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Salem English Lutheran Church

July-August 2022

Don't Forget Hope



I am not sure if you remember, but in March I wrote: "As hope-bringers we are called to the wilderness...but we are also called to come out of the wilderness carrying a word of hope for the world." We

talked about looking up at the world around us to find moments of hope because the wilderness is hard. I am finding these words to be my mantra these days...because while the world seemed hard in March, it certainly hasn't let up.

Coming back from a global pandemic is harder than any of us imagined—not to mention just when we think it's safe, another variant and another surge rears its head. It often feels like nothing will ever be the same. Church has not escaped this reality...and it's hard. I keep asking what it means to be church today because what church was 3 years ago is not what church is now...and it's hard. Some of the things we loved have had to evolve...and it's hard. The rhythm of our community, both Salem and SpringHouse, has changed, and while it is still moving back in the direction of what "normal", it isn't the same—and likely won't be exactly the same when we get there...and it is hard.

I want you to know that it's ok to feel this, you are not alone, and there is grieving that is, and will, be part of our life together.

AND—we still need to look for, and even expect to find, hope. Even in the midst of the difficult we are, by definition of our baptism and being followers of Jesus, hope-bringers for the world. It is our job to look for it, to capture it, and to share it. Truth be told, our world is crying out for something to hold on to and there may be no more important time for the church to be hope-bringers.

I am called to be a hope-bringer. It is literally my job to find hope and share it—and believe me there are some weeks that are harder than others—but God has never, not even on the worst of weeks, left me hanging. Here are just a handful of moments of hope that I have encountered while looking up recently...



Day Camp—check out the story inside...HOPE.

Salem Graduates—they are going to change the world...HOPE.

Faith Practices & Neighboring Practices—leading change...HOPE.

Axel went to Bible Camp...yay...and...HOPE.

Open Streets popsicles with no strings attached...HOPE.

Sunday Worship—that we know others will be here with us, that we are not alone...HOPE

You—yes, you. You, as part of this community of faith...you...HOPE.

The church everywhere is trying to figure out how to be church...it always has been and always will be...this is our call. But the pivoting and evolving we have had to do in the midst of a pandemic have been incredibly challenging. AND let's be honest, the church doesn't really like change and the amount of change we have had to endure has been significant...and it is hard.

It's ok for us to name it. It's ok for us to lament and grieve. It's even ok for us to be uncomfortable and feel overwhelmed by it sometimes. BUT, we cannot forget hope. We are the people of God, called to bring hope to the world. AND I can tell you, from personal experience, that the call to bring hope to others is sometimes the only way I am able to experience it. But it requires intentionality...because the world can drown out good things quickly. Sometimes you have to look up, out, and all around to find these little moments. But when you find them, when you capture them, and when you share them...God's work is done and hope comes alive. Where have you seen hope these days? Where will you find hope today?

In Hope—Pastor Rhonda



Summer Outdoor Worship

There are THREE more outdoor worship times scheduled before fall—make sure to mark your calendar! Worship in the park is always at 10:30 am at Minnehaha Regional Park Wabun Pavilions. We hope to see all of you in the park!

July 17—Outdoor Worship + Ice Cream Fellowship! (Wabun Pavilion G—10:30 am)

August 21—SpringHouse Joint Worship in the Park! (Wabun Pavilion G—10:30 am)

September 11—Gathering Sunday Worship and Fellowship! (Wabun Pavilion D—10:30 am)

Salem News

NEW Expansive Language Liturgy

Sighs Too Deep for Words

Over the past several months we have used pieces of a brand new liturgy that is proving to be a wonderful addition to our worship. Just this past week we added a couple of the sung elements that are lovely. Our hope is to learn many of the pieces so that we can add it to our worship repertoire on a regular basis.



Why a new liturgy? Where did it come from? Here is the scoop on our new liturgy *Sighs Too Deep for Words* as written by the commissioning team.

Background: Responding to members’ consistent requests for more expansive images in worship, a team of 15 church leaders from Twin Cities congregations (Holy Trinity, Grace University, St. Michael’s, Edina Community, University Lutheran Church of Hope, Augsburg University, and Bishop Ann Svennungsen) commissioned a new **expansive language liturgy**. The group was inspired by the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women, the 40th anniversary of the ordination of women of color, and the 10th anniversary of the ordination of LGBTQIA+ leaders in the ELCA, as well as the ELCA’s newly published social statement entitled ***Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action***.

