

SALEM CONNECTION

APRIL 2022



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I'm a fan of a good mystery novel or a tv show or movie with a who-done-it plot twist. There's something about figuring out the ending or catching a key revealing component that is so satisfying to me. I'll look over at Jason and proudly declare my discovery, "Ooo! I think they're in on it together!" but he'll already be a few steps ahead of me.

A good mystery keeps us guessing, keeps us interested and in-tune with what's happening in the story. Maybe that's why some phrases in our Christian faith exist: the *mystery* of Christ's resurrection, the *mystic union* with all creation, the *mystery* of Holy Communion.

Only problem is, if we think we've solved the mystery, we stop paying attention. The things of faith are not puzzles to solve, they are mysteries to experience, to be attentive to, to keep studying and engaging and pondering throughout our lives. If any of us feel we have "arrived" in our understanding of what it means to follow Jesus, we are most often wrong – or, at least, we don't have the whole picture. What's worse, we've stopped listening, stopped noticing, stopped being attentive to God. There's lots more mystery to dive into!

As we approach Resurrection Sunday and remember Christ's dying and rising anew, I invite you to see Communion through the eyes of children. Get wrapped up in the mystery and wonder of God's love and care for us. Here are some profound lessons I've learned from them:

1. **Run down the aisle.** Who wouldn't want to get to God's gifts as fast as you can? Shouldn't we all be running to feast with Christ?
2. **Stretch, reach, and grab at the bread.** If God promises forgiveness and life and salvation, who wouldn't want to get their hands on it?!
3. **Take communion with a toy.** It's totally acceptable, as long as the toy is served communion as well. Kids understand that everyone is welcome at God's table. Human and teddy bear alike.
4. **Ask for a "big piece."** (we broke bread at Lord of Life) Why settle for just a little bit of Christ? Don't we all want a "big piece" of his presence?
5. **Drink every drop.** It is critical that every drop of grape juice and crumb of bread is consumed at communion. Who cares if people are waiting, you do not leave that table until you take every last moment you can with Christ. Slurping is just part of it.

6. **Seek out the leftovers.** The Bread and Cup of Life are too good to feed to the birds or pour out on the ground. So ask to eat all the bread and drink all the juice after worship. It's like seconds! (See 4 and 5)
7. **Being shy is okay.** Kids understand that it's an honor to receive God's gifts, and it's a treat to be at the table. Being shy is to kids, as being humble is to adults. Humility at the table of God? Can't argue with that!
8. **Laugh.** A meal shared with loved ones? It's a party! Sharing this meal is a joyful event! Our sins are forgiven, and Christ gives us life! Hurray!
9. **Express thanks.** That's what "Eucharist" means. One thumbs-up at the meal is acceptable, but two thumbs-up is an awesome way to say thanks.
10. **Save some for later.** Putting bread into your pocket seems like a perfectly reasonable way to take Christ into the world.

The beauty of Communion is that none of us fully understand the mystery of grace offered there. We cannot fathom the depth of love that sends Christ to the cross for our sake. All we can do is approach with child-like faith, knowing that God's promises are true and God's love, endless.

God fill you with his grace, and send you out in his love!

~Pastor Amanda



First Communion Classes for All Curious Children!

Salem will be offering a Communion class after worship on Sundays, April 3 and 10 in preparation for First Communion on Maundy Thursday, April 14 at 7:00pm. Please attend both of these classes, as they build on each other. Class will be from 10:20-11:15 and start in the large classroom.

Parents are invited to bring any children who are asking questions about Communion, regardless of their age. Luther wrote in the Small Catechism, "a person is well prepared and worthy who believes these words, 'given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins'... the words 'for you' require simply a believing heart." A child who reaches out their hand knows this meal, and God's love, is for them. Much worse, the child that reaches out and doesn't receive bread and juice only knows they are missing out.

Pastor Amanda will lead these classes. In the future, we will host age-appropriate classes for parents and children as they develop in their faith. If you have any questions, please give her a call: 218-381-2105. Let her know if your children are attending!

Sunday School Experiment

Faith Formation will be experimenting with a shift in our Sunday school practice from April 27-May 15. Instead of children leaving at the beginning of worship, we want them to participate in more of



worship, to hear special music and the Scriptures being read, to sing and pray with the community. The children's message will immediately follow the reading of the Gospel, followed by the sermon. Sunday school will begin right after children receive Communion, giving their parents a few kid-free minutes for fellowship and our teachers more

time to engage them in the lesson that day.

