

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
359 Leonard Street N
West Salem, WI 54669

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DECEMBER

DECEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
WEST SALEM, WISCONSIN

DECEMBER 2016

- Director of Youth Ministry (We are hiring!)
- Sunday School & Confirmation News
- Advent & Christmas Schedules
- Giving Opportunities – Bell Ringing,
Lakeview Giving Tree, Coats 4 Kids,
Help the Homeless, Soles 4 Souls,
Salvation Army Dinner



Mission Statement:
To reach toward God
and to each other
for the sake of the world

OUR SAVIOR'S VOICE

Our Savior's Lutheran Church 359 Leonard Street N West Salem, WI 54669
www.oursaviorswestsalem.org 608-786-0030

DECEMBER 2016

PASTOR'S REFLECTIONS

If you are particularly observant, you have noticed that we have entered a very long season of Advent. Advent is always four Sundays, ending at Christmas. This year Christmas falls on a Sunday, so Advent began on November 27, and ends on December 24. Next year it begins on December 3, making the season a full six days shorter than this year!

So, what's the big deal? More than you might imagine! This year, you've got six more days to prepare.

Now, that is good news – more time to shop, bake, and decorate. All thanks to the liturgical calendar!

But that's not really what this is about. Advent isn't the Christmas shopping season. And it's not here to help us get the house clean, or the gifts wrapped. Advent is about really getting ready for what Christmas is really all about.

Consider the world in which we find ourselves as the year draws to a close. The recent election has opened up deep divides in our country. Regardless of the results, someone was going to be hurting, and hurting bad. Brokenness is pretty widespread. And healing is nowhere in sight.

Moreover, it's not just that some won and others lost. Some are scared because they see a way of life slipping away, and no one seems to care. Others feel targeted, blamed for the

woes of the nation, and wonder if there is a place for them in our society.

Amidst all this, the rhetoric of the campaign has caused many, especially younger folk, to wonder about the direction of our nation. And some – like my daughter – are downright fearful. In blunt terms, they are scared. And quite frankly, rightly so.

So there you go. Things are a mess. And now, it's time for Christmas.

Of course, the sounds and sights of the season will lift spirits. Some of them, anyway. Bells, carols, the "Christmas Spirit," maybe even a "white" Christmas, will give us some respite and relief. A chance to be renewed.

But for how long? Until the next crisis, or maybe just until the next news report. It may be the most wonderful time of the year, but in the face of real life, it doesn't go all that far.

Only one thing does. Jesus.

Jesus is the one thing that gives us hope and life in the face of a world that seems increasingly confused and broken.

That's why we take some time to prepare for Christmas. We prepare not just for the celebration and all that it entails, but to welcome anew into our lives the child of Bethlehem, the Prince of Peace, the renewer and restorer of life. And as we prepare, we prepare over and over. Not because we can't get it right, or because it takes a long time.

We prepare because in the end, it's not about achieving "preparedness," it's about the preparing itself.

What do I mean by that? Preparing for Jesus is engaging Jesus in a relationship. We connect with him, and we open ourselves to his embrace, becoming immersed in the gifts of life he brings to us. And in a mixed up, dog-eat-dog world, we need that – over and over again!

How do we prepare? Start with the reason for the season. Take some time to take stock in what we are about, what we need, and what Jesus provides. It's probably not available at Best Buy or Wal-Mart. Nor is buried in the box of decorations. Not that I mind a gift now and then, or some good music, or a decorated tree. But in the end, I need much more than that. I need Jesus.

So, take the time to make that happen. Come to worship during Advent, and make a commitment to start Christmas with worshipping the Christ child. And maybe find a way to do something that touches other lives. A gift to the Salvation Army? Some time volunteering? Maybe a neighbor in need? See Christmas in real, deep giving, not in the taking and the grabbing.

But most of all focus not on what lies under the tree, but on the Christ child who will hang on the cross. And remember, it's a long Advent. You've got time!

Pastor Jon

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY WE'RE LOOKING!

Our Savior's is seeking a new Director of Youth Ministry. The Congregation Council hopes to interview candidates for the position in early December. This position is currently set to be a part time position, with an expectation of 20-25 hours per week. A job description is

available in the office. A cover letter and a resume should be submitted to the church office no later than 9 a.m., Monday, December 5. We hope to have a new person in place by January 1, 2017. For more information, see Pastor Jon or Jim Quamme.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all of you, from the staff at Our Savior's! We treasure the community that gathers here, and we are grateful to all of you for your support and your partnership in the gospel of Jesus. May God's blessings in the Christ Child be yours during this Holy Season, and throughout the coming New Year!



Pastor Jon, Pastor Jean, and Kay

SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING



The bells beckon! Salvation Army bell ringing is right around the

corner. Our Savior's will provide the ringers at Hansen's IGA on December 2 from 4-7 p.m., and again on December 3 from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. A signup sheet is posted on the kiosk in the Gathering Area. Make this a family event, sharing some time with those who struggle to make ends meet! See Pastor Jon for more information.

CALLING ALL WOMEN!!!

Sunday, December 4
9:15 a.m. in the Library

Did you know you are a member of WELCA (Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) just because you joined this church?



Come help us decide where our Lutefisk Dinner proceeds are going to be sent.

Any questions, call Inger Michael 786-1707, or Bonny Goodenough, 608-769-0758.

