

December 2018



the  
**SPIRIT**

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

## ANGELS ALL AROUND

I was walking down the sidewalk, getting in my 5 miles for the day, when something out of the blue (literally!) happened....

Usually when I walk I have my headphones on as I listen to inspirational books or praise music. But on this particular day for some reason my heart felt empty and God seemed far away – kind of like the writer of Psalm 22 must have felt when penning these words: “...God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me...?” I thought back to those times in my life when I had felt closest to God. Why couldn’t I feel that reassuring presence now? I wanted God to fill my heart again so badly that tears welled in my eyes.

I was jerked out of my downward spiraling reverie by a voice. A pickup truck had honked and stopped on the other side of the road. It seemed the person was talking to me, but as I couldn’t make out the words, I turned and continued my walk. Maybe 5 minutes later the same truck pulled up beside me, and a man rolled down the window, smiled, and said, “I have a message for you. It’s from verses 11-13 in the first chapter of John: ‘Those who accept the Word and believe in the Name are born of God.’ You see,” he said, “if you open your heart to receive and believe, God is never far away.” I was so stunned, all I could think of to say was, “Thank you – I needed that!” He replied, “You’re welcome. I used to work for the post office; now I’m retired. But when I see someone in need of hearing God’s Word, I deliver the message.” And then he drove off. An angel in a pickup truck? Who knew?! I shook my head in wonder.

Soon it will be Christmas and angels will abound. Luke writes that an angel appeared to Mary to announce the birth of Christ (1:26-38). Matthew tells us that an angel appeared to Joseph telling him that what was conceived in Mary was from the Holy Spirit (1:20-21). And, in Luke we read that an angel appeared to shepherds to announce the birth of Jesus and was then joined by a great number from the angel army (2:8-14).

### What’s Inside

#### Salem

Calendar .....	3
Worship Assistants.....	4
Birthdays .....	5
Prayer List.....	5
Parish Nurse .....	8

#### Wider Church

Faith in Action .....	10
Global Links .....	11

In these days leading up to Christmas it can be so noisy that we miss God’s voice, so glaringly bright that we miss God’s motioning to us, and so crowded with busyness that we miss God’s touch. And so Advent calls us to pay attention. But just in case you miss some sign along the way, my Christmas wish for you is that God will deliver to you all that you need when and where you need it – even if it takes an angel in a pickup truck to do it.

Blessings abundant!

*Pastor Marjo*

*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](http://www.salembridgeport.org)

Facebook - [www.facebook.com/SalemBridgeport/](http://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  
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(on disability leave)

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

**Next deadline date is **December 15th** for the  
**January issue!****

**Email submissions to  
[salemsec123@sbcglobal.net](mailto:salemsec123@sbcglobal.net)**

## LEADERSHIP AT SALEM

### COUNCIL

Marjo Anderson, Pastor – [marjoanderson@aol.com](mailto:marjoanderson@aol.com)  
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Bill Winter, Property – [wjwinter@optonline.net](mailto:wjwinter@optonline.net)

### SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE

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### LIGHT –

**Leaders Inviting Growth through Hope for Tomorrow**

### Source Team:

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# December 2018

## Salem Lutheran Church



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						Sat Dec 1 ● 7:30pm Salem After Dark
2 <b>Advent 1</b> ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:45am Adult Forum ● 4:30pm SNAC Dinner Church	3 ● 6pm Staff Support	4 ● 9:30am Pastors' Text Study ● 12pm Book Club ● 7pm Talk Tuesdays at Brewport	5 ● 9:30am Bible Study	6 ● 4:30pm Music Theatre Thursday ● 6pm Music Theatre Thursday Meal ● 7:30pm Choir	7	8 ● 8am Men's Breakfast ● 9am Greening of the Church
9 <b>Advent 2</b> ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:45am Adult Forum ● 4:30pm SNAC Dinner Church	10 ● 6:30pm Finance Committee ● 6:30pm Social Ministry ● 7:30pm Executive Committee	11 ● 9:30am Pastors' Text Study ● 11:30am Pastors' Book Group ● 6pm Stewardship ● 7pm Talk Tuesdays at Brewport	12 ● 8:30am Pantry Setup ● 9:30am Bible Study	13 ● 8:30am Pantry Setup ● 4pm Food Pantry ● 4:30pm Music Theatre Thursday ● 6pm Music Theatre Thursday Meal ● 7:30pm Choir	14	15 ● 11am Inner-View Chat n Chew
16 <b>Advent 3</b> ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 11:45am Homebound Caroling	17 ● 7pm Council	18 ● 9:30am Pastors' Text Study	19	20 <b>MTT Closing Performance</b> ● 4:30pm Music Theatre Thursday ● 6pm Music Theatre Thursday Meal ● 7:30pm Choir	21	22
23 <b>Advent 4</b> ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:45am Adult Forum	24 Christmas Eve ● 9pm Christmas Eve worship	25 Christmas Day Office Closed	26 ● 8:30am Pantry Setup	27 ● 8:30am Pantry Setup ● 4pm Food Pantry	28	29
30 Christmas 1 ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:45am Adult Forum	31					<b>Community Room</b> Sun 6:45 SLAA Mon 7:30 Boy Scouts Tue 7:00 STEP



