

THE GRAPEVINE



The Newsletter of Our Saviour Lutheran Church
April 2026

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The Grapevine
is a monthly newsletter published
by the staff & members of

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Pastor's Ponderings:

Make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.
Philippians 2:2, NRSVue

Dear People of Our Saviour,
This past month I had the gift of serving as one of the leaders at Wild Women, and the even greater gift of being at the retreat with nine women from Our Saviour Lutheran Church. I came home carrying a deep sense of gratitude. Gratitude for the beauty of the weekend. Gratitude for the women gathered there. Gratitude for the ways God meets people through worship, conversation, laughter, scripture, and community in new and familiar ways.

As I came home, I found myself thinking about us and about this season in the life of our church.

Lent and Holy Week are my favorite time of the year because we get to worship together so much. During these days, we walk through the holy days of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. We hear again the story at the center of our faith. We gather around the table. We listen at the cross. We come to the empty tomb. We remember that Jesus Christ meets us in love, stays with us in suffering, and brings life where we thought there could only be loss. AND Our whole lives of faith are centered on Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life. Life in God includes every part of our human experience. It includes the joy of learning new things, meeting new people, and coming back to the center of our work together as a people who love liturgy.

Liturgy means “the work of the people”. It reminds us that worship is not a performance we watch, but the shared work of prayer, praise, listening, singing, grieving, hoping, and receiving grace together. Liturgy is one way we practice faith. Maybe that is part of why it was such a gift to learn a new

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hymn together this past month, “Jesus Is a Rock in a Weary Land.” A hymn like that meets us right where we are. We are a people who know what weariness feels like. We carry burdens, worries, griefs, responsibilities, and the ordinary weight of daily life. And still, together, we sing of Christ our rock. We learn the song together, and in it there is deep joy. A joy that we practice together. The kind that grows when people make room for one another. The kind that can live alongside tiredness, questions, grief, hope, conflict AND wonder. The kind that sings anyway.

We have been using Philippians in our Lenten Bible study, and it has been a gift to hear Paul’s words during this season. He writes from prison, and still this letter opens again and again toward joy, love, encouragement, and shared life in Christ. Paul keeps drawing the church back to the life they have together. Paul knows something about a weary land, and still he speaks of joy. He keeps calling the church toward humility, unity, and love shaped by Jesus.

That shared life in Christ also feels close to the work we are doing here. As a council, we have been spending time talking about mission and focus. We have been asking who we are and what kind of life God is calling us to grow into together. We have circled around language like this: follow Jesus, grow in God’s love, care for our neighbor. The more I sit with those words, the more they feel rooted. They feel clear. They feel like words we can carry into worship, into relationships, into service, and into the future.

I think you can hear that same spirit in our Holy Conversations this Lent.

We have been listening to Jesus in scripture. We have been listening to one another in chapel prayer services. We have been making space for stories, questions, and reflection. That kind of listening helps us notice Christ among us. It opens us to one another. It teaches us how to move forward with faithfulness and care.

And because of that, as we enter April, I give thanks.

I give thanks for a congregation that keeps showing up. I give thanks for your honesty, your generosity, your willingness to listen, your love for this church, and your care for one another. I give thanks that God is still at work among us, still drawing us together, still giving us joy for the journey.

So my prayer for us this month is that we keep growing into the life Christ is giving us. That we would follow Jesus with trust. That we would grow in God’s love. That we would care for our neighbor with joy. And that in all of it, we would keep discovering that Christ is already here, leading us forward together.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Joanna





OSLC News & Notes



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS March 2026

- An Organist Employee Agreement was approved. It will be submitted to Michail-Konstantinos Chalkiopoulos for his approval and signature.
- The church will buy gift cards for food and gas for people stopping at the church to ask for help.
- Council is investigating possible replacement of failing locking mechanisms of many of the church's outside doors.
- One pew in the Sanctuary may be removed to allow room for the new electric piano and the Bell Choir.
- Chat and Snack may be coming back on the first Sunday of each month. Volunteers are needed.
- Remember to check with Sylvia Ford or another member of the Memorials and Gifts Team before giving away or discarding items that may have been purchased with M&G money. The team would also welcome suggestions for a wish list for use of memorial money.

RAZBERRIES

Gail Marcum will be hosting the April Razberries on Friday the 10th of April. More details to follow at a later date, please note the date change.

