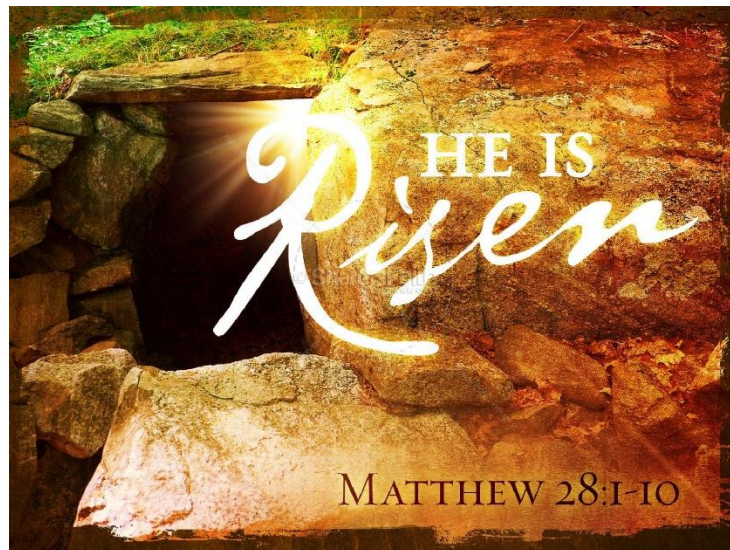


Our April 2026 Newsletter

To those who are new we welcome you
and here is our St. John newsletter!



Saint John Lutheran Church
Hattiesburg, Mississippi



A NOTE FROM YOUR PASTOR

Nostalgia

In Exodus chapter 16 we see the beginning of God's interaction directly with the congregation of the people of Israel. And time and again we see them complain. Often it's hunger or thirst. We see in this complaint a need. Next, the emotion of it used to be better where we were. We call that nostalgia. The good old days. Hey, the meat pots were full we could have died with a full belly. Never mind the bondage and slavery. And that is the danger of Nostalgia. As an emotion it makes you think of better times. Yet it colors what actually may be going on. Those better times may in fact not be better times. They may be rose colored bondage and servitude. The tendency to romanticize the good time over the bad may color the memory and the reality. Take the congregation of the people of Israel. Before they went to Egypt all those years ago, they lived and worshiped in freedom in the land of Canaan. What do I mean by that? They were able to govern themselves and to follow the statutes of the Lord and not the statutes of a pharaoh who thought of himself a god. As slaves they lived and died at the whim of the Egyptian ruler. The birth story of Moses is a great example. All those babies born at the time he was born were thrown in the river with the intent to curb the growth of the slaves. What an abomination! Yet the meat pots were full, though the cribs empty. What kind of life is it to live under a ruler who seeks to curb your people? As I write this, I listen to old songs, familiar comforting songs. One part nostalgia, and the other the old familiarity. Wrapped in warm feelings of a time that is past. I experience the same thing when I enter into the flea markets and see my childhood on display for sale. I remember the joyful moments of childhood. Never mind the reality of that childhood living on the farm where the weather dictates much of what you can accomplish each day and the

amount time one must labor. Of course weather is only one adversary. You have Satan and his wiles, and the brokenness of mankind. All things that happen at the same time. Yet we pick out the one thing we think is good and we are transported to a time where we thought it was simpler.

Years ago I was at my field work church in a bible study. And an elderly retired pastor's wife in the bible study remarked on how much she missed the 60's. Specifically the good old days of the church. She was looking at her condition now of frailty and age and looked back wishing for those prime years. Never mind all the things going on in the world. Vietnam, civil rights protest, all the violence that went with that. And even as I say that what have these last few years been like? Will I look back and think man I miss these good old days? I pray I do not. Instead I pray that I focus on the joy of the moment of being with God every day. Of course that is easier said than done. God often sends us into places that are hard. We experience times of want and need, refining and fire. So as to be tested and shaped for his purpose. And even though the hardness of that cannot be fully articulated with the reward at the end which is much greater than any time or place we recall. No matter the test or trial, we are to be faithful to God. Faithful as he is faithful to us in his son Jesus. Who brought us out of bondage into his marvelous freedom. Amen





Board of Director's Report
March 2026

The BOD met on March 17, 2026. The financial report shows that our receipts were \$21,332 and expenses were \$20,518 for an excess of \$814. This has reduced our deficit for the year to \$5,509.00. In 2 Corinthians 9:7, "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." This applies to all sources of giving including our time, talents, and treasurers. Please continue prayerfully considering your plan for giving throughout this year.

