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

The Salem Life

Newsletter of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Sandwich, Illinois

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Dear Friends in Christ,

A few years ago I heard a presenter talk to a pastors' group about Deitrich Bonhoeffer. He was a German Lutheran pastor who had an enormous influence on the church. He challenged Christians to think hard about what it meant to be faithful.

Bonhoeffer was a prodigy, going through college and getting his PhD by age 21. But he came of age in the 1930s as Germany was in great turmoil, as Hitler and the Nazi party were rising to power. The Lutheran Church in Germany was under great pressure to stand unified with the nation, and to support the rising Nazi government. It seemed like the patriotic thing to do, to help the nation become strong and great again after their humiliation in the aftermath of World War I. And so the churches joined the "*Deutsche Christen*," the "*German Christians*," which aligned the churches with Nazi ideals. There are many pictures of this era of Nazi swastikas adorning the altars of churches, showing the way that those churches subordinated themselves to the government and the popular will. Most of the church was willing to overlook the racist, fearmongering rhetoric of Hitler because of the good things that he was doing in the 1930's. We now look on this as a shameful time for the church.

However, Bonhoeffer was part of a group that refused to accept the *Deutsche Christen.* They formed the Confessing Church, because they were not willing to be a part of the *D.C*. They set up their own seminaries, to train pastors without subordinating them to the Nazi government. Those seminaries were soon declared illegal, and shut down, but Bonhoeffer set up another illegal seminary in Finkenwald, led it, and funded it from his own family money.

Eventually, Bonhoeffer was arrested for acts of resistance, including helping some Jews escape. He was jailed for some time at Tegel prison, and eventually evidence linked him to a plot to assassinate Hitler. He was taken to Buchenwald, and then executed at Flossenburg. The Lutheran Church looks at Bonhoeffer as one of our own martyrs and saints, as one who was willing to resist evil and give his life for what he believed.

Bonhoeffer's writings challenge the church to follow Jesus. This is not a simple or easy thing. His book, Discipleship is the challenging call to the costly but joyful way of following Jesus in the world today. A disciple walks behind Jesus on the way to the cross, sharing in his suffering.

His challenge is that the church and Christians must be faithful to Jesus, whatever that costs us. We must be obedient to the Lord, shaping our lives to follow where he leads, and bearing the burdens of faith. Discipleship may not make us popular, but it is the necessary path for anyone who wants to follow Jesus. Our Lord saves us by his costly grace, paid for by his death on the cross for you and me. We as sinners are justified freely by Jesus' grace, and called to live lives that are new and different because we are freed and forgiven. The cost of Jesus' grace calls us to be obedient to Christ, using our whole lives to love God and serve our neighbor.

Bonhoeffer speaks to the time before and during WWII, but his words speak powerfully to our world today as well. The church must not ever again submit itself to the popular will of the people or to the government. We must stand apart as a voice speaking for Jesus, and challenging whoever may be in power. We must be people who listen to our Lord and love our neighbor, whoever they may be. And we must be people who speak up against injustice and abuse of power toward any of those whom God loves.

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Happening this week...

Sunday, October 11
- 9:00 am Worship/Kids Church
- 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship
- 10:15 am Adult Bible Study

Monday, October 12
- 8:00 am Adopt-a-Road
- 9:00—Noon Quilting

Tuesday, October 13
- 9:00—Noon Quilting
- 5:30 pm Outreach Committee
- 6:30 pm Finance Committee

Wednesday, October 14
- 10:00 am Methuselah Coffee Group
- 11:30 am Lunch Bunch
- 6:30 pm Confirmation @ Salem

Thursday, October 15
- 8:30 -10:30 am Our Sharing Pantry Distribution
- 5:00 pm Praise Team
- 6:00 pm Handchimes
- 7:00 pm Salem Choir
- 7:00 pm AA

Friday, October 16
- 7:30 pm AA

Sunday, October 18
- 9:00 am Worship/Kids Church
- 10:00 am Congregational Meeting
- 10:15 am Coffee Fellowship

In Our Church Family…..

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

⇒ Joe Gregory *(cousin of Doug Fraley, Sandy Martens & Jerry Davis)*
⇒ Rachelle Claxton *(sister-in-law of Todd Claxton)*
⇒ Jim Bernhardt *(great-uncle of Emma Houser)*
⇒ Bonnie Guyer*
⇒ Jerry Davis*
⇒ Doug Fraley*
⇒ Sarah Ellis*
⇒ Stan Benson*



***Indicates Salem member**

OCTOBER DIAMOND PLUS" BIRTHDAYS



10/3 Janet Kaiser
10/11 Donna Fraley
10/16 Ruth White
10/27 Marlene Kee
10/28 Sandra Martens
10/30 Becky O'Hanlon

Scripture Readings for:

Sunday, October 11: Isaiah 25:1-9; Psalm 23; Philippians 4:1-9; Matthew 22:1-14

Sunday, October 18: Isaiah 45:1-7; Psalm 96;1-9; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; Matthew 22:15-22

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Most of us like to forget the *Deutsche Christen*, and the time when most of the Lutheran Church in Germany gave in to the Nazi government. We don't like to think of that happening among us. Bonhoeffer gives a ringing call to faithfulness to Jesus alone, and a willingness to challenge any leader or movement that would call us away from our Lord's road of costly discipleship.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor John



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18th

10:00 am

On the agenda is electing nominees to the Congregation Council for 2027. Please attend this important meeting.

