

THE MESSENGER

March 2023

The newsletter of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

FUN, FELLOWSHIP, & FOOD

BOWLING: There will be an afternoon of family bowling for members of Christ Lutheran, and you are welcome to invite your family and friends. Lanes have been reserved on **Sunday, March 19**, from **2:00-4:00 pm** at Lincoln Lanes in Merrill. The cost of bowling will be \$12, with shoes being an additional \$3, if needed. A sign-up sheet is posted at the back of church, so we can make sure we have enough lanes reserved.

DINING OUT: Plans are to also eat somewhere after bowling for those who wish to continue to join us or just to join for the eating. That will probably be at Casa Amigos, to start eating around **4:30 pm**. A sign-up sheet is posted at the back of church, so we can make sure we have enough tables reserved.



SOFTBALL SIGNUP: It's almost that time of year again! Church softball is right around the corner. Sign-up sheet is up in the narthex. Please indicate next to your name whether you would rather play competitive or casual softball because we may be looking into doing 2 teams.

In this Messenger:

- 1) Bowling, Dining Out, & Softball
- 2) Pastor's Devotion/ Lenten Worship
- 3) Calendar
- 4) Holy Week Schedule
- 4) Christian Worship Update
- 4) Cradle Roll Coordinator
- 4) Shut-in Visits
- 4) Attendance & Financial Numbers
- 4) Thrivent Choice
- 4) Birthdays/Anniversary
- 5) Council Members
- 5) Men of His Word
- 5) Youth Bowling
- 6) Member Care – Elder assignments
- 7-8) Mental Health Resources



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Confession

During the season of Lent a lot of emphasis is placed on confession. But what exactly is confession? What sins should we confess? To whom should I confess my sins? How do I know if I have committed sin? How should I feel after I confess my sins? What should I do when someone confesses their sins to me?

Thankfully, Martin Luther in his *Small Catechism* gives us the answer to these questions based on what Scripture says. Therefore, for this month's devotion I simply want us to remember what Luther wrote to us.

First: *What is confession?*

Confession has two parts. The one is that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution or forgiveness from the pastor as from God himself, not doubting but firmly believing that our sins are thus forgiven before God in heaven.

Second: *What sins should we confess?*

Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those we are not aware of, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. But before the pastor we should confess only those sins which we know and feel in our hearts.

Third: *How can we recognize these sins?*

Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments. Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, employer, or employee? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you hurt anyone by word or deed? Have you been dishonest, careless, wasteful, or done other wrong?

Fourth: *How will the pastor assure a penitent sinner of forgiveness?*

He will say, "By the authority of Christ, I forgive you your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

- Pastor Neal Behm

Lenten Worship Opportunities

Wednesdays @ 6:30 pm

- March 1 His Final Steps Led to His Father's House
- March 8 His Final Steps Led to a Fig Tree
- March 15 His Final Steps Led to Some Greeks
- March 22 His Final Steps Led to His Enemies
- March 29 His Final Steps Led to a Tomb



March 2023

View the most up to date calendar at christmerrill.com

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 5:15 pm Potluck Meal 6:30 pm Lenten Worship 7:30 pm Choir Practice	2 6:30 pm Catechism Class	3 1:45 pm Worship @ Bell Tower	4
5 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 10:20 am Children's Group Time 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study	6	7	8 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 5:15 pm Potluck Meal 6:30 pm Lenten Worship 7:30 pm Choir Practice	9 6:30 pm Catechism Class	10	11 9:00 am Men's Bible Study
12 9:00 am Worship 10:20 am Children's Group Time 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study	13 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study	14 6:30 pm Council Meeting	15 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 5:15 pm Potluck Meal 6:30 pm Lenten Worship 7:30 pm Choir Practice	16 6:30 pm Catechism Class	17	18
19 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 10:20 am Children's Group Time 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study 2:00 pm Bowling 4:30 pm Dining Out	20 6:00 pm Board of Elders Meeting	21	22 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 5:15 pm Potluck Meal 6:30 pm Lenten Worship	23 6:30 pm Catechism Class	24	25
26 9:00 am Worship 10:20 am Children's Group Time 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study	27	28	29 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 5:15 pm Potluck Meal 6:30 pm Lenten Worship 7:30 pm Choir Practice	30 6:30 pm Catechism Class	31	

8:00 am Sundays - worship service on the radio (96.3FM, 730AM)

9:00 am Sundays - worship service online at youtube.com/@christmerrill

2023 HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

April 2 @ 9:00 am

Palm Sunday worship (Holy Communion)

April 6 @ 6:30 pm

Maundy Thursday worship (Holy Communion)

April 7 @ 6:30 pm

Good Friday worship

April 9 @ 8:00 am

Easter Sunday worship

April 9 @ 9:30 am

Easter Fellowship Breakfast

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP '21 UPDATE:

An initial order of new hymnals have arrived. Two hymnals will be available in each pew when the new liturgy is used. Additionally, the service order will be available in the bulletin and on the digital displays, when available. Please pass along any feedback regarding the digital displays to Pastor, your elder, or at the April Open Forum.

