



God Loves Doing NEW Things!

From the beginning of the Bible to the end, it is clear that God is all about creating NEW things.

In Genesis, the first book of the Bible, we read that in the beginning God created all kinds of NEW things: Light, Day and Night, Sun, Moon and Stars, Earth and Sky, Land and Sea, Plants and Animals, and Earth Beings that we call Human. [Genesis 1]

In Revelation, the last book of the Bible, we read, “Then I saw a NEW heaven and a NEW earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.... And I saw the holy city, the NEW Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God....” [Revelation 21.1a. 2a]

And in between Jesus gave us a NEW commandment that we love one another as he has loved us. [John 13.34]

And Paul writes that those who are in Christ are NEW creations: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new. [2 Corinthians 5.17]

There is a part of us however that resists NEW things. We want to hold onto the old, familiar things in which we can find comfort and reassurance, but we can’t really do so. We can hold onto the memory of the old, but we can’t actually hold onto the old things themselves. What is past is past, and we can no more grasp them in our hands than we can the water that has already rushed past us in the river of time.

We can see it so easily with technology – just think how of all the new technological advances which have occurred in our lifetimes! I don’t even dare to mention some of them out loud or our youth might figure out how old I actually am!

Or think about other things in our lives – how mobile and transient our society has become, how fast we can get around the world, how much the price of homes and cars and college educations have risen, or how many cars are on I-95 or the Merritt Parkway!

If we grew up thinking that church should be a refuge from change, we were sadly misinformed, for from beginning to end, the Bible makes it clear that our God is a God who is always on the move, always leading us/pushing us/pulling us forward, always creating new things among us and with us.

That doesn’t mean we won’t grieve. I grieved my parents and my parents-in-law passing, I grieve that my kids are grown and that that part of my life is over, I grieved my son moving to Boston, I grieve we don’t have 5 Lutheran churches in Bridgeport anymore, I grieve we don’t have a choir of 30 people singing Bach chorales with the organ. We can and should grieve. But we should also be able to work through our grief.

And one way to do that is to begin to look forward to the new. Maybe my parents have passed away, but maybe, just maybe I’ll have grandchildren one day. Maybe we’re the last ELCA congregation left in Bridgeport, but we’re still here and God is still with us. Maybe we don’t have that choir and organ, but we have Mark and his wonderful voice and keyboard skills, and a small group still dedicated to choir and another small group dedicated to praise band.

If Salem is to survive and thrive, each one of us has to act in NEW ways. At our Council meeting we looked at a list of NEW things we can try and each Council member selected at least one. That list is included on the next page and also posted in the narthex (opposite Compass exercise). If you care about Salem, pick one thing on the list or come up with something else that you can do that’s NEW. Put your name on the chart at church, or call the church office and let us know what you’ve selected so we can fill you in on the details. And if you’re stumped, call me and we’ll sit down and figure it out together. The more participation we have, the faster we can move ahead.

And here’s the promise: when we set out to do these NEW things, we are not alone. God is with us. In the next to last chapter of the Bible we read these words from God: “See, I am making all things NEW...these words are trustworthy and true”. [Revelation 21.5]

Grieve the old, try something NEW, and know that God is with you.

Blessings abundant!

Pastor Marjo

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*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.*

WHAT CAN YOU DO DIFFERENTLY THAT WOULD GET YOU EXCITED ABOUT SALEM'S FUTURE?

