

Our Savior's Voice

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street N - West Salem, WI 54669

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

608-786-0030

May 2025



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

May 2025

Table of Contents

Worship Opportunities/Summer Hours	Page 3
YouTube/Facebook/Instagram	Page 3
Pastor's Page	Pages 4-6
Sugar Creek Camperships	Page 7
Sunday School/Confirmation/Youth	Pages 8-10
Adult Bible Study	Page 9
College Scholarships	Page 11
High School Senior Recognition	Page 11
Senior Connections	Page 11
Hungry Jar	Page 12
Quilters	Page 12
Feed Our Children	Page 13
June Dairy Days	Page 14
Synod News/Loggers Game	Page 15
Opportunities for Faithful Living	Page 16
Generously Blessed, Called, and Sent	Page 17
Capital Appeal Update	Page 18
Thank You/Pastoral Acts	Page 19
By the Numbers	Page 20
Financial Support Ministry	Page 21
Worship Leaders Schedule	Pages 22-23
Blood Drive	Page 23
Council Review	Page 24
Summer Offerings/Scrip Cards/Food Pantry	Page 25
Thrivent/Guiding Principles	Page 26



Worship Opportunities

Saturday 6 PM
Sunday 8 & 10:30 AM

NOTE: Beginning Sunday, May 25, the 10:30 AM worship moves to 10 AM!

10:00/10:30AM worship livestreamed!

Find the Livestreaming link on the home page of our web site (www.oursaviorswestsalem.org) or directly to YouTube at youtube.com/@techoslclstreams. Click on “live” to access the livestream.

Livestreams remain on the YouTube page as recordings for later viewing.



YouTube

We invite you to subscribe to our YouTube channel to keep up to date with our online worship. Thank you for your support of our virtual ministry!

Check it out ...



Facebook Page –
Our Savior’s ELCA – West Salem



Instagram Page –
[oursaviors_ws](https://www.instagram.com/oursaviors_ws)



Pastor's Reflections ...

Seeing the best in others

The other day we were having a conversation and Rebecca was sharing about her day at work. She started out sharing frustrations about situations and co-workers. But the more she talked through things, the more the conversation moved past the frustrations to the positives about the people. She was able to see potential reasons for situations “in the moment”, and move to the broader picture. *Deep down, sometimes hidden, we can see the best in others.*



There has been a person who has gone out of their way to agitate, pick on, and belittle her for a very long time, and yet recently they have been nice to her. Should she be a bit guarded with the sudden change, should she be cautious with how she responds, or should she accept the kindness and unconditionally show the same back? *Deep down, sometimes hidden, we can see the best in others.*



A friend died recently and I have been reflecting on his life ... seeing the best in others was one of his gifts. No matter who you were, you were accepted and made to feel special and important.

As a teenager we joined a new church and I got involved with the youth group. One event that always held a special memory, was our annual progressive dinner. The main course was at this particular family's home. While the mom was in the kitchen finishing the food prep, the dad was in the living room entertaining us kids, down on the floor teaching us the skills of playing bocce ball. As the years went on and I became more immersed in the life of the church, there were many opportunities to interact with this dad. There were church family retreats, church dinners, meetings, special

events ... there was the rescue of a stranded “stranger” (me!) on the side of the road 70 miles from home on the way to his mother’s funeral ... there was his preaching at our wedding, making time in his busy schedule to do that ... there was being the keynote speaker at my seminary graduation and joining the three of us for a meal following, when there were seminary dignitaries vying for his time. Whenever I would interact with this man there was a twinkle in his eyes, a smile and genuine care in his expression, and his complete attention to our conversation.

It wasn’t until years later that I understood the magnitude of Marty’s gift of presence. He rubbed shoulders with religious leaders, governmental officials, celebrities and authors ... he was known locally, nationally, and internationally ... and yet he treated me like a friend, he treated my family like friends, he treated our church community as friends, because that was exactly who he was ... a friend.

Deep down, sometimes hidden, we can see the best in others.



We have just finished our Lenten journey, our walk to the foot of the cross, to the deepest darkness where Jesus was crucified. But we were also there, at the tomb Easter morning, when it was found to be empty. The crucified Jesus was now the resurrected Jesus. Alleluia!

But more than that. Jesus was at work. At work in the cross and the empty tomb. At work creating life...and value. Making people special and important because ... that’s what God’s grace does!

