

Salem Covenant Church—making disciples who make a difference.

Salem SCENE

Fall
Issue
Vol. 31
No. 3

September | October | November 2016



Venture
Forward



Kickoff Week

Sunday, September 11
New Worship Schedule Starts

Wednesday, September 14
Ministries for all ages!

See the schedules on the back page.

Making Disciples: *in it for the long haul*

by Pastor Mark Pattie

At Salem's Annual Meeting in July, we celebrated yet another significant year of growth in life and ministry. Examples abound:

- Worship and Music Ministries continue with strength and amidst the joy I experience in all aspects of our worship services, for me personally, one of the greatest gifts is seeing so many children come up front for Children's Messages.
- Adult Sunday School experienced its highest attendance in the past ten years amidst glowing feedback regarding the exceptional level of teaching people are receiving.
- AWANA and Salem's summer children's camps are thriving with attendance four to five times beyond three years ago.
- Family Ministry programs continue to provide tremendous opportunities for parents to connect on Sunday mornings and through the week as we support them in their critical, God-given roles as the key disciple-makers of their children.
- Family Camp at Covenant Pines had its highest attendance in years with many participating for the first time.

Several long range strategic steps were initiated in the past year, as well, to support continued growth and increasing fruitfulness in the years ahead:

- A Spiritual Formation staff team was formed under Pastor Alice Johnson's leadership to enable us to work better together across the wide span of ages at Salem to facilitate multi-generational ministry and ensure that people of all ages, from youngest to oldest, are being encouraged to new life in Christ and to grow and keep growing and serving as his disciples.
- JOURNEYS for adults 50+ was established to encourage those in this growing demographic group to "Connect, Grow, and Go" as Jesus' disciples. See their upcoming plans on page 8.
- We completed our three-year Capital Campaign in May and have almost finished the last remaining projects the campaign made possible. Thank you, thank you, to the many who gave so generously to help us make our facilities better able to support our growing ministries.

**And Jesus came and said to them,
"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the
Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,
and teaching them to obey everything
that I have commanded you.
And remember, I am with you always,
to the end of the age."**

Matthew 28:18-20



The movement of God's Spirit among us is evident in so many ways.

With the transition in Youth Ministry this summer, I had the privilege of helping to lead our Youth Mission Trip to Ecuador in July. It was an amazing time as twenty-seven students and

twelve adults from Salem served at and alongside a Covenant Church and school in Guayaquil, Ecuador and spent time with the church's youth group and the families that hosted us. Our students worked hard as they led chapels and neighborhood outreach programs, shared testimonies and taught English, yet every one of those who went expressed that they received far more encouragement and blessing than they could ever give to those we went to serve. Our students experienced the reality of the Scriptural truth that it is more blessed to give than to receive and came back strengthened in their faith.

As we look ahead through this time of transition in Youth Ministry, we have an exciting fall season planned out and fully staffed. In addition, we have begun a search process for a new Director or Pastor of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. The position will oversee a discipleship process that not only meets youth where they are in their teen years, but is also intentional in following through as they enter into adulthood to encourage and equip them to live as followers of Jesus and as active members of his Church throughout their lives.

This is our heartfelt desire for all whom God is calling us to love and serve in his name whatever their age and season of life. **We are committed to encouraging and equipping people of all ages to grow ever-forward in a life-giving, life-long adventure as Jesus' disciples.** Thank you to the many of you who are praying, serving, giving, supporting, and participating in countless ways to encourage Salem forward on this path of God's call. It is exciting to be a part of what God is doing in and through Salem Covenant Church. I can't wait to see what God has in store as we venture forward.

A Taste of Salem

Sunday, September 18
12:15 p.m. in the Lounge

If you are visiting Salem and would like to learn more about our community, please join us for lunch. Bring your whole family. In a casual gathering around tables, the Pastors will talk a little bit about our vision and values, we've got some information for you, and we'd love to answer any questions you might have about the community. Your RSVP to the Church Office is so helpful in planning for food. We look forward to getting to know you a little better.

Salem 101

Sunday afternoons
September 25, October 2, 9, and 16

Thursday evenings
February 2, 9, 16, and 23, 2017

What does the Covenant Church believe?

Where is the church going?

What is important to Salem?

If you have been at Salem long enough to begin to wonder about these kinds of questions, Salem 101 is the place for you. Join us as we explore Salem's beliefs, the denomination we are part of, our history, and the vision for the future. This is also a chance to get to know other new folks to Salem and get to know the pastors a little better. This class is a prerequisite for membership, but it is a great opportunity for anyone looking to connect more deeply at Salem.

If you have questions about the class and membership, please contact Pastor Jonna (jfantz@salem-covenant.church).



Starting with the spring *Salem Scene*, we will be changing how we distribute the quarterly issues. It will no longer be mailed via Bulk Mail to our entire mailing list. Those on our shut-in list and upon request will receive issues via First-Class Mail. Other ways of obtaining your copy will be: website link, email, and hard copy available for pickup in the Narthex.

