



September 19-20, 2026

Pentecost 17

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street North, West Salem, Wisconsin

608-786-0030 office@oursaviorswestsalem.org

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

Pastor Jonathan M. Schmidt

Pastor Jean R. Schmidt



WELCOME TO WORSHIP! God gathers us through Word and Sacrament to celebrate God's presence and to receive God's gift of grace. God has made us his people through our baptism and keeps us close to him through the preaching of the word and God's presence in the bread and wine of Holy Communion. We give thanks today for the gift of faith God has planted in us, and we depart to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

We extend a special **welcome** to those who are our guests. May God bless this time of worship for you as we are blessed by your presence. If you have no church home we invite you to join with us and consider Our Savior's as your church home. If you are not baptized and would like to talk about baptism as part of your faith journey, please speak with one of the pastors.

FELLOWSHIP PADS: We ask everyone to sign and pass the fellowship pad in the pew and return it to the rack when done.

OFFERING: No offering is collected during our worship this day; however, we do welcome your support of our ministries and thank you for your gifts. Together we make a difference in the lives of others.

Offering plates are available as you leave the sanctuary. For online giving go to the church website: oursaviorswestsaalem.org/giving. Or text your gift amount to 608-471-7267 and follow the instructions on the response you receive. Or use the QR Code to the right. Thank you for your generosity and support of our work together.



Order of Worship

*Please stand as you are able

PRELUDE

WELCOME

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,

we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Hear this good news: We have peace with God through Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

Amen.

HYMN*"This Is My Father's World"****#824**

1 This is my Fa-ther's world, and to my lis-t'ning ears all
2 This is my Fa-ther's world; the birds their car-ols raise; the
3 This is my Fa-ther's world; oh, let me not for-get that,



na-ture sings, and round me rings the mu-sic of the spheres.
morn-ing light, the lil-y white, de-clare their mak-er's praise.
though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the rul-er yet.



This is my Fa-ther's world; I rest me in the thought of
This is my Fa-ther's world; he shines in all that's fair. In the
This is my Fa-ther's world; why should my heart be sad? The



rocks and trees, of skies and seas; his hand the won-ders wrought.
rus-ling grass I hear him pass; he speaks to me ev'-ry-where.
Lord is king, let heav-en ring; God reigns, let earth be glad!

Text: Maltbie D. Babcock, 1858–1901

Music: TERRA PATRIS, Franklin L. Sheppard, 1852–1930, adapt.

*GREETING

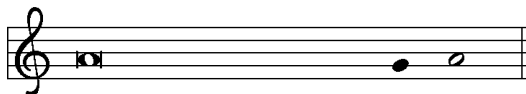
page 147 (in front of the hymnal)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

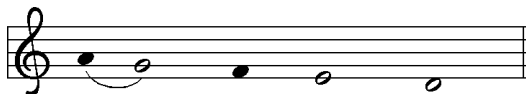
And also with you.

*KYRIE

page 147 (in front of the hymnal)



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



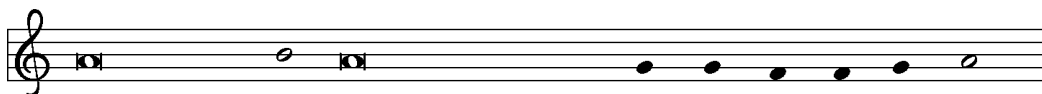
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

Refrain

Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.

All



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual loving kindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgement, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Senior Choir

10:30

Invitation to the congregation to follow along with the words
"When Long Before Time"

#861

- 1) When long before time and the worlds were begun, when there was no earth and no sky and no sun, and all was deep silence and night reigned supreme, and even our Maker had only a dream—
- 2) The silence was broken when God sang the Song, and light pierced the darkness and rhythm began, and with its first birth-cries creation was born, and creaturely voices sang praise to the morn.
- 3) The sounds of the creatures were one with their Lord's, their harmonies sweet and befitting the Word; the Singer was pleased as the earth sang the Song, the choir of the creatures reechoed it long.
- 4) Though down through the ages the Song disappeared, its harmonies broken and almost unheard, the Singer comes to us to sing it again, our God-is-with-us in the world now as then.
- 5) The Light has returned as it came once before, the Song of the Lord is our own song once more, so let us all sing with one heart and one voice the Song of the Singer in whom we rejoice.
- 6) To you, God the Singer, our voices we raise, to you, Song Incarnate, we give all our praise, to you, Holy Spirit, our life and our breath, be glory for ever, through life and through death.

Text: Peter W. A. Davison, b. 1936

Text © Peter W. A. Davison, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

As the anthem is sung please use this time for prayer and meditation. As the music concludes we ask you to continue in silence. No applause please!

