



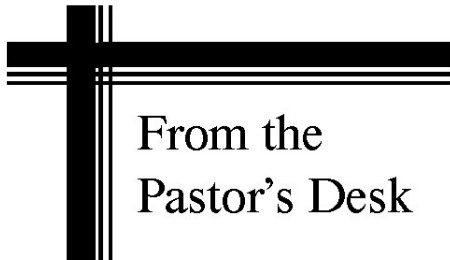
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The Salem *LIFE*

Newsletter of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Sandwich, Illinois

February 6, 2025

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From the Pastor's Desk

Dear friends in Christ,

How often do we say what people want to hear, just to smooth things over? Even if we don't mean it, we may find ourselves smiling and nodding when asked to do something. But then we have to decide what to do next. Do we follow through on a half-hearted commitment, resenting the time it takes, or do we make an excuse why we can't possibly do what we said we would do?

Someone shared a list of lies that Rachel Zupak compiled for her blog, The Work Buzz. While they make me smile, I think that they are revealing about how we think and speak.

The Lie

1. I'd be happy to.
2. My alarm didn't go off.
3. I'm late because of traffic.
4. I understand completely.

5. Everything is under control.
6. I'm sick.
7. This will only take a minute.

The Truth

- That's the last thing I want to do!
I was out late and I didn't hear my alarm.
I'm late because I didn't plan enough time to travel.
I have no idea what you're talking about,
but I don't want to look stupid.
No it isn't!
I'm sick of work and need a day off.
This will be really time-consuming.

It is obvious that what we say is not always the same as what we mean. Life is too short to waste with mixed messages and lies. We will be happier, and those we are with will be happier if we simply say what we mean, and mean what we say. The Bible guides us to speak the simple truth.

"Above all, my beloved, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your "Yes" be yes and your "No" be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation." James 5:12

"But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ." Ephesians 4:15

As we tell the truth, we want to speak the truth in love, so that we don't hurt or reject the person who asks us. But it is perfectly acceptable to say no, if the request doesn't match your priorities. Your priorities don't have to be the same as someone else's priorities. Yet you need to know what they are if you intend to hold them above other choices.

Our first priority as Christians is to follow the great commandment, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and love our neighbor as ourselves. If God calls you to go, you should find a way to go. We live out our faith in Jesus by sharing in the community of the church, as partners in worship, learning and service.

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Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church

Serving Christ!

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Marriage and family are also high commitments. When they fail, it is often because people have consistently put other things ahead of them. Good marriages and happy families don't just happen – they take a real effort to sustain and grow. They are worth time and attention.

Your work is how you provide for your family, and the way that you serve your neighbor day by day. God wants us to do our work well and faithfully, to the best of our ability. Yet work should not be all that we live for, a priority above all other things.

We also take part in community groups and activities, to make this a good, cooperative, and interesting place to live. These can be valuable as ways to draw people together and accomplish common goals. But sometimes their demands can become more than we can deal with.

And all the other things we like to do, our own entertainment and interests have to fit into the mix. They are important, shaping part of who we are. But they are not more important than God's call for our lives.

God gives us everything: our life, our relationships, our possessions, and our Savior, Jesus. What are we prepared to offer to the Lord as a sign of our gratitude? God asks simply for our life and our obedience. If God's saving gifts are of value to us, then we can show our thanks by making God's priorities our own.

We can play games and tell lies to one another, but not to God. The Lord knows very well what our priorities are by what we choose. What priorities do you show forth in your life?

Yours in Christ,

Pastor John

SCRIPTURE READINGS for SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9:

Isaiah 6:1-8[9-13]; Psalm 138; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11

Here I Am. Lord Send Me!



No Diamond Plus Birthdays in February

Prayer List – New Pattern

Starting in March, we will begin a new pattern with our prayer list. Currently, it has many names, and we are not always sure who they are or how long they have been listed. That makes it harder to pray for people as something more than just a name.

You are always welcome to add someone to our prayer list if they need special prayer. Just call Kelly in the office, or give a note. We always ask that you make sure to get their permission before adding their name. Some people would rather be private about their needs.

Please give us your relationship to the person as well. We will list names on the list like this – Mari Eklund, Pastor John’s Mother-in-law. It could also be a friend, neighbor, coworker, or other relative. This gives a context for who it is.

We will include those names on the list for four weeks after they are given. After that they will rotate off. If the person prayed for needs more time for prayer, just let the office know and we will include them for another cycle. If someone has long term needs, you may choose to include them when new challenges arise, or just keep renewing their name.

