

# SOUNDS OF SALEM

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

Volume 22 Issue 11

November 2020

## PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

At the end of his book in Habakkuk 3:17-19 [NLT], Habakkuk records this prayer in a song:

*17 Even though the fig trees have no blossoms,  
and there are no grapes on the vines;  
even though the olive crop fails,  
and the fields lie empty and barren;  
even though the flocks die in the fields,  
and the cattle barns are empty,  
18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord!  
I will be joyful in the God of my salvation!  
19 The Sovereign Lord is my strength!  
He makes me as surefooted as a deer,  
able to tread upon the heights.*

There was much evil and corruption in Judah, and Habakkuk pleaded for God to do something about it. As a prophet, Habakkuk foresaw that the Babylonians were growing in might, and he knows that God will use that nation to punish Israel for its disobedience. The prophet also sees a time after the Babylonians overrun the countryside when there are no figs, no grapes, no olives, no grain, no flocks, and nothing left. People will be starving.

The prophet wrestled with despair. But in today's passage, he resolved that, no matter how bad things got, he would "rejoice in the God of my deliverance." Habakkuk exclaims that he will find joy in his relationship with God no matter what hits the fan. This is the mindset that we want in our lifetime.

Even though we know that God is with us, we often do not find joy in our relationship with God when there are struggles in our lives. On the other hand, if Habakkuk can know a time when he has really nothing and yet continues to see himself finding joy in God, indeed, we can do the same thing.

We live in times when we nevertheless seek other things for our joy. But, who knows what will happen around the corner of life's journey? Habakkuk teaches us this simple lesson that to live steadily in a state of gratitude and joy in the Lord, we must be content in Him and only in Him.

*Pastor Tom Emery*

## As the Deer

[Verse 1]  
As the deer pants for the water  
So my soul longs after You  
You alone are my heart's desire  
And I long to worship You

[Refrain]  
You alone are my strength, my shield  
To You alone may my spirit yield  
You alone are my heart's desire  
And I long to worship You



[Verse 2]  
I want You more than gold or silver  
Only You can satisfy  
You alone are the real joy giver  
And the apple of my eye

[Refrain]  
You alone are my strength, my shield  
To You alone may my spirit yield  
You alone are my heart's desire  
And I long to worship You

[Verse 3]  
You're my friend and You're my brother  
Even though you are a King  
I love You more than any other  
So much more than anything

[Refrain]  
You alone are my strength, my shield  
To You alone may my spirit yield  
You alone are my heart's desire  
And I long to worship You

As sung by [Link](#).

## The Best Is Yet to Come - Psalm 16

In this lesson, we are reminded that **God's blessings are more profound than our difficulties**. Difficult situations in life cause immediate and emotional responses, to which we often react impulsively without thinking. If we would but remember who God is and rehearse what He has done for us in the past, we would find ourselves rejoicing despite trials.

We need to remember who God is. In Psalm 16:1-2, we see God in His presence. We see the God of creation, the covenant-keeping God, and the strong Lord. These are three facets of the character of God. David looks at this and concludes there is no goodness in himself apart from God.

Even Christians don't like to hear that there is no goodness in them apart from God, but it's true. Even the good, kind, or charitable things that a non-Christian does have their roots in the image of God. Everything we do and have comes from Him.

In vs. three, we see God in His people. Besides God Himself, as the greatest blessing David has, God has given him fellow saints in whom David delights. We don't do this often enough - stop and reflect on the good friends and close relations we have among the people of God. The Bible indicates that our relationship with people, our love for the brethren, mirrors our love for God (John 13:35, 1 John 3:14; 4:7-8, 11; 4:20-21). A measure of our gratitude for the blessings of God is how thankful we are for the saints of God.

In vs. four, we see God in His principles. The opposite side of the coin of relationships is those that God has preserved us. God is a holy God, and David would not mingle idolatry and holiness in his life. He was thankful that God had kept him from becoming an idolater. How grateful are we for how God has revealed His principles to us? You can look around in the world and see many examples of life that you can be thankful God has saved you. This is not a way to say we are better than someone else. Instead, it is a way to say that God has put His principles in our hearts and given us a desire to follow them. For that, we should be thankful.

