

Salem Lutheran  
Church and School

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# December 2023 Newsletter

Insight from God's Word:

The Season of Advent,  
The Season of Repentance  
In the Season  
of Advent, roughly the  
month before  
Christmas, the church  
has historically  
prepared for the  
celebration of the birth  
of Jesus, the Savior of



the world, by focusing on repentance. Repentance is turning from your sinful habits in sorrow to Christ in faith for the forgiveness of those sins. This turning is the gift from the Holy Spirit through the Word of God.

But it is easy to forget that repentance produces good works, an improvement in our lives, a movement towards living our lives for God and our fellow man. This improvement is not a straight line improvement in the sense that we get better every day in every way. As sinful human beings, we all have our up and our down days, even our up and down years!

But the Word of God teaches that repentance produces good works. "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance." (Matthew 3:8) The Apostle Paul summarizes his preaching of repentance, "First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds." (Acts 26:20)

We sometimes forget that repentance results in good works—a better, kinder life in our dealings with others, a greater faithfulness in keeping the commandments of God. People are like the little boy who had broken the glass of a street lamp. Greatly disturbed, he asked his father, "What shall I do?" "Do?" exclaimed his father, "Why we must report it and ask what you must pay, then go and settle it." This practical way of dealing with the matter was not what the boy was looking for, so he whimpered, "I thought all I had to do was ask God to forgive me."

Yes, but when we are truly sorry for our sins and truly trust in our forgiveness for Christ's sake, that is, when we are repentant, we will struggle against our sinning and for the doing of good to others. We will try to make amends for the evil which we have done to others. We will turn from our sin and refrain from that sin about which we are sorry.

Now we will never do this perfectly, 100% of the time, for we continue to carry the sinful nature of Adam with us, even as believers. But there will be a significant change in our lives. The Holy Spirit in the life of the repentant believer will change our wicked tempers into calmer attitudes, our judgmental gossip into gentle restraint, our selfishness into living more for others.

Because the Holy Spirit takes up residence in the repentant believer in Christ, He effects a change for the good, for the better, not to bring us forgiveness, but because we are already forgiven on account of Christ. May the Season of Advent by God's grace be a season of repentance for us all! Pastor Brechbuhl

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
LCMS Stewardship Ministry – [lcms.org/stewardship](https://lcms.org/stewardship)  
Newsletter Article – December 2023  
*The Measure of Our Generosity*

If you open up the Small Catechism, you'll find a shortened version of the Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." But if you look up the list of the Ten Commandments in Exodus, you'll find the full version: Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Ex. 20:8–11) Why did Luther shorten this commandment for the Small Catechism? Was it so that the kids wouldn't have so much to memorize? No, it was because Luther knew that all the details of the Third Commandment were part of the "shadow" of the Old Testament (Col. 2:16). Or as St. Paul puts it, there is "letter" in the Old Testament law and "spirit" (2 Cor. 3:6). The details of not working on Saturday were fulfilled by Christ. That part of the Sabbath regulation no longer applies. But the spirit of the law does remain: We need to dedicate sufficient time each week to hearing God's Word and giving it honor and respect. Or as Luther sums it up in the Small Catechism's explanation to the Third Commandment: "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it." The same sort of analysis applies to our giving. In the Old Testament, God commanded the Israelites to give a tenth of their income to the Levites so that those men could dedicate their lives to serving in God's house, teaching the people, conducting worship, etc. In the New Testament, there is a rigid requirement listed about handing in your tax forms to church to make sure you've given enough. But the mandate to have a full-time ministry, which is the spirit of that law concerning tithing to the Levites, is right there in 1 Corinthians 9:14: "The Lord has ordained

that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel.” The New Testament church’s job is significantly larger than the job of Old Testament Israel. We are commanded to preach the Gospel to all nations. There was only the temple to maintain in the Old Testament, but we have churches, schools, universities and seminaries, plus missionaries everywhere. So you tell me: Can we really undertake the work of the ministry if our giving doesn’t even measure up to Old Testament levels of generosity?

