

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
359 Leonard Street N
West Salem, WI 54669

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
West Salem, WI
Permit #21

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
WEST SALEM, WISCONSIN
January 2019

- Pastor's Reflections
- Baptism Recognition Worship
- Sunday School/Confirmation
- Stewardship
- Council Review
- January Calendar



Vision Statement:

*We are a church centered in Christ,
inviting all into a community of worship,
nurturing all to be disciples of Jesus.
Together we reach out to make a difference
here and throughout the world.*

Our Savior's Voice

Our Savior's Lutheran Church 359 Leonard Street N West Salem, WI 54669
www.oursaviorswestsalem.org 608-786-0030

JANUARY 2019

Pastor's Reflections ...

Truth be told, I'm not a very good photographer, but I do know the secret to great photography – take a million pictures, one is bound to turn out, and in a digital age, use the delete button – a lot!

Still, I enjoy playing with the camera. So much so that part of my sabbatical this summer will be to work on developing (no pun intended!) my photography skills.

That's also why for a gift this year I asked for, and received, a new prime lens for my camera. For those who care, it's a 50mm f1.8 lens. A nice lens, and rather inexpensive, making it a great value. But most of all, as a "fast" lens, it has (are you ready for this) great "bokeh."

Bokeh refers to the out of focus part of a picture. All lenses can produce bokeh, but a faster lens, with a more shallow depth of field produces a more evident and pleasing bokeh. A picture with really good bokeh will have the subject of the picture in sharp focus, while the background is nicely blurred, in a way that is attractive and pleasing. Really good bokeh becomes an artistic element that makes the picture quite special.



But bokeh does something else. When the background is blurred, the subject stands out. I discovered that last summer. I have pictures of a Native American dancer from Gallup, NM (not far from where next summer's mission trip will be heading!) The dancer is sharp and in focus. But so is the background, and that's the problem. There is too much cluttering up the picture and diverting attention from the dancer.

Now, sometimes we want the whole picture to be in focus, "sharp as a tack." All the details crisp and clear!

But other times we want to focus on the subject, and only the subject. Bokeh lets that happen – the subject stands out and grabs our attention. The background, the rest of the picture, doesn't distract us or divert us from what's important.

Kind of like Aaron Rogers, throwing a pass. He needs to see the receiver and the defense around him. He can't be distracted by what's going on in the stands. He doesn't want the details of the background. Just give him a lot of "bokeh."

Maybe that's a helpful image (no pun intended, again!) for us as we begin 2019. We are entering the *Forward: Fearless and Faithful* process, working with resources from the La Crosse Area Synod. A small team from Our Savior's of four to six people, with the pastors as observers, will work with an outside coach for the coming year. They will develop a process for discerning God's call to us, in our community, with the gifts God entrusts to us. They won't come together to figure out all the answers. Instead, they will engage the rest of the congregation so that we – together – can figure out what God is up to in this congregation, in our community, in our faithful discipleship.

In the end, the process will help us to develop some bokeh, to be able to focus on God's work, while "tuning out" the distractions and diversions around us. And maybe that will also let God's call grab our attention, and keep us "tuned in" to our role in all that God is up to in our corner of the world.

So I want to ask you to do a couple of things. Pray for those who will be a part of the *Forward: Fearless and Faithful* process. But pray too for the congregation, that this process may grab us and lead us to faithful discipleship as a community of faith.

Then, as the year unfolds, watch and listen as the process moves forward. And when the time is right, jump in. See the "bokeh," and focus on the subject – on what's really important – on what God is calling us to see, to be, and to do.

Oh, and have any questions? Just ask – we'd love to tell you more!

Pastor Jon



Recognition of Baptism

January 13/14 is the "Baptism of Our Lord." On that weekend, at all services, we will recognize baptisms from 2018. Those who were baptized are encouraged to join us, with baptism candle in hand! We will ask God's continued blessing on their journey in life, relight the candle to remember what God is doing in their lives, and send them forth to continue as disciples of Jesus! See Pastor Jean for more information.



Pastoral Acts:
Funeral – Ken Piper – December 17

In Loving Memory

Memorial Gifts Received ...

