

April, 2021



# The Salem Light

Newsletter of the Congregation of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church

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## Pastor's Ponderings

**Philippians 4:8-9** *Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or*



*heard from me or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*

“Think about such things.” Sometimes the challenge to simply, “think about things” has much to do with just having time to just sit and think. Our lives, even with COVID interruptions, are busy ones. Always places to go and things to do. Whatever happened to the “simple life?”

A colleague suggested a book for me to read titled, **Simple Church**, written by Thom Rainer & Eric Geiger. What I found interesting is the challenge to be as the title of this book suggests, becoming and maintaining a simple church.

We continue in the Easter season and we are aware of the great commission given by Jesus spelled out in Matthew's gospel, “Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life [the way Jesus taught], (my words), marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I'll be with you as you do this, day after day, right up to the end of the age.” (taken from the MESSAGE version).

Over the hundreds of years since Jesus walked this earth, is it possible that we have lost sight of the basic mission Jesus sent us on...encouraging and training folks in the way of Jesus?

How can we invite **other people** to grow spiritually in love with the Lord? How can **we** spiritually grow so that what becomes praiseworthy, right, and true moves us to set aside time to think with Jesus, to be with Jesus, and to share this thinking time about Jesus with others?

Since Palm Sunday we have realized just how much we missed worship and being together. Each Sunday, we do grow spiritually, we are nourished by our Lord, and then sent on our way to encourage others to experience the same holy love.

Keeping it simple, means just that: taking time with the Lord to worship on a Sunday, time during the week to grow together in faith, and time putting into practice simple ways of being church as Jesus took time for us to become his church. How can we respond otherwise? Might we think and pray about such things?

Yours in the love of Christ, Pastor Betty Lou+

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### ***Our President's Perspective***

Lynn Cox shares...

*"For the winter is passed.*

*The rain is over and gone.*

*The flowers are springing up.*

*And the time of the singing of the birds has come."*

-Song of Solomon 2:11-12

Dear Salem Families,

Easter Sunday was such a glorious day. It was so good to see everyone between Palm Sunday and Easter services. So many of Salem's friends and families returned as we look forward to getting back to our normal in-house worship. Although things are a little different, just being in God's house and worshipping with everyone brings such a joy to my heart. "Happiness blooms where seeds of Love and Joy are planted". If you have noticed, I am in my flower mode. God Bless and Happy Spring!



P.S. Speaking of planting and seeds, the flower beds around our church need a little loving care. Anyone interested please let me know. What a great family project.

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### ***Altar Guild Schedule***

From Ruth Phoebus...

#### **Communion Set-up/Clean-up:**

April – Ruth Phoebus

May – Linda Brannan

June – Claudette Wilson

July – Carol Temple

#### **Altar Paraments:**

White on Easter Sunday, April 4<sup>th</sup> through May 16<sup>th</sup>

Red on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, Pentecost

White on May 30<sup>th</sup>, the Holy Trinity

Green on June 6<sup>th</sup> thru August 8<sup>th</sup>

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## ***Help Needed; be a part of our Worship***

Sharon Lukens asks:

### **ACOLYTES, USHERS AND LECTORS NEEDED!!**

Please consider being an Acolyte, Usher, or Lector for Salem. We are in desperate need of help for these simple and small jobs. No experience is needed as myself, Pastor, and current helpers are more than willing to train you. These positions are fun and easy and you will get a greater satisfaction of knowing you are a contributor to the church in this small way.

I know firsthand how proud I and my family are to be able to serve my church in this way.



We do not know when our Church will resume fully, but I would like to have a list of people who can help so I can plan accordingly when things get back to normal.

Please contact me via email at [slukens@hotmail.com](mailto:slukens@hotmail.com) or call at (410) 692-5898.

Thank you for considering these very important positions.

