

The Messenger

The Monthly Newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church, Columbus, WI



Can God Take My Guilt Away?

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

"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." 1Corinthians 5:21

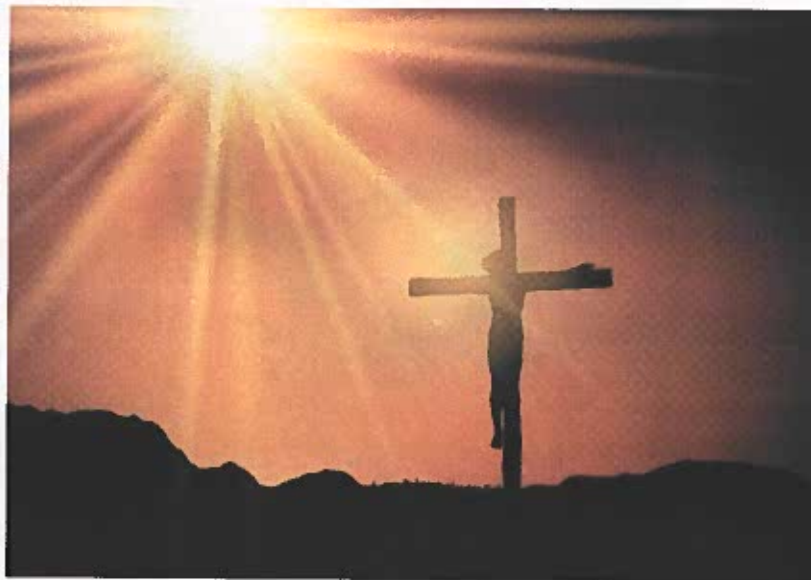
"I wish I could take it all away," Mom whispered to her suffering five-year-old son. He had the flu for a couple of days now, and Mom's heart was broken. As he lay in his bed suffering from the chills and a fever, there wasn't much Mom could do except give him some children's flu medicine and just be there for him. Mom felt helpless and wished she could take it all away from him. She even wished she could have the flu instead of her son.

When children are sick, the love of Mom and Dad really starts to shine through. In a heartbeat, parents go to extra lengths to make sure their kids are feeling as comfortable as possible. If you're a parent, you've been there. You make sure their pillow is extra fluffy. You bring their favorite juice box. You

provide their favorite movie to watch. And any time you hear them call, you quickly respond with, "What can I do for you?" The love of Mom and Dad goes so far that if they could take the sickness away, even become sick instead of their child, they would. But they can't, and it hurts.

Has there ever been a time when you wished you could take it all away? Not just a sickness of a child, but something you did that you really regret? Maybe it was something you did to end a close relationship with a friend. Maybe you said something to a family member that you wish you could take back. Maybe it was something that only you know about, but it haunts you each day.

It's at moments like these that God's love really starts to shine through. He knows your sin, your guilt, your regrets. But he doesn't just wish he could take them away. He did take them away. He forgave



them all! He took your sin and guilt away when he put them on his only Son, Jesus. He loves you so much that he had Jesus die for your sin so that you wouldn't have to. God forgave your guilt and now considers you right with him because of what Jesus did for you.

Wish your guilt and regrets could be taken away? They were. In their place, he gives you forgiveness and eternal life. Now that's a love that shines through!

Zion Lutheran Church and School

August 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 8:00 am Online Worship Posted 8:00 am Worship, Communion 9:15 am Bible Study 10:30 am Worship: Communion	3	4	5 9:15 am Pastoral Staff Meeting	6 2:00 pm Ladies' Aid Meeting 6:30 pm Worship	7 6:00 am Bible Breakfast	8
9 8:00 am Online Worship Posted 8:00 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Study 10:30 am Worship	10 6:30 pm *Board of Ed Meeting	11 7:00 pm Stewardship Board	12 School Orientation TBD 9:15 am Pastoral Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Council Meeting	13 6:30 pm Worship	14 6:00 am Bible Breakfast	15
16 8:00 am Online Worship Posted 9:15 am Bible Study 10:30 am Worship	17	18 LLHS First Day of School 6:00 pm PATZ Meeting	19 9:15 am Pastoral Staff Meeting	20 6:30 pm Worship	21 6:00 am Bible Breakfast	22
23 Christian Education Sunday 8:00 am Online Worship Posted 8:00 am Worship 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Church Picnic	24	25 8:00 am *First day of school	26 9:15 am Pastoral Staff Meeting	27 6:30 pm Worship Communion	28 6:00 am Bible Breakfast	29
30 8:00 am Online Worship Posted 8:00 am Worship, Communion 9:15 am Bible Study 10:30 am Worship, Communion	31					

Which Lives Matter?

