

The SEER

Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church February 2021



Worship
9:30am

SUNDAY ZOOM SERVICES
AT 9:30AM

February 7 - Light of Christ
February 14 - Light of Christ
February 21 - First Sunday in Lent
February 28 - Lent, ELW, setting 9

You can find our services on
Salem Facebook Page: "Salem Lutheran Church"
Salem YouTube channel: "Salem ELC Stillwater
OK"

From Bishop Michael Girlinghouse

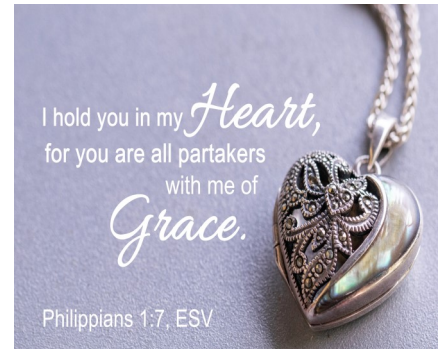
Excerpt from the 2020 Annual Report

In spite of these unfavorable times, the congregations and ministries of our Synod have been persistent in proclaiming the message of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ.

More than persistent, our congregations have demonstrated their ability to be creative, innovative and adaptive in the face of all these challenges. We have found new ways to keep people connected in spite of social distancing and quarantining. We have advocated for our neighbors impacted by the loss of jobs and livelihoods. We have supported our teachers, first responders, and medical professionals and others who work tirelessly in the midst of the pandemic. We may not be able to gather in our buildings like we used to, but our churches and ministries have not closed! Not at all. As our new Synod tagline says, together, we have put God's Grace in Motion in word and deed in so many different ways.

I thank God daily for each and every one of you.

While we were not able to have a Synod Assembly this year, we have hosted other, smaller programs and activities in the synod via Zoom. A weekly "Open Space" Zoom gives pastors, deacons and congregational presidents an opportunity to gather, share ideas and resources, and support one another as we meet the challenges in this unique time. The Lutheran Youth Organization has continued to meet online, plan together and support one another. Our annual Theological Conference for Rostered Ministers (Pastors and Deacons), TEEM ministers (Theological Education for Emerging Ministries) and SAMs (Synodically Authorized Ministers) took place digitally in September. An online gathering for Congregational Presidents to discuss online council and congregational meetings with our synod attorneys was held in November. The synod Christmas Lessons and Carols, spearheaded by University in Norman, showcased our vast musical talent and was used by a number of congregations during the Christmas Season. We currently have almost 30 people from ten congregations working through the book *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla Saad organized by the Synod's Building Bridges Team and led by Pastor Jenny and Horace Pratt.



I hold you in my *Heart*,
for you are all partakers
with me of
Grace.

Philippians 1:7, ESV

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FEBRUARY

Special dates

African-American History Month

- Transfiguration Sunday, February 14
- Valentine's Day, February 14
- President's Day, February 15
- **Ash Wednesday, February 17**
- First Sunday in Lent, February 21

From the Pastor:

For Lent I'm giving up....writing newsletter articles! Just kidding, but I'd like to share my space with hymnwriter Bernhard S Ingemann, a highly influential Danish Lutheran writer. It is in the Lent section of our hymnal, but has also been in the Community in Christ section in the previous one. I like that dual role, as it expresses both pilgrimage and the hope of salvation (for Lent) and how through Christ we manage the pilgrimage *together*. We have all had our shares of nights of doubt and sorrow, and it is excruciating that we cannot actually 'clasp the hand' of our fellow pilgrims right now – and yet we do clasp our hearts together while we 'step fearless through the night.' Spend some time with some 'old' but powerful language of the pilgrimage of community in Christ:

Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow

- 1 Through the night of doubt and sorrow,
onward goes the pilgrim band,
singing songs of expectation,
marching to the promised land.
Clear before us through the darkness
gleams and burns the guiding light;
pilgrim clasps the hand of pilgrim
stepping fearless through the night.
- 2 One the light of God's own presence
on the ransomed people shed,
chasing far the gloom and terror,
bright'ning all the path we tread.
One the object of our journey,
one the faith which never tires,
one the earnest looking forward,
one the hope our God inspires.
- 3 One the strain that lips of thousands
lift as from the heart of one;
one the conflict, one the peril,
one the march in God begun.
One the gladness of rejoicing
on the far eternal shore,
where the one almighty Father
reigns in love forevermore.
- 4 Onward, therefore, sisters, brothers;
onward, with the cross our aid.
Bear its shame, and fight its battle
till we rest beneath its shade.
Soon shall come the great awak'ning;
soon the rending of the tomb!
Then the scatt'ring of all shadows,
and the end of toil and gloom.

