

# August 2018

Salem Lutheran Church-ELCA  
631 N. 7th St.  
Montevideo, MN 56265

# SLC NEWS

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**Salem  
Lutheran  
Church ELCA**  
Montevideo, Minnesota  
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## CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS:

- JULY 31-PIE DAY (1PM LUTHER HAVEN)
- AUGUST 15-COUNCIL RESUMES
- AUGUST 29-WORSHIP (6:30PM)

## A Response to “A Way of Life Fades”

I am writing this article a few days after a story called “A Way Of Life Fades” appeared in the July 8, 2018 edition of the Star Tribune. It is a depressing article in many ways, but it is also true. A way of life that has been familiar to American culture for generations is indeed fading – many of our churches are in decline. As a pastor, I am well aware of this, and this needs to be an eye opener for us as a congregation as we look to the future. What is dying is not the Body of Christ we know as the Church, but the way we run our churches.

In my opinion, congregations can become victims of their own ignorance. If our vision of a congregation is to preserve what’s always been, we are in trouble. Think for a moment about what needs to be preserved. Take food for instance; you preserve cucumbers by making them into pickles. A jar of pickles made by grandma can be kept forever essentially, but can only safely be eaten within a certain amount of time. Another example is keepsakes; old family photos, antique china, an old wedding dress or an old pocket watch or rifle. We preserve these by putting them in a safe place and sharing the story behind them of why they are meaningful in order to maintain their relevance to our daily life. There are also things preserved through the art of taxidermy; that head of a big buck that took hours to track down, or the trophy walleye that goes along with a great fishing story. We can also preserve moments in time through taking photos and recording videos, which is now so easy to do with our phones that we think nothing of it. And of course, in many cases, loved ones who have died are preserved by embalming so

their body can be lovingly seen at the funeral for those who come to say goodbye. All of these can be deeply meaningful for us, and some sort of preservation plays an important role.

Everything in the refrigerator or freezer has an expiration date, whether labeled or obvious. Even so, there are some things that simply don’t preserve well. A few years back, I organized a lefse making day at Salem, thinking that lefse could be made in advance and frozen for Thanksgiving and Christmas. At that time, I did not realize that good lefse doesn’t freeze well – it needs to be made fresh. We made lots of lefse that day, but I don’t think it lasted until Thanksgiving and Christmas as I had originally planned.

Preservation plays an important role in life. It helps us to go grocery shopping once a week and stock up in advance, it helps us to recall experiences and relationships that are meaningful, it can even help provide closure. But preservation can also become a burden. One habit of my adult life that I’m always working to overcome is saving odds and ends because I might need it. I have come to realize that the convenience of having one or two of just about every type of nut, bolt, screw as well as lengths of wire, pieces of wood, or plastic containers is outweighed by the hassle of keeping everything organized and picked up. I hate to throw things away – but I only have so much space and time to manage what I hold onto. Therefore, I make myself load up a cardboard box of things to throw out, and sometimes even a trailer to haul to the landfill.

Preservation is necessary when something can no longer sustain its own existence in a way that is beneficial.

