



# Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

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

*for those with  
hearing challenges*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday  
in Advent*

*December 12,  
2021  
9:30 AM*

*He will baptize  
you with the  
Holy Spirit  
and with  
fire.*



Luke 3:16

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YouTube – Salem Lutheran Church, Bridgeport CT

# Gathering

Welcome!

**Council has decided to move worship back indoors as the weather is growing cooler.** It was also decided that if you are fully vaccinated, a mask is recommended but not mandatory inside. If you are immune-compromised and fully vaccinated, a mask is strongly recommended inside. If you are not fully vaccinated, a mask must be worn inside. **Although Council voted to not require masks, Pastor Marjo asks that you please wear one.** **Despite the fact that she was vaccinated just 6 months ago, is younger than most of the congregation, in excellent health, and is pretty cautious about wearing her mask, she ended up with a breakthrough infection and was sick for 12 days. Although the vaccine kept her from being seriously ill, she could have easily transmitted the virus to someone who was not vaccinated and that person could have ended up being hospitalized or even dying. Thank God that did not happen. Soft singing of hymns will be permitted BUT PLEASE SING ONLY IF YOU ARE WEARING A MASK.** While we know not everyone will be happy with this decision, please understand that whether it's about indoors vs. outdoors, masks vs. no masks, singing vs. no singing, there is simply no way we can please everyone. As Christians, however, it is our call to put aside our own preferences and focus not on our own desires, but on what God asks of us – which is to provide a place where even the most vulnerable in our midst feel safe. We have too many attendees with comorbidities and too many who are in contact with unvaccinated grandchildren to be less than cautious. Thank you for your understanding and your support.

**There will be a special congregational meeting on today** immediately following the 9:30 service. Accommodations will be made for ZOOM attendance. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and vote on the sale of the church building and property.

Flowers are given by the Murphy family in memory of loved ones.

**This afternoon, at 4 pm you are invited to join Pastor Steven Wilco and the pastors & lay leaders of the Southern CT Conference of the New England Synod for a meeting on zoom as we brainstorm how we might “Collaborate, for Christ’s sake”.** Link is on our calendar.

**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. The link is also on the calendar on our website at [Salembridgeport.org](http://Salembridgeport.org) under the Resources Tab.

**This Wednesday evening we gather on zoom from 6:30-7:15 for our last Bible study of 2021 as we look at the Christmas story in the gospels,** followed by a brief service of Holy Communion. There will be no class 12/22 & 29 but we'll resume again in January when we'll begin our study of the book of Acts, a time when the church and the world were in some ways quite similar to the church and the world today. Link will be on the calendar on our website at [Salembridgeport.org](http://Salembridgeport.org) under the Resources Tab.

**On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 1:00-2:00 on zoom this week,** there will be a special webinar on “The Magnificat”. Details and a registration link are on the back page of this worship program. Later a free copy of Luther’s Commentary on the Magnificat will be sent to you.

**Soprano Air**

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

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

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

*Text from Zechariah 9.9-10*

*Text set to Music by George Frideric Handel*

*This song is in the Public Domain.*

*Performance # 1 by Angela Scorese, Soprano; Stacie Yao, Organ*

*as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJAp7c3xTy8> [4:59]*

*Performance # 2 by*

*Sooyeon Lee, Soprano; Darrell Ang, Conductor; Münchner Rundfunkorchester, Orchestra  
Recorded at ARD Music Competition 2015 in Munich, Germany,  
where Lee obtained the second prize and audience prize.*

*as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhdTpc4KAhY> – [4:33]*

*Performance # 3 by Sylvia Naa Wilson, Soprano; Accra Diocesan Choir;*

*produced by the GH Choral Music, Accra, Ghana,  
an organization which promotes choral singing in Ghana.*

*as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORzx297QdYs> – [4:23]*

***Please note that here we go live on Facebook.***

## WELCOME

Welcome in the name of the God who saves us,  
the God in whom we can trust and not be afraid,  
the God who is our stronghold, our defense, and our Savior

It is so good to be here!

Thank you for joining us today! Thank you, those of you who are here in person with us!  
And thank you, those of you out there in cyber space, wherever – and whenever! – you are!

For those of you who don't know me,  
I'm Pastor Marjo Anderson of Salem Lutheran Church in Bridgeport, CT,

To find out more about our ministry or to contact us,  
you can go to our website [SalemBridgeport.org](http://SalemBridgeport.org), to our Facebook page, SalemBridgeport,  
and to our YouTube channel, Salem Lutheran Church, Bridgeport CT.

