

Our Savior's Voice

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street N - West Salem, WI 54669

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

608-786-0030

September 2022



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 2022

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Pastor's Reflections



It is that time. Every year we go through the September ritual. Plans are set in motion, ministries gear up again, and people return to the rhythm of church life. Every year.

This year is no exception. Take a look at this newsletter. Sunday and Confirmation, senior choir, the Synod School of Theology, and more...all coming off a summer break. Yes, indeed! The church is coming alive again!

Or not. Read some more. Find the page with a bunch of “thank you’s,” and watch for some other thank you’s scattered throughout the pages. Thank you’s for the work of people in ministries, ministries like:

- Summer lunch – almost 400 meals per week
- Corn roast – 400 gathered and fed
- Musicians in worship throughout the summer
- Those who stepped up during Pastor Jean’s sabbatical
- And the kids – kids offering thanks for the support that allowed them to attend Sugar Creek

Did you catch something here? We are thanking people for ministry, for ministry done during the “quiet” summer months, ministry when it seemed like the church was on vacation.



But there’s even more.

- Ilene Pavelko and Ann Sprain shared music at our monthly nursing home services.
- Did you notice the quilters are looking for thread. Why? They have been busy – all summer!
- And worship. From June 1 through August 14 we averaged 94 in the building, and another estimated 85 via electronic media, for a total of 179. (By the way, three years ago we averaged 140 and an estimated 15...for a total of 155.)

- And in that worship – new folk joining us – *every week!*
- School kits supplies are piling up – time to get them ready to go out!
- National Night Out, held for the first time in West Salem, included a table hosted by council members (thank you!) ALL of the brochures we had available were picked up – people learning about our community of faith and the ministry we carry out.
- The Food Pantry has added evening hours to their time.
- And lots of other things going on too...prayer shawls showing up and going out...weddings, funerals, and baptisms providing opportunities for pastoral care...Bible study...groups gathering to reflect on our ministry and how it is changing in a changing world...a variety of folk caring the building we have...and many, many people doing ministry on their own, in their own little corner of the world...
- And everything else I missed!

All during the past three months. The past three months of summer “hibernation.” Except, the church was never in hibernation, waiting for...something... The church – that’s YOU – was always engaged in the work of Jesus. Yes, some ministries took a few months off, while others kept cruising, and still others



took center stage. But we were always at work, always seeking to be a faithful community of faithful disciples of Jesus. Disciples busy doing “God’s work with our hands.”

That may seem a bit surprising, or at least notable. After all, isn’t summer the “down” time?

Obviously not. And really, it shouldn’t surprise us. We are called, after all, to be disciples, not occasional, hourly employees. My calling as a disciple is not the job I do when I want to be

“churchy.” It is, instead, my very being – my existence – my purpose in life. That’s what happened in my baptism – and in yours – the calling to BE a disciple, not just to occasionally do the work.



But something else happened in baptism too. Yes, I (and you too) was called to be a disciple, to be a difference maker in the world, in the name of Jesus. The water splashed, the promise made, the calling given.

But wait...there was also the promise. God’s promise. God’s promise that God would always walk with me, embrace me, hold me, protect me, and renew me. Even during the summer.

Recently, Pastor Jean, Rebecca and I took a trip to Colorado and some of the surrounding states. We were on the road for 16 days. We were not in the office, working hard, doing the work of Jesus in this place. We were “on vacation.” But God was still “on the job.” As we crossed deserts, climbed and descended mountain roads, sought out and explored new places, noted the “beware of rattlesnakes” sign (but didn’t see any!), and even explored a small portion of “Sin City” (Las Vegas), God was with us every step of the way. We “vacated” – God “persisted.”

Just as God continues to “persist” and to remain with us...with you...and with the community we call “Our Savior’s.”



