



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

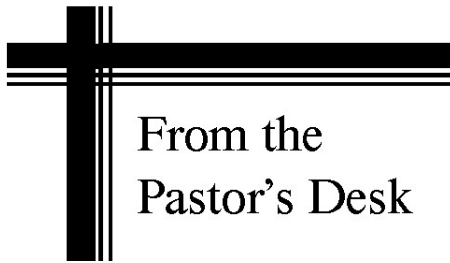
God's work. Our hands.

The Salem *LIFE*

Newsletter of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Sandwich, Illinois

March 6, 2025

VOL. 52, NO. 3



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

At the church in Tyler, Minnesota where Pastor Elise served her internship and where we were married, a large, intricate model of a sailing ship hangs from the ceiling. It is a church with a strong Danish ethnic identity, and so on one level it is a reminder of their

journey from Denmark to their new home in America. But at a much deeper level, it is a statement of faith, a reminder that we are all on a journey through this life, heading toward our final home in heaven with the Lord.

Many churches have been constructed with this image in mind. The technical word for our worship space is the *nave*, which has the same root as navy and means "ship." And with a little imagination, we can easily see the arched ceiling as the ribs of a ship, placed upside down on land. It is a reminder that we don't look at this world as our final home, but as a part of our long journey. We may face storms or smooth sailing, but we never stay in one place. We don't get too comfortable with this world or its ways, because our citizenship is with God, in the kingdom of heaven.

The season of Lent reminds us once again that we are on a journey. We walk with Jesus on his journey to the cross and death, and hope for the resurrection to come. The theme for our Lenten Wednesdays is *Hungering for God's Kingdom*, yearning for the better way that God has for our lives and our world. We take this time to consider how we are faring in our lifelong journey through this life. Are we following in the narrow way that Jesus calls us to, or have we strayed down the wide and easy path that leads to destruction?

The main biblical images of journeying come from the forty years that the Israelites wandered with Moses in the wilderness after God delivered them from their slavery in Egypt. Through those long years they yearned for the promised land of Canaan, that land of milk and honey on the other side of the Jordan River. They finally arrived, settling into that land, but that image remains powerful for the people of God. We too look forward to the day when we will cross the Jordan to the other side, to the promised land of the Lord in heaven. Many of our favorite old hymns sing out our yearning for the end of our journey, when God will finally bring us home. It is easy to get so involved in the things of this world that we forget that there is something more. We are on a journey following the way of Jesus, and heaven is our home. May Jesus come quickly, and hasten the day when we will all be united there with him!



Yours in Christ,

Pastor John Rothfusz

Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church

Serving Christ!

1022 North Main Street—PO Box 105—Sandwich, IL 60548

Phone: 815-786-9308

Email: Salemilc@comcast.net

Web site: wearesalemlutheran.org

Pastor

Reverend John Rothfus
Phone: 779-901-0803
pastorjohnrothfus@gmail.com

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

Staff

Kelly Clason	salemilc@comcast.net
Gina Carlson	salem-gina@comcast.net
Karen Wesson	salem-karen@comcast.net
Nancy Rex	salem-rex@comcast.net
Libby Welsch	salem-libby@comcast.net
Gloria Gilbertson	
Connie Hanson	
Nancy Hayes	

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

Happening this week...

Sunday, March 9

- 9:00 am Worship
- 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship
- 10:15 am Fellowship Committee
- 5:00 pm 3N1 at St. John's

Monday, March 10

- 9:00 am-noon Quilting
- 5:00 pm Praise Team
- 6:00 pm Handchimes

Tuesday, March 11

- 9:00 am-noon Quilting
- 6:00 pm Outreach Committee

Wednesday, March 12

- 9:00 am Lenten Breakfast Series at the Federated Church—*All are Welcome!*
- 6:00 pm Soup Supper hosted by Fellowship Committee
- 7:00 pm Lenten Midweek Service

Thursday, March 13

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

Friday, March 14

- 7:30 pm AA

Sunday, March 16

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

In Our Church Family.....

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

- ⇒ John Ballas* (*son of Holly Ballas*)
- ⇒ Karen Wesson*
- ⇒ Mari Eklund (*Mother-in-Law of Pastor John*)



***Indicates Salem member**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

for

SUNDAY, MARCH 9:

Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16;
Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

MARCH "DIAMOND PLUS" BIRTHDAYS



3/6	Doug Fraley
3/13	Dale White
3/16	Irene Yingling
3/23	Darwin Classon
3/30	Laura Caupert
3/31	Dean Burau



March 4, 2025 Salem Congregational Council Meeting Highlights

The Congregation Council met at Salem on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, starting at 6:30 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.

