

Salem

United Methodist Church

Forecaster

An Invitation to Lent

Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. Joel 2:12

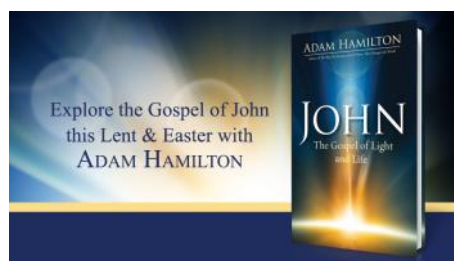
The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence, fasting, and prayer. You are invited, therefore, in the name of the Lord, to observe a holy Lent, by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving; and by reading and meditating on the Word of God. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, we will bow before the Lord, our Maker and Redeemer, and receive the Imposition of Ashes on Ash Wednesday, March 1, at 7 PM.

As we did last year, the whole church will have a single focus in worship and in small groups and classes. This year we will concentrate on *John: The Gospel of Light and Life*. We will experience a season of spiritual growth and life-changing renewal while exploring the major themes of John. The book is available on the Welcome Center. The cost is \$13, though please be sure to take a book even if you can't afford to pay.

In addition to worship each Sunday, everyone is invited and encouraged

to participate in a small group or class. There are sign up sheets on the Welcome Center with groups meeting throughout the week. Our weekly worship along with this time of intentional Christian conversation is vital for our lives as followers of Jesus. In John 20:31 we read, "These things are written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Christ, God's Son, and that believing, you will have life in his name."

Each Wednesday in Lent, beginning March 8, the Westside 6 United Methodist congregations are invited to come and reflect on the theme: *Living Lent as People of the Resurrection*. The Lenten service will start at 12:10 PM and a light lunch will be served afterwards about 12:30 PM. A freewill offering (\$5 suggested) will be received for the meal and to support Matthew 25. Our first gathering will be March 8 and Salem is hosting. The schedule is: March 8 at Salem; March 15 at Asbury; March 22 at St. James; March 29 at St. Mark's; April 5 at Trinity; April 12 at Sharon.



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We Really Don't Eat?



John Louk, Pastor

**And
whenever
you fast...**

Matthew 6:16a

Each year our congregation has been encouraged to fast during Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday (March 1). Jesus teaches us in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6) about giving, praying, and fasting as virtues of the kingdom people. Jesus does not say, "If you fast." Rather he gives directions for "When you fast." Therefore, I invite you to fast with me during Lent.

Fasting is a spiritual discipline; it means abstaining from food *for spiritual purposes*. Fasting and prayer go together. Therefore we devote the time normally used for eating to reading scripture and prayer. Furthermore, the feeling of hunger is a reminder to draw near to God. We remove our dependence from food and instead depend upon God. Doing so often leads to greater intimacy with the Lord and to hearing more clearly what the Lord is saying to us. While there are interesting physical things that happen when we fast, far beyond anything physical is the spiritual. This is a discipline that helps us hear from the Lord and be in the Lord's presence.

When you eliminate food, your spirit becomes uncluttered by the things of this world and more sensitive to the things of God. Fasting stirs a hunger in your spirit that goes deeper than the temporary hunger you experience in your body. When you hunger for God, you will be filled. Fasting makes you more sensitive to the timing and voice of the Holy Spirit.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, advocated fasting on both Wednesday and Friday each week as a regular spiritual discipline. As time passed, however, Wesley fasted mostly on Fridays, which was the Anglican norm, and advocated Friday fasting for Methodists in August 1739 in his journal.

To Wesley, fasting was an important way to express sorrow for sin and penitence for overindulgence in eating and drinking. He believed it allowed more time for prayer and was more meaningful if combined with giving to the poor (see <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/what-does-the-united-methodist-church-say-about-fasting>).

How to fast? Wesley usually began a Friday fast at sundown on Thursday. This was in continuity with Jewish and early Christian tradition, which both marked the beginning of the day at sundown, not midnight. Wesley typically ended his fast at 3 PM on Friday, though some fast until supper on Friday. This would be an excellent way to fast during Lent. It's how I plan to fast this year (see <http://www.methodistprayer.org/wesleyfast/>).

Still, some people are not able to fast from food, such as those who are diabetic or pregnant. Wesley advised caution against extreme fasting and against fasting for those in fragile health. Please do not abstain from food if it is unhealthy for you. Alternatively, rather than fasting *from* food or something else, consider *adding* a spiritual discipline (habit, practice) to your life during this time. For instance, you could read through the Gospel of John with a small group during Lent. Or you could add service each week, such as reading to a child to help Change a Child's Story. If you choose to participate in this spiritual discipline or if you have any questions or need help with how to fast, please let me know. There is more detailed information online about specific ways to fast on my blog at <http://johnlouk.blogspot.com/2011/03/fasting-for-lent.html>.

