

*June 2023
Newsletter*

GOOD NEWS

Because Good Happens!

**Saint John Lutheran Church
Hattiesburg, Mississippi**





Board of Directors' Report
For May 2023

The BOD met on May 18, 2023. Our financial situation continues to be sound. The Board thanks everyone for your continued giving during this challenging time as we search for a new pastor.

The Call committee continues its search for a new Pastor. Please continue to pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance in our pastoral search.

We will begin the remediation of the building very soon. As part of the remediation protocol, we will have air quality tests done before and after the work. We will periodically perform testing to ensure good air quality. The remediation will be throughout the entire building. We are scheduling a start date for the work. Thank you for your patience.

We are considering a fundraiser to pay down the mortgage even faster. If you would like to volunteer for such an effort, please see a Board member.

Work on Oktoberfest 2023 has begun. We encourage everyone who wants to support this Mission project to join us as we start our planning. We hope and pray that the leadership team that planned and implemented the mission event last year, will continue to do so for this year's event. All of our proceeds go directly to our mission partners, which were again fully funded by St. John. Thank you again for all who made last year's Oktoberfest a tremendous success.

Please be on the lookout for details of our church picnic, scheduled July 9th.

Ongoing Board issues include:

- Re-establish ushers, readers, and greeters. Christopher Longman and Nancy Kaul will coordinate and develop a plan of action.
- The minutes of the Board meetings are posted on the bulletin board located in the narthex.

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.

In his service and yours,

The Board



LWML MITES collected on Sunday, May 7, 2023, totaled \$171.39. Praise God!!! Thank you all for your continued prayers and support of the "Mission Grants" selected in convention by the Gulf States District and National LWML.

The LWML 40th Biennial Convention will be held in Milwaukee, WI on June 22, 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! (Psalm 33:12-13). Thousands of women and men from all over our nation will celebrate the love of God with his Word and Sacrament. Julie Radavich will experience this special time along with family members from California and Wisconsin. Keep Julie and all those traveling to the convention to celebrate 80 years with the Mission Grants (MITES) telling the Love of Jesus all over the world. Praise God!!!

Coming in June . . . The LWML will host a special Farewell and God's Blessings Potluck in honor of Katie, Daniel, and Ruth Robinson on their last Sunday here, as they will be returning to Kansas. This beautiful young family has been worshipping with us for a little over a year. We will truly miss them-especially baby Ruth and her sweet smile. The LWML will collect your "Love, farewell and God's Blessing" cards, letters, etc. every Sunday, and present them at the potluck. Watch the Sunday Bulletins for more details. Please make plans to send them off with our love and prayers.

Coming soon. . . The LWML will host a Baby Shower for Lynne and Chris Longman who are expecting their first - a little girl in July. Watch for more details as we prepare to share this time of joy with Lynne and Chris.

LWML MITES will be collected next on Sunday, June 4, 2023. Saint John Lutheran Ladies Guild has been collecting "Mites by Mail" for those unable to attend worship services for the past three years. If you are unable to attend worship, you may make your check out to Saint John Lutheran LWML and mail it directly to our society treasurer, Christina Noffke, at 108 Ramblewood Drive, Hattiesburg, MS 39402. MITES are collected on the first Sunday of every month.

The LWML will hold a Business meeting on Sunday, June 4, 2023, in the Community Room immediately following the worship service. Please make plans to attend. You are needed! Agenda: Magnolia Zone Fall Rally Date, Farewell Potluck for Robinsons, Baby Shower plans for the Longmans, Church Picnic - July 9, 2023.

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

Who are the false prophets? Who are the wolves in sheep's clothing?

In the days of early Christian disciples, some of the *false prophets* performed works of healing and exorcisms in the name of Jesus but lived evil lives. It is hard to imagine how that could be so. Yet it was a tender issue with Jesus. He seemed emphatic that only those works and deeds be done by the will of the Father.

The Gospel reading (Matthew 7:17-20) for this: "A good tree will bear good fruit; a rotten tree will bear bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a rotten tree bear good fruit."

That seems clear cut. "By their fruits you will know them." Time usually tells the truth in many matters.

We've known false prophets in our day too. One that comes to mind is Heaven's Gate led by Bonnie Nettles and Marshall Applewhite. Others that are easily recalled are Jim Jones, Charles Manson, and David Koresh.

It's scary and very sad. You feel bad for all the innocent people involved. What were they needing? What was missing in their lives that they placed such trust and faith in some of these leaders?

But there are many false prophets-there are experts that would persuade you to do wrong. One example is peer pressure among any age group. We know there are plenty of wolves in sheep's clothing: these nice voices on the phone, or people that come to your door with scams that take advantage of people are still going strong. The list of present-day scams is long, varied, and malicious with one goal: to mislead others down a path so that only the *false prophet* prospers.

I seem to be frequently challenged to look inside these "bad trees," if you will, and believe that good fruit can come forth. It is well known that some of the most unpleasant and rotten humus, that is, organic compost, aids in producing some of the sweetest and healthiest vegetables and fruits. What is of God is good.

