



November 2021

the  
SPIRIT

# Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

*A Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Congregation*

## Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

**In November our thoughts turn to thanks.** We begin the month with All Saints' Day, a day set aside in the Church to give thanks for those who have gone before us, for those on whose shoulders we stand, for those who have passed the gospel message along to us. And then towards the end of the month we celebrate Thanksgiving, a day set aside in our country to give thanks for all of the other blessings we have received – for life and health and food and shelter, for family and friends and fellow members of the body of Christ, for our planet with its air and land and water, and its minerals and plants and animals, for work and play and rest, for all that we see and hear and smell and taste and touch..

In his explanation to the first article of the Apostles Creed, Luther puts it this way:

*"I believe that God has made me and all creatures;  
and has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my mem-  
bers, my reason and senses, and still takes care of them.*

*God also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and  
home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have.*

***God richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support  
this body and life.***

***God defends me against all danger and guards and protects me  
from all evil.***

***All this God does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mer-  
cy, without any merit or worthiness in me...."***

All this God does out of divine goodness and mercy. All of this is sheer gift. We have done nothing to deserve these gifts; and there is nothing we can do to deserve them. That's what grace is all about: the undeserved love of God.

**Luther goes on, however, to say, "Therefore, it is my duty to  
thank and praise, serve and obey God...."**

**Notice that our response is not simply gratitude, but rather a  
fourfold response: thank & praise & serve & obey.**

**Thank.** As humans who are captive to sin and who cannot free ourselves, as beings who are by nature self-centered and curved in upon ourselves, as people who can easily believe that we deserve the things we've worked for, we can go about our daily lives taking God's countless blessings for granted. But every single thing we are, and every single thing we have, and every single moment we are alive, is a gift from a gracious God, and so we need to take time on a regular basis to recognize all that God has done for us and to say a personal

and heartfelt thank you to God.

**Praise.** Thanking God privately, however, is not enough. The scriptures command us to praise God publicly! When God answers our prayers, we are to witness aloud to God's grace and goodness! We are to proclaim the mighty acts of God within the assembly of God's people, and also spread the news to all the world! In fact, if we are truly moved by what God has done for us, we will not be able to be quiet about it!

**Serve.** Even heartfelt words of gratitude and joyous shouts of praise aren't enough of a response. Whatever God gives us – whether our time, talent, or treasure – is meant to be shared. God gives us our talents for a reason – so that they can be put to use in serving God and God's people and God's whole creation. God gives us treasure for the same reason, so that as God has been generous to us, we, too, can be generous. Service, however, is about more than about what it is that we offer; it's about the way we see others. If we see ourselves as those who "have", generously giving to those who "have not", we are not acting as servants but as benefactors. Serving requires that we put the "others" above ourselves, that we see them as God's gift to us, that we see in them the very face of the God.

**Obey.** And this is the hardest one of all, because it's not simply about obeying rules, but about obeying God. And it is not about using our intellect or common sense to make a decision that is logical and then simply assume that is what God wants. On the contrary, it's about submitting our minds and hearts and wills to God, and acting, not out of logic, but out of faith. In fact, if it's a question between doing what's logical and what's illogical, scripture tells us that God is usually calling us to do the illogical, the scary, the difficult, the challenging thing. Obedience is about giving up what we want, what we think is best, in order to do what God wants and what God knows is best.

**So this is our challenge this month: to spend November re-  
membering that all that we are and all that we have are gifts of a  
good and gracious God. And therefore, it is our duty – and our  
delight – to thank and praise and serve and obey this amazing,  
awesome, abundant, all-powerful, and all-loving God!**

Blessings be yours!

