



# SALEM

# LIGHT

*You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.* —Matthew 5:14

**"How Secrets Hurt" by Pastor Lori**

**August 2025**

**Scripture: Luke 12:2-3 | Psalm 32:3-5 | James 5:16 | Proverbs 28:13**

### **Introduction: The Hidden Things**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We live in a world where secrecy can feel like survival. Sometimes we hide parts of ourselves out of fear—fear of rejection, shame, exposure, or judgment. But the Word of God is clear: what we hide in darkness, God desires to bring into the light—not to shame us, but to **heal us, forgive us, and set us free.**

*"Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known."*

— Luke 12:2

### **1. Secrets Separate Us—from God and One Another**

Sin always pulls us inward. Think of Adam and Eve in the garden. After they disobeyed God, what did they do? **They hid.** That's what sin does—it isolates us, and isolation is dangerous to the soul.

*"When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long."*

— Psalm 32:3

When we keep secrets—especially those rooted in sin, shame, or past wounds—we build emotional and spiritual walls. Walls that keep others out, and walls that eventually keep us in.

### **2. Secrets Feed Shame, But God Invites Confession**

The longer a secret is hidden, the more shame it collects. But God, in His mercy, offers us a path out: **confession.** Not for punishment, but for **freedom.**

*"Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."*

*"I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' and you forgave the iniquity of my sin."*

— Psalm 32:1, 5

What the world tells us to hide, God invites us to bring into His light.

### **3. Secrets Destroy Trust—Truth Builds It**

In any relationship—especially in the body of Christ—trust is vital. When secrets come to light (and they often do), they wound more deeply than the truth would have in the first place. Secrets betray, but truth builds.

*"An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips."*

— Proverbs 24:26

### **4. Secrets Prevent Healing**

Church, hear this clearly: **God does not bless hidden sin**—but He deeply blesses honesty. Secrets can keep us spiritually sick. But when we confess, healing begins.

*"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed."*

— James 5:16

(continued)



**SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**2529 N. LaVenture Rd., Mount Vernon, WA 98273**

**(360)336-3600**

**[www.slcmv.org](http://www.slcmv.org)**

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### 5. Secrets Don't Stay Hidden Forever

You may think no one knows. You may think you can manage it. But Scripture is clear: all things will one day be laid bare before God.

*"For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil."*

— Ecclesiastes 12:14

God is not trying to trap us—He is trying to **redeem us**. Secrets rot our souls from the inside out. But grace is available now, today.

### 6. Christ Bore Our Shame—So We Don't Have To

At the heart of the gospel is this: **Jesus took our shame**. The very things we hide, He carried. He was stripped, mocked, and exposed on the cross—so we could walk in freedom and not fear.

*"Looking to Jesus... who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame..."*

— Hebrews 12:2

### A Call to the Church

Church, we are not a community of the perfect. We are a people of the **forgiven**. That means we must become a **safe place for truth-telling**. Let us not pretend. Let us not hide. Let us love one another enough to tell the truth, to confess our sins, and to walk together into the light of Christ.

*"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin."*

— 1 John 1:7

### Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Search us and know us.

Reveal anything we are hiding—anything that keeps us from You or one another.

Give us courage to confess, and surround us with grace to be forgiven.

May Your light heal what secrecy has harmed,

and may we walk in freedom and truth, as children of the light.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

## UGANDA UPDATE

Congratulations to Pastor James Akuwa and his wife Jane who welcomed a baby boy this week named Metesasira Grant Akuwa and he will go by Grant. Attached is his picture. He was born with a cleft lip and palate. He will require surgery but do not have the money at this time. The children of VBS have started a small collection to help Baby Grant. If you are interested in finding out how you can support their family, please see Pastor Lori.  
Thank you



### SEWING FOR OTHERS

Sewing for Others (aka Tying Knots) meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 9:15 am. We are putting together and tying LWR quilts. If you have a favorite needle, thimble and scissors — bring them. Otherwise, you can use our equipment. Questions — Linda Dunlap (253)548-6439.



### FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

Friendship Circle this month is “**Tropical Themed**”. Don your Hawaiian shirts, skirts and leis for some summer fun! Also, if you’re interested in helping afterwards, we will have a little work party for stuffing toiletry bags to benefit Welcome Home Skagit. We will meet on **Wednesday August 13th** at noon in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a hot dish, salad or dessert (and don’t feel obligated to make anything—just come and join the fun. We will have plenty of food plus ice cream cones!). If you have any questions, call Dee Archer at 360-982-7359.

### MEN’S BREAKFAST

Join us for great food and fellowship as we meet the first Tuesday of each month at the Curious Chef at 7:30 a.m. All are welcome!



### MEN’S BIBLE STUDY

The men at Salem invite you to a bible study on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 8:00 am. Come join the fun!



**\*Will resume 8 Sept\***

## **LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF SCHOOL KITS**

As students are heading back to school, it is time for us to once again shower them with God's love. One way to do this is to provide school supplies to help them get started. Lutheran World Relief not only accepts all the quilts our lovely ladies create, they also collect student kits for distribution around the world. Backpacks will be provided—all you have to do is collect the items on the list inside each backpack and return to Salem no later than September 7, Rally Sunday. It will cost approximately \$10 to fill each back with the requested items. If you have any questions, please see Laurie Benson or call her at 425-931-1445.





A big **THANK YOU** goes out to Chris Cammock, Dale and Susan Ragan and Bob and Nancy Slind for donating the funds to get the church van “wrapped” (yes-this is a vinyl wrap not paint) with Salem Lutheran’s logo, phone number and colors. **THANK YOU SO MUCH!!**



**ALTAR GUILD SCHEDULE 2024-2025**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Partner 1</b>	<b>Partner 2</b>	<b>Partner 3</b>	<b>Partner 4</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>Deanna</b>	<b>Janice</b>		
<b>October</b>	<b>Kay D.</b>	<b>Ann</b>		
<b>November</b>	<b>Melody</b>	<b>Kay S.</b>		
<b>December</b>	<b>Cheryl</b>	<b>Lynne</b>	<b>Kay D.</b>	<b>Linda C.</b>
<b>January</b>	<b>Deanna</b>	<b>Janice</b>		
<b>February</b>	<b>Kay D.</b>	<b>Ann</b>		
<b>March</b>	<b>Melody</b>	<b>Kay S.</b>	<b>Helga</b>	<b>Linda C.</b>
<b>April</b>	<b>Cheryl</b>	<b>Lynne</b>		
<b>May</b>	<b>Laurie B.</b>	<b>Janice</b>		
<b>June</b>	<b>Kay D.</b>	<b>Ann</b>		
<b>July</b>	<b>Melody</b>	<b>Kay S.</b>		
<b>August</b>	<b>Cheryl</b>	<b>Lynne</b>		<b>**</b>

**\*\*If you're interested in helping with the Altar Guild, please contact Cheryl Felt at: [cherfelt@outlook.com](mailto:cherfelt@outlook.com) or contact the church office at: [office@slcmv.org](mailto:office@slcmv.org) or call (360) 336-3600**

**Worship Assistants – August**

	<b><u>Readers</u></b>	<b><u>Communion Assistants</u></b>
<b>8/03</b>	<b>Linda Castleberry</b>	<b>Shianne Wadewitz, (Hannah Kress), Al Dunlap, Linda Castleberry, (MJ Bender)</b>
<b>8/10</b>	<b>Treva Votipka</b>	<b>Brayden Kress, (Hannah Kress), Mike McManus, Debbie McManus, (Lynn Jacobs)</b>
<b>8/17</b>	<b>Charlotte Grin</b>	<b>Brayden Kress, (Hannah Kress), Melody Kue, Kay Stendal, (Cory Grinaker )</b>
<b>8/24</b>	<b>Debbie McManus</b>	<b>Bayden Kress, (Hannah Kress), Rudy Rudolph, Debbie McManus, (Mike McManus)</b>
<b>8/31</b>	<b>Lynn Jacobs</b>	<b>Brayden Kress, (Hannah Kress), Treva Votipka, Kay Stendal, (Cory Grinaker)</b>

