

LIVING OUT GOD'S LOVE

Salem United Church of Christ is an Open and Affirming Congregation

NEWSLETTER | MAY 2022

Photo by Lisa Fotios

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR MAY:

Week of May 1:

Acts 9:1-6, (7-10)

Psalm 30

Revelation 5:11-14

John 21:1-19

Week of May 8:

Acts 9:36-43

Psalm 23

Revelation 7:9-17

John 10:22-30

Week of May 15:

Acts 11:1-18

Psalm 148

Revelation 21:1-6

John 13:31-35

Week of May 22:

Acts 16:9-15

Psalm 67

Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5

John 14:23-29 or John 5:1-9

May 26 (Ascension Day)

Acts 1:1-11

Psalm 47 or 93

Ephesians 1:15-23

Luke 24:44-53

Week of May 29:

Acts 16:16-34

Psalm 97

Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21

John 17:20-26

REFLECTIONS FROM TOM...

For this week after Easter, the primary text for many devotionals, like the ones in These Days, focus on John 20: 19-31, which includes the section about "Doubting Thomas". Yes, that same Disciple who doubted what the other Disciples said about Jesus appearing to them after the Resurrection. Now ... to be honest ... I am rather "defensive" on behalf of the Disciple Thomas, as I AM a "Thomas", and growing up as "Tommy" in the Southern Bible Belt, I had to endure the taunts of my little "friends" every single year about this time. "Doubting Thomas", "Doubting Thomas", "Doubting Thomas". *Sigh*

But, as I grew in age and faith (and hopefully, maturity), I came to realize that this passage is not ALL bad news for Thomas. He becomes the very first person to proclaim Jesus as "My Lord and my God!" ... and he does not actually even touch the wounds (as Jesus has offered). Later, he is reputed to have carried the Gospel message as far as India, where to this day many Christians conduct worship in ancient "Syriac", a dialect of Palestine!

In preparation and anticipation of our welcoming new Confirmands into membership of Salem Church, on Sunday May 22nd, there is a line in the These Days devotional for April 21st that stood out to me: "You see, it is where our questions and God's actions intersect that our life of faith really takes flight." Confirmands are just beginning their faith journey, because they have learned a lot about God and church and Bible and such, but also witnessed the faith of their parents and others in our church. They are making a basic Profession of Faith, but do not have to have ALL THINGS theological firmly decided and catalogued. The questions that they ask now, and later, and life-long ... will be what helps their faith "take flight". This is true for ALL of us!

As we celebrate Confirmation Sunday, on May 22nd, this would be a good time for all of us to recommit to a life-long exploration of not only things we believe, but things we question, events in life and world with which we struggle, and doubts that lead us to be open to new awareness about the spiritual aspects of our humanity. So, "doubting", with an openness to God's revelations and actions, is not a bad thing at all - it is a doorway to deeper faith, more effective ministry, and ever-deepening spiritual growth.

Peace and Joy to all, as we share in the light and life of the Resurrection!
Rev. Tom Robinson, Interim Pastor

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The men of the church are invited to gather for dinner and fellowship on May 19th at 6:30PM at the home of Doug Smith.

NEW ADDRESS

Elisabeth Pankonin has moved to Milestone Senior Living in Cross Plains. Contact the church if you would like her address.



MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 3: Sawyer Quade
- 5: Mark Yurs
- 7: Riley Dahlk
- 8: Martha Booth
- 14: Morgan Moll
- 18: Arlene Stradlbeger, Catie Cullen
- 19: Kari Pechan
- 21: Guy Williams
- 24: Carolyn Kleinfeldt
- 25: Sarah Worley
- 28: Ron Pauley, Israel Kwilinski, Drew Adams
- 29: Kay Berry

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

REV. TOM ON VACATION

Rev. Tom is on vacation April 25-May 9. Our own Lisa Hart will be the guest preacher on May 1st and Rev. Paul Melrose (a longtime friend of Tom's) will preach on May 8th.

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

We will observe the right of confirmation on Sunday, May 22nd for Blake Adams, Owen Luginbuhl, and Brianna Runnheim.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER RECOGNITION

This year's Sunday School teachers will be recognized during worship on May 15th. Our 3rd and 4th graders will also be presented with Bibles by the Women's Guild.



SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY

Help us clean up around the church on Saturday, May 7 beginning at 8am. We will be doing outside and inside work.

SYMPATHIES AND JOYS

Our sympathies to our bell director, Carrie Coenen, and her family. Her father, Roger Rymer, passed away on April 14th after complications from a fall.

Our sympathies to Debbie and the entire Bass family. Tom Bass passed away on April 25. He was a beloved member of our congregation and touched many lives. A celebration of life is in the plans for sometime this summer.

Welcome to Peter Fielek who was baptized as an adult on April 24th. He is the brother of Joe Fielek. Joe and his wife Ashley (Rusch) were married at our church in 2019.

Congratulations to Cara and Nathan Bahr who welcomed Machai Gabriel to the family on April 23. He was 9lb 4oz, 22.5 inches. His brothers and sister are happy to finally meet him.

