



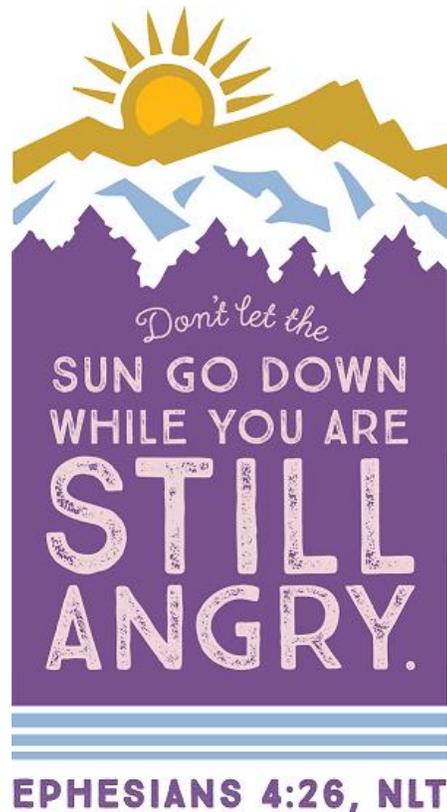
Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

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

*12th Sunday
After
Pentecost*

*August 15, 2021
9:30 AM*



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Gathering

GATHERING READINGS

As you prepare for worship, we encourage you to read and reflect on these lessons.

1 Kings 19:4-8

[Elijah] went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat". He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again. The angel of the LORD came a second time, touched him, and said, "Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you". He got up, and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God.

Psalm 34:1-8

I will bless the LORD at all times; the praise of God shall ever be in my mouth.
I will glory in the LORD; let the lowly hear and rejoice.
Proclaim with me the greatness of the LORD; let us exalt God's name together.
I sought the LORD, who answered me and delivered me from all my terrors.
Look upon the LORD and be radiant, and let not your faces be ashamed.
I called in my affliction, and the LORD heard me and saved me from all my troubles.
The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear the LORD and delivers them.
Taste and see that the LORD is good; happy are they who take refuge in God!

John 6:35, 41-51

Jesus said... "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever trust me will never be thirsty. Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven". They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" Jesus answered them, "Do not complain among yourselves. No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God'. Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. Very truly, I tell you, whoever trusts has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

Please note that here we go live on Facebook.

GATHERING SONG

Taste and See

*(as found in the ELCA worship books
Evangelical Lutheran Worship # 493 and This Far by Faith # 126)*

*When we worship indoors
please meditate on the text or sing it silently in your head,
or if you would like to sing softly, PLEASE wear a mask.
While you may feel safe singing, not everyone feels safe having you sing.
They may not tell you that – they may just stop coming to worship.
When we are outdoors we can sing (softly, please, unless you are masked!)
As Christians we are to put our love for God and others before our own desires,
So please, exercise patience, understanding, and love for your neighbor.
Thank you.*

Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord.
Oh, taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord.

I will bless the Lord at all times. Praise shall always be on my lips;
my soul shall glory in the Lord; for God has been so good to me.

Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord.
Oh, taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord.

Glorify the Lord with me. Together let us all praise God's name.
I called the Lord, who answered me; from all my troubles I was set free.

Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord.
Oh, taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord.

Worship the Lord, all you people. You'll want for nothing if you ask.
Taste and see that the Lord is good; in God we need put all our trust.

Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord.
Oh, taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord.

Text: based on Psalm 34:1-8 by James E. Moore Jr., b. 1951; Meter Irregular

Music: TASTE AND SEE by James E. Moore Jr.

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Performance by Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, 10/31/20

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odRVKOTMaFg> [5:02]

WELCOME

OPENING SONG

Awake, O Sleeper
(from the Hymnal Supplement 1991 # 813)

*When we worship indoors
please meditate on the text or sing it silently in your head,
or if you would like to sing softly, PLEASE wear a mask.
While you may feel safe singing, not everyone feels safe having you sing.
They may not tell you that – they may just stop coming to worship.
When we are outdoors we can sing (softly, please, unless you are masked!)
As Christians we are to put our love for God and others before our own desires,
So please, exercise patience, understanding, and love for your neighbor.
Thank you.*

Awake, O sleeper, arise from death, abandon the shadows of night;
the wind of the spirit shall be your breath, and Christ will fill you with light.

