

The Messenger

Rooted in Christ.  Reaching Out With The Word.

Faith Ev. Lutheran Church - Black River Falls & Cataract, WI

Pastor Joel Neumann - (715) 284-0772

January 2016



Jesus is the One and Only Savior

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

A common resolution at New Year's is to lose weight and improve fitness. There are various ways people seek to reach that goal. Some strive to improve their diet, either eating smaller portions or switching to healthier foods. Others focus more on exercise, building up their strength or following a cardio workout plan. Picking any or all of those options can help a person reach a weight loss and fitness goal.

There is a certain goal, however, that has only one way to reach it. If the goal that you want to obtain is eternal life in heaven, the one and only way to reach that goal is through Jesus. Jesus is the world's one and only Savior.

Many people disagree with that. The common thought is that there are many ways to reach the goal of heaven and eternal life. Many consider Jesus to be one option of many.

But Jesus didn't come to be *a* path; he came to be *the* path. Jesus didn't come to show us how

we could obtain heaven by ourselves; he came to show us his glory and to be our Savior.

Consider how many New Year's resolutions will be abandoned. We know how weak we can be. But Jesus is true God who came from heaven. Yes, he became human like us, yet he was without our weaknesses and he was without our sin. His great love caused him to leave heaven and dwell among us. He came to take away our sins by giving his own life as the payment for our sins. Calling us to be his followers by trusting him as our Savior, he freely gives us the gift of heaven and eternal life.

Following Jesus isn't like so many other resolutions that get discarded after a few months. To follow him is a goal that lasts the entire year. Having seen the true beauty and glory of the world's one and only Savior, we can't help but want to learn more and grow in the knowledge of Jesus, the world's one and only Savior.

Faith Council Meeting Minute Summary

December 21, 2015. Black River Falls, WI

Present: Pastor Joel Neumann, Scott Templeton, Cody Heller, Jake Dahlke, Brad Rahmlow, Todd Volk, Mark Mueller and Dave Kellen

Call to Order. The meeting opened at 6:30 p.m. with Pastor Neumann leading a devotion on Psalm 47.

Pastor's Report:

1. November - The average Sunday service attendance was 99. The average Bible class attendance was 26

2. Ministry - Pastor Neumann will take part in the Lenten rotation with other area pastors. There was discussion about the possibility of having an Ascension service. MSC to hold an Ascension service in Black River Falls this year (2016) with it rotating to Cataract next year (2017). There will be Communion for the New Year's Eve service. The Deer Hunter's worship service was a great success and the Council recommended continuing this service in the future.

3. Miscellaneous - Pastor posed the question if it would be beneficial to set up a fund for people who come to the church in need of financial or general welfare assistance. The Council suggested directing people to the numerous pantries and other resources in the area set up to help people in need. The Council also suggested never giving cash and trusting Pastor to use his best judgement when dealing with each individual case. MSC to appropriate \$200 in the budget allocated for charity use.

Old Business:

Council Candidates - MSC to recommend Cody Heller and Dale Jessie as the candidates for the open 2016 Council positions.

New Business:

1. Elder's Committee - Pastor Neumann would like to start an Elder's committee. The Council agreed that this committee would be very beneficial. MSC to create an Elder's committee. MSC to add a subset of Article VI to the bylaws, to include "Section 4 - Elder's Committee. 1.1 The Elder's Committee shall consist of three to five members including the chairman, who shall be appointed by the church council. The chairman will be a member of the Council. The remaining members shall be appointed by the committee chairman. 1.2 This committee shall be responsible for assisting the pastor with the spiritual welfare of the members of the congregation." MSC to change Article III - Section 1.1 to state "The voters' assembly shall elect by ballot at its first quarterly meeting, specified in the Bylaws, Art I, a church council composed of at least: President, Recording Secretary, Elder with the option of up to two additional positions, which could include: Financial Secretary and Trustee."

