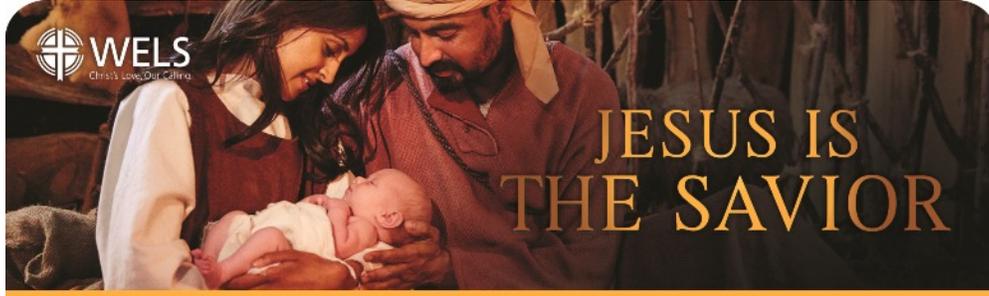


The Messenger

Rooted in Christ.  Reaching Out With The Word.

*Faith Ev. Lutheran Church
Pastor Joel Neumann - (715) 284-0772*

APRIL 2016



Jesus is the World's Savior

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. – John 3:16

Have you ever loved someone so much that you would have done anything for them? You wanted what was best for them, even if it meant sacrificing what was best for you. Their happiness and joy was your chief concern.

That type of self-sacrificing love inspires us. It is featured in many of the novels we like to read and the movies we like to watch. How would you feel to have someone love you like that? How would it feel to have someone who is so head-over-heels in love with you, that they would do anything, anything at all, to keep you safe?

That's exactly how Jesus describes the love of God. Jesus tells us that the heart of God beats for you! He loves you so much that he was willing to do everything necessary to keep you safe for all eternity.

From beginning to end, the Bible traces God's plan to rescue the world from eternal danger. His Word demonstrates just how far God was willing to go to save you, "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son."

God the Father sent his Son, Jesus, to suffer the punishment for the sins of the entire world. Why would God do that? Why would he allow his Son to endure the tortures of the cross? Why would Jesus voluntarily go through with his Father's plan? Why was Jesus willing to suffer the agony of hell itself?

God didn't sit back and watch the people he loved so dearly perish forever. He cared too much to see that happen to you. So Jesus stepped into human history and suffered the punishment that was meant for you.

He didn't want anything to stand in the way of spending an eternity with you in heaven. He wants you to know just how deeply he loves you. With a God who is willing to sacrifice himself for your rescue, is there any reason to doubt his love? "Whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." You can live confidently knowing that your God loves you and through faith in Jesus you have a place in heaven your Savior has prepared for you. His love truly is inspiring! He is the world's Savior. He is your Savior.



Lutheran Mobile Clinic (CAMP) Malawi Africa - March 2016

“Lord I crawled across the barrenness to you with my empty cup uncertain in asking any small drop of refreshment. If only I had known you better I’d have come running with a bucket.” -Nancy Spiegelberg

Figuring out how much printer ink we use and how many oil changes we get in a year is probably not the first thing that comes to mind when you think of a day in the life of LMC, nor should it be. But *my* day actually consists of thoughts like this often because one of my biggest tasks is preparing and managing the annual budget. In fact, preparing the budget for next year was one of my ‘to do’s’ last month. I was all but done when we received unexpected word from the government of changes that directly impact our financial planning. So, back to the drawing board I went. At the same time, everything everywhere seemed to be breaking. First, one of the ambulances needed major repairs. Then, we were told the roof at one of our clinic sites, Msambo, had severe termite damage. After that, we learned the World Food Program (WFP) in Malawi had run out of funding and the food supplements they provide to our patients in the middle of hungry season, so we needed to purchase extra maize and soya at the time of year when prices are highest. Oh, and then we learned the house’s septic system needed replacing. This past month made creating a budget plan feel like an exercise in futility.

Expecting the unexpected is part of life, especially in Malawi, so we do our best to ‘plan’ for it. But as anyone who’s ever owned a car or a home can appreciate, no matter how many tambalas (that’s the Malawian equivalent of pennies☺) you saved on printer ink this year for that ‘unexpected’ rainy day roof repair, you can never seem to save enough to feel too adequately prepared or too comfortable. The funny thing about unexpected expenses is they seem to travel with an entourage. You go into the mechanic for new tires and they tell you your brakes are also shot. You just finish fixing the leaky roof and a pipe burst and floods your basement. On a good day, we blame our old friend Murphy and his Law for our string of seemingly bad luck. On a bad day, it takes all we have not to cry when the plumber hands us the bill.

As it seemed Mr. Murphy was working a bit of overtime this past month, it’s no wonder that God’s been centering my personal devotion time on his limitless grace and what it means to trust in Him completely. He so frequently and graciously gives us specific physical and spiritual gifts which he makes known to us in advance, ones we can plan our lives around: steady monthly income around which you plan your daily living expenses, the gifts and enthusiasm for working with children that leads you to become a teacher, receiving a full scholarship for the upcoming school year. These ‘known’ gifts provide us with the opportunity to plan for the future and be good stewards with the talents God gives us. Yet, every day He has been teaching me that his Grace is so much bigger than I can ever imagine, much less plan for.

