

Our Savior's Voice

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street N - West Salem, WI 54669

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

608-786-0030

February 2023



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.***

Our Savior's Voice

February 2023

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Pastor's Reflections

Gifted and Called ...

The days of February ... Valentine's Day ... Presidents' Day ... and this year, Ash Wednesday.

This February, I would invite you to also think about Our Savior's' third Guiding Principle ... *God gifts and calls every one of every age to be a difference maker in the world.*

Way back in 2022 (yes, that long ago!), the Congregation Council developed a series of "guiding principles," words that declare who and what we are – sort of our "DNA" as a congregation. Each month we are taking a look at another "guiding principle." And this month, it's number three!

On Valentine's Day we are called to share love. Not just love in the candy hearts, chocolate kisses, flowers, diamonds, and romance. That doesn't work for everyone. There are those who are hurting, lonely, broken. They, too, need love, but not "lovey-dovey" love, they need the love of Jesus ... and we [every one of every age] are called to share that love of Jesus ... not just on Valentine's Day, but always.

On President's Day as we celebrate two leaders who worked to make our country strong, who worked to make changes, to ensure all were treated fairly and equally, we [every one of every age] are called to do the same, using Jesus as our guide and role model. Jesus calls us to be welcoming and inviting, to care for all of his people regardless of the color of their skin, their gender identity, their political affiliation, their economic status, their address, their religious beliefs. He calls us to speak out, to advocate, to work for fairness and equality for all.

On Ash Wednesday Jesus begins the journey to the cross and we are invited to join him. We are marked with the cross

of Christ in ashes on our forehead to remind us that we are ‘dust and to dust we shall return’. We [every one of every age] are called into a time of reflection and repentance; a time to look deep within ourselves and make changes.

In the waters of baptism, we [every one of every age] are marked with the cross of Christ forever. In those waters we [every one of every age] are claimed as God’s own, *gifted and called to be a difference maker in the world.*

Did you catch it? “Each and every one...” That’s all of us!

What are you being called to do to make a difference in the world?

What are you being called to do to make a difference here in this place?



The first of our Guiding Principles get us started on our way, and we’ll build on that as we continue to introduce the rest of them in the months to come.

1. **Jesus is Lord and Savior** – all that we do is grounded in Jesus our Lord and Savior ... what else can I say?!
2. **We welcome everyone, and we mean it** – our hearts and minds are open, we are intentional about embracing and including anyone and everyone who comes through our doors.
3. **God gifts and calls every one of every age to be a difference maker in the world** – each and every one of us, no matter how young or how old, has been gifted with the tools and abilities by God to go out and make a difference no matter how small or how big.

Each and every one ... each of us has gifts to share. Not the same gifts, but gifts which together make the whole.

And not only that, we are called to use those gifts to be difference makers ... in here (the church), yes (worship, education, for example) ... but especially out there – out in the world – because, we are not called by God to stay put.

Instead, we are called to be out in the world, using our gifts to make a difference and change lives ... out there. Sometimes that happens in “churchy” things out in the world. Like reaching out through the food pantry, world hunger appeal, quilting, and more.

And sometimes that happens in the routine of our daily lives as we serve others as teachers, health care workers, store employees, service personnel, and more. Ordinary work serving others.

And sometimes that happens when we see the needs around us and respond – the supporting word, helping someone in a moment of need, responding to a crisis (regardless of the size).

What matters is that we know that we are, in some fashion, doing God’s work with our hands.

Making a difference, wherever, no matter how small or how big. That’s our “DNA!”

Pastor Jean





Ash Wednesday Worship February 22

7:30-8:45 AM

***Drive-through ashes and Holy Communion
in the parking lot***

Bring elements for Communion (bread/crackers and wine/juice) – stay in your car as you receive ashes, hear Scripture, share in prayer, and partake in the Sacrament.

6 PM

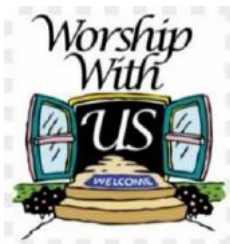
***Ashes and Holy Communion
in the Sanctuary***

Ashes and message, music and hymns, and the Sacrament as we begin the journey of Lent

And looking ahead...



**Midweek Lenten Worship
Wednesdays in March + 6 PM**



Worship Update

Saturday 6 PM
Sunday 8 & 10:30 AM

Remember... if you feel safer with a mask, we always welcome and encourage you to wear one!

Meanwhile...

