

Salem United Methodist Church

December 2020



*"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." -Isaiah 9:2*

Thoughts from Pastor Paola...

Have you noticed that this year people are putting up the Christmas lights up earlier than usual? I know it is happening in my neighborhood. As I drive around, I have been catching myself smiling with wonder and happiness just like a small child in front of a house lit up for Christmas. Part of the reason why so many people have their lights up already is because they took advantage of the nice weather we have been having. But I don't think that is the main reason. Even my neighbors who are coming from countries where Christianity is not prevalent have their lights up this year for the first time. The reality is that this year we all have a deep desire to break through darkness with light. We need light as we feel that the darkness is overcoming our spirits. The lights are a promise of better days ahead and the hopeful end of this dark time.

From the first page of the scripture, light symbolizes God's power over the pain, the evil and the brokenness of the world. And one day, about 2000 years ago, the light entered into the world and triumphed over darkness. On Christmas Day we celebrate the best news that was ever given to humankind: "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5)

This year is more important than ever that we "walk as children of the light" (Ephesians 5:8) so that others, especially those overcome by darkness, can see Jesus' light through us. Your smile, your kind message, your call, your prayer, your gifts can truly be the light entering in the darkness in someone else's life.

At Salem we will shine the light of Christ throughout this season even if we cannot worship in person. We will go above and beyond in celebrating Advent and Christmas in worship using all the tools we have. We will reach out to our community with love and gifts. We will even have Santa giving little gifts in a drive-thru style. And of course, we will start our church remodel project this week so that Salem can become even a brighter beacon of light in our community. (You can find lots more information in this Tidings)

May the light of Christ enter in your life this Christmas.

Blessings,
Pastor Paola



Advent and Christmas 2020

Oh Tidings of Comfort and Joy

In the midst of troubling times this Christmas, we focus on the only story in human history that has the power to bring to us “Tidings of Comfort and Joy”.

Inspired by one of the oldest carols, “God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen”, we will bring to life the story of the birth of Jesus as found in the Gospel of Luke 2:1-21

Sunday November 29 1st Sunday in Advent
God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Sunday December 6 2nd Sunday in Advent
Communion
His mother, Mary, nothing did take in scorn

Sunday December 13 3rd Sunday in Advent
And unto certain shepherds...
10:30-11:30 AM Salem Giving Tree at church:
Drive-thru donations of Outreach giving (see article in this Tidings) with Santa, Hot Chocolate & Cookies

Sunday December 20 4th Sunday in Advent
“Fear not then”, said the angel...

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24 (see next column)
*But when to Bethlehem they came,
Whereas this infant lay,
They found him in a manger...*

Sunday, December 27 A Service of Carols



4:00 PM Family Service **LIVE ZOOM**

Children friendly service. Families will share photos, videos, or objects that symbolize comfort & joy.



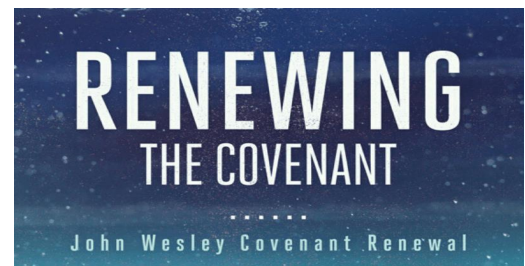
Traditional Candlelighting Service

Readings and Carols with Christmas message.
View on YouTube (taped)



****The Christmas Offering this year will go to the Hope Center in Waukesha. Envelopes will be included with the Christmas Letter from Salem that will be mailed in the next few days. Please mail your offering to the church office.**

Join us for a Special Service



Sunday, January 3, Communion Sunday

A Covenant Renewal Service (Live Zoom)

This service, created by John Wesley in 1755, is traditionally celebrated on New Year's Day. The heart of the service focuses on the **Covenant Prayer** and invites us to recommit ourselves to God in the New Year. It is a liturgical service, rich with hymns and scriptures. During the service, we will be installing the 2021 Lay Leadership Team.

January • February 2021
Worship Series



During this past year we have been experiencing isolation, sickness, financial stress, divisions, and anxiety. How do we have a New Start? The first Christian Church, in the midst of a very challenging time, found healing, growth and future by living out the foundational commandment of Jesus: "Love one another". Let's enter in the New Year by strengthening and building one another up.

Sunday, January 10

LOVE One Another - Romans 13:8

Sunday, January 17

SERVE One Another - Galatians 5:13

Sunday, January 24

**ENCOURAGE & BUILD UP One Another
1 Thessalonians 5:11**

Sunday, January 31

FORGIVE One Another - Ephesians 4:32

Sunday, February 7

**SPEAK THE TRUTH to One Another
Ephesians 4:25**

Sunday, February 14

CARRY One Another - Galatians 6:2

Annual Church Charge Conference

Sunday, Dec. 6th at 2:00 pm

Anyone who is not a member of Church Council but would like to take part, please contact Pastor Paola to receive the Zoom invite.

