



March

Grady + Nina Severson

3/24

March		
Richard Treptow		3/3
Emily Timm		3/5
John Pleau		9/9
Warren Timm		3/11
Linda Jessie		3/11
Jim Christie		3/19
Dave Spaude		3/21
Dawn Manske		3/21
Carolyn Diener		3/21
Chase Manske		3/21
Kevin Keisow		3/22
Charlie Severson		3/23
Karin Jandt		3/27
Bruce Olsen		3/31



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

N6774 Acorn Ave.
Sparta, WI 54656

Phone: 715-284-0772
Pastor: Joel Neumann

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

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.

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, please contact Pastor Neumann either in person or at the following email address: pastorjoelneumann@gmail.com. Newsletter deadline: The submission deadline is the next-to-the-last Sunday of each month.

The Messenger

MARCH 2021

Everything that exists has attributes or characteristics. They are what help to define that thing. God has attributes as well. This year in our newsletter articles we are going to take a look at some of the attributes of God. As we consider his attributes, we will be considering God's own essence. As we consider his attributes, we will be confronted by mysteries beyond our full comprehension. Yet, we can simply listen to his Word and marvel.

Our God is...Holy

One of the enduring memories of Chicago Cub fans is the late announcer Harry Cary. "Holy cow!" used to be one of his favorite sayings.

We usually say, "Holy cow!" to express our surprise—not to point to a cow that is particularly well behaved. Cows can be big. Some people even may think they are pretty. But holy?

God expects people to be holy. He demands, "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy" (Leviticus 19:2).

Holy means sinless/perfect. Think about playing Little League baseball. Imagine your coach telling you that you have to get a hit every time you go up to bat, or you will be punished and never play again. That's impossible.

How can a loving God demand that we be holy? How can he say that if we sin just one time we deserve to go to hell? It's because he is holy, and as a holy God, sin cannot be in his presence. But maybe you are thinking to yourself – isn't God demanding the impossible?

It is true, we can't be sinless. But there is someone who was. That's Jesus. The Bible says, "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth" (1 Peter 2:22). God gives us even better news! "God made him [Jesus] who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of

God" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Righteous means holy. God tells us that Jesus became sinful for us.

So how do *WE* become righteous/holy? "No one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe." (Romans 3:20-22).

God credits holiness to all who believe in Jesus as the one who saved them from their sins. What God demands; he provides! Everyone who believes in Jesus is considered perfect by God!

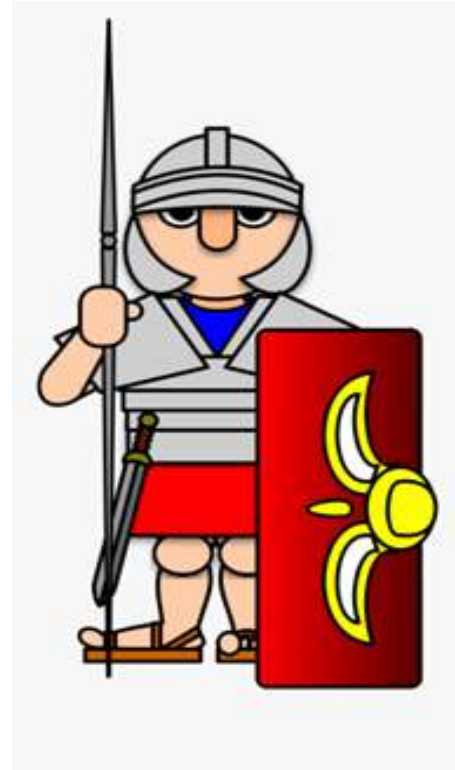


HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO BE A ROMAN SOLDIER...

...AND witness to our community the saving love of our Lord! The sign-up sheets are posted at both worship locations for our live tomb display. Sign-up early for the “best” times - maybe that includes a stint on one of our late night/early morning “integrity shifts.”

There will be three-hour shifts of two or three Roman guards in front of the closed tomb from 7:30 p.m. Friday (after the BRF Good Friday service) to 5:30 a.m. Easter Sunday. At that time the tomb is opened we will have two angels waving to people as they come to the BRF service at 8 a.m. We will have snacks, a fire pit for warmth and electric lighting for night. There will be handouts for anyone that stops with questions about what we are doing.

This is a living display, not a reenactment. Men, women and children may help guard the tomb as Roman soldiers – we will need a lot of help with this. This is very enjoyable fellowship! Come forward and help us witness to our community the saving love of our Lord. Contact Pastor Neumann or Brad Markhardt with any questions.