In Memory of Jackie Hartman

From Judy Long for Endowment Fund

In Memory of Karen Hehl

From Lowell Hehl for Confirmation Bibles

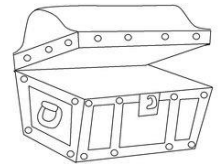




SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

If you missed the Sunday school Christmas programs, you really missed something! The kids worked hard and did a great job! After the first of the year, we will get back into our “normal” routines – music, lessons, and hearing from our friends from *Whirl*. We will be learning about the seasons of Christmas and Epiphany. Our teachers and helpers continue to share God’s love with our children, and Pastor Jean enjoys spending time with them during video. Now that Christmas is over, we hope our families will not take a break from Sunday school ... we always like to see your smiling faces!! Check out below how our attendance is going!

Don’t forget about our Sunday School Treasure Box! The “friendly competition” between our classes continues as the children bring their offerings for God’s Barnyard. As of late December, our **3rd grade** class is up to \$123.50 in offering, the **5th grade** class has \$105, and the **Kindergarten** class is closing in at \$95. Way to go kids! Let’s keep our barnyard growing!



We also get to visit the Treasure Box as we celebrate attendance. Check out these kids with “perfect” attendance or “missed once” during the **2nd quarter** of Sunday school:

Perfect:

5th Grade: Baylee Faucett, Lydia Jothén ... 4th Grade: Gunnar Eckland, Brianna Mathison ...
3rd Grade: Lily Muellenberg, Madison Phillips ... Pre-K: Kirya Eckland, Alise Jothén

Missed once:

5th Grade: Danielle Christianson, Bennett Fennigkoh, Breanna Smith ... 4th Grade: Lily Twite, Alicia Zarecki ... 3rd Grade: Deanna Christianson, Arianna Clements, Zander Clements, Jesse Jothén, Casey Mathison ... 2nd Grade: Alana Steinke ... 1st Grade: Anna Vick, Camille Zarecki ... Kindergarten: Noah Evenson, Max Twite ... Pre-K: Mason Knebes, Makynlee Crankshaw

And now check out those kids with “perfect” or “missed once” so far for the **whole year!**

Perfect:

5th Grade: Lydia Jothén ... 4th Grade: Gunnar Eckland ... Pre-K: Kirya Eckland, Alise Jothén

Missed once:

5th Grade: Danielle Christianson, Baylee Faucett ... 3rd Grade: Deanna Christianson, Jesse Jothén, Casey Mathison, Madison Phillips ... 2nd Grade: Alana Steinke ... 1st Grade: Anna Vick ... Kindergarten: Noah Evenson ... Pre-K: Makynlee Crankshaw

Important Dates

- Sunday, January 27 - Grades 3-5 sing during 10:30 am worship
- Sunday, February 3 - Grades 4K-2 sing during 10:30 am worship
- Sunday, February 24 - Grades 3-5 sing during 10:30 am worship

Sunday School Offering

Our Sunday School offerings this year are being collected for **God's Global Barnyard**. Each week the classes are adding to our barnyard depending on how much offering was collected the week before. Our chicken pen is overflowing, but the cows and pigs are a bit lonely. The more that a class collects, the bigger the animal that is added. Can you help us increase our stock in the next couple of months? Check out the barnyard between the pastor's offices.



Thank you for an awesome job!



On December 16th thirty of our 3rd – 5th grade Sunday School children did a great job presenting their Christmas program “*Crazy, Busy, Peaceful, Holy Night!*”

...and ...

On December 15th thirty-three of our 4K – 2nd grade Sunday School children did a great job presenting their Christmas program “*Rufus and the Very Special Baby!*”

We thank our children for working so hard – singing your hearts out and learning your lines – such energy!! – and our parents for your support and getting your kids to Sunday School each week.

Thank you to Mike Larson, Linda Berg, Ilene Pavelko, and Stephanie Subjek for providing the music and direction for the children ... Eric Iloff for coordinating the staging and working with the kids on their speaking parts ... Abbey Vick for singing, Scarlet Fullwood, Marissa Eckland, Mia Bahl, and Mali Hemker for sharing their voices, and Kathy Brisson for shepherding kids during the 4K-2nd grade program.

Thank you to those who helped behind the scenes to make this program possible – especially Wendy Kane and Eric Iloff who worked hard to make sure everything went smoothly.

We thank our Sunday School teachers for all of your work, not only with the program, but for faithfully sharing the love of Jesus Christ with our children each week.

