

"From the Top"

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

Volume V, Issue 9

September 2026

Hello Church –

Over the past several weeks, the Scriptures we've encountered, both in Sunday worship and in our daily Facebook posts, have taken us to remarkably different places. We've stood in fields wondering what is wheat and what is weed; watched a few loaves and fish feed thousands; joined frightened disciples in a storm-tossed boat; and listened as a persistent Canaanite woman refused to believe that God's mercy could possibly exclude her. Now we find ourselves invited to a table where God's abundance overturns our assumptions about who belongs, and how grace works.



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Different stories. Different circumstances. Yet beneath them runs a remarkably consistent promise: God always makes the first move. That's at the heart of our Lutheran understanding of grace. We don't climb our way toward God through sufficient faith, perfect understanding, moral achievement, or religious worthiness... God comes to us.

Perhaps nowhere is that more clear than in Paul's promise that neither death nor life, neither the present nor the future, nor anything else in all creation *"will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Romans 8:38–39). Notice the direction of that promise. Paul doesn't assure us that nothing can separate us from our love for God – He promises that nothing can separate us from God's love for us.

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.**

Pastor: Rev. Steve Anderson (951) 217-1885

COUNCIL:

President: Rich Kamiyama 335-3636
Vice President: Eric Ogaz
Council Secretary: Don Drost 864-4660
Treasurer: Kurt Anderson 553-3070
Congregation Support: Laura Davis 338-2994
Education: Melissa Anderson 213-1059
Property: Dave Clifford (951) 315-3949
Worship & Music: Barb Frey 881-6069

STAFF:

Accompanist: Zabdiel Miranda
Church Secretary: Becky Tarts 496-9550
Custodian: Joe Balli 380-4018
Financial Secretary: Viola Angebrandt 887-0799
Worship Leader: Heather Ogaz 725-8473

This newsletter is printed at no charge by LPI and supported by the generosity of the vendors listed. When you are in need of services, please remember to say 'thanks' to the businesses who help publish this newsletter.

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.

Spirit of Our Savior Lutheran Church
P: (909) 882-5013 office@soslutheran.org
Office Hours: M, W, Th 8 AM—4:30 PM Friday 8 AM—Noon

Attendance for July

	Trad	YT	Cont	YT*
7/5	11	1	33	9
7/12	Bishop's Visit		71	6
7/19	19	2	27	10
7/26	20	2	36	6

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

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Editor: **Becky Tarts**

Spirit of Our Savior Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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Then Matthew gives us a picture of exactly what that looks like. Peter steps from the boat toward Jesus, takes his eye off Jesus, and begins to sink. *"Lord, save me!"* he cries. And *"Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him"* (Matthew 14:30–31). Immediately. Peter does not first strengthen his faith, overcome his fear, or prove himself worthy of rescue. Peter sinks. Peter cries out. Jesus reaches.

Again and again, this same Gospel promise appears before us. When the disciples saw a hungry crowd and scarcity, Jesus provided abundance. When the Canaanite woman stood where boundaries said she didn't belong, she trusted the mercy she recognized in Jesus. Even the crumbs would be enough. But the Gospel keeps pushing us further, because Christ hasn't merely tossed us crumbs... Christ has given us the whole feast.

Where all these images finally converge isn't with us standing outside hoping something might be left over – but seated together at Christ's table. Jesus is at the head, the feast is before us, and around that table are people we might've never expected to find sitting beside us. We bring our scarcity, and Christ brings abundance. We bring our fear, and Christ walks across the storm. We bring our doubts, failures, divisions, and carefully constructed boundaries – and Christ keeps setting a larger table. Nothing can separate us from God's love. When we sink, Christ reaches for us. And at the table of grace, a place has already been prepared. Because God always makes the first move. Peace be with you.

iGg,



Pastor Steve

Community Partner Needs Us

The San Bernardino Community Wellness Campus is in need of the following:

Disposable razors

Travel size shaving cream

Travel size men's deodorant

Toothbrushes

Travel size toothpaste

Men's socks

Please bring items to church and Sue Clark will deliver to the campus for us.