- Work with Mark and Rae-Dawn to support Musical Theatre Thursdays and structure it in ways that will expand the program's outreach and build relationships among MTT and Salem families.** Ray Anderson
Pastor Marjo
- Help host the 9/11 Council of Churches Delegates meeting.** Ray Lansing Tracey Wilkins Pastor Marjo
- Attend the 9/11 Council of Churches Delegates meeting to learn how Salem is leading other congregations --- e.g., looking at new for-profit and not-for-profit income streams. (Council/LIGHT/SSF strongly urged to attend!)** Pastor Marjo
Ray Lansing
Tracey Wilkins
- Attend TANGO's free annual conference, "Building Bridges between For-Profit & Nonprofit Businesses" 8:30-3:30 Thu 13 Sept at CT Convention Center in Harford.** Pastor Marjo
Ray Lansing
Bill Winter
- If you worshipped at UCC &/or St. John's, attend adult forum on 9/9 to discuss experiences.** Cindy Roberts
Pastor Marjo
- Work with Mark to plan Salem After Dark's first benefit concert October 13.** Steve Kuczo
- Work with youth on Anti-Human Trafficking event this fall that would engage more than just Salem youth (e.g., friends, CCGB, BHOW, CPC, UCC, ELCA congregations, scouts).** Emily Sokoloski
- Serve as liaison between Salem and UCC to make sure programs get cross-publicized.**
- Convene Social Media Task Force to develop guidelines and goals (such as make recording of social media workshop available to congregation, and making sermons available on FB Live.)** Claire Repscholdt
- Read the book Weird Church: Welcome to the 21st Century by Beth Ann Estock & Paul Nixon.** Cindy Roberts
Nancy Headford
- Look at this website: <https://gracefarms.org/>** Cindy Roberts Nancy Headford
- Visit Grace Farms in New Canaan and reflect and report back on its format (5 program areas, including a church), its outreach, and its green architecture and sustainability programs.** Cindy Roberts
Nancy Headford
- Meet with Pat Spear to learn how faith based community organizing accomplishes social justice.** Pastor Marjo
- Meet with Matt McDermott to learn about CONECT – Congregations Organized for a New CT** Pastor Marjo
- Plan a "Gamification of Learning" seminar as a first event to bring together teachers working in schools (especially Bridgeport) and congregations.**
- Attend CONECT'S 10/18 Q&A with the gubernatorial candidates. (Council/LIGHT/SSF strongly urged to attend!)** Tracey Wilkins Pastor Marjo
- Work with youth on a congregational project next spring to raise awareness & money for world hunger that includes a 30 hour planned famine for youth from Salem and other places (e.g., friends, CCGB, BHOW, CPC, UCC, ELCA congregations, scouts).** Emily Sokoloski

Finding What You Are Looking For

You will always find what you are looking for... And I don't just mean your car keys or the TV remote. I mean in the stories we tell ourselves and each other. If you are looking for the anxiety of things not being the way they used to be, you'll find it. If you are looking for hope and joy of new possibilities, you will find that too. Right now, Salem is looking for, new visions, new dreams of how to engage with God's people in today's changing society.

Since there is no roadmap, Salem has been spending time with people who are going our same direction. We are having a lot of conversations with like-minded, churches and organizations. The more we engage, talk, ask questions the more Salem is shaping a vision and moving forward. On our journey, we need to look for signs of hope and joy.

Recently, a small group had a conversation with Cass Shaw, the Executive Director of the Council of Churches Greater Bridgeport (CCGB). This led to some positive outcomes. Salem will now be host to a cooking training program to provide the participants the skills they need to work in the restaurant industry. Salem is helping people get jobs!

There are plenty of more points of hope and joy. For example, Salem has an intern again, Claire Repsholdt. How awesome is that?! Through a lot of hard work and dedication our 2-week Summer Song program was a success. Salem is also now starting Musical Theatre Thursdays. This will continue our engagement of neighborhood children and families through music, dance and the arts. A joyful time.

I'm honored to be called in this time and place to help shape a future vision not just for Salem, but also for what it means to be Christian in today's world. I find hope because it is the same God who led the Israelites through the wilderness thousands of years ago, the same God that gave me all those nostalgic memories of church, and it is the same God who is with us right now.

I was recently reminded in a joint meeting of the Sustainability Task Force and Forward Leadership (LIGHT), we need to be better at telling Salem's story. So, I ask you to remember to share some hope and joy. It might just be what someone is looking for.

