



# LIVING OUT GOD'S LOVE

*Salem United Church of Christ is an Open and Affirming Congregation*

NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 2022

photo by Lina Kivaka

## SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR DECEMBER:

### **Week of December 4:**

*Isaiah 11:1-10*

*Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19*

*Romans 15:4-13*

*Matthew 3:1-12*

### **Week of December 11:**

*Isaiah 35:1-10*

*Psalms 146:5-10 or Luke 1:46b-55*

*James 5:7-10*

*Matthew 11:2-11*

### **Week of December 18:**

*Isaiah 7:10-16*

*Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19*

*Romans 1:1-7*

*Matthew 1:18-25*

### **Christmas Eve (Dec 24):**

*Isaiah 9:2-7*

*Psalms 96*

*Titus 2:11-14*

*Luke 2:1-14, 15-20*

### **Christmas Day (Dec 25):**

*Isaiah 52:7-10*

*Psalms 98*

*Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12)*

*John 1:1-14*

### **New Year's Eve (Dec 31):**

*Ecclesiastes 3:1-13*

*Psalms 8*

*Revelation 21:1-6a*

*Matthew 25:31-46*

## REFLECTIONS FROM TOM...

Dear Salem Church Friends,

The theme of "Journey" runs long and deep in the Biblical narrative of our faith tradition: Abraham and Sarah from Ur, Noah in an ark, Joseph in Egypt, Moses and the Israelites in the wilderness, the Hebrews in multiple exiles, Jesus constantly on the move, and the Apostle Paul's missionary journeys. For myself and my wife Annari (also an ordained minister), our own faith journey and sense of calling has us "on the move" soon as well, as she has received a call to direct Pastoral Care for an entire hospital system located outside of Wisconsin, an exciting opportunity for us both.

My last Sunday in worship with you at Salem Church will be a special date, on Christmas Day 2022! It will be an informal service of lessons and carols and reflections, music provided on guitar (and perhaps some noise makers?). This will also be a time of mixed emotions, as this past year and a half has been a great joy and privilege to serve as your Interim Pastor, but as is the nature of intentional Interim Ministry, there comes a natural and inevitable time to say "goodbye". This Interim Period for me and for Salem Church has certainly been challenging, coming out of the most intense part of the pandemic and seeking ways to rekindle energy and vision for the future. The Search Process for the next settled Pastor for Salem is well under-way, and while it is a confidential process such that only the Search Committee knows its progress, there is hope that a new settled Pastor is not too far off time-wise.

As I shared in my annual report, Salem Church has maintained a strong ministry and has made accomplishments during this Interim Period, and I am confident that there is a strong foundation ready to welcome a new Pastor. Just as much as the need to strengthen Salem Church internally, we have come to the realization that Salem Church and all of its members need to reach out, to be engaged in ministry near and far, and to welcome the many new neighbors coming to the immediate Verona area. This is happening, and will continue for many years to come.

*continued on next page...*



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2: Rhonda Blake
- 3: Maggie Groshan
- 5: Ethan Groshan, Dana Zurbuchen
- 6: Nathanael Steinagel
- 10: Heidi Grotelueschen
- 11: Brien Nechvatal
- 12: Payton Corning, Trevor Bass
- 16: Lisa Bakken
- 17: Josh Hart
- 18: Cara Bahr, Kathy Hauser
- 19: Scarlett Gauthier, Andrea Gust
- 22: Emma Hill
- 26: Chuck Hart
- 27: Barb Smith
- 31: Brandon Grotelueschen

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

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Thank you for the privilege of letting me share faith and church life with you, as your Interim Pastor. Thank you to the entire church staff for welcoming me readily and helping me quickly understand the way things traditionally happen at Salem. Thank you to the Council, for faithful service and for having a vision that looks toward the “new things” that God is doing. My hopes and prayers for your future are filled with expectation, thankfulness, and joy as Salem Church begins a new era of faithfulness to God.

