

# THE GRAPEVINE



The Newsletter of Our Saviour Lutheran Church  
May 2026

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is a monthly newsletter published  
by the staff & members of

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## Pastor's Ponderings:

One of the gifts of the church calendar is that it does not always move at the pace of the world around us. The world may already be thinking about end-of-school-year events, graduations, Mother's Day, summer plans, yard work, meetings, and all the ordinary pieces of life that seem to pile up at once.

May is beautiful, and May is full. If you are entering this month with a full calendar or a full mind, you are not alone. And here we are, still in Easter. The church does not rush away from resurrection. We are still hearing and speaking the good news that Christ is risen. We are still being gathered by the risen Jesus. We are still being sent out in his name. That is a good word for May, and it is also a good word for people who are still growing.

Recently, I led devotions for our WELCA circle meeting, and we spent time with that theme: still growing. We began with God's promise in Isaiah: "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" Those words are perfect for a room of people who have lived a lot of life, carried many responsibilities, loved many people, served the church in countless ways, and still have more life, faith, wisdom, and love growing in them.

Sometimes we talk about growth as if it belongs mostly to children or young people, as if the work of becoming, learning, changing, and bearing fruit has an age limit. But scripture gives us a wider vision than that. God is always bringing life where life seems finished. God is always making a way where the road seemed closed. God is always calling forth fruit in seasons when we

(continued on page 2)

may have assumed that season was behind us. Jesus gives us this image in John 15: “I am the vine; you are the branches.” And, “Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit.”

That is the main thing I want us to hold onto this May: growth and transformation are part of the life of faith. We do not grow because we are trying harder to become impressive people. We grow because our life comes from Christ. Just as the branch receives life from the vine, we receive life from Christ.

Spring tells this truth in its own way. Some things bloom early, while others take longer. Some things are growing underground before anyone can see them. Some growth is bright and obvious, and some is hidden for a while.

So maybe these are good questions for us to carry this month:

What might still be growing in you?

Where might God be doing a new thing that you have not yet fully perceived?

What fruit might Christ be bringing forth at OSLC and in its people?

There is space among us for things that are not yet finished. There is space for learning, for listening, for trying again, for changing, for healing, for wondering, and for growing in faith. In a way, that is a little like singing a hymn. We sing in faith. We sing with the voices around us. We sing words that have carried the church before us, and sometimes those words carry us when we need them most.

One place we practice this shared faith is in worship, especially in the hymns and prayers we offer together. Worship is sometimes called “the work of the people,” not because it is one more task to accomplish, but because it is something we do together as the body of Christ. We listen, pray, sing, receive, and in all of it God is at work among us.

A hymn is rarely just a hymn. It may carry the memory of a parent or grandparent singing beside us. It may bring us back to a wedding, a funeral, a baptism, a confirmation, or an ordinary Sunday when the words met us right where we were. Sometimes a hymn teaches us what we believe before we know how to say it ourselves. Sometimes it gives us words when our own words are hard to find.

During May, if you haven’t done so already, please pick up the yellow half-page sheet in the narthex on your way in or out of church. It asks:

What is one of your favorite hymns, and why?

Who do you think of when you hear it?

Is there a line that has stayed with you?

I hope you will take a few minutes to fill one out and turn it in. Over time, we will use those responses to learn more about one another, to remember the faith that has been sung into us, and to sing some of those beloved hymns together in worship. Maybe this, too, is part of being still growing: discovering again that God keeps forming us through scripture, prayer, song, and the gathered voices of the church.

As we move through May, I hope we will keep watching for signs of resurrection life among us: in worship, in prayer, in scripture, at the table, in food shared with neighbors, in children welcomed, in people showing up to serve, in prayers spoken by name, and in the small acts of mercy and faithfulness that often happen without much attention.

