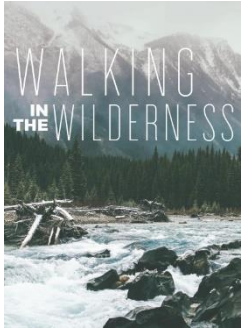




No Matter Who You Are, Or Where You Are On Life's Journey, You Are Welcome Here.
Salem United Church of Christ, 5300 E. Florida Avenue, Denver, CO 80222

March 2023

A Lenten Invitation



I don't believe Lent is for being dark, or morose, or heavy, as it has been commonly considered. Though it is certainly a serious time, I believe it is for being lifted, enlightened, perhaps even transformed by an adventure with Jesus in the wilderness...

Picture it-- looking under a bush here or there, lifting and peeking under rocks, even checking in tree branches or in your own reflection staring back at you from the water in the stream... You embark on a treasure hunt of sorts, searching for the treasure that is your true self.

I agree with Frederick Buechner, longtime Presbyterian minister, theologian, and prolific writer. Buechner reminds us that Jesus had to ask the same question in the wilderness, just after his baptism. Remember—no party-no cake, but straight to the wilderness to find his true self...

Buechner, in his unapologetic way, says this about the meaning of Lent:

In many cultures there is an ancient custom of giving a tenth of each year's income to some holy use. For Christians, to observe the forty days of Lent is to do the same thing with roughly a tenth of each year's days. After being baptized by John in the river Jordan, Jesus went off alone into the wilderness where he spent forty days asking himself the question what it meant to be Jesus. During Lent, Christians are supposed to ask in one way or another what it means to be themselves.

So, our false self is an identity defined by...

What others have done unto us, and what we have done unto others;

The masks we wear and the roles we take on that we think define us;

Actions we get caught up in that are not true to the God-ness within us, but have become automatic habit. And so on...

But there comes a time in the spiritual journey when we need to begin to lay the burden of false self-ego down in order to find the core of ourselves-- the "immortal diamond" as it has been called that is the truth of who we really are in God.

This Lent, as we continue to discern with Spirit what is Salem Church's "true self", I'm inviting you each to let go of your false self, so you can discover your own true Self, or your God-self; the Self with a capital S that God made us to be, and that we were familiar with as children, before all of the world's "stuff" came upon us, stifling that true God Self and forcing it "underground." This will take a daily practice of--you guessed it--your personal time and intention for discernment with Spirit! Thank goodness many of you know how to do this from 9 months of practice in our Spiritual Discernment process!

Of course, you can always just give up chocolate for Lent if you want to, but then, where's the adventure?
from Rev. Joanne, Discernment Minister

From the Pastors' Desk

Dear Salem Friends,

Several years ago, when I was the associate to an interim minister from out of state, I had some dishes and other kitchen items in storage and offered them to him to use in furnishing his studio apartment near the church. These were mostly items of sentimental value that didn't really fit in our house, but that I wasn't ready to part with either. When he was returning the items at the end of his pastorate, I told him just to bring everything back, and not to repack them, that I wanted to go through them first. One of the boxes was, well, less than sturdy. As I was carrying it to my office, the bottom fell out - in the center of the sanctuary no less. Kitchen items went everywhere, and a beautiful old glass pitcher that my great aunt had broke into a hundred pieces. I stood in the sanctuary angry that I hadn't held the box better, sad, grieving, and realizing I had a mess to clean up. I have never been one to deal well with change, but sometimes change comes barreling into our lives whether we like it or not. Lent to me is a time of uncomfortable transformation, getting out of my box, thinking outside of my habits, moving beyond old traditions - all while knowing I'm being held in love by my church and my God. It's a time to be broken and put back together in new ways, knowing we can never again truly be who we were, but that who we are becoming is just as beautiful. I'm reminded that it's okay to let go of the things that weren't serving me well, so that I can receive something new and beautiful. I wonder what Lent means to you? How does this season manifest in your lives? I wish for you a time of transformation as we make the journey together through this Lenten season. My hope is that we will open ourselves to letting go, and also to receiving the beautiful gifts that God has waiting for us.

With Love, Pastor Dustin

Worship and Christian Education

Feb. 5th we were treated to Scout Sunday. Salem's sanctuary was full of scouts that shared their experiences with us. This was Communion Sunday and all the scouts participated (ALL AT ONCE) and this brought a new energy to the Lord's Table.