--Ray Lansing

President

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604
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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
marjoanderson@aol.com

Mark Adamy, Music Director
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Pablo, Cruz, Sexton
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Home Phone (203) 683-7460
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**Newsletter deadline is the 15th of each month
unless otherwise noted in the monthly
calendar.**

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

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

LEADERSHIP AT SALEM

COUNCIL

Marjo Anderson, Pastor – marjoanderson@aol.com
Ray Lansing, President – raylansing@yahoo.com
Ray Anderson, Vice-President – andersray4@gmail.com
Frank Dukenski, Treasurer – fdukenski@aol.com
Katie Adams – keadams333@gmail.com
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Cindy Roberts - robjcrb@gmail.com
Kaitlyn Rosa, Youth – krosa2000@gmail.com
Emily Sokoloski – emilysokoloski@gmail.com
Tracey Wilkins, Staff Support – traelwil@gmail.com
Bill Winter, Property – wjwinter@optonline.net

SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE

Pastor Marjo Anderson – marjoanderson@aol.com
Frank Dukenski – fdukenski@aol.com
Ray Anderson – andersray4@gmail.com
Liz Bales – the2bales@gmail.com
Sandra Brown – sjbrown@snet.net
John Bryk – jbryk@znclaw.com
Richard Lansing – rlansing@optonline.net
Cliff LaRose – trevclif@att.net
Jean Larson – tjcklarson@sbcglobal.net
Bruce Tomasko – bltomasko@yahoo.com
John Wilkins – about2bike@gmail.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:

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Frank Dukenski – fdukenski@aol.com
Joel Hintz – brondle@aol.com



September 2018

Salem Lutheran Church



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat Sep 1
						
2 Pentecost 15 ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour	3 Labor Day - Office Closed	4 ● 9:30am Pastors' Text Study ● 12pm Book Club ● 6pm Stewardship	5 ● 9:30am Bible Study	6 ● 4pm Music Theatre Thursday ● 5:30pm Music Theatre Thursday Meal	7	8 ● 8am Men's Breakfast ● 8:30am UCC/Salem Women's Retreat at Salem
9 Pentecost 16 ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:45am Adult Forum	10 ● 6:30pm Social Ministry	11 ● 9:30am Pastors' Text Study ● 11:30am Pastors' Book Group ● 6pm CCGB Delegate Meeting	12 ● 8:30am Pantry Setup ● 9:30am Bible Study	13 TANGO Conference Hartford ● 8:30am Pantry Setup ● 4pm Food Pantry ● 4pm Music Theatre Thursday ● 5:30pm Music Theatre Thursday Meal	14 Holy Cross Day	15 ● 11am Inner-View Chat n Chew
16 Pentecost 17 ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 4:30pm TRI CHURCH WORSHIP & PICNIC	17 ● 6:30pm Finance Committee ● 7:30pm Executive Committee	18 ● 9:30am Pastors' Text Study	19 Yom Kippur Golden Hill Community Supper ● 9:30am Bible Study	20 ● 4pm Music Theatre Thursday ● 5:30pm Music Theatre Thursday Meal	21 Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist	22 ● 9am Forward Leadership Seminar Ayer, MA
23 Pentecost 18 ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 4:30pm SNAC DINNER CHURCH	24 ● 7pm Council	25 ● 9:30am Pastors' Text Study	26 ● 8:30am Pantry Setup ● 12pm CCGB Clergy Luncheon	27 ● 8:30am Pantry Setup ● 4pm Music Theatre Thursday ● 4:30pm Food Pantry ● 5:30pm Music Theatre Thursday Meal	28	29 Michael and All Angels
30 Pentecost 19 ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 4:30pm SNAC Dinner Church	  					Community Room Sun 6:45 SLAA Mon 7:30 Boy Scouts Tue 7:00 STEP