You can help our experiment by welcoming their wiggles as opportunities to practice grace. Help our little ones know they belong in God's house the whole time they are here! When the experiment is done, we'd love to know your experience – it will help us make decisions about the fall.

A Gift for Guests

Salem offers welcome bags for those who worship with us for the first time. We include small gifts, treats, maple syrup, the current Connections and devotion books, and an explanation of how we worship. If you see a new face in worship, make a connection by handing them a gift bag and striking up a conversation!

Great introductions always start with giving someone your name:

- Hi, my name is _____. I've been attending Salem for __ (months/years), but I still haven't met everyone. Is this your first time here? (Ask their name!)

Then, try one of these:

- What brought you to Salem today?
- Do you know anyone who worships here?
- Did anything good happen to you this week?
- Have you met ____? (including others helps a conversation get going)
- What do you do for fun? (or ask about their work, or kids, or their hopes for retirement)

Invite them to join you for fellowship, then lead the way and sit together. Remember their name by repeating it a few times in the conversation, introduce them to others, and don't be afraid to say, "We just met, please remind me of your name." And remember, using nametags helps everyone!

MENTORS ARE WORSHIPPING WITH CONFIRMATION STUDENTS DURING LENT. After worship they spend time reflecting on the worship service together, planning any other activities they may want to pursue, and getting to know each other better. Please keep Salem's confirmation students and their mentors in your prayers as they journey together in faith.

TURNING TOWARD'S GOD'S ABUNDANCE is our theme for midweek Lenten worship this year. Lent is a season of repentance, turning to God and asking for God's goodness to wipe away our sins and show us how to live anew. Lent also turns us toward Easter and the abundant life our Lord offers through his cross and resurrection. Each Wednesday we'll sing Holden Evening Prayer and reflect on one of five divine attributes taken from the Sunday Gospel readings during Lent: Compassion (Luke 13:1-9), Love (John 12:1-8), Faithfulness (Luke 4:1-13), Forgiveness (Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32) and Mercy (Luke 13:31-35).

LENT MIDWEEK SCHEDULE: Evening worship is at Salem every Wed. in Lent at 7 p.m. A free will offering supper is served each Wed. from 5:30-6:30, until April 6. Proceeds will go to Salem's youth program. Aitkin area pastors are reflecting on the theme "Turning Toward God's Abundance." Worship offerings are being divided between the Cuyuna Range Food Shelf and Midwives for Haiti.

Wed. Mar. 30	5:30-6:30 7:00 pm	Supper Worship Holden Evening Prayer "Forgiveness," Pr. Amanda
Wed. April 6	5:30-6:30 7:00 pm	Supper Worship Holden Evening Prayer "Mercy," Pr. Reggie Denton, 1 st - Aitkin



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Sun. April 10	9:00 am	Palm Sunday Worship Procession with palms
Thurs. April 14	7:00 pm	Maundy Thursday Worship 1st Communion
Friday April 15	7:00 pm	Good Friday Worship Tenebrae Service
Sun. April 17	8:15 am 9:30 am	Easter Worship with Communion Easter Worship with Communion

THE KOFFEE KLATCH is at Heartwood on the 3rd Friday of the month at 1pm. All are invited to come join the Bible study and the conversation. The next gathering will be Friday April 15th at 1:00 pm.

CONFIRMATION CLASSES RESUME on Wednesday April 20 at 6:30 p.m. The confirmation End-of-Year Picnic will be on May 4th.

THE NE-MN SYNOD ASSEMBLY is April 29-May 1 at Cragun's. Salem's voting delegates are Tim & Kim Coughlin, Pr. Mike and Pr. Amanda. Myron & Shirley Midthun will attend as visitors. Please keep Salem's delegates and the entire NE-MN Synod in your prayers as they meet and make ministry decisions for the coming year.

Spring Cleanup

Saturday, April 30, 8:00 am. (morning only)

Come, make Salem beautiful.

There will be coffee and treats!

Jobs that we will be doing: Murphy oiling pews,
cleanup of sand on parking lot and sidewalks,
placing new mulch around perimeter of church,
raking lawns and hauling away winter debris.

As we always say – Many hands make less work!

Hope to see you there!

SAVE THE DATE: Graduate Recognition Sunday is May 15th.



SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP in APRIL

Being there are TWO Worship times on Easter (Apr 17), we will be in need of a reader and communion servers and ushers for both services.

