



December 2023

the
SPIRIT

Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

A Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Congregation

This
Christmas
end a quarrel.
Seek out a forgotten
friend. Dismiss suspicion,
and replace it with trust.
Write a love letter. Share some
treasure. Give a soft answer. Keep
a promise. Find the time. Forgo a grudge.
Forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologize if you
were wrong. Try to understand. Examine your
demands on others. Think first of someone else.
Be kind; be gentle. Appreciate. Laugh a little. Laugh a
little more. Express your gratitude. Gladden the heart of a
child. Welcome a stranger. Take pleasure in the beauty and the
wonder of Earth.
Speak your love.
Speak it again.
Speak it yet
Once again.

lessonslearnedinlife.com

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

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

Barbara
Bernedette
Dolores
Jonathan
Linda
Steve

and all we name in
our hearts.



LEADERSHIP AT SALEM

COUNCIL

Marjo Anderson, Pastor
Cindy Roberts, President
Sandra Brown, Vice-President
Nancy Headford, Secretary
Rich Kenyon, Treasurer
Ray Anderson
Cake Elie
Steve Kuczo
Carol Lansing
Rich Lansing
Tom Larson
Bill Winter

Mitten Tree

We will once more have a mitten tree. As we did last year, it will be a box in the narthex on Sunday mornings. We are asking for contributions of hats, scarves, mittens and gloves. Collections will end on December 17 so delivery can be made soon after. Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

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

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

Email submissions to
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net



December 2023 Salem Lutheran



SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

Dec 1

SAT

2

- 12pm Noon Prayer Call In
- 5pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center

3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 4pm Anti-Racism Accountability Group ● 7:15pm Synod Anti-Racism Prayer Gathering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and' ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 12pm Wednesday Weekly Prayer ● 7pm Bible Study on Romans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 5pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9am The BREAKFAST Gathering!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 4pm Anti-Racism Accountability Group ● 6:30pm Social Ministry Committee Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and' ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 6pm Stewardship Committee Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 12pm Wednesday Weekly Prayer ● 7pm Bible Study on Romans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 5pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center ● 6pm Pray CT Summit planning meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 11am Inner-View Chat n Chew
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 4pm Anti-Racism Accountability Group ● 6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting ● 7:30pm Executive Committee Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and' ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 12pm Wednesday Weekly Prayer ● 7pm Bible Study on Romans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 7:15pm Synod Anti-Racism Prayer Gathering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 5pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 4pm Anti-Racism Accountability Group ● 7pm Council Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and' ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 12pm Wednesday Weekly Prayer ● 7pm Bible Study on Romans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12pm Noon Prayer Call In ● 5pm Rostered Leaders - God at the Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Worship 	<div style="border: 2px solid purple; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Call in to our prayer line at 681-999-0232, using access code 673980#, at noon Mon-Fri for a brief time of prayer. You can remain silent and anonymous, ask for particular prayers, or offer your own prayers.</p> </div>					

Refill the Pantry

Refill the Pantry program concluded this fall with collections for five food pantries from September 2 through October 28 every other Saturday.

- * ~~**Sep 02 Nourish Bridgeport**, Stop&Shop 1160 Kings Hwy Cutoff, Fairfield~~
(Completed: 2,400 pounds of food and \$1,480 in cash)
- * ~~**Sep 16 Bishop Jean Williams**, Stop&Shop 4531 Main Street, Bridgeport~~
(Completed: 2,455 pounds of food and \$691 in cash)
- * ~~**Sep 30 Sterling House**, Stop&Shop 200 E. Main St, Stratford~~
(Completed: 1,577 pounds of food, \$403 in cash, \$250 Thrivent gift card)
- * ~~**Oct 14 Trumbull Food Pantry**, Stop&Shop 110 Quality St, Trumbull~~
(Completed: 2,527 pounds of food, \$1,091 in cash, \$250 Thrivent gift card)
- * ~~**Oct 28 Operation Hope**, Stop&Shop 760 Villa Ave, Fairfield~~
(Completed: 1,637 pounds of food, \$1,151 in cash)

Totals for the collections for the year were 17,700 pounds and \$10,600 cash and gift cards!

News12 broadcasted a story on Bishop Jean Williams Food Pantry and their move to 3160 Park Avenue. Salem members shown were Tom Larson, Rich Lansing, and Bruce Tomasko. To see the News12 video, go to <https://connecticut.news12.com/bishop-jean-williams-food-pantry-relocates-to-church-in-bridgeport> .

