

Salem United Methodist Church

February 2017 Newsletter

«183 Years and Still Loving, Serving and Celebrating»



SALEM United Methodist Church 2016



SALEM Methodist Protestant Church 1833

12 High Street, Brookeville, Maryland 20833

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

TO THE SALEM UM CHURCH COMMUNITY



Rev. Dr. Sue Shorb-Sterling.

In last month's newsletter, we described a visioning process for Salem called Readiness 360 led by our conference's church strategist, Christie Latona. The process is basically in four steps:

1) January: Build our spiritual muscle by reading a chapter a day from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. Then we were to choose a scripture passage from the chapter, write down our observations, see how this one verse applied to our lives, and write a prayer asking for God to help us apply this to our lives.

2) Friday, February 3 – Monday, February 13: Take the Readiness 360 survey online. Plan on 20-30 minutes for the survey. If you need help accessing the survey on a computer, we will have computers available after both worship services on Sunday, Feb 5 and 12, as well as people to help

you take the survey, if needed. A letter is being sent out with the information on how to access the survey online. If you did not receive one, contact me for the information.

3) Saturday, February 18: Attend a retreat in our Community Hall from 9 am - 3 pm led by Christie. In the morning we will hear the results of the survey and its implications for our visioning. In the afternoon we will be putting together our next steps.

4) Feb 19 through-?: We will be implementing the next steps whatever they may be.

For this visioning process to be effective, we need the participation of as many Salem people as possible. Even if you do not attend Salem regularly, we ask you to take the time to complete the survey as participation is critical to the process and will determine the direction Salem takes. We are the church together!

As I have been reading through the Acts of the Apostles I am keenly aware that the actions of the Apostles were powered by the Holy Spirit and not by their human power. My prayer for us during this visioning process is that we are open to the Holy Spirit empowering us as we move forward.

With Grace and Peace,
Rev. Sue

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Worship Schedule:

Sunday, Feb 5 "Acts: The Sequel"

Debbie Ambrose, preaching

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 28:16-20;
Acts 26:15-23

Sunday, Feb 12 Samantha Larson, preaching

Communion Sunday: Communion

Offering goes to Souper Bowl of Caring

Sunday, Feb 19 "I Am To Do What?"

Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18; Psalm 119:33-40;
Matthew 5:38-48; I Corinthians 3:10-11,
16-23

Sunday, Feb 26 "Climbing Mountains"

Exodus 24:12-18; Matthew 17:1-9; 2
Peter 1:16-21

Joint Lenten Services

Each year Salem UMC joins with Ashton, St. Paul in Laytonsville and Mt. Carmel UMCs for Ash Wednesday, Holy Thursday, and Good Friday worship services. We rotate churches for these special services as we remember together Jesus' journey to the cross. This year's services are as follows:

All times are at 7:30 pm.

Ash Wednesday Service, March 1

Mt. Carmel UMC, corner of New Hampshire
and Georgia Aves.

Rev. Jean Lee, pastor

Holy Thursday Service, April 13

Ashton UMC, 17314 New Hampshire Ave.,
Ashton, MD

Rev. Emily Berkowitz, pastor

Good Friday Service, April 14

Here at Salem

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group Meets Every Sunday Evening

All middle and high-school students are welcome.
You do not need to attend Salem.

6:00-6:30 pm Youth Bell Choir

(Feb 12 & 19 only: Note change!)

6:30-8:00 pm Time Together

Seven youth and five adults will be going to ROCK 2017 in Ocean City on Friday, Feb 3 – Sunday, Feb 5. They include: Youth- Joey

Brantley, Sandy Harischandra, Karl McDonald, Amy Roberts, Aiden and Donovan Thompson, Jacob Weinberger. Adults: Mary Ellen Eaton, Sam and Alex Larson, Tom Luke, and Rev. Sue.

Please be in prayer for our safety and for us to experience the Holy Spirit in the music, preaching, and small groups, as well as in the fun moments!

Sunday, Feb 5 No Youth (ROCK weekend)

Sunday, Feb 12 Souper Bowl of Caring Offering

Shop for food for Olney Help

Sunday, Feb 19 Host Game Night for Church

Sunday, Feb 24-26 World Vision's
30 Hour Famine

Souper Bowl of Caring empowers youth to help those in their communities that are hungry. Usually this occurs on Super Bowl Sunday, but since the youth are at ROCK that weekend, we collect money for Souper Bowl of Caring the Sunday after the big game, Feb 12. This will be our communion offering. Then the youth will take the money, shop for food, and give it to Olney Help.

