
CONNECTION

Our Savior Lutheran Church

Mesquite, TX

September 2026

Groundhog Day in August

If Punxsutawney Phil lived in Texas, he'd climb right back in his air-conditioned bunker once he sniffed the blast furnace that is August. We wouldn't see him again until six weeks later in October when it would be safe to venture out again. Until then, each summer day is a mirror-image of the next, repeating over and over the relentless, ruthless, scorching heat.

For now, October seems a long way off. The heat dome that blankets our skies refuses to yield. It seems impenetrable. Strong as its stranglehold on the temperatures is, though, it is not immovable. That is the lesson of meteorology, of history, of life. Above all, it is the lesson of faith. Sooner or later, the stifling grip of the heatwave succumbs to the unwavering waves of winter winds. The seasons turn.

The heat may be strong. But the changing seasons are stronger.

Hate can be as unrelenting as heat. Hate grips the human heart and will not let go. Again and again, day after day, year after year, hate's repetitive refrain puts a stranglehold on the world, sending the weak ones, the vulnerable ones back into hiding. Just when it seems that hate has run its course, when it seems that hate has spoken its last, it comes back, like a Halloween horror flick ... like the specter of Freddie Kreuger.

At long last, Nazism seemed forever buried in its bunker, only to return in neo-Nazi masses.

Slavery was pronounced dead, only to be renamed Jim Crow.

Civil Rights had supposedly conquered segregation only to see the DEI purge.

Voting rights were assured only to be gerrymandered out of existence by unscrupulous politicians.

The KKK went underground only to emerge as the Proud Boys.

Lynching was outlawed until it was replaced by police and ICE brutality.

Joseph McCarthy and George Wallace are still with us ... they've only changed names.

And so history repeats itself. It's déjà vu all over again. It's groundhog day in August.

The war in Ukraine drones on, the slaughter in Gaza is still called a ceasefire, the Strait of Hormuz remains closed, the Kennedy Center is still trying to be claim another false name, the Ballroom is still being built, the insane search for reflecting pool vandals continues, the January 6th insurrectionists are still touted as patriots, retribution is still demanded for political foes, and the Epstein files remain a hidden secret.

Over and over. Again and again. Day after day the burning sun bleaches the earth with hate as the drought of lies repeats its endless cycle. It makes you want to climb back in the air-conditioned bunker with Punxsutawney Phil. But that would be the worst mistake, for that is a fatal posture to take in the face of hatred.

While hatred is strong, hope is stronger.

Hope calls us to climb out of the bunkers and face the hate. Faith calls us to stick out our necks and brave the heat. Love calls us to realize that hate—by whatever name or shape or form it morphs into—cannot endure. Just as Jesus emerged from the tomb to confront the icy coldness of winter and the withering heat of summer, we must emerge from our bunkers--for the seasons are changing. Rain is on the horizon brought by the cool, refreshing winds of New Life.

God's Creatures Great and Small



Lions and tigers and bears, oh my! Dogs and cats and fish, for sure. Pigs and owls and ducks, of course. Armadillos and longhorns and horn toads, in Texas. That's right, we're celebrating God's creatures throughout September leading up the October 4th Pet Blessing. Our display case will feature various creatures of our God and King, and we'd like you to share your collection of a particular animal that catches your fancy. Some people collect owls or horses or dogs or cats or songbirds or turtles or hedgehogs, oh my! Share your collection with us and we'll schedule a time to put it in the display case. This whole theme is inspired by a wonderful television show called '*All Creatures Great and Small*'... but before there were any television shows God put on the greatest show of all in the Garden of Eden where God's creatures—great and small—started a parade that is still going on today. To top it off, we'll highlight one of the most charming and intelligent creatures of all—the pig—by showing the movie '*Babe*' on September 18th at 6:30pm. Let's get caught up in the joy and wonder of God's creatures great and small throughout this month—and for many months to come!



WHAT WAS MARTIN LUTHER DOING 500 YEARS AGO? MUSIC, OF COURSE!

The furor over Martin Luther's excommunication and trial at Worms was over. Luther had been kidnapped to save his life, but now he was back in Wittenberg. He could have taken time off and relaxed a bit, but instead he continued his life of reform. He set off a series of theological and social changes that would affect church and state, economies and education, art and philosophy.

Above all, Luther wrote. He wrote expansive treatises on the Christian faith ... and he wrote music. Hymns poured out of Luther's pen and touched the hearts of his parishioners. Luther would bring about a glorious revival of music and congregational singing in church that would resound around the world for centuries to come.

That revival is happening at Our Savior Lutheran Church this fall! Starting September 6, Cliff Varnon will be our organist/music director. After the Cannon family served the long interim so faithfully and well, the organ will crank up again... and soon the choir along with it!

We often take music in worship for granted, but Martin Luther had to struggle to restore instruments and congregational singing in worship.

One of Luther's adversaries ranted against those changes: "Relegate organs, trumpets, and flutes to the theater," he wrote. "The lascivious notes of the organ awaken thoughts of the world—not of Christ."

