

News From The Rock

January 2023

Solid Rock United Methodist Church • Warren, Indiana

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

Hallelujah Hands Choir

If you love music and are interested in sign language, consider joining the Hallelujah Hands Choir. No experience or sign language knowledge is needed. All ages are welcome. Please contact Marsha Boyanowski if interested at (260) 804-3676.



These are exciting scriptures to aid us in our journey of faith. Your presence and prayers would be appreciated.

Joe Haney, Coordinator

What Being Your Pastor Means to the Pastor

By John Boyanowski

As we are near the six-month mark of serving at Solid Rock, I would like to reflect on all that has taken place since our arrival in Warren. Marsha and I are the newcomers, and after serving our former church for 21 years, I can safely say how God has been part of this new chapter in all our lives, both the pastor's family and the congregation alike. Why God has brought our lives together is unveiling every day and both Marsha and I know our answer to God's calling here was the right choice for us.

Coming from a smaller congregation, I was nervous about being able to meet the needs of Solid Rock because there were great differences and learning to obtain. The people (you) have been VERY gracious and have made the transition smooth. Getting to know and memorize all your names is a task (which I am getting better at!), but knowing your heart is easy. Solid Rock is a blessed church with a heart for ministry; not because of doing works, but for the love of one another and our community while serving God. This is what makes it exciting to serve here. What does this mean for us?

As your pastor, it means hearing you and your voices. When you share the hopes, dreams, callings, struggles and all the rest, it is my humble duty to empower you, hold you up in love and compassion, to help you discern what God is saying to

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Shepherding Moments

by Pastor John Boyanowski

What Motivates Us to Come?

There is a term for individuals who attend worship services in their local church in the Christian faith: Chreasters – those who attend church only at Christmas and Easter. Some people chuckle at the term, while others are offended by it. It is not my intent to offend anyone, and I truly appreciate those who come to worship in their local church ANY time of the year. I share this to ask an important question: What motivates you to come to worship with others during these two religious holidays? This isn't a judgment, but a question for understanding.

There is something special about these two holy days which will cause many who normally do not attend ongoing fellowship at a church, and they will come together and hear God's salvation call. Is it because there's children's programs which our children/grandchildren are participating in, and we come to support them? Is it an "obligation" which we feel we owe God and hope He sees we're still here and trying to improve our chances of showing the "goodness" we have? The answers varies with each person. There are some who come with poor attitude because they're "forced" to come against their wishes.

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"Feasting on the Word" Bible Studies

With the beginning of a new year, I encourage you to take some time to listen to God. Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m. a group of us meets in the Solid Rock kitchen for an

hour of looking at the scripture Pastor John will be using for the coming Sunday's message. So far, we have had few cancellations due to weather. Each study is a independent passage which allows for flexibility in schedules. Consistent attendance is not a requirement.

- January 2: John 14:1-7, "Jesus is Coming Back"
- January 9: Luke 24:3-14, "End Time Events"
- January 16: Mark 13:3-13, "End Times—More Signs"
- January 23: Ephesians 1:1-14, "Spiritual Blessings in Christ"
- January 30: Ephesians 2:1-10, "By Grace, Through Faith"



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.

Technology Update

Many churches, Solid Rock included, had to get creative during the COVID pandemic in finding new ways to keep our faith families connected. Solid Rock applied for and received a grant providing equipment enabling us to livestream our services. We have members living at a distance, Heritage Pointe residents, and others in our community who are otherwise unable to participate in person joining us each week. As many of you share links to our services, our reach extends far beyond our community.

We are at a point where, in order to continue to offer quality sound and video, both inside our sanctuary and online, upgrades to our equipment are being considered. Specifically we would like to replace

our nearly 10-year-old analog sound console with an up-to-date digital system. A fund has been established and donations are greatly appreciated.

We have a small dedicated team of volunteers who faithfully work to keep sound, video, and online broadcasting operating each week, but we are in need of additional volunteers to step in when our regulars are away or have other obligations.



