



# THE SALEM VISIONARY

## July 2023

*But be Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only. James 1:22*

Christmas in July

### Turning the Corner



Half of 2023 is gone. There are only 177 Days till Christmas. It will be here before we know it. When I worked in summer camp, we would break up our summer camp programming by designating one week of the summer as Christmas in July. With shorts on and living in the sweltering heat for the summer, we brought at least thoughts of cool days as we sang Christmas Carols, told Christmas stories, gave presents and shared the story of the Birth of Jesus.

We experienced a former practice at Salem of having Hymn Sings on 5th Sundays. On Old Fashioned Sunday, part of the service was designed to have those in attendance call out their favorite hymn. We sang so many favorite hymns that day. It was such a moving experience in worship. We have decided to bring the practice back every 5th Sunday.

Our next 5th Sunday will be Sunday, July 30th. We are planning to celebrate Christmas in July that Sunday. We will have another hymn sing. This time we will sing all our favorite Christmas Carols. What a merry day that will be as we witness Christmas a little early. We might even see a little snow that day.

A Little Christmas every day would not hurt us in the days we live now. When love seems to have waned, Christmas can be a force to reckon with as good cheer is shared every day. The Christmas Spirit is not present just one time a year. We need to make it a witness that lasts all year long.

With Independence Day celebrations being held this month, let us not forget that Christ's Birth ushered in the freedom we all have gained through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Make room in your celebrations to remember that Jesus is the Gifter of all that we have to celebrate. Don't leave Him out of your celebrations. Include Him and make Christmas a celebration that lasts all the year long.

On Sunday, July 30th we are also dedicating the new cabinets that display our collection of Nativity Scenes from around the world. The Collection is the largest collection of its kind. Over 230 different scenes are displayed in the cabinets in the hall outside the gym. In July, we are encouraging everyone to take time to stop to enjoy the collection. Ruth Rich and Gwen Edwards worked hard over the past months to display the collection in the new cabinets. Just looking at these scenes will inspire you in celebrating Christmas in July, making it truly Christmas all year round.



Winning them to Jesus,  
Pastor Gil

# Salem Methodist CHURCH



## Sharing the Gospel Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

This is the 175th year since Salem's founding as a church in Eastover. We are celebrating all year long. Mark your calendar so that you can join in the celebrations.

July 30 - Christmas in July (Nativity Scenes)

August 27 - Celebrating Sunday School

**SEPTEMBER 10 - 175TH HOMECOMING  
(WORSHIP AT 10:00)**

September 22 - Spaghetti Fundraiser

October 8- Methodist Camp Meeting

November 21 - Community Thanksgiving

December 3 - Maranatha Festival

December 24 - Christmas Eve Service

## History Boards

Check out the historical presentation on the boards in the Upper Fellowship Hall. Take a moment to look at where we have been as we prepare for our future.

## Operation Christmas Child Christmas in July



What better way to celebrate Christmas in July than to contribute to Operation Christmas Child?! If you are not familiar with this wonderful ministry, Operation Christmas Child delivers great joy and the Good News of Jesus Christ to children in need around the world through gift-filled shoe boxes. Each box packed full of quality toys, school supplies, and personal care items becomes a tangible expression of God's immense love for the child. For many, it is their first gift ever!

Delivered by local church partners like Salem, shoebox gifts provide an opportunity to present the Gospel to boys and girls in a clear, child-friendly way. From children to seniors, people pack shoebox gifts each year to bless children in need around the world. Parents often use the project to teach their kids about giving. Year-round volunteers support these efforts across the country.

In order to make this ministry most successful, contributions may be made all year long. Our goal this year is for 200 shoe boxes. We are still collecting hand crank flashlights that can easily be purchased on Amazon in quantities of 8 for \$15 or 24 for \$30. We will also gladly accept donations!

Del Peluso is our coordinator for this mission at Salem and is recovering from heart surgery. Let's show Del our support and make Christmas in July especially meaningful this year.

## Choir News

Our Salem Chancel Choir continues to provide musical selections for each week for worship services.

We are taking Wednesday night practice off until August. We welcome two new choir members, Becky Jones, soprano, and Trisha Horveth, soprano. They are wonderful additions to the choir.

I have great dreams for the choir. Thanks to all the faithful members who sing each week. As always, new members are needed to help in our music ministry.



School's out and summer is finally here! We have tons of fun planned for this summer, so we hope you can join the Salem Kids. Thank you so much for all who have helped out during the month of June! During the month of June we celebrated our dads on Father's Day!