We are excited for the opportunity you will have to obtain the *Scene* in a variety of ways and that will allow us to communicate in a more timely and budget-friendly way.

Watch the winter issue and the weekly bulletin for more information to come as we get closer to the spring issue.

Children and Family Ministry

Alice Johnson

Children and Family/Executive Pastor
ajohnson@salem-covenant.church

Katie Gehrz

Children's Director
kgehrz@salem-covenant.church



A Year Complete

submitted by Katie Gehrz

I have felt so blessed and supported in my role as Elementary Director and then my role as Children's Director at Salem over the past year. I cannot believe how quickly the time has flown and that it has only been a year since I was introduced to the process and details of organizing and overseeing the elementary components of AWANA and Sunday School. I can remember conversations about how many AWANA bucks I needed to make in a year, crash courses in how to use the binding machine, and the support of the Salem staff and volunteers.

There have been many highlights of the past year, and I could go on for a long time, but won't. My favorites include creative brainstorming with Hannah, Shelli, and Pastor Alice on the Advent and Lenten resources and watching how visions for Children's Ministry become realities. Another was hearing what the 5th grade student's experience in Sunday School has been and seeing how God is working in their lives. Others included hearing that children from VBS were playing out the different stations in their own homes. And last, but not least, the number one highlight was growing deeper in relationships with the people who serve, attend, and work at our church.

While Salem is transitioning from their summer schedule to the fall schedule, our family will be embarking on an adventure. We will be leaving Minnesota at the end of August for a four-month sabbatical in the Appalachian Mountains. This adventure is an opportunity for my husband Chris to work on a book he is writing, but it also is an opportunity to practice the discipline of Sabbath or rest. I look forward to experiencing God in the beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains and in the quiet, peacefulness of a rural setting. Salem will be in my prayers while we are away, and I ask that you all pray for us as we travel and explore. While I am away, Hannah Jacobson, Shelli Streeper, and Pastor Alice will be overseeing Children and Family Ministry, and the CFM Team will continue to provide vision and support for this ministry at Salem. You will be blessed by their creativity and passion to be disciples who make a difference in their everyday lives. I look forward to returning to the Children and Family Ministry Staff in January, ready to see what God has in store for Salem in 2017.

Fall Schedule

Sunday Activities starting September 11

Nursery Care

for children under age 2 during all services.

Children's Sunday School

for age 2-grade 5

9:45-10:45 a.m.

Preschool and Children's Worship

for age 2-grade 2

during the Contemporary Service

Ages 2-3 meet for the entire hour and age

4-grade 2 will be dismissed from the service.

Wednesday Activities starting September 14

Children's Choirs

for Kindergarten-grade 8

5:45-6:40 p.m.

AWANA Clubs

for age 3-grade 5

6:45-8:00 p.m.



Vacation Bible School Update

We kicked off the summer with *Vacation Bible School—Deep Sea Discovery*. The children were really excited about our mission project of supporting clean water initiatives through the Evangelical Covenant Church. **The children raised over \$1,700 to support clean water initiatives** in Flint, MI and clean water initiatives around the world through Covenant World Relief. During the week of VBS, it was so fun to hear the passion and the ideas the children had for raising money for the missions project. Thank you to everyone who donated to the clean water initiative!

Making Early Transitions Exciting!

In the Early Childhood program at Salem, we have implemented a new way to welcome our littlest Sunday School attendees from the Nursery. On the first Sunday of each quarter, we will be having a special welcome celebration for our new 2-year-olds! These special days will include a special greeting from the classroom teachers as well as Children and Family Ministry Team member Michele Bradley. There will be balloons to celebrate the exciting day and some special activities to welcome the children into the new environment.

It is our goal to create a smooth and clear transition for these 2-year-olds from the Nursery to the classroom. This allows the teachers to plan and prepare for the additional students as well as for the families to prepare their little ones for this new step. We will be celebrating the transition Sunday on the first Sunday of each new Quarter. This means that if your child has turned 2 this summer, we would love to see them in Room 20 for Sunday School on September 11. Children turning 2 between September 12 and December 4 will be welcomed in on December 4, at the beginning of the new quarter!



Nothing is more important to us than the safety and security of your children. That is why we've chosen KidCheck as our

children's check-in solution to bring you the best check-in experience and to allow us to partner with you to keep your children safe.

If you haven't already created your free account, please do so by going to go.kidcheck.com, selecting "Create Your KidCheck Account," and following the on-screen prompts. KidCheck Mobile Check-In app from the App Store or Google Play Store is also available. Once you've created your account, simply use your 10-digit phone number to check-in with us or anywhere you see the KidCheck logo. Creating your account now will speed up the check-in process this fall!



T&T Changes for the Fall

AWANA has just released a new curriculum for the T&T Club, including coordinated large group and small group activities for third through fifth graders. Each week, students will be presented with Bible lessons, life application questions, and discussions in small groups. In addition to the new group curriculum, AWANA has also revised and updated the first handbook in the T&T series. All incoming third graders and new clubbers will receive the new handbook entitled, *Mission: Grace In Action*. We look forward to starting the year with the coordinated large group and small group activities on September 14.

