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Live...  
Share...  
Christ

# The Voice Of Our Savior

Volume 3, Issue 6

February 2012



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## What's New in February?

- We have moved to email as a way to distribute this newsletter. If you would like a hard copy put in your mailbox, please contact the church office.
- Our new website is up and running! We have some glitches still to fix, but it should be at 100% very soon!
- Auction tickets are on sale! Take advantage of the early bird special. (see pg. 8)
- The School Open House is set for Thursday, Feb 9th! (see pg. 7)
- Ash Wednesday Supper, hosted by the 8th grade will be on Feb. 22nd. (see pg. 4)
- Join the Easter Contemporary Choir for practice every Wednesday! (see pg. 6)
- Food Bank Sunday will be February 12th. Please consider donating Shampoo and Soap for those in need! (see pg. 4)
- Schwan's truck sale is on Fri, Feb. 10th! (see pg. 4)

For a full calendar of February's events,  
please go to [www.oursaviorchurch.org](http://www.oursaviorchurch.org) or click [here!](#)

## Electronic Giving-Now Available

Give Now

**Our Savior Lutheran Church** is pleased to announce the introduction of online giving for making regular offerings. Contributions can now be debited automatically from your checking or savings account. This new online giving program offers convenience for you and much-needed donation consistency for our congregation.

If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will especially appreciate electronic giving. You will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. And, when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, this program will allow your weekly offerings to continue on an uninterrupted basis.

To start giving online, visit the church website at [www.oursaviorchurch.org](http://www.oursaviorchurch.org) and click on the Give Now button. Follow the steps to make a one-time donation or set up automatic recurring contributions.

For further questions contact Lisa Keefer in the church office.

## From the Desk of Pastor Graves



Dear Members & Friends of Christ at OSL,

It doesn't matter how old you are or what your circumstances; all of us wrestle with God, people and things.

Jacob in the Old Testament was a wrestler and it wasn't with the World Wrestling Federation. Earlier in his life he had tricked and deceived his brother, Esau, into giving Jacob Esau's birthright. Esau was the oldest son and his birthright privileged him to get most of his father's inheritance. Now the younger Jacob had it! Esau was so furious that he vowed to kill Jacob, after his father, Isaac died. Jacob fled to relatives in Haran.

Now Jacob is returning to the land of Israel with his family and many possessions. He desires to make peace with his brother, Esau. So Jacob sent messengers to share this fact with his brother to hopefully find favor and forgiveness from Esau. The messengers returned only to tell Jacob that Esau was coming to meet Jacob. Esau had 400 men with him.

Needless to say Jacob thought the worst and was afraid and anxious. First he prayed to God and confessed his fear. He also reminded God of His promise – *"You (God) will do good to me and make my descendants as numerous as the sand of the sea."* (Genesis 32:12)

Jacob decided to placate Esau with material gifts. He was to give him 200 she-goats, 20 he-goats; 200 ewes and 20 rams; 30 female camels with their young; 40 cows and 10 bulls; 20 female donkeys and 10

males – 550 animals in all. That would be an extravagant gift even by today's standards.

Then Jacob wrestled with God, all night. At day break God longed to leave Jacob but Jacob refused God's request. How bold! Jacob insisted on a blessing from God before their wrestling match ended. God gave way to Jacob's request. Jacob's name and identity were changed because he had *"struggled with God and men and had prevailed"* (Genesis 32:28)

Then came the anxious reunion with his brother Esau. Jacob in fear, *"ran to meet Esau embraced him, threw his arms around his neck and kissed him, together they wept."*

The fear and the wrestling were unnecessary but very productive. It helped Jacob examine his awful past. He wasn't proud of it! More than likely he was remorseful and asked God to cleanse him of all sins. What a burden lifted in the all-night wrestling match. You and I need to do that more!

Think of what you are presently wrestling with. The fear and anxiety may be paralyzing you or causing you to do things you wouldn't ordinarily do. Like Jacob, a good wrestling match with God would be extremely beneficial.

