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Salem Lutheran Church  
4715 Hermantown Rd.  
Hermantown, MN 55811

ADDRESS LABEL

# February, 2026

Pastor – John Ansell  
Pastor’s Cell – 952-261-5593  
Church Office – 218- 727-1357  
Office Manager – Beth Erdmann

***Temporary Church Office Hours***  
***Tuesday - Thursday - 9:00-1:00***

Email Address – [salemhermantown@gmail.com](mailto:salemhermantown@gmail.com)

Web Address – [www.slecduluth.org](http://www.slecduluth.org)

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**Sunday Worship Schedule**  
**Youth Education 9:00 am**  
**Worship 10:00 am**  
**Coffee Fellowship 11:00 am**

**Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2026**  
6:30 pm Worship with Imposition of Ashes and Holy  
Communion

Greetings Everyone,

We often associate love with the month of February because of the celebration of Saint Valentine's Day. Sadly, when we use the word love in English, it can carry multiple meanings. An individual could say within one sentence, "I love my wife, who made this pizza, which I love." While both uses of the word love are valid, they clearly express very different meanings, yet we rely on the same word. When it comes to expressing love in the English language, we often do a poor job of fully conveying its depth and nuance.

When we read Scripture, love is spoken of often. However, the original languages of the Bible are Hebrew for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament. Both languages contain multiple words to describe different kinds of love. Many other languages similarly use distinct words that help describe and deepen the true expression of love present in our world. In Greek, there are eight different words that describe love, while Hebrew has approximately five. By using a wider variety of words to describe love, we gain greater awareness and a deeper understanding of what love truly means, especially within Scripture.

Throughout Scripture, love appears repeatedly. Last year in my newsletter, I noted there are between 300 and 500 words associated with love in the Bible. Because the original languages of Scripture are Hebrew and Greek, these words vary in meaning and help create an even deeper expression of the love being described. The depth of love found in Scripture is vast and expansive, far more than what our English language alone can adequately convey.

As we explore love further in Scripture, one passage I particularly appreciate comes from Paul's letter to the Romans: "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38–39, NRSV). This passage reminds us that nothing can separate us from God's love, especially the love revealed to us in Christ. The Greek word used to describe this love is agape, a love that is selfless, self-sacrificial, and unconditional. In the New Testament, God's love is most often described as agape love. In this passage, we are reminded that such love is always with us and that nothing can ever separate us from it. This powerful assurance is why this passage resonates so deeply with me.

So, as we speak of love during the month of February, let us do so with greater clarity and understanding. Let us remember that love can be expressed in many ways and described with many different words, especially in Scripture. Most importantly, let us hold fast to the truth that God's agape love is always with us and can never be taken away.

May God's blessing be with us all this month and every month. Amen.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor John Ansell

## Lessons for February, 2026

**2/1/2026:** Micah 6:1-8, Psalm 15, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, Matthew 5:1-12

**2/8/2026:** Isaiah 58:1-9a[9b-12], Psalm 112:1-9[10], 1 Corinthians 2:1-12[13-16], Matthew 5:13-20

**2/15/2026:** Exodus 24:12-18, Psalm 2, 2 Peter 1:16-21, Matthew 17:1-9

**2/22/2026:** Genesis 2:15-17;3:1-7, Psalm 32, Romans 5:12-19, Matthew 4:1-11

## ABOUT OUR SALEM FAMILY

### Thank you!

As Always, thank you so much for your generosity during the holiday season. Our receiving families are always so grateful and appreciative, we appreciate your bringing joy and cheer during the holiday season. Best wishes to you all. Happy 2026. *Hermantown Support Staff*

## THE POWER OF PRAYER AT SALEM

Salem's Prayer Chain contact person is Maria Karon. All members of Salem are welcome to become a link in this very important ministry. If you are interested in becoming involved or have a prayer chain request, please contact Maria at 218-940-0347.

