

MEMORIAL MESSENGER

December 2017

You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.
2 Corinthians 8:9

This is being written a few days after what several economists said might have been the *last* Black Friday. With the increasing prevalence of on-line shopping for Christmas gifts, sales that normally drew shoppers to stores the day after Thanksgiving started appearing in ads and on-line days and weeks before Thanksgiving. We know that stores and companies want to boost sales and shoppers want to get good deals. But such strategy shoves the emphasis further and further from the holy events of our Savior's birth.

We can't easily isolate ourselves from the consumerism of this season. But we can keep ourselves from being sucked into its greedy grasp. How? We fill ourselves the holy truths of the real Christmas. And we do that best when we let the Advent lessons of Scripture prepare our hearts for the coming Christmas celebration.

The reason Jesus entered our world was "*for (our) sakes*". We admit there is something deadly wrong with us. We neither desire—nor are able—to match God's standard for absolutely holy living. We deserve God's sentence, "Go to hell!" We have no power by ourselves to change that damning situation. Listen for the truth about our sin and the hell staring us in the face and the need to repent as you gather around your family's Advent wreath for home devotions, and as you gather with your church family in God's house this month.

The One who entered our world from the virgin's womb in a lowly stable "*was rich*". Jesus owns everything in the universe. He—along with Father and the Holy Spirit—made everything that exists. He owes us nothing!

Yet He came to give us everything! "*Though He was rich, yet for Your sakes He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.*" Ponder that truth all month—and for the rest of your life. The mighty God became a baby for you! The holy God agreed to be born, to live a poor life, to suffer hell at the cross for you! He who rules everything was willing to live in poverty for you and to take your guilt on His holy soul! The little Lord Jesus did all this that you might become rich with Him in forgiveness now and in heaven forever!

It's not wrong to have secular customs as a part of our traditions this special season. But we rob ourselves of the wealth Jesus came to win for us if the real Christmas truth is just a tiny part of our life this special season. Start right now! Resolve that this December you'll take time to read God's Word about the Savior who came for us, that you'll make time to settle down around the truth of the Savior as you hear it and praise God with it in the company of fellow believers. Give thanks to the LORD that He was willing to be poor to make you rich. Live the riches you have in Jesus during this special season and for the rest of your life.

Pastor Voss



Worship & Praise

SUNDAY MORNINGS, DECEMBER 24 AND 31

Because both of the dates are part of the Christmas and New Year holiday celebrations, the Board of Elders has decided that there will be *one service at 10:00 each of those mornings*.

The December 24 morning service will be the 4th Sunday of Advent. The Children's Christmas Eve service will be that evening at 7:00.

The December 31 morning service will be part of our Christmas season celebration. The New Year's Eve service will be that evening at 7:00. The board considered a late afternoon time for the New Year's Eve service, but decided against an afternoon service

because it would be a quick turn around after the 10:00 service that morning.

SPECIAL SERVICES:

- Wednesday, December 6 - 7:00 PM - Midweek Advent Service
- Wednesday, December 13 - 7:00 PM - Midweek Advent Service
- Wednesday, December 20 - 7:00 PM - Midweek Advent Service
- Sunday, December 24 - **10:00** AM - Choral Worship Service
- Sunday, December 24 - **7:00 PM** - Christmas Eve Service
- Monday, December 25 - **10:00** AM - Christmas Day Service
- Sunday, December 31- **10:00** AM - Worship service
- Sunday, December 31- **7:00 PM** - New Year's Eve Service with Holy Communion



SUNDAY SCHOOL / BIBLE CLASS There will be no Sunday School or Bible Class sessions on *Sundays, December 24 and December 31.*

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

- Dec. 6 - Our school's Parent - Teacher Organization;
- Dec. 13 - Ladies Fellowship;
- Dec. 20 - Board of Evangelism & Stewardship.

A free will offering to help with meal expenses will be received each evening. *Any offerings given at the Ladies' Fellowship meal will be put into their mission funds.*

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 16 and 23* 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.