Greetings in Christ,

I would like to give you an update on Swaddling Clothes. Wow! What a year! We opened Swaddling Clothes in January 2023. While we had a slow start, helping only two families through April, we have grown steadily since then. Throughout May, June, and July we served 30 families. In August we hosted a monthly shopping day, and we offered a special back-to-school shopping day, where we offered larger sizes, socks, and underwear for school age children. We assisted 10 families with 26 children. On August 20<sup>th</sup>, St John’s Lutheran Church in Bath hosted a fish fry and donated all the proceeds to Swaddling Clothes. The remaining windows in the Swaddling Clothes building were replaced, and some minor repairs were completed. We were visited by the District Manager of the Old Navy Department Stores. They expressed an interest in assisting with toddler clothing. We also purchased 4 clothing racks from Target. In September we acquired a washer and dryer unit to wash the lightly used donated clothing. We hosted the monthly shopping day and assisted 16 families with 35 children. We featured winter coats. We had a workday to change clothing seasons. We boxed the spring and summer clothing, and displayed fall and winter clothing. We received a monetary and clothing donation from Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Petersburg. In October we assisted 10 families with 27 children with our shopping day. We featured children’s winter coats again in October. We also received a donation of clothing from Old Navy Department Store. We applied for a grant with LWML. We received information on the LCMS Million Dollar Life Matching Grant for 2024. This would again be a matching grant, and the congregation would have to provide half of the funds to receive the grant.

In November we were able to assist 14 families with 39 children. We received information that we would be getting \$250 from Morgan County Right to Life. They learned about Swaddling Clothes at the Morgan County Fair. Their booth was across from the Salem booth, and they voted to support us with some of their funds this year. God has blessed us greatly, and we have continued to grow throughout our first year in service to the community. I especially want to thank Lauretta Scheller, Donna Moody, Arnie and Sharon Delong, Karen Tomhave, Randy and Rita Tendick, Jim Turley, Michelle Moeller, Leta Malcott, Kevin Eckhoff, and Danny Magelitz for help with washing and folding

donated clothing items, packaging diapers, working at the shopping days, advertising, website changes, and planning repairs and improvements. I again want to thank everyone who has supported Swaddling Clothes through donations and kept us in their prayers. I believe we are making a difference in the lives of children in our community with this service. We can continue to make a difference with your help. If you wish to donate or volunteer, you may contact me through the church office. Thank you, Deaconess Linda Strubbe

## DECEMBER BAPTISM ANNIVERSARIES

ARING, Brandon N.	1-Dec
MICHAELS, Catherine I.	1-Dec
MCCLELLAN, Bailey E.	1-Dec
HASCHEMEYER, Christopher	1-Dec
LAIR, Allison M.	3-Dec
SNIDER, Doris D.	5-Dec
WHITE, Erika K.	5-Dec
KING, Stephen M.	5-Dec
STEINACHER, HENRY	5-Dec
SIEVING, Stephanie O.	7-Dec
STEINACHER, John H.	8-Dec
BAKER, Carol A.	9-Dec
ERIXON, Brenda L.	10-Dec
FREED, Michelle B.	10-Dec
GARRETT, Michael D.	10-Dec
STRUBBE, Aaron C.	10-Dec
PETERSON, Alli B.	10-Dec
DUDLEY, Barbara	11-Dec
LEUTZ, Benjamin J.	12-Dec
HAYNES, EMBRY T.	12-Dec
CARL, Carol A.	13-Dec
MCCLELLAN, Rebecca S.	14-Dec
SANDERS, Zachory J.	15-Dec
WIEGAND, Amber N.	17-Dec
CASEY, Ashley A.	17-Dec
WIEGAND, Audra L.	17-Dec
BUMGARNER, Joseph M.	18-Dec
WANKEL, Caleb M.	18-Dec
DERGES, Sarah M.	18-Dec
BAKER, Heather L.	18-Dec
O'HARA, Kristy N.	18-Dec
BAKER, Heather	18-Dec
REEVES Jr., Robert W.	19-Dec
MCFADDEN, Robin L.	19-Dec
GARMAN, Nicholas A.	20-Dec
STRUBBE, Dalton W.	22-Dec
SCHAEFER, Blake R.	22-Dec

