

SOUNDS OF SALEM

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

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PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

*In the same way, let your good deeds **shine** out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father (Matthew 5:16).*

This is a scripture that should convict all of us about our hypocrisy. I remember working as a Financial Planner and performing visits as I was working my way through undergrad school. I was not a Christian yet, but I was observing things to see if this Christian “thing” was real. I wanted to find “real Christians” to make up my mind about the church being worthwhile. I was tired of being disappointed by Christians that were no different from the world. I have to say that the world is watching, and I was taking note of the difference of Christian and non-Christian households that I would visit.

I was taught a sales technique for selling life insurance. Usually, when I talked with the father of the house and I presented a plan that “If the husband would die, who would take care of the family?” The non-Christian husband would usually say, “I don’t want to pay for her to marry someone else and to spend the money with him together.”

My reply that my training instructed me was, “Do you want her to have to marry someone because she has to support her kids? After a short pause usually came the reply, “Where do I sign?”

I noticed that the truly Christian families just assumed that the family needed to be taken care of for their well-being. There was love there. There was no need to explain things. There was already a care for the family’s future wellbeing. There was true love and caring for their families.

Family well-being was just one of the ways that the Christians were “real.” How about in the church, do you pray for others, give generously, and truly love others and God with your whole heart? We were purchased with a price by God with the blood of Christ. We are called to glorify God.

As we begin Lent, now is good time for self-examination and to make self-improvements if our walk doesn’t match our talk.

Pastor Tom Emery



St. David's Day

A land of rugged mountains
A land of finest slate
The sound of rushing rivers
Gives us cause to celebrate.

A land of ancient forests
Green valleys, grazing sheep
Gives the people of St. David
A land they wish to keep

Follow the red dragon flag
In parades led by Welsh bands
Raise voices in the choirs
To salute this lovely land

For here in Wales, or far away
The Welsh remember still
And on St. David's Day with pride
Wear leek or daffodil

By Brenda Williams

Lenten and Lengthened Season of Prayer

“Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;” Hebrews 10:22-23 NASB

As the Lenten season begins, we are challenged to reflect and prepare in prayer for Easter. Even if you do not come from a denominational background that

observes Lent, we want to encourage you to take these 40 days to pray and respond to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Many people choose to “give up” something for Lent. This is not to be equated with a New Year’s resolution that seeks to improve us, even though the action or object that is chosen is often a bad habit or something that is of great value or enjoyment. This is a small reflection from our hearts as we pause and ponder all that Jesus lavishly gave and sacrificed for us. Of course, there is nothing that we can sacrifice that could ever come close to the incredible sacrifice Jesus made for us, but it is a significant practice to express humility and gratefulness.



You may have already decided how you will observe the Lenten season or have your own traditions leading up to Easter, but we want to urge you to prepare through prayer. Over the next forty days we want to encourage you to increase and strengthen your prayer time to forty minutes each day.

Some of you are thinking, “No problem, I already pray more than forty minutes every day,” while others of you are thinking, “I have no idea how I am going to do this.”

There are several ways for you to observe this season; you can choose to begin by praying for two minutes on the first day and add two minutes each day until you get to forty minutes and then sustain that practice. In twenty days, you will be praying for forty minutes and then sustain this practice for twenty more. If that seems too aggressive you could add one minute each day and end with forty minutes and if you want to increase more quickly you could add or even double your time each day. Of course, the number of minutes is not as important as the preparation and condition of

the heart. It is our hope that you draw nearer and deeper to the Lord leading up to, through and beyond Easter.

If you have decided to give up something for Lent, be encouraged in prayer to persevere. All of us can be strengthened for the challenges and opportunities of each day as we pray. Scripture will be a key part of our prayer time each day, and we encourage you to let the Spirit lead you and for you to linger in His presence and listen as you pray. Or if you feel you have run out of things to say, meditate on:

1 John 4:16, “We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.”

Adapted from a 2/27/2020 letter from Kathy Branzell of the National Day of Prayer Task Force

The Book of Ephesians 1:3-6

We are chosen by the Almighty Father. In love, God has chosen us for adoption to be holy, to be His sons and daughters. His people are a part of the family of God. What a privilege to know God as Father! Paul writes to the people of Ephesus and shares with them this idea of adoption:

³ All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ. ⁴ Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. ⁵ God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. ⁶ So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son (NLT).

What does it mean to be adopted? It means to have all the rights and privileges that belong to the Father's children. As God's children, we can call Him "Abba" or "Daddy" which is what Jesus cried out in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:36). Not only is God our Father, but we are also now brothers and sisters with other Christians. The church is a family of adopted brothers and sisters.

When were we adopted? *"before He made the world"* (v.4). If we are God's children, then we are here on purpose. It is part of God's great plan.

How are we adopted? "through Jesus Christ". Only in Christ do we receive blessings from adoption. We have been caught up in the love the Father has for the Son.

