



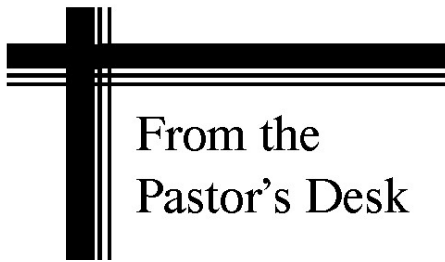
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The Salem *LIFE*

Newsletter of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Sandwich, Illinois

July 3, 2025

VOL. 52, NO. 7



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Faith,

"We ask your blessing, O Lord, upon us, and upon these your gifts. Amen"

"Let us give thanks to the Lord for he is good, and his mercy endures forever. Amen"

These were the prayers we prayed in my family every lunch and supper when we sat down to eat together. We said the first prayer before we began the meal, and the second prayer as we finished, before anyone was allowed to leave. These were simple prayers, which only took a moment, yet they set the tone for our time together. Each meal was a sacred time, and our food was a gift from God. We never forgot to eat, so we could be sure that we would always remember to pray, to spend at least those few moments each day in thanks to our God.

The Christian life is shaped by sacred moments such as these. It is in these times set aside for God that we define who we are and what we are here for. Each Christian has different ways to make their faith relationship real and present in their life. There is no single pattern that everyone has to follow, but every Christian has ways that they remind themselves of their relationship to God, and times that they renew those ties.

One event that is essential for people of faith is worship with the people of God. This is the single most important time of the week when God forms us as a potter forms the clay. None of us can be Christians on our own, and none of us will live by God's will unless we take these times to intentionally shape our lives. Worship is a defining moment, as the people of God come together to remember once again who we are, and what we are here for.

We remember the bad old days of the pandemic, when we had to break that pattern of gathering together. It simply was not safe to sit side by side and sing our hearts out in church. Thankfully the vaccines came, and we do feel safe to gather and sit side by side again. People can also have busy times when they fall away from worship, and summer travels that make us break patterns.

When we do something several times in a row, it becomes a habit, for good or bad. Coming to church is a good habit, like the habit of saying those mealtime prayers. It sets the tone for the week, and draws us together in community with God's people. It focuses our hearts on God's call for our lives and helps us see the needs of our neighbor.

For any number of reasons, many people have broken that good habit of worship. They got used to doing other things, and used to not being with others for worship. It does take a real effort to set aside the worship time, to get yourself ready, and to walk through those doors once again. If you haven't been coming for a while, you have to break one habit to start a new one. You need to do it this week, and the next week, until it feels normal again.

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Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church

Serving Christ!

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Web site: wearesalemlutheran.org

Pastor

Reverend John Rothfusz
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Administrative Assistant
Financial Secretary, Etc.
Bookkeeper
Traditional Worship Coordinator
Director of Contemporary Worship
Organist/Pianist
Organist/Pianist
Maintenance

Staff

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Gloria Gilbertson	
Connie Hanson	
Nancy Hayes	

Staff Office Hours: Tues.—Thurs., 9 am—2 pm; Fri, 9 am-12 noon

Happening this week...

Sunday, July 6 Sundaes on Sunday-All are welcome!

9:00 am Worship

10:00 am Coffee Fellowship with Sundaes

10:30 am Adult Bible Study

Monday, July 7

5:00 pm Praise Team

6:00 pm Handchimes

Tuesday, July 8

6:00 pm Outreach Committee

Wednesday, July 9

10:00 am Methuselah Coffee Group

11:30 am Lunch Bunch

Thursday, July 10

8:30 -10:30 am Our Sharing Pantry Distribution

7:00 pm Salem Choir

7:00 pm AA

Friday, July 11

7:30 pm AA

Sunday, July 13

9:00 am Worship

10:00 am Coffee Fellowship

10:10 am Adult Bible Study



SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR:

SUNDAY, JULY 6: Isaiah 66:10-14; Psalm 66:1-9;
Galatians 6:1-16; Luke 10:1-11, 16-20.

SUNDAY, JULY 13: Deuteronomy 30:9-14;
Psalm 25:1-10; Colossians 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37

In Our Church Family....

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

⇒ Paul Kulbartz*

⇒ Laura Caupert*

⇒ Eileen Negley*

⇒ Stan Benson*

⇒ Family & friends of Betty Scofield*1/25/26-6/26-25

⇒ Family & friends of Jeff Wilhelm*6/20/59-6/19/25

⇒ Missi Lewis (*neighbor of Todd Claxton*)

⇒ Marilyn Long (*neighbor of Todd Claxton*)

⇒ Galen Moody (*nephew of Dori & Dean Burau*)

⇒ Andy Gavel (*friend of Leigh Kossman,*

who is serving in the military)

⇒ Mari Eklund (*Mother-in-Law of Pastor John*)



***Indicates Salem member**



JULY "DIAMOND PLUS" BIRTHDAYS

7/6 Debbie Haag

7/8 Mick Kimmey

7/25 Leonard Johnson

Many people can worry, "What will they think when I come after being away so long?" That one is easy to answer. When someone comes after being away, we rejoice to see them, and can't wait to catch up with what has been happening. Jesus always welcomes those who have strayed. We care about you and are eager to see you. You belong with our Salem Family in this place.