We certainly care for each person we are given to pray for. Our hope is that this will make our praying more focused and meaningful. Please let us know what you think of this new pattern in the months ahead.



In our church family. . .

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

CURRENTLY— Karen Wesson*, Patrick Halbach.

CONTINUING— Jackie Cline*, Ruth Erickson*, Tom Glover*, Steve Guyer*, Shirley Hines*, Marlene Kee*, Mick Kimmey*, Baby Henry Ryan-Melchor, Marci Bluestone, Jerry Burd, Darlene Comiskey, Julie Cook, Rayden Davis, Shandol Dulin, Bobby E., Mari Eklund, Sally Ferko, Lisa Fisch, Elin Frietsch, Kate Gage, Jo Gehlbach, Mary Gliszczynski, Mike Guzzardo, Mark Hanson, Ava Hawbaker, Walter Ihnatiuk, Pamela Isaacson, Dan Jackson, Steven Johnson, Jacob Kenyon, Tanya Kimmey, Bill McGing, Colleen McMahan, Pastor Steve Mindrup, Paula Mueller, Nick Morgan, Carol Peisker, Joe Petit, Robert Perales, Martha Poggi, Lani Quast, Laurie Jacobson Rappa, Gloria Simpkins, Alphonse Somé, Erin Stiver, Joanne Sumner, Leslie Trettenero, John Wilson, Pearl Undesser, Carol Wilhelm, Tom Wysoglad, Bridget Yaeger.

MILITARY—All people serving in the military, especially: Danny Cassidy, Carson Harris, Brandon Jakubiec, Shawn Jakubiec, Joseph Kimmey, Ross Magee, Garrett O’Dell, Jared Usey, and Kevin Zaleski.

*Indicates Salem member.

Game Night



Game Night is for all ages on Saturday, February 22 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. Join us in the Fellowship Hall for games and Sloppy Joes, chips, and brownies.

Sign up in the narthex. Bring your favorite game and invite friends! See you there!

Trivia Night

Let’s get together and challenge our brains! A Trivia Night is set for Saturday, April 5 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm at Salem’s Fellowship Hall. The Fellowship Committee planned a potluck of appetizers only.



February 4, 2025 Salem Congregational Council Meeting Highlights

The Congregation Council met at Salem on Tuesday, February 4, 2025, starting at about 6:30 p.m. Council members Ron Cunz, Alan Deaton, Walter Farley, Donna Fraley, Bonnie Guyer, Connie Hanson, Durk Hellinga, Sharon Wallis and Pastor John Rothfusz were present. Jacqueline Beverage was absent.

Walter Farley led the devotions. The council voted to accept the minutes of the January 7 Congregation Council meeting, as prepared by Jackie Beverage.

The Minutes of Annual Congregational Meeting were also approved, with a correction to include the second vote on the constitutional amendments.

The Financial reports for December were examined. Dean Lundeen, the new treasurer, reported the following balances as of the meeting.

General Fund: \$15,070.72
Designated Fund: \$29,842.61
Capital Fund: \$39,759.36

Council members heard monthly reports from Pastor John Rothfusz and from council members representing Salem's committees. They reviewed the calendar to highlight events coming up in March and look for conflicts.

We heard a report of the ongoing needs of the Food Pantry, and brainstormed how we might support that ministry. Both food and monetary gifts are welcome and helpful.

The Synod Congregational Resourcing event is coming up on March 22, and any members are welcome to take part in that. This is a great chance to get new ideas and excitement for ministry.

Lenten Soup suppers are scheduled with committees taking the lead. The council voted to designate upcoming offerings. The Lenten Soup Supper offerings will go to the Food Pantry, The Lenten envelopes and loose offerings will go to our Synod Benevolence commitment, and the Easter Sunday offering will go to support the general budget.

The meeting closed with council comments, appreciating our congregation and the mix of leaders on the council this year.

2025

Council Officers and Committee Assignments

President:	Bonnie Guyer
Vice President:	Sharon Wallis
Secretary:	Alan Deaton
Treasurer:	Dean Lundeen*

Christian Education: Bonnie Guyer, Sharon Wallis

Fellowship: Durk Hellinga

Finance: Pastor John Rothfusz

Member Support: Donna Fraley

Mission: Walter Farley

Outreach: Jackie Beverage, Connie Hanson, Sharon Wallis

Property: Ron Cunz, Walter Farley, Bonnie Guyer

Stewardship: Donna Fraley, Sharon Wallis

Worship: Walter Farley, Connie Hanson, Sharon Wallis

Pastor John Rothfusz is a member of all standing committees.

