



February 2022

the
SPIRIT

Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

A Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Congregation

Knowing God – the Light of Epiphany

**When was the last time that God revealed God's self to you?
When was the last time you got a sign? the last time you
heard God's voice?**

The season of Epiphany begins at the birth of Jesus as the Star reveals to the magi the Divine Presence in this baby. It continues at the Baptism of Jesus as the voice of God reveals that Jesus is God's Beloved Child. Then Jesus performs his first miracle, turning water into wine. Then he preaches his first sermon. There are more miracles and more preaching. And the season concludes with the Transfiguration of Jesus, as his divinity is revealed in a special way to his closest disciples.

The season of Epiphany is all about revelation, about all the ways that God makes the Divine Presence known to us. Note, though, that I'm not speaking of KNOWING ABOUT God. I'm speaking about KNOWING God. There's a difference.

I can read everything written about a person, I can look at myriads of pictures of the person, I can read what the person has written him/herself, and I can get to know others who know that person. But even with all that knowledge, if I have not met the person and built a relationship with them, I cannot presume to say I know them. And it's the same with God. You can attend worship every week all of your life, go to Bible study every week, sing in the choir, volunteer at the food pantry, and serve on Council – and still not know God. You could be a pastor and not know God. You could get your PhD in Theology and still not know God. You will know a lot ABOUT God. But you will not necessarily KNOW God.

So how do you get to know God? Pray.

Simply pray that you might get to know God. Pray that God would speak to you in a way that you can hear. Pray that God would show up in a way that you cannot miss.

Pray from your heart. Written prayers have their place and can be helpful – or they can simply be a meaningless rote ritual. Share with God your thanks and praise, your joys and sorrows, your questions and needs, anything and everything that is on your heart and your mind.

Pray from your heart – with others. When you join in prayer with other people the power of everyone's prayers are amplified. The past 21 days I joined one prayer group that prayed on the

phone at 6, 12, & 6 each day. Their style of prayer was usually one person giving praise and thanks for a solid 15 minutes. I joined a second prayer group at 6:30 each day and their style was to have 3-4 people offer prayers on particular topics. Then there was our own Wednesday noon prayer gathering. What did all that praying do? Well, I don't think I've ever had so many God-sightings in a 21 day period as I did these past 3 weeks! If you need a prayer group, just let me know and I'll help!

Expect God to respond. Listen and look for how God is answering your prayer. If you ask and believe, you will receive.

And finally, when God answers your prayer, share! Thank God for answering and then glorify God by telling everyone you meet what God has done for you!

Which gets us back to Epiphany. Beginning with the shining Star and ending with the shining Jesus, Epiphany is about light, a light that Jesus says we are not to keep under a bushel, but to share that all the world might see!

Once you KNOW God, once God has lit a fire within you, once there is light shining in your heart, you will not be able to keep the news to yourself. God will have transformed your life and you will never, ever be the same. You will suddenly go from being shy about talking about God to wanting to share that news with everyone you meet.

That's what grows the Church. If God has been revealed to you, if you KNOW God, if your life has been transformed by God, you simply can't help but share. And when people see the amazing things that God is doing for you, they will want to KNOW that God, too.

During the rest of this season of Epiphany, may God reveal God's self to you. May you come to KNOW the power and love of God in such amazing and awesome ways that you won't be able to keep that news to yourself! And I, for one, can't wait to hear your news!

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
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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
Diane Tomasko

LENT 2022

Ash Wednesday services will be held with and at Our Saviour's, Fairfield. The service will be in person and online. Details to come.

During the Lenten season, there will be a joint online program with other congregations of the Southern CT Conference. Planning for this will take place this Sunday, February 6th at the conference meeting at 5:30 on zoom. We invite YOU to come and join the conversation! The link is on the calendar on our website at SalemBridgeport.org under the Resources Tab.

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 **February 15th** for the March issue!

