



December 26-27, 2020

**The First Weekend
After Christmas**



*"Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your word." (Luke 2:29)*

Messiah Lutheran Church & School

2015 N Hastings Way,

Eau Claire, WI 54703 ~ 715-834-2865

Affiliated with the *Church of the Lutheran Confession* ~ CLC

www.eauclairemessiah.com

Large-print copies are by the guest book.

Today's Worship

For a printed liturgy, see the green liturgy folder, page 21.

Pre-Service Devotion: *(on the front cover)*

Hymns: 712 710 99 706

Epistle Reading Isaiah 45:20-25

²⁰ "Assemble yourselves and come; Draw near together, You who have escaped from the nations. They have no knowledge, Who carry the wood of their carved image, And pray to a god that cannot save. ²¹ Tell and bring forth your case; Yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, A just God and a Savior; There is none besides Me. ²² "Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. ²³ I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, And shall not return, That to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath. ²⁴ He shall say, 'Surely in the LORD I have righteousness and strength. To Him men shall come, And all shall be ashamed Who are incensed against Him. ²⁵ In the LORD all the descendants of Israel Shall be justified, and shall glory.' "

Gospel Reading..... Luke 2:25-40

²⁵ And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, ²⁸ he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: ²⁹ "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; ³⁰ For my eyes have seen Your salvation ³¹ Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, ³² A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel." ³³ And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against ³⁵ (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." ³⁶ Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; ³⁷ and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. ³⁸ And coming in

that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. ³⁹ So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Sermon Text Galatians 4:4-7

⁴ But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" ⁷ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

GOD WORKS OUT EVERYTHING FOR OUR GOOD

Guest Preaching Today: Pastor John Schierenbeck



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This Week at Messiah

Masks required indoors as instructed by the public health department.

Sunday services are live-streamed and archived on eauclairemessiah.com.

- Sun, 12/27** 9:00 am Worship Service (Ushers #2, Counters F)
No Bible class/Sunday School/Young Adults
- Wed, 12/30** No Afternoon Catechism
- Thur, 12/31** 6:30 pm New Year's Eve Service (Ushers #4)
- Fri, 1/1** 9:00 am New Year's Day Service (Ushers #2) (live-streamed)
- Sat, 1/2** 6:30 pm Worship Service (Ushers #1)
7:45 pm Bible class/Sunday School
- Sun, 1/3** 9:00 am Worship Service (Ushers #4, Counters G)
10:15 am Bible class/Sunday School/Young Adults
11:15 am Youth Group Church "Undecorating"

Coming Up: Jan. 31st at 6:30 pm – Annual Voters' Meeting

Announcements

Thank you to all the students and organizers who brought the message of the newborn King, Jesus, to us on Christmas Eve. The two services can be seen on Messiah's website by clicking on the "Live Stream" button.

2 pastors' households are COVID-positive - Pastor and Eileen Tiefel, as well as Pastor Naumann, have tested positive for the COVID virus. The Tiefels have had some difficult symptoms, but have not required hospitalization. Pastor Naumann has had only mild symptoms (test results have been negative so far for Paula). God willing, both pastors Tiefel and Naumann will be back to health and to work by late next week. Messiah members should know that, unknown to him, Pastor Tiefel may have been contagious when he conducted Advent services on Dec. 16. Pastor Naumann was probably (and unknowingly) contagious when he conducted services on Dec. 19-20. We expect that our service precautions were effective, but if you were at one of those services please self-monitor for possible symptoms. We pray that our LORD will see us through these perplexing days!

"My times are in Your hand." (Ps. 31:15)

Our Weekend Bible Class does not meet this weekend, the 26th and 27th. Sunday school and young adults are also off. Next weekend, January 2-3, Pastor Naumann continues the Bible class series on a book entitled "Rainbow Savior." The Young Adults are meeting with this Bible class during the series.

