

SOUNDS OF SALEM

Volume 16 Issue 12

www.SalemChurch.cc

December 2014

**December 2014
Revised Common Lectionary
Year A**

2nd Sunday of Advent—December 7

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

3rd Sunday of Advent—December 14

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
Luke 1:46b-55
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

4th Sunday of Advent—December 21

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

Christmas Eve—December 24

Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-20

1st Sunday after Christmas Day—December 28

Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 22:40

Salem's Dove and Ten Commandment Windows



The stained glass windows at Salem are incredibly beautiful. Yet, they are also full of symbolism, and they are perfect for on-going personal devotional studies.

The **dove** is a symbol of peace, because when the dove brought an olive branch to Noah, he knew that the flood was over and soon they would be able to rebuild their lives in peace. The dove is also symbol of the Holy Spirit, which descended on Christ at His baptism "like a dove."

Read: Genesis 8:8-11 and Matthew 3:16-17. **Reflect:** How do you think Noah felt when he saw the dove come back with an olive branch? **Pray:** Ask for the Holy Spirit to give you peace.

God gave Moses and the Israelites the **Ten Commandments** on two stone tablets. They tell us how to relate to God and one another.

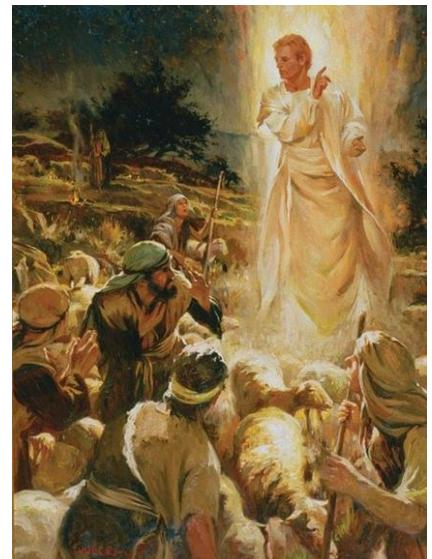
Read: Exodus 34:1-11, pp. 109-110. **Reflect:** How has God shown His great love and faithfulness? **Pray:** Ask that you would have the courage and faith to respond with love and faithfulness to God.

Source: The Salem Confirmation Class Handbook

The Times of Christmas

The first Christmas was impeccably timed by God, happening just when God wanted it. Galatians 4:4 says, "*When the right time came, God sent His son...*"

What time is Christmas this year? You find the answer in four statements the angel said to the shepherds at the first Christmas. (Luke 2:10-14)



1. It's time to release your fears! The first thing the angel said was, "*Do not be afraid!*" Fear is your greatest barrier to knowing God and fulfilling his purposes for your life. Fear is a self-imposed prison that keeps you from living the life God intends for you. So whatever you are afraid of – Christmas is the time to let it go. The Bible contains 365

"Fear not" – one for every day of the year! It's time to stop worrying and start worshiping. Stop tensing up and start trusting God.

2. It's time to renew your faith! Next, the angel said "*I bring you good news with great joy, and it is for everyone!*" The Good News of Jesus keeps getting better because the bad news of the world keeps getting worse. The Good News is that God loves you. He created you for a purpose in this world. You can know God personally by trusting in Jesus, and he wants you to spend eternity with him. God has really long range plans for your life! Christmas is time to come back to God.

3. It's time to receive forgiveness! It doesn't matter what you've done wrong; Jesus paid for it on the cross. Accept his forgiveness.

4. It's time to rebuild relationships! Finally the angel said, "*Peace on earth, and goodwill to all people.*" Once you've accepted God's forgiveness, He wants you to forgive everyone else. Who do you need to offer forgiveness to this Christmas? It's time to make peace!

Salem Christmas Eve and Communion



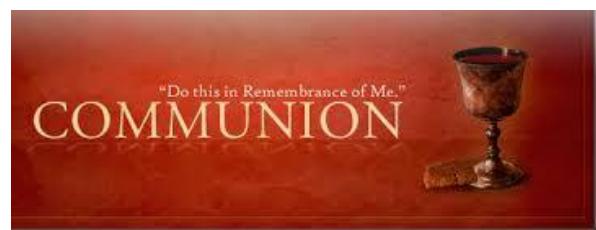
A popular Christmas card has a message that goes like this:

"If our greatest need had been knowledge, God would have sent us a scientist. If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist. If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer. But our greatest need is forgiveness, so God sent us a Savior."

