

PortalLight

the monthly Newsletter of West Portal Lutheran Church and School

JULY 2026

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West Portal Lutheran Church Website:

westportallutheran.org

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From Pastor Swenson

"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God." (Romans 13:1 NKJV)

By God's grace, we have entered a new month. Up to this point, most of our months have been marked by a particular Church holiday (Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Easter, the Ascension, even Trinity Sunday). July, also, has its holiday - the Visitation on July 2nd. On that day, we celebrate Mary's visit to Elizabeth, St. John's leaping in the womb, and the Magnificat. Still, for most people, there is another holiday that rings through the month of July, the Fourth of July. This holiday celebrates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence and is, by many, considered the birthday of these United States.

For some, speaking about our nation is a no-go. As Lutherans, we understand that there is a distinction between God's kingdom of the left (the world) and His kingdom of the right (the



Church). Some have taken this to mean that we should necessarily separate the two; as in, treat them as two distinct realms that have no overlap or interaction. In practice, this means we are told to talk "church stuff" in church and politics everywhere else. But what does the Holy Spirit say? He says, through St. Paul, that God appoints worldly governments and those who hold office in them. In simple terms, if God makes it, we get to talk about it in church.

Why does God appoint worldly authorities? St. Paul continued, "He is God's minister to you for good... [He is also] an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil." (Romans 13.4) St. Peter also

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says that God establishes worldly authorities, “for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.” (1 Peter 2.15) In short, as we learned in the Catechism, God sets human authorities in place as His servants for our good. They are to promote good and punish evil. This includes those in our own country, but also all those throughout the world wherein God’s people dwell.

Worldly rulers are to serve God by serving us, and we are blessed by God through them. Here, in our country, we have many blessings - from the freedom to worship and believe as we do, to things like passable roads and bridges. In the Fourth Commandment, God teaches us to honor our parents, but He also enjoins on us that we should honor worldly authorities: by praying for them, supporting them with our talents and gifts, speaking well of them, and being obedient as much as we are able. This is what God said to Israel, who had been carried off to Babylon, “Seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace you will have peace.” (Jeremiah 29.7)

We’ll leave it to a different article to discuss what to do when a government, national or local, disregards its mandate from God, how to address it (and the Church should). For now, let us give thanks to God for His gracious care for us, and for all the blessings He has provided us through this country. May His blessing rest upon our land, that faithfulness to His Word and life may flourish among us.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

Pastor Jacob Swenson



LET US PRAY TO THE LORD GOD for those who are ill, homebound, or recovering from recent hospitalization: Charlene Bruggemann-Wong; Vivian Char; Angie Cheung, Helen Bok’s sister-in-law; Bill Eves, Virginia Ferry’s cousin; Mary Jo Fischl; Jimmy Fong, Evelyn Fong’s father; Ray Holstead; Ping-Yee Law, Gilbert Mogyorossy; Bennette Nulph; Sigrid Rogge; Ruth Stresow; Diane and Ray Toloski; Elise Wen, Patrick Man’s friend; Cheryl Wong; Marilyn Wong.

Portal **ght** is the monthly Newsletter of West Portal Lutheran Church and School

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Sherise Lee, Principal

Amy Kao, Music Director

Weekly Worship Schedule

5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service-Lord’s Supper

9:00 AM Sunday Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall

10:00 AM Sunday Worship Service-Lord’s Supper

6:00 PM Monday - Membership Class

West Portal Lutheran Church is a member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Church Events

Pastor Jacob Swenson and members of West Portal Lutheran Church extended a warm welcome to Evelyn Priest and Israel Frayle as they joined the West Portal Lutheran community. Thanks be to God! Pictured below: Evelyn with her family and Israel with his family.



Evelyn Priest confirmed on
May 31, 2026

Israel Frayle confirmed
on June 7, 2026



West Portal Lutheran School: News from the Principal's Desk

Dear West Portal Lutheran Family of Faith,

**Come and see what God has done:
he is awesome in his deeds toward the
children of man. (Psalm 66:5)**



June is a time when I get to take some time off from the school year and have extended moments to pull back

from everything to lift myself from what can often feel like the endless tyranny of the school year. Doing this, for me, requires physically getting away and having the opportunity to look and see with different eyes in a place entirely different. In doing so, my eyes expand to engage the world more intentionally as I slow down.

One of the delights that comes for the people of God is taking in His beauty, goodness, and truth and in turn worshipping Him for these wonders. As someone who studied art history as an undergraduate, I've sat at length staring at pieces of art, observing, and learning to describe what I see. The first time I was exposed to looking at art in such a way was in my high school art history class. It was a class I determined to take for its means of boosting my grade point average, only to discover an internal longing that accompanied my study in marveling and wondering at the art I was

to study - the assignment was not only pleasant, but fulfilling to the point that I told my friend that I was enjoying taking the exams (to which she responded with incredulous disbelief).

I write this knowing that we as educators have been ever mindful of the growing impact of digital technology on our young children. With the advent of more addictive technology we lose the patience to gaze longingly at our Creator in the world He has created apart from our screens. My prayer is that this summer would be for our church and school opportunity to slow down and behold the God of wonders with marvel and greater worship. This summer I've taken up the practice of completing a sketch each day of something from nature (with the guidance of a trusty book since admittedly, drawing is not something I am either trained or have comfort in doing). The habit is transforming my own need for instant gratification and forcing me to look, see, and ultimately delight in new ways.