With peace and joy,  
Rev Tom

## THANKSGIVING BASKETS FOR BPNN - THANK YOU!

Thank you for your generous financial support to Badger Prairie Needs Network so that families in Verona and throughout Dane county were able to celebrate Thanksgiving with a delicious traditional meal. Members of Salem donated \$3110. Your kindness created happy Thanksgiving memories for our neighbors in need.

## DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS

*These Days, Our Daily Bread* and *The Upper Room* devotional booklets are provided by the Women's Guild and available on the wall inside the main entrance to the church and in the information box near the outdoor labyrinth. Please help yourself.



## ADVENT DEVOTIONALS AVAILABLE

“What’s Left of the Night?” is the 2022 Advent devotional available from the UCC Writer’s group. Daily reflections in addition to a guide for lighting your Advent candles at home are included. Electronic copies can be emailed to you and limited hard copies are available on the Christian Education table in the back of fellowship hall. Please contact Sarah Pundt to receive an electronic copy or request additional printed copies.

## “NOTHING TO HIDE”

*Family Diversity Projects Photo Exhibit*

### Dec 12 @ 7pm (planning meeting)

Salem will be hosting the "Nothing to Hide" photo exhibit February 19-March 26 to engage the surrounding community in a discussion about mental health issues facing families today. “These compelling accounts (in the exhibit) demonstrate strength, courage, integrity, and accomplishment in the face of adversity and stigma — giving people living with mental illness and their families an opportunity to come out of the shadows and into the public eye.” Please join Sarah Pundt for a planning meeting at church on Dec. 12 @ 7pm. This event offers an exciting opportunity to address an important topic, educate ourselves and others, and engage with the broader community.

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

We will offer one Christmas Eve Service this year at 7:30PM.

## POINSETTIA & WREATH SPONSORS

### Poinsettias

#### *Sponsor(s)*

Carla Baez, Sue Baez,  
Doug & Susan Baez,  
Mike & Helen Baez  
Scott & Pam Anderson

John & Cari Bass

John & Helen Hageman

Susan Hageman

Harlan & Gerri Hall

Judy Hansen

Chuck & Lisa Hart

Hugh & Kathy Hauser

Nechvatal Family

Elsie Oliver

Jon & Sarah Pundt, Dick Phillips

Bruce, Angela, Sawyer, Anika

Anna May Rhiner

Sandra Rost

Judy & Larry Skupien

Kerry & Stephanie Steinagel

Diane & Dave Triplett

#### *In Memory/Honor of:*

Lyle Baez (Husband and Dad)

Loved ones

Gift to the church

Grandpas, grandmas, aunts and uncles

Our parents

Husband, brothers, parents

Joan Hart, Molly Rankin, Rion Best,  
Joe Martino

Our dads Gene Hauser and  
Willard Storandt, aunt Angeline Haag

Lucille Cleveland, Doug Cleveland,  
Dale Cleveland, Roebe Cleveland

Gift to the church

Ruthellen Phillips

Erwin & Dora Pegel

Julian Rhiner

Parents

Our parents

Gift to the church

Parents - Ralph & Barbara Zingg  
Parents - David & Dolores Triplett

### Wreaths

Mary & Dwight Cutler

Roger & Becky Hagenston

Remus Family

Pat Mackler McCarthy

Barb & Doug Smith

Julie & Steve Sundby

Thiede Family

Doris Waldmann

Rose & Paul Wieland

Guy & Karen Williams

Betty Zurbuchen

Lucille & Bernard Bjorge

Elmay & Floyd Cutler

Our parents

Ann Dow, Dorothy Amans,  
Warner Thelen

Gift to the church

Gift to the church

Gift to the church

Gift to the church

Rodney K. Waldmann

Gift to the church

Our 28th wedding anniversary in Dec.

Harold Zurbuchen

## MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The men's group of Salem United Church of Christ will meet at the home of Doug Smith on Thursday, December 15, at 6:30 PM. Join us for this time of fellowship and Bible study.



## CHRISTMAS FUND

*for the Veterans Of The Cross*

Over 100 years ago the Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ created the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund, to help support retired clergy, their surviving spouses, and other church workers in their retirement and active church personnel during times of emergent need.

