



# FAITH NEWSLETTER



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AUGUST  
2026

HOW DOES GOD  
"BRING HIS  
CHILDREN HOME?"  
THROUGH YOU!  
WHEN YOU INVITE  
THEM TO HEAR  
THE WORD OF GOD  
WITH YOU!

INVITE  
A FAMILY MEMBER,  
NEIGHBOR,  
CO-WORKER,  
FELLOW  
STUDENT, OR  
FRIEND  
TO JOIN YOU ON  
SUNDAY  
IN ATTENDING.

SUNDAYS 9:00 AM

REV. GENE SMITH  
~ PASTOR ~

ANDREW SHAFFER  
DAVID JUENGEL  
~ DEACONS ~

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## What Does It Mean to Live Your Faith?

For Lutherans, living your faith is not confined to Sunday worship or the activities of the church. It is a daily walk of trust, receiving God's grace with open hands and responding with love toward the people God places before us: at home, at work, at school, in the congregation, and throughout the community.

This understanding is rooted in the Lutheran teaching of vocation. Martin Luther widened the meaning of "calling" beyond ordained ministry, reminding the church that God works through everyday relationships and responsibilities. A parent caring for a child, a student learning with diligence, a neighbor checking on someone who is lonely, or a worker serving with honesty can each become a living expression of faith.

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**FAITH** *Bringing God's Children Home*  
Lutheran  
Since 1937

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

**Everyday Places Become Places of Ministry** understand baptism as a continuing identity and calling: beloved by God, gathered around Word and Sacrament, and sent again into daily life. The classroom, office, kitchen table, hospital room, farm, neighborhood meeting, and grocery line can all become places where Christ's love is quietly embodied.

In a time when many people feel weighed down by division, loneliness, and uncertainty, this Lutheran view offers a gentle and hopeful word: Christians do not need to search for extraordinary tasks in order to live faithfully. We begin with the people and responsibilities already before us, trusting that God is present and active through ordinary service offered in love.

### Questions for Reflection

Who is my neighbor this season of life?

Where has God already placed me to serve?

What ordinary responsibility could become an act of faith active in love?

To live your faith, then, is to trust God's promise in Christ and to let that trust take flesh in love. It is worship that continues after the final hymn, carried into the world through hands that serve, words that heal, and lives that gently bear witness to the grace of God.

*Written by Deacon David Juengel*

# Navigating Grief

## Helpful Strategies to Cope with Loss

Grief is something we all go through. It can follow the death of someone you love, the end of a relationship, or another major loss or life change. While experiencing grief is normal and natural, it can still feel hard to understand. Researchers are working to learn more about how people grieve and what helps people move through it.

“Grief is a natural response to losing someone or something we are deeply attached to,” says Dr. Wendy Lichtenthal, a clinical psychologist at the University of Miami Health System. “We are wired for connection, so when we lose someone central to our lives, we often respond with distress and longing.”

### **The Myth of ‘Stages’**

Many people expect grief to follow a set path. They wait to move through stages of sadness, then anger, then acceptance. But researchers say that grief is not a straight line. “There’s no wrong way to grieve,” says Dr. Sarah Stahl, an associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Pittsburgh. “Everyone grieves differently. There’s no timeline.” Grief looks different for everyone. It can bring sadness, anger, or a loss of meaning in life. Some people cry often. Others feel numb, restless, or even guilty. These are all normal responses.

“One of the things that can make grief harder is when people believe they are grieving the wrong way, or should be ‘further along,’” says Lichtenthal. Her research focuses on meaning-centered grief therapy for parents who have lost a child. “We help people recognize and shift the meanings they are making about their grief, their loss, and themselves, while also strengthening their sense of meaning in life by connecting them with things that matter most to them.”

In early findings, parents who went through the therapy reported a stronger sense of meaning in life and sense of connection to the child they lost. Lichtenthal says, “It’s not about moving on, but about learning to coexist with grief while finding ways to stay connected to the person who died and engaged in life.”

### **The Body’s Response**

Grief doesn’t just affect your emotions. It can take a toll on your body. Physical symptoms can include headaches, loss of appetite, fatigue, dizziness, and trouble sleeping.

Older adults who lose a spouse face unique challenges. They may be dealing with changes in their own health challenges and are more likely to feel socially isolated, which can make grieving harder.

Stahl’s study helped older grieving adults rebuild regular routines around sleep, meals, and physical activity. These three healthy habits are often disrupted after a loved one dies. The online program provided daily digital check-ins and health coaching. Even without in-person contact, participants showed real improvements in their depression and anxiety symptoms.

