

Our Savior's Voice

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

359 Leonard Street N - West Salem, WI 54669

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

608-786-0030

April 2024



Vision Statement:

***We are a church centered in Christ,
inviting all into a community of worship,
nurturing all to be disciples of Jesus.
Together we reach out to make a difference
here and throughout the world.***

Our Savior's Voice

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Worship Opportunities

Saturday 6 PM
Sunday 8 & 10:30 AM

Livestreaming of 10:30 worship!

Find the livestreaming link on the home page of our web site (www.oursaviorswestsalem.org).



Livestreams remain on the YouTube page for later viewing as well, or go to the video page of our web site to view worship when the time works for you!



- ♥ Jesus is Lord and Savior.
- ♥ All are welcome, and we are intentional about that welcome.
- ♥ God gifts and calls every one of every age to be a difference maker in the world.
- ♥ We treasure the gift of creation and embrace the call to protect God's world.
- ♥ We value the gathering of God's people in worship and all our ministries.
- ♥ We seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in a world that has changed dramatically.



Pastor's Reflections ...

April Fool's ...

Holy Week ... Easter ... and the time of year. Interesting things can, and have happened over the years. Kind of like the Bermuda Triangle, crazy things come together when the stars are (literally) just right!

*When the
Stars Align*

Like many years ago, when I lived next door to the church, and I spent time on Good Friday opening the street drain in front of my home so the water in the street from the melting snow had somewhere to go – because the next day was going to be close to zero – and there would be inches of solid ice on the street, right in front of the church, right in time for Easter morning.

Or the year I piled up the melting snow to keep enough there to hold up a cross that we put out in the snow every year for Easter.

Or the year Easter morning was bright and sunny, but about 3 PM the snow began...and didn't stop!

Or the year Easter sunrise was also "time-change Sunday." 6 AM worship ... needed to be there around 5 AM ... which felt like 4 AM.

Or just recently, 2021, still in Covid, when Pastor Jean and I recorded the Easter sermon at Swarthout Park, just as the sun was rising. Cool picture! I can show that one to you, or just go back to that video on our web site.

Or the year two years (1988 and 1994) that Good Friday was...you guessed it, April Fool's Day! Or more recently, Easter in 2018. Some good preaching angles there!

And then, this year? Easter on Sunday...April Fool's on Monday. How perfect is that? After all, we will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, the triumph over sin, death and evil, and all that stuff. And we will proclaim that it really happened (hint – it did!).



Happened, yes, but ... will it make a difference? Or on Monday morning, as a new month begins, will the world cry out, “April Fool’s,” and all will be as it was?



Good question! And maybe the key question.

Sure, it's great to rejoice in the risen Christ, to celebrate life, to sing the “A” word again. But come Monday, will it mean anything? Will it REALLY mean anything? Or is this just a Sunday high followed by Monday blues?

Yet, that is what we affirm. Well, two things really. First, that in Jesus, 2000 years ago, God acted. In a moment that changed history, in the decisive act of all time, God took on sin, evil, and death – all the stuff that wears us down and breaks us – and restored the world – the whole world – including us! 2000 years ago.

But we also affirm that despite all we see around us, all the crummy stuff in the world, God is still at work. Still filling us with the gifts of grace. Still embracing us through the presence of Jesus. Still bringing life out of death. Then – 2000 years ago – and now, right now. Today.

Is that really possible? Is it at all credible that something from 2000 years ago continues even today, even in the midst of a rapidly changing (and not always for the better) world?

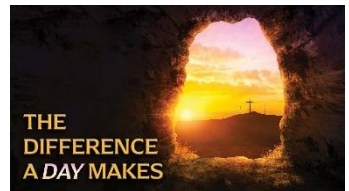
The answer? April Fool's! But not what you might expect.

We look around on Monday morning, and see a world as it was on Friday. Still pretty bleak and cold, heartless and even violent. Not much has changed. So, there you go – April Fool’s, and the joke is on us.

Yet, it is precisely in this kind of a world that God is eager to work, anxious to love, and itching to bring life. It is precisely because the world is as it is, that God comes to us in the once crucified, now risen, Jesus. Or to put it another way, if the world wasn’t what it is, there would be no need for Jesus. We have Jesus not despite the dark and foreboding world around us, but because of it. “God so loved the world” – (remember John 3:16?) – that he gave ... Jesus!