Worship Assistants

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

September, 2018

	Sept 2	Sept 9	Sept 16	Sept 23	Sept 30
Assisting Minister					
Lector/Communion Minister					
Altar Prep Team	Jean Larson Diane Tomasko	Anita Papp Cindy Roberts	Anita Papp Cindy Roberts	Bob Reichelt Chris Wolff	Bob Reichelt Chris Wolff
Ushers	Joe Bales John Bryk	Rich & Carol Lansing	Ray & Eileen Anderson	Mike Caragol Tom Larson	Ashley Baronavski Samantha Baronavski
Flowers Given By	Cliff LaRose Cindy Matusovich	John & Tracey Wilkins	Anita & Louis Papp	Joan Crossman	Baronavski family
Coffee Hour	Ray & Eileen Anderson		No Coffee Hour		
Tellers	Frank Dukenski Cindy Roberts	Steve Kuczo Bill Winter	Ray Anderson Kevyn Jackman	Nancy Headford Kaitlyn Rosa	Emily Sokoloski Tracey Wilkins

You can now signup in the Narthex for Sunday morning Worship Assistants. You can signup to be the Assisting Minister, or Lector/Communion Minister. You can also email (saalemsec123@sbcglobal.net) or call (203-336-3300) the church office.

Coffee hour hosts are needed for **Sept 9th and Sep 23rd 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.

Nancy Sidoti.....	2
Bennett Guadagno.....	2
Dennis Norberg.....	3
Emily Sokoloski.....	8
Richard Kenyon	9
Eileen Anderson	11
Al DeWalt.....	12
Charlotte Horton	13
Thomas Larson.....	15
Peter Mavilla	17
Ashley Rosa.....	21
Susan Molnar.....	22
Jenna Llanos	22
Dorothy Schrum.....	23
Kyle DeWalt.....	24
Olivia Mavilla.....	24
Kim Lange.....	25
Carol Mavilla	26
Stephanie Schott	26

Cliff LaRose, Jr.....	27
Dawn Anderson	29
Jennifer Reyes	29
Samantha Baronavski	30



A belated Happy Birthday to three August birthdays we unwittingly missed in the last newsletter.

Hazel Pasqua	29
Eduardo Vazquez	30
Joan Crossman.....	31

SALEM BOOK CLUB

SALEM BOOK CLUB's summer read is Before We Were Yours by Lisa Wingate which will be discussed on September 4th in the Salem Lounge at noon. Everyone welcome for the discussion. Please bring your lunch.



2018
Blood Pressure
Screening Dates

Sep 23	Nov 11
Oct 21	Dec 9

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

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



What's New. What's Returning.

Musical Theatre Thursdays (MTT) begin on **September 6th**, from 4:00-6:00 with music, drama, dance, and art from 4-5:30, and a community meal from 5:30-6:00. This is an essential piece of Salem's visioning plan and we need YOUR help to make it a success. ***Speak with Mark and Rae Dawn*** so that we can expand the program's outreach and build relationships among MTT families and Salem members, and have lots of fun besides!

Our Miracle Musician, Mark, has planned something new and exciting: "Salem after Dark", a series of benefit concerts, designed to bring in a new and younger crowd, to raise money for things like our food pantry, SummerSong, Musical Theatre Thursdays, and the Council of Churches Culinary program we'll be hosting, and to build relationships with businesses in the area. To make this successful, we need volunteers to work with Mark to plan the first concert **Saturday, October 13th**.

Sunday Night Alive dinner Church returns 4:30-6:00 each Sunday, beginning **September 23rd!** Plan to come AND plan to bring a friend. The only way people will get excited about what we're doing at Salem is if YOU share your excitement!

Talk Tuesdays return in October with two differences: this year to provide consistency we'll be at Brewport every Tuesday, whether it's for Bible Study, Beyond the Bible, or Beer & Bar Theology - and we'll meet from 7-8:30 when it will be a bit quieter. As is almost everything we do these days, this is an experiment and we'll see how it works!

Also beginning in October is a NEW monthly event: Ladies' Night Out, which will be held the Friday night before the Men's breakfast. We'll begin by trying out Brewport from 7-8:30 and see if the time and place works.

