



To the church of God as found at Marion Salem Church, called to be saints together with those in every place who call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ: You are miracles of God's grace and mercy!

The month of September brings the return to school, cool fall temperatures and somewhat a return to normalcy when it comes to routines (though as I write this during the last week of August, school has started most places, today feels like crisp Fall weather, and just what is normal!?). All kidding aside, September has long been considered the return to weekly routine for families after the summer break. For the

last 16 years, congregations around the country and now around the world, have utilized the 3rd Sunday of September as Back to Church Sunday. In the US, the first Sunday of September is often Labor Day weekend - an awful day to kickstart or prepare for something. The idea of using the third Sunday is to utilize the second Sunday as a preparation weekend.

When it comes to Back to Church Sunday there are two target audiences. Let's talk about the first set of people. These are the family and friends of Marion Salem Church - the members and regular attenders whose attendance might have fallen off a little during the summer months. When we celebrate Back to Church Sunday, part of our intent is to invite those back to worship who have recently fallen out of the habit. Part of our vows of membership remind us that all members are responsible for caring for one another. Before someone is baptized we say: "We will surround these persons with a community of love and forgiveness, that they may grow in their trust of God, and be found faithful in their service to others. We will pray for them, that they may be true disciples who walk in the way that leads to life." And when someone becomes a member, the pastor charges the congregation with: "Do all in your power to increase their faith, confirm their hope, and perfect them in love." Brothers and sisters in Christ, no one in this congregation should be absent of tangible contact with the Body of Christ. We profess to care for one another, and part of that is checking in when people have missed worship. Sending them an invitation. They used to say that Back to Church Sunday was the "no excuse needed" weekend to come back for worship. Honestly, any weekend is good for that. Methodists have long said we will "watch over one another in love." The book of Hebrews (3:12-14) tells us to care for each other like this.

The second audience for Back to Church Sunday are those who have long fallen away from the Church or never attended at all. These folks are categorized as the unchurched or dechurched. As Christians we are called to become like Christ, the One Who gave of Himself to reach the lost. The more Christ-like we become, the more we should have compassion and invite others to worship Christ. We should be making invitations to worship and meaningful connections to those who need Christ. It has been a growing number of people in the United States over the last several decades. Yet there is good news! We are making headway in reaching the lost. All research surveys are responding that people are more open to hearing about Jesus (71%). There has been a quadruple increase (4% to 16%) in young adults (18-24) attending worship. The trend in attendance has Millennials, yes Millennials, attending at higher rates than Gen-X and Baby Boomers according to Barna. And Millennials are looking for authentic Christian faith more than slick shows. This all means we have a great opportunity to reach those who have never been reached before!

So with Back to Church Sunday coming, I hope you join in making multiple invitations for people to join us at worship. It takes 6 consistent invitations before people come, so keep trying. If they come to Salem, awesome! If your invitation inspires them to attend a faithful congregation anywhere, it is still a joy to celebrate!

Blessings 🙌,



LIFE IS BETTER TOGETHER

BACK TO CHURCH[®]
SUNDAY

COMING SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 21, 2025

Monday Afternoon Bible Study

We will not be meeting on September 1st for Labor Day.

Sept. 8th we will conclude our study from our GMC Bishops: *Lessons in Scriptural Holiness*.

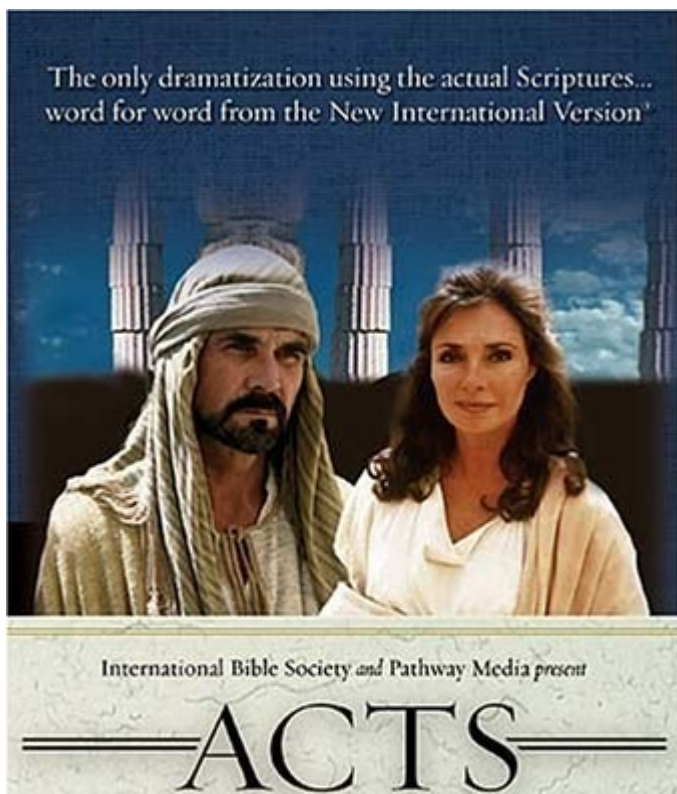
Starting on Mon. Sept. 15th we will enter into the Book of Acts with the second part of the Bible Live! Series. You do not need to have attend the previous Matthew Bible Live! Series to drop into the Acts class. Come and learn about the historical, cultural, and theological background of the first Christians.