Virtual worship options
remain...



We **Zoom 10:30 AM Sunday worship** (check out our home page for the link and have your Communion elements handy!)

We also record worship and post it as a YouTube by 10:30 am on Sunday. You can access this worship at any time through our web site: www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/videos ... You can even catch up on previous weeks!



Lenten Dramas

Again, this year midweek Lenten worship will feature a series of dramas. You can take on a role each week, or as many weeks as work for you. If you'd like to be a part of the drama (no memorization required!) see Pastor Jon.



Get a jump on

Mardi Gras!

Shake off the winter blahs!

Come one ... come all ...

**Sunday, February 19
3 - 5 PM**

Join us for ...

Food ... activities for kids ...

prizes ... music ...

Sample recipes from the church cookbook ...
and vote for your favorites!

[Proceeds will once again go to the Roof Fund.]

**** If you submitted a recipe for the cookbook, we want you! Cook up a batch of your special recipe, bring it to church, we'll serve small samples, and see whose recipes are the favorites! Prizes!! Talk to Pastor Jean for more details. ****

Hungry Jar Offering for February – Sleep in Heavenly Peace



**NO KID SLEEPS
ON THE FLOOR
IN OUR TOWN!**

Across the US, too many kids go without a bed—or even a pillow—to sleep on. These children end up sleeping on couches, blankets, and even floors, which has adverse effects on their physical and mental health. All children deserve a safe, comfortable place to lay their heads. Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP) is a national organization with local chapters – one right here in LaCrosse. They are a group of volunteers dedicated to building, assembling and delivering top-notch bunk beds free of charge to children and families in need.

Each bed that SHP delivers to a child sleeping on the floor offers comfort and safety. Oftentimes, the kids who get their beds have never owned a bed of their own. Every kid deserves a good night's rest. \$250 will sponsor a bed and mattress, along with a pillow, sheet set, and comforter. Our gifts make sure kiddos have a comfy place to lay their heads at night.

Faith Formation ...



January got off to a slow start with Sunday School attendance, but we are looking forward to seeing everyone back as we move into February.

It's hard to believe we are finishing up our second trimester of curriculum and will be heading into Lent. We continue to learn from our friends in the *Whirl* videos and share our faith with our teachers.

The kids had so much fun singing to prepare for the Christmas program, we will be reintroducing a time for music back into our Sunday morning routine. Starting February 12th, the kids will be singing again during class time. They will be singing in worship on Easter and Mother's Day! Thank you to Naoko Giblin and Linda Berg for doing this!

Thank you, kids, for remembering your Sunday school offerings for Lutheran World Relief personal care kits.



Sunday, February 12 -Sunday School music resumes
Sunday, April 9 - Kids sing at 10:30 am worship
Sunday, April 9 - Easter - No Sunday School classes
Sunday, May 14 - Kids sing at 10:30 am worship



First Communion Instruction

5th graders ... and any older kids who missed it ... and just anyone interested ... First Communion instruction is coming soon! Sundays, March 5 and March 26 ... from 1:30 - 3 PM. Learn about the Sacrament, create your own communion cup, and bake some “unleavened” bread. Parents are asked to join us! For more information see the Pastors.

SUGAR CREEK BIBLE CAMP - 2023



It's not too early to start thinking about Summer Bible Camp! Early registration deadline is March 15th. To find out more information about the summer schedule, check out their website at: <http://wp.sugarcreekbiblecamp.org/>

OUR SAVIOR'S CAMPERSHIPS AVAILABLE

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

**Request forms due in the church office
NO LATER than May 11th**

(Coming soon ... forms to be available in the church office, or on the website – www.oursaviorswestsalem.org)

Camperships will be given to the campers in worship May 20/21 and it is the responsibility of the family to get the checks to camp.

Faith Formation ...

Confirmation Ministry



Confirmation ministry, i.e. “disciple making,” keeps “plowing” through the winter! For February...

6th grade...

- Meet Wednesday evenings (Feb 1-8-15) at 6 PM to continue their journey through the Bible (they are moving through the gospels right now), with Corey Sjoquist as their guide.

7th and 8th grade...

- Meet on Wednesday, February 1, at 6 PM as they continue to explore the Ten Commandments.
- Electives are scheduled on February 8 and 15. Check to see if you are signed up for one of the classes!

9th grade ...

