

The SEER

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

MAY 2021



**IN PERSON
SUNDAY SERVICE
9:30 AM**

Face masks required

**For now, no Coffee Hour
or in person Sunday School**

**Nursery open
to parents**

**Our on-line services
continue** at 9:30am on
Facebook at
Salem Lutheran Church or
anytime on YouTube
Salem ELC Stillwater OK

**Sunday Morning Adult
Discussion 11am Zoom
class (new time!)**

**Friday Morning Bible Study
at 10am via ZOOM.**
Newcomers welcome.
Pre-reading not required!

Contact Pr. Sally (pastorsally
@sbcglobal.net) for website
info for these Zoom meetings.

**For Confirmation Sunday,
May 2 Sunday School &
Sunday Service will change
times.**



Sydney Ulrich, Peer Minister,
Assisting Minister and soon to be
graduate with a Bachelors in
Geology and a minor in
Environmental Science will
again be with us in the fall. She
will attend OSU to pursue a
Masters in Teaching.

Congratulations SYDNEY!

If there is a graduate in your family
who attends Salem, please send us a
note (salemelc@sbcglobal.net) with
information on the degree and any
future plans. Pictures, and anything
else you'd like to share are
appreciated!

During May, the Adult Discussion class will continue on with the "Beginnings of Judaism"
based on lectures by Professor Isaiah M. Gafni from Great Courses.



The topics will include:

- May 2nd at 11am- "Retelling the Bible – The Book of Jubilees"
- May 9th at 11am- "Revealing the Unknown"
- May 16th – No class
- May 23rd at 11am- "Judaism or Judaisms?"
- May 30th at 9:30– Sectarianism: Pharisees and Sadducees"

The Adult Discussion Class will continue as a Zoom meeting at **11 AM beginning Sunday, May 2.**
Please note the change of time. (As well as the Confirmation plan for Sunday, May 30)

The address for the Zoom meetings can be found in the Tuesday memos
and Sunday Service E-Mail.

Join us for thoughtful discussions on the "Beginnings of Judaism"
to improve our understanding of the roots of our faith.

From the Pastor

May is a month full of ... May!
We have Mother's Day for celebrating and remembering our mothers, and Graduations from Pre-School through Doctorates, and Memorial Day to honor those who gave the last great measure of devotion to their country.

However, we are also not without significant holy days and commemorations this year, as in...
May 13th, Ascension Day, when Jesus rose to the clouds and disappeared into heaven, or May 23rd, the Day of Pentecost, when the Church was infused with the power of the Holy Spirit, or...May 31, the day we commemorate Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth, sometimes called The Visitation.

Remember that? Just after Mary discovers that she will be giving birth to the savior of the world, the angel Gabriel, as if to give her comfort and confirmation, tells her that another God-given miracle is happening to her cousin Elizabeth, who is also expecting, even in her old age. Mary "makes haste" to visit her.

It strikes me that The Visitation is maybe what we need most this year in May. May marks a significant point in our congregational and cultural journey 'back together', a beginning of finding comfort in one another's company and confirmation that God is with us in difficult times, with promise for the future.

We 'sing' The Visitation every time we do Evening Prayer, retelling the story and ending with Mary's song of wonder, the Magnificat. This year we need to hear the Magnificat more than ever, a year of disorientation, of growing gun violence, sharpening racial tension, increasing mental stress and illness, and deepening political division. What does it mean to Mary, 'lowly servant', that God has so blessed her? It is not only her life that is turned upside down, but the whole world:

He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts, he has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty". What do we discern for our mission and ministry together when we overlay this song on the events of our time?

Christmas in May? Why not. As I write this article, the month of May is heralded in my woods by patches of a wildflower called the Star of Bethlehem. O come, O come, Immanuel...our Prince of Peace!

Pastor Sally

Pastor's
Notes



FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Some of you may remember back 15–20 years ago, between Pastor Ott and Pastor Sally, when our church was vandalized. Someone spray painted graffiti above the altar. I remember it vaguely and seeing the wall covered with a big sheet of paper. I wasn't on council, so never really knew any of the details. Of course I felt violated, sad, angry and had many questions like, Why would someone do this to a church? Over the years I have to admit I haven't given it any more thought.

