

SOUNDS OF SALEM

A MONTHLY PRINT AND DIGITAL NEWSLETTER OF SALEM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VENEDOCIA, OHIO

Volume 20 Issue 11

November 2018

Pastor's Thoughts

When my wife, Carol, and I, at our wedding, were pronounced man and wife, next it was time to walk back down the aisle in the church in front of the smiling congregation.

But, we stood there for a moment, because the expected recessional music hadn't started. It was on cassette, and the sound person was not ready. We stood there and smiled looking at the audience for what seemed like an uncomfortable eternity in front of everyone. Then, my wife and I whispered to each other **"Let's just go."** In agreement, just as we lifted our feet to take a step, the music began.

After the wedding, as newlyweds, we traveled from Ohio to California tent camping all the way to my seminary classes at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, which were going to start ten days later.

In getting training for ministry, we were trusting that we were in God's care to find the right apartment, jobs, church, and friendships. While we had our fears and doubts, we were trusting God for all things to turn out right. We realized that God wants all of us to take the initiative, and He will assist you as you are going by faith.

We cast our cares upon God because we realized that our vision was limited to know the future, but God's vision has no limitations. Not even a sparrow falls to the ground from His loving will. Not even the greatest trials can remove us from His loving care. Jesus told his disciples in John 13:7 NLT, **"You don't understand now what I am doing, but someday you will."**

For each of us also seeking to please God with our lives, our question in life should be, **"Lord, what do you want me to do next?"** Let God carry your burdens as we did, so you can serve others in His Name.

Many times, Carol and I shared that same expression with each other when we were waiting for things to get in the right order before we did something. We say, **"Let's just go,"** and it's amazing how the music begins when you seek first the Kingdom of God.

Pastor Tom

A Traditional Thanksgiving Hymn



We Gather Together

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;
He chastens and hastens his will to make known;
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing,
Sing praises to his name: He forgets not his own.

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,
Ordaining, maintaining his kingdom divine;
So from the beginning the fight we were winning;
Thou, Lord, wast at our side, All glory be thine!

We all do extol thee, thou leader triumphant,
And pray that thou still our defender wilt be.
Let thy congregation escape tribulation;
Thy name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!
Amen

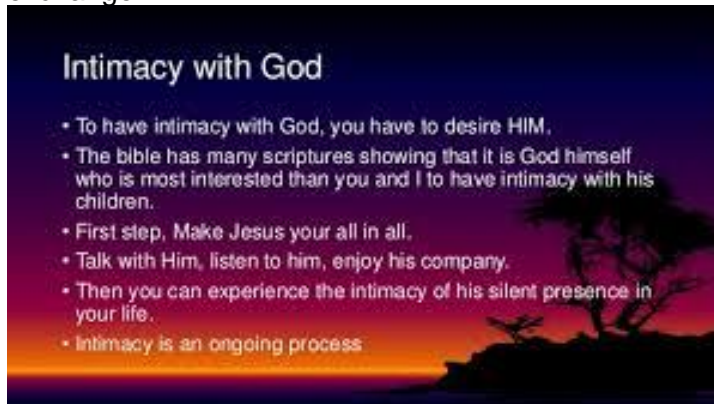
--Traditional Thanksgiving Hymn--
(A translation by Theodore Baker: 1851-1934)



Francine Klagsbrun, in her book *Married People*, discusses the nature of intimacy and enumerates several key factors present in it.

First, intimacy requires a complete acceptance of the other person just as he or she is, so that each person is unafraid to be open and honest with the other. Second, it implies that each person feels important to the other. Third, it means the creation of an environment in which secrets can be shared with complete confidence.

Fourth, it accepts the fact that there will be periods of distancing as well as closeness, and that the distancing will not destroy the relationship. Finally, intimacy means truly communicating, listening with sensitivity, and assuring the other that he or she is safe in the exchange.



Every human being longs to have intimacy with someone else — to be open and loving and safe together. But what about with God? Is it possible to be intimate with God as well, to have this open, sensitive, creative relationship with the eternal One who presides over our destinies? The Bible suggests that it is.

Oh, we're not to forget that there is always what Kierkegaard called "an infinite qualitative distance" between us and the Almighty. We must not assume too much.

But intimacy, communication, a sense of well-being together — yes, that is entirely possible. The psalms often breathe an air of intimacy. The Song of Solomon 2:8-17, read at a spiritual level, suggests it. The prophet Hosea glories in it. Jesus obviously experienced it, as did Paul and John and other New Testament figures.

How can we achieve a sense of intimacy with God? Let me offer some suggestions.

This is always a first step toward intimacy, isn't it? In any romantic encounter, in the beginning of any friendship, there is the sharing of information, getting to know the other person's history. "Tell me all about yourself." Isn't that the lover's plea?

