

News From The Rock

January 2022

Solid Rock United Methodist Church • Warren, Indiana

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

Small groups resume

Three new small group studies will begin the week of January 30. The purpose of these groups is to help people grow in faith and in their understanding of and love for God. It is the goal of each group to provide an environment in which participants can experience authentic community and spiritual growth in an open, non-threatening setting. The groups will continue for 10 weeks, concluding the week of April 3.



NOOMA

Facilitator: Pastor Paul Burris
Groups will be offered two times:
Wednesday mornings at 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m.
at the church
First session: February 2, 2022

Jesus lived with the awareness that God is doing something, right here, right now, and anybody can be a part of it. He encouraged his listeners to search, to question, to wrestle with the implications of what he was saying and doing. Wherever he went, Jesus started discussions about what matters most, because for Jesus, God is always inviting us to open our eyes and join in.

Nooma is a series of short films that explore our world from a perspective of Jesus. *Nooma* is an invitation to search, question, and join the discussion. Starting on February 2, 2022, Pastor Paul will be lead this 10-week study to dig a little deeper into issues that we care about and are faced with on a regular basis. There will be two opportunities for you to sign up

for: Wednesday mornings at 11:00 a.m. and Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m.

EXPLORING THE GOSPEL OF LUKE Online Group
Facilitator: Gary Walter
Beginning the week of January 30

This group will explore the first five chapters of Luke with Pastor Matt Whitman. Our lessons will be in the form of engaging YouTube videos on Matt's channel, "The Ten Minute Bible Hour." This group meets online, using a private Facebook page. Participants will be expected to read brief scripture passages, view two 10-15 minute videos, and post at least one question or comment each week. Join us as Matt tackles such topics as "Mary Crushes It," "Humble Pie Tastes Like Garbage; Has Benefits," "First Century Superhero Landing," and "You Just Don't Eat Your Kitchen." For more information, contact Gary at gary@solidrockumc.com.

Signup sheets may be found on the table at the back of the sanctuary beginning January 2.

"You Were Made for This Moment"

The small group which meets in the church kitchen on Sunday mornings is beginning a new study by Max Lucado, "You Were Made for this Moment," a video-based study on the book of Esther.



"Are you weary from your challenges,"
(Continued on page 3)



Warning signs serve as warnings. That might seem logical; it is. When we see a road sign alerting us to the danger of a dangerous curve we slow down.

Warning signs should not be ignored; "SLOW CHILDREN AT PLAY." Seeing the sign, drivers reduce their speed and watch for children.

We might have a natural inclination to rush through life. Instead, the LORD wants us to understand there are times to slow down.



BE QUICK TO LISTEN, SLOW TO SPEAK, SLOW TO ANGER.
James 1:19, NRSV

"My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." (James 1:19)

We must ask ourselves often are we quick to hear the thoughts, emotions and hurts of others or are we just focused on ourselves?

If we hear with understanding and discernment, we'll be slow to speak our mind. If treated badly, we can turn to the Holy Spirit for strength to forgive. Empowered and enabled by His love, we can be slow to anger.

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs." (I Corinthians 13:4-5 NIV).

As we enter into this new year let us
(Continued on page 3)

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.

Bible Study

Happy New Year to you readers of "News From The Rock"! We have an exciting set of readings/studies for our January "Feasting on the Word." Since many of you are arduous

readers of your Bible, the passages may be familiar; look for new ways where God may be speaking to your life. The Monday evening gatherings at 7:00 p.m. in the church kitchen call for only an hour of your discipleship. Below are listed the dates, scripture passages and leaders for each session. Do come and join with us for

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Sunday School at 9:00
Worship at 10:00
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Church Office
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Monday - Thursday
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Closed Friday

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News deadline for the February newsletter: January 23



our studies.