CENTRAL AFRICA MEDICAL MISSION FEBRUARY 2021



“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.” 2 Cor. 1: 3-4

I know that we’ve already covered a lot in the CAMM newsletters about the Covid-19 pandemic in Malawi. That is because it seems to influence everything we are doing with the mobile clinic work. Although our house and clinic staff and volunteers have observed strict Covid precautions since we resumed our clinics in October, many people in the country did not. The virus wasn’t real to people because there were few daily cases and deaths. In the rural areas outside of town, we never saw a mask. But Covid-19 case numbers had been increasing steadily in the country since December, to over 1,000 cases a day in January. The President of Malawi declared a state of national disaster almost 3 weeks ago and announced the enforcement of mask wearing in public, closed schools, and pleaded with people to social distance, avoid funerals and all gatherings over 50 people, and to wash their hands often. The South African variant of the virus is here and is making many more people sick in this second wave, mainly in the larger cities like Lilongwe. There have been more funerals than usual in our neighborhood. But the increase in people following precautions seems to be making a difference already, with new cases dropping this week into the 400-500 range throughout the country. More testing is being done, and there is a new Covid isolation center set up in a stadium here, hopefully with more oxygen and intensive care available and there is talk of a vaccine being here by next month.

Meanwhile, we aren’t yet seeing Covid in our remote villages, that we know of. Every patient is expected to wear a mask, wash hands and are kept at a distance from each other with the help of our volunteers. Our staff wears PPE and works mostly outside. Most clinic days there are over 200 patients coming to us between 9am and 1 pm, including well under-five children, pregnant women, family planning clients, and those who need HIV testing and counseling. The main outpatient diagnosis is malaria, due to the rainy season and plenty of mosquitos. At our Msambo clinic recently, there was a one-year-old girl who came in seizing with malaria. We gave medicine to stop the seizure, treated her fever and gave an injection for the malaria. Vicar David Kalima, who often helps out on clinic days, was asked to pray with the mother when we told her the baby had to be hospitalized. We took them to Kamuzu Central Hospital where she was treated, and Vicar told us the next week that the child was home and doing fine. Relieving the suffering of malaria is one way we give comfort in our work. Treating children with terribly itchy and infected scabies with the proper medicine (in a donated U.S. pill bottle) at low cost, and giving sunscreen and a hat to the mother of an albino child are some others. One little thing I enjoy doing, is picking out a colorful child-sized cloth mask, bought or made by wonderful ladies in the States, and giving them to a boy or girl who is school age and doesn’t have one.

Thank you for praying for Gary and I, our staff and patients. The Lord comforts us in times of stress. The donations and financial support are helping us get through this challenging time. We pray the God of all comfort guard and keep you as the troubles of Covid continue in the U.S. as well. Yours in Christ,

Beth Evans
Nurse in Charge – Lutheran Mobile Clinic (Malawi)

YOUTH GROUP MEETING

We’ll plan to meet at 2:30 pm on
Sunday, March 21. We’ll meet in
Black River Falls.

MEETINGS AND GATHERINGS THIS MONTH

Ladies Aid

Thursday—March 4 @ 12:30 p.m. in Cataract

Outreach Meeting

Sunday – March 7 @ 12:30 pm in Black River Falls

Ladies of Faith

Tuesday – March 9 @ 6 p.m. in Black River Falls

Ad Hoc Child Protection

Saturday—March 13 @ 9 a.m. in Black River Falls

Church Council Meeting

Monday—March 15 @ 6 p.m. in Black River Falls

Elders

Thursday – March 18 @ 6 p.m. in Cataract

Faith Teachers Meeting

Sunday – March 21 @ 12:30 p.m. in Black River Falls

Youth Group

Sunday—March 21 @ 2:30 p.m. in Black River Falls

Library Corner

A Garment Woven in Victory - Lutheran Comfort in the Resurrection by Carol Geisler is in the Difficult Issues section of our church library located in the Fellowship Hall at our BRF location. After the author's Christian mother died, Carol Geisler struggled with the meaning of death and the hope of her mother's resurrection. She begins with Jesus' resurrection to lead the reader through the Bible's teachings about our own resurrection and the joys of heaven that are waiting for all who are clothed in Christ's righteousness.

To check out, write the date,
your name and the name of
the book/DVD/CD in the
notebook on the shelf.



A LOOK AT LUTHER

LUTHER’S BREAK WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH & BRAVE STAND

The Pope soon heard about Luther’s theses, but at first he paid no attention to them. He thought it was only a quarrel between some monks in Germany and the excitement it caused would soon die down. But before long the Pope saw that people were showing more and more interest in Luther and were taking his side. If this were allowed to go unchecked, he feared that the Catholic Church would lose some of its power. There was danger that the followers of Luther would no longer obey the Pope and might even leave the Church.

