



St. John's Lutheran Church
March, 2019 *Fortress*

WORTHY IS THE LAMB

Revelation 5:6 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders.

We are about to begin the penitential walk down the path of Lent once again. It will lead us from the cheers of the crowd who welcomed Jesus on Palm Sunday as the King who came in the name of the Lord, to the temple courts where he drove out the money changers, to the secret place where his enemies plotted against him, to the upper room where he celebrated the Lord's Supper with his apostles, to the deep distress of Gethsemane, to the mock trials in the palace of the high priests – Annas and Caiaphas, to the Praetorium of Pontius Pilate, to the cross of Golgotha, and to the tomb provided by Joseph Arimathea where they laid his corpse.

Yes, Jesus really did all of these things. He really lived among us, sharing our flesh and blood. He really died on the cross and was buried.

Isaiah had said it some seven hundred years before it happened: He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth (Isaiah 53:7). Jesus is the Lamb of whom he spoke.

Jesus is also the Lamb about whom St. John also spoke when he said in Revelation 5:6 that he saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain. John says that "it looked like it had been slain," because it was no longer dead. The Lamb was very much alive. But it had been dead and its appearance somehow reminded John of what the purpose of the Lamb had been.

Remember, it may have been St. John himself who was one of the first of the apostles to follow Jesus when he heard John the Baptizer say in John 1:38, "Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" If indeed it was John, he never forgot those words. And even if John was referring to someone else, he never forgot those words, because his vision reminds us not to forget them. Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world by taking our place-- living the perfect life we are unable to live because of our sin, and by dying in our place as the sacrifice which pays the debt we owe to God and makes full atonement for all our sin and guilt.

All that he endured was done for us. The Lamb went uncomplaining forth on our behalf. That is what Lent is all about.

You are all invited to walk the Lenten road with fellow believers in Jesus our Redeemer during this season of the Church Year. As brothers and sisters in Christ, let us praise the Lamb of God who was delivered to death for our transgressions, and raised again to prove that we are justified through faith in his atoning work on our behalf.

Our midweek services will take place on the six Wednesdays prior to Easter,
beginning on Ash Wednesday, March 6 at 4:00 and 6:30 pm,
with a Lenten meal in between the services.

Please join us for worship and fellowship.

In Christ,
Pastor Jeffrey Bovee

March Sermon Texts

Mar 3	Luke 9:28-36	Receive comfort from the Mount Of Transfiguration
Mar 6 Ash Wednesday	Matthew 26: 1-4, 14-24	Jesus Predicts Death and Betrayal; His Enemies Plot to Kill Him
Mar 10	Hebrews 4:14-16	Jesus is Our Great High Priest
Mar 13	Matthew 26:31-35	Jesus Predicts Victory Over Death; Peter Presumptuously Promises Faithfulness
Mar 17	Jeremiah 26:8-15	God's Word: Tell It Like It Is
Mar 20	Matthew 26:36-46	Jesus Prays in Gethsemane; God's Plan is Positively Established
Mar 24	Numbers 16:23-40	Jesus Prays in Gethsemane; God's Plan is Positively Established
Mar 27	Matthew 26:57-68	Jesus Falsely Prosecuted by His Enemies; Jesus Prophecies about His Reign as the King of Kings
Mar 31	Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32	Seek the Lost

Cards of Caring

The Cards of Caring volunteers will meet Saturday, March 9, 2019 to make Easter cards for our "Thinking of You," homebound, and Befriend a Mission members and families.

We meet at 403 N. Minnesota St. between 9 am and 12 pm. We welcome MLC students and members age 12 and older. Come and join us for this fun volunteer project. We greatly appreciate all the donations that have been received over the 10 years we have had our Cards of Caring group. Thank you!

Contact Lois Willems at 507-676-1230 with questions.

Archives

Miscellany

Archives articles for the next few months will recall items from service bulletins, newsletters, and council and congregational minutes from 60, 50, 25, 10, and 1 years ago. Items reported do not necessarily coincide with the time of the year. For the earliest years not all those sources are as complete as for later years. St. John's was organized in January 1948, and thus these miscellaneous items involve a congregation that is part of God's Kingdom of Grace—making what is reported more than just trivia. Hope you will find them interesting and that they might bring back some memories for some.

1959, Pastors: Rollin Reim, Frederick Nitz (as of Nov). Services—still in the basement Church—were held at 8:30 and 10:00 on Sundays with Sunday school at 8:30; communion was celebrated once per month with registration on the previous Friday. The parsonage was at 517 S Washington. The parsonage phone number was 2005 and the church 955. In August, Pastor Reim announced that he was withdrawing his membership in the Wisconsin Synod for doctrinal reasons and invited the congregation to join him. Council meetings and discussions followed. Some members also left St. John's.