Thank you to everyone who came to our Christmas programs in the midst of worship! If you were unable to be with us that weekend, check out the YouTube of the services on our website: www.oursaviorswestsalem.org. Follow the link ...and see what you missed!!



Confirmation for January

It's a new year, and we are gearing up!

- After School begins again January 2. Time for fun, connecting, even homework. Dinner provided. Every Wednesday after school, for confirmation age kids.
- 6th grade have classes each Wednesday at 6 PM.
- 7/8th graders have core classes January 2 and 23, electives January 9 and 30, and small group time on January 16.
- 9th graders and parents gather on January 9 or 16 (your choice!), AND on January 30 or February 6 (your choice again!). They have small group time on January 23.



Please keep our confirmation students, parents, and guides in your prayers as they continue to explore what it means to be disciples of Jesus!



As our students are either away from home or studying in challenging environments, we keep them in our thoughts and prayers. This month please pray for: **Emily Steele** (UW-EC), **Delaney Schomberg** (UW-L), **Justine Rich** (MSU-Mankato), **Allie Skrentny** (UW-L), **Jillian Olson** (UW-EC) and **Danielle Schultz** (UW-L).

college+
connection

And we also pray for our students in military service: **Nathan Selck** (United States Marines).



Hi Pastor Jean, Thank you for the finals card and gift card. When I opened up my mailbox, I was so surprised to see a card from church! While reading the message, I was smiling because it was so nice. Also for my art final we had to create a series of paintings, and for one of mine I chose to paint things that reminded me of Christmas (I attached a picture of it)... Thank you again for the card, it made my day. Sincerely,

Emily (Steele)

... thank you for the card and the gift card to Kwik Trip. It's nice knowing I am in your thoughts and prayers. I look forward to attending service and seeing everyone over the holidays! See you soon,

Raeann Rich



What's going on in the Youth World!?

MISSION TRIP 2019

Educational Meeting, January 27 - 1 pm

Keep on the calendar important mission trip related meeting dates:

March 3 - 1 pm

April 7 - 1 pm

May 5 - 1 pm

Mission trip dates: June 14-24, 2019



30 HOUR FAMINE

February 8-9 - 11:00 am

Join us in fasting for 30 hours to stand against children facing hunger across the globe. Help us reach our goal of \$1,500 to feed 37 children for a month! Contact Cat or Pastor Jon with questions.

Fundraising opportunities: January 27 9:15 Bake Sale

February 16 5:00 Talent Show

Find us on Facebook to donate electronically!



Hungry Jar Offering for January LaCrosse Warming Center

The weather outside is frigid ... this *is* Wisconsin! The La Crosse Warming Center's mission is to work with the greater La Crosse community to better serve those experiencing homelessness with dignity and respect by providing a safe and warm place for homeless adults 18 years and older to get in out of the cold during the winter months from November 1 until April 30. The Warming Center is located at 413 South Third Street in La Crosse and can accommodate up to 34 guests. Guests are able to take a shower and wash their clothes. To keep the doors open, hundreds of volunteers from area churches and the community are needed to staff the center. Please be generous as we care for our brothers and sisters who are hurting.



New Members

If you are new to Our Savior's, but have not joined the congregation, we welcome you to consider membership with us. While EVERYONE is welcome in worship, and our ministry involves ALL of God's children, members help us by making a commitment to this community of faith, and by taking a role in leading our ministry. Regardless of where you are coming from, we would love to have you, and to partner with you in your journey of discipleship. For more information on membership, and how it can happen for you, see Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean!



We're planning...

We are beginning to work on a new ministry for couples, especially those who are seeking support and nurture through the ups and downs of parenting. Watch for more details, or connect with Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean.

Building Access

In response to some concerns about security, the Congregation Council has taken action to set building access times. **Effective January 1**, the church building will be open when the offices are open or staff is otherwise present. The building will be locked over the lunch hour, and when staff is off for the day. Office hours are generally 9 AM to 4 PM, though staff may be in the building earlier or remain later.



INTERGENERATIONAL MISSION TRIP 2019 ...

...You *don't* have to be a youth to attend this trip!

Where: Crownpoint, NM

When: June 14-24

Cost: ~ no more than \$900

We will be serving the Navajo Nation Reservation and will have free time to explore the Chaco Culture National Historical Park and then Albuquerque and Santa Fe.