*Article Continued on Page 3...*

# SALEM'S AUGUST 2018 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>July 29</b>	<b>July 30</b>	<b>July 31</b>	<b>August 1</b>	<b>August 2</b>	<b>August 3</b>	<b>August 4</b>
<b>9:30am</b> Worship Service with Gwen Evens Noisy Offering <b>10:30am</b> Coffee Fellowship		<b>1pm</b> Pie Day at Luther Haven (Copper Glen to follow)	<b>9am</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>6:30pm</b> Salem on Ch. 180	<b>6:30am</b> Salem Men's Breakfast & Bible Study	<b>9am</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>10am</b> Friday Coffee	
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>9:30am</b> Worship Service with Holy Communion <b>10:30am</b> Coffee Fellowship		<b>10am</b> Quilters	<b>9am</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>11:30am</b> Salem Women's Luncheon <b>6:30pm</b> Salem on Ch. 180	<b>9am</b> Morning Out: L.S.S. Sr. Care Group at Salem	<b>9am</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>10am</b> Friday Coffee  <i>Office Admin. out of the office all day</i>	
<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>9:30am</b> Worship Service with Guest Pastor Mari Larson <b>10:30am</b> Coffee Fellowship		<b>10am</b> Quilters <b>6pm</b> Worship & Music Committee Meets	<b>9am</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>6:30pm</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>7pm</b> Salem Committees Meet <b>7:30pm</b> Salem Council Meets		<b>9am</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>10am</b> Friday Coffee	
<i>Pr. Matt Away on Vacation</i>						
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>9:30am</b> Worship Service with Holy Communion <b>10:30am</b> Coffee Fellowship		<b>10am</b> Quilters	<b>9am</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>6:30pm</b> Salem on Ch. 180		<b>9am</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>10am</b> Friday Coffee	<b>8:30-10am</b> Community Breakfast at Salem (free)
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>September 1</b>
<b>9:30am</b> Worship Service with Noisy Offering <b>10:30am</b> Coffee Fellowship		<b>10am</b> Quilters	<b>9am</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>6:30pm</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>6:30pm</b> WORSHIP with Holy Communion (replaces Labor Day Sunday)		<b>9am</b> Salem on Ch. 180 <b>10am</b> Friday Coffee	

## ARTICLE CONTINUED

It is at this point when we must decide whether or not we are willing to undertake the task of preservation. When I was a child, my father owned two VW Beetles. One was a 1960's model, which died an honorable death after being passed among several family members as a second vehicle. The other was a 1972 Super Beetle, which for those who do not know, is the sportier model only discernable by the trained eye. My father kept this car for years, and while it spent many of those later years parked in a garage not running, I wanted to preserve this vehicle to drive and enjoy for myself. Now, I knew this car inside and out - I could repair it on the fly - as was often necessary. But, eventually I got tired of breathing in gas fumes and exhaust when I drove it, and worrying that it would start on fire during or after driving it. So, I made the decision to sell it. It was a sad day for me when the new owner drove it off, but I had also accepted that I could no longer manage the preservation of this vehicle in a way that was enjoyable.

Now, after my long introduction, I will get to my point - which is that individual churches as organizations run by human beings have an expiration date. Often, that expiration date is determined by the location of a building. A church was started in a rural area in the late 1800's when there were dozens of families within two miles farming 40 acres. That church would most likely struggle to stay open in 2018 when the farmland around it is owned or rented by one or two farmers, and now only a handful of people live within two miles. Those with a family connection to that congregation may likely no longer live in the area, but have many relatives buried in the cemetery. The remaining members of that congregation are then left with a task of preserving something that can no longer sustain itself. The mission of the congregation becomes 'keeping the doors open,' and seeking new members becomes a self-serving quest to find more people to help with preservation. The same can happen to a church in the middle of town - a church building like Salem was built in 1950 to serve the Lutheran Church in America (Swedish Lutherans) in this community. In the 1980's the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was formed, and suddenly we were one of three ELCA churches in town (along with Trinity and Our Savior's). When you hear that there are lots of ELCA churches closing in places like Southwestern Minnesota, it's because we're facing the outcome of several decades of not wanting to change.

As a physical location and facility, Salem has many strengths. We are located on a major road with lots of visibility, we are mostly on a single level and handicap accessible, and we have off-street parking. We also have a brick building, a roof that doesn't leak (yet), and a new kitchen that is paid for. That, however, does not guarantee us anything. There are other wonderful churches in town, and fewer people today identify with a particular church denomination. Anyone living within a fifteen mile radius of Montevideo looking for an ELCA church in particular has Saron (east), Baxter (west) Our Saviors, Salem, Trinity, Watson, Immanuel (Watson), Jevnaker (north), Bergen (south), Big Bend, Maynard, Clarkfield, Augustana (also in Clarkfield), Granite Falls, Kvitseid (Milan), Trinity (Boyd), Lac Qui Parle (rural Dawson). There was a time when we needed this many churches, and the truth is that we no longer do. Congregations then go into 'preservation' mode, which is more or less making what is already dead appear to be alive. This preservation mode is driven by the attitude that our job as followers of Jesus is to keep doing what we've already done, and hoping that somehow there will be more people to keep doing it.

