



# The **White Oak** Branch

## Make A Joyful Cacophony!

Psalm 100

*Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!*

*Serve the Lord with gladness!*

*Come into His presence with singing!*

*Know that the Lord, He is God!*

*It is He who made us, and we are His;*

*we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.*

*Enter His gates with thanksgiving,*

*and His courts with praise!*

*Give thanks to Him; bless His name!*

*For the Lord is good;*

*His steadfast love endures forever,*

*and His faithfulness to all generations.*

Just a few days ago a friend posted a wonderful slide online that said (and I paraphrase), “We sang a new hymn in church today. There were several casualties.” As a life-long Lutheran this joke hits really close to home. As a pastor that is responsible for planning worship for each Sunday, and special Wednesday, service, this little joke is outright scary. Something new can be frightening and even painful until familiarity takes hold. But novelty isn’t the only hindrance in singing and praising God. I have had a few parishioners over the years that have expressed an aversion to any hymn that has more than four verses. One gentleman even said that he was sure God stopped listening after the fifth verse, because we would just be repeating ourselves. I have often wondered how he made it through any Easter service where we sang “I Know that My Redeemer Lives” (even though none of our hymnals have never had all the verses available).

Along the lines of novelty and length, people also have problems with singing and praising because of a perceived lack of vocal talent. Some have had someone unfairly criticize their singing at an impressionable age. Some are shy

and afraid of drawing attention to themselves. Others have whatever reason they can think of to keep their mouths shut or never raise their voices above a whisper. Each and every one of these situations is tragic, unfortunate, and horribly sad.

This Psalm, like so many passages of Scripture, has to be given to us to cancel all of these hindrances. Although the common English translation is “make a joyful noise,” another good rendering is “shout for joy.” So you see this negates any idea of talent or fear. Often pastors just remind people that the psalmist declares (with the Spirit’s inspiration) that we should make a noise, a loud noise, a joyful and happy noise. Forget melody and harmony. Forget propriety. Forget any idea other than that of what God has done for us. How He has loved us.

How He is our Good Shepherd and we are His simple, cared-for sheep. We have our organs and musicians. We have our fellow shouters and singers. We have our tried and true, familiar, even memorized hymns. We even have the angels and archangels and all the company of heaven to fill out what our voices are lacking. But what these aids will never have is our singular heart, washed in Baptism, fed with the Word and the Supper, joining in the wondrous harmony of all the saints that Christ died to save.

Let us shout for joy! Let us make a joyful noise! Let us join in the eternal cacophony of celebration for our Lord and Savior.

Pastor Red Etzel

Concordia Lutheran Church





# Not by Sight

WHITE OAK ZONE  
Spring Rally



Gethsemane Lutheran hosted the LWML White Oak Zone Spring Rally on Sunday, April.

Pastor Red Etzel opened with a devotion followed by the league pledge and hymn. We were blessed to hear from a speaker in the mission field, Rebecca Potts of Lutheran Braille Workers, which exists to bring the Word of God to the 338 million people throughout the world who are blind or visually impaired, *completely free of charge*.



Our very own Concordia Lutheran serves as an LBW production center. If you would like to get involved with this incredible ministry, contact Concordia at (713) 462-4040.

**Be sure to join us for the Fall Rally on October 5 at Our Savior!**

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## Texas District Retreat: Make Travel Plans Now!



The LWML Texas District retreat will take place October 10-11 at St. Paul Lutheran Church (1301 Hogan Lane, Waco, Texas). Join us on Friday for an optional evening of fellowship, 6:30-8 p.m. On Saturday, registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and the retreat will end at 3 p.m.

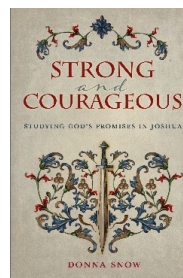
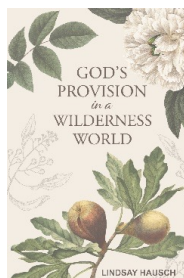
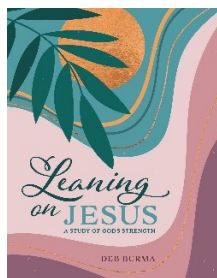
**Faith Over Fear** is our theme for the weekend, and our speaker Christina Hergenrader, will connect that to Psalm 23:4b: *I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and your staff, they comfort me*. In our time together, we will focus on the truths of Psalm 23 and be encouraged to move from fear to faith by trusting Jesus as our Good Shepherd

The registration cost of \$50 includes Friday night fellowship activities, Saturday breakfast and lunch, and all retreat materials. A block of rooms with a reduced rate has been reserved at the Holiday Inn Waco Northwest (1801 N Development Blvd). Details and registration is available on our website:

[lwmltxdist.org/district-retreat](http://lwmltxdist.org/district-retreat)

This retreat would make a great weekend away with your Lutheran gal pals! Come spend time in God's Word and in fellowship with one another—and stay for the local attractions, like Magnolia and the Dr. Pepper Museum.