LUNCH FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES Our Sunday School staff is once again providing a lunch for the children and their families. This year the special lunch will be *after the December 23 rehearsal*. The meal will begin at 11:30. We hope that all the children and their family members will join us!

LEARNING SONGS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE Parents, the Sunday School session each week begins with music and a brief devotion. In November and 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.

WE HAVE REFRESHMENTS on the first Sunday of each month. On *Sunday, December 3*, our Sunday School and Bible Class sessions will dismiss at 10:00 so that we can have refreshments *in the fellowship hall 10:00 – 10:20*. Join us!

These monthly gatherings are designed to provide time for our members to greet and visit with each other, much like we do on non-Communion Sundays in the summer months.

OUTREACH MATERIALS The Board of Evangelism & Stewardship reminds members that we have copies of the *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.

AT THE VOTERS’ MEETING on October 24 a 2018 budget of \$313,170 was adopted. The adopted budget eliminated support for WELS CMO and *Worship Supplement* licenses, and reduced some other line items from the budget proposed by the Church Council.

These men were re-elected to office: Dane Nickols, President; Bryan Grinnell, Secretary; Dan Kasischke, Financial Secretary; David Dawley and Victor Domke, Board of Trustees; David Fortin and Norm Schlicker, Board of Christian Education; Bob Briggs, Board of Elders.



HOMEBOUND MEMBERS We’ll provide a list in newsletter periodically of our members who are unable to get to God’s house due to health issues.

*Augusta Bump Ramona Canfield Karen Groop Emma Hepfer
Velna Hoag Geraldine Hodgson Caroline Kasischke Janet Mead*

Remember them in your prayers. If you’d like to visit any of them, please speak to Pastor Voss about the best time to do so and to find out where they are receiving care.

LADIES FELLOWSHIP Our Christmas party will be at 7:00 on Monday, December 4. Laurie Voss is going to host it at the parsonage. We will share our favorite appetizers and/or desserts of the season. Fun games will also be played and great fellowship will be enjoyed. This is going to be the last time we share Secret Pal gifts. We have done so for 29 years but each of us have had the same secret pal several times so we are going to try something new next year.

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. Please RSVP to Laurie by Saturday, December 2 if you are going to join us.



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). The plan, for now, is to have installation for these men during the worship services on *January 7*.

VOICE CHOIR meets Thursday evenings at **7:30**. We welcome and encourage all our communicant members to consider joining our choir!

CHIME CHOIR rehearses Thursday evenings at **6:30**. We encourage all members from fifth graders to senior citizens to attend chime choir rehearsals as music is practiced to edify our worship services.



THE FLOWER CHART FOR 2018 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 2018 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 2018 offering envelopes. They will be placed in the mail slots by December 16 or 23.

USHERS We will distribute the 2018 usher schedule, teams, and duties to you in your mail slot at church.



THE MONTHLY HOT LUNCH at Memorial Lutheran School for December is being served **Friday, December 15**. The menu is baked chicken, macaroni and cheese, sliced apples, raw vegetables, Christmas cookies, and milk.

Volunteers from the congregation are welcome to help serve the meal that day; speak with Pastor Voss for more information. Also, if you wish to prepare and/or donate any of the items (except for the first two), please speak with Pastor Voss or sign up for the item(s) on the list that has been posted at church.

A LOCAL TOY DRIVE is conducted each December. We plan to participate once again.

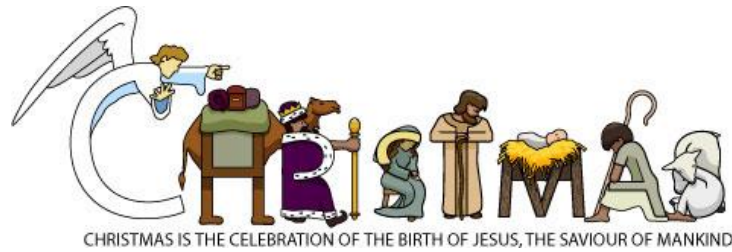
The local food bank is no longer handling Christmas gifts for needy children in our area. The food bank personnel have suggested that we take donated toys and games to Top Flight Financial in downtown Williamston since the staff there has taken over this work.

