

Salem Lutheran Church

11 West Bernard Street
West St. Paul, MN 55118-1409
SalemLuth.org

Summer/Fall 2026



OUTDOOR PET BLESSING
SUNDAY, JULY 19
(Details on pg. 12)

Grounded in Scripture, we seek to Nurture the Faith and to Proclaim Christ's Love in Word and Deed to each other and our neighbors near and far.

ALL ARE WELCOME HERE

Be sure to check your e-mail on Wednesdays for a video message from Pastor Aaron and to stay in the loop with the announcements. There's always something happening at Salem and we want everyone to be a part of it! Please call the church office at (651) 457-6661 if you have any questions. Thank you!

Sunday Worship - 9:30 am (In person & via livestream)

Adult Forums - Sundays at 10:40 am in the Fellowship Hall
(no forums Ash Wed.-Easter Sunday)

Tuesday Bible Study - Tuesdays at 10:00 am in the Fireside Room (No sessions on July 7, 14, 21)

Faith Formation - Wednesdays at 5:30 pm (2nd Wednesday Activity Night) (Sep. - May) (*Meeting place dependent on construction schedule at St. Stephen's*)

Elizabeth Circle - Second Wednesday of each month at 10:00 am in the Fireside Room (Summer break Jun. - Aug.)

Men's Renewal Group - Every other Friday at 8:00 am (Hosted by Salem and St. Stephen's at Gallaghers, West St. Paul)

Women's Bible Study Breakfast - Every other Friday at 8:00 am (Lay-led by St. Stephen's at Gallaghers, West St. Paul)

Jubilee Ringers - Rehearsals on every Wednesday of each month at 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary (Sep. - May)

Senior Choir - Rehearsals on every Wednesday of each month at 7:15 pm in the Sanctuary (Sep. - May)

Learner Bells - Rehearsals on every Wednesday of each month at 7:15 pm in the Choir Room (Sep. - May)

Centering Prayer - Every other Saturday at 9:30 am in the Fireside Room

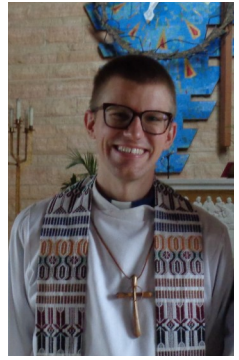
To stay current on all events/programs at Salem, please visit the church calendar at: www.salemluth.org/calendar-2

A message from Pastor Aaron:

“A Church for Today”

Hello Church,

I am writing this newsletter in the afterglow of our Summer Faith Fest. We shared three nights with our friends at St. Stephen’s talking about what it means to be Church, and I wanted to continue that reflection with you all. Our central image for the three days revolved around the earliest image of the Church we have which is found in Acts 2:42-47.



They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

In this short passage we see the bones of our shared Body in Christ. These earliest followers shared in teaching, fellowship, prayer, resources, and worship, creating a space for all to experience the love of God. In our three nights, we emphasized gathering around meals, sharing what we have for those in need, and worship. I could make this newsletter simply a summary of the three nights, but I think what I want to share is the overall takeaway I had from this experience which is, being Church together is a beautiful and simple gift that can help us address the hardest and most difficult of times.

I say that it's simple because Church is truly found in the presence of one another. We share in the body of Christ and experience God's grace when we are together, breaking bread and telling stories. It's as easy as that. Sometimes we dress up Church in beautiful buildings, with fancy liturgies, wonderful music, and ornate rituals, and that can be a moving meaningful experience, but it is not necessary. Most times the necessary thing as the Church is a prayer at a bedside, a cup of cold water on the street corner, or the sharing of possessions to meet the needs of a stranger. We don't find that in lifeless stone, but in the living bodies of friends and neighbors who gather with glad and generous hearts.

I am grateful that Salem practices these things and makes it a mission to reach out. I also know that this is a muscle which must continue to be refined and strengthened. As we look towards the future and wonder what the Church can look like in today's world, I think we can look back and find the blueprint from the very beginning. A community of generosity, gladness, commonality, and goodwill to all.

Thank you and thank God for this gift of being the Church together, may we continue this devotion, growing in practice and prayer until all needs are met and no one is found in need.

Your sibling in Christ,
Rev. Aaron Holmgren



A MORE ACCESSIBLE SALEM!

COMING SOON!

