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Salem English Lutheran Church

December 2024

Darkness and Light



In a world that feels turned around, upside down, and backwards these days, I am finding myself grateful that we are at the beginning of a new church year and the season of Advent is just beginning. While the culture around us gears up for gift buying and giving, big festive meals and lots of concerts, pageants, and general merriment...all which take a lot of energy, the season of Advent calls us to something different.

Advent calls to us in the darkness of this world and says...“Keep awake, hope is on the way.” The season of Advent is full of waiting, longing, anticipation, and glimpses of light that break through the darkness pointing us to the Light that will come into the world at Christmas...a light that the world cannot put out. This is the season that prepares us for the very presence of God that comes into the world to live with, through, around, under, and in us. This is a season of hope.

I could talk around the things that are happening in our world, walk the “politically correct” line and talk in vague realities, but we are a congregation that believes in naming things in order to live into our call as disciples. So, there is some difficult realities we face as we begin this season of hope.

As a congregation that stands with our LGBTQIA+ siblings, especially our transgender siblings today, we might wonder where hope fits into a world that seems as though it wants to take away their very humanity.

As a congregation that stands with our BIPOC siblings, whose voices are being minimized and devalued in systems of systemic racism, we might wonder how hope breaks through.

As a congregation that believes immigrants should be valued and not threatened, that women should be heard and not silenced, and that all those on the margins are in the places Jesus strategically placed himself and yet they are forgotten and left behind, we may wonder if hope really can be found.

In the season of Advent, God speaks clearly and says “yes” to hope...even in our upturned backwards world. God tells us that

it is precisely into these, the darkest of places, that hope breaks through the most. For the light cannot be seen if there is no darkness for it to shine through, right?

Advent is a season of mystery and wonder, of darkness and light, of waiting and hoping...knowing that on Christmas, in the birth of a tiny baby, the Light of the World showed up and despite humanity’s best efforts, that light will never go out.

Sometimes I think one of the reasons it’s difficult to see the hope God brings into the darkness is because we are looking “out there” for it when the hope God sends into the world is often us...God’s beloved living in the world. When we stand with those on the margins or the vulnerable, hope shines through. When we work to change systems of oppression, hope shines through. When we use our voice to lift the voices of those often unheard, hope breaks through.

Advent calls us to stay awake, to be prepared, to be ready...not just because God is breaking into the world, but because God’s hope calls us to action and, as Jan Richardson writes, “prompts us into motion” so that our hands can be God’s hands in the world, bringing the light, the hope, to all the places it is needed most.

I hope you will join us during this Advent season so that we can wait together, prepare together...so that we can find *and be* hope together...for each other and the world.

*Blessings,
Pastor Rhonda*

Advent & Christmas at Salem

- ◆ Advent Holden Evening Prayer Wednesdays at 6:30 pm on Zoom; December 4, 11, 18
- ◆ Lefse Making at church, Saturday December 14 at 9-noon
- ◆ Blue Christmas service hosted by First Christian, Saturday December 21 at 4 pm.
- ◆ Christmas Eve Worship Tuesday December 24 at 4 pm. Join us for carols, candles, communion, and Christmas!

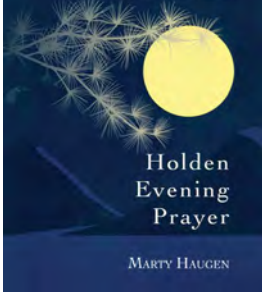


Salem News

SpringHouse Holden Evening Prayer on Zoom

Join us each of the three Wednesdays in Advent for a time to breathe...to come together in prayer, song, and reflection as we honor the waiting of the season. Salem, Lyndale, and FCC will join in this annual tradition of Holden Evening Prayer on Zoom...and you are invited. So mark your calendars and set aside a mid-week moment during a season that can find itself so full of busy. We look forward to seeing you on Zoom.

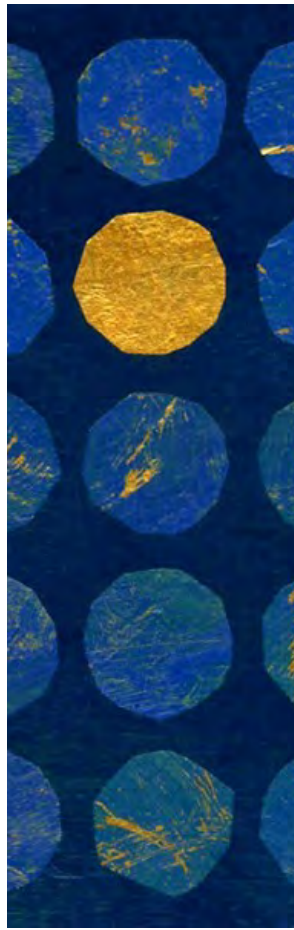
Wednesdays
December 4, 11, & 18
6:30 pm on Zoom
(watch the eblast for a link each Wednesday)



A Blessing of Hope as We Begin Advent

By Jan Richardson

Guardian of the seasons,
 keeper of every time,
 tune us so to your rhythms
 that we may know
 the occasion for stillness
 and the moment for action.
 May we be so prepared
 so aware
 so awakened
 in our waiting
 that when you prompt us
 into motion,
 our hands may be your hands
 and our purposes
 your own.



