

YOU'RE INVITED TO
CHRISTMAS EVE

2:00-5:00 PM - LIVE ANIMAL NATIVITY (MID-COUNTY) | In-Person: Don't miss the live outdoor nativity your entire family will enjoy. Stop by with your family or friends to take a photo.

3:00 PM - FAMILY WORSHIP (MID-COUNTY) | In-Person: Families with children won't want to miss this fun interactive service featuring kid-friendly music and telling of the Christmas story. Nursery care available.

5:00 PM - MODERN WORSHIP (MID-COUNTY) | In-Person & Livestream: Enjoy modern Christmas music featuring our band, Salem United, special guests, and a message of Christmas hope. Nursery care available.

8:00 PM - TRADITIONAL WORSHIP (MID-COUNTY) | In-Person & Livestream: Celebrate with a message based on the classic Christmas scriptures, Holy Communion, and traditional Christmas music featuring the Chancel Choir and Salem Chamber Orchestra. Nursery care available.

8:00 PM - BLENDED WORSHIP (SOUTH-CITY) | In-Person & Livestream: Enjoy modern Christmas music featuring our band, Salem United, Holy Communion, children's moments, and an inspiring message. Nursery care available.

11:00 PM - UNPLUGGED WORSHIP (MID-COUNTY) | In-Person: Countdown the minutes until Christmas together and enjoy live music, Holy Communion, Silent Night by candlelight, and a message to usher in the most holy night of the year.

11:00 AM: CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP DECEMBER 25 (MID-COUNTY) | In-Person & Livestream: Celebrate the birth of Christ with family and friends during this combined relaxed service! Kids of all ages are welcome in worship, no childcare. The regular schedule will resume January 1.

**WORSHIP ONLINE AT
SALEMSTLOUIS.COM
CHRISTMAS EVE 5:00 & 8:00 PM**



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AT SALEMSTLOUIS**



LISTENING FOR GOD'S MESSAGE

- REV. TERRI SWAN



"Aren't all the angels ministering spirits who are sent to serve those who are going to inherit salvation?"

— Hebrews 1:14

Advent is a time of anticipation and preparation. We hope and we wait for Christ's reign here on earth. As we draw close to the night of

Christmas eve, we will celebrate the birth of the Christ child once again in our hearts and lives. Now is a time of waiting and hoping, a time of "in between!"

It seems like I am always in between one thing and another. On most days, I am between events and meetings. At certain times I am in between seasons of preparations and celebrations. It seems I am always trying to get ready for the next big thing. Believe it or not, as we celebrate Christmas, I have already begun thinking about preparations for Easter. Thus, the life of a large church pastor.

The challenge for me is not to be so wrapped up in the preparations that I miss the moments of celebration and presence. God does some of His best work in the "in between." It is in the "in between" that we receive messages from God--and we encounter those who would bring God's message . . . the angels.

The Christmas story would not be complete without the messengers that bring Good News and sometimes warnings! As Susan Robb states in her book, *The Angels of Christmas*, "The angels of Christmas came to deliver im-

portant messages to people who were hoping for God to intervene in a mighty way, both in the fears and darkness of their personal lives and in their world. Just as they did 2000 years ago, the angels of Christmas still bring "good news of great joy" for all the people including you and me, and the tidings they bring can allay our own fears and bring great joy into a hurting world desperately in need of hope. Upon hearing such news, whether it's for the first time or the thousandth time, the question for us today is, "How will we respond?"

Not everyone believes in angels, but we can probably all agree that God uses people to share things with us. You can probably think of a time in your own journey of faith in which you were praying for direction, and God offered you a conversation with someone that helped you choose a path. When we look at the messengers in the Bible, the angels offer direction in significant moments in the history of God's people, many times in the seasons of waiting and hoping—during the "in between." We learn something from each story . . . about God and about ourselves. As we hear these stories of faith, we ask ourselves not just how we would have responded back then, but also how we might recognize and respond to one of God's messengers today.

Are you waiting and hoping for something right now? Is this a season of "in between?" I believe angels are still in our midst today, offering us a message of God's hope, peace, love and joy! I pray we can recognize them without their wings.

In Christ,
Pastor Terri



DISCOVERING YOUR STRENGTHS WORKSHOP

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 21
9:00 AM-NOON**



REGISTER
ONLINE AT
SALEMSTLOUIS.COM



Facilitated by
Rev. Adam Mustoe,
United Methodist
Pastor and Certified
Gallup Strengths
Coach

Frederick Buechner famously said "The place God calls you is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." So how do we find that place? Join United Methodist Pastor and Certified Gallup Strengths Coach Adam Mustoe for "Discovering Your Strengths." In this three-hour workshop experience we'll aim to help you find the places where you are gifted and called. We'll combine Gallup's strengths-based philosophy with New Testament theology to cover what strengths are, where they come from, and how to put your strengths into action. All on a Saturday morning.

