

SALEM CONNECTION

September 2020



Salem Lutheran Church 21276 Archibald Road PO Box 100 Deerwood MN 56444

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From Pastor Mike

“Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.’”

- Matthew 16:16-17

David Lose, pastor of Mount Olivet Lutheran in Mpls., writes an occasional column called “In the Meantime.” I’d like to share his reflections on Peter’s confession that we read last month.

How do we keep faith in the time of COVID? And struggle for racial equality? And weather economic crisis? And stay hopeful (or even just sane) amid such a toxic political culture? (And all this in an election year!)

Just now it feels like so much threatens to tear us apart... I know you wrestle with these questions – and bear the mental strain of trying to answer them – regularly.

These questions have pushed me to read this passage a little differently this year... Peter, like pretty much most of us and the world generally, defines power in terms of strength and might and the ability to exert our will over others. When Peter says “Messiah,” he’s thinking of a warrior king, like, and perhaps even greater, than King David. Hence the need to at least anticipate the second half of the story and how Jesus’ cross turns the world’s (and our) conceptions of power on their head and demonstrates the true power of sacrificial love.

All fair. But not this year... This year, I want to bask, at least for a moment, in Peter’s insight. I want to acknowledge the truth of Peter’s epiphany and celebrate his confession. I want, at least for a single Sunday, to recognize his accomplishment.

Except... except it’s not his accomplishment. Not really. “Heaven and earth have not revealed this to you,” Jesus says, but rather, “by my Father in heaven.” Revelation, it turns out, comes from God. And only from God. Always.

And here’s the thing: the same is true of faith.

All of which offers a different slant on our questions above. It’s not that they aren’t real or genuine or appropriate questions. They absolutely are. It’s that we don’t have to take final responsibility for answering them, or at least not for procuring the faith, hope, and courage that we may feel are in short supply. Because the faith we seek, the confidence we long for, the courage we hope to find and to share – these are gifts from God. And... God loves to bestow such gifts!

Which means that after acknowledging the challenges and weariness and stress that (we) are feeling,... after lamenting how long it has been since we gathered together in person..., and after wondering how we will get through all this and keep faith – all, again, genuine and appropriate feelings worthy of articulation – after all this, then (remember) that God, creator of the heavens and the earth, the One who brings life from death and creates from nothing... this God is still at work. God is still sustaining us in faith, creating in us hope, stirring us to acts of courageous generosity.

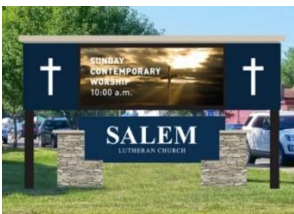
“Heaven and earth have not revealed this to you,” Jesus says to us as well as Peter, but rather “by my Father in heaven.”

God is still at work. More than that, God shows up in a variety of ways to create faith, hope, and love during challenging, even – maybe especially – unprecedented times. In the notes and phone calls that have taken the place of hospital visits. In the communal kindness and responsibility to wear masks in public. In the manifold donation drives so many of us are holding. In the imperfect, often fledgling, but vital work for greater racial equity and justice in which we are engaged. In the willingness to forego those things, like in-person worship, that typically sustain us out of a sense of love for our neighbor. Even via recorded, live-streamed, or zoom worship services and meetings.

God is at work. God is with us, sustaining us in faith, equipping us to meet the needs of our neighbor, renewing us in hope and courage, and preparing to work through us for the sake of the world God loves so much. God is still at work in and through you! - Pastor Mike



PRAYER CONCERNS: *Herb Schoon, Lavonn Reeves, Justin Fort, Teppi Bundy, Steve Holmwig, Don Thulin, John Lemcool, Cookie & Terry Knopik, Joyce Benike, Mary Jo Berven, Becky Guimont.*



LED UPDATE

Hurray!!!! We met our goal!!! The sign committee met with Albrecht Sign Company on Thursday, August 27th to finalize everything and sign contracts for our LED sign.

The Sign Committee thanks you for all of your contributions.

Thank you: “Thank you to all who sent sympathy cards, get-well cards, and birthday cards in the last few weeks. You are a wonderful church family.” – Teddy Skattum



LIL' FREE PANTRY at Salem!

