

LEARN LIVE SHARE

Winter 2023-24

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School
Quarterly Newsletter

God's Love Languages

By: Pastor Bill Wangelin



The holiday season, including Christmas and the New Year, provide opportunities for us to show love to family, friends, our community, and people in need. As Christians, this is rooted in God's love for us. As our school verse says, "We love because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19

In his classic book, "The Five Love Languages," author Gary Chapman describes five ways that people show love to each other, namely, 1) Words of affirmation, 2) Physical touch, 3) Gift giving, 4) Quality time, and 5) Acts of service. These five love languages give us a framework for how we can show God's love to others as we gather with church family, reach out to our



community, and spent time with family and friends. Look at these five again – do they inspire ways to love your family and the people God will place in your path?

God loves us with an everlasting love. "God so loved the world that He gave..." He speaks the

greatest words of affirmation (1) in Holy Absolution when He says through the pastor "I forgive you all your sins..." He gave us the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion to be a physical touch (2) conveying God's supernatural grace. He gives us the gifts (3) of the Spirit, His Word, and all physical and spiritual blessings. Through the gift of prayer, He wants to spend quality time (4) with us, and ultimately wants to spend eternity with us in heaven. That's some real quality time! Jesus committed the greatest act of service (5) when He healed and taught and ultimately went to the cross as the suffering servant.

At Christmas, love came down to walk among us, to suffer and die and conquer death for us. Love came down to show us what real love is all about. This is the love the world cannot give, but that we can offer the world in spades. In the pages of this edition of *Learn, Live, Share*, you will see God's love in action in numerous ways. We pray it inspires you to receive and pass on the love of God that we have as we learn, live, and share Christ.



In Joyful Service to Jesus,
Pastor Bill Wangelin <><

Lights, Lights, Lights

By: Pastor Chris Deneen

I love Christmas lights. They are one of my favorite decorations during the Advent and Christmas seasons. Lauren and I have been able to take Ida and Eleanor through some drive thru light displays, and they've loved them. It is the joy of hearing those squeals of excitement that simply warms my heart.

Ever since Lauren and I have been married, we've loved decorating wherever we were living. Whether it was our apartment at seminary, the parsonage we had on vicarage, or our house here in Lansing, we love to decorate.

Now, when people decorate they often put the lights up, they plug them in in November and December, and maybe January, but then they take the lights down and pack them up. Then they wait until the next year, get them out, test the lights, buy several new strands, and put up their lights, just to take them down again in the spring.

Lauren and I had a different thought and plan when it came to our lights. We put them up last year, our second winter at our home, and then we left them up.

All year long.



In early November, we plugged them back in, after having them unplugged since March. We had to replace a strand here and there, but our lights were up and ready.

Why didn't we take them down? Was it because we didn't want to go through the effort? Or we didn't want to have to get them out of the basement this year? It may have been.

But I look at it this way:

It gets dark early in Michigan in the winter. We long for those days where the sun sets around 8. We go days and weeks without the sun. We long for the sun to just peak through at least a little bit.

But with my Christmas lights plugged in year-round, we can get that extra joy and light anytime.

That's what our faith does. That's what the hope of eternal life with our Lord does. In the darkest days, in the dreariest days where we long for the sun, the Son is always shining upon us.

Our Lord and Savior, when He came to this earth around 2,000 years ago, stepped into the darkness of our world to bring His light. May His light shine into your life today, tomorrow, on your darkest days, on your brightest days, and every day in between.

Pastor Chris <><

Oktoberfest 2023

By: Dave Wright, Minister of Family Life



On the last Saturday of September – a glorious, sunny day – Our Savior members, friends, and neighbors of OSL gathered to celebrate Oktoberfest.

In the tradition of the original German Oktoberfest, we started in September.

Who knows, maybe one day our celebration might go for days like in Germany, but for our first Oktoberfest, we were thrilled to be able to gather for 4 hours under a massive tent for great fellowship and conversation, the blessing of the hops and opening prayer by Pastor Wangelin, dancing, Polka music, games, and some terrific German food and beer.



This event would not have been possible without the financial support of our generous sponsors including: Dart Investment Centers, The Law Office of Reid Felsing, High Caliber Karting and Entertainment, Lake State Lawn and Snow, DW Lawn Care and Cleaning Services, Paxton Countertops, Mark and Shannon Schlegel, and Jeremy Danbrook.



Thanks also to our planning team, which included Chris Manning, Brian and Jolene Holtz, Troy Becker, Rachel Krause, Jim Sundstrom, and Brant Henry, plus many volunteers who spent time setting up, cooking, serving, manning the entrance table, and cleaning up.

Approximately 350 joined in the fun that day, which included plenty of games for kids, face painting by Ryan Cummins, Evie Cummins, and Naomi Brossard, sack races, corn hole, and a seemingly never ending supply of draft root beer.

