



November 2020

the
SPIRIT

Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

A Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Congregation

Out of Our Control and into God's

Dear Friends in Christ,

Thanks be to God for the wonderful celebration we were able to have on Reformation Sunday back in our beloved building! And thanks to Carol Lansing and our Health and Safety Team who worked so incredibly hard to develop protocols so that once we were in Phase 3 we could return to indoor worship! Thanks also to the dozen(!) people who volunteered to be trained as Health and Safety Ushers and Greeters! And thanks to everyone who came and complied so well with all the guidelines. You all did an amazing job! Because of the careful and loving thought that went into it, our first service went exceptionally smoothly!

Sadly, however, Phase 3 has ended for the time being. Mayor Ganim announced that, effective October 30, Bridgeport has returned to Phase 2. The guidelines say that "public health experts do not recommend in-person services in this phase". While this is not a rule (due to first amendment considerations), the guidelines say that "faith leaders are urged to pause and seriously consider the health consequences for at risk devotees and for the broader community where the House of Worship is based." The "at risk" population refers to "those with pre-existing or underlying conditions and persons age 65 or older". The reason we are back in Phase 2 is that there is a surge in Covid cases, and the reason for the surge is that more of us are attending indoor gatherings and having interactions with those outside our core family groups. The Mayor also warned that it is going to get worse before it gets better. The more precautions we all take, however, the sooner we can return to Phase 3 – and as soon as that happens, we will have a service of CELEBRATION!

In the meantime, in order to keep each other safe and to comply with health guidelines, we will be returning to online worship via Zoom at 9:30 for Sunday, November 1st. While that is disappointing to many of us, we must not forget that we are to give thanks to God in ALL circumstances. We can look at the glass half-empty and feel miserable or we can look at the glass half-full and rejoice. Not only will we be able to see each other's smiles, we can sing our hearts out and celebrate communion in real time.

On November 8th I will be on vacation, but there will be a pre-recorded service. At the end of that service I hope to have figured out the technology to honor the brave veterans in our midst.

The weekend of November 15th we're going to worship extra hard! There will be a full pre-recorded service available on Facebook and YouTube that weekend. And then on Sunday we will be having our special congregational meeting to vote on the sale of our property. That meeting will include more worship - opening with devotions, and closing with communion. At the present time we are planning for an in-person meeting with zoom access for those who cannot attend. In order to do that we will need to figure out the technology AND figure out how to do it all safely. Your leaders are working diligently to do just that. At the same time we must prepare for a mainly zoom meeting in the (unlikely) event of something shutting us down. Please know that it is our goal to make sure every voting member can attend the meeting in as safe a manner as we can provide.

Dealing with this ongoing pandemic is not easy for any of us, but it is especially difficult for those who are trying to lead us through these times. Please pray even harder for all of our government leaders, our healthcare workers, and for those engaged in research into the prevention and treatment of Covid-19.

Pray also for our country as we approach this election.

Please pray for Salem's leaders -- staff, officers, council, sustainability team, health and safety team – and our whole congregation as we seek to navigate our way through a pandemic and social unrest, and as we seek to discern God's will with regard to the sale of our property.

Each of those issues is huge. And together they present us with an unprecedented amount of uncertainty in our life together.

HOWEVER.... here IS what's certain: you and I believe in a God of miracles, a God of wonders, a God of power and love!

And you and I believe that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of Christ - not pandemics, not elections, not decisions about our future, not disappointments, not conflicts, not uncertainties. No, there is NOTHING in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!

We can't control the pandemic, we can't control the election, we can't control much of anything these days. But that's ok. Because EVERYTHING is in God's hands.

Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers, as I trust that I am in yours.

As we wait expectantly for God to act, may the love of God, the peace of Christ, the joy of the Spirit, and abundant blessings be yours!

