

"From the Top"

A monthly publication of
Spirit of Our Savior Lutheran Church, ELCA

Volume V, Issue 7

July 2026

Hello Church –

On Independence Day, our nation will pause to give thanks for the freedoms we've enjoyed for 250 years. We'll remember the sacrifices made, celebrate civic life, and reflect on the blessings of liberty. As Christians and as Lutherans, we should also rightly give thanks to God for the gift of living in a nation where faith may be proclaimed openly, and where conscience is respected.



Scripture encourages us to receive such blessings with gratitude, while also remembering that freedom is a gift entrusted to us by God. Civic freedom is valuable – but it is not our highest good. Our deepest identity is found not in citizenship, politics, or national history – but in Christ. In Christ, freedom is never simply freedom *"from"* something – it is freedom *"for"* something.

St. Paul writes in Galatians 5:1, *"For freedom Christ has set us free."* Paul then expands upon this thought in Galatians 5:13, *"Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another."* Christian freedom is not independence from God or neighbor. Rather, because Christ has freed us from sin, death, and the power of the law to save us – we are liberated to love and serve. Martin Luther described the Christian this way, *"A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none; a Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all,*

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Join Us for Sunday Worship! In person or YouTube live. Traditional Service at 8:30 AM, Contemporary Service at 10:30 AM. Watch anytime on YouTube at www.youtube.com/@SOSLutheran **Wednesday Bible Study** in person or online via Zoom at 10 AM Zoom Meeting ID: 854 2429 7034 Passcode: 487951

**Following Jesus
and led by the Holy Spirit,
we love and serve
God and our neighbors.**

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Things you may need to know:

Newsletter Deadline: 15th of the month

Bulletin Deadline: 12:00 p.m. Wednesdays

Submissions must be in writing—email preferred.

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Attendance for May

	Trad	YT	Cont	YT*
5/3	28		32	
5/10	25	2	95	7
5/17	18	3	44	5
5/24	21	2	42	4
5/31	85	6	Fifth Sunday	

*YT YouTube number of devices online, not number of people.

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Volume V - Issue 7

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Spirit of Our Savior Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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subject to all." Through faith, we belong entirely to Christ. Through love, we belong to our neighbor.

This freedom reshapes our everyday discipleship. The Christian life is not merely believing certain truths, but living them out through our vocation – in our homes, workplaces, neighborhoods, and congregations. God sends disciples into ordinary places to reflect Christ's mercy through ordinary acts of faithfulness. Independence Day gives us an opportunity to ask: How are we using the freedoms God has entrusted to us? Discipleship means receiving God's gifts with gratitude, then using them for His purposes. We are free to worship, so let us gather faithfully. We are free to speak, so let us speak truth and mercy. We are free to serve, so let us care for the lonely, feed the hungry, encourage the discouraged, and bear witness to Jesus Christ.

We are also called to pray for our nation, its leaders, and all who work for justice, peace, and the common good. Christians participate in civic life not out of fear or obligation alone – but out of love for neighbor. Our nation celebrates liberty; the Church proclaims a greater freedom – the freedom won not on a battlefield, but at the cross and empty tomb.

As fireworks light the summer sky, may we give thanks for our country and pray for all who lead and serve within it. And may we remember that our highest citizenship is in heaven, where Christ reigns and calls us into lives of joyful discipleship here and now.

God bless our nation,
and may God deepen
our freedom in Christ
for the sake of the
world.

iGg,



Pastor Steve

Guardian Angel Update

Thank you to everyone who signed up as we now have at least two Guardian Angels for each confirmand. Just a reminder that Confirmation Camp starts July 19th. The congregation has raised over \$500 to help pay for the cost of sending these kids to camp through donations and through the loose \$1 bills in the offering plate each Sunday (April 1 – June 30).

President's Note

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we enter the month of July, our nation celebrates a remarkable milestone, the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America. For two and a half centuries, our country has stood as a place where many freedoms and opportunities have been protected and cherished. We give thanks for the blessings we enjoy in this nation, including the freedom to worship openly, gather in fellowship, serve our communities, and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

These freedoms are gifts that should never be taken for granted.

At the same time, as Christians, we are reminded that there is an even greater freedom that comes not from government or history, but from Christ Himself.