Treasurer's Report

Offering Update

2026 Giving through July 31st

	Giving YTD	Budget YTD = 58.3%	Plus/(Minus)
Offering Envelopes	\$125,440.00	\$145,750.00	(\$20,310.00)
Loose Offerings	\$3,924.78	\$8,745.00	(\$4,820.22)
Electronic Offerings	\$12,403.48	\$8,745.00	\$3,358.48
TOTAL	\$141,768.26	\$163,240.00	(\$21,471.74)

If you have been tracking previous Treasurer Reports, you will have noticed that we have continually been about \$20,000 short of the adopted budget in our giving. As summer vacations come to an end and we start to prepare for Fall, I'm asking that you review your year-to-date giving and see how it compares to what you had planned to give this year. Can you catch up or give a little more in the coming months? Please pray about it. Thank You.

Overview

Major Receipts and Expenditures in July

Major transfer of funds to the Checking Account in July included \$15,000 from the Savings Account, \$40,000 from the SOH Investment Account, \$15,000 from the Enduring Gifts Endowment Fund (part of the \$30,000 we had deposited there), and finally \$30,000 from the SOH Investment Account (to help fund pending repairs to the air conditioning systems). Major expenditures for the month included the quarterly benevolence remittance to the Synod (\$8,099.48) and two checks to High Desert Affordable Landscaping to complete the landscaping project (\$42,366.66 + \$18,480.00 = \$60,846.66).

Landscaping Project Wrap-Up

The final project cost equaled \$145,580.00. Contributions equaled \$12,489.91 (as of July 26th) with transfers of \$120,000.00 from the SOH Investment Fund and \$15,000.00 from monies invested in the Enduring Gifts Endowment Fund which were transferred to the project's designated General Fund account for a total of \$147,489.91. The balance of \$1,909.91 has been transferred back to the General Fund from the project designated fund. Two of the landscaped areas have outstanding pledge balances remaining as of the end of July.

Flood Mitigation Project

Robert Eisenbiez has been diligently working on a grading plan to mitigate the potential for flooding that we have experienced in the past. Robert briefed the Church Council at their August 9th meeting and advised that he has been working closely with staff at the City of San Bernardino to review plans and hopefully avoid some of the permitting costs as he has explained that we are basically restoring the original grades on the property which have eroded and changed over the years. With their approval, the project may be ready to start within the next month or two. The news you may not want to hear is that the projected project cost is in the neighborhood of \$250,000. This does not include any costs for irrigation or landscaping the regraded areas. Any and all donations to the Flood Mitigation Project will be appreciated and gladly accepted.

And Finally

Please email me at treasurer@soslutheran.org or text me at 909-553-3070 if you have any questions.

Respectfully Submitted
Kurt Anderson, Treasurer

Congregational Household Prayer list for September

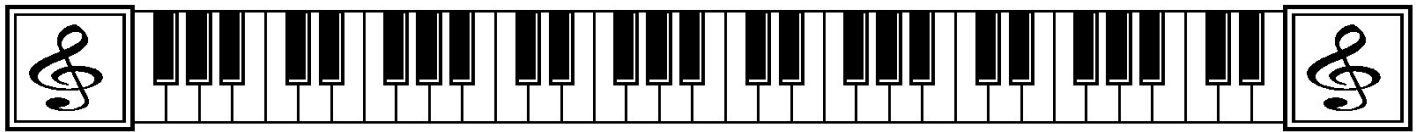
Week 1: Sue Clark; Jeanie Copeland; Corey Family; Carol Cushing; Laura Davis; Pam Demulling; Gene Diepholz; Don Drost

Week 2: Gary & Janice Eisenbeisz; Katie Eisenbeisz; Kelly Eisenbeisz; Robert & Barbara Eisenbeisz; Amy Eisenbeisz Martinez; Robert & Lois Ellinger

Week 3: Jessica Evans; Paulette Finneseth; Orquid Flores; Linda Follendorf; Barbara Frey; Chris & Rebecca Gallegos

Week 4: Patricia Gemmel; Gordon & Crystal Gertner; Jeff & Melissa Gertner Brown; Dale Gralapp; Jeremy & Rose Gutierrez





A Joyful Noise

Why Does Worship Look the Way It Does?