So which lives matter? I never thought that question could be so complicated. When the “Black Lives Matter” protests erupted in the wake of George Floyd’s death, I said what I’ve always said. I wrote a devotion about God’s love for all people. To me, it seemed simple: “All Lives Matter!” How naïve I am.

The next day, a sportscaster in California was fired for tweeting something terribly offensive. Do you know what he tweeted? “All Lives Matter!” Huh. I was missing something. I’ve since learned that to many people, saying “All Lives Matter” is an offensive way to dismissively disparage people’s concerns about injustice in America. Does what you say really communicate what you think you’re saying?

So which lives matter? How can God’s people be guided on this sensitive issue? We can start by asking ourselves this: Does God say “All Lives Matter,” or does he say that your specific life matters? The answer, of course, is “Yes!” God does both! Doesn’t the clear Biblical truth of objective and subjective justification help us in this delicate matter? For whom did Jesus die? For all! For me!

At times, the Bible emphasizes that Jesus is the world’s Savior. “For God so loved the world...” (John 3:16). “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). “God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ...” (2 Corinthians 5:19). There are times—many times—when you tell people that Jesus died for all. That objective truth drives away doubts. No one is excluded. All lives matter!

But I hope there are also times—many times—when you tell individuals that Jesus died for them. Think of how personally God delivers his gospel message: “Speak tenderly to Jerusalem...” (Isaiah 40:2). To the paralytic: “Take heart, son, your sins are forgiven” (Matthew

9:2). To the tax collector: “I tell you that this man ... went home justified” (Luke 18:14). To the sinful woman: “I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much” (Luke 7:47). Aren’t those powerfully personal statements from Jesus? What Jesus did for all, he did for me. That subjective truth drives away doubts too. I need that! Disabled lives matter. Tax collector lives matter. Prostitute lives matter. People needed to hear that!

In the face of abortion, a Christian says, “Unborn lives matter!” If someone responds, “No, all lives matter,” we’d say, “Yes, all lives matter, but that’s not the point that needs to be emphasized right now. Unborn lives matter!” In the face of racial injustice, a Christian says, “Black lives matter!” In the middle of a pandemic, a Christian says, “Elderly lives matter!” To that tormented soul, a Christian says, “Your life matters!” It’s very Biblical to comfort hurting hearts with how much their lives matter to God.

It takes wisdom to determine when it’s best to emphasize the universal grace of God and when it’s time to emphasize the personal grace God shows to individuals. So which lives matter? All lives matter. Black lives matter. Your life matters. May God grant us wisdom to clearly share his grace.

Rev. Nathan Nass serves at St. Paul/San Pablo Lutheran Church in Green Bay, WI. You can check out his blog at upsidedownsavior.home.blog.

Parables:

Spiritual Truths Told in Stories

Sunday Morning Bible Study in August
and September

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Council Names and Numbers

Dan Retzlaff, Chairman	920-319-0018
Don Lamb, Vice-Chairman	920-382-4338
Nick Uebelacker, Secretary	608-225-8861
Brady Weiland, Treasurer	920-285-7362
Andrew Tratar, Education	920-296-1485
Bruce Zander, Elders	920-438-4014
Nils Johansson, Outreach	608-239-5123
Jim Greiling, Property	920-948-1746
Otto Mattke, Stewardship	608-516-5279
Craig Lathrop, Family Ministry	608-770-2498

Our Mission

The mission of Zion
Evangelical Lutheran Church
and School is to preach and
teach God’s saving Word in
all its truth and purity.

Get in Touch

Church/School Office
(920) 623-5180
office@zioncrusaders.com
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Tim Schwartz, Pastor
(509) 480-2967
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Ben Zuberbier, Pastor
(920) 517-7940
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Alex Vandenberg, Principal
(507) 353-0719
avandenberg@zioncrusaders.com

Jim Grasby, Lakeside Principal
(920) 648-2321

Thanks
be to God
for his
indescribable
gift!