# EVENTS CALENDAR

Aug 3	9:00 am	Adult Bible Study Forum
Aug 4	3:00 pm	Property Committee Mtg-Library
Aug 5	7:30 am	Men's Breakfast Mtg
	1:00-2:00 pm	Women's Bible Study-Zoom&Library
Aug 6	9:15 am	Sewing for Others-Rm 7&8
	5:00 pm	Bible Study/Potluck
Aug 7	10:00 am	Staff Meeting
Aug 10	9:00 am	Adult Bible Study Forum
Aug 12	1:00-2:00 pm	Women's Bible Study-Zoom&Library
Aug 13	12:00 pm	Friendship Circle-Fellowship Hall
	5:00 pm	Bible Study/Potluck-Fellowship Hall
Aug 14	10:00 am	Staff Meeting
	3:00 pm	Friendship House Meal
Aug 17	9:00 am	Adult Bible Study Forum
<b>Aug 19</b>		<b>REPORTS TO COUNCIL DUE</b>
	1:00-2:00 pm	Women's Bible Study-Zoom&Library
Aug 20	9:15 am	Sewing for Others-Rm 7&8
	5:00 pm	Bible Study/Potluck-Fellowship Hall
<b>Aug 21</b>		<b>NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS DUE TO OFFICE</b>
	10:00 am	Staff Meeting
Aug 24	9:00 am	Adult Bible Study Forum
Aug 25	5:30 pm	Council Meeting-Library
Aug 26	10:00-5:00 pm	Bloodworks*
	1:00-2:00 pm	Women's Bible Study-Zoom&Library
Aug 27	8:30-2:30 pm	Bloodworks*
	9:30 am	Finance Team
	5:00 pm	Bible Study/Potluck-Fellowship Hall
Aug 28	9:00-3:00 pm	Bloodworks*
	10:00 am	Staff Meeting
Aug 29	10:00-5:00 pm	Bloodworks*
Aug 31	9:00 am	Adult Bible Study Forum

\* Call Bloodworks for an appt at 800-398-7888

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Happy birthday to all of you who had birthdays in July!!**



7/01 Robert Jewell  
7/04 Lyle Archer  
7/06 CJ Jewell  
7/07 Myrene Moller  
7/07 Treva Votipka  
7/11 Patti Burkland  
7/21 Linda Castleberry  
7/22 Mike McManus

7/22 Elyse Robbins  
7/23 Janice Lanier  
7/24 Donna Johnson  
7/24 Judy Koetje  
7/25 Connor Swanson  
7/27 Susan Hall  
7/29 Jenny Kress  
7/31 Jackson Benson



# ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Top left:**  
New mats for the downstairs entrance.

**Bottom left:**  
The new meeting room

**Top right:**  
The new laundry room. Folding table and fixtures installed.

**Bottom right:**  
Opposite view of the laundry room.



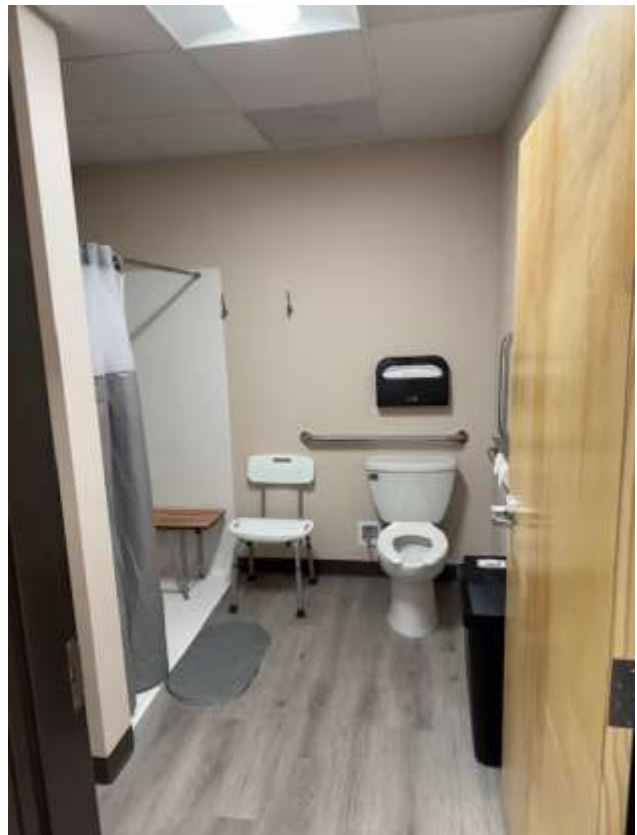
# ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED



**Bottom left:**  
The new utility closet

**Top right:**  
Shower room/restroom completed

**Bottom right:**  
ADA compliant shower room/  
restroom completed



## ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED



A new wooden cross made by Bob Slind was finished and installed in the new Multipurpose room downstairs.





# ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED



**CONGRATULATIONS** to our scholarship recipients!!

Pictured from left to right:

Jason Grinaker, Quinn Swanson, Joel Votipka and Dylan Jacobs

(Not pictured is Aleksei Ruby)

We continue to keep these young adults in our prayers as they pursue their educations.



# ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED



My name is Greg Faubion (Lori Faubion's husband) and am doing a charity bicycle ride on September 6th and 7th called the **Deception Pass Classic**. I'm looking for donations at the link below (or scan the QR code). Also on this link you can read the story on why I'm riding. Thank you in advance for any donations.

Greg Faubion

<https://events.nationalmssociety.org/participant/679751>



## **SAVE THE DATE—SEPTEMBER 6, 2025**

Houses of Many Colors:  
Ten Years of Cultivating Home  
Family Promise of Skagit Valley Fall Gala  
Swinomish Casino & Lodge



Join us for a semi-formal gala celebrating a decade of supporting families facing homelessness in Skagit County.

Enjoy dinner, drinks, games, raffles, a live auction, and inspiring speakers.  
Help us honor our past and build a bold vision for the next ten years!

[www.familypromiseskagit.org](http://www.familypromiseskagit.org)  
360-854-0743

## **SHREDDING EVENT COMING SOON!!**

It'll be held on Friday September 26 at 12:00—2:00pm behind the church. Please no metal objects such as paper clips or staples.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED



Happy Birthday wishes go out to Bette Fitzgerald who will be **100** on 22 August and Rudy Rudolph who will be **95** on 24 August!! Join us for a very special coffee hour and celebration. We wish you both all the best!!!



Ladies of Salem. You are all invited to a baby shower for Amy Benson on Sunday 21 September at 2:00 pm here at Salem in the Fellowship Hall. Questions? Please contact Barb Gurney at 360-941-1030.

# APPRECIATION

Dear Salem Lutheran Church and Scholarship Committee,

Thank you for awarding me the Hamburg Scholarship. This scholarship will help me a lot with paying for school while I play basketball there as well.

From,  
Quinn Swanson

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear SLC,

Thank you so much for the \$2000 Salem scholarship! I'm truly blessed and so thankful. I like the Community!

Love,  
Joel Votipka

\*\*\*\*\*

To the Jurgens Scholarship and the Scholarship Committee at Salem Lutheran Church,

Thank you for selecting me as a recipient of this scholarship for the 2025-2026 academic/school year. I really appreciate this and it will definitely help with tuition for this year at Skagit Valley College.

Sincerely,  
Jason Grinaker

I wanted to take a moment to thank my Salem Lutheran Church family for the opportunity with which you helped bless on my children, Hannah and Brayden. They were granted a scholarship that allowed both children the opportunity to spend a week at sleep-away camp at Camp Lutherwood. They have been waiting a few years to be able to go to a sleep-away camp. Hannah went first from June 29-July 4 and then Brayden had his turn from July 6-11.

Hannah was signed up for a water specialty session which granted her extra opportunities to experience the beautiful Lake Samish. Brayden (unknown to us) was signed up for an outdoor adventure program. This meant camping on the ground in a tent and dining in the great outdoors. He was very nervous about this upon first arrival as we did not realize that this was the specialty focus of his session. After a week at Camp Lutherwood each child met me with laughter, smiles and requests of when could they return.

