



MEMORIAL MESSENGER

May 2021



The goal is that we would no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, when people use tricks and invent clever ways to lead us astray. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we would in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head. From Him the whole body, being joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows in accordance with Christ's activity when He measured out each individual part. He causes the growth of the body so that it builds itself up in love. Ephesians 4:14-16 (EHV)

Only one letter was wrong – and right next to the correct letter on the keyboard at that. But it touched off a minor meltdown in the mind of the mother of a confirmand at the congregation I served before coming here. I had meant to type *CONFIRMATION* on the calendar, but it came out *CONFQRIMATION*. “My daughter is not *conforming* to anything next month. She is *confirming* her faith!” And so it went for the better part of an hour.

The mother was right. The ceremony is called *Confirmation*. We have announced that three young people of our congregation will be *confirmed* (not *conformed*) on May 2. They will *confirm* their faith. They will say before the Lord and us – out loud and in public – what the Holy Spirit has led them to believe. Their confession of faith will let us know for sure, will *confirm* in our minds, that they are one in faith with us.

The mother was also wrong. The ceremony could be called *Conformation*. Our three confirmands [*since our newsletter is posted on-line, we no longer include the names of the confirmands in the newsletter*] will also declare their desire to shape all their living to the truths of God's Word. That includes loving obedience to God's commands. They will be promising to live according to all that God desires from His people.

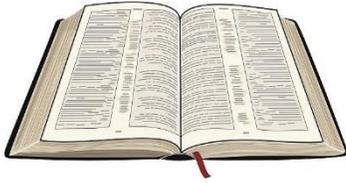
The Confirmation service will include a review of what God teaches in His Word as those doctrines are summarized in Luther's Small Catechism. The questions asked of the confirmands by the pastor are also questions meant for you to answer silently as you review the truths the Holy Spirit has used to change your life and to which you have promised to shape your life with God's help. The promises made by the confirmands prompt us to repeat personally with them our promises to remain true to all God's truths in His Word.

Did you skim over the Bible verses above just to see what the pastor wrote? Don't cheat yourself. Go back and read what *God* says! He tells us that even though we may be firm believers who regularly confess our faith in Christ as our Savior, we still need to “*grow up into Christ*”, to be “*joined and held together*” in Christ.

When any believer thinks his faith is as strong as it needs to be, he invites the devil to attack and smash his faith on the rocks of “*tricks...and clever ways to lead us astray*”. As our confirmands publicly declare their faith in Christ and promise to remain faithful to Him in using His Gospel, we encourage them to remain faithful to God and to His Word until death. We rededicate ourselves to making regular use of His saving good news given to us in His Word and Sacrament.

Conformation? Not officially. But in our lives as God's children we don't go our own way; we “*grow up into Christ, who is the head*”. And isn't that conforming to Christ?! May God bless not only our confirmands, but all of us, as we continue to live our lives for Him who gave His life for us.

Pastor Voss



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



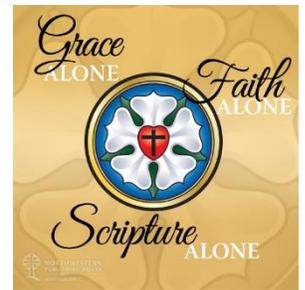
OUR YOUTH CONFIRMATION will be in the late service on **Sunday, May 2.**

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.

500 YEARS LATER: LUTHER AND THE DIET OF WORMS IN APRIL 1521

Our study of the Apostles' Creed will conclude on May 2.

The Bible Class on Sundays, May 9, 16, and 23 will go back 500 years to a key turning point in the Lutheran Reformation. In April 1521 Martin Luther boldly confessed his faith in the truths of God's Word in a meeting (*diet*) at the German city of Worms , despite threats from church leaders to take away his freedom if Luther did not retract what he had written.



We will take a look at the issues that led up to the historic meeting in Worms 500 years ago this spring, the charges against Luther at that meeting and how he addressed those charges from God's Word, and the legacy for believers from the courageous stand Luther took in defense of all of God's truths.

Join us in person Sunday mornings at 9:15 or via Zoom Tuesday mornings at 11:00. If your desire is to participate via Zoom, please contact Pastor Voss to get each week the information you'll need to join us on-line.



THE CELEBRATION OF OUR SAVIOR'S ASCENSION into heaven as the victorious Son of God will be part of the worship services on **Sunday, May 16.** Join us for this important festival of the Christian church year!

