

THE MESSENGER

March 2020

The newsletter of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

EASTER FOR KIDS

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church will be hosting an *Easter for Kids* event on **Saturday, April 11 from 9:00 am - 12:00 noon**. It will be for **children ages 4 through 6th grade**.

The following activities are being planned:

- Bible Lesson
- Resurrection Plant
- Animated DVD presenting the Biblical Easter
- Crafts
- Egg Hunt
- Ice Cream Social

Families of the children are encouraged to attend the Egg Hunt and the Ice Cream Social.

You can register at

christmerrill.com/easterforkids

Sign-up sheets for Children Planning to Attend will also be posted on the fellowship sign-up bulletin board.



Members of the congregation are being asked to provide colored plastic eggs filled with candy for the children to "hunt."

A sign-up sheet to donate eggs for the Egg Hunt will be posted on the bulletin board.

If you have any questions, please call Cynthia Varnum (715-360-1622) or Neil Varnum (715-360-1623).

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Women's Retreat;
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March through Holy Week

On February 26th we entered into the season of Lent. The season of Lent lasts for forty days, and the reason for that is because of how Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by Satan for forty days. While Jesus was being tempted, Scripture tells us that Jesus suffered. Therefore, the season of Lent focuses on Jesus' sufferings and death which resulted in our salvation during the events that happened during Holy Week. Let's take some time to review briefly what happened during Holy Week.

Palm Sunday: This is the day that begins Holy Week. Jesus entered into Jerusalem riding on a donkey, and the people praised God and shouted, "*Hosanna to the Son of David!*" (Matthew 21:9). Two things we take note of on this day. First of all, the reason why Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey was to fulfill Scripture. This brings us comfort because every single prophecy about the promised Messiah was fulfilled in every detail in Jesus' life. The other thing we take note of is that Jesus entered into Jerusalem to die. There were other times when people threatened to take his life, but Jesus would say that his hour had not come. With his entrance into Jerusalem Jesus showed that his hour had finally come to fulfill his Father's will.

Maundy Thursday: Do you know what the word "Maundy" means? It's a Latin word which means "command." One command that Jesus made was when he commanded the disciples to wash one another's feet to show love by being a servant. Another command from Jesus was when he said, "*Take and eat; this is my body. Drink from it, this is my blood of the new covenant*" (Matthew 26:26-28). Here Christ instituted the sacrament of Holy Communion. When we take and drink the body and blood of Christ connected with the bread and the wine, we receive our Lord's forgiveness from our sins.

Good Friday: Yet there is no way that our sins could be forgiven unless Good Friday happened. Jesus was betrayed by Judas and arrested in Gethsemane. He was put on trial before Pilate, and the crowd that once shouted, "Hosanna!" now shouted, "Crucify him!" But what is important for us to notice is what Jesus shouted. On the cross he said, "*It is finished*" (John 19:30). When Christ said these words, he declared that all of our sins were paid for in full. Then Jesus breathed his last and died.

Easter Sunday: Good Friday could not be called good unless Easter Sunday happened. For if Christ had remained dead then our faith is futile, and we would still be in our sins. But Christ is risen, therefore, our faith is not futile and we are no longer in our sins. We have eternal life because of Christ. Our fellow believers who have passed away are experiencing that Easter joy right now with their Savior, and we have that same guarantee as well. Death has been swallowed up in victory. Thanks be to God that he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is what truly makes Holy Week so holy. For what Christ has accomplished for us during that first Holy Week still applies to us each and every week of our lives. We receive his forgiveness in Communion. Our sins have been paid for in full. We will live with God forever. For this we gladly praise our God and shout, "Hosanna in the highest!"