Text: Bernhardt S. Ingemann, 1789-1862;
tr. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834-1924, alt.

Pastor Sally



OUTDOOR COMMUNION: TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Join us at 3pm on Sunday, February 14 for one of our outdoor Communion services. Park and be seated (or stand if you prefer) in the grassy areas by the east entrance to the church, or, if you prefer, stay in your car and Pastor Sally will bring communion to you. We are still in a time of extreme caution for Covid transmission, so the service will be short with masks and distancing required.



At this time you will also be able to pick up 40 Day Lent Calendars from ELCA World Hunger and a small packet of ashes that you can use with our online Ash Wednesday service on the 17th. (These items can also be picked up at the church on Tuesday or Wednesday mornings or Wednesday afternoon outside near the east door entrance).

Our outdoor Communion service will depend on weather and severity of Covid outbreaks, so be sure to watch your email for updates from Pastor Sally (Contact her at pastorsally@sbcglobal.net if you do not get regular email from her).

ASH WEDNESDAY: FEBRUARY 17

Our Ash Wednesday service will be online this year, but still include traditional prayers, hymns, scripture and message to begin our forty-day journey to Easter. Yes, we will have a time during it for Imposition of Ashes and meditation. Some of you may choose to simply trace the cross on your forehead, remembering the ashes you have received in the past, or you may choose to use ashes that will be provided by Salem in small packets. These can be picked up either (1) Sunday February 14th at our outdoor communion service, 3pm, (2) just inside the Duck St. doors during office hours, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings 9-11am or (3) from a basket placed near the east parking lot door Wednesday afternoon. Lenten 40 day Calendars for World Hunger will also be available at those times.



By the way, our prayer service this year will use the traditional Vespers or Evening Prayer service out of our ELW hymnal instead of Holden Evening Prayer. We decided (a) we really miss singing Holden *together*, so maybe we will look forward to that in the future and that (b) having Elizabeth leading us will help us to 'learn' it. We will return to our beloved Holden Evening Prayer this Advent when --we are hopeful! -- we will be able to sing it together, in person. (More information below.)

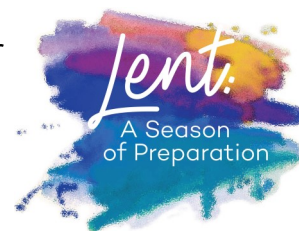
WEDNESDAYS IN LENT: FEBRUARY 24, MARCH 3, 10, 17, 24

“Pray...Fast...Give Alms.” Feeding Our Souls, Feeding the Hungry

“Pray...Fast...Give Alms”: these are the traditional spiritual disciplines of Lent. They spring straight from scripture, from the passage in the Sermon on the Mount we hear each Ash Wednesday. (Matthew 6:1-18) They are spiritual because they invite us deeper into our relationship with God *and* with neighbor, a combination so linked together that Jesus refers to loving God and loving neighbor as the ‘single’ greatest commandment.

We will explore this mystery further on Wednesdays in Lent during our online Evening Prayer services. Each year we give our Lenten Offerings to ELCA World Hunger, and this year members of our Salem Hunger Focus group will use materials from ELCA World Hunger’s Lenten Study to present messages based on lectionary scripture passages and how they relate to issues of hunger. It’s a beautiful way to combine prayer...fasting...and giving alms.

Services will be available on Wednesdays premiering February 24 at 7pm on our Facebook Page (Salem Lutheran Church), plus posted on our YouTube channel (Salem ELC Stillwater OK). Contact Pastor Sally to get Wednesday emails with the YouTube link at pastorsally@sbcglobal.net (Needed only if you do not already get the Saturday emails for Sunday services.)



