



May 2022

the
SPIRIT

Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

A Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Congregation

A Beloved Community

After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And many wonders and signs were done. And all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. And worshipping and breaking bread together with glad and generous hearts, they praised God. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. [Acts 2:41-47]

The first time I experienced a beloved community was in Clinical Pastoral Education at Park City Hospital in Bridgeport. Before that the only kind of community I had experienced was the kind that is based on the things that people have in common – things like age, race, class, culture, religious beliefs, and political affiliations. The trouble with such human “tribal” communities is that they are defined by their similarities, AND as opposed to other human “tribal” communities that are seen as “different”. I didn’t see anything wrong with that because it was all I had ever known – all that most people ever know.

In CPE we began as a typical human community, but the goal was to find true Christian community which is NOT based on similarities. Instead of focusing on what we had in common and sweeping our differences under the rug, we were challenged to be our whole authentic selves, and when we encountered differences we were urged to acknowledge them, discuss them in ways that were civil and respectful, with everyone committed to listening to, learning from, and being changed by one another. When we learned to do this, our differences were no longer a threat to our community. Instead we could actually celebrate them! It was the most amazing experience I had had up to that point. We could hold absolutely opposing beliefs and still feel a deep attachment and love for one another.

In his book, “The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace,” Dr. M. Scott Peck identified 4 clear stages to successful building of true community:

Pseudo-community: This is a stage where people believe they have community but the emphasis is on conforming and differences are not welcome and are suppressed. Until everyone is free and welcome to express differing opinions and diversity is celebrated, the only kind of community possible is pseudo-community.

Chaos: When conflicts emerge in a pseudo-community, the group responds in ways that make it clear that those who do not conform to the group’s beliefs are not welcomed. Often those who are not welcomed simply leave. If they stay, they are often treated disrespectfully in the hope they will leave. In such times it becomes clear that the community is deeply divided, and one side may wish that the others would disappear. Chaos looks counterproductive but it is the first step towards building true community.

Emptiness: After chaos comes emptiness and hopelessness. Sometimes the community simply falls apart at this point – or those on one side of the conflict leave and the group is greatly diminished. But if people learn to let go of their egos, if they learn to submit their wills to the divine, if they are willing to suffer the death of their own desires, this death paves the way for the birth of true community.

True Community: Having worked through emptiness, the people in a true beloved community are in complete empathy with one another. They not only understand how others feel, they care enough about the other to give up their own desires in order to reduce the pain of the other. Discussions are respectful with everyone open to having their minds and hearts transformed.

True community is the place where people shine the brightest and the most profound healing and growth emanate. “In genuine community there are no sides. It is not always easy, but by the time they reach community the members have learned how to give up cliques and factions. They have learned how to listen to each other and how not to reject each other. Sometimes consensus in community is reached with miraculous rapidity. But at other times it is arrived at only after lengthy struggle. Just because it is a safe place does not mean community is a place without conflict. It is, however, a place where conflict can be resolved without physical or emotional bloodshed and with wisdom as well as grace. A community is a group that can fight gracefully.” ~ M. Scott Peck

Jesus taught us how to have true community. It comes from listening to and obeying him. Because if we all are listening to Christ the head of us, the members of Christ’s body, we will all be going in the same direction. If we are not, then it is clear that not everyone is listening. Listening to and obeying Christ means that we have to be willing to give up the things that WE want – the hymns we want, the worship we want, the ways of doing business we want – in order to welcome the stranger, and love our enemy, and pray for those who persecute us. Listening to and obeying Christ means we have to be willing to give up the old ways of doing things in order to do the new things God is calling us to do. Listening to and obeying Christ means that we must treat everyone with the utmost care and respect, doing unto others as we would have them do unto us.

The easiest way to describe this true beloved community is to think about what it is to fall in love with someone, and then finding out that their political beliefs are the exact opposite of yours, because that is the true test of love, of community. Are the arms of your love long enough to embrace that person’s differences? I invite you to reflect on and pray about true community this month.

