



the Bugle

As Jesus was preparing his final journey toward the cross, he sat with his disciples to reinforce what the kingdom of heaven looks like. (Matthew 25:1-30) He then described the glory of his return and the examples of the fruit of his kingdom.

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' (Matthew 25:31-40)

Throughout this year, many in Christ's church will focus on the first of these fruits, feeding the hungry. The ELCA World Hunger organization is celebrating 50 years of feeding the hungry ones of the world this year. It seems a simple thing, but for many, basic needs are often unmet, and many suffer and die needlessly in a world that has such abundance. It has been said that there is not a food shortage on the earth, but an inequity in the distribution of the food that is available to be shared. How is this illustrated in the greater Peoria community? Where are the grocery stores abundant and what populations are overlooked from having adequate resources? What could be different? How does poverty affect the imbalance? What impact might Salem have as a partner with other ministry groups working to make a difference?

The theme for Lent this year at Salem will highlight the message of Jesus to his disciples as they sat on the hillside of the Mount of Olives overlooking the city of Jerusalem. Jesus knew he was going to face trials and suffer greatly in a few days, but he also knew his disciples would face additional challenges and persecutions as they carried forth the ministry of the kingdom for the sake of bearing

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fruit in his name long after he breathed his last. This Lent we will ponder what role we are being called to play out in Christ's church and the need to grow close together as we face the challenges to bear one another's burdens in offering hope and resources for the poor and marginalized ones of the earth.

Together we will wrestle with the issues of our time and strive to define ways to address what we see as the greatest needs before us. How would you answer the following questions? What have I done for Jesus today? Who are the ones in my life who long to be fed, quenched, welcomed, clothed, cared for, and visited in the name of Jesus? The journey for Lent begins **February 14**, but in reality, the journey began long ago among some bewildered followers called and sent to serve and witness the love of God through Jesus. The world's needs continue as does the call of Jesus to carry on the work. I pray that one day we are among the ones gathered at the right hand when Jesus comes again in his divine glory to say thank you for serving in my name.

Thank you for making a difference. Thank you for caring for my needs for the sake of the world. - Pastor Craig



Lent begins on February 14 with Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. The day is named for the practice of imposing ashes, a practice that many Lutheran congregations have found to be a very meaningful part of the Ash Wednesday

liturgy. Repentance is at the core of Christian living (the first of Luther's 95 Theses). During the season of Lent, with ashes on the forehead look toward the cross as a sign of God's reconciliation with all creation.

On Ash Wednesday, ashes in the form of the cross will be marked on your head. This is the same symbol placed on our bodies with water in baptism. Ashes also tell us the good news of the Gospel! Through the cross of Christ, the power of death has been destroyed. Through the cross there is life. The cross-shaped ashes on our foreheads proclaim the good news that sin and death have been conquered through the cross of Christ.

Come to the Lord's table - those marked with the cross of Christ are raised up, strengthened through God's mercy, love, and grace, and sent forth into the world to proclaim the good news! **Ash Wednesday services will be offered with communion on Wednesday, February 14 at 11am and 6:30pm.**



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CONGREGATIONAL CARE



Join the Salem Saints More Than Pink Team for this year's More Than Pink fundraiser at the home of Gayle & Craig Young on **Saturday, February 10 at 5pm**. The theme this year is Mardi Gras.

If you are interested in donating a silent auction item for the fundraiser please contact Leah Grebner or Gayle Young.

The Salem bus is available for transportation and will leave Salem at 4:30pm. Sign-up and learn more at the Welcome Center!

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

Come celebrate Shrove Tuesday with a pancake and sausage supper on **Tuesday, February 13** in the Social Hall at Salem. The meal will be served from **4:30pm-6pm**, and you can make your reservations by signing up on the Pancake and Sausage Supper sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center. Proceeds from the supper will benefit the Salem Saint More Than Pink Team. A donation will be taken at the door the night of the supper. Sign-ups are encouraged for planning purposes.

Ladies' Night

All women are welcome on **Monday, February 19 at 6pm** for Ladies' Night for soup and salad and fellowship.

Thank you, Kris Griffith

Thank you, good and faithful servant, for serving Salem as both Congregational Care Ministry Leader and Church Secretary. Your work and service as Church Secretary have helped the congregation for many years. Thank you!

