

SOUNDS OF SALEM

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

Volume 24 Issue 05

May 2022

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other (1 John 4:11 NLT).

Early in my twenties, before I was a Christian, I attended Adult Children of Alcoholics meetings. The meetings were a branch of the Christian Oxford Group revival making Christianity relevant again by emphasizing 12 Step spiritual principles. I was not yet introduced to Christ. Up to then no one witnessed to me. I was open to Christ, but the local church in general had turned inward.

Several events happened in those meetings that began to change my worldview. One day, Sam walked into a meeting. She wore a sleeveless biker blue jean jacket with the notorious "Hitler's Henchmen" embroidered on the back. She flexed her oversized tattooed muscles and making eye contact, she gave hate stares to each man in the meeting. She soon made it known that she was a lesbian who could take on any man in a fight, and that she had been in several biker rumbles.

She was welcomed into the meeting with everyone. At first, after declaring herself, she would just sit and listen to the stories of pain, sorrows, and triumphs built upon 12 Step Principles. Weeks later, she began sharing her story. She had much pain and rejection to talk about when she realized that the meetings were a safe place to talk and share with 12 Step guidelines.

She began to make "breakthroughs." She told how she was Lebanese from a Muslim background. She never knew her mother. Her father and three brothers treated her lesser than a dog and shamed her for being female. They actually prayed to Allah thanking him that they were not created as a dog or a female. She was full of explosive rage and bitterness. She felt rejected by life.

The breakthroughs occurred when she realized that there were some people in the meetings who could still love her knowing who she was. She got in touch with her emotions and began to cry in meetings showing vulnerability. She began to practice the Christian 12



Steps getting in touch with Christ as her "Higher Power." I remember her sobbing and just repeating these words, "All I wanted was to be loved." She began to know the love of Christ.

Then one meeting, she came in and wasn't wearing her usual biker colors. She showed up in a summer dress, and she had her hair nicely cut and shaped. She wore makeup. In that meeting she smiled, and she hugged people. She was a new person inside and out.

I learned that the world is a hurting place full of people on their spiritual journeys. They need for us to show the love and acceptance of Christ to them.

Pastor Tom Emery

"Because He Lives"

God sent His son, they called Him Jesus;
He came to love, heal and forgive;
He lived and died to buy my pardon,
An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives!

Chorus

Because He lives, I can face tomorrow,
Because He lives, all fear is gone;
Because I know He holds the future,
And life is worth the living,
Just because He lives!

How sweet to hold a newborn baby,
And feel the pride and joy he gives;
But greater still the calm assurance:
This child can face uncertain days because He Lives!

Chorus

Because He lives, I can face tomorrow,
Because He lives, all fear is gone;
Because I know He holds the future,
And life is worth the living,
Just because He lives!

And then one day, I'll cross the river,
I'll fight life's final war with pain;

And then, as death gives way to victory,
I'll see the lights of glory and I'll know He lives!

Chorus

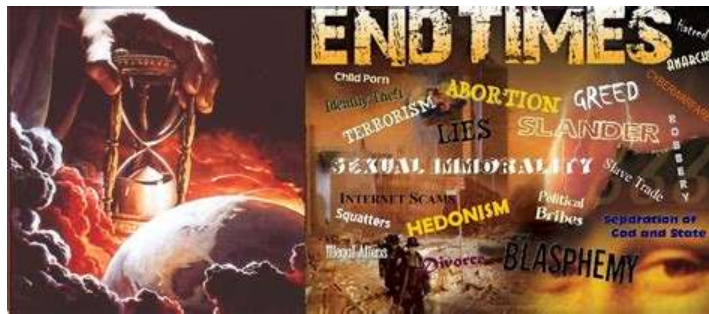
Because He lives, I can face tomorrow,
Because He lives, all fear is gone;
Because I know He holds the future,
And life is worth the living,
Just because He lives!

Bill Gaither. [Song Link](#) .

Counting on God Coming Through

"When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else'" Matthew 11:2-3 (NIV)?

I sat on the hardwood floor of our kitchen, back pressed against the wall, with my head in my hands and the tears flowing. I wanted to trust God for the new life within me, but my past losses were threatening my current peace.



After I had trouble in previous pregnancies, this one had me trembling. What was supposed to be the happiest time was the hardest time, and I felt scared of what each day would bring. It is one thing to say God will work everything together for your good. But what do you do when you're afraid God may not show up?

Sometimes our life circumstances don't make sense. We wonder what God is up to, and more pressing, we may even doubt and wonder if God will come through at all. But doubt is not the same as unbelief — as we see most beautifully in the example of John the Baptist, who found himself suffering in prison because of his allegiance to God. In a moment of questioning and doubt, John wondered if God would come through for him.

