

# The Shepherd's *staff*

THE NEWSLETTER OF HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH — LENT 2024

433 MORAGA WAY, ORINDA, CALIFORNIA — [www.holyshepherd.org](http://www.holyshepherd.org) — (925)254-3422

## WHAT IS LENT?

*"What should I give up for Lent this year, Pastor?" she asked. "Chocolate? Facebook? My nightly glass of wine?" "That all depends," her pastor replied, "It depends on your motivation."*

The Season of Lent is a time-honored tradition among Christians throughout the world — constituted by those forty non-Sunday days between Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. (This year, Lent runs from February 14 until March 27.) Traditionally, Lent has been a time for us to dress our worship spaces in purple (the color of sorrow.) It's been a time for us to take things on (or give things up) in mindful devotion to our Lord. It's been a time for our worship services to be a bit more reflective. And — most of all — it has been a time to prepare ourselves for the Holy Week cycle of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter.

Lent isn't a divine diet plan nor a religious version of 'New Year's Resolutions'. Rather, the spirit of Lent is found in a story Jesus told about a holier-than-thou fellow and a no-good tax-collector who both went to worship one day. The pious man prayed: "Oh, God, I thank you that I am not like other people - robbers, crooks, adulterers, or, heaven forbid, like that tax man." Meanwhile the tax man, slumped in the back pew, his

face in his hands, not daring to look up, said, "God, give mercy. Forgive me, a sinner." But Jesus noted that it was the tax man, not the other fellow, who went home, made right with God, for if you walk around with your nose in the air, you're going to end up flat on your face.

Lent is that humble tax collector. Lent is being honest to God about who we are, who we are not, and the ways in which we have fallen short of God's best hopes for us. Lent is asking God to help us precisely because we know we aren't all that. Lent is an attitude of honesty and humility, and at the same time an attitude of quiet joy, knowing that our imperfections have been forgiven by God. Lent is that long, slow walk to the cross, wherein we discover just how serious our brokenness is, and just how wonderful God's love is.

Even though Lent 2024 is already started, it's never too late to take on a Lenten spirit! For walking with Jesus in honesty, humility and thankfulness is something that never goes out of style!

Love + Joy + Peace, Pastor John

## WEEKLY EVENTS SCHEDULE

*We encourage you to join in!*

**Sundays at 9:30 am** — In-person worship with Holy Communion happens in our Sanctuary

**Sundays at 9:30 am** — Our in-person worship services are "Live-Streamed" via our Facebook page @HSLCOrinda.

**Sundays at 10am** — Sunday School for Kids happens twice-monthly following KidTalk. (Upcoming dates Feb. 25, March 10 and March 24!)

**Sundays at 10:30 am** — Coffee Fellowship takes place following our worship service.

**Sundays at noon** — Our weekly 'Worship Video' is up at [www.holyshepherd.org](http://www.holyshepherd.org).

**Tuesdays at 7 pm** — Our online 'Adult Ed' class meets via Zoom. **Zoom Meeting ID: 861 5874 8710**  
**Zoom Passcode: 94563**

# Ministry Partner Update: International Health Partners: TZ/US



*IHP has embarked on an exciting new project at Zuzu! They are preparing to serve a community desperate for quality health care near the capital city of Dodoma. This is a place where women often die on the way to the hospital if they are in obstructed labor because the few existing hospitals are too far away. It is not only laboring women who are affected, but also young children and the elderly. Our annual mission support for the year 2024 of roughly \$3000 will allow them to dig water wells on their new hospital complex — as they look toward a grand opening in 2025.*

Dear Friends at Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church,

With each of the projects IHP has begun in Tanzania, there is a learning curve, a lot of paperwork (that can be a moving target), and finally the groundbreaking. It seems like such a long time from the decision to start and the actual service to patients. But once that begins, it steamrolls into the day-to-day realization that we are saving lives, doing God's work to make the world a better place. Each dollar we receive goes directly into the project. The IHP board of 16 people here in the U.S. are all hard-working volunteers who have developed a love for the people of Tanzania and have heeded God's call to do everything possible to bring life-saving, compassionate care to them. Thank you for making this possible. With our love, Paula and Denny



We are proud of ALL of our congregation's many Ministry Partners, but find ourselves forever amazed by the work of Dr. Denny and Paula Lofstrom and their "International Health Partners: TZ/US" to provide vital health services in the country of Tanzania.

The Lofstrom are in the process of developing their fourth hospital complex in that nation, this one located in Zuzu (near Dodoma, the nation's capital. Zuzu is in the center of Tanzania (a full day's bus ride south of Arusha and a full-day's bus ride west of Dar es Salaam, two of IHP's previous regional building sites.

