

December 2025

Salem's



Good Newsletter



Pastor's Corner

Romans 5:1-2

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

I think about this passage often. I think the reason for that is because it states, “**we have peace with God.**” That word *peace* just grabs me when I think about it in relation to this passage. The opposite of peace is war. So, what this is telling us is that, in our natural state, **we are at war with God.** It tells us that because of the fall, because of original sin, through our sin, we came out of the womb looking for a fight—and not just any fight. We picked a fight with the Creator of the universe, the One who hung the stars, the One who creates through His speaking.

We woke up this morning and found ourselves in the church season of **Advent**. Advent is the announcement of the **arrival of Christ**. In Isaiah 2, the prophet tells us that in the latter days, the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established, He shall judge between the nations, and they shall learn war no more. The Father, through His love for us, desires peace—and therefore **creates** it through His spoken Word of promise.

He has sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to **tear down our fortresses of battle**, to **overcome our defenses**, and to **strip us of our weapons**. Christ has come to give us faith and **makes peace with God on our behalf**. He does what we cannot do, what we will not do, and one day Christ will come again and finally take us to Himself for eternity.

Jesus does not take us as prisoners of war, but places His name upon us in **Holy Baptism**, making us sons and daughters—true heirs of the kingdom with Himself.

So, as we enter the season of Advent, remember: **Jesus Christ died on the cross for you.**

Sin, death, hell, and the grave have been defeated.

Christ has come to make you His.

The war is over, because **Christ has ended it.**

God's peace,
Pastor Larry Wright

Below you will find a list of gospel-based resources. Here you will find something for everyone that will provide encouragement throughout the week. There are multiple podcasts, blog articles, and videos, all pointing you to the promise of Christ for you.

- Lutherhouseofstudy.org
- 1517.org
- pastormarkanderson.org
- Mbird.com

Check them out while commuting, working around the house, or if you're looking for something different to scroll through instead of the same old thing.

Church App

Download the
TITHE.LY
Church App

Then, search for
Salem Lutheran Church





Check out our website at
www.salemlutheranponca.org



Find us on Facebook /
Salem Lutheran Church



Communion: will be on Sunday, December 7th, 2025 & Wednesday, December 24th, 2025
(Communion will be on the first and third Sunday's of the month)

“Coffee Hour” Fellowship: will be on Sunday, December 14th, 2025.

(“Coffee Hour” Fellowship is on the second Sunday of the month @ 9:30am during Sunday School. Coffee will be provided, but treats will not. If you wish to provide treats, there will be a sign-up sheet on the welcome desk to do so.)

Sunday School: is every Sunday at 9:00am.

Confirmation: is every Wednesday at 6:00pm.

Bible Study: is every Thursday at 9:30am. All are Welcome!

Gifts & Offerings through November 23rd, 2025

- General: \$20,889.26
YTD: \$141,164.36
2025 Budget: \$187,481.00
- Mission Share/World Hunger: \$3,413.25
(2025 Budgeted Line Item #5780 for \$17,000.00)
Mission Share: \$3,047.50
World Hunger: \$365.75
YTD: \$14,694.48

Total: \$24,302.51

**Please note: these totals are before online giving fees have been assessed and are specific to the only two above noted budgeted line items (General and Mission Share/World Hunger).*

DEADLINE

Our **2025 Offering deadline is Wednesday, January 7th, 2026**,
any funds received after the 7th will be reconciled in 2026.

DEADLINE

Christmas Blessings

December 2025

Thank you to EVERYONE who helped with our Fall Festival!

A special thank you to those who supported Salem's Mission Team's Silent Auction. Because of your generosity the Salem Mission Team raised \$3,500.00, in which \$2,500.00 will go towards the PCEF Student Emergency Fund and \$1,000.00 will go towards the Ponca Food Pantry.

Again THANK YOU to everyone who helps with our Fall Festival! We are truly blessed and so thankful for everyone's generosity!

Also, thank you to the Prodigal Sons & Pastor Larry for the beautiful music during our worship service and to Jennifer Wright for sharing her Faith Statement.



Time & Talent and Ministry Team sign-up sheets



are on the welcome desk. There are lots of spaces to fill, if you are able please sign-up.

