

From your pastor...

I've never gone to the midnight premier showing of a movie. (Some of my kids have, but don't ask me which movies.) I guess people stand outside in long lines waiting for the doors to open. I can imagine the excitement in the air even at such an hour of the night.

With that picture in mind, I am inviting you to attend our Lenten Wednesday worship opportunities (12 noon and 7p.m.) as we watch our Savior go to the cross. Our doors will be open, and we will reserve a seat for you!

Excited? Our excitement level will grow as we realize this amazing fact: All that Jesus suffered He suffered for us. Our eternal destiny rested on His shoulders. In the passion plot we are both the villains (guilty of crimes against God) and the victims (oppressed by death and devil). Helpless and hopeless on our own, we watch – at the edge of our seats – Jesus fight for us. Nervously, we watch our Savior throw himself between us and God's wrath for our sin. With great interest, we see Jesus punished and at that moment hear our prison cell unlocked and the Warden speaking unbelievable, but true words, "You are free to go!"

Once again I invite you to watch your Savior and see scenes of "Gripping Action in the Passion." Excited, you and I will confess, "*I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*" (Galatians 2:20)

~ Pastor J. Bare

Church Council News:

Financial report – as of January 31, 2017

	Month	Year to Date
Budget Requirements	\$47,415.17	\$47,415.17
Offerings	\$36,515.93	\$36,515.93
Tuition/FEF/ Reg	\$ 362.13	\$ 362.13
Other	\$ 5.13	\$ 5.13
Total Receipts	\$36,883.19	\$36,883.19
Off budget receipts	\$ 545.05	\$ 545.05
Transfer Special Funds		
Total Receipts	\$37,428.24	\$37,428.24
Actual Expenses	\$39,928.99	\$39,928.99
Off Budget Expenses	\$ 6,558.24	\$6,558.24
Total Expenses	\$46,487.23	\$46,487.23
Difference	-\$9,058.99	-\$9,058.99

The Council approved the following membership changes:

Transfer Out Julie Tjernagel to St. Andrew's Lutheran
Church, St Paul Park, MN

Cancellation of Ted Drahos and Stacy Fortner

Pastor Adam Seelow from Roscommon, MI was called as our associate pastor on February 15th. Please keep him and his family in your prayers as he considers this call.

Ms. Maria Gines, whom we called as our preschool and kindergarten teacher, returned her call. We will be calling another teacher on March 7th at 7pm. Also at this Voters' Meeting a proposal from Church Properties for a new entry door at the school will be presented.

Lenten Services began on March 1st. We will have services on Wednesdays at noon and 7pm for the six weeks of Lent. We will not be having our Thursday night services during Lent.

Gripping Action in the Passion

Date	Theme	Pastor
Mar 1	Washing	Pastor Bare
Mar 8	Kissing	Pastor Franck, Howell
Mar 15	Weeping	Pastor Kunde, Durand
Mar 22	Denouncing	Pastor Johnson, Perry
Mar 29	Praying	Pastor Voss, Williamston
Apr 5	Protesting	Pastor Bare

Maundy Thursday Communion Services
April 13 at Noon & 7pm

Good Friday Communion Services
April 14 at Noon & 7pm

Easter Sunday Festival Services
April 16 at 8 & 10:30am

“SALEM’S MICHIGAN READERS”
Meet the Authors & Bingo for Books
Thursday, March 2, 2017
5:50-7:00 pm
Salem School

Meet local published authors Tracy Foster and Shannon Cooper-Toma as they share their book, Benson’s Adventures in Michigan. **Their presentation begins promptly at 6:00. So please arrive early!**

- All Salem students in Preschool through 6th grade will receive their very own copy of this book!
- After the presentation we will play Bingo for Books!

If you plan to attend, please let the school office know. If you have any gently used books you would like to donate for bingo prizes, please drop them off to the school office by March 1st.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Matthew 25:40 says, *“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”*

Tears filled my eyes as I opened the card from you, my home church. Words cannot express how humbled, loved, and supported we feel through your kindness and generosity. Christ’s love shines through you. Though distance separates us, we are the body of Christ, the Church. It is a beautiful thing. We do not trudge through the woes and burdens of this life alone. How good and gracious is our God to give us each other to celebrate times of joy and to lift each other up in times

of despair. We are so blessed by our God through you. Thank you.