Links to our donate page and worship bulletin –  
which has both the order of worship and announcements – as well as other resources  
are included on our website at [SalemBridgeport.org/Live](http://SalemBridgeport.org/Live).

On Wednesday at noon we have our weekly gathering for prayer on zoom at noon.  
And on Wednesday evening at 6:30 we will gather for our last Bible Study of 2021  
as we look at the Christmas story as told from 2 different perspectives in the Bible,  
followed by Holy Communion at 7:15.

Links for both events are on our calendar under the Resources tab on our website.

And on Saturday at 11:00 we invite you to join us on zoom for the Inner-View Chat'n'Chew.

Now as we begin our worship, will you pray with me?

Almighty God,  
to you all hearts be open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid.  
The propensity towards sin is part of our human nature.  
No matter how hard we try, we can never completely stop the thoughts, words, and actions  
that separate us from you and from one another.  
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name.  
Teach us to love others – especially those who are different from us – the way you love them,  
that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance.  
Pour out on us your Holy Spirit that we may burn with the fire of your justice.  
Guide us through the wilderness of this world in the way of peace.  
Fill our hearts with the gifts of your Spirit that we may rejoice always.  
We pray all this in the Name of Jesus and by the Power of the Spirit. Amen

## OPENING SONG

## People, Look East

*(as found in the ELCA worship books  
With One Voice # 626 and Evangelical Lutheran Worship # 248)*

*As long as you are masked, you may sing softly.*

*You may stand if you so desire.*

**People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Guest, is on the way.**

**Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flow'r may flourish.  
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Rose, is on the way.**

**Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim,  
shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Star, is on the way.**

**Angels announce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to earth.  
Set ev'ry peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Lord, is on the way.**

*Text: Isaiah 11:1-10, Mark 13:33-37, by Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-1965; Meter 8 7 9 8 8 7*

*Music: BESANCON, French carol; arr. Barry Rose, b. 1934;*

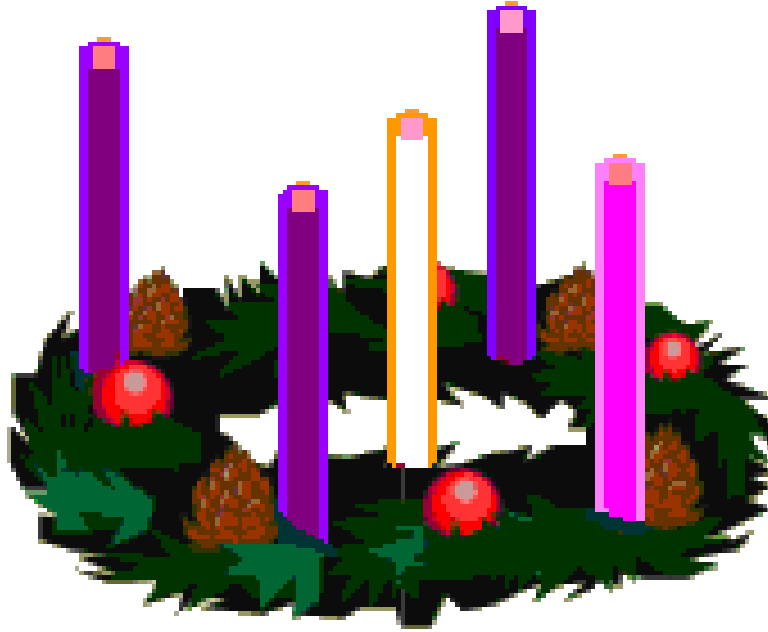
*Text © Miss E. Farjeon Will Trust, by permission of David Higham Associates*

*Tune is in the Public Domain*

*Arr. © 1999 Novello & Company Ltd., London, United Kingdom*

# ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

THE CANDLES OF ADVENT & CHRISTMAS EVE:  
HOPE – PEACE – LOVE – JOY – CHRIST



## ***THE ADVENT WREATH***

*The wreath is of course a circle - reminding us of the perfection and eternity of God.*

*Many wreaths are decorated with evergreen branches.*

*The evergreen, like the circle, is a symbol of eternity - but also of life.*

*Holly is sometimes used instead of - or with - the evergreen.*

*The sharp points of the leaves of the Holly remind us of Christ's crown of thorns.*

*The red berries remind us of his blood.*

*There is a story that holly berries were white until Christ's blood fell on them –  
causing them to be red ever since.*