# Worship Assistants

## SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

December, 2018

	Dec 2	Dec 9	Dec 16	Dec 23	Dec 24	Dec 30
<b>Assisting Minister</b>		Anita Papp	Bruce Tomasko			
<b>Lector/ Communion Minister</b>		Sandra Brown	Diane Tomasko			
<b>Altar Prep Team</b>	Nancy D'Andrea Emily Sokoloski	Nancy D'Andrea Emily Sokoloski	Jean Larson Diane Tomasko	Jean Larson Diane Tomasko	Anita Papp Cindy Roberts	Anita Papp Cindy Roberts
<b>Ushers</b>	Mike Caragol Tom Larson	Samantha Baronavksi	Joe Bales John Bryk	Rich & Carol Lansing	Ray & Eileen Anderson	Mike Caragol Tom Larson
<b>Flowers Given By</b>	Al & Dot DeWalt and Family	Ann Martin	Nancy Headford	Cindy and Nick Roberts		Murphy family
<b>Coffee Hour</b>						
<b>Tellers</b>	Nancy Headford Bill Winter	Emily Sokoloski Tracey Wilkins	Katie Adams Rich Kenyon	Frank Dukenski Cindy Roberts	Frank Dukenski	Steve Kuczo Bill Winter

You can now signup online for Sunday morning Worship Assistants. You can signup to be the Assisting Minister or Lector/Communion Minister. The signup sheet is for November to December, 2018.

[If you're reading this online click here for the signup sheet.](#)

You can also call the church office to signup

Coffee hour hosts are needed for **December 2nd and after**. PLEASE contact Linda Bryk 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 Linda at (203) 268-8008, or email her at [momryk@yahoo.com](mailto:momryk@yahoo.com).

Bruce Tomasko .....	1
Ella Kenyon .....	2
Sue Chrien.....	3
Elijah Caragol .....	4
Barbara Howard .....	7
Ashley Baronavski .....	8
Dale Danowski.....	8
Landon Jawarski.....	13
Susan Murphy .....	15
Natalie Kenyon .....	16
Nancy Headford.....	19
Joseph Roberts .....	21
Katherine Pytleski.....	22
James McWain .....	23
Priscilla Schulz .....	29
Denise Bukovan .....	29

Raymond Anderson ..... 31



## DECEMBER EVENTS

Dec 1	7:30	Salem After Dark
Dec 2	9:00; 10:30; 4:30; 6:00	Youth Group Cookie Walk
Dec 8	8:00 am	Breakfast, Cleanup & Greening of the Church
Dec 16	11:45	Caroling for Homebound
Dec 16	4:00	CPC Lessons & Carols Concert
Dec 23	6:00	BHoW Dinner
Dec 24	9:00	Salem Christmas Eve Worship

## Salem Book Club

SALEM BOOK CLUB'S November Read: " Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine" by Gail Honeyman will be discussed on Dec 4th in the Lounge at Noon. Please bring your lunch. Everyone is welcome for the discussion.



2018  
Blood Pressure  
Screening Dates

Dec 9

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

Joan B  
Marge S  
Barbara B  
Sam B  
Erick D  
Grace D  
Hannah & Joseph  
Bob H  
Dennis H  
Sylvitha  
Jay  
Jinny L  
Derm L  
Mike R  
Jane M  
Jana B  
Maurena W

William S  
Daphne B  
Peter K  
Bobby W  
Anna  
Barbara  
James S  
Sarah R  
Brooks A  
Angie  
Liz F.







