

JANUARY 2026, VOLUME 76, NO. 1

Chapel Chimes

"SHARING FAITH, LIFTING UP, REACHING OUT AND GROWING TOGETHER."

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, PLYMOUTH, WISCONSIN

First Notes

by Council President - Paul Clarke



Dear Friends and Members of Salem,

Welcome to the first of the newsletters for 2026. Happy New Year! Pastor Gary's time with us as interim came and went so quickly --- a challenging and rewarding time for us as we entered into a time of transition.

Before I get ahead of myself, just a word on the status of pastoral leadership for the near future. We will enjoy pulpit supply for the next several months and you will find the mix to be familiar and yet different. We continue to search for what's call a "settled pastor" and meanwhile hope to secure an interim pastor to help guide the processes already underway.

We had interviewed an interim pastor for the new year however, the pastor lined up to serve changed course and went with an offer out of state which means the interim we anticipated could not leave as planned. The good news is we have interested and inspiring pastors to assist us in the short term. I have been in regular conversation with Rev. Jane Anderson of the Conference and as well with representatives of various teams at Salem (along with the Council) as to next steps. Prayers as we search for an interim and eventually settled pastor are welcome.

Meanwhile, we will continue to carve into the "critical projects" voted on at the visioning session in November. The top 3:

1. Be Involved and Included in the community. From coordination and welcoming of guests, to hosting free meals, and being active in the network of community events e.g. Habitat for Humanity, etc.

2. Music. Inspiring and diverse music types, concerts, open mic nights, fill the accompanist position, and providing special music.
3. Intergenerational Family and Children Programming. Hosting Christian music events, mission trips, vacation bible school, adult discussion groups, and many other opportunities.

By end of January, Council will select three (3) from the 13 individuals that have volunteered to be primary coordinators of the above “critical projects.” They will establish planning sessions. All members and friends are expected to participate in responding to God’s call for the ministry of Salem United Church of Christ in Plymouth.

Your support and cooperation means a great deal. God is still speaking and we are listening for that small whisper of the spirit guiding us to new things. United in Christ.

Paul Clarke, Council President

**ATTENTION
PLEASE**



**OF SALEM UCC
CONGREGATION**

**Sunday, February 22, 2026
11:00 a.m. Annual Congregational Meeting**

Copies of the 2025 Annual Report will be available 2 weeks prior to the meeting from the Church Office via email or in the narthex.

Reports from various committees and support teams are welcome any time but will be needed before January 20th.



Salem Cares will take your unneeded holiday decorations! As you sort through decorations this holiday season, keep in mind that we would be glad to take any items you no longer want to keep. The Holiday Decorations room at the Craft Fair in November was a big hit and we plan to hold it again next year. You can bring items to the church office anytime and we’ll store them here until next November’s Fair.

The Giving Tree - Thanks to You!

The outpouring of love and support for these local organizations was evident in the many baskets of items under the tree in the narthex.

Your donations were contributed to these local causes:

Bridgeway, Fairview School, Plymouth Panther Student Sharing Closet, Sheboygan County Warming Center, Plymouth Food Pantry and many more! Your gifts (more than 300 items!) gave hope to so many - thank you!

Thank you!

The children and young people of Salem provided an insightful message on traditions and symbols of Christmas in December at the Christmas Program. Special thanks to the teachers and leaders (and choir!) for this event to remember. If you missed it, look on Salem's Facebook page and enjoy this treasured program.



Would you take over coordinating the recently launched “Journeys in Faith” discussions?

Designed for adult discussion, the last few gatherings fizzed out with holiday activities. Pastor Gary had led the discussion however the intent was for the gathering to continue with a “leader-type” rotation.

Meeting every other Sunday at 8:30AM in the Library, we left off with watching and discussing the same videos that our 3rd Year Confirmation students are studying. The topics cause us to reflect and discuss our shared journey in discovering God's will and being faithful Christians. This is not a quiz of bible knowledge but rather a study/reflection of your faith journey. **Please contact the church office if you can make time to reignite this time of adult fellowship.**



Night To Shine - Friday, February 13, 2026

Salem Church will again be hosting a portion of the 2026 Sheboygan County Night to Shine event, along with Christian Life Church, on Fri., Feb. 13.

