



# THE SALEM VISIONARY

## December 2022

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

A Message from Pastor Gil

### **Waiting for Santa and Watching for Jesus**

My favorite childhood memories are many. I particularly remember preparing cookies and milk for Santa the night before Christmas. Our family attended Christmas Eve Communion and then settled in on Christmas Eve. There were family gatherings to open presents. There was the ritual of saying prayers by our bedside before restlessly getting to sleep so Santa could come.

Waiting for Santa took the form of many activities before he could ever arrive. We had to go sit on Santa's knee and tell him what we wanted for Christmas. We participated in the annual Christmas Children's Pageant to recount the real reason for the season. My brother and I were extra careful with our behavior because we surely did not want to end up on the naughty list.

As I have grown older, I have a new appreciation in watching for Jesus. Instead of fearful eyes in making sure I am living the "right" way., I have begun to watch with faith-filled eyes that take on that childlike nature of waiting for Santa. Jesus is with me all the time.



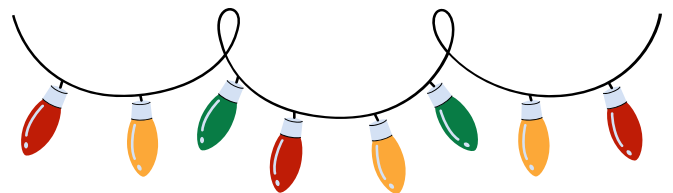
The promise of His ultimate return to establish his Kingdom has me busy getting all in order now so that when Christmas Eve arrives and I settle down to sleep, all will be ready for His Christmas morning arrival.

I check my list. Am I giving generously as Christ gave me? Am I cheerful with others to help them know the joy that comes from a life in Christ? Am I setting out cookies (scripture) and milk (Holy Spirit Baptism) so that others find food to eat and water to drink? In what way am I putting on Christ so that others find in me a physical, emotional and spiritual witness of Christ's love for us all?

Get ready because Santa will be here soon and more importantly Jesus is on the way. Watch for Jesus to return at any moment. Today is the day of salvation and is nearer than it ever has been before.

Winning them to Jesus,

Pastor Gil



Our Church Staff is an incredible team that richly serves our community of faith. You are invited to give your offerings today through December 15th to share in a Love Offering that will be presented to the staff on Sunday, December 18th. If you would like to give a love offering, place it in the offering plate in an envelope designating the gift for the staff.

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## Salem Methodist Church

A Global Methodist Church Congregation

The new logo for Salem Methodist Church is purposed to launch a new branding for our future as a congregation in the Eastover Community and the world beyond. It captures a witness of our past and our future. Elements of the Cross and Flame of the United Methodist Church as well as the Tri-circled Cross of the Global Methodist Church are found in the new logo.

The color scheme in red reminds us of the blood of Christ that was shed for our salvation and the flame of the Holy Spirit that transforms us going onto perfection. The blue is emblematic of the waters of baptism that births us into this new life in Christ. John 3:5 records that Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

The two people on each side of the Cross represent a people in worship and surrendered to a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Salem is a church that lives out the identity in the meaning of her name. Salem is a shortened form of Jerusalem, where the temple was located and the presence of God dwelt. The two people are also a reminder of all of humanity. It is reflective of where we were and where God has provided a place for us. We all are broken, and in Christ we all are redeemed. Salem is a worshiping congregation to celebrate the redemption and a sanctuary for the restoration from brokenness.

The Cross is in the shape of a sword resting in the open pages of a Bible. This reminds us of the spiritual armor of God and that the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. The open pages of the Bible represent the Old and New Testaments. The Cross points to the primacy of scripture for faith and practice. The Bible is the foundation of our life together in Christ.

The Arch over the Cross connects us with the Global Methodist Church. It is also a reminder that we are under the covering of God that brings a resurrection in a new day as we live and move and have our being in Christ. (Acts 17:28) Salem is expressive of all that it means to be a small church that cares and loves its members into a stronger relationship with Christ. She is also an expression of the large church in that we make a large impact and indeed are a Global Church.

Salem is indebted to the vision of Bryson Dexter, the creator of the design. Bryson volunteered to take on the challenge of a fresh representation for Salem going into our new year as a Global Methodist Church. His creativity captures so many aspects of who we are as a faith community. Many thanks to Bryson for this gift.

