

Our Savior's Voice

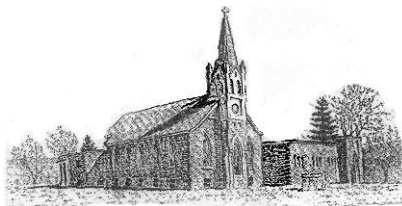
Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street N - West Salem, WI 54669

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

608-786-0030

August 2026



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

August 2026

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Worship Opportunities

Saturday 6 PM
Sunday 8 & 10 AM
(through Labor Day weekend)

10:00 AM 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.



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!

YouTube

Check it out ...



Facebook Page –
Our Savior’s ELCA – West Salem



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



Pastor's Reflections ...

Check it out ... ECI is here!

New things, exciting things are happening! We have been selected to be part of the LaCrosse Area Synod Engaging Children Initiative (ECI). ECI is part of the 1.25 million dollars grant the Synod received in 2025 from the Lily Foundation to explore ways to creatively engage children (particularly ages 5-12) within worship, prayer, and the life of their church over the next five years.

We will be part of Phase 2 of the initiative, and our participation will last from summer 2026 to summer 2028. We are one of five congregations from the LaCrosse Area Synod, along with five congregations from Northwest WI Synod who are part of the phase 2 cohort. We join the two Bible Camps and five other congregations who began the process in 2025. The information gathered from their work in Phase 1 can be found on the Engaging Children Initiative website (eci.lacrosseareasynod.org).



I encourage you to check out the ECI website (see above) where you can find more information about the initiative, along with resources for ideas to help engage children in

worship, and the results of a parent survey that was done last year (*which was very interesting and worth the read*).

As we look at the various thoughts/ideas/suggestions, it is affirming to see that we are already doing several of them. During the next two years we will be brainstorming new ideas to engage our children in worship and trying them out ... *watch for it!* Some may work and others may not, but that's part of the experience. We have committed to being open to trying and tweaking new resources, and evaluating and sharing with others what we learn along the way. Just as they will be sharing what they learn with us.

The long-term goal of this initiative is to learn ways to engage children in worship in various ministry contexts, and also create resources that can be shared with the wider church, as well as ecumenical partners. We are excited to be able to be a part of this initiative.

If you have a passion for engaging children in worship, if you have children who are 5 to 12 years old, if you have ideas for ways to engage children in worship, if you are willing to share your ideas, we invite you to join us as we embark on this exciting opportunity! Current members of our ECI team are Jordyn Gerke, Lindsey Gilberts, Kim & Ryan Sullivan, along with the pastors. We welcome others to join us – talk to a member of the team or one of the pastors.

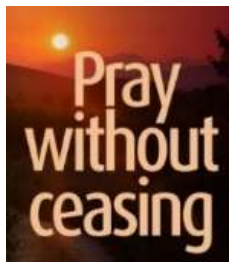
Looking forward to experimenting with you ...

Pastor Jean



Don't forget ... we are praying...

- ♥ Prayer time on Mondays at 6 PM ... outdoors by the prayer labyrinth or if the weather dictates, in the Koinonia Room. 35 minutes of sharing and praying.
- ♥ Use the prayer box in the Gathering Area to share your prayer concerns. We will lift up you and your concerns in our prayers!



Office and Building Closed

Please note that the office and building will be closed...

Friday, August 7

Back in business as usual on Monday!



Handbells

Whether you're "new" or "seasoned", we'd love to have you join us! Rehearsals will begin in September in the Music Room (downstairs off of the Fellowship Hall). If you would like to get more information or would like a trial run to see if bells is a good fit for you, please reach out to Laurie Noelke (laurienoeke@gmail.com - or - 608-317-241- (call or text)).

Gospel on the Green Worship & Potluck Picnic



Sunday
August 23rd
10:00 AM
@ the Lion's
Shelter

Join us as the S.O.S. Band leads us in worship, we hear God's Word, and receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion in the great outdoors! Bring your own seating!

Following worship, you are invited to join us for a potluck lunch – the church will provide sandwiches and beverages. If you are able, ***we would appreciate you bringing a dish to pass*** as follows – last names beginning A-K – main dish; L-T – desserts; U-Z – salads. And even if you can't bring a dish (or if you forget), join us anyway ... there is always plenty and you are always welcome!



Coming in September ...



Faith Formation ... Sunday School

Sunday, September 13 -
Sunday School Rally Day

Sunday School registration forms for all grades will be mailed out in August and will also be available on the church website (www.oursaviorswestsalem.org).