And so, yes, April Fool’s! But not on us, on the world and the forces that conspire against life, which, by the way, because of our sinfulness, sometimes includes us. But whether it is me as the sinner, or me as the victim of stuff around me, it is always the crucified, now risen, Jesus, who lifts me up and restores me to life.

And that is the ultimate April Fool’s joke. For while the forces around us (and even inside us) may relish the day after as a return to the norm, we know that in Jesus, God creates a new normal – a normal of life thriving, not just in the wonder and beauty of Easter, but even in the chaos, anxiousness, even despair of Monday.



That reality that life thrives where it should not, is the gift of Easter, that what happened on a Sunday 2000 years ago makes a difference even this year. A real difference. The difference of life.



Life and hope, even in the midst of what seems to be death and hopelessness. Now that’s April Fool’s!

Pastor Jon

New Member Classes Set!

But maybe for “old-timers” too?



Our Savior’s welcomes all people to be a part of our ministries, whether or not you are a member. But for many folks, being a member, being a part of things, is important. So ... in April and May we will offer a four-week class on what it means to be a “Lutheran Christian” – for anyone who wants to join the congregation – *and for anyone just wanting to brush up!*

Two sessions – take your pick ...

New Member Class



Sunday at 9:15 AM
April 21 + May 5-12-19

Wednesday at 6:30 PM
April 24 + May 1-8-15

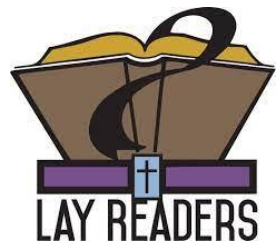
We will meet in the Koinonia Room. Participants will be eligible to join the congregation, but no obligation – most of all, just come and share, learn, and connect!

See Pastor Jon for more information!

Readers

If you would like to read lessons during worship, we would love to have you. Use the SignUpGenius link to sign up:

www.signupgenius.com/go/20F044CA5A629A7F85-reader
or call the church office (608-786-0030) and we’ll help.



Faith Formation ...



Sunday School

The Alleluia's have been unburied and the kids raised the roof with their singing on Easter Sunday. What a joyous celebration! These next weeks of class we are in the season of Easter, learning about being disciples of Jesus and remembering that "Jesus is in our heads, and in our hearts, and in all that we do" – making the sign of the cross as we say the words.

We are beginning the homestretch for Sunday School as we look towards **Mother's Day** and the last day to be together. The kids will once again **sing in worship** that morning.

We have been having a great time in Sunday School! We continue to welcome new kids all the time ... and we are excited to have them joining us!



First Communion

First Communion Instruction

We welcomed the following 5th graders to the Lord's Table during worship on Maundy Thursday:

Owen Christianson
Noah Evenson
Kaelyn Hebrink
Ava Johnsrude
Addyson Knebes

Lauryn Langrehr
Brooklyn Marinelli
Bailey Miller
Mabel Sjoquist
Ellie Tlustosch

Sunday School Offering ... Water is Life

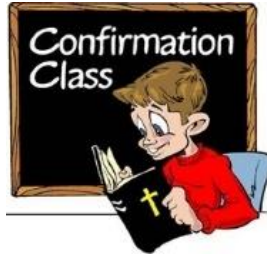
Our Sunday School children continue to work towards helping those without a proper water source to get the water that will bring them life. A simple water well costs \$2,500. We are on our way doing our part to obtain a share of providing a well with \$508 collected already.

Check it out ... we're *REALLY* off the bulletin board!



The kids were challenged to fill TWO buckets during Lent ... and they came through with just under FOUR - \$118! Each bucket holds \$30! Thanks for making a difference in the lives of people!

Faith Formation ...



Confirmation Ministry

April brings renewed confirmation classes!

6th graders resume meeting on Wednesday evenings at 6 PM, and we even have a new student (*there's always time and room for more!*).

7th graders also resume classes, studying the Apostle's Creed and Servant Leadership on April 3-10-17. No class on April 24.