- Pastor Neal Behm



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 Worship (Holy Communion) 10:30 Adult Bible Class 10:30 Sunday School 10:30 Teen Bible Class	2 5:00 Board of Christian Education Meeting	3	4 9:00 Adult Bible Class 3:30 Catechism Class 4:30 Elders Meeting 5:10 Lenten Meal 6:30 Lenten Worship 7:30 Adult Choir Practice	5 11:30 OWLS	6	7
8 9:00 Worship 10:30 Adult Bible Class 10:30 Sunday School 10:30 Teen Bible Class	9 6:00 Women's Bible Study	10 6:30 Council Meeting	11 9:00 Adult Bible Class 3:30 Catechism Class 5:00 Youth Group Meeting 5:10 Lenten Meal 6:30 Lenten Worship 7:30 Adult Choir Practice	12	13 4:00 <i>Pathways to Christ Women's Retreat @ Oshkosh (through Sunday)</i>	14 7:30 <i>Crossmen Conference @ Two Rivers</i> 9:00 Men's Bible Study 5:30 Game Night
15 9:00 Worship (Holy Communion) 10:30 Adult Bible Class 10:30 Sunday School 10:30 Teen Bible Class	16	17	18 9:00 Adult Bible Class 5:10 Lenten Meal 6:30 Lenten Worship 7:30 Adult Choir Practice	19 3:30 Catechism Class	20 7:00 <i>Women's Retreat @ Camp Phillip (through Sunday)</i>	21 9:00 <i>Ironmen of God Conference @ Ixonia</i>
22 9:00 Worship 10:30 Adult Bible Class 10:30 Sunday School 10:30 Teen Bible Class	23	24 6:30 Worship Aids Comm. Meeting	25 5:10 Lenten Meal 6:30 Lenten Worship 7:30 Adult Choir Practice	26	27	28
29 9:00 Worship 10:30 Adult Bible Class 10:30 Sunday School 10:30 Teen Bible Class	30	31				

UPCOMING RETREATS & CONFERENCES

PATHWAYS TO CHRIST WOMEN'S RETREAT:
March 13–15. Theme is "A friend loves at all times."
in Oshkosh. Website: pathwaystochrist.org.

CROSSMEN LAKESHORE WELS CONFERENCE:
March 14. Registration through March 7 = \$30.
Website: crossmenconf.org.

CAMP PHILLIP WOMEN'S RETREAT:
March 20-22 Visit CampPhillip.com for more information and to register or pick up a paper form from the Christian Education bulletin board at the top of the steps.

IRONMEN OF GOD CONFERENCE:
March 21. Regular admission is \$35. High School & College Students are FREE until March 7. Website: ironmenofgodwi.org.

CAMP PHILLIP TEEN RETREAT: April 17-19
Visit CampPhillip.com for more information and to register or pick up a paper form from the Christian Education bulletin board at the top of the steps.

GAME NIGHT: hosted by the fellowship committee on Saturday, **March 14** at 5:30 pm. Sign up in the narthex for baked potato bar dinner. Everyone is invited to bring card and/or board games for an evening of fun.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY is held from 6:00 to 7:00 pm on the second Monday of each month. The topic for **March 9** is *Names of God*.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY will meet on Saturday, **March 14** at 9:00 am to continue a study of the Minor Prophets. The March study will be *Micah*. Plan on reading the book of *Micah* before coming to the class. The **April 11** study will be on *Nahum* and the **May 9** study will be on *Habakkuk*.

WORSHIP AIDS COMMITTEE met and selected Ken Cerney - committee chair and Chris Revie - committee secretary. The next meeting will be on **March 24** at 6:30 pm. Goals for the committee will be decided at this meeting as well as how to get additional input from congregational members. Everyone is welcome to attend this meeting and give input.

OWLS BAKE SALE NEWS: The Christ Lutheran OWLS took in \$200 from the Christmas bake sale in December. The group has directed this money to the memorial fund to help purchase new communion ware! Thank you to all who donated or bought sale items.

CHURCH SOFTBALL: Anyone interested in playing on the church softball team should sign-up on the fellowship board in the narthex by March 11.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 Melisa Kropp	20 James Love
3 Svetlana Heisinger	22 Jim Nigh
4 Roger Schmoltd	23 Matthew Dehnel
10 Carrie Berg	23 Jon Kleinschmidt
11 Sally Anderson	23 Jerry Schoepke
11 Michael Nofsinger	24 Jenny Seeger
17 Wayne Pfaff	25 Trish Woller
18 Andrei Heisinger	28 Laurene Herdina
19 Danielle Thoun	29 James Pagel

Would you prefer your name to be printed in a different way than above in the future? Put a note in the Messenger mailbox.

Please submit items for next month's Messenger by the 20th of this month to Messenger@ChristMerrill.com or place them in the Messenger slot located in the top row of church mailboxes in the narthex.

Patience

By John A. Braun

Quarrels and hatred come so naturally from our sinful nature. Yet our patience comes from Jesus.

