

The Spirit of Southern

Web Edition – July/August, 2014

Struggling With God

"Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome." Genesis 32:28

Struggle . . . who needs it? Isn't life full of enough stress? Struggle is certainly not one of my favorite words when thinking of the Christian walk. I instinctively gravitate toward words like grace, mercy, or peace. But through his struggle with God, Jacob underwent such a radical change of nature that he received a new name, Israel. Israel means literally "he struggles with God." Jacob's experience provides us some encouragement when we encounter times of struggle.

Struggle is something Jacob did on his own, apart from his family and other relationships. No one could do it for him or help him in it. Have you ever watched a chick peck its way out of its shell? With every good intention we might think we are helping by pulling off the eggshell. But to do that is to weaken the chick and retard its development. The wet, scrawny chick gains strength as it hammers its way out of the shell. Likewise there are times when we have to go it alone in prayer with God. These times build our character and cause us to be transformed into what God has ordained.

In struggle the true desires are revealed. After a night of

conflict, Jacob announces "I will not let you go unless you bless me." (Genesis 32:2b) What a change for Jacob! Originally he had stolen spiritual blessings, like his brother's Esau's birthright and Isaac's blessing. He had connived to increase his flock while shortchanging his father-in-law, Laban. Now after a life of deceit and a night of struggle, what does he really want? He wants God's blessing. It may take a struggle in which our health, our finances, or a close relationship is threatened before we ask God for something that is truly significant.

Avoiding the struggles that God has planned for us prolongs our immaturity and deprives us of a blessing that can only be gained on the far side of struggle. To struggle through "the dark night of the soul," or "the valley of the shadow" is to see God face to face or know Him personally. That is a blessing that no earthly happiness can duplicate. Look at any Bible character that you admire - Abraham, Sara, Jacob, Joseph, David, Job, Jeremiah, Mary, Peter, John. Struggle was a part of their reality and maturity. Jesus travailed in the wilderness forty days and in Gethsemane a night. Struggle is part of God's plan for them and for us.

Almighty God, help us to accept all that comes from You, both times of struggle and times of refreshing. Thank You that You are present in both, in Jesus' name. Amen

Rev. Kurtis D. Schultz, President, Southern District, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

HOPE – JESUS CHANGES EVERYTHING 1 Peter 3:15



Save the date!

74th Convention of the Southern District-LCMS

June 4-5, 2015 -- Concordia College Alabama - Selma, AL

- - - - District and Synod News - - - -

What's New? Schools & Development

My first six months on the job in the Southern District as Executive Director of Schools and Development have seemed to fly by.

The Foundation has hit a very significant milestone. The Southern District Foundation Board has been re-constituted. We had our first meeting on May 23, the first meeting the board has had in 10 years. It was a very exciting time for me and our new board members.

The meeting agenda was three pronged: to get to know one another, to go over the history of our board, and to study our financial situation to see how we could better serve the members of the Southern District.

The members of the newly re-constituted board are: Larry Boudreaux: President; Major Madison: Vice-President; Scott Hodges: Treasurer; Frances Robinson: Secretary; Doug Molin: Commissioned Minister Representative.

As you can see we do not have many board members, and we need more. If dealing with finances and charitable giving are of interest to you I would like to talk with you further. We are looking for additional board members who are:

Accountants, Lawyers, Financial Planners, Bankers, Stock Brokers, Real Estate Brokers, Business Leaders, School Leaders, People who have a passion for our ministry!

The board has big plans to start contacting pastors and congregations asking them to allow us to visit their congregations to tell our story of how we can help people give gifts that will last a lifetime and beyond. The Southern District Foundation is an organization of service to help our members proclaim the word of Jesus. We are here to help donors give gifts and plan estate gifts to programs and people

Glenn D Gerber, Executive Director: Schools and Development

near and dear to their hearts. It is an exciting venture. I thank the foresight of the people who started our foundation over 40 years ago.

