A Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Congregation

"Two Churches"

"When you look at the ocean, what do you see? You see the surface, right? But that's only the part of the ocean that's visible to you. Underneath that surface there is SO much more!

When you look in the mirror, what do you see? You see your body, right? You see your head and neck and torso and arms and legs and hands and feet. You see your skin stretched over your bones and muscles. You might even be able to see a tiny bit of what is happening inside by observing how your face looks — peaceful or stressed, happy or sad, alert or tired. But even at that, it's just what is visible to you. Inside you there is SO much more!

And I'm not just talking about your bones and muscles or your inner organs. I'm sure you'd find it fascinating to watch your heart beat, your lungs breathe, your blood flow, and your nerves light up. But then think about what's causing all of that activity to take place! Think about what's inside of those things that are inside of you – the molecules, the atoms, the protons, neutrons, and electrons. And on that atomic level there is also movement – for in every atom, electrons zip around their nucleus, as planets revolving around their sun, but at lightning speed! And what is it that causes those electrons to move? Energy!

James Ray, in the book The Secret by Rhonda Byrnes, has this to say about energy. "...you're not a finite body. Even under a microscope you're an energy field. What we know about energy is this: You go to a quantum physicist and you say, 'What creates the world?' And he or she will say, 'Energy'. Well, describe energy. 'OK, it can never be created or destroyed, it always was, always has been, everything that ever existed always exists, it's moving into form, through form and out of form.' You go to a theologian and ask the question, 'What created the Universe?' And he or she will say, 'God'. OK, describe God. 'Always was and always has been, never can be created or destroyed, all that ever was, always will be, always moving into form, through form and out of form.' You see, it's the same description, just different terminology. So if you think you're this 'meat suit' running around, think again. You're a spiritual being! You're an energy field, operating in a larger energy field."

And the same thing is true of the Church. When you look at Salem, or other Lutheran congregations, or other White Mainline Protestant congregations, what do you see? You see the physical manifestation of the Church – the human institution with its governing documents, organizational structure, theology, traditions, practices, building spaces, meeting times, participants, bank accounts, etc. But that is NOT the Church that Jesus promised. Jesus was never interested in the surface level of religious institutions like Judaism, but in what was underneath the surface. Jesus was never content to deal with the surface level of people's physical and material lives, but always dug deeper into their spiritual lives. What Jesus was talking about was the Church as it exists on a spiritual level. It is true that the spiritual Church can and likely will manifest in a physical and material way that can

development into a movement or an organization or an institution. But the life of the Church will never be in the institution. Its life is not on the surface in the physical manifestation, but it is in the vast and deep ocean of the true spiritual Church underneath the surface. That vast and deep ocean simply teems with life, and everyone in that spiritual Church knows that the life is not on the surface but in the depths.

So when you look at Salem what you are seeing is just a human institution, a social organization. The REAL Church exists on a spiritual level, where the Spirit/Energy causes the most basic movement (electrons). It's comprised of all of the people whose spiritual selves have connected on a spiritual level with the Holy Spirit. It's comprised of people who don't just call themselves Christian, or think of themselves as Christians, or belong to a Christian church, or do the things that Christians are supposed to do. Rather, it's people who have had a spiritual encounter with the divine that has changed how they see God, how they see themselves, and how they understand the meaning of their lives. It's people who have experienced such joy in the presence of the living God that they cannot help but tell others about it! It's people who boldly do the risky things God asks of them because they just can't NOT do them anymore! And when God gathers these Christians, whose own spirits are connected with the Spirit of the living Christ, they constitute a Church that will necessarily be alive and vibrant and have the energy and excitement to do whatever it is that God calls them to do!

Some have said that Salem can never again grow. If we are simply looking at the surface, at the human organization then I agree. But if we look below the surface, at the spiritual church, then Salem CAN grow. It begins with GROUP prayer and GROUP Bible Study. I guarantee that if 12 members would covenant with me to meet together for weekly prayer and Bible Study, Salem would begin to grow spiritually. And then that spiritual growth would be visible on the surface and more people would come and there would be a new sense of mission and call and that would generate new energy and enthusiasm for witness and service. I am confident that if we begin working on a deeper spiritual level, then God will raise Salem to new life.