On our Christian journey to heaven, signs often point us to paths that lead away from our destination. Paul identifies one of those signs as hatred and discord. We don't even need this sign to beckon us to these acts of the flesh. They arise quickly within our sinful hearts and burst from our mouths with bitter venom. Without much coaxing, so often we cause heartache and cripple positive action even among our fellow believers in Christ.

Acts of the flesh: Hatred and discord

Arguments arise at all levels and in all kinds of ways. Sometimes those arguments are over silly and unimportant issues. The neighbor's dog leaves a deposit on your lawn, and you step in it when you're mowing. You get angry, and the words that tumble out of your mouth make your neighbor angry. It doesn't take long for you to be on the road to discord and quarreling. Husband and wife easily turn down the road, and so do parents and children.

It happens in neighborhoods. It happens in families. We are frustrated or hurt by what someone says or does. A little further down the road something else happens to fuel the tension. Soon we have turned down the road where hatred awaits. Hostility and enmity characterize conversation and action. A couple more steps and we are off the Christian way and building a hate wall.

Sometimes the turn from the Christian way seems so natural. Our prejudices and thinking contribute to building the wall. We know we are not "one of them." It seems natural to call different ethnic groups by offensive names, and they in turn label our ethnic origins in demeaning ways. The road of discord and hatred includes waysides where like-minded people stop and feed on the racial hatred of each other.

And racial hatred has a twin—ideological hatred. Both are born from a human heart that has turned away from the Christian way. We hate Democrats. We hate Republicans. We hate this politician and his or her supporters of the policy or personality we detest. Yes, we can disagree about differences on any subject, but the human heart is a perverse thing. Actions of the flesh all too often play out in destructive rhetoric that destroys peace and hardens the discord—even turning it into hate. If there is any doubt, surf social media and read the vicious attacks on all sides of almost any issue. Name calling and disruptive actions that flow from hatred of others are not part of the Christian way, and they destroy neighborhoods, families, friendships, and society in general. Jesus suggests, "Anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. . . . Anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell" (Matthew 5:22).

We should not be surprised that hatred, enmity, discord, and antagonism are so easy to find in our own hearts. We know the Christian way, but we also still have our sinful flesh. We know better, but we quarrel, and words hurt. Paul knew his own sinful heart and ours: "I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out" (Romans 7:18). It's a short trip from disagreement to enmity, hatred, and malice. It happens in the congregations of Christians too. Arguments create a stew that can bubble and boil over to set members against members. Paul reminded the Galatians "If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other" (Galatians 5:15).

(continued on next page)

In this discussion, we should remember that God allows us to hate only one thing—whatever opposes his grace and mercy in Christ. We hate such evil with God’s blessing, but we do not have his approval to inflict harm on others who do not share our beliefs. We are reminded not to turn the other cheek and speak the truth in love. Peter advises, “Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing.” He continues by reminding us that we are to share our faith with “gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:9,15).

Fruit of the Spirit: Patience

One sign calls us back to the Christian way. In large letters it says, “Patience.” Yet in the heat of arguments and disagreements, the sign is difficult to see. Our first reaction to verbal attacks is to raise our voice and retaliate. We forget that we are children of God who know his love. Because we are redeemed and forgiven by a Savior who has shed his blood for us, we can stop, remember our Savior, repent, and be patient with others. It is not easy, but the love of God for us unworthy, wayward, and rebellious sinners can soften our attitude toward others.

We are told to stop, drop, and roll when our clothes are on fire. Good advice! It’s good advice also when we are on fire with hatred and discord. Stop! Drop to your knees and roll yourself in the forgiveness and love of Jesus. Then stand up as a child of God and be patient.

The word Paul used for this fruit of the Spirit could also be translated as “forbearance” or “long-suffering.” Those two words are helpful. In the malice and anger that are directed at us, we can find the strength in Jesus to hold back, forbear, and be patient in spite of provocation. Long-suffering is similar. Endure whatever personal attack you experience—suffer the insult quietly, and do not be quick to retaliate.

How can we do this? Remember Jesus who has endured our sins and paid the penalty for our anger, harsh words, and malice. In spite of our sins, he went to the cross to claim us as his children. Think of what that means. His perfect example of patience in the face of discord has achieved the good our sinful flesh lacks. He did what we could not do. His righteousness covers our unrighteousness.