Backpack Blessing September 13



Faith Formation ... Confirmation Ministry

Confirmation is still on summer break, but soon ... very soon ... we start up again! An orientation session for parents and kids is set for **Wednesday, September 2**. 6th and 7th graders at 6 PM and 8th graders at 7 PM. And remember, we always have room for more! See Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean for more information.

Faith Formation ...

(Wendy Amundson)



It's Coming ... the ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis! ... June 28-July 2, 2027

This is a wonderful way to learn more about your path in faith while meeting other wonderful people. Youth (and your parents) should have received information about this - if you have questions or would like more information, please reach out to Wendy!

Early bird registration is still going on, giving a huge savings on the cost! If any 8th and 9th grade students are interested in going, we can find some fundraising opportunities to make this affordable!

Thank you ... to Lynda Grandstrom, who, through her employer TJ Maxx, has donated over 20 shoe boxes for the start of the Shoe Box Christmas project.



This project will start with the Confirmation kids in the fall. Our goal is to collect personal care items, put them into a shoe box, and deliver them to the Boys & Girls Club and/or the West Salem Schools to give a young adult a little something for Christmas.

The continued request is for: shoe boxes, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, socks, shampoo, and body wash. Items can be placed in the basket in the Gathering Area.

If you would like to give a monetary donation, please write the check out to *Our Savior's* and on the memo line put "*Shoe Box Christmas*". We will do the shopping for you!

Sunday School Ministry ...

We would love to have you as part of our Sunday School ministry. Talk to Pastor Jean for more information.



We are looking for ...

Team Teachers – the lessons and activities are scripted, and there is time for a video and music. Our goal is to have **two teachers** for each grade to make scheduling easier.



Adult Bible Study

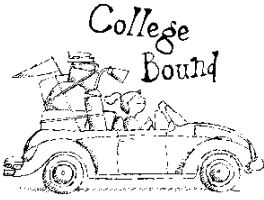
Wednesdays 9:30-11 AM
In the Library – or join us by Zoom

Bible study continues to meet – during August we will take a bit of a detour and look at some essentials of faith and life as the Body of Christ. Join us as we look at what community means, how God works through Word and Sacrament, and how God works through us. And yes, the Bible shows up each week too!

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

Coffee & Conversation
at Linda's Bakery
9:30 AM on Tuesday, August 11





college
connection

It's that time of year again ... already!
Whether you're going to WTC and living
at home or traveling to the far ends of the country, we need
your **campus address** and your **email address**!

You are important to us, and we want to keep in touch –
Please get the information to the office or to Pastor Jean.

Young Adult/Family...



August Gathering

Sunday, August 16 @ 4 PM

**Hosted by Avery & Riley Upton
(410 Lee Drive, West Salem)**

*Please bring a dish to pass to go along with
pulled pork sandwiches!*

Young adults, couples, and families with young children are
welcome to join us.

Come one, come all ... join us for our annual Beer & Hymns Campfire Edition. We especially invite our newest members, those who have been participating in community with us for worship, those who are checking us out, and EVERYONE who enjoys gathering together with others to raise your voices in song ... not to mention feasting on a tempting s'more, too!

**BEER & HYMNS
CAMPFIRE STYLE!
SUNDAY, AUGUST 9
POTLUCK -5:00 PM
SING-ALONG – 6:00 PM
ERIC & JILL ILIFF'S HOME
(430 Olson Drive)**



The Iliff's have once again graciously offered their backyard for a campfire and singalong. They will provide the hamburgers, hot dogs, and brats ... you are invited to bring a dish to pass. Bring your own beverage of choice, a lawn chair, and your voice. And don't forget to invite your friends!



POLICE - COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

National Night Out

Tuesday, August 4 - 5-8 PM

Village Park

National Night Out returns to West Salem ... and we will be there! Come and meet neighbors, connect with the community, and support others in our midst. And ... stop by Our Savior's table!

Corn Roast

Wednesday, August 12

4:30 - 6:30 PM

at the Lion's Shelter



We are once again looking forward to gathering with the West Salem community for our annual Corn Roast. The Corn Roast is our gift to the community, so invite your friends and neighbors – and join them with some great corn and other goodies.

We are looking for ***all-hands-on-deck*** to help make this work! Sign-up sheets in the Gathering Area.

Come be a part of giving back to our community!



Feed Our Children Summer Lunch

The summer lunch Program has been going strong serving over 180 kids some days, but floating around 165ish pretty consistently. Summer School, the 4th of July, smoke in the air and high temperatures have not kept families away.