Like every faithful Jew, John knew that the coming of the Messiah meant good news for the poor, healing for the brokenhearted and *"freedom for the captives"* (Isaiah 61:1, NIV). But would Jesus come through for him? Now?

In Jesus' response to John in Matthew 11:4-6, Jesus quoted Isaiah 61:1. But He omitted one very important phrase. He said nothing about the prisoners being set free. *"Jesus replied, 'Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame*

walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me'" (Matthew 11:4-6, NIV).

From Jesus' response, John understood that his faith, which got him imprisoned in the first place, would not set him free from the prison cell he found himself in. While Jesus' ministry would certainly include setting captives free, what John was expecting would not be what *he* would experience. And Jesus didn't come through in the way John had hoped.

But John's story does not end in despair. He did not fall into the trap of unbelief. Nor did he *"stumble,"* or fall away on account of Jesus. Scripture does not indicate that John's life, unlike others' (for example, Judas Iscariot's), ended in betrayal or disbelief. On the contrary, Jesus alluded to John later in His ministry as an example of righteousness (Matthew 21:32).

What we can learn from John is that he moved not from uncertainty to certainty, but from uncertainty to trust. He learned what we must all learn: In God's hands, even what seems senseless is sacred and full of meaning and purpose.

After that tearful day in the kitchen, God showed Himself faithful to me. He reminded me through His Word that He is trustworthy and good, no matter the outcome of our circumstances. He invited me to lean on Him as my Rock, to seek comfort in Him as my heavenly Father and to trade my fears for His peace.

Friend, I'm not sure what you are facing in your life today. But if you are struggling to give your hopes and hurts to God, you are in good company. We're all limping along, learning to trust Jesus in all the things.

The good news is that Jesus not only suffered for us, but He suffers *with* us. He enters our pain. And no matter the final outcome of any situation, Jesus gives us the grace to walk faithfully under the weight of our cross and into His glory.

Dear Jesus, thank You for being beside me through every season of my life. Even when I don't understand what You are doing, help me to trust that Your love for me is unending and Your plan for me is good. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Are We in the End Times?

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am" (John 14:3).

Jesus will return. This is a central tenet and firm belief rooted deep in historical Christian thought. The question is not whether it will happen, but when will it happen? Will it be soon or somewhere in the distant future? Is it with the war in Ukraine? Is there a way for us to know? As we read the headlines and watch our culture rapidly descend into Godlessness, many Christians are asking if we are finally in the End Times as described in Scripture. Is this age finally wrapping up and giving way to God's Kingdom? The best answer I have for that is "yes." And "no." And, well, "maybe."

The Point Is to Be Prepared. "You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them" (Mark 13:9).

A casual read of the New Testament reveals that the early Church believed that they were living in the end times and that the return of Jesus could happen at any moment. Of course, that did not occur. Yet they were willing to endure pain, prison, and even death for the sake of this new faith that they had received. Christianity was not an easy choice for anyone. Yet, they lived with an urgency that placed their fervor for Christ above all else and passed on this knowledge of God and trust in Christ so that their faith spread across the face of the earth.

Fast forward a few thousand years to our time. Ours is a time that sees the headlines filled with unsettling scenarios and a sharply divided culture. Christians throughout the world are increasingly facing persecution, and enduring prison and torture as a result of their faith.

Like those in the early Church, we must ask ourselves if we are living in the End Times, and if so, how do we compare to the earliest believers? Are we bold and confident in our faith, or does our fervor for the Gospel of Jesus Christ fall short of what it should be? Does it fall short of what it *must* be?

Is This the End? How often have we heard that the world has just gone crazy, or people are just crazy these days? We say this as if it is a new thing, that people have made bad decisions and acted irrationally for the first time. We say this as if our society is somehow getting worse, and things were better in the much longed-for, 'good old days.'

But are things really that different? In many ways, yes. Every day we utilize technology that was not believable just 25 years ago. Think of phones, for example. Until recently this was a device attached to a wall by a cord for talking. Now it is a supercomputer we carry in our pockets, statistically speaking, is likely where you are reading this right now.

Things are undeniably changing, and these changes indeed move us closer to the atmosphere that will lead to the end times. It is no longer unrealistic to think that an easy, digital way to buy things at the supermarket could easily become the mark of the beast as described in Revelation 13:16-17, "It also forced all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name."

I am not saying that the world is ending, that the President is the anti-Christ or any of that mumbo jumbo we are accustomed to hearing from alarmist sources. That is all just a distraction.

If we believe in Christ and believe that He will indeed return as He said, then we must be ready. We can be ready by living each day as citizens of His Kingdom, as citizens of heaven, with a godly outlook on life. It should find its way into the way we speak to others, the relationships we pursue, the way we raise our families, and how we choose to spend our time. Planning for our future on earth is wise and necessary but planning for our future in eternity should hold at least equal consideration.