*Pastor Marjo*

## SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

3160 Park Avenue  
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604  
Phone (203) 336-3300 ▪ Fax (203) 336-8813

Website - [www.salembridgeport.org](http://www.salembridgeport.org)

Facebook - [www.facebook.com/SalemBridgeport/](http://www.facebook.com/SalemBridgeport/)

### Church Office Hours

Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

### Worship Services

Sunday 9:30am In Person Worship

### Salem's Staff

The Rev. Marjo Anderson, Pastor  
Cell Phone (203) 982-3441  
[marjoanderson@aol.com](mailto:marjoanderson@aol.com)

Karl Kraft, Office Manager  
Office Phone (203) 336-3300  
[salemsec123@sbcglobal.net](mailto:salemsec123@sbcglobal.net)

Jennifer Reyes, Sexton  
Pablo, Cruz, Sexton  
Office Phone (203) 336-3300, ext. 10

## LEADERSHIP AT SALEM

### COUNCIL

Marjo Anderson, Pastor  
Ray Anderson, President  
Tom Larson, Vice-President  
Nancy Headford, Secretary  
Rich Kenyon, Treasurer  
Liz Bales  
Sandra Brown  
John Bryk  
Frank Dukenski  
Steve Kuczo  
Rich Lansing  
Judi Nielsen  
Diane Tomasko

## We Are Grateful



### Memorial

Ann Martin (In Memory of Joseph Andrews)

The following people have asked for  
healing, help, guidance or comfort.

Joan B	Daphne B
Barbara B	Peter K
Sam B	Bobby W
Erick D	Anna
Grace D	Barbara
Hannah & Joseph	James S
Bob H	Sarah R
Dennis H	Brooks A
Sylvitha	Angie
Jay	Liz F.
Mike R	Hazel P
Jane M	Katherine P
Jana B	
William S	



Please pass the word! Tell your family. Tell your friends.

### St. Vincent Medical Mission

Saturday, November 6, 2021 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Cesar Batalla School, 606 Howard Ave, Bridgeport, CT  
**Fall Health Care** for all  
Walk in, no appointments taken, no insurance needed



- ⇒ Free immunizations (e.g., Covid, Flu, Pneumonia)
- ⇒ Free blood work (e.g., blood tests, blood pressure)
- ⇒ Free foot care
- ⇒ Free medical equipment (e.g., walkers, canes)
- ⇒ Free clothing (e.g., new shoes, coats, masks)



# November 2021

## Salem Lutheran Church



SUN	MON Nov 1	TUE 2	WED 3	THU 4	FRI 5	SAT 6
	<b>All Saints Day</b> 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Anti 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tex 7pm STEPP Group - CR	12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 3:30pm Anti-Racism Planning Meeting 6:30pm Bible Study	6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
<b>All Saints Sunday</b> 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Forward on the FIRST 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 11:45am CPC - Picnic Area 12pm CHURCH 7pm STEPP Group - CR	4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Anti 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room 6:30pm Social Ministry Committee Meeting	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tex 6pm Stewardship Committee 7pm STEPP Group - CR	12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	8am The BREAKFAST Gathering! 11:30am Baronavski/Kemp Baptism
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<b>Pentecost 25</b> 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 7pm STEPP Group - CR	4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Anti 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room 6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting 7:30pm Executive Committee Meeting	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tex 7pm STEPP Group - CR	<b>Golden Hill Community Supper</b> 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	11am Inner-View Chat n Chew 1:30pm S Pasqua memorial service
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
<b>Christ the King</b> 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 7pm STEPP Group - CR	4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Anti 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room 7pm Council Meeting	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tex 7pm STEPP Group - CR	12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	<b>Day of Thanksgiving (Office Closed)</b> 6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	
28	29	30	 			
<b>Advent 1</b> 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 6pm Sunday Night Alive! 7pm STEPP Group - CR	4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Anti 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tex 7pm STEPP Group - CR				

Steve Kuczo .....	1
Nancy Kidwell .....	2
Aidan Palmieri .....	7
Augustine Palmieri .....	7
Carl Horton.....	10
Nicholas Roberts.....	13
Larson Palmgren.....	13
Tiana Rose.....	14
Christoph Dow .....	15
Carter Gulyas .....	15
Katrina Cotter.....	16
Sienna Cotter .....	17
Jaxon Gulyas .....	18

Dorothy DeWalt .....	21
Justin Claus .....	27



### Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

We have an amazing God who provides for us and our Congregation in so many ways. We are thankful for answered prayers of healing, our family and friends, our health and the newest member of the Bellows family. You should have received your pledge card by now but, if not, we have extras available. The ingathering of pledge cards will be November 14<sup>th</sup>. Remember God is good so “Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart”.

