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Now that my call among you has concluded, it is time for you and for me to seek guidance as to what God intends for our future paths. One of the Bible verses written inside the back cover of my Bible is Proverbs 16:9 “We make our own plans, but the Lord decides where we will go.” It is a good reminder that while we make plans for the future, ultimately, God knows best for the direction that brings God glory. I have a few plans for my new chapter in retirement but ultimately, I seek God’s direction to navigate this new adventure.

For Salem, I have secured pulpit supply for the month of February. Mr. Stuart Johnson, a Synodically Authorized Minister, will be with you February 1. Pastor Jim Christian will be with you February 8 and 22. Pastor Amy Zietllow, Assistant to the Bishop for Transformational Leadership, will be with you on the 15th. By then, she expects Salem will be under contract with a trained interim pastor to begin March 1. This can be a healthy, discerning time for a congregation. Pastor Amy met with the Council members at the January meeting to help guide next steps in the call process. She said you should expect to work through the process over the next 12 months before calling your next lead pastor. It is my hope and prayer that we all will benefit from intentionally discerning God’s work to guide our steps toward a healthy and fulfilling future, filled with hope and expectation.

May the peace of Christ guide your hearts, hold you close and give you courage.

Pastor Craig





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NOISY CAN OFFERING

\$1,270.85 - August 17 Noisy Can for Jocette and Salih Aribeyi ministry

\$2,877.40 - October 19 Noisy for Marion Medical



WOMEN'S CIRCLES

REBECCA CIRCLE

Rebecca Circle will meet at Salem on **Tuesday, February 10th** at 10am.

LYDIA CIRCLE

Wednesday, February 11th at 1:00 PM

VALENTINE BAGS

Valentine bags will be displayed outside the welcome center **January 25 through Feb 8th**.

Please remember our Salem homebound members with a special Valentine's wish!

SALEM CHURCHMEN

The Salem church men are sponsoring a Bradley men's basketball game on **Sunday, March 1st**. The cost is \$5. Sign up at the welcome center or contact Jeff Machacek for any questions.

LADIES NIGHT DINNER

Ladies Night Dinner on **Monday, February 16th** at 6:00 PM.

The cost is \$10.

FAIR TRADE SALE

Fair Trade items will be available for purchase on **Sunday, February 1st** after worship. 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 at (309) 256-5862 or email at pew117@aol.com

THANK YOU

Ron and I would like to thank our Salem family for the cards, calls, and well wishes we received during the Christmas season. We were blessed by each message and each person. May you have a blessed New Year.

- Ron and. Norma Hartman

HAPPENINGS

REFLECTIONS ON THE CARLINVILLE SYNOD YOUTH GATHERING

Back at the end of November, six of our youth had the opportunity to travel down to Carlinville, Illinois for a weekend-long synod youth gathering. This weekend was filled with fellowship, fun memories, and faith-formation. Here are some of our favorite highlights from the weekend that we want to share with you!

- Multiple people from Salem had the opportunity to compete in Friendly Feud (a spin-off of Family Feud), which surveyed members of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod about various theological topics.
- Two of our high school students completed the Barn Quest high ropes course, which is in a large barn on Lake Williamson's campus.
- We sang and danced our hearts out to some amazing worship music!
- The junior high students had the opportunity to participate in a handful of holiday related service projects!
- We built new relationships and continued growing relationships with other youth from across the synod!
- Christmas music filled the car on the way to and from Carlinville!
- We got to eat in the campus dining hall that offered ice cream and a wide array of yummy foods!
- We deepened our faith and had opportunities to explore questions in community together!
- We grew even closer to God!
- We learned what it looks like to abide in Christ and we made vines and fruit in our small groups that were displayed in worship on Sunday morning.
- We heard from speakers like Bishop Busboom, Deacon Jason, and Captain America!

We would love to continue sharing our experience at Carlinville with you all, so if you see someone that attended, invite them to share some of their favorite moments with you!