The Lil' Free Pantry will be stocked with free food items for anyone who wants or needs it. Any non-perishable and non-expired donations are appreciated and can be left within the pantry, so take what you need and if you have a little something extra, you can donate for someone else. **The Lil' Free Pantry will be located outside the youth door entrance of the church.** Donations can also be dropped off at church and left in the

youth room. Salem youth will be managing this project. Please contact Alex Schmidt at gingflow15@gmail.com or text at 218-851-1569 if you are interested.



From Steve and all of Sheltered Reality we want to say a huge thank you to Salem Lutheran church... Pastor Mike and the wonderful congregation for truly blessing us all with their incredible comments, generous donations, and especially the conversations they had with our drummers! In such a tough year for the world, we were so happy to have been able to join the worship service and see that truly, in such a difficult time for us all, that the power of music and our very hard working and talented kids, can bring a smile and a laugh to our audiences! But more importantly that we can also share our belief that we should take God's gifts in our lives and share these with others, so that we can all make the world a happier place! We can't wait to see you again next year!

Salem Lutheran and Pastor Mike, I am overwhelmed and truly grateful for your generosity. Your donations have blessed Sheltered Reality with \$700 that will greatly help us for at least a few months. I am so lucky to have met all you wonderful people. Thank you so much. Julie Fritz



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Xavia DeCent
- 4 Cathy Aykens, Terry Fields, Rebecca Guida, Kristin Peterson, & Jodi Stensrud
- 5 Brandon Kunz
- 6 Brant Lonergan
- 8 Egen Myers
- 10 Delores Chileen
- 11 Devan Bartels & Deanna Olson
- 12 Nate Kewatt
- 13 Susan Erickson
- 14 Margaret Blistain, & Gary Malek
- 15 Lee Uglem
- 16 Kade Novak
- 17 Jack Gavin
- 18 Kael Novak
- 19 Walker Jones
- 23 Marilyn Holmvgig, & Myrna Nelson
- 24 Madilyn Bodle
- 26 James Call

SEPTEMBER WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Brian Chileen (2001)
- 8 Meriellen Pisarek (1984)
- 9 Ed & Sherri Godfrey (1978)
Rod & Laurie Ogard (1978)
- 14 Gary & Becky Guida (1968)
- 15 Louie & Maridee Smilich (1956)
- 17 Jake & Dee Dee Frahm (2005)
- 23 Rick & Brenda Stirewalt (1967)
- 29 Randy & Lori Holmvgig (1979)
- 30 Lee & Ellen Uglem (1978)

Keep Up with Regular Offerings By Giving Electronically

Just as you rely upon receiving income on a regular basis, Salem Lutheran Church relies on your regular contributions. Salem appreciates the efforts of congregation members to make consistent donations throughout the year – especially during this time when the church is closed to worship and other activities. To assist you, the church provides a convenient electronic giving option for setting up regular contributions.

As you contemplate future contributions, please consider electronic giving. Authorization forms and additional information are available. Contact Salem's Financial Manager Ruth Blum by calling the church office, 218-534-3309. Ruth's office hours are Mondays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Ruth's email: finance@salemdwd.org



SALEM'S WORSHIP IS LIVE-STREAMED ON FACEBOOK AND POSTED ON YOUTUBE every Sunday as long as public worship and church events are cancelled. You can access it on Salem's website, www.salemdwd.org or on Facebook. Weekly readings, announcements and sermons are mailed weekly to those without internet access.



SALEM'S PARKING LOT WORSHIP will be held each Sunday, unless there is bad weather. **BRING YOUR LAWN CHAIR TO PARKING LOT WORSHIP!** **Services start at 9:00 a.m.** Households will be able to sit together (socially distanced from other households). There's plenty of room and a speaker system in front of the nearest cars for those who'd like to be outdoors. Those who want to worship in their car will park and tune in to 100.9 FM as normal. Offering will be received and Communion served by gloved and masked volunteers as vehicles exit the parking lot.

Many thanks to the **Nitty Gritty Sabbath Keepers** who lead music and offer the technical support that make our online and parking lot worship possible.

Here are the guidelines for Parking Lot Worship:

- Enter the Salem parking lot on the south side (near the bank). Exit on the north side (near the park).
- A volunteer will hand you a bulletin as you enter the parking lot and someone will direct you where to park.
- The entire worship service will be included in the bulletin.
- Tune your car radio to 100.9 to listen to the service.
- The church doors will remain locked.
- If it is raining at 8 a.m. or after, Parking Lot Worship will be cancelled. We will still be streaming on Facebook and posted on YouTube.