TREE TRIMMING

Trying to get into the Christmas spirit? One way is to help decorate your church. We will be putting up and decorating the tree and sanctuary on December 4 after second service. This is a great opportunity for individuals, families or even confirmation groups to enjoy a few hours together. Pizza, pop, cookies and hot chocolate will be served.



We are also in need of a trailer to pick up the tree from Labus tree farm. Please contact Jeff or Melissa Haldeman @ 786-1556 for questions and details.

MIDWEEK ADVENT WORSHIP WEDNESDAYS, 7 PM

Come and join us as we journey to the manger...

December 7 – It's the "Hanging of the Greens" – several of our confirmands help us to prepare for



Christmas by exploring some of the symbols of the season. *Bring an ornament to put on the tree in the sanctuary!*

December 14 – Carol Sing – we gather with our confirmands for an informal carol sing, message, and prayer. Like gathering around the Christmas tree, or in front of the fireplace, we are children of God getting ready for God's greatest gift!



Interested in getting together with other adults in our congregation to build relationships and just have fun together?

“Simply Social”

Thursday, December 8th – 6 PM

We will meet at the Starlite Lounge (above Buzzard Billy's – 222 Pearl Street, La Crosse) for appetizers and



to listen to David Kies (WSHS band director) and his band. Afterwards join us for a stroll through Riverside Park to see the Rotary Lights. [If you wish to go earlier, Happy Hour goes from 4-7 PM and the band plays from 5-8 PM.]

LAKEVIEW GIVING TREE



Each year Lakeview Health Center provides us with a wooden Christmas tree. On the tree are 19 tags with the Christmas needs of the residents at Lakeview. Some of these residents are far from family or are alone. We help to make their Christmas just a little brighter.

This is a reminder that the gifts are due back to the church by December 9.

SALVATION ARMY MEALS

The Salvation Army continues to provide an evening meal for the hungry in La Crosse, and you can join in that ministry by serving the meal. Our Savior's takes the second Friday of the month, December 9. We are there from 4:15-5:15 p.m. – no preparation or clean up, just serving and being the presence of Jesus as we do "God's work with our hands." We look to have up to six servers, and families are welcome, including children as young as ten. A sign-up sheet is on the youth bulletin board outside Pastor Jon's office.



PRAYER AROUND THE CROSS "BLUE CHRISTMAS" DECEMBER 11, 7 P.M.

Blue? Yes, blue as in the blues. As in, "I am feeling blue." Not everyone is up and cheery for the Christmas holidays. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job, living with cancer or some other disease that puts a



question mark over the future, and a number of other human situations make parties and joviality painful for many people in our community. This month "Prayer Around the Cross" we offer an opportunity to see Christmas in a different light, especially if, for you, this is a "blue Christmas." Come and experience worship that is simple, with times of silence, but rich in the presence of Jesus, the child of Bethlehem. We meet in the sanctuary. Come as you are – you don't need your "Sunday best." Just yourself.



**Lutherans
yesterday,
today, &
December 12th @
Salem Terrace**

**Join us at 9:30 for
Breakfast and
"something Christmas"**

We meet in the small kitchenette off the parking lot between Salem Terrace & Mill Street Manor.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

The Grades 7 & 8 confirmation classes will be Christmas caroling in the neighborhood Wednesday, December 14, from 6-7 p.m. So what??? So, *YOU CAN JOIN THEM!* Join us as we wander the town, sharing sounds of the season, and then as we return to the church for a "carol sing" in the sanctuary, at 7 p.m.



OUT IN THE COLD!

Hello, my name is Austin Kennedy, and for my Senior Exit Project I am conducting a Homelessness Awareness Project. On Saturday, December 17, from noon until noon on December 18, I will be camping out at the church parking lot for 24 hours. During the 24 hours, people will be able to drop off food, money, clothes, or anything that will help support the homelessness in the La Crosse area. All of the proceeds that are fundraised during this project will be donated to our local Salvation Army. Please spread the word to help end homelessness around the La Crosse Area!

**HELP
THE
HOMELESS**

CHOIR CANTATA



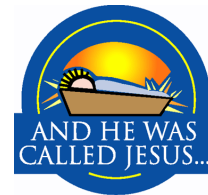
The Senior Choir will present "JOY! A Gospel Christmas Celebration" on Sunday, December 18 at both services.

This is a wonderfully written cantata that combines the gospel of the good news of Christ's birth with gospel music. We are excited to sing it for you and hope you will join us at one of the services December 18!

CIRCLE NEWS

RUTH CIRCLE

Monday, December 19, 9 a.m.
Leader: Ilene Pavelko
Hostess: Norma Schmig



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

1:30 PM

3:30 PM

5:30 PM

Festive Celebration of Jesus' birth with candle lighting, special music, and Holy Communion.
The Christ Child is born for me and for you!

10 PM

Lessons, carols, candle light, Holy Communion...and the newborn Jesus!
Come and welcome the savior of the world!



CHRISTMAS DAY

10 AM

We gather in the morning to rejoice in the newborn child of Bethlehem and to reflect on the gift of grace God gives us in Jesus.
Communion will be served.

MAILING CREW

IMPORTANT CHANGE: The Mailing Crew will be assembling the Newsletter on **Thursday, December 29 at 8:30 a.m.** instead of our usual Wednesday morning.



DON'T FORGET...

