

## Mark-et Place

### *Learning from the Pack Horse Librarians of Kentucky*

I have a new set of heroes from whom I am drawing inspiration. My new heroes are the Pack Horse Librarians of Kentucky.

You can learn about them by way of two books. The first is a thin volume of just over 50 pages. It is *Down Cut Shin Creek: The Pack Horse Librarians of Kentucky*, by Kathi Appelt and Jeanne Cannella Schmitzer (Purple House Press, 2001). The other is a novel: *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek*, by Kim Michele Richardson (Sourcebooks Landmark, 2019). Or you could just use the “Googlizer.”

The Pack Horse Librarians were active in the 1930s. They came about under the auspices of the WPA, the Works Progress Administration, which was one of the programs of Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal.

As with other programs in the New Deal, the WPA was a response to the tragedies of the Great Depression and a hoped-for stimulus to recovery. The WPA’s purpose was to put people to work and promote social and cultural life. A significant number of its endeavors involved heavy manual labor in the building of streets, roads, schools, clinics, and parks.

While many of the WPA projects classified – in those days – as “men’s work,” the Pack Horse Librarians of Kentucky were, for the most part, women. They earned \$28 a month riding horses along routes that took them into the hills and valleys of rural Kentucky. The women began their day at a central location and then each followed a separate route of several miles, taking them to schools and homes. The next day they would do much the same, though along a different route. The routes would be repeated, generally, once every two weeks.

The Pack Horse Librarians carried saddlebags or rucksacks or even pillowcases full of books especially chosen for the people along the route. The books, often used and tattered and lovingly but obviously repaired, had been donated by schools, PTAs, Boy Scout troops, Sunday Schools, or women’s groups from wealthier parts of the state and from other states. The Pack Horse Librarian carried with her material she thought would

equip, educate, entertain, and inspire the ones she would be seeing that day. She may have a copy of *Popular Mechanics* for a man along the way, a *Ladies Home Journal* for one of the young mothers, or something elementary to help an early reader (young or old) with phonics.

These book women, as they were called, faced many risks. They dared the rugged terrain of the back country with its rivers to cross and narrow mountain paths to navigate. They faced the threat of wild animals coming at them from the wood, and all kinds of weather coming at them from the sky. They faced these risks because they believed in what they were doing, and because they understood and cared for the people they were serving. They were bringing reading, and reading could open new horizons and develop new possibilities.

If the Pack Horse Librarians of Kentucky could do what they did then, the church can do much the same now. The Coronavirus disruption is upon us as I type these words. We don’t know when the disruption will end. We have people we know and care for who are isolated in their homes and in their fears and uncertainties. The church, in its long history of faith, has saddlebags and rucksacks full of hope, comfort, inspiration, and the power to see people through. In place of a pack horse, we have the Internet, the telephone, the mail system, and the ability to record and deliver the resources of worship that are essential to the spiritual life. Generations before us have donated a liberal supply of scripture, prayer, and the promises of God, all of which can feed us now and lift us from our confines and straightened ways into what a hymn calls “strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow.”

I am not ashamed to confess that news of the Coronavirus closing of churches left me depressed and thinking, “This is going to be hard.” But about a day into it I read the Appelt and Schmitzer book, which I had received for Christmas, and learned of the Pack Horse Librarians. After reading about them, my mind changed, and I thought “We can do this!” We can!

## COMMUNICATIONS DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK

The best place to find the latest communications from Salem would be by visiting our facebook page (@SalemUCCVerona). Like us, to get the latest notifications. You can also visit our website ([www.salemchurchverona.org](http://www.salemchurchverona.org)) to find the newsletter, worship services and other updates.

Each week a new worship service will be posted on our website under the "Worship" tab as "Online Worship". Salem's services of worship are also available via the Verona Cable channel, VHAT-98. Our service is aired twice each week, at 6 PM on Thursdays and 10AM on Sundays. Given the logistics of the station, these broadcasts are often a week behind.

We are also utilizing a video conferencing service called Zoom. If you are interested in participating in any of these meetings, please reach out to the office or the host of the event so that we can be sure to send you an invitation.

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## GROCERIES AND OTHER SMALL ERRANDS

We have volunteers who are making themselves available to pick up groceries or run other small errands for folks unable or hesitant to venture from their home. Contact us at the church and we will help connect you if you would like help in this way.

