

# SOUNDS OF SALEM

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

Volume 21 Issue 08

August 2019

## PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

***“Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live! (Deuteronomy 30:19 NLT)***

When I was taking my master’s level classes from the School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary, I was the only North American in some of my classes. In one class, I was assigned a seat for the semester next to a Nigerian. He seemed somewhat withdrawn, and communication with his accent was difficult.

One day, after praying and deciding to give it another try at the beginning of class, I tried again to talk with him, and I realized once we communicated that he is the one who needed to teach me. I had so much to learn from him. He was an ongoing church planter in Nigeria. He had grown three churches to over an attendance of thousand each. When they reached that size, he turned the church over to an apprentice and left following the Spirit to start another one.

He told me that the Africans were thirsty to know God. Many would walk twenty to thirty miles on foot the day before to worship Christ together and to hear the Word of God. They would sleep on the concrete outside the church overnight. After the service, they would begin their long journey back home. I was humbled hearing their love of the Lord and their willingness in their poverty to do whatever possible to know more about Christ.

Later, when I came to Venedocia, I met David Hugh Evans, who seemed to be the area historian. One of his comments stuck: “When the Irish settled the flatlands, the first thing that they did was build a bar. Where the Welsh settled an area, the first thing that they did was build a church.” That might explain why Venedocia is dry to liquor sales, and Salem is a “beautiful cathedral in the cornfields.”

John Lloyd told me that it was common knowledge with the older farmers in our area that you didn’t farm on

Sundays. In the past, church elders would walk up to your tractor and ask you to turn it off if you were working your field on a Sunday. Others Venedocia residents told me that there was exceptional personal honesty between neighbors, and the community took care of one another.

At one time, there would be the Sunday service at Salem, Sunday school, evening Sunday School, men’s and women’s clubs, and a Wednesday church gathering. Spencerville buses would drop off students after school for junior choir training.

Recently, I heard a discussion about the length of our worship service. It has become expected that worship should last about no more than sixty minutes.



One might wonder where do we develop these kinds of expectations about worship? Mass at the neighboring Roman Catholic parish never runs over fifty minutes, and that includes communion. Services down the

street at the Methodist church commence and dismiss within an hour. But our friends at an Apostolic church will worship for nearly two hours on any given Sunday.

In places like Africa, Christian worship services might last several hours. There is no clock on the wall telling anyone to stop singing or preaching or praying. The people’s worship begins when all are present, and it draws to a close when there is a sense following the Holy Spirit that all are finished with the rites and prayers and songs.

What do we expect out of worship? Some want to be entertained, some expect to experience a sense of connection with the Almighty, some expect to gain wisdom for living, and some of us to feel better about ourselves.

Even more important is this question — what does God expect of us when we gather to worship? What does God desire of us when it comes to worship?

Micah 6:8 (NLT) says, “No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.”

**“Follow Me”  
Matthew Chapter 4:12-25**

You see, when it comes to worship, God expects people to be transformed. God expects the love and trust they confess, to change the way they live.

God expects that people will become more deeply aware of God's generosity to them. God expects that they will be generous and gracious to one another, as God is with them. Then, as today, God expects his people to love him and reflect His love in their relationships with others. God is worshiped when God's people live in such a way that God's values shine through their words and deeds.

What do you come to worship expecting? Do you expect to see friends? Do you expect to receive that peace that passes all understanding? Do you plan to go home with one or two life questions answered? Do you expect to be loved, forgiven, and refitted by God for the sake of the world? Why not ask God now to lead you to choose life and blessings!

*Pastor Tom*

**Labor Day Poem**

God of shop and marketplace,  
Of farm and studio,  
Factory and shipping lane,  
Of school and busy home:  
Bless the produce of our hands.  
Redeem our work for Kingdom-use.  
By Your grace, our efforts stand,  
All offered up to You.

There in Eden, You proclaimed  
That we should work the earth –  
Stewards over all we named,  
Delighting in their worth.  
Through our fall we brought decay,  
Lost access to Jehovah's rest.  
Through the cross, we rest in faith  
And all our labor's blessed.

In Your image we are made:  
Creative like You are,  
Forming goods for use and trade  
Just like You formed the stars.  
Send us out in power and skill  
To worship through each task assigned.  
By Your Spirit we fulfill  
The holy, grand design.

By Billie Gilles

In Matthew 4:12-25, we find Jesus using two simple words: "Follow Me." This is a life-changing call from Jesus. This passage helps us see what it means to follow Jesus at the most basic level. In response to this passage, we should be asking ourselves this question, "Am I following Him?" No more important question can be requested.



Consider who you are to follow. In [Matthew 1](#), we learned Jesus is Savior, Messiah, the son of David and Abraham, fully human and fully divine. [Matthew 2](#) shows us Jesus is Sovereign over the wise and shepherd of the weak. He loves His fiercest enemies. [Matthew 3](#) gives us John the Baptist's message as he announces Jesus is the Savior King and Righteous Judge. Jesus is filled with the Spirit and loved by the Father. At the beginning of [Matthew 4](#), we see Jesus resisted temptation fully and completely, never giving in once to sin. He is the light of the world and the hope for all people.