READING

Genesis 2:4b-9, 15-25

⁴These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no vegetation of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground, ⁶but a stream would rise from the earth and water the whole face of the ground— ⁷then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

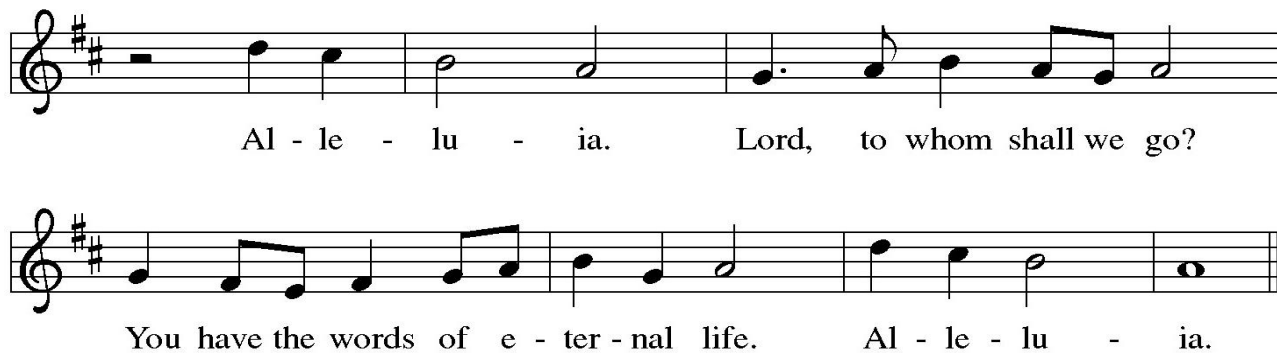
⁸ And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." ¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." ¹⁹ So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of the air and to every animal of the field, but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. ²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²² And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken." ²⁴ Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. ²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** page 151 (in front of the hymnal)



***GOSPEL** Matthew 20: 1-16

The Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:]¹ "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard ²After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

*HYMN

"For the Beauty of the Earth"

#879



- 1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the beau - ty of the skies,
- 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
- 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
- 4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
- 5 For each per - fect gift of thine, peace on earth and joy in heav'n;



for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light:
for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
friends on earth and friends a - bove; for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
for thy - self, best gift di - vine, to our world so free - ly giv'n:



Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sac - ri - fice of praise.

Text: Folliott S. Pierpoint, 1835–1917, alt.
Music: DIX, Conrad Kocher, 1786–1872

BAPTISM

page 227(in front of the hymnal)

6 PM

*APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Amen.

***PRAYERS**

P: Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

*(After a brief silence...The **congregation** is invited to read aloud individually the prayer petitions as the spirit moves them. If more than one person reads the petition, all the better!)*

Hold your church accountable for our unwillingness to share your good news and our anger at your generosity to others. Nourish us by your grace to be witnesses to your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Guide scientists and researchers studying responses to the climate crisis so that all your creation may inspire us to give thanks for your great goodness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Show employers the benefits of equal pay standards for all their employees. Reconcile conflicts between employees. Fill places of employment with camaraderie, and bring an end to employment disparity. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Encourage any who cannot work or who cannot work a full day with the truth that their value comes from your everlasting love for them. Provide for those who are injured, ill, and for all in any need. Accompany those who are isolated, alone, or homebound, especially Vern and Velma. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Strengthen all those in this congregation whose labor serves the needs of others in the community. Inspire all in this congregation to support community endeavors with our time and talents. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Gathering God, resolve conflicts in this community through your righteousness and grace. Reconcile us to each other, making your good news known even through our imperfections. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Work within your servants to be faithful disciples of Jesus. Be with our confirmation students, especially Beau and Blake as they seek to grow in their discipleship, and guide their families that together they may reflect your love and grace. Hear us, O God,
Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Comfort us with the promise of the resurrection as we remember all our loved ones whose desire to be with Jesus is fulfilled. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

P: Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

***PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

Please share a sign of peace with those around you.

MISSION MOMENT

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed our right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

***EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

***LORD'S PRAYER** page 154 (*in front of hymnal*)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Christ invites you to this table.

All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

HOLY COMMUNION *All who believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine of Holy Communion, bringing to us the gift of forgiveness and the promise of eternal life, are welcome to gather at the Lord's Table. Younger children are invited to come forward to receive a blessing.*

Both wine and grape juice are available – grape juice glasses are purple. Gluten free wafers are also available.