Check out the information on page 7 of this newsletter for important meeting dates! Speak to Cathryn Bottem or Pastor Jon for more information.

SENIOR

CONNECTION

**Coffee & Conversation at Linda's Bakery
9:15 AM on Tuesday, January 8**

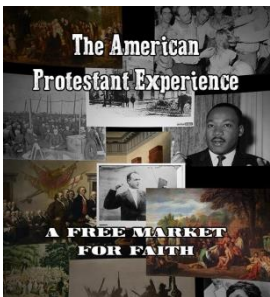
**"Grumpy Old Men"
& Lunch**

**Monday, January 14
11:00 am**

**First Presbyterian Church - La Crosse
Sign up on the senior ministry bulletin board
(outside the Koinonia Room)
Call Kathy Brisson (786-1958) for more details.**



Grumpy Old Men is dedicated to preserving the musical heritage of the Big Band Era of the 1930's, '40's, and '50's. They are a 14 piece big band with members from the La Crosse area. The band consists of mostly retired musicians who still love to play their instruments and the music of the swing era. The band's repertoire includes the music of Glenn Miller, Les Brown, George Gershwin and many others.

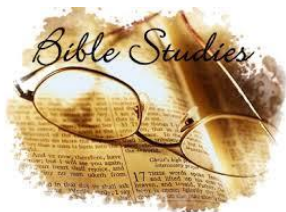


**The American Protestant Experience
January 14th
@ Salem Terrace – 10:00 am
Join us for coffee & study**



The coffee is perking as we gather for fellowship and study. We meet in the small kitchenette off of the parking lot between Salem Terrace & Mill Street Manor. Feel free to invite your friends.

Adult Studies



Wednesday morning Bible study meets at 9:30 in the Library. As a new year begins, we will take a look at Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. Filled with lots of treasures, this letter, not always very happy, is nonetheless a gift from a gracious God! Come and join us – no previous knowledge or experience required!

School of Theology

The La Crosse Area Synod School of Theology resumes classes January 10 with an intro session at Zion in Galesville, taught by Pastor Len Liptack. Regular classes are held RIGHT HERE at Our Savior's, on Thursday evenings from 5:30 to 9 PM, for six weeks, beginning January 17. Courses for this term include congregation dynamics, intergenerational ministries, and how gender affects our ministry work. Pastors Ben Morris and Libby Howe, along with Jake Sorenson will be the instructors. For more information see the synod web site at www.lacrosseareasynd.org/synod-school-of-theology, or see Pastor Jon.



CHECK IT OUT ...

Can't see the bulletin ... we have large print bulletins



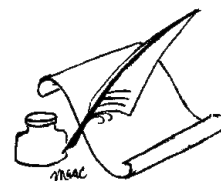
Can't hear the worship service ... we have a hearing assist device

Missed worship ... check out the website – www.oursaviorswestsaalem.org – to see the service.



Cards for shut-ins

Don't forget to stop by the "Card Ministry" table (located outside of the Pre-K classroom) each weekend when you are at worship to sign the cards for our shut-ins. You really do make a difference in the lives of those who cannot be with us.





Our Savior's Mission in the World *God's Work... Our Hands* ELCA Missionaries

Our Savior's is around the globe! Through the La Crosse Area Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), we support mission work on six continents. We do that by working with over 80 partner churches throughout the world. And we make a difference!

Once, mission work was seen as "us" proclaiming Jesus to those who had never heard the good news. Sometimes that still happens. But many times we are working with churches in the mission field itself. We work side by side with them, sharing and teaching, but also learning from them. Together, we address the root causes of poverty and hunger, meet human needs, fight malaria and HIV and AIDS, build communities that coexist in peace, and prepare women and men to preach the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

Many of these churches are in places where the Christian faith is spreading rapidly, while others are in places where Lutherans, or even Christians, are a distinct minority. The challenges can be great, but we respond to God's call, empowered by the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

And then there are "YAGMs" (Young Adults in Global Mission). YAGMs are young adults who volunteer for a year in the mission field, and as they make a difference, they too are changed. Almost 100 YAGMs are sent forth each year. Maybe we have a future YAGM among us? Pray for it!

