

*October 2023  
Newsletter*

**GOOD NEWS**

*Because Good Happens!*

**Saint John Lutheran Church  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi**



# A NOTE FROM YOUR PASTOR



## Butterflies

The other day it happened. Butterflies! I'm not referring to the kind that you find in your stomach when you're about to meet someone new. But the big, beautiful kind that meander through the air. I was in the Wal-Mart parking lot. I saw a color and size of butterfly I had never seen before. It had big delicate wings was nothing like the monarchs or the little yellow and white ones I had seen growing up. This one was light greenish blue with its own unique pattern.

Years ago, when I became a pastor, I was visiting a couple in the hospital. They had just had their second child. And as I walked to their room, I noticed that there were butterflies on the door of the room next to them. I greeted the happy couple, and we prayed and visited for a bit. Then they asked me to go next door. The young couple next door had lost their baby. The butterflies on the door were a way to let the nurses know that there had been loss in that room, and it was a grieving couple. That was the hardest prayer I have prayed to this date. And it has changed how I see butterflies.

Often after the loss of child families will do a butterfly release. Families that have lost children gather together and after raising the butterflies once they have gone through their metamorphosis are released into the wild. It's a beautiful sight. Each of us is precious in the eyes of God; none of our hurts or griefs pass by his attention. Not long ago we read Matthew 18:10 "See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven." God knows, he knows what the butterflies on the door mean.

Butterflies are a symbol of hope. Just as the cross of Christ is an object of sorrow it is also a symbol of hope to those who understand the payment of sin going on there. I didn't tell you this to make butterflies be a symbol of sorrow. The butterflies created by God with all their beauty go through their life stages and when the time is right, they come forth in their glory clad in colors that shimmer and shine. They rise born anew. When I see butterflies, I remember the door and the sorrow, but I also know the joy of eternal life in Glory in Christ Jesus. I know that after death comes life and it will come with its sparkle and its colors. Praise be to God. Amen!

Blessings and peace,  
*Pastor Chet*



LWML MITES collected on Sunday, September 3, 2023, totaled \$146.02. Praise God!!! Thank you for your prayers and support of the MISSION GRANT selected in convention by the Gulf States District and National LWML.

The 40th Biennial LWML Convention was held in Milwaukee, WI, June 22-23, 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 man (Psalm 33:12-13). What a JOY!!! Celebrating with over 35,000 men and women in worshiping and praising the Lord!

I have been privileged to attend five National Conventions in my lifetime. The first one was in 1973 in Mobile, AL. I was just twenty-eight years old and really didn't know too much about LWML. When we arrived in Biloxi, MS in June 1968, we had moved six times as a military family, and it was the first time we bought a home, joined a church, and stayed in one place. We were in Biloxi for a little over a year, when Hurricane Camille arrived and along with fifteen other families at Good Shepherd, we lost our home. This was a life-changing Time! We could have moved to any base in the States but decided to stay. The LWML ladies from Good Shepherd insisted I go and literally brought me leaving my four young children for the weekend alone with their dad. The next National convention I was able to attend was in Tampa, FL. Twelve ladies from Good Shepherd attended that convention. I had been to many other District Conventions in between - amid life changes - including divorce, health, hurricanes, etc. prevented me from attending other National conventions. This was the last convention I attended before Katrina arrived. The next National I attended was in Sioux Falls, SD in 2006, when my "sister in Christ" traveled with me from Biloxi. Since I have been here, the last two were in Mobile, AL, and Lexington, KY. All these wonderful "Mountain Top"

experiences have brought so much JOY in my life! I want to share some reflections of others who attended the Mobile National conventions as follows:

REVERENCE IN AWE - a gathering totally worth attending! We all revere Father, Lord God in AWE from clapping, dancing, and praising to the songs, to hearing and consuming the Word from the Bible Teachings, from the marvelous conversations of hope, faith, love, and engaging in the works of the Spirit! Volunteering and guiding others to their destination, sharing meals with others of all ages, cultures, and hearing the fears we released when a prayer or song reminded us how much love was in the room from Father God and each other - REVERENCE IN AWE!!! We did remember "Love x 2" - Love Jesus - Love You." (La Toursha Ezell)

"This was my first National Convention and my first "Mountain Top" experience. I have never felt so close to the Lord and such love from fellow LWML members! What a Blessing!" (Elaine Kersh)

"Refreshed & Renewed! Yes! Yes! Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving! There is great hope for our country when over 3,000 are gathered in such a positive reunion. Everyone happily greeted one another with a smile and "have a wonderful day!" Bible stories, Keynote speakers, LWML leaders - all with messages of "If God is with us, who can be against us?!" Praise to the Lord!" (Sandy Zigenhagen, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd)

LWML MITES will be collected on Sunday, October 1, 2023. 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. There will be no Business meeting in October.

