

SOUNDS OF SALEM

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

Volume 21 Issue 12

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PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

"For the time is coming," says the LORD, "when I will raise up a righteous descendant from King David's line. He will be a King who rules with wisdom. He will do what is just and right throughout the land (Jeremiah 23:5 NLT).

During the American Revolution in the cold of the Christmastime snowy winter, the British would send messages to the patriots to surrender, and their lives and property would be spared. Their return answer universally was, "We have no king but Jesus."

*A thousand times in history
a baby has become a king,
but only once in history
did a King become a baby.*



All Christians also can say, "We have a King, and Jesus is our King. We belong to His Kingdom. He is not only a king, but He was born "King of kings."

Jesus was not a king like Louis XIV, who lived in luxury in his Versailles palace of 1000 rooms. He was born in a manger among livestock in a cave. God's kind of King is described as a humble, wise and just ruler. There is no other king like King Jesus.

Paul described Jesus as "the image of the invisible God" and in whom dwells "all the fullness of God." Jesus himself knew who He was, for he said, "The Father and I are one; he who has seen me has seen the Father." All other "kings" are mortal and eventual die. Christ, the King, lives. Because He is God's Son, He was raised by God from death. On Easter, Christ rose to live forever. If He had not, He would be like all other kings. Because of His victory over death, He lives and reigns for all eternity.

Since Jesus is the Messiah, God's only Son, He is the King-Creator. In John's prologue, we are told about Jesus the Creator: "All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made" (1:3). Christ is King of kings because He is the Creator of kings.

If Christ, the King, created us, we are children of the King. Paul says we are a new creation in Christ, a new people in a new covenant. Therefore, we have status, dignity, and honor. We are persons of value, for "God made no junk." Remember who you are as a child of the King, a person of worth.

Christ rules the church because the church is His body. Some "churches" are not churches at all. How do we know? Because some of their teachings are not in harmony with the scriptural teachings of Christ the King. The church that Christ rules is one where the Gospel is truly proclaimed, and the Sacraments are administered rightly. Loyal Christian people choose to follow Christ's directives in scripture rather than church leaders.

The most significant difference between Christ, the King, and all other kings is the difference between life and death. In one sense, Jesus died as all kings die, but with one big difference; He rose again on the third day! He was the king who died to save His people from eternal death, from separation from God.

This Christmas season, what will be our responses to this King's dying for you and giving you eternal life? He is Christ the King. But, can you say Christ is your King? He may be the King of the church, but He is not your King until you crown Him King of your life.

Knowing the Christmas story and seeing the baby Jesus in the manger, have you forgotten to crown Him the King of your life? Why not take time now to do that?

Pastor Tom Emery

Christmas Time

Christmas bells are ringing out
across the land today;
They ring on streets, in belfries high,
And on the horse-drawn sleigh.

Christmas lights are shining bright
in windows, streets and trees...
Making rainbows in the snow
and shadows of the Leaves.

Christmas carols fill the air...
There's singing in each Heart –
Christ alone has caused the music,
Made the Christmas carols start.

Herald out then, all ye people,
Bow the trumpets, sing with mirth;
For today was born a Saviour -
Christ the Lord, of royal birth.

Written by Mrs. Pau E. King, [Christmas Greetings](#)



The Book of Philippians 1:27-2:11

The apostle Paul spoke to the Philippian church about humble servanthood. As believers, we are to serve one another with humble compassion. When we serve one another, we have unity in our relationships both apart from and within the church. The basis for unity has a fourfold motivation.

First, *there is **encouragement** in Christ.* During trials and suffering, find encouragement in your relationship with Jesus. Second, *we have the **consolation of love.*** We know God's love, and His love makes us love others. Third, *we share in the **fellowship with the Spirit.*** The Spirit unites us as brothers and sisters. Fourth, *we share **affection and mercy (or tenderness).***

This tender care should cause us to look out for the interests of others and serve sacrificially. Paul points out to the Philippians and us that we can enjoy these amazing blessings as believers. To be united, Paul

says, the church must have the same mentality remembering their identity and a common mission. ***That is to spread the message of God's love and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.***

We must pursue Christ-like humility. We are to follow the way of Jesus, not the way of our culture. We should ask ourselves, *"Am I competing for people's attention and approval? Do I find it difficult or easy to rejoice in the success of others? Am I conceited? Do I think I am superior to people? Am I concerned with the needs of others?"* There will never be unity in a congregation apart from people walking in humility. Jesus, who had every right to be conceited, instead emptied Himself and associated with us, the lowly. ***He's our model for humility, and He gives us the power to live out an "others-oriented" lifestyle.***

We must live with sensitivity to the needs of others. Only when we possess the grace of humility will we serve others with spiritual sensitivity. *We grow in humility by reflecting on the cross of Christ.* We see the holiness of God, the sinfulness of man and the grace of our Lord on display at the cross. *We grow in humility by reflecting on the glory of Christ.* Allow Christ's all-sovereign lordship to create in you humble adoration before Him. *We grow in humility by reflecting on God's Word, which reveals to us Christ's humility and exaltation.*

Studying the Bible can be an act of humility in itself if you're going to the Bible with the attitude, "I need Your Word more than bread." Get before God and realize that He rules over all; stand in the way of His greatness and regain your perspective on yourself and all of life. *Grow in humility through prayer.* We must humble ourselves before God's mighty hand regularly and cast our cares on Him. *We grow in humility by serving others.* As you do this, pray for God to cultivate in you the spirit of humility that was so gloriously displayed in our Lord.

