

Our Savior's Voice

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street N - West Salem, WI 54669

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

608-786-0030

August 2020



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.***

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Pastor's Reflections



The “dog days of summer” are here, and ... more of the same! BUT ... *new things are happening*. So, I'll update our ministries in a moment, but first ... new stuff!

When we gather in worship (you know, like it seems, years ago!), we usually gathered around God's Word both spoken (Bible readings and sermon) and visible (Holy Communion). These days those things are harder to come by.

Of course, our worship videos on YouTube have shared the spoken Word, and driveway communion has shared the visible word, but let's face it – driveways aren't quite as attractive in January, and if this continues ...

So, what to do? Recently, Bishop Arends has authorized us to offer some form of online, or “virtual” communion experience, until such time as regular, in person worship, is again feasible. In light of the Bishop's authorization, and after considerable discussion, Pastor Jean and I, along with Congregation Council, have decided to move ahead.

You need to know that we have spent long hours discussing, pondering, and even (dare I say) praying about it. Holy Communion is the community gathered together, around the presence of Jesus in the bread and wine. We hear the promises of God, and as a community we receive those promises, sharing them with each other, and then with the world around us. To do that on the internet? Hmm ... not sure about that!

On the other hand ... there comes a moment when we recognize that the box we are in needs to be broken, and then we realize that it is God breaking the box. This is that moment!

And so, with just a wee bit of uncertainty (after all, we've never done this before), we have embraced the opportunity to offer Holy Communion, the presence of Jesus in bread and wine, to you in a

new and different way. Not just for the sake of being different, but because this moment calls forth God's creative work in our midst. And right now, that is what we desperately need!

So, here's what's on tap ... ***Zoom Communion!***

Starting August 9, on Sunday's at 10:30 a.m., we invite you to "zoom" with us (connection info is below). Our worship will be on the "Zoom" internet platform, which allows you to see and hear us, and we to see and hear you, while you remain in your own home. Up to 100 viewers can be on at a time. The worship will last 20-25 minutes, and will include prayer, scripture, and the celebration of Holy Communion.

We offer this with the confidence that God understands our world better than we do, and that the God who would do anything to bring us life (like send Jesus to the cross) is just fine with "breaking the box" and inviting us to a supper where we dine together, but for the sake of the community, cannot be in the same space. Besides, the internet too is God's creation – why shouldn't God use it to make life happen?

So how does this all work? First, you need a camera and mic on your computer, and the connection info below. You can also phone in like a conference call if that works better for you.

Here's what you need to know:

- We meet on Sundays, at 10:30 AM, beginning August 9. Expect 20-25 minutes.
- Have bread and wine (or grape juice) handy. How about baking your own communion bread, using a tried and true recipe? Go to www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/worship.
- We ask you to mute your microphone, but be prepared to submit prayer concerns through the "chat" function. (We'll teach you how to do that!)
- As the service unfolds we will walk you through what you need to know, and when you need to do things.
- The service will be live, and will *not* be recorded.

- We hope to offer a second service (maybe Wednesday evenings?) beginning in September.

We encourage you to give this a try – and if you have concerns, please contact us. We are eager to listen, share, and process this with you, especially as it challenges “what we have always done.”

How to connect to the Zoom worship?

- I can send you an easy link – email me and I’ll send it on to you. Or you can find it on the front page of the web site.
- Or ... go to www.zoom.us. You may need to download some software, or just use it off your browser. Once there, click on “join a meeting.” You will need the meeting ID (819 5665 1326) and the password (863077).
- Or ... dial in using your phone. Call 312 626 6799, and use the ID and password above. You won’t see us, but you can hear us!

Yes, these are strange and challenging days, and “Zoom Communion” adds to the changes in our world. But remember, God is still with us, and not even Covid can change that!

Meanwhile, as our world has changed, we have lost a few things. There will be no Corn Roast or Gospel on the Green this year, and as I doubt we will worship together anytime soon, no choir, no SOS Band, and no kids sharing music in church.

Looking further down the road, it’s hard at this moment to see a Norwegian Dinner, or even, dare I say, Christmas Eve worship? What? No Christmas worship? Maybe not.

Yes, these are tough times. But God is still at work, we are still the church, and our mission in the world still remains.

So, just what’s happening these days? Plenty!