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

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



"Because he works from home. That's why we never see God in person."

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

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



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

Next deadline date is **May 15th** for the June issue!

Email submissions to
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net



May 2022 Salem Lutheran Church



SUN May 1	MON 2	TUE 3	WED 4	THU 5	FRI 6	SAT 7
Easter 3 9:30am In Person Worship 10:30am Forward on the FIRST 4pm Discussion of the book, "Caste" by Isabel	4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on An	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tr 12pm Book Club	9:30am Bible Study 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study		6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Easter 4 9:30am In Person Worship 4pm Southern CT Conference COLLABORATE!	4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on An 6:30pm Social Ministry Committee Meeting	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tr 6pm Stewardship Committee Meeting	12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study		6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	8am The BREAKFAST Gathering!
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Easter 5 9:30am In Person Worship	4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on An 6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting 7:30pm Executive Committee Meeting	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tr	Golden Hill Community Supper 9:30am Bible Study 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study		6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	11am Inner-View Chat n Chew
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Easter 6 9:30am In Person Worship	4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on An 7pm Council Meeting	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tr	12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray 6:30pm Bible Study	Ascension of Our Lord	6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	
29	30	31	 ASCENSION OF THE LORD			
Easter 7 9:30am In Person Worship 6pm Sunday Night Alive!	4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on An	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and Tr				

Howard Swanson.....	1
Gilbert Sidoti	2
Hannah Dollhopf	3
Bonnie McWain.....	4
Robert Roehrich.....	5
Joan Bromley	7
Jackson Sokoloski	7
Isaiah Vazquez	8
Nancy D'Andrea.....	9
Beverly Marshall	9
Ray Lansing.....	14
Andy Andrews.....	18
Deborah Palmieri	18
Maria Caragol	18
Karen Andrews	25
Michael Caragol.....	27
Rita Johnson.....	28



“Are Forever Stamps OK?”

OVER 72 ?

CONSIDER A GIFT TO SALEM FROM YOUR IRA

The tax law that covers your IRA has opportunities for charitable giving.

You can make a distribution to Salem from your IRA without paying any Federal or state income taxes on the distribution. The distribution is not included in taxable income, and no charitable deduction is allowed.

There are specific requirements:

- You must be at least 72.

- You must decline goods or services

- Your rollover may not exceed \$100,000

- The gift can be made only from a traditional IRA. Gifts from 401(k), 403(b), 457 or simplified employee pension (SEP) plans are not permitted

To make a gift, send a letter to your IRA administrator requesting a direct charitable distribution to Salem Lutheran Church in the amount you wish to donate. The letter should include the Church's tax ID number: 06-0727990.

This may be the right gift for you to make if:

- You want to make a charitable gift and your IRA is a large share of your available assets

- You are required to take a minimum distribution from your IRA, but you don't need the additional income

- You do not itemize your deductions. An IRA charitable rollover is equivalent to a deduction because it is not included in your taxable income.

If you have any questions, please call Rich Kenyon at 203-374-5923.

Time is Brain



Time is of the essence for an ischemic stroke, the most common type of stroke. An ischemic stroke occurs when a blood clot deprives the brain of oxygen. Two million brain cells die every minute without blood flow.

At the Stroke Center of Bridgeport Hospital, part of the Yale-New Haven Hospital System, neurosurgeons can minimize or prevent brain damage from ischemic stroke. Neurosurgeons remove the blood clot in the brain by a thrombectomy which reestablishes blood flow to the brain. That is if the doctors can do the surgery within 24 hours after the onset of the stroke.

During a thrombectomy, the neurosurgeon makes a small incision in the patient's wrist or upper leg, exposing an artery. A catheter is inserted into the artery and navigated to the site of the clot. The neurosurgeon then inserts a tiny retriever through the catheter to grab and remove the clot. The procedure usually takes under an hour. A thrombectomy can successfully reopen a blocked artery 85-90% of the time.

