

# News From The Rock

July 2021

Solid Rock United Methodist Church • Warren, Indiana

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

## Vacation Bible School

Mark your calendars! WAMA (Warren Area Ministerial Association) Community VBS is July 5-9, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Warren Church of Christ, 302 N. Wayne St, Warren, IN. VBS is open to all kids ages 5-12 years old.

This year we'll be spending the week with Bob Hobblegobble and the techs at the Solutions Labs, where their motto is, "You've got problems, God's got solutions!" We'll learn how God can help us, no matter what sticky situation we find ourselves in!



## Do you know your sacred pathway?

According to author Gary Thomas, you connect best with God and grow spiritually in one of nine unique ways. Discovering



your "sacred pathway" will help you understand how you most naturally relate to God and appreciate others who engage with God differently.

Solid Rock's Firm Foundation Sunday school class will study Thomas' "Sacred Pathways: Nine Ways to Connect with God" beginning July 4. They meet in the church kitchen at 9:00 a.m.

"Relating to God is not one-size-fits-all. If you have grown up in the church, you

(Continued on page 3)

## Indiana Annual Conference 2021

The 2021 Indiana Annual Conference took place on June 11-12. This was the first fully-digital Annual Conference in the Indiana Conference's history.

Rev. Annettra Jones Stephens challenged the Conference to dismantle racism with her devotion, based on the book of Nehemiah

### Children Matter Most

The Conference heard from Rev. Jennifer Huff, Chair of the Children Matter Most initiative. "Children Matter Most is not a mantra. It is the heart of churches and leaders who know children must have opportunities to know they are loved and cared for in their neighborhoods and schools," said Jennifer.

### Committee on Finance and Administration

After income and expenditures in 2020, there was a budget surplus of \$207,000. The 2022 budget, totaling \$11,871,159, was compiled with the following formula: INUMC Conference Needs + UMC Apportionment = Budget.

### Episcopal Address

Bishop Trimble's address was entitled "Awesome and Amazing". Bishop shared several examples of how God has been at work in the Indiana Conference in the last year, from church plants and Fresh Expressions to virtual Bible studies and baptisms. He declared, "Thank you, God, for signs of Pentecost and prayer power, for constant sightings and signs of Jesus and justice!"

### Pensions and Health Benefits

For 2022, the church contribution to-

(Continued on page 2)



I received this story a number of years ago via e-mail and couldn't pass up the opportunity to share it with you.

A man is in bed with his wife when there is a rat-a-tat-tat on the door. He rolls over and looks at his clock, and it's half past three in the morning. "I'm not getting out of bed at this time," he thinks, and rolls over. Then, a louder knock follows.

"Aren't you going to answer that?" says his wife.

So, he drags himself out of bed and goes downstairs. He opens the door and there is a man standing at the door. It doesn't take the homeowner long to realize the man is drunk.

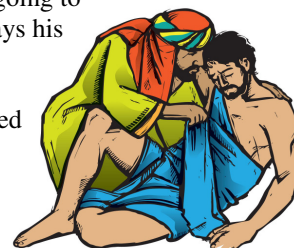
"Hi there," slurs the stranger. "Can you give me a push?"

"No, get lost! It's half past three! I was in bed!" screams the man as he slams the door. He goes back up to bed and tells his wife what happened. She remarks, "Dave, that wasn't very nice of you. Remember that night we broke down in the pouring rain on the way to pick the kids up from the baby sitter and you had to knock on that man's house to get us started again? What would have happened if he'd told us to get lost?"

"But the guy was drunk," says the husband.

"It doesn't matter," explains the wife.

(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.

(Continued from page 1)

ward clergy healthcare costs increased by only 1% (compared to 6% previously).

### Board of Trustees

Fifteen discontinued or abandoned church and Conference properties were sold for \$422,150.

Nine churches disaffiliated from the Indiana Conference.



### Resolution #1

The first resolution was submitted by Emily Krach on behalf of the Children Matter Most team, which is a call to immediate and sustained action on behalf of children. In part it reads:

“BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the people of the United Methodist Church of Indi-

ana, will work and walk according to God’s purposes for the lives of the children and their families in our communities. We will intervene where children encounter harm, seek healing that brings community, and offer love that leads to fullness of life. We will advocate for the children of Indiana that they may be given every opportunity to thrive and become disciples of Jesus Christ.”

Resolution #1 was adopted (98.3%).

### Resolution #2

The second resolution, submitted by Zachary Manton, is about having the Indiana Conference more actively support Adoption and Foster Care. Resolution #2 was adopted (96.9%).

