

SOUNDS OF SALEM

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

Volume 22 Issue 2

February 2020

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6 NLT).

This is a prophetic scripture spoken much around Christmas. Yet, it speaks clearly to the life of Jesus and the victory that Jesus bought for us on the Easter cross. We are given four descriptions in groups of twos. All the descriptions should give us confidence and joy that our loving God is in control even when it seems our lives are out of control.



Wonderful Counselor uses the Hebrew word, “wonderful,” which means, “not of this world.” For those of us confused and stumbling in darkness, He is “the Way, the Truth and the Life.” He offers us a fulfilling life that is “more than abundant.”

Mighty One frees us from being trapped by the power of darkness by depression, disease, drugs, and any other deep bondage. He is truly the “King of Kings and Lord of Lords” who is able to deliver us.

He is called **Everlasting Father**. The term, “father,” has suffered in recent times brought on by family abandonment and abuse in the culture. The Everlasting Father over all His children will be based upon perfect divine love and care. For those who cry out in loneliness feeling that they have been forsaken by all including God, He is joined in eternal love as a father or mother loves a child and will never let them go. He will “never leave you nor forsake you.”

He is the **Prince of Peace** and is not only confined to the absence of hostility, but brings wholeness, completion, and harmony for those who are paralyzed by anxiety, fear, and doubts and worries about the future. The “peace of God which passes all understanding will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” His kingdom will not increase by wars but will grow through peace and the working of the Spirit of God in the hearts of humankind who live a love-filled life.

All the promises of God are for those who have made Christ their Lord and Savior. If you have not done that, and you want to, please pray along with me.

“Almighty God, I am sorry for my sins that I have made during my life. I need You, God, to take control of my life. I’ve made a mess of things. I thank You, for your Son who died on the cross for my sins, past, present and future. I believe that after Jesus died and was buried, that You rose Him from the dead three days later. I want to follow Christ the rest of my life. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit that I may yield my life to Christ. May I now be a child of God, and that Jesus will guide me as my Shepherd all the days of my life and will take me into heaven when my days are over. I pray this in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Pastor Tom Emery

"You Say" – Popular Song

I keep fighting voices in my mind that say I'm not enough
Every single lie that tells me I will never measure up
Am I more than just the sum of every high and every low?
Remind me once again just who I am because I need to know

Ooh oh

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing
You say I am strong when I think I am weak
And You say I am held when I am falling short
And when I don't belong, oh You say I am Yours
And I believe, (I) oh I believe (I)
What You say of me (I)
I believe

The only thing that matters now is everything You think of me
In You I find my worth, in You I find my identity

Ooh oh

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing
You say I am strong when I think I am weak
And You say I am held when I am falling short
When I don't belong, oh You say I am Yours
And I believe, (I) oh I believe (I)
What You say of me (I)
Oh, I believe

Taking all I have and now I'm laying it at your feet
You have every failure God, and You'll have every victory

Ooh oh

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing
You say I am strong when I think I am weak
You say I am held when I am falling short
When I don't belong, oh You say I am Yours
And I believe, (I) oh I believe (I)
What You say of me (I)
I believe

Oh I believe, ah
Yes I believe, ah
What You say of me
Oh I believe

Soul-searching Christian singer, **Lauren Daigle**, has two Grammy Awards, seven GMA Dove Awards, five Billboard Music Awards, two American Music Awards and four No. 1 singles on both the Billboard Christian Airplay and Hot Christian Songs chart. [SONG LINK](#)

"When I say am a Christian" - Poem

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I'm not shouting, "I've been saved!"
I'm whispering, "I get lost sometimes"
That's why I chose this way"

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I don't speak with human pride
I'm confessing that I stumble –
needing God to be my guide

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I'm not trying to be strong
I'm professing that I'm weak
and pray for strength to carry on

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I'm not bragging of success
I'm admitting that I've failed
and cannot ever pay the debt

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I don't think I know it all
I submit to my confusion
asking humbly to be taught

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I'm not claiming to be perfect
My flaws are far too visible
but God believes I'm worth it

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I still feel the sting of pain
I have my share of heartache
which is why I seek God's name

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I do not wish to judge
I have no authority
I only know I'm loved

By Carol Wimmer of www.carolwimmer.com,

Coronavirus and Our Christian Faith

Are followers of Jesus right to flee an epidemic when people are suffering and dying? Citizens in Wuhan, a major central city comparable to Chicago, are under lockdown by the government and public activities have come to a standstill. Chinese Christians, in China at large, have faced difficult decisions about whether to flee from the mainland, or even to gather for regular Sunday services. Many feel with the handful of cases now in the United States, that it is just a short matter of time before we will have to face the same decisions of those Chinese Christians.