Nursery News

Congratulations and thank you to Nursery Attendant Laura Nduka (pictured to the right) for completing her CPR AED (including Child and Infant) certification with the American Heart Association during her winter college break.



During Laura's spring break **March 9 -17** and when her semester ends **May 10**, volunteers will be needed in the nursery who have had a background check through Salem within the past two years (that is since May of 2022.) Please contact the church office to ask for an email link to have a background check completed. The sign-up for Nursery Volunteers will be posted closer to those dates.

A Thrivent Action card was used to create a Nursing Nook in the private room off of the Nursery. A second glider was purchased for that room or as additional seating when needed in the Nursery play area.



Welcome New Members

Salem Lutheran Church welcomes Patrick and Sandra Monroe, and Amanda Maali (pictured above.)

First Friday: February 2, 6pm-8pm

Kids and Adults enjoy their time together at Salem with a Valentine's Day themed night.

- Youth will have "loaded mac & cheese" bowls and then use their creative skills to make Valentine's for their family, friends and their Salem family!
- Adults will enjoy finger foods while they compete in a friendly competition of "Valentine and All Saints Trivia".



**RSVP at the Welcome Center
for this free program!**

Salem Library

***Rediscovering Israel: A Fresh Look at God's Story
in its Historical and Cultural Contexts* by Kristi McLelland
(956.94 MCL)**

In *Rediscovering Israel*, you will experience the living God and His Word as never before! Bestselling author and professor Kristi McLelland invites you to explore the biblical narrative in the historical, cultural, geographic, and linguistic contexts in which it was written.

Whether you are preparing for pilgrimage to Israel or you desire to experience a fresh encounter with Scripture, *Rediscovering Israel* offers a welcome blend of biblical truth, faithful research, and personal reflections that will enrich your interactions with God's Word.

***God's Wisdom and Promises* by Jack Countryman
(248.4 COU)**

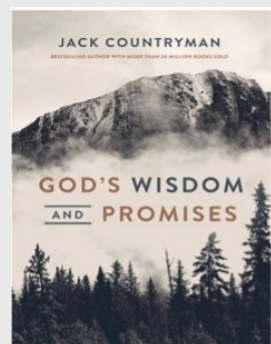
God makes more than 7,000 promises in the Bible, and He has proven faithful to keep every one of them. Find out what that means for you through this manual for life that will point you to the Source of all true comfort and peace, no matter what your circumstances.

Expertly divided into topics that are relevant to your everyday life, this book offers a guide for faith that will encourage and inspire you with the Word of God.

No matter how mature or new you may be to the faith, *God's Wisdom and Promises* is filled with hope and blessings for all stages of life.

To access and view the library collection (salemofpeoria.com), look for the Learn tab, click on Salem Lutheran Library, click again on Library Catalog and scroll through the online collection. Or search, (salemofpeoria.com/salem-lutheran-library).

Questions? Please contact Karen Swenson at 309-258-5708 or at klswen@hotmail.com



EXPLORE THE CALL OF JESUS



As Lutherans, we believe we are freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor. It is in that freedom that God has gifted us with the Spirit to a life where we are called as Jesus instructs in Matthew 25 beginning with verse 31. We are called to give food to those who hunger, give drink to those who thirst, welcome strangers, cloth the naked and provide company in times of illness and imprisonment. We are called to serve. Be part of that work and service during Lent and throughout the year!

You are invited on this 40-day journey through Lent to pray, discern, learn, and grow together to ponder what role we are being called to serve in Christ's church by exploring themes from Matthew 25:31-40.

• WEEK 1: FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY (*What is a little among so many?*)

Salem partners with the **Bethel United Methodist Church** food ministry by collecting non-perishable goods for their pantry. You can help feed others by bringing your donations during February. Suggested items for donation: **canned vegetables, canned fruit, canned beans, canned meat, cereal, peanut butter, dry noodles, mac and cheese, stuffing, spaghetti, rice, instant potatoes, paper towels, and toilet paper.**

Mark your calendar to serve at **Midwest Food Bank on March 20 at the Peoria Division at 9am.**

• WEEK 2: DRINK FOR THE THIRSTY (*I Thirst*)

Marion Medical Mission seeks to share the love of Christ with the extremely poor in Africa by providing all in need with a sustainable source of clean, safe drinking water. **The Noisy Can offering on Sunday, February 25 will go towards Marion Medical Missions' Well Program.**

• Week 3: WELCOME FOR THE STRANGER (*Who is my Neighbor/Hospitality*)

Invite a friend to worship, sit with someone new during fellowship time, sit in a different place during worship. Make this an intentional invitation on **Sunday, March 3 or Wednesday, March 6.** Welcome new members or someone you might not know as well into conversation.

