

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

BY PASTOR DAVID FLEENER



Pastor David Fleener

As we continue our series on liturgical time as a counterpoint to market time, we come to Christmas's lesser-known cousin: Candlemas, or the Presentation of the Lord. This feast day is celebrated on February 2 and commemorates Jesus's first appearance in the Jerusalem Temple as an infant, as told in Luke 2:22-38.

So, why is this day important? First, it shows us that Jesus's family were devout Jews. They followed God's law, which required the redemption of the firstborn through sacrifice (Exodus 13:11-16) and the purification of the mother 33 days following the birth of a male child (Leviticus 12:1-8). This also shows us that they were not a family of means. Luke tells us that they offer "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons", which was the offering of the poor.

But it also shows us that Jesus was recognized as the Messiah very early on. Simeon, a righteous man gifted with the Holy Spirit, holds the baby Jesus and sings the third of Luke's famous hymns: "Lord, now you let your servant go in peace," in which Jesus is to be God's light to all nations. Luke also mentions a prophetess by the name of Anna, who also recognized Jesus as the Messiah. Female prophets are fairly rare in the Bible, so the fact that Luke tells this story shows us that Jesus is not just for some people, but for all people: male and female; Jew and Gentile; Black, white, Latino, indigenous, and everyone else; immigrant and native-born; gay and straight; trans and cis; even Christian and non-Christian.

And that is the revolutionary impulse at the heart of the Christian faith. There are powerful people who enrich themselves by exacerbating division, stoking resentment, and fueling envy. The message of these people, whatever they're peddling, is similar: "It's not your fault. It's the fault of 'those people' (whoever 'those people' are). You are just an innocent victim in all this. Watch more, and we'll fill you with an endless supply of talking points that baptize your worst impulses, bless your deepest prejudices, and justify any action you take." All too often, we are catechized not by Scripture or the catechism, but by whichever voice yells the loudest. In the end, love and Christian community are sacrificed on the altar of self-righteousness.

Sunday Worship Service

in-person and online at 9:30
a.m.

Pastor David Fleener
pastor@shalomlutheran.org

Youth & Music Director-Sam Meehan

music@shalomlutheran.org
youth@shalomlutheran.org

Church Office:

Geri Rindahl
office@shalomlutheran.org

"We believe God is calling us to invite people into a deeper relationship with Christ, that they may discover true peace and be prepared to follow Him in compassionate service."

But there is no self-righteousness in the Temple that day 2000 years ago. That day, Jesus is presented to his Father God in obedience and humility. And Jesus is presented to us, not as yet another charlatan that divides people into “us” and “them”, but as the light for all people. Luke’s Gospel and Acts proclaim this powerful message repeatedly, especially through the parables of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan, and the reception of Samaritans and gentiles into the church. In the kingdom of God, people who ought to hate each other are united. It puts a beautiful bow on the Christmas season and prepares us for the penitential disciplines of Lent.

As a side note: why is this day also called Candlemas? Simeon sings of Jesus as a light to the nations and the glory of Israel. In honor of that, Christians brought their candles to church to be blessed for the year. Some churches also bless candles for liturgical use that day. It’s a powerful reminder that Jesus is ultimately our light, particularly when the world seems dark.

Love to you all,

Pastor David



SHALOM LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MINUTES
December 15, 2026

PRESENT: Carol, Ken, Kersten, Kim, Corey, Grant and Pastor

ABSENT:

Meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm by President Carol.

Motion was made to approve agenda with addition of Endowment Fund under New Business.

Motion was seconded. Motion carried.

Motion was made to approve November minutes. Motion was seconded. Motion carried.

Prayer led by Pastor: Devotion from “The New Book of Festival and Commemorations.”

Reviewed reports by Pastor and Committees

****Pastor’s Report:** Report included in packet. Adult Bible Study has finished reading the apocryphal books of Baruch and the Letter of Jeremiah. Confirmation has finished a unit on prayer and is continuing with Luther’s story. Pastor is going to meet again with the Jeremiah 29 team, probably in late January. Pastor will be gone December 29th-January 4th. Pastor Dennis Preston preaches and presides on January 4th.

**** Staff:** Report in packet.

**** Worship:** Report in packet. Community Hymn Sing will be held on April 22, to celebrate Earth Day.

**** Finance:** Report in packet. We are short about \$30,157. WELCA is purchasing a new chair for the office. WELCA donated \$5000 to the general fund and did not contribute to the kitchen fund this year. This was money from the Bazaar. Budget did pass this year with few questions from the congregation.

