

Immanuel's Newsletter

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December 2017



Christmas Worship Schedule

**Christmas Eve Service (24th)
9:00am**

**Children's Service (24th)
4:00pm**

**Christmas Day (25th)
9:00am**

**New Year's Eve (31st)
9:00am**

**Monday, January 1st
6:30pm**

*St Paul's, Algoma has worship on
Christmas Eve at 9:00am, 6:00pm
(Children's) and 9:00pm (Candlelight) and
New Year's Eve at 9:00am and 6:30pm for
those looking for alternative services.*

*****Please Note the Service Time Changes for Christmas Eve and
New Year's Eve Worship**

The Christmas Call

I want to talk to you about a divine call. No, not the one I recently returned to Spooner, but one that was issued to certain shepherds who kept watch over their flock by night. We read in the Gospel of Luke:

An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified! But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. For behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people: Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude from the heavenly army, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind.”

As you can see, the message the angels gave the shepherds was more than just information. It was an invitation: a call to come, see, believe and rejoice in the Savior that was born for them.

And how did the Shepherds respond? Did they just carry on as if nothing happened? Did they stay with their sheep – waiting for a more convenient time to heed God’s invitation to meet his Son. No, we read:

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Now let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”

The shepherds immediately heeded God’s call to come and see their Savior. Why? Not merely for curiosities sake, but because they believed the angel’s message. A Savior wasn’t just born, he was born for *them* – to take away *their* sins, reconcile *them* to God and bring *them* eternal peace. We read:

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they told others the message they had been told about this child. And all who heard it were amazed by what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

We can only imagine the wonder and joy the shepherds had at seeing Jesus. It was so great that they repeated the angels’ words to Mary, Joseph and anyone else who may have been there – thereby encouraging them with God’s wonderful promises. And, when the time came for them to leave, they didn’t leave in silence, but – as the LORD’s earthly angels (the word “angel” literally means “messenger”) they told everyone what they had seen and heard.

Brothers and sisters in Christ: the LORD didn’t just call the *shepherds* to come and see his Son, but *you too*. No, he didn’t send heavenly angels, but he did send earthly ones: fellow Christians who told you about his Son: *your* Savior. He invites you to come and spend time with him – not just on Christmas, but every time Christians gather around his word. He invites you to be like the shepherds – encouraging fellow believers as you discuss the good news together while focusing your attention on Christ.

So, what are you going to do with God’s invitation – the divine call to discipleship he issued you? Are you going to refuse it or wait for a more convenient time to follow it? No, I hope, rather, you heed God’s call to come, see and believe the great things that God has done for you. And then, having personally rejoiced in them with fellow Christians, be God’s “angels” to the world: joyfully telling others the good news of great joy, namely that a Savior has been born for them, who is Christ the LORD. Amen.

Renewed Commitment

As many of you know, shortly before Thanksgiving I had received a divine call to serve Beautiful Savior Luther Church in Spooner, Wisconsin. Even though deliberating divine calls can be stressful, the process serves as an excellent way to reflect and recommit oneself to ministry – whether that be in a new place, or where a person is currently serving. As you also may know, after a lot of prayerful reflection, I returned the call to Beautiful Savior. More importantly, I recommitted myself to ministry here at Immanuel. *I hope and pray you will do the same.*

What I mean is this: Immanuel's ministry is not merely my ministry; it's our ministry! We are a team. Now, we all know from the Packers this year that a team which only relies on the talents of a few players can get themselves into serious trouble. All players need to step up for a team to be a formidable force on the field.

So we too, as a congregation, cannot just rely on the talents of a few dedicated members to conduct ministry. We all have been called to Immanuel's ministry. We all need to step up and help each other out.

Christmas is an excellent opportunity to reflect on what our ministry is: to share the good news of great joy with the world. A Savior has been born for us – a Savior that both we and the world so desperately needs! Rejoice in that news, and use the change of the year to rededicate yourself in growing in the faith and sharing that faith with others. Make every effort, not only to come to worship, but to Bible Class as well. If none of the Bible classes we offer fits your schedule, tell me what would.