Youth Ministry

Sue Pederson
Youth Ministry Assistant
spederson@salem-covenant.church



Fall Schedule

Middle School Sunday School and Confirmation for Grades 6-8

starting September 11
Sundays, 9:45–10:45 a.m.

Senior High Sunday School for Grades 9-12

starting September 11
Sundays, 9:45–10:45 a.m.

Wednesday Night Bible Study

starting September 14
Middle School—6:45-8:00 p.m.
Senior High—6:30-8:00 p.m.



Wednesday Night Bible Study

We will be working with the Orange Curriculum again this year. It is designed to open up God's Word to students in relevant ways and to connect parents and students in living out God's Word, as individuals and as families. This fall, we will begin with the following series in both Middle School and Senior High:

WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY

What makes you happy? Or, what would make you happy? We all daydream about a trouble-free life made possible by something: a car, a house, a boyfriend/girlfriend, a spring break trip, or just a pile of money. We all have something that could fill in the blank, "I'd be happy if ____." One thing we'll find is that Jesus cares a lot about our happiness. Not only that, we'll discover where we find happiness may be in a different place than we ever thought—having to do less with a what, and more with a Who.

We're Back . . .

A team of 27 youth and 12 leaders from Salem partnered with Amistad (Friendship) Covenant Church in an urban area of Guayaquil in July on a mission trip through Covenant Merge Ministries. Amistad Covenant Church is very vibrant and active, and operates a school for close to 1600 students. Our team hosted the morning chapel services for the students each day, as well as helping with Conversational English classes in their language lab. They also hosted a school-wide "Minnesota Culture" assembly. In the afternoons, they headed to three different neighborhood outreach sites, located in poorer neighborhoods where the church is seeking to establish a presence with Bible studies and community outreach initiatives.

Here are some excerpts from posts on the team's blog as they ministered to and alongside others in Ecuador:

I am excited to work more in classrooms and at the obras where I can connect and attempt to communicate with the kids and feel less like a celebrity and more like their fellow sister in Christ. —Emily Toensing

After two days in Guayaquil, it is safe to say this has already been a life-changing experience. With every smile and conversation that is shared, I find myself in awe at the energy and eagerness of the kids. One of the coolest things has been when the kids will come up to us and say, in English, "Hello" and when we are able to respond to their English...that we understand them...the way their faces light up is unforgettable. —Maddie Beilby

After Chapel on Thursday, our youth group formed a tunnel for all of the children to run through. This has been my favorite moment so far because even though there is a language barrier we were still able to form amazing relationships! This has been an amazing week so far and I can't wait to see what the next 4 days bring! —Jared Kaul

With all the violence in the world at this time, we are so very blessed to be here with people who are so filled with the love of Christ! I am literally overwhelmed with the generosity of the Ecuadorian people! —Janell O'Brien

We went to Salinas Beach with some of the [Amistad Covenant Church] youth group yesterday. We even got ice cream at the end, which I think excited the Ecuadorian youth group just as much as us! —Veronica Flakne

God is truly at work, forming amazing bonds between wonderfully different cultures. I have created a new family here in Ecuador that I will miss so, so much. —Michelle Wang

Welcoming All Salem Sisters

submitted by Kirsten O'Brien

Salem Sisters invites women from all seasons of life to join together in friendship and faith. Through collective prayer, fellowship, and service we experience Christ's love and participate in God's redeeming work in the world.

Throughout the last year, Salem women of all walks of life joined together for three fellowship opportunities that were filled with laughter, sharing, and prayer. As someone who seeks role models and learns a great deal about what it means to walk in Christ from hearing the stories of others, I found these evenings to be invaluable blessings. It was beautiful to see the unique talents, interests, and perspectives of the women we have at Salem, and to celebrate the unifying experience of being beloved daughters of God. The name Salem Sisters speaks both to the reality that we are sisters in Christ, as well as to the hope that we will continue to grow together as women: welcoming, encouraging, serving, and lifting up one another as sisters do.

We are planning four Salem Sisters events this upcoming year. We invite all Salem women to attend. We also encourage women to plan their own events as well! Last year, a number of informal events organically emerged, which is wonderful.

Our kickoff event this fall will be a Soup Supper on Friday, November 11, 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the Lounge with a focus on preparing ourselves for the holiday season and being intentional through this busy time. We will also have events in January and March, and we'll end the year with an Intergenerational Formal Tea on Saturday, April 29.

Why Join a Small Group?

