



January 2022

the
SPIRIT

Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

A Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Congregation

The Journey Between Promise and Fulfillment

God showed Abraham the stars in the sky and promised him descendants just as numerous, if he would leave his home and all that was familiar and move to an unknown country at the age of 75. God showed Joseph in a dream that one day those horrible older brothers of his would bow down to him. God showed 3 astrologers from Persia a star and led them on a journey to see the One born to be King of the Jews, and as it turned out, so much more.

For Abraham, for Joseph, and for the 3 astrologers, those visions were a high point of their lives. God had shown up, given them a vision of their deepest desire, their most daring dream, their most dazzling delight, and PROMISED that if they trusted in God's love and power, they would receive all they ever wanted. Can you imagine their awe, their excitement, their exceeding joy? And then came the journey itself.

Abraham and Sarah kept waiting, week after week, month after month, year after year, for 25 years for Isaac to be born. Abraham had to wait from the time he was 75 until the time he was 100 and Sarah has to wait from the time she was 65 until the time she was 90 for them to have Isaac! That could not have been easy.

After 17-year-old Joseph was given a dream of a glorious future, his brothers sold him into slavery and he was taken to Egypt and just when things began to look up for him, he was propositioned by Pharaoh's wife, and when he resisted, was unjustly accused, placed in a dungeon, and for all intents and purposes forgotten. It was 12 years of trials before he became Pharaoh's right hand, and nearly another decade before the dream of his family bowing down to him came true.

The journey of the 3 astrologers was likely not easy either. Imagine setting out on foot or on camel on a journey towards a destination that is by no means sure, so there's no map as you'll be following a star. It could be a journey of 5000 miles and could last the better part of the year or more. You have to carry all you'll need with you – or enough things to barter or trade with to pay for your food and lodging along the way. The star is only visible on clear nights, so you've got to travel when the roads are the least safe. The journey takes more than the 4 months you'd anticipated and ends up being close to 2 years.

It's so easy for us to focus on God's promises and God's fulfilling of those promises in Scripture without stopping to think about the journey in between. And yet it's in that in-between place that you and I

live.

I believe that God calls each and every one of us to journey towards our deepest desire, our most daring dream, our most dazzling delight. What is the deepest desire of your heart? What is God calling you to do and to be? Where do you want to get before your life on this planet ends? When we first understand that call, that vision, that promise, we are filled with hope and excitement and joy. But then comes the journey – and not just the outer journey, but the inner one, because in order to follow faithfully and get where God is taking us on our outer journey, we need to follow faithfully along that inner journey. That means reaching down deep into our spirits to connect with God, to open ourselves to God's direction, and to receive from God all we will need to sustain us on our journey.

For me, 2022 will begin just that way as I commit to a 21-day course of prayer and fasting. The fasting part is driven by the desire to lower my cholesterol, break my sugar addiction, and lose the weight added during the pandemic by following a cleansing diet. The prayer part is driven by my desire to be more attuned to following God, so that I don't end up like Israel for whom an 11-day journey to the promised land ended up taking 40 years!

I invite you to join me in 21-days of prayer and fasting, beginning Sunday January 9th. If you're interested, text or call or email me, and we can discuss your physical and/or spiritual goals and potential resources to help.

I know that for me the key is to hold onto the dream, no matter how impossible it is, and to trust that if I watch and listen for God, if I pay attention to how God is working in my life, if I do what God calls me to do, God will fulfill the deepest desires of my heart, God will help me to grow into my fullest potential, and God will get me to exactly the place I'm supposed to be.

I pray that you will hold onto whatever promise God has made to you, whatever vision God has shown you, whatever dream God has planted in your heart. And I pray that God will guide you every step of the way on your Journey between Promise and Fulfillment.

Abundant Blessings Be Yours!

Pastor Marjo

Pastor Marjo Anderson

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

Website - www.salembridgeport.org

Facebook - 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

Karl Kraft, Office Manager
Office Phone (203) 336-3300
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



Capital Improvements

Food Assistance

Juliana Capinera

Memorial

Pasqua Family (in memory of Steven Pasqua)

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	



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

Next deadline date is **January 15th** for the February issue!