Think about how you can contribute to the ministry of this congregation. Maybe you can help encourage people who aren't coming to worship, perhaps you can help out with our fellowship committee, reach out with evangelism, or help me visit the ever-growing list of sick and shut-in people who can't make it to worship. Maybe you have an idea or talent that we don't know about – which would benefit the congregation.

During the second world war, the British government came out with motivational posters, one of which stated: Your courage, your cheerfulness, and your resolution will bring us victory. As Christians, we know that Christ already won our victory. As a congregation, however, we still have work to do. Let, therefore, your courage, cheerfulness and resolution in Christ continue to grow – for these fruits of faith are our victory.

New Bible Class

We are going to start a new Bible Information Class called "Paul and Luther." This unique class combines the entire New Testament book of Romans and Luther's Small Catechism. It is open to all (members and non-members alike). Non-members who complete this class will have the opportunity to become members of Immanuel. The class will meet **Sundays at 4pm, starting January 7th**. Please bring a small empty binder for the handouts.

Membership Changes

Affirmation of Faith: Mark Dax

Confirmation: Bradley Vandermause

Baptisms: Isaac Binney, Everly Chaudoir, Ellie Ihlenfeldt

Transfer to another WELS Church: Karlee Nimmer Horlacher, St. John's, Mukwonago

President's Letter

Happy New Year! Yes, that is correct. Pastor has reminded us that Advent starts our annual church year and cycle of observances. For a moment we should look back at just a few blessings we have received here at Immanuel. The church window repair project is finished, the organ repairs are done, and we see a large screen display each Sunday. These and many other projects, continue to support our church and worship, which strengthens our faith and our focus on Christ. Along with these physical blessings, we have many dedicated people accomplishing tasks, both big and small, which also help to support our many church activities. For all this we thank God for His blessings, give Him the Glory, and pray for continued strength and wisdom, and His presence in our church.

So, Christmas is coming, and you may need to find a gift for someone? May I suggest the Lutheran Study Bible, Concordia Publishing, on sale! It's a "book" within a Bible, many discussions and commentaries on what you are studying. Another simple gift that can become a family tradition, the reading of the Christmas story in Luke, the real purpose we celebrate Christmas. Consider reading the King James version also, familiar to the older generations, and a contemporary one, a wonderful comparison of the same story told in different words. Don't have KJV?, well download it to your electronic device! Finally, a good use for those things. Kidding. Don't forget the daily devotions that can be received daily, from Immanuel and the WELS website. I will also add, there are fun apps- to monitor heartbeat, or a star map to see in real screen time- the names of the planets and constellations, and the space station! These can help us to see and appreciate the amazing Creation we live in.

Now some serious business, The Annual Voters meeting will be January 28. We will have the election of Board and committee members. Candidates have been asked to run for positions. Please attend this important meeting of your church to help elect those who will represent you. The 2018 Budget will be discussed and approved. One of the important items for consideration will be a very special line item recommended by the Church Council. We currently have several wonderful youth education programs or ministries, but here is another opportunity to consider, an Early Childhood Program here at Immanuel!

As we have seen in several videos at church, our Synod's College is educating Early Childhood teachers. We have seen how many congregations have successfully implemented a program to educate and support their youngest members. As part of the preparation for this ministry, the Church Council is recommending we start a savings account immediately, as part of the 2018 Budget, and start paying to it as if we have an active school program. The current figure being considered is a cost of \$40,000. This would help to establish our congregation's financial commitment to this endeavor. It would also help to provide a financial reserve when the program is operating, for any unforeseen requirements. Planning will start immediately, but if this project is not feasible for any reason, we can simply redirect the funds to another improvement project or ministry that we decide on, so there is an alternative option for the funds. Immanuel has had a long history of Christian education, and with God's help, maybe we can once again provide this valuable support to our young families and children.

