

SALEM TIDINGS

No Matter Who You Are, Or Where You Are On Life's Journey, You Are Welcome Here.

Salem United Church of Christ, 5300 E. Florida Avenue, Denver, CO 80222

April 2021

A Word from Pastor Russ

It's now been just over a year since we closed the church building doors because of the pandemic. As a church, we've been through much together, but apart: Lent, Palm Sunday Easter, summer, Advent, Christmas, another Lent, another Palm Sunday, and this month: Easter again. We've Zoomed for worship, Zoomed for Bible Study, Zoomed for Wednesday Community Social, Zoomed for Council meetings, and Zoomed for Ministry meetings. Most of us are tired of Zoom, tired of masks, tired of social distancing, and tired of being at home. All of us are tired of this pandemic—to be sure!

But much good has happened in the past year, too: We've gained 2 new members and several worshippers we didn't have before. We've remodeled our two classrooms into a lovely children's classroom and a helpful church workroom and office for our Music Director. We've enjoyed 2 marvelous outdoor worship services together on our front lawn. We've re-invigorated 2 ministries (Christian Education and Communications) that have been dormant a while. We enjoyed some amazing special worship services online: Palm Sunday (twice), Easter, Christmas Eve, Boy Scout Sunday, and more. We're upgrading our Audio/Video for the sanctuary to Zoom more reliably, and so we may continue to Zoom after we return, for homebound folks and those far away. We've started a new monthly concert series. And increasing numbers of our church folks have gotten a shot (or two) against COVID-19. Things are really looking up!



Pastor Russ leading worship from home on Sunday, March 21, 2021 with German Shepherd "DJ" on his feet.

We've seen a lot of change, a lot of good things over the past year, and there is hope on our horizon, not just for Salem, not just for Colorado, but everyone on this planet. It will be a while before we've overcome this pandemic, but it looks like we're well on our way. We have "horizon hope."

Horizon hope is when we can see hope on the horizon, but still have to journey a while before we get there. It's like seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, while still having to travel through that tunnel. When we have horizon hope, we can be more likely to let our guard down, not wear a mask, go out more often... but we can't. Vigilance is key. We can still get lost between here and the horizon if we don't hold to the vision of getting there over time. We can do this!

When we finally *do* return, it won't be the same old Salem. You will have changed, I will have changed, our church will have changed, our building will have changed, and our world will have changed. The good news is, most of that change will have been for the better. We will be better. Our church will be better. I hope our world will be better, too.

Here's looking at our Horizon Hope!

Pastor Russ Kirby

Moderator Moments

We've made it through what was the longest winter in my memory – and my memory goes back a way! Through this winter, we continued to wait out the pandemic, live in relative isolation, long for the time when the simplest – and most meaningful routines could be experienced. Things like going to church on Sunday, gathering for coffee fellowship or a meal with friends.



I breathed a sigh of relief when the first day of spring arrived. Not relief that everything will switch back to “normal” with the change of seasons – it won't - but

relief that we've reached the moment when we can begin moving toward normal.

As Council Moderator, I try to keep abreast of what each of Salem's ministries and committees is working towards. Our Covid 19 Task Force is planning ahead for the time we can worship together in our beautiful sanctuary – hopefully before our next change of seasons! A host of church members, ministries, and staff have been working overtime to prepare our sanctuary with an exciting “upgrade” that will allow those of us who are able and comfortable coming into the sanctuary to enjoy that experience – while we continue to provide Zoom access to those who are hesitant or unable to join in person. Our Christian Education Ministry is looking forward to new offerings for a variety of cohorts – and is collaborating with Worship Committee to expand their reach and impact. The newly revitalized Communications Ministry is keeping us – and wider audiences – informed about all the good work that's going on. Every ministry, committee, staff member, and church

member at Salem is helping us move forward to the day when “things are back to normal.”

As I said the last two months, and now think I will say every month, we are truly blessed to have such wonderful leadership in our congregation at Salem!

Salem Christian Education

Sunday School News-The Christian Education Ministry Team is excited about the re-start of Sunday School at Salem! We have provided the first monthly resource packets to families for Holy Week and Easter inviting parents and their children to follow Jesus through the days of Holy Week and to participate in the Zoom worship service on Easter Sunday. We have worked with the Worship Ministry Team to include a “Children's Time” during worship and to invite parents to have their children celebrate Holy Communion with them on Easter Sunday. The resource packet also includes weekly Bible lessons and activities that can be used by parents and children during worship on every Sunday of April. We plan to distribute a packet of Sunday resources for May at the end of April.