CHURCH COUNCIL

October 6, 2026 Salem Congregation Council Meeting Highlights

The Congregation Council met at Salem on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, starting at 6:31 p.m. Council members Jacqueline Beverage, Ron Cunz, Alan Deaton, Walter Farley, Bonnie Guyer, Sharon Wallis, Bryan Wernli, and Pastor John Rothfusz were present. Connie Hanson and Durk Hellinga were absent.

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

The council reviewed the giving opportunities for September and upcoming months. There may need to be fundraising for the National Youth Gathering next summer. Youth will register this month.

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

General Fund:	$ 7,708.32	Designated Fund:	$ 33,117.17
Capital Fund:	$ 28,765.38	Loan balance:	$ 333,090.59

The previous sweep of $ 8,000 has been paid back.

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

The Crop Walk had a beautiful day and was a success. The Sunday School kids raised $361 toward that world hunger project.

After considerable discussion, the council voted unanimously to move forward with the Technology Team Screen project for the sanctuary. They voted to authorize spending up to $5000 for that, to be funded from the Memorial fund. Work to place outlets where needed and lay wiring will begin soon. The project will place screens at the front right and left above the rail, on the middle pillars, and in the cry room, so that everyone can see. The current projector is failing and will eventually be removed.

The council voted to dispose of the old metal folding chairs in the basement. Some have desks on them. The property team will decide how best to do this, and may make them available for any members who want them.

There is a Synod Safe Church policy training on October 19. We will work to develop our own policy for Salem, to keep kids and vulnerable adults safe in all of our activities.

The group heard council comments from each member.

The meeting was closed at 7:40 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

TREASURER REPORT

As you may know, when the General Fund is low, we borrow from the Capital Fund to pay bills. We have paid back what we borrowed from the capital fund recently. Income is currently short of our approved budget totals per month. Another sweep may soon be needed.

Recently, Dean Lundeen gave a temple talk about Salem's finances. If you are able to help us meet our shortfall with a special gift, we would appreciate that.

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."
– 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

<u>September Financial Report</u>
General Fund Monthly
Budget $22,176 Income $21,379

Capital Fund Monthly
Budget $6,342 Income $3,573



Salem finishes up our season of cleaning up ditches along West Sandwich Road on Monday, October 12 at 8:00 am.

Meet Mickey Farley in the parking lot of Prairie View Elementary School (1201 Castle St). Mickey has the vests and garbage bags for the job. It is suggested that you wear boots or sturdy shoes and gloves.

COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP FEAST

The next Fellowship Feast is Tuesday, October 27 from 4:30-6:00 pm at St John's Lutheran Church in Somonauk. Salem will bring 10 desserts.



Please sign up if you are able to help in this way and save the date! Invite friends or family to join you to dine in fellowship with others.

TRUNKS WANTED

<u>TRUNK OR TREAT</u>

Saturday, October 24

Cars should be parked and ready before children start visiting at 3:00 pm.

3-4:00 pm Trunk or Treaters visit

4-6:00 pm Bounce House fun!

Families and friends are invited to attend the Weenie Roast and campfire.



NORTHERN ILLINOIS FOOD BANK
NEIGHBORS. EMPOWERED.

Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) volunteers made a trip to Geneva in September to pack food for our hungry neighbors. We packed 3,400+ pounds of carrots!

Those who have signed up already will pack again on Tuesday, October 20.

LUNCH BUNCH

The next Lunch Bunch will meet at 11:30 am on October 14 at Paradise Pancake House on Route 34 in Plano. Let's meet at 11:10 at Salem for anyone who would rather car pool.











Thank you for supporting CROP Hunger Walk!





Salem Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 105

Sandwich, IL 60548



OCT 25: GloryWay—Concert in Somonauk at St. John's Lutheran Church at 6:00 pm with free-will offering

OCT 27: Community Fellowship Feast at St. John's Lutheran Church from 4:30 - 6:00 pm in Somonauk

NOV 1: Stewardship Kick-off—Thank you program with stories of impact during Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall

NOV 8: Veteran's Appreciation—Program with Sunday School students and our veterans at Salem beginning around 10:30 am

NOV 18: Note the change of date for Ruth Unit will be November 18 at 1:00 instead of Nov 25.



Thank you Salem volunteers for delivering Meals On Wheels in September! Ron Cunz, Jan Dunn, Pam Pescitelli, George Webster. Also thank you to our substitutes: Holly Ballas and Steve Guyer, and our coordinator, Laura Caupert.



2027 National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis

The 3N1 Youth Group has gone together for the last several ELCA National Youth Gatherings. The next one will be in Minneapolis on June 28- July 2, 2027.

Salem's deadline for registration is October 18. We want to register right away for the best housing options. All students who will be entering High School grades and those who will have just graduated are welcome to take part.

Pastor John will be very involved in the planning. Please talk with him if you have any questions.