



MEMORIAL MESSENGER December 2015

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.
Psalm 23:1

“What I want for Christmas is ...”

★
For
God so
loved the
world He gave
His one and only
Son that whoever
believes in Him shall not
perish but have eternal life
John
3:16

Children will say that a lot this month. Adults will, too—especially when prompted by their spouse. I won’t bore you with my gift list. But I urge you to join me in making a number of Christmas *wants* and *wishes*.

I want to outlaw the use of Christian Christmas hymns to sell merchandise. Doesn’t it rub us the wrong way to hear companies trying to sell Smartphones while someone slyly sings *Hark! The Herald Angels Ring*? Don’t we dislike hearing big box stores shouting about their great deals while *Joy to the World* plays in the background, as though the great joy of the season is huge savings on new gadgets?

I wish that “Merry Christmas!” wouldn’t be used instead of “Goodbye!” each time a visit or conversation ends this month. What I really want for Christmas is that we Christians wish our friends and loved ones “*May yours be a blessed Christmas!*”, thereby setting a spiritual tone for this special season to celebrate the Savior’s birth.

I wish that there would be no countdown of shopping days left until Christmas. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if everyone realized that there’s something far more important than packing our family life full of earthly traditions? I wish that people would understand that they don’t need to race around to make Christmas special.

I wish that we could take Christmas out of the stores and center it in our homes. What a blessings for fathers and mothers to read with their children at home the Old Testament promises of the Savior’s coming, and then the Luke 2 fulfillment of the Savior come to earth! How sad that too many parents don’t give that a second thought, but plan weeks in advance to get their kids to the mall to sit on a fairy tale character’s lap.

I wish that our Christmas will be what the Christian poet pictured: a silent, holy night. Wouldn’t it be refreshing to hear the world speak in whispered awe about our newborn King Jesus, rather than to have the world blast us with tales of sales and with flashing colored lights? *Christ the Savior is born!* Isn’t that what we want most?

I want Christmas to slow down, not race past in a blur of parties, gifts, and visits. I want to ponder and treasure what God has sent for us sinners. I want to hear about and to have in heart the excitement the shepherds felt the first Christmas. I want all of us to thrill at the only Gift we need: the Gift from heaven, the Savior, Jesus.

I’m no Scrooge. Wanting earthly gifts for Christmas isn’t wrong. But the heart of Christmas isn’t *earthly* gifts; it isn’t kind feelings. The heart of Christmas is that God came to earth so that His verse above would be fulfilled. “*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.*” Because Jesus came, I have all I need in Him!

I want our December to be more spiritual than commercial. I want us to hear the message that saves souls. We’ll attend the extra worship services held at church this month. The Word is how the Holy Spirit blesses our Advent preparation for and anticipation of the Savior’s birth. The Word is how the Holy Spirit makes Christ and His work more real than ever to us.

Finally, my wife and I want and wish for you and your family that yours will be a truly *blessed Christmas!*

Pastor Voss

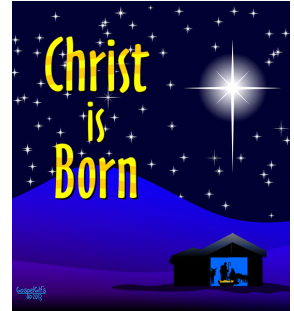


FOREVER WITH THE LORD The Savior called to Himself in heaven the soul of **Robin Schneider** on Friday, November 6. The Christian funeral service to comfort her loved ones was held on Saturday, November 14.

May the Lord Jesus grant to Robin's daughter Michele and to all her loved ones the peace of forgiveness and the sure hope of heaven through faith in Christ Jesus!

