

July 10, 2019

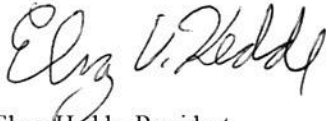
Salem Lutheran Church  
Rural Cummings, ND

Salem Lutheran Church belongs to a four-point church parish. Salem shares church time with St. Petri Lutheran Church which is in Nielsville, MN. Services are alternated each week. The Nielsville Bridge that joins these two churches is closed permanently and needs to be replaced. Parishioners must drive through Climax, MN or Shelly, MN to get to services, adding time, mileage, and gas expense. When the bridge was open, the trip from Salem Church to St. Petri was four miles; now the trip is 14 miles. The congregation is older; the average age of members is 70. Attendance is down because it is too far for some of the older members to go to St. Petri and for some of St. Petri's older members to drive to Salem, especially since many are on fixed incomes.

A group of our women belong to a quilting group that works at St. Petri Church. Because the bridge is closed these ladies have the same concerns, time, gas, and mileage.

Another concern that all members have is the increased traffic on County Road #2 that runs in front of Salem. More farm equipment and cars just now use this road.

Fire safety for Salem is contracted with Nielsville, MN through Buxton, ND. Because the bridge is closed, members are concerned that if we have a fire at the church the Buxton Fire Department would not make it in time to save the church. Also, the insurance rates for us are bound to go up. The Salem Church members pray every night for a new bridge as they have for nearly four years.



Elroy Hedde, President  
Matt Williams, Pastor  
Salem Lutheran Church