

Our Savior's Voice

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street N - West Salem, WI 54669

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

608-786-0030

March 2022



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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March 2022

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Pastor's Reflections

Lenten Journey

Well, here we are, another March, another Lenten season. I wonder what this one will bring. Lent of 2020 barely got started and then it stopped. (Well, Lent didn't stop, but we all did.) Lent of 2021 came and went with no fanfare. Enter Lent 2022 ... we are cautiously optimistic that we will finally be able to walk this journey together, in the same space.

We are beginning to take steps towards moving forward, living into our new normal. Not going back, but going forward. Isn't there an old adage that says 'you can never go back'? We need to go forward. We can take what we knew, we can use what was comfortable, and we can learn from it all ... as we go forward ... but we can't go back.

And, maybe Lent is the perfect time to be doing all of this. Lent is the time we take a pause, it's a time for reflection and introspection. It is a time of quiet.

Lent has traditionally been a time when we give something up. As a child growing up, my Catholic friends would give up sweets for Lent, and they would never be able to have cake at my birthday party. When you stop to think about the things that are usually given up at this time, they aren't really things that cause us "pain", they aren't much of a sacrifice, we aren't digging deeply, they are things that we don't really miss – like sweets.



If Lent is the time we are supposed to give things up, to make sacrifices, it's rather ironic that as we enter this Lent there is a lot of focus in our world on our own wants and desires. We're tired of doing things for the sake of someone else.

Earlier today (as I write this) I gathered virtually with my colleagues in the La Crosse Area Synod to ponder our world and our journey together, as a synod. We talked about how lots of people are tired, almost traumatized by the past two years, and just want to go their own way. Human nature, I suppose, but we also pondered what it is to be a synod ... and to be the people of God. The word "synod" literally means "walking together" and in our baptism we are, all of us, together in the Body of Christ. And the Body of Christ ... walks together!



That got me thinking about Lent and walking together. We walk together with Jesus on the way to the cross, as he prepares to make the ultimate sacrifice for us. And presumably we walk with each other, putting aside our selfish ways for the sake of others.

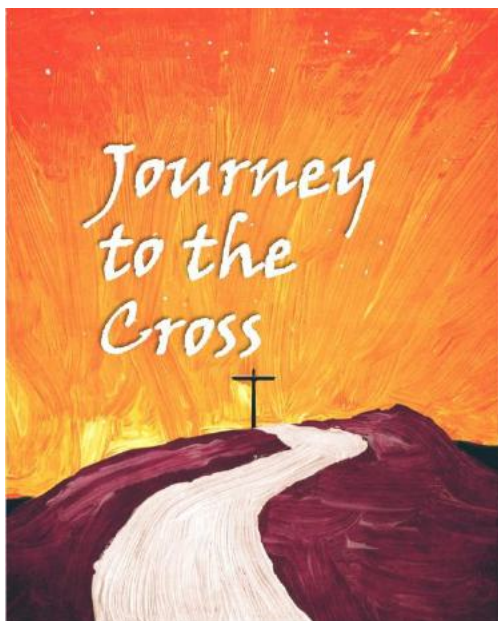
I have spent the last couple of weeks glued to the TV watching the Olympics. I love watching all of the sports, but there is more to it than that. The Olympics is a time when the turmoil, chaos, and challenges of the world are put on "pause" for the sake of the athletes, who come together, who walk together, supporting each other, cheering for each other, caring for each other despite the competition, despite their differences.

It's too bad the Olympics have to end; it's too bad Lent has to end – if we can figure out a way to work together, to walk together, and care for each other for a couple of weeks, why can't we figure out a way to do it the rest of the year, too?

On the other hand, when Lent ends, it ends at the foot of the cross, and then at the entrance to the empty tomb. Not a bad place to end!

So, as we go forward, embarking on our Lenten journey, heading to the cross and the empty tomb, remember we don't walk alone. We walk with Jesus. And as we walk with Jesus, may we walk together, and may our actions and our words reflect the sacrifice we are asked to make for the sake of each other.

