



Salem Connection

May 2026

Salem Lutheran Church 21276 Archibald Road PO Box 100 Deerwood MN 56444
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Ever feel guilty for not reading your Bible? We know it's important, that it tells the story of how God has worked in and directed people's lives throughout time. We know it's important to hear Christ's words and actions and forgiveness and wholeness. We know it's important to be filled with life-giving words when the rest of the world drains that life out of us.

We know it's important, but sometimes it really takes some work to get through it.

Sometimes (a lot of times) the Bible can be confusing. I'll be honest with you, I grew up in the church and still felt like I didn't know the Bible before I entered college. It can be full of battles and wars and judgment. It can be wordy and long-winded and repetitive. It can be downright boring (I suggest Numbers for those with insomnia). And Sunday morning doesn't always help – we jump back and forth between books so much that it's hard to follow.

My first piece of advice: don't get hung up on what you don't understand. This one book contains 66 individual books, each with its own message and its own priorities. Each was written in a culture that doesn't reflect our own, with ancient customs and practices. Do your best and keep asking the question: what is God's response to our humanity?

Because through those words written thousands and thousands (and thousands) of years ago, God makes God's self known. In some holy, mysterious way, God uses these simple writings to stir up faith in us, to strengthen us when we're weak, and to direct and guide our lives in ways that glorify God and serve our neighbors.

If you're wanting to read your Bible and not sure where to start – including what translation is right for you – I invite you to ask the big question with me: "How do I read this thing?" on Tuesdays in May at 6:30. I want to help you get started, to practice reading together, to have some tools to help your understanding of Scripture, and to fuel your faith.

And a small note: if you can't make it to these Tuesday evenings, I will create hand-outs for you to pick up on Sunday! The point is: there's no excuse for not reading God's Word sometime other than Sunday morning. You can do it! And I'm here – and I LOVE talking about these things of God – so ask away!!

So join me in asking the big question: "How do I read this thing?" on Tuesdays in May at 6:30. And then sit down and start reading, or find an audio version and listen to God's word. Your faith depends on it.

Your fellow reader,
~Pastor Amanda



Worship Notes at Salem

Thank you to those serving in May:

READERS

- 3** Cindy Sykes
10 Tom Wiedell
17 Ken Stebbins
24 _____
31 Samantha Gerland

USHERS

- 3** Mark & Cindy Larson, Curt & Sylvia Hoge
10 Randy Holmwig, Herb & Barb Schoon, Mark Boike
17 Herb & Barb Schoon, Roger & Marlene Prill
24 Nory & Peggy Hunze, Chuck Lubowitz & Karla Peterson
31 John & Raye Cragun, Becki Zender, Rod Ogard

COMMUNION SERVERS

- 3** Kay Bendorf, Tim & Kim Coughlin
10 Sarah Brunko, Jackie Halvorson, Shelly Skeim
17 Curt & Sylvia Hoge, Cindy Larson
24 Carol Bobich, Becki Zender, _____

OFFERING COUNTERS

In Need of 2 Offering Counters for May!

May Worship Schedule

- 3** 8:00a.m. Praise Worship
Pop-Up Choir
10 9:00a.m. Traditional Worship
Choir
17 9:00a.m. Praise Worship
Handbells
24 9:00a.m. Traditional Worship
Choir
31 9:00a.m. 5th Sunday Worship

Spring Music Schedule:

Every Wednesday: _____
Bells practice at 5:30p.m.
Choir at 6:15p.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, May 11th at 1:00p.m.

Welcoming New Members

On Sunday, May 3rd, Salem Lutheran will be welcoming 8 New Members into the Congregation. These individuals have learned about the Church and the ministries it has to offer during orientation classes leading up to the decision of becoming an official member of the family here at Salem. We are blessed to grow our family and encourage all those who are interested in either becoming members or inviting your friends and neighbors to join us Sunday mornings or for Bible Study! All are Welcome and we look forward to continuing to live out the Mission Statement we proudly present!

Be sure to keep a lookout for the new member board and meet the new faces joining the Salem Family in the next few weeks! This will be on the bulletin board in the hallway leading to the fellowship hall!

