



St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church, New Ulm, MN

April, 2021 *Fortress*

BEYOND THE CROSS

Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. (Isaiah 53:10-11 NIV 1984)

During this Lenten season we walked the pathway which led to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The road to the cross took us past scenes which reminded us that we are living in a sinful world. There is deceit, betrayal, anxiety, suffering, bloodshed and death. With each episode along the way – Judas' kiss of betrayal, Peter's denial of the Savior, the unjust trial of the chief priests, the venomous accusation of the Jews, the cruel abuse of the Roman soldiers, the scourging with the cat-of-nine-tails, the morbid death of the innocent Christ – we are reminded of our own abominable sins. We are convicted by our own unfaithfulness to God. We are condemned by the failings of our own human frailty.

However, the road through Lent which took us to the cross of Christ met up with another path, just beyond the cross. It is the road to a garden where we find the tomb which Joseph of Arimathea had carved out of the rock. Originally, he had intended it for himself. But he was willing to make a sacrifice for the one who sacrificed himself for the world. In that tomb he laid the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Beyond the cross where Jesus had died for the sins of the world Joseph and his friend Nicodemus wrapped the Lord of Life in funeral clothes and buried him in a grave with a stone which sealed the mouth of the tomb.

Just beyond the cross, a group of women, early in the morning, came down the Lenten path, the road which they expected to end at the tomb. But the tomb was empty. There, beyond the cross they were met by angels who proclaimed that Jesus was alive. Beyond the cross, Mary Magdalene would meet the risen Lord face to face. Beyond the cross Jesus would re-group and comfort his fearful apostles. Beyond the cross he would promise them life and salvation. He assured them that he would return in glory to take them to heaven. Beyond the cross he would ascend into heaven.

Today, we look back on the path through Lent and see before us the cross of Christ. There is the place where Jesus died for our sins. There is the place where Satan was defeated. There is the place where our debts to God were paid by the blood of Christ.

But it is beyond the cross that we find what it all means for us. Let us go beyond the cross to the empty tomb and meet the risen Christ. In the Resurrection we have the assurance that our sins have been atoned for, that God accepted Jesus' sacrifice for our sins, and that we too shall rise from

death. Beyond the cross is the empty tomb. Beyond the cross, the Bible says of Jesus: **After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.** Beyond the cross he waits for us, with deep satisfaction, at the open gates of heaven through which he beckons to us.

In Christ,
Pastor Bovee

Evangelism

Pray Continually

In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Paul told the Thessalonians to “pray continually.” How are *you* doing with that? Do you pray continually throughout the day - everyday? Or, do you find yourself praying in church, before meals and maybe when you need something? Chances are, you are most likely somewhere in the middle.

The Evangelism board is currently working on publishing a monthly prayer calendar and defining the best means of sharing it. We are looking at sharing them daily across our social media accounts and as a monthly view posted to our website and the Fortress. The intent of this is two-fold: One, as a prayer aid for visitors checking out our church’s online presence and two, as a daily reminder for all of us to pray continually.

In the meantime, here’s a simple reminder for the four parts of prayer to help you in your daily prayer life. Just remember A.C.T.S.

A - Adoration of God.

C - Confession and Repentance of our sins.

T - Thanksgiving for all that God has given us.

S - Supplication (our requests from God)

A few other closing tips if you’re not already doing them:

1. Start your own prayer reminder calendar. Something like a simple Google calendar where you note who you want to pray for each day. It’s very easy to start it out by praying for individuals on their birthdays and couples on their anniversaries. You can fill in more as you go.
2. Occasionally, let the person you’re praying for know that you did. It could be a phone call, or even a simple text to let them know you’re thinking of them and praying for them. I personally know how uplifting it is to get such a text out of the blue.
3. Add those you DON’T know to your prayer list - especially those searching aimlessly for answers and/or not finding a church home of their own.

Blessings on your month!
Jesse Zahrt
Board of Evangelism

Thank You!

Thank you to all of the individuals who took time out of their day to assist in cleaning the church on Saturday, March 20th. There was a great turn out and wonderful fellowship!

“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”

- Colossians 3:23-24

Church Library

Happy Easter season to all of you. We can all be happy knowing that Jesus died and rose again to ensure heaven for us.