In the 16th century, German Christians asked theologian Martin Luther for a response to this very question.

In 1527, less than 200 years after the Black Death killed about half the population of Europe, the plague re-emerged in Luther's own town of Wittenberg and neighboring cities. In his letter "Whether One May Flee from a Deadly Plague," the famous reformer weighs the responsibilities of ordinary citizens during contagion. His advice serves as a practical guide for Christians confronting infectious disease outbreaks today.

First, Luther argued that anyone who stands in a relationship of service to another has a vocational commitment not to flee. Those in ministry, he wrote, “must remain steadfast before the peril of death.” The sick and dying need a good shepherd who will strengthen and comfort them and administer the sacraments—lest they be denied the Eucharist before their passing. Public officials, including mayors and judges, are to stay and maintain civic order. Public servants, including city-sponsored physicians and police officers, must continue their professional duties. Even parents and guardians have vocational duties toward their children.

Luther did not limit tending the sick to health care professionals. In a time when Wuhan faces a shortage of hospital beds and personnel, his counsel is especially relevant. The city, one of China’s largest with a population of about 11 million, is in the process of rapidly constructing two new hospitals to accommodate growing crowds of coronavirus patients. Lay citizens, without any medical training, may find themselves in a position of providing care to the sick. Luther challenges Christians to see opportunities to tend to the sick as tending to Christ himself (Matt. 25:41–46). Out of love for God emerges the practice of love for neighbor.

But Luther does not encourage his readers to expose themselves recklessly to danger. His letter constantly straddles two competing goods: honoring the sanctity of one’s own life and honoring the sanctity of those in need. Luther makes it clear that God gives humans a tendency toward self-protection and trusts that they will take care of their bodies (Eph. 5:29; 1 Cor. 12:21–26). He defends public health measures such as quarantines and seeking medical attention when available. In fact, Luther proposes that not to do so is to act recklessly. Just as God has gifted humans with their bodies, so too he has gifted the medicines of the earth.

What if a Christian still desires to flee? Luther affirms that this may, in fact, be the believer’s faithful response, provided that no emergency exists and that they arrange substitutes who will “take care of the sick in

their stead and nurse them.” Notably, Luther also reminds readers that salvation is independent of these good works. He ultimately tasks them to decide whether to flee or to stay during plagues, trusting that they will arrive at a faithful decision through prayer and meditation on the Scriptures. Participation in aiding the sick arises out of grace, not obligation.

However, Luther himself was not afraid. Despite the exhortations of his university colleagues, he stayed behind to minister to the sick and dying. He urged his readers not to be afraid of “some small boils” in the service of neighbors.



Though God’s children face earthly sufferings, those who proclaim faith in Christ share in a heavenly promise of freedom from illness and suffering. An anonymous Wuhan pastor affirms “[Christ’s] peace is not to remove us from disaster and death, but rather to have peace in the midst of disaster and death, because Christ has already overcome these things.” Both Luther and the Wuhan pastor express the reality of suffering but recognize that death and suffering do not have the final word.

In a climate of fear surrounding the outbreak, we can come back to Luther’s letter for guidance. We have a clear vocational commitment to caring for the sick—whether they have coronavirus, tuberculosis, or influenza. Precautions we need to be taken, yes. But we are reminded by Luther that they are individuals deserving of care all the same.

“When did we see you sick?” ask the righteous in the parable of the sheep and the goats, to which Jesus responds, “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Matt. 25:39–40). If and when the coronavirus encroaches upon our communities, how will we faithfully respond?

Adapted from Christianity Today January 30, 2020 “Is It Faithful to Flee an Epidemic? What Martin Luther Teaches Us About Coronavirus” by Emmy Yang.