Spiritual Gifts Team

Luke 12:48 "But anyone who is not aware that he is doing wrong will be punished only lightly. Much is required of those to whom much is given, for their responsibility is greater. (Living Bible)

Coming across this during morning devotions, prompted a search for the meaning of this passage. A commentary identified four focus points:

- Stewardship: manage gifts and resources wisely, unselfishly, and for the good of others.
- Accountability: God measures faithfulness on how one uses what has been given.
- Service to others: Blessings are not for selfish enjoyment.
- Cultural Reflection: privilege entails duty- the more one is blessed, the greater the moral and spiritual responsibility.

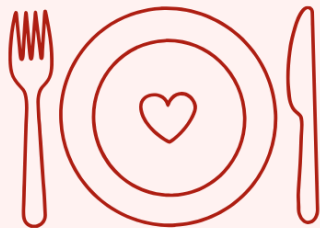
It seems that this verse includes not only material wealth, but also time, talents, spiritual understanding, health, and influence. It summarizes what the Spiritual Gifts Team is about.

In the past month, the Capital Appeal Team has worked diligently to make the best use of financial resources to pay off the mortgage. The Honduras Mission Team has used time and talents to provide food and safe shelter for families with funds provided by generous donors. Care and Share Teams have served food and provided hospitality to worshipers, grieving families, and those celebrating together. Volunteers have supported our Outreach ministries. People pray for and encourage others in times of need.

Thank you for all the ways that you live out this verse.

Volunteer Appreciation

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner



**As a thank you for the time, talents,
and energy you put into Salem
Lutheran, Salem West, and Mustard
Seed Ministries, please join us for a
special Volunteer Appreciation Dinner.**

Thursday, May 14th 2026

Salem Lutheran Church
Fellowship Hall

5:30p.m. Fellowship Hour

6:0p.m. Dinner

Call the Church or
RSVP on the Kiosk!

(218) 281-2100

Faith Formation!

Sunday School Schedule

Each Sunday at 9:50a.m. for about 30 minutes
Open to children age 3-12
Sunday School Party is May 17th!



Confirmation

Confirmation classes will be finishing up for the school year soon, the final class will be on Wednesday, 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!

May Kids Club will be the FINAL Kids Club of the School Year! Join us for one last time before we break for summer! Grades 3 through 6 are Welcome!

May 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!

"How Do I Read This Thing?"

Tuesdays in May, meeting at 6:30p.m. learn about tips and tricks for reading the Bible!

May 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th





Special Celebrations in May

BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

1	Delylah Voller	22	Beth Gavin
3	Finley Syrstad	23	Samantha Gerland
4	Chris Kobberdahl	24	Glenn Suess
5	April Novak	25	Jon Kempthorne
6	Jim Rude	27	Tom Wiedell
8	Janine Mattfield	28	Annette Larson
11	Owyn Pearson		Tim Coughlin
13	Blake Barnett	30	Wendy Christenson
	Jason Holmvgig		Dawson Holmvgig
	Rick Johnson	31	Peter MacKay
18	Jean Shermock		Donna Sanderson
			Raye Cragun
			Nancy Johnson



8	Les & Shirley Taylor
16	Glenn Suess & Ruth Helgesen
20	Greg & Jena Reed
28	Terry & Judy Fields

Financial Updates

Salem Lutheran Church			
Profit & Loss			
1st Quarter 2026: Jan-Feb-March			
	100 Church	150 Building	TOTAL
Income			
4000 · Offerings	103,306.95	0.00	103,306.95
4100 · Building Fund	0.00	25,597.83	25,597.83
4900 · Other Income	7,067.57	354.98	7,422.55
Total Income	110,374.52	25,952.81	136,327.33
Expense	94,340.02	25,884.00	120,224.02
Net Income	16,034.50	68.81	16,103.31

Lenten Benevolences:

Cuyuna Range Food Shelf: \$793.21
Home of Blessing-Honduras: \$793.21

Total Lenten Benevolences: \$1,586.41

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

Thank you for the continuous generosity!

Salem Lutheran Church			
Profit & Loss			
March 2026			
	100 Church	150 Building	TOTAL
Income			
4000 · Offerings	30,251.15	0.00	30,251.15
4100 · Building Fund	0.00	5,784.81	5,784.81
4900 · Other Income	2,749.05	123.67	2,872.72
Total Income	33,000.20	5,908.48	38,908.68
Expense	32,842.33	8,628.00	41,470.33
Net Income	157.87	(2,719.52)	(2,561.65)

March Benevolence

Synod ELCA: \$1,726.61
YAGM Support: \$107.45
VLM: \$107.45

Total March Benevolences: \$1,941.51

Outreach Governing Board (OGB)

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are grateful for the many years of faithful support that have shaped and sustained the work of Salem West & The Mustard Seed. Through the guidance and covering of Salem Lutheran, this ministry has been able to make a meaningful impact—serving children, strengthening families, and reaching our community with care and compassion. Your prayers, generosity, and encouragement have been essential every step of the way.