I wish to thank all the family of Immanuel, for supporting our church, each other, and our leaders. This is what "Love God, Love each Other, Love your Neighbor", is about. Continue to communicate your ideas and thoughts to your leaders and myself, and most important, pray for God's help and guidance here at Immanuel.

Dan Fager, President

Treasurer's Report

Total income for the church thru 12/05/17 is \$250,562. Budgeted income for this time frame was \$240,916

Total expenses for the church thru 12/05/17 are \$248,761. Budgeted expenses for this time frame were \$239,570.

So as you can see income has been higher but so have expenses. The net income is very close to the budget (\$455 more than the budget).

Little Lambs



The winter session for Little Lambs will run **January 9 - March 20**. We will again alternate between meeting in the playroom and meeting in the Gym. We have a few fun new toys for the gym - "stepping stones", a soccer net, a gas pump for the cozy coupes and a small bounce house! We also added a chalkboard and busy board for our younger Little Lambs in the playroom. Feel free to check it out.

Little Lambs remains a wonderful outreach tool in the community. Please like our Facebook page, Little Lambs Playgroup-Kewaunee, Wisconsin, and like and share posts. Thousands of people can be reached through just a few people sharing posts. You never know who might need a group like this.

Little Lambs is more than just an outreach tool, though. At every meeting we have the opportunity to share the love of Jesus to children and parents alike. This winter a very special Little Lambs will be offered in the evening for all of our young families who have working parents. Please follow the Facebook page for more info.

If you would like to support this ministry, please talk to Laura about what you can do. As always, please pray that the Lord blesses this ministry and all the families through it.

Coffee with Christ

This fall Coffee with Christ started an Introduction to the Bible study. We almost made it through the Old Testament before we stopped for Christmas. We will start up again on January 6 to finish the Old Testament and hopefully begin the New. We will tentatively meet every 1st and 3rd Saturday at 8:00 am after that.

I understand that life is crazy and occasionally you may not be able to make it Saturday morning. But that doesn't mean you should neglect studying God's Word. Therefore, Coffee with Christ has also started an online Bible Reading Group. During December we are reading Advent Devotions. In January we will begin a one year Bible reading plan. Please like the Facebook page Coffee with Christ at Immanuel and then join the group CWC Devotions to take part in the study.

Announcements

Are You Unable To Come To Worship? Please call, email or write Pastor Sullivan so he can include you in his shut-in visits.

Church Greeters Dick Stuebs is updating the Greeter list for 2018. Please contact him at 920-388-4355 if you would like to be a greeter or make changes for 2018.

Church Pictures Please see Glenn or Ann Brunner if you opted to not order pictures and only receive your complimentary 8x10. Those were shipped to the church in one package. Thanks!

Calendar Updates There will be no Tuesday Bible class until 1/9/2018. **There will be a make-up confirmation class on 12/20 @ 6:00pm**, but no confirmation on 12/27. There will be no Sunday Bible class on the 24th or 31st.

Pastor Johannes Retirement Please invite your congregation to join us as we celebrate the ministry of Pastor Robert Johannes on Sunday, December 31, 2017 at St. Peter's Ev. Lutheran Church, [325 Randolph Street, Mishicot](#). 9:00AM – Sunday Service with Communion Pastor Johannes preaching. 10:15AM – Reception after church in the east narthex. Please join us to thank Pastor for his many years of service to the Lord and to us.

2018 Offering Envelopes Offering envelopes should be in the mail shortly. Excluded from the mailing are those on the Automatic Transfer program called Simply Giving. We will still keep a supply of **WHITE** envelopes in the Narthex as a courtesy to our members. Just remember to put your name or envelope number on it for tracking purposes. We also have **PINK** envelopes in the Narthex which are used for special designations – Missions, Student Aid, Debt Reduction, Stained Glass Window Fund, etc.