This month I have two books to tell you about that are already in our church library. The first one is “No Wonder They Call Him the Savior,” by Max Lucado. He takes us through the seven words from the cross, and the witnesses of the crucifixion, plus the wisdom of the cross to explain why Jesus deserved to be called our Savior. There is also a study guide after that to lead to further thinking on each of the 33 chapter devotion subjects.

The second book is “501 Practical Ways to Love Your Grandchildren and Their Parents,” by Roger Sonnenberg. He wrote 52 chapters with each chapter listing 4-6 helpful suggestions for dealing with your children, and 4-6 more for grandchildren. If you have grandchildren, you may find this helpful.

Someone donated an audiobook to us. It is entitled “The Case for Easter” by Lee Strobel. Since I have read his books, I am sure this is worthwhile, especially during the Easter Season. He explains evidence he found for the Resurrection.

LeiLani Rahn,
Church librarian

April Sermon Texts

Apr. 1	1 Corinthians 10:16-17	Learn to Share
Apr. 2	Good Friday Tenebrae	Seven Words from the Cross
Apr. 4	1 Corinthians 15:19-26	Our Easter Legacy
Apr. 11	1 John 5:1-6	There is Victory in Jesus for God's Children
Apr. 18	Luke 24:36-49	Shalom? Prove It!
Apr. 21		Confirmation Examination Service: 7 pm
Apr. 25	John 10:11-18	The Good Shepherd Gives His Life for the Sheep
Apr. 25		Confirmation Service: 3 pm

Weekday Bible Classes meet in the Church Basement

The classes can also be found at
bit.ly/StJohnsBibleClass

Sundays at 9:30 am	Lies About God	Prof. Dave Scharf
Thursdays at 10:30 am	Civil Government	Pastor Jeffrey Bovee
Thursdays at 7 pm	Book of Revelation	Pastor Rob Guenther

Women of St. John's

The Women of St. John's met on March 20, 2021, for the first time since March, 2020 (due to the pandemic situation). Pastor Guenther opened with a devotion based on John 2:12ff. Jesus, no longer meek and mild, cleansed the temple with a whip and force. He was the angry Jesus defending His Father's house because of the blatant abuse that was occurring. We must ask ourselves – Have we ever abused God's house? Have we taken His Word or His help for granted? We are just as guilty. He also rebukes us when we do this. We need to be reminded, especially at this time of year, to take care of our own temple.

Secretary's Report: The minutes were read. No unusual or urgent correspondence arrived during the past year.

Treasurer's Report: Our balance is \$557.45. As Citizen Bank reports on paper now cost \$2.00/month, we are looking at going online. Marley Kuckhahn moved that we check with Mike Thom (temporary treasurer).

LWMS: The upcoming Spring Rally is on April 17. The National Convention will be discussed.

Cards of Caring: Lois Willems offered card crafts to the group and requested us to write Easter greetings in cards tonight.

After the Business meeting, Liz Wessel and Grace Bases supplied us with water bottles for refreshment and led us in exercises from Miranda Esmonde-White and her classic stretching work-out. She is on PBS at 6:00 AM with her class: Essentrics. Everyone enjoyed the mini-class and the stretch.

Ruth Aufderheide (Secretary)

Council Digest

The Church Council met on March 16. A summary of reports and action from the meeting not reported elsewhere in the *Fortress* follows:

- Membership changes approved
 - Transfer Out
 - Kelly Emde to St. Paul's, New Ulm, MN
- Financial Secretary Jim Grunwald, who also serves as chair of the Finance Committee, reported a vacancy on the Finance Committee due to a resignation. The primary responsibility of the committee is to count the weekly congregational offerings. This is usually done on Sunday mornings during the late service. If you are interested in serving the Lord in this way or would like more information, please contact the undersigned.
- A letter from the auditing team was shared with council members. The auditors found the 2020 calendar year financial records "accurate and in good order." The report will be presented to the voters for acceptance at the April quarterly voters' meeting.
- Deacon Brad Price shared a report indicating that worship service attendance has been steadily increasing in recent weeks to the point that our pandemic-imposed capacity of 80 worshipers per service is being met or exceeded by using overflow seating. He has had conversations with the New Ulm Police Department about conducting ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) training for our ushers once pandemic restrictions have been lifted.

