

News From The Rock

April 2021

Solid Rock United Methodist Church • Warren, Indiana

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Live worship broadcasts now available

Solid Rock began the livestreaming of Sunday worship services on March 14.

These broadcasts may be viewed on the church's Facebook page at 10:00 on Sunday mornings or at any time following the live broadcast.

These broadcasts are possible thanks to the Connect Through Tech Grant 2020 from the Center for Congregations and much work on the part of many individuals to prepare for and continue implementation.

Thanks are extended to numerous volunteers who produced and uploaded weekly prerecorded services over the past year.

Programs resuming

Decreasing transmission of the coronavirus in the community and increasing rates of vaccination are permitting a gradual resumption of several church programs. At their meeting on March 16, the Solid Rock Administrative Council approved restarting a children's Sunday school class and the two adult Sunday school classes, effective April 11. Children's worship time and the nursery have also resumed.

Volunteers are being sought to enable full restoration of several programs. Anyone willing to serve in any of the following ministries should notify the church office: children's Sunday school (curriculum will be provided), children's worship, nursery, children's message during worship, greeter prior to worship service.

Administrative Council also approved reinstatement of permitting outside groups to use the Solid Rock facility. These groups will be encouraged to follow whatever county health department guidelines are in effect at the time of their meeting.

Anticipating possible state COVID-19 guideline revisions at the end of the month, the Solid Rock Coronavirus Response Task Force will meet on March 31 to consider further changes to Solid Rock's programming and practices.

Bible Study

"Feasting on the Word" Bible studies for the month of April will be held in the social area of Solid Rock UMC at 7:15 p.m. each Monday of April. With the congregation experiencing a slight return to face-to-

face gatherings, you are urged to seek God's guidance through his Word. The Christian community has often said that both Jesus and the Bible are God's Word. The leaders listed along with the scripture passages are for your support and prayer time. We try our best to keep our studies limited to an hour time period. Do come and join with us.

- April 5: John 20:24-29 (Surviving Your Doubts); Joe Haney, leader
- April 12: Luke 24:13-35 (On the Road with Jesus); Jorita Banter, leader
- April 19: Acts 4:5-12 (Praise the Name of Jesus); Ann Spahr, leader
- April 26: Acts 8:26-40 (Led by the Spirit); Perry Spahr, leader

We are all guests at the table of the Lord; give us this day our daily bread!



Immediately after World War II the allied armies gathered up many hungry, homeless children and placed them in large camps. There the children were abundantly fed and cared for. However, at night they did not sleep well. They seemed restless and afraid. Finally, a psychologist hit on a solution. After the children were put to bed, they each received a slice of bread to hold. If they wanted more to eat, more was provided, but this particular slice was not to be eaten — it was just to hold.



The slice of bread produced marvelous results. The children would go to sleep, subconsciously feeling they would have something to eat tomorrow. That assurance gave the child a calm and peaceful rest. More tomorrow! Isn't that really the basic longing deep inside each of our hearts? It doesn't take an Einstein to figure out why we're that way. The longer I live, the more I see taken away from me. Oh yes, I've got more stuff than I've ever had in my life. I've accumulated a lot of stuff. I've got books I'll never read, auto manuals I'll never use and catalogues I'll never order from.

Plus, I've got jars and jars of assorted nuts and bolts, electric wire nuts, picture-hanging brackets, and curtain rod implements. Stuff. The funny thing about it is that when I need some of this stuff I can

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Our Vision: Sharing and experiencing the life-giving message of Jesus, to restore wholeness and build an intentional community of hope, relationship, and purpose for everyone.

Firm Foundation class to study Gospel of John

Sunday school is resuming, and the Firm Foundation class invites you to join them as they begin a new study on the book of John.

We will be using the video series "John: The Gospel of Light and Life," by Adam Hamilton. The major themes to be studied include "The

Word Made Flesh," "The Miraculous Signs of Jesus," "The 'I AM' Sayings of Jesus,"



News From The Rock

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Worship Schedule

Sunday School at 9:00

Worship at 10:00

at 485 Bennett Drive, Warren

Church Phone: 375-3871

Church Office

Office Phone: 375-3873

Monday - Thursday

9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Closed Friday

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News deadline for the May
newsletter: April 18

"The Farewell Discourse," "The Arrest, Trial, and Crucifixion of the King," and "Eternal Life."

The author suggests reading the first six chapters of John for the first week, but this is not essential to participate.