Remember the symptoms of a stroke by the letters **B-E F-A-S-T**:

Balance unsteady

Eyesight changes

Facial droop

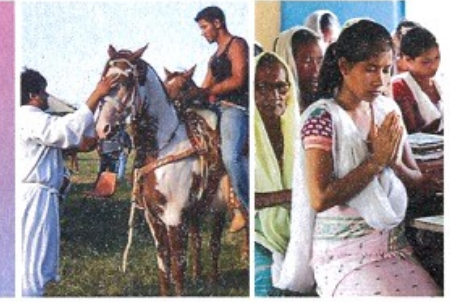
Arm weakness

Speech difficulty

Time to call 9-1-1



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



[THANK YOU]

To the members of
Salem Lutheran Church
Bridgeport, Connecticut

from the
New England Synod

of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
In grateful appreciation for giving

\$9,800.00

for Mission Support beyond the congregation for synod and
churchwide ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.


Synod Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America


Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

SAVE THESE DATES

New England Women of the ELCA 12th Biennial Convention

Camp Calumet Conference Center – Freedom, NH

OCTOBER 27-29, 2022

- Rejoice in the community of women
- Voices raised in praise and thanksgiving
- Awaken the spirit.
- Become empowered *

SCRIPTURE EXPLORED ♥ PRAYER ♥ WORSHIP ♥ JOYFUL SINGING
♥ SHARING OF IDEAS & STORIES ♥ JUST FOR FUN ACTIVITIES.

As women we are called to be disciples of Jesus Christ

Special guest Bishop James Hazelwood

New England Synod, ELCA

*MORE DETAILS COMING SOON

WEEKLY AND MONTHLY EVENTS

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 1st and 3rd 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.

*** And finally, every Wednesday at 6:30 pm we conclude with an Evening Bible Study 6:30-7:30 on zoom, led by Pastor Marjo and Jeanette Harris.** Join this diverse and interesting group of people for a study that is not simply informational but transformational. We continue our study of the book of Acts, concluding at 7:15 with a brief service of Holy Communion.

The next breakfast and faith discussion will be held on May 14th at Grace Lutheran Church, 150 Chapel Street, Stratford, at 8:00 (7:00 to help cook).

Please join Jeanette Harris and Genesis Gospel Café at the next Inner-View Chat'n'Chew, Saturday May 21st at 11:00 am. Details forthcoming.

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](#):**



Dear Members of Salem Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your contribution of \$161 to our Rwanda-Malawi World Hunger emphasis! Your donation will help provide food, school materials, and mattresses for orphans & vulnerable children. Youth will be trained in welding & tailoring. Women will get business loans. Hungry children will be fed and sick children will get medical care. Primary students will be nurtured medically & socially in after-school health clubs. And youth will be empowered in HIV/AIDS centers.

Church contributions of up to \$100 are being matched so your outreach will have an even greater impact!

Thank you for your caring!

Doreen Rinas, Co-chairperson of the Synod's World Hunger Team

RECYCLE THAT BICYCLE!



Have a bicycle you aren't using anymore?

Golden Hill United Methodist Church in Bridgeport needs **donations of bikes** for their annual **Used Bike Giveaway** on June 4, 2022 for families in need.

- Need children's, youth and adult bikes
- Bikes should be in decent shape (perhaps in need of a few **minor** repairs)
- Bikes can be delivered to Golden Hill UMC, 210 Elm St., Bridgeport , Tuesday-Friday 9:30am-12pm. Other times can be arranged if needed.
- A pick up is possible at a mutually agreeable time
- Need bike donations by **May 21** to allow time for repairs

To arrange to give a bike donation, please contact Phyllis Machledt at pmachledt@gmail.com or Golden Hill UMC (203-336-0152, Tues-Fri.) or email: office@goldenhill.org.

