

MEMORIAL MESSENGER February 2020

Jesus asked, “Didn’t you know that I had to be in / about My Father’s...?” Luke 2:49

Most Bible students are familiar with Luke 2:49. Some English Bible translations render the passage “*in My Father’s house*”, and others “*about My Father’s business*”. The Greek words that the Holy Spirit gave Luke here relate something like “*in My Father’s*” – without specifying whether Jesus was referring to His Father’s house or His Father’s business.

The translation “*business*” seems preferable. The 12-year-old Jesus was telling Joseph and Mary that His main concern was what the heavenly Father had sent Him to earth to do. That, of course, would be His Father’s business. That would also be the main topic of discussion in the temple at Jerusalem, His Father’s house.

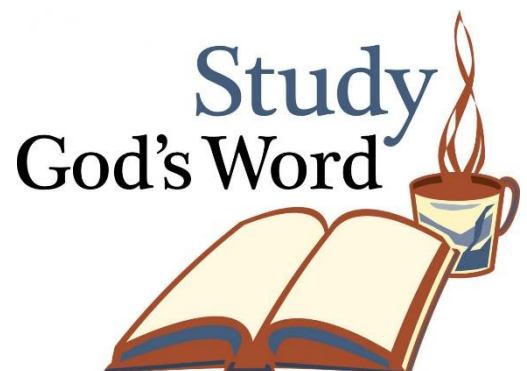
But rather than getting bogged down discussing the wording of the verse, let’s apply the verse’s truth to our lives as God’s people. At an age when most boys are figuring out their chances to make the travel soccer team or bugging their parents to get a new iPhone, our Savior was busy pursuing our salvation. Not yet a teenager at the time of this conversation with Joseph and Mary, Jesus was most interested in – and perfectly focused on – saving us from the guilt of sin which we pile up daily. What a Savior He is! What a Savior we have!

The sinless Son of God was at the house of God. He was hearing and studying and discussing God’s Word. Think about that! The Word points to Him who is “*the Word*” (John 1:1, 14), to Jesus, to Him who is One “*who takes away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29). Jesus hearing and studying and discussing the Word which He knew perfectly was Jesus obeying God’s law for us. We often think about Jesus suffering on the cross to remove our curse. But just as important in His work to save us was His perfect keeping of the law in our place.

Why do we forget about that at times? The pastor gets some blame because he doesn’t mention it often enough from the pulpit or in front of the class. But we also forget it because we don’t dig often enough into the Word to ponder the sublime truth that “*we have One who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin*” (Hebrews 4:15). Add to that the fact that Satan wants us to suppose Jesus was just twiddling His thumbs for 33 years until it came time to get His work done on Good Friday.

As we rejoice that the Savior has come to earth and has perfectly completed His mission for us, may our rejoicing be more than just words of praise to Him in home devotions and weekly worship services. May our rejoicing also be a renewed commitment to study His truth, to share His message, to grow in trusting what He’s done to rescue us from certain destruction in hell. May our lives reflect our gratitude to Him who made the full payment required by His Father to buy back our souls. We’re most richly blessed when we fill our hearts with all that Jesus has done to accomplish His Father’s business, His saving mission, our complete redemption!

Pastor Voss



The
Season
of
Lent



THE WALK ALONG OUR SAVIOR'S path to His crucifixion begins **Ash Wednesday, February 26**. *Lent services, which begin that evening, will be held each Wednesday at 7:00 through April 10.*

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.

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 that begin February 26 and to the Holy Week services April 5, 9, 10, and April 12.*



OUR 10-FOR-10 Stewardship emphasis continues. We are not hoping to get more money into the General Fund. We are rather encouraging you to ponder earnestly how richly God has blessed us sinners with forgiveness and eternal life in Christ, and then to consider prayerfully whether it is feasible for us to increase our thankofferings.

The first **10** in *10-For-10* is a suggestion that members evaluate committing **10%** of their income to support the Lord's kingdom work (the percentage that God required of His Old Testament people in Israel). If that isn't feasible for you, we ask you to consider increasing your thankofferings by **10%** of the amount you had been offering in 2019.

The second **10** in *10-For-10* is **10 weeks**. We suggest individuals and families consider an increase in thankofferings for the 10-week period from January 19 – March 29. At the end of those 10 weeks, individual and families will re-evaluate the amount of thankofferings they bring to the Lord.

Please understand that these are only suggestions. We also stress that there will not be any reports generated about specific giving units with an increase or decrease in thankofferings.

May our gracious God fill our hearts with joy in Jesus, and move us to offer him a percentage of our God-given gifts that honors Him!



THE VOICE CHOIR plans to resume rehearsals on **February 20**. That is a tentative date; we ask returning choir members, and members who will be new to our choir to let Laurie Voss know if that date will work for them. Rehearsals are planned for **Thursday evenings at 6:30**. We will distribute and practice music to sing in Lent and for our Holy Week services.

