

Parish Rebuilder

St. Luke's Lutheran Church - 5150 Wilson Street, La Mesa, CA 91942

www.st-lukes-la-mesa.org

May 2026
Monthly Newsletter
Volume 26 Issue 5

We invite you to attend

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Please contact Lupita in the office to discuss a visit or to arrange an appointment with Pastor Mark:

619-463-6633 or office-sllc@att.net

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In Whose Image?

In the first chapter of Genesis, the creation story continues, "Then God said, 'Let us make Adam (humankind) in our own image, according to our likeness ... male and female he created them'" (Genesis 1:26-27). A bit further, one reads, "But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of [the fruit] your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil'" (Genesis 3:4-5).

Ever since Adam and Eve lost their trust in God (Sin) and started to do things contrary to God's will (sins), the world has been a bit of a mess. Any newspaper or person living for any length of time will confirm this, by report if not by example. This same applies in the church. Although we are powerless to sort our mess, perhaps we might understand it a little better.

To defend our sinful nature it is often claimed that we are "created in the image of God," and therefore whatever we do must be right. Phrases like "God don't create junk" confirm such sentiments. Let us now try a little navel gazing. When you look at your navel, what do you see? You see that you were born not created. Adam and Eve were created in the image of God, but the rest of us are born in sin. Luther would even say that being born in sin means that we now have the image of the devil.

If we are born in sin, how can we be "like God, knowing good and evil."? In short, we cannot be or do either. Instead, our sin causes us to turn everything upside-down and inside-out. That means firstly that we desire to make God in our own

image and then tell God what is right and wrong. Luther expressed this dynamic by saying that our faith makes both God and idol (Gott und Abgott). Our faith, however, does not and cannot create the one, true God.

So, when we gather as church, we gather as individuals who each have the tendency to make God or gods in our own image, and worse, we each call such gods “Jesus” or “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” So, whose god is the real God? How do we know? How do we get rid of the false gods which we create to surround us? How do we react when someone challenges our god with scripture or even an off-hand comment?

As I have probably stated in various ways, Jesus was crucified because his revelation of himself as God did not match the conceptions or expectations of his friends and enemies. So, in order to help “the good” and to do what was “right,” we sinful human beings decided that Jesus and his God needed to die. So, we human beings crucified him. Worse yet, we continue in one way or another to crucify God when we assert our gods over the one true God.

So, are we lost? If left to ourselves, the answer is “Yes.” God, however, has not left us to ourselves, our sin, or the gods that we create in our own image. Instead, he called his Son out of the grave and calls us out of our sin to receive the image of Jesus Christ. To do so, however, God needs to kill the gods that we make in our own image. That he did on the cross, once for all, and that he does when each of us is baptized into Christ.

Our life together as a church depends upon these actions by God. As the light of Easter dawns on the darkness of Lent, may God continue to raise St. Luke’s Lutheran Church to newness of life in the presence and in the image

of our one Lord and God, Jesus Christ.

Many Easter Thanks

We wish to thank all those who put much time and effort into making our Holy Week observances and Easter celebrations truly joyous. Leading all these efforts, of course, was Richard Deal, St. Luke’s extremely gifted Director of Music. We thank him for his planning and expertise for all these worship events. St. Luke’s choir at all three services, and Jennifer Killions special music on Easter Sunday highlighted the importance of each day’s observance. We also thank the many extra musicians drafted in to help make our services extra meaningful, especially Scott Brown (percussion), Mjae Penaflor (violin), and Nick Caldwell (flute). We thank Terry East for organizing the Easter egg hunt on Easter Saturday. This event was well attended with about 20 children and about 30 adults, many of whom had not attended an activity at St. Luke’s before. We thank Judy Kirk, Laurie Floren, and Colleen and Stuart Olsen for decorating the Good Friday cross with Easter Sunday flowers and greenery. Finally, we thank Stephanie Brown, Cheryl Gray, and many others who provided the food and decorations for the outstanding Easter brunch after the Easter service.

