

Our Savior's Voice

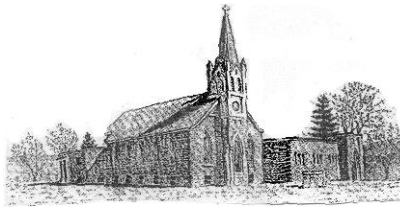
Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street N - West Salem, WI 54669

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

608-786-0030

September 2021



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

September 2021

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Pastor's Reflections

Listen, God is Calling ...

I know a young woman in her late 20's who is single, a nurse by vocation, and a foster mom by choice – let's call her "Sarah". Sarah has felt Called by God to be a foster mom, making a difference in the lives of teen girls since she was in her early 20's. At the present time Sarah is the mom, friend, mentor, confidant, advocate, care-giver, stable presence, giver of unconditional love, and family for three teens and two infants (daughters of two of the teens). Up until recently, she also had a fourth teen in her home. But, two weeks ago this teen apparently decided she didn't want to abide by one of the rules in the home and she proceeded to brutally attack Sarah. Had it not been for one of the other teens in the home at the time, hearing Sarah's screams and calling the police, who arrived almost immediately, the outcome could have been much worse. Sarah has had to endure injuries internally and externally, physically and emotionally. The teen was removed from the home, placed in a new living situation, and is now free to roam the streets, with no guidance or rules, and no apparent consequences.



I don't know about you, but this story fills me with fear and unease. If I was Sarah, I would be forever looking over my shoulder to make sure no one was following me, reacting to every little noise, having trouble falling asleep at night, making sure the house is locked and secured, not wanting to be left alone. My trust in people, even those whom I thought I could trust, would be shattered. Taking risks would no

longer be an option. I would have to think long and hard about what I was doing, and perhaps make the decision fostering teens was no longer something I could do.

Despite all she has been through, Sarah still believes God is calling her to be a foster mom, to love these teens who have felt unloved, who have felt invisible, who are troubled and in trouble, who need another chance.



I am in awe of this young woman's strength and faith, as she is working to push forward and go on with life, caring for the "family" she has created with and for these teens and infants. She is able to see the big picture beyond this one horrible moment. She is able to put aside her hurts and pains, her fears and insecurities, her wants and needs, for the sake of her girls. When even one girl has been saved, when one life has been changed, she believes it has been worth the sacrifices she has had to make and endure over the years, or in the moment, as she has done what God has called her to do.

So many times in life we find ourselves taking the easy path, the path without sacrifices, the path that doesn't challenge, the path that doesn't cause pain, the path of least resistance, the path that brings satisfaction that is self-centered, that looks inward rather than outward.

Think about times in your life when God is calling you to reach out, to care for others, to put the needs of others before your own. What are you willing to sacrifice, what are you willing to do, what are you willing to endure for the sake of someone else? Is it providing food for the food pantry, giving dollars for world hunger, giving of your time to share faith with young children on Sunday mornings, creating



relationships with those who are vulnerable, being a foster parent ... how about getting vaccinated and wearing your mask ...



Sarah gives selflessly of herself every day loving and caring for troubled teens ... what of yourself are you willing to give selflessly for the sake others?

God is calling us ... are we listening? ... how are we responding? ...

Pastor Jean

LISTEN
For
God's
voice
IN EVERYTHING
you do



Pastoral Acts:

Wedding – Sophia Wilker & Jarret Tietz –
August 28



“Returning to Normal” News

With the increasing Covid numbers, especially due to the “Delta” variant, the Reopening Team and the Congregation Council has revisited our safety protocol. We are mindful that everyone wants to be “back to normal,” and that we are tired of this. But ...

At a recent meeting of a new “ministry exploration team,” Pastor Jon posed the question – what should the church be about? The first two answers ... do good, and help others. That’s what we are about! We are not merely a grouping of individuals – we are a community, we are the “Body of Christ!” That means we don’t just do what we want – we “do” with an eye towards what it means to others (just like the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 8).

So, after much deep, considered, and prayerful conversation, the Reopening Team and the Council have determined the following, effective August 23:

- Masks are to be worn in the building at all times, including during worship. The preaching pastor may unmask, but pastors will be masked during the rest of the worship service.
- We will ask those in the building to clean hands on their way in and out, and to continue to be physically distanced. We will also continue to sign-in once you have arrived for worship.

