



Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

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

*3rd Sunday in
Advent*

*December 17, 2023
9:30 AM*



The Reverend Marjo Anderson, Pastor
marjoanderson@aol.com
203-982-3441 (cell)

Karl Kraft, Office Manager
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net

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

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

Welcome to Worship!

We want you to feel safe so please know that we have 3 units of the best air cleaner on the market in the sanctuary. (A big thank you to Bill Winter for getting our 3rd one repaired!). There is also one running in the lounge for when we have worship, coffee hour, or adult forums there. Also, you are most welcome to wear a mask at worship if you'd like.

The third Sunday in Advent is known as Jubilate (or Rejoice) Sunday, and one symbol of this is the lighting of a pink candle on our Advent wreath instead of the traditional purple (which signifies penitence) or the more contemporary blue ones. "Rejoice always", begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into dancing and shouts of joy. "All God's children got a robe", go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, but clothes we can't wait to wear! We receive that robe when we are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit – the Spirit which plants in us seeds of JOY! May that JOY overflow from each and every heart here so that anyone who sees us worshipping will want what we have found, a foretaste of the feast to come – which we can count on being the best party ever!

Today is the last day to contribute hats, scarves, gloves, and mittens for our "Mitten Tree"
Thank you for your support!

St. Matthew Baptist Church invites you to their Christmas Concert TODAY from 1:30 to 2:30 at 126 Washington Avenue.

This year the 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve are on the same date! Due to people's schedules, council decided that Salem will celebrate Advent 4 at our 9:30 AM service on the 24th, but we will have NO Christmas Eve service at Salem. We encourage you to find the place and time that works best for you to celebrate this holy night!

As Salem continues its ministry through April, expenses continue as well. If we are to give the maximum amount of our assets, we are depending on YOU to fulfill your pledge for this year and to continue your giving in 2024. While we can cover expenses from our endowment, we would much rather be able to celebrate the commitment and generosity of each and every one of our members!

As important as your financial contributions are, please remember that YOU are even more important than your money! Showing up for prayer, Bible study, Salem activities, and ecumenical events – either in person or on zoom or on conference calls – is just as impactful and sometimes more impactful than writing a check, so please think about that when you are invited to participate in events listed in these announcement pages!

Gathering

GATHERING MUSIC

Rejoice Greatly

Messiah # 18

Soprano Air

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, thy King cometh unto thee;

He is the righteous Saviour, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, thy King cometh unto thee;

Text from Zechariah 9.9-10

Text set to Music by George Frideric Handel

This song is in the Public Domain.

Performance # 1 by Angela Scorese, Soprano; Stacie Yao, Organ

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJAp7c3xTy8> [4:59]

Performance # 2 by

*Sooyeon Lee, Soprano; Darrell Ang, Conductor; Münchner Rundfunkorchester, Orchestra
Recorded at ARD Music Competition 2015 in Munich, Germany,
where Lee obtained the second prize and audience prize.*

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhdTpc4KAhY> – [4:33]

Performance # 3 by Sylvia Naa Wilson, Soprano; Accra Diocesan Choir;

*produced by the GH Choral Music, Accra, Ghana,
an organization which promotes choral singing in Ghana.*

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORzx297QdYs> – [4:23]

BRIEF WELCOME TO IN-PERSON WORSHIPPERS

Welcome, in the name of the God who created us to experience joy,
in the name of Jesus who partied in joy with outcasts and sinners,
and in the name of the Spirit who plants joy in our hearts.

Pastor Marjo is taking this Sunday as part of her continuing education, visiting Vox Church,
a potential model for our synod and the ELCA

We are happy to welcome Doug Ryniewicz,

pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Monroe as our supply pastor today.

So that Pastor Ryniewicz can make it back to his own church in time for their worship,

we'll be doing the parts of the service that require his presence first,

and then Cindy and the Larsons will continue leading you in worship.

We will therefore begin with the Confession and Forgiveness and Holy Communion.

Meal

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

You may stand if you so desire and make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God,
whose Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies, and keeps us in the one true faith. **Amen**

God's love is infinite and unconditional.