Email submissions to
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net

February 2022

Salem Lutheran Church



SUN	MON	TUE Feb 1	WED 2	THU 3	FRI 4	SAT 5
		9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tr 12pm Book Club 7pm STEPP Group - CR	9:30am Bible Study 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	
6 Epiphany 5 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Forward on the FIRST 10:30am Semi-Annual In-Person Meeting Zoor 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 7pm STEPP Group - CR	7 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Au 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room 6:30pm Social Ministry Committee Meeting	8 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tr 6pm Stewardship Committee Meeting 7pm STEPP Group - CR	9 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	10 6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	11 6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	12 8am The BREAKFAST Gathering!
13 Epiphany 6 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 4pm Southern CT Conference COLLABORATE! 7pm STEPP Group - CR	14 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Au 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room	15 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tr 7pm STEPP Group - CR	16 9:30am Bible Study 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	17 6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	18 6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	19 11am Inner-View Chat n Chew
20 Epiphany 7 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 7pm STEPP Group - CR	21 Presidents' Day 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Au 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room 6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting 7:30pm Executive Committee Meeting	22 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tr 7pm STEPP Group - CR	23 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	24 6pm Cub Scouts - Community Room	25 6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	26
27 Transfiguration of Our Lord 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12pm CHURCH 6pm Sunday Night Alive! 7pm STEPP Group - CR	28 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on Au 6pm Boy Scouts - Community Room 7pm Council Meeting					





Roberta Bellows	1
Hailey Dewalt	3
Keith Murphy	3
Kerry Schulz	13
Bill Winter	13
Michael Gulyas	13
Ann Martin	14
Carol Lansing	16
Talisha Burrus	17
Pablo Cruz	22
Scott Luciani	22
Judy Albers	26
Katie Adams	27

SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday February 27th (time and space at Salem to be decided) for **CABARET NIGHT, a Sunday Night Alive Inter-Church Event back by popular demand!** Come, share your talents – a song, a story, a poem, a dance, a piece of art, a group activity – as we celebrate how we are all made in the image of an abundantly imaginative and creative God!

December 30, 2021

Dear Pastor Marjo,



**PEACE
ON EARTH**

*Let all the world welcome
this season of peace.*

*With utter gratitude for
the continued hospitality of
Salem Lutheran Church.*

*On behalf of Tuesday Night
12-Step, our sincere thanks.*

David H.

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](#):

