



MEMORIAL MESSENGER

January 2019

Simeon said to Mary, “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul, too.” Luke 2:34-35

Our curiosity wants details of what the days were like for Joseph and Mary and Jesus right after the birth of our Savior. But the Holy Spirit has determined we don't need to know such details. Before Joseph was told in a dream to take the family to Egypt to escape Herod, all we are told is that the Magi worshiped Jesus and that the family made two trips the seven miles north to the temple grounds in Jerusalem.

One of those trips was on the eighth day after Jesus was born. That was the day prescribed in Jewish law for male babies to be circumcised and formally named. The other trip was forty days after Christmas. That was the day when Jewish parents presented their firstborn to the Lord.

It was on that second trip that Simeon saw the Savior for the first time and spoke the divinely inspired words above. Simeon had been told by God that he wouldn't die until he had seen the promised Messiah. This day made his life! He could now go about the rest of his life in peace with God, having seen firsthand that the Lord had come – and had come through on His promise to provide the Redeemer.

But the Lord not only gave rich blessings to Simeon that day. He also used Simeon that day to give rich blessings to us. The Christchild whom we've adored in numerous days on special days this past week *“is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed”*. The four gospels relate how true that was. People weren't non-committal about Jesus of Nazareth; they either loved Him or hated Him, which in turn revealed the spiritual condition of their hearts.

“And a sword will pierce your own soul, too.” You mothers know what Simeon meant. It hurts you as much as it hurts your child when your child is ridiculed, fails on a project, has important plans fall through because of the attitudes of others. When the Jewish religious leaders turned up the heat against Jesus, it pained Mary deeply. When they nailed Jesus to the cross, it was as though a dagger went right through her heart. She knew this was part of her Savior's mission and was necessary for the world's salvation. But that didn't make it any easier for her to see her son so brutally mistreated.

God's truths through Simeon set the tone for us as we begin 2019. The excitement of the secular Christmas will soon be past. The dreary routine of life will soon resume. The faces so quick with a smile and the voices so cheerful with “Merry Christmas!” will soon be etched more frequently with frowns or scowls, carry more criticisms than compliments. May the Christmas joy of the Savior's birth about which we have sung so joyfully so recently not fade in us. January and February and the months to come *“will reveal the thoughts of our hearts”*, too! If our commitment to God's Word starts to sputter, if our excitement about God's salvation turns to slush, let's realize the devil is starting to gain the upper hand – and then put Satan behind us by putting God's Word and God's Son before us!

Pastor Voss



SPECIAL SERVICES:

Sunday, December 30 – **10:00** AM – Worship service

Monday, December 31 – **7:00 PM** - New Year's Eve service with Holy Communion

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

There is *no* Sunday School or Bible Class on December 30. Also, there will be only one worship service that morning, and it will begin at **10:00**.

In the new year, Sunday School and Bible Class will resume January 6.

WE HAVE REFRESHMENTS the first Sunday of each month. On *Sunday, January 6* 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.

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 is to have installation for these men during the worship services on *January 6*.

CHIME CHOIR The chime choir will rehearse *Saturday, January 5 at 11:00* to prepare music for the late service on Sunday, January 6.

LADIES FELLOWSHIP GROUP Come join us January 7 at 7:00 PM as we discuss our agenda and projects for 2019. We usually bring a snack to share if able and then talk about what we hope to accomplish in the new year which includes having wonderful fellowship. We also draw the name for our prayer partner for the next month. We pray for her and then send a card at the end of the month. (We no longer do Secret Pals because we did it for so many years and many of us had repeated names several times.)

We are always looking for new projects and things to do together. Come share your ideas.



THE FLOWER CHART FOR 2019 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.

OUR GRAYCE GROUP will hold their next meeting on *Tuesday, January 29 at 11:30*. Watch for more information to be distributed later in January.



2019 THANKOFFERING ENVELOPES If you haven't yet picked up your 2019 thankoffering envelopes, please get them from your mail slot.

Your thankoffering statement, reflecting your thankofferings for 2018, 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.*

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!

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 10***.

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS

PASTOR'S REPORT – Bible Instruction Classes (BIC) separately with two individuals continue weekly.