Email submissions to
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net

January 2022

Salem Lutheran Church



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT Jan 1 New Year's Day
2 Christmas 2 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Forward on the FIRST 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 4pm Memorial Gathering in Lounge 7pm STEPP Group - CR	3 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Anti 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room	4 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tex 7pm STEPP Group - CR	5 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	6 Epiphany of Our Lord 6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	7 6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	8 8am The BREAKFAST Gathering!
9 Baptism of Our Lord 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 7pm STEPP Group - CR	10 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Anti 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room 6:30pm Social Ministry Committee Meeting	11 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tex 6pm Stewardship Committee Meeting 7pm STEPP Group - CR	12 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	13 6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	14 6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	15 11am Inner-View Chat n Chew
16 Epiphany 2 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 7pm STEPP Group - CR	17 Martin Luther King (Office Closed) 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Anti 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room	18 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tex 6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting 7pm STEPP Group - CR 7:30pm Executive Committee Meeting	19 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	20 6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	21 6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	22
23 Epiphany 3 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 7pm STEPP Group - CR	24 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Anti 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room 7pm Council Meeting	25 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tex 7pm STEPP Group - CR	26 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	27 6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	28 6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	29
30 Epiphany 4 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Adult Forum 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 6pm Sunday Night Alive! 7pm STEPP Group - CR	31 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Anti 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room					

Haley Danowski	2
Iris Murphy	3
Joseph Jambriska	3
David Larson	5
Elissa Velez	9
Allison Bryk	11
Barbro Lund	11
Kristin Schulz	21
Tiffany Claus	24
Eliana Llanos	24
Michael Lange	27

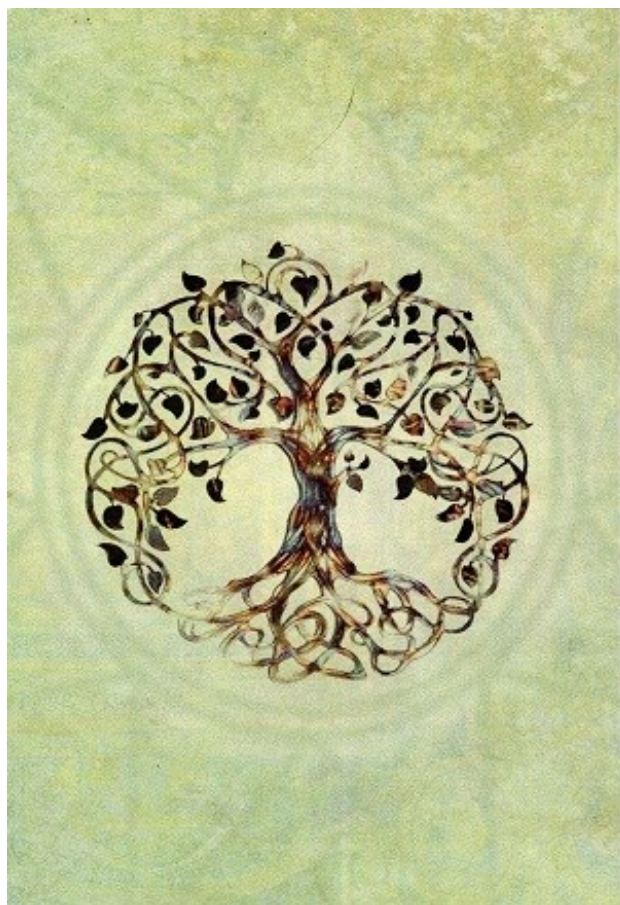
Elizabeth Bales	28
Jeff Johnson	29
Christiane Wolff	31



Salem was fortunate to receive two Thrivent grants for \$250 each. The first grant was used by our Troop 103 Boy Scouts to buy them eight warm sweatshirts.

Our second grant was for the Seafarers. Pastor Ruth Setaro purchased woolen hats, sweatshirts, socks, t-shirts, and candy and nuts. That made up 18 Seafarers' Christmas bags. In addition, Salem parishioners contributed an extra 137 items and cash to fill even more Christmas bags.

Thank you for all your Seafarers' donations and the support for our annual drive.



Dear Pastor Anderson +
Salem Lutheran Church
Congregation,
Thank you for all
your efforts in
raising funds for
the CROP Walk.
Please know that
you have truly
made a difference
in helping fight
hunger.
The Executive Board
Bridgeport CROP Hunger Walk

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 **2nd Saturday of the month at 8:00 am**. Although this used to be a men's event, it's now open to everyone, and we are most grateful for the men who sponsor it. (Thank you, Bruce for ensuring that this important time for talking informally about our faith lives continues even in the midst of a pandemic!) It's been outdoors until this month when we met in the lounge. We're working on figuring out how to make the sound work so we can offer this important time on zoom as well.

Inner-View Chat'n'Chew meets the **3rd Saturday of the month at 11:00**, so mark your calendars for **June 19th**. It's a time of fun and fellowship that gives us a chance to celebrate the gift that God has given us in one another. The theme for Evites are sent out to those on the Genesis mailing list but you can also find the Zoom link on Salem's calendar.