God does have a story. His history is in the Bible, and in the books of church history and the books about other people's experiences with Him. In fact, God's story is probably better documented than that of any other figure we know. It is woven in and out of all the history books, all the philosophy books, all the books of religious experience ever written. It amazes and frightens me to think how few people today seem to be interested in discovering as much of God's story as they can. They are busy reading and talking about everything else in the world, from computers to music to sports, but they don't seem to be motivated to learn about God. The New York Times best-seller list seldom contains a book about God.

It's almost as if we lived in the "brave new world" described by Aldous Huxley, in which the Bible and Shakespeare and all the books about God are locked up in a safe so people can't read them; only in our society they don't have to be locked up because most people don't want to read them anyway. How can we be intimate with a God whose history we don't know? We should all be constantly reading and listening and learning about God; then we will have taken the first step toward intimacy with Him.

II. Spend Time with God.

You can't have intimacy with anyone you don't spend time with. You can even lose intimacy, after you've had it. I have seen it often with married couples. They come to the counselor, complaining that they don't feel good about each other anymore. Pretty soon, it comes out in the open. "You're hardly ever home anymore," she says, "and when you are you've got your eyes glued to the TV set!"

"Oh, yeah?" he says. "Well, you're always on the phone to our daughter or you're running off to some meeting at the church!" In the end, they realize that if they want their marriage to work, if they want intimacy to return, they have to give it time to do so. They literally have to make time for it.

People often remark on the closeness my wife and I enjoy. I will tell you the secret of it. Twenty-two years ago, when I was a young professor busy with teaching,

writing, and speaking, I received a sabbatical year. We decided to spend it in Paris. For the first time in my life, I had big chunks of unprogrammed time to use in any way I chose. Our children were both in school for the first time.

My wife and I often spent half-days together walking through the beautiful city or sitting on a wall along the river. We had been married fifteen years, but it was as if we had just discovered one another. Ever since then, we have valued the time we have together. We have struggled to create time when our schedules denied it. Being together has produced intimacy.

It is the same with God. Study the life of any great saint, from Augustine to Mother Teresa. The story never varies. They are people who have time for God, because they make time for God. Mother Teresa, as busy as she was, working fifteen-hour days, always began her day with Mass. She begins with God. Then everything she did became sacramental.

When you have learned to do this, you miss God if you have to skip a time with Him. Who was it, Paderewski, who said, "If I don't practice for a month, my audiences notice it. If I don't practice for a week, my friends notice it. If I don't practice for a day, I notice it."

That is the way it is with spending time with God. When we miss doing it, if we are accustomed to it, we know it.

Get to know God's story. Spend time with God.

III. Seek to Please God.

That's what we would do next in a human relationship, isn't it? We would try to do something that would give the other person pleasure. This person buys another flowers. This one brings candy. This one prepares a special meal. This one gets tickets to a play. This one arranges a moonlight cruise.

Courting doesn't stop when two people get married. It is an essential ingredient of intimacy throughout the relationship.

A few months ago, one of our friends arranged a special birthday celebration for her husband. She took him on a trip that was a series of surprises for him. They drove to a lovely bed-and-breakfast home in the desert. They had a special dinner. After an early breakfast the next morning, she took him on a little drive into the desert and drove up to a colorful hot-air balloon waiting to bear

them aloft. They had a wonderful sail out over the coast, stopping enroute to pick lemons off a fruit tree.

The husband has not ceased talking about this fantastic trip. You can understand that it has contributed to the intimacy he shares with his wife.

Now, what can you do to please God?

There are many things. You can undertake a program of personal change and reform. You can make a pilgrimage to some special place of faith. You can make a significant donation to a church or charity. You can establish a relationship with a needy person and help that person back to solid ground in his or her life. You can offer your services to a church or a charitable agency.



There are countless things.

But, as in the case with the woman who arranged the balloon trip for her husband, the best gifts you can give God will be designed in your own imagination. You will think, "What can I give the Creator of the world who has shown His love to me in Jesus Christ?"

You may even try to think of a new thing each week and make the devising and bestowal of some new gift the pattern of your life. I promise you, it will carry you along the road to intimacy.

IV. Reflect on What Your Life is Becoming With God

Finally, when you have learned God's story and spent time with God and tried regularly to please God, I recommend that you pause occasionally to reflect on what your life is becoming with God — on how being related to God is changing your existence — and then surrender to the flow of this change.

We do this with any new discipline or influence in our lives. When we are undertaking an exercise program, we reassess our progress and adjust the strenuousness of the exercises. When we engage in a course of study, we pause to think about what we have learned and how that impinges upon everything else we know.

When we consider our relationship to God and what it is doing in our lives, we can only give thanks and receive inspiration to intensify the relationship.

