

# 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

**January 2021**

## **A Word From Pastor Russ**

Each year in the end of December, news shows and websites love to have “year in review” specials. I usually am neutral about them, taking them in on occasion. When they popped up again for 2020, my reaction this year was totally different.

“No. Just no.” I figured I’d already lived through 2020 once, and once was enough. To everything there is a season, and this was not a season to look back. The only thing I want to celebrate about 2020 is that I survived it.

This was a tough year. Now it’s time to look forward. Time to appreciate what we bring with us from 2020 into 2021. Time to look into the future with anticipation and joy.

But then I had to write my annual report for Salem, and I was forced to look back. So I did. And wow... Just wow.

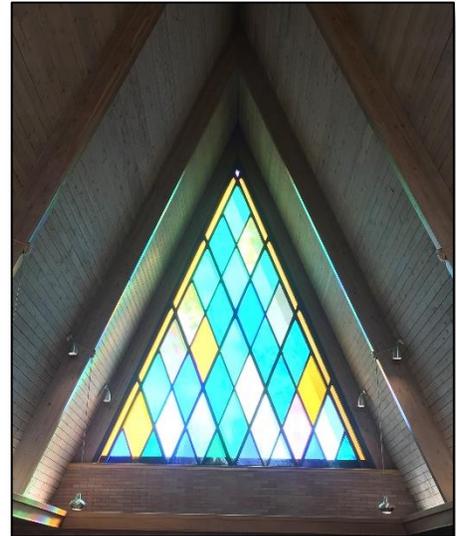
We entered 2020 with a new pastor and plan pretty much like previous years. Everything was humming along until COVID-19 brought those plans to a screeching halt. So we adapted. Church members bought us the laptop to go on Zoom, and without missing a Sunday—*not a single Sunday!*—we continued worshipping.

We fired up Tuesday Bible Study online, then the Wednesday Community Social in place of our Community Meal. Then Council met online, and committees started to meet again, too. We began to see friends and members in worship we hadn’t seen in a long time, or ever. We started doing new and different things, like a dedicated taskforce for addressing COVID-19 challenges, a midweek worship outside on the lawn and sending monthly care cards.

As a church, Salem has adapted and overcome. We’ve risen to challenges with courage and grace, challenges that have wounded and even crippled other churches. It’s not been easy, but we’ve sailed the tempest-swept seas of 2020 and not only survived, but thrived.

It’s because of you. It’s the people of Salem who have stepped up to help us to succeed. *THANK YOU.* We may not want to look back on the headlines of 2020, but we can always look back on Salem’s journey in 2020 with joy, with pride and with gratitude. I’ll bet that because of 2020, 2021 could be our best year yet. May it be so!

Pastor Russ

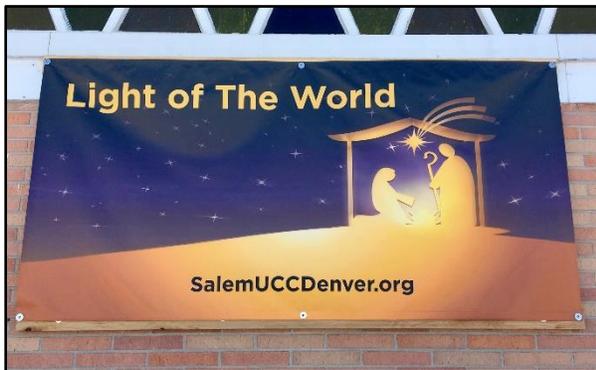


### Moderator Moments

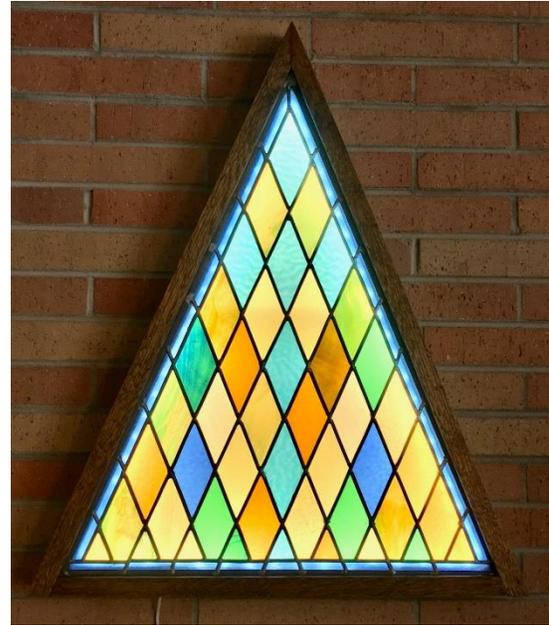
Happy New Year as we begin the month of January! With the vital emergency usage approvals and distribution of the first vaccines against Covid-19, we find real hope in ending this pandemic. This will take some time and we must be patient and continue to follow safety guidelines to protect others and ourselves. Just imagine how great it will be to worship, fellowship and be together again in person! It has been truly my honor to serve as Salem's Moderator for the past three years. I have learned so much and thank you for your prayers, ideas, suggestions and understanding as we have navigated into such uncharted waters. Rev. Russ, our new leadership team and each of us will move forward along a new path with the love of Christ, the strength of God and the light of the Holy Spirit! God bless,  
*Polly Fumagalli, Moderator*

### Thank you to Chappell Kingsland:

Chappell Kingsland, Salem's Music Director, performed a wonderful holiday piano concert on December 16, with the technical assistance of Rev. Russ and Craig Wilderman. We greatly appreciate and thank Chappell for bringing much joy into our souls by way of his special music for not only that night, but also every week! In case you missed the concert or would like to see it again, you may do so by viewing it on Salem's Facebook page ([facebook.com/salemucc](https://www.facebook.com/salemucc)) under the Posts heading.



