

Hello, Church.

You realize that *YOU* are the Church, right? I know that Pastor Slim used to tell you that; I know I have told you that; I would imagine other pastors and preachers have told you that. But do you remember it? We have a neat, old building, but that isn't the Church...it's only the Church's (your) building. We belong to a denomination (Lutheran) and an organization (Lutheran Congregation in Mission for Christ - Augustana District), but that isn't the Church...it's only the Church's identifier. The true Church is *YOU*.

You, your ancestors, your children, and believers all around the world are Church. And we keep on celebrating who we are. We also are continually being formed further into Church. We are formed when we hear God's word and share in the Sacraments; when we gather to challenge and support our brothers and sisters; when we reach out to others and their organizations; when we pray as individuals or in groups; when we socialize in respectful and fun ways; when we educate ourselves about our Scriptures and our History.

As Salem Church, we are doing all of this and doing it well. A larger and larger group of folks – younger and older – have gathered on Sundays for our 9:30 service. An impressive group of people met on the Wednesday nights of Lent to learn. A half-dozen or so leaders of our Church went to a training event on how to be an even better Church. A group of folks went to the MapleFest at Glenna farms as a social event. The first Date Night (an opportunity to drop younger kids off at the Church's building to be watched while mom and dad go out) was

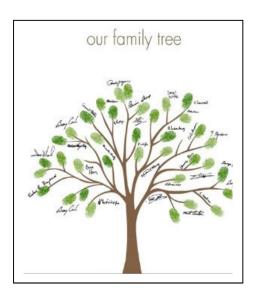
received well with plans for more of them in the future. We've donated to Doctors In India and Family Pathways Food Shelf. The Easter garden helped us worship throughout the spring. We've gotten new Bibles for our Church's building. We continue to maintain and improve our grounds and building. Memorial Day found the largest group of folks I've ever seen attend the service in our cemetery. We've baptized Meta Tauer, shared in Lane Nelson's and Ivan Nechal's first communions, witnessed Andy and Jenny Dullum's marriage, and helped Larry and Donna Nelson celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. We've honored Anita for her ten years of service/ministry at the organ, other



couples on their 'lesser' anniversaries, and many people on their birthdays. We honored the Nels Nelson family on our Heritage Day. We have prayed, grown, and celebrated as a Church.

Coming up, we will have further opportunities to continue to be Church, too:

- July 9th... Military Bible Stick presentation,
- July 14th... Date night,
- July 30th... Doctors in India presentation,
- Aug 6th... Annual Parish Picnic,
- Aug 27th... Gideons presentation,
- Sept 10th.... Sunday school start-up,
- Sept 29th... Date night,
- Oct 1st... New member appreciation Sunday,
- End of Oct...Fall clean-up of the grounds.
- Nov 10th... Date night,
- Nov 22nd... Thanksgiving service,
- and, watch for a date for a fun family activity.



Besides this newsletter and the various gatherings (don't forget Sundays!) we have, you can check out our new FaceBook page https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q+salem%20 lutheran%20church%20of%20oxford (maintained by Emily Egan) or our website http://salemlc-oxford.org/ (maintained by Jerry Youngquist) to stay informed and formed as part of our Church. Please appreciate these two and Joan Butler for her help publishing this newsletter (our mailing list grows, and Joan could use some help with this – any takers?).

We also want to appreciate Jenny Dullum, Char Smith, and Gateway Signs for their donation of the picnic signs and the 'cemetery rules' sign (designed by Laura Aho). The new cemetery rules (approved by the cemetery committee and the parish council) are also included here.

Many others give much of their time and talent to keep Salem going as Church; make sure we take time to appreciate them. Folks are motivated by the Spirit and God's grace to make and be Church. This started almost 2000 years ago when the Spirit came to the disciples and establishing the Church (the people of God); we just celebrated this 'birthday' on Pentecost Sunday about a month ago. The Holy Spirit still comes to us – the Church – today and all year-



long. We are being further formed by the Spirit into the Church. We are blessed at Salem by the Spirit...we can tell because of the 'success' we are having at being Church. Praise and thanks be given to God for this 'success'.

As always, you are all invited to be a part of this 'successful Church'. Come be a part of God's holy work at Salem Church, your Church, YOU! Peace and blessings to you this summer.

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