Once you were darkness, once you were lost in the shadows.
Once you were darkness, now you are children of light.

Awake, O sleeper, arise from death, abandon the shadows of night;
the wind of the spirit shall be your breath, and Christ will fill you with light.-

Live as God's people, live as God's justice and mercy,
filled with compassion, filled with the power of love.

Awake, O sleeper, arise from death, abandon the shadows of night; -
the wind of the spirit shall be your breath, and Christ will fill you with light.

Shine out with the splendor of love, shine with justice and righteousness.
Sing the music your spirit has heard, the songs of glory and light.

Awake, O sleeper, arise from death, abandon the shadows of night;
the wind of the spirit shall be your breath, and Christ will fill you with light.

OneLicense Song # #03165

Text: based on Ephesians 5 by Marty Haugen, b. 1950;

Music: AWAKE, O SLEEPER by Marty Haugen, b. 1950;

Text and Music: © 1987 GIA Publications, Inc.)

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Performance by St. Mark's Lutheran Winnipeg, 03/30/20

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvAUSL5gxAE> [2:56]

Word

READINGS

John 6:35, 47 *You may stand for the reading of the Gospel if you so desire.*

³⁵Jesus said...“I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever trust me will never be thirsty...⁴⁷Very truly, I tell you, whoever trusts has eternal life.“

Ephesians 5 *You may be seated.*

¹Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, ²and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

³But fornication and impurity of any kind, or greed, must not even be mentioned among you, as is proper among saints. ⁴Entirely out of place is obscene, silly, and vulgar talk; but instead, let there be thanksgiving. ⁵Be sure of this, that no fornicator or impure person, or one who is greedy (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes on those who are disobedient. ⁷Therefore do not be associated with them. ⁸For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light — ⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

¹⁵Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, ²⁰giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

²¹Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. ²²Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. ²⁴Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. ²⁸In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, ³⁰because we are members of his body. ³¹For this reason a man will leave his father & mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. ³²This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. ³³Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

SERMON

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION *You may stand for the Prayers if you so desire.*

Rooted in Christ and growing in the Spirit,
we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

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

God of wisdom, enlighten your church.

Guide theologians, biblical scholars, authors, and seminary professors
as they seek greater knowledge and invite others into deeper understanding.

Teach us to ask faithful questions and open our minds to new ideas. For our mission partners,
especially today for Kids Empowered with Your Support, and the New Paradigm Theatre,
and for Salem members and families, especially those celebrating birthdays this week:

Richard Lansing, Pauline Boyum, Mary Anne Caragol, Evan Lansing, Walter Ladue, & Brenda Vazquez.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, mend the earth.

Cool warming oceans and preserve melting ice caps.

Increase our awareness of changing climate patterns
and reveal new approaches to the ecological challenges we face.

Shield those in the path of hurricanes or tropical storms.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all nations, direct our leaders. Guide them in the work of reconciliation.

Grant them courage to lay aside political grudges
and renew their determination to address difficult conflicts.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of compassion, tend to the wounded. Ease the anxiety of those struggling with dementia.

Rescue those tormented by mental illness or mired in addiction.

Come quickly to help all who are grieving and all those who suffer, especially
Ed, Barbara, Bud, Cindy, Darth, Dolores, Eron, Grace, Hazel, Justin, Ryan, Steve, Sue,
and all we name in our hearts.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of beauty, inspire artists. Bless those whose visual and musical gifts enliven this assembly.
Bless the creative work of poets, hymnwriters, composers, painters, sculptors, and others
that enriches our worship and daily life.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of resurrection, bring us to new life.

Give us the living bread from heaven through which we abide in your love,
and on the last day raise us with all the saints to eternal life.

