



THE SALEM TIDINGS

OCTOBER 2020

No matter who you are, or where you are in life's journey, you are welcome here!

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Pastor: Rev. Russ Kirby

Administrative Assistant: Debbie Gordy

A Word from Pastor Russ

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

Jeremiah 29:11, NRSV

Down through the centuries, this scripture has reminded people in difficult times that God's got us, and that God will see us through. When I am in a difficult place, feel stuck, or am unsure where to go next, I reflect on Jeremiah 29:11.

In the moments after the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, a photographer captured a picture of the destroyed building with smoke rising above, and lots of people—in a time filled with despair and anguish—saw an image, a vision, of an angel in the smoke above the blown-out Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. For them, that photographer captured a vision of hope in a difficult time.

That's the call of the church: to capture a vision in this difficult time. As I shared in a sermon three weeks ago, it's time for Salem to leave our holding pattern where we've been waiting to land when everything is normal again, and to fly into a new vision of church and of ministry, moving forward once again with who we are and what we do in Christ.

In the month of October we will look at vision, what it means for us to discover a new vision for Salem UCC, and how we can move forward, serving God's world in these challenging times. As captured in that picture after the OKC bombing and as captured in the Jeremiah scripture above, vision gives us hope and a future, and for Salem UCC, our hope is Christ and our future is bright.

Here's looking at us,

Pastor Russ Kirby

Worship opportunities abound!

We may still be in a pandemic, but we still can worship Christ in joy and in truth! Sunday Zoom online worship has been extended through November, and you may sign up to join us through our church website, SalemUCCDenver.org.

We are also offering an in-person worship experience on the church lawn, with music, prayer and praise on Wednesday, October 7 at 6 PM. Come for the magic of Chappell's music and the joy of being together once again. Dress for the weather and bring lawn chairs or a blanket.

Moderator MomentsPolly Fumagalli

Happy Fall as we begin the month of October! Thanks to everyone who completed the Re-opening Survey via mail and/or online. Salem's Covid-19 Task Team and Council appreciate your input and comments as we continue to evaluate opening the church safely for our members, friends, renters and community. The good news is that it is time to take steps forward and offer some options for those of us who want to be together. There may be several opportunities for us to worship and gather outside, weather permitting. We will keep you updated by making announcements during our online Zoom worship services, on our website, in newsletters, etc. We are also seeking your creative ideas for how we can re-imagine and re-invent Salem's ministry. What can we do differently to minister to each other, our community, and beyond? How can we make a difference in these challenging times? Please share your ideas with Rev. Russ, any Council member, or me. As I mentioned last month, some sound system upgrades will be necessary for our online worship services and also in conjunction with our future in person worship services. Please be sure to read the "Salem's Technology Proposals" section in this newsletter for this important information. We are appreciative of Salem's technology team and their efforts to continue our online worship services, Bible Study sessions, community socials and meetings.

In addition to social distancing, hand-washing, and wearing masks, Dr. Tony Fauci encourages us to keep our immune systems strong by:

1. Getting enough sleep. For most of us, that means sleeping at least 7-8 hours each night.
2. Maintaining a healthy diet. Be sure to eat well-balanced, nutritious meals and snacks -- including many vegetables.
3. Alleviating stress. Make it a priority to exercise, have healthy relationships, read, meditate, listen to music, relax, etc.

God bless, Polly Fumagalli, Moderator

MISSIONS MOMENTS

We will continue to have our chosen monthly missions for the remainder of the year. This month is Salem's Community Meal. While the church is closed to activities it is the hope that in 2021 we will be able to resume some type of community meal gathering.

Salem sent a check for \$40.00 to Archway. They asked if they could use the money to buy shoes as a number of children did not have shoes to start school.

If you are looking for a very nice, clean, safe thrift store, The Assistance League of Denver at 6265 E. Evans Ave. is the place to go! They have clothing, books, housewares, jewelry etc. They also take donations Monday thru Friday 11:00am-2:00pm.