Church Financial Update	
Needed to Date:	\$7,955.11
Received to Date:	\$8,602.90

St. Valentine, the Real Story



The story of the man behind the holiday—St. Valentine’s Day is faith-inspiring. He was a Priest at a time when the Emperor Claudias persecuted the church. Claudias issued an edict that prohibited the marriage of young people. This was based on the hypothesis that unmarried soldiers fought better than married soldiers, because married soldiers might be afraid of what might happen to them or their wives or families if they died.

But obviously the church thought that marriage was very sacred between one man and one woman for their life and that it was to be encouraged. The Christian church took a decided stand against the edict. Valentine secretly married couples. Valentine was eventually caught, imprisoned, and tortured for performing forbidden marriage ceremonies.

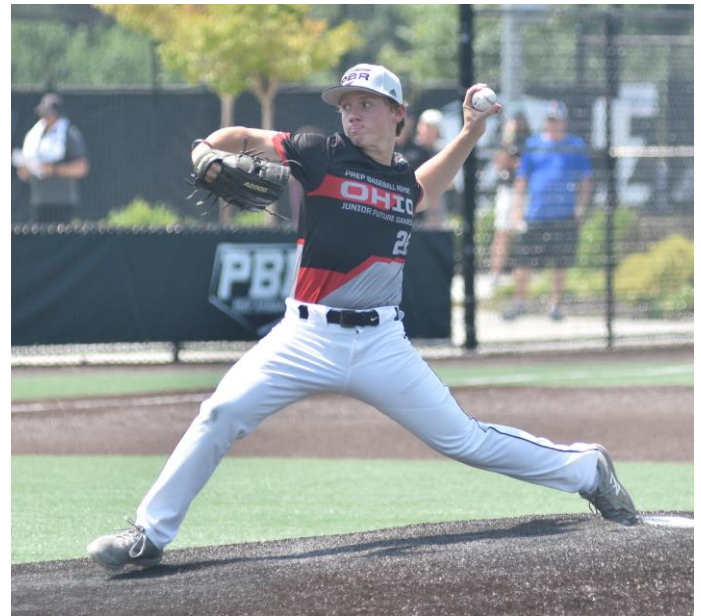
In the year 269 AD, Valentine was sentenced to an execution because of his stand for Christian marriage. The story goes that the last words he wrote were in a note to a couple he married inspired today's romantic letters by signing it, "from your Valentine."

There comes a time where you have to lay your life upon the line for what you believe with your Christian faith. And, with the power of the Holy Spirit, we can do that—even to the point of death.

Valentine has come to be known as the patron saint of lovers. If you ponder it, human love and sexuality is wonderful, and it is a blessed gift from God. But we are to live under the shadow of the cross to truly show Christ’s love, submission, and respect to each other. That’s what a true Valentine means.

Adapted from “St. Valentine, the Real Story,” David Kithcart, CBN.com

Salem News



Landon Price has accepted a college baseball offer from the Ohio State University. He is currently a sophomore at Lincolnview High School. Kentucky, Purdue and Ball State along with state schools Bowling Green, Miami, Ohio U, Xavier, Cincinnati and Wright State were others that had shown interest in the 24th-ranked sophomore in the state. “Ohio State was the top school on my list,” Price confirmed. “Once they offered, I thought why wait any longer when this is where I want to be. It was a deal breaker.” Full [Article](#)

2020 Gymanfa Ganu

Please set the date on your calendar for our annual Gymanfa Ganu on Sept 6th, 2020. We are excited to announce that our Director this year, **Kevin Fancher**, who grew up coming to our Gymanfa at Salem.

Currently, Kevin is a music teacher, class coordinator, and session musician at Vaughan Music Studios in Upper Arlington, OH (a suburb of Columbus). He previously taught music, directed choirs, bands, and more at schools in Cleveland, OH and New York City.

He has been attending the Gymanfa in Venedocia since he was 1 year old. His grandparents were married at Salem Presbyterian Church (Bob Bates and Jane Letitia Morris). Kevin has sung for special music at the Gymanfa three times. Once as a vocal soloist, he sang 3 Welsh folk songs in Welsh and twice as part of a quartet/quintet with his dad, brother, and cousin.

We are looking forward to having Kevin as our 2020 Director.

