



# MEMORIAL MESSENGER

## December 2022

*Just as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: A voice of one calling in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord! Make His paths straight. Every valley will be filled, and every mountain and hill will be made low. The crooked will become straight, and the rough ways smooth. And everyone will see the salvation of God."*

You're likely reading these lines right after Thanksgiving. We want the good feelings to linger. But the theme in church will turn somewhat somber. The Christian Church begins with the First Sunday in Advent.

Advent is considered by some the ugly duckling of the church year. Folks want to rush right from Thanksgiving meals to Christmas traditions. There's nothing wrong with that. But a sad result of that is considering Christmas to *end* on December 25, instead of just *beginning* then.

As children of God we will spend the weeks before Christmas not just following traditions of the season, but also preparing for the arrival of the Savior – the *real* Christmas. That Advent preparation includes pondering individually, as a family, as a congregation *why* the Savior was born in Bethlehem. He came to cover our guilt. The weeks leading up to Christmas are spent in repentance over our sins, and in reflection on God's love that moved Him to shower His grace in Jesus on us undeserving sinners to cover our sins. Advent messages from the Old Testament prophets and from John the Baptist hold those truths before us.

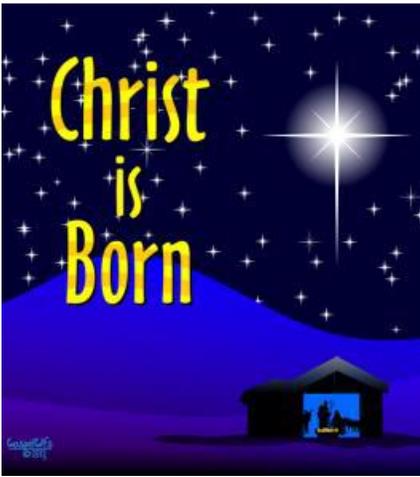
It's not popular during the world's holiday season to focus on our sins and our desperate condition. But it's the proper thing for God's people to do. When we feel more deeply our need for the Savior, we will receive more sweetly the message that He has come as promised to rescue us. When we level the mounds in our heart of self-centered pride, fill in the ruts of shameful sins, straighten the dangerous curves of worldly temptations, we do what God has urged His people for centuries to do in preparing for the Savior. Then God's good news of great joy will fill our hearts, "The Savior has been born for you!"

It's not wrong to enjoy holiday lights, events, music, and gift shopping. Those, too, are delights God has given us. But let none of that become more important to us than God's calls to repent and to trust, to prepare hearts and lives for Him who came once in humility to save us and who will come again in glory to get us.

As December moves along, maybe you'll wish time could slow down so you can enjoy the holiday season. The emphasis of the Christian Advent season is precisely that! At our special midweek service, regular Sunday services, and daily devotions at home, the Holy Spirit puts us in the sandals of Old Testament believers as we ponder what it was like to wait for the Savior to be born. That's how God will bless our Advent preparation, and then our real Christmas celebration!

Pastor Voss





### **SPECIAL SERVICES:**

Wednesday, December 7 - 7:00 PM – Midweek Advent Service

***Only one Midweek Advent service this year***

Saturday, December 24 - **7:00 PM** – Christmas Eve Service

Sunday, December 25 - **10:00 AM** – Christmas Day Service

Saturday, December 31 - **4:00 PM** – New Year's Eve Service  
with Holy Communion

Sunday, January 1 – **10:00 AM** – Worship service

### **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

We will begin the celebration of the birth of the world's Savior with our children's service on Christmas Eve worship. The children of our church and school will proclaim with words and songs the good news of great joy that the Savior has come. Parents, we ask you to work with your child(ren) at home on their speaking and singing parts.

**Saturday, December 17 9:30 – 11:30** will be the one rehearsal for the service. Booklets with the children's songs and speaking parts were distributed November 20-22.

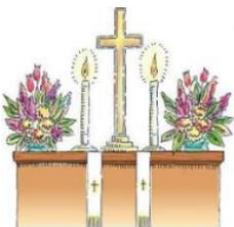
Children should be at church by **6:40** on Christmas Eve. Parents, please bring your children to the fellowship hall so we can get organized before the service.

**CHRISTMAS DAY AND NEW YEAR'S DAY** both fall on Sunday in upcoming special season. There will be ***one service at 10:00 both of those Sunday mornings.***

Sunday School and Bible Class will not meet those mornings.

**NEW YEAR'S EVE** is a Saturday this year. The Board of Elders has decided to do as we did in 2016 when New Year's Eve was also on Saturday. The New Year's Eve worship service will be at **4:00**.

**POINSETTIAS** We are not able to bulk order poinsettias this year. If you would like to donate a plant or two to decorate our chancel area for Christmas, please bring your plant(s) to church by **December 17** if possible. A display will be set up but if more plants come in later, we will add those to the display. If you wish to take your plant home after the Christmas services, please label your plant on the bottom of the pot.



