



June 2023

# The Oakleaves

*Do therefore & MAKE*  
*disciples of all the*  
*NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE*  
*name of the*  
*Father, the Son, & the*

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

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## Above & Beyond



**What:** A donor has pledged to match any donations given *above and beyond* your regular offerings, up to \$25,000. (The total amount on the left **includes** the matching funds.)

**How?** In addition to your normal offerings, place your “above & beyond” gift in the green envelope. The envelopes are located in the narthex by the “Above & Beyond” poster. Put your envelope into the offering plate.

**Vanco** app has an option to give to “above & beyond.” **Zelle** is free, put “above & beyond” in the memo line. *Check it out.*

*Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe*  
*all that I commanded you;*  
*I am with you always. —Matthew 28:19-20*

## Congregation Meeting Sunday, June 11

**All voting members** of Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church are encouraged to attend the

**Congregation meeting on Sunday, June 11 following worship.**

The new fiscal budget will be approved and council elections will take place.

**A New Pictorial Directory** will be available when more pictures are submitted.

We request all members and regular attenders to check their information, for any changes, in Servant Keeper, our database.

Please upload a photo to your family page, a family candid or formal photo, or individual photos can be uploaded. If you do not have a photo ask Larry Hanna at church to **take your picture**, which he will submit to the office.

If you do not have access to a computer just *call the church office*. We will work with you to process your information and your photo. **Thank you!**



## Mary & Martha Guild



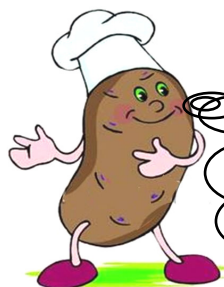
Seven women attended the Women's Bible Study on May 13.

We finished the first section and are moving to Chapter 4 –

*Shafts of Light* on **Saturday, June 10 at 9:00 a.m.** This will

be the final Bible Study for the year. We will resume the Bible Study on **Sat., September 9.**

After the Bible Study, Mary & Martha Guild held our final business meeting of the year with 4 attendees. We dispersed \$400 (\$100 each) to Children's Hope Chest, Elizabeth House, Open Arms Pregnancy Clinic, and the Above & Beyond fund. **Our next Mary & Martha Guild meeting will convene on Saturday, October 14.**



**Potato Bake on  
Sun., Nov. 5,  
2023**

Upcoming fundraisers will be:

**Cookie Walk on Sun.,  
February 11, 2024**



## from the Children's Center

by Director, Kimberly Ogas



It is hard to believe that we are approaching the end of the school year. In mid-June I will reach my 1-year anniversary of employment here at SOLCC. It has been such a busy, exciting, and wonderful blessing of a year. I appreciate all of the support everyone has given me. Thank you! You are definitely a special bunch!

This month the preschool will be studying zoo animals, dads, and grads. The children will make special gifts for their fathers, grandfathers, uncles, or any other special male figures in their lives.

We also have a **Trike-a-Thon Fundraiser** planned for **Friday, June 2 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** Each child will be asking family and friends to pledge a donation to them for riding a school tricycle on our school track. Please let us know if you would like to sponsor a child. All are welcome to attend the event to cheer the children on as they ride round and round the track! It's better than The Kentucky Derby!

Our **graduation** ceremony will be held on **Tuesday, June 13 at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary.** All of the graduate's families are invited to see the children receive their preschool diplomas before they venture on to kindergarten. They will perform graduation songs and view a video of themselves, answering the question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Their answers are absolutely ADORABLE!

**School will be closed from June 14 to June 16 for Teacher Work Days** in preparation of our cool Summer Camp Session. **Summer Camp begins on June 20** including all kinds of excitement. There will be fun water activities, special entertainment visitors, themed all-school events, art activities, chapel, and much more! It's going to be a WILD adventure!

