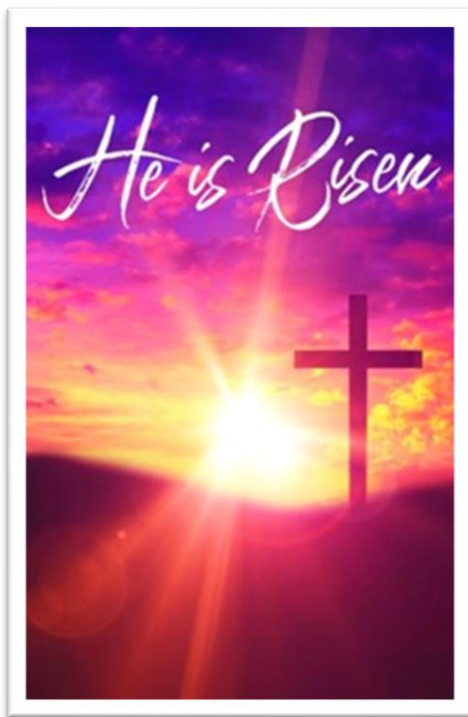


*April 2023
Newsletter*

GOOD NEWS



**Saint John Lutheran Church
Hattiesburg, Mississippi**





A Discipline of Lent is Prayer

by Rev. Phil Kuehnert

What does it mean when someone says, "I am praying for you," or some variation of that? It is certainly better, I would think, than saying "I'm thinking of you," or "I am sending positive thoughts your way."

What do you mean to say when you say or write, "I'm holding you in my prayers?" or some variation of that?

What is the power of prayer? Does it make a difference if there are 200 people praying for me than if two people are praying for me? Am I more likely to get better with 200 praying for me?

What do we hope when we call the church office or the pastor and ask for prayer? Does my request repeated before the altar during the gathering of the worshipping community have a better chance of being answered favorably?

When you pray for someone, do you put it in a specific intercession, or petition? Is a prayer more effective the more specific it is? For instance, If I pray that my friend's blood pressure stay under 130, does my prayer help my friend more than if I pray that God would improve his health, or, that God would give my friend peace of mind?

We pray because God has commanded us to pray; "Pray without ceasing." "I urge that supplications, petitions, Intercessions and Thanksgivings be made for all, especially those that are in authority." "Ask and it shall be given unto you." Whatever you ask in my name, it will be given to you." "You receive not because you ask not."

Then there are the promises in Romans 8, that when we don't have the words, the Spirit prays for us in groans that are too deep for words....and then a couple of verses later we are told that Jesus is at the right side of God's throne making intercession for us. And this, also in Romans 8, "All things work together for good to those who love God" ...and this crazy, wonderful ending: "that there is nothing in all creation that will separate us from the love of God." Is that finally the most important thing?

Two pesky things about prayer. The first is what does it mean to pray in Jesus' name? Are we asking that Jesus would edit our prayer before it gets to God the Father, or God the Holy Spirit? Are we asking that Jesus would lovingly pray only for that which would be good for us, because He is my best friend and knows me better than anyone else and knows what is best for me?

As you can imagine, I am overwhelmed by the number of people who are praying for me. It is humbling, and I am sure that most, if not all prayers are that I get better. The challenge is that short of a heart transplant, my congestive heart failure is a chronic condition. Chronic. Yes, in all the sobering definitions of that word: I will die with congestive heart failure, unless something else, like getting run over by a bus, happens first. But healing of my heart is not the only thing that I want or need. I need patience with those who don't understand....and with medical care providers who don't get back to me when they said they would. I need permission to grieve things that are no longer possible. I would like to live happily and productively within the new limitations of my body. I need prayer and encouragement.

That brings to us the 2nd pesky thing about prayer, that pesky 3rd petition - that third petition that Jesus screamed three times in the garden, as he quoted his own iconic prayer "Not my will, but thine be done." So what is God's will?