**THE FLOWER CHART FOR 2023** has been 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.

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

**DIVINE CALLS** ***Mrs. Leitz*** has returned her divine call to serve as Preschool teacher at Holy Trinity Lutheran in New Hope, Minnesota. We rejoice that she will continue to use the gifts God has given her to serve in our midst!

Mr. Matthew Stob has returned the divine call to be our upper grades teacher and principal. We will extend another divine call for that position at a **special voters meeting** on **Wednesday, November 30 at 7 PM.**



**CHURCH CLEANERS** It's time for a new schedule for volunteer church cleaners. Please consider if you (and your family) could help do this work for our congregation and in thanks to God. The schedule usually includes a family cleaning no more than twice a year. Please let Todd Loeffler, Pat Crandall or Victor Domke know that you would like to be included on the schedule.

The same holds true for our faithful cleaners from all the past years. If you feel that you can no longer do that work, please let our Board of Trustees know. We thank you for your faithful service.

There is a list of what to clean posted inside the little closet door between the bulletin boards in the upper entry of church. There are also cleaning supplies there, as well as in the closet under the steps in the fellowship hall. Some members choose to bring their own cleaning supplies since they are familiar with them. If you have any questions, the Board of Trustees will be happy to help (or you can ask anyone on the schedule that has done the work in the past).

**WE REMIND** re-elected and newly elected board members and officers that their terms begin January 1 (their first official meetings will be in early January). Those men will be installed during the worship services on **January 8**.

**REFRESHMENTS** are offered the first Sunday of each month, including **Sunday, December 4**. On those Sundays, 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. We are looking for refreshments hosts on **January 8, February 5, March 5, April 2, and May 1**. If you are willing to provide something simple for any of those dates, please volunteer by speaking to Joe Janecke, Jason Leitz, Karl Remus, or Pastor Voss.

**LADIES FELLOWSHIP** will meet soon to decorate church for Advent and Christmas. We will also have a Christmas party with great food and fellowship. Please watch your email for the dates and times as we are still trying to find what best fits for everyone.

★  
For  
God so  
loved the  
world He gave  
His one and only  
Son that whoever  
believes in Him shall not  
perish but have eternal life  
John  
3:16

**WE NEED YOU** to help with HymnSoft when worship service music is recorded. Everything is set up and directions are printed for each Sunday. You would be asked to follow the service and the program and then touch the spacebar when it is time for the music. Please consider this request. Talk to any of our present volunteers and they will let you know it is not difficult. Let Pastor Voss know that you would like to try it and serve for a service occasionally.

**WATCH FOR YOUR 2023** offering envelopes. They will be ready on December 18.

**USHERS** The Board of Elders will distribute the 2023 usher schedule and teams to you in your mail slot at church the second week of December.

**USE OF CHURCH/SCHOOL FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT:** We remind you that members of the congregation may make use of our spacious school grounds, our tables and chairs, and our fellowship hall for picnic and family gatherings.

Please contact Todd Loeffler (517-243-7349) to request a reservation of a facility and/or equipment.

**IF YOU HAVE ACCESS** to the internet and get the *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:** There isn't much change in WELS Congregation Mission Offerings through October. That is excellent news! CMO still remains ahead of 2021 (which was a record year for CMO receipts) and of prorated subscribed amounts for 2022. I have sent WELS our 2023 CMO commitment of \$6,000.00 as decided by the voters October 25.

We are preparing a children's service for our worship on Christmas Eve. As I arrange the parts to be spoken by the children, I am allowing for some flexibility since we don't know yet how many children from our church and school will be participating in the service by speaking and singing the good news of our Savior's birth.

**BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – School promotion:** Facebook site and postings are being updated by Laurie Voss. A school family is looking into publicity and other ideas as we plan for our upper grades teacher.

Mrs. Domke sought board permission to be absent 4 days the end of October to attend her son's graduation from US Marine Corps boot camp. Laurie Voss taught grades 1-5 those days.

Mrs. Leitz is lining up consultations with kindergarten parents. Preschool parents will meet with her in mid-winter, as Mrs. Leitz has done for years.

Mrs. Leitz declined her diving call to Holy Trinity- New Hope, MN.

There has been good response from parents for students singing in church (with our Sunday School) for one service each month.

*Gym Use:* Several school families (including three church families with children in our school) desire Saturday afternoon open gym sessions for church and school families, and for friends of those families. Our board enthusiastically supports the ideas and will work on proposed dates and hours. It has also come to the board's attention that recreation leagues have inquired about the use of our gym for games this winter. Right now, our board would be in favor of hosting games one weekend per month, and getting school family involvement to take tickets, staff concession stand, etc.

*Christmas Eve service:* Pastor asked about a board member serving once again as narrator for the service.

**BOARD OF ELDERS – Voice Choir:** A few voices sang for both Reformation Sunday services. We'll see about interest for Thanksgiving and/or Advent and/or Christmas services.

We are still looking for more HymnSoft volunteers.