2. Vision Timeline - The Outreach committee moved some items to earlier dates due to the fact that some things were already started or will be started sooner than they were proposed on the original timeline. By having the Council and congregation approve the timeline, it will encourage the Outreach committee to move forward with the rest of the items. MSC to approve the Vision Timeline to be presented to the congregation.

Recorded by Jake Dahlke



Youth Group

In his letter to the Thessalonians, the Apostle Paul writes: “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.” What a blessing it is when we as Christians can do that for each other. We will seek to do just that by bringing the youth of our congregation together into a youth group. We will meet for our first gathering on Thursday, January 21, from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Our time together will include Bible study, fun and games, food, and planning. Those who would be included in the youth group would be all current 7&8 graders and all current high school aged kids.

Faith Outreach Meeting

This is an open meeting – anyone interested is encouraged to attend. Motivated by the gospel, the purpose of our Outreach Committee is to help our church members live the mission of our congregation – to be “Rooted in Christ & Reaching Out with the Word.” Agenda items this month include begin discussing a new devotion activity. Our meeting will take place Sunday, January 24, at 12:30 p.m. in the BRF church building



WHAT WILL YOU DO THIS NEW YEAR?

People often make lists and resolutions for the New Year. No doubt, you have heard many of them. Perhaps you have made some yourself. Some such resolution are: to lose weight, exercise more, spend more time with the family and less time at work, save money, go on an exotic vacation—the list could go on. But what if we made a list on the basis of God Word? After all, we are Christians who seek and strive to put God’s Word into practice and serve and glorify him in all we do. If we were to make a list on the basis of God’s Word, here are just a few of the things we could include:

1. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly (Col. 3:16)

That means that if our habit is to worship only infrequently, we do so more regularly

That means if we worship regularly, we try to make Bible Class too

That means setting up and sticking with a regular time each day to spend in devotion and repentance

2. Carry each other’s burdens (Gal. 6:2)

This means talking to our fellow believers and seeing if they have any needs with which we can help

This means seeking out some of those members we don’t know as well so we can get to know any difficulties they might have

This means doing all we can to help one another

3. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (1 Cor. 9:7)

This means examining the blessings God has given me and seeing if what I am returning to him in thankfulness is a true reflection of my love, thanks and praise for my Savior

This means striving to be a proportionate giver, that means setting aside a specific amount to give for the year, and sticking to it unless circumstances change

This means gladly climbing out on the edge of the tree limb, so to speak, and trusting that God will not cut it off

4. Pray continually (1 Thess. 5:17)

Not much needs to be said! But if you were to ask yourself how much you prayed in a day or week this last year, what would it be?

We can’t go wrong if we make our resolutions according to God’s Word. Four more will come to you next month. God bless you in the New Year!



Kelly Rahmlow	1/01
Judy Johnson	1/01
Candy Janke	1/01
Estelle Dahlke	1/04
Nicole Stelter	1/11
Cheyenne Bue	1/11
Jessey Leisso	1/13
Jerry Haas	1/14
Abby Mueller	1/15
Jesody Heller	1/19
Charlene Fisher	1/25
Laura Mueller	1/26
Ella Rahmlow	1/28
Cathy Morgan	1/28



New Bible Class

Our “Connecting Sinai to Calvary” Bible class starts in January. In Cataract, we will start January 3rd at 11:00 a.m. In Black River Falls, we will start January 6th at 7:00 p.m. Your book will be handed out to you at this time.

Remember, if you are unable to make it to this class, you can still follow along by checking out the Study Guide and answers that will be posted online. If you have any questions, please speak with Pastor Neumann.

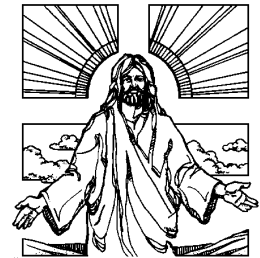


January 24th

Chris & Dawn Manske

Devotion Books

Need a devotion book for 2016? Why not get one right here at church? On January 3 and January 10 we are asking our members to donate the devotion books they aren't using. Then on January 17, you can choose a devotion book from the donated ones. Questions? Speak to Carolyn Diener or Mary Sasman.



