

July 2026

Salem's



Good Newsletter



## Pastor's Corner



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](http://Lutherhouseofstudy.org)
- [1517.org](http://1517.org)
- [pastormarkanderson.org](http://pastormarkanderson.org)
- [Mbird.com](http://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.

### "Sin Boldly?"

Perhaps you've heard the famous quote attributed to Martin Luther:

*"Sin boldly."*

Taken by itself, it sounds shocking. Even irresponsible. Was Luther really encouraging Christians to go out and sin?

Not at all.

The quote comes from a 1521 letter Luther wrote to his friend Philip Melanchthon, who had become paralyzed by the fear of making the wrong decision. Melanchthon wanted to be certain he could avoid every mistake before acting. Luther knew that wasn't possible.

The full statement is much different:

*"Be a sinner, and sin boldly, but believe and rejoice in Christ even more boldly."*

Luther wasn't giving permission to sin. He was reminding Melanchthon of a truth we all need to hear you already are a sinner.

The greatest danger isn't that we admit our sin. The greatest danger is pretending we aren't sinners at all. We spend enormous energy trying to justify ourselves—to prove we're good enough, faithful enough, or spiritual enough. Yet the more we trust in ourselves, the less we trust in Christ.

The Christian life is not lived by pretending we've become people who no longer need forgiveness. It is lived by daily returning to the One who forgives sinners.

That is why our confidence is never found in our obedience, our feelings, or our performance. Our confidence rests entirely in Jesus Christ, who died for the ungodly and was raised for their justification.

Christ did not come for people who have managed to clean themselves up. He came for sinners. Which means He came for you.

So, when your conscience accuses you—and it will—don't spend your time trying to prove that you're better than you are. Instead, confess your sin honestly and cling to Christ even more boldly. Your hope has never rested on your ability to avoid every failure. It rests on the promise that Jesus is a better Savior than you are a sinner.

God's peace be with you,  
Pastor Larry Wright

## Church App

Download the TITHE.LY Church App

Then, search for Salem Lutheran Church

 



Check out our website at [www.salemlutheranponca.org](http://www.salemlutheranponca.org)



Find us on Facebook / Salem Lutheran Church



**Communion:** will be on Sunday, July 5th, 2026 and Sunday, July 19th, 2026 at 9:30am (Communion will be on the first and third Sunday's of the month)

**“Coffee Hour” Fellowship:** will be on Sunday, July 12th, 2026 (“Coffee Hour” Fellowship is on the second Sunday of the month, following our Worship Service. 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.)

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

**Men’s Breakfast on Saturday, July 25th 2026** at 8:30am—come and enjoy breakfast and fellowship!

<b>Gifts &amp; Offerings through 6/30/2026</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General: \$9,549.00     <i>YTD: \$83,775.25</i>     <i>2026 Budget: \$219,954.00</i></li><li>• Mission Share/World Hunger: \$945.50     <i>(2026 Budgeted Line Item #5780 for \$18,000.00)</i>     Mission Share: \$516.00     World Hunger: \$429.50     <i>YTD: \$6,085.50</i></li></ul>	<p><b>Total: \$10,494.50</b></p> <p><i>*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—it does not include Lent/Christmas offerings that also go towards Mission Share)</i></p>



## The Ponca Community Churches invite Children to Rainforest Falls VBS: “Exploring the Nature of God.”

A summer kids' event called Rainforest Falls VBS will start and end each evening at the United Methodist Church from **July 19 to July 23**. Elementary kids will rotate between stations at Salem Lutheran Church and Christ the King Church. Preschool kids will enjoy their own programming at the Paradise Preschool at the United Methodist Church. At Rainforest Falls, kids explore the nature of God! Kids participate in memorable Bible-learning activities, sing catchy songs, play teamwork-building games, devour yummy treats, experience one-of-a-kind Bible adventures, collect Bible Memory Buddies to remind them of God's love, and test out sciency-fun experiments that get imagination bubbling. Each evening begins with a Sing & Play Tune Lagoon and concludes with a Canopy Closing that gets everyone involved in living what they've learned. Family members and friends are encouraged to join in daily for a special time at the **8:10 p.m. Canopy Closing at the United Methodist Church**.

