

Salem United Methodist Church

December 2023



Thoughts from Pastor Paola...

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. -Isaiah 9:6

A few days ago, I saw in a store the bag in the picture, and I laughed...I thought: *finally something real: **Naughty or Nice?** Not really **We tried our best.** We sure do!!*

We are already bombarded with images and recipes on how to have the perfect Christmas: *all is calm and all is beautiful and bright. It is snowing outside and inside everyone loves everyone. The house is clean and looks beautiful. Wonderful food is on the table, everyone is happy and smiling, problems and struggles are gone. Everyone gets along. Everyone is happy.*

We all dream of a perfect Christmas but the reality is far from it. As a result, beside all our struggles, we feel like we are failing on doing Christmas right. The pressure is on; the stress raises and before we know it, Christmas comes and goes along with the promises of joy, peace, love and hope.

Yet, when Isaiah was writing about the coming of the baby who was going to become the Prince of Peace for the world, his country had been in war for 40 years. Kids had been born into war, families were devastated, the country destroyed. Isaiah is announcing the coming of the baby who is going to bring Shalom to the people, in the midst of despair, grief and hurt.

When that baby finally arrives, he is in a stable surrounded by smelly animals with two poor parents away from home, away from family, with no support, scared to be judged and ostracized by their own people. Not a perfect Christmas there either.

Yet, Isaiah's message of hope of peace has deeply touched and transformed people souls for the last 2,800 years. The story of the birth of Jesus in a manger is still bringing joy and love to all who accept that baby as the Lord of their lives.

Christmas is not about perfection. Christmas actually comes in the middle of our imperfections, struggles and messes. That is why Jesus came into our lives. The media may try to convince us that more gifts, food, parties, ornaments are going to make us more joyful and hopeful. The reality is that only when we let Jesus in the middle of our hurt and failures, lasting and transforming joy finally comes into our lives.

Please take time during this season through prayer, worship and Scripture to let God unveil the parts of you that need transformation and shalom. It may be your inability to forgive. It may be your lack of compassion for someone who cries for help. It may be your need to let go of destructive habits that hurt yourselves and people around you. God is ready to show up in the baby born in Bethlehem to bring redemption and transformation in our hearts.

Please pay attention to people in your life who are overlooked and forgotten. Bless that persons. Give them a gift, encourage and stand on their side. When you do that you will be able to let joy in your life.

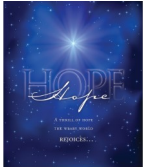
Happy Advent Everyone. Can't wait to see you all in church.

Advent 2023

For unto us a Child is born...

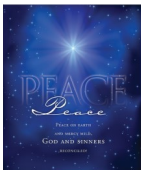
Isaiah 9:6

Through the words of the prophet Isaiah let us receive in our heart the Baby who brings everlasting life and light in our lives.



Dec 3rd First Sunday in Advent
Communion

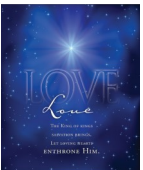
Coming of Hope: *Everlasting Father*
Isaiah 9:1-7; Isaiah 7:14



Dec 10th Second Sunday in Advent
Coming of Peace: *Prince of Peace*
Children's Program
Collection of Toys/Visit from Santa



Dec 17 Third Sunday in Advent
Coming of Joy: *Wonderful Counselor*
Isaiah 9:1-7; Isaiah 11:1-5



Dec 24 9:00 am
Fourth Sunday in Advent
Coming of Love: *Mighty God*
Isaiah 9:1-7; Isaiah 40:9-11

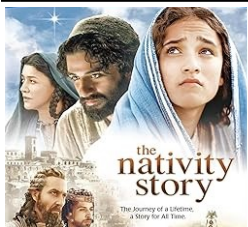
Special service filled with Christmas Carols

Dec 24 4:00 pm Christmas Eve

Candle Lighting

Coming of Christ: *For you He Came*
Luke 2:1-20

*We wish you and your family a
very Merry Christmas!*



Zoom Advent Bible Study
Thurs 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Nov 30, Dec 7, 14, 21

We will view clips from the movie ***the nativity story***, read a scripture and have an open conversation. Zoom invite will be sent via email.

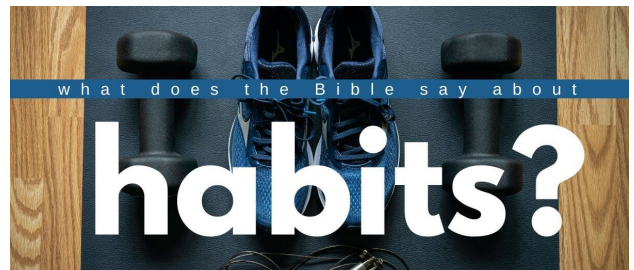
INVITE OTHERS THIS
Christmas Season

Salem has created a video as an opportunity to invite others to join us for worship during the Christmas Season. It will be available on our FaceBook page on 11/26. Please share it with family and friends. ***A BIG thank you to Leah & Brandon Fong for allowing us to have Baby Kaiya as a part of the video.***