CRADLE ROLL COORDINATOR: A person is needed to periodically distribute helpful packets that contain Christian parenting materials for pre-birth through age 4. It includes age-appropriate books, pamphlets with tips, songs, poems, and activities, and an age-appropriate music CD with vocal and accompaniment tracks. If you are interested in serving in this role, please contact Scott S.

SHUT-IN VISITATION: The Elders welcome help from members visiting our shut-ins. Members are encouraged to visit and/or keep them in our prayers. Please reach out to Pastor or an elder for contact information.

Brad B. Laurene H. Tom L.
Phil M. Lorna P. Kathleen P.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH WEEKLY AVERAGES	January
Sunday worship*	60
Men's Adult Bible Study	8
Sunday Adult Bible Study	15.5
Wednesday Adult Bible Study	13.3
Women's Adult Bible Study	5
Sunday School & Teen Bible Study	7.7

**includes Mondays during the summer, deer hunter's service*

OUR OFFERINGS TO THE LORD (as of 1/31/23)

Anticipated offerings: \$13,201

Actual offerings: \$12,029

Actual expenses: \$17,866

General Fund balance as of 2/12/23: \$23,096

For more information see the Treasurer Report on the bulletin board by the elevator.

THRIVENT CHOICE: Eligible Thrivent clients with membership, please consider directing Choice Dollars® to Christ Ev. Lutheran Church to help support the students attending WELS area schools through the P-16 Tuition Assistance Fund! Go to [Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](https://thrivent.com/thriventchoice) to learn more or call 800-847-4836 and, when prompted, say "Thrivent Choice" for more information.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 Melisa K.	17 Wayne P.	23 Jerry S.
3 Svetlana H.	18 Andrei H.	24 Jennifer S.
7 Jacob A.	19 Danielle T.	28 Laurene H.
11 Michael N.		29 James P.

MARCH ANNIVERSARY

16 Dan & Lisa K.

Please submit items for next month's Messenger by the 20th of this month to ChristMerrillEducation@gmail.com.

CURRENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

President: Hans (Willi) H. (elected)

Vice-President: Chris R. (incumbent)

Secretary: Bill W. (elected)

***Treasurer:** Bill W. (appointed)

Board of Elders Chairman: Scott S. (elected)

**Board of Elders will oversee education*

Board of Property Chairman: Larry W. (incumbent)

Fellowship Committee Chairman: Al Zimmerman (incumbent)

Stewardship & Finance Committee Chairman: Leon M. (elected)

**Stewardship & Finance will oversee evangelism*

***Technology Committee Chairman:** Ken C. (appointed)

**Pending approval at the April Voters' meeting*

See the complete listing of board and committee members on the bulletin board next to the elevator.

The recent **Men of His Word** conference was attended by several church members.

Left to right: Willi, Leon, Scott, Jacob, Tom



The next **Men of His Word** conference will be held October 28 in Rochester, MN. Visit menofhisword.org for more information.






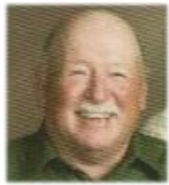


In December, youth group members and friends gathered for a fun evening of activities including bowling. *Left to right:* 2 guests, Katelyn, Derek, Megan, Adeline, Sonia, Kaylynn, Nicole, Danielle, and Youth Group Leaders Jennifer and Willi.

MEMBER CARE – UPDATED LIST

The Board of Elders is ready to serve to you! Every member household has been paired with an Elder. Communicate with your Elder regarding significant events and concerns: births, graduations, relocations, illness, death, hardship, promotions, change of address or phone numbers, etc.

Contact information for your Elder is on the bulletin board next to the elevator or call 715-539-0250.

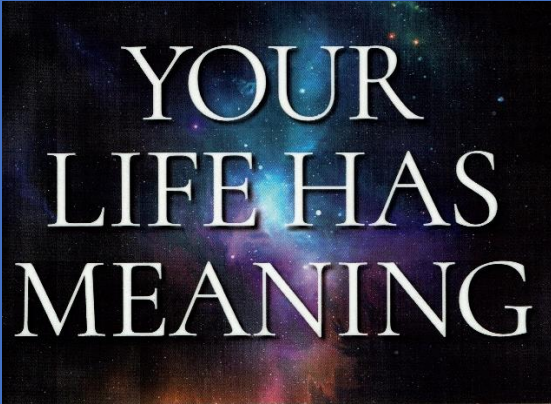
Here is a listing of member households and the Elder assigned to each group:

Aumann – Fuller	Mr. Willi H.	
Green – A. Kleinschmidt	Mr. Carl C.	
P. Kleinschmidt – Marheine	Mr. Chris R.	
Maschke – Polak	Mr. Phil M.	
Raddatz – M. Stockowitz	Mr. Bill W.	
T. Stockowitz – Zimmerman	Mr. Scott S.	