We Are Grateful

Food Pantry

Ray & Eileen Anderson, Dick & Roberta Bellows, Bert & Cary Andren, Joe & Liz Bales (all in memory of Eric Haaijer);
Cliff LaRose.Sr., Jane Lubben, Dolores Kuczo



General Memorial

Pauline Boyum in memory of Eric Haaijer

Then



Now



In August, the Fellowship Hall was given an updated look with a fantastic paint job. Pastor Simmonds from Bridgeport House of Worship was the chief painter. When Pastor Marjo told him of all her painting experience (all those workcamps paid off!) he was skeptical so she took that as a challenge and pitched in to help. While her thoroughness impressed him, her speed did not. He's ten times faster, at least! So thanks to Pastor Simmonds and his family for a job well done.



Introducing Luis Daniel Rodriguez, Jr (aka DJ)!

DJ was born August 11, 2018. Not wanting his mom to get much sleep, he checked in at 1:58am, weighing 6 lb, 3 oz and measuring 18 inches. He is the son of Salem's sexton, Jennifer Reyes. He is welcomed at home by proud dad Danny and older brothers David and Raymond.



Our Church Family

Summersong 2018



It's Peak Tick Season!

Protect – Remove – Check – Know Symptoms

Ticks are external parasites living by feeding on the blood of mammals and birds. Ticks transmit infections including Lyme Disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. Ticks will attach themselves to their hosts within minutes but it takes about 36 hours for them to transmit the bacteria. Before going outside, safely **protect** yourself from getting ticks. If you get a tick, use proper techniques to **remove** the tick. After coming back inside, **check** your body. Know the early **symptoms** from tick bites



From
Our
Parish
Nurses

Protect

- Wear socks pulled over long pants
- Wear long sleeves, hat and closed shoes
- Use tick repellent on clothes

EPA recommends the following safety precautions when using insect repellents:

- Apply just enough repellent only to exposed skin and clothes. Heavy application does not give extra protection.
- Never apply repellents over cuts, wounds or irritated skin
- Never apply repellents to eyes, mouth and ears. Apply sparingly around ears.
- Do not allow children to spray
- After coming back inside, wash treated skin with soap and water.

Remove

- If you discover a tick on your skin, properly remove it as soon as possible.
- Use a fine-tipped tweezers. If not available, cover your hands with tissue paper and use your fingers.
- Grab tick close to its mouth (part that is stuck in your skin). The body will be above your skin.
- Do NOT grab the tick around its swollen body or you may push infected fluid into your body.
- Gently pull the tick straight out until its mouth lets go of your skin. Do NOT twist the tick.

Check

Inspect yourself, your children and your pets after being outdoors. Wash or bathe to remove repellent and to reexamine for ticks.

Know Symptoms

Early symptoms from tick bites include:

- Skin rash
- Stiff neck
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Fever
- Muscle and joint pain
- Swollen lymph nodes

There are effective antibiotics for Lyme Disease and other tick-borne diseases. They should be administered timely. See your doctor if you have any early symptoms.



Let's Stay Healthy This Flu Season

Protect ourselves and others by: regular hand-washing, covering our mouth and nose when coughing, etc, staying home if sick, and getting vaccinated such as with the flu vaccine. The CDC recommends flu vaccination for everyone six months of age and older. You should receive a flu vaccination even if you are healthy, because the virus can be transferred to others. Pregnant women should get the flu shot to protect themselves and their unborn child. Two new vaccines have been approved for egg allergic people. Talk to your doctor about what type of flu vaccine is right for you. Let's all get vaccinated this fall.

Don't forget to ask your doctor about the diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus vaccine. If you are over sixty, also check with your doctor about the shingles and the pneumococcal vaccines.

