

MEMORIAL MESSENGER

November 2023



Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Hebrews 13:8

It just won't be the same! My wife and I have heard that repeatedly the past few months as the October 31 retirement date approaches. In ways that is true. But in the most important respect, it **will be the same**.

I chose October 31 as a retirement date for two reasons. The practical reason is that I recently turned 67, the age we targeted some time ago for stepping down from full time work. The *spiritual* reason is that is the date we Lutherans mark the Reformation, and no confessional Lutheran pastor would make the end of October all about him. There have already been too many uses of the word *I* in these lines. No more of that!

The pastor of the congregation will change, but the Savior doesn't! *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever*. Would we really want a Savior who goes back and forth about his commitment to His mission, to the souls He entered our world to save, to doing His heavenly Father's will? Of course not! The Savior never changes! *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever*.

The pastor of the congregation will change, but the Savior's Word doesn't! *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever*. Only God knows who the next pastor of the congregation will be. As of this writing, a vacancy pastor hasn't even been called. But whoever the vacancy pastor and then the full time pastor will be, they will proclaim the same Word that has been preached and taught and practiced and upheld for 75 years at Memorial. That isn't a testament to the pastors or the members. That is the faithfulness of Him who is the Word made flesh, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and today and forever*.

The pastor of the congregation will change, but the salvation given to members doesn't! *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever*. Ever since Eve and Adam in Eden received the LORD's promise of the Savior to be born of a woman, God's salvation for sinners has not changed. Nor will it ever! In our world that says *You can't be sure about anything you can't see*, the Savior continues to say, *"It is finished! My work of paying for your sins and suffering your hell and opening to you My heaven is perfectly complete! You are saved!"* There is never a new way for sinners to be declared, "Not guilty!" by God. It's always salvation through faith in Christ Jesus and His sacrifice. *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever*.

That was the blessing God restored to His people at the time of the Reformation. Luther didn't teach anything new. He went back to the same Savior, the same Word, the same salvation God has always given in His truth. That will never change. That will never be taken from us. That will ever be our greatest treasure. As the congregation prepares for some changes, every member gives thanks to God for what doesn't change. *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

Pastor Voss

WELCOME TO OUR CONGREGATION! On October 22 **Steve & Barb Harkness** joined our congregation by adult confirmation. After several months of studying God's Word with us, Steve & Barb confessed that morning that they are convinced the teachings of our congregation and church body are the teachings of Scripture, and that they desire to regularly hear the Word and receive the Lord's Supper with us.

May God make Steve & Barb a rich blessing to our congregation, and make our congregation a rich blessing to them!



NEW WORSHIP SERVICE TIME(S)? With the impending pastoral vacancy, Memorial's worship service time(s) may well change beginning November 5. Please check the web site and Sunday morning bulletin for announcement about the worship time that works for the vacancy pastor.

SUNDAY SCHOOL AND BIBLE CLASS sessions may be held at a different time to accommodate the Sunday morning schedule. Stay tuned!

SPECIAL VOTERS MEETING On October 15 we were informed by Pastor DeGier that he has declined the divine call to serve as pastor here. Congregation President Dane Nickols, in consultation with Circuit Pastor Hacker (who was in contact with District President Sims), has sent **Thursday, November 9 at 7 PM** as the next special voters meeting to extend a divine call to a pastor to serve the congregation.

FIRST SUNDAY REFRESHMENTS TO CONTINUE The Board of Evangelism & Stewardship is committed to scheduling a time for the 1st-Sunday-of-the-month refreshments. Once the time of worship and Sunday School sessions is set, the board will announce a time for the refreshments, hopefully already on November 5.

LADIES FELLOWSHIP will meet **Monday morning, November 6 at 10:00**. We will be finishing up our items for our Mission fundraiser and planning our Christmas party. Join us!

OCTOBER VOTERS MEETING For a number of reasons, this November issue of the *Memorial Messenger* was prepared before the October 24 voters meeting. Results from that meeting will be put in the October 29 bulletin. The reports for that meeting have been sent to members for whom Pastor Voss has email addresses. Printed packets of those reports are on the counter at church by the mail slots.

SPECIAL SERVICE As Pastor Voss retires from the full time pastoral ministry, our congregation will give thanks to God for his service at a worship service **Sunday, October 29 at 3:00**. Pastor & Laurie's sons, Pastor Joel Voss of Lansing and Pastor Aaron Voss of Wind Lake, Wisconsin, will preach for the service and conduct the liturgy.

A meal and program will be held **at 4:30 that afternoon** at our school. So that those planning the meal know how many will attend the meal, please sign up on a sheet soon to be posted in the church narthex. If you know of attendees for the meal from outside our congregation, please let Judy Domke know.



SET YOUR CLOCK BACK AN HOUR! Before you go to bed **Saturday, November 4**, set your clock back on hour. The time changes overnight as standard time resumes (through March 10, 2024).

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 – Steve & Barb Harkness will be received into communicant membership on Sunday, October 22, likely in the early service. We will finish our study of the teachings of God's Word on October 17.

WELS - The Catechism Class will meet with me through October 24. After that, the vacancy pastor will conduct those classes, with a day and time to be determined as it fits his schedule.

At pastor conference last week, Michigan District President Sims announced that a task force has been appointed by WELS leaders to study and recommend ways to address the high vacancy rate for pastors and teachers in our church body.

Emanuel – Lansing has invited 5th Grade girls from our school to join their team for practices and games this fall.