LENT 2026

Midweek worship services will be held Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m., beginning **February 18**. An additional evening service will be offered at 7pm on February 18 for Ash Wednesday. Pastor Dick Hanson will preside over both Ash Wednesday services.

Kaitlyn is leading the Wednesday services beginning February 25 at 11am. See her article for this year's theme. A light lunch will follow.

For those desiring an evening option on Wednesdays, please consider one of the other area congregations. Specifically, First English Lutheran welcomes Salem to join them for evening worship at 7pm beginning February 25. The theme for their Lenten journey is "The Work of Imagination."



HAPPENINGS

Birthday blessings!

FEB 1	FEB 11	FEB 25
Christopher Cochran	Diane Proft	Jacob Ferrell
Lynnco Coyner		
Roxanne Vandervlugt	FEB 12	FEB 26
	Lisa Janco	Marla Breidel
FEB 3	Norma Hartman	Mia Hoffman
Bill Ligon		
John Iverson	FEB 16	FEB 27
	Janet Jones	Conner Bidne
FEB 4	FEB 18	
Adelaide Taubert-Koss	Annette Doughty	
Landon Peterson	FEB 19	
FEB 5	Ann Roberts	
Janet Wiesehan	Janet Cox	
Sarah Bidne	John Harvey	
FEB 6	Wendy Cochran	
Rick Lambie	FEB 21	
FEB 7	Alan Puttcamp	
Maren Thompson	Noah Hopkins	
FEB 8	Vicki Larson	
Wendy Thomasson	FEB 24	
FEB 9	Chad Arnold	
Emily Peterson	Christine Steele	
	Lesley Howard	

If your name should have been on this list but wasn't, please call Salem's Office:

(309)688-9212



SYMPATHYS

The Rev Dr Rollen Martin Halvorson was born to Albert and Elizabeth Halvorson on August 15, 1936 in Bismarck, ND. The family moved to Peoria, IL shortly after Rollen was born where he spent the rest of his formative years as a member of Salem Lutheran Church. After graduating from Manual High School in 1954 he attended St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN. He attended Luther Theological seminary in St. Paul, MN where he graduated in 1962.

Rollen passed away peacefully at his home in his sleep on December 22, 2025. He is survived by his, wife Alice; and children: Jonathan (Deborah), Mary (Joseph), and Joel (Susan); and grandchildren: Benjamin, Ellen, Jonathon (Moe), Elizabeth (Zachary), Aaron, Jacob and Margaret.

A memorial service was held at 11am on January 3, 2026 at Shalom Lutheran Church in Alexandria.

Sympathy is also extended to the families of Robert Middleton, Lynn Akers and Don Swanson who joined the church triumphant in December.

Bob died December 14. A funeral was hosted at Salem on December 19.

Lynn died December 27. A memorial service was hosted at Salem on January 10.

Don died December 30. A memorial service was hosted at Salem on January 5.

Salem also received word that Marjorie Ryberg died January 3. A burial for John and Marjorie will take place later this summer.

FAITH FORMATION

ESCAPE ROOM

FEBRUARY 12TH | 7 - 8:30 PM

It's time for an escape room adventure at Escapetown Peoria! Put your teamwork and critical thinking skills to the test! If you plan to attend, please let Kaitlyn know by February 8th so spots can be reserved.



BREWED THEOLOGY STORYTELLING

FEBRUARY 26TH | 7 - 8:30 PM

This week we will be spending some time with Brewed Theology's guide on storytelling. How do we share our stories with others? Why is it important for us to not only tell our stories, but to hear the stories of others? Join us this week to explore these questions together!

LENTEN MIDWEEK SERVICES

"LISTEN, GOD IS CALLING!"

In his book Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community, Dietrich Bonhoeffer speaks frequently to the importance of listening. Describing it as a "ministry of listening," Bonhoeffer shares that "We should listen with the ears of God that we may speak the Word of God." Amid the rush of a life filled with tasks and responsibilities pulling us in a multitude of directions, it can be difficult to take a moment to pause and just listen.

