

"From the Top"

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

Volume V, Issue 10

October 2026

Hello Church –

Hope Looks Like an Empty Board

On Sunday, September 13th, before worship began, the board shown below in the narthex looked very different. It was covered with 54 brightly colored sticky notes. Each one listed a food or hygiene item needed by the Community Wellness Campus (formerly Central City Lutheran Mission), a program our congregation has supported for many years – including more than thirty years ago when we joined with four other local congregations to help establish the original shelter.



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By the end of our second worship service, the board was completely empty. Yes, empty. Every single sticky note had been taken. Perhaps that doesn't sound remarkable until I tell you that, in previous campaigns, it has often taken three or four weeks for all those notes to disappear. This time, it took only a few hours – and that fills me with great hope.



Not simply because I expect a wonderful collection of food and hygiene supplies to arrive in the coming weeks. That will certainly be a blessing to our neighbors. What gives me even greater hope is what those 54 missing sticky notes might say about us. Acts 2:46 tells us that the earliest followers of Jesus shared life together *"with glad and generous hearts."* Their generosity wasn't an

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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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
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Worship & Music: Barb Frey 881-6069

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Accompanist: Zabdiel Miranda
Church Secretary: Becky Tarts 496-9550
Custodian: Joe Balli 380-4018
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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.

Spirit of Our Savior Lutheran Church

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Office Hours: M, W, Th 8 AM—4:30 PM Friday 8 AM—Noon

Attendance for August

	Trad	YT	Cont	YT*
8/2	19	3	40	6
8/9	19	5	38	3
8/16	24	2	35	8
8/23	22	1	48	5
8/30	one service		89	12

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

**"From the Top"
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extracurricular activity added onto their faith. It was one of the ways their faith became visible.

Jesus tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves. We have heard those words countless times – but following Jesus means more than hearing them. It means allowing those words to shape how we see the people around us – and then responding when we discover that our neighbor has a need.

54 sticky notes disappeared one Sunday morning. That won't solve homelessness. It won't eliminate hunger. It won't erase the enormous challenges faced by people rebuilding their lives after incarceration. But it is something. It is 54 small acts saying, "My neighbor matters." And perhaps that is how hope so often enters the world – not through one enormous act that changes everything, but through ordinary people whose hearts are being changed by the extraordinary grace of God.

So when I look at this empty board, I don't see emptiness at all. I see generosity. I see neighbors loving neighbors. I see Christ at work among us. And I see hope.

iGg,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve".

Pastor Steve

STEWARDSHIP = TIME, TALENT, TREASURE, AND PRAYER

Greetings Church Family & Friends, recently I've been thinking about life around church and I want to take a moment to speak up. For lack of workers the annual Summer Film Festival was canceled, I was informed today that Trunk or Treat has been canceled for the same reason. There's talk about a Fall Festival in November but again, **without workers we have no programs.**

Before I started working as the Secretary at LCOS, I was the Outreach & Evangelism person at SOH. When the two churches combined into Spirit of Our Savior I could no longer continue that calling but helped where

and when I was able. What I've noticed in recent years is a decline in volunteers to make favorite community outreach activities happen.

This is my plea to everybody: please step up.

Please prayerfully consider making time in your busy life to help with these important and fun community events. Being an active member of our faith community is what we're all called to do. I came across ELW hymn #551 "The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve" and want to share it with you. Take a moment to read over the words of this hymn and contemplate how they can inspire and direct you to live into our church moto: **Following Jesus and led by the Holy Spirit, we love and serve God and our neighbors.** Blessings, Becky Tarts

- 1 The Spirit sends us forth to serve;
we go in Jesus' name
to bring glad tidings to the poor,
God's favor to proclaim.
- 2 We go to comfort those who mourn
and set the burdened free;
where hope is dim, to share a dream
and help the blind to see.
- 3 We go to be the hands of Christ,
to scatter joy like seed
and, all our days, to cherish life,
to do the loving deed.
- 4 Then let us go to serve in peace,
the gospel to proclaim.
God's Spirit has empowered us;
we go in Jesus' name.

Treasurer's Report

Offerings Through August 31st

	Giving Year-To-Date	Budget Year-To-Date (50%)	Plus/(Minus)
Offering Envelopes	\$140,641.00	\$165,000.00	(\$24,359.00)
Loose Offerings	\$3,979.78	\$9,900.00	(\$5,920.22)
Electronic Offerings	\$13,406.85	\$9,900.00	\$3,506.85
TOTAL	\$158,027.63	\$184,800.00	(\$26,772.37)

The summer has not been kind to our budget as we have fallen further behind in our giving. These are the funds that pay the salaries, keep the lights and air conditioning on, water the lawns and gardens, and provide the programs that we enjoy. The congregation has always been very responsive to special funding requests, and we have usually exceeded expectations. I know that higher prices for gas, groceries, utilities, and other costs are putting a pinch on everyone, but they are also putting the pinch on the church. By the time you read this newsletter article September will already be behind us, so I am asking that you prayerfully consider increasing your offerings for October, November, and December to help us overcome this deficit. On the other side of the ledger, the Church Council is considering what we can do to decrease expenditures during this three-month period while still paying salaries and maintaining our campus.

