



Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

A Reconciling in Christ Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

THE 2ND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

January 3, 2021
9:30 AM



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YouTube – Salem Lutheran Church, Bridgeport CT

Gathering

GATHERING CAROL Your Little Ones, Dear Lord

ELW # 286

- 1 Your little ones, dear Lord, are we, and come your lowly bed to see;
enlighten ev'ry soul and mind, that we the way to you may find.**

- 2 With songs we hasten you to greet, and kiss the ground before your feet.
Oh, blessed hour, oh, sweetest night that gave you birth, our soul's delight.**

- 3 Oh, draw us wholly to you, Lord, and to us all your grace accord;
true faith and love to us impart, that we may hold you in our heart.**

- 4 Until at last we too proclaim, with all your saints, your glorious name;
in paradise our songs renew, and praise you as the angels do.**

Text: based on Luke 2:14-20; Hans A. Brorson, 1694-1764; tr. Harriet Krauth Spaeth, 1845-1925, alt.

Music: HER KOMMER DINE ARME SMÅ; Johann A. P. Schulz, 1747-1800; Text Meter LM

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Performance by: Tim McNabb, ARME SMÅ LM Musician, Halifax Lutheran Church, as found at thislink:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqgXOA15tw4>

WELCOME

Word

FIRST READING: Psalm 148

Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!

Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.

He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,
fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

Wild animals and all cattle, ..creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

Young men and women alike, old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.

He has raised up a horn for his people,

praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him.

Praise the LORD!

Word of God, Word of life!

Thanks be to God!

FIRST CAROL

Let All Together Praise Our God

ELW # 287, vss. 1, 3, 5

**1 Let all together praise our God before the highest throne;
today God opens heav'n again and sends the only Son, and sends the only Son.**

**3 O tender Child, you veil in flesh the splendor of your might;
a servant's garb now wraps the one who clothed the sky with light,
who clothed the sky with light.**

**5 A wonderful exchange you make: you take our flesh and blood,
and in return give us to share the shining realm of God, the shining realm of God.**

*Text: Based on Genesis 3:24, Luke 2:1-14, John 10:7, 9, Philippians 2:6-8, Revelation 3:7,
Nikolaus Herman, 1480-1561; tr. hymnal version; Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.*

Music: LOBT GOTT, IHR CHRISTEN; Nikolaus Herman; Text Meter: 8 6 8 6 6

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*Performance recorded remotely, 11/20, by The Elm Sally Messner, conductor, Mary Burke, viola da gamba
as found at this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXUv4_tiG_8*

SECOND READING: Hebrews 1.1-3a

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word.

Word of God, Word of life!
Thanks be to God!

SECOND CAROL Joy to the World

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav -'n and nature sing.**

**Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding
joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love, and won-ders of his love.**

*Text: based on Genesis 3:17-19, Psalm 98, Psalm 100, Isaiah 55:12-13, Luke 2:10; Isaac Watts, 1674—1748;
Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792—1872); Text Meter: CM and repeat
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*Performance by Megan C, vocalist, and Dr. Thomas Conroy, organist,
at St Mary of the Mount and Prince of Peace Parish in Pittsburgh, PA.
Used with permission from Dr. Conroy.*

THIRD READING: Galatians 4.4-7

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Word of God, Word of life!
Thanks be to God!

THIRD CAROL Infant Holy, Infant Lowly ELW # 276

**Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the child is Lord of all.
Swiftly winging, angels singing, bells are ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!**

**Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!**

Text: Based on Luke 2:7-20; Polish carol; tr. Edith M.G. Reed, 1885-1933, alt.

Music: W ZLOBIE LEZY, Polish Carol; Text Meter: 8 7 8 7 8 8 7 7

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*Performance by by the St Michael's Sings and Coventry Singers.and posted by Chet Valley Churches
as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwkkclFxfJE>*

FOURTH READING: Ephesians 1.3-14

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Word of God, Word of life!

