



Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

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

Day of Pentecost

*May 23, 2021
9:30 AM*



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Gathering

We'll only be reading one of the assigned readings for Pentecost during worship today, so as you prepare for worship we invite you to read the others, as follows:

Ezekiel 37:1-14

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know". Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD."

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live". I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD."

Romans 8:22-27

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

How manifold are your works, O LORD!

In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

Yonder is the sea, great and wide, with its swarms too many to number, living things both small and great.

There go the ships to and fro, and Leviathan, which you made for the sport of it.

All of them look to you to give them their food in due season.

You give it to them; they gather it; you open your hand, and they are filled with good things.

When you hide your face, they are terrified;

when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.

You send forth your Spirit, and they are created; and so you renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the LORD endure forever; O LORD, rejoice in all your works.

You look at the earth and it trembles; you touch the mountains and they smoke.

I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will praise my God while I have my being.

May these words of mine please God. I will rejoice in the LORD.

Bless the LORD, O my soul.

Hallelujah!

John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

[Jesus said,] “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.

“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

GATHERING SONG Holy Spirit (You Are Welcome Here)

Verse 1 **There's nothing worth more that will ever come close
Nothing can compare You're our living hope –
Your Presence, Lord**

Verse 2 **I've tasted and seen of the sweetest of loves
Where my heart becomes free and my shame is undone
Your Presence Lord**

Chorus **Holy Spirit, You are welcome here!
Come flood this place and fill the atmosphere!
Your glory God is what our hearts long for
To be overcome by Your Presence, Lord.**

Interlude **Your Presence Lord**

Interlude **Your Presence Lord Your Presence
Oh God how we love Your Presence Lord**

Bridge **Let us become more aware of Your Presence –
Let us experience the glory of Your goodness (Lord)**

CCLI Song # 6087919

by Bryan Torwal and Katie Torwalt,

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Jesus Culture Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)

On the Bryan and Katie Torwalt album "Here on Earth". Year 2011.

as found here: <https://amzn.to/3ao4OuO>

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Performance by the Times Square Church Choir, 08/08/20, Matthew Grant

as found at this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UsI_ctYTLqQ [8:10]

Performance by Heavens Mutambira & Amplified Praise, 06/17/17, AmplifiedPraiseTV1

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2q7hMfmVL3I> [7:45]

Please note that here we go live on Facebook.

WELCOME

OPENING SONG Holy Spirit (You Are Welcome Here)

Verse 1 **There's nothing worth more that will ever come close
Nothing can compare You're our living hope –
Your Presence, Lord**

Verse 2 **I've tasted and seen of the sweetest of loves
Where my heart becomes free and my shame is undone
Your Presence Lord**

Chorus **Holy Spirit, You are welcome here!
Come flood this place and fill the atmosphere!
Your glory God is what our hearts long for
To be overcome by Your Presence, Lord.**

Interlude **Your Presence Lord**

Interlude **Your Presence Lord Your Presence
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Performance by the Sylvan Hills Church of Christ;

Mark Fonville, video production, 02/03/16, Kevin Hackett

as found at : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlrAqZgsyP4> [4:25]

Word

Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost had come, [the apostles] were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs — in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine”.

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “People of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning! No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

‘In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.
Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.
And I will show portents in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.
The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day.
Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ ”

SERMON

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.

So they can be heard online, these petitions will be offered by the leaders at the microphones.

Gracious God, you give the Holy Spirit to your church, filling it with many and varied gifts.
In the church throughout the world, strengthen us in our visioning and dreaming,
that it may discover anew the Spirit's creative work.

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
and for Salem members & families, especially those celebrating birthdays this week:
Karen Andrews and Michael Caragol.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of life, your mighty works are too numerous to count.
The earth is full of your creatures, living things both great and small.
Open your hand and give them the necessities of this life.
Send your fresh Spirit over the face of the earth.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of the nations, at the sound of the rushing wind,
people speaking different languages proclaimed and heard together your deeds of power.
Fill the leaders of nations with your Holy Spirit,
so that they exercise your gracious will in the lives of people.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of faithfulness, you tend to the needs of your people, even the sighs of our hearts.
Hear those who cry out to you in distress.