Salem's Annual Seafarers Collection will begin starting on Nov. 1 and run until Dec. 5. We are collecting Woolen Caps, Sweatshirts (L-XL), Thermal or White Socks, T-Shirts (L), Chocolate, Canned Nuts, and Hard Candy. Please place your contribution in the marked box in the Narthex. Also, Cash contributions can be sent to **Ruth Setaro, 33 Valley Brook Lane, North Haven, CT 06473** with a note specifying that it is for the Seafarers and include your name and address. Pastor Ruth Setaro will send you a thank you card for your records.

Newsletter deadline is the 15th of each month unless otherwise noted in the monthly calendar.

Next deadline date is **November 15th** for the **December issue!**

Email submissions to  
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net

# Devotions offered by Liz Bales at a recent council meeting

The church cannot be the church without the elderly. They are the essential elements of the church's story - according to scripture, old and young belong together. They are all part of the great family of God.

Some seniors have a phobia about aging. They see their retirement years as a curse of boredom and uselessness. Others see them as an opportunity for the pursuit of leisure. During the winter some seek a warmer climate, away from their family, friends and their local church. Old age is not just a time to relax and play golf, not is it a time to reminiscence about the past. Though relaxation and reminiscence surely have their rightful places in our lives.)

Instead, in old age, as throughout our lives, we must continue to pursue the way of serving others, conforming our own lives to the self-giving pattern of Jesus. The Christian practice of growing old is shaped by the example of Jesus, who emptied himself and became obedient, even to the point of death, for our sake. (Philippians 2:1-13) Our Lord never promised his followers an easy path to tread. The way of discipleship leads to the cross. (Mark 8:34-38; Luke 14:25-27)

Of course, not every senior is able to volunteer for mission or church work. Some have multiple health problems. Their physical disabilities limit them in their activities. But they can pray for others and offer friendship.

## **The Best is Yet to Come**

As we age, we become more aware of the swift passing of years. We can either let the fear of death put a mental stranglehold on us or look to the future with hope. The best is yet to come! Jesus Christ, the risen and ascended Lord is the ground of our hope and the promise of our deliverance. The hope of the resurrection lies at the heart of the way in which Christians embody the practices of growing old. We serve a faithful God who will never forget us!

We are strangers and pilgrims on earth - the older we become, the nearer we are to our eternal home. This truth encourages even the oldest individual to cherish each moment of life while preparing to relinquish it. Each day is a gift from God. We look to him for our daily bread while making sure that we seek first the kingdom of God rather than squandering our time and energy on secondary concerns.

With the prospect of a glorious future for all who are in Christ, we can identify with Martin Luther's suggestions that, "in the purpose of God, this world is only a preparation and a scaffolding for the world to come." I also think of John Calvin's teaching that we are "to learn to pass through the world as though it is a foreign country, treating all things lightly and declining to set our hearts on them."



# Troop 103 News

The past year and a half has been a challenge for all of us. In spite of the challenges, though, our scouts have persevered and, in fact thrived. During the early pandemic, the troop continued meeting on Zoom, like the rest of the world. It was not particularly fulfilling, but it kept the boys connected and allowed them to discover a new way of scouting. Summer camp, an annual highlight of the scout program, was converted to an all-online format in 2020, in which the troop participated. When in-person meetings were again permitted, we met outside by a campfire, a format which we followed through the winter and continue to follow (except for rainy days.) Again, a new and fun way of doing things. Summer camp returned in 2021 with many safety modification and the boys had a blast! They are a really good bunch of kids!

During this time we also had two of our scouts attain the Eagle Scout rank, an achievement earned by less than 3% of all scouts. In addition to a bunch of merit badges and troop leadership roles, this also requires a significant community service project, with a lot of new challenges created by the "new normal" way of doing things. But, they rose to and met the challenges.

Much of this success has been made possible by your past support of our annual Troop 103 Wreath Sale and other fund raisers. This year we are again offering 22" decorated wreaths and window boxes for \$20 each. The proceeds from this sale help to offset the annual registration fees for the troop and other operating expenses. Please let me know if you would like to support our troop. Payment can be made at the time of delivery.

