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Salem English Lutheran Church

November-December 2023



More Than Candles

Let's be honest, it is not often that I am at a loss for words...yet as I am looking ahead, I am struggling with what to write. Every time I began working on this article...I've had nothing. Well, that's not completely true. There is one thing that keeps coming to my mind, but it's not about what's coming up at Salem or about the seasons we are about to embark upon. Every time I sit down to write this front page, my mind is pulled, like a magnet, back to All

Saints Sunday and our worship together. Worship is always meaningful at Salem—mostly because of the community that gathers. But two weeks ago as we gathered around the saints, worship left me filled with wonder and with a desire to experience more.

It's always moving when we remember the saints. As each person stepped forward and lit candles in memory of those who have pointed the way to God in their lives, it struck me how blessed we are. But it was more than the candles this year.



This year I decided to keep my preaching short. I thought it was just because I knew I would not get home until late Saturday night from Duluth. As I think about it now, I realize that God was likely at work when I decided to talk less and listen more. After preaching a short message, I opened our after-the-message-conversation-time and asked if there was anyone willing to share stories about the people they were remembering on All Saints Sunday. The beautiful thing was, that there were.

Listening to your stories about the people in your lives who marked your faith journey and those who continue to do so, made a few things abundantly clear to me.

1. **We are most certainly blessed** to have been influenced by such an incredible cloud of witnesses throughout our lives.
2. **We need to share these stories more often.** Sharing the stories of those who point us toward God connects us with God and with each other. Being a native Minnesota Lutheran, I was brought up to believe that we were not supposed to share "faith stuff". I find this interesting, because if I have learned anything in over 20 years of pastoring (especially in the past couple of years as part of FP&NP), it's that these stories need to be shared as often as possible because these stories are what form us, feed us, and give us life.
3. **This faith practice of sharing with each other, doesn't come naturally to many and makes some uncomfortable...** it can be hard. This is why we use the word *practice*. I remember my kids practicing left-handed layups...boy was it awkward at first. They didn't like it, it was hard, and they felt

uncomfortable. But guess what happened after they did them a couple thousand times? After all that practice, their left-handed layups became just as smooth and easy as the right-handed ones. And so it is with our faith practices.

4. **Sharing these stories with each other doesn't just grow faith, it provides connection with each other** and takes our community to a deeper and more authentic place...allowing us to connect in more real ways with our neighbors.

All Saints Sunday was a special day for lots of reasons. For me, though, it was your willingness to share your stories...to share those beloved in your lives who helped form you. It was the way it felt natural to many...that our community is getting used to sharing in these ways.

Well, I guess I just needed to look back in order to look forward. As the season of Advent, of holy waiting and anticipation approaches, you are being asked to try a new spiritual practice. Just remember, it's called practice for a reason. Know that whatever you choose, just like sharing our stories with each other, these practices help connect us with each other and with God...they are important to your faith life and to the life of this community.

It was more than the lighting of the candles this year...it was the stories behind the candles that left me with a sense of wonder. I pray that the sharing continues.

*Blessings,
Pastor Rhonda*



Last Call for Poinsettias



This is your last chance to order poinsettias for Christmas in honor or memory of loved ones! If you would still like to order a red or white poinsettia, please contact Laurie in the church office or order online using the QR code or link below. *(right click on the link)* **Orders are due by THIS Sunday November 19!**

[Right Click HERE for Google Form](#)



Salem News



Advent Festival Potluck & Pie

Don't miss out! Join us on Sunday November 26 after worship for our annual Advent Festival. This year we are going back "all in" with a pot luck and pie social as we did before Covid.

We will gather around a meal, set up the tree, the lights and all the decorations for Advent, and there will even be crafts for all ages to help us get ready for the season.

We will have pulled chicken sandwiches as a main dish and we are asking YOU to bring either a SIDE DISH or PIE to share.



Come help us get ready for Advent and experience some great fellowship and community as we do it!