Our December door offering is targeted for a brand new mission effort in WELS. The Synod has provided materials about the mission effort and special offering. The materials arrived just after the Board of Elders decided we'll send our December door offering for WELS work in Vietnam. All WELS congregations are asked to conduct a special offering for this work among the Hmong people in Vietnam. The story of how Hmong people in the U.S. got the news about WELS to Hmong people in Vietnam is fascinating. WELS hopes to receive \$2 million in special funds by Easter 2019. That would enable WELS in the near future to begin some work in Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, as WELS has been invited to do by that still-communist government. Think about that! How unexpected that God would open that door for Gospel work! May God bless the thankoffering richly!

We thank the women of our Sunday School staff for hosting the lunch that will be served this Saturday after the first of our two Christmas Eve service rehearsals.

Installation of re-elected Church Councilmen will take place in the worship services Sunday, January 6.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Tuition – One family adds a \$75.00 gift to their tuition payment each month.

The PTO treasurer will reimburse a member family for supplies purchased for concession stand at school.

SignUp Genius is available on our web site for volunteers to help with weekend basketball games.

At present, we expect all 8 kindergarten students to enroll as 1st graders next year.

ACT materials were ordered before the December 31 deadline for spring testing.

Volunteer cleaning by school families has been going well.

February 18 there is no school - Presidents Day February 25 there is no school – Pastor/Teacher Conference in Flint. Grandparents Day will likely be held in connection with the spring plays.

There is a PTO meeting scheduled for Monday, January 14 at 7 PM.

VBS is set for the mornings of Monday-Thursday, July 22–25, 2019.

PTO Fund Raising – A form has been drawn up by the board for proposed fundraising events. The form is to be submitted for board approval of events.

Christmas gifts for children in Christmas Eve service: The Board saw to it that gifts were purchased for children who were in the service that evening.

BOARD OF ELDERS – The Elders reviewed the usher duties and teams. The 2019 usher schedule has been prepared and distributed to the ushers.

New organist and HymnSoft schedules have been prepared and distributed to our organists and HymnSoft operators.

Our annual December door offering was taken December 16 and 23. The door offering will help support new WELS mission work in Vietnam.

BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP – A new greeters schedule has been prepared and distributed.

We encouraged members to invite family and friends and others to our Advent and Christmas season services. We will distribute WELS DVDs to visitors at Advent and Christmas services.

The magnetic sign about Christmas services, as well as our manger scene were set in front of church.

The board will work on updating the *Opportunities to Serve* booklet and distribute it to our members in February or March.

The 2019 thankoffering counters schedule has been prepared and distributed. 2019 thankoffering envelopes have also been distributed.

We thank those who planned the Home for the Holidays event on December 28.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES – Our board thanks Kendall Goetz and Larry Shipman for volunteering their time and equipment to remove snow from our parking lots this winter.

Many thanks to Pat Crandall for the hours spent on the gymnasium's score board and the odds and ends at fixing and repairing items at school.

A new dishwasher has been installed at the parsonage.

Dave Dawley provided more information on DEQ and Ingham county testing as well as a spread sheet of when the tests need to be completed and the cost of testing the water at school:

2019: \$1,081.00; 2020-2027: \$954.00; 2022: \$1,414.00, 2028: \$1,541.00; 2029: back to \$954.00

Basketball games for third through sixth grade started December 1 and will run through the first week in March.

Meyer HVAC was called to work on the boiler at school as it was leaking and needed new seals.

SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR JANUARY SERVICES:

	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Altar Guild</i>	<i>Greeter(s)</i>	<i>Cleaners</i>
1/06 - #5 S. Houser	#3 J. Janecke	C. Kasischke	L. Tobia	S&G Houser
1/13 - #7 D. Kasischke	#9 D. Fisher	M. Zoran	D&S Rector	B. Janecke
1/20 - #2 V. Domke	#1 T. Marion	K. Unruh	K&J Douglas	J&S Janecke
1/27 - #6 E. Ruhlig	#8 D. Rector	S. Unruh	T&L Loeffler	D&C Kasischke