MIDWEEK WORSHIP

During the weeks of Lent midweek services on Wednesdays will be offered during the daytime at **11am, February 21 - March 20.** Services will be followed by lunch.

Evening worship services are available through partnership at **First English Lutheran Church (725 E Forrest Hill Ave, Peoria) at 7pm.**

LENTEN LUNCHEONS

Plans are already underway for Lenten Luncheons. Lydia Circle will be providing the **March 13** meal and Rebecca Circle will be providing the **March 20** meal. Volunteers to wash dishes for all the weeks have been found.

Please contact the church office (office@salemofpeoria.com / (309) 688-9212) if you are interested in making a main dish or dessert, setting tables, serving food, or clearing tables for the other three Wednesdays: **February 21, February 28, or March 6.**

• **WEEK 4: CLOTHE THE NAKED**

To clothe the naked means providing something to wear for someone who has none, or even very little. The Biblical sense of the term, however, also can mean bringing people out of darkness into the light. Phoenix Community Development Services strives to provide people with the opportunity to help themselves toward self-sufficiency. One way you can help clothe the naked is by donating new items for Phoenix Community Development Services’ Homeless Outreach. These items include socks, hand warmers, warm hats, and gloves. During March you may bring these items to the collection box in the atrium.

• **WEEK 5: CARE FOR THE SICK**

Some people are "sick" not from physical illness, but from social isolation. One thinks especially of the Salem members and friends that whether at home or in long-term care facilities, live in isolation from their loved ones and friends. Ask how to become involved with Home Communion, help provide a ride to church, write a Thinking of You card, or pray for those on the prayer chain. Most of all, do not forget that some of them may even be members of your own family.

• **MAUNDY THURSDAY, MARCH 28: VISIT THE IMPRISONED**
Worship service opportunities at 11am and 6:30pm.

Friendship and prayer can reform and heal. A true work of service is done by those who befriend those in correctional institutions in the name of Jesus Christ, thereby affirming their human dignity as persons made in God's image.

ELCA World Hunger

More than 820 million people – that’s about 11 percent of people in the world today – are hungry. As members of the ELCA, we are called to respond. We are a church that rolls up our sleeves and gets to work.

Hunger Facts

- 821 million people around the world - that's more than 1 in 10 - can't access the food they need to live active, healthy lives.
- According to the most recent estimates, 736 million people live in extreme poverty on less than \$1.90 per day. That's 10% of the world's population.
- At some point in 2017 (the most recent year available), more than 40 million people in the United States were unsure where their next meal might come from.
- 39.7 million Americans were living in poverty in 2017. For a family of four, this means their annual household income was below \$25,094.



In 2023, Salem Lutheran Church donated **\$7,276.91** to ELCA World Hunger. This year consider being a part of the next 50 years of impact. Whether you are new to the program, have been involved in the past, or make ELCA World Hunger part of your annual giving there are many ways to commemorate 50 years of ELCA World Hunger.



Spiritual Practice Class, Feb 18

High school youth and adults are invited to begin Lent with a class about spiritual practices of prayer on **Sunday, February 18** during the Education Hour in the Faith Chapel led by Gretchen Petrakis. Gretchen will lead two specific spiritual practices from the book, ***50 Ways to Pray***, by Teresa A. Blythe. This book is a wonderful resource for anyone who wishes to engage more in prayer as their Lenten discipline this season. A copy of the book will be available at the Welcome Center for anyone interested in looking at it and a sign up sheet if you would like a book for yourself.

Youth Groups: Sunday, February 11

Faith for Life Confirmation

On **Sunday, February 11 from 2pm-4pm at First English Lutheran Church**, Faith for Life Confirmation for 6th-8th grade youth will meet at First English Lutheran. Please remember your Bible.