### **SMALL CHURCH FEELING / LARGE CHURCH IMPACT**



**Salem Methodist**  
**CHURCH**

# Roots...

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We all come from someone, somewhere, and something—a people, a place, and a story.

So does Jesus.

The heart and mission of Emmanuel, God with us, is more profoundly understood by exploring the well-watered roots that flowered into Jesus's life as the Word of God made flesh (John 1:14). The roots of Jesus are his family tree and its characters, the land of Israel and its towns and terrain, and the incredible faith-story of God's covenant people.

Christmas Season at Salem is filled with opportunities to connect with the roots of Jesus in the land, in the people and in worship. The Maranatha Festival begins with a "walk to Bethlehem."

Entering the sanctuary doors on Sunday evening December 4th you will be greeted by carolers filling the sanctuary with songs of Christmas. Walking to the Maranatha Festival being held in the Dining Hall will take you by numerous Nativity Scenes that are a part of the largest collection of Nativities in the state of North Carolina. Narratives are provided along the way to provide the story that comes with the many Nativity Scenes.

Our celebration of the Birth of the Christ will help you and your family reconnect with the Reason for the Season. Give the gift of Christmas to your family by sharing in the celebrations at Salem Methodist Church.

You are Invited to Join Us for the

## Birth of a Savior Celebration Schedule

### A Night in Bethlehem

**Sunday, December 4 Doors Open at 5:00 pm**

Come tour the Largest Nativity Scene Collection in North Carolina. Talks will be given to tell the story of each Nativity Set on display. Period dress from Bethlehem along with Christmas Carols and a Brass Ensemble will bring a memorable experience that concludes with a festive Maranatha meal.

### Candy Cane Lane

**Sunday, December 11 at 11:00 am**

Hear fresh the story of the Gospel from the mouths of our children.

A joyful, colorful, funny recipe for life.

### Choral Christmas Cantata

**Sunday, December 18 at 11:00 am**



### A Contemporary Christmas

**Sunday, December 18 at 5 pm**

Our new worship band brings Christmas Worship into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### Christmas Eve Candlelight

**Sunday, December 24 at 4 pm & 6 pm**

A Service for the entire Family full of the sights, sounds and smells of Christmas

### Christmas Day

**Sunday, December 25 at 11 am**

Sunday Morning Worship

A short opportunity to gather the family together to recognize that Jesus is the reason for the season.

**Christ the Savior is Born!**



We continue to be blessed in the SMASH and Preschool Departments. We have several children from the four year old class working with Mrs. Linda Wise for the Candy Cane Lane play which will be performed on December 11th. Mr. Frank cooked a Thanksgiving Feast on November 23rd, which was a huge hit. December 8th we will be taking Santa Pictures with the preschool in the morning. On December 20th students at SMASH begin their Christmas break. We will be preparing fun activities with a carnival, crafts, and a fun-filled day of hot chocolate, cookies, bells and watching the Polar Express. We will be closed on December 23rd and 26th for Christmas. Merry Christmas to all and to all a Good Night!!



We love the feeling of Fall and giving thanks to those we love!! We celebrated Thanksgiving during the month of November at Salem Kids! Our kids are thankful for so much as am !!

One of my favorite projects is Operation Christmas Child! Del Peluso is so wonderful and operated and organized our Operation Christmas Child project this year! We were challenged with filling 100 boxes to send across the globe! WE DID IT!!

119 boxes filled with love and surprises that will be opened by children all across the world who don't get to experience the Christmas that we do here. We could not have done it without your help! Thank you so much to Armstrong Elementary and Eastover Central Elementary for hosting collection drives. We want to thank our congregation for coming together and making this such a successful event! A special thank you to Del Peluso and Betty Smith for all of their hard work and dedication to Operation Christmas Child!

Our Salem Kids celebrated Thanksgiving together on November 20 at the Children's Thanksgiving meal. This was organized by the Children's Director to show thanks and appreciation to the Salem Kids and their families.

For the month of December, we will have Salem Kids on December 14! Don't forget our Christmas Play "Candy Cane Lane" is on December 11 during church service! Our children are practicing so hard and can't wait to sprinkle some Christmas cheer. Our Children's Christmas Party will be December 18 during Children's Church!