A biblical example that comes to mind is in Matthew 17, Mark 9, and Luke 9 when Jesus brings Peter up on a mountain where he meets with Moses and Elijah. Peter is awe struck by the experience, and wants to hold onto it by building shelters for them to stay in. But Jesus rebukes Peter and tells him that they need to return to the world of everyday life, not hold onto the mountain top experiences. The same goes for churches - we want to hold onto the events and ministries that remind us of better days in the life of the church, but Jesus is actually calling us to move forward with our work, and to allow him to bring us into today.

I'm quite certain that when it was time for Jesus to suffer and die on the cross, his disciples were not looking forward to the change ahead. In their minds, this was not the way things were supposed to be. But Jesus knew that he needed to suffer and die for resurrection to take place. Resurrection is not preservation - resurrection is bringing something to life after it has died, transforming it into something completely new.

Unfortunately, the Holy Spirit does not seem to be very interested in keeping church buildings open and preserving long held traditions of congregations. This is very apparent in the state of many churches in America today. What I believe the Holy Spirit is calling us to do is to look beyond trying to 'preserve' what we see as the church and instead, allow it to be transformed.

## ARTICLE CONTINUED

This past week on Tuesday, July 10, over 400 people from our community gathered to package 127,000 meals over the course of an afternoon and evening. We were blessed with a wonderful event that no one church could do alone. I am also very thankful that our new kitchen is being used for the now growing monthly community meal. This needs to be something more of our members participate in and support. Maybe we're called to be a congregation that feeds both spiritually and physically.

What is God doing in our community, and how might God call us as a congregation to take part? How can we move beyond trying to find people to do what we think the church should be doing, and equip people to do what God is calling them to do? In what ways does the work of preserving the way we've always done things – whether it's when we hold worship, how we talk about stewardship, or how we operate as an organization – stand in the way of what we're called by God to become? These are not questions about how to preserve what's dying, but about letting the Holy Spirit transform us.

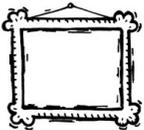
The truth is that what the article in the Star Tribune talks about is a reality, but we are only sentenced to that if we follow the path of trying to preserve what's dead. The Holy Spirit does not send us members to help pay the bills, take over on committees, and keep the church running. If we count on that, then we're merely a social club or a cultural preservation society. We are a part of the Body of Christ, which is the Church – and it is eternal and the Holy Spirit is in charge. The Holy Spirit does not assist with preservation of what has been - the Holy Spirit brings new life to become what will be.

Blessings, Pr. Matt

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Labor Day Weekend Worship Change:** Salem will have worship on Wednesday, August 29 at 6:30 p.m. in place of Labor Day Sunday (no worship at Salem on Sunday, September 2nd).

**Updated Salem Directory:** Please help Salem update its member directory by e-mailing us a current individual or family photo to: [slcelca@msn.com](mailto:slcelca@msn.com). Please include name(s) with your photo and a current household phone number. Our goal is to be able to print an updated directory this Fall/Winter - so please send photos as soon as possible! If you do not use e-mail, you may drop off a printed photo in the Salem office and we will scan it in for you.



Thank you for your help with this!

**Salem Council will Resume Meeting on August 15, 7:30 p.m. (Strombeck Room)**

**Salem Quilters New Meeting Time:** Salem's Quilters did not meet during the month of July, and will resume meeting in August, but at a new time. Beginning August, the quilters will meet on Tuesdays at 10am in the Stombeck Room.



