

SOUNDS OF SALEM

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

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May 2020

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

For I have kept the ways of the Lord; I have not turned from my God to follow evil (Psalm 18:21 NLT).

I've been called a book-alcoholic by close friends. I love to read, and I'm always looking for a good insightful read. I especially like narrations, where the author shares his or her life lessons. I seek out the diaries of historical figures to see what they learned. King Solomon's writings are the top of the heap for valuable lessons in life. But, I recently came across, "The Paradoxical Commandments" by Dr. Kent M. Keith.* It has great resolves that express the Proverbs in a layman's sense. We all can learn from these insights into life and their positive resolutions that follow.

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered.
Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives.

Do good anyway.

If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies.

Succeed anyway.

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow.

Do good anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.

Be honest and frank anyway.

The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds.

Think big anyway.

People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs.

Fight for a few underdogs anyway.

What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight.

Build anyway.

People really need help but may attack you if you do help them.

Help people anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and you'll get kicked in the teeth.

Give the world the best you have anyway.

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This period of downtime from the Corona Virus gives us much needed time to reflect on life and to apply our faith to the character of our lives. Why not journal on what God has taught you in your life lessons? I would love to hear your insights!

Pastor Tom Emery



Praise You in This Storm

I was sure by now
God You would have reached down
And wiped our tears away, stepped in and saved the day
But once again, I say, Amen and it's still raining

As the thunder rolls
I barely hear Your whisper through the rain, "I'm with you"
And as Your mercy falls, I raise my hands
And praise the God who gives and takes away

And I'll praise You in this storm and I will lift my hands
For You are who You are no matter where I am
And every tear I've cried You hold in Your hand
You never left my side and though my heart is torn
I will praise You in this storm

I remember when I stumbled in the wind
You heard my cry, You raised me up again
But my strength is almost gone
How can I carry on if I can't find You

As the thunder rolls
I barely hear Your whisper through the rain, "I'm with you"
And as Your mercy falls, I raise my hands
And praise the God who gives and takes away

And I'll praise You in this storm and I will lift my hands
For You are who You are no matter where I am
And every tear I've cried You hold in Your hand
You never left my side and though my heart is torn
I will praise You in this storm

I lift my eyes unto the hills
Where does my help come from?

My help comes from the Lord
The Maker of Heaven and Earth
I lift my eyes unto the hills
Where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord
The Maker of Heaven and Earth
And I'll praise You in this storm and I will lift my hands
For You are who You are no matter where I am
And every tear I've cried You hold in Your hand
You never left my side and though my heart is torn
I will praise You in this storm
And though my heart is torn
I will praise You in this storm

Source: [Casting Crowns and their song link.](#)

The Book of Ephesians 3:14-21

In this passage, Paul prays for God to empower the Ephesian believers and grant them a greater knowledge of His extraordinary love for them. Truth be told, many believers do not know how to pray. The answer to this problem is Jesus. Jesus Christ has given us access to God (2:18).

Ephesians contains many vital truths related to prayer. We know that prayer is a conversation with the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit (2:18). In 3:14-21, Paul shows us what it is like to pray in view of God's greatness and our human need.

We are to pray with **humble gratitude** to God. When we reflect on God's amazing grace, it should lead us to get on our faces before God, who called us, adopted us, redeemed us and forgave us. We should begin and end in worship. Paul loved God because God had called sinners to Himself, dressed them in the robes of Christ, and said there are no second-class citizens in the Kingdom. Did He do this because they were good? No. God did it because God is good. Let us kneel before the Sovereign Father overall and worship Him for His grace and glory.

We are to come to Him in **humble desperation**. When we realize we are approaching the only One who can act on our behalf, it gives us a proper sense of helplessness. Why is Paul so passionate and desperate in Eph. 3:14? Because he knows what the Ephesians need is something that can only come from God - power. Notice how Paul prays that God would "grant" them to be strengthened (v.16). He knew God's power was a gift, so he was desperate for God to answer. Apart from Christ, we can do nothing (John 15:5). This should humble us and make us desperate, but it should also encourage us. You can minister with His help.

We should not come with arrogance, thinking God owes us His blessings, but come with **humble confidence**. Paul said in Eph.2:18 that because of the reconciling work

of Jesus and our union with Him, we have access to God. We can pray with confidence because we are approaching our Father, who loves us (John 16:26-27). Our Father is gracious. Paul asks for God to "grant" the church strength. God loves to give good gifts to His children, particularly those things pertaining to the Spirit, not just material blessings but the Spirit's guidance and work.