This is the picture of Jesus-the One who used these two simple words, "Follow Me." While following Jesus requires abandoning everything, at the core, it means that we must forsake our sin. We admit our sin in brokenness before God, and then we run from it. That's what it means to abandon ourselves. To leave everything for Jesus and follow Him means to lay down all things so that we live for one thing: to honor the King. To follow Jesus means to hold loosely to everything else and cling tightly to the person of Christ and the mission of His kingdom.

As we live with radical abandonment for Christ's glory, we are to live with joyful dependence on His grace. In calling us, "Follow Me," God takes the initiative to choose us. Just as the Father elected His people in the Old Testament, so Jesus chose His disciples in the

New Testament. He wanted them, and He chooses us. This choice is not because of anything good in us; it is all because of grace in Him. The disciples Jesus chose were of the lower class, and uneducated. They weren't spiritually qualified. They were narrow-minded and superstitious. You and I have nothing to draw Jesus to us. We are sinners, rebellious, and running from God. And the beautiful, gracious, glorious reality of the gospel is that Jesus comes running to us. He calls our name. He chooses us.



Jesus not only takes the initiative to choose us, but He also provides the power to use us, and He gets the glory through us. The beauty of God's design is to

take our weaknesses as sinners and enables us to do far more than we could ever imagine; all to the praise of His glorious grace.

Committed followers don't merely listen to His words. He asks us to be willing to do whatever He asks and says-no matter the cost. We must live with total trust in His authority. He is the Master of every detail of our lives. He is Lord over budgets and bank accounts, houses, and cars. He is Lord over words and thoughts, attitudes, and actions. Will you follow Jesus? Will you give over every detail of your life?

Every follower is a fisher of men. At the end of Matthew's gospel, Jesus commands us to "Go...make disciples of all nations."

Matthew 4:12-25 confronts us with this question. Will we live with radical abandonment for His glory, to lay down and leave all things behind to live for the King? We are to do this with joyful dependence on His grace and with total trust in His authority. We are to live with urgent obedience to His mission. Jesus says to you-"Come follow Me."

Adapted from "Christ-Centered Exposition" by David Platt (used in the Salem Women's Bible study)

## Gymanfa Ganu September 1

Mark your calendar for **Sunday, September 1st** for our annual **Gymanfa Ganu** (Welsh Festival of Song).



This marks Salem's 104th year of honoring our Welsh heritage.

Our director this year is **Christopher Uhl**, who is originally from Van Wert and has been with us in the past. This year he is joining with **Paul Hoverman**, also of Van Wert, to put together a choir of 16-20 voices to entertain us for special music. This should be a real treat.

Anyone interested in singing with this group should contact Paul at 419-513-0123. Practices are being planned for August.

Our organist for the evening will be **Connie Lloyd O'Neill** and on the piano will be **David VanTilburg**.

Looking forward to a great evening of singing, meeting old friends, making new friends and of course eating great food. Hope you will join us!

*-Kathy McCollow, Salem Music Committee*

## Letters and Cards

### Bob Bolton

*Thank you all for your caring support, cards, and donations to Salem Presbyterian Church after the passing of our dad and grandfather, Bob Bolton. We appreciate all who came to the memorial service or brought food. He was a caring man and a faithful servant, and we know he is in heaven.*

*The Bolton Family*

## Church Financial Update

Needed to Date: \$58,357.80  
Received to Date: \$60,398.98

Salem Vacation Bible School Photos



Sign-in



Prayer and the Mission of raising money for Haiti earthquake victims by providing foot-powered sewing machines for the local people to be self-sufficient



Assembling and getting to know the kids



Story-time about "Biblical Wisdom"



Pledges of Allegiance to the Flag, Bible and the Cross



Wisdom Songs



Instructions for craft time



Prayer time before adjourning



Snack time



Recreation time

Thank you for allowing us to teach your Venedocia children these two days at Vacation Bible School!

We learned that **Wisdom** isn't being smart and getting good grades. True **wisdom** is hearing and doing what God says. **Wisdom** is knowing the difference between right and wrong and then doing the right thing.

**King Solomon** was the wisest man in the whole world and his wisdom came from God. "God *delights to give wisdom to those who truly seek it*" (James 1:5).

**Jesus** wants us to make wise choices. "Everyone who *hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock*" (Matthew 7:24).

*You and your entire family are invited to visit Salem Church this Sunday August 4th when we will be showing photos of our time together here at VBS. We would also like to have enough children to sing some of the songs we learned. Service starts at 9:30 am. Hope to see you then!*

God bless you and your family!

