



THIS SUMMER

Fair Trade Sale	2
God’s Work. Our Hands.	3
New Beginnings Sunday	4
Birthdays	5
Faith Formation	6
Outreach	7



It is now the fourth summer for the native garden at our home. It started with a vision of creating a space for birds and butterflies to feed followed by research through books, videos, and numerous conversations with experienced gardeners for plants native to this part of Illinois which took several months. We then designed the layout for the garden and placement of varieties (size, color, timing of the flowers, what plants compete well with others, which plants to avoid as invasive), prepared the soil, planted delicate plants, watered, weeded and supported the young plants. Not all our efforts have been successful but overall, the garden is thriving and we are enjoying the fruits of our labor.

As we move through summer months, I ponder what gauge we are using when we assess if our ministry efforts are thriving or not. Do we measure success by the number of visitors we have on Sunday mornings? The number of cars in the parking lot or how full the sanctuary is? Are we assessing the number of families with young children who are participating in the various activities and programs?

Or are we assessing whether or not we are faithful to our mission of “Growing people in Christ to love and serve others?”

I recently read an article written by a pastor of a congregation in Virginia about reviving a dying church as many congregations experience declining membership and participation. One paragraph makes a lot of sense. “When I worked part-time for the Virginia Synod, I would frequently visit congregations in need of revival where I heard people say again and again that the only way the church will grow is if they attract children, youth, and families. But that doesn’t necessarily follow (or work). In my present congregation, we started with a majority of older adults. So we used what God had given us and began an ecumenical mature adult ministry. Astonishingly, the more we focused on this ministry, the more the church grew. Instead of wishing for something you do not already have, make grateful use of the blessings that the Lord has already given you.”

Summer is a good time to reflect on what we value and what feeds our faith. I pray the seeds sown in faith will



## STAFF

**Craig Swenson**  
Senior Pastor  
[cswenson@salemofpeoria.com](mailto:cswenson@salemofpeoria.com)

**Danielle Worsham**  
Office Coordinator  
[office@salemofpeoria.com](mailto:office@salemofpeoria.com)

**Maggie Sloter**  
Director of Music & Choir Director  
[msloter@salemofpeoria.com](mailto:msloter@salemofpeoria.com)

**Gretchen Petrakis**  
Director of Sunday School  
[gpetrakis@salemofpeoria.com](mailto:gpetrakis@salemofpeoria.com)

**Brandon Worner**  
Director of Communications  
[bworner@salemofpeoria.com](mailto:bworner@salemofpeoria.com)

## POSTAL INFO

The Bugle is published monthly for \$10/year by:

Salem Lutheran Church  
1700 W. War Memorial Dr.  
Peoria, Illinois 61614-6724  
(309) 688-9212

Periodicals Postage Paid at:  
Peoria, IL 61601

POSTMASTER:  
Send Address Changes to:

Salem Lutheran Church,  
1700 W. War Memorial Dr.,  
Peoria, IL 61614-6724

**Pastoral Emergency Number:**  
In case of emergency,  
please call  
Pastor Craig: 309-258-4759

produce kingdom fruit. It may not look like the fruit we imagine and we may not always be successful but we know that God's word does not return empty but accomplishes its purpose. (Isaiah 55:11)

May our work together serve not as an end goal but as a way for God's purpose to be accomplished through us. Blessings in Christ!

*Pastor Craig*



## NOISY CAN OFFERING

The Noisy Can offered on June 8th received \$582.26 to support Central/ Southern Illinois Synod which has a companion synod relationship with two synods of the Malagasy Lutheran Church in Madagascar.

Thank you!



## MIDWEST FOOD BANK VOLUNTEER

**July 30<sup>th</sup> | 9:00-11:00 AM**

9005 N Industrial Rd, Peoria, IL 61615

Salem's volunteer team at Midwest Food Bank is growing, and we'd love to have a few more hands! If you're interested, please register online <https://portal.goldenvolunteer.com/timeslots/KMWigaHPOt> (link also available through the Bugle Blast).

Volunteers should plan to meet at the Peoria location. Thank you to our dedicated volunteers!

For questions, contact:

**John Grabel**  
[iron\\_man\\_46@yahoo.com](mailto:iron_man_46@yahoo.com)

## FAIR TRADE SALE

**July 6<sup>th</sup> and August 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Fair Trade items will be available for purchase on Sunday, Sunday, **July 6th** and Sunday, **August 3rd** after worship.