In a continued effort to steward this ministry well, the Outreach Governing Board has been in a season of prayer, counsel, and thoughtful discernment about the future. As part of that process, we are currently exploring the possibility of transitioning to operate as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and considering whether a new name, to reflect a unified ministry and location, would better reflect the scope and direction of our mission since our change in location from 2023, and the change in funding and support from Salem Lutheran in 2025 and 2026 budget years.

Scripture reminds us that seasons of change are a natural part of God's work among His people: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3:1). As we walk through this season, we are seeking to remain attentive to His leading—trusting that He is faithful to guide, provide, and bring clarity in the right time.

At this time, no final decisions have been made. Our goal is to carefully evaluate what structure and identity will best support long-term growth, expanded impact, and faithful service to the community—while remaining rooted in the same Christ-centered values you have supported from the beginning.

For our supporters, any potential changes would be communicated clearly and well in advance. Should we move forward with a transition, donations would eventually be directed to the new entity, with no change to how your gifts support the ministry's mission and programs. We are committed to full transparency, responsible stewardship, and honoring the trust you have placed in us.

As Scripture reminds us, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." (1 Peter 4:10)

While we explore these possibilities, the heart of our ministry remains unchanged. Our mission continues: to partner with local agencies to deliver essential goods to families in need. We are deeply thankful for your partnership and invite your prayers as we seek wisdom and clarity for the road ahead.

If you have any questions, insights, or would like to connect during this process, please reach out to Linda Sudman, Kay Bendorf, Carol Malek, Nancy Tighe, Diane Boike, or Julie Fritz. Your perspective and prayers are valued more than you know.

Thank you for your continued encouragement, generosity, and faithfulness. We are honored to walk this journey with you.

With gratitude and blessings,

The Outreach Governing Board

Salem Outreach Governing Board
OGB Preliminary Meeting Minutes
April 21, 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 via phone, Kay Bendorf, Carol Malek, Nancy Tighe, Julie Fritz

Absent: Diane Boike

Guest: Jake Walker

Open with prayer: Pastor Amanda

Secretary's Report: The March 17 minutes were reviewed. **Kay Bendorf moved to approve minutes. Nancy Tighe seconded MSC.**

Financial Report: Kay Bendorf-

- Supplies up: snow removal, box truck repair.
- Bailer income down: Just got two checks that have not been added
- Client furniture bought at the beginning of the year which took up a large part of the furniture budget. We won't need to buy furniture again till fall and will stay within budget.
- March store sales are up almost \$9000 from last year.

Linda Sudman moved to approve the Financial Report. Nancy Tighe seconded. MSC

Director of Outreach Report: Jason

- Grant Report- no news
- Program Report-
 - 26 active clients, 13 scheduled deliveries. 4 scheduled pick ups
 - 36 volunteers last month
 - No new maintenance issues
 - Tarrin left for a new job- Julie has been hired in her place. Still looking for help in the clothing department - employee and volunteers
- Impact Report-
 - March had 42 completed client orders. 93 individuals served. 17 repeat households.
 - \$83,600 impact dollars YTD
 - 1051 volunteer hours in March

(continued)

Manager Report: Jake Walker

- Mystery Shopper- Jake visited 7 other thrift stores and compared their hours, space, prices, cleanliness and product variety to the Mustard Seed. He distributed his assessment to members.
 - Mustard Seed is the only store that has a large, dedicated space for furniture
 - Mustard Seed prices line up relatively well with Salvation Army, Common Goods and Goodwill.
 - Mustard Seed is within a dollar or two on prices in other stores
 - Mustard Seed prices vary the most on appliances and lamps. We are usually a higher price than others.
 - Mustard Seed seems to price items more randomly than others specifically in clothing. Others have more standard prices.
 - Overall, Mustard Seed excels over all the stores
- With the Restore closed, we are getting more furniture. We will not be taking appliances and building supplies like Restore did.
- We will need to be pickier with furniture. If a couch is not usable, we need to say no. Can offer to dispose of the item if they pay us \$5 more than they would pay at the landfill. We give them the landfill address.

