



Salem Connection

February 2024

Salem Lutheran Church 21276 Archibald Road PO Box 100 Deerwood MN 56444
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There are a few things that bring joy to every pastor's heart. Always first: when God's Spirit makes a sermon come together. Second: when people find a way to serve that uses their gifts, fills them with joy, and serves others. And third, when people are seeking God's presence in their lives.

I have been so very delighted to be approached by a few women who are hungry to study the Bible. I was ecstatic when one of them added, "I think I could lead it." I heard an angel chorus that very moment – because the fourth thing that brings joy to every pastor's heart is when people take a risk in faith.

It is always a temptation to find our comfort zone and stick with it. When it comes to worship, we sing the songs we know and like, we follow a pattern or routine that is familiar, we sit back and receive what God gives and offer what we usually do. But there is beauty when we try something that pulls us out of our comfort zone for the sake of knowing and trusting God.

1 Peter 2 captures this sentiment in poetic form: "Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation – if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

Knowing God's goodness, we keep returning to the grace and mercy of God. We keep coming back for the pure things of God that feed our hope and faith, but we are not solid, immovable stones. We are growing and changing, alive in our faith. It may not make sense to others, but if we are looking for what feeds our hope, we have to look beyond what the rest of the world offers. What stands out to me is the call: "... let yourselves be built ..." This is an invitation to allow God to build our lives around what matters, not what makes us comfortable.

With Ash Wednesday, we are entering the spiritual season of Lent. On February 14, surrounded by the love of the God who calls us chosen and precious, we are reminded how fleeting this life can be and the hope that awaits us. We are invited to be built into God's spiritual house, to be set aside as God-followers, and to offer our spiritual sacrifices to God. These can be risky things, to let go of comfort and devote ourselves to seeking God, but there is great joy to be found in knowing and trusting that God is good.

Overjoyed to serve with you,
~Pastor Amanda



Faith Formation!

Kids Club February 14th!

Salem's after school program, "Kids Club" is for 3-6 graders and takes place the second Wednesday of each month. On February 14th, we will be spreading the love in honor of it being Valentine's day, by painting rocks with joyful colors and encouraging words!

[Click here to register online!](#)

We are looking for adults to share their hobbies, skills, or crafts with these upper-elementary age children in January through May. Consider sharing your knowledge of these hobbies and interests with the youth of our congregation and community. If interested in sharing your passion with these aspiring little minds please contact the Church office and we will get you the information needed to help and participate!



Sunday School is in full swing!

Sunday School materials will be emailed at the end of each week for families who may not be able to attend on Sunday morning. Sunday school gathers at the conclusion of worship which not only helps children experience all of worship (they absorb more than you know!) but to also give their parents some precious time to connect with other adults.

Sunday School Schedule

Each Sunday at 9:50a.m.



Children Belong in Worship

One of the items noted in the December surveys was the joyful presence of younger children in worship. As it says in every pew: "The presence of every generation is a gift to the church." Also on that laminated welcome card, Salem encourages families to sit toward the front so children are able to see what's happening in worship, to fully participate, and to be fully "at home in this house of worship."

Because we believe "children learn about worship by copying you and others", the Faith Formation Team decided to have children experience the full service of worship and attend Sunday school at the end of worship. Not only does this let children worship, but allows parents to have some time to build friendships during fellowship. As we all noted in worship on December 17, Salem's children have deep faith, growing understanding, and great respect for this worshipping community. They love being here!

We know this can be a BIG challenge for parents, who have the tremendous pressure of balancing the "wiggle" and respect for the worshipping community. We know this can be a challenge for those who are distracted by the additional movement and noise. But we also know that everyone belongs in God's house. So let us continue the work of genuine welcome, and remember to be gracious to one another in this community that is centered on Christ.

Worship Notes at Salem

Thank you to those serving in February:

READERS

- 4** Ken Stebbins
- 11** Glenn Suess
- 18** Jim Rude
- 25** Ken Stebbins

USHERS

- 4** Ed & Sherri Godfrey, Curt and Sylvia Hoge
- 11** Randy Holmwig, Herb & Barb Schoon, Mark Boike
- 18** Roger & Marlene Prill, Clark and Joyce Marshall
- 25** Nory and Peggy Hunze, Chuck Lubowitz, Karla Peterson

COMMUNION SERVERS

- 4** Katie McCormick, Renee and Josh Voller
- 11** Paul and Kristy Tesdahl, Glenn Suess
- 18** Tyanne Barrett, and Craig Rezac
- 25** Jack, Gwendolyn, and Delylah Voller

OFFERING COUNTERS

Tim Herberg and Diane Hein

Meals on Wheels takes place on Thursdays

CRMC Worship takes place on Sundays at 1:30p.m.