By sending them to Camp Lutherwood my desire for them was an opportunity to experience God with others. I hoped for them to meet people and have experiences where God would draw them in. I think both kids, if you were to ask, would tell you the best part of camp was the whole group Campfire Circle times. During Campfire Circle everyone came together singing songs and performing skits celebrating our God. Ask them to tell you about raisins. This was the best skit! Hannah performed it with her group at their closing Campfire Circle when family came to collect campers at the end of the week.

Thank you for granting them this opportunity to meet with our God and spend time learning more about his love for them! We appreciate Salem Lutheran Church so much and my kids count many of you as friends or family.

Jenny Kress

# COUNCIL

## SLC Church Council Minutes July 24, 2025. 5:30-8:00 p.m.

**Present:** Amy Benson, Laurie Benson, Greg Grinaker, Debbie McManus, Don Moe, Sue Ney, Susan Ragan, Nancy Raschko, Lynne Rittenhouse, Peter Swanson, Treva Votipka, Pastor Lori Cavender.

**Absent:** Karen Nelson

**Call to Order:** 5:30 pm by President, Amy Benson.

**Prayer** – Pastor Lori opened with prayer.

Approval of June 23rd Meeting Minutes. [Motion to approve as amended: Treva](#)

**Second:** Lynne. **Approved unanimously.**

### **Pastor's Report:** (Pastor Lori)

Confirmation classes are now being scheduled and will begin in the Fall. So far, 3-4 students will attend. Please let Pastor Lori know of others who are interested.

Several families in need have been assisted by the Good Samaritan Fund and a personal donation to help provide emergency food, gas and lodging.

Salem is now a member of the ELCA's Underground Ministries—One Parish/One Prisoner Program.

### **Ministry Teams Activity**

#### **Finance** (*Peter/Susan*) (Reports available)

Giving statements for this quarter have been mailed out.

Peter went over the balance sheet and the comparison of Budget to Actuals. He pointed out that the Offerings Received are down, the Building Use Income is up, Total Income is up and Expenses are under the budgeted amount. Total Staff Expenses are on budget and Total Operating Expenses are down from last year.

Peter reviewed the financials for the Lower-level Project.

#### **Property** (Greg)

Foss has completed the Heat/AC reset in classrooms 1-4, fixing the malfunctioning control panel. Cost – approx. \$220.

The Lower-level Project is 95% complete! Alarm work and installation of fire detection components by Bay Alarm is the only major work left to do. Next a final walkthrough with the contractor and architect and any repairs/changes will be completed. An occupancy permit will be issued after final inspections by the Mount Vernon Building Department and Fire Department.

Welcome Home Skagit will be moved downstairs, and the upstairs rooms will be cleaned/ready for group use this week.

The City of Mount Vernon is again awarding Affordable Housing Tax Grants. Greg will reapply. The Salem Lutheran Church van is getting its New Wrap thanks to Dale Ragan, Chris Cammock, and another donor. Come And See!

#### **Worship & Music** (Lynne)

Worship and Music will meet in August to plan for Fall.

#### **Education** (Treva)

Vacation Bible School will run July 27 – 31 at Salem, with 21 students registered to attend. Participating churches include First Lutheran, Burlington Lutheran, Edison Lutheran, Fir-Conway Lutheran and Salem Lutheran.



# COUNCIL

## **Fellowship** (Sue N)

Thanks to all who have been helping to provide Sunday Coffee Hours. Your efforts are much appreciated.

## **Nurture and Care** (Don)

Family Promise families will be hosted at Salem August 3-10. Help is needed with breakfast supplies, evening meals and overnight hosting. Please see Don to volunteer.

August 23-24 is a garage sale to support Family Promise to be held in Sedro Woolley. Contact Don if you have donations.

The Family Promise Fall Gala fundraiser celebrating 10 years is Sept. 26.

## **Outreach** (Laurie)

The Hot Dog Community Picnic Dinner was appreciated by a small, but festive crowd.

