



# September 2024

## The Oakleaves



**SHERMAN OAKS LUTHERAN CHURCH** The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

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### Welcome to our newly elected Officers and Committee Members!

<b>President</b>	David Seaver
<b>Vice President</b>	Larry Hanna
<b>Council Secretary</b>	Beth Cleary
<b>Financial Secretary</b>	Daphne Stegman
<b>Treasurer</b>	Cindy Hanna

**Sunday School Superintendent** Brandon Faus

**Board of Christian Education:**

<b><u>Children (Ages 0-11)</u></b>	Chris Gordon Rianne Utecht
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<b><u>Youth (Ages 12-18)</u></b>	Abby Connick
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<b><u>Adults</u></b>	Jeff Gordon Jonah Gordon Charlotte Hinrichs Sonia Uwanawich
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<b>Board of Elders</b>	Jeff Gordon Eric Lee Larry Nixon Dick Robertson Luigi Uwanawich
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<b>SOLCC School Board</b>	Charlotte Hinrichs (1 yr term) Diane Nixon (2 yr term) Dick Robertson (2 yr term) Florence Tankou (1 yr term)
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<b>Board of Trustees</b>	Eric Anderson Jamie Cleary Larry Hanna Christian Hinrichs Robert True Shamsa Kordestani
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<b>Board of Stewardship</b>	Brei Brantley Emily Craig Laura Murcott
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## WANTED

Those interested in becoming Sunday School teachers (5th grade & younger).

Qualifications:

- Passionate about sharing faith with children and families
- Member of SOLC
- Actively attending on a regular basis
- Available to teach once or twice a month at 9 am or Sermon Lesson Time
- Willing to support the monthly FEET gathering for families

Next Step:

- Pray to see if God is calling you into this commitment.
- Reach out to Chris Gordon or Rianne Utecht to discuss.

### continued...

**Board of Evangelism-Caregivers**

Anna Booher  
Abby Connick  
Fay Darmian  
Sammy Khalili  
Michele McClung  
Diane Nixon  
Tahirih Petryha  
Lorraine Salcedo  
Chuck Spitier  
Laura Redmond

**Board of Evangelism-Outreach**

Alan Cohen  
Diane Nixon  
Larry Nixon  
Tahirih Petryha  
Rhonda Renneker  
Dick Robertson  
Laurel Seaver  
Sandra Uwanawich

## Zoo News from the Children's Center by Interim Director, Arusyak Dzheyryanyan



SOLCC's Summer Camp wrapped up with many friendships, both old and new. We had the privilege of having 55 kiddos here for our summer program. We had lots of fun for the summer with our outside entertainment and lots of water play, which the kids loved.

The new 2024-2025 school year began August 15th. We currently have 47 kiddos on our rosters and are continuing to grow.

Our first few themes for the year focus on elements of life that help make the children feel more comfortable during this transition. The themes we will be teaching in the beginning of the school year include: Making Friends, All About Me and My Family, Our Bodies and 5 Senses, and Feelings and Manners.

All of these topics are taught in a loving manner with God as the center. The children take part in chapel with Pastor once or twice a week. Chapel is very child-friendly with puppets, flannel boards, singing, and dancing. The children especially love giving Pastor a hug or high five at the end of every chapel. They also learn daily meal prayers, hear and learn Bible stories in class, and learn a variety of Christian songs that will become beloved to them over time.

If you know of anyone who would benefit from a warm, loving, family-like preschool environment, please send them our way. We still have spots open in all ages and we would love to give them a tour of our Zoo Zone. For more information, you can visit our website at [www.solpreschool.com](http://www.solpreschool.com)

Our Back to School Night is Friday, September 27th at 7 pm.

We're WILD about learning and WILD about God!



Having fun with our Under The Sea theme for summer.



Camping fun with "roasting" marshmallows.

### Madame Butterfly Opera in the Park

FREE EVENT- Live from the LA Opera Stage to the Big Screen at El Cariso Park in Sylmar.

Saturday, September 21, 2024  
Broadcast begins at 6 pm

El Cariso Community  
Regional Park  
13100 Hubbard St., Sylmar, CA

Gather your blankets and lawn chairs, pack your picnic, and come experience the music and drama of Madame Butterfly under the stars. This Madame Butterfly gets a stunning and cinematic twist, taking place on a 1930s film set, transforming the look of this beloved opera classic.