Jesus wrestled with God and men in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before He was to ruthlessly be beaten, humiliated and hung to die on the cross.

What should He do? It would have been so easy to leave the disciples sleeping and quietly slip away in the night. Jordan or Egypt was calling Him to effortlessly flee and start a new life. That might have been

Jesus' will. But the wrestling was between doing His own easy will or the difficult will of His Father.

To flee and not to face the utter fear of painful suffering and death and Satan and our sin was a tempting path to follow. It would have spelled big-time disaster. Satan would be victor and at best, you and I would be consigned to aimlessly wander through life and death absolutely lost in our sin; completely alienated from God. No hope! No relief! No joy! No Life!

So Jesus wrestled with God and our condition and made the difficult but right choice. He didn't flee from His and our enemies (Satan and sin), but head on confronted them. He did not relent to His own will, but His Dad's.

Sincere Holy Spirit wrestling helps the likes of you and me be strong to face what troubles us and to do God's will. As with Jacob, so Jesus promises to prosper us and bless us. As with Jacob, we are new people with a new identity, a new name. We are stronger in the wrestling.

Christ will bless us in our wide awake all night and sometimes all day wrestling with our kids, friends, spouse, parents, vocation, illness, financial struggles, faith, calling of a Senior Pastor – you name it; Christ will bless the struggle. In the end it will turn out fine, just as it did with Jacob and Jesus. It will spell Life for us, just as Jesus' death and resurrection spelled life now and life forever for you, me and all who trust Jesus! Jesus has blessed you!

Lovingly, as a fellow wrestler!

Pastor Graves  
Interim Senior Pastor

**"Sincere Holy Spirit wrestling helps the likes of you and me be strong to face what troubles us and to do God's will."**

## From the Desk of Pastor Olsen "Punxsutawney Phil"



Groundhog day is coming soon. A day that is filled with anticipation and excitement over whether winter is going to last or not. It is amazing to see how much hoopla has been made over years surrounding this little groundhog that has been named, Punxsutawney Phil. A little history on this holiday and hog.

Groundhog Day, February 2nd, is a popular tradition in the United States. It is also a legend that has navigated its way through the centuries, its origins clouded in the mists of time with ethnic cultures and animals awakening on specific dates. Myths such as this tie our present to the distant past when nature did, indeed, influence our lives far more than many of us now realize. It is the day that the Groundhog comes out of his hole after a long winter sleep to look for his shadow. If he sees it, he knows that it is a bad sign of six more weeks of bad weather and returns to his hole. If the day is cloudy, and has no shadow, he takes it as a sign of spring and does not return to his hole.

Bet you didn't know Groundhog day is steeped in Christian tradition! The groundhog tradition stems from similar beliefs associated with Candlemas Day and the days of early Christians in Europe. For centuries the tradition was to have the clergy place their blessing upon candles and hand them out to the people.

Roman legions, as part of their conquests of northern

Europe, supposedly brought this tradition to the Germans, who continued using it and made the connection that if the sun was out on Candlemas Day, an animal, the hedgehog, would cast a shadow, and therefore would predict six more weeks of bad weather. They determined this as the duration of what was called the "Second Winter."

Pennsylvania's earliest settlers were Germans and they found groundhogs to be in abundance all over the state. They decided that the groundhog, similar to the hedgehog, was quite intelligent and that if the sun did appear on February 2nd, that an animal as wise as a groundhog would see its shadow and return to its underground home for six more weeks of a long winter stay. The Germans recited:

*For as the sun shines  
on Candlemas Day,  
So far will the snow swirl  
until the May.*

Even now after appearances, this little groundhog draws the attention of thousands of visitors who come to see him and even listen to their favorite rock bands. (Not sure if that is part of the German tradition?)