As individuals we have only to accept it and live in its light. The moment we confess, we are forgiven. As together we gather for worship, so together we confess the sins we have committed as a community, and together we are forgiven, restored, and made new.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God, **we confess:**

**that too often we focus on the things we lack,
that too often we are attached to our own personal agendas,
that too often we insist on doing things our own way,
that too often we are oblivious to the needs for justice around us.**

God who has heard our confession both forgives and forgets every failing. **Amen!**

Loving God, **teach us:**

**to see your amazing abundance rather than any lack,
to listen more - to you and to each other - and to talk less,
to trust in your power and not our own,
to build relationships with those who are not like us.**

God who has given us the will to do these things ✚ graciously gives us the power to perform them. **Amen!**

COMMUNION

Please be seated.

God be with you!

And also with you!

Open your hearts!

We open them to God and one another!

Let us give thanks to the God of all!

It is right to give God thanks & praise!

In the night in which he was betrayed....

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**

Please note that here we go live on Facebook.

BRIEF WELCOME TO ON-LINE WORSHIPPERS

Welcome, in the name of the God who created us to experience joy,
in the name of Jesus who partied in joy with outcasts and sinners,
and in the name of the Spirit who plants joy in our hearts.

It is so good to be here! Thank you for joining us today!
Thank you, those of you who are here in person with us & those of you out there in cyber space,
wherever you are – and whenever you happen to watching!

For those of you who don't know me,
I am Cindy Roberts, President of Salem Lutheran Church in Bridgeport, CT in the US.

To find out more about our ministry or to contact us,
you can go to our website SalemBridgeport.org, to our Facebook page, SalemBridgeport,
and to our YouTube channel, Salem Lutheran Church, Bridgeport CT.

Links to our donate page and worship bulletin –
which has both the order of worship and announcements – as well as other resources
are included on our website at SalemBridgeport.org/Live.

We'll have announcements, prayer requests, and God-sightings later on in the service today,
but let's begin now with prayer.

God, you are the God whose power knows no bounds and whose love knows no end!
In spite of the darkness in our world – and because of the evil that rises up against us –
we come here to worship you!

We worship you for who you are – a way-making, promise-keeping, miracle-working God!
And we praise you for all you've done before to bring us this far along the way
for all we know you'll do tomorrow and all you'll do this very day.

Fill us with your Holy Spirit! Tune our hearts to sing your praise.
Open our mouths to share your wonders! Hear the songs of thanks we raise!
Come and light up all the darkness! Banish fear from every mind!
Cast away all doubts that plague us! Fill us with your joy divine!

We pray all of these things in the name of Jesus and by the power of the Spirit. Amen

We continue with the reading of God's Word.

Word

Please be seated.

A READING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion — to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

Word of God! Word of Life! **Thanks be to God!**

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF PSALMS: Psalm 126

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy.

Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

The LORD has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses of the Negeb.

Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy.

Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

Word of God! Word of Life! Thanks be to God!

A READING FROM THE LETTERS TO CHURCHES: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Word of God! Word of Life! Thanks be to God!

A READING FROM THE GOSPELS: John 1:6-8, 19-28 *You may stand if you so desire.*

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah". And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not". "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No". Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord' as the prophet Isaiah said".

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Word of God! Word of Life! Thanks be to God!

SERMON

Please be seated.

Pastor Doug Ryniewicz

(CHILDREN'S SERMON)

SONG OF THE DAY

Awake, Awake and Greet the New Morn

*(as found in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's worship book,
Evangelical Lutheran Worship # 242)*

**Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning.
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born, behold! the Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,
he opens wide the heav'nly door and lives now inside us forever.**

**To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a-singing,
his humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing;
music to heal the broken soul and hymns of lovingkindness,
the thunder of his anthems roll to shatter all hatred and blindness.**

**In darkest night his coming shall be, when all the world is despairing,
as morning light so quiet and free, so warm and gentle and caring.
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in wonder,
the weak be raised above the strong, and weapons be broken asunder.**

**Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night, though dark the winter and cheerless,
the rising sun shall crown you with light, be strong and loving and fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story;
may God fill ev'ry day we share and bring us at last into glory.**

*Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950; Music: REJOICE, REJOICE, Marty Haugen, b. 1950;
Text and music © 1983, GIA Publications, Inc.,
7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638, www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
Reprinted and Streamed with permission under OneLicense #A-727372*

*Performance posted by jclarke527, 12/17/09
as found at this link:*

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Op9Yyh_M4dk&t=29s&ab_channel=jclarke527
[2:37]*

YEAR B – THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – JOY
ADVENT WREATH CANDLELIGHTING

Leader 1: Last Sunday we lit the second candle in our Advent Wreath, the Candle of Peace.
We light it and the Candle of Hope again as we remember that Christ will come again to fulfill all of God's promises to us & to bring to the world everlasting hope & peace.

