

LIVING OUT GOD'S LOVE

Salem United Church of Christ is an Open and Affirming Congregation

NEWSLETTER | FEBRUARY 2022

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SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR FEBRUARY:

Week of February 6:

Isaiah 6:1-8, (9-13)
Psalm 138
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Luke 5:1-11

Week of February 13:

Jeremiah 17:5-10
Psalm 1
1 Corinthians 15:12-20
Luke 6:17-26

Week of February 20:

Genesis 45:3-11, 15
Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40
1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50
Luke 6:27-38

Week of February 27:

Exodus 34:29-35
Psalm 99
2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2
Luke 9:28-36, (37-43a)

REFLECTIONS FROM TOM...

So ... this is what we discussed in Confirmation Class this week (on ZOOM): "**Worship!**" But it is a vital discussion/reflection for all of us individually, and for us together as Salem Church, especially in these times when getting 'together' is not necessary easy!

We started with a broad definition of the origin of the word, thanks to Wikipedia:

The word is derived from the Old English *weorþscipe*, meaning to venerate "worship, honor shown to an object", which has been etymologized as "worthiness or worth-ship"—to give, at its simplest, worth to something.

We tend to think of Worship as something that we do in one place, on a Sunday, but our Christian Worship is actually everyday, wherever we are, as we converse with God, in thankfulness, in confession, in petition, in joy and in sorrow, about what is real in our living. Coming together, of course, even "virtually" online or otherwise, is of great importance to affirm that covenantal community to which God calls us through our faith.

One great way to "worship" in the everyday, is to offer thankfulness or concern to God "in the moment", for something you experience, for something you are doing through which you learn and grow or are challenged, and sometimes to express your sense of closeness to, or distance from, God. It is all "worship", if you are "conversing" with God.

Did you know that our communal Sunday Worship Services are specifically and intentionally structured to be a "conversation" with God? God does or says something (Call to Worship, Scripture, Assurance of Pardon, Baptism and Communion, even the Sermon!) to us ... and we respond (Prayers of Confession and Thanksgiving, hymns, anthems, offering, doxology, and "Thanks be to God!"). Conversation with God!

A wonderful discipline to get us into the rhythm, the "dance" of daily and communal Sunday Worship ... is a devotional that you can access online, on smartphone or computer or tablet: "d365". It is free, written by many, many diverse people, changes daily, is quick to fit into busy lives, and gives you something to center your day. Try it at www.365.org

continued on next page...



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1: Matthew Flood
- 2: Kyle Smith
- 9: Owen Butzlaff
- 10: Nicolas Graese, Kelly Bass, Audra Smith
- 11: Terrie Smith, Bryce Corning
- 13: Debbie Hoffman
- 16: Molly Hill
- 17: Mary Cutler, Tyler Denu
- 19: Kyle Sundby
- 20: Joyce Fredrickson
- 21: Charity Durnen, Isaac Burgenske
- 22: Amy Luginbuhl, Henry Butzlaff
- 23: Kelly Borelli, Kira Tlusty
- 24: Carla Hageman, Terri Fiez, Wyatt Denu
- 25: Rhoda Gust, Joyce Gust

FUNERAL SERVICES

The funeral service for **Lyle Baez** was held in our sanctuary on January 17, 2022.

The memorial service for **Ruthellen Phillips** will be held at our church on Saturday, February 19 at 11am, with a visitation from 9:30am until the service begins.

2021 GIVING STATEMENTS

Giving statements for 2021 have been either e-mailed or mailed to you. If you did not receive one and would like to have one, please contact Frank Westphal, Heather Thoma, or the church office.

In this rather disruptive time dealing with the on-going pandemic, we can and should reclaim worship as a way to center, balance, and give worth to our lives and our relationship with God.

Worship isn't just us giving honor and "worth-ness" toward God - it is also God's way of giving love and "worth-ness" to us. A conversation of love with our God! Try it - you'll like it!

Peace and Joy and Worshipfulness,
Rev Tom

CHURCH BUILDING REMAINS CLOSED

The church building continues to be closed as we do our part to slow the spread of COVID. Services, Sunday School Classes and meetings are being conducted virtually. The council will meet on February 8th and determine if it is appropriate to reopen.