These events take place each Sunday and Thursday each week of the 12 months of the year, listed below are the times Salem is hosting.

Month	CRMC Worship	Meals on Wheels
February	Sunday 2/11	Thursday 2/15
March/April	Sunday 3/31	Thursday 4/4
May	Sunday 5/19	Thursday 5/23

February Worship Schedule

- 4** 8:00a.m. Choir Practice
8:30a.m. Praise Team Practice
9:00a.m. Worship-Epiphany
- 11** 8:00a.m. Choir Practice
8:30a.m. Praise Team Practice
9:00a.m. Worship
- 18** 8:00a.m. Choir Practice
8:30a.m. Praise Team Practice
9:00a.m. Worship
- 25** 8:00a.m. Choir Practice
8:30a.m. Praise Team Practice
9:00a.m. Worship

Music Schedule:

Choir sings on 2nd and 4th Sundays
practice Sundays at 8:00a.m.

Handbells play on 3rd Sundays
practice Wednesdays at 5p.m.

Heartwood Bible Study

The monthly Bible study at Heartwood will take place on February 12th at 1:00p.m.

These studies include Communion, so invite others along!



Faith and Coffee?

Sunday morning fellowship is a perfect time to talk through what God brought to your attention in worship. Grab a cup, a treat, and finish this sentence, "Today I noticed..."



Ash Wednesday is February 14th! Look at the next page for the Wednesday evening Lent Worship Schedule!

Lent 2024: The Faithful Promises of God

At its heart, the season of Lent is about returning to God and finding that God is faithful. This year in the lectionary (the cycle of Scriptures we read on Sundays), we get to hear the faithful promises of the loving God through the Hebrew Bible (our Old Testament). On Wednesday evenings, ELCA pastors from around the Aitkin area will focus us on the promises that God makes to folks like Noah, Abram and Sarai, to the people newly freed from Egypt, the covenant of the 10 Commandments, and the covenant to put new hearts within us.

Ushers needed for Wednesday evening services:

USHERS

February 14 _____, _____, _____
February 21 _____, _____, _____
February 28 _____, _____, _____
March 6 _____, _____, _____
March 13 _____, _____, _____
March 20 _____, _____, _____

Sign Up Sheets for Ushering these Wednesday services available on the kiosk in the Narthex, or contact the church office to let them know you would be willing to help serve those evenings!

Join us Wednesdays at 5:15pm for a meal and 6:30pm for worship with Holden Evening Prayer and the Faithful Promises of God.

If you would like to prepare a meal, bring bread or dessert for 30-40 people, please sign up on the kiosk in the entry.

Lent 2024 Worship Schedule

Date	Preacher	Promise
February 14	Pastor Amanda	Ash Wednesday (no meal)
February 21	Pastor Amanda	The 10 Commandments
February 28	Pastor James Muske Bethesda, Malmo	The Bronze Serpent Lifted Up
March 6	Pastor Reggie Denton First Lutheran, Aitkin	The End of the Flood
March 13	Pastor Rebecca Hinz Bethlehem, Aitkin	The Renaming of Abram and Sarai
March 20	Pastor Steven Teff Bethel, Palisade	A New Heart

Faith and Fellowship

Women's Bible Study

Starting Wednesday, February 7th at 3:00p.m.

Continuing each Wednesday following at 3:00p.m.

After a successful first meeting, there has officially been a start date given to the new women's Bible Study.

During the initial "meeting of the minds" it was decided that this group would focus on studying the book titled, "When Women Pray."

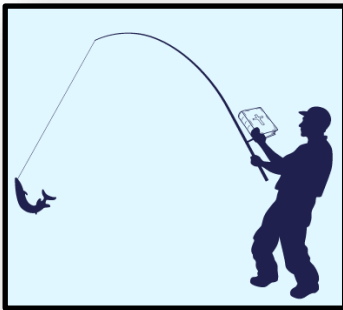
They will be meeting in the large classroom down the education wing. Any and all women are welcome and encouraged to join!