Worship continues to happen via YouTube, DVDs, Driveway Communion, and now ... Zoom!

Education will be challenging this fall, both for Sunday School and Confirmation, but we are working on it. Perhaps not in person, but faith will be shared.

And **Bible study** continues ... Wednesday and Sunday mornings ...

Pastoral Care is happening by phone calls, e-mails, cards, and the conversations when we do driveway communions. And we are praying – our prayer team is busy at work, and each day a designated pray-er is busy at 11:45 AM with the bell rung at that time, and the Prayer Labyrinth is open for business! Come by soon and check out the prayer labyrinth in the back of the lot across East Avenue from the parking lot. A great place for some quiet prayer and contemplation.

Meeting the Needs of the Community means the Food Pantry continues to be open, and Feed Our Children has been busy all summer – and now is pondering if it continues to have a role to play depending on the school status. We are meeting needs!

Visioning also continues, because the future keeps coming closer! As I write this, in the next 60 hours both the Forward: Fearless and Faithful team and the Stewardship for All Seasons team will meet to consider what God is calling us to do and to be. What dreams do we have? Covid or not, God has a mission for us, and God continues to bless us that we may be a blessing to others. So ... what will that mean for us? Stay tuned!

There you go ... lots and lots still going on ... and awaiting us as we move forward. The church remains open, for business, for witness, and for service. For you, and for those around you.

But most of all, for Jesus. Because as the church, we together are the Body of Christ. And in the end, Covid doesn't have a chance!

Pastor Jon



We Are Worshiping!

Actually, ***we never stopped!***

- A 40-50-minute YouTube worship with readings, message, music, and prayer is posted every week by 6 PM on Saturday. Find it on the church web site video page.
- OR ... If you don't have internet access, just ask – we make DVDs! In fact, currently five families get DVDs, along with a crowd from both Mulder's and Salem Terrace. All told 30-40 folk every week worship through our DVDs. Let us know if you need a DVD – we'll get it to you.
- Driveway communion – you provide your own bread/wine, we come by and provide a 10-15-minute worship, physically distanced in your driveway (or yard). Even better – invite a few neighbors or family members to join us!
- And now ... **Zoom Communion!** From your home, connected virtually, we worship and celebrate God's gifts of life. See the Pastor's Page for more information.

And one more worship opportunity – YOU! Someone once said, living life faithfully is worship. Every day – you worship as you live as a disciple of Jesus!

See? Worship never stopped ... and it keeps going on!

And don't forget to check the website for ...



Children's Message

Summer
Sunday School

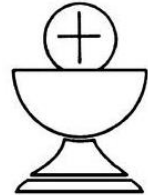


Driveway Holy Communion



Here's how it works – **you invite us** to come to your home – we would stand safely distanced, in the driveway, as we offer a scripture reading, prayer, and Words of Institution. You would supply your own bread (of whatever kind), and

either wine or grape juice. About 10-15 minutes, and we are on our way. We will have gathered as God's people, around the gifts of bread and wine, hearing the Word and the words of promise, and sharing together a brief meal.



And ... if you have others in your neighborhood – members of Our Savior's or just those who you know are disconnected these days, they could join us, also safely distanced. Wouldn't it be just wild to have two or three family groups, all safely distanced, sharing in God's gifts of grace?

We think this will be a way to connect, even briefly, and share the sacrament with you. Maybe even a few minutes of conversation (we really do miss you all!).

If you are open ... and interested ... give us a call (you can leave a message directly for one of us), or contact us via e-mail.

Christian Education Update



With the La Crosse County Covid compass is “severe” risk, schools are scrambling to figure out how to safely teach kids. We are doing the same! While it is critical for us to teach faith, it is equally critical

for us to do so safely, not only for the sake of our kids, but for all with whom they come in contact.

We are currently working to develop both Sunday School and Confirmation class plans. Initially we expect instruction to be online using pre-recorded videos, by our own teachers, and Zoom sessions with the whole class. We know that this will be challenging for kids, parents, and teachers, but we also know that learning isn’t really about us anyway – it’s about the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who yearn to experience Jesus!



If during the coming year conditions allow for a return to “in-person” classes, we will do so. Until then, however, we will work hard to make online learning as good as we can.



