

Salem

United Methodist Church

Forecaster

The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

Celebrating Jesus' Birth, God Made Flesh

In addition to our regular worship schedule, there are some special opportunities as we prepare for Christmas. Join us the first Saturday in December at 9 AM for the Men's All Church Breakfast. Then on Sunday, December 2, the ladies are celebrating with a Christmas Tea at 2:30 in the afternoon.

Project Linus is the following weekend, Saturday, December 8 at Noon, helping to provide homemade blankets to children in need. Then Cocoa and Carols happens on Sunday, December 9 at 3 PM. We will meet at the church to go caroling, bringing joy especially to our shut in members. We will return later to enjoy some cocoa and fellowship. Those who participate are invited to bring a treat to share when we return. Cocoa will be provided. The Youth will go caroling on Wednesday, December 12 as an outreach to our neighbors, and you're welcome to join us then too!

Because this is a difficult season for many, we will share in a Longest Night Healing Worship service on Friday, December 21 at 7 PM. In the midst of the joy and excitement of the season there can be gloom and

grief. The beginning of winter on December 21 brings the longest night of the calendar year, the longest period of darkness. We will join together that night to light candles, celebrate Holy Communion, and receive comfort in scripture and prayer. This is a beautiful moment of worship, bringing Christ's light to our lives.

Finally, with the 12 day celebration of Jesus' birth upon us, we will gather on Christmas Eve, Monday, December 24 with services at 5 PM and 11 PM. We have good news to share and celebrate! Please invite everyone you know to join us in this celebration of the birth of Jesus. We will enjoy Christmas carols, candles, the story of Jesus' birth, a special time for children (5 PM), Holy Communion (11 PM), and more.



In This Issue:

- The Most Wonderful Time of the Year
- This Is Where We're Headed
- Calendar
- Worship Series — *Nine Months*
- All Church Breakfast
- Medicare Renewal
- Ladies Advent Christmas Tea
- Project Linus
- Cocoa and Carols
- Mitten Tree
- Mission Focus: *Change a Child's Story*
- Leadership Board Report



John Louk, Pastor

Our Goals for 2019

This Is Where We're Headed

Our Leadership Board intentionally sets Salem's direction each year. They shared our goals for 2019 with our annual Church Conference on October 29 and were subsequently approved. Therefore, this is where we are headed next year.

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First, we want to improve the Discipleship Pathway to engage people more, specifically to worship, connect, serve, and share their faith with others.

Second, we want to create and implement an intentional plan for hospitality, serving as Christ's ambassadors to invite, welcome, and connect people into the life of the church.

Third, we want to create and implement a strategy for growth of the congregation. The reality is, if we do not grow, we will decline.

Fourth, we want to create and implement a strategy for intentional funding of the ministry, including another three-year capital campaign.

You might notice that paying our apportionments is no longer one of our goals as it has been in the last several years. This continues to be an expectation of our congregation and it is our intention to pay our apportionments, however, we realized it's not one of the most important things we're working towards. As a side note, the United Methodist Church has done some research recently that found our current apportionment rate unsustainable. Therefore, denomination-wide, our apportionments will likely drop by 25% in the next couple of years.

Also, I often look back to our 2011 study, analyzing the needs of the church and community as we prepared for a building project that led to our current facility. We noted how important it is to find ways to

host our community in our facility. We've often thought of using space on our 8.3 acres for a playground as well as a walking path that connects to the sidewalks.

An article from *The Atlantic* tells of Larry Duggins, who left a successful career in investment banking to attend seminary, and now works on helping congregations consider alternative forms of Christian community. He says, "Years ago, the neighborhood church was the place many in America got together and, along with local schools, was where they got to know their neighbors." This model doesn't work for many people now, so he says "Churches have to think creatively about how to help people encounter others and God in their everyday lives."