OUR SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE begins **Memorial Day weekend.** There will be one Sunday service at **9:00 AM** beginning **May 30.** Most weeks there will be a **Thursday evening service at 7:00** which will be the same as the following Sunday's service. The first Thursday evening service is **May 27.**

This summer schedule will continue through Labor Day weekend.



OUTDOOR SERVICES Weather permitting, our worship service will be outside (mask optional) in the church parking lot on the following Sundays:

May 23 (10:30 service only; 8:00 service indoors), **June 22, July 11, August 22,** and **September 26.** Each of those is scheduled to be a Communion service. We encourage you to bring your own lawn chair for those services.

AT THE VOTERS MEETING APRIL 27 the voters heard reports from our officers and boards, including a report about the audit of our 2020 financial records (all were found to be in excellent order). The voters also decided to send \$800.00 to WELS World Mission, marked for WELS work in Africa; and to hire a commercial electrical contractor to replace all fluorescent bulb fixtures (145) in the school for a total maximum cost of \$23,000.00. Packets with reports prepared for the meeting are in the church narthex and were sent via email April 23.

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.



LADIES FELLOWSHIP We pray that we might be able to start regular meetings again in September. We will talk about that later this summer and decide as a group. In the meantime, remember all your sisters-in-Christ in your prayers.

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 – Confirmation Sunday is set for May 2, and I expect three eighth grade students to present themselves for reception into communicant membership that morning. The following Sunday those young people will receive the divine assurance of daily forgiveness of sins and of eternal salvation given them in Holy Communion for the first time. Please welcome them to our communicant membership and encourage them to remain ever faithful to the Savior.

WELS news In March, WELS President, Rev. Mark Schroeder, sent the following to pastors:

Some have been asking about the potential impact of the proposed federal Equality Act on Christian churches and religious organizations, including our own synod. The Equality Act was first passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in 2019 but was not adopted by the U.S. Senate at that time. It was passed again by the House of Representatives on Feb. 25, 2021, and may well be introduced into the Senate in the near future.

The Equality Act seeks to make sexual orientation and gender identity a protected class, just like one's biological sex, under our nation's current federal non-discrimination laws. As a church we do not express opinions on purely political matters. However, the concern in this case is that aspects of the Equality Act could make it very difficult for the church to carry out its mission and could jeopardize our religious freedom to preach and teach God's Word faithfully.

At this point, there is much we don't know. For one thing, it is not known when or if the Senate will discuss the Equality Act...For another thing, if the Senate should pass the Equality Act, it is not known what specific restrictions would be imposed on Christian churches and institutions or what the result will be when legal firms appeal to the courts in regard to religious freedom concerns.

This concern is due to the fact that in its present form the Equality Act appears not to provide for

religious exemptions. It is possible, therefore, that identifying certain types of behavior as sinful could be considered unlawful hate speech under the provisions of this act. It could result in the loss of our tax-exempt status....There are several other ways in which carrying out our normal daily operations as churches and schools could potentially be affected in regard to things like facilities, health insurance policies, and sports programs.

Our entire focus as a Christian church is to proclaim God's law and gospel in order to convict people of sin and to assure people of forgiveness through the sacrificial death of Christ our Savior. We recognize that the only way for people to have an appropriate view of any situation of life, including matters of sexual identity, is to know and believe in Jesus. As a result, we do not believe that seeking to prevent a law from coming into existence will change anyone's heart. We also do not make it our goal to simply change anyone's external behavior. Further, we do not in any way condone behavior that shows hatred or disrespect to any individual. Such behavior is also sinful.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Enrollment is 33. Applications have been received and accepted to date for one kindergarten student and a 3-year-old for preschool for 2021-2022.

Grade 1-5 Classroom: Consultations with parents scheduled for after school and evenings have taken place.

Grades 1-5 went remote from March 30-April 1 due to the teacher having Covid exposure. All went well.

Preschool and Kindergarten Classrooms: Mrs. Leitz has had 3 preschool and kindergarten information tours with inquiring families.

Mrs. Leitz has submitted necessary items for our preschool license to be renewed. The environmental inspection identified two items.

General School Items: The faculty thanks the board for support to have plays in the gym. For now, only family members of students are permitted to attend.

Inspection took place March 18 for the new playground equipment. PTO submitted \$375.00 as payment.

Pastor Voss contacted all families by email about their intent to enroll their child(ren) for the 2021-2022 school year.

Vacation Bible School might be Monday, July 26-Thursday, July 30.

BOARD OF ELDERS – Pastor will be gone Sunday, July 25, 2021. A guest preacher that Sunday will be contacted.

