

THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE



Shepherd of the Valley Evangelical Lutheran Church

1455 East Yosemite Avenue, Merced CA 95340 209-383-0632

Our Mission Statement: To be loving Christians, centered in God's Word and serving one's neighbor.

Our Vision Statement: Accepting people where they are and loving them as God does.

STAFF

Pastor John Russell-Curry
jrussellcurry@comcast.net

Administrative Assistant:
Carolyn Daberkow
shepherdofthevalleyelca@gmail.com
209-383-0632

Office Hours

8:00 – 11:00 AM Monday-Friday

web page: www.thesovlutheran.net
Also on Facebook

Council President:
Barb Ward
Cell: 209-617-7592
barbew4352@aol.com

Sunday worship is live on Zoom at 10:00 AM and in-person in sanctuary. (See updates on calendar & SOV Weekly News emails.)

Please have your articles for the newsletter sent each month by the 15th to:
shepherdofthevalleyelca@gmail.com
Thank you.

THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE newsletter is available as a paper copy for pickup, mailed, or sent as an email attachment, or viewed on the website.

ELCA Statements and information are available on the web sites: Sierra Pacific Synod, spselca.org, and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, elca.org.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

Church language (polite society):

I told Pattee about my daily runs being in the dark along the creek.

"But, John, you're running in the total darkness. You could get mugged."

"Mugged? I'm not carrying anything - - no wallet, no money nor credit cards, no car keys... nothing."

"Guys can get away with this. Women have something that can be mugged."

I remained quiet for a couple of minutes pondering...

Church language (impolite?):

Women worldwide might be vulnerable ("muggable"?).

Worldwide, wide swaths of vulnerable people suffer from sexual/physical/emotional abuse, human trafficking, economic hardships, illiteracy, abandonment, impairments (physical, mental, and cognitive), and, other "impolite" human situations affecting the "least of these" out in the dark...

Perhaps, it is time that situations of "danger/violence/traumas/abandonment" are no longer hidden by the use of language intended for "polite society".

Perhaps, language used to address the conditions of the needy must become common "church language". Perhaps, the church has been called to "speak out" – to go and reconcile the sources of oppression.

Someone is getting "mugged" in the dark. We have a lot to talk about.

Pastor John



PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayers for healing:
Brad Brandstad; Tom Stephens;
Gleneda Muralt; Dorothy Woody;
Rosie Sullivan; Eric Smith;
Gleneda Muralt's niece,
Shereida; Nan Dailey; Kimberly
Castillo's daughter Jillian and
mother-in-law Lupe; Pam
Andersen; Pastor John Russell-
Curry and his family; Warren
Westerberg; Sylvia Poupard;
Jeane & David Hetland; Annie
Sofranek; David Cherf; and
people who are ill around the
world.

We lift prayers for our Benevolence
of the Month, **Shepherd of the
Valley/Healthy House Garden
Ministry** and for our Sierra Pacific
Synod Bishop, **Jeff Johnson**.

*The names on the Prayer List may
be removed at the end of each month
unless the office is notified that you
would like them left on for another
month. Please leave a message at the
office, 209-383-0632. Thank you.*



PRAYER CHAIN

If you have any prayer
requests, please contact
Pam Andersen at 209-
631-4594 to start the
Prayer Chain.

Church Council Highlights

Chris Love, Council Secretary

The outgoing and incoming councils met on Monday,
May 18. Here are the highlights:

- Outgoing members: Marc Medefind, Karen Arnold and David Cherf II
- Incoming members: Susan Gumm, Alan Arnold, Lora Burnett and Barb Ward
- The new council elected new officers: Barb Ward, President; Chris Tomford, Vice President; Chris Love, Secretary; Mona Kowalczyk, Treasurer.
- David Cherf resigned as Property Manager. Alan Arnold will be the new Property Manager.
- Marc Medefind purchased a new weed chopper, and we hired Kou (from Healthy House) to remove the weeds. We discussed keeping up on the weeds, so they do not get out of control again.
- Mona brought to our attention that SOV was named in a will in the 70's and there is still money there. SOV was only named if the person's daughter was no longer cared for in a specific facility. Chris Tomford will call the bank and the attorney to check on the status.
- Karen Arnold will continue to be on the Worship & Music committee. Barb will ask Lora Burnett to join that committee and be the council liaison.
- Garden report: Healthy House planted over 300 plants donated by Merced College along with seeds. The garden is doing well.
- We have not been receiving donations for the benevolence of the month recipients. Council will discuss dropping this program.
- We discussed moving the meetings to the second Tuesdays from 10-noon.
- Clean-up days - we need more help!

