



SALEM
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER **CONNECTPOINT** MAY 10, 2023

CONNECTING ALL PEOPLE WITH GOD'S
EXTRAVAGANT LOVE

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CONNECT WITH US



@SALEMSTLOUIS

WILDLIFE VBS AT SALEM JUNE 12-16, 2023



The Bible teaches us that God made the animals. Animals, like people, are a part of the world God made, and we can learn so much from them. Think about facts you know about any animal you have seen or learned about. Kangaroos can jump 10 feet straight up into the air. In the same way people are right or left-handed, elephants develop a preference for turning their trunks one way or the other. Aardvarks can't see very well, but they use their keen senses of hearing and smell to guide them in the night to find the many ants and termites that they eat to survive. It's wild that God helps each animal grow and thrive . . . and us, too! This year at Salem's Vacation Bible School, "Wildlife," kids will discover how special they are to God and how wild it is that they can share their story, use their gifts, spend time with God, and spend time with others. This five-day morning program will focus on learning to build spiritual habits through lessons in the gospels about Jesus through awesome music, fun games, creative art, and lots of FUN!

VBS is for kids ages three years old and potty trained through those entering 5th grade in the fall of 2023. Cost is \$35 per child. We can't wait to welcome your little ones to Wildlife VBS June 12-16! Adult and teen volunteers are also needed. Scan the code for details and to register or visit saalemstouis.com/vbs.



BELONGING

- REV. TERRI SWAN

There are six core questions humans long to have answered. Am I safe? Do you understand my point of view? What is my purpose? Am I valuable? Do you love me unconditionally? Do I belong?

Belonging matters to people. This spring, we are looking deeply at the story of the woman at the well in the Gospel of John. When the story begins she is at the well at noon, and she is curiously alone. In the ancient world women went to the well based on their status. The most respected would visit the well first, in the cool of the morning. No one wanted to go to the well in the hottest part of the day. But this woman is drawing her morning water at noon. She's alone. Not in the company of the other women. Not enjoying their conversation and companionship. She obviously does not want to be with the other women.

Have you ever experienced this? Have there been times in your life when you felt like you just couldn't be with people? I have seen this many times in the churches I have served—people who have pulled themselves away from the community of faith for one reason or another. A divorce—an addiction—a troubled family situation—economic hardship.

The pain was too great, or in their mind too embarrassing, to share with the community that could hold them up in the troubling time.

But what we learn from the woman at the well is that we need not be alone. Jesus comes alongside us in these moments, and there is a community that awaits our return. I hope that you will join us for the Belonging series this spring, and that you will seek new ways to find your place in the Salem Community as well. Next Steps is a great place for those new to the church to meet our pastors and learn more. Serving at Haven Street is a great way to meet new people and feed those in our community that are hungry. We have small groups ready to welcome you. VBS is right around the corner for the kids in our church family.



No matter where you are in life, you are not alone. Jesus is right beside you and your community is here for you. We'll be celebrating Mother's Day with special music in all our services and recognizing the graduates among us. The labyrinth and prayer walk at Mid-County is in full bloom and open to the community any time of day. I pray you will allow Jesus to greet you wherever you are on life's journey, and that you will feel the blessings of belonging this spring.

SUMMER GIVING

- REV. DEBORAH LEMOINE

If you ask anyone in the church or the faith-based non-profit sector, they will probably tell you that summer tends to be a season of low giving. It's not because people care less in the summer, it's just matter of logistics. We tend to travel more in the summer, and as a result we may not be in worship and reminded to give as often. We get distracted. This has been historically true at Salem as well.

Some organizations simply plan for this downturn in giving and lower their program ministry in the summer months. That is NOT true at Salem. For us, summer is a huge season of ministry and outreach. We host Vacation Bible School at our Mid-County Site for kids throughout the community. We host six weeks of Freedom School programming at our South-City Site to help kids learn to read and to ensure they are getting healthy meals while school is not in session. We host family events, youth & children activities as well as weekly worship at both sites. Our work does not stop in summer, and our giving to support that work need not stop either.

Thanks to our new online worship and giving platforms, no matter where you are you can worship <https://salemstlouis.online.church> and give <https://bit.ly/givesalemstlouis> online

to stay connected and be a part of this important summer work. I encourage you to simply make your online gift recurring, with the frequency and amount that fit your giving strategy. This allows you to "set it and forget it," and allows us to plan our summer ministry with confidence. Thanks to you, we never stop serving in summer! Your ongoing giving helps us continue to be the church in our community. Together we can make an impact in the lives of our neighbors and continue the ministry of spreading the extravagant love of God to all people.

Give Online // visit salemstlouis.com/give

Secure, quick, and easy. One-time and recurring gifts may be set up using a bank account, debit, or credit card.



Salem App // Search Salem Church - St. Louis

Mail // Send checks by mail to the Salem church office

NEED HELP? LET US KNOW.

INFO@SALEMSTLOUIS.COM // (314) 991-0546
VISIT: WWW.SALEMSTLOUIS.COM/GIVE

FREEDOM SCHOOL BEGINS THIS YEAR ON JUNETEENTH!

This year, since Freedom School begins on June 19, it will kick-off with a Juneteenth celebration at LifeWise. Juneteenth commemorates the freedom of enslaved African Americans and derives its name from combining June and nineteenth as that was the day in 1865 when Major General Gordon Granger issued the order that proclaimed freedom for slaves in Texas, and as of 2021, Juneteenth is federal holiday. Members of the worship bands from Salem and The Connection will support the Freedom School Juneteenth celebration with their musical talent.