On the school side, things are looking bright for our schools that just received National Lutheran School Accreditation. The National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) is quite a lengthy process that requires a lot of time and self-study for a school. It is not something that comes easy and our NLSA accredited schools should feel proud of their accomplishment. The parents and students in those schools should feel good about the quality education they are receiving. The recently accredited Southern District Schools are as follows:

St. Paul - Cullman, AL

Ms. Laurie Ninke, Principal

St. Paul - Decatur, AL

Ms. Nancy Neuendorf, Principal

Grace - Huntsville, AL

Mr. Josh Swartz, Principal

Congratulations to their faculties and principals, for going through the hard work of the NLSA process.

Mission & Ministry: Meet Daniel Nguyen, our newest Missionary At Large



On Sunday, July 6, Daniel Nguyen (pronounced "Win") was ordained into the Holy Ministry and installed as our new Missionary At Large to Vietnamese People in the Southern District. Daniel, 47, a recent graduate of Concordia Seminary - St. Louis, with an STM in Pauline Epistles and Ancestral Worship in Vietnam, comes to us with a wide range of experience in mission. Along with his wife, Duyen, and 1 yr old son, Samuel, he will be locating on the West

Bank of New Orleans where he will begin work among Vietnamese people.

Daniel describes himself as a generation 1.5 immigrant, explaining that he was born in Vietnam and speaks the language fluently, while also growing up in the U.S. At age 12 his family fled the Communist government and eventually arrived in the U.S. in 1979, settling in Dayton, OH.

As a missionary, Daniel's primary work will be to reach out to those in the Vietnamese community who do not yet know Jesus as Lord and Savior. The approach he will use is the same approach that most new outreach work follows in the new mission field we all find ourselves living and working within. Instead of attempting to gather people

together in a worshipping congregation that requires an expensive full time pastor and property in which to carry on ministry, Daniel will be planting missional communities among the Vietnamese people. He will spend most of his time in the community developing relationships and looking for "people of peace" who are ready to embrace the Gospel and are willing to share their new faith with their family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors. As Daniel plants missional communities, it will then be natural to gather together several missional communities and organize them into a congregation. Through this missional process, he has the potential to plant missional communities and congregations across the Southern District wherever Vietnamese people live and work.

We invite you and your congregation to keep Daniel, his family, and his mission work in your prayers.

Rev. Eric Johnson, Southern District Mission/Ministry Facilitator

Southern District Senior Youth Gathering

The Southern District Youth Committee thanks Camp Restore and its talented, committed staff for hosting ONE – United in Christ, the 2014 Senior Youth Gathering. Each day the main event speaker, Travis Hartjen, led the participants to understand: “we are all ONE in Christ”, “we are ONE body, called to serve together”, “together we can make huge changes” (comments from some participants).

As we read through the evaluations the words “awesome” and “amazing” are used to express thoughts about Tangled Blue, the servant events arranged by Camp Restore, and the Bible studies.

Thank you Southern District for supporting our youth. Next summer we will have our second Southern District Mission Trip which provides opportunities for small churches to join a group to serve. The location and dates will be determined soon! Watch the Southern District Website for updates.

Cindy Namanny

Save the Date...

Southern District Junior Youth Gatherings

November 7-9 @ Blue Lake Camp and Retreat - Andalusia, AL

November 14-16 @ Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center - Forest Hill, LA (near Alexandria)

Go to the district website:
www.southernlcms.org for further updates and to register.



Concordia College Alabama – Selma, AL

Camp Restore Interns

CCA students Jene Matthews and Sunday Ogundipe are serving the needs of the New Orleans community through summer internships at Camp Restore's Lutheran outreach ministry.

Jene, a junior education major, and Sunday, a sophomore business major, are bringing "sweat equity" and sweet support to people in need. The interns served children of all ages at Gloria Dei – New Orleans summer camp with Rev. Greg Manning; seniors at the Lower 9th Ward Senior Center; the Southern District LCMS senior high planning committee; and with volunteers from across the country as well.

The students were chosen for the

internships through recommendations of faculty and staff, academic achievement and involvement in campus life. The internships, supported in part by CCA Regent Rod Olson, a member of Trinity - Baton Rouge, provided Jene and Sunday with an opportunity to live the Concordia mission: to prepare students through a Christ-centered education for lives of responsible service in the Church, the community, and the world.