8th graders have one more class on the Apostle's Creed (April 3), and Servant Leadership (April 10), and then a closing session on April 17.

9th graders have their closing session on April 10.

After School also resumes April 3. Thank you to all the parents who have provided meals for our kids!

Affirmation of Baptism

Aka “Confirmation”

The **Rite of Affirmation of Baptism** happens twice this year as we are in the process of changing our confirmation program. Both 8th and 9th graders will affirm their baptisms in April, split between two dates.



April 14
and
April 28

10:30 AM worship

Please keep our young people in your prayers as they affirm their baptism and move on into a life of faithful discipleship!

8th Grade:

Isaac Arentz

Will Byom

Deanna Christianson

Arianna Clements

Zander Clements

Candace Drury

Anna Gross

Jesse Jothan

Campbell Laack

Landon Labus

Leah Langrehr

Casey Mathison

Lily Muellenberg

Mya Peterson

Madison Phillips

Ethan Quackenbush

Anya Tenner

Anna Witte

9th Grade:

William Clements

Gunnar Eckland

Charlie Fullwood

Julia Hansen

Sophie Hanson

Charlie Ihle

Grace Johnsrude

Noah Johnsrude

Isaiah Laack

Lexi Marinelli

Briauna Mathison

Drew McConkey

Mara McNaughton

Tula Mitchell

Jaxen Quackenbush

Brooke Rasmussen

Graham Sjoquist

Nathan Stefferud

Arianna Stugen

Lily Twite

Landon Weiland

Alicia Zarecki

As our college students are studying in challenging environments at home or on

college
connection



campus, we keep them in our thoughts and prayers. This month please pray for: **Brandon Riley** (WTC), **WyndSOR Goodenough** (UW-EC), **Angela Vick** (UW-L), **Mali Hemker** (UW-EC), and **Jacob Helgeson** (Viterbo).



College Scholarships

A reminder that applications for college scholarships are due **Monday, May 6**. High School seniors who are members of Our Savior's are eligible for a one-time scholarship of between \$500 and \$1,000. Information will be sent to our seniors, or check online at: oursaviorswestsalem.org/youth-and-family.

A one-time scholarship for sophomore year is also available to Our Savior's members who are college freshmen and have been connected to a church or campus ministry. More information is also available on the website.

For more information, see Pastor Jon.



Adult Bible Study

Wednesdays 9:30-11 AM
In the Library – or join us by Zoom

We are still studying ... so much to learn ... and, yes, really, fun to be had! Come and join us as we study the coming Sunday's gospel reading, ponder God's message to us, and have some time for good conversation and fellowship.

See Pastor Jon for more information, or to get the Zoom link.

**Coffee & Conversation
at Linda's Bakery
9:30 AM on Tuesday, April 9**



In Loving Memory

Memorial Gifts Received ...

*In Memory of Charlotte Swenson for
Building Fund*

From Judy Long

In Memory of Jean McCall for Building Fund

From Carla Burkhardt





SUGAR CREEK BIBLE CAMP - 2024

It's not too early to start thinking about Summer Bible Camp!
To find out more information about the summer schedule,
check out their website at:

<http://wp.sugarcreekbiblecamp.org/>

OUR SAVIOR'S CAMPERSHIPS AVAILABLE

\$350 full week -- \$150 half week

**Request forms due in the church office
NO LATER than May 2nd**

(Coming soon ... forms to be available in the church office,
or on the website – www.oursaviorswestsalem.org)

Remember that camperships will be given to the campers in
worship on May 11-12 and it is the responsibility of the family to
get the checks to camp.



Hungry Jar Offering for April OSLC Sugar Creek Camperships

Sugar Creek helps young people to be grounded in a Christ-centered, safe, and fun environment. It is a place for them to grow, and reinforces the importance of staying connected in our churches. It is a place where children can see role models in the college-aged staff who love Jesus and can excite them to a life of faith. At Sugar Creek youth are encouraged to make good choices, to share the love, joy and hope that a life of faith brings.

More than once we have heard what a difference Sugar Creek has made in the life of a young person!!

It costs almost \$800 to send a child to camp for a week. Our Savior's is committed to providing Camperships to help with the cost. Your generous contributions will help provide a camping experience for all who want to attend – no one is turned away.