Why did He adopt us? Because "it gave Him great pleasure (v.5). We don't have all the answers, we just know it pleased Him, and it was His will. He was delighted to adopt us, and verse 6 says He did it for His "glorious grace". Adoption magnifies the greatness of God the Father.

Lest we should boast, we were not chosen for anything good in us. God accepts us because He chose to put us in union with Christ. Being chosen should humble us. The proper response for God's having chosen us for salvation is awe, worship and obedience to God. Being adopted into the family of God should not inflate anyone's pride. It should humble everyone.

God's purpose of making us "holy" and making us His adopted children is that we have been chosen for a mission. God's children will take on the family business, carrying out God's mission. We will imitate God as beloved children (5:1). Adoption is a privilege, but it also contains the responsibility of making Christ known to all the world in word and deed.

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

The Godly Story of St. Patrick



The upcoming viewing in local theaters of the movie, "I am Patrick," is set for March 16 and 17. Here is a trailer [link](#) to review the film. Here is where tickets can be found: [Tickets](#).

Before all the festivities focused on shamrocks and leprechauns and good luck wishes, there was truly something to celebrate: a man willing to stand in the gap for Jesus Christ. We all know him as Saint Patrick.

It was an act of defiance that changed the course of a nation. Patrick lit a fire in pagan 5th century Ireland and Wales, ushering Christianity into the countryside. Who was this man who became the patron saint of Ireland?

Ireland was a beautiful island shrouded in terrible darkness. Warlords and druids ruled the land. But across the sea in Wales and England, a teenager was poised to bring this nation to God.

"Patrick was born into a Christian family," says Philip Freeman, author of *St. Patrick of Ireland*. "His father was a deacon; his grandfather a priest. But Patrick says that from an early age, he didn't have any serious interest in religion and that he was practically an atheist when he was a teenager."

Around 400 A.D., Patrick was abducted from his village and thrown onto a slave ship headed for Ireland.

"He saw that event as God chastising him, first of all," says Rev. Sean Brady. "That was the first view. He says we deserved what we got. He was carried at 16 years of age over to this foreign land." Patrick was sold to a chieftain named Milchu. He spent six years tending his master's flocks on the slopes of the Slemish Mountain. Patrick recounts his time as a slave in his memoir entitled *The Confession*.

"He says, 'I prayed a hundred times in the day and almost as many at night.'" "Through that experience of prayer and trial, he came to know another God -- God the Father, who was his protector. He came to know Jesus Christ in those sufferings, and he came to be united with Christ and he came to identify with Christ, and then of course, also the Holy Spirit."

One night during a time of prayer and fasting, Patrick wrote: "I heard in my sleep a voice saying to me: 'It is well that you fast. Soon you will go to your own country.' And again, after a short while, I heard a voice saying to me: 'See, your ship is ready.' "

Patrick escaped and traveled 200 miles cross country to the west coast. He found a ship ready to sail, but he was refused passage. After a desperate prayer, he was allowed aboard.

Patrick eventually returned to his home and family. His experience of God's provision solidified his faith. He

began to study for the ministry. Freeman says, "One night, he had a dream. There was a man who came from Ireland with a whole bunch of letters. And he opened one of the letters and it said, 'The Voice of the Irish.' And then he heard a voice coming out of this letter that said, 'Holy boy, please return to us. We need you.'"

Patrick struggled in his soul. Could he return to Ireland and minister to the same people who had enslaved him? Once again, he turned to God in prayer. He received the answer in a dream.

"He talks about how he, in this dream, is trying to pray and yet he can't," says Freeman. "So, he hears a voice coming from inside of him which he realizes is the voice of God praying for him."

Patrick knew he had to go and convince his church that he was called to be a missionary to Ireland. He set sail in a small ship.

Patrick landed at the mouth of the Slaney River. When Patrick set foot on this shore, a new era dawned on this island. Ireland was an Ireland of tribalism, an Ireland of war, an Ireland of suspicion, an Ireland of violence and death. Here he came as a virtual stranger to this country of warring factions.

"They worshipped multiple gods of the sky and the earth and the water," says Freeman. "And so that was his first challenge: to convince the Irish that there was only one God and that his God really did love them."

Patrick came face to face with the chieftains and their druid priests. The showdown came on the morning of his first Easter in Ireland.

This monastery on the hill of Slane is where Patrick -- in direct defiance of the high king of Tara -- lit a forbidden fire. Notes Rev. Brady, "He was summoned before the king, and he explained that he wasn't a threat, because he was bringing the new light, the light of Christ, the Savior of the world, the Light of the world." "The first light of Easter day was dawning. Patrick brought the hope of Easter day to Ireland," says Rev. Eames.

The weather can be absolutely brutal in Ireland. But just imagine how it must've been for Patrick in the 5th century as he trekked across the countryside bringing the Gospel to the pagan Celts. "People sometimes made fun of him because he said that God often gave him a message there was danger ahead," says Freeman. "But, he said, 'Laugh at me if you will. This is something that has protected me in Ireland.'"