Please consider joining us as a volunteer or providing financial or other support to help make this another wonderful event for the honored kings and queens. There will be more details shared in the coming weeks to become more involved in this stellar event!

Contact Mary Bender with questions.



BIRTHDAYS

| | | | |
|------|-----------------|------|------------------|
| 1/1 | Cindy Conrad | 1/18 | Corrine Vorpapel |
| 1/2 | Dale Knuth | 1/18 | Jan Koepsell |
| 1/5 | Betty Davenport | 1/18 | John Hoppert |
| 1/8 | Denise Buss | 1/19 | Susan Clarke |
| 1/8 | Edward York | 1/21 | Quinn Wilson |
| 1/10 | Laurie Born | 1/22 | Richard Jarosch |
| 1/11 | Kevin Bunyea | 1/25 | Carter Pratt |
| 1/16 | Jim LeMahieu | 1/30 | Deanna Lindow |

January

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

1/1 Larry and Sharon Zwerg

Sing!

"MUSIC IS A BRIDGE THAT LEADS US TO GOD. IT CAN LIFT OUR SPIRITS, NOT BECAUSE IT DISTRACTS US FROM LIFE'S TROUBLES, BUT BECAUSE IT REMINDS US THAT WE ARE MORE THAN OUR PROBLEMS."

POPE LEO XIV

**Choir practice is
Wednesdays at
7PM. Join us!**

WORSHIP

January 2026

January 4 Epiphany Sunday - Holy Communion 10AM

Leading Worship: Rev. Tom Schroeder

Hosting Coffee Hour: Salem Cares

January 11 Baptism of Christ 10AM

Leading Worship: Rev. Greg Whelton

January 18 Fourth Sunday after Christmas 10AM

Leading Worship: Letha Haucke

January 25 Fifth Sunday after Christmas 10AM

Leading Worship: Letha Haucke



Baked Beans
is being requested by the
Plymouth Food Pantry for the
month of January



Thinking of You Blessings to you as you turn the calendar to a new year filled with possibilities and framed with care.

Rollie Bruggink, Eugene Boll, Georgine Littlefield, Marian Lisowe, Jerome Miller, Tim Miller, Margaret Johnston, Corrine Vorpapel, Mariann Picard, Gladys Palm, Gloria Eldredge, Ron Bloemers, and Dolores Bohrmueller



**POINSETTIA PLANTS ARE PLACED AT THE ALTAR IN
MEMORY / IN HONOR OF LOVED ONES.**

IN HONOR OF

John, Gretchen, Lauren and Liam Richards by Bonnie Bermke

Grandchildren Isabella Tracy, Lena & Ian Schoenefeld by Lorena McKerrow

IN MEMORY OF

Jake, Larry and Jacob Lisowe placed by Marian Lisowe

Steve Rortvedt placed by Cheryl Rortvedt

John & Eleanor Dees placed by Theresa Dees

Fred Wehrmann placed by Theresa Dees

*Ham & Evie Gundersen placed by Karole and John Scott, David Gundersen,
Judy Gundersen and Pete Anderson, and families*

All Loved Ones placed by Aurelia Schuricht

*Ed Titel, Milton & Lorena Raeder, Reinhard & Caroline Titel, Louise
Haschenburger and Willard Schmitz placed by Delores Titel*

