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BISHOP’S REFLECTION

“Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.”

EZEKIEL 18:31-32

Shortly after arriving in Palestine this past January, our group was greeted by Bishop-Elect Imad Haddad, now bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. His words are words I have carried with me and pondered ever since. He shared with us words of both invitation and warning. “While here in Palestine,” he said, “keep your eyes and your ears open, but keep your hearts safe.” I knew these were important words Bishop Haddad was sharing with us, though, at that point in our travels, I did not know why.

Keep your hearts safe. I think these words capture the Lord’s message to Ezekiel in Ezekiel 18. The prophet Ezekiel, together with all the other leaders living in exile in Babylon, was blaming everyone but themselves, including their ancestors, for the dire situation in which they now found themselves. The Lord, however, is not impressed with Ezekiel’s blame game. Instead of pointing the blame at others, the Lord commands God’s people to look into their own hearts, calling them to repentance. “Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin” (18:30).

Living in captivity in a foreign land, nearly everything was outside of the control of God’s people. The one thing, however, that was under their control was their hearts. The one thing that was under their control was how they responded to the events around them. The one thing that was under their control was whether they remained faithful even in the midst of a seemingly impossible situation. Interestingly, it is this one thing over which God’s people had control — their hearts — about which the Lord is most concerned.

There is so much that seems outside of our control these days — life in our world, life in our nation, life in our churches, even life in our own families. In the midst of so much that lies beyond our control, it is all too tempting to play the blame game. When things seem out of our control, it is all too easy to blame the other political party or certain groups of people or “the ELCA” or even those we once considered friends and family. And yet, in doing so, we fail to look inside our own hearts. We fail to see how our own words and actions have contributed to broken relationships and unjust systems. We fail to keep our hearts safe, choosing judgment over grace, condemnation over understanding, hate over love.

In his classic work *The Cost of Discipleship*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer puts it this way: “Judging others makes us blind, whereas love is illuminating. By judging others we blind ourselves to our own evil and to the grace which others are just as entitled to as we are.” The key to keeping our hearts safe is love, a love that is only made possible when we are honest with ourselves and with God, turning from our own sinful words and actions so that we might live in the freedom of God’s grace in Christ Jesus, a grace that is for us and for all. The key to keeping our hearts safe is confessing the evil that lives in us so that we can love all people with the same love with which God in Christ first loves us.



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please call
the church office: 309-688-9212

This life of confession and forgiveness is the life to which we are called in baptism. Having been freed from the powers of sin, death, and the devil through the water and Word of baptism, we are freed to daily return to these baptismal waters, boldly confessing our sin and brokenness and receiving anew the gift of God's forgiveness. It is the reason that before we do anything else in worship—before the worship leaders process into the sanctuary, before we sing the gathering hymn, before we hear the Word and share the Meal — we confess together, “We are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves,” and hear the good news, “God forgives you all your sins.” Simply put, it is how we keep our hearts safe.

By the time we left Palestine, I had begun to understand, at least in part, Bishop Haddad's warning to us. Everywhere we went, we witnessed first-hand the indescribable suffering of the Palestinian people. When so much seems out of our control, it is easy to choose hate. Christ, however, calls us to love, even those who may consider us to be their enemies. As we enter these fall months, may each of us look deep into our hearts, confessing all that needs to be confessed so that we might be freed once again by God's grace to love all our neighbors.

Called in baptism +
Bishop Greg



FAIR TRADE SALE

Fair Trade items will be available for purchase on
Sunday, October 4th after worship.

Please contact Jennifer Gallas at 309-256-5862 or
pew117@aol.com if you need Fair Trade items.



WOMEN'S CIRCLES

REBECCA CIRCLE

Tuesday, **October 13th** at 10:00 AM
in the Salem conference room.
All women are welcome for study &
laughter, camaraderie & prayer.

LYDIA CIRCLE

Wednesday, **October 14th** at 1:00 PM



OUTREACH MINISTRY

OCTOBER COLLECTION FOR THE CENTER FOR PREVENTION OF ABUSE

Outreach Ministry invites the Salem community of disciples to participate in our collection for the Center for Prevention of Abuse (CFPA).

Donations of new items that we have been asked to collect by CFPA are:

- Laundry basket or hampers
- Shampoo/conditioner (variety of hair types, ethnic hair types, etc)
- Body wash
- Lotion
- Hairbrush or comb (variety of hair types, ethnic hair types, etc)
- Toiletry bag
- Dish towels
- Dish soap
- Sponges

*Gift cards (\$10 - \$25 from Dollar Tree, Kroger, Walmart, Target)

These items will be collected during the month of October and may be placed in the collection bin on the first floor.

* Gift cards should be turned in at the church office or the Welcome Center before or after worship.

CFPA works to end abuse, break the cycle of generational violence, and provides services to those in need of assistance related to violence or abuse. CFPA operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, and all victim services are free and confidential.

Salem has a long relationship with CFPA as one of our community partners. We are excited to contribute to their collection for Fresh Start/New Home kits for their clients. Thank you for your donations and for supporting the work of the Center for Prevention of Abuse. Please contact Kelly Brinkman, or Outreach Ministry if you have any questions.



