

SOUNDS OF SALEM

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

Volume 25 Issue 9

September 2023

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

"I am Joseph your brother whom you sold into Egypt. But don't feel badly, don't blame yourselves for selling me. God was behind it. God sent me here ahead of you to save lives. (*Genesis 45:5-6 ff: 45:1-28 MSG*).

The story of the life of Joseph gives us a lesson to trust God when you've been hurt by people. We need to turn things over to God and to praise Him in the storm. God uses everything for the good of those in Christ Jesus.

Joseph's jealous brothers had stripped him of his "coat of many colors," threw him into a pit, and eventually sold him off into slavery with a caravan headed to Egypt. There, Joseph initially faced false charges and accusations with years of imprisonment.

But during his thirteen plus years in Egypt, Joseph chose to increasingly become a godly man. He strove to honor God with his character in all his actions. With that commitment, God propelled him into positions of great power and prominence. He even was promoted to become the governor over the land of Egypt, second only to the Pharaoh.

While governor, his brothers came to Egypt to buy grain during a severe famine. They were at his mercy in Egypt, and Joseph had an opportunity to really have revenge, but he didn't. Joseph was already humbled while he had learned lessons about the redemptive power of God and the redemptive love of God.

Sometimes, like Joseph, God will break and remake us to be more like Jesus. God's Son was obedient to God even to the point of taking the sins of the world upon Himself to make us right with God. Jesus could have taken revenge upon the Romans and the Jews who called for Him to be crucified. But, He didn't. He chose instead to walk the path of God's love to show us the only way is to follow Him and to be made right with God.

Why not, when you have the time, read this Genesis 45:1-28 passage of Joseph and put yourself in his shoes as he learns that God is at work in this world. God is always looking for the faithful who seek Him. Perhaps, He is making you into a Joesph?

Pastor Tom Emery



Rhondda village, Wales

Rhondda

Gracious God, send down Thy Spirit, To renew my wayward mind;
Make my heart Thy grace inherit, Let me full salvation find.

Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Breathe on me the breathe of love.

Send Thy power in mighty torrent to revive my slumbering soul; Let me know this very moment That my heart is clean and whole.

Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Fill me with Thy mighty power.

Dwell within, keep Thou me ever In the path which I should tread;

May I never shrink or waver, But be bold for Thee instead.

Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Make my heart Thine own abode.

M. O. Jones 1841-1908

How to Find Peace with God

⁹ If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

¹⁰ For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. ¹¹ As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." ¹² Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him (NLT).

Even though God knew humanity would sin against Him, He created us anyway and put a plan in place to redeem us. Redemption, in a nutshell, is God buying us back from death. It is the act and process of saving us from our sins and the penalty of sin.

Since we know sin carries a death penalty, only a blood price would have been enough to save us from death. That's where Jesus and God's redemptive love comes in. God gave up His sinless, innocent son to pay the price for the sins of the sinful and guilty humanity.

Prayers for Loved Ones Who Don't Know Christ

"If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved" (Romans 10:9-10 NLT)"

I moved into my apartment in a new town, excited about all the new experiences a new life would bring. And boy, did I jump into those experiences without thought or care for the consequences. Late nights and poor choices became a way of life. But just two weeks into my newfound freedom, an unexpected phone call came.

On the other end of the call, a deep yet somewhat familiar voice I hadn't heard in years. A childhood friend who'd moved away long ago heard we were in the same area and looked up my number. He invited me to the local gathering of Christians. I laughed under my breath, then politely declined.

Looking back now, I can see that my old friend's call was an open door. God had a plan for me and knew I was headed in the wrong direction. Although I didn't accept the invitation, I remember the moment so clearly. No doubt this friend's prompting to reach out to me was the result of someone's prayer.

God hears our prayers for loved ones who don't know Christ. Yes, the Lord gives us free will to accept or reject him, but he will never stop pursuing us. God will intersect our lives with others who he strategically puts in place to reach out with the love of Jesus. And when we're ready, we will respond to that call.

Romans 10:10 tells us, "For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved."