There are two churches – the human institution and the true church. If we continue to focus merely on the church on the surface level of human institution, we will die. But if we focus on the church on the deep level of spirituality, we will be raised to new life, to life abundant, and to life that is beyond all any of us can ask or even imagine. That is God's promise. And God who is faithful WILL do it. Of that I am quite sure.

Abundant blessings be yours!

Lastor 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

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.

LEADERSHIP AT SALEM

COUNCIL

Marjo Anderson, Pastor Rich Lansing, President John Bryk, Vice-President Nancy Headford, Secretary Rich Kenyon, Treasurer Sandra Brown Frank Dukenski Steve Kuczo Carol Lansing Tom Larson Cindy Roberts Bill Winter

MITTEN TREE

While we will not have an actual mitten tree this year, we will be collecting mittens, gloves, hats and scarves as usual. There will be a box in the narthex on Sunday mornings for contributions. Items can also be dropped off at the office on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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

Next deadline date is November 15th for the December issue!

Email submissions to salemsec123@sbcglobal.net



November 2022 Salem Lutheran Church



					T	
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		Nov 1	2	3	4	5
		9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and	12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray		6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	
		12pm Book Club	6:30pm Bible Study on ACTS			
	Г					
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
All Saints Sunday	4pm S CT Rostered Ldrs Mtg on Anti-Racisr	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and	12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray		6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	8am The BREAKFAST Gathering!
9:30am In Person Worship		6pm Stewardship Committee Meeting	6:30pm Bible Study on ACTS			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Pentecost 23	4pm S CT Rostered Ldrs Mtg on Anti-Racisr	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and	Golden Hill Supper		6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	11am Inner-View Chat n Chew
9:30am In Person Worship	6:30pm Social Ministry Committee Meeting	,	12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray			
4pm Southern CT Conference COLLABORA	, ,		6:30pm Bible Study on ACTS			
,						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Christ the King	4pm S CT Rostered Ldrs Mtg on Anti-Racisr	9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and	12pm Lord. Teach Us to Pray	Thanksgiving	6pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center	
9:30am In Person Worship	6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting	,	6:30pm Bible Study on ACTS	A MA		
- 7.000m	7:30pm Executive Committee Meeting		S disapin and disappend	That the first		
				To God!		

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27	28	29	30		•	•
Advent 1		9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and				
9:30am In Person Worship	7pm Council Meeting	- 2.50mm Nostered Leaders Tuesday Talk all	6:30pm Bible Study on ACTS			
2.55 dili ili i Gisori Molalip	7 pm council meeting		- 0.00pm bible olday on ACTO			

Steve Kuczo	1
Nancy Kidwell	2
Aidan Palmieri	
Augustine Palmieri	7
Carl Horton	10
Nicholas Roberts	13
Larson Palmgren	13
Tiana Rose	14
Christoph Dow	15
Carter Gulyas	15
Katrina Cotter	
Sienna Cotter	17
Jaxon Gulyas	18
Dorothy DeWalt	
Justin Claus	



Mark your calendar and join us on Dec 10 for breakfast and Seafarer's Gift Bag Packing Party. We will gather at Grace Lutheran Church on Saturday, Dec 10, at 9:00 for breakfast and 10:00 for gift bag packing. This will be a great opportunity to meet members from Our Saviours, Grace, and Holy Trinity Lutheran Churches as we combine our efforts to make this year's collection better than ever.