- If you did not attend January 25, join us February 1, at 7 PM, **with parents!**
- **ALL** 9th graders have class on **February 8**. A **change in schedule** for that night – you are invited to be with us at 6 PM for snacks, then a conversation on servant leadership with Rachel Holthaus, from 6:30-8 PM.

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

And don't forget ... **After School each week** starting ... after school ... and ending ... with dinner at 5:30 PM ... then off to class!

As our college students are studying in challenging environments at home or on

college
connection



campus, we keep them in our thoughts and prayers. This month please pray for: ***Natalie Jeranek, Haley Jones, Wes Leren, and Katie Murphy.***

Adult Bible Study



Bible study, live or via Zoom, continues on **Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to 11 AM**. A small group time to read, ponder, and discuss 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 Library. If you’d rather join via Zoom, contact the church office or Pastor Jon. We can make that happen!



Pastoral Acts:

Baptism – Elyse Aguiar – January 8



New Members

If you are new to Our Savior's and interested in our ministry ... we invite you to consider joining the congregation! But ... why???

EVERYONE is always welcome in worship, and our ministry involves ALL of God's children. YOU are welcome to all of our ministries. Members, however, help us by making a commitment to this community of faith, and by taking a role in leading our ministry. Regardless of where you are coming from, we would love to have you, and to partner with you in your journey of discipleship.



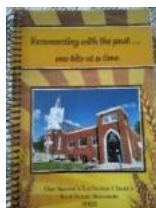
How can you make that happen? If you come from another Lutheran congregation, a transfer works best. Or, if you come from another Christian tradition, we periodically offer a new member class to help you learn more about how Lutherans understand the faith we share.

For more information on membership and how it can happen for you, see Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean!

"Reconnecting with the past ... one bite at a time" Cookbook

\$15

(Proceeds go toward the roof fund.)





Gift Received... Making Ministry Happen!

Thank you to Jean McCall!
Jean lives in Sioux City,
Iowa, but is a native of

West Salem, and was confirmed at Our Savior's in
1951. Jean is also a niece to Helen Friell.

Recently, we received a significant gift of almost
\$60,000 from Jean to do two things:

1. Create an endowment for campership support for Sugar Creek. This endowment will provide about \$2000 per year for our kids to attend camp beginning in 2024. At Jean's request, the fund is named the "Helen Anderson Friell Campership Fund." What a great gift to make a difference in the lives of children and young people!
2. The balance of the gift will go towards the completion of our tech project, allowing us to do an even better job of sharing the good news of Jesus in our building and literally around the world!

So ... thank you, Jean, and God's blessings be on
you ... and on the ministries you are supporting!

La Crosse Area Synod Stuff!



Global Missions Variety Show
February 19th – 3:00pm
Trinity Lutheran Church
1010 Sill Street - La Crosse

Join the La Crosse Area Synod in a fundraiser for our companion synod - Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren. All money raised will go towards assisting their mission to help Ukraine refugees.

The Synod School of Theology...

is waiting for you! A variety of learning experiences in Bible, theology, ministry, and lots more. No grades, minimal cost, but lots of learning and fellowship! Speak with Pastor Jon or Dori Jensen, or go to lacrosseareasynod.org/school-of-theology.

A Study for Lent: "Church & State"
Sunday evenings during Lent 6:30 - 7:30 pm
via ZOOM



Join Pastor Joanne Richmond of the synod Church in Society Committee in conversations about citizenship in the context of a Lutheran understanding of baptism. How do we live out our lives as both citizens and as baptized children of God? Registration required for ZOOM link and for introductory info. Register by calling 608-788-5000 or contacting office@lacrosseareasynod.org. And...there is no cost!

Mission Endowment Fund



The annual meeting approved the 2023 distribution of the Mission Endowment Fund in the amount of \$18,300. The following ministries received funding:

Clothes Closet - Our Savior's La Crosse	\$500
Jail Ministry - La Crosse County	\$200
New Horizons	\$1,000
La Crosse Warming Center	\$1,000
Sleep in Heavenly Peace	\$1,000
St. Claire Health Mission	\$1,000
St. Claire Health Rotary Mobile Clinic	\$600
ELCA World Hunger	\$2,000
Lutheran Social Services	\$1,000
Sugar Creek Bible Camp	\$2,000
Sugar Creek Camperships (for OSLC kids)	\$3,000
OSLC Capital Improvements	<u>\$5,000</u>
Total	\$18,300

Synod Assembly Voting Members



The 2023 annual meeting elected Jen Linse and Jaime Fortier to serve as voting members to the 2023 La Crosse Area Synod Assembly, along with Pastor Jon and Pastor Jean. But ... Our Savior's is entitled to elect four individuals ... so we are looking for ... maybe you? The 2023 Assembly will be held June 9-11 in La Crosse (Friday evening through Sunday noon). Expenses are covered, and you get to experience a whole new side of the church. Assemblies involve business, but also a lot of fellowship and learning about the work of God's people. For more information, or to share your interest see Jen Linse or one of the pastors. You will love it!