Check out our 2020 Christmas banner, thanks to Deb Mayhew's hard work. We hung it outside on the sanctuary to brighten our neighborhood during Advent and Christmas.



One recent Saturday, Pastor Russ was waiting for an internet repair person and had some time on his hands. So he updated the lighted stained glass window in our narthex. It sports brighter LED lighting, and a diffuser that makes the light more even across the whole window. Beautiful!

### Salem Annual Meeting January 24

Salem UCC will hold its Annual Meeting event via Zoom on Sunday, January 24, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. following our worship service. The meeting will be recorded so that a full record of the meeting will be available in the future. Discussion and votes will be taken via Zoom. Because Salem's Covid-19 pandemic task force believes it is not safe for persons to meet in person because of federal, state and local guidelines, a second meeting will be held at a time when we can all be together. This will be done because there could be legal questions as to the validity of a meeting held virtually. Despite that, Salem needs to be able to move forward into the new year with our budget, new ministry council and committee members, officials, etc. The second meeting will be held to ratify or modify actions taken at the virtual meeting. Please note that the Annual Reports will be ready for distribution on Tuesday, January 12, and will be sent via email or postal mail (according to how newsletters are currently distributed). Please, read the reports and information prior to January 24 and be well prepared for our lively discussion.

## Looking Ahead to 2021 Missions

Salem's 2021 missions will be a bit different. Since the first 5-6 month's Worship service will be held virtually, we will start with the first 5 months of missions.

Jan. - The Gathering Place - this organization has served women of poverty/homelessness for 7-20 years.

Feb. - Women's Bean Project. Hold your own "Souper Bowl Sunday" with their products from the grocery store and give a monetary donation through Salem.

Mar. - Food drive for Archway and Fish food banks as well as the UCC 5 for 5 One Great Hour of Sharing.

April - Pastor's Discretionary Fund in anticipation of our reopening in June!

May - 5 for 5 Strength the Church and Clothing collection for the new Archway Clothing Store.

June - Dec. missions will be determined by the Status of the virus and our ability to gather for Worship together. If you have ideas for the remaining missions please let June Seppa know!

## Stay the Course

### Vision, the 2021 Stewardship Campaign

by Chris Johnson

#### Salem Family - You did It!!

At the end of the Campaign, at the end of November we hadn't reached our Goal of \$50,000 in pledges but you came through and reached that goal. You all made the job of the budget committee, to put forth a balanced budget for 2021, within reach! Thank you, one and all for coming through even during a crazy, unusual, pandemic year!



*Despite the virus, volunteers decorated our building beautifully again this year, inside and out. The decorations were featured in several "walk-in" videos before worship last month, giving everyone a feel of being at home for the holidays!*

## Thank You Salem!

My heartfelt thanks and gratitude to my Salem family for the Christmas gift I received. I have been very blessed in so many ways by this church. I wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year and look forward to seeing all of us together soon!! Debbie Gordy

## January Calendar:

Worship Sundays, 9:30 am on Zoom

Bible Study Tuesdays, 10 am on Zoom

Virtual Community Social, Wednesdays at 6 pm on Zoom

Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm: Council Meeting

Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>: Newsletter Articles Due

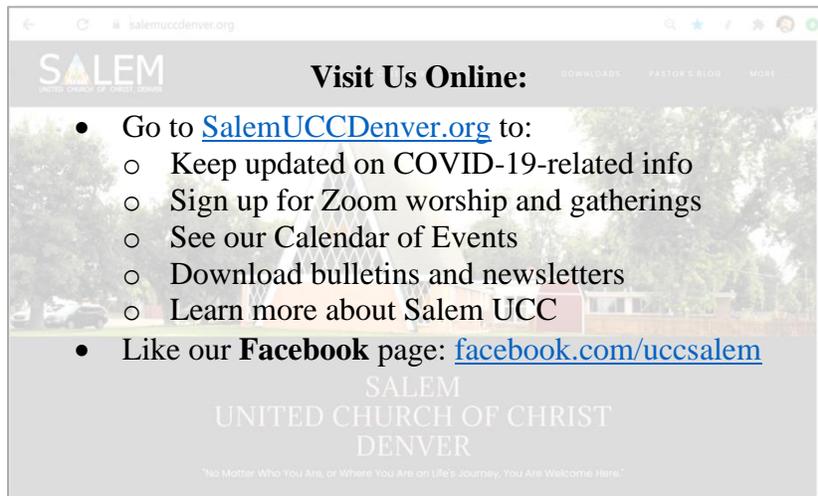
Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 am: Annual Meeting on Zoom



January 18 ▸ Addyson Neumann

January 20 ▸ June Seppa

January 31 ▸ Ruth Thoning



SALEM  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST DENVER

**Visit Us Online:** DOWNLOADS PASTOR'S BLOG MORE

- Go to [SalemUCCDenver.org](http://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/uccsaalem](https://facebook.com/uccsaalem)

SALEM  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
DENVER

"No Matter Who You Are, or Where You Are on Life's Journey, You Are Welcome Here."

**Salem United Church of Christ**

5300 East Florida Avenue

Denver, CO 80222

Phone: (303) 759-4649

Pastor: Rev. Russ Kirby, M.Div.

Phone: 303.759.4649

Email: [SalemUnitedChurch@yahoo.com](mailto:SalemUnitedChurch@yahoo.com)

Website: [SalemUCCDenver.org](http://SalemUCCDenver.org)

Music Director: Chappell Kingsland

Administrative Assistant: Debbie Gordy