

The Messenger

March 2022

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How can I be happy when I hurt so badly?

"How did you ever get such peace?" Jenny asked Carol. "It's been eight months since my baby died, and it still tears me up."

"Oh, I still ache when I remember my son. I miss him every day. Some days I can't stop wondering what he would be like. But as far as peace goes, I felt peace already the night Alex died. It's always been there, no matter how much I hurt."

"I can see it, Carol. I keep hoping to have what you have." Jenny glanced at a framed picture of Alex on Carol's desk.

"Sometimes I feel so angry and bitter that God took my baby."

"I've gotten angry, too. It's just not right that children die. But I don't blame God. He made it possible for me to have peace after Alex died. God didn't bring death into this world."

"How can you say such a thing?" Jenny looked surprised.

"God took your son from you. He's dead."



"That's where you're wrong," Carol responded, putting her hand on Jenny's shoulder.

"Alex is not dead. He's as alive as we are at this very moment. Jesus said, 'Whoever believes in me will live even though he dies.' God brought Alex to faith on the day of his baptism and God kept that faith alive through the Word we shared with Alex every day. You see, death entered this world when the first human beings sinned against God, but death cannot rob me of my son—he's safe with Jesus."

"How can you be so sure? I wish I could be as certain as you."

Carol smiled. "You can be certain. Before I explain, let me ask

you a question. Why did Jesus die on the cross?"

Jenny gave a puzzled look. "I don't know. I guess some people really hated him."

"Yes, some people hated him, but that doesn't explain what happened. Jesus had to die. It was part of a plan. You and I and everyone else have sinned and deserved to die. But God came up with the plan to have his Son die in our place. The plan was fulfilled, and Jesus came back from the dead. Knowing what God has done gives me peace. Jenny, do you ever blame yourself for what happened? I did, sometimes. But now, I focus on God's forgiveness and his love. And when I think of Alex, I remind myself that he's living with God now. And by faith in Jesus, I am looking forward to seeing my son one day!"

"Thanks, Carol. Forgiveness, love, alive with God—you've helped me see everything in a new way."

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.

LWMS Mission Boxes

If you have been collecting an offering for the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society, it is time for them to be given. If you have a mission box, or if you wanted to write a check, please get it to Linda Jessie by March 13.

A MARCH MOVE FOR LADIES OF FAITH

Due to the rearranged schedule during the Lenten season, the Ladies of Faith will meet on Tuesday, March 8, at 6 pm in Black River Falls.

Do You Play an Instrument?

Consider being a part of our mixed instrumental ensemble! Our mixed instrumental ensemble will play during the offering at the Easter morning service in Black River Falls at the 8 a.m. service. There will be two group practices: after the Good Friday service and at 7:15 a.m. Easter morning. If you would like to play with this group, please let Brad Markhardt or Pastor Neumann know by February 27.

Would you be interested?

Lloyd Harter, a member of one of our sister synod congregations in Eau Claire, teaches in Alma Center and is hoping to have a student teacher from Wisconsin Lutheran College (WLC) come to Alma Center in the future. As he plans for that possibility, he contacted Pastor Neumann to see if there would be anyone interested in hosting a student teacher from WLC. If anyone would be interested, please let Pastor Neumann know.

Confirmation, Bible Class, and Choir Schedule Change

During the season of Lent our normal Wednesday confirmation, choir, and Bible study classes will move to Mondays. We will still meet at 5:30 p.m. for confirmation and 7 p.m. for Bible Study. The first day of this change will be Monday, February 28. Please note that choir will not meet every Monday. When they do meet, it will still be at 6:15 pm. Keep an eye on the monthly calendar for information.



The WELS International Youth Rally is open to students entering high school in the fall of 2022 through graduates of the class of 2022.

Please contact Pastor Neumann if you are interested and haven't already talked to him.

Information will be coming to you in March for us to begin the sign-up process.



Register Now!

2022 WELS Coulee Women's Retreat
April 2, 2022
Christ Lutheran Church
West Salem, WI

This retreat provides an opportunity for WELS/ELS women and their friends to gather together, encourage each other with God's Word, & go forth to share God's Word with others.