We hope that new choir voices will join us! Any communicant member is welcome to sing with us for Holy Week services, and possibly a Sunday morning service during Lent.

THE MICHIGAN LUTHERAN SEMINARY CONCERT CHOIR will present God's Word in song at our church Sunday morning, **April 5**. To accommodate the choir's travel, there will be **one service April 5 at 10:00**. Our member Hannah Domke is a member of the concert choir.

Following the service, there will be a dinner for the students (and their family members who are here for the service). Watch for an announcement later this winter about how you can help with the meal.

Because of the different schedule that morning, and due to the choir's need to use our fellowship hall and sanctuary to prepare for the service, there will be no Sunday School or Bible Class sessions that morning.

WE HAVE REFRESHMENTS the first Sunday of each month. Join us in the church fellowship hall *Sunday, February 2*. 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.

The Board of Evangelism & Stewardship will provide the refreshments this month. 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.

THE LADIES FELLOWSHIP GROUP At our meeting on Monday, February 3 at 7:00 PM we will discuss where we will send our mission monies collected in 2019. We will also review our agenda for 2020. Our menu for the Lent supper on March 4 will also be finalized. Join us for wonderful fellowship with other women from our church family and to help serve the Lord in the many ways that we do.



HOMEBOUND MEMBERS Periodically we provide in the newsletter a list of our members who are unable to get to God's house due to health issues.

Augusta Bump Betty Deisler Velna Hoag Caroline Kasischke Janet Mead

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

WELS CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S RETREAT will be held *March 13-15* at Treetops Resort in Gaylord. You will find more information, as well as register online, at www.SistersInChrist.org.

THE FLOWER CHART FOR 2020 has been posted on the bulletin board. You are now invited to sign up to place flowers on the altar for as many Sundays as you desire. If you wish, you may also indicate the occasion for which the flowers are being donated.

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

IF YOU WILL BE AWAY FROM CHURCH and/or out of town for an extended period of time, there is a convenient way to submit regularly your thankoffering. You can instruct your bank to mail a check to *Memorial Ev. Lutheran Church / 1022 W. Grand River Ave. / Williamston, MI 48895*. When such checks arrive the mail, they are given to our thankoffering counters the following Monday. The amount is deposited into our General Fund, and the amount is noted for your account as our Financial Secretary keeps a record of all thankofferings by our members.

WHEN FILLING OUT your thankoffering envelope, please be aware of the following:

- You *don't* need to write your name on the line provided. The identifying number in the upper corner is all that our financial secretary needs.

- We ask that you *do* list the amount placed inside the envelope on the line provided for that purpose. This information is needed by our financial secretary. If you do not list it, the counters will write it in when opening the envelope.

Some members are uneasy about others seeing the amount written on the envelope as the offering plate moves across the pews. *We suggest putting the envelope in the plate face down. That will allow you to provide the information needed by our counters, financial secretary, and treasurer, yet keep your offering amount confidential.*

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.

FORWARD IN CHRIST - If you wish to renew your subscription to *Forward in Christ*, our Synod's magazine, or order a new subscription, you may use the envelope in your 2019 envelope packet that is marked for this purpose.

Subscription price will be **\$11.50** for this year, provided that enough families subscribe and we can take advantage of that bulk subscription rate. That price covers twelve monthly issues. If you subscribe through the congregation, your issue will be mailed to the church and placed in your box in the narthex.

Forward In Christ is an excellent periodical! It contains Bible studies, articles about how our Savior's love for us has affected people's lives, news from our Synod and religious information from around the world, and a number of other features. If you would like to see a few issues to get an idea of what the magazine is like, speak to Pastor Voss.

Please use your offering packet envelope for *Forward in Christ* (or a plain envelope labeled "*Forward in Christ*"), be sure to put your name on the envelope, fill it with a check for **\$11.50** made out to ***Memorial Lutheran Church***, and give it to Pastor Voss. Please do so by ***February 9!***

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!



CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS

PASTOR'S REPORT – I thank the Board of Elders for consulting with me late into the evening on Saturday, January 11 and very early the next morning as together we made the decision to cancel the 8:00 service, along with Sunday School and Bible class that day.

Our congregation thanks David Fortin for serving as narrator during the Christmas Eve worship service. Dave's willingness to attend the Saturday morning rehearsals was also a huge benefit to all who prepared spoken and musical proclamation of the Christmas Gospel about our newborn Savior.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Enrollment at 29 is unchanged. An application was received for a prospective 3 year old preschool student and was approved by the board.

Facebook posts continue to reach many people.

The board thanks Mrs. Domke and Mrs. Leitz for their work with the students for their songs and speaking parts for the Christmas Eve service.

We will host the CMLAL Volleyball Tournament for our area WELS schools in our gym March 28.

There will be no school February 10 because of Pastor/Teacher conference in Saginaw. There will also be no school February 17 because of Presidents' Day.

PTO will host the Lent super on February 26.

