

July/August 2026



THE MUSTARD SEED



Building the Realm of God...

Among my favorite parts of scripture are the stories that Jesus told concerning the Realm of God. These stories called parables are rich as they feature metaphors, vivid imagery, and allegories that try to illuminate for the listener the values and workings of God's realm. A lot of the parables begin with the phrase "The Kingdom (or realm) of God is like..." As Jesus tells these stories, we realize the Realm of God is like a great many things: a sower planting seed, a mustard seed, yeast in bread, a pearl, a buried treasure, etc.

If asked, how might we describe the Realm of God? What images and metaphors would we use to describe how we envision and understand the Realm of God? We at Salem might say we find the kingdom of God in many places and things. Perhaps corporately, we would describe the realm of God to be like our moments of fellowship and food. The Realm of God is like a meal, where people of all ages come together to talk, eat, and support one another. Oh and there is definitely dessert!

Perhaps for you the Realm of God is something different. Whatever the Realm of God is for you, I invite each of us to think about the story we might tell. I might even challenge us to tell that story and describe for others our images of God's kingdom. In doing so, I believe we will begin building and inviting others to the imaginative, expansive realm of God. In sharing our holy stories, we will craft a beloved community of believers. We will proclaim the Gospel and invite others to participate in this beloved kingdom. May it be so.

Peace,

Pastor Matt

PS. The Realm of God is like Laila's Kitchen....(Come see me for the rest of the story)



The Membership Committee is requesting donations for the Palmyra National Night Out. Our goal is to collect 100 boxes of Crayola Crayons (24 count) and 100 boxes of Crayola Colored Pencils (24 count) to hand out at our Salem UCC booth. *Crayola brand is specifically requested by the Palmyra school teachers.* A donation bin will be available outside the choir room until July 26th. We are also looking for volunteers to help manage our booth at the National Night Out event at In-The-Net on August 4th; 5pm – 7pm or 7pm – 9pm. If interested, the sign-up sheet is posted in the Narthex. Please contact Tara Jankouskas with questions.



KIDS' NIGHT 2026 will be WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12th from 6-8pm at Campbelltown Community Park. More information on donations and volunteer sign-up coming soon!

****WANTED**** - Kids' Night needs EMPTY GLASS JARS! NO lids and NO labels please. Must be able to hold a 4x6" flag. (i.e. pickle jar or spaghetti sauce). A collection box will be in the narthex. Thank you!



News from the Search Committee: The Candidating Sunday will occur on **Sunday, July 12th** during the Morning Worship Service. **There will also be a meet and greet with the candidate on Saturday July 11th from 1 – 3 p.m.**



SUMMER is officially here – and so are mosquitoes! But they don't have to ruin your outdoor fun!

Homegrown National Park offers six easy ways to control mosquitoes without harming the environment:

1. **Invite Natural Predators:** Build a healthy habitat for dragonflies, birds, and bats that eat mosquitoes.
2. **Build a Mosquito Trap:** Try a *DIY Mosquito Bucket* – easy directions found at the website.
3. **Dump Standing Water:** Empty clogged gutters and plant saucers.
4. **Treat Permanent Standing Water:** Use *Mosquito Dunks* in birdbaths, rain barrels, and ponds.
5. **Protect Yourself:** When outdoors, use fans, protective clothing, and repellents.
6. **Spread the word:** Coordinate with your neighbors for maximum impact!

Help C.A.R.E. today!



Mark Your Calendars – Salem Church Outdoor Service & Picnic – Sunday, August 2 at 11 a.m., Salem UCC will hold its annual outdoor worship service and picnic at the American Legion Pavilion on Campbelltown/Palmyra Rd. Everyone who comes is asked to bring a side dish or dessert to share with everyone. Please bring your own place settings and utensils. The Fellowship Committee will be preparing the main dishes and drinks. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the Bell Tower Bulletin Board.



