

# August Newsletter



**Lord, hear our constant prayers for . . .**

Mr. Burl Brown	Mrs. Joan McFadden
Rev. Marvin Griffin	Mrs. Marian Martin
Mrs. Agnes Hatcher	Mrs. Nancy Pritchett
Mr. Je'dan LeSure	Mrs. Jackie Wilder

**Prayer Hour – Join us each Saturday @ 11 a.m.  
Dial: 1/681-999-0264 (Access Code: 391959#)**

**Prayer Requests/Concerns – July 9, 2022**

Family members of Johnnie Mae Davis – bereavement  
(Sister of Joann Ramsey)

Burl Brown, Margaret Bryant, Dianne Harris, Angela LeSure, Je'dan LeSure

Christoph Lewis – in emergency room for an injury (Angie LeSure's Uncle)

Victoria (in physical therapy) and mom, Jean Davison (caregiver)

Pastor Marvin Griffin and wife, Mrs. Shirley Griffin

Epiphany Lutheran Church, Jackson, MS (in need of pastoral leadership)

Mass shootings and the many families of victims as they mourn

Blessings on our worship services for this month

Black Family Convocation in Mobile, AL – July 27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>

Pastor Washington and family/Church families

Bereaved families and sick/shut-in everywhere

All online this morning for prayer time; increase our faith

Bind Satan, the enemy

Thank You, Father, for hearing our prayers!

In Jesus' name, we pray . . . **Amen!**

## **Prayer Requests/Concerns – July 16, 2022**

Pastor Marvin Griffin and wife, Mrs. Shirley Griffin

Burl Brown

Victoria and Jean Davison

Angela LeSure

Je'dan LeSure

Margaret Bryant

Dianne Harris

Rev. Ferry Nye

Pastor Washington and family/Church families

Bless our worship service and all other churches and their services

Bereaved families, sick and shut-in everywhere

Those in nursing facilities, our caregivers, nurses, doctors, etc.

All online this morning for our prayer time together – be with our families

All prayer warriors, prayer leaders, etc. and let us pray for each other

Violence and unrest in our country

Bind Satan, the enemy

Thank You, Lord, for hearing our prayers!

In Jesus' name we pray . . . **Amen!**

**“Lord, teach us to pray . . .” (Luke 11:1)** Jesus responded with the 72 words we know so well as the Lord’s Prayer. Yet, He didn’t intend this to simply be a memory verse, a prayer to only be recited from rote memory. Instead, He gave the disciples a template for prayer.

## **Prayer Requests/Concerns – July 23, 2022**

Gail Morris

Rev. Ferry Nye

Rev. Marvin Griffin and wife, Mrs. Shirley Griffin

Margaret Bryant

Burl Brown

Angela LeSure

Je'dan LeSure and mom, Shaunte' LeSure

Victoria and Jean Davison

Roderick Ford (COVID) – nephew of Mr. & Mrs. Dunlap

President Joe Biden (COVID)

Pastor Washington and family/Church families

Pray for our worship services tomorrow

Black Family Convocation in Mobile, AL – July 27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>

Bereaved families, sick and shut-in, doctors, nurses, caregivers,  
those in nursing homes, hospitals, other medical facilities

All online this morning for our prayer time together

Binding Satan, the enemy

Thank You, Lord, for hearing our prayers! In Jesus' name . . . **Amen!**

*Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion,  
which cannot be shaken but endures forever.*

*As the mountains surround Jerusalem,  
so the Lord surrounds his people  
both now and forevermore.*

***Psalm 125:1-2 (NIV)***

## **Prayer Requests/Concerns – July 30, 2022**

COVID outbreak – numbers are going back up  
Be with our nurses, doctors, caregivers, etc.

Family members of Earl Travis – bereavement

Rev. Marvin Griffin and wife, Mrs. Shirley Griffin

Victoria and Jean Davison

Angela LeSure – continued strength for her as she awaits a transplant

Markica Pickney – eye problems (granddaughter of Mr. & Mrs. Dunlap)

Bereaved families and sick/shut-in everywhere

Pastor Washington and family/Church families

Pray for our worship services tomorrow and all other Churches & services  
And the ones who will bring the messages

Black Family Convocation in Mobile, AL – July 27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>  
Bless the service, safe travel for all, etc.