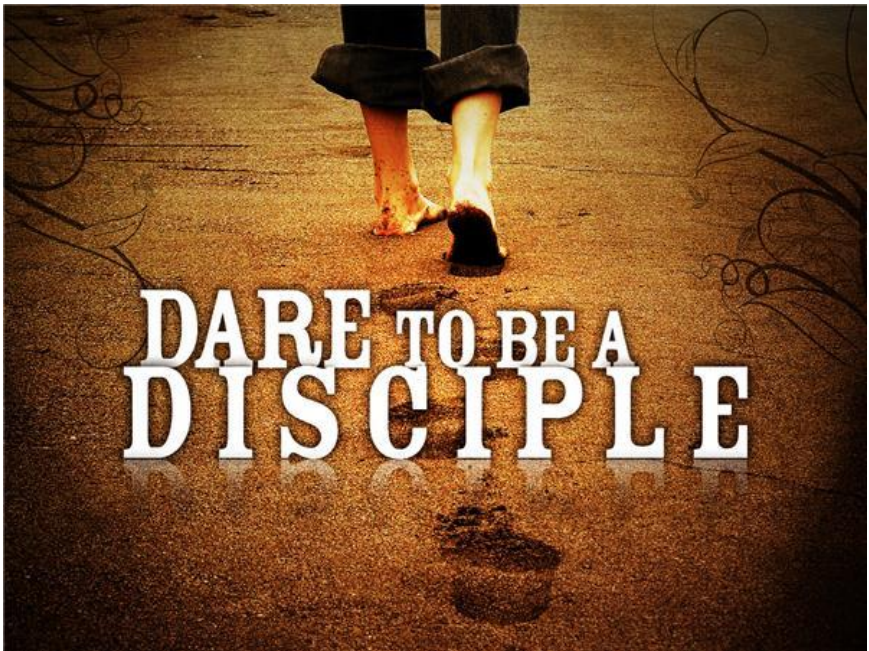
Make no mistake – some of our ministries are gearing up again, and some of our ministries are changing in a rapidly changing world. But God is “persisting” – persisting in empowering our life and our work, and renewing us even in our uncertainty and weariness.

Every day. Without a break. Not even a vacation!

And that is the good news that re-energizes me...you...and all of us a community of faith. Renewed and restored, we keep moving ahead.

Because, in the end, that is what disciples do. And remember? That is what we are – disciples of Jesus!

Pastor Jon



Worship Update

*Sunday 10 AM returns to 10:30
starting September 11*

**Saturday 6 PM
Sunday 8 & 10:30 AM**

Masks are NOT required, but if you feel safer with a mask, we encourage you to wear one!

Meanwhile...

Virtual worship options
remain...



We **Zoom 10:30 AM Sunday worship** (check out our home page for the link and have your Communion elements handy!)

We also record worship and post it as a YouTube. Starting September 11 YouTube worship posted by 10:30 AM. You can access this worship at any time through our web site: www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/videos ... You can even catch up on previous weeks!

Scavenger Hunt for the Food Pantry

Watch for it – on Wednesday, September 14, from 6-7, the 7-8th graders will be out scavenging the neighborhood for the Food Pantry. If you aren't in the neighborhood and want to support their work...you can drop off items here at church. A special need these days is cereal, but regardless, for whatever you share, thank you for all your support of ministries that feed God's people!

Faith Formation for Kids



*September it is...
and faith formation for kids...
is taking off!!!*

Sunday School for PreK-5th grade begins Sunday, September 11 with a “Rally Day” celebration! Parents are invited to join the kids, starting in the sanctuary, at 9:15. We’ll get started together...then move on to individual classrooms to connect with teachers and get geared up for a GREAT year! And remember... *we always have room for more, so invite your friends and neighbors to join us on Rally Day or anytime!*

But we’re not done yet – **bring your backpacks to worship** (either 8 or 10:30 AM) and we’ll bless the ‘packs and give you a reminder that you are always in God’s tender care – in church, at home, and even in school!

Confirmation instruction for 6-9th grade begins with orientation meetings for parents and kids on Wednesday, September 7. 6-8th graders meet at 6 PM...9th graders at 7 PM. Classes start September 14.

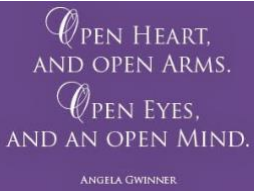


We are still looking for some group guides for 7-8th grade – maybe you? An awesome ministry opportunity to share faith and life with young people. See Pastor Jon for more information.



You can make a difference in the lives of our kids!

Have you noticed? We have the cutest kids around! And, they are eager to share their smiles and curiosity with some folks who are equally eager to share with them their care for kids and their love of Jesus. Are you one of those eager folks? Then, we have a special job for you ... being a Sunday school teacher! We've got the curriculum, the time and place, and a partner to share the task with. No experience necessary, no age restrictions ... just an open mind, heart, and arms.



Pastor Jean would love to hear from you that you are eager to become a part of the ministry team.



Youth Ministry Position Available

We will be seeking a new individual to take on the youth ministry duties at Our Savior's. This is a position of 10-20 hours/week, with a special emphasis on the Wednesday After School ministry. The position requires an ability to work as a team, a love of children, and the flexibility to "go with the flow" and be creative. If you have an interest, or know someone who might, see Pastor Jon or Jen Linse.