Luther's explanation to the 3rd article is sobering. *How is God's will done?*

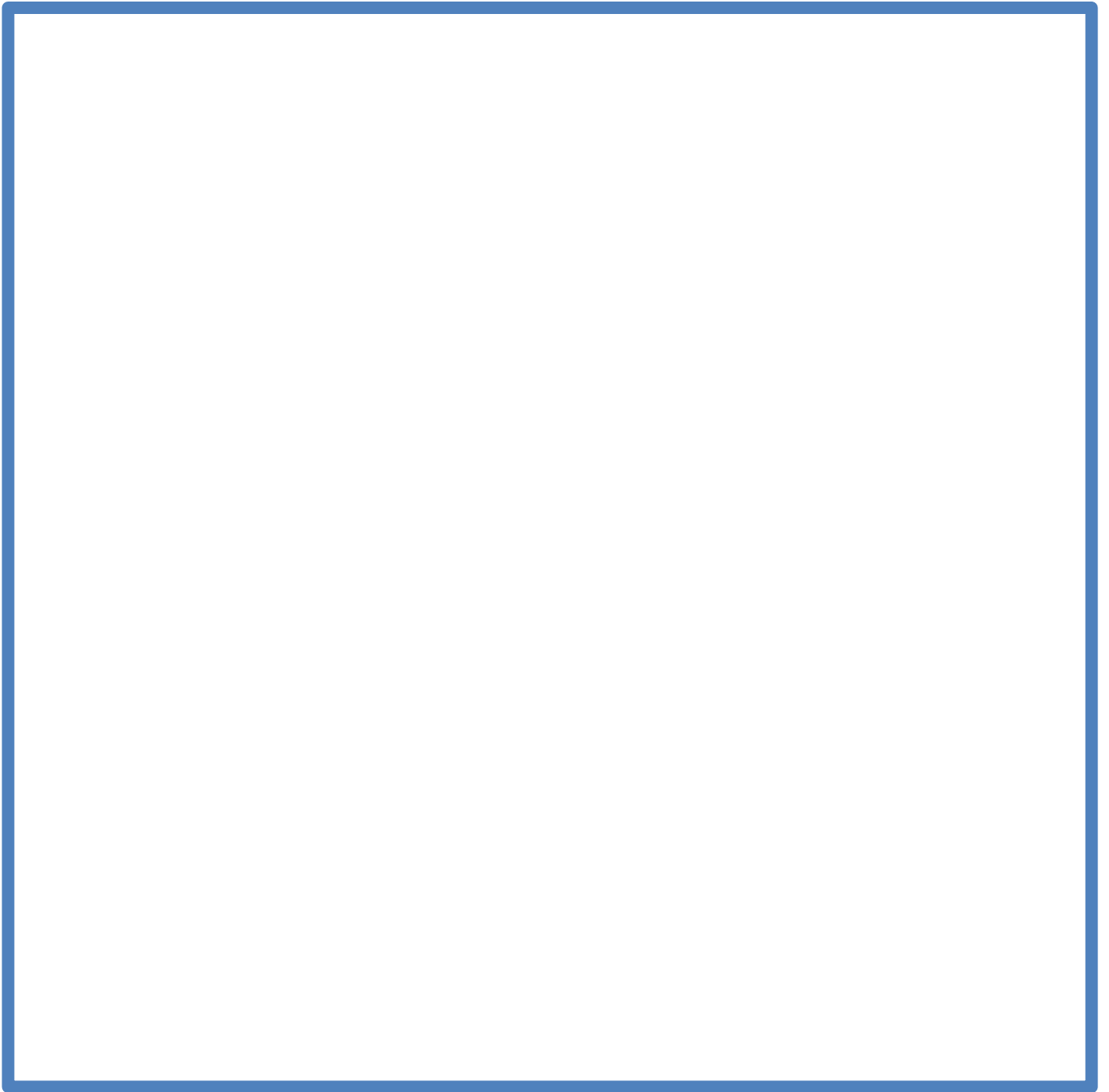
God's will is done when He breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God's name or let His kingdom come; and when He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith until we die. This is His good and gracious will.

A Prayer attributed to Nicholas Ridley (1500 - 1555)

*O heavenly Father, the Father of all wisdom, understanding and true strength, we beseech Thee look mercifully upon Thy servants, and send Thy Holy Spirit into their **hearts**, and when they must join to fight for the glory of Thy Holy Name, then they being strengthened with the defense of Thy right hand, may manfully stand in the confession of Thy faith, and of Thy truth, and continue in the same unto the end of their lives, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*



Board of Directors' Report





LWML MITES collected on Sunday, March 5, 2023, totaled \$332.29. Thank you for supporting the Gulf States District and National Mission Grants (MITES) selected in convention. At the February business meeting, members decided to challenge the congregation to collect 80 Ten Dollar Bills in MITES (\$800.00) celebrating 80 years (1942-2022) the Lutheran Women's Missionary League has been "serving the Lord" through Mission Grants. In four Sundays, the congregation has already donated \$900.00 in Ten Dollar Bills. It is amazing to me how God has blessed this challenge! Saint John LWML collects MITES on the first Sunday of every month and also collects (MITES by mail) for those unable to attend worship service. By the way, the 2021-2023 Biennium Mission Goal of \$2,150,000 voted in at the Lexington, Kentucky National Convention has been met. Praise God!!!

