
CONNECTION

Our Savior Lutheran Church

Mesquite, TX

August 2026

Thank Goodness It's Over

That's how it felt as the sun dawned on July 5, 2026.

It's hard to say that about a birthday party--especially a 250th Birthday Party—but thank goodness it's over. The cake was stale, the frosting was sour, the ice cream had melted (literally), and the candles sputtered a final faint glimmer as the last of the fireworks flickered into the darkness of night. Now, as the grand 250th birthday month of July melts into the intense heat of August, thank goodness it's over.

I looked forward to the “semiquincentennial”, but that was before it was hijacked. It was wrested away from Congress and the Smithsonian; and, by executive order, it was turned into a grandiose glorification of one man—one man's face on a commemorative coin, one man's face on a proposed \$250 bill, one man's face on the United States Passport, one man's name on an Arch, and a Gold Card, and a watch and a Bible, and a shoe, and a cellphone, and a ‘pharmacy’, and a children's account, and a national Performing Arts Center, and a United States Institute of Peace, and an airport, and a highway, and a golf course, and a train station, and a river in Morocco (or so he claims)! America250 may as well as been called Trumpfest250 because we were soon talking more about green algae and Roman gladiators on the White House Lawn than remembering the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

It became a spectacle more than a celebration ... a burial more than a birthday ... because sometimes it feels like America has grown old ... and grumpy and grouchy and greedy. Sure, we had more fireworks and flyovers than ever before, but there was little unity and perhaps even less joy. In the middle of July 4th was a war we had no business starting, a ballroom we had no business building, and immigrants we had no business deporting. It was over-priced, over-hyped, and over the top ... and within a few days we had shootings in the streets of Maine and Houston.

Maybe missing out on that long-awaited birthday celebration isn't all that big a deal. After all, God, who is eternal, can't be big on birthdays, right? Was does a 50th much less a 250th Anniversary mean when measured against eternity? For God, each and every day must seem a birthday. Each day is a new beginning and a fresh start. Each day, we are washed clean in our baptisms and given a new birth. Each day, God wakes us up and declares, “Happy Birthday!”

And that's what I wish for our country ... that we might wake up to a new day ... that we might be washed clean of our corruption, our arrogance, our racism, our divisions ... and that we might celebrate a declaration of freedom that was written on a cross ... and sealed in a tomb ... and resurrected in the morning when the angels shouted “Happy Birthday” to the world ... and to the United States of America ... and to you.

After all, who needs the fanfare of fireworks and flyovers flashing our names across every tower and trinket when God's name is written on our hearts every day? Thank goodness God's new birthday is never over.

—P. Stelten

School's Out for Summer...

But Classes are in for Lutheran 101

We usually don't start Lutheran 101 in the summer, but we have a group that is ready to go. Our first meeting is July 30th at 7pm. Further dates and times will be determined by the group at our July 30 meeting. Sign up if you're interested and we'll start the school bells ringing for Lutheran 101. Call the office if you have any questions—972-226-0510.



Fireworks for the 2nd SPARKLE SUNDAY

Fourth of July fireworks in Washington D.C. purported to be the largest fireworks show in world history... but we're planning to outdo them August 2nd. It's Sparkle Sunday at Our Savior Lutheran Church! Wear anything that sparkles, shines, glistens, or glows and we'll light up our worship with the fireworks of faith in Christ. The Gospel lesson reminds us that our faith is a treasure—a treasure chest of jewels and a pearl of great price. That means jewelry might add to our fireworks as well: rhinestones, diamonds, gold, silver, costume jewelry, fancy necklaces, gaudy rings, or whatever bling you've got. It doesn't have to be expensive, just flashy like fireworks as we celebrate the declaration of freedom and independence that Jesus gave us at the world's first and greatest firework show: the treasure chest of love that was open to us on the cross. Join us for Sparkle Sunday August 2nd at 10am!



Summer Film Festival

Robert Duvall Au Naturele

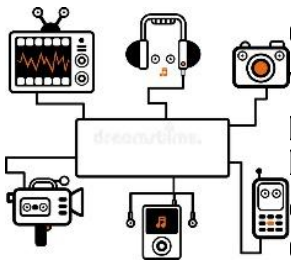
Don't get too excited. Robert Duvall will be fully clothed and starring as a villain in "The Natural." That will be the movie for our Friday Flix for Faith, August 7th at 6:30pm. "The Natural" won in a contest of three Robert Duvall movies on redemption: the redemption of a baseball player, the redemption of a country western singer, and the redemption of a preacher. Who knows? Maybe we'll end up showing all three Robert Duvall movies in the coming weeks. Keep posted.

