



### Is God Up There?

This year in our monthly articles we are considering favorite verses from the Bible.  
This month's favorite Bible verse is: Genesis 1:1

*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*

"God, if you are up there, please show yourself to me." Have you ever said that to God? Wouldn't it be great if God just came down and showed himself to us?

God does show himself. In the first line of the Bible, God reveals himself to us. He tells us that he made all things. He made the huge galaxies of the universe. He made the tiniest atoms. He made you and me. His creation demonstrates his power, creativity, wisdom, and tender concern for us.

Take time to notice and to marvel at all God made—the colors of the sky, the light of the sun and stars, the mosaic of leaves outside your window, the beauty of the landscape within your view. Consider how

God made you. Think of how your body works—your eyes and ears, your arms, legs, fingers and toes, your brain.

However, God did not make the world and then stand back as a disinterested observer far removed from it all. He is



watching over it all. He continues to care for us by providing for all our needs.

Sadly, we often don't thank

him for what he has done for us. We forget him. For that, God has every right to turn his back on us. Amazingly, he still cares for us. More than that, he came down to us and saved us from our wayward ways. He came down in love in the person of his Son, Jesus, and rescued us. Jesus lived the perfect life of thanks that we should live. On the cross, he died the death we should die for our sins. He promises a new and perfect world where all who believe in him will live forever in perfect joy.

Is God up there? Yes, he is! And, thankfully, he was willing to come down here to save us so that, one day, all who believe in him will see him face to face.

**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.



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*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](mailto:pastorjoelneumann@gmail.com). Newsletter deadline: The submission deadline is the next-to-the-last Sunday of each month.



Last month's newsletter ended with the Psalm 121:8, "The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." That verse is a relevant promise for the Lutheran Mobile Clinic. The last Friday in March was the final clinic visit before our work in villages outside Lilongwe was put on hold. As was mentioned, the inevitability of the COVID-19 pandemic reaching Malawi was upon us. Our clinic staff had worked for 2 weeks to enforce handwashing, spacing between patients, limiting patients in the buildings, and teaching the measures needed to protect against the virus, while carrying out our usual busy days in malaria season with hundreds of patients gathered to be cared for. It was agreed by them and the CAMM committee that our mobile work could pose a risk of spreading the coronavirus. We needed to wait to see what would happen and to think and pray about how and when to continue our work safely. Gary and I had been advised to try to get a flight out of Malawi, but it was canceled when the government stopped all air travel in and out as of April 1. We had thought we'd be staying, and began preparing to spend many weeks in isolation. As it turned out, God opened the door to us being on the last flight out of the country on March 31 and we safely arrived in Wisconsin April 1<sup>st</sup>. The next day, the first cases of COVID-19 started to officially appear in Malawi. As of this writing, there have been 39 patients with positive tests and three deaths reported. However, testing is limited, and it appears to be spreading within the urban communities.

The "going" was difficult. Having to stop our operations, communicate with everyone involved, make sure all government reports were finished, and ensure all of our staff would still continue to be paid-those physical tasks had to be done in a very short space of time. But it was the emotion of leaving many dear people who were experiencing the same fears we were, and not knowing when we could return that was hardest. Our staff had told us that they were concerned about our safety with the virus so widespread in the US. They were more worried for us than themselves, and promised to pray for us. God did watch over us on the journey and we are healthy, keeping isolated, yet with projects to keep us busy, and much communication and decision-making to do. We regularly check in with our staff and they keep us updated on how the government and their communities are handling the crisis. So far, they are keeping well and some are busy harvesting their maize.

Gary and I are so thankful for our supportive mission family in Malawi. Pastor Mark Panning and Mrs. Mindy Holtz agreed to help out with the financial oversight and banking that had to take place to be sure our house, clinic and village staff continued to be paid. Miss Jere, our head nurse, and our driver, Mr. Supu, took the monthly reports to the District Health Office and saved copies for our files. We had wanted to find a way for some of our epilepsy patients to receive the monthly medicine they needed, as the local government health centers often don't often have it. We asked our new clinician, Alfred Nkhoma, to go with Mr. Supu to two government health centers closest to our villages, and give them some of the needed medicines from our pharmacy supply, which were gratefully received. Pastor Beza at Mwalaulomwe had reported that albino patients were coming to look for sunscreen which we normally supply. Mr. Supu and Alfred also dropped off bottles of sunscreen with

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**MEETINGS AND GROUP GATHERINGS THIS MONTH**

Elders – Monday, June 8 @ 6 p.m. in Black River Falls

Child Protection Ad Hoc – Saturday, June 13 @ 9 a.m. in Black River Falls

Outreach Meeting – Sunday, June 14 @ 11 a.m. in Black River Falls

Youth Group – Sunday, June 14 @ 2 p.m. in Black River Falls

Council – Monday, June 15 @ 6 p.m. in Cataract

**June Birthdays**

Wyatt Anderson	6/2
Janeen Folgers	6/4
Roger Olson	6/5
Pastor Ron Baerbock	6/9
Nancy Kirchman	6/11
Pastor Joel Neumann	6/16
Malachi Neumann	6/17
Ian Timm	6/17
Mary Sasman	6/17
Tyler Jessie	6/19
Kristopher Schwartzenberger	6/21
Adalee Laufenberg	6/24
Rachel Neumann	6/24
Cooper Fatla	6/25
Karen Baerbock	6/25
Sherry Bue	6/28



**SUMMER SERVICE TIME CHANGE**

**First Sunday of Change:**

Sunday, May 31

**Last Sunday for Change:**

Sunday, September 6

**New Times:**

Cataract – 8 a.m.

Black River Falls – 9:45 a.m.



