

Taking Advent to Heart

“My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.”

-*Canticle of the Turning*, Marty Haugen
Adapted from Mary's Song of Praise, Luke 1:46-55



As a kid I perfected the art of anticipation and spent Christmas Eve eagerly awaiting the sound of reindeer prancing on our roof. Now days, I've come to savor a little more patiently our waiting-season of Advent. The four Sundays of Advent (literally, "to come") lead us to Christmas. It's all about anticipation, preparation, waiting, yearning, hoping, making a space for the birth of the Christ child in our lives. An entire season meant for the holy-practice of preparation—I need that long! I yearn for the intentional, counter-cultural reason to slow down and focus on the Prince of Peace when everything around me screams speed-up, buy-more.

Where anticipation could quickly turn to anxiety, Advent truly invites us into the Spirited, trusting patience of Mary and the prophets. We're not waiting for the proverbial other shoe to drop, but for the life transforming, world transforming gentle power of our God who comes to us as a babe ready to turn the world on end. How are you making space for Jesus' birth? In this waiting time, it's anticipation on many fronts: our uncertain economy, a new presidency, our growing congregation, more time in the "wilderness", generous and faithful stewardship, the yearning for renewed space and ministry, good news for our redevelopment of the ministry center. I invite you into the practices of Advent: pause, check out the Advent devotion books or read from Mark's Gospel, sing some carols, make an Advent wreath or light kitchen-table candles, enjoy the Christmas story, worship together—Sundays or Wednesdays, carve out some time for intentional preparation for Christmas and giving. This Advent I give thanks for you and for your faithfulness. The blessings of the Christ-child to you.

—Pastor Jen

Advent and Christmas at Salem

Advent is the season of the church year when we prepare for Christ's coming in the birth of Jesus. The color of the season is blue and advent wreaths and the deep yearning for Emmanuel (literally, God with us) mark the days leading to Christmas.

How will you prepare?

- * **Wednesday Evening Advent Services** begin Dec. 3rd at 7pm. We'll use Holden Evening Prayer for this simple, reflective pause in the midst of a busy season.
- * Would you **light the advent candles** during worship? Sign up if you'd like to light them (on your own, with a friend, as a family).
- * **Advent Festival** will be December 7th with a noon potluck and 12:30 making of advent wreaths.
- * We'll go **caroling** to our homebound members on December 7th at 12:30. Come and sing!
- * Our Sunday School children will sell their **Christmas crafts** on December 14th—proceeds to Heifer Project.
- * The **Christmas Program** will be Sunday, December 21st during a 10:30am service with Lyndale UCC. We will hold only one service on the 21st.
- * Advent **Devotion books** are available at church for each household
- * Minneapolis Synod Bishop Craig Johnson invites each of us to **read the Gospel of Mark** during Advent, one chapter at a time. See later article for details.
- * **Christmas Eve Candle Light Worship** will be at 4pm in the sanctuary. Invite a friend to join you for worship.



Salem News

ReDevelopment Update

- The Lyndale Green project (that’s the name for the mixed use development on the west side of Salem’s property at 28th and Lyndale) was ranked first by Met Council and awarded at an \$850,000 grant for the development. This will significantly help the workforce housing and allows the project to continue in a timely fashion--a big show of support!
- In November geothermal testing was done at the Salem site. The testing included a well drilled 200 feet down and recording of information from the depths to determine if it is a good site for geo thermal heat. Results? It is a “better than average” site! This gives the go ahead for this green energy. It will be used for the housing aspects of the project. The picture below is the testing apparatus and generator.
- The timeline includes more meetings with the neighborhood and city with demolition of the west side of the property anticipated in July 2009, and then building of the housing and retail as well as the Ministry Center. Move-in to the Ministry Center is anticipated for August-September 2010. The shared Ministry Center for Salem Lutheran and Lyndale UCC will be in the Salem sanctuary structure on the east side of our property.
- The Development Team is working with the architects and Brighton Development to keep costs low and manageable for our budgets.
- Watch for an opportunity in January or February to meet the staff from Brighton Development and Kim Breitheim, our architect from LHB Architects.

What else is happening?