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, choose the Resource tab, and click on Calendar. Then on the calendar, go to the day, the event, and when you click on it, it will open up the zoom invitation. You can click on the link, or copy and paste it into your browser. To see how to do this, [click here](#):

We also include the zoom links in our weekly email blasts, and in this announcement section of our Sunday bulletin. You can find links to Sunday worship materials like the bulletin, sermon, and donate page at www.salembridgeport.org/live. Or to see how to get there, [click here](#):

FROM THE SOUTHWESTERN CT AREA AGENCY ON AGING

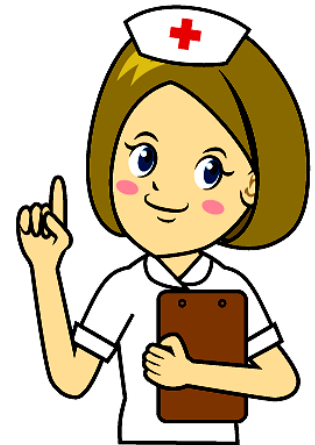
**THESE MAY BE SIGNS OF DEPRESSION IF
THEY LAST SEVERAL WEEKS.**

- Feelings of sadness
- Anxiety or emptiness
- Endless feelings of grief
- Feeling worthless or guilty
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Feeling tired all the time, no energy
- Feeling restless, irritable or agitated
- Eating more or less than usual
- Not enjoying activities anymore
- Feeling sick all the time
- Using alcohol or drugs to feel better
- Difficulty concentrating & making decisions
- Not bathing or changing clothes
- Thinking about suicide or death

**DEPRESSION IS NOT A NORMAL PART OF
AGING.**

IF YOU SEE YOURSELF OR A LOVED ONE
IN THE DESCRIPTION ABOVE,
CONTACT A PHYSICIAN OR MENTAL HEALTH
PROFESSIONAL.

**WITH TREATMENT AND SUPPORT
YOU CAN FEEL BETTER!**



**DAILY ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN
MENTAL HEALTH**

- Take a walk. Breathe in the fresh air.
- Take a yoga or Tai Chi class.
- Turn off the TV; knit, read or draw instead.
- Call a friend. Spend time around positive people.
- Listen to music. Dance (even by yourself).
- Work or volunteer.
- Write in a journal or diary.
- Put up a birdfeeder
- Play a card or board game.
- See your doctor regularly.
- Take medications as prescribed.
- Go to a religious service.
- **Make a list of things you can be thankful for.**
- **SMILE, LAUGH, HUG SOMEONE!**

**CONTACT YOUR PHYSICIAN -
or MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL.**

Resources:

Infoline dial 211

**Southwest CT Mental Health System
Hotline (800) 586-9903**

**Franklin S. DuBois Center
(203) 388-1600 for crisis program call (203) 358-8500**

**Southwestern CT Area Agency on Aging
1-800-994-9422 or (203) 333-9288**

**In our continuing quest to fight back against the power and fear of racism,
especially in those who say they are followers of Christ,
we present these opportunities of performance and dialogue
at Fairfield University's Regina A. Quick Center:**

Wednesday, February 2, 2022 – 7pm (free, registration required)

Fairfield University's Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Convocation

""The Wrong Side of the World Resolution': King's Internationalism & Lessons for Today"

by Robin D. G. Kelley, [PhD](#), (2022 Martin Luther King, Jr. Speaker)

Thursday, February 3, 2022 – 7pm (\$30, \$15 Member)

Global Theatre: Performance Series [curated by](#) Cheryl Weisenfeld

"Shared Sentences"

by Houses on the Moon Theater Company"

A post-show discussion will follow the performance.

Saturday, February 12, 2022 – 1pm and 6pm (\$25-\$35)

The Metropolitan Opera: HD Live

"Fire Shut Up in My Bones"

by Terence Blanchard

Tuesday, March 8, 2022 – 7:30pm (\$30, \$15 Member)

Open VISIONS Forum and The Common Ground Series presented by the College of Arts & Sciences

"Race, Liberty & Justice: Diverging Perspectives with Eyes on the Prize"

by Michael Eric Dyson, PhD & John H. McWhorter, PhD

Wednesday, March 23, 2022 – 7:30pm (\$30, \$15 Member)

Open VISIONS Forum and The Common Ground Series presented by the College of Arts & Sciences

The Annual Student Forum: **"Democracy: Choices and Challenges"**

by David Brooks

Thursday, April 28, 2022 8pm (\$30, \$15 Member)

Open VISIONS Forum

"Caste: Examining Race, Culture, & Consequences"

by Isabel Wilkerson

Pastor Marjo Anderson and Jeanette Harris

will host a discussion of this presentation and of the book in general

on Sunday May 1st at 4:00 on zoom at this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89975646418?pwd=ZG5nSVVmR3NVbVpXc5dTAwbWtqTWdrZz09>

or go to SalemBridgeport.org/Resources/Calendar and click on the event for more information

Tickets and additional information [is](#) available at: <http://www.quickcenter.com>



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

What are the 12 days of Christmas?

