



Divine Savior Lutheran Church  
 102 Northridge Dr. Shawano, WI 54166  
 Phone: (715) 526-6880

# MESSENGER

October 2020

## *Special Dates in October*

### Ladies Aid

6th @ 1:00 p.m.  
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### Worship at the Cross

8th @ 5:30 p.m.  
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### Co-or. Council Mtg.

13th @ 6:30 p.m.  
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### Communications Committee Mtg.

19th @ 1:00 p.m.  
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### JCM Bible Study

22nd @ 5:30 p.m.  
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### Adult Bible Study

Mondays  
@ 5:00 p.m.  
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### Pray & Play

Tues @ 3:00  
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### Choir Practice Weds. @ 6:30 p.m.

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### Food Pantry

Thursdays  
1:00– 3:00 p.m.  
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### Worship times.

Sun. 9:00 & 10:30a.m.

Mon. 6:30 p.m.

## I Need More...FAITH

*"I Need More faith."* I can't imagine any honest Christian who wouldn't say a hearty "Amen" to that statement. Because of the common weakness of our sinful, human nature, the fervent request that a greatly distressed father made to Jesus regarding his son's great need and his own weakness of faith has often struck a chord: "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24)

Notice how that statement is punctuated with only a semicolon regarding his faith, but an exclamation point with regard to his unbelief. Unfortunately, that's the reality of the faith-life of God's people. We wish our own faith was punctuated with an exclamation mark or at least a simple period. But we know a question mark suggesting uncertainty or doubt gets in the way too often.

Just about every Sunday the worshipers in our churches make a confession of faith with the Apostles' or Nicene Creed. The key truths of the Christian faith are very briefly and yet adequately summarized in those statements. There are no exclamation points in either of those great, ancient creeds—just commas and periods that acknowledge the basic scriptural facts. That's an important aspect about saving faith: knowing the truth about the true God and the Savior he has given us.

Since this faith is totally a gift, we need to keep going to the Lord with this request, "Lord, I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" We keep having a problem with unbelief because it's such a natural part of us. Faith is a supernatural thing, and it is kept alive and strong only with the supernatural Word of our supernatural God.

The most important thing to remember about faith is that it derives all its strength from its object, that on which it rests. As a famous preacher once said, "It is not your hold on Christ that saves you; it is Christ. It is not your joy in Christ that saves you; it is Christ. It is not even your faith in Christ that saves you, though that be the instrument. It is Christ's blood and merit." There might indeed be many instances where our trusting faith is shaky, but the Savior and his promises are rock solid. With this subject of faith, it's most important to hear him speak with exclamation points, "I love you! I have saved you! I will never let you go!"

## PARISH NEWS

### Congregational Changes last month:

Added: Baptism:

Released:

Transferred:

Called Home to Jesus:

Current Congregational Stats: communicants: 160 souls: 173

### May I Dwell in the House of the LORD Forever

**<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid? <sup>2</sup> When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall. <sup>3</sup> Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident. <sup>4</sup> One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple. (Psalm 27:1-4)**

What a great promise we receive in this message! In all things, in every situation, at all times, God is our light, our salvation, and our stronghold. Nothing and no one can stand against us and prevail. Yes, our enemies are many, our earthly enemies who stand against God and our faith, as well as our spiritual enemies, Satan and his demons.

Our greatest enemy, the devil, has been working tirelessly to destroy our faith, to cause fear, to cause doubt, and above all, to lose sight of God's love for us. On top of all our regular daily struggles and temptations, he is now working through extra-ordinary events surrounding Coronavirus to work against our hearts. These times have been difficult in their own right, and there has been the added stress on the faith of believers.

At times, we feel strong, trusting entirely that God is more powerful than anything, that he rules over all. And he is; he does. Praise God when we run to him for shelter in this storm! But there are other times when we feel a burden on our faith because we aren't sure what to do, how to react, with everything that is going on. We feel uncertain. We fear what's happening. We've had enough and are ready to move on. There's a wide range of what we are all experiencing, and at each step, we are tempted to despair.

Though our faith is attacked on many fronts, even seemingly from within, God's Word is powerful enough to sustain us in every trial, in every test of our faith. God's Word shows us the light of his grace that has brought about salvation in Christ Jesus. Our foes, earthly and spiritual, cannot overcome us when we find refuge in our Lord, who is our stronghold.