If you have any questions, please contact Katie.

Warm your neighbor's hands, feet, and hearts!

Warm your neighbor's hands, feet, head and heart! Help us decorate the tree and fill the box next to it with mittens, gloves, hats, scarves and socks. The items gifted will be brought to the Gospel Mission or Warming Shelter after December 31.



Christmas Eve Worship Service Scripture Readers are needed.

There is a sign-up sheet on the welcome desk or please contact Katie.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service

will be on Wednesday, December 24th, 2025 @ 5:00pm



2026 Offering Envelopes

Are available for you to pick-up on the welcome desk.

If you give on-line and would prefer not to get envelopes or if you have not received envelopes in the past and would like some, please let Katie know.

Confirmation Christmas Caroling

will be on Wednesday, December 17th: Soup & Grilled Cheese @ 6:00pm & from 6:30-7:30pm will be caroling.



Anyone from the congregation is invited & drivers will be needed for the caroling.

Salem Youth Group Christmas Party

On Sunday, December 14th the Youth Group will be doing a service project with Heartland Counseling Services Criss Pantry and having their Christmas Party. The kids will

meet at the church @ 8:30am, travel to Heartland Counseling for their service project. Once they are finished they will come back to the church for lunch and Christmas party. Each kid needs to please bring a wrapped \$10.00 gift for the gift exchange, along with a drink to enjoy during lunch. If you have any questions, please reach out to Barry, Codi or Lisa.



Salem Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes November 12th, 2025

Attendance:

Salem Lutheran Church Council met on Wednesday, November 12th, 2025, at 7:00pm. Those in attendance included: Koni Lamprecht, Katie Uthof, Mark Bauman, Kenton Book, Lindsay Burrell, Dan Schweers, Rick Schweers, and Pastor Larry Wright.

Call to Order/Devotions/Approve last month's meeting minutes:

Co-President Koni called the meeting to order at 7:02pm and Koni led everyone in a devotion.

Mark made a motion to approve last month's meeting minutes with the revision and was seconded by Dan. MCU.

Treasurer's Report:

Saumbra was not in attendance of the meeting, but she provided everyone with a copy of October's financial reports. A motion to approve the financial reports was made by Kenton and seconded by Rick. MCU.

Correspondence:

Katie reported that we received thank you cards from the Camp Luther for our matching funds donation and Willie, Heather, and Alexander Kackmeister for the baptism of Alexander.

Pastor's Report:

Baptisms:

Confirmation:

First Communion:

Funerals:

Membership:

Pastor met with Russell and Mackenzie and Pastor is waiting to hear back from Russell regarding what date works best.

Visits:

Pastor is doing weekly visits to our homebound members.

Weddings:

Misc:

Old Business:

New Lectionary

Katie reported that her and Pastor met on Tuesday to subscribe to Sola Publishing, but their offices were closed for Veterans Day. Katie left a voicemail and sent an email to them and will follow-up accordingly.

2026-2027 Church Council Members

3-year term ending February 2026:

Cortni

Koni

Lindsay

Dan

Continue to discuss options and move to next month's agenda

Contingency Plan

The council person of the month will make a sweep of the narthex, fellowship hall, classrooms, etc... and then lock the east and south door with the keypad.

Fall Festival on Sunday, November 23rd:

Worship Service led by Pastor Larry, music by the Prodigal Sons, and Jennifer will share her faith statement.

Potluck

Potatoes: Cortni

Meat: Koni/Karen turkeys and Mark ham

Dressing: Koni/Karen

Buns: Dan

Decorate for Christmas following

New Business:

Families to light the advent candles/wreath/readings:

Sunday, November 30th, 2025 – Burrell Family

Sunday, December 7th, 2025 – Heinemann Family

Sunday, December 14th, 2025 – Brian and Candice Hansen?

Sunday, December 21st, 2025 – Sunday School

Sunday School Christmas Program will be on Sunday, December 21st, 2025, during our Worship Service

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service on Wednesday, December 24th, 2025 @ 5:00pm. Katie will put out a sign-up sheet for readers at the beginning of December.