Thank goodness Luther stood against such stifling impulses, for, under Luther, music flourished. 500 years later we are reaping the benefits of the seeds Luther sowed and the notes Luther penned to help us make a glad sound unto the Lord every Sunday!

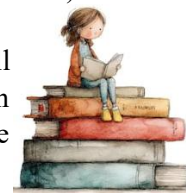
Welcome, Cliff Varnon, to Our Savior Lutheran Church ... to share the gift of music and the joyful sound of faith that marks our worship. Martin Luther would surely approve!

BEAT THE HEAT WITH A BOOK

It's too hot to do anything outdoors, and even indoor labor is uncomfortable. So why not wait out this summer heat wave with a good book. Our Savior Lutheran Church will serve as a no-cost library for your reading pleasure!

We are starting a "little library" of donated books, magazine, audio CDs, and DVDs. Anyone can donate books, and anyone is free to take books. Get started by scanning your bookshelves (or boxes!) for books that haven't been touched in years and are only taking up space. Bring them to church for a "book deposit" in the quad room (main education room). Loretta Cannon's idea to start a little library is coming to fruition with the library expertise of Shirleen Reese.

Our "little library" may not yet rival the great libraries of Alexandria and Constantinople, but it's a start. We'll accept books for all ages. Who knows? By the time one of us finishes reading "War and Peace," the war in Iran might be over and we might be welcoming winter snow outside! But since the war rages on and the scorching heat continues, why not read a book? (Bookshelves needed, as well.)



Helping the Homeless at Austin Street Shelter

SEPTEMBER 27, 2026



Join us September 27th as we carpool to Austin Street Shelter to help serve food. We will leave church at about **6:00am** and should be back in time for church. *We are looking for volunteers as well as contributions of cutlery packets, 9 oz. plastic cups, and 12 oz. plastic cups.* If you would like to help in-person or with a donation of paper goods, call the office, talk with Jamie Nivens, or simply sign up in the centrum.

Birthdays

Date	Name
1	Christopher Mayfield
4	Kathy Bohon
	Patricia Rasmussen
5	Bob Clayton
8	Michael Conoly
	Bob Hardi
10	Donna Salvato
11	Julie Williams
12	Loretta Cannon
14	Paula Hester
18	Amelia Holmes
	Angelita Fretheim
21	Matthew McCabe
23	Landon Hyatt
	Mel Vahlenkamp
24	Donna Brashear
29	Mark Pendergrast



September



Wedding anniversaries

Date		Years
4	Kirk & Tania Helm	22
9	Stephen & Irene Moore	65
17	Mitchell & Margaret Baker	4
	Travis & Donna Salvato	53
22	Bob & Glenda Hardi	47
26	James & Denise Bartosh	45
26	Chip & Loretta Cannon	42

Baptism Birthdays

Date	Name
2	Simon Belz
11	Tania Helm
	Eleanor Williamson
14	John Schelter
25	Mitchell Baker
	Steve Pickett



Worship Leaders for September:

Worship Assistant: Chip Cannon Reader: Shirleen Reese
 Ushers: Wendie & Miguel Meza Greeters: Thane Katz & Mary Frances Wegehof
 Altar Guild: Carolina Flanigan



BLESSING OF THE PETS

Sunday, October 4, 4:30 pm

Come Rover, Come Fluffy: Come one and all to the Blessing of our Pets!

This is an all animal, all age event for our church and our community! Bring dogs, cats, gerbils, rabbits, fish, birds, or any pet small enough to transport to church. Caution! We will have NOT ONE lost pet! Please make sure your pet is appropriately restrained by leash, carrier, or cage. After the pet blessing, we will bless each other with fellowship and food—chips, drinks, veggie trays, and hot dogs. There will also be special treats for the pets!

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!



Join us Sunday, September 13th, to celebrate September birthdays with cake and ice cream!



September 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Each Sunday 10:00am Worship Service		1 9:30am Mother's Day Out	2 10:30am Sages for All Ages	3 9:30am Mother's Day Out 10:30am NED Deanery 7:00pm Lutheran 101	4	5
6	7 <i>Labor Day</i>	8 9:30am Mother's Day Out 10:30am Communion at The Waterford	9 10:30am Sages for All Ages	10 9:30am Mother's Day Out 7:00pm Lutheran 101 7:00 Cub Scouts	11	12
13 11:15am September Birthdays Celebration 11:30am Council Meeting	14 6:30pm Table Talk 7:00 Boy Scouts	15 9:30am Mother's Day Out	16 10:30am Sages for All Ages	17 9:30am Mother's Day Out 7:00 Cub Scouts	18 6:30pm Flix For Faith 'Babe'	19
20	21 6:30pm Table Talk 7:00 Boy Scouts	22 9:30am Mother's Day Out	23 10:30am Sages for All Ages	24 9:30am Mother's Day Out 7:00 Cub Scouts	25	26
27 6:00am Austin Street Shelter	28 6:30pm Table Talk 7:00 Boy Scouts	29 9:30am Mother's Day Out	30 10:30am Sages for All Ages			