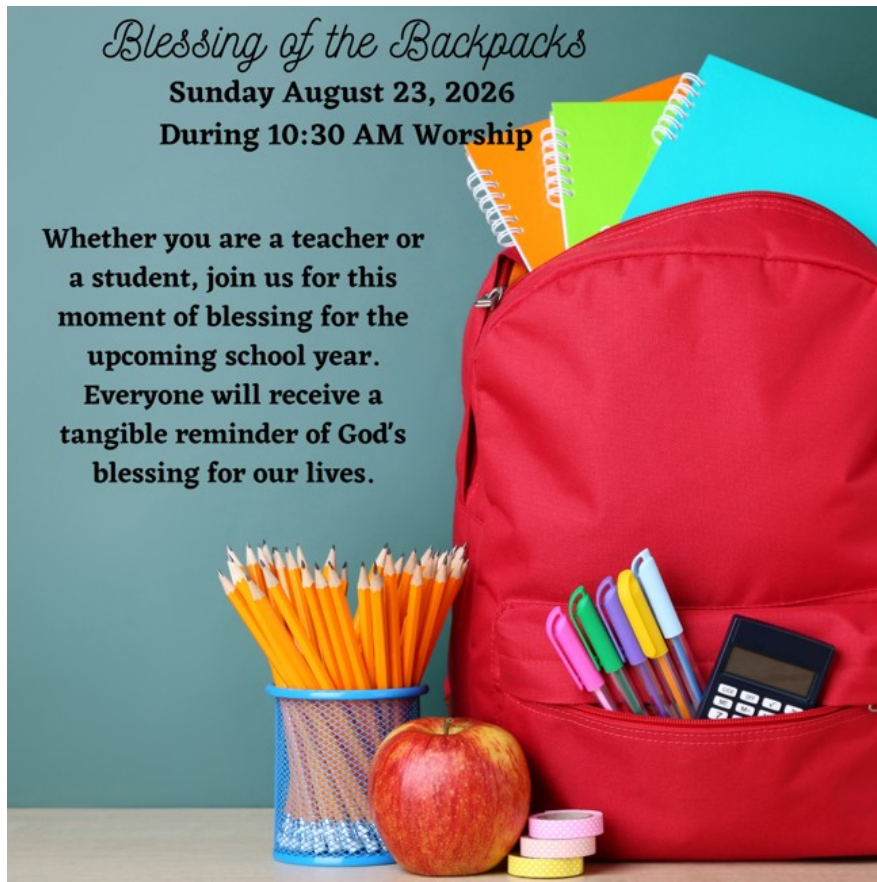
Discover Your Next Great Read This Summer! - Whether you are looking for a Bible study, an inspiring testimonial, a mystery, or an engaging fiction book, this is a reminder that we have two libraries available to us at Salem. The first is our church library. Please feel free to stop in to take a look at the variety of genres we have. There are various versions of the Bible; Bible Studies; Bible References; Christian Living; Devotionals; Humor; Inspirational Living; Poetry; Prayers; Salem and Church History; and Testimonials...just to name a few. There are even several Bible Trivia games as well.

The second library is our Little Free Library (LFL). Our LFL began as an idea which emerged from the UCC Reading Changes Lives initiative in 2014. We dedicated our library at our Literacy Day in May 2015. At that time, there were approximately 25,000 registered LFLs in 50 states and 70 countries. As of this year, there are more than 200,000 registered LFLs worldwide, spanning 128 countries and all seven continents. Our LFL continues to be a wonderful resource for promoting literacy not only in our community but also beyond. Travelers in cars from out of state have been seen many times stopping by to “Take a Book. Share a Book.” Our LFL is another excellent source of books right in our own parking lot. Finally, a huge thank you for your continuous support of our LFL over the years. Happy reading!