## Congratulations

*We celebrate with those of you who have had (or will yet have) a 'Big Day' in January or February — and apologize for our belated greetings!*



### Birthdays

1/11 Ellin S.  
1/12 Arwen Ch.  
1/15 Sharon T.  
1/19 Chris M.  
1/19 Craig W.

1/20 Matt V.  
1/21 Mary D.  
1/22 Otto Ts.  
1/25 Elaine B.  
1/28 Nina B.  
1/30 Scott G.  
2/1 Mitch Ch.  
2/4 Bryant Ch.  
2/10 Joan K.  
2/11 Mary Ann B.  
2/13 Lauren K.  
2/15 Barbara P.  
2/16 Claire S.

2/17 Marci B.  
2/18 Alanna L.  
2/18 Austin McM.  
2/21 Lori O.  
2/24 Ben M.  
2/26 Nadine C.  
2/26 Bob V. (98!!)  
2/28 Stacey R.  
2/29 Karen R-K

### Anniversaries

1/5 Rose-Kalvasses  
2/3 Hurleys

## In Memoriam

*It is with heavy hearts that we relate the news of the passing of two dear members of our community in recent days.*

**June Howe** died on January 16 at the age of 97. June was the last surviving charter member of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church (one of our two predecessor congregations.) A private service will be held at the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery, where June will be interred with her beloved husband of 67 years, Lt. Col. Harry Howe.



**Anne Johnson** died on January 24 at the age of 94. Anne was very active in facilitating the fellowship ministries of our congregation, including the Winers wine-tasting group, the Bridge Group and the Women's Book Club. You are invited to a memorial service in Anne's honor, which will be held at 11am on Saturday, March 23 in our Sanctuary, with a light luncheon reception to follow in the Center for Ministry.



## PRAYER list

*Please hold the following members and friends of our congregation in prayer:*

### For Those Serving

Meghan P.  
Brian P.

### For Healing

Yvonne G.  
Louise H.  
Donna Z.  
DoLoris T.  
MaryHelene W.  
Judy.B.

Judy H.  
Bill K.

### For Peace

Marian McM.  
DeLane R.  
Bob V.  
Henry K.  
Howard R.  
Marilyn N.  
Mark Z.

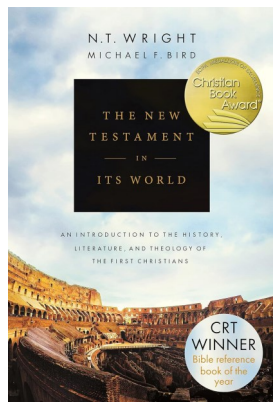
## Let's GROW for It! Our 2024 Lenten Journey through the Gospel of Mark

Rather than 'giving something up' for Lent, how about 'taking something on'? Our 2024 Lenten Bible Challenge involves reading the Gospel of Mark over the 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Holy Saturday. Come and join in the journey with Jesus — a journey that leads to LIFE!

<b>Wednesday, February 14</b> (Day 1) "Beginnings"	<b>Mark 1:1-20</b>
<b>Thursday, February 15</b> (Day 2) "The One Who Cleanses"	<b>Mark 1:21-45</b>
<b>Friday, February 16</b> (Day 3) "The One Who Restores"	<b>Mark 2:1-17</b>
<b>Saturday, February 17</b> (Day 4) "A New Spin on Old Rules"	<b>Mark 2:18-3:6</b>
<b>Monday, February 19</b> (Day 5) "Those Who Followed"	<b>Mark 3:7-19</b>
<b>Tuesday, February 20</b> (Day 6) "Family Matters"	<b>Mark 3:20-35</b>
<b>Wednesday, February 21</b> (Day 7) "Preaching in Parables"	<b>Mark 4:1-20</b>
<b>Thursday, February 22</b> (Day 8) "Of Lamps and Seeds"	<b>Mark 4:21-34</b>
<b>Friday, February 23</b> (Day 9) "Lord of the Wind and the Sea"	<b>Mark 4:35-5:20</b>
<b>Saturday, February 24</b> (Day 10) "Two Who Were Healed"	<b>Mark 5:21-43</b>
<b>Monday, February 26</b> (Day 11) "Rejection and Conflict"	<b>Mark 6:1-29</b>
<b>Tuesday, February 27</b> (Day 12) "He Who Gives Life"	<b>Mark 6:30-56</b>
<b>Wednesday, February 28</b> (Day 13) "Outside In or Inside Out?"	<b>Mark 7:1-23</b>
<b>Thursday, February 29</b> (Day 14) "Opened Up"	<b>Mark 7:24-37</b>
<b>Friday, March 1</b> (Day 15) "Bread in Abundance"	<b>Mark 8:1-21</b>
<b>Saturday, March 2</b> (Day 16) "Who Do You Say that I Am?"	<b>Mark 8:22-38</b>
<b>Monday, March 4</b> (Day 17) "Transfigurations"	<b>Mark 9:1-29</b>
<b>Tuesday, March 5</b> (Day 18) "Conflicts Within and Without"	<b>Mark 9:30-50</b>
<b>Wednesday, March 6</b> (Day 19) "Hard Lessons"	<b>Mark 10:1-31</b>

