



Redeemer Lutheran Church



Voice of Redeemer

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As fireworks light up the summer skies and flags wave proudly in the breeze, Americans across the nation gather to celebrate Independence Day. July 4th marks the anniversary of our nation's birth, a time to give thanks for the blessings of liberty and the freedoms we enjoy. But for Christians—especially those in the Lutheran tradition—Independence Day is also an opportunity to reflect on a deeper kind of freedom and on our God-given responsibility as citizens of both the heavenly kingdom and the earthly one.

Martin Luther spoke often about the Christian's place in society. In his treatise *On Temporal Authority*, he affirmed that government is a gift of God, established to maintain order, promote justice, and restrain evil. Civic rulers, even with their imperfections, are to be respected—not because they are perfect, but because God uses them to serve his purposes in this world.

Luther based this understanding on passages like Romans 13:1–7, where St. Paul writes, “*Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.*” Paul was writing during the reign of the Roman Empire—not exactly a model of virtue—yet he still called on Christians to honor their leaders as part of their obedience to God.

So how does this square with the American celebration of independence from England? For Lutherans, the key lies in the distinction between rebellion and reform. While we honor the legacy of our Founding Fathers and give thanks for the freedoms their sacrifices made possible, we also remember that true liberty comes not from governments, but from God. Christ sets us free—not to throw off all authority, but to serve our neighbor in love (Galatians 5:13).

This means that Lutherans can celebrate Independence Day with gratitude, while also remembering that we are not just Americans—we are Christians first. Our highest loyalty is to Christ, and our earthly citizenship is an avenue through which we live out our vocation. Voting, paying taxes, jury duty, serving in public office, and praying for our leaders are all ways we honor God by being faithful citizens.

In a time when politics often divide and public trust is fragile, the Lutheran understanding of civic authority reminds us that government is not ultimate—God is. Our hope is not in any political system, but in the kingdom that has no end. And yet, because we are called to love and serve our neighbor, we are to be engaged, responsible, and grateful citizens.

This Fourth of July, enjoy the fireworks and fellowship, but also take time to pray:

For those who serve in government, that they would lead with wisdom and justice.

For our nation, that it would strive for peace and righteousness.

And for the Church, that we might be a faithful witness in both word and deed.

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.” —Psalm 33:12

Let us live in that blessing in gratitude, service, and faith.

**In Christian freedom,
Pastor Jon Christenson**





Applying Bible Principles to Stewardship

As children, most of us probably liked to play "let's pretend." That harmless pastime offered an opportunity for us to dream and to let our imaginations soar. Via the wonderful channels of the mind, we were transported magically to places and times that were otherwise beyond our reach.

As adults, most of us probably like to dream and contemplate some of the "what if" situations of life. On the surface, there's nothing wrong with that practice. In fact, it's that kind of activity that often leads to some of our greatest ideas and inventions.

But playing "let's pretend" can be a problem in the Christian life if it means saying one thing and doing another, or as one author described it, if we are "talking further down the road than we are walking." For example, we might talk a lot about reading the Scriptures, when in reality, we seldom pick up God's Word except to dust around it on the coffee table. We might convey the impression to others of the importance of prayer in our lives, when all the while, we actually pray very little. We might talk about how essential it is to be a positive encouragement to others in God's family. If the truth was known, however, we would have to admit that we are usually the bearer of bad news and the possessor of a negative attitude. We might even attend church faithfully, but although our bodies occupy the pews, our minds regularly drift far, far away.

This kind of behavior is also possible when it comes to giving. We might like to convey the impression that we are "good givers," and we might be reasonably successful in our efforts since other people usually do not actually "see" our financial situation and our giving. However, if we are trying to say one thing and do another concerning our giving to the Lord, we will be confronted by our deception every time we look at the register in our checkbook. Here's why: Our checkbook will quickly and methodically strip away our pretense. We can deceive others; we can even deceive ourselves in many areas of life, but our checkbook always tells the truth about what is really important to us.

Charles Ryrie offered this powerful statement which lays bare the truth of our devotion:

How we use our money demonstrates the reality of our love for God. In some ways, it proves our love more conclusively than depth of knowledge, length of prayers or prominence of service. These things can be feigned, but the use of our possessions shows us up for what we actually are.

An unknown author wrote this:

Thirty thousand for my brand new car,
Fifty thousand for a piece of sod.
Twenty thousand I paid to begin a house;
A dollar I gave to God.