This leads us to the prayer in verse 4: **One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.** Not only do we offer praise and thanks to God for bringing us to know the forgiveness he has won for us in Christ, but the Spirit moves us to seek continued refuge in the Lord, that we **may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of our lives.** With this prayer, we are asking for God's continued protection against our great enemies that we may remain forever in saving faith.

Stand firm; take heart, and in every situation, praise God! Remember the great things he has done and is still doing for you. When you are tempted to despair, that is the best time to delve deeper into God's Word. There, and only there, can you be strengthened. There, you can find refuge from every attack. May God hold you firmly in your faith. Amen

In Christian love,  
Pastor Wolf B. Parsons

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#### A Note for All Members Concerning Choir Performances:

The Senior Choir has resumed practice and will occasionally be performing anthems live for services. We have discussed the best way to do so while making certain adjustments in light of the alterations to service to provide a safe and comfortable atmosphere to worship. Below is the procedure the members of the choir will follow during performances, along with a recommendation for members sitting in the pews:

- The choir will only sing during the first Sunday service (9:00 a.m.)
- This will allow two service times (Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and Monday at 6:30 p.m.) for those who wish to attend when the choir is not performing.
- The choir will stand in the FRONT of the sanctuary, around the altar. The members of the choir will practice social distancing from one another and from the congregation.
  - With this in mind, if you regularly sit in the first available pew (currently row number 2), but would like a greater distance from the front when the choir sings, please keep that in mind when entering the sanctuary.
- While performing the choir selection, choir members will remove their masks. We ask that choir members wear masks at all other times, unless exempted.
- For your convenience and advance planning, here is a list of dates the choir plans to enhance worship with an anthem:
  - October 4<sup>th</sup>; November 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup>; December 13<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>;
- All services will continue to be available online or as a recorded DVD.

## News Bits and Pieces

### A Look at the Capital Improvement Fund

Why does Divine Savior have a Capital Improvement Fund? What is its purpose? How will money contributed to the fund be used?

First, a quick look at the history of the fund. The Capital Improvement Fund is the successor of the old Building Fund, which was used to pay for the building renovation project in the early 2000s. The total cost for the renovation was approximately \$400,000 of which about \$300,000 was borrowed. In order to pay off the building debt, the Building Fund was used to receive members' donations for making loan payments.

Later, after the mortgage was retired, some money remained in the fund and some members continued to contribute to it. It was at that time that the Church Coordinating Council decided to rename the fund "Capital Improvement Fund." Its purpose was to serve as a type of savings account for use when major expenditures would occur such as buying a new organ, replacing the surfacing on the parking lot, repairing or replacing the roofs on our buildings, or engaging in some other projects that would improve the church property.

The term "capital improvement" generally means making an expenditure to add value to the physical property or possessions of the organization. It is not generally used for routine maintenance of property; however, it might be used to replace a heating or air conditioning system with one that is more efficient and more economical to operate. A capital improvement is normally considered to be something with a relatively long life expectancy like a building addition or renovation.

By having a Capital Improvement Fund, Divine Savior is able to set aside money in advance to help pay for "large ticket" items without having to borrow all the money needed or conduct a major fund raising program.

As of August 31, the Capital Improvement Fund had a balance of \$19,086.

### Eight-Month Financial Picture

Two thirds of the way through 2020 contributions of \$123,680 to fund the Unified Budget have exceeded expenses by \$10,464. While the least amount of contributions for the entire year was recorded in July, August showed a month-to-month increase of almost \$8,000 over the previous month. August Unified receipts totaled \$18,307, which was second only to \$19,300 in March.

Compared to year-to-date expenditures, income appears to be quite adequate; however, compared to what the 2020 Budget would have allowed for two thirds of the year (\$130,040) income would have fallen short of allowed expenditures by \$6,360.

A comparison of the first eight months of 2019 and 2020 shows an increase in Unified contributions in 2020 of \$2,336 with an increase in expenses of only \$471. Despite the very unusual year that 2020 has become, the eight month financial snapshots of the two years are surprisingly similar.

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Difference</u>
2019	121,344	112,745	8,600
2020	123,680	113,216	10,464

Two unusual events that occurred in July and August affecting the financial picture were the cancellation of one set of worship services in July and a premium "holiday" for one month for Pastor's health insurance. The cancellation of services for one week in July reduced the month's contributions and possibly helped to increase the August Unified donations. August also had five Sundays compared with only three in July, when one weekend set of three services had to be cancelled to exercise caution over possible exposure to a person who tested positive for the corona virus.