There are five ways in which David sees God's hand at work in his life daily. They are background blessings, things we take for granted unless we stop and number and remember them.

1. The Lord is our completeness (vs. 5). David knows that God is the answer to the prayer, "give us this day our daily bread." God is our inheritance and our provision. We are doubly blessed in all that He has

provided for us. We should thank Him for giving us not only Himself but for our daily bread.

2. The Lord is our certainty (vs. 5). Think of David thanking God for maintaining his circumstances in life, his "lot." David was a hunted man who had lost everything. He had only the promise of God to cling to that he would one day inherit the throne of Israel. But he believed God would maintain (keep) his circumstances under control and bring them to their appointed conclusion. Do you believe God is maintaining your lot in life despite what's going on around you? If you have the thankful heart of one such as David, you do.



3. The Lord is our contentment (vs. 6). As David writes this psalm, he looks at what God has given to him, the way God has portioned out his life, and he concludes that he has a "good inheritance." Can you say that? It is so tempting to complain about our lives, when in reality we have been mightily blessed in so many ways. Taken as a whole, the inheritance we have from God deserves our deepest gratitude. Contentment and thankfulness for what we have are signs of spiritual maturity (Philippians 4:11; Hebrews 13:5).

4. The Lord is our counsel (vs. 7). There may be no privilege more significant than that of approaching God on a first name basis. James tells us if we lack wisdom, we are to ask God (James 1:5). We go directly to God when we need counsel, knowledge, and help.

5. The Lord is our confidence (vs. 8). David ends this portion of this psalm with a strong statement of affirmation. "I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. What a powerful statement of rejoicing!

David rejoices in what God will do (vs. 9-11). He rejoices in the resurrection (vs. 10). **David is counting his blessings**. He doesn't have the resurrection to look back upon as we do. He can only look forward to it. He is saying, "Oh, what a blessed man I am, for God is not going to leave my soul in the grave. He has provided a

way out through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ" (paraphrase). Because He lives, and we live also!

David saw his future as being filled with the blessing of God for all eternity. He did not have the details of the New Testament as we do, but he didn't need them. All he needed to count himself blessed was the sure Word of God that, despite the difficulties life brings, the fullness of joy would be his forever at God's right hand.

Even though David's days of conflict and discouragement were not over, he didn't mind because he knew the best was yet to come. Any believer in Christ who gets bogged down in the present, can be back on his/her feet by **remembering who God is, what He has done, and what He is yet to do in the future.**



Source: "The Best Has Yet to Come" [When Your World Falls Apart](#) by Dr. David Jeremiah. Used by the Salem Women's Bible Study

### What should be the focus of Christians on Thanksgiving?

The original thanksgiving celebration was held by the Pilgrim settlers in Massachusetts during their second winter in America in December, 1621. The first winter had killed 44 of the original 102 colonists. At one point their daily food ration was down to five kernels of corn apiece, but then an unexpected trading vessel arrived, swapping them beaver pelts for grain, providing for their severe need. The next summer's crop brought hope, and Governor William Bradford decreed that December 13, 1621, be set aside as a day of feasting and prayer to show the gratitude of the colonists that they were still alive.

These Pilgrims, seeking religious freedom and opportunity in America, gave thanks to God for His provision for them in helping them find 20 acres of cleared land, for the fact that there were no hostile Indians in that area, for their newfound religious freedom, and for God's provision of an interpreter to the Indians in Squanto. Along with the feasting and games involving the colonists and more than 80 friendly

Indians (who added to the feast by bringing wild turkeys and venison), prayers, sermons, and songs of praise were important in the celebration. Three days were spent in feasting and prayer.



From that time forward, Thanksgiving has been celebrated as a day to give thanks to God for His gracious and sufficient provision. President Abraham Lincoln officially set aside the last Thursday of November, in 1863, "as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father." In 1941, Congress ruled that after 1941, the fourth Thursday of November be observed as Thanksgiving Day and be a legal holiday.