#### 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*

My spiritual practices are the life raft that keeps me floating atop the rough seas of life. One of my practices is to have my first cup of coffee each morning with God spending time in our *Portals of Prayer*.

The time I spend in prayerful contemplation, devotional reading, spiritual study, service, or fellowship keeps me tethered to my spiritual life. These practices remind me there is so much more to living than daily obligations and duties. It's so easy to become distracted by errands, chores, projects, and helping others when more is asked of us. We must remember that God will never give us more than we can handle, and that He is right there with us to see us through.


My relationship with God is my greatest comfort throughout all the seasons of life. It lifts me higher in easy times and keeps me from dipping too low in troubling times.

The more I focus my attention and energy on those activities and practices that draw me closer to God, the more I stay in the realm of comfort and support, no matter the state of my life or the world.

*I will turn their mourning into joy.  
I will comfort them and  
exchange their sorrow for rejoicing.*



jeremiah 31:13



## Growing Your Faith

*"And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you." Psalm 9:10 (ESV)*

The older I get, the more I'm convinced that true trust is almost more uncommon than love. We can say the words "I love you" to a friend or our spouse, but we struggle to live the words "I trust you" due to our pride and self-sufficiency.

It's easier to profess feelings of adoration than it is to be unguarded in a relationship. It's easy to enjoy companionship but hard not to worry about that same companion leaving us, betraying us, or going back on his or her word.

Many of us have known the sting of choosing to be vulnerable only to experience a break of trust. This can make us grow thick-skinned along the way, and now we enter relationships with one eye on the exit, our hands clenching the steering wheel.

It's exhausting to be so guarded. But let's not sugarcoat this: Trustworthiness can be so rare as we walk with other sinful, broken pilgrims on this journey of life. What a relief it is that God's Word tells honestly of the ways His faithful servants also experienced disappointment, betrayal and broken promises in the past.

Remember Joseph, betrayed by his brothers and left in Pharaoh's dungeon (Genesis 37:28; Genesis 39:19-21)? Then there's Paul, who was abandoned by Demas (2 Timothy 4:10). In fact, Jesus Himself knew the sting of abandonment from those He shared His life with most (Matthew 26:14-16; Matthew 26:56b). He was no stranger to the lack of trustworthiness in our broken world, and neither were many other people whom God loved and included in the story of redemption.

Encountering betrayal from others on our journey won't threaten to derail us if we grasp that God is the only One who is truly trustworthy. When we know the character of God, we won't rely on feelings, empty promises or blind faith. We will go to the Word of God. We will consider who He always was and who He always will be; we will know Him.

*"Those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you" (Psalm 9:10).*

You see, we were meant to live in the confidence of knowing the trustworthiness of God. All through life, other companions may abandon us, disappoint us, or lead us down the wrong path — but not the Lord. He is the most trustworthy guide we could have as pilgrims on a long journey. He cannot lie, He can only do good, and He is bound by the loving-kindness that defines Him.

He guides and leads (Proverbs 3:5-6).

He sees and vindicates (Psalm 37:5-6).

He never abandons us (Hebrews 13:5).

He keeps every promise He has made to us (1 Kings 8:56).

He answers us in our distress (Psalm 20:1).

He is with us even in the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23:4).

How trustworthy our God is!

Are you banking on God's grace? Is He your hope? Try recounting the ways He has been faithful as He's promised. Stop to consider how trustworthy He's been in times past, perhaps when you've not even realized or thanked Him for it. If you and I will take the time to write out the ways God's been trustworthy to us, we, too, will echo this refrain from an old hymn:

Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus  
and to take Him at His word,  
just to rest upon His promise  
and to know, "Thus saith the Lord."  
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him,  
how I've proved Him o'er and o'er!  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!  
O for grace to trust Him more!

*Faithful Father,*

*You alone are truly trustworthy; give us the grace to trust You more.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

*Lisa Case*



## **OKTOBERFEST Is for Everyone**

**43rd Annual Oktoberfest  
Saturday, October 7th, 11am to 3pm**

Oktoberfest at Saint John Hattiesburg brings together some of the most important values of the congregation. It's **inclusive** of the whole congregation; we believe everyone can enjoy the camaraderie of shared preparation tasks, working shoulder to shoulder on Oktoberfest day, and including newcomers to the congregation and friends in the community.