(DRF)

## Selections from WELS TOGETHER

### WELS Prison Ministry Reaches Out during Pandemic

(Sept. 1st TOGETHER)

The pandemic that hit the world this year has put many ministries in the position of making quick decisions about how to reach people in a socially distanced world. WELS Prison Ministry was no exception when, suddenly, jail ministry visits were indefinitely suspended. No longer could Prison Ministry volunteers go into jails and prisons to share God's grace with people who desperately needed to hear the good news, especially in a time of fear and uncertainty.

The Prison Ministry Committee got together to develop a plan to try to reach as many inmates as they could with God's Word. In mid-July, the Prison Ministry Committee authorized a significant outreach effort to offer its Bible correspondence self-study booklets to more than 2,000 correctional facilities due to the interruption in personal visits.

The mailing list consisted of facilities with which Prison Ministry has had interaction in the past. Over 75 percent of the facilities that have received mailings in the past have not received booklets in over two years. The breakdown is as follows:

County Jail/Detention Center—955  
 State Correctional Facility—1044  
 Federal Correctional Facility—111  
 Immigration and Customs Enforcement Facility—22  
 Youth/Juvenile Offender Facility—46

Prison Ministry mailed a sample booklet and a brochure to the chaplains, activity directors, or program coordinators describing the booklets and inviting them to order free copies for the inmates at their institution. They sent the booklet "A Broken-hearted Father" based on Jesus' story of the prodigal son as a great example of God's overwhelming love for his lost children.

The mailing is generating many new book orders. In the first four weeks the response has been over 36,000 booklets ordered by chaplains or others. In a typical year Prison Ministry has about 30,000 booklets printed. On average, the booklets cost about \$1 each to print, plus shipping. Prison Ministry sends

the Bible study booklets to inmates and facilities at no charge.

The Bible study booklets are the backbone of Prison Ministry's ministry-by-mail program, which is facilitated by volunteers out of an office in New Ulm, Minn., as well as around the country. Each booklet has a Bible lesson and a test that inmates fill out and return to Prison Ministry. Then, a volunteer will correct the test, provide a message of encouragement, and send the next Bible study to the participant.

Reflecting on Romans 8:28 and how COVID-19 prompted unplanned initiatives for the ministry, Prison Ministry Administrator Mr. Dave Hochmuth, says, "People quote Romans 8:28 so much, 'God is working for good,' but God doesn't promise that 'the good' is going to be our good. The good he's doing might be for somebody else—and you might not see it. Our patient, even cheerful, endurance of painful trials may give us an opportunity to give a reason for the hope that we have. God can use that testimony to lead others to place their trust in Jesus."

Learn more about Prison Ministry's outreach work and how to support it at [wels.net/prison-ministry](http://wels.net/prison-ministry).

### A Message from the WELS President The Importance of Your Congregation Mission Offering (CMO)

(Sept. 15th TOGETHER)

Fall is the time of year when most congregations begin to discuss and plan their budgets for the coming year. Ministry plans are developed, and then those plans are prayerfully adopted in keeping with the anticipated financial resources.

The ministry of a congregation is not limited to what is done locally. Some congregations are members of federations that support Lutheran high schools; others cooperate with neighboring congregations to carry out important joint ministries nearby. And, since our congregations are members of a synod, they also recognize that they join with all the other congregations of the synod to carry out ministry together that individual congregations could not easily do alone.

Fall is also the time when synod administrators are developing the synod's ministry financial plan (budget) for the next two years. Like the budget in

## Selections from WELS TOGETHER

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### A Message from the WELS President (continued)

your congregation, the ministry financial plan is much more than a list of line items with dollar amounts attached. More accurately, it is a description of the synod's plan for ministry, along with the resources needed to carry it out. The plan is based on careful estimates of the financial resources that, God willing, will be available from all sources. Those sources include gifts from individuals, grants from foundations, bequests, and income from investments. But the most important source of financial support comes from congregations like yours through what we call Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO). Congregations throughout the synod inform synod planners what they intend to send as their gift to support our work together.

