



MEMORIAL MESSENGER January 2021



Like newborn babies, crave the pure milk of the Word, so that by it you may grow up with the result being salvation. Certainly you have tasted that the Lord is good!
1 Peter 2:2-3

Our newborn Savior, lying in a manger, is proof God “*is good*”.

How good? So good and great and gracious to us sinners He left His heavenly throne and divine glory to destroy the devil’s death grip on us! So good and great and gracious to us sinners He agreed to live in humility and die in agony as our Substitute, doing perfectly what we could never do – pay the price to remove our guilt before the holy God!

Whether in person at church or at home via on-line worship, we have once again tasted that precious Christmas truth. We sinners drank in the glorious message of God’s angels and the stunning birth of the Savior. We want regular, steady helpings of God’s saving food all year long. We have felt the glow of God’s love warming our hearts throughout Advent and into the Christmas that has just begun. We don’t now sigh, “Too bad we can’t experience God’s love all the time.” We eagerly and regularly find God’s love in His good news.

An infant doesn’t sit quietly waiting for the next meal to come her way. She is aggressive in letting her parents know, “I’m hungry!” She fusses and wails until she gets the milk she craves.

Let’s be like newborn babies when it comes to tasting the goodness and mercy which God will shower on us again in 2021. Let’s “*crave the pure milk of the Word*”, God’s truth in its entirety – not just the portions of it we like. Let’s satisfy our craving by going to God’s Word of salvation every day!

A recent study noted that regular church goers are less likely to suffer from depression. We enter a new year in which concern and caution about illness are keeping a number of you from gathering in God’s house. But that doesn’t mean you can’t worship. Our congregation is committed to putting services on-line each week for the feast of salvation to reach you at home, too. Make on-line worship as much a part of your routine as traveling to God’s house was before concerns kept you at home. We are doing everything we can to have the service online by mid-afternoon on Sunday. Knowing that, pick a time each week to worship at home if you aren’t getting to God’s house. That way, you make the banquet of salvation *the* priority in your week and life!



Let’s all resolve to spend 2021 – and the rest of the years the Lord grants us on earth – tasting *daily* God’s Word and Sacrament. Those are the tools He still uses to make and keep sinners His children now and forever!

Pastor Voss



BAPTISMS

On Sunday, November 29 **Jemma Skye Soderberg**, infant daughter of Alison (nee Schlicker) & Eric Soderberg, received the saving washing of Holy Baptism in which the Triune God brought her to faith in Christ Jesus as her Savior.

Jemma’s father **Eric Soderberg** confessed his faith in the Savior and his desire to be baptized. Eric was baptized right after his daughter.

May the Holy Spirit ever keep Jemma and Eric in their baptismal grace!

SPECIAL SERVICES:

Sunday, December 27 - **10:00** AM – Worship service

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



BIBLE CLASS will *not* meet Sundays, December 27 and January 3, nor the corresponding Bible Classes via Zoom on Tuesdays, December 29 and January 5.

If you are not gathering in church for worship, but do wish to be part of our on-line Bible Class Tuesday mornings 11:00 – 11:50, contact Pastor Voss. He will be happy to send you each Saturday a Zoom link to the following Tuesday’s Bible Class. The Tuesday class each week covers the same material studied in church Sunday morning.

ON-LINE WORSHIP To provide worship opportunities for our members who are at risk and do not yet feel it’s safe for them to gather in larger groups, and for an unknown number of non-members who access our web site, we continue to record a service each week. We normally record the 8:00 service each Sunday. ***Because of that timing and the work required to edit and process the video and audio files, the recorded service is usually uploaded to our YouTube channel Sunday afternoon, though some weeks it may not be until late Sunday night.***

Our Board of Evangelism & Stewardship urges you to let unchurched family members and friends know where to find our worship services on-line!

COMMUNION OFFERED Those who are at risk and/or are not yet comfortable with gathering in church for worship are encouraged to contact Pastor Voss for receiving Communion privately – either at home or at church. He will be delighted to do so at our earliest mutual convenience.