2 Corinthians 9:15

Greeter Schedule



August 2nd

8:00am — E6

Jim & Jenny Greiling

10:30am — L1

Janell Allar &
Kay Salzwedel

August 9th

8:00am — E7

Dale & Joyce Gajdosik

10:30am — L2

Laurie Kirchberg &
Pat Premo

August 16th

8:00am — E8

Wilma Lenz &
Joan Herzberg

10:30am — L3

Rick & Lisa Gentz

August 23rd

8:00am — E9

Merle Nehmer

10:30am — L5

Marcia Rewolinski &
Arlene Sennhenn

August 30th

8:00am — E11

Delphine Schaefer

10:30am — L7

Wayne & Darlene Powers

If you are interested in being added as a greeter or need to be removed from the schedule, please contact Melody Krakow at (920) 210-6323.



August 2nd & August 9th

8:00am - Team E2

Dale Schilling (C)

Dale Gajdosik

Randy Vick

Kenneth Schulz

Matt Yaroch

Nick Yaroch

Nate Yaroch

10:30am - Team L5

Phil Manteufel (C)

Peter Lewke

Dave Harle

Paul Musser

Brian Baney

Eric Musser

August 16th & August 23rd

8:00am - Team E3

Randy Koehn (C)

Dan Retzlaff

Noah Litherland

Jim Stadler

Josiah Schwartz

William Penterman

10:30am - Team L6

Otto Mattke (C)

Paul Kehl (A)

Dennis Winter

Carl Wolf

William Mattke

Nils Johansson

Shaun Opsahl

August 30th & September 6th

8:00am - Team E4

Mark Lindell (C)

Remington Lindell

Roger Weiland

Bryce Weiland

Brett Weiland

Norman Weiland

Eric Turnquist

10:30am - Team L7

Matt Huber (C)

Carter Huber

Jeremy Maas

Peter Klokow

Jack Klokow

Brady Grambsch

Michael Vertz

If you have any questions about the usher schedule, would like to be added as an usher or won't be able to serve any longer as an usher, please call Randy Koehn at (608) 296-4333.



**Church Attendance
June 2020**

Date	Total
4/7	242
11/14	171
18/21	101
25/28	200

Ministrations

Marriage:

1. Bill Wang & Tina Kehl - Married 6/7/2020.
2. Michael Hallberg & Alisa Wheeler - Married 6/12/2020.

Death:

6. Madge Price - Born 4/19/1932; Died 6/12/2020.
7. Harold Schaefer - Born 9/30/1932; Died 6/23/2020.



Ev Berg	10th	88 years
Wilma Lenz	17th	94 years
John Evers	18th	82 years
Laverne Linde	19th	92 years

Messenger Deadline

Please submit your Messenger articles by August 21st. Contact Sue Henning at (608) 225-4853 or suehenning25@gmail.com if you have any questions.



August 2020 News from Twice is Nice Shop:

If you've visited our Jefferson location, you know the great bargains that can be found every day on 1,000s of items, but this month brings even more excitement for bargain hunters. Among the featured sales, from August 1-12, we have our 30¢ greeting cards on a buy one/get one sale! Then, from August 13-20, summer clothing is half-off. Not enough? How about 50¢ on all remaining summer clothing from August 21-24? Mark your calendar and find us open Mondays-Saturdays from 10-4 PM: we're just a minute east on the Hwy 18 exit off the 26 bypass at 907 W. Racine St., next to the Jefferson Piggly Wiggly.

Volunteer: We are thrilled to report that we have had more than 20 new volunteers from more than 10 federation churches try us out, either cashiering, unloading donations at the back door, sorting clothing or working in departments from books to baby to kitchen and antiques. It's a great time to join the wave—it takes so many to keep our 100% volunteer store operating well, and we are primed and ready to give you the support you'd like to have a fun and rewarding experience!

Donate: Having a rummage sale? Skipping your garage sale this year? Keep us in mind when you're finished or needing an alternative – our donation drop-off hours include every day the store is open, from 10 AM - 3:30 PM. Bring donations to the door on the back side of the store, no appointment needed. Call 920-674-6868 and ask for the day manager if you have questions.