(Leader 1 lights the 1st and 2nd candles.)

Leader 2: The third candle in our Advent Wreath is the Candle of Joy.
It reminds of the joy that Mary felt
when the angel Gabriel told her that a special child would be born to her –
a child who would save and deliver his people.



Leader 1: God wants us all to have joy.
The angel who announced to the shepherds that Jesus had been born told them:
"Do not be afraid. I am bringing you good news of a great joy for all people –
for to you is born this day, in the City of David,
a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

Leader 2: We light this candle to remember that Christ brings the promise of a new life –
life in which the blind receive sight, the lame walk, and the prisoners are set free.
We light this candle to remind us that Jesus Christ
is the bringer of true and everlasting joy.

Leader 1: Let us pray. *(a brief silence)*
Loving God, we thank you for the joy you bring us through Jesus.
Help us prepare our hearts to receive Him.
Bless our worship.
Guide us in all that we say and do.
We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem. **Amen**

(Leader 2 lights the 3rd candle.)



ADVENT SONG

“Light One Candle”

Natalie Sleeth

All: Light one candle for hope, one bright candle for hope,
He brings hope to ev’ry heart, He comes, He Comes!
Light one candle for peace, one bright candle for peace,
He brings peace to ev’ry heart, He comes, He Comes!
Light one candle for joy, one bright candle for joy,
Ev’ry nation will find salvation in Beth’lem’s baby boy.
Light one candle for love, one bright candle for love,
He brings love to ev’ry heart, He comes, He Comes!
He brings love to ev’ry heart, He comes, He Comes!

Text & Music by Natalie Sleeth, 1930-1992; © 1976 by Hinshaw Music Inc.

Reprinted / Streamed with permission under OneLicense # A – 727372

*Performance by the Ferguson family, Ella & Eva, vocals; Amanda, violin; Homer, piano; 12/06/20
as found at this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_thZGERq2g [1:45]*

You may stand if you so desire.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FOR ADVENT

(based on John 1 and John 14:19-26)

Let us affirm our faith together.

**In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
All things came into being through him,
and without him not one thing was created.
The life that was in him became light for all people.
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

**To all who receive him, who believe in him,
is given the power to become children of God.**

**The Word became flesh, a man named Jesus.
He lived among us, full of grace and truth.
From his fullness, we have all received grace upon grace.**

**In the name of Jesus, God has sent the Holy Spirit to teach us
and to remind us of all that he said and did.
We believe that because he lives, we shall live also,
to the glory of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen**

PURPOSE STATEMENT *(updated by Council in June of 2019)*

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

**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,
that we may encounter God, build relationships, and change lives.**

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

Please be seated.

With hope and expectation,
we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

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

Fill our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy
as we bear witness to the great things you have done!

Give your church a spirit of gladness as we gather and as we are sent.

We pray for our mission partners, especially today for The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport's Project Learn, Project Nueva Vida, and its Bridge Building programs,
and for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

We pray for all teachers and educators, especially those at Fairchild Wheeler High School,
that they know that they are appreciated and that they know the love of God.

And we pray for Salem members & their families, especially those celebrating birthdays this week:
Nancy Headford, Joseph Roberts, Katherine Pytleski, and Jim McWain.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let the trees of the field sing your praise! Move us to be good stewards of this good earth
as we protect forests, orchards, rainforests, and all wooded areas from disease and deforestation.
Remind us to be grateful for their gifts of oxygen, food, shade, and shelter.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You love justice and promise your favor to those who are oppressed, brokenhearted, and incarcerated.
Grant wisdom and compassion to those who work for public safety
and all who work within prisons, jails, and courts, that mercy may increase and violence wither away.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Move us to pray for peace and to work for justice without ceasing,
and fill our hearts with compassion for all who are in physical or financial or any kind of need.
Especially this day we pray for Austin, Barbro, Barry, Bob, Boni, Bud, Cindy, Cindy, Cliffy, Clyde,
Dave, David, Dennis, Diane, Dolores, Dorothy, Francesca, Hans, Ivy, Janice, Jeanette, Jeff, Jessica,
Jim, Joe, Joey, John, Karen, Kevin, Lynn, Marija, Pastor Marjo, Mark, Mary Lou, Melvin Jr, Melvin
Sr, Natalie, Pastor Paul, Pastor Paula, Sara, Sasha, VL & all we name in our hearts & on our lips.

