

SOUNDS OF SALEM

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

Volume 26 Issue 5

May 2025

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

²¹He will lay both of his hands on the goat's head and confess over it all the wickedness, rebellion, and sins of the people of Israel. In this way, he will transfer the people's sins to the head of the goat. Then a man specially chosen for the task will drive the goat into the wilderness. ²²As the goat goes into the wilderness, it will carry all the people's sins upon itself into a desolate land (Leviticus 16:21-22 NLT).

During the Jewish day of atonement, the priest would make atonement for the children of Israel by confessing the sins of the people and symbolically putting them on the head of a sacrificial goat. He would then send the goat into the wilderness never to return after having been led to a high, rocky place where it would face certain death. That way the goat couldn't wander back into town bringing back all their sins!

Jesus bore the weight of every sin on His shoulders. It wasn't a symbolic act, but rather a literal bearing of sin and shame for the entire world. Praise the Lord, there is no longer a need for a scapegoat. Jesus Christ's death on the cross and His resurrection established the final and complete sacrifice.

Hebrews 10:8-10 says: ⁸First, Christ said, "You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings or burnt offerings or other offerings for sin, nor were you pleased with them" (though they are required by the law of Moses). ⁹Then he said, "Look, I have come to do your will." He cancels the first covenant in order to put the second into effect. ¹⁰For God's will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time."

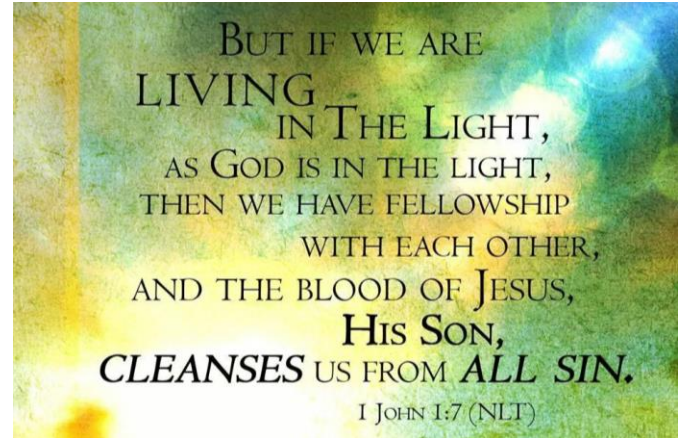
There is no more waiting for a yearly ceremony to cleanse us. There is no guesswork when it comes to our being made right with God. We have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. And the sins He bore, once and for all, will not "wander back into town."

Psalms 103:12 tells us, "He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west." By the sacrifice of Jesus, we can be made right with God, once and for all!

Pastor Tom Emery

Nothing But the Blood of Jesus

1 What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.



Refrain:
O precious is the flow
that makes me white as snow;
no other fount I know;
nothing but the blood of Jesus.

2 For my pardon this I see:
nothing but the blood of Jesus.
For my cleansing this my plea:
nothing but the blood of Jesus. [Refrain]

3 Nothing can for sin atone:
nothing but the blood of Jesus.
Naught of good that I have done:
nothing but the blood of Jesus. [Refrain]

4 This is all my hope and peace:
nothing but the blood of Jesus.
This is all my righteousness:
nothing but the blood of Jesus. [Refrain]

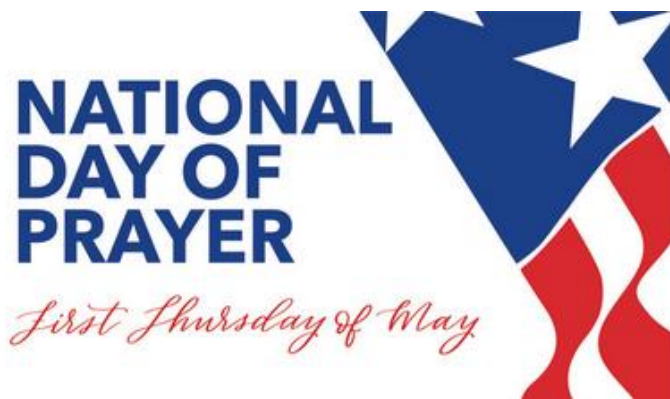
Author: Robert Lowry. (1876). [YouTube Link](#).

2024 National Day of Prayer

This God--his way is perfect; the word of the LORD proves true; he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him (2 Samuel 22:31 ESV).

The 2024 National Day of Prayer will meet Thursday, May 2 at noon at the Van Wert County Courthouse steps. The five-year-running Van Wert County prayer group of countywide churches was born out of the National Day of Prayer at the Courthouse steps five years ago to pray for our nation and its struggles.