We thank everyone who came out on our workday on Saturday March 21, 2026, for helping with our clean-up. We will have a second workday this Saturday March 28, 2026, to finish the job. The more the merrier and we will glorify the Lord as we labor for a few hours under the beautiful skies of Mississippi.

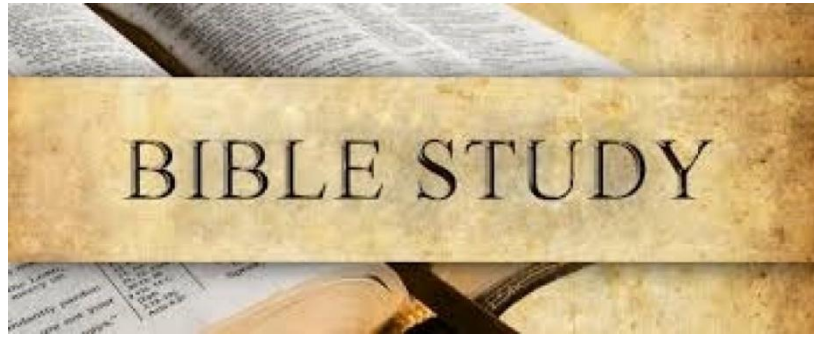
BOD actions taken:

- Inquiring about the cost of a memorial plaque for the church sign in front. It will match the existing plaque in size. Bids continue to be received.
- Cross-generational vacation bible school (VBS) will be June 10-12. If you would like to help, please see Beth. Otherwise, invite your friends and neighbors to attend and learn about our Savior Jesus Christ.
- There will be no children's Sunday school this summer. We will have a Sunday school rally to start up Sunday school in the Fall. Adult classes will continue throughout the Summer.
- First Oktoberfest Committee meeting will be on April 19, 2026, immediately after church service.

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



Bible study opportunities at St. John's

The Luke's Bible study led by Pastor Chet.
April 2nd & 16th
at 1:30 p.m.

Avenue Bible Study
Meets the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month
at 10:00 a.m.

Women's Bible Study
2nd & 4th Thursday of the month at 4:30 p.m.
Facilitated by Beth Scherbarth

Sunday morning Bible Class
Facilitated by Ellen Heck at 9:15 a.m.

New College/ Twenty Something
Bible Study, Sunday morning at 9:15 a.m.
Facilitated by Tommy Breland





April 23rd
Tentatively: 4:00-5:30 PM
Spay-ghetti Dinner
Take-Out/Sit down Fundraiser
at St. John's Lutheran Church!
Benefits Southern Pine Healthy Pet Clinics
(Sign-up sheet for Sit down option for St. John members.)

FOR DINE-IN:

Although the ticketing site says "no dine-in" to the general public, we'd like to give the congregation of St. John's the chance to dine-in this time! Things to know:

- If you're dining in, we will have dinner ready at 5pm! This will allow us to get past the pick-up that usually happens between 4pm-4:45pm
- Single Spaghetti plates will be priced as follows:
 - Meatballs - \$8
 - Veggie - \$7
- We will have a small selection of drinks available at no charge
- Please indicate if you are planning to attend via the sign up sheet
- Members of the congregation are welcome to sign up until **Sunday, April 19th**
- If you are planning to dine in, please **DO NOT** sign up via the ticketing website
- Payment can be made at the door via card or cash

FOR PICK-UP:

If members of the congregation are interested in take-home meals, they are welcome to order their meals via: <https://give.southernpinesanimalshelter.org/event/spayghetti-to-go/e783491>

- Pick-up will happen between 4pm-5:30pm
- Prices are as follows:
 - Baked Spaghetti with Meatballs and Cheese (SERVES 4): \$30
 - Baked Spaghetti with Meatballs and Cheese (SERVES 2): \$15
 - Vegetarian Baked Spaghetti with Cheese (SERVES 4): \$26
 - Vegetarian Baked Spaghetti with Cheese (SERVES 2): \$13
- Each pan feeds two people and comes with easy heating instructions as well as garlic bread and utensils.