Kids at Rainforest Falls VBS will join a mission's effort to provide fruit trees for families in Central America. A \$9 donation provides a family with a fruit tree that will keep giving for years to come.

Rainforest Falls is for kids from **4 years old through entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade** and will run from **6:00p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** each day. All are invited to a kid-friendly meal at the United Method Church each night at 5:30 p.m. Everyone is also invited to the



closing program at 8:00 p.m. on July 23, at the United Methodist Church. Register your kids online at [vbspro.events/p/ponca](https://vbspro.events/p/ponca) or use the QR code. Walk-in registration is also available each night. For more information, contact Michelle Rinas at 402.755.2697.

**Join us for a  
vine time this  
summer!**

We need YOU to swing through the treetops with us at VBS this summer. Youth, through adult volunteers are needed to make Rainforest Falls, the Ponca Community VBS happen. We are especially in need of Crew Leaders to guide small groups of elementary students from station to station and helpers for the preschool kids. Contact Michelle Rinas if you can help with VBS one or more evenings July 19-23.

**Salem Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes**

**June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

**Attendance:**

Salem Lutheran Church Council met on Sunday, June 14th, 2026, following our Worship Service. Those in attendance included: Koni Lamprecht, Cindy Purucker, Katie Uthof, Mark Bauman, Duane Boyle, Kevin Dohma, Sarah Hamilton, Morgan Nelson, and Rick Schweers.

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

Co-President Koni called the meeting to order at 10:22am and Mark led everyone in devotion.

Rick made a motion to approve last month's meeting minutes and was seconded by Kevin. MCU.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Saumbra was not in attendance, but she did provide everyone with a copy of May's financial reports. Cindy made a motion to approve the financial reports and was seconded by Duane. MCU.

**No Correspondence.**

**Pastor's Report:**

*Baptisms:*

*Confirmation:*

*First Communion:*

*Funerals:*

*Membership:*

*Visits:*

*Weddings:*

*Misc:*

Pastor was not in attendance, but he did provide Katie with an update-see attached. The Church Council agreed to Michelle Rinas also attend the LCMC Heartland District Gathering in Fremont July 17-18, if she chooses to attend.

Koni reported that her, Kenton, and Cortni met for Pastor's 6-month review, and they proposed the 2.5% raise (retro-pay back to his actual 6-month) and have the funds designated as he chooses. A motion was made by Mark and seconded by Kevin. MCU.

**Old Business:**

Property Items:

Julie met with Seth Hansen and his plumber regarding the women's restroom.

**New Business:**

Katie reported that the church was contacted by Don Stading's attorney regarding that Salem was listed as a beneficiary and would be expecting approximately \$13,000.00. The Church Council will need to determine where the funds go.

**Additions to the Agenda:**

Koni reported that Ashley Uthof left a list of projects with her regarding various cleaning projects at the church and asked if there was any certain focus area that the Church Council thinks needs addressed. After discussion, the Church Council determined that Ashley's list was pertinent and it was okay for her to work on as she had time.

**Ministry Team Reports:**

**Budget and Finance:**

Chairperson: Mark Bauman

Council Liaison: Kenton Book & Koni Lamprecht (Always the Co-Church Council Pres.)

Report:

~~CALL Committee: N/A — this team is not being utilized currently.~~

~~(Ministry Site Profile)~~

~~Chairperson: Koni Lamprecht~~

~~(Constitution Committee):~~

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

**Cemetery:**

Chairperson: Julie Sydow

Council Liaison: Kevin Dohma

Report:

**Communication:**

Chairperson: Barry Krusemark

Council Liaison: Katie Uthof

Report: Katie reported that her and Barry have been in discussion regarding a new camera for the sanctuary and recording Worship Services.

