

SOUNDS OF SALEM

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

Volume 27 Issue 9

September 2025

Pastoral Thoughts

"Everyone who drinks the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life" (John 4:13-14).

When the woman at the Samaritan well asked Jesus for some of this abundant living water, He didn't just give her a cup and say: "Here, have some."

Instead, He told the woman about her unfulfilled life. He asked her to examine her life, including how she was living it and how satisfied she was. The disappointing "cracks" in her life meant her life didn't hold water as she wanted or needed it. How about you? Are you satisfied with the outcome of your life?

We believed that **money** was all we needed, but when the money ran out, we found out that it was a broken cistern, which cannot hold water.

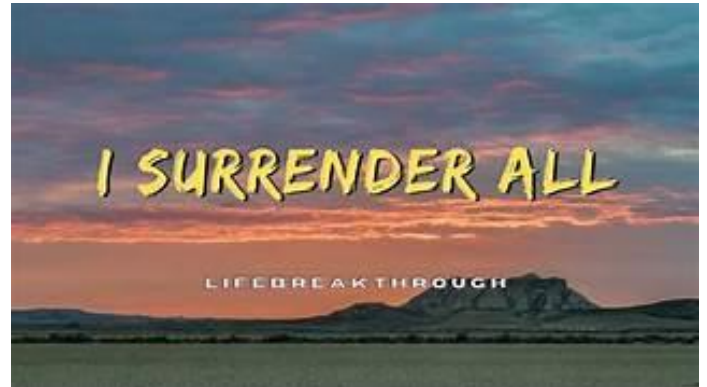
We believed that the **government** would take care of us, but when the government betrayed us, we discovered that sometimes the government is a broken cistern, unable to hold water.

We believed in **friends**, but they betrayed us; we believed in **family**, but they deserted us; we believed in **ourselves**, but we could not deliver ourselves. We sought fulfillment in all the **wrong places** by wandering around pursuing the addictions of ungodly relationships, hobbies, sports, food, alcohol, drugs, and gambling. Unfulfilled, we discovered that we have only broken cisterns that cannot hold water. While we pursued these things, we had turned our backs on the real spring of living water.

You may ask: What is the spring of living water?

A spring of living water is mentioned in Psalm 1:3, where David describes the righteous man. He said, **"And he shall be like a tree, planted by the rivers of water."** In a mostly desert nation, this illustration was most appealing.

Likewise, the water that Jesus gives us will totally fulfill us. In John 4:13-14, Jesus was at a well and



He gave an answer about the water to the woman of Samaria. Jesus said, **"... the water that I give will become a spring of water welling up to eternal life."**

This world will never satisfy us. The logical implication is "Why not surrender your life to Jesus Christ for the total fulfillment that He offers us?"

We begin by asking forgiveness for our sins through the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ, who paid the penalty for our wrongs before God. Our slate of sins will be wiped clean, and we can enjoy the living water offered to us.

Why not surrender all our being to Jesus Christ with such a proposal of forgiveness provided to us!

Pastor Tom Emery

I Surrender All

All to Jesus I surrender,
All to him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust him,
In his presence daily live.

Refrain:

I surrender all,
I surrender all,
All to thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.

All to Jesus I surrender,
Humbly at his feet I bow,

Worldly pleasures all forsaken,
Take me, Jesus, take me now.

Refrain:

All to Jesus I surrender;
Make me, Savior, wholly thine;
Let me feel the Holy Spirit,
Truly know that thou art mine.

Refrain:

All to Jesus I surrender,
Lord, I give myself to thee,
Fill me with thy love and power,
Let thy blessing fall on me

By Judson W. Van DeVenter (1855–1939). [YouTube Link](#)

How Do We Find Water When We Have a Dry Well?

I would suggest three things: 1) **discipleship**, 2) **stewardship**, and 3) **fellowship of the Spirit**.

Cracks in our reservoirs occur over time due to erosion. You must continue **discipleship**: by reading the Word of God, doing the work, and changing the world by witnessing Christ to others to avoid cracks in your faith.