Scripturally, we find things related to the issue of thanksgiving nearly from cover to cover. Individuals offered up sacrifices out of gratitude in the book of Genesis. The Israelites sang a song of thanksgiving as they were delivered from Pharaoh's army after the crossing of the Red Sea ([Exodus 15](#)). Later, the Mosaic Law set aside three times each year when the Israelites were to gather together. All three of these times [Unleavened Bread (also called the Feast of the Passover) ([Exodus 12:15-20](#)), Harvest or Pentecost ([Leviticus 23:15-21](#)), and the Feast of Ingathering or Tabernacles ([Leviticus 23:33-36](#))] involved remembering God's provision and grace. Harvest and Tabernacles took place specifically in relation to God's provision in the harvest of various fruit trees and crops. The book of Psalms is packed full of songs of thanksgiving, both for God's grace to the Israelite people as a whole through His mighty deeds, as well as for His individual graces to each of us.

In the New Testament, there are repeated admonitions to give thanks to God. Thanksgiving is to always be a part of our prayers. Some of the most remembered passages on the giving of thanks are the following:

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" ([1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#)).

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and

supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" ([Philippians 4:6](#)).

"Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men" ([1 Timothy 2:1](#)).

Of all of God's gifts, the greatest one He has given is the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. On the cross of Calvary, Jesus paid our sin debt, so a holy and just Judge could forgive us our sins and give us eternal life as a free gift. This gift is available to those who will call on Christ to save them from their sin in simple but sincere faith ([John 3:16](#); [Romans 3:19-26](#); [Romans 6:23](#); [Romans 10:13](#); [Ephesians 2:8-10](#)). For this gift of His Son, the gift which meets our greatest need, the Apostle Paul says, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" ([2 Corinthians 9:15](#)).

We, like the Pilgrims, have a choice. In life there will always be those things that we can complain about (the Pilgrims had lost many loved ones), but there will also be much to be thankful for. As our society becomes increasingly secular, the actual "giving of thanks to God" during our annual Thanksgiving holiday is being overlooked, leaving only the feasting. May God grant that He may find us grateful every day for all of His gifts, spiritual and material. God is good, and every good gift comes from Him ([James 1:17](#)). For those who know Christ, God also works everything together for good, even events we would not necessarily consider good ([Romans 8:28-30](#)). May He find us to be His grateful children.

Source: "What should be the focus of Christians on Thanksgiving?" Got Questions

### Why Salem Uses the Lectionary

There are 3 compelling reasons for Salem Church traditionally using the Lectionary:

**1) Scripture is the Main Focus.** Sure, this one sounds silly. On the other hand, we've all been to a service where God's Word takes a back seat. The Lectionary *prioritizes* scripture.

**2) Following the Lectionary Helps Prevent the Preaching of Safe or "Comfortable" Passages.** That's right! It actually challenges us to wrestle honestly with difficult texts.

**3) It Connects Us.** Every Sunday, Christians (from different denominations) around the world are reading the *same* passage. Pretty amazing!



The Revised Common Lectionary version used by Salem is organized into three-year cycles of readings.

The years are designated **A, B, or C**. Each yearly cycle begins on the first Sunday of Advent (the Sunday between November 27 and December 3 inclusive). Year B follows year A, year C follows year B, then back again to A.

**Year A:** Gospel of Matthew (Advent 2019 through 2020 - current year)

**Year B:** Gospel of Mark (Advent 2020 through 2021)

**Year C:** Gospel of Luke (Advent 2021 through 2022)

The **Gospel of John** is read throughout Easter, and is used for other liturgical seasons including Advent, Christmas, and Lent where appropriate.

The Lectionary can be a **POWERFUL** resource for you and our church. The daily and weekly lectionary link can be found at [Lectionary](#) for your own enrichment.