Registration forms and itinerary are available online at www.facebook.com/WCWRetreat. Register by March 15 – discount for early registration By February 15.

Go Fish!

Watch a Movie With Fish!

The FiSH group (Faith's Social Harbor) invites adults to our March Movie Madness on **Saturday, March 12**, at the BRF building location. We'll watch *Second Hand Lions* where an introverted young boy is sent by his irresponsible mother to live with his eccentric great uncles on a farm in Texas. We'll have popcorn, but feel free to bring a snack to share. 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.

If you have questions, talk with Ken & Carolyn Diener, Brad & Annette Markhardt, or Pastor Neumann



JESUS CARES MINISTRIES
Worship at the Cross

Next Worship at the Cross will be Saturday, **March 26, at 1 pm** at our Black River Falls campus.



More information can be found on the table in the gathering area. Please take a copy if you are interested, or go to www.lwms.org and click on Convention 2022.



CENTRAL AFRICA MEDICAL MISSION

February 2022



Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

My name is Violet Chikwatu, a member of The Lutheran Church of Central Africa, Crown of Life Congregation. I am a daughter to Pastor Chikwatu who once served the Lutheran Church of Central Africa and is now retired. I was born in one of the villages in Zomba district which is one of the districts in southern Malawi. Being a pastor's daughter, my family and I had the opportunity to move to new places of which one of them is Lilongwe, where I have grown up.

While in Lilongwe, I had an opportunity of doing both my primary and secondary school education. I sat for my National Board exams in 2012 and got good grades. I was accepted to do further studies at Daeyang College of Nursing, which is one of the best Nursing schools in Malawi. I applied for the Althea Sauer scholarship and was accepted. The scholarship covered my tuition and expenses while in school. I thank God for such an opportunity.

I graduated in 2017 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing and Midwifery. In 2018, I fulfilled one of my long-time goals, which was working with the Lutheran Mobile Clinic. As I write now, I am currently working as a Nurse Midwife and am training to become the Nurse in Charge when Beth Evans leaves Malawi in June 2022.

For the time that I have worked with the Clinic, I have learned a lot from both my work mates and the people that I serve. I have learned that the people we serve do not only need physical support but also psychological and spiritual support. The morning devotions we hold every morning before clinic have brought God's saving Word into people's lives which gives hope when their lives are difficult. For instance, the mothers of disabled kids that we have at one of our clinics struggle because of negative comments they receive from different people from their villages, concerning the lives of their kids. When we approach such mothers and tell them how Christ has loved us and that everyone was created in his image, we bring hope to them. Not only that, these mothers and kids also feel so much love as they receive some transport money that helps them get the physiotherapy which they would otherwise not be able to afford. Seeing their children improve and knowing God's love and forgiveness brings so much joy into their lives.

Lastly, I would like to thank God for everything that he is doing for us all and our clinics both here in Malawi and Zambia. It is my prayer that He continues giving us enough rains for the growth of maize and other crops that we rely on. A big thank you to all our donors and everyone who wishes us well. We are so very thankful for your support and prayers, and I pray that God continues blessing you and everyone around you.

Thank you,

Violet Chikwatu

Nurse In Charge in training

LENT BEGINS MARCH 2



If we were to use just one word to describe Jesus' suffering and death, might we use the word "crucial?" That is, "critically important." At the cross of Christ, time and eternity converged into humanity's most important moment: the moment Jesus won eternal life for us.

This year's Lenten Season will be shaped around that theme: "The Crucial Hours."

The season of Lent begins Wednesday, March 2. During this season we have extra opportunity to gather around our Lord's Word and be encouraged by our fellow members.

MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES START IN MARCH

March 2 – Ash Wednesday with Holy Communion

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 9

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 16

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 23

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 30

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

The next Faith teachers will meet Sunday, March 20, from 12:30-2:00 p.m. in the BRF church building.



YOUTH LOCK-IN



Youth Group Lock-In

The Youth Group will be having a lock-in at our Black River Falls location on Friday – March 25, starting at 6 pm. The Youth Group is open to all youth in 7-12th grade. A supper meal will be provided for them at 6 pm and parents are asked to be to church no later than 8 am on Saturday morning to pick their youth up.