Endowment & Memorial Board:

Lyle Anderson, Alan Deaton, Donna Fraley, Dean Lundeen, and Marisa Medgyesi

*NOTE: Dean Lundeen is serving as Treasurer as a non-council member which is allowable under our constitution.

Annual Congregational Meeting Report

The Salem Lutheran Annual Meeting was held Sunday, January 26th at 10 a.m. After devotions and calling a quorum, we saw a video from the Northern Illinois Synod, including a picture of Salem Lutheran at the installation of Pastor John Rothfusz. We approved the resolutions of thanks and appreciation for so many people who serve faithfully at Salem. The audit report was received, and the Annual Bulletin of Reports was received and accepted.

The proposed budget for 2025 was discussed and adopted, including a minor amendment to correct a few issues noticed in the Budget Review meeting.

The following members of the nominating committee were elected: Nancy Rex, George Webster, and Michele Farley. The voting members for the Synod Assembly were elected as well: Sharon Wallis, Durk Hellinga, and Marilyn Wouda. And Dean Lundeen was elected to the Endowment and Memorial Funds board.

There were two votes for the constitution updates. The first vote was a second required vote to approve the three constitutional amendments first passed in October. These related to terms on the Endowment and Memorial Funds board, allowing a Call Committee to decide by consensus, and changing the quorum to 10 percent of voting members. These passed without objection, meeting the 2/3 majority requirement.

The second vote was for the “housekeeping” amendments, which bring our constitution in line with the ELCA constitution after changes from the 2019 and 2022 churchwide assemblies. These changes were adopted without objection, excluding C10.08. which would have allowed for electronic participation at congregational meetings. A majority vote was required, and these passed.

The meeting was adjourned for a delicious potluck lunch.



Souper Bowl of Caring

Bring your donations to put in the Soup Pot on Sunday, February 9 to be forwarded to World Hunger.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

...to **Mollie Habbe** for sanitizing the nursery.

...to **Steve Guyer** for painting step stools for the bathrooms so our children can reach the sink to wash their hands.

...to **Doug Fraley** and **Durk Hellinga** for facilitating the High School Sunday School class.

...all who have shoveled snowy sidewalks.

...to **Patty Farley** for managing the Blessing Box refills.

...for those who donate food for the Blessing Box.

Blessing Box Donations

There is a box in the narthex under the sign up sheets where food can be left. Suggested items: small jars of peanut butter, Saltines, SpaghettiOs, cereal or oatmeal packets, and toilet paper.

Salem's Women's Retreat

LOMC: Friday, April 25 to Saturday, April 26

Registration is Open! We have reserved a cabin in Freedom Tree Village at LOMC for the evening of Friday, April 25 beginning at 6:00 pm. Please bring appetizers to share Friday evening.

This year will have two leaders. Leigh Kossman will lead us on Friday night. Sharon Wallis will facilitate discussion on Saturday, April 26 after breakfast and lunch, *but first coffee*. We will eat dinner together and depart for home.

Costs will be \$85.00 for lodging and meals for the full time. Those coming only on Saturday will need to cover costs of meals which would be \$42 for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

If you have any questions, please see Sharon Wallis, Kelly Clason or Sandy Martens. A sign-up is in the narthex and advance payment is requested in the office.

Leigh Kossman- Has God ever Called you to something? Are you good at hearing His voice and taking direction?! Can you be Called more than once?!

Salem's very own Leigh-Leigh Kossman, Speaker and Life Coach, has a lot to say about these things! She is delighted to be speaking to her Sisters in Christ on Friday night, April 25th, at the Women's Retreat. Come hear her latest Keynote speech, 'The Joyfilled Heart,' and learn how God's voice can Call each of us to use the gifts we've been given.

Sharon Wallis - This year at Salem's Women's Retreat we will be considering the ELCA's Study Curriculum on Civic Life and Faith. We will be discussing such questions as: How is God's invitation to discipleship lived out in a democracy? How do Christians address controversial civic issues? What are Lutheran views on civic life? What are the objectives of democracy in the United States? What's faith-based living got to do with civic life? How do we go in peace to love and serve the Lord in civic life?

We hope this discussion will help us develop strategies for living our faith within the reality of our polarized world. Come join us as we take up this important study.