WE REMIND the re-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 3**.



THE FLOWER CHART FOR 2021 has been posted on the bulletin board at church. 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.

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



2021 THANKOFFERING ENVELOPES If you haven't yet picked up your 2021 thankoffering envelopes, please get them from your mail slot.

Your thankoffering statement, reflecting your thankofferings for 2020, 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 counters, yet keep your offering amount confidential.*



LADIES FELLOWSHIP At this time, we are not having monthly gatherings. Our group has been in touch each month and will decide together when it is best to resume our meetings. If you wish to receive emails about Ladies' Fellowship, please let Laurie Voss know.

We hope you enjoy the new Christmas trees in church. That was part of our mission project for the church this past year. We were able to sell our other 9' tree and put that money into our mission fund.

We pray that soon we will be able to meet again and continue our fellowship and our service projects.

NEW HYMNAL Work over a number of years on a new hymnal for our church body has been completed, and the new hymnal and related resources are going to the printer this winter. Shipment of the hymnals and other resources will take place this fall. The scheduled date for first use of the hymnal, still called *Christian Worship*, is November 28, 2021 – the first Sunday in Advent and the beginning of the next Christian Church Year.

So that the WELS Hymnal Project has a good idea of how many copies of the hymnal to order the printer to make, congregations across the Synod are urged to submit their orders *this winter*. However, payment will not be due until the fall when the hymnals arrive.

Our congregation will be placing our order in early February. Cost of the new hymnal will be **\$24.00**. If you want to order a hymnal for your personal use, ***let Pastor Voss know this month***. He will keep a list and will add your copy (or copies) to the 250 hymnals we are ordering for our use in church. We are pleased to report that memorial gifts and other special gifts to the congregation the last two years will cover the cost to the congregation for pew hymnals and related resources. Your cost will be \$24.00; the congregation will pay for the shipping. There is no need to pay now; we'll contact you about payment in the fall.

The new hymnal will have about 400 of the hymns in our current hymnal, and more than 200 hymns that aren't in the current hymnal will be included in the new *Christian Worship*. More information about the hymnal will be provided in the coming months. Contact Pastor Voss to order your copy.

FOOD BANK At the present time, the local food bank is not accepting food donations. When that changes, we will inform our members via the monthly newsletter or weekly church bulletin.

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 2021 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 7!***

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 – WELS News: Through the end of November Congregation Mission Offerings across WELS are \$447,000 ahead of last year at this time, and nearly \$750,000 ahead of 11/12th of the subscribed amounts. Michigan District totals toward the WELS CMO are \$70,000 under last year's amount to this point in the year, but are almost \$50,000 above prorated subscriptions.

Our Synod's financial office reminds congregations that for mission thankofferings to be included in the 2020 total, the check for mission thankofferings needs to be received by January 8, 2021 and be accompanied by a 2020 form.

Although it seemed strange to have only one midweek Advent service last month, it was a wise decision to go that route. The Board of Elders will evaluate the number of midweek Advent services we will have in 2021, as well as discuss how the other special services from Thanksgiving to New Year's Eve went – and what changes might be considered for 2021.

Last week the WELS Center for Mission and Ministry and the WELS Benefit Plans Office announced that there will be no increase in WELS Pension Plan contribution rates for 2021.

In connection with this announcement, WELS leaders suggest several ways congregations might want to use the money budgeted for a pension contribution increase. I will discuss those suggestions for mission offerings with the appropriate boards at our meetings in early January.

Installation of newly elected and re-elected Church Councilmen will take place in the worship services Sunday, January 3.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Classroom Grades 1-5: 2 students receive speech help in person now with Williamston schools specialist. Remote instruction Nov. 9-13 due to Covid exposure; families adjusted well. First Quarter report cards were distributed.

Classrooms Pre-school and Kindergarten: Will be contacting families regarding a few 3-year-olds to enroll in January, start of second semester. Remote instruction Nov. 9-13 due to Covid exposure; families adjusted well. Kindergarten report cards have been distributed.

