

the Bugle

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December is filled with opportunities to worship and prepare to celebrate the gift we share in God's very presence coming among us in Jesus. While I love the story Luke tells of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem to humble parents, announced by angels to nearby shepherds, I am even more inspired by the words we will share on Christmas morning from John's gospel.

"In the beginning the Word already existed.

*The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.*

² *He existed in the beginning with God.*

³ *God created everything through him,
and nothing was created except through him.*

⁴ *The Word gave life to everything that was created,
and his life brought light to everyone.*

⁵ *The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

¹⁴ *So the Word became human and made his home among
us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness.*

*And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one
and only Son."*

John 1:1-5, 14 NLT

This passage proves Jesus is not an afterthought. From the very beginning, in infinite wisdom, God's plan was to come among us, dwell with us, know us and be known by us. Emmanuel means God with us. It is this very presence of God that we anticipate and hope for each day of our lives as light in the darkness. As evening's shadows lengthen in December, we focus more and more on the light of Jesus (Advent wreath, Christmas lights, evening candles while singing Silent Night) and we grow in faith that the darkness has no power over us for Christ is with us. May this Advent/Christmas season prepare our hearts to welcome Jesus anew, to ponder and treasure his presence so that above all the gifts shared this Christmas, we embrace the greatest of gifts.

|| *"O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord."* ||

Blessed Christmas!

Pastor Craig



"It is this very presence of God that we anticipate and hope for each day of our lives as light in the darkness."



COMMUNITY FESTIVAL OF NATIVITIES

December 5-8, 2024
3700 W. Reservoir Blvd. Peoria

The Peoria Area Community Festival of Nativities invites you to celebrate the Christmas season by experiencing nativity displays from around the world and enjoying musical performances by local talent. This free, interfaith event brings together churches from Central Illinois and beyond to share the story of Christ’s birth. Their goal is to provide a peaceful space for individuals and families to reflect on the sacred meaning of Christmas. For more information, check www.communityfestivalofnativities.com

December 5 | 3PM - 9PM
Live Nativity from 4:30PM - 6:30PM

December 6-7 | 10AM - 9PM

December 8 | 12PM - 6PM



SALEM FAMILY CAROLING

Sunday, December 15th | 3-5PM

Join your friends to bring some Christmas cheer and holiday sounds to Salem’s homebound members. Please sign up at the Welcome Center.



BREAKING BREAD

December 4th | 5:45-7:00PM

Join Salem members for a festive and fun-filled evening of food, fellowship and gingerbread house building! This family-friendly activity will be a wonderful opportunity to come together, share the Christmas spirit and create edible masterpieces. The meal for the evening will be baked spaghetti casserole, garlic bread and salad with hot chocolate and Christmas cookies for dessert. All ages are welcome. Bring your creativity and Christmas cheer as we build lasting memories and celebrate the season! Sign up at the Welcome Center.



Craig Swenson, Senior Pastor
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please call:
Pastor Craig: 309-258-4759

WORSHIP

Sundays of Advent
December 1, 8, 15, 22

Service of Solace
December 11 | 7PM

Christmas Eve
December 24 | 7PM

Christmas
December 25 | 10AM

December 29 | 9AM

Happy Birthday!

DEC 1
William Fischer
Alexander Zapf

DEC 2
Henry Arnold
Darlene Ford
Susan Hamann
Wren Jolliff

DEC 3
Hailey Zapf

DEC 4
John Day

DEC 5
Donald Hoffman
Grayson Rook
Rosemary Swanson

DEC 6
Isaac Hartman

DEC 7
Jon Arehart
Bonnie Gallas
Lucas Owen

DEC 8
Caleb Bastian
Joanne Bridges

DEC 10
Dan Starzynski

DEC 11
Walter Bastian
Wanita Van Scoyoc

DEC 12
Holland Taubert-Koss
Jody Jean McKinty
Greg Roberts
Marjorie Ryberg
Hans Vandervlugt

