

LIVING OUT GOD'S LOVE

Salem United Church of Christ is an Open and Affirming Congregation

NEWSLETTER | AUGUST 2023

Photo by Marian Strinoiu from Pexels

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR AUGUST:

Week of August 6:

Genesis 32:22-31
Psalms 17:1-7, 15
Romans 9:1-5
Matthew 14:13-21

Week of August 13:

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28
Psalms 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b
Romans 10:5-15
Matthew 14:22-33

Week of August 20:

Genesis 45:1-15
Psalms 133
Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32
Matthew 15:(10-20) 21-28

Week of August 27:

Exodus 1:8-2:10
Psalms 124
Romans 12:1-8
Matthew 16:13-20

FROM PASTOR PHIL

Dear Members and Friends of Salem,

This fall, we have some youth who are the right age to start Confirmation class. For me, this is an exciting time. I love the stories of our faith, those in scripture, in the history of the church, and in our own experiences. I enjoy explaining what the stories might have meant in their first settings (as it is hard to know for sure), how they have been understood at different times (occasionally in surprisingly complex and/or modern ways), what scholars say about them, and then asking students how these stories resonate with them.

Of course, Confirmands are not the only ones for whom this is all true. So, as we head towards the fall, I am looking for ways to offer Bible study for all ages. I know that evenings tend to work better for people who work during the day, and daytime works better for people who don't like to drive at night.

I also want to know what topics you are interested in. Some possibilities include:

- How did the Bible get to be the way it is?
- Are we allowed to read it for ourselves? Are we allowed to understand it THIS way? (Hint: for this we might use Jennifer Bird's Permission Granted--Take the Bible into Your Own Hands, which may give away part of the answer!)
- What does the Bible say about _____?
- Can we believe the Bible and also be/do/believe _____?
- Is St. Paul really a total jerk, or can his writings help people?
- Whatever you think of that I haven't mentioned here.

My idea of Bible study is where I can bring some of what the tradition offers and what scholars say (if they even agree with each other) and then we have a discussion where we learn from each other and help each other grow in our faith.

So, think about what you want for Bible Study, whether you are a daytime or an evening person, and let me know. We will look to get started in September.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Phil

COUNCIL CORNER



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 4: Colleen Bass
- 5: Madeline Moll
- 7: Debbie Bass
- 8: Owen Luginbuhl
- 13: Gladys Schmid
- 14: Bake Adams
- 15: Isaac Bahr
- 16: Katherine Shubak
- 17: Michael Fiez
- 22: Dawn Lingard
- 23: Verlis Luchsinger
- 27: Lena Woodis
- 29: Melissa Remus
- 30: Heidi Hodel
- 31: Krista Nechvatal

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

Women's Guild

Talks are ongoing concerning the future of a long-standing institution at Salem. Our Women's Guild finds its membership dwindling and participation waning as the services the Guild provides for Salem - spring salad luncheon, fall bazaar and raffle, funeral lunches, Bibles for 3rd graders - remain the same. Pastor Phil and the Council are working with the Guild to find new ways to invite other church members to support the group's important work

Verona Area Chamber of Commerce

Salem has been offered the exciting opportunity to be the only area church featured on the Verona Area Chamber of Commerce website here. Last month a crew filmed various activities at Salem and an invitation by Pastor Phil to stop by our church. After launching the website, scroll to the right, and click the Salem icon to see your church friends highlighted in the video.

Answer the Call

Late summer and fall is the time when plans for the upcoming year start to come together. Leadership is chosen, teachers are recruited, committee membership lists are filled, and budgets are planned. When the phone call comes inviting you to participate, please offer your time and talents, knowing that a simple "yes" will open the door to new church friendships, provide a chance to get to know our younger members, and allow you to become a welcome voice to join the conversation on Salem's leadership team. There will be openings for Church Council, Sunday School teachers and Financial Secretary to name a few. Volunteers for these openings are always welcome as well.

Other news...

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.



Eagle Scout Project

As his Eagle Scout project, Blaise Westphal has offered to catalog and digitize Salem's library collection. Over the following months, Blaise and his Boy Scout companions will be hard at work on this project.

Parking Lot

Do you find parking your car in the church lot a bit confusing? Time and weather have erased most of the line markings. No significant overhaul of the lot will be undertaken at this time, but look for refreshed lines soon. Also, exterior lighting issues are being addressed.

Sanctuary Accessibility

Speaking of parking, the Council discusses ways to provide easier access for wheelchairs and walkers in the sanctuary. Options are being considered to remove or strategically revise pews to more easily accommodate everyone in attendance.

MEALS FOR MADISON

Several years back, Salem helped with the Friday meal at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Madison. We are back at it on the first Friday of each month. If you are interested in participating, there is a sign up sheet behind the pews or you can speak with John Cashman for more information.