It happens over time. No one becomes dry overnight. Over time, we stop praying, stop reflecting, and become more preoccupied with self-seeking. Countless people stray away like sheep or carelessly roll away like a coin. Values, integrity, perspective, and souls are rarely lost overnight.

In discipleship, you must follow the Lord. That is what discipleship means. And when you follow Him, you can refill the water when the well runs dry.

Stewardship is an indication of what priorities are essential. Somewhere along the line, amid politics and business, we lose sight of what is truly important. God said, *"I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved Me. Why have you strayed so far?"*

Think about it, isn't it strange that at a funeral we never talk about how much money a person had? It seemed so inconsequential at that time. At that tender moment, the only thing that matters is how a person lived their life. That is what is important to God.

You must continually have the **fellowship of the Holy Spirit to guide you**. "How have things come to this?" asked the prophet Jeremiah when confronting the Jews



walking away from the worship of Jehovah God. With their choices, attitudes, and behavior, they became their own worst enemy. All of their toiling to develop the nation turned to naught when they turned their backs on God.

I saw a man who was getting ready to jog. He was doing some stretching exercises and some warm-ups and then began his run. When he had finished his run, I saw him getting in his car. Huffing and perspiring, he got in and quickly lit up a vaping cigarette.

Vigorously exercising the heart and lungs, then sitting down to a vaping cigarette, why?

It is so inconsistent. Israel praised God in worship yet lived a life void of God. Fellowship means hearing the Word of God and obeying it. And when you are in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, you have located the living water. You have dug the well, and now it's time to dip the bucket deep down, into the spirit, deep down below the surface. And when your bucket comes up, there will be water in the bucket; your well is not dry.

God says, ***"I planted you a choice vine. How have you become a wild vine?"*** It reminds us that life's little daily decisions can have consequences that add up.

The story hopes that God, the supreme vinedresser, will not be angry forever. God calls believers to return:

"Return, faithless Israel, declares the Lord, I will frown on you no longer, for I am merciful, declares the Lord, I will not be angry forever." Only acknowledge one thing, God says, confess your guilt.

POINT ONE – *Cracks occur in belief over time.* You must continue discipleship: by reading the Word of God, doing the work, and changing the world.

POINT TWO – *Israel had the wrong priorities.* Stewardship is an indication of what priorities are important.

Everything we have is God's to be used in building His kingdom.

POINT THREE – *Israel forgot its ideals.* You must continually have the fellowship of the Holy Spirit to guide you.

Let this prayer soak our souls:

In Jeremiah 1:5 ("NLT"), You, O Lord, told us, *"I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born, I set you apart and appointed you as My prophet to the nations."*

Almighty God, before our births, You have called out men and women to be Your faithful servants.

We believe You have now called us to join that great company that seeks to follow You.

Grant unto us today and always a clear vision of Your call and strengthen us to fulfill the ministry that You assigned to us. We pray that, from this day forward, our lives may be consecrated to You, and that You would use us to fulfill Your will for our lives, for Your greater praise and glory.

Please give us the living water that we need so greatly!

We pray in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Getting Right with God's Word, the Bible

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. - Hebrews 4:12

It's easy to go through seasons where Bible reading becomes routine or even a struggle. Life's distractions, spiritual fatigue, or simply not feeling "inspired" can cause us to lose our passion for the Word. But God's Word isn't meant to be just another item on our to-do list — it's living, active, and able to breathe fresh life into our weary souls.

Sometimes what we need most is simply to ask God to rekindle our desire: *"Open my eyes, that I may behold*

wondrous things out of your law" (Psalm 119:18). A simple, sincere prayer can reignite the spark.

Renewing your excitement often begins with a shift in perspective. Instead of approaching the Bible as a textbook, approach it as a letter from your Father — full of wisdom, correction, love, and personal guidance.

