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Salem English Lutheran Church

April-May 2021

## The In-Between Time...The "Not Yet"



The light at the end of the pandemic tunnel is getting brighter and the hope that comes with this is exciting. "But we're not there yet", is what we keep hearing. (wah wah wah) While this triggers frustration, it should also be familiar. As followers of Jesus, as beloved of God, we understand the idea of "not yet" don't we? In fact, I am pretty certain that we are somewhat experts at this gray area. Our lives are lived in the "now and not yet". We've been walking through the gospel of Luke since September and I am willing to bet that if the author of Luke were sitting on a panel discussion, that he would say that one of his over-arching points is that God's Kin-dom is here and now...and not yet.

Sometimes though, this in-between time is hard. We've been waiting so long and working so hard—we need an end. More than that, we are so fatigued from working and waiting that trying to navigate even the small things becomes difficult. Traversing through the growing list of things we can do and those we still shouldn't do, becomes arduous and we feel like it's too hard to take the forward steps we can, so instead we stay put.

I will confess, I feel this way about gospel work sometimes too. There are days when the weariness sets in and I wonder if the steps forward we take are worth it, since we know the Kin-dom cannot come to fruition in our world.

Yes, the gray area can be frustrating and difficult. But that doesn't change that it is...the gray area is real. So how do we lean into it? How do we stay focused on what we can do and not fall into despair about what we cannot do?

One of my favorite rituals in the church is the Easter Vigil. The Easter Vigil is a service for the in-between time. It marks the time Jesus was dead and his victory (that we KNOW is coming) was "not yet". It is filled with the lighting of candles (the light of Christ) and the stories of God's presence even in the "not yet", like the fiery furnace. The Vigil ends as Easter begins and we hear the first Alleluias.

I love the Easter Vigil because it echoes the everyday life we live in the gray area of the "now and not yet". There is waiting but it is an active waiting in which we tell stories and remember...because those things help us to be mindful that we are Easter people.

The light at the end of the pandemic tunnel is getting brighter and the waiting is getting harder. But we are people of the in-between time in the Kin-dom of God. We know this space. Leaning into this space is, as my 13 year old might say, "how we roll". It does take effort though...just like our gospel work does. We need to prepare and be willing to take the small steps that may feel inconsequential and odd after all this time. I mean, I don't know if you've tried it yet, but there is a delightful awkwardness to things that used to be second nature...like eating in a restaurant or having in-person conversations outside your bubble. We will figure it out—with some practice— and while these little things may seem trivial, they are vital for our lives together in the future post-pandemic world.

So, as we continue to be committed to being safe for everyone, we will continue to tell the stories of God's faithful love—as we have done throughout. We will continue to meet for coffee hour—as awkward as it may occasionally feel—because it reminds us of who we are. We will also prepare for a time when the light at the end of the tunnel arrives by taking small steps forward as we can. Maybe it's a short gathering on the lawn for ice cream or a Bible study outdoors...all of these things can serve as our "pandemic's end vigil". They can be the things we do to move the "normal" forward and to mark the time of "not yet" together.

It's been over a year now, and I miss seeing you all in person. But I am excited about the light that will bring us back together...even in the small ways...in the weeks and months to come!

*Be Well and Hope Much! -Pastor Rhonda*

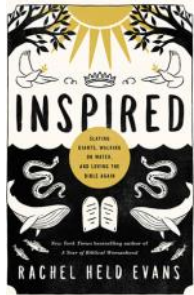


### Holy Week Worship

**Maundy Thursday April 1-7 pm** Zoom Worship in the Salem Zoom Worship Room

**Good Friday April 2-** A recorded worship/devotions will be available on our YouTube channel for you to worship when you choose. Watch your email for the YouTube link on Friday.