- Sunday School and Confirmation WILL be in the building this year, but with a modified format and schedule – and all teachers and students will wear masks.
- Sunday School will begin October 10, and classes will meet twice a month to allow us to distance the students.
- We will continue to clean the building following worship on Saturday and then again after worship on Sunday.
- We hope to resume the 8 AM worship, probably in October.
- We encourage you to stay home if you are not feeling well.
- All groups meeting in the building will be required to wear masks.

Is this all tough to do? You be it is! But Pastor Jean recently completed a survey of Sunday School parents. When asked, “If your child is expected to wear a mask, will they come?” 82% said yes. If the kids can do it ... so can we ... and ***especially for the sake of children who cannot yet be vaccinated!***

We are thankful for your care for others and your support of the ministry we carry out together. If you have questions or concerns, we invite you to share them with Pastor Jon or Pastor Jean.

Remember, we are in this together, and want to be together, but we want to be safe. This is how we can do it – for the sake of others. That is what a church does!





September Worship

We are still worshipping! Lots of ways, lots of times!

In building worship – we worship Saturday at 6 PM, and Sunday at 10 AM.

With the changing Covid situation, we may need to change safely protocols – watch the web site for more information. But we are together, and God is with us!

Online videos are a recording of the Saturday evening worship, with the help of a song leader. Videos are posted on YouTube by late Saturday evening. You can access them through our web site:

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/videos, and the bulletin is available at the same spot. You can watch any time, and you can even catch up on previous weeks.

DVDs are also available of our online service. If you, or someone you know, does not have the ability to watch online, but can use a DVD, let us know. Currently, we have a number of DVDs going out each week – we can do more!

Zoom Communion...using Zoom you can join us in our Sunday worship. No, it's not perfect, but it works – and it allows us to join together, even across distances! Easy to do – just head to our home page, and click on the link. Have bread and wine/juice available and join us when we celebrate the sacrament. The bulletin is also available for download so you can follow along.



Office Hours

The church office and building are open! Hours are Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 2 PM.

Use the East Avenue entrance. Remember that we now have a locked and secure **mail box** outside the East Avenue entrance if you need to drop off an envelope or other similar material.

**** Please note we will once again require everyone in the building to wear a mask! ****



Looking for ... friendly folks

As we worship in-person, we are looking for friendly folks (individuals and families!) to welcome those in attendance. We will have the doors open, all we ask is that you greet those who are here, have them sign in, and make sure they get a bulletin. Easy tasks and such an important part of our welcoming ministry. If you are able to spare a few minutes prior to worship, let Pastor Jean know, or better yet, sign up using the SignUpGenius link found here or on the website:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F044CA5A629A7F85-ushers1>

Christian Education Update



As we continue to make plans for Sunday School, the safety of our children is our most important consideration.

Protocols are being developed to ensure our children are as safe as possible for their sake and to reassure parents. We can all do what we need to do for the sake of our children!

As of this writing, here are the “tentative” plans ...

- † Begin in October
- † Alternate weeks when children are in the building
- † Masks required for students and teachers

Watch for a letter in September with more specific information.

Let's get energized ... Teachers needed



If you enjoy being with children and learning from them, we invite you to join us on Sunday mornings to share your faith and get energized. We are looking for several teachers (team teaching available) and helpers. **Note:** it would only be twice a month as we will alternate weeks when your class would be in the building. **Also,** at this time, the plan is to require teachers to **wear a mask** and encourage them to be vaccinated.

If you are able to share your gifts of time and self, or would like more information, please contact Pastor Jean.



Confirmation Ministry

Confirmation ministry for 6th-9th graders is on. We are busy again...making disciples for Jesus!

Letters have been sent out to parents and students, and we are expecting a great year, even with the challenges we face. We plan to safely open in person, and hope we can stay that way.

Here's what's up for September...

6th graders will be taught again this year by Corey Sjoquist. Kids and parents will have an orientation session on Wednesday, September 8, at 6 PM, in the sanctuary. Classes will begin September 15, at 6 PM, in the lower level beneath the sanctuary. We are also aware that 6th graders have not yet had First Communion – we'll talk about the possibilities at orientation.

7th graders will be taught by Pastor Jon. Orientation for kids and parents will be on Wednesday, September 8, at 6 PM, in the fellowship hall. Classes will begin September 22 at 6 PM in the same space. *We are still seeking several group guides – how about you???*

8th graders and parents will have orientation on Wednesday, September 8, at 7 PM. Classes will begin September 29 at 6 PM. *Again, we are seeking several group guides – are you game?*

9th graders have orientation for kids and parents on Wednesday, September 15 at 7 PM. Classes begin the following week.