This is who we are called to be together: people following Jesus, growing in God's love, and caring for our neighbors. The risen Christ is still at work among us. And by God's grace, we are still growing. Thanks be to God.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Joanna

### **Welcome to four New Members!**

In baptism, God gathers us into the body of Christ and makes us part of a community that is larger than any one congregation. Wherever life takes us, the promise of baptism goes with us. And when people find a new church home, we have the joy of welcoming them as siblings in Christ and companions in ministry.

Recently, we received John and Judy Shotts as members of Our Saviour Lutheran Church. John and Judy transferred from Zion Lutheran Church after moving to West Columbia. As they looked for a new church home, they were seeking a congregation that was accessible, friendly, and welcoming. We give thanks that they have found those gifts here at OSLC.

We also received Tyler Cox as a member of OSLC. Tyler is from Lumberton, North Carolina, and came to Columbia for graduate school. After graduating, he was hired as a biological sciences instructor. He now teaches advanced human physiology and coordinates the associated labs. Tyler first began attending OSLC after Melodie invited him to come and support the handbell ringers, many of whom are also his friends. We are grateful that invitation helped lead him into this community of faith.

Melodie Capole has been received as an associate member of OSLC. Melodie was born in the Philippines and raised in Goose Creek, South Carolina. She works at the University of South Carolina in international admissions for the graduate school. Melodie likes to cook, dance, and draw, and she shares many gifts with our congregation. She now serves as our handbell choir director and as a leader in faith formation for all ages.

We give thanks for John, Judy, Tyler, and Melodie. Their presence among us is a gift. As they join us in worship, fellowship, service, music, learning, and prayer, we are reminded again that the church is always being formed by God's grace.

Together, we are one body in Christ, called through baptism to follow Jesus, grow in God's love, and care for our neighbors. Thanks be to God for these new siblings in faith and for the life we share at Our Saviour.



# OSLC News & Notes



## COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

April 2026

- The congregation will be encouraged to go back to the way “Passing of the Peace” was done prior to COVID: greeting near-by neighbors with a handshake and saying “Peace be with you,” instead of waving the peace sign.
- Because of the high cost for replacing door-locking mechanisms on all outside church doors, we will start only with the doors nearest the office. NOTE: Please remember to check that a door is fully locked when you leave the building.
- Thanks to Francis Fingerlin, who has been pressure washing the church sidewalks.
- We celebrated that we have four new members joining our community of faith! (see page 8).

### RAZBERRIES

Please mark your calendars for Saturday, May 16. Plan to join the Nivens' for a fish fry and all of the trimmings! Stay tuned for details via email.

### Chat & Snack

Chat & Snack will resume on the 2nd Sunday of the each month. A sign-up sheet will be in the narthex for those willing to provide snacks . The next “chat & snack” will be on Sunday , May 10.

## MAY MINISTRIES

Date	Flowers	Greeters	Worship Assistant	Lectors
May 3	Wayne & Marie Lybrand	Caroline Raszewski	Gail Marcum	Caroline Raszewski
May 10	Charles & Ruth Nicholson	Horace & Betty Meetze	*Need Volunteer	Pam Hanfland
May 17	Mark & Ann Satterwhite	*Need Volunteer	Marie Lybrand	Ruth Nicholson
May 24	Gail Marcum	Sylvia Ford	Gail Marcum	Sylvia Ford
May 31	Gary & Kay Black	Rebecca Fingerlin	Rebecca Fingerlin	Rebecca Fingerlin

Role	May	June
Usher	Wayne Lybrand	Gail Marcum
Usher	*Need Volunteer	Jim Garner
Altar Guild	Charles & Ruth Nicholson	Wayne & Marie Lybrand
Offering Pickup	Wayne Lybrand	Pam Hanfland
Tellers	Beth Cleland & Melba Murphy	Pam Hanfland & Gail Marcum
Property Committee	Steve Nivens	Jim Garner

**AVERAGE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE April 2026 WORSHIP—43**

## 2026 SC WELCA CONVENTION

Date/Time: June 19-20

Friday 12:00 pm—8:00 pm

Saturday 8:30 am — 3:30 pm

Theme: “I am Worthy. I am Loved. I am Enough”