9/22: Acts Live!

9/29: no study—Pastor's vacation

10/6: no study—Pastor's vacation

10/13 study resumes



Basic Christian Faith

Wednesdays 7pm

Join Pastor Jason for an engaging time of discussion as we explore basic teachings of Christian Faith. This is a paced study and you can drop in anytime.

September Studies:

3rd: The Natural State of Humanity

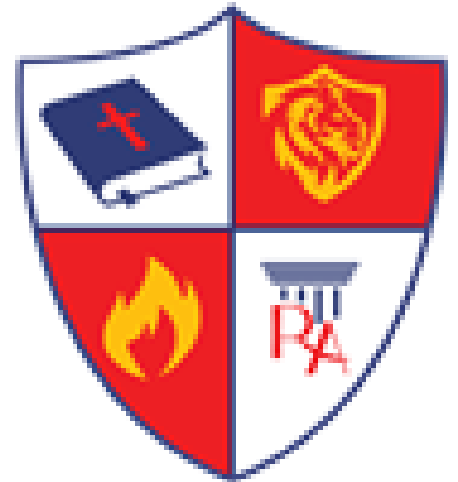
10th: study continues

17th: study continues

24th: study continues

Rhema Academy Update

Rhema Academy staff has been working hard to prepare for the first day of class on Tuesday, September 2. Meet the staff! Stephanie Loomis, Eleanor Maynard and Ellie Nixt with Head Master Brian Sparling (and Keisha Stewart-Slob, not pictured). Our friends at Rhema Academy continue to advertise and seek students enrolling in school year '25-'26. There are parent information packets at the information table in the sanctuary as well as in the gathering space outside the offices. If you or anyone you know is interested in this Christian, classical, and chartered opportunity for education, please check out rhemaacademyk12.education or reach out to Brian Sparling brians@rhemaacademyk12.education



Please show patience and grace as we begin this new endeavor!



Cookies For Kairos



Due: 9/12
in the morning

Same rules as last time.

If someone gave you 30 seconds to describe Salem Church, what would you say?



Wed. Sept. 24th—Noon
Food: Tacos
Please bring salad or dessert to share
Devotion: Would someone volunteer?
Activity: Would someone plan a group activity?



Salem Singers
Choir practice starts Tuesday, Sept. 3rd at 6:15 pm. Meet in the choir room beside the office. All are welcome!

Food Pantry

Hours: Monday 10-noon



Missed a Sunday or really want to catch a replay? Have you been to our Facebook page... it's all there facebook.com/MarionSalemChurch. You don't have to have a Facebook account to watch, it's livestreamed each week and the replays can be found there immediately.

MITES MESSAGE: Anyone interested in sharing with the children during worship for the mites' message should see Pastor Jason. As of 8/27, Sept. 14 & 28 are available.



Salem Strivers

Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. Hebrews 12:14

Strivers do all they can to seek after the Lord. Part of that is sharing Christ with others.

Remember to invite someone to youth!!

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

The youth group is scheduled to start again on Sunday, September 14th. **Ad Council is asking that the Adult Sunday school classes take on a Sunday evening youth meeting.** We are currently looking for volunteers for two Sundays in September, the 21st and 28th. Please reach out to Amy McGuire, Pastor Jason, Charisse Smith or Conni McChesney to secure your date.

Without volunteers, youth group meetings will be postponed.



Tentative Early Fall Schedule:

- 9/7: No Youth—Labor Day Weekend
- 9/14: Youth Group—Upper Room Class
- 9/21: Youth Group—**TBA**
- 9/28: Youth Group—**TBA**
- 10/5: Youth Group—Genesis Class
- 10/12: Church Fall Party (save the date)

Church is hard.

Church is hard.

Church is hard for the person walking through the doors, afraid of judgement.

Church is hard for the pastor's family, under the microscope of an entire body.

Church is hard for the prodigal soul returning home, broken and battered by the world.

Church is hard for the girl who looks like she has it all together, but doesn't.

Church is hard for the couple who fought the entire ride to service.

Church is hard for the single mom, surrounded by couples holding hands, and seemingly perfect families.

Church is hard for the widow and widower with no invitation to lunch after service.

Church is hard for the deacon with an estranged child.

