



Message from Pastor

'Tis Better to Receive

Pastor Schopp

"If many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many." – Romans 5:15

On Christmas Eve, 2004, I led my platoon on a cordon and search in the city of Samarra, Iraq. We were aware that it was Christmas Eve, of course, but we had more pressing problems at the time. Our patrol base was a partially blown up police station, we were lucky to get a hot meal every other day and we were mortared so regularly that we simply shrugged in our sleeping bags and went back to sleep. That Christmas Eve was exciting for all the wrong reasons. We were ambushed and a sniper's bullet struck the wall less than a foot from my head. We caught some bad guys with a lot of explosives and weapons. But at the end of the day, we did not stop to worship God nor contemplate what it meant that the Word came to us in the flesh to save us from ourselves. We just went to bed tired, with only more of the same to look forward to.

The next day, Christmas morning, we were once again on a patrol, this time in a cold rain. We were freezing and worn out from non-stop missions with almost daily contact with the enemy. We had reports of insurgent activity in a certain neighborhood and we banged on a door to a house, not sure if we were alerting the enemy or simply annoying some locals. The door opened and we saw... a Christmas tree.

There are Christians in Iraq and there have been for over a thousand years. They are not flashy with their faith and, honestly, cannot afford to be. There are too many people who want to kill them. But that didn't stop this family from celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ in a war-torn city, full of anger and violence. They knew what was important, even if we had forgotten. I was humbled. We excused ourselves as politely as we could and continued on our mission and we talked about that throughout the day. About those Christians living out their faith in the midst of so much hopelessness.

But they understood what true hope is. It is what the Patriarchs longed for, what the Prophets foretold and what the Apostles witnessed with their own eyes. The Christ had come, as was long foretold. He had come to bring peace between God and man. That was the gift we really needed, even if we didn't know it. With God's forgiveness and love, anything is possible.

Pray that God would make us as bold as those Iraqi Christians, to live out our faith in lives devoted to Him. To recognize that we don't have to go to church, we get to go to church, because there Jesus comes to us to give us forgiveness of all our sins. Contrary to what we have heard, it is better to receive... to receive adoption as children of God, to receive mercy for our trespasses, to receive the overwhelming love of God in Christ Jesus. Christmas is about receiving the Messiah and the gifts He bears for mankind. The Christ has come! Alleluia!

*Unto Us
a Child is Born*



Mid Week Advent Schedule at Bethlehem

Wk.1 Wed. Dec. 4 1:30pm
WK.2 Wed. Dec 11 1:30pm
Wk.3 Wed. Dec 18 1:30pm

Mid Week Advent Schedule at ST. John

Wk. 1 Wed. Dec. 4 7:30pm
Wk. 2 Wed. Dec.11 7:30 pm
WK. 3 Wed. Dec.18 7:30pm

Christmas Eve Service

Bethlehem 9:00pm

Christmas Day

Bethlehem 8:00am

St. John 10: 30am



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

233500 County Road E

Milan, Wisconsin 54411

Sunday Worship at 8:00 a.m.

Pastor: Rev. Chad Schopp

Pastors Office Hours @ BETH. Tues. 9am-5pm

Pastors Cell: 715-680-8117

Pastors Email: cschopp@protonmail.com

St. John "High Steeple LCMS"

119415 Huckleberry Road

Edgar, Wisconsin 54426

Sunday Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Pastor: Rev. Chad Schopp

Pastors Office Hours: M, W, T, F: 9am to 5pm

Pastors Cell: 715-680-8117

Pastors Email: cschopp@protonmail.com

Sec. Office Hours: M, T, W, F: 1pm to 4pm

Dual Parish Office: 715-352-2888

Dual Parish Email: secreary@bethstj.org

Dual Parish Website: www.bethstj.org

Traci Pehlke: webmaster@bethstj.org

ANNIVERSARY ANECDOTE
Celebrating 150 Years (1869-2019)
December, 2019

How quickly we have moved from preparing and eagerly awaiting the 150th anniversary celebration, to now looking back with fond memories of that exciting event. The hours, weeks, months (and even years!) of preparations by many St. John members have given way to blessed memories of conversations and interactions with former members and former pastors, a wealth of historical pictures and documents produced and put on display, a wonderful lunch, good wishes from our sister and surrounding congregations, uplifting voices raised in praise to our Triune God and most importantly, the Word of God proclaimed at two anniversary services.