# Salem News



## Book Study Returns

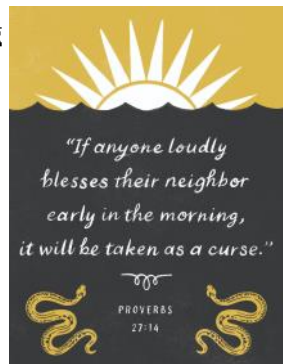
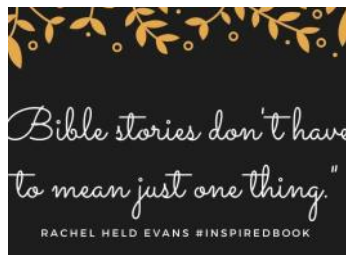
Let's try this again! Last summer we planned to spend time in Rachel Held Evans book "Inspired", but plans changed...let's try it again.

*Join us every other Sunday at 4 pm, beginning May 2, for this book study.*

*To sign up—watch for the link in the e-blast or contact Pastor Rhonda in the office.*

"Drawing on the best in recent scholarship and using her well honed literary expertise, Evans examines some of our favorite Bible stories and possible interpretations, retelling them through memoir, original poetry, short stories, soliloquies, and even a short screenplay.

Undaunted by the Bible's most difficult passages, Evans wrestles through the process of doubting, imagining, and debating Scripture's mysteries."



## Stewardship Corner

The stewardship corner for April and May are simply a word of gratitude for the faithfulness with which you, all of you, have continued to give to our community of faith. Your willingness to help, to participate whenever asked, and yes, the generous giving that you continue to do, is appreciated and inspiring. Checks in the mail, online giving, and special gifts that you so graciously offer, keep our community in a good place to do the ministry we are called to do. So, thank you. Just thank you.

*It Matters...*



## Council Corner

### Highlights from March's Meeting:

- ♦ Salem's finances continue to look good. Giving was slightly overbudget.
- ♦ Faith and Neighborhood Synod Cohort Program – The Minneapolis Synod and is accepting applications for a congregational learning program on faith practices and neighboring practices. Council decided to apply to be one of the 15 Minneapolis Synod congregations in the program.
- ♦ Holy Week worship schedule was discussed
- ♦ COVID restrictions and return to worship: The current expectation is that we will not worship together in the building until next fall. The SH team will be meeting soon to talk about a timeline and procedures.
- ♦ We plan to offer three outdoor summer events for gathering and fellowship.

To see the minutes from the council meeting, right click on the links below, or contact the church office for a copy.

[March Council Minutes](#)

[March Treasurer Report](#)

[Feb Financials prepared for March Council Meeting](#)



**board meeting**

## SpringHouse Board Highlights

The SpringHouse Board met on Sunday, March 21, via Zoom. Highlights of the meeting included the following:

- ♦ Dates for SH board meetings for the rest of 2021 were established. Regular meetings will be on May 30, August 29 and November 14; business meetings, if necessary, on April 25, June 27, and September 26. Meetings are scheduled for 2 pm via Zoom at this point.
- ♦ A draft of a newly revised Kitchen Contract for SpringHouse was presented by the Building Committee. The board voted to approve the draft and thanked Mike Cackoski for his work on this project.
- ♦ Two rental groups have inquired about returning to SH, and the board discussed reopening plans. Rev. Rhonda Hlavinka will convene a meeting of the SH pastors, key SpringHouse staff, and a representative from each congregation to draw up reopening plans and timetables.

## More News

### COVID 19 Update

The light at the end of the pandemic tunnel is getting closer and closer. More people are being vaccinated each day, treatments are proving to be effective, and restrictions are being lifted all around us. BUT, we are not quite there yet. Here is a brief update.

Pastor Rhonda met with over 100 other leaders in the MPLS Synod just last week with members of synod churches that work for the Minnesota Department of Health and HCMC who delivered good news and bad news. They said it is just not safe YET to meet inside in person for worship. AND they said that "Anything outside is OK" (even singing masked). Our Synod and the ELCA churchwide agree and encourage us to move forward with caution.

**The SpringHouse Safe Return team will be meeting in April** to talk about a possible timeline and procedures for opening the building for groups that are in need (like our small NA groups) and ultimately worship. But we are still looking at fall as our goal for in person worship in the building.