READERS

April 3 Nancy Meyer

April 10 Glenn Suess

April 17 Nancy Meyer

April 24 Jim Rude

USHERS

Ed & Sherri Godfrey

Mark Boike, Randy Holmwig, Herb & Barb Schoon

Clark & Joyce Marshall, Becki Zender

Nory & Peggy Hunze, Chuck Lubowitz, Karla Peterson



April

- 1 Laura Newton
- 3 Nancy Reek, Mike Shermock
- 5 Sam Coughlin, Easton DeCent,
Carrie Johnson, Paul Magnuson,
Nate Novak
- 6 Sandy Archibald, Paul Hein
- 8 Carol Bobich, John Christenson,
Beth Lavan
- 10 Joan Haglund, Stan Kangas, Bev
Kunz
- 11 Clark Marshall, Connor Zender
- 12 Warren Balfany
- 13 Elsa Ray
- 14 Jami Bodle, Shelly Skeim
- 15 Jena Reed
- 16 Tina Royer
- 17 Jane Stromberg
- 19 Heidi Mitchell
- 20 Abigail Chileen
- 21 Colin Barnett, Greg Meyer
- 25 Roger Prill
- 29 John Davies
- 30 Randy Briggs

Happy Anniversary in April to:

- 5 John & Nancy Pelant (1996)
- 18 Nathan & Jayme VanRisseghem
(1998)
- 25 Rob & Kris Schmidt (1995)
- 26 John & Raye Cragun (1986)



SHARING BREAD SOUP KITCHEN

Salem continues to provide a meal at the Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen in Brainerd on the second Tuesday of each month. Thanks to those who have volunteered! In April we have the Hicks and the Shermocks helping the Maleks. In May, Myrna Nelson, Elsa Ray and the awesome Knief gang have volunteered. If you would like to help with this worthwhile ministry, please give me a call or text. Thanks again.

Carol Malek
218-820-3329

ATTENTION THRIVENT MEMBERS!

Your Thrivent Choice Dollars are available to you to designate until March 31st. Just call Thrivent Financial at 800-847-4836 and say "Choice Dollars." Or visit Thrivent.com. to assign available funds. You may choose to designate those funds to Salem. Thank you!



Robert Cooper would like to say a special thank you to all those who sent lovely cards, telephone calls, and those who helped us with grocery shopping, lighting the pilot light on our fireplace, and daily mail delivery. We're hanging in there with the goal of getting back to church.

The mortgage for Salem Lutheran Church has gone below a million dollars! The original loan was for 2.4 million. It is now \$997,169.36. The Capital Appeal Team would like to thank everyone who has contributed to paying off the loan to get us to this point. Thanks be to God!

LIBRARY NEWS

There are still books and DVDs about Lent and Easter on display for checkout on the desk and children's table in the Salem Library.

After Easter, there will be books about recycling, landscaping, gardening, and living simply for Earth Day – Friday, April 22, 2022. This year's theme is: **Invest in Our Planet.**

1. Consider joining the Great Global Clean-up by picking up trash
2. Identify and brainstorm ideas to reduce plastic consumption
3. Use reusable bags, containers, and water bottles
4. Try plant-based recipes
5. Begin composting food waster
6. Add plants to your yard that attract bees and butterflies (important pollinators)
7. Donate clothes and household items instead of throwing them away

Check out earthday.org for more ideas.

Movie Night

Salem does a movie night on the 3rd Tuesday of every month. The theater we go to is the Lakes 12 in Baxter. We can't see what movies are available until the Wednesday before the movie, so the time and the name of the movie is announced in church the Sunday before. The cost for the movie is \$5.00 and we usually eat dinner at 612 Station on Front Street in Brainerd after the movie, and they have \$5.00 burger night on Tuesday. Everyone pays for their own movie and dinner. It's a fun evening with choice and time sent right to you, please email Diane Meyer: diane.meyer1984@gmail.com.

Save the Date for Vacation Bible School 2022!!!

July 18-22nd, 9:00am-noon

We are excited to be planning another wonderful week of faith and fun for this upcoming summer! Sign up your kids, grandkids, neighbors-- help us spread the word! We will begin recruiting volunteers to help with VBS soon, and we'd love to hear from YOU. Whether you can help for one day or one week, all are welcome. Contact Marlene, Whitney, or Pastor Amanda to sign up to volunteer. Registration sheets will be available in the kiosk, the church office, and on the website. Stay tuned, we will be announcing this year's theme in the May Connection!

VLM Early Bird registrations for camp ends April 1st!

