



The Anchor – The Newsletter of Hope

May 2021

Vol 12, Number 8

Hope Lutheran Church of Rossmoor

"We have this Hope of Christ's promises as an anchor for our lives." Hebrews 6:19

Reflections of HOPE

from Pastor Andy

"Amen Corner"

"When they said, "Let's go to the house of GOD," my heart leaped for joy.

And now we're here, O Jerusalem, inside Jerusalem's walls!"

(Psalm 122:1-2, The Message)

Since 1958, holes #11, #12 and #13 located at the far corner of Augusta National Golf Club have been affectionately referred to as, *Amen Corner*. During the *Master's Golf Tournament* that year, Arnold Palmer navigated the three most difficult holes on the course in a miraculous fashion leaving a reporter to comment, *Arnold Palmer has just completed Amen Corner!* The name stuck and has remained a vital part of *The Master's* lore ever since. When golfers and their caddies successfully complete the difficult challenges presented by those three holes, they take a deep breath and whisper to one another,

Amen! We made it through Amen Corner!

As I reflect upon the initial three months of 2021, I realize the past year of navigating the difficult challenges related to COVID-19 are nearing an end. *The Golden Rain Foundation* has lifted certain restrictions for religious organizations regarding public worship. We are now able to meet again in the *Fireside Room* at 50% capacity, which is 120 people! For many of us, we are coming to the close of one of the most challenging and difficult seasons in our lives. We still have challenges in front of us, yet we can celebrate coming through our own personal *Amen Corner* of social distancing and sheltering-in-place for over a year!

Please save the dates for two very special events coming up in the next few weeks.

- **Virtual Fellowship Hour:** On Sunday, May 2, 2021 at 10:30 a.m., the staff will host a time of fellowship via Zoom for all of us to see one another and provide an opportunity to share briefly with one another an update on our lives. We are all longing to be back in worship together.
- **Special Mother's Day Worship Service in the Fireside Room.** On Sunday, May 9, 2021, we will return to the *Fireside Room* for our regular weekly worship service! Like the Psalmist, we can shout, *When they said, 'Let's go to the house of the Lord,' my heart leaped for joy!*

The Psalmist's heart was leaping for joy as he made his way into the Temple for a time of worship and fellowship with his sisters and brothers in the faith. The long wait was over. They had endured long days of waiting for this moment. That is our story too. Although new challenges await, we have made it through *Amen Corner!* For that, we can all shout *Amen!* (while wearing our masks, or course)!



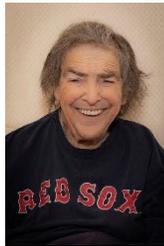
Together, in the name of Jesus,

Pastor Andy

More on the Mystery of Suffering

by Janice Callentine

Last month we started discussing the mystery of suffering: how can a loving God reign over a world full of suffering? I shared with you my personal thoughts about suffering. Then I suggested that we should really get more opinions about this, such as the opinions of the theologian Martin Luther. Then, since Luther's theology was rooted in scripture, we should investigate what the Bible has to say about suffering, specifically the book of Job and the writings of Saint Paul. We will get to the scripture part next month.



The people in Luther's day were no strangers to suffering. In the year 1347, the black plague swept through Europe for seven years. In 1527 some soldiers brought the plague back into Germany from Italy. Luther was swamped with questions about how they should deal with the pandemic: should they flee or should they stay put?

The local political leader ordered everyone to leave town to get away from the plague, but Luther defied him and stayed. He said that doctors and priests and everyone called to tend to the sick and dying should stay because it was their Christian duty.

There is an amazing similarity between the plague of 1527 and our COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. Luther's description of the situation back then is a bizarre precursor of our recent headlines:

"(Some people) are much too rash and reckless, disregarding everything which might counteract death and the plague. They disdain the use of medicines; they do not avoid places and persons infected by the plague, but lightheartedly make sport of it and wish to prove how independent they are."

Luther's main concern about the plague was that people would use it as proof that God is a harsh judge and that the plague was God's harsh punishment upon His people. To combat this,

Luther borrowed a phrase from the prophet Isaiah and described the plague as God's strange, or alien work. Suffering is alien to God's nature since God is a god of love.

The phrase "alien work of God" was Luther's response to all of the conflicting beliefs and concerns about the plague, and his way of offering some comfort in the midst of overwhelming suffering. The term expresses Luther's desire to assure Christians that God is for them, and never against them, despite appearances to the contrary.