BLANCHETTE, Joshua P.	23-Dec
SHERRILL, Susanna L.	25-Dec
DERTZ, Jonathan M.	25-Dec
WILLIAMS-B-EDWARDS, Amy	26-Dec
CROW, Kelsie L.	27-Dec
CLEMONS, Tyler R.	27-Dec
SLAVENS, Kristel N.	28-Dec
SIEVING, Kameron A.	28-Dec
JACKSON, Donna M.	29-Dec
MATHIAS, Alexandra V.	29-Dec
GREGORY, Deborah A.	30-Dec

hospital and recuperating at home. I am doing much better. Thank you, Carol Baker

**FAMILY FUN FESTIVAL:** Join in the fun on Sunday, December 3, from 1-3 pm., for crafts refreshments, and Christmas carol sing along. Crafts are appropriate for 4 years to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. To make this happen, we need lots of volunteers, including junior high and high school students. Call Elaine Jarman at 217-473-1503 or Laurie Surratt at 217-473-8382 to volunteer.

**THANK YOU:** A heartfelt thank you to the congregation, staff, and volunteers who have supported the call committee in meeting our called pastors. The event went well with called Pastor Ryan Meyer and his wife Cathy this past week. We ask that you continue to pray that the Lord brings us a pastor. It has been a long process but your call committee joins Paul in his letter to the Hebrews “, let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.” Heb 12:1.

**SCRIPT CARDS:** We have ordered script cards to be available in the office. There are several different cards that are available. The gift cards that are available in the office are as follows: Amazon, Wal-Mart, Shell, Casey, Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks, and Walgreens. We can also order any gift card that you would need. Please let us know if you can use any of the above or we can place an order for you. The money made from these cards will benefit the School and PTL.

## **CONGREGATIONAL NEWS**

### **PREACHING SCHEDULE PASTORS**

**NOTE: ALL START TIMES ARE AT 9 AM**

Dec. 03	9 am	Riemer
Dec. 10	9 am	Strattman
Dec. 13W	6 pm	Brechbuhl
Dec. 17	9 am	Thrivent
Dec. 24	9 am	Brechbuhl
Dec. 24	6 pm	Brechbuhl
Dec. 31	9 am	Brechbuhl
Dec. 31	6 pm	Brechbuhl

**REMINDERS:** DON'T ASSUME that Pastor knows when you are hospitalized. Please call the Church Office 243-3419 to let us know when you enter the hospital.

**LFL THANK YOU:** The nuts have arrived! The Illinois Lutherans for Life thanks all who supported our annual nut sale. In doing so you helped raise money to educate the public on the sanctity of human life. And, thanks to all who helped sort and package for delivery. Ruth Werries

**THANK YOU:** I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the cards, phone calls, prayers, acts of kindness and the beautiful flowers by Mr. Middendorf, while I was in the hospital and recuperating. I am doing well. Thanks again, Martha Aring

**THANK YOU!** Thank you everyone for the prayers and acts of kindness during John's recent illness and hospitalization. He is improving each day. We are thankful for the healing that the Lord has provided and to be home again. Our hearts go out to you! John and Ruth Werries

**THANK YOU:** I would like to thank everyone for the calls, prayers and acts of kindness while I was in the

**GREETERS WANTED:** The Evangelism committee is looking for volunteers to be Greeters at the Sunday morning Worship Service. You will need to be here by 8:30 am. If you would be interested, please contact Paul Reither, (217)-248-0550 Thank you.

**DOORBELL DINNER VOLUNTEERS:** Doorbell Dinner volunteers are needed for the week of December 4-8. Consider helping out those who need us in the Jacksonville community. It doesn't take much time out of your day. Drivers and deliverers need to be at Jacksonville Memorial Hospital at 11:10 AM for pick up and are usually finished by 12:45 PM. Please contact Rita Tendick at 217-473-5017 if you are willing to help.