From Your President



Last month I was writing about Christmas and now we are thinking about Lent. Sometimes it seems the days go so fast, but then waiting for Covid-19 to at least be under control seems is taking forever. I rejoice every day I read the new cases are less than the day before, but frown when they go back up. With the days staying light a few minutes longer, little signs of life popping up in my flower bed, AND the Bustani Flower catalog arriving it does make me feel Spring can't be far behind. (And yes I know we can still get snow). Now the vaccine is giving some of us new hope and new challenges, wondering where and when we will get an appointment.



The other thing that gives me hope and encouragement is that Salem continues to be church even if from our own living rooms or kitchens. Dave and I look forward to the Sunday Service just as we always have and though the singing is a little softer, we love that Elizabeth fills that void. I marvel when I see her and Krystal working together and yet I know they are recording at different times. Pastor Sally's sermons have inspiration and insights. In this issue of the SEER you have probably noticed the monthly calendar is back and see all the activities that are still happening. We are all welcome to join any meeting/activity we are interested in. if you have any questions about how can you become more involved you can always email me at judyLewis@suddenlink.net, call or text me at 405-747-9116 and I will help you make the connection.

Every week we are reminded of members, friends and family that need continued prayers and learn of needed other prayers. Those prayers are so important and when you are being prayed for it gives you confidence and comfort. Thanks Salem members and friends for being faithful and being church together.

Hugs from a distance. Judy



ADULT DISCUSSION CLASS

New Class Beginning Midmonth!

During February, the Adult class will complete "Saint Augustine's Confessions" led by Professor Tony Brown.

Following that we will initiate a series on the Beginnings of Judaism. These discussions will be based on lectures by Professor Isaiah M. Gafni from a Great Courses video with the same name.

Topics will include:

February 7th – "The Confessions Through the Ages"

February 14th– Summary Discussion of Saint Augustine's Confessions

February 21st– "The Beginnings of Judaism – Biblical Roots"

February 28th– "The Beginnings of Judaism - New Challenges in the Late Biblical Period"

The Adult Discussion Class will continue as a Zoom meeting at 10:30 AM on Sunday mornings. The address for the Zoom meetings can be found in Pastor's Tuesday memos and the Sunday Service E-Mail. Contact the office or Pr. Sally if you need that information.

Join us for thoughtful discussions on the philosophy that is a major influence on our faith. And as our discussions shift to the "Beginnings of Judaism" an understanding of the roots of our faith.





Birthdays

- 4 Ava Claire Haar
- 7 Joanna Gipson
- 8 John Houck
- 12 Joshua Haar
- 13 Bruce Ackerson
Brandon Hearp
Seth Headrick
- 20 Amanda Goeringer
- 21 Katarina Lavery

Anniversaries

- 14 Margaret & Larry
Redburn

A prayer for Ash Wednesday

Lord of the winds,
I cry to thee,
I that am dust,
and blown about
by every gust
I fly to thee.

Lord of the waters,
unto thee I call.
I that am weed
upon the waters borne,
and by the waters torn,
tossed by the waters,
at thy feet I fall.

—Mary Coleridge (1861-1907)



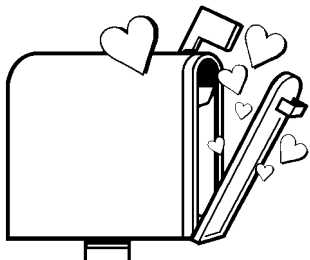
We need
your
articles
for this
monthly
newsletter.
Please

send your articles/news items in to the Church
office around the **Third Monday of each
month**. We love your photos!

If you were wondering-

Our total offering for 2020 was
\$236,995!

Thank you for your continuing
support!



If you are receiving the
SEER by mail, please
send in your \$12 per year
to cover mailing. You can
send your check marked
SEER to the office- 101 S
Duck, Stillwater 74074.