By Cory Driver

Christmas, according to the liturgical calendar, isn't just a day, but a season. Many Christians know the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas" or recall that Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* is about the last night of Christmas. But what defines the Christmas season?



The 12 days of Christmas are a reversal of the season of Advent. Traditionally, Christians have fasted during Advent as we await the celebration of the birth of our Savior. The period from Christmas Day to the day before Epiphany (the celebration of the magi visiting Jesus, the baptism of Jesus and the beginning of his earthly ministry) is a period of daily feasting. This is surprising, given the reason for celebrating several of the days.

The first day of Christmas, the Feast of the Nativity, is obvious enough as a reason to celebrate. The Messiah has been born into the world! The next day, however, is the feast of St. Stephan, the first Christian martyr, who was killed under the authority of Saul of Tarsus/Paul (Acts 8:1). The emotional whiplash of celebrating the birth of the Savior and then the next day celebrating the life and martyrdom of the first person to die for Christ is stunning. However, tradition calls for a joyful feast to celebrate the faithfulness of Stephen, even unto death.

The next day, the third of the 12, celebrates the life of St. John the Apostle. He was, traditionally, the only disciple who wasn't martyred. Tradition holds that John took care of Mary, the mother of Jesus, made disciples, grew old and finally died a natural death in Ephesus.

The fourth day of Christmas is the most shocking. The Feast of the Holy Innocents commemorates the death of all boys in Bethlehem, aged 2 and under, at the hands of Herod the Great's soldiers (Matthew 2:16-18). Again, we feel the emotional rollercoaster, as we're reminded that the Christian life isn't simply one of sweetness and joy, but also of pain, hardship and injustice. Nevertheless, the fourth day of Christmas is the Feast of the Holy Innocents, rather than a fast, because we celebrate the One who has conquered sin and death and doesn't surrender these precious little ones, or any others, to the grave forever.

The following days celebrate Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Becket's resistance to injustice; the holy family; Pope Sylvester, who resisted the Donatist and Arian controversies (in many Germanic-speaking countries, New Year's Eve is still called "Sylvester"); the circumcision of Jesus; St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen, who defended the doctrine of the Trinity; Jesus' presentation and naming in the Jerusalem temple; the hermitage of St. Simon on the pillar; and even two American saints: Elizabeth Ann Seton and John Neumann.

These 12 days help Christians remember that the life of faith is full of challenges and hardships but also contains plenty of reasons to celebrate as we remember the heroes and heroines of the church, and most importantly, our Lord and Savior.

Cory Driver is an ELCA missionary serving as the director of graduate studies at the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Cairo (Egypt).



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.

American Indian Alaska Native Tribal Nations

Vance Blackfox has been named desk director for American Indian Alaska Native Tribal Nations. A citizen of the Cherokee Nation, Vance has earned degrees from Texas Lutheran University and the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and lives in San Antonio, where he serves as Indigenous theologian for the San Antonio Faith-Based Initiative.



The American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association has been awarded a grant from ELCA World Hunger to respond to needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds will be distributed to American Indian and Alaska Native congregations to create programs that will educate congregation and community members about COVID-19 and public health opportunities available to them. Over the last year, American Indian and Alaska Native communities saw infection and death rates much higher than those of other ethnic communities and racial groups in the United States. As infections with the delta variant of COVID-19 surge, this grant will allow vital and timely educational opportunities in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

Since the 2016 Churchwide Assembly passed the social policy resolution "Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery," the ELCA has accomplished little in addressing the concerns it listed. However, last fall Presiding Bishop Eaton began convening a group of Native and non-Native ELCA leaders to discuss and begin the work of repudiating the doctrine in healthy and impactful ways.

Latino Ministries

Recently, the ELCA Latino Ministries Association was awarded a three-year grant from ELCA World Hunger to conduct a COVID-19 vaccination campaign in two major cities – Los Angeles and New York – where the pandemic has had a devastating impact. COVID-19 deaths are at least 2.7 times higher among people of color than among white Americans. The Metropolitan New York Synod and the Southwest California Synod will collaborate on implementing the grant. Two Latino congregations in the Metropolitan Chicago Synod – Parroquia Luterana Sagrado Corazon in Waukegan and Iglesia Santa Cruz in Chicago – have sponsored a COVID-19 vaccination clinic in partnership with the Honduran Consulate, Chicago Vaccine Angels and other community organizations.