

Our Savior's Voice

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street N - West Salem, WI 54669

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

608-786-0030

March 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.***

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March 2023

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Pastor's Reflections

Farming and Lent ...

I am not a farmer. And Lent has just begun. Those two facts are intertwined. Believe it or not ...

From the tomato seeds I planted as a child that simply didn't, to failed Zucchini in Michigan, to, quite frankly, pretty lame peppers in West Salem, I just can't farm. True, the rhubarb has sprouted each year, and the raspberries have "berried," but let's face it – those are both pretty low maintenance. With the rest? Just give it a rest – it's not happening!

The truth is hard to take, but undeniable. A farmer I am not! And yet, I need the land. Desperately. I also need the real farmers, the ones who can nurture and coax the land to produce the sustenance that I, and all of creation, depend on. So, for all of you who are, or once were, farmers, thank you! You have pretty much saved my life.



Well, maybe ... but let's not forget ... God had something to do with this too. In fact, we probably ought to give God the credit for life, and farmers the credit for faithful discipleship of the land. God's really the grower, with an assist from the farmers. We might say, "God's work, the farmer's dirty hands!"

But back to the land. The land that produces as God causes it to produce is, of course, a gift of a gracious God. It is God who brought into being the land so that it might be the cradle of life for all beings. The land, creation, the natural world around us. All part of God's plan for life.

That God would bring forth creation for the sake of life is on the one hand a remarkable gift of grace, and on another a bit of a “duh” moment. After all, isn’t that what we read in the creation story in Genesis? God created ... and it was good! And then ... God gave humanity the responsibility to tend the gift of creation?

So, what’s this all mean? At least three things:

1. Creation, the wonder and beauty around us, is a gift to be treasured and cherished. Forests to mountains to rivers and lakes to wetlands to wildlife to crops and cattle ... all gifts!
2. But more than that, the gift of creation is also the gift of nourishing and sustaining life – our life, and the life of all around us – people (all of them) and all forms of life.
3. But yet even more than that, creation is not just a sideline in our existence, or window dressing to be admired. Creation is God’s mechanism to support and nurture life. That means that creation is more than God’s doing, creation is God at work, and not just an “option” for us. When God gave humanity the responsibility to care for creation, God meant it!

That’s why the Congregation Council believes that respect for and care of creation is one of our guiding principles as a congregation. We do not just care for creation because it is the “box in which we live,” we care for creation because it is (at God’s plan and direction) the source of our life. And the life of all around us!



Guiding
principles

So ... on the heels of our first three guiding principles ...

1. Jesus is Lord and Savior.

2. All are welcome, and we are intentional about that welcome.
3. God gifts and calls every one of every age to be a difference maker in the world.

we add number four ...

4. We treasure the gift of creation and embrace the call to protect God's world.



Part of faithful living is to know who and what we are, and what our limitations are. We are human, and we are limited – we are dependent on God’s gifts for life – especially God’s gift of creation!

But faithful living is also about responding to God's call to protect and care for the world around us.

And that's where Lent comes in. Lent is a time of introspection ... and repentance. We pause to take a careful and honest look at ourselves and how we relate to both God and the world around us, including creation. And then,



repentant, we change our direction, we change how we live. We don't just talk the talk, we walk the walk. We become intentional so that we may live out faithfully our faithful discipleship.

What that means for us is that faithfully living out our fourth guiding principle is to be repentant and to seek to live in a way that respects and protects the precious gift of creation. And Lent is a great time to renew our commitment as a congregation and as individuals to treasure, both in word and deed, the world around us. From farm fields to forests,

to rejoice in God's gifts and to work to protect for ourselves and for future generations not what God has given us, but what God has entrusted to us.

And perhaps there lies the key. The world does not belong to us, it is entrusted to us. In an incredible act of divine trust, God has trusted us with creation, it's care and it's preservation, that creation may sustain us, all of life, and the future yet to be.

Imagine that ... God trusting ... US? That is grace at work – God willing to trust us and welcome us as partners in the care of the world around us. Trusting us, because in the end, it's really God at work in us, in the grace of Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Even if my tomatoes and peppers just don't cut it!

Pastor Jon





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

Holden Evening Prayer

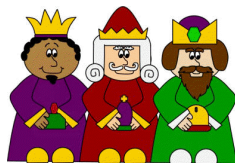
Led each week by a member of the choir ...

with the drama series ...

The Holidays of Lent

Featuring partiers, angels, a wiseman, and even a few groundhogs. All discovering the long shadow – and the new life – cast by the cross and empty tomb of Jesus.

Each drama is an independent unit, so come the weeks you can and explore the mystery of Lent through the eyes of different holidays!





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...