DEC 15
Julie Gannon
Laura Hartman
Bernice Kent
Gerald Snyder

DEC 16
Margaret Steele

DEC 17
William Ricketts

DEC 18
Audrey Koeltzow
Nancy Peterson
Payton Rook

DEC 19
Julia Hokanson

DEC 20
Ashlynn McKinty
Julianna Rees

DEC 24
Richard Peterson

DEC 25
Jack Cooper

DEC 27
Joel Brinkman
Michael Petrakis

DEC 29
Beth Cooper
Spencer Lantz
Grant Peterson
Kathleen Self

DEC 30
Braden Wallstedt



CONGREGATIONAL CARE



LADIES NIGHT OUT

December 9th | 6:00PM

Meet in the Social Hall | \$10 admission

Ladies, you’re invited to a special evening of fellowship and fun at Salem’s Ladies Night! Come to Salem for a relaxed and enjoyable time with great conversation, laughter, and delicious food. Dave Swanson’s famous pulled pork will be served for dinner, so come hungry! Please sign up on the sheet in the Welcome Center to let us know you’re coming. We can’t wait to spend this wonderful evening with you!



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Let Salem members know they’re remembered by providing a cheery greeting for their Thinking of You bags! You may bring cards from **Sunday, November 24 through Sunday, December 8**. The names of people to be remembered are:

Lynn and Ed Akers, Kay Bartholomew, Nancy Bastian, Betty and Matthew Bennett, Alf Berg, Ruth Bock, Helen Buerger, Sue Colloton, Dolly Conley (Ruth Bock’s sister), Marty and Joan Creager, Velma Crowley, John Day, MaryAlice Erickson, Ron Hipple, Janet Jones, Bea Kent, Carol Love, Arlan Maier, Suzanne McMickle, Bob Middleton, David Mills, JoAnn and Paul Misselhorn, Henry Noe, Kay Peterson, Linda Peterson, Marjorie Ryberg, Jan Saylor, Marilyn Setterlund, Phyllis Shadley, Marilyn Smith, Fred Stamerjohn, Wanita Van Scoyoc

The bags will be located outside of the Social Hall through **December 15**. If you want to deliver these greetings, please sign-up at the Welcome Center. Bags will be available for delivery on **Monday, December 16**. These Christmas greetings are sure to be cherished!

FAITH FORMATION



From left to right: Allen Bidne, Ella Hartman, Landon Peterson, Makayla Schroeder, Julia Wallstedt
Back row: Pastor Craig

Affirmation of Baptism

Congratulations to the young people who affirmed their baptism! May God's love continue to guide you in your faith journey, and may you always feel the support and encouragement of your church family.

WOMEN'S CIRCLES



REBECCA CIRCLE

Tuesday, **December 10**, at 11:00AM
The Fox Pub & Cafe
(7800 N Sommer St, off Pioneer Parkway)
We look forward to a time of lunch & merrymaking!

LYDIA CIRCLE

Wednesday, **December 11** at 2:00PM
SLC Conference Room

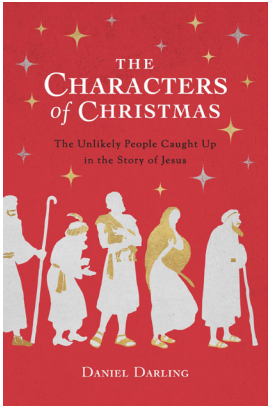
SUNDAY SCHOOL EVENT BRUNCH & PROGRAM

December 15th

Meet in the Social Hall following worship

Please gather for a delicious brunch of many Scandinavian favorites including egg casseroles, danish, Swedish pancakes & lingonberries, meatballs, fruit soup, rice pudding and much more! It is sure to be a joyful and heartwarming morning you won't want to miss! Sign up at the Welcome Center.

SALEM LIBRARY



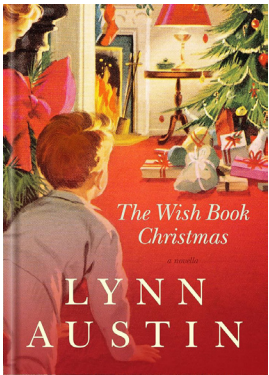
The Characters of Christmas: 10 Unlikely People Caught Up in the Story of Jesus

by Daniel Darling (232.92 DAR)

Learn something new this Christmas... We hate to admit it, but after years, sometimes even decades, of reading the same Luke 2 story of Christmas, we get a little bored—we lose some of the awe we ought to have when discussing the greatest miracle in history. That's

why *The Characters of Christmas* was written, to help you take a fresh look at the Christmas story by getting to know the minor characters that played a part in Jesus' birth, such as Zechariah and Elizabeth, the Shepherds, and Herod.