We give thanks to the LORD with Carl and Kayla Strike that He blessed them with the gift of a healthy baby daughter. Cassandra Marie Strike was born on Dec. 22. Baptism arrangements are being made. You may correspond with the Strikes at carlstri@ilc.edu. *"Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward."* (Ps. 127:3)

Call decision from Teacher Paul Tiefel: *"Dear Members of Messiah, After prayerful consideration, I have decided to accept the call extended to me by Messiah Lutheran in Hales Corners, WI. I am enormously grateful for your support, encouragement, and patience during my teaching ministry here. It has been a tremendous blessing to me and to my family, and I will always be thankful to you and to our LORD for providing me the opportunity to serve among you. I will continue to pray that our Heavenly Father bless the important work He accomplishes through you here. Yours in Christ, Paul Tiefel III"*

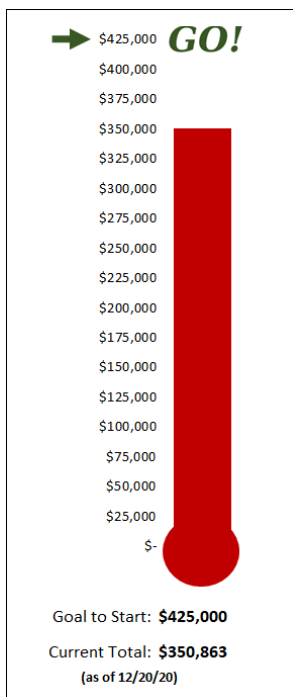
Be a "Messiah School Builder"!



Our Initial Goal is in Sight!

We encourage everyone to consider the Messiah Building fund as you plan your contributions at the close of this year, and into 2021. Praise the LORD for having brought us so close to our goal of \$425,000 in such a short time! We still need about \$70,000 in additional contributions to meet this initial goal, which is 25% of the overall cost of the project. We ask the LORD to fulfill this amount also. The Building Committee intends to present a completed building plan to the voters in late January, followed by a February meeting to vote on whether to proceed with the project. It is urgent to make a decision in February due to material costs rising and the need for a May start time. If the amount needed is quickly met, the decision to proceed will be simplified. The building project is school-related. We are running short of physical space to teach our Savior's lambs. The new building project should meet our school's needs for many years. Please prayerfully consider how you can help in bringing up our children in the nurture and admonition of our LORD.

Messiah Building Finance and Publicity Committee



Extra Christmas joy, from a child's eyes: Mt. Zion Lutheran of Detroit, MI produced a virtual children's Christmas service, with participation from around the CLC. You may pass this along to family and friends to help share the Christmas message of the newborn Savior. See the video https://youtu.be/X362Am_xEv4.

Church Undecorating - Help is needed to undecorate on Sunday, January 3rd, immediately following Bible class/Sunday school. We especially encourage Messiah Youth Group to join, though all are welcome.

CLC News: Pastor David Ude, Living Hope, Appleton, WI has been called by Redeemer, Cheyenne, WY. <> Redeemer of Bowdle and Zion of Ipswich have called Pastor Emeritus John Klatt to serve as their vacancy pastor, beginning in 2021. Pastor Klatt has accepted their calls. <> Pastor Mike Eichstadt, Messiah, Hales Corners, WI has been called by Living Savior, Eden Prairie, MN. <> Paul Tiefel III, Messiah, Eau Claire, WI has accepted the call to serve as principal and upper grade teacher at Messiah, Hales Corners, WI. <> Neil Bernthal, Immanuel, Winter Haven, FL has been called to be principal and upper grade teacher by Faith, Markesan, WI. <> Joshua Ohlmann, Grace, Sleepy Eye, MN has been called by Holy Trinity, West Columbia, SC to be upper grade teacher and principal.