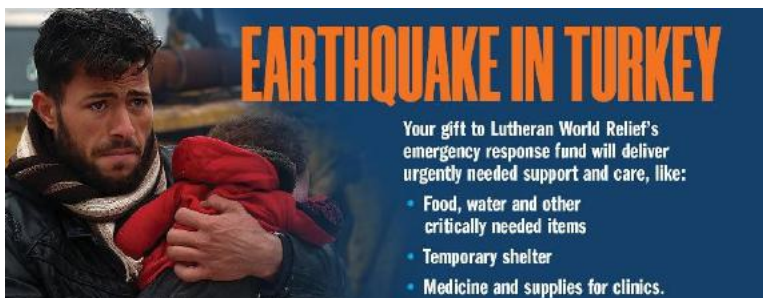
Virtual worship options
remain...



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!

And soon ... livestreaming of the 10:30 worship. We hope to have the new tech work done sometime after Easter, with enhanced capabilities in the building, and a much-improved online experience as well.



Hungry Jar Offering for March – Lutheran World Relief – Emergency Response Fund

Following the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, Lutheran World Relief is there to help, working with their trusted local partners to reach children, women, and men in desperate need.

Your gifts to LWR's emergency response fund will deliver urgently needed care and support like food, water, and other critically needed items, temporary shelter, medicine and supplies for clinics. Financial gifts are the number one need to assist our neighbors who are injured, hungry, and displaced from multiple earthquakes.

Faith Formation ...



The year feels like it is flying by! It's hard to believe we have just begun our last trimester of curriculum. During this time of Lent, we will journey with Jesus these next 40 days to the foot of the cross.

The kids are having fun rockin' the tunes during class time, again, and are looking forward to singing in church on Easter (and Mother's Day!).

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

Important Dates

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

Sunday, May 14 - Last day of Sunday School

Faith Formation ...



Confirmation Ministry

Confirmation ministry for 6th-8th graders is (for the most part) on pause during Lent ...

But ... 7th and 8th grade...

- The elective on “Learning About Another Faith” has been rescheduled to March 1, from 6:45-7:30 PM.
- For the rest of our 7/8th graders ... keep working on worship notes!

Meanwhile ... 9th graders are hard at work! ...

- 9th graders meet March 1 and 15 to work on their clay faith projects with Angie Hemker. We'll begin right after Lenten worship at 6:45 PM and work until 7:30 (or so).



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 Pastor Jean or Pastor Jon.

Adult Bible Study

Beat the mid-winter blues, explore some familiar (and not so familiar) stories, and have some great conversation – all in the Wednesday morning Bible study. We meet from 9:30-11 AM in the Library, or you can join us via Zoom. Each session is “stand-alone,” so you don’t miss if you ...miss! NO previous Bible knowledge is needed – just a healthy curiosity in what God is saying to us these days.



See Pastor Jon for more information, or to get the Zoom link.

Back by popular demand...



Beer & Hymns

Sunday, March 5

6~7 pm

Hunter's Last Chance Bar & Grill

(140 Leonard Street S)

Join us for an evening of singing and fellowship! We provide the songbooks, you provide whatever you'd like to eat and drink.



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 the brochures on the kiosk in the Gathering Area or 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**

(Forms available in the church office,
or on our website – www.oursaviorswestsale.org)

Remember that camperships will be given to the campers in worship the weekend of May 20-21 and it is the responsibility of the family to get the checks to camp.



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.

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 1**. See Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean for more information.

As our college students are studying in challenging



environments at home or on

campus, we keep them in our thoughts and prayers. This month please pray for: **Abbey**

Vick, Lizzy Averbeck, Meghan Hansen, and Ashlie Lockington.

college+
connection



New Members

If you are new to Our Savior's and interested in our ministry ... we invite you to consider joining the congregation! You are always welcome in our midst and our ministry, but members choose to make a commitment to this community of faith, and take on 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!



Thank you!!

Thanks to all who came to our Mardi Gras event on February 19th! The kids had a great time making their masks (thank you Wendy and Kamryn), and the rest of us got full sampling all of the tasty treats from the cookbook.

Thank you to those who made treats to share:

Wendy Amundson
Connie Blunck
Gloria Fennigkoh
Bonnie Gensch
Melissa Haldeman
Saundra Holthaus
Dori Jensen
Jen Linse
Jim Michelson

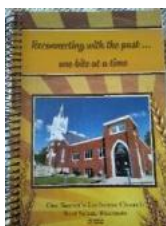
Kay Niemeier
Ilene Pavelko
Norma Piper
Pastor Jon
Stacey Sjoquist
Brenda Skittone
Emily Steele
Carol Stekel
Carol Thompson

*Check out the pictures on the church website -
www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/photo-galleries/.
We look forward to making this an "annual"
event!*

*“Reconnecting with the past ...
one bite at a time” Cookbook*

\$15

(Proceeds go toward the roof fund.)



WISCONSIN COUNCIL
OF CHURCHES

COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach



Vaccine Clinic

Our Savior's is working with the Wisconsin Council of Churches to host a vaccine clinic. We are hoping the clinic will occur in March, but no date has been scheduled. Watch ... and listen ... for details when the clinic is scheduled. Covid is still out there ... make sure you are immunized!



Council Meeting Date

Please note a change in schedule – the March Congregation Council meeting will be held on Monday, March 20, at 7 PM.