YouthWorks

Youth Mission Trip

St. John Lutheran in Mendota is planning a summer youth mission trip to Benton Harbor, Michigan in late July, led by YouthWorks. Pastor Elise will be taking part. They offered to let High School youth from Salem Lutheran share with them in this trip. Two youth from Salem are interested, and will join with them. Pastor John will also go as a chaperone. Salem has a long and meaningful history of sending young people on service trips, and we are excited for this chance. It is also good to find ways to share in ministry with St. John Lutheran in Mendota.



Northern Illinois Food Bank

Volunteers packed water at the Northern IL Food Bank in January. We packed 3000 pounds of water providing 2,500 meals. Salem goes the 4th Tuesday this month which is Tuesday, February 25, 2025. Please register by February 11, 2025 on the clipboard. First time? Call Mickey or Walt Farley for details.



Lunch Bunch

The Lunch Bunch met at Sidetrack'd on Wednesday, January 15 for fellowship and food.

We selected Star 34 as our next meeting place on Wednesday, February 19, 2025. There is a sign-up in the narthex if you plan to come for lunch.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

AJ Parkison has selected his Eagle Scout project. He will create a chess set on the grounds of Dummer School, where he attended as a child. He will complete the installation over Spring Break 2025, weather permitting.

He anticipates needing almost \$2,000 for the project. AJ is accepting donations towards his project that he will start weather permitting. His flyer shows items that could be donated to his project and items he would like to borrow and return.

AJ would love to talk with you about this leadership project. For more information, see the flyer on the bulletin board in hallway.



Quilting Days

Quilting Days are February 10 & 11.

Diaper Closet

February 16 is Diaper Sunday.

Handchimes

Rehearsals start up March 3 at 6:00 pm.

Styrofoam Recycling

Bring your Styrofoam to the Green Machine on March 23.

Christian Education

The Education Hour begins with a Sunday School opening, typically in the sanctuary. Pastor John participates in the opening before teaching the Adult Bible class. The opening will begin at 10:10 am.



A new class has been added for High School youth, led by Doug Fraley and Durk Hellinga.



Recently, Kelsey Mattson led the Intergenerational Sunday School class.

3N1 Makes Blankets

Kim Boczko reports that 3N1 pinned and tied 4 blankets for the homeless. The youth used flannels and print material that are not acceptable for quilts sent overseas. They also cut squares for more quilts. Cheryl Carls shared her quilting expertise with the youth.



LENTEN MIDWEEK SCHEDULE

Wednesday, March 5

Ash Wednesday Services

1:00 pm and 7:00 pm

(No Soup Supper on Ash Wednesday)

6:00 pm Lenten Soup Supper

7:00 pm Lenten Midweek Worship

on these following dates:

Wednesday, March 12

Wednesday, March 19

Wednesday, March 26

Wednesday, April 2

Wednesday, April 9

Palm Sunday 9:00 am Worship

Sunday, April 13

Easter Sunday 9:00 am Worship

Sunday, April 20

Salem Lutheran Church was highlighted in the Northern IL Food Bank newsletter:



Salem Lutheran Church in Sandwich, Illinois first organized a team to volunteer with Northern Illinois Food Bank in April of 2015. Since that time, this team has completed almost 10 years of monthly volunteer shifts, only missing one shift due to a snowstorm and a few months during Covid. Five of the original team members still volunteer each month!

How much can be accomplished by one dedicated team? In 10 years, they have....

Logged 4,475 volunteer hours

Packed 290.35 tons of nutritious food

Provided 468,479 meals to our neighbors in Northern Illinois!

One of the things we appreciate about the Salem Lutheran team is how they greet every project with enthusiasm. The disposition of this group of like-minded individuals is just as sunny as the bright yellow shirts they wear each time they volunteer! Thank you for being such wonderful neighbors!



“The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention.” — Oscar Wilde

Salem Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 105

Sandwich, IL 60548

Happening this week...

Sunday, February 9

9:00 am Worship
10:00 am Coffee Fellowship
10:10 am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study
Souper Bowl of Caring

Monday, February 10

9 am-noon Quilting
5:00 pm Praise Team

Tues, February 11

9 am-noon Quilting
6:00 pm Outreach Committee

Wed, February 12

10:00 am Methuselah Coffee Group
6:30 pm Confirmation @St.John's Lutheran Church

Thurs, February 13

8:30 -10:30 am Our Sharing Pantry Distribution
7:00 pm Salem Choir
7:00 pm AA

Fri, February 14

7:30 pm AA

Sunday, February 16

9:00 am Worship
10:00 am Coffee Fellowship
10:10 am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study