



Salem Connection

April 2026

Salem Lutheran Church 21276 Archibald Road PO Box 100 Deerwood MN 56444
Phone: 218.534.3309 Email: office@salemwd.org Website: www.salemwd.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/salemlutheranchurchdeerwood



As we walk through Holy Week and into this new season called Easter, we follow Jesus step by step from the table to the cross, into the tomb and back out of it. We live knowing the end of the story – we know that resurrection is coming. Yet, what happens to Christ is not just something we observe, it is a story that has a profound effect on us.

The story of Christ's death and resurrection actually becomes our story of death and resurrection – and not just at the end of our lives.

We read these words from Romans 6:5-7 at every funeral, but this is more about our lives now: "For if we have been united with [Christ] in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin."

In our baptisms, we are joined to the death of Christ through the promises of God. Think about it: we have died. We have dumped off the old sinful nature because sin can't get at a dead person. And we are then raised just like Christ – to a new life with God. God liberates us from the captivity of sin. We have been freed! And we are reminded of that every Sunday as we confess our sins and receive God's forgiveness.

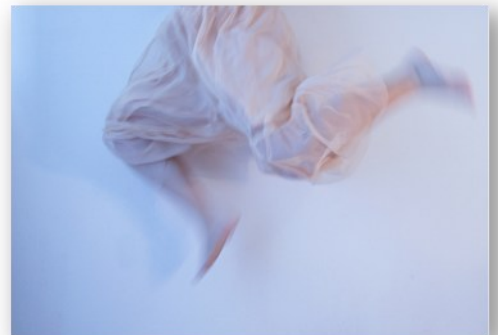
Romans 6:10-11, "The death Christ died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

Christ's death on the cross didn't make us perfect – it made us free. We trade all our failings and shortcomings for the righteousness of Jesus. God frees us from trying to be perfect so we can live fully alive in Christ. Therefore, "sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Romans 6:14), and "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death" (Romans 8:1-2).

You need not carry your sins with you. You need not let your past failings weigh you down – for Christ has died for them, overcome them, and risen again that you and I may have new life. So continue to lay your burden on the cross, be freed, and be alive to God in Christ Jesus! Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen indeed, Alleluia!!!

Alive in (and because of) Christ,
~Pastor Amanda

P.S. If you want more Bible references about our new life in Christ (maybe read these slowly and thoughtfully or journal about them through the next 7 weeks of Easter): Colossians 2:12-13, Colossians 3:1-3, Galatians 2:19-20, Galatians 5:24-25, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:4-6, 1 Peter 2:24



Worship Notes at Salem

Thank you to those serving in April:

READERS

5 8:00a.m. _____

9:30a.m. _____

12 Natalie Gavin

19 Ken Stebbins

26 _____

USHERS

5 8:00a.m. Curt & Sylvia Hoge, Mark Larson,
Brian Sudman

9:30a.m. Curt & Sylvia Hoge, Karla Peterson &
Chuck Lubowitz

12 Randy Holmvgig, Herb & Barb Schoon, Mark Boike

19 Herb & Barb Schoon, Roger & Marlene Prill

26 Nory & Peggy Hunze, Chuck Lubowitz &
Karla Peterson

COMMUNION SERVERS

5 8:00a.m. Doug & Gay Calkins, _____

9:30a.m. Julie Fritz, Shelly Skeim, Craig Henningson

12 _____, _____, _____

19 _____, _____, _____

26 _____, _____, _____

OFFERING COUNTERS

Ann Zillmer & Lori Holmvgig - THANK YOU BOTH!

April Worship Schedule

5 8:00a.m. Easter Sunday Worship

9:30a.m. Easter Sunday Worship

12 9:00a.m. Traditional Worship
Choir

19 9:00a.m. Praise Worship
Handbells

26 9:00a.m. Traditional Worship
Choir

Spring Music Schedule:

Every Wednesday:

Bells practice at 5:30p.m.

Choir at 6:15p.m.

Praise Team at 7:00p.m.

Choir will sing in worship the second and
fourth Sundays of each month.

Bells will ring in worship the third Sunday.

The Pop-Up Choir, also known as the
volunteer choir, sings the first Sunday.

Heartwood Ministries

The monthly Bible study will take place on
Monday, April 12th at 1:00p.m.

Salem Orientation Classes

Salem Lutheran Church

After worship on April 19th & 26th.

Come and get to know some basic Lutheran theology and Salem's ministry specifics.

If you would like to join Salem's membership, we will welcome you in worship on Sunday, May 3rd.

Check the Next Page for the Holy Week Worship Schedule!



