



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!

I think these newsletter thoughts are going to address the elephant in the room and that's the recent progressive provocation during a worship service in a congregation in Minnesota. It was wrong, disgusting, and thankfully it's being dealt with. Contrary to popular belief, this was not the first instance of such an incident. I recall seeing video of a progressive "pastor" interrupting a sermon of a friend of mine several years ago. It didn't get nearly as much attention within the church or nationwide. What seems to be different this time is that there was a flood of media attention (thanks to the self-serving and self-incriminating individuals there) and those in government positions are finally holding wrongdoers accountable.

Should we be worried? No. Violent disturbances in churches are rare. They get outsized media attention. When they occur, the vast majority are caused by people who know someone in the church or they are targeted incidents like Minnesota's City Church.

Should we be prepared? That depends on what you mean. Do we need to hire security guards? Absolutely not, that would be over doing it. As a security measure, after worship starts all doors but the sanctuary entrance are locked and that door is monitored every Sunday by several members during worship for trouble.

But it could still happen... A great many things could happen, and yet we are called to live not with a spirit of fear, but with power, love, and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). If there are ever disturbances in worship the following would happen: "You are invited to calm down and take a seat and worship. If you continue, you'll be asked to leave. If you do not, we will press charges for disturbance and trespassing at a minimum." If the situation escalates law enforcement will already be on their way—and in Ohio, Marion County... I am reasonably assured of that outcome, and you can be too. Rest easy.

We do not live in town. While not impossible, the kind of trouble January 18th makes us afraid of is highly unlikely out here. The most common kind of trouble we aren't likely to have either. We won't have drunks stumbling in to the front row to join us for worship and ask for money afterwards (had that happen elsewhere to me, fun times). Even the out-of-town travelers looking for gas money aren't likely. Of course, when folks like that regularly come in we definitely know who we're trying to reach for Christ and what kind of ministry we can offer to change lives. Our work as a congregation to reach the lost is different and perhaps a little harder. We've got to go find those who are suffering in and from sin. When we find them, we've got to reach them for Christ where they are as we minister to their need. Only after we've built a relationship with them can we invite them to Salem to grow in Christ.

So no, I'm not worried about the incident in Minnesota happening at Salem. My bigger concern is finding more lost souls to reach for Christ so that we can grow.

Blessings 🙌,

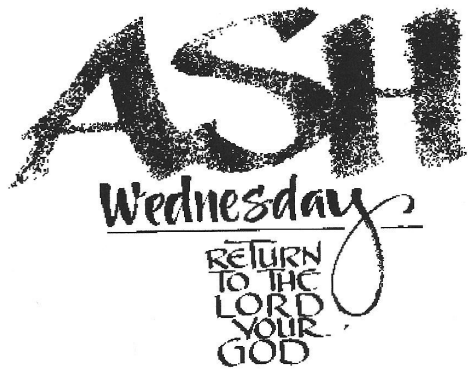
Upcoming Lenten Series: The Cure

Based off a book by the same name, we will explore the paths of Pleasing God and Trusting God, learning that one is built on self-effort and the other on humility. This series is for those seeking a deeper relationship with Christ no matter where they are starting on the journey.

2/15: "Two Roads" Romans 8:1-11 — 2/22: "Two Faces" Genesis 3

3/1: "Two Solutions" 2 Corinthians 5 — 3/8: "Two Healings" 1 John 4:7-21

3/15: "Two Friends" John 3:16-21 — 3/22: "Two Destinies" John 12:12-16



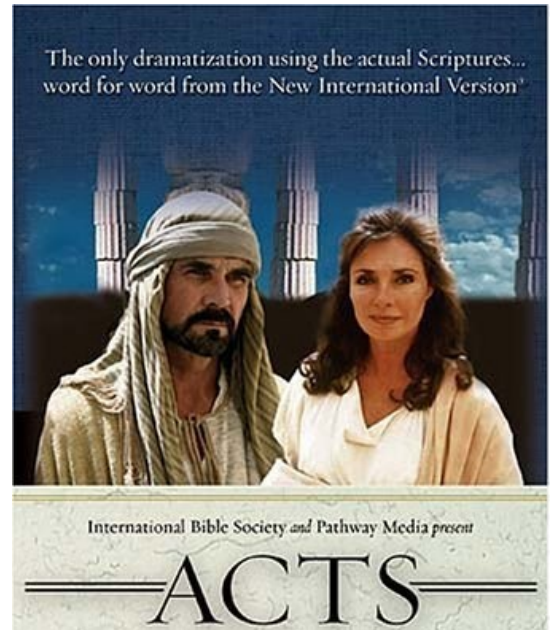
Ash Wednesday February 18

Soup Supper at 6 pm
Service at 7 pm

Please come as we begin the Lenten season with a service focused on repentance, recognition of our mortality, and dependence on Christ.