What time is it?

It's School Kit Time!

Start watching for school supplies for the school kits we assemble and send, literally around the world, through Lutheran World Relief!

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)



Kit materials can be placed in the bins in the Gathering Area. During September we will begin to assemble the kits and get them ready for their journey...to wherever they are needed! Start the shopping and make a difference in the lives of children!

College Student Connections

Staying at home...or going far away...if you or your child is heading to college this fall, please let us know. We'd like to know school, year, e-mail, and campus address so we can keep in touch and remind them that they are prayed and cared for by Our Savior's. Information can be sent to Pastor Jean or the church office. Happy studying!

college
connection

Scholarship News

Congratulations to Connor Koepp for being awarded the **College Freshman Scholarship** for 2022. This scholarship is awarded to college freshman who have demonstrated a commitment to faith and the work of the faith community. Only one scholarship is available each year.

Connor is a student at UW-Eau Claire, and even in the midst of Covid continued to be involved with the worshiping community online, and sought to find ways to connect life and faith. Good job, Connor!

Incoming college freshman should watch for details on next year's scholarship – details will be in the newsletter in late winter/early spring of 2023. Or contact Pastor Jon!

Meanwhile...

The **Homer Moe Scholarship** is available for persons pursuing non-traditional education, especially continuing education required for their career, or those pursuing a second career. Established in memory of Homer Moe, this scholarship varies in the amount it offers, and application can be made at any time during the year. For more information, see Pastor Jon.

Norwegian Dinner



People have asked...*are we having a Norwegian Dinner this year?* We don't know yet. But if you want to see this ministry continue, we invite you to be a part of the conversation on how we can do that. We hope to gather a small group in the near future to consider how best to have the dinner. We'd love to have your input. And

remember that this is more than a meal – the Norwegian Dinner becomes part of our outreach into the community as all the proceeds go to programs that meet human needs. See Pastor Jon if you are willing to be a part of the conversation about this this ministry!

Bible Study



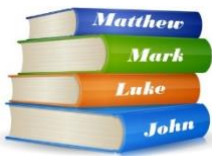
Bible study, live or via Zoom, continues, on **Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to 11 AM**. We take time to ponder the gospel reading for the coming Sunday, so each session is “stand-alone.” NO previous Bible

knowledge is needed – just come and enjoy some great conversation and “faith-deepening” discussions.

We meet in the Library. If you’d rather join via Zoom, contact the church office or Pastor Jon. We can make that happen!

Synod School of Theology

The La Crosse Area Synod School of Theology resumes in-person learning this fall! Classes are held Thursday evenings from 5:30-9:00 pm, September 22-October 27, and are held here at Our Savior’s. Two classes are offered each trimester, with a cost of \$25/class, along with any books needed. There are no exams! You learn what you want to learn, at your speed, and you take the classes you want to take.



This fall the classes offered are “Gospels,” taught by Pastor Mark Kvale, and “The ELCA Experience,” taught by Bishop Malpica and Pastor Dionne Stepanek.

For more information see Pastor Jon, or check the synod web site at lacrosseareasynod.org/school-of-theology.

Senior Choir



Can it be? Is it true? Yes, it is!
The Senior Choir will begin rehearsing again Wednesday, September 7 at 7:00 p.m. in the balcony, and you are invited to join us. We have all missed making

music together and are really looking forward to assembling again. And new voices are ALWAYS welcome! Come and be a part of this important ministry. We rehearse every Wednesday at 7:00 and typically sing three Sundays a month. "To sing is to pray twice!"

Mission Endowment Fund

Each year the Mission Endowment Fund distributes around \$15,000 to agencies and programs in our community and around the world that meet human needs. We are looking for your suggestions for appropriate disbursements for the endowment in early 2023. Guidelines on what can be funded are available from the church office, but most agencies and programs that meet human needs qualify.



This year the fund disbursement will be recommended by the committee, but approved by the annual meeting. Your suggestions are the first step in that process. Suggestions will be received through October, and can be submitted to the office.

For more information contact Melody Schmitz, or see one of the pastors.

Tech Project Delays



I know, we sound like a broken record, but really, the tech project is coming! We have shifted to a new company and they have assured us that the project is doable, and soon! We hope before Christmas to have new audio/visual equipment to all for livestreaming, better quality recording, and an enhanced worship experience in our building.

We also thank those who have contributed towards this project and continue to invite your support to cover the cost of the project. This isn't just a few new "bells and whistles" – it will enable us to do new ministries, and do them well!