Come and see the works of our God as you delight in His beauty this summer.

Blessings in Christ,
Sherise Lee
School Principal

Taking time to slow down and wondered at the Seattle Art Museum and taking in some art with my nieces



West Portal Lutheran School Event

WEST PORTAL LUTHERAN IS #1!



We are now **THREE-PEAT** winners as the Best Private School (K-8) on SFGate's Best of Bay Area! Thank you for helping vote us #1 again! See the official results announced at this link - <https://www.sfgate.com/best/map/best-k-8-private-schools-bay-area/#westportallutheralschool> or copy address & post to the browser.

On our 75th Anniversary year, we are proud to continue to carry this distinguished title as we continue our commitment to educating and nurturing our students as a whole in a Christ-centered environment.



In attendance to this event: WPLS teachers, staff, and school board.



Best of the Bay basketballs for WPLS!



School Board Kyle Johnson and Principal Sherise Lee



Director of Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Sherilyn Jew and Principal Sherise Lee



- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Sharon Badra | 12 Teresa Hansen |
| 1 Lawrence Fung | 12 Enzo Esposto |
| 1 Cheryl Schudel | 13 Peter Ahn |
| 2 Rudolph Frey | 17 Audrey Bass |
| 4 Gavin Wong | 17 Audrey Phui |
| 5 Carter Cheng | 17 Mila Phui |
| 5 Jennifer Lee | 18 Aileen Brasche |
| 5 Joseph Man | 19 Deborah Ahn |
| 5 Jenna Yee | 19 Melissa Louie |
| 6 Dick Bass | 20 Joshua Man |
| 6 Gary Presley-Nelson | 20 Cal Porter |
| 8 Carol Spencer | 21 Vincy Huang |
| 9 Kenneth Ahn | 22 Austin Yuen |
| 9 Nerriah Perez | 22 Genevieve Park |
| 9 Matthew Stranahan | 23 John Rixe |
| 9 Glenda Woo | 23 Victoria Hirano |
| 10 Darlene Hartman | 25 Keith Latimore |
| 10 Betty Mellencamp | 25 Daniel Latimore |
| 10 Michael Curtis | 26 Christina Wong |
| 10 Madison Edwards | 27 Estrella Uy |
| 10 Betty Mellencamp | 27 Bradley Jann |
| | 28 Sophie Louie |
| | 29 Vivian Char |
| | 30 Kenneth Romines |
| | 31 Ruth Stresow |
| | 31 Katerina Atinaja |
| | 31 Justin Wood |



- | |
|------------------------------|
| 2 Jonathan & Beatrice Priest |
| 4 Marvin Kwok & Jennie Ho |
| 5 David & Kathleen Garrett |
| 7 Portia Chu & Kenny Hioe |
| 11 Chris & Sharon Brase |
| 13 Lei Wu & Karen Street |
| 16 Marvin & Beverly Dye |
| 16 Peter & Estrella Uy |
| 18 Yu Meng & Eva Wong |
| 27 Steven & Eileen Crouse |
| 31 Ray & Diane Toloski |

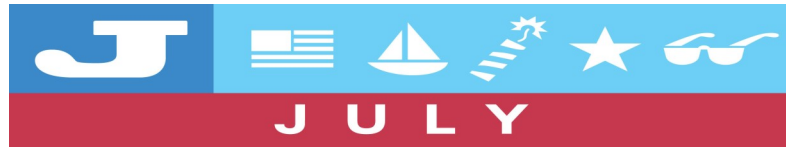
"Pray for one another" (James 5:16)

Let us follow this command of God's Word. Use the birthdays and anniversaries list each month to hold up one another to the Lord in prayer. You may wish to keep this list on your refrigerator, in your Bible, in your Portals of Prayer, or in some convenient place. What strength we receive from Almighty God when we sincerely pray for one another! And in these "interesting times," a call to a member wishing him/her birthday or anniversary greetings would probably be appreciated. It's particularly important that we keep in contact with each other when we're unable to meet in person.



The prayer
**OF THE RIGHTEOUS
 IS POWERFUL
 AND EFFECTIVE.**

James 5:16, NRSV



Wednesday, 7/1	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class
Friday, 7/3	Office is closed. July 4th Holiday	
Saturday, 7/4	5:00 PM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 7/5	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 7/5	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Monday, 7/6	6:00 PM	Membership Class-Church Library
Wednesday, 7/8	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class
Saturday, 7/11	2-4 PM	WPL Class 2022 Reunion
Saturday, 7/11	5:00 PM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 7/12	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 7/12	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Monday, 7/13	6:00 PM	Membership Class-Church Library
Wednesday, 7/15	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class
Saturday, 7/18	5:00 PM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 7/19	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 7/19	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Monday, 7/13	6:00 PM	Membership Class-Church Library
Wednesday, 7/22	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class
Saturday, 7/25	5:00 PM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 7/26	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 7/26	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Monday, 7/27	6:00 PM	Membership Class-Church Library
Wednesday, 7/29	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class

