



The Messenger

The Messenger

December 2021

MAGNIFY THE LORD

And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior” (Luke 1:46-47).

Magnificat is the Latin for the first word of Mary’s song of praise, so we call her song the *Magnificat*. In the King James Version of the Bible Mary says to Elizabeth, “My soul doth magnify the Lord.”

A magnifying glass makes an object appear larger. A child may be fascinated by it. An elderly Christian may need one to read his Bible or to look up a phone number. A microscope may magnify tiny invisible organisms and make them visible to us.

So when we magnify the Lord, he does not become bigger or greater as a result of our efforts. He just looks greater to us because we see him better. We grow in our appreciation of his wondrous works and ways.

Mary’s song teaches us to magnify the Lord in this way. This Christmas we want to follow her example.

Now, Mary’s situation was unique. God had singled her out for an honor that no one else could ever receive. She was the virgin mother of the Son of God. But we realize that this honor shown to Mary is a blessing for us all. So we like to sing this song along with Mary and join her in that rejoicing.

Mary was happy that she had been chosen to become the mother of the promised Savior, but her greatest joy was in being able to call him *my Savior*. Although she was a godly woman, she knew herself as a person with a sinful heart, whose best efforts were not good enough to meet the demands of God’s law. She knew that her only hope of salvation rested upon the promise that went way back to the Garden of Eden, where God told Adam and Eve that the offspring of a woman would crush the head of the serpent, Satan, and free us from his clutches.

The time had come for God to keep his promise and to send the Savior, and that was Mary’s greatest

reason for rejoicing. That joy is ours too. We know that we are people with sinful hearts, whose best efforts are not good enough to meet the demands of God’s law. Our only hope of salvation is the birth of Jesus, the Son of God and Mary’s Son.

That’s what makes Christmas this most wonderful time of the year. Jesus entered our world to bring the joy of forgiveness and salvation that he would win with his life, death and resurrection. So, let us magnify the Lord this Christmas season.



The Messenger is published monthly for the congregation and friends of Faith Ev. Lutheran Church. Its purpose is to provide information regarding all areas of congregational news and to offer enlightening articles.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, contact—in person or by email—or Laura Mueller: mueller-laura@hotmail.com or Pastor Neumann: pastorjoelneumann@gmail.com

Newsletter deadline: The submission deadline is the next-to-the-last Sunday of each month.

HAPPENING THIS MONTH

Congregational Review of Faith's Vision Timeline

December 20, from 6-7 pm BRF

Did you know that Faith has a Vision Timeline? This document is meant to help set the direction and focus of our congregation, under God's grace and blessings, for the year(s) to come. Each year our congregation takes time to review it to see how we are doing and what needs to be emphasized and added. We will plan to have this review on Monday, December 20, from 6-7 pm at our Black River Falls campus. All members are welcome.

CHRISTMAS DECORATING

Both our Black River Falls and Cataract locations will get decorated for Christmas this month. Everyone is invited to help. Here are the details:

Black River Falls—Saturday, December 4 @ 9 a.m.

Cataract—After worship on November 28

Faith Teachers Meeting

The Faith teachers will meet Sunday, December 12, from 12:30-2:00 p.m. in the BRF church building

CARE PACKAGES

We will be collecting items for our college/military/away from home members once again this November, and into the first week in December. Each of our locations will have a box for the items and a list of "suggested" items. We will be filling 8 boxes this year. What a wonderful opportunity for us to encourage one another and live a life of love!

HERITAGE TREE

This December, you will notice a Christmas tree adorned with decorations standing in the gathering area in Black River Falls. This is a Heritage Tree. The idea behind the Heritage Tree is that each family in the congregation is invited and encouraged to provide an ornament for the tree. This ornament should have the names of the family members displayed on it and will be stored at church so that it can be set up year after year. What a wonderful way for us to express our unity and see how God blesses our congregation through the many changes that happen over the year. Please consider participating by simply placing your ornament on the tree.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS EVE PRACTICE

Starting Sunday, November 28 and going through Sunday, December 19, the children in Black River Falls will be practicing for the Christmas Eve service during the regular Sunday School/Bible Class hour. There will be no Bible Study during this time.

Sunday, December 5 – 9:15-10:15 am

Sunday, December 12 – 9:15-10:15 am

Sunday, December 19 – 9:15-10:15 am

Thursday, December 23 – 5:30-6:30 pm



HAPPENING THIS MONTH

CHRISTMAS PARTY WITH FISH!