### Resolution #3

The third resolution, proposed by Jacob Williams, regards an aspiration for delegates. It is meant to give optional guidance to General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates. In part it reads ...

“Therefore, we resolve and respectfully request that the members of the Indiana General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference delegations abstain ... from the making of charges or complaints against other persons of our connection. Furthermore, we call on members of these delegations to refrain from inciting or offering material assistance to others in filing similar charges, particularly when the purpose of these charges has been clearly stated as an attempt to further damage and undermine our adjudicatory system and deliberative processes.”

A motion was made to amend the resolution, adding to line 33 “as those charges and complaints relate to same gender weddings or LGBTQA+.”

Resolution #3 was approved as amended (56.9%).

### Resolution #4

The fourth resolution, submitted by William Amerson, regarded Equalizing Lay and Clergy Membership to Annual Conference. Its intent was to restore fairness and proportionality in allocations between districts. It would base equalization numbers on church membership instead of actual Charge Conference affiliation of retired and

extension clergy.

Resolution #4 did not pass (52.3% opposed).

### Committee on Finance and Administration

The 2022 budget was presented for approval. The motion passed (94.4%).

### Celebration of Life

The Conference honored the lives of 38 clergy and 40 spouses who have joined the Church Triumphant in the last year.

### Retiree Recognition

Thirty retirees were honored for 737 years of combined faithful service to the Indiana Conference.

### Presentation of Persons to be Commissioned and Ordained

Six persons were commissioned as provisional members. Three persons were commissioned for the work of elder.

Bishop Trimble has set the dates for the 2022 Annual Conference Session as June 9 -11, 2022, at Indiana Wesleyan University in Marion, Indiana.

Conference representatives from Solid Rock were Pastor Paul Burris and Gary Walter. Full details of the conference may be found online at inumc.org.

### Bible Study

“Feasting on the Word” Bible studies for the month of July are as follows:

- July 5: 1 Corinthians 3:1-16 (We Are God’s Temple); Ann Spahr, leader
- July 12: Mark 10:32-45 (Called to a Life of Service); Joe Haney, leader
- July 19: Ephesians 3:14-21 (The Full Measure of God’s Love); Jorita Banter, leader
- July 26: John 6:24-35 (Musical Guest/ Communion); Ann Spahr, leader

Our studies are held in the church kitchen at 7:00 p.m. Each person is encouraged to bring their Bible and an open spirit of sharing. Even though the first study of the month falls on a “holiday,” we will gather to be refreshed in the mercy and love of our Lord. Do come! The place is air-conditioned!

Joe Haney, Coordinator



## News From The Rock

is published each month by

### Solid Rock United Methodist Church

P.O. Box 322  
Warren, Indiana 46792

[www.solidrockumc.com](http://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

Pastor: Rev. Paul Burris

[pburris@hotmail.com](mailto:pburris@hotmail.com)  
(260) 609-9260

Interim Youth Director: Emily Okes  
[youthministry@solidrockumc.com](mailto:youthministry@solidrockumc.com)

Editor: Gary Walter  
[gary@solidrockumc.com](mailto:gary@solidrockumc.com)

Office Manager/Treasurer: Jane Hitzfield  
[jane@solidrockumc.com](mailto:jane@solidrockumc.com)

Financial Secretary: Wanda Spahr  
[wanda@solidrockumc.com](mailto:wanda@solidrockumc.com)

News deadline for the August newsletter: July 25

(Continued from *Pastor Paul*, page 1)

“He needs our help and it would be nice to help him.”

So, the husband gets out of bed again, gets dressed and goes downstairs. He opens the door but he can't see the stranger anywhere in the dark, so he shouts, “Hey, do you still want a push?”

He hears a voice cry out, “Yes, please.”

“Where are you?” shouts the homeowner.

The stranger calls back, “I'm over here, on your swing.” (Unknown author)

I'd like to share several thoughts I have concerning this story. In Luke 10:22 Jesus instructs one of the teachers of the law (and us) to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.” He then went on to tell the story of the Good Samaritan describing just who our neighbor is and offers an example as to how it is that we are to care for them.

The reality of Jesus' parable is that everyone is to be considered as our neighbor. There are no outsiders in God's eyes. At times it is difficult at best to reach out to people who aren't a part of our circle of friends. Sometimes it's inconvenient, as the man in the story pointed out to his wife and the stranger at the door. Sometimes we fear that it might be costly (both time and money). Sometimes our neighbor's requests seem far-out and ridiculous, and even unreasonable (as it was in this story).

