



Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

*for those with
hearing challenges*

*The Second
Sunday of
Easter*

*April 11, 2021
9:30 AM*

Y PRAY?



(R is for REJOICE!)

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[YouTube](#) – Salem Lutheran Church, Bridgeport CT

Gathering

GATHERING MUSIC

Rejoice Greatly from the Messiah

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, thy King cometh unto thee;

He is the righteous Saviour, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, thy King cometh unto thee;

Text from Zechariah 9.9-10

Text set to Music by George Frideric Handel

This song is in the Public Domain.

*Performances (**which we do not have permission to stream**)
are by the artists below and found at the following links:*

Angela Scorese, Soprano; Stacie Yao, Organ

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJAp7c3xTy8> [4:59]

Sooyeon Lee, Soprano; Darrell Ang, Conductor;

Münchner Rundfunkorchester, Orchestra

*Recorded at ARD Music Competition 2015 in Munich, Germany,
where Lee obtained the second prize and audience prize.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhdTpc4KAhY> – [4:33]

Sylvia Naa Wilson, Soprano; Accra Diocesan Choir;

produced by the GH Choral Music, Accra, Ghana.

an organization which promotes choral singing in Ghana.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORzx297QdYs> – [4:23]

Please note that at this point we go live on Facebook.

WELCOME

Welcome in the name of God in whom we live and move and have our being!

Thank you for joining us today!

Thank you, those of you who are here in person with us!

And thank you, to those of you out there in cyber space,
wherever – and whenever! – you are!

For those of you who don't know me,

I'm Pastor Marjo Anderson of Salem Lutheran Church in Bridgeport, CT.

While our offices are closed at present, you can always find us at our website:

SalemBridgeport.org,

on our Facebook page, SalemBridgeport,

and on our YouTube channel, Salem Lutheran Church, Bridgeport CT.

Links to our donate page and worship bulletin

which has both the order of worship and announcements, as well as other resources
are included on our website at SalemBridgeport.org/Live.

We want to invite you to three events this week on zoom;

On Wednesday at noon we have our weekly prayer gathering.

On Thursday at 7:30 pm on zoom is the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport's

Raising the BAR – Becoming Anti-Racist – gathering

and this month we learn about and discuss racial disparity in employment.

For details see the Announcement section of our Sunday worship bulletin

or go to CCGB.org/BAR.

And on Saturday at 11:00 I also invite you to join us for the Innerview Chat'n'Chew,

a group of diverse Christians who love to laugh and learn and just get to know each other.

During Lent we dug deep into the theme: Y PRAY?

and we examined the “Why” of prayer,

and looked at the letter P for Pause and A for Ask.

Today, as we continue to celebrate

the awesome power of Christ's resurrection for our own lives,

we look at the R for Rejoice,

And so, let us begin with a call to worship, a call to Rejoice!

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 96.11, 1118.24, 105,3)

Let the heavens be glad!
Let the earth rejoice!

Let the sea roar
and all that fills it!

This is the day that the Lord has made!
Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Glory in God's holy name!
Let the hearts of those who seek God rejoice!

OPENING HYMN **Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!**

1 Rejoice, ye pure in heart! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!
Your festal banner wave on high, the cross of Christ your King!

Refrain Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

2 Yet, on through life's long path, still chanting as ye go,
from youth to age, by night and day, in gladness and in woe,

Refrain Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

3. At last the march shall end, the wearied ones shall rest,
the pilgrims find their homes at last, Jerusalem the blest!

Refrain Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

4. Then on, ye pure in heart; rejoice, give thanks, and sing!
Your festal banner wave on high, the cross of Christ your King.

Refrain Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

Text: based on Psalm 20:5, 71:22, Philippians 4:4, by Edward H. Plumptre, 1821-1891, alt.;
Meter S M and refrain

This text is in the Public Domain.

Music: MARION by Arthur H. Messiter, 1834-1916

This music is printed/streamed with permission under OneLicense #A-727372.

Performance is by the Antipolo United Methodist Church, Inc. and is found at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4q7mHRXwys> [2:01]

Word

READINGS

Isaiah 35.1

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.... They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

Isaiah 61.10

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for God has clothed me with the garments of salvation, and has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

Zephaniah 3:14-17

Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! God has taken away the judgments against you and has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, YHWH, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. YHWH your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; God will rejoice over you with gladness; God will quiet you by love; God will exult over you with loud singing.