Plan to join us Sunday mornings at 9:00 in the church kitchen beginning April 11. Rosalie Walter will facilitate this study.

General Conference postponed until 2022

United Methodist General Conference organizers announced that the denomination's top lawmaking assembly — long postponed by pandemic — must wait to meet another year. The global gathering is now scheduled for August 29 through September 6, 2022, in Minneapolis.

At the same time, the Council of Bishops has announced a special one-day General Conference on May 8. The special global gathering has only 12 pieces of legislation before it — all basically intended to help the church function until the full General Conference meets.

In October, the Commission on the General Conference named a technology team to look at virtual options for ensuring full participation. The team's report outlined several challenges before such a conference. Those hurdles include the 16-hour time difference between delegates who live in the Philippines and on the U.S. West Coast, the inequity of internet availability and the difficulty in safeguarding voting.

With the slow rollout of vaccines, continued travel restrictions and limitations of virtual technology, the commission concluded February 20 that a full, 10-day session was not possible this year either in-person or online.

A proposed separation plan, known as "Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation," will be considered during the 2022 conference. After decades of debate over LGBTQ inclusion, the protocol opens the door for new denominations to break away with property and church funds. The Wesleyan Covenant Association, a traditionalist group, has a global gathering scheduled for May 1 to discuss its plans for its future denomination. The process outlined in the protocol hinges on General Conference approval.

Links to further information regarding the separation proposal may be found on Solid Rock's website.

Easter Flowers

April 4, 2021

Robert & Marie DeWeese
*In memory of Grandma Elizabeth Bolinger
Robert Prout*

Steve & Mary Ann Holmes
In memory of our parents

Joe & Yvonne Haney
In honor of Jesus our Lord

Jack & Marg Bentley
*In memory of Clyde & Helen Hoover
George & Helen Bentley*

Jennifer Jackson
In memory of Larry & Joyce Keiffer

Lana Myers
In honor of my family

Mindy Rider
In honor of God's glory and creations

Rose Broyles
*In honor of my children
In memory of Art Broyles*

Gary & Rosalie Walter
In honor of Martha Plummer

Dave & Wanda Spahr
In honor of our family

George & Teresa Kriegbaum

Jane Hitzfield
*In honor of those living I cherish
In memory of those I've lost*

John & Susan Mills
*In memory of our beloved son Nathan
Our parents*

All things in common

Just as the bread is made out of many grains ground and mixed together, and out of the bodies of many grains there comes the body of one bread, in which each grain loses its form and body and takes upon itself the common body of the bread; and just as the drops of wine, in losing their own form, become the body of one common wine and drink — so it is and should be with us. ...

Through the interchange of [Christ's] blessings and our misfortunes, we become one loaf, one bread, one body, one drink, and have all things in common.

—Martin Luther,
Treatise on the Blessed Sacrament

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never find it, so I wind up going down and buying more stuff.

Would you like to know what I do with the leftovers? I put them in the jar alongside the stuff I was looking for when I went down and bought new stuff. It's right beside the half empty gallon paint can I saved from one of my projects back in 1991.

Yeah, I've got stuff all right, but I'm also losing things — lots of things. My mind, for instance. My once active brain picks the dumbest times to go on sabbatical. Some things I'm still good at; some things I'd rather not discuss. I'm sort of like the professor on Gilligan's Island who was smart enough to make a two-way radio out of a coconut, but didn't have sense enough to fix a hole in the bottom of the boat. That's me all right.

Yes indeed! I want more tomorrow, like the little children in the war camps. I need something to hold on to; something that will let me know that tomorrow is taken care of already. God knew that we were all going to be like those little children. That's why he so often referred to us as "little children". And one of my favorite "little children" talks Jesus gave, came to us by way of the pen and parchment belonging to Matthew, His disciple:

"Don't worry about having enough food or drink or clothing," Jesus said. "Why be like the pagans who are so deeply concerned about these things? Your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

That's better than stuff stuffed into the closet. Better than stuff on shelves in the garage. Better than stuff in jars. That's even better than sliced bread!

See you Sunday,
Pastor Paul

February Financial Update

General Fund Receipts\$14,193
General Fund Expenses\$16,832



solidrockumc.com



What on earth are you doing — for heaven's sake?

A child's prayer

The following was written during a worship service by a child attending Solid Rock.

I pray every night.
We have the Lord in all times.

Dear God,
I hope you have a good life because I do have a good life.

