



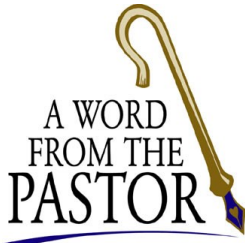
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The Salem Life

Newsletter of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Sandwich, Illinois

September 6, 2026

VOL. 53, NO. 9



Dear Friends in Christ,

“¹⁵If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.” Matthew 18:15

This is from our Gospel reading for next Sunday. It gives some essential advice on how we are to live together as God's people in the church. We have to talk to one another when we feel hurt or pushed aside, and work things out together. Otherwise things never get any better.

Matthew 18 is a call for reconciliation and peace-making in the church. If your brother or sister sins against you in some way, your call and responsibility is to go directly to them and tell them gently how their actions affected you. When we have a break in a relationship, intentional or not, it is important to clear the air, and make sure that both people involved understand that there is an issue.

It can be very difficult to live this out. But the alternatives are far worse. If we don't talk to the other person directly, we might sit and stew in our anger, fuming, while they go blissfully on, perhaps not even aware of our hurt. Or if we talk about it to someone else about it instead, we are drawing them into the hurt, magnifying its power and impact, without acting to heal it. There is good reason that Jesus commands us to speak directly to one another if we have a conflict or disagreement.

How should we live this out? What if all members and friends of Salem Lutheran made a point to follow this “Matthew 18:15 rule?” What if we agreed to always go directly to the person who hurt us, and let them know? They might well have been thoughtless or spoken without realizing how it would affect us. And what if we expected others to come to us and tell us how we have messed up, so that we can receive it with a humble spirit, and seek forgiveness where we have done harm?

It really does not help to “triangle” someone else into the conflict by talking to a third person about it. It may lessen your own anxiety by passing some on to them, but it does not work things out with the first person. Jesus calls us to go directly to someone who has upset us, and tell them about it. If someone comes to us to complain about a third person, we should ask, “Have you talked to them?” We can help each other develop good habits of speaking directly to the people and issues that trouble us.

I recognize that many of us find this hard to do. Some of us have been taught not to raise a fuss, not to confront people directly if they hurt us. But Jesus calls us to speak the truth in love. He challenges us to be reconciled to one another and live at peace, which takes hard work. It is not fun to go with hurts or anger to our brother or sister, and it is not fun to find that we are the ones who have hurt someone else. But when we clear the air in love, we have the chance to put aside our division, and reclaim our bond of love in Christ. We each have the chance to confess our sin and brokenness and find a new and restored life together.

Conflict and disagreement are a normal part of life. They are not bad or wrong in the church, because we all bring different interests and viewpoints. But how we deal with conflict makes all the difference. If we will each dare to answer Jesus' call and speak directly to one another when we have a disagreement, it will go a long way toward restoring and maintaining the peace of God among us.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor John Rothfus



Happening this week...

Sunday, September 6

- 9:00 am Worship/Kids Church
- 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship
- 10:15 am Adult Bible Study

Monday, September 7 LABOR DAY

Tuesday, September 8

- 5:30 pm Outreach Committee
- 6:30 pm Finance Committee

Wednesday, September 9

No Methuselah Coffee Group

Thursday, September 10

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

Friday, September 11

7:30 pm AA

Sunday, September 13

- 8:30 am Worship at Fair
- 10:30 am Worship at Salem

In Our Church Family.....

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

- ⇒ Jerry Davis*
- ⇒ McLaughlin Family (*teacher at Ottawa High School*)
- ⇒ Doug Fraley*
- ⇒ Sarah Ellis*
- ⇒ Stan Benson*



***Indicates Salem member**

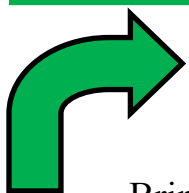


Pastor John Rothfusz presided over the wedding of Jason VanPelt and Holly Michael at Salem Lutheran Church on August 8.

Tyler Houser married Jodie Penman on August 14 at The Mora Farm in Waterman.

May God continue to provide blessings in their lives today and always. †

SEPTEMBER "DIAMOND PLUS" BIRTHDAYS



Sunday, September 27

Styrofoam Recycling Day

Bring clean Styrofoam to Alan's Green Machine.



- 9/4 Lyle Anderson
- 9/13 Jerry Davis
- 9/20 Ruth Erickson
- 9/24 Patty Farley
- 9/29 Kent Wesson

Congregational Meeting Date Set

The Nominating Committee has begun its work, praying and considering who God wants to have us call forth as leaders for the ministry of Salem Lutheran. Please pray with them that God will raise up the right people to energize and strengthen our ministry. If you are called to serve among us, we pray that you will have an open heart to respond joyfully. New and/or returning Council Members will be elected at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, October 18 at 10:00 am.