Unfortunately, we rarely see our need for a Savior. Consider this letter a little boy sent to Santa Claus as being similar to our attitudes:

"Dear Santa, There are three little boys who live in this house. There's Jeffy; he's two. There's David; he's four. There's Norman; he's seven. Jeffrey is good some of the time. David is good most of the time. Norman is good all the time; I am Norman. Remember that when you come to visit on Christmas."

I even heard of a discussion over the necessity of Holy Communion for Christmas Eve worship. His secular wife, who was appalled by the whole Body and Blood sacramental thing, kept asking, "Can't I come to church at least once a year without somebody getting killed?" In other words, why can't we let our faces glow in the candlelight and go home without remembering the death and resurrection of Jesus?



I wish we could. Forgiveness fits faulty people. Forgiving is not forgetting, not excusing, and not setting ourselves up for more torture. Forgiveness opens new doors of possibilities and creates a new future. Forgiveness is the oil that lubricates the human machine. Without it, all of life just grinds along. Wouldn't you like to walk down that road of forgiveness at Communion?

If you've gone through this year and reached Christmas Eve without any sin such as hurting or wounding anyone, disappointing or betraying anyone, you probably don't need to be at Salem Church for Communion.

But, if you have limped in here as a tired old sinner who is hungry for spiritual refreshment, then you have come to the very spot to find the wondrous grace of a God that will renew you. Here sins can be forgiven. Here God and sinners are reconciled. Here people bent beneath life's heavy loads find the courage to carry on.

Would you pray this prayer with me? "If I have wounded any soul today, if I have caused one foot to go astray, and if I have walked in my own willful way, forgive me Lord, in Jesus's Name. Amen."

We'll Get Through This

Lord, our troubles
are so great,
We don't know what to do;
The price for our
iniquity
Is finally coming due.

The world is crumbling
all about;
No safe place can be found.
Right is wrong,
wrong is right;
The change is quite profound.

Lord, we need
Your guiding light
To lead us out of here;
We'll focus on
Your Word, and prayer,
to take away our fear.

Temptations of
this dying world
we'll rule out and let go;
Give our burdens
all to you,
Shed all worldly woe.

That's how we'll
get through this, Lord,
Fixed on heaven above,
Assured of your
protection, help,
and everlasting love.
By Joanna Fuchs

Ten Thoughts of Wisdom

Someone has written these beautiful words. It's a must read. Try to understand the deep meaning of it. They are like the Ten Commandments to follow in life all of the time!

1] Prayer is not a "spare wheel" that you pull out when in trouble, but it is a "steering wheel" that directs the right path throughout the journey.

2] So why is a Car's WINDSHIELD so large & the Rear View Mirror so small? Because our PAST is not as important as our FUTURE. So, Look Ahead and Move on.

3] Friendship is like a BOOK. It takes a few minutes to burn, but it takes years to write.

4] All things in life are temporary. If going well, enjoy it; they will not last forever. If going wrong, don't worry; they can't last long either.

5] Old Friends are Gold! New Friends are Diamond! If you get a Diamond, don't forget the Gold! Because to hold a Diamond, you always need a Base of Gold!

6] Often when we lose hope and think this is the end, GOD smiles from above and says, "Relax, sweetheart, it's just a bend, not the end!"

7] When GOD solves your problems, you have faith in HIS abilities; when GOD doesn't solve your problems HE has faith in your abilities.

8] A blind person asked St. Anthony: "Can there be anything worse than losing eye sight?" He replied: "Yes, losing your vision!"

9] When you pray for others, God listens to you and blesses them. And sometimes, when you are safe and happy, remember that someone has prayed for you.

10] WORRYING does not take away tomorrow's TROUBLES, it takes away today's PEACE.

Source: Anonymous

Senior Luncheon

The next Senior Luncheon will be at the Lions Club on **December 3rd at 12:00 pm**. Come to socialize, to eat a delicious meal together, and to play Bingo! Bring a white elephant gift!



