The Courier

Volume 90 ~ Number 7 ~ July & August 2026

Idolatry

So if I were to ask you what are your idols, what would you say? First of all, let's be honest and admit that there are idols to be had in our lives. According to the Bible an idol is anything that we put ahead of or in front of our love of God. I'll be honest and admit that sometimes my idols look like fear of lack of income, vanity, and even some influencers that fall under the Christian moniker but are NOT Him.

How many times do we turn to friends, family, or others for guidance, and help instead of turning to the one true Triune God? Again, full transparency, I do this as well. Now, there are times when I can feel the Holy Spirit encouraging me to reach out to a specific brother or sister in Christ, but it's because I went to Him first. I picked up and opened my Bible, I prayed, sometimes, I even fasted in order to kill my flesh and truly draw closer to Jesus. It's not that we aren't supposed to turn to each other or rely on one another as a body of Christ. That's encouraged in the Bible we are encouraged to seek healing and laying on of hands from one another (1 Timothy 5). We are encouraged to pray over one another and confess our sins to one another (James 5:13-20). However it all comes **after** going to our Father in heaven, calling out to Jesus in need, turning to the Holy Spirit that teaches and guides us.

Have you ever placed an artist, athlete, actor, or team in a "beloved" position? Where it's border lining they are getting your praise, adoration, worship? For our younger generations how many times do you wake up and immediately open social media or turn to your phone or the news feed? How often do we "ask AI" for the answer or "Google it" instead of taking it to God in prayer? Yes we are lucky to be given so many tools and resources to enrich our lives but what happens when you turn to them first? These are all examples of idols, no longer just a wooden carved image, although those still exist in false religions.

Our faith means that we are to be solely and completely dependent on Jesus. Only He is worthy, only He is to be worshiped and praised. Only He is Holy. I would ask that if there seems to be a stronghold in your life, something that you feel you absolutely **CANNOT** live without or let be, that you fast from it. Feel like you're missing out without social media platforms, delete it for a week and fill that scrolling time with your Bible instead. First inclination to turn to Google or ChatGPT? I encourage you to pray on it and allow our Father to answer you or at least guide you to the answer. Absolutely cannot go a single day without a sweet treat? Fast from added sugar for a week, and only eat natural sugars in the form of fruit or honey. Battling the spirit of gluttony? Fast and pray for as long as the Holy Spirit leads you to do so eating your daily bread, God's Word, instead of food. Can't "wind down" without a little night cap? Try fasting from alcohol for a full week and see what Jesus does.

I know it's not easy, I also know this requires a very strong and honest look in the mirror for

many of us. However, I'm in and I pray you are as well. Even Martin Luther fought for the everyday man in society to be able to read God's Word and to have a direct relationship with God. How much more will He love, guide, and speak to you if you're truly focusing on Him? Thank You, Jesus, You are sufficient, You are worthy, You are enough. He's everything we need. Amen. ***~ Jaime Doganes***

CALL COMMITTEE

Nothing new to report ~ **Call Committee**

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Hello fellow Christians, and family,

I was at Hobby Lobby and already, the holiday crafts are out! I couldn't believe it!

As is usual during the summer months, the service attendance for both services has been low. We are looking forward to seeing you all, back and worshiping once again. We also hope that your summer has been FABULOUS!

We are grateful for the replies we received on the blended service survey. It is established that all those who submitted a survey were receptive to having Blended services should they be necessary. We have had 2 blended services and they were well received. Of course, being that our church is in a flux with getting an interim and a call pastor, we are keeping the faith in knowing that God has a plan.

We were very blessed to have Reverend Jeffrey Nelson officiate this past Sunday. From what I could see, our congregation was very receptive and welcoming. So, to those who were at service and were able to say 'hello', thank you so much. Also, as a supply pastor, and a congregation in need, we may have the honor of having him back.

I would like to send out a special thank you to our lay leaders; Pam Garcia, Carl and Cheryl Coleman and Gretchen Ely. You guys went above and beyond to help in our days of need and if further called upon to lead, THANK YOU! You are the bomb!

Thank you Jason, Luaine and Candice for reading the lessons and prayers.

Thank you, Jaime, (Jack in heaven) and Elsie for making our AV happen!

The organ has not been played or maintained in a few years. Due to its age, many of the parts, if required to fix it, may not be available. It is still playable, however. We are looking to have an organ technician evaluate the condition of the organ.

Narthex: In order to make our church more inviting to our visitors, I am preparing a welcome packet for the greeters to hand out. I am also putting out bottles of water so that all who enter have water. Especially during these hot months, and man! Can the church get toasty.! Thank you greeters; Ericksons, Carlsons, Carl Coleman and Pam Garcia.