**** Y/ED:** Report in packet. Christmas program and Youth Bake Sale on December 21st.

****Outreach and Caring:** Report in packet. Angel Tree family from United Way.

****God’s Work Our Hands:** Report in packet. Continue to reach out to members in needed.

****Personnel:** Did not meet

****Endowment Fund Committee:** Held an unofficial meeting on December 8th. All 3 of the new members did attend but were missing some of the current members. \$4852.51 dollars remaining to grant in 2025. Council believes that Endowment Committee should have a council representative. Pastor is currently going to act as the council representative to be able to bring any items for council attention.

****Jeremiah 29 Project:** Report in packet.

**** Property:** Did meet but no report. Small toilet in nursery has been repaired. Looking at getting new lights for Sam’s office. Looking at sitting down in the new year to look at the cleaning contract.

**** FM Radio:** Team met on Sunday. Motion made to authorize an application to the FCC to officially request a call sign change to “KONX” (from the former “KVSL”). Motion seconded. Motion carries.

****Tech:** Report in packet. Corey and Grant are working on the Microsoft 365. Geri would like the team to wait until after the new year to install the new computer.

****Stewardship:** No Stewardship report this month.

Old Business:

New Business: Pastor will look into a council retreat in January. Looking at January 24, 2025.

Motion was made to adjourn. Motion seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Kim Casavan Council Secretary





Shalom Lutheran Financial Activity: Jan/Dec 25

SHALOM LUTHERAN CHURCH STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY: JAN/25 - DEC/25 - UNAUDITED

General Fund Activities	Actual	Budget	Annual Budget	Variance
Revenues				
General Offerings	\$ 245,426	\$ 290,556	\$ 290,556	\$ (45,130)
Building Fund Offerings	62,215	85,728	85,728	(23,513)
Interest and Other	8,222	5,050	5,050	3,172
Total General/Bldg Fund Revenues	315,862	381,334	381,334	(65,472)
Expenses				
Office expenses and Wages/Benefits	207,885	212,642	212,642	(4,757)
Building and Grounds	46,175	51,260	51,260	(5,085)
Synod payments, Outreach, GWOH	9,191	9,800	9,800	(609)
Shalom programs (music, Ed, worship, Technology)	13,631	22,700	22,700	(9,069)
Total General Fund Expenses	276,882	296,402	296,402	(19,520)
Net Transfers in/(out) of General/Bldg Fund	8,410	(5,904)	(5,900)	14,314
Building Fund Mortgage Payments	(79,051)	(79,032)	(79,032)	(19)
Net General/Bldg Fund Surplus / (Deficit)	\$ (31,660)	\$ (4)	\$ -	\$ (31,656)

Fund Activities	12/31/24 Balance	2025 Receipts	2025 Disbursed	Transfers between funds	12/31/25 Balance
General Fund (Unrestricted)	\$ 88,193	\$ 254,981	\$ 278,303	\$ 3,557	\$ 68,427
Bldg Fund (mortg pmt, debt reduction)	51,283	62,215	79,051	4,854	39,300
Restricted Funds - WELCA	37,413	13,548	7,779	(4,603)	38,579
Restricted Funds - Youth	18,224	7,962	13,346	900	13,740
Restricted Funds: Shalom internal use	84,196	34,210	17,118	(4,707)	96,581
Restricted Funds for Outreach use	3,886	3,711	5,471	-	2,126
Totals	\$ 283,194	\$ 376,627	\$ 401,068	\$ (0)	\$ 258,753

Summary:

This Shalom reporting is through December with a combined General and Building Funds deficit of \$31,660. The deficit is primarily due to Jan-Dec offerings under-budget by \$68,643, offset by expenses underbudget by \$19,520. Transfers from BBQ and WELCA funds also helped offset the deficit. Council approved transferring the BBQ net proceed 50% to Building Fund and 50% to General fund. The General/Bldg Funds balance is about \$107,728, down from \$139,000 at the end of December/24.

Notes:

- Cash & short term investment balances:

Cash	M Mrkt
\$ 70,582	\$ 194,432

 Includes all Restricted Funds
- Restricted Funds: activities such as Memorials, Love Inc, Music, Youth, WELCA, World Hunger, etc
- Restricted Funds: not budgeted, but receive/use only money received for that specific purpose.