## “Happy Birthday” To Our Members in “February”

1	January Erickson	17	Allie Wood
2	Nikomah Gomez		Tyler Wood
	Rya Green	23	Marc Ross
4	Tyler Zastrow	24	Chad Wood
10	Mickey Schultz	25	Rich Paulson
16	Della Value	27	Paul Ahlberg
17	Matt Nickles		
	Alex Struck		

## WORSHIP LEADER SCHEDULE

### February, 2025

	1	8	15	22
LEAD COMM	Kelly Erickson	Judy Giese	Sharon Szamatula	Carol Christenson
READER	Richard Petersson	Simon Erdmann	Carol Christenson	Sophie Wietman

Ruth Circle will meet on February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00 pm at Mary Larson home.

## **Salem Church Council Meeting Highlights- Council Meeting Highlights January 13, 2026**

Minutes-Motion made by Eric to accept the minutes from December meeting. Seconded by Sharon.

### **Ongoing Business**

- Safety/Security-EAP(Emergency Action Plan)  
Update 2/3 complete.  
Time & Talents Sheets: Have received 18 so far, Carol will review for action.
- Laugh and Learn Daycare Lease renewal, along with lease for kitchen use renewal June 1, 2026.

Half Walls in playroom are finished.

All entrances to the church will be always locked, with exception of events such as funerals, workshops meetings, Bible study, etc. A doorbell will be installed for access.

### **Committee Updates**

- **Youth Ministry**- No report
- **Mutual Ministry**-With the resignation of Sherri as Office Manager. Beth has agreed to cover the position for up to 6 months.  
Carol Christensen has accepted the Volunteer Funeral Coordinator position.
- **Property**-Toilets in lower women's bathroom have been fixed, waxing of floors has been done.  
Faucet repaired in downstairs Daycare bathroom.
- **Finance**-2026 Mission Support intent form was sent into the Synod by Carol.
- **Nominating Committee**-All positions filled

- **Vision Team**-A new Mission statement was decided on by the Team. Council will look into what the current status is.
- **Evangelism & Outreach**-Generous Together is a synod stewardship program with three components;  
1-Traditional stewardship program.  
2-Generosity project.  
3-Develop a cohort team Synod monthly via Zoom.
- **Other-Bishop Election Committee News:**  
Synod Assembly is April 24-26, 2026  
Updates can be found on synod website.

### **Pastor's Update:** via email

#### **SALEM'S FINANCIAL PICTURE**

	<b>December, 2025</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>
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General Giving	\$20,030	General Giving	\$ 224,619
Expenses	\$20,444	Total Needed	\$ 242,608
Difference	\$ -714	Difference	\$ 18,284

### **Men's Group:**

Beginning in March Salem will be starting a Men's group on the first and third Saturday of the month. The meeting will be at 10am and go for an hour. Come join us in the family room as we gather in fellowship to learn together about faith, life, and scripture. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor John

We would love to have members of your congregation join us in February at Sacred Heart Music Center located at 201 W 4th Street.

### **"How to Train Your Dragon"**

This FREE interactive program for children will feature music from **"How to Train Your Dragon"**. The Friends of the Felgemaker will host "A Morning with the Felgemaker" at on Saturday, February 7, 2026 from 10:00am-11:30 am. played on Sacred Heart Music Center's historic Felgemaker pipe organ. It is geared towards younger children (K-5th grade).

**This event is FREE. All children must be accompanied by an adult. No tickets are required.**

Friends of the Felgemaker will host a concert called "Balm for Troubled Times" at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 15, 2026.

The program will feature a variety of singers and instrumentalists from the Duluth-Superior community in a varied program of reflective and meditative music. Musical selections will include movements from *Requiem* by Gabriel Fauré, for chorus and organ.

The event is free. However, donations to the CHUM Warming Center are gratefully accepted upon exiting the venue.

### **Church Office Manager**

Salem is seeking a dedicated and organized person to join our staff! The ideal candidate will work in collaboration with pastoral staff, non-rostered staff, church committees, and members of Salem to provide operational support of the church. This position requires efficient skills in administration, communication, and time management. They must be comfortable handling financial records and be proficient or be willing to acquire proficiency in various computer applications (e.g. Microsoft Office). Contact Nancy Berntsen, Pastor John or Beth for more information.