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Service Preview for the Upcoming Weekend

GOD'S WORD SERVING US:

***Bible Readings** – Micah 5:2-5a, Hebrews 2:10-18, John 7:40-43*

***Bible Class** – Rainbow Savior (part 3)*

CHRISTIANS SERVING US:

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|--|-------------|
| <i>Thursday 12/31 6:30 pm: Usher Team 4</i> | | <i>Friday 1/1 9:00 am: Usher Team 2</i> | |
| Tom Joos | Jerry LeDuc | Dan Sydow | Bryce Sydow |
| Gary Meyer | Blane Knutson | Ethan Sydow | Noah Sydow |
| Jon Oster | Gordon Stratton | Adam Schmid | Jerry LeDuc |
| Jordan Quam | Jamie Quam | Steve Mielke | |

| | | | |
|--|-------------------|--|---------------|
| <i>Saturday 1/2 6:30 pm: Usher Team 1</i> | | <i>Sunday 1/3 9:00 am: Usher Team 4</i> | |
| Joel Carstensen | George Carstensen | Dave Johannes | Joel Gullerud |
| Dennis Oster | Jason Zimmerman | Kevin Hulke | Jeff Rutz |
| Ryan Zimmerman | Rich McGeorge | Brent Rutz | Britten Rutz |
| | | Carter Rutz | |

Counters for the week following 1/3 – G

Mike Buck, Darin Oster, Jamie Quam

Thank you!

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Highlights from the December 17 Church Council meeting

<> **The meeting began** at 7:39 pm. There were 13 members present, including church officers, board chairmen, board chairmen-elect, and pastors. <> **Elders:** We are trying to locate member Melissa (Otte) Parker. Changes to our church family: transfer out of Kevin Schrader to St. Matthew of Dallas, TX. Termination: motions carried to recommend that the voters terminate the memberships of Lindsey (nee Matysik) Johnson and Maggie Caird, both by Bylaw 2.08c. <> **Deacons:** We are proceeding with two Christmas Eve services this year and in 2021. We now have 8 core usher teams to serve through the pandemic. The new Hymnal Committee will be meeting. We are continuing to discuss the need for a digital communications coordinator. We are asking the Constitution Committee to consider an amendment to allow for voting by those attending voters' meetings virtually. There will be no Sunday school or Bible class the weekend after Christmas (Dec. 26-27). <> **Pastors:** We are making plans for a pulpit exchange for Lent. Pastors meet weekly and coordinate classes and contacts. We are working with the Elders to keep in contact with people we haven't seen recently. Installation for new church officers will be this weekend (Dec. 19-20). The preachers at the care facilities will be installed sometime in 2021. All 3 pastors have been kept busy with various aspects of counseling. Pastor Schaller has been posting regularly on Messiah's Instagram & Facebook pages. <> **Outreach:** The last of the 5 billboards went up today. We put an announcement in the paper about the Tour Choir CD (since we're not hosting the choir concert this year). The committee has brainstormed a number of new outreach ideas and will be evaluating them in January. We are tentatively planning on 3 summer VBS sessions in 2021: June 14-18, July 12-16, August 2-6, and a one-day Christmas VBS on Dec 12. <> **Property:** Tom Beekman has been working on siding the shed. We plan to wax the sanctuary floors the week after Christmas, and will need help in moving the pews. An annual walk-through of parsonages will be scheduled. <> **Board of Education and Principal:** We are putting together take-home packets for SS. We are looking to start basketball in January. New rugs will be purchased and installed over Christmas break. Work is being done to prepare for calling a full-time teacher at the January Voter's meeting, due to Mrs. Carrie Reim's move to the Milwaukee area, after this school year. We are working on teacher & staff appreciation events for Kären Franson and Carrie Reim. Preschool and Kindergarten Round-ups have been cancelled for 2021. Paul Tiefel III is considering the call to Messiah, Hales Corners, WI. <> **Treasurer:** Total contributions are now \$639K, up \$16K from last year through 49 weeks. November 30, 2020 financials: There is a balance in the General Fund of \$32,234. The non-budgetary fund balance (including Building Fund,

Helping Hands, Current Project Fund, etc.) is \$215,002. CLC General Fund contributions total \$171,721, toward our year-end goal of \$190,000. The cash balance of all funds is \$293,370. <> **Miscellaneous:** President Sydow has made his personnel appointments for 2021. A motion passed that we ask Dennis Oster to continue to serve as Financial Secretary. The new president will appoint a financial review committee in January. <> **The next Council meeting** is scheduled for January 20th at 7:15. **The next Quarterly Voter's Meeting** is scheduled for Sunday, January 31st at 6:30. <> **The meeting adjourned** at 8:53 pm with the Benediction.