SOLES 4 SOULS

Ellie Sloten is collecting new and gently used shoes for Soles 4 Souls. This is your chance to change lives with your new or gently used shoes. If you haven't checked your closets or storage yet, now is the time! She has surpassed her original goal of 350 pairs! Can you help her send 500 pairs of shoes to those in need in the U.S. and around the world? A box is located in the Gathering Area. Let's see how many times we can fill it up before December 8th!!

SYNOD SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

It's almost here! The La Crosse Area Synod School of Theology begins in January, right here at Our Savior's! Come and learn with others from the synod, studying Bible, theology, and increasing your skills in ministry, in classes taught by various pastors from around the synod. The full program is offered over two years, with three trimesters and one retreat each year.

- Thursdays, from 5:30-9 p.m.
- Winter trimester begins January 12, for seven weeks.
- No grades to worry about! Some reading and a small amount of writing, but most of all, just come and learn.
- Cost - \$50/trimester, plus books, or \$20/course.
- Classes for the winter term include Gospels, Christian Theology I, and Worship, taught by pastors from Sparta, DeSoto, and Onalaska.
- Future classes in New and Old Testament, theology, history, and more ministry skills!

For more information go to www.lacrosseareasynd.org/synod-school-of-theology, or see Pastor Jon.

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

I just spent the week enjoying the weather and wondering if the cold days and snowy mornings are coming. Regardless of what I am ready for, the frigid air will inevitably arrive, and I will be forced to get out all my cold weather gear. Now I have to drag out the totes of hats, mittens, gloves, boots, and coats.

Growing up, I remember not really having much of a selection in the realm of winter wear. Most often, it was a hand-me-down from my older siblings and if anything matched, it was purely accidental. The mittens were the knitted ones; that once they got soaked from making snowballs, they were useless. My boots required bread bags for linings so my feet wouldn't be cold and wet. Fortunately, I can remember this fondly because that was, I think, the norm for most kids.

Every year the Salvation Army collects coats and warm winter gear for people in our communities who need clothing for the cold weather season. Really, this can mean the world to a parent who can't afford the clothing, and it can mean the world to a homeless person who is forced to spend the majority of his/her time in the outdoors.

So once again, I ask you to clean out your closets, totes and baskets. Let's be good stewards again this year and help those who need it. The Coats 4 Kids tote is located in the Gathering Area and is just waiting for your donation! Thank you.

Stacy J. Mitchell



Do you have the gift of gab ... *why not try being an usher?*

Do you have compassion for those who can't get out ... *why not try taking communion to our homebound members?*

Do you like to talk ... *why not try reading lessons in worship?*

Do you like to work behind the scenes ... *why not try helping with altar care?*

Do you like to bake bread ... *why not try making bread for communion?*

Do you like to serve others ... *why not try being a communion assistant?*

Do you have a knack with numbers ... *why not be a money counter?*

It's a new dawn
It's a new day
It's a new life
...And I'm feeling good

It's a new opportunity for you to get involved ...

We would love to help you explore your passions. Check out the sign-up sheets in the Gathering Area, call the office, send us an email, or talk to Pastor Jean. "Job descriptions" and "on the job training" available!



**Are you
retired ...
stay at
home mom**

... work part time ... enjoy people ...

... then we need you!

We are looking for someone to be a part of our **hospitality ministry** ... someone who will coordinate the ushering schedule. People have volunteered to usher and now we need someone to put the pieces together and create a schedule. If you can help, talk to Pastor Jean or Pastor Jon.

FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN... AND ANYONE ELSE WHO CARES!



The Family Ministry team is looking for your input and insights. Whether you have young children or not, we want to hear from you! Go to the link below and fill out a very

quick survey on our family ministries, what we are doing, and what we might do. The deadline for the survey is December 7, so don't delay – do it today!

www.surveymonkey.com/r/F9633Z5

Thank you for your support and your partnership with us. If you have any questions see Pastor Jon.

NORWEGIAN DINNER SUMMARY 2016

Thank you to all who helped with our annual Norwegian Dinner. Your willingness to give of your time and to donate food items is greatly appreciated. We



received many compliments! Many of our guests commented on the large number of young people who provided such great service at the dinner. It is truly a gift to have a wide variety of ages and talents willing to serve at Our Savior's.

692 meals were served, which included 96 carryout meals. We prepared 350# of lutefisk, 3,000 meatballs, and several gallons of gravy, 250 pounds of potatoes, and 5 bushels of rutabagas. The exact total and disbursement of the money will be reported in the January newsletter. The tip jars on the tables netted \$319.00. The tip jar money disbursement will be decided by the youth and reported in the January newsletter as well. Thank you, everyone, for your help with another successful dinner.

Special thanks to our businesses who made donations, Family Tree Floral, Linda's Bakery, Kwik Trip, and Hansen's IGA. Special thanks to the Noffke's for the gift of rutabagas and to all of those who donated toward the meat costs.