Arrive early and explore your artsy side. Enjoy family friendly crafts with LA Opera Connects, lawn games, balloon animals, a glitter bar, caricature artists, magician Belle Daily, giveaways, food trucks, and more. This event is free to attend and open to all ages.

What to bring: your own blankets, low lawn seats, and cushions. Outside food and non-alcoholic beverages are allowed.

Parking: Free parking available at El Cariso Park

**Elaine Werner will hold space on the lawn for a group. Call her at 818-367-0681 to reserve a space and receive a free gift from LA Opera.**



FAITH IN THE FAMILY AND HOME - A MONTHLY SERIES FOR THE WHOLE YEAR!

SEPTEMBER'S FOCUS:  
*worship - worship at home*

Let's live our faith together:  
**SEPT ??**

11:45 - 1:30 PM LUNCH PROVIDED



## Lutheran Women in Mission

**JESUS is calling you to serve in the army of LWML.  
With the power of Jesus, we can SERVE MANY.**

See you on Sunday, September 15.

**Guest speakers:**

**Nila Rodriguez**—Past District President; 2026 Convention Co-Chairman; and National Finance and Operations Committee

**Michelle Jenks**—2026 Convention Co-Chairman and the past Strategic Plan Facilitator for the National Board of Directors

# New Staff Members

We are excited to welcome two wonderful new people to our staff at SOLC!

Makayla Smith has begun as the church secretary. She brings a lot of technological and design skills, a warm personality, and a great passion for serving the Lord.



Makayla Smith, left; Angela Hughes, right

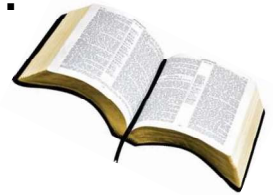
Angela Hughes is starting at the beginning of September as the bookkeeper for both the church and school. She has years of experience in accounting and a strong work ethic.

We are very blessed to have both of these wonderful people serving alongside us. Stop in to say a quick hello and give them a warm welcome!

*(Note the new office hours: Makayla will be in Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 9-3:30. Angela will be in all 5 weekdays.)*

## Memorize Bible verses with our kids...

Our Bible Memory Champs for the Summer: "Whenever I am afraid, I put my trust in you, Jesus!" - Psalm 56:32



Our new ALL CHURCH verse for September is John 6:35:

**Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."**

Join us in committing God's word to your heart and renewing your mind.



*Join us in wishing God's blessings on those celebrating their birthday or anniversary this month:*

### Birthdays:

Alexis Murcott	9/1	Yasuko Fischer	9/18
Torrey Murcott	9/1	Parisa Foroughiazar	9/20
Abby Connick	9/3	Hope Gordon	9/26
Haley Marshall	9/5	Michael O'Byrne	9/27
Caydence Renneker	9/6	Daphne Stegman	9/27
Anthony Lee	9/15	Sandra Uwanawich	9/28
Charlotte Hinrichs	9/16		

### Anniversary:

(Congratulations on number of years!)