The board thanks our Sunday School staff for planning and providing lunch for our students after the December 14th rehearsal. We also thank a member family who provided the gifts for the children who participated in the Christmas Eve service.

Concessions for weekend basketball games – Mrs. Labadie, a parent of students at our school, purchases

supplies with the PTO debit card. We thank her! However, lack of PTO volunteers for concessions and gate entrance is problematic. A letter seeking the same was sent to school parents and was addressed at the January 15th PTO meeting.

Dates for our Vacation Bible School in 2020 are tentatively set as July 27-30, pending discussion with VBS volunteers.

BOARD OF ELDERS – The Elders reviewed the special Advent, Christmas, and New Year's Eve worship services.

Pastor Voss will talk to the member suggested to our board about serving as director of our chime choir.

The voice choir will resume rehearsals in February to prepare music to sing for Lent, Good Friday, and Resurrection Sunday services. The Board of Elders thanks all the members of both choirs for using their God-given talents to edify our worship services.

New organ and HymnSoft schedules have been prepared and distributed. The Board of Elders thanks the organists for using their God-given talents to edify our worship services. We also thank our HymnSoft volunteers.

Welcome Home Sunday was held December 15. A few infrequent members have been here more regularly since our Welcome Home Sunday service.

Our annual December door offering has been forwarded on to Prince of Peach Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thousand Oaks, CA.

BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP – We thank the Domke family for hosting the January 5th refreshments. Our board hosted the first Sunday refreshments on February 2. We seek other families to host future refreshment Sundays.

We thank all who hosted Advent suppers.

We planned the kick-off for the WELS 10-for-10 Stewardship emphasis in our congregation on January 19th.

Midweek Lent suppers are February 26 – PTO; March 4 – Ladies Fellowship; March 11, 18, 25, and April 1st are open and we ask for volunteers to host.

BOARD OF EDUCATION – The board organized for 2020 as follows: Chairman - Todd Loeffler, Secretary - Dennis Fisher, School Property – Pat Crandall, Church & Parsonage property – Victor Domke, Water testing – David Dawley.

Church furnace was serviced and a thermostat was replaced.

We updated the cleaning schedule and distributed it to the volunteers.

Items worked on: popcorn machine was serviced, exhaust fans in lobby bathrooms repaired, Little Leap room heating unit was serviced for excessive heat.

Our board will look into the replacement of the 3 metal exit doors in church.

We are still working on new exit lights for the church as well as window replacement in the parsonage.



BADGER NEWS from SCHOOL

FROM MRS. LEITZ AND PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN: We have been learning from the Israelite people that we need to trust in God at all times. We are reminded that He has taken care of every daily need or struggle we have especially with sin, death, and the devil. We want to thank and praise Him for doing all of these wondrous things for us every day.

We have been having fun learning about all things winter. Threes have been working on their names and shapes. Fours have made it over halfway through the alphabet and have been listening to some fun stories along the way. The Kinders have been working on adding, telling time, and patterns in math. In *Super Kids* we have been blending letter sounds into words and writing sentences.

We have been so busy trying to play catch up with all the sickness keeping kids out of school that we haven't been able to do many fun extra things like field trips, so perhaps next month we can accomplish a fun day. Kinders will be celebrating the 100th day of school and Preschool and Kinders will celebrate Valentine's Day.

May the Lord bless your new month,

FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES 1-5: In our study of God's Word we have been traveling with the Israelites as they've moved through the desert to the Promised Land. So, we've seen water come out of a rock, victory against incredible odds in battle, and food provided nonstop for forty years! God cared for His people with amazing love. He cares for us, too. We have all we need for body and life, and we have the best gift ever, salvation through Jesus. We thank God for His unending goodness.

Grades 3-5 are moving through the regions of the United States, learning about geography, resources, and occupations. We are also learning the states and capitals. Everyone is doing well and working hard.

Grades 2-5 are also doing something a bit different for reading the next two quarters. We are going to do the "20 Book Challenge." Each student will be reading independently and try to finish twenty chapter books by the end of school. We will have mini lessons on important language arts topics and assignments that all can do, regardless of the book being read. Students will conference with the teacher, too. Everyone is excited about this new challenge.

We will also be gearing up soon for the Fine Arts Fair at MLS, the Lansing Concert Band presentation in March and begin working on our spring play. Never a dull moment around here!



SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR FEBRUARY SERVICES:

<u>8:00</u>	<u>10:30</u>	<u>Altar Guild</u>	<u>Greeter(s)</u>	<u>Cleaners</u>
2/02 - #2 V. Domke	#4 J. Zoran	S. Unruh	H&S Clark	Kasischke
2/09 - #7 D. Kasischke	#3 J. Janecke	K. Unruh	D&C Kasischke	Leitz
2/16 - #6 C. Rhodea	#9 D. Fisher	T. Wood	D&S Rector	Loeffler
2/23 - #5 S. Houser	#8 D. Rector	R. Olin	K&J Douglas	Mills
2/26 - #2 V. Domke		R. Olin		