SALEM SCENE

Salem English Lutheran Church July-August 2026

A Time of Renewal

It's been a year and a half since we were writing a grant in hopes of offering Salem the opportunity to provide me with a sabbatical and all of us with a time of renewal. Months of waiting for a "yes" or "no" (with me having to read the "yes" a hundred times before I believed it) and another year of planning, and now we are here...at the precipice of a 3 month adventure that has been carefully designed to offer rejuvenation to us all.

As I have been preparing for this once in a lifetime opportunity, I have spent a lot of time reflecting on my 25 years of ministry, this amazing faith community, and what this renewal means for me AND for you.

A clergy sabbatical is an intentional time away from daily ministry that gives physical and spiritual rest and renewal, as well as opportunities for learning and growth–SO THAT when a pastor returns, they are renewed and ready for the ministry we will continue to do together. It is ALSO a time for the congregation to do some learning and growing so that when the pastor returns THE CONGREGATION is renewed and ready for the ministry we will continue to do together. (The one thing I lament is that I won't be around for all the amazing opportunities you will have while I am gone!)

Speaking of those opportunities, I realize life is busy, but if you are in town and can make it to church–especially when our Faith & Neighboring Practices team is here offering their wisdom and experiences to us, please do so. Lilly decided the ideas for this time were good enough to give us quite a bit of money to make them happen. I hope that as many of you as possible (from Salem AND SpringHouse) will participate!

I was going to try to write something theological and wise as I leave on this great adventure, but what has been sitting on my heart these past several weeks has been a spirit of so much gratitude. So instead of theological and wise, I'm going for simple gratitude.

So here are some of the people my heart is so grateful for today.

Michelle for helping to write, literally editing our grant in real time, and finding the smallest Sans Serif font so it would fit into the allotted space. Antone for agreeing a year an a half ago that if we were to somehow get awarded this grant he would agree to serve as Salem's pastor for the time I am away. Josh and Maria for being named in the grant and being part of my sabbatical team–helping me know that all will be well. Laurie Z for ALL the extra work she has done and will do for this renewal period. Tom, Paul, and Chris for their consistently amazing music and for always showing up so we never have to worry. The entire Salem council who have been supportive every step of the way...even knowing their leadership will be called on for much over the next three months. The SpringHouse clergy for their unwavering and tangible support, the F&NP team for agreeing to this great big experiment. The SpringHouse staff for picking up any balls I may have dropped. Jimmy H who was very upset when he heard I was leaving–until mom told him I was coming back. All the kids of Salem, who make walking through the doors on Sunday morning extra special–I hope they know they hold a very special place in my heart! And finally, each and every one of you–the members of Salem and SpringHouse–who have stepped up, will step up, and who I know really make this time possible for all of us.

I am so incredibly grateful that Salem has this opportunity for renewal. I have told many of you, and often, that Salem was a completely unexpected path on my journey and I think God got it right for me and for this special place. We've been together now for 10 years (Can you believe it?) and as I prepare to leave you all for the next 3 months, know that I am truly looking forward to what is still to come!

Farewell...for now. Keep me in your prayers, and know that you are always in mine. And now...I'll turn it over to Rev. Antone!

Peace, Pastor Rhonda

Come Celebrate with Us THIS Sunday!

Come join us this Sunday, July 19, for a special worship that will include a liturgy of sending for Pastor Rhonda and installation for Rev. Antone as we head into our sabbatical renewal time.

Then STAY after worship and join all of SpringHouse for Pastor Rhonda's sending lunch. We will have sandwiches and fellowship as we send her off on her very first sabbatical. Come join the fun!

Salem News

Picking Up the Baton

The Peace of Christ be with you! Many of you already know me, but for those who do not, I am Antone Melton-Meaux. It is a privilege and blessing to serve as Interim Pastor while Pastor Rhonda is on her well-deserved sabbatical. I am grateful for the opportunity to walk alongside this congregation during this season and supporting Pastor Rhonda during this time of rest, renewal, and reflection.

While many of you know me as an attorney and mediator, I also completed my seminary training at Union Theological Seminary in New York City and served for several years as a chaplain. I am married to my college sweetheart, Genevieve, and we have two children–Avery (22) and Xavier (soon to be 17). Our family has been part of Salem since 2008, when the congregation was sojourning and gathering for worship in the upper room of Lyndale UCC on 32nd Street. The same Spirit that sustained Salem then continues to guide and strengthen this faith community today. Salem is a congregation rooted in Christ's grace, radically welcoming, committed to justice, and called to be the people of God in our neighborhood and throughout the world.