FROM OUR INTERN

Imago Dei

Imago Dei, meaning the image of God, is the understanding that all of humanity is made in the likeness of God. It comes from a long line of thought and reflection on the passage in Genesis 1, in the creation story, where the writer proclaims that human beings are created in the likeness of God. And, later, God proclaims that this creation is, "very good" (Genesis 1:31).

In a world where life is fraught with human conflict, especially along political lines right now, I find myself centering on the importance of human worth, human dignity and what being made in the likeness of God means in the midst of our Christian lives. In one of my classes here at Wesley we had an exercise where we were handed a picture of someone visibly homeless, visibly poor and were told to look at their face for several moments, to notice them as a human being. When was the last time we took the time to look another human being in the eye and say you are a child of

God, made in the likeness of God, and you are of great worth?

Our likeness to God, whatever that likeness may be, is a gift given to us only from God. My professor posits this likeness to our understanding of "human dignity." We all have dignity as people and that can never be stripped away from us regardless of our circumstances or context in life. But, one must ask, why would that worth ever be stripped away? Or, we may ask, how does our world try to strip others of their human dignity?

I think we constantly try to deface other human beings by labeling them liberal or conservative. We try to put others in a box so we can continue to ridicule their stance rather than trying to understand where they are coming from and why they decided to vote for one political candidate over another. We deface the other when we instinctively fear someone because of the way they look or the category our culture puts them into. Often, this happens to immigrants, especially when we call them illegal, we do this to Muslim-Americans, we do it to homeless people, and the list goes on.

I conclude by challenging you to rethink how you see other human beings. The next time you see someone or label someone, pause, think about who they are as they stand in the likeness of God. Ask them who they are and where they come from. Envision their dignity and worth without the labels of our culture. Embrace them as your neighbor.

-Sam

FROM THE CONGREGATION



"Sharing My Thoughts
With You"

from Charlyne Lewis
(a favorite repeat from years past)

LOVE

February, as we all are aware, is the "LOVE" month. We can express and show our LOVE in numerous ways during this fun month! Valentines, special gifts to that 'special someone' in our lives, all kinds of neat things to be happy about. (Do you remember as a child – 'way back

when' – giving and receiving those cute penny Valentines? – and what about those little heart-shaped candies with cute 'sayings' on each one (which are still around today) - I always LOVED that period in my life as a child, didn't you folks?

Well, our Heavenly Father has also given to each of us His abiding LOVE which is mentioned often in His Holy Word. We are so blessed to know that we can go to Him anytime and receive from Him an abundance of LOVE overflowing to us every day, and not just at 'special' times of the year.

God Bless!!

I Corinthians 13:1-13 (The LOVE chapter)



SALEM BOOK CLUB

Salem's Book Club is planning a game night on March 7th. Stay tuned more information.

ASP 2017

Annual Chili Cook-Off and Epiphany Auction

By Carole Roberts

A great time was had by all at the annual Chili Cook-Off and Epiphany Auction. A small but hearty group braved the cold evening to sample five delicious chili recipes. Barbara Achstetter provided all sorts of wonderful condiments. Attendees voted by placing chips with their favorite recipe. The results were as follows:

1st Place - Buck Bartley - Texas Adultery
2nd Place - Kathryn Ennes - Maryland Mambo
3rd Place - Carole Roberts -

Cornbread Topped Chicken Chili
Honorable mention to Barbara's awesome cornbread!



While people sampled the different chilies, they had the opportunity to bid on many silent auctions including such diverse items as a coffee grinder and beans, a framed cat painting, a "Tea Makes Me Pee" cup, a stuffed snowman, and many more items.



Then the live auction began. Our auctioneer Ms. Barbara and her able assistant David Ranshaw hawked nearly twenty items; from snow shovels, to grilling supplies, to a very entertaining stuffed giraffe. Fun was had by all. The bidding really lit up over a handcrafted box made by Chet Babylon and a fan/teardrop vase combo!

Thanks to all who attended and supported this ASP fundraiser. The event made \$515!

Our next fund raiser is Breakfast on February 12th at Coffee Hour. Come hungry and remember all donations go directly to Appalachia Service Project for their 2017 trip to West Virginia on June 18-24 to help those unable to help themselves.

A TIME FOR CHILDREN



On Sunday, January 1, New Years Day, the children were given the opportunity to offer their own praise to God as Sam told them the story of praising and giving thanks.

THE LORD'S TABLE

The next Lord's Table is
Saturday, February 25, 2017, 1-5 pm
At St. Martin's of Tours Catholic Church
201 S. Frederick Avenue, Gaithersburg, Md
Come and help to create a delicious meal to
serve those who are hungry in our community.