Pastor Jean





Worship Update!

As of March 1, masks are no longer required ... though you are welcome to continue to wear your mask!

Saturday @ 6 PM
Sunday @ 8 and 10:30 AM

Meanwhile...

Virtual worship options

We **Zoom the later Sunday worship** (check out our home page for the link and have your communion elements handy!)

We also record the **Saturday worship and post it later that evening as a YouTube**. You can access this worship through our web site: www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/videos. You can watch any time, and you can even catch up on previous weeks.

Ushers Needed at worship

If you know what service you're planning to attend, why not help out?! We are grateful to the faithful few who are here week in and week out. If you can help, please let Pastor Jean know, or better yet, sign up using the SignUpGenius link found here or on the website:



<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F044CA5A629A7F85-ushers1>



Ash Wednesday ... Wednesday - March 2

7:30-8:45 AM Drive through Ashes and Holy Communion in the parking lot

Bring your elements for Communion, receive ashes, and pray ... all in five minutes, and in the comfort of your car!

6 PM Worship in the Sanctuary!

Ashes and Holy Communion, along with a “take-home souvenir,” as we begin the Lenten journey through the streets of West Salem. Curious? Join us and find out!

Later ... The 6 PM worship will be posted as a YouTube later in the evening ... so if you can't join us, join us anyway!

Lenten Worship @ 6 PM Wednesdays, March 9 - April 6



We gather in the sanctuary, but each week we head out on a journey through West Salem. Join us as we explore what it means to be a baptized child of God using familiar spots, themes, and hopes and dreams. And you will even head home each week with a small “take-home souvenir.”

This service will be posted as a YouTube video later each evening.



Sunday School

Sunday School keeps humming along. It's hard to believe we are $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through the year! We are having fun learning about red pandas. Did you know red pandas eat bamboo leaves? 20,000 every day! Now that's a lot of leaves! Our Bible verse comes from Philippians 4:6, and we are learning that "God knows what we need" ... so we can "*trust God!*"

We look forward to seeing everyone in March!

Our March schedule:

PreK/4K to 2nd Grade – March 6 and 20

3rd to 5th Grade – March 13 and 27

Thank you for bringing your offering envelopes to be shared with Lutheran Disaster Relief.



First Communion classes are coming in March. We are still finalizing the details. We will contact current 5th graders and their parents as soon as we know. If you know of a 5th grader interested in the class, or an older student who has not yet had First Communion, contact the pastors. We will explore God's gifts in bread and wine, dabble in a bit of creativity, and have a little fun too!



Confirmation Ministry

It's Lent! And that means that **6th-7th-8th grade confirmation** is taking a break! Classes resume in mid-April.

BUT ... 9th graders continue hard at work! 9th graders will gather on Wednesdays, beginning March 9 following Midweek Lenten Worship to work on their art projects. Work sessions will run from 6:45 -7:30 PM, and students will attend as many sessions as they need to conclude their project. 9th grade class will resume April 20.

See Pastor Jon for more information on our "disciple making" ministry!

SUGAR CREEK BIBLE CAMP - 2022

“Boundless” – Ephesians 3:18-19



Back in the SADDLE again, with ELEVATED excitement, this summer is sure to be a SPLASH! PADDLE along with us, and bring your FRIENDS! You'll be GAGA about camp because it's a cool place

Sugar Creek Bible Camp is excited to report “following the many ACA & CDC safety standards for accredited camps, with God’s help, Sugar Creek provided a 100% Covid-free summer in 2021” and they are ready to do the same in 2022!

All Covid-19 safety practices will be fully in place through the entire 2022 summer season. Campers will receive detailed information on prevention, preparations, and camp expectations before arriving for summer camp.

There will be exciting new programs as well as beloved favorites. Check out the Summer Brochure on their website - www.sugarcreekbiblecamp.org.