FB4K LENTEN MISSION PROJECT



Thank you, Salem community! Through your generosity, FB4K received 14 new bike helmets, 8 bike locks, \$620 in financial contributions, and we provided 72 hours of volunteer service! All of this is in addition to the 67 bikes we collected last fall.

Still Want to Help?

The end of Lent marks the official end of our Lenten mission project, but the needs of FB4K still continue. FB4K still needs volunteers to help prepare bikes for their new owners. There are a variety of shifts and days available. They also need a lot of help at the bike giveaway days: May 7, 14, 21. Gather a group of friends and spend a few hours putting smiles on the faces of children as they receive their new bikes! Please contact Sarah Pundt to register.

MONETARY DONATIONS FOR UKRAINE

The Wisconsin Conference is collecting donations for the aid of Ukraine. All that they receive will go directly to providing food, shelter, and care to refugees of the war in Ukraine. Making a gift through the Wisconsin Conference allows us to say together: We unite in hearing God's call to help refugees. And, in a state often divided by politics, it matters for us to find ways to make a common public witness to our shared values.

Give online at
www.wucc.org/Ukraine

WOMEN'S GUILD SPRING SALAD LUNCHEON



That's right! The Women's Guild is having its annual Salad Luncheon once again on Thursday, May 5th from 11:30am to 12:30pm. A large variety of salads will be enjoyed, along with a selection of delicious desserts. The cost remains at \$7.00 per person.

The Guild will greatly appreciate the donation of a salad from every household of Salem, where possible. You can bring it the morning of the luncheon, or Wednesday morning between 9 and 10 am while we are setting up for the event.

We are thrilled that we can host this event once again. The success of this event means we can continue our mission work of helping those in need in our church family, in our community, and around the world.



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.

SALEM'S 2022 GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Join us as we honor this year's graduates during worship on May 1.



Owen Butzlaff

Owen is graduating from Oregon High School and has been a lifelong member of Salem UCC. In his younger years, he was active in Sunday school. As he got older, he was confirmed in high school and would occasionally serve as a welcomer. Community, compassion, and kindness are all values Owen remembers most about his time here at Salem. Owen feels that the Salem community is something that extends beyond the walls of the church building. He also learned about kindness and compassion from scripture read in Sunday school classes and worship, but the relationships and conversations he had at Salem took his understanding of these values deeper. Now, he wishes to use his career to interact with and help people, specifically in a health-related field. Owen's current ambitions include a college focus on kinesiology with potential career goals of sports medicine, athletic training, or a related health-related career including the possibility of medical school. Iowa State is currently the front-runner of Owen's choice of colleges.



Payton Corning

Payton is graduating from Verona Area High School and is a lifelong member of Salem. She was baptized here as an infant and over the years, she has participated in Sunday school, Confirmation, youth gatherings, mission opportunities, and volunteered in the church nursery. Payton is a quiet leader who is firm in her self-understanding and values. She also has a big heart for service and enjoys being part of a church community that supports that interest. In high school, Payton completed the CNA program through Madison College to explore serving others through healthcare. She is currently undecided about nursing as a career but knows that her future endeavors, whatever they may be, need to focus on service to others. Payton plans to attend the University of Minnesota in the fall and is looking forward to exploring different academic options as she pursues her degree.



Wyatt Denu

Wyatt is graduating from Mt. Horeb High School and has been a lifelong member of Salem. He was baptized here as an infant and completed his Confirmation here in high school. His weekly confirmation classes intersected with an intense period of transition for him. Wyatt discovered that as he began to build a relationship with God, many pieces of his life began to fall into place. Through this process, Wyatt feels he grew into the student he could be and wanted to be and has strived toward that potential ever since. Wyatt plans to attend UW-LaCrosse to study Exercise and Sport Science.

LIVING OUT GOD'S LOVE THROUGH CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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

"Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God's people, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as it serves this community and the world?"
(*Order for Confirmation, New Century Hymnal, p. 41*)

May is a special month in our Christian Education program and almost every worship service features an acknowledgement or celebration:

- We are giving Bibles to our 3rd and 4th graders on May 15. This gift represents our desire for them to engage in lifelong learning and faith exploration.
- We are celebrating our Confirmands on May 22. The question listed above from the New Century Hymnal is posed to the Confirmands as part of the Order for Confirmation.
- We are acknowledging our graduating high school seniors on May 1 with prayers of celebration, gratitude, and protection. We hope their church roots at Salem keep them grounded while they are pursuing new adventures.
- We are publicly honoring our Sunday school teachers on May 15. These individuals have mentored our young people through all these various stages.

It is important that the congregation surrounding our young people models the dedication to faith and church we are asking of them: Are you also continuing with your lifelong learning and faith exploration like we hope for our 3rd & 4th graders? Are you living up to the Confirmation promise we ask our youth to make? Do you carry your faith with you on your journeys like we hope for our high school graduates? And do you share your faith with others through teaching and mentoring like our Sunday school teachers? In modeling good spiritual habits for others, you will be rewarded with a deeper and richer faith that carries you through all seasons of life. You will also be leading the next generation to be part of a strong and healthy church.

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.