Disaster Planning

Do you have a disaster plan in case of storms, fires, floods, etc? Here are some simple suggestions to get you started:

- 1) Have a spot to meet family outside of the home. Choose one person out of town to contact.
- 2) Know how to escape your home if disaster strikes.
- 3) Have a 3 day survival kit of water, non-perishable food, medications for family and pets.
- 4) Have emergency kit with batteries, flashlight, battery radio, blankets, clothes, moist towelettes, first aid kit, and cash

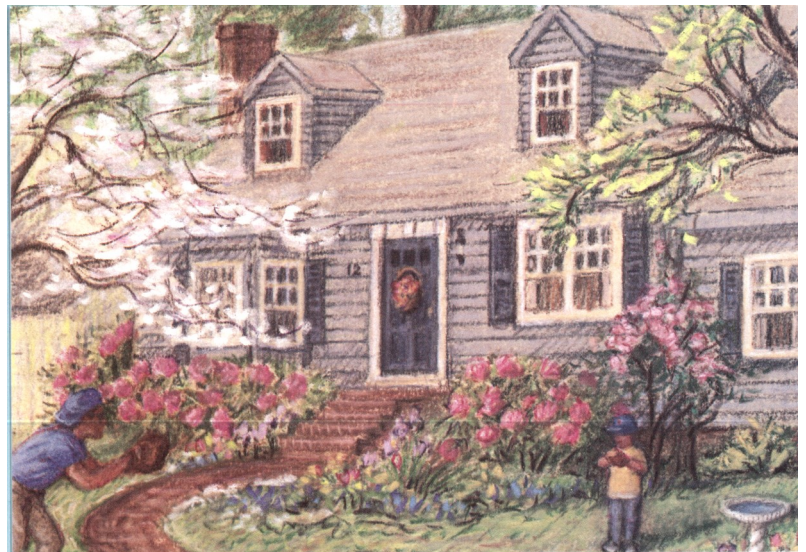
Make sure the survival kit and emergency kit are easily available.

For more information go to www.fema.gov. Having a family emergency plan in place could lesson the blow should disaster strike.

DEAR PASTOR MARJO + OUR FRIENDS AT SALEM,
THANK YOU FOR HELPING BE OUR
SPIRITUAL GUIDE OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS.
SALEM HAS ALWAYS HELD A SPECIAL PLACE
IN OUR HEARTS SINCE TIM'S DAD GREW UP
IN THE CHURCH.¹ (AND TIM ATTENDED AS A BOY (HIS GRANDPARENTS))
WE ENJOYED SPENDING OUR
SUNDAY MORNINGS WITH SONNIE THERE AS WELL
AS CELEBRATING HER LIFE AT SALEM. IT WAS
BEAUTIFUL TO WATCH OUR KIDS GET BAPTIZED AT
SALEM TOO. WE HAVE REALLY ENJOYED WATCHING
HELPING THE CHURCH CHANGE AND GROW AND WE
CONTINUE TO WISH GREAT THINGS FOR OUR CHURCH
FAMILY. WE WILL KEEP YOU ALL IN OUR PRAYERS
AND WILL STOP TO VISIT WHEN WE ARE BACK IN
THE AREA.

WITH LOVE, THANKS +
GOD'S BLESSINGS,
KATIE, TIM, RYNE + SIENA
COTTER.

P.S. I ASKED RYNE LAST NIGHT HIS FAVORITE PART
OF CHURCH + HIS ANSWER WAS THE MULLET DINNER
CHURCH! HOPE IT CAN CONTINUE TO GROW!





At Born Ready Fitness, his team provides Personal Training programs, Bridal Programs, Executive Wellness Coaching, Corporate Wellness, Pre and Postnatal programs, Diagnostic Wellness Testing, Yoga and Pilates, Self-Defense, MMA Training, Nutrition Coaching, Massage Therapy, Personal Chef Services, or Cooking Classes with themes. Striving for top quality, they excel at giving their clients all the necessary tools to create “self-care before health-care”. The Born Ready way is all about balance, believing that creating a less stressful, healthier, and a more positive energy-filled environment in our everyday lives will greatly increase our quality of life.

To contact Michael, visit his website at BornReadyFitness.com, email him at BornReadyFit@gmail.com, or call him at 203.895.8715.