If you are in need of items, you are welcome to contact:

**Jennifer Gallas**  
(309) 256-5862  
[pew117@aol.com](mailto:pew117@aol.com)



## GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7TH**

### WHAT IS "GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS."?

Together in Jesus Christ we are freed by grace to live faithfully, witness boldly, and serve joyfully. "God's Work. Our Hands." is an annual day of service and an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) — one church, freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor. "God's Work. Our Hands." is a way for us to be church together. On this day, **Sunday September 7th**, we bear witness to the love and concern God's people have for one another. These acts of service allow us to explore one of our most basic Lutheran convictions: All of life in Jesus Christ — every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life — flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God's grace.



God's work. Our hands.



September 7, 2025

## HOW CAN I HELP?

- Be on the lookout for more information to come in the September Bugle Newsletter.

## 2025 SYNOD ASSEMBLY RECAP

The Central Southern Illinois Synod (CSIS) assembly was held at St. John's Lutheran Church in Bloomington from June 5-7 where Pastor Craig and Dave & Kris Griffith attended among the approximately 140 lay voting members and 90 rostered clergy.

The theme for the assembly was "Carrying On in Christ's Mission and the guest speaker for three presentations was Dr. Dwight Zscheile from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. The presentations focused on the cultural changes in society, its impact on the church, and the Faithful Innovation process to help congregations engage with local communities through listening to God through dwelling in the Word, listening to each other in the spirit of teamwork and partnership, and listening to our neighbors to understand what opportunities God is placing in front of us.

In addition to these insightful presentations and various reports from Lutheran organizations, seminaries, and campus ministries, there were a variety of fun events including a wonderful worship service, an Oktoberfest style meal with music and a "brat toss" competition, and a recognition of clergy who have reached a milestone year of ministry include our very own Pastor Craig Swenson (30 years) and a past interim Pastor Dick Hanson (65 years).

The CSIS budget for 2026 was approved and a resolution to continue support for our companion Synod in Madagascar was passed. Additionally, there was exciting news that our Central Southern Illinois Synod applied for and received a 5-year \$491,000 grant for rural ministry. Our Synod will be sharing more information on how they will staff for this initiative to help our rural congregations in towns of less than 10,000 population.

Next year's annual assembly will be experimental in nature, with the business portion of the assembly held remotely in June, and Synod staff attending "Synod days" at each of the Conference meetings in-person in the fall.





CONGREGATIONAL CARE

BLESSING OF NEW BEGINNINGS  
SUNDAY, AUGUST 24TH

On **Sunday, August 24**, worship time will recognize a season of new beginnings and new things. Students and teachers are encouraged to bring their backpacks to church on this Sunday. January 1 is often thought of as a time of “newness” as we recognize a new year, but this time of year is often the beginning of new schedules, activities, friends, classes of all kinds, and new skills and learning take place. Sometimes we look forward to new beginnings. But we can also be anxious about it. Through the highs and lows, God never forsakes us.

Our God is a God of new beginnings as the writer of Lamentations tells us:

*“The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. ‘The LORD is my portion,’ says my soul, ‘therefore I will hope in him.’”*

Lamentations 3:22-24

Every season has a purpose and is an opportunity to see God as the God of new beginnings. The familiar passage from Ecclesiastes reminds us that:

*“For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven...”*

Ecclesiastes 3:1

The Faith Formation ministry team hopes to see you as we celebrate this season of new beginnings. God is always creating and as we follow the path that Jesus shows us, with the Holy Spirit working in and through us, we are given strength and a desire to pursue new things.

TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A  
*Season*  
AND A TIME TO EVERY PURPOSE  
UNDER HEAVEN. ECCLESIASTES 3:1

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Confirmation co-op at First English Lutheran Church. Second Sundays of each month. **August 10th** is parent/student orientation beginning at 2:00 pm.

Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9, Jan. 11, Feb. 8, Mar. 8, Apr. 12

FAITH FORMATION

UPCOMING DATES

**Sunday, Aug 24**  
New Beginning Sunday  
  
10:30am: Faith For Life  
Confirmation meeting  
  
2pm: Sunday School

**Sunday, Aug 17**  
Cross+Generational Choir Practice  
after worship

**Sunday, Aug 24**  
Cross+Generational Choir  
at worship

**Wednesday, Aug 27**  
7:30pm: Salem Book Club

**Sunday, Sept 7**  
10:15am: God’s Work.  
Our Hands. service project  
  
10:45am: Sunday School students  
meet in classrooms after serving at  
GWOH project

11:15am: Salem Picnic

**Sunday, Sept 14**  
Education hour resumes



Birthday blessings!

