

# Beautiful Savior January 2022 Newsletter

## WHAT IS ETERNAL LIFE?

It is that time again when we encounter the change from the old year to the new. For some, the ushering in of a new year is a ritual of staying up until midnight to make a bunch of noise or perhaps sing an old song. Yet, one way or another, the beginning of a new year is a time of reflection and planning. We take stock of what happened in the last year. We think of our pains, regrets, joys, surprises, births, and deaths. We also look to the future and ponder what we want to do differently in days to come.

In all of our planning, though, there is this unalterable fact that life here will end. Our time is finite. It has a limit. In fact, everything about this world has a limit.

The Bible tells us of one thing, however, that has no end. Referring to those who follow him, Jesus said, "I give them eternal life" (John 10:28). In view of our knowledge and experience of limited life in this world, we wonder what eternal life is.

Jesus explains, "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life" (John 5:24). Life is being connected to God and his blessings. The opposite is death, which is separation from God and his goodness. All people are born separated from God because, by nature, they are sinners. As a result, they are headed toward an eternal separation from God to be condemned in a very real place called hell.

But God did something very great. He sent the world a Savior who is Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God. In an unmatched act of love, Jesus placed himself under our condemnation for sin. He willingly suffered the death sentence that all of us deserve.

Through Jesus, God has forgiven the world's sin, which separated people from him, and he gives the gift of eternal life. All who listen to the Savior and believe in God who sent him have eternal life. By faith in the true God of salvation, they have crossed over from death to life. They do not face the fear of separation from God, but they rejoice in a close and blessed relationship with him now and forever.

What a great way to start a new year! We have the confidence that no matter what has happened in days gone by, and whatever the future holds, our life with God is secured forever by faith in Jesus.

*\* The above article reprinted with permission from WELS Outreach resources*

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*From the pen of the Pastor.....* <sup>15</sup> *The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ.* <sup>16</sup> *John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.* <sup>17</sup> *His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."* (Luke 3:15-17). What a powerful message John had to proclaim as he prepared the way for Jesus. It is a message that applies directly to you and to me. We have been baptized with water and the Holy Spirit, and I would hope it has created some spiritual fire in our hearts as the Holy Spirit planted the seed of faith!

Jesus Christ has redeemed us and brought us into his family. He didn't just tell us that he loves us – he showed his love by suffering for our sins. It's easy to speak the right words but the best way to show our love and thankfulness to our Savior is to obey his commands – to show him through our actions.

We are starting a new year and many people look at this as a time to make changes in their lives. This year look for ways to put your faith into action. Make an effort to attend more worship services and increase your support for the ministry we have at Beautiful Savior. Don't wait for someone to ask you to help, look for ways to volunteer by talking to the leaders of the congregation and Pastor. And if you aren't able to get around as much as you used to, please pray for your fellow members at Beautiful Savior, the various committees, and the Pastor. In this way you can serve your Lord and Savior and set the example for your children, grandchildren and the next generation of leaders in the church. Now is the time to act! May the Lord bless you with many opportunities and the courage to step forward in the coming year.

**Recent Membership changes.** None during the month of December.

**Communion** – Please note that in January communion will be offered on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month. (January 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>).

If you have not been able to attend services and would like communion, please call Pastor Welke to set up a time for private communion.

**New Liturgy in January** – The Voters decided that we should try out the new liturgies in the new hymnal so that we can make an informed decision in April as to whether to purchase the new hymnal. Starting on January 9<sup>th</sup> we will use the **"New Service Setting 1"** for 4 weeks. The first two weeks we will have a soloist or duet sing the parts that are new and then the last two weeks we should be able to do it on our own. Much of this liturgy setting is similar to the page 15 liturgy we currently use.

**Women's Bible Study** – Women's Bible Study will be on Monday, 1/17/2022, at 9:30 AM. Join us as we begin a new study this month. This would be a great Bible Study to invite a friend to.

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**Voters' Meeting** – This meeting will take place on Sunday, 1/16/2022, after worship and fellowship. The main agenda item will be to approve the budget for 2022.

**Finances and Attendance.** The numbers weren't available at the writing of the newsletter but it appears that we will meet our budgeted offerings for December. If you have not been attending in person, please remember to send your offerings to church at: PO Box 332, Austin, MN 55912.

The average in-person attendance for December was 57. We also had 81 people attend on Christmas Eve and 35 on Christmas Day.

**High Schoolers** – I know next summer seems a long way off but start to think about the WELS International Youth Rally that will be held at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. The dates of the rally are June 28-July 1 and you might need a day on either side for travel. The theme of the rally is "Here & Now." This is an opportunity to come together with around 2000 other young people to listen to stories of faith and hope, attend workshops together, worship and take in some fun excursions. Registration starts in March.