And remember, that through our Automatic Transfer Program your offering can be transferred to the church account at various times and frequencies each month and doesn't cost you anything and you can sign up anytime by contacting Julie at 920-304-0228 or e-mail her at juliesiegmund@outlook.com.

Heart to Heart Dinner The Heart to Heart Dinner is scheduled for March 11, 5:00 p.m. social, dinner at 6:00 p.m. Cost is \$15.00/person. A sign-up sheet will be posted in the Narthex or you may contact Glenn Brunner.

Men's Club Meeting The next Men's Club meeting will be Tuesday, February 13, 2018

OWLS OWLS meetings are the first Tuesday of each month. We meet in the Fellowship Hall at 12:30pm for a Devotion, Meeting, Snacks, Social or Entertainment. Always looking for new members to join us. Contact President Carol Krueger for more information.

Elders

Elder's Mission: *Reach out in love to our inactive members and work to provide for the physical needs and the spiritual enrichment of all our members and called workers.*

Pastor asked us a question as a result of his call to Beautiful Savior in Spooner, Wisconsin. He asked us to think about our mission and then look at what tools he provides us. It's the first part of the question I want to talk about. Just what is our mission? It's something to think about isn't it? As an elder I am very concerned about reaching out to our inactive members who have gone astray from the Lord's desires and us, their Christian family. That's one mission I think we all need to embrace. A significant number of our members seldom attend church. Have some of us fallen into a trap offered so often and so convincingly by Satan and the world that if we are basically "good people" by worldly standards, then we are good to go, no need for continually staying in God's Word, participating in Bible studies or communing with him in the sacrament of Holy Communion where we receive his body and blood and the forgiveness of sins. I remember the story of Mary and Martha when Jesus had come to their home. Martha was upset that Mary wasn't helping her serve the guests (Mary was at Jesus' feet listening to his words.) and asked Jesus to tell Mary to do so. Jesus said, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen that good part, and it will not be taken from her." (Luke 10:38-42) What are we worried about, or what have we chosen to do, instead of hearing the Lord's words? Please pray for them, and the elders who need your prayers and support too. If you would like to help us in this ministry please talk to Pastor or myself. Thanks.

Alms box ministry is going well. Thank you to everyone who has dropped a "coin" in the alms box. Since our last report we received: October - \$144.00 for WELS Special Ministries and in November - \$513.10 for Christian Aid and Relief.

Do you have a memorial or gift for the church and don't know what to designate it for? Please contact Lou Richard of the Planned Giving Committee or myself. We have a Planned Giving List, which lists what the church could use or needs.

Extra funding will be provided for pulpit assistance in 2018 if the congregation approves it at our annual meeting in January. We want to ask guest pastors to periodically conduct a church service so Pastor Sullivan will have more time for other areas of ministry.

The Elders are looking for someone to act as the Head Usher. This person will coordinate usher activities, train new ushers and be responsible for locking up after services and turning out lights, etc. If you are interested please let me know. It would be very much appreciated.

Your brother in Christ,
Glenn M. Brunner
Chairman, Board of Elders

Property

Goal; To keep Immanuel Lutheran facilities in good repair by careful planning, thoughtful decision making, and supervision of activities as they take place.

The Cathedral Crafts Company has completed the Stained Glass Window project as of December 1st. All work has been done in a timely manner. The advance deteriorating conditions of the windows as predicted has been remedied by replacing window frames, re-cleaning, re-calking, repainting and with new window coverings. The workers did very well in keeping the dirt and dust to a minimum inside the church. Very little cleaning was required. Some lawn and landscape work will need to be done about the church for this spring to repair deep ruts in the lawn made by heavy lift equipment the contractors were using. The cost of the project has been completely paid for as there was no borrowing or any debt. It is amazing how well the fund drive for the windows progressed, especially when we just finished with a costly organ repair project the year before. Thanks to all donors for your contributions and generosity in keeping Immanuel Lutheran Church a place to be proud of.