# EASTER IS REASON TO CELEBRATE!

*“Because I live, you also will live.”*

*John 14:19*

“Happy Easter!” Does this sound out of place in June? It doesn’t have to. The truths and meaning of Easter—which is arguably the most important holiday of the year—are truths that last year round. At Easter we celebrate that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and that miraculous event is certainly a reason for celebration. It proves that Jesus has power over even death.

And, what’s more, he promises that he has power over *your* death. You may not like to think about death at all. (Who does?) Still, we are all facing that reality. Sooner or later, our lives will end.

Then what? Plenty of people have plenty of ideas about what happens after we die. But there is one person who can tell us with certainty what will happen because he has already been there and done that. Jesus experienced death...*and came back to life!* Now, listen to what he promises all of his followers, “Because I live, you also will live.”

Could there be any better news? Could there be anything more worth celebrating? Could there be anything more important to remember each day of the year? Through Jesus, you do not need to be afraid to die. You can be sure that one day he will raise your body back to life. And you will never die again.

What a reason to celebrate—all year long!



## A Few Notes About Worship In June

⇒ Weekend of June 6/7

- ◇ This weekend is Confirmation Weekend
- ◇ The Saturday, June 6 service at 6:30 p.m. will be the examination of the confirmands. Members are welcome to attend this service if they would like.
- ◇ The Sunday, June 7 service at 9:45 a.m. will be the service that will be on Faith’s Facebook page. This means it will not be on YouTube till around 11:30 a.m. that Sunday morning.

⇒ We will continue 3 services per weekend throughout the month of June. Saturdays at 6:30 p.m. in Black River Falls and 8 a.m. in Cataract on Sunday and 9:45 a.m. in Black River Falls on Sunday. You are welcome to attend any of these three services.

⇒ Facebook Live will continue on Saturday, June 13, 20, and 27<sup>th</sup>. This will be at 6:30 p.m.

⇒ If there are other questions/concerns, please call the church office. Also, refer to the last update that was sent out on May 21. It can be found online at our website at [www.faihwels.net](http://www.faihwels.net). If you would like a copy sent to you, please let Pastor know.

### SUMMER DEVOTION SERIES

Remember those devotions last summer that were based off of Pastor’s sermons? Well, we will do that again this summer! Starting Sunday, June 7, these devotions will once again be available after service. God’s bless you as you and your family sit down together to discuss God’s Word.



### YOUTH GROUP

The youth group will meet in Black River Falls on Sunday, June 14 from 2-3:30 p.m. Our youth group includes all those in 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Those who will be entering the 7<sup>th</sup> grade in the fall are invited to come.

Pastor Beza, who agreed to distribute them. We heard from Lozias Sinoya, our registrar, that one of our Health Surveillance Assistants, a government employee, is continuing weekly under-fives vaccinations and assisting family planning clients at Msambo. We pray that the Lord protects and provides for our patients and staff during this time.

One of the blessings of being isolated is having time for on-line church services and Bible studies. During a recent Bible study, I was reminded of a verse in Isaiah, chapter 43. The Lord is speaking to his redeemed people in this chapter and reminding them not to be afraid. Verse 4 states, "Since you are precious and honored in my sight and because I love you, I will give men in exchange for you, and other people in exchange for your life." It was a reminder of God's love for us regardless of what we accomplish, and that running the Lutheran Mobile Clinic successfully is not dependent on Gary, me or any individual. It is God's grace that allows us to continue this mission and provides the means to do it. Meanwhile in Zambia, the Lutheran Rural Health Center staff are continuing their daily clinic work and are busy preparing for COVID-19. We pray God spares Mwembezhi from this virus, while we ask for guidance for our "coming" back to Malawi in His timing. Thank you for your continued support and prayers. God bless and keep you.

Yours in Christ, Beth and Gary Evans

## FAITH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES SUMMARY

May 12, 2020

### CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting opened at 6:00 pm with Pastor Neumann leading us in a Devotion on Matthew 6 and a short prayer.
- Attendance: Pastor Neumann, Garrett Jessie, Dale Jessie, Dave Spaude, Kirk Goetzka, Rick Trepow, Scott Templeton, Brad Markhardt

### PASTOR'S REPORT

- Pastor presented a statistical report for the month of April
- Recap from Communion. If the "Safer at Home Ban" is lifted as scheduled on May 26 we will proceed to have 3 service on May 30th and 31st. One service Saturday night (6:30) in BRF, and one service at each location Sunday morning.
- If services are held, the Saturday evening service will still be posted to Facebook and YouTube.
- If the ban is not lifted, and we are not allowed to have a service, we will plan to have communion on

Saturday and Sunday (June 6th and 7th).

- The offering plate will no longer be handed around the church, it will be placed at the rear of the church.

### FINANCIAL REPORT

- Scott Templeton, in place of Brad Rahmlow, presented a financial report showing a net gain of \$27,088.29 through the end of May. MSC to accept financial report for May, 2020

### SPECIAL REPORTS

- Council reviewed the Outreach Committee Report supplied by Brad Markhardt
- Property Committee- The council approved spending \$700 on a couple of loads of gravel to blend the edges of the blacktop
- Council approved up to \$370 dollars to be used to purchase a small sprayer for the BRF location

### NEW BUSINESS

The next Congregational Meeting will tentatively be held August 2nd

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm with Pastor leading us in the Lord's Prayer

The next Council Meeting will be held in Cataract, June 15 at 6pm.

Recorded by Garrett Jessie

### June Anniversaries

Greg + Elaine Fatla	6/8
Ken + Carolyn Diener	6/15
Mark + Laura Mueller	6/17
Brad + Kelly Rahmlow	6/26