Thanks be to God!

FOURTH CAROL

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

vss. 1 & 3

**Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"**

**Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"**

*Text: Based on Isaiah 9:6, Malachi 4:2, Luke 2:13-14, John 1:1-14, 2 Corinthians 5:19;
Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.*

*Music: MENDELSSOHN; Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831-1915;
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Performance by Madlene, vocalist, and Dr. Thomas Conroy, organist,
at St Mary of the Mount and Prince of Peace Parish in Pittsburgh, PA.
Used with permission from Dr. Conroy.*

FIFTH READING: Hebrews 2.10-18

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.... Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death.... Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Word of God, Word of life!

Thanks be to God!

FIFTH CAROL

Once in Royal David's City

ELW # 269, vss. 1-2, 4-6

- 1 Once in royal David's city Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby In a manger for His bed;
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.
- 2 He came down to earth from heaven, Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable, And His cradle was a stall;
With the poor, and mean, and lowly, Lived on earth our Saviour holy.
- 4 For He is our childhood's pattern; Day by day, like us, He grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless, Tears and smiles, like us He knew;
And He cares when we are sad, And he shares when we are glad.
- 5 And our eyes at last shall see Him, Through His own redeeming love;
For that Child so dear and gentle, Is our Lord in heaven above:
And He leads His children on, To the place where He is gone.
- 6 Not in that poor lowly stable, With the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him; but in heaven, Set at God's right hand on high;
Where like stars His children crowned All in white shall wait around.

*Text: Based on Micah 5:2, Philippians 2:5-11, Revelation 7:13-17, Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818-1895;
Text Meter 8 7 8 7 7 7*

Music: IRBY; Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805-1876;

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*Performance by the choirs of St Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney and used by permission, as stated at this link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_qxu9R5xk8*

SIXTH READING: 2 Corinthians 4.1-6

Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness", who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Word of God, Word of life!

SIXTH CAROL

'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime

- 1 'Twas in the moon of wintertime when all the birds had fled,
that mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead;
before their light the stars grew dim, and wond'ring hunters heard the hymn:
Jesus your king is born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!**
- 2 Within a lodge of broken bark the tender babe was found;
a ragged robe of rabbit skin enwrapped his beauty round;
but as for hunger braves drew nigh, the angel song rang loud and high:
Jesus your king is born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!**
- 3 The earliest moon of wintertime is not so round and fair
as was the ring of glory on the helpless infant there.
The chiefs from far before him knelt with gifts of fox and beaver pelt.
Jesus your king is born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!**
- 4 O children of the forest free, O seed of Manitou;
the holy child of earth and heav'n is born today for you.
Come, kneel before the radiant boy, who brings you beauty, peace, and joy.
Jesus your king is born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!**

Text: Based on Luke 2:8-16; Jean de Brébeuf, 1593-1649; tr. Jesse E. Middleton, 1872-1960, alt.,

© 1927 The Frederick Harris Music Company. All rights reserved.; Text Meter: 8 6 8 6 8 8 and refrain

Music: UNE JEUNE PUCELLE, French folk tune, c. 16th cent.

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Performance by the musicians of Duluth First United Methodist Church

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urkxPCk8WuQ>

SEVENTH READING: Psalm 97

The LORD is king! Let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!

Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;

righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

Fire goes before him, and consumes his adversaries on every side.

His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees and trembles.

The mountains melt like wax before the LORD, before the Lord of all the earth.

The heavens proclaim his righteousness; and all the peoples behold his glory.

All worshipers of images are put to shame,

those who make their boast in worthless idols; all gods bow down before him.

Zion hears and is glad, and the towns of Judah rejoice,

because of your judgments, O God.

For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth;

you are exalted far above all gods.

The LORD loves those who hate evil; he guards the lives of his faithful;

he rescues them from the hand of the wicked.

Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.

Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous, and give thanks to his holy name!