Mario & Miriam Sweet	(17 yrs)	9/22
Craig & Tanya Peterson	(19 yrs)	9/24



# September-October 2024 Events

*All dates and times are subject to change*

Sun, Sept. 1	Bible Study, 9:00 am Healthy Life, 12:00 pm	Worship, 10:00 am
Tues, Sept. 3	High School Youth Group, 6:30-8:00 pm in the Loft	
Sat, Sept. 7	Contemp. Worship, 5:00 pm	Bible Study, 6:30 pm
Sun, Sept. 8	Bible Study, 9:00 am Healthy Life, 12:00 pm	Worship, 10:00 am
Tues, Sept 10	Elders Meeting, 7:00 pm	
Wed, Sept 11	School Board Meeting, 6:30 pm	
Sat, Sept. 14	<b>LWML 9:00 am</b> Bible Study, 6:30 pm	Contemp. Worship, 5:00 pm
Sun, Sept. 15	Bible Study, 9:00 am <b>LWML Presentation 11:30 am</b>	Worship, 10:00 am Healthy Life, 12:00 pm
Tues, Sept. 17	Council Meeting, 7:00 pm	<b>October Oakleaves Contributions Due</b>
Sat, Sept. 21	Men's Group, 11:00 am Bible Study, 6:30 pm	Contemp. Worship, 5:00 pm
Sun, Sept. 22	Bible Study, 9:00 am Healthy Life, 12:00 pm	Worship, 10:00 am
Sat, Sept. 28	Contemp. Worship, 5:00 pm Young Adults, 6:30 pm	Bible Study, 6:30 pm
Sun, Sept. 29	Bible Study, 9:00 am Healthy Life, 12:00 pm	Worship, 10:00 am
Tues, Oct. 1	High School Youth Group, 6:30-8:00 pm in the Loft	
Sat, Oct. 5	Contemp. Worship, 5:00 pm	Bible Study, 6:30 pm
Sun, Oct. 6	Bible Study, 9:00 am Healthy Life, 12:00 pm	Worship, 10:00 am
Tues, Oct. 8	Elders Meeting 7:00 pm	
Wed, Oct. 9	School Board Meeting 6:30 pm	
Sat, Oct. 12	<b>LWML 9:00 am</b> Bible Study, 6:30 pm	Contemp. Worship, 5:00 pm
Sun, Oct. 13	Bible Study, 9:00 am Healthy Life, 12:00 pm	Worship, 10:00 am
Tues, Oct. 15	Council Meeting, 7:00 pm	
Sat, Oct. 19	Contemp. Worship, 5:00 pm	Bible Study, 6:30 pm
Sun, Oct. 20	Bible Study, 9:00 am <b>FEET 11:45 am</b>	Worship, 10:00 am Healthy Life, 12:00 pm
Tues, Oct. 22	<b>November Oakleaves Contributions Due</b>	
Sat, Oct 26	Contemp. Worship, 5:00 pm Young Adults, 6:30 pm	Bible Study, 6:30 pm
Sun, Oct. 27	<b>Reformation Sunday</b> Bible Study, 9:00 am	Worship, 10:00 am

**Scan for  
full calendar**



Called to *Serve* Thank You!  
by Breilyn Brantley

*"Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!"*

*Psalm 107:1*

Here are some thanks to a few people that helped at the church in the month of **August**:

- ☺ Thanks to those who donated to the mercy packs (and remember you still can through Amazon).
- ☺ Thanks to all Altar Guild, Greeters, and Ushers.
- ☺ Thanks to all the great Sunday School teachers.
- ☺ Thanks to those who volunteer their time to help with all the goings on at the church.

*If there are anyone out there you feel deserves thanks for giving their time and talents to the church, please email [brei04@hotmail.com](mailto:brei04@hotmail.com).*

*Thank you, Ushers*  
**Fall 2024**

- 9/1 Christian Hinrichs, Heather Wolter
- 9/8 Lorraine Salcedo, Chansom Zayabouth
- 9/15 Eric Anderson, Charlene Irwin
- 9/22 Dennis Werner, Jamie Cleary
- 9/29 Christian Hinrichs, Dick Robertson
- 10/6 Inga Windsor, Laura Murcott
- 10/13 Eric Anderson, Robert True
- 10/20 Charlene Irwin, Chansom Zayabouth
- 10/27 Dennis Werner, Chuck Spittler
- 11/3 Lorraine Salcedo, Laura Murcott
- 11/10 Robert True, Dick Robertson
- 11/17 Inga Windsor, Heather Wolter
- 11/24 Jamie Cleary, Chuck Spittler
- 11/27 Thanksgiving Eve  
(anyone that attends)

What did you eat this morning? Where did it come from?

Did you know you are alive and well today because of the seeds someone else has sown?

The food we eat that gives us energy starts with a farmer and a bag of seeds. In faith, the farmer plants those seeds into the ground, eventually producing a huge harvest to the benefit of hundreds of people.

2 Corinthians 9:10-11 (The Message) says this:

**"This most generous God who gives seed to the farmer that becomes bread for your meals is more than extravagant with you. He gives you something you can then give away, which grows into full-formed lives, robust in God, wealthy in every way, so that you can be generous in every way, producing with us great praise to God."**

The church budget and our individual pocketbooks are like that bag of seeds. Obviously, our harvest is not food – it is people encountering God for the first time. Pardon the rhetorical question, but **how great is God?** He gives us the means to participate in expanding His Kingdom and then shares the joy with us when a new believer professes Christ. He is truly always thinking about us. We are blessed when we return His gifts to Him.