How do we know the will of God? We learn that by spending personal time with our Creator. Become still, become quiet, rest in God. Listen with the ear of your heart using utmost patience in God's idea of time, which is not the same as we perceive time. And you will be known by your fruits.

A Prayer:

Father, we come to you as humble children. You know our needs before we ask, yet we turn to you for guidance and protection. You are our very sustenance. Your mercies are great, and your love is everlasting. Amen.



HELP FOR THE WEARY

"Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him." John 13:5 (ESV)

Rise before dawn for an hour of Bible study and a 5-mile run: **Check!**

Fold laundry and order groceries while attending an online meeting: **No worries!**

Cook dinner and load the dishwasher while helping with homework: **Easy peasy!**

Said no woman ever.

Many are the seasons of a woman's life, but I've yet to hear anyone say life is always easy. As for me, I'm often a weary woman wondering how I could possibly make a difference when I can't even drag myself out of bed in the morning or make a meal some nights.

But my soul is encouraged to know that the Lord Himself understands the demands of life, for during His time on earth, Jesus knew what it was to live a full, poured-out life.

The Apostle John records this beautiful example for us: *"Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So, he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him"* (John 13:3-5, NLT).

In Jesus' day, it was common to provide water for guests to wash their feet after they'd walked in sandals along dusty roads. Foot washing, though, was considered a servant's task, not a leader's. Yet despite Jesus' authority, while His disciples reclined around the Last Supper table, Jesus served His beloved friends by cleaning their feet.

Afterward, Jesus explained: *"And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you"* (John 13:14-15, NLT).

Though Jesus was physically spent from His journey to Jerusalem and mentally anguished by the impending cross, He humbly cared for His people, setting the ultimate example of servant leadership. In seasons when we wearily wonder if all we're offering our people and our communities makes any difference, may our spirits rest in the shadow of the Savior, who humbly served His world and ultimately made the greatest difference of all. (Isaiah 53; John 1:29)

This doesn't imply that we should neglect healthy boundaries by adding more to our to-do lists than God intends. Jesus also set a beautiful example of withdrawing for prayer and rest, affording Him wisdom to know when and where to apply His limited human resources. (Luke 5:16) Likewise, as dawn's warmth strolls across the eastern sky each morning, may we follow Jesus' lead and seek God for wisdom to know which tasks belong to today and which do not.

And in seasons when the demands of life leave us feeling weary and spent, may we steal away for moments with the Lord, and may we rest in the company of the Savior who understands life's seasons of sacrifice.

It is such a comfort to me that our God knows what it is to be human and weary. The sacrifices you make amid challenging seasons aren't lost on Him; He understands. When you feel like your energy is spilled upon the ground of long days and weary nights, take heart — God sees your service and the quiet legacy you're leaving as you impact the lives of those around you.

Even when you can't always sense it, God is moving within your story as you step into the shadow of the Savior's example and mark the world with His love.

Dear Jesus, thank You for being a trustworthy example for every season of life. Please give us wisdom and strength to do Your will as we seek to serve those around us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



Refresh Your Weary Soul



Reason for Hope

1 Peter 3:15a - But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you [all] for a reason for the hope that is in you ...

A well-made violin, like a human being, is fearfully and wonderfully made. But it needs time and use to mature. I'm told that new violins must be played into condition. They must be conditioned to develop a well-rounded tone. While some debate this claim, it is indisputably part of violin-making lore. One hundred and thirty-some years ago, a British violin maker named Edward Heron-Allen noted that a violin consists of seventy different parts and that these pieces are like "strangers to each other." So, "it takes a century, more or less, to make them *thoroughly* acquainted."

A good fiddle, like a human being, is to be conditioned by age and experience. But, unlike a human being, a fiddle is not an individual. It's an ensemble of different parts commingling in community for a common purpose. So, maybe we should modify our metaphor and say that a well-crafted fiddle, like a *human* community, is designed to deepen and sweeten in tone through time and use.

This is how Peter, the writer of our text today, thought of things. Maybe you noticed how I added the word "all" to the translation we're using. A literal translation might say, "If anyone asks *ya'll* for a reason for the hope that is in *yous guys-and-gals* ..." This important point of grammar is easily missed by us English readers of the text. The fact is, Peter is addressing a community, not isolated individuals. Often, I hear Peter's encouragement spoken in the singular. That is, I'm supposed to think of how I, alone, as an individual, can be a good witness to this hope in Jesus. But Peter didn't think like that, not exactly. He wants us to think about our *collective* witness. Yes, of course, this involves individual action and personal responsibility. But it's always in relation to others in a community.

So, Peter devotes much of his letter addressing households and servants, husbands and wives, sisters and brothers—people bound to each other in love and mutual service. He encourages them, and us, to be in-tune with each other, sympathetic, of the same mind, resonating together with the self-sacrificing love of Jesus Christ, our pores and fibers all full of His music. Peter wants us to know that our Christian way to give an answer for the reason for our hope is deeply communal; it's something we give together.

