

Our Savior's Voice

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street N - West Salem, WI 54669

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

608-786-0030

June 2021



Vision Statement:

***We are a church centered in Christ,
inviting all into a community of worship,
nurturing all to be disciples of Jesus.
Together we reach out to make a difference
here and throughout the world.***

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June 2021

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Pastor's Reflections

April...to May...to June...the calendar moves on...and so does the pandemic. But finally, there seems to be real hope that we are close to the end. Yes, we are still worshiping differently, and elsewhere around the community restrictions are still in place. Still, there is – finally – light at the end of the tunnel!

That is, of course, good news. For all of us, in so many ways. All the disruptions of life over the past year are beginning to fade away. A return to normal is on the horizon.

But not everything will return to normal, and really, I hope not. Some things need to stay changed.

Like an appreciation for time with family, and the discovery of new ways to do old things, and learning to persevere, even in tough, uncertain times. We need to keep all that.

But what about church...and faithful disciples...and followers of Jesus...what about us? What do we need to keep?

We need to keep...the Church!

Of course, I want to keep the church, you know, Our Savior's. I'm looking forward to the day when this is really all over, and we can worship with a full house, gather together in Sunday School and Confirmation, and enjoy time together over cups of coffee. I'm hopeful we can again have a Norwegian Dinner, music from the choir, and the energy of children pulsating throughout the building. All that makes "church," church!

But that's not what I said. I want to keep "the Church." Church, with a capital "C."

Yes, I love Our Savior's, and I love the work we do together. We make a difference, we change lives, we proclaim hope in times of fear and uncertainty. We preach Christ crucified! The work of the church, the work we do as a community of the faithful.

The work of the "church." But what, then, is the work of the "Church" (capital "C")?

Well, a lot of it is the same. The "Church" isn't about Our Savior's, or the ELCA, or any other congregation. It's about the "Church" – the Body of Christ – God's people at work.



And a lot of that work happens together – you know, you, me, and everyone else, together, in the partnership of a faith community – like Our Savior's.

But when the "Church" is at work, it's about much more than what happens in the ebb and flow of congregational life. It's about what the Body of Christ is up to – here, there, and everywhere. It's about what we do every day, because in the end, the "Church" is present wherever you happen to be – right now. That is to say, the Church isn't confined to a building (like 359 N Leonard), but rather the Church is out and about, active and moving in our world, present wherever we happen to be, at any time, any place. And that is what the pandemic lifted up to us.

For a year the church building was closed, locked up. A few ministries went on (like the food pantry). Most, however, were on hiatus, shut down until...who knows?

But the ministry of the "Church" couldn't be confined by locked doors because the "Church" was already out and about, in the world, active and making a difference.

How so? In YOU – in your daily life, in the many ways in which you connected with those around you, making a difference in a world that was filled with so many unknowns, so many fears, and so many uncertainties. As YOU lived a life of faithful discipleship, in your corner of the world, wherever you happened to be, the “Church” was hard at work.

That has always been the case. We have always been the “Church” out in the world. But the pandemic gave us the opportunity to realize and discover that God is still at work through the “Church,” even when the “church” is restricted with locked buildings and curtailed programs.

So as our world begins to return to normal, I hope – even pray – that we don’t lose that discovery, that in our everyday lives, in our corners of the world, we are in fact the “Church” – hard at work, doing God’s work with our hands. Imagine what realizing that we are making a difference, each of us in our own way, as the “Church” might mean to us as we gather as the “church.” Each of us knowing that the other, like our self, goes out each day to be the “Church,” to be God’s presence in a disturbed and disrupted world.



That’s worth keeping! And perhaps one of the gifts of the pandemic that we can hang on to will be the opportunity to embrace this new discovery with joy, wonder, and amazement – as we see God’s Holy Spirit at work in what we do, and in the “new” that we have experienced!

So, as the pandemic begins to wane, look forward to coming back to church, to our worship, our gatherings, our ministries. But don’t lose the Church. Keep living as faithful disciples day in and day out, wherever you are. Keep being what Covid could not prevent – keep being...the Church!

Pastor Jon



June Worship

We continue to offer a variety of worship opportunities during June, including both “in-building” and virtual options.

- **In-building worship** is held on Saturdays at 6 PM, Sundays at 10 AM, and Wednesdays at 5:30 PM. Masks required, as are sign ups (web site home page or call the office.)
- Join the **Sunday morning worship at 10 AM on Zoom** – find the link on the home page of our web site.
- Watch a recording of the Saturday worship, posted on **YouTube late Saturday evening**. Link on our video page.

And then ...



**June 13 and June 27
10 AM worship
Lion's Shelter**

We invite your mask wearing as you are comfortable.

Bring your own seating and elements for Holy Communion.
(Pre-packaged elements will also be available.)

