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Salem Lutheran Church
401 South Lake Street
Lake Mills, IA 50450

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LABEL



Salem Lutheran Church

OUTREACH

December 2017

We invite you to join us for our weekly Worship Services:

Sunday:

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship Service

9:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship- Fellowship Hall

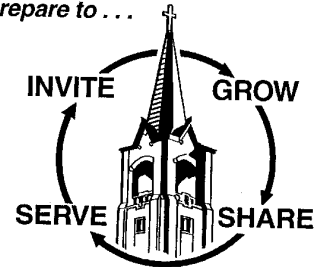
9:45 a.m. Faith Formation– Chapel

10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service

Saturday:

5:30 p.m. Casual Worship

Prepare to . . .



. . . for Christ's sake

Pastor Joel Guttormson

641.596.0535 ~ joelguttormson@gmail.com

Pastor Melinda McCluskey

563.581.9965 ~ melindamcmc@gmail.com

Helen Rice, Church Secretary

641.592.1771 ~ salem@wctatel.net

Ruth Sheldon, Organist

641.592.0184

Ashley Hoffman, Communications Director

641.590.3087 ~ SalemLMinfo@gmail.com

MISSION

Salem Lutheran Church members have known and now extend to others the invitation from Jesus Christ to know him and his gifts of forgiveness, hope, peace, and purpose. Our desire is to be a welcoming place in service to the Lord who has welcomed us. We seek to grow in our faith through meaningful worship and study. We seek to share the gifts of Christ, both as individuals who reach out in love to our families, our community, our workplaces, and our world, and also as a congregation reaching out with meaningful and supportive services and programming to people of all ages. We seek to be servants, following the example of our Lord Jesus, who said that the greatest life is not the one lived simply for itself, but for the benefit of others.

A Message from Pastor Joel Guttormson...

An older gentleman meets the new pastor two years into her first call. He has come to her office to voice some concern about some of the things he has been hearing about his church. In the course of the conversation this lifetime church member reaffirmed his relationship to the church. Both his parents were members and he was baptized and confirmed at this church. The former pastor presided at his marriage thirty years ago, his three children were all baptized and confirmed there also. In the midst of the conversation it dawned on the pastor that those milestones, attendance on Christmas and Easter, a few funerals and occasionally the Annual Meetings were the extent to which he remained connected to the church.

A single mother with two young children was once very active in a church of another denomination. Moving from an urban to a rural community after her divorce, she was used to a wide variety of programs that her former church offered their youth. She is looking for a place where her children can have the same opportunities to participate, so in their later years they can make a decision about their faith life and commitment to the church. Without realizing it she just made one of the most critical decisions about the possibility of her children being drawn to active participation in the life of the church. Parents model to the children the value of membership by their own activity or inactivity.

A group of very faithful active members have been together for a very long time, shared all the ups and downs of each other's personal lives, as well as the ebbs and flows of life together in their church. They remember the golden era where classrooms were full of children and there were always enough teachers, mentors and chaperones for classes, service events and outings. There was an active men's group and women's circles and a Luther League that met most Sundays. There were three choirs with special music almost every Sunday.

Sunday's didn't have to compete with all the other activities and responsibilities that seem to overwhelm so many these days. For a while the sentiment was one of resentment but now it's more of resignation. There are those in the community who have a very marginal attachment to the church. They really have no intention of being active. In a crisis, be it financial, personal or

Salem Women of the ELCA

Altar Guild

Tuesday, Dec. 5th at 7:00 pm

Altar Guild for October

All Guild Members

Dec. 24th, 5:00 and 10:30

Mission Quilters

Monday, Dec 11th at 1:00pm

WELCA Meeting

Thursday, Dec. 21st at 2:00pm

Hostess: Sarah Circle

Program: Martha Circle

Communion Schedule

Sundays, Dec. 3rd and 17th (8:30)

Sundays, Dec. 3rd, 10th, 17th,
24th (10:30)