Your congregation's mission offering is used to operate our system of ministerial education, where young people are trained to serve as pastors, teachers, and staff ministers in congregations like yours. Your gifts to the synod train national pastors in our rapidly growing sister synods in Malawi, Zambia, Ethiopia, and Kenya. Your support enables us to share the gospel with hundreds of thousands of people in Latin America through modern communication tools and helps to operate orphanages in India where hundreds of children learn to know their Savior. Your gifts of love and faith provide needed assistance to sister church bodies like the Ukrainian Lutheran Church as they face huge challenges. Your offerings enable WELS to establish and support home missions in places like Houston, Texas, and to enable campus ministries to serve young people at many different universities. Your generous gifts support the work of WELS Congregational Services, which provides resources and advice to congregations as they carry out their local ministries. And, yes, you provide the financial means for the less exciting but necessary administration and structure that support all the ministry we do. These are only a few of the many ways in which your mission offerings are used.

As your congregation decides what its Congregation Mission Offering will be, don't just think of the dollars. Think of the faces of the people around the world whose lives and eternities will be changed by the power of the saving gospel. Be a voice that advocates for generous support of this work. Talk to your congregational leaders and with

your fellow members. And pray that God will continue to bless the work we do together in his name.

Serving with you in Christ,  
WELS President Mark Schroeder

### **Ministerial Schools Open for Fall**

(Sept. 1st TOGETHER)

Many schools, colleges, and universities across the country have not yet reopened for in-person classes due to continuing concerns about COVID-19; in many cases, no date has been set when that will happen.

We are thankful that each of our four ministerial education schools began the fall semester with in-person instruction. Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.; Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.; Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.; and Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.; welcomed students back to campus last week and held their opening services. At each campus, measures have been taken to ensure that the campus environment will be as safe as possible for both students and faculty. Plans are also in place as to how to respond if anyone on campus contracts the virus.

We are also thankful that, despite the uncertainties caused by the virus, enrollments at three of the schools have held steady, with only some small declines. At the beginning of the semester, Martin Luther College enrollment is 713 (731 last year); Luther Preparatory's enrollment is 401 (402 last year); Michigan Lutheran Seminary's enrollment is 184 (196 last year). Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's enrollment has increased by 12 students over last year to 134.

At the opening services on each campus, new faculty members were installed in their new positions. You can find the names of the new faculty members on the website of each school.

Just as the gospel ministry and mission that God has given us has not stopped during these difficult times, so the training of future pastors and teachers continues by God's grace. We pray that God would bless all four schools with healthy and productive school years.

Serving with you in Christ,  
WELS President Mark Schroeder

**ORDER A PIE****From the Ladies Aid**

Due to the Virus and not being able to gather for a Pie and Ice Cream Social, the Ladies Aid decided to bake pies to order for a suggested donation of \$8—\$10 per pie.

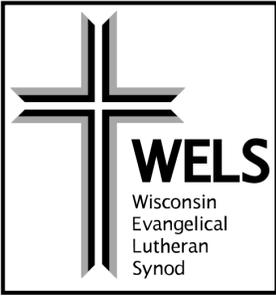
We have apple, banana cream, blueberry, cherry, chocolate cream, coconut cream, lemon meringue, pecan, pumpkin, raspberry, sour cream raisin, and strawberry.

There are limited quantities, so first call, first choice. When we have your pie baked and ready to go we will call you and make arrangements to deliver your pie to church or wherever you like.

Place your order with Eilene Buettner—Phone # 715-526-3400 after 10:30 a.m. We will need your name and phone number.

Thank you for your support.

Divine Savior Ladies Aid



2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 Food Pantry 1:00-3:00 p.m.	2	3
4 Worship 9:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.	5 Adult Bible Class 5:00 p.m.  Worship 6:30 p.m.	6 Ladies Aid 1:00 p.m.  Pray & Play 3:00 p.m.	7 Communica- tion Committee 1:00  Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.	8 Food Pantry 1:00-3:00 p.m.  Worship at the Cross 5:30 p.m.	9	10
11 Worship w/ communion 9:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.	12 Adult Bible Class 5:00 p.m.  Worship w/communion 6:30 p.m.	13 Pray & Play 3:00 p.m.  Co-ord. Council Meeting 6:30 p.m.	14 Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.	15 Food Pantry 1:00-3:00 p.m.	16	17
18 Worship 9:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.	19 Communica- tions Mtg. 1:00 p.m. Adult Bible Class 5:00 p.m. Worship 6:30 p.m.	20 Pray & Play 3:00 p.m.	21 Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.	22 Food Pantry 1:00-3:00 p.m.  JCM 5:30 p.m.	23	24
25 Worship w/communion 9:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.	26 Adult Bible Class 5:00 p.m.  Worship w/communion 6:30 p.m.	27 Pray & Play 3:00 p.m.	28 Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.	29 Food Pantry 1:00-3:00 p.m.	30	31