



Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

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

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

*February 14,
2021
9:30 AM*



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Gathering

*We invite you to reflect on these readings for the Transfiguration of Our Lord
as you prepare for worship.*

First Reading: 2 Kings 2:1-12

¹Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. ²Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here; for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel”. But Elisha said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you”. So they went down to Bethel. ³The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?” And he said, “Yes, I know; keep silent”.

⁴Elijah said to him, “Elisha, stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho”. But he said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you”. So they came to Jericho. ⁵The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?” And he answered, “Yes, I know; be silent”.

⁶Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan”. But he said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you”. So the two of them went on. ⁷Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. ⁸Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you”. Elisha said, “Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit”. ¹⁰He responded, “You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not”. ¹¹As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. ¹²Elisha kept watching and crying out, “Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

Psalm: Psalm 50:1-6

¹The mighty one, God the LORD, has spoken;

calling the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

²Out of Zion, perfect in its beauty, God shines forth in glory.

³Our God will come and will not keep silence;

with a consuming flame before, and round about a | raging storm.

⁴God calls the heavens and the earth from above to witness the judgment of the people.

⁵“Gather before me my loyal followers,

those who have made a covenant with me and sealed it with sacrifice.”

⁶The heavens declare the rightness of God’s cause, for it is God who is judge.

1. **Longing for light, we wait in darkness, Longing for truth, we turn to you,
Make us your own, your holy people, light for the world to see,**

Refrain: **Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.**

2. **Longing for peace, our world is troubled, Longing for hope, many despair,
Your word alone has pow'r to save us, Make us your living voice. (Refrain)**

3. **Longing for food, many are hungry, Longing for water, many still thirst,
Make us your bread, broken for others, shared until all are fed. (Refrain)**

4. **Longing for shelter, many are homeless, Longing for warmth, many are cold,
Make us your building, sheltering others, walls made of living stone. (Refrain)**

5. **Many the gifts, many the people, Many the hearts that yearn to belong,
Let us be servants to one another, signs of your kingdom come. (Refrain)**

Text: John 1:9, 3:19, 8:12, 9:5, 12:46, 2 Corinthians 4:6; Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957; Meter 9 8 9 6 and refrain

Tune: CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT, Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957

Text and Music: © 1993 Bernadette Farrell, admin. OCP Publications Text

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Performance by the Reverend Marjo Anderson

WELCOME

Word

READING 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

³Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴In 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. ⁵For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. ⁶For 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!

Thanks be to God!

READING Mark 9:2-9

²Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, ³and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. ⁴And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. ⁵Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah". ⁶He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. ⁷Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" ⁸Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. ⁹As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

Word of God, Word of Life!

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Guided by Christ made known to the nations,
let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

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

Guided by Christ made known to the nations,
let us pray that our hearts be set on fire with passion for proclaiming the gospel in word & deed.
We pray for our mission partners, especially today for
the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land;
& for Salem members & their families, especially those celebrating their birthdays this week:
Ann Martin, Carol Lansing, and Talisha Burrus.
God, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for creation: sun, moon and stars; life forming in the dark earth and ocean deep;
mountains and valleys; clouds and storms; creatures seen and unseen;
and for the Holy Spirit's guidance in our stewardship of God's creation.
God, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for those responsible for safety and protection: for attorneys and advocates,
for emergency responders and security guards, & for civil servants and leaders of governments,
that they witness to mercy and justice throughout the world.
-God, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for all who suffer this day, that Christ our healer transform sickness into health,
loneliness into companionship, bereavement into consolation, & suffering into peace.
We pray especially for 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....
God, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for companions on life's journey in this worshiping community,
for loved ones who cannot be with us this day, and for guidance during struggles we face,
that God's glory is revealed around and among us.
God, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed who now rest from their earthly pilgrimage,
especially missionaries Cyril and Methodius, let us pray that their lives of service and prayer
inspire us in our living.
God, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

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

The pastor concludes:

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent,
for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen**

Thanksgiving

OFFERING PRAYER

Jesus, you said, “Give and 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 SONG

City of God

AUDIO

- 1. Awake from your slumber! Arise from your sleep!
A new day is dawning for all those who weep.
The people in darkness have seen a great light.
The Lord of our longing has conquered the night.**