Sanitizing Help: Thank you to all who have stepped up and helped sanitize the sanctuary. We will need to continue sanitizing in 2021. The Board of Property is organizing groups to help do this job. If you wish to help or wish to continue to help, please contact Jerry LeDuc 715-379-5020 (text/call) or Lynette Roehl 715-831-8306 (text) lynette.roehl@ilc.edu. Specify if you can help Saturday or Sunday. It is a pretty easy job and it goes pretty quickly with more people helping. Hopefully each volunteer team will only need to do it once or twice a month. Thanks!

Last weekend our church officers and other elected board and committee members were installed for 2020:

- President: Gerald Oster
- Board of Elders: Steve Mielke and Andy Buck; Kevin Hulke, Chairman
- Board of Deacons: Aaron Durst and Dan Sullivan; Jon Sandeen, Chairman
- Board of Education: Ryan Hammett and Jon Kelly; Aaron Thompson, Chairman
- Board of Property: Kyle Scheberl and Tim Schaller; Jerry LeDuc, Chairman
- Outreach Committee: Josh Gurgel and Zach Wry
- Nominating Committee: Gary Meyer
- Foundation Committee: Gus Falkenberg

Our sincere appreciation goes out to the following men who have finished their terms:

- Jim Sydow, President
- Gerald Oster, Deacons Chairman
- Adam Schmid, Property Chairman
- Paul Meyer, Board of Elders
- Andy Buck, Board of Deacons
- Harley Fuerstenau, Board of Property
- Ethan Gurgel, Outreach Committee
- Dennis Oster, Nominating Committee



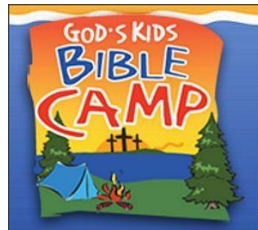
Reminder: The church doors will be open so that you can pick up your church mailbox contents on Sundays, from mid-morning to 1:00 pm, through January 3rd. You can also contact one of the pastors to set up a different time, or to arrange for a delivery to your home.

In the hospital: Steve Mielke underwent successful hip replacement surgery on Dec. 21, and is recovering at home. Mike Markus underwent an emergency surgery to correct blood clots in his legs and heart on Dec. 24. He is still in critical care, and his situation is complicated by infection with COVID. Please remember Mike, Kathy, and their family in your prayers!

Messiah Shut-ins: Ida Drews (2455 Sawgrass Place #213, Altoona), Marge Eckel (1431 Peterson Ave.), Shirley Johnson (2512 New Pine Dr. Altoona), Mae Noeldner (3706 Damon St. #17), Ellen Knuth (Care Partners, 887 Brian Lane, Altoona), Connie Larson (1500 S. Edgewater Dr.), Tom and Linda Larson (3134 Eldorado Blvd.), Betty Nolting (HeatherWood Assisted Living #213), Mavis Thelen (418 N. Barstow), Ted Thurow (Altoona), Paul Tiefel, Sr. (2455 Sawgrass Rd #419, Altoona), Johanna Williams (2118 Augusta St.) and Shelly Williamson (Bellevue, IA).

From Messiah's Board of Property - We are planning to start stripping and waxing the floors in the sanctuary the week after Christmas. We need to move the pews out on the 27th after church. We will be waxing the floors during the evenings of the 28th and 29th. We will then be replacing the pews on the Wednesday the 30th at 6:30pm. We could use all the help we can get moving the pews before and after waxing, as it is a big job. Many hands make light work. Thank you!

God's Kids Bible Camp - Dates are set (July 5-8, 2021) and planning is just getting started. We have an announcement regarding co-director positions. Zack Sippert and Emily Zimmerman have made the difficult decision to step down as co-directors after 2021. This means we are looking for two new directors (typically one male, one female) to be counselors in 2021, to shadow both Emily and Zack with intent to become GKBC co-directors in 2022. Co-directors participate on the planning committee, recruit counselors/volunteers, conduct counselor orientation, assign cabins, plan camp activities, and manage day-to-day camp operations. If you are interested, and you are between the ages of 17-early 20's, please contact Pastor Caleb or Anne Vaver at 715-456-3418.