The Assistance League has numerous philanthropic programs serving students in underserved schools, seniors lunches and activities and hospital equipment loaned to those in need. They also help serve assault victims. Please visit them to find out more ☺

This and That Financial Update Chris Johnson, Treasurer

There are four items I'd like to share with you, Salem Family:

1. Current Operating finances - we seem to be holding our own - barely. Your concerted effort to get your pledges and donations sent to Nate Reiser are much appreciated, so keep them coming. As Rev. Russ says each Sunday "We still have all our regular bills and salaries to cover."
2. US Bank glitch - On September 15th, US Bank closed ALL of our 5 accounts. As I worked to find out what had happened I was told, "It is not your (Salem's) fault. There is nothing that you did or did not do that caused these closures. This is on the Bank. We are liable." And we proceeded to get them reinstated, with the original account numbers, up and running and in time to meet payroll for the month of September. Mr. Alexander Francis, Business Specialist II worked the entire Week of Sept. 20-25 to make this happen and I am very grateful for his time, effort and willingness to solve this problem. Debby Gordy also made numerous phone calls to our vendors, whom we had written checks for, so they would be aware of the situation and hopefully avoid any return check fees. This is the next step to resolving this "glitch" - incurred fees and restitution for time, travel, and stress related to this incident. I'll keep everyone posted!
3. Payroll Protection Program (PPP) Loan. We received this loan in June to cover salaries for Debby Gordy and Chappell Kingsland and a bit of Utilities. This money has been used accordingly and we will be submitting the necessary information to have this loan Forgiven during the month of October. Rev. Russ' salary was not included because he is an independent contractor with Salem and not an official employee.
4. Stewardship Campaign 2020 - **Stay the Course** - November 1 thru the 22, 2020 for 2021 budget year. The Budget committee composed of myself, Chris Johnson, Jim Dean, Nate Reiser and Heather Side, is gearing up to look at our Budget for 2021. This will be a challenge as there is so much that is unknown. What I Do Know is that the "Campaign" will be run very differently, starting with pledge cards. You will be receiving your 3rd qt. giving statement in the mail in October and there will be a pledge card included. You have a couple of options to register your pledge commitment and they are:

A. Return the pledge card filled out with your check you are already sending to Nate Reiser any time before Thanksgiving which is the 26th of November. Nate is the one who takes care of the pledge cards originally so this works out well.

B. You can email Nate Reiser at georareisjr@comcast.net with your pledge amount.

C. You can email me, Chris Johnson, at RJCJ75@aol.com or text me at 303-204-3908 with your pledge amount.

We will be having some **Stay the Course** information each Sunday during the November Zoom worship service so you can be reminded during that month of November!

That's it from me at this time it has been a BUSY September and promises to continue in October! Thank you for all your financial support! Stay Positive, Test Negative!!

LIFELINE SCREENING IS COMING BACK!

Life Line Screening, a leading provider of community-based preventive health screenings, is pleased to offer a preventive health event at Salem United Church of Christ on 11/2/2020. Five screenings will be offered that scan for potential health problems related to: blocked arteries which is a leading cause of stroke; abdominal aortic aneurysms which can lead to a ruptured aorta; hardening of the arteries in the legs which is a strong predictor of heart disease; atrial fibrillation or irregular heart beat which is closely tied to stroke risk; and a bone density screening, for men and women, used to assess the risk of osteoporosis. Register for a Wellness Package which includes 4 vascular tests and osteoporosis screening from \$149 (\$139 with our member discount). All five screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. **There are three ways to register for this event and to receive a \$10 discount off any package priced above \$129, please call toll-free 1-888-653-6441 or visit <http://lifelinescreening.com/communitycircle> or text the word circle to 797979**

Salem Technology Proposals:

There's almost always a silver lining - - - even in 2020, the year of draught, floods, wind, fire, and pandemic! For Salem United Church of Christ, that silver lining may just be that we were pushed into the world of technology-supported worship services and gatherings. When the lockdown was announced, the technology in place at Salem was not able to support basic on-line presentations. Church members joined Pastor Russ to acquire a donated computer and a tremendous amount of borrowed electronic, audio, and camera equipment. That modestly upgraded system - plus a huge amount of effort - had us ready for the first Zoom worship service on Sunday, March 22 – and every Sunday since. We can all be proud of how we came together to create a way to continue gathering for worship!

Our congregation recently completed a survey about preferences on how to move forward with worship services as our community re-opens. A few congregants are ready to start attending in-person worship services, some are interested but concerned, and many are not yet comfortable gathering at the church. Most thought the best path forward would be to offer in-person worship, simultaneously available on Zoom.