Restore to wholeness all who are in any need this day, especially Andrea, Audry, Barbara, Bud,
Jerry, Diane, Dolores, Eron, Grace, Hazel, Jacob, Katherine, Liz, Maria, Martha, Ron, Sarah,
Steve, and all we name in our hearts.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of love, fill Salem with gratitude for the gifts we have received from you.
Renew our faith, expand our ministries, heal our divisions,
and open us to build relationships with and learn from those who are different from us.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of hope, those who have died in you raise their eternal song of praise.
We give you thanks for the many gifts of your people and rejoice in the witness of your saints.

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

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

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 and offerings of time, talent and 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 INVITATION

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 Spirit of the Living God, Fall Afresh on Me

**Spirit of the Living God
Fall fresh on me
Spirit of the Living God
Fall fresh on me
Melt me mold me
Fill me use me
Spirit of the Living God
Fall fresh on me**

CCLI Song # 23488;

Text: based on John 20:22, Acts 2, Romans 8:26, 1 Corinthians 2:12, Galatians 5:16-25, & Ephesians 5:18 by Daniel Iverson, 1890-1977;

Meter 7 4 7 4 8 7 4

Music: IVERSON by Daniel Iverson, 1890-1977

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Performance by the Marble Anniversary Virtual Choir of Marble Church, NYC, comprised of members of The Marble Choir, The Festival of Voices, The Marble Community Gospel Choir, and choir alumni, with Chris Whittaker, audio visual engineer and producer, and produced for worship on January 10, 2021 as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXEjyGTKer8> [2:48]

Sending

ANNOUNCEMENTS, THANK YOU and BLESSING

Here our Facebook Livestream ends.

Meal & Dismissal

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.

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. Grape juice stains! 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.

The body & blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you & keep you in divine grace! **Amen!**

After our Sending Song and the Dismissal, 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.

SENDING SONG & POSTLUDE

Holy Spirit, Rain Down

Renewing Worship # 152

**Holy Spirit, rain down, rain down;
O Comforter and Friend, how we need your touch again;
Holy Spirit, rain down, rain down;
let your power fall, let your voice be heard,
come and change our hearts as we stand on your word; Holy Spirit, rain down.**

**No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind can know what God has in store.
So open up heaven, open it wide, over your church and over our lives.**

Rain down, rain down. (Repeat as desired.)

CCLI Song # 2405227; Russell Fragar

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Performance by Middle Church, with arr.by J. Del Cueto,

featuring Allison Mickelson and the Middle Community Chorus, Allison Mickelson, solo,

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujd74OFZvAo> [3:37]

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, filled with the Spirit, and witness to the awesome things our God has done!

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Holy Spirit, Rain Down

Performance by FCOB Deaf Fellowship

signed in ASL for worship service at Deaf Fellowship at FCOB- www.deaffellowship.net

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnAgL7r0Plc> [5:57]

Announcements

THIS SUNDAY, May 23rd, worship is in person at 9:30 am and on 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 who is doing this well. If you cannot worship in person and would like communion, please contact Pastor Marjo so that that can be arranged. The parish nurses are still reviewing the changes to Covid regulations. For this Sunday, we will continue to wear masks and maintain social distancing inside the church. We will no longer take temperatures but will ask you how you feel. And remember, to find our donate page, worship bulletin with order of worship and announcements, sermon, and other resources, go to SalemBridgeport.org/Live.

You may have been vaccinated, but please bear in mind that not everyone is able to receive the vaccine due to their health condition. The more cautious we are, the faster we can reach herd immunity and get back to normal. So, please, let's all do our part to end this pandemic. 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. As St. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 8, while he has the freedom to certain things, he chooses not to use his freedom if it will hurt someone else. In other words, it's not about how safe WE feel, but about how safe we make OTHERS around us feel. 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.