At first the Pope tried to frighten Luther, hoping in this way to get him to take back what he had written. He commanded Luther to come to Rome at once and beg his pardon. But the ruler of Saxony, Elector Frederick the Wise, would not allow Luther to leave Germany, because he feared that Luther would not come back alive. The Pope didn’t want to lose the support of the mighty Elector, so he sent a man by the name of Cajetan (*kad-juh-tuhn*), a high ranking official in the Catholic Church, to settle matters with Luther. Cajetan would not allow Luther to defend his theses, but gruffly demanded of him that he should recant – that is, take back the statements he had made about the indulgences. Luther said that he could not do this unless it could be proved from the Bible that he was wrong.

When the Pope saw that he could not force Luther to change his mind, he published a bull of excommunication against him. This was a writing which stated that Luther was no longer a member of the Catholic Church, but a heretic whose faith was different from that of the Catholic Church. This bull also stated that all the writings of Luther should be burned and that Luther should be turned over to the Pope for punishment. In those days heretics were put to death.

Many of Luther’s friends feared that he would be killed and his reformation would come to an end. But Luther trusted in God and was not afraid. One day he asked the teachers and the students of the university to go with him to a place outside the city. There the young men built a big bonfire, and into this fire Luther threw the Pope’s bull. By this bold act Luther declared that he was no longer a member of the Catholic Church.

Emperor Charles the Fifth was the ruler over a large part of Europe and over the lands which Columbus

had discovered in America. Next to the Pope, he was the most powerful ruler at that time. In 1521 he held a diet, or meeting, with the mighty men of his empire, in the city of Worms (*vuerms*), Germany. He hoped that a way could be found to put an end to Luther’s reformation. But he did not think it right to punish Luther until he had given him a chance to defend himself and to prove to the Diet that he was not guilty. The emperor therefore gave orders that Luther should appear at the Diet in Worms.

Luther’s friends did not trust the emperor, and they begged Luther not to go. The Catholic leaders also tried to keep him away, because they feared that he might win some of the princes to his side. But Luther believed that the order he had received was an opportunity that God was placing before him to confess the truth before the mighty rulers of Europe. He said he would go even if there were as many devils in Worms as there were tiles on the roofs of the houses.

The emperor sent officers and a carriage to bring Luther to Worms. Along the way great crowds of people came out to see and cheer him. When he arrived, the streets were packed with people who were eager to see him. The honor that was shown to Luther made the officials of the Catholic Church very angry. Luther spent the night in prayer, asking God for courage and help. The next day he was brought before the Diet. He was told to say nothing but “I recant,” that is, take back everything. He was allowed one day to think the matter over, then he was brought again before the emperor. Again he was told to say only that he would recant. But he answered bravely and boldly: “Unless you can prove from the Bible that I have made wrong statements and have spoken contrary to God’s Word, I refuse to recant. My conscience is bound in the Word of God. Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen.”

The members of the Diet jumped to their feet in great excitement. Some felt friendly toward Luther, but most of the men were against him. Luther was led back safely to his lodging. By his confession of the truth the goal of the Reformation – to bring to light again the truths of the Bible – had been advanced.

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes Summary FEBRUARY 15, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting opened at 6:00 pm with Pastor Neumann leading us in a Bible study of Romans.

Attendance: Pastor Neumann, Garrett Jessie, Dale Jessie, Dave Spaude, Kirk Goetzka, Rick Treptow, Tyler Jessie

PASTOR’S REPORT

Pastor presented a statistical report for the months of December and January

Worship will continue to be the same as it was the last month

Church service times at our two locations will again switch this summer between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

CAT 8am BRF 9:45am

FINANCIAL REPORT

Tyler presented a financial report showing a net gain of \$3,400.08 through the end of January. Moved, seconded and confirmed (MSC) to accept financial report

SPECIAL REPORTS

Outreach Committee

Council approved Brad Markhardt’s suggestion of manning the tomb during Easter again this year

OLD BUSINESS

To help accomplish our vision timeline goals, the five most important goals have been assigned to different committees/individuals within the church:

Exploring Early Childhood Education – Outreach Committee

Jesus Cares – A couple of people will be approached to continue this ministry

Office Assistant – Pastor

Live Streaming – Property Committee

Bible Study Encouragement - Elder’s Committee

Council will not pursue the chance to receive a second PPP loan. MSC

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion was begun about what to do about debt reduction

Recorded by Garrett Jessie

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting Minutes Summary JANUARY 31, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting opened at 12:00 pm with Pastor Neumann leading us in a short prayer.