Saturdays, Dec. 2nd and 16th

Mills Harbour & LMCC

Wednesday, Dec. 27th

Birthdays: Grace Circle

Program: No December Program

December Worship Schedule

Saturdays: Casual worship at 5:30 pm in the lounge

Sundays: Traditional service at 8:30am in the sanctuary

Coffee fellowship at 9:30am in the fellowship hall

Contemporary worship service at 10:30am in the sanctuary

Saturday, December 23 Schedule:

5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service in the Chapel

Sunday, December 24 Schedule:

8:30 a.m. worship service - Advent 4

9:30 a.m. coffee fellowship

No 10:30 a.m. service

Christmas Eve services will be held at 5:00pm and 10:30pm

Saturday, December 30: No Service

Sunday, December 31:

One service at 8:30 a.m. - A Service of Lessons & Carols

9:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship

December Volunteers

8:30 Traditional Service in the Sanctuary

3rd Ushers: Andy and Kendra Stene family

Communion: Kirby and Abby Holtan

Reader: Tyler Helgeson

10th Ushers: Erich and Julie Stene family

Reader: Summer Sterrenberg

17th Ushers: Todd and Kris Severson family

Communion: Shawn and Julie Helgeson

Reader: Tami Alphs

24th

31st Reader: Connie Sabin

Reserve your special date to sponsor the 2018 8:30 a.m. worship service broadcast on KLOW (107.3 FM) radio in Forest City. The service can also be heard at 8:30 a.m. on cable channel 2. **Call the office to reserve your dates. Cost for 2018 is \$83.**

Available dates are:

Jan. 14	May 6, 20	Sept. 2, 16
Feb. 25	June 10, 17	Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28
March 25	July 8, 15, 29	Nov. 4, 11, 18
April 1, 22, 29	August 5, 19	Dec. 2, 9, 23, 30

familial, many of these members of the church or community will come to the church requesting pastoral care. They have maybe heard from others in the community the church will pay an overdue bill, help in a crisis, or serve their present needs, “because that is what pastors and churches do.” When the need has been met so has their connection to the church.

Sometimes these folks believe they will be judged if they become more involved. That feeling of judgement can cut both ways. Sometimes active, committed, compassionate, but far from perfect church members and pastors struggle with the perceived image that they are the cause of the churches demise. Both active and inactive folks can impede church involvement.

So what would happen in the life of this community if the “problematic church” ceased to exist? Are we at a critical moment where the demise of the church might become a reality? What will happen to a community that no longer has a place to celebrate Christmas and Easter, the last vestiges of a common, communal religious experience. When grandparents no longer hound their children to baptize their grandchildren regardless of their commitment to those baptismal promises. When the second or third generation of eight graders are confirmed to leave active participation in the life in the church as did their parents and in some cases their grandparents. Then what?

Every year, 2.7 million members fall into inactivity. Half of all churches in the U.S. did not add any new members to their ranks between 2010 and 2012. Every year, more than 4000 churches close their doors compared to approximately 1,000 new (and mostly very small) churches that start. Many of those small startup expressions struggle to survive and have a hard time moving beyond the enthusiasm, commitment and personality of the pastors and lay leaders that began them. In church circles there has been much talk about a growing group of people who, when interviewed, consider themselves “spiritual but not religious.” They “love Jesus but hate the church.” They account for about 20% of the population and are often called the “nones.” A new focus group many have begun to pay attention to are being called the “dones.” These are folks who have grown up in the church and now stepped away. They are also sometimes referred to as “formerly churchd” and represent 31% of the population. That accounts for 51% of the population!

Salem Lutheran Church in Lake Mills is one of the roughly forty congregations serving the five-mile area surrounding our (50450) zip code. Salem has a total membership of 1,450 with 1,166 confirmed members with an average weekly attendance of 179. Roughly 2.5% of our membership regularly attend and 4% actively give to its vision and ministry. If this trend continues, how are we going to be a church for the next generation?