Many churches, government officials, and prayerful citizens will participate on May 2nd. Its theme is "Lift Up the Word; Light Up the World" and the theme artwork seeks to remind us to take up the Shield of Faith and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, from Ephesians 6:16-17. Second Samuel 22:31 begins with the promise that God's way is perfect, and since His Word is a lamp to our feet, Scripture lights the way.



Let us pray for our country!

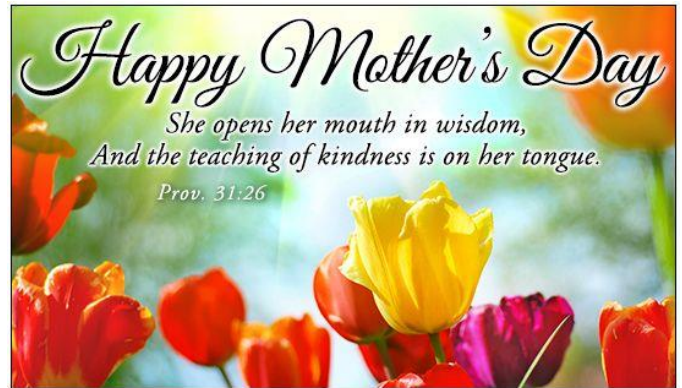
God, we thank You, for guiding our Country. We yield ourselves to You. Your way is perfect, and we give You praise and thanks as You are perfecting us and conforming us to the character of Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. We are commanded to abide in You and Your Word in our hearts so that all that we would think, feel, say, and do would overflow from what we have seen and received from You.

We repent for our sins of turning from You as a country. May You heal our nation, direct and defend our nation, and bring unity among us in Christ. We are commanded to love, give mercy, and forgive, just as You have forgiven us. Thank You Holy Spirit for working in us and equipping us to live fruitful lives that can express these with great grace as we are called to be salt and light in this world.

Each day brings its battles as a nation, but You are our shield when we put on the full armor of God, pray, and stand with spiritual shields and swords in hand as You command us to, "Lift Up the Word, Light Up the World!" In our Savior's Name, we pray, Amen!

Mother's Day

On Mother's Day, we honor women and their unique calling to serve. Whether you're a biological mother, stepmom, godmother, or spiritual mother figure, your influence in the kingdom of God is profound. It's a privilege to fulfill this role!



Take heart and continue following Jesus in your motherhood journey. Your position is irreplaceable, chosen by God for a purpose.

Your legacy will shape future generations. Regardless of your current faith or circumstances, through Christ, you can make an impact (Philippians 4:13). Seek His guidance and prioritize Him above all else, including your children.

Know that God, who created the universe sees and loves you. He will equip you in your weakness (Isaiah 41:10) and direct your path (Hebrews 12:2).

So, women, on Mother's Day and beyond, find strength in Jesus, who defines your identity and purpose. Trust that God has placed you where you are for His plan (Esther 4:14).

Let us pray together!

Father, we thank You for these women serving in motherly roles. Strengthen them to lead their families and communities with grace. Help them find their worth in You and leave a legacy of faith. Grant them wisdom and peace as they navigate their journey. We honor them not just on Mother's Day but every day. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

For those facing challenges this Mother's Day, we offer a special prayer for comfort and healing: Father, we humbly ask You to draw near to those grieving today. Please bring them comfort and peace. Let them feel Your love and support. Heal their heart. Let them know they aren't alone. Please remind them how much You love them. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Adapted from: "Leaving a Legacy: Your Role as a mother" by Maria Schleicher. Devotional CBN Frontlines. May 2024.

Memorial Day

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, was instituted to honor Union soldiers who died in the Civil War. After World War I, the purpose of the day was expanded to include all men and women who died in U.S. military service. This year in Venedocia, we observe Memorial Day on Monday, May 27th with observations at Horeb Cemetery at 10:30 AM and Memorial Park at 11 AM.

It is always tricky to know how Christians should or shouldn't celebrate patriotic holidays. Certainly, some churches blend church and state in such a way that the kingdom of God morphs into a doctrinally thin, spiritually nebulous civil religion. But even with these dangers, there are several good reasons why Christians should give thanks for Memorial Day.



1. Being a soldier is not a sub-Christian activity. In Luke 3, John the Baptist warns the people to bear fruit in keeping with repentance. The crowds respond favorably to his message and ask him, "What then shall we do?" John tells the rich man to share his tunics, the tax collectors to collect only what belongs to them, and the soldiers to stop their extortion. If ever there was a time to tell the soldiers that true repentance meant resigning from the army, surely this was the time. And yet, John does not tell them that they must give up soldier-work to bear fruit, only that they need to be honest soldiers. The Centurion is even held up by Jesus as the best example of faith he's seen in Israel (Luke 7:9). Military service, when executed with integrity and in the Spirit of God, is a suitable vocation for the people of God.