Word of God, Word of life!

Thanks be to God!

SEVENTH CAROL The Bells of Christmas / Det kimer nu til julefest ELW # 298

The bells of Christmas chime once more; the heav'nly guest is at the door.

He comes to earthly dwellings still with new year gifts of peace, good will.

O patriarchs' Joy, O prophets' Song, O Dayspring bright, awaited long,

O Son of Man, incarnate Word, great David's Son, great David's Lord:

Come, Jesus, glorious heav'nly guest, and keep your Christmas in our breast;

then David's harpstrings, hushed so long, shall swell our jubilee of song.

Text: Based on Luke 2:15-16, Revelation 19:6; Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783-1872,

tr. Charles Porterfield Krauth, 1823-1883, alt.;; Text Meter: LM

Music: DET KIIMER NU TIL JULEFEST, Carl C. N. Balle, 1806-1855

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Performance by Dr. Thomas Conroy at St Mary of the Mount and Prince of Peace Parish in Pittsburgh, PA.

Used with permission from Dr. Conroy.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Joining our voices with the song of the angels,
let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Individual worshipers are invited to offer the petitions as so moved by the Spirit.

Redeeming God, you gather together your people from the farthest parts of the earth.
Protect your church from stumbling. Let it not be overcome by sorrow, division, or despair.
Make us radiant with goodness, that we might live always to the praise of your glory.
We pray for our mission partners, especially today for our Southern CT conference,
the New England Synod and Region 7; & for Salem members & their families,
especially for those celebrating their birthdays the past 2 weeks:
Priscilla Schulz, Ray Anderson, Haley Danowski, Iris Murphy, Joseph Jambriska, & David Larson.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You bring together heaven and earth. All creation testifies to your splendor.
Hold the ecosystems of this earth in delicate balance,
from coastlands to farmlands, forests to wetlands, deserts to rainforests.
Show us new ways to live in harmony with the world around us.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You overflow with grace upon grace.
Expand the imaginations of those who serve in positions of authority.
Open their hearts to the needs of their nations and communities.
Protect all those in harm's way and those risking danger for the sake of others.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You bring consolation to those who weep, especially the Simmonds family.
Embrace those who feel far-off, excluded, or defeated.
Accompany those living with chronic and invisible illness. Sustain the weak and weary.
Refresh those who labor under the weight of pain or sickness,
especially Andrea, Audry, Barbara, Bud, Jerry, David, Diane, Dolores, Eron, Grace, Hazel, Jacob,
Jana, Katherine, Liz, Maria, Martha, Ron, Sarah, Steve, and all we name in our hearts.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You come to us in the beauty of darkness and of light.
Bring justice and reconciliation to communities divided by oppression and misuse of power.
Guide us to speak holy words of advocacy and truth. Help us to honor your image in one another.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You turn our mourning into joy.
We give thanks for those who have died in faith, especially Millicent Patricia Dawn Simmonds.
With all the saints, give us our inheritance in Christ.
In the fullness of time, gather us all together in your mercy.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You are invited to offer your own prayer petition at this time, either silently or aloud.

The pastor concludes:

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you,
in the name of Jesus. **Amen**

Thanksgiving

OFFERING PRAYER

Jesus, you said, “Give & it will be given to you...
for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

**Give us the confidence to cheerfully give our tithes & offerings of time, talent & treasure
to your work in this place, trusting that you will provide abundantly for all our needs.
We pray this in the power of your Spirit. Amen**

OFFERING

In response to God’s grace, it is our joy to return to God our tithes and offerings.
Although our building at 3160 Park Avenue in Bridgeport, CT is closed at present,
our ministry continues because of your generosity.

If you are watching and are part of another faith community,
we encourage you to give your tithes to your own church first, and, if in addition to that,
you would like to support our work here at Salem, we would be most grateful.