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:

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Thanksgiving

LORD'S PRAYER *You may stand for the Lord's Prayer if you so desire.*

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 *You may stand for the Offering Prayer if you so desire.*

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 *Please be seated.*

In response to God's grace,
it is our joy to return to God our tithes and offerings.
We are grateful for your generosity,
which not only is an exercise of and witness to your faith,
but which funds our ministry together here at Salem.

If you are worshipping with us,
we encourage you to give to your home congregation first,
but invite you to contribute to our ministry also
so that we can continue to take our worship online
as a witness to the power and love of the amazing God we serve.



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

Taste and See

*(as found in the ELCA worship books
Evangelical Lutheran Worship # 493 and This Far by Faith # 126)*

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or if you would like to sing softly, PLEASE wear a mask.
While you may feel safe singing, not everyone feels safe having you sing.
They may not tell you that – they may just stop coming to worship.
When we are outdoors we can sing (softly, please, unless you are masked!)
As Christians we are to put our love for God and others before our own desires,
So please, exercise patience, understanding, and love for your neighbor.
Thank you.*

Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord.
Oh, taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord.

I will bless the Lord at all times. Praise shall always be on my lips;
my soul shall glory in the Lord; for God has been so good to me.

Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord.
Oh, taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord.

Glorify the Lord with me. Together let us all praise God's name.
I called the Lord, who answered me; from all my troubles I was set free.

Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord.
Oh, taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord.

Worship the Lord, all you people. You'll want for nothing if you ask.
Taste and see that the Lord is good; in God we need put all our trust.

Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord.
Oh, taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord.

Text: based on Psalm 34:1-8 by James E. Moore Jr., b. 1951; Meter Irregular

Music: TASTE AND SEE by James E. Moore Jr.

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*Performance directed and produced by Richard Clemmitt, Christ Church, Winnetka, 04/25/21
as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yACCrBeUC80> [4:17]*

Sending

ANNOUNCEMENTS, THANK YOU and BLESSING

Here ends our Facebook live stream.

Meal & Dismissal

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS *You may stand if you so desire.*

Blessed be the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy. **Amen**

God, we have failed to be the people you have called us to be.

We think back on those times

when we have hardened our hearts against the transforming power of your love...

when we have held onto bitterness and anger...

when we have blamed others for our own failures...

when we have spoken ill of others behind their backs...

when our thoughts and words and actions have torn down the body of Christ...

when we have withheld our time and talent and treasure from your work in this place...

Forgive us for our failings, dear God.

Draw us into deeper relationship with you through prayer and the power of your Word.

Make us gentle and humble of heart,

forgiving one another and bearing with one another in love,

making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished.

By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough.

Through Jesus, ✠ the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy:

you are forgiven and loved into abundant life. **Amen**

COMMUNION

Please be seated.

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.

*During communion, you may take your communion elements during worship
or hold on to your kit until you get home.*

*If you take the elements inside the church, open the kit over the pew to prevent spilling on the carpet.
After the service, please dispose of your own kit either in a waste receptacle at church or at home.*

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

SENDING SONG

Let All Things Now Living (as found in the ELCA worship books *Evangelical Lutheran Worship # 881*)

*When we worship indoors
please meditate on the text or sing it silently in your head,
or if you would like to sing softly, PLEASE wear a mask.
While you may feel safe singing, not everyone feels safe having you sing.
They may not tell you that – they may just stop coming to worship.
When we are outdoors we can sing (softly, please, unless you are masked!)
As Christians we are to put our love for God and others before our own desires,
So please, exercise patience, understanding, and love for your neighbor. Thank you.*

Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
to God the creator triumphantly raise,
who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
who still guides us on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us, God's light goes before us,
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night,
till shadows have vanished and darkness is banished,
as forward we travel from light into light.

God rules all the forces: the stars in their courses
and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
the deeps of the ocean proclaim God divine.
We too should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
with glad adoration a song let us raise
till all things now living unite in thanksgiving:
"To God in the highest, hosanna and praise!"