After having spent time with the voices of feminist, womanist, mujerista, and queer theologians and musicians, and having been awarded a Ministry Imagination Grant from the Minneapolis Area Synod, the team then contracted with two writers—namely, Rev. Tamika Jancewicz and Rev. Emilie Casey. Their work began just weeks after Minneapolis, along with the rest of the world, witnessed the brutal murder of George Floyd. ***Given these circumstances, the commissioners felt called to create an expansive language liturgy not only relating to gender and sexuality, but also to race and culture*** and were pleased that these two writers, with very different social locations, graciously agreed to work together to create something that would bring a richness and depth that could not be achieved by one individual working in isolation. The commissioning team then searched for a musician and found Anne Krentz Organ to join them as composer.

Summer Sermon Series

July: Forming Communities of Resistance.



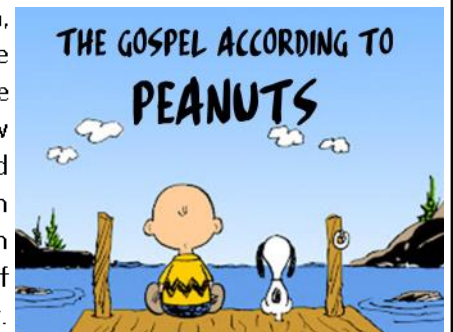
“As the church in a society that’s divided, it is our prophetic burden to form communities of resistance that challenge the divisive messages and the destructive intent of ‘the diabolical imagination’ the world offers.” - Rev. Dr. Christopher Wyckoff

If now is not the time to talk about being a community of resistance, it’s hard to imagine when the right time would be. Now, maybe more than ever, we need a reminder of who we are called to be in the midst of the chaos.



Then join us mid-August and into September as we dive into the great hometown comic strip by Charles Schultz with a sermon series entitled **The Gospel According to Peanuts**.

Charlie Brown, Snoopy, and the whole gang will help us to see the gospel in a new light...and at the end will leave us with an image of hope seen in the joyful dancing of everyone’s pal Snoopy.



Together, Pastor Tamika Jancewicz, Pastor Emilie Casey, and Anne Krentz Organ shaped this liturgy entitled ***Sighs Too Deep for Words*** (Romans 8:26). This resource gives special attention to **women’s experiences in scripture and in everyday life, and it invites embodied prayer**. This is a liturgy rooted in scriptural accounts of the breaths, sighs, groans, and shouts of God, humanity, and all creation. The writers have aimed to craft language and music that is not only theologically rigorous and aesthetically beautiful, but also clear, adaptable, and singable. May we pray and sing without knowing exactly what to say, for it is when “we do not know how to pray as we ought” that the “Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.”



More News

WORD OF THE DAY

stewardship

noun [stoo-erd-ship, styoo-]

the responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving.



Stewardship Moment

Thank you for your generosity! The ways you give are sacrificial and faithful. This month we are lifting up gratitude for those people at the beginning of this experiment called SpringHouse, who worked so hard to get us into a financially stable position. We are also grateful for those who have worked for the past several years to make our budget balanced. We are so fortunate to have been in the financial position we were in when a global pandemic hit because coming back from COVID is proving to be more difficult than anyone imagined.

The reality is that while our congregation is beyond generous with time, talent, and with giving, we are slightly behind budget in our giving as of June. While this is not necessarily surprising in these summer months, when combined with SpringHouse income not recovering as quickly as we anticipated, our congregational SpringHouse contributions being much higher than previous years, and inflation raising costs on everything, we just don't know how this will affect our bottom line at the end of the year.

We are still grateful and we are still hopeful. We are grateful that we knew this year would be a tough one but we have hope it will lead us to better years as we navigate the return from COVID, what it means to engage with our neighbors, and what it means to be church in the world today.

"God's work. Our hands." Sunday

JOIN US for a day of service

God's Work. Our Hands.

Coming in September!

Watch for information soon about our annual ELCA tradition of gathering around service and advocacy.