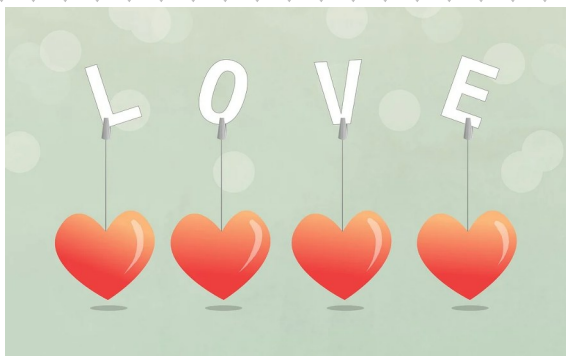
Our Easter Hearts

During the season of Lent we will have hearts available in the sanctuary. We will pray for the unchurched (those who have never attended), dechurched (those who have completely left the community of faith), and the unsaved (those who have no connection to Christ). Simply write the first name of someone on the heart and they will be hung up for congregational prayer during Lent. On Wed., March 25 at 7pm we will join together for a prayer service to lift up all these names as well as our congregation for the upcoming Holy Week Services that start with Palm Sunday on March 29.



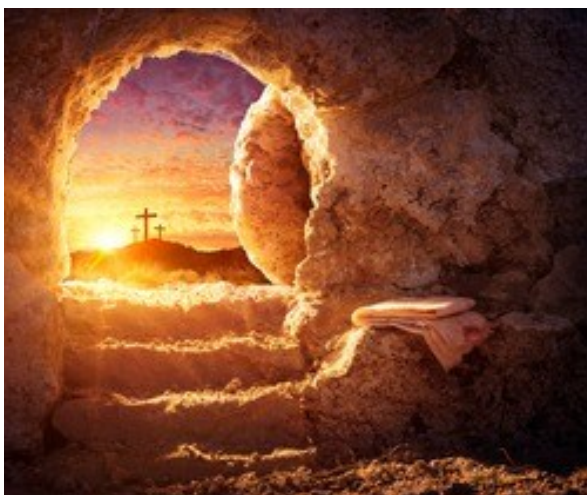
Monday Bible Study—Hiatus

The Study will pick up in Acts 9:32. First date to be announced later in the month of February.



Trail of Easter Coming:

March 1 through April 5



The “Trail of Easter” provides a fun way for families to experience the story of Holy Week and the Resurrection from the convenience of their own car. The route is mapped out for you and will take you past different locations where objects relating the story are placed for you to find as you drive by. You’ll stay in your car and spot the items from the road, Scripture passages will be available to read on the map handout. Maps will be available.

— Credit to Lockport Mennonite Church for the idea.

Updating Directory

It's time for a new directory update. Please be on the look out with a letter that will help update your entry and return it to the church office by Feb. 1. Be on the lookout for new directories later in February.



Baptism Celebration



During our Superbowl Half-Time Worship Service we will be celebrating at least 4 baptisms. The Smith Family (Hunter, Caitlyn, Parker, and Kinslee) have stepped forward to receive the Sacrament of Baptism. **This is a great celebration for our entire church family.** If you are not coming for the Superbowl Game, please join us for the fellowship and half-time service as we celebrate the work of God's Grace in the Smith family.

Half-Time Service:

"Re-Born Into This" John 3:1-8

SUPERBOWL PARTY!

Sunday, February 8th starts at 6p

All are welcome, bring friends!

Bring your favorite snack to share.

Four screens to watch the game.

A boardgame room, playroom, and exclusive youth room are open!

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.

February Studies:

- 4th: No Study (Pastor's Vacation)
- 14th: Study continues
- 21st: No Study (Ash Wednesday)
- 28th: Study continues

Spaghetti Dinner & Auction



March 7, 2026, at 5:30 pm

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!!

Donate a new item or service that can be auctioned off.

Contact your place of business for a donation. (You will have more influence than a stranger asking them). Ask your family members to do the same.

Do you have friends or family members that make quality crafts? Woodworking – quilts – dolls – paintings?

Are you an excellent baker or candy maker?

Do you sell products such as Mary Kay, Pamper Chef, Scentsy, Thirty-One, Lula Roe, Avon, Tupperware, or any other products such as these, or know of someone who would like to donate items?

If you can help in any way, please contact Conni McChesney at 419-210-0925.

We would like to THANK YOU in advance for your support.

Please reserve your dinner tickets so that we can have an estimated number to prepare for. Tear off this section and put it in the offering plate or give it to Conni McChesney.

