

January 2024

From the Pastors Desk



A friend posted this on social media this week: “I was going to give up all my bad habits for the New Year, but then I remembered, No one likes a quitter!” I don’t know how many bad habits I have – there are several I can name and probably a few I haven’t even recognized yet – but I’m guessing that most of them will still be here this time next year, too. Experts say that it’s easier to create a new habit than to try and eliminate an old one. If we’re lucky, in time the new, better habit can



take the place of the old one. In my sermon last Sunday, I talked about how we don’t have to go drastic to make a difference.

I can tell you some completely unreasonable goals for this year: I’d love to go to the gym every day, lose 50 pounds, read a book a week, and more. Honestly, I’d be happy (and realistic) if I walked a mile or two several times a week, ate better, lost 20 pounds, etc.

Little things make a big difference down the road. Like the butterfly effect I talked about in my sermon, little differences do add up. We humans are creatures of habit, and habits are tough to change. Many days, getting through the day is enough without trying to summon the energy to change the world! The trick is to do something small and achievable. One thing I’m doing differently this year is goal setting, to help keep me on track. Small, achievable, incremental. I hope that for 2024, you’ll change something for the better. Create a new habit that benefits you and – in turn – those around you. We won’t change ourselves or the church or the world overnight. Step out of your comfort zone: Reconnect with a friend. Have a salad. Volunteer. Believe things can be better - because they can.

With Love, Pastor Dustin



Worship/CE

With the help of so many people, our team feels that our congregation has completed a very meaningful and successful Advent and Christmas season of worship and activities. The Hanging of the Greens, Gerald Johnson's Christmas Concert, the "Blue Sunday" Service of Hope and Healing, the contemporary carols and Pam and Roger Neumann's presentation of, "Hark the Harold Angels," on Joy Sunday, and the morning and evening Christmas Eve services of scripture, carols, and Holy Communion all proclaimed the power and the glory of the Christ Child, God with us.

In December we hosted the monthly Zoom Fellowship at which we received lots of great ideas for celebrating Salem's 140th anniversary throughout 2024. Please join in worship on January 7th, as we kick off the year with a sharing of plans, dates, and events for our anniversary year. Worship in January will also include a service recognizing and reflecting on the work of racial justice and healing on January 14th, and a Salem Covenant Service on January 28th, before our Annual Congregational meeting. We invite your participation in our worship as we seek to be the Body of Christ in the times in which we live, and in our community.

Throughout December our Tech Team, Lisa, Chuck, Mike, and Dustin, struggled mightily with the sound system and the sound on Zoom. We believe we have struggled and prevailed! However, experience has taught us that nothing lasts forever in the world of tech. We encourage everyone to contact us if you are aware of any problems with our tech in the Sanctuary or with the sound on Zoom. As always, we welcome questions and input concerning our ministry in worship and Christian Education. Please feel free to contact any of us. We look forward to the New Year of ministry!

Chuck Wright; Beth Hansen, Norma Hansen, and Pastor Dustin Adkins

Leadership

The team – consisting of Deborah Barnard, Polly Fumagalli, Su Wright, and Dustin Adkins – met Dec. 14th and 28th, 2023. Items discussed at the December meetings included:

- Reports for the Annual Meeting that need to be submitted by various members.
- Agenda and packet information for the Annual Meeting.
- The deadline for annual meeting reports - Jan. 14th, 2024.
- Update on nominating committee's progress.
- Update on sound system issues.

The Administrative Team is scheduled to meet via Zoom at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 11th and 25th, 2024. The Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 28th, 2024, after the Church Service in person in the Sanctuary and on Zoom.

submitted by Su Wright

Stewardship

As our 2023 Stewardship Drive draws to a close, our church has received 11 financial commitments totaling \$19,988. Currently the 2024 Operating Budget deficit looks to be around \$24,000. We invite anyone who has not yet returned a Financial Pledge card to prayerfully consider your ability to support Salem in this way and do so by the Annual Meeting on January 28. Pledge cards are available at church or by contacting the church office. Completed cards may be returned to the offering plate on any Sunday, or to the Church Office.

We thank everyone for their support of our church in so many ways. Together we will “do even greater things”!

Beth Hansen and Chuck Wright



Missions

The Pastor’s Discretionary fund will be the mission this month. Funds raised will allow Pastor Dustin to have the ability to financially help those that come to our door seeking assistance. Once Pastor Dustin and I have met – we will finalize the missions for 2024 and the list should be in the February newsletter.

Missions - June Seppa

Finance and Property

Our team’s primary focus in December was developing a 2024 Preliminary Operating Budget by obtaining accurate, up to date income and expense projections to share with the congregation, formatting financial reports in a transparent, understandable format, and seeking congregational input and ideas for the 2024 budget. Our team will next meet on Wednesday, January 10, 10:30am, at Salem and on Zoom to finalize a 2023 Financial Report and a Proposed 2024 Operating Budget that we will present for a vote at the Annual Congregational meeting on Sunday, January 28. If anyone has further questions or input on the Operating budget, you are encouraged to attend this meeting or contact one of our team members. Other no less important projects that occupied our time were:

- normalizing accounting procedures with Ellis Accounting.
- having our first meeting with the City of Denver about getting a Zone Lot Amendment for the Parsonage and Southwest backyard lots. It was very successful, and the process is moving forward.
- completing a new two-year lease with Christ the King Anglican Church
- preparing the annual update of the Sunflower Childcare lease.
- preparing a new, short-term lease for the Parsonage tenants to be signed in March.
- having the church furnaces checked and serviced.

2023 has been a challenging and exciting year for our team. We look forward to another like it in 2024! (Well, maybe more exciting, less challenging!) We hope everyone will plan on attending the annual Meeting on January 28th.

*Finance and Property Team: Roger Neumann, Treasurer,
Chuck Wright, Polly Fumagalli, Administrative team liaison; Pastor Dustin Adkins.*

Conversational Coffee

The Romeos Men’s Coffee Club has seen the light! At the beginning of this new year, we will be changing our name to Conversational Coffee, and inviting everyone and anyone to join us every other Wednesday morning, 9 am. During the winter months we meet at the church and share “goodie” bringing duty. Our time together is spent in informal conversation on a wide variety of topics. Occasionally we solve one of our world’s problems! Please feel free to join our gab fests in January!

Salem Zoom Fellowship

Our monthly Zoom Fellowship will meet on Tuesday, January 16th, at 7pm. We will gather for a time of individual checking-in and fellowship. Our discussion is informal and wide ranging. Since we are meeting on the “National Day of Racial Healing,” one suggested question might be: “How can our church be relevant in efforts toward anti-racism and racial healing in our country?” Zoom meeting information will be emailed to everyone on the Monday before our meeting. Our meeting contact is Chuck Wright.

Chuck Wright; Pastor Dustin Adkins

January Calendar Highlights

Bible Study	Every Tuesday on Zoom at 10:00 am.
Worship C/E Zoom	Jan. 9 th at 7:00 pm.
Community Meal	Every Wednesday at 6 pm.
Conversational Coffee Club	Jan. 10 th and 24 th at 9 am.
Property and Finance	Jan. 10 th and 24 th at 10:30 am - Hybrid.
Annual Reports	Jan 14 th
Zoom Fellowship	Jan. 16 th at 7 pm.
February Newsletter	Jan. 26 th for articles to be published.
Annual Meeting	Jan 28 th