We want our friends and family to believe in God— to say yes to the unconditional love of Jesus. But their hearts may be distant from God for whatever reason.

Thankfully, Jesus stands at that door, and he compels us to shine his light for others to see.

"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me. (Revelation 3:20 NIV)"

So, we have hope today— hope in the One who is faithful. Let's never give up praying for our loved ones who need salvation. God's Word assures us, "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. (James 5:15 NIV)" As God listens to our prayers, He connects people for the purpose of introducing our loved ones to Jesus. He will keep knocking on their heart's door.



Let's pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for my family and friends. They are a precious gift, and I love them more than words can say. I rejoice over my loved ones who've accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and I pray for those who have not. More than anything, I want to know we will all be in heaven together someday through your promise of eternal life.

Forgive me for getting discouraged as I continue praying. When I don't see results, I start to lose hope, so I stand against those lies right now with the power of your promises. You are a good and faithful Father who never stops pursuing your children.

You have good thoughts toward my family and friends. So many can't be counted!

(Psalm 139: 17) You love my people even more than I do. What an awesome truth! I know you hear my prayers and that you are working in their lives right now. Keep knocking on the door of their hearts, Lord. Send your servants as messengers, beckoning my loved ones to open the door and receive the abundant life you have planned for them.

In Jesus' Name, I pray, Amen.

Adapted from "A Prayer for Loved Ones Who Don't Know Jesus" By Kristine Brown. 2023 Aug 26 Crosswalk

Why We Doubt Our Worth?

Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me. So many of us heard that as children, and just as many learned how untrue that statement is. A bad word can sit with us long after we hear it. Whether an insult, an argument, or an unpleasant conversation, words carry weight. That's especially true for those closest to us, like our parents, friends, or spouses. Sometimes, we can get over the hurt by the end of the day. Sometimes we struggle all our lives.

Perhaps, that is why Scripture admonishes believers to be extra careful about the words we speak.

"No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need, so that it gives grace to those who hear. (Ephesians 4:29)"

Words can be used to build up, but they can also be used to tear down. Some of us are carrying around hurt from things that happened in the past. We have *been* torn down. While we may desire a different mindset, we just aren't sure how to get there.

You probably don't need me to remind you that you're hurting. Remembrances of past pain come to mind when we look in the mirror, when we see those who offended us, and when we lay down to sleep at night. The thoughts force themselves on us.

Certainly, we aren't to blame for every hurtful thing said to us. Maybe not most of them. But even if we are not culpable, we are still responsible in some way. Not for what gets said, but for what is done after. See, we can't choose what people say, but we can choose how we respond.

Too many of us dwell on the bad things that get spoken. We harbor unforgiveness, animosity, and more so than that, we begin to doubt ourselves. We doubt our worth in God's eyes all because of what someone said.

The truth is that if you're keeping a running list of past offenses, then be prepared to add to the list. People

have said hurtful things, and people will continue to do so. And they won't just say, they will also *do*. Even those closest to you could one day offer an unpleasant surprise.

That's a part of life.

More importantly, we should not allow anyone's words or actions, whether good or bad, to define us. People can affirm, but they cannot define us. To affirm is to confirm or encourage. To define is to give us meaning and significance.

We are defined by God, and He has determined that you are worthy. Maybe someone's hurtful words or actions are preventing you from seeing that today, but His Word is true. The question, then, is what holds you back from believing that truth?

Parental Love

One reason adversity leads us to think negatively about ourselves is because we lacked affirmation growing up. Our parents didn't say "I love you" enough, if at all. Perhaps they didn't show up for sports games or recitals. In everyone's case, we feel the impact of our parents' influence on our lives. The same is true when they serve as a bad influence or as no influence at all.

Conflict

When a relationship falters, some of us have a tendency to instinctively blame ourselves. However, conflict is a part of life for everyone. Therefore, going through such an experience does not automatically mean you are to blame. And even if the conflict was a result of your actions, God is willing to forgive those who repent.

Internal Sin

As sin separates us from God, sin also has the power to make us doubt our worth. However, just as God is willing to forgive the conflict we cause with others, He is willing to forgive the sins we commit against Him and ourselves. Bad behavior does not make us unworthy of His love.