Jesus Cares Ministries

New Time

On January 25th, Jesus Cares Ministries will meet at 6:00 PM. Please note that this time is 30 minutes earlier than usual. This will be the new time for now on.

Enjoy Catan & Cake with FiSH!

The FiSH group (Faith's Social Harbor) invites area adults to an evening of *Catan* and cake on Friday, January 22, at the BRF building location. Games will start at 6:00 p.m. and we expect to be done around 8:30.

“What is *Catan*?” you may ask? “Only the most fun board game ever” would be the answer.

According to Wikipedia: *Catan* is a multiplayer board game designed by Klaus Teuber and first published in 1995 in Germany. Players assume the roles of settlers, each attempting to build and develop holdings while trading and acquiring resources. Players are rewarded points as their settlements grow; the first to reach a set number of points, typically 10, is the winner. *The Settlers of Catan* was one of the first German-style board games to achieve popularity outside of Europe. As of 2015, more than 22 million copies in 30 languages were sold. The game has been translated into 30 languages. It is popular in the United States where it has been called "the board game of our time" by *The Washington Post*.

No experience is necessary. We will help you learn. In addition to *Catan*, cake will also be served! Invite your friends for an enjoyable evening with FiSH!

Sponsored by Faith Lutheran Church, FiSH is a social group geared toward recreation activities for adults, single or married, younger or older. For more information contact Nicole Stelter at steltnic@hotmail.com.



“After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.” Matthew 2: 9-10

The Star in Bethlehem was the light to guide the Magi to the baby Jesus, but Jesus was the true light. In the familiar verse of John 8:12, Jesus said “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” A quote by Paul L. Powers on a desk calendar says “Jesus Christ – the light that knows no power failure”.

How appropriate to think about lights and power failure as we reflect on Zambia and Malawi this Christmas season. Can you imagine life in the day of Jesus’ birth - no electricity - only lamps to guide the path as you would walk in the dark of night? Without light, you would be startled and unsure of where to go or what to do next. Darkness leaves us wandering ... bumping into things ... darkness poses dangers.

How differently we would approach each day if we were without dependable electricity. We could be thrown into darkness at any time and scrambling to figure out how to accomplish the easiest of tasks. Perhaps it is taking a shower or composing an email? Would you simply put your tasks on hold and pray the power returns in a few minutes or maybe a few hours?

Now imagine your life without electricity for eight hours every day. Power shedding is part of daily life in Zambia and truly causing disruptions. Power shedding is the term used when electricity is turned off in an entire section of town. Power shedding is done at peak usage time - maybe 8am to 4pm or noon to 8pm. This is new to Zambia as power was previously very dependable. No one puts off til tomorrow (or even for an hour) what can be accomplished today - when there is power.

The rural area, where the Mwembezi Lutheran Mission Rural Health Center is located, is less dependent on electricity, but our clinic does require power for some of the lab medical equipment. Our clinic has reason to rejoice, however, as our new building was dedicated July 19th. The day began with a worship service that packed Martin Luther Lutheran Church. The voices of the choirs were full of harmony and emotion as the people of various villages and languages joined together in a unified praise to the same God. Following the service, everyone walked to our new clinic building where a purple ribbon graced the entry. A ceremonial ribbon cutting took place. A special ceremony of speeches and acknowledgements was held on the grounds. Television and radio stations were present to report this historic event. Delegates from the Zambian government, local village/tribes, Lutheran Church of Central Africa, Lutheran Mission Zambia, CHAZ (Churches Hospital Association of Zambia) and Central Africa Medical Mission were honored guests. All speakers acknowledged with thanks the efforts of the missionaries when the clinic began. A delicious meal of nsima, beef and chicken (prepared without the use of electricity) was served to those in attendance. A day of fellowship, joyous praise and thanksgiving will be remembered by many as the next step of moving forward to serve those in spiritual and physical need at the Lutheran Mission Rural Health Center.

