



MEMORIAL MESSENGER

August 2020

*Do not fear, for I am with you.
Do not be overwhelmed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you. Yes, I will help you.
I will uphold you with My righteous right hand....
I am the LORD your God.
I am the One who is holding on to your right hand.
I am the One who says to you, "Do not fear. I Myself am helping you."
Isaiah 41:10,13*

Since mid-March 2020, what has changed? Everything has changed. And absolutely nothing has changed.

We read and hear so much about the virus and changes, projections and mandates, worries and vaccines. I won't add to that here. And I won't deny that in connection with all of that it *seems* that everything has changed.

But the LORD hasn't changed a bit since mid-March 2020, since you were born and baptized, since He gave these wonderful words to Isaiah in 700 BC, since He formed the universe. In Him, nothing has changed!

Think about it. The LORD who made the entire universe *owns* the entire universe. Our house and savings account, our vehicles and recreation equipment? Not ours, but His! All of that belongs to the LORD because He created everything – including the raw materials that made those things, as well as the combination of mind and muscles in us that we use to earn money to buy and secure any all of that. Our office or business, our lakes and trees? Not ours, but His! All of that is given us by the LORD to use in ways that honor and please Him. And what He chooses to allow us to suffer doesn't mean He has lost control of even a cubic inch of the universe.

Most importantly, we have from the LORD His verdict of "*Not guilty* – the verdict spoken by the Father, the verdict won by the Son, the verdict given us individually by the Holy Spirit when He led us to trust that work of redemption. All our sins are forgiven. We are God's children through faith in Christ. Heaven is our inheritance – guaranteed by the Savior's blood! None of that has changed.

We have concerns about where all the virus and related issues are headed. But we have no concerns where we sinners stand with God. He promises to be with us in His Word and sacraments, and uses them to tell us, "*Do not fear. I am your God. I am helping you. I will uphold you with My righteous right hand*, the same one nailed to a tree to save you!" We need that message daily – in good days and in troubled times. Billions of souls around the world need that message, too. The LORD uses us to tell them that, even in the face of concerns, we need not fear because the God who died for us is with us sinners for this life and for the life to come.

Thanks to the LORD, we do not fear. Thanks to Him, nothing that matters forever has changed. *Pastor Voss*

IS.41:13
FOR THE LORD
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IN-PERSON WORSHIP services have resumed. After the July 19 worship service, the Board of Elders, President Dane Nickols, Vice-President Joe Janecke, and Pastor Voss decided that worshippers are to wear masks during the service (removing them for the Lord's Supper) unless there is a medical reason for not wearing the mask.

ON-LINE WORSHIP To provide worship opportunities for our members who are at risk and do not yet feel it's safe for them to gather in larger groups, and for an unknown number of non-members who access our web site, we will continue to record the Thursday evening service. The recorded worship service will be uploaded to our YouTube channel each weekend. Please let others know where to find these worship services!

COMMUNION OFFERED Those who are at risk and/or are not yet comfortable with gathering in church for worship are encouraged to contact Pastor Voss for receiving Communion privately – either at home or at church. He will be delighted to do so at our earliest mutual convenience.

OUR SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE continues. There is one Sunday service at **9:00 AM** beginning that morning. Most weeks there will be a **Thursday evening service at 7:00** which will be the same as the following Sunday's service. This summer schedule will continue through Labor Day weekend.

NO THURSDAY SERVICE There won't be a Thursday evening service **August 13** since Pastor Voss will be on vacation that week.



OUR LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 2020-21 school year begins with a worship service at our **school Monday, August 24** at 8:30. The entire congregation is invited!

Parents, remember that classes at our school dismiss at 12:00 that day, and that our Labor Day recess is both **Friday, September 4 and Monday, September 7**.

As of mid-July we are planning on having in-person classes at our school. The Board of Christian Education and faculty have already spent hours in study and discussions about what we will require to be different as the school year starts, as well as what we will do should schools be closed during the school year. You can read more about this in the Board of Christian Education report in this issue of the *Memorial Messenger*.

REGISTRATION FOR THE 2020-21 Memorial Lutheran School year will be held **Monday, August 17 from 6:15 – 7:30**. Students are asked to come to registration in order to get set up in their desk that day, as well as to bring their school supplies to the classroom.

If that will not work for you, please contact Pastor Voss, Mrs. Domke, or Mrs. Leitz to make other registration arrangements.

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY As of this writing (mid-July), it looks like Confirmation Sunday will be **September 20**. Our two youth confirmation candidates are **James Dawley** and **Jessie Every**. Watch for future notices confirming that date or announcing a new date.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL was held July 27-29. 20 children attended our limited and abbreviated VBS. The students learned what Jesus did as our Savior, and how the Triune God moves us to live as His followers in thankfulness for the salvation He has won for us and has given to us. We give Him our eternal thanks for His Word to share with others!

We also thank our teachers, as well as the project organizers and helpers, for their work.

MEDITATIONS The shipment of *Meditations* has arrived. You will find copies of the devotions for September, October, and November in the church narthex. Take a copy and use it daily!

If you are unable to, or feel uncomfortable, in traveling to church to pick up your copy, please contact Pastor Voss. He will be happy to deliver it to you at home.

AT THE VOTERS MEETING July 28 recommendations were adopted for the 2020-2021 school year tuition rates, for sending to WELS Missions 10% of two large gifts our congregation has received this year, and for adjusting our budget reporting to reflect the CARES loan received. The reports for the meeting were sent by email on July 17. If you didn't get one, you can pick a packet up at church.

