

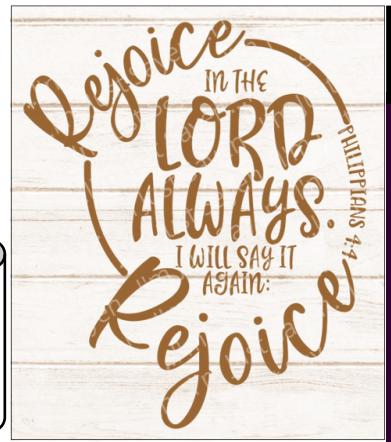


# MAY, 2022

## The Oakleaves

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

818-789-0215 · Fax: 818-789-037 · 14847 Dickens Street, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403  
e-mail: [shermanoakslutheran@yahoo.com](mailto:shermanoakslutheran@yahoo.com) · [www.shermanoakslutheran.org](http://www.shermanoakslutheran.org)



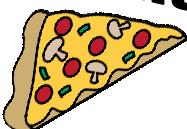
The Shredder is coming....  
The Shredder is coming....  
The Shredder is coming....

**Tuesday, May 24, 2022 ~ 8 a.m.**  
*(approximate time)*



Bring items that you want shredded to SOLC **by 8 a.m. on Tuesday, May 24** for free. You can start dropping them off Sunday, May 22 after church with the boxes clearly marked "shredding"... when the truck arrives your box of "shred-ables" go directly into the industrial size shredder, which shreds them ON THE SPOT!!!

**Preschool Fundraiser**  
at Antonio's Pizzeria  
**Tues., May 17 11am-8pm**  
**Mention you're supporting**  
**the Preschool**



### Date to put into your calendar:

All voting members of Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church are encouraged to attend the **Congregational meeting on Sunday, June 12 following worship.**

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

**NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE - 2022**

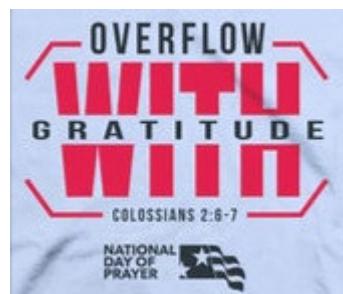


**Thursday, May 5, 2022**  
**7 p.m.**

Theme: Colossians 2:6-7

**"Exalt the Lord who has established us."**

Come and unite in the Lord's "House of Prayer" where we will lift our voices as one for our Heavenly Father to hear.



This intimate evening will include time to be led in prayer, a time for silent reflection and time to pray in small groups over personal requests.

If you have not participated before, please know this is a safe place to grow in your prayer life. Whether you are most comfortable in silent prayer or you are lead to pray aloud; your attendance is what matters and truly makes a difference.

Praying you will join us and bring others!

## Mary & Martha Guild



Greetings. The Mary & Martha Guild Board met recently, unfortunately without our fearless President, Evelyn Christel, who is under going medical tests. The Board discussed resuming the once-a-month Bible Study in September. Some of the traditional fundraisers will be changed to other months such as having the potato bake in March. Stay tuned for more information. 100% of dollars we raise is donated to mission projects of the LWML and other charitable organizations. (We support a seminary student every year, too.)

As Evelyn mentioned in previous Oakleaves, the Mary & Martha Guild has not been able to hold fundraisers due to the pandemic. We are now making a **plea to the congregation: for Thrivent choice dollars.** Send your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church, then call Liz in the church office to designate your Thrivent Choice Dollars contribution to the church Mary & Martha Guild account.

Contact Dorene Rubin, Mary & Martha Guild Vice President, with any questions.

**Keep Evelyn  
in your prayers!**



## Children's Center

by Diane Nixon, Director

The month of April was a wave of activities and fun. Our Easter celebration and **Spring Sing** was awesome. It was wonderful having the children sing for their families in person. The children performed wonderfully as they praised and worshiped God. It is a delight to watch the teachers as they work through the songs with their students to gift the parents with a delightful and memorable program.

The children **graduating from SOLCC on Tuesday, June 14**, will get their pictures taken in cap and gown for their graduation photos. It's a show in its self-watching the photographer and all they have to do, at times, to insure a great picture for their parents.

The teachers enjoyed **conferencing** with their students' parents. This is a memorable time for the parents and teachers to reflect on the many milestones their children have accomplished throughout the year. It really was good to sit and review the evaluations, *in person*.

