



# *Salem Lutheran Church*

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

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

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in  
Lent*

*March 27, 2022  
9:30 AM*



**The Reverend Marjo Anderson, Pastor**  
[marjoanderson@aol.com](mailto:marjoanderson@aol.com)  
203-982-3441 (cell)

3160 Park Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06604  
Telephone: 203-336-3300;

**Karl Kraft, Office Manager**  
[salemsec123@sbcglobal.net](mailto:salemsec123@sbcglobal.net)

[www.salembridgeport.org](http://www.salembridgeport.org)  
[www.facebook.com/salembridgeport](https://www.facebook.com/salembridgeport)  
YouTube – Salem Lutheran Church, Bridgeport CT

# Welcome

## Rejoice and be glad!

We rejoice when God rolls away our sins!

We rejoice when God forgives our transgressions and puts our sin away!

We rejoice when we are made right with God whenever we trust and obey!

We rejoice to discover that in the divine arms we find God's boundless power & endless love!

**A week ago Wednesday, we closed on the sale of our property to the Ephraim French Seventh Day Adventist Church (currently on the corner of Iranistan and Maplewood in what was formerly a synagogue) and we will be renting back space for worship, offices and storage for at least 2 months and perhaps longer.** Ephraim graciously offered us the former music director's office for Pastor Marjo and Karl to share, half of the workroom behind what will now be their church office for such things as our copier, printers, router, and file cabinets, a section of the paper supply closet in the workroom (thanks to Bill and Dave who doubled the size of our shelving there), storage for larger items in one of the closets off the stage, as well as a temporary "staging area" in the former food pantry space for things we will be moving off-site to long-term storage. The pastor and leaders of Ephraim have been most gracious and we thank God that our beloved building has been received into their loving hands and that we are able to still worship and serve here at this time.

**Salem is still requiring masks.** We know that some are only comfortable coming into a place where people are masked, and we want to provide an environment where they feel safe. We will continue to re-evaluate based on what happens with the pandemic and what the latest advice is concerning singing protocols.

**Welcome to WONDROUS WEDNESDAYS!** On Wednesday we have 3 wonderful opportunities to live into our mission of Encountering God, Building Relationships, and Changing Lives. The links are all on the calendar on our website at SalemBridgeport.org under the Resources Tab.

**\* First, on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays of the month through June, we begin with a Morning Bible Study 9:30-11:00 on zoom, led by Grace Dukenski.** There is time for sharing before we launch into our study of the book of Romans, and time for prayer at the end.

**\* Every 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 more we talk with God and the more we listen to God, the more God is able to work through us. And the more we pray TOGETHER the more the power of prayer is multiplied.

**\* On the Wednesdays during Lent – March 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, and April 6<sup>th</sup> – we'll gather at 6:30 ONLINE with other congregations from our conference for a Virtual Dinner Theatre Worship experience.** Bring your dinner to your desk - or your laptop to the dinner table - and enjoy your meal while participating in a kind of dinner church/cabaret theatre. The theme is "Looking for Joy in Lent", and each week's worship will incorporate a play, scripture, music, prayer, and some time to get to know one another. Each week's play will be self-contained but the same characters will return each week. We're looking for volunteers to read a part in the play. Please let Jeanette "Momma J" know if you can play a part. You can call or text her at 203-366-6778 or email her at [jharris524@yahoo.com](mailto:jharris524@yahoo.com). The worship will be streamed live to Facebook so if you can't join us in real time you can watch it later. Please invite your family and friends to this novel Lenten experience.

# Gathering

## GATHERING SONG

## Father, I Have Sinned

### *Chorus 1*

Father I have sinned, help me find my way.  
Remember not my sins, just let me hear you say:

### *Chorus 2*

I forgive you, I love you You are mine, take my hand.  
Go in peace, sin no more, Beloved one.

### *Verse 1*

Father I have turned, my back and walked away  
Depended on my strength and lived life my own way

### *Verse 2*

Father I have closed, my heart to those in need.  
Thought only of myself, a victim of my greed.