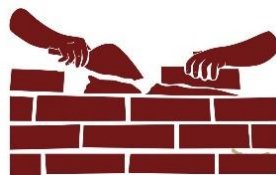
Thank you for your generous donations to the Hungry Jar ...
♥ February – LaCrosse Warming Center
- \$509.67

Building Projects Update

As we have been waiting through the winter months, it's now time for our building projects to begin!

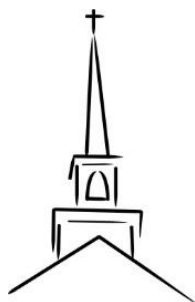
Roof and Tuckpointing

The flat roof and tuckpointing, which we approved last June, will begin in mid-April, and be completed by the end of May. The new roof replaces the 25-year-old roof, which has needed occasional patching over the past few years. The tuckpointing will refurbish our brickwork, but will also include caulking windows where needed.



Pitched roof and siding storm damage

The pitched roof, siding, and skylights, which were damaged in the storm last July, will be replaced at the same time. The roof was part of our long-term plan, and while insurance will not cover the full cost, it will significantly reduce our future outlays.



New Organ



We have heard that the new organ, provided by a generous gift, will be installed after worship on Sunday, May 5. During worship that weekend we will give thanks to God for the current organ, and for the music it provided us. A dedication of the new organ will follow sometime in late May or early June.

CAUTION

Please note that **during the work period** the entrance by the alley

may be restricted due to equipment in place. Please **use the East Avenue entrance** instead.

PLEASE USE OTHER DOOR



Finally, **THANK YOU** to all who have so far supported these projects. We are still a bit short, but we are getting close. Your gifts to the capital appeal are greatly appreciated!

For more information see Jeff Haldeman or one of the pastors.



Tech Invite

As we continue to roll out our new tech in the sanctuary, we are looking for folk who are interested in “working the system.” If you might be one of

them, Dean Olson invites you to join him during worship and see how it all comes together – and maybe discover that it isn’t as overwhelming as it looks! See Dean or Pastor Jon for more information.





Bed Building! Saturday, April 27th

Our Savior's will be hosting a bed build for the local chapter of Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP) that serves La Crosse County on Saturday, April 27th at the Lion's Shelter from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm. The goal is to build 30 beds with 60 volunteers. Come and join us! (*Idea: NHS hours??*)

What is Sleep in Heavenly Peace?

At SHP, we fully believe that a bed is a basic need for the proper physical, emotional, and mental support that a child needs. When it was brought to our attention that the need for beds went far beyond our own neighborhoods, we stepped up and took initiative. We're a national organization answering the call to a national problem. There are over 270 chapters nationwide and have recently expanded into Canada.

*That's where Sleep in Heavenly Peace comes in. We're a group of volunteers dedicated to building, assembling and delivering top-notch bunk beds to children and families in need. Our organization has grown steadily over time, and we're working on opening more chapters in different states to serve more people. **NO KID SLEEPS ON THE FLOOR IN OUR TOWN!**[®]*



For more information on Sleep in Heavenly Peace, go to: shpbeds.org/about-sleep-heavenly-peace/

And for more information on the bed build contact Linda Arentz or one of the pastors.

Use this link to sign up: <https://x.gldn.io/QoFVq34M6Hb>



Thank you ...

... to the March newsletter mailing crew: Larry & Connie Blunck, Renee Herman, and Carol Thompson.

... to all who made soup and desserts for the Lenten Soup Suppers ... to all who helped serve and clean up ... and to Jeff Haldeman for organizing everything and keeping it altogether!

Received from others ...

... Thank you to everyone that has reached out with messages, cards, and gifts to our family in the past few months, and for all the thoughts and prayers for our little Lincoln. A special big Thank You to those that took the time to provide a meal for us. They were greatly appreciated and a big help after long days in the clinic or trips to Madison. Lincoln is doing well and growing stronger every day! Please visit our CaringBridge site for more on his journey by searching "Lincoln Brockmeyer" on the site.

Jason, Valerie, Braxton, & Lincoln Brockmeyer

Mission Endowment Fund recipients ...