We hope to make this an annual event! If you are interested in being a part of the planning team for next year, contact Dave Wright at dwright@oursaviorlansing.org.



Our Savior Lutheran 2024 AUCTION

Proudly Presented by:
Dart Investment Centers

OSL
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MARCH 2ND
2024

oursaviorlansing.org/auction



Baptism Birthday PARTY

Sunday, January 14
BETWEEN WORSHIP SERVICES



All who were baptized in the last year are invited to celebrate!

The role of a US Army Chaplain

By: CH (CPT) Lang Yang, USAR



Our nation's armed forces, "Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine, Coast Guard, and Space Force," are always ready to defend and protect this nation. The chaplain's responsibilities are nurturing the living, caring for the wounds, and honoring the dead. Other tasks include performing religious rites, conducting worship services, and providing confidential counseling. They also advise commanders on religious, spiritual, moral, and ethical matters. Chaplains are commissioned officers stationed wherever military members are, including in combat environments. Chaplains cooperate without compromising their faith traditions or ecclesiastical endorsement requirements to ensure the most comprehensive religious support opportunities possible for all Soldiers. They either perform or provide opportunities for Soldiers to support their religion and spiritual well-being. We want to thank our Veterans who have served our nations so that we may enjoy "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

Pro Deo et Patria - For God and Country

Pastor Yang Lang, Hmong Pastor, is currently serving as a Chaplain in Alaska. We thank him for his service and look forward to welcoming him back to Michigan in February.

Hymn Festival with Robert Hobby

Wednesday, December 6, 7pm



Join us as we sing and hear the wonderful carols of Advent and Christmas accompanied by organ, handbells, brass and timpani. Carols to be sung include Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence; Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus; Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying; O Little Town of Bethlehem; Angels We Have Heard on High; Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light; Hark! The Herald Angels Sing; Star Carol; It Came Upon the Midnight Clear, Go, Tell It on the Mountain and Joy to the World. Robert Hobby is the Minister of Music at Trinity English Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne and a well-known composer and workshop leader. All of the music for the hymn festival was composed by him. A free-will offering will be taken.

Increasing Whole-Child learning and Biblical Friendship with Friendly!

By: Sara DeYarmond, Educational Specialist



Helping students encounter Christ's love daily is at the heart of everything we do here at Our Savior. It is an incredible gift that we get to weave our Christian faith into all that we do and teach! As part of our dedication to meet the unique needs of each individual student spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially, we are thrilled to introduce to you our newest school-wide program, Friendly.

The Friendly program teaches friendship skills and emotional intelligence through the lens of Scripture with a focus on cultivating a safe and Christ-centered school community. The Friendly program supports the following areas of students learning:

- Understanding of Christ-like living and healthy relationship skills
- Development of Self-confidence, emotional recognition and strengths identification
- Self-Management skills including understanding and managing behaviors, goal setting, stress management and perseverance
- Making responsible decisions that align with Scripture and Christian values
- Practicing empathy, perspective taking and kindness with peers
- Communication skills, Conflict resolution and teamwork





CHRISTIAN OUTREACH FOR AFRICA

2nd Trimester Chapel Offerings: South Africa Scholarships



This year's Hearts for Jesus offering, which is collected by Lutheran schools across Michigan, is supporting our mission partners at St. Peter Christian College in Middelburg, South Africa.



\$10,000 match!
Chapel offerings for the 2nd trimester will be matched by OSL South Africa funds up to \$10,000. This means each gift given will give double the blessings!

The scholarship program at St. Peter Christian College supports students currently enrolled, including the orphans from the Hannay House, and is also contributing to an Endowment Fund with the goal of \$1 million to support scholarships long-term.



The American organization that oversees the scholarship program and other mission projects in Middelburg is COFA - Christian Outreach for Africa. Our Savior

members are actively involved in COFA providing financial oversight, promotion, and collaboration with our South African partners. For more information about COFA, you can speak with Bob Glenn, Melisa McKendry, Kristin Wangelin or Pastor Wangelin.

Learn more at <https://africaoutreach.org/heartsforjesus>

2ND TRIMESTER CHAPEL OFFERING



CHRISTIAN OUTREACH FOR AFRICA

Chapel offerings will be matched by OSL South Africa funds up to \$10,000. This means each gift given will give double the blessings!



Parking Lot
Construction



Parking Lot
Dedication



Parking Lot & Playground Construction Projects



Playground
Construction



Fun on the
new
Playground



School Update

by Matthew Couser, Principal



Team Volleyball Returns to Our Savior Athletics

Bump. Set. Spike! There was a lot of excitement among the middle school students as Our Savior restarted a volleyball program this past fall. 6th, 7th, and 8th graders were eager to learn about the game, develop their serving skills, and generate teamwork. We had so much interest, 19 girls in fact, Our Savior had to form two teams (Team Blue & Team White). Athletic Director Derek Lounds worked with new coaches Jamie Lafavor, Laura Plee, and Emily Zug to provide home and away volleyball matches. It was special to have these coaches, also parents of players, coordinate and rally together a great season with lots of learning and progress. Coach Plee recently reflected on the season, "The first season back to volleyball was a joy-filled season of learning, teamwork, and fun." She added, "It was so cool to see school spirit soar just like the volleyballs that flew over the net. We grew in faith and athletics in a positive way." Our Savior looks to continue middle school volleyball in the future with a possible summer clinic and volleyball open-gyms. Go Panthers!