External Sin

Another reason we doubt ourselves is because of how people sin against us. Lying, cheating, violence, and other evils can make us think we are unworthy or lesser than. Yet, that couldn't be further from the truth. People can affirm us, but they don't define us.

Life

Harkening back to the misfortune of not having parents who love us or those who lack in their displays, some of us get dealt a tough hand in life. While we all face suffering, some of us have very rough upbringings. Even as adults, some of us have faced circumstances that most other people will never experience. Whatever life situations you find yourself in, remember that God created you. And in that creation process, He assigned you a purpose. Your life is worthwhile.

Conclusion

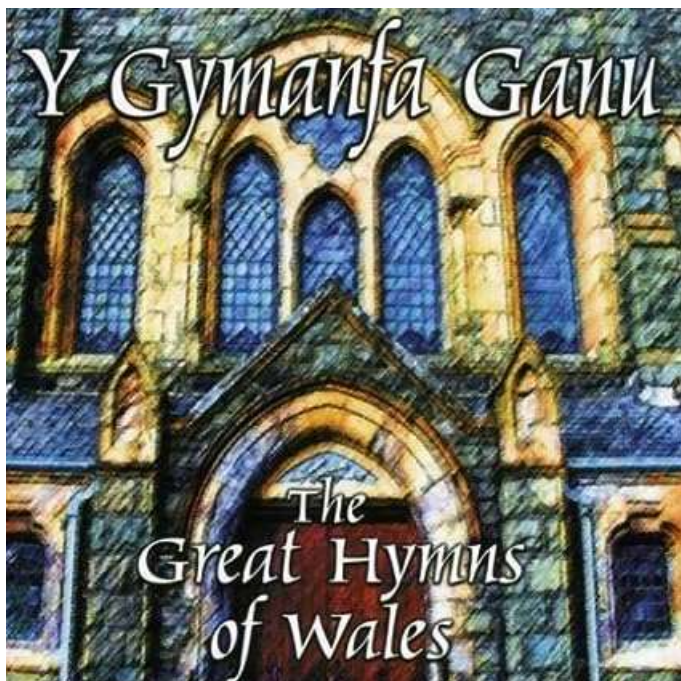
Sticks and stones can break our bones, and words can surely hurt us. Words can hurt us deeply, but we always have a choice in how we respond. Do we succumb to the negativity presented to us, or do we cling to truth instead, recalling our worth and remembering just how much we mean to God?

You were worthy before that traumatic thing was said or done, and you are worthy afterward. You just have to remember that.

If you've never known or understood just how worthy you are, then I want to present the truth to you today: Psalm 8:3-4, Romans 5:8, and Psalm 139:7-8

Adapted from "Why We Doubt Our Worth and Scriptures to Help Us Stop" by Aaron D'Anthony Brown. Crosswalk 2023 28 Aug

Gymanfa Ganu



The Gymanfa Ganu is a Welsh festival of sacred Christian hymns, sung with four-part harmony by a congregation, usually under the direction of a choral director.

The English term, Gymanfa Ganu, is sometimes used, due to the complexities of consonant mutation in the Welsh language, which leads to the initial ⟨c⟩ being mutated to a ⟨g⟩ when preceded by the Welsh word for "the." The Welsh plural is **Cymanfaoedd Canu**.

The Gymanfa Ganu movement was launched in 1859 at Bethania Chapel in Aberdare, where it was pioneered by the Reverend Evan Lewis. The English up to that time attempted to extinguish the Welsh culture. In Wales, cymanfaoedd canu are held each year in many villages and towns throughout the country. Some have more than one Gymanfa Ganu a year, as often many separate chapels hold their own.

In Europe, some large annual events occur in chapels and take place at festivals such as the National Eisteddfod and the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod. Outside of Wales, in the UK there are Cymanfaoedd Canu in London, parts of the West Midlands and other areas where there are still evangelical chapels using the medium of Welsh¹. The preservation of the Gymanfa Ganu, as a unique feature of Welsh culture, is being supported by a number of Welsh cultural associations.