Blessing of the Backpacks

**Sunday August 23, 2026
During 10:30 AM Worship**

**Whether you are a teacher or
a student, join us for this
moment of blessing for the
upcoming school year.
Everyone will receive a
tangible reminder of God's
blessing for our lives.**



CARING CUPBOARD CHRISTMAS IN JULY FOOD DRIVE

During the month of July, we will be collecting items needed to replenish supplies at the Caring Cupboard. The top needs are Peanut Butter, Jelly Squeeze Bottles, Canned Pasta/Ravioli, Chicken Noodle Soup, Mac & Cheese Cups, Tuna (can or pouch), Chicken (can or pouch), and Ramen

Donations can be placed on the table in the West Narthex July 12 through 26 or you can bring your donations out to the "Christmas" car in the Parking lot on July 26th before the worship service begins. Thank you for your support of the Caring Cupboard!

Salem UCC Council Meeting Agenda

5/11/26

Present: Faith Bicksler, Jared Cooper, Michelle Alger, Gretchen Monahan, Matt Kaag, Bill McNamara, Sarah McNamara, Pastor Matt Hoover, Jim Flanagan, Barb Kaufman, Cindy Umberger, Megan Wheelden

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM

Opening Devotions (Faith)

Approval of Agenda by unanimous consent

Secretary's report (Bill) – motion to approve the April 2026 minutes by Jim, second by Cindy

Treasurer's Report (Tom)

- General fund receipts up 1.4% from the same first four months of last year
- Overall loss of \$3,307 for the month of March (despite transfer from Moyer fund and surplus into General fund)
- Large expenses still coming with mowing and A/C repairs
- McNamara approved the treasurer's report, Jared second. Motion passed unanimously.

Pastor's Report (Pastor Matt)

- In June, we will clear the prayer list which is overdue. Shut-ins will stay on.
- Post Christian Age Initiative (PPCAI) Continuing education next meeting will be in September

Old Business:

- **By-laws Update and Discussion (Pastor Matt and committee)**
 - Pastor Matt provided written copies of edits, including dissolution of cemetery if the Church is dissolved.
 - Discussion on Fee Schedules in the policy doc
 - General Church Usage Fees – members will be charged for various usages of the church; please give any changes/ideas to Barb by COB 5/18/2026.
- **Update on Horseshoe Pike Lot and discussion of most recent offer (Jared)**
 - Tom and Jared attended the council meeting of the Methodist church and told them about potential sale of our parking lot. No immediate interest in selling their land behind the parking lot.

New Business

- Extending custodian service and potential raise. Tom via email recommended a 4.5% raise to \$15.52 an hour. Motion to remove Daniel from probation and consider a raise for the next budget year (Megan, Barb seconded the motion)
- Karen Umberger asking to use the sanctuary for a student piano recital. Cindy made the motion that Karen has permission to use it in June (Jim seconded)

Committee Reports :

- **Building, Grounds, Cemetery (Jared)** –
 - A/C repairs are expected to be done next week (Delta)
 - Cindy pointed out that UCC has a special loans fund (3.5%) to fund projects that a church could use to reduce carbon footprint (like HVAC)
- **Christian Education (Jim)** – No meeting during this timeframe
- **Fellowship (Michelle)** – May 31 is next fellowship event for Graduation Sunday
- **Finance Stewardship (Tom)** – Nothing to report
- **Membership (Bill)** – June 28 noon at the church – “Know before you Go: Burial and Funeral Options” - Donna Buse
- **Missions (Matt)** – Meeting 5/12/26, 61 health kits
- **Creation Care (Cindy)** - April 19 was the lunch, May 2 was the C pickup, May 10, Springtime in the Park April 12, next meeting at Campbelltown park to discuss spring events, met with the master gardener, May 10 activity 10-12 PM in conjunction with CCA, May 16 plant exchange in the parking lot. June 23rd next meeting
- **PACC (Tom)** – Met April 28, continue PACC under a different agenda, will manage projects and get other projects involved.
- **Women’s Fellowship (Faith)** – Met 4/22, Friday June 5th Kitchen Kettle Village
- **Pastoral Relations (Missy)** – No meeting
- **Music and Worship (Faith)** – Met April 27, received summer schedule (messages and scripture)
- **Youth Fellowship (Sarah)** –
 - Helped the Hygiene kits week on May 3rd
 - Handed out flowers on Mother’s day

Open Comment period (off the record)

Meeting adjournment by unanimous consent at 8:02 PM

Closing: Mizpah Benediction

Next Meeting: June 8, 2026 7:00 PM

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Like us on Facebook!