I think God allows Murphy’s Law to give us the even greater gift of seeing how inexhaustible his grace is. Trusting all things will work out for the good of those who love God is far easier when he lets me know what the plan is ahead of time. It’s a lot easier to concentrate on school when I know it’s paid for. It’s far less comfortable when water is pouring into my basement and I don’t have any idea where I will find the money to pay the plumber working on the pipes right now. A few days ago, the quote of the day on my daily calendar was, “Lord, make me so uncomfortable that I will do the very thing I fear.” It’s scary to let go of my plans and move forward when the only one who knows the plan is God. I know he’s promised his plans for me will prosper and never harm me, but too often I tend to put human limitations on God’s Grace. Too easily I forget his solutions are so much bigger and better than I can ever plan for or even imagine. He says in Isaiah 30:19, “Cry for help, and you’ll find it’s grace

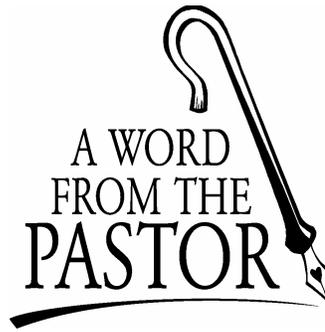
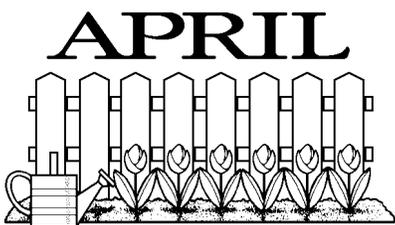
Malawi Africa Cont.

and more grace. As soon as he hears, he'll answer." When we've run out of ideas and exhausted all our human plans, God doesn't just say he'll chip in. He says, just ask and I'll handle everything. I'll give you extra and then some. "And God is able to make all grace **ABOUND TO YOU**, so that in **ALL THINGS** at **ALL TIMES**, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." (2 Cor. 9:8). No matter what Murphy tries to throw our way, we know that God will always use every challenge we face to remind us just how boundless his loving grace for us truly is. I feel better already. I hope you do, too.

"I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance." Ephesians 1: 18

Grace and Peace Be Yours in Abundance,
Alison Westphal
(Clinic Administrator of the Lutheran Mobile Clinic)

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 GREATEST SERMON EVER PREACHED

One dictionary defines the word "sermon" like this: *"a talk on a religious or moral subject...often based on a passage from the Bible."* If we use that for our definition of a sermon, couldn't we say that the empty tomb might be the greatest sermon ever preached?! After all, the empty tomb speaks to everything Jesus teaches us in the Bible.

In the Bible, Jesus teaches us he is true God. That's what he plainly told his disciples. His miracles clearly demonstrated that truth. Yet the greatest evidence is his resurrection: **"who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord"** (Romans 1:4).

In the Bible, Jesus teaches us that we are sinners. He tells us that in order to stand before God our sin must be removed. He tells us that we cannot remove it on our own. He tells us no matter how much good we think we may do we can never escape the fact that we are guilty. He tells us that what we need is a Savior to remove that sin and guilt from us. Jesus' resurrection assures us that he is the very Savior we need and that with his life and death he did what we couldn't do: **"He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification"** (Romans 4:25).

In the Bible, Jesus teaches us that the believer's real home is heaven. The believer is told that this life isn't the one to live for. The believer is told that they do not need to fear death. How can this be? Jesus's resurrection: **"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; ²⁶ and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'"**

The empty tomb is the greatest sermon ever preached because it teaches us that indeed the Bible is true. All of it! Every last bit of it! Yes, even that part that tells you, dear friend, that Jesus died for you and paid for your sins. Believe it! As the month of April comes and goes; as we prepare for the fun and sun of summer; don't let this sermon leave your heart, your mind, your soul, or your side.

Summary of Council Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2016

Attendance: Pastor Joel Neumann, Scott Templeton, Cody Heller, Mark Mueller, Brad Rahmlow, Todd Volk, Dale Jessie, Dave Kellen

Call to order: The meeting opened at 6:30p.m.

A. Pastor's report

1. Membership changes - Kedric Knas - Profession of Faith (1/19/16)
2. WELS One in Christ Video – motioned, seconded and approved to show the video the 2nd weekend of April
3. Mission Festival – motioned, seconded, and approved to hold Mission Festival as a combined service in October with a presentation by Pastor Neumann's Father-In-Law
4. Church Picnic - discussion held and consensus was that it is a worthwhile idea to be planned further by the Outreach Committee.
5. Confirmation Class - recommendation by Pastor that we begin future confirmation classes in 6th grade changing the current class from a 2 year program to a 3 year program (6th-8th grade). Motioned, seconded and approved.
6. Anniversary - discussion about 10 year anniversary of Faith Lutheran to take place in 2017. We are looking for volunteers that would be interested in being on a committee to plan the celebration.