JULY

**JULY 2**  
Stephen Arff  
Matt Bidne  
Chris Cozadd  
Leah Owen

**JULY 3**  
Tamara Iott  
Ashley Owen

**JULY 4**  
Helene Peterson  
Jordan Snider

**JULY 5**  
April Madigan

**JULY 6**  
Bradley Hamann  
Heather Hodgkins  
Caryn Holmes

**JULY 8**  
Thomas Anderson  
Hannah Grant  
Caleb Kotewa  
David Nelson  
Karen Swenson

**JULY 9**  
Julie Eastwood  
Linda Peterson

**JULY 10**  
Nancy Bastian  
Kyle Griffith  
Luren Hood

**JULY 11**  
Jessica Bastian  
Branden Cooper  
Joey Ghazanfari  
Barbara Ginger  
Chris Janssen  
Leah Joyce  
Karen Norman Rees  
Jodi Serfling  
Stella Serfling  
Jean Yancick

**JULY 12**  
Monica Dockery  
Laurie Seidel  
Elaine Sokolowski

**JULY 13**  
Jason Brinkman  
Ellen Forkell

**JULY 14**  
Dennis Lehmann  
Alexander Nelson

**JULY 15**  
Bill Cox  
Sydney Neltner  
Brenda Newcomb

**JULY 16**  
Kayla DeGood  
Taylor Eastwood  
Emily Nichelson

**JULY 17**  
Sharon Couden  
Cynthia Fischer  
Ryan Garcia

**JULY 18**  
Scott Faulkner  
Leah Grebner

**JULY 19**  
Megan Thomasson  
Craig Young

**JULY 20**  
Jonathan Arnold

**JULY 21**  
Caroline  
Hurlbut Rumpy

**JULY 24**  
Jason Egan

**JULY 25**  
Melissa Berchtold  
Kay Peterson  
Lynsey Steinbach

**JULY 26**  
Steven Bennett  
Thomas Hokanson

**JULY 27**  
Richard Huxtable

**JULY 28**  
Alyvia Cowser  
Merrell Hickey  
Abigail Monahan  
Avery Uphoff

**JULY 29**  
Mary Starzynski

**JULY 30**  
Roger Anderson  
Brooke Drury  
Christopher Snyder  
Rod Topel

**JULY 31**  
Rebecca Hagen  
Megan TouVelle

AUGUST

**AUG 1**  
Henrik Wilczewski  
Adeline Young

**AUG 2**  
Maggie Slotter

**AUG 3**  
Caleb Aeschliman  
Paul Bahnfleth  
Cloyd Conrad  
Cadence Forkell

**AUG 4**  
Idan Ghazanfari

**AUG 6**  
Ross Massey

**AUG 7**  
Darryn Peterson

**AUG 8**  
Patricia Arehart  
Rebecca Sipf

**AUG 9**  
Nicholas Doty  
Quinn Salverson

**AUG 11**  
Derek Barnes

**AUG 12**  
Troy Mayon  
Jan Taylor

**AUG 13**  
Gayle Carrillo

**AUG 14**  
Justin Gabel

**AUG 15**  
Jaedyn Grebner  
Riley Neltner

**AUG 16**  
Heather MacIver-  
Arnold  
Jon Ripper

**AUG 17**  
Jennifer Paar  
Jill Sidell

**AUG 18**  
Christopher Dowell  
Nona Mitchelar  
Ryan Stanley  
Marshall Vasquez

**AUG 19**  
Liam Dammann  
Dylan Schroeder

**AUG 20**  
David Anderson Jr.  
Kyle Mathiesen

**AUG 21**  
David Anderson  
Evelyn Aprahamian  
Sandra Carlson  
Cassandra LaFollett

**AUG 22**  
Jason Breidel  
Kirk Cooper

**AUG 24**  
Jamie Hartwig

**AUG 25**  
Leo Vandervlugt

**AUG 27**  
Joy Anderson  
Amy Schroeder

**AUG 28**  
Dennis Krus  
Ellen Mangan

**AUG 29**  
Tammy Eckhardt

**AUG 30**  
Levi Salverson  
Michael Westart

**AUG 31**  
Donald Graves



# FAITH FORMATION

## A NIGHT OUT AT THE BALLPARK

SPONSORED BY THE SALEM CHURCHMEN

Join the Salem Churchmen for a fun-filled night at the Peoria Chief’s stadium — faith, fellowship, and fastballs!  
Enjoy great company, ballpark snacks, and America’s favorite pastime under the lights. Wear your favorite team’s attire and let’s make memories together at the ballgame on **Wednesday, August 6th** at 6:35 PM. Because it is Faith and Family Night, stick around after the game to enjoy some postgame fireworks.  
\$2.00 hot dogs and nachos.  
\$5.00 per ticket (box seats).  
If you have questions, please contact Jeff Machacek or Tim Hickey. The final day to sign up with be Sunday, July 27th.