*Text: based on Exodus 12:21-22, Psalm 150:6, Ephesians 5:18-20
by Katherine K. Davis, 1892-1980, alt.; Meter 6 6 11 6 6 11 D*

Music: THE ASH GROVE Welsh folk tune

*Text © 1939, 1966 E.C. Schirmer Music Company; Tune is in the Public Domain
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*Performance by First-Plymouth Church Lincoln Nebraska, 01/24/16
as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ow9JJ6Y-Xoo> [2:40]*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, live in the light of the love of the Lord!
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Take My Life

Holiness, holiness is what I long for.
Holiness is what I need.
Holiness, holiness is what You want from me.

Faithfulness, faithfulness is what I long for.
Faithfulness is what I need.
Faithfulness, faithfulness is what You want from me.

So take my heart; transform it.
Take my mind; inform it.
Take my will; conform it to Yours, to Yours, oh, Lord.

Righteousness, righteousness is what I long for.
Righteousness is what I need.
Righteousness, righteousness is what You want from me.

So take my heart; transform it.
Take my mind; inform it.
Take my will; conform it to Yours, to Yours, oh, Lord.

Oh, so take my heart; transform it.
Take my mind; inform it.
Take my will; conform it to Yours, to Yours, oh, Lord,
to Yours, to Yours, oh, Lord.

Yes, take my heart; transform it.
Take my mind; inform it.
Take my will; conform it to Yours, to Yours, oh, Lord,
to Yours, to Yours, oh, Lord.

CCLI Song # 1617154

Scott Underwood

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Performance by: members of the music ministry of St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish, Newburgh, IN, 02/27/21

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRUtDeRx-Tg> [3:11]

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. *Although churches may claim an exception to the government's current rule that masks be worn by all in all indoor public gatherings, the virus does not respect such exceptions. Some of our members have asked that everyone wear masks as they have people in their lives who cannot be vaccinated. PLEASE respect them and their situations.* The more cautious we are, the healthier those around us will be. As Christians Jesus calls us to love our neighbor, so, please, let's all do our part to end this pandemic. 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 all at Salem as safe as possible!

During communion, you may take your communion elements during worship or hold on to your kit until you get home. If you take the elements inside the church, open the kit over the pew to prevent spilling on the carpet. After the service, please dispose of your own kit either in a waste receptacle at church or at home.

Sunday Worship Services – We are now doing in-person worship with live-streaming to Facebook. *Weather permitting, we will be worshipping outdoors as much as possible this summer, so please bring a lawn chair if you can, or you are welcome to sit at the picnic tables.*

It's not too late to make your steps count! If you walk, or run, or bike, **please join Calumet's Walk the Walk 2021. Here's how:**

1. "Walk the Walk 2021" began on July 1 - BUT....YOU CAN STILL JOIN AND REPORT THE MILES YOU ALREADY DID! It ends on August 31. Each registrant is \$25 (which is actually a donation from you to Calumet!).

2. To register go to: <https://www.calumet.org/giving/walkthewalk> When you register sign up for "TEAM God at the Center". Everyone gets an official Walk the Walk 2021 T Shirt. Dogs get an official Walk the Walk 2021 bandana!

3. Pastor Marjo is your Team Captain. Four times during the 62-Day walk, she will gather mileage from every TEAM member and report the total miles to Calumet. As you as you register email her your miles from July 1-15 at marjoanderson@aol.com.

4. As of July 31st, over 80,000 miles have been walked. All together, Calumet hopes to reach 200,000 miles in the 62-Day period - July & August! If they reach 200,000 miles walked, another hunk of dollars (amount not yet known) will come to Calumet by a group of Angel Donors. During early August, each participant will have the chance - if they wish - to invite friends & family to support them with one-time gifts to Calumet in support of their "Walk the Walk 2021". If everything works perfectly, Calumet will raise at least \$106,250 from "Walk the Walk 2021." How cool is that!

Wednesday at 12:00 noon we meet on zoom for prayer. You can pray out loud if you want, or you can simply ask others to pray for you or for the concerns on your mind or heart.

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

Meeting ID: 828 8277 7326 Passcode: 688740

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

The link is also on the calendar on our website at Salembridgeport.org under the Resources Tab.

Wednesday at 6:30 we meet on zoom to learn how God's Word deepens our life of faith.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85048710511?pwd=NWIxeTFwRkRUbXRmN3k1N2hvQWl6Zz09>

The link is also on the calendar on our website at Salembridgeport.org under the Resources Tab.