STARTING THE YEAR GLORIFYING GOD



Salem's New Year's Love Feast

On Sunday, January 1, while Rev. Sue was on resting from the Advent/Christmas season, our Intern, Samantha (Sam) Larson introduced us to a Wesleyan Love Feast or Agape Meal. This Feast consists of praising God, prayer, religious conversation, and sharing of food. On this New Year's Sunday, we celebrated in our Community Hall instead of the sanctuary. No one went away hungry: physically or spiritually!



Rose Eide-Altman, our Music Director, filled the Hall with songs of praise as we gathered.



The food was plentiful, and delicious, thanks to Barbara Achstetter, and many others.



The attendance was great and the fellowship was overflowing with love for God and each other.

The call to Worship was in the form of a prayer well worth re-praying:

L. Creator God, You make all things new in heaven and on earth.

**P. We come to you in a new year with new desires and old fears,
new decisions and old controversies,
new dreams and old weaknesses.**

L. Because You are a God of hope, we know that You create all the possibilities of the future.

P. Because You are a God of love, we know that You accept all the mistakes of the past,

L. Because You are the God of our faith.

P. We enter Your gates with thanksgiving and praise, we come into Your presence with gladness and a joyful noise, and serve and bless you. Amen

CHURCH COUNCIL

Next Meeting –February 23, 7:15 pm

All are welcome!

Church Council Meeting Highlights

January 26, 2017

This meeting was very well attended!! Thanks to Hisashi Yamagata, Tom Luke, Rev. Sue, Nancy Cox, Mary Abramson, Joyce Howes, Suzanne Friis, Buck Bartley, Velma Durant, Carol Roberts, Fred Ambrose, Kulley Bancroft, and Debbie Ambrose for being there!

- Rev Sue opened the meeting with a devotion based on Act 2.
- The bulk of the meeting was spent preparing for our upcoming congregational survey and meeting. We discussed the following:
 - We developed two open-ended questions to be added to the basic survey questions. They are:
 1. **What difference has it made in your life to follow Jesus at Salem?**
 2. **What does our Salem congregation need to be doing differently to support discipleship of Jesus Christ, and remain relevant to Christians and non-Christians into the future?**

- Tom Luke agreed to be the administrator of the survey. Thanks Tom!
 - Suzanne sent out 71 letters to members of the congregation regarding the survey. Another letter will be sent prior to the survey dates (February 3-13) with instructions on how to access and complete the survey.
 - It is hoped that most of the congregation will complete the survey. To support this, on Feb 4 at 12 noon, we will have 5 people meet at church to call the 71 members to remind them about the survey, and ask them if they need assistance taking the survey.
 - We made plans to support members without computer access or needing help with the survey.
 - The following information was shared by the Treasurer and the Finance Committee:
 - Paid Jan 2017 apportionment. Apportionments for 2017 are a little higher than last year.
 - All deposits entered into Quick Books for 2016.
 - Once all the other donations members have made are entered into Quick Books, we can run donation statements for 2016.
 - Suzanne Friis and Libby Wright have volunteered to coordinate painting of the Choir Room and Hallway. They will be asking for volunteers to help in this effort.
 - Rev. Sue closed the meeting with prayer.
- Debbie Ambrose, Church Council Chair

OUR SYMPATHY

Our deepest sympathy to the Poe-Yamagata Family on the loss of Eileen's father, David George Poe on January 17th in Media, PA.

And our deepest sympathy to the McKeever family on the death of Doug's father, Bob McKeever. Bob was a member of St. Louis Catholic Parish in Clarksville, MD. He was a life member of the Silver Spring Lions Club and of the American Legion's Norman Price Post #68. His wife, Reta, was a member of Salem and his son, Doug, is a member. The funeral will be at Salem on Monday, February 6 at 11:00 am. Burial will be in Salem UMC Cemetery following the funeral.

A WORD ABOUT MISSIONS

Compassion International and India

What Happened?

By Libby Wright

A topic of discussion on Sunday, January 29, was a letter received by a sponsor of a child in India through Compassion International (CI). According to the letter, CI is withdrawing its services to administer care to poor Indian children.

This is not a new development and CI has been dealing with growing obstacles in conducting its work in India since 2013. According to testimony provided by Compassion International Senior Vice President and General Counsel Stephen Oakley in a December 6, 2016, hearing before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Indian government "assessed over \$18 million in corporate income tax on the charitable donations" to its locally incorporated South India entity and that soon after the taxing initiative, Indian Intelligence Bureau investigations began with visits to several of CI's church partners, staff interrogations, and asking questions like "you are converting children to Christianity, aren't you?" Oakley denied that any of their sanctioned partners were doing so and even if they were, CI officials asked the Indian government to provide the organizations' names and CI would cease partnering with them. Apparently, the Indian government did not take the offer.