If you are interested in helping plan this years event, contact Pastor Rhonda ASAP.

Congratulations, Blessings, and Good Luck!



What a wonderful Sunday we had in June as we celebrated our graduates! A huge thank you to all four of our graduates (Emma, Ava, Cassie, and Clark) for participating and helping to lead worship, making worship special for all of us!

A special thank you to our high school graduates for contributing their creative talents!

Ava painted a special piece for our bulletin cover inspired by the Holy Spirit and Pentecost.



Cassie shared a painting she did this year inspired by Bob Ross, which made the perfect background for our graduate blessing.

Clark joined the Salem Musicians for the day, sharing special music during our offering time. He was featured in a piece called *Clark's Blues* written by our own Paul Harper.



Faith Practices....



FP&NP Foundational Prayer Exercise: Daily Examen

From the May Faith Practices & Neighboring Practices meeting

A core prayer practice of Ignatian Spirituality utilizes one's imagination and core listening for God's presence in one's life. For more than 400 years this prayer exercise invites prayer-filled mindfulness and reflection on the events of the day in order to notice God's presence.

- ◆ **Become aware of God's presence.** Look back on the events of the day and ask God to bring clarity and understanding. (without judgement but with gratitude.)
- ◆ **Review the day with gratitude.** Gratitude is the foundation of our relationship with God. Walk through your day in the presence of God and note its joys and delights. Focus on the day's gifts. Look at the work you did, the people you interacted with. What did you receive from these people? What did you give them? Pay attention to small things—the food you ate, the sights you saw, and other seemingly small pleasures. God is in the details. (Gratitude helps us to see God's presence.)
- ◆ **Pay attention to your emotions.** One of St. Ignatius's great insights was that we detect the presence of the Spirit of God in the movements of our emotions. Reflect on the feelings you experienced during the day. Boredom? Elation? Resentment? Compassion? Anger? Confidence? What is God saying through these feelings? You may note some ways that you feel as though you "fell short". Make note of this, and look deeply for other implications. Does a feeling of frustration perhaps mean that God wants you to consider a new direction in some area of your work? Are you concerned about a friend? Perhaps you should reach out to them in some way.
- ◆ **Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.** Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you to something during the day that was particularly important. It may involve a feeling—positive or negative. It may be an encounter with another person or a moment of joy. Or it may be something that seems rather insignificant. Look at it. Stay with it. Allow a prayer to arise spontaneously from your heart—whether intercession, praise, repentance, or gratitude.
- ◆ **Look toward tomorrow.** Ask God to give you light for tomorrow's challenges. Pay attention to the feelings that surface as you survey what's coming up. Are you doubtful? Cheerful? Apprehensive? Full of delighted anticipation? Allow these feelings to turn into prayer. Seek God's guidance. Ask God for help and understanding. Pray for hope.

St. Ignatius encouraged people to talk to Jesus like a friend. End the Daily Examen with a conversation with Jesus. Ask forgiveness where needed. Ask for his protection and help, wisdom about the questions you have and the problems you face. Do all this in the spirit of gratitude. Your life is a gift, and it is full of gifts from God. (Ask God's help and talk to him like a friend, this practice opens one to God's activity.)



And Neighboring Practices

Open Streets Tells Us About our Neighbors

What do you LOVE about our neighborhood?

At Open Streets this year, our Faith Practices and Neighboring Practices team set out to listen...specifically to hear what our neighbors love about the neighborhood. They asked the question and had folks either write answers on post-it notes, on the white board, or simply enter into conversation as they were offered a popside. Their answers were many and varied, but three themes seemed to rise to the top of the heap when asked; "What do you love about the neighborhood?"...



Local Businesses

People like that many of the businesses in our neighborhood are locally owned and they enjoy being out on a street like Lyndale where they can support local businesses and encounter other folks who feel the same way.

The Food!

People in our neighborhood love the food scene. Folks named local coffee shops, dinner spots, breweries, bars, and ice cream shops—saying they love the atmosphere in these local places.

The LAKES!

Can you blame them? Minnesota folks, especially Minneapolis folks...and certainly our Uptown neighbors—LOVE our lakes and waterways and will find time to be near them whenever they can.