Just as God offers us love in a welcoming and supportive manner, Salem will soon be re-creating areas in the sanctuary to offer welcoming and supportive spaces to give our members, friends, and visitors the ability to participate in worship more fully, in body, mind and spirit.

Last year, we began this intention by creating a space for readers to share scripture without needing to use the chancel steps.

Future projects will include an accessible Communion set-up so that participants have the option to sit or stand while serving and won't need to lift/hold the Communion wine tray. We will also be creating spaces for mobility assistive devices.

The spaces will be officially introduced and blessed in an upcoming worship service. Stay tuned for more details!

For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

Romans 12:4-5





**A CONVERSATION WITH
ENGAGE:
LUTHERANS FOR GUN
VIOLENCE PREVENTION**

**DATE: SUNDAY, JULY 26
10:40 AM - FIRESIDE ROOM**

The following resolution was adopted at the St. Paul Area Synod Assembly this year:

Study and Action Regarding Assault Weapons and High-Capacity Magazines

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that in 2026, the youth and adults in the congregations of the Saint Paul Area Synod be encouraged to study gun violence and then act as peacemakers by urging friends, parents, teammates, fellow students, co-workers, and neighbors to write, visit, and phone their Minnesota and Federal legislators to ban assault weapons and high-capacity magazine sales.

In follow up to this resolution, Salem has asked Engage: Lutherans for Gun Violence Prevention, to provide further education on this topic. They will lead the adult forum on Sunday, July 26. We hope to see you all there!

ENGAGE is a Saint Paul Area Synod Public Witness Work Group on gun violence prevention (GVP). To learn more: engageelca.com.

Our mission is to MEDITATE on, EDUCATE about, and ADVOCATE for gun violence prevention in the non-violent Spirit of Jesus.





BE A PART OF SUPPORTING OUR NEIGHBORS!

Through the generous donations of Salem members and friends, we are able to provide emergency assistance to our local community members when funding is available. Unforeseen emergencies such as illness, job loss, and car repairs can easily derail financial stability for anyone. Through the Emergency Pastoral Fund, community members can submit an application to receive assistance and move forward in stabilization. This fund also supports emergency grocery assistance.

This year has been fraught with rising prices for food, gas, rent, and medical expenses. Imagine waking up and asking yourself:

“Should I eat just one meal today so that I can pay my rent?”

We have felt the deep need in our community as the number of requests for assistance has sharply increased. We are reaching out to ask everyone to prayerfully consider donating to the Pastor’s Emergency Fund so that we can continue offering assistance.

HOW TO DONATE:

Write a check out to Salem with “PEF” in the memo line.

Give cash with a note indicating “PEF” on it.

Donate online: Honor and/or remember someone by designating the donation to the “PEF” fund!

<https://secure.myvanco.com/YN9A/campaign/C-12TSB>

THANK YOU!!

I am a Child of God. I know it.
I live it. I love it.

JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Richard Fenton
- 1 Emily Nelson
- 1 Vincent Nesdahl
- 2 Julie Burket
- 2 Judy Hedger
- 7 Beverly Kroll
- 9 Kory Atkinson
- 9 Lawrence Gibis
- 10 Kenneth L. Hanson
- 10 Craig Vincent
- 11 Floyd DeHate
- 12 Johanna Nelson
- 12 Terry Stein
- 15 Donna Pederson
- 16 Elizabeth Gaines
- 17 Lori French
- 17 Mary Heath
- 17 Norma Johannsen
- 18 Elliott Magnuson
- 21 Beverly Momberger
- 25 Clarence Berg



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 5 Russell Emeott
- 13 Mary Ann Horner
- 15 Jared Pixley
- 16 Arlyn Larson
- 18 Judith Bartel
- 18 Kenneth French
- 19 Kathleen Hanson
- 19 Carol Olson
- 22 Mark Chapple
- 24 Arthur G. Lemke
- 25 Roxanne Olson
- 29 Frank Nesdahl
- 31 David Thomas

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Johni Wilczyk
- 9 David Johannsen
- 10 Elizabeth Fenton
- 10 Peter Hueller
- 10 Janet Sell
- 13 William Scibora
- 19 John Nesdahl
- 21 Jeannie Schmidt
- 23 Valerie Ruth Elling
- 26 Rosanna Barker
- 29 Nancy Wyatt

HUGE THANK YOU!

The Education Committee would like to thank everyone who donated generously to the Summer Faith Fest food drive. Twenty-eight emergency packs of food were packed for Neighbors, Inc.