	Month	To-date	Budget
4. Offerings to-date are:	\$ 24,422	\$ 245,426	\$ 290,556
Building Fund Offerings:	\$ 4,653	\$ 62,215	\$ 85,728

- Building Fund receipts to-date are \$16,836 under funds needed to pay the mortgage.**
- Mortgage balance at time of reporting is \$456,610. Our monthly payment is \$6,586.



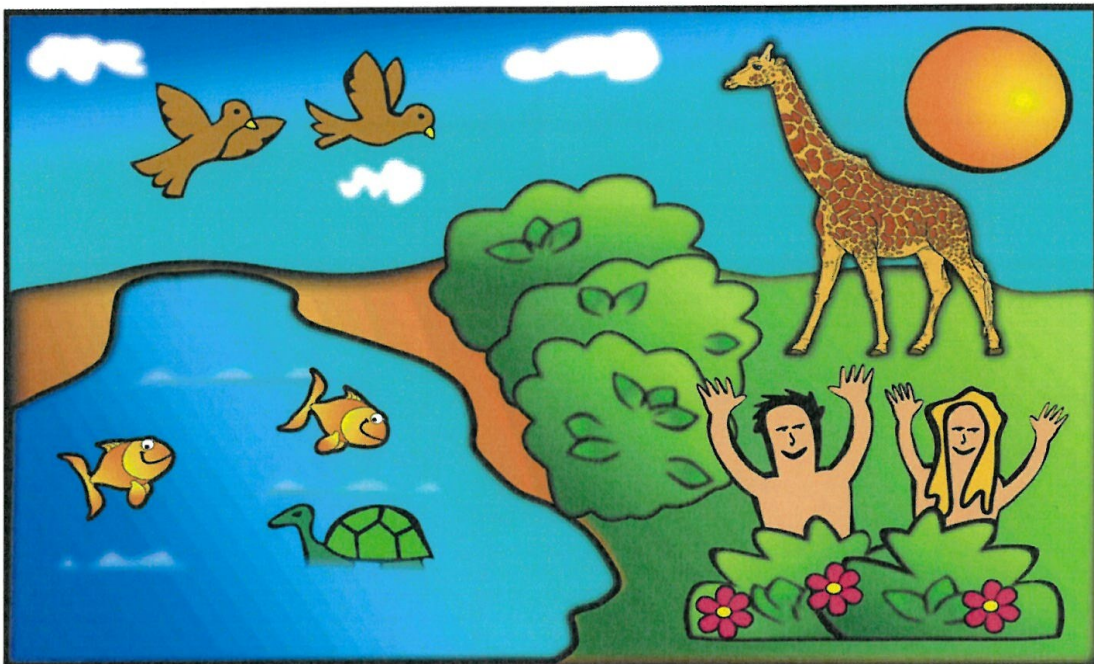
God is Love



X	S	G	M	E	R	C	Y	J	K
E	A	L	D	W	I	S	D	O	M
F	L	P	O	J	F	H	I	T	V
O	V	A	O	V	H	E	J	E	G
R	A	T	V	Q	E	A	W	A	R
G	T	I	R	D	A	L	E	C	A
I	I	E	F	A	I	T	H	H	C
V	O	N	Y	M	P	A	L	E	E
E	N	C	T	R	U	S	T	R	E
Q	Q	E	K	K	G	U	I	D	E

Word list:

FAITH
FORGIVE
GRACE
GUIDE
HEAL
LOVE
MERCY
PATIENCE
SALVATION
TEACHER
TRUST
WISDOM





Valentine's Day, also called Saint **Valentine's Day** or the Feast **of** Saint **Valentine**, is celebrated annually on February 14. Originating as a Western Christian feast **day** honoring one or two early saints named Valentinus, **Valentine's Day** is recognized as a significant cultural, religious, and commercial celebration **of** romance and romantic love in many regions around the world.



RUNESTONE CHORUS

Runestone Chorus: A New Musical Community in Alexandria

This fall marks the exciting beginning of a new musical journey in the Alexandria area! A community choir—**Runestone Chorus**—has begun meeting at Shalom Lutheran Church, under the direction of Sam Meehan. Rehearsals are held every Tuesday evening at 6:30 PM.

Open to all who love to sing, Runestone Chorus offers a welcoming space for anyone interested in making music together and connecting with others through song. Whether you're an experienced vocalist or just someone who enjoys singing in the shower, this group is about community, creativity, and the joy of shared music-making.