- January 3: Acts 8:9-24 (A Change of Heart); Jorita Banter, leader
- January 10: John 2:1-11 (Are You Thirsty?); Ann Spahr, leader
- January 17: Luke 4:14-21 (The Transforming Power of the Gospel); Joe Haney, leader
- January 24: Luke 5:1-11 (Living a Life of Purpose); Jorita Banter, leader
- January 31: Psalm 71:1-6 (God Is Our Refuge); Ann Spahr, leader

These are "stand alone" studies which do NOT require attendance at every session for continuity. Do participate in the fellowship of God's Word.

Joe Haney, Coordinator

Giving statements available

A statement of your 2021 giving to Solid Rock is available. Contact the office to request a printout.

November Financial Update

General Fund Receipts..... \$19,673
General Fund Expenses..... \$19,481

What's in a name?

As the U.S. evacuated thousands from Afghanistan in August 2021, an Afghan



woman gave birth on a plane. She named her daughter Reach — the name of the aircraft that brought her family to safety.

Many people name their children after loved ones or special events; a child born on Christmas might be called Noel or Holly. In Bible times, too, names often had meanings: Eve likely means "mother of all living"; Abraham, "father of many"; Isaac, "laughter." Moses is a play on words with the Hebrew for "draw out" because Pharaoh's daughter drew him from the Nile.

Of course, the most important biblical name is Jesus, which means "The Lord saves." As the angel told Joseph, "[Mary] will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21, ESV). The Christian church traditionally celebrates Name of Jesus on January 1. But every day, as we pray in Jesus' name, we remember that what's in *this* name is the salvation God offers to all.

Lighting the way for others

When Ida Nelson, head tribal clerk of a remote Alaskan village, heard an airplane flying low after dark, she knew something was wrong. Igiugig (Igggy-yaw-gigg), population 70, isn't normally a nighttime destination. Indeed, the medevac flight was coming to pick up a sick child.



Because the local airstrip's lights had been vandalized, the plane was having trouble landing. Nelson began alerting neighbors, and within minutes, villagers lined the runway with their vehicles, headlights blazing. The pilot was able to land and then safely deliver the sick child to an Anchorage hospital. The airlift service praised the residents' determination, but Nelson describes their effort as "normal" and "ordinary."

What everyday actions can you use to provide light amid darkness? How can you shine Jesus' light in a world that needs him?

First in line

We were rushing to our next destination when yet another traffic light turned red. As usual, I had packed too many tasks into the day. Now we'd be even later. While I stewed in frustration, my son had a completely different reaction to being stopped. "Yes — I love this!" he shouted as we sat. "We're first in line!"

What an important lesson on perspective. I focused on the negative, but he saw the good in the situation. As Proverbs 15:13 says, "A joyful heart brightens one's face, but a troubled heart breaks the spirit" (CEB).

Now instead of pep talks about half-full or half-empty glasses, our family offers reminders about being stopped by a light versus being first in line. The next time I'm delayed, I hope I can think, "Yes — I love this!"

—Janna Firestone



Facing the future

Don't worry about the future. Worry quenches the work of grace within you. The future belongs to God. He is in charge of all things. Never second-guess him.

—François Fenelon

(Continued from **Pastor Paul**, page 1)

resolve to slow down and be present in the moments that God gives to us. Let us continually practice what it truly means to love God and neighbor in every aspect of our lives.

See You Sunday,
Paul

(Continued from "You Were Made..." page 1)

wounded by your battles, or worried your world is spinning out of control? The book of Esther brings welcome news that God hasn't forgotten you. Pastor Lucado will help you reclaim your eternal identity as a citizen of heaven, put your hope in the God of grand reversals, cultivate courage for your challenging times, and discover your role in God's story."

Everyone is welcome to join our group Sundays at 9:00.

Christmas Poinsettias

Thank you to all who donated poinsettias to enhance our sanctuary for Christmas.