So what does this mean for us? The Faith Practices and Neighboring Practices team is just beginning this work of listening, but this first venture at hearing our neighbors tells us at least a couple of things.

- ♦ If we want to engage with the people in our neighborhood, there are several places they have clearly indicated we can find them...at our local eateries and by the water.
- ♦ Lyndale Avenue, steps from our front door, is where many of our neighbors spend their time shopping, eating, and just walking.

As we continue to listen over the next several months, there will be lots of conversation about what we do with the information we hear that can help answer the question of how can we be church to our neighbors?



Children and Youth News

Sunday School




Watch for exciting news about a return to Sunday School AND the Squiggle Space coming in the fall!

If you are interested in helping plan what this looks like, contact Pastor Rhonda ASAP.

Blessing of the Backpack Tags
SpringHouse Joint Worship
Sunday August 21–Wabun Pavilion G - 10:30 am

Don't miss this wonderful annual tradition as we gather all three SpringHouse congregations to worship together in the park. It's also the day we will hand out this year's backpack tags and do a blessing for the 22-23 school year.



Building Beloved Community: South Minneapolis Day Camp Was a BIG Success!

After three years, two years of doing day camp online, we were able to hold day camp in person! What a wonderful week full of blessings! It was fantastic to see our elementary age kids learn to be community organizers, discover kid heroes (and make their own super hero capes), make wonderful creations in their art rotation, and just have fun together after a long school year. Our middle school youth spent their week discovering what building community looks like and our high school youth shepherded our K-5 kids, strengthening their leadership skills and having fun.

We send a huge thank you out to all the adult volunteers and staff from all of our churches for their hard work, and also to our congregation for their continued support each and every year of this wonderful joint endeavor!



Building neighborhoods in "Cardboard-opolis" and organizing in community to solve real world issues in a cardboard city.



Superhero capes for kid heroes

Making beloved images of ourselves



Making protest signs for their cardboard neighborhoods



More News

Council Corner

Highlights from the June Meeting:

- ♦ Carl Cusinak joined us a guest from the Faith Practices & Neighboring Practices team to share how Open Streets and their debrief of the listening they did went.
 - ♦ Treasurer: YTD is behind budget, which is somewhat normal at this time of year. There are a variety of factors leading to this and we are unsure how this will all affect our end of year bottom line.
 - ♦ Update from Salem Relics team
 - ♦ We are looking to form a 3-4 month long stewardship team to work through the fall
 - ♦ God's Work. Our Hands Sunday will either be September 11 or 18, depending on a joint worship for gathering Sunday.
- For complete minutes to the council meeting, online readers right click on the document link below to download, or for a hard copy contact the office.



[June Council Minutes](#)

Where Are Our Graduates Headed?

All three of our Salem high school graduates will be continuing their education at universities away from the Twin Cities this fall. We keep all of them in our prayers and hope they continue to be awesome on the next leg of their journeys.

Ava will be headed to Washington University in St. Louis! She plans to study drama and art.

Cassie is headed to UWM, the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee! She plans to study business and film.

Clark is staying in Minnesota, but heading north. He will be attending UMD, the University of Minnesota Duluth! He is enrolled in the Civil Engineering program at the Swenson College of Science and Engineering.

May
God Bless You
 ON YOUR JOURNEY

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!

Sundays

9:30 am Salem Worship In Person and on YouTube

10:30 am Coffee Hour in the Sanctuary

Sundays – July 17, August 21, and September 11 all at 10:30

at Wabun! See front page for details!

Tuesday

8:15 am Lectionary Bible Study via Zoom



Guest Preacher & Presider August 7

Make sure your calendar is marked for Sunday August 7 as Salem welcomes our own Antone Melton-Meaux as guest preacher and presider. Don't miss what the Spirit brings as he graciously blesses us with his voice.



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.

Dona Varns – 7/1

Myra Rusten – 8/10

Johan Baumeister – 7/15

Xavier Melton-Meaux – 8/18

Holly Benson – 7/15

Barbara Livdahl – 8/21

Jacentia Peña – 7/24

Orpha Rustebakke – 8/23

Alex Nordeen – 7/31

James Anderson – 8/30





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.

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