And yet there is more. He wants us to be like him here in this life and has given us a perfect example to follow. Think of Jesus responding to the Pharisees who claimed that he had supernatural power from the devil (Luke 11:14-28). Think of Jesus before the high priest and before the crowds that called for his death. Think of Jesus standing before Pilate. He quietly endured and is a perfect example of long-suffering, forbearance, and patience. Like him we are to be peacemakers and not agents of hatred in this world of discord, quarrels, and enmity.

When we walk along his way, he knows that our steps will not be steady and resolute. We stumble and fall. It’s an ongoing struggle to avoid the quarrels that come so naturally from our sinful nature. Yet he calls us back, encouraging us to repent and turn once again to the way that leads to the eternal home he has prepared for us. He seeks to renew our hearts and attitudes with his forgiveness and his example.

Author: John A. Braun

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Church Council, Boards & Committees

President: Jacob Marheine

Financial Secretary: Bob Dehnel

Secretary: Curt Whitson

Treasurer: Bill Wendorf

Board of Christian Education Chairman: Scott Schult

715-539-0250 14schult@gmail.com

Current BoCE members:

Mike Huth, Willi Heisinger, Tom Marheine, Curt Whitson, Al Zimmerman

2020 Board of Christian Education Goals:

The Board this year is focusing on two major goals: congregational care and teach/train. To accomplish these goals, we are planning on the following:

1. We are working with the Fellowship Committee to have a Fall Kick-Off Celebration on September 13 after the morning service; the preliminary plan is to have a picnic at church, a Sunday School open house, and outdoor activities.
2. Our congregation is a member of Camp Phillip. We are planning to collect a door offering and explore financial aid for interested church members. We are working with the Board of Elders to schedule a visit from the organization.
3. We are working with the Board of Elders and youth leaders to develop a mentoring program for training and developing future church leaders.
4. We are looking to promote and sponsor spiritual growth conferences in the Messenger, social media, the bulletin and on the church calendar.
5. Fully use Church 360 for educational needs.

**Anyone interested in helping out with any of the items listed above are encouraged to contact a member of the Board of Christian Education.*

Board of Church Properties Chairman: Nick Cordova

(715)218-8513 nickcordova1@yahoo.com

Board of Elders Chairman: Willi Heisinger

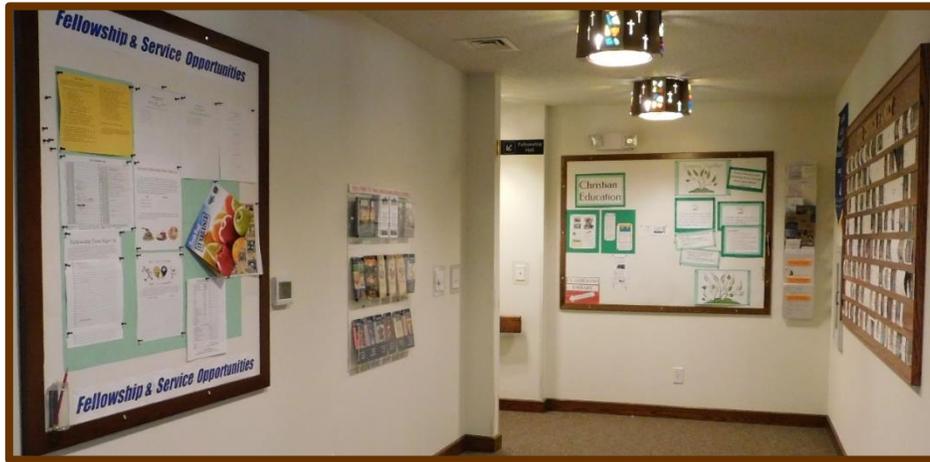
Church Fellowship Committee Chairman: Leon Marheine

Evangelism Committee Chairman: Chris Revie

Stewardship Committee Chairman: Ken Neff

Technology Committee Chairman: Ken Cerney

Where to Find Information at Church: Part 4 – Hallway Bulletin Boards



Fellowship & Service Opportunities

Includes sign-up sheets for Fellowship treats; Greeters; and various upcoming events.



Christian Education information about youth and adult education; Camp Phillip; Northland Lutheran High School; church library; and more.

To the right of the Christian Education board are envelopes for and descriptions of **Tuition Assistance Programs**, as well as information about various **WELS** schools.

The bottom of the display contains **Bible study pages** from various studies happening at church. Pick up a copy if you are unable to make it to a study.