Grace and peace to you,

John Louk

Worship Series for Lent — *John: The Gospel of Light and Life*

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, March 1. At 7 PM we will receive the Imposition of Ashes and make a right beginning of Lent.

Like Advent, Lent is a season of preparation. The origins of Lent lie in the preparation of the catechumen before baptism on Easter. “At the heart of the Christian faith is our participation in the life, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ as Lord...In remembering the mystery of our redemption in Christ through the seasons of Lent and Easter, we are formed in the pattern of his death and resurrection and his life-giving Spirit” (*The New Handbook of the Christian Year*, p. 105-106). The liturgical color is purple.

Our worship series, *John: The Gospel of Light and Life*, will examine more closely the Gospel of John. We will experience a season of spiritual growth and life-changing renewal while exploring the major themes of John. In John 20:31 we read, “These things are written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Christ, God’s Son, and that believing, you will have life in his name.” Come and worship!

Mar 1 **Ash Wednesday**

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17	Return to the Lord
Psalms 51:1-17	Prayer for Cleansing and Pardon
2 Cor 5:20b-6:10	The Ministry of Reconciliation
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21	Almsgiving, Prayer, Fasting
Imposition of Ashes	

Mar 5 **First Sunday in Lent — *John: The Gospel of Light and Life***

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7	The First Sin
Psalms 32	The Joy of Forgiveness
Romans 5:12-19	Adam and Christ
John 2:1-12	Jesus’ First Sign: The Wedding at Cana
Holy Communion	

Mar 12 **Second Sunday in Lent — *John: The Gospel of Light and Life***

Exodus 17:1-7	Water from the Rock
Psalms 95	A Call to Worship and Obedience
Romans 5:1-11	Results of Justification
John 4:5-42	Jesus and the Woman of Samaria

Mar 19 **Third Sunday in Lent — *John: The Gospel of Light and Life***

Genesis 12:1-4a	The Call of Abram
Psalms 121	Assurance of God’s Protection
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	The Faith of Abraham
John 3:1-17	Nicodemus Visits Jesus
Holy Communion	

Mar 26 **Fourth Sunday in Lent — *John: The Gospel of Light and Life***

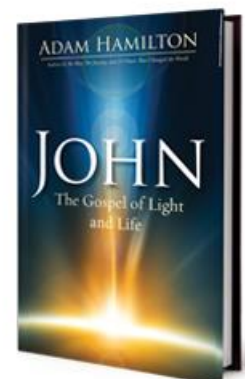
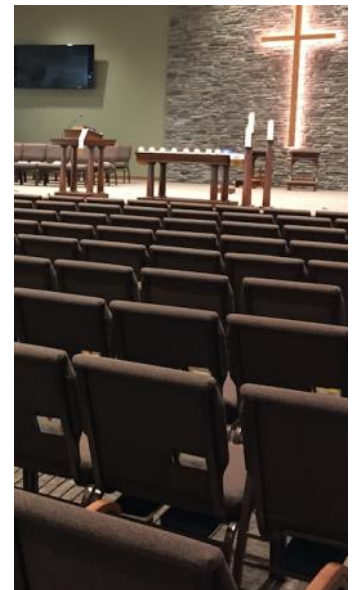
1 Samuel 16:1-13	David Anointed as King
Psalms 23	The Divine Shepherd
Ephesians 5:8-14	Live as Children of Light
John 9:1-41	A Man Born Blind Receives Sight

Come and Worship!