Simply go to the menu on our website at SalemBridgeport.org and click “donate”
or scan the QR code here in our Sunday worship program
with a QR reader on your smart phone which will take you to that page.



OFFERTORY CAROL

In the Bleak Midwinter

- 1 In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.**
- 2 Our God, Heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.**
- 3 Enough for him, whom cherubim worship night and day, a breastful of milk and a mangerful of hay:
enough for him whom angels fall down before the ox and ass and camel wick adore.**
- 4 What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man I would do my part; yet what I can give him — give my heart.**

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830-1894; Text Meter: Irregular

Music: CRANHAM; Gustav Holst, 1874-1934

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Performance by The Choir Boys and posted by Chet Valley Churches

at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xAzQIS4-MpY>

LORD’S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen**

Sending

of cyberspace worshippers

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANK YOU and BLESSING

Meal

COMMUNION

God be with you!

And also with you!

Open your hearts!

We open them to God and one another!

Let us give thanks to the God of all!

It is right to give God thanks and praise!

In the night in which he was betrayed...

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest and let these gifts to us be blessed.

Blessed be God, who is our Bread; may all the world be clothed and fed. Amen

The body of Christ given for you. The blood of Christ shed for you.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in divine grace!

Amen!

Sending

of physically or zoom gathered worshippers

DISMISSAL

Go in peace and may the joy of Christmas remain in your hearts and minds today and always!

Thanks be to God!

SENDING HYMN

The First Noel

ELW #300, vss. 1-3

- 1. The first Noel the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

Refrain:

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

- 2. They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night. *Refrain***

- 3 And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain***

Text: Based on Matthew 2:1-12, Luke 2:8-11; English traditional; Text Meter: Irregular

Music: THE FIRST NOWELL; English traditional; arr. John Stainer, 1840-1901

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Performance by Ellen S, vocalist, and Dr. Thomas Conroy, organist,

at St Mary of the Mount and Prince of Peace Parish in Pittsburgh, PA.

Used with permission from Dr. Conroy.

Announcements

To join today's zoom worship at 9:30, as we focus on Mary, just click on this link – <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82586283567?pwd=c3hwV1g5eFVYU3RwQ3ZzSEQyRzc5Zz09>

Don't forget to join us for our virtual coffee hour on zoom at 10:30! Coffee hour continues at 10:30 on Sundays via Zoom. To join, just click on this link - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86881604946?pwd=WE11ZkNGd3ZwaU5WS1JTMnlLZ1Ywdz09> - (Meeting ID: 868 8160 4946) (Passcode: 069124) or go to our website: www.salembridgeport.org, click on the Resource Tab, then on calendar, & then on the date & event, and a zoom invitation with link as well as call in information will appear. Remember that even if you don't have a laptop or a tablet or a smart phone, you can join by calling - even from your landline - one of these numbers - One tap mobile: +13017158592,,86881604946# US (Germantown) Dial by your location: +1 929 205 6099 US (New York) and entering the ID and passcode.

Upcoming Important Events: On January 31st, instead of Coffee Hour, we will have an Adult Forum on the 2021 budget. On February 7th we will have the Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting with Opening Devotions and Closing Prayer in place of worship at 9:30.

Online Worship will be the norm until it is deemed safe to once again gather in-person indoors. *Salem members, if you are not able to join us online from your home, please contact either me or our parish nurse so we might facilitate your participation.* Perhaps we can loan you a digital tablet and teach you to use it, or provide a place for you to safely watch our service outside your home. No matter how we worship, we'll stream to FacebookLive and post to our YouTube channel.