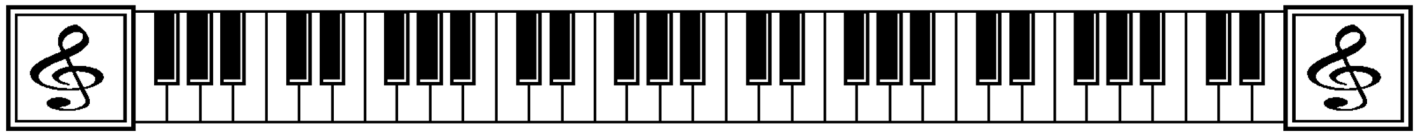
In Galatians 5:1, Paul writes: "For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."

While civic freedom is important, the freedom Jesus gives reaches far deeper into our hearts and lives. Through Christ, we are freed from sin, fear, guilt, shame, and hopelessness. We are reminded that our worth is not determined by our failures, our past mistakes, or the challenges we face. In Christ, we are forgiven, loved, redeemed, and given new life. That freedom changes us. It allows us to live not with fear, but with hope. Not with bitterness, but with grace. Not with selfishness, but with joyful service to God and our neighbors. As I look around our congregation, I see many examples of that Christ centered freedom in action. I see faithful volunteers serving quietly behind the scenes. I see members supporting one another through difficult times. I see generosity, compassion, encouragement, and love being shared throughout our church family and community. God continues to bless Spirit of Our Savior in so many ways.

As we celebrate Independence Day this month, may we give thanks both for the freedoms we enjoy as Americans and for the eternal freedom we have through Jesus Christ. May we continue to stand firm in faith, serve others with joy, and be a light to our community here in San Bernardino. Thank you all for your continued faithfulness, encouragement, and servant hearts. Our congregation may be small in number, but God continues to work through us in mighty ways.

May God bless you, your families, and our church this July and always.

Your Brother in Christ,
Rich Kamiyama
Congregation President



A Joyful Noise

Before we dive into this month's topic, we're excited to introduce a new song to our worship lineup:

Better Hands by Pat Barrett

This encouraging song reminds us that God's plans are greater than our own and that we can trust Him with every worry, burden, and uncertainty. It is a beautiful invitation to place our lives in His better hands and rest in His faithfulness.

When we gather for worship each week, it can be easy to focus on the music we hear without thinking about all the pieces that come together to create it. A worship band is much more than a group of musicians playing songs. It is a team of individuals using their gifts to help lead the congregation into worship.

A worship band is often made up of vocalists, guitarists, keyboard players, drummers, bass players, sound technicians, and media volunteers. Each role is important. Some are visible from the stage, while others work behind the scenes, but all contribute to creating an environment where people can focus on God and engage in worship.

The purpose of a worship band is not to perform. It is to lead. Our goal is not to draw attention to ourselves but to point hearts toward Christ. Every song, every note, every slide on the screen, and every sound adjustment is intended to support the congregation as we worship together.

But why do we sing in the first place? Throughout Scripture, God's people are called to sing. We sing because God is worthy of praise. We sing to celebrate His goodness, proclaim His truth, and remember His faithfulness. Music has a unique way of reaching our hearts, helping us express joy, gratitude, hope, and even sorrow when words alone seem insufficient.

When we sing together, we also encourage one another. Hearing a room full of voices united in praise reminds us that we are not alone in our faith journey.

Whether a song is a joyful celebration or a quiet prayer, it becomes an opportunity to connect with God and with one another.

Worship is something we do as a church family. The worship band may help guide the music, but the congregation is not the audience. God is. Whether you sing

loudly, quietly, or simply reflect on the lyrics, you are an important part of worship. The voices from the pews are just as valuable as the voices on the stage. Every voice matters. Every heart matters. As we gather in worship this summer, may we continue to lift our voices together, making a joyful noise to the One who is always worthy of our praise.



Happy Birthday to . . .

3 – Carol Cushing
 3 – Audree Gutierrez
 4 – Don Drost
 7 – Laura Davis
 7 – Bertie Vanettes
 9 – Becky Tarts
 14 – Tomi Ehe
 16 – William Hubbard
 17 – Joseph Beltran
 19 – Sue Clark
 20 – Hayley Sinclair
 25 – Nikki Wood
 31 – Sophia Williams

Bishop Dave Nagler of the Pacifica Synod
 will be visiting Spirit of Our Savior
 on Sunday, July 12.

We will have ONE SERVICE that Sunday at
 10 AM. Please plan accordingly.



Happy Anniversary to . . .

9 – Robert and Barbara Eisenbeisz
 10 – Brett & Karen Brossia
 29 – Robert and Margaret Nilson

STEWARDSHIP = TIME, TALENT, TREASURE, AND PRAYER

Last month's newsletter article focused on our treasures. This month let's talk talents. We all have them, some talents may be obvious, others might be hidden and are just waiting to come out and be utilized.