SOME HAVE ASKED ABOUT OFFERINGS during the weeks public worship is canceled. The best ways to give at this time are either electronically (Simply Giving, Website, through your bank, etc.) or by U.S. Mail. Salem's mailing address is:

Salem Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 100
Deerwood, MN 56444

THANK YOU for your gifts and offerings that will help Salem continue to pay its bills, payroll, mission support, mortgage, etc.

THE MEN'S BIBLE STUDY is meeting online by Zoom at 8:00 a.m. on Fridays. They're studying the weekly lectionary readings. All are welcome. Call/text (715-410-5404) or email (pastor@salemdwd.org) Pastor Mike to receive a Zoom invitation.

The Safety team meets every other week to review current synod guidelines and Crow Wing County Covid 19 data. **At this time, we are recommending that we consider inside worship when there has been a decline in the weekly percentage rate of new positive cases per 10,000 people in Crow Wing County, over the period of three weeks AND the percent of new positive cases must be under 1% of those tested.** Crow Wing county data is available on the MN Department of Health website weekly covid report at the following link:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/stats/index.html#wmapcz1>

- Current data through August 1 shows that Crow Wing County's % of positive covid tests completed the week of 7-26 to 8-1 increased to 5-6.99% (last week was 3-4.99%)
- **Weekly case rate per 10000 people is also up to 4-7.99.** The previous 3 weeks this had been stable at 2-3.99.
- 49 of 87 total counties in MN have a LOWER positive case rate than Crow Wing. (2 week running average used by schools to determine school status)
- The data shows that new Crow Wing County case rates have continued to increase weekly. Therefore, the safety team is recommending that we continue with outdoor and livestreaming worship until it is safer to gather indoors.

DELIVER BOOKS - Salem West is looking for volunteers to deliver books to thrift stores -Goodwill or others-in the twin cities, Duluth or St Cloud. Boxes are inside the south door at Salem West and say donate on them! Take two or a dozen boxes and help us out!

Lutheran Lounge Act: Due to Covid 19, and all the issues with this pandemic, the Lutheran Lounge Act will not be held this year as we had hoped. We hope to reschedule in August, 2021. We thank you for your support.
– Chuck Lubowitz and Noreen Steinbrecher



Romans 12:10-13

¹⁰ love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

If you have something you would like to add to the Salem Connection,

please contact Dawn Huffman at: 218-534-3309 or by emailing: office@salemdwd.org

All submissions for the Salem Connection are due by no later than the 20th of each month.

Present: Pastor Mike Briggs, Paul Tesdahl, Jeff Mitchell, Mark Carlson, Joel Huntley, Jena Reed, Peggy Blistain, Terry Tichenor

Absent: Tracy Perpich

Opening Prayer

Congregation Reports:

- None.

Approval of Minutes:

- A motion was made and carried to approve the June, 2020 Council meeting minutes.

Pastor's Report

- Short discussion was held regarding July's report to the council.

Committee Reports

- Treasure Report
 - A motion was made and carried to approve the Treasurer's report.
- Sign Committee
 - Discussion was held regarding a silent auction to help raise funds.
- Capital Appeals
 - Discussion was held regarding the process and history. The committee recommended to the Council to remain with Davy and Associates beyond the 3-year program.
 - A motion to accept the recommendation to use Davy and Associates with their plan for a 1-year extension and pay the fees as required passed.
 - The Council recognized and greatly appreciated the hard work and dedication for the Capital Appeals Committee members.
- Safety Team
 - Safety Team members presented their 3-phase plan for re-opening to the council.
 - A motion was made and passed to continue parking lot services and add in-person worship as the situation warrants.

Unfinished Business

- Discussion was held regarding the status of the litigation, the costs, and the funds used so far.
- Short discussion was held regarding Glen Helm returning to work 14-hours/week.
- Discussion was held regarding the PPP loan. The paperwork to forgive the loan has been submitted to the bank but currently is pending while more rules of adjustments are announced.
- Discussion was held regarding the search for an Associate Pastor and how to hold a congregational meeting for the Call Committee.

New Business

- Discussion was held regarding sharing the results of the Covid-19 survey with the congregation.
- The Council accepted the resignation of councilmember Jake Frahm and thanks him for his service.