If you'd like to learn more, feel free to reach out to Sam Meehan via email at sam.meehan.sm@gmail.com, by phone at 4064809675 or better yet, come check out a rehearsal or two. You might just find your voice and your people!

REMINDER: Please continue to support our Coffee Fund with your donations. The donation box is located on the treat table in the Community Room!



BOOKWORM BUNCH

“SO MANY BOOKS-SO LITTLE TIME”!! Enjoy reading??? Great Discussions???. Come join us at one of our monthly gatherings. We meet the last Monday of each month (unless it is a holiday) at 1 pm at Shalom. If any questions, call Barb at 952-297-2541 or Joann at 320-219-0810.



Following is the list of books selected for discussion.

February 23 Frozen River

Ariel Lawton

March 30 Wish you Well

David Baldacci

April 27 When The World Fell Silent

Donna Jones Alward

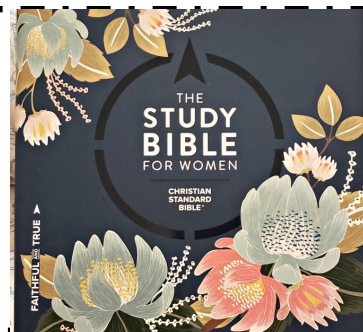


Adult Bible Study

First, the good news: God always speaks to us through the Bible.

Second, the bad news: we don't listen or read the Bible as often as we would like.

Third, the good news: we can share God's Word in inspiring ways. Come to our gatherings on Thursday mornings from 10-11:00 am.





Dear Ladies of Shalom
Lutheran Church -

You went above...
and beyond!

Thank you for your
wonderful donation
to the African Girl's
Scholarship and
Mentorship Program.
These scholarships make
a big change to girls
so they can continue
to pursue education
and have a better life!
I will continue to support
their cause, as I hope
you all will too!
Blessings -
Nola Smith

**Dear Ladies of Shalom Lutheran Church [WELCA],
Thank you for your wonderful donation [\$500 from Fall
Bazaar] to the African Girl's Scholarship and
Mentorship Program. These scholarships make a
big change to girls so they can continue to pursue
education and have a better life! I will continue to
support their cause as I hope you all will too!
Blessings,
Nola Smith**



Ash Wednesday will be February 18th. The following Wednesday starts our first of 5 Wednesday evening suppers & prayer services. The first supper will be following tradition with the famous chili cook-off! This is a fundraiser for our summer youth mission trip. This year we are taking our youth to Niagara Falls.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the community room for the following 4 weeks of suppers. Please consider signing up to provide a meal.

We will be using "That You May Have Life" by Marty Haugen and Susan Briehl again this year for our evening prayer service.

God
is good
all the
time



Feb 4 5:30-6:30
Grades 6-8 Confirmation
Pre-K-5th

Feb 11 5:30-6:30
Grades 6-8 Confirmation
Pre-K-5th

Feb 18 5:30-6:30
Grades 6-8 Confirmation
Pre-K-5th

Feb 25 5:30-6:30
Grades 6-8 Confirmation
Pre-K-5th

Feb Shared Ministry

Shared Ministry	2/1/2026 0:00	2/8/2026 0:00	2/15/2026 0:00	2/22/2026 0:00
Acolyte	Joshua Flaten	Andrew Kappmeyer	Rhe'von Richmond	
Assisting Minister	Dave Burbank	Nola Smith	Carol Hedlund	Cami Pexsa
Communion Assistants	Angie Erickson	Dave Morgan	Dean Kliever	Grant Pexsa
Communion Assistants	Cheryl Burbank	Amy Klimek	Catherine Kliever	Judy Hoffman
Communion Bread/Month	Judy Hoffman	Judy Hoffman	Judy Hoffman	Judy Hoffman
Greeters	Judy Radjenovich	Corey Drewes	Dave Beyer	Amy Schlosser
Greeters	Connie Facciotto	Tammy Drewes	Barb Beyer	Pam McCormick
Kitchen Monitor/Month	Sue Engstrom	Sue Engstrom	Sue Engstrom	Sue Engstrom
Lector	John Smith	Ellen Kappmeyer	Judy Hoffman	Joann Garland
Proclaim Slide Presenter	CJ/Kim/Julie	CJ/Kim/Julie	CJ/Kim/Julie	CJ/Kim/Julie
Usher	Craig Neubarth	Renae Hills	Dave Malvin	Al Anderson
Usher	Lona Neubarth	Rachel Buse	Sue Engstrom	Carolyn Carlson

Training is available for serving. Let the office know and arrangements will be made for a training session.