May is here and the first Thursday of the month is **National Day of Prayer**. What a wonderful way to kick off the month of May. The teachers will take extra time to discuss the importance of prayer and the excitement of knowing Christians all over the country will be praying throughout the day and evening.

Our **Trike-A-Thon** is coming up fast, the children will be in training between now and June. Their classmates will be very excited for their friends and cheer them on with pom poms, megaphones and other hand-held cheering items.

**Antonio's Pizzeria is supporting SOLCC fundraising efforts. Bring your family and friends to support the school. Be sure you mention you are supporting Sherman Oaks Lutheran Preschool: Tuesday, May 17, 11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.**



**Teacher Appreciation Day is May 20.** Room parents are secretly planning a special day for each teacher. Our families are just so wonderfully supportive and generous.

As the school year begins to wrap up, please pray that our children leaving the Children's Center for Kindergarten will continue to learn about God's Word and that their faith in God be strengthened day by day.



## National Youth Gathering

July 9 - 13, 2022 in Houston, TX  
only 75 days until take off!

Our Youth did 2 jobs for donations toward the NYG trip: babysitting and painting the wall in the Memorial Garden.

When adding the past year's National Youth Gatherings fundraiser income and subtract the expenses we seem to have more money then we expected. We are currently at \$6,953.58. Thanks to all of you for your generosity! Our Spring Cleaning campaign will continue until the end of May.

**Holy Saturday is a special service**, which walks attendees, through the Holy Week experience.

- Jesus Last Supper with his disciples,
- the death of Jesus as we nail our sins to the cross, and then
- the Resurrection of Jesus.



We hope that you will join us next year for this Holy Saturday worship service.



**Worship on  
Holy Saturday**



by Chris Gordon

## SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Time for Spring CLEANING and CLEANSING!

*If only you had more time and extra hands...*

**Hire our Youth Team of Lexi, Torrey and Cal...**individually or all together for whatever project you have been wanting to tackle.

Will work for donations made toward the trip to the National Youth Gathering.

To work out the details, you can speak to the kids directly after service, call the church office or email your request to [animator95@sbcglobal.net](mailto:animator95@sbcglobal.net)

# Stewardship

Recently, Pastor Utecht shared an article with me that was referenced in the English

District newsletter. The piece – *"Gen Z Are Leaning into Their Gifts – Will the Church Help?"* – summarizes a research study conducted by the Barna Group ([www.barna.com](http://www.barna.com)) in partnership with Lutheran Hour Ministries ([lhm.org](http://lhm.org)). To read it online, go here: [www.barna.com/research/gen-z-gifts/](http://www.barna.com/research/gen-z-gifts/)

The study found that an overwhelming percentage of practicing Christians consider developing their gifts as a way to grow closer to God. This is especially true of younger generations (Gen Z and Millennial as opposed to Gen X and Boomer), who believe it's extremely important to identify and understand their unique skills and abilities. These would fall into the "talents" category of the stewardship trifecta: **giving of our time, talents and treasures to further God's Kingdom.**

The results of the study illustrate an opportunity for the Church: by offering groups and classes targeted at developing members' gifts, an increasing number of young adults can connect more deeply with their faith communities and eventually grow into strong church leaders. But, where to start?

As an additional resource at the end of the article, Barna provides a link to Lutheran Hour Ministries'

## Knowing Our Gifts

by Andréa Vasilio

### EveryGift Inventory

*You are a gift with gifts to share!*

very own giftings assessment, called the "EveryGift Inventory."

The survey, which asks participants for their comfort level in and preference for an array of gifts, analyzes the responses and produces a color-coded, easy-to-digest PDF of results.

It took me less than twenty minutes to fill out EveryGift. Upon completion, the assessment deduced that my top gifts are technical (meaning that I can perform specific tasks which require a refined set of skills) and artistic (meaning that I can express myself in creative ways). It also identified areas in which I can develop and grow.

**I encourage everyone in our congregation to take advantage of this resource.** Perhaps it will help you see where your gifts can be utilized at SOLC! For the Bible says, *"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."* (1 Peter 4:10) To access the EveryGift Inventory, go to this link: [www.everygift.org](http://www.everygift.org)

*Don't forget:* if you are not yet comfortable attending in-person worship services, you can still support SOLC by mailing offerings to the church, downloading the Vanco app, Tithe.ly app, online "bill pay" through your bank, or giving online...[www.shermanoakslutheran.org](http://www.shermanoakslutheran.org).