If attending, the youth are encouraged to bring:

- * A six or twelve pack of soda/juice/water to share
- * A snack to share
- * Board games they might like to play
- * A pillow and sleeping bag in case they get tired and want to sleep
- * Anything else that they might need to sleep

Please watch the bulletin and your email for more information.

Come for all night, or come for a portion of the night.

FROM THE LIBRARY

"Triumph at the Cross" by Rev. Harold L Senkbeil is in the devotion section of our church library. This book is a collection of 47 daily Lenten devotions (Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday). These devotions use the Gospel to guide you through the Lenten season.

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.



Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church

February 21, 2022

The meeting opened at 6:00 pm with Pastor Neumann leading us in a bible study of the catechism.

Attendance: Pastor Neumann, Garrett Jessie, Grady Severson, Dave Spaude, Kirk Geotzka, Rick Treptow, Tyler Jessie, Scott Templeton

Elder's report: Non-member of baptism of Michael Hall on February 16, 2022

Pastor's Report: Pastor presented a statistical report for the month of January

- Average Sunday worship attendance was 78—that number was 87 if you include online worships
- During upcoming Emphasis Sundays that have a bible study during the church service there will also be a special bible study for children under 5th grade.
- The Sunday psalm Bible Class will be condensed to 3 Sundays (March 27, April 3 and 10)
- Council discussed purchasing new hymnals to replace the supplement. Uses of the service builder in the future were also discussed. More information is being gathered.

Financial Report: Tyler presented a financial report showing a net gain of \$1,659.50 through the end of January. Moved Seconded Confirmed to accept financial report for January, 2022

Special Reports:

- Council reviewed the Outreach Committee Report supplied by Brad Markhardt
 - Council and the Outreach Committee will look for promotional videos from other congregations to use as an example for a video to be posted on our website.
- The property committee will be investigating purchasing a new lawn mower for the Cataract location.
 - Brotherhood Mutual, our insurance company, sent us some detectors used to monitor for fires, water and break-ins.

Old Business:

- Information regarding online giving will be presented in March's Newsletter
- Council reviewed the key objectives identified during the last Vision Timeline Meeting and divided responsibilities as shown below:
 - Investigate installing projectors at both locations – Property Committee
 - Utilize synod programs – Outreach Committee
 - Start a VBS at the Cataract campus – Tyler and Garrett will ask for volunteers
 - Appoint a Website manager – Council will look for candidates
 - New member welcome / Increased prospect follow up - Outreach

New Business:

- Church times will switch again between the two locations from Memorial Day to Labor Day, 8 am in Cataract, 9:45 in BRF
- The joint church picnic will be held June 19th at 10am in BRF

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm with Pastor leading us in the Lord's Prayer

The next Council Meeting will be held in CAT on Tuesday, March 22nd at 6pm.

Recorded by Garrett Jessie

The Live Tomb – a Unique Opportunity to Witness

What is a live tomb? It's an oxymoron – two words at odds with each other, but used to describe the same thing. It's also a way we could describe Jesus' tomb – he was dead, but rose to life. It's also what we call a unique opportunity to create more public awareness in our community about Easter events. We are again setting up a display of a tomb with live "Roman soldiers" standing guard at our Black River Falls location. Members are needed to help guard the tomb.



Like last year, 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 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 sunrise 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. We need two people to be angels for 2½ hours Sunday morning. We will need help setting up the tomb and help taking it down. Set-up will be Saturday, April 9 at 9 a.m. Take-down will be Sunday, May 1 at 10:30 a.m. This is very enjoyable fellowship! Come forward and help us witness to our community the saving love of our Lord. Sign-up sheets will be at both Cataract and Black River Falls locations during Lent. Contact Pastor Neumann or Brad Markhardt with any questions.

WEBMASTER WANTED

Do you know your way around a computer? Are you plugged in to what is going on at church? Do you have an understanding of what makes a good website? If you answered yes to any or all of these questions, we would ask for you to consider whether you have the time, skills, and desire to serve as Faith Lutheran Church's webmaster (the one who takes care of our website).