If you are so inclined to bake communion bread, we're always looking for people to make it. For the recipe or more info, you can reach out to anyone on the Altar Guild committee; Gretchen Ely, Pam Garcia and Pam Anderson. Thank you Gretchen, Pam and Pam for your continued service in Christ.

There you have it. Again, as we're always encouraging people to do, INVITE, INVITE, INVITE for everyone is worthy of his love and his presence within.

Cia Salisbury ~ **Worship & Music Committee**

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

This month's "Want Ads" please pray and consider if the Holy Spirit is calling you to any of these committees.

WANTED- ST. LUKE'S MISSIONS AND OUTREACH CHAIR

HOURS: AS NEEDED

PURPOSE: TO INVOLVE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION IN COMMUNITY SERVICE,BENEVOLENCE, AND WORLD MISSIONSTHAT ACCOMPLISH CHRIST'S COMMANDMENT TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR. ***(page 21 of the constitution)***

REQUIREMENTS:

- **ATTEND COUNCIL MEETINGS AS YOU ARE ABLE, OR SUBMIT A WRITTEN UPDATE IN YOUR ABSENCE.**
- **ADMINISTERS THE CONGREGATION'S BUDGETED FUNDS AS INSTRUCTED BY THE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL.**
- **PROVIDE AN ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE CONGREGATION IF ASKED TO DO SO.**
- **WRITE A WRITTEN REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE'S ACTIVITIES FOR THE ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING.**
- **INVESTIGATE AND PUBLICIZE POSSIBILITIES FOR SERVING NEEDY PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY, (EX. LSS) AND/OR GLOBALLY**
- **ENCOURAGE MEMBERS TO VOLUNTEER AND/OR CONTRIBUTE TO LOCAL AND/OR GLOBAL MISSION PROJECTS.**
- **EDUCATE THE CONGREGATION ON WHAT IT MEANS TO SERVE "THE LEAST OF THESE".**

TENURE TIME: TWO YEARS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: ANY MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION.

WANTED – WORSHIP AND MUSIC CHAIRPERSON

HOURS: AS NEEDED.

PURPOSE: ASSURE THAT WORSHIP SERVICES HONOR GOD, HELP PEOPLE COME INTO A SENSE OF GOD'S PRESENCE, AND THAT WORSHIPERS RECEIVE SPIIRTUAL NUTURE. ***(Taken from page 25 of the constitution)***

REQUIREMENTS:

- **ATTEND MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING AS YOU ARE ABLE, OR SUBMIT A WRITTEN UPDATE IN YOUR ABSENCE.**
- **SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE CONGREGATION.**
- **DEVELOP, TRAIN AND ASSIGN MEMBERS FOR DUTY IN THE ALTAR GUILD, USHERS, AND WORSHIP ASSISTANTS.**
- **MAINTAIN THE SANCTUARY IN A NEAT FASHION AND KEEP SEAT POCKET INFORMATION AVAILABLE AND CURRENT.**
- **MAINTAIN CLEANLINESS OF COMMUNION WARE, OFFERING PLATES AND ALTAR EQUIPMENT (CANDLES/CROSS)**
- **COORDINATE AND IMPLEMENT ANY TIMES OF "SPECIAL" SANCTUARY DECORATING (CHRISTMAS/EASTER, ETC).**
- **MAINTAIN ANY CHURCH MUSICAL EQUIPMENT SUCH AS PIANO AND ORGAN.**

- **COORDINATE PLANNING AND OR SERVICES WITH CHOIR DIRECTOR, PRAISE BAND DIRECTOR AND PASTOR.**
- **PERIODICALLY WRITE ARTILCES FOR THE NEWSLETTER TO PUBLICIZE ACTIVITIES.**

TENURE: TWO YEARS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERS WHO ARE WILLING TO HELP.

If you are interested, reach out to any Council member. No experience required.

Thank you. ~ ***Pam Garcia for the Nominating committee***

MISSIONS

Thank you to everyone that signed up for the LSS Back to School Backpacks!! Please make sure all items are here at church no later than the Sunday prior we'll be putting the backpacks together Saturday August 15th. Be on the lookout for the emails…**Missions & Outreach**

Fellowship Committee

What's Going On at St. Luke's!