Gymanfa Welsh Voices at the Royal Albert Hall

Once a year, a four-day North American Festival of Wales is held in North America over the Labor Day weekend. The festival can start on Thursday night with an opening ceremony and concert. The weekend continues with an evening banquet sponsored by the North America Wales Foundation on Friday and a Saturday concert, generally featuring a Welsh male voice choir and soloists, both from Wales.

Sunday is the defining day of the four-day festival which begins with a bilingual church and memorial service. After a brief intermission, this service is followed by afternoon and evening sessions of the Gymanfa Ganu itself.

A unique feature of the gymanfa ganu is the seating separation of alto, soprano, tenor, and bass singers

into sections for the four-part harmony singing. And while the Gymanfa Ganu is conducted with the dignity of a church service, it is not unknown for the musical conductor to stop the singing when one or more of the voice sections wanders from the desired harmony and needs special attention.

Interspersed between the formal proceedings are frequent sessions of spontaneous singing of favorite hymns. A Welsh marketplace, offering Welsh products, artifacts, souvenirs, recordings, and books, is also available during the days of the festival. The Welsh North American Association is the main organizational body responsible for putting on the event.

Salem Presbyterian Church welcomes all who want to worship God through the Welsh singing traditions.

The 106th Venedocia Gymanfa Ganu

The Venedocia Salem Presbyterian Church will be celebrating a longtime community event with its 106th Gymanfa Ganu on Sunday, September 3rd.



The 2022 Salem Gymanfa

The village of Venedocia has strong Welsh roots, being settled as it was in 1848 by three Welsh families. Those early settlers brought with them strong religious convictions, but also a deep love for music particularly for singing in four-part harmony. The first church was built in 1851 and the present church building was finished in 1898.

Venedocia's Welsh Festival of Song has been kept alive for over a century. Every year, people come from many different states to renew friendships and to participate in the singing. To hear the grand old Welsh hymns sung in four-part harmony by a large and very enthusiastic congregation is quite inspiring.

**Blessing of the Harvest
Drive your Tractor to Church**



2022-09-18 Drive Your Tractor to Church Sunday and The Blessing of the Harvest. The next event is 2023-09-17.

Church Financial Update

Prayerfully consider donating to Salem Church. Offerings should be mailed to the church at:

Salem United Presbyterian Church
PO Box 678
Venedocia, Ohio 45894

Needed to Date: \$76,287.08
Received to Date: \$86,693.90

Celebration of Life

PJ Burnett and Marylin Foust are inviting you to a celebration of life. This is the 50th Anniversary of PJ and Marylin's kidney transplant. The celebration will be held on September 10th from 1 to 4 pm at the Venedocia Lion's Club.

Sights of Salem



Spencerville graduate, Andrew Emery graduated with a Master of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati. Here is his graduation in August 2023. He currently designs robotic machinery for high tech firms and government contractors.

IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

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

“Young at Heart”

John Lloyd

20155 Venedocia-Eastern
Venedocia, OH 45894

Marilyn Stockton

Lochhaven Apt 220
1640 Allentown Rd
Lima, OH 45805

Paul & Doris Price

18890 Bebb St
Venedocia, OH 45894

Charles Boroff

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

Marjorie Eutsler

Room 302
Homestead at Town Ctr
240 Towne Center Blvd
Van Wert, OH 45891

Serving our Country

Cory McCollow

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

Lloyd (Butch) Eutsler

(National Guard)
14975 Van Wert-Mercer
Co. Line Road
Venedocia, OH 45894

Sgt. Micah Linger,

(U.S. Marine Corps)
814 Strawberry Hill Rd. E
Columbus, OH 43213

Dillon Ellerbrock (Marines)
Grandson of Gloria Leiter

Madison Pugh -USCGA
8800 Pine Forest Rd
Apt 6303
Pensacola, FL 32534

Away at College

Landon Price. Ohio University,
77 Mill St, 101, Athens, Ohio 45701

Evan Pugh University of Pikeville
147 Sycamore St, Pikeville, KY 41501

Isaiah Pugh University of Toledo
3030 Residence Drive, Ottawa East Room 4205-A
Toledo, OH 43606