Men's Retreat Registration Now Open

This years men's retreat is taking place July 8th through July 11th! Registration is now open and ends March 1st, 2024.

If you are interested in registering or learning more there are paper copies in the kiosk in the Narthex as well as on our website!



[Click here to register online!](#)

Council Members

Meet your new Church Council Members as well as the new Outreach Governing Board Members

Council Members

Mark Boike	President	Mailbox #56
Lynn Hansen	Vice President	Mailbox #78
Sherri Godfrey	Treasurer	Mailbox #92
Tina Royer	Secretary	Mailbox #135
Don Hales		Mailbox #211
Peter MacKay		Mailbox #136
Nathan VanRisseghem		Mailbox #282
Sylvia Hoge		Mailbox #57
Julie Fritz		Mailbox #297
Pastor Amanda Kempthorne		
Jason Kempthorne		

OGB Members

Randy Sykes	President	Mailbox #111
Cathy Aykens	Financial	Mailbox #95
Kay Bendorf		Mailbox #16
Diane Boike		Mailbox #56
Linda Sudman		Mailbox #33
Pastor Amanda Kempthorne		
Jason Kempthorne		
Sherri Godfrey	Council Rep.	

Special Celebrations in February



1	Ethan Kunz	16	Paul Erickson
3	Kay Bendorf	19	Kyle Bartels
	Brent Fields	21	Jerry Sanderson
4	Larry Holst	22	Hunter Brix
5	Jasmine Siliznoff		Claire Pelant
	Linda Stebbins		Lavonn Reeves
8	Curt Bordwell	25	Mark Houghton
	Ernie Erickson	26	Doris Carlson
10	Cal Midthun		Wayne Kohnen
	Grace Reininger		Lee Midthun
11	Kerri Sanderson	28	Hunter Johnson
12	Nancy Meyer		Jayne Vanrisseghem
13	Joey Stromberg		
14	Nory Hunze		
	Jan Rude		



1	Sue and Rick Johnson
11	Kyle and Devan Bartels
22	Joel and Mary Huntley
26	Jon and Shirley Ross
28	Mike and Jami Bodle

Save the Date!

◇ **14** Ash Wednesday
Kids Club 3:15-5:00p.m.



Caring for One Another

Thank you dear Salem Friends for your prayers, cards, phone calls, visits, meals and rides during my recovery from my broken leg. God is good!

- Kay Bendorf

Thank you to those who helped prepare envelopes for tax purposes during this busy financial season!

-Aimee Watson, Financial Manager at Salem Lutheran

Piecemakers

Do you need something to do on Tuesday mornings?? Come join a great group of women in making quilts!!! Sewing is NOT a requirement!!!

It takes all kinds of talents to make a quilt.

--If you can cut out fabric, that's great!

--If you can match colors to lay out a quilt, that's great!

--If you can sew a quilt top, that's great!

--If you can tie a knot to tie the layers together, that's great!

--No experience is necessary!

For more information, see Jena Reed.

Offering

Offerings Report for Financials

Information from the Church Office

\$702.13 to World Hunger for all 2023

\$372 to Cuyuna Range Food Shelf
from Thanksgiving Offering

Thank you for the continuous
generosity shown through offering here
at Salem Lutheran!

Salem Outreach Governing Board December 19, 2023

Present were Pastor Amanda, Jason Kempthorne, Cathy Aykens, Randy Sykes, Linda Sudman. Absent Kay Bendorf and Diane Boike.

MSC: Motion, Seconded, Carried

Opened with prayer by Pastor Amanda.

Secretary's Report was emailed to board members. MSC

Jason to ask Council and work with Aimee to release Summer Fest Funds to Outreach MSC

Motion to move \$15840 from Line 1330 to 2825 using line 7700 MSC.

Financial Report was approved. MSC

Jason: Facebook advertising for Taste of Christmas reached 27,000 screens. The advertising budget was spent on Facebook rather than C-I Courier. Managers meeting are on Thursday's and morning sales team huddles are helping with communication issues. Feedback has been good from volunteers. Crow Wing County Ministry Christmas party was Dec 13. Four members joined Lutheran Church of the Cross Nisswa. SLC purchased 45 pizzas, served 65 inmates and additional staff, gave 100 cards and gift cards to inmates to distribute to their children. Sang lots of songs and spread Christmas cheer.