Pastor Marjo

Pastor Marjo Anderson

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

Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Worship Services

9:30am Outdoor Worship

Salem's Staff

The Rev. Marjo Anderson, Pastor
Cell Phone (203) 982-3441
marjoanderson@aol.com

Karl Kraft, Office Manager
Office Phone (203) 336-3300
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net

Jennifer Reyes, Sexton
Pablo, Cruz, Sexton
Office Phone (203) 336-3300, ext. 10

LEADERSHIP AT SALEM

COUNCIL

Marjo Anderson, Pastor
Ray Anderson, President
Tom Larson, Vice-President
Nancy Headford, Secretary
Rich Kenyon, Treasurer
Liz Bales
Sandra Brown
Judi Nielsen
Emily Sokoloski
Diane Tomasko
Bill Winter

We Are Grateful



Capital Improvements

Marjo Anderson

Memorial Donations

Sandra Brown (In Memory of Eunice Larson);
Marjo Anderson

Outreach

Marjo Anderson; Rich & Mary Ann Kenyon

Salem's Seafarers 2020 collection will not require shopping, packaging, and delivery. Instead, contributions can be made directly with a check made out to and sent to:

Ruth Setaro
33 Valley Brook Lane
North Haven, CT 06473

Put "Salem Seafarer Donation" in the note on the check. Pastor Ruth Setaro will send you a thank you card for your records.



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

Next deadline date is November 15th for the December issue!

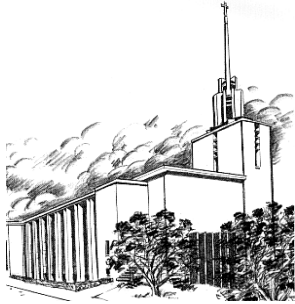
**Email submissions to
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net**



November 2020 Salem Lutheran Church

SUN Nov 1	MON 2	TUE 3	WED 4	THU 5	FRI 6	SAT 7
All Saints Day ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries ● 4pm Let's Plan Christmas!	● 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on /	● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and ● 12pm Book Club	● 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray	● 6pm Genesis Game Night for All	● 6pm God at the Center	● 8am Men's Not-Breakfast
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries	● 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on / ● 6:30pm Social Ministry Committee ● 6:30pm Social Ministry Committee	● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and ● 6pm Stewardship Committee	● 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray	● 6pm Genesis Game Night for All	● 6pm God at the Center	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries	● 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on / ● 6:30pm Finance Committee ● 7:30pm Salem Executive Committee Meeting	● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and ● 5:30pm Stewardship Committee Meeting	● 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray	● 6pm Genesis Game Night for All	● 6pm God at the Center	● 11am Inner-View Chat n Chew ● 11am (No title)
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Christ the King ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries	● 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on / ● 7pm Council Meeting	● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and	● 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray	Thanksgiving - Office Closed ● 6pm Genesis Game Night for All	Office Closed ● 6pm God at the Center	
29	30					
First Sunday in Advent ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries ● 6pm Sunday Night Alive!	● 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on /					





SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

3160 Park Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06604

Telephone 203-336-3300 / Fax 203-336-8813

October 28, 2020

Dear Salem Member,

More than three years ago, the Council approved the formation of Salem Sustainability Taskforce. Eight members from Salem and Pastor Anderson formed the original team.

Last year, at a special congregational meeting, the Salem Sustainability Taskforce was given permission to actively pursue the sale of the property, including the church building. In the process of seeking a buyer, Salem engaged the consulting group Verse 4. As the project progressed, the Salem Sustainability Taskforce with the guidance of Verse 4 and with the constitutionally defined assistance of the Salem Council, engaged a broker, developed a Request for Proposals, collected six proposals, narrowed the field to three, and eventually chose a proposal from the finalist (developer).

The proposal calls for:

- Preservation of the current building.

- Salem and the other two congregations to continue worshiping in the sanctuary as well as sharing of the upper level for office, music, and classroom space.

- 50 to 60 townhomes in a gated, age restricted community.

- A community center within the lower level of the current church building.

Salem Lutheran Church will receive:

- \$2,175,000.00 with no zoning or financial contingencies.

- Full week use of the upper level (shared with two other congregations).

- Parking on the current upper level.

- Fixed monthly rental for up to five years.

- Occasional access to the current fellowship hall and kitchen area.

The Salem Council has approved the plan. Upon acceptance by the congregational meeting, a purchase and sale agreement will be executed with a projected closing date by early Spring.

(see next page)

While we on the Salem Sustainability Taskforce realize that such a disposition of the property will be somewhat difficult to accept by some of our congregants, we strongly feel that we have done what we were directed to do. Based on the financial state of the church and the reality of an aging membership, the sale is a good move. The national trend of church membership in traditional Christian congregations does not bode well for Salem's growth. Coupled with the fact that we will have continued use of our sanctuary and office and meeting spaces, the lease-back is a great move. Thus, the Salem Strategic Taskforce, the Verse 4 Transition Team and the Salem Council propose the following resolution:

Resolved: That the Salem Lutheran Church accept the proposal herein discussed and follow through with the transfer of ownership from the congregation to the developer. And that the congregation accept the terms of the proposal with regard to remaining a lessee of the upper level as defined in the proposal. And, that the congregation assign authority to complete the transaction to the Salem Council.