*Christ is, of course, the light of the world – hence the candles.*

*Our candle lighting ceremony today copyright is by the Rev. Richard J. Fairchild 2003*

*The following contains a litany for each Sunday of Advent and for Christmas Eve.*

*"A Candle Is Burning" is a new song by Sandra Dean (1986)*

*and is found in VOICES UNITED, the new hymn book of the United Church of Canada.*

*The tune is "Away in A Manger".*

*If you use this song in worship, please acknowledge authorship and date.*

*The words are reproduced here with permission.*

*Sandra lives in Ottawa, Canada and is Director of Music at Southminster United Church.*

*She is delighted to share the song with you.*

**YEAR C – THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – JOY**  
**ADVENT WREATH CANDLE LIGHTING**

*Please be seated.*

*Leader 1:*

Today is the third Sunday of Advent.  
Last Sunday we lit the second candle in our Advent Wreath, the Candle of Peace.  
We light it and the Candle of Hope again  
as we remember that Christ, who was born in Bethlehem,  
will come again to fulfill all of God's promises to us, and bring us everlasting peace.

*(Light the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> – blue – candles.)*

*Leader 2:*

The third candle of Advent is the Candle of Joy.  
When the angel Gabriel told Mary that a special child would be born to her  
she was filled with joy. She sang a song that began with the words:  
"My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my savior."



*Leader 1:*

Just as the birth of Jesus gave great joy to his mother,  
so his presence in the world gave joy to those who had none before.  
He healed them and gave them hope and peace when they believed in him.  
From hope and peace grows joy.

*Leader 2:*

We light the Candle of Joy to remind us that when Jesus is born in us we have joy  
and that through him there will be everlasting joy on earth.

*(Light the 3<sup>rd</sup> – pink – candle.)*

*Leader 2:*

Joy is like a light shining in a dark place.  
As we look at this candle we celebrate the joy we find in Jesus Christ.



*Leader 1:*

Let us pray. *(a brief silence)*  
Thank you God for the joy you give us. Thank you God for the peace you give us.  
We ask that as we wait for all your promises to come true, and for Christ to come again,  
that you would remain present with us.  
Help us today and everyday to worship you, to hear your word,  
and to do your will by sharing your joy with each other.  
We ask it in the name of the one who was born in Bethlehem **Amen**

**ADVENT SONG**

**“A Candle Is Burning”**

**Sandra Dean (1986)**

*(Tune: “Away in a Manger” by James Murray, 1887)*

**A candle is burning, a candle of joy.  
A candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.  
Our hearts fill with wonder, and eyes light and glow  
as joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.**

# Word

## **Zephaniah 3:14-20**

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.

On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.

The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory;

he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.

I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you;

for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth,

when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

## **Philippians 4:4-7**

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone.

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

## **Luke 3:7-18**

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham and Sarah as our ancestors'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham and Sarah. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise". Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you". Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages".

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

**SERMON**

*Please be seated.*



## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

*You may stand if you so desire.*

Let us affirm our faith together.

**We believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,  
of Sarah, Rebekkah and Rachel,  
We believe in the God of Miriam and Ruth, of Deborah and Esther.  
of Moses and David, of Elijah and Isaiah.**

**We believe in Jesus, the incarnate God,  
who visited us at Bethlehem, who lived with us in Galilee, who died for us at Calvary,  
and who exploded the power of death on Easter morning.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
who is the Spirit of God among us,  
and is the Spirit of Christ within us.**

## PURPOSE STATEMENT

As members and friends of Salem Church, let us remind ourselves who we are:

**We are a community of Christian disciples called by the Holy Spirit.  
In response to God's transforming love, we share our joy through praise and service.**

May it be so!

**Amen**

## 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**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In this season of watching and waiting,  
let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