Christmas at Sea

Collection dates:

Gift Suggestions:

- Woolen caps
- Sweatshirts (L-XL)
- Thermal or White Socks
- Colored T-Shirts (L)
- Chocolates
- Canned Nuts
- Hard Candy
- Christmas Cards
- Money



If questions, contact Carol Lansing (203) 520-3752

Please place items in the marked box in the Narthex

19 Surprising Things That Raise Your Blood Pressure

- 1. **Salt** makes the body retain fluids which stresses your heart and blood vessels more.
- 2. Worry
- 3. Anger
- Added sugar especially in a processed form like high-fructose corn syrup
- 5. Loneliness especially over time
- 6. Sleep Apnea
- 7. Not enough potassium in your diet
- 8. Pain especially sudden or acute
- 9. **Herbal Supplements** especially ginkgo, ginseng, guarana, ephedra, bitter orange, or St. John's Wort
- 10. Thyroid problems that include not enough hormone or too much hormone
- 11. A full bladder
- 12. **NSAIDs** such as aspirin and ibuprofen
- 13. Your doctor's office or the "white coat effect"
- 14. **Decongestants** like pseudoephedrine and phenylephrine can narrow your blood vessels
- 15. **Dehydration**
- 16. Hormonal birth control can narrow blood vessels
- 17. **Talking** while getting your blood pressure taken
- 18. Crossing your legs while getting your blood pressure taken
- 19. Antidepressants that target brain chemicals

17 Ways to Feel Calmer Now

A lot is going on in this world that is entirely out of our control. There are things we can do to address our worries and simplify our life. This will allow us to feel better and have more love, optimism, and joy.

- 1. **Pray** allow God to carry your worries, especially concerns you can do little to resolve.
- 2. **Consciously forgive someone** don't let something that happened in the past affect your future. The act of forgiveness will help you move on plus will lower your levels of anxiety and stress.
- 3. **Take a slow sip of tea** cradling a cup of tea in your hands can make you feel cozy and at peace.
- 4. **Get that worrisome thing checked out** have a doctor look at that mole, pain, or bump you have been stressing over. Either that thing is nothing, or you'll get it treated right away.
- 5. **Take one small action** when you feel overwhelmed about the state of the world, taking a concrete action to make a better world, like donating time or money, empowers us.
- 6. **Apologize for that awkward moment** if you blurted something insensitive or forgot something important, apologize quickly. Otherwise, you will dwell on it, maybe even more than the person you hurt.
- 7. **Limit your social media** the bad news you hear on TV or in the newspapers can leave you stressed and exhausted. Limit your listening and reading of negative news to about twenty-five minutes daily.
- 8. Chew on cherries cherries contain the antioxidant quercetin, which may help you feel calm.
- 9. **Swap to-dos** with a friend there's always one chore you hate. Talk to a friend about exchanging one task that they don't mind doing and taking a task of theirs that you do not hate.
- 10.**Do a cathartic mini cleanup** take a few minutes to clean one spot that has been bothering you. This quick clean takes just a short burst of physical energy and little planning, quickly reducing stress.
- 11.**Log on for support** support groups can be helpful for issues you are struggling with. You will realize that you are not the only one and can get tips on coping.
- 12. **Breathe through your feet** pay attention to your feet when you feel pulled in too many directions. Take off your shoes and stand tall with your shoulders relaxed. As you breathe in, notice each toe on the ground and then feel the entire foot. This action will help you feel in control of your body.
- 13. Cancel something find one thing on your calendar, like a meeting you genuinely don't have to attend. Allow yourself to do nothing. This will recharge your battery, lower your blood pressure, and help you think more clearly.
- 14. **Declutter your refrigerator door** the kitchen should be a calming place. A refrigerator covered with paperwork, bills, menus, and coupons does not help. Toss out outdated stuff. Use a magnetic dry-erase calendar for important dates.
- 15.**Make Monday more appealing** on Sunday, anxiety can build about returning to work on Monday. Schedule something you can enjoy for Mondays, such as lunches, after-work drinks with friends, or a night of TV binging.
- 16. **Walk to zone-out** walking is a stress reliever, especially a walk through nature. Keep your head full of happy thoughts to lift your mood.
- 17. Remember that you've got this you have all the tools you need to get through whatever you're dealing with. Write down what you successfully dealt with in the past and how you handled it.