Sunday, Dec 31st New Year's Eve

RENEWING THE COVENANT
JOHN WESLEY COVENANT RENEWAL & COMMUNION SERVICE



NEW YEAR, NEW HABITS

*Join us as we learn how to bring God into our
habits, one day at the time.*

January 7 - Body Habits

Communion - Epiphany Sunday

Romans 12:1-2 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

January 14 - Soul Habits

Psalms 62:1-6; psalm 105:1-3

January 21 - Relationships Habits

Colossians 3:14-15; 1 Thessalonians 5:11;
Ephesians 4:15

January 28 - Work Habits

1 Corinthians 15:58; Romans 8:28

February 4 - Money Habits

Proverbs 3:9-10; 11:24-25; Matthew 6:19-24

February 11 - Rest habits

Transfiguration Sunday

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 11:28-30



Hanging of the Greens

Join us on
Sat, Dec 2nd at 9:00 AM
Come and decorate the church together!



Poinsettia order forms will be available in the bulletin through 12/3. They may be purchased to acknowledge someone, either in honor or in memory. You may take your plant home following the Christmas Eve service.

Completed form with payment should go into the offering plate.



WE'RE ROUNDING UP THE Youth Group GANG!



FOR A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS SLEEPOVER

SATURDAY, DEC 9TH @ 7PM -
SUNDAY, DEC 10TH @ 10 AM

SALEM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
541 HWY 59
WAUKESHA, WI 53186



On Dec 10th, our youth will participate in readings, the younger children will be part of a skit, and all will help with the toy drive...including Santa.

Practice is on Sundays during Sunday school

- Sun Dec 3 - Final practice
- Sun Dec 10 - Please arrive to church at 8:30

Thank you, this is always a big event and the children are very proud to serve with Outreach for the Christmas Gift collection for our community. **All are welcome to participate.**



Following the service on **Dec 10th**, the children will have an opportunity to take a picture with Santa, enjoy yummy treats and do some fun crafts. Santa will be in the Library.



Annual Christmas Party & Free Concert

December 10TH, 4 PM

Everyone is invited...

The Civic Broadway Singers will be singing at Salem for our annual Christmas Party, hosted by the United Methodist Women in Faith with help from the Nurture team. This free concert includes festive songs of the season both old and new. Following the concert join us for light refreshments and sweet treats.

You won't want to miss this great way to start the holiday season!

Questions? Call Gloria Rongstad
(262) 844-3309



The Nurture team is hosting a special Christmas Gathering for our New Perspective members, on Sun Dec 17th immediately following the church service in the fellowship hall.



Christmas Giving at Salem

November 12th – December 10th

Christmas Is Coming Quick!

It's that time of year again, to help share Salem's love of community, and generosity to our Waukesha neighbors. Salem's Outreach Team is asking for your help in supporting two local organizations that we are sure you are familiar with. As in the past, we are collecting for the Christmas Clearing Council and ERAs Senior Network. We want to make sure we give to both the young and the seniors in our community. We will be collecting the items from November 12th through December 10th. Our items will be presented by our youth, and blessed during Worship on December 10th.

Thank you, Salem for your support!



The **Christmas Clearing Council** has been helping families make Christmas happen for over 70 years!!! Salem will be holding a gift card and toy drive from Nov 12th through Dec 10th to benefit the Christmas Clearing Council's one-day Toy Shop. Any new, unwrapped toy or book for children ages birth to 11 are welcomed, as well as, \$20 gift cards to Walmart or Target for the teens. They are also asking for sleeping bags and blankets. *Place your items in the red toy barrel near the Outreach bulletin board.*



ERAs Senior Network's goal is to provide a package for approximately 400 local older adults through their Holiday Giving Program. Their aim is to provide each with \$50 in gift cards and a book of stamps. *Place your items in green basket near the Outreach bulletin board.*

Eras 2023 Wish list items:

- * Books of Forever Postage Stamps
- * \$10 Pick 'n Save Gift Cards
- * \$10 Walmart Gift Cards

Please include receipts with each gift card.



The **FOOD**
Pantry
SERVING WAUKESHA COUNTY

Join the Salem Food Pantry team!

We are in need of 2-3 new volunteers to help with our monthly shift (2nd Monday) at the Pantry. Our primary job is to help distribute food to the clients. Salem has been involved with the Pantry since it started 50+ years ago.

Help keep the tradition going by
joining the team.

Contact Debbi Oswalt for more information.

Snack Collection



The need for snacks continues throughout the year. Please continue to place snack items in the basket at the Happenings Center. They are delivered to the school on a regular basis.

***Salem is such a blessing to the children at
Hadfield School.***



THANK YOU

On behalf of Outreach,
a big thank you to all who
attended the service in

which Temba, our missionary, shared his message, and showed us some of the new and exciting projects at Mujila Falls. Thank you also, to those who brought a dish to pass and attended our brunch. We hope you had a chance to greet Temba personally. If you enjoyed the Outreach "pie desserts", be sure to watch for our fundraiser this summer when you will receive another piece of delicious pie for a donation to Mujila Falls. In a brief message to us, while still traveling in the states, Temba said meeting the people of Salem was one of the highlights of his trip. He wanted to meet the people whose generous donations made Salem House Dorm possible!



