

the
SPIRIT

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
*A Reconciling in Christ
(RIC) Congregation*

THERE IS MORE – SO MUCH MORE – SO VERY MUCH MORE!

Sometimes we may have to lose something in order to find something more.

When our lives are full of loving relationships and we have health and wealth and even opportunities to serve, we may be so happy that we don't need anything more. But what happens when we are in an accident and injured, or receive a diagnosis of stage 4 cancer, or our spouse of decades divorces us, or we lose our job? What then?

What happens then is that we discover that our happiness was dependent upon external things, and when those things depart, our happiness departs with them, and we are left broken.

It is in that brokenness, in the empty hollow of our hearts, in the pain of our crushed spirits, that we may find that there is something far better than happiness with its fleeting, flirting nature, something that is stubbornly steady and steadfast, something that is abiding and enduring, something that wells up from deep within like an ever-flowing fountain, something called joy.

I have a friend who's got good health, enough money to burn a hole in her pocket, a loving family, plenty of friends, and even a church she enjoys. She seems happy, and maybe she is. But whenever I look into her eyes, she looks away, and I suspect she may be like the rich young man who, possessing so much and having done everything he could think of, came to Jesus wanting, needing more – deeply desiring the secret to abundant life.

I have another friend whose life is pretty much in shambles. In the past year she suffered an almost fatal illness, her husband has stage 4 cancer, except for odd jobs here and there they've both been unemployed for over a year and they never know from

where their next meal will come, and while she loves her church, it is on the brink of closing because no one seems able to give more than they are already giving. From the outside her life is a mess, but I don't know anyone who has more faith or more hope or more joy in God than she does. And it's clear to everyone who knows her: she's not ask-

ing Jesus for the secret to abundant life – she's already found it.

God wants more for you – so much more. And God wants more for Salem – so very much more. Believe it.

The church, you see, is not a social club where people who are happy want to come to rub shoulders with people just like them and then want to leave unchanged. The church is the place where God gathers the broken, and brings together those who are different – people from different races, cultures, creeds, ages, abilities, and sexual orientations – not to make "them" into people like "us", but to transform all of us into something more than we were before. If you want more joy, bring your brokenness. If you want to know the secret to abundant life, step out of your comfort zone and go to some new group or event where God is calling you. If you want more of God, then don't hang onto who you've been, but let God transform you into who you're called to be.

God wants more for you – so much more. And God wants more for Salem – so very much more. Trust it.

But in order for God to give us more, we must be willing to risk losing what we already have. We must offer up to God all we hold dear – our wants and needs, our hopes and dreams, our strategies and plans. Only when we put our treasures – like our familiar worship style, our straight/white/educated/ northern European culture, our comfortable building, and our bank account – into his hands will Jesus be able to multiply them. Only when we open our hearts and souls and minds and bodies completely to God, can God pour in the full measure of the Spirit's power.

Whether you think you have a little or you think you have a lot, let me assure you: there is more, much more.

If you think Salem has a little or a lot, I promise you: there is more, much more than you have ever dreamed.

God wants more for you—so much more. And God wants more for Salem—so very much more. Depend on it.

Ask and Believe. Then stand with your arms raised wide to heaven, completely open and ready to Receive.

Abundant blessings – and MORE – be yours!

Pastor Marjo

What's Inside

Salem

Calendar	3
Worship Assistants.....	5
Birthdays	7
Prayer List.....	7
Parish Nurse	9

Wider Church

Faith in Action	13
Global Links	14

*We are a community of Christian disciples called by the Holy Spirit.
In response to God's transforming love, we share our JOY through praise and service.*

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

3160 Park Avenue
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604
Phone (203) 336-3300 ▪ Fax (203) 336-8813

Website - www.salembridgeport.org

Facebook - www.facebook.com/SalemBridgeport/

Church Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Worship Services

9:30am Traditional Worship

4:30pm SNAC

Sunday Night Alive Dinner Church

Salem's Staff

The Rev. Marjo Anderson, Pastor
Cell Phone (203) 982-3441
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Mark Adamy, Music Director
adameus7@aol.com