## **Old/New Business**

Peter initiated a conversation about the disconnect between Greg's current job title of "custodian" and the myriad building projects he has accomplished at Salem. **Motion by Peter, "Change Greg Grinaker's job title to Salem Lutheran Church Property Manager." Second: Sue N. Approved unanimously.**

The Lower-level Ribbon Cutting/Open House is scheduled for Sunday Sept 21 from 11:30 – 1:30. Join us for cake, punch and a celebration of our wonderful new space! Raffle Baskets to raise dollars for final costs are coming soon.

## **Announcements & Upcoming:**

Future Meetings:

**Next Council Meeting: August 25**

**Adjournment with the Lord's Prayer at 6:25 pm.**

## **CHURCH COUNCIL VOTING MEMBERS:**

### **2023-2026**

Sue Ney  
Greg Grinaker  
Peter Swanson  
Don Moe

### **2024-2027**

Amy Benson (P)  
Nancy Reschko (S)  
Lynne Rittenhouse  
Debbie McManus

### **2025-2028**

Laurie Benson  
Treva Votipka  
Susan Ragan (T)  
Karen Nelson



## AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

8/01 Deanna Archer  
 8/01 Cheryl Felt  
 8/07 Larry Leander  
 8/12 Pastor Lori  
 8/14 Torey Swanson  
 8/15 Claudine Hategekimana  
 8/21 Darlene Hamburg  
 8/22 Bette Fitzgerald  
 8/24 Rudy Rudolph  
 8/26 Marlene Bruhn

8/01 Cliff Williams & Kay Horton 22yrs  
 8/10 Randy & Marcia Pratt 22yrs  
 8/18 Gene & Pamela Van Selus 52 yrs  
 8/28 Rick & Laurie Benson 43 yrs  
 8/30 Chris & Shaun Cammock 34 yrs



## Year-to-Date Financial Comparison for Salem

	Jan - June ACTUAL	Jan - June ACTUAL	2025 to	BUDGET	Act 2025
	2024	2025	2024	2025	to Bud
TOTAL INCOME	\$158,374	\$170,158	7.4%	\$168,305	1.1%
OPERATING EXPENSE	\$75,949	\$63,168	-16.8%	\$74,958	-15.7%
TOTAL STAFF EXPENSES	\$113,061	\$120,566	6.6%	\$119,131	1.2%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$189,010	\$183,734	-2.8%	\$194,089	-5.3%
RESERVE FOR CHURCH OPERATIONS	-\$30,635	-\$13,576		-\$25,784	

**SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**2529 N. LAVENTURE RD.**  
**MOUNT VERNON, WA 98273**  
**(360)336-3600**

**\*\*For Synod news please visit  
 their website:**

**[www.lutheransnw.org](http://www.lutheransnw.org)**



### **OUR MISSION STATEMENT:**

It is our mission as members of this congregation to share the unconditional love of God in Jesus Christ with all people, and to serve God by serving others.



**Evangelical Lutheran  
 Church in America**  
 God's work. Our hands.

### **CHURCH COUNCIL:**

**Amy Benson**  
 President  
**Treva Votipka**  
 Vice President  
**Susan Ragan,**  
 Treasurer  
**Nancy Raschko,**  
 Secretary  
**Sue Ney**  
**Peter Swanson**  
**Don Moe**  
**Greg Grinaker**  
**Laurie Benson**  
**Lynne Rittenhouse**  
**Debbie McManus**  
**Karen Nelson**

### **Lori Cavender**

Pastor  
 (360)230-8507  
 PrLori@slcmv.org

**Laurie Benson,**  
 Church Administrator  
 (425)931-1445  
 office@slcmv.org

**Cory Grinaker**  
 Office Assistant  
 office@slcmv.org

**Bonnie Thoreson**  
 Music Director

**Greg Grinaker**  
 Property Manager

### **OUR WORSHIP SCHEDULE:**

Worship Sundays, 10 a.m.  
 Dinner Church Wednesday 5 p.m

### **CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:**

9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Thursday

### **WEBSITE:**

[www.slcmv.org](http://www.slcmv.org)

### **"Salem ELCA" App**

(Apple & Google Play Stores)

### **Like us on Facebook**

@Salem Lutheran Church E.L.C.A.

