



The Gloria Dei Grapevine



The *Gloria Dei Grapevine* is the monthly newsletter of Gloria Dei Evangelical Lutheran Church. For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact us.

Vacancy Pastor Samuel Hacker
sammyh73@gmail.com
810-701-3732

5005 McCandlish Rd.
Grand Blanc, MI 48439

Please Join Us

- ◆ **Sunday Morning Worship** at 9:00am
- ◆ **Communion** on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month
- ◆ **Adult, Teen, & Children's Sunday School** at 10:00am, September thru May
- ◆ **Adult Bible Study** - every Thursday at 9:00am
- ◆ **Youth Group** (6th-12th grade) First Saturday of the month, 6-9pm. Contact Laura or Allen Mortimer for more information.

Scan in your banking app to make your offering for
Gloria Dei Evangelical Lutheran Church at
financialsec@gloriadeigb.com



From the Pastor...

Don't pack it all away! Christmas may be over but it lives on. Although you may take down the tree, put away the decorations, and redecorate your home back to normal, take some time each day to realize what a difference Christmas makes in your life. It is a wonderful reminder that you are special to God. You are so dearly loved by Him that he kept his promises and sent his Son to live, die, and rise for you. Like Mary ponder all this in your heart. Like the shepherds take time to worship him and spread the news all around. Like the Magi seek him and present him with your gifts. Yes, keep Christmas in your hearts and show it in your lives all through 2024.

COVERED!

"All of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."
Galatians 3:27

It was late November. His yard looked awful. The grass was brown; it had gone dormant. But even when it was green it hadn't been very lush. The yard had its share of bare spots. After a hard rain, those bare spots had become puddles of mud. The leaves that had been swirling around his yard for weeks were now bunched up in various piles along the fence. The same swirling wind had also taken all of the debris from the neighborhood and wedged it into the leafless branches of his dying bushes. His yard was an ugly mess; it was an embarrassing sight. Overnight, however, it snowed, Six inches of beautiful snow now covered the ugly mess. His yard was suddenly

beautiful; it actually was a sight to see: picturesque, peaceful. His yard was covered with a uniform layer of glistening brilliance. Rolling mounds of white snow covered the trash in the bushes, the piles of leaves along the fence, the puddles of mud, and the dormant grass. Every tree branch popped in the sun as though someone had traced each limb with a white highlighted. Only he knew what was still underneath that snow – his ugly, brown, dead, trash filled yard.

My life isn't beautiful. My life displays the brown grass of a love that all too often goes dormant, the bare spots of

Serving in January

January 7

Ushers: Paul Allar, Jim Sharich, Jim Luisier

Communion Set Up: Major

Communion Assistants: Tom Furnner & Wayne Pennell

Power Point Assistant: Calvin Bessolo

Livestream Assistant: Logan Moore

Counters: Straub & Luisier

Cleaners: Gresock

January 14

Ushers: Joe King, Kent Kerwin, Mark Moore

Power Point Assistant: Owen Straub

Livestream Assistant: Paul Allar

Counters: Mortimer & Metz

Cleaners: Major

January 21

Ushers: Logan Moore, Harold Fox, Tom Furnner

Communion Set Up: Major

Communion Assistants: Gary Richmond & Mark Moore

Power Point Assistant: Mitchell Bessolo

Livestream Assistant: Allen Mortimer

Counters: Neuwirth & Moore

Cleaners: Allar

January 28

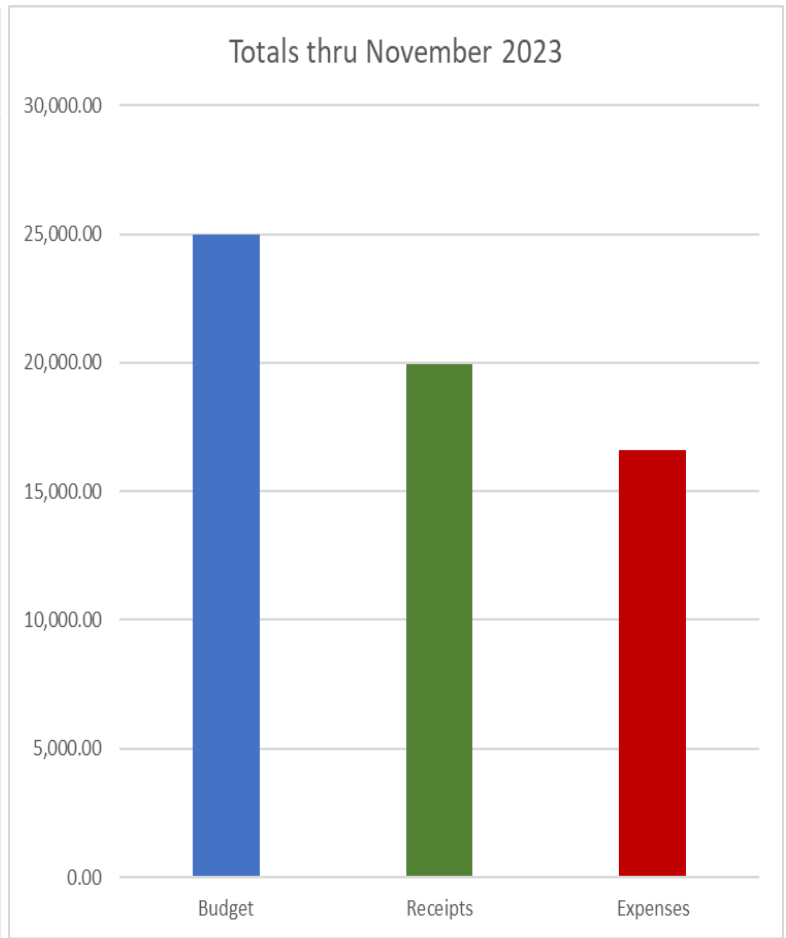
Ushers: Scott Mortimer, Allen Mortimer, Rocky Bessolo