Karl Kraft, Office Manager
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Jennifer Reyes, Sexton
Pablo, Cruz, Sexton
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LEADERSHIP AT SALEM

COUNCIL

Marjo Anderson, Pastor – marjoanderson@aol.com
Frank Dukenski, President – fdukenski@aol.com
Ray Anderson, Vice-President – andersray4@gmail.com
Nancy Headford, Secretary – nancy9881@att.net
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Emily Sokoloski – emilysokoloski@gmail.com
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Bill Winter, Property – wjwinter@optonline.net

SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE

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John Bryk – jbryk@znclaw.com
Richard Lansing – rlansing@optonline.net
Jean Larson – tjcklarson@sbcglobal.net
Bruce Tomasko – bltomasko@yahoo.com

LIGHT –

Leaders Inviting Growth through Hope for Tomorrow

Source Team:

Pastor Marjo Anderson – marjoanderson@aol.com
Ray Lansing – raylansing@yahoo.com
Tracey Wilkins – traelwil@gmail.com
Bill Winter – wjwinter@optonline.net
Tom Larson – tjcklarson@sbcglobal.net

Reflection Team:

Katie Adams – keadams333@gmail.com
Jean Larson – tjcklarson@sbcglobal.net
Frank Dukenski – fdukenski@aol.com
Joel Hintz – brondle@aol.com

**Newsletter deadline is the 15th of each month
unless otherwise noted in the monthly
calendar.**

Next deadline date is **August 15th for the
September issue!**



**Email submissions to
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net**



July 2019

Salem Lutheran Church



SUN	MON Jul 1	TUE 2	WED 3	THU 4	FRI 5	SAT 6
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am Pastors' Text Study 7pm STEPP Group - CR 7:30pm Talk Tuesdays at Brewport 		Office Closed 		
7 Pentecost 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12:30pm New Directions Ministries 6:30pm SLAA - CR 	8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Summersong 	9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am Pastors' Text Study 10am Summersong 7pm STEPP Group - CR 7:30pm Talk About Life 	10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:30am Pantry Setup 10am Summersong 	11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:30am Pantry Setup 10am Summersong 4pm Food Pantry 	12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Summersong 5pm Summersong Performance 6:30pm Summersong/Salem Picnic 	13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8am Men's Breakfast
14 Pentecost 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12:30pm New Directions Ministries 6:30pm SLAA - CR 	15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Summersong 	16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am Pastors' Text Study 10am Summersong 7pm STEPP Group - CR 7:30pm Talk Tuesdays at Brewport 	17 Golden Hill Community Supper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Summersong 	18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Summersong 	19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Summersong 5pm Summersong Performance 6:30pm Summersong/Salem Picnic 	20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11am Inner-View Chat n Chew
21 Pentecost 6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12:30pm New Directions Ministries 6:30pm SLAA - CR 	22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30pm Scout Troop 103 	23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am Pastors' Text Study 7pm STEPP Group - CR 7:30pm Talk About Life 	24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:30am Pantry Setup 	25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:30am Pantry Setup 4pm Food Pantry 	26 	27
28 Pentecost 7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 10:45am Adult Forum - Sustainability Task I 12:30pm New Directions Ministries 6:30pm SLAA - CR 	29 	30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am Pastors' Text Study 7pm STEPP Group - CR 	31 			