There are so many possibilities. We could offer a gymnasium or fitness area. We could provide public work space and meeting areas with accessible Wi-Fi. Currently, we host neighborhood housing associations, but we could also provide space for businesses, AA, and other groups. We could build retreat space for Emmaus and Chrysalis as well as for other community groups. We could offer space for artists, performers, and students learning a second language. Cooking classes could use the kitchen.

The idea and hope is that our facility could be used every day if we create opportunities and space for the community to gather and connect. That also draws people to the church who might not otherwise come. Since we exist to make disciples of Jesus Christ who will transform the world, then how can we provide Salem/*shalom* (peace, wholeness, completeness, health, well-being, joy, beauty, justice, friendship, and salvation) for those around us?

This is my eleventh year at Salem. So much has been accomplished since the flood of 2008 changed Salem's course. While it's encouraging to step back and reminisce, we're never really done. We continue moving forward, serving, growing, creating, and building in God's kingdom.

Grace and peace to you,
John Louk

Worship Series—*Nine Months*

In December we enter the season of Advent and Christmas. Advent, a season of waiting, is designed to cultivate our awareness of God’s actions — past, present, and future. So God’s actions in bringing the Messiah, Jesus, is addressed to us who wait for the second coming of Jesus and the fulfillment of all the Old Testament promises about the kingdom of God, when the wolf will lie down with the lamb, when death will be swallowed up, when every tear will be wiped away. (*The Worship Sourcebook*) The liturgical color for this season is blue, symbolizing hope.

The Longest Night service on December 21 will offer a special time of worship to offer comfort, healing, and hope, especially for those who struggle with gloom and grief.

We will finally begin the twelve-day Christmas celebration with Christmas Eve worship services at 5 PM and 11 PM. Come and celebrate with the whole family. Invite everyone you know, especially unchurched family, friends, neighbors, and associates to join us for this celebration of Jesus' birthday! This is one of the best moments of the entire year to invite others. We will enjoy Christmas carols, candles, the story of Jesus' birth, a special time for children (5 PM), Holy Communion (11 PM), and more.

Our worship series, *Nine Months*, focuses on how long we wait for a pregnancy to culminate in a birth. We’re reading the first two chapters of Luke in their entirety to hear what God does in the pregnancies and births of John the Baptist and Jesus. Fleming Rutledge says, “The calling of the Church is to place itself where God is already at work.”

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| Dec 2 | Nine Months — First Sunday of Advent, Year C | |
| | Malachi 3:1-4 | The Coming Messenger |
| | Psalm 25:1-10 | Prayer for Guidance and Deliverance |
| | Philippians 1:3-11 B | Blameless in the Day of Christ |
| | Luke 1:5-25 | The Announcement of John’s Birth |
| | Holy Communion | |
| Dec 9 | Nine Months — Second Sunday of Advent | |
| | Micah 5:2-5a | The Ruler from Bethlehem |
| | Luke 1:46-55 | Mary’s Song of Praise (the Magnificat) |
| | Romans 1:1-7 | The Gospel Concerning Jesus |
| | Luke 1:26-45, 56 | The Announcement of Jesus’ Birth and Mary’s Visit to Elizabeth |
| Dec 16 | Nine Months — Third Sunday of Advent | |
| | Zephaniah 3:14-20 | The LORD Will Restore Your Fortunes |
| | Luke 1:67-79 | Zechariah’s Prophecy (the Benedictus) |
| | Philippians 4:4-7 | Rejoice in the Lord Always |
| | Luke 1:57-66, 80 | The Birth of John the Baptist |
| | Holy Communion | |
| Dec 23 | Nine Months — Fourth Sunday of Advent | |
| | Isaiah 52:7-10 | The Return of the Lord |
| | Psalm 98 | God Has Done Marvelous Things |
| | Titus 3:4-7 | When Our Savior Appeared |
| | Luke 2:1-7 | The Birth of Jesus |
| | Bells Playing | |
| Dec 30 | Nine Months — First Sunday After Christmas Day | |
| | 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 | The Child Samuel at Shiloh |
| | Psalm 148 | The LORD Has Raised Up a Horn for His People |
| | Colossians 3:12-17 | The New Life in Christ |
| | Luke 2:21-39 | Jesus’ Naming and Presentation in the Temple (Simeon and Anna) |

Come and Worship!