In those last days, in the darkness, despite the betrayal, abandonment, denial, hurt, and pain, Jesus created and found *deep down, sometimes hidden, the best in others*,

because that's what God's grace does. In the criminal on the cross, who asked for forgiveness ... in Joseph of Arimathea, who despite their political differences asked for the body of Jesus to give him a proper burial ... in Peter, who was afraid to admit he knew Jesus while in the midst of the mob at the trial ... in Judas, who despite his horrific betrayal, found remorse ... No matter who they were, they were accepted and made to feel special and important. Because they were made to be special and important. Because that's what God's grace does!



Is there hope for us? Despite our humanness, our tendencies to be self-centered, always wanting ... more, the best, power, authority, prestige ... not stopping to see the hurt and pain, the brokenness and

needs of those around us ... not stopping to do anything about it ... not stopping to welcome and accept those who are different from us in their looks, language, self-identification, beliefs, practices, fears, dreams ...

Is there hope for them? Is there hope for us?

Deep down, sometimes hidden, we can see the best in others.

Deep down, sometimes hidden, Jesus can see the best in us. Because Jesus has been at work, creating the best in us. Because that's what God's grace does!

Looking deeply with you,

Pastor Jean





SUGAR CREEK BIBLE CAMP - 2025

“God’s Word Comes Near”

It’s getting closer ... Summer Bible Camp! To find out more information about the summer schedule, check out their website at: <http://wp.sugarcreekbiblecamp.org/>

OUR SAVIOR’S CAMPERSHIPS AVAILABLE

\$400 full week -- \$175 half week

**Request forms due in the church office
NO LATER than Thursday, May 1st**

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

Remember that **camperships** will be **given to the campers in worship on May 10-11** and it is the responsibility of the family to get the checks to camp.

Faith Formation ...

Sunday School



It's hard to believe our Sunday School year is almost done! We have had fun gathering together with our friends (old and new), learning about Jesus along with the crew from *Whirl*, sharing with our teachers, and singing songs.

On Sunday, May 11, the children will practice their song that they will be singing during 10:30 AM worship that day, and then we'll party!

We will celebrate the kids and thank our awesome teachers, helpers, substitutes, and music leaders:

PreK/Kindergarten – Olivia Maki

Helpers – Kaelyn Hebrink, Niko Schnittgen

1st Grade – Audrey Schlifer

2nd Grade – Jessalyn Hickey

3rd Grade – Lydia Jothen and Emelia Tlustosch

4th Grade – Lindsey Gilberts

5th Grade – Eric Iliff

Subs – Brenda Skittone, Erin Hebrink, Jen Maki

Music – Linda Berg, Naoko Giblin

Sub – Ilene Pavelko

We look forward to seeing our Sunday School families in worship this summer!



Sunday, May 11 - Children sing at 10:30 AM

Sunday, May 11 - Last day of Sunday School

Sunday School Offering

ELCA World Hunger is a story of caring for the environment, new fields being planted with crops, and wells bubbling with clean water. This year our Sunday School students collected their offerings for World Hunger to buy a cow that can be used in many ways to help sustain a family.

Check out the bulletin board by Pastor Jean's office to see how we did – *we not only got our cow (\$500), we also will get to choose a few small animals.*



Adult Bible Study

*Wednesdays 9:30-11 AM
In the Library – or join us by Zoom*

Bible study continues to meet – and we are always digging a way to find new nuggets and hear God speak anew to us. YOU are always welcome. NO prior knowledge expected, just a bit of curiosity and excitement to encounter God's word ... and live as faithful disciples.

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

Faith Formation ...

Confirmation Ministry



Almost to the end of the year – the final stretch! Confirmation classes meet for 6th and 7th graders, as the 8th graders have affirmed their baptism in April.

6th grade concludes their study of the Bible as they finish off the New Testament, meeting May 7-14-21.

7th grade has one final elective, and then a year-end “outdoor gathering.” Classes meet May 7 and 14.

After School meets May 7-14-21 – and then off for the summer!

Confirmation classes resume next fall, beginning with a parent’s meeting on **September 3**. See Pastor Jon for more information about any of our confirmation ministries. And remember, *we love new students!*

Faith Formation ...

(Wendy Amundson)



7th graders – May 14th Confirmation class outdoor gathering around the firepit.



College Scholarships

A reminder that applications for college scholarships are due **Monday, May 5**. High School seniors who are members of Our Savior's are eligible for a one-time scholarship. For more information, see Pastor Jon.

High School Graduate Recognition

High school graduate recognition is set for **Sunday, May 18**, at the 10:30 worship service. We will honor our graduates, ask God's blessings upon them, celebrate their achievements, and announce scholarship recipients.