Easter Realized in Baptism

Manifesting the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, St. Luke’s welcomes into membership Stella Rain Engel who was baptized on Easter Sunday (05 April). Stella’s baptism reminds us that God’s grace and forgiveness comes to us as a glorious gift even before we know the depravity of our sin. On the First Sunday of Easter, we also welcomed into Kelly Lynn McGill into membership through Holy Baptism. Kelly was and is extremely excited to deepen her understanding of the Christian faith through St. Luke’s Theological Academy which laid the foundation for her christening on 12 April.

Why Church is Important

In Psalm 133:1 we hear, “How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!”

You'd probably say that this Bible verse helps us learn something important about our religion. Whereas you know God, the Father, and Jesus his son, do you truly know the people in these pews? People who you've been around every Sunday. Some may say, “Yes,” but how well do we know each other? What do you know besides their name? After the service I invite you to speak to someone you don't normally talk to, perhaps about your weekend plans or about this past week's activities.

More than a simple good morning community, our church is about the people who support one another no matter what. The people at St. Luke's care about you deeply. Learning about the Bible helps bring us together, but there's so much more room to grow as a community. Our community helps us carry our sins when they get too heavy to carry. For example, Psalm 38:4 tells us, “For my iniquities have gone over my head; like a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me” (ESV). This highlights sin as a crushing, shared human weight. Let's be real. We aren't perfect, but the church is a place for healing and figuring things out together. It's a safe space to ask tough questions when you're doubting, rather than just faking it or giving up. Life is tough, and Lutherans believe in supporting each other. Gathering together isn't just for worship, but for fellowship, supporting one another through hard times, and sharing the Gospel together. Church communities help believers mature by providing sound teaching and accountability to live out their faith, preventing spiritual stagnation, and preparing to live together with God forever.

-Stasha Raschtschenia

Stasha's Eagle Scout Project

My name is Stasha Raschtschenia, and I am a 15 year old Scout currently working toward my Eagle Scout rank, the highest achievement in Scouting. I have been involved in Scouts since I was 11 years old, and I am now on the final step of my journey.

For my Eagle Scout project, I am raising funds to build and install a bench for St. Luke's Lutheran Church, where I serve as an acolyte. This bench will provide a welcoming place for members of the community to rest, reflect, and gather.

I am also a freshman at Steele Canyon High School, and I am proud to give back to a church that has been an important part of my life.

Any donation—big or small—helps cover materials and construction costs and brings this project one step closer to reality. Your support means a lot and will leave a lasting impact on the community. I would truly appreciate any donation to help make this project possible.

Thank you for helping me make this project happen!



Dear Women of St. Luke's,

Happy MAY! In the afterglow of our wonderful Easter Celebration of Jesus' death and resurrection, we are in the midst of Springtime – full of flowers blooming and green hillsides – God's beautiful creation. There are so many lovely aromas in the air – sweet scents of life and beauty and so many colors to delight our eyes. What multi-sensory joy!



I spent many years not being able to smell anything due to chronic sinus issues. I would see flowers bloom in my yard, but, smelling nothing, would try to remember the sweetness of their fragrances. I would walk into a Starbucks – no coffee smell. I'd visit a candle shop, but have no awareness of the beautiful scents. I would sit down to a beautiful dinner, but have no smell or taste of the food. I am not sure if I had previously realized how magnificently the sense of smell enhanced so much of life. Many years and four surgeries later, I now take special delight and pleasure in the amazing gift of the sense of smell. The ability to smell adds so much depth and richness to so many sights and experiences – a cup of coffee, a campfire, a flower. The sense of smell also serves as a terrific warning of impending danger or trouble, such as a house fire, a gas leak, or a lurking skunk. I treasure the ability to smell.