Back-to-School Backpacks—August 9th

A new school year signals a fresh start, a new beginning of learning and growth. New teachers, new classrooms, new friends... new backpacks! Backpacks symbolize the excitement and energy of back-to-school, so we're having a "Blessing of the Backpacks" in worship, August 9th. Kids, bring your backpacks before your first day of school. We'll bring them forward for the children's dialog and say a prayer of blessing on them—and you! May God bless teachers and students alike—and their backpacks—as school begins anew.



Do You Hear What I Hear?



Our new sound system has vastly improved the quality of our Sunday morning worship. It's still new but we're working out the kinks so that you can hear and participate more fully in our praise of God. A special fund has been set up to help defray the expenses. Any contribution is appreciated, just earmark your offering "A/V Fund." (Special thanks to the extra efforts from Christopher Cannon and Eric Nivens!)

Join us Sunday, August 16th, to celebrate August birthdays with cake and ice cream!



BIRTHDAYS

Date	Name		
6	Shirleen Reese		
7	Austin Morton	20	Mark Fretheim
10	Jana Mayfield		Jeremy Richardson
13	Jon Cook	25	Mark Grafing
14	Randy Peterson	31	Richard Mastin
17	Diana Bruneau		John Schelter
	Renata del-Busto		
19	Sophie DeShazo		
	Jake Lippincott		
	George Morton		

AUGUST

BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

Date	Name
9	Sonja Conoly
12	Cynthia Lubben
25	Jordan Grafing
31	Laura Stidd



WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Date		Years
10	Michael & Sonja Conoly	35

Worship Leaders for August:

Worship Assistant: Steve Pickett Reader: Eleanor Williamson
 Usher: Thane Katz & Lois Schelter Greeter: Henry & Baerbel Williams Altar Guild: Amy Ismail



House Sharing with Cheri



Cheri Allred is opening up her home for a housemate. \$1400 a month would include 2 bedrooms, a full bathroom, and would cover all utilities. Kitchen and living spaces would be shared... along with Cheri's wonderful companion puppy dogs. Her home is located in South Garland near Lakeview Centennial High School, between Rowlett and Mesquite. Address any inquiries to 512-773-4644 or contact Cheri if you know someone who might be interested.

IS MOTHER NATURE CALLING US TO A FALL CAMPOUT?

For over 20 years, Our Savior Lutheran Church had two special weekends in the spring and fall to celebrate the beauty of nature and the wonder of creation. Our campouts included potluck brunches, hiking through the woods, outdoor worship by the lake, and late-night fireside chats. We have not yet determined a time or place because we want to see if there's enough interest to revive our late-October/early-November campout tradition. We would find a state park or private campsite that would include air-conditioned cabins for the refined as well as shelters/tent sites for the rugged. Sign up if you are interested and we just might go camping this fall—or next spring!



Ericka on Education



Table Talk for Monday, August 3 at 6:30pm, will host a special guest who is running for the State Board of Education, District 9. Her name is Ericka Ledferd and she will join our dialog and help educate us about making a difference in classrooms around Texas. We'll have the usual wide-open discussion so we'll be talking about a lot more than education, as usual, but consider welcoming Ericka and supporting her with a good turnout. (Our format will not change much and we'll continue reflecting on what's going on in our country and our world. Your voice and your presence are important to make Table Talk a great way to learn and grow and make a difference for justice and peace and truth.)

The Gift of Groceries Some say "groceries" is a new word, but there's nothing new about hunger. So far this summer your gifts of food and garden produce have added up to 217 pounds. In a world of trillionaires and trillion dollar budgets, that might not sound like much, but it is a gift that matters and makes a difference. Thank you for your gift of "groceries!"



August 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<u>Each Sunday</u> 10:00am Worship Service	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	31	1
2 <i>Sparkle Sunday</i>	3 6:30pm Table Talk	4	5 10:30am Sages for All Ages	6 10:30am NED Deanery Meeting 7:00pm Lutheran 101	7 6:30pm Flix for Faith <i>"The Natural"</i>	8
9 <i>Blessing of the Backpacks</i>	10 6:30pm Table Talk 7:00pm Boy Scouts	11 9:30am Mother's Day Out 10:30am Communion at The Waterford	12 10:30am Sages for All Ages	13 9:30am Mother's Day Out 7:00pm Cub Scouts 7:00pm Lutheran 101	14	15
16	17 6:30pm Table Talk 7:00pm Boy Scouts	18 9:30am Mother's Day Out	19 10:30am Sages for All Ages	20 9:30am Mother's Day Out 7:00pm Cub Scouts 7:00pm Lutheran 101	21	22
23	24 6:30pm Table Talk 7:00pm Boy Scouts	25 9:30am Mother's Day Out	26 10:30am Sages for All Ages	27 9:30am Mother's Day Out 7:00pm Cub Scouts 7:00pm Lutheran 101	28	
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