For more information on the project see Pastor Jon or Dean Olson.

amazon smile 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.

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.

Like the support for our returning to Sunday School and Confirmation classes. Lots of kids, at all ages, learning about Jesus and God's love for them. In a broken, conflicted, mixed-up world, that's what they need to hear – and what we seek to share! Your support makes that happen!

Financial gifts can be shared in worship, by mail, or placed in our locked mailbox. You can also make gifts electronically. Go to www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/giving to find out more!

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

Got Thread???

Does anyone have extra spools of thread (any color) at home? The Quilters have been very busy and now have 244 quilts ready to ship this October, but are running low of thread. You can put your thread in the basket with the quilt squares located in the coat room entering the sanctuary. Thank you in advance for your help!



Sincerely,
The Quilters



Congregation Council Review

The Congregation Council met on Monday, August 8, with President Jen Linse presiding. At this meeting the council:

- Shared in devotions centered on Proverbs 29:18.
- Shared observations on The Post Quarantine Church, and agreed to continue to discuss the book at future meetings.
- Received a report from the Mission Exploration Team, and a first draft of “Guiding Principles” for our mission. Will continue to work on this in September.
- Heard that Wendy Amundson has resigned as youth ministry director. Requested Pastor Jon to continue to advertise the position, but to also pursue potential candidates from Campus Ministry and Sugar Creek.
- Discussed the fall ministry schedule and how to best “reboot” our congregational life.
- Approved the minutes of the June 13 council meeting, and received the June and July financial reports.
- Heard an update from Pastor Jon on congregational life, including the cookbook project and Pastor Jean’s sabbatical.
- Discussed the completion of the landscape project.
- Discussed how the building and ministries can be better accessible, especially when space is tight.
- Heard that the tech project continues to encounter delays, and that we are now in conversation with a new company to complete the project.
- Heard that the National Night Out event was a big success.
- Discussed “thank you’s” for both Kathy Brisson and Wendy Amundson. Kathy’s will be in October.
- Affirmed the clearing out of the library, removing materials that have not been used in many years, and offering them to the congregation, and then to the community through a “free will donation.”

The next meeting of the council will be Monday, September 12 at 7 PM. If you have questions or ideas for enhancing the ministry of Our Savior’s, contact Jen Linse or one of the pastors.



Thank you ...

...to the August newsletter mailing crew: Bev Bockenbauer, Vernetta Moe, Marion Twite-Stensven, and Eve Twite

Received from others ...

Dear Our Savior's, my time at Sugar Creek could not have been any better. I made new friends and got to see some old ones too. We were at night camp, so we stayed up pretty late. We also went on horse back rides and creek stomping. My favorite part was the night swim. I also got to grow a lot in my faith and worship God. Thank you for the opportunity.

Candace Drury

Dear Our Savior's, thank you for letting me have a time to connect with the Lord while I was at Sugar Creek. During my time I made lots of friends, did lots of art, and enjoyed the warm weather. I even got to go to new areas in the camp like the past outpost! Thank you again for the incredible journey that I had and hope to have next year!

Chloe Drury

Dear Our Savior's, thank you for helping me go to Sugar Creek! It was really fun! I can't wait to go again next year. I really enjoyed staying in a cabin. Thank you again.

Sophia Sprehn

Dear Our Savior's, I'm very grateful for the scholarship to Sugar Creek camp. I have never been to Sugar Creek before and I can't wait to go back. My favorite part was getting to meet a bunch of new friends.

Olivia Sprehn

Thank you so much for the money for Sugar Creek. My favorite part was the pool party. I had so much fun! Thank you once again!

Mabel Sjoquist



THANK YOU to all who helped plan, roast corn, bake bars, and serve at the 2022 Corn Roast. We estimate that at nearly 400 guests dined on Wednesday, August 10. We were blessed with great weather and delicious corn.

With gratitude,
The Outreach Committee



A “Musical” Thank You!

A heartfelt "Thank You" to all the musicians that provided special music for our summer services: Eric Ender, Ilene Pavelko, Dottie Baumgartner, Melissa Haldeman, Carla Burkhardt, Bonny Goodenough, Naoko Giblin, Jen Linse, Eric Sorenson, Ken Isler, Dan Backhaus, Dean Olson, and Jon Hetland. Your dedication and commitment are much appreciated, and we thank you for enhancing our worship services.