Mustard Seed: Sales have already exceeded the \$300,000.00 budget. Taste of Christmas sales are worked very well. Jason and Jake will present after action report with suggestions for 2024. At this time most things are going well.

Salem West Impact Report: We had 68 referrals, filled 43 orders in November. Total of 1,057 individuals have been helped. In addition to \$300,000 going back into the community with the Mustard Seed sales, \$754,592 for the year of goods given to clients.

New Business: Summer store hours were discussed. The MS will open Tuesday – Saturday starting May 7th – end of September. MSC

Clothing team needs help. Part Time Staff member will be joining them in January for 3 days per week 24 hours.

Discussion on Summer Mission Trip. Looking for something closer and short term. Members will be reviewing some options before we advertise. Additionally talked about GWOH event in the fall.

Awaiting Pastor to schedule MN teen Challenge. We discussed need to volunteers for the Pancake Feed when scheduled.

Volunteer appreciation will be in the spring.

Next meeting will be January 16 at 1 pm.

Closed with prayer. Submitted Jason Kempthorne

Salem Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes

December 28, 2023, 6:30 pm

We exist with God's help, to provide leadership for the Salem Lutheran Church Congregation.

MSC=The motion was seconded and carried.

Call to Order

Members present: Pastor Amanda Kempthorne, Mark Boike, Lynn Hansen, Jason Kempthorne, Sherri Godfrey, Sylvia Hoge, Nathan VanRisseghem, Tina Royer, Don Hales

Members absent: Peter MacKay, Julie Fritz

Opening Devotion and Prayer by Pastor Amanda

SOS Announcement

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve minutes of November 2023, Council meeting as corrected. MSC

Treasurer's Report: Motion to approve November 2023 Treasurer's Report. MSC.

Pastor's Report: Present and future actions and responsibilities.

Christmas Eve worship- 9am, 45 attd. 3pm, 145 attd. 5pm, 112 attd.

Epiphany Celebration- January 7 activities and home blessing

Annual Report- Committees need to submit reports

Lent planning- Ash Wednesday is February 14

Vacation- January 29-February 1. Guest preacher will conduct service.

Pastoral Acts At-A-Glance: 1 baptism, 0 weddings, 1 funeral, 17 pastoral visits.

Outreach Report:

Salem West has assisted over 500 referrals from various social service agencies, serving 1057 individuals (431 families), and totaling at least 15,000 volunteer hours. The Outreach Impact Report is posted on a bulletin board by the Social Hall. If Salem West volunteer hours and donations were paid ministries, calculations would put them at \$754,592.00.

Dressers were recently purchased.

Summer store hours will commence in May, with Saturday hours in consideration.

Old Business

Review Membership

Completed in November

Parent's Night Out

12.16 review- 11 children. 6 members, 5 community

Next date? This is an event that congregation members can participate in, so we will put the word out.

Summerfest Funds Distribution

\$9,590.64 to church budget, remainder to Outreach. MSC

(Continued on the next page)

Summerfest

Deerwood City Council has canceled it for 2024. Discussion on this will be held at January 6 retreat. Results of discussion will be put in Monthly Connections to inform congregation.

Audit

Still to be completed and must be done! Internal audit first? No. Hire firm for late summer, early fall. Have Aimee make calls to see who's willing/available and procure bids. Mark will work with her on this important issue.

New Business:

Approval of Employee Policies. MSC

Appropriate policy will be shared with every Salem employee.

Preparation for January 6th Council Retreat

Saturday, January 6 from 9am to 2pm. Soups provided. Members bring sides and desserts.

Pastor Amanda distributed a Questions for Reflection form to all to examine personal expectations as a council member. Discussion will follow at retreat.

Majority of time will be spent on examining and defining Salem's Strengths, Opportunities, Barriers, especially in light of the 35 surveys returned by the congregation.

Discussion: Old blue van that OGB will sell

2012 Dodge Van. What to do with it? Decided to sell/trade-in on a new vehicle.

Approval & Acceptance of the dissolved Trust to be deposited into Trust at Initiative Foundation

The Schwanke Trust has been dissolved, with approximately \$400,000.00 in it. A current trustee is looking into investing it in the Initiative Foundation. Salem can then use the interest accrued towards church needs. MSC: The Schwanke Trust to be given to the Salem congregation will, in turn, put those funds in the Initiative Foundation. Interest accrued will be used towards church needs.