There are many ways to find the zoom link for worship and all other Salem events. The most reliable way is to go to our website - www.salembridgeport.org, choose the Resource tab, and click on Calendar. Then on the calendar, go to the day, the event, and when you click on it, it will open up the zoom invitation. You can click on the link, or copy and paste it into your browser. **To see how to do this, [click here](#):**

We also include the zoom links in our weekly email blasts, and in this announcement section of our Sunday bulletin. You can find links to Sunday worship materials like the bulletin, sermon, and donate page at www.salembridgeport.org/live. Or to see how to get there, **[click here](#):**

Lord, Teach Us to Pray! Want to know how to pray? Want to see how prayer can change your life? Need prayer? Then join us each **Wednesday** on zoom at **noon** for a half-hour as we delve more deeply into the Lord's Prayer, and pray for each other's needs. The zoom link will be on the calendar on Salem's website at Salembridgeport.org under the Resources Tab.

Game Night! Every Thursday from 6:00-7:00 we gather online to see what the “Gaming Commission” has planned for us. Sometimes we play Bingo or Scattergories. Sometimes we play Headbands or Trivial Pursuit. Sometimes we act out Charades. But ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS, we LAUGH! For more information, speak with Jeanette or her daughter, Lynnette Lawson. Zoom link is available on Salem’s calendar.

Salem and Friends Prayer Gathering & Take-out Breakfast, sponsored by the Salem Men, is held outdoors in the picnic grove on the **2nd Saturday of the month at 8:00 am.**

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport’s Raising the BAR: Becoming Anti-Racist series continues on the 3rd Thursday each month from 7:30 to 8:15 pm.

You can register on their [website](#) –

<https://default.salsalabs.org/T4ca0bc4e-b5a6-457f-9432-5f3e459aaaa6/464704ca-cfbd-4af1-9836-dc2cefbf86ab> - and join these conversations to learn more, talk in small groups, and continue to engage in anti-racist work.

Inner-View Chat’n’Chew meets the **3rd Saturday of the month at 11:00 on Zoom.** It’s a time of fun and fellowship that gives us a chance to celebrate the gift that God has given us in one another. Evites are sent out to those on the Genesis mailing list but you can also find the Zoom link on Salem’s calendar.

Sunday Night Alive events continue the last Sunday of the month, our next one taking place on **January 31st at 6:00 pm on Zoom.** We’ll be watching the second half of our hour-long video, “The Gifts of Christmas”, a compilation of the readings and the gifts that were shared as part of our Video Advent Calendar. If you didn’t get to see all of our daily video posts this month, this is your chance to catch up. And even if you didn’t miss a day, you won’t want to miss this chance to gather together on zoom to remember, to celebrate, and to share some laughter and love. You can find the link on our website, SalemBridgeport.org, by clicking on the Resources tab, then Calendar, and then going to the event. Or you can simply click on this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82224426828?pwd=aTNKcUE4eEdINELiYIFVd1RnYl1XQT09>

Every single one of us would no doubt like to go back to the way we used to worship pre-pandemic, but sadly that is not a possibility for now. God is GOOD, however, and has provided so many other ways for us to worship. Even if we get to Phase 3, there are those in our church family who due to health concerns are not able to gather with us indoors and have requested that we have zoom services sometimes. When the weather is too cold or when the roads are too snowy, or if we are in Phase 1 or 2, or if someone worshipping tests positive for Covid and we need to self-quarantine, we’ll be worshipping via zoom. When the pastor is on vacation or on other special days, there will be pre-recorded services on Facebook and YouTube. While each one of us has our preferences, remember that we are a community in Christ who loves and looks out for one another. When we’re worshipping your favorite way give thanks! And when we’re worshipping in someone else’s favorite way, give thanks for that, too!

Technology have you stumped? If you’d like some (VERY BASIC!) technology help – like accessing zoom on your iPhone, tablet, or pc, or downloading and using the Venmo or Cash app, or anything else, please speak with Pastor Marjo or call or email Karl.

THE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF GREATER BRIDGEPORT

*If you're reading this online, just click on the underlined links for details.
Or go to CCGB.org*

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE?