OUR SAVIOR’S CAMPERSHIPS AVAILABLE

\$300 full week -- \$125 half week

**Request forms due in the office NO LATER than
May 5th**

(Forms will be available in the church office,
or on the website – www.oursaviorswestsalem.org)

From the Youth Director ...



New Opportunity:

The ELCA made the painful decision to cancel the National Youth Gathering scheduled for late July. Our LaCrosse Area Synod would still like to do something with our youth, so they are working on plans for a shorter event either locally with only youth from our synod (1 day), or working together with the Northwest Wisconsin and Northern Great Lakes Synods (3 day) to be held in Minneapolis. They are excited to offer this event and look forward to hosting our youth! Watch for details in the coming weeks.

Lenten Challenge:

Check out the Lenten Challenge on page 12.

Check it out:

Remember to watch your emails for the latest youth news.

Wendy Amundson, Youth Director
youthoursaviorswestsalem@gmail.com

A Lenten Challenge for our Families ...



A Season of Hope – Lutheran World Relief

Lent is a time for reflection, but it can also be a time of

action. Around the world, our neighbors are suffering in the aftermath of war, displacement and poverty. A Personal Care Kit contains simple, yet life-saving items that help families maintain good hygiene, health and basic human dignity.

We are inviting our families to assemble **Personal Care Kits** during Lent – maybe even more than one! The list of items needed and the instructions for assembling the kits follows on page 13. What a great project to do together with your children – from shopping to assembling!

Kits need to be returned to church **by the end of March.** Financial assistance is always welcome, too, to help ship the items to LWR.

To learn more about this important ministry, check out a new YouTube (https://youtu.be/978eLqj_Tzs) that highlights staff from around the world describing the challenges they face in their work and the ways they witness hope breaking through.



INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN EACH PERSONAL CARE KIT

- ONE light-weight bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27"), dark color recommended
- TWO or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping
- ONE adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging*
- ONE sturdy comb, remove packaging
- ONE metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging

* Toothbrush multi-packs may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-size envelope; no plastic bags or wrap

HOW TO PACK YOUR PROJECT PROMISE KITS

- Fold the towel in half. Place the rest of the items in the towel, fold and roll so nothing falls out, and secure with yarn, ribbon, string or rubber bands.
- Do not use plastic or paper bags to pack donations.

SOME IMPORTANT GUIDELINES TO REMEMBER

- Be sure to shop for light- or medium-weight towels, which are easier for Kit recipients to hand wash and air dry, take up less storage space and are considerably less expensive than the fluffier towels we may prefer to use.
- Bath towels vary in size. The 52" X 27" size listed in the guidelines is the maximum size. 20" x 40" is a good guideline for a minimum size.
- Please give new items only.
- Please do not donate items with any religious symbols, messages or your group's name.
- Please do not donate any items decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage.
- Do not add other items or leave out any of the items listed.
- All items should be new and in good condition.
- Do not enclose the Kit or any of its contents in plastic bags.

As our college students are studying in challenging environments at



college
connection

home or on campus, we keep them in our thoughts and prayers. This month please pray for: **Natalie Jeranek** (Viterbo), **McKenna Riley** (UW-M), **Wyndsor Goodenough** (UW-EC), **McKenzie Fitzpatrick** (UMN-D), **Justine Rich**

(MN State-Mankato), **Olivia Haun** (Winona State), and **Austin Kennedy** (WTC).



College Scholarships

Due to the generosity of a number of families, Our Savior's has several college scholarships

available to congregation members who are current high school seniors, and one scholarship to current college freshmen. This year, due to Covid disruptions, we also have a scholarship available to current college sophomores.

Scholarships are a one-time award, generally ranging between \$300-\$700. Information on scholarships will be sent to all high school seniors. Forms and information for all of our scholarships is available on our web site at www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/forms/.