During this season of Lent, our theme will be "Listen, God is Calling!" Lent is a time when we are invited to slow down and listen for the ways in which God is calling us to our relationships, our vocations, and our faith. When we slow down and listen, we not only hear God's Word, but we grow into our calling as disciples.

This Lenten season, you are invited to the Lenten midweek services on Wednesday mornings at 11AM. If you have been feeling the weight of busy schedules or simply need some time each week to be fully present with God, this season is time to step away from the noisiness of life and to hear God's call that centers us back on Jesus.

PRAYER OF LAMENT IN THE BIBLE

TWO PART STUDY ON FEBRUARY 22 AND MARCH 22

The prayer of lament is the unsettling biblical tradition of prayer that includes expressions of complaint, anger, grief, despair, and protest to God. Without the prayer of lament, other important elements of prayer (praise, thanksgiving, confession, intercession) are not complete. How can heartfelt thanks be given for healing if the wounds are denied? How can confession be sincere if we turn all sorrow into guilt? How can praise be joyful if realities of our brokenness are not named and lamented?

We are acceptable to and loved by God NOT because we do good things or try to be good people. We are acceptable to and loved by God because of God's grace that comes to us in the person of Jesus Christ. We are part of the body of Christ – we are people called by the Holy Spirit to be in community. In lament, we acknowledge our dependence on God and others and become open to help from beyond ourselves.

Come and learn about this tradition of lament that may be new to you! We are people that are reluctant to admit/grieve our failures, losses, and limitations. We may feel like we need to always have a positive outlook or not burden people with our problems. However, God desires us to bring our whole selves to Him. We will look at the many books and people in the Bible that brought their prayers of lament to God. We think of Isaiah, Rachel, Ezekial, Hagar, and Rizpah and the books of Job, Lamentations, and of course the many psalms. The laments of Jesus affirm that God also laments.

Join us in the Faith Chapel (in the sanctuary) for the first part on Sunday, February 22nd at 10:15a.m. for this discussion led by Gretchen Petrakis, Director of Sunday School. We look forward to seeing you there!

FAITH FORMATION

BOOK CORNER - READ & JOIN THE DISCUSSION

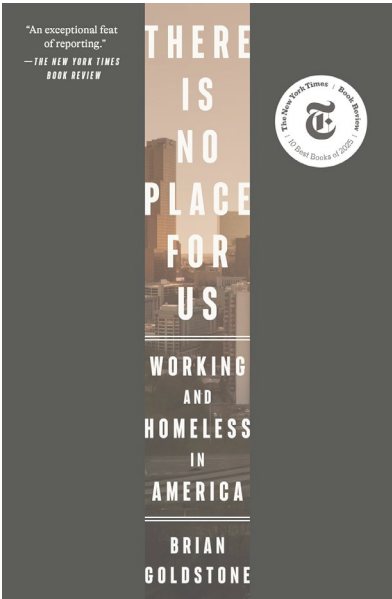
TWO OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND GROW

There Is No Place for Us:
WORKING AND HOMELESS IN AMERICA

by Brian Goldstone

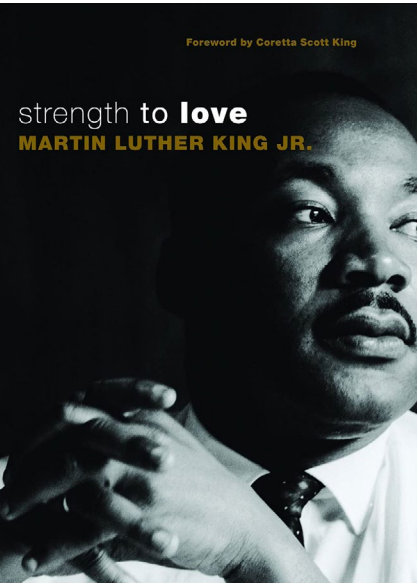
Housing insecurity is one of the great challenges affecting people both locally and globally. We invite you to learn more about this issue and the struggles of homeless individuals by reading Brian Goldstone’s book, There is no Place for Us: Working and Homeless in America. This nonfiction work examines homelessness in America with the stories of five Atlanta families and exposes “a new and troubling trend—the dramatic rise of the working homeless in cities across America”.