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

Holy God, renew your church and raise up leaders who announce your good news.  
Grant peace to congregations and seminarians in the midst of transition.  
Guide the work of candidacy and call committees.  
We pray for our mission partners, especially today for the Bridgeport Rescue Mission  
and the Center for Family Justice, and for Salem members and families,  
especially those celebrating birthdays this week: Susan Murphy.  
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Creating God, your Spirit brought forth the earth and all that is in it.  
Breathe life into us, that we are inspired to live in harmony with one another and the planet.  
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Shepherding God, you lead your people in paths of righteousness.  
Raise up prophets in our own day  
who warn against captivity to greed and point us to the freedom found in generosity.  
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Nurturing God, you come near in times of worry and need.  
Cradle us in your arms, that we trust you and are not afraid.  
Attend to any who are hungry, imprisoned, or ill this day,  
especially Barbara, Dolores, Eron, Frank, Grace, Steve, Sue, and all we name in our hearts.  
Grant them healing and wholeness.  
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Rejoicing God, you exult over us in singing.  
Enliven the song of this assembly and bless the ministry of church musicians.  
With instruments and dance, join our voices to the song of all creation.  
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We give you thanks for your servants who showed us your goodness and grace.  
By the power of your Spirit, keep us steadfast in faith until we make our home with you.  
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect.  
Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus. **Amen**

# Thanksgiving

## OFFERING PRAYER

Jesus, you said, “Give and it will be given to you...  
for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

**Give us the confidence to cheerfully give  
our tithes 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 a member of another congregation,  
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.



# HYMN

# Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

*(as found in the ELCA worship book Evangelical Lutheran Worship # 244)*

*As long as you are masked, you may sing softly.*

*You may stand if you so desire.*

**Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear;  
the evening is advancing, and darker night is near.  
The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing nigh.  
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.**

**The watchers on the mountain proclaim the bridegroom near;  
go forth as he approaches with alleluias clear.  
The marriage feast is waiting; the gates wide open stand.  
Arise, O heirs of glory; the bridegroom is at hand.**

**The saints, who here in patience their cross and suff'rings bore,  
shall live and reign forever when sorrow is no more.  
Around the thorn of glory the Lamb they shall behold;  
in triumph cast before him their diadems of gold.**

**Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;  
arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere.  
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see  
the day of earth's redemption that sets your people free!**

*Text: based on Isaiah 40:3-5, Matthew 25:1-13, Revelation 4:9-10, 21:23-24  
by Laurentius Laurenti, 1660-1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823-1907;  
Meter 7 6 7 6 D*

*Music: HAF TRONES LAMPA FÄRDIG, Swedish folk tune  
Text and Music are in the Public Domain*

# Sending

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Please be seated.*

On Wednesday at noon we have our weekly gathering for prayer on zoom at noon.

And on Wednesday evening at 6:30 we will gather for our last Bible Study of 2021 as we look at the Christmas story as told from 2 different perspectives in the Bible, followed by Holy Communion at 7:15.

And on Saturday at 11:00 we invite you to join us on zoom for the Inner-View Chat'n'Chew.

Links for all events are on our calendar under the Resources tab on our website.

## THANK YOU and BLESSING

Before we end the live-streamed portion of our worship,

I want to especially thank those of you out there in cyberspace who have worshipped with us.

I hope you will join us again.

If you'd like to know more, or if you'd like to talk or pray together, you can reach me through our website or Facebook.

As we conclude our Facebook Live portion of our service let me offer all who are worshipping with us this blessing from our reading today from Philippians:

Rejoice in the Lord always!

Do not worry about anything,

but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Amen

*Here ends our Facebook live stream.*



*Instead of reading the assigned psalmody for today, Isaiah 12:2-6,  
we are singing that text here.*

SENDING HYMN

First Song of Isaiah

Jack Noble White

*As long as you are masked, you may sing softly.*

*\Please join in the refrain, in bold print;  
if you know the song, you are welcome to join in the verses as well.*

*You may stand if you so desire.*

Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid.  
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, and he will be my Savior.

**Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid.  
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, and he will be my Savior.**

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing from the springs of salvation.  
And on that day you shall say, give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name.

**Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid.  
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, and he will be my Savior.**

Make his deeds known among the peoples; see that they remember that his Name is exalted.  
Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, and this is known in all the world.

**Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid.  
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, and he will be my Savior.**

Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion; ring out your joy,  
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

**Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid.  
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, and he will be my Savior.**

**Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid.  
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, and he will be my Savior.**

*Text: based on Isaiah 12:2-6;  
translation from The Draft Proposed Book of Common Prayer,  
© 1976 by Charles Mortimer Guilbert  
as Custodian of the Standard Book of Common Prayer.  
All rights reserved. Used by permission.*

*Music: Jack Noble White, \  
© 1976 HW Gray, a division of Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation*

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace,  
Sing the praises of God who has done great things so that all the world might know!