Fruits of Faith Last Week December 19 & 20, 2020

Weekend Worship: (Sat. 54 - Sun. 180) 234
Bible Class: (Sat. 14 - Sun. 61) 75 Sunday School: (Sat. 0 - Sun. na) na
Online: (Worship: 280, Bible Class: 78)
Young Adults: met with Bible Class

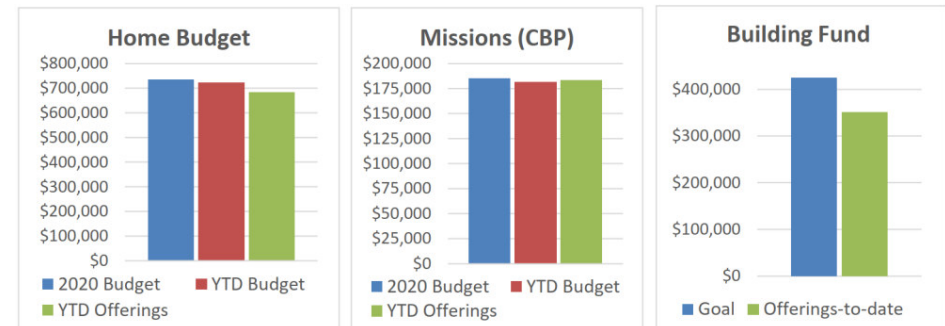
Weekly Offering Information

| Offering Summary | | Home Budget | Missions (CBP) | Building Fund | |
|----------------------|--|--------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 2020 Budget | | \$736,000.00 | \$185,000.00 | \$425,000.00 | Goal |
| YTD Budget | | \$721,846.00 | \$181,442.00 | \$350,862.60 | Offerings-to-date |
| YTD Offerings | | \$682,876.94 | \$183,584.82 | \$74,137.40 | Still Needed |
| Weekly Need | | \$53,123.00 | \$1,415.00 | | |
| Last Weekend (12/20) | | \$12,938.52 | \$3,051.83 | | |
| Amount Still Needed | | \$53,123.06 | \$1,415.18 | \$5,360.00 | Last Week (12/20) |

Given in memory of...

Sonja Olmanson
Sonja Olmanson
Dorothy Sibbers

35.00 Messiah Building Fund
50.00 ILC Student Aid
35.00 ILC Student Aid



December contributions for 2021. If you are making any contributions yet this year for income tax or other purposes, with the intention that they are meant as your contributions for 2021, we ask that you note your contribution as being for 2021. If you use offering envelopes, you may just write "2021" on the envelope. If you make your contributions electronically through E-give, please let Dennis Oster know which contributions are for 2021. Providing this information will allow the Church Council and voters to make more informed decisions when budgeting and planning for the future.

HAVE A WHITE CHRISTMAS!

Are you dreaming of a white Christmas? For many it just doesn't seem like Christmas without at least a little snow. There is nothing quite like the calm and quiet which descends after a heavy snowfall. A fresh blanket of snow covers everything with dazzling white purity, and creates a sense of peace and well-being. No wonder then that one of the best-selling songs of all time is "White Christmas." Did you know, though, that God predicted a white Christmas? Joseph didn't have to shovel a path to the stable in Bethlehem and the shepherds didn't trudge through three-foot drifts to see the newborn Baby. The climate of Israel is more like Phoenix than Minneapolis. Nevertheless, it was a white Christmas. Nearly 1,000 years before the angels sang of the Savior's birth, God spoke through Isaiah: "Come, now, let us reason together . . . Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool" (Is. 1:18). To make this miracle a reality, God sent His Son: conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus truly makes our Christmas "white." He came to calm and quiet the harsh accusations of our guilty conscience. As you wrote out Christmas cards, did you feel bad because you should have written Aunt Margaret long before now? Or you really had wanted to visit Grandpa, but somehow it just never happened? Our conscience reminds us that we are not the people we ought to be. Self-interest all too often interferes with loving and serving God and one another as God's Law commands. Guilt ringing in our ears quickly drowns out joy. But then remember Christmas. Jesus came to quiet guilt by taking every bit of it upon Himself. He didn't come to condemn us for our sin. He came to be sin for us. Pure Whiteness Jesus makes our Christmas white by blanketing us with the pure whiteness of His righteousness. Our best efforts at measuring up to God's holy standards are contaminated by sin. They are more like filthy rags than fresh snow. But Jesus was born as the God-Man so that He might live under God's Law in our place and give us His perfect righteousness as our very own. Jesus makes our Christmas white by giving us perfect peace with God. Our inborn sin makes us