One of the New York Times top 10 best books of the year, this book can be found in print, audio book, or e-book format. Join us for discussion on this thought-provoking work on **Sunday, February 15 at 7pm via Zoom**. Please contact Kelly Brinkman, the church office, or sign up at the Welcome Center for the Zoom link.



Strength to Love

by Martin Luther King, Jr.



“If there is one book Martin Luther King, Jr. has written that people consistently tell me has changed their lives, it is Strength to Love” wrote Coretta Scott King. She continued: “I believe it is because this book best explains the central element of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s philosophy of nonviolence: His belief in a divine, loving presence that binds all life.” In these short meditative and sermonic pieces, some of them composed in jails and all of them crafted during the tumultuous years of the civil rights struggle, Dr. King articulated and espoused in a deeply personal compelling way his commitment to justice and to the intellectual, moral, and spiritual conversion that makes his work as much a blueprint today for Christian discipleship as it was then.

Join an online Zoom discussion on **Tuesday, February 24th at 7:30pm** led by Gretchen Petrakis. Contact the church office to be put on the Zoom link email distribution list. Zoom link will be emailed the morning of February 24th. The book is available at Augsburg Fortress, Amazon, and on Kindle.

WORSHIP MINISTRY

FEBRUARY WORSHIP VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

	2/1	2/8	2/15	2/18 (AM & PM)	2/22	2/25
<u>Guest Pastor</u>	Mr. Stuart Johnson	Pastor Jim Christian	Pastor Amy Zietlow	Pastor Dick Hanson	Pastor Jim Christian	Kaitlyn Jedrzejowski
<u>Ushers</u>	Dave & Paula Sydow	Leo & Roxanne Vandervlugt	Earl & Bonnie Gallas		Bill & Suzanne Ligon	
<u>Welcome Team</u>	Leo & Roxanne Vandervlugt	Schroeder Family	Roberta & Flo		Dave & Paula Sydow	
<u>Lector</u>	Gary Setterlund	Sandy Salverson	Kirsten Kelly		Inez Norgard	
<u>Communion Assist.</u>	Gary & Jeanne Setterlund	Larry & Julie Kotewa	Peterson Family		Craig and Gayle Young	
<u>Livestream Operator</u>	Meghan Peterson	Eric Schroeder	Mark Hartman		Aaron Grebner	
<u>PPT</u>	Landon Peterson	Dylan/Makayla Schroeder	Isaac Hartman		Brent Wallstedt	

- Please review the schedule for the month.
- If you are scheduled and cannot serve, or if you are avaiable and would like to volunteer, please contact Danielle.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Jim Morose (friend of Earl Gallas)
 - Dennis Rhoades
 - Luan Borquist
 - Joanie Creager
 - Maddy, friend of Julia Wallstedt
 - Mike
 - Tim, Jessica, Daniel, Sarah Peterson
 - Linda Peterson
 - Kay Peterson
 - Sheryl Sattler
- Jocette and Salih Arbeyi (missionaries through CRU)
 - Tim Walters
 - Greg Gebhards
 - Thelma Neal
 - Sally Smith
 - Dennis Gustafson
 - Crystal (daughter-in-law of John Grabel)
 - Niki Keffer

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY:

- Ian Borquist
- Gibson Gonzalez
- Emily Graff
- Barry Joyce
- Talon Maki
- Greg Miller
- Ashley Owen (deployed)
- Lucas Owen
- Jim Sterling
- Jason Sterr



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The Bugle
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