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JULY ANNIVERSARIES

- 16 Scott and Julie Reed
- 29 Donald and Judith Nelson

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Floyd and Sandi DeHate
- 9 Constance and Edward Williams
- 10 Lana and Jonathan Pemberton

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 7 Julie and David Boldt
- 17 Pastor Aaron & Abbe Holmgren
- 19 JR and Mary Lou Berg
- 24 Jack and Judith Schlukebier

SALEM AT WSP DAYS!





FINANCE & SOLAR UPDATE

We will be including finance and solar updates in the newsletters! Thank you to everyone for giving so generously!

Every Dollar Helps Salem:

- Continue it's mission to serve neighbors near and far!
- Keep the building running so we can keep worshipping, gathering and serving!
- Keep our promise to be great stewards of God's creation!

2026 Summary Giving: January - May	
General Fund	\$88,824
Expenses	\$110,811
Net loss for first five months	\$(-21,987)
Restricted Donations	
Neighbors	\$1,255.00
Solar	\$11,920.00
Faith Formation	\$294.00
Pastor Emergency Fund	\$3185 .00
Flowers	\$565.00
Total restricted donations	\$10,539.00
Building Fund Donations	\$3,370
Total January-May Donations	\$112,285
Transferred from Endowment Fund	\$8,267.00

Solar Project Update

Solar Payback Fund: \$40,135
January—May 2026 Usage: 9499 Wh (2025=16,550 kWh)
January - May System Production: 18,498 kWh
YTD Net Usage: ~ 8999 kWh



FREE & DISCOUNTED COMMUNITY RESOURCES



FREE EVENTS AT COMO LAKE PAVILION & COMO PARK CONSERVATORY

Use these links for access to calendar of events!

Pavilion Calendar: <https://dockandpaddle.com/music-and-events/>

Conservatory Calendar: <https://comozooconservatory.org/events/>



FREE THURSDAY NIGHTS AT THE HISTORY CENTER

Enjoy free admission and free parking at the Minnesota Historical Society (345 W. Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul). Includes access to world-class exhibits including: *Our Home: Native Minnesota*, *Minnesota's Greatest Generation* and many others!

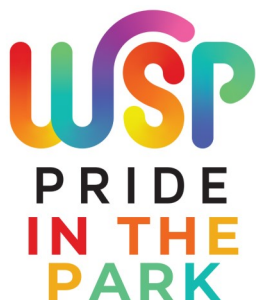


UPCOMING EVENTS!

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

FRIDAY, JULY 10, 2026 - 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Everyone is invited to participate at the Feed My Starving Children event (990 Lone Oak Rd., #136, Eagan, MN., 55121) on Friday, July 10 from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm. We will reserve 20 volunteer spots. There will be a sign-up sheet available in the Narthex soon. Please sign up by **Sunday, July 5**. Thank you!



WSP PRIDE IN THE PARK

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 2026

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Salem will be hosting a booth at WSP Pride in the Park this year on Saturday, July 11 from 11-4. Please speak with Pam Wakeen if you are able to volunteer! Join us in representing the wonderful and welcoming community at Salem!

**WSP SPORTS
COMPLEX**



OUTDOOR WORSHIP SERVICE WITH PET BLESSING

SUNDAY, JULY 19, 2026

9:30 AM

Salem will be hosting an outdoor Pet

Blessing Worship Service on Sunday, July 19 at 9:30 am. Pets of all sorts (including stuffed animals) are especially invited to participate. Please bring lawn chairs/blankets to use. We will also have a limited supply of folding chairs. The event will take place on the landing/lawn facing the Sanctuary entrance on Hall Ave. We look forward to meeting these special members of your families!

**In case of adverse weather, the service will be held inside. Pet owners are encouraged to bring pictures of their pets and/or pet toys to be blessed as an alternative.*

UPCOMING EVENTS!



NIGHT TO UNITE - TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2026 **6:00 PM - 7:30 PM**

Everyone is invited to “Night to Unite” at Salem! Come and share in an evening of fellowship with Salem friends, neighbors and other guests from the community. Enjoy free ice cream and lawn games!

BEER, BURGERS & HYMNS **MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2026** **6:00 PM - 7:30 PM**



Everyone is invited to Gallagher’s (888 Ohio St.) on Monday, August 10, from 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm for an evening of Beer, Burgers and Hymns! Bring your family out for a fun evening with Pastor Aaron, Salem members and St. Stephen’s folks in what has become a well-loved community outing!