All online this morning for our prayer time together

Thank You, Lord, for hearing our prayers!

Binding Satan, the enemy

In Jesus' name, we pray . . . **Amen!**

**A General Prayer of Thanksgiving:** Heavenly Father, we thank and praise You for all You have blessed us with. Your mercies are new every morning, and we thank You for all that You give us from the dawning of the sun to its setting. We thank You for Your protection and renewal of our bodies during the night. We thank You most for sending Jesus to save us from our sins. In His name. **Amen.**                    ***-Portals of Prayer/July-September 2022***



## **Portals of Prayer/July-September 2022**

**For Sunday Schools:** Lord Jesus, we come in humility, asking You to bless our Sunday School. Our Sunday School program is designed to deepen the faith Your children have in You and to teach Your will and Word. We ask, dear Lord, for Your patience, love, and kindness as we lead our Sunday School students to dedicate their lives to You and to witness to their classmates and friends who need to know You, the Father, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**For Students:** You have blessed us, gracious Father, to have a quiver that is full of children who are students that we have the privilege to lead into a fuller relationship with You and Your Son, Jesus. Grant our students keen discernment and wisdom to embrace those teachings that lead to salvation and deepen faith and to reject those teachings that lead away from You and distract from the joy of Your salvation. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

**For Faithful Teachers:** You have made teachers an essential part of the Body of Christ, Father, and we thank You for the grace of those teachers who dispense the knowledge of Your Son, Jesus Christ, and help deepen our faith in You and our discernment of how to act when life meets faith at the crossroad. Increase the courage, consecration, knowledge, and wisdom of our teachers so they can more effectively pour the same into Your people. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

**For Schools:** You desire our children to come to You, Jesus, and to learn what it means to honor Your Father by growing in wisdom, stature, and favor. We humbly ask You to bless students, teachers, staff, and administrators of the schools in our nation. Grant wisdom, Lord Jesus, so they understand how to teach children to follow Your moral and spiritual example of love for the Father, His creatures, and creation. **Amen.**

## **STEWARDSHIP DEVOTION - God Calls Us to be His Workers**

In spite of our foolish and sinful ways, God calls us to be His workers. Scripture tells us that Jesus did not pick people from society's elite when He chose his workers. Jesus' disciples were peasants, fishermen, and even a tax collector. Paul wrote, **"Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things . . ."** (1 Corinthians 1:26-28). The majority of God's work was done and continues to be done by the lowly and oppressed people.

Certainly, God can use celebrities and very successful people in His work. However, we need to remember that, even though we may not have accomplished anything of worldly significance, broken any records, or won any awards, God can use and transform us into effective workers in His kingdom. **"I can do everything through Him Who gives me strength"** (Philippians 4:13). Society gives many accolades to those who succeed, but there is no greater honor or privilege than to be chosen as God's vehicle to spread the Gospel. As John states in his Gospel, it is Jesus Who does the choosing. **"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit"** (John 15:16).

So why does God elevate the foolish and the lowly to be His workers? A reason may be found in 1 Corinthians 1:29: **"so that no one may boast before Him."** It is only by God's grace that we are saved, called, and equipped to be in His service. If we come into God's work with impressive credentials, we risk taking the glory and credit for ourselves. God desires the weak and the lowly. As Paul said, **"Therefore, I will honor all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong"** (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). God uses ordinary people to do extra-ordinary things. Are you ready for duty?

## **ALTAR FLOWERS FOR MONTH OF AUGUST**

**“Thanks”** to Mrs. Rosetta Junius for the lovely flowers placed on our Altar for the month of August – in memory of her husband, Mr. Henderson Junius.