Power Point Assistant: Noah Straub

Livestream Assistant: Jeff Edgett

Counters: Mortimer & Major

Cleaners: Moore



General Fund is \$20,191.97

Budget	Receipts	Expenses
24,962.90	19,964.79	16,608.57

It's a Leap Year...

Do you know what that means? Clara Buyack will have a birthday! Clara was born on February 29, 1928, so she will be turning 96 this year, but this will be only her 24th birthday. She doesn't get to attend church at Gloria Dei very often, and she misses the fellowship and friendships. If you would like to send her a card her address is:



Clara Buyack
6356 W. Dodge Rd.
Clio, MI 48420

Covered!

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my awful failures to help a neighbor in need, and the muddy puddles of doubt and worry that I tend to wallow in. My life is littered with the trash of my hate filled thoughts, my hurtful words, and my self-absorbed actions that swirl around and eventually pile up in my conscience,

The sins I commit day in and day out truly are an embarrassing sight, I can hardly bear to look at them. I shudder to think what God must think when he looks at me.

And yet, what does God see when he looks at me? No me. Not my sin. But like a blanket of fresh, white snow, he sees only the righteousness of his Son. “All of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Galatians 3:27). In Baptism Jesus covered me with his obedience. What does my heavenly Father see when he looks at me, one of his own baptized children? No stain. No wrinkle. No blemish. Despite the sins I commit, robed in Christ, I stand holy and blameless before him (Ephesians 5). With the gentle sprinkling of water in Holy Baptism, God covered all of our sins – he covered all of us – with Christ, by grace and grace alone.

The Sunday after Epiphany (January 6) is usually celebrated as the Baptism of our Lord. Although we do not baptize because Jesus was baptized – but rather because he commanded us in the last chapter of Matthew to go and baptize all nations – we can still use that Sunday, and every Sunday, to remember our own baptism when we were clothed with Christ. Happy New Year!



AREA WELS MEETING

Our Church Council has been discussing the possibility of joint ministries with Flint area WELS churches. On December 20, 2023 we sent a letter to 4 area WELS congregations/Pastors/Church leaders inviting them to a special breakfast meeting and discussion aimed at exploring the possibilities of collaboration among our congregations in the greater Flint area. We firmly believe in the power of unity and collaboration within the Body of Christ. We are excited about the prospect of synergizing our efforts and resources to expand our collective impact in serving the greater community. The purpose of this meeting is to initiate an open dialogue among our area WELS churches to explore ways in which we can combine our strengths, share our ministries, and work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation. Our goal is not only to enhance our individual ministries but also to amplify our impact to reach and serve more people of all ages within our communities. The meeting is scheduled for Saturday, January 27, 2024 at 9:00am at our church. If you are interested in joining us, please sign up on the bulletin board!

BIRTHDAYS IN January

1/02	Stacy Baker
1/03	Joshua Thomason
1/07	Julie Poulos
1/10	Robby Kerwin
1/12	Patrick Tesler
1/14	Denise Faulkner
1/16	Melissa King
1/16	Mandy Straub
1/18	Caleb Neuwirth
1/20	Scott Freimark
1/20	Laura Mortimer
1/20	Becky Richmond
1/22	Isabel Sharich
1/25	Melody Tesler
1/26	Joelle McGowen
1/26	Randy Neuwirth III
1/27	Eric Guffey
1/29	Isaac Poulos

Anniversaries in January

1/06 Adam & Jamie Stevenson

Time to Celebrate!

Gloria Dei Needs You!

