



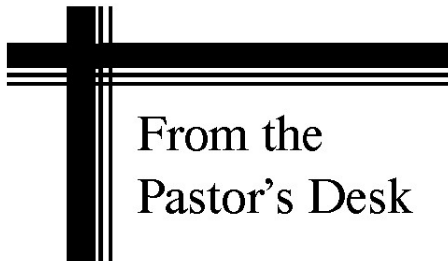
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The Salem *LIFE*

Newsletter of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Sandwich, Illinois

April 3, 2025

VOL. 52, NO. 4



Dear Friends in Christ,

From the Pastor's Desk

"For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost" Luke 19:10

Our gospel reading from last Sunday is one of my favorites in the whole Bible, the Prodigal Son. In Luke 15, there are three parables in a row: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. They all make the same point in different ways.

The lost sheep tells of a shepherd who leaves 99 sheep grazing quietly on the hillside to go search and rescue one sheep who is lost. And when he finds it, he lifts it to his shoulders and carries it back, rejoicing. It concludes with the words, "Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous persons who need no repentance." Luke 15:7

The lost coin tells of a woman who had 10 silver coins and lost one of them. She cleans her house from top to bottom until she finds the coin, then she calls her friends and neighbors to rejoice with her. "Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." Luke 15:10

And then comes the one we know best, the story of the lost son. He rudely demands his inheritance while his father is still living, and runs off to a far country, where he squanders it in foolish living. Only when he is hungry and in rags does he come to his senses, recognizing that he had been far better off in his father's house. Even the hired hands were much better off than he is now, dying of hunger in a far-off land.

So the prodigal son returns slowly, sadly home. He rehearses his planned speech to his father, begging for a place among the hired hands. But the father sees him coming in the distance, and runs to greet him. He sweeps him into an embrace, and calls for a party to celebrate his return.

The elder brother, who stayed at home and worked faithfully, is now filled with resentment and anger as he sees this good for nothing brother welcomed with a great party. It isn't fair. It isn't right, and he refuses to take part in it. But the father says, "we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found." Luke 15:32

These stories are such a beautiful summary of our faith. The whole message of Jesus is how he comes to seek and to save the lost. Like the elder brother, we can feel angry at all the gifts and attention given to those who just don't deserve it. And he is right as far as that goes. They really don't deserve it.

But God in Jesus gives each of us far more than we deserve. When we are lost, when we are sinful, when we are despairing and hopeless, God still comes to us with an embrace, celebrating that the lost have been found. And God shows the same amazing grace for all who are lost.

Continued on page 3

Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church

Serving Christ!

1022 North Main Street—PO Box 105—Sandwich, IL 60548

Phone: 815-786-9308

Email: Salemilc@comcast.net

Web site: wearesalemlutheran.org

Pastor

Reverend John Rothfusz
Phone: 779-901-0803
pastorjohnrothfusz@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant
Financial Secretary, Etc.
Bookkeeper
Traditional Worship Coordinator
Director of Contemporary Worship
Organist/Pianist
Organist/Pianist
Maintenance

Staff

Kelly Clason
Gina Carlson
Karen Wesson
Nancy Rex
Libby Welsch
Gloria Gilbertson
Connie Hanson
Nancy Hayes

salemilc@comcast.net
salem-gina@comcast.net
salem-karen@comcast.net
salem-rex@comcast.net
salem-libby@comcast.net

Staff Office Hours: Tues.—Thurs., 9 am—2 pm; Fri, 9 am-12 noon

Happening this week...

Sunday, April 6

- 9:00 am Worship
- 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship
- 10:10 am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study
- 10:15 am Fellowship Committee

Monday, April 7

- 9:00 am-noon Quilting
- 5:00 pm Praise Team
- 6:00 pm Handchimes

Tuesday, April 8

- 9:00 am-noon Quilting
- 6:00 pm Outreach Committee

Wednesday, April 9

- 9:00 am Lenten Breakfast Series at the Federated Church—*All are Welcome!*
- 6:00 pm Soup Supper
- 7:00 pm Lenten Midweek Service

Thursday, April 10

- 8:30 -10:30 am Our Sharing Pantry Distribution
- 7:00 pm Salem Choir
- 7:00 pm AA

Friday, April 11

- 7:30 pm AA

Sunday, April 13 PALM SUNDAY

- 9:00 am Worship
- 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship
- 10:10 am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study
- 5:00 pm 3N1 at Bethany

In Our Church Family.....



PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

- ⇒ Leslie Trettenero (*mother of Gina Carlson*)
- ⇒ Mark Rothfusz (*brother of Pastor John*)
- ⇒ Mari Eklund (*Mother-in-Law of Pastor John*)
- ⇒ Family and friends of Debi DeBlasio who passed away on 3/27/2025 (*cousin of Gina Carlson*)



***Indicates Salem member**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

for

SUNDAY, APRIL 6

Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126;
Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8

APRIL "DIAMOND PLUS" BIRTHDAYS



- 4/14 Stan Benson
- 4/27 Joanne VanPelt
- 4/30 George Webster

Our privilege in the church is to share in that work of Jesus, in seeking and saving the lost. We have good news for people who feel like they are outsiders or unworthy. God loves each of us, and welcomes us with open arms, no matter what we might have done. We are a community of forgiven sinners, and we rejoice when each new sinner comes into our midst to share in the abundance of God's forgiveness given freely to each of us.

There is no limit to God's grace and forgiveness. We are invited to the party to celebrate, and there is a spot for each and every one who is lost and lonely. So, we get to be witnesses for Jesus, telling others of the party that Jesus is throwing, inviting them to come. We get to make each person welcome, sharing the good news of forgiveness and hope that makes each of us a new creation in Jesus. This is no time to be quiet – we have good news to share!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor John Rothfusz



April 1, 2025 Salem Congregational Council Meeting Highlights

The Congregation Council met at Salem on Tuesday, April, 1, 2025, starting at 6:30 p.m. Council members Jacqueline Beverage, Ron Cunz, Alan Deaton, Walter Farley, Donna Fraley, Bonnie Guyer, Connie Hanson, Durk Hellinga, Sharon Wallis and Pastor John Rothfusz were present.

Sharon Wallis led the devotions, with a prayer for peace in our lives and our world.

The council voted to accept the minutes of the March 4 Congregation Council meeting, as prepared by Alan Deaton.

The Financial reports for January were examined. These are the following balances as of the meeting.

General Fund: \$19,384.22 Designated Fund: \$36,484.46 Capital Fund: \$38,196.29

Council members heard monthly reports from Pastor John Rothfusz and from council members representing Salem's committees. They reviewed the calendar to highlight events coming up in May and look for conflicts.

The Fellowship team set the Community Fellowship Feast for May 27 at Salem.

The Salem Sign Committee proposed that we add black letters for a "Salem Lutheran Church" sign to the back of the church. The council passed a motion to fund this with \$600 from the Renovation fund. DeKalb Mechanical will do the work. A picture is on the bulletin board.

Under new business, the council moved to receive Fran Parkison and A.J. Parkison as members by transfer.

The property team recommended that Salem install a water softener. The council passed a motion to fund this with \$2800 to Ecowater.

Two youth and Pastor John will go on a Mission trip this summer to Benton Harbor, MI along with a group from St. John, Mendota. The council passed a motion to spend up to \$2000 for this trip from the Servant Events fund.

The Worship team recommended that we should get the All Creation Sings hymnal supplements and use them at worship services. We currently have 25 for the choir and praise team, and will buy 75 more, at a cost of \$16 each or \$1200 total. We will ask people to sponsor books in honor or memory of loved ones. The council passed a motion to approve this proposal.

The group heard council comments from each member, and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Lent Schedule

Wednesdays in Lent – April 9

- 9 a.m. Community Lenten
Breakfast service at the Federated Church
- 6 p.m. Soup Supper in the Fellowship Hall
- 7 p.m. Lenten Worship - Holden Evening Prayer



Happy Easter!

Sunday, April 20 is our celebration of Easter, the Resurrection of our Lord. It is the central event of our church year. Join us on Easter Sunday for our celebration worship at 9 a.m. After worship we will have an Easter Egg hunt for the kids, and sit down for Easter Breakfast. We hope to see you and your family all together as we celebrate the good news of new life at Easter!