The donations we have received this year have been more amazing than ever before. There was even a week that we served all meals without ordering a single item. With 3 weeks left of the program we can still use the following 3 items - fruit cups, snack items, and granola bars. Should any of those items be left over at the end of summer lunch they will go to the BGC to be used the last week of summer and/or during their after school program. All storage items will be stored and used again next year.

Thank you all for your donations and volunteering your time. This truly is a team effort.

Hungry Jar Offering for August – Quilt & School Kit Shipping

Our ladies have been hard at work this past year creating quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Their goal is to have **375** quilts ready for shipping in early October - they already have 285! We will be putting the school kits together in early October as well.

The quilts and kits will be taken to Good Shepherd in LaCrosse to be loaded on the truck headed to Minneapolis and then shipped across the country and across the globe. **The estimated cost of shipping quilts and kits this year has**

been raised to \$4/each. The Hungry Jar offering for August will be used to help with the cost of shipping these items.



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

♥ June – LWR School Kit Supplies –
\$694.07



It's School Kit Time!

We are collecting school supplies through September for the school kits we assemble and send, literally around the world, through Lutheran World Relief!

Each School kit contains the following:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1 – 30 cm ruler/12 inch | 1 – pencil sharpener |
| 1 – BLUNT scissors | 5 – UN sharpened pencils |
| 1 – box 24 crayons | 1 – 2-1/2-inch eraser |
| 4 – 70 sheet notebooks (no loose-leaf paper) | |
| 5 – blue or black ball point pens (no gel ink) | |

At this time, our greatest needs are: **notebooks, pens, and rulers**. We are well supplied with pencils, *thank you*, and do not need any more. Our goal is to create 150 kits this year!

Donations can be placed in the box in the Gathering Area. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of children!



Property Committee

The Property Committee has a bulletin board outside the Koinonia Room. Check out the ***"to do and completion"*** list to see what the committee has been up to. Some of these items are small in nature while others have required many church volunteers to complete - ***thank you for your help!***

Potential fall projects include:

- Trim bushes around the church property
- Repaint outside signage
- Upgrade the Prayer Labyrinth (once decisions have been made regarding the best approaches for the upgrade)
- Wash windows (inside and out)
- Caulk windows /paint trim

At times the property committee may set up workdays and invite church members to help complete certain projects.

The committee meets at 4 PM on the third Wednesday every other month to discuss items relative to the church property and select items on the "to do" list to get completed and to add new items brought forth by the pastors or church members.

Current property committee members are: Rich Westpfahl, Carol Thompson, Jerry Greeno, and Maryrose Hetland. If you would like more information or would like to become a part of the property committee, please feel free to talk to one of the members or contact the pastors or church office.



Senior Choir Invite

The Senior Choir invites you to be a member of our group! We have a great time and love making music together. New members are always welcome! We usually sing for church services three times a month. Watch for details in September.



- ♥ 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.



I want to express my sincere appreciation to all of you at Our Savior's for allowing me to be a part of your church the past nine years. It has been my privilege to be the voice at the "other end" of all your phone calls and to welcome all the visitors who wandered in and out of the office. I thank Pastors Jon and Jean for their guidance and patience (especially their patience). I am proud of the ways we were able to work together through the good days and the not-so-good days to keep things running smoothly. I enjoyed working with all the staff and will miss the team spirit we developed here. I especially want to thank all who made the effort to wish me well at my open house and for all the wonderful cards and gifts! I am so grateful for the kindness shown to me not only as my retirement neared, but for the entire time I was here. I will miss most of all, the many, many friendships formed here over the years.

Congratulations go out to Mabel Sjoquist and Larry Blunck for winning the last bags of candy!

As I continue into this new phase of my life (and make my last contribution to the newsletter) I want to wish you all well. May God bless you and may His blessings continue to grow Our Savior's Lutheran Church.

Sincerely,
Kris Seeger



Thank you ...

... to the July newsletter mailing crew: Bev Bockenbauer, Bonnie Gensch, Renee Herman, Carolyn Karl and Carol Thompson.

... to Dick Erickson, Gloria Fennigkoh, and Corrine Hanson for helping serve food at the West Salem Emergency Services Day on behalf of the Community Assistance Fund.

Received from others ...