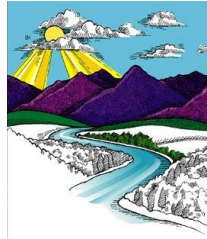
August 2019

Salem Lutheran Church



SUN

MON



TUE

WED

THU
Aug 1

FRI
2

SAT
3

4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pentecost 8 ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries ● 6:30pm SLAA - CR	● 6pm Staff Support ● 7:30pm Scout Troop 103	● 9:30am Pastors' Text Study ● 7pm STEPP Group - CR ● 7:30pm Talk Tuesdays at Brewport	● 8:30am Pantry Setup	● 8:30am Pantry Setup ● 4pm Food Pantry	● 5pm Oustide Hall Rental	● 8am Men's Breakfast ● 9am Oustide Hall Rental
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Pentecost 9 ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries ● 6:30pm SLAA - CR		● 9:30am Pastors' Text Study ● 7pm STEPP Group - CR ● 7:30pm Talk About Life				● 11am Inner-View Chat n Chew
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Pentecost 10 ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries ● 6:30pm SLAA - CR	● 6:30pm Finance Committee ● 7:30pm Executive Committee ● 7:30pm Scout Troop 103	● 9:30am Pastors' Text Study ● 7pm STEPP Group - CR ● 7:30pm Talk Tuesdays at Brewport	● 8:30am Pantry Setup	● 8:30am Pantry Setup ● 4pm Food Pantry		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Pentecost 11 ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 10:45am Adult Forum - Sustainability Task I ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries ● 6:30pm SLAA - CR	● 7pm Council ● 7:30pm Scout Troop 103	● 9:30am Pastors' Text Study ● 7pm STEPP Group - CR ● 7:30pm Talk About Life				



Worship Assistants

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

July, 2019

	July 7	July 14	July 21	July 28
Assisting Minister	Anita Papp			
Lector/Communion Minister	Sandra Brown			
Altar Prep Team	Jean Larson Diane Tomasko	Jean Larson Diane Tomasko	Anita Papp Cindy Roberts	Anita Papp Cindy Roberts
Ushers	Ray & Eileen Anderson	Mike Caragol Tom Larson	Joe Bales John Bryk	Rich & Carol Lansing
Flowers Given By	Dick & Roberta Bellows	Sandra Brown	Frank & Grace Dukenski	Karl & Linda Kraft
Coffee Hour			Baronovski family	
Tellers	Emily Sokoloski Tracey Wilkins	Nancy Headford Rich Kenyon	Sandra Brown Diane Tomasko	Liz Bales Frank Dukenski



Calling all coffee hour hosts. PLEASE contact the church office to secure a date for coffee hour. Coffee hour is a wonderful tradition at Salem. It gives all of us a chance for fellowship among our members. Thank you for your continued support. Contact the office at (203) 336-3300, or email salemsec123@sbcglobal.net.



Worship Assistants

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

August, 2019

	August 4	August 11	August 18	August 25
Assisting Minister				
Lector/Communion Minister				
Altar Prep Team	Bob Reichelt Chris Wolff	Bob Reichelt Chris Wolff	Sandra Brown Emily Sokoloski	Sandra Brown Emily Sokoloski
Ushers	Ray & Eileen Anderson	Mike Caragol Tom Larson	Joe Bales John Bryk	Rich & Carol Lansing
Flowers Given By	Cindy Roberts Judi Nielsen	Frank & Grace Dukenski	Sandra Brown	Joan Crossman
Coffee Hour				
Tellers	Steve Kuczo Bill Winter	Ray Anderson Dale Danowski	Emily Sokoloski Tracey Wilkins	Nancy Headford Rich Kenyon



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Happy Birthday!



Cary Andren	1
Katherine Horton	1
Miriam Llanos	3
Karl Kraft	4
Katherine Johnson	8
Teresa Roehrich	8
Dick Bellows	9
Jon Baronavski	9
Paul Baronavski, Jr	9
Annette Marquardt	13
Kimberly Sokoloski	13
Kevyn Jackman	16
JoAnn McMaster	16
Laurie Kulakowski	19
Anita Papp	20
Dolores Kuczo	22
Lisette Vazquez	22
Victor Ladue	23
Ryne Cotter	26
Corey DeWalt	30

Josephine Anderson	1
Gloriana Claus	1
Christine Larson	3
Janice Lansing	6
Morgan Danowski	8
Bryan DeWalt	8
Cindy Roberts	10
Kaitlyn Rosa	12
Diane Tomasko	13
Carl Roehrich	14
Richard Lansing, Jr	16
Pauline Boyum	18
Mary Anne Caragol	18
Evan Lansing	18
Brenda Vazquez	21
David Schulz	23
Jean Larson	24
Frank Dukenski	25
Sharon Norberg	27
Hazel Pasqua	29
Eduardo Vazquez	30
Joan Crossman	31

There will be a discussion of the **Sustainability Taskforce** report after the Sunday services on July 28, and August 25. Anyone with questions, comments, or suggestions is urged to attend.