Sunday Morning Worship in Advent

In addition to lighting the Advent candles and singing the familiar hymns, during this holy season of waiting, we will be again looking at the spiritual practices we use in our daily lives. Last year we used Advent to introduce several different

spiritual practices. This year, during Advent, we will be talking about what new spiritual practices you are trying as part of your stewardship pledge this year. (Read more about this on page 4)

Don't miss our weekly worship gatherings where we will wait, watch, and grow together.



Advent Midweek Worship

Join us for Holden Evening Prayer on Zoom each Wednesday in Advent! We are looking forward to this meaningful midweek break. (This could be your new spiritual practice for the season of Advent.)

6:30 pm Holden Evening Prayer on Zoom
December 6, 13, 20

All of SpringHouse is invited to join us for this great annual tradition.



Christmas Worship

Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year so Sunday, December 24 is both the 4th Sunday of Advent AND Christmas Eve. Salem will worship only in the evening this day, marking both.

Join us for Christmas Eve Worship!
Sunday December 24 at 4 pm

Come and gather around the manger with us for a service of candles and song. This holy evening service will begin marking the 4th Sunday of Advent and then center on the story of the nativity, full of wonder and joy. We hope you will bring the whole family to celebrate with us this Christmas Eve!

NARRATIVE LECTIONARY

Narrative Lectionary Scripture Calendar

- 11/26: Christ the King Sunday
- 12/3: Promise of the Messiah—Jeremiah 33:14-18
- 12/10: Isaiah of the Exile—Isaiah 40:1-11
- 12/17: Zechariah's Song—Luke 1:5-13 [14-25], 57-80
- 12/24: Birth of Jesus— Luke 2:1-20
- 12/31: Beginning of Good News—Mark 1:1-20
- 1/7: Jesus Heals and Teaches - Mark 2:1-22
- 1/14: Parables in Mark—Mark 4:1-34

More News

Lefse Making

It's Lefse time! *Join us Sunday December 3 after worship* for lots of fun and fellowship as we make lefse.

If you're an expert...we'd love to have you. If you've never made lefse before...we'd love to have you!



Bring a lefse griddle if you have one! We will see you there. Did we mention you get to take lefse home?



Mini Capital Campaign this Stewardship Season



The number one way people find Salem is through our website after a Google search. One of the best ways for us to connect with our neighbors is through a good website that is user-friendly and reflects our community in a way that draws people in.

For the past several months we have had a team working on what that new website design might look like and it's time to move forward with the design. The council has approved up to \$2000 for this project, which includes hiring a web designer. However, because Salem is such a generous congregation that takes seriously its call to neighboring, we have decided to throw down a challenge for stewardship season. The challenge is this: ***We would like to raise \$1000 (half of the estimated cost) toward our website redesign through individual pledges.***

This congregation is invested in reaching out to new people and this is a great TANGIBLE way to show that commitment. So, take up the challenge and pledge a special gift to this mini capital campaign during stewardship season this year. You can



give to the website redesign fund using the special envelopes found in the back of the sanctuary or by using the QR code here.

Watch for updates in the weeks to come!



ELCA Good Gifts

Stumped for a Christmas gift for a relative or friend? Just want to do some good in the world during this holy season? Consider the ELCA's Good Gifts program! From chicks and goats to fruit trees to mosquito nets or school fees, this program provides support where it is needed most, that makes big impacts in communities around the world.

To see more about Good Gifts and the difference they make through ELCA World Hunger, check out the catalog using the QR code labeled *Good Gifts Catalog* below or pick one up in the back of the sanctuary.

Again this year there will be Good Gift ornaments on the tree in the sanctuary and cards on the table that you can use to make a gift concrete for giving to those you love. You can also go to the Good Gifts donation website, choose a specific gift and then print a matching card to send.

To choose a gift and donate:

1. Use the QR code labeled *Donate Good Gifts* below or go to <https://goodgifts.elca.org>.
2. Send your gifts to the church or put them in the offering basket on Sunday morning using the special offering envelopes located on the table in the sanctuary.

Be part of solutions around the world!