Women's Association

The Women's Association will be having their Christmas luncheon on **December 18**. Remember to bring your mittens! More details to follow. There will be no meetings in January or February.



Dove and 10 Commandment Windows



Singers preparing for the Christmas program



Junior Bell Choir practice



Elementary Sunday School wreath-making to give away



Veteran's Day exhibit table



Adult Sunday School singing

Church Business

Trustee Notes from November 2014

Where we have been: The manse perimeter wall was repaired on the south half of the manse. There was a new footer and partial wall poured and the drainage was tiled in to solve any future issues.

Where we are at: A bid for the basement painting was accepted and that will be complete before the Advent Breakfast on December 7th. The basement, to include the hall, bathroom, kitchen, and small classroom, will be included in the project. The divider curtains are being looked at for replacement due to the mold issues found on the fabric. We are accepting donations towards this project to ease the burden on the Major Improvement Fund. If you would like to make a donation to this project please make the donation to the Major Improvement Fund and earmark it for the basement project. The painting part of the project to include oil based primer to seal any mold issues was bid at \$5,653.00. One of the bids for the curtains was in the \$3,000.00 range.

Where we are going: The parking lot project will be the next major project in our near future. The parking lot surface will be priced in asphalt and in concrete to find the best option as far as initial price and upkeep and maintenance.

We would like to thank everyone for your support in 2014 with the monetary donations and volunteered labor to keep our manse, sanctuary, church, and grounds looking beautiful. In the closing months of the 2014 budget, we have come to a deficit. Due to several missed Sundays for inclement weather and losses from our rosters, we are attempting to balance the budget by year end. We, the congregation and the friends of Salem Church, need to focus our efforts on balancing the budget by year end through our tithing, gifts, and donations.

Session Report from November

Session met November 9 with the trustees to discuss the 2015 budget and recommend financial compensation for the pastor. Then, the two groups separated and held their own meetings.

Everybody present expressed concern about our lack of sufficient general fund income. Although there may be some big end of the year contributions, we have lost, some by death, several members this year. It was agreed to keep the pastor's 2015 salary flat, even though we are paying less than the minimum full time pastor salary 'mandated' by PCUSA. Even with no pay increase, we have

to begin paying a higher amount into the PCUSA pension fund because of mandated higher healthcare costs.

Earlier in the year the Session developed some specific 2014 performance criteria for the pastor which, if met, would be the basis for a \$1,000 bonus payment that was listed in our 2014 budget. It was agreed that the pastor had indeed met our criteria, but due to loss of membership, we agreed to pay him \$500 less than the maximum budgeted bonus amount. No bonus will be in the 2015 budget.

There was a congregational meeting immediately after the service November 23 that approved the 2015 budget. A congregational meeting will be held December 21 to approve the pastor call and elect officers. The nominating committee is delighted to report that everyone asked readily agreed to fill the various officer positions we will be electing.

We have, as of November 9, oversubscribed our pledge of canned goods to the Salvation Army. Additional food donations will be given to Community Samaritans. Our annual Christmas caroling and manse open house will be December 14.

Salem Charitable Giving

We are pleased to say that there were 29 Christmas boxes given to Operation Christmas Child this year. That is the most that the Salem members have ever donated. This is a great way to show Jesus' love to needy children.

Church Family

December Birthdays

Dave Owens	12/5
Marjorie Jones	12/8
Paige McClure	12/8
Jason Lloyd	12/9
Megan Price	12/12
Marilyn Stockton	12/13
Jeremy Morris	12/17
Sue Ann Skanes	12/19
Jeff Owens	12/23
Mary Ellen Lloyd	12/24
Haydn Williams	12/25
Isaiah Pugh	12/30
Vicki Profit	12/31

December Anniversaries

Kent & Heather McClure	12/16
Doug & Marylin Strickler	12/28



Violet Ashton
c/o Roselawn Manor
420 E. 4th Street, Apt. 109
Spencerville, OH 45887

Evelyn Hoverman
Hearth & Home
1118 Westwood Drive
Van Wert, OH 45891

Lee Lare
P.O. Box 654
Venedocia, OH 45894

Betty Lloyd
Van Wert Manor
160 Fox Rd.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Gordon Morgan
Vancrest of Convoy
510 Tully Drive
Convoy, OH 45832