SPECIAL SERVICES:

Wednesday, November 25 - 7:00 PM - Thanksgiving Eve Service
Wednesday, December 2 - 7:00 PM - Midweek Advent Service
Wednesday, December 9 - 7:00 PM - Midweek Advent Service
Wednesday, December 16 - 7:00 PM - Midweek Advent Service
Sunday, December 20 - 8:00 & 10:30 AM - Choral Worship Services
Thursday, December 24 - 7:00 PM - Christmas Eve Service
Friday, December 25 - **10:00** AM - Christmas Day Service
Thursday, December 31 - 7:00 PM - New Year's Eve Service with Holy Communion



There will be no Sunday School or Bible Class sessions on Sunday, December 27.

A SUPPER will precede each of our midweek Advent services. The meals will begin at 6:00. Our hosts:

Dec. 2 - our school's Parent - Teacher Organization;
Dec. 9 - Several Church Councilmen and their families;
Dec. 16 - Ladies Fellowship.

A free will offering to help with meal expenses will be received each evening.

By having a supper before the service, we hope that more members will come here for a meal and then to be fed with God's Word as we prepare to celebrate our Savior's birth.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE REHEARSALS The children of our congregation will gather at church on **Saturdays, December 12 and 19** from 9:30 - 11:30 AM.

Parents, for the children are to proclaim God's Word on Christmas Eve in word and song effectively, their attendance at these rehearsals are very important. Please plan now to have your children here those two mornings. If your child must miss a rehearsal, please speak with Pastor Voss ahead of time.

We expect all children of the congregation to participate in the service (from those who attend the pre-school level of our Sunday School through children who are in 8th grade.)

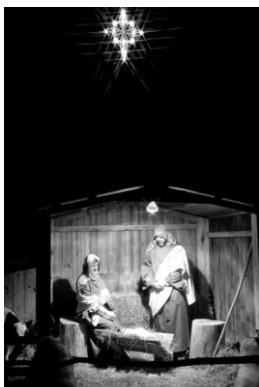
If travel plans will keep your child from being here Christmas Eve, please mention it to Pastor Voss as soon as you are aware of the conflict so that the necessary changes can be made in service assignments.

LEARNING SONGS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE Parents, the Sunday School session each week begins with music and a brief devotion. In December, the music will include songs that the children will sing for the Christmas Eve service.

Bring your children to Sunday School regularly so that they can learn about what God has done to save sinners, while you come upstairs to do the same in our Bible Class! Please have your children here for the start of Sunday School each week so that they can participate in the music portion and hear the devotion.

OUTREACH MATERIALS The Board of Evangelism & Stewardship reminds members that we have copies of the **new WELS DVD "My Son, My Savior"** are available for purchase (\$3 per copy; 2 for \$5).

As the Christmas season approaches, consider purchasing copies for your family and friends to show them why the birth of the Savior is so important for everyone on earth.



PARADE HELP We urge members to speak to Joe Janecke, Andy Rusnak, Clark Collins, Jason Leitz, or Pastor Voss to volunteer to walk in costume alongside our float in the Williamston Light Parade ***Saturday, December 5 at 6:00***. The volunteers will pass out flyers about our Live Nativity event and Christmas Eve & Day worship services.

LIVE NATIVITY Many of our members continue to work on various aspects of our 4th annual Live Nativity. This year's event will be in our church parking lot on ***Saturday, December 12 from 5:30 until 7:30***. Invite friends and neighbors to drive through or walk through that evening.

WE REMIND the re-elected and newly elected board members and officers that their terms begin January 1 (their first official meetings will be in early January), and that they will be installed to office during the ***services on January 3***.

YOUNG MUSICIANS We are inviting our members who are trained in keyboard or other musical instruments to consider using their gifts to serve our Savior and His Church by playing pre-service music or music during the thankoffering. Children are also invited to play Christmas anthems before the Christmas Eve service.

Please speak with Pastor Voss about doing so!

OUR GRAYCE GROUP will hold their Christmas party on ***Monday, November 30 at 11:30***. Please bring a dish to pass and a children's toy to be given to the Williamston Christmas Toy Drive. We plan to sing Christmas carols, play various games, and more. Everyone is welcome!

THE LOCAL FOOD BANK CONDUCTS A TOY DRIVE each December. We plan to participate once again.