Holy Week 2026

Palm Sunday - March 29th
9:00a.m. Worship

Maundy Thursday - April 2nd
6:30p.m. Worship

Good Friday - April 3rd
6:30p.m. Worship

Easter Sunday - April 5th
8:00a.m. & 9:30a.m. Worship

Thank You!

Thank You to all who have helped serve during this season of Lent and Holy Week! Whether you helped in preparing a meal, delivering flowers or bulletins, helped guide a Confirmation Student as a mentor or just attended weekly evening worship. We are so grateful for the continuous support that our congregation and community show through the different seasons of the church!

As we move into the next season here at Salem, we encourage all those who are interested in trying a new ministry to sign-up for something you have not served in yet, or continue a favorite way of participating in worship and ministry here at Salem!

As a reminder, moving into the new season in the Church, things to look forward to are welcoming New Members, Summer Music and Worship and Vacation Bible School!

Faith Formation!

Sunday School Schedule

Each Sunday at 9:50a.m. for about 30 minutes
Open to children age 3-12



Confirmation

Confirmation classes resume April 8th. The next mentor nights are April 15th and May 20th.

Thank you mentors for guiding our students in their faith in this season!

Kids Club

This after school program occurs the second Wednesday of the month from 3:30-5:00p.m. and is a time for members of our congregation to share what they love to do with the youth in our community! Sharing what you love with the younger generation is such an important building block in their lives!

APRIL Kids Club will be another craft and experience event about the Easter story, sharing the good news of God's great love with kids. Grades Pre-K through 6 are Welcome!

April Kids Club

Click Here or Register on our website: www.salemdwd.org

Adult Faith Formation

Women's Bible Study, Wednesdays at 3:00p.m.

"Fruit of the Spirit" is the current study material!

Men's Bible Study, Fridays at 8:00a.m.

Both of these take place every week!

If you are looking to join a Bible Study, there is always room for one more at the table!

Salem Scholarships

Salem Lutheran Church

Scholarships available for graduating seniors or those transitioning from a 2 year to 4 year schooling opportunity. Those pursuing additional education qualify for this scholarship given by the Memorial Committee here at Salem Lutheran.

For more information, scholarship applications and instructions are available in the Kiosk located in the Narthex! We are excited to support the next steps in your future!

2026 Women's Retreat

Salem Lutheran Church

Annual Women's Retreat on Bay Lake Island

September 25th - 27th

Registration and more information will be available soon! We encourage those interested in going to be sure and watch emails and announcements in the spring and summer!



Special Celebrations in April



BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

1	Laura Newton	11	Clark Marshall
3	Nancy Reek	12	Connor Zender
	Mike Shermock	13	Warren Balfany
5	Sam Coughlin	14	Elsa Ray
	Carrie Johnson		Jami Bodle
	Nate Novak		Joan Johnson
6	Sandy Archibald	15	Shelly Skeim
	Paul Hein		Jena Reed
8	Carol Bobich	16	Karen Savick
	John Christenson	19	Tina Royer
	Beth Lavan	21	Heidi Mitchell
9	Linda Shephardson	25	Collin Barnett
10	Joan Haglund	29	Roger Prill
	Bev Kunz		John Davies



5	John & Nancy Pelant
18	Nathan & Jayme VanRisseghem
	Lynn Hansen & Warren Balfany
25	Rob & Kris Schmidt
26	John & Raye Cragun



With the new season upon us, we encourage you to introduce yourself to new individuals in the congregation! Sending a letter of celebration for either a birthday or anniversary is a great way to break the ice (ironic as we are hopeful that spring will officially be upon us soon!) This is your reminder that all members here at Salem have a mailbox at the church, there is a list showing what mailbox belongs to what families and individuals! This is your reminder to check your mailbox, as maybe a note from a new found friend is waiting for you!

Financial Updates

Salem Lutheran Church Profit & Loss February 2026

	100 Church	150 Building	TOTAL
Income			
4000 · Offerings	41,142.94	0.00	41,142.94
4100 · Building Fund	0.00	12,285.81	12,285.81
4900 · Other Income	2,525.86	110.36	2,636.22
Total Income	43,668.80	12,396.17	56,064.97
Expense	29,165.32	8,628.00	37,793.32
Net Income	14,503.48	3,768.17	18,271.65

January Benevolence

Synod ELCA: \$1,425.62
YAGM Support: \$472.50
VLM: \$472.50

Total Feb. Benevolences: \$2,370.62

**Information Provided by Aimee Watson,
Financial Manager at
Salem Lutheran Church**

Thank you for the continuous generosity!