You may remember that several years ago we passed out a Time and Talent's Sheet where you were asked to enter information on areas of the church where you might be able to lend a hand (whether it be Altar Guild, ushering, helping with repairs, etc.). Well, we're going to do it again!

Over the next month or so you will find Time and Talent Sheets located in the Narthex and we ask that you prayerfully fill one out and return it to me directly or put it in the Treasurer's mailbox located in the hallway outside of the Church Office. Please complete and return them by Sunday, August 23rd.

If you have any questions, please contact me at treasurer@soslutheran.org or by texting me at 909-553-3070.

Treasurer's Update

Offerings Through May 31st

	Giving Year-To-Date	Budget Year-To-Date (41.7%)	Plus/(Minus)
Offering Envelopes	\$96,425.00	\$116,760.00	(\$20,335.00)
Loose Offerings	\$3,039.78	\$6,255.00	(\$3,215.22)
Electronic Offerings	\$9,990.03	\$6,255.00	\$3,735.03
TOTAL	\$109,454.81	\$129,270.00	(\$19,815.19)

We are continuing to fall further behind each month in our giving in relation to the approved budget. With summer upon us with higher electric bills combined with members going on vacation, it is important for you to keep your giving current.

At any time, if you have any questions regarding the church's finances, please contact me at treasurer@soslutheran.org or by texting me at 909-553-3070.

Peace,
Kurt Anderson

Women of the Church News (WELCA) BY MELISSA ANDERSON

Words that heal the soul were sent by a pastor friend. "The Power of a Smile – A smile is a **small light** that scatters shadows and softens the world. It **heals, inspires,** and moves like warm sun, lifting spirits, turning **darkness** toward dawn. When days feel heavy, a smile plants **quiet joy,** bridging hearts and bending us toward **kindness.** Wear yours freely, each shared spark sends **peace** rippling outward."

MARY BIBLE STUDY GROUP – We meet on the second Thursday of the month from **10:00 - 11:30 A.M. or so), and again this month we will meet at Shirley Nelson's house, 28317 Carriage Hill Drive in Highland (July 9th)**. Turn onto Surrey Lane from Highland Avenue, take the first right and the street will wind around to Shirley's house. The Summer 2026 Bible Study continues with "I Am: Worthy," Session Two: I am more than one thing by the Rev. Sara Olson-Smith. In this study participants share thoughts on "I am" We will look into how our identity encompasses values, relationships, and social location. The stories we tell about ourselves, and others help to shape who we are, how we flourish, and the way we live, love, and follow Jesus. We will explore what the Bible says about women in our readings and not what we have been taught with readings from Luke, Ruth, Esther, Matthew, and John. The study is from Gather Magazine and copies are duplicated for you, so you do not have to have the magazine to participate. Come join us for Bible Study, fellowship, a cup of coffee and a snack.

LIGHT OF THE WORLD BIBLE STUDY GROUP – **This group meets the 4th Thursday from 10:00 – 11:30 in the library (July 23rd).** If we complete the Parable of The Rich Fool from Luke 12:13-21, we will move on to study The Rich Man & Lazarus from Luke 16: 19-31. In this parable we will focus on what Jesus again told the Pharisees that spiritual wealth is more important than personal wealth. The lessons are from the book Parables: The Greatest Story Ever Told by John White. Copies of the lesson are duplicated so you do not have to have the book to come and join us for Bible Study, fellowship, and a cup of coffee.

REBECCA QUILTING GROUP – **This group meets the 1st & 3rd Thursday from 10 – 3 in the Parish Hall (July 2 & 16). With the holiday on the 4th and a fifth Thursday in July 30,** the schedule may be adjusted. Watch for more information. if you wish, bring something to share for lunch, though it is not required. This is an important fellowship where we make different kinds of quilts for those in need as social outreach that benefits a local veteran's hospital in Loma Linda and raises money for Lutheran Social Services of Southern California. Even if you have never quilted before, we invite you to join

us and learn something new to help others as there are many different tasks to be done to complete each quilt. Come and stay for as long as your schedule allows.

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY GROUP – **We meet weekly from 10:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. in the library and via Zoom.** We are continuing our study during Pentecost on the Revised Common Lectionary A, which involves reading the scripture and discussing important questions. Pastor sends out information in an e-mail at the beginning of each study week. If you are not already on the list, let him know so you can be included. Also, copies of the lesson are available on the day of the study. I invite you to join us for the study led by Pastor Steve. If you want to join via Zoom the Meeting ID is 854-2429-7034 and the Passcode is 487951 for the study.