Zion Lutheran Church - Estate Funds Report

Report for the Month of:

June 2020

Previous Month Assets	\$120,399.76
Total Transactions	\$7,512.32
Total Current Assets	\$127,912.08

	\$122,526.48
New Church/School Total	
<i>checking/savings</i>	

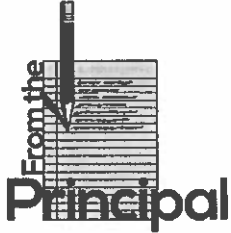
Accounts	Undesignated Checking	Explanation	Monthly Statements		NEW Church/School Checking	
			Undesignated Savings	NEW Church/School Fund Savings		
Previous Balance	\$545.76		\$4,686.53	\$113,628.85	\$1,538.62	
Monthly Transactions *	(\$149.98)		\$303.29	\$7,359.01	\$0.00	
Current Balance	\$395.78		\$4,989.82	\$120,987.86	\$1,538.62	

Transactions	(\$150.00)	loan Marks	\$300.00	6-17 deposit	\$3,302.00	6-1 deposit
	\$0.02	Interest	\$3.29	Interest	\$220.00	6-2 deposit
					\$225.00	6-3 deposit
					(\$5.00)	6-4 Varco return
					\$115.00	6-5 deposit
					\$2,040.12	6-8 deposit
					\$80.00	6-9 deposit
					(\$5,425.00)	6-9 Mortgage payment
					\$75.00	6-10 deposit
					\$599.00	6-12 deposit
					\$5,325.00	6-15 deposit
					\$575.00	6-16 deposit
					\$75.00	6-17 deposit
					\$30.00	6-18 deposit
					\$40.00	6-19 deposit
					\$360.00	6-22 deposit
					\$3,670.28	6-23 deposit
					(\$5,425.00)	6-23 Mortgage payment
					\$75.00	6-24 deposit
					\$250.00	6-25 deposit
					\$574.00	6-26 deposit
					\$85.00	6-29 deposit
					\$424.00	6-30 deposit
					\$74.61	Interest
Monthly Transactions TOTAL	(\$149.98)		\$303.29		\$7,359.01	
TOTAL TRANSACTIONS	\$7,512.32					\$0.00
Notes:						
Interest Received	\$77.92					



LLHS FEDERATION CONNECTION

920-648-2321 • info@llhs.org • 231 Woodland Beach Rd. Lake Mills, WI 53551



Take a breath

Jim Grasby is principal of Lakeside Lutheran.
Reach him at 920.648.2321 or jgrasby@llhs.org

What is the most useful chapter in the Bible? Some may feel that Genesis 1 (Creation), Psalm 23 (the Good Shepherd), 1 Corinthians 15 (Resurrection), or Revelation 22 (the Bible's final words) deserve that title. Yet, there is a case that Romans 8 may well earn that distinction. Living in an unsettled world, this chapter bears a timely message: "Take a breath. God says that it will be okay."

Romans 8 contains several well-known verses.

- There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (v. 1)
- I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. (v. 18)
- If God is for us, who can be against us? (v. 31)

Each one clearly states that God is in control. Nothing can separate us from his love.

The past five months have been difficult for everyone. I do not wish to minimize the impact that disease, the loss of livelihood, and restrictions on travel and socializing have had on people. Nor do I claim that there is no inequality in the world. Yet, if you look at all that has recently happened through the lens of Romans 8, you begin to understand that what God does is for our good and it will continue to be for our good even in trying times.

Have you considered the new opportunities for the gospel since mid-March? An avalanche of technology through streaming, YouTube and other social media has shared the saving message of Jesus with a figuratively captive audience. The seed of the Word has been planted. The Holy Spirit will cause it to grow as he sees fit.

Have you considered the new opportunities for personal spiritual growth? Once busy schedules are not as busy. There is more time to read God's Word, meditate on it, and pray.

Have you considered the new opportunities for godly living? Social isolation creates loneliness. This is a great time to reach out and check on others—especially those who have no one checking on them.

Romans 8 closes, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "Take a breath. God says that it will be okay."

Lord, help us to "take a breath" knowing that you are in control.

Amen.



LAKESIDE ADVANTAGE

The summer edition of the Lakeside Advantage magazine mailed recently. Does your household have children in K-8 but didn't receive a copy in the mail? We'd like to hear from you! Send an e-mail to info@llhs.org.

In this issue, grade school students are invited to join a contest by asking a question they have about Lakeside. Admissions Director Steve Lauber is looking forward to providing some helpful answers...and maybe even being stumped! Prizes include LLHS tuition credit and fun Warrior bling! See the mag for details, or go to llhs.org/advantagecontest

☺ LAKESIDE GOOD NEWS *and* NOTES ☺

☺ Graduated senior Alex Ryan (St. Paul, Lake Mills) was selected as one of 72 of Wisconsin's finest senior baseball players for the annual Wisconsin Baseball Coaches Association All-Star Classic, usually held in Oshkosh at the end of June. Of course, the games didn't happen this year, but we certainly are going to celebrate anyway. Alex will continue his baseball career at Valparaiso University.