A tidy sum to entertain my friends in pointless chatter.
And when the world goes crazy mad,
I ask, Lord, what's the matter?
A dollar I gave to God.

Yet there is one big question,
For the answer I still search:
With things so bad in this old world,
What's holding back my church?

As you consider your answer to that question, and as you consider your giving to the ministry here at Redeemer Lutheran Church, are you "talking further down the road than you are walking?"



Grades pre-K
through 6th grade.
Contact: Nate Olson
202-374-2211 or
661-835-7881

Join us on a ROAD TRIP!
REDEEMER LUTHERAN
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

August 4th—8th.
8:30am—12:30pm
2525 Belle Terrace

Snacks and lunch
Bible lessons, crafts,
games, songs and
more!



The VBS team is looking for volunteers to reach out to the neighborhood for VBS. The job is pretty easy— requires walking the neighborhood, placing door hangers on doors. Interested? Contact Phyllis at the church office. 661-832-7881 or Nate Olson 202-374-2211.



A WORD FROM THE TREASURER

Summer has just started per the seasonal calendar. With summer comes higher temperatures. That means cooling will probably be needed when attending the church property. Please remember if you turned on fans and AC units while working at the church (and fellowship hall), to turn them back off when leaving.

Appreciate your consideration in this matter.

BRUCE



**ARE YOU READY FOR SOME
BUNCO???**

Join Us Friday, July 25

**\$15—including sandwiches, drinks,
snacks, dessert and BUNCO!**

Raffle tickets 6 for \$5.00

\$1.00 each

Game prizes

FUN!!!

WANTED/NEEDED

PRIZES FOR BUNCO AND ITEMS FOR RAFFLE

IDEAS: Gift cards, re-gifting items, food baskets, cosmetic baskets, etc.

Contact: Linda—599-0799: Dakota—864-6019

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

2525 BELLE TERRACE, P O BOX 13132-93389, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93304

Pastor: Rev. Jon Christenson 832-7881 Secretary: Phyllis Elrod

E-mail address: rlcbakersfield@sbcglobal.net

Web site address: www.bakersfieldlutheran.org



BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Linda Gaenicke | 01 |
| Kathy Hairfield | 01 |
| Mickey Rivers | 05 |
| George Stilwill | 06 |
| Lilian Powell | 15 |
| Kelly Gelhaus | 17 |
| Judy Olson-Peterson | 17 |
| Andrew Cohen | 18 |
| David Schroeder | 20 |
| Aaron Orloff | 23 |
| Clayton Schindler | 23 |
| Carolyn Schonewise | 23 |
| Jade Gallegos | 25 |
| Sharon Vieyra | 29 |
| Pr. Donella Silveira | 30 |



| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| Laura & Brian Haywood | 07 |
| Nate & Sarah Olson | 08 |
| David & Linda Gaenicke | 10 |
| Gary & Karen Manes | 19 |

HAPPENINGS IN JULY



You're invited to
Lunch Bunch!



LUNCH BUNCH: is Wednesday 7/2/ - 11 am @ Stacks, 1321 Easton Dr. (Formerly *The Corner Bakery*) Everyone is welcome. Make reservations with Judy.

QUILTING/PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY is Wednesday 7-9-25 9am-3pm in the Fellowship Hall. Phyllis Elrod will provide a snack & please bring your own sack lunch.

AFTERNOON CIRCLE is Wednesday 7-16-25 1:30pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will discuss Relationships That Form Us from *Gather* magazine & the Bible. Phyllis Elrod will provide refreshments.



WINE & DINE is Thursday 7/24@6 pm. More information to follow in the bulletin.



GAME DAY will be on Wednesday, July 23. 12 noon if you want to bring a sack lunch, 12:30 games begin. Bring a friend.

DATES TO REMEMBER



Saturday, July 12
**WE NEED MORE
HELPERS !**

Church Council
Sunday, July 20

In Our Prayers



MAY 26, 2025- JUNE 26, 2025

| | |
|---------|--------------------------------|
| IVY | JERRY |
| ANTHONY | NANCY |
| TOM | DIANNE |
| PAM | |
| ANN | |
| MARIO | THE FAMILY OF LILIAN POWELL |

Your prayers are greatly appreciated.

PRAY THIS PSALM BEFORE YOU GO TO BED

Father, as I prepare to sleep, I come to you. Your Word promises me in **Psalm 127:2** that I can sleep peacefully because you, Lord, are the only one who can give me a peaceful heart.

Tonight, I release the weight of today into Your loving hands. I surrender my worries, my fears, and my uncertainties about tomorrow.