Have you ever stopped to think about why we worship the way we do? Why do we begin with music? Why do we hear Scripture and a message? Why do we gather around the table for Communion? And why are we sent back out into the world at the end of the service?

Whether you attend traditional or contemporary worship, the music and style may be different, but the heart and purpose of worship are the same.

We begin by **gathering together as the people of God**. We come from busy weeks filled with responsibilities, worries, distractions, celebrations, and everything else life has placed before us. In many ways, we walk through the doors filled with ourselves and the concerns of our everyday lives. Worship gives us a place to begin setting some of that aside and turning our attention toward God.

Music helps us make that transition. Whether it's a hymn accompanied by the organ or a contemporary song led by the Praise Band, music helps move our hearts and minds from the world outside toward the presence of God. As we sing and reflect on the words, we can begin to let go of some of our "me-ness" and make room for the Holy Spirit to work within us.

Then we **hear the Word of God** through Scripture and the message. We listen, learn, and allow God's Word to challenge and encourage us. Our minds begin to open to God's vision for our lives and for His Kingdom here on earth. We are reminded that there is a different way to live, one rooted in grace, love, forgiveness, hope, and service to others.

Then we come to **the Lord's Table**. In the bread and wine, we receive the gift of God's grace. We do not come because we have everything figured out or because we have earned a place at the table. We come with open hands and open hearts to receive what God freely gives.

And then something important happens. **We are sent out.**

We came in carrying the weight of the world, but we leave filled with the Word, strengthened by grace, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Worship was never meant to stay inside the church walls. What God pours into us is meant to go with us into our homes, workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, and communities.

Happy Birthday to . . .

11- Riley Brossia

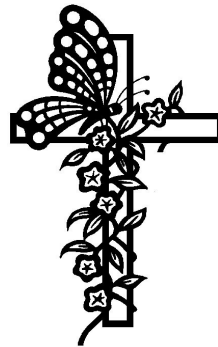
14 – Rachel Shay

18 – Sophia Beltran

23 – Chris Neighbors

27 – Garrett Assumma

28– Jim Penman



The following member
recently joined the church
triumphant:

Melba Saucier

We will see you again,
friend.

**Happy Anniversary to . . .**

4 – Mitch and Terri Assumma

18 – Tristan and Diane Sinclair

That is the beautiful rhythm of worship.

We gather. We empty. We listen. We receive. We are filled. And then we are sent.

Traditional worship and contemporary worship may express these things differently. The instruments may change. The songs may change. Some parts of the service may look or sound different. But underneath it all, the bones of worship remain the same.

We come together to encounter God, and then we go back into the world carrying His love with us.

So the next time that final song begins, remember that worship is not ending. In many ways, it is just beginning.

We have been filled. Now we are sent to make a joyful noise with the way we live.



Women of the Church News (WELCA) BY MELISSA ANDERSON

Important thoughts shared by a pastor friend. “BE SOMEONE’S SUNLIGHT. Be the quiet spark that helps a tired heart believe again in kindness, warmth, and gentle souls. Be the reminder that hope still has a place here and tomorrow can feel brighter. Be the reason someone chooses softer thoughts, holds onto dreams a little longer, and trusts beauty has not disappeared. Sometimes, simply being you is enough to brighten the world.”

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 may meet at Shirley Nelson’s house, 28317 Carriage Hill Drive in Highland (September 10th). Turn onto Surrey Lane from Highland Avenue, take the first right and the street will wind around to Shirley’s house. If the location changes due to a trip, I will let you know via the power point information at the beginning of the service or in the church bulletin.

The Fall 2026 Bible Study is written by the Rev. Tiffany Chaney and is entitled “Bold Faith on an unexpected journey.” It deals with faith that often leads us down paths we did not expect and into wilderness places, across unfamiliar lands, and through seasons of grief and hope. The three-part study takes us on a journey with Hagar, Ruth, and Mary Magdalene, women whose bold faith transformed their lives. Copies of the lesson are duplicated for you. 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 (September 24th). This study has not been able to meet the last few months, so we will complete the Parable of The Rich Fool from Luke 12:13-21, then 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. We are also looking into a new study when lessons from this book are completed.

