



# MEMORIAL MESSENGER March 2021



*It was because of our rebellion that He was pierced. He was crushed for the guilt our sins deserved. The punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53:5 (EHV)*

“I’d like to trade places with him... with her... with them!” Maybe you’d like to trade places with Bill Gates to get your hands on his money. Maybe you’d like to trade places with Queen Elizabeth to enjoy some of the perks of British royalty. Wouldn’t you like to trade places with retirees who have both the time and the cash to travel around the world without any commitments or concerns? We think others have it better than we do.

The verse at the top of this page is the truth of God that the Son of God traded places with us – and things can’t be any better for us! The Holy One took our sins on Himself, and removed our rebellious guilt forever. The sinless Jesus agreed to become a sin offering for us, and we don’t have to pay a penny for our sins against Him. The Savior had the horror of hell heaped on Him at the cross, and we don’t have to worry about hell.

Those are the truths the Holy Spirit lays before us each Lent season. Lent’s value isn’t in sinners giving things up, but in the Messiah giving His life for sinners. The message of Lent isn’t, “Be better people!”, but, “Christ has paid your price!” The ritual of Lent isn’t a matter of us showing God how much we care by worshiping an extra time each week but is *the* matter of God telling us when we worship how much He loves us. “My perfect Son became your damning sin, and thus you have become My children forever through faith in Him!”

Those are the truths God uses to sustain us in uncertainty. Questions about health issues, pandemic policies, financial risks, personal problems, and more combine to make us uneasy. *When will it end? How will it all turn out?* God gives no definitive answers about any of those. But He does assure us our sins and guilt are removed forever. God does guarantee, in the ink of His blood!, that our peace and life with Him are sure forever!

The message of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world isn’t a message meant for only Wednesday evenings in late winter and early spring. The Savior is at the center of our hearts and lives always. We let Him and His message fill us with confidence and move us to serve Him. Rather than worry, *What is going to happen?*, we tell others, *This is what happened! Jesus took our place and we sinners are rescued eternally!* We already have – in Christ Jesus! – the answers that matter most and that last forever.



Instead of wishing things were different or we could trade places with others, we trust the truth in Jesus. Then we speak to others the good news that Jesus has traded places with us sinners for the world’s salvation. God will bless us as together we do trust that and tell that.

*Pastor Voss*



**THE WALK ALONG OUR SAVIOR'S** path to His crucifixion continues **Wednesdays, March 3, 10, 17, and 24.** (There is no Lent service Wednesday, March 31; Pastor Voss apologizes for the error about that in the February issue of the *Memorial Messenger*.) Lent services begin **at 7:00.**

Join us to praise God for the gift of salvation won by our Savior for us sinners in His life, death, and resurrection. Pastor Voss will conduct the services, which will include sermons about our Savior's betrayal, various trials, and His words on the cross.

**THE WALK** to our Savior's cross and empty tomb reaches its climax the first weekend of April with a number of special worship services.

#### **OUR HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE:**

Palm Sunday, March 28 – 8:00 & 10:30 AM

Maundy Thursday, April 1 – 7:00 PM with Communion

Good Friday, April 2 – 7:00 PM: Tenebrae (darkness) service

Easter Sunday, April 4 – **8:00 & 10:30 AM** (no Bible Class)

*Because there will not be an Easter breakfast this year, the Board of Elders has decided that the early service Easter Sunday will remain at **8:00**, rather than at 7:30 as in previous years.*



**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 our Sunday morning and Lent midweek worship services.

Links to our congregation's YouTube channel is on the home page of our congregation's web site [www.memorialwilliamston.org](http://www.memorialwilliamston.org) . 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 comfortably 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.

**NO BIBLE CLASS MARCH 7 & 9** Because Pastor Voss will be out of town **Sunday, March 7** and a guest pastor will conduct the worship services here that morning, there will be no Bible Class March 7 (and the Bible Class that meets via Zoom will not have a session on March 9).