Christmas Eve Worship

Join us **Tuesday December 24 at 4 pm** for our annual family worship and candlelight service. There is no better way to give meaning to all the busyness of the season than to come together on this holy night to hear the great story of God's love come to earth as a baby in a manger. So make sure to join us for this family friendly, fun, meaningful, and sacred service meant for everyone on Christmas Eve.



Narrative Lectionary Scripture Calendar

Here are the parts of the story coming up:

- 12/1: **Daniel's Hope in God** - Daniel 6:6-27
- 12/8: **Joel: God's Promised Spirit** - Joel 2:12-13, 28-29
- 12/15: **Spirit of the Lord Upon Me** -Isaiah 61:1-11
- 12/22: **Jesus' Birth Announced** -Luke 1:26-45 [46-56]
- 12/24: **Christmas Eve-Birth of Jesus**-Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]
- 12/29: **Simeon and Anna** -Luke 2:21-38.
- 1/5: **Boy in the Temple** - Luke 2:41-52
- 1/12: **Jesus Baptism**-Luke 3:1-22
- 1/19: **Sermon at Nazareth**-Luke 4:14-30

More News

Let's Make Lefse!



It's almost time! Time for the great annual tradition of lefse making at Salem. We are moving our griddling session back to a Saturday morning this year—we hope you will be able to join us. (Making it on Saturday means we can use it for communion on Sunday!)

Here's what you need to know:

When: Saturday December 14, 9 am–12 pm (come when you can, leave when you must)

Who: ALL are WELCOME for lefse making—NO EXPERIENCE necessary! In fact, we take pride in that every year we have been able to introduce new people to the fun that is lefse making. So don't worry if you haven't done it before or don't know how...we will teach you!

What to Bring: If you have a lefse griddle, lefse roller, lefse rolling board, or lefse turning stick, bring it with you. Don't worry if you don't, we will have plenty with those who do. Otherwise just bring your lefse making spirit to join in the fun!

If you know you will be able to join us, sign up in the sanctuary so we know how many potatoes to start ricin. We hope to see many of you on Saturday December 14!



Blue Christmas Service at SpringHouse

Salem and Lyndale have been invited to join First Christian in a Blue Christmas service designed by Intern Chelsea. Mark your calendars for Saturday December 21 at 4 pm. Watch for details to come soon.

MERRY CHICK-MAS

Chicks \$10

Shop ELCA Good Gifts this Christmas for more than 60 different gifts that grow the church, fight hunger and transform lives.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

ELCA.org/goodgifts

ELCA Good Gifts for Christmas!

Supporting ELCA World Hunger and its programs, here in the US and around the world, is a great way to celebrate the seasons of Advent and Christmas! Choose a person you want to buy for, choose an animal or program, donate the amount indicated, and send them a card telling them about how their gift has changed lives. It's easy, it's fun, and it is part of our work together as God's people in the world.

Find all kinds of animal and program options on the tree in the sanctuary as well as on the back table. Go ahead and help a neighbor by purchasing a gift for someone you love today!

Donations can be made through Salem by using the Good Gifts envelopes found on the back table, indicating Good Gifts on your offering, or by visiting www.elca.org/goodgifts.



Give something **unexpected** this Christmas.

Synod News

Synod Youth Choir Starts in January!

Youth ages 5-18 are invited to join in the fun of the new Synod Youth Choir! **One of the creators and directors will be a favorite musician of Salem, Kent Goodroad.** (He was our pianist at our first service for several years and through Covid.) Together with his musician partner Alyssa Schwitzer they founded and run LK-ArtsAcademy.com, here in Minneapolis and are excited about this new adventure.

Kent and Alyssa believe that “when young people are connected to one another and to their faith, they have a deeper sense of self, compassion, and justice. They are teaming up with the Minneapolis Area Synod (MAS) to explore how young people can thrive by making music together.”



The youth choir (for ages 5-18) is **an especially GREAT opportunity for small congregations, like Salem**, who cannot sustain a choir of their own yet have young people who would like to be part of a choir. **The choir will be “pop-up” in nature, meaning it will meet once a month between January and June** to learn songs, meet other young people from congregations around the synod, and prepare to sing with a larger youth choir at both the MAS Synod Assembly in May and one other event in June.