☺ This summer, the sign on the front lawn underwent a facelift. It took 55 hours of work by five different people to give it a facelift—with new lights; new sign supports; a power wash for the sign and stone work; caulk in the worn areas; then a good scraping, priming, and painting. Great big thanks to facilities engineer Paul Achilli (St. John, Jefferson), grounds manager Dan Schultz (Zion, Columbus), teachers Andrew Willems (Bethany, Fort Atkinson) and Nate Sievert (St. John, Watertown), and incoming senior Lydia Buxa (Immanuel, Farmington) who all contributed to the final result.



☺ Campus re-opened on July 1 and it was a joy to start our summer strength program for our teens! It's fun to hear the squeaky shoes and hear the laughter fill our gym and halls again.



☺ That same evening, July 1, we also celebrated our 2020 graduates with an outdoor graduation ceremony on the football field. Congratulations to the 92 students who received their diplomas. Special congrats to our academic top ten: Top Ten Annika Bilitz (Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and Student Center, Madison), Salutatorian Ella Collins (St. Paul, Lake Mills), Gilbert Haw (St. Paul, Lake Mills), Valedictorian Elise Meier, (St. Mark, Watertown), Logan Pampel, (St. John, Jefferson), Valedictorian Megan Reinke (St. Luke, Watertown), Owen Schoenherr (Peace, Sun Prairie), Valedictorian Lauren Thiele (Holy Cross, Madison), Salutatorian Kirsten Thundercloud (St. John, Jefferson), Valedictorian Grace Westrate (Door Creek, Madison). See and download photos of the night at llhs.smugmug.com/Events/LLHS-Graduation-2020/

☺ This May, two seniors received the WIAA student-athlete award. Lauren Thiele was the female nominee and Logan Pampel was the male nominee. Both were multiple-sport athletes and in the Top 10.

☺ The Jefferson County Daily Union newspaper featured our Air Force Academy-bound and 2017 WIAA D2 State High Jump champion, Forever Warrior Collin Schulz (Bethany, Fort). He will be competing for the Academy in track and field.

☺ Congrats to Warriors Karleena Battist (St. Paul, Lake Mills), Matthew Gunst, Breanna Preskar, and Cole Schuster (all grads of St. John, Juneau) in earning the Wisconsin FFA Degree, awarded to members who have demonstrated the highest level of commitment to the State FFA Association and made significant accomplishments in their Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAEs). In addition, Connor Dobson (Immanuel, Farmington), Benjamin Huebner (Resurrection, Verona) and Ashley Valerio (St. Matthew, Oconomowoc) were selected to the 2020 Wisconsin FFA Honors Chorus.

☺ Warrior Booster (Angie) Chopp Photography LLC (St. Paul, Lake Mills) did a fabulous job of capturing much of the fun and fellowship of our 26th annual Warrior Booster Golf Outing and dinner on July 10, held at Kestrel Ridge in Columbus, where we had a recent record of 135+ golfers and over 180 for dinner. Without final numbers even in yet, we raised more than \$15,000 for Warrior athletics! See and download pics at llhs.smugmug.com/Boosters/Booster-Golf-Outing-2020



☺ Our OpGo pastors in New Orleans (NOLA) are hosting a virtual VBS and asked Warriors for help...and we responded! Ruth and Dave Fenske (St. John, Jefferson) agreed to take a carload to NOLA "on their way" to visit family on the East Coast, so after some Zooming, Pastor Ielwig, Mrs. Fenske, student and adult servant-leaders

put together lesson plans, organized Kiwi Box-type crafts, treats and other helps that will help the churches during their VBS week. Like the NOLA Facebook page to keep track of this effort and Gospel work in Louisiana at facebook.com/Operation-Go-New-Orleans-101505578313591



☺ To read how your Lakeside Lutheran plans to begin the new school year (Freshman Orientation August 17; All students August 18) in light of the current status of COVID-19, visit our webpage that keeps a running log of announcements and plans. As is the case with all schools across the state, decisions and plans remain subject to change according to state and local actions. Find our current info at llhs.org/apps/pages/corona

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July 7, 2020

WELS female called workers eligible for parsonage allowance

Ever since an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Private Letter Ruling in 1956, WELS pastors and male teachers have qualified for the parsonage allowance. This provision of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) allowed pastors and male teachers to exclude from taxable compensation the value of housing, utilities, and furnishings. In that same ruling in 1956, the IRS declared that WELS female teachers did not qualify for this tax benefit according to the IRC and the IRS interpretation of the rules at the time.