Making the services available both in-person and via Zoom offers some great on-going benefits, but does come at a cost. Here are some of the benefits that have been identified:

- Members and friends of Salem have the option, on a week-by-week basis, to choose to join worship in person at Salem, or to join via Zoom from home - or from wherever they may be.
- While this option is particularly important during the pandemic, it will continue to be of value once we arrive at the “new normal.” Church members and friends with ongoing health issues or with more limited mobility can always attend. Likewise, those with small children can more easily attend regularly – whether or not children have the sniffles or are too tired. Families on vacation can enjoy their time away without taking a “forced” vacation from Sunday services.
- Church members who have moved away can join us whenever they wish – whether they are in Greeley, Parker, Nevada, New York, Florida, or Chile. We could even launch an outreach to re-engage those whose geography prohibits regular attendance!
- As Salem looks to the future, offering services that may be joined by anyone looking for a church home has real value. By making services so much more accessible, we are better able to meet our mission, serve our broader community, and spread the good Word.

If we want to offer services on Zoom and in-person, we will need to make some additional upgrades to our technology. The current system, which works wonderfully for Zoom-only worship services, needs to be expanded with additional microphones, cameras, and electronic gear so the in-person experience and on-line experience will be equally enjoyable. There is an itemized list of all needed equipment which can be provided on request. For our purposes now, the following is a general list of needs and costs:

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|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| • Audio equipment (speakers, cables, mixer, microphones, etc.) | \$ 5,500 |
| • Camera equipment and accessories | 1,500 |
| • Enhanced electronic and internet support | 3,000 |
| • Offsetting grant money currently available | (1,000) |

**Total amount needed to be able offer in-person worship,
simultaneously available on Zoom: \$ 9,000**

As reviewed and discussed at the Salem Council meeting on September 17, 2020

Buildings and Grounds Updates

1. Church Council has voted to add a **2 year extension** to the lease for the Parsonage commencing at the end of the original lease which is the end of February 2021.
2. Bldg. and Grnds. met various times and decided on a northern boundary for the demarcation line between the Church lot and the Parsonage lot. This lot line runs straight from Grape to Glencoe and will also give us a 50 ft. wide front for a lot in the back half of the backyard, in case, in the future, the church wants to sell this land. It was decided to do this proposed third lot since the price would be the same as doing just the two lots. If you're interested in seeing where the line is, there is a pin located in the ties behind the dumpster on Grape street. This is the survey pin that runs due west to Glencoe.
3. Russ and I met with a contingent from Oaks Church who are looking for a church to worship in. We would be looking, most likely, of having them in Sunday from around 4 pm – 7:30 pm. As of this writing, we have not heard back from them, but they did seem very interested. Of course, Church Council will have to approve the details before it becomes official.
4. Just an update on the cost of getting the Parsonage ready for renting and the costs that have arisen since. The initial costs to get it ready for moving in were \$5,501.05. Besides replacing the driveway and the landscaping around it to prevent future damage, there was also a problem with the drainage on the south side of the house with all the water running back down into the foundation and damaging the inside of the house; this was hopefully mitigated by installing a drainage system that would transport the water out to Grape Street and away from the house. The dishwasher also was leaking (not surprising considering how long it sat there being unused) and had to be replaced. There have been other minor costs. All of these expenses have added up to over \$15,000. Also, we're looking to have to replace the original electrical circuit breaker box (early 1960's) with a new one that'll pass code, though this will not happen probably till next spring.
5. The Men's bathroom has been updated. Thanks to Roger Neumann and his handyman Joe for getting this many years old project finally completed!
6. Just as a reminder to anyone who comes to the church, there is a trailer and vehicle parked in our parking lot back by the double gate. They have our permission and are paying rent for at least 6 months for these two spaces, so please do not get upset over these vehicles! Thanks Jim Dean for coming up with the contract.
7. FYI: Art Class is meeting 3 times/ week but they are following the guidelines that Salem's COVID task force came up with; the Scouts are meeting outside on Mondays and Tuesdays; all other rental groups are still not meeting due to Denver's and Salem's guidelines.
8. Thanks again to Miro for keeping the lawn and grounds looking so good this year, even though most of us haven't been there to appreciate it!
9. The Scouts had a work day last month and they also helped spruce up the church grounds! Thank you Scouts!

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

ENJOY YOUR SPECIAL DAY!!!!!!

10-12 Kathleen King



PLEASE NOTE.....

Address Updates:

Ruth Thoning (in care center): Brookdale Greenwood Village, 6450 South Boston Street, Greenwood Village CO 80111; 303-224-9455.

Linda Eggleston (is at home now): 1980 S. Dahlia St. Denver, CO 80222

Harriette Mauter (in hospice care): 2225 South Jasmine Street #202-B, Denver CO 80222.

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)

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

Wednesday, October 7, 6 PM Worship on the Lawn—bring something to sit on

Tuesday, October 13th 7 pm: Council Meeting

Visit us Online:

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