# 'T WAS THE NIGHT LESSONS AND CAROLS ON LONGING FOR JUSTICE

DECEMBER 16 @ 4:00 PM

FREE ADMISSION

CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

3160 Park Avenue, Bridgeport, CT



Congratulations to Donald Daniels, Alesia Dennis, Devon Francois, Ronald Harkless, and Sandra Montes. They are the graduates of the first CREATE Culinary Careers Training Course held at Salem and sponsored by the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport.

The students completed their 10 week course and were honored at a luncheon at Salem on November 16th.

During the course, the students learned cooking skills and techniques that food industry businesses are looking for.

# We Are Grateful

## Food Pantry

Barbara Howard

## Thrivent Choice Dollars

Al & Dot DeWalt, Reinie Lange, Rich Lansing



Dear Marjo,

Thank you so much for your donation of \$2,800 to The Council of Churches! Please extend my gratitude to the congregation and let them know how great a positive impact they are having on their neighbors.

Your contribution will help us continue to strengthen both our Food Access and Youth Services ministries. You are helping us feed the hungry and provide classes and entrepreneurial opportunities for people to lift themselves out of poverty. It also allows us to provide counseling and temporary respite care to youth in crisis - leveraging hope and changing lives!

Our bridge building ministry brings people of different races and faiths together - leveraging hope and changing lives!

With much appreciation for your support,

The Rev. Cass L. Shaw, President & CEO

## OVER 70 ½ ? CONSIDER A GIFT TO SALEM FROM YOUR IRA

The tax law signed by the President last December has created new opportunities for charitable giving.

As you may know, the IRA rollover law (which has been allowed since 2006) was recently permanently extended. This means you can make a distribution to Salem from your IRA without paying any Federal or state income taxes on the distribution. The distribution is not included in taxable income, and no charitable deduction is allowed.

There are specific requirements:

- You must be at least 70 ½
- You must decline goods or services
- Your rollover may not exceed \$100,000
- The gift can be made only from a traditional IRA. Gifts from 401(k), 403(b), 457 or simplified employee pension (SEP) plans are not permitted

To make a gift, send a letter to your IRA administrator requesting a direct charitable distribution to Salem Lutheran Church in the amount you wish to donate. The letter should include the Church's tax ID number: 06-0727990.

This may be the right gift for you to make if:

- You want to make a charitable gift and your IRA is a large share of your available assets
- You are required to take a minimum distribution from your IRA, but you don't need the additional income
- You do not itemize your deductions. An IRA charitable rollover is equivalent to a deduction because it is not included in your taxable income.

If you have any questions, please call Rich Kenyon at 203-374-5923.



# Do I have a Cold, Sinusitis, or an Allergy?

We all want to stay healthy for the holidays. Did you know that Christmas trees and decorations can cause an allergic reaction? The culprits are mold and dust. So, do I have a cold, sinusitis or an allergy?

Colds, sinusitis and allergies may start with similar symptoms. Colds and sinusitis are infections caused from a virus or bacteria. Cold symptoms go away quicker even without treatment. Without treatment, sinusitis and allergies will continue to bother you.

A cold is caused by any one of the many viruses. Cold symptoms can be nasal stuffiness, sneezing, runny nose, and sore throat. Usually only infants and toddlers have an elevated temperature with a cold. Other symptoms such as headache, cough, post-nasal drip, burning eyes, muscle aches, or a decreased appetite may accompany a cold. If your symptoms last longer than 7 – 10 days, you may have a sinus infection or allergies.

Acute sinusitis occurs when bacteria infect the sinus cavities. Pollutants, allergies, or a cold cause the sinuses to become inflamed and unable to drain. This can lead to congestion and infection. Chronic sinusitis is when you have frequent sinusitis or when the infection lasts three months or more. If you suspect you have sinusitis, you need to see a doctor for you may need an antibiotic.

Allergies are caused from your body overreacting to common substances such as pollens, food, mold, Christmas trees, decorations, dust, feathers, animal dander, and chemicals. Allergy symptoms can be itchy, watery eyes, nasal and sinus congestion, headaches, sneezing, scratchy throat, hives, or shortness of breath. Try to avoid your allergy triggers and avoid smoking.

Symptoms of a cold or an allergy may be relieved by over-the-counter and prescription medications. Your doctor may recommend antihistamines, decongestants, pain relievers or nasal sprays and to drink plenty of water.