AGNUS DEI "Lamb of God"

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

#471

"As the Grains of Wheat"

#465

"Eat This Bread"

#472

*POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

***SENDING OF HOME COMMUNION**

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist XXX in this ministry on which she is/he is/they are sent forth. Bless her/his/their time with YY, and in your love and care, nourish and strengthen them in this sacrament, that through the body and blood of your Son we all may know the comfort of your abiding presence. Amen.

***BLESSING**

The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus. The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit. The God of grace bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

***HYMN**

"Let All Things Now Living"

#881



1 Let all things now liv - ing a song of thanks - giv - ing to
2 God rules all the forc - es: the stars in their cours-es and



God the cre - a - tor tri - um - phant - ly raise,
sun in its or - bit o - be - dient - ly shine;



who fash - ioned and made us, pro - tect - ed and stayed us, who
the hills and the moun - tains, the riv - ers and foun - tains, the



still guides us on to the end of our days.
deeps of the o - cean pro - claim God di - vine.



God's ban - ners are o'er us, God's light goes be -
We too should be voic - ing our love and re -



fore us, a pil - lar of fire shin - ing forth in the night,
joic - ing; with glad ad - o - ra - tion a song let us raise



till shad - ows have van - ished and dark - ness is ban - ished, as
till all things now liv - ing u - nite in thanks - giv - ing: "To



for - ward we trav - el from light in - to light.
God in the high - est, ho - san - na and praise!"

Text: Katherine K. Davis, 1892-1980, alt.
Music: THE ASH GROVE, Welsh folk tune

***DISMISSAL** (*Done from the back of the church*)

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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OUR SAVIOR'S WORSHIP TEAM

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Linda Berg, Organist/Choir Accompanist/Director of Music

Email: linda@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Wendy Amundson, Youth Director 608-518-9593

Email: youthoursaviorswestsalem@gmail.com

Laurie Noelke, Handbell Choir Director/Assistant Worship Musician

Email: laurienoelke@gmail.com

Joey Barnett, Senior Choir Director

BAPTISM: In the waters of baptism, we welcome Cleo Kay, daughter of Boston & Delaney Goodenough. Cleo's sponsors are Elly Goodenough and Connor Brown.

CARD MINISTRY - Please be sure to sign the cards for this week's shut-ins, Vern Romskog and Velma Schmidt. The cards are on the table by the Pre-K/K classroom.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Home Communion
Altar Guild for September

6 p.m.

Riley Sullivan
Judy Gilbert
Phil & Judy Gilbert

8 a.m.

Max Twite
Kyle Twite
Brenda Skittone

10:30 a.m.

Autumn Amundson
Tiffany Janisch
Trudy Drugg

Ilene Pavelko
Wendy Amundson

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP - A time for fellowship and treats between services on Sundays! Please sign up to bring treats or to serve what others have provided.

SCRIP CARDS AVAILABLE

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

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



**Fall Rehearsals have begun
on Wednesday evenings!**

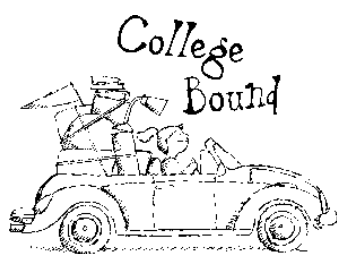
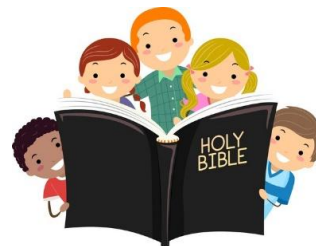
Handbells at 6:00 PM in the Music Room

Choir at 7:30 PM in the balcony

Come and join us!

3rd Grade Bible Workshop
Sunday, September 27
1:30-3:00 PM

Parents and students gather for class.
Students will receive their Bibles in worship on Sunday,
October 11



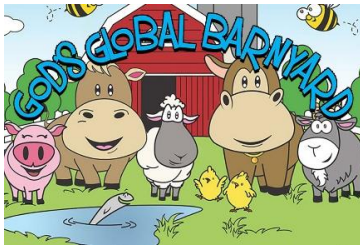
college
connection

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.*

Care and Share Food Pantry ...

is open Saturdays, 10 AM to Noon. The food pantry could use Hamburger Helper, pasta sauces, and SPAM. Money, other non-perishable food items, and personal care items are always welcome. Thank you for being so supportive of the pantry!





Sunday School Offering for 2026-2027

God's Global Barnyard

An animal can make a world of difference for a family in need. Animals provide food to eat, fertilizer to grow crops, and offspring to sell at the market. With our gifts, we can help a family escape the cycle of hunger and poverty for good.

