

SOUNDS OF SALEM

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

Volume 27 Issue 4

April 2025

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

Consider this Lenten season, why then, do we all know of Christians who lie, steal, cheat, gossip, commit adultery, and seem to still walk in darkness? There is no doubt that **salvation** comes to us through the **justification** (being made right without sin before God) work of Christ dying on the cross for our sins. But many of us have been justified by grace through faith but have never been **sanctified**.

Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit that prompts, supernaturally empowers, and produces good works in us. You've heard it said of someone who has been sanctified, "**He's not the wretched man he used to be,**" and that is often literally true. God has changed that person.

The privilege and responsibility of all Christians is to live so that the presence of Christ radiates from our lives so that everyone who knows us will see Jesus and be drawn to the Savior.

A Christian understood this clearly as he was once fascinated by a lamplighter who moved down the shadowy streets of his town. He could always tell where the man was by the trail of light he left behind him. As we walk through life, do we leave a trail of light or darkness? Christ would like to so possess us, and cleanse us, and remake us, that everyone who sees us would say we are "new and improved."

Yet every human being must choose between two deaths. We can die in our sin or allow our sin to die. One is a horrific death; the other is a glorious one. If we are honest with ourselves and search the depths of our being, I believe we would all find the homesickness to be with God in heaven. There is a wonderful place to begin again: at the foot of the cross, by making the decision what path in life you want to follow.

Jesus says, "You can begin again, for I have died for all your shameful stuff. All you must do is relinquish those seething and suffocating sins, and I will nail them to me on the cross and make sure they never have dominion over you again. Come and die to your old self and experience a new beginning. Come and die to sin and



move from darkness to light. Come and die and receive the new life which only I can give to you."

God wants to do something new with you. Your sins are forgiven. Do you not perceive it? A life free from bondage. God's refreshing Spirit quenches every dry, deserted corner of your soul. Do you not perceive it? Why not birth a life of love, joy, peace, and hope? Do you not perceive it? Come and die an invigorating death. Your eternal life is waiting.

Pastor Tom Emery

Resurrection Power Chris Tomlin

[Verse 1]
You called me from the grave by name
You called me out of all my shame
I see the old has passed away
The new has come

[Chorus]
Now I have resurrection power
Living on the inside
Jesus, You have given us freedom
No longer bound by sin and darkness
Living in the light of Your goodness
You have given us freedom

[Verse 2]
And I'm dressed in Your royalty
Your Holy Spirit lives in me
And I see my past has been redeemed
The new has come

If You Have Been Wounded by the Church



[Chorus]

Now I have resurrection power
Living on the inside
Jesus, You have given us freedom
I'm no longer bound by sin and darkness
Living in the light of Your goodness
You have given us freedom

[Bridge]

Freedom, You have given us freedom
You have given us freedom, my chains are gone
Freedom, You have given us freedom
You have given us freedom, Hallelujah!
Freedom, You have given us freedom
You have given us freedom, my chains are gone
Freedom, You have given us freedom
You have given us freedom, Hallelujah!

[Chorus]

Now I have resurrection power
Living on the inside
Now, I'm no longer bound by sin and darkness
Living in the light of Your goodness
You have given us freedom
Now I have resurrection power
Living on the inside
Jesus, You have given us freedom
Now, I'm no longer bound by sin and darkness
Living in the light of Your goodness
You have given us freedom

[Outro]

I have resurrection power
Living on the inside
Living on the inside
No longer bound by sin and darkness
You have given us freedom
You have given us freedom

[YouTube Link](#)

When the church hurts people, the pain can cut deep into their souls. That's because it often comes from people they trust, leaders they admire, or a church, a denomination, or community organization they believe is safe. When wounds come from a place meant to reflect God's love, it can shake people's faith to its core. But God sees their pain, and He cares about their healing. Remember, Jerusalem's religious leaders condemned the innocent Jesus.

The apostle Paul recognized that walking away from unhealthy relationships was necessary. In 2 Timothy 4:14-15, he warns Timothy about a harmful person: "Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done. You, too, should be on your guard against him because he strongly opposed our message." Paul didn't seek revenge, but he took precautions and advised others to do the same.

If wounded people feel guilty about setting boundaries, you can remind them that their well-being matters to God. He doesn't call them to endure continuous mistreatment in the name of "grace." Instead, God wants them to experience peace. Isaiah 26:3 says, "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast because they trust in you." They should pray for the wisdom to make the best decisions about setting boundaries and trust that God will guide them as they set the boundaries necessary for their healing.

When church members or leaders have hurt people, it's easy for them to associate those failures with God Himself. They may think: "If these people claim to follow Jesus and act this way, then maybe God is like this too." That's a painful and understandable reaction. But the truth is Jesus is not the same as the church.

Although Jesus wants the church to reflect His love and truth, it is composed of flawed human beings, so it sometimes falls short in devastating ways. During His life on earth, Jesus spoke out against the hypocrisy of religious leaders. Matthew chapter 23 describes Jesus confronting the Pharisees, calling them out for their legalism and abuse of power. Jesus says in verse 27: "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean."

