

News From The Rock

April-May 2020

Solid Rock United Methodist Church • Warren, Indiana

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

Family Ministry Update

By John Pearson,
Family Ministry Coordinator

The Little Rocks children's ministry has been and will continue meeting on "Zoom" every Thursday night at 6:30 p.m. until we are able to resume our normal meetings. We started our first online meeting on April 2 and have averaged between 12-32 kids, adults, and sponsors.

During this time we play several games with each other and have a lesson.

Each week the kids have been issued a challenge for them to complete before we meet again.

Unfortunately, our traditional WAMA VBS that was scheduled for June 1-5 has been canceled. We are, however, looking into a few different ideas to still do something at some point. Once I have more information on this I will let you know.

Rock Foundations 456 and Rock Solid Youth have been meeting together weekly on "Zoom" every Sunday evening at 6:30 p.m. We will continue to meet like this until we are able to return to our normal Sunday evening meetings. We have seen anywhere from 12-16 teens and sponsors log in for our meetings. Much like the children's ministry, we play some games, fellowship together, and have a lesson. We started a new series titled "Jesus' Parables" on April 19. Unfortunately, we have had to postpone many scheduled events, and even our work project at the Heath's townhouse.

As of right now all summer camps are still planning to run. The camps have extended the early bird registration and also are offering full refunds if students aren't able to make it because to this virus. We are encouraging students in grades K-5 to

attend Camp Lakewood on June 21-25. We have a total of four adults from Solid Rock planning to attend as camp counselors this week.

We are encouraging students in grades 6-8 to attend Camp Adventure on July 12-17. We have two adults from Solid Rock planning to attend as camp counselors this week. I will be attending and staying for this week as well, but as a camp director. I am getting to see some behind the scenes camp planning and this week is going to be awesome.

We are encouraging students in grades 9-12 to attend Epworth Forest on July 5-10. I will be attending as a camp counselor this week. As of right now I know of nine children/teens signed up for camp across these three weeks.

I hope and pray everyone is staying healthy during this time. I miss you all!

Online directory now available

Our directories have arrived! We are in the process of delivering print editions. Call the office (375-3873) to arrange to get yours.

Online access is now also available. If you submitted an email address at the time your provided roster information, you should have received notification and instructions on how to proceed.

In order to access the online version, you must submit roster information and an email address. If you did not do so previously, please contact Gary Walter (gary@solidrockumc.com) and he will add you. Also contact Gary if you did not receive the email from United Church Directories with your access code.



Isaiah 41:13. *For I am the LORD your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.*

What happens when we leave our fear and anxiety unchecked? We are well into our third month of this Coronavirus outbreak. Nothing is normal right now.

There's a lot to cause us to be afraid. Fear of the unknown, fear of getting sick and how mild or even fatal the virus could be, fear of not seeing loved ones, fear of the result of lost finances. It's a lot to deal with.

What is normal is how our body responds to fear. We are all subjected to PTSD right now. Our body's fight or flight mechanism is kicking in because we are sensing real danger. Staying in that state will cause us to be anxious and release hormones into our bodies that if continued could impair our immune systems. It's a normal response.

But severe anxiety that's unchecked can cause our breathing to increase and escalate into a panic attack. Shortness of breath is one of the symptoms of the virus, so that can cause even more anxiety. God gave us instincts for fear, but God did not give us a spirit of fear.

We already live in a fear-filled culture. Anxiety is rooted in scarcity. What is unfortunate about our culture, is it had already trained us to be stressed and anxious in "normal" times.

Advertising constantly bombards us with messages that we need the latest and greatest products to prove we are enough. The stressing and striving and multi-

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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.

Bible Study

Dear Solid Rock brothers and sisters, when the “social distancing” is lifted for our area, we will again gather for Monday evening Bible studies based on Pastor Paul’s sermons. Until that time you are encouraged to follow your *Upper Room* or other devotionals that you have. I, Joe Haney, personally recommend *Gift and Task* by Walter Brueggemann, a year of daily readings and reflections. Another publication for your spiritual enrichment might be *Daily Feast*, meditations from Feasting on the Word, Year A, edited by Kathleen Bostrom & Elizabeth Caldwell. Let the spirit of Christ draw you into richer fellowship with our Savior as we journey together toward Pentecost. Mizpah!