Part of the UMC Cooperative Parish Program



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

Easter is a season, not a day

By Tim Brown

I remember one Easter growing up in Toledo, Ohio, waking up very early for the sunrise service. My father, already at the church preparing worship, had pre-tied my necktie and hung it on the banister. I slipped it on with my freshly pressed white shirt, donned my once-a-year suspenders and walked downstairs.

And then I cried. A fresh coat of snow had fallen overnight. I remember saying, "We can't celebrate new life with snow on the ground!"

It's my earliest Easter memory. One that has stuck with me as I've grown up and had my own children. For as true and real as those emotions were (and, sometimes, still are), they are rooted in a falsehood that continually needs to be dispelled by gospel truth: Resurrection happened, and happens, even in unlikely circumstances.

"What's the next holiday?" my sons asked after this second year of pandemic Christmases. The festivals that dot our calendar have always been important, but recently that significance has been highlighted as bright spots illuminating an otherwise confusing reality in these years of strangeness. Calendars, both secular and sacred, aren't just for knowing what day it is, but also for helping us know how to behave.

"Easter," I replied with much enthusiasm. My son looked at me a bit disappointed. "But that's only one day," he said, downcast.

"It's not," I replied with confidence. "It's actually 50 days!" But I understood his assumption. In the larger landscape, Christmas lasts for weeks: holiday music starts in early November and Christmas-themed movies air before the Halloween candy is consumed. Christmas itself is, at least liturgically and historically, 12 days long. To my son,

Easter seems like only a day. But for something as unique and life-giving as resurrection, strides need to be taken to honor the totality of the season long past the secular celebrations of rabbits and eggs.

Easter is a season, not a day. And in this pandemic-lingering reality, we need that reminder more than ever.

Practices

- Take Easter walks. During the 50 days of Easter, go for regular walks, encouraging your children to point out signs of new life: budding blades of grass, singing birds, increased wildlife activity.
- Create Easter scenes. We're all used to nativity scenes, but what if your family made a "resurrection display"? Using dolls, modeling clay or puppets, create a display of the empty tomb, the proclamation angel and the disciples inspecting the scene.
- Observe Easter symbols. Bunnies and eggs have long been used to describe spring, but they also provide resurrection imagery. Rabbits are prolific and are signs of exponential generations. Eggs are signs of hidden potential, like the empty tomb. Describe how these secular images hold sacred promises within them.

Tim Brown is a pastor, writer, and director of spiritual gifts for Methodist Home for Children.



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

ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.

Global Ministries—Europe

In the coming year, the Europe desk will continue to prioritize its accompaniment of regional partners as they respond to the needs of the most vulnerable populations in Europe.

Within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary (ELCH), Szabolcs Végh is an active leader in the Lutheran community and guides the Backyard Garden and Little Workshops project, one purpose of which is to



A participant in the Backyard Garden and Little Workshops project tries her hand at loom weaving during an introductory training session.



Participants in the training sessions and their families get an introduction to pottery.



A participant in the basket-weaving workshop with his first project nearly complete.

address limited economic opportunity and skill training. In rural settings, women and Roma individuals are disproportionately impacted by lack of economic opportunity. This project focuses specifically on communities in five neighboring villages near Lake Balaton in western Hungary.

The first step in establishing the Backyard Garden and Little Workshops was to equip a location, so a multipurpose house in the village of Kötcse was renovated to serve as both a community space and an arts and crafts center. Once the space was established, the ELCH invited families from the surrounding villages to a trial day at which they could learn about and try each of the crafts (basket weaving, loom weaving and pottery) and select a training course in the one they preferred. The eight-week training courses are led by professional craftspeople. Once a participant completes a training course, they can utilize the space and materials to create art to sell.

In addition to providing practical skills training, work space and materials, the project weaves together creative expression, cultural celebration and community connection. To that end, the building utilized for crafts is also used for community activities. From guitar practice for the youth club to pottery days for children to all family events, the message to the larger community is clear: this is a place to gather. Through this collaboration with the local villages, the ELCH is empowering individuals and strengthening the fabric of the community.