Walking with a Purpose group. In June our Walking group ventured to local El Dorado Nature Trail. Always a favorite, it's hard to believe that the area is next to the 605 fwy. You feel like you are out in the woods somewhere. Last week the Walking group met at the Bolsa Chica Wetlands North. This is a different part of the reserve than we've been to before. Lots of different birds and a cool morning made for a great hike. Next month we'll be heading to **Gum Grove Park** (Hellman Ranch Trailhead) on Saturday **August 8** at 8:30 am for an easy 2.2 mile trail route. The group will head to nearby Yucatan Grill restaurant afterwards for fellowship and food.

The June **Bonfire** was a hit as usual. Church and preschool families met at Huntington State Beach on Friday, June 5. Fun was had by all including hotdogs, s'mores and fun stories

around the fire.

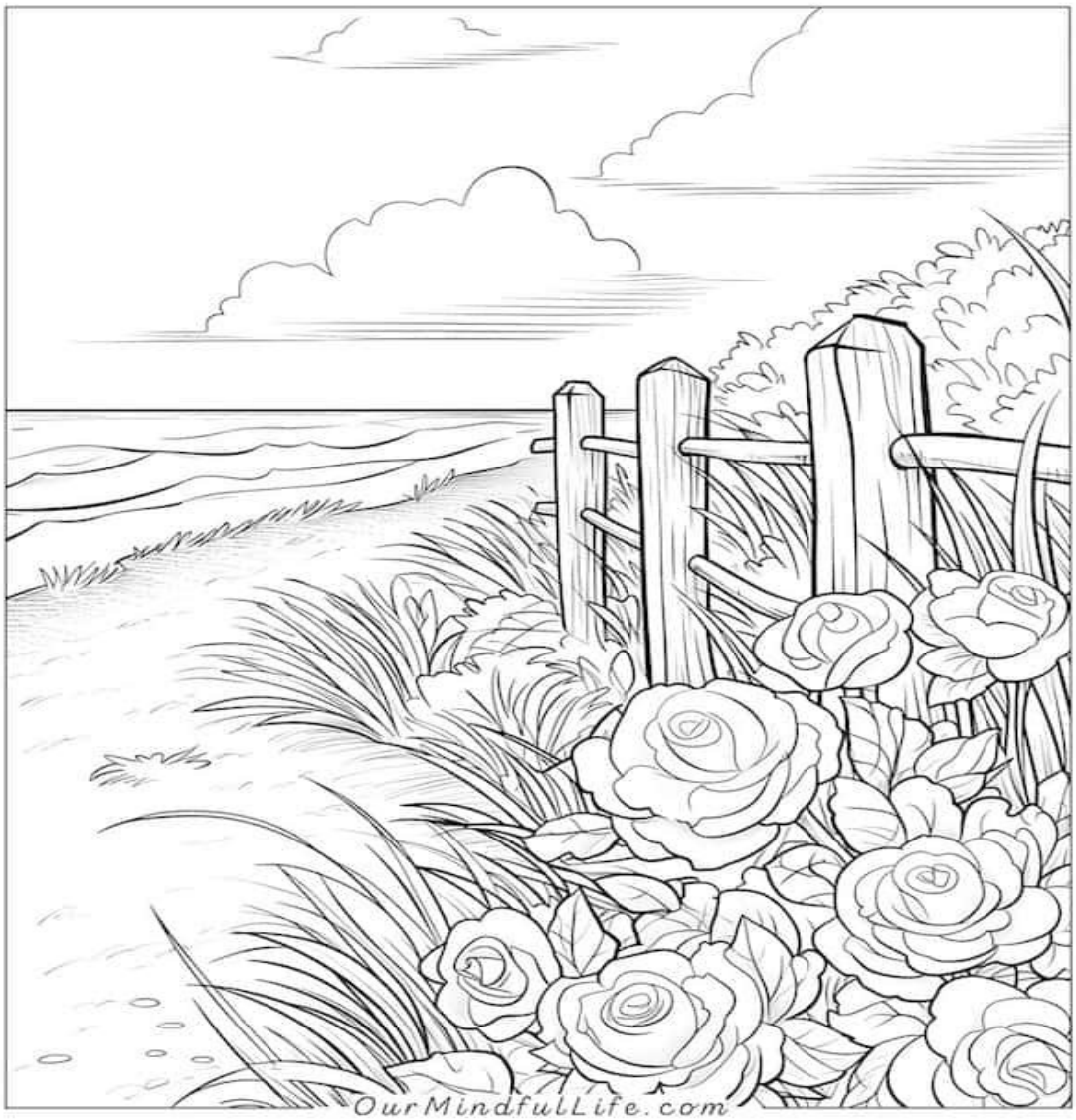
Coming up. Erin's Sourdough Bread Making Class is being rescheduled (previous date was Aug. 8 which conflicts with our Walking group). Watch for the email with the new date.