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## ***From our Council Secretary***

The latest council meeting was held on Tuesday, April 13. Here is a summary of that meeting from Diane Grove, Council Secretary:

- After seemingly endless months of “Zoom” council meetings, the Parish Council members finally met in person for their April meeting!
- Previous meetings had lengthy discussions on when and how to reopen Salem safely. All of that careful planning led to Salem

successfully opening her doors and welcoming a masked and socially distant congregation for both Palm Sunday and Easter. Welcome back, everyone!

- We will hold in-person services weekly now and in the same manner that has become our “new normal” – temperatures taken, masks on, and family groups kept socially distant during the service. Please know that your council continues to consider each church member’s safety as their top priority. We plan to maintain an in-person worship service each Sunday at 9:00 AM, unless the State of Maryland would order another closure.
- Pastor will also continue to offer an online version of worship each week.

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## ***Mason Dixon Food Bank***

Sarah Keller shared the following:

When considering your donation to Mason-Dixon, I was told they need condiments like mayonnaise, mustard, ketchup etc., they have only 4 bottles of shampoo and they are out of juice. Paper towels and toilet tissue are always needed. Thank you for remembering our neighbors in need!



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## ***Celebrate World Labyrinth Day***

“World Labyrinth Day is an annual event sponsored by The Labyrinth Society as a worldwide action to “walk as one” to create a wave of peaceful energy across the globe” (excerpted from The Labyrinth

Society website). One labyrinth that will participate in World Labyrinth Day, is actually located close to Salem; it is at St. John's Lutheran Church in Parkville (8808 Harford Road). And one of the neatest features of this labyrinth is that **it has direct ties to our congregation at Salem.**

To explain the tie to Salem, allow me to digress briefly. An important requirement for graduation from seminary is a 12-month internship at a congregation. An integral element of this internship requires the intern to design and complete a project, agreed upon by the intern's supervisor. As many of you may know,



our Pastor Betty Lou did her internship at St. John's in Parkville. Her internship project, which

she selected, was the design and construction of a labyrinth. With the assistance of congregational members, family, and friends, the labyrinth was completed summer of 2013. Since its completion, St. John's has maintained and enhanced the labyrinth with a line item in their annual budget, and they have lovingly cared for it. These collective efforts have resulted in a lot of recognition by the Labyrinth Society. The labyrinth will be the site of a World Labyrinth Day celebration on May 1, 2021.

If you would like to experience this labyrinth and participate in this celebration, come to St. John's on Saturday, May 1 at 1:00 PM. Even though this is an outdoor event, COVID protocols of masks and social distancing will be enforced. If you have any questions about the labyrinth or the celebration, take a few moments to talk with Pastor Betty Lou or Glenn. Hope to see you there!

## ***From the Deacon's Desk***

Mark Hoefler

- And the lucky winner isssssssSSSSSS.....Sarah Keller! Yes, during Pastor's congregational greeting time on Sunday, April 11th, Skylar was asked to draw from the container of names that included anyone who had made a donation towards the purchase of the goats. Sarah won Gruff, the stuffed goat that Pastor often conversed with during her children's sermons throughout the Lenten season. I'm certain that Gruff will enjoy his new home with the Keller family.
- No Italian casseroles were prepared in the months of March and April by our members at the request of Our Daily Bread. Don't be alarmed though; it wasn't because they didn't appreciate our cooking. It was actually due to the fact that they didn't have enough storage space for the numerous casseroles that had already been prepared from many caring folks. As a result, we were asked to hold off for two months. What a blessing to have the problem of "too many" prepared casseroles. The Italian casserole preparation will resume again with the next pickup taking place on May 10th at 12 noon. If anyone would like to become a part of this important outreach to feed the hungry in Baltimore City, you'll find the pans and simple recipe for the casserole in the narthex.
- Fortunately, we're starting to experience some light at the end of the "pandemic tunnel" as the number of coronavirus cases



are lessening with the increased vaccine availability and the continued utilization of safe practices of 6' distancing, frequent hand washing and the wearing of face masks in public buildings. As a result, we are beginning to open up to travel opportunities once again and are able to experience the natural wonders within our great country. Please remember that we continue to collect toiletries that you may bring home with you from your resort stays or that you may specifically purchase from local stores for the benefit of the patrons of the Welcome One Homeless Shelter in Belcamp.