**Community Breakfast at Salem:** Salem hosts a free community breakfast on the last Saturday of each month, 8:30-10 a.m., and is in need of volunteers to cook and serve. A volunteer sign-up sheet is available at Salem - on Sundays, it can be found on the Usher Stand in the Sanctuary. ***In need of volunteers for all upcoming meals (August - December)***

**AmazonSmile:** If you are an Amazon shopper, please start at the AmazonSmile homepage ([smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)) and shop in support of "Salem Lutheran Church of Montevideo." It is that simple and no extra cost to you! Shop as you normally would and a portion of your purchase will support Salem!



## Save the Date for Rally Sunday (1st Day of Sunday School): September 16

To register for Sunday School ahead of time, you may download a registration form from Salem's website (homepage or "Worship & Education" page) - fill out and e-mail back, or print and mail in.

**Thank You for Your Help with "Better Together":** Better Together was a community service project consisting of packing meals to be distributed to local food shelves, area school backpack programs, disabled Veterans, and others in need. The event took place on July 10 at the Montevideo Middle School. Thank you to everyone who made the event such a success! Through the efforts of everyone involved- planning, coordinating, fundraising, publicizing, setting up, cleaning up, and the helping hands of about 400 volunteers- an amazing 127,000 meals were packaged! Thank you for coming together to make this all possible!

**Thank You to Kurt Hoehne and Myra Anderson:** The hard work and dedication that goes into keeping Salem's yard and gardens groomed and our church clean is no small task, so we want to give a special "thank you" to Kurt and Myra for their work, and to everyone who helps!

### **Stewardship Report Through June, 2018:**

*(Full financial report is available in the Church Office)*

Year to Date Income: \$62,202.21

Year to Date Budgeted Income: \$81,575.00

Year to Date Expenses: \$83,232.61

Year to Date Budgeted Expense: \$82,109.00

## SALEM E-GIVING



SALEM HAS PROVIDED E-GIVING TO  
MAKE YOUR OFFERING EASIER AND MORE  
CONVENIENT THAN EVER!



SALEM'S ONLINE AND MOBILE GIVING OPTIONS ARE SERVICED BY VANCO PAYMENT SERVICES,  
MAKING IT SAFE AND SECURE. VANCO'S GIVE+ SERVICE IS TRUSTED BY 20,000+ CHURCHES!



### **To Access Salem's Online Giving:**

Open Salem's website: [www.slcmonte.org](http://www.slcmonte.org)

Click the green "Salem Give+ button"

Salem's online giving page will open. Follow the on-screen instructions.

SALEM GIVE+

### **To Access Salem's Mobile Giving:**

Using your smartphone's QR code reader, scan the provided code box.

Salem's mobile giving page will open. Follow the on-screen instructions.

**SALEM NEWS DEADLINES: Sunday Bulletin Announcements: Fridays at 10am;  
Newsletter Announcements: 15th of the Month; Calendar changes and website/  
Facebook posts can be submitted any time (may not post same-day)**



## THE TABLE

# FREE COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Last Saturday of Every Month 8:30-10 a.m.

Salem Lutheran Church • 631 N. 7th St. Montevideo

## Weekly Coffee & Treats

In Salem's  
Strombeck Room

Friday  
Mornings  
At 10 a.m.



## SALEM PRAYER CHAIN

The Salem Prayer Chain is a volunteer group of Salem members who pray by request for the needs of others. Prayer requests may be for yourself or someone else, and may be for healing or other challenges in life.

Requests can remain anonymous if you wish, and privacy of individuals is always respected. Please contact Ruby Flickinger at 269-2220 or 226-8591, or Arlys Tilberg at 269-8440 with any requests you may have. This is different from the Sunday prayers listed in the bulletin. To be included in the Sunday prayers, please call: 269-7624 or e-mail: slcelca@msn.com.