Just as a visual illustration of Salem's possible future, we would invite you to go down to the fellowship hall and view the Confirmation Class pictures of the past five years. How many of the seventy-five confirmands do you know by name? How many of the thirty-five children baptized in the last five years do you know by name? How well do you know their parents?

Keeping in mind that it's not about the numbers, if seventy-five youth have affirmed their baptisms for greater participation in the life of the church and thirty-five have begun that relationship through baptism and if even half are from two parent families or have one or two siblings, why hasn't participation increased by at least two-hundred over the course of the past five years? In ten years 25% of the U.S. population will be under twenty years of age, what kind of congregation do we want to leave in their hands - knowing the future is all in God's hands.

What it means to be a member is an important part of discerning our future. Becoming more aware our true commitment to Salem's vision and mission is a necessary part of knowing the "us" as we discern what God is calling "us" to. The Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegon Lutheran, Ole and Lena, lutefisk and lefsa eating church will not be the church of the future. It won't be the cultural expression of who we are. We all come from different church experiences, and more often know from another or no religious tradition at all. What it means to say, "I am a church member" means something different now and more importantly in the future. The future of the church means reaching out to the "nones" or the troubled "dones" in a meaningful way.

A group of leaders at Salem have read a book by Thom S. Rainer, president and CEO of Lifeway Christian Resources. It's a quick read of six chapters we have found to be an excellent aid to our conversations about what membership means. The Stewardship, Life and Growth Committees will be sponsoring a New and Renewing Program as an opportunity for a wider group of our

and words of encouragement. LSI and Woodhaven Shelter had been there for Morgan during some of her darkest times. Now, she wants to be there for those who need it.

She is now employed as a Youth Associate in LSI's Woodhaven Shelter! When a new resident comes through the doors, Morgan is there to show them that no matter the odds, they can make a better life for themselves. She is there to help other youth find their path to hope, healing and wholeness.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Understanding Grief & Loss

Sponsored by Hospice of North Iowa

*6 week program for adults grieving a death

*FREE but space is limited

*Registration required prior to 1st session

Winter 2018 schedule:

6 consecutive Sunday afternoons~ Mason City 1:30 p.m.- 3:30 p.m.

January 21- February 25

Hospice of North Iowa

232 – 2nd Street SE - Mason City

Call 1-800-297-4719 or 641-428-6208 to pre-register

Merry Christmas from LSI!

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” —
John 1:5

As Christmas approaches, we give thanks to you! Every day, as a ministry partner of LSI, you help bring the light of Christ to others.

At LSI, we know many people experiencing deep darkness. We know parents who feel hopeless, with little to no resources to raise their young children. We know adults with disabilities who feel voiceless, with no support system or connection to their community. We know teens who are aging out of the foster care system, who fear they will never belong to anyone or have a family to love them.

LSI's work is Christmas work, shining love, compassion, and light in places of darkness, despair, abuse, neglect, addiction, and loneliness. We could not do this important work without you, and we are so grateful.

Wishing you a blessed and merry Christmas from LSI!

A Voice for Change

Morgan struggled with anger management before coming to LSI's Bremwood Residential Treatment Center in Waverly. When she was in stressful situations, she tried to escape her emotions by running away. But she can remember the exact moment she knew she wanted to make a change.

“One day at Bremwood, another resident lashed out at a staff. I was just sitting there thinking this is not the life I want to live,” Morgan says. “This is not me. This is not who I want to be.”

She worked hard to practice her coping skills and soon graduated out of Bremwood. But Morgan wanted to do more to give back and help others. Morgan, now 19, is going to college for Agricultural Business. She recently took her first international trip to Haiti to study local farming, and she's already saving money to take a similar trip to Brazil next year.

Morgan turned to LSI once again – but this time, not for herself. Instead, to help others in need: youth just like her who need support, a listening ear

members to read and discuss what membership means for us at Salem. In the future as others, new to the church are asking questions about membership they will be partnered with a sponsor who will be willing to read the book with them, answer questions and accompany them as they discern their desire to become a member of Salem. Confirmation youth will also have sponsors who will read the book and commit a period of six weeks of prayer and conversation as they discern their commitment to the ongoing life of Salem and its mission. Twice a year and as needed Pastors Joel and Melinda will lead a class in the spring and fall.