A special congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, November 15, at 9:30 AM. Voting members are urged to attend in-person. (Dress warmly due to ventilation requirements,) Voting members unable to attend the meeting in-person may attend via ZOOM either on a computer device, a smartphone, or by an ordinary telephone line. Contact Karl in the office to receive help with ZOOM if needed. He will refer you to someone who can help. Details on ZOOM address will be in the November Newsletter and the Thursday Blasts. The full Sunday service will be prerecorded on **Facebook** and/or **You Tube**. You may view the service, at home, before or after the meeting.

The congregational meeting will have a brief opening devotion followed by the "business" portion of the meeting. At the end of the meeting there will be an opportunity for those in the building to celebrate and receive communion.

It should be noted that the developer and the Council continue to work out the fine points of the sale and lease-back. We have retained legal counsel to coordinate and develop the Purchase and Sale Agreement (contract) pending approval by the congregation.

Looking forward to seeing you,

Ray Anderson

Salem Council President

Steve Kuczo.....	1
Nancy Kidwell	2
Aidan Palmieri.....	7
Augustine Palmieri	7
Carl Horton.....	10
Nicholas Roberts.....	13
Larson Palmgren.....	13
Tiana Rose.....	14
Christoph Dow	15
Carter Gulyas	15
Katrina Cotter	16
Sienna Cotter	17
Jaxon Gulyas	18
Dorothy DeWalt.....	21
Justin Claus	27



THANKS

TO THOSE ON THE FRONTLINE OF COVID-19

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

Joan B
Barbara B
Sam B
Erick D
Grace D
Hannah & Joseph
Bob H
Dennis H
Sylvitha
Jay
Mike R
Jane M
Jana B
William S
Daphne B
Peter K
Bobby W

Anna
Barbara
James S
Sarah R
Brooks A
Angie
Liz F.
Hazel P
Katherine P



In-Person Salem Lutheran Church Worship Participation Guide

Salem's Health and Safety Committee, Church Council, Pastor, and the Parish Nurses have been working hard during the past months in anticipation of Salem's reopening. Now that Connecticut is in Phase 3, Salem Church will reopen on October 25, 2020. Our parishioners' safety is the utmost importance to us. Our procedures for In-Person Salem Church Worship meet all the Phase 3 COVID-19 CT Regulations.

We will be practicing physical distancing, wearing a mask, and following a modified service format. The following guidelines will help you to plan and make the most of your in-person experience.

1. Plan to arrive early to attend the worship service to be screened. Doors will be open by 9:10.
2. Maintain 6 feet distancing.
3. All participants must wear a mask to attend in-person worship. Please bring a mask with you. If you forget, a mask will be provided to you at the entrance door. If you cannot wear a mask or you feel sick, please do not come for in-person worship and, instead, watch the service on line. If you are immune-compromised, you need to decide if you should attend in-person worship.
4. You will enter the church by the open front doors after being screened.
5. Please be prepared to answer the COVID-19 screening questions asked by the Greeters:
 - Have you traveled out of state in the last 14 days?
 - Have you had close contact with or cared for someone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
 - Do you currently have fever, chills, cough, difficulty breathing, headache, sore throat, muscle/joint aches, diarrhea, abdominal cramps or nausea, pink eye, or loss of taste or smell?
6. Your temperature will be taken by a Greeter using a non-contact thermometer before you enter the church building.
7. When you enter the church, you need to use hand sanitizer.
8. Ushers will direct you into the sanctuary. Please continue to maintain your distance from others outside your family unit.
9. There will be an offering box at the back of the church. Offerings may also be made virtually or mailed to the church office.
10. An usher will hand you a bulletin.
11. You will be directed by an Usher as to where to sit. Individuals or family units will be seated six feet apart from others. Participants will be seated in every other row. Likely, you will not be seated in your "regular" spot. Ushers will seat parishioners from the front of the church to the back.
12. The worship service will follow a different format that will limit the amount of the congregation's participation. There will be no singing by the congregation. The congregation will not respond aloud.
13. Upon conclusion of the worship service, Ushers will guide all participants on how to exit the sanctuary maintaining safe physical distancing. Please wait for the Ushers to direct you. Exiting will be from the back to the front and through the center aisle. The exit doors will be open.
14. The back usher will pass out the Communion elements. Please do not consume the elements in the church.
15. Please do not gather in the narthex.
16. Please keep social distancing in the parking lot.
17. If you need to use the bathroom, only one person is allowed in the rest rooms at a time. The restrooms in the Narthex will be available for use. Please use the sanitizers in the rest rooms to clean up after use. There will be wastebasket located outside the restrooms for paper towels and sanitizers.
18. No eating or drinking is allowed in the church and, therefore, no coffee hour will follow the service.