**Salem will be planning some outdoor fellowship and even worship events over the summer** to help us acclimate to being together again. Watch weekly e-blasts and announcements for information as it becomes available.



### Soil & Spirit Day Camp

#### Join us for South MPLS Day Camp, June 21-25!

This year, our theme is "Soil and Spirit." As we sing, pray, and listen to stories from Scripture together, our kids will be grounded in the Spirit's work in creation - renewing and sustaining life. As we make art and learn about gardening, our kids will get their hands in the dirt and learn about soil, seeds, plants and pollinators through a number of activities. Camp is for children entering kindergarten through high school, with a separate middle and high school track and opportunities for high school leadership with the younger kids.

**Due to the unknowns related to the continuing pandemic and vaccine roll-out, we are planning to offer camp fully online, with at least one outdoor, in-person evening gathering opportunity for every kid (with an option for the whole family to join) from 6:30-8 pm on T, W or Th.** Our online camp will include live Zoom gatherings from 9-10 am M-F, which will involve songs, ASL learning, prayer time, and learning about our theme. We will have further content on our website with daily art, storytelling, and gardening videos. Everything will be ASL interpreted. We will also have a closing celebration on Friday, June 25, which will be outdoor and in-person. At any outdoor in-person events, we will have safe protocols in place, including a mask requirement and physical distancing.

To register for this awesome summer tradition—right click on the link below or contact Pastor Rhonda.

#### [Soil and Spirit Online Registration](https://sites.google.com/view/southminneapolisdaycamp2021/registration)

<https://sites.google.com/view/southminneapolisdaycamp2021/registration>

### NARRATIVE LECTIONARY

4/1: Maundy Thursday Luke 22:1-27: –The Last Supper  
 4/2: Good Friday Luke 23:32-47: –Crucifixion  
 4/4: Luke 24:1-12: –Resurrection  
 4/11: Luke 24:13-35- Road to Emmaus  
 4/18: Acts 6:1–7:2a; 7:44–60–Steven's Witness  
 4/25: Acts 8:26–39–Phillip Baptizes the Ethiopian  
 5/2: Acts 15:1-18 - Council at Jerusalem  
 5/9: Galatians 1:13-17; 2:11-21– Living by Faith  
 5/16: Galatians 3:1-9, 23-29–One in Christ  
 5/23: PENTECOST–Acts 2:1-4; Galatians 4:1-7–Fruits of the Spirit



# Faith in the World

## LIRS FAQ: WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH IMMIGRANT CHILDREN AT THE SOUTHERN BORDER?

Since April 2020, we have seen steady increases of families and children arriving at our southern border seeking protection from violence and environmental disasters that have ravaged Central America and beyond. Most acutely, there has been a significant increase in the number of children arriving without a parent or guardian. While current policy generally does not permit migrants from entering the U.S. through the southern border, there is an exception for “unaccompanied children” and they are supposed to receive certain protections and care under the law. The influx of children has resulted in hundreds of children arriving in the U.S. per day, and thousands in Customs and Border Protection custody.



LIRS

80 Years  
of Welcome



### ***Who are the children at the border?***

The children are largely from the Northern Triangle, which includes El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Many come to the United States without a parent or guardian in search of safety and range in age, with some children as young as six or seven years old. A majority of the children (approximately 85-90 percent) have a parent or guardian in the United States and are seeking refuge and reunification with their families.

Other children are coming to the United States with their families, but they are currently being expelled immediately under Title 42, a Trump administration-era public health directive.

### ***Why are they coming now?***

Historically, migration ebbs and flows. Several factors have coalesced in 2020 and early 2021 to create an emergency situation requiring children to seek safety outside of their home country, including:

- ◆ Community violence
- ◆ Political unrest and corruption
- ◆ Climate crises, including hurricanes Eta and Iota
- ◆ Pandemic-related challenges

They are, in many cases, fleeing for their lives. Under the Trump administration, the children were being immediately expelled without due process. Now, their safety is the priority.