A **cow's** milk, meat, fertilizer, and calves can quickly strengthen a family's financial security. Fresh milk from a **goat** is very nutritious and can be used to make products like yogurt and cheese to sell at the market. Within months after birth, **piglets** grow to weigh over 200 pounds - bringing a big payoff at the market. **Chicks** begin laying eggs at just a few months old, offering nutritious, protein rich meals for families who are hungry. **Honeybees** pollinate plants and boost crop growth - helping the wider community. Soaps and candles can be made from their wax and sold at the local market.

With our offering, we can make a difference in the lives of hungry people. Let's see if we can fill our barnyard this year!

IT'S SCHOOL KIT TIME!

We are collecting school supplies through September for the school kits we assemble and send 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) | |



Our greatest needs are **notebooks and pens**. We are thankful to be well supplied with other items. Our goal is 200 kits this year! A collection box is in the gathering area.

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of children!



Shoe Box Christmas Project ...

This project is starting 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!



7th & 8th Grade Confirmation Students ...
[All parents are invited to join us]

Wednesday, October 7 at 6 PM

Speaker: Heidi Overson, The Amara Rose Foundation

The Amara Rose Foundation (amararosefoundation.org) was founded in 2022 by Randall & Heidi Overson and Jeff Richardson. On January 7, 2022, they lost their daughter, Amara, to fentanyl poisoning. Amara died alone on a cold kitchen floor, miles from home. She was 31.

Amara had struggled with substance abuse, insecurity, and poor mental health for eight years. But fentanyl is what killed her. The foundation was started for a beautiful life lost, but also in honor of all those whose lives have been lost to substance abuse, fentanyl poisoning, and mental illness. They stand on the verse: *"... You meant evil against me, but God made it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."* Genesis 50:20

Confirmation Parents and anyone else with a passion for kids ...



Wednesday, October 14 at 6 PM

Speaker: Al Erickson
Adults Saving Kids (ASK)
(www.adultssavingkids.org)

ASK works to train and equip parents and grandparents with the tools they need to build up the lives of their children. They carry out their mission with a special concern for the human trafficking of young people.

Hungry Jar Offering for September – Lutheran Disaster Response

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) is the ELCA's ministry to accompany disaster survivors, as they work with congregations, synods, and local partners in affected communities. When families are displaced by floodwater, your support helps meet immediate needs such as food, shelter and clean water, and makes recovery assistance possible. When extreme heat creates life-threatening conditions, your generosity helps provide safe and welcoming cooling spaces that support vulnerable neighbors. When wildfires force evacuations and leave devastation behind, your gifts help sustain relief and recovery ministries long after media attention fades. One of the unique strengths of LDR is their commitment to accompany communities for the long haul. They do not simply arrive in the immediate aftermath of a disaster and then move on. They walk alongside affected communities as they rebuild homes, restore stability, and find hope again.



Young Adult/Family... *September Gathering*

Sunday, September 20, @ 4:00 PM
Hosted by Kaytie & Tadd Duescher
(N5027 Oakview Drive, West Salem)



*Please bring a dish to pass to go along with
brats and hot dogs!*

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



Facebook Page - Our Savior's ELCA - West Salem

Instagram Page - oursaviors_ws

YouTube Channel (for livestream and recording of worship) - youtube.com/@techoslc

Check out the September newsletter (www.oursaviorswestsalem.org) to find out more.

GOSPEL MESSAGE
September 20, 2026
Scandalous Grace

Jesus loved to tell strange, unsettling stories to illustrate God's grace. Theologians and biblical scholars have wrestled with the parables of Jesus for centuries, trying to make them make sense. But perhaps the beauty of these strange illustrations is that they refuse to succumb to our need for logic or neat conclusions. They are wild, confusing, and often scandalous—much like God's love for God's people.

This parable is one such story that has the power to offend us with its backward-seeming logic. A landowner who keeps inviting new laborers to join the workforce, paying them the same amount for different amounts of work? To be sure, this is not a commentary on how to run a business or abide by fair labor practices. Instead, it is a reminder of the outrageousness of God's kingdom or reign and the scandal of God's grace.

The kingdom of God functions by its own rules: It is a table where there is always room for more people, and an endless supply of bread and wine. It is a font where all are welcome, where all are invited to splash in the waters of baptism and be named children of God. It is a realm where our rules of space and time no longer apply, as we enter into ancient story and liturgy alongside the saints who have come before us. It is a sanctuary where we find the courage to confess our sins and receive God's extravagant, scandalous forgiveness. It is a community where love and justice supersede force and greed. It is a safe place where the most vulnerable are the most cared for, and generosity abounds so that all have enough. And it is a kingdom where all are invited to participate. Much like how the landowner hired new laborers until the end of the day, it's never too late to be welcomed by God's mercy!

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