Drive organizers are looking for new 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 14. You may bring your donations to the church narthex through **December 10**.

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.

NEEDED: We could use a high chair or two out at school for when we have church potlucks or other larger meals there. If you have a good one that is no longer being used, please consider donating it.

AMAZON has a program in which 0.5% of qualified Amazon purchases can be given to a charity of the buyer's choice. Here is the link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/38-2130250>. To get additional information, please speak to Kim Fedewa or Pastor Voss.



CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS

PASTOR'S REPORT – WELS news: Through October WELS Congregation Mission Offerings totaled \$16,324,625, about \$176,000 more than the first 10 months of 2016. It's also nearly \$375,000 above 2017 subscriptions (when pro-rated for 10 months). We thank the Lord for moving His people to bring these thankofferings! The Michigan District portion of those mission thankofferings is about \$9,000 less than last year's levels, but more than \$50,000 above what the 10-month subscription is for our district.

The attendance across WELS at special Reformation services the end of October and beginning of November was very strong. Original plans called for a service in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to which every WELS called worker would be invited—along with lay people who would want to attend. But when the facility's rental fee for the event was set at over \$400,000, that plan was scrapped and WELS districts and conferences were encouraged to plan for (and fund) their own special Reformation 500 services. About 25 of our members attended the Michigan District service in Saginaw, along with 2,200 others. It was a very special worship service, and edified those who attended.

I will be here for the first midweek Advent service on December 6, then travel for 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.

Since our Council discussion—and the voters' decision—last month to eliminate the land line for the church and parsonage (both have the same phone number), I have done some research about what kind of wireless phone to use and to which the church phone number would be transferred. Adding the church land line number to a wireless phone on our current wireless plan would cost \$20 every month. I'm guessing that there is a less expensive way to go, and am currently looking at a Tracfone. If any of you have experience with a Tracfone, or have advice for me, please let me know. The change needs to be made by late December.

In a related matter, if you know whom to contact to get the land line service disconnection and the charges for that service dropped as of January 1, I'd appreciate that information.

On behalf of a grateful congregation and school family, we thank Laurie Voss and Karla Leitz for filling in at school as Judy Domke has had to travel for the funeral service to comfort her and her loved ones at her father's death, and other family matters.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – The board approved the purchase (from General Fund) of materials Mrs. Leitz feels are necessary to provide a student with needed help.

The board asked our office secretary to start another targeted Facebook marketing effort, this one to run 10 days and to be funded once again by the PTO. It began last week Wednesday. We are doing this in light of recent WCS board's decision on trans gender policy. This time we are using a 25-mile radius.

We will purchase standardized testing materials in the next few weeks. The deadline is early December.

The board discussed the possibility of the PTO covering the cost of new software for the computers in the computer room.

PTO will host the Advent supper December 6 and the Lent supper February 14.

The last week of June seemed to work well in 2017 for Vacation Bible School. We discussed keeping it during that week for 2018. No decision yet.

Pastor Voss will draft a letter for board consideration as we inform school families in December about how our school is funded, and to let them know how they can submit a special gift to the congregation in appreciation for the Christian education their children and grandchildren receive at our school.

BOARD OF ELDERS – As our congregation ages we have more members using the ramp to enter the sanctuary. The Elders will be asking the ushers to monitor the ramp and door and be available to assist those using the ramp with the door.

Those who sang in the choir for the special Reformation service in Saginaw had to purchase their own music for that service. The Elders recommend paying the \$48.22 for the music used by members of our congregation who participated in the choir.

A computer will be set up to use HymnSoft during worship services.

The Elders discussed using the Evangelical Heritage Version for Scripture lessons in worship. We will talk more about using the translation in the new year.

The Elders discussed security during worship services.

BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP – There were 84 tickets reserved for the Luther movie at Celebration Cinema on October 25th.

