

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

August 2021

A Word From Pastor Russ



Whenever I prepare to write this monthly newsletter article, I usually begin by stopping. I take a moment to let everything settle, and then feel my way through the creation process. I engage my spiritual journey, my pastoral journey, scriptures I've read, news and other stories

I've read, and where I am sensing that we as a church community are. In the combination of all this, I listen for what it is I believe God calls me to say here on this page. As I prepared to write this article, I stopped. I took a moment for everything to settle, and then I tried to feel my way through.

And there was nothing. Zero.

Not in a writer's block sort of way, but in a burned-out sort of way. There simply was nothing there.

I realized that this has been the extent of my personal exhaustion. I answered a new call to this church in October 2019. Then I answered a new call to this church in March 2020 when the pandemic shut us down. I became a televangelist and a tele-minister overnight, so it was like starting a new church from scratch.

All this has taken a deep toll on my soul. I'm fortunate to have made it this far, and I've no doubt that's because of the loving, caring, and understanding people of Salem UCC. I am grateful. But I am tired. I'm chronically exhausted. I need a break. Starting August 1, I will be taking a 6-week leave of absence to work on healing my soul and refreshing my spirit. I have hard work to recover from burnout. I'll be journaling frequently and engaging in regular counseling deal with anxiety and depression from the past year. I will also do fun stuff to lighten my soul. And with the help of the Rocky Mountain Conference's Rev. Dr. Anthony Scott as a loving mediator, Salem will have the opportunity to begin the work of engaging the wear and tear of the pandemic on our congregation, as well as dealing with some longtime struggles.

We all need a break sometimes. After creating the world in 6 days, God rested on the 7th (Genesis 2:1-3). The prophet Elijah—on the run from Jezebel after his prophecies offended her—was told by God to take a break (1 Kings 19:3-9). Jesus often went away to rest and pray during his ministry (Matthew 14:23, Luke 6:12, Luke 22:41, Mark 6:31-32, Mark 7:24). These times have been hard on us all, and rest and recuperation—for pastors and for congregations and for all people—is good for our souls. I'll miss you these next 6 weeks, but will keep you, my beloved church, in prayer. Please keep me in prayer, too. May we all rest, recuperate, and—like the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 19—may we all find and reconnect with God. I'll see you in September!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Russ

Moderator Moments

As we continue to move forward and (hopefully) away from the pandemic, it's important to take stock of how this past year has affected us – knowing that each of us entered the year with different personal strengths, support systems, physical and mental health status, and expectations from our community – volunteering, jobs, caring for our families.

In July, Pastor Russ was taking stock of how this past year has affected him – he'd only been with Salem a few months when the pandemic hit hard and changed everything. The year – the pandemic – providing spiritual leadership to all of us (as we also dealt with our own life- and pandemic-created issues) – has taken a toll on Pastor Russ. In order to allow himself to regroup and refresh, he's taking a "mini-sabbatical" starting August 1 and will return to Salem on September 13. During this time, he'll be taking care of himself, and I'm asking that each of us give him the space to do that – so no calls, texts, or emails to Pastor Russ during this time. Worship Ministry has arranged for some great coverage during his absence, so please plan on continuing to join services each week!

This will also be a time for members of Salem to come together and do our own "regrouping and refreshing." The Reverend Doctor Anthony Scott will lead us through some soul-searching exercises to help us acknowledge and work through some long-standing issues so we can more fully continue our congregation's work.

Information on these exercises will be coming soon. I hope each of you will join in – with an open heart and an open mind – to do this work.

August is going to be an interesting month for all of us at Salem!

Michael Stice, Moderator

Personnel Ministry Update

July was a month of transition for Salem's personnel:

Early in the month, we said goodbye to long-time employee Debbie Gordy, who has been working as the Finance Assistant since April 1. Debbie has been with Salem for over 9 years, and we wish her all the best as she moves on.

We are assessing how to best move forward to meet our finance assistance needs. Kerry Mayhew, who stepped in as interim Administrative Assistant on April 1, concluded her 4 month interim period with Salem, and assisted in the search for her "permanent" replacement.

Kerry has agreed to continue to be a resource as we transition to the new person. After reviewing many applicants and interviewing two candidates, we have offered the Administrative Assistant position to Lisa Thomas, who started with us on Tuesday, July 27. We're still figuring out her exact schedule – watch for it in the bulletin – but she will be in at least two days each week. Please join me in a warm welcome for Lisa – she will be a great addition to our staff.

We are blessed to have the talents of Pastor Russ, Music Minister Chappell, and Administrative Assistant Lisa at Salem. We are grateful to Kerry for stepping up to help out over the summer – and to Debbie for her efforts over the past nine years. Please take a moment this month to let each of our staff know how much you appreciate them!