- A motion was made and passed to provide for a 1-year council term to fill this vacancy on the December ballot at the 2020 congregational meeting.
- Discussion was held regarding the IT policy. A copy of the proposal will be sent to the council for consideration.
- Discussion was held regarding the Initiative Foundation. The Council designated the Executive Team along with Don Hales to go over the Initiative Foundation agreement questions.

S.O.S.

Announcements

- Outreach will hold a live auction in August to help raise funds. Large items and helpers are needed.

Meeting Adjourned

- The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on August 27, 2020, at 6:00 P.M. via zoom.
- Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Prepared by: Tracy Perpich

Capital Appeal Update & One-Year Extension



In August 2017, Salem conducted a Capital Appeal to reduce our building mortgage, with pledges beginning in December of the same year. The effort was a great success with many throughout our congregation making financial commitments and volunteering. We met and exceeded our goal for the three-year effort.

Due to the generosity of Salem's members through numerous appeals, our mortgage balance has been reduced by almost half to \$1.25 million! If we continue to make monthly payments of \$15,408 at the current 3.875% interest rate, Salem will pay off our mortgage in 2028!

With uncertainty caused by the pandemic, our Church Council has decided to conduct a one-year extension of this appeal, rather than doing another three-year effort. It was the feeling of many that members may find it difficult to pledge over an extended period and we do not have a grasp on when the pandemic will end. All households will receive their pledge packets in the mail in October and one-year commitments will begin in December 2020. Please look for more information in various communication vehicles and plan to attend the virtual informational gathering on **Sunday, September 13**.

On behalf of the Capital Appeal Team, we thank you for your continued support and interest in our Stepping Forward in Faith Campaign!

No Fall Gathering this Year

August 25, 2020

Dear Sisters in Christ,

These are very interesting times. We are being challenged to stay alert and ready for what is in store for us each day. The Synod Board met and has agreed "that it is not wise to hold our Fall Gatherings this year. It is challenging during these difficult times, since we want to see each other and meet in our groups."

The work of the synod continues even in this time of no meetings. Because none of us have met since March, the offerings, in most cases, have not been mailed. Please send them to Irene Gearey, our conference treasurer,

at PO Box 23, Pine River, MN 56474. If your unit set aside offering intended for the convention or gatherings, please send them to Diane Anderson, our synod treasurer, at 2604 8th Street SW, Backus, MN 56435. The synod thanks you!

What needs to happen with the quilts and kits for Lutheran World Relief? If you can deliver them to the warehouse at 398 Richmond Street E in St. Paul, they are open from 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. If you need help unloading call 651-457-9009 before you arrive. From the synod: “Possibly several churches in your area could go together. For those who have already collected Foster Care Kits you can connect with local Social Workers or local schools or homeless shelters to see if there is something they might need. Otherwise please save the bags for our Convention in June 2021.”

From Vicki Kopplin “Thank you for all you do. These are difficult times. We have hope that God will make a way. We live in a beautiful part of God’s world. Hopefully you have been able to enjoy summer in Minnesota.”

We are hopeful that we will be able to celebrate being together at our Spring Gathering at Our Savior’s in Pequot Lakes. Won’t that me wonderful to actually worship and talk with each other? I look forward to that possibility.

Let us pray for each other and encourage one another. The love available to us is truly an amazing gift given freely to each of us to pass along. Each new day is a clean slate. Feel the freedom in that.

Blessings to you today,
Jeannine Bruesewitz
Conference Coordinator
320-630-4785
djbruesew@gmail.com

SALEM STAFF

Pastor	Mike Briggs	pastor@salemdwd.org
Administrative Assistant	Dawn Huffman	office@salemdwd.org
Financial Manager	Ruth Blum	finance@salemdwd.org
Facilities Coordinator	Glen Helm	facilities@salemdwd.org
Choir Director		
Salem Ringers Director	Kevin Edstrom	
Praise Team Director	Becky Klingelhofer, Noreen Steinbrecher	
Organist/Pianist	Becky Klingelhofer	
Director of Outreach	Don Hales	outreach@salemdwd.org
Salem WEST Manager	Dee Dee Frahm	west@salemdwd.org
Mustard Seed Manager	Jacob Walker	mustardseed@salemdwd.org
Mustard Seed Asst Manager	Bev Kunz	

COUNCIL MEMBERS

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Jeff Mitchell, VP	651-260-8140
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Peggy Blistain	218-851-1208
Joel Huntley	218-546-9774
Jena Reed	218-670-0499
Paul Tesdahl	218-546-5036