During this season, we will have the opportunity to reflect, grow, and reimagine together what God is calling us to become as we partner with our friends from the Faith & Neighboring Practices team of the Minneapolis Area Synod. I look forward to worshiping, praying, serving, and discerning alongside you in the days ahead. I am filled with gratitude, hope, and joy as we walk this journey together!

Antone

A Season of Sabbatical & Renewal

Salem Friends,

What an exciting few months we are approaching! I'm so thankful and excited that Pastor Rhonda gets to take this time for renewal and almost equally excited for the many opportunities Salem gets to experience in the time Rhonda is gone. Many events have been planned for Salem to learn about itself and how we can use it to be great neighbors. I'm also super excited for Antone's leadership while Rhonda is gone - we are so blessed! Please make every opportunity to be at church for these great events and send a few prayers up for Rhonda to have an amazing sabbatical!

Sincerely,

Josh Jorstad, Salem Council President

Joint SpringHouse Worship in the Park

Don't miss this wonderful SpringHouse tradition! Come for worship and stay for lunch! Details coming soon@

Joint SpringHouse Worship
Sunday August 16 at 10:00 AM
Wabun Pavilion G

COMING UP

The Sundays of Sabbatical Time

So you don't miss any of the amazing Sundays coming to Salem, here is a schedule of what's happening Sundays during this season of renewal.

7/26: Grace Harrison (F&NP Team) Preaching Luke's story of Jesus on the road to Emmaus. Workshop #1 after worship!

8/2: Rev. Antone Melton-Meaux Preaching

8/9: Rev. Antone Melton-Meaux Preaching

8/16: Joint SpringHouse Worship in the Park (Wabun G)

8/23: F&NP Team Preaching and helping to lead worship. Workshop #2 after worship!

8/30: Rev. Antone Melton-Meaux Preaching. Pastor Dan's Farewell Lunch!

9/1: Labor Day Weekend. Rev. Antone Melton-Meaux Preaching

9/13: Joint SpringHouse Gathering Sunday (Farewell to Pastor Ben Masters)

9/20: F&NP Team Preaching and helping lead worship. Workshop #3 after worship!

9/27: Rev. Antone Melton-Meaux Preaching

10/4: Rev. Antone Melton-Meaux Preaching

10/11: Guest Preacher! Seth Anderson-Matz (multi-traditional community minister and queer public theologian AND FCC administrator)

10/18: Rev. Antone Melton-Meaux Preaching

10/25: Joint SpringHouse Worship to hear Bishop Yvette Flender (Open & Affirming Ministries) Preaching.

Faith & Neighboring Practices

To our friends at Salem English and SpringHouse,

My name is Nicholas Tangen, and I am the Assistant to the Bishop for Faith & Neighboring at the Minneapolis Area Synod. I am so excited to spend the next three months with y'all, exploring our call to be neighbors in the place where you gather as church. We believe that the neighborhood is the unit of change and the context where the church can have the greatest impact. Together, I hope we can experiment with some practices for engaging our community, building authentic relationships, discovering what God is up to in the neighborhood, and identifying and celebrating abundance.

Salem English was part of the very first Faith & Neighboring Practices learning community, and some of the things we'll explore together may be familiar – we'll experiment with neighborhood walks, throwing good parties, and deep listening. These months together will give us a chance to dig back in, reignite some energy for the neighborhood, and invite more folks from your community to join the fun.

Grace Harrison, Mercy Zou Taithul, Matthew Tiede, and I (The FNP Team) will be with you each month to preach and lead some workshops, and to accompany you as you step out into the neighborhood, curious about what God is already up to. By the time Pastor Rhonda returns from Sabbatical, I hope we'll be able to tell her about neighbors we met, discoveries we made, and practices that we'd love to embrace moving forward – rooted in the promise that God has gone ahead of us, walks with us, and shows us the way each and every day.

Looking forward to connecting with you all more!

Nick Tangen

FP&P Gatherings You Should NOT Miss!

Funded by the generous Clergy Renewel Grant in conjunction with the Lilly Foundation, these events will be led by the FP&P Team from the Minneapolis Area Synod. If you are in town and able–please come and be part of this simple and yet revolutionary work!

Workshop #1

Sunday July 26, 11:30 am–1 pm

An Introduction to Faith and Neighboring, Beginning Asset Mapping, Intro to Neighborhood Walks, and More

Local Food/Treats Provided!

Join the FP&P team as they introduce the concepts of Faith and Neighboring and launch Salem and SpringHouse on this renewal journey that will help us to see how we connect with our neighbors. This workshop is for all of SpringHouse and will include the beginning of a giant asset map that will be installed on the east wall in the gathering space that we will add to each week. Come and find out what the buzz is all about!

Workshop #2

Sunday August 23, 11:30 am–1 pm

Neighborhood Walks, Neighborhood Event Planning, Continued Asset Mapping for SpringHouse, and More

Local Food/Treats Provided!

