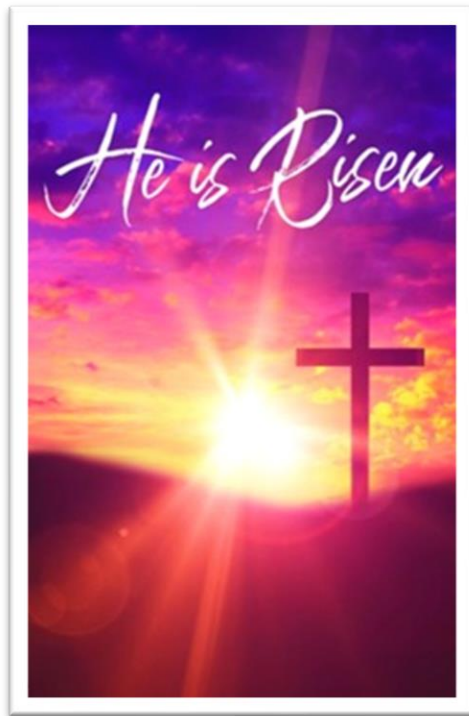


*April 2023  
Newsletter*

# GOOD NEWS



**Saint John Lutheran Church  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi**



# A NOTE FROM YOUR PASTOR

Since Spring has come and Easter has been celebrated, I thought it would be a good time to share some words from the book of Job. In Chapter 12:7, Job is responding to his friend Zophar. And in this particular verse he draws that the beast of the field and the birds of the air will tell you God has caused his suffering even though he is innocent. And this is because Job understands that in the hand of the Lord is every living thing. As we contemplate this in light of Easter, Jesus, his Son was in His hand just as we are. And we are safe to assert that God did this work of sending his innocent son to suffer on the cross, to die for us, and to rise to give us life as only a creator who holds all life in his hand can do. Jesus suffered unjustly as God's perfect Son; Job suffered as a man created by God, unjust by Job's estimation. However, Job is work of God's hand and not God. Through Job's suffering we know that God is still faithful. And through the suffering of Jesus, we know that we are saved.

In Psalm 104:11-13, besides the beasts and wild donkeys, dwell the birds of the heavens and they sing among the branches. From the Lord's lofty abode, He waters the mountains, and the earth is satisfied with His work. How satisfying it is for us to realize the faithfulness of the Lord for our Salvation. When I hear the birds call in the morning, it makes me think the birds are reminding me that they are a work of his hands, just is the Easter Joy we celebrate.



Blessings and peace,  
*Pastor Chet*



The BOD met on March 21, 2024. The financial report reflected that our receipts are up from this time last year and we exceeded our budget projections. Year to date we are ahead \$4,210. This is great news, and we thank God for all of our blessings. We remain in good shape financially and are always cognizant of giving fluctuations throughout the year.

BOD actions taken:

- Discussion on updating the church By-Laws
- Discussions on church maintenance.
- Completion of the cleaning and waxing of the floors in the educational wing and fellowship hall.
- The church picnic is scheduled for June 23rd at Lake Serene Clubhouse.

We encourage you to review the Board minutes on the bulletin board in the narthex and if you have any questions, please feel free to ask. Also, please share any concerns you may have with members of the Board. We are at your service.

In his service and yours,

*The Board*



LWML MITES collected on Sunday, March 3, 2024, totaled \$128.96. Thank you for your continued prayers and support of the Mission Grants selected in convention by the Gulf States District and National LWML.

On Sunday, April 7, 2024, the LWML will meet in the Community Room immediately following the worship service. Agenda Items: Magnolia Zone Rally; Gulf States District Convention "Gifts from the Heart" collection; District Mission Grants Proposal (will be voted on prior to convention). All women are invited and welcome - especially if you are new to our church! Please come and share your gifts of talent in serving Saint John Lutheran and our community.