Harassment of other faith-based non-government organizations (NGOs) has led Oakley to believe that Compassion "is experiencing an unprecedented, highly coordinated, deliberate, and systematic attack to drive Compassion out of India" because the "government of India wrongly

believes that faith-based organizations are using humanitarian efforts to convert Indians to Christianity.” He said although the attacks are “occurring under the guise of regulatory compliance,” he believes it is “religious discrimination, pure and simple” and that the Indian government is not following their own laws.

India is predominately Hindu but more than 130 million Muslims and 50 million Christians live in the country. CI uses local Christian churches to help children in their communities because they are able to provide the moral and spiritual values that are consistent with CI and its donors and they make the perfect delivery system for needed humanitarian assistance.

Mr. Oakley’s testimony stated that “Compassion opened operations in India in 1968 continuously and lawfully, helping over a quarter of a million children break the cycle of poverty. Until 2016, Compassion sent nearly \$50 million per year in humanitarian aid to India, funding nearly 145,000 sponsored children in some of India’s most impoverished and remote regions. Compassion’s church partners in India employ hundreds of staff through more than 580 child development centers staffed entirely by Indians. Compassion only works through churches which possess a valid license to receive foreign aid.”

Other non-religious NGOs are facing increased scrutiny, including the World Movement for Democracy, the National Endowment for Democracy, Greenpeace, Ford Foundation, and the Open Society Foundation.

In spite of efforts by members of the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and former Secretary John Kerry to save CI’s work in helping poor children, apparently the government of India wants them to leave and that is what the organization is doing.

When you have finished paying the entire tenth part of your produce on the third year—that is the year for paying the tenth-part—you will give it to the Levites, the immigrants, the orphans, and the widows so they can eat in your cities until they are full.
Deuteronomy 26:12 (CEB)

Upcoming Missions



We will be undertaking some missions in the near future to help resupply items needed by the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and that is to put together Health Kits and Cleaning Buckets.

During the Lenten season, we will purchase the supplies and the youth will put together the Health Kits. These kits provide basic necessities to people who have been forced to leave their homes because of human conflict or natural disaster. Health Kits are also used as learning tools in personal hygiene, literacy, nutrition, and cooking classes.

This process will be similar on how we assembled the Cruiser Kits. The items that we will need are the following: Hand towels, washcloths, large combs, nail files or nail clippers, bath soap, adult toothbrushes, Band-Aids, and gallon plastic bags.

We will set up a sign-up list and Salem members will be asked to purchase these items. Depending on price, people may want to group together to purchase these supplies, for example the hand towels. (Please do not purchase items now.)

More details will be forthcoming but this is a much needed and easy mission to accomplish. We will undertake the Cleaning Buckets in the early summer.

As always, thank you for your never ending generosity.

SIGN-UP FOR ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to provide flowers during the 2017 worship year, please sign up on the list posted on the bulletin board in the Hallway.

When signing up, please indicate if the flowers are a tribute (for example: from the Jones family in honor of John's 10th birthday). Tributes will be listed in the Sunday announcements.

Purchase your flowers at the vendor of your choice and bring by Saturday afternoon. Call Rev. Dr. Sue before you head out so she can open the church for you. Contact Suzanne Friis with questions.

COFFEE HOUR

Have you signed up to provide snacks for coffee hour? Please volunteer to provide a coffee hour or two this year. You may sign up on the list posted on the bulletin board in the Hall.

MEMORY GARDEN

If you are interested in placing an order for a brick to honor/remember someone please see Joyce Howes for more information.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

If your name should be on one of these lists, please contact velma_durant@yahoo.com. We don't want to leave you out. Thank you.

Our February Birthdays are:

Gregg, Eddie	02/02
Friedrich, Jeff	02/07
Whaley, Janet	02/07
Roberts, John	02/08
Wahl, Jerry	02/08
Sterling, Sarah	02/12
Roberts, Austin	02/15
Lyon, Anna	02/17
Blaine, Ed	02/23
Rhinehart, Roger	02/24
Pustis, Amanda	02/25

There are no Anniversaries in February.

OUR COMMUNITY

Sunday School: We are short a Sunday School teacher. If you can volunteer monthly, on the fifth Sunday or even now and then (or as a sub) please contact Deb Ambrose.

Salem Men's Meeting: Saturday, February 11 at 8:00 am in the Community Hall.