First Communion Class

Due to Covid, we missed the First Communion class normally held in late March/early April. We are now looking to offer the class via Zoom in late August. Classes for *kids and parents together* will be held **Wednesdays, August 19 and 26, at 6 PM** each evening. Class will last about 45 minutes. We will send out information to parents on our list, but *if you or someone you know would be interested, please let us know!*

First Communion will be celebrated via our Zoom Sunday morning worship, which begins in August. More information will be sent out to parents. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate very different and challenging times!



Confirmation Service *The Affirmation of Baptism*

Like so much else, Confirmation will be different! We will have the Affirmation of Baptism on **Sunday, August 30**, at the Lion's Shelter as part of a short worship service, with Holy Communion included.

How can we do that safely? We will have six worship slots, spread out over several hours, with five families at each slot. Families will bring their own lawn chairs, and bread and wine for Communion. We will take a picture of each confirmand, and then create a composite picture for the display board. We will also make arrangements for those who are unable to be with us that day.

Details are being mailed out to families, so watch for it!



Hey, Confirmation Students!

I hope things are going well for you this summer. You should have received an email from me inviting you to a gathering in the lot across the street from the church building.

We will sit (socially distanced) to check in, see how things are going, and give each other support. If you haven't received the email, please let me know (my email is listed below). We want everyone to be a part of these gatherings. So far, we have gathered with 8th and 9th graders, with the rest to come.

7th Grade – Wednesday, August 5 from 5-6 pm

6th Grade – Wednesday, August 12 from 5-6 pm

Please bring a lawn chair or you can sit on the grass. I'll provide some safely distributed snacks. Watch for more details soon!

Look forward to seeing you. Take care, and stay safe!

Wendy Kane

youth@oursaviorswestsalem.org

2021 ELCA Youth Gathering News ...



If you were planning to join us at the ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis in July 2021, please note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this event

has been rescheduled to **July 24-28, 2022**. We will set our sights on 2022! Save the dates! Watch for details later!

Scrip Cards Available

We continue to have Scrip cards available for purchase in the office during the day. We ask that you call ahead to make sure someone will be there to get the cards for you.

KWIK TRIP

WOODMAN'S

Just a reminder ... we have Kwik Trip, Kwik Trip car washes, Woodman's, Festival, and Ship Shape car washes.



Proceeds go to help World Hunger and Our Savior's Youth programs.



Off They Go ...

It's hard to believe but the summer is winding down and we are beginning to look to the fall and the activities that may be happening. One event will be our college students heading off to campus (hopefully). Now is the time to help them on their journey ... why not get a (some) Kwik Trip card(s) to help with their travel expenses ... *that's one way to make sure they have gas money to come home and visit!*

Also ... whether they are going to WTC and living at home or traveling to the far ends of the country, we need our college **students' emails and campus addresses**. Please get that information to Pastor Jean when you know it. We like to keep in touch during the year and let our students know we are thinking about them and keeping them in our prayers.



Feed Our Children Summer Lunch

We continued to serve families through the Feed Our Children Summer Lunch Program during the month of July.

We are very thankful for the various groups who have helped in the kitchen, delivering, and serving. Specifically, Colette Schockman from Prince of Peace Lutheran, Cheryl Lang from St. Leo's, Wendy Kaiser from the food service staff at the School District of West Salem, Carla Burkhardt, Tracy Hesse, and Connie Pinski all from Our Savior's Lutheran, and all of the volunteers that they gathered.

We have also had a variety of gifts of produce, products, and monetary donations. Of special note, a mystery donor paid our ENTIRE (4 digit) balance at Hansen's IGA!!! We are still hoping to find out who that is.

It is a blessing to be able to serve. We have 3 weeks left of lunches. Our group is looking to the fall to see what role we might play. We are so grateful for your support.

Angie Hemker

Feed Our Children Weekly Leaders

Tuesday	Thursday	Leader	Phone
August 4	August 6	Audra Jandt 1st CCU	
August 11	August 13	Valerie Olson WS Presbyterian	H 608-786-1834 C 608-397-1568
August 18	August 20	Angie Hemker	608-780-9172



Care and Share Food Pantry

The Care and Share Food Pantry remains open, Saturdays, 10 AM to Noon. As the pandemic continues, your support is critical! As the building is still locked, please call the office to ensure that we will be able to receive your gifts.

And, thank you!