... On behalf of the Board of the Community Care and Share Pantry, we want to thank you for your recent donation. Every dollar and food donation shows that you care about the various communities we serve. Thank you for your generous donation of \$750. These funds will enable us to more effectively serve our community. Thank you!

Lil Twining, Treasurer



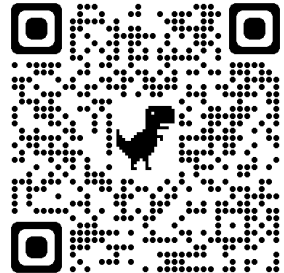
**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

Financial Support Ministry

As we approach the end of the year!

THANK YOU!!! *Thank you for your continued financial support of our ministry together!*

Over the past few months ministries have been “cooking,” especially Sunday School, with new kids and bigger classes! Our Sunday School ministry – and all our ministries – happen because of your generosity and support. So, thank you!



Financial gifts can be shared in worship, by mail, or placed in our locked mailbox. You can also make gifts electronically. Go to www.oursaviorswestsaalem.org/giving or use our QR code.

*Thank you for your support.
We are grateful for your partnership as
we proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ!*

By the numbers...



Ministry is not a numbers game, but numbers can help us get a feel for what is happening as we carry out our part of God's work in the world! Numbers help us

measure our faithful response to God's call, both in our financial support and our worship life. So ... here is a snapshot of our ministry ... by the numbers!

2024 Ministry at Work			
	Actual-Feb	Actual-YTD	Budget-YTD
Income	\$25,335.20	\$48,179.98	\$61,725.00
Prepaid		\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00
Expense	\$32,020.53	\$60,814.55	\$63,895.70
Net	(\$6,069.98)	(\$3,634.57)	
2024 Worship Life – Weekly average			
	In-building Actual	Online Estimate	TOTAL
February	203	93	296
Year to Date	183	82	265



Congregation Council

The Congregation Council met on Monday, March 11, with President Jeff Haldeman presiding.

At this meeting the council:

- Celebrated Pastor Jean's birthday with special treats.
- Watched a video on council decision making and shared in opening devotions based on Ephesians 4.
- Approved minutes from the February meeting and the special congregation meeting of February 25, and received financial reports and pastor's reports.
- Heard a report on youth ministry conversations.
- Discussed worship and the continuing presence of new people in our midst. Heard that worship attendance is up 40/week over the first two months of the year.
- Appointed Sharon Olson to a three-year term on the Audit Committee.
- Discussed some thoughts from the family on the Eggen Seminary Scholarship Fund, and directed the pastors to follow up with the family.
- Heard that the new organ will be installed after worship on May 5, and decided to gift Linda Berg with the old organ bench.
- Received a report from Pastor Jon on his plans for his upcoming sabbatical.
- Discussed membership review and decided to reach out to persons who have not worshipped in the past few years with an invitation to join Holy Week/Easter worship.
- Authorized the reallocation of scrip dollars from families without school age children with half of the money going to camperships and the other half to be reserved for a future mission trip.

The council next meets on Monday, April 8 at 7 PM. If you have questions, or if you have ideas for enhancing the ministry of Our Savior's, contact Jeff Haldeman or one of the pastors.



Mission Endowment Fund

We continue our series of articles on Endowments, what they are, what they do, and how they can support the ministry of Our Savior's Mission Endowment Fund in ways that work for you.

Wealth Replacement Life Insurance

Wealth Replacement Life Insurance is a tool used to facilitate some life income gifts to ministry. The concept is for an insurable donor to make a gift for ministry to Our Savior's or another ministry such as Sugar Creek or Campus Ministry. The donor then receives a life income. Part of that income is used to purchase life insurance on the donor's life. This insurance policy is put into a trust for the donor's heirs. At death, this trust is paid to the heirs/beneficiaries to replace the wealth that was given to ministry. If a life income gift is for you, wealth replacement insurance may be a way for you to preserve your estate value for your heirs.

Gifts to Our Savior's can be directed toward the ongoing ministry of the congregation, or to the Mission Endowment Fund, ensuring that those gifts will continue to make a difference for years to come.