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

3-10 years old - \$5.00 # tickets _____

11 & over - \$10.00 # tickets _____

You may pay in advance or at the door. Money may be given to Conni McChesney. Make checks payable to Marion Salem Church

Can you donate an item for our silent/live auction? ___yes ___no

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

Beyond Youth Group



Thank you to everyone who came to our first meeting in January. I am overwhelmed with gratitude for the support! Together, we have already made a lot of plans: a Valentine's fundraiser, Easter Eggstravaganza, VBS, and we have even discussed plans for future BRAND-NEW ministry for 4th-6th graders that we hope to be launching in the fall! Stay tuned for more updates.

The next meeting of the Family Ministries Council will be Sunday, April 12, following the worship service.

Children's Message Schedule

February 1	Cheryl Slack
February 8	Pastor Heather
February 15	Ruth Lutz
February 22	Karla Sharp



March 28, 2pm—4pm

For more information, contact Emily Sharp



July 16 (evening) - 26 (morning)

Ten days of worship, Bible study, rest, and fun for ALL AGES in a rustic

setting in nearby Mt. Vernon, Ohio. The youth program (grades 6-12 in 2025-2026) runs concurrently with the rest of the camp but has separate housing, activities, and costs. There are also separate and joint activities for adults, children (grades 1-6 in 2025-2026), tiny tots (ages 3-6), and nursery (under age 3).



July 26-28

Vacation Bible School is coming! Contact Cheryl Slack for more info.

Rhema is recruiting for the 2026 school year. Open houses in February. Come and see what Rhema Academy is all about!





Families can donate to Rhema in two different ways:

1. Direct tax deductible donation by check or by giving online to:
2. Through Ohio Christian Education Network (OCEN) at:
This is an OHIO STATE TAX CREDIT & thus will reduce your state tax liability up to \$750 per person.

See Brian Sparling with any questions.

<https://rhemaacademyk12.education/>

https://app.ocen.org/users/sign_in



Wed. Feb. 25th—Noon

Menu: Soup

Please bring a side or dessert to share

Rhema Chapels on Wed. 9am



Rhema Academy invites the Salem Church Family to join them for worship on Wednesdays, please enter by the office door and check in at office before 8:50am.

Food Pantry

Hours: Monday 10-noon



February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Communion	2	3 Rhema 5 pm	4 Knitting/Craft 1pm Bible study 5 pm	5 AHG 6 pm	6	7
8	9 Rhema 5 pm	10 Rhema conferences 4 pm	11 Knitting/Craft 1pm Bible study 5 pm Choir 6:15 Bible study 7 pm	12 SPRC 6:30 pm	13	14 Valentines Day 
15	16 Ad Council 6:30 pm 	17 Rhema 5 pm	18 Knitting/Craft 1pm Bible study 5 pm Ash Wed 7 pm	19 AHG 6 pm	20	21 Family Center Reserved
22	23	24	25 Knitting/Craft 1pm Bible study 5 pm Choir 6:15 Bible study 7 pm	26	27	28



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

Feb—Joy/Ren Class
March—Crusaders Class



Pray for

- Ron VonAlmen
- Janet Schelb
- Jude Stitzel
- Sheryl Campbell
- Donna McKinnis
- Vicki Adams
- Israel
- Judi Myers
- Rick Hicks
- Haiti



- GREETERS**
- 2/1 Janet Burns & Becky Oliver
 - 2/8 Brian & Deborah Mahler
 - 2/15 Curt & Mary Galloway
 - 2/22 Still needed

- Children's Church**
- 2/1 No Children's Church
 - 2/8 Cheryl Slack & Jesseca Wagner
 - 2/15 No Children's Church
 - 2/22 TBD

- Birthdays**
- 2/5 Oliver Wagner
 - 2/7 Norm Titus
 - 2/11 Barb Dendinger
 - 2/12 Norwada Croskey
 - 2/13 Valerie Schrote
 - 2/15 Carter Bayles
 - 2/18 Jana Bauer
 - 2/19 Austyn Hedges
 - 2/20 Becky Oliver
 - 2/21 Cheryl Slack
 - 2/22 Emily Sharp



- ANNIVERSARIES**
- 2/09 Nick & Mallori Hedges
 - 2/10 Jayson & Amanda Loyer
 - 2/27 Roger & Marcia Burden

- Nursery Schedule**
- 2/1 Amy McGuire & Charisse Smith
 - 2/8 Avy Bauer & Linda Seitter
 - 2/15 Amanda & Marissa Loyer
 - 2/22 Jesseca Wagner & Susie Williams

- Mike Dilsaver
- Steve Crock
- Paul Messenger
- Shawn Wilcox
- Jamie Marquis
- Inda Lama
- Janie Wooten
- Doug Burkhardt
- Nathan Cedric
- Mary Linn
- Joni McCray
- Family of Callen Klingler
- Mark Dendinger
- Steve Shamhart
- Ed Crawford family
- Andrew Pfeiffer
- Norm Titus
- Tierney Bender