Location: Lutheran Church of Redeemer  
(1515 Boundary Street, Newberry)

Delegates: Marie Lybrand and Gail Marcum

## 2026 OSLC-WELCA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 29-31 (Friday-Sunday) SCWELCA Retreat  
@ Isle of Palms Retreat Center

June 19-20 (Friday-Saturday) SCWELCA  
Convention/ Newberry-Lutheran  
Church of the Redeemer

June 28 OSLC-WELCA SUNDAY & Newberry  
College Nursing Scholarship  
Donations

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

## GOD’S HELPING HANDS

Current needs are: vegetable oil, breakfast cereal, small bags of sugar and flour, and small cans of soup. Please place donations in the container in the Cameron Hallway.

## OSLC OFFICE HOURS

Monday, 9:00-12:00

Tuesday, 10:30—1:30

Wednesday, 9:00-12:00

Thursday, 9:00--12:00

## MAY COMMUNITY LUNCH WITH JUBILANT SINGERS

Please join us on Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> for Community Lunch with a barbecue meal and entertainment. The Jubilant Singers will present their Spring Patriotic Musical celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S.A. The Jubilant Singers’ Chorus was organized in 1985 by three area churches. They currently have thirty-two members representing eleven churches in the area. The director is Jason Barrs of Springdale Baptist and the accompanist is Jamine Lee of Broadacres Baptist. Come and support this choral group and enjoy the food and fellowship.

# THANK YOU

To the Congregation of Our Saviour,

Thank you for allowing the Synod to hold the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Of Ordination celebration in your fellowship space! Your facility was perfect. The Synod is blessed by your ministry.

Wendy Davidson  
Assembly Manager

Thank you to OSLC Church Council for the work you’ve done on two retreat Saturdays in conversation with Deacon Lexanne Graves. You’re leadership and time investment means a lot to our faith community.

Pastor Joanna and the  
Church Council Executive Committee



## 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.

**May 24**

**Nicolaus Copernicus, scientist  
(1473 - 1543)**

Copernicus is best known for his once-controversial claim that Earth revolves around the Sun, not vice versa. He began life as a Polish merchant's son and soon proved to be a voracious learner of many disciplines, including theology. A truly gifted scholar, Copernicus was also humble and compassionate toward others.

**May 24**

**Leonhard Euler, scientist  
(1707 - 1783)**

Son of a Swiss Calvinist pastor, Leonhard Euler studied to follow his father's vocation. However, he became so fond of geometry that he and his teacher, Johann Bernoulli, convinced the father to let Leonhard change his major. Euler went on to excel in pure mathematics, publishing 866 books and articles, and like Copernicus, making important contributions to astronomy and other fields.



**May 29**

**Jiri Tranovsky, hymnwriter  
(1592-1637)**

Son of a blacksmith in Silesia (now Poland), Tranovsky studied at the University of Wittenberg and was ordained in 1616. In addition to teaching and preaching, he published collections of poems, prayers, and hymn texts. (See ELW #602, "Your Heart, O God, Is Grieved," one of the hymns he wrote.) Because he helped to advance the Protestant Reformation in central and eastern Europe, Tranovsky has been called the "Luther of the Slavs." His influence on Slovak Lutheran worship extends to the present day.



- 4/1 An Easter Message from Presiding Bishop Curry
- 4/8 Craig Schweitzer Appointed Executive Director, ELCA Christian Community and Leadership
- 4/16 Presiding Bishop Curry Issues Message for Child Abuse Prevention Month
- 4/20 ELCA Awarded Grant for Total Inclusion
- 4/21 Rachel Wind Elected ELCA Executive for Administration
- 4/23 Creation Care Film Series Features ELCA Faith Leaders

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](http://scsynod.com) for your South Carolina Synod's news; [scsynod.com](http://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

Our **Joint Circle Meeting** was held on Sunday, April 26. Below are bullets of the discussions and decisions made moving forward for the remaining of 2026.