**COOKIE WALK:** Looking ahead! Planning for the holidays! It's not too early to start thinking about holiday baking. The Salem Ladies Guild will be hosting their annual Cookie Walk on Friday, December 1 from 3 to 5 PM. We need your help, so get ready to think about baking your favorite treats. Proceeds from this event will be divided between: Salem's Swaddling Clothes Program, Salem School's Adopt-A-Student Program, Jacksonville Food Pantry, and the Orphan Grain Train. Please call Elaine Jarman at 217-473-1503 if you have any questions.

**RADIO OPENING:** Salem Lutheran is in search of volunteers that would like to learn how to broadcast our services. If you would be interested in the opportunity to do that or would just like to see if you would enjoy doing this, please see Kevin Eckhoff. He would be willing to let you sit in and check it out. Any volunteers would be greatly appreciated. An opportunity to learn something new and help Salem out. Thank you.

**FRIENDSHIP BIBLE DATES:** The following dates have been scheduled for Friendship Bible, they are held on Mondays at 6:00 pm here at Salem. November 6<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>; December 4<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>. Please mark your calendars.

**COMMITTEES:** We are looking for individuals to be on our committees. We have several committees that are in need of adding to the committee. If you would like to join a committee, please talk with David Hannel. He will provide you with the available committees and what openings Salem has. Please be a part of the solution at Salem. Thank you

**DEACONS:** Listed below are the names of the Deacons for Salem Lutheran 2022. Please feel free to give your Deacon a call.

Group 1: "AA-GARM" Wade Mathis 217-690-2693

Group 2: "GARR-MAN" Austin Tomhave  
217-883-3461

Group 3: "MASS-SHE"

Group 4: "SHIR-ZIM" Dwayne Middendorf  
217-248-2091

Two Elders assisting Deacons: Larry Baker  
(217)370-1480, Gerald Warcup (217)243-2620.

**ADOPT A STUDENT:** The Adopt a Student Fund is receiving requests for assistance from some of our students for the upcoming school year. We would like to assist these families, but we need the help from the Congregation. If you would you like to help, please mark your envelope "Family In Need". The money you donate will go directly to these family's account. If you would like to sponsor a student for a month, 3 months, 6 months, or a full year, please call the office. We would love to have such donors. Thank you.

## SCHOOL NEWS

**NEWS FROM PRINCIPAL JOY REITSMA:** What an amazing place Salem Lutheran Church and School is! It is a privilege to help lead children to Christ or to help them strengthen their relationship with their Savior. Sharing our "home" with the community helps us to grow and reach out to others. How do we do this? By hosting events like the trunk or treat event we hosted last month. We were able to share our place with around 260 children and their families! Many great

comments were made about our "house" or the fond memories people had from events they had come to in the past. The Chili Cook-off was another successful event! All the chili was great and it was a tight race to find the winners! We were also able to acknowledge the service of our veterans as well. We are excited to have passed all DCFS hurdles to get our operation permit for our preschool. We are now able to welcome our smallest 2-year-old Cyclones FULL TIME! It has been such a blessing to watch them become part of the Salem family. Our students have been working hard to prepare for the Christmas Service they will lead on December 13 at 6 pm. We are looking forward to worshipping together with the congregation, singing those long-loved Christmas songs and preparing for the birth of the King. All of our students from PK2-grade 8 will help to tell the story of Christmas!

## **PRESCHOOL Pre-K2 News from Ms. Hathaway /Ms. Wilson, Pre-K3 Ms. Martin, Pre-K4 Mrs Ly:**

Monthly Theme: Blessings/Families/Friends

Bible Story: Jonah and the Whale

Our classrooms will continue with daily prayers, read the story of Jonah and the Whale, and share ideas of why it is important to put our trust in God as he planned everything for everyone. In the story Jonah felt that the people of Nineveh didn't deserve God's grace and instead of delivering a warning for God he ran off to escape his mission. God is everywhere and at the end Jonah did deliver God's warning to the people of Nineveh. Jonah is an ordinary sinner like all of us and this story shows us that we can all be saved by Jesus Christ if we follow Him. Preschool 4 The students learned about God's blessings by sending his only son to die on the cross for our sins. This message is meaningful to the students as they are still growing and learning socially emotionally. Connecting Jonah's actions to God's forgiveness inspires students to want to do better in their everyday lives. With Thanksgiving around the corner, the students are also studying about the various types of turkeys, birds, and family's gatherings to thank God for the things He has given us. In creative art the students drew a turkey hand and made a baby bird in a nest to symbolize rebirth. Our class sold the most socks for October fundraiser and the reward was an ice-cream party! A big congrats to the students and their families!





