



**Sunday:** 2023-12-10  
 9:30 AM Worship (nursery with Jeff & Kelly Lloyd)  
 4:30 PM Christmas Caroling  
 6:00 PM Manse Christmas Party

**Tuesday:** 2023-12-12  
 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at the Van Wert Hospital Cafeteria  
 7:00 PM Women's Bible Study

**Thursday:** 2023-12-14  
 Noon The Van Wert County Prayer Meeting will be at the Living Truth Ministries at 1180 South Washington, Van Wert, Ohio.

**Sunday:** 2023-12-17  
 9:30 AM Worship (nursery with Bill & Ruth Evans)  
 9:30 AM Youth Christmas Program

**Announcements:**

The Women's Bible Study is on Tuesdays at 7 PM during December.

Today, the **Christmas Caroling** will take place at 4:30 PM [meet at the church parking lot], and the **Manse Party** is at 6 PM. The **Youth Christmas Program** will be held on December 17 during the Sunday service.

On December 17, **Handel's "Messiah" sing-along** will be held at the Van Wert First Presbyterian church from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. Additional details are available on the back table.

There is a **Sunday School sign-up sheet** at the back of the church. We are asking people to sign up for a month at a time to help with lessons during the church service time. Please write down your special gifts this season and place them in the **Sparkle Box** (on the back table).

Salem is collecting offerings from the heart to be given to the **Salvation Army**. There is a monthly need, and your generosity is greatly needed. The December item is toilet paper.

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

**Upcoming Birthdays**

|                                 |                                   |                                |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 10 <sup>th</sup> Danielle Lloyd | 13 <sup>th</sup> Marilyn Stockton | 17 <sup>th</sup> Jeremy Morris |
| 17 <sup>th</sup> Jon Finn       | 23 <sup>rd</sup> Jeff Owens       | 30 <sup>th</sup> Isaiah Pugh   |

**Upcoming Anniversaries**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 16 <sup>th</sup> Kent & Heather McClure | 28 <sup>th</sup> Doug & Marilyn Strickler |
|---|---|



He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Isaiah 40:11

*"Make ready, the Messiah Is Coming" Isaiah 40:1-11*

*Salem Presbyterian Church*

Venedocia, Ohio | December 10, 2023

P.O. Box 678, Venedocia, OH 45894 | 419-667-4142

[www.SalemChurch.cc](http://www.SalemChurch.cc) | [secretary@salemchurch.cc](mailto:secretary@salemchurch.cc)

**Prayer Concerns:**

Josh Archinal (recovering from car accident)  
 Cindy (Davis) Barnes (liver transplant)  
 Sara Beeks (heart)  
 Charles Boroff (heart issue)  
 Jason Boyd (terminal cancer)  
 Dave Burnett (heart issues)  
 Kim Coil (foot surgery)  
 Lynn Collins (cancer)  
 Pastor Tom Emery (long Covid healing)  
 Marjorie Eutsler  
 Ellen Friesner  
 Shana Fryer  
 Stephanie Gamble (eye issues)  
 Diana Glass (cancer)  
 Jane Harter  
 Jerry & Elizabeth Holscher  
 Pat Hunt (breast cancer)  
 Mandolin Jones (cancer)  
 Barb Kimmet  
 John Lloyd  
 Steve Martz  
 Carol Matthews (Lou Gehrig's disease)  
 Anne and John C. Morris  
 David Morris (Zeb)  
 Monica Placke  
 Patti Poling (pancreatic cancer)  
 Paul & Doris Price  
 Ann Rees (in Van Wert Hearth & Home)  
 Kristy Ringwald (adenoid cystic carcinoma)  
 Evelyn Schwartz  
 Derek Sellers (Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy)  
 The area Nursing Homes and their residents

**Serving Our Country:**

Dillon Ellerbrock (U.S. Marines)  
 Butch Eutsler (U.S. Army)  
 Corbin Evans (U.S. Marines)  
 Cory McCollow (U.S. Coast Guard)  
 Madison Pugh (U.S. Coast Guard)

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Rev. Thomas Emery  
“Make Ready, the Messiah Is Coming” Isaiah 40:1-11  
Salem Presbyterian Church  
December 10, 2023

The people had broken God's law; they had ignored the warnings of the prophets whom God had sent one after the other to warn the people and help them to return to the proper path. However, their failure to heed the numerous warnings resulted in their Babylonian exile because of their sins, but still, Isaiah affirms that the exile will end. The exile is an expression of God's judgment. Judah not only abandoned Yahweh but also detracted from Yahweh's glory by giving it to idols. The exile was a time in which God's people could reflect on what they had done; this period of reflection was a way of paying the damages in order to be restored to fellowship with Yahweh. The statement “she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins” (40:2) is an allusion to the Old Testament laws of restitution (Exod. 22:4, 7, 9).

Despite the situation, however, God would never abandon His chosen people and, thus, Isaiah was sent to proclaim the message of peace and new life. We hear, “*Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins*” (Isaiah 40:1-2). It will be a new day for Israel; God has forgiven the transgressions of the people. Their term of exile will soon end.

#### TEACHING POINTS

***First. Jesus, of course, is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies.***

***Second. Still, the Lord gives us free will and will never enter where he is not welcome.***

***Third. This Advent season we wait for Jesus to return to our world.***

#### THIS WEEK'S MEMORY PASSAGE

<sup>3</sup>*Listen! It's the voice of someone shouting, “Clear the way through the wilderness for the LORD! Make a straight highway through the wasteland for our God (Isaiah 40:3 NLT)!”*

#### ACTION POINT

Having told the people that God would give them a new day, the prophet then begins to explain about the journey home. They are to build a highway that is straight and level. All valleys must be filled in and all mountains made low; the uneven ground is to be made level and the rough places smooth. From our twenty-first-century perspective, Isaiah is telling the people to build a superhighway that will allow them to return home quickly and safely. This, of course, is not a real road but an especially important thoroughfare of the mind. The physical movement cannot be accomplished until the people understand and can create a straight path between themselves and God. In the past, many hurdles, obstacles, and detours, all of which were human generated, were placed between the people and God. Now, during Advent, perhaps you can prayerfully deal with your obstacles so that the relationship between God and you, His chosen one, will once again be whole.

Rev. Thomas Emery  
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