For the month of July, we will be celebrating Independence Day on July 2nd during children's church. Salem Kids will be July 12th from 6pm until 7pm in the Lower Fellowship Hall. We are continuing to learn about Moses and Mary. Our 2nd VBS Volunteer meeting will also be on July 12th, at 5pm, to review VBS instructions.

The best week of the summer is right around the corner! July 17-21 we are traveling to outer space to discover God's love and how we can use our gifts to honor and serve the Lord.

It is not too late to register! You can find the registration link on our Facebook page and website. If you would like to set up for VBS, set-up will begin Friday, July 14.

Contact Caitlin Craven if you have any questions.



## Summer Literacy Program

We had a successful Staff Orientation and Open House on June 23, 2023. We are thankful for our staff which includes Stephanie Hall, Janet Spearman, Vershell Calloway, and Alicia McKay. We are looking forward to our camp which begins July 10th.

## Sunday School

Stay tuned for our August 27th Sunday School Celebration as a part of our 175th activities!



COME AS YOU ARE!

Come as you are to our worship service EVERY SUNDAY at 5:00 pm in the Salem Gym! We mean it when we say this new space is intentionally set aside for everyone who hasn't found a place yet. So many of us have so much going on in our lives that we don't have time, let alone the right dress. None of the rest of us are dressing up either, so bring what you've got. Jesus will meet you in all your stuff, and oh, what a day that will be!



We have had a great start to our Summer program at SMASH. We have had a water day, cook-out, roller-skating trip and so much more. We have movies, bowling, a Woodpeckers game, a color run, Aloha Zoo, sand art, and tie-dye shirts planned for the month of July.

We had a bounce house/waterslide day for all the classrooms on June 9th, and the kids had a blast. Our 3 and 4-year-old classrooms went to the Eastover Ballpark and enjoyed the playground and splash pad.

Salem Preschool applied and received a \$5,000 Operation Round Up grant from South River EMC. We will be adding a gate to our front playground on the deck and replacing some wooden classroom furniture that we have had for 20+ years.

We currently have openings in most of our classes, so please spread the word.

Please continue to keep the SMASH and Preschool departments in your prayers.



Shelton and Dexter at the Youthie Awards

June was full of new life in the youth group. We added five new youth to our group and had a great time meeting them and getting to know them. There have already been strong friendships formed that will hopefully last for years to come.

We have seen more involvement with our youth as we see youth helping the tech team both in our morning service, as well as our evening service. In addition, we also have had youth help with set-up for the new worship service, teardown after old-fashioned Sunday, and of course their wonderful help in assisting Bryson Dexter in digging up the time capsule.

Our youth group held the first ever Youthie Awards where many glamorous awards were won, ranging from most likely to know that RC cars need batteries to most likely to eat raw chicken. A fun time was had by all, even if most in attendance were a little underdressed for the occasion.

I would like to give a special shout-out to Bryson Dexter this month. This is a man who truly exemplifies Christian service in all he does. He is constantly doing things to better the church, whether through his Tech Team direction, or his work with the trustees, Bryson works tirelessly to improve both of Salem's services and all our other events, all while running the church website and Facebook pages. He does not do it for money; he does not even want recognition. He will probably get mad that I wrote this, but Bryson, while doing all he does for this church, still finds time to help me plan for the youth and be there so we can run events. I could not do the majority of what I do here at Salem without his help.

Please be sure to thank Bryson this month, and all the other humble servants working in the background to keep our church running smoothly. They are backbones of this church and this community, and though they are not doing it for appreciation, that does not mean we cannot appreciate them anyway.

Your brother in Christ,  
Shelton Burkart

## Family Promise

Salem's Mission to Homeless Families

Salem's Summer week of service was the first full week in June.

Fifteen total folks were served including five adults, one preschooler, one elementary, four preteens and four teenagers. Four families and the staff of Family Promise send a BIG THANK YOU to Salem Methodist Church for funding a week of food and essentials to support the families. We collect funds 52 weeks a year to support the four weeks of service. Gently used household items and small furniture are needed. Contact Debbie Moody for information.

SPECIAL THANKS to CRAFTY Russell Humphries who repaired a small kitchen table (2 sided drop leaf) and four chairs which were donated in June.



## Food Pantry

On June 22 & June 29 folks received a special July 4th Celebration of hot dogs, hamburger meats, buns & trimmings!! This was in addition to their usual staples. All foods are packaged; folks must cook. On Thursdays from 9-11 am, folks pick up in the office parking lot or by prearranged times.

THANK YOU: Angie Britt, Harrison Burkart, Bryson Dexter, Russell Humphries, Jonathan Johnson, Pat Lyons, Estelle McPhail, Jean Outlaw, & 5th Grade SMASH students who worked in various capacities during May & June to staff, pack and provide food during the month.