Sundays

9 AM—*Modern*

11 AM—*Traditional*

Longest Night Service:
December 21—7 PM

Christmas Eve Services:
December 24—
5 PM & 11 PM



December Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays:

- 1 Sharon Lindo Steele
- 2 Ginnie Clark
- 3 Saffie Kamara
- 7 Cathy Halsted
- 8 Dixie Burg
- 9 Gary Briesemeister
- 12 Kathy Miller
- 13 Lee Borntrager
- 13 Cindy MacLeod
- 13 Nicole Knapp
- 13 Linden Hague
- 16 Shari Kendall
- 16 Lorrie Prasil Holcomb
- 19 Susan Lillard
- 20 Sandy Minger
- 21 Jeff Cook
- 25 Grace Thompson
- 25 Francis Halsted



- 25 Greg Johnson
- 26 Marlene Primrose
- 26 Julie Lefebure
- 27 Max Stransky
- 28 Jeff Gipple
- 29 Courtney Templeton
- 31 Kyla Boas

Anniversaries:

- 3 Bill & Susie Heald
- 26 Tim & Linda Nolan
- 29 Ron & Sandy Andreasen

Salem Servants



Where are you serving outside the church? This is a great way to make a difference in the world. Salem Servants are serving at Green Square Meals at the Ecumenical Community Center every first and fourth Thursday of the month (December 6 and 27) at 3:30 PM. Contact Linda Curson at lcursion@me.com or (319) 651-8029 to help serve.

Winter Weather Alert

With winter on its way, and the potential for snow, ice, and severe cold making travel treacherous, we offer this reminder. If events are canceled at Salem due to safety concerns, it will be posted on our website, (www.salemchurchcr.com) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/salem.cr) as well as on the TV channels KCRG (9), KWWL (7), and KGAN (2).



In general, when the Cedar Rapids Public Schools cancel due to dangerous weather conditions, Salem will also cancel activities.

United Methodist Men

All Church Breakfast

Our All Church Breakfast, hosted by the United Methodist Men is on Saturday, December 1 at 9 AM in Fellowship Hall. All are invited to this wonderful breakfast. A free-will offering will be received. RSVP to Mark Minger at 319-651-4751 or at sailing2@mchsi.com.

Mark Minger



Cards and Fellowship



Come and enjoy an afternoon with your Christian friends! Cards and Fellowship meets the last Tuesday of

the month in Fellowship Hall. Come at 12:30 PM for a potluck, followed by devotions and games, usually a hot UNO game, also Royal Rummy and Kings in the Corner. If you would like to try another game, please bring it and directions and we will join in.

Everyone is welcome so invite friends and relatives. The food is delicious! Love to see you all!

All Golden Agers Welcome!

Golden Links will meet on Wednesday, December 19, at 12 PM at Pizza Ranch (2450 Westdale Drive SW). Please join us! Call Josie Lanz (319) 362-3859 or Judy Thomas (319) 390-6574 for more information.



Medicare Renewal

Oct. 15-Dec. 7 is the time to make changes to your Medicare drug program and/or advantage plan. There appears to be lots of changes in premium costs as well as drug costs. Your plan should be checked each year. I am a SHIIP (Senior Health Insurance Information Program) volunteer.

Judy Cowen

You can call me at (319) 396-3996 or email at gramee4840@gmail.com with questions. I can also see you at my office at Community Health Free Clinic. Call for an appointment at (319) 363-0416 and ask for Judy for Medicare.

United Methodist Women

Sarah Circle will meet on Thursday, December 13, at 9:30 AM in Fellowship Hall. Hostess will be Chatty Lullmann.

The lesson will be “Mary’s Song of Praise/Vision of Shalom”.

Mary’s vision of a transformed world was rooted in her foremother’s songs. We can learn of our own foremother’s songs and join with them in the transformation necessary to achieve shalom.