### ***What happens when unaccompanied children arrive in the U.S.?***

By law, children are supposed to receive certain protection and care. When children arrive on their own, they are first processed by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and transferred as quickly as possible to the Health and Human Service’s Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) – an agency with child welfare expertise.

Once in their custody, ORR cares for the children through its network of providers, including Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), until they can be safely united with their vetted sponsor. Typically, this can take a few weeks, because it takes time to vet sponsors and ensure that the home will be a safe environment for children.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement prioritizes environments that consider the best interests of the children – where they have access to case managers, medical care, and legal services providers. At Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, our model recognizes these children are not just in our custody, but in our care, and we train and support foster care parents to care for children in family-like settings until they can be united with their sponsor.

### ***What is different about what’s happening now?***

Problems can arise when the ORR network is at full capacity, as it currently is due to pandemic constraints and necessary compliance with public health guidelines. When this is the case, children can’t be transferred from CBP to ORR custody quickly, and instead spend prolonged periods in CBP facilities, which were never designed to care for children.

Additionally, the past four years under the Trump administration significantly depleted our immigration infrastructure, and specifically the capacity to care for children. It takes time to rebuild. While we are working as quickly as possible, there are certain legal requirements that must be met.

### ***What are the temporary shelters?***

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), with support from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the American Red Cross, and faith-based partners have opened temporary influx facilities to move children out of CBP detention. These temporary facilities provide children with a safe place to sleep, eat, tend to personal hygiene, and offer activities and certain supports while ORR builds its licensed bed capacity. Because these facilities are temporary in nature, they are not licensed.

As LIRS has previously testified to before Congress, facilities like Homestead present significant risks to the care of children.

### ***What is LIRS doing to help?***

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is urgently working with our network of service partners, community groups, and volunteers to address the critical needs of these children and work to reunite them with a family member here in the United States.

### ***How can I help?***

There are a number of actions supporters can take to help unaccompanied children at the border. We invite you to support this work however you can – through donations, prayers, advocacy, or even applying to become a foster parent. We ask, too, that you work with us to promote compassion, empathy, and education. Children at the border, like all children, deserve love, safety, and support, and we ask you to join us in celebrating their safety and welcoming them into our country and our community. We invite you to download our Hope for the Southern Border Toolkit, which shares more about how you can get involved.

To find out more or to help—go to [www.lirs.org](http://www.lirs.org)



# Sunday School, Children's Ministry, and Youth

## Children's Ministry/Sunday School



Springhouse Sunday School continues to meet every Sunday morning via our ZOOM Squiggle Space.

If you have not been able to join us—it's not too late—you are always welcome!

Beginning April 11, we will begin a new 4 week curriculum from Illustrated Ministry called "The Lord's Prayer". Come and learn more about the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to pray!

If you need the ZOOM link, contact Pastor Rhonda and she will make sure you get it!



## Prayer Corner



As the light at the end of the pandemic tunnel gets closer, Nadia Bolz-Weber offers us this prayer.

### Who are we now, after a year of this?

By Nadia Bolz-Weber

Dear God who made us all,

A year ago we did not know that we were about to learn:  
what we could lose and somehow live anyway  
where we would find comfort and where it would elude us  
whose lives matter to whom  
why we have kitchens in our homes.  
In mid-March 2020 all I knew for sure is that  
hoarding toilet paper doesn't make you safe-  
it just makes you selfish.

But God, it feels like the world is about to open back up.

And I'm both thrilled and kind of scared about that.

Because I'm not who I was a year ago.

I want so badly to hug my friends again

and laugh like hell again,

and have amazing conversations again

and yet I am not sure how long I could do any of this

before crying or just getting really quiet.

My emotional protective gear has worn so thin,

and grief just leaks out everywhere now.

I am so afraid that I will never be who I once was.

And I am also afraid that I will be.

(Not to mention, I'm not entirely clear what size jeans I wear  
as the me I am now)

And yet, when I quiet my anxious thoughts, I start to suspect  
that I am now closer to the me you have always known  
and always loved. So help me trust that, Lord.

As things change, help us be gentle with ourselves  
and with each other.

We are all wearing newborn skin right now.

Amen.

## Youth News

Youth Group is happening! We decided that with Zoom fatigue and busy spring schedules we would meet once a month for Zoom youth group on Sunday evenings at 7 pm. After meeting this past week, our next Zoom Youth Group will be Sunday April 25.

We are also planning to have one group evening either in person outside or online if it is a project we are working on. The plan for May is MINI GOLF—or something similar. Watch for updates via email and e-blast!



## Stop Line 3 Youth Outing

The youth of SpringHouse plan to take a drive to stand with the community opposing Line 3 at this important time. They will leave in the morning on April 10 and return that afternoon. Social distancing and masks will be observed even



as the event is outside. In addition to taking a stand for eco-justice, they will be working on a project for Earth Day that the congregations can use in worship.



# Calendar

In this disrupted time, we're doing the calendar a little differently, highlighting events that take place weekly. Be sure to check the rest of the Scene for one-time events!

## Sunday

- 9:30 am Salem Live Stream Worship on YouTube
- 9:30 am Zoom Squiggle Space Sunday School
- 10:30 am Salem Fellowship via Zoom
- 7:00 pm Youth Zoom (4/25)

## Tuesday

- 8:15 am Lectionary Bible Study via Zoom

See page 1 for Holy Week service information

## An Invitation to Join the Nerd Squad Collective!

A formal invitation has been extended from our friends at Lyndale UCC to join their Nerd Squad Collective...

I am writing to extend the invite to members and including and especially youth of First and Salem to join the Lyndale Nerd Squad Collective. We have been sacredly reading and discussing the *Harry Potter* books, following the model of the podcast *Harry Potter and the Sacred Text*. Just like the sacred texts we read in worship, we know that *Harry Potter* is not perfect and in fact has brought harm to certain people AND we also know the stories can generate love and community. **We meet via zoom the fourth Monday of each month (April 25)** to discuss chapters of the books through a theme, do sacred reading practices like *Lectio Divina* with the text and bless the characters. **We are just about to start the fourth book, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* in April. If people would like to learn more or simply get on the list to join the discussion, they can reach out to Claire Klein at [claire.klein280@gmail.com](mailto:claire.klein280@gmail.com).**



# ZOOM HOUSE

## 2021 ZOOM House Virtual Fundraising Gala

Save the date for April 17 at 7 PM for the 2021 *Beyond Shelter Virtual Gala* and participate all that weekend in the silent auction. Zoom House has an inspiring program that includes several resident stories, speakers and much more. ZOOM House is focused on helping families transition out of homelessness and has helped families find hope and stability since 1997. *Your support makes a meaningful difference in the lives of ZOOM House residents.*

While participation in the virtual gala is free this year, there are several ways to support the event. Find more information at <https://www.thezoomhouse.org/2021-gala> or contact [gala@thezoomhouse.org](mailto:gala@thezoomhouse.org) or 612-825-2825 if you have any questions.

Not able to make it? Make a donation instead!

## Birthdays!

Wish these Salem members and friends a happy birthday! If you're new to Salem and would like your birthday listed, please contact Laurie in the office.

Elaine Reed – 4/18

Scott Rusten – 5/12

Luke Pena – 4/21

Frank Buzzell – 5/17

Melissa Anderson – 5/1

Chris Nordeen – 5/19

LaVina Giinther – 5/6

Ava Melton-Meaux – 5/20

Emily Chesley – 5/12

Rae Buzzell – 5/23





610 West 28th Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55408

**Salem English Lutheran Church**  
*is a Reconciling in Christ*  
*(R.L.C.) Congregation*  
We are a Spirit-led, welcoming, and bold  
Christian community rooted in the neighborhood,  
striving to live faithfully in God's world.

612-872-4650

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