- ◆ A purchase agreement is in the final stages of negotiation for the Lyndale UCC building.
- ◆ Currently, we’d anticipate closing at the end of March.
- ◆ If this schedule holds, Salem and Lyndale would anticipate moving during March 2009.
- ◆ Pastors Don and Jen have been busy talking with landlords about potential sites for our partnered congregations during the “in-between-time” (March 2009-August/September 2010, hopefully).
- ◆ The list of potential sites is being narrowed and the Partnership Team is looking at the options, anticipating visits to a few sites and eventually an opportunity for the congregations to check them out. Ideally things will be firmed up in the coming month or two.
- ◆ Lyndale UCC is beginning to assess their belongs in preparation for the move (do you remember this?!).
- ◆ Salem will be organizing for the move in the new year as well. A move for Salem is considerably easier since we brought essentials and minimal storage items to Lyndale UCC.





More News ...

Honoring Our Elders

On All Saints' Sunday we gathered with many of our homebound member for worship and fellowship.



Clockwise, from piano:

Betsy Keno and the choir; Chuck Sasse and Germaine Stotz; Jill Davis and Pastor Jen; (middle) Marian Engman; Myrtle Johnson, Florence Jennings, Mayme Larson; John and LaVina Giinther, Bob Shorten, and Kathryn Patterson.





More News ...

Our sympathy

We hold Florence Jennings and her family in our prayers as they grieve the death of Florence's sister Amanda in Iowa. Amanda died on November 26th. We entrust Amanda to God's rest and light.

Friendship Sunday

On January 11th, the Transformation Team invites YOU to INVITE a friend to church. What feeds you by coming to worship with a community of God's faithful people? For this one Sunday, share this with a friend/family member and invite them to come with you. Watch for more details and special invitations you can pass and share. God is doing something at Salem!



- ✓ **Christian Ed.** One or two more Salem participants on the Christian Education Committee. This is a committee shared between Salem and Lyndale. CE Committee focuses on the Sunday School program and special monthly activities. CE committee meets monthly after 10:30am service.
- ✓ **Youth Ministry.** One person for the Youth Ministry Team. This is a new team that gives support and input to Youth Minister Erin Davis and our youth program. The team includes two adults and one youth from Salem and a similar combination from Lyndale.
- ✓ **ZOOM House.** Someone to connect between Salem and ZOOM House (the transitional housing program at 33rd and Blaisdell). ZOOM House serves families moving from shelter to more stable housing. A social worker and other services help a family with needed skills and resources. This church connector would attend a once monthly partnership church meeting and help the congregation learn more about ZOOM house and ways we can be involved.

Reaching Out

Service, Justice, and Outreach Opportunities

Taking Heart Muslim Christian Meal and Conversation

The next Muslim Christian meal and conversation will be December 11 at 6pm at Lake Harriet Methodist Church (4901 Chowen Ave. South). The focus will be Holiday Traditions. Please sign up if you'll attend.

ZOOM House Christmas Party

Salem is a partner congregation with ZOOM House, a transitional housing program for families located at 33rd and Blaisdell. The Christmas Party will be held on Thursday, December 18. Here are some ways to be involved:

- Attend. The party is at 6pm at Zion Lutheran (33rd and Pillsbury).
- Provide cookies/dessert. Salem is committed to bringing dessert for 75 people. Can you help with a portion?
- Set up and serving. This begins at 4:30pm.
- Gifts for a family—more specific details to come.





Reaching Out

Service, Justice, and Outreach Opportunities



Simpson Women's Shelter

Salem's next opportunity to prepare and serve a meal at Simpson Women's Shelter will be Monday, December 22, 6:15pm. Please sign up at

church if you will bring an element of this meal. Please contact Bonnie with questions: 612-810-8333.