## Scripture Readings for April

Apr. 5: Palm Sunday	Psalms 118:1-2, 19-29 Matthew 21:1-11
Apr 9: Maundy Thursday:	Exodus 12:1-14 Psalms 116:1-2, 12-19 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Apr 10: Good Friday	Isaiah 52:13-53:12 Psalm 22 Hebrews 10:16-25 John 18:1-19:42
Week of Apr 12:	Acts 10:34-43 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 Colossians 3:1-4 John 20:1-18
Week of Apr 19:	Acts 2:14a, 22-32 Psalm 16 1 Peter 1:3-9 John 20:19-31
Week of Apr 26:	Acts 2:14a, 36-41 Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 1 Peter 1:17-23 Luke 24:13-35



## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 1: Noah Nechvatal
- 2: Gary Aebly, Craig Fitzwilliams, Ellen Bass
- 3: Astrid Swain
- 4: Clifford Hageman, Pat Anderson
- 5: Matthew Reniero
- 7: Kain Hageman
- 8: Kelli Malueg
- 9: Steve Witcraft, Avery Durnen
- 12: Arlene King
- 14: JoAnn Aebly
- 16: Sarah Pundt
- 17: Kaden Nechvatal
- 18: Sue Castle, Alexandra Flood
- 21: Robert Kleinfeldt
- 24: Lis Pankonin, Brianna Runnheim  
Will Bugenske
- 25: Gladys Hustad, Chris Worley
- 26: Helen Hageman
- 30: Nicolas Flood



**Notes from Janet**  
 Choir Director/Youth Director  
 jdahl@salemchurchverona.org

What a difference a week can make. Our schedules are all awry, our lives are disrupted, and the novelty of being off school has abruptly turned into sadness, anger, anxiety. And now, we are experiencing a "Stay at Home" order. Our household is feeling it, as I'm sure yours is too. The sense of overwhelm within our families and outward to our community and our church is immense. As I am writing this, March 23rd, we at Salem understand the importance of connections, and are working diligently on ways that we can reach out to each other. Be patient as we explore ways to travel these unexplored territories of technology. And, we encourage you all to put on your hiking shoes and travel with us. There may be detours, but I am confident in a few weeks our comfort level will increase and our paths will become known. Some of the responsibility will be yours too. Get involved in these new opportunities of growing your faith and connecting with others in ways which are new to you. Be sure to read Mark's email blasts for days/times. Below are some opportunities that I will be guiding...

**WATCH**

**Generosity**

**LISTEN**

MESSAGE FROM TIM - GENEROSITY  
 TIM MACKIE

**READ & DISCUSS**

**THE BIBLEPROJECT DISCUSSION**

This is a wonderful web-based Bible study. Every week, you'll find a BibleProject short video, short message (like 4 minutes) from Pastor Tim, along with some suggested Scripture readings that focus on the ideas explored in the video. There will also be suggested discussion questions for each Scripture reading that could be used for a group conversation or personal reflection. To get access to the BibleProject, sign up here and your weekly study will be delivered right to your email inbox. <https://bibleproject.com/>. Check it out and email me if you would like to participate.

This week's video and Scripture readings focus on the story of God's generosity in the Bible and what it might look like for us to continue that story in our world today.

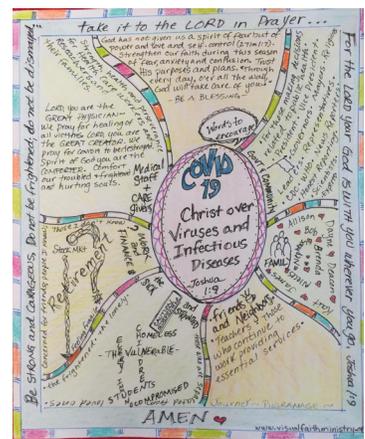
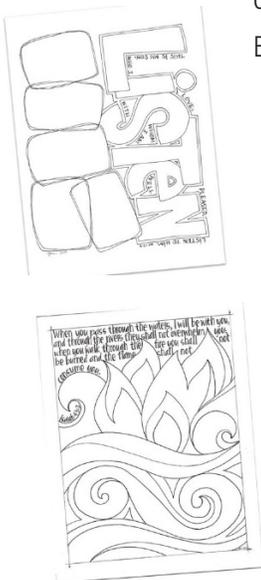
**PRAYER JOURNALING (or DOODLING)**

This is something I have just begun to dabble in and am enjoying it so much.

Covid 19: **Christ Over Viruses and Infectious Diseases**. Joshua 1:9 says, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

I began this on Sunday, March 15th, and continue to add to it. I have used this to pray daily. Let's get creative together through a Zoom Meeting.

But, there are many ways to be creative with journaling or doodling or simply coloring.

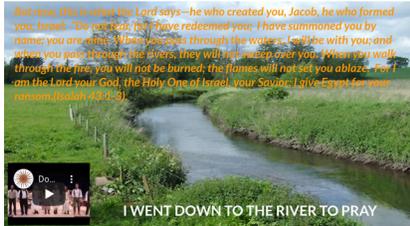


## HYMNS: The Lyrics, The Story, The Meaning

Join me in an online Zoom Meeting where we will learn the story behind some of our favorite hymns and their meaning. We will then have an opportunity to sing or listen to those hymns. A Google Slide Show will then be shared with you to listen to later in the week or to use as part of your meditation or devotional time.