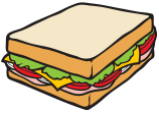


Feed Our Children Summer Lunch Ministry

The summer lunch program returned this year after a year away. The year off came because of funding which allowed the School District to provide free breakfasts and lunches to all local children. This came with some new and unexpected challenges, but was a successful year. We were lucky that major donors like Linda's bakery, Hansen's IGA, 1st CCU, Union State Bank, LaCrosse County Dairy Producers, Kwik Trip, Compeer Financial and the Le Coulee Cheese Castle returned to help us out in various ways. We are also lucky to have partnered with Prince of Peace Lutheran, the Presbyterian Church, St Teresa's Catholic Church and 1st CCU who took on a week or two of leading the kitchen and serving. We also partnered with the West Salem National Honor Society again this year.

All of this is possible because of the support of the members of OSLC for allowing us to use the kitchen, and to all of those who volunteered. There are so many to mention, I would like to point out Carla Burkhardt, who took the lead on delivery options when, with less than a week to prepare, school funding changed to allow lunches to be free for all during summer school. We actually partnered with school for those three weeks and provided delivery every day of those weeks-THANK YOU CARLA. Connie Pinski and Lynette Ender both applied for and received Thrivent Grants as well as went shopping for needed supplies of food items for us, we thank them! Of course, Kris in the office, Pastor Jon and Josh Corning helped us regularly as they were here with us in the building, cleaning up, taking calls etc. Judy Long would check in on us on behalf of the Food Pantry. There are so many of you who donated items and volunteered, we thank you all. This truly is a community partnership and huge group effort.

We served just under 200 children daily. Some days we were even able to toss in a few healthy snack/breakfast items for the next day.



We had delivery drivers for several families and prepared for pick-ups at Our Saviors. We had kids on bikes, walking, in vehicles with a parent or child care provider and some were even wet, fresh from swimming lessons. We also prepared meals for and have already received a formal thank you from the BGC. Their staff would pick up the items and bring them to the BGC and are always telling us thank you for our help in providing meals for the children they serve.

Thank you for the opportunity, the facility and all of the support that you have given us all. At times, we had so many offers to help, we didn't have enough jobs - Isn't that one of the best problems to have?

Angie Hemker,
Coordinator

Editor's Note: *A big thank you to Angie Hemker* for volunteering again this year to coordinate the Summer Lunch Program. We couldn't have done it without you!

Hospital Visitation

With the changes in hospital visitation protocols it is more difficult for the pastors to "just drop by" and visit. Still, we want to be there for you! If you are anticipating a hospital stay, or find yourself there unexpectedly, and want a pastoral call, please contact the church office. We will be happy to visit!

And as we say that...a "thank you" again to all who are a part of the health care systems in our area- thank you for your dedication to bringing healing and wholeness, and for being a part of God's gift of life!

Looking for a Good Read?

As always, the library at Our Savior's is available to you, offering some good reading! But...recently we decided to thin the collection, removing material that has not been used as often, or used recently. Those books are now in the Gathering Area, on the pews alongside the sanctuary wall...and they are waiting for a new home! A free will donation is suggested, with the proceeds going to a worthy cause (we're still figuring that out!) Books will be available through September 10 when they will be offered as part of the village-wide rummage sale. Check it out soon – maybe a “good read” for a late summer day?



Looking to Take the Next Step?



New Members Are Joining

Over the past months a number of new people have joined us in worship. We love having you – thank you for sharing in worship with us!

At Our Savior's new folk are always welcome, and membership status doesn't matter. But for some, a sense of belonging and commitment is important – and we would love to have you “join us” formally!

If you are interested in membership at Our Savior's please let Pastor Jon know – a new “new member” class is just around the corner. But...if you're not ready for that, not to worry – we love having you with us just as you are!



Join us for new opportunities ...

September is upon us and after a couple of years of uncertainty, disruption, missing out, and doing things differently, we are getting back into the groove of mission and ministry. We are eager to prepare our space, welcome folks back, hear the Word, and partake in the Sacraments. When the building was empty or sparsely populated, it wasn't hard for the pastors to "do it all", but now that we eagerly anticipate seeing more of you, we will invite others to help carry out the tasks of ministry.

Starting in October we will once again prepare the "schedules" for Altar Guild, Ushering, and Communion Assisting. If you have been a part of these ministries in the past, you can expect to receive a letter this month with the new schedules beginning in October. If you are new to the congregation and/or you have decided now is the time to try something new, Pastor Jean would love to hear from you so she can include you in the schedule. We are anxious to be able to work together!



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



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!



Newsletter Deadlines – September 15

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
359 Leonard St N
West Salem, WI 54669

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Change Service Requested