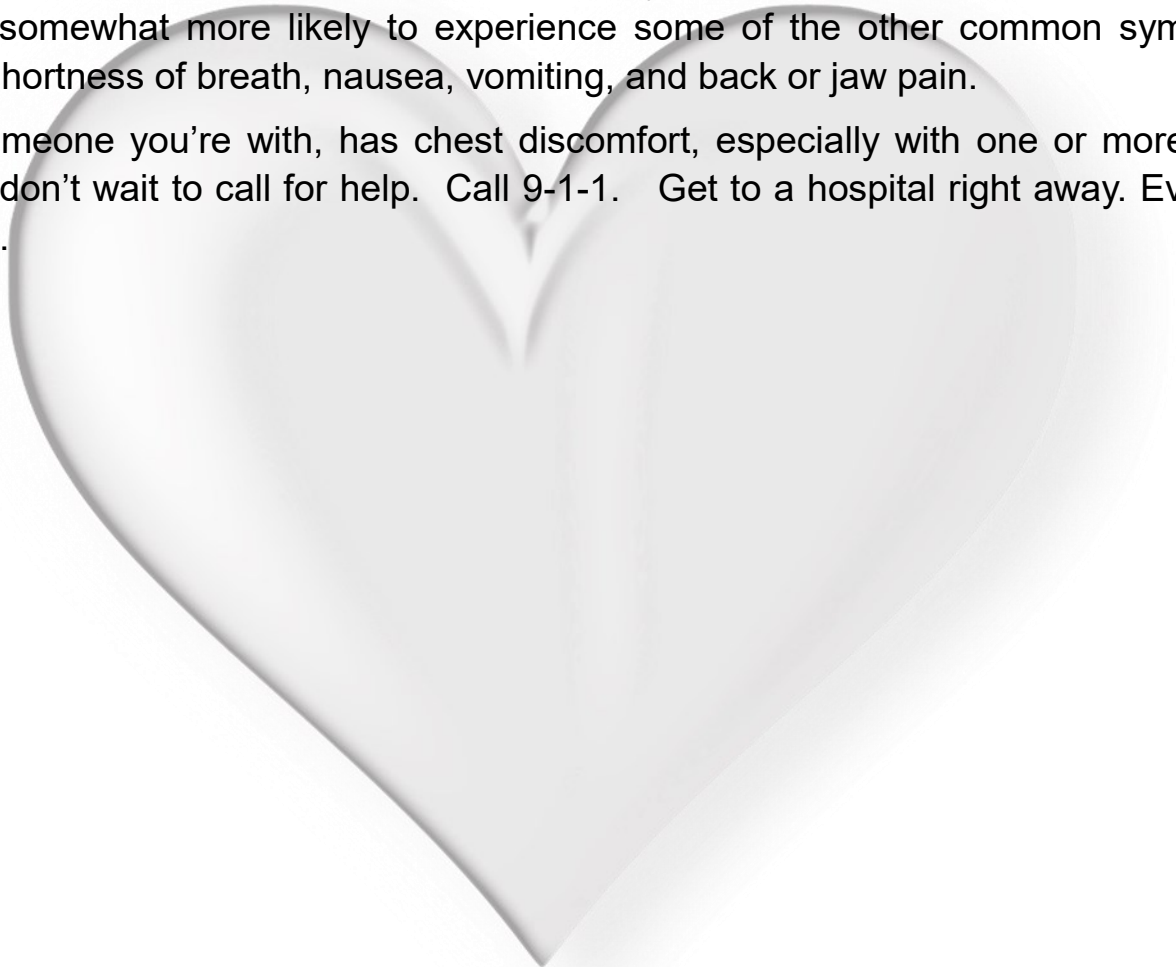
Heart Attack Warning Signs



- **Chest Discomfort** – Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts for more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.
- **Other Discomfort** – Discomfort in other parts of the body include symptoms of pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- **Shortness of Breath** – This feeling can occur with or without chest discomfort.
- **Other signs** – These may include breaking out in cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness.

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

If you, or someone you're with, has chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs, don't wait to call for help. Call 9-1-1. Get to a hospital right away. Every minute matters.



HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE AND HEART DISEASE IN WOMEN

While high blood pressure isn't directly related to gender, throughout a woman's life, health issues like pregnancy, pregnancy prevention (birth control) and menopause can increase the risk of developing high blood pressure.

Is high blood pressure considered heart disease?

High blood pressure is a condition that makes the heart work harder than normal. And left untreated, it scars and damages your arteries and can lead to heart disease such as heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, eye damage, heart failure and fatty buildups in the arteries, called atherosclerosis.

What are the symptoms of high blood pressure in women?

High blood pressure, also known as HBP or hypertension, is widely misunderstood and is called the 'silent killer' because there can often be no symptoms. We often assume it affects those who are type-A personalities, tense and aggressive. But the truth is, it has nothing to do with personality traits. In fact, you can be the most relaxed, calm person and still suffer from HBP.

Women represent almost 52% of deaths from high blood pressure.

A common misconception is that high blood pressure rarely affects women. However, nearly half of all adults with high blood pressure are women. In fact, women have an increased risk of developing high blood pressure if they are 20 pounds or more overweight, have a family history of high blood pressure, or have reached menopause.



What is healthy or normal blood pressure in women?

There is no difference in what is considered normal blood pressure in women and men. The different levels are the same for all adults.

Blood pressure is typically recorded as two numbers and is written as a ratio.

Systolic: The top number in the ratio, which is also the higher of the two, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart beats.

Diastolic: The bottom number in the ratio, which is also the lower of the two, measures the pressure in the arteries between heartbeats.

Your blood pressure rises with each heartbeat and falls when your heart relaxes between beats. While it can change from minute to minute with changes in posture, exercise, stress or sleep, it should normally be less than 120/80 mm Hg for women or men aged 20 or over.

The different blood pressure levels are:

- **Normal:** Less than 120 systolic and less than 80 diastolic
- **Elevated:** 120-129 systolic and less than 80 diastolic
- **High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1:** 130-139 systolic or 80-89 diastolic
- **High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2:** 140 or higher systolic or 90 or higher diastolic
- **Hypertensive Crisis:** higher than 180 systolic and/or higher than 120 diastolic

To learn more contact your nearest American Heart Association office,
call **1-800-AHA-USA1 (1-800-242-8721)** or visit www.heart.org/life.



This seal signifies that the American Heart Association-National meets the BBB Wise Giving Alliance's Standards for Charity Accountability.



**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=ZG5nSVVmR3NVTXc5dTAWbWtqTWdrZz09>

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

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

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

December 2, 2021

Dear Rev. Anderson and members of the Congregation,

Thank you so much for supporting The Council of Churches with your generous donation of \$1,125.00 on December 2, 2021. Throughout the past year, we have been grateful for congregations like yours, who have been incredibly supportive of our work, and because of your help, we look forward to 2022 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.
- 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.
- Provide free culinary training to low income residents giving them the opportunity for food industry employment.

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

Merry Christmas!