**DRIVE-THRU CHRISTMAS
FUN AND GIVING!!**

SUNDAY, DEC. 13

10:30-11:30 AM



Don't forget to drive-thru at Salem to drop off your gift cards, donations of new underwear or money for our Christmas Outreach Giving. As a special treat, Santa will be helping to hand out hot chocolate! You can also pick up a little gift for the children in your life. The following items replace the specific gifts we bought in years past: Books of Forever Stamps, \$10 gift cards for Walgreens, Pick and Save and Walmart, or \$25 gift cards for Target or Walmart. These items will go to ERAS and/or the Christmas Clearing Council. The Hope Center is always in need of new underwear too, so you may drop that off as well. If you prefer to make a donation financially, you may do so and Outreach will shop for you. We at Salem are blessed with so much, so let's remember the folks in need in our community at Christmas. Thank you!



Our Worship Services are all online. Go to:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQY7kQoYMJH1n_XsHnetCrQ

Or Google search: YouTube Salem United Methodist Church Waukesha. There you will be able to find our worship services, special events, Children's Times, and youth lessons.

At Salem, we are so thankful for your gifts of tithes and offerings! Your generosity is allowing us to move forward with joy and hope, knowing the best is yet to come.



Thursdays at 6:30 PM!

We send out the Zoom invite by email each week. We study passages from the weekly lectionary every week. It is an awesome opportunity to grow in faith. Let Paola know if you'd like to join us!



Equal Exchange for Christmas

Are you in need of a small gift for the mailman, hairdresser or other essential worker, a stocking stuffer or special treat for the holidays? Consider purchasing some special products from Equal Exchange. The Equal Exchange program allows farmers and artisans all over the world to be able to sell in the fair-trade market. They are then able to stay on their land, educate and support their families, and plan for their future.

- 25 dark chocolate mini bars - \$5.00
- Large candy bars: dark chocolate with mint, orange, almonds, or caramel crunch with sea salt - \$3.00
- Milk or dark hot cocoa mix - \$6.00

Call or email Gladys at 262-594-5099 or eaglerosz@gmail.com Orders are due Friday Dec. 18 and she will arrange delivery to you between the 20 and 24th (earlier if you need it).



Building Committee Report

With Congregational approval of both the remodel of the Church (vote was 64 yes and 3 no) and authorization of a finance committee to handle the mortgage process (vote was 67 yes and 4 no), the Building Committee is moving forward with the renovation and updating of our Church. Thank you Salem Members.

We are hoping to begin the remodel and renovation sometime in early December. Packing of our building contents took place on Friday, November 27 and Saturday, November 28. Most items were put in two large storage pods located in the parking area of the Church. On November 30, the sanctuary piano and organ were professionally removed and placed in an indoor storage facility for the duration of the remodel.

As you may or may not know, for a long time there has been a problem with a rotted roof and support beam outside the library and the boiler room door. A repair solution in this area will include the input from a structural engineer. First, the beam will need to be reinforced and then repaired in order to support the roof deck. Second, the area of rotting deck will need to be removed and replaced; and then, some roof repair will be needed. This is a critical problem and needs to be taken care of now. Therefore, the Building Committee has taken this over from the Trustees. Our general contractor, Ott Construction, will be handling this roof issue.

Let us all pray as we move forward that we have mild winter weather, no injuries on the job, and face few supply shortages so that relatively soon, we can all meet and worship together again in our remodeled Salem.



Continued progress on Salem House

Update from Mujila Falls, Zambia

We recently received a message from our missionary Temba at Mujila Falls in Zambia, Africa. Here is part of what he wrote:

“I am very grateful for your friendship, support and the confidence you have in our mission center and I, the missionary. This year alone your moral and financial support has enabled us to produce more than 2,000 eggs a day for wholesale and produce at least 100 litres of milk per day, of which about 60 litres was given to members of our community free of charge. We have erected buildings: a pig sty, an office, and a dormitory. We have empowered our staff with some getting driver’s licenses. At least 30 children at the Mama Roxanne Day Care have learned basic math, reading and writing, hymns and Bible stories. We have trained about 35 farmers in animal husbandry and agronomy. We have paid school fees for pastor’s children in our district. I’m very thankful for all these things and most of all I’m thankful for you.”

Peace and Blessings, Temba

A Thank You from Bonnie Stuempfig

From the bottom of our hearts, Bob and I want to say how wonderful it has been knowing that our Salem family is keeping us in prayer through all the challenges we've faced of late. God and lungs willing, Bob will get through this COVID crisis and get back home before our kitty goes mad from not having him around. Bless you all for taking such good care of our spiritual needs, and we hope those of you who have avoided illness continue to stay well. -Bonnie Stuempfig

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Thanks to your faithful contributions and some spending reductions, we have been able to meet our expenses.