Bruce Bunyea placed by Janice Bunyea and Family

Ansel Tupper placed by Janice Bunyea and Family

Sharon Schoenefeld placed by Ron Schoenefeld

Daniel Klotz placed by Paulette Klotz

Ron Holzmann placed by Sandra Holzmann

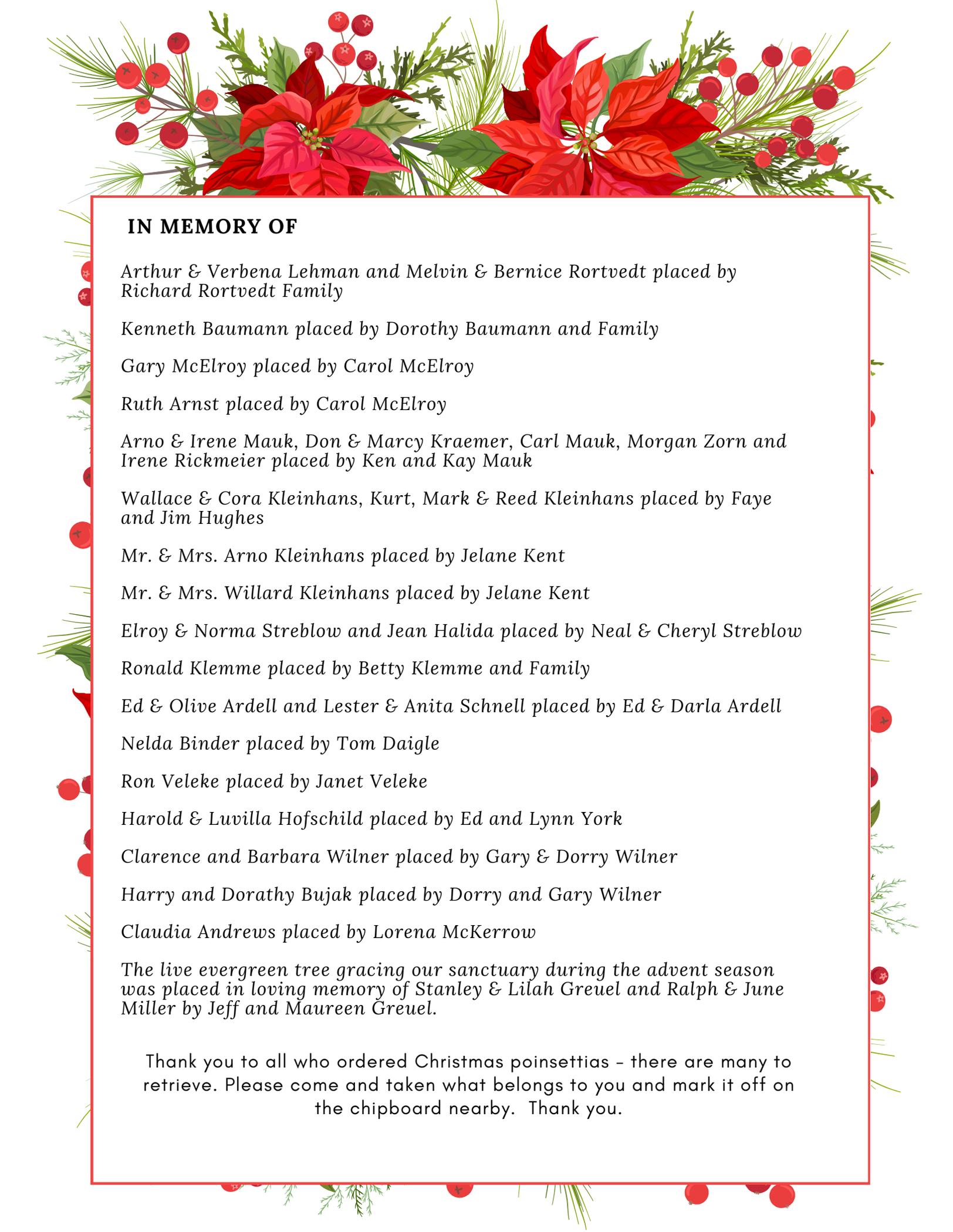
Bernice Daigle placed by Steve and Betty Davenport

Hazel Davenport and Linda Long placed by Steve and Betty Davenport

*Alvin & Dorothy Schroeder, and JoAnne Steenberg placed by Judy and Bill
Helmer & Family*

Gertrude & Milford Leverenz placed by Mark Leverenz & Louise Leverenz

*Ralph Bermke, John & Edna Richards, Clarence & Hildegard Bermke placed
by Bonnie Bermke*



IN MEMORY OF

*Arthur & Verbena Lehman and Melvin & Bernice Rortvedt placed by
Richard Rortvedt Family*

Kenneth Baumann placed by Dorothy Baumann and Family

Gary McElroy placed by Carol McElroy

Ruth Arnst placed by Carol McElroy

*Arno & Irene Mauk, Don & Marcy Kraemer, Carl Mauk, Morgan Zorn and
Irene Rickmeier placed by Ken and Kay Mauk*

*Wallace & Cora Kleinhans, Kurt, Mark & Reed Kleinhans placed by Faye
and Jim Hughes*