Here are some of the details you need to know:

- ◆ **The choir is open to ages 5-18** within the synod, but need NOT be Lutheran to join the fun!
- ◆ **No experience is necessary AND young people do NOT need to be able to read music.** All music will be taught through repetition and listening to the songs.
- ◆ “Pop-up” style means groups will rehearse in different locations for several months and then come together for performances.
- ◆ **Rehearsals are ONE time per month,**
- ◆ **There are THREE different locations families can CHOOSE from to attend rehearsals each month.** (S MPLS, N MPLS, & Western Suburbs) These three sites will have rehearsals once a month that are at different times on different days of the week so that families can make a choice that works for them. **The rehearsals at each site will be the same each month.**
- ◆ **The South Minneapolis site is Lake Nokomis Lutheran** and rehearsals will take place on the 2nd Sunday of each month at 12:30 pm. Detailed dates and information about all three sites can be found on the choir registration website.
- ◆ You can attend rehearsals at different sites each month if that is what works for your family.
- ◆ If you miss a rehearsal, that’s ok—just come to the next one!
- ◆ To get more information about the MAS Youth Choir, visit the website at: <https://mpls-synod.org/for-congregations/youth/synod-youth-choir/>
- ◆ If you are ready to register, [REGISTER HERE](#), or visit the synod website address above to find the registration link.

More News



Check Out Some Live Music

Salem worship is privileged to have some of the best musicians around helping lead every week. It should not surprise anyone that they play music outside of worship in many and various places. Check out these upcoming opportunities to go and hear some great music by some great musicians!



Paul Harper will be playing saxophone with his quartet on both December 6 and 7. Check them out:

December 6 from 9 pm–12 am at Volsteads, a speakeasy at Lake and Lyndale (*right down the street from church.*) Entrance is at the back of the building on the southwest corner.

December 7 from 8 pm–9:30 pm at Jazz Central. *You can even check this performance out on their livestream!

<https://www.jazzcentralstudios.org>



Tom Pieper and Chris Lomheim can be seen performing at the Lexington on Grand in St. Paul (together and separately) as part of their **Live Jazz at the Lexington!** "Friday and Saturday evenings in the Williamsburg Room, live music by Jazz Greats of the Twin Cities!"

December 6, 7 pm–10 pm: The Joel Shapira Trio (*Tom Pieper on bass*)

December 13, 7 pm–10 pm: Maurice Jacox Duo (*w/ Chris Lomheim on piano & Tom Pieper on bass*)

December 28, 7 pm–10 pm: Joel Shapira Trio (*w/ Chris Lomheim on piano & Tom Pieper on bass*)

December 31, 7 pm–10 pm: New Year's Eve Solo Piano by Chris Lomheim!

Check out the [Lexington's Facebook Page](#) for details and go to <https://thelexmn.com/reservations> to make reservations!

Caritas Vocal Ensemble Holiday Concerts



Caritas Vocal Ensemble, a Twin Cities *a cappella* chamber choir, kicks off its season of **Musical Stories** with a winter program 'Twas the Night... in support of several local non-profits. The concert considers the twofold themes of mystery and joy: Mystery is explored through a mix of classical selections in the first half, and joy through lighter fare interwoven with the classic Christmas tale in the second. Sing along with them on some holiday favorites before heading back out into the cold! Tickets and more information at <https://www.caritasvocalensemble.org/>

Our administrator, Laurie Zaepfel, sings in this group.

Saturday, December 14, 2:00 pm
(head on over after lefse making!)

Unitarian Universalist Society
 900 Mt Curve Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55403

Sunday, December 15, 3:00 pm

Redeemer Lutheran, 285 N. Dale St., Saint Paul, MN 55103



Tom Pieper will be performing in the **Bloomington Chorale Winter Concerts**. Check out one of their two performances!

December 20, 7 pm: Bloomington Center for the Arts

December 21, 4 pm: Bloomington Center for the Arts

For more information or to get your tickets, go to <https://bloomingtonchorale.org/>

Looking ahead, **Tom will be performing with the Bloomington Symphony** in February and April. Check out their website for more information and tickets! <https://bloomingtonsymphony.org/>

February 9, 2 pm: Minnesota Heritage Center. *Exuberance!*

April 6, 2 pm: Orchestra Hall, *Transcendence Mahler*



Youth, Children, & Family News

From Chelsea's Desk

Let's Find the Best Time for Youth Group

As many of you know, I'm interning at First Christian Church this year as part of my seminary education (Cue the angelic choir noises: future pastor on the rise!). While it's not shaking up the youth group schedule too much—worship services at FCC and Lyndale are still rocking at 10:30am and Salem at 9:30am—it does mean I'm not always hanging out in the youth room during services. I've noticed that this works fine for some of you, but for others, not so much.

