



JOY

Lutheran Church

Bringing Joy to the Heart of Rockwall...

The 'Joyful Noise' Newsletter - July 17, 2026

"Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth!" (Psalm 100:1)

302 N. Goliad Street • Rockwall, Texas • (214) 716-7539 • www.joylutheranchurch.org

POOL PARTY & MOVIE NIGHT IS TONIGHT!

Our 'dive-in movie' is being hosted by Steve & Kay Orr.
They live at 1915 Wind Hill Road, Rockwall.

Our schedule:

- Swimming & Pizza (5:00 pm to 7:30 pm).
- Outdoor Movie (starts at dusk, around 7:30 pm until 8:50 pm).
- Invite a friend and please bring a lawn chair!



Save These
DATES

- Family Movie Night & Pool Party – *Tonight*, July 17th at Steve & Kay Orr's home!
- Blaine Davis will lead us in worship – this Sunday, July 19th at 10:30 am.
- Artists Gathering – Tuesday, July 21st at 10:00 am in the fellowship hall.
- Ladies Bunco Night – Wednesday, July 29th at 6:30 pm.
- Men's Fellowship – Wednesday, July 29th at 6:30 pm at Pastor Moore's (903 Windham Drive).

Is God calling you into membership at Joy? Membership papers are available on the Guest Table at the back of the sanctuary. Have questions? Please see Pastor Martin.

Gail, Patrick, Patty, Collin, Lucy, Carol, Tommy & Laurie, Fred, Weston, Mary Kay & Mike, Brian & Kelli, Mary, Annette & Charles, Michael.



SUMMER SERMON SERIES:

"AND SO WE CAME TO ROME" (ACTS 28:14)

This Sunday Blaine Davis will once again lead our worship. I look forward to being back with you on the 26th when we will pick back up our Romans study. I will miss part of the eighth chapter of Romans while I am away, but I hope you will meditate on the four readings for this coming Sunday. Here is Sola's summary of the common thread running through our readings:

The Lord, the only God, is all we need. We need fear nothing in life, for his is a steadfast love. This does not mean there are no sufferings in the present time. It does mean that the divine Spirit helps in all our weaknesses. He even mediates for us before the Father when we do not know how to pray about our troubles. Indeed, the troubles of life will come. Eventually, judgment will come at the end of time, but then the righteous – those who trust in the Son of Man – “will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”

“For where two or three have gathered together in My name,
I am there in their midst.” -Jesus (Matthew 18:20)



This past week I heard from a dear friend in another city lamenting the struggles within her congregation and the dwindling numbers in worship each Sunday. This is a concern heard often these days; one not to be dismissed lightly. However, it is important to gain some perspective both from our vantage point as well as that from the throne room of heaven.

There are roughly 373,000 religious congregations in the United States. Half of these churches have fewer than 65 people in the pews most Sundays. So, most Americans experience their fellow Christians at worship within a small church setting. This figure might surprise us since our North American culture showcases ‘winners’ and is sold on ‘bigness’ as a primary indicator of success. Daniel J. Boorstin famously examined America's obsession with scale and illusion in his 1962 classic, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*. He warned that society suffers from “social narcissism,” measuring value by sheer volume and mistaking “bigness” for true importance, leading us to build a culture of superficial, manufactured realities.

Hermann Sasse (1895-1976), the great Lutheran theologian of the last century, knew what it was to face times of persecution, scattered flocks, and dwindling numbers. His was one of the strongest and earliest voices to speak out against the threat that Nazism presented to his beloved Lutheran Church in pre-war Germany. He frequently lamented the doctrinal indifference and liberal theology infecting the Church, arguing that such forces were toxic to the life of faith. Yet, Sasse was no doomsayer. He truly believed the promise the Living Christ spoke to His Church in Matthew 18:20. Neither was Sasse an optimist; optimism is merely a matter of *optics*, of seeing what you want to see and not seeing what you don't want to see. Sasse was hopeful, not optimistic. In Scripture, hope is not a vague wish, but a confident, unwavering expectation of a guaranteed outcome. Rooted in the character and promises of God, it serves as a secure spiritual anchor and is fundamentally tied to the resurrection of Jesus (see Titus 2:13; Hebrews 6:19; 1 Peter 1:3). The hope that runs throughout his writings is on the far side of a realistic understanding of the human condition; that is to say, on the far side of the cross.

“We must learn anew Luther's invincible faith in the power of the means of grace. Whatever the Church still has and still does should not be minimized. But she does not live from mercy, or from political and social activity. She does not subsist on large numbers. When will the terrible superstition of the Christendom of our day cease that Jesus Christ is powerful only there where two or three million are gathered in His name? When will we again comprehend that the Church lives by the means of grace of the pure preaching of the Gospel and by divinely instituted administration of the Sacraments and by nothing else? And for no other reason than because Jesus Christ the Lord is present in His means of grace and builds His Church on earth, being even as powerful as ever before in the history of the Church—even if His power and glory, to speak as our Confessions do, are *cruce tectum*, hidden under the cross (Ap. VII-VIII 18). Oh, what secret unbelief and what little faith we find in the Church that calls herself the Church of the *sola fide*! May God in His grace eradicate this unbelief and strengthen this weak faith in our souls and renew us through the great faith of the New Testament and the Reformation.” -Hermann Sasse, *Letters to Lutheran Pastors*

Sign-up Sheets are on the **BLESSINGS BOARD** in the Fellowship Hall. Please review these opportunities and see where God may be leading you to serve our church family.



LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THIS COMING SUNDAY -

First Reading- Isaiah 44:6-8

Second Reading- Romans 8:18-27

Responsive Reading- Psalm 119:57-64

Gospel- Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43



This Sunday our members, frequent visitors, and first-time guests will have an opportunity to help us pick a color for our renovation project in the fellowship hall, kitchen, restrooms and foyer! Dennis will provide details on how *you* can participate during the announcements.

And now for something completely different...



"Now that you've all put in your two cents' worth, I should like to interject my fifty-one per cent controlling interest."

"A joyful heart is good medicine, but depression drains one's strength."

(Proverbs 17:22, God's Word Translation)