“Focusing on simple, healthy routines is very empowering,” Stahl says. “It helps people work through their grief by taking care of themselves.”

Sleep plays an important role in healing. It supports brain health and helps people process emotions and memories. Stahl’s research suggests that rebuilding healthy sleep habits may be one of the most important things a grieving person can do for their health and well-being.

# Health Notes Continued...

## Feeling Stuck

Most people adapt to loss over time. But some people get stuck in their grief for much longer. They can develop a condition called Prolonged Grief Disorder, or PGD.

People with PGD feel intense grief for more than a year after a loss. They may think constantly about the person who died, feel unable to connect with others, or believe the future holds nothing for them. Unlike normal grief, these feelings do not ease with time and can make it difficult to get through the day.

Dr. Holly Prigerson, a social scientist at Weill Cornell Medicine, spent years working to get PGD formally recognized. Her research showed that this form of grief is distinct from depression and requires its own approach to care.

“Before PGD was formally recognized, many grieving people were misunderstood or misdiagnosed,” Prigerson says. “We didn’t invent a new problem. We gave a name to something people have been struggling with for centuries.”

Risk factors for PGD include losing someone who was central to your identity, a history of depression or anxiety, social isolation, financial hardship, and sudden or traumatic loss.

Parents who lose a child and isolated older spouses also face higher risk.

“The term ‘prolonged grief disorder’ doesn’t mean that grief that continues beyond one year is, by itself, a disorder,” says Lichtenthal. “The concern is when grief remains so intense, persistent, and disruptive that a person feels unable to re-engage with life.”

## What Can Help

There are many things you can do to support healthy grieving for yourself and others. One of the most important is to give yourself or your loved one permission to grieve. Trying to push grief away often makes it harder, not better.

Being flexible in how to cope also matters. There is no one strategy that works for everyone or every moment. Sometimes talking helps. Sometimes a walk, a regular routine, or quiet time is what you need. Try different things, notice what helps. If it’s not, be willing to try something else.

When supporting someone who is grieving, let them know you are there for them. Keep checking in. Respectfully acknowledge their loss and show empathy. Use phrases like, “I know I can’t fully understand what you’re going through, but I’m here for you.” Avoid phrases that minimize the loss, like “Everything happens for a reason.” It can be especially helpful to offer support like bringing meals, helping with errands, remembering important dates, or continuing to reach out over time, not just after the initial loss.

Prigerson’s current work focuses on social connection to help with grief. It uses an online tool to match people who are grieving with others who share similar experiences.

“Sometimes the most powerful support comes from someone who has walked the same path,” Prigerson says.

Not everyone needs professional counseling for grief. Many people find their way through with the support of family, friends, faith, or other sources of connection. But if you’re feeling “stuck” after a significant loss, or if your grief is making daily life difficult, talk with your doctor or a licensed counselor who specializes in grief.

<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2026/07/navigating-grief>

## THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Come join us for our **Thursday Bible Study** in the Fellowship Hall at **10:00 AM**! We are currently studying **Genesis 6-11**. This is a discussion study and so will not be streamed online.

**\*\*Thursday Bible Study will  
be on hiatus all of August  
and will return on Thursday,  
September 3rd\*\***



### "FOOD FOR FAITH"

Faith wants to take care of our families! Whether it is to celebrate the birth of a baby, help during chemo-therapy months for our brothers and sisters, or provide meals when a family member is sick or has passed away, Food for Faith wants to help our families.

But we cannot do it without the help of all of you. Food for Faith needs volunteers who would be willing to provide a meal for our families that are in need. If you are interested in helping, there is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Church Narthex, or you can contact Sherry Llamas at 714-337-7201.

*"And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." ~ Hebrews 13:16*





WOMEN'S  
*Bible Study*

**Join us** for Women's Sunday Morning

Bible Study from 8:10-8:50 am in the Fellowship Hall. We are currently studying the "Perfectly Flawed" (God transforms our weaknesses into strengths)" by Lisa Toney.