In the midst of busy lives and hectic schedules, it can be hard to carve out time for a weekly or bi-weekly meeting with anyone. Here's a couple of things to think about:

- 1. You will understand the Bible better in a small group.** If you've ever listened to a Bible teacher or preacher and wanted to stop that person and say, "But what about...?" or "I don't understand," then a small group is for you! Preaching is fine for imparting knowledge but not as effective for personal application as a small group. In a small group setting, you can ask questions, participate in a discussion of the text, and hear others share insights and illustrations of the truth you are trying to grasp.
- 2. You will begin to really feel like part of God's family.** Most people who have been a part of a group say the greatest benefit is the close relationships and friendships that develop.
- 3. Prayer will become more meaningful to you.** Many people are hesitant to pray in front of others, especially in a large church. In a small group, you will learn to participate in prayer by having a conversation together with God and other people. You also get the chance to hear about the answers to prayer.
- 4. You will be able to handle stress and pressure better.** Small groups provide excellent support in times of crisis, change, and stress. You'll have a sense of stability and security knowing there are people who really care for you and are committed to standing with you.

Watch for the Small Group Flier in September that will highlight opportunities for you to step into a short-term small group experience and discover what Jesus has for you this fall.

Adult Ministry

Jonna Fantz

Outreach and Community Life Pastor
jfantz@salem-covenant.church

Back by popular demand: Burgers, Brats, & More

**Tuesday, September 20
6:30 p.m.**

Hosted by Men's Ministry

Our topic for the evening will be **Faith Stories**. Some of our brothers will be sharing their testimony of the Lord's work in their lives. In addition, we will be raising our voices in praise to the Lord, led by Norm Blagman.



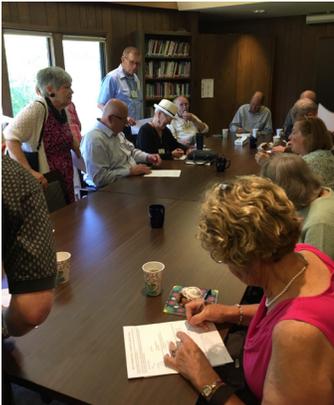
Please plan to attend and especially invite family and friends to hear what God has done to transform lives. Sign up on Sundays at the table in the Narthex.

JOURNEYS for adults 50+

The seeds for JOURNEYS were planted during the church's strategic planning process initiated by the Leadership Team to discern what areas of focus would help the church increase effectiveness in fulfilling its mission.

The steps that have been taken to date on this journey are:

- Selecting a leader
- Sponsoring a Focus group
- Selecting a launch team
- A Retreat with Covenant leaders
- Cinnamon rolls and Surveys



A short survey was administered to the members of the congregation who are 50 years of age or older during June 2016. There were over 211 responses representing this demographic. Questions related to respondent demographics, the importance of various ministries for this age/season of life, and topics that the group is interested in learning more about. The goal is for the JOURNEYS Launch Team to use the results to plan for and develop programs starting in the fall, in addition to connecting with 50+ adults in ministries that already exist.

One of the unintended consequences of our cinnamon roll and survey Sundays was a demonstrated yearning for connection. Our hope based on that experience is that our launch event is full of fun and fellowship.

**JOIN in the JOURNEY for adults 50+
Chili Cook-off and Game Night on Friday October 21 at 7:00 p.m.**

Opportunities have been identified for planning and development.

- Partnering with the Children and Family, and Health Ministry Teams and other ministries for joint sponsorship of events and/or ongoing ministry
- Exploring new programs, events or ministries that promote fellowship, friendship, and learning
- Helping to make connections to Salem ministries that already exist. The need for Bible and faith education was expressed strongly in the surveys. We therefore strongly support the classes being planned by the Adult Sunday School Ministry Team.

Wednesday Bible Study

We will begin with coffee and fellowship at 9:30 a.m., followed by a hymn sing at 9:45 a.m. Gather at 10:00 a.m. for a time of prayer for our community and a deep dive into Scripture this fall.

The Greats of the Faith

Wednesdays, September 14–October 12

Come, explore for five weeks, pillars of Christianity that shape our understanding of what it means to follow Jesus.

Esther: Watching the Shadows

Wednesdays, October 19–November 16

The story of the Jewish people during the reign of Queen Esther is a study of mission and shadow mission. Experience this story in a fresh way, and reflect on your own mission and shadow mission.

No Study:

November 23 Thanksgiving

November 30 Christmas Quiet Service

Sr. Fellowship Ministry

Contact: Edna Harelstad (612-789-3685)

We hope to **CONNECT** with you,
so we can **GROW** and **GO** again this coming fall season.
God bless each of you!

Friday, September 16, 12:00 p.m.
Picnic Style Lunch held in the Fellowship Hall

Entertainment: Synod Senior Band
A freewill offering for the band will be taken.

This is a MUST sign up event.

Friday, October 21, 12:00 p.m.
Potluck Luncheon—Bring your favorite dish to share!

Entertainment: Malsted Family Singers

Friday, November 18, 12:00 p.m.
Famous Soup Lunch
Entertainment: Rene Fuglestad demonstrating the art of pottery
This is a MUST sign up event. Cost: \$8

Watch the weekly bulletin for details and updates.
Sign ups will be at the bulletin board behind the Welcome Center.



The Prayer Ministry Team wants to hear your stories of how *God has Answered Prayer* in your life. Answers to prayer are vital to every one of us. Sharing of miracles, big and small, is an encouragement to our congregation and a testament to God's love for us. Submit your stories to Heather Brumbaugh (hbrumbaugh@saalem-covenant.church) or in writing at the Welcome Center.