WE ARE IN NEED OF VOLUNTEERS IN ALL AREAS OF SERVICE

- * Ushers
- * Communion Set Up
- * Power Point Assistants
- * Live Stream Assistants*
- * Counters
- * Cleaners*
- * Fellowship & Altar Flowers
- * Donations of commonly used items such as coffee, creamers, dish soap, paper plates, cups for coffee and juice, plastic silverware, napkins, hand soap, toilet paper, etc.

The more people we have volunteer the easier it is on everyone, and training is available. Please take a moment to prayerfully consider which of these areas you can serve in and speak with Val Hoppe. You can also just leave a note on her desk or email her at:

VHoppe.GloriaDeiGB@yahoo.com.

**desperately needed at this time*



Bible Readings for January

Date	Old Testament	Psalms	Proverbs	New Testament
January 1	Genesis 1,2	1	1	Matthew 1, 2
January 2	Genesis 3,4	2	2	Matthew 3,4
January 3	Genesis 5, 6	3	3	Matthew 5
January 4	Genesis 7,8	4	4	Matthew 6
January 5	Genesis 9,10	5	5	Matthew 7,8
January 6	Genesis 11,12	6	6	Matthew 9
January 7	Genesis 13, 14	7	7	Matthew 10
January 8	Genesis 15,16	8	8	Matthew 11
January 9	Genesis 17,18	9	9	Matthew 12
January 10	Genesis 19,20	10	10	Matthew 13
January 11	Genesis 21,22	11	11	Matthew 14
January 12	Genesis 23, 24	12	12	Matthew 15
January 13	Genesis 25, 26	13	13	Matthew 16,17
January 14	Genesis 27	14	14	Matthew 18
January 15	Genesis 28-29	15	15	Matthew 19-20
January 16	Genesis 30	16	16	Matthew 21
January 17	Genesis 31	17	17	Matthew 22
January 18	Genesis 32, 33	18:1-5	18	Matthew 23
January 19	Genesis 34,35	18:16-36	19	Matthew 24
January 20	Genesis 36-37	18: 37-50	20	Matthew 25
January 21	Genesis 38-39	19	21	Matthew 26
January 22	Genesis 40, 41	20	22	Matthew 27
January 23	Genesis 42	21	23	Matthew 28
January 24	Genesis 43, 44	22:1-21	24	Mark 1
January 25	Genesis 45, 46	22:22-31	25	Mark 2
January 26	Genesis 47, 48	23	26	Mark 3
January 27	Genesis 49, 50	24	27	Mark 4
January 28	Exodus 1,2	25	28	Mark 5
January 29	Exodus 3, 4	26	29	Mark 6
January 30	Exodus 5, 6	27	30	Mark 7
January 31	Exodus 7,8	28	31	Mark 8

Serving in February

February 4

Ushers: Eric Bessolo, Eric Metz, Paul Allar

Communion Set Up: Moore

Communion Assistants: Tom Furnner & Rod Davies

Power Point Assistant: Josh Thomason

Livestream Assistant: Allen Mortimer

Counters: Callahan & Furnner

Cleaners: Bessolo

February 11

Ushers: Jim Sharich, Jim Luisier, Joe King

Power Point Assistant: Luke Mortimer

Livestream Assistant: Paul Allar

Counters: Straub & Luisier

Cleaners: Mortimer

February 14

7:00pm Ash Wednesday Service

Ushers: Kent Kerwin, Mark Moore

Power Point Assistant: Marshall Bessolo

Livestream Assistant: Logan Moore

Counters: Mortimer & Metz

February 18

Ushers: Logan Moore, Harold Fox, Tom Furnner

Communion Set Up: Moore

Communion Assistants: Gary Richmond & Wayne Pennell

Power Point Assistant: Calvin Bessolo

Livestream Assistant: Jeff Edgett

Counters: Neuwirth & Moore

Cleaners: Davies



February 21

7:00pm Lenten Service

Ushers: Scott Mortimer, Allen Mortimer

Power Point Assistant: Owen Straub

Livestream Assistant: Paul Allar

Counters: Mortimer & Major

February 25

Ushers: Rocky Bessolo, Eric Bessolo, & Eric Metz

Power Point Assistant: Mitchell Bessolo

Livestream Assistant: Allen Mortimer

Counters: Callahan & Furnner

Cleaners: Gresock

February 28

7:00pm Lenten Service

Ushers: Paul Allar & Jim Sharich

Power Point Assistant: Noah Straub

Livestream Assistant: Logan Moore

Counters: Straub & Luisier



WELS Synod Convention

“Embrace the Cross, Anticipate the Crown”

As many of you know, I was invited to be lay delegate to the WELS National Convention held July 31 – August 3, 2023, at Michigan Lutheran Seminary High School in Saginaw. It was my second invitation as the 2021 convention (synod conventions are held every two years) was held virtually with very few delegates attending. It was then decided to reinvoke all the 2021 delegates to the live 2023 convention. It is a once or maybe twice, in a lifetime opportunity.