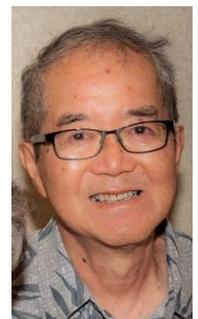
The best way that I can think of to try to explain this concept is to think about a doctor who has a patient who needs surgery. Surgery requires cutting open a part of the body and perhaps removing dangerous tissue. Surgery is alien to the doctor's nature. The doctor's nature is to heal, and not cause suffering. But the suffering is part of the plan to restore the patient to better health. Sometimes suffering is a necessary step along the path to achieve the greater good.

I wonder if anyone has ever seen the good that suffering has eventually brought about. But we are a people of faith and we can trust in God's loving purpose. Luther borrowed from Isaiah, so I will borrow from Jeremiah: "For I know the plans I have for you' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'".

Peace, love and HOPE,
Janice

New Hope Council Member

Welcome to the Hope Council, Wayne Quan! Wayne will be filling the vacancy created when Marjatta DeSchepper moved to Southern California.



Triumph & Connection!

Through the Lens of Debbie's Camera



Debbie Bergvall's "Star Trails over Double Arches" in Arches National Park, Utah



Debbie trekked to the "Cracked Eggs" in the Bisti Badlands of northwest New Mexico

Happy 100th Birthday Olive Sampson!



Wayne & Mom Olive

Wayne & Julane Sampson drove back to the Midwest to celebrate Olive Sampson's 100th birthday. Olive is Wayne's Mom.



Rare Globe Lilies



Jean Faszholz and daughter Deb were excited to find some of these rather rare and elusive Globe Lilies on a recent hike. They are found mainly in the Mitchell Canyon area and are also called Fairy Lanterns.

Congregation Fellowship Meeting Via Zoom

Save the date and time! On Sunday, May 2 at 10:30am, we will gather for virtual fellowship via Zoom. Won't it be great to see all those familiar faces again? And, since we are meeting virtually, we don't have to wear masks. So, grab your coffee/tea and let's



Event: Congregation Fellowship Meeting

Date: Sunday, May 2, 2021

Time: 10:30am

Where: Your own home via Zoom

Margaret Anderson Joins the Hope Staff As Care Ministries Team Leader



At the March Council Meeting, the Council acted to hire Margaret Anderson to serve as the part-time Care Ministries Team Leader following the resignation of Marjatta DeSchepper from the staff and subsequent relocation to Southern California.

Margaret's deep faith and

Spiritual gifts of compassion, mercy and service are the perfect fit for her leadership role in overseeing our Care Ministries. Margaret will provide a listening ear to those she visits personally and will lead a team of volunteers on the Care Team offering concern, care and compassion to the people of Hope.

Hope's Care Team

- Margaret Anderson
- Barrie Christensen
- Robin Kanno
- Inge Knight
- Bill Kuhnsman
- Sally Nordwall
- Evelyn Olson
- June Payne
- Jean Possin
- Pastor Andy Smith
- Pastor Karen Woida

An Exchange of Thanks & Appreciation

Thank you **Charlene & Arnold Lenk** and **Clint & Priscilla Mah** for allowing me to reprint your beautiful exchange of thanks and appreciation.

Charlene writes:

"Good morning Clint and Priscilla,

"We just wanted to take a minute and tell you how much we appreciate all the time and effort you put into keeping the members of Hope together. For those of us who are simple users of the computer, it ceases to amaze us how much you manage to put together in a short time every week. Thank you.

"Take some time to have fun too - with your masks on! We hope you have been able to get your shots. Stay safe, healthy, and we look forward to seeing you in church someday soon.

"Charlene and Arnold"

Clint responds:

"This past year of virtual worship has been a learning experience for everyone from Pastor Andy and Pastor Karen on down. None of us had ever tried to assemble a coherent weekly service from many separate contributors on a tight schedule for so long. Most readers had never recorded themselves on a smart phone, much less email a resulting audio file. Singers had to follow an accompaniment that Maestro Wayne had to pre-record separately. Clover, the web host for the Hope web site, kept throwing up unexpected roadblocks, probably because of churches everywhere trying to move on line. We really need to thank the people of Hope, who put up patiently with it all. This coming Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter will be an unprecedented huge challenge for us all. To us, it will be the way of the Cross in more ways than one. Give all glory to God.

*-
Yours in Christ,
Clinton Mah"*

AMEN!

“Victory in Jesus”
By Wayne Quan

In 1972, a picture of a naked 9-year-old Vietnamese girl won the Pulitzer Prize and the “picture of the year” by the World Press. The girl, Kim Phuc Phan Thi, badly burned from a napalm bombing was saved with 14 months of hospitalization and 17 surgical procedures.

