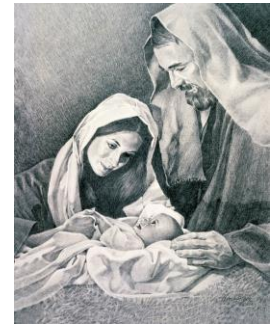




MEMORIAL MESSENGER January 2018



“On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise Him, He was named Jesus.” (Luke 2:21)

Before each special day was used as a reason to sell merchandise, New Year’s Day held special *spiritual* significance in the Christian Church. The eighth day after December 25—according to the way Jews counted time—is January 1. Since the time of Abraham, boys in his family line were circumcised on the eighth day of life outside the womb. So, the eighth day of the ongoing Christmas season marks the circumcision of Jesus.

Circumcision seems silly to some today. But it was a command from God for the Jews before Christ. And God packed circumcision with meaning. It was God’s sign to assure His people of His promises. The cutting off of some flesh was also symbolic of removing inner impurity.

Then why would Jesus, the *sinless* Savior, be circumcised? We’ve just celebrated the fact that He is the true God who makes promises to people. Why would the Son of God need assurance of promises *He* made? He didn’t! In our festival worship services, we reviewed the great truth that Jesus remained true God after taking on human flesh. Why would He need a ceremony picturing removal of inner purity? He didn’t!

Jesus was circumcised *for us*. We miss a lot if we see Christ’s suffering on the cross as the only work He did to redeem us. He who gives laws to sinners willingly put Himself under His own laws for the sake of sinners. Jesus kept God’s law *for us, to redeem us*.

Circumcision was not a major medical procedure; it was over within seconds. But a little blood was shed by Jewish baby boys and some pain was suffered. Do you see the salvation connection? On the eighth day of His life, our newborn Savior first shed His holy, precious blood *for us*, first suffered *for us*.

Joseph and Mary didn’t ask Jesus if He wanted to be circumcised; they had the procedure done, and the Son of God allowed human hands to do that to Him. What love the baby Jesus showed that day! What rich evidence of His commitment to pay the price to buy us back to God’s family! He who is God-in-the-flesh let His flesh be cut *for us*. At tender age of one *week* old He was working to redeem us—obeying His law in our place and shedding His blood *for us*.

Most Americans think that on New Year’s Day they are doing something noble by resolving to change habits. How much better to resolve on New Year’s Day that we’ll ponder every day what Jesus has done *for us*. That means more Bible study, more consideration of God’s truth, more attention to His will, more worship in His house.

May this brief review of an often-forgotten act in our Savior’s work of redemption give new meaning to what we ponder on New Year’s Day. May our Savior’s richest blessings fill you and your family in 2018!

Pastor Voss





SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

Because the date is part of the New Year holiday weekend, the Board of Elders has decided that there will be ***one service at 10:00 that morning.***

The New Year's Eve service will be at ***7:00 that evening.*** 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.

SUNDAY SCHOOL / BIBLE CLASS

There will be no Sunday School or Bible Class sessions on ***Sunday, December 31.***

BAPTISMS

Frank James Patrick Albany, infant son of Amber (nee Crandall) & Frank Albany, became a believing child of God through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism administered December 3.

Addison Christine Eldridge, daughter of Chelsie (nee Stanton) & Mark Eldridge, entered God's family through faith in Jesus given in Holy Baptism on December 10.

May our gracious God ever keep Frank and Addition in their baptismal grace!



WE THANK YOU FOR your response to the toy drive and food bank in December! The presents donated by many of our members were appreciated by the volunteers who distributed the gifts to children of needy families in the area.

May we continue to remember that God has instructed us, "*Look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*" (Philippians 2:4)

WE HAVE REFRESHMENTS on the first Sunday of each month. On ***Sunday, January 7***, our Sunday School and Bible Class sessions will ***BEGIN 10 MINUTES LATER THAN USUAL.***

This is a change from what we did in the fall. In an attempt to get more to join us, we will have refreshments ***right after the early service*** in the fellowship hall.

The refreshments will be available ***9:05 - 9:25.*** At 9:25 Sunday School sessions downstairs and Bible Class upstairs will begin.

Please let Joe Janecke, Dan Kasischke, or Jason Leitz from our Board of Evangelism & Stewardship know how you like this new time for monthly refreshments.

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.***

EVANGELICAL HERITAGE VERSION The Board of Elders, in consultation with Pastor Voss, has decided that we will use the Evangelical Heritage Version (EHV) translation for Scripture lessons on a trial basis.

The EHV is a translation of the Bible by pastors and professors in WELS and in ELS, a small church body in full doctrinal fellowship with WELS. The translation work has been done entirely without budget funds from WELS. It is hoped that the printed EHV translation of the entire Bible will be available from Northwestern Publishing House this year or next year.

