

# Cross CURRENTS

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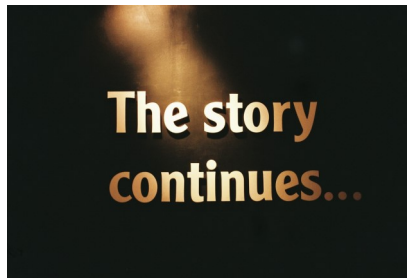
A monthly publication to keep you informed about the ministry of Living Water and the opportunities for you to grow your relationships with the Lord and each other.

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## The Story Continues

"[Jesus] grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him" (Luke 2:40).

The story didn't stop when the shepherds returned to their flocks, "glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and



seen" (Luke 2:20). In December, and especially the last week of December, we read, heard, and saw the story of Jesus' birth play out before us. Now, for many, the temptation is to go back to whatever normal routine they had before the Christmas season and forget that this baby Jesus, like all humans, grew up. Many are captivated by the story of a young married couple traveling a long distance and having their first child in less-than-luxurious accommodations. But the story doesn't stop there, and what comes after it is just as miraculous and just as captivating.

Granted, the Gospel writers – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – do not tell us a whole lot about Jesus and his journey from childhood into adulthood. We get a glimpse when the Magi visit and when his family goes to the temple at age 12. Other than that, God doesn't really tell us anything about his growing with wisdom and growing with stature. But once Jesus is about thirty years old (our best guess), the story goes full bore! Jesus is baptized by his cousin, John the Baptist, and God the Father kicks off his public ministry with a booming public announcement that echoed down the Jordan River. Then we see Jesus conquer Satan's temptations in the wilderness. The Gospel writers give us Jesus' moving sermons, thought-provoking parables, and many miracles. The story continues!

It continues not just to sell a book or movie. It continues not just to entertain you. The story continues to show us exactly how wise Jesus was for us. Only the true Son of God could deliver this story with such spiritual wisdom which perfectly walked according to God's commands, perfectly talked God's law and

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gospel to all, and perfectly loved each and every friend and stranger he came across. The story continues to show you that Jesus grew and became strong so that he can be your substitute and your Savior. The story continues so that “you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name” (John 20:31).

Our services over the next four months will follow Jesus’ story, as the Holy Spirit inspired the Gospel writers to record it. Our services will show us Jesus’ perfect wisdom, strength, and grace. Whether you’ve heard these stories every year for your entire life or you haven’t heard them in a long time, join us! Join us so that the Holy Spirit can encourage you when he shows the life of Jesus on the pages of the Bible. Whatever resolutions you made for the New Year, watch Jesus’ resolve for you as he lives your life, dies your death, and then rises for your own resurrection. Watching Jesus be your Savior – it’s the best way to roll into 2018 and beyond.

God’s grace to you in our newborn King for 2018! Serving our Savior with you,

Pastor Aaron Voss



**Chairman/President**

John Wiederhold  
414-218-8962  
jwiederhold@wi.rr.com

**Pastor Voss**

517-575-5546  
pastor@livingwaterlutheran.com

**Treasurer**

Jim Mertz  
414-791-3205  
jjmertz@wi.rr.com

**Financial Secretary**

Craig Scherbarth  
262-389-1577  
cscherbarth@tds.net

**Secretary**

Bob McGill  
262-909-1326  
mcbeersnob@yahoo.com

**Elders**

Jeff Roska  
414-745-4759  
jeffroska@gmail.com

**Outreach**

Neil Hankwitz  
262-716-3374  
nhankwitz@gmail.com

**Education**

Brian Haag  
414-416-6332  
bjhaag30@yahoo.com  
brian.haag.rapx@statefarm.com

**Trustees**

Gary Steffens  
262-758-9155  
262-763-2695  
garysteffens@hotmail.com

## December Voters' Meeting Summary

In our recent Voters' meeting, we covered a lot of ground. Voters elected their church leaders. They are:

Board of Education (1yr)	Brian Haag
Trustees	Gary Steffens
Head Elder	Jeff Roska
Treasurer	Jim Mertz
Board of Outreach	Neil Hankwitz

In addition, we want to say thank you to the leaders that will be leaving the Church Council. A big thanks to: Jim Mastrocola (Trustees), Bill Bartholomew (Head Elder), Rob Sawall (Council Secretary), and Mike Viehwig (Board of Outreach). Your dedication to the Lord was very evident and appreciated.

Voters also approved a 2018 balanced budget of \$235,000. A portion of the budget discussion was centered on a new church sign and our future picnic shelter/prayer garden.

It is felt that our current church sign is showing signs of wear and should be replaced or modernized. Three of our neighboring congregations have installed new digital models. These newer signs are much easier to see. Pastor Voss stated that he felt a new sign is important for our outreach to the community and should receive number one priority. The Church Council agreed and \$25,000 was put in this year's budget to cover the cost. Voters agreed and approved the budget item. If the cost turns out to be more than the budgeted amount, we have some extra funds in a contingency fund that could be used to cover additional costs. Bids from three companies will be solicited. We will ask each company if they can work

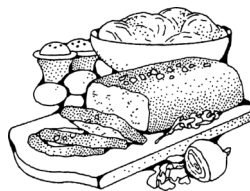
with Racine County to help us move our sign closer to the road. Once we receive the bids, we will schedule another Voters' Meeting and select a proposal.