Wednesday	July 1	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Thursday	July 2	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Sunday	July 5	Family Worship 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday	July 8	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Thursday	July 9	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m. ManeStreamers 6 p.m. Chime Rehearsal 7 p.m.
Saturday	July 11	Meet & Greet for Pastoral Candidate
Sunday	July 12	Family Worship with Pastoral Candidate Preaching Congregational Vote on Candidate after Worship
Monday	July 13	Council 7 p.m. Hybrid
Wednesday	July 15	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Thursday	July 16	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Sunday	July 19	Family Worship 10:30 a.m. Membership Committee 12 noon
Monday	July 20	Book Club 7 p.m.
Wednesday	July 22	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Thursday	July 23	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Sunday	July 26	Family Worship 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday	July 29	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Thursday	July 30	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.

All Worship Services will also be livestreamed on YouTube



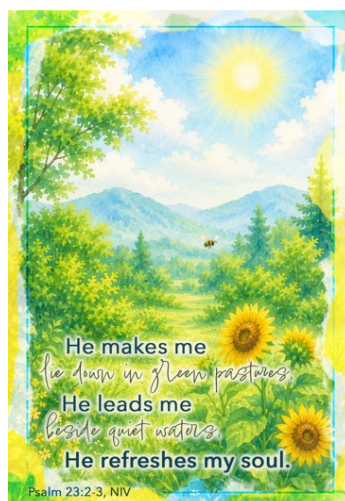
The Book Club will meet July 20 at 7 p.m. to discuss “Demon Copperhead” by Barbara Kingsolver The book for August is “These Summer Storms” by Sarah MacLean. Any questions contact, Carin Kaag cas207@yahoo.com



AUGUST

Sunday	August 2	Family Worship & Church Picnic at American Legion Pavilion at 11:00 a.m.
Tuesday	August 4	National Night Out at In The Net from 5-8 p.m.
Wednesday	August 5	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Thursday	August 6	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Sunday	August 9	Family Worship with Communion 10:30 a.m.
Monday	August 10	Council 7 p.m. Hybrid
Wednesday	August 12	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m. Kids' Night Out VBS – Campbelltown Community Park 6 p.m.
Thursday	August 13	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m. ManeStreamers 6 p.m.
Sunday	August 16	Family Worship 10:30 a.m.
Monday	August 17	Worship & Music Committee 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday	August 19	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Thursday	August 20	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Sunday	August 23	Family Worship 10:30 a.m. Blessing of the Backpacks
Wednesday	August 26	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Thursday	August 27	Sanctuary Being Used By Karen Umberger 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Sunday	August 30	Family Worship 10:30 a.m Rally Day Kick-Off

All Worship Services will also be livestreamed on YouTube





July 5, 2026

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 68-69

Psalms 45:10-17

Romans 7:15-25a

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

July 12, 2026

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 25:19-34

Psalms 119:105-112

Romans 8:1-11

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

July 19, 2026

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 18:10-19a

Psalms 86, 139:1-12, 23-24

Romans 8:12-25

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

July 26, 2026

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 19:15-28

Psalms 105:1-11, 45b

Romans 8:26-39

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

August 2, 2026

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 32:22-31

Psalms 17:1-7, 14

Romans 9:1-5

Matthew 14:13-21

August 9, 2026

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28

Psalms 105:1-6, 16-22

Romans 10:5-15

Matthew 14:22-33

August 16, 2026

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 45:1-15

Psalms 133

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

Matthew 15:(10-20), 21-28

August 23, 2026

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 1:8-2:10

Psalms 124

Romans 12:1-8

Matthew 16:13-20

August 30, 2026

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 31:1-15

Psalms 105, 1-6, 23-26, 45b

Romans 12:9-21

Matthew 16:21-38





1	Gregory Miller
3	Matthew Kaag
5	Carolyn Albright
5	Darrell Woomer
6	Grace Frew
9	Julia Fuhrman
10	James Binkley
18	Sophia Southers
20	Barbara Kauffman
21	Joanne Longenecker
22	Debra Weidler
29	Patricia Flanagan
28	Caleb Wheelden
31	Tara Jankouokas