I would like to share a story how God powerfully worked in our lives recently. Al and I have had our name on a list for a senior independent apartment at Johanna Shores Presbyterian Homes for about 2 years. We began to pray whether this process should be accelerated. We called our contact person and she explained we could be put on a fast track. However, this could take several years. As she suggested, we put our names on the list for several of their other facilities. We continued to pray for God's will. About a week later, we received a call from our contact person to let us know a new unit in the Brownstone building had become available and we had 24 hours to make our decision. We toured the apartment and liked it very much. We prayed for God's will in making this decision and we felt God leading us to make the move. We put our home up for sale the next day and it sold in 4 days after 4 offers. One month later we are here in our apartment, almost unpacked and settled in. We are so thankful and praising God for his answer to our prayers. Ephesians 3:20 is a verse that God brought to my mind. "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us." —submitted by Diane DeVries

A member of Salem buys coats on clearance each spring for the coat drive we hold each fall. This year, they were unable to get to the store at the time they usually go because of their health. Later, the store called to say they had several \$145 coats available for \$11! By this time, our Salem family member was well enough to go and buy several coats. The coats are kept in several closets throughout their house as a reminder of how God provides.

"You can't make this stuff up..."

submitted by Chuck Scott

Adult Sunday School Attendees have heard that phrase more than once from Walter Sundberg about some of the more intriguing episodes in Church History. Walter is leading off our fall program with a class on *Fundamental Questions for the Christian Believer*; we will delve into questions such as "Who is the Holy Spirit and what are his mysterious powers?"



We have received many requests for a class on Islam. Al Fairbanks will be with us to present the *Islam Today* class that promises to be very interesting and timely given the importance of the Muslim faith in American and Global religious and political affairs. His topics will include origins of Islam, the Quran, Muslims view of Jesus and the Bible, Islamic history, extremism, Sharia Law, and tolerance for other faiths.

Jim Fultz and Ron Krueger will be with us to present thought-provoking topics about how the Bible is translated into the personal languages of people around the world. *Translations of the Bible* are still being made with the goal to ensure the everyone can have a copy in their own written language. They will share with us how Wycliffe endeavors to provide accurate and effective Bible translations, with stories of the challenges that Bible translators must overcome.



Please contact Chuck Scott (651-439-5307 or chuck.scott@comcast.net) if you have any questions about Salem's Adult Sunday School classes.

Missions Updates

Larry Holmberg
Missions Ministry Team Leader



Czech Mission Trip Team

Words cannot express our gratitude for the support our team received from Salem as we traveled to the Czech Republic this year! The generosity and love expressed by Salem and the Czech Brethren Church will always remain with us. Once again this year, we were overwhelmed by the generosity, kindness, and love that we received.

The English Camp took place in the small, rural town of Trhové Sviny, which is located in the south, central part of the Czech Republic. The town sits peacefully in the rolling countryside of South Bohemia. Life is peaceful in Trhové Sviny. The people are earnest, hardworking, generous, and have a strong sense of community. Life moves at a slower pace where the people sincerely engage in conversation and treasure the time spent with others. What a dramatic contrast this is to our culture in the US with our intense pace and complicated relationships.

The Brethren Church that sponsors the English Camp welcomed us, once again, with open arms, providing us with meals, lodging, and sightseeing trips. This year we had 35 students registered for our English classes. These students come from all walks of life and all ages. Each year, we have many returning students and many that wish to return, but cannot due to other circumstances. However, the connections remain and many former students stop by just to visit with the team even if they cannot attend. As a team, we value each and every one of the students and look forward to seeing them every year.

Each morning, for one week, we taught English and Bible. We had three levels of English competency this year—beginning, intermediate and advanced. We taught our classes in English using a thematic approach. Each day every group focused on the same topic and English

2016 Czech Mission Trip



The advanced class at the graduation ceremony on Friday.

lessons were taught within that context. After the English sessions, we switched classrooms for Bible reading and discussion. The focus of our Bible teachings this year were Jesus' parables, which engaged our students in many interesting discussions about the spiritual truths in these stories. Our afternoons were less structured, but included interactive events, like language games, recreational activities, and crafts. Our evenings involved participation in many diverse activities such as a talent show, quiz games and sharing cultural traditions.

Our team has been touched and changed in many ways by our experience in the Czech Republic. We have been blessed with warm friendships, many cultural experiences, and spiritual connections that surpassed our expectations. We have been given a glimpse of God's power within a contrasting culture. The Czech people have had experiences politically, culturally, and historically that we have never had and cannot even imagine, yet Christ is moving there among His people. We have been able to experience, not just imagine, how the Lord works through His people everywhere. This year, the fruits of our efforts were even more evident as more young adults participated in our morning devotions and were more engaged in the Bible teaching. Distance divides us, but our hearts and hands can be joined in a circle of faith bridging two diverse cultures.