In verses 16-19, Paul has two main requests for the Ephesians: **power** and **love**. Paul believed they desperately needed these, and so do we. We need to be strengthened by the Spirit in our inner selves. Paul says, "that the Messiah may dwell in your hearts through faith." Christ dwells in our hearts by the Spirit. This is a compelling mystery that Christ is dwelling in believers, not in a temple or church. Paul is talking about Christ ruling in our hearts. Christ enters the heart of a Christian that He may live, abide, and reign there. He enters our hearts that we may reflect His character.

We need the power to grasp Christ's love. Paul shows us we need to **experience** His love, not just know that He loves us. There are four aspects of God's love that we need to know and experience.

Know that you are secured in God's love (3:17b). Paul describes Christians as "being rooted and firmly established in love." This love came to us before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:3-6). In love, God called us and brought us to life (2:4-5).

Know the limitless dimensions of God's love. (3:18). Scripture speaks of the breadth of God's love in that He has included all ethnic groups as part of His family; Jew and Gentile are one. His love is as long as eternity (Jer 31:3). His love is higher than the heavens (Ps 103:11-12). God casts our sins to the bottom of the deepest sea (Mic 7-19).

Know that His love surpasses knowledge (3:19a). We need to stop and marvel at God's love (2:1-2) and rest in God's forgiveness (4:32). We need to experience God's love by showing love to the world. We must show God's love by putting up with difficult people and offering patient,

forbearing love (4:2-3); the same type of patient love that God has for us.

Know God's love that you may be mature (3:19b). We cannot be mature unless we know and experience the power and love of God in Christ. Each of us must seek the fullness of God's power and love that we may love our neighbors, our churches, our families, and this broken world.

Finally, in verses 20-21, Paul moves to praise. He shows us the greatness of God. He says God is "able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think"! God can do more in response to one prayer than we can do in a hundred years of planning and plodding. Do you believe God alone is Sovereign? He is the One who raised Jesus from the dead and placed Him as head over the church and has put all things under His feet! If you believe that, then pour out your heart to Him in worship and prayer, believing He is able! To God, be the glory forever and ever! Amen!

Source "Christ-Centered Exposition" by David Platt (used in the Salem Women's Bible study).

Does the Bible Approve of Cremation?

This question is asked quite a number of times. The Scriptures do not say anything about required modes of burial for believers. The standard practice in the Old Testament and in the New Testament was burial.

There are some Biblical accounts. Saul and Jonathan were cremated by the Israelites after their deaths, but this was not normal practice in Israel. Their bodies were mutilated by the Philistines, thus the decision was made to cremate, then bury the ashes ([1 Samuel 31:8-13](#)). Achan, and his family, were cremated upon their execution for sinning against Israel, which again appears to be an exception to normal burial practices among the Israelites."

This may not give you the confirmation you need, but here is your answer about what the Bible tells us about cremation - as best as I can tell, **there is no Bible passage that attempts to give guidelines regarding acceptable burial procedures.**

No matter which burial practices one follows, the results are always the same: "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes." Job reiterated the final disposition of the body in Job 34:14-15: "If it were his intention and he withdrew his spirit and breath, all mankind would perish together *and man would return to the dust.*"

The ancient Egyptians embalmed bodies to delay decay and to prepare for the afterlife. In first-century Israel, bodies were buried on the day of death! A 60-foot length of one-foot-wide cloth was wrapped around and around

the deceased while all sorts of spices were sprinkled in the wrappings in order to reduce the stench of decay. The bodies were then placed in caves or stone sepulchers.



Venedocia Cemetery

In more recent times, it's customary to embalm a body before burial in order to delay decay long enough for the family to mourn the deceased and to give time for out-of-town friends and relatives to arrive before the funeral.

Burial procedures are rapidly changing in today's culture. Many people are turning to cremation as the body disposition of choice. One of the primary drivers in this change is the astronomical cost of having a "traditional funeral." The costs for embalming, buying a casket and purchasing a piece of ground to put the casket in is cost prohibitive for too many families.

The only long-term difference between embalming and cremation is time. Cremation just speeds up the process.

As we have seen, cremation is never a Biblical issue. Here are some other concerns of Christians about cremation.