Nan Livingston, President

Rachel Circle will meet on Thursday, December 13, at 5:55 PM in Fellowship Hall. Please bring a wrapped \$10-\$15 gift and a salad to share.



Ladies Advent Christmas Tea



The 4th Annual Advent Christmas Tea is Sunday, December 2 at 2:30 PM in Fellowship Hall. If you don’t yet have a reservation contact Judy Thomas at (319) 390-6574.

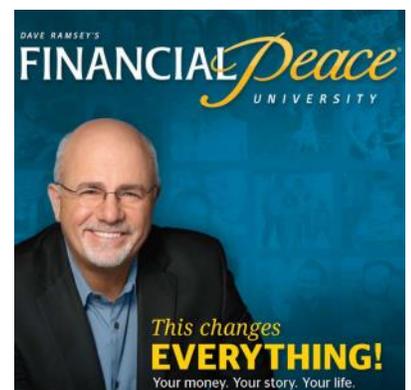
Women’s Care Group

The Women’s Care Group meets monthly to encourage and care for one another and to extend that care beyond the walls of Salem. Please plan to join us Sunday, December 9, at 12:30 PM in Fellowship Hall. We will be working on Christmas ornaments for nursing home residents.



Coming in January...*Financial Peace University*

Planning for the future is hard when you’re still paying for the past! Listen—there’s a better way. Join our *Financial Peace University* group in January, and we’ll learn how to beat debt and make a plan for the future...together. Interested? Join us at Salem United Methodist Church this January. Make it the best New Year’s Resolution yet! Feel free to call the church with your questions, but the starting date will be publicized soon and sign-up will then be available through our website (www.salemchurchcr.com).



Outreach

The Outreach Team invites you to join us on Saturday, December 8, from 12- for 5 PM Project Linus. We are hosting this community mission project to make blankets for underprivileged or seriously ill children. You can help by donating fleece, providing refreshments, or helping to make blankets (no sewing required). Come for as little or as long as you'd like. For more information, please contact Outreach Team Leader, Debbie Klatt at debbie.klatt@kirkwood.edu or see the information posted in Fellowship Hall.

Project Linus



"Providing Security Through Blankets"

Cocoa and Carols



Join us on Sunday, December 9 for a warm and wonderful afternoon of Cocoa and Carols!

We will meet at the church at 3 PM to go caroling to our shut-ins and homebound members. At 6 PM, we'll warm up back at the church with delicious hot cocoa. You are invited to bring a treat to share. All are welcome to join in on this family fun, spreading cheer afternoon!

Please contact Deb Black with questions at (319) 350-8843 or d.black@salemchurchcr.com.

Mitten Tree

The Mitten Tree is on display in the Narthex again this year. You may bring new or handmade children's mittens, gloves, hats and scarves to the tree which will be given to schools for children in need in our community.



Mission Focus: Change a Child's Story

Joni Salazar

Our congregation is helping "Change a Child's Story." We are collecting new or gently used books for our neighboring Van Buren Elementary School.

"You're never too young for books. Reading to babies as young as six months of age leads to stronger vocabularies and better early literacy skills four years later, just as the children are getting ready to go to school." Only 53 percent of children ages three to five were read to daily by a family member. Children in families with incomes below the poverty line are less likely to be read to aloud everyday than are children in families with incomes at or above

poverty. It all starts by giving a book as a gift to a child. A child can learn from a book read to them or by them reading a book to their family.

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus who transform the world. We can transform the world when we help a child read a book.

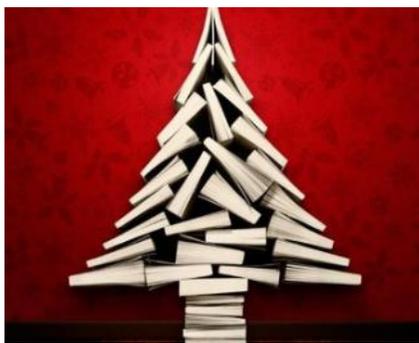
There are two ways to make a difference:

- 1) Pick a school that your children, or grandchildren attend, or the closest neighborhood school. Share your favorite book with a child at the school and read it together. Contact Joni Salazar and she will contact the school for you. The school will match you with a child that needs help with reading skills.
- 2) During our Christmas Eve services, 100% of the offering will give new books to at-risk children to read. Both new books and monetary offerings will be received. You can also drop off new books anytime at the Mission Center.