The 40th Biennial LWM L National Convention will be held in Milwaukee, WI on June 22-25, 2023. Theme: "Celebrate the Lord of the Nations," Scripture verse: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage! The Lord looks down from heaven, he sees all the children of ma" (Psalm 33:12-13).

The Magnolia Zone Spring Rally was held at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Biloxi, MS on Saturday, March 18, 2023, with five members from Saint John Lutheran in attendance. Our Zone has only five active congregations. There were twenty in attendance. Plans were made for our Delegate, Hanna Dunlap, to cover travel expenses to the National convention with her family.

The LWML will host an Easter Sunday Coffee Fellowship in the church narthex from 9:00 - 10:00am prior to the Resurrection Service. Alleluia! Christ has risen! He has risen Indeed! Alleluia! Please plan to come and greet our visitors, members, and friends, with some sweet breakfast goodies, coffee and juice. There will be something "special" for the children. If you would like to help or bake something, please contact any LWML member.

LWML MITES will be collected next on Sunday, April 2, 2023. If you are unable to attend worship service, you may make your check out to Saint John Lutheran LWML and mail it directly to Christina Noffke at 108 Ramblewood Drive, Hattiesburg, MS 39402.

LWML MISSION STATEMENT

As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support Missions and equip Women to honor God by serving others.

Until Next Time"Serve the Lord with Gladness!!!"
Shirley Thone
President LWML





Growing Your Faith



A Year of Feasts and Festivals



Church Office Hours: 8:00am – 12:00pm, Monday – Thursday

Phone: 601.583.4898

Email: stjohnlutheranchurch@gmail.com

April 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 12pm AA	3 9am Men's Breakfast 10am AA 11:30am Ladies' Luncheon
4 10:30am Worship MITES Collected	5 12pm AA	6 12pm AA	7 10am Avenue' s Bible Study 12pm AA	8 12pm AA	9 12pm AA	10 10am AA
11 10:30am Worship	12 12pm AA	13 12pm AA	14 12pm AA	15 12pm AA 7pm BOD	16 12pm AA	17 10am AA
18 10:30am Worship	19 12pm AA	20 12pm AA	21 10am Avenue' s Bible Study	22 12pm AA	23 12pm AA	24 10am AA

			12pm AA			Christmas Eve
25 10:30am Worship Christmas!	26 12pm AA	27 12pm AA	28 12pm AA	29 12pm AA	30 12pm AA	31 10am AA

Serving in April
Interim Pastor
 Rev. Gary Weier
Music Director
 Jason Sims
Altar Care Team
 Patricia Davenport
 Christina Keiper

Live Streaming of Worship Services — www.saintjohnhattiesburg.com.

Portals of Prayer for April-June are available at the lobby mailboxes.

April Newsletter — available via the church website and printed copies are at the foyer mailboxes. Thanks to all those who contributed!

May Newsletter Deadline — Monday, April 17th at 10am.

The Spirit that is St. John:



April Celebrations!



B I R T H D A Y S

Brenda Hesselgrave	1/1
Skylar Chaney	1/11
Jerry Frederick	1/11
Don Shields	1/11
David Grunig	1/16
Jayce Wastvedt	1/17
Sawyer Chaney	1/20
Regina Johnson	1/27
Susan Perkins	1/30
Karla Weiss	1/30
Trenia Thiel	1/31



B A P T I S M S

Eric Reid	1/1
Jason Sims	1/1
Lisa Case	1/8
Jane O'Connor	1/10
Isaac Jimenez	1/13
Michael Jimenez	1/13
Naomi Jimenez	1/13
Willy Noffke	1/19



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Thomas & Brenda Hesselgrave 1/9
Bob & Mary Cubley 1/27

Surprise the World!
Love. Like. Jesus. + Hope for the City.



Saint John Lutheran Church

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