I trust in Your protection, knowing that You watch over me as I rest. Guard my dreams, Lord, and fill them with Your peace.

May my sleep be a time of rest for my body, soul, and spirit, knowing that You hold my future securely. In Jesus' name, I pray for peaceful and restorative sleep, trusting in Your care for what lies ahead.

If you love God, Amen, I hope your family and friends can see this prayer too.

Thanks to
Vera
Freebourn
our prayer
partner in
PA.

Editors note: The following two pages are contributed by our own Bruce Wearda. Bruce, a member of the local chapter of the SAR, and has been spotted at various events, gives us an excellent background of the SAR in word and pictures. Thanks Bruce, your dedication and information is deeply appreciated.



Sons of the American Revolution California SAR Kern Chapter



Have you heard of the Daughters of the American Revolution? How about the Sons? If like most people, the answer to the first question is yes, even if you fully don't know who they are or what they do. The answer to the second is, "Huh? Never heard of them." Let me take the time to tell a little about the Sons of the American Revolution.

The National Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), is a nonprofit, nonpartisan male lineage organization whose mission statement reads, *"honors our Revolutionary War patriot ancestors by promoting patriotism, serving our communities, and educating and inspiring future generations about the founding principles of our Country."*

My great-great-great-etc. grandfather, Henry Speed Jr. served in the Revolutionary War. He served in the New York 4th Infantry. After many generations of 'begatting,' you know, so-and-so begat, such-and-such, blah, blah, blah begat..., after about seven begats, we get to present day me. Proving the lineage allows one to join either the Sons or Daughters of the American Revolution. The principles and objectives are the same and as the mission statement indicates, promoting patriotism, and honoring our veterans. SAR participates in many community events that align with those activities.

The Kern Chapter of the SAR supports other events in the community. It has a robust education program where they go to various schools (5th grade) and give presentations. During the pandemic when school was not in person and if it was, no visitors allowed, videos were made. The California Department of Education saw them and have endorsed them as official curriculum. Any school district is authorized to use them for instruction. The chapter also recognizes ROTC and Boy Scouts. Flag certificates recognizing proper flag flying and etiquette are also presented to businesses and residences. The SAR also participates in numerous parades and events honoring veterans, including Wreaths Across America where wreaths are placed at the headstones in National Cemeteries. A flyer follows. One may scan the QR code with a smart phone or go to the web address to make a donation.

The SAR has created a Decade of the American Revolution Calendar to list Revolutionary War signature events each year that will be the focus of a decade of celebrations commemorating the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. Starting with the Boston Tea Party (1773) and running through the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783, different events will be highlighted each year.

This year the signature event is the Battles of Lexington and Concord (April 19, 1775). Listen my children and you shall hear... a little-known man riding around the countryside sending the alarm to every Middlesex, village, and farm, that the British Regulars are coming. That led to the ensuing conflicts in each of those towns as the British found colonial resistance waiting for them on their way to confiscate weapons, and perhaps Mr. Samuel Adams, Mr. John Hancock.

This of course is going to set up the big celebration on July 4th next year of the 250th anniversary of the new nation.

(Continued on page 7)

(con't. from page 6)

I was captured delivering a "250 Minute" at River Lakes Park for their 1000 Flags event on Memorial Day. I shared a bit about the Battles of Lexington and Concord. It was at Lexington the first eight veterans would have died in battle. I am part of the local chapter color guard, hence the colonial soldier uniform. This would be representative of the dress of the army General Washington commanded.

I visited Lexington and Concord for the 250th anniversary. I am in more of a 'merchant' dress, or maybe a farmer. Perhaps more emblematic of a 'minuteman' who would rush from the store, or farm at a minute's notice.

Another picture shows a wreath presented at Historic Union Cemetery on Memorial Day.

The caskets (18 of them) contain about 200 US Flags each. They were honorably retired on Flag Day at Greenlawn SW.

If you are interested to see if you too have ancestors that may allow you to join the SAR or DAR, please contact our Registrar at lmadar1948@gmail.com for more information.

Sincerely,

Bruce Wearda

Kern Chapter SAR America 250 Chair

CASSAR Youth Video Chair



The flyer on the next page is the up-coming wreath laying event in December. Share it with family and friends. (Sorry, color reproduction unavailable.)

