

  
**New Hope**  
**LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**march**  **Newsletter**

Volume 3 No 12

*The mission of our congregation is Building Disciples, Growing in Faith, and Serving in Christ's name. We believe the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the inspired Word of God and the final authority for us in all matters of faith and life.*

**The Rev. Steven Counts**

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**Officers of the Church Council**

President: Larry Strock  
Vice President: Don Byers  
Secretary: Kirk Partin  
Treasurer: Alan Lunsford  
Financial secretary: Debbie Sowell



**Members**



LeNair Amick, Mary Coltrane, Vicki Edwards, Melissa Flemming, Lavenia Hentz, Becky McCartha.

**Friends and Family**

Wanda Boland (daughter of Becky McCartha), Dianne Clark, Jill Billings (daughter of Gene and Karen Jeffrey), Sheryl Jackson (Gordon's daughter), Cliff McElveen, Willoe Wilhite, Irene Leviner & Joy Rushe Mann.

**Those with on-going illness:** Landon Derrick

**MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS**

*Given to New Hope Lutheran Church*  
***In Memory of: Nell Bouknight Poole***

*Members who give **In Memory of** or **In Honor of** will receive a card from the church office thanking them for their gift to the church and the family will also be informed of the gift.*

*The names of those giving gifts may be found in the Remembrance Book.*



# MONTHLY INCOME & ATTENDANCE—February

## Report from Sunday, February 2nd

Worship Attendance:..... 52  
 Offering Collected: ..... \$ 4,358.00

## Report from Sunday, February 9th

Worship Attendance:..... 52  
 Offering Collected: .....\$ 8,225.35

## Report from Sunday, February 16th

Worship Attendance:.....38  
 Offering Collected:.....\$ 3,461.00

## Report from Sunday, February 23rd

Worship Attendance:.....53  
 Offering Collected:.....\$ 3,380.00

**AVERAGE ATTENDANCE 49**

## ALTAR GUILD TEAMS & SCHEDULE

(\*Donates Group Coordinator)

**Group #1:** \*Laurie Lackey, Chrystal Bouknight, Janis Strock , Laurie Lackey , Cindy Lindler (Saturdays—9:00am)

**Group #2:** \*Leigh Ann Lunsford, Pat Coogler, Patsy South, Betty McCartha (Saturdays—8:30am)

**Group #3:** \*Nancy Cannon, Mary Coltrane, Erica Richardson, Dana Monts (Saturdays—8:30am)

(Reminder– if you are not able to attend on your scheduled day, please let your coordinator know)

### MONTHS ASSIGNED

Group #1—January, April, July & October

Group #2—February, May, August & November

Group #3—March, June, September & December



## **ASSISTING MINISTERS—March**

	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
<b>Lectors:</b>	Earl	Larry	Lynn	Laurie	Gene
<b>Flowers:</b>	Monts	Lent	Lent	Lent	Lent
<b>Fellowship:</b>	South	Lent	Lent	Lent	Lent

**Acolytes:** Lucas, Hentz, Edwards

**Communion Assistants:** Strock/Cannon

**Altar Guild Group: # 3 Cannon**

**Ushers:** F. Shealy, E Hentz, K. Monts, J. Leviner

**40 days  
OF LENT**

LECTIONARY YEAR C  
Sundays in March

*Worship*

	<b>1st Reading</b>	<b>Psalm</b>	<b>2nd Reading</b>	<b>Gospel</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Deuteronomy 34:1-12	99	Hebrews 3:1-6	Luke 9:28-36
5 <sup>th</sup>	Joel 2:12-19	51:1-13 (14-19)	2 Corinthians 5:20b — 6:10	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
9 <sup>th</sup>	Deuteronomy 26:1-11	91:1-13	Romans 10:8b-13	Luke 4:1-13
16 <sup>th</sup>	Jeremiah 26:8-15	4	Philippians 3:17 — 4:1	Luke 13:31-35
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Ezekiel 33:7-20	85	1 Corinthians 10:1-13	Luke 13:1-9
30 <sup>th</sup>	Isaiah 12:1-6	32	2 Corinthians 5:16-21	Luke 15:1-3, 11-32



# 40 days OF LENT

We will be fasting for Lent during Sunday

Morning Fellowship Time.

March 9th–April 13th

Coffee & juice will be available.

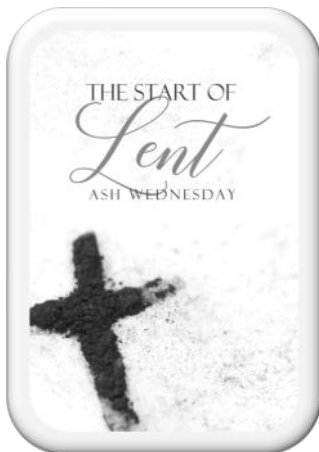
No Altar Flowers until Easter Sunday.