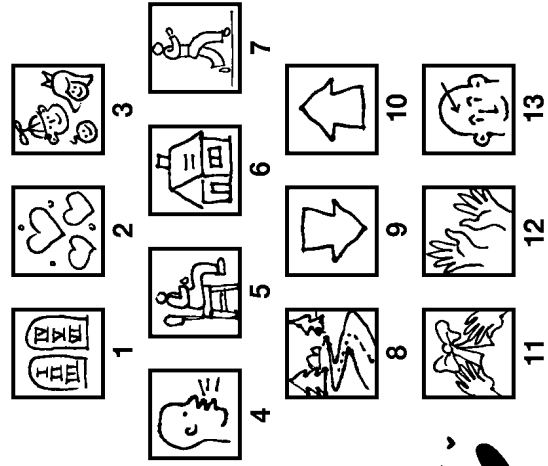
Upon your hearts

The Bible is the perfect guidebook for living God-pleasing lives. Deuteronomy 6:6-8 (NIV) tells us how to remember the Scriptures.

Use the picture clues and Word Bank below to finish the verses.

WORD BANK

| | |
|--------------|------|
| children | road |
| commandments | sit |
| down | Talk |
| foreheads | Tie |
| hands | up |
| hearts | walk |
| home | |

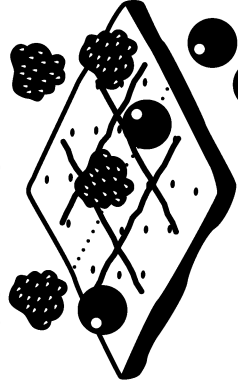


"These (1) _____ that I give you today are to be upon your (2) _____. Impress them on your (3) _____. (4) _____ about them when you (5) _____ at (6) _____ and when you (7) _____ along the (8) _____, when you lie (9) _____ and when you get (10) _____. (11) _____ them as symbols on your (12) _____ and bind them on your (13) _____."

Answers: (1) commandments; (2) hearts; (3) children; (4) Talk; (5) sit; (6) home; (7) walk; (8) road; (9) down; (10) up; (11) Tie; (12) hands; (13) foreheads

Friendship Squares

This tasty treat doubles as a game to play with a buddy.

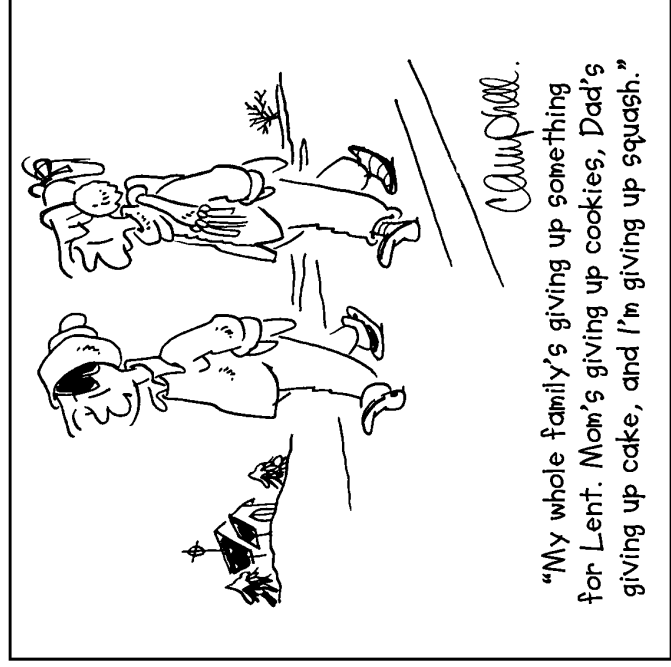
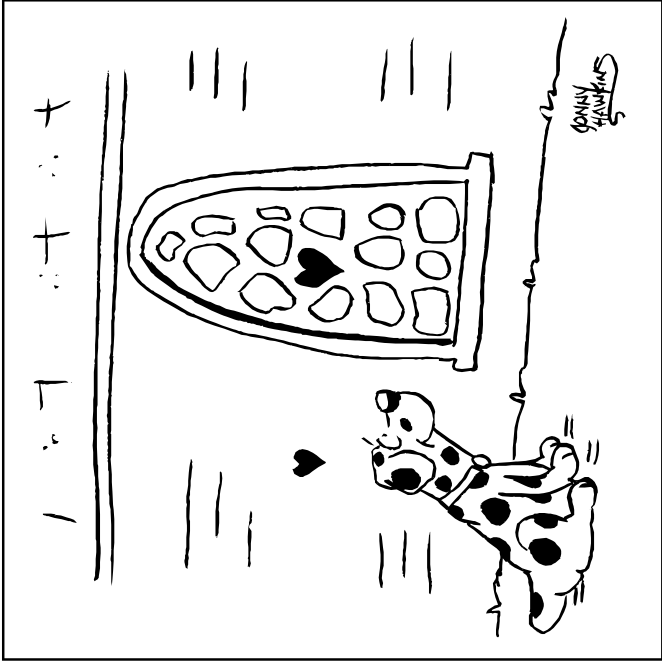