The Lutefisk Ladies,
Lynette Ender,
Bonny Goodenough and
Inger Michael

MISSION ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

It was with great pleasure that the Endowment Committee was able to disburse \$12,400.00 to missions this year. The funding for this comes only from the interest that is earned on the Endowment Fund that is invested. Donations are often given from memorials, bequests, wills, honoring birthdays, anniversaries, and holiday gifts. This year the money was disbursed as follows:

Category 1 Outreach in Community Synod

La Crosse Area Synod Endowment Fund	
Campus Ministry	\$500
Seminary Scholarships	\$300
La Crosse Area Synod	
Flood Relief	\$900
Salvation Army	\$1,000
Sunshine On The Trail	\$120
La Crosse Warming Center	\$1,000
New Horizons	\$1,000
St. Clare Health Mission-La Crosse	\$1,500
Sugar Creek Bible Camp	\$600
West Salem High School Jane Doe Fund	<u>\$250</u>
Total Disbursed Category 1	\$7,170

Category 2 Missions of the ELCA

Global Barnyard Program	\$200
ELCA Disaster Response	\$1,350
ELCA Well Project	\$250
ELCA World Hunger	\$750
ELCA Lutheran Immigration and	
Refugee Service	<u>\$200</u>
Total Disbursed Category 2	\$2,750

Category 3 Local Capital Improvement

Our Savior's Lutheran for property needs	<u>\$2,480</u>
Total Disbursed Category 3	\$2,480

TOTAL DISBURSED FOR 2016: \$12,400

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Carlson

THANK YOU

Thank you to Bill and Marsha Bateman for the gift to the Endowment Fund in memory of Herb Long.

Communion Bread ...



We thank *Stacey Sjoquist* for providing the homemade bread for Holy Communion in November and *Karen Tiber & Dana Roemhild* in December.

We also thank four of our confirmation students who recently completed first communion class for providing bread on November 6. Please keep them in your prayers as they join us at the Table to receive the Lord's Supper – *Kendall Burkhamer, Jesse Loging, Adrianna Massman, and Brandon Riley*.

If you would like to be a part of this important ministry, please speak with Pastor Jean. Recipes are available.

We thank the **MAILING CREW** for assembling the Newsletter. The members who helped this past month were Connie and Larry Blunck, Bev Bockenbauer, Bonnie Ender, Carol Peterson, Rich Storandt and Betty Whitlock.



BEQUEST RECEIVED

Our Savior's has received a bequest for \$2000 from the estate of Clyde Pierce. Clyde was a long time member of Our Savior's, and died earlier this year. As per congregational action, 70% of the bequest (\$1400) will be placed in the Mission Endowment Fund. The remainder will be designated by the Congregation Council. We are grateful to Clyde for his witness of faith, and his desire to see the mission of Jesus continue. But most of all we thank God for Clyde, and we ask God's blessings on his memory and the ministry his bequest will make happen for years to come!

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

Thank you to all who participated in our recent stewardship ministry emphasis. Your financial gifts year round empower our ministry to make a difference in the lives of others. If you still have not turned in an estimate of giving card for 2017, it's not too late.



Remember too that if you have changed your estimate for next year, and use Simply Giving, you need to fill out a new form to make the change effective. And if you are not using Simply Giving, it's a great way to make your support of our ministries "simple." Contact the office or one of the pastors for more information.

"DRIFTLESS DEVOTIONS"

Check out "Driftless Devotions" at www.Driftlessdevotions.com. Written by one of our members, these devotions are inspired by images and experiences in our driftless region. Each devotion takes an element of our surroundings and draws out the spiritual truth found in each one.

MISSION DISCERNMENT UPDATE

Things are moving! The Vision and Space Team is beginning to look at specific ideas for the use of the space in our building. We are excited as we look at the possibilities of what can be done. Changes will require some expenditure of funds, and therefore will require congregational approval. We'll keep you posted!

We are also working on a new "mission plan" for the congregation, a vision for where we believe God is calling us to go in our work together. A new Director of Youth Ministry is part of that plan, but there's more to do, so stay tuned!

CONGREGATION COUNCIL REVIEW

The Congregation Council met on Monday, November 14, with President Jim Quamme calling the meeting to order. At this meeting the council:

- Shared in devotions and prayer, around the theme of giving thanks.
- Approved minutes from the October council meeting. Also received and reviewed financial reports and pastors' reports.
- Discussed the youth ministry position. Approved a job description and authorized the Executive Committee to hire a candidate. Set salary parameters for the position.
- Decided to table constitution changes to the next meeting.
- Received new members: Maryrose Hetland, from Christ Lutheran, and the Massman family (Rich, Michelle, Easton, Hayden and Adrianna), from First Lutheran, Onalaska.
- Heard that the congregation has received a bequest from the Clyde Pierce estate. 70% will go to Mission Endowment; the remainder will be designated by the council. Decided to make that designation at the December meeting.
- Set the annual meeting for January 29, 2017.
- Noted that the December meeting will be at Pastor Jon and Pastor Jean's home, with families invited to share in a Christmas party.
- Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

The council meets again on Monday, December 12, at Pastor Jon and Pastor Jean's home. See Jim Quamme or one of the pastors if you have any questions.

PASTORAL ACTS

Baptisms

† **Owen Robert Kelemen**, son of Matthew Kelemen and Morgan Pember, was baptized November 13. His baptismal sponsors are Cortny Racine, Andrew Hibbs and Charles Pember.

† **Amelia Mae Racine**, daughter of Michael and Cortny Racine, was baptized November 13. Her baptismal sponsors are Morgan Pember, Jason Montgomery and Charles Pember.

† **Baylee Marie Faucett**, daughter of Jore and Jamie Faucett, was baptized November 26. Her baptismal sponsors are Sara Dullum, Robert Dullum, and Jamee Faucett.

Memorial Services/Funeral

We express our Christian sympathy to the following families:

† **Herb Long** died October 28.
A Memorial Service was held November 3.