Ash Wednesday was celebrated, and ashes were received. Followed by a nice meal together.

Community meals will continue as usual throughout Lent. Following the meals Dustin will have a program "Who do you think you are?". Please plan on joining us at 6:45 in person or on Zoom.

Holy week: Maundy Thursday will be a joint service at the Kirk of Bonnie Brae. Information will be sent out soon. Options for Good Friday services will be sent out closer to Holy week. Easter Egg hunt will be held Saturday April 8th at 10:00. Children 2 years old to 5th grade will be hunting for the eggs. We are in need of helpers to hide the eggs and candy to fill the plastic eggs. Please bring your bags of candy to church before March 26th.

Dustin will be sending out devotions during Lent. Please check your e-mail.

Easter Sunday will begin with our lovely Easter Breakfast at 8:30 am followed by our Easter service at 10:00 am.

Sunday March 12th we will be having our first Pi-day pot- luck. After service we will join in fellowship. We are asking that along with your dish to share, that a pie is made for us to sell by the slice or the whole pie. If you are feeling like Duff Goldman or The Pioneer Woman you can make two. The proceeds of the sale of pie will go towards the purchasing of an outside banner. Please plan on baking and attending our first Pi-day pot- luck.

Your Worship & CE Ministry

Beth, Hansen Polly Fumagalli, Norma Hansen, Chuck Wright, Deborah Barnard, and Dustin Adkins

Transition Finance and Property Ministry Team

Over the past month our team has been meeting weekly to prepare a line-item budget and year-to-date amounts to be discussed and voted at the first of our scheduled congregational meetings on March 26. We are also getting estimates on a long list of building maintenance and upgrade projects to be prioritized and approved at that meeting. Finally, we will seek congregational approval to spend up to \$5,000 for legal help to re-plat the Parsonage and SW backyard lot for possible sale. Our team will continue to meet regularly, if not weekly, to conduct business. Our meetings will be announced in the Sunday Bulletin and through congregational emails. We will continue to provide the opportunity to participate in our meetings through Zoom. We welcome everyone’s participation and input. If you have any questions or input about our efforts to empower Salem’s future, please don’t hesitate to contact one of our members.

Roger Neumann, Chuck Wright

Missions Report

During the month of March Salem will hold a food drive open to the community from 10-1pm. In the narthex, there will be a donation box to collect food items from March 1-19th. Please be sure food items are non-perishable and are not opened or expired.

Second mission is One Great Hour of Sharing, a UCC 5 for 5 organization.

Update from the stamp alliance, so far this year they have raised \$35,000.00 to support Christian materials for poverty areas in Haitian America and some in the US. They did have damage from the hurricane Ian and lost some volunteers but now have new quarters and are going strong.

I also found out that they collect old postcards from the early 1900s. The cards that qualify are those that only needed a 1 cent stamp. Each could be new or those sent in the mail.

June Seppa

Zoom Fellowship

Spring is in the air! (Hopefully!) Join our monthly Zoom Fellowship on the first full day of Spring, Tuesday, March 21, 7 pm. Let’s emerge from hibernation, celebrate our stories of new creation, share gardening tips, and get our juices flowing for a time of checking in, working out, and good conversation. Zoom meeting details will go out the week before our gathering. Questions or input? Contact Norma and Beth Hansen, or Chuck Wright.

Pi Day Potluck



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Pi Day!

Salem is having a celebration of
National Pie day.
Sunday March 12th 11:00am
We are celebrating Pi day by having
a **pot luck** with the bonus of being

able to buy a slice of pie 
or the whole pie.


Please bring a pot luck dish to
share
and bake a pie to sell

Upcoming Events

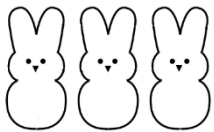
- The Executive Committee of the Metropolitan Denver Association (MDA) of the United Church of Christ has set a **Special Meeting of the Association for Sunday, March 12th at 2 p.m.** on Zoom. [Click here to register.](#)
- Chappell Kingsland and Wild Beautiful Orchestra presents *Into the Spotlight: Composers of Color*. This is a deep dive into the music of three composers:
Silvestre Revueltas (Mexican),
Tania León (Cuban)
Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji (Parsi/English).