With gratitude,

Tom Larson

Tom Larson
Interim President and Chief Executive Officer

*Marjo -
Thanks for all you and Salem
do in support of the Council of Churches!
Tom*

We acknowledge that no goods or services were provided in exchange for your donation.

Advocacy * Food Access * Ecumenical & Interfaith * Re-Entry * Youth in Crisis



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

A Boom in Baptisms

By Cindy Uken

Vishal Ryan Gangaram has been an atheist and, later, a practicing Muslim, but over the Labor Day weekend the 23-year-old was baptized at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Eggertsville, N.Y.

Steve Biegner, pastor of St. Paul, now refers to Gangaram as a “Jesus freak.”

To a certain extent, that is true, said Gangaram, a graduate student at the University at Buffalo. “I believe that Jesus saves people,” he said. “I believe that God saved me. I wanted to officially become a Christian. I believe in the Bible and in the Trinity. I do believe that God is real.”

Since being baptized, Gangaram believes his “inner voice or conscience has become stronger. I also feel that God ... shows me signs, in many ways and on many occasions, to keep me moving forward, and for that I am grateful.”

Gangaram was one of 38 people the congregation baptized between February 2020 and Labor Day 2021, a span that encompasses the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Biegner said the number of baptisms at St. Paul during that time was nearly four times that of an average year. The newly baptized included infants, children, teens and adults.

Fourteen of the baptisms took place at St. Paul's, and 24 were done through Fire Church, a new mission for local first responders that the congregation launched the month before the pandemic was declared.

The baptisms and Fire Church are the result of the congregation putting energy into evangelizing in the community, meeting people where they are. As Biegner explained, “If we've learned one thing at St. Paul's, it is that we have to listen harder to the first word of the Great Commission: ‘go.’ The church has been ready to do the baptizing, teaching ... but we rarely go. Too often we wait for others to come to us.”



To baptize the families of Fire Church, St. Paul went to “their comfort zone, their sanctuary, which is their firehouse,” he said. “[That] is a place they already find community, vulnerability, family—a place they share their gifts and where they give and receive grace. We've stopped asking our first responders to come to church and feel uncomfortable, and now we go to their firehouse, barracks and hangar.

“One of [the baptized] was a past fire chief who was just there to help out and watch. He was so moved by the experience that he asked halfway through the baptisms if there was any chance that he could be baptized as well. I tried to get out of God's way and said, ‘Heck, yes!’ We baptized him with the firehouse chaplain pouring the water.”

To accommodate baptisms at the church during the pandemic, St. Paul held services outside when possible or scheduled them inside its clean, well-ventilated sanctuary. Most of the baptisms included family members and sponsors attending via Zoom or FaceTime. To minimize physical contact, Biegner often asked parents to do the pouring of water and laying on of hands.

“We all found this incredibly intimate and beautiful,” he said of the last change. “We're keeping the tradition.”

Cindy Uken is a veteran, award-winning reporter based in Palm Springs, Calif. She has worked at *USA Today*, as well as newspapers in South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana and California.



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

ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.

As COVID-19 has upended lives and economies across the African continent, the ELCA has provided more than \$1.2 million to its companions in 18 countries for pandemic relief (through July 2021). The varied requests reflect the vastly different social contexts of our African siblings. In Liberia the ELCA, together with other international partners of the Lutheran Church in Liberia, buttressed the COVID-19 capacity of the medical institutions associated with the church: Phebe Hospital and Curran Lutheran Hospital. It provided staff with protective clothing and risk management training, supplied patients with oxygen and constructed and renovated isolation units.

In Tanzania, the nonprofit Mwangaza Education for Partnership is working with Lutheran congregations to fight a torrent of disinformation about COVID-19, offering weeklong seminars that train people to evaluate media messages and ask critical questions about news sources: Where do they get their information? Who benefits from it? What are their biases? The seminar then equips congregations to train others to evaluate or assess information.

In Malawi, evangelism outreach has increased during the pandemic. Pastors hosted several short services to accommodate restrictions on the number of people permitted to gather. Evangelists took the word to the people, equipping a pickup truck with loudspeakers so they could preach and sing to people in their homes. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi Bishop Joseph Bvumbwe created a virtual forum for Malawian pastors, providing daily updates so they could stay at the forefront of helping their parishes. Read more in the new issue of “Stories of Faith in Action” about Malawi’s creative approach to evangelism outreach during the pandemic.



Lilongwe, Malawi. Photo: Mphatso Thole



Distribution of sanitizing equipment in Salima, Malawi. Photo: Shakira Chimbaza