JUNE 2026

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

"Chris" Christine Love	06/03
Elizabeth Pressly	06/13
Steve Hand	06/16
Kaydence Gallaway	06/17
Adrian Saldivar	06/18
Jim Christofferson	06/21

JULY BIRTHDAYS

Jan Collins	07/01
LaVonne Wenrich	07/02
Beth Lored	07/09
Carol Linneman	07/10
David Hetland	07/11
Barbara Ward	07/12
Erica Kateley	07/16
Mary Jo Knudsen	07/18
Judy Westerberg	07/19
Natalie Saldivar	07/22
Devin Cherf	07/31

MONTHLY BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON

Birthday Luncheon will meet on
Thursday, June 18, at 11:30 AM at
Olive Garden, 721 W. Olive Avenue.
Join us for food and fellowship.

REMINDER

All SOV members who enter
the church during the week are
reminded to double and triple-
check that doors are locked
when leaving. Thanks so
much.

BIBLE TEXT READINGS

Second Sunday After Pentecost	June 7
Hosea 5:15-6:6	
Psalms 50:7:15	
Romans 4:13-25	
Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26	Green
Third Sunday After Pentecost	June 14
Exodus 19:2-8a	
Psalms 100	
Romans 5:1-8	
Matthew 9:35-10:8 (9-23)	Green
Fourth Sunday After Pentecost	June 21
Jeremiah 20:7-13	
Psalms 69:7-10 (11-15) 16-18	
Romans 6:1b-11	
Matthew 10:24-39	Green
Fifth Sunday After Pentecost	June 28
Jeremiah 28:5-9	
Psalms 89:1-4, 15-18	
Romans 6:12-33	
Matthew 10:40-42	Green

BENEVOLENCE OF THE MONTH May & June Benevolence

The Shepherd of the Valley/Healthy House Garden
Project Ministry is our church's Benevolence for the
months of May and June. Donations may be given to
SOV Lutheran Church with "Garden Ministry" on the
memo line.

2026 Scholarships

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation, we are able
to fund two scholarships for Merced College students as
well as members of Shepherd of the Valley. The criteria
and application information will be available in the
narthex, and all confirmed members are encouraged to
apply by June 3.

Saintly Match Game
Reflection by Nan Dailey

This reflection is different than any other I've ever written. Not only is it to be used in both June 2026 (Part 1) and July 2026 (Part 2) It's not really a reflection at all: It's intended to be a game of sorts.

A hymn, I remembered, not completely accurately as it turns out, from childhood popped into my head the other day: "I Sing a Song of the Saints of God" (Lesbia Scott 1929). Though I'm not sure it's officially still in the Episcopal hymnal, or the ELCA's for that matter, some of you may remember singing this ditty in choir or congregation.

It came in my head while I was in the hospital Emergency Room waiting an innumerable number of hours for a blood transfusion and bored out of my mind. It set me wondering, who was that Shepherdess? Who was that Queen? FYI – I guessed the shepherdess right, totally muffed the queen.

So, I thought I'd present you with **Emergency WAITING Room Saintly Challenge**. No quibbling now, or at least not yet – of course I know the course of sainthood does not run smooth in an ER – but does it anywhere? And I, like you I'm sure, have seen some pretty close to saintly things in my recent sojourns in hospitals.

The way this works is there are three columns in the July 2026 reflection. One is prefilled with the descriptor of the saint from the hymn: shepherdess, priest etc. The second column is blank. There is a list of the saints below the table as identified by the author, Lesbia Scott, so you can match saint to descriptor. No points, no prizes and I guess we'll never know if Miss Scarlett killed him in the library with the candlestick.

I've included the relevant lyrics of the hymn spread across the row right above the most relevant column so you can actually see them in situ as it were. And the answers, in true puzzle fashion, are upside down in the right lower corner.

FYI: One final note. Should you desire to pray for heavenly intervention, St. Hillary is the saint of riddles.

Shepherd of the Valley Website

The website is active and being monitored by Carolyn Daberkow, Administrative Assistant. Take a little time to review the website.

You will find the links to the Zoom gatherings by clicking on ABOUT US, click on WORSHIP SERVICE OUTLINES and click on the long link. You will need the Zoom app downloaded to your phone, tablet, or computer first.

Thanks go to Carolyn Daberkow for the continuing updates.

SOV WORSHIP SERVICES ARE ON FACEBOOK

Our worship services can be seen any day, at any time, on Facebook. Just type in the search box "Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Merced" and you will see the church listed. Click on our church and our Facebook page appears, with all the services.

We encourage you to send the service to your family and friends by clicking on the "SHARE" icon below the picture and then use "Share to your friends" or "Send in Messenger" service.

**SHEPHERD OF THE VALLEY LUTHERAN CHURCH
JUNE CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
					Knitting Club 2 PM SOV Weekly Email News	Church Clean-up 9 AM
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Worship 10 AM Sanctuary & Zoom	Council Meeting 10 AM				Knitting Club 2 PM SOV Weekly Email News	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Worship 10 AM Sanctuary & Zoom				Birthday Luncheon 11:30 AM Olive Garden	Knitting Club 2 PM SOV Weekly Email News	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Worship 10 AM Sanctuary & Zoom					Knitting Club 2 PM SOV Weekly Email News	
28	29	30				
Worship 10 AM Sanctuary & Zoom						



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED