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Salem English Lutheran Church

January-February 2022

Look Up for Epiphany



My *Living Lutheran* magazine came the other day and the cover article “Epiphany: A Time to Pay Attention” caught my eye. Chris Michaelis wrote a wonderful piece about Epiphany and walks in the neighborhood with his 2 year-old son. It made me stop and delete what I had already written for this space and start over. He says ***“Most of us think of an epiphany as a flash of insight, but what if Epiphany is an invitation to notice the beauty and brilliance of what’s already there?”***

The season of Epiphany calls to me because it’s a season of light, of learning, of seeing and discovering. It begins in January when Minnesota winter hits hard and the days are short and sometimes the cold and dark get to be a lot. So this season of seeing and light, of beauty and brilliance, feels especially enticing...and so very needed.

Pastor Michaelis’s article, where he talks about taking walks with his 2-year-old son, made me think about my own kids. My boys used to be so curious about the world and excited about everything they encountered...just like he describes his son on their walks. They would chatter from the backseat of the car about everything we passed. I would often get tired of “Mama, what’s that?” and “Mama, look!”. They used to...but they’re teenagers now—they’re different.

Last month we went to a wedding and the drive was about an hour from home to a place we had never been. As I drove, I noticed all kinds of interesting things and pointed them out. Halfway there I noticed that if the boys looked up at all, it was too late and we had already passed what I was trying to share with them. I’m not sure they looked out the window the entire trip.

What happened to “Mama, look!”? Their phones. Like many of us, they were so engrossed in the screen in their hands, they forgot the world was going by around them. As I think about this, I realize that it’s not just phones...in fact, it’s not just things at all. There comes a time when all of us lose that 2-year-old curiosity and wonder about the world and we just stop looking...phone in hand or not. There are times I can be walking in a most beautiful part of creation and not see a thing around me because I just stopped looking. I’m busy thinking of work or kids or dishes or the global pandemic that just won’t go away...and the world just fades into the background.

January 2022 brings with it a lot of weariness. We are tired because of the holiday season. We are cold and the shorter winter days make us feel dreary. The pandemic feels like it will go on forever.

And amidst all these things we are expected to do the daily business of living.

The challenge we face this Epiphany is to look up so we can see. I am coming to realize that this season of light, of revelation, of manifestation, of learning and seeing has perfect timing. We can all use a call to look up and notice...because beauty and brilliance, light and hope, haven’t gone away, we have just let the moments and pieces of the world where we get to see them fade into the background. The reality is that God is all around us. Beauty and generosity, love and restoration, all of these wonders, are all around us. The light shines and God is revealed all over the place—if only we will look up and see.

We do often think that an “epiphany” is a bright flash of brilliance that happens in a quick moment. But I want to thank *Living Lutheran* and Chris Michaelis for reminding us that instead of a quick moment of light - Epiphany is more about learning to see the light that shines in the world because Jesus was born and God’s love became manifest, concrete, tangible, knowable, and accessible to all of us.

Look up! Look up from your phone or your computer or your book. Look up from the work in your head and the family schedules. Look up from the news of the world. Look up from the shadow of the pandemic. Look up and see. Look up and see the world around you. Look up and see the beauty and generosity, the love and the neighboring. Look up and see that baby in a manger for whom we light candles and sing. Look up and be gifted with the very presence of God—who is very much in the world to see.

Blessings this Epiphany season. May you look up and see all the hope and brilliance God has been waiting to show you.

Look Up! Be Well!

—Pastor Rhonda

Epiphany

Salem News

Salem Annual Meeting

This year's annual meeting will take place on Sunday, January 30 immediately following worship. Here is what you need to know:



- ♦ Sunday January 30, 2022 at 10:45 am. (This will be a hybrid meeting in person and on ZOOM.)
- ♦ *All information will be sent to you in the same way you receive the Scene newsletter, either via email or USPS.* If you would prefer a different method of delivery, contact Laurie in the office by January 15.
- ♦ *If you would like to attend the annual meeting in person, please make sure to RSVP for worship on Sunday January 30.* Limited spots will be available due to COVID restrictions and Salem council will hold some of the space as needed. The meeting will be live on Zoom for everyone who is not attending in person.

Safe Reopening Update

As we continue to watch COVID news dominate the headlines, you can be sure that we are both taking the health and safety of everyone at Salem and SpringHouse seriously AND doing everything we can to keep moving forward in our gathering.



Our gathering in limited numbers during Advent and Christmas was wildly successful and *we will continue to welcome worshipers into the building on Sunday while offering online worship at the same time.* Because of the Omicron variant of the virus, we do not feel like we can "open" to the wider community as of yet, but will continue to be open for members and friends who are fully vaccinated, masked, and who RSVP for planning purposes. (This includes friends and visitors who would come with you to worship.)

Make sure to check the e-blast and weekly announcements for ways to RSVP and for any updates in our plans.

Council Corner

Highlights from the December Meeting:

- ♦ A report from the Faith Practices & Neighboring Practices team introduced us to some of the things to look forward to that they will be sharing with us in the New Year.
- ♦ Giving continues to be down. As of December 1, we are \$8435 in the red. Several members have inquired about making year-end gifts, and we expect the deficit to shrink significantly before year-end.
- ♦ Office Report: Laurie is recovering well after a medical procedure and will resume coming into the office once a week starting the first week of January. The deadline for submitting materials for the annual meeting is January 14.
- ♦ The Christmas letter will go out the week of December 15.
- ♦ Council finalized the Salem budget. There was a motion to present the budget to the congregation at the annual meeting. Motion was seconded and passed.



NARRATIVE LECTIONARY

Narrative Lectionary Scripture Calendar

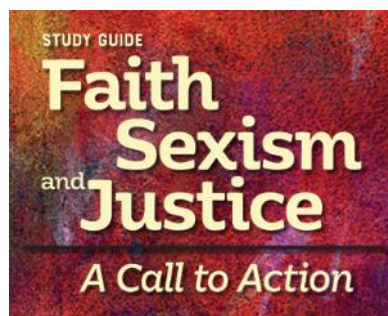
The narrative lectionary story arc continues as we move into winter. As we enter a new year we jump into the gospel of John. Here are the readings for the weeks ahead:

- 1/9: **Wedding at Cana** - John 2:1-11 (*Psalm 104:14-16*)
- 1/16: **Jesus Cleanses the Temple** - John 2:13-25 (*Psalm 127:1-2*)
- 1/23: **Nicodemus**—John 3:1-21 (*Psalm 139:13-18*)
- 1/30: **Woman at the Well** - John 4:1-3 (*Psalm 42:1-3*)
- 2/6: **Healing Stories** - John 4:46-54 [5:1-18] (*Psalm 40:1-5*)
- 2/13: **Bread of Life** - John 6:35-59 (*Psalm 34:1-10*)
- 2/20: **Living Water**—John 7:37-52 (*Psalm 147:1-11*)
- 2/27: **The Man Born Blind**—John 9:1-41 (*Psalm 27:1-4*)

More News

Sunday Morning Adult Study in February

Way back in 2017, Salem took part in a study that was part of the seven year ELCA-wide conversation/process leading to the formation of our newest social statement, "Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action." It's time to take a closer look at the final version adopted at the 2019 ELCA National Gathering.



"The social statement is designed to help people hear God's promise of abundant life and call for justice, see the complex harm caused by sexism, and pursue gender justice through personal and collective actions."

A study guide on the social statements, its meaning, and its call, was recently released to offer congregations a chance to enter the conversation again. The topics will include: the call to lives of justice, how patriarchy and sexism involves everyone, language and images of God, creation's diversity, and Lutheran insights on gender justice. It's bound to be good conversation!

Come and join us as explore this newest social statement together during the month of February. **We will meet on Sunday mornings (February 6, 13, 20, & 27) following worship at 11 am in-person and on Zoom.** Simply stay after worship or switch over from YouTube to Zoom if you are home. **No experience necessary, no homework, and ALL are welcome to be part of this conversation!**

SpringHouse Annual Meeting

The annual SpringHouse Meeting will be held immediately following our Salem Annual Meeting on Sunday January 30 at 12 pm via Zoom. For those attending the Salem Annual Meeting in person, you will be able to attend this Zoom meeting in the sanctuary via Zoom.



Poinsettias were given to beautify Salem's Christmas worship by

LeVina Giinther & family
In memory of John Giinther

Linda Hanson
In memory of loved ones

Rhonda, Bob, Clark, and Jack Hlavinka
*In memory of Jackie & Doug Buckman
 (Rhonda's parents)*

Roger & Barb Livdahl
In memory of our parents

Michelle Ruppert Madsen
In honor of Ruppert nieces & nephews

Mary Patterson
In memory of loved ones

Kari Podenski
*In memory of Tom Podenski
 In honor of Sarah & Jake Sinderbrand
 and Zachary, Christina, Carlo, and Marie Podenski*

Sarah & Jake Sinderbrand
In memory of Tom Podenski

Diann Uzelac
In memory of Mark & Elaine Uzelac



News

Myra Gives an FP&NP Update

All of the FP&NP cohorts met in December for their quarterly all day retreat...and it was very good. Here are some of the highlights.

We were excited to meet with our cohort’s spiritual director for the first time! The main focus of this meditative time was an introduction to a very interesting graphic called “the Tree of Contemplative Practices”. The short time we were able to spend looking at these faith practices, gave us a great visual of spiritual practices we are already doing (even if we didn’t know it) and ones we want/could do in the future.

We continued to work on praying the Psalms and we are excited to begin using them again in worship at Salem and seeing the different ways we can use them.

We spent part of the afternoon talking about storytelling for community formation. “We are storytelling creatures...stories are central to the development of human communities.” The team is excited to see where Salem and SpringHouse can focus on our individual and shared stories over the next year.

The final “learning” part of our day was a conversation about moving from being “*networks of programming*” to “*communities of practice*”.



The discussion concluded with our teams looking at some of the questions we all will spend time with for the next 2 years. What is essential? What is our vocational identity? What practices will deepen our relationships with God and neighbor?

Our team is excited to bring you more of what we are learning and experiencing on this journey together as the New Year begins and as we grow in our faith practices and our neighboring practices together.



Meet the FP&NP Team

We decided you should get to know your Faith Practices and Neighboring Practices Team. This Scene will help you get to know two of our five team members, but watch for the next Scene to round out the crew.

Myra Urness Rusten

I have been a part of the Salem community for a long time. I was baptized at Salem in 1954 and spent 4 years here as a child then returned as an adult when my grandma Esther Peterson, who was a long time member of Salem, asked me to take her to church. (Although she was really taking me.) My Dad and his siblings were all confirmed at Salem and I believe my grandparents on that side were custodians here at one time.

I agreed to join the synods Faith Practices & Neighboring Practices team because I felt that the synod could help us grow where we didn't think to grow on our own. To be one of the churches chosen for this opportunity seemed like a great chance to grow individually, as a congregation, and as the wider community of SpringHouse.

Anna Bliss

I grew up Lutheran but now sit in the next pew over with the First Christian Church - Mpls folks at Springhouse. I wrote my master’s thesis about using art in neighborhood revitalization and have stayed curious about the intersections and overlaps between geographic neighborhoods and the less geographic-driven nature of communities. The Faith Practices & Neighboring Practices project is yet another way to explore this - how to **be** community and **in** community as people of faith at Springhouse, in our neighborhood, and how to help **build** community that honors what is important to the communities in our neighborhoods as well as that of Salem and Springhouse.

More News



Praying the Psalms Part II

The Faith Practices & Neighboring Practice cohorts have been focusing on several faith practices over the first several months of their time together. One of the main focuses has been exploring the Psalms and how they can be a spiritual practice for us as a community and as individuals.

The Psalms have long been central to the prayer life of the Jewish people and Christians alike. When we pray the Psalms, we add our prayers to those who have come before us – the heroes and heroines of the faith, our elders and ancestors, and Jesus himself. We also add our prayers to those who pray the Psalms today, the many faithful across the globe.

While we may be tempted to approach this book of the Bible like we would any other, the truth is that the Psalms long to be prayed, chanted, sung, painted, pictured, and lifted not simply analyzed and studied. Rolf Jacobson, Professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary says that if you are looking for scripture that is relevant to you or that resonates with you, simply “start reading the Psalms and stop when you get there.” There is a Psalm for everyone and every situation, so just start reading...their richness will meet you where you are.

Beginning with the season of Epiphany we will be introducing the Psalms back into our worship at Salem. When the Narrative Lectionary uses a gospel text for its main text, it offers a Psalm as a companion text. We will be exploring many different ways to encounter these wonderful texts as a community and encouraging you to see where they may lead you in your own spiritual practice.

Types of Psalms

The very first things the teams spent time discovering is that there are many different genres of Psalms. As we use them in spiritual practice, it is important to know the most common forms and their theological significance. Here is a quick guide to the various types of Psalms provided by our synod leaders.

Psalms of Praise – These Psalms speak of God’s goodness and power, where we as pray-ers give our whole selves joyfully to God. Ex. **“Hallelujah! Praise the Lord, O my soul!”** – Psalm 146

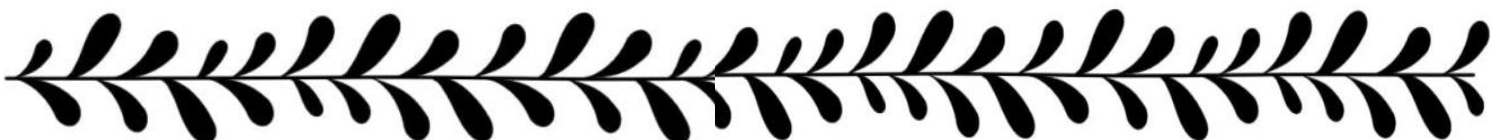
Psalms of Lament – These Psalms cry out for God’s deliverance, and sometimes wonder at God’s seeming inaction. In them we remember that God hears our cries in the midst of struggle and suffering. Ex. **“O God, do not be silent; do not keep still nor hold your peace, O God.”** – Psalm 83

Psalms of Gratitude – These Psalms offer thanksgiving to God who hears our cries and transforms our sorrows. Again, we remember that God is with us and has the power to change the reality we are facing. Ex. **“Give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good, for God’s mercy endures forever.”** – Psalm 107



Psalms of Forgiveness – These Psalms seek out God’s mercy, trusting that God forgives, not because we are worthy, but because God is compassionate. Ex. **“Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger; do not punish me in your wrath”** – Psalm 6

Psalms of Trust – These Psalms speak of the trust we have in God’s love, protection, and the comfort we can take in God’s mercy and power. Ex. **“The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not be in want.”** – Psalm 23.



Caring for Others



Stretch Your Eco-Faith Muscles!

As our churches contemplate a return to a “new normal”, *we are seeking new members to make the Green Team a truly Springhouse team.* Join us as we work toward our 2022 goals. Everyone interested in planning hands-on projects to protect our environment and work towards environmental justice is welcome to join us via *monthly zoom meetings.* Currently we are working on service projects like restarting the Springhouse garden, joining the Lower Phalen Creek project to help restore some sacred Dakota land and educating Springhouse members on ways we as individuals can help heal our world. If interested, *please contact Melia Derrick at runningbird68@aol.com to be added to our email list.*

Christ the King Altar

Using several of her pastoral stoles and Salem’s pastoral stoles, Pastor Rhonda created a wonderful visual of the church year for our Christ the King Service of Lessons and Carols. What a wonderful picture of the liturgical year!



Sunday School

Kids Invited!

Tune in to our Zoom call on Sunday mornings! The Zoom call opens at 9:20 am,

and we start at 9:30 with our Gathering Time - talking about our blessings and what we’re grateful for until about 9:40 am. Then it’s STORY TIME FROM THE SQUIGGLE SPACE!!!

We will have someone reading a children’s story to you - a different story and reader each week. After the story, there will be an activity that everyone can do together. How fun is that?

Want to be a Story Reader? We could use your help—and it’s EASY! Parents, Guardians, Grandmas, Grandpas, Aunts, Uncles, other Adults and Youth: we will need a lot of volunteer readers. Readers can be in our Zoom Squiggle space live on Sunday with us ***OR readers can record themselves reading their story*** (or we can record it for you by scheduling an individual Zoom call at any time) and we will simply share the recording of your story during our Squiggle Space time.

Watch for details about how to access the recordings of our stories in our new online story library coming soon!

Questions? Talk with Pastor Rhonda or Deb - or both! The Zoom link is emailed to families each week, usually on Saturday. If you are not getting the email or if you want to be added to our list of Child Ministries families, please email Deb (deb.murphy@fccmpls.org) or Pastor Rhonda.



Youth Minister Search

Now that the New Year has come, the job description for the SpringHouse Youth Minister is being updated and distributed with hopes to get candidates to interview in the next month or two.



BibleProject

A New Way to Tell an Ancient Story

Those of you have been in worship over the past couple of years have been given the opportunity to enjoy some of the videos the Bible Project has produced about the books of the Bible. They have a wonderful, entertaining, and theologically sound way of bringing the Bible to life and has been a great tool for us as we have journeyed together through the Narrative Lectionary.

Last month they made a big announcement that came with an invitation:

We are an education technology company that produces media to help people encounter the Bible like never before. Everything we make is available for free because of the generous support of people like you. Together, we're helping people everywhere experience the unified story of Jesus.

When we read the Bible the way it was designed, we discover a unified story. We're building a reading journey that equips you with the skills to see the larger story of the Bible, every time you read.

You're invited to experience the Bible in a new way on the BibleProject app. Begin a guided journey through the literary beauty of Scripture, learn to identify biblical themes, and watch and listen to our entire library of videos and podcasts in one place at any time. **Download in your app store today to get started!**

**"We are a Spirit-led, welcoming,
and bold Christian community,
rooted in the neighborhood
and striving to live faithfully in God's
world."**

Salem Mission Statement

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

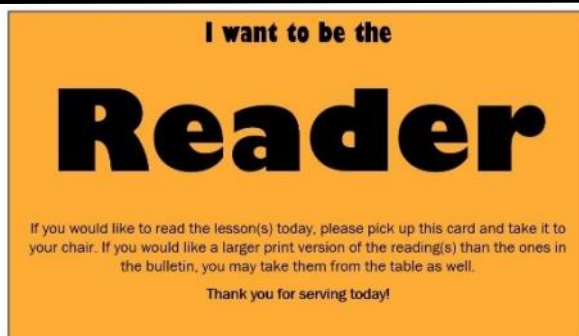
- 9:30 am Salem Worship In Person and on YouTube
- 9:30 am Story Time from the Squiggle Space on Zoom
- 11:00 am Adult Study (Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27)

Tuesday

- 8:15 am Lectionary Bible Study via Zoom

Sunday, January 30

- 10:45 am Salem Annual Meeting (see p. 2 for details)
- 12:00 pm SpringHouse Annual Meeting (see p. 3 for details)



Help Out at Worship!

If you would like to read the scripture during worship, and are attending in person, please pick up the reader card when you come in. We are excited to have people participate again!

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.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Karen Pieper – 1/5 | Axel Jorstad – 2/8 |
| Ian Evans – 1/11 | Ingrid Jorstad – 2/17 |
| Mary Johnson – 1/28 | Austin Tollerson – 2/18 |
| Paul West – 1/31 | Solveig Tollerson – 2/22 |
| Chris Wick – 2/6 | Mary Patterson – 2/28 |



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

Pastor:	Rhonda Hlavinka	Office:	Laurie Zaepfel	Rev: rhonda@discoversalem.org
Office:	Tom Pieper	Office:	Laurie Zaepfel	Rev: rhonda@discoversalem.org
Jazz Music:	Traditional Music	Office:	Laurie Zaepfel	Rev: rhonda@discoversalem.org
Building Coordinator	Deb Murphy	Office:	Laurie Zaepfel	Rev: rhonda@discoversalem.org
Building Manager:	Rick Bowman	Office:	Laurie Zaepfel	Rev: rhonda@discoversalem.org

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