We each need those structured patterns of life, to give meaning and purpose to all that we do. Please do challenge yourself to establish and maintain regular patterns of worship in every season. If you ever wonder: you are wanted, you are missed, you will be welcomed.

In the chaos of our lives, the patterns that we keep define who we are. Let us make sure that we maintain the patterns of closeness to our Lord, who always has time to keep close to us.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor John Rothfusz



July 1, 2025 Salem Congregation Council Meeting Highlights

The Congregation Council met at Salem on Tuesday, July 1, 2025, starting at 6:27 p.m. Council members Jacqueline Beverage, Ron Cunz, Alan Deaton, Walter Farley, Donna Fraley, Bonnie Guyer, Connie Hanson, Durk Hellinga, Sharon Wallis and Pastor John Rothfusz were present.

Ron Cunz led the devotion about our Good Shepherd, Jesus, who searches and finds lost sheep. God's love pursues us and brings us back.

The council voted to accept the minutes of the June 3 Congregation Council meeting, as prepared by Alan Deaton.

The Financial reports for May were examined. These are the following balances as of the meeting.

General Fund:	\$9,372.48	Loan Balance \$403,122.32
Designated Fund:	\$39,236.96	
Capital Fund:	\$33,872.53	

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 August and look for conflicts.

The Christian Education Committee is planning a Baked Goods Raffle for Rally Sunday once again.

The Outreach Committee will assemble the float and join in the Freedom Days parade.

The Property Committee reported that the boiler was repaired and the downspouts were rerouted.

The Worship team reported that we are considering a Thursday Music night, with Praise Team at 5, Chimes at 6, and Salem Choir at 7.

The Endowment/Memorial Committee reported receiving several new memorials, including one for \$2500 for Sharon Foster.

The group heard council comments from each member.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer at 7:01 p.m.



Thursday Music Night?

In Salem's several music groups, we have been having a conversation about whether we should move to a single music night on Thursday. We could keep meeting at the same times, with the Praise team at 5, the Chimes at 6, and the Salem Choir at 7. This might help several people who currently travel both Monday and Thursday. We can also hope that people might choose to share in more groups if they are there anyway, strengthening all of them.

Most responses to this idea have been positive. We haven't made any final decision yet, but we would probably start this pattern in the fall. A few committees might need to shift times as well, if members are busy on Thursday. Please let Pastor John or the worship team know if you have thoughts on this.

Synod Assembly Highlights

Pastor John Rothfusz, Sharon Wallis, Durk Hellinga and Marilyn Wouda attended the Synod Assembly on June 13-14 at Augustana College, Rock Island. They represented Salem Lutheran church and served as voting members.

Durk Hellinga was elected to the Synod Outreach Committee.

Several resolutions were considered and passed by the assembly. These were: R-1: Resolution for National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools; R-2: Northern Illinois Synod to Be a Reconciling in Christ Synod.

In the coming weeks we will have a short forum with the voting members to discuss the Synod Assembly and the actions taken. You are welcome to come to learn and discuss the event with us.



Tracking Church Keys

The office is trying to clear up our records of who has church keys. If you have a church key, please bring it by the church office so that we can check the number and see if our records are correct. If you have a key and no longer need it you can also return it. We appreciate your help in correcting our records and helping keep our building secure.



Youth Mission Trip to Benton Harbor, MI

St. John Lutheran in Mendota is leading a summer youth mission trip to Benton Harbor, Michigan July 20-25, led by YouthWorks. AJ Parkison and Wyatt Farley from Salem are taking part with them. Pastors John and Elise will go as leaders. 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.

2025 SYNOD ASSEMBLY HIGHLIGHTS

"Each of you has a call and gifts for living Jesus' work in the world. And you are given opportunities every day to live that out, to be the body of Jesus to someone else and to grow as a disciple. Because you, Beloved Child of God, have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. God is with you in the questions."
- Bishop Stacie Fidler



ACTIONS TAKEN

- Blessed new synod paraments, thanks to the 38 congregations who pieced together quilt blocks
- Heard from Deacon Jessica Noonan from LEAD Connects about learning from our neighbors
- Passed the Fiscal Year 2027 Northern Illinois Synod Budget
- Passed the 2026 Rostered Minister Compensation Guidelines
- Elected several members to serve on Synod Council and synod committees
- Heard from Bishop Fidler about discovering our why
- Heard from Ms. Becca Payne and Mrs. Rahel Mwitula Williams from the ELCA
- Blessed those who will be voting members at the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly
- Celebrated our Rostered Minister ordination anniversaries and remembered our Rostered Ministers who died in the last year

RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were passed by the assembly:

- **R-1: Resolution for National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding School**
- **R-2: Northern Illinois Synod to Be a Reconciling in Christ Synod**

ELECTIONS

Synod Council

Trace Gallagher, Ms. Janice Forrest, Mr. Bill Wescott, The Rev. Shellie Knight, The Rev. Rob James