Join the FP&P team as they continue to lead us in asset mapping for SpringHouse, talk about our neighborhood walks, hear about who makes up our neighborhood, and begin talking about what it means to listen to our neighbors and the beginning steps to planning events that help us engage with our neighbors in meaningful ways.

Workshop #3

Sunday September 20, 11:30 am–1 pm

Being Good Neighbors, Meaningful Event Planning, Connecting for Ministry Purposely in THIS Place, and More

Local Food/Treats Provided!

Join the FP&P team as they continue to lead us in fostering meaningful relationships with people and organizations in our neighborhood. Help us plan a neighborhood event for the beginning of October!

Meet the FP&P Team

In addition toNick, there are three other members on the Faith & Neighboring Practices Team. Check them out and get to know them.

Mercy Zou Taithul
Faith and Neighboring Convener
Fun fact: Mercy is from Northeast India and speaks seven languages. She loves all kinds of indoor and outdoor activities, but mostly loves bowling and badminton.

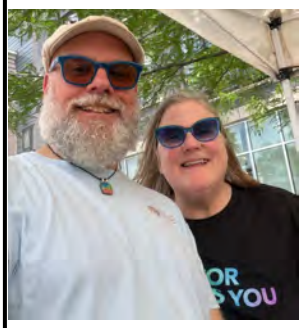
Grace Harrison
Faith and Neighboring Organizer
Fun fact: Grace is one of several twins on the Synod staff!

Matthew Tiede
Faith and Neighboring Communicator
Fun Fact: Matthew is an actor on the side. He often does musical theatre and films around the Twin Cities!

All Things Sabbatical

Open Streets Lyndale is Always a Blast!

A huge Thank You to the members of Salem AND SpringHouse who joined us out on Lyndale for Open Streets in June! We handed out over 1000 popsicles to our neighbors and had a ton of fun listening to some great music!



A Huge Thank You!

It was another amazing week of Building Beloved Community at Day Camp in June. This year Pastor Rhonda had so much fun she forgot to take pictures.

We sang, heard stories, did art, learned different ways to be good neighbors, and had special guests every day. We welcomed some very special people that do very special neighboring, including Haven Watch, Singing Resistance, Heart of the Beast, and one of our St. Paul firefighters. It was a great week of beloved community.

One of the best parts of this year's day camp was the number of SPRINGHOUSE volunteers we had walking the halls. One of our parents whose kids attended each day sent Pastor Rhonda a message telling her that her kids remarked about how great it was to see so many SpringHouse people there...because even if they didn't know their names, they recognized their faces and it meant something to them. WOW!

Speaking of volunteers...a HUGE THANK YOU to all three congregations for their involvement in this amazing summer program. Specifically I want to thank:

From Salem: Mary Johnson, Bruce Hansen, Barb Livdahl, Kathy Sievwright, Kari Podenski, and our amazing youth mentor Solveig Tollerson

From FCC: KC Helmeid, Deb Murphy, and Pastor Ben Masters

From Lyndale & Lyndale Adjacent: Allan Henden, Pastor T. Michael, Maggie George, and one of our young adult mentors Shannon Voelkel.

If your name was inadvertently left off this list it's because Pastor Rhonda had pre-sabbatical brain when writing and she apologizes!

SpringHouse & Community News

The End of an Interim & Beginning of a Sabbatical

Pastor Rhonda is not the only one going on sabbatical, Pastor Dan at FCC is also headed out on a sabbatical funded by the Lilly Foundation. His last Sunday before his leave will be August 30 and all of SpringHouse is invited to a celebratory lunch after worship to send him off well. FCC is asking for people to RSVP on their website. fccminneapolis.org

In addition, as FCC comes closer to calling a solo pastor, Interim Pastor Ben Masters will end his time at FCC. Join all of SpringHouse at joint worship on Gathering Sunday, September 13, to bid him farewell. Watch for details about both events in the weeks ahead!

Grief Groups to meet again at SHMC

From May 2 through August 29, First Christian will host the Downtown Coalition for Grief Support groups in the lower level of SpringHouse every Saturday.

DOWNTOWN COALITION FOR GRIEF SUPPORT

The participants gather at 10 am to hear a speaker, and then break into discussion groups for family loss, spouse loss and child loss after the speaker's talk. These sessions are free and open to the public, regardless of religious affiliation. The meetings provide a safe, understanding environment for grief education, comfort and recovery. Some participants come once or twice, while others have been coming for weeks or months

Please contact Ann Wolverton (651-276-9855) if you can help or need more information.

Volunteers are needed to set up at 9 am, help with refreshments (or donate for weekly treats), display library resource books, and help with registration and greeting.