Concordia Alumni Meet

Concordia alumni, Rev. Ulmer Marshall (1967) and Blaise Marin (2008), met at Concordia Seminary - Fort Wayne on May 23rd during the annual Commencement Service. Rev. Marshall, pastor of Trinity -

Mobile, AL, was the commencement speaker and also recognized for his 40 years' of exemplary service to the Church and His people with the Doctor of Divinity, Honoris Causa. Marin received his Master of Divinity degree. Attending the services in Fort Wayne were CCA alumni Rev. Frank Marshall, Nate Pinkston and Ralph Coquemar.

On Sunday, May 25, Marin, a native of Haiti, was ordained at the Seminary, and was installed June 8 at his first parish, St. John - Moore, OK. Attending the ordination was his father, Rev. Marin, who serves a Lutheran parish in his native Haiti, and also a Fort Wayne graduate.

Concordia Chorale

Concordia Chorale (pictured), led by Mrs. Minnie McMillan, worshipped the Lord at the 2014 Black Ministry Convocation in Kansas City. Their trip

was funded by a grant from the Church Extension Fund of the Southern District.

Christine Weerts



New Season of Partnership Available Via Transforming Churches Network (TCN)

Seasons of Discovery is a guided, step-wise church transformation process delivered in four seasons (preparation, visioning, empowerment, and outreach), over two or more years, that helps congregations to begin engaging their community with the Gospel of Jesus.

Each season includes: Personal coaching, skill builders & learning guides for the pastor, tools for equipping people for ministry, sermons & Bible Studies to rally people around the theme of the season, and outreach activities.

Is your congregation ready to explore a new season? If so, go to www.tcnprocess.com and click on the Seasons of Discovery tab to view a video with the details as presented by TCN executive director, Rev. Dr. Terry Tieman. There is also a PowerPoint presentation along with a brochure and

discovery map. Southern District congregations can enroll to begin the process in January, 2015. The district's partnership with TCN makes the Season of Discovery process available at a reduced price. The usual cost is \$1,800/season but for Southern District congregations it is \$1,200/season, with a special price of \$900/season for the first six congregations enrolling in the process. Seasons of Discovery calls for a congregation's investment in the process to make sure the follow-through is achieved. Too often, planning is done at the congregational level but little is ever done to work or realize the plans.

For additional information about TCN, contact Gene Menzel at 504-495-7436 or by e-mail at gwmenz@aol.com

Gene Menzel, Contractor for Congregation Revitalization/Transformation

----- Congregation News -----

Jehovah – Pensacola, FL

The Rev. Dr. Warren H. Davis retired after serving 41 years in ministry, and 36 years at Jehovah – Pensacola, FL.

Warren H. Davis was born in September, 1947, in Prattville, AL to Mr. Walter Davis Jr. and Mrs. Mary Ruth DeRamus Davis. He graduated from Alabama Lutheran Academy and College - Selma, AL; and Concordia College - St. Paul MN. He enrolled in Concordia Theological Seminary - Springfield, IL in September, 1969. He served his vicarage at Cross - Milwaukee, WI, before graduating Master of Divinity degree. Throughout his ministry he continued his education, enrolling in graduate courses at Louisiana State University, Louisiana Tech, McCormick Seminary, and the Air (Force) University. In May 2010, he graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary - Fort Wayne, IN earning his Doctor of Ministry degree.

Pastor Davis was ordained on July 22, 1973 at Concordia College - Selma, AL, and installed at King of Kings (now Faith) - Shreveport, LA, in September 1973. He served there until he was installed at Jehovah – Pensacola, FL in September of 1978, where he served

until his retirement on June 30, 2014.

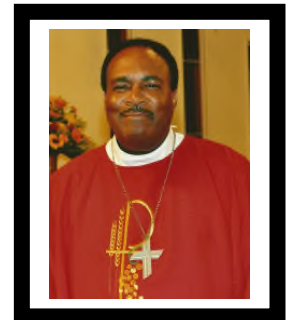
He was united in holy matrimony to La Jewel Ellen Stanback of Springfield IL on May 29, 1971. Pastor Davis and LaJewel were blessed with one daughter, Valencia.

Pastor Davis served on many boards and committees at the District and Synodical levels in the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. He has also been very active with many Pensacola community organizations and outreach programs.

He is the author of "Racial Segregation: New Patterns Upon Old Premises," his unpublished Master of Divinity Thesis (May 1973) and "Developing the Laity for Effective Ministry," his unpublished Doctor of Ministry Thesis (May 2010).