Students should join us around **10 AM** in the lower level, and **bring your robe** if you have it. An RSVP to the office is always helpful, but not necessary. And bring your parents!

**Coffee & Conversation
at Linda's Bakery
9:30 AM on Tuesday, May 13**



Hungry Jar Offering for May – Boys & Girls Club Snack Fund



As we head into summer, the Boys & Girls Club will be buzzing with all ages of kids from all over the area. Many will need snacks to help get them through the day. Regardless of need, there is always a supply of healthy, kid-friendly snacks available for them. Our generous financial support of the BGC Snack Fund is a way to help all of the kids in the community.



Thank you for your generous donations to the Hungry Jar ...

♥March – LuMin Campus Ministry – \$1,920.68

Quilters are looking for sheets ...

We are on our way to making 300 quilts again this year, but we need your help. We are looking for used sheets, light weight blankets, and larger pieces of material for quilt backings.

If you are spring cleaning and have any extras, we will gladly take them off your hands. Donations can be dropped off at the church during office hours or Sunday mornings. If you have any questions please contact Maryrose Hetland at mhetland405@gmail.com.





Feed Our Children Summer Lunch Program

Planning is underway for the 2025 Summer Lunch Program. We are currently forming weekly serving teams. If you are interested in being a weekly leader, please contact Angie Hemker (feedourchildrenws@gmail.com) for more information.

We are beginning to collect granola bars and fruit/applesauce cups. Items may be placed in the baskets in the Gathering Area.

Financial contributions are also always welcome – make checks out to Our Savior's, but **note** the gift is for Feed Our Children.

Look for sign-up sheets for other volunteer opportunities and other donation needs coming soon. Our first day of serving will be June 3rd.

Check the bulletin each week for updates, as well as the Feed Our Children Facebook page. Thank you for your support of this important ministry.



June Dairy Days

Summer is coming and will kick off with June Dairy Days on **May 30, 31, and June 1!** Please save the date and plan to participate in one or all of the following ways:

Fun Run will be held Saturday, May 31.

Volunteers are needed to help with registration, set-up, and serving as crossing guards from 6:30 - 9:30 AM on Saturday morning.

Runners/walkers are also needed! Registration is open at www.junedairydays.com/content/events. Sign up your family and friends to participate in the 5K or 5 Mile run or walk.

Food Stand will be open all weekend.

We need lots of folks helping out, so please answer the call to sign up for duties at the Village Park all weekend - we need grillers, servers, ticket workers, window workers, and shift leaders. Youth and their families are especially encouraged to help on all shifts.

Sign-up sheets for volunteering at the food tent are available at church and online – use the following link: <https://signup.com/go/ChnXXcN>.

THANK YOU for helping us return to our fun traditions in June!

LaCrosse Area Synod News ...



You are invited!

Synod Worship

Sunday, June 8 at 10 AM

Riverside Park

Gather with others from across our Synod for worship and a picnic lunch – wear **RED**!

Note: We will still have worship here at Our Savior's during our regular times that weekend. Bishop Malpica will have a recorded message to be shared in the congregations.



Save the Date!

**Synod Day at the LaCrosse
Logger's Baseball Game!**

Sunday, June 15 at 5 PM

\$27 (age 13+) \$15 (children 4-12)

Tickets include seating as a group on the Topper Terrace which provides some shade, all you can drink pop/water, the ballpark classic dinner at the concession stand, and 3 beers for adults 21+.

Let's get a group together - If you would like to be part of a group from Our Savior's use the sign-up sheet in the Gathering Area and **WE** will order the tickets together. Or ... feel free to order your own tickets on the synod website (LacrosseAreaSynod.org). To be included in the OSLC ticket block, **your \$27/\$15 (per ticket) is due to the church office NO LATER THAN Sunday, May 25.**

Opportunities for Faithful Living!

It is a hurting world out there...God is generous...and YOU can change lives! Each month we highlight an opportunity for you to connect with people in need outside of Our Savior's, out on the world around us! See something that kindles your passion and uses the gifts you have? Check it out!

STAR Center

The Sports, Therapeutic, and Adaptive Recreation (STAR) Center exists to create health equity in the greater La Crosse area by removing barriers and creating opportunities for all to be physically active in the community.



The STAR Center offers para sports programs, adaptive recreation programs and specialized exercise programs. They partner with the health systems and universities in our area, along with the Aging and Disability Resource Center.

Coming up soon...STAR Center is sponsoring a Parkinson's walk on May 10th at Myrick Park, from 10 AM to 2 PM, to raise awareness for Parkinson's Disease.

