
CONNECTION

Our Savior Lutheran Church

Mesquite, TX

July 2026

“Rooting for the Yankees is like Rooting for US Steel”

-Roger Kahn in “The Boys of Summer”

With apologies to Yankee fans, the above quote describes the 1920s thru 1950s New York Yankee teams that held a steel grip over baseball. They lorded it over the lowly Washington Senators and exerted their will over the cellar-dwelling Kansas City Athletics. The Yankees were the most powerful, the most wealthy, the most dominant; and, from the viewpoint of their neighbor Brooklyn Dodgers, the most hated.

The Brooklyn Dodgers were a blue collar, middle-class team that appealed to common, everyday folk. The Yankees were elite, buttoned-down and corporate—churning out champion after champion with ruthless efficiency. The Yankees were as endearing as the conveyer belts of US Steel. Brooklyn fans, meanwhile, were struggling immigrants that rode and dodged the street trolleys on their way to work.

Times have changed, of course. US Steel is now owned by the Japanese, and the Yankees are suffering through their longest World Series drought in history. Meanwhile, the once blue collar Brooklynites moved to the glamor of Hollywood seven decades ago, touting overflowing wealth and the highest team salary of any team in baseball.

Baseball isn’t the same anymore ... and neither is the United States of America. The United States was once a country of immigrants whose Statue of Liberty proudly stood as a symbol of a nation. The United States was built on accepting the world’s poor and huddled masses. The United States was a bustling bundle of humanity, teeming with people dodging trolleys, harvesting wheat, baking bread, navigating rivers, scaling mountains, building schools and hospitals, in a spirit as American as baseball and apple pie.

The United States today, like US Steel of yesterday, has become an empire that flaunts its wealth, flexes its power, and forces its dominance over the poor and huddled masses. We are still a nation that works hard—but while the vast majority works hard to make ends meet, our leaders work hard to hold on to their wealth, to hide any uncomfortable history, to cover up atrocities like slavery and native American annihilation.

We work hard to deny truth.

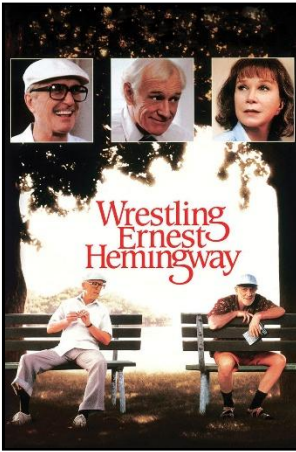
Today, the Statue of Liberty casts a ghost-like shadow over New York harbor.

The flame is extinguished, and the immigrant boats are no more. We are US Steel.

Once Americans came from the four corners of the world, defining our country, widening its welcome, and shaping its identity. That identity and spirit have all but vanished. Our leaders insist on a new identity. “We are the hottest country” that is “back to greatness” by “closing our borders”, insulting our allies, and bullying any lowly and cellar-dwelling nations. We brazenly boast that we are the most powerful, the most wealthy, the most dominant ... but we are not the Brooklyn Dodgers anymore.

Lest these words seem gloomy, pessimistic, and even unpatriotic, they are not intended to leave out the promise of redemption. Even the New York Yankees of the 50s had beloved characters: the humor of Moose Skowron, the humility of Roger Maris, and the honesty of Yogi Berra. Yankee greatness, mirrored in the supreme talent of Mickey Mantle, was humanized by the lovability of those characters.

The United States desperately needs that kind of leadership now: humor, humility, honesty ... compassion, sacrifice, servanthood ... even warmth. Make no mistake. Being the most powerful, wealthy, and dominant can be a source of pride, I suppose, but not if they are joined to another American superlative: arrogance. For the world is listening and watching as our words and actions continue to say “arrogance.” And everything they hear and everything they see is marked by arrogance. It is not too late to light the flame again, to exhibit warmth and welcome again, and to start dodging trolleys again. After all, as the immortal Yogi Berra once said, “it’s not over ‘til it’s over.” (Paraphrased version!)



FLIX FOR FAITH

Round 2 of Robert Duvall's summer movie tour continues this July 10th at 6:30pm. The themes will be similar but the movie's completely different as two old men wrestle with growing old and growing closer together in friendship. Once again, "Wrestling Ernest Hemingway" will help us understand the obstacles and the joys of aging so that when we get old, we'll have some experience! (Just kidding) We'll start with a snack and show the movie at about 6:45pm. We'll end with a little discussion relating cinema to our faith... Flix for Faith! Sign up to give us a rough head count. (Is there a Lonesome Dove marathon later this summer? We promise not to show any more bad Pope movies!) There will be lots of humor and pathos in the movie and lots of laughter and fellowship in our group. Come join us!

BAPTISMAL FONT VICTIMIZED BY VANDALISM

Algae was discovered growing in the baptismal font Sunday morning, alongside a box cutter that was left in the back pew. The water had turned an eerie shade of green, while mysterious flecks of blue dotted the surface. We've alerted the police who are conducting 24-hour surveillance. The National Guard has been notified to patrol the church grounds, and soon we'll have Air Force flyovers to monitor any malicious activity.

The Church Council is on top of the situation, immediately hiring a firm to fix the font. Council president Thane Katz explained the process: "It was a no-bid contract with Pastor Schelter's neighbor, but he assures us of this company's competency. 'Holy Water Enterprises' has expertise in exorcism and snake handling. When completed, our baptismal waters should be restored to the pristine levels of purity found in the Jordan River."