## CHOIR AT HOME

I have already shared this Google Slide Show with the Choir and would be happy to share with anyone interested in listening to a variety of genres of music. Most of these pieces will be performances. Some of the listening pieces the choirs have sung, some are on my “to do” list and others are just simply beautiful and inspirational pieces to be enjoyed.



## ONE LAST THING

In the midst of these times, these moments, we are all in need of practices to help us make meaning from our experiences. One such practice is one I found on the Fuller Youth Institute webpage. I am putting this practice into place this week to help with the many losses we, our children, our neighbors are experiencing. This practice involves naming our losses, but also naming things that we are grateful for.

Make two lists: one says **LOSS**, the other **GRATEFUL**.

**LOSS:** Little things and big things. The cancelled spring break trip. Not getting to go to church. Wondering if graduation will happen.

**GRATEFUL:** Finding things to be thankful for, and the little surprises of this disruption. Playing guitar again. Watching movies together. Not packing lunches every morning. Having devices to connect with friends.

This practice of naming both losses and gifts is important for a few reasons.

*1. Naming loss helps us be honest about grief.*

We don't have to pretend like everything is just fine. We can name what's lost, and lament it together. We can say, “That's rough.” We can be sad. We can acknowledge sources of anger and irritability. There are plenty of those sources right now, and more coming.

*2. Naming loss keeps us from minimizing or silver-lining.*

As a parent, my knee-jerk reaction is to minimize. I find that I have to intentionally practice holding back my “your life isn't so bad” statements to my privileged middle-class first-world kids. While that sentiment may be true—even now—it's unhelpful as a first response.

Brené Brown urges us to remove the words “at least” from our vocabulary as we learn to practice empathy. Saying “at least” is a way to try to add a silver lining around a dark-cloud experience. Instead, most of us just want someone else to acknowledge that our experience is sad, and to be with us in our sadness for a while. This week's losses might feel pretty minor in a few weeks, but that's not for us to judge today. We need to see and name the losses for what they are and how we're all experiencing them. Developmentally, adolescents naturally react to loss more emotionally—some blow up, some shut down. The emotion may not match the experience. You could see anger, tears, or even goofy laughter that seems inappropriate to the moment. Go with it. Then help them name the loss that they're feeling.

*3. Naming gratitude prevents us from drowning in sorrow.*

We can be honest about what's hard without getting stuck. I think this is going to become a real challenge in the coming days and months. Finding things to be thankful for is a research-proven practice that can help young people, and all of us, manage both daily struggles and bigger challenges. Experts tell us that practicing gratitude can increase positive emotions, sleep quality, and overall well-being. At the very least, naming a positive thing about our day can help us mitigate some of the loss. There's no need to try to cancel out all the sadness by manufacturing gratitude, but it's important to find something that is going right in our lives when all feels wrong. <https://fulleryouthinstitute.org/blog/doing-youth-ministry-during-a-pandemic>

# Living Out God's Love through Christian Education

Sarah Pundt, Director of Christian Education  
608-692-3239 or [spundt@salemchurchverona.org](mailto:spundt@salemchurchverona.org)

*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" (Luke 4:1-4)*

I chose this familiar passage from Luke because of its reference to the wilderness. We are in a wilderness now as we implement social distancing and completely rearrange our daily lives. Lent as a season is also meant to simulate the time that Jesus spent in the wilderness; a way for us to appreciate what he endured.

A unique challenge of social distancing is that it strikes at the very heart of who we are as a church. Every time I ask people why Salem is important to them the answer is almost always "the people" or "the relationships". In this time of social distancing, we are supposed to avoid the very thing that makes church so special, gathering with the people. And this isolation comes at a time when we need our community more than ever.

We are apart but we can still be together. Please consider joining one of our online gatherings to spend time with each other and to grow in faith and community. Beginning March 29, Sunday school will continue online for all ages using Zoom. Please watch for an email for specific instructions for joining your class.

## Children & Youth

**PreK-Grade 5**      Sunday@9am  
**Middle/High School**      Sunday@11am

Parents: *We know that your new family routines have been challenging and we do not want Sunday school to add more stress. Zoom allows us to have interactive time with your children and we do not expect you to teach the lesson. More than anything, we want to connect with your children and youth at a time when their lives need familiar faces and routines.*

## Adults

Sunday @ 10am

Join Sarah Pundt via Zoom for our Sunday morning adult class. We will be looking at wilderness in the Bible through the stories of Hagar, Jacob, Elijah, the people of Israel, and Jesus. All are welcome. Please send Sarah Pundt an email [spundt@salemchurchverona.org](mailto:spundt@salemchurchverona.org) if you are interested in participating and she will include you in the Zoom invitation. Technical help is available if you would like to join but have never used this application.