Sit distanced in family groups.

Sign-ups requested, but no limits on numbers!

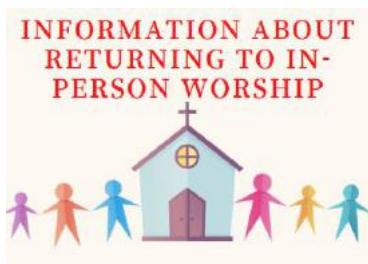


Masks During “In-building” Worship

With the revised CDC guidance regarding masks and those who have been vaccinated, the question has been asked if we need to continue to wear masks during in-building worship. The answer, for the moment, is “Yes!” Here’s why:

1. The Congregation Council, in consultation with the re-opening team, has established that as our norm for worship. Until the council revises that, masks remain required.
2. More importantly ...the CDC guidance addresses those who are vaccinated. We have children in worship who cannot be vaccinated yet. Our Savior’s has a long history of being supportive and encouraging of children and families. It fits our mission to remain a safe place for children, especially when they are not yet able to be protected from Covid!

We understand the yearning to “ditch the masks,” and in time we pray that will happen. But for the sake of our children, just not yet!



In-Building Worship ...

In-building worship on Saturdays at 6 PM, Sundays at 10 AM, and Wednesdays at 5:30 PM. We will hear God's Word, sing quietly, and share in Holy Communion.

There are several things **you need to know** as you make plans to join us.

- **Sign up** on SignUpGenius using the link (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F044CA5A629A7F85-worship>) or call the office (786-0030) and we will be happy to get you signed up.
- Attendance at each service will be **limited to 50** people. (When we worship at the Lion's Shelter in June, there will be no limit on numbers.)
- **Masks are REQUIRED** for those 2 years old and older. (If you forget your mask, we will have them available.)
- **Doors will be open 15 minutes** prior to the start of worship. We invite you to have your conversations outside.
- **Enter through the door off the alley/parking lot.** (If you need the elevator, please let us know that when you sign up and we will have someone greet you at the front door.)
- We will need an **usher/host team** in place or worship will be cancelled. (We will let you know in advance if worship is cancelled.) If you would like to be a part of the usher/host team speak to Pastor Jean.
- **Windows** must remain **open** so dress accordingly.

Office Hours

Beginning June 1, the church office and building will be open Monday-Friday,



8:30AM-2 PM. Use the East Avenue entrance. Please **wear your mask** upon entering the building.

Remember that we now have a locked and secure mail box outside the East Avenue entrance if you need to drop off an envelope or other similar material.



Synod Assembly



The La Crosse Area Synod Assembly will meet virtually June 11-13. Corey Sjoquist, Wendy Kane, Dori Jensen, and Eric Iliff will join Pastor Jean and Pastor Jon as voting members. The big highlight this year is the election of a bishop!

Go to lacrosseareasynod.squarespace.com/2021-assembly to find out how you can watch the assembly, and join the livestreamed worship on Sunday, June 13, at 9 AM.



Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting for Our Savior's will be held on **Sunday, June 13, following the 10 AM worship**, at the

Lion's Shelter. Bring a lawn chair for worship, and stick around for the meeting!

On the agenda:

- Elections for Congregation Council and the Mission Endowment Fund Committee.
- Adoption of the 2021 budget.
- A proposal from the Congregation Council to make major video and audio upgrades in the sanctuary at a cost not to exceed \$40,000.

The annual meeting had been delayed due to the pandemic, but we are eager to gather together and consider our ministry and where God is leading us. We want you to be with us, and to share your voice as we together celebrate God's blessings even in the midst of a challenging time!

2020 Annual Report



The 2020 Annual Report is now ready!

The report provides a review of the ministries we carried out in the past year, even as we worked through a difficult year. The report also includes a variety of financial reports from 2020. It also includes the blueprint for our 2021 ministries in the form of the 2021 proposed budget.

To get a print copy, contact the church office, or download a copy from our web site. Go to www.oursaviorswestsalem.org, then to the "Resources" tab along the top, down to "Annual Reports."

Highlights of the Technology/Audio Project



The Congregation Council is preparing a proposal for the congregation to consider at the Annual Meeting – to significantly upgrade the technology in the sanctuary!

What's included on the project?

- Adding the ability to project words, music, and images on a screen in the front, along with a smaller screen for the area under the balcony.
- Installing the equipment to livestream our worship, then post the recording online, and create quality DVDs for our shut-ins. The equipment would allow for several camera angles along with zooming in for closeups. The camera would produce an HD quality picture.
- A major overhaul of the audio system, which hasn't had a significant upgrade in over 30 years!

The cost? Around \$40,000. The good news? Thanks to the Endowment Fund and a very generous donor, we already have \$14,000! More details in the June newsletter and at the annual meeting.