Our Savior Lutheran School Recommended for Re-Accreditation

During the past fourteen months Our Savior Faculty, Staff, and CET produced a 237 page self-evaluation report complete with evidence that included pictures, videos, and documentation of our school ministry, operations, procedures, and programs. We loved gathering educational evidence and ministry experiences to showcase where we see God at work in our school.

On November 6-8, Our Savior hosted Pastor Sean McCoy from Ascension Lutheran Church- East Lansing and four educators from Lutheran schools in the Michigan District to validate our report. The validation team was led by our Michigan District Education Executive, Travis Grulke. The team members visited classrooms, met with many church and school stakeholders, including teachers, parents and students, and experienced our school ministry and school family first hand.

Among the many strengths observed and validated, the team was most impressed with our existing *churchschool* partnership. It was stated that it was difficult to see where the church ended and the school began. We were honored that this was named a Powerful Practice and our pastor and principal will be asked to share with district congregations how they were able to make this possible. The team was also very impressed with the quality of instruction, services provided and school ministry offered to our 195 K-8 students and their families. We celebrate that we have been recommended for re-accreditation through the Michigan District-LCMS Synod and Michigan Nonpublic Schools (MANS). We thank our congregation, who throughout it's history has been strong supporters of the school ministry. The next steps for re-accreditation include Michigan District approval in late Spring and synodical approval Summer 2024. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. The next step in accreditation has our Early Childhood completing their self-study and hosting an onsite visit in Spring 2024.



From Colossians 3:23-24...Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Advent at Our Savior Lutheran

Events & Midweek Services

Faith On Display Midweek Service: Wednesday, November 29th, 7pm

Advent by Candlelight: Saturday, December 2, 2-5pm

Early Childhood & Kindergarten Christmas Program
Sunday, December 3, 4pm

Hymn Festival: Wednesday, December 6, 7pm

Advent by Bonfire: Saturday, December 9, 5-8pm

Grades 1-4 Christmas Program: Wednesday, December 13, 7pm

Grades 5-8 Christmas Concert: Thursday, December 14, 7pm

Living Nativity: Saturday, December 16, 5-7pm

Blue Christmas Midweek Service: Wednesday, December 20, 7pm



Winter Events at Our Savior

December

- 2 Advent by Candlelight 2pm
- 9 Advent by Bonfire 5pm
- 16 Living Nativity 5pm
- 24 Worship @ 9:30am
Christmas Eve Worship
10am, 4, 7, 10pm

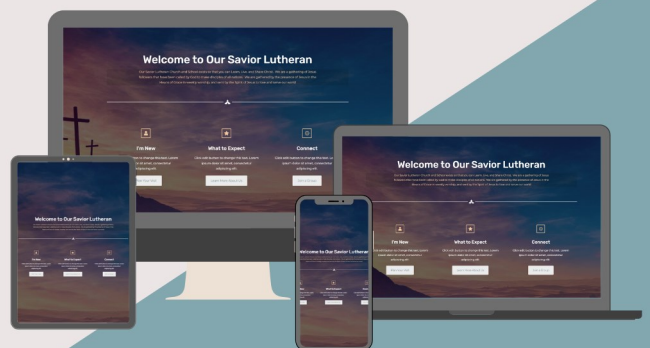
January

- 14 Discover Our Savior Begins
- 21 First Grade Bible Milestone 9:30am
- 22-26 National Lutheran Schools Week

February

- 1 Re-enrollment Begins
- 3 Michigan Theological Conference
- 14 Ash Wednesday

New Year New OSL Website!



A new and improved Our Savior website will be launching in January 2024!
Keep an eye out for more information and final launch date.

Advent at Our Savior Lutheran Sunday Worship Services

Sunday, November 26 - 8:30 & 10:30am
"Christmas Confessions: Waiting"

Sunday, December 3 - 8:30 & 10:30am (Communion)
"Christmas Confessions: Gifts"

Sunday, December 10 - 8:30 & 10:30am
"Christmas Confessions: Joy"

Sunday, December 17 - 8:30 & 10:30am (Communion)
"Christmas Confessions: Safety"

Sunday, December 24

9:30am: Traditional service with communion

10:00am: Christmas Eve Connect service

4:00pm: Contemporary Christmas Eve service

7:00pm: Organ led Christmas Eve service

10:00pm: Organ with string quartet Christmas Eve service

All evening services will include candlelight ceremony and communion.

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