Wreaths and boxes will be available for pick-up or delivery anytime after Noon on Sat Nov 27. Checks should be made payable to BOY SCOUT TROOP 103.

Thanks again for your continued support of these future community leaders.

Bruce Tomasko

Chartered Organization Representative

Troop 103

Salem Lutheran Church

203-521-8103 (C)



# WEEKLY AND MONTHLY EVENTS

**Mid-Week Wednesday Worship through Prayer!** 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. Jesus says, "I tell you truly that if two of you on the earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by My Father in heaven." Author Frank Peretti writes that it is our prayers that empower the angels to fight the spiritual battles which are where the real battles are fought and won. If there is something you or your family or congregation needs, then the more people you have praying for it, the more power that prayer wields. 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. So please, join us on **Wednesdays at noon** on zoom for a half-hour as we turn our worries and cares over to the Lord in prayer. The zoom link will be on the calendar on Salem's website at Salembridgeport.org under the Resources Tab. Or you can simply click on [this link](#).

**"Forward on the FIRST" adult forum 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 **2<sup>nd</sup> 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. (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 **3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month at 11:00**, so mark your calendars for **June 19<sup>th</sup>**. 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.

**There are many ways to find the zoom link for worship and all other Salem events.** The most reliable way is to go to our website - [www.salembridgeport.org](http://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](http://www.salembridgeport.org/live). Or to see how to get there, [click here](#):

# Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease is an illness that destroys large number of nerve cells in the brain. This affects a person's ability to remember things, think clearly and use good judgement.

Doctors do not know what causes the disease. Most of the time it begins after age 60. Nearly half of people over 85 have Alzheimer's. Studies found a heart-related connection where heart disease, diabetes, stroke, high pressure and high cholesterol can increase the risk. Your doctor should monitor your heart health and treat any problems.

Alzheimer's disease usually starts slowly and worsens over time. The rate of progression varies. There is no cure but treatments are available such as medications.

Eating a healthy diet, staying socially active, avoiding tobacco, avoiding excess alcohol, and exercising body and mind help keep the brain healthy and may reduce the risk of Alzheimer's.

The Alzheimer's Association is available for families, caregivers and patients for services, support and research. Call (800) 272-3900 or go to [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org).



## 10 Early Signs and Symptoms of Alzheimer's

- 1. Memory loss that disrupts daily life** - forgetting recently learned information, forgetting important dates or events, asking the same questions over and over, and relying on memory aids. *[Age appropriate: Sometimes forgetting names or appointments but remembering them later.]*
- 2. Challenges in planning or solving problems** - having difficulties following a plan or working with numbers, taking much longer to do things that they did before. *[Age appropriate: Making occasional errors when managing finances or household bills.]*
- 3. Difficulty completing familiar tasks** - having trouble driving to a familiar location, organizing a grocery list, or remembering the rules of a favorite game. *[Age appropriate: Occasionally needing help to use microwave settings or to record a TV show.]*
- 4. Confusion with time or place** - losing track of dates, seasons and passage of time, trouble remembering where they are or how they got there. *[Age appropriate: Getting confused about the day of the week but figuring it out later.]*
- 5. Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships** - having vision problems leading to difficulties with balance and with reading, trouble judging distances, and trouble determining color or contrast. *[Age appropriate: Vision changes related to cataracts.]*
- 6. New problems with words** - having trouble following or joining a conversation, stopping in the middle of a conversation and not knowing how to continue, struggling with vocabulary, trouble naming a familiar object or using the wrong name. *[Age appropriate: Sometimes having trouble finding the right word.]*
- 7. Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps** - putting things in unusual places, losing things and be unable to go back over their steps to find them again. *[Age appropriate: Misplacing things from time to time and re-tracing steps to find them.]*
- 8. Decreased or poor judgement** - using poor judgement when dealing with money, not paying attention to grooming or keeping themselves clean. *[Age appropriate: Making a bad decision or mistake once in a while like neglecting to change the oil in the car.]*
- 9. Withdrawal from work or social activities** - due to problems with communications they may withdraw from hobbies, social activities or other engagements, having problems with a favorite team or activity. *[Age appropriate: Sometimes feeling uninterested in family or social obligations.]*
- 10. Changes in mood and personality** - become confused, suspicious, depressed, fearful or anxious, becoming upset at home, with friends or when out of their comfort zone. *[Age appropriate: Developing very specific ways of doing things and becoming irritable when a routine is disrupted.]*





## The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, Inc.

*Leveraging Hope, Transforming Communities*

*Service \* Dialogue \* Collaboration*

Dear Friend,

October 15, 2021

Seventy-five years old and feeling great! And you're the reason.