### *Verse 3*

Father I have loved, if love's the word to use.  
I've played so many games, they've left me so confused.

### *Verse 4*

Father I've returned, I'm home with you to stay.  
Standing at your door, knowing that you'll say

*CCLI Song # 646803*

*Eugene O'Reilly*

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*Performance # 1 The Orillia Family of Catholic Churches and Schools Virtual Choir, 03/06/21  
as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIKEhsWtVYI> [4:25]*

*Performance # 2 by Chicago University Bible Fellowship, 05/05/20  
as found at this link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUtQ-mf2B\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUtQ-mf2B_s) [3:50]*

*Performance # 3 by Ricci Picache, 03/26/19  
as found at this link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PE\\_a7bOyTOc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PE_a7bOyTOc) [5:23]*

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

**WELCOME**

## OPENING SONG

## Our Father We Have Wandered

*(as found in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's worship book,  
and Evangelical Lutheran Worship # 606)*

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

*You may stand if you so desire.*

**Our Father, we have wandered  
and hidden from your face;  
in foolishness have squandered  
your legacy of grace.  
But now, in exile dwelling,  
we rise with fear and shame,  
as, distant but compelling,  
we hear you call our name.**

**And now at length discerning  
the evil that we do,  
behold us, Lord, returning  
with hope and trust to you.  
In haste you come to meet us  
and home rejoicing bring,  
in gladness there to greet us  
with calf and robe and ring.**

**O Lord of all the living,  
both banished and restored,  
compassionate, forgiving  
and ever-caring Lord,  
grant now that our transgressing,  
our faithlessness may cease.  
Stretch out your hand in blessing,  
in pardon, and in peace.**

*Text: based on Luke 15.11-32 by Kevin Nichols, 1929-2006; Meter 7 6 7 6 D*

*Music: HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN, (isometric), Passion Chorale (isometric)  
Hans Leo Hassler, 1564-1612, arr. Johann Sebastian Bach, 1685-1750*

*Text from Resource Collection of Hymns and Service Music for the Liturgy © 1981,  
International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc.*

# Word

*Please be seated.*

## **A READING FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT: Joshua 5:9-12**

Yahweh said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt”. And so that place is called Gilgal (meaning “rolling away”) to this day.

While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the Passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. On the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

## **A READING FROM THE BOOK OF PSALMS: Psalm 32**

Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!  
**Happy are they to whom Yahweh imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long.  
**For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;  
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt.  
**I said, “I will confess my transgressions to Yahweh.”  
Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.**

Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble;  
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.  
**You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;  
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.**

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;  
**I will guide you with my eye.**

Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;  
**who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.”**

Great are the tribulations of the wicked;  
**but mercy embraces those who trust in Yahweh.**

Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in Yahweh;  
**shout for joy, all who are true of heart.**

## **A READING FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT LETTERS: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21**

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ, the divine plan was to reconcile the world to God, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is working through us, making this appeal: we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the One to be sin who knew no sin, so that in that One we might become the righteousness of God.

## **A READING FROM THE GOSPELS: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32** *You may stand if you so desire.*

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus]. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them”.

So he told them this parable: “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me’. So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.’ ’ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son’. But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe — the best one — and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. The slave replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound’. Then the older brother became angry & refused to go in. His father came out & began to plead with him. But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, & all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate & rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead & has come to life; he was lost & has been found.’ ”

*You may stand if you so desire.*

## **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Let us affirm our faith together.

**I believe it is a matter of faith to stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves.**

**I believe it is a matter of faith to recognize equally  
and love all members of God's human family  
whatever their race, creed, color, gender, marital status,  
physical or mental capacity, or sexual orientation.**

**I believe Jesus Christ came to us to free all people from sin and to make disciples –  
people willing to live Christ's discipline of love and justice for all.**

**I believe the Holy Spirit is that power within us  
that gives us courage and stamina to face the truth and to live it,  
even to die for it, as Jesus died.**

**I believe in the resurrection, the victory over death,  
the truth that is life for all in Jesus' name.**

**Glory be to God, the One-in-Three:  
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustaining Power of Love. Amen**

## **PURPOSE STATEMENT**

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

**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

Drawn close to the heart of God,  
we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

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

Jesus formed the disciples in the ways of extravagant mercy and profound welcome.  
Lead your church to be a community marked by forgiveness, hospitality, and celebration.  
Send us to transform a world plagued by fear and condemnation.