Salem's Knitting ministry invites you to bless others with a wrap of love. If you know someone who needs the comfort of one of our hand knit blankets, feel free to take one. The love wraps are located on the counter (right side) in front of the Sanctuary. We ask that you please sign our book, so that we know who is being blessed. Thanks!

Healing Hearts of Southeast Wisconsin

A HEARTFELT thank you from the Outreach team for the success of the Windy Hill Concert that took place on November 4th.

\$2034.00 was raised to benefit
Healing Hearts.



Nov 2023

Pastor Paola ~ all your helpers ~

Thank you so much for providing the
Yummy BBQ, mac + cheese + all the other good
stuff. We appreciate your support of our
Program.

Blessings

Amyl Prutz
Executive Assistant

We would also like to thank the many
volunteers that helped provide a meal for the
participants of Healing Hearts. They are very
grateful for the support we provide for
their program.



Send a senior a card

Let a senior know you are thinking about them.
Please put your signed cards indicating the
occasion on the front of the envelope in the box
on the counter in front of the office. We will
deliver them to a senior center. **Thank you!**



Chapel Service *Next Door*

December 20th

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Come worship with our neighbors at New Perspective! Pastor Paola will lead worship in the chapel on the 3rd floor. Communion will be served. Please arrive 15 minutes early to check in at the front desk.

Future services: Jan 17th & Feb 21



Please join us for Handbell Rehearsal every Wednesday night. Handbells meet at 6:30 pm

Volunteers Needed



We have a need for Greeters and Fellowship Snacks in the month of December. Please check out the sign up for fellowship refreshments at the snack counter and the greeter sign up at the Happenings Center.

Thank you!!!!



December Choir Schedule

Come and have fun and fellowship this Christmas season, we would love to have you in the choir!

Rehearsals - Wednesdays at 7:20 pm
Dec 13th and Dec 20th

Sing during Worship - Sunday
Dec 3rd - 9:00 am
Dec 24th - 9:00 am
Dec 24th - 4:00 pm
Dec 31st - 9:00 am (Pop-up Choir)

*If you have any questions, contact
Rev. Dr. Michelle Oberwise Lacock
at 630-336-2317*



We will be having a pop-up choir on

December 31st

Please join us...



Just a reminder about Fellowship Snacks....

Please take your leftovers home or make arrangements with someone to use them for another event. Thank you.



Save the date for the upcoming
Women In The Middle Retreat

February 23-February 24

Please join us for this time of reflection,
laughter and fellowship as we are led by a
former Salem member Chris Taylor to reflect on
our Lenten journey.

We will be gathering together at the beautiful
Siena Retreat Center in Racine from late Friday
afternoon through Saturday mid afternoon.
Attendees will each have their own room and
bathroom. Breakfast and lunch on Saturday is
included in the cost. Dinner on Friday TBD. The
cost of this event is \$140 per person with \$20
down payment due by January 1. If you plan on
joining us, complete an enrollment form
(located in the Happenings Center) and drop off
at the church office along with your down
payment no later than Jan 1.

More information will follow as we get closer to
the retreat. Please consider joining us!



New Books for a New Year!

Thanks to your wonderful donations to our
book sale, we have taken some of the books
that didn't sell and placed them in our library.

These include the following and more.

The Tattooist of Auschwitz, Hearts of Fire:
Eight Women in the Underground Church and
their Stories of Costly Faith, Hiding in the Light,
The Book of Lost Friends, and
Between Two Kingdoms.

We have also purchased some new books
which are on the table in front of the library.

Full descriptions for the new books will be
coming up in the January edition of Tidings.



- Thank you, Kari for ordering and replacing the pediatric defibrillator battery
- The Seegers are now on the contact persons for the burglar alarm.
- Dave put together the chair carts. We thank him for that.
- We are taking bids for lawn service please contact one of the trustees if you know of a company.
- We ordered 2 more chair carts and are in the process of getting rid of the big chair rack.
- Jim Seegers is building and putting shelves in the closet in Fellowship Hall. Please try to remove any unwanted items by 12/2 (Hanging of the Greens) so we can make it easier for him to measure and start.
- NO Trustee meeting in December
- We are in the process of improving the outdoor lighting around the driveway and entrances. We are hoping to get an estimate on replacing the outdoor lights with LED in the parking lot and also ask what can be done with the poor lighting by the driveway.



We are taking orders for Kwik Trip cards through
DEC 3RD. This will also be the order for cards for

Christmas gifts. These make great stocking
stuffers, gifts for students, and for that person
you want to give a thank you to. Denominations
available are **\$10,20,25,50,100,200**. Sign up in the
narthex or email Kermit at

kbohning1@gmail.com. Make checks payable to

Salem and note Kwik Trip in the memo.

Cards will be available for pickup on **DEC 10TH**.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!!