1969, Pastor was Frederick Nitz. Services were held at 8:30 and 10 am with Sunday school at 8:30 am September to June; a single service at 9 am June through August; communion on the last Sunday of the month with registration on the previous Friday either at the church or the parsonage. In April, St. John's won its second consecutive Area Lutheran Dartball season championship.

1994, Pastors: David Kolander Jeffrey Bovee (associate as of June); **David Zabel was Director of Christian Education.** Weekend services were held Saturdays at 7 pm, Sundays at 8:30 and 10:30 am with a single Sunday 9 am service in summer. A third Sunday service at 11 am was added in August. The congregation decided early in the year to call an associate pastor. Discussion about pastors' duties, salaries and about office space and housing followed for much of the year.

2009, Pastors were Jeffrey Bovee and Wayne Laitinen; Administrative Teacher was James Dretske. Weekend services: Saturday 7pm, Sunday 8, 9:30, 11 am (no 11 am service during summer months). At the annual meeting a worship committee was added to the by-laws consisting of the Worship Pastor, the Associate Pastor, the Head Organist, the Director of the Adult Choir, the Director of the Women's Choral Group, and the Director of the Children's Choir.

2018, Pastors: Jeffrey Bovee, Rob Guenther (associate as of July); **Administrative Teacher was James Dretske.** The Council and congregation considered the purchase of the property at 601 S. Washington St. for future use as additional parking space and immediately for needed Sunday school rooms or an interim parsonage. Purchase was somewhat difficult due to trust restrictions on the property but with the help of other members along with generous gifts and internal funds it was accomplished.

To be continued.

Bob Krueger

Volunteer Opportunity

Join the Easter for Kids Team

On April 13th, we will join St Paul's Church in hosting an *Easter for Kids* event at St Paul's School.

Easter for Kids is a congregation and community event where children in grades Prek3-grade 4 come for a morning of fun and learning the Easter message of our Savior!

Many hands are needed for such an event! Please go to bit.ly/EasterforKids2019 for the online volunteer sign-up form. Areas of crew leaders, decorators, crafts, snacks, games etc. are all needed.

Contact coordinator Beth Scharf with any questions (920-757-5606; dbscharf@hotmail.com) Thank you!

Council Digest

The church council met on Monday, February 18. A summary of reports and action from the meeting not reported elsewhere in the Fortress follows:

Ministrations

Baptisms

27 Jan Ezra Jane Webster

27 Jan Otto John Ernst Wendland

Pastor Guenther has visited over 350 members since last October in his quest to complete an every-member visit.

Council members previewed the March 2019 WELS Connection and a promotional video for the upcoming Men of Truth conference at MLC on Saturday, March 23, from 8:00 am - 2:00 pm.

The financial secretary's report for January showed that contributions in the new year are lagging behind projected expenditures by about 25%. This includes operating expenses, MVL support and Congregational Mission Offerings (CMO).

The annual Church Leaders' Workshop at Trinity, Belle Plaine, will be held Saturday, March 2, from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. Pastor Guenther is planning to attend and invited other council members to join him.

On behalf of the council, President Thiesfeldt has invited MVL principal Tim Plath to address the council on the building plans currently under consideration and discussion for our area Lutheran high school. The visit tentatively has been set for sometime in April.

Although he was unable to attend the meeting, Evangelism Board chair Bill Pekrul provided a detailed report on the board's most recent meeting. In a cooperative effort with St. Paul's, a community screening of the new WELS video "To the Ends of the Earth" on March 21 is planned as a prelude to an MLC-sponsored Evangelism Action Day on April 10.

It has been three years since the last pictorial directory of our congregational members was produced. Plans and options for the next directory are under consideration by the Evangelism Board.

All vacant council positions have been filled in recent weeks. Scott Deters has agreed to serve as chairman of the Board of Trustees; Ron Zahrt, a member of the Board of Evangelism; Jerry Plagge, a member of the Board of

Stewardship; and Lance Hartzell, a member of the Board of Elders. All positions are subject to ratification by the voters in April; meanwhile, they have all begun to serve in their respective roles. We thank these men and all who serve in elective and appointive positions.

Reporting for the Board of Trustees, Scott Deters noted that new entry rugs and folding chair replacements have been ordered. Some office ceiling panels have been replaced, signage improvement is under consideration, and the key inventory is being updated. Removal of some trees and shrubs from the 601 S. Washington property may provide a place to pile snow removed from the parking lot.