The 2018 budget for the next calendar year has been completed and submitted to the church council for review. Our improvement projects planned for the next year include the flooring repair inside the parsonage, an access control system to enter the church/school/FLC buildings, door exit pad bars at the Family Life Center exits, a heating system for the south side school basement, and window replacement on the east side secretary office.

You're "HARD WORKING" wishes you a happy holiday season as we move along into placing our best step forward in planning to keep your Immanuel Lutheran Church property in good repair.

Steve Ihlenfeldt, Brian Ihlenfeldt, Fred Steffen, Jeff Christian, Greg Hlinak

Youth Christian Education

Board Members: Chair Brian Dax, David Chadoir, Chris Richard and Keith Schmeling

- The Christmas season is upon us and the trees in Church have been decorated by the YPS group. They have done a wonderful job and will certainly enhance the atmosphere as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.
- We look forward to hearing the Sunday School voices singing in Church and telling us about Jesus' birth. The Sunday School teachers are looking at the possibility of the older kids being able to opt out of singing in Church in exchange for offering services to the Church. The younger kids will possibly create artwork for bulletin covers. Children's service on Christmas Eve will be at 4:00 PM.
- Jill Belter is continuing to promote and encourage the teen members of our congregation through the YPS program. Please take the time to encourage the young members of our congregation to participate in the YPS program as it teaches life-long lessons under Christ's guidance. We are struggling with attendance and any encouragement would be very helpful.
- YPS has rented the tubing hill on Monday, February 26th in the evening.
- After the Christmas season has ended, Little Lambs will be doing a Bedtime Story Event program. This will be an evening program involving reading bedtime stories (both religious and secular) to little children. Laura Sullivan is continuing to head this program.
- The 2018 YCE budget has been submitted and will be approved by the voters at the Annual Voters Meeting. The overall YCE budget has not increased.
- The 2018 WELS International Youth Rally will be held on June 26-29, 2018 at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, OH. The Synod has just released more information on their website. Registration begins March 1, 2018. Cost of registration is \$345 which does NOT include the bus trip. The YCE board will begin preparation for registration and sign up. Please watch the bulletins for more information in the very near future.

Sincerely,
Brian D. Dax, Chairman

Planned Giving Committee

One Size Fits None

If you have even a generic estate planning document in place, such as a will, you are in a better position with your plans than most people, since less than half of people even have a will. However, you are a unique individual, and one size does not fit all when it comes to estate planning. There is no one like you with the exact same possessions and plans to provide for your family and the Lord's work after you're with our Lord.

That is why WELS offers the services of local Christian giving counselors to help each household prepare a multi-faceted estate plan covering their personal situation and goals. A giving counselor can help you consider things you might not have thought about. Once he works with you to determine the specifics of what you would like done, he can help you find a reputable, Christian estate planning attorney near you who will take care of the final steps of making your plans official.

In addition, WELS offers a booklet titled, "Estate Planning for the Christian Steward," to help you prepare for your meeting. Topics include writing a Christian preamble, considering the people in your life and the blessings God has given you, and determining your planners. There are tear-out forms you can use to provide your planners and your family with all the information they need.

This is all available to you at no cost or obligation. The goal is to assist fellow Christians with formally documenting their wishes to support their families and the Lord's work. To receive a copy of the estate planning booklet or to speak with our congregation's Christian giving counselor, Rev. Dennis Kleist, Dennis.kleist@wels.net, 920-740-5899. He can share with you helpful information and provide a personalized illustration showing what a gift annuity can mean for you. There is no cost or obligation for the consultation.

PLANNED GIVING TABLE

A **Planned Giving Table** can be found on the bulletin board in the church narthex. The table was developed to let the congregation know about projects and items that need funding. The table is not just a "wish list", but it is also includes desperately needed projects and items that our yearly church budget might not cover. Anything on the table listed in **BOLD** is high priority. Currently, Immanuel is raising funds toward the restoration of our beautiful stained glass windows, which is near completion. The estimated cost for this project is \$62,000 (please edit). To date \$15,000 (please edit) has been raised.