The 2023 Annual Meeting met on Sunday, January 29, with President Jen Linse presiding. Thirty-three voting members were in attendance as the gathered congregation:

- Joined in opening devotions led by Pastor Jean.
- Saw a video greeting from Bishop Felix Malpica of the La Crosse Area Synod.
- Received reports from the pastors, president, and ministries for 2022, along with financial reports.
- Elected the following persons to positions of leadership:
 - o Congregation Council: Jaime Fortier, Carolyn Karl, Bonnie Gensch, Chad Vick
 - o Mission Endowment Fund: Katie Drury, Scott Thompson
 - o Synod Assembly voting member: Jen Linse, Jaime Fortier – *two other persons to be appointed by the Congregation Council*
 - o Sugar Creek Bible Camp – Naoko Giblin, Jeff Haldeman
 - o Eagle Crest Communities – Carolyn Karl, Jim Michelson
- Adopted the budget proposal for 2023, noting that the budget presents some challenges for the congregation.
- Adopted the Mission Endowment Fund proposal for 2023 as presented.
- Heard that a significant gift to support the tech project and Sugar Creek Camperships has been received from Jean McCall, who grew up in this congregation.
- Heard a report on upcoming property needs over the next few needs, including the roof and parking lot.

The meeting closed with prayer, as we celebrated the blessings of a good and gracious God!



Congregation Council

The Congregation Council met on Monday, January 9, with President Jen Linse presiding. At this meeting the council:

- Shared in discussion and prayer centering on the first of our Guiding Principles – “Jesus is Lord and Savior.”
- Approved the minutes of the December 12, 2022 Council Meeting, and received the December financial report.
- Heard a report from the pastors on ministries over the past month, and goals for the coming months.
- Decided to invite Pastor Dione Stepanek, Assistant to Bishop Malpica, to preach here on May 6/7.
- Voted to recommend to the annual meeting the budget proposal as presented.
- Reviewed the Mission Endowment Fund disbursement proposal for annual meeting consideration.
- Noted that nominees are secured for all positions except two voting members for synod assembly.
- Heard an update on property projects including the tech work and the flat portion of the roof.
- Heard that a gift of around \$60,000 is in the process of being given to the congregation. \$50,000 would be placed in a “campership” fund for Sugar Creek participants, with only the earnings used each year. The balance would be used for the tech project.

The next meeting of the council will be held Monday, February 13 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.



Thank you ...

to the January newsletter mailing crew: Larry & Connie Blunck, Bev Bockenbauer, Carolyn Karl, Carol Thompson, and Marion Twite-Stensven

Received from others ...

A total of 62.5 dozen krumkake were sold during December in support of the Ukraine Relief effort. The bake sale collected a total of \$418 and matching funds doubled the donation to \$836. Thank you all for your support.

Jim Michelson

Thank you so much for the Kwik Trip gift card & for the thoughts & prayers. I have completed most of my finals for the semester & have my schedule for second semester. I am so excited to come to service while I am home for Christmas break. Thanks again!

Madeline Janisch

Thank you so much for the Kwik Trip gift card! It was very thoughtful of you and definitely lifted my spirits during my stressful finals week. Thank you!

Delaney Christianson

Thank you very much for the Kwik Trip gift card. It will be put to good use! Thank you very much for thinking and praying for me while I'm away, it means a lot! See you soon and take care!

Liam Sjoquist

Thank you, you're a very special congregation! Thank you for the Thanksgiving basket of treats.

Bobbi Broughton

Words are hard to find to express my feelings over the basket of goodies that you had delivered to me during the Christmas holidays. It was a nice assortment of items that were all very good. The holidays, while we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child, are for families. My friends got together with me but while I enjoyed it, my family is in Florida and California and scattered all over the country – so I am alone except for my cat. I'm not complaining, its not the first time, and others face the same situation, but at least I'm home and not in Mulder's as it was December of 2019. Christmas means so much for me when I also recall visiting the place of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem – the year was 1964. It was a night I won't forget as we sang Christmas carols in the courtyard afterwards! Thanks again and God Bless! My heart is with you –

Errol Kindschy

Thank you so much for taking part in the caring tree for Lakeview Health Center. Your generosity brightened the holidays for residents at Lakeview Health Center. We appreciate our continued support through the years.