I think about a friend who has been a Christian for only a few years. It has been exciting, in the last couple of years, to hear him speak self-consciously of what is occurring on his pilgrimage. Some time ago, he was visiting with a former partner in business. She observed that he seemed always to be going to church these days. He said he took the opportunity to tell her about what a difference God has made in his life. She replied that she would like to go to church sometime. Afterward, he reflected on the conversation and realized that he was now witnessing to his faith. He could see his own growth occurring. It was an exciting moment.

I don't mean that we should spend our time feeling our pulses to see how we're doing. But there should be times of introspection when we think about the journey we're making, how far we've come, and what we ought to do to facilitate our future progress.

When I taught courses on prayer, I asked my students to keep journals of their experiences during the semester. Each day, they would write about their prayer lives and other things that impinged upon their spiritual formation. In the years since, I have often had a former student say to me, either in a letter or in person, "I am so glad you had us keep a journal. It began a practice I have never given up, and it still rewards me when I look back and see the distance I have come."

May I summarize for you? First, learn God's story. Second, spend time with God. Third, seek to please God. And, fourth, reflect on what your life is becoming with God.

Do these things and you will find yourself growing in intimacy with God.

Maybe you saw the movie, "A Field of Dreams." It is a beautiful, whimsical story about a young farmer who hears a voice in the cornfield say to him, "If you will build it, he will come." Build what, he wants to know. A ball park, he learns. Who will come? Shoeless Joe Jackson,

the great star of the Chicago White Sox. So the farmer plows under his corn and builds a ball diamond. And sure enough, one day Shoeless Joe Jackson walks out of the cornfield and begins to play ball. So do seven other White Sox players, and then some old New York Giants. It is a tender story, and it probably sounds crazy if you haven't seen it, but it almost invariably gives people's spirits a lift.

"If you will build it, he will come." That's the promise we are dealing with too, isn't it? If we will create the right conditions in our lives, God will come and dwell in them. God doesn't make the intimacy. We do. But God never fails to reveal Himself intimately to those who make the overtures, those who take the simple steps of preparing for His presence. Build your life in these ways and He will come.

Adapted from "Christian Life: Intimacy with God" by John Killinger

OUTREACH PROJECTS

For the past 25 years, shoeboxes have been collected for **Operation Christmas Child** filled with gifts and delivered to children in need around the world. Please plan to fill a shoebox and give hope and joy to a precious child. Collection day is Sunday, Nov. 18.

Salem is also collecting packets of gravy for the **Salvation Army Christmas baskets**. Our goal is 400 to 500 packages.

Both are being collected on the inside table next to the elevator.

Swiss Bread Braid



Makes two loafs - by Catie Emery

Ingredients:

7 C. Flour
3 tsp. Salt
2 packages Yeast
2 C. Milk - no hotter than body temperature - may heat shortly in microwave (30 seconds)
3/4 C. Margarine or butter

Instructions:

1. Mix 1st 3 ingredients together
2. Melt butter in microwave. Add to flour mixture.
3. Add warmed milk (reserving 1/4 C.)
4. Mix with your hand to feel if more milk or flour is needed. Mixture should be soft and smooth, not sticky.
5. Knead for 5-10 minutes. The longer the better.
6. Put into bowl and cover with a damp towel.
7. Let raise for 45 minutes. Punch it down.
8. Let raise for another 45 minutes.
9. Shape into 2 long pieces of soft dough.
10. To braid - go to Google on YouTube for [Schweizer \(Berner\) Zopf Oder](#) (1st video - best time 1:18-5:30). Keep X shape, start with horizontal ends and cross left over right, do same to vertical ends and repeat. Finish by squeezing and tucking ends into each other.
11. Coat with 1 egg yolk.
12. Preheat oven to 375 F. During preheating time allow bread to raise about 15 minutes.
13. Bake 30-35 minutes. The bread should be golden, soft and glossy.



Senior Luncheon servers October 24 / Lions Club costume judging - October 27



The empty house next to the Evans barn was taken down for a future building lot. New curbs and sidewalks have been installed in the village. The Salem parking lot has a new ramp to the street. A new park is finished at the corner of Bebb and Main Streets.



Una VanWynesberg and La Donna Allenbaugh special music - October 28

Offering prayer over the tithes and offerings - October 21



Junior Bell Choir - October 21



Church Financial Update

Needed to Date: \$82,861.00

Received to Date: \$77,202.48

IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

Remember our elderly members, soldiers, and college students with cards and visits.