### All Saints Day

The Church of Jesus Christ exists in two places: on earth and in heaven. On All Saints' Day, recognition is on Sunday, Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>, and we acknowledge the loss of lives we have experienced in the past one year. The names of the ones who departed are read in the service of worship, and a hand bell is rung in memory of each loved one:

The names this year are: Diane Burnett, Kris Richey, Pam Purmort, Doug Wierwille, Larry Howell, Don Balyeat, Larry Poling, Dorothea Plikerd, Bob Louth, Sr., Steve Gullickson, Bill Harmon, Sara Whittaker, Bill Pollock, Natalie Wilkin, Dave Cook, Marilyn Beamer, Chad Eutsler, Julie Sheets, Brenda Fackler, Dan Theobald, Mary Looser, Connie Johnson, Nancy Cox, Jack Hardesty, Kay Patrick, Vincent Clement, Robert C. Evans, and Patty "Binnion" Hodgson

### Pastor Appreciation Month

Pastor Tom Emery is thanking the church for the presentation of appreciation given in October (as seen

in the photo). He said that, "Salem is a loving and caring church that lives out the Gospel in its relationships. It is a blessing to be part of the Salem Family!"



October 11 – Pastor Tom given appreciation by Kim Coil for Salem

### Salem Website, Facebook and FM Radio

During the coronavirus outbreak, our website is SalemChurch.cc. Our Facebook pages are: "Salem Presbyterian Church Venedocia" for our Facebook Live Sunday Service recorded using just a cell phone, and the Group Page is "Salem United Presbyterian Church" for private spiritual church wide discussions. Our short-range FM station is **FM 87.9** for the Venedocia-area during service times.

### Church Financial Update

Before the pandemic hit Salem Church, we were doing financially better than last year at this time. With church services and events like the Gymanfa Ganu and meal events cancelled and restricted by the State of Ohio, we need more than ever for our church family to continue their giving during this trying time. We are behind in some repairs in our attempt to stretch-out our existing income from our giving and our fund-raising such as the November Election Night Supper.

Church offerings should be mailed to the church at:

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

Needed to Date: \$85,517.47  
Received to 2020-10-25: \$91,247.54

### Christmas Shoe Boxes

Plan to pack a shoe box this year and be part of an amazing project that brings hope and joy to children in

over 100 countries. Not only do they receive fun and useful items, but they also hear the Gospel message. In the past 10 years 8.9 million children reported making decisions for Christ. For the first time this year boxes are going to the Pacific Islands in the hope of reaching half a million children. In one year alone over 1,000 churches have been started as a direct result of the Shoe Boxes. Brochures are available at the back of the church with instructions for packing a box. Collection day is Sunday, November 22, 2020.

### Announcements

The **Election Day Supper** will be held on Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> (drive thru only). Remember to vote!

The **Veterans Day Service** is on November 8<sup>th</sup>; November 8<sup>th</sup> is also when Session and the Trustees meet at 11:30 AM to approve the budget. The Budget and Nomination reports will be given to the Congregation November 15<sup>th</sup>, and the vote on the budget and officers will be November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The "**Between the Notes Concert**" is on November 7 at 7 PM at the First United Methodist Church of Van Wert, featuring many past performers at Salem Church.

Please start **collecting gravy packets**. The goal for our church this year is 650 packages to donate to the Salvation Army by December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Please take photos and contribute recipes, thoughts, and ideas for the December newsletter. Submit them to [secretary@salemchurch.cc](mailto:secretary@salemchurch.cc).

### The Sights of Venedocia



October 3 – Finishing the soybean fields behind Salem Church



October 13 – Lions Park shelter, playground and the maple trees

# 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

## **Marjorie Rhoades**

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

## **Marian Morris**

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

## **Ione Owens**

Van Wert Manor  
160 Fox Road  
Van Wert, OH 45891

## **At College**

**Evan Pugh** – University of Northwestern Ohio

**Christina Emery** – University of Cincinnati

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

## **Condolences**

Condolences to the families of Robert C. Evans, Patty “Binnion” Hodgson, and Diane Burnett

## **Serving our Country**

### **Cory McCollow**

(U.S. Coast Guard)  
7225 Altura Place  
Oakland, CA 94605

**Phoebe Eutsler** (Army)

**Dillon Ellerbrock** (Marines)  
Grandson of Gloria Leiter

### **Micah Linger**

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

### **Butch Eutsler**

(National Guards)

**Gyer Blackmore** (Army)  
Grandson of Gwenda B.

## **Birthdays**

- |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Avery Zielke      | 5 Carla Breese    |
| 5 Marjorie Rhoades  | 5 Missy Zielke    |
| 10 Lucas Mullenhour | 12 Catie Emery    |
| 16 Doug Jones       | 29 Kathy McCollow |
| 30 Mike Breese      |                   |