Provide for all without adequate housing, food, employment, or access to health care.

Empower us as helpers and advocates.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Open our hearts to those who serve as truth-tellers in our church and in our society.

Bless leaders in church and society in their task of proclamation.

Amplify voices of peacemakers, advocates, and those whose voices are ignored or marginalized.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

With gratitude we rejoice in the saints who witnessed to your life in all circumstances,
in whom your Spirit was not quenched, even in death.

Through them, teach us always to hold fast to what is good.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

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

O God of hosts, listen to these & all our prayers & restore us with your great everlasting mercy. **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 HYMN

Hark, the Glad Sound!

(as found in the ELCA's worship book, Evangelical Lutheran Worship # 239)

**1 Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,
the Savior promised long;
let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
and ev'ry voice a song.**

**2 He comes the pris'ners to release,
in Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.**

**3 He comes the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor.**

**4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,
your welcome shall proclaim,
and heav'n's eternal arches ring
with your beloved name.**

Text: based on Isaiah 40:3, 61:1-2, Luke 4:18-19, Acts 16:26

Phillip Doddridge, 1702-1751; Meter C M

Music: CHESTERFIELD by Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820

Text and Music are in the Public Domain

Performance by Tim McNabb, Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, 11/21/22

Accompaniment Style: 9-8 Waltz

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGvSjRLEC9Y> [1:46

Sending

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please be seated.

Every Monday-Friday at noon you're invited to join us on our conference line for prayer.

There is weekly opportunity for anti-racism work tomorrow at 4:00 on zoom, the Anti-Racism Accountability Group hosted by Jeanette Harris and me at.

On Wednesday, you are invited to our weekly Prayer Gathering at noon on zoom, and to our regular Bible Study at 7 on zoom.

All of our zoom events can be found on the Calendar under the Resources tab on our website: SalemBridgeport.org

Any other announcements? Prayer requests? God-sightings?

THANK YOU

Before we end the live-streamed portion of our worship,

I want to especially thank those of you out there in cyberspace who have worshipped with us. I hope you will join us again.

If you'd like to know more, or if you'd like to talk or pray with Pastor Marjo, you can reach her through Salem's website or Facebook page.

BLESSING

As we say good-bye to our online worshippers,

I'd like to offer to all who are worshipping with us, both in-person and in cyberspace this blessing based on our reading today from the 1st letter to the Thessalonians, chapter 5:

May the God of peace sanctify you entirely;
and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. Amen

Here ends our Facebook live stream.

SENDING SONG

People, Look East

*(as found in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's worship book,
Evangelical Lutheran Worship # 248)*

- 1 People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Guest, is on the way.**
- 2 Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flow'r may flourish.
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Rose, is on the way.**
- 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Star, is on the way.**

*Text: based on Isaiah 11:1-10 & Mark 13:33-37 by Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-1965
Meter 8 7 9 8 8 7*

Music: BESANÇON, French carol; arr. Barry Rose, b. 1934

Text © Miss E. Farjeon Will Trust, by permission of David Higham Associates.

Arr. © 1999 Novello & Company Ltd., London, United Kingdom

vss 1-3 performed by The Kitsap Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 12/13/21

Brian Kenny (Piano), Alena Hemingway & Mike Menefee (Vocals)

and Mike Menefee, Flugelhorn

as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDM4HFeNOMs> [1:23]

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances!

Thanks be to God!

PEACE

As Christ reconciles us with God,

let us be reconciled with each other by sharing the peace of the Lord!

The peace of the Lord be with you always!

And also with you!

Please share that peace!!

POSTLUDE CAROL

He Came Down

*(as found in the ELCA worship books,
This Far by Faith # 37 & Evangelical Lutheran Worship # 253)*

He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love; hallelujah forevermore.

He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
he came down that we may have light; hallelujah forevermore.

He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace; hallelujah forevermore.

He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;
he came down that we may have joy; hallelujah forevermore.

Text: based on John 1.1-14, Cameroon traditional; Meter L M

Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional; arr. John L. Bell, b. 1949

Text and Tune are in the Public Domain.

Arr. © 1986 Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Reprinted / Streamed with permission under OneLicense # 727372

Performance by the Oonte Orphans & Vulnerable Children Choir from Namibia, 12/04/20

*Video background by Joe Hackney from Pixabay, Posted by Chet Valley Churches
as found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXrB500CuCg> [1:33]*

CREDITS

From sundaysandseasons.com. © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS005794.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989,

Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA

Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress.