## SHROVE TUESDAY

*Congregational Pancake Supper*

Tuesday, March 4th @ 6:00 pm



March 5th @ 7:30

## ASH WEDNESDAY *worship* Service



## *Lenten Services*

March 9th-April 6th

Sunday evenings @ 7:00pm,

Meals will be served @ 6:00pm



Holy Week

*April 13<sup>th</sup> - Sunday of the Passion / Palm Sunday*

*April 17<sup>th</sup> - Maundy Thursday / 7:30pm*

*April 18<sup>th</sup> - Good Friday / 7:30pm*

*April 20<sup>st</sup> - The Resurrection of Our Lord*



The Price for Easter lilies is \$15.00 per lily.  
Reservation forms will be located on the table in the foyer for members to place in honor of or memory of loved ones. Reservations are due by March 10th.

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## Greeting Card Workshop

All Ladies are invited to attend a greeting card workshop hosted by **Circle of Hope & Lynne Gordon** Saturday, March 15th from 9am-1:00pm. You will be able to make up to 6 cards each. Please sign up by March 10th so we can have enough supplies on hand.

Suggested Donation \$10.00

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## Ladies Tea

Please mark your calendars for a Ladies' Tea to be held on **Saturday, May 17th.**

*More details to come!*

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## **MEN'S** **GROUP**

## **MEN OF NEW HOPE**

Our Next Meeting will be **Tuesday, April 1st @ 6:30**  
Join us for a great meal, planning, and fellowship!

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## **WOMEN'S** **GROUP**

## *Circle of Hope Women*

Our next meeting will be **Tuesday,**  
**March 11th @ 6:30**

All women are invited to join us for dinner, devotions & planning of community projects.

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## **Small Group Bible Study**

topic: The Book of ACTS

- ➔ Tuesday morning @ 9am
  - ➔ Wednesday evening @ 7pm
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## **Choir Practice**

Thursday, March 13th & 27th @ 7:00pm

# MARCH

## Birthdays & Anniversaries



Andrew & Hayley Brehmer	4 <sup>th</sup>
Edwin & Lavenia Hentz	7 <sup>th</sup>
Bill & Patsy South	9 <sup>th</sup>
John & Chrystal Bouknight	17 <sup>th</sup>



Lynn Morris	1 <sup>st</sup>	Chrystal Bouknight	21 <sup>st</sup>
Henneke Counts	7 <sup>th</sup>	Kathleen Pierce	26 <sup>th</sup>
Shirley Outlaw	11 <sup>th</sup>	Mervyn Derrick	29 <sup>th</sup>
John Bouknight	12 <sup>th</sup>		
Raegan Gray	14 <sup>th</sup>		
Shawn Lackey	14 <sup>th</sup>		



**REMINDER**

### Community Yard Sale

**Reminder: our community yard sale will be held on Saturday, March 22, 2025. An upcoming email and Sunday bulletins will provide information on hours of the sale, drop-off times, etc. Please get your items together that you wish to donate for the sale.**



### Ash Wednesday and Lent

What is Ash Wednesday? In Western Christendom, Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent and falls between February 4th and March 11th, 6 ½ weeks before Easter. Early in Christian history the length of Lent varied, but in the 7th century it was fixed at 40 days as a reminder of the 40 days Jesus fasted in the desert. Early penitents were sprinkled with ashes, wore sackcloth, and were required to remain apart from the rest of the community until they were reconciled on Maundy Thursday, the Thursday before Easter. (Sundays are not included in the 40 day count).

The most obvious mark of celebrating Ash Wednesday is the blessing and application of ashes to the foreheads of those who participate as a sign of penance using the ashes created by the burning of palm fronds from the previous Palm Sunday. Traditionally this is accompanied by the phrase "Remember you are dust and will return to dust." Not all Christian churches observe Ash Wednesday or Lent.

They are mostly observed by the Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and Anglican denominations, and also by Roman Catholics. Eastern Orthodox churches observe Lent or Great Lent, during the 6 weeks or 40 days preceding Palm Sunday with fasting continuing during the Holy Week of Orthodox Easter. Lent for Eastern Orthodox churches begins on Monday (called Clean Monday) and Ash Wednesday is not observed.

Some denominations expect Christians to engage in both fasting and abstinence on Ash Wednesday. The Bible does not mention Ash Wednesday or the custom of Lent, however, the practice of repentance and mourning in ashes is found in 2 Samuel 13:19; Esther 4:1; Job 2:8; Daniel 9:3; and Matthew 11:21.