If you are unable to be here for your Shared Ministry appointment, please try your best to find someone else to take your place. Then, let the church Office know who will be here.

Thank you to all who share their time & talents to bring God's word to our Shalom family and friends. We are always looking for more people who would like to share in this Ministry.

Feb Birthdays

02/05 Beyer Dave
 02/09 Steussy Ella
 02/11 Smith John
 02/12 Shelstad Roger
 02/15 Bukowski Fritz
 02/15 Paine Naomi
 02/16 Koranda Diane
 02/18 Richmond Rhe'von
 02/18 Whipkey Jim



02/22 McKay Eileen
 02/23 Dertinger Randy
 02/23 Granning Rhett
 02/23 Wehofer Arnie
 02/24 Carlberg John
 02/25 Endreson Sherri
 02/25 Evjen Clayton
 02/26 Dertinger Eldie
 02/28 Pletcher Arvin

Your Shalom family rejoices with you as you celebrate the day God gave you life. Birthday Blessings! If we missed your birthday please let us know in the church office because we would like to include you in our thoughts and prayers on your birthday!

Hospitality Time

Hospitality treats will be served in the Community Room between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. on Sundays.

The schedule Feb is:

<u>02-01-26</u>	<u>02-08-26</u>	<u>02-15-26</u>
Dave & Barb Beyer Carolyn Carlson Ryan & Angie Erickson	Kim & Brian Casavan Corey & Tammy Drewes Joann Garland	Deb Hoven Glen & Linda Huebner Dale & Naty Kittleson
	02-22-26 Carol Hedlund Dean & Catherine Kliever Clem & Ginny Klimek	

If you are unable to make it, please call someone to replace you. Thank you



February



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Feb 1 9:30 AM 9:30 am worship (in persc) ↗ 10:30 AM GWOH ↗ 12 PM Malvin Christmas 4:30 PM Bible Ladies	2 1 PM Book Club ↗ 6 PM Newcomers	3 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at Com ↗ 6:30 PM Runestone Chorus ↗	4 5 PM 🍴 Meal ↗ 5:30 PM ☺ Confirmation/Faith Tim ↗	5 8 AM LWR Quilting ↗ 10 AM 📺 Adult Bible Study ↗ 5:30 PM Tech Team meets ↗ 6 PM Shalom Singers ↗	6 Newsletter Items due ↗	7 9 AM SOS Rehearsal 9:00 am ↗
8 9:30 AM 9:30 am worship (in persc) ↗ 10:30 AM Radio Ministry ↗	9 8 AM 🏠 Presidents Day Office Closed ↗ 5:30 PM 📺 Council Mtg ↗	10 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at Com ↗ 11 AM Outreach ↗ 5 PM Youth/Ed meets ↗ 5:30 PM Property Meeting ↗ 6:30 PM Runestone Chorus ↗	11 5 PM 🍴 Meal ↗ 5:30 PM ☺ Confirmation/Faith Tim ↗	12 8 AM LWR Quilting ↗ 10 AM 📺 Adult Bible Study ↗ 11 AM Altar Guild 5 PM Worship 6 PM Shalom Singers ↗	13 9 AM SOS Rehearsal 9:00 am ↗	
15 9:30 AM 9:30 am worship (in persc) ↗	16 8 AM 🏠 Presidents Day Office Closed ↗ 5:30 PM 📺 Council Mtg ↗	17 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at Com ↗ 6:30 PM Runestone Chorus ↗	18 6:30 PM Ash Wednesday Service	19 8 AM LWR Quilting ↗ 10 AM 📺 Adult Bible Study ↗ 6 PM Shalom Singers ↗ 6:30 PM 🚗 Vintage Car Club	20 Newsletter Items due ↗	21
22 9:30 AM 9:30 am worship (in persc) ↗	23 1 PM Book Club ↗ 6 PM Newcomers	24 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at Com ↗ 5 PM Newcomers ↗ 6:30 PM Runestone Chorus ↗	25 5:15 PM 🍴 Meal ↗ 6:30 PM Lenten Service	26 8 AM LWR Quilting ↗ 10 AM 📺 Adult Bible Study ↗ 1 PM Retired Pastors ↗ 6 PM Shalom Singers ↗	27	28 9 AM SOS Rehearsal 9:00 am ↗



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