† **Ralph Marking** died November 3.
A Memorial Service was held November 12.

† **Dana Geske** died November 10.
A funeral was held November 15.

college+
connection

We are intentional about keeping in contact with our college students –



As our students are either away from home or studying in challenging environments, we keep them in our thoughts and prayers.

This month please pray for **Eric Trautman** (UW-L), **Danielle Schultz** (studying abroad in London through UW-River Falls), **Allison Rigotti** (UW-Stout), and **Leif Ender** (St. Cloud State).

AFTER SCHOOL

After School meets on December 7 for the last time this year. Activities, free time, homework, and more. We have Wi-Fi in the building so you can get your work done! Dinner is at 5:30, and classes follow at 6 p.m. for grade 6, 7 & 8. No After School on December 14, 21, or 28. Join us again on January 4! See Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean if you have any questions.

CONFIRMATION

In December:

- 6th grade classes meet December 7 and 14.
- 7th & 8th grade classes meet December 7, and then on December 14 we go caroling – dress for the weather!
- 9th graders meet with parents on December 7 following the "Hanging of the Greens."



Full class schedule resumes January 4.

SOUNDS LIKE LOVE 2016



Jarron, Molly, Aunna, and Kamryn and I made the trip to St. Andrews Lutheran Church in Minnesota for another powerful weekend full of

singing, dancing and John Jacobson's contagious energy.

Sounds Like Love 2016—The theme for this year was "Hearts on Fire." 250 kids from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North Dakota, and Nebraska coming together to sing God's word. Have you ever listened to a beautiful song or music and it gave you goose bumps? That was the lesson for the weekend "Feelin' the burn." Quoting the words from the song "Soul on Fire" by Marty Hamby.

God I am running for your heart,
I'm running for your heart,
'til I am a soul on fire.
Lord, I'm longing for your ways,
I'm waiting for the day,
when I am a soul on fire
'til I am a soul on fire.
Lord, restore the joy I had.
When I have wandered, bring me back.
In this darkness, lead me through until
all I see is you.

God is in all of us. It doesn't matter what race, color, size or shape you are, He accepts all kinds and forgives all things. Stop and "Feel the burn" and share that feeling with other people.

I would like to thank Wendy and Justin for their help over the weekend and for Our Savior's Lutheran Church, West Salem and the four kids for letting me be a part of it again this year. I am forever grateful. Also, a big thank you to our host families for taking good care of us.

Tracey Beckley

YOUTH MINISTRY FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

Sunday morning "Breakfast Club"— don't miss the goodies on Sunday mornings during Sunday School in the kitchen. Cathryn Bottem and Ariel Behnke (UW-L juniors) facilitate conversation about life and Jesus, along with some breakfast treats. All middle and high schoolers are welcome – friends are welcome too!

Wednesday Early Release for High School— high school kids are encouraged to join us on Wednesday, December 14, right after school lets out, here at church. We will have lunch waiting, then off to be difference makers in someone's life (maybe decorate someone's home for Christmas?) See Pastor Jon or Tayler Jones for more information!

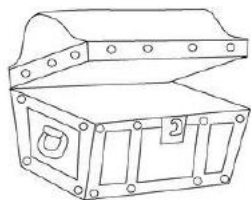
Important Dates

Sunday, December 11 - Christmas Program -
 Grades PreK-2 during 10:30 a.m. worship
 Saturday, December 17 - 9 a.m. - Christmas
 Program rehearsal (grades 3-5)
 Saturday, December 17 - Christmas Program
 - Grades 3-5 during 6 p.m. worship
 Sundays December 25 & January 1 - NO
 Sunday School



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

What a joy it is to see so many children on Sunday morning as we watch a video together with our *Whirl* friends, sing songs, and learn about Jesus and his love for us. In the midst of all of that, the children are working hard on their Christmas programs, too. We are always eager to welcome new students ... bring a friend and join us!



Those who got to check out the Sunday School Treasure Box at the end of October ...

Gussed the correct number of goldfish crackers in the jar at

Gospel on the Green: Brooke Gander (4th grade)

First Class to video time most often in
 October: Pre-K

Kids with perfect attendance - September
 through October:

5th: Jon Iliff, Nick Jones, Elliott Sjoquist,
 Amanda Vick

4th: Marissa Eckland

3rd: Baylee Faucett, Aidan Hillyer,
 Lydia Jothen, Autumn Loging,
 Camdyn Lyga, Emelia Tlustosch

2nd: Graham Sjoquist

1st: Jesse Jothen, Kaleb Kendhammer
 K: Zach Roemhild, Adelyn Tlustosch
 PK: Oliver Kendhammer, Addyson
 Knebes, Alex Roemhild, Anna Vick

At the end of December, we will see who has had perfect attendance in November & December and which class has collected the most in offerings for the Sembrando Project. Will *YOU* get to check out the Treasure Box next time?

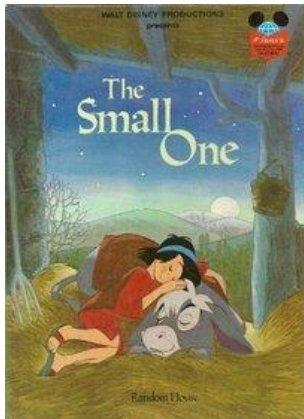
SUNDAY SCHOOL OFFERING ...