EVENTS / SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES / INFORMATION

***San Bernardino Community Wellness Campus (formerly known as Central City Lutheran Mission or CCLM)** – They are allowing churches to become involved, which includes cooking and serving dinner. We provide bottled water. Watch for more details.

***Triennial Gathering** is July 16 – 19, 2026, in Des Moines, Iowa. The theme is "I Am Worthy" from Psalm 139:14 which says, "I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well." Viola, Kurt, and I are attending.

****Special Outreach Opportunity** – Once again I will be running in the 5K (3.1 miles) Run, Walk 'n' Roll (people in wheelchairs are pushed) at the Triennial Gathering. This is an effort to support The Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls Health Initiative. The work of this initiative continues to keep us focused on the heart of the emotional, spiritual, and physical wellbeing of women and girls. If you want more information or would like to support me, please contact me by July 10th.

***Fall Synodical Convention** this year will be November 6-7 at Good Shepherd Lutheran, 7082 Crescent Avenue, Buena Park. Pacifica Synodical Board is meeting via Zoom on June 15th so watch for more details soon.

***Check Out These On-line Sites:** Pacifica Synod Notes and Newsletter and Pacifica Synod Women of the ELCA Pacifica Partners are both available on Facebook. You may also email questions to the Pacifica WELCA President's e-mail at **welca@verizon.net**

Questions or Need More Information – Contact Melissa Anderson at 909-213-1059 or e-mail at custernut@aol.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

7/1 W	10:00 a.m.	Bible Study, L/Z
7/2 Th	10:00 a.m.	Rebecca Quilt Group, PH
7/3 F	4th of July Observed - Campus Closed	
7/4 Sa	Independence Day - Campus Closed	
7/5 Su	8:30 a.m.	Traditional Worship, S/YT
	10:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship, S/YT
	1:00 p.m.	HKBP, S/PH
7/6 M	5:15 p.m.	Young Champions Dance, PH
7/7 Tu		Mary's Table
	5:15 p.m.	Young Champions Cheer, PH
7/8 W	10:00 a.m.	Bible Study, L/Z
	4:00 p.m.	Confirmation, L
7/9 Th	10:00 a.m.	Mary Bible Study Group, SN
7/12 Su	10:00 a.m.	Blended Worship Service, S/YT
	1:00 p.m.	HKBP, S/PH
7/13 M	5:15 p.m.	Young Champions Dance, PH
7/14 Tu	5:00 p.m.	Worship & Music Committee, Z
	5:15 p.m.	Young Champions Cheer, PH
7/15 W	10:00 a.m.	Bible Study, L/Z
	4:00 p.m.	Confirmation, L
7/16 Th	10:00 a.m.	Rebecca Quilt Group, PH
7/19 Su	8:30 a.m.	Traditional Worship, S/YT
	10:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship, S/YT
	1:00 p.m.	HKBP, S/PH

7/20 M	5:15 p.m.	Young Champions Dance, PH
7/21 Tu	5:15 p.m.	Young Champions Cheer, PH
7/22 W	10:00 a.m.	Bible Study, L/Z
	4:00 p.m.	Confirmation, L
7/23 Th	10:00 a.m.	Light of the World, L
	6:00 p.m.	Around the Table Study, AK
7/26 Su	8:30 a.m.	Traditional Worship, S/YT
	10:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship, S/YT
	1:00 p.m.	HKBP, S
7/27 M	5:15 p.m.	Young Champions Dance, PH
7/28 Tu		Mary's Table
	5:15 p.m.	Young Champions Cheer, PH
7/29 W	10:00 a.m.	Bible Study, L/Z
	4:00 p.m.	Confirmation, L

AK: Amy Kamiyama's House

L: Library

PH: Parish Hall

S: Sanctuary

SN: Shirley Nelson's House

YT: YouTube

Z: Zoom

Congregational Household Prayer list for July

Week 1: James & Judi Penman; Margie Penman Edwards; Jim Petrucci; Andrea Portsche; Melba Saucier; Donald & Ardella Schmidt

Week 2: Megan Schmitz; Paul & June Schmitz; Joyce Seeger; Matthew Seeger; Rachel Shay

Week 3: George & Jasmine Simmons; Warlock & Diane Sinclair; Solar Family; David Sparks; Gaylene Swanson; Becky Tarts

Week 4: Richard Tomasso; John & Bertie Vanettes; Mary West; Amy Williams; Bishop Wood; Bev Wotnow; Herman Zietlow



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we love and serve God
and our neighbors.**