Refrain: **Let us build the city of God. May our tears be turned into dancing!
For the Lord, our Light and our Love, has turned the night into day.**

- 2. We are sons of the morning; we are daughters of day.
The one who has loved us has brightened our way.
The Lord of all kindness has called us to be
a light for his people to set their hearts free. (Refrain)**

Bridge: **God is light; in him there is no darkness. Let us walk in his light, his children, one and all.**

- 3. O comfort my people; make gentle your words.
Proclaim to my city the day of her birth. Refrain twice)**

*OneLicense Song # 80676; Text based on Isaiah 9, 40:1-9, & 1 John 1 by Dan Schutte, S. J. ; Music by Dan Schutte, S. J
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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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANK YOU and BLESSING

SENDING SONG

We Are Marching in the Light / *Siyahamba*

VIDEO

SOUTH AFRICAN

Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos'. Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos'. (repeat)
Siyahamba (hamba, siyahamba, hamba). Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos'. (repeat)

ENGLISH

We are marching in the light of God. We are marching in the light of God. (repeat)
We are marching (marching, we are marching, marching). We are marching in the light of God.
We are marching (marching, we are marching, marching). We are marching in the light of God.

SOUTH AFRICAN

Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos'. Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos'. (repeat)
Siyahamba (hamba, siyahamba, hamba). Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos'. (repeat)

**Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos'. Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos'.
(*Siyahamb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos'.*)**

Text: based on Isaiah 49:1-6, 60:1-11, Revelation 21:22-26 South African traditional; Meter- Irregular

Music: SIYAHAMBA, South African traditional

Text & Tune are in the Public Domain;

Translation © 1984 "Freedom Is Coming", Utryck, admin. Walton Music Corp;

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Performance by the Tapiola Children's Choir as found at this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bw5Cw_ZnOJw

Meal & Dismissal

for zoom gathered worshippers

COMMUNION

God be with you!
Open your hearts!
Let us give thanks to the God of all!

And also with you!
We open them to God and one another!
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!**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace.

May the light of Christ shine in your heart for all the world to see!

Thanks be to God!

Announcements

Today's Worship with Coffee Hour is at 9:30 at this zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82586283567?pwd=c3hwV1g5eFVYU3RwO3ZzSEQyRzc5Zz09>

Meeting ID: 825 8628 3567 Passcode: 792383

One tap mobile +13017158592,,82586283567# US (Washington DC)

+13126266799,,82586283567# US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Wednesday at 12:00 noon Prayer Gathering at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82882777326?pwd=VCtObFRPOGI3cTR3eII2ZmtiZEpadz09>

Meeting ID: 828 8277 7326 Passcode: 688740

One tap mobile +13017158592,,82882777326# US (Washington DC)

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 pray for each other's and the world's needs.

Lent 2021

Ash Wednesday – 12:00 & 7:00 pm February 17 – zoom worship for area Lutheran churches.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84047903958?pwd=UzhLWFpSYnFmdHVYN2lSNFIJMUJyUT09>

Meeting ID: 840 4790 3958 Passcode: 675136

One tap mobile +13017158592,,84047903958# US (Washington DC)

+13126266799,,84047903958# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Midweek Series – Lenten Adventures in Prayer – on zoom for area Lutheran churches

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89939840751?pwd=amlvTnJIU1c5MWlIOFozcUfTVnJuOT09>

Wednesdays at 7:30 pm or Thursdays at 10:30 am

Week 1 (**Feb 24/25**) – The **Y** is for WHY Pray?

Week 2 (**March 3/4**) – The **P** is for PAUSE!

Week 3 (**Mar 10/11**) – The **R** is for REJOICE!

Week 4 (**Mar 17/18**) – The **A** is for ASK!

Week 5 (**Mar 24/25**) – The **Y** is for YIELD!

Maundy Thursday – 7:30 pm April 1st – most likely we'll have a drive-in worship for area Lutheran churches held at Our Saviour's Church, 160 Hill Farm Rd, Fairfield,

This Thursday (02/18) the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport's Raising the BAR: Becoming Anti-Racist series continues (3rd Thursday of the month) 7:30-8:15 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.