B. Special Report's

1. Property Committee - new purchases were \$70 for the offering plate in Black River Falls.
2. Jesus Cares-Next meeting Monday, March 28th.

C. Financial Report

1. Cody Heller presented a report showing the net income through February 29, 2016 of \$53.35.

D. Old Business

1. Elder's Committee - Dave Spaude and Jeff Nicolai have been chosen as Elder's in addition to Dale Jessie who serves as Chairman of the Elder Committee.
2. Facebook Guidelines - Pastor reviewed a list of Facebook Guidelines submitted by the Outreach Committee with the Council. Motioned, seconded, approved.

E. New Business

1. WELS Youth Rally - Pastor asked if we would have financial resources to assist youth and chaperones in attending the Youth Rally in Fort Collins, CO. this year to be held from June 28th to July 1st. Motioned, seconded and approved to fund the full cost of attendance including transportation, housing and attendance. Estimated costs should be around \$3,000.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

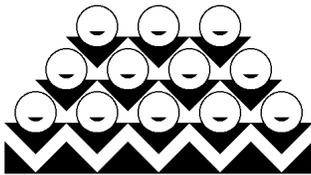
Recorded by Brad Rahmlow

The next Council Meeting will be in Cataract on April 18, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

The Quarterly Voter's Meeting will be April 24th at Black River Falls.



Lori Spaude	4/2
Allison Dahlke	4/2
Sandy Bue	4/10
Evan Markharde	4/18
Karen Jessie	4/18
Jacob Bue	4/18
Benjamin Leisso	4/18
Arlene Jessie	4/20
Gordy Ritter	4/23
Chris Manske	4/25
Penny Nicolai	4/27
Judy Sommers	4/29



CHOIR SCHEDULE APRIL INTO MAY

April 6: practice

April 13: no practice

April 20: no practice

April 27: practice

May 4: practice
(last one until fall)

Please contact Nancy Templeton if you have any questions.

When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. (Luke 24:9-11)

Doubting Disciples

There are two natures that live inside each follower of Christ. The Spirit has used Word and sacrament to create in us the new self, which loves and trusts the Lord and always seeks to do his will. Sadly, on this side of eternity we also continue to carry around with us the sinful nature, our old Adam. This ally of the devil hates God, desires to constantly rebel against him, and is suspicious of his holy words. The battle between these polar opposite forces rages daily inside the heart of each Christian.

Even the 11 disciples often fell prey to the old Adam that lived inside their hearts. We witness the evil power of the sinful nature even on the joyous day of Easter. As the women from the tomb rushed into the house where the Eleven were staying and shared the comforting and amazing news that their friend and teacher was alive again, the sinful nature rose up in the hearts of these disciples. Their old Adam robbed them of the joy Christ wanted to share with them and instead replaced it with the cynicism Satan would prefer us to wallow in.

Jesus knew the failings and the weaknesses of his disciples, and yet in mercy he would continue to reach out to them. Through the women's testimony, through a number of post-resurrection appearances, and through his Holy Spirit given to them at Pentecost, these doubting disciples would be forgiven, comforted, and commissioned to go out into the world as Christ's ambassadors.

What a comfort that is for us present-day Christians who daily struggle with our own sinful natures! Jesus does not cast us aside as worthless garbage when we fail him. He knows our faith is weak, and so he provided us with the world's most powerful force, his saving gospel. He desires that we hear his Word often so that we may be regularly renewed in his love and forgiveness and that we be confirmed in our calling to be his lights in this dark world. Following the lead of our new self, we point other souls who are lost in the despair and darkness of this world to the one eternal light found in Jesus Christ.

Prayer: *Risen Lord Jesus, forgive all my failings in my struggles against my sinful nature. Renewed by your Word, help me live to your glory. Amen*

Meditations: (NPH) April 1, 2016
The Triumph at the Tomb



“Show your Faith”

the Outreach Committee would like to make sure new and old members have a Faith T-shirt as a part of their wardrobe. Maybe you don't have one yet, or maybe yours is faded, or maybe you have old chili stains, or maybe you want a long sleeve one in addition to your short sleeve one. Sign-up sheets are at both worship locations. The last day to order is Sunday, May 1.

YOUTH GROUP MEETING

The next youth group meeting will be on Friday, April 8. We will meet from 6:30-8 pm in Black River Falls. Bring a game that we can play after our Bible Study.



April 3rd

Gary & Pam Johnson

April 26th

Jacob & Sandy Bue



The Outreach Committee is looking for someone willing to coordinate the Faith Family Fun Nights (formerly known as VBS). You would select a program and organize the event. The Outreach committee can help. Please see Pastor Neumann or Brad Markhardt if you would be willing to help out with this.

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 creating a new devotion activity and evaluating the Living Tomb activity. Our meeting will take place Sunday, April 17, at 12:30 p.m. in the BRF church building.



Black River Falls & Cataract, WI

www.faithwels.com

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 Sunday of each month. is the deadline for the , 2016 newsletter.