In February the church received a \$39 check from the District Attorney's for restitution. I kind of remembered something had happened at one time but \$39 didn't seem like any big deal. But then in April we received a second check for \$39 and then I actually saw the check. Looking at the accompanying document I realized the restitution was going to be \$600 and obviously paid out every other month in \$39 increments. If my calculations are correct, it meant it was going to take this person over 2 years to pay us back. It made me think after 15+ years maybe this individual had paid enough. So mentioned it to a couple other members and the consensus was to see if we could forgive the debt, which is what I did. The DA's office assured me we could and I asked that it be forgiven. The person I talked to seemed happy we would do this. I learned we were not the only church vandalized, but to date the only one that had made that request. I did ask if he could be told and they agreed to tell him. I still have lots of questions, Was he been incarcerated for part of that time? Is he remorseful? And I still wonder the motivation behind the vandalism. Was he mad at God, at churches, the world? I'll never know, but I hope he knows he has been forgiven and it makes some small difference in his life. And as Steve Haseley said "after all, we're in the business of forgiveness".

Getting ready to have in-person Church again has taken a lot of planning and the help of many people. After these many months we still need to be safe and stay well. Thanks to all of you that are making this possible and everyone for supporting Salem this past year and for being church together. *Judy Lewis*



The new Salem website address is
salemstillwaterok.org

The old web address will redirect you to our new site temporarily. We hope the site will be inviting and informative for people seeking a church as well as providing information for our members. Of course, we will still rely on emails and the Seer for internal communications. Check it out.

Thanks to Carol Beier for doing the leg work to get this up and running!

Our current **Walmart credit cards** have been cancelled. The new company has issued just 2 cards. Because of that, we will be checking them out like we do the Visa.

If you have need of a card, please see Lisa beginning May 1st.

Sunday May 2 at 9:30: Two Options for Worship, Online and In-person!

Online worship remains at 9:30 (and after) on our Facebook Page (Salem Lutheran Church) or anytime on our YouTube Channel (Salem ELC Stillwater OK)

In-person worship will be at 9:30 am.

Very important:

If it is your delight to return to in-person worship, please come!

If it is your delight to worship remotely, please do!

There is no pressure to do anything but whatever suits you best..

This includes those who have continued to volunteer with various worship tasks- ushers, greeters, counters, etc

- Worship at home, and return to in-person worship when you are ready.
- We invite those of you who prefer in-person worship to make yourselves available for volunteer roles.

Tell Pastor Sally that you are willing to help and she will let you know whom to contact.

For the safety of worshippers, we recommend that worship assistants be vaccinated.

Worship: the same, but different

Many things will be the 'same' in worship, but during this time when the virus is still circulating we will also adopt these changes:

- *Masks will be required;* extra masks will be available upon entering the church if you do not have one.
- Seating will be by household, but also distanced. We will use every other pew.
If needed we will also use the Parish Hall.
- We will have Krystal and Elizabeth's beautiful recorded music in the service (until we can livestream).
You are invited to sing quietly.
- Holy Communion will be a part of the service, spoken.
Those who are comfortable will come forward to receive bread only (we hope to add wine/juice soon).
- Outdoor visiting is encouraged after the service for those who care to stay.
- The Nursery will be open for parents to use as needed (with a limited amount of toys, which will be cleaned during the week). We hope to have caregivers available this fall.

The Adult Discussion group will remain on Zoom for now, moving to Sundays at 11am.

Thank you for your kindness and patience as we hit the 'restart' button.

We're on our way! Pastor Sally





May

Anniversaries and Birthdays

16	Lori & Kevin Oltmanns	5	Jeanette Johnson
22	Lynn & Bill Lester	8	Katie Kershaw
23	Tricia & David Auberle	9	Emily Headrick
24	Chris & Kay Headrick	12	Barbara Bliss
28	Mike & Lucy Kershaw	15	Mike Kershaw
31	Jacque & Jeff Jones		Evan Reitan
		23	Dorothy Johnson
		29	Susan Prater
		30	Larry Redburn
		31	JuDean Howerton

Notes from Priscilla Gerfen

Service Ministry



Thank you to the congregation for your generosity – As of April 11th, we collected \$4085 for Lutheran World Hunger during our Lenten season.