Adult Sunday School Class Sundays @ 9am, Conference Room (1st Floor)

Our program theme this year has focused on being the church out in the wider community. Throughout May, we will explore specific ways we can serve as the hands and feet of Jesus beyond the walls of Salem. We will learn about resources and ministries offered through the Wisconsin Conference UCC and the national UCC setting. Topics will include Open and Affirming , Environment, Hunger, Poverty, and Interfaith work. We will also learn about funding available to congregations to implement innovative and community ministries.

Bibles for 3rd and 4th Grade Children

The Women's Guild will present Bibles to our 3rd and 4th grade students during our Sunday morning worship on May 15. Our 4th graders have waited over a year for this rite of passage because of Covid delays. Join us to celebrate this special moment for Emma Burgenske, Micah Banaszak, Soren Winterle, and Isaac Bahr.

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, and some of Salem's 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. This important church committee is mandated in the Salem church constitution.

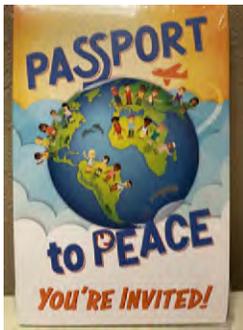
We currently need 3 more individuals from the church congregation to participate as BoCE members and we also need a Sunday School Superintendent. Please contact Sarah Pundt if you are interested in participating or have any questions.

Current BoCE Members:

Dave Triplett

Kelli Malueg, Church Council Representative

Sarah Pundt, Director of Christian Education and Youth Ministries (ex-officio member)



VBS News! **Passport to Peace** **July 10-12**

*Intergenerational Community Meal
Music, Bible Stories, Games, & Crafts for Kids
Adult Bible Study & Discussion Group
Volunteers needed! Please contact Sarah Pundt.*

SMALL GROUPS

Koinonia *May 19 @ 7pm*

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.

Parent's Promise *May 12 @ 7pm* **Church Library**

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. Our focus for this gathering will be on Mental Health and Youth. Newcomers and visitors are always welcome! Please contact Sarah Pundt for more information.

SALEM YOUTH NEWSLETTER

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

May 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!

May 22 @ 6:30pm *CROP Walk for Hunger Impact*

Salem Youth provided the largest local CROP Walk team last fall. Join us on May 22 as we explore the real-world impact our group had on others through our CROP Walk participation.

Rite of Confirmation May 22 @ 10:15am

Congratulations and many blessings for our three Confirmands: Blake Adams, Owen Luginbuhl, and Brianna Runnheim. Please join us in worship on May 22 as we celebrate with them.

Youth Mission Work

FB4K Bike Giveaway May 1 @ 1pm; May 7 @ 11am-2pm

The youth have been working with Free Bikes for Kids Madison throughout this program year. Last fall, the youth hosted a bike collection station at Salem and received 67 bikes from the surrounding community. Now, Salem youth and adults will experience their work with FB4K come full circle as they participate in bike giveaway events. Please contact Sarah Pundt to register.

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.

Registration deadline is May 22!

At Your Service

Do you need assistance with lawn mowing, yardwork, painting, or dog walking? The youth of Salem would like to serve you by helping with these chores and other odd jobs. Please contact Sarah Pundt for more information or to schedule a service.



DIY mini-golf at youth lock-in on April 8th



FB4K volunteer session

MAY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Senior Sunday - Guest Preacher Lisa Hart 9AM - Sunday School 10:15AM - Worship	2 Eve - Boy Scouts	3	4 6PM - BRC 6:30PM - Handbells	5 11:30AM - 12:30PM - Salad Luceon Worship on VHAT-98	6	7 8AM - Church Clean-up Day Worship on VHAT-98
8 Mother's Day - Guest Preacher Rev. Paul Melrose 9AM - Sunday School 10:15AM - Worship	9 Eve - Boy Scouts	10 6PM - Finance 7PM - Council	11 4:45PM - Confirmation 6PM - BRC 6:30PM - Handbells	12 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98 7PM - Parent's Promise	13	14
15 9AM - Sunday School 10:15AM - Worship	16 Eve - Boy Scouts	17	18 4:45PM - Confirmation 6PM - BRC	19 6:30PM - Men's Fellowship 7PM - Koinonia (Women's Fellowship) 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98	20	21
22 CONFIRMATION SUNDAY 9AM - Sunday School (Last Day) 10:15AM - Worship 6:30PM - Youth Gathering	23 Eve - Boy Scouts	24	25	26 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98	27	28
29 10:15AM - Worship	30 Memorial Day	31				

MAY NEWSLETTER 2022



WOMEN'S GUILD SALAD LUCHEON

Thursday, May 5, 11:30am-12:30pm

\$7 per person



CLEAN-UP DAY

Saturday, May 7, 8am:

Outdoor and Indoor work to be done

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

May 22, 10:15am

SALEM CHURCH STAFF:

PH: 608-845-7315

www.salemchurchverona.org

Interim Minister:

Rev. Dr. Tom Robinson

trobinson@salemchurchverona.org

Office Administrator:

Cara Bahr

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Director of Christian Education

& Director of Youth Ministry:

Sarah Pundt

spundt@salemchurchverona.org

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

