



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

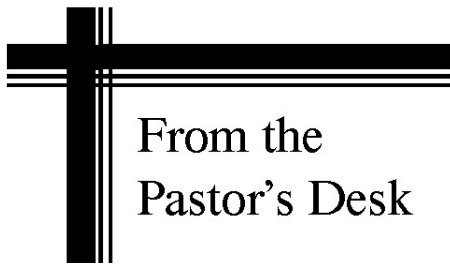
God's work. Our hands.

The Salem *LIFE*

Newsletter of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Sandwich, Illinois

May 3, 2025

VOL. 52, NO. 5



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

Transitions are hard. We become accustomed to a particular way of being, and we hate to change. Even if our current reality isn't great, it is a challenge to let go and start something new.

For anyone who has children in school, May is a time of transitions. All the school classes and groups will be drawing the school year to a close, getting ready for the summer break. At church, Sunday School and Confirmation programs will be coming to an end for the spring. And, more personally, my daughter, Anna, will be graduating from college this spring.

A few years ago Daniel graduated from college and moved to San Diego with a good job. David also graduated and landed back home with us. We are not sure of the next steps of the journey.

I am surprised at how strong an emotional reaction I get to the idea of each of them heading out into the world. It is the right thing for them to do, and they are clearly ready for this next step. Yet I have a hard time letting go, and imagining my kids as adults or living far away.

I share this, not (just) because I am feeling sorry for myself, but because these changes keep happening in our lives, and they can throw us for a loop. Children grow and move onward in life. Jobs end and change, and we have to adapt or move on. Relationships that seemed strong can drift apart, or break up suddenly. Friends can move away, or we might be the one who has to move to a new place. I have seen friends and colleagues retire or move away. And I have done funerals for people who die much too young.

These things do affect us. It hurts to let go of a person, a place, or a job that has been so close and central in our lives. It is hard to do, and can leave us in a sad funk for quite a while.

So I would say, to myself as much as anyone, this is a normal part of life. It is OK to lose your bearings and feel a little lost when something significant in your life changes. It is OK to acknowledge that these changes are hard on us.

But I would also say that we need to remember where our true foundation lies. Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. The Lord has called us by name in our baptism, and he holds us close forever. Wherever we go, whatever we experience, the Lord goes with us, to give us guidance and help along the way.

And for those loved ones who are separated by distance, or even by the veil of death, we remember that we still have a firm connection with them by faith in Jesus. We can pray for them, and know that Jesus watches over them. We can share in Holy Communion, and feel them connected to us in our Lord's one body, wherever they may be.

Jesus is the one stable point in our lives, even when everything else seems to change. He is trustworthy and faithful, so that we can build our lives and our hopes on him.

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Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church

Serving Christ!

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Pastor

Reverend John Rothfusz
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Financial Secretary, Etc.
Bookkeeper
Traditional Worship Coordinator
Director of Contemporary Worship
Organist/Pianist
Organist/Pianist
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Libby Welsch salem-libby@comcast.net
Gloria Gilbertson
Connie Hanson
Nancy Hayes

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

Happening this week...

- Sunday, May 11 CONFIRMATION
9:00 am Worship
10:00 am Coffee Fellowship
10:10 am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study
5:00 pm 3N1 Meet at Salem
- Monday, May 12
9 am-noon Quilting
- Tuesday, May 13
9 am-noon Quilting
6:00 pm Outreach
- Wednesday, May 14
10:00 am Methuselah Coffee Group
11:30 am Lunch Bunch
- Thursday, May 15
8:30 -10:30 am Our Sharing Pantry Distribution
5:00 pm Contemporary Worship Committee
6:30 pm Finance Committee
7:00 pm AA
- Friday, May 16
7:30 pm AA
- Sunday, May 18
9:00 am Worship with UPROAR!
10:00 am Coffee Fellowship
10:10 am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study
11:00 am Sunday School Picnic

In Our Church Family.....

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

- ⇒ Pat Clason*
- ⇒ Mike Ballas* (*husband of Holly Ballas*)
- ⇒ Joanne Stiver (*mother of Leigh Kossman*)
- ⇒ Jon Menk (*cousin of Laura Caupert*)
- ⇒ Stacey Reavley (*friend of Pat Clason*)
- ⇒ Lisa Fisch (*friend of Leigh Kossman*)
- ⇒ Wayne Koschnitzki (*friend of Leigh Kossman*)
- ⇒ Leslie Trettenero (*mother of Gina Carlson*)
- ⇒ Mari Eklund (*Mother-in-Law of Pastor John*)



*Indicates Salem member



It is with deep sadness that we announce that Pastor Greg Mayer passed away 4/24/25 at Clarissa C. Cook Hospice Home, Bettendorf, IA. May he rest in eternal peace in the arms of Jesus. Visitation and a funeral service was held May 2 & 3, 2025.

Kristine has requested stories about her father be sent to pastorgreg.memories@gmail.com as she would like to create a book of memories about his life.

Cards may be sent to Family of Pastor Greg Mayer
815 17th Street
Rock Island, IL 61201.