Malawi has also been experiencing power outages although the outages are usually later in the day as the Malawi government works to upgrade the power infrastructure. In Malawi, however, most of the rural areas do not have electricity. Amanda Oswalt and Alison Westphal are wonderful blessings to CAMM’s Lutheran Mobile Clinic. Amanda arrived in January and has quickly orientated to her Nurse in charge responsibilities. Alison has been in Malawi two years as Clinic Administrator.

Alison continues to develop organic gardens at several of our clinics and is working with staff development in other areas such as savings plans and smaller gardens for our clinic workers. The gardens at Suzi are especially impressive. Over 100 new mango and other fruit trees have been planted. Proper irrigation is a challenge to new plantings during the dry season. Glass bottles are part of a creative irrigation system. First, bottles are filled with water from a nearby river. Then they are capped with corks that have several holes punctured in the cork. The bottles are placed upside down next to the plantings so the water can slowly drip into the soil. An assembly line of village workers is used to refill the bottles so existing plants are not damaged with foot traffic going down to the river and back to the plantings.

In June a new ambulance arrived in Malawi. It is a lengthy process of almost a year to secure our ambulance. A Land Cruiser is the most dependable and versatile vehicle for our use; it must be able to travel extreme road conditions and fit all of the necessary medical supplies and staff in it each day for clinic. It takes about 8 months for the vehicle to be ordered, financing verified and actually produced. Once it arrives at the Malawi border, there is a great amount of legal paperwork to prove the vehicle should not have duties imposed (the duties can be as much as the vehicle itself). The “extras” such as the roof rack, ambulance lettering, sirens, and lights must be added; it is then inspected again by the Malawi Dept of Transportation for road readiness. The wait, however, is worth every day and we give songs of thanks that we have such generous donors who embrace this “Mission of Love.”

The Lutheran Mobile Clinic is blessed to have a great staff that works together. They travel each day in the ambulance to get to the different clinics; it is a joy to hear their laughter and social chatter on the journeys. Attendance even on slow days is about 350 people – mainly children and mothers. The staff works as a team to ensure each person is seen and treated and receives the necessary medications or food supplements. They have so much to do in a few hours. Keep in mind clinic must be finished by 3pm or so as the patients walk home and prepare an evening meal over the fire. No streetlights to guide their paths - no indoor kitchens.

Although power cannot be depended on here in this world, we can be eternally thankful that Jesus is our light every minute of every day. We do not need to worry about our path to heaven. Jesus lights the way to follow just as the Star led the Magi years ago. Thank you for your generous support during the past year. . Our spirits are uplifted with your prayers and notes of encouragement. They provide us with daily strength to carry out the work entrusted to us. We join with our sisters and brothers of the Lutheran Church of Central Africa to rejoice in the Lord’s birth. May each of you enjoy a joyous and blessed Christmas. Your prayers are especially needed this coming year. Last year our costs to serve the medical needs of the people of Malawi and Zambia exceeded our revenue by \$30,000/year. CAMM operates solely on donations. Jackson Kalekwa and the staff of the Lutheran Mission Rural Health Centre (Zambia) Amanda Oswalt, Alison Westphal and the staff of the Lutheran Mobile Clinic (Malawi) CAMM stateside committee (Linda Liesener, Bea Punke, Beth Evans, Angela Sievert, Shelly Sievert, Kari Belter, Rebekah Carey, Jennifer Lee, Dr. Mike Brooks, Pastor Kevin Schultz)

*If you have any questions, please contact our church’s reporter, Linda Jessie,
or log onto the LWMS web site at www.lwms.org for more information.*



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 or information:

Contact Alisa Volk either in person or at the following e-mail address: aavpc@hotmail.com.

Newsletter deadline: The submission deadline is the next-to-the-last Saturday of each month.
January 23rd is the deadline for the February, 2016 newsletter.