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

Peace,

Kurt Anderson

Congregational Household Prayer list for October

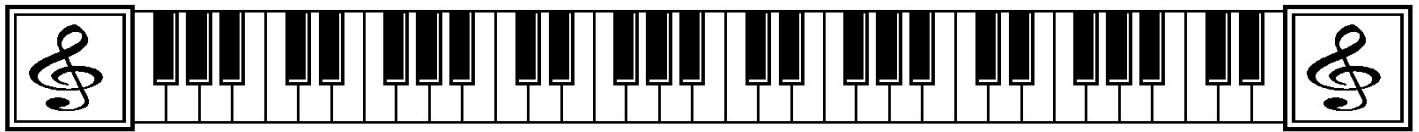
Week 1: Richard & Lisa Gutierrez; BreeAnna Hale; Rebecca Hofflund; Bill & Tracy Hubbard, John & Susan Jay

Week 2: Rod & Jenny Jones; Rich & Amy Kamiyama; Lorna Kenney; Chris & Joan Knowles

Week 3: Kathy Langer, Marian Marshall, Gigi Meltzer, Ethel Mohler; Kay Mullen

Week 4: Emelie Neher, Ed & Chris Neighbors; Shirley Nelson;
Bob & Margaret Nilson; Eric & Heather Ogaz; Benton &
Orine Paine





A Joyful Noise

What Happens Before We Sing?

When the first note is played on Sunday morning, worship may seem to simply begin. But have you ever wondered what happens before we sing?

Long before Sunday morning, preparation has already begun. Choosing music for worship is about much more than finding songs we enjoy singing. We consider the Scripture, the message, the season of the church year, and where each song fits within the service. The goal is for the music to support the message of the day and help prepare our hearts to hear what God has for us.

Once the songs are chosen, there is still plenty to do. Musicians practice their individual parts, vocalists learn harmonies, and the Praise Band comes together to rehearse. We work through tempos, keys, beginnings, endings, and transitions so that when Sunday arrives, the music can flow naturally and allow the focus to remain where it belongs: on worship.

And there are people you may not see who are just as important to the process. Lyrics need to be prepared so everyone can sing along. Sound needs to be balanced so voices and instruments work together. Technology needs to be ready. Each person, whether standing on the stage or serving behind the scenes, brings a different gift to worship.

Why put so much thought into all of this?

Because when we gather on Sunday morning, we are not preparing for a performance. We are preparing a place for **all of us to worship together**.

Our hope is that you do not have to think about the key, the tempo, the sound, the slides, or what song comes next. Instead, you can simply sing. You can listen. You can pray. You can reflect on the words. You can allow the Holy Spirit to meet you right where you are.

So the next time the first note begins, know that there has been prayer, preparation, practice, and a whole team of people working together behind it.

And then comes the best part.

We get to stop preparing and start worshipping, together.

Women of the Church News (WELCA) BY MELISSA ANDERSON

The Kindness Cloud Foundation's goal is to amplify real stories of kindness and unite people in building supportive communities. The following quote was recently shared with me. "You never know... when just a smile, opening a door, stopping to listen... and being a 'human', can make someone's day, change an attitude or the world. It starts with each of us and moves into the kindness cloud to be felt by others all over."

MARY BIBLE STUDY GROUP – We meet on the second Thursday of the month from 10:00 - 11:30 A.M. or so), and this month, due to vacations and other appointments, we are tentatively **meeting in the library at church on October 8th**. Watch for further details in the church bulletin, power point, or information on the Wittenburg Wall to confirm the exact location.

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. This month we study Ruth's story and see how God works through relationships to bring provision, dignity, and new life. 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 (October 22nd).** This month we should finish the book with the study of 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 (October 1st & 15th).** 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 local people in need 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. Watch for information on Thankoffering Sunday in November where there are opportunities for all of you to help.

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

* **Community Wellness Campus or (CWC)** – We are currently involved in a CALLED TO CARE: CAMPAIGN TO HELP SUPPORT the Community Wellness Campus (CWC). The current needs are: 1) #10 cans of corn, green beans, and refried beans, 2) men's deodorant, 3) men's shaving crème, 4) toothpaste, 5) toothbrushes, 6) combs, and 7) disposable razors. Bring these items to church and place them on the card table in the narthex. The items will be taken to the wellness campus for us. Any questions ask Laura Davis or Sue Clark. We also provide bottled water.

