

Light Has Come

from WELS Teen Devotions

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:1-5)

I was sitting in a strange car in the middle of Buenos Aires when I heard these very words from St. John. A friendly man was driving me to the airport. After some roundabout Spanish small talk, he told me that he too was a Bible-believing Christian! He plugged a flash drive into his car's stereo and together we listened to these words, "En el principio ya existía el Verbo." Translated, it is the opening of John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word."

Studying Spanish in a foreign country helped me understand the power of words. My words could communicate to a waiter that I'd like to order the pizza with extra cheese or help me navigate my way through the city in a taxi. But when I consider that Jesus, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit created the world with a word from their mouth, my words seem like nothing. I can use words to tell people what I want, but God used the words "Let there be," to create the world from nothing! And he saw that it was good; yes, it was very good.

God was happy with his perfect creation, but that perfection didn't last long. The first sin plunged the world into spiritual darkness. But God doesn't settle for mediocrity, he demands perfection! I can't do anything perfectly. I snap at my siblings, throwing insults at them. I gossip. I blame. I complain. God hears every terrible word I say, he even knows each sinful thought I think. Do you struggle controlling your words and thoughts too?

Our future would be bleak if God didn't say anything after the first sin, but he did. God spoke to Adam and Eve and promised them a Savior to bring light into the darkness. What gracious words!

Flash forward to Good Friday. The sky is dark as night in the middle of the afternoon. Jesus suffers on the cross while the sin of all people

of all times hangs on his shoulders. This gruesome death in the pitch dark brought us life. There in the dark, Jesus, true God, spoke, "It is finished." What powerful words!

After three days Jesus rose from the dead! He burst out of the tomb after conquering the darkness. Death has lost its power. Death doesn't lead to eternal darkness and terror. Jesus promises us victory over death and eternal life in heaven. He is the light! He is the life! Yes, he is our light and our life.

Prayer: *Dear God, your words are powerful. Your words created this world. The Word made flesh, Jesus, saved me from sin and death. The Word came to scatter the darkness. You have brought us light! Now, help us be lights to others so that they can also be with us in heaven! Amen.*

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CHAIRMAN'S SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT THAT AFFECTS ALL OF US:

Gossip or slander has been heard within our community that has originated from our own members. This slander says the pastor or our Inreach Team is kicking people out of church. Little could be further from the truth. And this slander is not only harmful, it is sinful. Please recall the 8th Commandment. And please hear again what Jesus said through the writer to the Hebrews. *"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us ENCOURAGE one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching* (Hebrews 10:25). The Pastor nor the Inreach Team has the purpose or desire to "kick people out" of church. Instead, their purpose is to do what we all have the command to do—to encourage our church family members to regularly make use of the Means God has given us to strengthen our faith – The Means of Grace in Word and Sacrament. If you hear such gossip or slander, please identify it for the sin that it is, ask the people to stop, and encourage them to speak with the chairman, the pastor, any Inreach Team member, or even attend an Inreach Team meeting to see the loving work this group is trying to do. And let us all resume basking in the joy of forgiveness none of us deserve. Thank you!

Call Meeting

The call meeting for our next pastor will be **April 3 at 7:30 pm.**

Sunday School and Adult Bible Classes

Join us to grow in God's grace every Sunday at 7:45 in the sanctuary. There is a 5-minute devotion with fellowship time and refreshments before heading to the various classes. Parents, please don't drop your children off outside or in the Sunday school room as there will be no supervision there. Bring them into the sanctuary. Thanks! If you happen to worship on Thursday, come for the fellowship and growth on Sunday.

Canvass for Holy Week

We'd like to make a big impact in the Johnson Creek neighborhoods on **April 13**. Please go to www.immanuelinfarmington.com/canvass and sign up to help us hang invitations on doors for our Holy Week services.

LWMS Spring Rally

The Lutheran Women's Missionary Society will have its Spring Rally on **April 13** at St Matthew Lutheran Church in Janesville. Please see the poster on the bulletin board or speak to our representative, Jackie Naatz, for more details.

Wish List

A new wish list is up on the bulletin board. If you would like to make a donation toward a specific item/goal, please consider some of the items on the list. Thank you!

Easter Flowers

The Altar Guild is taking orders for the flowers that will be used to decorate the altar and church chancel on Easter Sunday. After the second Easter service, you are welcome to take your flowers home with you. Order forms are enclosed with this newsletter and available in the main hallway where there is also a basket to place completed forms and payment. Please have your orders in by **April 7**. Thank you!

Easter Breakfast

This year the Annual Easter Breakfast will be put on by ALL OF US! Please see the sign-up sheet in the main hallway for ways that you can donate and volunteer for this great meal and fellowship event. Thank you!

Freewill Offering for Women's Ministry Conference

Would you be willing to help offset the cost of this conference for some of the ministry-minded women of our congregation who would like to attend? There will be a freewill offering basket at the back of the sanctuary **March 28 & 31** and **April 4 & 7** if you would like to offer your support. Thank you!

Women's Ministry Conference

The *Living Stones Positioned to Thrive* conference will be held at Luther Preparatory School in Watertown **July 18 - 20**. This year's conference will highlight God's design and purpose for the Christian woman in our society today. From openly speaking about Jesus at work or on the college campus, to reaching out in love to another generation, to working with others in God's kingdom, each woman is uniquely and purposefully in that place by God's design. With God's Word, this conference will nurture, encourage and equip you to see how God intends for you to thrive in the unique situation He has placed you. If you are interested in attending, please sign up on the sheet in the hallway. Part or all of the cost for the conference will be covered. More information is available at wels.net.

