



# **MEMORIAL MESSENGER March 2019**



*I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Romans 12:1*

When we hear “*sacrifice*”, we think of death. Old Testament Israelites were surrounded by sacrifices whenever they entered the outdoor area surrounding their temple in Jerusalem. It was more than the meat roasting on altars. Dead animals’ blood, hides, and entrails were spilled and piled up for disposal by the priests’ assistants.

How striking, then, for Roman believers to pick up Paul’s letter to them and read, “*Offer your bodies as living sacrifices*”! Who had ever heard of such a thing? Isn’t it strange to us even in 2019? “*Living sacrifices*”?!

We will soon enter Lent. Christians use this special season to ponder the greatest act of God’s mercy. We walk the road to the suffering and death of Him who never did or said or thought anything sinful. Jesus didn’t deserve death, much less any suffering. But Jesus endured all of that to give us what we could never earn: forgiveness of our sins, life here as dear children of the Triune God, and eternal glory with Him in heaven. Our Savior gave up His life as the only sacrifice powerful enough to cover our guilt and to guarantee our inheritance as saints.

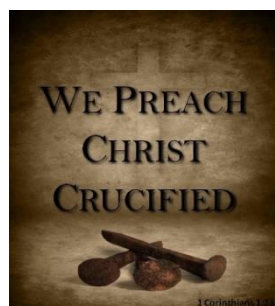
The Baal worshipers we meet in the Old Testament and the Buddha worshipers we read about still today offer sacrifices to their gods to get on the good side of their gods. In every other religion the theme is, “*This do and you will be blessed!*” Christianity alone declares, “*This was done and you will be blessed forever!*”

That’s where the “*living*” sacrifice of our body and life fits in. We don’t sacrifice to earn God’s love; that was already completed at Christ’s cross as we will hear twice a week throughout the Lent season. As we view God’s greatest act of mercy for us, we ask, “How can I ever thank You, Lord God?!” Our “*living*” sacrifice is what He asks us to do freely, daily, cheerfully. Our “*living*” sacrifice is our thanks to Him whose lavish grace provides for every needed blessing every day, and whose saving love for us at the cross gives us life forever.

As we solemnly mark the suffering and death of our Lord in the Passion season, we will be moved by Jesus’ sacrifice – the enormity of it, the selflessness of it, the results of it for every sinner. We will also be moved by it to offer our every act and thought and word every hour of every day to serve and thank Him in everything.

May the Holy Spirit bless our Lent meditations at home and in His house. May He use our pondering Christ’s suffering to build up in us the “*living*” sacrifice of our lives that we live for His glory and for the good of others. May He bless us as we tell others *why* Jesus died, and what it means for us and all sinners. May He bless our spiritual walk with the Savior, and bless our lives lived for Him who gave His life for us!

*Pastor Voss*





**THE WALK ALONG OUR SAVIOR'S** path to His crucifixion begins *Ash Wednesday, March 6. 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. The midweek services have the theme *Symbols of Our Savior's Suffering*.

**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*". These 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 March 6 and to the Holy Week services April 14, 18, 19, and April 21.*

**LENT SUPPERS** precede each midweek Lent service. We are doing this as an opportunity for families to come here for their evening meal, then receive spiritual nourishment from God's Word, and still be able to return home by a decent hour.

The *Ash Wednesday* meal begins at **5:45**. The other 5 suppers begin at **6:00**. A free will offering to help with meal expenses will be received each week.

*Our thanks to all who will volunteer to provide food for these suppers, as well as to those who will set things up for the meals and clean up after them!*

**LENT SUPPER HOSTS?** We are still looking for Lent supper hosts on *March 20, April 3, and April 10*. If several families wish to get together to host a meal for a date, please mention your willingness to Pastor Voss.



**KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP** at our school will be *Friday, March 8 at 9:30*.

Invitations have been given to our church and school families who have children of Kindergarten age for next school year, and others who have expressed an interest in our Kindergarten.

If you are aware of anyone who might be interested, please speak to Mrs. Leitz or Pastor Voss to get information sent to that family. Children must be 5 years old by September 1 to enroll in Kindergarten.

**PRESCHOOL ROUNDUP** will be at our school *Wednesday, March 6 at 9:30*.

If you know of a family interested in Preschool for next year, please tell them about this special day and speak to Mrs. Leitz. Children must be 3 years old by September 1 to enroll.