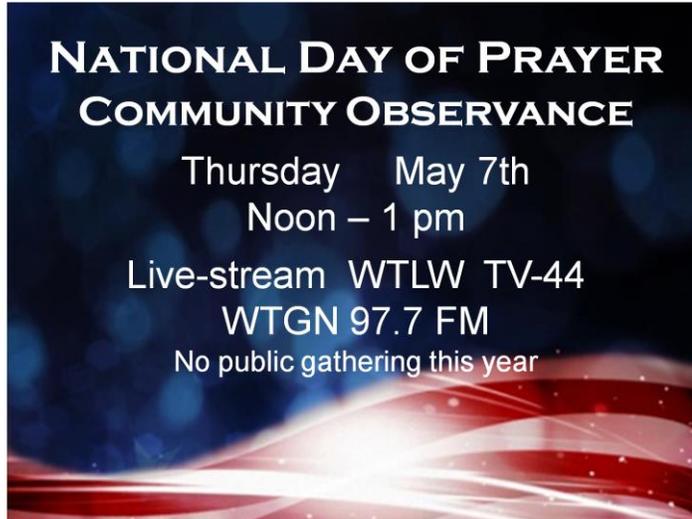
1. Perhaps they are worried that when Jesus returns at the Rapture and the bodies of long-dead Christians are resurrected and transformed into spiritual bodies — that you won't have a body to resurrect. Frankly, since the first century, most (if not all) bodies are now dust anyway. Since God is big enough to produce a world-wide resurrection, He certainly can make a spiritual body from only a speck of dust -- or less.

2. Perhaps your family wants you in a casket-filled grave so they can have a place for remembering you and your lives together. This desire is natural and normal.

Recently, I've observed families foregoing the expensive caskets and burial plots by choosing cremation. They then purchase a small cemetery plot in which to bury the ashes.

Others scatter the ashes over a prearranged place meaningful to the deceased. Some save a few ashes in a small locket as a token reminder of their loved one. Some ashes reside in burial urns over fireplace mantles. With all that being said, remember that your body is still your body. Discuss openly with your family that you want to dispose of your body in the way most comfortable to you.

Adapted from "What Does the Bible Say about Cremation?" Dr. Roger Barrier. Crosswalk.com



Pastor Letter

Dear Congregation of the Salem Presbyterian Church:

As you know, we have been following the orders of the Ohio Governor not to hold services until we receive the green light from his office. We thought that the closure would be short-term, but we have been informed that it may last through the summer. Romans 13:1-2 tells us to **“obey the government for God has put it there,”** and **“those who refuse to obey the law of the land are refusing to obey God...”** Even though we question the order’s application to us as we are a small church with plenty of space available possible between members on any Sunday, Session voted to comply fully with the order.

In the meantime, the Sunday services are broadcasted on Facebook Live each Sunday at “Salem Presbyterian Church Venedocia” and our Facebook Group at “Salem United Presbyterian Church” is available to share spiritual insights. Please forgive the quality of the recordings at this time as we are learning this on the go. We are improving the sound equipment as we realized that most podcast microphones and other equipment worldwide have sold out, and for the most part are made in China making delivery slow. We are putting Zoom Conferencing to use for Sunday fellowship, and we are awaiting a FM short-range half-mile transmitter for those who soon may want to fellowship at a distance (perhaps by Mother’s Day) in our parking lot or in their Venedocia homes during Sundays.

I offer you my services as your Pastor to come to your home and visit with you. I will read Scripture and pray with you. If you are not afraid of the virus and would like for me to come and visit you, please do not hesitate to call me on my cell phone at (419) 863-9131. The Session members and I will also call upon you now and then to have us remain a connectional church. Once again, we have a limited access Facebook Group site for those who want to share spiritual insights so we can be the church to support one another spiritually.

The prophet, Isaiah, continues to speak to Salem Church and other Christians as he spoke to the nation of Israel. **“Say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not”** (Isaiah 35:3). My hope and prayer for you and all that are in our Salem Church family is that you will take the strength of the Lord into your life and not fear in this time of crisis. I pray that you will also take this time to grow stronger in the Lord. The peace of the Lord Jesus be with you all.

Pastor Tom Emery

Gymanfa Ganu 2020

In these difficult days with the virus consuming our thoughts, try to remember the beautiful sounds of our Welsh music from the Gymanfa each year. Once again, we turn our thoughts towards sharing our heritage and gift of music with all of you. Mark your calendar for **Sunday September 6, 2020**. Our director this year is **Kevin Fancher**. As a bit of background, he has been attending the Gymanfa in Venedocia since he was one year old. His grandparents were married at Salem (Bob Bates and Jane Letitia Morris). Until we see you on September 6th, keep a song in your heart!



Church Financial Update

Before the pandemic hit Salem Church, we were doing financially better than last year at this time. With church services being suspended by the State of Ohio, we need more than ever for our church family to continue their giving during the trying time. Church offerings should be mailed to the church at:

**Salem United Presbyterian Church
PO Box 678
Venedocia, Ohio 45894**

Needed to Date:	\$33,809.23
Received to Date:	\$37,289.78

Salem Sights



April 11 Preparing Flowering of the Cross for Easter



April 11 Kim Coil announcing church



April 12 Flowered Cross for drive-by view and traditional Easter family photos



April 17 The last snowstorm falling on the spring flowers

IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

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

Bartie Jones

407 Stony Ridge Dr.
Sandusky, OH 44870-5468

Marian Morris

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

Marjorie Rhoades

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

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)

Away at College

Evan Pugh – Aquinas University, Grand Rapids

Andrew Emery – University of Cincinnati

Christina Emery – University of Cincinnati

Madison Pugh – USCGA | 15 Mohegan Ave.
8785 Chase Hall | New London, CT 06320

Condolences

Condolences to the families of Bill Harmon, Sara Whittaker, Bill Pollock, and Natalie Wilkin.