There were no Additions to the Agenda.

Ministry Team Reports:

Budget and Finance:

Chairperson: Mark Bauman

Council Liaison: Koni Lamprecht & Cortni Krusemark (Always the Co-Church Council Pres.)

Report: Mark reported that they plan to meet mid-December sometime.

CALL Committee:

(Ministry Site Profile)

Chairperson: Koni Lamprecht

Council Liaison: Koni Lamprecht

Chaplin: Michelle Rinas

Report: N/A – this team is not being utilized currently.

(Constitution Committee):

Cindy Anderson, Todd Anderson, and Michelle Rinas are on this committee

Report: N/A this team is not being utilized currently

Cemetery:

Chairperson: Julie Sydow

Council Liaison: Kevin Dohma

Report: Rick reported that Arnie Mellick was buried at the cemetery

Communication:

Chairperson: Barry Krusemark

Council Liaison: Katie Uthof

Report: Katie reported that Barry set up the new TV in the narthex.

Endowment:

Chairperson: Brian Burrell
Council Liaison: Duane Boyle

Report:

Faith Formation:

Co-Chairperson: Saumbra Hall and Michelle Rinas
Council Liaison: Lindsay Burrell

Report: Lindsay reported that Olivia has agreed to lead the Sunday School Christmas Program this year and they will start practicing soon during Sunday school.

Memorial:

Chairperson: Saumbra Hall
Council Liaison: Dan Schweers

Report:

Mission Support:

Chairperson: *Need to assign
Council Liaison: Lindsay Burrell

Report: Lindsay provided everyone with a proposal from the team – see attached.

Music & Worship:

Co-Chairperson: Bruce Ericksen and Diane Smith
Council Liaison: Koni Lamprecht

Report: Katie reported that they met earlier tonight and their next meeting is scheduled for 12/17/25 @ 4:45pm.

Mutual Ministry:

Chairperson: Rick Schweers
Council Liaison: N/A

Report: N/A – this team is not being utilized currently

Property:

Chairperson: Doug Bauman
Council Liaison: Mark Bauman and Kenton Book

Report: Mark reported that the stoves were installed and Brad did some trim work so that they fit okay. Kenton reported that he has reached out to Todd regarding replacing the south storage garage door at the parsonage. Mark made a motion to have Todd purchase the materials from Builders Source and Brad will install the door and was seconded by Rick. MCU. Kenton reported that the women's restroom is not handicap accessible, possible options etc.. it was decided to "table" this project at the current time.

Salem Mission Team:

Chairperson: Michelle Rinas
Council Liaison: Lindsay Burrell, Cortni Krusemark, and Michelle Rinas (as per their guidelines)

Report: Lindsay reported that they just met and plan to meet again on 1/26/26 @ 7:00pm. They are working on the silent auction, collecting items for Christmas bags for the homebound members, mitten/sock drive, and teddy bear drive after the first of the year.

Thrivent:

Chairperson: Michelle Rinas
Council Liaison: Duane Boyle

Report:

Worship Leading Team:

Chairperson: Nicole Ericksen

Council Liaison: N/A – this team is not being utilized currently

Report:

Youth Group Ministry:

Co-Chairperson: Lisa Balvantin, Codi Hrouda, and Barry Krusemark

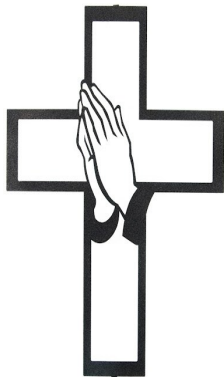
Council Liaison: Mia Krusemark

Report: Lindsay reported that they set up a Remind group text. Pastor reported that Paige has reached out to him regarding doing something for our youth on Wednesdays possibly.

Announcements:

The next Church Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 10th, 2025 @ 7:00pm. Lindsay made a motion for adjournment, and it was seconded by Dan. MCU. The Church Council closed the meeting with a prayer from Pastor Larry. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Uthof, Salem Lutheran Church Council Secretary



Salem Lutheran's 2026 Mentor Program

Is scheduled to meet on January 25th, 2026 @ 9:30am. Sixth grade students will choose a mentor and they will spend time together over a period of three months. During this time, the Mentor and student will study the book of Luke and share their faith journeys with each other. They will also create a cross that they will present to the congregation in late April.