High School Youth

On **Sunday, February 11** the high school project at Build-a-Bear has been rescheduled from January. High School youth from Salem are invited to participate in a service opportunity making stuffed animals at the Build-a-Bear store in Northwoods Mall to donate to the organization, Cuddles with Kindness.

Youth meet at Salem at 2pm, and the group will travel together to the Build-a-Bear store and return by 4pm. All stuffed animals will be for donation, and the cost is being covered by funds from Salem’s Outreach Activities and a Thrivent Action Team grant. Please RSVP to Kelly Brinkman if your high school child will be participating in this service project.

6th-12th Grade Youth and Families

Pizza and fellowship to follow high school service project and confirmation class at Salem Lutheran for 6th-12th grade youth and their families from 4:30pm-6pm.

1st Communion

First Communion instruction for children in 3rd grade and older is scheduled for **Saturday, March 23 at 10am**. If interested in participating, please contact the church office to express interest.

Quilters

The Salem Quilters will meet in **February from 10:30-Noon on Sundays**. We have a handful of senior t-shirts ready for quilting! Anyone can join us, no experience is needed. If you can cut, iron or sew you can help us quilt!

2024 Vacation Bible School

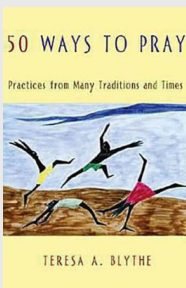
Volunteers are needed in all positions for 2024 Vacation Bible School. Please contact Faith Formation Ministry leader, Amy Schroeder (309) 202-1210 or amy.angela.schroeder@gmail.com about your interest in volunteering.

Salem Book Club

Salem’s Book Club will meet on **Wednesday, February 28 at 8:00pm on Zoom**. Please note the time change to allow people to attend Lenten evening services at First English Lutheran Church. You are always welcome to join for a specific book or start joining each month! All our welcome.

The book this month is ***50 Ways to Pray***, by Teresa A. Blythe. This book is a wonderful resource for anyone who wishes to engage more in prayer as their Lenten discipline this season.

50 Ways to Pray is exactly what the name implies – a book filled with 50 prayer practices that you can do on your own, with your family, or in larger groups. It includes traditional prayer practices such as *lectio divina*, the examen, and centering prayer as well as many others that are less traditional. If you want to deepen your prayer life but aren’t sure where to start, this book would be a great addition to your library! On Sunday, February 18 at 9:30am, Gretchen Petrakis will lead two specific spiritual practices from the book. For more information about the book and the author, check out her website: <https://teresablythe.net/50-ways-to-pray>



FROM THE PARISH NURSE, LORI REIMER

In my position as Parish Nurse, I often help individuals with their medications. This often just includes understanding the medications or what questions to ask their healthcare team. Being a medical advocate for yourself or a loved one includes medication safety.

- When you begin a new med, ask questions of your health care team, which includes your pharmacists.
- Look at the label every time and ask the pharmacist about anything on the label you do not understand.
- Check every prescription when you pick it up and question any possible discrepancy- change in size or color for example. They often use different manufacturers so the pill may look different.
- Be sure your healthcare team knows all of the non-prescription meds, vitamins, herbals and other dietary supplements that you are currently taking.
- Take your medications as directed by your healthcare team.
- Carry a current list of all medications (prescription and over-the-counter) with you at all times.
- Using a daily calendar or pillbox can help ensure that you take your meds every day; be sure to take your medications at the same time every day
- If you miss a dose of your medication, don’t double up with the next dose. If unsure what to do, call your physician’s office or pharmacist.
- Don't increase, decrease or stop taking medicine without notifying your healthcare team.
- Don't crush or split pills without check with your healthcare team.
- Don't share your prescription medications with anyone; don't take medication prescribed for someone else. Discard outdated medications.
- Store your medications as instructed by the pharmacist. Place them in a safe place away from heat, moisture or freezing temperatures.