Ask questions, take notes, and pause to reflect. Sometimes, switching up your method — whether it's trying a new translation, listening to audio scripture, or joining a study group — can bring new depth and joy. As you engage more intentionally, you'll start to recognize God's voice more clearly and see how relevant His truth is to your everyday life.

Ultimately, the goal of Bible study is not information but transformation. The more time you spend in God's Word, the more you'll find yourself changed — not by obligation, but by delight. Let that truth encourage you today: the Bible is not a burden, but a gift, waiting to be unwrapped daily with fresh wonder. Are you willing to let God renew your heart for His Word today?

Let's Pray:

Father, I come to You honestly — sometimes my heart feels distant, and my excitement for Your Word fades beneath the weight of life's distractions. But I know Your Word is living and powerful, and I long for that closeness again. Please rekindle a deep passion within me to seek You through Scripture. Open my eyes to see the beauty, truth, and life in every page. Stir my spirit with fresh hunger to know You more and to treasure Your voice above all else.

Lord, forgive me for the times I've treated Your Word casually or out of routine. Help me approach it with awe and expectation, knowing that each time I open my Bible, You are ready to speak. Let my heart burn with joy and wonder as I encounter You in new ways. Teach me to delight in Your truth and to let it transform me daily. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Adapted from: "A Prayer for Renewed Excitement to Study the Word" - Your Daily Prayer, Crosswalk.com, Joe Navarro

Delicious Welsh Cakes

Directions

1. In a large bowl, whisk flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and baking soda. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add milk and egg; stir just until moistened. Fold in currants.
2. Pat or roll dough to 1/4-in. thickness; cut with a floured 2-in. biscuit cutter. Preheat griddle over

medium heat. In batches, place cakes on griddle; cook until tops puff and bottoms are golden brown, 1-2 minutes. Turn; cook until second side is golden brown. Cool on wire racks.



Created by the Taste of Home editorial board

Ingredients

- 3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup cold butter, cubed
- 3/4 cup 2% milk
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1-1/4 cups dried currants or raisins

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 \$82,106.37

Received to Date \$81,228.86

Gymanfa Ganu Salem Music Update

We completed the Gymanfa again this August 31st. Directing us this year was Truman Littler, and at the organ was Connie O'Neill.

We welcomed the Chancel Choir from the First Presbyterian Church of Van Wert, under the direction of Greg Pysh who performed two special

numbers. One of the pieces was written by Haydn Morgan in 1958, who had his roots in Venedocia and went on to compose several pieces during his accomplished music career. The song he composed for a dedication at Van Wert Presbyterian church was "Blessed Are They". The choir also performed "O Come To The Savior" by Eric Whitacre. We appreciate their presentation and value all their efforts to help us share our Welsh Heritage through music. We look forward to our next Gymanfa Ganu.

Meanwhile, do not forget that on September 14th, we will have a "Blessing of the Harvest / Drive Your Tractor to Church" event as well as a shared potluck after the service that day!

Sights of Salem



Organist Connie O'Neill and Conductor Truman Littler in discussions



Choir practicing before the Gymanfa



Music Committee
Spokesperson, Jan Jones



Chancel Choir from the First Presbyterian Church of Van Wert



Conductor, Truman Littler



Song sections for singing



Gymanfa gathering

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

Ellen Freisner

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

Marjorie Eutsler

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

Away at College

Landon Price. (at Ohio University)

152 Mill St, Apt. 102, Athens, Ohio 45701

Isaiah Pugh (at the University of Toledo)

2632 Greenway Street
Toledo, OH 43607

Condolences to the family Marjorie Eutsler

Serving our Country

Cory McCollow

(U.S. Coast Guard)
7225 Altura Place
Oakland, CA 94605

Madison Pugh

64 Main St
Floor 3
Stonington, CT 06378

Dillon Ellerbrock (Marines)

Grandson of Gloria Leiter

Corbin Evans (Marines)