Rich Lansing received the following from the Trumbull Food Pantry for our collection of 2,527 pounds of food, \$1,096.22 cash, and a \$250 gift card:

On behalf of the Human Services Department, the staff and I would like to thank you for your donation. Contributions like yours allow us to continue our mission to assist Trumbull residents and their families by providing assistance to help meet their basic needs. We see individuals and families facing food insecurity and financial crisis every day. Your donation allows us to provide them with food, holiday gifts, holiday meals, gift cards, or financial emergency assistance so clients do not have to choose what bill or expense they will pay that month. Your donation will have a huge impact; thank you for your generosity and for making our clients' lives a bit easier.

With sincere gratitude,

Michele Jakab, LCSW, Director of Human Services

The Feeding of the Tens of Thousands!

*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.*

We have prayed that prayer every week for the last 12 years, and just look how God has answered!

Several years ago, a Mission Task Force was formed at Salem to look at how our congregation might collaborate with other congregations to do ministry together. We went through a whole variety of options as to what that ministry could and should be. Given the talent and the experiences that our congregation has had in dealing with food insecurity in our community, we continued old programs and established new ones, serving at Golden Hill United Methodist's Community Dining Room, packaging food for delivery at the Bishop Jean Williams Food Pantry, sponsoring food collections, and growing food in our garden, work that has included almost every one of our able-bodied members.

So far, in 2023, we've:

Created and made the food for delivery at **Golden Hill United Methodist Church's Community Dining Room** once every other month for roughly 50-70 people. Since Covid, that's as close as we get right now to getting hot meals directly to people.

Packaged between 300-400 bags of food for delivery at the **Bishop Jean William Food Pantry** every week, thanks to a team of a dozen dedicated people, half of whom are from Salem. ***That Pantry has served up to 900 families in a single week, and they have told us that our team puts together 90% of what they distribute***

Collected food to stock food pantries, with 4 collections in the spring, and 5 more in the fall. Not including our 9th event, we have collected 16,060 pounds of food (that's over 8 tons!) and \$8,100 in cash that went to those food pantries. 1 pound of food, or 50 cents, are each roughly equivalence to a single meal, so that means ***our food collections have supplied 32,000 meals! We are very proud of the 5 congregations and grateful to the 72 individuals who have made this all possible. None of this would have happened without Rich Lansing's initiative and Salem's commitment.*** In addition to the food and cash collected, each of the 9 events provided a \$250 grant from Thrivent. AND...pantries that submit their paperwork in time may receive an additional \$500 from Thrivent!

And as if that were not enough, God worked through Salem in another quite incredible way....

Ever since the Ephraim French Seventh Day Adventist Church purchased our building at 3160 Park Avenue, they have wanted to start a food pantry, but they were not permitted to do so, because Connecticut Food Share said there were already too many pantries in the community. Since there seemed like nothing else we could do on a human level, people at Salem and people at Ephraim turned this problem over to God.

About three years ago, the church in which the Bishop Jean Williams Food Pantry was located was sold, and the new church buying the building agreed to allow the pantry to stay for three years as they estimated that would be about how long it would take them to grow their church to the size where they would need the entire building. Knowing that they needed to find a new location, the Food Pantry decided to buy a temple on Park Avenue, and they were all geared up and ready to go when the deal fell through. Now they were stuck between a rock and hard place, having promised to vacate their current premises, but now having no place to go.

And here is how God answered prayer....

It just so happened that of all the food pantries that Salem could have been helping, it was the one that needed a place. And out of all the churches that could have purchased Salem's building, it was one that desired a food pantry. And so it was that Rich Lansing was able to connect the two organizations. They got together for an initial meeting and both were excited about the partnership. Then a party from Ephraim French SDA church and a party from Bishop Williams pantry met with Joe Bales and Connecticut Food Share to begin working out the details. So please give thanks to God for using Salem to make this vital connection, and pray that the rooms will get emptied out and the electrical work will get done in time for the new pantry to be operational at 3160 Park Avenue by Thanksgiving!

Bruce Tomasko.....	1
Ella Kenyon	2
Elijah Caragol	4
Barbara Howard.....	7
Ashley Baronavski	8
Dale Danowski.....	8
Landon Jawarski.....	13
Susan Murphy.....	15
Natalie Kenyon	16
Nancy Headford.....	19
Joseph Roberts.....	21
Katherine Pytleski	22
James McWain	23
Priscilla Schulz.....	29
Raymond Anderson.....	31



We are collecting for “Seafarers Christmas at Sea” now through December 3rd. A packing party will be held on Saturday December 9th, following the Lutherans & Friends breakfast at 9:00 at Grace Lutheran Church, 150 Chapel Street, Stratford. If you have questions contact Carol Lansing at 203-520-3752

Seafarers

Christmas at Sea

Collection dates: **September 10 – December 3**

Gift Suggestions:

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

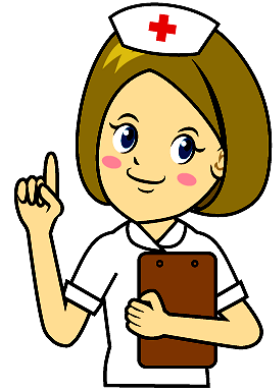


If you have questions, contact Carol Lansing at (203) 520-3752

Please place items in the marked box in the Narthex

10 Recommended Adult Immunizations

To stay healthy, please talk to your doctor about receiving the following vaccines. If you are older, you're at a higher risk for certain vaccine-preventable diseases. Vaccines are immunity boosters that help prevent serious diseases at any age.