Even in trying times, we always have room for more. See Pastor Jon for information on our Confirmation ministry, how new kids can join us, and how you can be a part of making disciples for Jesus!

Backpack Blessing Coming in October



We will share a blessing and a reminder of God's love and presence as we begin another year of learning. Bring your backpacks to Sunday School when classes begin in October – watch the October newsletter for exact dates.

From the Youth Director ...



7th-9th grade confirmation students –



Back by popular demand ... plans are being made to resume our gatherings outside around the fire pit this fall. Join us for snacks and conversation.

7th Grade – September 29 at 6 PM
8th Grade – September 22 at 6 PM

Watch your emails for more details!

Wendy Kane, Youth Director

youth@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Save the Dates: July 24-28, 2022

Youth in 8th – 12th grade



ELCA Youth Gathering Minneapolis

Join 30,000 youth from across the country for
the ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis
(Yes! All 30,000 together in one place!)

Music ... worship ... change lives – make a
difference ... discover yourself ... meet
others who believe in Jesus and share your
faith

Plans are being made ... don't miss out on this
exciting event! Contact Wendy Kane or one of the
pastors to find out how you, too, can be a part of
this Gathering!

Check out the Gathering website for the latest information:
www.elca.org/youthgathering/updates



Off They Go ...

It's hard to believe that summer is now behind us and we are beginning fall activities. Our college students have headed off to campus (hopefully) and are beginning yet another year in the midst of the unknown. Whether they are at WTC and living at home or have traveled to the far ends of the country, we need their **emails and campus addresses**. Please get that information to Pastor Jean as soon as possible. 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.

Adult Bible Study

Bible study, live or via Zoom, continues on **Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to 11 AM**. We take time to ponder the gospel reading for the coming Sunday, so each session is “stand-alone.” NO previous Bible knowledge is needed – just come and enjoy some great conversation and “faith-deepening” discussions.



We meet in the Gathering Area. If you'd rather join via Zoom, contact the church office or Pastor Jon.



Food Pantry “Scavenger Hunt”

Get ready...here they come! The 7th & 8th grade confirmation students will be out in the neighborhood

scouring for goodies for the Food Pantry on Wednesday, **September 15, from 6-7 PM.** Non-perishable food items will be gathered to meet the needs of those who are finding times a bit tougher.

If you live in the area of the church, be prepared! And if you don't, bring a contribution when you come to worship, or just drop it off during the week.

As we gather, we thank you for your generosity, and we thank the many pantry workers who volunteer to make this ministry happen!



Care and Share Food Pantry

The Care and Share Food Pantry is open Saturdays, 10 AM to Noon. Food can be dropped off during office hours. Thank you!

**One more month to collect ...
Lutheran World Relief
School Kit Project**



Imagine having to choose between a meal or purchasing a notebook. School Kits are sent to places where even the few required school supplies may be more than a family can afford. Pencils and paper can help write a positive future.

Once again, we are collecting items to fill school bags for this ministry. As school is upon us, sales should be plentiful for school supplies. Please take this list with you when you shop, as the list of needed items is quite specific. We are unable to send items that are not on the list!

Each School kit contains the following:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1 – 30 cm ruler | 1 – pencil sharpener |
| 1 – BLUNT scissors | 5 – unsharpened pencils |
| 1 – box 24 crayons | 1 – 2-1/2 inch eraser |
| 4 – 70 sheet notebooks (no loose-leaf paper) | |
| 5 – blue or black ball point pens (no gel ink) | |

In past years we have been able to fill 100 backpacks and we are confident we can do that again. Have fun shopping!

There is a collection box in the Gathering Area.

If you have any questions, please call Wendy Kane at 608-518-9593.

Thank you in advance for your support



Thank you ...

... to Wendy Kane and Eric Iliff for the countless hours they spent preparing for and presenting Vacation Bible School four Sundays in July and August. Attendance was disappointing, but those that were there had a great time!

... to all who helped with the Corn Roast – from those who did all of the planning, shucked the corn, cooked, served, set up early and cleaned up after! From the smiles on the faces of our guests, it appeared everyone enjoyed themselves and left satisfied!

From our Bible Camp youth ...

... Thank you for supporting my trip to Sugar Creek. I had a lot of fun. We rode horses, slept on a bluff. I love going to Sugar Creek. I would go back again.