Salem Images



January 5 and 12th - Becky Reichard, one of our interim organists.



January 12 – Brooke Coil's baby shower



January 18 – Seven-gun salute for Robert Louth Sr. "Pouch"



January 19 – Installation of Session Officers Elizabeth Adkins and Denise Pugh



January 26 – Sandy's blanket tent Time for Children skit



January 26 – Adult Sunday School TED Talk on "The Science Delusion"

IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

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

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

Serving our Country

Cory McCollow

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

Micah Linger

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

Phoebe Eutsler (Army)

Away at College

Evan Pugh – Aquinas University, Grand Rapids

Andrew Emery – University of Cincinnati

Christina Emery – University of Cincinnati

Condolences

Condolences to the families of **Larry Poling**,
Dorothea Plikerd, and **Bob Louth, Sr.**

Birthdays

1 John Lloyd	1 Ashley McClure
4 Andrew Emery	4 Jerry Foust
12 Madison Pugh	15 Ryan Fair
16 Jeff Lloyd	16 Scott Lloyd
18 Dalton Ellerbrock	18 Marilyn Foust
19 Corey Hobbs	21 Paul Price
24 Tim Price	25 Bill McGee
27 KevinFair	28 Jean Owens

Anniversaries

15 Brian & April Ellerbrock 15 John C. & Anne Morris

Prayer Concerns

Connie Bassett (breast cancer)

Kyle Baxter (brain cancer)

Warren (Punkin) Burnett

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 (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 Kiesza (leg operation)

Nancy Lautzenheiser (colon cancer)

Linda Lissey (cancer)

Bob Louth, Jr (prostate health)

LuAnn (family issues)

Carol Matthews (Lou Gehrig's disease)

Marian Morris

Joan Poling

Terry Profit (chemotherapy)

Mallory Rentz (blood clot in brain)

Marjorie Rhodes

Derek Sellers (Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy)

Julie Sheets (lung cancer)

Sherry Siler (cancer)

Bruce Taylor (had a liver transplant)

Martha Jean Evans Vasquez

Natalie Wilkins (failing health)

Noah Wyatt (son of Stuart Wyatt)



February 2020

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:30 am Speaker-Emmanuel Yeboah-Mantey -canned goods 10:45 am Sunday School	3	4 7pm Women's Bible Study	5	6	7	8
9 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School 11:30 am Session Meeting 5:00 pm Trustee Meeting	10	11 7pm Women's Bible Study	12	13	14	15
16 9:30 am Worship with guest Speaker Kevin Clancy No Sunday School	17	18 7pm Women's Bible Study	19	20	21	22
23 9:30 am Worship –Communion 10:45 am Sunday School	24	25 7pm Women's Bible Study	26 6 pm Ash Wed. Meal by Pugh Family 7 pm Service	27	28	29

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Organist
February 2	Gwenda Blackmore	TBD	Dave VanTilburg
February 9	Mark & Missy Zielke	TBD	Becky Reichard
February 16	Toby & Elizabeth Adkins	TBD	Connie O'Neil
February 23	Dave & Carla Breese	TBD	Dave VanTilburg
Ushers	Jeff & Kelly Lloyd	Greeter:	Kim Coil

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



January 12 - Bev Glander, Brooke Coil, and Kim Coil at Brooke' baby shower

Sounds of Salem Newsletter

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www.facebook.com/salemchurchvenedocia

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Secretary's cell: 419-303-2032

Rev. Thomas Emery's cell: 419-863-9131

Pastor's Email: PastorTomEmery@live.com

February 2020 REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY YEAR A	
4th Sunday after Epiphany – February 2	
Micah 6:1-8	Psalm 15
Cor. 1:18-31	Matt. 5:1-12
5th Sunday after Epiphany – February 9	
Isa. 58:1-12	Psalm 112:1-10
1 Cor. 2:1-16	Matt. 5:13-20
6th Sunday after Epiphany – February 16	
Deut. 30:15-20	Psalm 119:1-8
1 Cor. 3:1-9	Matt. 5:21-37
Transfiguration of the Lord – February 23	
Exod. 24:12-18	Psalm 2 or 99
2 Peter 1:16-21	Matt. 17:1-9