

# OSL MESSENGER

JANUARY-MARCH 2026  
VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1



## FROM PASTOR GARY'S DESK

The word "Lent" comes from a West Germanic word meaning "lengthening of the day." What does lengthening of days have to do with the church season? Well, not much, or so it would seem initially. It actually has much more to do with the natural season than the church season. During Lent, days are getting longer. Lent spans the transition from mid to late winter to early spring. Obviously, this is only true for our hemisphere, but the word was already part of the English lexicon before it spread around the world.

With the dropping of the word "Alleluia" from the liturgy, the practice of giving things up for Lent, and general somber mood from Ash Wednesday through Good Friday, many of us may see Lent as a particularly gloomy time of the church year. And that isn't necessarily wrong. Lent is a time to focus on repentance, and to do that, we need to focus on our own sinfulness. We need to remember that we aren't perfect, and assuming we don't need to change may be one of the most dangerous things we can do. This is a time to remember that we are mortal, that we will die.

Sometimes, spring weather cooperates with this drama. Though the days are longer, if we are lucky we will get spring rains. The cold, damp, dreary days of early spring help us feel the grim tone of the Lenten season. And yet, the days are getting longer, and hopefully warmer. Maybe Lent isn't purely gloomy.

In the early church, people were Baptized on Easter Sunday. Lent was the season of intense focus, reflection, and study to prepare those new members who would be baptized. It wasn't so much about being serious, sad, or gloomy. It was essentially a forty day intense confirmation class. That fits really well with the coming of spring. You are getting enlightened as the sun is staying around longer and providing more light. You are focusing as you emerge from winter with renewed energy. Perhaps we should spend Lent dedicated to learning.

But the length of days is important theologically as well. It's interesting that the word comes from an observation about days getting longer. That's not something we have any control over. It doesn't come from a word meaning repentance, reflection, or study. It comes from a word that has to do with the movement of the sun. It's out of our hands.

Someone may say that I am focusing too much on things being out of our hands. I'm focusing too much on God's work and things being outside of our control. Don't Christians use the term "discipline" with regard to Lent? Isn't discipline something that we do? Well, maybe, but that's not the whole story. Again, we need to think about what this word means.

When you hear the word "discipline" you might think of punishment. Maybe you think of parents grounding their teenager for missing curfew or sending their young child to stand in the corner for saying a bad word. But do you think of the related word: "disciple?" Both of these words come from the same place, and they have more to do with learning than pain. Hopefully, parents would agree that the point of punishment isn't to inflict suffering or to take out your anger on a child, but rather to teach them something about how they should behave. So, we could ask again, who is doing the discipline in Lent?

If we are practicing the disciple of Lent, we are the students, and God is the teacher. While we should certainly aspire to be good students, diligent and focused, our ability to learn is dependent upon our teacher. God is instructing us during this season. Our job isn't to fix ourselves or change our own lives. Our job is to patiently listen and learn.

I think it is strikingly fitting that this season leading up to Easter is named for the lengthening of days. As much as we may want to think that Lent requires our work, perhaps it will help us remember. Just as we don't lengthen the days, we don't save ourselves. We don't change ourselves. God adds light to the world, and God shines new light in our lives.

PASTOR:  
Gary Grinvalds  
402.658.2253  
garygrinvalds@gmail.com

SECRETARY:  
Pam Gerdes  
402.239.2715  
oursaviorslutheranwymore@gmail.com

CHURCH COUNCIL  
President: Josh Schmidt  
402.520.0950  
Vice President: Chavonn Mailahn  
308.214.0039  
Secretary: Rachel Frerichs  
402.239.0466

At Large Members:

Roger Henrichs  
402.239.7740

Erin Saathoff  
402.239.9117

Jodi Wegner  
402.223.8263



### *Sharing the love!*

On February 8th, the LYF group decorated valentine cookies and delivered goodie bags around the community.

A great time was had by all & the cookies were delicious!



## UPCOMING EVENTS

March 3rd - Church Coffee @ 10 am

March 4th - Lenten Service @ 7pm - Darla Acton leading

March 5th - Bible Study @ 6:30 pm

March 11th - Lenten Service @ 7pm - Confirmation Class leading

March 18th - Lenten Service @ 7pm - Faith Formation leading

March 19th - Bible Study @ 6:30 pm

March 19th - Council Meeting @ 7:30 pm

March 25th - Lenten Service @ 7pm - Erin Saathoff leading

March 28th - LYF Service Project - Wymore Country Club cleanup

## BIRTHDAYS

### JANUARY

- 02 - DIANE WELLS
- 02 - GARY WEYER
- 03 - CALLIE MCKEEVER
- 04 - HATTIE HARMS
- 05 - KAYE OBLINGER
- 09 - TREVIN DORN
- 09 - JANET MEINTS
- 10 - GARY GRINVALDS
- 10 - JIM OBLINGER
- 13 - NEALEIGH ACTON
- 18 - SCOTT BEDNAR
- 18 - KASHIS CROME
- 19 - KELLI MURPHY
- 20 - LYNN BAILEY
- 23 - MADDIE WEGNER
- 26 - KATHLEEN REMMERS
- 27 - JUDSON FRERICHS
- 28 - JEFF MAILAHN
- 28 - ERICA MORSE
- 29 - HUNTLEY FOSSLER
- 30 - MARGARET MICHAELIS

