Salem Lutheran Church

November 2026



Pastor's Corner

Thankfulness: More Than Counting Our Blessings

November brings us to Thanksgiving, a time when we're encouraged to pause, count our blessings, and consider all the things for which we ought to be grateful. Family, friends, health, homes, food on the table, and the many good gifts we receive throughout our lives.

And these are certainly things for which we can give thanks!

But what happens when life doesn't seem to offer much to be thankful for? What about the person grieving the loss of a loved one? The family struggling to make ends meet? The one facing illness, loneliness, or uncertainty about tomorrow? Are they somehow less blessed? Do they have less reason to give thanks?

The Apostle Paul writes, “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Notice what Paul doesn't say. He doesn't tell us to give thanks for every circumstance, but in every circumstance. There's a difference.

Christian thankfulness isn't pretending that suffering is good or that everything happens for a reason we must somehow discover. Nor is it another religious obligation by which we demonstrate our faithfulness to God.

In fact, when thankfulness becomes something, we must produce to prove ourselves faithful, even gratitude becomes another work of the Law.

But the Gospel gives us something entirely different.

Before we ever thought to thank God, He was already giving Himself to us in Jesus Christ. Before we could recognize His goodness, Christ had already gone to the cross for sinners. Before we could offer Him anything, He had already given us everything.

This is the heart of Christian thankfulness. It begins not with what we do for God, but with what God has done for us. And His promise doesn't disappear when our circumstances change.

Whether our tables are full or nearly empty, whether our hearts are joyful or burdened with grief, Christ remains ours. His forgiveness is certain. His mercy is sufficient. His promise of resurrection stands.

We don't give thanks to make God gracious toward us. **We give thanks because, in Jesus Christ, He already is.**

So, this Thanksgiving, enjoy the good gifts God has given you. But above all, hear again the greatest gift of all:

Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, for you. Thanks be to God!

In Christ,
Pastor Larry Wright



Check out our website at
www.salemlutheranponca.org

Find us on Facebook /
Salem Lutheran Church



Confirmation: is every Wednesday at 6:00pm

Bible Study: is every Thursday at 9:30am

Sunday School: is every Sunday at 9:00am

Adult Bible Study: is every Sunday at 9:00am

Worship Service: is Sunday at 10:30am

Communion: will be on Sunday, November 1st, 2026, and Sunday, November 15th at 10:30am
(Communion will be on the first and third Sundays of the month)

Gifts & Offerings through 10/24/2026

- General: $9,234.00
  YTD: $128,225.25
  2026 Budget: $219,954.00
- Mission Share/World Hunger: $729.00
  (2026 Budgeted Line Item #5780 for $18,000.00)
  Mission Share: $438.00
  World Hunger: $291.00
  YTD: $10,926.98

Total: $9,963.00

**Please note: these totals are before online giving fees have been assessed and are specific to the only two above not-ed budgeted line items (General and Mission Share/World Hunger—it does not include Lent/Christmas offerings that also go towards Mission Share)*

GRACE-BASED RESOURCES

Hear Christ's Promise.

Faith comes by hearing the Gospel (Romans 10:17).

These trusted ministries faithfully proclaim Jesus Christ and His promises for sinners.
Listen, read, and be reminded: ***Christ forgives. Christ gives. Christ saves.***

1517.

1517.ORG

Clear, Christ-centered teaching that returns us to the Gospel.

- **30 Minutes in the New Testament**
  Hear Christ preached through the New Testament.
- **60 Minutes in the Old Testament**
  Hear how all Scripture points to Christ.
- **Blogs & Articles**
  Faithful articles on Scripture, theology, and life in Christ.

Visit 1517.org
for podcasts, articles, and Christ-centered resources.

mbird
MBIRD.COM

MBIRD.COM

Encouraging hearts by pointing to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- **Website**
  Essays and resources that return weary sinners to grace.
- **Podcasts**
  Messages that proclaim Christ and His promises.

Visit MBIRD.COM
for resources and podcasts.

PASTOR MARK ANDERSON
GOD'S WORD IS LIFE
pastormarkanderson.org

PASTOR MARK ANDERSON AT GOD'S WORD IS LIFE

Sermons and teaching that proclaim Christ and His forgiveness for sinners.

- **Website**
  Sermons, devotionals, and resources that keep Christ at the center.

Visit pastormarkanderson.org
for sermons and encouragement.

LUTHER HOUSE OF STUDY
lutherhouseofstudy.org

LUTHER HOUSE OF STUDY

Resources that teach God's Word and keep Christ and His gifts at the center.