Also, on Friday, September 20, 2019, at 6:30 PM, there will be a potluck supper at Salem with additional opportunity to discuss the report of the Sustainability Taskforce. Anyone with questions, comments, or suggestions is urged to attend.

<u>2019</u>	Jul 28	Oct 13
<u>Blood Pressure</u>	Aug tba	Nov 10
<u>Screening Dates</u>	Sep 8	Dec 8

Salem Book Club meets on the first Tuesday at noon in the Salem Lounge. There will be no meetings in July and August. Fall discussions will be: Sept. 3rd - **Left Neglected** by Lisa Genova; Oct. 1st - **The Girl Who Wrote in Silk** by Kelly Estes; Nov. 5th - **Where the Crawdads Sing** by Delia Owens. New members and guests are welcome. Please bring your lunch



The following people have asked for healing, help, guidance or comfort.

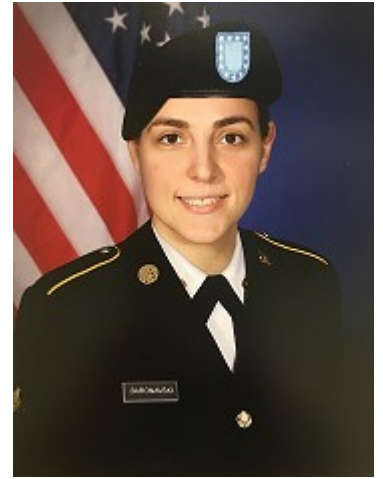
Joan B	Daphne B
Marge S	Peter K
Barbara B	Bobby W
Sam B	Anna
Erick D	Barbara
Grace D	James S
Hannah & Joseph	Sarah R
Bob H	Brooks A
Dennis H	Angie
Sylvitha	Liz F.
Jay	Hazel P
Jinny L	
Derm L	
Mike R	
Jane M	
Jana B	
William S	



Congratulations!

The Baronavski Bunch along with Salem Lutheran Church would like to congratulate SPC Samantha Baronavski for her service with the US Army National Guard. She arrived to Fort Leonard Wood Reservation in Missouri on 2/26/19 and graduated Basic Combat Training on 5/8/19. She was recognized as an Honor Graduate nominee during the family day ceremony.

She is currently doing advanced individual training as a Chemical, Biological Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Specialist and recently named as her Platoon Guide! Graduation is planned for 7/18/19 and Sam plans to attend the 7/21/19 Salem service and looking forward to worshipping and seeing everyone after 5 months.



The Baronavski Bunch will host coffee hour and will also have a welcome home picnic for her later in the day at Beardsley Park, Field 5 since she has softball double header. All are welcome! Sam plans



On June 20th the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport's CREATE celebrated the graduation of its 7th culinary class. The class was the third class that Salem provided the kitchen and classroom space for. CREATE is culinary training for the aspiring food entrepreneur.

These 10 week culinary boot camps are geared to prepare students for all aspects of the food industry, from basic knife skills, cooking techniques, recipe testing and scaling, and ServSafe to workshops in product development, business accounting, permits and licenses, farmers market retail, and entrepreneurship. Each week the class also prepared a dish for the Music Theatre Thursday meal.

Classes are intended for under-employed and unemployed area residents looking to start their own businesses or explore a new career in food. After graduation, the program helps place these students in jobs or start their own food businesses. The program has placed 65% of past graduates in good jobs, and are on track to surpass that mark.