As we near the end of this anniversary year and look with anticipation to Advent and Christmas, we are reminded of so many past St. John Christmas recollections. Every generation gives witness to the excitement of the Children's Christmas Service. For some that meant new dresses or clothing, exchanging gifts, finding the popcorn ball and orange nestled in the bottom of a bag of candy, or memorizing and reciting a "piece" to bring to light the Christmas message. For the most senior of members, the memories involve coming to church by horse and sleigh, or a ceiling-high Christmas tree adorned with real lighted candles. And for others, it is the lighting of individual candles, the dimming of the overhead lights, and voices joined in singing "Silent Night" at the Candlelight Services. For some, a verse or two sung in German would roll off their lips just as it had when they were children.

As we notice the shortening of daylight hours at this time of year, we have to think back to the lives of our St. John pioneer ancestors to appreciate the difficulty and darkness of those times. For the first half of our 150-year history, there was no electricity in our church or in our homes. A few lanterns and candles were all that provided light through the long dark winter nights. How welcoming the season of Christmas and the message of "the Light that came into the World" must have been to these early Town of Wien Christians.

It was during Pastor Jeff's tenure that he began describing St. John with this slogan: "Where the Light of Jesus Christ Always Shines!" We know that we cannot physically make Jesus do anything, and in no way does the slogan suggest that the light only shines here. Yet it is no stretch of the imagination to envision Pastor Jeff driving back to St. John on any given night and being guided home by the lighted steeple piercing the dark night sky. And although many of us may see some amount of symbolism in a lighted steeple pointing to the heavens, it would mean nothing if not for all the faithful pastors called to proclaim the gospel message that enables the saving Light of Christ to shine into the hearts of our congregations and community.

It is this Light of Jesus Christ which led our ancestors through the darkness of their days, through the hardships of their lives and labors, through world wars and the Great Depression. It is that same Light that we need to focus on today as we make our way through an often fractured and chaotic world. It is that Light which we must follow into the new year; and it is only that saving Light which will finally lead us Home.

"Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a Light for my path. Psalm 119:105"



For All

Webmaster: Please send any updates, events, pictures, and changes concerning the website information to Traci Pehlke at webmase@bethstj.org.

Quilting: The Bethlehem- St. John Quilters will start on Tuesday Jan. 7th, 2020 at St. John in the Fireplace Room. 9 to noon. We gather to put quilts together for LWR, OGT, and many other places where comfort, warmth and love are needed. As we stitch we are blessed to give thanks!! Call Janice Brown 715-352-3056 or Joanne Luther 715-223-3410

Bethlehem

Bethlehem Out-reach

“Christmas Stars” at Xavier High School in Appleton on December 7th. We will see a Broadway style holiday themed extravaganza. Christmas Stars features a cast of over 250 performers (ages 5 to Senior). The performance starts at 1:00pm. We plan on arriving at the Golden Corral around 4:00pm. Lamers Bus Lines will be picking up at the Hardees parking lot in Abbotsford at 9:00am, at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Milan at 9:30am and at The Cenex in Edgar at 10:00am. Contact info: Marlene Schreiber 715-223-4534 or 715-383-0259

Christmas Cards

The CWIA has a selection of greeting cards and Christmas cards. Individual cards are \$.50 each and boxes of cards are \$5.00. Please come and check them out. Thanks

Soup Supper & Craft and Bake Sale Live Nativity

Saturday, Dec. 14th 4pm to 7:30pm is our Soup Supper and Live Nativity, be sure to invite your family, neighbors and friends to come join us for the evening.