## **ALTAR FLOWER DONOR NEEDED FOR SEPTEMBER**

If there is a member of the congregation who wish to donate flowers for the month of September, please inform Ms. Dianne Harris. **Thank you!**

## **BULLETIN BOARD FOR AUGUST**

**“Thanks”** to Ms. Tamecia Smith for the beautiful decorated board located in the Narthex.

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

### **Here’s a healthy habit:**

Start your day with water. Drinking a glass of water in the morning sets the tone for rehydrating your body for the rest of the day. (If you’re a coffee person, drink your water first to off-set the dehydrating effects of coffee).

Knowing that about 60% of your body and 73% of your brain consists of water, getting hydrated in the morning can be good for your brain – it boosts your alertness and can provide a pick-me up for your low energy level. Water (and being hydrated) also helps you eat healthier. Water takes up room in your stomach to make you feel full so you eat less when you sit down to breakfast, and when not adequately hydrated throughout the day, you can mistake thirst for hunger, which can lead to eating more.

**Source:** *Better Health Bulletin/Summer 2022*

### **Items to be donated:**

If there is anyone who has a need for or an interest in jigsaw puzzles, mugs, books, other collectables, or items that can be given for door prizes, please send an email to: [dorothyveazey@outlook.com](mailto:dorothyveazey@outlook.com)



**Trinity Lutheran Church – Selma, AL**  
**LWML Mother’s Day Program, Sunday, May 8, 2022**



Pictured are LWML Ladies – Front row (left to right): Dr. Cheryl Washington, Barbara Brown, Dianne Harris, Nettie Williams, Debra McDaniel, Barbara May, Dorothy Veazey, Agnes Pegues; Back row (left to right): Vivian Fleming, Evelyn Barber, Paulette Ishman, Betty Mosley, Nellie Blackmon, Ollie Morrissette, and Yolanda York.

LWML Ladies not pictured – Wilma Dunlap, Shirley Griffin, Theodora Hatcher, Maggie Hill, Gracie Hollins, Lorenza McIntosh, Benita Madison, and Jackie Wilder.

The LWML Ladies of Trinity Lutheran Church, Selma, Alabama, celebrated Mother’s Day 2022 on Sunday, May 8, 2022 in an in-person worship service. This was the first in-person Mother’s Day to be celebrated since the 2020 pandemic. The theme chosen for the occasion was: “Christian Women *STILL* Held by God Through A Pandemic” based on Psalm 46:1-3. The speaker was Ms. Wanda Goodwin, member of Trinity. The LWML members were happy to be able to fellowship together again. **PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW!**

*“Thanks” to Mr. Roy Barber for capturing this beautiful picture!*

# **A U G U S T**

## **“Birthday Blessings”**

*6<sup>th</sup> Edward Coles*

*16<sup>th</sup> Skye Perkins*

*6<sup>th</sup> Bertha Durry*

*16<sup>th</sup> Summer Perkins*

*8<sup>th</sup> Gracie Hollins*

*19<sup>th</sup> Dorothy Arnold*

*14<sup>th</sup> Burl Brown*

*21<sup>st</sup> Vickie L. Fails*

*14<sup>th</sup> Deborah Peeples*

*23<sup>rd</sup> Mary Jackson*

*16<sup>th</sup> Rev. Marvin Griffin*

*26<sup>th</sup> Kaleb Barnfield*

*16<sup>th</sup> Sherrick Hatcher*

*28<sup>th</sup> Erica Barnes*

## **“Anniversary Blessings”**

*4<sup>th</sup> Dr. Major, Jr. & Mrs. Benita Madison*

*11<sup>th</sup> Rev. Dr. McNair & Mrs. Joann Ramsey*

*24<sup>th</sup> Mr. Bruce & Mrs. Dorothy Barnes*

*24<sup>th</sup> Mr. James & Mrs. Bertha Durry*

*25<sup>th</sup> Mr. Larry, Sr. & Mrs. Caroll Ishman*

## **Post-Convocation Reflections**

Friends and Co-Laborers in Christ, we consider it a blessed privilege to have been able to meet, share and fellowship with so many of you at our recent Black Ministry Family Convocation. We sincerely pray that our keynote presentation raised the questions and concerns and pointed to the resources that will help you to enrich and extend your ministries. We want to take a moment to reiterate a few critical points and to leave you with some suggestions for action in your congregations and ministries.