**Treasurer**, Ann Satterwhite, reported that there is currently a low balance in the WELCA General Fund. It was decided to move monies from the Retreat Fund and the Project Fund into the General Fund. This will enable upcoming expenses to be fulfilled including registration fees for two delegates to the WELCA Synodical Convention in Newberry on June 19. For many years, approximately \$450/year has been given to Churchwide for specified offerings. Due to our budget deficit and lower WELCA membership, this amount was decreased to a \$150 (\$50 per circle) contribution to Churchwide and \$50 (\$25 per delegate) for Convention offering from OSLC. It was also decided to remove these expenses as line item budget expenses and to revisit each year prior to convention on the dollar amount to be given. There will be three projects for the Synodical Convention this year. 1: *“God’s Abundance For All People”* (GAAP); 2) *Birthday Box Resolution* (birthday cake ingredients made with Sprite; and 3) Donating monies to a 100 year old *Christian School in Japan* to purchase new library books and a gate for the new primary school. It was voted to select the food pantry project in the Newberry area similar to our God’s Helping Hands. There will be a box in the Cameron Hallway for **non-perishable** food items that will be taken to Convention in June as OSLC’s contribution. The deadline is June 14. If anyone prefers, monetary contributions towards **perishable** food items will be accepted by our treasurer. Beginning January 1, 2027, the **Hospitality Coordinators** will begin their duties on January 1<sup>st</sup> rather than February 1<sup>st</sup> as in previous years. This will now align with all other duties for circles.

**Action Committee (Rebekah):** The Wild Women Weekend will serve as our 2026 ladies retreat. The Community Service Project will be to assist with the Nehemiah Project. Currently, men from Mt. Herman are building twin size beds for children in need of comfortable sleeping arrangements. They have built 50 beds and their goal is 100. WELCA voted to help purchase sheets, blankets, pillows and spreads for these beds. More information will be forthcoming. Linda Hill is the coordinator. **Community (Lydia):** The Easter Egg Hunt was another success with 19 children attending. Many thanks to the young adults for assisting the Lydia Circle with this annual event. Gail Marcum reported that for our social activity this year we would assist the Lutheran Men with the annual Christmas Dinner. Also, discussion was held on a possible 250 year patriotic celebration this summer. **Growth (Cameron):** Women of the ELCA Sunday has been rescheduled for June 28th with Pastor Mary Finklea as our guest pastor. All WELCA ladies are encouraged to attend, if possible. Donations for Newberry College Nursing Scholarships will also be accepted by the Cameron Circle. They cleaned the nursery and replaced all linens before Easter. As you can see, there was a lot of information discussed and voted on at this meeting. And, we were delighted our newest WELCA member, Judy Shotts, joined us for the meeting on the same day she joined Our Saviour! Also, we’re delighted to have Melodie Capole and Tyler Cox become OSLC members today. We are so happy they have chosen to be official members of Our Saviour. Welcome and God’s Blessings to all of you!

MAY CIRCLE MEETINGS:  
*Cameron/Rebekah:* 11:30 AM May 4, 2026  
 Annual Lunch Outing LaCienaga Mexican Restaurant.  
 ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!  
 Please contact Linda Hill if you’d like to join them!

*Lydia: TBA Plans are to go out to eat. They will let others know plans if they’d like to join them also.*

# .....*And One more thing*

## 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 Moye  
Steve Rucker  
Herman & Elizabeth Shealy  
Marie Shealy (National Health Care)*

### MAY BIRTHDAYS

Brent Holcomb	5/04
Patsy Horton	5/05
Steve Nivens	5/08
Doris Wessinger	5/14
Kaitlyn Sawyer	5/18
Wayne Haltiwanger	5/30

### MAY ANNIVERSARIES

David & Sallie Hutto	5/02
Wayne & Marie Lybrand	5/03
Albert & Sue Drafts	5/21
Jason & Susan Smith	5/26

### BE ON THE LOOKOUT

Be on the lookout for upcoming information on 2026 VBS dates and details, as well as the Fall Festival. More information will be shared as it becomes available

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, May 25.