Merry Christmas from Salem Kids and our Children's Director Caitlin Craven!



# Operation Christmas Child

Thank you for your support of the Operation Christmas Child shoebox ministry. Whether you packed a box, donated items or money, purchased peanuts or Texas Roadhouse gift cards or prayed for this ministry, from the bottom of my heart and on behalf of the shoe box recipients THANK YOU! Last year we packed 19 shoe boxes; this year we packed 119 shoe boxes! So how many can we pack next year? We have a whole year to be shopping and on the lookout for shoebox items.

It's not just about packing a shoebox and providing gifts to a child who has never received a present before, it's about an opportunity to share the good news of salvation. Each shoe box recipient receives a copy of The Greatest Gift, telling the story of Jesus. This has and continues to bring children and adults to accepting Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

May God Bless You and Merry Christmas!



# Thank You!

The Juanita Warren Group would like to say "Thank you!" to those who came and helped decorate the church for Christmas. It was a labor of love by everyone who came and gave of their time.

We hope you take the time to look at all the Chrismos on the tree in the sanctuary, the angels in the Narthex, the Nativities from around the world that are located throughout the church, and all the other meaningful decorations! Salem is a special and beautiful place of worship! Merry Christmas from the Juanita Warren Group!





The past month has been full of fun activities for the youth group. The last Sunday in October, we focused on how no matter what our fears are, whether we still fear ghosts and vampires, or fear bad grades and anxiety, our God is greater than any of that, and just like how a sledge hammer can destroy a pumpkin, Christ can smash any fears we have because through Him we already have the ultimate victory over fear. The month of November we explored Judges and Job, and also made sure to remember all we are thankful for when we celebrated Thanksgiving with our fast food feast! If you see any of our youth, be sure to ask about Shelton's special "Mashed Potato" recipe. Our youth are growing and learning more about how to be good people and good Christians, and are looking forward to the Christmas season coming up, full of helping decorate the church and helping with the Christmas play. We are so thankful for those of you who continue to support our ministry and wish you a Merry Christmas!

## Children's Christmas Musical

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Children and their families are invited to join us in the dining hall following the play on December 11th for a reception.



## Happy Thanksgiving Eastover Eastover Community Thanksgiving Service

Mt. Zion AMEZ hosted this year's community thanksgiving service. The church was attended by a capacity crowd. Members from Integrity Ministries Global, Lebanon Baptist, Mt Zion AMEZ, Salem Methodist and Temple Baptist attended, celebrating with over 110 persons present.

The service also afforded the opportunity for the community to welcome two newcomers to the Eastover Community. Rev. Chris Autry is the new pastor at Temple Baptist arriving in September. He and his family came here from Vermont. Rev. Autry proved to be a dynamic preacher as he brought the message for the service. His scripture was from Psalm 3. He reminded us that though are enemies may be many, all we need is our one who is the champion, Jesus Christ.

The other newcomer only arrived 2 weeks prior to this service. Rev. Dr. Carlton Brown was appointed to Mt. Zion at the end of the AMEZ Conference held two weeks ago in Fayetteville. Rev. Dr. Brown comes to Mt. Zion from South Carolina. He and his family are in the process of securing a home as he serves the church here in Eastover.

The service gave the community an opportunity to give thanks to God for all the many blessings we have received. Salem's Choir along with Lebanon's Choir brought special music. An added bonus was when the CD accompaniment failed for Lebanon's choir, our own David Gorman stepped to the rescue and loaned his base guitar to accompany them. David is a superstar!!! The Community Thanksgiving Service is held every year the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. Salem Methodist will be the host church for next year's celebration.



# Mission and Outreach

## Food Pantry

### GIFTING TURKEY & TRIMMINGS

Juanita Warren Group UMW (lead shopper Estelle) purchased a variety of side items for a plentiful Thanksgiving box. Russell Humphries assisted with the packing & moving of the boxes. Many Salem folks rushed to Food Lion to purchase turkeys (at a great price). Thus ALL TOGETHER Salem gifted 25 families with a bountiful meal in addition to their bundle of food and frozen meats. THANKS to John McCarroll, Jean Outlaw and Charleen Wallace for their time dedicated to food pantry preparation & distribution. THANKS TO ALL who donate FUNDS and FOOD as well !! Contact Debbie Moody to learn more about how YOU can help! A variety of tasks are needed, many without heavy lifting.