FUNDS & FOOD are always needed. Peanut butter & jelly, skillet dinners/hamburger helper and canned chicken are needed year round.

Contact Debbie Moody for information or to volunteer.

## Prayer Ministry

James 5:16 says, "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." And we saw that in action in our soft launch of the Cafe Zion joint prayer ministry with Mt. Zion AME Zion Church the last week of school at Armstrong Elementary. We handed out coffee, words of encouragement and prayers one morning to people waiting in line to drop off children and bottles of water one afternoon to those waiting in line to pick them up. The recipients were pleasantly surprised and appreciative. It was our goal to share God's love and blessings with them, but I feel the volunteers might have received a bigger blessing! We enjoyed the fellowship with each other as we were working together to further God's kingdom. A big thank you to Ron Hardin, Fred McDaniel and Betty Smith for volunteering, and also thank you to Bruce Sykes for the beautiful sign and flyers he created for this ministry. But you don't have to feel left out! We will start this up again the third week of September and will need more volunteers, so stay tuned for additional information as we get closer to the start of school in the fall.

The Prayer Room continues to be open Sunday mornings before Sunday School and Monday and Thursday mornings from 7 AM until 9 AM. Beginning July 12th, the Prayer Room will also be open on Wednesdays from 1:00 - 3:00.

I shared this in the June Newsletter, but please remember that Mt. Zion has a Prayer call each morning beginning at 6:30 AM, and we are all welcome to call in. It starts with a short devotional, called a Word of Encouragement, and then we share our praise reports and ask for prayer requests. Who can't use a daily word of encouragement?! And we can never have too many people praying for us or those we love. The conference call number is (720) 527-5849, and the access code is 3828555#.

A parting thought: God is like WiFi: He is available everywhere, but you have to connect to Him with a correct password. And the password is PRAYER!

Let us continue to support one another in prayer,  
Pat Lyons



Christ caring for people through people

**STEPHEN  
MINISTRY**

Salem's Stephen Ministers are staying busy behind the scenes. At their meeting on June 5th, they held a strategy planning session for the remainder of 2023.

This included the upcoming continuing education session topics. The group will take a vacation break for the month of July, then resume August 7th with the topic "Ministering to People Experiencing Challenges Related to Aging".

Several members were absent in June due to personal situations. These included Del Peluso who was recovering from heart surgery, Nancy Dorman-Honeycutt who was preparing for surgery, Ron Hardin who was with his daughter Rebecca while undergoing cancer treatment, Cindy Whetzel who was preparing for a well-deserved cruise, and Chuck Griffin and Gil Wise who were otherwise committed. That left our ever-faithful Bonnie Crabtree, Frank Dawson, Pat Lyons, Linda Wise, and me. I list our individual group members because we have such a strong bond and know that we are better when we are all together and sorely miss each person when absent.

Please know that our ministers are in regular contact with one another through continuing education and group texts and are praying for our congregation's ongoing cares and concerns. We have been commissioned by you, the congregation, to support our pastor Gil. We are currently looking at ways to do this through our shut-in ministry in addition to providing one-to-one Christian care to hurting people.

Finally, in order for this ministry to continue to grow at Salem, we need **at least one additional Stephen Leader**. This exceptional training is currently offered online for five weeks with ten sessions meeting twice a week or for ten weeks meeting once a week. You do not have to be a Stephen Minister to become a Stephen Leader. Please prayerfully consider your possible contribution to this powerful ministry at Salem. We would love to have you join us.

For more information, contact  
Carol Hudson  
(910) 916-5834 or Pastor Gil.

Not a One-Time Event

## **A Changed Life Forever**

When we encounter Jesus Christ, we are transformed in a way that starts us on a lifelong journey of transformation. Our encounter doesn't "FIX" us and then we continue life as usual. Encountering God in Jesus Christ causes us to have a desire that always longs for more of all that God is and who we are called to Be. Our new life in Christ reflects the new nature that we have received with a change of our heart from hardness to a pliable receptivity of God's re-creation in us.

With the new nature in Christ we receive, we act and do things differently. All of us have been called into ministry. Your ministry is something that was designed in the heart of God as he envisioned you in your mother's womb. The opportunities to discover what God has called you to do abound at Salem. We need you who have a heart for evangelism (reaching the lost) to look at possibilities with the pastor.