News From The Rock

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Solid Rock United Methodist Church

P.O. Box 322

Warren, Indiana 46792

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, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

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

Wednesday

9:00 a.m. - Noon

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News deadline for the June
newsletter: May 24

Completes degree

Tom Bolinger will graduate from Purdue Fort Wayne with a Master of Applied Computer Science degree in May. He has accepted a position at Purdue Fort Wayne as a professor in the Computer Science Department.

Donation Options

Your continued financial support of Solid Rock during this period of suspended worship services is appreciated. Here are some giving options.

1. Mail a check to: Solid Rock UMC, P.O. Box 322, Warren, IN 46792.
2. Most banks have online banking options, which are usually free of charge. These can be set up as one-time payments or scheduled ongoing payments. (Locally, both First Merchants Bank and Bippus State Bank have free online bill pay services.) Contact your bank for details.
3. Donate online or using a mobile app. Solid Rock has enabled giving via Vanco GivePlus. (Vanco is a partner of the United Methodist Church’s General Council on Finance and Administration.) Donations can be made using checking or savings accounts or credit/debit cards. (Givers may opt to cover the processing fees, about 2-2.5%, at their discretion.) To get started, simply go to solidrockumc.com and click on “Donate.”

God is Bigger Than the Coronavirus

March Madness: Canceled

Disney World: Closed

Classes: Online

Travel to Europe: Suspended

Canceled. Closed. Online. Suspended. Is anyone else tired of hearing these words?

It’s inevitable that you are a victim of canceled events, postponed trips, remote classes, and accommodating plans. Maybe it’s your senior year of college, and the last semester you thought you had with your friends has been significantly shortened. Maybe you had planned a trip to visit Europe over spring break, and now you will be home with your parents instead. Maybe

you’ve been looking forward to the final showdown against your basketball team’s fiercest rival and now you will never know which team finished on top. This is the nature of the situation in our country and in our world. We are all feeling the weight of cancellations and disappointment. Let us tell you something you might need to hear;

You have permission to be disappointed.

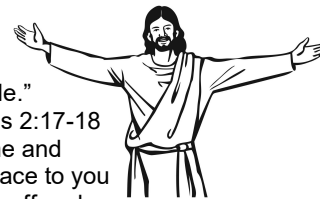
Do you know that it’s not wrong to be disappointed? It’s not a sin to be sad. It’s ok to mourn the fact that the next few months will not be what you thought they would. And the beauty of the disappointment we face right now is that we are all in it together. You are not the only one in the world, the country, the town, the room that is feeling it. Cancellations are frustrating. But while we all agree on this, let us also realize this:

When *everything* else is canceled, there is One Thing that never is.

There is One Person who never cancels on us.

When everyone else says, “Our doors are closed.”

God says,
“My arms
are open wide.”



Ephesians 2:17-18

“And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.”

When the health department says, “Practice social distancing.” Jesus says, “Come to me.”

Matthew 11:28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

When your social media feed shows nothing but hysteria and fear, the Holy Spirit says, “I will comfort you and give you peace.”

Galatians 5:22-23 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

All of this is proof that God is bigger than the coronavirus.

Did you hear that?

We’ll say it again just in case: God is bigger than the coronavirus. Let’s entrust our hope, our future, and even our disappointment to Him. Because He can handle it!

Even when everything else is canceled, He *never* will.

—From the website of Grace College
(grace.edu)

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tasking to keep up made us feel that we could never get enough done. We need to find a way to get past the feeling of not having enough by letting go of the need for outward approval and focusing on God's approval.

When we spend time daily in meditation, prayer, reading scripture, and reading inspirational material, our spiritual muscles kick in to serve us when we are put to the test in the form of peace, faith, hope, endurance, and resilience.

Physical muscles must literally be torn down in order to be built back up and to be built up stronger. We need to tear down those anxious thoughts of fear, worry, and doubt, so that we build our faith, hope, and peace.

It's never too late to build your spiritual muscles! When you do, you will be equipped to handle challenges now and in the future.