Oktoberfest is **hospitality** toward the community; we believe that the best celebrations are those that heartily welcome friends and strangers. We want to throw open the Biergarten gates and sit a spell with good food and brew, to catch up on where the time has gone, and to tell a few tall tales. Laughter shared is friendship doubled!

Oktoberfest is **mission**; we believe that we're on this earth and a part of this neighborhood, this community, and this city for greater purposes than the mere enjoyment of life. We give back by pouring into the lives of others around us, by extending God's blessing to those in need, by sharing tasks and making room for new people, by providing financially for worthy efforts in our region and around the world.

At Saint John Hattiesburg, **Oktoberfest is for everyone!** Let's come together, find a place to help, and raise a toast to friends old and new!



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

**Phone:** 601.583.4898

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

**Oct. 5th:** 9:00 Bake Strudel and other prep tasks

**Oct. 6th:** 9:00 Set up Fellowship Hall and other prep tasks

**Oct 7th: Oktoberfest (11-3) All hands-on deck: 8:00 until we've cleaned up, picked up, and put up. Your help is needed and appreciated!**

**Oct 14th:** 9:00 Men's Breakfast at Chesterfields Restaurant

**Oct 18th:** 1:30 Kaffee Klatsch

**Oct. 26th:** 6:30 BOD Meeting at church

**Oct. 28th:** LWML Zone Rally

**\*Stay tuned for news on when the Avenues Bible Study Group will resume their studies after Oktoberfest.**



## October 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 10:30am Worship  MITES Collected  Breadbasket	<b>2</b>  12pm AA	<b>3</b>  12pm AA	<b>4</b>  12pm AA	<b>5</b>  <b>9:00</b> <b>Bake</b> <b>Strudels</b> <b>+ other</b> <b>prep</b>  12pm AA	<b>6</b>  <b>9:00</b> <b>Fellowship</b> <b>Hall + other</b> <b>prep</b>  12pm AA	<b>7</b>  8am AA  <b>11-3</b> <b>Oktoberfest</b>
<b>8</b> 10:30am Worship	<b>9</b>  12pm AA	<b>10</b>  12pm AA	<b>11</b>  12pm AA	<b>12</b>  12pm AA	<b>13</b>  12pm AA	<b>14</b>  <b>9:00am</b> <b>Men's</b> <b>Breakfast</b>  10am AA
<b>15</b> 10:30am Worship	<b>16</b>  12pm AA	<b>17</b>  12pm AA	<b>18</b>  12pm AA  <b>1:30 Kaffee</b> <b>Klatch</b>	<b>19</b>  12pm AA  6pm FH in Use	<b>20</b>  12pm AA	<b>21</b>  10am AA
<b>22</b>  10:30am Worship	<b>23</b>  12pm AA	<b>24</b>  12pm AA	<b>25</b>  12pm AA	<b>26</b>  12pm AA  <b>6:30pm BOD</b>	<b>27</b>  12pm AA	<b>28</b>  <b>8:00am</b> <b>LWML</b> <b>Zone Rally</b>  10am AA
<b>29</b> 10:30am Worship	<b>30</b>  12pm AA	<b>31</b>  12pm AA				

## **Serving in October**

### **Pastor**

Chet Scherbarth

### **Pianist**

Lewei He

### **Altar Care Team**

Patricia Davenport & Shirley Thone

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

***Portals of Prayer* for October-December** are available in the Narthex.

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

**November Newsletter Deadline** — Monday, October 23rd.

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



## **October Celebrations!**



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Gabriel Wastvedt	10/3	Bill Lowry	10/21
Chris Weiss	10/3	Patricia Shields	10/23
Jane O'Connor	10/4	Tasha Lowry	10/25
Elise Trahan	10/5	Debbie Frederick	10/26
Norbert Thiel	10/7	Van Lowry	10/26
Tommy Breland	10/13	Pat Davenport	10/27
Christina Keiper	10/13	Mark Keyl	10/27
Kathy Mount	10/13	Warner Boortz	10/29
Kerry Geroux	10/14	Diana Rymarz	10/30
Bob Cubley	10/15		



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Art Kersh	10/1
Julia Hagen	10/20
Alex Meyer	10/25
Robert Meyer	10/25
Lynn Umbdenstock	10/27
Jerry Frederick	10/28
Kerry Geroux	10/29



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Scott & Sonja Chaney, 30 yr	10/2
Bill & Joyce Coll, 26 yrs	10/11
Al & Diana Rymarz, 34 yrs	10/14
Bill & Tasha Lowry, 24 yrs	10/23



**Saint John Lutheran Church**

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