



# MEMORIAL MESSENGER April 2017



*The Jews demanded of (Jesus), “What miraculous sign can You show us to prove Your authority to do all this?” Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.”...The temple He had spoken of was His body. After He was raised from the dead, His disciples recalled what He had said.” John 2:18-22*

Thousands of people heard Jesus claim to be the Son of God, the promised Messiah, the world’s Redeemer. But most of those thousands didn’t believe what they heard Jesus say. They insisted on visible proof of His deity.

The source of their skepticism is Satan, who wants to create doubt and denial in us, too. He suggests we demand of Jesus, “What miraculous sign can You show us to prove Your authority and divinity? Wouldn’t Your Church grow more rapidly if You showed *visible* signs to unbelievers?”

God silences His foe and answers our question with the same tool: His truth. It wasn’t just the events of His suffering and death that led His disciples to conclude He is the Savior. It was the written and spoken Word of God about Jesus. The Holy Spirit used the Word, combined with the facts of His dying and rising, to work deeper faith inside the disciples. “*After He was raised from the dead, His disciples recalled what He had said.*”

This month we go spiritually to Holy Week, the high point of the Christian Church year. Will the services the middle of April make the Savior’s suffering and death more real to us? The subdued colors and somber songs, the rugged cross in the sanctuary and the banners in the chancel, the black veil and the crown of thorns which will dominate our altar on Good Friday—as well as the solemn silence and the ebbing darkness inside our church—will all serve as visible and audible reminders of His suffering for *our* guilt!

The brilliant whites and the bright lights and the fragrant lilies and the uplifting anthems which will burst all around us Easter morning are also sensory aids to worship. We celebrate Christ’s bodily resurrection and the foundation of our faith. He lives! Therefore, *we* live, too!

But without the clear Word of God to tell us what Jesus has done for us, all of that would be only theatrics. What it finally comes down to is “*the Scripture and the words that Jesus has spoken*” (John 2:22). We may or may not get an overwhelming feeling from our Holy Week services. But we will most certainly have the Word of our God about the crucified and risen Savior at the center of the Holy Week services, and every service.

We don’t look for signs or depend on feelings this holiest time of the year. When people ask us, “How are you feeling?”, our answers change depending on, well, how we are feeling! When we ask ourselves, “What happened at the cross and the grave?”, the answer is always the same: *Jesus died and rose for me! I am saved!*

One more thing. The record of our Lord’s suffering and death and rising is *not* a secret to be kept hidden among the faithful. Whom will we invite to hear the certainty of salvation with us in the house of risen Son? As the Lord sent His angel to announce to the women at the tomb, so He says to us, “*Come and see! Go and tell!*”

Pastor Voss



**THE WALK ALONG OUR SAVIOR'S** path to His crucifixion continues with Wednesday evening Lent services at 7:00 on ***March 29 and April 5.***

Join us to praise God for the gift of salvation won by our Savior for us sinners in His life, death, and resurrection. Area WELS pastors are conducting the services. The midweek services will have the theme: *Gripping Action in the Passion.*



## HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday, April 9 – 8:00 & 10:30 / Potluck & reception – 11:45

Maundy Thursday, April 13 – 7:00 PM with Communion

Good Friday, April 14 – 7:00 PM: Tenebrae (darkness) service

Easter Sunday, April 16 – **7:30 & 10:30 AM**

Easter breakfast served 8:45 - 9:35; *no SS or BC*

**THE CHILDREN** of the congregation will sing early in each service ***Easter Sunday***. They have been rehearsing their song before Sunday School sessions the last month or so, as well as daily at our school.

**OUR ANNUAL NEW MEMBER RECEPTION** will take place at a potluck dinner following the late service ***Palm Sunday, April 9.*** Sign up in the narthex to indicate how many from your family will attend and what you will bring; we also ask you to bring your own tableware. A presentation will recognize new members, as well as our 2017 youth confirmation candidates.

**INVITE UNCHURCHED** loved ones, friends, and neighbors to our Good Friday and Easter Sunday services, as we celebrate the greatest events in world history: ***Christ has died and is risen to save us sinners!*** Invite them to our Easter Breakfast as well. Use the invitation cards on the narthex counter to extend your invitation to them to worship with us.

**OUTREACH MATERIALS** The Board of Evangelism & Stewardship reminds members that we have copies of the ***WELS DVDs "Road to Emmaus", "Come, Follow Me", and "My Son, My Savior"*** are available for purchase (\$3 per copy; 2 for \$5).