Baptismal font vandalism is a serious violation of ecclesiastical etiquette and is punishable by a minimum of 10 years in purgatory. Please report any suspicious looking characters—including canines—who may be loitering in the narthex.

Many Thanks

A heartfelt thanks to everyone who volunteered at Austin Street Center. Your time, compassion, and dedication made a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. We are truly grateful for your support.

This ministry continues throughout the year on the last Sundays of March, June, September, and December. Jaime Nivens involved us in this ministry and it has reaped many rewards for those who help.



"HEY! I WAS WATCHING THAT EXERCISE SHOW!"

Green is "In" at Our Savior Lutheran Church

Thanks to all who wore green last Sunday, June 28th. (Did I fail to mention it was the feast day for Saint Kermit?) Speaking of green, our Community Garden is lush and growing. Many thanks to Julie Williams and a whole host of gardeners, including Carolina Flanigan, David Anderson, Clyde and Laure Millican, Charolotte Greguski, Mark Crawford, and others.

Speaking of green houses, Ruth Montgomery cleaned out our green house after it had also been used as a halfway house! Job well done, Ruth, and all of the characters who make green the "in" color at Our Savior Lutheran Church.





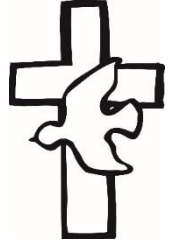
July 2026 Birthdays

Date	Name
1	Laura Stidd
2	Ashlee Morton
3	Connie Skyles
6	Ezra Ortiz-Aguirre
	Travis Salvato
9	Gerald Hare
11	Ella Ranta
12	Becky Williams
	Shawna Zubieta
17	Gabriel Ramirez
18	Simon Belz
	Adama Ndomahina
	Floyd Neeriemer
	Skip Rickmeyer
	Julia Chavez
	Steve Pickett
	Elliot Baker
	Mitchell Baker
	Lisa White
	Edward Fretheim
	Tania Helm
	Ken Hester
	Mackenzie Reggia
	Lindsey Bennett



Baptism Birthdays

Date	Name
5	Brynna Vannatta
25	Julia Chavez
	Kyle Furr
	Michael Furr
26	Denise Bartosh
29	Carson Williams
	Andrew Williams



Worship Leaders for July:

Worship Assistant: Lois Schelter

Reader: Michael Lubben

Ushers: Cheri Allred & Bonnie Johnston

Greeters: Mike & Debbie Zimmermann

Altar Guild: Carolina Flanigan

Bundling Birthdays on July 5th

We're celebrating July birthdays for those of all ages, even 250-year-old Uncle Sam after worship on July 5th. By combining America's 250th birthday with our monthly birthday celebration, we'll have fireworks of food including cake and ice cream! With all the festivities on July 4th, join us after worship on July 5th for a real birthday celebration.

School's Out for Summer...

But Classes are in for Lutheran 101



Don't worry! Lutheran 101 isn't school. It's an adventure in learning more about our faith and the good news of God's love. It's also a great way to meet other people at Our Savior Lutheran Church and find a community time for conversation and support. There are no tests, no grades, no papers, and no homework, but we'll talk about the origins of the Bible, the history of the Lutheran church, sin and grace, baptism and holy communion, worship and whatever else our group wants to discuss. Our group usually comes from a variety of denominational backgrounds so it's always fun to share our experiences in different churches and understand how the body of Christ is bigger than Our Savior Lutheran Church, Lutherans, and the thousands of denominations around the world.

Although we usually don't start in the summer, let's plan on beginning in mid-to-late July. We'll tentatively plan on our first meeting on July 23rd at 7pm. The definite start date and time will be determined by the group. Sign up if you're interested and we'll start the school bells ringing for Lutheran 101. (We plan on meeting about 6 times, one evening a week. If summer schedules don't work for this month, we'll try to start Lutheran 101 when school does officially start in August.) Call the office if you have any questions—972-226-0510.

Wolf is a Handy Person to Have Around



Wolf Hartman is not widely known because she works most Sundays, but she is well worth getting to know because she can clean, fix, repair, and help with a wide variety of tasks. If you have any jobs that fit that category, give the church office a call and we'll relay your information to Wolf.

July 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<u>Each Sunday</u> 10:00am Worship Service		9:30am Mother's Day Out	1 10:30am Sages for All Ages	2 9:30am Mother's Day Out	3	4 <i>Independence Day</i>
5 11:15am July Birthdays Celebration	6 6:30pm Table Talk	7 9:30am Mother's Day Out	8 10:30am Sages for All Ages	9 9:30am Mother's Day Out	10 6:30pm "Flix for Faith" <i>Wrestling Ernest Hemingway</i>	11
12 11:30pm Council Meeting	13 6:30pm Table Talk	14 9:30am Mother's Day Out 10:30am Waterford Service	15 10:30am Sages for All Ages	16 9:30am Mother's Day Out	17	18
19	20 6:30pm Table Talk	21 9:30am Mother's Day Out	22 10:30am Sages for All Ages	23 9:30am Mother's Day Out 7:00pm Lutheran 101 (Tentative)	24	25
26	27 6:30pm Table Talk	28 9:30am Mother's Day Out	29 10:30am Sages for All Ages	30 9:30am Mother's Day Out 7:00pm Lutheran 101 (Tentative)	31	