If you wish to contribute something on the Planned Giving Table, simply put your contribution in an envelope and write on it the project or item it is to go toward. Place the envelope in the alms box or give it Julie Siegmund.

The Planned Giving Committee would like to wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Remember to thank God for the blessings you have received.

For more information on the Planned Giving Table or planned giving in general, please contact any member of the Planned Giving Committee.

Lou Richard
Charlie Novak
Larry Schneider
David Siegmund

"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh." Matthew 2:11 (KJV)

MLHS News & Notes

CALL INFORMATION - The Federation extended a call to Dan Unke to serve as Assistant Principal/AD at MLHS. He currently serves as AD at Divine Savior in Florida. Dan is 35, married, 4 young children. He is the grandson of former Pastor Unke of Immanuel. (Son of Jim, for those that know that family).

Mrs. Alana Enger received the call to teach in the math department, replacing Mr. Schwartz who has been helping us with the vacancy this year. Her duties include teaching Geometry and Algebra 2. Mrs. Enger currently teaches at St. Paul Lutheran School in Lake Mills, WI. Our prayers are for both Dan Unke and Alana during this deliberation process and for a peaceful conviction in the end.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MLHS is still looking for an evening custodian – 15 hours a week. If interested please contact Scott Reinhard at screinhard@mlhslancers.org.

First German Lutheran is looking for a Preschool Aide Monday through Friday from 8am-11:30am. If interested, please contact Mr. Klatt at rklatt@firstgerman.org or call First German Lutheran School at 920-682-7021.

MLHS K-8 POM CAMP – Attention all young ladies in grades K-8!!! On January 6th, the MLHS Pom Team is having their annual Pom Camp! The time is 8:30-11AM at MLHS. They will learn a full routine and perform it that evening during halftime of the JV1 boys' basketball game. The game starts at 5:50. To register go to www.mlhslancers.org/pomcamp2018.

MLHS CHRISTMAS CONCERT – The annual Christmas concert will be Thursday, December 21st at the Capitol Civic Centre - 913 South 8th St. Manitowoc, WI. It will be presented twice that evening at 4:30pm & 7:30pm. Pre-Concert Music will begin 30 min. prior to the start times. This is FREE & Open to the Public. See you all there!

MLHS LANCER BOYS WRESTLING CLUB - Sign up now for Grades K-8 Boys to learn about wrestling @ www.mlhslancers.org/juniorlancers. It's Tuesdays and Thursdays in the MLHS Wrestling Room, Jan 2 – March 29th, 2018, from 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM. Questions? Please contact Paul Brodtke at pajbrod@gmail.com.

L-C.R.E.W. Quarterly Meeting- 1/9/2018 at 4pm in room 101. L-C.R.E.W. stands for Lutheran Christians Ready Equipped and Willing. If that describes you and you want to join the crew you are always welcome. Go to www.mlhslancers.org/lcrew to learn how you can use your time to serve the school.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Thursday – 12/21: MLHS Christmas Concert at the Capitol Civic Centre (4:30 & 7:30 pm)

Thursday – 1/4/18: Big East Honors Band & Choir – 7PM at the Capitol Civic Centre

Tuesday – 1/9/18: L-C.R.E.W. meeting – 4PM in room 101

NEW!!!! Photo Gallery for MLHS-see all the great photos of the MLHS students in action. Visit: www.mlhslancers.org/pics today!

Visit www.mlhslancers.org to view the up-to-the-minute MLHS calendar. Like us on Facebook (facebook.com/mlhslancers) or follow on Twitter (twitter.com/mlhssports).

Manitowoc Lutheran High School Delegate Report

A survey was provided to all the federation churches, which asked individuals to answer (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest importance) how important debt retirement was to them and how important continuing the site plan development of MLHS was to them. This is how Immanuel responded.