This “New And Renewing Membership” program is an opportunity to educate, equip and inspire all of us to share in the life of what we are called to do and be as members who gather to share in the future God has and is calling us to in the future.

SALEM RECORDS November

Wedding:

Lisa Nelson and Alex Kubik

Baptism:

Jeneva Rose Roder

Memorials:

Char Keltner: Kitchen Fund \$45, Clothes Closet \$20,
Alter Guild \$20, Cemetery \$20

Phyllis Brackey: Saturday Service Music \$50,
General Fund \$50

Bethel Durby: General Fund \$50

Jim Tweed: General Fund \$5

New Members:

Samantha Sylvara and Kaylie, Lucy Carlson

Transfers:

Janice Canny

Update from the Council...

President Scott Hagenson called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Members present: Cathy Chose, Ashley Hoffman, Stephanie Steffens, Wayne VanVeldhuizen, Mike Swenson, Deb Throne, Willie Skellenger, Linda Helgeson, Brad Evenson, Heidi Obermeyer and Pastor Joel Guttormson.

Devotions and Prayers led by Pastor Joel.

Secretary's Report: It was moved by Wayne and seconded by Cathy to accept the minutes of the previous meeting as written. All approved.

Treasurer's Report: Mike reported month end balance in checkbook of: \$10,864.24. Total income for October was \$28,508.62 with expenses of \$31,244.84. Notable expenditures were Boiler Repair/maintenance of almost \$1000. We have not recovered from overall lower giving this summer. We will be entering the 3rd month of not sending Synod giving.

Financial Secretary's Report: Deb reported Average weekly contributions of \$5,965. Deb is continuing her work on other options for giving and will provide updates as those are available to members. It was moved by Ashley and seconded by Willie to approve reports as written.

All approved.

Board of Worship and Music: Cathy reported that a "Thankful" video will be available for viewing of the Sunday school children and will be incorporated into the Thanksgiving service. The board is looking for an organist/pianist for the 5pm Christmas Eve Service. Nancy Knudtson has resigned from the board. We thank her for her time served. Discussion was held regarding live streaming of the church services. No changes will be made at this time. The board is exploring the option of utilizing "head ushers" for church services.

Board of Stewardship: Wayne reported on New and Renewals of membership programs, incorporating the usage of "I am the Church" materials. Pledge cards will be available Nov 18. Information will be shared at each church service and also in the Outreach.

Board of Youth: Stephanie reported 4 youth will be attending the youth conference in Dallas June 2018. Christmas program practice is underway. "Thankful" video is being put together and will be used at the Thanksgiving

On November 8th, Salem's confirmations students, along with One in Christ and other local churches, held their annual food drive to collect items for the Lake Mills Food Pantry.



Faith Formation completed their Faith Practices Tree with "TALENTS" as the final leaf. Pastor Joel discussed talents with the kids at church on Sunday, November 19th.



The Children's Christmas Program "*Symbols of Christmas*" will be Sunday, December 10th at 10:30am followed by cookies in the fellowship hall. If you would like to donate Christmas cookies, please contact Jennifer Sauer at 641-903-1847.

The *Creature Praise Choir* rehearses on Sundays at 9:30am in the choir room. Youth in grades 3-7 are welcome to attend. Contact Kathy Nelson with any questions.

Salem's Senior Choir will rehearse on Wednesdays at 7:00pm in the choir room. All are invited to attend. Contact Kathy Nelson with any questions.

Salem has three high school students that will be attending a convention in Huston next year. They are selling *Butter Braids* pastries as a fundraiser to earn money for their trip. If you are interested in purchasing Butter Braids, please contact Helen in the church office. Thank you for your support!

