

January 2021 Riverview Report

Mission Statement:
Growing in faith and
sharing the Gospel of
Jesus Christ with
all people.



QR Giving Code



One Thing Never Changes

How much life changed in the last year for many of us. Things we easily took for granted suddenly weren't available to us anymore. What was once routine became rare. What was once familiar became foreign. And we are tempted to feel sorry for ourselves, to lament what we have lost and to keep seeing the glass half-empty until things "get back to normal."

But let's not lose sight of the blessings God has poured out upon us. Here are a few of them:

- Our school enrollment is the highest it has been in at least 5 years, even though we had to turn some families away because we couldn't safely accommodate more children.
- Each week, our online worship services are viewed almost 200 times, perhaps by many who might not otherwise come to a Christian church.
- With digital tools, we have been able to offer bible classes and catechism instruction and hold ministry planning meetings, even when some or all were not able to attend in person.
- More down time has led some members to take more time for personal or family devotions, bible study, and prayer.
- God's Word does not change and continues to be proclaimed, heard, studied, and shared at Riverview.

That last blessing was one that Peter shared with a group of Christians in the first century – Christians facing severe hardships and persecution. They might have been tempted to just give up, or to question and blame God for not doing something to stop the trouble they were experiencing. Peter's Spirit-inspired words offered the encouragement they need. (Read through 1 Peter and 2 Peter in the coming days, and I think you'll find it remarkably timely and relevant.)

Times change. People change. Some human efforts succeed. Others fail. But our God never fails. Peter writes, "You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For, 'All people are like grass,

and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.' And this is the word that was preached to you" (1 Peter 1:23-25).

Through his Word, God has made you new and given you life that neither pandemic nor politics can take away. Through his living and enduring Word, God sustains you in good times and bad. In that Word, he continues to assure you that, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18). In that Word, he pledges, "They will call on my name, and I will answer them" (Zechariah 13:9). He vows that nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39). And he promises that one day, "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

So, my friends, enter this new year with confidence that the Lord will bless you every day. Take time to hear God's Word every day, that its unchanging truths might encourage you and strengthen you for whatever the new year holds.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Tim Wagner

Church News

➤ Snow Removal Help Needed

We are still looking to fill a few slots for morning and evening snow removal for the church sidewalks. If you are interested, please contact the church office or Wayne Somers. We also have a senior member in Neenah looking for snow removal help. Contact Pastor Wagner, if you are able to help.

➤ Riverview Christmas Tree Display

Thank you to all the families that decorated Christmas trees. Our 1st annual tree display was a success. Please remove decorations from your tree by January 10th. If you wish to donate your lights and ornaments, please contact Mr. Witte.

➤ **Thank You**

Thank you to all who donated toward holiday bulletin covers, flowers, or stoles and paraments. Your gifts brought glory to God in our services.

➤ **January Door Offering**

Door offerings for the month of January will support the WELS Institutional Ministries (learn more at im.life). Those who wish may write “Institutional Ministries” on the “other” line of their envelope or electronic gift throughout the month or may place their gift in the door offering on January 17.



➤ **Congregational Voters Meeting**

Members are encouraged to attend a voters meeting on Sunday, January 31, after the 10:30 service. In addition to mid-year ministry and financial updates, we will hear a preliminary report from our Space Needs study. We plan to offer a virtual attendance option as well.

➤ **Connecting with our Congregation in 2021**

We are a family of believers at Riverview, but we haven't been able to spend much time together in recent months. We are hoping for a fresh start in 2021. As a first step, a group of members will be calling every family in our congregation this January and February to simply find out how you are doing. Receive their call as a reminder that your congregation cares about you. If you would like to be a part of this calling effort, please speak with the pastors. We look forward to reconnecting with the members of our church family.

➤ **Bible Studies**

Pastor Wagner continues the bi-monthly study called “Living Our Our Lutheran Identity” at 6:30 pm on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month. Pastor Belter will offer a new bible study Mondays at 1:00 pm. Visit riverviewlutheran.org/biblestudy to learn more.

➤ **Devotional Resources in Church Library**

If you are looking for devotional resources as you begin the new year, consider our church library. We have over 30 devotion books available for checkout.

➤ **Scrip Information.**

We are selling scrip on Sundays after the 8:00 am service. Pre-orders are still welcome and can be picked up in the office. 920-733-3728
accountant@riverviewlutheran.org

➤ **Monthly Mission Spotlight**

Our mission spotlight for January is Grace Lutheran Church in Sahuarita, Arizona. Grace is a mission church looking to build a new church and child learning center to spread the gospel in their area. This past winter, students from Wisconsin Lutheran College and St. Croix Lutheran High School spent their winter breaks in Sahuarita through the Mission Journeys program. The members of Grace offered lodging and food. The students worked for about a week sharing news about Grace’s mission building project, new child learning center, and gospel ministry in their community. The students knocked on almost 6000 doors, inviting neighbors to church and surveying the community to see how Grace could serve the community. Their efforts resulted in a new family joining their church, numerous visitors and 60 students pre-registering for their learning center. What a great blessing for Grace to have the extra help in reaching out to their community and for the students to be able to share the Gospel this way. What better way to spend a winter break from school! Please keep Grace, the students and the Mission Journey program in your prayers.

➤ **School and Church Office Hours**

Regular office hours for the school year are Mon – Fri 7:15 am-4:00 pm.

➤ **Year to Date Offerings - 7/1/2020-11/30/2020**

	Actual	Budget	Difference
General	\$228,468.21	\$264,009.15	-\$35,540.94
Building	\$38,905.95	\$55,194.10	-\$16,288.15
Synod	\$11,940.93	\$15,855.05	-\$3914.12
FVL	\$6961.47	\$9,938.80	-\$2977.33
TOTAL	\$286,276.56	\$344,997.10	-\$58,720.54

➤ **Average Weekly Attendance**

	Worship		Bible Study
	In Person	Online (worship cards)	
September	155	72	26
October	145	83	27
November	142	82	29
December	149	72	17

Midweek Advent Avg: 97 (40 online)
Christmas Eve: 243 (48); Christmas Day: 97 (54)

School News

➤ **2021 Basketball/Cheerleading Cancelled**

The RLS School Board has decided to cancel the 2021 basketball/cheerleading season for the Roadrunners. Our main goal is to keep everyone healthy and able to attend school in person.