We discussed Facebook marketing that is currently being used for the school to advertise.

We discussed, then decided, that based on the lack of volunteers we will not have the Live Nativity this year.

We discussed distributing WELS DVDs to visitors at Thanksgiving and Christmas services.

We discussed the refreshments on the first Sunday of the month and how that went for the first two months.

Advent suppers will be as follows: December 6 – PTO; December 13 – Ladies Fellowship; December 20 – Board of Evangelism and Stewardship.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES – Howard Clark and David Dawley worked on the heating units in the library and preschool room.

Snow throwers are ready for winter.

David Dawley brought up to date on the water testing at school and has an account at DEQ for all of the various testings.

Basketball games started at school November 18. A Sign-Up Genius request has been sent asking for concession stand help and gate entry help. You may see that Sign-Up Genius request on our web site too.

BADGER NEWS from SCHOOL -

FROM MRS. LEITZ AND OUR PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN ROOMS: Preschool and kindergarten have been learning about Joseph's life this past month in our Bible lessons. We learned that God was with Joseph his whole life and had a plan for him. We also can take comfort knowing that God is always with us and that even if things seem really bad, He still has a plan for our good.

The three year olds have been working on cutting skills and shapes this past month. The fours have been working on letters A-H, and the concept of top, middle, and bottom. Both age groups were working on classification for math skill and will be working on patterning next.

Kindergarten has been covering letters D,S, and L this past month and math concepts such as patterns, measuring weight, making a graph, and numbers 5-8. November was full of learning about the first Thanksgiving for preschool and kindergarten.

Kindergarten was fortunate to be able to go to the MLS play *Joseph and the Technicolor Dream Coat*. This month we won't have any field trips but a lot of fun things to do in the classroom to prepare for our celebration of Christ's Birth.

May you have a blessed Advent season!

FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES ONE-FIVE: This month in our study of God's Word we have been focusing on lessons of the Old Testament. In them we are reviewing the true stories of Isaac, Jacob and Joseph and how God used these men to keep the line of the Savior alive. When you study these stories the love of God is so clearly shown! His plan for mankind is clear and the message of the cross is there for all. We pray that God

will give us a heart eager to hear the message of the cross. We also pray that God will help us not get caught up in the busyness of the world, but will keep us focused on our Savior.

Students in grades 3-5 have begun our study of regions of the United States. We are currently learning about the geography, history and economics of the New England region.

Stop by school sometime to see some of the art the students in our school have been working on. Better yet, stop by Biggby Coffee in Williamston to see our students' art up on the wall! Congrats to our volunteer art teacher, Tracy Chaffee, for all her hard work! Students are LOVING art with Mrs. Chaffee and have learned so much!

We all enjoyed a trip to the Turner-Dodge house in Lansing for an early fall field trip, courtesy of Diane Sanborn. We learned loads about life long ago when Lansing was just a little spot on the map. Thanks so much, Mrs. Sanborn, for making this field trip possible!

We also enjoyed a field trip to MLS to see *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. It was a great experience to see such an amazing performance!

SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR DECEMBER SERVICES:

<i>Ushers</i>		<i>Altar Guild</i>	<i>Greeter(s)</i>	<i>Cleaners</i>
12/03 - #2 V. Domke	#9 D. Fisher	L. Voss	B&L Painter	D&S Fisher
12/06 - #4 B. Grinnell		L. Voss		
12/10 - #5 S. Houser	#3 J. Janecke	K. Unruh	R&J Hannewald	D&L Fortin
12/13 - #2 V. Domke		K. Unruh		
12/17 - #6 E. Ruhlig	#1 T. Marion	J. Vogt	M. Bennett	??
12/20 - #3 J. Janecke		J. Vogt		
12/24 - #7 D. Kasischke		C. Burris	C&K Collins	D&N Hart
12/24 - #5 S. Houser		C. Burris		
12/25 - #6 E. Ruhlig		C. Burris		
12/31 - #8 D. Rector		K. Ward	B&L Janecke	??
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.*