Since 1956, court rulings and interpretations have expanded the eligibility for the parsonage allowance to include female teachers in other church bodies. Recently, questions have been asked about WELS female called worker eligibility under today's interpretations of the IRC. This led the Synodical Council to study the issue and to seek legal advice to determine whether this provision should be available to WELS female teachers and female staff ministers.

We are pleased to report that, after a thorough investigation, we have received a legal opinion that synod ministry certified female teachers and female staff ministers in our synod do qualify for the parsonage allowance. That opinion, from a nationally recognized expert in this area of tax law, was based on court rulings and interpretations of the current language in an IRS publication outlining the qualifications for the exemption.

It is important to note that a necessary requirement for a called worker to receive this tax benefit is that the worker be ordained, licensed, or commissioned by a church body. Based on the advice from our attorney, having synod ministry certification is the equivalent of being licensed by the synod.

This tax benefit has not become available because WELS has changed in its understanding or definition of the role of female called workers. Our description of female teachers and female staff ministers as called workers who serve in the public ministry hasn't changed. What has changed is the way the courts have interpreted IRS rules regarding the required qualifications for this benefit. In other words, this is not a question of theology (our teaching has not changed) but of how tax law is interpreted and applied by the courts and the IRS.

On the basis of the legal advice received, and with input from the Conference of Presidents, the Synodical Council and the Conference of Presidents have determined that there is no reason why synod ministry certified female teachers and female staff ministers should not receive this benefit. Both the Synodical Council and the Conference of Presidents have determined that all calling bodies are to implement this provision for its synod ministry certified female teachers and female staff ministers no later than January 1, 2021. While calling bodies will

need to make this change, it remains up to the individual called worker to decide whether or not to take advantage of this parsonage allowance benefit.

You can find helpful information that will answer questions about this change and provide guidance to congregations and called workers on the WELS Finance Cloud site at wels3655.sharepoint.com/sites/finance (WELS Cloud login required).

Links to these resources have been sent electronically to called workers and will be sent soon via mail to congregations and other calling bodies.

Serving with you in Christ,
WELS President Mark Schroeder 

New WELS Investment Funds video highlights benefits to ministry

Since 1997, WELS Investment Funds has been faithfully providing investment portfolios to WELS and ELS ministries, helping them to achieve their ministry goals.

Currently, WELS Investment Funds manages more than \$225 million for our synod and over 200 organizations, including congregations, area Lutheran high schools, and WELS-affiliated ministries.

"It's another way we can support each other," says Mr. Jim Holm, executive director of WELS Investment Funds.

"By pooling our God-given resources, we can take advantage of lower cost, institutionally priced investment opportunities that are not available to smaller investment accounts."

WELS Investment Funds has released the first video in a series to highlight the benefits to ministry when organizations partner with WELS Investment Funds. Watch it now at wels.net/wif.

"I recommend that ministries view the video and prayerfully consider WELS Investment Funds for their investment needs," says Mr. Dennis Walters, chairman of the WELS Investment Funds board. "Our investment advisor and co-fiduciary, Vanguard, gives us access to the world's premier index and active fund managers. Our goal is for all ministries to be aware of the services of WELS Investment Funds and be able to benefit from them."

Mr. David Bartelt, vice president of the Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School Foundation in Jackson, Wis., knows those benefits firsthand. Since 2013, Kettle Moraine Lutheran (KML) has partnered with WELS Investment Funds, but that wasn't always the case. Prior to 2013, the leadership at KML thought they should manage their investments themselves.

Looking back, Bartelt says, "We spent meeting upon meeting being money managers rather than ministry managers." He wishes they would have entrusted their investments to WELS Investment Funds sooner. "What they have done for us is immeasurable. They help us focus

more on ministry rather than managing money.”

If you would like to learn how WELS Investment Funds can help support your organization's ministry goals, or for a free review of your current investment portfolio, contact Executive Director Jim Holm at jim.holm@wels.net or 414-256-3206. ☩

Did you know...