We pray for our mission partners, especially today for Seafarers and International House,  
the Lions Club and 12-step groups, and the Ephraim French Seventh Day Adventist Church;  
and for Salem members and families, especially those celebrating birthdays this week:  
John Bryk and Dave Albers.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You make the land to produce a harvest that sustains your entire creation.

Equip farmers and farm workers who till the soil.

Nourish the earth with ample rainfall and abundant sunshine.

Heal grounds tainted by pollution or misuse.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Countries are divided and leaders often harbor grudges.

Reconcile nations that experience conflict, especially Russia and the Ukraine.

Act quickly to bring an end to war.

Anoint peacemakers trained in the art of diplomacy  
and foster a spirit of collaboration among political rivals.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Your people cry for help in times of distress.

Resolve disagreements among family members.

Save those experiencing financial hardship.

Hear our prayers for those who are sick or grieving, especially

Barbara, Bernedette, Christiane, Dolores, Frank, Grace, Jonathan, Linda, Steve, Pastor Johnson,  
and all we name in our hearts.

Help us to rejoice in the promise that you are always at work making all things new.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Your love comes to us when a table is set and a feast is prepared.

Bring an end to hunger in our community and around the world.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

The One who was dead is alive again.

We give thanks for those who have died, confident that steadfast love surrounds them.

Shelter them in your love until we are gathered together at your heavenly banquet.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

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

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

**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.



**OFFERTORY SONG      Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling**

*(as found in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's worship books,  
This Far by Faith # 155 and Evangelical Lutheran Worship # 608)*

*As long as you are masked, you may sing softly.  
You may stand if you so desire.*

- 1 Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me.  
See, on the portals he's waiting and watching, watching for you and for me.**

*Refrain*

**"Come home, (Come home,) come home! (come home!)  
You who are weary, come home."  
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,  
calling, "O sinner, come home!"**

- 2 Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading, pleading for you and for me?  
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies, mercies for you and for me?    *Refrain***

- 3 Oh, for the wonderful love he has promised, promised for you and for me!  
Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon, pardon for you and for me.    *Refrain***

*Text:      based on Luke 15:11-32 & John 10:3-4 by Will L. Thompson, 1847-1909  
Meter 11 7 11 7 & refrain*

*Music:    THOMPSON by Will L. Thompson*

*Text & Music are in the Public Domain*

## **Sending**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS, THANK YOU & BLESSING**

*Please be seated.*

*Here ends our Facebook live stream.*

# Meal & Dismissal

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of God, who makes a way in the wilderness, walks with us, and guides us in our pilgrimage.

Holy One,  
we confess that we have wandered far from you:  
we have not trusted your promises,  
we have ignored your prophets in our own day,  
we have squandered our inheritance of grace,  
we have failed to recognize you in our midst.  
Have mercy on us!  
Forgive us and turn us again to you, teach us to follow in your ways,  
assure us again of your love, and help us to love our neighbor. Amen

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us,  
and for Christ's sake God forgives us all our sins.  
As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by Christ's authority,  
I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins,  
in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

## COMMUNION

*Please be seated.*

God be with you!	<b>And also with you!</b>
Open your hearts!	<b>We open them to God and one another!</b>
Let us give thanks to the God of all!	<b>It is right to give God thanks &amp; praise!</b>

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest and let these gifts to us be blessed.  
**Blessed be God, who is our Bread; may all the world be clothed and fed. Amen**

The body of Christ given for you and the blood of Christ shed for you.