**Thanks be to God!**

## POSTLUDE

### Freedom Is Coming

- 1 (Oh, freedom!) Freedom is coming!  
(Oh, freedom!) Freedom is coming!  
(Oh, freedom!) Freedom is coming! Oh, yes, I know!  
(Oh, freedom!) Freedom is coming!  
(Oh, freedom!) Freedom is coming!  
(Oh, freedom!) Freedom is coming! Oh, yes, I know!  
  
(Oh, yes, I know!) Oh, oh, yes, I know!  
(Oh, yes, I know!) Oh, oh, yes, I know!  
(Oh, yes, I know!) Oh, oh, yes, I know! Oh, yes, I know!  
(Oh, yes, I know!) Oh, oh, yes, I know!  
(Oh, yes, I know!) Oh, oh, yes, I know!  
(Oh, yes, I know!) Oh, oh, yes, I know! Oh, yes, I know!
- 2 Oh, Jesus! Jesus is coming!

*Text: South African traditional based on Isaiah 61:1 transcribed Freedom Is Coming, 1984;  
Meter P M; © 1984 Peace of Music Publishing AB,  
admin. Walton Music Corp., a div. of GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com.  
All rights reserved.*

*Music: South African traditional FREEDOM IS COMING  
Text and music © 1984 Utryck, admin. Walton Music Corp.  
Reprinted/Streamed with permission under OneLicense # A-727372*

*Performance by the Sunday 7 pm choir at St. Francis De Sales Church, Ajax Ontario Canada, 11/27/16,  
Subscribe to our YouTube Channel for more songs like this - <https://www.youtube.com/c/SFDSSunday7...>  
and thanks for listening! Our hope is that the music we make brings people closer to the Lord.  
as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBnv2RxyDiE> [2:46]*



# Announcements

**The next Salem and Friends Breakfast & Faith Discussion**, sponsored by the Salem Men but open to ALL, will be held Saturday **January 8<sup>th</sup>** at 8:00 am. Please join us...and invite a friend! Volunteers to help prepare breakfast welcome to come at 7:00 am. Thanks!

**Give thanks with a grateful heart** – This past year has been full of challenges for each of us personally and for Salem as a congregation. But God has been with us through all of it. Over the next several weeks, let's reflect on the things for which we are thankful. In your bulletin is a slip of paper; please fill that out and deposit it in the offering box. We will collect these thoughts, post them on a board, and include them in the next week's prayers. (Those who are not worshipping in person can participate by emailing your thankful thoughts to salemsec123@sbcglobal.net so we can include them.)

**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. She would be MORE THAN HAPPY to hear from you!**

**If you would like to call, or send a card or note to one of our shut-ins**, please contact our Parish Nurse, Carol Lansing. She 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 her know.

**UniteCT - Emergency Rental Assistance for Connecticut's Economy** - The UniteCT Program is administered by the Department of Housing on behalf of the US Treasury. UniteCT provides up to \$15,000 rental and electricity payment assistance on behalf of Connecticut households financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. UniteCT is stabilizing CT's rental housing market by financially supporting those households up to 80% of HUD's Area Median Income (AMI) - Select [here](#) for an interactive AMI map. Tenants and landlords use the UniteCT Rent Relief software to submit their own sections of the application creating a unique case file for decision making evaluation. UniteCT will provide continued rental and electric utility assistance to eligible households until all funding has been committed. There is no current end date of the program. *For more info, go to: <https://portal.ct.gov/DOH/DOH/Programs/UniteCT> You must first register to get an email invitation to start your application. Paper applications will not be accepted. Do you qualify for UniteCT funding? If you need to share your eligibility status with a new landlord or court, check your eligibility by taking this survey at <https://portal.ct.gov/DOH/DOH/Programs/UniteCT---Survey> and print the results for your records.*



**We invite you to participate in our annual ANGEL APPEAL by making a gift to The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport** in honor or in memory of one or more of the "ANGELS" in your life who has inspired, encouraged, or partnered with you in making a difference in our community. The challenges faced by our poorest neighbors are significant, but hope abounds! We at The Council are acutely aware of the unmet needs throughout Greater Bridgeport, and with your help are making a difference. You may donate by going to: <https://ccgb.salsalabs.org/angelappeal/index.html>, or by mailing a check to The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, 1718 Capitol Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06604. Or see Sandra Brown, Tom Larson, or Bonnie McWain for more info.

## **UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS**

### **Lucy, martyr, died 304**

**Monday, December 13, 2021**

Lucy was a young Christian of Sicily who was martyred during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian. Her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway, perhaps because the feast of Lucia (whose name means "light") originally fell on the shortest day of the year.