Of course you may register after April 1st for camp at the non-discounted prices

Camp Sunday 2022

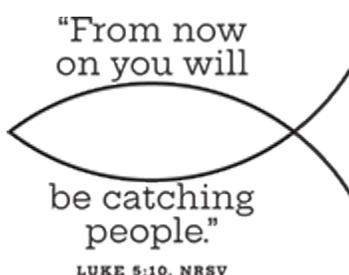
THANK YOU to all who participated in Camp Sunday on March 13th!! It was a joy to host Joel Abenth and Trisha Peterson from Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry and hear about what's happening at Camp Hiawatha and Camp Vermilion--oh and learn a camp song too!

Together we raised \$380.00 to support VLM's outdoor ministry!! Extra thanks to Kathi and Sherri for always doing such a fabulous job with brunch, and for those who jumped in on Sunday to help. If you missed out on the Camp fun, be sure to go back and watch the service on Facebook. You just might get to see some of us try to do-si-do! :) Thanks for helping us support such a life-changing ministry.

Whitney Fischer & Devan Bartels, VLM delegates

MEN'S RETREAT UPDATE

Conniver, Master of slight-of-hand, Seamy reputation of getting what he wanted by hook or crook— or both. Those are just a few of the terms used to describe this man of the bible. In keeping with our theme of studying important men of the bible, we will be delving into the life of the above-described



man when we gather at beautiful Kec's Kove on Kabetogama Lake. All men and their friend are welcome to find our more about this character in July at Kab. I am reminded of Paul Harvey's message at the end of his montage "Now you know the rest of the story." Join us as we find out the 'rest of the story' and more about this "Important Man of the Bible." Registration forms are available in the kiosk in the narthex or online at Salem's website.

Salem Outreach Governing Board Meeting February 15.2022

Present were Pastor Mike, Paul Tesdahl, Jason Kempthorne, Mark Carlson, Chuck Lubowitz, Jacob Walker, Sandy Kretlow, Jadell, Pastor Amanda. Teppi Bundy absent.

MSC: Motion, Seconded, Carried

Pastor Amanda opened with prayer

Minutes from January's minutes was approved. MSC.

Financials:

We looked over the financials for January 2022. We need to raise money to increase monies for our budget. We need to advertise more so we have more traffic at the store. Waiting to hear from council on what dollars we will receive from Summerfest and PPE Grant. MSC

Fair Trade will be limited. We won't order much more. A motion was made to move \$3000.00 from line #7150 to #7140. MSC This will be help with advertising.

Facebook will be expanded by sharing to area businesses. We will try to boost advertising for the next two weeks through social media. We will watch to see if it boosts the sales at the store.

Working on a donation link on the website for Outreach.

Grants:

ELCA grant is closed.

United Way remaining balance is \$2470. + \$1250. (4/1/22)

Hallett Trust: \$3940.37 balance

Mille Lacs Energy Grant is for maintenance and gas. \$1663.75 balance this will be used this month on repairs for the trailer expense. Gas will come out of the balance of Hallett trust.

Mustard Seed Report.

Bake sale around Easter time. Specials each week at the store. March food share month. Used our cause of the month for the Cuyuna Food Shelf.

Salem West: Slow time. We did have a whole house pick up this past week.

New Business:

Rummage sale for the end of April at Salem West. We will have monthly sales from April thru September. We will need volunteers for these sales. We will have to have accountability. We will have a register and a total sale at the end of the day.

Sustainability Planning.

We need to increase sales at the store. We need cash donations. Jason & Chuck will present to council about our financial needs for such things as gas money.

Spiritual Connection:

We discussed looking at how we can connect the spiritual needs with our clients and our volunteers.

Old Business:

We have foundation issues at the Mustard Seed and a need for long time care plan at the Mustard Seed. We will continue to monitor it.

Salem West has many issues. Plans to go to the council to find out who is responsible to address the issues at both places.

WE will be needing volunteers to be in charge of Summerfest this year?

Next meeting March 15,2022.

Submitted by Sandy Kretlow, Secretary.

Salem Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes February 27, 2022

MSC = The motion was seconded and carried

The meeting was called to order by President Paul Tesdahl.

Council members present: Paul Tesdahl, Warren Balfany, Renee Voller, Peter MacKay, Pastor Amanda Kempthorne, Pastor Mike Briggs, Al Schiffler, Renee Voller

Council members absent: Tracy Perpich, Don Hales, Jena Reed, Mark Boike

Also present: Jason Kempthorne (Director of Outreach), Chuck Lubowitz (Outreach Governing Board Chair), Ruth Blum (Salem's Financial Manager)

Secretary's Report

- MOTION: to approve the January 27, 2022 Council minutes. MSC.