REBECCA QUILTING GROUP – This group meets the 1st & 3rd Thursday from 10 – 3 in the Parish Hall (September 3rd & 17th). 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. 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. Watch for information about when we might not meet at the end of September, the first of October. 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)**

– Churches are becoming involved. We have been asked to save: 1) disposable razors, 2) travel size shaving crème, 3) travel size deodorant, 4) toothbrushes, 5) travel size toothpaste, and 6) men's socks. Watch for a labeled box to be placed in the narthex soon.

Laura Davis is the liaison if you have any questions. We also provide bottled water.

***Triennial Gathering** was July 16 – 19, 2026, in Des Moines, Iowa. The theme was "I Am Worthy" from Psalm 139:1 Highlights were:

- 1) Amazing music, opening and closing worship services with the Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry speaking at the closing service, Bible Study, workshops, and community with the 1,078 participants.
- 2) The Thrivent motto of Living Generously was shown by Over \$16,000 collected in gift cards going to the Iowa Food Bank, Triennial offerings of over \$42,000 with 25% of this total each going to Lutheran World Relief and the Des Moines Area Religious Council Pantry Network, and 50% to Women of the ELCA where needed most, silent auction items and store proceeds of over \$7,000 each going to Women of the ELCA where needed most, and over \$8,000 from donations collected from the Run Walk and Roll 5k which I participated in that was supporting the health initiative for Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls.

***Fall Synodical Convention** this year will be November 13th – 14th at Good Shepherd Lutheran, 7082 Crescent Avenue, Buena Park. The theme this year is "Rooted in Grace, Reaching in Love" from Colossians 2:6-7. It blends the foundational Lutheran emphasis on God's unmerited grace with an active community response. Registration begins at 2:00 P.M. on Friday and ends at 3:00 to 3:30 P.M. on Saturday. It will include Friday and Saturday workshops, Friday dinner & light entertainment, business, a silent auction, and Saturday breakfast and lunch, and a closing worship service. Pastor Jennifer Zahnow is with us for the week-end. The cost is 75.00. Our hotel is the Doubletree by Hilton in Buena Park. Registration for the hotel is on your own. Continue to watch for more details and registration information.

***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

Coffee with a Cop is Back!

You are invited to attend
Tuesday, Sep 15, from 9-10:30 AM

in the Parish Hall

We will have officers from SB Police Department onsite to update on what's going on in the neighborhood and surrounding areas as well as answer any questions you may have. Coffee and donuts will be provided.

President's Note

The Gift of Time Together

Last month, I was blessed to take a wonderful trip to the Philippines with my wife and my parents. We had an amazing time exploring this beautiful country, experiencing its culture, meeting wonderful people, and creating memories that we will treasure for years to come.

But as I look back on the trip, what I remember most is not the places we visited. It is the **time we spent together**.

Life moves quickly. Our schedules fill up, our responsibilities grow, and it can be easy to let time with the people we love get pushed aside. This trip reminded me what a blessing it is to simply slow down and enjoy being together. Sharing meals, laughing at unexpected moments, seeing new things together, and having conversations that might not happen in the busyness of everyday life are gifts that I do not want to take for granted.

It also made me think about our church family. We are blessed not only when we gather together for worship, but whenever we make time to share our lives with one another. Fellowship, conversation, service, and simply being present with each other are important parts of what makes us a congregation.

Scripture reminds us in Psalm 90:12, **“Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”** Our time is a precious gift from God. We cannot slow the clock, but we can be intentional about how we use the time God has given us and the people He has placed in our lives.

As we enter another month together, I encourage each of us to make time for the people we love, to make time for our church family, and most importantly, to make time for God. Those moments may seem ordinary at the time, but they often become the memories and blessings we treasure most.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as your congregation president, and I am especially grateful for this church family that God has given us. May we continue to encourage one another, enjoy one another's company, and make the most of the time God gives us.

God is good, and every day is a gift.

Rich Kamiyama

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5050 N. Sierra Way
San Bernardino, CA 92404

Phone: 909-882-5013
E-mail: office@soslutheran.org

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