As you slow down, engage your imagination, and enter into the stories of these women and men, you'll see the most important character—Jesus Christ—with new eyes. Break free from the familiar, and discover something you never knew about the story you've always heard.



The Wish Book Christmas

by Lynn Austin (FIC AUS)

Best friends Audrey Barrett and Eve Dawson are looking forward to celebrating Christmas in postwar America, thrilled at the prospect of starting new traditions with their five-year-old sons. But when the 1951 Sears Christmas Wish Book arrives and the boys start obsessing over every toy in

it, Audrey and Eve realize they must first teach them the true significance of the holiday. They begin by helping Bobby and Harry plan gifts of encouragement and service for those in their community, starting by walking an elderly neighbor's yellow Lab—since a dog topped the boys' wish list for Santa. In the charming tale that follows, Audrey and Eve are surprised to find their own hearts healing from the tragedies of war and opening to the possibility of forgiveness and new love.

To access and view the library collection, visit:
saalemofpeoria.com/salem-lutheran-library

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

OUTREACH MINISTRY



Hello, Salem Family!

Thank you for your support on my mission trip to Ethiopia over the week of 10/19 – 10/26. In Ethiopia, I was introduced to people both young and old. Some of these people were school children who were provided the opportunity to escape their circumstances through learning. Others lived in Kora (a trash dump) and made their living off of looking through trash. And yet others were artisans who crafted fine, handmade products to support themselves and others. Granted, these were not all of the people I had the opportunity to meet, but all of them had one important characteristic in common.

They were all God's children. All were touched by someone who God spoke to. These people God spoke to had the opportunity to focus on only bettering themselves, while forgetting about others less fortunate. However, I am convinced God spoke to them, moved them, and brought the love of God to their hearts to care and love for these people. The reason I am convinced is who would commit to feeding hearty meals to school children on the top of a mountain every Thursday year-round just because? Why would someone choose to feed nutritious meals to the prostitutes in Kora once a month just because? Why would people start businesses employing artisans and using that business to support others who lack the opportunity to escape their circumstances? People even do it around Peoria, such as Salem supporting the C.T. Vivian elementary school. With your support, I was able to witness these stories and gain an understanding of God's love I never thought I would. I learned that the love of God is spoken differently through different people, but universally it drives God's people to love their neighbor as themselves. Thank you, Salem Family, for supporting me on my continual faith journey.

- Levi Salverson



FAIR TRADE ITEMS FOR SALE December 1st

Supporting fair trade ensures that producers in developing countries receive fair wages and work under ethical conditions, empowering communities and promoting sustainability. Thank you for your support! If you are in need of items, you are welcome to contact:
Jennifer Gallas | (309) 256-5862 | pew117@aol.com



NOISY CAN

Thank you for all your donations to Noisy Can! In October, we received **\$687.23** for Marion Medical Mission, and in November, we received **\$305.69** for ELCA World Hunger. Your heartwarming generosity is truly making a big difference in the lives of those in need, and we are so grateful for your continued support.



FOOD COLLECTION

Throughout the month of December please consider donating items for Salem's partner in ministry - Bethel United Methodist Food Pantry. Let's make a meal! Please consider during the month of December donating:
canned meat, canned vegetables, canned fruit and Jiffy mixes.

Lessons and Carols

Gather at Salem Lutheran Church to celebrate the beginning of the Advent Season with Lessons & Carols on **December 8 at 3pm at Salem Lutheran Church.**



The format for the Lessons and Carols service is simple: nine scripture readings following the fall of humanity, the promise of The Messiah, and the birth of Christ. Interspersed with traditional Christmas hymns, and musical offerings from Salem choirs, ensembles, as well as others within our Peoria community.

INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING?

All event rehearsals for Bell Choir and Sanctuary Choir will take place during their regularly scheduled times on Thursdays at 6pm (Bells) and 7pm (Choir). All are welcome to start joining choir rehearsals – it is not too late!



OUTREACH COLLECTION for the Center for Prevention of Abuse

Donations will be collected from **December 1 – December 8** to support Adopt Our Families program for the Center for Prevention of Abuse.

New items being collected are items that keep people warm: **throw blankets, robes, pajama sets, separate pajama tops and bottoms, footies/warm socks, skid-free slippers/socks, mittens, gloves, winter hats, scarves, cardigan sweaters, sweatpants, & sweatshirts.**

We will accept donations in all sizes, from infant – 4X.