COLLECTIONS DURING LENT

Personal Care Kits include 1 light-weight dark towel, 2 bars soap, 1 adult-size toothbrush in original package, 1 sturdy comb, and 1 metal nail clipper. Deadline for kits is April 27. Thank you for the great response!

Easter Dinners for Our Sharing Pantry to distribute to our hungry neighbors. Please share if you are able: box potatoes, mushroom soup, canned pineapple, muffin/bread mix, boxed dessert mix, box cereal or a financial donation. Our Sharing Pantry accepts donations of food or dollars at anytime, but Easter meals should be turned in by Thursday, April 10.



Lutheran Inquiries/

Salem New Member Class

Are you interested in becoming a member of Salem Lutheran? Or are you a member, but would like to know more about the faith that we share?

If there is an interest, Pastor John will lead a class to go over some basics about our Lutheran faith and who we are as God's church. Please let Pastor John know if you are interested in taking part.

Palm Sunday 9:00 am Worship
Sunday, April 13th

Maundy Thursday, April 17th
Lunch at noon hosted by Worship Committee
1:00 pm and 7:00 pm Worship

Good Friday, April 18th
1:00 pm Service of Readings & Hymns
7:00 pm Passion Reading and Choir Cantata

Easter Sunday 9:00 am Worship
Sunday, April 20th
Egg Hunt for Sunday School students
Easter Brunch—All are Welcome!

The sign-up is in the narthex if you can bring a dish to share on Easter morning. See you there!





*To Our Salem Family,
Help us celebrate
Joanne VanPelt's
90th Birthday!
Sunday, April 27*

*Join us for a special
coffee hour after the service
and/or an open house luncheon
from 11:00 to 2:00
in the fellowship hall.*

We hope to see you all there!

No gifts please. Your presence will be a gift to Mom.

Styrofoam Recycling

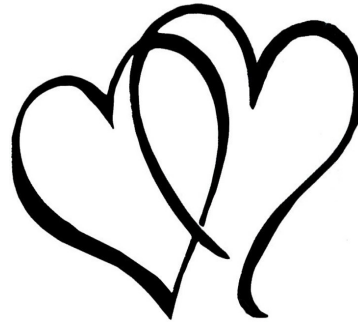
All sorted and ready to recycle. Thanks to everyone who saved so much! (Side note.... We eat a lot of takeout, meat, and eggs.) ☺



The Hat Lady

Louise Classon was honored as a Hero of the Month by Just In Time Heating, AC & Plumbing Services, Sandwich. Louise was recently featured in the WNIJ newspaper for 30 years of crossing guard duty. Louise is a notable woman with nearly 500

hats and costumes which she wears while keeping children safe at the intersection of Wells and Lions. Pass her corner and you'll see her waving at every car.



The men and women of St. John's Lutheran Church in Peru are pleased to present the chancel drama:

The Living Last Supper

Sunday, April 13, 2025
3:30 P.M.

St. John's Lutheran Church
607 10th Ave, Mendota

The Living Last Supper follows Jesus' twelve disciples and three women after Jesus said, "One of you will betray me." Each of the disciples wonders aloud "Is it I?" and shares their thoughts about their relationship with Him. The women - Mary, mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and the innkeeper of the Upper Room - share their thoughts and fears. Powerful statements of faith and doubt are voiced, and observers get a strong sense of the feelings of loyalty and love that Jesus' followers had for him. Even Judas gives a deep explanation of his feelings and motives. Holy Communion will be offered at the close of the presentation.

All are welcome to attend.

A freewill offering will be taken to benefit the Mendota Area Christian Food Pantry.

For additional information, please contact the St. John's, Mendota church office at 539-5626.

Kate Staffeldt and Jake Chismudy were married by Pastor John Rothfus in a ceremony at Salem Lutheran Church on March 22. We wish them God's blessing as they begin their new life together as husband and wife.



Meals on Wheels

Laura Caupert is once again coordinating Salem's participation in Meals on Wheels.

Salem is in charge of the month of May and we will deliver to the North Route and South Route.

Those who would like to volunteer, please talk with Laura.



Worship Video on Website



Holy Humor Sunday April 27

We will try something new this year. There is an old tradition to tell jokes, do silly things, and wear bright clothes on the Sunday after Easter, to laugh at the great joke that Jesus plays on the devil when he rises from the dead. So we hope that you will join in the fun with us!