Current roles include operation of the sound mixing board, the camera for livestreams, the camera for children's messages, and projection and streaming. Prior experience is not necessary and training will be provided. If you would like more information, please contact Gary Walter (gary@solidrockumc.com) or the church office.

SOS

SOS met on December 8 for their Christmas meeting at Cindy Boxell's with 17 in attendance.

A love offering was taken to purchase gifts for a sponsored Christmas family. The seasonal committee hosted a fun meeting with a prize for the ugliest sweater (congrats to Marsha!) and a white elephant gift exchange. (Ironically, the most stolen gift was an elephant figurine.) Delicious snacks were also enjoyed!

The January meeting will be held at the church with Brenda as hostess, Cindy as co-hostess, and Allison providing the lesson.

November Financial Update

General Fund Receipts	\$21,043
General Fund Expenses	\$13,073

Writing our life — with God's help

A journalist once said you can measure the quality of a piece of writing by the quality of what has been cut. No matter how beautiful or interesting a phrase or sentence is, the piece may be stronger without it.

Rabbi Evan Moffic applies this wisdom to life in general. Too often we refuse to let something — a habit, a memory, a process

— go, even when it no longer serves us. Thinking of our life as a book, we can cut out, edit or rearrange some pages or sentences to reflect our new learnings and growth.



This is not always easy, but we don't have to do it alone. "God is our 'editor-in-chief,'" says Moffic, "and we are part of God's story."

[While] God ... gives us free will to decide what to write on the pages of our lives, ... God is always there for conversation and consultation. And God left us a great guidebook called the Bible. Its lessons make our writing shine with truth and beauty." With God's guidance, what will you "write" in the new year?

Time for a spiritual assessment

"Hardly anything else reveals so well the fear and uncertainty among [people] as the length to which they will go to hide their true selves from each other and even from their own eyes," says A.W. Tozer. For insights into who we really are as Christians, the theologian proposes "rules for self-discovery." According to Tozer, "we may be known" by these seven things: what we want most, what we think about most, how we use our money, what we do with our leisure time, the company we enjoy, who and what we admire, and what we laugh at.



The "wise Christian" will find other tests, says Tozer, but these are a starting point to reveal if our desires and priorities conflict with God's will. "Our self-judgment is almost certain to be biased and imperfect," he adds, yet there's "every good reason for us to work along with the Holy Spirit in his benign effort to locate us spiritually in order that we may make such amendments as the circumstances demand."

- "If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl, but by all means, keep moving." —Martin Luther King Jr.
- "When it comes to life, the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude." —G.K. Chesterton

News From The Rock

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www.solidrockumc.com

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 February
newsletter: January 22

(Continued from *Shepherding Moments*, page 1)

I believe I need to share the various reasons why I attend worship with others. As many of my readers know, I've been a pastor for 22 years. That isn't the reason for my fellowshiping and communal worship with other believers. In fact, in my youth, I would be sent to church by my parents on the church bus, arrive at the church, walk in one door and out the other. I would walk over to the store which was a block away from the church, spend the money my mom would give me to put into the offering on candy and treats for myself, walk back to the church, go in the one door and out the other, get on the bus and go home. (I was not always a good boy!) I thought that if it wasn't important to my parents to come, I didn't need to go myself. At that time, my parents were Chreasters. The lack of importance to them made me believe it shouldn't be important to me. God had other plans for me.

An important person in my life, my brother David, began to attend church. At that time in our lives, life was complicated, and dysfunction was the norm. As David attended church, I noticed a change which I couldn't understand: he had a sort of peace about him and was more calm. I always wanted to be like him, so I too began to go to church. It was there that I learned about God and Jesus and of their love for me. I had sought the love of my earthly father and his approval yet felt light years away from it. At church, God and Jesus, as I was told, were LONGING to be with me! They wanted me around and they accepted me for who I was! I did end up asking Jesus into my heart eventually, but I must admit, I was over-cautious because I was let down by the best of people!