Items will be collected in the Atrium from December 1st until the event. If you wish to make a monetary donation, please make checks payable to the Center for Prevention of Abuse. An offering box will be available during the event on **Sunday, December 8.**

The Center for Prevention of Abuse (CFPA) exists to help all people—women, men, and children—live free from violence and abuse. CFPA provides safety, counseling and therapy, advocacy for women, men, and children who have been affected by violence and abuse and works to prevent abuse from happening.

Invite your friends!

This is an opportunity to invite friends and family to come together to celebrate the beginning of the Advent Season. A short reception with light refreshments is to follow the service. Come and join us for this immersive Advent activity on **Sunday, December 8** at 3pm!

Thank You!

“Thank you for your continued support and donation to Dr. C.T. Vivian Primary School. We are grateful to have such supportive and involved community partners. We appreciate everything you do for our school, students and staff to help our year go smoothly. Thank you for all your prayers and kindness—We are lucky to have you in our school.” *Thank you, Kary Boerger, Principal, C.T. Vivian Primary School*

“Thank you for the mission support you provide to the Central/Southern Illinois Synod and the wider church. Through your partnership in the Gospel, congregations are encouraged in their mission, the whole body of Christ is uplifted, and the Gospel of Christ is proclaimed near and far. Thank you for your ministry and mission support—a sign of the Spirit’s work among us!” *Much appreciation from Marilyn Dichsen and the C/SIS Mission Support and Stewardship Education Committee*

“Thank you to the following people who participated in the fall workday at Salem on October 26th. Pastor Craig Swenson, Jeff Machacek, Eric Schroeder, Tim Hickey, Daniel Taminger, Gary Setterlund, Dave Griffith, Rick Lambie, Inez Norgard, Jeanne Setterlund, Paula Sydow, Deb Sanders, Suzanne Ligon, Sharon Mollenhauer and Roberta Kessinger. Your efforts to maintain the church property is greatly appreciated.” *Thank you, Jeff Machacek*

“Thank you to Meghan, Brenda, Theresa and our volunteers for creating the insert & PowerPoint presentation for Veterans Day. Thank you to all our Veterans who provided us with service information and photos for our displays. Thank you to all the folks who traveled to the airport for the Honor Flights and to Scott Faulkner for driving the Salem Bus so more people could participate. Thank you to our Veterans for your Service! Thank you to Nathan for always setting up the tables for the displays. Thank you to Deb Sanders for the extra goodies in the fellowship hall and to Karen for always having cookies for us.” *Sincerely, Ann Sterr*



Service of Solace

Christ’s coming proclaims hope for all who are grieving or otherwise find the holiday season difficult. Experience words of forgiveness and the comfort of Christ in this service on **Wednesday, December 11 at 7:00pm** in the Faith Chapel.



POINSETTIA DONATIONS

The church will purchase poinsettias for the Chancel to provide a more festive atmosphere. You may make a donation along with any information describing “in honor” or “in memory” or “in celebration”. Suggested donation amount is \$15 per plant. Forms are available at the Welcome Center or on request at the office.

Planning to make a year-end charitable contribution to Salem?



If you are planning a gift to offset 2024 income, you’ll want to be aware of the official rules from the IRS: “Donors must deliver or mail checks on or by **December 31, 2024**, in order to claim a charitable contribution deduction for 2024. Checks that are placed in the church offering on the first Sunday of 2025 will not qualify for a charitable contribution deduction in 2024, even if the check is pre-dated to 2024 or was actually written in 2024. However, checks that are written, mailed and post-marked in 2024 will be deductible in 2024 though they are not received by a church until 2025.” Thank you for keeping these things in mind as you plan your giving.



PRAYER REQUESTS

Jocette and Salih Arbeyi
missionaries through CRU

Prayers continued for:

- Luan Borquist
- Butch Conard
- Joanie Creager
- Ron Hipple
- Maddy, friend of Julia Wallstedt recovering from a liver transplant
- Mike
- Tim, Jessica, Daniel Peterson
- Linda Peterson
- Sheryl Sattler

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



Welcome, Danielle!

We are delighted to welcome a new member to our team, Danielle Worsham, who will be joining us as our Office Coordinator. Let's extend a warm welcome as we look forward to the many ways Danielle will help strengthen our ministry and community.

Danielle, we're so glad to have you here! God bless you as you begin this new journey with us.