First, we want to clarify who we, the Black Ministry Think Tank, are. Just like each of you, we are called and authorized servants of our Almighty God! We have no official capacity in the Synod or in our respective districts, but we are concerned members of the LCMS who want to see our church body as a whole, as well as our individual ministries and congregations, become more and more effective in our outreach to African-Americans, African immigrants and other people of color. The Black Ministry Think Tank did not come into being to DO ministry but rather to alert our entire church to areas of ministry that need our attention. We suggest ministry ideas and strategies that the Think Tank develops but we also seek to share ministry ideas and strategies that we learn of from you!

The Church all over the world is operating in a very challenging environment; but our Lord Jesus made clear that the Church will prevail--no matter what the circumstances. It's helpful to know, however, the circumstances in which we operate. Attached to this message are:

- Some statistical information on church closings within the LCMS, the current number of Black professional church workers and the prognosis for the short-term future; and
- Survey results taken at the convocation on how people view their ministry and ministry needs.

We also offer the following suggestions for enhancing your ministries. Most of these were shared at the Convocation by us or by other presenters. A number of these suggestions relate to youth ministry which was the focus of the Convocation. We offer those first:

**HAVE A YOUTH DEDICATION CEREMONY** in your worship service on some appointed Sunday. Just as pastors surround and lay hands on a pastor who is being ordained, have the youth (no matter how few) come up to the altar and have the elders or church council or all parents lay hands on them as a biblical charge is given them (like the words Paul spoke to Timothy) so that youth can appreciate how special and important they are in the ministry. (This was done at the Convocation and it was quite impressive!

**HAVE JUNIOR LEADERS:** Appoint youth to serve as junior deacons, junior elders and junior church officers who partner with and learn from the adults who hold those positions. (Youth who are actively involved in the ministry are less likely to drift away.)

Consider using the same concept in the congregation with career choices. If you have teachers, accountants, lawyers, electricians, plumbers etc. in your congregation, see if there are youth who might be interested in those career choices and develop adult-youth partnerships. (Youth who feel “connected” to fellow church members are less likely to drift away.)

**MAKE EVERY FIFTH SUNDAY A YOUTH SUNDAY!** (Did you use to do that? Bring it back!) Have a Sunday where youth are responsible for EVERYTHING: Sunday School, the church bulletin, the sermon, the choir—everything! Offer needed assistance but encourage their creativity with careful low-key guidance.

**Other Suggestions:**

**CONSIDER THE VARIETY OF MUSIC USED IN YOUR WORSHIP CELEBRATIONS:** A mix of contemporary and traditional seems to be practical (and preferred according to our survey!) Our hymns are a learning opportunity but if we don’t understand (OR don’t pay attention to) what we are singing, then we are not worshipping “in spirit and in truth”!

**HAVE AN ANNUAL BLACK MINISTRY CELEBRATION** during which we share and celebrate the history of Black Lutherans in the LCMS. This can be a great learning opportunity for Blacks and Whites that might help us to better appreciate one another. Information on that history is available from the LCMS. Check the Black Ministry tab on the LCMS website.

**DELIBERATELY AND CONSISTENTLY CULTIVATE AN “AMBASSADOR MENTALITY”** among your members. Far too many of our members tend to support their churches with their presence and maybe even their dollars but consider the *work* of ministry the job of the pastor and a cadre of elected or appointed leaders OR projects or programs that happen in a church building. Encourage EVERY member to recognize and embrace his or her role as a full-time ambassador of Jesus Christ in their homes, on their jobs and in their neighborhoods through sermons, classes, prayer circles or even a special stewardship event.

**CAPITALIZE THE LETTER “B” IN BLACK** when using the term as a racial designation. The Associated Press changed its policy two years ago and is now using uppercase B when referring to Blacks in new stories. The LCMS has not yet changed its policy and we encourage you to encourage them to do so; but in the meantime, please use an uppercase B in black when using the term as a racial designation in

your personal and church communications. Interestingly, the Associated Press has NOT changed its policy with respect to using an uppercase W when using White as a racial designation; but there is no reason why we, the Church, cannot lead the world instead of following it!