Bill's Photo Workshop will start with a photo outing on Saturday 8/1/26 to practice taking photos with our cameras and cell phones. The workshop will officially start on Thursday 8/20.

There will be 4 sessions as well as a photo field trip on 8/29/26. All levels are welcome. Flyer coming out soon with more detail.

As always everyone at St. Luke's church and preschool are invited to all of our events. We also continue to have fellowship and snacks between services, so stop and chat for a while!

Berit Bode & Erin McCuan Fellowship Committee



ST. LUKE'S CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL
LONG BEACH, CA

Pack for Preschool Camp

To help your child have a comfortable and successful day, please send the following items:

- ✔ Crib sheet (for nap time)
- ✔ Small blanket
- ✔ Towel (for water play days)
- ✔ Sunscreen (please apply at home each morning and provide a labeled bottle for school)
- ✔ Two complete changes of clothing (shirt, shorts, socks)
- ✔ One extra pair of shoes for outdoor play
- ✔ Two extra pairs of underwear
- ✔ Diapers and/or swim diapers (if applicable)

Please label ALL personal belongings with your child's name, including clothing, blankets, towels, sunscreen, water bottles, and backpacks.

John 8:12

12 **Jesus said,**
"I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

SLCP REVIEW

6

"To know God's love and to make it known"

The latest news, views, and announcements

Dear Preschool Families,

Summer is in full swing, and we are excited for an unforgettable season filled with adventure, creativity, learning, and lots of fun! Each week will feature a new theme with engaging activities, hands-on learning experiences, outdoor play, crafts, music, stories, and opportunities to make wonderful memories with friends.

Summer Camp Weekly Adventures

July 6–10

Out of This World
Blast off into an exciting week of robots, rockets, planets, astronauts, and space exploration as we discover God's amazing universe!

July 13–17

Illumination Station
Vacation Bible School Week
Join us as we shine brightly in God's light through Bible stories, songs, crafts, games, and glowing adventures!

July 20–24

Water Wonders
Dive into an ocean of fun with beach-themed activities, water play, sensory exploration, sea creatures, and splash-filled excitement.

Important Reminder

Preschool will be CLOSED on Friday, August 28, 2026 as our teachers prepare classrooms for the upcoming Fall Program.

Thank you for an incredible summer filled with laughter, learning, and lasting memories. We are grateful for your partnership and can't wait to welcome everyone back for another exciting school year!

Have a wonderful summer!

July 27–31

Circus Spectacular
Step right up for a week of carnival games, circus animals, gymnastics, juggling fun, and colorful circus crafts!

August 3–7

I Scream for Ice Cream!
Cool off with frozen fun, sweet treats, colorful crafts, summer science, and ice cream-inspired activities.

August 10–14

Nature Explorers
Grab your backpacks as we head outdoors to discover camping adventures, bugs, maps, gardening, hiking, and God's beautiful creation.

August 17–21

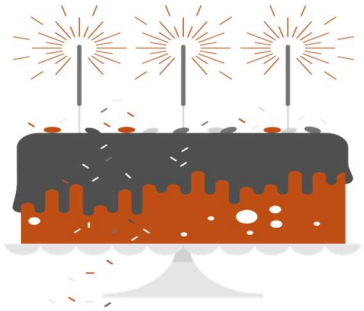
Fairytale Fantasy
Once upon a time...our classrooms transform into magical kingdoms filled with princesses, superheroes, castles, dragons, storybook adventures, and dress-up fun!

August 24–27

Summer Blast Luau
We'll wrap up an amazing summer with a tropical celebration featuring island games, music, crafts, dancing, and plenty of aloha spirit!

Clase de Espanol w/ Ms. Moran

Did you know Early exposure to a second language, like Spanish, enhances cognitive development, improves problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and boosts academic performance in other subjects. Additionally, it fosters cultural awareness, empathy, and communication skills, potentially leading to increased career opportunities in a globalized world.