O.W.L.S. **(OLDER WISER LUTHERANS AT SALEM)**

TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2026
1:00 PM - FELLOWSHIP HALL



**PLEASE NOTE: OWLS WILL BE MEETING ON TUESDAYS
INSTEAD OF THURSDAYS STARTING IN AUGUST.**

UPCOMING EVENTS!



JOINT WORSHIP SERVICE AT ST. STEPHEN'S SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2026 - 9:30 AM

Everyone is invited to a joint worship service at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church on Sunday, August 16 where both congregations will join their voices and spirits in prayer, song and reflection!



FAITH FORMATION 2027/28 (SEPTEMBER - MAY)

Be sure to look for sign-up information for Salem/St. Stephen's Faith Formation in August. Start up will be in mid September! Faith Formation is for individuals and families of all ages! It takes place on Wednesday evenings and offers a time for worship and learning! All are welcome!



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2026 - 9:30 AM

Everyone is invited to participate in the "God's Work, Our Hands" service project following the 9:30 am worship service. Details on the service project coming soon!

UPCOMING EVENTS!

Help support students at Moreland Elementary! Look for a collection bin in the Narthex in July! Shirley Peterson will organize the donation delivery in August. Please see the list of most needed items and not needed items below. Thank you!

SUPPORT MORELAND STUDENTS

BACK to school SUPPLY DRIVE

NEEDED ITEMS:

- Headphones (over-the-ear, not bluetooth)
- Markers (Wide and Thin tip)
- Dry Erase Markers
- Notebooks and Folders
- Colored Pencils
- Watercolor Paints
- Post-it Notes
- Pre-Sharpended Pencils
- Glue Sticks
- Scissors
- Pencil Sharpeners with Cover
- Black Sharpie Markers
- Kleenex and Clorox Wipes

NOT NEEDED: Crayons, Pencil top erasers, calculators, book covers, workbooks, rulers, pens, mechanical pencils, loose-leaf paper



**FREE 6-WEEK
PAINTING CLASS
(BEGINNER FRIENDLY)
THUR: 1:00 - 3:00 PM
SEP. 17 - OCT. 22
FELLOWSHIP HALL
Details below:**

Salem received a \$2500 mini-grant from the St. Paul Area Synod through the “Planting Hope” campaign. The purpose of the grant is to fund creative projects in congregations that serve as a step to invite community members into life in Christ. Wanda Borman (pictured above) will be leading six, 2-hour classes beginning on September 17. Everyone will paint the same subject during the first class, then move on to painting basics in following classes and finish by choosing their own subject to paint. No experience needed!

Wanda Borman is an experienced project manager and arts leader with 18 years in community engagement, event planning, and nonprofit management. She has led art festivals, curated exhibitions, secured grants, increased attendance, and built partnerships. Currently, she coordinates programs for the Minnesota Music Educators Association and maintains a focus on arts, community, and education.

RESUMING IN SEPTEMBER!



SENIOR CHOIR AND HANDBELL CHOIR REHEARSALS WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

Do you love to sing and/or play music? Would you like to learn? You're invited to join the Salem Senior Choir, Jubilee Ringers (handbell choir) and/or the Learner Bells (beginner handbell choir). If you are interested in learning more, please contact the church office to be connected with Judy Belland (Choir Director) or Keith Irwin (Handbell Choir Director).

WEDNESDAY EVENING REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

JUBILEE RINGERS - 6:00 PM

SENIOR CHOIR - 7:15 PM

LEARNER BELLS - 7:15 PM



ELIZABETH CIRCLE WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 - 10:00 AM

The Elizabeth Circle will resume meeting on Wednesday, September 9 at 10:00 am in the Fireside Room. The group is open to anyone wanting another place to study the word of God in a small setting. We use the magazine called *Gather* for our studies. The group meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. All are welcome!

LOOKING AHEAD!

2026 ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP DRIVE FOR STUDENTS IN SAN LUCAS, GUATEMALA AND MAGOME, TANZANIA



The scholarship drive for students in San Lucas, Guatemala and Magome, Tanzania will be happening throughout the month of September. Your gifts and support give students in both countries the opportunity to go on to secondary school. Full scholarship amounts will be made available soon! Any amount is greatly appreciated! Designated envelopes will be available in the pews during September and a scholarship giving tab will be available on the “Give” page of the website during that time as well. Please include “scholarship for Magome and/or Guatemala” on the memo line of your check. Thank you!



INFORMATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2026 10:40 AM - FIRESIDE ROOM

Have you wondered about new ways to be involved, observe, learn, grow in faith, and strengthen our sense of a church community? How did Salem start and where might we be going together?

Have questions around membership and what that entails?

You are invited to the Fireside Room to learn more and get answers to your questions!

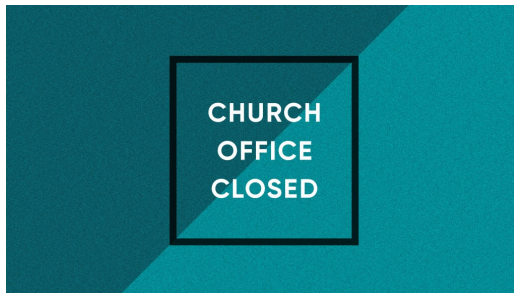
Hope to see you there,
Rev. Aaron Holmgren & Diane Hueller (Membership)



LOVE THROUGH SERVICE

If you would like to get more involved with the Sunday morning worship services as an Usher, Lay Reader, Communion Server or Coffee Hour server, please reach out to our Church Secretary, Michelle Rodriguez. She will be drafting the

2027 schedule later this fall. Mary Lou Vining-Berg sets the schedule for coffee hour servers. Sharing God's message of love through Scripture, the Holy Meal and Fellowship is a wonderful way to become more involved and create new connections at Salem! All are welcome! *Accommodations are available for anyone unable to stand to read and/or serve communion.*



OFFICE CLOSED & STAFF OUT OF OFFICE

The office will be closed on **Friday, July 3** for the Independence Day holiday and on **Monday, September 7** for the Labor Day holiday. Michelle will be out of the office on **Tuesday, September 8**.

Pastor Aaron will be on vacation from **Monday, July 6 through Friday, July 17** and will be attending the Bishop's Theological Conference from **Sunday, September 27 through Tuesday, September 29**. We will have a guest preacher on Sunday, July 12 and Pastor Aaron will lead worship on Sunday, September 27. If you have a pastoral emergency during his absence, please reach out to Debbie Lee (Parish Nurse).

CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERVICES

Are you caring for a loved one and in need of support and fellowship? Caregiver fatigue can increase the risk of physical illness, mental health decline and cognitive impairment. Don't forget that resources are available in our local community!



CENTERING PRAYER EVERY OTHER SATURDAY AT SALEM

JULY 11, 25

AUGUST 1, 15, 29

SEPTEMBER 12, 26

Centering prayer is a form of Christian meditation that can help participants deepen their relationship with God and find peace in the busyness of caregiving. The meetings consist of two 20-minute meditation sessions, a teaching and a short social time. Please speak with Louise Nesdahl if you have any questions.



CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS

2nd Wednesday each month at 1:00 pm at
Thompson Park Activity Center (West St. Paul)

4th Wednesday of each month at 1:00 pm at
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (Burnsville)



MEMORY LOSS CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

2nd Tuesday of each month at 10:30 am
(virtual)

Learn more at:

<https://lyngblomsten.org/community-services/caregiver-support/>



Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church

11 West Bernard Street, West St. Paul, MN 55118-1409

(651) 457-6661 • FAX: (651) 457-6693

E-mail: secretary@salemluth.org • Website: www.salemluth.org

✝ NEED PRAYER ✝

Diane Hueller.....651-451-0307

Louise Nesdahl.....651-280-9678

Church Office651-457-6661

If you or a member of your family are in need of prayer and would like us to pray for you, please call the prayer chain coordinator or the church office and we will place you on the prayer chain. *All calls are kept confidential.*

Ministers: All Members of Salem

Pastor.....Rev. Aaron Holmgren

Handbell Director.....Keith Irwin

Organist/Choir Director.....Judy Belland

Parish Nurse.....Debbie Lee

Admin. Secretary.....Michelle Rodriguez

The *Salem Newsletter* is a publication of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are located on Bernard Street, three blocks west of Robert Street between Humboldt and Hall. ***Deadline for the Fall/Winter newsletter is noon, Monday, September 7.*** Please submit articles typed or printed clearly, by mail or email, including your name and phone number.



Details on pg. 12



FRIDAY, JULY 10
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM
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