Avoiding Stinging Insect Stings

The venomous insects are yellow jackets, honey bees, wasps, hornets, and fire ants (found only in the south). If you are stung by one of these, you may experience pain, swelling, and redness at the site of the sting for a few days. Only bees leave their stingers behind. The bee stinger should be scraped away. Watch the sting site for an infection.

If stung, disinfect the area, apply ice, and use an antihistamine ointment and/or corticosteroid cream. Oral antihistamines may also help.

If you have symptoms away from the site of the sting, it can be a serious allergic reaction. Call 911 if you experience any of the following symptoms: hives, tight chest, wheezing, swelling of the tongue, throat tightness, and dizziness. You may even become unconsciousness. The emergency room staff will treat you and send you home with an EpiPen (Epinephrine). Then see an allergist.

The following precautions may help you avoid an insect sting:

- Don't wear sandals or walk barefoot in the grass.
- Don't swat at a flying insect. Gently brush it aside or wait for it to leave.
- Don't drink from open beverage cans. Cover your cans or use bottles.
- If eating outdoors, keep food covered.
- Cover garbage cans that are outside with tight lids.
- Be careful when doing yard work and cutting the lawn.
- Keep window and door screens in good repair.
- Drive with the car windows closed.



From
Our
Parish
Nurses

Stay Healthy While Traveling

- Before you go, make a list of health info in case of an emergency, including health issues, insurance info, allergies and travel itinerary. Keep the list on your phone and print a paper copy.
- If travelling outside the US, know the emergency number; it is probably not 911.
- Review your insurance coverage; consider buying travel insurance.
- Check online for health and safety advisories concerning your itinerary.
- Be sure you are up to date on immunizations.
- WASH HANDS; carry hand sanitizer.
- Move around every couple of hours during long plane and car trips
- Eat and drink carefully. In some places you need to drink bottled water and avoid street food.
- Take symptoms seriously if they persist. If abroad, where you don't speak the language, look for a university affiliated teaching hospital for care.

Worth packing: small first aid kit, thermometer, cold and flu meds, diarrhea meds, hand sanitizer, sunscreen, bug repellent, anti-itch cream, allergy meds.

Keep your prescription meds with you and in original, labelled bottles.

SUMMER SAFETY



CHECKLIST



GENERAL SAFETY

- ✓ Always be aware of your surroundings.
- ✓ Do not drink alcohol while swimming, biking, boating, or driving.
- ✓ Always make sure someone is with you or knows where you are in case of emergencies.



AT THE POOL OR BEACH

- ✓ Do not dive in less than nine feet of water.
- ✓ Be aware of sandbars.
- ✓ Don't run on a pool deck.
- ✓ No board, no diving!
- ✓ Be aware of signs at the beach signaling rough waters or other dangers.

ON A BOAT



- ✓ Keep your distance from other boats.
- ✓ Obey speed limits.
- ✓ Don't dive off the boat – go feet first.

WHILE BODY SURFING

- ✓ Hold board so it extends past head.

ON YOUR BIKE

- ✓ Always wear a helmet that is snug, fitted, and level.
- ✓ Replace your helmet if it is cracked, damaged or more than 3-5 years old.



HEADING DOWN THE HIGHWAY



- ✓ Just drive! Don't let passengers in the car or other motorists distract you.
- ✓ Never text while driving.
- ✓ Buckle up. Make sure the bottom strap rests across your hips and the shoulder strap across your chest.
- ✓ Children and young teens should always be seated in the back of the car.
- ✓ Obey car and booster seat guidelines. Make sure every child is in a car seat appropriate for their age, weight, and height.

ST. VINCENT'S SWIM ACROSS THE SOUND

22nd Annual Memorial Service

*Celebrating the lives of family members and
friends who have been lost to cancer*

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4, 2019

Open to All - Rain or Shine

Registration 8:00 am

Service 8:30 - 9:30 am

Captain's Cove Seaport, Bridgeport
(Handicapped Accessible)

- Reading of Names • Musical Tributes
- Inspirational Readings/Prayers • Refreshments

Dedicate a flower to be cast into the Sound
in memory of your loved one.