This experience of losing and then regaining my sense of smell heightened my awareness of Scriptures that talk about God's savoring of certain aromas. Leviticus 1:17 describes a burnt offering that is "an aroma pleasing to the Lord." Revelation 5:8 tells of "golden bowls of incense which are the prayers of the saints." Ephesians 5:2 instructs us: "Therefore be imitators of God as beloved children and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." 1 Peter 2:5 states, "You yourselves, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." Psalm 141:2 says, "May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting of my hands be like the evening sacrifice."

What an awesome realization that our prayers, our worship, our fellowship are a sweet smelling aroma to the God of all creation. It is astounding to read about our prayers being gathered in golden bowls of incense. Hebrews 13:15 even talks about the sacrifice of praise as the fruit of our lips. That verse goes on to remind us “do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” I pray we individually and collectively choose to proclaim His name among our congregation, our neighbors and our world that we might be a beautiful fragrant offering to the Lord.

In His service,

Laurie 





Coffee Hour Hosts for May

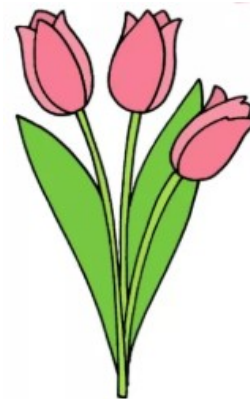
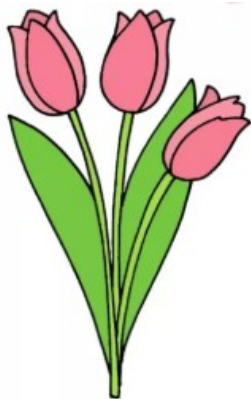
May 3rd — Pending host

May 10th — Pending host

May 17th — Pending host

May 24th — Pending host

May 31st — Pending host



MAY WORSHIP TEXTS

Fifth Sunday of Easter — May 3, 2026

First Lesson — Acts 6:1-9; 7:2a, 51-60

Psalm 146

Second Lesson — 1 Peter 2:2-10

Gospel — John 14:1-14

Sixth Sunday of Easter — May 10, 2026

First Lesson — Acts 17:16-31

Psalm 66:8-20

Second Lesson — 1 Peter 3:13-22

Gospel — John 14:15-21

Seventh Sunday of Easter

— May 17, 2026

First Lesson — Acts 1:12-26

Psalm 68:1-10

Second Lesson — 1 Peter 4:12-19; 5:6-11

Gospel — John 17:1-11

The Day of Pentecost — May 24, 2026

First Lesson — Numbers 11:24-30

Psalm 25:1-15

Second Lesson — Psalm 25:1-15

Gospel — John 7:37-39

The Holy Trinity — May 31, 2026

First Lesson — Genesis 1:1-2:4a

Psalm 8

Second Lesson — Acts 2:14a, 22-36

Gospel — Matthew 28:16-20



Ed Foreman	5/6
ShirleyCarrington	5/7
Isabelle Reisert	5/13
Randy Engel	5/15
Theresa East	5/17
Ryan Yerger	5/19
Jeannie Meranda	5/28
Janice Urich	5/30



Denise & Mark Stephens	5/30
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MAY PRAYER CALENDAR

“To God the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray”

1	Psalm 145:15-19	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Eternal Spirit of the living Christ, I know not how to ask or what to say; I only know my need, as deep as life, And only You can teach me how to pray.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Come, pray in me the prayer I need this day; Help me to see Your purpose and Your will-- Where I have failed, what I have done amiss; Held in forgiving love, let me be still.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Come with the strength I lack, bring vision clear Of human need; O give me eyes to see Fulfillment of my life in love outpoured, My life in You, O Christ; Your love in me.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Hymn 769 Lutheran service book</i></p>
2	Ephesians 6:10-20	
3	Ephesians 3:14-21	
4	Psalm 5:1-8	
5	Matthew 7:7-11	
6	Timothy 2:1-6	
7	Psalm 1:1-6	
8	Matthew 5:43-48	
9	Philippians 4:4-7	
10	Psalm 61:1-4	
11	2 Corinthians 1:8-11	
12	Colossians 4:2-6	
13	Colossians 4:12-13	
14	Psalm 69:13-16	
15	Hebrew 13:20-21	
16	Psalm 103:1-5	
17	I Thess 5:14-24	
18	II Thess 1:11-12	
19	Psalm 86:5-7	
20	Psalm 119:81-88	
21	Psalm 71:1-3	
22	John 16:11-15	
23	Jude 20-25	
24	Psalm 91:1-4	
25	James 5:13-15	
26	Ps 18:1-3	
27	Psalm 25:1-7	
28	Psalm 105:1-6	
29	Matthew 6:5-13	
30	Luke 11:9-13	
31	John 17:1-26	