- Elder Bill Dinse noted that the congregation has installed video communication devices at several local residential care centers for the elderly and disabled, allowing our pastors to conduct virtual shut-in calls. Initial testing suggests that the devices will be a useful tool in communicating the love of Christ with these members during a time when face-to-face visits are restricted.
- Following consultation with the Minnesota Governor's Office, the Elders also brought a recommendation that we increase our worship capacity from 80 to 100 by utilizing every other pew (rather than every third pew) and by staggering the arrangement from one side of the church to the other, effective immediately. The new arrangement should not only increase our capacity but also improve our ability to maintain appropriate social distancing. The council approved the recommendation and Pastor Guenther offered to lead the implementation of the decision.
- Evangelism chair Jesse Zahrt indicated that the Evangelism Board is planning for a full slate of activities in the coming months with the prayer that social distancing guidelines will be relaxed or eliminated with the rollout of a vaccine. A list follows:
 - * A recent community canvas and newspaper ads serve the purpose of inviting members of the community to attend our Easter services on April 4. Overflow seating options for the new narthex and church basement are being developed.
 - * A church picnic is tentatively scheduled for June 12.
 - * A congregational camping event is scheduled for June 25-27 at Sleepy Eye Sportsman's Park.
 - * A youth soccer camp is tentatively scheduled for July 19-22.
 - * A fellowship event at the Sleepy Eye outdoor pool is tentatively set for July 24.
 - * Vacation Bible School scheduling and planning is currently on hold.
 In addition, some general evangelism, fellowship, and outreach activities are under investigation and development. They include a church prayer calendar, participation in WELS mission trips, and pictorial directory update options.
- A list of 12 names was approved for the formation of a Technology Committee to guide the congregation as it updates its technology infrastructure and uses technology tools to spread the gospel. Once all of the individuals nominated have been contacted and agreed to serve, the committee will meet to organize into subcommittees, develop a mission-vision statement, and begin its work.

Future meetings:

- The next Church Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 20, at 7:00 p.m.
- The next quarterly voters' meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 27, at 7:00 p.m.

Steven R. Thiesfeldt,
Congregational Chairman

Our Synod at Work

“Called to Proclaim”

This month we will continue to discuss highlights from The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod’s Annual Report to Our Members in 2021. This month we will look at the section entitled “Called to Proclaim.” The section basically discusses home and world missions.

Regarding Home Missions, the Board for Home Missions approved three new missions in 2020. They were:

1. Amarillo, Texas, which is located 130 miles from the nearest WELS church. A group of 15 WELS members are the core group that is reaching out. A pastor from Lubbock, Texas, makes a two-hour drive to Amarillo twice a month to serve the members with the Word and sacraments.
2. North Liberty, Iowa, which is a multi-site ministry with Good Shepherd in Cedar Rapids. There are a core group of 20 members that began worshipping in July, 2017, at the North Liberty Community Center. Funding from Home Missions will allow Good Shepherd to call a second pastor that will help the North Liberty outreach.
3. West San Antonio, Texas, where ten families from Our Savior in San Antonio make up a core group at this new mission that began worshipping together in March, 2020.

World Missions conducts gospel outreach in 40 foreign countries and is currently exploring outreach opportunities in 17 additional countries. World Missions uses evangelism efforts, church planting, training national workers for ministry, and providing religious materials in foreign languages in spreading God’s Word. World Missions supports mission work in the following areas:

1. Apache reservations in Arizona. The gospel is being shared in eight churches, one preaching station, and two Lutheran elementary schools.
2. Africa. Missionaries and national church partners from six existing countries are exploring mission work in nine additional African countries.
3. Asia. The newly formed Asia One Team is coordinating resources and partnering with sister synods to reach out with the gospel to Buddhist, Catholic, Hindu, and Muslim individuals that live in nine different countries.
4. East Asia. Missionaries are coaching and mentoring 45 mission group leaders. They are doing so in spite of tightening security. Asia Lutheran Seminary is also reaching hundreds of new students through new online classes.
5. Latin America. The Academia Cristo online training tool is helping more than 345 people take self-led classes, and missionaries have identified more than 25 men in 11 different countries as potential church partners.
6. Europe. National churches are partnering with WELS missionaries and the Pastoral Studies Institute to train the next generation of church leaders.
7. Multi-Language Productions. They have produced confessional Christian content in more than 56 languages using a variety of platforms.

We will continue our summary of the 2021 Annual Report to Members next month.

Gerald Woodley

St. Paul's Lutheran School

splnewulm.org/school/

A Cup of Coffee with the Principal

You read that right. I am always open to meet over coffee with anyone who would like to talk about Christian education at St. Paul's. I have a beautiful new office where we can sit down to visit. I am passionate about what we are doing at our school and thankful for all of the blessings we have been given.