We thank you, Salem, for your financial and prayer support. We couldn't do this without you. Your participation in this mission is making a difference in the lives of many in the Czech Republic. We are looking forward to continuing our ministry next year. Our entire team agrees that this mission trip has been life changing and a spiritual experience that has touched our hearts and souls.



My Mission Trip Story

submitted by Grace Hill

This past month overseas in Freetown, Sierra Leone was an absolutely unforgettable, life-changing experience. I was able to go on a Royal Servants mission trip through Reign

Ministries. The bright, vibrant, chaotic culture of the country and the hospitable, warm, welcoming people made the country become a second home to me during the time my team spent there.

We partnered with Sierra Leone Youth For Christ staff and were able to walk alongside them in their ministry to spread God’s Word and love to those in the slums and the many impoverished communities surrounding Freetown. We did a lot of door-to-door ministry, visited boys’ homes, and ran a VBS at an orphanage.

In Sierra Leone, about 80% of the population is Muslim and 10% is Christian. It was challenging to present the Gospel to people there because many of them knew the “Sunday School” answers about Jesus even if they weren’t Christian, so we didn’t have new information to share with them. Others were “both Muslim and Christian.” They wanted to respect their parents’ Muslim beliefs, but knew that Jesus was the right way. We met one man while we were there who was a Muslim, but his mother was a Christian. The man’s father had died when he was six years old and had made him promise to always be a Muslim. After the father died, the mother became a Christian after having visions, but the son remained a Muslim although he knew Jesus is the only way. It was saddening to see him wanting to be a Christian but not yet willing to break his promise to his father.



We spent three days doing VBS at Dream Again Orphanage, run by a local pastor. The first day, we expected to only have the 20 children from the orphanage, but they had invited all the village children to join us, so we had over 100 kids by the end of the VBS! We called it “the VBS that kept growing.” It was amazing to watch the children be excited for Jesus and worship Him!

All of the children in the orphanage were either orphaned during the Ebola crisis or were Ebola survivors themselves. Hearing the stories of those who had survived was eye-opening and shocking. One teen in the orphanage was the only survivor in her family. Her mother was a nurse and when Ebola first started they didn’t know to use proper protection, so she brought it home to her family. Everyone in the family died from Ebola except for Jeraldine, who survived it.



Door-to-door evangelism was a new experience for me. We had a booklet, *Connecting With God*, that we used as a format for what we said. At first, it was uncomfortable to walk around the slums telling people about Jesus, but it grew to be more comfortable, and I was able to talk to the people I encountered without hesitation.

My eyes were opened wide to the lives of those in third world countries, and God worked in and through our team in so many amazing ways! Thank you so much, Salem Covenant Church, for your prayers and support!

Service Updates

Dave Lindenberg
Missions Ministry Team Leader

Thank You!

This year there were 67 Salem walkers compared to 19 last year. With 932 walkers from eleven churches, a total of \$12,919 was raised for the Community Service Center—a faith-based agency providing service and help to needy individuals and families in the New Brighton area.

19th Annual Winter Clothing Collection

Salem will be collecting winter clothing from September 11–October 14

Donate: winter coats (gently used or new), snow suits or pants (gently used or new), gloves, mittens, scarves (gently used or new), hats (new only, please!). Coats for infant and plus-size adults are especially needed. Donations are distributed to individuals and families served by the local Social Concerns Network, serving the Mounds View School District. Donations may be left in the box located by elevator.

Care Ministry

Jim Anderson, Visitation Pastor
janderson@salem-covenant.church

Kathy Welte, Faith Community Nurse
kwelte@salem-covenant.church

Results of Health Needs Assessment and Next Steps

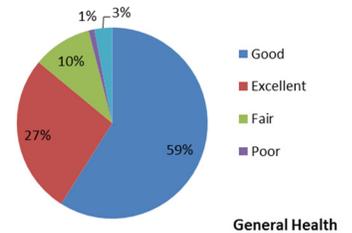
submitted by Kathy Welte, R.N.

Thank you to the more than 170 people who completed the congregational health needs assessment in May. The results are being used for program planning by the new Health Ministry Team. Here are some highlights from the survey.

Health Status

The good news is that 86% of respondents rated their general health as good or excellent. However, over 40% said there were health concerns among family members. Thirty-five percent said they, or a loved one, was living with a chronic diagnosis. There were many specific concerns noted, but the top categories tend to mirror the health concerns of the US population:

- Mental health and depression
- Cardiovascular problems
- Weight management
- Issues related to aging
- Chronic illnesses such as diabetes, arthritis, and/or lupus



Interest in Health Information and Opportunities to Connect with Others

There are a number of sources of health and wellness information available, such as through physician clinics and various disease-focused organizations. People indicated they are also interested in receiving health information through church that would incorporate a spiritual component. More people are interested in receiving information than are interested in opportunities to connect around topics, but the topics are the same. There is clear overlap among the top four items. The interaction between healthy eating, exercise, stress management, and weight loss is profound. The Health Ministry Team will explore opportunities to provide programs in these areas and look at where there are intersections for 2016-2017.