Our Sunday School offerings are being collected for the Sembrando project in our companion synod in Peru. Let's help these kids get a healthy meal, school materials, books, and a safe place to spend part of their day. Your offerings will make a difference in the lives of children just like you! Check out the bulletin board by Pastor Jean's office for more information and to watch our progress.



You are invited ...

Join us for our **Sunday School Christmas Programs ...**

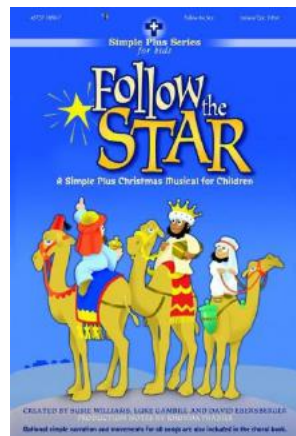


**Sunday,
December 11th
During
10:30 am
worship
“The Small
One”**

Join our Pre-K through 2nd graders as they hear the story of “The Small One” and sing their songs.

**Saturday,
December 17th
During
6:00 pm
worship
“Follow the
Star”**

Join our 3rd through 5th graders as they present “Follow the Star” in music and words.



Hungry Jar Offering for December ELCA World Hunger/Good Gifts



Give
something
unexpected
this
Christmas.

Millions of Americans struggle to get enough to eat. Whether people are looking for a refuge from

the streets or a little extra help to get by, a warm meal and a seat at the table can go a long way ... More than 30 million children in the United States depend on school meal programs to keep them full and focused each weekday. But on weekends, many students have no choice but to go hungry. Stockpile a child's backpack with a weekend's supply of healthy food each Friday so that children – and their entire families – don't have to worry about food ... A bag of groceries, blankets, new clothes and toiletries can be a big help to a struggling family, especially in the weeks and months after losing their home to a natural disaster. These and many others are ways ELCA World Hunger is helping to respond to the needs of those who are hungry. Can we join them?

Also ... check it out! This Advent, you are invited to journey with ELCA World Hunger through the Scripture readings for this season. This study takes you through each week of Advent with devotions based on the lectionary, questions for reflection, prayers and hymn suggestions. To download the free World Hunger Advent study, go to:
http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/WH_Advent%20Study.pdf

CHECK IT OUT ...

Can't see the bulletin ...
we have large print bulletins



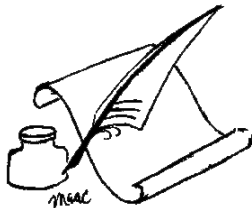
Can't hear the worship service ... we have a hearing assist device

Missed worship ...
check out the website –
www.oursaviorswestsalem.org – to see the service.



CARDS FOR SHUT-INS

Don't forget to stop by the "Card Ministry" table (located outside of the Church Office) each weekend when you are at worship to sign the cards for our shut-ins. You really do make a difference in the lives of those who cannot be with us.



ADULT STUDIES

- Wednesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. – *Luke's done, but now we are looking at Christmas texts – come and join us!*
- Sunday mornings during Sunday School – *no study during December – we start up again in January!*
- Senior study - Monday, December 12, at Salem Terrace, at 9:30 a.m.
- Coming in January – *an evening "confirmation for adults" – watch for details!*

HOSPITAL REMINDER

Being hospitalized is never easy. Our goal is to visit each member during this difficult time.



At Gundersen, please be sure to alert the hospital of your church affiliation when they ask and they will then release your name to us when we call. At Mayo Clinic Health System/Franciscan Healthcare, it is important that you or a family member contact the church office to notify us of your stay. Mayo is no longer able to give out that information.

E-COMMUNICATIONS OR PAPER COPY



Did you know that **112** people receive the newsletter by email instead of the **456** people who receive a paper copy?

Interested in helping us save paper and postage? One way we can do that is to send you an email each time we post the newsletter on our website. Give us your email address, let us know you don't want a paper copy of the newsletter, and we'll do the rest. You can find the website at www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

SIMPLY GIVING

Simply Giving is an electronic transfer that makes your offerings to the work of Jesus through Our Savior's automatically at the amount and frequency you desire. It's easy to set up, easy to change, and can be discontinued at any time. See Kay in the office or one of the pastors to learn more.



Celebrating our Resident Theologians...



Disciples come in all shapes and sizes. We have much to learn from our “elders” as these resident theologians

have insights and stories to share. Errol Kindschy graciously allowed us to share a glimpse into his story. Errol, 78 years young, taught the 2-year Bethel Bible Series course at Our Savior’s for 12 years. Among those students in his class were Pastor & Mrs. Brauer ... *no pressure!* ☺

Errol’s advice to new disciples of Jesus ...

Take it slowly, don’t feel like you’re being pushed in any direction. When you find things hard to accept, talk to another Christian or the pastor. Read (the Bible) and pray a lot. Don’t expect everything to make sense immediately. Get involved as much as you can, but don’t feel you have to do it right away. Errol’s advice in three words: *listen, discuss, enjoy!*

Errol’s favorite Bible passage ... because ...

John 3:16 because that verse has so much meaning, it is a part of him, and the older he gets these words become even more important. Errol was taught this verse as a child by his grandmother (in Norwegian first) and it has stuck with him all these years. It was the first thing he memorized as a young child. Errol said all of Christianity is found within these two sentences.