<b>Thursday, March 7</b> (Day 20) "Do Us a Favor ..."	<b>Mark 10:32-52</b>
<b>Friday, March 8</b> (Day 21) "I Love a Parade!"	<b>Mark 11:1-11</b>
<b>Saturday, March 9</b> (Day 22) "Cursing and Cleaning"	<b>Mark 11:12-26</b>
<b>Monday, March 11</b> (Day 23) "A New Authority"	<b>Mark 11:27-12:12</b>
<b>Tuesday, March 12</b> (Day 24) "I Have a Question"	<b>Mark 12:13-27</b>
<b>Wednesday, March 13</b> (Day 25) "What Matters Most"	<b>Mark 12:28-34</b>
<b>Thursday, March 14</b> (Day 26) "Do Not Be Deceived"	<b>Mark 12:35-44</b>
<b>Friday, March 15</b> (Day 27) "Things Foretold"	<b>Mark 13:1-13</b>
<b>Saturday, March 16</b> (Day 28) "Difficult Days Ahead"	<b>Mark 13:14-27</b>
<b>Monday, March 18</b> (Day 29) "Keep Awake!"	<b>Mark 13:28-37</b>
<b>Tuesday, March 19</b> (Day 30) "An Evil Plot"	<b>Mark 14:1-11</b>
<b>Wednesday, March 20</b> (Day 31) "Preparing for a Feast"	<b>Mark 14:12-21</b>
<b>Thursday, March 21</b> (Day 32) "The Lord's Supper"	<b>Mark 14:22-31</b>
<b>Friday, March 22</b> (Day 33) "In the Garden"	<b>Mark 14:32-42</b>
<b>Saturday, March 23</b> (Day 34) "Betrayal"	<b>Mark 14:43-52</b>
<b>Monday, March 25</b> (Day 35) "On Trial"	<b>Mark 14:53-65</b>
<b>Tuesday, March 26</b> (Day 36) "Denial"	<b>Mark 14:66-72</b>
<b>Wednesday, March 27</b> (Day 37) "Innocent but Guilty"	<b>Mark 15:1-20</b>
<b>Thursday, March 28</b> (Day 38) "Crucified"	<b>Mark 15:21-37</b>
<b>Friday, March 29</b> (Day 39) "Died and Was Buried"	<b>Mark 15:38-47</b>
<b>Saturday, March 30</b> (Day 40) "He Is Not Here"	<b>Mark 16:1-8</b>

## ITEMS FOR YOUR CALENDAR



Pastor John's "New Testament 101" study course continues on a 'twice-monthly' basis on Wednesday evenings in the Center for Ministry

(or via Zoom). Participants are reminded that we're now entering the final leg of our three year journey, as we walk through the so-called Catholic Letters that comprise the final portion of the New Testament. Upcoming class dates include:

February 21 — 1 & 2 Peter (Ch. 32)

March 6 — 1, 2 & 3 John (Ch. 33)

March 20 — The Revelation (Ch. 34)

### 2024 HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Our celebration of the Season of Lent 2024 culminates with that week known as 'Holy Week'.

On Palm Sunday (March 24), we worship at 9:30a to remember Jesus' arrival in the Holy City.

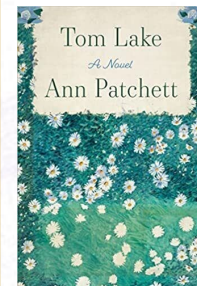
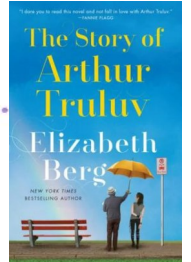
On Maundy Thursday (March 28), we worship at 7p to remember 'the night in which He was betrayed.'

On Good Friday (March 29), we worship at 7p in somber remembrance that our Lord was 'crucified, died and was buried.'

On Easter Sunday (March 31) we gather at both 9a and 10:30a with worship services celebrating the news that Christ is risen indeed! (We will again offer a hearty 'Easter Coffee Fellowship' following each of our Easter Sunday worship times.)

The **Women's Book Club** meets regularly on the first Saturday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in our Center for Ministry building. Besides discussing their current book, they sip warm beverages and nibble on treats. If you're interested in joining, they'd love to have you. (Speak with Bethany Valentine or Juanita Gilbertson for more information.) Next up:

March 1 — The Story of Arthur Truluv by Elizabeth Berg



April 6 — Tom Lake by Ann Patchett

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church  
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Orinda, CA 94563