Note:

Due to COVID-19 the following events will not occur in August:

- Beer & Hymns Campfire Edition
- Corn Roast
- Gospel on the Green

We look forward to these annual events next year!



Stewardship for All Seasons Update

The Stewardship for All Seasons team has been hard at work, in prayerful consultation with both the Forward: Fearless and Faithful team, and the Congregation Council, to develop ministry goals and challenges for 2021. We know these are trying times, and while it is tempting to say, “When the going gets tough, the tough get going,” we know it’s really “When the going gets tough, the gifts of God keep flowing!”



We are blessed to be a blessing, and gifted to make a difference. As our world struggles, God is generous, and we have that message to share. That drives our discernment of where God calls us to be in the coming year. So, keep watching – more in coming months!



Synod School of Theology

Over the past years, the Synod School of Theology has met at Our Savior’s. Now, with the pandemic around us, classes will begin this fall via Zoom, on Thursday evenings, from 6-7:30 PM. Reformation History and the Holy Spirit will be the two classes offered. Cost is \$20 for each class, plus any books needed, and you can join the class from the comfort of your own home.

Reformation begins September 10 and concludes October 15. Holy Spirit runs from October 29 through December 10. Take one or both – classes are taught by pastors from our synod.

Contact Pastor Jon for more information!



Congregation Council

The Congregation Council met via Zoom on Monday, July 13, with President Steve Ahles presiding. At this meeting the council:

- Shared in study and prayers based on Psalm 145:15-16.
- Approved the minutes of the June 8 Meeting, and received the June financial report.
- Heard an overview on what has been happening with our various ministries.
- Heard that the PPP Grant timeline has been extended, and thus the entire amount will be a grant that is used for payroll.
- Heard an update on several property issues – floors waxed, roof leaks, elevator issue, lawn mower handle.
- Formed a task force to address details for reopening building based on plan previously adopted by council, and directed the Worship Committee to design a worship experience within those parameters.
- Determined we will continue to restrict access to the building until the County Compass is down to moderate and then reevaluate at that time.
- After significant discussion, decided to provide virtual communion beginning in August.
- Discussed roof repair/replacement options and timing.
- Heard the Tech Group is researching audio and visual options to enable a better worship experience in person and on line as we move forward.
- Heard the Stewardship for All Seasons group is discussing the mission emphasis for 2021.

The next meeting of the council will be held Monday, August 10th at 6:30 PM at the home of Steve & Sue Ahles. If you would like to know more about the ministry of the council, contact Steve Ahles or one of the pastors.

Financial Support Ministry



**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

THANK YOU!!! *Thank you for your continued financial support of our ministry together!* You make a difference in the lives of children and adults, in those across the globe, and those on the same block!

You are always welcome to mail in your envelope, or use one or more of the electronic giving options which we have available. You can start your electronic giving by going to our web site at www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/giving.

Among the giving options:

- **Electronic transfer** ... directly from your financial institution.
- **Mobile app** ... Easily create an account to set up recurring donations and review your giving history.
- **Text** ... The first time you use texting, you will be asked to register your payment information; after that, enter the amount and send the text.

However you do it, give in confidence! At Our Savior's we value integrity in our financial practices. Transactions are made via a secure web portal, and are facilitated by Vanco, an industry leader in online financial products.

***Thank you for your support.
We are grateful for your partnership as
we proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ!***



Shopping Online?

Our Savior's 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.

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. A number of Our Savior's folk direct their choice dollars – do you? See Thrivent's web site for more information or stop by the office and we will help you out.



Pastoral Acts:

Baptism – Jalyn Hundt – July 1

Funeral – Joyce Root – July 10

Funeral – Patrick Hansen – July 18

Web Site: www.oursaviorswestsalem.org
OUR SAVIOR'S STAFF

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Kathy Brisson, Organist
Eric Sorenson, Senior Choir Director
Karen DeSchepper, Financial Secretary
Josh Corning, Custodian

August Dates for your calendar:



August 5 - 7th Grade Youth Connecting at 5 PM
August 9 - Zoom Communion at 10:30 AM
August 12 - 6th Grade Youth Connecting at 5 PM
August 16 - Zoom Communion at 10:30 AM
August 19 & 26 - First Communion Classes at 6 PM
August 23 - Zoom Communion at 10:30 AM
August 30 - Zoom Communion at 10:30 AM
August 30 - Confirmation Worship Services

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