mortal enemies of God deserving of eternal separation from Him in the fire of hell. But Jesus came as the Prince of Peace. He won peace by His holy life and innocent suffering and death. His peace is our peace now by faith. In Christ all is well between you and God. He couldn't be happier with you. Things couldn't be better! Dreaming of a white Christmas? Here in the desert southwest there won't be snowflakes in the air Christmas Eve and we won't wake up to a fresh blanket of snow on Christmas morning. Yet that really won't matter. The birth of God's only-begotten Son means we'll still have a "white" Christmas in the very best possible way. That's no dream!

-- Pastor Michael Eichstadt

Reprinted from the Dec., 1997 *Lutheran Spokesman*

Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions; Dec. 28, '20 - Jan. 2, '21.

Mon Isaiah 45:20-25 Since our world has only two religions, we disavow the false but honor the True, worshiping the LORD God, our Savior Jesus (20-21). We advertise Him (22) because we don't want anyone to end up on the wrong side when God holds court on Judgment Day (23-24). Those who honor and serve Jesus are true Israelites—which is a point that needs to be made (25). [The Holy Spirit clarifies this point in Romans 9:6 and 11:26.]

Tues Luke 2:25-40 God's Spirit blessed Simeon, a true Israelite who had been waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and he loved Jesus (25-32). Indeed, the hopes and fears of all the years are met in Jesus (cf. #647 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*). God blessed good old Anna (another true Israelite) likewise, and a few weeks later Jesus' family trekked back to Nazareth, where He grew strong spiritually, learned the Bible, and flourished every way possible. Thank you, Trinity God!

Wed Colossians 3:12-17 How does God's Spirit impact us today? He not only assures us that we are God's dear children (12), He makes us happy to help one another stay connected (13-14). Since God has won the war, we cherish His peace treaty (15) with humanity, claim it as our own, study it, even set it to music, and carry the banner in Jesus' victory parade (16-17).

Thurs Psalm 111 As the old year expires, we praise the LORD (1) for keeping His atoms and gravity and magnetism, etc., functional (2) and especially for keeping His covenant of grace and compassion (4-6). We have learned to depend on God during 2020, and we continue to place ourselves in His good hands, depending on His guidance and secure in our redemption (7-9). God deserves everyone's reverence and dedication (9-10). Praise the LORD!

Fri Genesis 8:20-22 We expect some ups-and-downs during 2021; maybe Covid19 will get suffocated (maybe not); godly citizens will submit them-selves to the governing authorities—but perhaps not, for we humans are naturally perverse (21). In contrast, God pledges to keep our planet orbiting around the sun and rotating on its axis so that greenery will continue to support life on planet Earth (22—but not forever and ever!

Sat Acts 19:33-41 Though ours is a small chapter in God's History book, God is making things work for the good of His children. Let us make some deductions from the experiences of the Apostle Paul: To illustrate, if the practice of our religion [which is God's religion] gets us into trouble with society or with our neighbors, we may defend ourselves in court with legal counsel and expect that honest citizens will understand our stance (that the U.S.A. Constitution guarantees freedom of religion) and will appreciate that our religious demeanor is Christlike. Lord, have mercy on us!