Habakkuk 3.17-18

Though the fig tree does not blossom, and no fruit is on the vines; though the produce of the olive fails, and the fields yield no food; though the flock is cut off from the fold, and there is no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in YHWH; I will exult in the God of my salvation.

Philippians 4.4-7

Rejoice in God always; again I will say, rejoice.... God is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Romans 5.3-5

We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, & hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

1 Thessalonians 5.16-19

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit,
we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

A brief silence.

You are invited to offer one the following petitions as you are so moved by the Spirit.

You shower your church with grace, O God.
Unite the whole church on earth,
so that with one heart it testifies to the resurrection of Jesus Christ with power and love.
We pray for our mission partners, especially today for
the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport.
and for Salem members & families, especially those celebrating birthdays this week:
Grace Dukenski, Liz Frohrip, Liliana Vasquez, Linda Bryk, and Victoria Roehrich.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You proclaim the blessing of life forevermore.
Like dew upon the mountains, refresh your creation.
Restore waters, cleanse the air, and provide revitalizing moisture to parched land.
Give your whole creation the promise of new life.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You direct the nations, O God. Defeat in us our impulse to war.
Guide all in authority, that they shepherd their peoples in the ways of your love.
Bestow the peace of Christ upon those in authority and breathe upon them the Holy Spirit.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You place within the heart of the church a spirit of sharing.
Give us the power of your generous Spirit, that we provide for the needs of others,
We pray especially today for Andrea, Audry, Barbara, Bud, Jerry, Diane, Dolores, Eron, Grace,
Hazel, Jacob, Katherine, Liz, Maria, Martha, Ron, Sarah, Steve, & all we name in our hearts....
Announce your peace to those who are lonely, hurting, suffering, or afraid.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You give us fellowship with one another in this faith community called Salem.
Shine the light of the risen Christ in our life together,
so that we live in love for one another and our joy may be complete.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You share the gift of eternal life. In thanksgiving and remembrance,
we recall the lives and gifts of those who now live in endless joy, especially Olavus Petri and
Laurentius Petri, whom we commemorate this day. Unite us with them in resurrection hope.
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:

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you,
trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **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 offices at 3160 Park Avenue in Bridgeport, CT are 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

How Majestic Is Your Name

**Oh Lord our Lord how majestic is Your name in all the earth
Oh Lord our Lord how majestic is Your name in all the earth
Oh Lord we praise Your name Oh Lord we magnify Your name
Prince of Peace Mighty God Oh Lord God Almighty**

CCLI Song # 26007

Michael W. Smith

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Performance by Marjo Anderson, Salem Lutheran Church, Bridgeport, CT, 06/05/20

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

Before we end the live-streamed portion of our worship,
I want to especially thank those of you out there in cyberspace who have worshipped with us.
I hope you will join us again.

And in the meantime, no matter what challenges you are facing,
know that one of the secrets to life is that we attract what we project,
so joy is not something that happens to us – it is something we choose.

It's not always easy, but when we cultivate joy, then joy multiplies.

And if you'd like to know more or you'd like prayer, please don't hesitate to contact me.
Just reach out on Facebook or through our website.

In the meantime, receive this blessing as found in Romans 15:

¹³“May God...fill you with all joy and peace by means of...faith,,,
so that your hope will continue to grow by the power of the...Spirit.”

Amen

Please note our Facebook Live stream ends here.

Meal & Dismissal

for gathered worshippers

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 & blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you & keep you in divine grace!

Amen!

SENDING SONG

On Our Way Rejoicing

On our way rejoicing, gladly let us go, conquered hath our leader, vanguished is the foe,
Christ without, our safety, Christ within, our joy, who, if we be faithful, can our hope destroy?

On our way rejoicing, as we forward move, hearken to our praises, O blest God of love!

Unto God the Father joyful songs we sing;, unto God the Savior thankful hearts we bring,
unto God the Spirit bow we and adore, on our way rejoicing now and evermore.

On our way rejoicing, as we forward move, hearken to our praises, O blest God of love!

Text: based on Acts 8:39 by John S. B. Monsell, 1811–1875, alt.; Meter 6 5 6 5 6 5 D

Music: HERMAS by Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879

This hymn is in the Public Domain.

Performance by Daily Hymns is found at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HK8RHLWzTlY> [1:58]

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, rejoicing always!

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Rejoice Greatly from the Messiah

This is a short, fun recording of a rehearsal that absolutely BUBBLES with JOY!

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, thy King cometh unto thee;

Text from Zechariah 9.9-10; Text set to Music by George Frideric Handel

This song is in the Public Domain.