The part of the story that struck me was even though the gentleman at the door had an unreasonable request the man in the house would have never known it until he went back a second time. And this was only after his wife had reminded him that he too had been in that position in the past and someone reached out to help. Many times in life our response to the knock on the door (or a hand held out, etc.) is to simply ignore it for whatever reason. Other times we are forced to acknowledge our neighbor is in need. We respond to this inconvenience resentful and bitter.

It wasn't until the third opportunity the homeowner had to respond to the gentleman at the door that he began to understand the situation. Yes, in the end the situation proved to be comedic. However, in life we never know what one's situation is if we don't take the time to stop and listen. I can only imagine how grateful the traveler was in Jesus parable that the Samaritan took the time to cross the road and reach out to a

total stranger. We too are called to reach out to those in need, because you never know when you might be the traveler in need.

See you Sunday,  
Pastor Paul

(Continued from *Sacred Pathways*, page 1)

might have been led to believe there is only one 'right' way of connecting with God and experiencing his presence. Perhaps the one-size-fits-all mentality has left you feeling frustrated and a bit distant from your heavenly Father. But the truth is, not every person will engage with God in the same way. For this reason, it is important to discover the particular pathway that will best help you grow your faith.

“In this five-session video Bible study, Gary Thomas describes nine spiritual temperaments that will help you understand your key pathway. You will be encouraged to investigate the ways that you most naturally express yourself in your relationship with God. You will discover the traits, strengths, and tendencies in your own devotional approach, so that you can eliminate the barriers that keep you locked into rigid methods of worship and praise. And you will also understand how to relate to others who have different spiritual temperaments from your own.”

Plan to join us Sunday mornings at 9:00 in the church kitchen!

## The flavor of the gospel

“You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor?” (Matthew 5:13, NLT). These words from Jesus might seem strange to us — can salt lose its flavor? But in New Testament times, most of the salt used as seasoning, preservative, medicinal aid and more came from the Dead Sea, where impurities often compromised its usefulness, especially its flavor.

Jesus urges his disciples — including us — to not let the flavor of the gospel be suppressed in our lives. What might do this? Teachings that treat patriotism, prosperity or any other value as equal to Jesus; the tendency to elevate one nation, church denomination, theological understanding or religious tradition above all others; such intense focus on the laws of ancient Israel that we neglect the superseding grace of God. But neither should we force the gospel on people, like overpowering



their food by dumping in too much salt at once.

As followers of Jesus, we're the salt of the earth. Let us use his good news to gently season others' lives with service and love.

## Friendly signposts

We need friends. Friends guide us, care for us, confront us in love, console us in times of pain. Although we speak of “making friends,” friends cannot be made. Friends are free gifts from God. But God gives us the friends we need when we need them if we fully trust in God's love.

Friends cannot replace God. They have limitations and weaknesses like we have. Their love is never faultless, never complete. But in their limitations they can be signposts on our journey towards the unlimited and unconditional love of God. Let's enjoy the friends whom God has sent on our way.

—Henri Nouwen, *Bread for the Journey*



## In God's hands

In *Keep a Quiet Heart*, Christian missionary Elisabeth Elliot ponders the faith implications of fretting about days to come.

“Today is mine; tomorrow is none of my business,” she writes. “If I peer anxiously into the fog of the future, I will strain my spiritual eyes so that I will not see clearly what is required of me now.”

And what's the alternative? Instead of dwelling on times to come, which we can't change anyway, Elliot recommends: “Leave it all in the hands that were wounded for you.”



## May Financial Update

General Fund Receipts .....\$13,384  
General Fund Expenses .....\$12,939



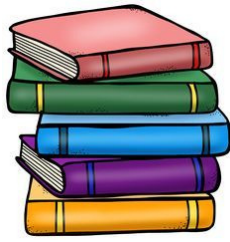
[solidrockumc.com](http://solidrockumc.com)





## Books for loan

Solid Rock has a number of books available for loan to anyone interested. They are located on shelves under the bulletin board in the fellowship area. Sign-out instructions are posted there.



## Free books

Also in the fellowship area is a box of free books. Help yourself!

- “That the birds of worry and care fly over your head, this you cannot change, but that they build nests in your hair, this you can prevent.” —Chinese proverb
- “Dripping water hollows out stone, not through force but through persistence.” —Ovid

For our country, O God, I am so thankful. For our immigrant ancestors who came here across an ocean that seemed so wide; for their years of struggle against obstacles that I have never faced; for the sacrifices of others who built our country and defended it against all the things that would go wrong; for opportunities in my own lifetime to do something that would really make a difference; for a place in which to raise a family, to seek to do well in my job, to worship you in freedom, and to cherish the hopes and dreams for the years ahead—I am, O God, deeply thankful.



—ministrymatters.com