Listen to Patrick's poem of faith and trust in God, "The Breastplate:"

"Christ be within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ inquired, Christ in danger, Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger."

Myths and legends have grown up around this hero of Ireland. It is sometimes difficult to describe the triune aspect of God. So, according to the story, to better illustrate the central teaching of the trinity, Patrick took a shamrock and pointed out the three leaves on it. Interestingly, it is only in Ireland that you find this shamrock. Therefore, the people believed.

Patrick's ministry lasted 29 years. He baptized over 120,000 Irishmen and planted 300 churches. "What Patrick did was really lay the groundwork for Christianity," says Freeman.

Rev. Sean Brady concludes, "He was a man who came to face and help his former enemies who had enslaved him. He came back to help them and to do them a great favor -- the greatest favor he possibly could."

Rev. Earnes concurs, "I honestly feel that what Patrick taught Ireland was that there is a cost to discipleship, but it's a cost worth paying. And I believe, to bring this right up to date, the church of St. Patrick must be constantly saying to people, 'Discipleship demands of you, but it's a cost that Christ will help you to pay.'"

Adapted from CBN. Patricius: The True Story of St. Patrick by David Kithcart

Upcoming Events

Soup & Sandwich Supper at the Landeck St. John the Baptist Church Basement on March 8th from 3:30 pm to 7:00 pm. Featured items are Venedocia sausage and homemade ice cream along with soups and sandwiches.

The **Senior Luncheon** begins again **March 25 at noon** at the Lions Club building. Lunch will be served followed by friendly Bingo and exchanges of gifts. Come and make friends.

Church Financial Update

Needed to Date:	\$15,910.23
Received to Date:	\$21,101.00

Evan Pugh

[Evan Pugh](#) was awarded WHAC Field Athlete of the Week accolades by the league office on Monday. It is the first time this season that he has won the award.



Pugh competed on Friday, Jan. 31 at the AQ Quad Meet in both the weight throw and the shot put in the first home competition for the team this year.

He placed first in the weight throw with a throw of 15.98 meters (52' 5"). Pugh also came in second place in the shot put with a mark of 15.15 meters (49' 8.5").



February 18 - Congratulations to Brooke Coil and Jarrod Rigdon for the birth of Rayna Sue Rigdon on February 18th. She weighed 5 lbs, 15 oz and is 19 inches long. Featured here are four family generations.

Sights at Salem



February 2 guest speaker, Emmanuel Yeboah-Mantey, and his follow-up Adult Sunday School class discussion of Ghana, Africa and the African mission field.



February 25 Womens Bible Study with guest speaker, Pastor Tom, speaking on Election of Believers in Christ.



February 26 Ash Wednesday Service – During snow storm.

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

Birthdays

2 Marilyn Strickler

11 Todd Morris

14 Elijah Martz

19 Pamela Beamer

20 Brian Owens

23 Josh Hoehn

8 John Morris

14 Larry Caffro

16 Pastor Tom Emery

20 Johnathon Morris

22 Toby Adkins

28 Ron Richards

Condolences

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)

Steve Gullickson (cancer)

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)

Tom Menker (cancer)

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)

March 2020



Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30 Worship 10:45 St David's Day reception	2	3 7pm Women's Bible Study	4	5	6	7
8 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 5:00 Trustee Meeting 3:30-7:00 pm Soup & Sandwich in Landeck Church Basement	9	10 7pm Women's Bible Study	11	12	13	14
15 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Session Meeting	16	17 7pm Women's Bible Study	18	19	20	21
22 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School	23	24 7pm Women's Bible Study	25 Noon-Senior Luncheon	26	27	28
29 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School	30	31 7pm Women's Bible Study				

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Organist
March 1	Bob & Kathy McCollow	TBD	Becky Reichard
March 8	Bob & Denise Pugh	Jen Pugh	Connie O'Neil
March 15	Jeff & Kelly Lloyd	Jen Pugh	Connie O'Neil
March 22	Bill & Ruth Evans	Jen Pugh	Dave VanTilburg
March 29	Eric & Jenny Pugh	Lisa Lloyd	Seth Baker
Ushers	Rex & Lisa Lloyd	Greeter:	Denise Pugh

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



February 23 Sunday School crafts

Sounds of Salem Newsletter

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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

**March 2020
REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY
YEAR B**

1st Sunday in Lent – March 1

Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-7 Psalm 32
Rom. 5:12-19 Matt. 4:1-11

2nd Sunday in Lent – March 8

Gen. 12:1-4a Psalm 121
Rom. 4:1-5, 13-17 John 3:1-17

3rd Sunday in Lent – March 15

Exod. 17:1-7 Psalm 95
Rom. 5:1-11 John 4:5-42

4th Sunday in Lent – March 22

1 Sam. 16:1-13 Psalm 23
Eph. 5:8-14 John 9:1-41

5th Sunday in Lent – March 29

Ezek. 37:1-14 Psalm 130
Rom. 8:6-11 John 11:1-45
