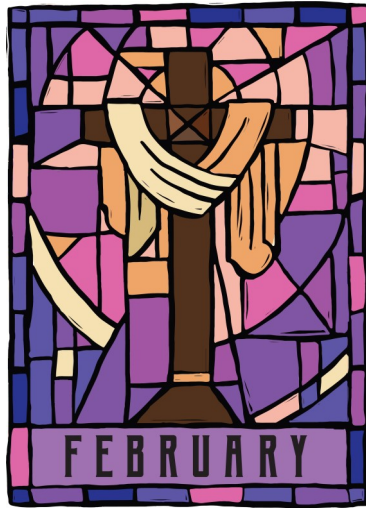


The SEER

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2025



SUNDAY SERVICE
9:30AM

Feb. 2 - 4th Epiphany,
Light of Christ, Communion
Feb. 9 - 5th Epiphany,
Light of Christ, setting 4
Feb. 16 - 6th Epiphany,
Light of Christ, Communion
Feb. 23- 7th Epiphany,
Light of Christ, setting 4

Watch the on-line service
on Facebook at
[Salem Lutheran Church](#)
or anytime on YouTube
[Salem ELC Stillwater OK](#)

Child care is available 9am to noon.

Coffee hour is after the service.

Two Adult Sunday School Classes
meet. The original, video and
discussion class is at 11am on Zoom
and in person in the All Purpose
room. A second, book driven class
meets in the Library.

To the Salem Lutheran Community,

Please accept our heartfelt thanks for your care and kindness during Sally's illness and as we prepared for her funeral. Not to mention the dozens of delicious baked goods you brought to the service! It added a warm and personal touch, and brought back so many memories of good conversation with the Salem Community over coffee and cookies in the Fellowship hall.

You will all be in
our prayers.

*Peace,
Mary,
John,
Mark &
Peggy*



**For God
so loved
the world.**

JOHN 3:16



These days unhospitable rhetoric abounds as issues of citizenship and immigration reveal an unwelcoming spirit in our country. While we may feel helpless about national events, let's remember to do what we have the power to do - extend welcome and hospitality in our own community.

Salem is currently working on a number of things involving welcoming and hospitality:

Our Call Committee is preparing to welcome a call candidate.
All will be invited.

Members attending the Sunday School Class, Stranger God: Meeting Jesus in Disguise are examining how to become more welcoming to the strangers. Join us!

The RIC continues to work on ways for Salem to extend a welcome to people in need of a church community. Come, or come back, on February 7 at 11:30am in the Library.

During this time, please pray that all of us discover new sources of love and hospitality within ourselves, and ways to share that love with our siblings in Christ Jesus.

February is Black History Month. According to Pew Research, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is one of the least diverse denominations in the US by race/ethnicity, with about 96% of members being white. Despite this, Lutherans have some interesting connections to Black History.

The Rev. Jehu Jones was the first African-American Lutheran pastor. Originally ordained in 1832 to be a missionary to Liberia, he instead settled in Philadelphia. He founded and pastored St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, the first African-American Lutheran congregation there. Despite his best efforts to fundraise, the Pennsylvania Synod withheld financial aid, and the church building was foreclosed. Even so, he continued serving St. Paul's for many years before passing away in 1852. He's remembered by many as a trailblazer in our church's journey toward justice.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his father were born Michael King. In 1934, their church sent Rev. King, Sr. to Germany for a meeting of the World Baptist Alliance. Appalled by the Nazi regime, the Alliance passed a resolution denouncing racism. While he was there, the elder King toured historical sites from Luther's life and felt inspired to change his and his son's name in Luther's honor. During his nonviolent struggle for racial justice, Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke to the ALC Luther League (a precursor to the ELCA Youth Gathering) in 1961. He is remembered in our church as a reformer of society and a martyr.

In the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod, we also care about racial justice. In 2016, our Synod Assembly passed a resolution calling on congregations to "address the realities of racism." Several study groups, including at Salem, convened to learn about racial injustice. Several congregations throughout the synod participate in Unity Walks for justice. Salem members are often involved in MLK Jr. commemorations. In 2023, as a part of our Reconciling in Christ process, we included the following in our Welcome Statement: "We are committed to work for racial equity and justice within and through our community."

Although it is the shortest month, February commemorates one of the most important subjects in history. I encourage everyone to take some time to learn something new about Black History.

