



# MESSENGER

**October 2019**

## *Special Dates in October*

### Ladies Aid

1st @ 1:00 p.m.  
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### Co-or. Council Mtg.

8th @ 6:30 p.m.  
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### Worship at the Cross

10th @ 5:30 p.m.  
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### JCM Bible Study

24th @ 5:30 p.m.  
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### Bread of Life Bible Study

Thursdays  
12:00—12:30 p.m.  
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### Food Pantry \* Thursdays

1:00— 3:00 p.m.  
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### Choir Practice

Weds. @ 6:30 pm  
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### Toddler Time w/Jesus

12th & 26th  
@ 10-11 am  
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### Pray & Play Tues @ 3:00

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### Refit Classes Sun & Wed 4 p.m.

## I Need More...FAITH

*"I Need More faith."* I can't imagine any honest Christian who wouldn't say a hearty "Amen" to that statement. Because of the common weakness of our sinful, human nature, the fervent request that a greatly distressed father made to Jesus regarding his son's great need and his own weakness of faith has often struck a chord: "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24)

Notice how that statement is punctuated with only a semicolon regarding his faith, but an exclamation point with regard to his unbelief. Unfortunately, that's the reality of the faith-life of God's people. We wish our own faith was punctuated with an exclamation mark or at least a simple period. But we know a question mark suggesting uncertainty or doubt gets in the way too often.

Just about every Sunday the worshipers in our churches make a confession of faith with the Apostles' or Nicene Creed. The key truths of the Christian faith are very briefly and yet adequately summarized in those statements. There are no exclamation points in either of those great, ancient creeds—just commas and periods that acknowledge the basic scriptural facts. That's an important aspect about saving faith: knowing the truth about the true God and the Savior he has given us.

Since this faith is totally a gift, we need to keep going to the Lord with this request, "Lord, I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" We keep having a problem with unbelief because it's such a natural part of us. Faith is a supernatural thing, and it is kept alive and strong only with the supernatural Word of our supernatural God.

The most important thing to remember about faith is that it derives all its strength from its object, that on which it rests. As a famous preacher once said, "It is not your hold on Christ that saves you; it is Christ. It is not your joy in Christ that saves you; it is Christ. It is not even your faith in Christ that saves you, though that be the instrument. It is Christ's blood and merit." There might indeed be many instances where our trusting faith is shaky, but the Savior and his promises are rock solid. With this subject of faith, it's most important to hear him speak with exclamation points, "I love you! I have saved you! I will never let you go!"

#### Worship service times.

Sun. 9:00 a.m.

Mon. 6:30 p.m.

## PARISH NEWS

### Congregational Changes last month:

**Added: Baptism:**

**Released:**

**Transferred:**

**Called Home to Jesus:** Michael Mauritz

**Current Congregational Stats:** communicants: 162 souls: 178



### Give and Take; Give More

If you've ever entered into a long-term relationship of any kind with someone else, you know that there is some level of give-and-take. It doesn't matter if it's friendship, work-related, or love. There has to be some level of compromise because you probably don't agree on everything. Compromise is not a bad thing; in fact, it is necessary to find some kind of harmony, rather than one person giving up all their ideals or preferences. With compromise, all parties involved can complement one another, to fill in the gaps where the other does not.

This is especially true within the church. We've talked many times over about being a body of Christ and how there are different parts to the body. It must be so or nothing could truly be accomplished within the church. When you've spent long periods of time with your brothers and sisters of this congregation, it's easy to see how we can work together, how we can compromise when needed, how we can become one whole, rather than many separate parts.

Although that is a fantastic blessing, it can also become a hinderance. We, as one body of believers, become comfortable in our patterns, in our routines, in how we do things. That's not a bad thing in itself. When we are consistent, it is easier to function. The problem arises when that consistency becomes the primary goal. We are who are. We do things this way because it has worked for years. We aren't willing to change it. Again, there are good and wonderful benefits to being consistent because it makes it easier to accomplish our goals.

But when those goals are being met, or have been completed, consistency can become the enemy. It can impede growth – growth in faith, and growth as a body of believers. We become comfortable and find it difficult to branch outside the norm. We become stable, which is good for a time. But a stable church is not a growing church. A stable church focuses on how we can be comfortable in what we are doing. It does not leave much room for stepping outside our comfort zone and doing something new to reach out and serve the needs of others.

I recently came across a post someone shared on Facebook. *(see picture at the end of this letter)* It centers in on the fact that as a church, we often gravitate to serving our own wants, whether that is intentional or otherwise. If it happens too much, it can result in an air of exclusivity. Now, to be clear, I am not saying that the members at Divine Savior are "put-offish." In fact, I have found it to be quite the welcoming congregation, on the whole.