## SOLC Memorial Prayer Garden

Much admiration and appreciation to Susan Panahandeh for creating such an amazing mural for the Memorial Prayer Garden. Thank you to our **trustees** for getting it safely transported and up for the Easter reveal. Special thanks to

**Jim Windsor** who volunteered his time all week to mentor **Caleb Gordon** as they readied the wall and brought new life back to the plaques of our loved ones. Thank you trustees for 'hiring' Cal as part of the Youth Spring Cleaning fundraiser!



**Looking for a way to help at church?** The church is looking for someone who could cherish taking over the position of ordering Memorial Plaques for our members and loved ones which are then given to the trustees to put on the wall. If this is an area where you are led to serve or have a great recommendation; call Liz in the church office at 818-789-0215.



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



## Birthday:

Asmik Gyulderyan	5/1	Don Bostrom	5/19
Grace-Lilly Muze	5/1	Sandra Bostrom	5/19
Michele McClung	5/3	David Quesada	5/19
Emily Craig	5/6	Jeff Gordon	5/20
Dustin Lee	5/10	Robert True	5/20
Fay Darmian	5/11	Diane Nixon	5/21
Laura Murgott	5/12	Fofo Lukata	5/23
Beth Cleary	5/16	Cyrus Pan	5/28
		Jovana Tankou	5/29

## Anniversary:

(Congratulations on number of years!)

Tom & Charlene Irwin	(36 yrs)	5/3
Larry & Diane Nixon	(52 yrs)	5/9
Jane & David Green	(38 yrs)	5/12
Mike & Rhonda Renneker	(32 yrs)	5/12
Dick & Olga Robertson	(11 yrs)	5/22
Dick & Cynthia Poliak	(25 yrs)	5/24
Jeff & Chris Gordon	(33 yrs)	5/27

## Calendar for Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church

All dates and times are subject to change

**MAY, 2022**

Sun, May 1	Bible Study & Sunday School, 9 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.
<b>Thurs, May 5</b>	<b>National Day of Prayer service, 7:00 p.m.</b>	
Sat, May 7	Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Saturday School & Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.
Sun, May 8	Bible Study & Sunday School, 9 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.
Tues, May 10	Preschool Board meeting, 6:00 p.m.	
Thurs, May 12	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>	
Sat, May 14	Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Saturday School & Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.
Sun, May 15	Bible Study & Sunday School, 9 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.
	<b>Faith Families Time</b> , after worship	
Tues, May 17	<b>Preschool Fundraiser at Antonio's Pizzeria, 11 am-8 pm</b>	
	Elders meeting, 7:00 p.m.	
Thurs, May 19	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>	
Sat, May 21	Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Saturday School & Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.
Sun, May 22	Bible Study & Sunday School, 9 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.
Tues, May 24	<b>The Oakleaves</b> articles are due in Liz's "in box," noon	<b>The Shredder</b> is here, 8 a.m.
Tues, May 24	Council meeting, 7:00 p.m. <b>NOTE different date!</b>	
Thurs, May 26	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>	
Sat, May 28	Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Saturday School & Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.
Sun, May 29	Bible Study & Sunday School, 9 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.
<b>Mon, May 30</b>	<b>Memorial Day — Office and School Closed</b>	



## Refill our Mercy Packs

Thank you to all who have been dropping off goodies for our packs. We are very close to having a **Packing Party**, we just **need more granola bars and fruit chews.**

Cash donations are always welcome if you don't have time for the shopping part. Just mark an envelope for "Mercy Packs" or write a check to SOLC with Mercy Packs on the memo line.

## CHF Poverty Encounter Field trip – is cancelled...due to lack of interest.



We all gathered for a family lunch and crafts. The children loved spinning colorful eggs for our shut ins. Each family worked together to create an Easter celebration cross keepsake.

The best part of our time together was "**Journeying to the Cross**" as families. Parents had the opportunity to guide their children through 5 interactive scenes that included:

1. being in the Palm Sunday parade, waving our palm branches and considering the emotions of the different groups of people of that day,
2. struggling with the challenges of our sins by walking with a pebble in our shoe,
3. appreciating Jesus' finished work at the cross by putting our pebbles in 'baptismal' water,
4. Jesus welcomed us to hear how He is the '**light of the world**' and we broke our glow sticks as a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice and victory,
5. ended at the empty tomb as we celebrated that **Jesus is Alive and Jesus loves us!**



(Turn to page 8 to learn about more family activities.)