Anya Tenner

... Thank you for the gift of money to go to Sugar Creek. I felt that my faith grew well in my time there.

Olivia Maki



A big THANK YOU to those who helped with the peaches in August ... Bennet Fennigkoh, Graham Sjoquist, Olivia Maki & friends, Addy, Emelia & Ellie Tlustosch, Anna Vick, Bella Quackenbush, Layla, Laney & Beau Kneifl, and Owen Kendhammer ... Chad Vick (& his forklift!), Carolyn Karl and Wendy Kane.



Congregation Council

The Congregation Council met via Zoom on Monday, August 9, with President Jen Linse presiding. At this meeting the council:

- Shared in study and prayers based on John 6:1-14.
- Approved the minutes of the July 12 Council Meeting, and received the July financial report.
- Heard an overview on what has been happening with our various ministries.
- Discussed the pandemic situation and the increase in Covid cases. Expressed a desire to remain open, but to do so safely. Authorized the Reopening Team to develop appropriate protocols to enable ministry to continue safely.
- Heard that landscaping in the front of the church should begin around August 23.
 - Discussed several ministry priorities including how to better support youth ministry, strengthening the Property Committee, and exploring where God is taking us through the Ministry Exploration Team.

The next meeting of the council will be held Monday, September 13th at 7 PM. If you have questions, or if you have ideas for enhancing the ministry of Our Savior's, contact Jen Linse or one of the pastors.

September Dates:



- September 1 – Bible Study – 9:30 AM
- September 4 – Worship – 6 PM
- September 5 – Worship – 10 AM
- September 7 – Prayer Shawl – 1-3 PM
- September 8 – Bible Study – 9:30 AM
- September 8 – Confirmation Parents & Students
 - 6 PM – 6th & 7th Grade
 - 7 PM – 8th Grade
- September 11 – Worship – 6 PM
- September 12 – Worship – 10 AM
- September 13 – Council – 7 PM
- September 15 – Bible Study – 9:30 AM
- September 15 – Confirmation –
 - 6 PM – 6th Grade
 - 6 PM – 7th & 8th Grade Scavenger Hunt
 - 7 PM – 9th Grade Parents & Students
- September 18 – Worship – 6 PM
- September 19 – Worship – 10 AM
- September 21 – Prayer Shawl – 1-3 PM
- September 22 – Bible Study – 9:30 AM
- September 22 – Confirmation –
 - 6 PM – 6th Grade Class
 - 6 PM – 7th Grade Class
 - 6 PM – 8th Grade Outdoor Gathering
 - 7 PM – 9th Grade Class
- September 25 – Worship – 6 PM
- September 26 – Worship – 10 AM
- September 29 – Bible Study – 9:30 AM
- September 29 – Confirmation –
 - 6 PM – 6th Grade Class
 - 6 PM – 7th Grade Outdoor Gathering
 - 6 PM – 8th Grade Class
 - 7 PM – 9th Grade Class

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 right here in our midst.

As the summer comes to a close, and we find new ways to carry out long-standing ministries, we continue to work to bring hope and the life of Jesus to a broken and hurting world. Your financial support makes that happen. 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 find more information, and directions on starting your electronic giving, on 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!***

Scrip Cards Available

KWIK TRIP

We continue to have Scrip cards available for purchase in the office during the day.

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.



amazonsmile

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.

Direct your
**Thrivent Choice
Dollars**
Today!



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.

Wands for Wildlife ...



Thank you to all those who have turned in mascara wands. At this time, we do not have enough to send in, so we will continue collecting until we have enough to ship out.

Please bring your **clean**, used mascara wands to church. To clean them: soak in a mixture of dish soap and warm water to get the mascara out of the brush, air dry, and place in a Ziplock bag. *Our little furry friends thank you!*

Our Savior's T-Shirts

Show your church spirit!

The cost is **\$12.50** – and **proceeds go to World Hunger!** Shirts are available in the office!



Cleaning your closets?



The quilters need your old sheets to put in the middle of each quilt they make. Thank you so much for sharing in this ministry!

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

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Eric Sorenson, Senior Choir Director

Karen DeSchepper, Financial Secretary

Josh Corning, Custodian



Newsletter Deadline – September 15

Check your spam



It continues ... many of you with **yahoo.com** email accounts are not receiving our communications because the emails have gone to your spam file. So ... please take a minute to check your spam files and see if you have any communications from church/pastors that you may have missed.



Our Savior's Lutheran Church
359 Leonard St N
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Change Service Requested