**You are welcome to join us every Sunday for Bible Study after 9:00 am Service in the Fellowship Hall except on the last Sunday of the month when we have the Fellowship Brunch. We are currently studying "The Book of Ruth" led by Pastor Gene Smith and David Juengel.**



**Men's breakfast & Bible Study is held every Saturday morning at 7:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. They are currently studying Genesis.**

**Come on by and join them for food, fellowship and the Word of the Lord!**



### SCRIP Sales Schedule 2026

**August 2, August 16, September 6, September 20, October 4, October 18, November 1, November 15, December 6, December 20**

**Updated SCRIP List is on the table in the Narthex.**



THE NEXT FELLOWSHIP BRUNCH WILL BE

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30, 2026

**Join us for our Sunday Fellowship Brunch and Visitor Welcome! After Sunday service.**

We hold these on the last Sunday of the month. We want to encourage fellowship for our whole congregation, as well as encouraging you to bring a guest with you that week! Bring them to our 9:00 am service and stay later for Brunch! The church will supply some of the brunch food, but we ask each family to bring a brunch item to share (muffins, egg casseroles, quiche, etc.), so we will have enough for our guests.



### **Fellowship time after Service:**

Please join us at the coffee cart after 9:00 am Service for some Fellowship time with your Faith family!

***Coffee and snacks will be provided!***



The new Byzantine Service will be held on the first Saturday of every month at 5:00 pm. Please join us for a new worship service.

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Next BOD  
Meeting  
August 19 @  
6:00 pm



Next Elders  
Meeting  
NO MEETING THIS  
MONTH

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# July Fellowship Brunch



## This Month's Anniversaries



Louis & Deborah 08/10

Cammarota

Vic & Cindi Noel 08/17

Larry & Amy Phipps 08/24



*If we missed any birthdays or anniversaries,  
please contact the Church. Thanks!*

## Birthdays of the Month



Addison DuMontelle 08/02

Judy Summers 08/08

Carter Nord 08/09

Deborah Cammarota 08/10

Melissa Creacy 08/12

Devon Danbo 08/12

Bruce Duerfeldt 08/15

Deborrah Kraimer 08/17

Caroline Schroeder 08/17

Aldo Llamas 08/22

Shalom Kabing 08/27

### **Early September BIRTHDAYS**

Cindi Noel 09/06

Sherry Llamas 09/07



## **REMINDER**

Mite Sunday is on the first Sunday of the  
Month. Turn in your mites on Sunday,  
August 2, 2026!

# *Come Be A Part Of God's Great Gift!*

As an act of Grace — undeserved love for us — God sent Jesus “to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”

— 2 Corinthians 5:21b

Jesus took our sin & death and in exchange — week by week — we receive forgiveness,

eternal life and the status of holy children of God. Please join us at Faith each Sunday for:

**9:00 AM Traditional Worship Service** (inside sanctuary)

**1:00 PM Online Worship Service** [Upload] on Youtube.

[www.youtube.com/@davidtito834/video](http://www.youtube.com/@davidtito834/video)

*“This is my command: Love each other”*

*John 15:17*



**AUGUST**



# Summer

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

Church Office Hours are Tuesday through Thursday 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM and Friday 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Pastor Gene is available on Wednesday and Saturdays from 9 AM to 2:30 PM.

|                                                                                                                 |                  |                           |                                 |                                                        |    |                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2<br>8:10-8:50 AM Women's Bible Study<br>9:00 AM Worship Service<br>After 9:00 am Service<br>Bible Study        | 3<br>7:30 pm NA  | 4                         | 5                               | 6                                                      | 7  | 8<br>7:30 - 9:00 am Men's Breakfast/Bible Study<br>5:00 pm Byzantine Service |
| 9<br>8:10-8:50 am Women's Bible Study<br>9:00 am Worship Service<br>After 9:00 am Service<br>Bible Study        | 10<br>7:30 pm NA | 11<br>9:15 am Food Set-up | 12<br>9:45 am Food Distribution | 13                                                     | 14 | 15<br>7:30 - 9:00 am Men's Breakfast/Bible Study                             |
| 16<br>8:10-8:50 am Women's Bible Study<br>9:00 am Worship Service<br>After 9:00 am Service<br>Bible Study       | 17<br>7:30 pm NA | 18                        | 19<br>6:00 pm BOD Meeting       | 20                                                     | 21 | 22<br>7:30 - 9:00 am Men's Breakfast/Bible Study                             |
| 23<br>8:10-8:50 am Women's Bible Study<br>9:00 AM Worship Service<br>After 9:00 am Service<br>Bible Study       | 24<br>7:30 pm NA | 25<br>9:15 am Food Set-up | 26<br>9:45 am Food Distribution | 27                                                     | 28 | 29<br>7:30 - 9:00 am Men's Breakfast/Bible Study                             |
| 30<br>8:10-8:50 am Women's Bible Study<br>9:00 am Worship Service<br>After 9:00 am Service<br>Fellowship Brunch | 31<br>7:30 pm NA |                           |                                 | **Thursday Bible Study on hiatus until September 3rd** |    | 2026                                                                         |