## Called to Serve Thank You!

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

- ☺ Jim Windsor for setting up the Fellowship Hall for Elaine Sabih's funeral reception.
- ☺ all who volunteered to make soup for the Lent soup suppers: Laurel, Faus family, Isaac, Jim & Inga, Rianne, Fay & Michele.
- ☺ all who support our youth through their fundraising efforts, especially to those who bought See's Easter candy, to attend the LCMS youth gathering.
- ☺ trustees and wives for beautifying the grounds for Easter.
- ☺ volunteers to be *name tagged* during Easter services so visitors could approach them with questions, esp to Lorry Salcedo, who stayed at the Visitor's Welcome Tent the duration of the 10 am service.
- ☺ Altar Guild ladies who honor the Lord and us making sure all the details for Holy Week ran smoothly and looked beautiful!
- ☺ Mike Renneker for all of the hours he poured into Holy Week and esp the music for the Easter services and his amazing singers: Tenise and Tiffany!
- ☺ ALL who put in extra to make this Easter season special.
- ☺ an amazing team, who took the Holy Saturday experience to an even deeper level. (see pics on pg 3) Thank you Pastor for all his planning, coordinating, and preaching!
- ☺ Peter Zamar, Peter Das (doubling as an angel), Jonah Gordon, Eric Lee, and Brandon Faus for being our disciples and Michael Reiser returning as Jesus.
- ☺ Tristin Holland who at the last minute was our Roman Soldier.
- ☺ set up crew: Anthony Lee, Tahirih Petryha, Tiffany Hegg, Jeff Gordon, Laurel Seaver, Sonia and Sandra Uwanawich (also our costuming whiz). And all who stepped in to clean up for a quick turn around to Easter breakfast!

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



Thank you to Cyrus and his team for a delicious Easter breakfast!



## Council highlights ~ April 26, 2022 mtg in person!

by Ann McClung,  
Council Secretary

♦ **Pastor's Report:** Pastor Utecht gave a presentation on what is to be accomplished in the raising of our children in the church. Children are a distinctly honored part of the church. Our Christian faith is passed on through the parents. We want to help engage and equip parents in that endeavor.

♦ **Christian Education representative:** Chris Gordon shared the many challenges that the committee has dealt with during the pandemic and ideas on what adjustments need to be made now that we are returning to a more normal schedule. The SS (Saturday/Sunday) School is still struggling to get many of our families back. We are exploring new ways and spaces to reach and engage our families. She expressed that the wisdom of elders, when met with the wonder of children, is a beautiful thing.

**English District Convention:** Pastor Utecht and David Seaver were elected to represent SOLC at the English District Convention in June, held in Michigan.

**Donation:** Elaine Sabih's family has donated \$2,500 to be used for the needy. Pastor will have discretionary use of this fund.

♦ **Vice President's Report:** Eric Anderson shared attendance numbers at the Easter Services: **Sunrise: 22, 8:00: 30, and 10:00: 117.** (All of the services were spectacular.) Pastor will follow up with as many of the guests for which we have information.

♦ **Treasurer's Report:** Leslie O'Byrne provided financial reports. Leslie researched prior years to find fundraiser moneys and expenses for the National Youth Gathering. We have approx. \$6,900 in the NYG account at this time. There are still outstanding expenses to be covered: airfare, hotel, food, etc. Our next fiscal year's church budget will be worked on in the next few weeks. The Preschool was able to tithe more money last month.

♦ **Financial Secretary's Report:** Heather Wolter reported on the account totals for March. Year-to-date contributions have increased 13% from last year.

♦ **Mary & Martha Report:** Doreen Rubin, as vice president of M/M, is the acting President while Evelyn is recuperating. The committee met to discuss Bible Study resuming in September. Some of the traditional fundraisers will be changed (potato bake in March). We are making a **plea to the congregation for Thrivent choice dollars.** Those who have the choice dollars should tell Liz to put their contribution into the church Mary & Martha account.

♦ **Trustee Committee Report:** None.