Congregational Life Committee

Mrs. Somar Bryson, Deacon Laura Gorton, The Rev. Tom Redig

Global Missions Committee

The Rev. Amy Michelson, The Rev. Ron Larson

Ministry Support Committee

Ms. Susan King, The Rev. Dr. Sharon Rogers

Outreach Committee

Ms. Cortney Breeden, Mr. Don Kinney, Mr. Dirk Hellinga, The Rev. Anthony Windau

Social Ministry Committee

Mrs. Kim Halper, The Rev. Frank Langholf

Committee on Discipline

Ms. Marcia Clausen, Mr. Shawn Wolfe, The Rev. Elise Rothfusz, The Rev. Joel VanderWal

Consultation Committee

Ms. Bev Lindsay, Mr. Ray Bergles, The Rev. Jill Flynn, The Rev. Bill Callister,



Growing Disciples
Northern Illinois Synod 2025

Summer Happenings



Vacation Bible School at

St. John's Lutheran Church, Somonauk

Monday, July 21 - Thurs July 24 (4 days)

"Camp Chaos VBS focuses on 4 or 5 of the Gospels' most chaotic stories. The VBS kids will learn how Jesus is our peace in a chaotic world."

Register by July 11, please.

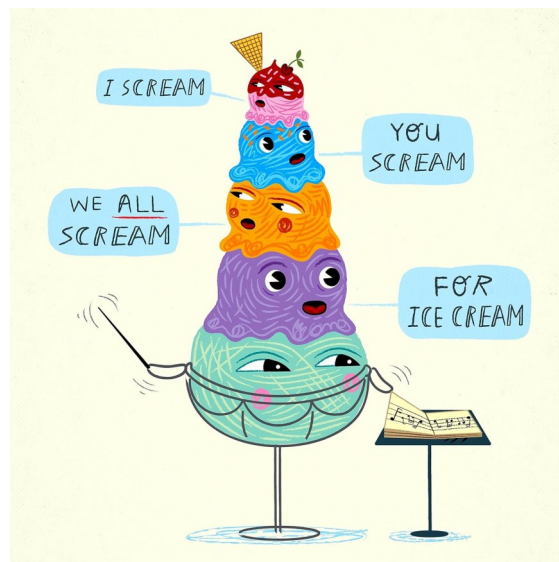
Registration forms are in the coffee area.

Please return them to Salem's office.

Sundaes on Sunday

♦ July 6

♦ August 10



hosted by the
Worship Committee



Main Street Reconstruction Project

Be aware that your regular path to and/or from Salem may not be available. Construction has started and there are new traffic patterns on Main Street.

Freedom Days Parade

SATURDAY, JULY 5 10:00 AM

- * Join us walking alongside the float - Find us in the Sandwich Fairgrounds at 9:30.
- * Watch the parade along the new route
- * Details found on Sandwich Park District website: www.sandwichparkdistrict.org.

Visit the Prayer Garden

A gem at Salem is the Prayer Garden near the circle drive & vestibule. Come visit and sit in quiet conversation with our Lord.



Calling all puzzlers!

We have a fresh batch of shareable jigsaw puzzles for adults, kids and even toddlers. Check them out in the coffee hour area!





Food Bank volunteers packed onions in June. We packed 4,540 pounds of onions, (908 bags!) providing 3,783 meals. Those who have already signed up will be packing food on July 15. Upcoming dates are Tuesday, August 19 and September 16. Pictured L-R front row: Wyatt, Walt, Mickey, Ruth, Ron, Lisa; 2nd row: Jan, Cheryl, Pam, Sharon, 3rd row: Ernie, Sterling, Dale, Jackie, Evan, Sami & Bonnie.

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch at the Beaver Den Tavern & Grill Co in Paw Paw on June 11. Next we travel to Ottawa to enjoy Mexican food at Fondita Mexican Grill on July 9. The address is 351 W Stevenson Rd, Ottawa. Meet at Salem at 10:45 to car pool.

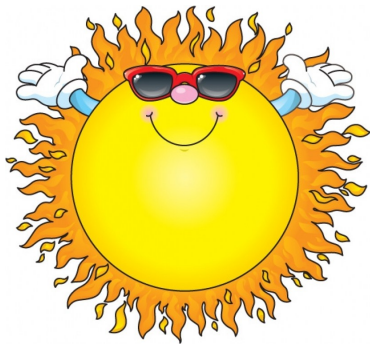


Pictured L-R (front row) is Bonnie, Joanne, Sharon; 2nd row: Nancy Rex, Sandy, Kelly, Libby, Ruth, Jan, Pastor John, and Lisa. Back row: Durk, Marilyn, and Dale.



Pentecost Sunday
The dove made an appearance flying high above our heads while the Salem Choir led singing and processed to their seats.

Salem Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 105
Sandwich, IL 60548



Summer Schedule from the Christian Education Committee

There are two more monthly activities scheduled for youth and anyone who would like to join in on the fun. Please save the dates for the following Sundays:

July 20 Hayes Farm Visit

August 10 Water Games



July 13: Diaper Closet

July 7 & 8 Quilt Days*

July 20-25 Mission Trip

July 21-25 VBS

*July calendar has
incorrect days.