If unable to attend, please visit our website
at www.stvincents.org/SwimMemorial
and submit the name of your loved
one to be remembered at the service.



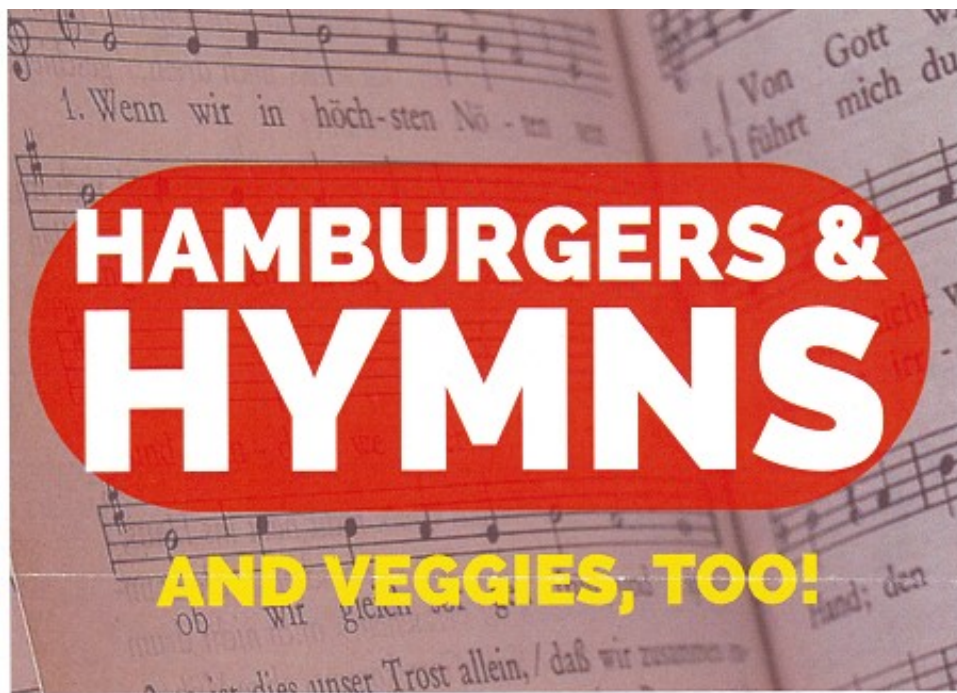
St. Vincent's
Medical Center Foundation



St. Vincent's
swim
across the sound

Hope has no finish line.

For information, please call 475-210-5550



THURSDAY, JULY 18, 6–8PM

**JOIN US IN
BETHESDA'S
GARDENS
TO SING
AND EAT!**

**CASH TIPS ACCEPTED
TO SUPPORT
THE NEW HAVEN
LAND TRUST**

**FREE BURGERS
AND VEGGIE BURGERS
SIDES TO SHARE WELCOME**

**HYMNS BY REQUEST FROM THE HYMNAL
LED BY OUR MUSICIANS**

BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH
450 Whitney Ave • New Haven
www.bethesdanewhaven.org



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

From the ashes

Congregation serves community six months after Camp Fire destruction

By Jay Saunders

People fleeing for their lives, surrounded by walls of flame. The fury of Mother Nature tearing through everything in its path. Those who have managed to get out safely wondering what the future will look like when, or if, they return.

That was the scene in Paradise, Calif., on the morning of Nov. 8, 2018. A town in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in Butte County, Paradise was largely destroyed by the [Camp Fire](#)—the deadliest fire in the state's history, causing at least 85 deaths and more than \$16 billion in damage.

That night, Scott McLean, a spokesperson for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, told members of the media, "Pretty much, the community of Paradise is destroyed. The wind that was predicted came and just wiped it out."

One week prior to the fire, the congregation of Paradise Lutheran had completed the renovation of old classrooms into housing quarters and a communal living space. Although the church's parsonage, garage and toolsheds burned to the ground, the church building itself was mainly spared.