As always, it is important to consult a financial professional to see how this might work for you

For more information speak with one of the pastors, or with a member of Our Savior's Mission Endowment Team – Jeff Rich, Lee Friell, Katie Drury, Melody Schmitz, Scott Thompson.

Worship Leaders - April



April 6-7

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

6 p.m.
Chloe Drury
Kim Arentz
Jon Hetland

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

8 a.m.
Ariel Wuensch
Lynette Ender
Byom Family

10:30 a.m.
Paige Christianson
Naoko Giblin
Gross Family

Home Communion
Altar Guild April

Dottie Baumgartner
Stacey Sjoquist & Tracy Skrentny

April 13-14

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

6 p.m.
Addy Tlustosch
Allison Boudry
Phil & Judy Gilbert

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team
Home Communion

8 a.m.
Camille Godlewski
Melody Schmitz
Jaime Fortier & Tracy Hesse
D&J Wee
Bev Bockenbauer

**10:30 a.m. -
Confirmation 9th**
Claire Gross
Jeff Haldeman &
E&L Ender

April 20-21

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

6 p.m.
Sophia Johnson
Judy Gilbert
Jim & Marjorie Anderson

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team
Home Communion

8 a.m.
A Kendhammer
Berit Gilbertson
K&K Wehrs
Judy Gilbert

10:30 a.m.
Max Langrehr
Jason Stefferud
Brenda Skittone

April 27-28

6 p.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant
Welcoming Team

Olivia Sprehn
Jill Iliff
Todd & Inger Michael

8 a.m.

Worship Assistant
Communion Assistant

Welcoming Team

Home Communion

Alana Steinke
Steve Ahles
Dori Jensen & Wendy Amundson
Tlustosch Family
Carolyn Karl

10:30 a.m. -

Confirmation 8th

Addy Tlustosch
Stacey Sjoquist &
J&M Haldeman



We are looking for members to help out with the June Dairy Days Fun Run! Are you a runner yourself or are you interested in helping organize the fun run? We're looking for you! Contact Carla Burkhardt (608-617-3262) or Judy Gilbert (608-797-3001), to let us know of your interest. We will appreciate your help!

Direct your
Thrivent Choice
Dollars
Today!



Thrivent Choice Dollars

Remember that if you are a Thrivent member you may have “Thrivent Choice Dollars” to direct. Our Savior’s is one of the many potential recipients of your choice dollars, but your direction needs to be made each time. A number of Our Savior’s folk direct their choice dollars – do you? See Thrivent’s web site for more information or stop by the office and we will help you out.



Care and Share Food Pantry

The Care and Share Food Pantry is open Saturdays, 10 AM to Noon. We are thankful for all the donations we have recently received. Many local families have benefited from your generosity. Monetary, food, and personal items are always appreciated.

Scrip Cards Available

Scrip cards make great gifts and help support Our Savior’s Sugar Creek Bible Camp Camperships and World Hunger! You can’t beat that!!

KWIK TRIP

WOODMAN'S



Culver’s, Kwik Trip, Kwik Trip car wash, Woodman’s.

Available after worship services and in the office during the week.

Web Site: www.oursaviorswestsalem.org
OUR SAVIOR'S STAFF

Pastor Jonathan Schmidt, Senior Pastor (608) 612-0217

Email: pastorjon@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Pastor Jean Schmidt, Associate Pastor (608) 612-0217

Email: pastorjean@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Kris Seeger, Administrative Assistant Church Office: (608) 786-0030

Email: office@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Jill Iliff, Treasurer

Email: treasurer@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Linda Berg, Organist/Choir Accompanist/Director of Music

Email: linda@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Laurie Noelke, Handbell Choir Director/Assistant Worship Musician

Eric Sorenson, Senior Choir Director

Karen DeSchepper, Financial Secretary

Josh Corning, Custodian



Newsletter Deadline – April 15

Keeping up with life at Our Savior's

Check out the photo gallery on our website (www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/photo-galleries/) to see what's been happening, including:

- ♥ **Mardi Gras Event**
- ♥ **First Communion Class**
- ♥ **Sunday School Easter Egg Hunt**



Our Savior's Lutheran Church
359 Leonard St N
West Salem, WI 54669

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
West Salem, WI
Permit #21

Change Service Requested