APRIL MINISTRIES

Date	Flowers	Greeters	Worship Asst.	Lectors
Apr 5	Herman & Elizabeth Shealy	David & Linda Griffith	Gail Marcum	Linda Griffith
Apr 12	Bill Aull	Doris Wessinger	David Griffith	Linda Griffith
Apr 19	Frank Yonce	Mark & Ann Satterwhite	Ann Satterwhite	Ann Satterwhite
Apr 26	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>	Sylvia Ford	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>	Sylvia Ford

Role	April	May
Usher	Jim Garner	Wayne Lybrand
Usher	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>
Altar Guild	<i>*Need Volunteers</i>	Charles & Ruth Nicholson
Offering Pickup	Gail Marcum	Wayne Lybrand
Tellers	Linda Griffith & Sylvia Ford	Beth Cleland & Melba Murphy
Property Committee	Jim Garner	Steve Nivens

AVERAGE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE March 2026 WORSHIP—39



COMMEMORATION PROFILES

Ruth Nicholson

The Lutheran Church, as part of its worship, celebrates the lives of notable Christians of the past. Our hymnal provides a calendar (pp. 15–17) for us to follow which recognizes these individuals on the anniversary of their deaths.



April 10
Mikael Agricola, Bishop of Turku
(1510-1557)

Son of a Finnish fisherman, Agricola distinguished himself as a student and ultimately completed a Master of Arts degree at Wittenberg, Germany. Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchthon were among his teachers there. Back in Finland after his studies, Agricola served as rector of the cathedral school in Turku and assistant to the Catholic bishop. When the bishop died, Agricola succeeded him. As bishop, Agricola introduced the principles of the Reformation to Finland, masterfully transforming its church structures and traditions along evangelical lines. In addition to translating sections of the Bible into Finnish and writing a catechism, prayer book, and treatises on the sacraments and liturgy, Agricola published a spelling book that was important to the future of Finnish education and literature.

April 19
Olavus Petri, priest
(1493-1552)
and

Laurentius Petri, Bishop of Uppsala
(1499-1573),
Renewers of the church

These two brothers from Sweden came under the influence of Martin Luther when they studied at Wittenberg. Olavus, in fact, was very likely present at Wittenberg when Luther posted his ninety-five theses.

Olavus, the elder brother, became a deacon and teacher and later, senior pastor at the cathedral in Stockholm. Like Luther, he brought worship to the people in their own language as he preached, translated the Bible (with his brother's help), and published hymnbooks. Laurentius was a teacher, priest, and later, archbishop at

Uppsala—the first Lutheran archbishop of the Church of Sweden. He had great influence on the spiritual life of his country and the way in which the Reformation took hold there. Writings by Laurentius, like those of Olavus, contributed much to the liturgical and educational resources of the emerging Lutheran church in Sweden.

April 21
Anselm, Bishop of Canterbury
(ca. 1033-1109)

Son of an Italian nobleman, Anselm traveled to France at age twenty-three in search of learning. He entered the monastery of Bec in Normandy and followed its prior, Lanfranc, to Canterbury when the latter became archbishop. In 1093, Anselm became the next archbishop at Canterbury. His time in that post was not easy; he was at odds with several successive kings of England over church-state relations and had to go into exile twice. Anselm penned several important theological and philosophical treatises. In 1720, Pope Clement XI recognized him as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church.



- 3/4 Bishop Curry Issues Statement on Iran War
- 3/12 ELCA Introduces New Website
- 3/13 ELCA Conference of Bishops Elects Chair and Vice Chair
- 3/24 Presiding Bishop Curry Issues Pastoral Message on Gender-based Violence
- 3/31 Presiding Bishop Curry Issues Pastoral Message for Transgender Day of Visibility

As part of the ELCA we share in a wider ministry at work in the world. The bishop of the ELCA and the office of the bishop make statements that are a part of the faithful conversation. Please also see scsynod.com for your South Carolina Synod's news; scsynod.com

2026 OFFICERS

- President—Marie Lybrand (Lydia)
803-397-0503
- Vice-Pres—Linda Griffith (Rebekah)
803-920-3975
- Treasurer—Ann Satterwhite (Lydia)
803-530-6249
- Secretary—Caroline Raszewski (Lydia)
803-231-8642

WILD WOMEN WEEKEND RECAP---

Pastor Joanna, along with ten of our WELCA ladies, attended the *Wild Women Weekend* March 13-15 at Lutheridge. Pastor Joanna was a leader along with four other female pastors. The theme of the weekend was **“So She Laughed”** from the book of Genesis where Sara was told she would become with child at such an old age and she laughed at this bizarre possibility. We shared many stories of what brings us Joy in our lives. The busyness of life tends to take priority unless we make time to give, notice, and receive, Joy. The weekend was full of scripture, fellowship, good meals, crafts, and the enjoyment of the Lutheridge Camp. It was good for us to meet other Lutheran ladies from different states while sharing the word of God together. Here are a few comments from our WELCA ladies who attended:

*“I enjoyed *Laughing at a Funeral...*so entertaining! Also enjoyed making my Joy Journal.”