The convention began on Monday with registration, dorm room assignments (most of us stayed in the school dorms), delegate orientation, dinner (all the excellent meals were served in the school cafeteria), and a very inspiring opening service with communion at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Saginaw. Each evening about 8:00 PM, fellowship with food and drinks was held outdoors in the campus courtyard.

The basis for the business conducted at the convention are the floor committees which many delegates are assigned to prior to the convention. There are 20 such committees covering all phases of synod operations. These committees meet daily, usually in the evening, to formulate Reports and Memorials (recommendations) to be presented to the whole body for discussion and possible action. I served on the Support Services Floor Committee #14 which included Technology, Financial Services, Human Resources, and Facility Services. These four areas were thoroughly discussed in the committee, and it was decided to recommend no action to the body as all four phases are performing at optimum levels.

Daily activities included elections of various officers (Rev. Mark Schroeder was re-elected President of the Synod). Daily morning and afternoon devotions were given by various presenters. Presentations by groups within, or affiliated with, the synod were given including one by Rev. Glenn Obenberger, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS). There was also a lengthy essay presented by Rev. Philip Hirsch, Nebraska District president.


There were a few major Memorials (directives) given to the convention. Memorial 2023-01 “Statement on Critical Theory and Social Justice (“Woke” philosophy), Memorial 2023-02, “Reevaluation of the Call Process”, Memorial 2023-03, “Informal Doctrinal Discussions with the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod”, Memorial 2023-04, “Artificial Intelligence and the Church”, Memorial 2023-05, “WELS Heritage of Church”, and Memorial 2023-06, “Staffing New Missions”. Memorials 2023-01, 02, and 04 were referred to the Conference of Presidents to make a preliminary report available in the “Report to the Twelve Districts” in time for their 2024 conventions. The other 3 memorials, 2023-03, 05, and 06, were referred to the parties responsible for those areas of concern.

In conclusion, the convention was very enlightening and spiritually moving. I was proud to serve YOU and the synod! It was amazing to see 400 pastors, teachers, and laymen conduct the business of the synod, all positive I might add, in a Christian business like manner. I made many new friends and talked to many old ones. It was a gathering I thank the Lord for and will never forget.

A synopsis of the convention can be found in the September 2023 “Forward in Christ”. The full Convention Proceedings can be found in a book on the table in the fellowship hall or on welsconvention.net.

Tom Furnner
WELS 2023 Convention Lay Delegate

JANUARY 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>31 9:00 am - Worship</p>  <p>New Years Eve</p>	<p>1 Cleaners for January 7: Gresock</p> 	2	3	4	5	6 6:00pm—Youth Group
<p>7 *Donation Sunday* 9:00 am - Worship with Communion 10:30 am - Potluck & Decorating</p> <p>Epiphany</p>	<p>8 Cleaners for January 14: Major</p> <p>6:30pm—Confirmation Class 7:00pm—Choir Practice</p>	9	10 6:30pm—Board of Elders Meeting	<p>11 9:00 am - Adult Bible Class</p> <p>6:30pm—Call Meeting 7:00pm—Church Council Meeting</p>	12	13
<p>14 9:00 am - Worship 10:30 am - Adult, Teen, & Children's Bible Class</p> <p>Epiphany 2</p>	<p>15 Cleaners January 21: Allar</p> <p>6:30pm—Confirmation Class 7:00pm—Choir Practice</p>	16	17	<p>18 9:00 am - Adult Bible Class</p> <p>7:00pm—Board of Trustees Meeting 7:00pm—Board of Education Meeting</p>	19	20 6:30pm—Family Trivia Night
<p>21 9:00 am - Worship with Communion 10:30 am - Voter's Meeting 10:30 am - Ladies Guild Meeting</p> <p>Epiphany 3</p>	<p>22 Cleaners for January 28: Moore</p> <p>6:30pm—Confirmation Class 7:00pm—Choir Practice</p>	23	24	<p>25 9:00 am - Adult Bible Class</p> <p>7:00pm—Board of Evangelism Meeting 7:00pm—Board of Stewardship Meeting</p>	26	27 9:00 am - WELS Congregational breakfast
<p>28 9:00 am - Worship 10:30 am - Adult, Teen, & Children's Bible Class</p> <p>Epiphany 4</p>	<p>29 Cleaners for February 4: Bessolo</p> <p>6:30pm—Confirmation Class 7:00pm—Choir Practice</p>	30	31	<p>1 9:00 am - Adult Bible Class</p>	2	3 6:00pm—Youth Group