Salem Outreach Governing Board
OGB Preliminary Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2026

Mission Statement: Salem Outreach partners with local agencies to collect and deliver essential goods to families in need.

Present: Pastor Amanda Kempthorne, Jason Kempthorne, Linda Sudman, Kay Bendorf, Julie Fritz

Absent: Dianne Boike, Carol Malek, Nancy Tighe

Guest: Jake Walker

Open with prayer: Pastor Amanda

The group took a few minutes to remember the volunteers who have passed away or who have retired. Good memories with such dedicated volunteers. We are so grateful for their years of service.

Secretary's Report: The February 17 minutes were reviewed. **Kay Bendorf moved to approve. Linda Sudman seconded. MSC**

Financial Report: Kay Bendorf- Again increased expenses for supplies, furniture, and insurance continued from last month. A Question was raised about the dedicated World Hunger offering - a household gives \$50 each month. Technically, it's a pass-through account, but because it's serving the community, the donation has been placed in Outreach until dispersal. Linda Sudman moved to approve. **Kay Bendorf seconded. MSC**

Director of Outreach Report: Jason

- ◆ Grant Report-nothing new
- ◆ Program Report
 - 28 active clients, 18 deliveries scheduled, 15 pick-ups scheduled
 - 39 volunteers last month
 - No new maintenance issues
 - Jake Nelson has given notice. He is moving out of the area. Joe Zontelli, who was working as a volunteer has been hired. 2 new volunteers.

Impact Report

- February had 37 completed client orders. 77 individuals served. 17 repeat households.
- \$54,855 impact dollars.
- 1344 Volunteer hours
- We are out of food from the Outreach program so will need to do a packing event. There is some food left at the church. We will take some of that to West.

Manager Report: Jake Walker

- ◆ February
 - \$44,463 in sales. Very good month
 - Average ticket is 5 pieces and \$16.88. This is up.

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- Roundups were up \$879.44. Doubled from last year at this time
- Average price of a piece is \$3.17.
- ◆ Space issue at West
- The shoe and accessories sorting and pricing space is getting to be too small for all the products. The flower area takes up a full cubby, is much larger, and is not used as much as in the past. Flowers bring in a much smaller amount of money than shoes and accessories. Therefore, the plan is to move the flower area to the mezzanine area after it is cleared out. The old flower area will become the shoe and accessory area. There will be much more room to sort, store and price the shoes and accessories. Thank you to Jean Shermock for her flexibility and graciousness in moving spaces.
- In the mezzanine area, the shelves are not stable and may cause safety issues. The plan will be to take the shelves down and replace them with new shelving. This will be a cost that was not anticipated in the budget but will not be a huge cost.

2026 Goals

- Monthly Announcement at SLC- April 12 or 19 we will announce Deerwood Days plans for the church. We will ask a council representative to announce plans with us.
- Volunteer Recruitment- ongoing
- Separate 501-C3 Organization / Single Name- See old business

New Business

- Deerwood Days 2026
- Ideas for fundraising and bringing the community into the church:
 - ◆ Magician with popcorn and lemonade. \$5 per person- Friday or Saturday night. Inside event.
 - ◆ Pancake Breakfast Saturday morning with basket auction. \$10 per person. Inside event. Jason shared a cost and possible profit sheet
 - ◆ Food Booth Friday and Saturday 9-4pm with Lefse, Meatballs, Gravy, Pop and Water. Outside event. Jason shared a cost and possible profit sheet.
- Thoughts
 - ◆ We don't think we can pull a large group into the church for a magician during Deerwood Days. Perhaps this event could be held at another time during the year to bring the community to the church. Also, it would take up to 200 attendees to cover costs.
 - ◆ Pancake breakfast is a good option for a fundraiser. Sausage will be expensive. Will need many volunteers to hold this event. We would have to ask for donations for basket auction. It will bring people into the church. If not done at Deerwood Days, it could be a fundraiser at another time during the year.
 - ◆ A food booth with meatballs and lefse is what Salem is known for during Deerwood Days. People will be disappointed if we don't have the food booth. It is a good fundraiser. Will need volunteers for two days. Beef is expensive.

Continued on the next page.

- Kay Bendorf moved to have the food booth event for Deerwood Days 2026.

Details:

- 2 large Meat Balls, 3 Lefse, Pop.
- Cash box- no tickets.
- Food trailer use is a possibility.
- 5 volunteers per shift x 4 shifts (Friday and Saturday- 1 in kitchen plus 1 runner. 1 cashier and 2 servers out front.)
- Price \$7.00 Meatballs, \$6.00 Lefsa, \$3.00 bottles of pop and bottles of water.