STAR Center has lots of ways for you to volunteer and change lives. For more information check out their web site (starcenterlacrosse.org) and click on "Get Involved," or contact Bri Holden at 608-797-6295.

Generously Blessed, Called, and Sent

We continue our exploration of disciples of Jesus who understand that they have been “generously blessed, called, and sent.” This month...Todd Michael, a longtime member of Our Savior’s, and a cancer survivor (more on that in a moment!).



What is generosity to you? Sharing my time, talent and money...being generous to others with the gifts that God has blessed me with. Life is much richer when shared with others.

How do you experience receiving generosity? I appreciate the generosity of others and the role models they play in our lives. We should all strive to be disciples of Christ.

How do you share your gifts? I share my gifts as a member of the counting team, ushering on Saturdays, and helping with other tasks. Since I am retired...we make sure to give first fruits to the church from our income.

How has generosity touched you? I was diagnosed with colon cancer in June, 2011. I have never forgotten the mental picture of 1 in 8 surviving my cancer after 5 years. “Why did God spare me?” has been a question in my mind daily...I like to flip that question around a little and challenge myself with “What work does God have for me to accomplish with this ‘bonus’ gift of life?” That work starts with being generous to others with all God has blessed me with.

Who taught you to be generous? God, Jesus, cancer, my family, my friends, and Our Savior’s Stewardship ministry.

Watch for next month’s story of a disciple of Jesus “generously blessed, called, and sent.”

Capital Fund Appeal



Closer and closer! More generous gifts to the Capital Fund Appeal during March, totaling almost \$1,500, have brought us closer to our goal – less than \$12,000 to go! Thank you for all the gifts we have already received!



We continue to invite gifts to meet these needs. Remember that gifts can be made by marking your envelope “building fund,” or you can make an electronic gift. Use the QR code or go to our giving page at oursaviorswestsalem.org/giving/.

But ... remember too that we have also identified some other long-term needs, including the parking lot paving and the eventual replacement of our sanctuary air conditioning unit (it's over 30 years old!). While these are not at the moment priorities or projects in which we are engaged, your gifts now get us closer to being able to meet these needs in the future.

For the moment, however, ***thank you all for your support and your sharing with us.*** For more information contact the office or speak with one of the pastors.



Thank you ...

... to the April newsletter mailing crew – Larry & Connie Blunck, Bev Bockenbauer, Carolyn Karl,

and Carol Thompson.

... to all who helped with the Lenten soup suppers making soups and/or desserts – Amy Rasmussen, Angela Gross, Melissa Haldeman, Carolyn Karl, Carla Burkhardt, Judy Gilbert, Jen Maki, Jen Linse, Jane Brenengen Reinl, Carol Thompson, Jim Michelson, Connie Blunck, Ilene Pavelko, and Corinne Hanson. And, to Jeff Haldeman for coordinating and overseeing everything.

... to all who helped with the Easter breakfast – Carla Burkhardt, Ty & Candice Tlustosch and Adelyn, Emelia, & Ellie, Alex Premo, Carolyn Karl, Dottie Baumgartner, Barb Sorenson, Trudy Drugg, Olivia and Quinn Maki. And, to Jeff & Melissa Haldeman for coordinating and overseeing everything. We served 55 people!

Pastoral Acts:



Funeral – Sandra Holthaus – April 3

Funeral – Ken Herman – April 11

Funeral – Elvera Indahl Welch – April 26

Baptism – Audrey Vike – April 13

Baptism – Evelyn Vike – April 13

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!

2025 Ministry at Work			
	Actual-Mar	Actual-YTD	Budget-YTD
Income	\$31,906.47	\$79,435.24	\$92,412.51
Prepaid		\$17,500.00	\$17,500.00
Expense	\$33,885.66	\$107,241.54	\$97,161.25
Net	(\$1,979.19)	(\$10,306.30)	
2025 Worship Life – Weekly average			
	In-building Actual	Online Estimate	TOTAL
March	183	31	214
Year to Date	163	34	197



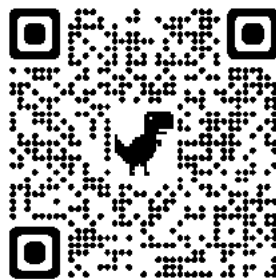
**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

Financial Support Ministry

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.

Like the close to 40 worshipers each month who attend our services at Lakeview, Salem Terrace, and Mulders. Only a few are members – the rest are from all sorts of places – but all are beloved children of God. Your support enables our outreach ministry to people who are easily overlooked and forgotten.