2026 Goals

- Monthly Announcement at SLC-
 - Done April 19: Deerwood Days announcement was done by Linda Sudman and Don Hales from the Council
 - Linda Sudman will write an article for the May newsletter on volunteerism.
- Volunteer Recruitment-
 - Jason presented the Outreach Program in Malmo at the Spring Women of the ELCA event Sunday April 19. Has had a few calls since then.
- Separate 501-C3 Organization / Single Name-
 - Jason will write an article for the May newsletter.

New Business

- Summer Hours-
 - The group reviewed a comparison of the first quarter of last year and first quarter of this year for income and expenses to decide if we should be open on Mondays during the summer.
 - ◇ Our income from the church is less than last year, but our sales are up from last year.
 - ◇ Our expenses are up.
 - ◇ If we are open 6 days a week, scheduling of the full-time employees would change.
 - ◇ Many pros and cons were discussed.

Linda Sudman moved to open the Mustard Seed on Mondays for summer hours June 1-August 31, 2026. Kay Bendorf seconded the motion. MSC.

Continued on the next page.

- Food Packing Event-
 - We budgeted for 2 packing events this year. Jason will plan a September 13 food packing event at the church.
- New Member Orientation-
 - We need someone from OGB to present at new member orientation to discuss volunteerism and what it means to us. Nancy Tighe and Carol Malek volunteered to present this Sunday April 26.

Old Business

- Deerwood Days 2026-
 - A Deerwood Days meeting was held on April 14 with Sheri Godfrey and Kathi Sharp. Meeting notes were attached to the member packet
 - A major change from other years is that the food and pop will be purchased because Sheri, Kathi, and Jason can get better prices on the items needed. Monetary donations will be requested to help pay for the food items.
 - Volunteer sign ups will be posted for lefse and meatball making before Deerwood Days, as well as selling and serving on the actual Deerwood Days.
- Report on Pro/Cons for a separate 501c3 Vs Sponsored Ministry-
 - Jason will write a newsletter article for May

Council Rep Report:

Julie will ask Council to organize the Volunteer Dinner event especially the food. Linda and Julie volunteered to help with decorations. All will assist in serving.

Motion to give \$750 to Council for Volunteer Dinner by Jason. Seconded by Kay Bendorf MSC

Next Meeting: May 19

Close in prayer

Adjourned at 2:50pm

Respectfully submitted by Julie Fritz

Salem Lutheran Church Council

Preliminary Minutes

April 23, 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, Mark Boike, Lynn Hansen, Don Hales, Nate Van Risseghem, Sylvia Hoge, Julie Fritz, Randy Holmvig

Members Absent: Tina Royer, Alan Niemann

Leadership Devotional: Pastor Amanda

Approval of the Agenda:

One new item: Cuyuna Range Farmers Market

Motion to approve the April 23 agenda, MSC

Approval of minutes:

Motion to approve, March 17, 2026, meeting minutes. MSC

Approval of Financials:

Increased net assets in the first quarter- 3.9% or almost \$40,000. Increased envelope giving in first quarter.

Motion to approve the March 2026 financial report. MSC

Pastor's Report – Pastor Amanda

Joy and delight! Not only are we seeing a few new faces to Salem, there are folks who are new to faith. 4 adults want to be baptized. Their passion and questions will be a blessing to the whole community

Committee Reports – Monthly

Outreach – Julie

- The Mustard Seed will begin summer hours June 1 which means it will be open on Mondays until August 31.
- OGB is slowly deciding whether Outreach should be its own 501c3 or stay under the church. Either way, the group is looking at re-branding the name. Moving slowly and thoughtfully.

Worship & Music – Pastor Amanda

- Will sing the liturgy on choir Sundays (or non-praise team Sundays)

Memorial-

- Completing scholarships

Columbarium-

- Need to have Swanke urns filled with flowers by Memorial Day

(continued)

Unfinished Business

Adult Education Dates

How to Read the Bible -will be Tuesdays in May at 6:30pm, move to small groups in June.

Deerwood Days

See attached meeting minutes from planning team

Thrivent Funds

3 people are interested in being on the team and a meeting is set up for May 6 in the afternoon.

Home School Group

Much discussion on the use of the church facilities and it was decided that we will follow the facility use policy to be fair to all

Motion made to give our Facility Use Policy to the Home School Group for costs to use the building. MSC

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

OGB agreed to have the dinner on May 14 with the Council. Voted to give \$750 for the dinner.