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in grand style. With a \$75,000 challenge gift in hand, we asked you and several others to meet the challenge either by increasing your donation or becoming a new donor. The outpouring of generosity and affection was amazing.

We achieved our \$75,000 match by the end of January 2021. Inspired by the early success, we secured a second \$75,000 challenge and by June 30, 2021, we met that goal.

An achievement of this magnitude has multiple benefits:

- Most importantly, we provided \$300,000 worth of programs, services, food, financial support, and advocacy to help people in need
- The additional monies came at perhaps the most critical time in our 75-year history, a world-wide pandemic
- We powerfully affirmed our mission, "As people of faith and partners in service, we create and sustain a more just, healthy, and vibrant society"
- We established the long-term viability of CCGB by sustaining 295 regular donors, having 147 regular donors increase their giving, and attracting 153 new donors
- We celebrated 75 years that CCGB has directly improved the lives of over 3,000,000 children and adults with services, education, food, clothing, housing, and financial support!

Thank you for making 2020-2021 the most successful of our 75 years of operation. We start our next 75 years with confidence, purpose, and passion. Confident because of your generosity; a sense of purpose to sustain our impact on thousands of lives; passionate to expand and improve our services and programs.

Leveraging hope and changing lives – today, CCGB has an unequalled opportunity to meet the needs of a diverse community and help create and sustain a more just, healthy and vibrant community. As we prepare for a new year of meeting the needs of a diverse community, we invite you to sustain your new level of giving to CCGB. We value your continued support!

Sincerely,

Rev. Iona Smith Nze,  
President and CEO

**Advocacy \* Food Equity and Economic Development \* Ecumenical & Interfaith  
Re-Entry \* Youth in Crisis**

1718 Capitol Avenue · Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604-1531  
Tel: 203.334.1121 · Fax: 203.367.8113 · [www.ccg.org](http://www.ccg.org)



# YOUR SUPPORT MADE A DIFFERENCE!

*Thank you!*

## TWO \$75,000 MATCHES WERE MET!

Your support helped us achieve our first \$75,000 match by the end of January 2021. Inspired by our donors response, we secured a second \$75,000 challenge and by June 30, 2021 your generosity allowed us to meet that goal too!

## \$300,000

Your generous support raised \$300,000 which allowed our programs to continue to deliver services, food, financial support, and our advocacy work!

## 75TH ANNIVERSARY DONORS

**595 DONORS SUPPORTED THE COUNCIL THROUGH OUR ANNIVERSARY APPEALS!**

- 147 donors generously increased their support.
- 153 were welcomed as new donors!
- 295 sustaining donors continued their generous support.

## 3 MILLION SERVED

Your support has directly improved the lives of over three (3) million children and adults through our Hunger Outreach Network, the Janus Center, Proyecto Nueva Vida, our Street Outreach Team, and Raising the B.A.R. that provide services, education, food, clothing, housing, and financial support to Greater Bridgeport.

## NEWS + UPDATES

Visit our new website to see our award winning videos that highlight our great programs and to see what we are up to as we head into our 76th year serving Greater Bridgeport!

[www.ccgb.org](http://www.ccgb.org)



Rev. Marjo Anderson  
Salem Lutheran Church  
3160 Park Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06606

September 29, 2021

Dear Rev. Anderson and members of the Salem Lutheran Church,

Thank you so much for supporting The Council of Churches with your generous donation of \$1,125.00.  
**Thank you for helping us reach our goals in 2021!** Through the Covid-19 Pandemic supporters like you, have helped us look forward with great optimism!