But why do we really care about this? We know that even though the shadows may fall on our everyday lives, that the Son, the Son of God that is, always rises. And just as these people await the return each year of that lovable little groundhog, we also await the return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

He lives in our hearts and in our lives. God has sent His Son into the world to show us that there will be no more

winter. No longer do we have to live under the snow covered coldness of our sins. He has cleansed us from our sins and all unrighteousness by his death and resurrection. There will be no more darkness, the light of the world has come. The people that sat in darkness have seen a great light.

Often these days of February can be rather dreary without the sunlight. I must admit, as a native born Floridian, winter can get tough with the dreariness. I miss the sun. But there are others who are very dearly really missing "The Son," and their lives are dreary and can be meaningless, meaningless without Him. But because of the work of Christ, because what He has done, the shadows of a cold, cloudless winter hold no real sway over us. The shadows of death may seem to scare us back into our hole, but we are Children of the Resurrection, followers of the one who came out of "His" hole in the ground, to silence the death and call us into His marvelous light.

May the dark, cloudy months ahead be filled with the warmth and joy of the Son, the Son of God, the one who took your sins away, the one who gave you new life in your Baptism and the one who promises to return and bring us to the new heavens and the new earth, the home of righteousness.

In His Service and Yours,  
Pastor Olsen





Thank you for the generous donations of soup during the month of January!!

## Food Bank

Our Food Bank is the grateful recipient of a commercial upright deep freezer. It was purchased by the Greater Lansing Food Bank through a grant they received. Sharon Miller, Food Bank Director, said that OSL was chosen because of all we do for the community. It is a well deserved and much needed addition to the Food Bank facilities.

The last quarter report for the months of October, November and December show that the OSL Food

Bank served 856 families including 1406 adults and 869 children for a total of 2275 people. Many thanks to Sharon and all her volunteers who reach out to feed the needy in the Lansing area.

*"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink..."*  
Matthew 25:35

As always, any non-perishable food donation is always appreciated and can

be dropped off in the baskets in the far corner of the narthex.

**Food Bank Sunday is February 12th! The focus is Shampoo and Soap. Please consider dropping off an item or two on the table in the narthex.**

March: laundry detergent

Watch the sales and stock up to help support the Food Bank.

## Ash Wednesday Supper

On February 22 the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class will be hosting a pancake, waffle, and sausage supper prior to the Ash Wednesday worship service. The supper will begin at 5:00pm and continue until 6:15pm in the school commons area.

Join us for a time of fellowship and food as we begin the season of Lent. The proceeds from this annual dinner will go toward the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class trip, which will include a day at the Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky.

The cost is \$5 for adults and \$3 for students (8<sup>th</sup> grade and under). Children 6 and under are free.

## Schwan's Truck Sale

Our Savior will be hosting the Schwan's truck on

Friday, February 10th from 2:30 to 6:00 in our parking lot! 20% of the proceeds will go to support our church and school.

Pre-order your items now and pick them up on Friday the 10th! We have found

that ordering online is a bit difficult and so attached is the order form to fill out and return to the church or school office no later than Wednesday, February 8th. Extra order forms and catalogs are available in the church and school offices as well as on the tables under the bulletin board in the narthex.

If you do not get a chance to pre-order, you can always

stop by during the truck sale as they will have a full truck of items to purchase on the spot!

Pay for your order when you pick it up using cash, check, credit card or EBT.

Don't have time to stop by or pre-order, you can always buy a gift card! All Gift Card purchases will count towards our fundraiser!



## Finance Information

### Financial Activity: July – December 2011

Total Contributions/Income	\$ 915,722
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 990,696</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>&lt;\$ 74,974&gt;</b>

\*Income is almost \$75,000 less than expenses thru December 2011.