The Elders brought a recommendation to increase the church secretary's hours by 10 hours a week during the school year to handle an increasing number of clerical tasks in the church office. Although the recommendation was moved and supported, the motion was tabled until the March meeting to allow council members more time to study the details of the proposal.

Next Church Council meeting – Monday, March 18, at 7:00 pm.

Next Voters' meeting—Tuesday, April 23, at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by Steven Thiesfeldt,
Congregational chairman

Church Library News

Did you make a resolution to do more Bible reading? You could do that by following the suggestion in Forward in Christ, of Reading Through the Bible in Three Years. There are also several ways to read through the Bible in one year, perhaps found on the internet. One system has you reading about 4- 5 chapters a day, with weekends off. Or you could compromise at doing it in 2 years.

We have several different versions of the Bible in the church library such as The King James Version KJV, the New King James Version NKJV, the New International Version NIV, plus others. Some have helps and notes along the way, and maybe helps and maps in the back. BUT you no doubt have your own Bible at home that would be easier to use. The church library has various Bible commentaries you can check out., if you have questions. The People's Bible has a book for each Bible book or maybe 2 or 3 in one book. Don't forget that the pastors are available to answer questions also.

There have been several books that have been checked out for longer than a month. We ask that you check your library and return those books to our library. Thanks.

LeiLani Rahn, Church librarian

From Your Staff Minister

The new WELS video "To the Ends of the Earth" is available in the narthex. This video is a continuation in a WELS evangelism outreach program.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:17)

Kelly Emde

Key Registry Update

If you have a church key(s), could you please send your name and the numbers and letters printed on that key to Lisa Goeglein at stjohnsnewulm@gmail.com, write it on a note and leave it on the church reception desk or in her church mailbox, or call the church office with the information.

The trustees are trying to update the key registry of everyone who has a copy of our keys and keep better records of them. Thanks for your help!

St. Paul's Lutheran School

www.splnewulm.org/school

BoCD Work (SP Board of Child Discipleship)

Enrollment grew to at 276 in K-8 with PreK enrollment increasing to 54 at the beginning of the new year. The annual Kindergarten Roundup on February 26, 28 will provide us with a projection of next year's class sizes.

School Improvement Project: With gifts totaling over \$2.5 million at the present time and have paid expenses of about \$450,000 paid, there is a current balance of about \$2,100,000. St. Paul's has secured the \$5 million loan for a spring 2019 building start. **A Special Groundbreaking Service will be held at St. Paul's School on Sunday, April 7, at 11:00am.**

Continue to keep this project in your prayers and if you should desire to give a check to the building project, please include the words: "St. John's member" in the Memo. A number of building expenses will be considered St. John's responsibility under the current School Formula, the amount from members will help to offset these amounts.

There will be restrictions to the parking lot beginning the end of April. Look for further information coming on the restrictions on traffic flow through the parking lot and student drop-off.

Due to construction and the need for workers to get into the classrooms, school will be ending on Friday, May 24th. Graduation/Closing Service will be on Thursday, May 23rd, at 6:30 at St. Paul's Church.

MLC Basketball Tournament

The basketball season concluded with the MLC Tournament on February 15-17. The 8th Girls team finished with the Consolation Trophy winning the final game against St. Martin's, Watertown S.D. The 8th grade Boys team also won the Consolation game against Crown of Life, West St. Paul. Thanks to all who support the St. Paul's Raiders!

MVL Music Festival

Some of our young musicians will be participating at the MVL Music Festival on Saturday, March 2. This is not a competition, but the participants will perform before a judge. Afterwards, the judges will meet with the students to discuss their performance.

SPL Musical Events

The Raider Choir will be performing the musical, "Princess What's-her-name" on the evenings of March 15-16 at 7:00. Grades 3 & 4 will be performing the musical, "Go Fish" on Tuesday, March 19. Come and join us for evenings of music. The musicals are open to the public and will be funded through a free-will collection. All proceeds benefit the music programs and will be used to cover their production expenses.

Calendar

Mar 2	MVL Music Festival
Mar 3	Joint SP & SJ Meeting
Mar 15-16	Raider Choir Musical: 7 pm
Mar 19	Grades 3-4 Musical: 6:30 pm
Mar 22	No Dist. 88 Busing
Mar 25	NO School - Teacher In-Service
Mar 27	Jr. Choir sings: 6:30 pm

Respectfully submitted, James L. Dretske, Administrative Teacher
jdretske@splnewulm.org

Our Synod at Work

WELS ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS

Once again the WELS has published an annual report to their members. It has been the practice of this column to spend a few months reviewing some of the highlights contained in the report. That will be the practice again this year.