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### ***Go for the Goats – Salem's Goat Project***

Mark Hoefler's update:

- Our Lenten Goat Project was quite successful. Our initial goal was to raise enough funds to purchase 20 goats at a cost of \$50 each. Through the generous



participation of our congregational members and a couple of nonmembers, we were able to surpass our initial goal and were able to purchase 13 additional goats. How awesome is that? Our small congregation was able to reach out beyond our Jarrettsville border to the world community through Lutheran World Hunger and provide needy and impoverished families with a gift total of 33 goats. What a blessing it is to serve our Lord in this way.

The success of this Lenten Project was definitely a combined effort. Thank you to those who were financially able to participate in this outreach effort during our 40-day Lenten journey through sacrificial giving.

Your compassionate hearts will surely have a positive impact on many new Christians' lives who have come to know our Lord and Savior. In addition, a special thank you to Lynn



Cox for sharing her artistic talents in the construction of the narthex display for the Lenten Goat Project. Kudos also to Pastor for her entertaining and yet, meaningful way that she made use of Gruff to publicize the outreach project during her online children's sermons. Prayers certainly helped, too, especially during these difficult times of the pandemic, so thanks to all who prayed for a successful outcome for this outreach. All efforts were very much appreciated.

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### ***A Way to Reduce your Tax Obligation\$\$***

Here is a way to potentially reduce your tax obligations and even help Salem in the process, provided by Ned Cockey:



If you are over 70 ½ years old and have to take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from an IRA, you may want to consider making any charitable contributions through a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). A QCD excludes the donated amount from taxable income even if you don't itemize and take the Standard Deduction when filing your tax returns.



A tax advisor can help you determine if both your IRA and charity qualify for QCDs.

This is a link to some more information on QCD's.

<https://www.fidelity.com/building-savings/learn-about-iras/required-minimum-distributions/qcds>

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## **SLCC Happenings**

Cherie Johnson, Director

We continue to learn and have fun at Salem Lutheran Children's Center! Our preschool and daycare classes have been busy learning about Spring and Earth Day this month by planting flowers and learning



how to take care of the earth. The 3's class is busy learning about protecting the earth by recycling and are

having fun with an Earthworm dig. The 4's class is planting carrots to learn about vegetables that grow underground.

We are definitely looking forward to summer here at SLCC! Since we are not able to have our traditional field trips and visitors to the center, we are making every day fun with center wide themes each week. Some of the themes include Wild about Wildlife, Salem Olympics, Down on the Farm, Hooray for the USA, and Passport Around the World. We will have Water Days, cooking, crafts, science experiments and so much more!

Preschool registration for the 2021-2022 school year is also underway at Salem. We currently have openings in the PM three-year-old class, the PM four-year-old class, and the M-F 9:00 am-12:00 pm four-year-old class. Church members do not need to pay

the registration fee so if you are interested in registering for the preschool program or the summer program please contact the office.

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## **We need you!**

The annual DEMD Synod Assembly is coming. Each congregation is to send two voting representatives plus their pastor. This year the assembly is held virtually over Zoom so you can stay at home and participate!! The assembly begins Friday, June 4th at 6:30PM and ends Saturday, June 5th at 12:30PM.



Please contact pastor for information and to be registered by, or before May 1st. Salem will cover the registration fee!

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## **From the Editor**

I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone who has supported this edition of our newsletter by taking the time to provide a contribution, for without your effort there would be no newsletter.

Remember that all congregation members are invited to contribute to the newsletter if you have something to share.

Through these two newsletter editions, I have learned that 150 words is often too few for meaningful articles. So please do not feel constrained to stay within that limit as you provide input to future editions.

Glenn Deuchler

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