THANKS to Eastover Central Elem. which donated "food & funds" to the food pantry mid November.  
THANK YOU to Armstrong Elem. for their donation of food.  
THANKS to Black's Chapel UM Church which delivered a wonderful selection of food in November.  
THANKS to Methodist Univ. Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity as they donated funds in November.  
THANKS to SMASH students who work packing bags for the weekly gift away.



## Family Promise

Salem's Mission to Homeless Families

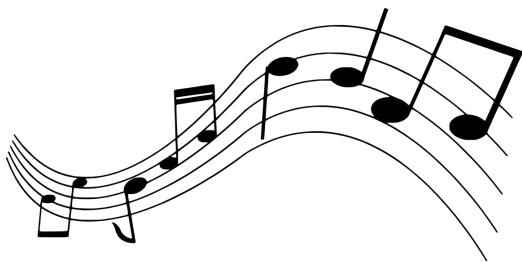
Salem's final week of service is Dec 18-24, 2022. We supply funds for food (they cook), essentials (soap, detergent, etc.), & utilities/insurance for this week four times a year. Staff assists families with goals (employment & educational), finances and overall family wellness.

Extra mile giving is needed to support this ministry; please mark your donation FAMILY PROMISE. Contact Debbie Moody for additional information.

# Mission and Outreach

## Choir News

This is an exciting time for the Salem Chancel Choir. On November 6th we sang a beautiful rendition of "For the Autumn Sky". Frank Dawson sang, "On Eagles Wings" after communion. On November 13th the Methodist University Chorale ministered in music singing a cappella selections. The choir sang for the joint Thanksgiving services at Mt. Zion on November 22nd. Gary and Pastor Gil participated in the Black's Chapel Hymn singing on November 13th. We are looking forward to our Christmas music special called "Hope" to be given on December 18th.



## Methodist University Chorale

Catherine Grosshaeuser, Rita Sears & Debbie Moody baked cookies and cake bars which were festively bagged as a Thank You to the MU Chorale members. Salem appreciates their talents and time shared with us.



We have walkers!!! All of our littles have started walking. We have 6, and they are so active. Any given week we have 3-7 in our nursery. If you have one Sunday a month free, we would love for you to join our wonderful group of volunteers. Please contact Betty Ann Crawford if you are interested. Nursery will not be available Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

## Angel Tree



The Angel Tree gifts are due to the office, wrapped with the tag attached by Sunday, December 18th. Please email Jennifer Jackson with questions at [jenniferejackson1978@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferejackson1978@gmail.com) and she will assist you. If you would like to donate money for the Angel Tree and have someone else shop for you, that can also be arranged. Please note "Angel Tree" on the memo line of your check or on the envelope with your contribution. Thank you!

-Jennifer Jackson



## **Disaffiliation Update** **Salem Will Become Global**

On September 7 the congregation voted to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church. The vote was prompted by the extreme move of the UMC away from Orthodox teachings of the church. This vote set into motion a process that was ratified by the NC Annual Conference on November 19, 2022.

Salem will end its relationship with the United Methodist Church that was organized in 1968. 248 other United Methodist Churches were ratified in their votes to disaffiliate as well.

On November 9, 2022 the congregation voted to join the Global Methodist Church. 180 churches, that includes Salem, are in the process of organizing a new NC Annual Conference that will be affiliated with the Global Methodist Church. The GMC was organized with a design that listened to the concerns of the laity reinforcing Orthodox, Traditional Theology to the church. As the churches have organized, the excitement is building for a church that is returning to the status of a movement and not an institution.

The NC Transitional Conference Advisory Team that is organizing the new Conference in North Carolina voted to affirm the continuing appointment of Rev. Gil Wise to Salem Methodist Church. The vote also affirmed the continuing appointments of 140 other disaffiliated churches. "I am fulfilling a directive that the Bishop gave me in 2021 to help Salem get to where she wanted to be," said Pastor Gil Wise. He continues with, "It is my intention to continue to serve Salem through this transition to the Global Methodist Church to help Salem realize more of her call to be a church connected like family making a missional impact on the world."

Soon you will see logo changes and name changes as Salem rebrands. The cross and flame will be removed to make way for our new identity as Salem Methodist Church. See the related article on Salem's New Logo.