Kari Coaty, Household Coordinator

In Loving Memory

Memorial Gifts Received ...

In Memory of Eleanor Lee

From Larry & Connie Blunck – for WELCA

From Bonnie Gensch

From Judy Long – for Green Thumb Fund

In Memory of Mike Lyga

From Jeanne Arnez – for Summer Lunch





**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

Financial Support Ministry

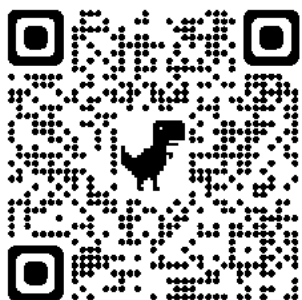
As we begin a new year, ***thank you for your continued financial support of our ministry together!*** You make a difference in the lives of children and adults, in those across the globe, and those right here in our midst.

Like our music ministry – from music and hymns in worship, to the singing of the choir and the ringing of the handbells, to the beat of the SOS Band and the energy of our Sunday School children, to the soloists of voice and instrument, to the music shared in our nursing home worship ... music is a big part of our ministry and outreach. And guess what? Musician or not, you help make it happen. Your gifts allow us to carry out all our ministries, including the ministry of music

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!***

Check out our new...



QR Code!

To be found in the Sunday bulletin ...and here in the newsletter... the QR code takes you to our online giving page. You can set up electronic gifts to support the work we share in the gospel of Jesus Christ! Direct payment or credit

cards, one time or recurring, the general fund ... or summer lunch ... or world hunger ... or youth fund. Your gifts and regular support make a difference, and the QR Code makes it easy to find!



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.

Worship Leaders



February 4-5

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant Zander Clements
Communion Assistant Jill Iliff
Welcoming Team Todd & Inger Michael

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant Jesse Jothen
Communion Assistant Jim Quamme
Welcoming Team Tlustosch Family

10:30 a.m.

Campbell Laack
Bill Jensen
Kerkman Family

February 11-12

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant Landon Labus
Communion Assistant Marjorie Anderson
Welcoming Team Labus Family

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant Leah Langrehr
Communion Assistant Eric Ender
Welcoming Team Hickey Family

10:30 a.m.

Casey Mathison
Naoko Giblin
Faucett Family

February 18-19

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant Lilly Muellenberg
Communion Assistant Judy Morzinski
Welcoming Team

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant Mya Peterson
Communion Assistant Paula Heilman
Welcoming Team Peterson Family

10:30 a.m.

E Quackenbush
Michelle Witte
Fennigkoh Fam

February 25-26

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Anya Tenner
Kim Arentz
Hillyer Family

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Anna Witte
Alison Hemker
Hundt Family

10:30 a.m.

Lauren Burt
Carolyn Karl
Jones Family

Altar Guild for February Pam Gresens

Scrip Cards Available

Help support Our Savior's Sugar
Creek Bible Camp Camperships
and World Hunger!

KWIK TRIP



Culver's, Kwik Trip,
Kwik Trip car wash, Woodman's,
and Ship Shape car wash.

WOODMAN'S

Food Pantry Opportunities

The Food Pantry is looking for volunteers. Are you interested in volunteering 2-3 Saturday mornings per year from 9:30 am - 12 noon at the Community Care and Share Food Pantry housed here at Our Savior's?



Are you interested in helping Wafer distribute food boxes on the 1st Friday of the month from their mobile food pantry, which parks at Anytime Fitness on Hwy 16 from 10:45 am - 12:15 pm? Must be able to lift 40 lbs.!

If you are interested in either of these opportunities contact the food pantry at wsalempantry@yahoo.com. Thank you.

Mark your calendar...

Pastor Dione Stepanek
Assistant to Bishop Malpica



Pastor Dione Stepanek will be with us May 6 and 7 to share the message and connect with us as she serves the La Crosse Area Synod. More details to come, but for now ... plan to be with us!

Web Site: www.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

Kris Seeger, Administrative Assistant Church Office: 786-0030

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Rachel Holthaus, Director of Youth Ministry (405) 474-7201

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Email:

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 – February 10

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

Non-Profit Org.
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Permit #21

Change Service Requested