SYPMATHIES

*Our sympathies to the family of **Mary Poole** who died on July 9th. A private service will be held at a later date.*

*Our sympathies to the family of **Bernice Hamilton** who died on July 15th. Her service was held at Salem on Thursday, July 20th.*

COUNCIL CORNER CONTINUED...

Prairie on Property

Council has approved a group of Salem members to research and undertake the planting of a pollinator prairie on part of our vacant green space. Green thumbs are invited to join the group: contact Rod Runnheim or Doug Smith.

General Stewardship Report:

Last month's income: \$22,759

Last month's expenses: \$24,716

YTD income: \$137,006

YTD expenses: \$174,356

(includes \$30,000 transfer out of checking to money market account)

FELLOWSHIP TABLES

The Guild recently ordered 18 new (8 foot) and 4 (6 foot), white lightweight tables for Fellowship Hall. All finally got delivered. With the help of Doug Smith (truck), Harlan Hall, Scot Cullen, Cindy Remus and Mary Cutler. We unboxed and unwrapped them all and put them away in the closet. The boxes and the plastic wrap all got recycled. All the old tables will be going to a new home and will be leaving in the next few weeks.

The Guild with Memorial money from Gladys Behnke, Virginia Witt and Richard and Gladen Zurbuchen helped purchase the new tables. We thank everyone for supporting the Women's Guild to make this happen.

LIVING OUT GOD'S LOVE THROUGH CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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

When things change, God is with you. When you need help, God is with you. When you are afraid, God is with you. God is with you at all times and in all circumstances. This is a message we all need to hear, and it is the theme of our 2023 VBS. Join us for our final day of VBS Aug. 13 @ 10:15am-12pm. We have programs and groups for everyone followed by a kid-friendly community meal. Childcare for children under age 3 is available upon request.

Infants-Age 3: Parents and caregivers bring your little ones and gather for fellowship/play time and lunch. We have several families with babies born during Covid and some new families too. The casual atmosphere of VBS is the perfect opportunity for you and your child(ren) to get better acquainted with each other.

Age 3-Grade 5: VBS will include a Bible story, music, games, projects, and crafts. The children will share some of their music during worship on Aug. 13 @ 9am.

Grades 6-12: The youth all have different ways they like to participate in VBS. Some middle schoolers participate as VBS "campers". Some middle and high school students volunteer. And some high school students participate in the adult discussion group. Please contact Sarah Pundt to customize your personal VBS experience.

Adults: Everyone is invited to join our discussion group focused on the same Bible stories and themes the children will be learning. This group will be Bible study, discussion, and fellowship combined. Grab a cup of coffee following worship and gather in the first floor conference room.



Vacation Bible School
10:15am-12pm
Aug. 13
Please contact Sarah Pundt if you would like to register or to volunteer.

Congregational Summer Project: God Sightings

Let's stay connected this summer by sharing the ways in which we experience God in our lives: God Sightings. Throughout VBS, we are learning from Daniel's experience in Babylon how God is with us in all things and at all times. In response, we will create a special God Sightings Wall in fellowship hall as a way to visualize all the ways in which God is at work.

Visit the wall frequently to look for how others are experiencing God in their lives. Do you see any patterns or trends? Does anything surprise you? In what ways can you expand your potential for God sightings?

Instructions: Practice looking for how God is active in your life and share your God Sighting by writing a brief description of your experience (ie "saw a rainbow"). You can also take a picture or create artwork to express your experience. Email your God Sightings to Sarah Pundt spundt@salemchurchverona.org. or complete a God Sightings "wall tile" in fellowship hall. By the end of the summer, we should have a wonderful wall mosaic of God's presence in the world.

BoCE Notes: Looking Forward to Fall.....

It is only mid-summer, but the BoCE is hard at work preparing for the 2023-2024 program year. One important way to tend to your own faith is to participate in our Christian Education ministry, both as a participant and leader.

Please make note of the following:

Sunday School Leaders: We are moving away from the term Sunday school teachers because the idea of teaching is intimidating. Teaching implies a high level of competence and mastery of a particular topic. It intimidates us when we think we need special teaching qualifications and Biblical knowledge to teach others in Sunday school class. Serving as a group leader simply requires a passion for the people and the topic at hand.

- Do you think you could lead our younger children by reading a Bible story to them?
- Do you think you could lead our Middle/High School group in a discussion by sharing your own questions about your faith?
- Do you have a passion for the future of the church and how we lead our young people and each other to grow in relationship with God and live the message of Christ in our daily lives?

We are recruiting leaders to serve in all age groups (preschool-adult) for the coming program year. Our Sunday school leaders work on a rotating schedule and teach when it fits their schedule. Training, curriculum, materials, and ongoing support are provided. Leading others is the best way for you to grow your own faith and learn more about God, Jesus, and the Bible. Don't want to go it alone? Find a friend and lead as a team.

Please contact Sarah Pundt if you have any questions or to indicate your interest in leading a Sunday school group.