WELS has a Facebook page?
facebook.com/welslutherans

WELS has Instagram?
instagram.com/welslutherans

WELS has Twitter?
twitter.com/welstweets

Forward in Christ magazine has a Facebook page?
facebook.com/forwardinchristmagazine

Forward in Christ magazine has Instagram?
instagram.com/forward_in_christ_magazine/



To sign up for the e-mail version, visit wels.net/together.

July 21, 2020

Good news on two fronts


The 2021 premium rates for the WELS VEBA Group Health Care Plan will not change compared to the current 2020 rates. In other words, the 2020 rates for all WELS VEBA health and dental plan options will remain in effect for 2021. The WELS VEBA health plan has experienced better-than-expected claims costs and investment returns over the past 18 months, which has allowed the WELS VEBA Commission to keep 2021 rates the same as they were in 2020. No significant changes to cost-sharing amounts (deductibles) or covered services are expected for the 2021 plan year.

In contrast to rising costs of healthcare nationwide, WELS VEBA rates will have increased by only four percent over the three-year period from 2019-21. This does not include the approximately \$4.2 million in savings passed on to participating sponsoring organizations during the previously announced August 2020 WELS VEBA premium holiday.

Mr. Joshua Peterman, director of Benefit Plans, says, "The Lord continues to bless WELS VEBA to provide the commission with the financial flexibility to hold the rates flat for 2021 while maintaining adequate plan reserves. The commission is pleased to provide this rate stability to help support WELS ministry efforts."

In addition, the WELS VEBA Commission has approved a limited open enrollment that will run from Nov. 2, 2020, through Nov. 30, 2020, for coverage effective Jan. 1, 2021. Eligible workers serving at sponsoring organizations with at least one active worker enrolled in the WELS VEBA health plan will have the opportunity to enroll for new coverage or make changes to their existing WELS VEBA coverage. Open enrollment materials will be mailed to eligible workers in late October.

Another piece of good news is that Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) for June totaled \$1,795,803, an increase of 28.9 percent over June 2019. Year-to-date CMO is now \$9,480,520, 2 percent above prior year-to-date receipts and 1.9 percent above year-to-date subscriptions. We are thankful that the Lord has enabled our congregations and members to continue their generous support for the work we do together as a synod even in these challenging times.

Serving with you in Christ,
WELS President Mark Schroeder 

WELS Christian Aid and Relief Relief makes humanitarian aid grants

WELS Christian Aid and Relief announced it has granted \$455,919 to humanitarian aid projects in WELS mission fields around the world for fiscal year 2020-21.


Projects are developed by WELS home and world missionaries to reflect Christ's love to the people of their community and open doors to share the gospel. Major items include support for health clinics, borehole drilling to provide clean water, home-based care for the chronically ill and dying, food assistance, adult literacy classes, food and nutrition to orphans and refugees, and medical equipment.

While many projects are ongoing and renewed annually, Rev. Robert Hein, chairman of Christian Aid and Relief, says, "This year we approved more grants from our home missions, especially as they minister to people in cross-cultural situations, such as providing backpacks to needy children for school."

"Many of the people we serve are lacking in essentials like clean water, food, basic health care, and other supplies. God meets their physical needs through our efforts and they also have the opportunity to learn about their Savior, who met our greatest need," Hein explains, "All humanitarian aid projects start with our missionaries in the field. They develop projects to meet community needs and build relationships to share the gospel with the people they serve. All requests are reviewed by our mission leaders and then brought to our commission for funding."

He continues, "Meeting community needs is a great way to put Christ's love into action. As we address physical needs, our missionaries also have opportunities to share the good news about Jesus with the people of their community. We are always looking for ways to make a positive impact on our communities."

WELS members can support the work of WELS Christian Aid and Relief through prayers and offerings. In addition to humanitarian aid grants, the organization also provides disaster relief and medical financial emergency grants to people in need.

View a complete list of humanitarian aid projects supported by WELS Christian Aid and Relief through your offerings at wels.net/car 

MLC releases return-to-school plans

Martin Luther College (MLC), New Ulm, Minn., the WELS college of ministry, released its "Knights Return to Campus Plan" on July 17, after months of planning. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, MLC had to conclude its 2019-20 school via alternative/distance learning.

The plan calls for students to return to the school's campus in New Ulm for the fall semester, with classes starting on Aug. 24. Most of the courses will be delivered in person, with less than 10 percent being a blend of online and in-person instruction. The campus will host only essential on-campus events and provide virtual alternatives for other events where possible. Only students, faculty, and staff will be able to participate in the on-campus events at this time.

