
SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

September 1 - 7

The Heart of the Matter

When clay becomes a pot, it must first have a center. As a potter spins, pushes, and pulls the clay into its final form, it can easily lose its center and become misshapen. Having lost its center, it fails to fully be what it is being created to be—a pot, a pitcher, a plate, a thing of beauty, a vessel for others.

Faith and religious practice have lost their center in today's readings. Quoting Isaiah, Jesus calls into question "This people" that "honors me with their lips" but whose "hearts are far from me" (Mark 7:6). Some in the religious community have begun focusing on surface matters (the washing of hands, what one eats, the traditions of the elders) and have forgotten the core. What really matters is how one's faith is expressed in mercy, in words and actions that build up rather than tear down the neighbor.

In the second reading James wonders about those who look at themselves in a mirror and upon walking away forget who they are (James 1:23-24). For James, they are simply hearers of the word and not doers. Their lives do not reflect the love and mercy that has claimed them.

And so it is with us. We do not live as the people God has claimed us to be. Our lives lose their center. Our faith practices focus on surface things rather than the core. We fail to be what God has created and is creating us to be—vessels poured out for others. We look at ourselves in the mirror and upon walking away forget who and whose we are.

At the heart of the Christian assembly is Jesus—in word, in song, in prayer, in the neighbor, in water, bread, and wine. Jesus, who embodies forgiveness and mercy, is the heart. Again and again, life becomes misshapen. Again and again, the potter reshapes the clay. The splash of a watery cross, the taste of bread and wine: these things center life in Christ. God's mercy washes over us. God's mercy is implanted in us. God creates life anew; deformed hearts are reformed for works of mercy and love.

THIS WEEKS TEXTS

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9
Psalm 15
James 1:17-27
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23



NEXT WEEKS TEXTS

Isaiah 35:4-7a
Psalm 146
James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17
Mark 7:24-37

Each week we will lift up five church families/ members in prayer.
THIS WEEK WE WILL PRAY FOR: Ben & Anna Stene, Erich, Julie, Elijah and Ella Stene, Rodney & Beth Stene, Thelma Stene, Gene Stensrude

This week the following members will be celebrating their birthdays and we would like to wish them a HAPPY BIRTHDAY! Please call the office if you have an upcoming birthday, to ensure we have it in our records. 641.592.1771

2-Roger Olson

3-Scott Helgeson

6-Tanner Jensen

2-Heidi Obermeyer

4-Scott Westcott

6-Katie Bergan

2-Sondra Nelson

5-Andrew Zabel

7-Scott Hagenson

3-Mark Bjorklund

5-Paige Adams

7-Ella Stene

-WEEKLY GIVING-

LAST 2 SUNDAYS: 8/25/24: \$ 4,361

YEAR-TO-DATE: 8/27/24: \$ 130,398

LAST YEAR: as of 8/27/23: \$ 121,077

DIFFERENCE YEAR TO DATE: \$ 9,321

Last Weeks Attendance

59

Tuckpointing/Steeple Project Update: Total received as of 8/27/24 **\$165,837**
Total available balance as of 7/31/24 **\$57,549.32** All contributions towards this project are greatly appreciated! Please remember to note the "Steeple Project" in the memo when submitting your contribution. Thank you!

Guest Book: If you are visiting Salem today, we welcome you and invite you to sign our guest book, located in the Narthex, and we hope to see you again!

Upcoming Blood Drive: Sept. 19; 1:00pm-6:00pm in the Fellowship Hall
Appointments Are Encouraged. Call: 800-287-4903 or Text: LIFESERVE to 999-7777 or visit: lifeservebloodcenter.org

Memorials Given In August: Lloyd Okland—Steeple Project \$40, Building Fund \$100, Cemetery Fund \$80, General fund \$45

Prayer Shawls, hand knit or crocheted by Salem members, are available in the Narthex for you to wrap someone in need. A Prayer Shawl is for anyone in need of prayer, hope, comfort and love of a community. If you would like the person included in the prayer chain, please call the office.

Prayer Chain Ministry is a network of people who are committed to prayer and will take action on behalf of others. If you will pray for those in need, sign-up in the Narthex. If you or someone you know is in need of prayer, call the office and the prayer request will get sent out. If there is no answer, leave a message. All requests will be confidential among the prayer chain ministry. Thank you!

Many activities are scheduled for Sunday, September 8 th !

- Rally Sunday where everyone is invited to the south lawn after worship for food and games. The Stewardship Board will provide a meal for everyone, and The Youth Board will have games for the kiddos!
- Blessing of the Backpacks for students of all ages to bring a backpack to worship to receive blessings as a new school year begins!
- Installation of Faith Formation instructors and helpers during worship. We recognize the time and effort put into the Faith Formation program and appreciate all the volunteers that help nourish and grow the faith of our youth.
- Mission Quilters will display quilts in the sanctuary. As we enjoy the beauty and handiwork of these quilts, let's remember that they get sent around the world to be used as a warm blanket or perhaps as a baby carrier. They are used as market displays or maybe sacks. These quilts are a wonderful reminder that someone far away cares for them.

Live Stream Sponsorship Cost is \$40. Call the church office to reserve your date.
Dates available 2024: Oct 20. Nov 24. Dec 29.

Dates available 2025: Jan 5, 19, 26, Feb 9, 16, 23, March 9, 16, 23, 30, April 20, May 4, June 8, 15, 29, July 6, 13, 20, 27, Aug 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, Sept 14, Oct 5, 12, 19, 26, Nov 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, Dec 7, 28

ALL ARE INVITED TO STAY FOR FELLOWSHIP

SUNDAY 9/1

9:00am Worship Service-Sanctuary (Pastor Judy Wozniak)

10:00am Fellowship-Fellowship Hall

MONDAY 9/2

12:00pm Sons of Norway-Fellowship Hall

1:00pm-4:00pm Mission Quilters-Fellowship Hall

2:00pm-4:00pm Salem's Clothes Closet is OPEN

2:00pm-5:00pm Lake Mills Food Shelf is OPEN

TUESDAY 9/3

9:30am Miriam Circle-LeAnn Anderson's Home

5:30pm Altar Guild Meeting

WEDNESDAY 9/4

10:00am Bible Study-Choir Room

6:00pm Confirmation Class-Choir Room

THURSDAY 9/5

9:30am Grace Circle-Library

9:30am Ruth Circle-Mills Harbour

SUNDAY 9/8

9:00am Worship Service-Sanctuary (Pastor Ken Jensen) Blessing of the backpacks

10:00am Rally Sunday—Food and Games on the South Lawn

Celebrating Generosity: Thank you for your support of ministry at Salem!

Go Green—Go Paperless by giving in one of the following ways...

-- Give through PayPal or Card by going to the bottom of www.salemlakemills.com

-- **Give automatically through the Simply Giving Program.** Sign up for monthly or weekly ACH withdrawals. Call the office to have a form sent to you or stop by the office. We also have forms in the Narthex. Please return forms to the office.

(We are charged a much lower service fee through the Simply Giving Program)

Salem Office: 592.1771 Monday-Friday 9:30am-1:30pm

(Hours subject to change. Feel free to call the office to ensure its open.)