1	Karen Bell
1	Fran Shepler
3	Katy Kauffman
5	Abigail Aungst
6	Matthew Waller
10	Melissa Gainer
11	Melissa Kreider
13	Chessie Kauffman
14	Samuel Weidler
16	Jim Flanagan
19	Jewel Gravely
20	Skylar Thomas
22	Carin Kaag
23	Ashleigh Aungst
25	Katie Umberger
26	Jeffrey Steely

They Walked Everywhere



When a teenager earned his driving permit, he approached his father, a minister, to discuss using the car. His dad replied, "I'll make you a deal. Raise your grades, spend some time in your Bible and get your hair cut. Then we'll talk."

A month later, the young man came back. "Son, I'm proud of you," his father said. "Your grades are up, and you've been faithful in your Bible study. But you didn't get your hair cut."

The teenager paused. "Well, Dad, I've been thinking. Samson had long hair. Moses had long hair. Noah had long hair. Even Jesus had long hair."

His father nodded. "That's true. And they walked everywhere they went."

SALEM COLLECTIONS -

The Caring Cupboard is a community food pantry, that has grown into a community necessity, that currently serves over 350 families living primarily in the Palmyra and Annville-Cleona School Districts. Products to be given to the Caring Cupboard may be placed on the designated shelves found at the end of the northwest hallway of Salem Church.

Pop Tab Collection Program (Matt Waller) Ronald McDonald House. The collection of aluminum beverage tabs began in 1996. The aluminum tabs are sold to a local recycling company and their proceeds help with daily operating expenses at the Ronald McDonald House. The generous amount from the tabs collected has been very beneficial to the House and the families they serve. They are averaging \$1,000 monthly just from these tiny tabs. You can help raise money by pulling tabs from any aluminum container. Pop Tabs may be placed in the designated box on the shelf above the coat rack in the bell tower entrance.

Redner's Cash Register Receipts (Cindy Steger) By using the Save-A-Tape card you picked up at Customer Service Desk each time you purchase merchandise at Redner's Warehouse Markets, your receipt will be designated as a Save-A-Tape customer receipt. When you come to Salem Church, place your **entire register/sales receipt (DO NOT CUT!)** in the designated box on the shelf above the coat rack in the bell tower entrance. Salem Church will receive a check for 1% of the total amount of tapes submitted, excluding items controlled by the government, such as tax, milk and tobacco products.

Clothing Recycling Old clothing and material that are too worn to use can be recycled. If possible, take to an Goodwill (mark the bag Recycling) otherwise put it in the box in the west narthex and we'll take it for you. Thank you!

Writing Tool Recycling You can recycle old writing tools – crayons, markers, pens, and pencils. Staples Store will recycle these items as well as many other items (check their website!). Feel free to take to a Staples or place in the "Crayola marker" collection tube on the windowsill in the west narthex. Thank you!

Battery Recycling Salem now has a battery recycling collection bin in the West narthex (shaped like a battery!). Place used rechargeable or single-use batteries there and they will be taken to Staples for proper disposal.

Carried and Called to Follow



Jesus the Good Shepherd is one of Christianity's most endearing images. Scenes of Jesus holding a small lamb bring comfort during times of trouble, reminding us of God's tender care when we are weak or hurting. In those moments, we are grateful to be carried.

Yet this image also points to a deeper truth. The Shepherd's role is not only to carry the lamb, but to lead the flock. When we are restored and strengthened, we are called to rise, to walk and to follow where He leads.

God meets us in our need with compassion, but He also calls us forward with purpose. The same hands that lift us up also guide us on the path ahead.

There is a time to be carried, and there is a time to follow.