Lastly, we have a **new preschool logo** (see above left). It matches our zoo brand with its cute animals and fun colors. T-shirts are being made so anyone can help advertise our school by wearing the new logo shirt. Please let the office know if **you would like to purchase a t-shirt and be a part of the SOLCC Zoo Crew!**





SOLC's National Day of Prayer gathering was held on May 4, 2023. It was a wonderful time of fellowship in prayer. Pastor Utecht opened the Gathering with a warm welcome. David Seaver led the National Prayer. The seven pillars of influence prayers were lead by Larry Nixon for California Government, Charlotte Hinrichs for Military, Jeff Gordon for Media Arts and Entertainment, Janet Bova for Business, Kimberly Ogas for Education, Luigi Uwanawich for Family, and Dick Robertson for Church. Mike Renneker led the worship music and Pastor Utecht gave a message. The event finished with small groups gathering for prayers over our nation and for personal requests. Thank you to all the Elders who attended and led these small groups.







## Vacation Bible School 2023

Please pray as we prepare to LAUNCH preparations for our STELLAR Vacation Bible School.

**Monday, July 24—Friday, July 28**

**3:30 - 6 p.m.**

**Ages 4 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade**



Pics are from Jeff, Hope & Chris who helped with VBS prep at Trinity Lutheran in Simi Valley, last week.

**It will be Impossible to accomplish this Mission without many of you!**

**Watch for ways to join the crew!**



## Thankful Thursday

**Radio Station 99.5 KKLA-FM honored SOLC & SOLCC**

A sweet surprise happened on Thursday, May 25, with a team from KKLA honoring our school and church staff for their tireless, joyful Kingdom work.

Chris Gordon put in a nomination over a year and a half ago! We were selected few days ago! Donna Rush, their week-day morning host, interviewed Chris which was aired. Pastor and Kimberly, our preschool director, gave an interview from the church and school.

## Congratulations Graduates!!!

**Torrey Murcott** will be heading to Calvin University in Michigan after High School graduation.

**Carissa Lee** recently graduated from Penn State College of Medicine Physician Assistant Program.

**Fuzie Q Taylor** graduated summa cum laude from Arizona State University and will be taking the summer to travel around Europe.



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

## Birthdays:

Naomi Engle	6/1	Marie Hanson	6/16
Anna Booher	6/3	Nick McLaughlin	6/16
Chuck Spitler	6/3	Sophie Cohen	6/17
Victoria Anderson	6/8	Lorraine Salcedo	6/18
Paris Bayat	6/9	Ann Millgate	6/19
Elijah Tankou	6/14	Christy Engle	6/20
		Jonah Gordon	6/25

## Anniversary:



(Congratulations on number of years!)

Pastor & Rianne Utecht	8 yrs	6/26
Ali & Samaneh Khalili	26 yrs	6/27

## June 2023

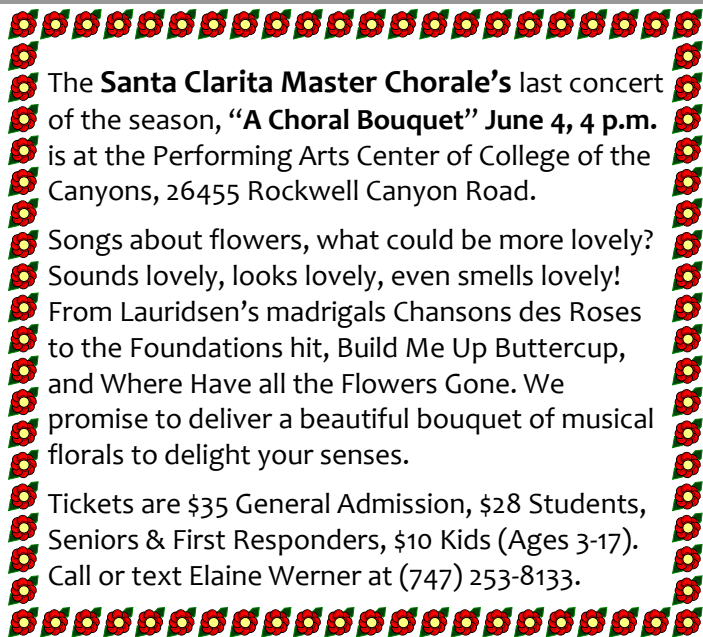
### Calendar for Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church