Sincerely,

Carol Lansing, Parish Nurse

Infographic



Asthma and COVID-19

People with asthma and other chronic respiratory diseases may be at higher risk for severe complications – including life-threatening pneumonia or bronchitis – if diagnosed with COVID-19 (also called coronavirus).

COVID-19 symptoms

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Congestion or runny nose
- Sore throat
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- A loss of taste or smell

What you need to do...

Protection

- Take your daily asthma controller medications as prescribed
- Check to see if your prescriptions are up to date and not expired
- Keep an emergency supply of prescription and OTC medications, including asthma inhalers (but do not hoard medications)
- Follow your Asthma Action Plan
- Know how to correctly use your inhaler – discuss with your allergist if you don't
- Use a nebulizer in a place where any droplets in air cannot be inhaled by others
- Avoid your asthma triggers
- Monitor breathing with a peak flow meter and take note of any changes
- Help yourself cope with stress and anxiety – consider stress-relieving activities (exercise, yoga, etc.)
- Keep your regular doctor appointments – ask if telehealth is an option

Prevention

- Wash your hands regularly using soap and water
- Avoid touching your face
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Practice social distancing (at least 6 feet)
- Avoid large crowds of people
- Wear a mask or cloth face covering when in public
- If your asthma is moderate or severe and you don't feel you can wear a mask because it impacts your breathing, it may be best for you to stay home or avoid public places. If you must go out, avoid large crowds and practice social distancing.



If you are feeling sick, contact your doctor right away to discuss your symptoms, stay home and separate yourself from others so you do not risk spreading infection. Visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for updated information and COVID-19 management strategies.

6 Things You Should Never Do Again

Flu season is an ideal time to break your bad habits and reduce your odds of infection



Never pass a sink without washing your hands. Aim to sanitize or wash your hands every hour when out in public.



Never leave home without a pen in your pocket. Keep your own plastic ballpoint pen with you so you can avoid touching the communal pen at banks, restaurants and other businesses.



Never wake up to an alarm clock. Those who slept fewer than five hours on average were 4.5 times more likely to become infected than those who slept more than seven hours.



Never drive when you could walk. People who rarely walked took twice as many sick days over a three-month period than those that walked briskly nearly every day.



Never smoke a cigarette. COVID-19 patients with a history of smoking are 91 percent more likely to die or reach critical condition than those who never smoke.



Never eat buffet style. Filing your plate from open chafing dishes and using serving utensils that everyone else is touching and breathing over may increase your risk of picking up a virus.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

My Faith Journey

A Journey of Faith, Hope and Joy

By Nelson H Rabell-Gonzalez

One thousand, nine hundred and seventy-three miles. That's the distance between Lodi, Calif., and Los Fresnos, Texas. It's a distance I drove twice with a father and his children—two little Lutherans facing deportation.

Wilian (last name withheld) and his children, Darel, 5, and Madelyn, 3, belong to my congregation, St. Paul Lutheran in Lodi. On March 1, we started this 1,973-mile trip to Los Fresnos because Darel and Madelyn had an immigration hearing scheduled there.

Some background: Violence, crime and extreme poverty spurred Wilian's family to migrate from Honduras to the United States. He arrived in March 2019 with his older son, Oseas, and the hope that they'd make a better life here. His younger children and their mother stayed in Honduras and decided to join them later.

On their path to the United States, Darel, Madelyn and their mother arrived in Matamoros, Mexico, where they struggled for four months in a migrant camp. Wilian showed me pictures from the camp. His kids looked like zombies—there was no joy or hope in their faces.

Many migrant parents in this camp became desperate and decided to send their children across the border. Darel and Madelyn's mother was one of them. But the children were captured by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials while crossing the border and were taken to a detention center near Los Angeles. They spent 40 days there.