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

Sunday Night Alive will meet TONIGHT at 6 pm on zoom! We'll watch a short play, "A Night at the Theatre" written by a certain playwright named Jeanette Harris and featuring a beloved Salem couple! You won't want to miss this chance to gather together with old friends and new, people like you and people unlike you - who LIKE you, even LOVE you, as the beloved child of God you are! So PLEASE, join in our faith-filled fun and fellowship -- and invite someone else to come with you! The link is here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82224426828?pwd=aTNKcUE4eEdINEliYlFVd1RnYlIiXQT09>

Meeting ID: 822 2442 6828 Passcode: 209780;

One tap mobile +13017158592,,82224426828# US (Germantown);
+13126266799,,82224426828# US (Chicago)

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.

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.

Salem's semi-annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday June 27th, following worship. *Council will decide whether to have an all in-person meeting, a hybrid in-person/zoom meeting, or a zoom meeting with the sanctuary open as a zoom location. If you have a preference or other input, please speak with Pastor Marjo.*

Our next "Forward on the FIRST" adult forum is scheduled for Sunday June 6th on zoom! Now that we are worshipping in-person, we needed to come up for a new plan for adult forum and specifically for our Forward discussions. We realized that not everyone is able or comfortable meeting in person. Plus, since we used to have trouble hearing at Council meetings even when we were sitting side by side(!), trying to hear in the lounge with every one spaced 6' apart isn't going to work. So we want to meet by zoom. Yet as wonderful as zoom technology is, it doesn't work when you have more than one person in a small space on zoom – there's too much sound feedback. So here's the plan: if you want to participate in adult forum, please bring your laptop or tablet or smart phone with you, and after worship, we can spread out into different rooms – lounge, music room, music office, workroom, church office, narthex – or you can sit outside or in your car. For those who prefer, you may stay in the sanctuary and have that be your shared zoom room. And of course for those who are worshipping via Facebook live, simply join from the comfort of your own home – or wherever you are. We are also moving our Forward discussions to the FIRST Sunday of the month, since that follows our Council meeting and will allow us to bring you the most timely information possible. As always, the zoom link will be on the calendar at SalemBridgeport.org/Resources/Calendar. PLEASE JOIN US! :D

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, so mark your calendars for June 12th.** 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. (Thank you, Bruce for ensuring that this important time for talking informally about our faith lives continues even in the midst of a pandemic!) It's been outdoors until this month when we met in the lounge. We're working on figuring out how to make the sound work so we can offer this important time on zoom as well.

Inner-View Chat'n'Chew meets the **3rd Saturday of the month at 11:00**, so **mark your calendars for June 19th**. 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. The theme for Evites are sent out to those on the Genesis mailing list but you can also find the Zoom link on Salem's calendar.

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport's Raising the BAR: Becoming Anti-Racist monthly series has ended for the year. There will be a summer series announced soon. For more info, go to CCGB.org.

THANK YOU!!! – Even though our staff works primarily from their homes, our ministries (and the expenses to fund those ministries) continue. We are grateful for everyone who continues to give their tithes and offerings to our work here at Salem. We are also grateful to those who have taken advantage of the opportunity to give online, especially to sign up for regular weekly or monthly donations. Every gift no matter how small is appreciated and will enable us to continue to do God's work in this place. If you'd like help signing up for online giving please do not hesitate to contact Pastor Marjo, Karl, Ray Anderson, Jean Larson, or Nancy Headford.

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

Let's stay connected! 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.

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

**Nicolaus Copernicus, died 1543; Leonhard Euler, died 1783; scientists
Monday, May 24, 2021**

These two men were both scientists who helped to explain the wonders of God's universe. Copernicus is best known for promoting the idea that the sun, not the earth, is at the center of our solar system.

Euler was one of the founders of pure mathematics, and contributed to many other fields.

**John Calvin, renewer of the church, died 1564
Thursday, May 27, 2021**

Gifted both as a systematic theologian and as an interpreter of scriptures, Calvin embraced the Reformation, and as a preacher in Geneva, Switzerland, brought a theocratic government to it. He is regarded as the father of the Reformed churches.

**Jiri Tranovský, hymnwriter, died 1637
Saturday, May 29, 2021**

Tranovský is considered to be the father of Slovak hymnody as well as an important reformer of the Slavic church.

He translated the Augsburg Confession (the basis of Lutheran teachings) and published a collection of Slovak hymns.

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. *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](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Slavery%20Apology%20Explanation.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.*