What would Halloween be without an email from me about Boy Scout Christmas wreaths?

The year 2022 has been another year of challenges and change for Troop 103. Our sponsor, Salem Lutheran Church, has sold their property, so the troop has relocated to a new home with Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Bridgeport. The move took a lot of effort (and patience) on the part of both scouts and leaders. We have been warmly welcomed are still settling in. And our scouts continue to go camping, work on advancement, participate in community service projects and support our new sponsor.

These activities are made possible by your continuing support or our annual Christmas wreath and window box sale. The proceeds of this fundraiser are used to pay for registration and insurance fees, equipment, camping and other troop operating costs. This year we are again offering 22" decorated wreaths for \$25 and window boxes for \$20.

Please let me know if you would like to support our troop. Payment can be made at the time of delivery. Wreaths and boxes will be available for pick-up or delivery anytime after 11:00am on Sat Nov 26. Checks should be made payable to BOY SCOUT TROOP 103.

Thanks again for your continued support of these future community leaders

Bruce Tomasko
Troop 103 Committee
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
203-521-8103 (C)





Join CWK Network and the Community of Fairfield for a Special Film Screening and Panel Discussion Featuring Stacey DeWitt (Defining US Director), Dr. Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz (Cast Member and Professor, Teachers College, Columbia University), and Friends.

DEFINING US

CHILDREN at the Crossroads OF CHANGE

Students and teachers inside the Nation's largest school systems share the untold story of why we need to acknowledge, discuss, and validate concerns about race and other vital issues that define our humanity.

Friday, **November 4th**

Doors Open at 5:00 PM | Film Begins 6:00 PM

Sacred Heart University Community Theater

1420 Post Road

Fairfield, CT 06825















WEEKLY AND MONTHLY EVENTS

Welcome to WONDROUS WEDNESDAYS! On Wednesday we have 2 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.

- * 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 November 12th 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 November 19th 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:



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

A Family Reformation

By Todd Buegler

Josh smiled as he watched his kids, ages 8 and 10, help carry one end of a single mattress. Carrying the bottom end, he coached the children as they made their way up the front steps into the home and then back into the bedroom. Carrie, the children's mom, followed behind with a package containing bedding and pajamas for the 6-year-old who would sleep in a bed for the first time that night.

As volunteers of their congregation's Beds for Kids program, the family delivered beds, set them up, carefully made them and then prayed before going on to their next delivery.

That night at dinner, the family talked about their experience. The kids asked questions about the child who received the bed and about her family. Carrie and Josh tried to explain why she might not have had a bed. They talked about abundance and scarcity. They talked about how they felt to be part of this project.

One of the most powerful things a family can experience together is serving others in Jesus' name. These experiences can change them.

When we consider the Reformation at this time of year, we often discuss it as a historical and transformational event—and it was. But we may not always think about God's ongoing work of reformation in the world and in the lives of God's people, or our role in it.

Reformation takes place wherever the Spirit works through God's people to make God's hopes and imagination for the world a reality. Reformation is when God's people experience transformation in their faith. Reformation is when communities, families and individuals take steps toward becoming who God has created them to be.

The child who received that bed experienced a reformation: that night, she would have a safe, warm and comfortable place to sleep. Josh, Carrie



and their kids experienced reformation by participating in God's mission for the sake of that child and her family, and for the sake of the world. Together, they created a liturgical memory, an opportunity to experience being an agent of God's grace. It was their hands, doing God's work.

Practices

- Talk with your family about where you see need in your community. Pray for guidance on how you might meet those needs.
- **Serve together as a family.** Inquire in your congregation or with area service organizations about how your family might serve together.
- Hold a family conversation to process your service project. The experience of serving can't stand on its own. Ask your kids what they saw, how it made them feel and how they think they might have helped. Share your answers too. (Parents, model honesty and vulnerability.) End with a prayer for all whose lives might have been touched by the work you did together.

Todd Buegler is a pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Owatonna, Minn. and also serves as executive director of the ELCA Youth Ministry Network.