This performance (which we do not have permission to stream) is by:

*Jeanine De Bique, Soprano, with the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra
at the US Naval Academy Chapel, 12/04/16, as found at this link:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXvJqEjx8ms> [1:16]

On Our Way Rejoicing

This is a fun recording of a duet between organ and piano!

Text: based on Acts 8:39 by John S. B. Monsell, 1811–1875, alt.; Meter 6 5 6 5 6 5 D

Music: HERMAS by Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879

This hymn is in the Public Domain.

Performance by Grace Episcopal Church Manchester, NH

(Havergal arr. Smith; Piano, Carter Beck; Organ, Kenneth Grinnell) as found at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNwvFg4eUI> [2:09]

Announcements

You may have been vaccinated, but please bear in mind that not everyone is able to receive the vaccine due to their health condition. As Christians Jesus calls us to love our neighbor, so please maintain 6' physical distance and keep your mask on over your nose and mouth as long as you are on church property.

At the end of service, please wait as the ushers will dismiss you by pew in order to comply with pandemic protocols. Please move quickly through the narthex to where you can safely visit outdoors.

If you have ordered Easter flowers, the plants may be picked up outside by the Sacristy door. An usher will hand you the plants outside.

Thank you for doing your part to help keep everyone at Salem as safe as possible!

During communion, you may take your communion elements in church or hold on to your kit until you get home. If you take the elements in the church, open the kit over the pew to prevent spilling on the carpet. Take each element by lowering your mask, consuming, and raising your mask back up. After the service, take the empty kit to the wastebasket in the back of the church.

Sunday Worship Services – We are now having in-person worship each week which we will stream to Facebook. For those of you who enjoyed our zoom worship, we regret that we do not yet have the technology to offer a high quality hybrid/zoom worship. In fact, we're not aware of any congregation that has figured this out. If you cannot worship in person and would like communion, please contact Pastor Marjo so that that can be arranged.

Wednesday at 12:00 noon Prayer Gathering at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82882777326?pwd=VCtObFRPOGI3cTR3ell2ZmtiZEpadz09>

Meeting ID: 828 8277 7326 Passcode: 688740

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

If ever we needed prayer, it's now! Agreed? While we can (and should!) pray on our own, scripture teaches us that there is power in group prayer, and so we invite you to join our midweek prayer gathering. You don't have to pray out loud, if you don't want to, but your presence with us will mean more than you know. The zoom link is on the calendar on Salem's website at Salembridgeport.org under the Resources Tab.

Innerview Chat'n'Chew – Want to meet some awesome people who will inspire you and also make you laugh? Then please join Momma J and Genesis Gospel Café **this Saturday, April 18th, at 11:00** for their monthly **Innerview Chat'n'Chew** on zoom. **This month's theme is....** If you can't make it this week, put it on your calendar now for the **3rd Saturday of the month at 11:00**. Details are sent out as an Evite to those on the Genesis mailing list but you can also find **the Zoom link** on Salem's calendar.

CCGB's Raising the BAR – As members of Christ's church we have promised to work for "justice and peace in all the world". That includes working to eliminate **disparities in employment opportunities with regard to race**. As part of this work we invite you to the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport's Raising the BAR gathering as we learn about and discuss this vital issue. The meeting is **this Thursday April 15th at 7:30 on zoom**. [Click here](https://default.salsalabs.org/T670979e3-63b7-4463-8af2-4deb7c0604b2/464704ca-cfbd-4af1-9836-dc2cefbf86ab) for a shortcut to this link: <https://default.salsalabs.org/T670979e3-63b7-4463-8af2-4deb7c0604b2/464704ca-cfbd-4af1-9836-dc2cefbf86ab>

Here are the materials we ask you to review beforehand:

1. A 3 minute video: [How Racism Plays out at Work](#) – This is a great, short video focusing on the experience of Black women in the workplace. please watch with the understanding that we will be looking at the experiences of ALL people of color in the workplace. [Click here](#) for a shortcut to this link: <https://default.salsalabs.org/T02ac38e7-2929-4686-be08-f7d1b1341c7b/464704ca-cfbd-4af1-9836-dc2cefbf86ab>

2. An article: [Race, Risk and Workplace Equity in the Coronavirus Economy](#) [Click here](#) for a shortcut to this link: <https://default.salsalabs.org/T2da38a64-d412-41bb-b2ad-50a44575edf0/464704ca-cfbd-4af1-9836-dc2cefbf86ab>

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](#) by [clicking here](#) and join these conversations to learn more, talk in small groups, and continue to engage in anti-racist work.