# Reading Corner



## [Promised Hope: Finding Peace in God's Faithfulness](#) by Michelle Diercks

In this life, we aren't promised health, wealth, stability, or perfect relationships. What we are promised is hope in Jesus. In this eight-week Bible study from the author of *Promised Rest: Finding Peace in God's Presence*, you'll discover what eight different names and characteristics of God say about who He is and the hope He promises.

Use *Promised Hope* in your personal study, a group study, or a book club and face whatever uncertainty you have in your life—the future, relationships or situations that feel irreparable, loss, or a new diagnosis—with confidence in God's promised hope and the peace we find in His faithfulness.

## [Leaning on Jesus: A Study of God's Strength](#) by Deb Burma

Our culture encourages independence and self-empowerment. We're told we have all we need to make it all work, that we can smash our goals and own our own lives. But what happens when we can't or simply don't? How can we find rest when nothing goes right or never feels like it is enough? Let's learn to live out (and promote) a different posture: leaning. Leaning on Jesus.

*Leaning on Jesus* invites you to explore what it means to lean on your Redeemer. In eight weeks of study, divided into forty short daily sessions, learn how Jesus' words show you forgiveness and strength for today, direction for tomorrow, and hope for eternity. Leaning on Jesus is perfect for individual or group use, and includes a Leader Guide, weekly study review, and daily readings. Let's lean forward to listen, lean back to rest, and lean on Jesus, together. He is present with you now.

## [God's Provision in a Wilderness World](#) by Lindsay Hausch

For the Israelites wandering through the wilderness and us, God's manna is a gift wrapped in struggle. This example of God providing manna invites us to look at our present life—with its bittersweet beauty—and see how our Creator is blessing us with His gifts in our everyday struggles. The forty studies in this book will lead you through the Book of Exodus as the Israelites wander through the wilderness, pointing you to what God wants you to know and apply to your own life.

Our culture is a wilderness where our effort to satisfy our needs with things of this world leaves our hearts empty and aching for more. Every day, no matter where you wander, God invites you to take time in His Word and recenter your heart on Him. God's provision for you is personal. He meets you where you are. And He gives you what you need.

## [Strong and Courageous: Studying God's Promises in Joshua](#) by Donna (Pyle) Snow

Joshua, born into slavery and witness to a forty-year death march, was called into what is arguably one of the most intimidating leadership roles in the history of God's people. As he stood at the Jordan River looking into the land that God had promised, Joshua knew what awaited him—but he was strong and courageous, having faith that God was with him.

Join Donna Snow in an eight-session, verse-by-verse Bible study looking at the life of Joshua and see how you, too, can be strong and courageous amidst any challenges, conflicts, or roadblocks you face.

# Meet Our New Executive Council Members!



## Emily Kemnitz, Young Woman Representative

Emily is a born and raised Houstonian. Her family joined Our Savior Lutheran Church in 2012 where she also attended school.

Emily is a graduate of the University of Houston and has been married to her amazing husband, Alec, for two years.



## Eva Shaw, Chairman of Communication

Eva is a native Houstonian and member of Our Savior Lutheran Church, where she first got involved with LWML. Shortly after transferring membership there in 2020, she was invited by several OSL ladies to join them for Night Circle, and her connection grew from there!

Eva is a graduate of The University of Texas at Austin and serves as Associate Director of Communications at a large church in Bunker Hill Village. She and her husband, Joel, have one child.

## Mite Report

The zone has given mites for 2023 (\$127) and for 2024 (\$659).

Articles for upcoming editions of *The White Oak Branch* can be sent to Mandy, White Oak Zone President.

If you have received this newsletter and wish to be removed from the distribution list, contact Mandy via email at [mandylwml@gmail.com](mailto:mandylwml@gmail.com).

## Save the Dates

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|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>June 25-29</b>    | LWML Convention<br>Omaha, NE         |
| <b>July 19</b>       | Summer Retreat<br>Concordia Lutheran |
| <b>October 5</b>     | Fall Rally<br>Our Savior Lutheran    |
| <b>October 10-11</b> | District Retreat<br>Waco, TX         |





LWML WHITE OAK ZONE

Biennial One-Day Retreat

# HEARTS WIDE OPEN

Christian Compassion

*We often find the unknown to be scary, or at the least, uncomfortable. Looking at the teachings of the apostles, shared with a world very different from them, we will learn to live with open hearts, reaching out to all people.*

**JULY 19, 2025 · 9AM – 3PM · 4115 BLALOCK**

*Check-in and a light breakfast begin at 8:30.*

***Ingathering:*** *Please bring bath-size towels and men's and children's socks as you are able.*



retreat registration

## REGISTER HERE!

- Scan the QR code,
- or send the form below to Sarah:  
**sarahebaughman@gmail.com**

or

**Our Savior Lutheran, Attn: Sarah Baughman, 5000 W Tidwell, Houston, TX 77429**

*Please fill out one form per person attending.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Church / LWML Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary Restrictions:  Dairy-free  Gluten-free  Vegetarian      Allergy    

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name & Phone Number:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Need Childcare? Y / N Names and ages of children:

## PAYMENT INFORMATION

Registration Fee \$25

Late Registration Fee  
(after 7/8/23) \$30

Please send check payable to **LWML White Oak Zone** with your registration form, or contact Sarah for how to send funds electronically.