Chapter 2 verses 5-11 gives us a Christ-centered mindset. Paul magnifies the humility and exaltation of Jesus, which should lead us to emulate Jesus' example and adore Him as Lord of all. As a result of adoring Christ and emulating Him, we will experience unity as a people. The more we behold His glory and imitate His character, the more unified we will be as a church.

It is said of Jesus in vs.6 that he did not consider equality with God as something to be grasped, to be used for His advantage. This phrase highlights the astonishing giving nature of Jesus. He did not consider being God grounds for getting but for giving. Paul

encourages the church to follow the example of Jesus' service in their relationships with one another. Jesus could've clutched His rights, His blessings, and His benefits as King of glory, but He didn't. He lived open-handedly, showing us what benevolent generosity and service look.

Do you have a hard time letting go of your possessions? Do you find it hard to relinquish your rights to be mad at someone for the good of preserving a relationship? If we applied Jesus' mindset to marriage and other relationships, imagine what our lives would be. How can you go from being a grasper to a giver? You need the gospel; You need Jesus. Through His perfect life and atoning death, He gives us forgiveness and new life, empowering us to live like Him.

During Advent, we reflect on the humble incarnation of Jesus Christ. He emptied Himself. He added humanity; He did not surrender deity. He remained fully God while coming to live here with us as fully human. Jesus endured the physical agony of the cross, the abandonment, the shame, and He received the wrath of God in place of sinners. Isaiah 53 describes this.

Christ's humility follows the spiritual principle, "Whoever humbles himself will be exalted. His incomparable self-humiliation leads to His super-exaltation. He is our Lord. He is the King of Glory. In response to Christ's universal lordship, "at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess... that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Vs 10-11. Jesus doesn't keep the glory for Himself, and even in His exaltation, He remains the model of humbly honoring the Father.

Let our attitude be like His. Let our actions reflect Him - all to the glory of God, our Father.

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

Trustee Report

The congregation recently voted to approve the fiscal year 2020 budget of \$103,416. This was an increase of \$2,263 from the 2019 operating budget. This increase was necessary to account for cost of living increases and inflation. Typically, costs rise by 2-3 percent annually.

Our church has roughly \$120,000 in various mutual funds that we utilize as a financial security blanket and for future planning. These funds if left untouched have the potential to secure our church's existence far into the future with the help of compounding interest. For these funds to work in our favor

it is imperative that we continue to operate the church on tithes and offerings alone and not tap into these mutual funds unless absolutely necessary. Proverbs 21:20 says "*In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has.*" This verse is a teaching about financial savings. Choice food and oil = our church's mutual funds and to spend that money willingly is a foolish thing to do according to the teachings of the bible. In the planning of our operating budget we pretend that this money does not exist.

Unfortunately, membership within our congregation has been in decline for the past 20 years mostly due to a shift in modern culture and competition with large contemporary churches. By the grace of God, our tithes and offerings have been just enough to meet or exceed our forecasted operating budget every year. With membership and attendance, being in a steady yet slow decline it has been ever more difficult to procure the necessary funds to support operating costs without dipping into our reserve funds. I humbly ask the recipients of this newsletter to spread the awareness to members everywhere that tithing is incredibly important to the survival and growth of our 171 year old church.

Church Infrastructure Matters

The church has some upcoming infrastructure expenses that will require some fundraising to afford. They are as follows:

- A new chime system needs to be purchased as the current one (Installed 1980) is broken and cannot be repaired due to its age. Estimated new installation cost is \$30,000.
- Over the last 121 years the exterior masonry work on the church has collected a lot of dirt and grim and needs professionally cleaned to maintain the aesthetic and physical performance of the stone and brick. An estimate for this work is currently being researched.
- The asphalt parking lot is deteriorating quickly and will need to be resurfaced. An estimate for this work is currently being sought out.

More information on these items will be published in the coming months.

Thank you all for your continued support to our wonderful congregation and church. God Bless.

Pete McCollow,
Trustee President

Church Financial Update

Needed to Date:	\$91,427.22
Received to Date:	\$104,028.62



November 28 – Jean and David Owens 70th Anniversary



November 24 - Singing practice



November 24 - Steve Richards family



November 5 - Salem Election Day Supper



November 15 - Cassy and Emmanuel Yeboah-Mantey wedding. Salem reception is December 8.