We encourage all our Salem family to welcome our children back into the life and worship of our church. We hope this new beginning of Sunday School can prepare all of us to worship and learn together when we return to in-person worship.

Marine Corps Recruit Update

Antonio Fumagalli enlisted in the Marine Corps in January and he will complete his basic training the end of April. Please contact his proud mom, Polly (303-589-6941), for his mailing address if you would like to send him a note or letter of encouragement.

Communications **Blurb**

Communication, the means of sending or receiving information. The Communications Ministry has a big job. I want to ask for your help! I challenge each member to talk about Salem this month. Communicate something Salem is doing for you, for our members or our neighbors and neighborhood! Communication is not just a committee it is our community. If you have something to share, please contact myself, Michael Stice and Debbie Gordy to get your news spread!

Krissy Berry

kristenmarieneumann@gmail.com

Personnel Ministry Updates

Personnel Ministry is working hard to serve Salem and our staff! Ministry members include Polly Fumagalli and Kathleen King. Since the first of the year, the Personnel Ministry has worked on:

- Annual reviews for the pastor and the administrative assistant;
- Preparing to move forward with annual review for Chappell Kingsland;
- Considering a staffing model based on a “staff team” concept;
- Assessed current administrative staff needs; recommended and moved forward with restructuring the Administrative Assistant position. Based on current needs, there will now be two jobs – Finance Assistant and Administrative Assistant.
 - We are excited that Debbie Gordy will continue as Finance Assistant – reporting to Salem’s treasurer and the moderator.
 - An Interim Administrative Assistant has been hired to help

us hone that job description to match the ever-evolving administrative needs at Salem. Long-time Salem members will recognize Kerry Mayhew – whose own grandma was Salem’s administrative assistant for many years. Kerry will complete her interim work within three months; at that time, Salem will move forward to identify and hire a “settled” Administrative Assistant who will report to Salem’s pastor and the moderator.

Looking ahead, the Personnel Ministry will review and possibly update personnel policies and procedures, and begin work to ensure that Salem embraces best practices in managing and supporting our employees.

The Personnel Ministry appreciates your support of our work and of our hard-working employees. We are truly blessed to have Pastor Russ, Chappell Kingsland, Debbie Gordy, and Kerry Mayhew. We hope you’ll take a moment this month to let each of them know how much you appreciate them!

Please feel free to reach out to either Polly or Kathleen with questions.

Salem Pastoral Survey Results

Thank you again to everyone who participated in the Salem Pastoral Survey last November. Since the Personnel Ministry (i.e., Kathleen King and Polly Fumagalli) has met with Rev. Russ and reviewed the information, we are now able to share the overall results (on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest) as follows:

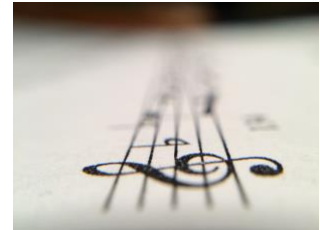
1. **Worship/Sermon:** Average rating of 4.3/5; clearly a strength appreciated by the congregation.
2. **Theology:** Average rating of 4.2/5; a reflection that Rev. Russ' theology as woven into sermons and church life aligns with the congregation.
3. **Available to me:** Average rating of 4.2/5; a healthy evaluation, but may reflect that a few of our congregants would like more direct contact.
4. **Reaches out to our members who need extra support:** 3.1/5; this is also the only area with any "1" ratings, and the only area with multiple responses a "3" or below.
5. **Participated in and supported church activities and events:** 4.6/5; clearly an area of strength that is appreciated by the congregation.
6. **Has provided effective guidance and leadership:** 4.1/5; reflects appreciation of Rev. Russ' leadership.
7. **Has done an effective job in moving Salem's Sunday services, Bible Study, and essential church meetings from in-person to Zoom:** 4.8/5; a clear reflection of appreciation for the way Rev. Russ was able to adapt our worship and other essential church functions during the pandemic.

There were many comments for the specific items above as well as general ones. They were provided to Rev. Russ as part of his annual review. Several goals and needs have

been reviewed for the coming year. Overall and in spite of the Covid pandemic, Salem has done well under Rev. Russ' leadership, and the congregation is grateful to have him as our Settled Pastor. The commentary from the congregation – both in the survey and in conversations – has been overwhelmingly positive and Rev. Russ is appreciated!