As we enter the final month of 2020, please consider completing your planned giving for the year. We have several bills coming up, plus our heating season has started. Also, we are looking at some roof repairs which were partially budgeted for by the Trustees, but will require contributions to cover the budget. This project will also likely carry over to 2021. Your faithful giving in this trying year is a blessing.



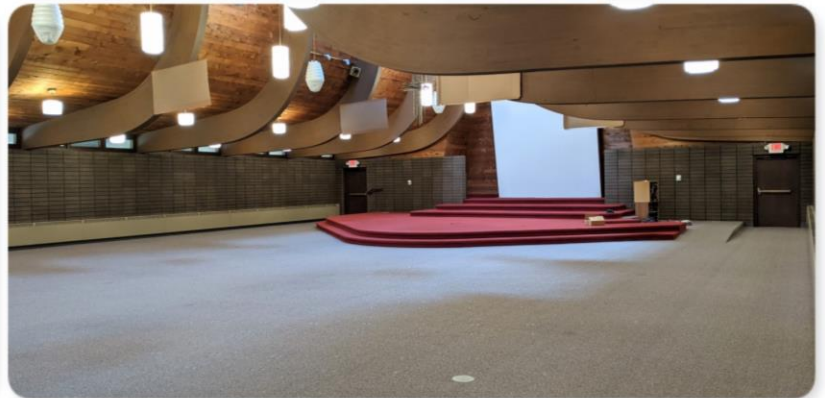
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN and MUSTARD SEED PAYMENTS

As you begin to make contributions to these two finance campaigns, please clearly designate to which one you are making the contribution so they are credited correctly. Thank you for your commitment!

Charitable
IRA
Rollover

TAX FREE
IRA Charitable
Rollover

If you are 70½ or older and have a Traditional IRA, you may give up to \$100,000 to a charitable organization without being subject to income tax on the distribution. In addition, the gift satisfies all, or in part, the annual Required Minimum Distribution from the IRA. You may make a direct charitable gift to fund your church’s operating budget, fund a special project or establish a permanent endowment fund to benefit your church in perpetuity. Salem has several members using this option. Contact Kermit Bohning for more information. Consult your IRA custodian to assist you with their process.



Packing up and clearing out to prepare for the remodeling!
 Many people came to help get our church ready.
 Thank you, everyone, for your hard work!



Dec. 4	Sue Guenther
Dec. 6	Jacques Crusan
Dec. 10	Harriet Young
Dec. 11	Bonnie Stuempfig
Dec. 16	Liz Scrima
Dec. 22	Sheryl Crusan, Jeff Everson
Dec. 24	Ed Padgett
Dec. 27	Jenny Tonz
Dec. 28	Gary Rongstad

Blessings of 2020

The Bringa's greatest blessing in 2020 is our son Kyle Bringa. He entered the year of 2020 as a Heroin addict with an arrest. He has now completed rehab and has kicked the addiction! He is employed and working steady. He has reunited with this son and family. Our Kyle has come home!
-Maggie and Ken Bringa

While we have received many blessings this year, I would like to share one of my favorites. I have always had a good relationship with my mother-in-law, but never a close one. She lives in Indiana, and for whatever reason, back in April, we started writing weekly letters to each other. It's been such a blessing getting to know each other better, sharing our joys and sorrows, 'discussing' our different faiths, and getting to know each other on a more personal level. I am so thankful!
-Kimberly Newton

Bob and I are blessed with being in the right place at the right time, enjoying the loving care of the most wonderful family, all of whom carry the light of the Lord in their hearts: My sister's cranberry muffins, Cole and Brooke "popping in" for a quick hug and "I love you," Vicki's surprise tacos with all the fixings, Michael's daily phone calls, Jon carrying down the grocery delivery... we're moved to ask God how we ever deserved such graciousness. Then, our Salem family, especially Pastor Paola, radiate Christian caring with the prayer chain, your cards, phone calls and offers to help. We are a church that puts faith into action - how beautiful is that! And, say what you will about Facebook, when Vicki posts about yet another health crisis for Bob, how gratifying it is to know that the airwaves are thick with dozens of petitions for healing from all over the country, many from people we've never met.
Abundance fills our hearts!
- Bonnie Stuempfig

What a blessing it has been to call some of our Salem members; to help keep us all connected during this difficult year. Some of the people I call have been those I only knew from a quick "Good morning" at church. Now I feel like I have made some new friends and have a real connection with them.

-Gladys Roszkowski

The Henrys have always given a gift to our grandchildren for St Nick's Day. This year we decided to give a gift of money for them to decide to share their gift from us to a favorite charity. We were overwhelmed and blessed for their overwhelming response. They each responded with their gift to a favorite charity. Thanks to their parents, teaching them what gifts truly are!
-Karla Henry

December Lectionary

Dec. 6	Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8
Dec. 13	Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11 Psalm 126 1 Thess. 5:16-24 John 1:6-8, 19-28
Dec. 20	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Luke 1:47-55 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38
Dec. 27	Isaiah 61:10 – 62:3 Psalm 148 Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:22-40