## CROSS+GENERATIONAL CHOIR

SUNDAY, AUGUST 24TH

Salem’s Faith Formation and Worship and Music Ministry Teams are partnering together to provide an exciting music ministry opportunity. You are invited to join our Cross+Generational Choir for elementary age young readers through adults. This choir will hold one rehearsal on **Sunday, August 17** at 10:30am-11:15am following worship, and focus on learning one song accessible to various ages and musical skills. The choir will then share this song during worship the following **Sunday, August 24**. This short-term commitment is a great way for many to experience the joy of choir while enhancing our worship with beautiful music.  
Mark your calendars with these dates and invite your friends to participate! You can contact Director of Music, Maggie Slotter (mslotter@salemofpeoria.com) if you are interested, or sign up at the Welcome Center.



## SALEM PICNIC

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7TH

All are invited to the Salem Family picnic following the God’s Work. Our Hands. service project on **Sunday, Sept 7**.  
Sunday, Sept. 7: All invited! Bring a friend and a dessert!  
• 9am: Worship service  
• 10:15am: God’s Work. Our Hands. service project assembly  
• 10:45am: Sunday School students meet in classrooms  
• 11:15am: picnic lunch in social hall, outdoor tables available  
• Bingo in social hall following the picnic lunch

## WOMEN’S CIRCLES

### LYDIA CIRCLE

We will meet at Olive Garden  
on Wednesday, **August 13<sup>th</sup>** at 11:30 AM



# FAITH FORMATION

## SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH 2025 VBS, ROAD TRIP

Monday, July 7 – Friday, July 11 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm

### ROAD TRIPPERS (PREK -5th GRADE)

Join us for an exciting adventure on the open road, where children embark on thrilling journeys to fantastic destinations. As kids experience these stories through music, storytelling, games, arts and crafts, and science, they’ll discover God is always with them.  
We will meet in the evenings at 5:30 for a light meal and hold our program from 6:00-7:30pm.

### ADULT AND STUDENT VOLUNTEERS (6TH GRADERS AND UP!)

Vacation Bible School is an outreach serving event for the Peoria Community. We have big jobs and small jobs – every volunteer matters! Please contact Rebecca Sipf (beccagurl1@hotmail.com) or Amy Schroeder (amy.angela.schroeder@gmail.com) with any questions.

Please see the Bugle Blast for access to electronic registration.

# OUTREACH MINISTRY

## VBS School Supply Drive for Dr. C.T. Vivian School

The Outreach Committee and the Faith Formation Committee are co-sponsoring a school supply drive to benefit Salem’s partner school, Dr. C.T. Vivian Primary School. During the week of Vacation Bible School (**July 7-11**), participants will be asked to bring a school supply daily as a donation to the school. The Outreach Committee will support the effort with the purchase of additional supplies, and the entire congregation is invited to participate by bringing their own donations. Dr. C.T. Vivian’s school supply list can be found on their website, but suggested items include dry erase markers, headphones, Kleenex, Clorox wipes, paper towels, Ziploc bags, and hand sanitizer (ideally 12 oz pump bottles – please no extra-large bottles). The school would also benefit from donations of new or gently used uniform pants, shorts, or skirts (colors: navy blue, khaki, or black) and collared shirts, sweatshirts, or sweaters (colors: solid navy blue, red, white, or cream). Youth sizes 5-8 are especially in demand.

A donation box will be placed near the nursery in the atrium, and donations will be accepted until **Friday, July 11**.  
Please contact Emily Jolliff at 309-712-4979 if you have any questions.

# PRAYER REQUESTS

### CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR:

- Dennis Rhoades
- Luan Borquist
- Butch Conard
- Joanie Creager
- Maddy, friend of Julia Wallstedt
- Mike
- Tim, Jessica, Daniel Peterson
- Linda Peterson

- Sheryl Sattler

- Jocette and Salih Arbeyi  
(missionaries through CRU)

- Tim Walters

- Greg Gebhards

- Thelma Neal

- Sally Smith

### 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



1700 W. War Memorial Dr. • Peoria, IL 61614-6724

The Bugle  
USPS 477-460



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

**God's work. Our hands.**



September 7, 2025