Have started 10-minute computer sessions with our K-5 students (7 at a time; 1 time per student per week). Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes used.

Mr. Fedewa continues to work on 7 laptops for our computer room to get them running for use beginning January 4.

PTO - January meeting canceled due to Covid. April meeting – will review at a later date.

Sunday School- Zoom sessions are being held with our SS staff. WELS ChristLight used.

BOARD OF ELDERS – The elders discussed having members read portions of Scripture lessons on Christmas Eve in lieu of the children. Logistically, this would be difficult due to our commitment to maintain social distancing while trying to share microphones during the service. Instead, we had a service with different groups reading lessons, much like we do with the Passion History lessons during our midweek Lent services.

Organist and HymnSoft schedules are being prepared and will be distributed when complete.

Due to some usher teams not being available due to Covid concerns, the Elders are asking a few men to assist with ushering communicants forward for Holy Communion. Currently this has been done by the Elders.

The annual December door offering will be received December 13th and 20th. Michigan Lutheran Seminary will be the door offering recipient.

BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP – Rather than encouraging our members to invite others to our Christmas services (due to concerns about gathering in larger groups), we urge our members to remind loved ones and friends why the Savior was born, what the true meaning of Christmas is, to read the Christmas Gospel from Luke 2 at family gatherings, and to share with loved ones and friends the link to our worship services.

We remind members that Debt Retirement Fund is established and that gifts to it are over / above principal owed. The reminders will be in the weekly bulletin and in the monthly newsletter.

There was a special voters meeting for an election to the Board of Trustees after the late service on Sunday, December 6.

We will renew our subscription to the *WELS Connection* videos for 2021.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES – The 2021 church cleaning schedule has been distributed.

Snow throwers are ready to go.

Lights in the school parking lot have been replaced.

Furnace filters have been replaced at school and at church.



BADGER NEWS from SCHOOL

FROM MRS. LEITZ AND PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN: I pray all of you are doing well this Christmas season. December always goes very quickly with so much preparation for the Big Day! This year is no exception. Our little ones here at Memorial have been busy making patterns with Christmas bows, decorating our Christmas tree in the classroom, playing with pretend gingerbread cookies in our kitchen, and making precious gifts for their parents that will bring them back to this year every time they look at their handprint and picture in the future when getting out their Christmas decorations. How wonderful to know that some things never change no matter what is going on in the world around us.

The one thing that our little ones, their families, all of us at Memorial, and everyone everywhere can always count on is that our Precious Savior was born and that He has saved us from sin, death, and the devil!! Let us fill our hearts and minds with this thought to give us all the joy we can possibly contain during this year's Christmas celebration.

Joy to the World the Lord is come!

FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES 1-5: This past month we have continued studying Jesus' ministry in the land of God's people. We have traveled with Jesus as He calmed storms, healed the sick, fed the multitudes and even raised the dead. How wonderful to be a witness to the power of the living God! We pray that the faith that is growing in these children continues to grow as they hear the Word.

We have been busy with Christmas business, making ornaments and doing lots of singing. We have also enjoyed our Christmas devotions. The halls are filled with garland and red and green paper chains. Our party on December 18 was wonderful! We played our yearly game of Christmas dice and then watched the fun as kids acted out their prizes!

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>
1/03 - #2 V. Domke	#9 D. Fisher	L. Voss	V&J Domke	D&R Hoag
1/10 - #5 S. Houser	#1 T. Marion	R. Olin	L. Tobia	S&G Houser
1/17 - #7 D. Kasischke	#3 J. Janecke	C. Kasischke	G. Withey	B. Janecke
1/24 - #6 C. Rhodea	#8 D. Rector	M. Zoran	J & S Janecke	J&S Janecke
1/31 - #2 V. Domke	#4 J. Zoran	C. Burris	H&S Clark	D&C Kasischke



*May God richly bless
your new year and
your worship of Him
throughout the year!*