### **John of the Cross, renewer of the church, died 1591**

**Tuesday, December 14, 2021**

John was a member of the Carmelite monastic order, and worked to reform it. His writings reflect a deep interest in mystical thought and meditation.

### **Las Posadas**

**Thursday, December 16, 2021**

This celebration, long popular in Mexico, takes its name from the "posadas," or lodgings, sought by Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. Their search is reenacted in a neighborhood, unsuccessfully, until finally they are welcomed in, and a party commences.

TURNING THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN:

# *The Magnificat*

The ELCA Wittenberg Center invites you to a three-part webinar series to mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's commentary on the Magnificat and the continued significance of Mary's voice. Each hour-long session will take place at 12 pm Central time.

DECEMBER  
15

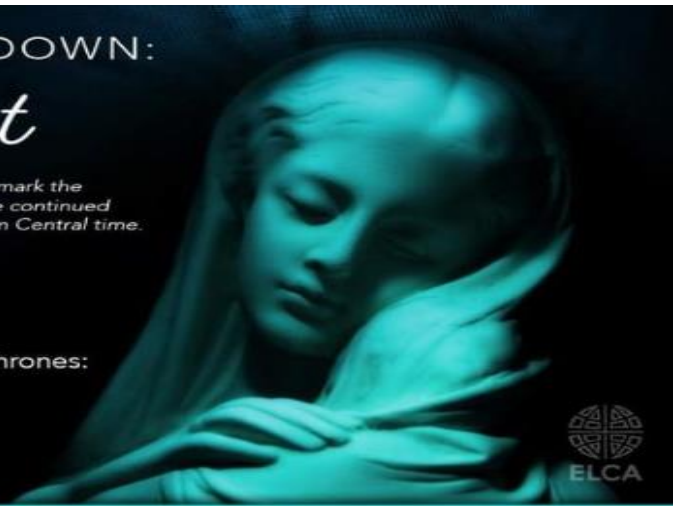
My Soul Magnifies the Lord:  
The Gift of Mary's Voice

DECEMBER  
16

Brought Down the Mighty From Their Thrones:  
The Strength of Mary's Voice

DECEMBER  
17

From Generation to Generation:  
The Future of Mary's Voice



Five-hundred years ago, Martin Luther published his Commentary on the “Magnificat” or Mary’s Song from Luke 1:46-55. This text was sung or read at every evening prayer for well over a thousand years. It also is a primary reading for worship in the season of Advent. The ELCA Wittenberg Center invites you to a three-part webinar entitled “The Magnificat: Turning the World Upside Down.”

This webinar series—in English with Spanish interpretation—is a collaborative effort across the Service and Justice unit of the ELCA led by the Europe Desk through the ELCA Wittenberg Center. In each of the one-hour sessions, the Director of the Center, the Rev. Dr. Robert Moore will host two guest speakers. Each of the featured speakers will bring a unique perspective to both the biblical text and Luther’s commentary.

### **Wednesday Dec 15: “My Soul Magnifies the Lord: The Gift of Mary’s Voice”**

The Rev. Dr. Wanda Deifelt (Luther College) & the Rev. Heidi Neumark (Trinity Lutheran, Manhattan) will explore the biblical text from Luke, its interpretation, and use over the centuries.

### **Thursday Dec 16: “Brought Down the Mighty from Their Thrones: The Strength of Mary’s Voice”**

The Rev. Dr. Mary Lowe (Augsburg University) & the Rev. Angela Trejo Haager (Lutheran Augsburg Seminary in Mexico) will explore Luther’s Commentary on the Magnificat and the response with the church to the Mary’s song.

### **Friday Dec 17: “From Generation to Generation: The Future of Mary’s Voice”**

The Rev. Dr. Guy Erwin (United Lutheran Seminary) & the Rev. Dr. Mercedes Garcia Bachmann (Institute for Pastoral Contextual Studies of the Lutheran Church in Argentina and Uruguay (IELU)) will explore the implication of the texts for the future of humanity and all creation.

All sessions will be held from 1:00 to 2:00 pm Eastern Standard Time.

Please register in advance. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. Later, a free copy of Luther’s Commentary on the Magnificat, courtesy of Fortress Press, will be sent to you.

To register go to: <http://bit.ly/MagnificatWebinar>

Join us for what will surely be a great event during the Advent season! We will send a reminder to all registrants.

Grace to you,  
The Rev. Robert G. Moore, Ph.D.