From  
Our  
Parish  
Nurses

## Handling Your Food Allergies During the Holidays

Christmas and New Years are all about yummy foods. Unfortunately, some delicious treats can make you loved one or you sick. The most common foods that cause allergies are: eggs, cow's milk, peanuts, tree nuts, soy, wheat, fish, and shellfish. See an allergist if any foods cause you to have hives, intestinal problems, itchy, stuffy, runny nose, sneezing, swelling of the tongue, lips, or throat, asthma, or anaphylaxis (a severe allergic reaction).

If a family member or you have been diagnosed with a food allergy, you must use caution when eating. Always have your EpiPen with you. You must avoid the foods that you are allergic to. Carefully check ingredient labels on food products (especially candy wrappers). When eating out, ask the kitchen staff, not just the waiter, what the ingredients are in the prepared meals. You can call ahead to restaurants to find safe foods on their menu. If you go to a party at school or at a friend's house, bring a safe treat or dish with you. Make sure the teachers or hosts know your food allergies. If you accidentally ingest a food that you are allergic to and have an untoward reaction, administer your EpiPen (epinephrine shot) and call 9-1-1. The hospital emergency room will treat your immediate problem and any delayed reaction. Have yummy and safe holidays.



# Point of View starts with YOU <sup>1</sup>

The assumption that we hear or remember what others say, when we actually hear or remember what we think about what others say, is a major blind spot. According to Judith Glaser, author of *Conversational Intelligence*, researchers have found that:

- We drop out of conversations every twelve to eighteen seconds to process what people are saying.
  - We often remember what we think about what another person is saying because it has such a strong internal process and chemical signal.
- In other words, our internal listening and dialogue trumps the other person's speech.

Even if we are trying to be open to others' perspectives, there's a good chance we may have missed the point. While we invariably THINK we know what was said, we are still hearing ourselves. Even the most self-aware on the planet struggle with this. So what can we do to increase our capacity to listen to someone else's point of view?

## Point of View (POV) starts with YOU:

Recognize that there is a reality gap. Your reality and mine are not the same. You and I have different experiences, we know different people, we come from different parts of the world, and we use different language to label our world. Even those of us who are in the same room at the same time will take away different impressions of our time together. Not convinced? Read the four Gospels, all first-hand accounts of Jesus, and notice the different agendas, angles of vision, and how the stories are told. All are valid, by the way.

Celebrate diversity of opinion, perspective, and culture. Men and women have notoriously managed problem-solving in different ways, yet they may even reach the same conclusion. People from different cultures, even those as subtle as growing up in two different families in the same neighborhood, look at life through different lenses. Getting hung up on the "right" answer, "right" response or "right" way reduces the richness of God's world to a black and white mono-culture that denies the beauty of creation and each person's unique fingerprints on the planet.

Be a POV advocate. Stop ignoring stereotyping, gross generalizations, bad jokes, and assumptions in yourself and in others. Literally stop being okay with pointing fingers at others before you have a conversation to understand their perspectives. Listening is the only real cure to recognizing our own ignorance. We don't know what we don't know. That doesn't mean it is wrong or bad, it just means that we don't know.

We live in a time that demands that people of faith listen more than they talk and when they do talk, it is with a sensitivity and affirmation of the diversity of POV. Jesus modeled this over and over as he gave dignity to Zacchaeus, a despised thief who used the guise of collecting taxes to steal. Jesus asked pointed questions of and listened carefully to the woman at the well, a "nobody" who was so shunned by her peers that she came to the well at midday to avoid the gossip and ridicule.

We are called to be people who bless POV as a gift from God to be celebrated, not reduced to them and us. There is more than one "right" POV to embrace. Thanks be to God

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<sup>1</sup> September 14, 2016 – <https://waytolead.org/point-view-starts/>



# Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

**STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION**

## Walking the talk

### *The ELCA's Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Ministries*

By Francine Knowles

Growth and advocacy: these are the top priorities of the ELCA Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage, said its president, Khader El-Yateem. He wants to see more Lutherans "walk the talk."

Elected in 2017, El-Yateem assumed the post in part "to become the voice of the voiceless of the Arab and Middle Eastern church in the Middle East and to tell the story in the U.S. about their struggles, about their strong witness in very difficult situations in various countries in the Middle East," he said.