The FiSH group (Faith's Social Harbor) invites adults to a Christmas party! We'll meet Saturday, December 11, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the BRF building location. Bring an appetizer/snack to share if you can. Bring a white elephant gift to exchange if you would like. Experience is NEVER required with any of our activities – come, learn and have fun! This is a great opportunity for you to invite a friend, relative, or coworker. It would also be a great opportunity for a "date night." FiSH is our social group geared toward recreational activities for adults, single or married, younger or older.

LADIES AID

The Ladies Aid will have their annual Christmas potluck and gift exchange on Saturday, December 11 at 12:30 p.m. at our Cataract Campus. If you are able to participate, bring a dish to pass, a few dozen cookies, and a gift to exchange. We try to keep the gift between \$5-\$7.

Church Cleaning 2022

As the Property Committee Chairman, I would like to thank all the members who helped with the cleaning of our church in BRF this last year. Your service is appreciated as we continue to have a clean and orderly church. I will soon be working on the schedule for 2022. If the availability of any of you has changed please let me know. If the months I had you schedule for last year don't work for you this coming year, I can make changes to accommodate you. Also, if you were not on a crew this year, and would like to be included on the 2022 schedule please contact me.

Thank you for your service,

Scott Templeton
612-419-8992
dscotttempleton@gmail.com



Anniversaries!	
Jack + Sherry Bue	12/3
Joe + Alisha Southwood	12/19

Birthdays!	
Garrett Spaude	12/1
Annette Markhardt	12/4
Jerry Eggen	12/11
Aron Bue	12/11
Toni Anderson	12/14
Noelle Kiesow	12/20
Lisa Treptow	12/21
Sharalyn Hartley	12/22
Elaine Fatla	12/24
Deziree Mueller	12/27
Nicole Kiesow	12/28
Justin Goetzka	12/29
Avah Reetz	12/30
Jeremiah Spaude	12/31
Richard Sitarz	12:31



On Sunday, December 5, we are going to celebrate as a church family and praise God in a very special way as we gather together on what we are calling “God’s People Gather” Sunday.

This Sunday gives us the chance to celebrate the blessings that are ours when we get-together for in-person worship. Blessings like encouragement, community, the Lord’s Supper, and service.

We understand if hesitancy to gather together has grown over the past few weeks. This may lead some of you to choose to worship online. The opportunity to worship online is also a blessing from God. However, God's word encourages us to see online worship as the exception, not the norm. God's Word encourages us to see online worship as something temporary, not permanent. The reason for this is because online worship is not able to provide all the blessings of worship and service that we receive when we gather together.

If you feel comfortable, we look forward to worshipping with you on the 5th.

FROM THE LIBRARY



In four weeks, I will be returning "A Year of Prayer" to the devotion section of our church library located in the Fellowship Hall at our BRF location. A second copy will be in Cataract. I used this book almost every morning and evening for a year because it contains a morning prayer and an evening prayer for each day of the year. For me it was a great way to begin and end every day.

To checkout, write the date, your name, and the name of the book/DVD/CD in the notebook on the shelf.
To return, put the book/DVD/CD into the basket on the shelf and cross out your entry in the notebook.

CAMM 60TH ANNIVERSARY HIGHLIGHTS:

“Gratitude is Our Attitude No Matter the Latitude.”

Praise God from Whom ALL Blessings Flow...

October 9, 2021 was a beautiful, sunny, day in Milwaukee, Wisconsin where many nurse alumni, supporters, guests and committee members gathered, at Grace Lutheran Church, to celebrate, reminisce, and revisit their days spent on the field serving the many people of Zambia and Malawi.

From Lilongwe, Malawi to Alaska and Nebraska...

People came from far and near including Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Texas, & Wisconsin. Current CAMM Field Administrator, Gary Evans, and current Malawi Nurse-in-Charge, Beth Evans, were in attendance and provided an overview of 60 years of medical missions.

What has happened over the course of 60 years?

Current CAMM Field Administrator, Gary Evans, and current Malawi Nurse-in-Charge, Beth Evans, provided a detailed history of where CAMM started and where things are today.

What does the future hold?

Current State Side Committee Chair, Shelly Sievert, provided updates on the nationalization of the Malawi operations and introduced the national administrator and nurse in charge.

Central Africa Medical Mission 60th anniversary service at Grace Lutheran

Pastor Kevin Shultz, CAMM Pastoral Advisor and previous missionary, and Pastor Paul Nitz, former missionary in Malawi led the evening service. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vi87uZiVD8o> (click link to watch)

Well done, good and faithful servant...