Thank You

Thank you for the Christmas package full of cards and goodies. We love receiving them every year! - Betty and Matthew Bennett

Salem Friends – I really appreciated the Christmas cards and goodies. I really miss coming to church. I hope to come soon. I really enjoyed the visit, too. Thanks for my sister’s sack, too. She enjoyed it! Merry Christmas – Ruth Bock

Thank you for the bag of lovely Christmas cards. Please thank the Sunday school children for all the candy. Blessings to you all! MaryAlice Erickson

Thank you to all who sent Christmas greetings. In enjoyed them all. Belated Merry Christmas! – Janet Jones

Dear Salem Friends - thank you for making my Christmas “merry and bright”, and to Sandy Harvey for bringing me your bundle of cheer and to Rebecca Circle for their gifts to enjoy. You share the spirit of Christmas in cards and gifts. I will remember your blessings and kindness all through the new year. - Joyfully yours, Bea Kent

Thank you to the Sunday School classes and to our Salem family for all the treats and Christmas cards. We are so appreciative of your kindness and wish each of you a joyous New Year. - Clarence and Lois Knutson

Dear Church Members, The card shower was appreciated and I enjoyed all of the cards being so different. I am praying for a good year ahead and peace on earth. Sincerely – Suzanne McMickle

This year we had two first born male calves on our farm. I am pleased to offer the proceeds from the sale of these two calves to the church, for whatever purpose seems best to you. "All the first born of your livestock that are males shall be the Lord’s." (Exodus 13:12:) Thanks-Brad Mangan

To the people of Salem - thank you for all the cards and nice remembrances at Christmas. There are very nice people at Salem. - Kay Peterson

BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS!
FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

February 1 Chris Cochran Lynnce Coyner Roxanne Vandervlugt	February 7 Maren Thompson	February 16 Janet Jones Misty Kelly Nancy Rehn	February 22 Olivia Kelly
February 3 John Iverson Bill Ligon	February 8 Wendy Thomasson	February 18 Annette Doughty	February 24 Chad Arnold Lesley Howard Christine Steele
February 4 Landon Peterson Adelaide Taubert-Koss	February 9 Emily Peterson	February 19 Wendy Cochran Janet Cox John Harvey Ann Roberts	February 25 Jacob Ferrell
February 5 Sarah Bidne Janet Wiesehan	February 11 Diane Proft	February 20 Lorelei Hull Luci Hull	February 26 Marla Breidel Mia Hoffman
February 6 Lily Bastian Rick Lambie	February 12 Norma Hartman Lisa Janco	February 21 Noah Hopkins Vicki Larson Alan Puttcamp	February 27 Conner Bidne
	February 14 Pam DeBruyn Allison Harvey		

PRAYER
REQUESTS

- Salem’s growing ministry

DIRECTION...

- Salem Congreg. Council
- Salem’s Pastor and Staff

PRAYERS REQUESTS...

- The men and women of our armed forces
- Support for all caregivers when loved ones suffer
- Individuals suffering from depression

- Ulrich family in Malawi
- Jocette and Salih Arbeyi missionaries through CRU
- Families at Crittenton Center
- Midwest Food Bank
- Luan Borquist
- Butch Conard
- Karen Erickson
- Crystal Grabel
- the family of Vi Gruber
- Charles Hettrick
- Ron Hipple
- Brenda and Mike Newcomb
- Tim, Jessica, Daniel Peterson

- Linda Peterson
- Rosy Park
- Donita Lynn Purcell
- Debi Smith
- Brant Wegrzyn
- Raymond Weitzel

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY...

Stateside: Ian Borquist, Gibson Gonzalez, Emily Graff, Barry Joyce, Talon Maki, Greg Miller, Ashley Owen, Lucas Owen, Jim Sterling, Jason Sterr

Condolences

Viola Gruber

Vi Gruber joined the church triumphant on Sunday, December 17, 2023. May the Lord grant peace and comfort to the family members and friends who mourn Vi and rejoice as she enters the church triumphant. Vi’s caring nature and love for nursing gave her the opportunity to care for many people and impact many lives throughout her career.

Thank You

Just wanted to thank the Salem Lutheran family for being so attentive to our mother, Vi Gruber. For many years, the children have been light there, too. – Randy Gruber and family



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Salem Churchmen

Salem Churchmen Annual Christmas dinner party and white elephant gift exchange was a hit featuring beef brisket from Dave Swanson (viking in the 2nd row) and another fun night of fellowship!