MAY WORSHIP TEAMS

	Reader(s)	<i>Terry East</i>
	Altar Guild	<i>Colleen Olsen</i>
3rd	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Bob Urich</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Jillian Barnard & Jennifer Killion</i>
	Greeter	<i>Randy Engel</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Pastor Mark Menacher</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Shirley Carrington</i>
	Usher Team	<i>Bob & Cheryl Gray</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Jocelyn Sollenberger</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>
10th	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Ted Olsen</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Randy Engel & Terry East</i>
	Greeter	<i>JoAnn Hendrickson</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Jillian Barnard</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Gail Knippelmeyer</i>
	Usher Team	<i>Cheri Murrell & Randy Engel</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Giuliana Salas</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>
	Counter	
17th	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Ken Murrell</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Laurie Floren & Terry East</i>
	Greeter	<i>Laurie Floren</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Randy Engel</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Shirley Carrington</i>
	Usher Team	<i>David & Kim Emerson</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Stasha Raschtschenia & Jocelyn Sollenberger</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>
24th	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Judi Dunnigan</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Jennifer Killion & Randy Engel</i>
	Greeter	<i>Jillian Barnard</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Laurie Floren</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Gail Knippelmeyer</i>
	Usher Team	<i>Gary & Carol Prior</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Stasha Raschtschenia</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>
31st	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Randy Engel</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Terry East & Jillian Barnard</i>
	Greeter	<i>Laurie Floren</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Jennifer Killion</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Shirley Carrington</i>
	Usher Team	<i>David & Kim Emerson</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Giuliana Salas & Jocelyn Sollenberger</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>

May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 8:00 am JOY 10:30 am WSL Tea
3 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 6:00 pm Al-Anon	4 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm AA	5 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day	6 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	7 8:00 am Tai Chi 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Al-Anon	8	9 8:00 am JOY 10:30 am WSL Story telling time
10 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 6:00 pm Al-Anon	11 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm AA	12 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day 6:00pm Council mtg	13 10:00 am WSL Bible Study 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	14 8:00 am Tai Chi 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Al-Anon	15	16 8:00 am JOY
17 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 6:00 pm Al-Anon	18 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm AA	19 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day	20 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	21 8:00 am Tai Chi 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Al-Anon	22	23 8:00 am JOY 10:30 am WSL Story telling time
24 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 6:00 pm Al-Anon	25 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm AA	26 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day	27 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	28 8:00 am Tai Chi 12:00 pm Book Club 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Al-Anon	29	30 8:00 am JOY 7:00 am Finding Solutions for Seniors
31 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 6:00 pm Al-Anon						

ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

5150 WILSON ST.

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Dated Material
May 2026

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

A WARM WELCOME TO ALL

- Sunday Worship: 9:00 am in the Sanctuary
- Sunday School: 10:30 am in the Lower Level
- Wednesday Choir Practice: 5:30 pm in the Fireside Room (Lower Level)
- Wednesday Pericope / Communion Service: 7:00 pm in the Fireside Room

St. Luke's Mission Statement:

We are called as a community of Christians saved by grace
—through faith alone in Jesus Christ—
to spread the Holy Gospel in word, sacrament, and action
solī deo gloria.