## **Anniversaries**

- 28 David & Jean Owens



October 15 – Signs around Venedocia advertising the Supper

## **Prayer Concerns**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Connie Bassett (breast cancer)          | Carol Matthews (Lou Gehrig's disease)       |
| Barry Coil (stroke)                     | David Morris (Zeb)                          |
| Kathy Comer                             | Marian Morris                               |
| Cathy Donnal (health issues)            | Judy Jones Muhn (health issues)             |
| Catie Emery (nightmares)                | Nursing Homes and all residents             |
| Stephanie Gamble (eye issues)           | Ione Owens                                  |
| Suzanne Hadley-Himes (recurrent cancer) | Marjorie Rhodes                             |
| Jerry Holscher                          | David Ringwald (healing from burns)         |
| Dale Kiesza (leg operation)             | Derek Sellers (Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy) |
| Nancy Lautzenheiser (colon cancer)      | Doug Smith (Jen Pugh's father)              |
| LuAnn (family issues)                   | Mary Strayer (cancer)                       |
| John Lloyd                              | Betty Tenant (recovering from stroke)       |
| Donald Martin                           | Raymond Young                               |
|   | Curt Whetstone (cancer)                     |

# November 2020

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> 9:30 Worship <b>All Saints Day</b> 10:45 Sunday School	2	<b>3</b> 4:30-7:00 pm Election night dinner at the Lion's Club. Drive thru only	4	5	6	7
<b>8</b> 9:30 Worship <b>Veterans Day Service</b> 10:45 Joint Trustee/session meeting	9	<b>10</b> 7 pm Women's Bible Study	11	12	13	14
<b>15</b> 9:30 Worship w/guest speaker John Zerbe Budget & nomination reports will be available	16	<b>17</b> 7 pm Women's Bible Study	18	19	20	21
<b>22</b> 9:30 Worship Congregational Meeting Shoe boxes due today 10:45 Sunday School	23	<b>24</b> 7 pm Women's Bible Study	<b>25</b> 7:00 PM Thanksgiving Eve Service- food offering gravy packets	26	27	28
<b>29</b> 9:30 Worship 10:30 Advent Breakfast	30					

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Organist
November 1	Mark & Missy Zielke	Lisa Lloyd	Connie O'Neill
November 8	Toby & Elizabeth Adkins	Lisa Lloyd	Becky Reichard
November 15	Dave & Carla Breese	Gwenda Blackmore	Becky Reichard
November 22	Bob & Kathy McCollow	Gwenda Blackmore	Dave VanTilburg
November 29	Bob & Denise Pugh	Carla Breese	Seth Baker
<b>Ushers</b>	Marylin Foust	<b>Greeter:</b>	Marylin Foust

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



October 22 – Sunset reflection at dusk of the Salem church and manse

## *Sounds of Salem Newsletter*

Church Phone: 419-667-4142

Church Web Pages: [www.SalemChurch.cc](http://www.SalemChurch.cc)

Secretary E-Mail: [Secretary@SalemChurch.cc](mailto:Secretary@SalemChurch.cc)

Secretary's cell: 419-303-2032

Rev. Thomas Emery's cell: 419-863-9131

Pastor's Email: [PastorTomEmery@live.com](mailto:PastorTomEmery@live.com)

<b>November 2020  REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY  YEAR B</b>	
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – Nov 1</b>	
Rev. 7:9-17	Psalm 34:1-10, 22
1 Thess. 2:9-13	Matt. 23:1-12
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – Nov 8</b>	
Josh. 24:1-3a, 14-25	Psalm 78:1-7
1 Thess. 4:13-18	Matt. 25:1-13
<b>24<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – Nov 15</b>	
Judges 4:1-7	Psalm 123
1 Thess. 5:1-11	Matt. 25:14-30
<b>Christ the King/Reign of Christ – Nov 22</b>	
Ezek. 34:11-16, 20-24	Psalm 100
Eph. 1:15-23	Matt. 25:31-46
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent – Nov 29</b>	
Isa. 64:1-9	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Cor. 1:3-9	Mark 13:24-37