"The church, our hall, a building behind the church we turned into apartments to rent out ... the fact these buildings didn't burn gave us a huge lift," said Gwen Nordgren, a member of Paradise who is leading the effort to rehabilitate and restore the church from smoke damage and asbestos found after the fire.

Nordgren was one of many who had to flee the Camp Fire at a moment's notice. Like more than half the congregation, she lost her home. She was able to rent one of the church's apartments, along with other people affected by the fire. Six months later, she still lives there.

At age 76, Nordgren chose to stay in Paradise after the flames were extinguished. But she said many her age chose to leave because they couldn't, or didn't want to, rebuild. Members of the community experience "fire brain," she said, a feeling she compared to post-traumatic stress disorder.

"It's all surreal, and surreal here is the new normal," she added.

Several months later, though, Nordgren sees plenty of reasons to be hopeful. "We know we are following a disastrous situation, but we have the location, attitude, faith, wonderful leadership, and we're all standing up," she said.

"I don't cry anymore going up the hill [near the church]. For months, everyone here just broke down and cried when they saw each other and what our town had become."

Signs of new life

As Paradise residents adjust to a new normal, Nordgren said she sees "every kind of truck imaginable" in town as the restoration effort continues. Recently two of the town's four grocery stores reopened. Each has a deli, and there are long lines every day at lunchtime. The post office also recently reopened, which Nordgren said has been an important change. Previously, those in Paradise had to drive 20 minutes to nearby Chico to pick up their mail.

Meanwhile, the Paradise congregation is "rising from the ashes," she said.

In the weeks following the fire, the congregation got a meaningful boost from Faith Lutheran Church in Chico. "We were offered shelter, quilts, clothing, food and a place to worship for that Sunday," said Rod Platte, pastor of Paradise. For several months, Faith hosted weekly services for both congregations, in addition to offering office space to Paradise, while damage repair got underway.

Although work remains, signs of new life can be seen in the restored Paradise Lutheran. In February, the congregation was able to hold services in the church hall again. Nordgren said they have had "good attendance," including new faces and new families from Paradise and surrounding communities.

The congregation has been developing a strategic plan to grow not only the church but also the community. Before the fire, Paradise had offered a free lunch program and was growing its housing-assistance project. Today those efforts are needed more than ever. But Nordgren said the congregation is ready to meet those needs and expects to share its spaces with other congregations and denominations that have lost their facilities.

"People here have a lot of faith," she said. "We're safe and we know we are going to make it. Everyone cares so darn much about each other, and there's an amazing sense of dedication here. We are Paradise strong."

Jay Saunders has more than 20 years' experience writing for television, newspapers and magazines. He is a member of Fox Point Lutheran Church in Fox Point, Wis.



Sometimes a church...

"Sometimes a church just needs bricks and mortar!"

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia is growing fast – so fast it needs more church buildings!

This young, vibrant church now has almost 6,000 members in 40 worshipping communities spread across four provinces. Of those 40 worshipping communities, only four have sturdy, weatherproof buildings. "The rest meet in thatched pole-and-mud structures. There are instances when members would find themselves worshipping under a tree because their building collapsed in a windstorm," says the Rev. Alfred Chana, senior pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia.

ELCA Missionary Arden Strasser describes it: "The fact is, sometimes in Africa, a church just needs bricks and mortar to meet, especially during the rainy season. "It's not about the building; it's what goes on inside the building. And we've seen, when you have a brick-and-mortar church that can stand up the whole year round, you can get a lot happening in there."

Pastor Chana foresees that congregations with modern buildings "will attract local community members, will not suspend worship in case of a rainy day or a windstorm, and can hold workshops and seminars."

Pastor Strasser continues, "A church structure is the hatching place for ideas and motivation. It matters!"

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia has proposed an exciting new initiative in partnership with the ELCA. With the support of ELCA members and congregations, together, we can build up to 15 permanent new church buildings in Zambia, starting with a leadership training center to support the pastors and evangelists who serve that growing church.