Children’s Christmas Program

Fill your hearts with joy as we await our Savior’s birth at *From Heaven Above*, the children’s Christmas service at Bethlehem Lutheran Church on Sunday, December 15th, 2019. Christmas program will take place immediately following service Children will tell about Jesus’ birth with joyful hearts, songs and readings. Hope to see you all there! Join us in fellowship to follow children’s Christmas service with a light breakfast.

Christmas Bag Donations

Anyone who would like to donate towards the children’s Christmas bags at Bethlehem can give it to any CWIA member.

ST. JOHN

Church Cleaning Volunteers

A Job List to volunteer for cleaning the Church in 2020 will be on the bulletin board near Pastors office. If you wish to continue the job you are doing now, sign up on the new sheet. Just a note: If you have a message for cleaning people, post a note by the sign up sheet. Sign up soon.

Partner Corner



Orphan Grain Train (OGT) an LCMS Recognized Service Organization, reaches people all over the world. It provides assistance to children in nearly 90 orphanages, primarily in Russia and the Baltic states. They provide food, clothing, medical equipment and other supplies to people in places impacted by natural disasters and poverty. Last year, some 48 million worth of aid-7.8 million meals and other material goods distributed in 27 countries.

You make the ministry possible through your prayers and contribution to World Relief Deliver our Savior’s mercy to people in need.

St. John is pleased to be part of Orphan Grain Train Ministry.

ST. John Congregational Christmas Gathering

Christmas Pot-luck on Sunday Dec 8th beverages, utensils, ham and buns will be provided. Please bring a dish to share. We will be eating right after services. Carol singing and a fun gift exchange will follow. Please bring a wrapped "White Elephant" or gag gift. Mark it for guys or gals, if its for anybody no mark needed. Use you creativity!!

Christmas Bag Donation

Anyone wishing to give a donation toward the Christmas bags for the children see a Trustee. This long time tradition gives treats to all the children at the Children’s Christmas Program.

Children’s Christmas Program

The Children’s Christmas Service will be on Sunday, Dec. 22 at 5:30pm at St John’s. Practice, for any interested children, will be on Sundays at 9:00am to 10:15am, Dec 1, 8, 15, and 22. Contact Traci Pehlke 715-352-2269, text 715-432-9333, traci@pcavenue.org or Mary Schultz at 715-352-2603 if your children are interested in participating in the service or if you are interested in helping. Friends and family are encouraged to participate as well! Thank you. **Have a blessed Advent and Christmas Season!**

A Great Bargain !

Since there still is a moderate supply of the commemorative Christmas cards that were printed last year, the cards are now available at SIX CARDS for \$1.50. The cards have two keepsake photos of our church, and the message inside doesn't have an expiration date! What better way to share the message of our Savior's birth, and the memories of our recent anniversary celebration? Please see either Sharon Ballerstein or June Krebsbach. Thank you!

We also have a large selection of Christmas, Get Well, Sympathy, and Birthday Cards in the Narthex area, for \$5.00 a box. Check them out.

Cindy Wrucke Mission Donation

Donations given to Cindy at her presentation on October 27th was \$380.00 and from the Cinnamon Rolls for Cindy collection \$170.00 was given. The total donations sent to Cindy to continue her mission work in the Czech Republic was \$550.00. Thank You for your generous donations.

**SERVING THE LORD
IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC
NEWS FROM CINDY ZIRBEL WRUCKE**

Wisconsin has beautiful scenery, wildlife and hiking paths, but limited internet. Most of my travels in October included spectacular scenery, beautiful fall colors and plenty of fresh air, all in Wisconsin. It also included dirt roads, wildlife jumping onto the roadways, and many areas with little to no internet and cell phone service. Though it may have been frustrating to endure dropped calls and missed Skype meetings for a few weeks, it reminded me to pause and enjoy the beauty of God's creation around me. Sometimes, it's good to just enjoy the journey.

Feel free to follow along with more of my mission travels!