JULY & AUGUST BIRTHDAY'S

July 4	Eric Ree
July 7	Berit Bode
July 15	Summer Pearson
July 24	Justyn Schwoegler
July 29	Gabrielle Rosar
Aug 1	Jim Lande
Aug 3	Jens Ree
Aug 10	Ella Ree
Aug 13	Mark Hartley
Aug 14	Dan Carlson
Aug 22	Gretchen Ely
Aug 24	Eden Dunn
Aug 28	Samantha Pearson
Aug 31	Bob Erickson

July 2	Bob & Sharon Erickson

Upcoming Events

July 4	Happy 4th of July America here's to 250 years!
July 6-10	Summer Camp @ Preschool.
July 11	Walking with Purpose North loop Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve @8:30am
July 13-17	VBS @ Preschool! Illumination Station!
July 20-24	Water Wonders week Summer camp @ Preschool
July 27-31	Circus Spectacular Summer Camp @Preschool
Aug 3-7	I scream for Ice Cream week! @ Summer Camp @Preschool.
Aug 8	Walking with Purpose @Gum Grove Park @8:30am. See Jaime.
Aug 10-14	Nature Explorers week @ Summer Camp @Preschool.
Aug 15	Putting the backpacks together for the LSS Back to School event. @9am
Aug 20	Photo Workshop Class! @6:30pm in Sanctuary see Bill Bode.
Aug 17-21	Fairytale Fantasy week @ Summer Camp @Preschool
Aug 27	Photo Workshop Class #2 @6:30 in Sanctuary.
Aug 29	Photo Workshop Field Trip! TBD
Aug 24-27	Last week of Summer Camp. No school on Friday the 28th.
Aug 31	First day of school FALL 2026!!!

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Across

1 Not to be put under a bushel. (6)

3 Let yours shine before men! (5)

7 Moth and rust will do this to your earthly store. (7)

8 If you do this, you will find. (4)

10 These should not be done in view of men. (4)

13 The eight sayings by Christ at the beginning of his sermon. (10)

15 They sound trumpets in the streets when they are being charitable. (10)

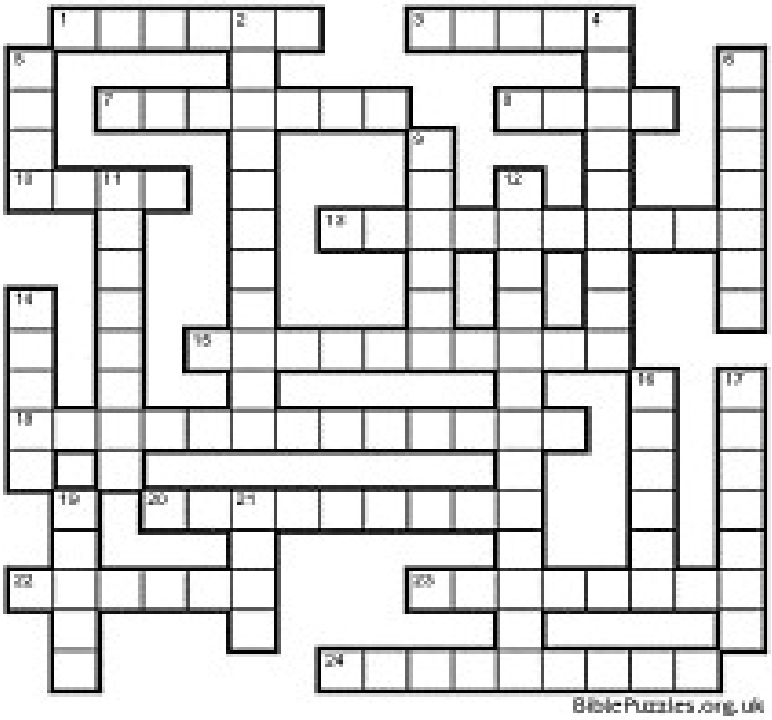
18 The peacemakers will be called this. (8,2,3)

20 They were with Jesus when he gave the sermon. (9)

22 You can't serve God and this. (6)

23 Fellow believers. (8)

24 The earth is this to God. (9)



Down

2 Jesus gave this as example of how to communicate with God. (5,6)

4 Don't lay these upon the earth. (9)

5 Whoever says this to his brother shall be in danger of the council. (4)

6 Those who are given happiness and good fortune. (7)

9 When engaging in this, you should enter into your closet and shut the door. (6)

11 Where the sermon was given. (8)

12 You should search for this first, before worrying about food and clothing. (13)

14 What you should do to your eye if it offends. (5)

16 They which do this shall be filled. (6)

17 The hypocrites disfigured their faces while doing this. (7)

19 If you are forced to go a mile with someone, this is how far you should go. (5)

21 The foolish man built his house on this. (4)

The Courier **is the newsletter of**
St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Preschool

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SUNDAY SCHEDULE
In-Person & Online Services
9AM & 11AM

ONLINE STREAMING LINK
https://www.youtube.com/@stlukeslongbeach

St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Change Service Requested