Bonnie Guyer led the devotions, talking about Shrove Tuesday and the purpose of Lent.

The council voted to accept the minutes of the February 4 Congregation Council meeting, as prepared by Alan Deaton.

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

General Fund:	\$12,059.84
Designated Fund:	\$32,455.91
Capital Fund:	\$39,329.03

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 April and look for conflicts.

The Council received a thank you from Our Sharing Pantry, for timely gifts. Gifts from Salem Lutheran kept the doors open and the shelves full at a difficult time.

The Property team is planning for spring. There will be a signup sheet inviting people to claim areas in the yard, flower boxes, and garden plot. We need volunteers to claim and care for these areas.

Bonnie shared thank you notes from Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response.

The group heard council comments from each member, and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

SIGN COMMITTEE UPDATE

Alan Deaton has been leading a committee of Lyle Anderson, Kelly Clason, Bonnie Guyer, Scott Kossman, Dean Lundeen, Pam Pescitelli, Pastor John Rothfusz, and Laverne Mattson. We have talked with sign companies and area churches, have taken a lot of pictures of area signs, and discussed signage for the parking lot side of the church.

You may be aware that the City of Sandwich will be reconstructing Main Street like they did to Latham Street last summer. Although construction on a new sign will not start until after the Main Street construction completes, the Salem Sign Committee is continuing to discern and plan so that we are ready to start construction as soon as possible. The committee has decided unanimously to recommend against a digital sign and to start investigating non-digital options. Here is why:

- The additional cost of a digital panel: >\$20,000; (or >\$160 per month) amortized over the anticipated 10-year lifespan of a digital sign, is not warranted for these reasons:
 - ◇ We do not anticipate the need for rotating messages or frequent message changes.
 - ◇ There are numerous other lower cost options that would resolve the mechanical challenges of our current sign.
 - ◇ We do not believe a digital sign will bring in more members.
 - ◇ The money we save on a lower cost option could be better used on other means of bringing new members in (digital footprint, music program...) and other directions that more effectively support our mission of spreading Christ's word.

Also, the Sign Committee decided to proceed with a sign for the back of the church without delay.



What is Lent?

It is forty days of stripping down
To the living essentials;
It is forty days of facing truth
About one's self-indulgent evasions;
It is forty days of fellowshiping
With Christ in the desert;
It is forty days of rejoicing
in God's mercy and forgiveness.

Practices of our Lenten Journey

The three traditional practices of Lent are fasting, prayer, and almsgiving (giving to the poor). We offer the opportunity to engage in all of them each Wednesday evening as we gather at 6 p.m. for a simple soup supper (fasting), sing the lovely Holden Evening Prayer at 7 p.m. (prayer), and gather in offerings for ministries to help the poor (almsgiving).

I know your life is very busy. Our lives fill up quickly with the work and tasks of daily life. But I ask you very seriously to set aside time each Wednesday evening of Lent, bring your family, and gather with your brothers and sisters in Christ for this fast, prayer, and almsgiving. It will make a difference in your life, in our church life, and in the life of the world.

Would you please join us? You will honor us with your presence, and strengthen us as together we pray, fast, and give.

Lent Schedule

Wednesdays in Lent – March 5, 12, 19, 26, April 2, 9

**9 a.m. Community Lenten Breakfast service at
the Federated Church**

6 p.m. Soup Supper in the Fellowship Hall

7 p.m. Lenten Worship - Holden Evening Prayer

**LENTEN
BREAKFAST
SERIES 2025**

**CONVERSATIONS
WITH THE SAVIOR**

A LENTEN JOURNEY
INTO PRAYER

9AM
WEDNESDAYS
MARCH 5 -
APRIL 9

FELLOWSHIP, REFRESHMENTS, SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

HOSTED AT
THE FEDERATED
CHURCH OF SANDWICH

403 N MAIN ST
SANDWICH, IL

A COLLABORATION OF THE
SANDWICH/SOMONAUK MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION

Lenten Project 2025

Salem is collecting Personal Care Kits throughout March and April for Lutheran World Relief. Complete kits would be preferred, but all donations are appreciated. Please Note: Light weight, dark towels are preferred since they are easier for recipients to dry.