Will you help us Change a Child's Story this year? Your involvement can make all the difference in a child's future. If you have any questions, please contact Joni at (319) 573-3943 or jsalazar@cr.k12.ia.us.



Library News



Stop in the Salem Library and see the featured December selections: Christmas Books, DVDs, and Music. Also browse our Adult's and Children's Bible shelves.

Come in and look around. There is something for all ages.

Your Salem Librarians,

Kay and Evelyn

Report of the Leadership Board

Following the subcommittee meetings at 5:15 PM, the full board met at 5:40 PM. Chair Nancy Rawson led the meeting. She opened with prayer and shared a scripture reading from Isaiah 54:10 reminding us that we do not walk alone through the challenges of life for God is right there with us.

Treasurer's Report – *Linda Curson reported on the income and expenses for this year (January – October). Our year-to-date expenses continue to exceed our year-to-date income resulting in a \$13,217.30 deficit in the operating budget as of October 31. A decision regarding what percentage of our apportionments we will pay this year will be made in December. *A preliminary tally of the pledges from Commitment Sunday for the Generation to Generation campaign shows a good response. *The church plans to offer a Financial Peace University course next year.

Leadership Board Development/Training – The LB concluded our discussion of the book: *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory* by Tod Bolsinger. As we work to fulfill our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, we will often be stepping into uncharted territory that “requires and results in transformation of the whole organization, starting with the leaders.”

A Way Forward Town Meeting –A gathering for the Salem congregation will be scheduled for a Sunday afternoon in January to have a question and answer time regarding the Commission on the Way Forward and our denomination's special General Conference in February. We want to ensure the Salem family understands the United Methodist position on human sexuality and has an opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

Other Items – *Carole Beaton has offered to host the December LB meeting at her home. *The LB discussed the history behind why the modern service is at 9:00 AM and the traditional service is at 11 AM and the potential for considering a change to this schedule.

Meeting Notes 11-20-18

Trustees – *A radon test will be conducted. As this test should be done every two years, it will be incorporated into a “routine maintenance” program going forward. *Prairie grass has been planted and rolled (ready for spring). *The Trustees will contact Nesper Sign regarding the possibility of replacing additional bulbs in the outdoor sign with higher wattage bulbs. *The cleaning of the carpet in Fellowship Hall, the parlor, the mission closet, and adjacent hallways was completed November 16. Some remaining stains will be inspected by the carpet cleaner for additional spot cleaning.

Stewardship –*Commitment Sunday for the third year of the Generation to Generation campaign was November 18. Follow-up steps were discussed. *The Stewardship Subcommittee will meet with the Mission Team to discuss end of year giving and 2019 monthly mission focuses.

SPRC – *Pastor John shared his plans for continuing spiritual formation for 2019. He intends to take two weeks of leave in January or February to complete his *Saved Through Water* writing regarding his own and Salem's experience with the 2008 flood and rebuilding the church.

Closing –Nancy Rawson closed with prayer. The meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM.





December 2018 Forecaster

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**Salem's mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
"connecting people, building community, transforming lives through Jesus"**

Salem's Sunday Morning Schedule

9:00 AM	Modern Worship	Sanctuary
10:00 AM	Fellowship Time	Fellowship Hall
10:10 AM	Children and Adult Sunday School	Lower Level
11:00 AM	Traditional Worship	Sanctuary

Nursery for infants through 4-year-olds is available on the Lower Level during worship services and Sunday School.

Salem Office hours: Monday—Thursday 9 AM to 4 PM
(closed standard holidays)