2008 Homeless Memorial March and Service

December 18 will be the Simpson Housing Services annual march to lift up those who have died while homeless over the past year. The March is a silent vigil beginning at 5pm at Hennepin County Government Center (3rd Avenue South and 5th Street South) and following Nicollet Avenue south. The Service of Remembrance will be at 6:30pm at Simpson United Methodist Church (28th Street and 1st Avenue). The speaker will be John Song, Assistant Professor, Center for Bioethics; Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, University of Minnesota Medical School. A Community Meal follows at the church. Shuttles will depart from Kmart, at the corner of Lake Street & First Avenue at 4:20 pm. Parking available at Kmart. www.simpsonhousing.org



Photo: www.simpsonhousing.org

A Minnesota Without Poverty

With the push of faith communities, government, and business, together Minnesota commits to end poverty by 2020. Check out this bold plan at



www.mnwithoutpoverty.org. This began as a spirit-led mission in St. Paul Area Synod and has grown much, much bigger. Consider attending the endorsement ceremony on January 21, 3-3:30 p.m., at the Landmark Center, 75 West 5th St. in St. Paul. If not us, then who? If not now, then when? Ending poverty is possible when we show up, stand up, sign up, and speak up.

Workers Interfaith Network

Workers Interfaith Network lobbies senators to support The Employee Free Choice Act. Lyndale UCC is part of a local chapter of the Workers Interfaith Network, an organization that advocates for workers' justice issues. Pastor Jen is involved and Salem is invited to become more involved. As people of faith, we recognize the dignity of all people and all workers. We feel that our religious traditions affirm the rights of workers to freely organize themselves to improve their wages, benefits and working conditions and assert the right to a voice on the job.

Because we are compelled by faith to aid workers in their struggle for justice, Workers Interfaith Network joins with people of faith from across the country in strongly supporting the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). EFCA, which passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 241-185 on March 1, 2007, has three main planks.

- Allows workers to form unions when a majority sign union authorization cards.
- Increases fines for employers who break labor laws.
- Provides for binding arbitration in workplaces where contracts can't be agreed upon within six months.

How can we help?

- Sign a card urging Congress to pass the EFCA.
- Get others to sign cards.
- Cards will be available for your signature the first two Sundays in December.



Youth Ministry News

Erin Davis, Youth Minister

If you have questions about any of these events, please contact your Youth Minister, Erin Davis, for more info at 612.991.1607 or salemlyndaleyouth@gmail.com.

I've been getting this question a lot recently - what is this trip to New Orleans the youth are raising money for? The answer? The 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering. The theme? Jesus Justice Jazz. The location? New Orleans. As I learn more

information about this exciting upcoming event, I will do my best to pass on that information to you. So far, here's what I know. This five-day event occurs July 22-26 of this next summer. While they are in New Orleans, the youth will participate in a "Jesus" day, a "Justice day," and a "Jazz" day. These themed days will help the youth grow in their faith formation, give them the opportunity to learn more about New Orleans culture, and give them an opportunity to serve in a community still feeling the effects of Hurricane Katrina. It's exciting. It's new, and it will give our youth an experience that they will always remember. BUT we need your help. Keep your eyes and ears open to hear the various ways you can support this trip in the coming months. Your contributions, prayers, and thoughts will be needed as we embark on this exciting adventure. Have any questions? Just ask!



Lyndale and Salem Christian Education (CE) Committee

Kathy Hayden, CE Chair

Through the month of Nov the children have been busy working on crafts. They will be selling their unique Christmas gifts on **Dec 14** at 10:15am and again at 11:30am. They are raising money to add to their weekly Sunday School offering collection for the Heifer project. This is your opportunity to support our children, to teach them about stewardship and giving to others.

Dec 7th is the Advent fest. Come join us at 12:00pm for a festive potluck, share a favorite holiday dish or dessert. Stay for making advent wreaths or go caroling to homebound congregation members. Last year children, youth and adults all worked together making one of a kind advent wreaths

Dec 21st at 10:30am is our Children's Christmas program. The children began practicing Nov 23th during the 9:15am Sunday School time. This year we are doing a traditional Christmas story with a few twists. There will be some movement marching and dancing along with some non-traditional music. Parents, please help you kids come for practices: Sundays at 9:15am, Saturday, December 20, 10-11:30am, and before worship on Sunday, December 21st. Questions? Talk with Melissa Anderson, Kathy Sievwright, Sandy Block, or Jon Hanke from Salem.



Jan 18th will be Sunday School open house between services. Come and see what the children have been doing in class, talk with teachers, and share your thoughts.

Jan 25th Annual Meeting Sunday. The children will perform a song for your enjoyment.

Jan 31st Polar bear picnic. Information will shared later.