MAY "DIAMOND PLUS" BIRTHDAYS



5/4 Walter Farley
5/16 Dori Burau
5/26 Carolyn Gengler

These times of transition remind us to use our lives to make meaningful connections wherever we can. Friends and loved ones will enter and leave our lives, but the times that we share will bless and change us forever. The more that we connect in real and significant ways, the more that we will always carry that person in our heart.

Jesus loves us, deeply and personally, and wants us to share that same kind of love with one another. He wants us deeply rooted in this world, enriched by the soil where we are planted, so that we can grow and flourish in his care.

Let us give thanks for all those who are a part of our lives, making them rich and full. We want to appreciate them while they are close, and entrust them confidently to God as they go forth.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor John Rothfusz



May 6, 2025 Salem Congregational Council Meeting Highlights

The Congregation Council met at Salem on Tuesday, May 6, 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.

Connie Hanson led the devotions, with a devotion about how we are often forgetful, but Jesus is always faithful to call us back.

The council voted to accept the minutes of the April 1 Congregation Council meeting, as prepared by Alan Deaton.

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

General Fund:	\$16,162.71
Designated Fund:	\$32,426.85
Capital Fund:	\$37,463.84

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 June and look for conflicts.

The Fellowship Committee is hosting a Fellowship Feast at Salem on May 27 for the community. Gifts are requested to help with that cost.

The Outreach Committee is planning a new Salem Lutheran t-shirt to show our pride in the community. More information will be available soon.

The Council affirmed Wyatt Farley as a new confirmed member of Salem Lutheran Church. His confirmation will be May 11.

The group heard council comments from each member.

The Women's Retreat at LOMC was very worthwhile and enjoyable.

The Sunday School group singing at Pavilion on Main did a great job, and got a good response.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Thank you for extra effort during Lent, Holy Week & Easter Sunday!

Pastor John and worship planners for meaningful worship services

Committees that prepared and served Lenten suppers

Salem host and hostesses at the April 2 Lenten Breakfast

Worship Committee for hosting the Maundy Thursday lunch

All of Salem's musicians

All who helped prepare and serve Easter Brunch

Lily and spring flower providers

Christian Education Committee for planning the egg hunt

Inside Cleaners & Outside Gardeners

TOTAL DONATIONS AS OF APRIL 30

Lenten Envelope Offerings - \$6,535 contributed to Benevolence

Lenten Supper Offerings - \$792 contributed to Our Sharing Pantry

Easter Envelope Offerings - \$6,425 to Salem's General Fund

Personal Care Kits - 34 kits



Spring and Summer Schedule from Christian Education Committee

Confirmation is on Sunday, May 11. Congratulations to Wyatt Farley who will affirm his baptism.

Sunday, May 18 is the last day of Sunday School. Please join Sunday School students and leaders for their end-of-year picnic. Everyone is invited! There is a sign up in the narthex for donations of food and number of picnic attendees.

Over the summer there will be three monthly activities scheduled. Details to come but please save the dates for the following Sundays:

- * June 29: Sannauk Forest Preserve Picnic and Walk,
- * July 20 Hayes Farm Visit,
- * August 10 Sundaes on Sunday followed by Water Games for all. (Worship and Christian Education committees)

Thank you to the Women Retreat planners:

Sharon Wallis, Sandy Martens, Kelly Clason, and Nancy Rex. The weather was great! The fellowship was warm! Food was tasty! Watch the bulletin board for pictures.

UPROAR!



Come to church on May 18th!!!
You won't want to miss it!

Salem's very own praise band UPROAR! will be providing the music for that day's service. They're back together for one day to bring us a special service of sing-along Christian radio songs, at our regular 9:00 am time.

UPROAR! is Alan Deaton, Connie Hanson, Leigh-Leigh Kossman, and Steve Pescitelli.

Synod Assembly

The Synod Assembly will be held June 13-14 at Augustana College. Durk Hellinga, Marilyn Wouda, and Sharon Wallis will be our voting members, along with Pastor John.

The Synod Assembly offering will go to support Global Refuge, formerly called Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service. This is a group we as Lutherans can be proud of that originated after World War II to help displaced people.

The 2025 Synod Assembly In-Kind offering will be advocacy letters. Congregations are encouraged to have members write letters to their representative and senators. More information, including sample letter templates, will be shared soon. In the meantime, please visit [ELCA Advocacy](#) for other resources. As prayerful Christians, it is good to make our voices heard as we share the faith that shapes us.

Contributions Needed

The Community Fellowship Feast will be held at Salem. We will be buying and cooking pork loin to serve as the main dish. Partner churches will bring sides and desserts.

To support this effort, please give money to Marilyn Wouda, place in the offering plate well marked for Fellowship Feast, or bring your donation to the church office.

Join us on Tuesday, May 27 for a delicious meal. There's a sign up sheet to help either to set up or clean up.

Thank you for helping us host a meal for our neighbors.



Meals on Wheels

Our dedicated crew of Meals on Wheels volunteers has begun delivering meals to homebound residents of our community this month. Our volunteers are Holly Ballas, Linda Benson, Dean & Dori Burau, Ron Cunz, Jan Dunn, Karen Gleason, Steve & Bonnie Guyer, Deb Haag, Pam Pescitelli, Leo Sondgeroth, Dale & Ruth White. Marilyn Wouda and Kelly Clason are substitutes.