Congregation Council

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

- Welcomed back Bonnie Gensch, Chad Vick, Jaime Fortier, and Carolyn Karl, all re-elected to another term.
- Approved the minutes of the January Council Meeting, and received the January financial report.
- Heard a report from the pastors on ministries over the past month, and a report on activities across the synod. Affirmed the pastor's vacation schedule for March and June/July.
- Decided to move the March meeting to March 20, due to the pastor's weekend away in March.
- Noted several ministry teams needing some redevelopment including stewardship and youth ministry. Also discussed future fellowship activities and some new ministry possibilities connecting with community needs.
- Appointed Eric Ender and Bonnie Gensch as two additional voting members to Synod Assembly.
- Appointed Sharon Olson (2024) to replace Jeff Haldeman on the Audit Committee, and re-appointed Jim Anderson for a new three-year term on the committee.
- Elected Congregational officers ... President – Jeff Haldeman; Vice-President – Brenda Skittone; Secretary – Alison Hemker; Treasurer – Jill Iliff.
- Discussed several property issues including the East Avenue entrance and the organ. Decided to develop a task force to consider musical instrument needs.
- Acted to revise signatures for Mission Endowment accounts and to move local accounts to Union State Bank.

The next meeting of the Council will be held Monday, March 20 at 7 PM. If you have questions, or if you have ideas for enhancing the ministry of Our Savior's, contact Jeff Haldeman or one of the pastors.



Thank you ...

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

In Loving Memory

Memorial Gifts Received ...

In Memory of Mike Lyga

From Friends & Family to Summer Lunch Program

In Memory of Jim Johnson

From Carol Wittenberg to Choir

In Memory of Eleanor Lee

From Elizabeth Rusch



Pastoral Acts:

Funeral – Delmar Pettis – February 10



**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 the summer lunch ministry (Feed Our Children) coming soon! Your gifts to the lunch ministry, and your gifts to the congregation in general, make this ministry a difference maker for our kids.

Financial gifts can be shared in worship, by mail, or placed in our locked mailbox. You can also make gifts electronically. Go to www.oursaviorswestsaalem.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!***

By the numbers...

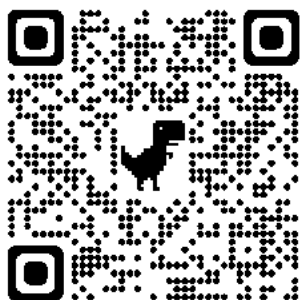


Ministry is not a numbers game, but numbers can help us get a feel for what is happening as we carry out our part of God's work in the world! Numbers help us

measure our faithful response to God's call, both in our financial support and our worship life. So...here is a snapshot of our ministry...by the numbers!

2023 Ministry at Work			
	Actual-Jan	Actual-YTD	Budget-YTD
Income	\$ 25,251.28	\$ 25,251.28	\$ 30,118.75
Prepaid		\$ 13,362.00	\$ 13,362.00
Expense	\$ 30,669.81	\$ 30,669.81	\$ 31,759.26
Net	(\$ 5,418.53)	\$ 7,943.47	
2023 Worship Life – Weekly average			
	In-building Actual	Online Estimate	TOTAL
January	127	76	203
Year to Date	127	76	203

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!

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

Direct your
Thrivent Choice
Dollars
Today!



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.



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!



BLOOD DRIVE

Monday, March 13

12:30-5:30 pm

Presbyterian Church West Salem

Worship Leaders



March 4-5

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Will Clements
Rich Clements
Jothan Family

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Gunnar Eckland

Kammel Family

10:30 a.m.

Kylie Elsen
Jen Linse
Elsen Family

March 11-12

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Charlie Fullwood
Judy Morzinski
Jim & Marjorie Anderson

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Julia Hansen
Brenda Skittone
Langrehr Family

10:30 a.m.

Charlie Ihle
Corey Sjoquist
Loring Family

March 18-19

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Deanna Christianson
Chad Vick
Maki Family

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Isaiah Laack
Pam Gresens
Massman Family

10:30 a.m.

Lexi Marinelli
Tracey Beckley
Premo Family

March 25-26

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Noah Johnsrude
Julie Quackenbush
Darrell Smith Family

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Briauna Mathison
Naoko Giblin
Bakkum Family

10:30 a.m.

Drew McConkey
D Baumgartner
Dawn Affeldt

Altar Guild for March

Jaime Fortier & Cindy Averbek



Pastors' Vacation

Pastor Jean and Pastor Jon will be on vacation March 11-14. Worship that weekend will be a "Lenten Hymn Sing," with a number of Lenten and other favorites sung during worship. During their absence, contact the church office for any pastoral care needs.



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 Under the Rust for an Easter display.

Please fill out this form and submit the \$24 to the Church Office by March 27. 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

Email: pastorjon@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Pastor Jean Schmidt, Associate Pastor 612-0217

Email: pastorjean@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Kris Seeger, Administrative Assistant Church Office: 786-0030

Email: office@oursaviorswestsalem.org

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

Email: youth@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Email: rachel.holthaus10.3@gmail.com

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



Newsletter Deadline – March 15

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

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
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Permit #21

Change Service Requested