So, to keep things fun and accessible for everyone, I need your help! Can you and your family fill out the form [HERE](#) or via the link in the eblast together and let me know your thoughts, ideas, or wild suggestions? Your input means the world to me! Thanks for being amazing—couldn't do it without you!

Day Camp 2025

That's right—it's already time to get the dates on the calendar! The South Minneapolis Building Beloved Community Day Camp will be June 16-20, 2025 at Diamond Lake Lutheran Church.



Call for Volunteers

Chelsea is looking for volunteers to help with youth group every once in awhile from 10:20-11:00am on Sundays. Volunteers would not have to prepare anything, they would just need to be available in the youth room during this time. If interested, please sign up use [THIS LINK](#), the link in the eblast, or reach out to Chelsea with any questions.



Every Meal

Every Meal is a program that distributes week-end meals to school children throughout Minnesota. First Christian helps with the distribution at Whittier School (315 W. 26th Street, Minneapolis) and is asking for SpringHouse partner congregations to help put meals into backpacks on weekday mornings, approximately every 2 weeks, at 10 am. You can sign up by clicking the link in the eblast or by visiting www.fccminneapolis.org For questions, contact Pastor Rhonda.

We will also be looking to find a group packing experience at their warehouse sometime this winter on an evening from 6 pm-8 pm...watch for news and details to come. In the meantime, to find out more about Every Meal go to www.everymeal.org



YOUTH GROUP

Sunday Morning Youth Group—All are Welcome!

- ◆ Youth ages 10-18 years old are all invited!
- ◆ Sundays from 10:00-10:30 am in the Youth Room on the lower level (Come to Salem worship and leave at 10...experience BOTH each Sunday!)
- ◆ **Open Youth Room Hours:** (just hang out with Chelsea and any others who are around) Sundays 9:00-10:00 am.

Come on down and see what's happening!

Join Us On Facebook

Follow the SpringHouse Youth Ministry page on Facebook to keep in the loop! Simply search for SpringHouse Youth Ministry.

Save the Date: Annual Meeting: Sunday, Jan. 26

Mark your calendars for Sunday, January 26 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.



More News

Flowers for Worship

If you would like to offer flowers for worship on any given Sunday, in honor or memory of a special person or occasion, we are again offering the opportunity to do so. Our own Myra Rusten, florist extraordinaire at Flowers by Myra (www.flowersbymyra.com), has offered to provide bouquets for these special Sundays.

Cost is \$50 for one of her traditional sized arrangements and can be paid to Salem. You can sign up for a specific Sunday in the back of the sanctuary or by contacting Laurie in the office.



Council Corner

Your Salem council met on November 10 after worship. Minutes are available in the sanctuary or by contacting the office. Highlights from the November meeting:



- ◆ The council and endowment committee are beginning a conversation about how to move forward with our funds. The council heard a representative from Thrivent talk about what could be done if we transferred our funds to them to manage. The endowment team will be meeting to look at several options for moving forward.
- ◆ The 2025 budgeting process has begun and once stewardship season ends and pledges are all in, we will get a better picture of what 2025 holds.
- ◆ We discussed how best to communicate reports and minutes to members of the congregation who want them and will be exploring the best and most efficient ways of communicating within our congregation.
- ◆ The nomination committee is already hard at work getting people to fill vacant positions at our January annual meeting.
- ◆ Day Camp in 2025 will be June 16-20 and will take place at Diamond Lake Lutheran again.
- ◆ Pastoral report included stewardship, possible Lilly Grant proposal, and Advent/Christmas worship
- ◆ We have hired a website designer and designing will begin after Thanksgiving
- ◆ SpringHouse Board is working on budget for 2025

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
- 10:00 am Youth Group for ages 10 and up in the Youth Room
- 10:30 am Coffee Hour in the Sanctuary

Tuesday

- 8:00 am Lectionary Bible Study via Zoom

Wednesday–December 4, 11, 18

- 6:30 pm SH Holden Evening Prayer via Zoom



“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

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.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Shirley Bernu – 12/9 | Quinn Livdahl – 12/29 |
| Pastor Rhonda Hlavinka – 12/11 | Ian Evans – 1/11 |
| Jill Livdahl – 12/25 | Mary Johnson – 1/28 |
| Corinn Sievwright – 12/26 | Paul West – 1/31 |





610 West 28th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Salem English Lutheran Church
is a Reconciling in Christ
 (R.I.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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Office:	Laurie Zaepfel	office@discoversalem.org
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Building Manager:	Rick Bowman	rjamesb49@gmail.com
Building Coordinator	Allison Jones	shcoordinator@fccmps.org

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