November 27 - Thanksgiving Eve Service



December 1 – Youth lighting of the wreath Advent candle



December 1 Advent Breakfast



December 1 - Sparkle Box explanation at Time for Children



LaDonna appreciation gift from the Music Committee



December 1 Michael Breese with baby Wrigsby and grandparents



Late harvesting in November. God blessed us with a good harvest despite the earlier heavy rains

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

Cory McCollow

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

Micah Linger

Grandson of Doris Evans
(U.S. Marine Corps)

Marjorie Rhoades

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

Dorothea Plikerd

Roselawn Manor
418 East 4th Street
Spencerville, OH 45887

Phoebe Eutsler (Army)

Bob Louth

Roselawn Manor
418 East 4th Street
Spencerville, OH 45887

Birthdays

5 Dave Owens	8 Paige Thatcher
9 Jason Lloyd	13 Marilyn Stockton
17 Jeremy Morris	23 Jeff Owens
24 Mary Ellen Lloyd	30 Isaiah Pugh

Anniversaries

16 Kent & Heather McClure
28 Doug & Marilyn Stickler

Condolences

Condolences to the families of Diane Burnett, Kris Richey, Pam Purmort, Doug Wierwille, Larry Howell & Don Balyeat.

Away at College

Evan Pugh – Aquinas University, Grand Rapids

Andrew Emery – University of Cincinnati

Christina Emery – University of Cincinnati

Prayer Concerns

Connie Bassett (breast cancer)
Kyle Baxter (brain cancer)
Barry Coil (stroke)
Kathy Comer
Amy Cunningham (Fibromyalgia)
John Davis (stroke)
Cathy Donnal (health issues)
Kent DuCheney (surgery)
Aiden Ellerbrock (serious injuries from a fall)
Betty Ellis (rapidly failing health)
Catie Emery (constant nightmares)
Stephanie Gamble (eye issues)
Suzanne Hadley-Himes (recurrent cancer)
Bill Harmon (cancer)
Tim Huster (cancer)
Connie Johnson (cancer)
Jan Jones (health issues)
Paula Jones (healing from fall)
Dale Kieszka (leg operation)

Nancy Lautzenheiser (colon cancer)
Gloria Leiter
Linda Lissey (cancer)
Bob Louth (heart problems)
Bob Louth, Jr (prostate health)
LuAnn (family issues)
Carol Matthews (Lou Gehrig's disease)
Marian Morris
Dorothea Plikerd
Terry Profit (chemotherapy)
Mallory Rentz (blood clot in brain)
Marjorie Rhodes
Julie Sheets (lung cancer)
Sherry Silar (cancer)
Bruce Taylor (had a liver transplant)
Martha Jean Evans Vasquez
Doug Wierwille (cancer)
Natalie Wilkins (failing health, 90 years old)
Noah Wyatt (son of Stuart Wyatt)



December 2019



Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30 Worship Peace Offering 10:30 Advent Breakfast 11:30 Confirmation Class	2	3 7pm Women's Bible Study	4 Noon-Senior Luncheon 6:30 pm Confirmation Class	5	6	7
8 9:30 Worship *FINAL DAY FOR GRAVY PKTS* 10:30 Cassy and Emmanuel reception 11:30 Confirmation Class 12:30 Session meeting 5:00 Trustee Meeting	9	10 7pm Women's Bible Study	11 6:30 pm Confirmation Class	12	13	14
15 9:30 Worship Christmas Program 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Confirmation Class 2:00 Santa at Lions Club 4:00 Christmas Caroling 6:30 Manse Open House	16	17 7pm Women's Bible Study	18 6:30 pm Class Confirmation	19	20	21
22 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School	23	24 9:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service & Communion	25	26	27	28
29 9:30 Worship w/guest Speaker John Zerbe No Sunday School	30	31				

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Special Music
December 1	Bob & Denise Pugh	Carla Breese	Connie O'Neill
December 8	Jeff & Kelly Lloyd	Carla Breese	Ann Morris and Addie Breese
December 15	Bill & Ruth Evans	Carla Breese	Jr Choir/Christmas Program
December 22	Available, but not staffed	Gloria Leiter	LaDonna Allenbaugh
December 29	Eric & Jenny Pugh	Gloria Leiter	
Ushers	The Price Family	Greeter:	Bob McCollow

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



December 1 LaDonna Allenbraugh appreciation event

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

December 2019 REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY YEAR B	
1st Sunday of Advent – December 1	
Isa. 2:1-5	Psalm 122
Rom. 13:11-14	Matt. 24:36-44
2nd Sunday of Advent – December 8	
Isa. 11:1-10	Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Rom. 15:4-13	Matt. 3:1-12
3rd Sunday of Advent – December 15	
Isa. 35:1-10	Psalm 146:5-10
James 5:7-10	Matt. 11:2-11
4th Sunday of Advent – December 22	
Isa. 7:10-16	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Rom. 1:1-7	Matt. 1:18-25
1st Sunday of Christmas –December 29	
Isa. 63:7-9	Psalm 148
Heb. 2:10-18	Matt. 2:13-23