



# **MEMORIAL MESSENGER December 2018**



*Prepare the way for the LORD, make straight paths for Him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all mankind will see God's salvation. Luke 3:4-6*

Advent is considered by some the ugly duckling of the church year. Folks want to rush right from Thanksgiving meals to Christmas traditions. There's nothing wrong with that. But the sad result of that is considering Christmas to be over by December 25, instead of just beginning.

As children of God we will spend the weeks before Christmas not just following traditions of the season, but preparing for the arrival of the Savior – the *real* Christmas. That Advent preparation includes pondering individually, as a family, as a congregation *why* the Savior was born in Bethlehem. He came to cover our guilt. The weeks leading up to Christmas are spent in repentance for our sins, and in reflection on God's love that moved Him to shower His grace in Jesus on us undeserving sinners. Advent messages from the Old Testament prophets and from John the Baptist hold those truths before us.

It's not popular during the world's holiday season to focus on our sins and our desperate condition. But it's the proper thing for God's people to do. When we feel more deeply our need for the Savior, we will receive more sweetly the message that He has come as promised to rescue us. When we level the mounds in our heart of self-centered pride, fill in the ruts of shameful sins, straighten the dangerous curves of worldly temptations, we do what God has urged His people for centuries to do in preparing for the Savior. Then God's good news of great joy will fill our hearts, "The Savior has been born for you!"

It's not wrong to enjoy holiday lights and events and music – even gift shopping. These, too, are delights God has given us. But let none of that become more important to us than God's calls to repent and to trust, to prepare hearts and lives for Him who came once in humility to save us and who will come again in glory to get us.

As December moves along, maybe you'll wish time could slow down so you can enjoy the holiday season. The emphasis of the Christian Advent season is precisely that! At our special midweek services, regular Sunday services, and daily devotions at home, the Holy Spirit puts us in the sandals of Old Testament believers as we ponder what it was like to wait for the Savior to be born. That's how God will bless our Advent preparation, and then our real Christmas celebration!

*Pastor Voss*





**FOREVER WITH THE LORD** Early Sunday morning, November 11, our risen Savior called to Himself the soul of *Linda Eldridge*. Although Linda had undergone heart surgery a few days earlier, her death was very unexpected.

The Christian funeral service to comfort Linda's family, including her niece Missy Stiefel, was held November 15.

We ask our risen Savior Jesus to comfort Linda's loved ones, and all others who mourn her death. But we also rejoice with them that Linda's soul now is with Jesus forever! God works all things out for good to those who love and trust Him.

### **SUNDAY MORNINGS, DECEMBER 23 AND 30**

Because both of the dates are so near to 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*. There will be no Sunday School or Bible Class sessions either of those Sundays.

The December 23 morning service will be the choral service, featuring a number of anthems by our choir.



### **SPECIAL SERVICES:**

Wednesday, December 5 - 7:00 PM - Midweek Advent Service  
Wednesday, December 12 - 7:00 PM - Midweek Advent Service  
Wednesday, December 19 - 7:00 PM - Midweek Advent Service  
Sunday, December 23 - **10:00** AM - Choral Worship Service  
Monday, December 24 - **7:00 PM** - Christmas Eve Service  
Tuesday, December 25 - **10:00** AM - Christmas Day Service  
Sunday, December 30 - **10:00** AM - Worship service  
Monday, December 31 - **7:00 PM** - New Year's Eve Service with Holy Communion

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

Dec. 5 - School Parent - Teacher Organization

Dec. 12 - Ladies Fellowship

Dec. 19 - Board of Evangelism & Stewardship

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 15 and 22* 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.

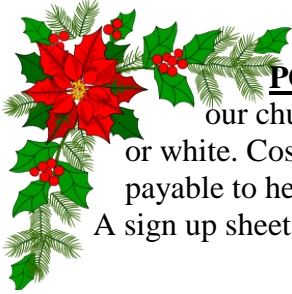
*We expect all children of the congregation to participate in the service (from those who attend the pre-school level of our Sunday School through children who are in 8th grade.)*

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 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.

**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 15 rehearsal**. The meal will begin at 11:30. We hope that all the participating children and their family members will join us!



**POINSETTIAS** Carol Kasischke has made arrangements to order poinsettias to decorate our church for the Christmas services. They will be in 6-inch pots, and you can order either red or white. Cost is \$7.50 per poinsettia, and should be given to Carol (if using a check, please make it payable to her).

A sign up sheet has posted at church. Last day to order poinsettias is ***December 12***.

**THE LADIES FELLOWSHIP GROUP** In December we have several activities planned. Our annual Christmas party is Monday, **December 3** at 7:00. We will share our favorite Christmas appetizer or dessert, visit and play a few fun games. Don't forget your wrapped White Elephant gift. (We've chosen to have them be useful.)