With gratitude from your Stewardship Committee.

*Excerpted from 25 Tithe & Offering Message Ideas For Your Next Giving Talk (growchurch.net)*

# Celebrating Baptisms

## Baptized in August:

Madison Perez  
 Donovan Perez  
 Raelia Utecht



**Praise God from whom ALL blessings flow!**

45 children... even more volunteers from beginning to end...

coming together to affirm and grow in God's truth and love... remembering that "When I am afraid, I put my trust in YOU, Jesus!" (Psalm 56:3)

*Thankful to all who served!*



**Baptismal Birthdays:**  
 members of Jesus' family



The Church Office records show the following members as having a baptismal birthday this month.  
*(Please contact the office if your baptism date is incorrect.)*

Dorene	Rubin	Sept 2
Akyra	Utecht	Sept 3
Susan	Panahandeh	Sept 15
Ping (Steven)	Sun	Sept 17
Parisa	Foroughiazar	Sept 19
Elaine	Werner	Sept 24
Cyrus	Pan	Sept 25
Abigail	Connick	Sept 26
Michael	O'Byrne	Sept 28

## A Message from the Pastor...

by Pastor Titus A. Utecht

# Talking *to* People (Not *About* Them)

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell someone else their fault.” That’s how Matthew 18:15 reads in the TDT—*The Devil’s Translation*. That is advice that we all too often readily hear and follow, instead of listening to Jesus’ true words on the matter: “If your brother sins against you, go and tell *him* his fault, between you and him alone.” In other words, whenever someone does something that hurts us, something we think is wrong, or that we have a problem with, the question becomes: Do we talk *to* the offending party, or *about* them?

Take a moment and ask yourself: Which of those options is easier and comes most naturally? You are upset by something someone did, so you can go find a friend or colleague who will readily hear your story, affirm and reinforce that you were in the right, and probably show sympathy for you or shared frustration at the offender. They also very likely have no direct knowledge of the actual event, so they won’t challenge any part of the story. You can walk away feeling reaffirmed and justified. That is pretty easy, it makes you feel good, and if your human nature is anything like mine, it comes quite naturally.

In contrast, talking *to* the other person is necessarily going to be a difficult conversation. You are going to be telling them something they won’t want to hear. They might even respond poorly to what you tell them and lash back out with further hurt. This person who you are so convinced is entirely in the wrong will also likely challenge some of your interpretations about what happened and some assumptions you made. Furthermore, if you are approaching the conversation with all of Jesus’ words in play, you have to be willing to find the log in your own eye. That is to say, the conversation will likely expose some ways that *you* were mistaken, wrong, or hurtful yourself!

Talking about people rather than to them is overwhelmingly easier, but now ask another question: what fruit does each option produce? If I’m talking *about* people rather than *to* them, the upside is that I feel justified and reassured about myself. The downside is that I become set in viewing the person negatively, I hurt their reputation in the eyes of the person I did talk to, I have left all of my assumptions about the other person unchallenged, and the actual problem or offense is likely to reoccur because I did nothing to actually address it! (Furthermore, you can double or triple those effects by going and talking to even more people!) On the flip side, when I talk to people rather than about

them, the upside is that you have the opportunity to reach reconciliation and a shared understanding, correct hurtful behavior and work out good solutions for going forward. Your assumptions and way of thinking is challenged along with theirs, hopefully leading you both to a better and more godly way of thinking and acting. The downside, however, is that such a conversation is difficult and requires courage and humility. (And didn’t Jesus say somewhere

**“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.**

*Matthew 18:15*

in the The Devil’s Translation that God wants your life to be easy?)

To wrap up, I must say that as I write this newsletter, it’s a little difficult for me because I know that I have often walked the easy path of talking about people rather than to them. It comes so naturally. Honestly, I suspect that all of us have failed at this in many ways. We need God’s grace for our failures, and he gives it abundantly. Strengthened by that grace, let us grow in walking the difficult path of having godly conversations and talking to people, not about them.