Jared Smith
Church Council Secretary



**I will sing of
the Lord's great
love forever.**

PSALM 89:1

2025	<i>February 2 Presentation of our Lord Light of Christ</i>	<i>February 9 5th Epiphany Light of Christ</i>	<i>February 16 6th Epiphany Light of Christ</i>	<i>February 23 7th Epiphany Light of Christ</i>
<i>Assisting Minister 9:30</i>	Rick Cowell	Priscilla Gerfen	Jared Smith	Keith Schmidt
<i>Ushers 9:30</i>	Roger & Teri Sabs	Jan & Ken Bartels	Pat Darlington & Tracy Nordquist	Dorothy Johnson & Cathryn Vijayakumar
<i>Greeters 9:30</i>	The Ackersons	The Cowells	Sharon Schonthaler	Pam Talley
<i>Altar Guild</i>	Maria Moccia-Wolff and Dorothy Johnson	Shelley Schmidt	Priscilla Gerfen and Mary Jo Shiever	Elaine Ackerson
<i>Counters</i>	Cindy Haseley and Paula Long	Lori Oltmanns and Maria Moccia-Wolff	Michelle Ratzlaff and Terry Gipson	Priscilla Gerfen and Keith Schmidt
<i>Coffee Hour</i>	The Gerfens	The Bashes	The Gragerts	The Lovells
<i>Altar Flowers</i>	Dorothy Johnson			
<i>Campus Ministry Dinner</i>	Jan. 30 The Ackersons	Feb. 6 Pam Talley	Feb. 13 The Gragerts	Feb. 20 Dorothy Johnson

A Prayer for Presidents Day

Lord of heaven and earth, we offer you our deepest gratitude for this country and the freedom to worship you. Stir up a sense of stewardship so we all may care for our nation and each inhabitant of it.

We pray especially for our leaders, that you will bless them with wisdom and humility. Prompt everyone in positions of authority to pursue righteousness, justice and the welfare of all.

Remind us of the psalmist's teaching: "Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord" (Psalm 33:12, NRSV). May that promise be fulfilled "from sea to shining sea." Amen.

**God
demonstrates
his own
love for us...**

ROMANS 5:8



From the SYNOD

I invite you to hold **Comunidad de Espenaza in Tulsa** in your prayers. Recent changes in federal policy have put some their community members in a place of limbo and uncertainty as they look to the future. I have spent much of today in conversation with Pastor Alvaro who has been a friend and colleague in the Synod for the last decade. The CdE worshipping community would great appreciates your prayers as dynamics shift for them . **Rev. Peter Olson, Asst to the Bishop**

You are invited to join members from around the AOK Synod to travel to our companion synod, the Morogoro Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. We will be traveling around the dates of July 3-20 and the cost for the trip is approximately \$3500. That will cover your airfare to/from your local airport to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, food, housing and transportation while in Tanzania and a few tourist adventures. While in the Morogoro area, you will have the opportunity to work with local ministries on building repairs and maintenance, give basic medical care (or if you have the training, more advance care), get to know the people of the Morogoro Diocese as we travel to local congregations and ministries (especially as we will be there during their bishop's election) or a combination of all these opportunities. If you are interested or have questions, please contact (our own) Cindy Pennie at pennie@pennieworks.net

Join people from around the synod as we worship together in Thursday Mornings at 10am on Facebook and on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81658865516?pwd=ZythUjhrOFB3T3BHMS9Bd1B5LzBodz09>

Meeting ID: 816 5886 5516 Passcode: 097437

Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, who has served for the last 12 years, has announced that she will not go forward for a third term as Bishop and so at the Churchwide Assembly in July, representatives from all the synods will elect a new Presiding Bishop.

I don't have a crystal ball so I can't tell you who the next Presiding Bishop will be. I can only share with you what I think are the gifts and skills that person should have. The top of these are a sense of call, organization, strategic planning, a passion for the church, a deep sense of humility and the ability to take very little personally. The job of Presiding Bishop is so large and encompassing and we put a lot of responsibility on them while at the same time they do not have as much power and authority as we think they have. They also get blamed for a lot that is beyond their control and there is no pleasing everyone. When pastoral messages are made about wildfires in California or war in Palestine and Israel, the Presiding Bishop is both praised by some and also vilified by other because what they said was too political, or not political enough, or ignored one issue while focusing on scripture, or was too focus on an issue and not enough on scripture. The criticism, especially in our era of instant communication and social media, are constant and deep.