The people of Salem have contributed to this special Christmas offering regularly for decades. We hope that those of you who are able will find it in your heart to contribute once again this year. Your contributions - labeled "Christmas Fund" or "Veterans of the Cross" - can be dropped in the offering plate at Sunday worship or sent to the church through the mail at P.O. Box 930125, Verona, 53593.



# Musical Christmas Bazaar



Saturday, December 3, 2022  
Lunch, Bake Sale and Raffle  
11am - 1pm (Raffle drawing at NOON)

Hosted By:

The Women's Guild of  
Salem United Church of Christ  
502 Mark Dr., Verona, Wi



Adults-\$7.00, Children 5-12 yrs-\$3.00, Under 5 yrs-FREE

*(Serving BBQ's, Salads, pie and beverage)*

***Live music provided by  
Salem's various talented musical  
groups***

*(starting at 11 am)*



# Advent Mission Project

## Birthday Party Kits for BPNN Kids

Do you remember how exciting it was to wake up on your birthday morning, anticipating the cake and party? Many children in Dane County are in families that struggle with food insecurity. These children do not share those happy memories, as a birthday cake for a child is a luxury they cannot afford.

You can change that situation by donating items to create Birthday Party Bags for BPNN kids. Celebrate Jesus' birthday by making a child's birthday brighter.

Each Birthday Party Kit should include:

- 1 cake mix
- 1 prepared can frosting
- 1 9 x13 cake pan
- 1 package of birthday candles
- 10 disposable party plates and napkins (age and gender neutral)

Birthday Party kits should be bagged in a gift bag or plain paper bag and placed under the Christmas trees on the altar. For those who choose to donate individual items rather than a complete kit there is a wrapped collection box by the trees.

Help Salem collect 50 bags to be distributed during the month of January. Questions can be directed to the Board of Christian Ed or the Mission Committee.



# LIVING OUT GOD'S LOVE THROUGH CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sarah Pundt, Director of Christian Education  
608-692-3239 or [spundt@salemchurchverona.org](mailto:spundt@salemchurchverona.org)

## Sunday School

Sunday school is provided for all ages every Sunday morning 9-10am from September 18, 2022-May 21, 2023. Nursery care is provided during the Sunday school hour for children ages 6 mos-2 years and during worship for children ages 6 months-5 years. \*\*Transportation and childcare are available for all other events upon request. Contact Sarah Pundt for more information.\*\*

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Location</u>
Nursery (Under age 3)	Lower Level
Pre-K (age 3)-grade 5	Lower Level
Middle/High School	2nd Floor Classroom
Adults	1st Floor Conference Rm

### Children's Music, Dec. 18 @9am

Once per month, all grades PreK-Grade 12 will meet in the lower-level Sunday school area @ 9am. The youth will serve as mentors for the younger children during children's choir.

## Christian Education Calendar

### December

- 4 Sunday School
- 11 Sunday School
- 18 Children's Music (PreK-Grade 12)
- 25 Christmas Day (no Sunday school)

### January

- 1 New Years' Day (no Sunday school)
- 3 @7pm BoCE
- 8 Sunday School Resumes

## Church Nursery Childcare

Children of all ages are always welcome in worship, but nursery care is offered for children age 5 and under for those who need it. Please consider volunteering in the church nursery for one or more Sundays so we can provide this important ministry for our youngest church members and their families. We are also seeking applicants for paid childcare givers in the nursery. Please contact Sarah Pundt for more details.

### December Nursery Staffing

If two volunteers are listed, the nursery will be open during worship only. We need more volunteers or paid staff to provide nursery care during the Sunday school hour.

Date	Adult Caregiver (Safe Church trained and +18)	Assistant (Adult or Teen)
Dec 4	Heather Thoma	
Dec 11	Heather Thoma	Kaden Nechvatal
Dec 18	Heather Thoma	Kaden Nechvatal
Dec 25	Christmas Day - no nursery care	
Jan 1	New Year's Day - no nursery care	

### Safe Church Training Dec. 6 or Dec. 14 @ 7pm

Anyone who works with children and youth at Salem needs to complete Safe Church compliance training every 3 years. If you have never had training or your training has expired, please come to one of the following training sessions. We will meet in the first-floor conference room at Salem. Please RSVP to Sarah Pundt to indicate which training you will attend.