The Magnolia Zone Spring Rally will be held on Saturday, April 13, 2024, at Christ Lutheran Church in Pascagoula. Registration will begin at 9:00am with a continental breakfast. The Business Meeting will begin at 10:00am. This is an important meeting as we will be planning for the District Convention in Prattville, AL on April 26-27, 2024. We plan to carpool and will meet at the church by 7:30am. Please let me or Lillian Smith know if you plan to attend. I will be the Delegate for Saint John Lutheran Ladies Guild and also for the Magnolia Zone.

The Gulf States District Convention will be held in Prattville, AL, on April 26-27, 2024. Theme: "Return to your Rest (Psalm 116:7)." Julie Radavich and I will be attending as Delegate and Alternate for Saint John Lutheran Ladies Guild. At the February LWML meeting, members voted to fill a Pack 'N Play placed in the church narthex with ALL BABY ITEMS, including Gift Cards for the Autauga Interfaith Center in Prattville, AL. These Gifts will be taken to the convention. We will be collecting these items for the first three Sundays in April.

LWML MITES will be collected on Sunday, April 7, 2024. If you are unable to attend worship, 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



## *From the Altar Guild*

We have concluded Easter season and are slipping quietly into Ordinary season. However, it is anything but ordinary, but rather, it is indeed *extraordinary*! You will notice the color green now adorns the Altar and vestments. Green represents growth. Growth can be seen readily in the vegetation around us, but can it be seen readily in the spirituality within us? The term "growth" elicits images of outward movement, that is, an observable change in appearance. Inwardly, we focus on the teachings of our Lord that we may grow in faith, in love, in giving, and in receiving. From that inward focus should come the outward movement of growth in sharing what is generously given to us: God's Word, His love, His forgiveness. So, as we grow through the Word, will that growth be visible to others?

### *You are cordially invited...*

Yes, you are invited to join the Altar Guild. Preparing the Lord's Table each week is a simple, but *extraordinary* and rewarding ministry. Assisting on the Altar Guild is a special way in which to quietly and prayerfully serve all who come to partake of this most wonderful feast. The tasks are not difficult, and it is a shared experience. Altar Care Teams work in pairs and commit to one month of Altar service per year. We have a meeting once a year to address any concerns, set up a working schedule, discuss new ideas, and develop a basic plan of action for the next year. Our next meeting will be held in early September. Look for the date in future newsletters and church bulletins. Of course, you don't have to wait until then to join! Got questions? Just curious? I will be happy to share information with you!

### *Did you know...*

There is an ancient tradition (from the fourth century) for receiving the Body of Christ during Communion to make the hands into a "throne" for the King of kings. This "throne" is made by placing the open right hand upon and across the open left hand (forming a cross). Both hands are then used to bring the bread to the mouth. Whatever manner you use to receive the Body of Christ, know, and be comforted in that it is an eschatological feast--a foretaste of the heavenly banquet to come.  
*Extraordinary!*

**Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for His mercy endures forever!**

Christina Keiper  
Altar Guild Chair



***"The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." James 5:16b (NIV)***

Confession? I'm sometimes scared to pray boldly. It's not at all that I don't believe God can do anything. I absolutely do. I'm a "wild about Jesus" kind of girl. My hesitation is more rooted in doubt about myself and my ability to discern the will of God. Because sometimes God chooses not to do things. And if His will is "no" while I am boldly praying for a "yes," it makes me feel out of step with God. You too?

I so desperately want to stay in the will of God that I sometimes find myself praying with "but if" clauses. *God, please heal my friend ... but if it's Your will to take her, I will trust You.* I wonder why I don't just boldly pray, *God, please heal my friend,* and then stand confident that my prayers are not in vain no matter the outcome.

The reality is that praying boldly boots us out of a stale place of religious habit into authentic connection with God Himself. Prayer opens our spiritual eyes to see things we can't see on our own. *"The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective"* (James 5:16b). So prayer does make a difference — a life-changing, mind-blowing, earth-shattering difference. We don't need to know how or when. We just need to kneel confidently and know that our simple, short prayers extend wide, high and deep.