- [Why Advocacy - A Study Guide for Congregations](#)

The Council of Churches and our member congregations have prioritized the issues listed below for our advocacy efforts. Policy changes in these areas will have an immediate, positive effect on our communities and the neighbors we serve.

Climate Change

learn about how addressing food insecurity and reducing our food waste can make a huge difference

- [Combatting Food Insecurity](#)
- [Ways to Reduce Food Waste](#)
- [Articles from Earth Day 2020](#)

Criminal Justice Reform

help us pass the Clean Slate bill and give people a real second chance

- [Clean Slate Bill - A Study Guide for Congregations](#)

Education Equity

all children in Bridgeport and beyond deserve a quality education

- [Call to Action](#)
- [CCGB's Goals and Initiatives](#)
- [Education Reform - A Study Guide for Congregations](#)

Immigration Reform

how shall we "welcome the stranger" with respect and care?

Gun Violence Prevention

"do not stand idly by while your neighbor's blood is shed" Leviticus 19:16

- [Overview of Resources](#)
- [Do Not Stand Idly By Campaign](#)
- [Congregational Toolkit \(PCUSA\)](#)

Resources on the CT Legislature

Here you can find basic guides, templates and resources for raising your voice and getting involved!

- [Guide to Written Testimony for a Public Hearing on CT Legislation.pdf](#)
- [How a CT Bill Becomes Law.pdf](#)

Ebony and Ivory? Wonder why some of your friends are saying “Black Lives Matter” when obviously all lives matter? Wonder why when we have anti-racism laws, people keep talking about “systemic” or “structural racism”? Wonder why the church is so focused on this issue? If you’re looking for answers to these and other questions, here are some great ways to learn:

1. **The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport invites its members to take the following steps to work for a more just and equitable society:**

*Starting on **September 17**, and going at least **through May 20, 2021** we will hold monthly zoom meetings, **the third Thursday of every month from 7:30 to 8:15 PM**. You can register on our website –

<https://default.salsalabs.org/T4ca0bc4e-b5a6-457f-9432-5f3e459aaaa6/464704ca-cfbd-4af1-9836-dc2cefbf86ab> - & join these conversations to learn more, talk in small groups, & continue to engage in anti-racist work.

*You can take the 21 day Racial Equity Challenge - <https://default.salsalabs.org/T6ccaac28-05da-4baf-88a8-d1c2b9b86893/464704ca-cfbd-4af1-9836-dc2cefbf86ab> - all by yourself, to continue to learn, reflect, and act. This is a great resource created by the Myers Park Presbyterian Church, in Charlotte, VA.

*Also, here is a link - <https://default.salsalabs.org/Tc340bebd-4d68-4800-b754-7c48a473cd23/464704ca-cfbd-4af1-9836-dc2cefbf86ab> - to a document which lists these resources and our recommendations for a number of local and national organizations doing excellent anti-racism and justice work.

2. **Read the 2019 Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent**

& its accompanying Explanation at

http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Slavery_Apology_Explanation.pdf?ga=2.119362624.853575714.1565027421-1958052405.1536241629 or go to ELCA.org, scroll down to “Resources”, scroll down to “Racial Justice”, and click on the Declaration to read and/or download.

3. **Listen to this video lecture** by Tom Skinner:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvKQx4ycTmA> . It gives a much more detailed history of slavery in this country than we received in our history classes at school, & explains how it was the issue of slavery that created the divide between mainline & evangelical Christians.

4. **Read the book, Dear Church: a Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the US** by Lenny Duncan. There have been many explanations for the church’s decline, but Duncan sees a direct correlation between the church’s lack of diversity and its lack of vitality. Part manifesto, part confession, and all love letter, Dear Church offers a bold new vision for the future of the ELCA and the rest of mainline Protestant Christianity and calls everyone – leaders and laity alike – to the front lines of the church’s renewal through racial equality and justice. *Salem has a few copies of the book, so if you would like to borrow one, please speak with Pastor Marjo.*