Deadline for applications is **Monday, May 2**. See Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean for more information.

Adult Bible Study

Bible study, live or via Zoom, continues on **Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to 11 AM**. We take time to ponder the gospel reading for the coming Sunday, so each session is “stand-alone.” NO previous Bible knowledge is needed – just come and enjoy some great conversation and “faith-deepening” discussions.



We meet in the Gathering Area. If you'd rather join via Zoom, contact the church office or Pastor Jon.

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is again looking for folk to assist in the serving of their evening meals in La Crosse. They are asking Our Savior's to take the first Friday of each month. Several families and individuals have already shared in making a difference – you can too!



Teams of three are asked to come to the Salvation Army building at 223 N 8th Street at 4:15 PM. Serving lasts a bit over an hour. It's a great service and witness, but also a moment to build relationships with folk who are in need. YOU can be the presence of Jesus for them, and maybe even discover that THEY can be Jesus to you!

Sign up on SignUpGenius or call the church office.
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F044CA5A629A7F85-salvation>



Tech Project ...

We continue to look forward to the end of May and the installation of new audio and video resources in the sanctuary and in other parts of the building. These resources will enable us to livestream worship, improve the in-building worship experience, and use technology to make a difference in our worship life.

We also continue to look for your support to make this project happen. Over \$15,000 has been given toward the project – but there's still time for you to be a part of this new venture. Mark your gift "tech project" to make a difference!

See Pastor Jon or Dean Olson for more information on this new resource for our ministry together.

Norwegian Dinner



Once again, this year the lack of a Norwegian Dinner did not stop Our Savior's from making a difference. Thanks to you, we were able to recoup \$2,300 to strengthen the ministries of organizations that meet the needs of people, literally around the world! This year's support?

Salvation Army	\$500
Lutheran Social Services	\$500
Lutheran Disaster Relief	\$500
Support of Quilt Shipping	\$800

Thank you to all of you who supported the dinner. Even without Lutefisk, Lefse, meatballs, and all the other goodies, God's work is still happening!



Thank you ...

...to the February newsletter mailing crew – Connie & Larry Blunck, Bev Bockenbauer, Carolyn Karl, Vernetta Moe, Velma Schmidt, and Marion Twite-Stensven

Received from others ...

... Thank you for the note and the Kwik Trip gift card during finals week. I appreciate you thinking about me even while away at college. It means so much to me!

Kirin Linse

... Thank you for the holiday card and gift card. I am not very good at checking my mailbox and was a little late in retrieving the card from it. Anyways, again thank you so much! Hope all is well! Thank you,

Trenton Foreman

... Dear Mary & Martha Prayer Shawl Ministry Group, Thank you all for the prayer shawl. I love the colors and I feel the loving energy when it is wrapped around me. I will always cherish this gift and I thank God for loving people in our world. Your kindness will not be forgotten, God bless,

Paula Hase-Mickelson



Synod Assembly Voting Members

The Congregation Council will be selecting voting members to the 2022 La Crosse Area Synod Assembly in the near future.

The assembly will be held Friday evening, June 10 through Sunday noon, June 12, in person, in La Crosse. All expenses are covered. The assembly includes business, fellowship, worship, and a lot of learning about the work of God's people! If you are interested in participating in the assembly, contact Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean. We'd love to have you join us and experience the church at work!

Congregation Council Elects Officers for 2022

At its February meeting, the Congregation Council elected officers for the council and the congregation for 2022. All officers from last year were eligible for re-election, and that's exactly what happened!

President

Vice-President

Secretary

Treasurer

Jen Linse

Jaime Fortier

Carolyn Karl

Jill Iliff



THANK YOU to our officers for their willingness to serve in these positions of leadership! You are gifts of God to us, as you guide us in our ministries for the coming year!