If you've never heard of them, you're not alone, and we aim to change that! Maybe you would like to know what the music sounds like? [Here is a Spotify playlist](#) with five of the nine pieces. The other four pieces are either unrecorded or hard to find, so we will be producing our own recordings for BIS Records and streaming services!

As part of celebrating the music from many cultures, the WBO performers and this will be a valuable opportunity to introduce audiences to these composers of color. We'll have four incredible guest vocalists for this program, several instrumental quintets, and a 14-piece chamber orchestra. Sorabji's pieces are mysterious and lovely, León's works are colorful and intense, and Revueltas is a lot of FUN - imagine cartoon soundtracks elevated to the level of art music. [Here is the link to get tickets.](#) March 11th at 7:30pm Central Presbyterian Church, located at 1660 Sherman St Denver, CO 80203.

- **Salem's Easter Egg Hunt is Coming!**



The Easter Egg Hunt is right around the corner, Saturday, April 8th in fact! What I love about the hunt is that this community steps up in so many ways! I have checked the eggs and they are already matched up, Woohoo! So how can you help? Please bring in small candy. If I am not around, please leave it in Lisa's office. We are asking for bite size candy bars, Tootsie Rolls, bubble gum, etc. You can bring hard boiled, decorated eggs. Come early and help hide eggs at 9am the morning of the hunt. Invite your neighbors and friends, the more the merrier. If you have any questions, please reach out to me, kristenmarieneumann@gmail.com or 303-229-9983.

Ages 2 years old through 5th grade!!

April 8th, 10am Rain or Shine

Salem UCC, 5300 E. Florida Ave. 303-759-4649

March Calendar Highlights

Bible Study - Participate on Zoom at 10:00 am on Tuesday.

Worship - Sundays, 9:30 am. Join us in person or online!

Food Drive – Please donate items in the Narthex from March 1 -19th.

Discernment Session – March 5th at 11:00 am.

Zoom CE Worship – March 14th at 7:00 pm.

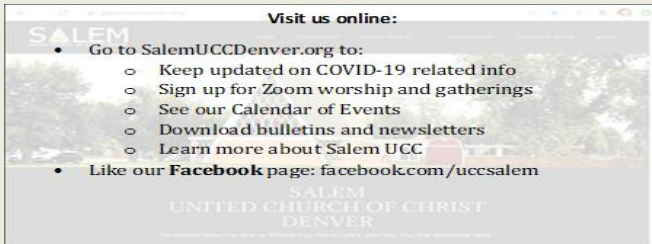
Zoom Fellowship – March 21st at 7:00 pm.

April Newsletter – Mar. 27th will be the deadline to submit your articles.

Salem United Church of Christ

5300 East Florida Avenue
Denver, CO 80222
Phone: (303) 759-4649

Email: Salemuccdenver@gmail.com
Website: SalemUCCDenver.org



Church Staff:

adassistant.salemuccdenver@gmail.com

Designated Interim Pastor- Dustin Adkins

Discernment Minister - Joanne Buchanan

Administrative Assistant - Lisa Thomas

Financial Assistant - Ani Martinez

Music Director - Isabella Ashton



March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5 Worship 9:30 Disernment Sesson 11 Christ the King 3-7 pm	6 Boy Scouts 7 pm	7 Zoom Bible Study 10 Cub Scouts 7:00 pm	8 Romeos 9:30 am Finance and Property 10:30 Community Meal 6 pm Lenten Discussion 7pm	9 Chappell Rehearsal - 5 pm	10	11 UCC Food Drive 10-2 pm
12 Worship 9:30 Pi Day Potluck Christ the King 3-7 pm	13 Boy Scouts 7 pm	14 Zoom Bible Study Zoom CE Worship 7 pm Cub Scouts 7:00 pm	15 Community Meal 6 pm Lenten Discussion 7pm	16	17	18
19 Worship 9:30	20 Boy Scouts 7 pm	21 Zoom Fellowship 7 pm Cub Scouts 7:00 pm	22 Romeos 9:30 am Building and Grounds 10:30 Community Meal 6 pm Lenten Discussion 7pm	23 Coin Club 7 pm	24	25
26 Worship 9:30 Annual Meeting 10:30 Christ the King 3-7 pm	27 Boy Scouts 7 pm	28	29 Community Meal 6 pm Lenten Discussion 7pm	30	31	