**INITIATE CONVERSATIONS ON RACISM** in your congregation and/or circuit perhaps focusing on local or national incidents. Understandably it is likely to be uncomfortable initially; however, as the body of Christ, we have a unique opportunity to change hearts and outlooks with the Word and love of God. We should never underestimate the critical difference we can make in the world around us!

Consider starting a discussion group on the controversial Critical Race Theory with the goal of understanding what it is and proposes. An excellent starting point might be engaging a group to read **CRITICAL RACE THEORY: AN INTRODUCTION** by Richard Delgado and Jean Stefanic. Have weekly discussion groups chapter by chapter and see what you discover.

**ESTABLISH AN ACTION TEAM!** From all reports, Convocation registrants had a blessed and productive time! But don't just leave it at that! Establish an action team in your congregation or circuit. Share the information and ideas that you took away from the Convocation with others and start developing plans to eliminate or enhance existing ministries and to initiate new ones. Perhaps there is a ministry idea on which two or more congregations might collaborate. Use an action team to get the ball rolling!

Well, that's all for now. Please stay in touch with us! We're eager to pass along ministry strategies that are working well for you that might also work well for others! Our contact info is on the masthead of this report. And please know that we\* are with you in His service!

*Rev. Paul Anderson*

*Rev. Donald Anthony*

*Vicar Jerrod Drye*

*Mrs. Shirley Jackson*

*Rev. Cleveland Lewis*

*Mrs. Aisha Lewis-Scott*

*Rev. John Loum*

*Rev. McNair Ramsey*

*Ms. Nikki Rochester*

*Rev. Douglas Shamburger*

*Rev. Aubrey Watson*

*Mrs. Mary Wise*

*Mrs. Yolanda York*

***\*We are eager to add more names to this list. We are especially seeking lay men. Please consider if God might be calling you to serve!***

**To God be the glory!**

LCMS  
CONGREGATIONAL  
STATISTICS\*

Year	Closed Congregations	Other Losses from the Roster	Total Losses in Congregations
2010	30	4	34
2011	17	9	26
2012	30	14	44
<b>2013</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>49</b>
2014	31	13	44
2015	29	7	36
2016	28	5	33
<b>2017</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>48</b>
2018	25	6	31
2019	30	13	43
2020	28	9	37
<b>2021</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>488</b>
<b>Avg.</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>40.7</b>

*\*LCMS Office of Statistics*

- Congregations in Black Ministry in 1970 est. 150; in 2022 est. 121
- The number of Blacks Parishioners in 1970, est. 30,000; in 2022- est. 15,000
- Of the current estimated 134 black pastors, over 65-70% are eligible for retirement.
- In the last ten years the number of Black/African graduates? **26**  
(includes residential, Specific Ministry Program, Emigrant Institute of Theology, Deaconesses, and Ph.D's)
- Black/Africans currently enrolled in both seminaries: **8**
- Congregations in Black ministry with over 200 in Sunday worship: **2**

## **REVITALIZATION SURVEY**

In a brief survey taken among Convocation attendees, we got the following results:

1. The number one ministry in need of revitalization in Black Ministry is:
  - Preaching - 0
  - Sunday School - 16
  - Evangelism - 21
  - Youth Ministry - 52
  
2. Which of the following is more critical to the future of Black Ministry?
  - Stewardship - 0
  - Empowerment of Laity - 13
  - Recruitment (of clergy) -17
  
3. Which style of music do most worshippers prefer?
  - Traditional - 3
  - Contemporary - 5
  - Mixed – 75

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **BLACK MINISTRY THINK TANK**

*Black Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

*Revitalization, Recruitment, Communication,  
Ownership, and Ministry Focus*

**[blackministrythinktank@gmail.com](mailto:blackministrythinktank@gmail.com)**

*(334) 431-7145*