## BIBLE STUDY

*The Men's Breakfast and Bible Study* is an open men's group that meets on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 a.m. at The Rivers in Montevideo. Together, they eat breakfast, have conversation and then Bible Study. The Bible Study is usually about the Bible text for the upcoming Sunday with conversation about how it applies to current events and daily life.

*The Women's Luncheon and Bible Study* is an open women's group that meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. in the Social Hall of Salem. Lunch is provided for a small donation and is followed by Bible Study and discussion.

## MOMS OF MONTEVIDEO AREA

This open group for moms of young children meets at Salem on the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays of each month, September - May.

## MORNING OUT:

### L.S.S. SENIOR CARE RESPITE GROUP

This open group for Seniors and their caregivers meets at Salem on the second Thursday of each month from 9am - Noon.

## SALEM QUILTERS

Open Group: Every Tuesday At 10 a.m.

If you have a scissor, needles and are able to tie a knot, you can join the Salem Quilters! They would love to have more people join them!



For those who would like to help the quilters from home:

*The Salem Quilters need volunteers to sew fabric squares together to make quilt tops - they will provide the fabric!*

## STAYING CONNECTED WITH SALEM

### SALEM'S WEEKDAY OFFICE HOURS

- Mondays: 4:30 - 6:30pm
- Tuesdays: 9am - 12pm
- Wednesdays: 9am - 2:30pm

No office hours on Thursdays

- Fridays: 9am - 2:30pm

Salem's Office Administrator (Ally Buseman) is the main contact for questions, announcements, scheduling, etc. You can reach her by e-mail any time ([slcelca@msn.com](mailto:slcelca@msn.com)), or call/stop in during her office hours on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Outside of her office hours, you can leave her a message and she will get back to you promptly! Tuesday office hours are fulfilled by an office volunteer, Carol Westberg.

Office Admin. will be out of the office on August 10.



### SALEM'S MONTHLY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- 1st Sunday: Traditional service & full Communion
  - 2nd Sunday: Traditional service without Communion
  - 3rd Sunday: \*Blended service & Communion
  - 4th Sunday: \*Blended service without Communion
- \*A "blended" service is a more contemporary-style service

Pastor Matt will be away on vacation August 11 - 16. Emergency contacts will be arranged. Pastor Mari Larson will fill-in for Pr. Matt at Salem on Sunday, August 12.

### SALEM ON CABLE ACCESS CHANNEL 180

Salem's days and times are:

Wednesdays  
at 9 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.  
Fridays at 9 a.m.



Find Salem on the web at: [www.slcmonte.org](http://www.slcmonte.org)

Salem's website is updated weekly with current news, announcements and event information!

If you are not yet receiving Salem news e-mails, please send us an e-mail with your name to: [slcelca@msn.com](mailto:slcelca@msn.com) to be added to our e-mail list! If you have done this, and are still not seeing the e-mails in your inbox, please check your "junk" folder.



Stay connected on Facebook by following our page: [www.facebook.com/slcmonte/](http://www.facebook.com/slcmonte/)

Once on the "Salem Lutheran Church, ELCA" Facebook page, click "Like" & "Follow" in the header to see our posts in your news feed! Salem also has a Facebook group; find Salem's Facebook group by searching "[slcmonte](#)" in the Facebook search bar and click "Join". We will see your request and add you to the group!

Salem has also made use of an app called "remind" which helps to keep you informed by sending texts directly to your phone. These texts are not frequent, likely only a few per month depending on what Salem has going on. We currently have two different remind groups - one is for Salem Sunday School and the other is Salem Announcements. Salem Announcements is used mostly to notify about worship or event changes, whereas Salem Sunday School helps to remind Salem's Sunday School families about special events, such as Milestones.



To join the remind groups, please do the following:

- For announcements, text this: [@slcmonte](#) to: **81010** (or to the number 320-334-2145)
- For Sunday School, text this: [@salemsu](#) to: **81010** (or to the number 320-334-2145)

**Salem Lutheran Church**

631 North Seventh Street  
Montevideo, MN 56265

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**SLC NEWSLETTER**