Please let Bob Briggs or Rex Hannewald from our Board of Elders, or Pastor Voss, know how you like the use of the EHV for our Scripture lessons. If you want more information about the EHV, you can check the web site wartburgproject.org.

THE FLOWER CHART FOR 2018 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.

We thank you for your cooperation in filling only two or three Sundays for 2018 per family in December, allowing more of our families to sign up.

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



2018 THANKOFFERING ENVELOPES If you haven't yet picked up your 2018 thankoffering envelopes, please get them from your mail slot. Some of your family's envelopes may be on the counter below the mailboxes.

Your thankoffering statement, reflecting your thankofferings for 2017, will be prepared and placed in your mail slot by the end of January.

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 financemen, yet keep your offering amount confidential.*



LADIES FELLOWSHIP will have our first 2018 meeting on the second Monday of the month, **January 8** at 7:00 PM. We will take down the Christmas decorations and discuss our goals for 2018. Remember that we will continue to bring snacks to share and our own beverages from now on.

OUR GRAYCE GROUP will hold their next meeting on **Tuesday, January 30** at 11:30. Watch for more information to be distributed later in January.

FOR SECURITY REASONS we are removing the key for the church that has been available for years. If you need to enter church, but don't have a key, please speak to Pastor Voss to make sure the church will be open for you.

THE MONTHLY HOT LUNCH at Memorial Lutheran School for December is being served **Friday, January 19**. The menu is spaghetti and meatballs, breadsticks, fruit cups, frosted cupcakes, and milk.

Volunteers from the congregation are welcome to help serve the meal; 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.

THE CHIME CHOIR will rehearse Saturday, **January 6** at 11:00 AM to practice music to be played at the late service on January 7.



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 2018 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 11!**

COLLEGE STUDENTS, please submit your campus address, phone number, and e-mail address to Pastor Voss. If he has your e-mail address, he would be happy to send a copy of week's sermon to you electronically.

Even if you have previously submitted a college e-mail address to Pastor Voss, please do so once again so that we can be sure to have up-to-date information. Pastor Voss' e-mail address is revdavoss@gmail.com.

We wish you God's richest blessings on your studies!

AMAZON has a program in which 0.5% of qualified Amazon purchases can be given to a charity of the buyer's choice. Our treasurer has set up our congregation to participate, and the pastor has sent an email with our church's unique charity link. If you didn't get the email, here is the link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/38-2130250>. To get additional information, please speak to Kim Fedewa or Pastor Voss. You must sign in to this link every time in order to get the rewards passed on.

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 – We thank our Sunday School staff for once again volunteering to host a meal for the children and their families after the Christmas Eve service rehearsal on Saturday, December 23.

WELS news: WELS Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) continue to run ahead of last year (through November) and continue to run ahead of pro-rated subscription amounts by WELS congregations for this calendar year.

WELS Congregational Services (CS) personnel attended the November meeting of the WELS Synodical Council (SC). As we heard and saw in the November WELS Connection, WELS CS is studying the demographic challenges facing our synod, and is making plans to help congregations address those challenges. Congregations will be provided with resources as they address ministry to millennials, work to reduce the number of backdoor losses, and emphasize evangelism. They will also provide guidelines to congregations considering mergers as a means to improve their ministries.

More than 1,000 separate screenings of *A Return to Grace* were hosted by WELS congregations throughout the nation this year.

We continue to research the best way to keep the 655-2294 phone number, but eliminate the cost of the land line. So far, it appears that we'd have to purchase a piece of equipment to provide a wireless home phone system (\$45 - \$99, depending on the company), then pay \$15 - \$20 per month for the service (again, the amount depends on the company).

Do any of you have different ideas or know of another alternative that will be closer to the \$120 we budgeted for 2018 for the church phone?

Installation of re-elected Church Councilmen will take place in the worship services January 7.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Enrollment is 24. (two new students since our last meeting)

Preschool: 5 Kindergarten: 5 Grades 1-5: now 14

School promotion: Facebook -Targeted Facebook marketing Nov. 8-18 for \$200, paid by PTO. Results: 47K local impressions/33 link clicks / 23K people reached

General School items: Standardized tests- \$28 X 8 students in grades 3-5, plus shipping – Order by December 31.

Board reviewed monthly use of debit card and receipts, as well as log being used.

PTO concession money deposits: Seems to be working well with our thanko offering counters

Reviewed the verbiage of a letter Pastor Voss drafted a letter to inform school families this month about how our school is funded, that a modest increase for 2018-2019 tuition rates is being considered by the board, and to let families 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.

Began discussions of tuition rates for 2018-19 school year

VBS Last week of June worked well in 2017. Discussed keeping it during that week for 2018.

BOARD OF ELDERS – A computer is being prepared for use with the HymnSoft software at church when an organist is not available. We are working to patch the computer into the organ's MIDI unit. The Elders will seek individuals who are able and willing to run the program during worship service as needed. The office secretary, in consultation with Pastor, will be responsible for setting up HymnSoft when needed.