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

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

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

## CLOSING SONG

## Come on Home

*(as found in the Lutheran Church in America's 1992 Vacation Bible School Songbook,  
Together In Jesus' Name)*

*As long as everyone is masked, you may sing softly.  
You may stand if you so desire.*

**All: Come on home. Come on home.  
You're my child and I forgive you.  
Come on home. Come on home. Come on home.  
You are always welcome here, so come on home.**

**Solo:** All those years of labor, his father's gift of love.  
He grabbed it like a bandit and left home on the run.  
He was always "little brother," but he'd show them all this time.  
And he told them, "Fame and fortune will be mine."

**All: Come on home. Come on home.  
You're my child and I forgive you.  
Come on home. Come on home. Come on home.  
You are always welcome here, so come on home.**

**Solo:** In a far, far country he threw it all away.  
No thought about tomorrow, just living for the day.  
When he fin'ly hit the bottom he knew he was alone  
and all that he could do was go back home.

**All: Come on home. Come on home.  
You're my child and I forgive you.  
Come on home. Come on home. Come on home.  
You are always welcome here, so come on home.**

**Solo:** What was he to tell him? How could he explain  
his reckless self-indulgence, his sorrow and his shame?  
But his dad ran out to meet him and he simply said, "I know.  
My son, how I have missed you! Welcome home."

**All: Come on home. Come on home.  
You're my child and I forgive you.  
Come on home. Come on home. Come on home.  
You are always welcome here, so come on home.**

*Words and Music: Jay Beech; © 1980 Jay Beech  
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## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, be glad, and shout for joy!

**Thanks be to God!**

## POSTLUDE

### This Is Amazing Grace

**Who breaks the power of sin and darkness? Whose love is mighty and so much stronger?  
The King of Glory the King above all kings!**

**Who shakes the whole earth with holy thunder and leaves us breathless in awe & wonder?  
The King of Glory the King above all kings!**

**(Yeah) (Oh) This is amazing grace! This is unfailing love  
that You would take my place, that You would bear my cross!  
You laid down Your life that I would be set free!  
Oh Jesus I sing for all that You've done for me!**

**Who brings our chaos back into order? Who makes the orphan a son and daughter?  
The King of Glory the King of Glory!**

**Who rules the nations with truth and justice, shines like the sun in all of its brilliance?  
The King of Glory the King above all kings! (Refrain)**

**Worthy is the Lamb who was slain! Worthy is the King who conquered the grave!  
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain! Worthy is the King who conquered the grave!  
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain! Worthy is the King who conquered the grave!  
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain! Worthy! Worthy! Worthy! (Refrain)**

*CCLI Song # 6333821 – by Jeremy Riddle | Josh Farro | Phil Wickham  
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*Performance by the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir, Nov 10, 201508/07/21  
as found at this link:*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bqqMOPnrj0&list=RD2bqqMOPnrj0&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bqqMOPnrj0&list=RD2bqqMOPnrj0&start_radio=1) [6:31]

# Announcements

**You are invited to join Our Saviour's Lutheran Church for a Hymnfest this Saturday afternoon at 4:00 pm in their sanctuary.**

**Join the Journey as we Look for Joy in Lent!**

**\* We encourage everyone to spend the 6 weeks of Lent reading** what we have been studying in our Bible Study these last 2 months – **Acts chapters 1 & 2**. As you read this story reflect on what God is saying to YOU through this story and listen to how it applies to your life and then pay attention to how God works to transform you through this story.