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

Personnel Ministry

Keeping in Touch

Is Salem connecting with you the best way? Please let us know how we can contact and distribute Salem news to you! Email Kristenmarieneumann@gmail.com or adassistant.salemuccdenver@gmail.com Help spread the word! Share/invite 5 people or more to a Salem event! Let's start sharing all the great things Salem is doing!

Communications Ministry

Christian Education News

The Christian Education Ministry team will distribute a Family Resource packet for July and August to Salem Sunday School families

The packet will contain a collection of undated Sunday School activities to be enjoyed by parents and children throughout the summer months.

Extra packets will be available at church for anyone to pick up to use or share with another family. When families attend in-person Sunday worship during July and August, Sunday School activity packets will be available for children to use during the worship service.

Our team is beginning to brainstorm and plan for our Fall Christian Education program beginning in September and will include Sunday School, Youth Fellowship, and Adult programs. We are seeking input from our Salem family on program ideas and times for these programs.

Please contact any of our team members if you have ideas you would like to share with us.

Chuck Wright, Polly Fumagalli, Rev. Russ Kirby.

C.E Ministry

Financial Update

Just a quick update, Salem Family, on the delay for your second quarter giving statements. They ARE coming soon but delayed due to the termination of Debbie, Gordy, our Financial assistant the first part of July. Since then, I have had a whole lot more added to my responsibilities and thus creating the delay. Through this whole occurrence we are doing OK but I'd like to remind you to please continue your pledge and giving commitment. Please keep myself, as treasurer, and Salem's financial health in your good thoughts and prayers!

Chris Johnson, Treasurer

Missions Moments

August Mission – Archway School Supply Drive

Archway is so excited Salem will do the School Supply Drive for August's Mission. If you don't have an opportunity to shop for supplies or backpacks and want to make a monetary contribution, just be sure and put "Archway" on the memo line on your check. They will use the money to buy the supplies still needed so the kids are prepared for school. Again, there will be a collection box place in the narthex August 1-29th.

August's Calendar

Worship Sundays, 9:30 am. We are back in person! Please pay attention to the COVID guidelines. We will also continue with online and by-phone options for services. Join us in person or online!

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

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

Council Meeting Tuesday August 3rd 7 pm:
on Zoom

Wild Beautiful Concert Series at Salem UCC Denver, will continue back up in August!



August 27: Bev Gibson

Visit us online:

- Go to SalemUCCDenver.org to:
 - Keep updated on COVID-19 related info
 - Sign up for Zoom worship and gatherings
 - See our Calendar of Events
 - Download bulletins and newsletters
 - Learn more about Salem UCC
- Like our **Facebook** page: facebook.com/uccsalem

SALEM
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DENVER

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Music Director: Chappell Kingsland

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug 1 9:30am Worship Services 5:00pm PLPC	2 6:00pm Boy Scouts Troop 376; Salem Parking Lot and Backyard 10:00am Bible Study 7:00pm Council Meeting	3 9:00am Twinkle Together Music Classes--Lawn 10:00am Bible Study 7:00pm Council Meeting	4 9:00am Twinkle Together Music Classes--Lawn 9:30am Art Class	5 9:00am Twinkle Together Music Classes--Lawn 9:30am Art Class	6 9:00am Twinkle Together Music Classes--Lawn 9:30am Art Class	7 9:00am Twinkle Together Music Classes--Lawn
8 9:30am Worship Services 5:00pm PLPC	9 6:00pm Boy Scouts Troop 376; Salem Parking Lot and Backyard	10 9:00am Twinkle Together Music Classes--Lawn 10:00am Bible Study	11 9:00am Twinkle Together Music Classes--Lawn 9:30am Art Class	12 9:30am Art Class 7:00pm Child Care	13 9:00am Twinkle Together Music Classes--Lawn 9:30am Art Class	14 9:00am Twinkle Together Music Classes--Lawn
15 9:30am Worship Services 5:00pm PLPC	16 6:00pm Boy Scouts Troop 376; Salem Parking Lot and Backyard	17 10:00am Bible Study	18 9:30am Art Class	19 9:30am Art Class	20 9:30am Art Class	21 9:30am Art Class
22 9:30am Worship Services 5:00pm PLPC	23 Newsletter articles due 6:00pm Boy Scouts Troop 376; Salem Parking Lot and Backyard	24 10:00am Bible Study	25 9:30am Art Class	26 9:30am Art Class 6:00pm Coin Club	27 9:30am Art Class	28 9:30am Art Class
29 9:30am Worship Services 5:00pm PLPC	30 6:00pm Boy Scouts Troop 376; Salem Parking Lot and Backyard	31 10:00am Bible Study	Sep 1 9:15am Twinkle Together Music	2 9:15am Twinkle Together Music	3 9:30am Art Class	4 9:30am Art Class