The world we love and live in is doomed to destruction at some point in the future. This is clearly laid out in scripture, and it is more evident every passing day. I love the awe-inspiring beauty of creation. I love the people of this world and the brilliance and creativity that has been placed in the minds of the hearts of mankind. There is an unparalleled beauty when looking at a mountain, staring up at the stars in the night sky, or watching the sunrise and set, painting the sky in radiant hues.

Yet this world in all its beauty is just a mere glimpse of the beauty that is to come, of what awaits us on the other side of Christ's return. My fear is that we have become comfortable amongst them to the point we fail to consider the Creator who designed it for us to enjoy.

Earlier this week I saw a comedian proclaiming that there is no hell. Of course, she also concludes that there is no heaven either because there is no God.

What Should We Do in the Meantime? "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" *Matthew 24:14.*

We have no way to know when the end will come, we just know that at some point in history it will! There is so much more to be discussed about the signs of the end, but in the meantime, our job is to be ready and to share the Good News of the Gospel as we can do so. Jesus could come before you finish reading this, or He could tarry another thousand years. The point is that we are to live as if today is the day that every choice we make will hold eternal significance. This should make an unmistakable impact on how we live and what we do with our lives.

It is my prayer to live out each day as if I will see Jesus face-to-face, knowing that someday, in this life or the next, I most certainly will.

Adapted from "Are We Living in the End Times?" by Jason Soroski.

Senior Luncheon



Senior Luncheon 2022-04-27 at the Lions Club.

Trustees Activities

The Salem Trustees would like to thank the congregation for their continuing financial support. We recently repaired the hot water heater at the Manse and replaced the storm door and framing on the south side office door of the Church. The north side entrance door was also repaired. Future projects are to replace south side basement door. Boiler inspection was completed for 2022. We continue to keep our church in great shape with your continued financial support. Any questions, please contact a Trustee.



The Venedocia Lions are offering Salem a lighted cross to be installed free of cost on the eastern edge of the parking lot; the morning sun will shine behind it. Here shown is the Landeck cross being installed before landscaping across from the Landeck church.

Gymanfa Update from the Music Committee

Gymanfa Ganu 2022- Welcome back!! We are so delighted to announce our up-coming Gymanfa on Sunday, Sept. 4, at 7:00 pm. Our director, Kevin Fancher will be joining us from Columbus and we welcome Harriet Schaadt and Connie O'Neill on the organ and piano. Special music will be performed by Sheila Chilcote-Collins and a 10 lady singing group called InSpiritu. We look forward to sharing an evening of music, singing, and fellowship once again. So set the date on your phone, calendar, or refrigerator door and join us for the evening!

Bell Choir thank you from Kathy McCollow

I would like to thank all the kids for playing bells for our services these last 8 months. They have been very attentive and cooperative (Thanks to the parents for always getting them here for practices and performances). Our group varies from 8 to 13 kids and range in age from 6 years to 17 years of age. This year a few of the older kids assisted with the youngest players which was very helpful! With more players, we have been able to play songs that require more bells and sound fuller, so thanks again for a great year. Hope you all have a fun-filled summer and looking forward to seeing you in late September!

Church Financial Update

Prayerfully consider making a donation. Salem Church. Offerings should be mailed to the church at:

Salem United Presbyterian Church
PO Box 678
Venedocia, Ohio 45894

Needed to Date: \$36,155.19 Received to Date: \$48,379.79

Graduation party invitation for Landon Price

An open house for Landon Price's graduation party will be held on May 22 from 5 to 8 pm at the Middle Point Community building.



Salem Palm Sunday 2022-04-10.



Memorial Park gathering for the Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt 2022-04-16.



Pastor Tom's testimony at the 2022-04-15 Van Wert County **Good Friday Service**.



Easter Sunday 2022-04-17 church breakfast preparation by the Lloyd family, the Flowering of the Cross, and the Bell Choir performance.



2022-04-17 Boone Finn **Easter Day baptism** with family.



Outdoor wedding of Christina (Emery) and Cole Youngpeter 2022-04-23 Columbus, Ohio. Sheila Chilcote-Collins 2022-04-24 Special Music performance.



IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

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

"Young at Heart"

John & Mary Ellen Lloyd
20155 Venedocia-Eastern
Venedocia, OH 45894

Marjorie Rhoades
Homestead at Towne Ctr
240 Towne Ctr Blvd.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Bartie Jones
Parkview Healthcare Ctr
3800 Boardwalk Blvd
Sandusky, OH 44870

Maxine Stewart
Roselawn Manor
420 E. 4th St.
Spencerville, OH 45887

Paul & Doris Price
18890 Bebb St
Venedocia, OH 45894

Charles Boroff
311 West 4th Street
Apt. 104
Odessa, Texas 79761

Marjorie Eutsler
15044 Main St
Venedocia, OH 45894

Marilyn Stockton
Lochhaven Apt 220
1640 Allentown Rd
Lima, OH 45805

Away at College

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

Condolences

Condolences to the families of **Howard Klaus,
Mary Young, and Shirley Jarmean**

Serving our Country

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

SPC Phoebe Eutsler (Army)
Cmr 405 Box 3825
APO, AE 09034

Lloyd (Butch Eutsler
(National Guards)
14975 Van Wert-Mercer
Co. Line Road
Venedocia, OH 45894

Sgt. Micah Linger,
(U.S. Marine Corps)
2nd MEF G4
PCS Box 20085
Camp Lejeune, NC 28542

Dillon Ellerbrock (Marines)
Grandson of Gloria Leiter

Gyer Blackmore (Army)
Grandson of Gwenda
Blackmore

Birthdays

2 Audrey Hobbs	3 Kim Coil
3 Debbie 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
19 Holen Price	22 Dawson Kimmet
23 Carolyn Girod	25 Taylor Hoehn
31 Vincent Richards	

Anniversaries

15 Steve & Lindsay Richards
19 Bart & Rosemary Strick
20 Mark and Missy Zielke

Prayer Concerns

Kenzie Bay
Kathy Comer
Stephanie Dillon (lymphoma)
Pastor Tom Emery
Marjorie Eutsler
Deb Fair (cancer)
Nikki Ford (surgery & funds for surgery)
Shana Fryer
Stephanie Gamble (eye & knee issues)
Charlie Good
Brett Hammons (cancer)
Jane Harter
Jerry Holscher
Dale Kiesza (leg operation)
Ann King (cancer)
Claudia LeValley (cancer)

LuAnn (family issues)
John & Mary Ellen Lloyd
Carol Matthews (Lou Gehrig's disease)
Byron Mohr
Anne Morris
David Morris (Zeb)
Steve Peters (surgery & recovery)
Paul & Doris Price
Denise Pugh
Marjorie Rhodes
Derek Sellers (Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy)
Stacy Smith (Covid)
Betty Tennant
Rosa Wollenhaupt
The area Nursing Homes and their residents

May 2022

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30 AM Worship	2	3 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, VW Hosp. Cafeteria. 7pm Women's Bible Study	4 Memorial Park Clean up day 10 AM	5 Noon - Van Wert National day of Prayer Meeting at the Courthouse steps	6	7
8 9:30 AM Worship Mother's Day Recognition	9	10 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, VW Hosp. Cafeteria. 7pm Women's Bible Study	11	12 Noon - Van Wert Prayer Meeting	13	14
15 9:30 AM Worship 5:00 Trustee Meeting	16	17 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, VW Hosp. Cafeteria. 7pm Women's Bible Study	18	19 Noon - Van Wert Prayer Meeting.	20	21
22 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 AM Session Meeting 5 to 8 pm Landon Price's grad party at the Middle Point Community Building	23	24 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, VW Hosp. Cafeteria. 7pm Women's Bible Study	25 Noon – Senior Luncheon	26 Noon - Van Wert Prayer Meeting	27	28
29 9:30 Worship Veterans Recognition	30 11:00 AM Memorial Day celebration in the park	31 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, VW Hosp. Cafeteria. 7pm Women's Bible Study				

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Organist
May 1	Tuzz & Liz Hobbs	Tuzz & Liz Hobbs	LaDonna Allenbaugh
May 8	Todd & Jayne Morris	Marylin Foust	LaDonna Allenbaugh
May 15	Gwenda Blackmore	Marylin Foust	Beth Conn
May 22	Mark & Missy Zielke	Marylin Foust	Dave VanTilburg
May 29	Toby & Elizabeth Adkins	Gloria Leiter	Connie O'Neill
		Greeter:	Elizabeth Adkins

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



Salem Children's Sunday School Class preparing for Mother's Day

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

May 2022 **REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY** **YEAR B**

3rd Sunday of Easter – May 1

Acts 9:1-20	Psalm 30
Rev. 5:11-14	John 21:1-19

4th Sunday of Easter – May 8

Acts 9:36-43	Psalm 23
Rev. 7:9-17	John 10:22-30

5th Sunday of Easter – May 15

Acts 11:1-18	Psalm 148
Rev. 21:1-6	John 13:31-35

6th Sunday of Easter – May 22

Acts 16:9-15	Psalm 67
Rev. 21:10,22-22:5	John 14:23-29

7th Sunday of Easter – May 29

Acts 16:16-34	Psalm 97
Rev. 22:12-17, 20-21	John 17:20-26