SpringHouse Clergy Stoles

The clergy of SpringHouse debuted their new SpringHouse stoles at our joint worship in May! A huge THANK YOU to Emily Chesley for her amazing artistic talents and willingness to create these great new stoles!

Every Meal

EVERY MEAL
FIGHTING CHILD HUNGER

Now an almost monthly event for all of SpringHouse, Every Meal packing has become a great Salem/SpringHouse tradition.

Our next packing event will be in September–sign up on the clipboard in the back of the sanctuary!

Come pack with us:

Wednesday September 9: 6 pm–8 pm

Note: ***Anyone 8 years or older*** are welcome to join the fun as we pack meals for food-insecure kids all over the Twin Cities and beyond. To find out more about Every Meal go to www.everymeal.org

Children, Youth & Family

SpringHouse Child Ministries

Children's Ministry

Watch for conversation coming soon about where Children's Ministry at SpringHouse is heading–it should be exciting!

SpringHouse Youth Ministry

Sunday Youth Group

Join the fun on Sundays at 9 am!

With all three congregations worshipping at the same time, we finally have a dedicated hour that doesn't overlap with worship, which means youth can fully participate in both.

Everyone's cooperation in helping us begin right at 9:00am makes a big difference as we navigate this new and exciting change. We're excited for this new chapter and all that's ahead!

Queer Prom Disco Inferno!

Back for its fourth year, this free, intergenerational, and sober event welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds to dance, celebrate, and be unapologetically themselves in a fun and affirming space.

Whether you're attending your first prom, experiencing the excitement again, or finally getting the chance to celebrate as your full self, this night is for you! Come dressed in whatever makes you feel amazing and dance the night away with your queer and trans family.

What to Expect:;

- a live DJ & photo booth
- family-friendly drag performances
- low-stim space
- local queer and trans organizations tabling
- a warm, welcoming space for all
- Free onsite childcare.

Follow the this link in (also in the eblast) to get your FREE tickets today!

https://www.springhousemn.org/totall-fabulous-queer-prom/

More News

Dreamstate, a plant based, all day cafe & bar at the corner of 26th St + Lyndale Ave

If you haven't had a chance to try the newest café on the block–go check it out. They are open for lunch, happy hour and dinner M-F and on Saturday & Sunday they add a morning brunch.

Support Local Businesses!

Council Corner

Your Salem council met last Sunday July 12. Minutes will be available in the sanctuary binder or by contacting Laurie in the office as soon as they are available.

Highlights from the July meeting:

- We welcomed Antone to council as he prepares to take on the leadership role of Renewal Interim Pastor. Thank you Antone!
- We also welcomed Nick Tangen from the synod office and leader of the Faith & Neighboring Practices program to talk with council about what the next 3 months will look like and how Salem/SpringHouse can be involved!
- We decided to move God's Work Our Hands Sunday to November in conjunction with stewardship for 2027.
- The office report from Laurie reminded us that July is the tightest month for Salem financially due to 3 payrolls and summer giving.
- A majority of the meeting was spent talking about details for Rhonda's sabbatical. Council members and members of the congregation will be asked to help with things like worship prep, as well as planning and participating in events.

Calendar

Our calendar highlights events that take place weekly. Be sure to check the rest of the Scene for one-time events!

Sundays

9:00 am Youth Group for ages 10 and up in the Youth Room
10:00 am Salem Worship in Person and on YouTube
Coffee Hour in the Sanctuary following worship
Adult Education following fellowship time.

Tuesday

8:00 am Lectionary Bible Study via Zoom

Spirit-led. Welcoming.
Bold. Rooted.

SpringHouse Calendar

Want to keep up with happenings at SpringHouse? Our shared calendar is accessible for all to view! The link can be found here and on the SpringHouse website. To reserve a room and get an event listed on the calendar, simply email the details to Allison at shcoordinator@fccmpls.org (allison.jones@fccmpls.org works too). Feel free to reach out to Allison with any questions.

Birthdays!

Wish these Salem members and friends a happy birthday! If you're new to Salem and would like your birthday listed, please contact Laurie in the office.

Dona Varns – 7/1
Johan Baumeister – 7/15
Holly Benson – 7/15
Alex Nordeen – 7/31
Myra Rusten – 8/10
Xavier Melton-Meaux – 8/18
Barbara Livdahl – 8/21
Orpha Rustebakke – 8/23

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Christ tended to attract

squeamish

an assorted crowd

Salem English Lutheran Church
is a Reconciling in Christ
(R.I.C.) Congregation
We are a Spirit-led, welcoming, and bold
Christian community rooted in the neighborhood,
striving to live faithfully in God's world.
612-872-4650

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Salem English Lutheran Church

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