Don Hales and Sylvia Hoge volunteered to organize the meal and program. Carol Malek, Linda Sudman, Nancy Tighe from OGB with Julie Fritz have already volunteered to purchase/ arrange for decorations and door prizes.

Motion to use up to \$1500 (budget line item 7540) for the Volunteer Dinner. MSC.

Pastoral Coverage for June

Family vacation May 31-June 15 includes 3 Sundays:

May 31: Travels, Trip, and Journeys- Scripture and song. Lynn Hansen and Warren will lead worship

June 7: *discussion with Synod office- will hear after Assembly

June 14: Need someone to lead

Brother's Wedding June 19-21 weekend, including 1 Sunday absent

June 21: Pastor Dave Holte is available

New Business

- Review of Council Goals
 - Reviewed goals and how we will attain them by the end of the year.
- Capital Appeal recommendation.
 - Randy Holmig presented the work the Capital Appeal Team has done to refinance the church's mortgage

Motion to accept the Capital Appeal recommendation to accept the proposal from First National Bank for the refinancing of Salem's mortgage for the next five years based on their proposal dated 2/25/2026. MSC.

Motion to accept the Capital Appeal recommendation that the current Mission Investment Funds (MIF) savings account (\$86,964) be transferred to a First National Bank savings account at the same time as the refinancing. MSC.

*The Council would like to thank the Capital Appeal Team for their hard work on this item!

(continued)

- Funeral Care Review
 - We had our first funeral that Care and Share organized. We need to add some guidelines and tasks for the future. Will have a Care and Share meeting in May.
- T-Shirt fundraiser
 - Julie Fritz will investigate a fundraiser where the church does not have to buy upfront.
- Membership Changes
 - There are several members who have not come to church, had communion, or are on record. Council went through the list. Several have been moved to inactive. Several have been removed from membership.
- Cuyuna Range Farmers Market
 - The farmer's market is asking for donations to give kids tokens to buy items at the farmer's market. Last year we gave \$100 and in return had media presence in the markets. We did not see any benefit to this so did not recommend a donation this year.

SOS Submission: No submission.

Announcements:

Spring Clean -up May 2, 8am-11am

Kay Cooper Memorial 10:45am May 3, 2026

Graduation Sunday is in July

Meeting Dates – Tuesday May 19 Exec Team @ 3:00PM – Council meeting Thursday May 28 @6:30P

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:40pm. MSC

Closed in Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Fritz



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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 8:00am Spring Church Clean-Up 11:00am Drum Group Practice
3 9:00am Worship 9:50am Sunday School	4	5 9:00am Piecemakers 5:00pm Worship and Music Meeting 6:00pm Faith Formation	6 2:00pm Thrivent Meeting 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 5:30pm Salem Ringers 6:00pm Choir Practice 6:00pm Confirmation	7 11:30am Catholic Charities Meal Distribution	8 8:00am Men's Bible Study	9 9:00am Serpent Lake Association Meeting
10 9:00am Worship 9:50am Sunday School	11 1:00pm Bible Study at Heartwood	12 9:00am Piecemakers 5:45pm Capital Appeal Meeting	13 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 3:15pm Kids Club 5:30pm Salem Ringers 6:00pm Choir Practice 6:00pm Confirmation	14 6:00pm Volunteer Appreciation Dinner	15 8:00am Men's Bible Study	16
17 9:00am Worship 9:50am Sunday School End of Year Party!	18	19 9:00am Piecemakers 1:00pm Outreach Governing Board Meeting 3:00pm Executive Team Meeting 5:00pm New Member Dinner	20 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 5:30pm Salem Ringers 6:00pm Choir Practice 6:00pm Confirmation Party	21 6:00pm Cuyuna Range Lions Meeting	22 8:00am Men's Bible Study	23
24 Graduate Sunday 9:00am Worship	25 Office Closed	26 9:00am Piecemakers	27 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 5:30pm Salem Ringers 6:00pm Choir Practice	28 6:30pm Council Meeting	29 8:00am Men's Bible Study	30
31 9:00am Worship	1	2 9:00am Piecemakers 5:00pm Worship and Music Meeting 6:00pm Faith Formation	3 3:00pm Women's Bible Study 5:30pm Salem Ringers 6:00pm Choir Practice	4 11:30am Catholic Charities Meal Distribution	5 8:00am Men's Bible Study	6