Topic	# responses	Connection Interest
Nutrition/Healthy Eating	73	25
Exercise	65	26
Stress Management	58	15
Weight Loss	44	14
Mental Health	38	6
Grief/Bereavement	25	5
Memory Loss/Dementia	25	4
Being a Caregiver and Taking Care of Self	23	5
Advanced Directives/Living Wills	23	4
Alternative Therapies	21	7
Educating Children on Healthy Relationship Boundaries	20	4

How Would People Like to Receive Information?

- Salem Scene Newsletter (could supplement with additional website information)
- Sunday School Classes
- Pamphlets/Handouts
- One-time session
- Electronic/Online Education

The Team will use different information channels based on the content and likely participants. Stay tuned for new programs and health and wellness opportunities in 2016-2017.

If you have questions, comments or suggestions at any time, please contact Kathy Welte, RN, Faith Community Nurse.

Mark Your Calendar

Flu Shots at Salem

Sunday, October 2,
10:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Most insurance accepted.
Regular and High Dose (≥ age 65)
offered.

Stay tuned for information about a new **GriefShare Series** to be offered this fall

Salem Preschool

Pam Carlson, Director

pam@salemcovpreschool.com

651-633-0158

salemcovpreschool.com



It has been an exciting summer for Salem Preschool.

Our six-week summer program covered everything from bugs to the Olympics. We were outside much of the time enjoying the warm, sometimes sunny, sometimes rainy, summer weather. The children laughed together, learned together, loved each other, celebrated the birthday of our nation, and learned to serve each other and our community. We have watched our garden grow from tiny shoots to healthy, productive plants. So far this summer (June through August 9), the Preschool Garden located in the backyard has contributed 43 pounds of produce to Ralph Reeder Food Shelf! We're proud of our Preschool students who planted the seeds and the Preschool families who have been helping us care for the garden over the summer. There is much more to harvest in the fall when the children are back in school.

Back-to-school time is here and our Preschool is preparing for a new adventure. In addition to our traditional morning classes, we are offering a new afternoon format for our children. Our Tuesday/Thursday afternoon class will be expanded to include a supervised lunch with friends (bag lunch sent from home), followed by an afternoon class that will be enriched with guest specialists in the areas of music, art, movement, science, and more throughout the year. This class will not be a duplicate of the morning classes, but is meant to complement them with more in-depth information, additional time to socialize, and time to work on kindergarten readiness skills. We are excited about all the possibilities for this adventure. If you are interested in knowing more about it, please contact Director Pam Carlson.

Fall encourages us to relish the memories of the lazy days of summer and embrace the challenges of the school/work routine of the fall. The seasons of God's year bring something special with each change. We look forward to what he has in store for the fall and winter months at Preschool!

To see what we are doing on a weekly basis, visit our web site, salemcovpreschool.com, and click on the Facebook icon.

For more information or to register, contact Pam Carlson at pam@salemcovpreschool.com.



Salem Legacy Fund

The Salem Legacy Fund, recommended by the Finance and Stewardship Ministry Teams, was approved for establishment by the Leadership Team in June 2016.

The Legacy Fund provides a special fund for undesignated estate gifts that will support strategic initiatives, special one-time projects, and certain mission work that is typically outside the scope of the general operating budget. In the past, unrestricted estate gifts would typically be recorded to the General Fund; now, future estate gifts that are not restricted for any specific purpose will be recorded to the Legacy Fund. Gifts to the Legacy Fund are intended to be used within a five-year period after the gifts are received.

Management of the Fund will be the responsibility of the Finance and Stewardship Ministry Teams. The Leadership Team will approve all projects to be funded. Expenditures from the Fund will be communicated to the congregation at the Annual Meeting each year. A maximum of 10 percent of the Fund balance could be used to support the on-going general operating budget, if needed, in any given fiscal year.

Establishment of the Legacy Fund, something the Stewardship Team has wished could happen for some time, was made possible by a significant unrestricted estate gift to Salem by Frances R. LeClair, member of Salem who passed away in September 2014 at 95 years of age.

Frances devoted her life to youth as a teacher and counselor in Superior and Columbia Heights schools. She loved her dogs, her friends, her Windsor Green community, and her Lord. A single woman, she lived simply, was generous to causes she supported, and was a careful steward of her income. She joined Salem after searching the area for a home church that would serve her needs as an aging senior. In gratitude for what Salem offered to her, she left a gift in her will that has funded the establishment of the Legacy Fund.

The ministries of Salem are grateful for this gift and for the generous support of our congregation. The Legacy Fund will be a significant factor in allowing Salem to explore creative and thoughtful ways to grow the impact of our ministries. Remembering Salem in your will is a way that members and friends can help the Fund remain strong and continue the impact on the ministries long into the future. Blessings and thanks to Frances R. LeClair for her gift and for the many others who will follow her example. Salem is stronger as a result.

