

LIVING OUT GOD'S LOVE

Salem United Church of Christ is an Open and Affirming Congregation

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR FEBRUARY:

Week of February 2

Jeremiah 1:4-10

Psalms 71:1-6

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Luke 4:21-30

Week of February 9

Isaiah 6:1-8, (9-13)

Psalms 138

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Luke 5:1-11

Week of February 16

Jeremiah 17:5-10

Psalms 1

1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Luke 6:17-26

Week of February 23

Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Psalms 37:1-11, 39-40

1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

Luke 6:27-38

FROM PASTOR PHIL

Dear Members and Friends,

My wife has often expressed that life seems to be about learning stuff, and then we forget it for a while, and then we have to remember and relearn it.

One such piece of wisdom that I learned long ago, but apparently keep needing reminders of, is how when someone has the courage to speak the truth, it encourages others to do the same.

When someone is able to open up about a difficulty they have faced, others realize they are not alone. When someone talks about grief, it can free people up to speak of their own.

This is known to 12 Step groups, where honesty of sharing about the difficulties of addiction allows people to be honest with themselves.

It is the truth of support groups, where safety and community can make room for opening up about the truth of life.

And it is a cornerstone of what it means to be a community of faith.

We have psalms going back thousands of years that speak honestly about pain, doubt, fear, anger, and worry. These are voiced to God and in the midst of the community of faith. The result of speaking honestly about pain, doubt, fear, anger, and worry is not that they are multiplied. If they are heard honestly and honored with integrity, we find instead the growth of hope, healing, courage, and agency.

May we continue to grow in telling the truth about how we are, who we are, and whose we are.

May we gain courage from the examples of truth-tellers around us.

And may we continue to grow in hope, healing, courage, and agency, and offer these gifts to those around us.

Grace and Peace, Pastor Phil

ADVENT MISSION OPPORTUNITY UPDATE

Diane Triplett purchased an additional 146 pounds of diapers and wipes with the cash donations that were received during the month of December towards the advent mission opportunity. Along with the donated items, Badger Prairie Needs Network received 387 pounds of diapers and wipes to be distributed to families. Thank you to everyone who continues to live out God's love through supporting Salem's mission work.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1: Matthew Flood
- 2: Kyle Smith
- 9: Betty Zurbuchen, George Adams, Owen Butzlaff
- 10: Kelly Bass, Audra Smith
- 11: Terrie Smith, Bryce Corning
- 13: Debbie Hoffman
- 16: Molly Hill
- 17: Mary Cutler, Tyler Denu
- 19: Kyle Sundby
- 21: Charity Durnen, Isaac Burgenske
- 22: Amy Luginbuhl, Henry Butzlaff
- 23: Kelly Borelli
- 24: Terri Fiez, Wyatt Denu
- 25: Joyce Gust

**Let the church office know if we missed your birthday.*

SAVE THE DATE - SATURDAY, MARCH 15

Join fellow members of Salem and attend the free community meal at Badger Prairie Needs Network. This free hot lunch is served twice a month. The purpose of the meal is to create a more cohesive and resilient community and to build support for BPNN's mission to end hunger and poverty locally. More than 7,200 community members shared a meal in 2023/2024. The meal is open to all so invite your friends and family. The mission committee will provide information on carpooling and rides as the date gets closer.

SALEM WOMEN'S GUILD MEETING

There will be a special meeting of the Women's Guild on **Thursday, February 13, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.** We will begin with a discussion of the status of the Women's Guild, followed by a vote as to whether we will terminate the Guild. **IF** the vote is to terminate the Women's Guild, then we will hold a discussion to determine how to spend the balance of our bank account, followed by a motion and final vote. This is a very important meeting for all those interested in the Salem Women's Guild, so please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

NEW DIRECTORY

The new photo directory is available to pick up at the back of the Sanctuary - please feel free to take one home with you! You will also see smaller versions which includes just the photos in the pews. All of the information you provided to the church (name, address, phone number and email) is available online via the Breeze software program. If you would like to access the digital directory online and do not yet have access to Breeze please follow this link to request access: <https://salemchurch.breezechms.com/login/create>. You will need to use your name and email as provided and set up in Breeze. Once set up, if you have any changes to your information, you can change this right within Breeze (you can even add a new photo if you'd like!) This is a great resource for keeping our members and friends information up to date and easily accessible.

Please let the church office know if you have any questions: office@salemchurchverona.org



COUNCIL CORNER

Salem United Church of Christ became an Open and Affirming Church on Sunday, January 29, 2017, following a process of discussion, study, and discernment. On that date, Salem UCC approved our Open and Affirming Statement.