Once again, Salem is partnering with LifeWise to support Freedom School by hosting one of their locations at our South-City Site, The Connection. Freedom Schools are a program of the Children's Defense Fund, and in St Louis, LifeWise St Louis facilitates their work through staffing, training of staff, and administration. Freedom Schools provide food and education to young students over the summer to keep them advancing in their reading levels. This is Salem's fourth year to host a Freedom School site, and we are thrilled to be a part of this important supportive work for students and their families. Freedom School students in the past have averaged an eight-month gain in educational progress after only six weeks in this summer program.



Freedom Schools also provide opportunities for college students to serve as interns who work with the children over the summer. Serving as Freedom School interns not only gives these students valuable life experience and insight into possible career choices, but it also helps them to see the needs of children and families in our community. These young people will not leave their summer work experience unchanged. Working directly with children from St Louis schools will shape their character in ways that will hopefully give them a passion for service that will last a lifetime.

Do you want to help encourage children to learn? Freedom Schools also need volunteers to read to students and to provide enrichment programs each week at The Connection, Salem's South-City Site.

Summer Readers Volunteers Needed: 8:50-9:30 am

Volunteers will choose a book that is meaningful to them, read the book aloud to K-2nd grade youth, and answer questions from the scholars.

Afternoon Activity Leaders Needed: 1:00-3:00 pm

Volunteers will teach/co-teach a 45-60 afternoon activity with elementary students (examples include but are not limited to: arts/crafts, team building games, music, knitting, tie dye T-shirts, baking, physical activity, and gardening).

You can learn more about how to volunteer contact Emily Smith, Salem's Director of Children's Ministry at emily@salemstlouis.com or register at: <https://www.salemstlouis.com/freedom-school>.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Don't miss our upcoming events. Scan the code to check out our featured events and get more information.



Scan Me

ACC Concert featuring Stephanie Beinhorn // May 20, 7:30 pm // Mid-County Sanctuary // The American Chamber Chorale and Orchestra present *Brahms' Requiem*. Free admission.

Next Steps // No matter where you are in your journey there is a Next Step for you. Register online at salemstlouis.com/next_steps
Online: June 6, August 1 - 7:00 pm // Zoom
In-Person: June 25, Noon // South-City
In-Person: August 27, Noon // South-City

Online Book Study // June 8, 7:00 pm // Register online // Join Pastor Deb for casual online discussions of *Enchantment* by Katherine May

Women's Summer Fellowship // June 23, 7:00-8:30 pm // Home in West County // All Salem women are invited to an evening of fun, tasty treats, and fellowship at a fun poolside Girls Night Out! Sign up at salemstlouis.com.

Combined 11:00 Worship Service // July 2, 11:00 am // Mid-County Site // Both sites are invited to a special combined service. The 9:30 am modern service will be held as normal. Worship will not be held at the South-City Site on July 2.

Jazz with Joe Mancuso // July 22, 2:00 pm // South-City Site // Enjoy live jazz music at this free concert featuring Joe Mancuso.

Family Movie Night // August 11, 5:30-9:00 pm // Mid-County Site // Don't miss a night out with the family featuring Sonic the Hedgehog 2, popcorn, fun activities, and food trucks. Food trucks vendor prices vary. Activities and entry to movie is free.

Outdoor Concert // August 20, 5:00-7:00 pm // Mid-County Site // You're invited to an Outdoor Concert featuring talented Salem United musicians and guest artists. Holy Smokers Men's Ministry will also have sandwiches for sale. Bring lawn chairs or a blanket and enjoy time together. Concert entry is free.



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We have a variety of teams and ministries that will help you find a place to serve and use your skills and passions. We think you'll find that the time and energy you invest will offer returns in new friendships, spiritual growth, and personal satisfaction through seeing the impact you can make to our community.

SHARE A PRAYER REQUEST



SCAN ME

Did you know you can share prayer requests with our staff and prayer team? We regularly share a prayer list with our prayer team and staff, who will pray for your request, and will contact you if you request follow-up care.

KIDS & YOUTH EVENTS

Kids Night Out // May 26, July 28, August 25 (6:00-9:00 pm) // Register online // 6 weeks-6th grade // The cost is \$20 per child, \$40 max for a family (includes: dinner, crafts, games, specialty classes, etc). Registration is required.

IMPACT Youth Night // Monthly // Dates: May 26, July 28, August 25 (6:30-8:30 pm) // Register online // IMPACT! features a special activity, dinner and prayer time.

MID-COUNTY

1200 S. Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63131
(314) 991-0546
salemstlouis.com

SOUTH-CITY

6701 Virginia Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63111
(314) 256-0545
theconnectionstlouis.com

**PLEASE SEND ALL MAIL FOR BOTH SITES TO
THE MID-COUNTY ADDRESS. THANK YOU!**

WORSHIP IN-PERSON OR ONLINE

In-Person Worship Schedule

Mid-County: 9:30 am - Modern Worship (Multipurpose Room)

Mid-County: 11:00 am - Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)

South-City: 11:00 am - Modern Worship (The Connection Sanctuary)

Online Worship Schedule Sundays or Anytime On-Demand

9:30 am - Modern Worship Livestream

11:00 am - Traditional Worship Livestream