After I gave my life to Christ, it changed drastically! I would love to say that I had a great life with no problem; but that's just a dream. What I can say is that I was no longer alone going through the things I did. God provided friends and Himself to guide me and to remind me that I have His love and support, which continues even to today's writing and will until I am united with God on His side of eternity. I am motivated to come to church to serve Him and to thank Him for all He has done and continues to do for my life. I proclaim Christ because He loves this lost soul which He finds value in; enough to die for my sins so I can have fellowship with God the Father.

I might not know why you come, but I can share with you reasons why you will

want to if you know what I do about God. Take it from a once broken man: God is longing to love you the way you have searched for. We come to church to learn more about God, connecting with others who help us and allow us to help them, and we support one another. If you are not part of a faith community, I invite you to look around your local area and see where God leads you to. There are many great churches around which God can lead you to. You can watch some of these on their Facebook Pages or internet sites to see if they meet your needs. Our church is always open to anyone if you are interested. But I encourage you to let God lead you and your family to the church where you all can grow your intimacy with Him. May God bless you!

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you and how to help you with your passions to deepen your relationships with God and one another.

Some people call the first year of pastoring "the honeymoon stage," and it might be. However, if

we're honest with ourselves and open with each other, we can see how God is moving in this place. It is a bit confusing at times as we adjust to/with one another; but if you're like me, I believe God is hearing our prayers and is leading us to

be a strong foundation together. This only comes with the determination to work together and for one another.

Yes, we have some differences, and our opinions sometimes will differ; yet we stay together because God has brought us together. God, as well as people in our community/church are watching to see how we either come together or fall apart. If this is our focus, we will fall and fail. If our focus is to become the church discussed in the book of Acts, we will forever prevail as we serve God. I firmly believe this is our focus. Since being here, I have met with several of you to discuss new possible ministries and services you want to engage in. How excit-



ing! I want to encourage each of you, regardless of age, stature, or anything else that might try to deter you from serving your calling to share what these dreams and hopes are and lets give you the opportunity to invest in your callings!

Some of you are still trying to learn and understand my abilities to help you reach your fullest potential. Yes, I AM A DIFFERENT type of pastor; however, God uses those who most others wouldn't even consider making the greatest impacts. As you get to know me better, you'll see just how deeply you are loved by Marsha and I. Being your pastor means I am here to serve you and your families. But I can't be used unless you allow me into your world! This means that I can only help you if you allow the needs to be known. There's a beauty to see how God brings things together with those whom He has standing in your corner.

How can we best serve God and one another? By becoming vulnerable to God and one another. It's time we begin to share our needs instead of trying to fool ourselves into believing we can do it on our own. We might have the ability to get things done, but unless we open ourselves to others, how can they grow and learn from our examples? As we reflect Christ, people are drawn to Christ. ALL of us are to serve God, and I believe we are doing this well as a church and as individuals.

Being the pastor at Solid Rock is such a blessing! Marsha and I are looking forward to how God unfolds His plans for our church and community. Even more so, what He has planned for YOU! Please feel free to communicate with me and/or Marsha about whatever you wish. We are here for you and with you!



solidrockumc.com



Find us on:
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Prayer Requests

Requests for prayer should be directed to
Solid Rock Office at 375-3873
during office hours or
Pastor John Boyanowski
at (260) 580-8305
when office is closed

Seen on a church sign

- Honk if you love Jesus. Text while driving if you want to meet him.
- God shows no favoritism, but our sign guy does — Go Cubs!
- Prophecy class cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances
- Adam & Eve: The first people to not read the Apple terms and conditions
- May all your troubles last as long as your New Year's resolutions
- Church parking only. Violators will be baptized.
- I wish Noah had swatted those two mosquitoes
- God wants full custody, not just week-end visits

Lord, whether I leave behind a year of joy or of trials and difficulties, I pause to give thanks. Thank you for being with me every day of every year. Thank you for making all things new and for giving me the grace of fresh starts and new beginnings. Remind me of your presence in the days to come, even when I feel pushed and rushed by busyness. Be glorified in my life this year. Amen

— Heather C. King



2023