Open and Affirming means that we are open to the membership and leadership of people who are LGBTQIA+ in our congregation, and we affirm that God's image and love and gifts are fully present within ALL people. When we say "no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, YOU are welcome here" we are working to really mean it.

Salem UCC ONA Statement

The purpose of Salem United Church of Christ is to live out the love of God in ways that are faithful to God, relevant to today, open to all, and striving to improve.

We are an open and affirming congregation that believes that all people are created in God's image and thus are loved and blessed equally by God. And as it states in Luke 10:25-28, we should "Love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, with all our mind, and our neighbor as ourselves."

We welcome and celebrate everyone, including people of all ages, races, cultures, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, family configurations, economic circumstances, faith backgrounds, and physical and mental abilities.

We celebrate the beauty and uniqueness of each expression of God's diverse family as well as our oneness in Christ.

In our community of faith all people are encouraged to participate and share their talents and energy in worship and sacraments, leadership positions, ordained ministry, lay ministry, learning, service, mission and fellowship.

We commit ourselves to the ongoing work of being an Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation, striving to demonstrate in all ways that no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, YOU are welcome at Salem United Church of Christ.

Love Your Neighbor Food Drive

*The second is this: "You Shall Love Your Neighbor as Yourself"
There is no other commandment greater than these. Mark 12:31*

Valentine's Day is about showing important people in your life you love them. You can also show your love by helping your neighbors in need.

In 1986 Salem began helping our neighbors by distributing government cheese and bread in a small closet in the basement. Now in 2025, **Badger Prairie Needs Network** is a grocery-style food pantry serving all of Dane county. Children are 32% of those needing assistance, 69% are Spanish speaking and 77% are working. People who use BPNN average 4.5 visits a year. Most can't make ends meet as rent takes too much of their income.

Buying food in bulk has become more expensive for BPNN. Traditional supplies of free food can't keep up with the demand. Changes in the food system has meant there is less surplus food available for pantries. The Dane County Board did not replace the federal funding through a budget allocation to Second Harvest Food Bank. Now there will be less free food coming to BPNN from Second Harvest and BPNN will have to purchase more food. Food Banks are the source of 46% of the food BPNN receives. Retail recovery accounts for 31%, the Kitchen to Table Program 6% and 3% comes from food drives. In 2024 BPNN purchased 12% of the food it had on its shelves.

Throughout the month of February, love your neighbors by feeding them.

Feed them Dinner, Sunday February 2

Bring canned tuna, salmon and chicken
Canned or dried protein beans (pinto, black, kidney)
Hamburger and Tuna Helper

Feed them Breakfast, Sunday February 9

Bring canned fruit, especially applesauce and pineapple
Breakfast or Snack bars

Feed them Dessert, Sunday February 16

Bring 3-4lb bags of sugar
Bring 4-5lb bags of flour

Feed them Fresh Fruit & Vegetables February 23

Donate funds for the pantry to purchase perishable food.
Checks should be made out to Salem and BPNN noted.



Photo by Ann H at Pexels.com

While specific items are featured each week, bring the items on any Sunday or bring them all at once. When shopping choose paper bags, bring them to Salem and they will be taken to the pantry to be used by the clients. Shopping bags both paper and reusable are always a needed item.

FEBRUARY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1						
2 9AM – Sunday School 10:15AM – Worship	3 Eve – Scouts	4 Eve – Scouts	5 6PM – BRC 6:30PM – Handbells 6:45PM – Chancel	6	7 10AM-2PM – Serve at Meals for Madison 6pm – Scout Sleepover →	8
9 9AM – Sunday School 10:15AM – Worship	10 Eve – Scouts	11 Eve – Scouts 6PM – Finance 7PM – Council	12 6PM – BRC 6:30PM – Handbells 6:45PM – Chancel	13 1:30PM – Women's Guild Meeting	14	15
16 9AM – Adult Sunday School 9AM – Youth Choir 10:15AM – Worship	17 Eve – Scouts	18 Eve – Scouts	19 6PM – BRC 6:30PM – Handbells 6:45PM – Chancel	20	21 MARCH NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE	22
23 9AM – Adult Sunday School 10:15AM – Worship	24 Eve – Scouts	25 Eve – Scouts	26 6PM – BRC 6:30PM – Handbells 6:45PM – Chancel	27	28	

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2025

WOMEN'S GUILD MEETING

Thursday, February 13 at 1:30pm

HOW TO CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE

Cara will continue to help with office tasks from afar until a new office administrator is hired. In the mean time, please use the following e-mail: office@salemchurchverona.org

Cara's old e-mail will eventually be deactivated.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR FOOD DRIVE

To benefit Badger Prairie Needs Network

SALEM CHURCH STAFF and CONTACT:

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Cari Bass

An Open
and Affirming
Congregation

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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Living Out God's Love
SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