Consider purchasing copies for your family and friends to show them why the work of the Savior is needed by every sinner. ***Any, or all, of these videos would be a great way to invite them to our special Lent services and to the Holy Week services April 9, 13, 14, and 16.***

**SUPPERS** precede each midweek Lent service. We are doing this as an opportunity for families to come here for their evening meal, then receive spiritual nourishment from God's Word, and still be able to return home by a decent hour.

All suppers begin at **6:00**. A free will offering to help with meal expenses will be received each week.

***Our thanks to all who have volunteered to provide food for these suppers, as well as to those who will set things up for the meals and cleaned up after them!***

**LENT SUPPER HOSTS?** All the Lent suppers have hosts except for ***April 5.*** If several families wish to get together to host a meal for that date, please sign up on the sheet in the narthex.





**THE VOICE CHOIR** meets *Thursday evenings March 30 and April 13*. We are practicing anthems to sing for our Holy Week services.

**THE CHIME CHOIR** will rehearse *Thursday, March 30 at 6:30*, as well as *Saturday, April 1 at 11:00*. The chime choir will ring music in the late service on April 2. (Pastor Voss regrets the erroneous date published in the March issue of the *Memorial Messenger*.)

**SPECIAL EASTER FLOWERS** A sign-up sheet has been posted on the main church bulletin board for ordering *Easter lilies and/ tulips* to beautify our church sanctuary for the Easter services.

*Lilies: 6-inch pot for \$9.00*

*Tulips: 6-inch pot for \$8.00 (red or yellow)*

Carol Kasischke is coordinating the order. She asks that you **sign up by April 6**. You may pay Carol at any time for the flowers that you order.



**THE CMLAL VOLLEYBALL** tournament will be held in our school gym on *Saturday, April 1*. Games will begin at 10 AM and continue into early afternoon. If you can help with concessions, please speak to Pastor Voss or Judy Domke.

**OUR YOUTH CONFIRMATION** will be in the late service on *Sunday, May 7*. This year's Confirmation candidates are *Kevin Every, Tristen Lycos, and Dylan Staffeld*.

**WELS CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S RETREAT** will be held *March 31 - April 2* at the Double Tree Hotel – Riverfront in Bay City. You may register online at [www.tcwr.org](http://www.tcwr.org).



**AN OUTSIDE WORK DAY** has been set by our Board of Trustees for *Saturday, April 22*, starting at 8 AM. More details will follow, but please set aside the date now!

**EARLIER VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL** Our Board of Christian Education consulted with those who have taught classes and organized activities for our Vacation Bible School in the past few years about holding VBS earlier this summer. After hearing of new major conflicts or complications, the Board of Christian Education has set VBS for **the mornings of Monday, June 26 – Thursday, June 29**. More details will follow as VBS draws closer.

**AMAZON** has a program in which 0.5% of qualified Amazon purchases can be given to a charity of the buyer's choice. Our treasurer has set up our congregation to participate, and the pastor has sent an email with our church's unique charity link. If you didn't get the email, here is the link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/38-2130250>. To get additional information, please speak to Kim Fedewa or Pastor Voss.

**IF YOU HAVE ACCESS** to the internet and get this *Memorial Messenger* that way, please let us know and we will no longer print a copy for you.

**LADIES FELLOWSHIP** - We have rescheduled our April 3 meeting and will instead meet one week later on **April 10** at 7:00 PM. It is our hope to finish work on our church library and encourage more members to use this wonderful resource we have. We'll be sure to do a lot of visiting while we work on the library. ☺



**THE LADIES' FELLOWSHIP IS HOSTING A PAINT PARTY.** This is open to the women of our congregation. We have a professional coming from Michigan Paint Party to teach us how to paint a 16X20" colorful, abstract picture of daisies. <https://www.facebook.com/MIPaintParty/>

We have the conference room at school (farthest classroom to the south of the building) reserved for **May 6th**. We will start at 10:00 and go until we are finished (about two hours). Don't forget to bring your own non-alcoholic beverage that day.

We have a 15 person limit for this, our first event of this kind. Please pay Marty Bennett **\$20.00 by April 23** to reserve your spot. (If Marty is gone when you want to pay, you may also pay Laurie Voss.) Payment is non-refundable since our teacher will be planning on 15 and purchasing supplies for that amount. If you reserve a spot and something comes up that you cannot be there that day Marty may have a waiting list, and you can ask her who you could contact about taking your place.

**REQUESTS FOR LIVE NATIVITY ITEMS:** The Live Nativity organizers have been in contact with the Board of Stewardship and Evangelism after last year's Live Nativity. We have a few new ideas for this year's Live Nativity. We ask for your help now so that we can be prepared in plenty of time.