Jack and Marg Bentley

1 red
In honor of
Our family

Rose Broyles

2 red
In memory of
Art Broyles

Steve and LeAnn Buzzard

1 red and 1 white
In honor of
Steve and Mary Ann Holmes
In memory of
Jack and Martha Buzzard

Larry and Pat Davis

2 red
In memory of
Phil and Lois Davis
Wilbur and Mareetta Cretsinger
Brothers Bill and Tom
Sister-in-law Lynda

Marie DeWeese

1 red
In memory of
Joyce Sorg

Joe Haney

1 red
In honor of all disciples

Steve and Mary Ann Holmes

1 red and 1 white
In honor of
Our children, grandchildren,
and great-grandchildren
In memory of
Lester and Nova Preston
Kenneth and Gwen Holmes
Bill Preston
Robert E. Preston

Jennifer Jackson

1 red and 1 white
In memory of
Larry and Joyce Keiffer

John and Susan Mills

1 white
In memory of
Our beloved son Nathan and our parents

Bruce and Noreen Preston

1 red and 1 white
In honor of
Our family
In memory of
Our family

Dave and Wanda Spahr

1 white
In memory of
Our parents

Ted and Sharon Williams

1 red and 1 white
In honor of
Alyce Tinkel
In memory of
Bill Williams



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Turning back

In 1569 Holland, Dirk Willems, a member of the Anabaptist (now known as Mennonite)



church, was imprisoned for refusing to belong to the state church. He escaped and was running across a pond's thin ice

when the guard in pursuit fell through. Hearing the drowning man's cries, Willems turned back to rescue him, even though it meant his capture and subsequent execu-

tion.

Four centuries later, civil rights icon Martin Luther King Jr. urged us to love our enemies by not defeating them "when the opportunity presents itself." Eventually we'll have chances to get back at people who misuse or gossip about us, he said. But "the meaning of love" is in not doing so. "In the final analysis, love is not this sentimental something that we talk about," said King. "It's not merely an emotional something. Love is creative, understanding goodwill for all [people]. It is the refusal to defeat any individual."

Be of good cheer

Near the end of every January, stories circulate about "Blue Monday," supposedly the year's most depressing day. Factors include broken New Year's resolutions, Christmas debts and cold weather. But this phenomenon actually originated as a PR gimmick. U.K. marketers invented Blue Monday as "the best day to book a summer holiday," and a psychologist they enlisted to help later admitted the saddest-seeming day became a self-fulfilling prophecy.



January may lack the excitement of December, but it doesn't have to be a let-down. Christmas is over, but Jesus isn't! No matter the season of the year or our season of life, Christians always have reason for joy: God's promises of forgiveness and eternal victory. As Jesus says in John 16:33, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (KJV).

A cheerful what?

Guideposts editor Mary Ann O'Roark recalls hearing the phrase "cheerful liver" so often in church as a girl that she asked her grandmother what a liver is. "It's a part inside you, like your stomach or your heart," Grandma replied.

Rather confused, O'Roark tried to figure out how to be cheerful from the inside out. Then during Sunday school one week, a classmate explained that God loves a cheerful giver, not liver. Years later, however, O'Roark realized that her younger self wasn't too far off the mark. After all, God does indeed love someone who *lives* cheerfully, spreading the hope and joy that he longs for all people to know!

After all, it was Jesus who said, "I came that [all] may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10, NRSV).

Biblical resolutions

Hold firmly to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)

Assemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)

Pray and thank God earnestly (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18)

Petition God for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)

Yield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Notice opportunities to serve others (Galatians 6:10)

Examine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)

Work diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Yearn for righteousness (Matthew 5:6)

Exercise godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)

Aim for sinless perfection (Hebrews 6:1)

Redeem the time, living wisely (Ephesians 5:15-16)

—Gus Nichols (adapted)



My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following Your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please You does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that, if I do this, You will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore I will trust You always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for You are ever with me, and You will never leave me to face my perils alone.

—Thomas Merton