Stephanie Miller and Jill Briggs accepted on September 13 and 17 the Church Council's offer to have them serve as school office secretary/web site administrator (Stephanie) and church office secretary (Jill). They both began working with Laurie Voss in mid-September and are doing good work in their respective roles. Sue Clark is willing to serve as a backup for Stephanie and/or Jill should the need arise.

It has been an underserved gift from God to serve Him with you. Your partnership in the Gospel work has been a rich blessing to me and to God's people! May God bless you richly as you continue to do His vital work here! In Jesus, *Pastor Voss*

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Enrollment 2023-24 school year Total 36

Preschool - 8 (Three year olds – 4, Four year olds 4); Kindergarten – 5; Grades 1-5: - 23 (First Grade – 8; Second grade – 4; Third grade – 4; Fourth grade – 2; Fifth grade - 5

School Promotion – Stephanie Miller has assumed ownership of the school Facebook account.

Grades 1-5 – The 8 in 1st Grade are adjusting to Judy's classroom/work/routine.

Preschool and Kindergarten- Karla lined up the field trip to an apple orchard in Charlotte. Danielle Lewis is serving as Karla's aide 3 days per week through December.

General school items – Oct. 4-6, Michigan District Teachers Conference expenses paid from General Fund. Children are singing on Sunday per month; will do so with Sunday School, same as last year. Our faculty hosted two MLS Taste of Ministry senior students again this fall.

Upcoming events- No school November 3rd for Parent-Teacher conferences.

PTO – Christina Engman has taken over as treasurer. New PTO debit card in place.

Sunday School – All calls have been accepted and things are going well. We thank our Sunday School for their willingness to serve and pray for the Lord's blessings on their work.

After School Care for Preschool – At least 4 children would use after-*Preschool* care regularly 11:30-3:30. Discussed the logistics of this program, insisting that it be budget neutral.

BOARD OF ELDERS – Anticipating going to a single service on Sundays with a vacancy pastor, a revised usher schedule for the remainder of the year is being prepared.

Currently Pastor Voss is listed as the "owner" of Playlist and Service Builder. The Elders intend to transfer ownership of both to the next church secretary.

Pastor Voss attended a pastor conference in Gladwin. Thanks to a generous offer from a member family, Pastor Voss was able to use their cabin saving the congregation the cost of lodging.

The Elders continue to discuss our transition to being served by a vacancy pastor.

BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND STEWARDSHIP – We still urge members to share service links with others. Ownership of our Facebook pages and web site administrator have been moved over to the new church/school secretaries.

We are thankful for all our thanksoffering counter and all their work!

We contacted men for nominations to open positions on the different boards and offices that are coming to an end of their terms. A slate of candidates was posted Oct 15th.

We will have the smaller 1st Sunday of the month refreshments. The first one was held between services on Oct 1st.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES – Still waiting on the installation of the new roof heating and cooling units. Myers Heating & Cooling repaired the safety valve (back flow preventer) for school boiler unit.

Further discussed the Church Parsonage once Pastor and Laurie move to their new home.

Thank You: *Steve Houser* for painting classroom(s) at School; *Pat Crandall* for the removal of the internet dish no longer needed at School; *Kim Fedewa* for reworking the paver walkway to the School flagpole.



BADGER NEWS from SCHOOL

FROM MRS. LEITZ AND PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN

Dear Memorial Family,

In our bible lessons we have been learning about the life of Joseph and how he always trusted in God. We want to be like Joseph and trust in God no matter how bad things seem to be in our lives. God works all things to be good for us.

This past month we have been learning about all things fall. We had a special visitor come from Michigan Lutheran Seminary through the taste of Ministry program. We will be having a dress up day on October 31st where we will play games, paint pumpkins, and have a special treat.

May you all have a blessed Month,

Karla Leitz

FROM MRS. DOMKE AND GRADES 1-5

Over the past month in our study of God's Word we have been busy learning about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We learned how their lives both honored God and sinned against him. We study these spiritual ancestors because then we understand our faith ancestors. We also learn from their mistakes and their good days, too. May God use this study to benefit us and help us honor him!

We certainly enjoyed our time at Country Mill apple and pumpkin farm. The time with friends is always good and the cider and doughnuts are great! Thanks so much to all who helped make that happen.

Next week we are going to dress up for Halloween, but will also spend time learning about Luther and the Reformation. This is important, too, because we need to know how God used many people to help us keep to the pure Gospel.

A big thank you to all of the people that help in our classroom! We appreciate those who teach art, and phy-ed, make copies, give spelling tests, and hang up work in the hallway.

Grades 3-5 are learning all about early American history, from Indigenous People to exploration, colonization, and the beginnings of the United States. Right now we have taken a look at the first people during the time of Christopher Columbus.

SERVING OUR LORD FOR OUR NOVEMBER SERVICES:

<u>8:00</u>	<u>10:30</u>	<u>Altar Guild</u>	<u>Greeter(s)</u>	<u>Cleaners</u>
11/05 - #10 B. Briggs	#4 Jim Janecke	K. Ward	Dennis & Sue Rector	Miller
11/12 - #7 T. Loeffler	#9 D. Fisher	M. Zoran	Keith & Judy Douglas	Muscott
11/19 - #5 S. Houser	#3 Joe Janecke	K. Ward	Todd & Lena Loeffler	Staffeld
11/22 - #6 J. Zoran		K. Ward		
11/26 - #2 V. Domke	#8 D. Rector	R. Hoag	Joe & Marlene Zoran	Tobia
12/02				Need Volunteers