♦ **School Board Report:** Dorene Rubin reported three new teachers have been hired and they are looking for 2 more teachers to round out the staff. Extracurricular music classes will begin in May for the 2/3 year olds. Diane Nixon is retiring in June, so that job will be posted with interviews happening quickly. We will find a way to thank Diane for all her years of service.

♦ **Outreach Committee Report:** None.

♦ **President's Report:** David Seaver reported the **Congregational meeting is set for June 12 after worship.** The new budget and council elections will take place.

### March 2022 Financial Facts:

<b>Total Contributions</b>	\$16,157.76
<b>SOLCC Contribution</b>	\$6,558.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	(\$18,406.96)
<b>Liability/EQ Premium</b>	(\$2,000.00)
In the black:	<b>\$2,308.80</b>

**Please Note:** A Preschool teacher and her husband, Deborah and Neftali Santiago, are in need of a **rental home by mid-June.**

**Their needs are:** 2-3 bedroom, 1.5-2 bath, covered parking, regular amenities (stove, fridge, washer/dryer, dishwasher...), safe neighborhood in SF Valley close to Mission Hills. Rent between \$1,800 and \$2,000.

They trust God's leading and pray for a solution.

Contact Neftali Santiago (818) 378-2419 with any leads.

## A Message from Pastor...

# Consider Your Ways

Recently in our Thursday evening Bible study on the book of Haggai, we encountered a short and striking message, repeated twice by the prophet: "**Consider your ways.**" (Haggai 1:5,7) That is, **give some careful thought to the broader picture of your life and consider what place God has in your life.**

The setting for the book is the return of the people of Israel from exile. After years of living in a foreign country, the people are finally returning to their desolate homeland and seeking to rebuild and reestablish themselves. On one hand, you can imagine the joy and thanksgiving they must have felt at returning to the Promised Land, the land God had sworn to give them going all the way back to Abraham. They had much in which to thank God. What is more, they had an opportunity both they and their fathers had longed for which was to rebuild the temple and worship God there! At the same time, you can also imagine the difficulty and stress involved. They had homes to build. They needed to be able to work and provide, but there was hardly any economy. They had to find and cultivate food. The challenges and urgencies were endless.

As it turns out, all the things that the Israelites really did want to do like praising God, worshiping him, and rebuilding the temple weren't ever happening because of all the things they had to do first. They said "**The time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.**" (Hag. 1:2) Notice what is going on here? The people want to rebuild the temple, they want to worship God, they want to be connected to him... They just don't have time *yet*. Don't be fooled, they want to be good godly people, they just aren't quite ready to get there *yet*.

Isn't that how it always goes? We value our faith, we value time spent in prayer, we value reading the Bible, we value getting to church, we value serving him. We really do treasure all those things, we just don't quite have time *yet*. Instead, it's "When things settle down at work, I'll be able to have more time to spend with God." "When this season wraps up, I'll be able to make it to church more often." "When the kids are a little older, then I can really get into a good

by Pastor Titus A. Utecht

devotion routine." What we do is take what should be our #1 priority (God) and consistently place God in the #2 slot (never lower, but never higher) behind what is most urgent at the moment.

Into this situation the prophet Haggai declares: "**Consider your ways!**" Stop waiting for the conditions to be right to make God a priority in your life. Don't put God at the very top of your list of "Things to Do when I Have Time." Put him at the top of the list that says "Things I Must Do Today." When you do, you'll find yourself all the better for it. Because here's the thing: The great lie of "not yet" that we tell ourselves is that once we cross everything off the "urgent list" and hit a few key goals, then we'll be happy and content and can devote ourselves to God. But the "urgent list" always finds a new addition for every item crossed off, and the goals we desire move away at the same speed which they are pursued. Thus we can always chase, but never capture real joy and contentment and satisfaction. Yet when we take that inconspicuous and non-urgent seeming item on the list named "Jesus" and make him truly first, then no matter what the rest of the list looks like, we have real joy and satisfaction and peace.

-Pastor Utecht



## More Faith Family Time (continued from pg 6)

We are thankful for all the families who were able to join us for our Easter Family Event.

We look forward to our next **Faith Families** time on **Sunday, May 15**, following worship.



Lunch will be provided. We'll have space for parents to chat while the kids play.

Finally we will engage as families through interactive activities that will allow us explore how to extend the week's sermon lesson into our homes and lives.

Please remember to pray for parents as they raise their children in the faith.

Thank you from your  
Christian Education Team