Sandwich Fair Worship

During the Sandwich Fair, Community Worship will be at the Ag Land Stage on Sunday, September 13 at 8:30 a.m. Pastor Selena Blackwell from St. John's Lutheran in Somonauk will preach and area pastors will share in that. Worship at Salem Lutheran will be at 10:30 a.m. that day. It is good to make time for worship whatever may be happening.



September 1, 2026 Salem Congregation Council Meeting Highlights

The Congregation Council met at Salem on Tuesday, September 1, 2026, starting at 6:29 p.m. Council members Jacqueline Beverage, Ron Cunz, Alan Deaton, Walter Farley, Bonnie Guyer, Connie Hanson, Durk Hellinga, Sharon Wallis, Bryan Wernli, and Pastor John Rothfusz were present.

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

The council reviewed the giving opportunities for September and upcoming months. There was a vote to authorize a dessert raffle on 9/20/26 to support the Sunday School program. Crop Walk activities extend over three months.

The treasurer's reports for April were examined. These are the current balances as of the meeting:

General Fund:	\$ 7985.27	Designated Fund:	\$ 32,338.66
Capital Fund:	\$ 21,123.04	Loan balance:	\$338.310.96

We have an existing sweep of \$8000 because general funds are low.

Council members heard monthly reports from Pastor John Rothfusz and from council members representing Salem's committees.

Giving continues below budget expectations. We continue to make up the sweep from capital funds. We have about one capital payment in the fund.

We will have a Fall Ministry Fair on September 20, kicking off our fall activities. We invite ministries to tell their story and highlight what they do. Members and friends are welcome to join with us in any of these ministries.

The Joni Knox Game Day will also be September 20. We will share in yard games like Croquet, Bags, and Bocci.

We need to find and update our Safe Church policy, to make sure we are doing our best to be a safe place for children and everyone. This will probably take a while, but is important.

The group heard council comments from each member.

The meeting was closed at 7:19 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

Confirmation Classes to Begin

Confirmation is a time for our young people to claim the faith of their baptism for themselves, and think more deeply about what it means to live as a Christian in the world. Salem Lutheran will continue our shared confirmation program with St. John Lutheran in Somonauk. Confirmation classes will begin this fall with an organizational meeting and first class on September 16 at 6:30 p.m. at St. John's. Regular Wednesday classes will continue each week at 6:30, alternating monthly between the churches. Please talk to Pastor John if you have any questions.

Scripture Readings for:

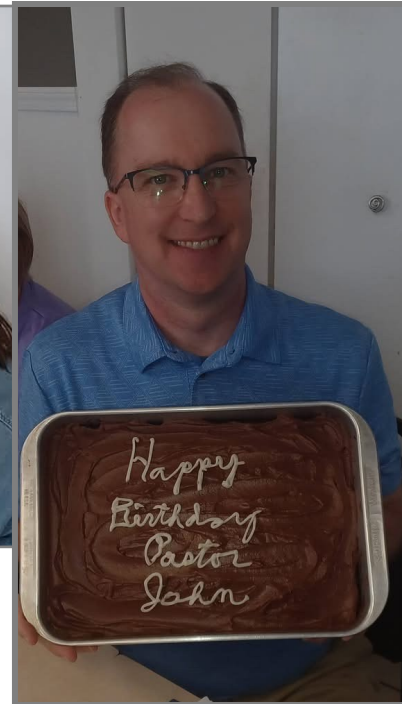
Sunday, September 6: Ezekiel 33:7-11;
Psalm 119:33-40; Romans 13:8-14;
Matthew 18:15-20

Sunday, September 13: Genesis 50:15-21;
Psalm 103:[1-7]8-13; Romans 14:1-12;
Matthew 18:21-35



RUTH UNIT

The Salem Ladies, who are part of the Ruth Unit, gathered for lunch with Pastor John, which happened to be his birthday. This is their kick-off to their 2026-27 year of Bible Study and fellowship. The Ruth Unit typically meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month. They welcome new members.



ADOPT-A-ROAD, a partnership with the Sandwich Park District and Salem

Bonnie, Sandy, Ron, Sharon, Kelly, Marilyn, Jan, Durk, Pat & Libby met to clean West Sandwich Road from the school to the cemetery. Next date is Monday, October 12. Photo credit: Mickey Farley, our driver and supplies keeper.