- **YouTube**
  Teaching videos on Scripture and Lutheran doctrine.
- **Podcasts**
  In-depth teaching on theology and the Christian life.
- **Confirmation Curriculum**
  Free, faithful resources to teach the faith and the promises God gives in Baptism.

Visit lutherhouseofstudy.org
for videos, podcasts, and confirmation resources.

We do not strive.
We receive.
Christ speaks. He gives. He forgives.

You are baptized.
You are forgiven.
You are His.

ROMANS 6:3–4

THANK YOU to everyone who supported this year's school kit project!

The Salem Mission Team would like to thank the Sunday School staff and students for helping us assemble the school kit backpacks for Lutheran World Relief. Also, thank you to all those in our congregation who contributed school supplies or made a monetary contribution to our project. We had a great event, and we packed 106 school kits. These kits will mean so much to kids all over the world, including right here in the U.S.A.





UPcoming EVENTS

- **All Saint's Sunday:** as we celebrate All Saint's Sunday on November 1st, we especially remember the family and friends of Helen Hall, Mark Hughes, Dick Schweers, Don Stading, and Doris White

- **Join Us for Salem's Fall Festival on Sunday, November 22nd, 2026**
  -Worship Service @ 10:30am and music by the Prodigal Sons
  -Thanksgiving meal following the worship service. The Church Council will provide the meat, potatoes, gravy, & buns. Members of the congregation are asked to bring a side dish or dessert.
  -Silent Auction
  -Following the Silent Auction, we will also be decorating for Christmas. If your able, please stay and help decorate.

- **Silent Auction Baskets:** The Salem Mission Team is beginning to work on the silent auction gift baskets for our Fall Festival. Anyone who wishes, may donate a basket. If you have any questions, please contact Tammy Book or Teri Harder.

- **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.


DIXON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
DIXON COUNTY
STATE OF NEBRASKA
SHERIFF'S OFFICE
SERVICE
LOYALTY
COMMUNITY
TOGETHER
THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT
Your generosity and support of the Dixon County Sheriff's Office K-9 Golf Tournament makes a real difference. Because of supporters like you, K-9 Tank can continue to serve and protect our county and surrounding communities.
With sincere thanks,
Deputy Blatchford & K-9 Tank
K9 TANK


THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION TO HELP US PACK OVER 80,000 MEALS FOR THE ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN!

Salem Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes **October 14th, 2026**

Attendance:

Salem Lutheran Church Council met on Wednesday, October 14th, 2026, at 7:00pm. Those in attendance included: Kenton Book, Cindy Purucker, Katie Uthof, Pastor Larry Wright, Mark Bauman, Kevin Dohma, Sarah Hamilton, Morgan Nelson, and Rick Schweers.

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

Co-President Kenton called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and Kenton led everyone in devotion.
Kevin made a motion to approve last month's meeting minutes on 9/14/2026 and was seconded by Mark. MCU.

Treasurer's Report:

Saumbra was not in attendance, but she did provide everyone with a copy of September's financial reports. Katie noted that our Thrivent account received $879.00 from Dick Schweers Thrivent/Choice Dollars. Cindy made a motion to approve the financial reports and was seconded by Sarah. MCU.

Correspondence:

Katie noted that we received a thank you from the Ponca School regarding the Orphan Grain Train Meal Packing Event.

Pastor's Report:

Baptisms:
Confirmation:
First Communion:
Funerals:
Dick Schweers on 10/8/2026
Membership:
Visits:
Weddings:
Misc:
Pastor will be gone December 30th, 2026-January 6th, 2027. Either Pastor Terrill or Sara will lead our Worship Service on January 3rd, 2026.

Pastor noted that he was able to set-up call forwarding on the church phone to his cell phone and the possibility of looking at faster internet speeds. He's been working through lots of his classes for school and will be using the new bulletin format this Sunday.

Old Business:
Restroom Remodel:
Began work and it is coming right along
New camera set-up for the sanctuary:
Kenton reported that he did speak with Aaron Voss and our bid with RTI. Aaron seemed "vague" and not really interested in doing it but knew that the bid from RTI included top of the line products. It was also discussed that it would be nice to have all of our "IT" matters under the same roof with RTI. Katie noted that she will touch base with Barry again regarding other possible options with RTI.