**Kindergarten News from Mrs. Audrey Sprinkel:**

This month we are learning so much in kindergarten! In reading, we are working on sight words, and doing more cold reads to work on our reading skills. We are talking about what people use to do their jobs. We are exploring jobs and what people in those careers need to complete their job! In math we are working on counting by 10s, paying with pennies and dimes, and halves and whole fractions. Students are learning how to differentiate between wholes and halves by sorting pictures of halves and wholes. Students are using class money to purchase items from the class store. Students are learning about maps and globes in social studies. Students are learning to tell directions, such as north, east, south, and west, as well as differentiate between land and water on both maps and globes. Students have also been learning about different types of bodies of water, such as rivers, oceans, and lakes. Students will be working coloring a map to show what they have learned. In science we are learning about characteristics of different objects. Currently, students are exploring foam blocks and learning about their characteristics. Students are so excited for Thanksgiving, and we have been celebrating in religion class by talking about being thankful for all God has given us. We are so excited for the rest of November, and we cannot wait to share it with you! God Bless!

**1<sup>st</sup> & 2nd Grade News from Mrs. Deborah Steinacher:**

We have been busy learning so many things! The class loves to be creative and fill the hallway with lots of projects. In art we used chalk to make the Northern Lights. They learned where the Northern Lights are found and what time of day they can be seen. They also made their own picture of Luther's Seal. We read a book about Martin Luther and how he helped people know that buying indulgences does not forgive sins, Jesus does. Grades 1-4 presented a chapel message "Being Thankful." They told everyone about the ten lepers and how one came back to tell Jesus thank you. They told everyone how we should give God thanks every day, on our happy days, tough days, and all the days in between. They are now looking forward to getting ready for the Christmas service. They are ready to tell everyone about how Jesus was born to be our Savior. Thank you so much for your support. God's blessing.

**3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade News from Mrs. Jacqueline Steinacher:**

It's an exciting time of year as we prepare for Christmas here at Salem! I am especially thankful to be here

during this time, as we are free to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas: Our Lord's Birth! The halls are decked, and our classrooms are filled with reminders of this wonderful season. We are preparing for our Christmas Service on December 13. The students are working hard at memorizing their lines and practicing their songs. We are working hard at improving writing skills this quarter, so the students are working on a variety of writing projects, many of which are connected to the Christmas season. We have learned about family ancestry and traditions, and the students have enjoyed sharing their family traditions with the class. We are looking forward to spending time with our families over Christmas break but are also eager to return in January to get back into the swing of things. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to All! Mrs. Jackie Steinacher.

**6<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade News from Ms. Joy Reitsma:** The Middle School studied Ancient Egypt and its surrounding areas. They finished the digestive system and are working on the circulatory system. They are working on creative writing and storytelling in English. Math has been working on 3D shapes, rates and ratios, and graphing linear equations. Art class has been about one-point perspective drawing and using watercolors to shade for dimension from a light source. We are using our music time to prepare for the Christmas Service, learning our speaking part as well as our songs.

**OUR FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP  
WORK PROGRAM**

Fiscal Year 8/31/2022 – 07/31/2023  
(From 8/31/2022 Treasurer's Report)

**CURRENT FINANCIAL  
INDEBTEDNESS**

7/31/22	09/30/23
Farmers State Bank Line of Credit	
\$122,900.20	\$0.00
Internal Loan from Restricted	
\$63,725.00	\$0.00
	LEAP
\$677,802.80	\$615,911.84

**Financial Status Report for  
September 2023**

Our total operating needs monthly:	\$ 59,549.42
Our operating receipts September 2023:	\$ 39,550.08
Our total operating needs YTD:	\$129,141.67
Our total operating receipts YTD:	\$ 87,904.49
Our Shortfall or Excess YTD:	\$(41,237.18)