Prayer, meditation, journaling, spending time in God's Word, are all spiritual exercises, that if done on a regular basis, will build your spiritual muscles. There are several resources to help you. I have always found that a daily devotional like *The Upper Room*, or *Our Daily Bread*, etc. can be very useful. There are several resource links on our church website that you can access. We have several resources in our church library for anyone to use. I also encourage you to seek out material on your own.

Philippians instructs us to think on what is true, honorable, pleasing, commendable, excellent, and what is worthy of praise and the God of peace will be with us.

Guard your heart and your mind during this stressful time.

Breathe in peace and let go of worry, anxiety and fear.

Isaiah 41:13 says, "For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, do not fear; I will help you."

And Psalm 56:3, "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you."

When you build spiritual muscles, you can let go of anxiety and fear to weather life's storms and challenges with grace and peace.

Shalom,
Pastor Paul

Unleashing the Power of the Church

By Bishop Julius C. Trimble
Resident Bishop, Indiana Conference of
The United Methodist Church

John 14:12 (NRSV) says, "Very truly I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these."

Jesus says those who love Him and keep His commandments will engage in fruitful ministry with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Greater works will be done. The great secret of the Church and the great power of the Church is the people of God who are indeed the Church.



The key to the successful Church is no great secret at all: laity and the ministry of laity. Our Book of Discipline says, "The ministry of the laity flows from a commitment to Christ's outreaching love. Lay members of The United Methodist Church are, by history and calling, active advocates of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Every layperson is called to carry out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18 – 20); every layperson is called to be missional (§ 127)."

Since we have not been worshipping in our buildings, some have wondered if we are losing our identity. I believe we have a great opportunity to rise to our highest potential and expand our ministry.

In fact, the evangelist ministry of the Church comes alive as laity live their lives in relationship with others with gratitude and thanksgiving as followers of Jesus.

To all of the laity of The Indiana United Methodist Church, I ask, "How is it with your soul? What has COVID-19 taught us about who we are and how we deal with crisis? What new future is God preparing us for?"

Thank you for the ways you have kept the ministry of your local congregations and community ministries alive and relevant. I learned a long time ago that United Methodists are doers more than talkers, and that still rings true today. Thank you!

I am encouraged by your steadfast support of the Church and your eagerness to support frontline workers in health and safety. Just because we are social distancing does not mean we are prohibited from speaking and sharing our care for others.

Especially during this pandemic, the Church truly has left the building.

May the power of the Holy Spirit unleash the Church for the work we have to do. I thank God daily for the lay men and women, children, and youth in the Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church.

March Financial Update

General Offerings \$12,674
General Fund Expenses \$15,633

April Financial Update

General Offerings \$15,325
General Fund Expenses \$14,179

Hidden Books

Can you find the names of sixteen (16) books of the Bible hidden in the paragraph below?

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible (merely by a fluke). It kept people looking so hard for the facts and for others it was a revelation. Some



were in a jam, especially since the name of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes,

there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be a loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now.

There really are sixteen names of books hidden in this story!

- "Never yet was a springtime when the buds forgot to bloom."
—Margaret Elizabeth Sangster
- "Spring shows what God can do with a drab and dirty world." —Virgil A. Kraft
- "Where flowers bloom, so does hope."
—Lady Bird Johnson
- "There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature — the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter."
— Rachel Carson



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When will we meet again?

The question everyone would like an answer to is, "When will we meet again?" A core group of Solid Rock leaders met on Tuesday, April 28, to begin formulating plans for the day that we can once again gather as a congregation. With the status of the pandemic changing daily, it is difficult if not impossible to establish a firm date. It was decided at this meeting that the earliest feasible first opening date would be June 7, with a reevaluation of that projected date as it approaches.

In the meantime, Solid Rock will continue with the weekly online posting of a worship service. Planning has begun for resuming services with a number of social distancing measures in place. The only activity at first opening will be a worship service, with no Sunday school or other activities until a later date.

Watch for further announcements as plans begin to take shape. Please continue to be in prayer for Pastor Paul and church leadership as they discern what is in the best interest of the congregation as planning continues.

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