*Pastor Tom Emery and the Salem Church Family*

# IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

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

## Serving our Country

### **Natalie Morgan Wilkins**

Vancrest Healthcare  
10357 VW—Decatur  
Van Wert, OH 45891

### **Marian Morris**

Hearth & Home  
1118 Westwood Dr.  
Van Wert, OH 45891

### **Marjorie Rhoades**

Hearth & Home  
1118 Westwood Dr.  
Van Wert, OH 45891

### **Dorothea Plikerd**

Roselawn Manor  
420 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Spencerville, OH 45887

### **Bob Louth**

15113 Main St  
Venedocia, OH 45894

### **Cory McCollow**

(U.S. Coast Guard)  
311 Oak Street #109  
Oakland, CA 94607

### **Cpl. Linger, Micah 2nd**

MEMES Support Battalion  
PSO Box 20085  
Camp Lejeune, NC 28542  
Grandson of Doris Evans

### **Phoebe Eutsler (Army)**

## Birthdays

4 Phillip Eutsler	4 Don Owens
6 Brooke Coil	9 Denise Pugh
11 David Hobbs	20 Austin Kimmet
22 Jan Jones	27 Barb Owens
30 Kelly Lloyd	

## Away at College

**Evan Pugh** – Aquinas University, Grand Rapids

**Andrew Emery** – University of Cincinnati

**Christina Emery** – University of Cincinnati

## Anniversaries

12 David & Carla Breese  
17 Kory & Tamara Mullenhour  
27 Tom & Carol Emery

## Condolences

Condolences to the family of Bill Stewart (Kim Coil's brother)

## Prayer Concerns

Kylee Ball (surgery)  
Connie Bassett (breast cancer)  
Kyle Baxter (brain cancer)  
Barry Coil (stroke)  
Kathy Comer  
Amy Cunningham (fibromyalgia)  
Jim Davis (cancer)  
Kent DuCheney (surgery)  
Aiden Ellerbrock (injuries from a fall)  
Betty Ellis (rapidly failing health)  
Doris Evans (cancer)  
Daniel Fisher (rectal cancer)  
Suzanne Hadley-Himes (cancer)  
Bill Harmon (cancer)  
Jeff Hines (kidney transplant)  
Bob Hundley (cancer)  
Tim Huster (cancer)  
Jan Jones (health issues)  
Paula Jones (healing from fall)

Nancy Lautzenheiser (colon cancer)  
Linda Liskey (cancer)  
Bob Louth  
Bob Louth Jr. (prostrate health)  
LuAnn (family issues)  
Carol Matthews (Lou Gehrig's disease)  
Sarah Miller (health issues)  
Gwen Montez (surgery)  
Marian Morris  
Dorothea Plikerd  
Terry Profit (chemotherapy)  
Mallory Rentz (blood clot in brain)  
Marjorie Rhoades  
Julie Sheets (lung cancer)  
Deb & Steve Sheppard (health issues)  
Bruce Taylor (need liver transplant)  
Martha Jean Evans Vasquez  
6 Doug Wierwille (cancer)  
Natalie Wilkins (failing health, 90 years old)  
Noah Wyatt (son of Stuart Wyatt)

# August 2019

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 8:00 am Church grounds work day.
<b>4</b> 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>11</b> 9:30 Worship w/guest speaker John Zerbe Gideon speaker 5:00 pm Trustee meeting	12	13	14	<b>15</b> 6:30 pm Music Committee mtg	16	17
<b>18</b> 9:30 Worship w/guest speaker Kevin Clancy No Sunday School	19	20	21	22	23	24
<b>25</b> 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Session meeting	26	27	28	29	30	31

Week of	Special Music	Nursery	Flowers
Aug 4	To be determined	Mark & Missy Zielke	Gloria Leiter
Aug 11	To be determined	Toby & Elizabeth Adkins	Gloria Leiter
Aug 18	To be determined	Dave & Carla Breese	Gloria Leiter
Aug 25	To be determined	Bob & Kathy McCollow	To be determined
<b>Ushers</b>	Jim & Danny Lloyd & Dave Rees	<b>Greeter:</b>	Marylin Foust

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



Vacation Bible School craft



Building on rock, not sand

## *Sounds of Salem Newsletter*

Church Phone: 419-667-4142

Church Web Pages: [www.SalemChurch.cc](http://www.SalemChurch.cc)  
[www.facebook.com/salemchurchvenedocia](http://www.facebook.com/salemchurchvenedocia)

Secretary E-Mail: [Secretary@SalemChurch.cc](mailto:Secretary@SalemChurch.cc)  
Secretary's cell: 419-303-2032

Rev. Thomas Emery's cell: 419-863-9131  
Pastor's Email: [PastorTomEmery@live.com](mailto:PastorTomEmery@live.com)

### August 2019 REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY YEAR B

#### 8<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – Aug 4

Hosea 11:1-11	Psalm 107:1-9, 43
Col. 3:1-11	Luke 12: 13-21

#### 9<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – Aug 11

Isa. 1:1, 10-20	Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23
Heb. 11:1-3, 8-16	Luke 12:32-40

#### 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – Aug 18

Isa. 5:1-7	Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19
Heb. 11:29-12:2	Luke 12:49-56

#### 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – Aug 25

Jer. 1:4-10	Psalm 71:1-6
Heb. 12:18-29	Luke 13:10-17