Marian Morris
Hearth & Home
1118 Westwood Drive
Van Wert, OH 45891

Ruth E. Morris
Vancrest Healthcare
10357 Van Wert—Decatur Rd.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Evelyn Pugh
Vancrest Healthcare, Room 100
10357 Van Wert—Decatur Rd.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Warren Summersett
Vancrest Healthcare
10357 Van Wert—Decatur Rd.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Becky Zirkle
Vancrest Health Care, Room A8
10357 Van Wert—Decatur Rd.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Serving our Country

Cory McCollow (U.S. Coast Guard)
311 Oak Street #109
Oakland, CA 94607

2nd Lt Pete McCollow
116 HAC Street
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Away at College

Cassy Emery Box 564
c/o Cincinnati Christian University
2700 Glenway Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45204

Sammi Jones

Those with Health Concerns

Gwenda Blackmore (foot surgery)
Brendan Daily (friend of Morgan Pugh)
Ralph Du Cheney (father of Stacia Profit)
Bob Drewyore (son of Bette Richards)
Natalie Ellerbrock (Stacia Profit's niece)
Jeannie Etzler (daughter of Warren Summersett)
Vernon Hobbs, Sr.
Linda Howell (Jeff Coil's sister – congestive heart failure)
Jesse (a mother with a heroin addiction)
Margaret Keltner (in hospice—mother of Jan Jones)
Amanda Lamb (granddaughter of Dave & Jean Owens)
Betty Lloyd
James Marshall (mysterious ailment and M.S.)
Tim Morris
Aimee Schulte (friend of Sarah Kimmet)
Warren Summersett
Paula Klein (cancer – friend of Evelyn Martz)
Joyce Profit (heart problems)
Marjorie Rhoades (leg pains)
Bill Rowlett (church neighbor, heart problems)
Maxine Stewart (mother of Kim Coil)
Tom Theobald (recurrent cancer)
The Burnett/Foust Family (spiritual protection)

In Mourning

The family of Paul "Sonny" Martz

Please remember our elderly members, soldiers and college students with cards & visits.

DECEMBER EVENTS

Wednesday, December 3	12:00 PM Senior Luncheon
Sunday, December 7	8:30 AM Senior Choir Practice 9:30 AM Worship Service 10:30 AM Advent Breakfast
Sunday, December 14	8:30 AM Senior Choir Practice 9:30 AM Worship Service – Christmas Program 5:00 PM All Church Caroling to shut-ins 7:00 PM Manse Open House Reception
Thursday, December 18	Women's Association Christmas Luncheon
Sunday, December 21	9:30 AM Worship Service 10:30 AM Congregational Meeting
Wednesday, December 24	10:00 PM Candlelight Christmas Eve Service
Sunday, December 28	9:30 AM Worship Service 10:45 AM Sunday School

SERVANTS FOR DECEMBER

Week of	Greeters*	Ushers	Acolyte	Nursery**
December 7	Charles Good	Morris Family	Catie Emery	Ashley & Katie McClure
December 14	Charles Good	Morris Family	Catie Emery	Bob & Denise Pugh
December 21	Charles Good	Morris Family	Catie Emery	To be announced
December 28	Charles Good	Morris Family	Catie Emery	Jeff & Kelly Lloyd

*Besides greeting with a smile, greeters should be at the outside landing to watch the steps and parking lot as well as assist with the elevator to help those in need.

** Nursery workers please bring snacks for 15 children.



Salem Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 678
Venedocia, Ohio 45894-0678

Music for December

Church Phone: 419-667-4142
Church Web Page: www.SalemChurch.cc
Church E-Mail: Secretary@SalemChurch.cc

Sunday, December 7, 2014
Special Music: Sue Fickle

Sunday, December 14, 2014
Special Music: Christmas Program

Sunday, December 21, 2014
Special Music: Senior Choir

Sunday, December 28, 2014
Special Music: Carol Singing

Rev. Thomas Emery cell: 419-863-9131
Email: PastorTomEmery@SalemChurch.cc