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.

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS

PASTOR'S REPORT – It's looking like our Confirmation Sunday will be in September, based on summer travel for the two confirmands' families and on our family's travel.

WELS news: WELS Congregation Mission Offerings for the first six months of 2020 are up slightly across the Synod from the CMO amount through June 2019, and are slightly above subscriptions for one-half of this year. Michigan District congregations are down \$50,000 from the same time last year, and \$11,000 below the subscribed amount through June.

Michigan District delegates re-elected our district's president, Pastor Snowden Sims of Columbus, Ohio; vice-presidents, Pastor Thomas Westra of Cincinnati, Ohio (2nd VP) and me (1st VP); and secretary, Pastor Jason Baldwin of St. Charles, Michigan. We thank Steve Houser for representing our congregation as those on-line elections were held.

An increasing number of members who do not feel comfortable gathering with any size group has requested the Lord's Supper privately – either in their homes or in our church sanctuary. I am very eager to provide the sacrament to them in either of these ways. It is very helpful that those members check with me in advance to set a date and time that doesn't impact any plans that they and I may have.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Mrs. Domke is considering how to rearrange things in her classroom to allow for greater spacing between desks.

Mrs. Leitz is making plans to space students in her classrooms at greater distances than in the past.

The board approved a slight revisions to the 2020-2021 calendar. School will begin Monday, August 24, and registration will be Monday, August 17 6:15 – 7:30.

PTO Discussed next meeting on September, September 14. Request gym and lobby reserved.

Sunday School Sunday School calls are still being considered.

New playground equipment: Pastor will talk to Russ Labadie now that he is recovered from surgery to set dates for installing posts, and then for entire structure work.

VBS: In-person with appropriate protocols July 27-29 (3 days) and shortened morning (9:30 – 11:00). Weather-permitting, sessions will be held outside.

2020-2021 School Year – Under Phase 4... **REQUIRED** Staff will wear masks at all times in the building. Students will need to wear masks when in common areas. Lunches will be in the classrooms. Classrooms will have separate recess. No changing in between classes. We ask the Board of Trustees to install (batterypowered?) hand sanitizers in classrooms and common area. We are also required to follow local health department requirements for health screening. Combined devotions will have to be help separately. We will require Little Leap to utilize the far north doors at all time for entry and exit of children and parents. Cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (door knobs, light switches) and bathrooms every 4 hours.

Under Phase 4... **OPTIONS** we plan to put in place.... No parents cleaning until we reach Phase

5. Limited parent (and other visitors) access to building beyond double doors in the lobby.

Under Phase 5... the requirements listed above are no longer required.

We decided there will be no Sunday School or Bible Class on Sunday, October 18 when MLS Concert Choir is here for one 10:00 AM service.

BOARD OF ELDERS – There will be no Thursday evening worship service on August 13 due to Pastor being on vacation.

New HymnSoft and Organist schedules for July through December has been prepared and distributed. The Elders thank our organists for using their God given talents to edify our worship services and the HymnSoft operators for giving of their time to aide in the worship services.

The Michigan Lutheran Seminary Concert Choir will be here on Sunday, October 18. We will have one service at 10:00 AM that morning. A door offering will be received that day to help defray costs for MLS Concert Choir.

The Elders spent a lot of time discussing our worship services going since resuming in-person worship. Things seem to be going well. Distance is being maintained, and members are visiting outside with members maintaining adequate distances. Distribution of Holy Communion is a little slower, but with the reduction in liturgy songs and hymns that are sung the overall length of the services has been no more than an hour. The Elders will continue to monitor our services and make adjustments as needed.

BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP – We reviewed the number of views for our on-line worship services last month. The numbers are down from previous months now that in-person worship services have resumed for those who are comfortable to gather with others.

We are grateful that thankoffering counters continue to do their work faithfully. The weekly work to tabulate and deposit thankoffering has resumed.

Mr. Kasischke reported to the board that thankofferings, while down a little during June, are still strong considering the circumstances that we are under.

We had further discussions about equipment and costs associated with continuing recording services. Jason is confident that a camera for \$400, mounted in the balcony, would provide excellent video and audio for our recorded services. Annual license costs, based on average worship service attendance and including an annual fee for posting on-line services with copyrighted music, for the license contracts we would need will be about \$500 this year. In addition, there would be some costs each year associated with work our office secretary would do to report to those companies the music that we've used.

While we have Sunday, September 13 on the calendar for our annual church picnic at school, we don't think it looks wise to have a meal for a larger gathering. We will reach a decision about this at our August meeting.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES – Letter received from City of Williamston for property on Williams street. Stating they are checking the piping material used for the city's water lines. Inspections will be over the next 18 months.

New windows at the parsonage have been installed and paid for.

Water testing reports for the school were received. Thank you to Dave Dawley for his diligent work on gathering and reporting these water tests to the various government entities.

SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR AUGUST SERVICES:

9:00
8/02 - #3 J. Janecke
8/09 - #2 V. Domke
8/16 - #1 T. Marion
8/23 - #9 D. Fisher
8/30 - #8 D. Rector

Altar Guild
S. Rector
C. Burris
L. Voss
M. Zoran
C. Kasischke

Greeter(s)
J&S Janecke
H&S Clark
D&C Kasischke
D&S Rector
K&J Douglas

Cleaners
D&C Kasischke
J&K Leitz
T&L Loeffler
F&N Mills
J. Muscott