Suggestions for conversation might include discussing the climate of the school, and what we are trying to teach the children about living lives of sanctification. Whether that means having children show compassion for each other, helping others by picking up their dropped books, or looking out for the neatness of our new facility. Our climate is a work in progress, and it always will be. We could also talk about how we are using the new facilities that were dedicated in January, 2020. It might be how the new office has changed the way the school runs, or it might be our new STEM and Art rooms. We could also shoot the breeze about current events happening at school. It might be how politics affect the school, or what is the next project at the school. There is always something exciting for the principal to share.

Whether you are a new parent with children in the school, a longtime member of one of our partner congregations, or a school supporter, you are welcome to meet the principal for a cup of coffee. Just remember that he likes it black.

Pete Markgraf

Student of the Month

St. John's recognizes the importance of supporting the future called workers of the WELS and has created the **Ministerial Student Scholarship Fund** as a means of assistance to St. John's members training for service in the ministry. These funds are equally distributed to the St. John's members who are third and fourth year students at Martin Luther College or attending the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

Sam Boeder is one of the students who is receiving funds and is attending Martin Luther College.

1. What made you decide to become a pastor or a teacher?

I decided I wanted to pursue pastoral ministries while I was attending the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. While I enjoyed my time there, I knew I was ignoring an urge and desire to explore my interests in being a pastor. I enjoy writing, languages (I had to warm up to those first), being in God's Word, and people. Whether I'm getting to know new people or enjoying fellowship with friends, I recognize that God blessed me with the ability to talk, so what better way to use this blessing than to serve God's church.



2. How many years of school do you have left?

I'm currently in my final semester at MLC, then four years at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

3. What class do you enjoy the most?

I really appreciated the opportunity to study Spanish further and hope to use it in my ministry. As far as pastor-track classes go, I like the history, tradition, and poetry of Hebrew.

4. What class do you find the most challenging?

An easy answer would be Greek, but more specifically, our class devoted to the book of Acts. Studying Acts was a fun challenge for language and Biblical knowledge, but Professor Fredrich is a treasure trove of knowledge, so it's well worth it.

5. Do you have a job while you're in school? If so, what do you do? How do you balance work and studies?

I work as a server/delivery driver at Green Mill, a security team member at MLC, and I donate plasma when I can. Work is a necessary part of being a student and I've been blessed with understanding employers and good opportunities for jobs that allow me to complete my homework AND sleep too. It helps me set a good routine and work ethic and the days fly by!

6. What are your hobbies when you're not in class or studying (or at work)?

I play on the offensive line for the MLC football team, so I spend my time between class and work at practice or working on Olympic lifts with Coach Steve Pearson. I love Olympic lifting and any intramural sports, but if I can, I really love any kind of fishing, ice, fly or otherwise, or being outside in God's creation.

7. Anything else you'd like to say to the St. John's members who support you?

I have greatly appreciated the support I've received from St. John's ever since I can remember. Whether in Sunday school or confirmation, youth group, or music, this congregation has helped grow my faith and nurture my desire to serve God somewhere else in the future. Thank you for the financial support I've received at MLC, the verbal support from fellow members and pastors, and for your continuous prayers. Thank you!

1948 - A Banner Year

In the Year of our Lord, 1948, these were the headlines that grabbed the attention of most:

Babe Ruth Dead at 53 - *The Indianapolis Star*

Gandhi Shot To Death: Riots Sweep Bombay - *The Cincinnati Post*

Zionists Proclaim New State of Israel - *The New York Times*

IT'S A BOY-(Princess) Elizabeth and Her Son Are Doing Well - *The Bulletin and Scots Pictorial*

Dewey Defeats Truman - *The Chicago Daily Tribune*



While the world is mesmerized by the headlines of their native land, God's people long to hear the voice of their Good Shepherd. To assure that they receive the genuine Word and Sacraments, they

look for a pastor who is well trained in the truth of Scripture. Already on January 18th, only two weeks after the congregation was founded, St. John's received a call list from The Minnesota District Mission Board and Minnesota District President Adolph Ackermann. The list included the names of Wisconsin Synod pastors, Edwin Schmelzer, John Dahlke, Conrad Frey, Emil Toepel, Professor Waldemar Pless (of Northwestern College, Watertown, WI) and, understandably, Prof. Martin Albrecht who had served them so far.