Affirmation of Baptism (aka “Confirmation”)

The Rite of Affirmation of Baptism for our 9th graders will be held on Sunday, June 27, during the 10 AM worship at the Lion’s Shelter. Come and share as

almost 30 of our young people affirm their faith in a gracious God, and are reminded of God’s commitment to them through their baptism. We will celebrate what they have accomplished, but also send them forth to continue as faithful disciples in all that they do.

Special thanks for all who have been a part of their nurture over the years, especially to our group guides. You have made a difference in the lives of these young people!

Pastoral Acts:



Wedding – Allyson Bottem & Oscar Engh –
May 1

Baptisms – Ronan Gresens and Lyriq Kumbier
– May 2

Funeral – Carol Reed – May 12

Confirmation Instruction

Confirmation instruction is done for the school year – we resume again next fall! A special thanks to all who made the year, as challenging as it was, work!



- To group guides, for being a part of our Zoom classes...
- To Becki Murphy, for teaching two “servant leadership” sessions to our 7th and 8th graders, and doing it creatively...
- To Corey Sjoquist for demonstrating that he is the “guru” of 6th grade Zoom instruction...
- To Wendy Kane for organizing outdoor gatherings to keep our kids connected as much as we could...
- To parents for helping keep kids focused and engaged...

Most of all, thanks to our kids for working through a challenging year, and allowing the Holy Spirit to work in them!

Watch for details in August as we get ready (sooner than we think!) for another year of faith building and discipleship making!

Adult Bible Study



Bible study, via Zoom (or dial in as a conference call) continues on

Wednesdays from 9:30 to 11 AM. Some great conversation and probing discussion – all from the comfort of your home!

Not sure how to do it? Contact Pastor Jon or the church office and we'll help you get connected.



We will wrap up our Sunday school year on June 13 with the last YouTube video (found on the church website: www.oursaviorswestsaalem.org – resources/videos). It's hard to believe we have been sharing weekly Sunday school lessons for the last **92 weeks** without a break! It all started in fall of 2019 and in to early 2020 when we could gather in person ... and then Covid hit and everything became virtual ... which brings us to today. During that time, we changed curriculum and met new Bible buddies who helped us learn our Bible verses and also helped us learn about several of God's creatures – owls, flying squirrels, rhinoceroses, bats, termites, glow worms ... We also learned new songs and had fun singing and dancing along. We are anxious to see what fall of 2021 brings ... until then, be sure to join us for VBS this summer!



Family Vacation Bible School

**Sundays – July 11 and 25
August 8 and 22
11:00 am – 1:00 pm
at the Lion's Shelter**

**Pack a lunch and join us
Fun, active new theme each week
Watch for sign-ups**

If you are looking for a fun way to earn National Honor Society hours or you just want to be a part of the action, let us know ... we have a job for you and would love to have you be a part of VBS!





From the Youth Director ...

8th and 9th graders – watch your emails for information about the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering that will be held in Minneapolis, MN on July 24th – 28th.

All grades - watch your emails for news about upcoming outreach projects to help folks in our community and also to help with fundraising opportunities for the Youth Gathering and future Mission Trips.

Thank you to Carolyn Karl, Bennett Fennigkoh, Eve Twite, Trevor Arentz, and Will Stefferud for helping with the Military Care Packages. Darcy from Operation Homefront is very pleased with such wonderful kids that Our Savior's has and their willingness to help with such a wonderful cause. We were able to complete 60 boxes that will be going overseas to Military Families.

The 50 boxes prepared last time where sent to Afghanistan to help give joy to our Troops.

Attention Youth: helping with distributing the peaches is a very good opportunity to earn money in your account. Let me know if you can help!

Wendy Kane, Youth Director
youth@oursaviorswestsalem.org



Helping Hands Ready to Work ...

Do you have a small project around the house that needs to be tackled, but you just aren't up for the job? We have youth eager to be of assistance, *for a small fee* that will help them fund future mission opportunities. Contact Wendy Kane, Youth Director, to make arrangements – youth@oursaviorswestsaalem.org or call the church office and leave her a message.



High School Students Check it out ...

Every three years, 30,000 high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives. We will gather in Minneapolis MN July 24-28, 2022. For more information talk to Wendy Kane or one of the pastors.

Wands for Wildlife ...



We have two more months before the box of Mascara wands is sent out. If you have any used-up wands, please clean them (soak in a mixture of dish soap and warm water to get the mascara out of the brush, and air dry), place in a Ziplock bag and get them to the Church. *Thank you all for helping with this cause!*



They're back ...

The peach order forms have been mailed and we have orders coming in, which is so good to see! If you have not received a peach order form and would like one, please contact the church office so we can get one out to you.