1. **Influenza Vaccine** - Given annually, usually in the fall. Consult your doctor about flu vaccine choices.
2. **Covid 19 Vaccine** – Boosters are recommended to be taken yearly.
3. **RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) Vaccine** – Recommended for infants and people over 60.
4. **Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis Vaccine (TDAP)** - Recommended for everyone, especially with pregnancy. Tetanus and diphtheria (TD) booster or a TDAP booster is suggested every ten years. Getting yourself vaccinated with TDAP can help keep you from spreading pertussis to an infant.
5. **Varicella (Chicken Pox) Vaccine** - 2 doses given if you never had Chicken Pox.
6. **Zoster (Shingles) Vaccine** - given to adults 50 and older who have had Chicken Pox. Even if you had the older shingles vaccine, you should still get Shingrix. Shingrix is offered in two doses 2 to 6 months apart.
7. **Hepatitis B** - 3 doses given to health care workers, people with multiple sex partners, and those under age 60 with diabetes.
8. **Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Vaccine** - Given to those born in 1957 or later.
9. **Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccine** - 3 doses recommended for people through the age of 26.
10. **Pneumonia Vaccines** - Recommended for all adults over 65. It is also recommended for those younger than 65 who smoke, have asthma, diabetes, or a weak immune system. There are two pneumonia vaccines. You should receive the Pneumovax 23 vaccine. Ask your doctor if you should also receive the Prevnar 13 vaccine.

HOW TO ACCURATELY MEASURE BLOOD PRESSURE AT HOME

High blood pressure is one of the top risk factors for heart attack and stroke, so it's important to keep track of your blood pressure numbers.

How do I select a home blood pressure monitor?

The device should measure blood pressure on the upper arm, which produces a more reliable result than those that measure from the wrist.

Many devices are automated. Simply put on the cuff and press a button. The results are displayed digitally. Some will store readings, calculate an average blood pressure over time, or even transmit them to your doctor.



A list of validated home monitors, the first in the United States and commissioned to meet the American Medical Association's criteria, is available at www.validateBP.org. Your health care provider should check the device about once a year to ensure its accuracy.

How do I get the most accurate measurement?

Do not smoke, drink caffeinated beverages or exercise within 30 minutes before measuring your blood pressure. It's important to use a cuff that fits your arm. Cuffs that are too small can artificially raise your blood pressure reading.

With the cuff on your bare arm, sit in an upright position with back supported, feet flat on the floor and your arm supported at heart level. Make sure the bottom of the cuff is directly above the bend of the elbow. Relax for about five minutes before taking a measurement. Resist the urge to talk or look at a cellphone.

Also, make sure your bladder is empty, as a full one can temporarily raise blood pressure. Some medications, including over-the-counter pain relievers called NSAIDs and common decongestants, can elevate blood pressure. Alcohol, caffeine, smoking, salt intake and stress can, too.

It's recommended to check your blood pressure at the same time each day, such as twice in the morning and twice in the evening for one week, then talk with your doctor about the results.

A life changing Journey to the

HOLY LAND

NEW ENGLAND SYNOD ELCA

With Bishop Jim and Pastor Lisa Hazelwood

JAN 15TH - 25TH, 2024

Boston, MA (BOS)

Package Price : \$4190



Package Price Includes:

- * Round trip Airfare
- * All nights accommodations in double occupancy luxury hotels
- * Breakfast, lunch and dinner daily
- * Ten days sightseeing in modern, air conditioned private bus
- * English speaking government licensed Christian tour guide
- * And much more . . .

Bring the Bible alive in your life

New England Synod ELCA

20 Upland St, Worcester, MA
(508) 791 - 1530



Good Shepherd Travel

Toll Free: 1-844-659-5263
www.goodshepherdtravel.com



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.

* **Our Wednesday Evening Bible Study continues at 7:00 on zoom as we study Paul's letter to the Romans. Why Romans, you ask? Well, according to Martin Luther...** "This Epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament and the very purest Gospel, and is so worthy that not only should every Christian know it word for word, by heart, but feast on it every day as bread for the soul. It can never be read or pondered too much, and the more it is dealt with the more precious it becomes, and the better it tastes." While you may not be ready to memorize it or read it every day, we do invite you to study it weekly with us! This week we'll be looking at chapters 2 & 3. The zoom link is on Salem's calendar under the Resources tab at SalemBridgeport.org .