### **So, What is Lent?**

Originating in the fourth century of the church, the season of Lent spans 40 days excluding Sundays, beginning on Ash Wednesday and climaxing during Holy Week with Holy Thursday (Maundy Thursday), Good Friday, and concluding Saturday before Easter. Originally, Lent was the time of preparation for those who were to be baptized, a time of concentrated study and prayer before their baptism at the Easter Vigil, the celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord early on Easter Sunday. But since these new members were to be received into a living community of Faith, the entire community was called to preparation. Also, this was the time when those who had been separated from the Church would prepare to rejoin the community.

Today, Lent is marked by a time of prayer and preparation to celebrate Easter. Since Sundays celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, the six Sundays that occur during Lent are not counted as part of the 40 days of Lent, and are referred to as the Sundays in Lent. The number 40 is connected with many biblical events, but especially with the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness preparing for His ministry by facing the temptations that could have led him to abandon his mission and calling. Christians today use this period of time for introspection, self examination, and repentance. This season of the year is equal only to the Season of Advent in importance in the Christian year, and is part of the second major grouping of Christian festivals and sacred time that includes Holy Week, Easter, and Pentecost.

Lent has traditionally been marked by penitential prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Some churches today still observe a rigid schedule of fasting on certain days during Lent, especially the giving up of meat, alcohol, sweets, and other types of food. Other traditions do not place as great an emphasis on fasting, but focus on charitable deeds, especially helping those in physical need with food and clothing, or simply the giving of money to charities. Most Christian churches that observe Lent at all focus on it as a time of prayer, especially penance, repenting for failures and sin as a way to focus on the need for God's grace. It is really a preparation to celebrate God's marvelous redemption at Easter, and the resurrected life that we live, and hope for, as Christians. The color used in the sanctuary for most of Lent is purple, red violet, or dark violet. These colors symbolize both the pain and suffering leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus as well as the suffering of humanity and the world under sin. But purple is also the color of royalty, and so anticipates through the suffering and death of Jesus the coming resurrection and hope of newness that will be celebrated in the Resurrection on Easter Sunday.

To be honest with all of you, I had hoped that our Lenten season at New Hope would be different from my experiences at other congregations I have served, that our worship attendance would climb rather than decrease through the season, that people, that we, would make time to contemplate all that God in Christ has done for us, and how that has the power to motivate and change us. However, Lent last year (my first at New Hope) took shape much like my experiences at other congregations. We started off with good attendance on Ash Wednesday but steadily decline until Holy Week when we got a small bump in attendance. Why? Why aren't Lenten observances more of a priority?

I'm afraid Lent seems hopelessly old fashioned and unhelpful to many of us busy with modern life – not unlike phonographs and 8mm movie cameras. A season dedicated to self-denial and repentance seems hopelessly anachronistic to a people bent on immediate gratification and an individual independence that means never having to say we're sorry.

BUT, please remember Lent is about more than just repentance. From its earliest days, the Church set aside Lent as a time of learning. One way we learn is through self-reflection, learning by studying from our past experiences how God may be leading us, both in our successes and our disappointments. In just that way, Lent should/could/would teach us much. For this very reason, I am including what author Fredrick Buechner wrote on Lent over 40 years ago. I still find it relevant today, maybe even more so. Buechner wrote:

In many cultures there is an ancient custom of giving a tenth of each year's income to some holy use. For Christians, to observe the forty days of Lent is to do the same thing with roughly a tenth of each year's days. After being baptized by John in the River Jordan, Jesus went off alone into the wilderness where he spent forty days asking himself the question what it meant to be Jesus. During Lent, Christians are supposed to ask, one way or another, what it means to be themselves. If you had to bet everything you have on whether there is a God or whether there isn't, which side would get your money and why? If you had only one last message to leave a handful of people who are most important to you, what would it be in twenty-five words or less? Of all the things you have done in your life, which is the one you would most like to undo? -- which is the one that makes you happiest to remember? Is there any person in the world, or any cause, that, if circumstances called for it, you would be willing to die for? If this were the last day of your life, what would you do with it?

To hear yourself try to answer questions like these is to begin to hear something not only of who you are, but of both what you are becoming and what you are failing to become. It can be a pretty depressing business all in all, but if sackcloth and ashes are at the start of it, something like Easter maybe at the end. - Frederick Buechner,

### ***Whistling in the Dark***

Over the years I've come to the conclusion that we tend to be not very thankful because we don't take the time to think, to count our blessings -- we're not thankful because we are not "think-ful" -- and I really believe that to be true. In a similar way, often we aren't the kind of people we are called to be simply because we do not think about it. Lent could/should afford us the space and time to do just that. And may this be so for all us as we journey on to Holy Week, Easter and beyond. -Pastor