This Saturday (02/20) the 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.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5984687293> Meeting ID: 598 4

Sunday Night Alive meets the last Sunday of the month, so please mark this event on your calendars for 02/28. You won't want to miss this chance to gather together! The link is here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82224426828?pwd=aTNKcUE4eEdINeliYlFVd1RnYlIXQT09>

Meeting ID: 822 2442 6828 Passcode: 209780

One tap mobile +13017158592,,82224426828# US (Germantown)

+13126266799,,82224426828# US (Chicago)

The 2nd Saturday of the month at 8:00 is our Salem and Friends Prayer Gathering & Take-out Breakfast, sponsored by the Salem Men. After our usual interesting discussion and prayer, we'll be continuing our clean out of the building in preparation for the sale of our property. Prepackaged snacks and coffee will be available outside.

Connecticut residents over 75 can now begin making appointments to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Over the coming weeks, Phase 1b will expand to include those over 65, those with underlying conditions, and frontline essential workers. For more information [click here](#).

Upcoming Worship – Depending on how today's in-person meeting goes, how diligent everyone is, and what the current covid rates are, we may be able to have in-person worship once or twice a month, with zoom or pre-recorded services on the intervening weeks. No matter how we worship, we'll stream to Facebook Live and post to our YouTube channel. *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 Facebook Live 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](#):

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.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Pastor Marjo and Salem's Office Manager, Karl, work primarily from their homes but generally come in once a week to take care of tasks that cannot be accomplished remotely. Even though we must operate differently in these times, if we can help in any way, please know that you can still call Salem's church office at 203-330-3300 and leave a message and your message will be picked up remotely and your call returned. Please also do not hesitate to call or text Pastor Marjo at 203-982-3441.

Online Worship – Online worship is here to stay. Far more people participate in our worship online than come to worship on our property or even join us on zoom. In fact, up to 8 times as many as those gathered physically watch the entire service online, and many weeks we have over a thousand people who at least watch some of it! So no matter what format we use for worship in the future, we plan to stream via Facebook Live. Where the service is pre-recorded in the sanctuary it will also be streamed on YouTube. If you can't watch at 9:30 Sundays, video worship services will be saved to Facebook and also posted on YouTube so you can watch them later. Closed Captioning will be provided when available. For help turning on Captioning contact Karl or Pastor Marjo.

Did you enjoy The Best of Lucia? We're happy to provide other special online worship experiences if you have old VHS tapes or DVDs or other video recordings of the Salem Choir to share. Or maybe you have an old reel-to-reel or 8-track or cassette audio recording. Did you ever film the choir with your phone? Or what about recordings of our children's musical productions? We'd love to build up a digital library of Salem's musical treasures. Since singing increases significantly the amount and projection of the aerosols we produce when we breathe or speak, in-person singing is a high-risk activity which we cannot in good conscience allow for the duration of the pandemic, but we would dearly love to enjoy music in other ways. If you have any such recordings, please contact our Office Manager Karl by emailing him (salemsec123@sbcglobal.net) or calling the church and leaving a message (203-336-3300). We will figure out how to convert and copy your recordings so that we can all enjoy them. **We're especially looking for recordings we could use for use in Lent, Holy Week, Easter,** or other special days.

Need help finding a Salem zoom meeting or need to set one up? Just go to our website at SalemBridgeport.org, click on the Resources tab, then on Calendar. On the calendar just find the day and click on the event and a zoom invitation will appear. Sometimes you may have to click on “(+2 more)” in order to see additional vents that don't fit in the calendar square. If your Salem committee or group would like to meet via Zoom, please contact Karl by emailing him at salemsec123@sbcglobal.net or by leaving a message on the church phone, 203-336-3300.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

**Cyril, monk, died 869; Methodius, bishop, died 885; missionaries to the Slavs
Sunday, February 14, 2021**

These two brothers from Thessalonika, Greece, were monks and were sent to bring Christianity to the Slavic people.

In the course of their work they created a written language, inventing the Cyrillic alphabet for it, and translated the Bible and the liturgy.

**Martin Luther, renewer of the church, died 1546
Thursday, February 18, 2021**

Though he began his adult church life as a simple Augustinian monk, Luther challenged the abuses he saw in the church, and his work eventually led to the Protestant Reformation.

Luther's accomplishments included liturgical reform, translation of the Bible, and creation of the Small and Large Catechisms.

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.*