Mr. & Mrs. Arno Kleinhans placed by Jelane Kent

Mr. & Mrs. Willard Kleinhans placed by Jelane Kent

Elroy & Norma Streblov and Jean Halida placed by Neal & Cheryl Streblov

Ronald Klemme placed by Betty Klemme and Family

Ed & Olive Ardell and Lester & Anita Schnell placed by Ed & Darla Ardell

Nelda Binder placed by Tom Daigle

Ron Veleke placed by Janet Veleke

Harold & Luvilla Hofschild placed by Ed and Lynn York

Clarence and Barbara Wilner placed by Gary & Dorry Wilner

Harry and Dorathy Bujak placed by Dorry and Gary Wilner

Claudia Andrews placed by Lorena McKerrow

*The live evergreen tree gracing our sanctuary during the advent season
was placed in loving memory of Stanley & Lilah Greuel and Ralph & June
Miller by Jeff and Maureen Greuel.*

Thank you to all who ordered Christmas poinsettias - there are many to
retrieve. Please come and taken what belongs to you and mark it off on
the chipboard nearby. Thank you.

JANUARY 2026

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|--|---|---|-----------|--|
| <p>4 Epiphany Service 9am Church School 10am Worship with Holy Communion 11am Coffee Hosts: Salem Cares 7pm Alcoholics Anonymous</p> | <p>5 9am Men's Group 9am Women's Coffee 6pm Worship Team</p> | <p>6 <i>Items due for Bulletin</i> 7p Kettle Squares</p> | <p>7 6:15 Confirmation 7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p> | <p>1 Happy New Year! Office closed</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>3 6pm Kettle Squares</p> |
| <p>11 9am Church School 10am Worship 7pm Alcoholics Anonymous</p> | <p>12 9am Men's Group 9am Women's Coffee</p> | <p>13 <i>Items due for Bulletin</i> 5:30pm Willing Workers 6:30pm Council Meeting</p> | <p>14 5:30p Mentor Meal Year 3 6:15 Confirmation 7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p> | <p>15</p> | <p>16</p> | <p>17 6pm Kettle Squares</p> |
| <p>18 9am Church School 10am Worship /Choir 7pm Alcoholics Anonymous</p> | <p>19 9am Men's Group 6:30pm Special Gifts Team Mtg. (Zoom) Meeting</p> | <p>20 <i>Items due for Bulletin</i> <i>Annual Reports due for Congregational Meeting</i></p> | <p>21 <i>Articles Due for Newsletter</i> 6:15 Confirmation 7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p> | <p>22</p> | <p>23</p> | <p>24 6pm Kettle Squares</p> |
| <p>25 9am Church School 10am Worship 7pm Alcoholics Anonymous</p> | <p>26 9am Men's Group 9am Salem Cares 6:30pm Night To Shine Meeting</p> | <p>27 <i>Items due for Bulletin</i></p> | <p>28 6:15 Confirmation 7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p> | <p>29 5pm—9PM Buddy Training Night to Shine</p> | <p>30</p> | <p>33 8am—11AM Buddy Training Night to Shine</p> |

In case of inclement weather, please tune to 1420AM (Cow Country) or 1330AM (WHBL) for any weather-related cancellations. Or check our Facebook page! If Confirmation classes are cancelled on Wednesday evenings, students will be contacted.

Salem United Church of Christ
217 Salem Drive
Plymouth, WI 53073

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PASTOR: (Search Continues)
MUSIC DIRECTOR: Anne Hernandez / CHOIR DIRECTOR: Eileen Brooks
COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Paul Clarke
TREASURER: Joshua Bender
FINANCIAL SECRETARY: Mary Bender
CUSTODIAN: Shannon Mendenhall
CHURCH SECRETARY: Linda Bosman/Sandy Rabe
ORGANIST: Scott Weir

*CHAPEL CHIMES IS A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED IN THE
INTEREST OF FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF SALEM UCC*

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY 9-4
To reach us during the week: (920) 892-7456 OR Email: churchoffice@salemuccplywi.org
Website: www.salemuccplywi.org

SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
“Sharing faith, lifting up, reaching out and growing together.”

JANUARY 2026
VOLUME 76 No. 1