What you need:

- Graham crackers
- Chocolate chips
- Microwave-safe bowl
- Zippered baggie
- Scissors
- Raspberries
- Blueberries

What you do:

1. Gently break cracker sheets in half to form squares.
2. Heat chocolate chips in microwave for 30 seconds. Stir, then continue heating for 30 seconds at a time until melted.
3. Spoon melted chocolate into baggie and snip a small triangle from one bottom corner.
4. On each cracker, squeeze chocolate lines to form a Tic-Tac-Toe board. Let cool.
5. Using the fruit as X's and O's, play Tic-Tac-Toe with a friend. The winner gets to eat the treat!



Covid-19 Vaccine

As your Parish Nurse, I am recommending that everyone get vaccinated as soon as you are eligible. This is how we are going to begin to get back to a more normal life. Even if you are not eligible yet, go ahead and register now. This will let the OSDH know how many Oklahomans are waiting for the vaccine.



Here is the link to register in Oklahoma: vaccinate.oklahoma.gov

This can be done on a smart phone, a tablet (iPad), or a computer. If you don't have access to the internet, please call LIFE Senior Services at 918-664-9000 or our local health department, Payne County at 405-372-8200, 8am – 5pm, Monday - Friday

When Registering With The Vaccine Portal- There are two main emails people will receive from this system.

1. A registration confirmation email. This confirms that you are registered in the system and will be notified when you are eligible to receive the vaccine. You can likely expect your confirmation email within 24-48 hours.
2. An eligibility confirmation email with a link to set up an appointment. This email will be sent when you are eligible to receive the vaccine.

Successful registration within the portal does not guarantee an appointment. Registering only means you will be notified when you are eligible to schedule your appointment. **Keep checking the link throughout the day, and in coming weeks, as appointments may come available. Your link does not expire and will provide continuous access to see if appointments are available. The portal will not schedule appointments for you.**

Demand for the vaccine FAR exceeds the current supply. **New appointments for the next week are made available on Wednesday afternoon/Thursday mornings. If you haven't made an appointment yet, check your link early and repeatedly for an open time and location – they fill up fast. Openings do come up during the week, it doesn't hurt to check a couple of times each day.** The most important thing to know is: KEEP TRYING!!

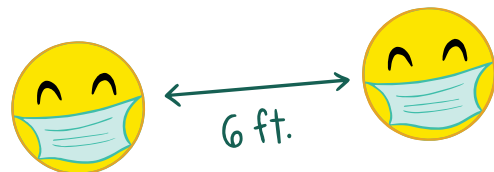
Using the portal is not the only way you can make an appointment. Many places have signed up to be pandemic providers. Eventually, you will be able to access the vaccine through primary care providers, urgent care clinics, or pharmacies.

If you are interested in volunteering with the Oklahoma Medical Reserve Corp to assist in these vaccination sites, the place to sign up is www.okmrc.org. They are providing medical and non-medical people to help the county health departments staff the Point of Delivery Sites (PODS). I will be volunteering to help give shots, first shift is in Guthrie on 1/21 (I will get my vaccination then!).

This process is going to take months to accomplish. There are over 800,000 Oklahomans in Phase 2, almost 1 million of us in Phases 1 and 2. We'll get through this but we need to know that this is the hardest and most dangerous time of the pandemic so far. Helping someone who finds this process challenging (either emotionally or technically) is a great way to be an engaged citizen and a caring neighbor!

If you have questions, need help with registering, or need a ride to get your vaccine – please give me a call or text or email. We will work out a solution for your situation.

Cindy Pennie, Parish Nurse
405-269-9019
pennie@brightok.net



In the meantime, stay home if you can, wear your mask when you are away from home, stay 6 feet apart, and wash your hands!