*All dates and times are subject to change*

Sun, May 28	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.
<b>Mon., May 29</b>	<b>Memorial Day—School and Offices closed</b>	
Thurs, June 1	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>	
Fri, June 2	SOLCC Trike-a-Thon Fundraiser, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	
Sat, June 3	Contemp. Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.
Sun, June 4	Bible Study, 9 a.m.	Worship, 10 a.m. <b>FEET</b> , noon, off campus
Tues, June 6	High School Youth Group, 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the Loft	
Thurs, June 8	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>	
Sat, June 10	Women's Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Contemp. Worship, 5 p.m. Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.
Sun, June 11	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m. <b><u>Congregation meeting</u></b>
Tues, June 13	Preschool culmination, 10:00 a.m.	Elders, 7:00 p.m.
Wed, June 14	<b>Preschool Closed June 14-16 for teacher in-service</b>	
Thurs, June 15	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>	
Sat, June 17	Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.
<b>Sun, June 18</b>	<b>Father's Day-Thank you, Dads!</b>	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m. Worship, 10:00 a.m.
Tues, June 20	<b>SOLCC Summer program begins</b>	<b>The Oakleaves Articles Due</b> , noon in Liz's "in box"
	Council, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person</i>	
Thurs, June 22	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>	
Sat, June 24	Contemp. Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m. Young Adult group, 6:30 p.m.
Sun, June 25	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.
<b>Monday, June 26—Tuesday, July 11 • Pastor is on vacation!</b>		
Sat, July 1	Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.
Sun, July 2	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.
<b>Tues., July 4</b>	<b>Independence Day—School and Offices closed</b>	
Sat, July 8	Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.
Sun, July 9	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.







The **Santa Clarita Master Chorale's** last concert of the season, "**A Choral Bouquet**" **June 4, 4 p.m.** is at the Performing Arts Center of College of the Canyons, 26455 Rockwell Canyon Road.

Songs about flowers, what could be more lovely? Sounds lovely, looks lovely, even smells lovely! From Lauridsen's madrigals Chansons des Roses to the Foundations hit, Build Me Up Buttercup, and Where Have all the Flowers Gone. We promise to deliver a beautiful bouquet of musical florals to delight your senses.

Tickets are \$35 General Admission, \$28 Students, Seniors & First Responders, \$10 Kids (Ages 3-17). Call or text Elaine Werner at (747) 253-8133.

## Items Needed to make more Mercy Packs

**"Giving to help others."**

PLEASE help us restock our Mercy Pack supplies by going to our Amazon wishlist or head to the 99 Cent Store with our shopping list from the Fellowship Hall. We so appreciate a cheerful giver!

Use the **Amazon link** for easy ordering!  
[https://www.amazon.com/dp/B003EH0CY0/?coliid=IISZU2NVSZLRK&colid=3JEGWVFP3N50%20V&psc=1&ref\\_=lv\\_vv\\_lig\\_dp\\_it](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B003EH0CY0/?coliid=IISZU2NVSZLRK&colid=3JEGWVFP3N50%20V&psc=1&ref_=lv_vv_lig_dp_it)

Our Mercy Packs have been a wonderful SOLC ministry. Many people have been blessed by these bags of goodies. **Cash donations** are always **welcome**. Just mark an envelope for "Mercy Packs" or write a check to SOLC with Mercy Packs on the memo line.

Our **final FEET** - Families Equip and Encourage Together - **gathering**, until the Fall, will be **Sunday, June 4, noon to 2 pm** at the **Parsonage** where we will **bounce** our way into summer!

**ALL church and SOLCC preschool families**, please join us for some fun, fellowship and food at Pastor's place.



Called to *Serve* Thank You!