Attendance: Pastor Neumann, Garrett Jessie, Dale Jessie, Dave Spaude, Grady Severson, Scott Templeton, Rudy Jeseritz, Kirk Goetzka, Brad Markhardt, Gale Jessie, Tyler Jessie, Bill Yahnke

ELDERS REPORT

The following actions were ratified by the congregation:

Removal of Chris, Jennifer, Mackenzie, Jayden and Ethan Bedell MSC (Moved; Seconded; Confirmed)

Transfer in of Eric and Julia Smith (Easton and Mason) MSC

Transfer out of Carmon Gilbertson to St. Matthew’s in Winona, MN MSC

Dave Spaude presented a statistical report for 2020

- Faith Church ended the year with 167 baptized members and 130 communicant members
- Average attendance at Sunday Services throughout the year was 67

SPECIAL REPORTS

Scott Templeton gave an update on the activities of the Property Committee in 2020. The blacktop in BRF was sealed and several cleaning projects were accomplished.

The congregation reviewed the Outreach Committee Report supplied by Brad Markhardt. There were many outreach activities completed in 2020 and many more are planned for 2021. Fish will continue their 2021 schedule of events starting in April.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Scott presented a financial report showing a net gain of \$14,277.11 through the end of 2020. MSC to accept financial report for 2020.

Scott presented the budget approved by council for 2021. The budget totals are as follows: income \$199,450, expenses \$209,533, total -\$10,083. MSC

Scott also gave a detailed summary on expenses, giving, and the PPP loan we were gifted by the government. Even though the financial report for 2022 shows positive, our net revenue would have been -21,853.41 without the PPP loan and several canceled expenses due to COVID.

There is an opportunity for a second PPP loan, however pastor presented a couple of reasons why we may not want to.

The following information was shared in printed form by our outgoing treasurer, Brad Rahmlow.

Summary of 2020 Financial Information

Offerings	\$174,520.85
PPP Funds	\$20,272.00
Savings contribution	\$10,704.00
Thrivent	\$2,263.00
Int. Income from CD's	<u>\$1,386.40</u>
Total Received	209,146.25
Total Expenses	194,869.14

Above is a quick summary of Faith's financial information for 2020. We were certainly blessed in 2020 as we have \$14,277.11 over our expenses for the year. We should be very thankful for the position we are in going into 2021. That being said, you will notice that the PPP loan of \$20,272 is included in money received in 2020. This was a loan from the US Government that was funded and forgiven as part of the COVID-19 response. We also benefitted from reduced expenses totaling \$15,858 as a result of the shutdown, reduced travel, less outreach, etc. We had budgeted offerings at the beginning of 2020 in an amount of \$200,000. Had we not benefitted from these items our year-end would have looked as shown below:

Total Received	\$188,874.25
Total Expenses	<u>\$210,727.66</u>
	-\$21,853.41

Things, no doubt, would have been different had COVID-19 not been a part of our lives this past year, but you are asked to keep these things in mind as you prayerfully consider your offerings in 2021.

NEW BUSINESS

Vision Timeline Discussion – The congregation reviewed 5 main points that arose at the congregation invited church council meeting. They are: Improved service projection, Jesus Cares Ministry, Strengthen core and leaders, Early childcare ministry, and a part-time office assistant.

Council Nominations: Tyler Jessie, Ron Baerbock, and Garrett Jessie were nominees for church council. Tyler Jessie and Garrett Jessie were nominated to the church council.

- Dale Jessie – President
- Tyler Jessie – Treasurer
- Garrett Jessie – Secretary
- Kirk Goetzka – Councilmen at Large
- Dave Spaude – Head Elder
- Rick Treptow – Financial Secretary

The next Quarterly Congregational Meeting will be held April 25th at 11:15am in BRF.

Recorded by Garrett Jessie

MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES CONTINUE

During the season of Lent we have extra opportunity to gather around our Lord's Word as well as being encouraged by our fellow members. Below are the service times and places for this coming Wednesday. God's blessings as you adjust your schedule around God's Word that you might make use of this blessed worship opportunity.

MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES IN MARCH

MARCH 3 – MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICE

- 4:30 p.m. – Service in Cataract
- 5:30 p.m. – Simple Supper at both locations
- 6:30 p.m. – Service in Black River Falls

MARCH 10 – MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICE

- 4:30 p.m. – Service in Cataract
- 5:30 p.m. – Simple Supper at both locations
- 6:30 p.m. – Service in Black River Falls

MARCH 17 – MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICE

- 4:30 p.m. – Service in Cataract
- 5:30 p.m. – Simple Supper at both locations
- 6:30 p.m. – Service in Black River Falls

MARCH 24 – MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICE

- 4:30 p.m. – Service in Cataract
- 5:30 p.m. – Simple Supper at both locations
- 6:30 p.m. – Service in Black River Falls