Pastor and Mrs. Davis' relatives and friends joined church members on June 7 at Heritage Hall in Pensacola for a luncheon which began the retirement celebration. Friends, such as the Rev. James Wiggins Jr., who served as a vicar under Pastor Davis, and the Rev. Harold Avers of Detroit, who married the couple, told humorous stories. Family, friends and several church auxiliaries had their turn in showing appreciation too, presenting various gifts of recognition.

A worship service on June 8 at Jehovah marked the final day of the retirement celebration. The Rev. Roosevelt Gray, Jr., Director of Black Ministry, LCMS National Missions, was the guest speaker. His text was taken from 2 Tim 4:1. His subject was "A Triple Crown Day," comparing Pastor Davis' years in the ministry to a race. The Rev. Kurtis Schultz's delivery of the Rite of Retirement was also a high point of the service. On June 29, the Rev. Dr. Warren H. Davis ended his final service at with communion, just as he began 36 years ago at his installation service.



Sylvia Abney Lewis and Ida Henderson



Christ Our Redeemer – Hartselle, AL

This spring, Christ Our Redeemer – Hartselle, AL members held a different Sunday worship service. Worship began at the church and then members set out to demonstrate ways of showing love for our neighbors.

Two families who live in Habitat for Humanity houses received teams of workers at their homes. One team worked on building ramps to make the home accessible for Beverly Davis and family. Part of this team also trimmed shrubs and trees. NARCOG's Helping Hands program assisted with financial support.

Another team worked on home repairs and interior painting at Charlene Murphee's home. Replacement screen doors were part of this project.

Another team provided lunch and beverages for the workers and families. During the early afternoon downpour, participants gathered indoors at Charlene's residence to conclude the worship service with all of the workers and teams participating. Laurie Ninke played guitar and Pastor John Ninke gave a reading and message for the day. The group sang "Amazing Grace" and concluded with a prayer.

The message for the day was clear. We are called to acts of service as a response to the love shown to us by the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Redeemed by grace, this community of believers is sharing God's love as faith in action. We serve as the hands of God doing His work in our community.

Donna Bessken

Redeemer – Fairhope & Our Savior – Mobile, AL

Redeemer - Fairhope, AL and Our Savior - Mobile, AL sent a group of 28 youth and chaperones to the Higher Things Youth Conference in Gainesville, FL at the University of Florida campus. The theme of this year's conference was "Crucified."



The conference included daily worship services, educational sessions, and free time for fellowship with one another. Rev William Parsons of Redeemer led the Catechesis session entitled "You Are Only as Good As Your Word." Each day began early, at 7am, and ending with lights out following the Prayer at Close of the Day at 11:30pm.

George Miller

Augustana – Alexandria, LA

The members of Augustana – Alexandria, LA are preparing to celebrate their 90th Anniversary in 2014. A special worship service will be held on Sunday, September 7, 2014, at 3:00 p.m. in the sanctuary at 2732 Third St. A reception will follow at Mt. Triumph Baptist Church Robert Perry Family Life Center, located at 2200 Third St.

Your presence is important to us as we celebrate this momentous occasion. Please RSVP by August 15th with the number of guests to Phyllis Culbert at (318) 613-8351 or phyllis_culbert@yahoo.com.

Rev. Bill Vogt

St. Paul – New Orleans, LA

Capricious Productions of St. Paul – New Orleans, LA announces it's production of "Sofa So Good," the story of the adventures of a "special" sofa for 100 years. The play will be held on Saturday, August 23rd (doors open at 6:00, show at 7:00) and Sunday, August, 24th (doors open at 3:00, show at 4:00) at the St. Paul Basement Theater, 2624 Burgundy St.

For ticket information, please call (504) 945-3741. Everyone is asked to bring a non-perishable item for the Food Bank. All net proceeds go to the St. Paul Lutheran School Scholarship Fund and the St. Paul 175th Anniversary Seed Money Fund. Refreshments will be available for sale.