Used by permission.

Announcements

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 pray silently and anonymously, ask for particular prayers, or offer your own prayers.

You are invited to join the Anti-Racism Accountability Group hosted by Pastor Marjo and Jeanette Harris on Mondays 4:00-5:00 on zoom. The group began in the fall of 2020 as a response of our Southern CT Lutheran pastors to the murder of George Floyd, but has grown into a diverse group that includes people who are White and Black, Christian, Jewish, Unitarian, and Rastafarian, clergy and lay, and from CT, MA, and DE. Some come every week while others drop in as their schedule permits. The link is on Salem's calendar, so please drop in and see what God is doing to help us fulfill our baptismal call to work for justice!

On Wednesdays, you are invited to our weekly Prayer Gathering at noon on zoom. The zoom link is on Salem's calendar under the Resources tab at SalemBridgeport.org . **Please join us!**

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 8 & 9. The zoom link is on Salem's calendar under the Resources tab at SalemBridgeport.org . **Please join us!**

You have another opportunity for Bible Study as well on zoom on Tuesday evenings 7:30-8:30. This group, led by Pastor Rip Hoffman, looks at the gospel for the coming Sunday. For the link, contact Pastor Marjo or Pastor Hoffman.

You are invited to join members of the New England Synod on the first Monday and third Thursday of the month 7:15-7:45ish on zoom as we undergird the anti-racism work of our synod with prayer. The next date is 12/21. The link is on Salem's calendar.

This year the 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve are on the same date! Due to people's schedules, council decided that Salem will celebrate Advent 4 at our 9:30 AM service on the 24th, but we will have NO Christmas Eve service at Salem. We encourage you to find the place and time that works best for you to celebrate this holy night!

Thank you for donating to our collection for "Seafarers Christmas at Sea". A packing party was held last week and we thank everyone who participated!

Save the date! A Special Congregational Meeting was held on 10/29 at which the congregation voted to close. Last Sunday Pastor Maria was here in her role as Congregational Consultant for Holy Closure and Merger for the New England Synod to explain the process of dissolution which will begin in January. There are practical and legal procedures which must be followed, and as the synod leads us through these, we ask your patience and your prayers. **The next congregational meeting will be in person on January 14th following worship.**

Jeanette “Momma J” Harris & Genesis Gospel Café invite you to an Inner-View Chat & Chew. For information on the January meeting contact Jeanette at 203-366-6778.

Like our prayer breakfasts, a lunch is held each month to build relationships among Lutheran and other congregations in our area at noon at Old Towne Restaurant in Trumbull. If you would like to attend, please RSVP to Bruce Tomasko, bltomasko@yahoo.com.

Thank you for your contributions to Salem’s Food Assistance Fund! While we may not have our own food pantry anymore, some of our members and others are still in need of food and Pastor Marjo distributes \$25 stop & shop cards as needed, requested and as available. We encourage you to donate to Salem’s food assistance fund. You can give using the envelopes found in your quarterly envelope packet or you can put a check in the donation box at Salem marked “food assistance.” In addition, you may send a check to the office or drop it in church mailbox or give it or cash to Pastor Marjo.

If you’d like to do more than feed people, you can also contribute to the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund which is used to help members who have other financial needs. If you have financial needs, please contact Pastor Marjo or Parish Nurse Carol Lansing.

We are grateful to God for answering our prayers that there would once again be a food pantry in this building. Here’s how it happened! While the Ephraim French Seventh Day Adventist Church that purchased the building from us wanted very much to start a food pantry, they were unable to get permission from CT Food Share who said there were too many pantries in the area. They and we kept praying. Meanwhile a food pantry to which members of our congregation used to deliver food closed, and they began delivering to the Bishop Jean Williams Food Pantry which operated out of a church on Worth St. Three years ago that church building was sold and purchased by Transforming Lives Church. While they knew that as their congregation grew they would eventually need all of the building, they agreed to allow the food pantry to stay for three years. As the end of that time period approached, the Bishop Jean Williams Food Pantry needed a new space. That’s when we discovered how God had been using Salem to be an answer to our own prayers and those of the Ephraim French Seventh Day Adventist Church and the Bishop Jean Williams Food Pantry! The pantry is now renting space from the SDA church right here at 3160 Park Avenue! Because of how God has worked, over 500 families came by to pick up food the week of Thanksgiving, and food was delivered to an additional 200 families! Thanks be to God!