* **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 3:30 P.M. on Saturday. It will include Friday and Saturday hands on workshops, Friday dinner & light entertainment, business, a silent auction, and Saturday breakfast and lunch, Bible Study, 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 at 7000 Beach Blvd. in Buena Park, which is just over two miles from the church down Beach Blvd. then a turn onto Crescent. Registration for the hotel is on your own. Registration forms will be available soon on the Wittenburg Wall.

We will also have guest speakers from the groups we are supporting with our Love Gifts. Rosemary Neilsen, Buena Park Outreach for the Homeless. We are collecting grey or dark colored socks. Cecilia Hinojosa, community liaison for the Centralia School District. We are collecting new or gently used children's books from the Pre - K to 6th grade level. Thrivent Action Grants cover the cost of hygiene kits.

* **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

Planting Seeds

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Lately, I have been thinking about something very simple that I believe is important for all of us to remember: **as Christians, we are called to plant seeds.**

Sometimes I think we put too much pressure on ourselves when it comes to sharing our faith. We worry that we won't know the right words to say. We may feel like we need to know the Bible well enough to answer every question. Or perhaps we think that if we invite someone to church and they say "no," somehow, we have failed.

But that isn't what God asks of us.

Our job is to plant the seed. God takes care of the growth.

Every one of us has people in our lives who may not know Christ, who may have drifted away from church, or who may simply be going through life without realizing how much they need Him. They are our family members, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and sometimes even people we meet only briefly.

We never really know what is going on inside another person's heart.

Someone may not be ready to hear about faith today. They may not be ready to accept an invitation to church. They may smile and politely change the subject. And it can be easy for us to think, "*Well, I tried.*"

But perhaps something much more important happened. **A seed was planted.**

Think about a seed in the ground. After it is planted, we don't stand over it expecting a flower the next morning. For a while, we may see absolutely nothing. But beneath the surface, something can be happening. Then, when the conditions are right, that little seed begins to grow.

I believe God often works in people's lives the same way.

Something you say to someone today may come back to them months—or even years—from now. The person who turns down your invitation to church today may remember it when life becomes difficult. An act of kindness may cause someone to wonder why your faith seems to make a difference in the way you treat people. A simple "*I'm praying for you*" may mean far more to someone than we ever realize.

And sometimes we won't be the person who gets to see the result.

Maybe we plant the seed and someone else waters it years later. Maybe another Christian comes into that person's life at exactly the right moment. We may never know the role our small act played.

Paul reminds us:

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow."

I love that verse because it takes the pressure off of us. God doesn't ask us to change someone's heart. **That's His work.** He simply asks us to be faithful and willing.

(Continued on page 10)

So I would like to challenge each of us at Spirit of Our Savior this month to think about **one person**. Who has God placed in your life who might need a seed planted?

Maybe it is someone you have been meaning to invite to worship. Maybe it is someone who needs encouragement. Maybe it is a friend who is struggling. You don't need to preach a sermon to them. You don't need to have all the answers.

Happy Birthday to . . .

2 – Kassidy Kamiyama

5 - Gilbert Beltran

5 – June Schmitz

7 – Ed Neighbors

10 – Matthew Beltran

10 – Jocelyn “Jojo” Rodriguez

14 – Melissa Anderson

15 – Jean Copeland

18 - Kiran Arter

18 – Kelly Eisenbeisz

19 – Melissa Gertner-Brown

Invite them.

Encourage them.

Pray for them.

Show them kindness.

Tell them why your faith matters to you.

And then trust God with the rest.

One of the wonderful things about being part of a church family is that **we are planting seeds together**.

Every time we welcome someone who walks through our doors, serve someone in need, pray for someone who is hurting, or simply show the love of Christ in our community, another seed is planted.

Some will grow quickly. Others may remain beneath the surface for a long time. That's okay.

We plant. Others may water. God gives the growth.

Imagine what could happen if every one of us at Spirit of Our Savior intentionally planted just one seed this month.

We may never see every result, but God does.

And in His perfect timing, a small seed can become something beautiful.

20 – Marlene Balli

20 - Justin Corey

20 – Rebecca Gallegos

20 – Tristan Sinclair

21– Abigail Cervantes

26 - Jeff Brown

Happy Anniversary to . . .

1 – Amy & Dorian Martinez

4 – Sue and Dave Clark

5 - Jeff and Melissa Brown

6 – Kiran & Melissa Arter

19 – George & Jasmine Simmons

26 – Christina & Adrian Pedroza

In Christ,
Rich Kamiyama
Congregation President



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