Dennis Malloy



Good Shepherd – Gulf Breeze, FL

What kind of project can you conduct between Mother's Day and Father's Day? Good Shepherd - Gulf Breeze held "a fill the bag drive" to support Currie House, a children's shelter sponsored by Lutheran Services Florida (LSF). The congregation's Lady Crafters made twenty large bags which were filled with underwear, socks, t-shirts, sandals and crafts, plus 10 homemade quilts. There were over 640 items in total.

Representatives from LSF attended the worship service on June 29th, at which time the items were blessed as part of the Sunday offering and given to the representatives of the Currie House. Currie House staff members and children present for the worship service were invited to the 5th Sunday potluck that followed.

Pastor Rory Hermann

Lamb of God – Slidell, LA

J.O.Y (Jesus, Others and You) Quilters and Bible Study of Lamb of God - Slidell, LA, held a luncheon on Tuesday, May 27, 2014 at the home of Mrs. Kathy Jones. The luncheon celebrated the results of our March auction. Representatives of all six recipient organizations (pictured) were invited. The recipients were: The Caring Center, Community Christian Concern, Mt. Olive Feeding Ministry, NAMI (National Alliance of Mental Illness,) Rainbow Child Care, and S.T.A.R.C. (St. Tammany Association of Retarded Citizens).



The representatives of the organizations joined our members in partaking of a lovely luncheon and then were presented with the proceeds of our 2014 Auction. We were blessed with a very successful auction and were able to give away \$16,200.00. Thrivent Financial sponsored J.O.Y. by contributing \$1500.00.

The J.O.Y. group is sponsored by area Lutherans and meet at Lamb of God on Allen Rd. in Slidell, LA. J.O.Y. celebrated 34 years of working year round on quilts, homemade items and the securing of many wonderful donations for our annual auction. The auction monies have always been distributed to many needy organizations in Slidell and have given us as much JOY as they had in receiving it !

Marian Pezant

Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills – Birmingham, AL

On June 22nd, in their morning worship service, Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills – Birmingham. AL celebrated the ministry of Southern District President Kurtis D. Schultz. Rev. Michael Ahlemeyer of LCV presided over the service in which former Synodical President Rev. Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick preached.

In his sermon Rev. Kieschnick pointed out the commitment shown by President Schultz to the LCMS Council of Presidents. Couple that responsibility with the responsibilities of his geographically diverse district, his plate is more than full. Pastor Kieschnick also pointed out what it takes to support a man in his position. He complimented Mrs. Becky Schultz on her past support and ongoing support of her husband's ministry. Pictured left to right are Rev. Kurtis and Mrs. Becky Schultz with Mrs. Terri and Rev. Gerald Kieschnick.



Pastor Schultz was ordained on June 3rd in 1979. He served Prince of Peace in Ozark, AL; Christ the King in Enterprise, AL; and, First in Birmingham, AL, before being elected Southern District President in 2003.

A fabulous southern reception was served after the worship service. Mr. Tom Noon, Financial Representative for Thrivent, was present on behalf of Thrivent who graciously hosted the reception.



Immanuel – Pensacola, FL

Rev. Dr. Larry Rast, President of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, presented "American Lutherans: Past, Present, and Future" at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Pensacola, FL July 18-19, 2014.

The Pensacola & Mobile Bay Circuit pastors and laity came out in force to attend the 2-day seminar which educated attendees on the challenges that Lutheranism has faced in the past as we LCMS Lutherans address current and future issues.

Cheryl Casey

Unity – Birmingham, AL

On Sunday, June 8, 2014, the Unity LWML sponsored a tea which was centered around the four seasons of the year. Four tables were beautifully decorated with corresponding foods for each season. The theme of the event was "My Cup Runneth Over" based on Psalm 23:5c, around the thought "God abundantly supplies our needs."

Our inspirational speaker for the event was Mrs. Mary L. Williams, a sister in Christ, who worships with us from time to time. She is a deaconess of Greater Shiloh Baptist Church of Birmingham. Mrs. Williams correlated the theme with mission, reminding us of our mission as Christian women to respond to God's abundant blessings to us by spreading his message of redeeming love to others. Mission is an assignment to be carried out. Just as we would not withhold a free gift from our friends in a give-away deal, surely we would not withhold the good news of Christ and his free gift of redeeming love.

We were truly blessed by her message and we give all glory and honor to God.