Our desire to build a picnic shelter/prayer garden was put as number two on our list of actions. At this time, Bill Walter is studying designs and possible kits that we might consider. Since we only had enough money to do the sign project, the council did not put money in this year's budget for the shelter. Can we do both projects in one year? Let's pray about that. For now, members are encouraged to start donating to the project by using the undesignated envelopes in our packets. The money gathered will provide us with a great headstart for moving our plans forward.

## Midweek Worship Suppers

Many thanks to all who hosted one of the dinners before the midweek Advent services. Thanks also to anyone who brought food for these meals. Many enjoyed fellowship before the Advent worship services.

There will be meals before each of the midweek Lenten services. The midweek Lenten services begin on Wednesday, February 14. Senior Moments is hosting a potluck that evening.



Hosts are needed for the remaining five suppers. Please contact Janeen Roska at [church@livingwaterlutheran.com](mailto:church@livingwaterlutheran.com) or at 414-745-6385 if you are willing to host one of these meals.

See you there!



Our next activity will be Royal Rummy Game Day on Saturday, January 20 at 3:00 p.m. Bring a dish to pass and plan to have a good time. Sign up on the sheet in the narthex. This activity will be hosted by Art Plautz and Nancy.

We will be hosting the Ash Wednesday Lenten Supper on Wednesday, February 14. Watch the bulletin for more details.

There are a few Senior Moments t-shirts available. They are on the counter in the narthex. Help yourself, if you'd like one.

Senior Moments is a service organization to provide social opportunities for the congregation. All members, 50 and older, are encouraged to join us for fun and fellowship.

#### **Senior Assistance/Community Outreach**

We had a great group of hard workers to help out one of our members with her fall yard clean-up. We took advantage of one of the last beautiful warm days to rake and blow the leaves and trim the brush before the cold weather arrived. It's wonderful that we are able to help our fellow members in this way. A BIG Thank You goes out to everyone who helped!

## **Jesus Cares Celebrates our Savior's Birth**

In December, Jesus Cares students learned of our Savior's birth and praised him in song during class as well as a hymn sing before the Monday, December 18 service. Church members joined in with the students singing Away in the Manger, Silent Night & a resounding Joy to the World. Several new students attended for the first time and look forward to returning again for our January 15 class.

Thanks to the Jesus Cares Ministry Team – Sherri Mertz, Nancy Gitzel, Kristen Moldenhauer, and Kathi Boziel. Each member brings their gifts and talents to this important ministry at church.

## **Jesus Cares Students Share Their Faith**

Each month we will be interviewing one of our students from the Jesus Cares Program – this month is Wendy.

What do you like to do? "Camping, fishing, game arcades, coloring, puzzles."

What is your favorite activity at Jesus Cares? "Singing, dancing."

What have you learned at Jesus Cares? "Friendship, Jesus loves me."

What has Jesus done for us? "Jesus saves us and looks out for us."

## **Church Pictorial Directory**

Three members have offered to help us produce a new church pictorial directory in 2018 – Boyd Recknagel, Marlene Recknagel, and Renee Steffens. Our goal is to start the project in spring. We will need some additional help when we start scheduling the photographic appointments. If you are willing to help the team, please contact one of the members.

## Thank You, God, for Faith Sharers - TEEN DEVOTION

*I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. 2 Timothy 1:5*

*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of because you know those from whom you learned it. 2 Timothy 3:14*

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Grease the pan, cream the butter and sugar. Add the eggs and vanilla; stir in the cake flour, pour it into the pan and bake for 75 minutes. I remember doing that as a kid. I was interested in how to make more than PB&J, so I listened, watched, and learned. Now I take that knowledge and continue to hone my skills. I still love to bake today; I love to build on what I learned as a child in the kitchen.

It's fun when you can continue to do the things you were taught when you were little. It's fun to build on what you learned from the important people in your life.

My parents taught me a lot of other things too. I worked on our cars and built computers. I planted a garden and learned to do the laundry. I learned habits too—like patience, compassion, and hard work. Most importantly, my parents taught me about Jesus. I say “most importantly” because if they had not shared Jesus with me, who would have?

Maybe you have had some of the same thoughts. Maybe you've thought something like this: “If so and so wouldn't have shared the good about Jesus, would I have ever learned about my God and my Savior?”

The good news is that many of you do know who Jesus is because someone told you about the need for a Savior and Jesus, the solution. Maybe it was a pastor, a teacher, a friend, parents, or another family member. Maybe you're just starting to hear about Jesus from these devotions. All of that is God's work in your life, sending faith-sharers to help you know who Jesus is.

So, remember to take the Apostle Paul's words to heart and continue to grow in what you have learned. Keep growing so that you can be that person who shares Jesus with someone else. In the meantime, say “Thank you, God” for bringing me Jesus through my own personal faith-sharer.