Do you want to talk or pray with your pastor? Well, just like you call your doctor or dentist to schedule an annual wellness visit or a visit to deal with a particular issue, you can contact Pastor Marjo via text or phone at 203-982-3441, or through Office Manager Karl Kraft via text at 203-336-3300 or email at salemsec123@sbcglobal.net . Our bodies are intimately connected with our minds and hearts and spirits, so the health of one part impacts the health of the other parts.

- 1. Get your annual “spiritual” – just the way you get your annual physical.**
Call or text Pastor Marjo at 203-982-3441 to arrange a time to discuss how you are, and let her know how she can pray for you.
Or if you prefer to use email to set something up, send your email to salemsec123@sbcglobal.net.
- 2. Call in to our prayer line at 681-999-0232, using access code 673980#, at noon Mon-Fri** for prayer. You can pray silently & anonymously, ask for particular prayers, or offer your own.
OR join our weekly prayer gathering on Zoom, Wednesdays at noon, at this link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82882777326?pwd=VCtObFRPOGI3cTR3eII2ZmtiZEpadz09>
- 3. Begin a fast** or establish a new healthier habit.
- 4. Commit yourself to some new work of charity and one new work of justice.**
If you’re wondering what the difference is, it’s like this.
If people are hungry and you give them fish, that’s CHARITY.
If people are hungry and you teach them to fish, that’s EMPOWERMENT.
If people are hungry and you work to change laws so that they receive high enough wages from their jobs so they can afford to buy fish, that’s JUSTICE.
If you’re not sure how to “do justice” as God commands through the Prophet Micah (6:8), Pastor Marjo can offer suggestions.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, died 1552
Wednesday, December 20, 2023

Born to an impoverished nobleman, Katie eventually took vows as a nun, but around age 24 she and several other nuns who were influenced by the writings of Martin Luther left the convent. Six children were born to Katie and Martin.

SEVEN -- You thought last year's "A Calumet Christmas Carol" was good ... Get ready Calumet Nation for the exciting event we've been planning for many months which will take place on DE 16 at 7 PM ... a *Lessons & Carols* type experience we're calling: "It's Our Story (and we're stickin' to it)." Together with our friends at First Christian in Freedom and Nativity Lutheran in North Conway, Calumet will be welcoming up to

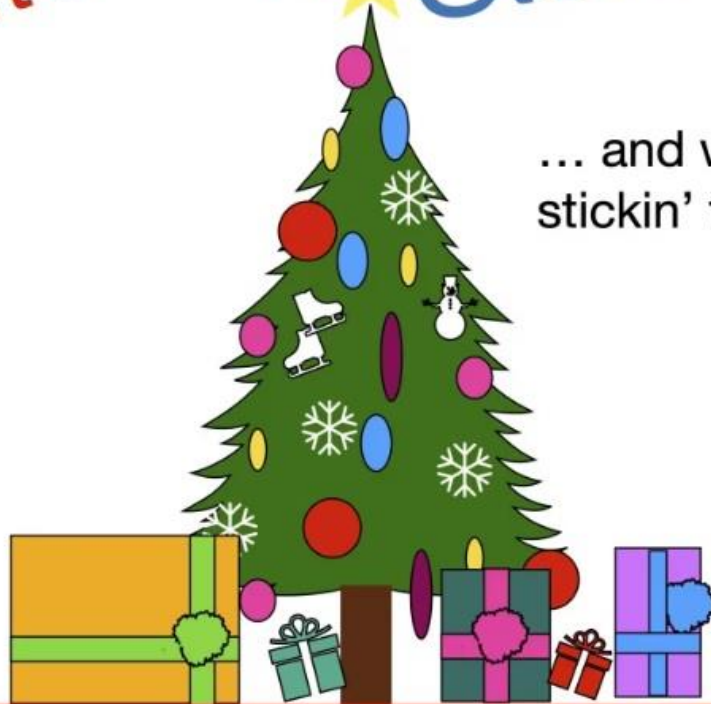
200 people into the Oasis while -- at the very same time -- inviting people from all over to enjoy the LIVE broadcast on Facebook LIVE and YouTube. Attendance, whether LIVE or ONLINE, is free -- but those attending in-person will need to reserve a spot.

Mark your calendars, plan on attending from wherever you are, and spread the word! This is going to be fantastic!

www.calumet.org/ourstory

It's OuR ★ StORy...

... and we're stickin' to it.



Lessons & Carols — DEC 16 PM at 7 PM

LIVE in-person and LIVE online