Years later while attending school in Saigon, she discovered a New Testament in the university library and committed her life to following Jesus Christ, and realized that God had a plan for her life. In 1994, UNESCO designated her a Goodwill Ambassador for Peace and she established a Foundation to provide medical and psychological assistance to child victims of wars.

“Forgiveness made me free from hatred. I still have many scars on my body and severe pain most days, but my heart is cleansed. Napalm is very powerful, but faith, forgiveness, and love are much more powerful.”

We would not have war at all if everyone can learn to live with love, hope, and forgiveness. If that little girl in the picture can do it, ask ourselves: Can’t we?

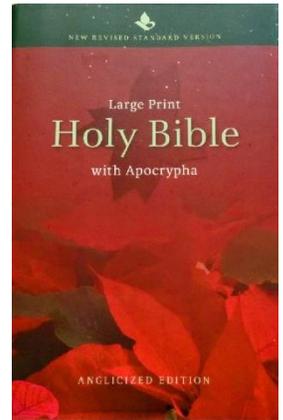
Today, Kim Phuc, age 57, lives with her husband and two children in Toronto, Canada.



**Interfaith Council of Rossmoor &
A Senior-friendly Large Print Bible**
By Sally Nordwall

The Interfaith Council of Rossmoor is busy working on a Revised Mission Statement and Brochure. I expect to be able to share the results in the June Anchor. In the meantime, we are all enjoying the BIG Question Zoom meetings on the third Monday of the month. The April 19 meeting on “What is the Purpose of Life” will be reviewed in the June Anchor.

BIG NEWS!!! I am gleeful about my solution to an irritating problem. As I have aged, I have had more and more difficulty reading the small print on tissue thin paper in my Bible. In seeking a solution, I asked for and received help from Pastor Karen. She suggested the New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha. I



set out to do some research. Did not want that **BIG PRINT** that takes up a whole column for one word. Did not want paper that would tear easily or bleed from the back side. After reading many reviews, I ordered, received, and love my new Cambridge University Press NRSV Large Print (13pt on 131/2 Karmina) HOLY BIBLE with Apocrypha. It is not a slim line book I can put in my purse to read while waiting in a Doctor’s office, but I can use an iPad for that reading. It is an excellent way for me to read and study the Word of God in comfort. For more details, either call me or go to www.nrsvbibles.org.

Sally Nordwall is Hope’s representative to the Interfaith Council of Rossmoor

Hope Council’s Corner

Here are the highlights from our “virtual” Council Meeting on Monday, April 12, 2021.

- **Live Worship returning to Fireside Room:** Council approved the reopening of services in the *Fireside Room* on Mothers' Day, May 9, 2021. Indoor capacity allowance of 50% assures us of no restrictions on attendance. The Staff will work out logistics of how we shall worship together and inform the Congregation.
- **Virtual Fellowship Hour:** The staff volunteered to coordinate a *Virtual Fellowship Hour* via Zoom on May, 2, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.
- **Wayne Quan elected to Council:** Wayne Quan was unanimously elected to fill Marjatta DeSchepper's unexpired term on Council through January 2022.
- **First Quarter Financials:** Carolyn Schick presented the March and First Quarter Financial Statements to the Council. Our financial position at March 31, 2021 remains strong and within budget. We benefitted from several annual offerings received for the full year pledge.
- **Easter Benevolence Gift:** Pastor Karen suggested that since we have not done a special offering lately (since we have not been meeting in person) that we offer some form of benevolence at this time. The Council voted unanimously to present a gift of \$500 to the Contra Costa Food Bank as a love gift from Hope.

The Second Annual True Grit Award: For the second year in a row, Clint Mah received the annual *True Grit Award* for his outstanding contribution to our weekly virtual services over the past year.



Respectfully submitted,

Andy Smith
Pastor

Bill Kuhnsman
President, Hope Council

Upcoming Events in April - May

Saturday, May 1 – Women’s Bible Study via Zoom at 10:00am

Sunday, May 2 – Congregation Fellowship Zoom Meeting



Tuesday, May 4 – Staff Meeting at 10:00am via video conference

Sunday, May 9 – Mother’s Day
Return to in-person worship in the Fireside Room at 10:30am



Monday, May 10 – Hope Council Meeting at 1:00pm via video conference

Tuesday, May 11 – Staff Meeting at 10:00am via video conference

Tuesday, May 18 – Staff Meeting at 10:00am via video conference

Saturday, May 22 – Anchor articles and group updates due for *June* Edition

Sunday, May 23 – Pentecost Sunday – Remember to wear red!