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport ENCOURAGES ALL MEMBERS of our congregations to join in their Raising the BAR (Becoming Anti-Racist) 2021

Summer Series via ZOOM. This summer we will join in facilitated conversations on Jemar Tisby's new book, How to Fight Racism. You are welcome to attend any or all of the 5-part series. every other Thursday. Each session is from 7:30-9:00 pm. **The remaining date is 8/26. Register here:**

<https://ccgb.salsalabs.org/summerserie2021/index.html>

You will receive the Zoom link a week before the first session. The Zoom link will remain the same for all sessions. Check out the reviews for Tisby's book here:

https://www.google.com/books/edition/How_to_Fight_Racism/G7bWDwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&printsec=frontcover

The next Salem and Friends Breakfast & Faith Discussion, sponsored by the Salem Men, will be held the 2nd Saturday of September at 8:00. Please join us...and invite a friend!

Let's stay connected! 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. If we can help in any way, please know that you can 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

Mary, Mother of Our Lord

Sunday, August 15, 2021

The church (including Martin Luther) honored Mary with the title theotokos, meaning "God-bearer," for her role in giving birth to the Son of God.

Her song, the Magnificat, speaks eloquently of God's lifting the lowly and feeding the hungry.

Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, died 1153

Friday, August 20, 2021

Bernard, a Cistercian monk, was a man of great spirituality

who wrote mystical works and criticized those

whom he thought took an overly intellectual approach to the faith.

He became an abbot, and wrote several hymns that are still beloved today.

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport Names The Reverend A. Iona Smith Nze as its Next President & CEO

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport is pleased to announce that after a nation-wide search, its Board of Directors has selected the Reverend A. Iona Smith Nze (of Bridgeport!) to serve as its the next President & CEO following the upcoming retirement of its current President & CEO, the Reverend Cass Shaw on June 30, 2021.

The Rev. Smith Nze has been the Senior Pastor of Bethel AME Church in Bridgeport since 2017 and will continue to perform certain pastoral duties at Bethel AME Church through spring of 2022. She has extensive leadership experience in public, non-profit and religious settings. Prior to her first pastoral assignment in 2007, the Rev. Nze managed a variety of outreach programs addressing crisis prevention, food insecurity and immigrant support. Throughout her sacred and secular careers, she has been a visionary thinker, gaining valuable experience in both managing budgets and raising funds. Having served on the Board of Directors of the Council for the past two years, she has a keen understanding of the Council's programs and the strategic partnerships and alliances that provide critical support. She is a gifted orator who holds the distinction in the First Episcopal District for preaching Annual Sermons in three Annual Conferences in under five years. She will be an exceptional spokesperson for the Council throughout the greater Bridgeport community where she is already an advocate through Congregations for a New Connecticut (CONNECT), the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Greater Bridgeport (IMA) – the predominantly black organization of congregations, of which Pastor Marjo is a part, that predates our predominantly white Council of Churches) – and FaithActs for Education.



With experience as pastor of a member congregation of the Council, The Rev. Smith Nze is deeply committed to strengthening ties with current members and connecting with new congregations. “The Board of Directors is confident that the Council will continue to thrive under the spirited leadership and direction of the Reverend Smith Nze, and is grateful to the Reverend Shaw for her outstanding service to the community over the past eight years,” said Board Chair Doug Varga.

The Council formally introduced the Rev. Smith Nze at its Annual Meeting held virtually on Thursday, June 17th.

New Directors elected are: Beswick Channer, Assistant Principal, Bassick High School; Father Reggie Norman, Priest, Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church; the Rev. Rhonda Taylor, Pastor, Golden Hill United Methodist Church, Bridgeport; and Carolyn Vermont, Community Liaison for Mayor of Bridgeport

Directors nominated for new term or office are: Aileen Brill, Esq., Christ and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Westport; the Rev. Curtis Farr, Rector, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Fairfield; **and our own Bonnie McWain, of Salem Lutheran Church, Bridgeport**

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) - <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) - <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.*