Salem Concert Series

Thanks to the Salem community for making our first Wild Beautiful concert



a success! Special thanks to Pastor Russ, Craig, Krissy, Chris and Debbie for their work behind-the-scenes. And thanks to Roger, Randy, Ean and Miro for their heavy lifting to get the piano into its new dolly! Coming up next:

Wild Beautiful Concerts presents I Love the '90s - a solo piano concert by Chappell Kingsland featuring the greatest songs of Pop, Rock, Alternative, R&B, Country, Folk, Latin, Electronica, and Soundtracks

The audience will choose some of the songs in this interactive concert!

Get ready to sing along and dance in your living room!

- **Friday, April 16th at 7pm**
- **Live-streaming on Zoom and Facebook Live**
- **Free admission; suggested donation \$15 per household**
- **Visit salemuccdenver.org for the latest information**

—Chappell Kingsland

Missions

Salem had a wonderful turnout from the community for our March 20th food drive. It was wonderful to get to talk with them and explain the smaller food bank the food items were going to. In addition to the food, we collected \$60. A great highlight was seeing a couple who many years ago were homeless and parked their car in our lot and attended the Community Meal every Wednesday, as well as used our food closet, are now back on their feet with a home and jobs. They wanted to give back and support Salem by donating food. This time Archway had to bring their van to take away all the food and the community saw an active church.

April mission is Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

Missions for remainder of 2021

May – Strengthen the Church-a UCC 5 for 5

June – In anticipation of re-opening Salem we will be collecting, all month, gently used clothing (infants to adult) to support Archway's NEW clothing store.

July – Filter of Hope-a water filter system that takes dirty water and turns it into drinkable water. A video is available-very impressive!

August – Archway School Supply Drive and Our Church's Wider Mission-a UCC 5 for 5.

September –UCC CROP WALK if held this year, otherwise donations to support FISH food bank.

October – Neighbors In Need-a UCC 5 for 5

November – Salem Stewardship Campaign and UCC Sock Drive- Beth will enroll us with

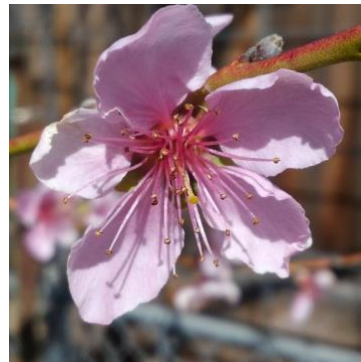
the UCC Drive so Salem gets the credit we earn.

December – UCC Christmas Fund-a UCC 5 for 5 and The Heifer Project.

Boulder Crisis Fund:

Per the Rocky Mountain Conference UCC: As we sit with our grief and reflect on yesterday's events in Boulder, many of us wonder how we can be of help. One way is prayer, another is donating to this newly established crisis fund. [Community Foundation Boulder County](https://www.commfund.org/blog/community-foundation-announces-boulder-county-crisis-fund) has established a fund to support the Boulder King Soopers shooting victims, their families, and our community in dealing with and processing this event. The Boulder County Crisis Fund will support the needs of those directly affected and the needs of our community to heal from this horrendous event. Please feel free to share this resource with your congregation. **To learn more and donate, please visit:**

<https://www.commfund.org/blog/community-foundation-announces-boulder-county-crisis-fund>.





Kurt Mayhew installing a shelf to hold the camera



Burke Jackson installs wiring under the Chancel



Chappell Kingsland works to remove a piano caster



Randy Johnson, Ean Oliver and Chappell Kingsland assembling the piano dolly as Roger Neumann supervises.



Old Sanctuary speaker versus new Sanctuary speaker



Scaffolding used to install new speakers

April Calendar:

Worship Sundays, 9:30 am by Zoom* (online or by phone)

Bible Study Tuesdays, 10 am by Zoom* (online or by phone)

Virtual Community Social, Wednesdays at 6 pm by Zoom* (online or by phone)

Tuesday, April 13th 7 pm: **Council Meeting** on Zoom*

*to join by Zoom, sign up on our website at SalemUCCDenver.org



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April 1 ▶ Anne Ottinger

April 3 ▶ Polly Fumagalli

April 20 ▶ Paul Traudt

April 26 ▶ Melinda Neumann



Salem United Church of Christ

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Administrative Interim Assistant: Kerry Mayhew