Rummage/Bake Sale October 19 and 20

**Share with God's people who are in need. Romans 12:13
And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for
with such sacrifices God is pleased. Hebrews 13:16**

Good usable items (no large furniture or electronics, please) can be brought to the Gym beginning Sunday, October 16 after 12:30 p.m. and all day Monday through 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday. Bake sale, packaged items, can be brought Tuesday or through 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday.

Proceeds from the sale will go to Manna Market operating out of Fridley Covenant Church. This all-volunteer organization sorts and gives food purchased from Second Harvest and donated by Cub and Target to 150 to 165 families each week. A light supper is also served to the recipients.

Current needs of the market include a storage shed (\$2,000, if built by the volunteers) and a canopy to provide shelter for the food when it is being loaded into the cars. This is our opportunity to not only raise money for such a worthy cause, but to also help needy people who in past years were especially grateful for the items they were able to purchase for a small amount.

Let us prayerfully consider what we can donate in the fall in the form of Rummage sale or Bake sale items or a monetary donation.

Sale Contact: Judy Sonstegard (612-788-9072)
Manna Market Contact: Jane Hasman (763-439-8595)

Arts & Crafts Fair Saturday, November 5 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Every year this event has gotten better and better and our attendance has been tremendous. This event is so unique in so many ways. Where else can you get a jump on your Christmas shopping, grab a bite to eat, and visit with old and new friends? You won't want to miss this year's Arts & Crafts Fair as it is shaping up to be our best event yet. In addition to all the wonderful shopping we will again have the Salem Café and Bake Sale.

Our Salem members and friends have helped make this event a huge success. This event has really helped our Salem Youth Group over these many years, as all space rental, bake sale, and concession profits support their programs.



TRUNK or Treat

Sunday, October 30
5:00-6:00 p.m.

Great costumes, tons of candy, laughing kids, enthusiastic parents, and an array of creative trunks all decorated to delight. Salem's Second Annual Trunk-or-Treat will be the night before Halloween again this year. This amazing outreach to our neighbors brought hundreds of people into a fun and caring connection with the church. Trunk owners and volunteers had a great evening handing out candy and laughing it up with one another. Please set aside the night to come and be a part of this wonderful fall celebration. See you for a night to remember!



There are several ways to participate:

1. Decorate your trunk and hand out candy for the event. We would like to have at least 40 trunks for our neighborhood kids to go trick-or-treating at. If you aren't that creative and don't know what to do for a trunk decoration, contact Pastor Jonna Fantz or Shelli Streeper to get some ideas.
2. Volunteer to be a support person that night. We need people to walk around and pray, to welcome folks into the Narthex and answer questions, to bring candy refills to the trunks, and to help clean up afterward. There's something to do for everyone.
3. Donate candy and prizes. Thousands of prizes will be needed for the night. Bring your donation to church starting at the beginning of October.

FIKA Saturday, December 3, 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Please join us again this year as we celebrate the Christmas season with Coffee, open faced sandwiches, traditional Swedish treats, and traditional Swedish music. All ages are welcome! A freewill offering will be taken.

2:00-4:00 p.m.

Fika served in the Fellowship Hall.

Children's activities

3:00-4:00 & 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Swedish Singers and Salem String Band

New this year:

The Swedish Singers and Salem String Band will each perform twice and Traditional Carolers will perform.





salem

COVENANT CHURCH

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651-633-9615 | salem-covenant.church

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Kicking Off the Fall

Sunday, September 11, 10:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Good seasons start with good beginnings. by Sparky Anderson

What's true for baseball is often true about other parts of our lives. Salem knows how to start the fall off with a good beginning. This year for Fall Kickoff all your favorites will be back from delicious pulled pork, inflatables, corn-on-the-cob, photo booth to some great jazz music. Come to services and stay for a time to reconnect with Salem friends and visitors. Volunteer to help with part of this big day by signing up at the display in the Narthex at church. Invite your neighbors to join you and celebrate an auspicious beginning to a promising season.

Sunday Schedule

beginning September 11

- 8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
- 9:45 a.m. Traditional Worship
- Sunday School (Children/Youth)
- Confirmation
- Sunday School (Adult) *
- Parenting with Spirit Group
- 11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship
- Preschool Worship
- Children's Worship
- Sunday School (Adult) *

* begins September 18

Wednesday Schedule

beginning September 14

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study
- 5:00 p.m. Bells of Glory Rehearsal
- 5:15 p.m. Wednesday Night Dinner
- 5:45 p.m. Joy Singers Rehearsal
- Praise Singers Rehearsal
- 6:00 p.m. God's Children Sing
- 6:30 p.m. Senior High Bible Study
- 6:45 p.m. AWANA Clubs
- Middle School Bible Study
- Adult Bible Study
- 7:00 p.m. Salem Handbell Ensemble Rehearsal
- Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
- 8:10 p.m. Doxology Rehearsal

For more details about the ministries at Salem:

- pick up a ministry brochure from kiosk in the Narthex.
- visit Salem's website at www.salem-covenant.church
- contact the staff listed with each ministry.
- sign up for our email updates by clicking on the link on the website's home page.