The association represents about 3,000 Arab and Middle Eastern Lutherans in the United States and has targeted Chicago, California, Florida and New York for growth, El-Yateem said. It includes two Arab and Middle Eastern ministries: Salam Arabic Lutheran Church in Brooklyn, N.Y., which El-Yateem founded 23 years ago and where he previously served as pastor, and Mother of the Savior Lutheran Church in Dearborn, Mich.

Strengthening existing congregations—which can face challenges—is also a central focus.

"They are congregations mainly with new immigrant and refugees, so there are a lot of demands," said El-Yateem,



director for evangelical mission and assistant to the bishop in the Florida-Bahamas Synod. "They don't speak the language. Our job as pastors is to help these new immigrants. They don't have a lot of financial resources to support the church. They come here. They work. They have to support their families."

Immigrants also face cultural issues. They "don't understand what it means to be a member in a church," said El-Yateem, who was born in Bethlehem and immigrated to the United States in 1992. "It is a growing process where people have to be educated. To serve on council, to be a minister, is a foreign concept. Our duty and job is to educate them."

The association's advocacy has been concentrated on helping immigrants and refugees from the Middle East and other countries.

"We're engaged and involved with different groups to make sure our voice is heard ... to represent the community and tell their stories in different congregations," El-Yateem said. "We have been intentional [about being] present at different synod assemblies so we can speak about the issues of immigrants. During the [ELCA] Youth Gathering we had board members fly there to be volunteers to help educate the youth about the issue of immigration and refugees and the peace process among Israelis and Palestinians."

El-Yateem wants ELCA congregations to understand that these immigrants "do not want to leave their homes, but they are forced out because of the political situations or the economy or bad regimes. ... Their lives are in danger."

"For us as a church, we have a great opportunity to accept them, to practice the ministry of hospitality," he added. "It's a chance for us to welcome them into our congregations."

El-Yateem noted the importance of statements issued by ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton on the Trump administration's family separation policies, as well as the work ELCA Advocacy has done related to the issue. But he hopes to see such statements and advocacy prompt action in congregations. "My call to the whole church is to help our local congregations live out these statements in their daily lives in their relationships with their neighbors," he said.

Francine Knowles is a freelance writer and former religion and business reporter with the Chicago Sun-Times.



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

## ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.

# Tending creation, caring for neighbors

by David Mills

The roots of a mature Cassia tree are 13 feet deep. In Chole, Malawi, Shadrack Tsatautenda's roots are deeper than that.

Tsatautenda has been cultivating Cassia trees for two years; the oldest are nearly ready to sell and transplant. Caring for the land, coaxing life out of the soil and guiding the trees to maturity connects him to the past, plants him firmly in the present and informs his vision for the future. Someday his children will inherit this land.

His nursery was made possible by a small-business loan from the Village Savings and Loan group established by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi and bolstered by [ELCA World Hunger](#) grants. In addition to providing microenterprise loans, it operates a farming school that trains local farmers on crop diversification and new planting methods.

Deforestation is a common issue for rural Malawian villages like Chole. As local businesses clear trees for farming or firewood, the air becomes polluted and the soil erodes more quickly.

With training he received from the farming school, Tsatautenda is caring for God's creation while supporting his family.

In 2016, he planted the first seedlings in his nursery, which today boasts 1,200 trees ranging from saplings to almost fully grown. Tsatautenda plans to sell the developed trees to area farmers by preaching their benefits. New trees reduce soil erosion and increase crop yields and clean the air while lowering health costs, he said.

On a tour of his nursery, Tsatautenda walked along paths, ran his hands over tree branches and surveyed the orchard in a way that conveyed the symbiotic nature of his relationship with the land. "This land has been in my family for five generations," he said. "It is meaningful to me to look after the land of my ancestors, and I want to pass this land to future



generations."

Where Tsatautenda's nursery ends, his neighbor's farm begins and so on. He shares his nursery expertise with his customers and neighbors in their daily interactions. The knowledge will help his neighbors heal their land and use profits from increased crop yields to send their children to school.

"My faith encourages my work," said Tsatautenda, a Christian. "And what gives me joy is that many people will be able to come and learn from me about how to conserve and care for their land."

In Chole, this truth is lived out without exception: when the land binds you together, your neighbor's burdens are your burdens, and your neighbor's success is your success. Amid this holy dance, the church in Malawi is at work—yesterday, today and tomorrow.

**David Mills** is program director for budget and operations, ELCA Global Mission.