### FEBRUARY

- 03 - LANDEN FRERICHS
- 05 - SABRINA JERRAD
- 11 - DELL MICHAELIS
- 13 - JARED MCKEEVER
- 20 - BRADEN KLOVER
- 22 - LEIGHTON MCKEEVER
- 27 - LUELLA ERPELDING

### MARCH

- 02 - ELLA MARTIN
- 03 - JODI WEGNER
- 09 - LINDA CREEVAN
- 10 - WESTON WHITWER
- 11 - REESE BENINGHAUS
- 14 - SHIRLEY ANDERSON
- 14 - LARRY SCHMIDT
- 16 - ILEEN THEYE
- 20 - CALEB HARMS
- 21 - OAKLYN MAILAHN
- 24 - EVAN SAATHOFF
- 26 - BROCK ADAMS
- 27 - EMALIE MAXSON
- 27 - JACOB OBLINGER
- 28 - PAXX ADAMS
- 28 - LOREN TRAUERNICHT

## ANNIVERSARIES

### MARCH

- 05 - LARRY & SHIRLEY ANDERSON
- 12 - GENE & CAROL ERDMANN
- 20 - SCOTT & DENIELLE TRAUERNICHT
- 30 - MARK & JOEY TRAUERNICHT

Faith Formation hosted a soup & dessert supper prior to the Ash Wednesday service. It was so nice to enjoy fellowship to begin the Lenten season. Thank you to all who donated the wonderful food!



Our Saviors Lutheran Church

Council Meeting

January 21, 2026

Present: Darla Acton, Darin Frerichs, Erin Saathoff, Chavonn Mailahn, Josh Schmidt, Pastor Gary, Pam Gerdes, Roger Henrichs

Absent: None

Meeting called to order by: Darla and opened with a prayer.

Approve Previous Month's Meeting Minutes -Moved by Roger, seconded by Chavonn

Financial report - Pam reviewed the financial report. Josh noted the decrease of \$10,500 is due to insurance and mileage. Moved by Josh, seconded by Darin

Pastor's Report:

Pastor opened discussion regarding the previous week's sermon. Discussion was postponed until the end of the meeting. Pastor reported confirmation has been going well.

Old Business:

- Ushers for February - Google Calendar will be used moving forward.
- Church Directory - Erin provided an update for printing the directory. Erin received quotes from Arbor Ink and Priority Printing. Erin will order 50 from Arbor Ink for \$413.41. Directories will be distributed via email as well, after the Annual Meeting, in order to include the new Council members.
- Electronic Sign bids - Erin will reach out again. Darin will reach out to Terry Jurgens to see who recently installed the one for his business.
- Constitution Question - Erin will provide a bullet list of changes proposed to be handed out at the Annual Meeting. Copies will be handed out January 24th & February 1st at the Annual Meeting.

New Business:

- Date for next council meeting will be February 19, 2026 @ 7:30
- Grant Update - Chavonn reported we received the Morris Grant. The official letter has not been received to verify the total award amount.
- Pam reported we received \$500 from Vaughn & Tina Wright Grant Fund for the Ardys Philippi Memorial which will be put in the memorial fund. Kathleen Remmers has requested that her future contributions be designated for a specific project.
- Church Annual meeting will be February 1, 2026 after service.
- Lenten Services - Ash Wednesday services will be at Filley at 6:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at Our Savior's. All other services will be held at Our Savior's at 7:00 p.m. & led by the Council. Maundy Thursday & Good Friday services times will be discussed during the Quarterly Parish Meeting with Filley. Faith Formation will have a soup supper on Ash Wednesday. Details to be announced.
- Quarterly Parish Meeting January 28, 2026 @ 6:30 in Filley.
- Electronic Slides - Darla asked how the new system has been working. It has been well received. Pam has cut down on printing the number of bulletins & will continue to print song and announcement sheets.

The Council discussed the sermon from January 18th and the feelings of the congregation with Pastor Gary.

Closed meeting with the Lord's Prayer.