In a letter of introduction to the plan, Rev. Richard Gurgel, MLC president, shares that the fall planning team spent “hours listening to government officials, health professionals, collegiate organizations, new and returning students and their families, our faculty and staff, and many others in our synod” before putting together the document.

“Our top priority is providing the highest level of safety and confidence in our campus learning environment, while adhering to the spiritual and educational standards WELS expects from its college of ministry,” he says.

Students and administration will participate in daily screenings, including a temperature check.

Isolation and quarantine procedures are in place for those who have symptoms for COVID-19, test positive, or have been in close contact with someone exhibiting symptoms or testing positive.

Campus officials say the plan may change as circumstances change.

“We offer this plan trusting in God’s gracious care for us in our Lord Jesus,” says Gurgel. “At the same time, we also recognize that such trust does not diminish the responsibility God himself entrusts to us to be wise stewards of our health for the sake of our whole campus family as well as for the entire community of New Ujm.”

The other ministerial education schools—Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.; Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.; and Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.—are finalizing their return-to-school documents. As of right now all three schools are planning to have face-to-face, in-

person instruction on their campuses for the start of the 2020–21 school year, with classes starting the week of Aug. 24. All four schools concluded the 2019–20 school year via alternative/distance learning due to COVID-19.

“The faculty and staff at Martin

Luther College have done a remarkable job pulling together the many plans and decisions that have to be made to open safely this fall,” says Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of the Board for Ministerial Education. “We ask God’s blessings on the faithful work of everyone at MLC and the other ministerial education schools, and we keep them in our prayers.”

New faces at WELS CMM

The WELS Center for Mission and Ministry (CMM), Waukesha, Wis., welcomes Mr. Paul Patterson and Mr. Kyle Egan. Patterson joined the CMM on July 1 as the associate director of the Commission on Lutheran Schools, replacing Mr. Tom Piltzweit who took a call to serve at a school. Egan started as chief financial officer (CFO) on July 6, following the retirement of former WELS CFO, Mr. Todd Poppe.

Patterson will be responsible for overseeing the WELS School Accreditation (WELSSA) program. He came to the CMM from Wisconsin Lutheran School, Racine, Wis., where he served as principal for eight years. Prior to serving at Wisconsin Lutheran School, he served as a principal and teacher at Peace, Sun Prairie, Wis., and Christ, Zumbrota, Minn.

While he says he’s going to miss being around kids, he’s looking forward to the opportunity to serve in a new

role. “One of the passions I have is developing professional learning communities and tapping into the strengths our educators already have and using those strengths to maximize the benefit to the school. I’m looking forward to working with schools that are interested in improvement and leveraging the resources of so many smart people in our synod to make those connections,” says Patterson. Patterson and his wife, Lara, have four children, two in high school and two in college.

In his free time he likes to hunt and has been teaching snowboarding since 2008 as a nationally certified snowboard instructor.

Mr. Jim Rademan, director of the Commission on Lutheran Schools, says, “Paul brings a vision for excellence in education and a passion for meeting the needs of both children and families being served through our schools.”

As CFO, Egan will be responsible for overseeing the synod’s finances. He is a member at Bethlehem, Germantown, Wis., with his wife Janet and three young children.

Egan has more than 15 years of finance experience, most recently as the assistant treasurer and director of investor relations for Quad/Graphics in Sussex, Wis. He is looking forward to using his professional expertise to further the ministry work of WELS.

“I’ve had a pulling at my heart over the last several years that had me searching for an opportunity to use

my abilities in a way that would help forward a mission or ministry, to do something that would align my faith closer to my professional background and the skill set that God has given me,” says Egan. “There has been so much good work done at WELS, and I want to make sure I carry that forward in a good way.”

When he’s not working, Egan likes to visit the zoo with his family and attend Packer games with his wife—in pre-pandemic times.

“We feel blessed Kyle has made the prayerful decision to join the leadership team at the WELS CMM and look forward to working with him,” says WELS President Mark Schroeder.

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facebook.com/welslutherans

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WELS
Christ's Love, Our Calling

To sign up for the e-mail version, visit
wels.net/together.

Sunday, August 23rd at Zion

MENU HOT DOG CHIPS CARROTS COOKIE BOTTLE OF WATER	Fun, distanced, family activities Balloon Toss Blanket Volleyball Scavenger Hunt Craft Table Prize Walk Bingo Cornhole Tournament
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PICNIC Branches Band to perform

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