Grandson of Bill & Ruth
Evans

Lloyd (Butch) Eutsler

(National Guard)
14975 Van Wert-Mercer
Co. Line Road
Venedocia, OH 45894

Birthdays

1 Elizabeth Adkins	1 Kim Ebel
1 Katie Young	3 Pete McCollow
4 Claudia LeValley	4 Katie McClure
11 Landon Price	12 Jackson Dunlap
15 Evana Yeboah-Manley	16 Terry Lloyd
18 Jayne Morris	18 Morgan McConnell
18 Tyler McConnell	19 Gianna Richards
20 Megan Jones	23 April Ellerbrock
25 Darlene Jones	26 Cindy Barnes
27 Brian Ellerbrock	27 Lisa Lloyd
29 Stephanie Beck	29 Steve Richards
30 Jack Blackmore	

Anniversaries

11 Jeremy & Samantha Morris
15 Bob & Denise Pugh
28 Eric & Jen Pugh

Prayer Concerns

Allen Breece
Tom Burnett (tractor accident)
Bill Culver
Pastor Tom Emery (Long Covid recovery)
Millie Fletcher
Ellen Friesner
Shana Fryer
Stephanie Gamble (eye issues)
Charlie Good (prostrate cancer)

Carla Hillabrand (Medical issues)
Elizabaeth Holscher
Jim Lloyd (at Van Wert Manor)
Pete McCollow
Mary Lou Morgan (Eleanor's daughter)
David Morris (Zeb)
Steve Muhlenkamp (cancer)
Ann Rees (at Hearth & Home)
Bianca Richards (Leukemia)
The area Nursing Homes and their residents

September 2025

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at the Global Methodist Church at Crawford and Walnut Streets.	3	4 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Meeting at the Living Truth Ministries 1180 S Washington St.	5	6
7 9:30 AM Worship with guest Pastor Harry Tolhurst	8	9 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at the Global Methodist Church at Crawford and Walnut Streets. 7:00 PM Women's Bible study	10	11 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Meeting at the Living Truth Ministries 1180 S Washington St.	12	13
14 9:30 AM Worship Drive your Tractor to Church Potluck lunch to follow the blessing of the tractors ? 10:45 AM Trustee Meeting	15	16 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at the Global Methodist Church at Crawford and Walnut Streets. 7:00 PM Women's Bible study	17	18 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Meeting at the Living Truth Ministries 1180 S Washington St.	19	20
21 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 AM Session Meeting	22	23 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at the Global Methodist Church at Crawford and Walnut Streets. 7:00 PM Women's Bible study	24 Senior Luncheon at noon	25 Noon - Van Wert County Prayer Meeting at the Living Truth Ministries 1180 S Washington St.	26	27
28 9:30 AM Worship	29	30 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at the Global Methodist Church 7:00 PM Women's Bible study				

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Organist
Sep 7	Mark & Missy Zielke		Ron Miller
Sep 14	Toby & Elizabeth Adkins	Jeremy & Samantha Morris	Cindy Bowsher
Sep 21	Tyler & Morgan McConnell	Jeremy & Samantha Morris	Jake Wilder
Sep 28	Kevin & Kristen Price	Jeremy & Samantha Morris	Dave VanTilburg
		Greeter:	Marilyn Foust

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



Sabelle Yeboah-Mantey, born July 26,
 granddaughter to Carol and Pastor Tom Emery

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

September 2025 REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY YEAR C

13th Sunday after Pentecost – Sep 7

Duet. 30:15-20	Psalm 1
Philem. 1:1-21	Luke 14:25-33

14th Sunday after Pentecost – Sep 14

Es. 32:7-14	Psalm 51:1-10
1 Tim. 1:12-17	Luke 15:1-10

15th Sunday after Pentecost – Sep 21

Amos 8:4-7	Psalm 113
1 Tim. 2:1-7	Luke 16:1-13

16th Sunday after Pentecost – Sep 28

Amos 6:1a ,4-7	Psalm 146
1 Tim. 6:6-19	Luke 16:19-31