Congregation Council

The Congregation Council met on Monday, February 14, with President Jen Linse presiding. At this meeting the council:

- Shared in discussion and prayer around the call to love and uplift those around us, and installed newly elected council members.
- Spent some time exploring the duties of the council, reviewing the documents and policies that direct the ministry of the congregation, and looking ahead to some of the challenges of the coming year.
- Elected officers for 2022: Jen Linse-President, Jaime Fortier-Vice-President, Carolyn Karl-Secretary, Jill Iliff-Treasurer.
- Approved the minutes of the January 10 Council Meeting and the 2022 Annual Meeting, and received the January financial report.
- Heard an overview on what has been happening with our various ministries, and discussed plans for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter.
- Appointed to the Audit Committee: Jim Anderson (1 year), Jeff Haldeman (2 years), Dori Jensen (3 years).
- Decided that if numbers continue to improve, masks will not be required after March 1. Discussed further changes to the protocol for future action.
- Noted that voting members for synod assembly need to be appointed in the near future.
- Noted that Pastor Jon is the appropriate person for the updated "IRS Responsible Party" designation.
- Received Joe and Leslie Vike as members via transfer from Holmen Lutheran Church.

The next meeting of the council will be held Monday, March 14 at 7 PM. If you have questions, or if you have ideas for enhancing the ministry of Our Savior's, contact Jen Linse or one of the pastors.

Scrip Cards News

Now available ... Culver's Scrip cards – \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$25! We earn 10% on the purchase of each Culver's card. Grab a card and enjoy a *Butterburger* and frozen custard!



Don't forget we continue to have Kwik Trip, Kwik Trip car wash, Woodman's, and Ship Shape car wash cards.



Proceeds go to help World Hunger and Our Savior's Youth programs – ***think Sugar Creek Campership support!***

Check it out!



Changes have been made to our on-line and mobile giving! Current recurring gifts already set up will continue as before, but new gifts and any changes need to go through the new app. From the giving page on our website, you can link directly to Vanco. If, however, you use the mobile app, as of February 1 you now need to download the new "Vanco Mobile" app. All of your passwords stay the same. For more information contact the church office.



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 worship, by mail, or placed in our locked mailbox. You can also make gifts electronically. Go to www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/giving to find out more!

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



Shopping Online?

Our Savior's has an account with "Amazon Smile." If you shop with Amazon, you can support our work together by designating your "Amazon Smile" contribution to Our Savior's.



Thrivent Choice Dollars

Remember that if you are a Thrivent member you may have "Thrivent Choice Dollars" to direct. Our Savior's is one of the many potential recipients of your choice dollars, but your direction needs to be made each time. A number of Our Savior's folk direct their choice dollars – do you? See Thrivent's web site for more information or stop by the office and we will help you out.



EASTER GARDEN

Once again you will have the opportunity to fill the sanctuary with flowers in memory or honor of a loved one(s). The cost of the spring flowers will be \$24.

The money will be used to buy an assortment of spring flowers from Stems Floral for an Easter display.

Please fill out this form and submit the \$24 to the Church Office by **April 3**. These gifts and names will be acknowledged in the Easter Sunday Bulletin.

Name _____ \$ _____

In Memory of:

In Honor of:

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

Pastor Jonathan Schmidt, Senior Pastor 612-0217

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Pastor Jean Schmidt, Associate Pastor 612-0217

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Wendy Amundson, Director of Youth Ministry 518-9593

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Jill Iliff, Treasurer

Email: treasurer@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Linda Berg, Organist/Choir Accompanist/Director of Music

Email: linda@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Laurie Noelke, Handbell Choir Director/Assistant Worship Musician

Eric Sorenson, Senior Choir Director

Karen DeSchepper, Financial Secretary

Josh Corning, Custodian



Care and Share Food Pantry

The Care and Share Food Pantry is open Saturdays, 10 AM to Noon. Food can be dropped off during office hours. Thank you!



Newsletter Deadline – March 15

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
359 Leonard St N
West Salem, WI 54669

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Change Service Requested