#### As we look at January 2012:

Bank account balances as of December 31, 2011:

Building Fund (FWC)	\$ 2,647.46
General Fund	\$ 4,028.56
Payroll Account	<u>\$ 1,403.10</u>
Total funds in the bank as of 12/31/11	\$ 8,079.12

The monthly mortgage payment each month is approximately \$26,500. In order to make January’s mortgage payment, we will need to bring in almost \$24,000 in Forward with Christ (FWC) contributions by January 22. The average weekly giving for FWC has been \$4,026. With four Sunday’s in January before the mortgage payment is due, we will still be short \$7,750. (Please note, that is if we received the average each week in January. Last week (1/15) was \$2,817, much lower than the average) We are in jeopardy of not having enough funds to pay the mortgage.

The monthly payroll without benefits is approximately \$90,000 each month. With only having \$5,432 in the bank at the end of December, we need to have contributions in the amount of \$84,568 just to make payroll. This does not include any other bills. That would amount to an average of \$21,142 each week of the first four weeks in January. (The last Sunday of January is not included, as payroll needs to be posted prior to that Sunday). As of last week (1/15) our average giving was only \$17,789 and this number includes the New Years Eve service.

In addition to payroll, the total accounts payable (bills due) as of 12/31/11: \$ 84,938.63

With continued decrease in giving, we will need to cut approximately \$300,000 from our budget for the next six months.

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil . . . Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine (Proverbs, 3:5-10, NIV)*

## Worship

### 4 Epiphany

Ecclesiastes: How Can I Make the Most of My Time?

Sunday, February 5

8 a.m. (Communion)

10:45 a.m. (No Communion)

Monday, February 6

6:30 p.m. (Communion)

### 5 Epiphany

Ecclesiastes: What Happens When I Die?

Sunday, February 12

8 a.m. (No Communion)

10:45 a.m. (Communion)

Monday, February 13

6:30 p.m. (Communion)

### Transfiguration

Ecclesiastes: How Do I Face the Future?

Sunday, February 19

8 a.m. (Communion)

10:45 a.m. (No Communion)



### Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 22

6:30 p.m. (Communion)

### 1 Lent

Sunday, February 26

8 a.m. (No Communion)

10:45 a.m. (Communion)

### Lent Midweek 2

Wednesday, February 29

6:30 p.m. (No Communion)

## Music

### Join the Easter Contemporary Choir

We will be singing at the 10am Easter Service on Sunday, April 8th

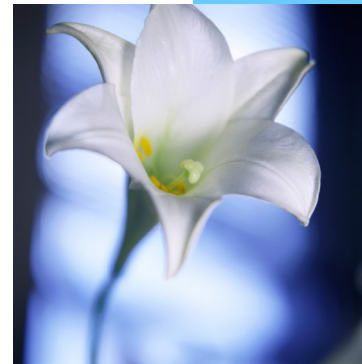
Open to all high school age and older.

Rehearsals will be in the Music Room on Wednesdays at 7:15pm

February 29th; March 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th; April 4th

If you have any questions or would like more information, Please

contact [John Horak!](#)



## Communication Corner

Do you have an event or information that you would like in the weekly or monthly news? Please fill out the communication form on [www.oursaviorchurch.org](http://www.oursaviorchurch.org) or contact the church office at least 2 weeks prior to your event!

### Member Spotlight

We would love to be able to spotlight members of our congregation/school! Do you know someone who is making a positive impact on those around them? Or maybe they are spreading the good news about Christ! We want to hear about them! Please contact Becky at [communications@oursaviorchurch.org](mailto:communications@oursaviorchurch.org) or call the church office!

## From the Desk Of Principal Jim Landskroener



**Why?**

This past month I had the privilege to attend the National Lutheran Principals Conference. Over 120 principals from around the country gathered under the theme “For Such a Time as This” from the book of Esther. There were many ideas shared but one that stood out to me was where do we spend our thought process most days. Most of our days are filled with what we do and how we do things. One thing we sometimes neglect is why we do things. For the rest of the year I hope to focus on the why. Why is that child behaving the way they are? Why does that parent seem distant or disconnected? Why is that teacher saying what they are saying? To figure out the why means relationships need to be strengthened. When you first meet someone you might ask them what they do for a living. As you get to know them better you may learn how they do something and even ask for their help. It is only after you really get to know someone do you understand why they do what they do and how they do it.