Treasurer's Report

- Pastor Amanda suggested a bi-monthly report to monitor spending.
- MOTION: to approve the January 2022 financial reports.

PASTORS REPORTS

Pastor Mike

- Discussion of wage increases for music staff. No action taken.
- March 2nd is beginning of Lent. Area pastors will rotate preaching on Wednesdays during Lent.

Pastor Amanda

- Redesigning Salem's website
- Communion instruction will be open to all ages.

OUTREACH REPORT (Jason Kempthorne)

- Paperwork is being completed to close out 4 grants.
- Need an increases in advertising budget.
- Discussion of fund-raising for Outreach

Chuck Lubowitz suggested another giving option to be placed on the website.

- MOTION: Add a third option to Simply Giving on Salem's website. MSC.

There were no committee reports.

Use of masks in Worship was discussed.

- MOTION: to continue requiring masks during worship through March 27, 2022. MSC.
- MOTION: to approve Salem's weather Cancellation Policy. MSC.

Financial Manager, Ruth Blum, addressed the Council regarding storage for financial reports. There would be no extra cost.

- MOTION: to used Cloud-Based storage for storage. MSC.

MOTION: to adjourn the meeting. MSC.

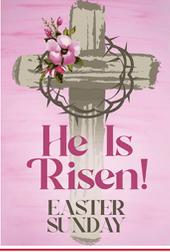
The meeting was closed with prayer.

Submitted by

Al Schiffler *for Jena Reed*

APRIL 2022

Salem Lutheran Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study	2
3 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM Worship/Sunday School 10:30 AM First Communion Class	4 3:00 PM Farewell Team Meeting	5 9:00 AM Piecemakers 2:00 PM Staff Meeting 5:00 PM Worship & Music Committee Mtg	6 6:30 AM Women's Bible Study 5:00 PM Salem Ringers Rehearsal 5:30 PM Supper 7:00 PM Worship	7	8 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study	9 Heartland Conf. Spring Gathering for women, Zion Lutheran, Milaca (All day event)
10 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM Worship/Sunday School 10:30 AM First Communion Class	11	12 9:00 AM Piecemakers 2:00 PM Staff Meeting 6:00 PM Faith Formation Team Mtg	13 6:30 AM Women's Bible Study 5:00 PM Salem Ringers Rehearsal	14 MAUNDY THURSDAY 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Worship/First Communion	15 GOOD FRIDAY 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study 1:00 PM Koffee Klatch at Heartwood 7:00 PM Good Friday Worship	16
17 EASTER 8:15 AM Easter Celebration Worship 9:30 AM Easter Celebration Worship	18 4:00 PM Booth Meeting	19 9:00 AM Piecemakers 1:00 PM Outreach Governing Board Mtg 3:00 PM Executive Team Meeting	20 6:30 AM Women's Bible Study 5:00 PM Salem Ringers Rehearsal 6:30 PM Confirmation	21 9:30 AM Heartland Conference Gathering at Salem 6:00 PM Lions Meeting	22 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study	23 Funeral – Lavonn Reeves, time TBA
24 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM Worship/Sunday School	25	26 9:00 AM Piecemakers 2:00 PM Staff Meeting 2:00 PM Welcome Team Meeting	27 6:30 AM Women's Bible Study 5:00 PM Salem Ringers Rehearsal 6:30 PM Confirmation	28 5:30 PM Council Meeting	29 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study NE MN SYNOD Assembly @ Cragun's Resort	30 <i>Church Reserved for private occasion</i> Synod Assembly continues (concludes on 5/1)



STAFF

Pastor	Michael Briggs	pastor@salemdwd.org
Pastor	Amanda Kempthorne	pastoramanda@salemdwd.org
Office Manager	Deborah Carlson	office@salemdwd.org
Financial Manager	Ruth Blum	finance@salemdwd.org
Praise Team Coordinators	Becky Klingelhofer, Noreen Steinbrecher	
Pianist/Organist	Becky Klingelhofer	
Salem Ringers Director and Choir Director	Kevin Edstrom	
Director of Outreach	Jason Kempthorne	outreach@salemdwd.org
Mustard Seed Manager	Jacob Walker	mustardseed@salemdwd.org
Mustard Seed Asst Manager	Bev Kunz	
Mustard Seed Asst Manager	Debbie Olson	
Salem WEST Manager	Jadell Horner	west@salemdwd.org

COUNCIL

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Don Hales, V.P.	320-267-7770
Peter MacKay	218-851-5601
Tracy Perpich, Treasurer	218-838-7008
Jena Reed, Secretary	218-670-0499
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