Salem's 6th grade students are: Wayde Duerksen, Ethan Schweers, and Jase Uthof. Prayers are welcome for these students as they choose their mentors and enter into this part of their faith journey.

If you have any questions, contact Saumbra Hall.

Church Council Vacancies

If you are interested in being on the Church Council, please talk to a current member.

There will be vacancies for those members whose term is expiring in Feb. 2026.



The Christmas season is almost here, and we are so excited to announce our Sunday School Christmas Program on:

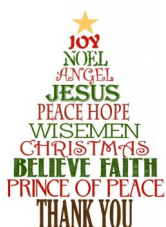
🎄 Sunday, December 21, 2025

🕒 10:30 AM during our worship service

Rehearsals begin November 30th during Sunday School, and every child will receive a special role.

If you know your child(ren) will not be able to attend on December 21st, please let Olivia know at 402-615-1064 so we can plan roles accordingly.

We can't wait to celebrate Christmas with you!



A SPECIAL THANK YOU

to everyone who helped decorate the church for Christmas—it looks beautiful!

December 2025

CAMP LUTHER OF NEBRASKA, INC.

1050 ROAD 4
SCHUYLER, NE 68661
+14023525655
campluther@campluther.org
www.campluther.org

Sales Receipt



BILL TO

Salem Lutheran
PO Box 316
Ponca, NE 68770

SALES #	DATE
81879891	10/29/2025

ACTIVITY	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
4030 Church Contributions	1	1,000.00	1,000.00
Dunklau Grant 2025			1,000.00

Beloved Salem Lutheran Congregation of Ponca,
I can't thank you all enough for supporting our Matching Grant Campaign! Thank you also for having me out back in July! I pray our Lord blesses you all this Fall!
- Joel Ramsey A.K.A., Master Oogway!

THANK YOU

For Your Donation

Your support of God's mission at Camp Luther provides our volunteers and staff the opportunity to boldly share the good news of Jesus with youth, families and God's children with special needs. No goods or services were provided in exchange for this contribution. Tax ID 47-0613021



December Worship Assistants

(If you are unable to be a worship assistant, please find a replacement and email salemonca@gmail.com)

Council Person of the Month: Cortni Krusemark

Communion Assistants: Cortni Krusemark & Kevin Dohma

Communion Set-up: Codi Hrouda & Cortni Krusemark

Sunday Morning Set-up: Barry Krusemark

Ushers/Greeters: Kevin Dohma & Julie Sydow and Jim Smith

Scripture Reader:

7th: Cortni Krusemark

14th: Cindy Anderson

21st: Need Volunteer/SS Program

24th: Separate List

28th: John Street

Acolytes:

Jett Taylor

Saylor Schweers

SS Christmas Program

Audrey Burrell

Brielle Hogan

Proclaim Slides:

Brinklee Heineman

Brielle Hogan

Brinklee Heineman



Nora Krusemark

Jett Taylor



December 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Hometown Holiday Parade @ 6pm (Confirmation kids meet at church @ 5:45pm)	4 Bible Study @ 9:30am	5	6
7 Sunday School @ 9:00am Worship Service (Communion) @ 10:30am	8	9	10 Confirmation @ 6:00pm Church Council @ 7pm	11 Bible Study @ 9:30am	12	13
14 Youth Group Mission Project @ 8:30am, followed by lunch and Christmas Party Sunday School @ 9:00am "Coffee Hour" Fellowship @ 9:30am Worship Service @ 10:30am	15	16	17 Music & Worship @ 4:45pm Confirmation/Caroling @ 6:00pm	18 Bible Study @ 9:30am	19	20
21 Sunday School @ 9:00am Worship Service @ 10:30am (Sunday School Christmas Program during Worship)	22	23 Newsletter Item Deadline	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service (Communion) @ 5pm	25 No Bible Study 	26	27
28 No Sunday School Worship Service @ 10:30am	29	30	31 No Confirmation	1 No Bible Study 	2	3