



LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF HOPE

HOPE HAPPENINGS

MARCH 2024

Save the Date!

- March 24: Palm Sunday
- March 28: Maundy Thursday
- March 29: Good Friday
- March 31: Easter Sunday

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From Pastor Liz

Dear People of Hope,

This month we will enter Holy Week, the week when we follow Jesus with palms and shouts of “Hosanna!” to the cross and then, finally, to the empty tomb. While the lead-up to Christmas Eve and Christmas Day is surrounded by Christmas lights all around us, music in stores and movies reminding us of the season, Holy Week comes with very little to remind us that it is on its way, except for maybe Easter candy on the shelves.

Palm Sunday begins our week remembering Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday (and traditionally, also, Easter Vigil) are considered one service held over several days. Why do we leave them in silence without a benediction? Because the service is not yet complete; we will be returning to worship again. We will not hear a benediction until Easter! This is the rhythm we are invited into; setting aside time to gather, pray, reflect, and on Easter Day, rejoice with hope. This year, we are also joining Christians for Equality for a vigil remembering those unhoused neighbors who have died in the cold.

It is such a contrast to what may be going on around us to think about breaking up our normal schedules for these strange services and gatherings during a long winter. Waving palms. Eating a meal in the sanctuary. Entering into the day that Jesus died. Entering into the death of our neighbors and the call to action it places upon us. All of it leading up to the shouts of “Alleluia!”

I invite you to take a look inside our newsletter for what is planned. Are there ways you can help? Do you need to shift your calendar now in order to join us? Set a reminder in your phone today!

May Holy Week be a holy interruption in our lives.

Peace be with you,
Pastor Liz



Holy Week

Palm Sunday Worship Service

Sunday, March 24 at 10:00 am

Maundy Thursday Potluck & Worship Service

Thursday, March 28 at 6:30 pm

How You Can Help

Contact Patty Bryant to help with the food or to help set up.

Good Friday Worship Service

Friday, March 29 at 6:30 pm

Decorating the Church

Saturday, March 30 at 10:00 am

No More Deaths

Memorial Vigil for Unhoused Neighbors

Saturday, March 30 at 1:00 pm
at First United Methodist Church

COMING UP

Easter Sunday, March 31

Easter Breakfast

at 8:30 am

Sign up to bring pastries, egg casseroles, juice, & fruit in the Narthex or online.



Easter Worship Service

at 10:00 am

He is Risen!



Don't forget to set your clocks ahead!
Daylight Saving Time starts on Sunday, March 10

Spring Forward

JOIN (formerly AFACT)
is hosting a
Mayoral Candidate Forum
Monday, March 18 at 7:00 pm
at First Covenant Church



*Service of
Prayer & Healing*

Sunday, March 17
10:00 am



In life, there are moments when we sense a shift in the air, a whisper of change on the horizon. For me, that moment arrived about a year and a half ago, I returned from a trip to Nepal and I felt a clear sense that something was coming and I needed to be prepared. And so, I began to clean out, to clear out, to let go.

It started with my house, filled with a clutter of things some memories cherished and others forgotten. Room by room, I sifted through the stuff, releasing those that no longer held meaning, creating space for the unknown yet to come. With each item donated or discarded, I felt a lightness, a sense of opening.

The physical clutter was only the beginning. As I delved deeper, I realized there were emotions I had long buried, grievances unaddressed, wounds I had yet to heal. So, I allowed myself to feel, to explore the depths of my heart with honesty and compassion. In embracing my vulnerability, I found strength, and in releasing my pain, I found peace and more lightness.

I also found that some relationships began to fade into the background, which made me sad for a while. But in the space left by their absence, new connections began to come forward and thrive, nurturing me for the unknown ahead. I have a deep sense within me that it is these newfound relationships that will support me for whatever is coming into my life.

Embracing change requires courage and faith. It is not easy to step into the unknown, to trust in the divine plan when the path is uncertain. As we “Bless this Mess” to clear out our physical spaces, let us also examine our hearts. What clutter weighs us down? What fears or doubts do we cling to?