Let's **give thanks** to those who have given their time and talents here at SOLC in **May** to:

- ☺ Leslie O'Byrne for the "super cool" side tables for the Youth Loft, added to a beautiful rug donated by Ann McClung.
- ☺ the Sunday School teachers.
- ☺ all who made the National Day of Prayer special!
- ☺ all who donated to the mercy packs, **remember you still can through Amazon.**
- ☺ all who volunteer their time to help with Church activities.
- ☺ all who pray over our church and its leaders. Please reach out to animator95@sbcglobal if you would like to be added to the confidential SOLC Prayer Chain.

*If there is anyone out there you feel deserves thanks for giving their time and talents to the church, please email me at brei04@hotmail.com.*

**Please remember to check out our new website:**

**Solpreschool.com**

**Thank you to our June Ushers:**

- 6/4** Lorraine Salcedo & Inga Windsor
- 6/11** Christian Hinrichs & Jamie Cleary
- 6/18** Eric Anderson & Chansom Zayabouth
- 6/25** Heather Wolter & Laura Murcott

## SUMMER & SUNSHINE

**BOUNCE INTO SUMMER AT SOLC'S FEET EVENT**  
 Families Encouraging & Equipping Together

*June 4 ~ Noon-2pm*

**BOUNCEHOUSE AND LUNCH PROVIDED**  
**PLEASE RSVP FOR FOOD COUNT**

**UTECHT'S BACKYARD**  
**15117 GREENLEAF ST**



by Laura Murcott & Ann McClung

## Council highlights ~ May 16, 2023 mtg in person!

♦ **Pastor's Report:** Pastor Utecht will be on vacation June 26 through July 11. He reported the average attendance over the past five weeks — 62 on Sundays and 13 on Saturdays. He's working with Mike on a 2-3 minute video on the importance of worship & attending worship services. The Elders will distribute the video to their people.

♦ **Vice President & Elder's Report:** Dick Robertson met with Rhonda, Mike and Cyrus on the remaining Fellowship of Care funds which they decided to be used for a marketing campaign. SOLC is also involved with an advertising campaign that is targeting 24 Hour Fitness members in the Sherman Oaks Galleria. Ads will be presented for both church and school. Dick attended the LAPD Active Shooter event and will train our ushers. Elders continue to make efforts to **call / email / text past** and **present congregants** to encourage them to come back to church. **"We miss you!"**

♦ **Treasurer & Financial Secretary Reports:** Leslie O'Byrne and Heather Wolter discussed the financial reports. Next month a liability insurance premium of \$14,000 is due. We anticipate it will create a \$8,000 deficit in June.

Heather mentioned that each committee chair is responsible for keeping track of their spending. If we go over budget, that money comes out of savings, of which we only have 4 years of savings left. Anyone who buys anything to be reimbursed must fill out the proper forms and submit to Liz. (Forms are in the church office.) Non cash donations, non reimbursed receipts are also requested for record keeping purposes and will be included in your giving statements. The Above and Beyond total is \$9,126, which will be matched at the close of the funding.

♦ **Mary & Martha Report:** Dorene Rubin reported that Sat., June 10 will be the next Women's Bible Study. They will be off for the months of July and August. Fundraising schedule is November 5 for the Potato Bake and February 11 for the Cookie Walk. They dispersed \$400 equally to Children's Hope Chest, Elizabeth House, Open Arms Pregnancy Clinic, and the Above and Beyond campaign.

♦ **Trustee Report:** Larry Hanna reported the Fellowship Hall AC and heating has been fixed for \$5,500. Next projects include trimming the parsonage trees and shrubs and painting an upstairs classroom.

♦ **School Board Report:** Dorene Rubin reported the summer registration is 68 out of our approved number of 78. The employee handbook is being updated. The school board paid 50% of the AC repair cost. The school will have a new logo soon (see page 2). Dick is exploring how to get the preschool to pop up consistently in Google searches. Most of our students are finding out about our preschool through word of mouth. The School is marketing more towards the brand of *preschool over children's center*, since people know what a preschool is.