This would require independent working as well as coordination with Pastor to determine items to be included on the website.

Please speak to Pastor Neumann or a member of the church council if you might be interested. Thank you.



Faith Lutheran Church - Online Giving

Great news! Online or electronic giving is available for Faith Lutheran Church! For those who don't find traditional cash or check convenient in today's world, online giving is a fast and easy option.

Two very good resources are available which are "fee free" for the giver and the church: **Thrivent Choice** and **Bill Pay** through your existing bank account.


NON-RECURRING OFFERINGS



Thrivent Choice
Fees covered 100% by Thrivent
Visit thrivent.com
Click 'What We Offer' at top of page
Click 'Generosity' near top of page
Scroll down to Thrivent Choice, click 'More'
Scroll to 'Make a Personal Donation', click
Search 'Faith Lutheran Black River Falls'
Click 'Make a Personal Donation' for Faith
Note: Thrivent redirects to inFaith Community Foundation, a Thrivent microsite
Note: a receipt will be sent via email for personal record keeping purposes
Options: checking, savings, credit/debit card
Note: checking and savings will require your bank routing number and account number
Faith Lutheran - Click link to give online
Scan QR Code to give online

RECURRING (SCHEDULED) OFFERINGS



Bill Pay
Generally no fees through your existing bank
Access your online bank account

Go to Bill Pay option
Note: Normally referred to as Bill Pay within your account options
Options: paper check mailed to office
Note: Church office address in BRF
Faith Lutheran Church
N6598 County Road A
Black River Falls, WI 54615-5851



New Bible Classes Starting

Hard Sayings of Jesus

We will resume a study of some of the Hard Sayings of Jesus in March. This Bible Class will answer the “why did Jesus say that” and “what did Jesus mean by that” questions that sometimes arise with some of his words. In studying these sayings, we will be given a better understanding of his Word as well as added confidence as we read the gospels on our own.

Where: Black River Falls Campus

When: Monday, March 14, 21, 28

Study of Psalms

We will have a three lesson study of 3 Psalms led by Pastor Korthals, Pastor Baerbock, and Pastor Neumann. Here is the schedule.

Sunday, March 27—Psalm 51

9:15 a.m.—Black River Falls Campus

11:00 a.m.—Cataract Campus

Sunday, April 3—Psalm 2

9:15 a.m.—Black River Falls Campus

11:00 a.m.—Cataract Campus

Sunday, April 10—Psalm 22

9:15 a.m.—Black River Falls Campus

11:00 a.m.—Cataract Campus

WELS/ELS SINGLES FACEBOOK GROUP

"If you're single (unmarried, divorced, widowed) and looking to socialize, make friends, or enjoy fellowship with other singles who share your faith, we encourage you to join our Facebook group! Our group consists of over 500 members from around the world with ages ranging from 18-65+. We are an active group sharing Biblical encouragement, prayers, Lutheran memes, personal victories, and food. Our page is full of discussion posts and we typically have a weekly video hangout on Sunday evenings. We'd love to have you join us. [Facebook Groups](https://www.facebook.com/groups/wels.els.singles)" (or type in <https://www.facebook.com/groups/wels.els.singles>)





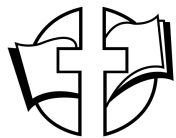
Richard Treptow	3/3
Emily Timm	3/5
John Pleau	9/9
Warren Timm	3/11
Linda Jessie	3/11
Jim Christie	3/19
Dave Spaude	3/21
Dawn Manske	3/21
Carolyn Diener	3/21
Chase Manske	3/21
Kevin Keisow	3/22
Nikki Mueller	3/23
Charlie Severson	3/23
Karin Jandt	3/27
Bruce Olsen	3/31

Anniversaries

Grady + Nina Severson 3/24



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.



FAITH
EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Black River Falls, WI 54615
(mailing address)

N6774 Acorn Ave.
Sparta, WI 54656

Phone: 715-284-0772
Pastor: Joel Neumann

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