**LADIES FELLOWSHIP** decided to send mission monies from the last two years to Africa and Mexico as World Missions and to Martin Luther College, WELS Campus Ministry and a mission in LaPorte, IN as Home Missions. We also decided to purchase a Christmas tree, stainless steel carafes, and a dehumidifier for the church kitchen. We consider it a joy to serve in this way in thankfulness for all God has done for us.

**KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP / PRESCHOOL INFORMATION DAYS** Our congregation's Board of Christian Education has decided that this year, in an effort to limit the number of people entering our school building during the school day and thus minimize the risk of spreading the Covid-19 virus, our Kindergarten Roundup and Preschool Information days will be held either remotely as parents meet with Mrs. Leitz via computer or phone, or in person by setting up a time with Mrs. Leitz to meet at school.

If you know of a family interested in Preschool (children must be 3 or 4 years old by September 1) or Kindergarten (children must be 5 years old by September 1) at our school for the 2021-2022 school year, please speak to Mrs. Leitz or Pastor Voss.

Flyers have been placed in the church narthex for you to distribute to families you know who have children in those age groups.



**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME** begins *Sunday, March 14!* Set your clocks *ahead* one hour *Saturday evening, March 13.*

**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 by mid-February**. 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 **by Wednesday, March 3** to order your copy.



## CHURCH COUNCIL REPORTS

**PASTOR'S REPORT** – Our faculty gives thanks to the Lord for His gracious gift of good health for our school's families this winter. Last year in early February we had a string of days when school was closed due to widespread flu. This winter, our students and faculty have been very healthy – even as Covid-19 cases continue to be a widespread issue in many areas of our nation.

**WELS news** Congregation Mission Offering (CMO) total for 2020 across WELS exceeded the amount subscribed for 2020 by nearly \$630,000. We are humbled by God's grace, and grateful for His blessings! May He continue to move the hearts of His people to support the world-wide mission of our church body with regular, generous congregation mission offerings.

**Some** of you have expressed concern about the pastor's item in the voters report that I will conduct all of the six midweek Lent services here, and have asked me to consider trading video services with the pastors who are usually here for Lent. That was discussed at our pastors' meeting January 13. But since each congregation represented uses a different platform for putting services on-line, that won't work very well at all.

**The Board of Elders** is deferring to the Board of Evangelism & Stewardship to bring a recommendation to the Church Council for how to use the \$798 in our 2021 budget for an increase in WELS Pension contributions for our called workers.

Several ideas were discussed by the Board of Evangelism & Stewardship, and I will give the board in March some information and direction about a few new fields in which WELS is doing world mission work. It's

likely that the board will have a recommendation next month as another way our congregation can support the world-wide mission work of our church body.

**For almost one year** plans have been made for a Michigan District Study Conference at which teachers and pastors will have the opportunity to take continuing education classes from professors at Martin Luther College (teachers) and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (pastors) on the campus of Bowling Green State University (BGSU) in Ohio. The conference is scheduled for June 7-10 of this year.

Conference officers have sent an email survey to all pastors and teachers about called workers' personal comfort in attending such classes in person, and about their calling body's comfort having the congregation's called workers attend such classes in person. I have spoken with our Board of Christian Education and Board of Elders about this. BGSU is giving our conference until April to reach a decision, allowing us to cancel without penalty if the decision is not to have the conference in person.

**BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Enrollment 2020-2021 (33)** Preschool: 6; Kindergarten: 7; Grades 1-5; 20

**Classroom Grades 1-5:** Consultations with parents scheduled for after school and evenings; discussed feasibility of standardized testing this spring; Mrs. Domke will work with students about the MLS Virtual Science & Fine Arts Fair.

**Classroom Pre-school and Kindergarten:** 1 new 3-year-old and 1 returning 4-year-old have joined preschool. One family met Karla and toured the school for possible enrollment next year. Consultations with parents are being scheduled for after school and evenings. Preschool and Kindergarten information will be provided to families as they inquire. The Preschool license is up for renewal this spring.

**General School items:** Faculty looking at the possibility of the school plays being held outside (pavilion); laptops are up and running in the computer room, thanks again to Kim Fedewa.