Safe Church Training Aug. 17 or Sept. 11 @7-8pm

All volunteers who work with children at Salem UCC need to complete the Safe Church Training every 3 years. Sarah Pundt will be contacting those individuals whose training has expired. If you are new to Salem or unsure of your training status, please contact Sarah.

Sunday School Leader Meeting Aug. 24 @ 6:30pm

All Sunday school leaders are encouraged to attend our fall semester planning meeting. Bring your calendars and we will set the leading schedule, review the curriculum, and plan for the program year.

Sunday School Kickoff Event September 17 @ 9am

Bring a dish to pass and help us start our Sunday school program year. Come for fellowship and meet our Sunday school leaders for the year. All are welcome.

Christmas Program Plans

We are in the early stages of planning for Ornament Sunday and the Christmas Program. For our Christmas Program Event, we are planning an outdoor drive-thru live nativity for the evening of December 9. But we need your help.....

- Please start saving metal cans of all sizes (washed and with labels removed). We plan to make luminaries on Ornament Sunday (Nov. 26) to use for the live nativity.
- Animals: Do you or someone you know have animals we could safely use during our event (especially a donkey and sheep)?
- If you would like to help plan this event, please contact Sarah Pundt or speak to a member of the BoCE (Dave Triplett, Cara Bahr, and Kelli Malueg)

Christian Education Events

Aug. 24 @ 6:30pm
Sunday School Leader Meeting

Sept 17 @ 9am
Sunday School Kickoff

Nov. 26 @ 9am
Ornament Sunday

Dec. 9 (evening)
Christmas Program Event:
Live Nativity

Please mark your calendars for these important events.
A full calendar will be provided at the Sunday school kickoff.

SALEM YOUTH NEWSLETTER

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

AUGUST 2023

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

SALT Trip Sharing

52 people gathered on July 24 to share a meal together and hear about the youth SALT Trip to Minneapolis. It was a wonderful evening of reflection and testimony as the youth described the experience of confronting racism in our society, the value of fellowship with each other, and the importance of mixing fun with the hard work. Great job Salem youth! We are looking forward to SALT Trip 2024!



Heartland Second Harvest



Mdewankanton: Spirit of the Dwellers Lake Exhibit



Offerings for George Floyd Square

Coming up.....

August Visits: Sarah Pundt will be in contact with all youth and families to schedule a personal check-in. The goal is to continually improve how our youth ministry serves every individual youth and their families while also developing deeper connections with each family.

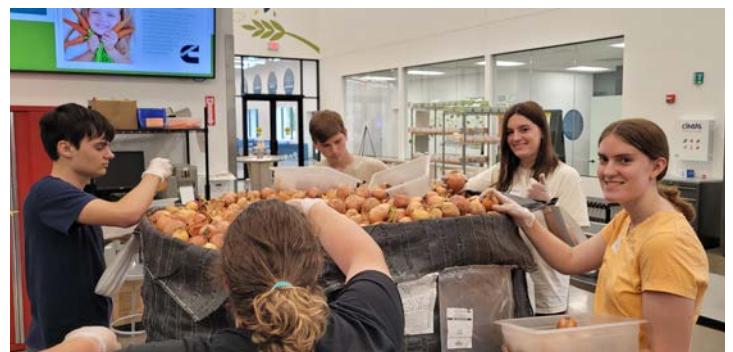
September: Watch the Mighty Network for information about our youth kickoff gathering. We will use this gathering to review our calendar for the coming program year, discuss service opportunities, and plan some fun!



Making our offerings before our visit to George Floyd Square



Youth talking with Angela Harrelsons, George Floyd's aunt



Sorting onions at Heartland Second Harvest

SALEM YOUTH AUGUST NEWSLETTER | 2023

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!

An Open
and Affirming
Congregation

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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

Living Out God's Love
SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



AUGUST 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98	4 Serve at Meals for Madison	5
6 9AM - Worship	7	8 6PM - Finance 7PM - Council	9	10 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98	11	12
13 9AM - Worship 10:15AM-12PM - VBS	14	15	16	17 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98 7-8PM - Safe Church Training	18	19
20 9AM - Worship	21	22 6:30PM - BOCE Meeting	23	24 6PM - Worship on VHAT-98 6:30PM - Men's Fellowship 6:30PM - Sunday School Leader Meeting	25 SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE	26
27 9AM - Worship	28	29	30	31		

AUGUST NEWSLETTER 2023

SAFE CHURCH TRAINING
Thursday, August 17 @ 7-8pm

SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADER MEETING
Thursday, August 24 @ 6:30pm

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
10:15am-12pm
August 13

SALEM CHURCH STAFF:

PH: 608-845-7315
www.salemchurchverona.org

Pastor

Rev. Philip Hobson
phobson@salemchurchverona.org

Office Administrator:

Cara Bahr
cbahr@salemchurchverona.org

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



**Give
Online**

An Open
and Affirming
Congregation

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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

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