Good Gifts Catalog



Donate Good Gifts



Synod and ELCA News



MPLS Synod Bishop Election

At our next Synod Assembly on May 2-4, 2024, we will elect a new bishop for the Minneapolis Area Synod. Over the next six months the whole Synod will be invited to discuss, discern, and pray as we shape what

the office of the bishop will look like in years to come.

A Bishop Election Committee has formed to coordinate the election process. The committee not only will organize the logistics of how we elect a bishop, but will work with the entire synod to define what we expect and elect a bishop to do.

Who is eligible to be elected as our next bishop? The office of bishop is open to any ELCA Minister of Word and Sacrament. That person may serve up to two consecutive six-year terms. Our current bishop Ann Svennungsen will complete two terms in 2024.

The first stage of nominating will be on February 10, 2024, when Synod Assembly voting members from each congregation will be at one of the 12 Conference Assemblies. Each conference can make up to three nominations at that time. Those who agree to continue in the process will have opportunities to get to know the synod better and for members of congregations to get to know them better before the Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Synod Assembly in May, where a new bishop will be elected.

In the months ahead, please pray for the members of the Bishop Election Committee, for the whole synod, and for people discerning their own call to the office of bishop. For more information and updates check out the Bishop Election Website [HERE](#).



Presiding Bishop on Leave



The ELCA's Church Council approved Presiding Bishop Eaton's request for a 4-to-6-month leave of absence. Her leave starts Nov. 17, 2023.

The Church Council appointed former bishop of the SE Iowa Synod, the Rev. Michael Burk, as Presiding Bishop Pro Tem to care for the responsibilities of the presiding bishop during her leave of absence. We give thanks for Bishop Eaton's tireless dedication and leadership and pray for her during this time of rest and rejuvenation.

LivingLutheran

Living Lutheran Magazine Update

This is the time of the year when we have traditionally asked members to chip in for their subscriptions to *Living Lutheran* magazine. As most of you have already heard, the magazine will cease print publication with the December issue this year. Going forward, interesting and thoughtful content will continue to be available online without a subscription cost. Those who are interested may sign up to receive email alerts of new content, and choose the categories that interest you the most. You can find the publication and subscribe at <https://www.livinglutheran.org/>

However, we know that some of our members would prefer content in print, so if this applies to you, and you would like to see content from *Living Lutheran* in the Scene or on the info table, please contact Laurie in the office (612-872-4650, or office@discoversalem.org) and let her know what kinds of articles you find most interesting and meaningful. We'll keep our eyes open for highlights to share.

Share your input

Draft social message
on gun-related
violence and trauma



Draft Social Message on Gun Violence and Trauma

How is the ELCA called to respond to gun-related violence? A new draft social message on this urgent and polarizing problem is now available. This message seeks to move past the impasse of gun rights vs. gun control by offering a more constructive proposal. Share your feedback by January 31, 2024.

[Right Click HERE](#) or use the QR code to find out more, see a copy of the message, and fill out the survey.



Children, Youth and Community



SpringHouse Childcare Workers

SpringHouse is looking for 2 childcare workers to supervise our nursery and Squiggle Space on Sunday mornings for our youngest members.

Job Responsibilities: To care for children under 5 years of age and supervise children of elementary school age, whose families participate in worship and activities at SpringHouse Ministry Center on Sunday mornings and other special occasions/worship services, such as Holy Week services and Christmas Eve services.

Job Qualifications:

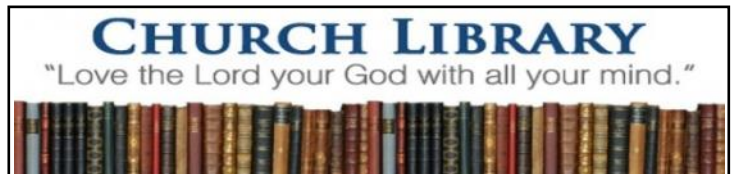
- ◆ Must be at least 16 years old (candidates over the age of 18 must pass a criminal background check)
- ◆ Must be dependable and prompt, with a positive disposition and ability to welcome families
- ◆ Preferred prior experience working with children
- ◆ Good communication skills

If you know someone who loves kids and is looking for a very part time position, have them contact Pastor Rhonda.