We bid a fond farewell to Linda Liesner who faithfully and diligently served on the Central Africa Medical Mission State Side Committee for 14 years (2007-2021). Linda served as chair for 7 of those years and wrapped up her service to CAMM as the outreach coordinator for the last 3 years.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father.
Mathew 5:16

Indeed you did, Linda. Thank you!

CAMM 60th anniversary prayer:

We joined together on October 9, 2021 in praise and thanks to You, our loving God, and rejoiced in all the blessings You have bestowed on the Central Africa Medical Mission over the past 60 years. We said “*Thank You*” in the United States, “*Zikomo*” in Malawi and “*Twalumba*” in Zambia for 60 years of Your grace which allowed many to serve the people of Central Africa with Christ centered healthcare and share His word. Christ’s love compels us. Continue to guide CAMM according to your good and gracious will for many more years to come!

Beth Evans, Malawi Nurse-in-Charge (left), Rebekah Carey, alumni nurse (right).



An Advent Social at Faith Lutheran Church

December 5, 2021—2:00 p.m.

Advent Social is an opportunity for women of all ages to set aside the hustle and bustle of holiday preparation and focus their minds and hearts on the birth of Christ. It is a beautiful time filled with Scripture readings, narration, prayer, songs of praise and Christian fellowship.

Advent is a time for us to prepare our hearts for Jesus' coming. We want our focus to be on Jesus throughout this season, but all too often it gets caught up with the preparations in our homes, churches or communities.

This is our 9th year of Advent Social at Faith Lutheran Church. You are invited! Feel free to invite a friend or relative, acquaintance or neighbor. Set aside the date and time, Sunday, December 5, 2:00 p.m. at our Black River Falls location.

The angels were sent by God to speak the good news of a tiny baby – born to do what none of us could – pay for all the sins of all people. Jesus is our Christ, our Emmanuel, our Prince of Peace, our GOOD NEWS in the flesh, and the fulfillment of all promises in Scripture. Let us always thank God that the angels were sent to announce the Savior's coming. Always thank him for sending his one and only Son to be our Savior. Always be thankful that Jesus was willing to take on human flesh and be our substitute! Now we wait. We wait for the return of the angels that will signal judgment day, the beginning of our life in eternal peace, joy and happiness! That is also GOOD NEWS!

After the devotion, those interested may participate in a homemade cookie / candy etc. exchange. If you choose to participate in the exchange please bring 5 dozen homemade treats to share, the recipe, and a container to take your treats home in! We will make copies of all the recipes at church. Please note that if you do not wish to be part of the treat exchange, you are still welcome to come and enjoy the devotion, fellowship and cookie samples!

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP TIMES

Children's Christmas Eve Service

December 24, 4 p.m.—in Black River Falls

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

December 24, 7 p.m.—in Cataract

Christmas Day Worship

December 25, 8 a.m.—in Black River Falls

December 25, 9:45 a.m.—in Cataract

New Year's Eve Worship

December 31, 6:30 p.m.—in Black River Falls

HELP WANTED

We are looking for some people to help run the livestream portion of our worship service. This would involve either helping run the PowerPoint during the service or running the audio video equipment during the service. If you would be interested in helping out in both areas, that would be great too.

What all would be asked of you?

PowerPoint – You would be asked to advance the slides on the computer that correspond with the bulletin as the worship service goes along. This would simply require the repeated pressing of a keyboard key or clicker. Training would be made available so that you would feel comfortable.

Audio/Video – This would require learning how to start, set-up, and run the projector, computer, camera, and audio equipment that is set up in back of church. However, before you dismiss this as being too difficult, there is a handbook that helps walk you through this step by step. You would not be “thrown to the wolves” right away, but would have opportunity to learn how it works before ever running it for a church service. During the first few times of running it for a worship service, others would be available to help you if you have any questions. One of the biggest things with this is the willingness and ability to arrive to worship 30 minutes early to make sure everything is set up and ready to go.

If you would be willing to help in one or both of these areas, please speak with Pastor Neumann.



EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

N6598 County Highway A
Black River Falls, WI 54615
(mailing address)

N6774 Acorn Ave.
Sparta, WI 54656

Phone: 715-284-0772
Pastor: Joel Neumann

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church is a part of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod or WELS. The WELS is a church body with congregations in all fifty states and missionaries in 25 countries.

We are a Christ Preaching Church! We believe, teach and confess that Jesus is God's own Son, who came into the world to be the Savior of all people so that through his sufferings, death and resurrection, we might have forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

We Are A Bible Teaching Church! We believe and teach that the Bible is the true and divinely inspired Word of God, the sole authority for Christian faith and life.

We're on the Web!
www.faithwels.com