**INVITATIONS** to invite families to our Kindergarten and Preschool Roundups are available in the church narthex and school office. Please share the flyers with interested families!

**WE HAVE REFRESHMENTS** the first Sunday of each month. On *Sunday, March 3* 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.

*We have volunteer hosts for the first Sundays in March, April, and May. We thank our volunteer hosts!* If you are willing to provide something simple for first-Sunday refreshments in the fall, please speak to Joe Janecke, Dan Kasischke, Jason Leitz, or Pastor Voss.

**LADIES FELLOWSHIP GROUP** At our March meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup>, we are going to make greeting cards that will be sent to our shut-ins and hospitalized members. Please bring your own supplies if you have some at home. There are always enough supplies to work with even if you don't have any to bring. It's a lot of fun to do this for our church family and to see the many wonderful cards that come out of this project. We thank Phyllis Hoppe for being so faithful in sending these cards out.

We have a project in the works so we haven't yet been able to decide how much we have to send to the mission endeavors we chose. We hope to decide that at this meeting.

We remind our gals to keep watch for those towel, potholder and dishcloth sets for a future project we will do too. Come to our meeting and learn about these wonderful and fun projects.

We also remind you to remember your Prayer Partner and send her a card at the end of the month that lets her know who her Prayer Partner was that month.

Carol K is our volunteer this month to clean and keep an eye on the church kitchen for needed items to be purchased.

Ladies, please join us. We have such a special fellowship in this group and would love to share it with more.



**THE VOICE CHOIR** will resume rehearsals on **March 7**. Rehearsals will be held **Thursday evenings at 7:30**. 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.

**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME** begins **Sunday, March 10!** Set your clocks **ahead** one hour **Saturday evening, March 9.**



**GRAYCE** The GRAYCE event for March is hosting the Lent supper on **March 27**.

**HELP?** We have 6 volunteers to operate HymnSoft for our early services, but only 3 to do so for our late services. ***Might you be willing to be on the schedule to operate HymnSoft for our late services?***

Our HymnSoft operators do **not** need

- to set up anything on the computer or organ (everything is set up by others before the service begins), or
- to have any extensive computer or music skills.

Our HymnSoft operators **do**

- follow along with the service and click on the laptop's space bar when the next music selection is needed, and ...
- ... that's all there is to it!

Speak to Laurie or Pastor Voss for a demonstration of how easy it is to run HymnSoft, as well as for answers to your questions or concerns about being a HymnSoft operator. ***Might you be willing to be on the schedule to operate HymnSoft for our late services?***

**USED COUCH?** The couch in the church cry room is wearing out. We are looking for a used couch in good condition **or** two used chairs in good condition to replace the couch currently in the cry room. Please speak to Pastor Voss if you have furniture to donate for use in the cry room.

**WELS CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S RETREAT** will be held **March 22-24** at the Marriott Auburn Hills Hotel in Pontiac. You will find more information, as well as register online, at [www.tcwr.org](http://www.tcwr.org).



**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 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.

## CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS

**PASTOR'S REPORT – WELS news:** WELS congregations have submitted their 2019 WELS Congregation Mission Offering (CMO) commitments. To date, I've heard about the total commitments only from Michigan District congregations. Alarmingly, Michigan District 2019 CMO commitments are \$57,000 less than 2018. The WELS Synodical Council meets late this month, and will have the total 2019 CMO commitments from all WELS congregations. Based on what that number is, the SC will finalize the budget to propose to WELS delegates. That budget may include significant cuts. Join me in keeping this matter before the Lord of the Church, who remains the Lord of the Church.

Pastor Snowden Sims, Michigan District President, reports that there are 115 pastoral vacancies across WELS, about the same number as there were in January 2018. In the past year, several more Michigan District congregations are exploring different ways to conduct their Gospel ministry since they are no longer able to support a full-time pastor.

It's too early for our Synod's leaders to estimate the number of requests that WELS congregations will make for teacher graduates from Martin Luther College this spring. But what seems certain is that once again in May there will be more requests for graduates than there will be teacher graduate candidates to fill those requests.

I have discussed with the Board of Elders the proposed midweek Lent service rotation of area WELS pastors. Pastors Johnson (Our Savior – Perry), Bare and Wilde (Salem – Owosso), Franck (Prince of Peace – Howell), and I will conduct the services. With 5 pastors traveling to 4 churches, each pastor will be off for one Wednesday.

**BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** – We stressed at the PTO meeting that word of mouth is the best advertising we have.

Weather delays forced postponement of the second quarter report cards being issued for a week.

Mrs. Leitz applied for our 2-year preschool license.

Preschool Roundup will be Wednesday, March 6, 2019

Kindergarten Roundup will be Friday, March 8, 2019.

A PTO meeting on January 14 was well attended. We discussed with parents and faculty volunteer opportunities, possibility of adding an upper grades teacher, and a third meeting April 15.

The Board of Christian Education approved the 2019-2020 school calendar.

**BOARD OF ELDERS** – The Elders reviewed the upcoming special services for the Lent and Holy Week season.

Our Thursday evening summer worship services will begin May 23. The Thursday evening worship service will be a preview of the following Sunday morning worship service with the exception of Thursday, May 30. That service will be an Ascension and School year closing service.

Our voice choir will resume rehearsals on March 7.

**BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP** – We thank Dan Kasischke for his work distributing the 2018 thankoffering statements to our members.

Lent suppers: March 6 – PTO; March 13 – Ladies Fellowship; March 20- ??; March 27 – GRAYCE; April 3 - ??; April 10 - ??.

We have a template for monthly financial reporting to members in the bulletin. The goal is to do this each month on the Sunday after the Council meeting.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES** – Thank you to everyone who helped with snow removal from the Monday, January 28<sup>th</sup> snow storm.

We discussed in detail the proposals we have for installation of an automatic door at the top of the church ramp.

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

**FROM MRS. LEITZ AND PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN:** This month our Bible lessons have been teaching us about how Jesus was preparing His disciples and all people for His death and resurrection. He shows all of us that we ALL are sinners needing a Savior. We are thankful and rejoice over our forgiveness of sins.

The threes and fours have been working hard to catch up after missing so many days of school due to the terrible weather we have been having. We are hoping to get back into a routine and slow down instead of rushing through things to play catch up.

The Kinders are slowly working through all of the work we missed with all of the snow days. We will finally be celebrating our 100th day of school. We also look forward to the start of working on our play which is yet to be determined.

May the Lord bless your month with joy and less snow days!

**FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES 1-5:** This month in our study of God's Word we have been learning about Jesus' ministry just before He went to Jerusalem to suffer and die. Jesus spent an incredible amount of time preaching to the masses, teaching about the way to eternal life, and how to live a God-pleasing life. Only Jesus could give the people exactly what each needed at the time they needed it. We try to follow that example, too. We give the warning of the law, the sweet message of the Gospel, and the tools to live a God-pleasing life! What a joy to share the message of our Savior every day!

We are getting ready for the annual CMLAL choir concert on March 8. All the students in grades K-5 are invited to attend. It is a nice evening of song and praise. The mass songs are always beautiful!

Our class is in the middle of a checkers tournament right now. Grades 1-2 are battling, as well as grades 3-5. Besides it being a lot of fun, the kids are learning about how a bracket works and how, with a little luck, someone in the loser's bracket can fight through to challenge the top person from the winner's bracket.

We'll also finally hit our 100th day the end of February. We have a fun day planned, including dressing up as 100 year olds!

**SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR MARCH SERVICES:**

	<i>Ushers</i>		<i>Altar Guild</i>	<i>Greeter(s)</i>	<i>Cleaners</i>
	<b><u>8:00</u></b>	<b><u>10:30</u></b>			
3/03 - #5 S. Houser		#9 D. Fisher	K. Ward	B&L Janecke	J. Muscott
3/06 - #1 T. Marion			K. Ward		
3/10 - #2 V. Domke		#8 D. Rector	C. Burris	L&J Vogt	C&A Rhodea
3/13 - #3 J. Janecke			C. Burris		
3/17 - #6 E. Ruhlig		#4 B. Grinnell	M. Zoran	K&A Remus	N. Russell
3/20 - #2 V. Domke			M. Zoran		
3/24 - #7 D. Kasischke		#3 J. Janecke	C. Kasischke	H&MJ Surtman	J&J Staffeld
3/27 - #9 D. Fisher			C. Kasischke		
3/31 - #5 S. Houser		#1 T. Marion	S. Unruh	D&S Fisher	J&M Stiefel