Condolences

Condolences to the families of George Siler,
Bartie Jones, Jim Francis, and Deb Fair, and Scott
Myers

Birthdays

1 Elizabeth Adkins	1 Kim Ebel
3 Pete McCollow	4 Claudia LeValley
4 Katie McClure	11 Landon Price
12 Jackson Dunlap	18 Jane Morris
18 Morgan McConnell	18 Tyler McConnell
19 Gianna Richards	20 Megan Jones
23 April Ellerbrock	25 Darlene Jones
26 Cindy Barnes	27 Brian Ellerbrock
27 Lisa Lloyd	29 Stephanie Beck
29 Steve Richard	30 Jack Blackmore

Anniversaries

8 Paul & Doris Price
11 Jeremy & Samantha Morris
15 Bob & Denise Pugh
28 Eric & Jen Pugh

Prayer Concerns

Josh Archinal (critical condition)
Cindy (Davis) Barnes (liver transplant)
Edie Basham (back surgery)
Scott Basham (bypass surgery)
Charles Boroff (heart issue)
Jason Boyd (cancer)
Dave Burnett (heart)
Lynn Collins (cancer)
Stephanie Dillon (lymphoma)
Pastor Tom Emery (Long Covid recovery)
Dave Espinoza (lung transplant)
Marjorie Eutsler
Ellen Friesner
Shana Fryer
Stephanie Gamble (eye & knee issues)
Diana Glass (cancer)
Jane Harter

Jerry Holscher
Pat Hunt (breast cancer)
Mandolin Jones (cancer)
Tony Kahle
John Lloyd
Steve Martz
Carol Matthews (Lou Gehrig's disease)
Wayne McMichael
David Morris (Zeb)
Monica Placke
Paul & Doris Price
Ann Rees
Dave Rees
Evelyn Schwartz
Derek Sellers (Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy)
The area Nursing Homes and their residents

September 2023

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 9:30 AM Worship 4:30-6:00 Light Supper 7:00 PM Gymanfa Ganu	4	5 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, VW Hosp. Cafeteria.	6	7 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Mtg. at Church on the Horizon, 624 N. Washington St.	8	9
10 9:30 AM Worship w/ guest Speaker John Zerbe 5:00 PM Trustee Meeting	11	12 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, VW Hosp. Cafeteria. Begin 7:00 PM Women's Bible study	13	14 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Mtg. at Church on the Horizon, 624 N. Washington St.	15	16
17 9:30 AM Worship Drive your Tractor to Church Potluck lunch to follow the blessing of the tractors	18	19 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, VW Hosp. Cafeteria. 7:00 PM Women's Bible study	20	21 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Mtg. at Church on the Horizon, 624 N. Washington St.	22	23
24 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 AM Session Meeting	25	26 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, VW Hosp. Cafeteria. 7:00 PM Women's Bible study	27	28 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Mtg. at Church on the Horizon, 624 N. Washington St.	29	30

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Organist
September 3	Bill & Ruth Evans	Open	Connie O'Neill
September 10	Steve & Lindsay Richards	Marylin Foust	Cindy Bowsher
September 17	Dave & Carla Breese	Marylin Foust	Becky Reichard
September 24	Kevin & Kristen Price	Marylin Foust	Dave VanTilburg
		Greeter:	Steve Richards

Salem Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 678
15240 Main Street
Venedocia, Ohio 45894



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

September 2023
REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY
YEAR C

14th Sunday after Pentecost – Sep 3

Ex. 3:1-15	Psalm 105:1-6,23-26,45b
Rom. 12:9-21	Matt. 16:21-28

15th Sunday after Pentecost – Sep 10

Ex. 12:1-14	Psalm 149
Rom. 13:8-14	Matt. 18:15-20

16th Sunday after Pentecost – Sep 17

Ex. 14:19-31	Psalm 114
Rom. 14:1-12	Matt. 18:21-35

17th Sunday after Pentecost – Sep 24

Ex. 16:2-15	Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45
Phil. 1:21-30	Matt. 20:1-16