The Elders reviewed Lenten and Holy Week services.

The Festival of Ascension will be observed Sunday, May 16.

Summer Thursday worship services will begin May 27.

The Elders continue to review and monitor our worship service practices as they relate to the health and safety of our congregation. No changes to our current practices are being made at this time.

The Elders are once again planning to hold worship services outside with masks optional the fourth Sunday of May, June, July, August and September. There will likely be a change in the July date so a guest preacher doesn't have to be informed about the logistics of an outdoor service.

We are planning to have some sort of confirmand recognition outside after one of the outdoor services.

BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP – The board reminds our members that friendship evangelism remains the most personal work any believer can do to thank the Savior for His living and dying and rising to save us.

We will speak with Jason Leitz about his preference for recording summer worship services on Thursday evening or Sunday morning. The board also noted the poor audio quality on the Good Friday recording due to the pastor speaking from under the west wing. We will change that for 2022.

Our board is glad to hear that outdoor services are planned once a month from May to September, and we will use one of those Sundays to recognize our 2021 confirmands after the worship service.

Members may use Debt Retirement Fund envelopes (placed in the tract rack in the church narthex) or their own envelope marked Debt Retirement Fund. If using their own envelope, members are urged to include

their 2021 envelope number and the amount of the thankoffering on the envelope. We will publicize the DRF matching gift offer at least monthly via the bulletin, weekly email update, and newsletter, in addition, the monthly financial reporting from our board will let members know where thankofferings to the DRF stand at the end of the previous month.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES – April 24th was work day at church and school.

DeLau Fire extinguisher service checked and updated all fire extinguishers on March 31.

We thank Steve Houser for painting the west wall of the gym and Victor Domke for replacing a door seal at school.

Pat Crandall cleaned carpets and replaced ceiling tiles at school over spring break. He also will repair the bathroom fixture at church.

We will keep an eye on the west HVAC unit for possible bearing replacement.

The Simplex alarm at school has new batteries. We are still looking into the sensor that keeps failing and triggering the alarm to sound off.



BADGER NEWS from SCHOOL

FROM MRS. LEITZ AND PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN: This past month we have been able to learn all about Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven. It never ceases to amaze me about the sure, never doubting faith that these little ones at school proudly proclaim. How odd and yet wonderful to think that because Covid exists some of the students we have this year have heard all the lifesaving details of Jesus' life here on earth. Yet another example to all of us that God is good ALL the time!

In addition to celebrating Easter, we have studied all the different ways of transportation that exist, and life cycles of frogs and butterflies. We've been working on counting and recognizing numbers 1-10, writing our names, and writing letters. We have also been able to work on our play *The Little Red Hen*. Next month besides the play, we will have our Three and Four Year Old Graduation/Fun in the Sun Day, Kindergarten Graduation, and recognition day for the Kindergarten.

Thank you for your continued support in our ministry at school. May you all have a blessed month!

FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES 1-5: This past month we have been studying the Easter lessons about Jesus. There are so many rich details about Jesus' resurrection for us! In them we are reminded not only that He is our risen Savior, but that He allows us to be His witnesses in our families, neighborhoods, and ultimately the world. Jesus wants us to share what we know - the good news of salvation!

Grades 3-5 are busy in Social Studies learning about the post-Revolutionary War government. We have discovered why the Articles of Confederation were a good idea, but were just not right for the new country, and why a new constitution had to be written. In science we are learning all about animal and plant adaptations, and how God created animals and plants to survive all over the earth.

We are all working hard on our play, *Feelin' Your Oats*. Because of covid it will all look a little different this year, but we are grateful to be able to put a show together. Everyone is doing a great job and it is coming together nicely.

We are also very thankful to be in school - in person! We are very thankful to those who are making that work for all of us!

A big thank you to all our volunteers who help make the school days roll by! You know who you are and we are so thankful to God for your work!

SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR MAY SERVICES:

8:00

5/02 - #2 V. Domke
5/09 - #5 S. Houser
5/16 - #6 C. Rhodea
5/23 - #7 D. Kasischke
5/30 - #4 J. Zoran

10:30

#8 D. Rector
#1 T. Marion
#9 D. Fisher
#3 J. Janecke

Altar Guild

S. Unruh
K. Unruh
T. Wood
K. Leitz
C. Burris

Greeter(s)

L. Voss
F&N Mills
D. Steiner
L&K Ward
P&S Crandall

Cleaners

B&J Briggs
H&S Clark
J. Coulter
P&S Crandall
V&J Domke