BREAKING BREAD MINISTRY

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21ST AT 6PM

Dinner and Outreach Education in Support of the Center for Prevention of Abuse

All are invited to join us on **Wednesday, October 21st at 6 p.m.** for dinner followed by a speaker from the Center for Prevention of Abuse. Gretchen Petrakis will be our cook for the evening, and the menu will be:

- Pork Tenderloin in Sauerkraut
- Braised Red Cabbage (bold, tangy taste from butter, red wine, vinegar, and caraway seeds)
- German Potato Salad (potatoes tossed in a bacon vinaigrette)
- Tossed salad
- Roasted Carrots
- Rye Bread
- Apple Strudel (spiced apple filling with walnuts wrapped in puff pastry and served with vanilla ice cream)

After the meal, we welcome you to learn more about the work of CFPA from one of its executive directors. This presentation will be approximately 30-40 minutes with an opportunity to address questions to our speaker.

A freewill offering will be taken during the meal to support the work of the Center for Prevention of Abuse. (Checks may be made payable to Salem Lutheran Church with “CFPA” in the memo line.)

Sign up is requested if you are attending the meal. Please sign up at the Welcome Center in the downstairs atrium. We look forward to seeing you there as we learn more about the work of this vital community partner.

UPDATE FROM SALEM’S TRANSITION TEAM

Salem’s Transition team would like to thank the congregation for the tremendously thoughtful completion of Salem’s purpose card request. This exercise helped the transition team develop a clear understanding of Salem’s purpose as you, the congregation, see it. The team then reviewed the last few years of annual reports to describe the characteristic’s goals and programs Salem has developed to help achieve its purpose. From these characteristic’s goals and programs the team determined changes and trends that have developed in the last few years at Salem. Next we discussed how these trends and changes express Salem’s current energy and excitement, in other words what Salem is passionate about. The team also looked at our neighborhood context; where Salem is located in Peoria, our neighbors, schools and other churches in our area. All of this work gives us the best understanding of why we are here, who we are, how we fit in our neighborhood and what our passions are. We continue working through the “discover and invite” tool to develop a clear mission site profile that will provide potential pastors a complete picture of Salem. Soon our team will provide a full update to the congregation, and as we move further in the process we will again call on the congregation to describe the desired characteristics of the next pastoral leader for Salem. The transition team requests your continued prayers during this process.

Yours in Christ –

Sarah Gonzales, on behalf of Salem’s transition team members; Inez Norgard, Matt Morateck, Dick Peterson, Kelly Brinkman, and Emily Joliff.

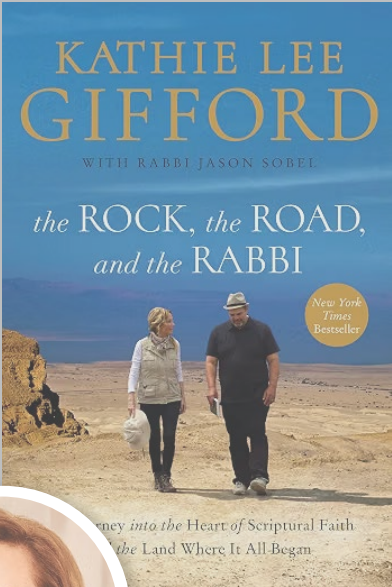
BOOK DISCUSSION

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH AT 7:30 PM ON ZOOM

Join us for a conversation about our fall book selection, *The Rock, the Road, and the Rabbi: My Journey into the Heart of Scriptural Faith and the Land Where It All Began* by Kathie Lee Gifford and Rabbi Jason Sobel. We will meet on **Wednesday, November 4th at 7:30 p.m. on Zoom.**

The book takes readers on a spiritual journey to Israel to explore the deep roots of the Christian faith. It moves past basic “Sunday school” teachings by looking at biblical texts through their original languages and historical contexts.

This book is available in print, ebook format, and audio. Copies for checkout can be found at the Welcome Center. If you have any questions, please reach out to Kelly Brinkman, Gretchen Petrakis, or the church office.



SUNDAY SCHOOL CELEBRATES MARTIN LUTHER AND THE REFORMATION SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18TH

On **Sunday, October 18th**, during the Education Hour, Sunday School students will take time to learn and celebrate the Reformation. We will participate in a skit, sing songs, and enjoy community as we learn about Martin Luther and how he wanted to reform the church.

We will meet in the 2nd Floor Lounge at 10:30am. You are invited to join us! You might learn something about Martin Luther, the Reformation, and our Lutheran heritage. It is also a wonderful opportunity to support Salem’s young people.

Hope to see you!



Birthday blessings!