Dear God,
You give me all I need and what I want. I thank you for all you do because it makes my life better.

Dear God,
Thank you for everything. I love you.

A modern-day parable

In Luke 15, Jesus tells three parables about the precious being lost and, at great lengths, found again. The kingdom of heaven, he says, is like that. But most of us don't shepherd sheep and wouldn't fret over one lost coin. A child, on the other hand ...

In fall 2019, as night fell in northern Minnesota, 6-year-old Ethan and his dog wandered off. Family and police grew frantic because the area consisted of fields, woods and swamps. Authorities requested assistance.

The kingdom of heaven, Jesus might say, is like 600 volunteers searching diligently in the dark for a child they didn't know. It's like Steve Fines who, though also a stranger to the boy, grabbed his company's pricy heat-seeking drone and worked the camera for hours, until it detected Ethan huddling with his dog, safe but cold. Yes, the kingdom of heaven — indeed God — is like people giving their all and refusing to quit until the lost one is found.



Be a caremonger

At the start of the coronavirus pandemic, a mutual-aid movement dubbed as "caremongering" quickly spread throughout Canada. Within 72 hours, 35 Facebook groups were launched so people could request and offer assistance.

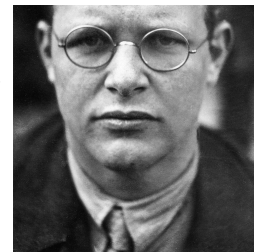
This altruistic effort is essentially the opposite of fearmongering. "We wanted to switch that around and get people to connect on a positive level," says Mita Hans,

who helped set up the first group. The movement, she adds, "spread the opposite of panic in people, brought out community and camaraderie, and allowed us to tackle the needs of those who are at-risk all the time — now more than ever."

One disabled man in Halifax who received aid through a caremongering group said it felt "like a hug." That's intentional, says participant Valentina Harper. "I think it is really showing people there is still hope for humanity." When the pandemic is history, may we all continue to be caremongers in our communities.

Remembering Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The Christian church commemorates Dietrich Bonhoeffer — pastor, theologian, anti-Nazi spy — on April 9, the anniversary of his 1945 martyrdom. Among his much-loved writings are nuggets of wisdom such as these:



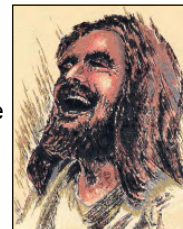
"Judging others makes us blind, whereas love is illuminating. By judging others we blind ourselves to our own evil and to the grace which others are just as entitled to as we are." (*The Cost of Discipleship*)

"In normal life we hardly realize how much more we receive than we give, and life cannot be rich without such gratitude. It is so easy to overestimate the importance of our own achievements compared with what we owe to the help of others." (*Letters and Papers from Prison*)

"The table fellowship of Christians implies obligation. It is our daily bread that we eat, not my own. We share our bread. Thus we are firmly bound to one another not only in the Spirit but in our whole physical being. The one bread that is given to our fellowship links us together in a firm covenant." (*Life Together*)

A reason to laugh

The week after Easter, some churches observe Holy Humor Sunday — a tradition dating back to the fourth century. Early Christian theologians coined the term "*risus paschalis*," or "the Easter laugh," saying God played the supreme joke on death. Some believers celebrated Bright Monday, gathering the day after Easter to mock Satan's defeat.



Believing in

Sometimes we get caught up in thinking we need to understand God in order to have faith. But faith is more about trust than knowledge; it's more about believing in someone than believing information. A child, for instance, doesn't have to know the precise roads to Grandma's house; he only needs to believe *in* his parents and their ability and desire to get him there safely. Similarly, we need not understand all the intricacies of how God works; we can take a cue from the disciples and let belief *in* the risen Christ transform and empower us.

In the words of Madeleine L'Engle (*The Rock That Is Higher*): "The disciples did not bother to try to understand the resurrection body. They doubted, and then they believed. They believed something so wonderful that it changed this broken, fragmented, beaten-down little group of men and women in a moment from depression to enthusiasm, from despair to new life, vibrant and unafraid."

Lord God, You loved this world so much, that you gave your one and only Son, that we might be called your children too. Lord, help us to live in the gladness and grace of Easter Sunday, every day. Let us have hearts of thankfulness for your sacrifice. Let us have eyes that look upon your grace and rejoice in our salvation. Help us to walk in that mighty grace and tell your good news to the world. All for your glory do we pray, Lord, Amen.

- Rachel Marie Stone