Elois Ramsey

Mt. Olive – Metairie, LA

Mt. Olive - Metairie, LA, celebrated Pastor Bradley Drew's 25th year of service to our Lord. He was ordained July 2, 1989, at First - Baton Rouge,

LA. He accepted a call to Mt. Olive in 1998. The congregation is thankful to God for Pastor Drew and his ministry.

Marilyn Hoffmann

Holy Trinity – Covington, LA

The members of the Ladies Auxiliary – LWML of Holy Trinity – Covington, LA donated fifty wall crosses of all sizes and design to adorn and beautify the church Fellowship Hall.

Anne Scheer

Grace – Huntsville, AL

The Grace – Huntsville, AL annual Youth Christmas Workshop will be held this year on November 2, 2014 from 3:00-7:00 p.m. at Grace. The event is sponsored by the youth at Grace and is funded by the Northwest and North Alabama Chapters of Thrivent Financial. The event is for all middle and high school Lutheran youth, their friends and advisors, and Thrivent members throughout the two chapters. This project, in existence for over 15 years, is one of the few times during the year when youth and adults work together on a service project.

The workshop activities include: making holiday tray favors for Meals-On-Wheels clients; making Christmas cards for nursing home residents including those at Tutt Fann Veterans Home; filling and wrapping shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child; and purchasing Christmas gifts for foster children under the direction of FOCAL

and DHR.

Youth groups and Thrivent members are encouraged to mark their calendars now for this event. For further information contact Charlene Lechner in Huntsville at (256) 881-4754.

Charlene Lechner

Faith – Madison, AL

We're having a Luau!! On Sunday, September 21, 2014, Faith – Madison, AL will be hosting its annual "In-reach/Outreach" Homecoming and Church Picnic. All members of Faith, past, present and future are invited to come and join in the fun. We had a rousing good time last year and there will be even more excitement this year as we add a Hawaiian theme and an old fashioned "tent meeting" to the event.

If you are a previous member of Faith, we especially invite you to mark the date on your calendar and plan on being with us on September 21st. We will be combining "early" and "late" worship services that day at 10:45 a.m. under the big tent out front followed by the picnic.

Last year we got to meet new friends, see distant faces and had a wonderful time with a talent show, pie-eating contest and lots of events. Dig out that grass skirt and lei and see you there!!

Sherrie Callahan

Ebenezer – Atmore, AL

Ebenezer – Atmore, AL recognized its mothers and fathers in special services.



Stallworth, Annie Poole.

The L.W.M.L. Women in White program was held on Mother's Day, May 18, 2014. The speaker for this occasion was Mrs. Dorothy Jean Adams, a member at Ebenezer. She brought a message to us on "A Virtuous Woman" and she did a very, very awesome job. Pictured are Virgie McCullam, Barbara P. Harris, Helen Brown, Annie Deese, Barbara Grissett, Carolyn James, Ruby White, Dorothy Jean Adams, Stephanie Buitron, Gwedolyn Rothchild, Rev. Benjamin



Mr. Hoover Brown was chosen as the Father of the Year at Ebenezer on Father's Day. The award was given by the Progressive Civic And Recreational Club of Atmore, AL, presented to him by Annie Leslie Poole. To God be The Glory.

Annie Poole

Good Shepherd Lutheran School – Elberta, AL

This summer the students of Good Shepherd Lutheran School are learning about all the different creatures that God created that live in the water. They are making a mural of all the different sea life they are learning about, and learning that God wants us to take care of the creatures and not to put trash and plastic in the water that can harm sea life.

As an outreach project for the summer the students are collecting non perishable food items to help Shepherd of the Bay's Food Pantry.

Charlotte Bailey

Redeemer – Mandeville, LA

"O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds. So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come." (Psalm 71:17-18).

On May 30, 2014, Elvira Bouterie, a member of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Mandeville, celebrated her one hundredth birthday. Elvira was a longtime member of First English Lutheran Church in Metairie, and later of Christ Lutheran Church in Chalmette. After moving to the north shore, Redeemer was blessed to receive her into their church family.

The Redeemer LWML coordinated a visit of members to Elvira's home to celebrate the gift of her hundredth year of living in God's grace.