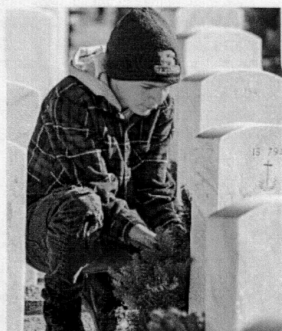




JOIN US IN OUR MISSION

★ December 13, 2025 ★ National Wreaths Across America Day

Help Sons of the American Revolution,
Kern County Chapter honor local heroes!



Sponsor a wreath today to be placed on a
veteran's grave this December at the
Bakersfield National Cemetery

Scan the QR code to make a donation online
or visit wreathsasscrossamerica.org/CA0802P



KEEP MOVING FORWARD



IN HIS SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Thank you for your help—there are sign-up sheets in the Narthex if you would like to volunteer for any of these areas,

| Area of Service | July 6 | July 13 | July 20 | July 27 |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Assistant | Louise | | | |
| Altar Guild | | | | |
| Acolyte | Lieth | Darrynne | Leith | Leo |
| Lector | Louise | Judy | Karen | Bruce |
| Flowers | Julie | Phyllis | | Laura |
| Greeter | Karen | | | |
| Counters | Laura,Dakota | Karen, Dakota | Karen , Dakota | Karen, Tammy, Laura |
| Fellowship | Autumn & Max | | | |

EVERGREEN SCHOOL

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

2025 Financial Report

| | January | February | March | April | May | Total |
|--------------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Receipts | 31,956.00 | 15,890.50 | 19,084.00 | 9,335.80 | 18,360.50 | 94,626.80 |
| Budget | 16,069.17 | 16,069.17 | 16,069.17 | 16,069.17 | 16,069.17 | 80,345.85 |
| Difference | 15,886.83 | (178.67) | 3,014.83 | (6,733.37) | 2,291.33 | 14,280.95 |
| Expenses | 22,802.93 | 18,314.52 | 13,447.73 | 13,494.11 | 12,976.48 | 81,035.77 |
| Budget | 16,069.17 | 16,069.17 | 16,069.17 | 16,069.17 | 16,069.17 | 80,345.85 |
| Difference | (6,733.76) | (2,245.35) | 2,621.44 | 2,575.06 | 3,092.69 | (689.92) |
| Total | 9,153.07 | (2,424.02) | 5,636.27 | (4,158.31) | 5,384.02 | 13,591.03 |
| Compared to Budget | | | | | | |
| Loan Re- ceipts | 1,550.00 | 1,575.00 | 1,575.00 | 1,725.00 | 1,500.00 | 7,925.00 |
| Loan Pay- ments | 1,085.00 | 1,085.00 | 1,085.00 | 1,085.00 | 1,085.00 | 5,425.00 |
| Difference | 465.00 | 490.00 | 490.00 | 640.00 | 415.00 | 2,500.00 |
| Total All | 9,618.07 | (1,934.02) | 6,126.27 | (3,518.31) | 5,799.02 | 16,091.03 |

CHARITY FOR

JULY AND AUGUST

ITEMS NEEDED

PENCILS—CRAYONS—
ERASERS SCISSORS—
PAPER—RULERS
BACK PACKS—ANY
SCHOOL SUPPLIES

GIFT CARDS: TARGET
(\$10)TO PURCHASE
ITEMS IN EMERGENCIES,
ALSO ACCEPTED: CASH
(CHECKS PAYABLE TO
REDEEMER)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
SUPPORT**



JULY 2025

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---------------------------------------|--------|---|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | 1 Hymn sing at Riverstone Terrace 3 pm | 2 Pacifica 10 am Lunch Bunch 11 am | 3 | 4  | 5 |
| 6 Worship 9:30 Coffee hour | 7 | 8 Hymn sing at Riverstone Terrace 3 pm | 9 Prayer Shawl Ministry & Quilting 9 am-2 pm | 10 | 11 | 12 Glass Club  |
| 13 Worship 9:30 Coffee hour | 14 | 15 Hymn sing at Riverstone Terrace 3 pm | 16 Pacifica 10 am Afternoon Circle | 17 | 18 | 19 Garden Club 9am-1 pm |
| 20 Worship 9:30 Coffee 10:30 | 21 | 22 Hymn sing at Riverstone Terrace 3 pm | 23 Senior game day noon to 3 pm | 24 Wine & Dine 6:00 pm | 25 BUNCO 5:30  | 26 Glass Club 11am -2 pm |
| 27 Worship 9:30 Coffee hour | 28 | 29 Hymn sing at Riverstone Terrace 3 pm | 30 | 31 | | |