PERSONAL CARE KITS

Include the following items in each Personal Care Kit:



x1

One light-weight bath-size towel (between 20"×40" & 52"×27"), dark color recommended



x2

Two bath-size bars (4 to 5 oz.) of soap, any brand, in original wrapping



x1

One adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging*



x1

One sturdy comb, remove packaging



x1

One metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging

Thank you to the Christian Education committee for the Mardi Gras Party on Sunday. With



Libby Welsch's leadership, the children made Mardi Gras masks. The children hid the Alleluias, marched around singing in worship and downstairs, and we enjoyed King Cake, wearing beads, playing games, and jazz music!



Worship Tech Team

Would you like to be a part of helping us make some advances with our worship tech?

You can join our tech team as we work on these projects. We also need people to help manage our Audio and Visuals each week for worship. This is not too complicated, but will help those who worship on site and from a distance share a good experience with us.

Please talk to Pastor John if you would like to help us with these roles.



Nearly \$430 was collected for World Hunger on our Souper Bowl of Caring Day. A big thank you for your generosity!

National Quilting Day

March 15, 2025

Thank you to our quilters for spending at least two days per month preparing quilts to share with Lutheran World Relief.

Salem WiFi is Working

The Salem Tech Team has been working on several projects to improve what we can do at the church. We now have WiFi connections and internet through the church. The Salem Guest login code is listed in the Hall Conference room, the basement Fellowship Hall, and the Sanctuary. We also upgraded our internet speed so that it is fast enough for most uses.

You are welcome to log into this Salem Wifi Guest network at church. We hope that it will be a help as we do our worship and work together.

Worship Video on Website

We are also completing a project to record our worship services and share them online. We will post them each week on the church website, www.wearesalemlutheran.org. Click on the worship tab, and you should see a player with the worship service listed by the date.

These videos of our worship are hosted at www.vimeo.com/salemsandwich. You can also go to that site, and see all of the Salem Worship Videos that we host and store there. If for some reason it isn't showing up on the website, it might be there.

We have several hopes for this new venture. We hope that Salem members who are travelling or homebound will be able to share with us in worship from a distance. You may be able to help some of our elders figure out how to find and share in these worship videos from their laptop or screen. We also know that many people check out a new church online before visiting. We hope that it will be welcoming when they see how much fun we have together. We are still working out some of the bugs in bringing this to the Salem Website, but it is time to share the good news, and invite everyone to share with us even from a distance.

Lutheran Identity/Salem New Member Class

Are you interested in becoming a member of Salem Lutheran? Or are you a member, but would like to know more about the faith that we share?

If there is an interest, Pastor John will lead a class to go over some basics about our Lutheran faith and who we are as God's church. Please let Pastor John know if you are interested in taking part.





Northern Illinois Food Bank



Volunteers packed apples in February. We packed 7000 pounds of apples, providing 5,833 meals!

Salem goes Tuesday, March 25, 2025 which is during Spring Break for surrounding schools. Please register by March 11, 2025 on the clipboard.



Lunch Bunch

The Lunch Bunch met at Star34 on Wednesday, February 19 for fellowship and food.

Lunch Bunch will not meet in March due to Lenten invitations for Wednesday breakfast and soup suppers. We selected Yorkville Cafe as our next meeting place on Wednesday, April 16, 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 March 10 & 11.

Diaper Closet

March 16 is Diaper Sunday.

Handchimes

Rehearsals started up March 3 at 6:00 pm.

Styrofoam Recycling

Bring your clean Styrofoam to the Green Machine on March 23.

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.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Thank you to **Bonnie Guyer** and **Libby Welsch** for cleaning and organizing the Christian Education Supply Room.

Tree Removal and Cleanup

We appreciate the hard work of **Fred Hayes, Durk Hellinga, and Dean Lundeen** who removed two large trees from the lot across the street. One was a dead poplar, and the other a dying spruce. It takes a lot of work to manage our beautiful grounds. Thank you for all that you do for God's church!

Spring is Coming – Yard Projects

With Springtime around the corner, we need to plan for our garden, flower beds, and yard. Would you like to help with an area around the church, or with the flower garden across the road? We have a beautiful and eye-catching spot to share with our community, and it takes many hands to make it happen. Please talk to Pastor John, Bonnie, or the property team if you are interested.



Yard Clean-up Duty

I am not much of a gardener, but I can pick up sticks. Can you join me or could your family take responsibility for picking up sticks after a windy day so the yard is ready for mowing? Call the office at 815.786.9308 or send an email to SalemLC@comcast.net to be added to the list for yard clean-up duty.

Kelly Clason



Salem Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 105

Sandwich, IL 60548