Please wear bright colors and silly hats, shoes, pants or tops that day, and come prepared to laugh at some silliness and at the surprising and wonderful things that our God does for us.

Salem WiFi is Working

The Salem Tech Team has been working on several projects to improve what we can do at the church. We now have WiFi connections and internet through the church. The Salem Guest login code is listed in the Hall Conference room, the basement Fellowship Hall, and the Sanctuary. We also upgraded our internet speed so that it is fast enough for most uses.

You are welcome to log into this Salem Wifi Guest network at church. We hope that it will be a help as we do our worship and work together.

We are excited that our project to put our worship services online is now working. Each week we will post our service recordings on the church website, www.wearesalemlutheran.org. Click on the worship tab, and you should see a player with the worship service listed by the date. They usually go up by noon on Sunday.

These videos of our worship are hosted at www.vimeo.com/salemsandwich. You can also go to that site, and see all of the Salem Worship Videos that we host and store there. If for some reason it isn't showing up on the website, it might be there.

We have several hopes for this new venture. We hope that Salem members who are travelling or home-bound will be able to share with us in worship from a distance. You may be able to help some of our elders figure out how to find and share in these worship videos from their laptop or screen. We also know that many people check out a new church online before visiting. We hope that it will be welcoming when they see how much fun we have together.

Worship Tech Team

Would you like to be a part of helping us make some advances with our worship tech?

You can join our tech team as we work on these projects. We also need people to help manage our Audio and Visuals each week for worship. This is not too complicated, but will help those who worship on site and from a distance share a good experience with us.

Please talk to Pastor John if you would like to help us with these roles.



Celebrate Ten Years of Service with Northern Illinois Food Bank!

This group worked the volunteer shift at the Northern Illinois Food Bank's Geneva warehouse on March 25. That day marked Salem's tenth year of monthly volunteer shifts at NIFB. The regular schedule of the third Tuesday of the month was varied to allow our students who were on Spring Break to be included. The group of 20 processed frozen foods – 5 pound logs of salami, pumpkin pies, and ravioli. At the end of the shift we learned that we had prepared 10,368 pounds of food to be shipped out to local pantries, soup kitchens, etc. This equates to 8,640 meals to help feed hungry neighbors in 13 counties across Northern Illinois.

During the last ten years, our group has processed 605,232 pounds of food. If you think of that number as tons, it would equal over 300 tons of food. We have worked with frozen foods, fresh produce (oranges, apples, potatoes, sweet corn, cabbage, sweet potatoes, onions, and more), canned vegetables, holiday boxes, school backpacks, granola bars, fruit snacks, dry pasta and more. Since April of 2015, we have missed only one month due to a snow storm and a few months during Covid. Our group of dedicated volunteers averages about 17 per month, some of whom have been with the group since the beginning. Surely this is **God's Work. Our Hands.**



Trivia Night! Friends Welcome!

Come have some fun planned by the Fellowship Committee! Trivia Night goes from 4-6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Bring an appetizer to share. Even if you have not signed up, please feel free to come. Teams will be determined by the planners.

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch will meet on April 16 at 11:30 for lunch together. We selected Yorkville Café at 102 E Stagecoach Trail in Yorkville as our next meeting place. There is a sign-up in the narthex if you plan to come for lunch.

Mother's Day Craft

Libby will lead us in glass painting on Saturday, May 3 at 1:00 pm. There is a fee of \$5 for each item painted. All are welcome!



Quilting Days

Quilting Days are April 7 & 8.

Diaper Closet

April 20 is Diaper Sunday.

Women's Retreat

Takes place on April 25 -
April 26 at LOMC.

**RESERVATIONS are
due by Sunday, April 13.**

Thank You for Supporting Growing Hope Globally

from Jerry and Toni Lundeen

“In addition to the money raised at the Harvest Celebration which was designated to support Tanzania Arusha, the Somonauk Area Growing Project sent \$19,590 to support projects in Palestine Tubas, Timor-Leste Liquica and Honduras Macuelizo. We were able to complete the funding needed to finish the support for these three programs.