Julie Fritz seconded. MSC.

Old Business

- Report on Pro/Cons for a separate 501c3 Vs Sponsored Ministry
- After reading the Comparison Table, discussion centered on the fact that Outreach is already a Sponsored Ministry, not a regular Church Covered Ministry. However, perhaps the Congregation sees Outreach as a Church Covered Ministry. Jason will write an article for the April newsletter to clarify this. Then, does Outreach stay as a Sponsored Ministry and re-brand the name of Outreach with the church's assistance, or does Outreach separate from the church into a separate 501c3 and re-brand on its own.

Next Meeting: April 21, 2026

Closed in prayer

Adjourned at: 3:16pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie Fritz

Salem Lutheran Church Council

Preliminary Meeting Minutes

March 26, 2026

We exist with God's help, to provide Leadership for Salem Lutheran Church.

MSC=The motion was seconded and carried.

Call to Order

Members Present: Pastor Amanda Kempthorne, Lynn Hansen, Don Hales, Nate Van Risseghem, Tina Royer, Julie Fritz, Alan Niemann

Members Absent: Mark Boike, Sylvia Hoge, Randy Holmwig

Leadership Devotional: Pastor Amanda

Approval of the Agenda:

Additions to New Business: Synod Fundraiser, Funds from Wednesday Lenten Meals, Lily Delivery

Motion to approve the updated agenda, MSC

Approval of minutes:

Motion to approve February 2026, meeting minutes. MSC

Approval of Financials:

Money spent on advertising and publicity is over budget because of advertising for Easter. Half of budget for building supplies and services has been spent. There was a need for repairs to the fire suppression system. New compressor and gaskets installed.

Lois E Berg Youth Fund: CD needs to be renewed 4/7/26. Aimee Watson sent a note to council with rates for 36 months and 12 months. 12-month CD has a better rate at 3.39%. Council needs to decide.

Motion to renew the Lois E Berg Youth Fund CD for a term of 12 months at 3.39% instead of 36 months at 1.70%. MSC.

Motion to approve the February 2026 financial report. MSC

Pastor's Report – Pastor Amanda

- I am beginning to see people step into new territory. We have new people bringing meals for Lent worship, new readers on Sunday morning, long-time members willing to share their story, a crowded women's Bible study, and volunteers bringing Communion to those in crisis as well as homebound members.
- Preparing for Holy Week!
- Preparing Easter Season themes through Pentecost May 24
- New Member Orientation April 19, 26, and welcome on May 3

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- April 24-26 Synod Assembly in Breezy Point, bishop election year
 - working on finding worship leader and preacher
- Multiple conversations with adults seeking baptism – considering a class on basic faith
- May 19 New(er) member meal at Salem
- Family vacation May 31-June 15, includes 2 Sundays absent
- Brother's wedding June 19-21 weekend, including 1 Sunday absent

Committee Reports – Monthly

- Outreach – Julie- The mezzanine area of Salem West is being cleaned out and repurposed/remodeled to be the Flower area. The original Flower area will be converted to the Shoe and Accessories area. Better use of space and more room for everyone.
- Faith Formation- Pastor Amanda- Vacation Bible School will be July 20-23. No meeting in April. There will be a second craft day April 8 for Kids Club. Kids of all ages have been invited
- Memorial- Approving camperships. \$500 scholarship being offered to Crosby Ironton Senior
- Facilities- Changing bulbs out. Some are high. Presbyterian church has a ladder that may be able to be used. Looking at May 2 for cleanup day.
- Capital Appeal- Waiting on a few banks to give their information on refinancing details
- Welcome Committee- May 19 will be a dinner for members who started in the last year or so.

Unfinished Business

- Adult Education Dates- How to read the Bible. Pastor Amanda is looking at 3 Mondays in May. Offer afternoon or evening or both based on Congregation interest.
- Deerwood Days- Outreach Governing Board was tasked with deciding the event for Deerwood Days.

Will sell Meatballs and Lefse, Pop and Water: 2 large Meat Balls, 3 Lefse,

Cash box- no tickets.

Will either use a food truck or tables with tent to serve

5 volunteers per shift x 4 shifts (Friday and Saturday- 1 in kitchen plus 1 runner. 1 cashier and 2 servers out front.)

Price \$7.00 Meatballs, \$6.00 Lefse, \$3.00 bottles of pop and bottles of water.

Will take donations for cost of meat, lefse supplies, cost of pop, water.