The next Presiding Bishop will not be able to do the job that they will be called and elected to do, without us, the people of the ELCA. Let us all agree now that we will support them, cheering them on with just as much love and enthusiasm on the day they are elected as the day they leave office.

And in these last 9 1/2 months of Bishop Eaton's term, I also encourage you to continue to support her, continue to pray for her and continue to demonstrate God's love to her and to all of God's people.

In Christ's name, Bishop Becca



**Love one
another.**

1 JOHN 4:7

Birthdays

- 4 Ava Claire Haar
- 7 Joanna Gipson
- 8 John Houck
- 12 Joshua Haar
- 13 Bruce Ackerson
- 14 Brandon Hearp
- 17 Seth Headrick
- 18 Jared Smith
- 20 Amanda Goeringer
- 21 Katarina Lavery
- 25 Jan Bartels



Anniversary

- 14 Margaret & Larry Redburn

From a worship bulletin:

Our visitor center has an updated beverage menu. Stop by for some coffee or sweat tea. We look forward to meeting you!

This doesn't sound like a very *sweet* offer!

From a worship bulletin:

Stewardship Sunday
Please place your cars in the offering plate ... to symbolize your commitment

Surely this resulted in more *cards* than automobiles!



Puzzle!

Use the clues to fill in the boxes. Then write those letters on the correct numbered lines below to complete 1 John 4:16 (NIV).

A place to live

1	2	3	4	5

Opposite of dark

6	7	8	9	10

Companion

11	12	13	14	15	16

Hand greeting

17	18	19	20

Male adult

21	22	23



8 2 16 13 4 6 2 19 5

17 9 2 5 19 5 12 6 7 19 5 4

13 15 6 2 19 20 6 7 19 14 4

13 15 8 2 16 18 15 16

8 2 16 13 23 10 1 14 21

1 John 4:16, NIV

Bible Quiz

Complete this sentence which introduces a well-known Bible story: "The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of ____."

- A. flowers
- B. sheep
- C. rocks
- D. bones

Answer: D (See Ezekiel 37:1, NIV.)

When 12-year-old Jesus stayed at the Jerusalem temple as Joseph and Mary started traveling home, after how many days did his parents find him?

- A. 1 day
- B. 2 days
- C. 3 days
- D. 7 days

Answer: C (See Luke 2:46.)

Shortly after the birth of the church at Pentecost, which apostle(s) taught an Ethiopian official about Jesus and then baptized him?

- A. Philip
- B. Peter and Andrew
- C. James
- D. Paul and Silas

Answer: A (See Acts 8:26-40.)

What kind of birds does God use to supply Elijah with food at the Kerith Ravine?

- A. quails
- B. ravens
- C. eagles
- D. doves

Answer: B (See 1 Kings 17:2-6.)

King Ahab, assisted by his conniving wife Jezebel, appropriated for himself something belonging to a man named Naboth. What did he take?

- A. Naboth's oxen
- B. Naboth's farm
- C. Naboth's vineyard
- D. Naboth's house

Answer: C (See 1 Kings 21:1-16.)

MINISTRY STAFF

Director of Music ~ Krystal Hennessey
Choir Director ~ Elizabeth Albright
Pianist- ~ Elena Lyalina
Office Coordinator ~ Lisa Murray-Francis
Parish Nurse ~ Cindy Pennie
Media Specialist ~ Olie Weaver
Nursery - Kailinn Valdois & Jocelyn Aguilar

CHURCH OFFICE

Hours: Monday thru Thursday 8:30 - 1pm
Friday 8:30-11am

Telephone numbers:

405-372-3074, 372-0879

(please leave a message!)

Email Address: salemelc@sbcglobal.net

February 7, RIC will meet in Salem's Library at 11:30am. All are welcome.

"You don't love someone because they're perfect; you love them in spite of the fact that they're not." —Jodi Picoult

Salem's Year End Giving Statements have gone out. Please contact Michelle, our financial secretary if you don't receive yours by the end of January.

"Without Valentine's Day, February would be ... well, January." - Jim Gaffigan

Interested in joining a Tai Chi class? Contact Annette Cowell about the class that's currently meeting at Salem on Saturday mornings.

"Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud."
- Maya Angelou

Games Nite! February 21, 6pm

"Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy. That is not our business and, in fact, it is nobody's business. What we are asked to do is to love, and this love itself will render both ourselves and our neighbors worthy." - Thomas Merton



**Love is patient,
Love is kind.**

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4