Church is hard for the person singing worship songs, overwhelmed by the weight of the lyrics.

Church is hard for the man insecure in his role as a leader.

Church is hard for the wife who longs to be led by a righteous man.

Church is hard for the nursery volunteer who desperately longs for a baby to love.

Church is hard for the single woman and single man, praying God brings them a mate.

Church is hard for the teenage girl, wearing a scarlet letter, ashamed of her mistakes.

Church is hard for the sinners.

Church is hard for me.

It's hard because on the outside it all looks shiny and perfect. Sunday best in behavior and dress.

However, underneath those layers, you find a body of imperfect people, carnal souls, selfish motives.

But, here is the beauty of church—

Church isn't a building, mentality, or expectation.

Church is a body.

Church is a group of sinners, saved by grace, living in fellowship as saints.

Church is a body of believers bound as brothers and sisters by an eternal love.

Church is a holy ground where sinners stand as equals before the Throne of Grace.

Church is a refuge for broken hearts and a training ground for mighty warriors.

Church is a converging of confrontation and invitation. Where sin is confronted and hearts are invited to seek restoration.

Church is a lesson in faith and trust.

Church is a bearer of burdens and a giver of hope.

Church is a family. A family coming together, setting aside differences, forgetting past mistakes, rejoicing in the smallest of victories.

Church, the body, and the circle of sinners-turned-saints, is where He resides, and if we ask, He is faithful to come.

So even on the hard days at church—

The days when I am at odds with a friend, When I've fought with my husband because we're late once again. When I've walked in bearing burdens heavier than my heart can handle, yet masking the pain with a smile on my face. When I've worn a scarlet letter, under the microscope. When I've longed for a baby to hold, or fought tears as the lyrics were sung. When I've walked back in, afraid and broken, after walking away.

I'll remember, He has never failed to meet me there.

By Jacob Waldron



Praise and Worship Sunday

August 24, 2025

Thank you to all who offered their talents to praise God!!



September 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
	1 Labor Day 	2 Rhema begins	3 Knitting/Craft 1pm Bible study 7 pm	4	5	6	
7 Communion	8 Bible Study 4 pm	9	10 Knitting/Craft 1pm Bible study 7 pm	11 Trustees 6:30 pm	12 Kairos cookies	13	
14	15 Bible Study 4 pm	16	17 Knitting/Craft 1pm Bible study 7 pm	18 AHG 6 pm	Kairos Weekend		
21	22 Bible Study 4 pm Fin/Ad C 6:30 pm	23	24 Sr. Lunch—12 pm Knitting/Craft 1pm Bible study 7 pm	25	26	27	
28	29	30	Sharp Vacation				Pray for



1st Sunday every month in the Family Center at 8:30 AM.

Sept—Genesis Class
Oct —Joy/Ren Class



- Birthdays**
- 9/1 Steve Shamhart
 - 9/3 Charisse Smith
 - 9/14 Lee Saiter
 - 9/15 Cheryl Doezema
Carrie Hutchman
 - 9/18 Kinslee Smith
 - 9/19 Donna Dietsch
 - 9/25 Helen Denton
 - 9/27 Landon Sharp
Layton Sharp
Liam Sharp
 - 9/29 Amy McGuire
 - 9/30 Maria Barbarich



- GREETERS**
- 9/7 Karen Marquis & Cheryl Slack
 - 9/14 Carrie Hutchman & Megan Pollock
 - 9/21 Steve Shamhart & Messengers
 - 9/28 Jenny Bayles & Cindy Fuller



- ANNIVERSARIES**
- 9/3 Max & Janet Strine
 - 9/14 Bill & Mary Linn
 - 9/19 Dustin & Andrea Bayles
 - 9/22 Mike & Amy Springer

- Ron VonAlmen
- Janet Schelb
- Jude Stitzel
- Sheryl Campbell
- Donna McKinnis
- Vicki Adams
- Israel
- Judi Myers
- Rick Hicks
- Haiti
- Mike Dilsaver
- Steve Crock
- Paul Messenger
- Betty Woodruff
- Kelly Marsh
- Shawn Wilcox
- Jamie Marquis
- Dave Gerfen
- Inda Lama
- Janie Wooten
- Doug Burkhart
- Nathan Cedric
- Mary Linn
- Joni McCray
- Peggy Smith
- Bill Crabtree Family

- Nursery Schedule**
- 9/7 Carol Crawford & Robbi Smart
 - 9/14 Linda Seitter & Charisse Smith
 - 9/21 Avy Bauer & Susan Rockwell
 - 9/28 Conni McChesney & Amy McGuire

- Children's Church**
- 9/7 No Children's Church
 - 9/14 Emily Sharp & Ruth Lutz
 - 9/21 Karen Marquis & Jesseca Wagner
 - 9/28 Ellen Messenger & Cheryl Slack