There will be a 5th Sunday offering in May. More info to come!

Book Club

Bookclub will meet on Monday, May 31, at Annette Cowell's home. If you need directions, or are interested in more information please contact Priscilla Gerfen. (priscilla@gerfen.com or 405-612-7731)



Book Club

Loving an EGR???

During a conversation over coffee, a friend mentioned an "EGR." I had to interrupt and ask for a definition: Extra Grace Required – in other words, people who can seem tough to love. Often, they're the most in need of love. Perhaps Jesus was referring to EGRs when he said, "If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much" (Matthew 5:46, NLT).

Truly loving others – even EGRs – might not be as tough as we think. Simple gestures such as smiling, truly listening, sending a note or extending an invitation go a long way toward expressing care and softening hearts.

At times, we all require extra grace. Thankfully, God has an unlimited amount to extend to us and then through us. Out of joy, we can find ways – even simple ones – to share God's grace and love with people who need it.

—Janna Firestone

Volunteer Schedule

2021	May 2 ELW, Setting 4	May 9 ELW, Setting 4	May 16 ELW, Setting 4	May 23 Pentecost	May 30 Holy Trinity
Assisting Minister On-line In-person	Sydney Ulrich Lynn Franzmann	Sarah Spitaleri Sarah Spitaleri	Judy Lewis David Lewis	Mark Pennie Mark Pennie	Susan Prater
Cantor	Elizabeth Albright	Elizabeth Albright	Elizabeth Albright	Elizabeth Albright	Elizabeth Albright
Ushers 9:30	Moses & Catherine Vijayakumar	Roger Sahs & Stephen Haseley	Susan & Jess Prater	David & Judy Lewis	Rick & Carol Beier
Greeter 10:45	The Lewises	The Sahs	The Ackersons	The Cowells	
Altar Guild 9:30	Joanna Gipson	Priscilla Gerfen	Mary Jo Lanier	Dorothy Johnson	Maria Wolff & Dorothy Johnson
Sound Tech 9:30	Olen Weaver	Terry Gipson	Rick Beier	Terry Gipson	
Counters	Michelle Hoerning & Cindy Haseley	Terry Gipson & Terry Gipson	Carol Beier & Michelle Hoerning	Cindy Haseley & Priscilla Gerfen	Priscilla Gerfen & Carol Beier
Altar Flowers	Dorothy Johnson				

Volunteer Needed for Sunday Worship

Until we are fully capable of livestreaming, we will be hearing Elizabeth and Krystal's beautiful recordings for in-person worship. Olen Weaver says it will be very simple to play through our sound system, much like playing music through your computer.



Rick Beier is ready to train others to help with this task so that a number of us can share it. Please contact Rick at rick.beier@gmail.com if you have questions or think you might be able to help.

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: Please call for new hours
Telephone numbers: 405-372-3074, 372-0879
 (Please leave a message)
Email Address: salemelc@sbcglobal.net
Church Website: salemstillwaterok.org

To Our Younger Members and Guests



We know it is hard to sit quietly, so we want you to know you can wiggle and talk in the nursery!

Mom or Dad will keep you company.

YOU CAN PLAY WITH THE TOYS AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO PICK THEM UP!!

To help keep you safe and well, we will wash all the toys and they will be next week.

If you are thirsty, enjoy a bottle of water and if your tummy needs some attention there are Gold Fish.

Encourage Mom or Dad to leave us a suggestion if they know how we can increase your fun.

The Arkansas Oklahoma Synod Assembly will convene this Friday evening, April 30. For the first time ever it will be held virtually via Zoom. Friday evening will include small group opportunities to get to know other voting members plus Zoom worship led by Synod pastors.



Saturday will include business, reports, and discussion around the theme, Grace in Motion (the Synod's new tag line). Speaking to the topic will be the Rev. Ruben Duran, Director, ELCA Congregation Vitality.

Salem's Voting Members include Pastor Sally, Mary Jo Lanier, Bruce Ackerson and Jared Smith. We appreciate their willingness to serve the wider church, and look forward to hearing about 'Grace in Motion' from them.