As the body of Christ we also encourage each other in the faith. So my brothers and sisters in Christ, remain in the Word and Sacrament. Cling to your baptism. No trial, no burden is able to separate us from God. They draw us only closer to him. We are his. Our name engraved in the palm of His hand. How we long for His return.

May the Lord bless and keep you.

Much love,

David & Heidi Frey

William, Greta, Henry and Frederick

Historic merger leads to formation of present-day synod

2017/02/15/in FIC News, Forward in Christ

The year 2017 is receiving much attention for being the 500th anniversary of the Reformation—and rightly so. A lesser-known, but not unimportant, anniversary is also approaching—the 100th anniversary of the amalgamation of the Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Nebraska Synods. In 1917, these four separate church bodies merged to form the Wisconsin Synod.

John Brenner, professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., is presenting on this important time in the synod's history on Feb. 22 at 7 p.m. Tune in to this online presentation titled "From Federation to Final Amalgamation: The Birth of the Wisconsin Synod as We Know It Today" at livestream.com/welslive. (*You can view this after the original*

date as well. Go to livestream.com/welslive and look under past events.)

“The merger of Lutheran denominations in 1917 laid the framework for our synod and firmly connected our strong confessional Lutheran approach back to the roots of the Lutheran Reformation,” says Dan Nommensen, vice president of the WELS Historical Institute. “Prof. Brenner brings to life our celebration of God’s grace in our synod as he reflects on the history of the merger in 1917.”

Brenner is also presenting on the same topic at the annual meeting of the WELS Historical Institute, which will be held Oct. 22 at 3 p.m. at the WELS Center for Mission and Ministry, Waukesha, Wis.

The Historical Institute exists to preserve and present WELS history. It works closely with WELS’ full-time archivist, Susan Willems.

Conference of Presidents holds winter meeting

2017/02/07/in Together

The Conference of Presidents (COP) met in January for its regular winter meeting. Some of the highlights of the meeting include:

- The COP received the report that the synod’s capital debt was completely retired 18 months ahead of schedule. The COP asked that a special thanksgiving prayer be written and sent to pastors for use in worship services in February.
- WELS Communications Services shared plans for congregations to sponsor showings of the new Luther movie in local theaters. Several congregations will

participate in a pilot program, with information about how to participate in this effort in this newsletter

- The COP discussed the process for appeals of disciplinary action for called workers and lay members. The COP wants to be sure that the process is working as intended and will hold further discussions on the matter in April.
- The COP was informed of the progress made in discussions regarding the Grenada mission's application for membership in the South Atlantic District. The mission had been an independent mission in fellowship with WELS.
- The COP affirmed its support for the calling of one director to serve the Commission on Youth and Family and the Commission on Adult Discipleship. The position is currently included in the draft ministry financial plan being considered by the Synodical Council.
- The COP appointed Professor Craig Hirschman to the Commission on Worship.
- The COP expressed its support for the joint statement on fellowship prepared by a committee of representatives from WELS, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), and the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). The statement will be presented for adoption to the synod convention by the Commission on Inter-Church Relations. The ELS has already approved the statement, and the CLC is discussing it.
- The COP plans to create video presentations encouraging Congregation Mission Offerings. Congregations in each district will be shown a video introduced by their own district president.
- The COP expressed appreciation for the work done by WELS parasynodical organizations. The COP will be exploring ways to foster even closer communication and cooperation.

- The COP approved the concept of adding a year of internship to the Martin Luther College Urban Ministry program.
- The Compensation Review Committee shared the results of its effort to review the synod's compensation plan. The COP encouraged the Compensation Review Committee to submit its recommendations to the Synodical Council and to the convention this summer.
- The COP is working with Communication Services to improve the way that delegates to the synod convention are prepared for the work they will do at the convention.
- The COP reviewed the pastoral vacancies in the synod, noting that there are currently 86 vacancies in congregations, 4 vacancies in foreign missions, and 3 vacancies in professorships.
- The COP continues to discuss doctrinal matters relating to fellowship, congregational governance, doctrinal supervision, and communion practices.

As is the case at every meeting, the COP held wide-ranging discussions on the call process, questions regarding special situations, and ways to foster consistency in matters of doctrine and practice.

Serving in Christ,
President Mark Schroeder