Jesus wasn't afraid to expose corruption within religious leadership. He didn't excuse their behavior, and He doesn't excuse the harm done in His Name today. If wounded people you know have been judged unfairly,



manipulated, excluded, or betrayed by the church, they should know that Jesus remains pure and loving despite the church's failures. Jesus is *for* people, not against them.

While human leaders may fail, Jesus never does. Remembering that a church's failures don't change God's goodness is essential. Numbers 23:19 points out: "God is not human, that He should lie, not a human being, that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and not fulfill?"

Even when people break trust, God remains faithful. Jesus' love is perfect, even when His followers are not. If people you know have felt rejected, judged, or abandoned by the church, let them know that Romans 8:38-39 promises: "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Psalms 34:18 states: "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." If they feel crushed by what they've been through, they can know that God draws close to them – not to condemn or dismiss them, but to comfort and restore them. Sometimes, well-meaning people in the church rush to tell them to "forgive and move on" or "just trust God's plan." While forgiveness and trust in God are essential, healing can't be rushed. God gives people space to process their sadness.

Adapted from "5 Things to Say to Someone Who Has Been Wounded by the Church" by Whitney Hople. Crosswalk, updated Mar 20, 2025.

COWBOY COOKIES

from the Old Farmer's Almanac



- 2 cups old-fashioned oats
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt

- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¾ cup (1 ½ sticks) softened unsalted butter
- 1 ¼ cup vegetable shortening
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
- ¾ cup chopped walnuts or pecans

In a bowl, combine oats, flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon. In a separate bowl use an electric mixer to beat butter, shortening, and sugar for 2 minutes. Beat in eggs one at a time, then add vanilla. Stir in dry mixture, about half at a time. Add chocolate chips and nuts and stir to combine. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour (or longer; if longer, let sit at room temperature for 10-15 minutes before shaping).

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly butter two large baking sheets or line with parchment paper.

Using ¼ cup of dough per cookie, shape dough into balls and place on the baking sheet, leaving 2 ½ inches in between. Flatten balls into 1/3-inch-thick disks with your fingers. Bake one sheet at a time on the center oven rack for 13-14 minutes, turning the baking sheet 180 degrees midway through the baking time. When done, cookies will have browned very lightly and will still look moist beneath the surface. Do not overbake. Makes about 24 cookies.

Gomer Women's Lovespoon Event

Sue Grusenmeyer would like to extend an invitation to any Salem ladies who would like to attend her Gomer tea on May 4th. Laura Jenkins Gorun gives an excellent presentation on the Welsh Lovespoons. The Welsh Society of Northwest Ohio will hold a Ladies Tea on Sunday, May 4th, from 3 to 4:30 pm in the fellowship hall of Gomer Congregational Church. Laura, a renowned Lovespoon carver will share her knowledge about this lovely Welsh tradition!

Laura graduated from Capital University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, then worked in financial services for several decades, primarily as an IT project manager, until she discovered the Welsh Lovespoon tradition, which led her to leave that career and return to the arts. Captivated by this lovely tradition, she taught herself to carve and developed her own very distinct and delicate style.

She's had several collaborations with world-famous Lovespoon carver, David Western, and has been

featured in multiple publications, including David Western's "History of Lovepoons."

Although some injuries have slowed her carving in recent years, she still loves to speak about the history of the art. She will explain a bit of the history, talk about the carving process, and offer some insights into the romantic symbolism often used to distinguish this cherished centuries-old Welsh tradition.

Bring a tea cup and join us for our annual Welsh Tea! Cost is \$10.00 and reservations can be made by contacting Deb Thomas 419-230-4344 or Sue Grusenmeyer at 419-236-0289.

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 \$30,496.65
Received to Date \$35,469.68

Sights of Salem



2025-03-02 St. David's Day visiting speaker Dan Rowbotham telling a children's story.



2025-03-02 St. David's Day meal.



2025-3-16 Morgan and Tyler McConnell with baby Marcus James.



2025-03-26 Servers for the Senior Luncheon and Bingo.



2025-3-30 Jaxson Todd Lloyd with dad, Jason, and grandfather, Jeff.



2025-03-30 Junior Bells.



2025-03-25 Lion's Club Venedocia breakfast fundraiser with many Salem members assisting.



2025-03-30 Missy and Mark Zielke with older kids in Sunday School.



2025-03-30 Jim Lloyd was surrounded with well-wishers upon his return to church after his severe leg operations ordeal.



2025-03-30: Toddler's Class learning the "Jesus Loves Me" song.



2025-03-30 Sunday School children's class craft for Easter



2025-03-25 Deak Dearing eating custom Micky Mouse pancakes at the Lions Club breakfast fundraiser. Right: Pastor Tom on the grill.