The next breakfast and faith discussion will be held on December 9th at Grace Lutheran Church, 150 Chapel Street, Stratford, at 9:00 (8:00 to help cook).

Please join Jeanette Harris and Genesis Gospel Café at the next Inner-View Chat'n'Chew, Saturday December 16th 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

The well, the water and the women

Embarking on a journey of healing

By Maria K. Miller

In a spur-of-the-moment decision, guided solely by my instincts, I found myself heading to a women's retreat nestled within the tranquil confines of Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp, nestled in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains near Hillside, Colo. These mountains, the southernmost extension of the mighty Rockies, bear a name that speaks volumes in translation: "Blood of Christ."

Emotionally I was wrestling with inner turmoil and longing for a reset. Amid my struggles, I recalled that Jesus had sought solace and rejuvenation in the mountains. It was a time for prayer and reflection. The vibrant hues of autumn, the serene surroundings and the presence of kindred female souls made it the ideal locale for the "eco-therapy" my soul yearned for.

Drawing inspiration from Jesus' encounter at the well (John 4:1-42), the retreat was aptly titled "Living Water." In that sacred story, Jesus, conversing with a Samaritan woman who was fetching water, displayed an uncanny knowledge of her life. I couldn't help but wonder: Does Jesus possess such insight into my journey?

Intuitively I requested a cabin with solitude, fully aware that I was embarking on days of profound self-exploration. Indeed, it was a weekend marked by torrents of tears. I wept for the loss of my children, for the life I would never lead, for the innocent girl within me who had learned to acclimate to trauma. I also cried for the middle-aged woman in me who had been made to feel she was of little worth, a beast of burden.

Jesus declared to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well: "If you knew the gift of God and who it is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water" (John 4:10). Could it be that simple? Just to ask?

Amid the remote tranquility of Hillside, a profound sense of sacredness enveloped me as I walked the pathway that led to an outdoor worship area surrounded by evergreen trees, quaking aspens and crimson red rocks. In the chill of the autumn morning and again with the embrace of the evening sunsets, I laid my grief at the foot of the large wooden cross.

Jesus proclaimed: "Everyone who drinks of this water will be

thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life" (John 4:13-14).

I felt that "living water" coursing through me—in the streams of tears I shed at the foot of that cross and again as I lay on my bunk, weeping, during the night. On the retreat's final day, there was no doubt that this water was meant to cleanse me of anxiety and worries. Not a single day would be added to my life by worrying, Jesus had taught. Wash it away. Let it go. Leave it here.

Soon enough, Jesus, I will come to you, I pondered. For now, you have me on earth for a purpose. Perhaps I'm the metaphorical woman at the well, engaged in a profound conversation with the Rabbi who then proclaimed himself the Messiah. Just like the Samaritan woman who dropped her water jar and ran joyfully to share the good news, I contemplated my role.

A small tattoo on my left wrist serves as a daily reminder, etched with the word "hope" alongside a cross. During a Bible discussion at the retreat, a woman showed me her wrist ink, symbolizing "faith over fear." Was the Spirit urging me to heal? To share my story? Had I already heard the call, yet was too afraid to answer?

Perhaps, I thought, I was meant to be the woman at the well sharing my story with the hope of aiding others in their healing journeys. Maybe it was time to exuberantly proclaim that faith and healing are intertwined, especially when one surrenders and places their trust in the transformative power of "Living Water," allowing it to wash away the pain we have all carried for far too long.

Maria K Miller is interim director of people operations and interim director of communications of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Greeley, Colo. She is the former editor-in-chief of the *Ohio Country Messenger*, former syndicated columnist and an award-winning journalist.



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

ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.

50
years



ELCA
World Hunger

In 2024, ELCA World Hunger will celebrate 50 years of global impact.

We are eager to share and equip you with stories, resources and special opportunities as we look ahead to the future of this important ministry of our church.

Even as we have worked to transform the world with and for our neighbors, our church has been transformed. Together we have learned how hunger, poverty and other justice issues intersect. We have deepened our understanding of how baptism calls us to "strive for justice and peace in all the earth." We have been strengthened in hope by the decline in hunger since we began this work. And we have nurtured relationships with local communities to ensure that the work we support will be sustainable, effective and authentic.

We have been part of this story — a story of faith in action, a story of hope, but most of all a story of a church set free for bold, abundant love and service, a church that responds, with creativity and courage, to God's invitation to transform the world. Despite the challenges we face, the story goes on. And in faith, we know how it will end: "They will hunger no more, and thirst no more ... and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Revelation 7:16-17).



Join us and be part of the story
of our next 50 years together —
boldly and faithfully pursuing
God's promise of a just world
where all are fed.