The Food Bank is looking for new or unused toys and games for children in our area who might not receive gifts for Christmas. The gifts are distributed to infants and children through age 10. You may bring your donations to the church narthex through December 13.

As we celebrate the birth of the Christ-child, your gift to a less fortunate child could make this a special Christmas not only for that child, but for you as well.

ONE IN CHRIST WELS DEBT ELIMINATION THANKOFFERING Our congregation has begun the WELS *One in Christ* debt elimination thankoffering.

The goal is to completely retire the remaining \$4.1 million WELS debt by June of 2016 through special thankofferings by members across the Synod. A brochure was placed in your mail slot on November 22. That brochure includes a detachable envelope for our members to use if they desire to participate in this thankoffering.



THE FLOWER CHART FOR 2016 will soon be posted on the bulletin board. You are invited to sign up to place flowers on the altar for any Sunday. If you wish, you may also indicate the occasion for which the flowers are being donated.

We ask your cooperation in filling only two or three Sundays for 2016 per family for now, allowing more of our families to sign up. In January please feel free to take as many Sundays as are still open.

If you have questions about how to use the chart or order flowers to be presented here in church, please speak to Pastor Voss.

WATCH FOR YOUR 2016 offering envelopes. They will be placed in the mail slots by December 19.

USHERS We will distribute the 2016 usher schedule, teams, and duties to you in your mail slot at church.

IF YOU HAVE IDEAS for our church and school web site, please let Laurie Voss know.

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 –

Gals, don't forget we will decorate the church for Advent and Christmas November 30th. We will meet at 9:00 AM.

Our annual Christmas Party/Ornament Exchange will be held December 7th at 7:00. Please bring one, wrapped ornament (\$5.00 limit please.) for our ornament exchange.

We will also reveal our 2015 secret pals at the Christmas party, and then draw names for our 2016 secret pal. If you cannot make it to the party but would like to be part of the secret pal program, please speak with Laurie Voss before the party. We are always looking for more women to join in this fun activity. We send cards to our secret pal during the year (at least once a month). Then at our Christmas party we will give a gift to our secret pal as we reveal our names. This past year was the 27th year of our secret pal program.

Our hostesses for our Christmas party are Phyllis and Rene'. They will provide the beverage and paper products. We are asking everyone to bring their favorite appetizer, treat, or dessert for our snack table. It sure is a lot of fun sampling all these fun foods.

Our next meeting will be January 11. We will discuss our agenda for 2016, decide where to send our mission offerings, and talk about special activities and projects which we might do.

Come to the Christmas party and have some fun with us! Learn more about our activities and join in the wonderful Christian fellowship we share.

COOKIES AND CANDIES IN TINS: The Ladies' Fellowship group has available at church tins filled with homemade cookies and candies. The prices are listed. The ladies from our group have made these delicious treats, and **all proceeds go to our Ladies' Fellowship mission projects.**



REMINDERS FOR THE SEASONS: Please remember to ask for church library stamps when you purchase something from the Christian Family Bookstore (which is now located in Frandor). We use these stamps to purchase books, videos, and CD's for our church library.

Religious Christmas cards will be available at church in the narthex. Prices are marked on the boxes. We use our profit from the cards to purchase books and videos for the church library.

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS

PASTOR'S REPORT – WELS News – WELS has already received some gifts marked for the *One in Christ* WELS debt elimination thankoffering. Our congregation received information about that thankoffering on November 22.

The organ repairman was here on October 22, at our request. He did not charge us for the service call. He

spent almost two hours here, but only charged us for one hour of labor (\$90) and for a \$16.90 part. He tried to clean contacts to see if that would fix the popping noise; it didn't. He narrowed the problem down to a failing module, and to the necessity to re-solder and tighten all amplifier module connections. Because the problem was not in the module replaced previously (which he had said would be a repair for which there would be no charge), he felt it was fair to charge us for some of his labor and for a new part.