New Business:
Katie reported that Ashley has been cleaning out the utility room and there are a lot of old/broken items in there, etc… It was decided that she can toss whatever items need to be tossed, etc…
All Saint's Sunday is November 1st, 2026
Katie has mailed invites to the families of Don Stading, Helen Hall, Mark Hughes, and Dick Schweers
The Fall Festival is typically the Sunday before Thanksgiving, which is Sunday, November 22nd, 2026
Pastor confirmed with Bruce that the Prodigal Sons will do the music
We need to touch base with the Salem Mission Team regarding; faith statement, silent auction, potluck…
Typically the council provides the meat/potatoes/gravy/dressing/buns – everyone else brings a side dish/dessert

No Additions to the Agenda.

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 noted that she will touch base with Barry regarding camera options/RTI
Endowment:
Chairperson: Brian Burrell
Council Liaison: Duane Boyle
Report:
Faith Formation:
Co-Chairperson: Saumbra Hall and Michelle Rinas
Council Liaison: Cindy Purucker
Report:
Memorial:
Chairperson: Saumbra Hall
Council Liaison: Sarah Hamilton
Report:
Mission Support:
Chairperson: Michelle Rinas
Council Liaison: Cindy Purucker
Report: Cindy reported that they meet on Wednesday, October 28th, 2026 @ 7:00pm.
Music & Worship:
Co-Chairperson: Bruce Ericksen and Diane Smith
Council Liaison: Koni Lamprecht
Report: Katie reported that they will be meeting next Wednesday, October 21st, 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: Mark reported that the gutters have been cleaned out, work's begun in the bathroom, the pedestal light pole on the east side of the sidewalk is still not working properly.
Salem Mission Team:
Chairperson: Michelle Rinas
Council Liaison: Morgan Nelson & Koni Lamprecht (as per their guidelines)
Report: Morgan reported that they are meeting on Wednesday, November 4th, 2026 @ 7:00pm.
Thrivent:
Chairperson: Michelle Rinas
Council Liaison: Duane Boyle
Report: See the Treasurer's Report.
~~Worship Leading Team: N/A – this team is not being utilized currently~~
~~Chairperson: Nicole Ericksen~~
Youth Group Ministry:
Co-Chairperson: Lisa Balvantin, Codi Hrouda, and Barry Krusemark
Council Liaison: Koni Lamprecht
Report: Katie reported that they are going to Fear Street on Sunday evening.

Announcements:

The next Church Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 11th, 2026, at 7:00pm. Morgan made a motion for adjournment, and it was seconded by Mark. MCU. The Church Council closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 7:32pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Uthof, Salem Lutheran Church Council Secretary

November 2026 Worship Assistants

(If you are unable to be a worship assistant, please find a replacement and let Pastor Larry know.)

Council Person of the Month: Rick Schweers

Communion Assistants: Rick Schweers & Sarah Hamilton

Communion Set-up: Lindsay Burrell & Jennifer Wright

Sunday Morning Set-up and Power Point: Lisa Balvantin

Ushers/Greeters: Brian Burrell & Karen Rush

Scripture Reader:	**Acolyte:**	**PowerPoint:**
1st: Jennifer Wright	Jase Uthof	Brielle Hogan
8th: Cindy Anderson	Wayde Duerksen	Ethan Schweers
15th: Cheri Albrecht	Audrey Burrell	Nora Krusemark
29th: Cindy Purucker	Brielle Hogan	Jase Uthof



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Adult Bible Study & Sunday School @ 9:00am All Saints Sunday Worship Service (Communion) @ 10:30am Youth Group @ 5:30pm	2	3	4 Confirmation @ 6:00pm Salem Mission Team @ 7:00pm	5 Bible Study @ 9:30am	6	7
8 Adult Bible Study & Sunday School @ 9:00am Worship Service @ 10:30am	9	10	11 Music & Worship @ 4:45pm Confirmation @ 6:00pm Church Council @ 7:00pm	12 Bible Study @ 9:30am	13	14
15 Adult Bible Study & Sunday School @ 9:00am Worship Service (Communion) @ 10:30am	16	17	18 Confirmation @ 6:00pm	19 Bible Study @ 9:30am	20	21
22 Adult Bible Study & Sunday School @ 9:00am Fall Festival: -Worship Service @ 10:30am -Potluck -Silent Auction -Decorate for Christmas	23	24 December Newsletter Item Deadline	25 No Confirmation	26 	27	28
29 Adult Bible Study & Sunday School @ 9:00am Worship Service @ 10:30am Mentorship Team Meeting, following our worship service	30	1	2 Confirmation @ 6:00pm	3 Bible Study @ 9:30am	4	5