Sundays

9 AM—Contemporary

11 AM—Traditional



March 2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Ash Wednesday 10 AM Wednesday Morning Bible Study 6:15 PM Youth Group 7 PM Ash Wednesday Worship	2 1 PM Mission Team	3	4 8 AM UM Men's Breakfast
5 First Sunday in Lent 9 AM Contemporary Worship 9 AM Lectionary Class 10 AM Fellowship 10:10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Traditional Worship	6 5 PM GriefShare	7 9:30 AM Staff Meeting 9:30 AM Prayer Room 6:30 PM Tuesday Night Bible Study	8 10 AM Wednesday Morning Bible Study 12:10 PM Lenten Luncheon Series (Salem UMC) 5 PM Ministry Teams Leaders Meeting 6 PM Salem Son Walkers Emmaus Reunion Group 6:15 PM Youth Group 8 PM Cantata Rehearsal	9 9:30 AM UMW Sarah Circle 5:55 PM UMW Rachel Circle	10	11
12 Second Sunday in Lent Daylight Saving Time Begins 9 AM Contemporary Worship 9 AM Lectionary Class 10 AM Fellowship 10:10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Traditional Worship 12:30 PM Women's Care Group	13 9 AM Private Meeting 5 PM GriefShare	14 9 AM Private Meeting 6:30 PM Tuesday Night Bible Study	15 9 AM Private Meeting 10 AM Wednesday Morning Bible Study 12 PM Golden Links 12:10 PM Lenten Luncheon Series (Asbury UMC) 7 PM Choir Rehearsal 8 PM Cantata Rehearsal	16	27	18
19 Third Sunday in Lent 9 AM Contemporary Worship 9 AM Lectionary Class 10 AM Fellowship 10:10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Traditional Worship	20 Spring Begins! 4 PM Trustees/Property Owners meeting 5 PM GriefShare <u>January Forecaster articles due to church office</u>	21 9:30 AM Prayer Room 5:15 PM Leadership Board 6:30 PM Tuesday Night Bible Study	22 10 AM Wednesday Morning Bible Study 12:10 PM Lenten Luncheon Series (St. James UMC) 6 PM Salem Son Walkers Emmaus Reunion Group 6:15 PM Youth Group 7 PM Choir Rehearsal 8 PM Cantata Rehearsal	23	24	25
26 Fourth Sunday in Lent 9 AM Contemporary Worship 9 AM Lectionary Class 10 AM Fellowship 10:10 Connecting Point 10:10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Traditional Worship	27 5 PM GriefShare	28 12:30 PM Cards & Fellowship 6:30 PM Tuesday Night Bible Study	29 10 AM Wednesday Morning Bible Study 12:10 PM Lenten Luncheon Series (St. Mark's UMC) 6:15 PM Youth Group 7 PM Choir Rehearsal 8 PM Cantata Rehearsal	30	31	Salem Office hours: Monday—Thursday 9 AM to 4 PM (closed holidays)

March Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays:

- 1 Jane Dusil
- 2 Jarrad Lehman
- 3 Lee Walker
- 3 Michael Perkins
- 7 Louis Alqueseva
- 8 Doris Holst
- 9 Kristy Flack
- 11 Esther Kamara
- 11 Roger Prasil
- 11 Andelyne Berice
- 12 Teresa Thompson
- 14 Andy Andersen
- 14 Judie Hintzman
- 15 Liz Young
- 15 Mara Louk
- 17 Grace Archambeau
- 17 Roberta Kleppe
- 17 Gary Valenta
- 18 Brian Schooley
- 18 Joan Erbe
- 19 Kaitlyn Louk
- 20 Lori Bestick
- 21 Lindsey Black



- 22 Frank Conrad
- 23 Mark Minger
- 24 Jeremy Hague
- 25 Kelly Bergmann
- 27 Zach Lefebure
- 28 Linda Jandik
- 28 Steve Thompson
- 28 Nan Raiford
- 28 Cynthia Johnson
- 31 Momodu Kamara

Anniversaries:

- 5 Larry & Teresa Janda
- 14 Brian & Mandy Brownfield
- 21 Kory & Linsey Thomas
- 22 Wilma & Roy Livermore
- 27 Evelyn & Roger Prasil

GriefShare Support Ministry



GriefShare is a positive, uplifting, caring group in which you can learn to deal with the emotions and

challenges that come when a loved one dies. Anyone who has experienced the death of a family member or friend is invited to attend our GriefShare series. The sessions are held in our Lower Level Room 5 from 5-7 PM.

For additional information, please contact Deb Black, 319-350-8843, or d.black@salemchurchcr.com.

Women's Care Group

Women's Care Group meets monthly to encourage and care for one another, and to extend that care beyond the walls of Salem.

Please plan to join us Sunday, March 12 at 12:30 PM in Fellowship Hall. We will have a potluck meal, fellowship, and uplifting encouragement.



United Methodist Women Nan Livingston, President

Sarah Circle and **Rachel Circle** will have a joint meeting at 5:55 PM on Thursday, March 9 in Fellowship Hall. The program on "Prayer and Self-Denial" will be given by Rachel

Circle, following a sacrificial supper furnished by Sarah Circle.



United Methodist Women Special Recognition

Since 2001 Salem's United Methodist Women has recognized and honored someone in the church by giving a donation to the Missions of UMW and a lapel pin with the UMW insignia on it.