Natalie Morgan Wilkins

Vancrest Healthcare
10357 VW—Decatur
Van Wert, OH 45891

Marjorie Rhoades

Hearth & Home
1118 Westwood Dr.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Bob Louth

15113 Main St
Venedocia, OH 45894

Marian Morris

Hearth & Home
1118 Westwood Dr.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Warren Summersett

Vancrest Healthcare
10357 VW—Decatur
Van Wert, OH 45891

Dorothea Plikerd

418 East 4th Street
Spencerville, OH 45887

Away at College

Evan Pugh – Aquinas University, Grand Rapids

Andrew Emery – University of Cincinnati

Christina Emery – University of Cincinnati

4/C Madison Pugh- U.S. Coast Guard Academy
15 Mohegan Ave
8785 Chase Hall
New London, CT 06320

Serving our Country

Cory McCollow

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

Micah Linger

Grandson of Doris Evans
(U.S. Marine Corps)

Phoebe Eutsler (Army)

Birthdays

1 Avery Zielke	5 Carla Breese
5 Marjorie Rhodes	5 Missy Zielke
10 Lucas Mullenhour	11 Sarah Kimmet
12 Catie Emery	16 Doug Jones
29 Kathy McCollow	30 Mike Breese

Anniversaries

28 Dave & Jean Owens
30 Herman & Nell Jean Wienken

Condolences

Condolences to the family of **June Morgan**.

Prayer Concerns

Jerry Agler
Peggy Burnett (cancer)
Mark Davis
Aiden Ellerbrock (serious injuries from a fall)
Betty Ellis (failing health)
Doris Evans (cancer)
Daniel Fisher (rectal cancer)
Judy Foust
Suzanne Hadley-Himes (recurrent cancer)
Bill Harmon (cancer)
Jeff Hines (kidney transplant)
Bob Hundley (cancer)
Tim Hurbert (cancer in lungs & pancreas)
Jan Jones (health issues)
Paula Jones (healing from fall)
Emily Klosterman
Beverly Koenig (cancer treatments)
Nancy Lautzenheiser (colon cancer)
Barbara Lewis (heart attack)

Linda Lissey (cancer)
Larry Lloyd
Bob Louth
Becky Martz (health problems)
Sarah Miller (health issues)
Gwen Montes
Marian Morris
Kim Owens (cancer)
Dorothea Plikerd
Walter Poling
Brent Price (recovering from heart attack)
Joyce Profit
Mallory Rentz (blood clot in brain)
Marjorie Rhodes
Julie Sheets (lung cancer)
Shelly (vertigo)
Bobbie Spyres
Natalie Wilkins (failing health)
Noah Wyatt (son of Stuart Wyatt)

November 2018

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School	5	6 No Bible Study <i>Election Supper 4:30-7:00 pm at Lions Club</i>	7	8	9	10
11 9:30 Worship Honor Veterans 10:45 Joint Session/ Trustee Meeting	12	13 7pm Women's Bible Study	14	15	16	17
18 9:30 Worship Thank Offering 10:45 Sunday School Dist. Info to Cong.	19	22 7pm Women's Bible Study	21 7 pm Thanksgiving Eve Service <i>Canned goods Offering.</i>	22	23	24
25 9:30 Worship Congregational mtg 10:45 Sunday School	26	27 7pm Women's Bible Study	28	29	30	

Week of	Special Music	Nursery	Flowers
November 4	Dave Lusk	Gwenda Blackmore	Jean Owens
November 11	Double Quartet	Mark & Missy Zielke	Jean Owens
November 18	Bells-Jr. Choir	Ross & Alyssa Evans	Lisa Lloyd
November 25	Stacy Rife	Toby & Elizabeth Adkins	Lisa Lloyd
Ushers	Bob & Kathy McCollow Dave & Carla Breese	Greeter:	Marilyn Foust

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



Tommy Evans watching the Venedocia Lions costume contest with cider and glazed donut in hand

Sounds of Salem Newsletter

Church Phone: 419-667-4142

Church Web Pages: www.SalemChurch.cc
www.facebook.com/salemchurchvenedocia

Secretary E-Mail: Secretary@SalemChurch.cc

Secretary's cell: 419-303-2032

Rev. Thomas Emery's cell: 419-863-9131
Pastor's Email: PastorTomEmery@live.com

November 2018 REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY YEAR B

24th Sunday after Pentecost – November 4

Ruth 1:1-18	Psalm 146
Heb. 9:11-14	Mark 12:28-34

25th Sunday after Pentecost – November 11

Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17	Psalm 127
Heb. 9:24-28	Mark 12:38-44

26th Sunday after Pentecost – November 18

1 Sam. 1:4-20	1 Sam. 2:1-10
Heb. 10:11-25	Mark 13:1-8

Christ the King/Reign of Christ– November 25

2 Sam. 23:1-7	Psalm 132:1-12 (13-18)
Rev. 1:4b-8	John 18:33-37