We will be hosting more *Listening Sessions* on December 4th and 5th. If you were unable to attend the previous sessions, please take a look at the signup times and find one that will work with your schedule. Your input is needed and welcomed as we continue to gather data to help us move into the next chapter of Salem's ministry.

Current and past Salem members can sign up for a listening session at:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0545a4ae2ba24f85-salem>

Dec. 4 Listening times are every half hour from 3:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Dec. 5 listening times are every half hour from 2:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Signup is simple! Or call the office and Helen will sign you up!

The congregation is also welcome to join us in the presentation of the MAP results on Monday, December 4th at 7pm in the fellowship hall or Tuesday, December 5th at noon in the fellowship hall. (please feel free to bring a brown bag lunch if you would like)

service.

Board of Life and Growth: Willie reported the Reformation events were well attended and many positive comments were given. Upcoming events: Hanging of the Greens Dec 2nd . Good Gifts giving will be a new opportunity for giving this holiday season.

Board of Property and Management: Snow removal will be provided by LM Pump, as it was previously.

Lead Pastor's Report: Pastor Joel presented a written report with pastoral acts during the month of October.

Associate Pastor's Report: Pastor Melinda submitted a written report with pastoral acts during the month of October.

Communication Director's Report: Ashely reported provided information on face book updates and "This Week at Salem" posts. Outreach deadline will be Nov 21st .

It was moved by Mike, seconded by Brad to accept the above reports. All approved.

Old Business: Discussion was held on updates from the Kairos Group. There will be many upcoming opportunities to share in the planning for Salem with Kairos. Information was shared regarding a free service with Mike Klinefelter, Regional Gift Planner, Iowa for Legacy Planning. Discussion was held on continuing Live Streaming worship services. This item was tabled until next month.

New Business: Discussion was held regarding the 3rd month of suspended giving to the ELCA, due to the current financial situation. This will be reviewed again next month.

The Annual Meeting date has been set for Jan 28 with a snow date of Feb 4th . More details will follow. It was moved by Deb and seconded by Wayne to approve the annual meeting date. All approved.

Board members were asked to please review current budget and forecasted budget for 2018 for planning.

An approval of Housing Allowance adjustment for Pastor Joel was presented. This will be at no additional cost to Salem only an accounting adjustment. It

was moved by Willie, seconded by Mike to accept. All approved.

Information was presented on Memorial Recognition Letters to be shared as part of stewardship during services. It was moved by Brad, seconded by Deb to accept. All approved.

Transfer of member: Janice Canny to St. Ansgar, IA . It was moved by Wayne, second by Mike, all approved.

New Members: Lucy Carlson; Samantha Sylvara & Kaylie. It was moved by Ashley, seconded by Deb, all approved.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mike seconded by Ashley. All approved. Meeting adjourned 7:30pm . The next regular council meeting will be December 1th.

We closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heidi Obermeyer

Is church still on? It is the time of year where we need to pay attention to the weather!

If we have an emergency schedule change, we will notify you through the following media:

KIOW Radio 107.3 FM (Forest City)

KIMT TV Channel 3

www.salemlakemills.com

Email– go to “Salem News” on the right hand side of the website and select “subscribe to email updates”



Faith Formation Upcoming Events...

December 6th: 3rd-6th grade Christmas Program practice from 2:15-3:30

December 9th: 4 year old-6th grade Christmas Program practice at 9am

December 10th: Christmas Program at 10:30 service

December 24th: No Faith Formation– Christmas Break

Tapestry Singers Advent Concert will be held on Sunday, December 3rd at 4pm in the Sanctuary. Everyone is welcome!

Toys for Tots collection box is outside the church office. Unwrapped gifts may be placed in the box. Monetary donations are also appreciated!

2017 Operation Clothes for Kids -

The Tree is in the narthex this year.

Donations will be distributed throughout the Lake Mills School District

Pick a Christmas Tag (with a child's needs/sizes on it) from one of the following locations: Salem Lutheran Church, Winnebago Lutheran Church, Word of Faith Dominion Church, Farmers Trust and Savings Bank, or MBT.