The Global Methodist Church is in the process of organizing. The NC Conference of the Global Methodist Church launches January 1, 2023. Salem will be one of the Charter Churches with this new annual conference.



**Dr. Kenneth Haugk founded Stephen Ministry in the mid-1970's. He is a pastor and a clinical psychologist. He was feeling stretched really thin with worship services and providing care for his congregation and decided to train laypeople to do one-to-one quality caring. He believed there were people in the congregation who had gifts for caring that were not being used effectively.**

**In an interview with Peter Rosenberger on the radio show Hope for the Caregiver, Dr. Haugk stated that "A Stephen Minister doesn't try to solve people's problems, but gets people to tell their stories and really listens to and cares for them, which is extremely healing." Dr. Haugk went on to say, "The whole process ends up helping the Stephen Ministers." They get the gift of personal growth through their training, service, and from the congregation. He said this personal and spiritual growth was a wonderful byproduct of the ministry.**

**Please pray for our Stephen Ministers as they grow spiritually and prepare to give the gift of caring to others.**

**"We are the Caregivers, God is the Caregiver."**



# Prayer Requests

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

## Church Members

Dusty Tatum, Dawn Dean, Linwood House, Angela Sellers, Eula Snow, Teri McLaurin, Thelma Bullard, Derotha Fink, Bruce & Lorraine Kirkwood, Charlie Williams, Lisa Johnson, Mickey Kimbell, Conrad Kurtz, Colton Honeycutt, Trillma Prebbenow, Darwin Edwards, Rachel Dawson, Pat Baker, Weldon Hudson, Sallie Darden, Paula Johnson, Jean Lugar, Gilda Horne, Bill Roberts, The Family of Lynn Baker



## Family and Friends

Family of Sara Faye Conley Lane, Family of Melissa Dean, Janet & Wingate Collier, Rodney Dean, Devon, Rachel and Dean Kelly, Rev. Robert Flynn, Charlotte Glass, Vicki Mickler, Sam Holt, Stacey Wiseman, Phillip Gaines (infant ICU), Anderson Stewart, Russell Varner, Randall Idol, Clifton Faircloth, Mike Butler, Family of Maurice McLaurin, Morris McLaurin, Hannah and Michael Davis, Sue Grissom, David and Hannah Helbig, Jason Oliver, Jean Brown, Carrie Jones, Carolyn Ortero, Liam Dixon, Cale Johnson, Nick Wilson, Anthony Bethea, Angie Baker, Denise Rhodes, Sheilia Minschew, Eddie Bowen, John Sange, Will Nash, Leslie Horne, Jason & Brittany Ray, Lin Wheeler, Angela Renfrow, Betty Price, Jen Partney, Nelly Johnson, Laurie McLaurin, Vanessa Cuestas (cancer), Tabetha Priest, Ron Hardy, Randy West (cancer), Marilyn Parkin, Melinda Craven, Grant Singletary, Robin Barber, Rev. Jan (Poland Methodist Pastor), Matthew Johnson, Whitney Larimore, Linda Disbrow, Gary Page, J.M. Butler, jr., Del Gray, Vickie Knoch, Sandra Jones, Bill Smith, Daniel Knox (cancer), Brooke Autry's mother, Sue Grissom, Abraham Beniquin and Jennifer Johnson.

# Memorials & Honors

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## Elizabeth Sykes

Kenneth and Claire Lynn  
Sykes

## Steve Fussell

Jernigan and Warren

## Financial Health

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### Budget Needed Monthly

**\$ 45,000.00**

### Total October Offering & Tithes

**\$ 41, 181.00**

### October Building Fund Deposits

**\$ 5, 230.00**

### YTD Budget Needed

**\$ 450,000.00**

### Year to Date Offering & Tithes

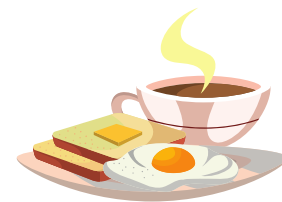
**\$ 420,746.00**

### Year to Date Building Fund Deposits

**\$ 30, 155.00**

## United Methodist Men

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Salem United Methodist Men Breakfast: Please join us Sunday, December 18th at 8 AM for breakfast and camaraderie! Join us for a special guest speaker.