Here's this week's challenge: Identify who God used to tell you about Jesus. Send them a text, or write them a note to say “Thank you for telling me about Jesus.”

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, thank you for sending \_\_\_\_\_ into my life to share the good news about Jesus. Through your Word and sacrament, I have the greatest treasure ever given to me. Amen.

## Prayer LIST



"In God we live and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28)

- Pray that we can start the New Year with our eyes, heart and mind on Jesus. Pray that Living Water will grow in membership. Pray that our members will grow in their faith this year and encourage one another to also grow in their faith. Pray that all our members may come and worship together often.
- Pray for pastors to keep the message of God's word pure. May God give them strength to overcome all difficulties which the devil puts before them. Pray for missionaries that God may go before them and open the hearts of those they preach to so that they hear and receive the message. Keep them safe in all their endeavors. Pray for the snow birds that they may be kept safe and be of good health. Pray for those who remain that they also will be safe and in good health.
- Pray for those who have lost loved ones that they may be comforted and have strength to continue on.
- Pray for all who are ill, fighting cancer or need help in any way. Pray that they know the nearness of God and that the church members have wisdom in how to minister to them.
- Pray for Bill Bartholomew that his body may respond positively to treatment and that his doctors may determine the best treatment for Bill. Pray that, should it be God's will, he may be worshiping in person at Living Water with us again soon. Pray also for Doreen that she has strength and wisdom for all she has to do.

## Living Water STATISTICS AND NUMBERS

Year to Date Membership Changes	
Transfers In	4
Profession of Faith	0
Adult Confirmation	0
Transfers Out	-12
Released	-3
Baptism	1
Confirmation	0
Death	0
<b>Net Gain/Loss</b>	<b>-10</b>

Membership Statistics	
264	Baptized
233	Communicants
278	Total
108	Family Units
115	Average Attendance

Worship Attendance				
	Sun.	Mon.	Total	Special
11/26	82	13	95	
12/3	99	14	113	
12/6				55
12/10	115	11	126	
12/13				34
12/17	113	12	125	
12/24	92		92	
12/24				137
12/25				60
12/31	89		89	

Offerings					
	General	Special	Building	Education	Total
Total Given	\$246,480	\$3,367	\$4,950	\$1,427	\$256,224



# January 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 8:00 am Men's Breakfast	3	4	5	6
7 8:15 am Children's Choir Rehearsal 8:20 am Prayer Group <b>9:00 am Worship with Communion</b> 10:30 am Bible Class & Sunday School	8 5:15 pm Catechism Class <b>7:00 pm Worship with Communion</b> 8:00 pm Elders Meeting	9	10 6:30 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	11	12	13
14 8:15 am Children's Choir Rehearsal 8:20 am Prayer Group <b>9:00 am Worship</b> 10:30 am Bible Class & Sunday School	15 5:15 pm Catechism Class 6:00 pm Jesus Cares <b>7:00 pm Worship</b> 8:00 pm Church Council	16	17 6:30 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	18	19	20 3:00 pm Senior Moments Game Day
21 8:15 am Children's Choir Rehearsal 8:20 am Prayer Group <b>9:00 am Worship with Communion</b> 10:30 am Bible Class & Sunday School	22 5:15 pm Catechism Class <b>7:00 pm Worship with Communion</b>	23	24 6:30 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	25	26	27
28 8:15 am Children's Choir Rehearsal 8:20 am Prayer Group <b>9:00 am Worship</b> 10:30 am Bible Class & Sunday School	29 5:15 pm Catechism Class <b>7:00 pm Worship</b>	30	31 6:30 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal			



6525 Milwaukee Avenue

Wind Lake, WI 53185

[www.LivingWaterLutheran.com](http://www.LivingWaterLutheran.com)

## Worship Information

Sunday Worship Service - 9:00 AM

Sunday Education Time - 10:30 AM

Monday Worship Service - 7:00 PM

## Contact Us

**Pastor:** Aaron Voss

**Church Office:** 262.895.3700

**Pastor's Cell Phone:** 517.575.5546

**E-mail:** [pastor@livingwaterlutheran.com](mailto:pastor@livingwaterlutheran.com)

**Office:** [church@livingwaterlutheran.com](mailto:church@livingwaterlutheran.com)

**Website:** [www.LivingWaterLutheran.com](http://www.LivingWaterLutheran.com)

## 2018 Church Council

Here is a list of people to contact if you have any questions or suggestions regarding anything happening in our ministry. Also, if you send a single e-mail to [council@livingwaterlutheran.com](mailto:council@livingwaterlutheran.com), it will reach all members of our Church Council.

**John Wiederhold**—President

**Jim Mertz**—Treasurer

**Craig Scherbarth**—Financial Sec.

**Bob McGill**—Secretary

**Jeff Roska**—Head Elder

**Neil Hankwitz**—Outreach

**Gary Steffens**—Trustee

**Brian Haag**—Education

## A Year of Blessings



Easter for Kids



Women's Retreat



Fourth of July Parade



Installation of Pastor Voss



Christmas for Kids



Christmas Worship



VBS—A Mighty Fortress