**VBS 2020**  
**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**July 19-23**



**SALEM UNITED CHURCH**  
OF CHRIST  
*Living Out God's Love*

Youth Newsletter | April 2020

*Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!*

*They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.*

-- Mark 1:22

If they gave out medals for rule following, I would be an Olympic contender. I am a born rule follower. When I was little, if someone else got into trouble, I would feel guilty for them. If someone else got punished, I would get so upset that I would cry and run away. On one hand, being a rule follower isn't all bad. It has prevented me from making many bad choices. A lot of rules are totally sensible and protect us and others from our worst impulses. However, too much rule following can be a problem.

For one thing, rule following is the twin sister of people pleasing. It's not all bad to want to please people. But I have learned from my years on earth that people pleasing is a real dead-end street. I should have learned this a lot sooner, because I specifically remember a middle-school science teacher who told us one day, "No matter what you do, ten percent of the people you meet will hate you on sight." I think he made up that statistic, but the point is true enough. You don't control how other people feel about you, and in many cases, no amount of championship-level people pleasing is going to make them like you.

Jesus had many things to say about rule following and people pleasing. He may not have used those words exactly, but a lot of his preaching came down to two questions: Whose rules are you following? Who are you trying to please?

Consider this story from Matthew's gospel:

*When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible distress." And he said to him, "I will come and cure him." The centurion answered, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it." When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, "Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith."* --Matthew 8:5-10

The word "centurion" comes from the Latin root "cent", which means one hundred. A centurion commanded a hundred soldiers in the Roman army that occupied Jesus' homeland. As the centurion said, he knew plenty about ordering people around. Yet, instead of commanding Jesus to cure his ailing servant, he asked with great humility. He recognized in Jesus an authority far greater than all the power of Rome. And as the centurion was impressed by Jesus' authority, Jesus was impressed by the centurion's faith.

There is a big difference between being a rule follower and recognizing true authority. It is important to have a respectful attitude toward everyone. Yet once in a while we have to break a rule to acknowledge true authority. Being a rule follower may mean trying to please everyone around us, when it's God we should be trying to please.

With our love and prayers for you,

Cathy Kwilinski ~on behalf of the Salem Youth Ministry Team~  
(Janet Dahl, Cara Bahr, Nathan Bahr, Sarah Pundt, and Cathy Kwilinski)

Youth Newsletter | April 2020

## **Social Justice Corner**

*...and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. --3 John: 2*

*As we live through a historic viral pandemic, it's more clear than ever how important it is for every person to have access to health care. Most people in America agree that everyone deserves to receive medical care when they need it, even if they can't afford to pay for it. Medicaid exists to help meet this need. It's funded partly by the federal government and partly by state governments. In different states Medicaid goes by different names: here in Wisconsin you may have heard of it called "BadgerCare."*

*When the Affordable Care Act was passed, one thing it did was to expand the number of low-income adults who could receive Medicaid. States that wanted to make use of federal Medicaid dollars had to follow those more inclusive rules. The purpose of this part of the law was to reduce the number of people who didn't have health insurance, and we were making progress toward that goal. Now, the Trump administration is seeking to allow more "waivers" for these rules. In other words, states would be able to set stricter limits on who could be eligible to receive Medicaid in their state, yet those states could still collect federal Medicaid funding.*

*If there ever was a time when it was important to increase low-income people's access to health care, this is it. As Christians, we are called to protect the vulnerable and to advocate on behalf of the poor. Let's all contact our US Senators Tammy Baldwin and Ron Johnson and our US Representative Mark Pocan. It's easy to send a message to each of them on their individual official website. We need to let them know that it matters to us how our state treats the people who depend on Medicaid for their health care.*

### **An uncertain calendar for unsettled times**

*I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. --Philippians 1:3*

As you probably know by now, as a church community we are trying to do our part to slow the spread of covid-19. We won't be meeting in our usual way for a while, either for worship or for other activities. Since it's not clear yet how long this public health emergency will go on, it's not possible to provide a calendar of youth activities just yet. Please keep an eye out for email updates in the coming weeks.

During an uncertain and unsettled time like this one, we need each other. Some may struggle with physical illness, some with fear and worry, and some with loneliness that comes from staying away from other people. Let us all be as faithful as we can in praying for each other each day.

On the Youth Ministry Team, we miss you all and look forward to being able to get back to our normal activities together!

# APRIL NEWSLETTER 2020

**In these uncertain times, the best way to receive current information is by visiting our facebook page and liking us or by visiting the website.**

 [facebook.com/VeronaSalemUCC](https://facebook.com/VeronaSalemUCC)

 [twitter.com/salemuccverona](https://twitter.com/salemuccverona)

[www.salemchurchverona.org](http://www.salemchurchverona.org)

**If you do not have internet access, Pastor Mark and others will reach out to you by phone.**

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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