CALENDAR

Week of November 30

Wed. 12/3 7:00 pm Advent Evening Worship
 12/3 7:00 pm Confirmation

Week of December 7—Advent Two

Sunday 12/7 8:30 am Traditional Service
 12/7 9:15 am Sunday School & Youth Group
 12/7 9:40 am Adult Ed: Book of Faith
 12/7 10:30 am Jazz Service
 12/7 12:00 pm Potluck
 12/7 12:30 pm Caroling and Advent Fest

Wed. 12/10 7:00 pm Advent Evening Worship
 Thursday 12/11 6:00 pm Taking Heart (Lake Harriet UMC)

Week of December 14—Advent Three: New Members

Sunday 12/14 8:30 am Traditional Service
 12/14 9:15 am Sunday School & Youth Group
 12/14 9:40 am ReDevelopment Forum
 12/14 10:30 am Jazz Service
 12/14 11:30 am Kids Craft Sale

Tuesday 12/16 6:00 pm Executive Committee
 12/16 6:30 pm Council Meeting

Wed. 12/17 7:00 pm Advent Evening Worship
 12/17 7:00 pm Confirmation

Thursday 12/18 5:00 pm Homeless Memorial March
 and Service
 12/18 6:00 pm ZOOM House Christmas Party
 Saturday 12/20 10:00 am Christmas Program Practice

Week of December 21—Advent Four: Christmas Program

Sunday 12/21 9:40 am Adult Ed: Book of Faith
 12/21 10:30 am Worship with Christmas Program
 Wed. 12/24 4:00 pm Christmas Eve Service

Week of December 28

Sunday 12/28 8:30 am Traditional Service
 12/28 9:40 am Adult Ed: Fellowship
 12/28 10:30 am Jazz Service

Week of January 4

Sunday 1/4 8:30 am Traditional Service
 1/4 9:15 am Sunday School & Youth Group
 1/4 9:40 am Adult Ed
 1/4 10:30 am Jazz Service
 Wed. 1/7 7:00 pm Confirmation Class

Week of January 11—Friendship Sunday

Sunday 1/11 8:30 am Traditional Service
 1/11 9:15 am Sunday School & Youth Group
 1/11 9:40 am Adult Ed: Friendship Sunday
 1/11 10:30 am Jazz Service

Adult Ed

Sundays, 9:40am-10:15am

December 7..... Book of Faith Study
 December 14..... ReDevelopment Forum
 December 21..... Book of Faith Study
 December 28..... Fellowship
 January 4..... TBA
 January 11..... Friendship Sunday Fellowship

Reading the Gospel of Mark

Minneapolis Synod Bishop Craig Johnson invites each of us to read the Gospel of Mark during Advent, one chapter at a time. We are just beginning the “year of Mark” in our lectionary readings, year B. The day-by-day plan is available at church or at www.mpls-synod.org/resources/bof/advent_reading_guide.pdf. Mark is the shortest of the gospels. What a way to get acclimated to this new church year and our lectionary focus.

New Member Sunday

A number of people will be making a public commitment to being part of Salem during the worship services on Sunday, December 14th. In a coming issue of the Scene we’ll introduce this interesting and passionate bunch. We give thanks for the ways the Spirit is calling our community to growth.

Stewardship

During November we focused on the great gifts of our God and heard week after week from people of this community how they use the gifts they’ve been given! What a rich conversation. Thanks to all who shared their stories: Florence Jennings, Gene Sandler, Sarah Kunze, Myra Urness, Kathy Sievwright, Paul Wharton, Ana Menk, Diann Uzelac, Claire Kirchhoff, Antone Melton-Meaux, and Tom Pieper. A few more people will be sharing in the coming months (hey, stewardship is more than just once a year...it’s every day!).

Thanks to all who have turned in their estimated giving forms. We are doing well! This honest estimate helps the Salem congregation plan a budget for the coming year. If you haven’t already, please prayerfully consider how you can give in the coming year. We realize that sometimes our intentions must change—that is fine. We ask that estimated giving forms be turned in by December 7, 2008, if possible. More forms are available at church. Thank you in advance for your generosity and faithfulness in trying times. Please talk with Diann Uzelac if you have questions or concerns: 612-728-3782.

Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars...Annual Meeting will be January 25th. We’ll have one service this Sunday with Lyndale UCC, a meal, and then our respective meetings.