We would like to make wrap around, hood-like head coverings for the angels. We will need white material (perhaps fleece would be best) and a few volunteers who are willing to sew these.

We also would like to get 5 canopy, easy set-up tents that are 10'X10' and that would become church property. Each year we have used borrowed tents. While this is greatly appreciated, it has been hard to set them up as marketplace tents because of the different sizes and the different ways they are set up. We would like to be able to use the same ones every year and be able to have the coverings for the sides all set to place on the tents because we will have the size determined.

Four of these tents will be used for the marketplace and one will be used now for the angels. That tent we would like to have set up with all white sides and lights and tulle on the top. For that, we will now need many white, flat sheets (or similar white fabric); small, white strings of Christmas lights, and fabric like clear tulle that will reflect those lights.

Please consider these requests, and then volunteer your time, direct any questions, or give your donations to Laurie Voss.



## CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS

**PASTOR'S REPORT** – There are three eighth grade students in the Catechism Class (along with three seventh grade students). The class is on track to finish the material, as well as get our three eighth grade review sessions in, before confirmation Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup>.

**WELS news** - At the late February Synodical Council (SC) meeting, the SC determined that ministry needs justified greater use of WELS reserve funds, approved the 2017-19 support forecast, and affirmed that a \$3.2 million drawdown of reserves in the Financial Stabilization Fund (FSF) was prudent based on ministry needs and opportunities.

Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS President, writes, "The FSF still has a healthy balance for the short term,

but the SC recognizes that this level of drawdown is not sustainable in the long term. Inflationary pressures are increasing costs 3.5 percent annually and the SC hopes that congregations, through the efforts of the Conference of Presidents, will increase their CMO by at least that amount annually, so that ministry programs and services do not need to be cut.

The support forecast, which includes CMO, bequests, grants, and gifts, shows a slight improvement over the current year as CMO is planned to grow 0.5 percent annually. In addition, lower than-expected operating and debt retirement costs, plus the gift of a closed congregation's property are projected to increase reserves."

Efforts to secure a guest pastor to conduct our worship services and Bible Class here on Sunday, April 23 have been unsuccessful to date. The Board of Elders is discussing alternatives for those services and the class if a guest pastor is not able to be here that morning.

WELS musician Stephen Bautista, who was here last June, will be traveling through Michigan with his family in October. He has received an open invitation from our congregation, and has expressed his preference to use our school gym for a concert (rather than using the band shell at McCormick Park) because one never knows what the weather will bring.

A special Michigan District Convention will be held at MLS in Saginaw June 5-7. The main reason to have this convention is to prepare Michigan District delegates for the WELS Convention in Watertown, Wisconsin July 31 – August 3.

**BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** – The Board of Christian Education recommends that the tuition amounts for the 2017-2018 school year remain unchanged from the 2016-2017 tuition amounts (K-5: \$1,000.00, Pre-School: \$750.00 + \$50.00 non-refundable application fee).

Parent meeting regarding tuition for 2017-2018 school year. Meeting took place on February 15. We received feedback from the parents who attended. There was no firm opposition to increasing tuition. Board is recommending to have tuition rates remain the same for 2017-18. We will formalize a way for school families to submit special gifts, should they do desire, in additional to the regular tuition payments.

Facebook targeted marketing for school reached approximately 37,176 Facebook pages February 20-27 before Preschool and Kindergarten Roundup days. 32 users clicked on the "learn more" link which directed them to our web site. Very cost effective for numbers reached. We thank Laurie Voss for her research and execution of the plan.

We asked at February 15 meeting how non-members heard about us. Most said, "On-line".

One student participated in MLS Fine Arts Fair on March 4.

Preschool license renewal: paperwork completed, waiting for a visit from licensing personnel.

One child and the child's parents attended Preschool Roundup.

We expect five 4-year old preschool students to enroll for kindergarten next year.

MSU Rodeo field trip was very enjoyable.

Seven computers, monitors, keyboards and mice were donated for computer room.

No school April 3-7 for Spring Break

No School April 14 for Good Friday (We will have classes on Monday April 17.)

PTO meets next on Wednesday April 19 at 5:00 pm and will start with a meal.

CMLAL volleyball tournament will be in our gym April 1. PTO help with concessions is needed.

**BOARD OF ELDERS** – The Board of Elders recommends the transfer of membership for Dawn Pirkel to Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church in Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

Pastor Voss will not be here for worship services on Sunday, April 23. So far, a guest preacher has not been found. If no guest preacher, is found Rex Hannewald will lead the services, and in that case Holy Communion will not be served at those services.