We will decorate the church for Advent the next day, Tuesday morning, **December 4** at 9:00 AM. After all that, we will host the congregational Advent supper on **December 12**. We have been working on a tasty menu for that meal.

**CHOIR** rehearsals have resume. We meet ***Thursdays at 7:30*** and are practicing numbers for our choral service on December 23.

We welcome and encourage all our communicant members to consider joining our choir! We invite new choir members to join us! If you can play an instrument that might accompany our choir, please speak to Laurie Voss or Pastor Voss.

**CHIME CHOIR** The chime choir will rehearse ***Thursdays, December 6, 13, and 20*** and ***Saturday, January 5*** to prepare music for the late service on January 6. The Thursday rehearsals are at 6:30.

We encourage all members from 5<sup>th</sup> graders to senior citizens to attend chime choir rehearsals as music is practiced to edify our worship services. If you desire more information or have questions about playing in our chime choir, please speak to Linda Janecke.

**HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS** A special event is being planned for ***Friday, December 28 5:00 – 9:00 in our school gym***. It will be a chance to you to get together with friends from our church and school family. The event will include a potluck meal.

More details are listed on the upper level bulletin board at church. If you have questions, please speak with Kathy Fedewa or Linda Janecke. They are asking people to sign up so that they know how many to expect.

**WE HAVE REFRESHMENTS** the first Sunday of each month. Join us ***Sunday, December 2***. That day our Sunday School and Bible Class sessions will not begin until **9:25**. The refreshments will be available ***in the fellowship hall 9:05-9:23***. 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.

If you are willing to provide something simple for future first-Sunday refreshments, please speak to Joe Janecke, Dan Kasischke, Jason Leitz, or Pastor Voss.

**WELS APP** Every so often we remind you about the WELS app that our Synod has developed and makes available with a free download. We encourage you to download the WELS app – and use it!

It has a church locator for your travels, daily devotions, Bible reading series, and much more!

**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 6*.

**THE FLOWER CHART FOR 2019** 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 2019 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 2019** offering envelopes. They will be placed in the mail slots by December 15 or 22.

**USHERS** We will distribute the 2019 usher schedule, teams, and duties to you in your mail slot 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** – I am conducting Bible Instruction Classes with two prospects. Their respective schedules and preferences make it best to have separate classes, rather than combining them in one class.

**WELS news** Congregation Mission Offerings through the end of October across WELS are about \$375,000 behind last year at the same time, and are just about at the level of the prorated subscribed amount for 2018. Michigan District congregations have sent WELS \$1,686,739, which is \$14,000 ahead of last year at the same time, and about \$80,000 ahead of the district's prorated subscribed amount for 2018.

As a result of the CMO not increasing, the Synodical Council (SC) will consider at its February meeting adjusting spending levels so that the Financial Stabilization Fund does not dip any lower than the \$10,000,000, an amount that a WELS Convention decision set some years ago to help the Synod weather financial fluctuations.

I will be here for the first midweek Advent service on December 5, then travel for the next two Wednesdays to conduct the services at our WELS churches in Dexter and Grass Lake, while the pastor of the congregation I am at conducts the service here that evening.

**BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** – First Quarter report cards were prepared and Parent - Teacher conferences held.

With 3 in 5th grade and 8 in Kindergarten this year, if nothing changes, Mrs. Domke will have 25 students next year. Faculty has talked about classroom duties being shared to some degree next year.

ACT testing materials (Grades 3-5) will be ordered before the December 31 deadline for April 2019 testing.

The board thanks Laurie Voss for taking student pictures and sending them to our parents by email.

Christmas vacation will be December 24-January 24 which is the same as most area public schools.

PTO will host the Advent supper on December 5 and the Lent supper on March 6.

There will be no Sunday School or Bible Class on December 23 and December 30.

**BOARD OF ELDERS** – We have a new communion flagon. The cross on top of the old flagon has broken off several times, and the plating on the inside of the flagon is starting to deteriorate. Thanks to a special gift, a new stainless steel flagon has been purchased.

The Elders discussed the upcoming special services. We will have one service with Communion on Sunday, December 23 at 10:00 AM and one service on Sunday, December 30 at 10:00 AM. The Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve services will be held at the same times as in previous years.

New white and green paraments have been ordered and will arrive in mid-December. The paraments are being paid for by the Ladies Fellowship Group and special gifts.

Our annual December door offering will be taken December 16 and 23. The Elders are discussing which WELS charity/mission field to support with the offering.

**BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP** – We discussed the Live Nativity and decided that because of lack of volunteers to set up before the event, we will not have it this year.

The office secretary has put a link to SignUp Genius for basketball games on web site.

A new greeters schedule has been prepared and distributed.

The Ladies Fellowship will try to have a pancake meal in March at school.

We discussed a Trunk or Treat event and will look more into this for next year.

Advent suppers are set: December 5 – PTO; December 12 – Ladies Fellowship; December 19 – If no hosts, Board of Evangelism and Stewardship.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES** – Myer's Plumbing and Heating was contacted for a service call due at School due to no heat in the offices and classrooms (older section of School).

Thank you to Victor Domke for the number of tedious hours spent resealing and replacing gaskets on the School's roof heating and cooling units (to prevent leaking).

Due to deteriorated condition, the tables under the School pavilion will be removed and disposed.

Basketball games have resumed as of Saturday, November 10 and continue through March 2019.

Volunteer help is most appreciated.

The Church cleaning schedule will be updated and the new schedule will begin in January.

The parsonage dishwasher needs new dish racks. Due to the age of the dishwasher and cost for replacement dish racks, the dishwasher will be replaced when funds are available.

We discussed snow removal for the upcoming months.

Thank you to the family for the donation for usage of a snow blower and generator.

It was brought to the Trustees' attention that a power door is needed to assist with entering church from the top of the ramp. Discussion followed regarding logistics and cost. We are researching further.

Many thanks to everyone who helps with keeping the properties functioning and beautiful.



## ***BADGER NEWS from SCHOOL***

**FROM MRS. LEITZ AND PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN:** This past month we have been learning about Jesus doing many miracles. We have been learning about the great faith that many people showed by trusting that Jesus could heal them. We also have seen Jesus humbly serve others and even ask that no one tell about the miracles He performed. We mostly learned that if Jesus can do all of these things He certainly took care of our biggest trouble in life "SIN". We can come to Him with all of our problems and He will help us. With these thoughts in mind our little ones can enter into the next month (especially focusing on His birth) with great joy, peace, and thankfulness in their hearts.

The preschool has been busy with the threes learning more of their letters such as H, T, and I. They have also been learning more of their shapes and their numbers. The fours have been working on letters E, F, G, and H and the concept of top, middle, and bottom. For math they all have been working on patterns. We were concentrating on learning about the very first Thanksgiving with a Pilgrim House center and they even got to use

a real butter churn to make butter!

Kindergarten has been working hard on their letters S, L, and I. They also have been working on writing words and sounding three letter words out. In science we were learning about the weather and made an anemometer to measure the wind with.

A highlight this past month was going to the play in Saginaw at Michigan Lutheran Seminary with the whole school.

In December we will be working on the different songs and parts for the Christmas service as well as a song for the first Advent service. We also will be doing special Advent devotions and have a birthday party for Jesus right before break!

May you all have a wonderful Advent and Christmas season!

**FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES 1-5:** In our study of God's Word we are continuing on our journey with Jesus as He preaches, teaches and heals. Jesus is sharing the truth that He alone is the way to heaven, and that God, through His love, has made it possible for sinners to be right with the Heavenly Father! What wonderful news! We live in that joy, too, as we work hard, play and share the love of Jesus with those around us.

We had lots of fun decorating the school for Thanksgiving. We had turkeys, pilgrims, and cornucopias all over the place. Now it's time to shift gears and get the Christmas things out of storage and eagerly anticipate the birth of the Christ! Never a dull moment.

We also enjoyed traveling to Saginaw to see "Beauty and the Beast". Seeing a big stage production really helps children see how much fun it can be to be on stage. They also get ideas for our plays coming up in the spring! Already they are asking what our May production will be!

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

	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Altar Guild</i>	<i>Greeter(s)</i>	<i>Cleaners</i>	
12/02 -	#2 V. Domke	#4 B. Grinnell	R. Olin	J. Coulter	
12/05 -	#1 T. Marion	R. Olin			
12/09 -	#5 S. Houser	#9 D. Fisher	C. Burris	G. Withey	P&S Crandall
12/12 -	#2 V. Domke	C. Burris			
12/16 -	#6 E. Ruhlig	#8 D. Rector	T. Wood	J&S Janecke	V&J Domke
12/19 -	#3 J. Janecke	T. Wood			
12/23 -	#7 D. Kasischke	S. Rector	H&S Clark		D&L Fortin
12/24 -	#9 D. Fisher	S. Rector			
12/25 -	#8 D. Rector	S. Rector			
12/30 -	#1 T. Marion	K. Ward	D&C Kasischke		D&R Hoag
12/31 -	#4 B. Grinnell	K. Ward			