Rev. Aaron Stinnett



Shepherd of the Bay – Lillian, AL

On July 24 Shepherd of the Bay's food pantry received over 1,000 pounds of food from the national "Feeding America" program. This program is an equal opportunity provider. The church food pantry is funded by local contributions of money and food donations. There are canned goods, non-perishable dry goods, frozen foods, breads, and many other items. The church's food pantry is open monthly to the public on the second and fourth Tuesdays, from 9 a.m. until noon, and is focused on supporting local needs of hungry people where we live.



For more information about the food pantry, please contact Shepherd of the Bay at 251-962-7682.

Charlotte Bailey

Vacation Bible School

District youngsters and friends were treated to Bible stories, crafts, games, and activities in service to others during Vacation Bible School this summer. Here are a few highlights...

Atonement – Metairie, LA

Atonement – Metairie, LA hosted an Amazing Desert Journey this summer! VBS participants had a fun week growing in their relationships with God and each other. They enjoyed many activities, including crafts, stories, games, snacks, and more!

Daisy L. Olmstead



St. Mark's – Elberta, AL

St. Mark's – Elberta, AL recently held VBS and raised over \$312 for Gospel Nets Ministry Fund, an initiative to help

bring the gospel of Jesus to people in foreign countries by providing things like bicycles for pastors and church leaders as well as print resources, and money to help repairs buildings where people meet for worship.

The children at St. Mark's will continue to help with this mission project this summer as they meet each Sunday during the Sunday School hour – Fun in the Sun at 8:45 a.m.

Diana Ringers



Shepherd of the Bay – Lillian, AL

"Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into His presence with singing!" (Psalm 100:2) That is what the children attending Camp Dixie's Traveling VBS at Shepherd of the Bay, Lillian did during their week of VBS fun. The week long VBS day camp was based of Hebrews 12:1-2, with the theme being "Look to Jesus."

The children enjoyed learning about Jesus and His love, songs, crafts, games and good food as they all learned how to "Look to Jesus" and to tell others about His wonderful love for us all.

Charlotte Bailey



St. Paul's – Decatur, AL

St. Paul's – Decatur, AL hosted a one day Vacation Bible School on June 28th. As part of their experience, attendees decorated tote bags and filled them with toiletries or kid-friendly food supplies then delivered the filled bags to the Neighborhood Christian Center. Pictured delivering the bags are (back row l to r) Annsleigh Hamm and Dakota Bauer, (front row l to r) Maggie Nicholson, Tricia Scheler, Director of Children's Ministries at St. Paul's, Hunter Hamm, and Ashlee Bauer.

Tricia Scheler

Share Your News

The deadline for the September/October edition of the *Spirit of Southern* is September 15, 2014. Materials received after that date will be included in the web edition. We look for the "good news" of events happening in your congregation – special programs, outreach events, installations, dedications, anniversaries, new member Sundays, etc. A good photo is a plus! Please see photo information below. The guideline for article length is 200 words.

The preferred means for receiving material, text and pictures, is e-mail to "sosstuff@yahoo.com." **Please send photos as a separate JPEG file. High resolution photos are needed for the print edition.** Material can also be mailed to the district office: The Spirit of Southern – Southern District LCMS – 100 Mission Drive, Slidell, LA 70460-5221. Please allow two additional weeks for mailing.

Hurricane Preparedness 2014

By the time this issue of *Spirit of Southern* reaches your home, we will be in "Hurricane Season." The Southern District takes this subject very seriously and wants to help as much as possible. First and foremost, if you receive a mandatory evacuation order, please heed it. Then, please take a few moments to register with the district so that information can be on file. This can be done by phone, or on the District website, www.SouthernLCMS.org. This box can be saved in your evacuation file. It contains all of the information that you will need if and when the time comes.

If you can provide shelter, or are looking for shelter, you can also use the website to provide or receive information.

Clip and Save - Southern District Evacuation Reporting

In the event of hurricane evacuation, please contact the Southern District with the following information:

Name, Congregation, City, State

Evacuated (yes or no) If yes, to: City, State

Contact Phone Number

Report information to: www.SouthernLCMS.org or call:

Church Workers (mandatory reporting) – 985-635-4232

Congregation Members – 985-635-4239

If you can provide shelter, or are looking for shelter, you can use the website to provide or receive information.

Please update any changes.