

October

Dear Salem,

This past September, Salem's chairman (Daryl Heinen) provided an "Elder's Corner" email update. Elder's Corner is a monthly communication from the elder board to the members of Salem and is intended to provide a brief update regarding some of the items the elders are thinking and praying about with respect to Salem's ministry and operations. This Elder's Corner will provide an update for the month of October 2021.

For many, the fall season is a blur of activity: new schedules and routines, earlier mornings, new teachers and classrooms, more programs and activities, big projects and deadlines at work, more driving, less sleep, and the list goes on. It's easy to become distracted and worn out by the hustle and bustle of everyday life. But fall is also one of the most beautiful seasons of the year. The fall foliage and colors are truly magnificent and provide a breathtaking reminder of the majesty of our God. If we become too distracted and worn out by the grind of our everyday life, we may miss out on the quickly fading beauty that is all around us. Over the last several weeks, Pastor Seth has been preaching through the book of Ephesians. During this series, we have been reminded again and again of how important (and amazing!) it is to remain rooted in the abundant love of Jesus. Paul reminds us in Ephesians 3 that when the Holy Spirit lives within us, our hearts are changed! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can experience first-hand the incredible and immeasurable love and beauty of Jesus – a beauty that never fades! My prayer is that each of us would slow down, fall to our knees, turn our eyes to Jesus, and bask in the amazing love that He lavishes upon us.

Salem's mission is to Live Lives of Love with God, in Community, and on Mission. Our core values are Love, Truth, Community, and Service. Throughout this last year, the elders have started discussing and praying over a vision for Salem. We are asking God how, as a church body, we should live out our mission and core values. Part of this process has included our study of a book called "Future Church" by Will Mancini. Mancini and other respected church leaders and authors would acknowledge that vision-creation is a slow-drip process; it can take months and perhaps years to complete. For Salem, we acknowledge and embrace the fact that much has changed over the last eighteen months. But our

mission and core values haven't changed! We trust that God will continue shaping this new vision for us, but we expect the process to take time. Would you join us in praying that God would direct our hearts and minds toward a vision that will lead Salem into a powerful new chapter of ministry?

Finally, we are looking forward to presenting the 2022 Budget during the Congregational Meeting on November 14th at 12:45 PM (lunch provided beforehand). Our year-to-date offerings for 2021 are on a similar pace with last year's offerings. We are so thankful for the many generous individuals who have sustained us during another challenging year! However, as we near the end of the fiscal year, we are praying that God will stir the hearts of many cheerful givers to help us finish strong and propel us into 2022. As a reminder, we will be voting on the budget at the Congregational Meeting, so member attendance is expected and strongly encouraged. If you are a member of Salem and are unable to attend, please complete a proxy form in advance of the meeting (proxy forms can be completed online [here](#) or in-person at the Connections Center). The agenda and a copy of the Budget will be emailed to you the Monday prior to the meeting.

On behalf of the elders, thank you for your continued support, encouragement, and prayers. It means so much to us.

Praying Ephesians 3:14-21 together,

Michael Carlson