Sunday Night Alive meets the last Sunday of the month, so please mark this event on your calendars for Sunday, April 25th, at 6 pm. You won't want to miss this chance to gather together with old friends and new, people like you and people unlike you - all of whom...like you, even love you, as the beloved child of God you are! **Stay tuned for details!** [Click here](#) for shortcut to this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82224426828?pwd=aTNKcUE4eEdiNEliYlFVdIRnYlXOT09>

Meeting ID: 822 2442 6828 Passcode: 209780; One tap mobile +13017158592,,82224426828# US (Germantown); +13126266799,,82224426828# US (Chicago)

"Wrap the Capitol" - National Day of Prayer & Action - Streaming on FacebookLive

Please save the date for National Day of Prayer. On Thursday, **May 6, 2021**, FaithActs will wrap the State Capitol in prayer and action. Through outreach from hundreds of prayer warriors across the state, we'll make sure Governor Lamont and legislative leadership stand for education justice during their closed-door budget negotiations. When they go quiet, we'll go loud! And bring God to the negotiation table. Right now, we're planning for socially distanced, in-person participation from pastors and virtual participation from other members and supporters. The FaithActs team will keep you posted as we finalize the details.

FaithActs for Education is a grassroots community organizing nonprofit based in Connecticut. We are people of faith building power to get our children the education they deserve. We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to graduate from college, take care of their family, and fulfill their God-given potential. We build relationships, we build leaders, and we build power through community organizing and civic engagement. Founded in October 2014, FaithActs is more than 500 members and 70 churches strong. We've turned out thousands of Bridgeport voters, demanded stronger governance from the Board of Education, prevented busing cuts for 2,300 elementary school students, and secured millions of additional dollars for Bridgeport public education. For more info go to: RSVP - <https://faithacts.org/rsvp>

Salem and Friends Prayer Gathering & Take-out Breakfast, sponsored by the Salem Men, is held on the **2nd Saturday of the month at 8:00 am.** Although this used to be a men's event, it's now open to everyone, and we are most grateful for the men who sponsor it. Weather permitting, we'll gather outdoors.

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport invites you their Virtual Spring Fling at 7:00 pm May 25th. Enjoy a Broadway inspired musical performance from the comfort of your own home with special musical guests, Chris Coogan and Michele Grace.

There are many ways to find the link Salem zoom 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](#):

A GIFT OF THE PANDEMIC: EVANGELISM MADE EASY! We used to have all kinds of reasons we couldn't bring family members or friends to church, many of the reasons involving distance or timing. But one of the GIFTS that God has given us along with the pandemic is FREEDOM to spread the gospel around the world! We are no longer limited within our church walls or bound to any geographical area! And that means that you can invite ANYONE from anywhere around the world to come to worship with you! "But they wouldn't be interested", you say? Well, the truth is more people participate in our worship online than come to worship on our property or even join us on zoom. One of our services currently has had 1.6K views, many services have had hundreds watch the entire service, and every Sunday we have far more watch online than actually gather on zoom. So what on earth are you waiting for? **INVITE A FRIEND TO WORSHIP!**

Let's stay connected! One of the silver linings in the storm clouds of the pandemic was that we learned to work much more efficiently and be better stewards of the resources God has given us. While worship and other occasional events will be in-person, many meetings will continue to be on zoom since it saves driving time and gasoline, and allows folks to attend even when they are out of town. Another benefit at this time is that due to the 6' physical distancing, it is not always easy to hear one another in a room without a sound system. On zoom everyone can hear and see everyone else. For the time being Pastor Marjo and Salem's Office Manager, Karl, will continue to work primarily from home, taking care of tasks that can be accomplished remotely, but will come in to do those things that cannot be done online. 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.

Please contact your Parish Nurse Carol if you would like to call, or send a card or note to one of our shut-ins. Carol will let you know if the person would prefer a call or a note. If you have extra cards that you do not need, please let Carol know.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

**Olavus Petri, priest, died 1552; Laurentius Petri, Bishop of Uppsala, died 1573;
renewers of the church**

Monday, April 19, 2021

These two brothers studied with Luther at the University of Wittenberg and then returned to their native Sweden to introduce the Lutheran reforms.

Olavus published a catechism and hymnal;

Laurentius was a professor who defended the office of bishop and later became one.

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.*