For more information on our mission work, go to:

www.elca.org/Our-Work/Global-Church/Global-Mission

Your financial support makes this ministry of outreach and thanks possible. Thank you for helping us reach out by simply giving back to the community around us!

Mission Support

Thank you for your continued support of our mission and ministry, here in West Salem and around the world! The end of year figures are not yet available, but we continue to move forward, into a new year, filled with the confidence that God is calling us – and empowering us – in our work together! Your support as we begin a new year of mission in our world is so very important. Thank you again for all you share for the sake of the world, and the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ!



2019 Offering Envelopes ...



By now you should have received your new offering envelopes for 2019. If you haven't received them or you still need envelopes, please let Kris know in the office and she will gladly get some for you. If you are new to Simply Giving or are changing your amount in 2019, please be sure to fill out a new form and get that to the office ASAP. *Also note:* it is possible you will have a new number in 2019, so be sure to use the 2019 envelopes beginning in January.

Partners in electronic giving since 1998.



SIMPLY GIVING

Many of us make a variety of payments directly from our bank accounts. Simply Giving allows you to do the same with your contributions to Our Savior's ministry! A number of our members currently use this service for their contributions. There is no charge to you, and it is a safe and efficient way for you to make your contributions. For more information see Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean, or speak with Kris in the church office. Setting up Simply Giving is easy, and you can change your contributions or end your participation at any time. Check it out!

THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS



Remember that if you are a Thrivent member you may have "Thrivent Choice Dollars" to direct. Our Savior's is one of the many potential recipients of your choice dollars, but your direction needs to be made each time. See Thrivent's web site for more information or stop by the office and we will help you out.

SHOPPING ONLINE?



Our Savior's now has an account with "Amazon Smile." If you shop with Amazon, you can support our work together by designating your "Amazon Smile" contribution to Our Savior's.

Recently Received...

Dear Pastors and Members of Our Savior's Lutheran Church,
This is a note of gratitude for the recent gift received from you in the amount of \$1024.27 that was designated as \$526.27 for Lutheran Campus Ministry, La Crosse-Operations and \$498 for ELCA World Hunger...Thank you for giving life to your call as God's people.



In Christ, Bishop Jim Arends

Annual Meeting

The 2019 Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 27, at approximately 11:45 AM, following the 10:30 AM worship service. All voting members are encouraged to attend. The mission plan and budget for 2019 will be presented, reports on our ministry shared, and elections held. Don't miss it!



2019 Annual Meeting report deadlines ...



The New Year is upon us, which means Our Savior's annual meeting is right around the corner. We will meet as a congregation to share all that has happened in 2018 ... and there is lots to share! In preparation for the annual meeting, we will once again call on folks from the various committees, teams, and ministries to write their reflections for the annual report. Please note we will need those reports in the office as follows: **Written Reports by Sunday, January 6** and **Financial Reports by Thursday, January 10**.

Congregation Council Review

The Congregation Council met on Monday, December 10, at Pastor Jon and Pastor Jean's home, with President Steve Ahles presiding. At this meeting the council:

- Approved the council minutes, and received financial reports and reports from the pastors, all for November.
- Discussed the membership review, with the intent to take action at the January meeting.
- Discussed the "Forward: Fearless and Faithful." Heard that Wendy Kane, Tracey Beckley, and Judy Gilbert, along with the pastors are working to identify and recruit team members.
- Heard that Wehrs Electric is exploring the possibility of increased LED lighting in the building, along with several other electrical projects.
- Discussed access to the building when the offices are not open. Voted to have the building locked when staff is not present, including over the lunch hour.



Following the conclusion of the meeting the council and families engaged in a Christmas party. Lots of good treats and well wishes were shared. The council meets again on Monday, January 14. See one of the pastors or Steve Ahles if you have any questions.



Thank you ...

...to the December newsletter mailing crew - Connie & Larry Blunck, Bev Bockenbauer, Carolyn Karl, Caryll Loughan, Judy Morzinski, Carol Peterson, Mary & Rich Storandt, and Betty Whitlock.

... to Lynette Ender and Sharon Olson for making the Communion bread in December.