But there are times when our desire to serve our own needs as a congregation, or simply our desire to be

*(Continued on page 3)*

comfortable, can hinder the purpose of the church, which is to reach out to all people in a loving way to express the truths of Scripture and to share the saving message of Christ with all people. This has been on my own mind quite a bit lately. In October, we have a special worship service that focuses on the theme "Welcome Home." The idea is that we welcome back any and all members of our congregation, regularly-attending members, members who are rarely in worship, and even previous members who have left the church. The focus is on helping all to realize the importance of regular immersion in God's Word, for it is only through regular hearing of God's Word that we can be preserved and strengthened in faith.

In November, Pastor and Missionary Tim Flunker will join us for our Mission Festival Sunday, and he will focus on how we might reach out to others in a cross-cultural society. This especially looks to reaching outside of our own comfort zones, but doing so in order that we might reach more souls with the Gospel.

As we move into these special worship services and beyond, I pray that we as a body of believers might remember that sometimes, we might have to give a little, we might have to loosen our grip on what makes us feel comfortable and safe, and step out there to do what God has called us to do.

How might that look as a congregation? It might mean that you'll have to be okay with giving up "my spot" in the pew. Even when said in jest, that mentality can lead those who are weak in faith to feel excluded. It might mean enduring the sounds of multiple young children. They need to hear about their Savior, too, if they are to be saved. It might mean seeing someone who doesn't dress the way you think they should dress. But, so long as their clothing is "clean" as far as language and content, modest, and not crude or containing pictures or phrases that are clearly ungodly, then God doesn't care what type of clothing you wear; t-shirt, shorts, dress, shirt and tie.

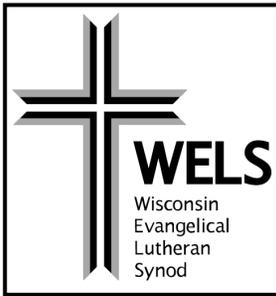
These are all examples of areas where we have our preferences, our comfort zones, and we don't want them to change. But does being flexible in these areas change the truth of God's Word? No. It is as true and effective as it has always been. The apostle Paul once spoke of being willing to let go of yourself so that you might better serve others with the Word of God. He said, **"Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings."** (1 Corinthians 9:19, 22-23)

In this whole discussion, please do not take away the idea that everything has to change. That is not what I am stressing. That would not be helpful to lose all consistency. But we must be flexible and open enough to realize that we have some areas where we can exercise some "give and take," and in so doing, can better open up the opportunity to share God's Word with many others.

May God help us to grow, both inwardly to strengthen ourselves against our spiritual enemies, but also outwardly, reaching out to serve all people with the message of Salvation. Amen

In Christ,

Pastor Wolf B. Parsons



# 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		<p>1 Ladies Aid 1:00 p.m.</p> <p>Pray &amp; Play 3:00 p.m.</p>	<p>2 Refit 4:00 p.m.</p> <p>Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>3 Bread of Life 12:00-12:30</p> <p>Food Pantry 1:00-3:00 p.m.</p>	4	5
<p>6 Worship 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>Bible Study 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Refit 4:00</p> <p>Bake Sale to Benefit Sam 25</p>	<p>7 Worship 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>8 Pray &amp; Play 3:00 p.m.</p> <p>Co-ord. Council Meeting 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>9 Communication Committee 1:00</p> <p>Refit 4:00 p.m.</p> <p>Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>10 Bread of Life 12:00-12:30</p> <p>Food Pantry 1:00-3:00 p.m.</p> <p>Worship at the Cross 5:30 p.m.</p>	11	<p>12 Toddler Time With Jesus 10-11 a.m.</p>
<p>13 Worship w/ communion 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>Bible Study 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Refit 4:00</p>	<p>14 Endowment Fund Mtg 4:30 p.m.</p> <p>Worship w/communion 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>15 Pray &amp; Play 3:00 p.m.</p>	<p>16 Refit 4:00 p.m.</p> <p>Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>17 Bread of Life 12:00-12:30</p> <p>Food Pantry 1:00-3:00 p.m.</p>	18	19
<p>20 Welcome Home Sunday 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>No Bible Study</p> <p>Pot Luck Lunch Refit 4:00</p>	<p>21 No Worship</p>	<p>22 Pray &amp; Play 3:00 p.m.</p>	<p>23 Refit 4:00 p.m.</p> <p>Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>24 Bread of Life 12:00-12:30</p> <p>Food Pantry 1:00-3:00 p.m.</p> <p>JCM 5:30 p.m.</p>	25	<p>26 Toddler Time With Jesus 10-11 a.m.</p>
<p>27 Reformation w/communion 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>Bible Study 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Refit 4:00</p>	<p>28 Worship w/communion 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>29 Pray &amp; Play 3:00 p.m.</p>	<p>30 Refit 4:00 p.m.</p> <p>Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>31 Bread of Life 12:00-12:30</p> <p>Food Pantry 1:00-3:00 p.m.</p> <p>Reformation Day</p>		