Thank you, Laura Caupert, who has coordinated this effort. Salem volunteers also deliver in September.

Thank you Ditch Cleaners!

The first Adopt-a-Road crew cleaned up the ditches on West Sandwich Road on Earth Day, April 22.

Mark your calendars for 8:00 am on these next days:

- ◇ Saturday, June 21
- ◇ Saturday, August 23
- ◇ Saturday, October 18



Quilting Days

Quilting Days are May 12 & 13.

Diaper Closet

May 18 is Diaper Sunday.

Sunday School Picnic & Games

May 18 at 11:00

Community Fellowship Feast

Tuesday, May 27 4:30—6:00 pm

Styrofoam Recycling

Sunday, June 22

VBS in partnership with St. John's Lutheran Church, Somonauk

July 21-24

LifeWorks Youth Mission Trip

July 20-25



Lunch Bunch meets at Yorkville Café, Yorkville. PHOTO centered and clockwise: Pastor John Rothfusz, Donna Fraley, Sharon Wallis, Joanne Van Pelt, Karen Van Pelt Koerner, Kelly Clason, Alan Deaton, Doug Fraley, Marilyn Wouda, Durk Hellinga, Bonnie Guyer, Libby and Patrick Welsch, Sandy Martens and Laura Caupert.

Lunch Bunch

The Lunch Bunch met at Yorkville Cafe on Wednesday, April 16 for fellowship and food.

Join the Lunch Bunch on Wednesday, May 14 beginning at 11:30 at Harner's Bakery at 10 W State Street, in North Aurora. We will have lunch at Harner's Bakery at North Aurora. Let's meet at Salem to car pool at 10:45. There is a sign-up in the narthex if you plan to come for fellowship and a meal.

Northern Illinois Food Bank

Volunteers packed onions in April. We packed 4,605 pounds of onions, providing 3,837 meals! Salem goes Thursday, May 22, 2025. Please register by May 8, 2025 on the sign-up in the narthex.



May Day Celebration

May Baskets were delivered to Salem's shut-ins by members of the Member Support Committee. Thank you to the Sunday School for making the baskets.

"Dear Salem members and Sunday School, Thanks so much for the beautiful "May Basket" and filled with treats!! Brought back many happy memories of passing May Baskets! So thoughtful of all who made, filled, and passed our beautiful basket.

Blessings to all, "Ace" and Jean Hanson"



Donna Fraley, Jan Dunn, Pam Pescitelli and Patty Farley put together the baskets.

Planning for your Final Stewardship with your Will or Life Insurance

God calls us to be good stewards through all of our lives. Just as God gives us our lives, our relationships, and all that we possess, we are privileged to give back to the Lord a share of what God gives us in trust. All through life we seek to be good stewards of God's gifts, giving back a percentage of what God first gives us as our offering in faith.

When we die, we know very well that we can't take it with us. All that we leave behind will be directed somewhere, by some plan. If you were to die without a will, the State of Illinois would be happy to make those decisions for you, but I doubt you would like the outcome. So every Christian, whether affluent or not, should have a will, a plan for their final stewardship of what God gives them. As our kids have gotten older, Elise and I redid our wills, which had gotten out of date.

In the same way, we may also have life insurance policies, directed to pay out to a beneficiary. During our working years, our family usually depends on us for financial support, and life insurance protects that. Later on, when they are more independent, we can reconsider how we would want to direct the funds from life insurance.

Have you made a will, or looked at it in recent years? Does it truly reflect what is most important to you? It is appropriate for our wills and life insurance to reflect what we value most in life, including our faith. I hope that you will consider including a gift to Salem Lutheran Church in your will, as your final stewardship of all God's blessings in your life. This can demonstrate the faith by which you live all your life, and give a witness to those left behind.

What is an appropriate gift to the Lord? I would recommend a percentage gift of your estate, such as a tithe (10%). Another way that people have thought about it is to treat the church equally as another child would be treated in your estate. This makes sense especially when children are grown and well-established, and don't really need a significant inheritance.

If you wish to consider a gift to Salem Lutheran, you may direct it without a designation, to the Capital Campaign, or to the Salem Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund. If you have any questions, you are always welcome to talk to Pastor John or to the Endowment Committee. The ELCA also has a helpful gift planning professional who can help if you wish. Your intentional gift planning can make a significant difference to the health and vitality of Salem Lutheran for the future. Thank you for your witness of good stewardship of all that God gives you!

Salem Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 105

Sandwich, IL 60548

Join Us!

We will celebrate with an end-of-the-year Sunday School picnic on Sunday, May 18 beginning at 11:00 am. They would like the congregation to join them for hot dogs, chips, fruit, cookies and beverages. If you and your family would like to join us, please sign-up in the narthex to help us plan. There is also opportunity to sign-up to help supply food.

Calling all families!

Do you have a graduate this spring? Please let the office know so they can be recognized. Email salem1c@comcast.net.



You are All Invited!
Sunday School Picnic
Sunday, May 18
at 11:00 am