**\* Palm Sunday, 9:30 April 10<sup>th</sup> – in-person at 3160 Park Ave, & streamed live to Facebook.**

**\* Maundy Thursday, 7:30 April 14<sup>th</sup> – in-person at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 160 Hill Farm Rd, Fairfield, and streamed live to YouTube.**

**\* Good Friday, 7:30 April 15<sup>th</sup> – in-person at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 160 Hill Farm Rd, Fairfield, and streamed live to YouTube.**

**\* Easter. 9:30 April 17<sup>th</sup> – We will celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord right here at 3160 Park Avenue with a festive service, complete with brass players and the Hallelujah Chorus!**

**\* After Easter we will return to our Wednesday Bible Study from 6:30-7:15**, followed by Holy Communion, 7:15-7:30 – and we'll begin by reflecting on how God has been using Acts 1-2 to transform our lives during Lent!

**Please join Jeanette Harris and Genesis Gospel Café at the next Inner-View Chat'n'Chew, Saturday April 16<sup>th</sup> (the day before Easter) at 11:00 am. Details to come.**

**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:**

*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 1<sup>st</sup> at 4:00 on zoom at this link:*

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89975646418?pwd=ZG5nSVVmR3NVTXc5dTAWbWtqTWdrZz09>

or go to [SalemBridgeport.org/Resources/Calendar](http://SalemBridgeport.org/Resources/Calendar) and click on the event for more information

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

**Thank you also to all who attended our Sunday Night Alive Inter-Church Cabaret Night.** We had representatives from 7 different congregations there, including Salem, Genesis, Our Saviour's, CHURCH, Tabor, and even the Seventh Day Adventist congregation who is purchasing our property! We had a lot of fun enjoying stories, poems, songs, and the reading of a short play – all while getting to know each other – which is exactly what God calls us to do!

**God is SO good that we cannot help but give thanks with a grateful heart!** At last week's congregational meeting we heard in the report of the Treasurer that your giving has remained consistently strong over these past 2 years despite the pandemic. **THANK YOU!** We also heard that we made so much money in the stock market that it more than covered our budgeted deficit! **PLUS!** we received \$40,000 in grants from the federal government! But the vitally important thing to note is that **ALL of these gifts are from God** who gave this year through you, through our investments, and through our government. It doesn't matter if someday the stock market loses money. It doesn't matter if we never get money from the government again. Why? Because if God desires to bless us financially, God can and will find a way to do it. Our trust is not in each other, nor in banks, nor in governments. Our trust is in the God of all power and love who will give us all the resources we need to do whatever it is God calls us to do. So pray that God make our mission known to us and give us the courage to do it. And then the rest is easy: Don't worry! **BE THANKFUL!**

**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!**

**Invitation from Joe Bales** - As I'm sure you'll remember the Salem Food Pantry ended in early 2020 with the onset of the Covid 10 pandemic. It was a very disappointing period for Salem and personally for me as we had created a great community outreach program. While our pantry has been silent a small contingent of Food Pantry volunteers have continued to be involved in meeting the needs of the hunger challenged. Today seven men meet weekly at the Brooklawn Deli for fellowship — followed by picking up food from the Bridgeport Food Bank with delivery to the PTBarnum Food Pantry. The group consists of Dr. Peter Mitchell, Fred Schaefer, Bert Andren, Ray Anderson, Tom Larson, Charlie Beaver and myself. **YOU** are welcome to join us and as in the past we welcome your support through monetary contributions. Your donation should be directed to Feed The People Food Pantry, c/o Roberta Marson, 240 Hanson Avenue, Bridgeport, Ct 06605. Contact Joe Bales at 203-434-6308 for additional information.

## UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

### **Hans Nielsen Hauge, renewer of the church, died 1824 Tuesday, March 29, 2022**

Hauge was a layperson who wished to revitalize the church in Norway. As a result of a mystical experience, he felt called to preach. Many professionals in the church feared his motives and influence, and he was imprisoned for leading unauthorized gatherings.

### **John Donne, poet, died 1631 Thursday, March 31, 2022**

After finishing his education at Oxford University, Donne seemed headed for a career in the English public service. But a series of circumstances led him into the ordained ministry. He is well known as a writer of both secular and sacred poetry.

## CREDITS

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