The schedule for midweek Advent services with area WELS congregations has not yet been finalized. However, I expect that I'll be here for the first service on December 2, then travel the next two Wednesdays to conduct the services at area WELS churches while the pastor of the congregation I am at conducts the service here that evening.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – We began discussions on setting tuition and fees for the 2016-2017 school year.

The board thanks our school library volunteers for their faithful service.

The vent/register unit in the library needs fixing, a new transformer part has been ordered.

The PTO will host the first midweek Advent service supper on Wednesday, December 2.

BOARD OF ELDERS – The Elders reviewed the upcoming special worship services.

The Elders continued to discuss the logistics of our Christmas Eve candle lit service.

We will order an Automated External Defibrillator for placement in our church building.

New choir music has been ordered. Our board asks the choir director to request reimbursement for this purchase.

Our annual December door offering will be Sundays, December 13 and 20. Money received in this special thankoffering will be sent to support Shepherd of the Lakes Ev. Lutheran Church, the new WELS mission in Fenton, MI.

BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP – Donated wire was run to the school office computer by volunteers. Internet connectivity has not been an issue in the office since this was performed. We thank those who donated and volunteered to run the wire from the computer room to the office, and soon to our classrooms.

We are looking into providing CPR training for our members and community.

Financial planning seminar will be held February 28, 2016 by Pastor Kenyon.

Festival of Lights parade will be December 5. We discussed making preparations for preparing the float, tow vehicle and getting volunteers in costume to hand out invitations.

The Live Nativity will be December 12. The plan is to keep things the same with the event, except the wise men may not be included this year.

Thanks to Clark Collins for distributing the Third Quarter thankoffering statements. 2016 envelopes will be distributed on December 19.

We discussed candidates for open board positions. We have some candidates, and we will request a special voters meeting before Christmas.

We discussed Advent suppers. PTO will host the first supper. Volunteers will do the second supper, and the Ladies' Fellowship will host the third supper.

We will renew the *WELS Connection* for 2016.

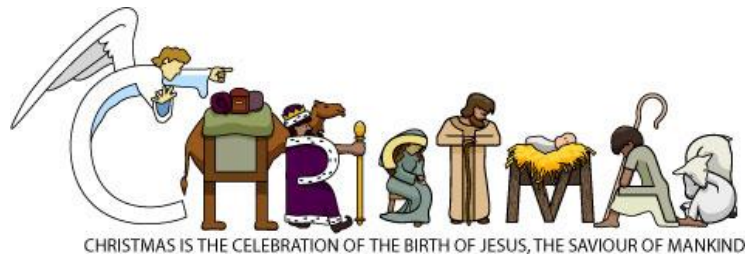
BOARD OF TRUSTEES – The church cleaning schedule has been updated.

Snow throwers are ready for snow.

The lawn has been mowed and leaves blown at school.

Basketball starts: practices each week, first game was Saturday, November 14th.





BADGER NEWS from SCHOOL -

FROM OUR PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN ROOMS:

Preschool: This month has really gone by fast! It seems that when you have things like Spirit Week and Grandparents Day it really makes the days go by fast. We had a lot of fun on Grandparents Day making turkeys, playing in rice, and putting on a little skit of "The Three Little Pigs". We also enjoyed a pizza lunch at the end. I am sure we had lots of tired little ones that took a good nap that afternoon. Thanks to all the grandparents that came. It sure was fun to watch all the bonding going on that morning.

We also had a really cool show and tell when one of our three year old's parents brought their very own Monster Truck for all of us to see! Sure wowed all of us; that's for sure. ☺

In between all of the fun times we managed to learn a few things as well. This month in Christ Light we have really been learning about Joseph and all of the troubles he went through as a young man. We can learn many things from his life such as trusting God especially through the difficult times, working our hardest no matter the circumstances, giving all glory and praise to God, and of course forgiveness for those that have sinned against you. It is such a gift to see the light in the little ones eyes as they confess their faith every day and they had such excitement as they learned about God's plan for Joseph.