Professor Pless was called by the congregation. About a month later, the congregational voters were notified that he had declined the call. The congregation then extended the call to Professor Martin Albrecht. After consulting with the Dr. Martin Luther College Board of Control, he accepted, with the understanding that his college duties for 1948-49 be significantly reduced. Professor Martin Albrecht served St. John's until June 1950. At that time, Pastor Roland A. Gurgel became St. John's first full-time shepherd.

The congregation immediately focused on purchasing land on which to eventually build a church. Mr. William Stelljes had purchase two lots on the corner of Washington and Seventh Street South from Mrs. Carrie Bianchi and Mr. Frank J. Tauschek. The fledgling congregation purchased them, in turn, from William Stelljes for the sum of \$5,500.



This picture of the basement church was taken just before the superstructure was built in 1966. This is the entrance which faces 7th Street South (Lincoln Park)

On Wednesday, May 19, 1948, the congregation assembled for the groundbreaking. Professor Albrecht led the service and Mr. Helmuth Hagen, the congregational president turned the first shovelful of dirt.

In a matter of days, each of five New Ulm businesses began to swarm the site. The Wallner Construction Company excavated the footprint. Next, the Kraus Construction Company poured the footings and assembled the walls. At this point, members offered whatever sweat-equity they could by hauling cement blocks and bags from the New Ulm Brick and Tile Yards up to the site. Finally,

Although there were fewer than 200 souls at this time, the people of St. John's planned, God-willing, to build a church that would eventually seat 500 worshippers. They hired the Mankato architectural firm of Ernst H. Schmidt and Company to draw up the plans for the entire building.

During those post-war years, it was a common practice of congregations to build the basement and use it as a temporary worship area until it was paid for and the congregation could rally its finances for the final phase - the building of the "superstructure."



Architect's Drawing of Proposed Superstructure
It was still uncertain whether the tower would be at the Seventh Street entrance or closer to the Washington Street entrance. Notice the single window over the main entrance. Today it is a triple window. This superstructure would not be built for another 18 years.

the Ulrich Electric Company, the plumbers of W.O. Moll & Company and Ahrens Brothers (heating) plied their trades.

On July 11, 1948, the chairman of the Minnesota District Mission Board, Pastor N. Wehausen, drove over from LeSeuer to preach the sermon for the cornerstone laying. The 1948 cornerstone, one of the two which celebrates God's grace in providing a place to worship Him, was designed by B.J. Krahn of New Ulm, is pictured.



The cost of the basement church was \$62,000. Almost \$4,000 of that was contributed by the 186 souls at the time of the cornerstone laying.

The contents of the 1948 cornerstone include: a Bible, Luther's Catechism, a hymnal, a copy of The Unaltered Augsburg Confession, a copy of the original constitution of the congregation and for those who follow us, an early copy of the history of the congregation, a list of all members at that time, a list of officers who were serving as well as a copy of the local newspaper.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor em. Wayne A. Laitinen,
St. John's Archivist

Band of Brothers

The 2021 Men of Truth Conference will meet this year under the theme *Band of Brothers* on April 10th at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in New Ulm. This year's engaging keynote speaker is Pastor Mark Jeske. Our panel comprises of Dr. Benjamin Kohls, Mr. Phil Scriver, and Pastor Tim Hartwig. Mrs. Michelle Markgraf is our guest speaker from Kingdom Workers. Go to www.menoftruth.org for more information!

OWLS

OWLS Lenten Newsletter for Seniors

Still no meetings planned! Or being planned at this point!

In this "unprecedented" year, I have been thinking about life during Jesus' years of active ministry. What was it like? Deep political turmoil as the ruling Jewish religious heads worried about revolution that they as favored Roman agents were charged to prevent, brutal policing by the feared Roman legions, economic uncertainty at all levels due to unpredictable Roman taxations and building programs, rigid social divisions, job worries, and omnipresent diseases of every sort without a hope of cure except a miracle. Something missing back then that is a real problem now is racism. A different

sort of element we have experienced now is social distancing and the discouraging of intimacy with dear relatives.

Besides doing miracles to convince the people that God loved and cared for them, Jesus' early Sermon on the Mount to a crowd gave them something to think about carefully--**if** they really cared about heaven and God. These are the Beatitudes (Matthew 5):

- ³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- ⁴Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
- ⁵Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
- ⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
- ⁷Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
- ⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
- ⁹Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
- ¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus then added the rest of the lengthy Sermon on the Mount so that they would not think too shallowly and quickly about these crucial meditations for their time--and for ours. As the senior members of our congregations, we perhaps have already thought carefully about these things. Perhaps we can also learn from one another's thoughts what God himself might be pleased to have us all be thinking and planning and praying resolutely. Mutual encouragement is good.