Suggestions for Overcoming Physical Activity Barriers

Lack of time – Identify available time slots. Monitor your daily activities for one week. Identify at least three 30-minute time slots you could use for physical activity. Add physical activity to your daily routine. For example, walk or ride your bike to work or shopping, organize school activities around physical activity, walk the dog, exercise while you watch TV, park farther away from your destination, etc. Select activities requiring minimal time, such as walking, jogging, or stair climbing.

Social influence – Explain your interest in physical activity to friends and family. Ask them to support your efforts. Invite friends and family members to exercise with you. Plan social activities involving exercise. Develop new friendships with physically active people. Join a group, such as Born Ready Fitness or a hiking club.

Lack of energy – Schedule physical activity for times in the day or week when you feel energetic. Convince yourself that if you give it a chance, physical activity will increase your energy level; then, try it.

Lack of motivation – Plan ahead. Make physical activity a regular part of your daily or weekly schedule and write it on your calendar. Invite a friend to exercise with you on a regular basis and write it on both your calendars. Join an exercise group or class.

Fear of injury – Learn how to warm up and cool down to prevent injury. Learn how to exercise appropriately considering your age, fitness level, skill level, and health status. Choose activities involving minimum risk.

Lack of skill – Select activities requiring no new skills, such as walking, climbing stairs, or jogging. Take a class to develop new skills.

Lack of resources – Select activities that require minimal facilities or equipment, such as walking, jogging, jumping rope, or calisthenics. Identify inexpensive, convenient resources available in your community (community education programs, park and recreation programs, worksite programs, etc.).

Weather conditions – Develop a set of regular activities that are always available regardless of weather (indoor cycling, aerobic dance, indoor swimming, calisthenics, stair climbing, rope skipping, mall walking, dancing, gymnasium games, etc.)

Travel – Put a jump rope in your suitcase and jump rope. Walk the halls and climb the stairs in hotels. Stay in places with swimming pools or exercise facilities. Visit the local shopping mall and walk for half an hour or more.

Family obligations – Trade babysitting time with a friend, neighbor, or family member who also has small children. Exercise with the kids. Go for a walk together, play tag or other running games, get an aerobic dance or exercise tape for kids (there are several on the market) and exercise together. You can spend time together and still get your exercise. Jump rope, do calisthenics, ride a stationary bicycle, or use other home gymnasium equipment while the kids are busy playing or sleeping. Try to exercise when the kids are not around (e.g., during school hours or their nap time).

Retirement years – Look upon your retirement as an opportunity to become more active instead of less. Spend more time gardening, walking the dog, and playing with your grandchildren. Children with short legs and grandparents with slower gaits are often great walking partners. Learn a new skill you've always been interested in, such as ballroom dancing, square dancing, or swimming. Now that you have the time, make regular physical activity a part of every day. Go for a walk every morning or every evening before dinner. Treat yourself to a stationary bike and ride every day while reading a favorite book or magazine.

3 PRINCIPLES FOR CLEAR COMMUNICATION AND ACTIVE LISTENING:

1. PUT THE BEST CONSTRUCTION ON THE WORDS AND ACTIONS OF CONGREGATION MEMBERS, LEADERS AND STAFF.

Be an active listener.

Ask questions if you need clarification.

Do not make assumptions or jump to conclusions.

Give people a chance to explain their positions.

If someone approaches you with a complaint about someone else or has an issue with another party, point them to direct communication with that party.

*“We should fear and love God
that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, or defame our neighbor,
but defend him, [think and] speak well of him,
and put the best construction on everything.”
(Martin Luther’s explanation of the 8th commandment.)*

2. IF SOMEONE DOES/SAYS SOMETHING TO OFFEND YOU OR HURT YOU, PLEASE PRESENT THE ISSUE TO THAT PERSON DIRECTLY.

² ...all of us make many mistakes....

⁵ ...How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire!

⁶ And the tongue is a fire.

*The tongue ...stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature,
and is itself set on fire by hell....*

*¹⁰ ...My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so.”
(James 3:2,5-6,10)*

3. FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE – IN YOUR THOUGHTS, WORDS, AND DEEDS.

Look for ways to live out God’s call to be a people of faith, hope, and love by speaking with grace, celebrating the unique gifts and contribution of each member, and by striving to bring out the best in everyone.

