



# MEMORIAL MESSENGER

## January 2020

*Because of the LORD's great love, we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. Lamentations 3:22-23*

Even the serious student of God's Word doesn't get into Lamentations very often. That's too bad. As these verses from Lamentations indicate, God speaks about our guilt and His grace often in Lamentations, and just as clearly as He does in the other sixty-five books of His Word.

With this key passage, the Holy Spirit reminded Jews living in distress, "God has not forgotten you!" It also reminds us – both as we continue to celebrate Christmas and enter 2020 – God hasn't forgotten us.

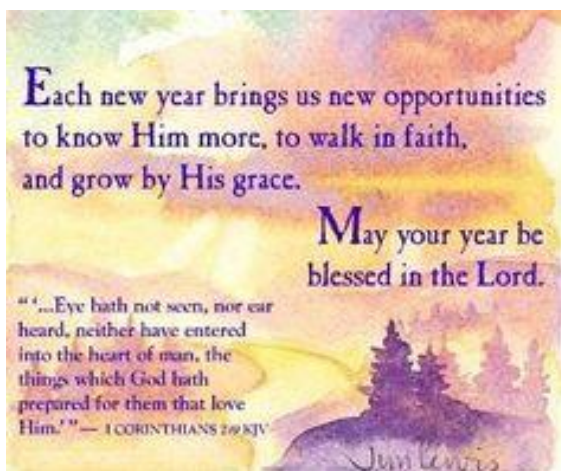
We know from previous Christmases that the joy which filled and fueled us for much of December tends to melt quickly after New Year's Day. The melting of Christmas joy isn't God's fault. His blessings and faithful love in *the* Christmas Gift are new to us every day. Not one of the 8,784 hours in 2020 will pass with God's grace in Jesus being withdrawn from us, unless we tell the LORD to leave us in 2020.

Believers in Jesus have the frightening ability to sever ties with God. God uses the power of His good news in Jesus to keep us close to Him when we try to wriggle away from Him. But if we persist in wanting to live apart from His grace, He will finally say, "Have it your way! Go ahead and live without Me, if that's what you really desire!" But the consequence of dying in such a defiant attitude toward God is to suffer in hell forever.

Our Savior wants us to step into 2020 full of Christmas confidence, carrying with us the miracle that the Christchild came from heaven to earth to carry the guilt of every trespass. Our Savior wants us to live every day of 2020 as Christmas Christians, sinners who delight in "*His compassions*", in His gifts we don't deserve – and who delight in them every morning, afternoon and evening. Our Savior has set up 2020 to be an unbroken string of 366 days in which we rise from sleep to marvel at His love for us sinners, and at His power to keep us.

There are questions about 2020. What will happen about the economy, in the elections, with other nations, to our loved ones? But are any of those uncertainties greater than "*the LORD's great love for us*"? No! Even if 2020 is worse for us than any past year, will such setbacks cancel our complete forgiveness in Christ? No way!

The LORD describes those blessings of His as "*new every morning*". They are *not* new in the sense that we've never seen or experienced them before. They *are* new in that they come in rich measure, renewed to us every day. They will not likely be blessings that fall from the sky in the form of \$100 bills. But they are daily assurances that our sins are covered. And which of those two has benefits that will last forever? The latter!



In every area of our living in 2020, we will find our power source in God's unfailing love for us sinners. May God grant you a richly blessed 2020 as you celebrate Christmas daily and bask in His love that endures forever!

*Pastor Voss*

## **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29**

There is *no* Sunday School or Bible Class on December 29. 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 5.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES:**

Sunday, December 29 - **10:00** AM – Worship service

Tuesday, December 31- **7:00 PM** - New Year's Eve Service with Holy Communion

**WE HAVE REFRESHMENTS** the first Sunday of each month. Join us in the church fellowship hall *Sunday, January 5*. 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 again 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.

**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). We will install those men to their elected terms of office during the worship services on *January 5*.

**THE LADIES FELLOWSHIP GROUP** Happy New Year! We are blessed with another year to meet together for fellowship and for service to our Lord. We will meet January 6 at 7:00 PM. Please bring a snack to share if you'd like. Best of all, please bring ideas for this year.

**THE FLOWER CHART FOR 2020** is 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 thank you for your cooperation in filling only two Sundays for 2020 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.

**2020 THANKOFFERING ENVELOPES** If you haven't yet picked up your 2020 thankoffering envelopes, please get them from your mail slot.

Your thankoffering statement, reflecting your thankofferings for 2019, 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!

**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 8!***

## CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS

**PASTOR'S REPORT – *WELS news*:** Last month this report included a note about WELS leaders having to cut short abruptly a visit to our world missions in Africa. Within the past few weeks, the WELS Board for World Missions decided to pull our East Asian missionaries and their families from an unspecified country in East Asia because of concerns about their security. The government in that country is now regularly detaining, questioning, and deporting Western people suspected of conducting religious activity. The missionaries and their family members have relocated to a nation nearby. From there our missionaries continue teaching the truths of God's Word via online instruction, as well as plan to return to the country which they had to leave. These incidents remind us that the Lord of Church wants us to take advantage of the Gospel work opportunities He is giving us while those doors are still open to us. We keep the believers in East Asia and the Americans who are doing mission work there in your prayers.

Installation of newly elected and re-elected Church Councilmen will take place in the worship services Sunday, January 5.