Every life has a story that helps explain the why. Take some time today to focus on the why.

**Hearts for Jesus**

In the month of February Lutheran schools from across the state will join forces to support a ministry together. This year our focus is on the Children’s Christian Concern Society. CCCS continues to reach out to the hearts of over 25,000 kids around the world through the offerings and gifts these schools give. They operate schools, orphanages, and other homes for children around the world. You can find out more at [www.cccskids.org](http://www.cccskids.org).

**Open House**

Everyone is invited to attend our open house on Thursday, **February 9<sup>th</sup>** from 5:30-7pm. Each classroom will have food to eat from around the world and teachers will be available to answer questions and share what goes on in their classroom. If you haven’t visited our school in a while or never have, here’s your opportunity. Bring a friend and let them see some of the exciting classrooms.

**February Madness**

Basketball tournament time is here. Come join us on Friday

and Saturday **February 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>** as we host our JV boys basketball tournament and Friday and Saturday, **February 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>** for our Varsity boys basketball tournament. Come cheer on the Panthers and relive some past experiences of grade school and middle school basketball. Check out the school board in the narthex for tournament brackets.

**Facebook**

Have you liked us on facebook yet? Search for us at “I Love Our Savior Lutheran School” and like us. You will see pictures, videos, and stay up to date on what is happening at Our Savior Lutheran School.

**Enrollment**

Enrollment for the 2012-2013 school year is upon us. If you have questions about enrolling at Our Savior Lutheran School please contact the school office and we will lead you through the process. Are you thinking you cannot afford the tuition at Our Savior? Please contact the office and we will walk you through our tuition reduction process as well. We really want to be of service to you and your family and partner in your child’s education.

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## School Open House

Please join the teachers, parents and students of OSL for a School Open House on Thursday, February 9th from 5:30 to 7:00pm. This is a wonderful opportunity to see what is going on in our school as well as invite friends and family to check out the great things OSL has to offer! We will have progressive hors d’oeuvres as you check out each classroom. Please contact the school office with any questions.

## Thank you!!

Our Savior Lutheran School's athletic program was blessed to be the recipient of a memorial fund that was established in memory of Luke Lillmars, who died this past summer. Luke was a long time friend, grandparent, coach, and mentor to students and families of our school. He gave unselfishly of his time in order to help young people become more skilled in athletics and become better, well rounded individuals.

Through this memorial we have been able to purchase several



things for our school. The gym walls are adorned with a couple beautiful panther murals and several scripture verses. This is something that has been long overdue and we hope everyone has a chance to come to our

games in the near future to see these new signs of school spirit in the gym.

We also have been able to purchase new volleyballs, basketballs, adjustable basketball hoops, and warm up shirts for our varsity girls and boys basketball teams as well as the girls volleyball team.

A big thank you goes to Mrs. Rose Lillmars and to the Mohnke family as well as everyone who donated money to this memorial. Your generosity and support is truly appreciated.

## Night On the Town Auction

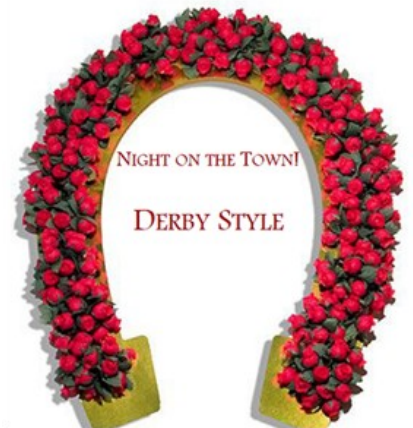
Join us on Friday, April 20<sup>th</sup> at the Country Club of Lansing for our annual Night on the Town Dinner and Auction.