Debt retirement: 55.6% voted level 4 and 33.3 % voted level 5. (88.9%)

Site plan development: 16.7% voted level 4 and 38.9% voted level 5. (55.6%)

The Federation Meeting was held in November. Some key results follow.

1. The school Board of Control was given permission to purchase a house if one comes on the market and suits the school's needs for housing international students.

2. The delegates approved a capital campaign to reduce debt and execute the next step of the proposed site plan. The next step in site plan development would be to build a second gym. Members of Immanuel will be asked to support this campaign with their individual pledges, and as a congregation. As we get closer to the kickoff of the campaign I will give you more information as I get it.

3. The budget for next year is in development and will be presented to the delegates next February.

4. I continue to let my voice be heard regarding MLHS Student/Staff ratio, which I think is too low, and presently hovers around 10/1 (excess staff raises the overall budget cost and ultimately tuition costs). However, I am pleased that President Kock is receptive to my input. We may actually see a budget reduction next school year. Anyway, that remains my hope. The school staff continues to push renaming the Director of Education as "Principal", a move I have vigorously opposed. The administration organization we established at MLHS several years ago removed the principal position and replaced it with a President (Pastor Kock) and two directors to assist him: the Director of Mission Advancement currently held by Scott Reinhard and the Director of Education currently held by Dave Uhlhorn. The original principal's duties were split up between the three offices. Reestablishing the position title of principal may result in mission (responsibilities) creep (which I believe is happening) and causes a problem when making a call to fill a vacancy to that position since it does not entail (not supposed to) all the duties of a principal. Someone experienced enough to fill a high school principal position will probably be more senior than this position calls for and thus cost us more. These remain my concerns.

Glenn Brunner
MLHS Lead Delegate

2018 Men of His Word Conference:

Have you seen the news lately? It's crazy out there. The world attacks our Christian values from every direction on a daily basis. To counter these attacks, the MOHW Conference provides opportunities and resources for men to grow spiritually, using God's Word to empower and equip men to carry out their God-given mission in their homes, churches, communities and the world. This year's theme is "GET OUT OF THE BOAT."

Whether you attend for the keynote speaker (*Pastor Jared Oldenburg from Eternal Rock in Castle Rock, Colorado*), the relevant, thought-provoking breakout sessions (*19 to choose from*), or the worship experience with 600 other men (with *Koine', the worship band*), God's Word will speak to you.

The 9th annual MOHW Conference will be held at the Best Western Premier Waterfront Convention Center in Oshkosh on Saturday, February 24, 2018. Additional details and online registration are available at www.menofhisword.org for the first 650 men (\$50 by February 11th; \$60 from February 12th - 18th). Please join us for a day of fellowship in God's Word that you will not soon forget!

Adult Discipleship Devotion

Keep Your Clothes On

Jesus used some really unusual metaphors to describe himself and his work: a hen gathering her chicks, the gate to a sheep pen, and the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. One of the strangest comes from Revelation chapter 16 where he compares himself to a criminal: “Look, I come like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and remains clothed, so as not to go naked and be shamefully exposed.” (Verse 15)

Yes, a thief. Why? Thieves study their prey and strike when they are not expected. The coming of judgment day will be sudden. When Jesus becomes visible as the returning King and Judge of all the earth, it will be too late for Bible study, church attendance, and earnest prayer. There will be no time even for quickie repentance. You will be locked forever in the spiritual state in which Jesus finds you. In his metaphor, will you be wearing the rags of your own shabby, sinful life? Or will he find you in the beautiful robes of his righteousness, given to you through your baptism (Galatians 3:26,27)?

No one, not even God himself, will force those shining garments on you. When you came to faith, your will was reborn and you now can make crucial spiritual decisions. Without Jesus, you will stand naked and defenseless in the final court. The beautiful clothes he bought you cost him his life to purchase.

Keep your clothes on!

(This devotion taken from Grace Moments, by Pastor Mark Jeske)