Men and Young Men

You are invited to:

**Men's Breakfast, the first Saturday of the month.
Come and Enjoy Devotion, Food and Fellowship!**

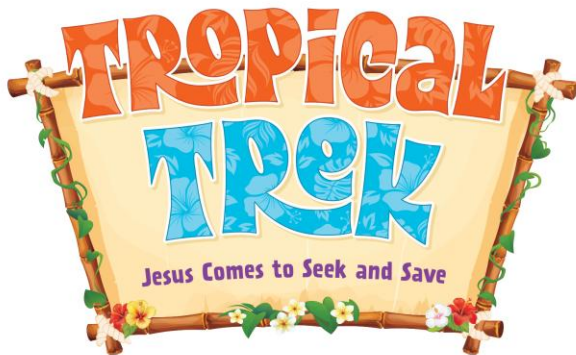
At: Chesterfields 4646 Hardy Street Hattiesburg, MS.



Kaffee Klatsch – meets first and third Monday of the month at 1:30pm in the Fellowship Hall.



**April 19th
Oktoberfest Meeting
(Immediately following church)**

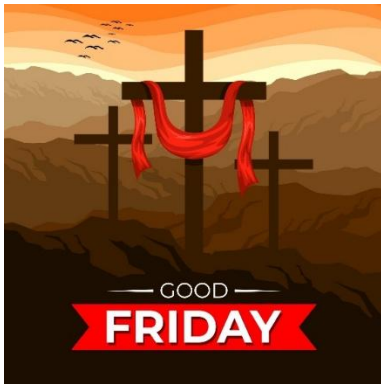


**Mark your calendars:
Cross-generational VBS
Fundraiser
May 3, 2026**



Holy Maundy Thursday Service

April 2, 2026, at 6p.m.



Good Friday Service April 3, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.



EASTER SUNDAY (April 5, 2026)
LWML will host "Coffee Fellowship"
with "Home Baked" sweets during the
Sunday School Hour.

There will be "Special" treats for the
children, and an
"Easter Egg Hunt."
A Sign-up List will be available if you
would like to help.



From the Altar Guild April 2026

Our Lord has been Resurrected ~

Jesus' resurrection is the Father's declaration that Christ's atonement for our sins was accepted, for Jesus "was handed over to die because of our sins, and He was raised to life to make us right with God" (Rom 4:25). Our sins were the reason Jesus went to the cross (Rom 5:8; 2 Cor 5:21). He bore the penalty that rightfully belonged to us, for "Christ died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet 3:18). Jesus' Resurrection Matters, and it gives me pause for Reflection. In fact, it's life changing! Knowing He died for my sins (and yours) stops me in my tracks. It's the most beautiful gift!

The nature of life is change, which may happen more quickly than I'd like at times. And as one who likes to keep pace, it can cause me to rush through life, eager to reach higher and do more.

With Christ's Resurrection, I remember the importance of stepping back and reflecting on how far I've come in my spiritual growth and understanding. I have survived many trials and realized many dreams and all along the way, I know I have been enveloped in the love and grace that only our Lord can give. Reflection puts my present life in perspective by replenishing my gratitude for the goodness and grace of God, which fills my life with many blessings.

Reflection also keeps me grounded in the present, able to fully appreciate the gifts unfolding before me and able to behold God in the midst of it all! For us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist (1 Cor 8:6).

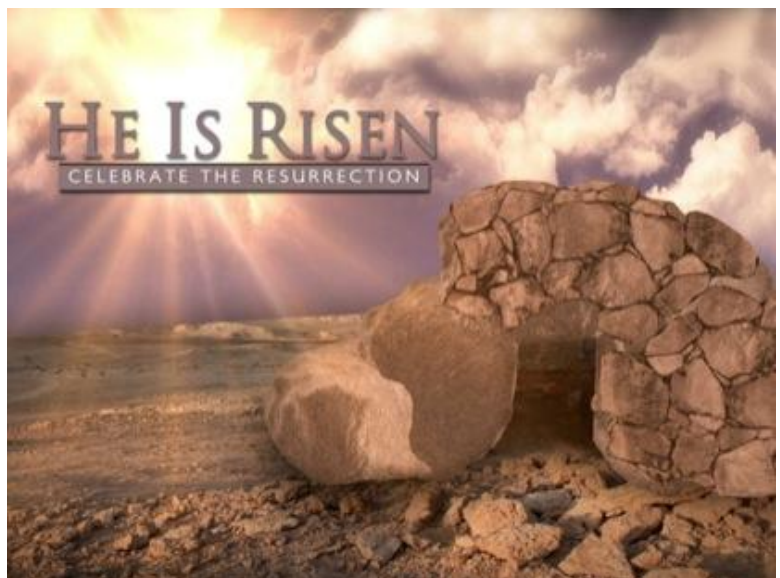
I pray you reflect and find God anew.

Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

All praise to our Lord

Christina Clark,

Altar Guild Chair





LWML - APRIL NEWSLETTER

LWML "MITES" collected on Sunday, March 1, totaled \$75.97. Thank you for your prayers and support of the Mission Grants (MITES) selected in the Convention of the Gulf States District and National LWML. "MITES" will be collected NEXT on Easter Sunday, April 5, 2025. There will be no LWML Business meeting in April.

The LWML will host an Easter Morning Coffee Fellowship during the Sunday School Hour. There will be Coffee, Juice, and all kinds of "home baked" Breakfast "sweets". Also, some special surprises for the children. Gracie Scherbath and helpers, will once again, head the "Easter Egg Hunt" for the Sunday School. If you would like to bring your favorite breakfast "sweet", contact any LWML member. Come and enjoy the fun and fellowship on this wonderful day! HE IS RISEN!!! HE IS RISEN INDEED!!! ALLELUIA !!!

The LWML Gulf States District Convention will be held at the Courtyard Marriott in Gulfport, Mississippi from April 24-26, 2026. Theme: "Jesus our Hope - Anchor of our Soul." (Hebrews 6:19a). The Registration Fee of \$150.00 has been extended to March 25, 2026, by the District. The "Gifts from the Heart" recipient, Camp Dixie in Foley, Alabama, is a Lutheran Summer Camp for Youth Groups, and Retreats. If you would like to contribute "Gifts Cards" for Lowes, Home Depot, Target, Walmart, etc. there will be a BOX in the church narthax from Sunday, April 12 - April 19, 2026. As Delegate for the Saint John Lutheran Ladies Guild, I will deliver these "gifts" at Registration on April 24, 2026. Registration begins at 12:00 p.m. on Friday, April 24, 2026. Check-In to hotel starts at 3:00 p.m. Thank you for supporting "Camp Dixie"!

LWML "MITES" will be collected on Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026. 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

April 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 12pm AA	2 12pm AA Pastor's Bible Study 1:30 Maundy Thursday service 6pm	3 12pm AA Good Friday service 6 pm	4 9:00 Men's Breakfast 10:00 a.m.AA
5 EASTER 9:15am Easter Breckfast Easter Egg hunt 10:30am Worship	6 Kaffee Klasch 10:00 a.m. 12pm AA	7 12pm AA	8 10:00 a.m. Avenue Bible Study 12 pm AA	9 12pm AA Women's Bible Study 4:30pm	10 12pm AA	11 10am AA
12 9:15am Sunday School & Bible Study 10:30am Worship Service	13 12pm AA	14 12pm AA	15 12 pm AA	16 12pm AA Pastor's Bible Study 1:30	17 12pm AA	18 10am AA
19 9:15am Sunday School & Bible Study 10:30am Worship Oktoberfest Meeting immediately after church	20 Kaffee Klasch 10:00 a.m. 12pm AA	21 12pm AA	22 10:00 a.m. Avenue Bible Study 12 pm AA	23 12pm AA 4-5:30 Spay-ghetti dinner Women's Bible Study 4:30pm (community room)	24 12pm AA	25 10am AA

26 12pm AA 9:15am Sunday School & Bible Study 10:30am Worship	27 12pm AA	28 12pm AA	29 12pm AA	30 12pm AA		
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March Celebrations!

Birthdays



Donna Blair	April 7
Nancy Grunig	April 17
Anna Elledge	April 18
Jean Martin	April 20
Teresa Bennett	April 22
Eric Martin	April 25
Beth Scherbarth	April 27
Bonnie Houser	April 30
Ronald Johnson	April 30

Baptism Celebrations



Wayland Johnson	April 1
Pat Potesta	April 2
Joyce Coll	April 7
Catherine Lee	April 14
Ethan Reid	April 15
Scott Chaney	April 21
Skylar Chaney	April 21
Kyra Johnson	April 29



Wedding Anniversaries

Maggie & Lee McMichael	April 9
Pat & Damian Potesta	April 21



Saint John Lutheran Church

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Hattiesburg MS 39401
Telephone: 601.583.4898 Website:
Email: stjohnlutheranchurch@gmail.com
Like Us on Facebook: Oktoberfest Hattiesburg
Like Us on Facebook: Saint John Church Hattiesburg



Church Office Hours: 9:00am – 1:00pm, Tuesday – Friday; After 1p.m. by appt.
Pastor's Office Hours: Tue-Thu: 9:00am – 1:00pm; after 1p.m. by appt. Also Fri – Sun by appointment.