... Thank you for the campership to go to camp. I truly appreciate it. With this opportunity at Sugar Creek, I grew closer with God. I also had a lot of fun being with the horses. I enjoyed creek stomping, worship, horseback riding, the Christ hike, pool parties, and bible studies. Without this chance I wouldn't have met the people in my cabin and become friends with them. Once again thank so much for this campership! Sincerely,

Mabel Sjoquist

... Thank you for donating money to help me go to bible camp! My favorite thing I did was canter on a horse named Gus! We did so many fun things like creek stomping, sleeping on the bluff with the horses, and grooming the horses. Thank you so much for donating! Love,

Leah Gross

... Dear Scholarship Committee... Thank you so much for choosing me as a recipient of the Marking Scholarship. I am honored by your generosity and support as I begin this next chapter in pursuing my nursing degree. Thank you for believing in me and for being such an important part of my life. I appreciate it very much! With heartfelt gratitude,

Danielle Christianson



Congregation Council

The Congregation Council took July off ... and meets again on Monday, August 10, at 7 PM. If you have any questions or ideas to enhance the ministry of Our Savior's, see Brenda Skittone or one of the pastors.



Pastoral Acts:

Baptism – Mason Jaromin – July 12



Tech System Invite

We continue to look for folk who are interested in “working the system” during worship, enabling us to use video resources and livestream the service. If you might be one of them, Dean Olson invites you to join him during worship and see how it all comes together – and maybe discover that it isn’t as overwhelming as it looks! See Dean or Pastor Jon for more information.

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!

2026 Ministry at Work			
	Actual-June	Actual-YTD	Budget-YTD
Income	\$27,499.99	\$189,342.52	\$179,325.00
Prepaid		\$23,968.36	\$23,968.36
Expense	\$21,213.31	\$187,307.34	\$191,814.60
Net	\$4,871.33	\$26,003.54	
2026 Worship Life – Weekly average			
	In-building Actual	Online Estimate	TOTAL
June	141	43	184
Year to Date	178	54	232



**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 quilting ministry of this congregation that has grown by almost 100% in the last decade, and welcomes not only women of all ages, but even this year one of our confirmation students over the summer. What a great way to meet the needs of others, nurture a young disciple and be the Body of Christ gathered together!

Your financial gifts make this, and all our ministries happen, and 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 - August



August 1-2

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Noah Evenson
Marjorie Anderson
Alison Hemker

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Kaelyn Hebrink
Melody Schmitz
Carolyn Karl

10 a.m.

Ava Johnsrude
Denise Jones
K & S Hehl

Home Communion
Altar Guild August

Carol & Scott Thompson
Stacey Sjoquist & Tracy Skrentny

August 8-9

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Addyson Knebes
Judy Gilbert
Dan & Jan Wee

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Lauryn Langrehr
Amy Rasmussen
D & A Sprain

10 a.m.

Brooklyn Marinelli
Naoko Giblin
E & B Sorenson

Home Communion

Daryl Wermedal

August 15-16

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Bailey Miller-Siddons
Jon Hetland
Jon & Maryrose Hetland

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Mason Knebes
Dori Jensen
S & T Gilbertson

10:00 a.m. –

Ellie Tlustosch
Melissa Haldeman
Tlustosch Family

Home Communion

Marjorie Anderson

August 22-23

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Jaxon Stugen
Bonny Goodenough
Jim & Marjorie Anderson

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Home Communion

Brynnleigh Baganz
Jim Quamme
J Hickey/ K Sloan

Dottie Baumgartner

10:00 a.m. Gospel on the Green

Lily Cooper
Jaime Fortier
K & G Twite

August 29-30

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Makynlee Crankshaw
Dan Steele
Gullickson Family

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Home Communion

Kirya Eckland
Eric Iliff
E & L Ender

10:00 a.m.

Blake Hundt
Stacey Sjoquist
Brian & Jen Linse





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 to Our Savior’s – do you? See Thrivent’s web site for more information or stop by the office and we will help you out.

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 ...



is open Saturdays, 10 AM to Noon. The food pantry could use canned fruit, especially pineapple, mandarin oranges, and applesauce. Money, other non-perishable food items, and personal care items are always welcome. Thank you for being so supportive of the pantry!

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

Pastor Jonathan Schmidt, Senior Pastor (608) 612-0217

Email: pastorjon@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Pastor Jean Schmidt, Associate Pastor (608) 612-0217

Email: pastorjean@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Kris Seeger, Administrative Assistant Church Office: (608) 786-0030

Email: office@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Wendy Amundson, Youth Director (608) 518-9593

Email: youthoursaviorswestsalem@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

Email: laurienoelke@gmail.com

Eric Sorenson, Senior Choir Director (608) 397-1832

Karen DeSchepper, Financial Secretary

Josh Corning, Custodian



**Newsletter Deadline –
August 13**

Blood Drive



**Wednesday, August 5
12:30 – 5:30 p.m.
West Salem High School Library**

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