*“By celebrating what’s right, we find the energy to fix what’s wrong.”
(DeWitt Jones)*



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

Hope Amid Instability

Adrainne Gray

My family watches for rivers of peace. We seek them out in a place known for conflict and discord. We are Lutherans living in the Holy Land.

For many, healing waters are elusive when it appears all that surrounds is stony, dry riverbed. For us, watching for these rivers is a way of life—the only way to seize hope.

We started this practice after I noticed my children, ages 13 and 15, were struggling to love everyone the way Christ loves them. Access to the River Jordan, Jacob's Well and the Sea of Galilee seemed meaningless to them as they watched their Palestinian Christian peers denied dignity in and around these sites, restricted by a separation wall. My youngest increasingly made blanket, unloving statements about those he identified as the problem.



As visitors here, my husband and I know our parenting challenges don't compare to those Palestinian parents endure. Often their children live with limited resources, movement and space, and are the targets of cruelty. Yet we also struggled to help our children find hope amid instability.

One day, I invited our children to help me look for peaceful interactions among ethnic groups in our city—what we call “rivers of peace.” We saw them in:

The middle-aged Muslim man who helped an Orthodox Jewish mom cross a busy road with her four children.

The nonpracticing Jewish man who ran to the aid of an Ethiopian child who had fallen off his bike in the street.

The Palestinian Christian who assured us that, while they don't like the U.S. administration, they would never hate American people.

These moments sustained us and reminded us that Jesus hasn't abandoned this place or any other. Rivers of peace run freely, but we must be willing to seek out the river's edge so God will quench our thirst.

Maybe you and your little ones have been in our shoes, immersed in conflict and instability, whether personal, political or otherwise. The next time your family finds itself hopeless as it faces the stark realities of our country and world, try this practice.

Practice

Encourage your children to look critically at the difficult reality of your neighbors and for signs of hope. When they witness acts of kindness and humanity, urge them to observe, celebrate and share them with your family. My family has taken to proclaiming, “River of peace!” when we spot one together. When you introduce this activity, you might take time to sing or read the lyrics to “When Peace like a River” (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 785) and to pray as a family.

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LWF welcomes three new churches to the communion

Geographic reach of LWF extends to include Cuba

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Council has voted to welcome with joy three new member churches to the Lutheran World Federation. They are the Christ Lutheran Church (India), the United Evangelical Church en Cuba – Lutheran Synod, and the Augustinian Lutheran Church of Guatemala. This brings the number of member churches to 148 and the countries to 99.

“We welcome you into the LWF’s journey of mutuality and solidarity. Centered in Christ and holding fast to the gift of liberation by God’s grace, you are invited to share your talents as we jointly work towards justice, peace and reconciliation in our world,” said LWF General Secretary Rev. Dr Martin Junge as the Council approved the new member churches.



Members of the LWF Council welcome three new members to the communion. Photo: LWF/Albin Hillert

The Christ Lutheran Church (India), is made up of 54 congregations and outreach centers in six states. Congregations are served by 18 ordained pastors and 18 evangelists. Membership of the church stands at just over 2700.

The United Evangelical Church en Cuba - Lutheran Synod, extends the communion’s geographic reach to a new country. It has 1500 members, 11 congregations in seven provinces, seven ordained pastors, a bishop and an auxiliary bishop, six ordained deacons and 15 preachers.

The Augustinian Lutheran Church of Guatemala is made up of 3000 members in 17 congregations, located in El Quiché, Cobán, Alta Verapáz, Petén and Guatemala City. The church counts eight ordained pastors, two catechists, an evangelist, a preacher, a minister for Eucharist, as well as 16 health promoters and various volunteers.

Churches that apply for LWF membership accept the doctrinal basis of the LWF, must be autonomous bodies, legally recognized in their respective country, and consisting of more than one local congregation.