2. The life of a soldier can demonstrate the highest Christian virtues. While it's true that our movies sometimes go too far in glamorizing war, this is only the case because there have been many heroic acts in the

history of war suitable for our admiration. Soldiers in battle are called on to show courage, daring, service, shrewdness, endurance, hard work, faith, and obedience. These virtues fall into the "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just" category that deserve our praise (Philippians 4:8).

3. Military service is one of the most common metaphors in the New Testament to describe the Christian life. We are to fight the good fight, put on the armor of God, and serve as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. When we remember the sacrifice, single-minded dedication, and discipline involved in the life of a soldier, we are calling to mind what we are supposed to be like as Christians in service to Christ.

4. Love of country can be a good thing. As Christians, we have dual citizenship. Our first and ultimate allegiance must always be to Christ whose heavenly dwelling is our eternal home. But we are also citizens of an earthly country. We will stand before God

not as individuals wiped clean of all earthly nationality, but as people with distinct languages, cultural affinities, and homelands. It is not wrong to love our distinct language, culture, or nationality. Whenever I'm at a ball game I still get choked up during the singing of the National Anthem. I think this is good. Love for God does not mean we love nothing else on earth, but rather that we learn to love

the things on earth in the right way and with the right proportions and priorities. Love of country is a good thing, and it is right to honor those who defend the principles that make our country good.

5. I believe the facts of history will demonstrate that on the whole, the United States military has been a force for good in the world. Obviously, as a military power, we have blundered at times, both individually and corporately. But on the whole, the men and women of our armed services have fought and are fighting for causes that promote freedom, defend the rights of human beings, and reject tyranny. War is still hell and a tragic result of the fall. Praise God for his promise to one day end all human conflict. But in a world where people are evil by nature and leaders are not always reasonable and countries do not always have good intentions, war is sometimes the way to peace, at least the best peace we can hope for between peoples and nations this side of heaven.

So, thank God for a day to remember God's common grace to America and his special grace in enlisting us, poor, weak soldiers that we are, in service to Christ our Captain and conquering King.

Adapted from: *Why Christians Should Give Thanks for Memorial Day* by Kevin DeYoung. May 27, 2019
thegospelcoalition.org

Is Cremation OK?

With several families having funerals recently, the question has arisen about what the Bible says about cremation. Researching the Bible, you'll find that **no Bible passage 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 with a 60-foot length of one-foot-wide cloth wrapped around and around the deceased while all sorts of spices were sprinkled in the wrappings to reduce the stench of decay. The bodies were then placed in caves or stone sepulchers. In more recent times, it's customary to embalm a body before burial 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.



In today's culture, many people are turning to cremation as the body disposition of choice. One of the primary drivers of 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 are cost-prohibitive for too many families. The

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

Considering the Biblical Perspective on Cremation, God is big enough to produce a worldwide resurrection, He certainly can make a spiritual body from only a speck of dust -- or less. Perhaps your family wants you in a casket-filled grave so they can have a place to remember you and your lives together. This desire is natural and normal. Many families forego 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 ones. Some ashes reside in burial urns over fireplace mantles. Some churches have erected a columbarium with small niches for burial urns of ashes. After all, the chapel wall sounds like a great final resting place while we wait for the sounds of the resurrection trumpet.

Psalm 103:15-17 is a Bible passage that gives us a great perspective on cremation -- or on any other burial practice:

*As for man, his days are like grass,
He flourishes like a flower of the field;
The wind blows over it and it is gone,
And its place remembers it no more.
But from everlasting to everlasting
The LORD's love is with those who fear him,
And his righteousness with their children's children...*

John MacArthur, of "Grace to You" says: "The Scriptures do not say anything about required modes of burial for believers. Standard practice in the Old Testament and the New Testament was burial. 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, and 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."

Finally, the theologian John Piper, tells us, "Although there is biblical evidence for burial instead of cremation, it is still a preference, and Christians should not condemn other Christians who have chosen cremation. But burial is equated to "sowing the seed of the body," and "is the biblical picture of belief in the resurrection of the body."

Adapted from: *What Does the Bible Say about Cremation?* By Roger Barrier. Preach It, Teach It. Oct 24, 2023, Crosswalk.com.

Operation Shoebox

Operation Shoebox wants to thank everyone. The Van Wert area had a record of 3,080 boxes, and Operation Shoebox had a total of 11.3 million boxes donated in 2023. So many children hear about Jesus from this program. Four boys from Zambia wrote that they received nylon string backpacks and loved them. Other popular gifts were a pump, soccer ball, & needles that were \$6.25 from Old Navy, and crank flashlights that were found for \$.90. Remember to shop all year for bargains and when school supplies are cheap in July. Kids love any kind of ball. Thanks again, for everyone's contribution to this program.