- Instagram: Anyone can follow me at Cindy Zirbel Wrucke Missionary.
- ♦ Facebook: Search for Cindy Zirbel Wrucke Missionary and follow my page.
- ♦ Mail: My address in Prague is
Nad Želivkou 475, Prague 6 – Nebušice,
164 00 Czech Republic
- ♦ Email: Cythia.Wrucke@lcms.org

PLEASE PRAY FOR: • Fluency in the Czech language. • The Czech people to hear the Gospel and seek Jesus Christ as their Savior. • Safe travels when I fly back to the Czech Republic.

GIVE THANKS FOR: • Safe travels during my home service. • My American host families who provided shelter, food and friendship. • All of those faithful servants who nurtured me in the faith and helped me become a missionary.

PRAISE GOD FOR: • The gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, who conquered death and gives us life through Him.

Victory Lutheran Update

Victory has had many changes this summer, some for the better and others we are just dealing with. It is with sadness that we are closing the Thrift Store, the climate here has changes from the time we opened in 2007. People are putting their stuff at the curb or on facebook for free. So people find what they need on the curbs! We had a hard time getting volunteers to work the store, and we are getting older and have our health issues. The Community center was sold and they also inherited our building. On the bright side, after we lost Deacon John we were not sure what was going to happen, but the good Lord sent us Pastor Mark Werner. He has a

church in Munising, and luckily he had a heart for us. His sermons are wonderful, we are truly blessed.

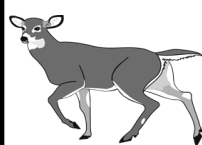
Our food pantry stays fairly busy, our youth group has about 35 children and is doing well. The middle school children are down a bit. About 25 every Monday, the day we feed everyone.

Our annual pig roast was a huge success, we served 300, and everything was donated.

We had to cover our stained glass windows with insulation and siding. A sad day but necessary, it has made a big difference in our heating costs.

We would just like to thank everyone for their generosity over the years, monetary, food pantry and items for the Thrift store. Blessings to all!

In His Service Victory Lutheran



Got Extra Deer?

Consider giving to Deer Donation Program

If you enjoy deer hunting but don't need any venison for your freezer, consider donating it to someone in need.

Since 2000 when this program started in Wisconsin hunters have donated 90,000 deer that supplied 3.7 million pounds of ground venison to food pantries.

To celebrate 20 years of the program, hunters who donate a deer in 2019 will receive a free hat as a thank you.

Hickory Nutz Sausage of Medford processed seven deer in 2018 for food pantries, they said they would like to have more in the 2019 hunting season.

Other processors accepting donated deer in nearby communities include Pinter's Packing of Dorchester (715-654-5444), River Valley Meats of Withee (715-229-4230), Smith Brothers Meats of Colby (715-223-2777) and Custom Meats of Marathon City (715-443-3734).

Any legally harvested deer can be donated by dropping it off at a participating processor. We suggest you call the processor first to make sure they have space for your deer. Field dress and register your deer.



Bethlehem

Kilty, Sutton 12/2
Bunkelman, Sheri 12/6
McKee, Tammi 12/6
Geisking, Lucy 12/9
Schwartz, Justin 12/12
Kunze, Rosie 12/13
Kirchner, Elizabeth 12/14
Bernt, Joshua 12/16
Anderson, Ronald 12/17
Neumann, Megan 12/17
Neumann, Marilee 12/18
Geisking, Justin 12/28
Thomas, Janessa 12/28
Woodward, Denney 12/29
Kirchner, Galen 12/30



Bethlehem

Matt, Janessa Thomas 12/15
Randy & Sandy Reynolds 12/23

St. John

Albert & Miriam Wolff 12/12
Ryan & Sam VanDerLeest 12/15
Steve & Cathy Schneider 12/26