## Adult Sunday School

All are welcome! Please join us in the first-floor conference room as we discuss a variety of topics related to Bible study, Christian living, social justice, and the church. Hybrid class options are available for this who wish to join remotely (contact Sarah Pundt).

### **Advent Study: Advent Antiphons**

**Dec. 4, 11, & 18**

Antiphons are ancient Christian chants based on pieces of Psalms and other Hebrew scriptures. They express deep theological convictions. We will use a collection of these Antiphons and a series of reflection questions to create our own personal daily Advent devotional.

## Small Groups

*For more information about any of our small groups, or to start a new group, please contact Sarah Pundt. All groups welcome visitors and you do not need to be a Salem member to participate. Please join us. All are welcome!*

### **Parents Promise      Dec 8 @ 7pm**

This group is for parents of tweens, teens, and young adults. Join this circle of parents for conversation and fellowship as we support each other in raising young people of faith. Newcomers and visitors are always welcome! We will meet in the church library on the first floor.

### **Koinonia      Advent Refelction: Shining our Light      Dec. 15 @ 7pm**

Cari Bass is planning a special Advent reflection called "Shining Our Light". Join us as we pause from the busy preparations of Christmas to prepare ourselves for the true light of the season. All women of Salem and visitors are invited for a time of reflection and fellowship. This group meets the third Thursday of each month at 7pm.

# WI Conference UCC

## Damascus Project

The Damascus Project is an educational resource for the Wisconsin and Minnesota conferences of the UCC. They offer lay leadership classes, books studies, online discussion groups, and more. Here are two examples of classes coming soon:

### **Faith Foundations** January 12-April 20

- Meet like-minded believers on a similar journey of faith
- Gain tools for reading and interpreting scripture
- Connect events from the past with who we are today
- Ground your faith in scripture and tradition within a vibrant hybrid (online and on zoom) learning community

### **Exploring the Enneagram** January 30-March 12

- Learn the Enneagrams system of 9 Types
- Identify and explore your type - what are its strengths and weaknesses?
- Personal and group reflection on how understanding our Enneagram Type helps us relate to others more effectively
- Personal and group reflection on how the Enneagram can be a useful tool for faith leaders as they navigate the personalities and systems of their congregations

For Questions: [info@the-damascus-project.org](mailto:info@the-damascus-project.org)

Website: <https://the-damascus-project.org/>

## **Upcoming Online Events through the UCC**

(Register to join each event live or watch recording at your convenience)

### **Wednesdays for the World**

Dec. 7@ 2-3pm ET (1-2pm CT)

Gift Giving and Worker Justice

<https://www.ucc.org/event/gift-giving-and-worker-justice/>

### **Thursdays for the Soul**

All events are online 3:30-4:40pm ET (2:30-3:30 CT)

Dec. 1            World Aids Day of Prayer and Remembrance

Dec. 15          WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) for Mental Health

Dec. 22          Near the Brokenhearted

For more information or to register visit: <https://www.ucc.org/events/category/thursdays-for-the-soul/>

### **Creation Justice**

Dec. 14 @ 1pm ET (12pm CT)

The Midterms and Beyond: A Path for Climate Justice

<https://www.ucc.org/event/the-midterms-and-beyond-a-path-for-climate-justice/>



# SALEM YOUTH NEWSLETTER

Sarah Pundt, Interim Director of Youth Ministry  
608-692-3239 or spundt@salemchurchverona.org

December 2022

*Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!*

## Youth Opportunities at Salem

Grades 6-12

*All Are Welcome!*

Youth and parents are encouraged to join our Salem UCC Youth Ministry Mighty Network. This is an online platform that allows us to have all our youth information, events, rsvp options, pictures, prayer requests, and discussions in a single place on a private network. Please contact Sarah Pundt for more information.