WELS President Mark Schroeder has an excellent message in the inside front cover. He states that “the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is not just a Christian denomination. It is not just a worthy charitable organization that we support with our gifts and that does a lot of good things. More than anything, the Wisconsin Synod is people—people like you who walk together in a common faith in Christ and in a common mission that God himself has given us to carry out.”

President Schroeder goes on to state that “the people of our synod have much in common, but they are also very diverse. There are people who serve as pastors, missionaries, professors, and administrators. There are people who serve faithfully as lay leaders in their congregations. There are people of many different races and cultures. There are people who work with their hands and others who work at a desk. Yet, despite that wonderful diversity, there is also a beautiful unity in faith and mission, a unity given by God and worked through his saving gospel.”

There is also some excellent background information. For example, the report states that “as a Christian church body, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod’s calling is to nurture the faith of our members and to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.” We are the third largest Lutheran church body in the United States with 1,281 churches, 359,426 baptized members and 286,213 communicant members.

We are divided into 12 districts, which allows for more area-specific ministry, personal contacts, and member involvement. Congregations—either individually or as federations—operate one of the largest parochial school systems in the United States with 294 Lutheran elementary schools, 387 early childhood ministries, and 26 area Lutheran high schools. WELS is a member of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference, an organization of 32 confessional church bodies throughout the world.

The report is further broken down into four sections: Called to Prepare; Called to Proclaim, Called to Serve, and Called to Support. In future columns we will take a look at each one of those sections and summarize the important information contained in each.

Gerald Woodley

Reflections

Women of the area are invited to the 20th Annual Reflections Service which will be held on Sunday, March 31 from 2:30 - 4:00 pm.

We will gather at St. Paul's Lutheran Church for dessert, fellowship, and a candlelight service of songs, readings, and prayers. Our theme will be "Godly Wisdom for Heroes of Faith."

You may sign up online at: bit.ly/Reflections2019, on the sign-up sheets which are in the narthex or by e-mailing kgrunwald@splnewulm.org.

You may have been one of the hundreds of ladies who have set a table in the past, and perhaps you would like to set that same table again. Ladies interested in setting a table are encouraged to contact Mary or Karen or sign up at church or online.

Please invite friends and sign-up by Monday, March 25. Contact Mary Hussman at 354-3001 or Karen Grunwald at 507-217-6229 with questions.

Men of Truth

Come and join the Men of Truth at their 2019 conference, Man of God. The conference will be held at MLC in the Auditorium on March 23rd, 2019. Worship begins the conference with Jonah Backus and the Conquerors, with Pastor Nate Scharf leading the opening devotion.

We are pleased to have five engaging speakers with us this year to address various topics important to the Man of God:

Answers to Anxiety for the Man of God – Clinical and Biblical –
Dr. Joshua Mears (Christian Family Solutions)

Godly Men Among Us – Things I Wish I Knew in My 20's, 30's, 40's, and 50's -
Pastor Rob Guenther, Professor Roger Klockziem, and Mr. Mark Wrightsman

What Women Look for in a Godly Man –
Ms. Naomi Schmidt (WELS Women's Ministry)

More information can be found at www.menoftruth.org. Middle school through college students are free. Continental breakfast in the auditorium and buffet lunch at the MLC Cafeteria included with registration. Registration is open now!

Youth Group

The Youth Group will be hosting a Midweek Lenten Meal. Our day is Wednesday, March 20.

Please sign up at: bit.ly/March20Meal or on the youth board in the narthex.

There will be choices to set-up and serve, donating food and to serve and clean-up.

Upcoming Events:

Apr 12	Help decorate and set up for the Easter for Kids
Apr 13	Help with Easter for Kids
Apr 20	Decorate the church fellowship hall for Easter Brunch

Upcoming Bible Classes

Sundays at 9:30 am:

March 3, 10 & 17	Quintilian Clear	Pastor Rob Guenther
March 24 & 31	Athanasian Creed	Keith Wessel

Thursdays at 10:30 am:	Book of James	Pastor Jeff Bovee
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Thursdays at 7:00 pm:	Book of 1 Kings	Pastor Rob Guenther
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Fridays at 6:30 am:	“On Giving Advice to God”	Pastor Rob Guenther
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Fridays at 9:30 am:	Book of Revelation	Pastor Jeff Bovee
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