Wilian showed me pictures from the migrant camp. His kids looked like zombies—there was no joy or hope in their faces.

Since he had started his asylum case, ICE contacted Wilian and released Darel and Madelyn to him. Wilian and the children's mother have since separated.

After Wilian and his three children started to worship with us at St. Paul, he received a letter from immigration authorities informing him that Darel and Madelyn had to be in Los Fresnos for their hearing. How can a migrant who is trying to follow the immigration process but doesn't have a car or resources be expected to succeed in such an endeavor?

Thanks be to God for the community of faith. Our congregation stepped up and collected money to finance the trip. I talked to the council and parishioners and told them I would drive the family to lower the costs of the trip and to make it more suitable for the children.

But as we made the long drive to Texas, I feared that Darel and Madelyn would be deported and I would have to give pastoral care to a father missing his kids once more.

Throughout our trip we were thankful for the prayers and words of encouragement we received from ELCA bishops, pastors,



members and ecumenical partners. The children were blessed with two Latina lawyers, Gladys Hernandez and Miriam Aguayo, who work for the ProBAR Children's Project, a migrant advocacy group in Harlingen, Texas.

We arrived in Los Fresnos on March 3. During Darel and Madelyn's hearing, Hernandez and Aguayo argued for the case to be transferred to an immigration court in San Francisco, which would make it easier for the family to attend subsequent meetings.

When the judge decided to transfer the case to California, I was so relieved that I made the sign of the cross. Wilian told me that when he saw me do that, he knew everything was going to be OK and the kids were going to return home with him.

As we headed back to Lodi, joyful and hopeful because of the favorable decision, Wilian told me that he knew God was with us and that he'd read every prayer, message of hope and wish shared with us via social media. He'd borne witness to the wider church surrounding us with support, and he knew we were not alone.

I have to be honest with you: Wilian had more faith and confidence than I did. I was super-scared about what would happen to the kids. His faith in the face of insurmountable odds kept me going.

We traveled 1,973 miles with two little Lutherans facing deportation, and by the grace of God, we traveled 1,973 miles back with them. The cloud of witnesses praying for us was a visible sign that God had led us through the journey.

In 2016, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly approved AMMPARO, a strategy to "Accompany Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities." To learn more, visit elca.org/ammparo.

Rabell-González is associate pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Lodi, Calif. He was born and raised in Puerto Rico and is a graduate of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (2002). Rabell-González is married to Dr. Fabiola Ramos.



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

ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.

Middle East and North Africa



Christians have become the remnant of the remnant in the Holy Land, but they remain faithful, from the youngest to the oldest. This picture was taken by former missionary Ben Gray at a confirmation service at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem.

Prayers for Christians in the Middle East

The Middle East and North Africa Desk asks the ELCA to pray for Christians in the Middle East who are suffering. Until recently, Christians in the Middle East were a robust minority community with long histories and deep interfaith relationships, but in some countries the wars of the 21st century have reduced the number of Christians to single percentages. Decades of conflict, the weakness of financial institutions and governments, and this year's repudiation of a "two-state" solution for Israel and Palestine have driven a mass exodus of Christians from the region. Church leaders in the Middle East are speaking of a Kairos moment, deeply concerned for the future of their churches and of Christian witness in the Middle East.

Seeking the Safety and Viability of Christian Communities in the Middle East

The ELCA's Global Mission unit works with Christians in the Middle East to build leadership capacity, provide relief to refugees, support strategies for sustainable Christian communities, and strengthen Arab Christian awareness in the West. Global Mission supports its companion churches in their efforts to witness publicly and to provide their members with a safe and viable future in the region.

Though bilateral support, historically, has gone to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), the ELCA now provides World Hunger support to Christians and others in need throughout the region through ecumenical organizations such as the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) in Beirut and the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services in Cairo. The ELCA also provides Mission Support to Arabic-speaking seminaries in the Middle East, namely the Near East School of Theology in Beirut and the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo.

The displacement of millions of people in the Middle East makes "people on the move" the focus of the ELCA's action for refugees, migrants and internally displaced people. Support to the Middle East has mainly been administered through such agencies as the Middle East Council of Churches, Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief, St. Andrew's Refugee Services in Cairo, and the ELCJHL.

Please read the monthly update from the Middle East Council of Churches found at mecc.org/resources.