A sample Welsh Lovespoon Carving

Upcoming Salem Lent Events

- Palm Sunday – April 13**
- Good Friday – April 18**
- Easter Sunday – April 20**

IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

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

"Young at Heart"

Ann Rees

Hearth & Home
1118 Westwood Dr
Van Wert, OH 45891

Marjorie Eutsler

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

Ellen Freisner

Delphos Van Crest
1425 E. 5th St
Delphos, OH 45833

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

64 Main St
Floor 3
Stonington, CT 06378

Corbin Evans (Marines)

Grandson of Bill & Ruth
Evans

Away at College

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

Isaiah Pugh (at the University of Toledo)

2632 Greenway Street
Toledo, OH 43607

Condolences to the families of Bob Harter,
David Kroeger, Tim Morris, and Kerry Walls
(Kelly Lloyd's brother)

Birthdays

2 Lyndi Breese/Forsythe
8 Carol Emery
8 Piper Finn
8 Andy Breese
12 MaKenna Kimmet
13 Sami Jones
16 Bill Evan
16 Anne Morris
20 Kevin Matthews
22 Elgarda McGee
23 Grant Zielke
25 Julia Morris/Moliter
26 Gwenda Blackmore
29 Jenny Pugh
30 Ruth Evans

Prayer Concerns

LaDonna Allenbaugh (shoulder surgery)
Charles Boroff (heart issue)
Dave Burnett (heart)
Tom Burnett (tractor accident)
Pastor Tom Emery (Long Covid recovery)
Marjorie Eutsler
Millie Fletcher
Ellen Friesner
Cecil Foust (heart surgery)
Shana Fryer
Stephanie Gamble (eye issues)
Sheryl Hefner (cancer)
Carla Hillabrand (Medical issues)

Jerry & Elizabeth Holscher
Jim Lloyd (recovering leg surgery)
Mary Lou Morgan (Eleanor's daughter)
David Morris (Zeb)
Steve Muhlenkamp (cancer)
Bev Place
Patti Poling (pancreatic cancer)
Ann Rees (at Hearth & Home)
Bianca Richards (Leukemia)
Evelyn Schwartz
Mark Zielke (prostate cancer)
The area Nursing Homes and their residents



April 2025



Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at the Global Methodist Church at Crawford and Walnut Streets. 7:00 PM Women's Bible study.	2	3 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Meeting at Ohio City United Methodist Church.	4	5
6 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 AM Session Meeting	7	8 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at the Global Methodist Church at Crawford and Walnut Streets. 7:00 PM Women's Bible study.	9	10 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Meeting at Ohio City United Methodist Church.	11	12
13 9:30 AM Worship, Salem Palm Sunday Special music-bells 5:00 PM Trustee meeting 6:00 PM Delphos Palm Sun Service at Trinity Global Meth Church on Ambrose Dr.	14	15 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study. 7:00 PM Women's Bible study.	16	17 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Meeting at Ohio City United Methodist Church.	18 Noon VW County Good Friday Service at Van Wert Presbyterian Church	19 Venedocia Easter Egg Hunt 1 PM Memorial Park
20 Salem Presbyterian 8:00 Easter Breakfast 9:00 Flower the Cross 9:30 Worship & Communion	21	22 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study. 7:00 PM Women's Bible study.	23 Sr. Luncheon at noon	24 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Meeting at Ohio City United Methodist Church.	25	26
27 9:30 AM Worship Special music-Evan Pugh	28	29 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study. 7:00 PM Women's Bible study.	30			

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Organist
April 6	Kevin & Kristen Price		Seth Baker
April 13	Rex & Lisa Lloyd		Connie O'Neill
April 20	Jeremy & Samantha Morris	Bob & Kathy McCollow	Dave VanTilburg
April 27	Liz Hobbs & Kim Coil	Bob & Kathy McCollow	Becky Reichard
		Greeter:	Makenna Kimmet

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



2025-03-16 Newborn Marcus James McConnell with sister, Charlotte.

Sounds of Salem Newsletter

Church Phone: 419-667-4142

Church Web Pages: www.SalemChurch.cc
www.facebook.com/salemchurchvenedocia

Secretary E-Mail: Salemchurch.cc@gmail.com

Secretary's cell: 419-303-2032

Rev. Thomas Emery's cell: 419-863-9131
Pastor's Email: PastorTomEmery@live.com

**April 2025
REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY
YEAR C**

5th Sunday in Lent – Apr 6

Isa. 43:16-21	Psalm 126
Phil. 3:4b-14	John 12:1-8

Palm/Passion Sunday – Apr 13

Isa. 50:4-9a	Psalm 31:9-16
Phil. 2:5-11	Luke 22:1-14-23

Resurrection of the Lord/Easter Day – Apr 20

Isa. 65:17-25	Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
1 Cor. 15:19-26	John 20:1-18

2nd Sunday of Easter – Apr 27

Acts 5:27-32	Psalm 118:14-29
Rev. 1:4-8	John 20:19-31