TRUNKS WANTED

Trunk or Treat is coming.....

Saturday, October 24

Start thinking now
for how you will
decorate your trunk.





Fall Ministry Fair

Sunday, September 20

The Christian Education Committee invites you all to come to the Fellowship Hall after worship for coffee and treats. The committees that lead the congregation will be there to share all they do. Talk with them about how they share their talents with members here at Salem, in the community, and/or around the world.

You are welcome to find a task - either once a month or once a year - that fits your talents and time you would have available to share.

It is at this time, after the fair, that Salem starts to buzz with the Fruit of the Spirit. This fall we will be talking about how we share our love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control with one another and people near and far.



Sunday School will be offered for all ages, including Adult Bible Study with Pastor John. Sunday School starts on September 27 from 10:15 to 11:00 am.

A Dessert Raffle will take place on 9/20/26 to support our Sunday School ministry.

Joni Knox Game Day

Come back to church after the Fall Ministry Fair for an afternoon of LAWN GAMES and pot luck. We will have the games and food set up in the garden across the street. Games will include Croquet, Bags (Corn Hole), Bocci Games, just to name a few.

Please bring a dish to share for a picnic pot luck after the games. Bring bag chairs or blankets to set up for the meal.

We are calling this the “Joni Knox Game Day” because Joni was always ready to welcome the congregation out for a good old fashioned gathering together for fun and food! Joni and Jim Knox were the parents of Julie Tasharski, Jerri Kuhn, Jill Gentile, and Jay Knox.



The congregation gathered to dedicate the new sign on August 16, 2026.





Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) volunteers made a trip to Geneva in August to pack food for our hungry neighbors. We packed 5,430 pounds of potatoes! This makes 4,525 meals out of 1,086 potatoes.

Those who have signed up already will pack again on Tuesday, September 15. The next date is October 20, 2026.

IN THE NEWS: NIFB was pleased to participate in a Money Watch segment of CBS News. In this news story, consumer correspondent Ash-har Quraishi reported on the tough choices facing many Americans as they struggle to put food on the table. With a 32% increase in grocery prices since 2020, the need for food has never been higher.



God's Work. Our Hands.

This page shows some of the many ways Salem lives out "God's Work. Our Hands." It will be celebrated with one day projects throughout our nation on 9/13/2026. The Outreach Committee will pass out 100 refrigerator magnets with Galatians 5:22-23 passage on it at the Sunday service at the Fair.



Look for Salem's booth at the Taste of Sandwich on Wednesday, September 23 from 5-7 pm. They will be passing out Fruit Snacks and inviting attendees to worship at Salem. Thank you for your outreach efforts!!



SAVE THE DATE!

This year's CROP Hunger Walk will be at the United Church of Sandwich on Sunday, October 4th

CROP Walk is a major fundraiser for Church World Service (CWS). Salem supports CWS along with 13 other local churches with our Community Interfaith Walk every October. 25% of all the funds raised will be donated to our local food pantries. The balance will be used by CWS to support disaster relief, refugee assistance and grassroots development to all parts of the globe. **PLEASE JOIN US** to walk and raise money for this cause.

See Jan Dunn to walk, pick up a donations envelope or make a contribution.

Our Sharing Pantry Donation List

Market List

Sm Box Sugar

Sm Vegetable Oil

Bottle of Juice (any)

Toilet Paper

Kleenex

Paper Towels

Toothpaste

Bar of Soap



Salem Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 105

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Work Clothes Sunday for Labor Day September 6

What are you doing every Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. – or whenever your work schedule might be? What are you wearing? Our daily work is a way that we give glory to God and serve the needs of our neighbor. Let's celebrate that work by wearing our work clothes to church on Sunday, September 6th. Whether that might be scrubs to work in the hospital, suit and tie for the office, a uniform, or even the ratty clothes you wear to work in your garden, these are ways that we work to bless God's world. So celebrate that! Thank you for all that you do in Jesus' name!



Pictured above is Lunch Bunch at Hardware in North Aurora.

LUNCH BUNCH

The next Lunch Bunch will meet on October 14 at Paradise Pancake House on Route 34 in Plano.

The group meets the second Wednesday of the month at 11:30 am for lunch, fellowship, and conversation. In the winter months, we choose local restaurants but in the summer we might choose to venture further away from Sandwich and try new restaurants. Save the dates and watch for announcements in the Good News or The Life. Then, sign up on the clipboards in the coffee fellowship area if you are able to go. Car pooling is often offered or just meet us there!