Errol’s earliest memories of church ... As a young child in the Christmas program every child had a part to recite. As Errol was saying his part, he paused for a minute to catch his breath, and the child next to him started in saying his lines. To which Errol elbowed him and said, “I’m not done yet!” Errol also remembers walking to church (Zion, Galesville) on Christmas Eve with his mother and

grandmother. When they arrived back home after worship, they found Santa had been there and left presents.

Errol shared about traveling to the former Soviet Union and touring one of the churches. Throughout the tour, the guide shared some less than positive opinions about the Church, and at the end, he said to Errol, “You’re *not* a Christian, *are you?*” To which Errol replied, “Yes, I am!” Errol said that was the first time (and the only time) he had been challenged about being a Christian and it was very meaningful to be able to say with certainty that ‘yes, I am a Christian.’

Errol also shared about traveling in the Holy Land at Christmas time, and being in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve with people of all faiths and religions singing together. He remembers one star overhead seeming to shine brighter than the others. Errol said traveling between Bethlehem and Jerusalem, they saw shepherds with their sheep out in the fields. Being in that place, especially at that time, everything comes together.

Thank you for sharing, Errol! Please keep Errol and all of our “senior” members (and “resident theologians”) in your prayers.

THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS

If you are a Thrivent Financial for Lutherans member, you may have “Thrivent Choice Dollars” to direct. You can direct these dollars to Our Savior’s (or any other registered ministry) by going online, or contacting Thrivent. We have information in the office to assist you – see Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean.



DATE	ATTENDANCE	OFFERING	SUNDAY SCHOOL
Nov. 6	197	\$6,502	74
Nov. 12 & 13	331	\$7,155	61
Nov. 19 & 20	226	\$2,923	62
Nov. 26 & 27	203		

FELLOWSHIP HOUR AND FAIR TRADE



Did you know that the percolator coffee we serve on Sunday mornings is Fair Trade? Yes. It is ordered from the cooperative known as Equal

Exchange which partners with Lutheran World Relief. LWR is one of about a dozen church and nonprofit groups that support Equal Exchange's efforts to bring fair prices to small farmers around the world. Their mission is to strengthen sustainable farming practices, thus caring for the land, air and water...all part of God's creation. Now doesn't that make your cup of coffee feel just a little bit warmer and kinder?!

Thank you to these generous folks who have provided treats in recent weeks, September to mid-November: Lynette Ender (2), Jim Michelson



(3), Dana Roemhild, Emily Steele, Pam Willer, Rita Schmitz, Kay Osiecki, Nancy De Young, Nicole Campbell, Bonny Goodenough, Jan Goetzinger, Connie Blunck, Shannon Wiese, and Helen Friell. And here are the coffee hour servers: Jim Michelson (2), Connie and Larry Blunck (2), Dana Roemhild, Lynette Ender, Beth Quamme, Jan Goetzinger, Bonny Goodenough, and Shannon Wiese.

We appreciate their time and gifts to make our fellowship hour so pleasant.

Contact me if you have questions: Ilene Pavelko ilenepav1@aol.com or 786-2360

FAIR TRADE NEWS AT OUR SAVIOR'S

Do you need a Christmas gift that pleases both the giver and the receiver? Check out the Fair Trade cart. There's a variety of coffee and chocolate. Each item is packaged with a story or testimony that explains the grower of the bean, coffee bean or chocolate bean. We also have a handy gift enclosure you can use that explains to the recipient the mission of Lutheran World Relief fair trade.



Back by popular demand is flavored coffee: Toffee Caramel. "Organic Midnight Sun" is a new item for dark roast fans. Even if you are not a "coffee snob," you may enjoy reading the descriptions of Equal Exchange Organic Midnight Sun: *"A dark coffee lover's dream. Both the aroma and the flavor are like the perfectly burnt crispy edges on a pan of fresh baked brownies...A slight black pepper bite and notes of roasted almond and pipe tobacco note that linger after each sip. Balanced and straightforward, this smoky coffee makes the perfect companion for a dessert course. No flavoring is added. These tasting notes and descriptions refer to the natural flavors and nuances of the coffee."*

See Judy Gilbert or Ilene Pavelko for questions or suggestions.

SCRIP CARDS

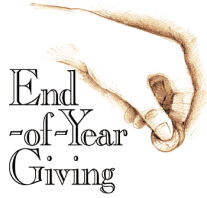


Scrip Cards are now available for Kwik Trip, Woodmans, and Festival. Cards are generally available before and after Saturday worship, and between services on Sunday. Cards make great gifts, and at the same time, a percentage goes to our youth ministry program. You can fill up, eat up, and gift up – and support our kids at the same time!

YEAR END CONTRIBUTIONS

With the end of the year fast approaching, this is the time to make sure you are up to date on your financial support of our ministry at Our Savior's.

Your gifts DO make a difference! You can make gifts at worship, or you can mail them to the office.



In order to comply with IRS requirement, gifts received through December 31 will be acknowledged on your 2016 giving statement, as will gifts received in worship on December 31. Any checks dated 2017 will be acknowledged for 2017. Gifts received in worship on January 1, regardless of date, will also be acknowledged on your 2017 statement.



Once again, you're invited to place poinsettias in the church at Christmas. Many people have found it a special way to remember or to honor someone in this season. You may provide your own plant or we will order a plant for you through Family Tree Floral here in West Salem. Red or white poinsettias are available for \$20.00. Please let us know how we can acknowledge your poinsettia in the Christmas bulletins.