Tuesday, May 25 – Staff Meeting at 10:00am via video conference



Monday, May 31 – Memorial Day

Small Group News

The Women of Hope Small Group – The women's Bible study group will be meeting on Saturday, May 1, from 10:00-11:30am via Zoom. Entitled “Journey of generations”, the study is in the May issue of Gather magazine and is about the shared blessings that inter-generational relationships bring. Please contact Pastor Karen if you are interested in participating so that she can send you the Zoom link. We welcome all newcomers!

Monday Lunch Group – We don't know yet whether we can have our luncheon this month. We will let you know as soon as pertinent information is available. Stay well and confident. If you have questions, call Inge Knight.

Wednesday Lunch Group – This activity is dependent upon current shelter-in-place & social distancing requirements. This group usually meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Please talk to Esther Kuencer if you have any questions.

The Small Group Going Out to Dinner – The Small Group Going Out to Dinner will be gathering (finally) on Wednesday, May 19th. Dinner will be outside at Creekside on Wednesday, May 19th at 5:30 PM. Persons planning to attend should please contact Karen Peterson NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, MAY 14TH BECAUSE SEATING IS LIMITED DUE TO COVID RESTRICTIONS. Masks are required. Looking forward to seeing everyone.

Dinner-in-homes Groups – The dinner-in-home groups have suspended all their activities, pending a change in the Rossmoor shelter-in-place guidelines that will allow for indoor activities for small groups of people.

Worship Assistant Coordinators

- Altar Guild – Jean Possin
- Ushers – Evelyn Olson
- Communion Assistants – Mary Lyn Padley
- Greeters – Sandra Williams
- Lay Readers – Mark Krauth
- Fellowship – *Position open*
- Offering Counters – Jean Possin
- Altar & Table Flowers – Mary Lyn Padley

God's Work, Our Hands.



Have you remembered the **Hope Endowment Fund** in your will or trust? When you plan your giving for 2021, think about the Hope Endowment Fund. Your contribution is tax deductible. For more information, please contact Evelyn Olson or any member of the Hope Endowment Committee. Members are identified on their name badges.

Endowment Committee Members

- Evelyn Olson (Coordinator)
- Mark Conrad
- Mark Krauth
- Jack Padley (Liaison to Hope Council)
- Wayne Sampson
- Carolyn Schick

Hope Lutheran Church Staff & Representatives

- Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Andy Smith
- Associate Pastor: The Rev. Karen Woida
- Anchor Contributor: Janice Callentine
- Minister of Music: Wayne Anderson
- Financial Manager: Carolyn Schick
- Cantor: Kimberly Twesme
- Care Ministry: Margaret Anderson
- Operations Manager: Robin Kanno
- Rossmoor Interfaith Council Representative: Sally Nordwall
- Webmaster: Clint Mah

2021 Hope Church Council Members

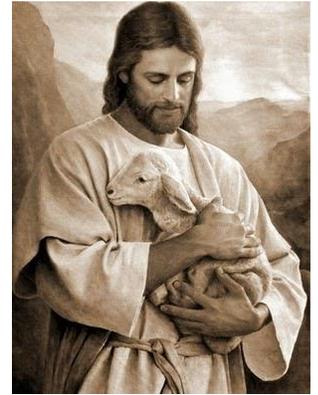
- Bill Kuhnsman (President)
- Barrie Christensen (Vice President)
- Mark Krauth (Secretary/Treasurer)
- Robin Kanno (Operations Manager)
- Jack Padley (Liaison to Endowment Committee)
- Wayne Quan (Anchor Contributor)
- Carolyn Schick (Financial Manager)

Together Again
By Clinton Mah

Our Hope congregation will be meeting in person again on Mother's Day, May 9th. If the national vaccination campaign can sustain itself through that date, then we should see further lifting of pandemic restrictions on indoor worship. Everyone is eager to recite the liturgies, to sing hymns, to go up to the altar for communion, to pass the peace, and to enjoy a real coffee fellowship.

Except for four Sundays last fall, we have had virtual worship services for over a year. These differed from our previous recorded services, when all the participants could see each other. In a virtual service, we can do more things: Pastor Jack and Ruth reading Psalms from Arizona, Matthew Tang singing 8-part motets all by himself, and Pastor Karen pouring baptismal water in a liturgy. Many worshippers could hear a virtual service better.

Let us give thanks for finding new ways of glorifying God. Let us also go forward with fresh eyes on the possibilities of worship. In the hardship of the past pandemic year, we have often been surprised by small moments of grace when we departed from the well-trod paths of Sunday mornings. We may be older folk in Rossmoor, but in Jesus we again become spring lambs following in his way. AMEN.



Yours in Christ,
Clinton Mah