The cemetery is a great tool for evangelism. The number of individuals that are connected to our church through loved ones buried in the cemetery exceeds thousands of people. There are many of you that have a heart for our cemetery and its upkeep. May we catch a new vision of keeping up the cemetery and keeping up with the many connected to loved ones buried there? Is it possible that we could have an open door to minister with others simply through a place that experiences such anguish? We believe that there are many of you that have a call of God upon your life to re- envision a ministry through our cemetery. The Pastor would like to help you develop this ministry. If you have that calling please notify the church office so that he can build this ministry with you.

**"We are the Caregivers, God is the Curegiver"**

## Prayer Requests

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**Pray for:** Our Pastor, Our Military, Our Shut-Ins, Our Schools, Our Church, Our Country, Ukraine

### Church Members

**Charlie & Donna Williams, Fred & Rita McDaniel, Jake Melvin, Sandy McDaniel, Del Peluso, Bruce Sykes, Elizabeth Varner, Gilda Horne, Brenda Johnson, Rachel Dawson, Kenneth Sykes, Betty Register, Rosine Dexter, Denise Rhodes, Joyce Costin, Eula Snow, Thelma Bullard, Derotha Fink, Bruce & Lorraine Kirkwood, Mickey Kimbell, Colton Honeycutt, Trillma Pribbenow, Darwin Edwards, Weldon Hudson, Paula Johnson, Jean Lugar, Mary Patterson, Bill Roberts, Daniel and Nancy West.**

### Family and Friends

**Family & Friends: Kim Gordner, Patricia McLemore, Jorge Alvarez, Luz Aguilar, Karen Larrimorea, Sam Holl, Bobby Coley, Sue Grissom, Becky Peele, Maria House, Karolyn Palush, Garland Slate, Laurie Barnes, Emily Dickson, Marc Gastaldo, Rebecca Hardin, Mike Butler, Johnny Butler, Susan Jernigan, Kelly Stephens, Tim Lease, Jackson Woodcock, Patricia McLemore, Kyle Powers, Grayson Marsh, Sam Holt, Charles Bullard, Frank Harris, Charlie Marpol, Nick and Jamie Smith, Deanna Tallon, Everna Worthen. Travis & Sheila Wages, Bruce Raynor, Larry Smith, Pam Taylor, Meredith Steihl, Kenan Steihl, Tre Turpin, Judah Turpin, Sam Williams, Jonathan Lenore, Maria Gonzales, Janet Campbell, Margaret Ann Heine, Margaret Saccareccia, Jennifer Partney, Aaron Griffith, Brian Moxey, Chloe Creech, Helen Scoggins, Kelly, Rev. Robert Flynn, Stacey Wiseman, Anderson Stewart, Russell Varner, Clifton Faircloth, Sue Grissom, Jean Brown, Carrie Jones, Carolyn Ortero, Cale Johnson, Nick Wilson, Anthony Bethea, Angie Baker, Sheila Minschew, Eddie Bowen, John Sange, Will Nash, Leslie Horne, Jason & Brittany Ray, Lin Wheeler, Angela Renfrow, Nelly Johnson, Vanessa Cuestas (cancer), Tabetha Priest, Ron Hardy, Randy West (cancer), Marilyn Parkin, Rev. Jan (Poland Methodist Pastor), Matthew Johnson, Gary Page, J.M. Butler, Jr., Del Gray, Vickie Knoch, Sandra Jones, and Daniel Knox (cancer)**

## Memorials

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### Sallie Darden

Jimmy and Bonnie Crabtree, Michael and Jean Outlaw, Peggy Allen, Darwin and Edna Edwards

### Gwen Edwards

Jimmy and Bonnie Crabtree, Michael and Jean Outlaw, Henry and Amy Bowden, Kenneth and Claire Lynn Sykes, Buck and Betty Smith, Helen Smith, Robert McDonald, Rudy and Eleanor Tatum, Tony and Linda Jackson, Nobles Pound Financial, Peggy Allen, Ed and Ruby Bullard, Kenneth and Denise Sykes, Mark and Kim Fisher, Darwin and Edna Edwards, Stephen and Wanda Grove, Besan Nash

### Ruth Cain

Darwin and Edna Edwards

## Financial Health

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### Budget Needed Monthly

**\$ 44,166.00**

### Total June Offering & Tithes

**\$ 26,906.90**

### June Building Fund Deposits

**\$ 850.00**

### YTD Budget Needed

**\$ 265,000.00**

### Year to Date Offering & Tithes

**\$ 234,441.82**

### Year to Date Building Fund Deposits

**\$ 6,055.00**

## Methodist Men

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The Methodist Men's breakfast will be held on Sunday, July 16th at 8:00 am in the Dining Hall. All are welcome!