Youth Group to Start in December

Calling all youth! It's happening. Our youth minister, Chelsea, will be announcing details for the SpringHouse Youth Group to begin on December 3. At publishing time of this Scene, we are still double checking logistics and details, but watch the eblast and your email for information to come in the next week about the first gathering.



Readers! Alert!

The SpringHouse library has books for you!

The SpringHouse library shelves hold hundreds of books on subjects ranging from Bible interpretation to saving the planet and living our faith daily. There are also biographies and fiction and inspirational and devotional works. And there are books specific to the three SpringHouse denominations. The books are organized in broad categories designated by shelf labels.

Check Out is Easy!

Simply write the title of the books you choose on the yellow pad on the stand at the entry of the library. Return them after you have read them to the same location.

And that's not all! Are there specific titles or topics you would like to find in the SpringHouse library?

We are eager to hear from you about titles and topics you would like to see in the library. We would like to add these important books to the library.

Our first purchase this year was in response to interest in Christian Nationalism. The title is *The Hidden Roots of White Supremacy and the Path to a Shared American Future* by Robert P. Jones. Jones explores the hidden roots of white supremacy in Mississippi, Minnesota, and Oklahoma.

Reorganizing the collection.

The library committee is reorganizing the collection with a new program that promises to offer more helps and information to readers. In the future, readers will be able to access the catalog from their phones.



More News

SpringHouse Ministry Center

SpringHouse Board News

The SpringHouse Board met Sunday, November 12, at 2 pm on Zoom.

Highlights of meeting:

Updates from the SH congregations:

- ◆ Updates were provided on Pastor Dan's and Pastor Rebecca's healing progress. It is likely Rebecca will return in January per Paul T.
- ◆ Paul T. shared that Lyndale continues in its transition process. They are in the process of calling a new interim pastor to start in January to take on the role after Pastor Joann finishes her time with Lyndale.
- ◆ Salem is planning at least one SpringHouse baptism in the gathering space before Lent!

2024 Budget

Andy Rennert brought forth the proposed SpringHouse budget for 2024. The board voted to approve both the operating budget and capital budget. It is now to be taken to each congregation's board/council for a vote.

Sanctuary Switch

The next sanctuary switch will take place the first week of January, so that congregations are in their new spaces for the first Sunday of Epiphany.

Looking Ahead to Annual Meeting Sunday

Mark your calendars for Sunday, January 28 when we will gather for the SpringHouse annual meeting and our own Salem annual meeting. Join us for worship, stay for lunch and the annual meetings! We hope most of you will be able to attend.



Calendar

Our calendar highlights 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

*December 24 Worship at 4 pm ONLY

10:30 am Coffee Hour in the Sanctuary

Tuesday

8:15 am Lectionary Bible Study via Zoom

Wednesday

6:30 pm Holden Evening Prayer via Zoom 12/6, 13, 20

**Spirit-led. Welcoming.
Bold. Rooted.**



New Directories Are Ready!

That's right—our new picture directory is ready. You can pick one up at church, or contact Laurie in the office if you would like one sent to you in the mail, or a digital version via email

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.

Li Livdahl – 11/1

Shirley Bernu – 12/9

Emma Jorstad – 11/4

Pastor Rhonda Hlavinka – 12/11

Terry Günther – 11/5

Jill Livdahl – 12/25

Lucas Johnson – 11/5

Corinn Sievwright – 12/26

Emma Schmidtke – 11/14

Quinn Livdahl – 12/29

Paul Harper – 11/14

Erica Doss – 11/16

Josh Jorstad – 11/22

Katherine Glick – 11/23

Christy Henzler – 11/24





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	revrhonda@discoversalem.org
Office:	Laurie Zaepfel	office@discoversalem.org
Music:	Tom Pieper	thomas.pieper@wayzata.k12.mn.us
Youth Ministry	Chelsea Boyden	springshouseyouth@tcamps.org
Building Manager:	Rick Bowman	rbowmanb49@gmail.com
Building Coordinator	Allison Jones	shcoordinator@tcamps.org