Mark your calendars.....the second annual Paddle for a Purpose Pickleball Tournament will be Saturday, May 31 (the Saturday AFTER Memorial Day) at the Somonauk Community Park beginning at 9:00 am. There will be lots of competition, a DJ, food and a beer tent....so there should be something for everyone! If you would like to register to play, you can do so at foxvalleyymca.org (click menu-programs-special events). Or just join us for a fun summer day and cheer on your favorite competitors! Thanks for all the support you have provided over the past 20+ years!!!!!!”

Pickle Ball Team

Would anyone be interested in forming a Salem Team to participate in a Pickle Ball Tournament benefitting Growing Hope Globally at the Somonauk Park? Let Kelly or Pastor know.

Ditch Clean-Up Scheduled

Salem volunteers will celebrate Earth Day on Tuesday, April 22 by cleaning ditches along West Sandwich Road. To avoid heavy school and commuter traffic, we will start at 10:00 am at Prairie View Elementary School. The Farleys will bring garbage bags, vests for safety, and shuttle you back to your car when you are done. Dress for the weather.



Thrivent

In 2024 Salem received \$787 in Thrivent Choice Dollars® grant funding. This is given when a Thrivent member directs donations given by Thrivent to the organization of their choice.

Thrivent spokesman says “We’re proud to help support the important work you do and hope we can accomplish even more together in 2025.”



\$55/ Team Entry
T-shirts included with registration by May 18!

2ND ANNUAL CHARITY PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT

Saturday, May 31st

Somonauk Community Park
New Pool Play Style Tournament

ALL PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT

 **GROWING HOPE GLOBALLY**
A 501(c)(3) organization linking the grassroots energy and commitment of rural communities in the U.S. with the capability and desire of smallholder farmers in developing countries to grow lasting solutions to hunger.

Participants, family and friends
hang out and enjoy
Food, Beer Tent & DJ!

Interested in becoming a sponsor?
Email tjlundeen@gmail.com

In partnership with

 **FOX VALLEY FAMILY YMCA**

 **SANDWICH PARK DISTRICT**
813 788 8011

 **VILLAGE OF SOMONAUK**
Est. 1850



Visit foxvalleyymca.org to register your team or scan the qr code

Thank you for Spring Clean-up

Ron Cunz, Steven and Bonnie Guyer, Brandon, Evan and Sami Beverage picked up sticks and helped cut up the branch lost in the wind. Jan Dunn prepared the flower bed across Main.

There’s a sign-up in the narthex to help with Salem’s gardens this spring and summer.

Fond Memories ~ Good Advice

Jim Hennigar

(March 16, 1942—September 1, 2006)

For many years Jim and Jan Hennigar, along with their sons Mike and Mark, were a part of our Salem family. Jim was a very active member, and for many years taught the High School Sunday School class.

Many of us remember him for his sense of humor, his wise advice, his bicycling across Iowa with Walt Farley, and most of all he was a good Christian role model for many of us. Sadly, ALS took Jim far too early, but some of his advice is here for us to share today.

Here are some of Jim's wise words of advice:

Take a nap on Sunday afternoon.
Take time to smell the roses.
Drink 8 glasses of water a day.
Never deprive people of hope, it may be all they have.
Don't be afraid to say I'm sorry.
Don't take your health for granted.
Don't tailgate.
Improve your performance by improving your attitude.
Listen to your children.
Leave everything better than you found it.
Leave the toilet seat down after you use it.
Keep it simple.
Keep your promises.
Be kinder than necessary.
Take good care of those who you love.
Make it a habit to do good things even if the person doesn't find out.
Be a good winner/loser.
Live so your children learn fairness, caring, and integrity.
Never turn down home made brownies.
Never give up on people, miracles happen everyday.
Never give anyone a fruitcake.

Remember other people's birthdays.
Don't nag.
Don't gossip.
Don't expect money to bring you happiness.
Be forgiving of others.
Sing in the shower.
Say please and thank you a lot.
Slow dance.
Don't rain on other's parade.
Don't postpone Joy.
Fight for justice.
Take care of your reputation.
Count your blessings.
Do more than is expected.
Be there when people need you.
Make a difference.
Whistle.
Enjoy butterflies.
Say I love you a lot.

submitted by Doug Fraley

Salem Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 105

Sandwich, IL 60548

Let's Laugh!
Come to
Holy Humor Sunday
on April 27, 2025
(See details on page 7.)