May we trust in the words of Isaiah 43:19, "Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

A year and a half later, I still don't know what that new thing is that is coming, but I know that I must be prepared. I invite you to join me in the unknown and to prepare with me for whatever God will bring to fill the space we make today.

Melanie Bladow, Council President

Join us for a meal at 6:30pm on Wednesdays. If you're able to help provide the meal, [sign up online](#) or in the narthex.



Thank you to everyone who has signed up to help us care for our church! Take a look at the remaining sign-ups for some of the tasks and activities in the narthex. Help us continue to take care of and improve our space!



Women of the ELCA & friends – you're invited



Gather with friends at your church
or join us from home:
Zoom.us meeting ID: 815 5254 9714
and passcode: ASWO

Churches hosting in-person groups include
Christ Lutheran, Fairbanks
Central Lutheran, Anchorage,
Christ Lutheran, Soldotna
(and maybe yours, too?)
*Contact your congregation to ask about
lunch plans at your location.*

Women of the ELCA Spring Retreat **11 am - 2 pm Saturday, March 23, 2024**

Join friends in singing hymns * a Bible study led by Rev. Luisa Hanson * Bill Bahleda will describe the Bishop election process our synod will experience this spring * Rev. Lisa Smith Fiegel shares on the three expressions of the Church (local, synod, national) * Linda Post-Bushkofsky talks change and updates us on the National women of the ELCA.
Event organized and led by Alaska Synodical Women's Organization.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Our March prayer partner is Trinity Lutheran Church in Palmer, AK.



Prayer, individually and communally, is one of the highest calls of our discipleship in and imitation of Christ. We pray for one another in joy and in sorrow, for discernment and with gratitude. If you need prayers in any circumstance, please contact the church office (907 279-7714) or lcohope@gmail.com. If you wish to be on the prayer chain of the church, please let us know and we will pass along the pertinent information so that others will lift you in prayer with the help of the Holy Spirit. Prayer requests to the Pastor and church office are confidential unless you indicate otherwise.



Happy Birthday!

John Hoopes, Nancy Farrer, Katrina Eldred,
Betsy Eisses, Katie Schroeder, Meredith Rude,
Dan Bollerud, Brad Sordahl, Jennifer Wardell

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

WORSHIP



We welcome you into the sanctuary for worship with communion at 10am!

Unable to join us in the sanctuary? We are also streaming live on Facebook. It is good to gather as the people of God each week!

Drawn together by God, celebrating grace, serving all.

Prayer Team



During communion on the first Sunday of the month

LEARN



Sunday morning Bible study meets at 8:30 am in person.



Join us for Sunday School Stories for Adults and Lenten meals every Wednesday during Lent at 6:30.



The Other 4H Group meets monthly to discuss books chosen by the group. The next discussion book is How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen by David Brooks. We will be discussing this book on Tuesday, March 19 at 7 PM on Zoom.



Confirmation

Confirmation Class is taking a break until April 7.



Thank you for continuing your financial support of our church. Check out our website for more information, www.hopeak.org/give



SERVE



LSSA Mobile Food Pantry is every Tuesday at 4:30 pm. Line up starts at 3:30 pm. You do not need an appointment to receive food. If you would like to volunteer, contact 272-0643 option 14. Distribution is drive-thru.



Worship Team The next meeting will be after Easter. They meet regularly to plan and discuss ideas for Sunday morning worship and special services. Interested in helping us? Talk to Pastor Liz.

Property Team helps us take care of the building and the grounds by discerning what needs to be done and how best to do it. Please talk with Don Bladow or Todd Bryant if interested in helping.

Council will meet on **Thursday, March 21 at 6 PM** to discern and make decisions on behalf of the congregation regarding ministry, mission and stewardship of our resources. Please pray for our council leaders.

Art Team: Notice different signs on the fence? Art on the windows? Art around the garden? These were brought together by the art team! Would you like to help or have an idea? Contact Chris Terry.



Altar Flowers

The 2024 Altar Flower Sign Up is posted on the bulletin board in the narthex, or you can [sign up here!](#)

Flowers are \$25



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