CHECK ONE:

_____ Please purchase a poinsettia for me. I understand the price is \$20.00.

_____ Red _____ White

_____ I will provide a poinsettia but prefer to purchase my own plant. I will have it at church by December 22.

IN MEMORY OF

IN HONOR OF

GIVEN BY

Please return this slip and \$20.00 by December 11 to the church office or put it in an envelope and place it in the offering plate.

You may take your poinsettia home after the Christmas Day worship service.

ACOLYTES

	Saturday 6 p.m.	Sunday 8 a.m.	Sunday 10:30/10 a.m.
December 3 – 4	McKenna Stadtler	Jade Turnipseed	_____
December 10 – 11	Mya Jacobson	Mallory Farr	Audrey Godlewski
December 17 – 18	Sydney Hammes	Madison Hass	Everett Michael
Christmas Eve	1:30 p.m. Josh Iliff	3:30 p.m. Natalie Jeranek	5:30 p.m. Owen Johnson
	10 p.m. Haley Jones		
December 25, 10 a.m.			10 a.m. Connor Koepp
December 31 – January 1, 2017	Kirin Linse	NO SERVICE	10 a.m. Cody Anderson

BASKET HOLDERS

		Sunday 8 a.m.	Sunday 10:30/10 a.m.
December 4		Amalia Hemker	Morgan Kammel
December 11		Brennan Kennedy	Ben Larson
December 18		Tyler Leren	Tyler Mathison
December 24 Christmas Eve	1:30 p.m. Morgan Quackenbush		
	3:30 p.m. Dylan Wiese		
	5:30 p.m. Noelle Zarecki		
December 25 Christmas Day 10 a.m.			10 a.m. Delaney Christianson

READERS

	Saturday 6 p.m.	Sunday 8 a.m.	Sunday 10:30/10 a.m.
December 3 – 4	Char Buelow	Stacy Mitchell	Dottie Baumgartner
December 10 – 11	Vernetta Moe	Jim Quamme	Fran Noffke
December 17 – 18	Joyce Schultz	Choir	Choir
Christmas Eve 1:30 p.m.	Eric Iliff		
Christmas Eve 3:30 p.m.	Lee Fernstaedt		
Christmas Eve 5:30 p.m.	Karen DeSchepper		
Christmas Eve 10 p.m.	Jeff Haldeman		
Christmas Day		NO SERVICE	10 a.m. Phil Gilbert
December 31 – January 1	Vernetta Moe	NO SERVICE	10 a.m. Dottie Baumgartner

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

	Saturday 6 p.m.	Sunday 8 a.m.	Sunday 10:30/10 a.m.
December 3 – 4	Judy Gilbert	Eric & Lynette Ender	Denise Jones Tracy Hesse
December 10 – 11	Jon Hetland	Judy Long Sandy Novak	Michelle Witte Kristen Tschumper
December 17 – 18	Judy Morzinski Jill Iliff	Sharon Olson Melody Schmitz	Marty & Jane Frank
Christmas Eve 1:30 p.m.	Eric & Jill Iliff, Jon Hetland, Marjorie Anderson		
Christmas Eve 3:30 p.m.	Lee Fernstaedt, Bonny Goodenough, Carla & Carlie Burkhardt		
Christmas Eve 5:30 p.m.	Sharon Olson, Eric & Lynette Ender, Karen DeSchepper	Christmas Eve 10 p.m. Jeff & Melissa Haldeman	
Christmas Day 10 a.m.			10 a.m. Judy Gilbert

USHERS

	Saturday 6 p.m.	Sunday 8 a.m.	Sunday 10:30/10 a.m.
December	December 3 Phil Gilbert December 10 Ryan & Jen Wheeler December 17 Ryan & Jen Wheeler	December 4, 11, & 18 Harlan Oldendorf Ken Spraetz Eric Ender	December 4, 11, & 18 Paul Beckley Steve Noffke
December 24 1:30 p.m.	Iliff Family		
December 24 3:30 p.m.	Harlan Oldendorf Paul & Sara Jeranek Family		
December 24 5:30 p.m.	Wendy & Kamryn Kane Bennett Fennigkoh		
December 24 10 p.m.	Jeff & Jared Haldeman		
December 25 10 a.m.	Wayne & Darlene Affeldt		
December 31 6 p.m.	_____		
January 1 10 a.m.	_____		

ALTAR GUILD

Nancy De Young

HOME COMMUNION SERVERS

December 3 – 4	Iliff Family
December 10 – 11	Ilene Pavelko
December 17 – 18	Daryl Wermedal

COMMUNION BREAD FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Karen Tiber and Dana Roemhild

Web Site: oursaviorswestsalem.org

OUR SAVIOR'S STAFF

Pastor Jonathan Schmidt, Senior Pastor	612-0217	Email: pastorjon@oursaviorswestsalem.org
Pastor Jean Schmidt, Associate Pastor	612-0217	Email: pastorjean@oursaviorswestsalem.org
Kay Niemeier, Parish Secretary	Church Office: 786-0030	Fax Number: 786-0951
	Email: office@oursaviorswestsalem.org	
Jill Iliff, Treasurer	Email: treasurer@oursaviorswestsalem.org	
Linda Berg, Organist	Email: linda@oursaviorswestsalem.org	
Eric Sorenson, Senior Choir Director		
Karen DeSchepper, Counter		
Sherri Neal, Custodian		