LLHS Grand Event

The Lakeside Lutheran High School 8th annual "Grand Event" fundraising auction and dinner has a USO theme this year inspired by Paul's encouragement to the Galatian Christians. It's **April 13**, on the Lakeside campus, beginning at 4:30 pm. Cost to attend this night of delicious food and memorable entertainment is \$50/person. Table and other sponsorships are also available. The link for registering to attend, for sponsoring part of the night, for donating an item for auction and more is llhs.org/grandevent or call Bari at 920-648-2321 x2223. Thank you for your support of Christian education!

Grace-Hmong Outreach in Vietnam

Our synod has an amazing opportunity! We have been asked by a large Christian group in Vietnam to teach and train pastors. We have been invited by the government to build a theological training facility in the city of Hanoi. Our goal is to raise \$2 million by the end of June to build the facility and cover operating expenses for the first two years. Please prayerfully consider being a part of this enormous outreach opportunity! There is a designated giving envelope in the informational booklet about the Grace-Hmong Outreach which is available in the main hallway.

Worship Service DVDs

Do you know someone who'd be interested in regularly receiving DVDs of our worship services? Please let Pastor know. We'll mail them out to them. Extra DVDs are next to past bulletins in the entryway and available for anyone now.

Organization of WELS Seniors

The April meeting of our OWLS chapter is scheduled for 1:30 pm on **April 16** at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Hubbleton, served by emeritus Pastor Lance Hoff. We thank the Immanuel ladies for providing refreshments. We will hear the personal story of Beverly and her husband Clyde Nehls, *Raising Two Deaf Children*. The Organization of WELS Seniors exists to provide meaningful activity for those who are retired and/or 50 years and older. Here you will enjoy spiritual growth and the fellowship of neighboring WELS and ELS members. Bring a friend along.

Family Usher Teams

The idea behind Family Usher Teams is to have ushers representing who we are—a family, to have guests welcomed by folks just like them—a mom, a grandpa. Imagine the impact when a young mother comes to our church for the first time with her baby in her arms, a little nervous as it's her first time to any church in a while, and another young mother opens the door for her and calms her nerves, tells her where things are. Or a grandpa with his granddaughter going out to open the car door of an elderly woman who needs help with her walker. Everyone in our church can help make such an impact. Please ask others to help you make a team. We'd like at least four people on each one, and you don't even have to be of the same family (we're all family in Christ). See the schedule in the main hallway and sign up for a date today!!

Servicemen/women

Do you know a serviceman or woman serving on our behalf? Go to www.wels.net/refer to register them for free resources.

Adopted Seminary Family

Our family at Immanuel continues to support seminary student Dominick Olson, his wife Bethany, and their new arrival, Ella Mae. Please see the display in the hallway for more information about this family, what their needs are, and an envelope to give gifts to help support them and send words of encouragement. Thank you!

Building Improvements

Would you like to help with building improvements? Please use the envelope in your box of envelopes, one of the envelopes kept at church, or simply indicate on your check that your gift is to go towards "building improvements." Check out our fundraising progress on the poster on the north wall of the hallway. Thank you!

Cookie Committee

Are you good at making cookies? Are you able to deliver cookies? Could you do both? A new exciting way to serve is developing. Please see the signup sheet in the entryway.

Electronic Giving

Did you know you can give your offerings electronically? Whether you're able to make it to church or not, you can always make sure your offering arrives. It's a safe, convenient way to give your firstfruits every week. Ask Carla for more information.

Large Print Editions

Could you benefit from a large print edition of our weekly worship folder, the *Meditations* devotional booklet, or the *Forward in Christ* magazine? We'll gladly make these available if you'd like. Please let Pastor or Carla know. Thanks.

Register for Holy Communion

Please remember to fill out a registration card for the Lord's Supper. These cards are used by our Inreach Team to encourage faithfulness in worship. Thank you!

Offerings vs. Budget as of 2/28/2019

Offerings: \$47,484.01 Budget: \$55,317.33 Difference: - \$7,833.32

Sunday Usher Teams

April 3	Naatz Family
April 7	Morris-Robinson Family
April 10	Guenterberg, Metzger, Marti
April 14	Morris/Maron
April 18	Braatz/Buglass
April 19	Altreuter Family
April 21	Bartsch/Emrath (6:30am)
April 21	Braunschweig Family (9am)
April 28	Baum Family





APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Roxanne Sukow 4/1
Laurie Schroeder 4/3
Dennis Fenner 4/4
Lillian Kamenick 4/5
Jakob Peterson 4/6
Mark Guenterberg 4/7
Kimberly Trimborn 4/8
Alvin Miller 4/10
Connor Dobson 4/11
Faye Nora 4/12
Jesse Perschke 4/12
Charles Melcher 4/13
Karen Christian 4/14
Laura Knaack 4/14
Scott Tetzlaff 4/16
Ellen Milbrath 4/17
Kenneth Pfeifer 4/17

Sue Andersen 4/20
Rodney Lemke 4/20
LuAnn Erdmann 4/21
Ronald Gaulke 4/21
Robert Buss 4/23
Dugg Hartwig 4/23
David Schultz 4/23
Adam Sherry 4/24
Ruth Guenterberg 4/25
Sharon Radloff 4/25
Merlin Witte 4/25
Nancy Wrensch 4/29
Caleb Lamp 4/30



Couple	Date	Years
Al & Darlene Schmidt	4/6	62
Edward & Susan Stoltenburg	4/28	40
Tom & Pam Olszewski	4/19	39
Allen & Darcy Draeger	4/24	37
Timothy & Amy Dettmann	4/26	17
John & Jennifer Kamenick	4/3	15
Andrew & Lindsey Marschke	4/28	12



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