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, or use our QR Code.



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

Worship Leaders - May



May 3-4

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Bennett Ihle
Jon Hetland
Knebes Family

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Laney Kneifl
Carolyn Karl
Alison Hemker

10:30 a.m.

Beau Baganz
Trudy Drugg
Steve & Sue Ahles

Home Communion
Altar Guild May

Rasmussen Family
Wendy Amundson

May 10-11

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Layla Kneifl
Marjorie Anderson
Todd & Inger Michael

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Lyriq Kumbier
Dori Jensen
Tlustosch Family

10:30 a.m.

Quinn Maki
Kyle Twite
P & J Fortier

Home Communion

Mariette Stefferud

May 17-18

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Easton Massman
Jill Iliff
Chad & Carla Long

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Cole McNaughton
Jim Quamme
Goodenough Fam

10:30 a.m.

Kylie Nelson
Denise Jones
Wendy Amundson

Home Communion

Scott & Carol Thompson

May 24-25

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

6 p.m.
Harper Niemeier
Alison Hemker
Chad Vick Family

8 a.m.

Kirsten Rasmussen
Eric Ender
Rasmussen Fam
Daryl Wermedal

***10 a.m. –
Summer Hours**

Lexi Schulz
Jen Linse
W & D Affeldt

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team
Home Communion

May 31-June 1

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

6 p.m.
Darrell Smith
Judy Morzinski
Darrell Smith Family

8 a.m.

Sophia Sprehn
Brenda Skittone
J & R Kerkman
Marjorie Anderson

***10 a.m. –
Summer Hours**

Amy Stefferud
Jason Stefferud
Baganz Family

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team
Home Communion



**Friday, May 30
11:30 am – 5 pm
WS Presbyterian Church**



Congregation Council

The Congregation Council met on Monday, April 14, with President Brenda Skittone presiding.

At this meeting the council:

- Welcomed Eric Ender and Dori Jensen as part of the ongoing reflections on generosity and faith living.
- Approved the minutes from the March meeting, and received financials for March and the pastors' reports.
- Heard a report from Scott Thompson, Carolyn Karl, and Brenda Skittone on the recent Synod-sponsored council workshop. Also heard from Carolyn Karl, Brenda Skittone, and the pastors on the pre-assembly caucus.
- Heard reports on a number of congregational ministries including worship and the pictorial directory. Discussed planning a welcome event for new members and participants at Our Savior's.
- Adopted the membership list for the congregation distributed at the March meeting as the official membership list, with the understanding that the list can be modified if and when necessary.
- Received and adopted proposed guidelines for the Bible camp staff scholarship. Noted that the scholarship is available for any Lutheran Bible camp, but that a higher scholarship is available for Sugar Creek.
- Heard that computer issues have been resolved.
- Voted to receive members of the 2025 confirmation class as voting members.

The council next meets on Monday, May 12 at 7 PM. If you have questions, or if you have ideas for enhancing the ministry of Our Savior's, contact Brenda Skittone or one of the pastors.



Summer Offerings ...

Summer is upon us, but the work of the church continues ...

We invite you to pray for us while you're away enjoying the sun and fun, and also to continue your financial support of the ministries of our congregation by using the QR Code or online giving through the website – oursaviorswestsalem.org/giving.

Scrip Cards

Scrip cards help support Our Savior's Sugar Creek Bible Camp Camperships and World Hunger! You can't beat that!!



Culver's, Kwik Trip, Kwik Trip car wash, Woodman's.



Available after worship services and in the office during the week.



Care and Share Food Pantry

The Care and Share Food Pantry is open Saturdays, 10 AM to Noon. We are thankful for all the donations we have recently received. Many local families have benefited from your generosity. Monetary, food, and personal items are always appreciated.



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? In 2024 Thrivent Choice Dollars totaled \$1,350 – they make a difference! See Thrivent's web site for more information or stop by the office and we will help you out.



- ♥ Jesus is Lord and Savior.
- ♥ All are welcome, and we are intentional about that welcome.
- ♥ God gifts and calls every one of every age to be a difference maker in the world.
- ♥ We treasure the gift of creation and embrace the call to protect God's world.
- ♥ We value the gathering of God's people in worship and all our ministries.
- ♥ We seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in a world that has changed dramatically.

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

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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 – May 15

Keeping up with life at Our Savior's

Check out the photo gallery on our website (www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/photo-galleries/) to see what's been happening, including:

- ♥ **First Communion Class**
- ♥ **Sunday School Easter Egg Hunt**



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359 Leonard St N
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Change Service Requested