Michigan District meetings will be held in suburban Toledo Monday afternoon, January 27 – Wednesday noon, January 29.

**BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Classroom Grades 1-5:** Judy reports that a good round of conferences with parents of her students were held.

Classroom Pre-school and Kindergarten: Karla planned a morning event held Nov. 26th for parents and grandparents of preschool and kindergarten students. It was well done, well attended, and much appreciated.

General School items: Heat issue fixed (boiler repair). Heat problems in the Kindergarten room repaired

by Victor Domke. The board thanks Victor for his work

PTO: PTO hosted Advent supper on 12/4/19 and will host Lent supper on 2/26/20. January 15th PTO meeting – Work bee for playground, other issues (Basketball concessions urgent need for PTO volunteers, future of concession stand)

Sunday School: Sunday school staff hosted lunch for the students after rehearsal on 12/14. The board thanks our Sunday School Staff for their work with our students and the rehearsal lunch.

Concessions for weekend basketball games – A mother of some of our students has been purchasing the supplies with the PTO debit card. The board thanks her for that work. PTO volunteers needed - Board sent letter seeking help to parents.

Dates for VBS 2020 – Considering July 27-30 or July 20-23

**BOARD OF ELDERS** – The Elders discussed upcoming special worship services.

A new usher schedule has been prepared and distributed. The usher duties have been revised to include instructions regarding the new automatic door at the ramp.

Our annual December door offering was received December 15 and 22. The offering was sent to Prince of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church – Thousand Oaks, California (a WELS congregation served by Pastor Noah Bater). Though the church and parsonage were spared damaged from wild fires in the area, fires that came within several hundred yards of the church building and parsonage, some member families suffered significant loss of property.

**BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP** – We will use the worship services on January 19 to introduce the 10-for-10 stewardship emphasis. Bible Classes beginning that Sunday and continuing for several weeks will study what God's Word teaches us about using the gifts He has given us in a God-pleasing way. Basically, the 10-for-10 emphasis asks members to consider increasing their thankofferings by 10% for 10 weeks, and then to reevaluate their family / individual budget for thankofferings at the end of the 10 weeks.

Discussed further placing names of those who volunteered for various Opportunities to Serve categories on our web site. Right now the board is leaning toward asking a member who's volunteered under a category to be the contact person who is listed for that category in the online version of Opportunities to Serve. We may also put a notebook in the church narthex with all that information for members to consult.

We thank the school PTO, Ladies Fellowship, and two families for hosting our midweek Advent suppers.

The board intends to renew our congregation's subscription to The WELS Connection . Cost for the DVDs to be sent us in 2020 is \$105.00.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION** – Since the emergency exit lights did not function properly when the power went out, since it is almost less expense to purchase a new fixture instead of replacing the expensive batteries, we have a recommendation to purchase new emergency fixtures.

Salt for the sidewalks has been ordered and was delivered.

Laurie Voss updated the church cleaning schedule and distributed.

Victor has replaced the dampers in the heating system at school where needed.

Will start to look at getting proposals for window replacements at the parsonage.

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

**FROM MRS. LEITZ AND PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN:** This month has been a wonderful month for our Preschool and Kindergarten. This point in the school year is always fun not just because of the all the Christmas fun we have at school but because the students are comfortably set in the routine and we can start seeing major growth in their social skills and also their academic growth since the beginning of the year.

Our students have been enjoying our special Advent devotions with the lighting of candles and opening the boxes on our advent calendar. We also have been making some special snowman Christmas gifts for their parents. We also plan on celebrating the birth of our Savior with a party before Christmas break.

Kindergarten was able to go with the older students to sing at the Senior Center and that is always a very enjoyable experience.

May the Lord bless your Christmas and New Year!

**FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES 1-5:** This month in our study of God's Word we are traveling with God's people to the Promised Land. Along the way we have fought the Amalakites, watched God send water out of a rock, picked up manna and quail every day, and witnessed the Lord coming down to Mt. Sinai. What an amazing God the Israelites had to do so much for them and love them so much! Their God is ours, too, of course, and we receive so much from Him as well. We get all of our daily needs. We live in a free country. Most of all we have salvation. So much to be thankful for this time of year - any time of year!

Last week we traveled to the Williamston Senior Center and sang sacred and secular carols for the people there. We had a great time and were warmly received. Thanks to Tracy Chaffee for setting that up.

We have been busy learning songs for our Christmas service, making our nativity pictures, decorating and working hard this month. The days certainly fly by with so much going on. We have also enjoyed dressing up like snowmen, gifts, and candy canes. Pajama day and a pancake buffet will round out the week. Of course we'll party, too!

**SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR JANUARY SERVICES:**

<u>8:00</u>	<u>10:30</u>	<u>Altar Guild</u>	<u>Greeter(s)</u>	<u>Cleaners</u>
1/05 - #7 D. Kasischke	#3 J. Janecke	M. Zoran	V&J Domke	D&R Hoag
1/12 - #2 V. Domke	#9 D. Fisher	S. Rector	L. Tobia	S&G Houser
1/19 - #5 S Houser	#1 T. Marion	C. Burris	G. Withey	B. Janecke
1/26 - #6 C. Rhodea	#8 D. Rector	L. Voss	J&S Janecke	J&S Janecke

*God bless your new year!*