Tickets are \$40 before February 15<sup>th</sup> and \$50 after. Our theme is Building Kids in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Derby-Style. Come on ladies let's see those hats!

Buy a table and invite friends.

Please consider asking businesses that you visit to make a donation. Donation forms and letters are available on the school table in the narthex and in the school and church offices.

**Giddy up!!!!!!**



## Mom2Mom Sale

The spring Mom2Mom Sale has been set for Saturday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. It's a great opportunity to clean out those closets and sell all the clothes and toys your infants, kids and teens have outgrown!! Early bird specials are available on table

and space rental through February 1<sup>st</sup>!

Don't want to sell your items but still need to get rid of them? PTL is accepting donations for its own table at the sale. All proceeds from that table go to PTL for all the great events

that happen throughout the year!

For any questions or more information, see the PTL board by the school entrance or contact Becky Grocki at [bgrocki@yahoo.com](mailto:bgrocki@yahoo.com) or 517-582-0072

### Mom2Mom Sale Early Bird Prices

\$15 - 8' Table

\$10 - 8' Space (you provide Table)

Please return completed form with payment by Feb 1<sup>st</sup> to take advantage of the special pricing!

# February Celebrations

## Anniversaries



- |                           |                         |                           |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Ken & Terrie Brownell   | 15 Dave & Tammie Wright |                           |
| 4 Keith & Sue Barber      | 17 Mike & Susan Baldock | 22 Russ & Jill Berends    |
| 9 Chad & Katy Frazier     | 20 Wm & Arlene Nicholas | 24 Jeff & Sara Skerratt   |
| 14 Peter & Ling Liu Ruark | 21 Ed & Gloria Terrel   | 27 Thomas & Teresa Shaver |

## Birthdays



- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Erik Olsen                                      | 10 Sheila Jordan<br>Ling Liu  | 17 Sharon Allaire<br>Brandon Carter<br>Kelly Donahue  | 25 Anna Zander<br>Heather Wilson  |
| 2 Benjamin Trapp<br>Bob Utrup<br>Timothy Yang     | 11 Vicki Gothals<br>Yolanda Perez   | 18 Wendy Moncada<br>Emma Thomas   | 26 Janet Henshaw<br>David Mendoza<br>Madeleine Schlegel<br>Rose Sweet<br>Lorianne Wamhoff |
| 3 Tom Kaiser<br>Aaron Mohnke                      | 12 Emma Ried  | 19 Barbara Anderson<br>Alissa Brandenburg<br>Michelle Buchtrup<br>Anthony Covert<br>Chase Cullimore | 27 Brandon Bermudez<br>Audrey Grocki<br>Kathy Westby<br>Jeff Witt                         |
| 4 Rachel List<br>Mitchell Whisler<br>Chris Zander | 13 Natalie Wallas   | 20 Ben Burmeister<br>Sherri Claucherty<br>Larry Flak<br>Richard Simpson<br>Mao Vang                 | 28 Zachary Bliven<br>Chloe Kingsley<br>Anna Lyons<br>Sam Williams                         |
| 5 Celene Flannery<br>Sophia Ruark                 | 14 Molly Scherer  | 22 John Hamstra<br>Bill Paterick<br>Patty Reeves<br>Jenni VandenHaute                               | 29 Donyelle Hayhoe  |
| 6 Brent Ericks                                    | 15 Teresa Shaver<br>May Lee Yang  | 23 Rebecca Morford  |   |
| 7 Sara DeYarmond<br>Brenda Rayle                  | 16 Joanne Boss<br>Carson Brunk<br>Riley Donahue<br>Aubrey Friedrich<br>Virginia McKenney<br>Charlene Sell |   |   |
| 8 Dani Hughes                                     | Sarah Wagner<br>Jacob Walters<br>Hunter Wilson  |   |   |
| 9 Kim Metzger                                     |   |   |   |