Our Thursday evening summer worship schedule begins May 25. That Thursday is also the same day as the festival of our Savior's Ascension into heaven. The Board of Elders is considering that Thursday evening service be a preview service of the upcoming Sunday morning service like the rest of our summer Thursday services rather than a separate Ascension festival service.

New Year's Eve is on a Sunday in 2017. The board is considering having only one morning service on that day at 10:00 AM, along with the traditional New Year's Eve service. With a morning service held that day, should our New Year's Eve service be at 4:00 like this past New Year's Eve or at 7:00?

**BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP** – Facebook marketing for church and school was used before preschool and kindergarten roundup days.

Our website manager has set it up to view the site's analytics.

We discussed promoting Lenten suppers as community dinners. The groups may request reimbursement if collection isn't enough to cover the cost.

We discussed the new greeter schedule and modified greeter guidelines.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES** – The newly installed sump pumps are working at church and the parsonage.

We discussed the ongoing water testing. Dave Dawley will be meeting with Ingham County later this month as well as completing the State of Michigan DEQ testings.

New batteries were installed in the thermostat in the storage room, and a new zone damper was installed in the classroom.

Our annual outside cleaning date is set for April 22, 2017 for the church and school. Our board will have a list of projects including power washing the church.

Basketball games were completed on March 5<sup>th</sup>. We still have teams practicing throughout the week.



## **BADGER NEWS from SCHOOL -**

**FROM OUR PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN ROOMS:** This past month we have been learning about many of the lessons Jesus taught the disciples as He prepared them for His death and departure from our life here on earth. We also learned the events that happened leading up to His death and resurrection. This time of year is so important to reflect on the suffering Jesus went through for all of us. For some of our preschoolers it is their first or second time hearing about what Jesus went through in great detail. It can be a little scary and sad to hear of anyone being treated that way especially when He did not do anything wrong. Even at this young age they can understand the profound sacrifice that Jesus made for us. They too can be humbled and awed by His great love and mercy. In this way we teach our children to be thankful for His sacrifice for our forgiveness, eternal life in heaven. Let us this Lenten and Easter season look at the cross through the eyes of a young child hearing the news for the first time that our perfect, loving, Lord suffered and died for us but rose so that we can live in heaven with Him.

For our three year olds we have been learning the letters D, B, and P. The four year olds have been working on the letters A-I. All ages have been working with the numbers 1-5 and will be learning the numbers 6-10 in the next month. We have also started working on our play "The Little Engine That Could Sing!"

Kindergarten has been working on the letters B and R. We will be working on letters N and M next. We are wrapping up our science unit on our bodies and will be working on something more springy like bugs or plants next.

In the next couple months we will have all of the usual flurry of activities such as field trips, working on our play, enjoying the warming weather with outside recess, and getting ready for graduation day. Where does the time go??

Praying that the Lord blesses you as we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord!

**FROM OUR GRADES 1-5 ROOM:** In God's Word we've been busy traveling with Jesus to Jerusalem this past month. We witnessed His teaching, miracles, and compassion as He showed God's people that He was the Savior. We are reminded that love for Jesus and thanks for what He has done compels us to serve God with our thoughts, words and actions.

In art we have been studying texture. We've done some paper weaving and montage.

Our 2017 play is called, "Nuts!" It is all about the life of an oak tree from seed to mature tree. The songs are great and the dialogue is great, too.

We certainly have enjoyed getting outside more now that the weather has moderated. It won't be long before we are practicing track and field!

### **SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR APRIL SERVICES:**

<i>Ushers</i>		<i>Altar Guild</i>	<i>Greeter(s)</i>	<i>Cleaners</i>
<i>8:00</i>	<i>10:30</i>			
4/02 - #6 E. Ruhlig	#9 D. Fisher	K. Unruh	K&J Douglas	H&S Clark
4/05 - #4 B. Grinnell		K. Unruh		
4/09 - #7 D. Kasischke	#3 J. Janecke	K. Ward	T&L Loeffler	J. Coulter
4/13 - #5 S. Houser		K. Ward		
4/14 - #8 D. Rector		K. Ward		
4/16 - #2 V. Domke	#1 T. Marion	M. Bennett	J&M Zoran	P&S Crandall
4/23 - #5. S. Houser	#3 J. Janecke	S. Rector	B&L Painter	V&J Domke
4/30 - #6 E. Ruhlig	#9 D. Fisher	C. Burris	R&J Hannewald	J. Douglas