Dar Raddatz

Central Africa Medical Mission

Proverbs 16:3 "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans."

When the Central Africa Medical Mission was established sixty years ago, those who were on the stateside committee and their advisors had the foresight to establish a clear plan for the organization. When looking at a country for our services, they determined it was important for a mission to be established and that we could support the mission work through our humanitarian work. They also desired to only go into a country if there was an opportunity for Nationals to serve our patients. Finally, they set forth guidelines about nationalizing the clinic in future years. Because of the foundation laid in the last 60 years and God's continued generosity, we have been blessed to serve over 50,000 patients per year in Zambia and Malawi.

As we approach our 60th anniversary in Zambia, we reflect on God's continued grace to our clinic and our staff, which includes 10 Nationals in Zambia. Our Zambia clinic has been operating with little oversight from the stateside committee for close to 15 years and thrives! In fact, they were recently granted the honor of being chosen by the Ministry of Health to be the site as a cholera clinic over the government clinic. We celebrate our clinic's success and continue to thank God for the opportunities we have been given to serve Him there.

Although 2020 was a tough year for the world, it gave us time and the opportunity to look at our clinic procedures in Malawi which have been operational for over 50 years. We currently employ 11 Nationals, one of whom is a registered nurse who received the Althea Sauer scholarship for her nursing degree. Fifty years ago, we were established to empower the National staff to take on more responsibility when the time was right.

After 50 years, our CAMM stateside committee, with guidance from the Administration Committee for Africa, and with prayerful consideration, has decided that the time is right. God has provided us the right staff, the right ex-patriots to train the staff and the right support to do this. Beth and Gary Evans are spending their last 18 months in the field training and evaluating the staff so we can confidently empower the staff to take on the day-to-day clinic operations.

We thank God for the opportunity he allows every day for our clinics to operate, for the staff to care for the patients, for the chances our staff is given to share their faith and for his continued generosity. We thank God daily for you, our supporters, as well – for without your prayers and YOUR generosity, we could not continue the work that we do. Please continue to keep our clinics, staff and the patients in your prayers. We know that God will bless our plans and guide our decisions for His glory, as he tells us in Jeremiah 29:11 “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Written by Shelly Sievert on behalf of the CAMM Stateside Committee:(Shelly Sievert, Chair; Bea Punke, Treasurer; Kris Olson, Secretary; Cindy Fietzer, Nurse Coordinator; Linda Liesener, Outreach Director; Stacy Stolzman, Development Director; Angela Sievert, Public Relations Coordinator; Cheryl Valus, Contact Woman Coordinator)

WELS Lutheran School in Haiti

Your Support is Urgently Needed at our WELS Branch Lutheran Schools of Haiti, Inc. Director Yvette in Smyrne operates the largest school and orphanage with 470 students currently able to attend. For four months, she and the children have suffered a lack of electricity resulting from the extreme economic hardship affecting people all across Haiti. Yvette's electricity was provided by a private company that serviced the whole area, but her neighbors became unable to pay for their portion. Eventually, the electric company shut off the power and removed the electrical boxes, leaving the entire neighborhood--including Yvette's orphanage and school--completely without electricity. Once the sun goes down, there is no light on the premises at all. The orphans who reside there are unable to do their work and studies and the school classrooms cannot be lit.

Yvette hopes to purchase solar panels at a cost of \$2,745 and install them at her school. These desperately-needed panels can eliminate the reliance on electric companies and bring light back into the orphanage and classrooms for the hundreds of children who are struggling in this darkness. With your help, our WELS Branch Schools can both continue to share the saving light of God's grace and bring back the physical light to fill the darkness once again. You can donate through the link below at branchlutheranschoolshaiti.org/donate.

Any donations that exceed their \$2,745 goal will go directly towards the other expenses of the schools.

Yet, in the midst of the physical darkness across Haiti, Jesus' eternal light shines clearly. The message of salvation proclaimed at Branch Schools includes these comforting words: "Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'" (John 8:12)

We thank God for His constant presence at Branch Schools and for touching the hearts of so many people who donate to keep the schools open.

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5)