... Dear Folks of the Mary & Martha Prayer Shawl Ministry, Thank you for the beautiful shawl and all the prayers that are in it! It is so cozy and comforting. I do feel God's presence wrapped around me each time I put it around my shoulders. It will always be treasured by me and definitely comforting when I feel lost without my wonderful husband that God called home. Thank you so much for extending your love and prayers to me, someone you have never met! May God bless you in all your endeavors. Love,

Glennidia Bridenbaugh
(Pastor Jean's Aunt)

... Hello, Thank you for the thoughtful Thanksgiving bag. The whole family enjoys the variety of treats. The decorations were delightful. What a nice way to start this blessed season.

Bobbi Broughton



Synod Assembly Voting Members

The Congregation Council will need to appoint voting members to the 2019 La Crosse Area Synod Assembly sometime in the near future. If you are interested in participating in the assembly, contact Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean. The assembly will be held June 14-16 in La Crosse. Expenses are covered. Assemblies involve business, fellowship, worship, and a lot of learning about the work of God's people!

Blood Drive



Blood Drive - Monday, January 14, 12:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. at the West Salem Presbyterian Church.

ACOLYTES			
	Saturday 6 p.m.	Sunday 8 a.m.	Sunday 10:30 a.m.
Jan 5 - 6	Sophia Taylor	Dylan Wiese	Jacob Hickey
Jan 12 - 13	Adam Chandler	Kylee Gander	Madelyn England
Jan 19 - 20	Delaney Christianson	Justin Hennessey	Madeline Janisch
Jan 26 - 27	Zachary Long	Megan Marcou	CJ McConkey

BASKET HOLDERS			
		Sunday 8 a.m.	Sunday 10:30 a.m.
Jan 6		Mallory Long	Rylee Lyga
Jan 13		Ella Muellenberg	Samantha Niemeier
Jan 20		Carter Quackenbush	Will Stefferud
Jan 27		Eve Twite	Owen Kendhammer

HOME COMMUNION SERVERS

Jan 5 - 6 Judy Gilbert
 Jan 12 - 13 Pam Gresens
 Jan 19 - 20 Iliff Family
 Jan 26 - 27 Ilene Pavelko

COMMUNION BREAD (*January 19/20*) - Phil & Judy Gilbert

ALTAR GUILD Cindy Averbeck / Jaime Fortier

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS			
	Saturday 6 p.m.	Sunday 8 a.m.	Sunday 10:30 a.m.
Jan 5 - 6	Paula Heilman	Kyle Twite Naoko Giblin	Jessica Kennedy Dottie Baumgartner
Jan 12 - 13	Judy Morzinski	Larry Blunck Melody Schmitz	Gillian Twite
Jan 19 - 20	Jim Quamme	Steve Ahles Jill Iliff	Vicky Johnson Dori Jensen
Jan 26 - 27	Karen DeSchepper	Wendy Kane Bonny Goodenough	Shannon Wiese Corey Sjoquist

READERS

	Saturday 6 p.m.	Sunday 8 a.m.	Sunday 10:30 a.m.
Jan 5 - 6	Angie Hemker	Kathy Wehrs	
Jan 12 - 13	Bonnie Gensch		
Jan 19 - 20	Marjorie Anderson	Sharon Olson	Kristin Tschumper
Jan 26 - 27	Karen DeSchepper		

USHERS

	Saturday 6 p.m.	Sunday 8 a.m.	Sunday 10:30 a.m.
Jan 6 - 7		Karl & Kathy Wehrs	
Jan 13 - 14			
Jan 20 - 21			
Jan 27 - 28			

Web Site: www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

OUR SAVIOR'S STAFF

Pastor Jonathan Schmidt, Senior Pastor	612-0217	Email: pastorjon@oursaviorswestsalem.org
Pastor Jean Schmidt, Associate Pastor	612-0217	Email: pastorjean@oursaviorswestsalem.org
Kris Seeger, Administrative Assistant	Church Office: 786-0030	
		Email: office@oursaviorswestsalem.org
Cathryn Bottem, Director of Youth Ministry	518-1181	Email: youth@oursaviorswestsalem.org
Jill Iliff, Treasurer		Email: treasurer@oursaviorswestsalem.org
Linda Berg, Organist		Email: linda@oursaviorswestsalem.org
Kathy Brisson, Organist		
Eric Sorenson, Senior Choir Director		
Karen DeSchepper, Financial Secretary		
Sherri Neal, Custodian		