*“I enjoyed the opening and closing sessions reminding us that we do deserve joy and need to make time for Joy in our lives. Found the open mic session entertaining and enjoyed fellowship with all women attending.”

*“It was fun to share with others what really made us laugh. I tend to be a pessimist, so it was refreshing to talk about noticing joy in our

lives. Since returning home, it’s been interesting to come across the word “joy” in what I’m reading, and I look forward to reflecting on joy in my journal.”

*“I enjoyed *Laughing at a Funeral*. Funerals don’t have to always be sad when we can remember the good, funny times with the deceased and have a good life.”

*“It was nice how the focus on making time for joy wasn’t just talked about, but actually woven into everything we did all weekend. It made the whole experience feel a lot more meaningful.”

Here’s the podcast link: <https://open.spotify.com/show/ozSwzJsNXINAqdQr8QcIt9> You're On Mute Podcast by Elise and Mary Anderson Ep.28: Live from *Wild Women at Lutheridge* So as you can tell, “a good time was had by all” and we all arrived back home safely, our spirits renewed, and our hearts joyful. Thanks be to God!

2026 SC WELCA CONVENTION

This year’s convention will be held at Lutheran Church of Redeemer (1515 Boundary Street, Newberry) June 19-20. Friday 12:00 pm—8:00 pm and Saturday 8:30 am — 3:30 pm. New this year! The Food Truck *Wingz, Thingz, and More* will be available for lunch purchases before the convention begins! Please contact me if anyone is interested in representing OSLC. More information will be forthcoming at the April circle meetings.

MARCH CIRCLE MEETINGS

Cameron/Rebekah: April 12 at 10:30 AM in Fellowship Hall. Hostess/Leader: Sylvia Ford

Lydia: April 19 at 6:00 PM Hostess: Caroline Raszewski, Leader: Gail Marcum

2026 OSLC-WELCA Calendar of Events

- April (TBA) OSLC-Newberry College Nursing Scholarship Donations (Cameron Circle)
- April 26 (Sunday) Joint Circle Meeting Devotion/Prayer-Lydia Refreshments-Cameron/Rebekah
- May 29-31 (Friday-Sunday) SCWELCA Retreat @ Isle of Palms Retreat Center
- June 19-20 (Friday-Saturday) SCWELCA Convention/ Newberry-Redeemer Lutheran Church
- July 16-19 Triennial Gathering—Des Moines, Iowa
- September 20 (Sunday) Saxe Gotha Conference Meeting-Mt. Tabor/West Columbia
- October 18 (Sunday) 3 PM Joint Circle Meeting (Officer nominations/election) Devotion/Prayer-Rebekah Refreshments-Lydia
- December (TBA) WELCA Executive Meeting (circle leaders w/unit officers) Opening Prayer: Gail Marcum

What a blessed month of March as a community!



Caroline Raszewski joined the fun at the latest Razberries event, celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday by dressing up as one of his most famous characters—the Cat in the Hat.



Palm Sunday



Easter Egg Hunt



Wild Women's Retreat Weekend at Lutheridge

.....*And One more thing* (future notes)

PRAYER REQUESTS

Those listed below have special prayers needs at this time. We keep the entire congregation in our prayers at all times, but sometimes special prayers are needed. If your name is on the list or you have added someone's name and they no longer need to be on the list, please contact the church secretary so the name can be removed.

*Melanie Amick
Gary Black
Greg Chapman
Jeannie Chapman
Katie Doble
Dolores Hopkins*

*Anne Moyer
Steve Rucker
Herman & Elizabeth Shealy
Marie Shealy (National Health Care)*

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Matthew Lybrand	4/01
Pastor Joanna Gragg	4/05
Hutton Raszewski	4/13
Russell Dawkins	4/15
Bob Graham	4/15
Sandra Hughes	4/21

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Phil & Sonya Urban	4/17
James & Melissa Vagts	4/19

Our Saviour continues to be engaged in a mission focus process with Deacon Lexanne Graves as we listen for where God is leading us. Council is also taking time to dwell in the Word at our monthly meetings. All of this is helping us pay attention to who we are, the gifts God has placed among us, and how we are called to follow Jesus, grow in God's love, and love our neighbors.

Our council will continue this work on April 18 as we gather for the second part of this conversation, and we look forward to sharing more with you about what is taking shape.

Please Note: if there are any errors or omissions in birthdays or anniversaries, notify the church office. We want to make sure our records are correct.

GRAPEVINE ARTICLES

If you have articles, reports and/or pictures that you or your group would like printed in the next Grapevine, please send them to the Church Office by Monday, April 27.

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

April 2, 5pm: Maundy Thursday

April 3, 5pm: Good Friday service

April 5, Easter Day:

Flowering of the Cross at 10am

Communion service at 10:30am.

There will be no Sunday School.