The easiest way to access worship services it is to click on the "Link to Online Worship" button on the homepage of our church website: www.salemchurchverona.org. The bulletins are also available to view or download.

Another way to access the service is simply to paste this link to it into your internet browser: <https://youtu.be/Ovtv26Hx704>

Finally, one can access the YouTube website - www.YouTube.com - and type in "Salem United Church of Christ Verona WI" into the search box, and it will then list ALL of the recorded services that are on YouTube.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Salem is pleased to make available scholarships for current church members for expenses during the first year of college, trade school, or technical college.

To receive one of these scholarships, interested persons must complete an application form by April 1, 2022. Contact the church office to receive an application form should you wish one.

Please note this is not limited to high school seniors. Older adults who are planning to attend college, trade school, or technical college are likewise encouraged to apply.

SPEND TIME WITH US...

Do you have a special interest or hobby you would like to share with Salem's Youth? Intergenerational connections are vital to healthy faith development in young people. Please contact Sarah Pundt to plan and schedule your event.

WOMEN'S GUILD NEWS

We were able to use the bazaar funds to make donations to the following organizations as voted upon at our November 2021 meeting: New Glarus Activity Fund - \$150, New Glarus Home auxiliary - \$400, Prison Ministry Project - \$600, Lakeland University Scholarship - \$400, Wisconsin Conference UCC blanket fund - \$300, Save the Children (buy a cow) - \$200, Verona food Pantry - \$100, and "Our Daily Bread" devotional booklet - \$100. This totals \$2,250, which we were able to do thanks to you, our Salem members and supporters. When you help us, we can help others, which is our mission!

It is still TBD if we can have our annual Spring Luncheon this year. We will keep you informed as we approach Springtime. Our next meeting will be Thursday, April 7, 2022 at 1:30pm.

NEW ADDRESS

Sue Thiede has recently moved into All Saints Assisted Living. If you would like her new address, please contact Cara Bahr, our office administrator.

DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS

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



Here is your Salem Church Pastor Search Committee!

These are the members of the Salem Church Pastor Search Committee, selected by Council from among those nominated by members of the Congregation:

Brad Bergin, Kathy Hauser, Krista Nechvatal, Jon Pundt, Angela Quade, Karen Williams, and Brian Winterle. They will be advised and resourced along the way by Rev. Tom Robinson (Interim Pastor, during the pre-Candidate phase) and by Rev. Ted Drewsen and Rev. Amy Lunde-Whitler from the Southwest Association of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ.

We had hoped and expected to introduce the Committee to the Congregation on January 16th, at Sunday Worship in the Salem Church Sanctuary, but the Omicron surge interrupted that plan. We WILL have a formal Commissioning of the Committee once back for onsite worship, but for now, the Search Committee has already begun meeting "virtually" each week. Leadership and tasks chosen from among the Committee include: Jon as Chairperson, with Krista as backup Chair when needed; Brian, Secretary; Angela, Communications; Krista and Karen, Announcements; Kathy, Profile writing; and Brad, Committee Chaplain. Of course, each member will carry out these specific leading roles, but also support each other in every role, and do numerous other tasks. Among those other tasks will be reaching out to groups and individuals and families for input, surveys, discussion, and discernment. We will not only need to assess who we are currently as a Church in worship and mission, but also how and in what ways God will call us into future ministry within our congregation and community, as well as beyond ourselves. This will all go into the Church Profile, which is what potential Pastoral Candidates will first read to learn about Salem Church.

Please be in constant prayer for the individual members of the Search Committee and for the Committee as a whole. This is a very important responsibility and a multi-faceted process. Salem Church will be regularly kept informed of the stages through which the Search Process is moving and deeply involved in the data and profile information gathering. However, the internal workings of the Search Committee will necessarily be confidential, especially once actual Candidates for Pastor are in dialogue with the Search Committee. Thank you for your love, prayers, and support of our Search Committee along this pivotal journey of searching for Salem Church's next "settled" (permanent) Pastor!

SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS

One important way that we can remain in community with each other is by sharing our joys and concerns and prayer requests. We encourage you to share this information with Rev. Tom, either by e-mail (trobinson@salemchurchverona.org) or a phone call to the church and indicate if you wish for it to be made known to the wider congregation (shared via e-mail and during worship). You are welcome to leave Rev. Tom a voicemail message at mailbox extension 101.

LIVING OUT GOD'S LOVE THROUGH CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sarah Pundt, Director of Christian Education
608-692-3239 or spundt@saalemchurchverona.org

And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love. (1 Cor. 13:13)

The adult Sunday school class is currently studying 1 Corinthians and chapter 13 of that book is all about love. This scripture passage is often read at weddings but using it only in that context falls short of its deeper meaning. Love is obviously a main topic throughout the Bible and there are four different kinds of love described in scripture: Eros (romantic), Storge (family), Philia (friendship), and Agape (God's immeasurable, incomparable love for humankind). Love is so important and complex that it requires multiple different names to describe the nuances of our relationships with each other and God. In honor of Valentine's Day, pull out your Bible and ponder the true meaning of love in 1 Corinthians 13.

Sunday School Classes for all ages*

Sunday school classes for all ages are offered every Sunday @ 9am September-May.

PreK-Grade 5: Lower Level Sunday school area
Grades 6-12: 2nd Floor Youth Room (opposite choir loft)
Adults: Fellowship Hall

Church Nursery: The nursery will remain closed until further notice as we continue to navigate through the pandemic. Please know that at Salem UCC children of all ages are warmly welcomed in church during worship

**All Sunday school classes are being held online until further notice. PreK-Grade 5 & Grades 6-12 meet in separate Zoom classes on Sunday mornings @ 9am. The adult class meets on Thursday evenings @ 7pm. Please contact Sarah Pundt for the link to join one of these groups.*

Adult Sunday School Class Sundays @ 9am, Fellowship Hall

**(This class is temporarily meeting online every Thursday evening @ 7pm. Please contact Sarah Pundt for the link to join this group.)*

Jan./Feb.: *Listen Up! Bible Study of 1 Corinthians*
 (contact Sarah Pundt for your personal copy of the Bible study workbook)

Lent: *Dwelling in the Word - The Parables*

April/May: *Serving as the Hands and Feet of Jesus*

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (BOCE)

The BoCE oversees all aspects of the Christian Education offerings at Salem: Sunday School for all ages, Palm Sunday Pilgrimage, Vacation Bible School (all ages), Christmas program, Parent's Promise, Koinonia and other adult small groups. In consultation with the Director of Christian Education, this advisory committee provides guidance for the content and structure of Sunday school and other programming. We are shifting from a model where the members of the BoCE provide the volunteer service for this programming, and they will now solely serve in an advisory capacity. This important church committee is mandated in the Salem church constitution.

We need you! This committee is more important than ever. As we search for a new pastor and try to grow our church, a strong BoCE provides the backbone for our education ministries and sends a clear message that we are a vibrant and engaged congregation. No previous experience required, and anyone who believes in the value of Christian Education is welcome. Please contact Sarah Pundt to learn more about this opportunity or to participate in this advisory group.

LENT

"Be the Church" Lenten Devotional

Our annual Lenten Devotional is back by popular demand. This devotional provides daily reflections written and created by Salem congregation members. The theme for the devotional this year is "Be the Church". The adult Sunday school class has been exploring ideas for being the hands and feet of Jesus beyond our church building. This devotional theme builds on that and calls us to action in our community as both individuals and as a congregation.

Writers and contributors still needed! As of this newsletter writing, we still need 13 more contributors to this year's devotional. If you participate, you will receive a scripture to guide your reflection and response. Your response can be in the form of writing, photography, drawing, art, or any other method of expressing your interpretation of that scripture verse. *All submissions are due by Feb. 13.* Please contact Sarah Pundt for more information or to participate.

Palm Sunday Program **April 10 @9am**

Please contact Sarah Pundt if you would like to help create and organize our Palm Sunday morning experience. Ideas can range from our traditional Donkey Walk and Pilgrimage to intergenerational activity stations in Fellowship Hall. New ideas welcome! We do not have BoCE members to help make this program a reality and we will need to rely on volunteers to provide this opportunity. *Please express your interest to help before Feb. 21.*

SMALL GROUPS

Koinonia

All women of Salem are invited for a time of reflection and fellowship. This group meets in Fellowship Hall, the third Thursday of each month at 7pm.