Mental Health Resources Available

The **church library**, located in the lower level near the windows, has many items available to help you and your family grow in faith. Take a look at the resources and take home a book, CD, or DVD today!

New item!



DISCOVERING
YOUR ROLE
in an EPIC STORY

Money. Possessions. SCHOOL. WORK. Life. THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD.

At times it can all feel empty and meaningless.

Is everything fleeting or is there something with lasting meaning we can be a part of?

We might be tempted to think that there's no way to answer this question, that people have been asking and not finding answers to this question for millennia and will continue to do so for many more millennia.

But what if three thousand years ago the question was already answered and it was answered in a way that continues to flip our world upside down today, that continues to charge our lives with epic purpose and beauty, that continues to give meaning and purpose—transcending culture, trends, and current philosophies? (FROM PAGES 3 AND 4)

Philosophers, writers, and artists throughout history have come to the conclusion that life and its pursuits are meaningless. In many ways, they are correct. Yet when life is considered in the light of the gospel message, you will find true and deep meaning.

New Youth Resource

"Who Am I?" is a three-part youth ministry resource that takes an in-depth look at real-life problems that overwhelm teens with feelings of being unloved, worthless, guilty, anxious, lonely, and more.

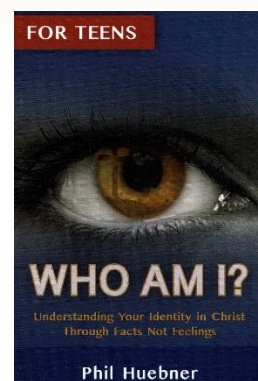
The **videos** explore the identity crisis among teens and look to root their identity in Christ through the facts of God's Word instead of personal feelings. Each video contains numerous "pause points" for the youth leader (or a parent) to stop the video and interact in personal discussion before continuing. The series is adaptable for use in a youth group ministry setting, home setting, or for personal teen viewing.

May this series speak into the anxious lives of young people and remind them, "You are someone. You are loved."

Find the videos at <https://welscongregationalservices.net/youth-bible-study-who-am-i/>



An additional resource on this topic is *Who Am I? Understanding Your Identity In Christ Through Facts Not Feelings* which is available in our church library.



Mental Health Resources Available

New Bible Study

Helping the Hurting with Hope is a new Bible class to help participants appreciate the role of compassion in a Christian's personal and congregational life. It provides gospel motivation for participants to go beyond their comfort zones and act in compassionate ways through the Spirit's power. Where the Bible class succeeds in cultivating compassion, congregations will be better spiritual refuges for people with broken lives and welcome people looking for a church family where they can walk a new path after release from prison, or in recovery from addiction, or starting a new life after a public fall into sin.



Helping the Hurting with Hope is available on the WELS [Congregational Services website](https://csm.welsrc.net/). It comprises an introductory lesson with a video and four additional lessons. The participants' lessons, leader's guide, and video are downloadable.

Mental Health Needs Go to <https://csm.welsrc.net/> and click on **COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS**

Informational brochures for dealing with mental health issues are available to download.

- **Ask a Therapist** - This flyer gives you important questions to ask counselors when you seek counseling and don't have access to WELS counselors.
- **Christian or Non-Christian Counselor** - This flyer outlines potential concerns when a counselor is not a Christian, or is a Christian but not of your faith.
- **Mental Health Issues** - This flyer will guide you when you believe you might need counseling for mental health issues.
- **Therapy Models** - This pamphlet helps you sort out psychological terms and distinguish between different counseling processes.
- **When to Refer** - This flyer is written to help pastors determine when a member is in need of other forms of counseling in addition to the spiritual counseling he offers.

The [WELS/ELS Christian Therapists Network](#) provides a network for professionally-trained therapists in fellowship with the WELS or ELS to enhance the delivery of Bible-based, Christ-centered therapy. It is a referral source for WELS/ELS congregations and called workers, and the Network helps Christians find professionally-trained, Christian therapists in their area.

Another resource for WELS called workers and their families, and for members of WELS churches, is Christ-centered counseling through WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions. [WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions](#) provides an array of [counseling services](#) including outpatient, intensive outpatient, day treatment programs, and psychiatry. Their services are available in person or through a secure video connection ([telehealth](#)) in some states.