If you've been wrestling through some unanswered prayers recently, keep pressing into God. Keep praying. Don't pull away. He isn't ignoring you; He's listening. He loves you too much to answer your prayers at any other time than the right time and in any other way than the right way. Letting that truth wash over my soul snuffs out the flickers of hesitation. It bends my stiff knees. And it ignites a fresh, bold wildfire within me. Not bossy and demanding, but **bold**, as in, *I love Jesus with all my heart, so I want to show up and try again. Pray again. Ask again.*

Jesus said, *"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him"* (Matthew 6:6-8, NIV).

What do you need to pray boldly about today? Don't listen to fear — go ahead and ask again. Not so that we can cause God to move according to our plans but so that we can position our souls to be able to see Jesus move in any way He pleases.

*Dear Lord, You are the Giver of life and Lord over all things. Thank You for providing exactly what we need, even when it isn't what we want. Help us to trust that You have our best interests in mind today. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

Lisa Case



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

**Pastor's Hours:** Tue-Thu: 9:00am – 1:00pm; Fri – Sun: by appt; Mon: off

**Phone:** 601.583.4898

**Email:** [stjohnlutheranchurch@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnlutheranchurch@gmail.com)

**3rd - Kaffee Klatsch** - meets at 1:30pm.

**4th – Spayghetti Dinner** - This dine-in or take-out fundraiser on **April 4th** is hosted by the Southern Pines Healthy Pet Clinic. Won't you help to make a difference for our animals and community?

Time: 4:00-6:00pm

Location: St. John Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall

Meal options: \$11.00/plate with meat, \$9.00/plate without meat

\$31.00 Family Meal with meat - feeds 4

\$26.00 Family Meal without meat - feeds 4

**6th - Men's Breakfast** - meets at Chesterfield's Restaurant at 9:00am.

**7th - MITES** - The LWML will be collecting MITES. If you cannot give in person, please mail your mites to Christina Noffke at 108 Ramblewood Drive, Hattiesburg, MS 39402. Make your check payable to Saint John Lutheran LWML.

**10th - Avenues Study Group** - meets in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00am.

**17th - Kaffee Klatsch** - meets at 1:30pm.

**18th - BOD** - meets at 6:30pm.

**21st – Oktoberfest Meeting** after worship service.

**24th - Avenues Study Group** - meets in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00am.

## **Serving in April**

**Pastor**

Chet Scherbarth

**Pianist**

Lewei He

**Altar Care Team**

Patricia Davenport    Christina Keiper

**Live Streaming of Worship Services** — [www.saintjohnhattiesburg.com](http://www.saintjohnhattiesburg.com).

**Bell Choir** – The Bell Choir will not meet during the month of April.

**Portals of Prayer for April - June** are available in the Narthex.

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

**May Newsletter Deadline** — Monday, April 22nd.

**The Spirit that is St. John:**





## ***April Celebrations!***



### **B I R T H D A Y S**

Donna Blair	4/7
Nancy Grunig	4/17
Jean Martin	4/20
Art Kersh	4/23
Eric Martin	4/25
Bonnie Houser	4/30
Ron Johnson	4/30



### **B A P T I S M S**

Wayland Johnson	4/1
Joyce Coll	4/7



### **A N N I V E R S A R I E S** **W E D D I N G**

Lee & Maggie McMichael (47)	4/9
Damian & Pat Potesta (12)	4/21



### **Saint John Lutheran Church**

2001 Hardy Street

Hattiesburg MS 39401

Telephone: 601.583.4898

Website: [www.saintjohnhattiesburg.com](http://www.saintjohnhattiesburg.com)

Email: [stjohnlutheranchurch@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnlutheranchurch@gmail.com)

Like Us on Facebook: Oktoberfest Hattiesburg

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