♦ **Outreach Committee Report:** Rhonda Renneker reported all Outreach Committee members have agreed to continue and serve. Lorraine Salcedo is joining the Committee. The mission of the Committee was discussed. Increasing church and school attendance is one goal, but the great commission of telling people about Jesus can't always be measured in numbers. We are looking to create a **slogan** for the new advertising campaign that will run at 24 Hour Fitness beginning June 26. **Suggestions are welcome!**

♦ **Christian Education Report:** Chris Gordon reported there is still work to be done to align the Christian Ed roles and responsibilities with the constitution. There is a separate Sunday School Superintendent who oversees just the Sunday School teachers. In order to continue to build connections with SOLCC, Christian Ed members will attend the preschool graduation June 13. Chris and Jeff are looking for others to help them in planning for VBS with help from Trinity Lutheran of Simi Valley (see page 4). A budget line item for the FEET program was requested.

♦ **President's Report:** David Seaver reported the **Church directory** still needs folks to send in their pictures.

**Memorial Plaques:** David said some changes need to be made before plaques can be hung.

**Nominating Committee** is still working on the slate.

**2023-24 Fiscal Year Budget** was presented to the Council. We are on an honor system to not overspend. Income funds did not allow for any pay raises for church staff in the new fiscal year. The budget was passed by Council to be presented at the **congregation meeting** after worship, **Sunday, June 11.**



## A Message from Pastor...

### "A Life of ~~Pretendence~~

# Repentance"

by Pastor Titus  
A. Utecht

In the first of the 95 Theses, Luther said "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, "Repent," he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance." However, after some experience in this matter I have found that it is far easier and more comfortable to live "a life of pretendence" instead. After all, repentance means taking a deep and honest look at my life, opening myself up to the possibility that I am really the one to blame for my problems, and openly facing the reality that I have fallen far short of the calling God has for me. That's hard.

A life of pretendence is so much easier! Whereas a life of repentance is all about taking a close and honest look at sin, a life of pretendence is all about pretending that the problems aren't my fault. I pretend that all of my decisions and actions and thoughts are quite good and reasonable. I can pretend that I am basically a good person. (I don't need to pretend that I'm perfect, just that I'm overall a pretty good person.)

Our human nature by default sets us strongly toward living a life of pretendence, and many follow it. Broad is the path that leads to destruction. It is so easy to go through life quietly excusing and justifying myself the whole way. Even for Christians, one can easily go through life without taking time to honestly repent. I know from my own experience how easy it is to even show up to church, go through the motions for confession and absolution without ever coming close to rending my heart or examining my own sin. Unlike a life of repentance, a life of pretendence takes no effort.

Yet here I find one of the liturgies we often use in confession and absolution to be quite striking. Citing 1 John 1:8, we are reminded: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." That is, if we ignore the reality of sin and live by self-justification, we are truly living a life of pretendence. It is all pretend, and there is no reality to it, because the truth is that we have all sinned in many grievous ways and are in desperate need of God's mercy. Thus our Lord calls us to "repent."

With that in mind, I urge you to consider carefully and honestly: Do you live more of a life of pretendence or a life of repentance? I myself am rather convicted by this question. I'd like to *pretend* that as a pastor I am disciplined in examining my life, realizing my faults, and confessing my sins to God, but the truth is I am far too infrequent in my own repentance. So I find that I must even repent over my lack of repentance!

Yet God is faithful and forgiving. Even our sin of failing to repent, he forgives. Our salvation is not dependent upon our ability to repent heartily or frequently enough. It depends solely on God's grace. Yet as we grow into a life of repentance, we come to learn just how gracious our God is, we grow in our relationship to him, and we are able to put away many of the sins which we would have simply ignored in a life of pretendence. So I encourage you this day and always to truly live a life of repentance. Humble yourself before the Lord, confess your sins, and receive his forgiveness.

In Christ, Pastor Utecht

P.S. One great place to grow in a life of repentance is *every weekend* in the divine service! Cultivate a habit of not just saying the words during confession and absolution, but truly repenting in your heart.