This workshop will be the perfect complement to our January series "Unwrapping Your Gifts." Join us on Saturday, January 21 from 9:00 am-Noon. Register online at salemstlouis.com, scan the qr code, or contact the church office (314) 991-0546. Cost is \$19.99 for the online Top 5 CliftonStrengths assessment. Childcare will be available by reservation.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

- REV. DEBORAH LEMOINE

The Christmas decorations at the mall seem to go up earlier every year. And I started getting Black Friday advertisements online well before Thanksgiving this year. The season of consumerism in the world starts well before the season of Advent officially begins in the church. This year, instead of lamenting that early start, Salem decided to use it for good. On Thanksgiving Day, more than 250 families enjoyed a turkey dinner thanks to your early generosity in purchasing all those birds. Thank you! We invited people to shop early for toys, coats, and other gifts for kids at LifeWise, so we could stock their Christmas shop and allow parents make choices based on their kids' actual Christmas wishes. All these gifts were collected and in place at LifeWise by the first week of December. Thank you! We also decided to launch our Christmas Offering earlier this year, taking advantage of a matching gift and the momentum of Giving Tuesday and our Soul of the Season fundraising concert to raise over \$41,000 for nutrition and literacy programs in the year ahead. Thank you!

As I write, we are not even halfway through Advent, yet so much good has been done already. Salem is a community of amazing generosity. Each of your gifts, large and small, combines with the gifts of others to make a difference in the world. Each gift is a means of connecting someone in our community with God's extravagant love. Thank you.

Christmas and year-end giving is essential to the ministry of the church in the year ahead. Your gifts to general ministry at this time of year fuels our work for the year ahead. It enables us to staff for the future--hiring a new youth pastor to reach the next generation and ensuring the quality of worship, music, education, online technology, and service that makes Salem a voice of hope and welcome in the community. Thank you.

As you consider your year-end giving, I want to offer you some resources. If you are donating appreciated stock or making transfers from a brokerage account, you can find resources online at www.salemstlouis.com/give or call the church office directly for assistance. If you are mailing a year-end gift, remember it needs to be postmarked by December 31, 2022, or you can drop it off in person. As the end of the year approaches, please feel free to reach out to me if you have questions about the logistics of your giving, or the ways that your giving makes a difference in the world.



**SCAN TO
GIVE
ONLINE
NOW**

Together with Christ we are indeed bringing good news of great joy to all the people.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE THIS CHRISTMAS

Celebrate the spirit of the Christmas season and make a difference in the life of a family. There are several ways you can get involved by giving of your time and resources. As you prepare for Christmas, we invite you to consider a special gift to the Christmas offering in celebration of the love of Christ that is for all God's children.

Salem is committed to feeding our neighbors physically and spiritually all year long. Our goal is to raise \$100,000 to help fund our nutrition and literacy outreach efforts in 2023. You can still get involved. Here is what your special Christmas gift will accomplish in 2023:

- **\$25: Dinner for a family of four at Haven Street (South-City Site)**
- **\$75: Groceries for Epworth Drop-In Center meals for teens & young adults**
- **\$250: Produce Box for children in Costa Rica Day Care**
- **\$1,500: Summer literacy camp with 2 meals a day for a STL child**



Visit salemstlouis.com or scan the qr code to give online to the Christmas offering.

You may also give in-person or by mail.



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Web: www.salemstlouis.com
Email: info@salemstlouis.com

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We have a variety of teams and ministries that will help you find a place to serve and use your skills and passions. We think you'll find that the time and energy you invest will offer returns in new friendships, spiritual growth, and personal satisfaction through seeing the impact you can make to our community.

KIDS NIGHT OUT

LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH | 6:00-9:00 PM
(EXCEPT MARCH & JUNE)

\$20 PER CHILD | \$40 MAX PER FAMILY
REGISTRATION REQUIRED





<p>MID-COUNTY 1200 S. Lindbergh Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63131 (314) 991-0546 salemstlouis.com</p>	<p>SOUTH-CITY 6701 Virginia Avenue St. Louis, MO 63111 (314) 256-0545 theconnectionstlouis.com</p>
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SHARE A PRAYER REQUEST



SCAN ME

Did you know you can share prayer requests with our staff and prayer team? We regularly share a prayer list with our prayer team and staff, who will pray for your request, and will contact you if you request follow-up care.

PLEASE SEND ALL MAIL FOR BOTH SITES TO THE MID-COUNTY ADDRESS. THANK YOU!

WORSHIP IN-PERSON OR ONLINE

In-Person Worship Schedule
Mid-County: 9:30 am - Modern Worship (Multipurpose Room)
Mid-County: 11:00 am - Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
South-City: 11:00 am - Modern Worship (The Connection Sanctuary)

Online Worship Schedule Sundays or Anytime On-Demand
9:30 am - Modern Worship Livestream
11:00 am - Traditional Worship Livestream