Kathi and Sherri can help make meatballs and lefse but will not be there for the weekend. Sandy Kretlow can help setup the lefse making

Jason has licensing to serve the community

Intend to open bathrooms for all in the building to use.

OGB will honor council decision to let Deerwood Days have vendors in the parking lot

Hope to visually identify Salem members among the crowd i.e. Hats, T-shirts

Council thanks OGB for all their work and supports the event 100%

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- Thrivent Funds – Pastor has the list of people. Will send email to those people to be on a team to decide where money goes
- Home School Group- Pastor Amanda spoke with the group and has the answers to all the questions Council proposed

15 kids plus parents. 1 parent for every child. Younger siblings would be in the nursery 4-5 kids. They would be in building on Mondays 8-3:30pm September - April. Usually bring their own lunch so may use microwave and refrigerator. Storage- 6 totes to be kept in first classroom. They want to use our first aid kits. They don't have insurance. Our insurance will cover them at no additional cost. For cost of lights, bathroom, heat, the other church had covered the cost. They will clean up and vacuum.

Thoughts- Do we want to do this? What is the cost to the church? What are we liable for? Will the custodian need to clean up after them? Is this a contract? Is it outreach? Do we accept rent from them? Do we ask for a damage deposit?

It was decided that the Council will think about this item and readdress at next meeting.

- Classes to bring to community to Salem- tabled until there are proposals

New Business

- Result of Q1 listening session: Hand out was good. No space for feedback after the questions. Thought there would be more discussion. Had two questions in writing and those were answered. Raised hand questions were answered. Next time we will have more time for discussion and questions.
- Volunteer Appreciation Dinner- Council has proposed Thursday May 14 and will ask OGB if this date is OK.
- Synod Fundraiser- Last year they had new fundraiser- a silent auction. Last year we gave a \$25 gift card to the Deerstand. This year, they want \$50.

**Motion to provide a \$50 gift card to Deer Stand. Money coming from 2520 Dedicated accounts
Special Events. MSC**

- Lenten meal funds. There is about \$230 this year. There is a meal on Maundy Thursday and Pastor Amanda would like to use that money for the dinner.

Motion to use the Lenten meal funds for the Maundy Thursday meal. MSC

- Lily Delivery. Need someone to pick up delivery at Super One in Brainerd and then need to deliver to the homebound. Don Hales will pick up Lilies. Tina Royer offered to deliver a few lilies. Still need others to deliver.

SOS Submission: No submission.

Announcements:

Capital Appeal results to present to council in April.

Minnesota Energy will be doing replacement or maintenance to our meter this summer.

Meeting Dates – April 16th Exec Team 3:00PM – Council meeting April 23rd 6:30P
(continued)

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:19pm

Closed in Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Fritz

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 9:00am Palm/Passion Sunday Worship 9:50am Sunday School	30	31 9:00am Piecemakers	1 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 5:30pm Salem Ringers 6:00pm Choir Practice	2 11:30am Catholic Charities Meal Distribution 6:30pm Maundy Thursday Worship	3 8:00am Men's Bible Study 6:30pm Good Friday Worship	4
5 8:00am Easter Sunday Worship 9:30am Easter Sunday Worship	6 Office Closed	7 9:00am Piecemakers 5:00pm Worship and Music Meeting	8 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 3:15pm Kids Club 5:30pm Salem Ringers 6:00pm Choir Practice 6:00pm Confirmation	9	10 Office Closed 8:00am Men's Bible Study	11 9:00am Serpent Lake Association Meeting
12 9:00am Worship 9:50am Sunday School	13 1:00pm Bible Study at Heartwood 4:00pm Drum Group Practice	14 Deerwood Days Meeting 9:00am Piecemakers	15 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 5:30pm Salem Ringers 6:00pm Choir Practice 6:00pm Confirmation	16 3:00pm Executive Team Meeting 6:00pm Cuyuna Range Lions Meeting	17 8:00am Men's Bible Study	18
19 9:00am Worship 9:50am Sunday School	20	21 9:00am Piecemakers 1:00pm Outreach Governing Board Meeting	22 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 5:30pm Salem Ringers 6:00pm Choir Practice 6:00pm Confirmation	23 6:30pm Council Meeting	24 Synod Assembly 8:00am Men's Bible Study	25 Synod Assembly
26 Synod Assembly 9:00am Worship 9:50am Sunday School	27	28 9:00am Piecemakers	29 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 5:30pm Salem Ringers 6:00pm Choir Practice 6:00pm Confirmation	30	1 8:00am Men's Bible Study	2