On Feb 12, Sheryl Hansen was honored with this award and recognized for her many years of service to the Kenwood Neighborhood Assn, helping with their annual Chili Supper and summer picnic, serving on the board of Helping Hands Ministries for several years, being a book buddy last spring at Kenwood Elementary School, being instrumental in the Women's Care Group, the Mission Team, and Rachel Circle here at Salem. For several years she organized the distribution of our left over items from the annual garage sale to be taken to the various charities in our community. Congratulations Sheryl for all of your time, dedication, and commitment.

Sharon Busch was also honored that day for serving 8 consecutive years as the president of our UMW unit. A gift to missions of UMW was also given in

her honor. No one in our history here at Salem has served that many consecutive years. Thank you Sharon for your wonderful leadership these past 8 years. You deserve a break.

Sharon also accepted the Certificate of Recognition of our unit as once again qualifying as a 5 Star Unit by our contributions to each of the 5 areas of giving: Pledge to Missions, Special Recognition Pin, Gift to Mission, Gift in Memory and World Thankoffering.

Thank you to the entire unit for your generous contributions and hard work to make all of this possible.

In 2015 United Methodist Women throughout the world gave \$13 million to missions for women, children and youth to 90 National missions in the US, 100 International missions in over 80 countries and 8 Regional missionaries, and active and retired deaconesses and mission era.

Kathy Wickham, UMW Treasurer

World Day of Prayer

March 3 at Buffalo United Methodist Church, 1000 30th Street NE, Cedar Rapids. 9 AM Fellowship time with rolls and coffee. 9:45 AM Program

"Am I Being Unfair to You?" Scripture Matthew 20:1-16, Parable of the Laborers. Program prepared by the women of the Philippines.

March Mission Focus: Heifer International and Coins for Lent



Salem's March Mission focus and Lenten mission emphasis is Heifer International. Coins for Lent calendars will again be available after March 1, Ash Wednesday and will continue through Easter Sunday, April 16.

Since 1944 Heifer International has worked with people of all faiths to provide families around the world with training and inputs that enable them to become self-reliant. These gifts include livestock, fish, trees, seeds, improved cook stoves, efficient irrigation equipment and much more. Through Heifer's traditions of "Passing

on the Gift," these gifts are multiplied countless times over.

Several years ago Salem UMC purchased an "Ark," raising \$5000. That money purchased two of 15 kinds of animals to help families around the world. **Could we do that again in 2017?** Whatever you can give will help bring hope and healing into thousands of communities. Check out the display in Fellowship Hall.

For additional information, visit www.heifer.org or contact Joni Salazar at 319-573-3943 or Joan Erbe at 319-363-7498.



Linn County Food Bank



Donations are needed! Thank you for your continued support of the Linn County Food Bank. In February we delivered 30 pounds of food. Many people also give financially to aid in the purchase of food from local markets or HACAP. Please place your donations in the grocery cart in the Mission Center.

All Golden-Agers Welcome!

****PLEASE NOTE NEW MEETING DAY AND TIME**** Golden Links will meet on Wednesday, March 15 at 12 PM at Pizza Ranch (2450 Westdale Drive SW) Judy Thomas will have the program. All seniors are invited. Please join us!

Call Jeff Cook (393-9180), Judy Thomas (390-6574) or Dick Talbott (247-9919) for information.



United Methodist Men

United Methodist Men's breakfast is Saturday, March 4 at 8 AM in Fellowship Hall. Chuck Martinec will present a program on his hobby. Come and see his creations in wood. Please make your reservations by calling Jeff Cook at 319-393-9180.

We'll also make plans for serving Fellowship Time the next day. All men are invited to be a part of the United Methodist Men.

The United Methodist Men would like to thank everyone who participated in our first Soup Supper on Thursday, February 16. We received many favorable reviews!

Mark Minger



Please mark your calendars for Thursday, June 15 to attend our annual Strawberry Festival with homemade ice cream!

Spring Clean Up Day



Mark your calendars! Salem's Spring Clean Up Day is scheduled for

Saturday, April 1, following the UMM Breakfast. We'll care for our grounds and also do street cleanup. For further information, please contact Kathy Wickham at 319-362-9429.

Can You Help?

A Salem member, who lives in the Hiawatha area, is needing a ride to our 11 AM worship service. If you are willing and able to extend help to a fellow Salem member in this way, please contact Sandy Minger at 319-651-5140.