Your financial gift helps to bolster the Council's programs. We are able to:

- Provide intervention for youth and families in crisis through the Janus Center case managers.
- Supply Howard, our Street Outreach Worker, with the resources of food and essential needs to homeless youth, to help get them off the streets and into stable housing.
- Supply fresh produce through our Mobile Market Truck to many, including senior citizens and college students.



As you probably know, the poorest among us, especially people of color, have suffered most through this pandemic.

THANK YOU for being part of this ministry, and helping us bring healthy food, safety, support, and new opportunities to those we serve!

Grace and Peace,

Rev. A. Iona Smith Nze  
President and Chief Executive Officer

*Dear Pastor Marjo,  
Thank you and the congregation  
of Salem Lutheran Church for  
your generous donation to CCGB.  
I look forward to our work  
together!*  
*Wan*



# Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

**STORIES** OF FAITH IN ACTION

## Nevada goats receive Lutheran baa-lessing

By Erin Strybis

How did 260 goats end up [being blessed](#) at St. Paul Lutheran Family in Carson City, Nevada?

"It was a pretty big ordeal," said Chad Adamik, pastor of St. Paul. "We were in a really bad drought ... and the goats were [doing] what they call 'fire mitigation.'"

No *kid*-ding—the goats were working on St. Paul's 4 acres, which were overrun with cheatgrass this past August. They're employed by High Desert Graziers in Wellington, Nev., owned by Dennie Cook.

Adamik said Cook's goats had been grazing outside St. Paul's property, and when Cook noticed the congregation's cheatgrass crisis, he offered his company's services.

When Adamik learned how much fire mitigation would cost, he told Cook the church couldn't afford him. In the past, members mowed the cheatgrass—a fire hazard in Carson City's hot climate. (Though wildfires hadn't entered Carson City, Adamik noted that this summer the city experienced unusually high levels of air pollution from fires further west.)

Cook responded with a generous offer: he'd let his herd graze at St. Paul for free. "It was completely unexpected," Adamik said. "We were very, very appreciative of that."

"Wednesday through Saturday, the goats grazed, and people would stop by to watch them, he added. On Sunday, the goat's final day working the grounds, Adamik visited after St. Paul's second worship service and offered a spontaneous blessing.

He prayed over all 260 goats plus a handful of herding dogs that day, giving thanks for the way the animals *baa*-lessed the congregation and community.



"Having the goats out here helped ... highlight that animals are wonderful companions and they do provide a lot of love and they do provide a function in order to keep the circle of life going," Adamik said.

Furthermore, the goats inspired the congregation's council to discern how they might develop their property to better serve the Carson City community. [Homelessness has grown](#) in the area recently, he noted.

Animal blessings in ELCA congregations are common, though they typically take place in October. Earlier this week, the church at large recognized Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals. In celebration, many ELCA congregations—including St. Paul—offer (or have already offered) [pet blessings](#).

"The creation stories in Genesis and Hebrew Scripture point to the fact that all [creation] is a gift," Adamik said. "An awareness of this gift will hopefully elicit a response [from God's people] to care for that which has been given to us."

Erin Strybis is a content editor of *Living Lutheran*

## News From Around the World

As Afghan evacuees arrive in the United States, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) is resettling Afghan families. In addition to supplementing the work of LIRS, Lutheran Disaster Response is reaching out to synods, congregations and affiliates that are welcoming Afghan refugees. In Afghanistan, the increase in conflict is forcing people to flee their homes. Community World Service Asia (CWSA) is assisting internally displaced Afghan families through food security and cash assistance. Lutheran Disaster Response contributed to ACT Alliance's Rapid Response Fund, which is funding CWSA's work in Afghanistan. Click on the image above to learn more.



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Since 1994, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have cooperated to welcome volunteer teachers to Central Europe. The program welcomes 12-20 new and returning volunteer teachers to serve in Lutheran schools in several towns and cities. Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on borders and travel, the ELCA was unable to send any new volunteer teachers in the 2020-2021 academic year. However, this August we were able to welcome new volunteer teachers, who joined those about to return. At the end of their in-country orientation in Bratislava, Slovakia, the teachers were blessed for their year of ministry by the Rev. Kyle Svenningsen, pastor of Bratislava International Church.