**Dates for VBS** will be discussed later.

**BOARD OF ELDERS** – The Board of Elders recommends the transfer of membership of David & Tami Mead and Kelsie to Shepherd of the Hills Ev. Lutheran Church - Lansing.

Pastor will be gone Sunday March 7, 2021. Retired Pastor Schwab from Lansing will be our guest preacher that Sunday.

Assuming we will not have an Easter Breakfast due to covid restrictions, our early service on Easter Sunday will be at 8:00 am (most Easters it has been at 7:30).

The Elders continue to review and monitor our worship service practices as they relate to the health and safety of our congregation.

The Elders discussed this quarter's after-service presentation. We will likely prepare a message to the congregation to be included in the bulletin and the newsletter.

**BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP** – We encourage members to share service links with others as Lent approaches.

We remind members that Debt Retirement Fund is established and that gifts to it are over/above principle owed.

As reported at the voters meeting January 26, a non-member family with ties to our school has pledged up to \$140,000 in matching funds for our congregation to apply to our DRF at the end of 2021. If our members' contributions reach \$140,000, the balance of our LACE loan (\$280,000) will be paid off. We are grateful for the offer and remind our members that God-pleasing thankofferings are given not to take advantage of an offer, but to thank our Savior for what He's done to save us. We also remind our members that these would be thankofferings above and beyond regular thankofferings.

We decided that no Lent suppers will be held this year because of Covid concerns.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES** – We recommend the purchase of eight carbon monoxide detectors for the school.

We recommend playing Larry Shipman \$250 for snow removal. This will help him with fuel and

equipment costs.

The new copier was delivered and set up at the school on January 28. The copier was paid for at that time. *Applied Imaging* took the old copier.

The school fire alarm system has been going off intermittently since the repair of the roof heating and cooling unit. Victor is going to evaluate the system to determine if there is dust in the duct work or if the batteries need to be replaced.

As a result of the annual savings the updated LED lighting in the school gym provide, the Board of Trustees would like to get an estimate to replace the remaining florescent lighting at the school.

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

**FROM MRS. LEITZ AND PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN:** This past month has been a busy one in our preschool and kindergarten classroom. We have been learning about Jesus' ministry as He prepares to make the ultimate sacrifice for us. We learn that He paved the way for us and that we want to live our lives in thanks and praise to Him because of it.

We had a fun time celebrating our love for Christ and for our friends on Valentine's Day with some games, treats, and passing out Valentines. We have been having a lot of fun in our dramatic play centers this year also. The students had fun in a pet shop, post office, and most recently our Pre-K Diner.

In the coming months we are looking forward to learning about Spring and most importantly celebrating the death and resurrection of our Savior.

May He bless your preparation and celebration as well.

**FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES 1-5:** This month has been a busy one in grades 1-5! We celebrated the love of our Savior and others with a Valentine's party on February 12. Thank the Lord that He loves us so much!

Despite COVID lockdown and a few random snow days we managed to reach 100 school days this month. We celebrated with some games, group activities, and treats. Here's to the next 100!

The 3-5 grades continue to learn about events leading up to the Revolutionary War. Right now we are learning about the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts. It is fun to see history making sense to these kids.

We are hoping to be able to have our plays this spring. Stay tuned!

### **SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR MARCH 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>
3/03 -	#3 J. Janecke		S. Unruh		
3/07 -	#2 V. Domke	#4 J. Zoran	K. Unruh	J&M Zoran	C&A Rhodea
3/10 -	#6 C. Rhodea		K. Unruh		
3/14 -	#5 S. Houser	#3 J. Janecke	T. Wood	M. Bennett	N Russell
3/17 -	#4 J. Zoran		T. Wood		
3/21 -	#6 C. Rhodea	#9 D. Fisher	L. Voss	C&K Collins	J&J Staffeld
3/24 -	#5 S. Houser		L. Voss		
3/28 -	#7 D. Kasischke	#8 D. Rector	K. Ward	B. Janecke	J&M Stiefel