### Youth Group

Youth grades 6-12 gather twice per month for fellowship, faith, and fun. Gatherings take place at Salem UCC unless otherwise noted. Friends are always welcome!

### YOUTH MISSION

#### FB4K Bike Collection Event

Salem youth and adults hosted a bike collection event on November 19. Thank you to Sam Shubak, Katie Banaszak, Steve Berry, Kathy & Hugh Hauser, and Cindy Remus for braving the cold. 44 bikes were collected at Salem!

#### Knock-Knock Middle School Retreat

4 youth and 2 adults from Salem participated in the Knock Knock middle school retreat at the Daycholah Center on Green Lake. Here are some reflections from some of the participants:

**Sarah Pundt:** I had always heard great things about the Knock Knock retreat but had never been able to attend.

### YOUTH CALENDAR

#### December

**4** @ 6:30pm Youth Gathering  
**18** Christmas Party

#### January

**8** @ 6:30pm Youth Gathering



44 Bikes collected at second collection event in November

# SALEM YOUTH NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 2022

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An Open  
and Affirming  
Congregation

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

502 Mark Drive  
PO Box 930125  
Verona, WI 53593-0125

*Spreading Out God's Love*  
**SALEM UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



# DECEMBER 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1</b> 1:30PM- Guild Meeting 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 11AM-1PM - Women's Guild Bazaar and Raffle
<b>4</b> 9AM - Sunday School 10:15AM - Worship 6:30PM - Youth Gathering	<b>5</b> Eve - Boy Scouts	<b>6</b> Eve - Cub Scouts 7PM - Safe Church Training (sign up with Sarah Pundt)	<b>7</b> 6PM - BRC 6:30PM - Handbells 6:45PM - Chancel Choir	<b>8</b> 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98 7:15-8:45PM- Girl Scouts 7PM - Parent's Promise	<b>9</b> 4-8PM - Piano Recital	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> 9AM - Sunday School 10:15AM - Worship Afternoon - Piano Recital	<b>12</b> Eve - Boy Scouts 7PM - "Nothing to Hide" Planning Meeting	<b>13</b> 6PM - Finance 7PM - Council	<b>14</b> 6PM - BRC 6:30PM - Handbells 6:45PM - Chancel Choir 7PM - Safe Church Training (sign up with Sarah Pundt)	<b>15</b> 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98 6:30PM - Men's Fellowship at Doug Smith's 7PM - Koinonia (Women's Fellowship)	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> 9AM - Sunday School (Grades PreK - 12 have music) 10:15AM - Worship Youth Christmas Party	<b>19</b> Eve - Boy Scouts	<b>20</b> Eve - Cub Scouts	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98 <b>JANUARY NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 10:15AM - Worship	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>

# DECEMBER NEWSLETTER 2022

## MUSICAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Saturday, December 3, 11AM-1PM

## SAFE CHURCH TRAINING SESSIONS

December 6th or 14th at 7pm  
(sign up with Sarah Pundt)

## ADVENT MISSION PROJECT

Birthday Kits for BPNN for kids of BPNN families



## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

We will offer one Christmas Eve Service  
this year at 7:30PM.

### SALEM CHURCH STAFF:

PH: 608-845-7315  
[www.salemchurchverona.org](http://www.salemchurchverona.org)

#### Interim Minister:

Rev. Dr. Tom Robinson  
[trobinson@salemchurchverona.org](mailto:trobinson@salemchurchverona.org)

#### Office Administrator:

Cara Bahr  
[cbahr@salemchurchverona.org](mailto:cbahr@salemchurchverona.org)

#### Director of Christian Education & Director of Youth Ministry:

Sarah Pundt  
[spundt@salemchurchverona.org](mailto:spundt@salemchurchverona.org)

#### Music Director:

Dawn Lingard

#### Bell Choir Director:

Carrie Coenen

#### Church Council President:

George Adams

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An Open  
and Affirming  
Congregation

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

502 Mark Drive  
PO Box 930125  
Verona, WI 53593-0125

*Living Out God's Love*  
**SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