Birthdays

2 Audrey Hobbs/Menker	3 Kim Coil
3 Deb Fair	3 Eric Pugh
4 Rod Eutsler	4 Heather Matthews
6 Emma Jones	7 Josh Lloyd
8 Bob Pugh	10 Rex Lloyd
12 Sandy Clayborn	15 Dane Ebel
16 Chance Mosier	17 Mary Jane Haines
17 Delayna Profit	17 Stacia Profit
18 Ione Owens	19 Holden Price
22 Dawson Kimmet	23 Carolyn Girod
23 Taylor Hoehn	

Anniversaries

13 Jerry & Marilyn Foust	19 Bart & Rosemary Strick
20 Mark & Missy Zielke	

Prayer Concerns

Connie Bassett (breast cancer)
Kyle Baxter (brain cancer)
Warren (Punkin) Burnett
Barry Coil (stroke)
Kathy Comer
Amy Cunningham (Fibromyalgia)
John Davis (stroke)
Cathy Donnal (health issues)
Kent DuCheney (surgery)
Aiden Ellerbrock (serious injuries from a fall)
Betty Ellis (rapidly failing health)
Catie Emery (nightmares)
Rod Eutsler (hip surgery)
Stephanie Gamble (eye issues)
Suzanne Hadley-Himes (recurrent cancer)
Tim Huster (cancer)
Connie Johnson (cancer)
Jan Jones (health Issues)
Paula Jones (healing from fall)

Dale Kiesza (leg operation)
Nancy Lautzenheiser (colon cancer)
Linda Lissey (cancer)
Bob Louth, Jr (prostate health)
LuAnn (family issues)
Carol Matthews (Lou Gehrig's disease)
Tom Menker (cancer)
Marian Morris
Joan Poling
Terry Profit (chemotherapy)
Mallory Rentz (blood clot in brain)
Marjorie Rhoades
Derek Sellers (Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy)
Julie Sheets (cancer)
Mary Strayer (cancer)
Bruce Taylor (had a liver transplant)
Martha Jean Evans Vasquez
Mike Wolverton

May 2020

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 5:00 Trustee Meeting	4	5 7pm Women's Bible Study	6	7	8	9 Clean park at 10:00 am
10 Happy Mother's Day! 9:30 Worship Jr. Choir Recognition 10:45 Sunday School	11	12 7pm Women's Bible Study	13	14	15	16
17 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Session Meeting	18	19 7pm Women's Bible Study	20	21	22	23
24 9:30 Worship – Recognize Veterans 10:45 Sunday School	25 11:00 am Venedocia Memorial Day celebration in the park	26 7pm Women's Bible Study	27 Noon-Senior Luncheon Cancelled	28	29	30
31 9:30 Worship Communion 10:45 Sunday School						

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Organist
May 3	Gwenda Blackmore		Becky Reichard
May 10	Mark & Missy Zielke	Marylin Foust	Connie O'Neill
May 17	Toby & Elizabeth Adkins	Marylin Foust	Connie O'Neill
May 24	Dave & Carla Breese	Marylin Foust	Dave VanTilburg
May 31	Bob & Kathy McCollow	Liz Hobbs	
Ushers	Elizabeth Adkin's family	Greeter:	Elizabeth Adkins

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



Several people at Salem are making masks. Here, Carol Emery is sewing facemasks for giveaway during the Coronavirus Crisis with Pastor Tom modeling with a selfie.

Sounds of Salem Newsletter

Church Phone: 419-667-4142

Church Web Pages: www.SalemChurch.cc
www.facebook.com (Page is being renamed)

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

May 2020 REVISIED COMMON LECTIONARY YEAR B	
4th Sunday of Easter – May 3	
Acts 2:42-47	Psalm 23
1 Peter 2:19-25	John 10:1-10
5th Sunday of Easter – May 10	
Acts 7:55-60	Psalm 31:1-15, 15-16
1 Peter 2:2-10	John 14:1-14
6th Sunday of Easter – May 17	
Acts 17:22-31	Psalm 66:8-20
1 Peter 3:13-22	John 14:15-21
7th Sunday of Easter – May 24	
Acts 1:6-14	Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35
1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11	John 17:1-11
Day of Pentecost – May 31	
Acts 2:1-21	Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
1 Cor. 12:3b-13	John 20:19-23