Beginning in the new year will use the Evangelical Heritage Version translation of Scripture for our Scripture lessons in worship.

The annual December door offering was received December 17 & 24. Money collected will be given to WELS Christian Aid & Relief.

The Elders discussed security during worship service. After hearing from members of the congregation, the Elders have decided not to lock the door to the basement at the bottom of the ramp.

The next organist schedule is being prepared. The Elders thank our organists for using their God given talents to edify our worship services.

BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP – We distributed WELS DVDs to visitors at Advent and Christmas services.

Discussed the refreshments on the first Sunday of the month. To get more people than just those who are in Sunday School and Bible Class to attend, we are going to move the time to 9:05-9:25 in January. We hope that early service worshipers will join us in the fellowship hall after the service.

We have renewed the WELS Connection for 2018.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES – Light fixtures were replaced in the narthex.

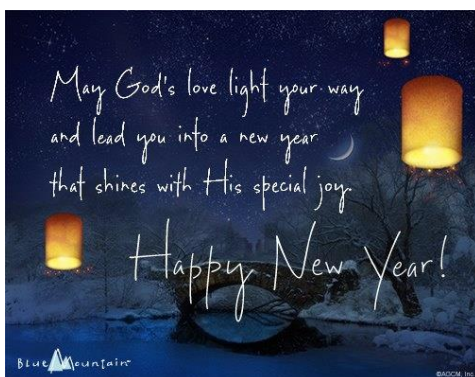
Larry Shipman will be available for snow removal this winter.

All furnace filters have been replaced.

The gas line supports on the roof of school will need some work spring or summer 2018.

The public water well supply invoice was discussed and paid. Our class code is correct and will not be considered for change.

The cleaning schedule was discussed. We will ask for it to be printed and distributed.



BADGER NEWS from SCHOOL -

FROM MRS. LEITZ AND OUR PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN ROOMS:

The month of December has been a flurry of excitement in preparing the foot and hand print Christmas gifts, counting the days to Jesus' birthday, and learning about all of the things we normally do.

We have been learning about Moses this past month and with that we have been reminded of the many things God does for us every day. Just as He promised Moses to be with him He is also with us all the time. Just as Moses had a special job to do so do we! Spreading the news about Jesus is our job. We also kept our focus on Jesus' birth with special Advent devotions.

We have been practicing hard for the Christmas Eve service of which quite a few of our church's younger ones will be in. They are doing a great job! They are so excited to spread the news about Jesus. Let their excitement carry your hearts and minds to the true reason for the season.

Every year we celebrate Jesus' birth in our classroom with a party for Him! We play games, eat special treats, and exchange gifts. We also had some special dress up days and a pancake lunch for the K-5 grades.

May your Christmas be fun and filled with the true reason for the season!

FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES ONE-FIVE:

This month in our study of God's Word we have learned about God's people in Egypt, the plagues and the Exodus. In all of these true stories we learn about how God deals with His people, both in old days and today. God was patient with His people, showing love and administering discipline when needed. God is the same with us, too. His love is boundless and His discipline is always just what we need. We praise Him this season of our Savior's birth. But, we also remember that our God wants our praises all year long, too. We continue to praise and worship Him in our homes, at school, at church, and wherever we go in our day to day lives.

Grades K-5 certainly enjoyed singing for the first Advent service! Thanks so much to the parents for help making the meal and for all the help from Memorial members before, during and after the meal. We know that many hands helped to set up the fellowship hall, serve the meal and clean up after it was all over. In fact, several grandmas were seen in the kitchen washing and drying dishes. Thanks to you all!

We are also having lots of fun getting ready for Christmas at church and at home. Our classroom, halls and lobby look absolutely great! It would be wonderful if you could stop by and see how cool school looks!

Another big thank you to all the people who have helped make hot lunch possible at school! School moms and dads, grandparents and Memorial friends have all worked hard to make it work. Thanks so much!

Grades 1-5 participated in the Williamston Red Cedar Garden Club's Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl poster contest. We didn't have any winners this year, but we sure had fun making them. We thank the garden club for the opportunity!

SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR JANUARY SERVICES:

| <i>Ushers</i> | | <i>Altar Guild</i> | <i>Greeter(s)</i> | <i>Cleaners</i> |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1/07 - #6 E. Ruhlig | #4 B. Grinnell | M. Bennett | L&J Vogt | S&G Houser |
| 1/14 - #5 S. Houser | #3 J. Janecke | D. Steiner | K&A Remus | B. Janecke |
| 1/21 - #2 V. Domke | #1 T. Marion | S. Unruh | H&M Surtman | J&S Janecke |
| 1/28 - #7 D. Kasischke | #9 D. Fisher | C. Kasischke | D&S Fisher | D&C Kasischke |