In God's hands, we are becoming like a new violin. God doesn't *need* us to make music for Him. God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, resonate together in an eternal harmony of self-giving love and mutual service. No, God doesn't need us, but stubbornly, lovingly wants to share this community with us. And God's music, through time and use, is cancelling out our distortions and reigning us into His harmony. In Jesus, we are the unique and various components of a new fiddle fresh from the hands of our Maker. And it takes some time to make us all thoroughly acquainted.

WE PRAY: Dear Father, please send us Your Holy Spirit to help us give a good answer, together, for the reason for our hope, in Jesus, Amen.

May 12, 2023, Daily Devotion from Lutheran Hour Ministries
Thomas Hesselgrave

A Year of Feasts and Festivals

June 11: St. Barnabas, Apostle

Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, received the name Barnabas from the apostles. He was sent to Antioch to see "the grace of God" among the Hellenists, exhorting "them all to remain faithful to the Lord." There, through His Church, the Holy Spirit "set apart ... Barnabas and Saul for the work to which [He had] called them," which was to proclaim repentance, cast out demons and heal the sick among the Gentiles. Still, this Word is not always received. Even within the Church, divisions threaten it. Barnabas knew this. He was at the Jerusalem council to see that the Gospel was preserved without mingling in the Law, and he parted ways with Paul over the usefulness of John Mark. Despite all these trials, St. Barnabas remained full of faith so the Gentiles could "give glory to the LORD and declare his praise in the coastlands." Thus, by the Lord's calling and Spirit, Barnabas lived up to his new name: "son of encouragement."

June 24: The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

St. John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ. He was called from the womb to bring Jacob back to God through his Baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, just as Christ was the true servant of the Lord. Miraculously conceived by Zechariah the priest of barren Elizabeth, John was marked to be the greatest born of women. John is the voice "[preparing] the way of the LORD." Jesus, the virgin-born Son of God, is that Lord. John is "the prophet of the Most High." He is born to "give knowledge of salvation to [God's] people in the forgiveness of their sins," because Christ, the Dayspring, is visiting. Thus, what John preaches is the comfort of iniquity pardoned by Jesus, the promised Savior of Israel and "the nations, that [His] salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

June 29: St. Peter and St. Paul, Apostles

Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God." So confessed St. Peter. And Christ promised to build His Church on it by the forgiveness of sins. He does this so we don't try to build the Church ourselves, on this or that person, or by any human means. "Let no one boast in men ... whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas," for "all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's." The same Lord "who worked through Peter ... worked also through" Paul and is still at work in His Gospel and Sacraments. The Church of every age must be recalled to "hear the word of the gospel" — the free forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake apart from the Law — "and believe." The Holy Spirit makes "no distinction" among men, but cleanses "hearts by faith" alone. So "we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus." Both were imprisoned, both wrote Scripture, both opposed the world — and sometimes each other— all so "that the truth of the gospel might be preserved" for us.

June 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 12pm AA	2 12pm AA	3 9am Men's Breakfast 10am AA
4 10:30am Worship MITES Collected LWML Mtg BreadBasket	5 12pm AA	6 12pm AA	7 12pm AA 1:30pm Kaffee Klatsch	8 12pm AA	9 12pm AA	10 10am AA
11 10:30am Worship Oktoberfest Meeting	12 12pm AA	13 12pm AA	14 10am Avenues Bible Study 12pm AA	15 8-11 am Southern Pines Vaccine Clinic 12pm AA 6:30pm BOD	16 12pm AA	17 10am AA
18 10:30am Worship Father's Day	19 12pm AA	20 12pm AA	21 12pm AA 1:30pm Kaffee Klatsch	22 12pm AA	23 12pm AA	24 10am AA
25 10:30am Worship	26 12pm AA	27 12pm AA	28 10am Avenues Bible Study 12pm AA	29 12pm AA	30 12pm AA	

Serving in June

Interim Pastor

Rev. Gary Weier

Music Director

Jason Sims

Altar Care Team

Sheila Curry and Cindy Landry

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

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

July Newsletter Deadline — Monday, June 19th

The Spirit that is St. John:



June Celebrations!



B I R T H D A Y S

Damian Potesta	6/2
Christina Noffke	6/7
Rita Wilson	6/8
Dewey Case	6/13
Bjorn Wastvedt	6/14
Chuck Westfall	6/19
Corbin Blair	6/20
Katie Robinson	6/20
Elaine Kersh	6/21
Sheila Curry	6/23
Catherine Lee	6/25



B A P T I S M S

Bill Coll	6/1
Bridgette Lee	6/11
Alex O'Connor	6/11
Rita Wilson	6/20



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

David & Nancy Grunig, 56 yrs	6/3
Bjorn & Judy Wastvedt, 53 yrs	6/12
Jerry & Debbie Frederick, 54 yrs	6/13
Shawn & Jane O'Connor, 14 yrs	6/27



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