Thank You

The family of James "Andy" Francis would like to say Thank you for all of your kindness, food, cards, and prayers during our loss of Andy. He loved his family, this town, and all of the people who touched his heart.

Thank you again, Monica & Haylie Placke & Sophie & Colby; Alex, Alanna, & Aaron Francis
Jason & Sarah Kimmet & family
Tim & Julie Rickard & family
Marylin "Scarecrow" Foust

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 \$39,067.72
Received to Date \$44,344.50

Salem Photos



2024-04-14 Sunday School crafts



2024-04-21 Junior Bells Special Music



2024-04-24 Senior Luncheon and Bingo Gathering



2024-04-25 Van Wert County Prayer Meeting and reception at Salem Church

IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

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

“Young at Heart”

Paul & Doris Price
18890 Bebb St
Venedocia, OH 45894

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

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

Ellen Freisner
Delphos Van Crest
(Moving to independent
Living)

Ann Rees
Hearth & Home
1118 Westwood Dr
Van Wert, Oh 45891

Serving our Country

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

Dillon Ellerbrock
(Marines)
Grandson of Gloria Leiter

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

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

Corbin Evans (Marines)
Grandson of Bill & Ruth
Evans

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 Dale Kuiesza and Adam Clark.

Birthdays

2 Audrey (Hobbs)Menker	3 Kim Coil
3 Eric Pugh	4 Rod Eutsler
4 Heather Matthew	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	17 Katey Lloyd
19 Holden Price	22 Dawson Kimmet
23 Carolyn Girod	25 Taylor Hoehn
29 Wrigsby Breese	31 Vincent Richards

Anniversaries

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

Prayer Concerns

Josh Archinal (recovering from car accident)
Cindy (Davis) Barnes (liver transplant)
Charles Boroff (heart issue)
Jason Boyd (cancer)
Dave Burnett (heart)
Tim (Alfie) Burnett (auto accident healing)
Kim Coil (recovery from surgery)
Pastor Tom Emery (Long Covid recovery)
Marjorie Eutsler
Ellen Friesner
Shana Fryer
Stephanie Gamble (eye issues)

Jane Harter
Jerry & Elizabeth Holscher
Larry Miller (cancer)
David Morris (Zeb)
Patti Poling (pancreatic cancer)
Paul & Doris Price
Ann Rees (at Hearth & Home)
Kristy Ringwald (adenoid cystic carcinoma)
Evelyn Schwartz
Derek Sellers (Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy)
Tori & Roger Wells (surgeries)
The area Nursing Homes and their residents

 **May 2024** 

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Mtg. at Van Wert Court House	3	4 Memorial Park Clean up 10 AM
5 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 AM Session Meeting	6	7 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, at the Orchard Tree in VW. 7:00 PM Women's Bible Study	8	9 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Mtg. at 1 st United Brethren Church 501 Race St., VW	10	11
12 9:30 AM Worship Mother's Day Recognition 5:00 PM Trustee Meeting.	13	14 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, at the Orchard Tree in VW. 7:00 PM Women's Bible Study	15	16 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Mtg. at 1 st United Brethren Church 501 Race St., VW	17	18
19 9:30 AM Worship w/guest speaker Harry Tolhurst Pentecost Offering	20	21 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, at the Orchard Tree in VW. 7:00 PM Women's Bible Study	22 Noon-Senior Luncheon	23 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Mtg. at 1 st United Brethren Church 501 Race St., VW	24	25
26 9:30 Worship & Communion Veterans Recognition	27 Memorial Day - 10:30 Horeb Cemetery & 11:00 AM Memorial Park observations	28 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study, at the Orchard Tree in VW.	29	30 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Mtg. at 1 st United Brethren Church 501 Race St., VW	31	
Week of	Nursery		Flowers		Organist	
May 5	Kevin & Kristen Price		Jeremy & Samantha Morris		LaDonna Allenbaugh	
May 12	Rex & Lisa Lloyd		Gloria Leiter		Connie O'Neill	
May 19	Jeremy & Samantha Morris		Gloria Leiter		Joyce Morris	
May 26	Liz Hobbs & Kim Coil		Gloria Leiter		Seth Baker	
				Greeter:	MaKenna Kimmet	

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



2024-04 A Salem Church photo taken after a spring rainstorm by Tamara Mullenhour.

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 2024 REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY YEAR B	
6th Sunday of Easter – May 5	
Acts 10:44-48	Psalm 98
John 5:1-6	John 15:9-17
7th Sunday of Easter – May 12	
Acts 1:15-17, 21-26	Psalm 1
John 5:9-13	John 17:6-19
Day of Pentecost – May 19	
Acts 2:1-21	Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Rom. 8:22-27	John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15
Trinity Sunday – May 26	
Isa. 6:1-8	Psalm 29
Rom. 8;12-17	John 3:1-17