Visioning Retreat: Saturday, February 18, in Salem's Community Hall. We will start at 9 am with a debriefing of the survey and a congregational wide training; next steps will be discussed from 12-3 pm. Lunch will be provided.

Congregational Game Night: Bring your favorite game and snacks and come enjoy fun and fellowship on Sunday, February 19 from 6: to 8:00 pm in Community Hall.

30-HOUR FAMINE: February 24-25 our youth will grow closer to Christ and each other as they fast together for 30 hours to raise funds to fight hunger. Awesome (and fun) Trek challenges, compelling videos, inspirational discussion ideas, and the thought-provoking Poverty Simulation all add up to an unforgettable no-eat overnigher.

Sandy Spring Lions Club: The next dinner will be on Monday February 27th at 7:00 pm. **There is a standing request for help in preparing the dinner, setting up, serving and cleaning up. If you can help, please contact Mary Ellen Eaton.**

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper: Tuesday Feb. 28, 5:00-7:00 pm in the Community Hall. Pancakes and more prepared by the Salem Men. Eat in or carry out.

Eyeglass Collection: Salem continues to collect used eyeglasses, cell phones and hearing aids to donate to Lions Club. Please leave them in Salem Community Hall.

Spirit Club: A fitness group for those with disabilities, meets Wednesdays in the Community Hall from 6-7 pm. Our own Philip Weinberger is an avid participant.

Seniors on the Move – Exercise Class: Fridays, 9:00-10:00 am in the Community Hall. Drop in – registration not required! Participate and pay by the session or for the full fall program. For more information contact the leader, Mary-Jo Cosgrove, at mjcosgrove58@gmail.com.

JUST A REMINDER

To order your Café Justo Coffee please contact Kathryn Ennes at church or via e-mail at k_ennes@yahoo.com.

[Café Justo](#) is a coffee grower cooperative based in Salvador Urbina, Chiapas, Mexico – a ministry of [Frontero de Cristo](#). They market a pure, organic coffee which is grown, harvested and marketed in the spirit of justice.

BLOOD DRIVE

The Sandy Spring Lions Club is hosting a Blood Drive, on Tuesday, February 14 from 1:00-6:30 in our Community Hall. Blood donors are needed and welcome!

Go to www.redcrossblood.org to make an appointment or contact Joyce Howes at cucinotta24@icloud.com. Or call at 301-774-5851.

Have a Heart and donate blood on Valentine's Day!

One unit of blood can help as many as three people who desperately need it.

“FOR I WAS HUNGRY...”

Manna Food Center: 9311 Gaither Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20877
To volunteer call 301-424-1130 or online at www.mannafood.org.

Olney Help: P.O. Box 430, Olney, MD 20830
To volunteer call 301-774-6829. They still are in desperate need of rice sides (Rice-a-Roni/ Knorr sides), peanut butter, jelly, canned chicken, fruit juice, snacks such as granola bars/crackers, cake mix/frosting, canned pasta. Please place items in the box marked for Olney Help in the church hallway. No glass jars.

PRAYER SHAWLS



Prayer Shawls are available in the Salem entry hall on top of the coat rack. There is no cost. If you know anyone you want to share a prayer with all the time, please help yourself to a shawl. The

comfort they give is well worth the effort of delivering one to your friends, family, or co-workers. They do help. Just knowing someone cares is sometimes just the right medicine. They will thank you!

A Thank You

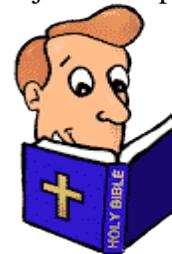
As publisher of the Salem Newsletter, I want to thank everyone who stepped in to help get the newsletter out while I have been working with Curt in his fight with his foot diabetic ulcer.

Velma

Bible Trivia: How well do you know your Bible?

~Answers Below~

1. How does Jesus say charity should be given?
2. What does Jesus say will actually enter the kingdom of heaven?
3. When the spies sent Moses into Canaan returned, what items did they bring back with them?
4. Who was the disciple in Damascus whom the Lord told to go find Saul of Tarsus?
5. Who was Elijah's disciple?



Bible Trivia Answers:

1. *In secret. (Matthew 6:3-4)*
2. *Those who don't just say the right words or perform impressive rites in God's name but actually do the will of the Father. (Matthew 7:21-23)*
3. *A grape vine branch with cluster of fruit on it, pomegranates, and figs. (Numbers 13:17-23)*
4. *Ananias (Acts 9:10-19)*
5. *Elisha (1 Kings 19:16-21)*

The Salem Newsletter is assembled and published by
Velma Durant, and edited by Curtis Smith and
Rev. Dr. Sue Shorb-Sterling or Suzanne Friis