Report of the Leadership Board

Following the subcommittee meetings at 5:15 PM, the full board met at 5:40 PM. LB Chair Nancy Rawson led the meeting. She opened with prayer and a scripture reading from 1 Timothy 4:12b-15 that reminds us to be an example to all believers in what we teach, in the way we live, in our love, our faith, and our purity. Dalene Bateman shared her answer to the question, "Why Jesus?"

Healthy Congregations, Hopeful Future Leadership Event

– Several LB members who attended the district leadership event on January 29 shared their observations and learnings. Sessions that day covered such topics as telling your faith story, next steps on a discipleship pathway, managing conflict in the church, the ministry of small groups, and tools for developing leaders in the church.

Treasurer's Report – Financially the church is off to a good start for 2017. A draft budget will be presented and discussed in more detail at the March meeting.

LB Notes – Leadership Board members were reminded to make sure information regarding any events/meetings being held at the church are submitted to the church office for placement on the church calendar. The LB should be as transparent as possible in dealing with issues of the church. LB members should be open and willing to talk about what is going on. A few issues, such as personnel matters, will need to be treated with confidentiality. The full LB should be consulted before actions are taken by the subcommittees or by individuals. There should be no surprises regarding the dealings of the church.

Trustees – Another meeting was held on January 30 with neighbors who have lots backing up to the church's property to discuss water run-off issues. There was a consensus that some improvements could be made on our property that might help with this situation. Ron Andreasen moved to approve a proposal for grading, rock work, drainage materials, and seeding. The estimated cost is \$2,240. The motion was seconded and approved on a voice vote. The church is not assuming responsibility and will have the neighbors sign a letter of understanding agreeing to our access to their properties at the time of the repairs. The work will commence in late spring. The neighbors will be advised when the work will take place.

- A planned maintenance agreement from LADCO covering the air conditioning, heating, and air filtration systems at Salem was approved. This agreement would cover two annual (spring and fall) inspections of the systems.
- A free energy audit of our facility by Mid-American Energy is being planned for mid-March.
- A backflow prevention test

Meeting Notes 2-21-17

was performed on February 10. This testing will be conducted on a regular basis.

- Another power outage on February 8 has once again affected speakers in the sanctuary. R&D will review the situation and advise us of what we need to do so this doesn't keep happening.
- A church clean-up day will be held on April 1. Kathy Wickham will organize the event.

Stewardship – Joni Salazar, representing the Mission Team, met with the subcommittee to discuss reporting of mission gifts and the distribution of undesignated mission donations that were received through 2016. The beneficiaries of this undesignated funding include Books without Borders, Justice for our Neighbors, missionaries Jane and Larry Kies, and the Ecumenical Community Center.

SPRC – The custodian position has been offered to church member, Sheilah Perry-Rosales, pending the completion of appropriate paperwork.

- The administrative assistant position is still open. Qualified candidates are encouraged to apply.
- A draft job description for a Director of Communication for Salem is under consideration. If approved, our previous administrative assistant, Julie Lefebure, would continue on staff at the church in this 4-6 hour per week position. The Director of Communication would create, organize, plan and implement effective communication messages and strategies for/with the church and community audiences.
- Annual staff evaluations are underway. It is a two-step process where the staff member completes a self-evaluation and then meets with the pastor and a member of the SPRC.
- A thank-you note from Louis Busch was read. A clock was presented to him on a prior Sunday morning to honor his twenty years of service as Building Superintendent.

Closing – Rev. Louk closed with prayer. The meeting adjourned at 7:22 PM.





March 2017 Forecaster

3715 33rd Avenue SW
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404

319-362-6178

office@salemchurchcr.com

www.salemchurchcr.com

www.facebook.com/salem.cr

RETURN SERVICE

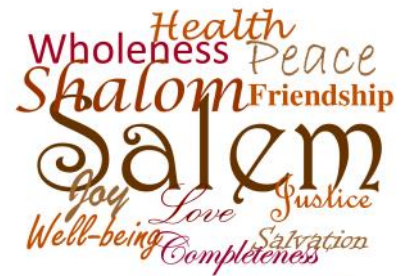
REQUESTED

**Salem's mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
"connecting people, building community, transforming lives through Jesus"**

Salem's Sunday Morning Schedule

9:00 AM	Contemporary Worship	Sanctuary
9:00 AM	Lectionary Class	Lower Level Room 6
10:00 AM	Fellowship Time	Fellowship Hall
10:10 AM	Sunday School	Lower Level
11:00 AM	Traditional Worship	Sanctuary

Nursery for infants through 4-year-olds is available on the Lower Level during worship services and Sunday School.



Salem Office hours: Monday—Thursday 9 AM to 4 PM
(closed standard holidays)