Purchase the items on the tag, wrap in one box, attach the original tag to the gift and deliver to one of the listed sites by 4pm on Wednesday, Dec. 13th.

Feel free to team up and share costs.

Cash donations are also accepted. Please send to the LMCS nurse office, 102 S 4th Ave E, Lake Mills, IA 50450. Make checks payable to LMCS Clothes for Kids.

The Good Samaritan/Good Gifts Barnyard Tree

There's a Christmas tree in the entrance near the elevator this year. You are invited to take a tag from the tree and purchase a barnyard animal.

There will be gift boxes under the tree to receive donations of socks and underwear for Salem's Good Samaritan Clothes Closet.



Hanging of the Greens

Saturday, December 2nd at 9am

Everyone is welcome to come help decorate the sanctuary, narthex and chapel for the Advent and Christmas season.

You may bring treats to share!

History of the Angel Tree- The Angel Tree was started in 2000 by the Miriam Circle members. A longtime circle member had passed away and the Angel Tree was dedicated to her memory. People were able to purchase angels and these were hung on the tree in the narthex each year. The names of all the dedications were also recorded in a special book on display near the tree. Through the years, over 500 angels have been dedicated.

If you have purchased an angel in the past, you can pick it up and hang it on the Angel Memory Tree or take it home to enjoy on your own tree. All previously dedicated angels are recorded in the memory book.

There is no charge to dedicate an angel. You can pick up an angel in the church office and hang it on the tree any time you wish. A book will be on the table where you can write the name of your loved one and note who is dedicating the angel.

The Hospice Tree Lighting Service will be held in Salem's Fellowship Hall on Thursday, December 14th at 6pm. With your gift to Hospice, a light will be placed on the Tree of Life. Every light on the Tree of Life celebrates and honors our friends and loved ones in a very special way. A light in memory of someone who has died is a reminder that despite the wintry effect death can bring, life can still be celebrated. Names of those you wish to remember and honor will be listed at the service. Your contribution will help extend Hospice care to others so they can live the last months of their lives in dignity, often in their own homes.

GENEROSITY MOMENT

As we enter the final month of 2017, the Board of Stewardship & Social Ministry would like to thank you for your part in supporting Salem Lutheran throughout this past year. That support may have come as attending services on a regular basis, monetary gifts, or devoting time and talent in some way.

In the past two fiscal years, the Board of Stewardship & Social Ministry held a Special mid-year appeal called the "Keep Your Fork Campaign." The first held in 2015 was "Starting Strong" with the goal of a solid financial base as Salem called a new pastor. The second was the "Staying Strong" campaign, with the goal to fund new ministries such as Faith Formation, Confirmation field trips, Summer Day Camp and Junior High Camp at Riverside.

As Salem's ministry opportunities grow, so do the challenges to financially support them. Despite a lot of positive developments at Salem, we are still in need of our congregation's support each month to keep these good things moving forward. In order to do that in an organized way, our committee has chosen to use a pledge card system, similar to past years.

Something new you will notice in the midst our of worship services the opportunity to hear about or view a short video during the offering. We are calling these "Generosity Moments." This will be a moment to hear about the impact our giving has on a particular ministry in our church, community and world.

So we thank you for your financial commitment to the ministry Salem in addition to the sharing of your time, talent and prayerful support. Pledge cards have been available over the last several weeks at Salem for the 2018 calendar year. If you have not received one, please contact the church office. All pledges are kept strictly confidential. Thanks, again, for your past support.

GIVE+Settings INTRODUCING GIVE+ TEXT

You can now make a contribution with text!

Simply send a text message to 1-641-832-5367 with the amount to contribute (example 25) in the message line. Within in minutes, you'll be sent a text with a link to register. Click the link and enter your information. Once your registration is complete, you will receive a text verification and a receipt of your donation via email. Save in your contacts for future giving. You can even text "repeat" to make it a recurring donation. Give+Text is one of the fastest, easiest ways to give. Thank you for supporting the Church!