A "dream" becomes a reality Synod secures funds for Lutheran University of Nigeria

By Nicholas Tangen

The Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN), based in northeastern Nigeria, is one of the largest Lutheran denominations in the world, with approximately 2.5 million members. Education is a core value for the LCCN, whose faith-based primary and secondary schools in the region have a nationwide reputation for excellence. But opportunities for higher education are limited for its students, with most universities located in the southern part of the country.

"Every region has their own catchment area," LCCN Archbishop Musa Filibus told staff of the Minneapolis Area Synod, its companion synod, during a recent Zoom call. "So students, when they graduate and apply for higher education, must have as their first choice a university within their own region. Only as a second choice can you apply to a school outside your own region. So already we have limitations for our young people."

According to the <u>LCCN</u>, nearly 60% of all eligible students in Nigeria won't find placement in the country's relatively few universities, a fact further complicated by patterns of religious, ethnic and political discrimination. In state schools, Christian students are often excluded from courses related to medicine, engineering and law.

These limitations have long been on the minds of LCCN leadership, who imagined a university that could provide educational opportunities and hope. So in 2020 the church began taking steps to build the Lutheran University Nigeria (LUN) in Demsa, a semirural village in Adamawa State.

"We think that the church going into this dream of a university will be a huge response to [the concerns], not only for the Lutherans, not only for the church, but for the wider community," Filibus said.

The university will offer 27 majors, and Musa hopes to have at least 500 students enrolled when it opens. The nearly 400 acres acquired for the university sit next to Demsa Hospital, a public facility operated by the LCCN. Musa envisions Demsa as a teaching hospital where university students can receive training in health care fields.

But making this dream a reality involves a long process of application and approval with the National Universities Commission, which oversees all university development in the country. One of the final steps was to secure \$500,000—the amount required in the bank to establish a university—in reserves prior to construction. In November 2020 the LCCN General Church Council voted to designate one Sunday each month to collect a special offering for the university. But the task of raising \$500,000 in such a short time was a challenge.

In 2021, Filibus contacted <u>Ann Svennungsen</u>, bishop of the Minneapolis Area Synod, and asked the synod to consider raising that amount while he worked to purchase land, drill wells, construct buildings and identify teachers. The synod and LCCN have worked together before on projects in Nigeria and in the United States, and their relationship has grown meaningfully over those years.

"With Archbishop Musa's election, our relationship was reenergized," said Craig Pederson, the synod's assistant to the bishop for congregational vitality. "[His] presence is a real catalyst for a lot of our work together. And Bishop Ann's trips to Nigeria have been equally important in making this relationship tangible and incarnational."

This close relationship and the vision outlined by Filibus gave the synod the courage to agree to his request. In October 2021, after synod council approval, Svennungsen and her staff launched the Lutheran University Nigeria Fund. The campaign aimed to raise the \$500,000 by the end of 2021, and all 144 synod congregations were asked to contribute.

In a video sent to rostered ministers, Svennungsen reflects on her hope for the future impact of the LUN: "As we partner with our companion synod in Nigeria, we can imagine 100 years from now Nigerians reminiscing about the start of the Lutheran university in that country, and the remarkable ways that God has blessed them through that vision."

In just three months, the synod raised \$535,000 and secured a \$150,000 ELCA World Hunger grant to contribute to the project. At the synod's 2022 assembly, Filibus spoke by Zoom to offer his thanks, celebrate the milestone and share updates about the university's progress.

"Bishop Ann and the synod assembly, what an exciting day, what an exciting moment for me to join you during this assembly," he said. "I want to say thank you for your indescribable generosity and support ... thank you for your friendship and your companionship and your love. ... We are deeply grateful."

With the funds secured, the LCCN is continuing the approval process, with several steps to come. But Filibus is confident that, in a few years' time, the university will be able to offer a full slate of programming.

With faithfulness, commitment and collaboration from partners around the world, the vision of launching the LUN is becoming a reality.