Campus Ministry Resumes

Our students are back and we had ten stop by for a home-cooked to-go meal, and most joined in for conversation and Bible Study via Zoom. We had a lot of catching up to do, and anticipation of the semester to come. With limited student functions on campus this is a welcome chance to 'be together' in a safe way.

Please contact Pastor Sally (pastorsally@sbcglobal.net) if you are willing to prepare a meal (or even part of a meal) for our students. Pick a Thursday if you'd like, or just put yourself in the queue. Never done it? Pastor Sally will describe the particulars to you. Meals can be super simple. They are a most appreciative audience!



Meetings are the last Monday of each month at 7pm.

Currently we are meeting on ZOOM. The February book is The Vanishing Half by Brit Bennett . Everyone is welcome, even if you haven't finished reading. For more information, contact Priscilla Gerfen at 624-6235 or priscilla@gerfen.com



GRADUATION INFORMATION

Every year we like to celebrate and congratulate all of our graduates from high school through PhD. If you, your son or daughter are a member of Salem and graduating this spring (or last December), please send us a paragraph

with information on the degree and any future plans AND/OR send a picture, with full name, degree and anything else you'd like to share to salemelc@sbcglobal.net no later than April 15.



Midweek Classes

The Stillwater Public Library has received a grant to offer a series of free wellbeing programs this spring.

The first series, "Community Conversations", will take place in February. Community members will meet online to discuss shared experiences and coping strategies for dealing with stressful times during the pandemic. A health professional will be in attendance to help answer any questions that arise during the conversation. Each session is focused on a specific topic:

- **Seniors in Isolation**: Tuesday, Feb. 2 @ 2-3 pm
- **Strengthening Relationships**: Tuesday, Feb. 9 @ 6-7 pm
- **Supporting Employees**: Thursday, Feb. 18 @ 12-1 pm
- **Families and Parenting**: Thursday, Feb. 25 @ 6:30-7:30 pm

Space is limited and registration is required. Sign-up at http://library.stillwater.org/community_conversations.php, or call the Library Help Desk at (405) 372-3633 x8106. Attendees will receive a link to join the online conversation via Zoom prior to the program. **Accommodations can be made for people who want to participate, but do not have access to the internet or a device. Please direct questions to the Library's Help Desk at (405) 372-3633 x8106, or email askalibrarian@stillwater.org.**

A second class- "Mastering Mindfulness," is a virtual, self-paced mindfulness-based cognitive therapy course. Registration will begin on February 2. More details will be [available on our website soon](#). You can also sign-up for [Library's Newsletter](#) to keep up with upcoming events and programs.



Evangelical Lutheran
Church (ELCA)
101 S. Duck St.
Stillwater OK 74074

MINISTRY STAFF

Pastor ~ Sally Houck
Director of Music ~ Krystal Hennessey
Choir Director ~ Elizabeth Albright
Office Coordinator ~ Lisa Murray-Francis
Parish Nurse ~ Cindy Pennie
Peer Ministers ~ Sydney Ulrich,
Jared Smith, Luke Ratke
Media Specialists ~ Olen Weaver &
Jeremy Hennessey

CHURCH OFFICE

Hours: Tuesday thru Thursday 9 - 11am
Telephone numbers: 405-372-3074,
372-0879 (please leave a message!)
Email Address: salemelc@sbcglobal.net

Believe.
HOPE.
Encourage.
P E R S E V E R E .

Third Sunday Food Offering Sunday, February 14

Be a Valentine to the less fortunate!
All donations of any kind are appreciated. Checks and food and hygiene items will go to Our Daily Bread. If you would like to contribute meat or fresh items, please take them directly to ODB- 701 East 12th, (East side of the building facing the City pool.) For more information- 405-533-2555 or info@ourdailybreadstillwater.org

Our Fifth Sunday offering to Mission of Hope. Sunday, January 31

Over 3,944 People in Oklahoma are Homeless

- Over 881 Families
- Over 280 Veterans
- About 325 Children

In addition to housing clients on a long-time basis, to provide training and save money with the goal of becoming self-sufficient. MOH also provides bedding and a warm place to sleep to Stillwater's chronically homeless people when the temps get frigid.