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

OCT 1
Zachary Ferrell

OCT 2
Stephanie Dammann

Miles Janssen
John Sipf

OCT 3
JR Runkel

OCT 4
Jackson Grabel
Karsen Grabel
Collins Graves

OCT 5
Allen Bidne

OCT 6
Alton Berg
Mary Alice Erickson
Elijah Sipf

OCT 7
Trenton Hainline
Meghan Peterson

OCT 10
David Griffith
Maren Gomez
Ella Snyder

OCT 12
Aaron Hartman
Charles Jolliff
Brent Wallstedt

OCT 13
Michael Newcomb
OCT 15
Melissa Aprahamian
Sharon Coyner
Marilyn Oertley
Gavin Stenzel

OCT 16
Roberta Kessinger

OCT 17
Daniel Young

OCT 18
James Ripper
Kelly Swanson

OCT 19
Christa Taubert
Gayle Young

OCT 20
Matthew Kammerer

OCT 21
Kelsi Gustafson

Jaxon Howard
Kathy Kalbacken

OCT 23
Joann Blum
John Grabel

OCT 25
Faith Forkell
Erika Haedicke
Sandra Harvey
Celeste Woerner

OCT 26
John Day

OCT 28
Mike Shadley

OCT 29
Gail Serrahn

OCT 30
Aaron Grebner
Ann Sterr
Annie Swanson

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

(309)688-9212

HAPPENINGS

VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION

Salem will recognize and celebrate our Veterans and their families on **Sunday, November 8th**. We are grateful for each Veteran and each family for their service to our country.

Please join us after the morning service for refreshments in the Social Hall. Please also take the opportunity to enjoy the displays in the Social Hall and the video. There will also be information provided by Veterans organizations describing available services and benefits.

Each year we add photos to the displays – share those memories! If you have not added a photo to our collection please do so. Photos can be placed in the mailbox marked “Military Support” at Salem. They will be copied and returned to you. Photos may also be shared electronically. Send them to Danielle at office@salemofpeoria.com. Please provide the photos by October 19.

HOME COMMUNION OFFERED OCTOBER 25TH

Home Communion will be offered on **October 25th** after Sunday Worship. It is a program whereby the home bound members of Salem can participate in the sacramental life of the congregation by receiving Holy Communion directly from the Communion Service held at Sunday worship. If you, a family member, or Salem member friend wants to participate, please call the office at (309) 688-9212 to sign up by giving name, address, and phone number for contact. The communion recipient will be called (usually on Saturday before Home Communion) by a caring Salem member who is a trained communion assistant at which time they mutually agree to a specific time and meeting place. On Sunday the communion assistant brings the sacraments to the recipient for a brief Communion Celebration.

If you have any questions, please contact Suzanne Ligon at (309) 264-1237.
Thank you,
Suzanne Ligon
Home Communion Coordinator

CHURCHMEN WORKDAY SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH

The Salem Churchmen Fall Workday will be Saturday, November 7th at 8:00 am. There will be sign ups starting in a couple weeks at the welcome center

DAY TRIP TO BISHOP HILL WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7TH, 2026 FROM 9:00 AM TO 3:00 PM

We will stop in Galva to see the ELCA Messiah Lutheran Church for a short time and then on to Bishop Hill. Lunch at Bishop Hill will be your choice:
They have P.L. Johnsons, Krans Kafe & the Filling Station available.
Sign-up is available at the Welcome Center. The bus will leave PROMPTLY at 9:00 AM

HAPPENINGS



LUTHERAN HILLSIDE VILLAGE
6901 N. GALENA ROAD
PEORIA, IL 61614



*Want to Be Part of
Our Bake Sale?*

The Lutheran Hillside Village Sewing Group is hosting a Craft & Bake Sale to help offset the cost of supplies used for projects benefiting our licensed care areas and other charitable organizations.

DONATION GUIDELINES:

- Package items in smaller portions or bring them as a whole item
- Leave the pricing to us
- Please put your name on any containers you would like returned
- Suggested Items: Pastries, pies, brownies, chocolate, small breads, snack mix

DONATION DROP OFF:

- Thursday, October 15th
- 1pm-4pm
- Use the main entrance and follow signs to the Private Dining Room.



Anything is greatly appreciated. For questions, call Kaylee Boyer 309-689-2127

PEORIA HONOR FLIGHTS

Just a reminder - there is one more Peoria Honor Flights scheduled for this year on **October 20th**. This is one more opportunity to help friends and family celebrate the trip. There is always a celebration at the airport when the flight returns, complete with singing, cheering, bagpipes, banners, and more.

The flight usually returns about 9:30 pm, weather permitting. And you may also choose to honor your friend with a note for the return flight at “Mail Call”. Simply write a note, address it to the person in/care/ of Greater Peoria Honor Flight; PO Box 43; Tremont, IL 61568.

All the notes will be distributed on the return flight during “Mail Call”. Just remember to mail the note to Tremont in time for it to make the flight on Sept 8 or on October 20.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Gary & Vicki Johnson (for their grandson)
 - 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
 - Sally Smith
- Crystal Grabel
 - Niki Keffer
 - Allen Bidne
 - Merrell Hickey
 - Katherine (Joyce Crone’s daughter’s sister-in-law)
 - Florence Clark
 - Gina Sackman
 - Dee Basfield
 - Niki Keefer
 - Ruth Bock and family
 - Lesley Howard
 - Blake Mueller
 - Jason, Carolyn and family of Don Lantz
 - Julie Kotewa
 - Helene Peterson’s cousin Shari

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY:

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



The Bugle
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