**Endowment:**

Chairperson: Brian Burrell

Council Liaison: Duane Boyle

Report:

**Faith Formation:**

Co-Chairperson: Saumbra Hall and Michelle Rinas

Council Liaison: Cindy Purucker

Report: Cindy reported that they recently met and they have decided to go with Sola "Seed" as their Sunday School lectionary. Sola Publishing is the lectionary that is currently being used.

**Memorial:**

Chairperson: Saumbra Hall

Council Liaison: Sarah Hamilton

Report: Sarah reported that there is \$19,100.43 in undesignated funds, \$3,835.17 in the Sanja Juu Travel Fund, and \$1,151.82 in the Lazarus Fund.

**Mission Support:**

Chairperson: Michelle Rinas

Council Liaison: Cindy Purucker

Report:

**Music & Worship:**

Co-Chairperson: Bruce Ericksen and Diane Smith

Council Liaison: Koni Lamprecht

Report: Koni reported that they met on Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> and are scheduled to meet again on Wednesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026 @ 4:45pm.

~~Mutual Ministry: N/A — this team is not being utilized currently~~

~~Chairperson: Rick Schweers~~

**Property:**

Chairperson: Doug Bauman

Council Liaison: Mark Bauman

Report:  
Automatic lights in the Narthex  
Lawns look great

Salem Mission Team:

Chairperson: Michelle Rinas  
Council Liaison: Morgan Nelson & Koni Lamprecht (as per their guidelines)

Report: Koni/Morgan reported that they are meeting on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026 @ 7:00pm.

Thrivent:

Chairperson: Michelle Rinas  
Council Liaison: Duane Boyle

Report: Duane reported that Thrivent donated \$2,000.00 to Mike & Brooklyn Sand for their son Townes.

~~Worship Leading Team: N/A — this team is not being utilized currently~~

~~Chairperson: Nicole Eriksen~~

Youth Group Ministry:

Co-Chairperson: Lisa Balvantin, Codi Hrouda, and Barry Krusemark  
Council Liaison: Bronsan Schweers/Koni Lamprecht

Report:

**Announcements:**

The next Church Council meeting is scheduled for Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026, following our worship service. Rick made a motion for adjournment, and it was seconded by Sarah. MCU. The Church Council closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 10:51am

Respectfully submitted,  
Katie Uthof, Salem Lutheran Church Council Secretary

**Send Nolan a Note!**

Nolan is currently in basic training and would love to hear from his church family. If you'd like to let him know you're thinking of him, feel free to send a letter or card.

***Please do not send treats or gifts until after basic training,*** as he is only able to receive letters and cards at this time.

**Mailing Address:**

RCT Schweers, Nolan  
Golf Co, 2nd RTBN PLT 2142  
35051 Midway Ave.  
San Diego, CA 92140-5051



Thank You so much for deeming my family worthy of such a gift. Not only financially but to know a whole church community was praying for my son & family is something I will never take for granted. This church is something I am so proud to have been a part of my whole life.



- The Sand Family

## July Worship Assistants

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

**Council Person of the Month:** Cindy Purucker

**Communion Assistants:** Cindy Purucker & Duane Boyle

**Communion Set-up:** *\*Need Volunteer*

**Sunday Morning Set-up and Power Point:** John Street

**Ushers/Greeters:** Doug Bauman & Brian Burrell

**Scripture Reader:**

5th: Jennifer Wright

12th: John Street

19th: Cindy Anderson

26th: Lisa Balvantin



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 Bible Study @ 9:30am	3	4 
5 Worship Service (Communion) @ 9:30am	6	7	8 Music & Worship @ 4:45pm	9 Bible Study @ 9:30am	10	11
12 Worship Service @ 9:30am "Coffee Hour" Fellowship, following our Worship Service Church Council, following our Worship Service	13	14	15	16 Bible Study @ 9:30am	17	18
19 Worship (Communion) @ 9:30am Mentorship Team Meeting, following our worship service	20	21	22	23 Bible Study @ 9:30am	24	25 Men's Breakfast @ 8:30am
26 Worship @ 9:30am	27	28	29	30 Bible Study @ 9:30am	31	1