February 17* Bible Trivia @ 7pm Host: Judy Skupien

**This meeting is contingent on Covid restrictions. Watch your emails for details.*

SALEM YOUTH NEWSLETTER

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

February 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!

Lock-In Overnight Our Lock-In scheduled for Jan. 21 was postponed due to Covid restrictions. We adapted our plan and had an outdoor sledding party and campfire. Thank you to Rod and Kristin Runnheim for organizing and supervising the fire and bringing the hot beverages. It was a cold evening but a good time was had by all! Please watch for details on our rescheduled lock-in overnight.

February Gatherings Feb. 6 & 20 @6:30-7:45pm
We will use our February gatherings to prepare for our Youth Sunday worship service. Our Feb. 6 gathering will be online. Please watch your email for an update on the location of the Feb. 20 gathering.

March 13 @6:30-7:45pm
Come join our drum circle! We have beautiful drums and percussion instruments that we will bring out for an evening of fun and community.

Youth Sunday March 6 @10:15am
We will be busy during February preparing for our Youth Sunday worship service on March 6. Please note the calendar for dates and times of youth Sunday prep. On Saturday morning March 5, we will practice a run-through of the worship service. All youth are invited and encouraged to participate in some way with this service.

Spend time with us..

Do you have a special interest or hobby you would like to share with Salem's Youth? Intergenerational connections are vital to healthy faith development in young people. Please contact Sarah Pundt to plan and schedule your event.

S.A.L.T. Trip June 24-26

Camping @ Blue Mounds State Park

During our two-day S.A.L.T. trip, we will engage in a conservation project and explore the work done by Al Swain, a beloved Salem member who passed away in 2019. We will make Intergenerational Connections with congregation members who join us to share their experiences. Hiking, swimming, campfires, and games will top off our fun experience. Please contact Sarah Pundt for more information.

YOUTH CALENDAR

January

30 @ 6:30pm Youth Sunday Planning
(online)

February

6 @ 6:30pm Youth Sunday Planning
(online)

20 @ 6:30pm Youth Sunday Planning

March

5 @ 10am-12pm Youth Sunday Prep

6 @ 8am Youth Sunday

13 @ 6:30pm Youth Gathering

FEBRUARY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 4:45PM - Confirmation (Zoom)	3 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98 7PM - Adult Sunday School on Zoom	4	5
6 9AM - Sunday School (Zoom) 10:15AM - Worship 6:30PM - Youth Sunday Planning (online)	7	8 7PM - Council	9 4:45PM - Confirmation (Zoom)	10 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98 7PM - Adult Sunday School on Zoom	11	12
13 9AM - Sunday School 10:15AM - Worship Submissions for Devotional Booklet Due	14 Eve - Boy Scouts	15	16 4:45PM - Confirmation	17 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98 7PM - Koinonia (Women's Fellowship)	18	19 9:30AM - Visitation for Ruthellen Phillips 11AM - Memorial Service
20 9AM - Sunday School 10:15AM - Worship 6:30PM - Youth Sunday Planning	21 Eve - Boy Scouts	22	23 4:45PM - Confirmation MARCH NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE	24 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98	25	26
27 9AM - Sunday School 10:15AM - Worship	28 Eve - Boy Scouts					

JANUARY NEWSLETTER 2022

"BE THE CHURCH" LENTEN DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

In search of contributors

Contact Sarah Pundt with questions or to participate

MEET YOUR SALEM CHURCH PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

Introduction letter inside

CHURCH BUILDING CURRENTLY CLOSED

*Look for information following the February 8th
council meeting about possible reopening.*

SALEM CHURCH STAFF:

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www.salemchurchverona.org

Interim Minister:

Rev. Dr. Tom Robinson

trobinson@salemchurchverona.org

Office Administrator:

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cbahr@salemchurchverona.org

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Sarah Pundt

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Music Director:

Dawn Lingard

Bell Choir Director:

Carrie Coenen

Church Council President:

George Adams

An Open
and Affirming
Congregation

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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