The Annual Planning Calendar, 2024 was distributed.

Committee Reports:

Capital Appeal – Lynn Hansen. Meeting on January 23, 2024. Will determine monthly mortgage payments for 2024.

Columbarium – Don Hales. NR

Facilities – Nate VanRisseghem. Meetings after service on Sundays. Concern as to when a water softener will be installed.

Faith Formation – Sylvia Hoge. Met December 5th. Renee V. will handle the bulletin board. January 7-May ? is Sunday School. Looking for VBS ideas. Kid's Klub begins January 10, 2024. Next meeting- January 2.

Memorial – Peter MacKay. Currently reviewing by-laws.

Stewardship – Lynn Hansen. Met on December 14. Updating Time & Talent forms. Looking for ways to offer a visual of how members give beyond their money and keeping the congregation informed. Pledge updates will be shared in the bulletin.

Technology – Julie Fritz. NR

(Continued on next page)

Welcome – Tina Royer. Next meeting is January 31st at 2pm.

Worship and Music – Julie Fritz. Planning January 7th Epiphany celebration-Story of the Magi. A party is planned for after the service; to include star cookies!

Outreach – Sherri Godfrey/Jason Kempthorne.

2024 Goals: 1). Replace Suburban & Trailers, 2). Expand space vs reconfigure current space, 3). Hire staff. Clothing volunteers are aging out, and unable to keep up with the demands of quick product turnover. This is now a \$100,000.00 business. 4). Replace front and side doors.

SOS – Request made that during winter months members refrain from shaking hands during Sharing God's Peace. Announcement will be put in bulletin.

Announcements: Council Retreat January 6th. 9am-2pm.

Council meeting- January 25 at 6:30pm.

Executive Board meeting- January 16 at 3:00pm.

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:25pm. MSC

Close in the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Royer

SALEM'S STAFF

Pastor	Amanda Kempthorne	pastoramanda@salemwd.org
Office Manager	Grace Reininger	office@salemwd.org
Financial Manager	Aimee Watson	finance@salemwd.org
Praise Team Coordinators	Becky Klingelhofer and Noreen Steinbrecher	
Pianist/Organist	Becky Klingelhofer	
Salem Ringers & Choir Director	Kevin Edstrom	kevin7903@hotmail.com
Building & Grounds	Dan Quinn	facilities@salemwd.org
Cleaning Team	4 & 47 Cleaners, Aitkin	
Director of Outreach	Jason Kempthorne	outreach@salemwd.org
Mustard Seed Manager	Jacob Walker	mustardseed@salemwd.org
Seed and Donation Manager	Holly Willert	west@salemwd.org
Mustard Seed Team Lead	Debbie Olson	



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 8:30am Praise Singers Rehearsal 9:00am Worship	29 11:00am Staff Meeting	30 9:00am Piecemakers	31	1	2 8:00am Men's Bible Study	3
4 8:30am Praise Singers Rehearsal 9:00am Worship	5 11:00am Staff Meeting	6 9:00am Piecemakers 5:00pm Worship and Music Meeting 6:00pm Faith Formation	7 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 5:00pm Salem Ringers	8	9 8:00am Men's Bible Study	10 2:30pm Drum Group Practice
11 Transfiguration Sunday 8:30am Praise Singers Rehearsal 9:00am Worship	12 11:00am Staff Meeting 1:00pm Koffee Klatch at Heartwood	13 9:00am Piecemakers 3:00pm Executive Team Meeting	14 Ash Wednesday 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 3:25pm Kids Club 5:00pm Salem Ringers	15 6:00pm Cuyuna Range Lions Meeting	16 8:00am Men's Bible Study	17
18 8:30am Praise Singers Rehearsal 9:00am Worship	19 11:00am Catholic Charities Meal Distribution 11:00am Staff Meeting	20 9:00am Piecemakers 1:00pm Outreach Governing Board Meeting	21 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 5:00pm Salem Ringers	22 6:30pm Council Meeting	23 8:00am Men's Bible Study	24
25 8:30am Praise Singers Rehearsal 9:00am Worship	26 11:00am Staff Meeting	27 9:00am Piecemakers	28 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 5:00pm Salem Ringers	29	1 World Day of Prayer 8:00am Men's Bible Study	2