*Service Builder* has been ordered. We will be able to now print out the entire worship service, including hymns, as well as printing them in larger print for those who have difficulty reading the print in the hymnal. In addition, we will have some copies available for use by guests who may not be familiar with our hymnal.

A large print *Meditations* subscription is available at a cost of \$22. We have one member who has requested the larger print version. If there are others who would like the larger print *Meditations*, please speak with Pastor. We will order the large print version as necessary when we renew the subscription.

We are reviewing our usher teams and usher schedule for the next year. If there are men who would like to serve as an usher please let an elder or Pastor Voss know.

We are planning to have our annual December door offering on December 18th. A recipient for the offering has not yet been identified.

**BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP –** We discussed the responses to Trunk or Treat. By the time enough volunteers came forward, it was too late to promote it. We will look into having one next year.

After-service Presentation this quarter will be done by the Board of Evangelism and Stewardship,

probably on December 4th.

We are thankful for all our thankoffering counters and all their work. The 2023 counters schedule will be completed by the end of November.

The first Sunday of the month refreshments will continue throughout the school year, and we are seeking more volunteer hosts.

Looking to have a Friendship Sunday on December 18th.

We discussed the plans for the Advent supper on December 7 before our only midweek Advent service. A sign up sheet has been posted to let us know how many will attend.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES** – David Dawley forwarded the upcoming water tests that are due by 12/31/22 for a grand total of \$842.00.

*Monthly discussion regarding facilities usage:*

- We encourage school families to schedule open gym nights at the school. They will need to schedule with Pastor or Todd Loeffler so we can add the dates to the facility usage calendar and make arrangements for opening and closing of the gym.
- Further discussed the potential of basketball tournaments.

*Thank you:*

- Pastor Voss for adjusting the timers at the church and school.
- Pastor Voss starting the church snowblower monthly. It should be ready for usage once it starts snowing.
- Victor Domke for replacing the filters and belts on the heating units at school.
- Pat Crandall for repairs to the septic tank cover at the school.
- Thank you for all the faithful service to our Savior and for His Church!



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

### **FROM MRS. LEITZ AND PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN**

This past month the students have been learning about many of the miracles that Jesus performed while He was ministering to all the people. We have seen many times that God wants us to come to Him with ALL of our troubles in prayer. He wants us to be persistent and to never stop praying to Him. We also have learned that He may not answer with a yes and He may just tell us to wait. However, we should not give up praying to Him and to accept the answer He gives us because He knows what is best for us.

Our three year olds have been working on recognizing their names and writing letters and shapes. Our four year olds have been working on recognizing writing the letters A-H. The Kinders have been working on letters D, S, and L.

As a group we have been learning about the Pilgrims and the Wampanoags. As well as discussing what we are thankful for and thanking God for them.

Next month we will be celebrating Jesus' birthday with some special dress up days, a gift exchange, and fun games. We also have special Advent devotions that will help us focus on Jesus being the reason for this season.

May you all have a blessed Thanksgiving and a wonderful time preparing to celebrate Jesus' birth.

### **FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES 1-5**

This month in our study of God's Word we have continued with Jesus as He travels around Galilee, Samaria and Judea. Everywhere He goes He preaches God's Word, teaches the people what that word means and how to apply it to lives, and does miracles, proving Himself to be the Savior. Our faith is strengthened when

we hear what Jesus has done. What blessed people we are to have a Savior who loves us so!

We have been working hard this first quarter, getting back into the school groove and bettering our skills. The third, fourth and fifth grade students are studying matter. Right now we are looking at chemical changes in everyday life. We have looked at chemical changes in digestion, rockets and nature. This week we will look at chemical changes in baking. In Social Studies we have finished a chapter on the New England Region of the United States and are drawing maps of the states in that region.

The first and second graders are working hard on reading, writing and math and are all making good progress. Daily reading, reading, and reading really pay off!

We have made lots of Thanksgiving things and are eager to move on to Christmas. We look forward to working on our Christmas service songs and recitations and are planning to sing at the Williamston Senior Center soon, as well.



**SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR DECEMBER SERVICES:**

<b><u>8:00</u></b>	<b><u>10:30</u></b>	<b><u>Altar Guild</u></b>	<b><u>Greeter(s)</u></b>	<b><u>Cleaners</u></b>
12/04 - #7 D. Kasischke	#3 Joe Janecke	R. Hoag	L. Tobia	D&C Kasischke
12/07 - #4 Jim Janecke		R. Hoag		
12/11 - #5 S. Houser	#9 D. Fisher	M. Zoran	G. Withey	J&K Leitz
12/18 - #2 V. Domke	#8 D. Rector	S. Rector	J&S Janecke	T&L Loeffler
12/24 - #5 S. Houser		S. Rector		
12/25 - #6 J. Zoran		K. Ward		
12/31 - #10 B. Briggs		K. Ward		



**Let us worship the Lord our Savior!**  
*May you have a blessed Christmas in the joy of our Savior's birth.*