St. John

Myszka, Samantha 12/1
Myszka, Valerie 12/1
Schneider, Stephan 12/1
Telschow, Audrey 12/1
Ulrick, James 12/2
Durkee Jr, James 12/4
Noller, Delayna 12/5
Guyett, Darlene 12/8
Koepke, Emma 12/8
Streit, Donna 12/8
Syring, Amanda 12/9
Murkowski, Richard 12/10
Rodman, Raegene 12/11
Schultz, Michael 12/13
Heise, Holly 12/14
Koepke, Steven 12/18
Wussow, Lisa 12/19
Myszka, Victoria 12/20
King, Easton 12/20
Niemann, Karissa 12/20
Mroczenski, Corbin 12/26
Wendtland, Damion 12/27

Bethlehem

Greeters
12/1 Shirley Buss,
Dawn Gumz
12/8 Troy, Cheyanne Kilty
12/15 Jason, Tami McKee
12/22 Bruce, Jolene Gumz
12/25 Clarence Arlette Molthen
12/29 Kevin, Beth Kosik

Elders
12/1 Virgil Underwood
12/8 Scott Parker
12/15 Del Schwarting
12/22 Virgil Underwood
12/25 Scott Parker
12/29 Del Schwarting

Acolytes
12/1 Ashton Hammel
12/8 Megan Kosik
12/15 Braiden Johnson
12/22 Aaron Gumz
12/25 Brayden Schopp
12/29 Marcus VanLuven

Techs
12/1 Lydia Carlson
12/8 Ashton Hammel
12/15 Olivia Hammel
12/22 Alexis Gumz
12/25 Luke Carlson
12/29 Tami McKee

St. John

Greeters
12/1 Mark, Stacey VanHoy
12/8 Ron, Carolyn Hahn
12/15 Jonathon, Kay Schulz
12/22 Carrie, Nadine Callies
12/25 Neal, Anna Koepke
12/29 Dan, Jill Korner

Elder
Paul Heise

Acolytes
12/1 Natalie Thompson
12/8 Maryn Schafer
12/15 Micha Schulz
12/22 Brayden Schopp
12/25 Lillian Pehlke
12/29 Ethan Telschow

Ushers
12/1 Steve Schneider
Carrie Callies
12/8 Steve Schneider
Jared Reis
12/15 Steve Schneider
Dennis Punke
12/22 Steve Schneider
Paul Reinhart
12/25 Steve Schneider
Bud Mortvedt
12/29 Steve Schneider
Mike Thompson

Lutheran Hour Sermon Schedule



December 1
"Enough with the Self-Talk"
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler
We are not always who we say we are. What you say to yourself about yourself may or may not be what's true. Dr. Michael Zeigler says, "Enough with the self-talk!" Who does God say you are? You'll find that you are worse than you thought, and yet, more loved than you could ever imagine. (Luke 18:9-14)

December 8
"God's Yes"
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler
Loved and Sent Series - "If we say that God's purpose is simply to take our souls to heaven when we die, we might miss God's bigger 'yes' ... God's 'yes' to putting bodies and souls back together again in the resurrection; God's 'yes' to creation as He intended

it to be." Romans 8:18-39)

December 15
"Love Is Enough"
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler
Loved and Sent Series - God shows us a different kind of love. It's love for the world that is not of this world, love that is focused outward, love that gives without requiring anything in return. (Matthew 22:35-40)

December 22
"Christmas"
Speaker:
Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

December 29
"Dreams"
Guest Speaker:

Lutheran Hour Sermon Schedule



Station	City, State	Freq.	Day	Time
WDLB	Marshfield, WI	1450 AM	Sun	8:00am
WRVM	Marshfield, WI	91.3 FM	Sun	10:00am
WRVM	Medford, WI	98.7 FM	Sun	10:00am
WRVM	Wausau, WI	101.3 FM	Sun	10:00am
WSAU	Wausau, WI	550 AM	Sun	8:30am
WSAU	Wausau, WI	99.9 FM	Sun	8:30am
WAXX	Altoona, WI	104.5 FM	Sun	6:30am

You can also go on line at www...lhm.org or download the free App @ LHM.ORG/APPS