We have continued learning the colors. This month we have learned blue, purple, pink, and brown. We have continued learning Spatial Recognition for math this month. We have started learning our letters. So far we have covered L, F, and E. We have also been playing with rhythm sticks in music. We started taking time to learn about the Pilgrims, Wampanoags, Squanto, and why we have Thanksgiving.

Next month we will be focusing on our Christmas theme and learning a lot about Jesus birth. We will of course have a birthday party for Jesus! We have already started preparing for The Christmas Eve service.

May you all have a blessed and wonderful Thanksgiving!

Kindergarten: This month has really gone by fast! It seems that when you have things like Spirit Week and Grandparents Day it really makes the days go by fast. We had a lot of fun on Grandparents Day making turkeys, playing in rice, and putting on a little skit of "The Three Little Pigs". We also enjoyed a pizza lunch at the end. I am sure we had lots of tired little ones that took a good nap that afternoon. Thanks to all the grandparents that came. It sure was fun to watch all the bonding going on that morning.

We also had a really cool show and tell when one of our three year old's parents brought their very own Monster Truck for all of us to see! Sure wowed all of us; that's for sure. ☺

This month in Christ Light we have really been learning about Joseph and all of the troubles he went through as a young man. We can learn many things from his life such as trusting God especially through the difficult times, working our hardest no matter the circumstances, giving all glory and praise to God, and of course forgiveness for those that have sinned against you. It is such a gift to see the light in the little ones eyes as they confess their faith every day and they had such excitement as they learned about God's plan for Joseph.

In math we have been learning about comparing lengths, numbers 7&8, reviewing shapes, and finding the most and fewest. In Super Kids we have been learning the letters D, S, and L. We have also started to blend the letter sounds together. For science we have finished learning about the weather and started a Social Studies Unit on the Pilgrims, Wampanoags, Squanto, and thanksgiving.

Next month we will be focusing on our Christmas theme and learning a lot about Jesus birth. We will of course have a birthday party for Jesus! We have already started preparing for The Christmas Eve service.

May the Lord Bless you this Thanksgiving season!

FROM OUR GRADES 1-5 ROOM:

This month in Christ Light we have been learning about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their families. It is so important to learn about them because they are in the line of our Savior. As we learn about them we learn about our Christian heritage. We dare not forget about that!

We sure had fun on Grandparents' Day! We had several grandparents and other volunteer grandparents from Memorial who filled in to make the day great for our kids. We presented a couple skits, played a grandparent bingo game, and played Bible Jeopardy! What fun! The morning ended with a delicious pizza lunch!

We have made some fun Thanksgiving decorations to put up to make our school festive! Come and have a look.

In grades 3-5 Social Studies we are learning about the New England region. As the year progresses we'll learn all about the others, too.

A big thank you to those who have made us delicious hot lunches this year! You know who you are – and you really rock!

SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR NOVEMBER SERVICES:

<i>Ushers</i>		<i>Altar Guild</i>	<i>Greeter(s)</i>	<i>Cleaners</i>
<i>8:00</i>	<i>10:30</i>			
12/02 - #2 V. Domke		M. Bennett		
12/06 - #5 S. Houser	#9 D. Fisher	T. Wood	V&J Domke	J&M Stiefel
12/09 - #3 J. Janecke		T. Wood		
12/13 - #6 E. Ruhlig	#1 T. Marion	S. Rector	G. Withey	B&N Tobia
12/16 - #4 B. Grinnell		S. Rector		
12/20 - #7 D. Kasischke	#3 J. Janecke	C. Burris	J&S Janecke	D&L Voss
12/24 - #5 S. Houser		C. Burris		
12/25 - #7 D. Kasischke		C. Burris		
12/27 - #2 V. Domke	#8 D. Rector	K. Ward	H&S Clark	L&K Ward
12/31 - #9 D. Fisher		K. Ward		

Let us worship the Lord our Savior!



*May you have a blessed
Christmas in the joy of
our Savior's birth.*