Note: Peach Order form deadline is July 5th

We have been in contact with a new Colorado peach grower and we should be seeing the delivery around mid-August.



From others ...

... For a thirteenth year the church gardeners thank Todd Michael for his tilling of the garden plots. A weed free parcel is always a good start to the year.

To the prayer shawl ladies ...

... Thank you so much for the Prayer Shawl. That was so thoughtful of you. I will treasure it.

Barb Mellor

... Thank you so much for the beautiful prayer shawl I was given in memory of Jeanne Schliebe Arnold. It was a heartfelt gift to receive and appreciate your thoughtfulness. Thank you so much.

Lori (Pralle) Windhorst

... Thank you for the wonderful gift of the prayer shawls in the memory of our dear friend Jeanne. Your prayers and comfort were appreciated. God bless the working hands and warm hearts of the Prayer Shawl Ministry.

Barb, Barb, Jan, Lori, Kris

In Loving Memory

Memorial Gifts Received ...

In Memory of Bonnie Ender
From John Hutzenbuhler





Congregation Council

The Congregation Council met via Zoom on Monday, May 10, with President Steve Ahles presiding. At this meeting the council:

- Shared in conversation about how God has blessed us even during a pandemic.
- Approved the minutes of the April Council Meeting, and received the April financial report.
- Heard an overview on what has been happening with our various ministries.
- Discussed how the resumption of in-building worship has proceeded. Determined that masks remain, but that the pastors may remove the masks while leading worship.
- Discussed opening the building and establishing public office hours. Directed the staff to proceed.
- Decided that defined groups, when all are vaccinated, may meet without masks provided no children are expected in the building for 24 hours.
- Decided to end the lease on Johnson South and open the building to a new tenant.
- Heard that we remain short on nominees for Congregation Council, and decided to continue to seek names.
- Reviewed the proposed budget and voted to recommend the budget to the congregation.
- Decided not to meet in June unless there is a need.
- Expressed thanks to Steve Ahles and Tracey Beckley for remaining on the council past the six-year mark in order to serve through the June annual meeting.

The next meeting of the council will be held Monday, July 12th, at 7 PM via Zoom. If you have questions, or if you have ideas for enhancing the ministry of Our Savior's, contact one of the pastors.



House Rental Available!

The house just south of the church building ("Johnson South") remains available as a rental. Rent is \$800/month, with the tenant responsible for utilities, lawn, and snow

removal. This is a smaller 2-bedroom home, with a basement and 1 ½ car garage. The house has central air, and basic appliances are included. For more information contact Dean Olson or the church office.

Scrip Cards Available

KWIK TRIP

We continue to have Scrip cards available for purchase in the office during the day.

WOODMAN'S

Just a reminder ... we have Kwik Trip, Kwik Trip car washes, Woodman's, Festival, and Ship Shape car washes. Proceeds go to help World Hunger and Our Savior's Youth programs.



**Feeding the
Community**

Care and Share Food Pantry

The Care and Share Food Pantry is open, Saturdays, 10 AM to Noon. If you have food to drop off, please call the office to ensure that we will be able to receive your gifts. And, thank you!

Financial Support Ministry



**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

THANK YOU!!! Thank you for your continued financial support of our ministry together! You make a difference in the lives of children and adults, in those across the globe, and those right here in our midst.

Financial gifts can be shared in a variety of ways. You may choose to mail in your envelope, or use one or more of the electronic giving options which we have available. You can find more information, and directions on starting your electronic giving, on our web site at www.oursaviorswestsale.org/giving. Among the giving options:

- Electronic transfer...directly from your financial institution.
- Mobile app...Easily create an account to set up recurring donations and review your giving history.
- Text...The first time you use texting, you will be asked to register your payment information; after that, enter the amount and send the text.

However you give, give in confidence! At Our Savior's we value integrity in our financial practices. Transactions are made via a secure web portal, and are facilitated by Vanco, an industry leader in online financial products.

***Thank you for your support.
We are grateful for your partnership as
we proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ!***

Web Site: www.oursaviorswestsalem.org
OUR SAVIOR'S STAFF

Pastor Jonathan Schmidt, Senior Pastor 612-0217

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Kris Seeger, Administrative Assistant Church Office: 786-0030

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Wendy Kane, Director of Youth Ministry 518-9593

Email: youth@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Jill Iliff, Treasurer

Email: treasurer@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Linda Berg, Organist/Choir Accompanist/Director of Music

Email: linda@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Kathy Brisson, Organist

Eric Sorenson, Senior Choir Director

Karen DeSchepper, Financial Secretary

Josh Corning, Custodian



Check your spam



It has come to our attention that many of you – mostly those of you with **yahoo.com** email accounts – are not receiving our communications because the emails have gone to your spam file. So ... please take a minute to check your spam files and see if you have any communications from church/pastors that you may have missed.

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