

# News From The Rock

August 2021

Solid Rock United Methodist Church • Warren, Indiana

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

## Sunday school matters

With the experience of Covid and online Sunday school, our church has learned how much the children want to learn about God's love.

They showed up week after week for Sunday school. Our children hunger for His peace and grace just the same as all of the adults. Even through that difficult time, many children were with us online, and working through some tough questions and lessons. The kids were there. Sunday school matters.

1. Just look at the times Jesus mentions the importance of children.
  - "But Jesus called the children to him and said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.'" Luke 18:16
  - "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me." Mark 9:37
  - "Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." Luke 18:17
2. Parents need spiritual backup.
  - It supports Godly parenting and initiates conversation between parents and children about their faith.
  - It helps nudge some parents into more faithful attendance.
  - It brings unchurched families in contact with the gospel.
3. Every soul matters to God! Even if the

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## Bible Study

"Feasting on the Word" Bible studies will be held in the church kitchen each Monday evening at 7:00 p.m. With the beginning of public school classes, it is time for the gathering of students of God's Word to us. Pastor Paul has outlined some enriching passages for our reading this month. You are encouraged to give to the Lord an hour of your time to be immersed in his will. Below are the scriptures to be studied each week. Come as often as you can, bring your Bible, and share your engagements with God through his Word.

- August 2: Psalm 34:1-8 (A Testimony of Praise); Joe Haney, leader
- August 9: Ephesians 4:1-6 (It's Hard to Be Humble); Jorita Banter, leader
- August 16: Ephesians 4:22-5:2 (Walk in the Way of Love); Ann Spahr, leader
- August 23: Romans 7:15-25a (Walking Back the Cat); Joe Haney, leader
- August 30: Mark 1:40-45 & James 2:12-13 (Reflecting God's Love); Jorita Banter, leader

There is always room for another disciple on the journey of faith. Do join us!

Joe Haney, Coordinator



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



Gate Keeper versus Gate Greeter. I have been thinking a lot lately about the difference between Judaism and Christianity. The big difference, I see, is that Judaism provides a faith which is focused on the one God, just like Christianity, but does not seek to proselytize others. Christians are commissioned, Matthew 28:18-20, to share their faith with others.

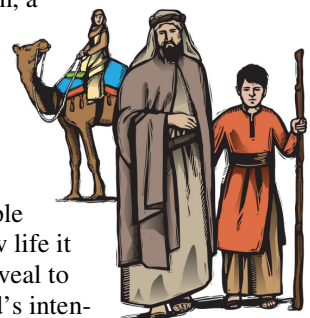
Cultural understanding helps us see the reason why these two faith traditions are different. Yes, we worship the same God, but I think Christianity is a further unfolding, a further revelation of God's desires for his creation, a

desire from the onset. Let me explain.

When God called Abraham to leave his people to begin a new life it was to also reveal to Abraham God's intentions for humankind, from the very beginning. We need to remember that in Abraham's time everyone believed in gods. There was no atheism, not believing in a god, or more. Everyone believed that each geographical location had its own god. If you moved to a new place you had to learn who that god was and the expectations of that god. That is, you learned what you needed to do to keep on the good side of that god.

Abraham first moved to Haran from Ur with his father Terah. It was from there

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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.*

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attendance is small, it is still important to God! I'm so glad that God shows up every Sunday to our church, even though we don't have 1000 people in attendance. Small is where we start.

We need to be the hands and feet of God in order for this to happen. We need to search our hearts and remember that none of us are too old, too busy, or too tired to share God's word with our young folks. They are the future of the church in the world. It is our responsibility to be there to teach and share God's word and love with them.

So it's time to refocus our Children's Sunday school. A new curriculum is being prepared. It will be easy to teach, involve a small amount of preparation, and be organ-

ized for you each month. We will need to know the number of volunteers we have in order to plan for the number of classes that we will be able to have for our children.

Please consider volunteering for this very important ministry. We need all of you—even if you can't teach on Sunday morning, you could still be a person who organizes the supplies for a craft, or a game. You might be the person who volunteers to tell a Bible story to the kids once a month, or help to lead some songs. Whatever you are able to do will be so welcome! Please contact the church office (375-3873) or Pastor Paul (260-609-9260).

## Thank you!

We want to thank everyone who sent cards, brought delicious food and offered up prayers for the healing of my fractured fibula. I am released from the doctor with no more pain and just some stiffness, but everything is progressing well. Solid Rock-ers are great partners in our daily lives. God blesses us through each of you.

Thank you,  
Marcia Jackson

## Playground equipment

Following the closure of Lancaster Elementary School, Solid Rock salvaged several pieces of playground equipment in hopes of installing them on our property. Unfortunately, this

is going to be unfeasible. This equipment is now available by request, offered first to those who attend

Solid Rock. If you are interested, please contact Dave Spahr (375-3147 or 375-6375) or the church office at 375-3873. If a piece is requested by more than one person, a drawing will determine the recipient. Deadline to request is August 21.



## Ministry Opportunities

Attached to this newsletter is a 2022 Ministry Opportunities form. This assists the Nominations Committee in matching interests with needs. Please complete and return the form. Additional copies will be available in the sanctuary or from the church office.

## The power of listening

"The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen," says Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen, author and integrative medicine professor. "Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention."

Twice in Mark 4, while teaching, Jesus urges, "Let anyone with ears to hear listen" (verses 9 & 23, NRSV). One way we show what Jesus means to us is by truly listening to his word — not just hearing sounds but being attentive and intentional. Likewise, one way we love and serve others is by respectfully listening to them: not assuming we know what they feel or mean or will say; not planning what to say even as they're still speaking, but listening deeply to learn about them and their experience.

We often think living our faith calls for great accomplishments or worldwide reach. But Remen says, "A loving silence often has ... power to heal and to connect." Don't underestimate something as basic and doable as listening as a way to practice Christlike love.



## Friends with binoculars

At a beautiful outdoor wedding reception in the Colorado foothills, a group of us noticed a family of black bears on the next hill. We were so excited because we'd never seen them in the wild! When some friends grabbed binoculars from their car, however, we realized the creatures were merely grazing cows.

Now I tell this story whenever I'm asked what exciting wildlife I've encountered in the mountains. It gets a good laugh but also reminds me that I desperately need friends with binoculars. Instead of surrounding myself with people who automatically agree with me and don't challenge my perceptions, I need friends in my life who search with me for answers, accuracy and truth. Let's all be on the "lookout" for friends with binoculars!

—Janna Firestone

"A Christian man is the most free lord of all, and subject to none; a Christian man is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to everyone."

—Martin Luther



### News From The Rock

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#### Solid Rock United Methodist Church

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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

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News deadline for the September newsletter: August 22

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Abraham was called to a new land and, of course, in his understanding to a new god. In order for Abraham to make this transition it was necessary for him to leave behind his father and his father's god or gods.

The promise made to Abraham, found in Genesis 12:1-3, included a blessing to all nations. That is the people of Abraham would be the agents of blessing from God to the world. In order to be these agents the people needed to be established first as a new nation and then they needed to learn the way to live according to the ways of this new God.

As this nation became established through Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve sons of Jacob, they began to understand they had a God who was committed to them. They did not have a capricious god from whom they had to guess what would please him, but they did need to be committed to this new God, just as he was committed to them.

The growth of the Hebrews, or Israelites as they became to be called, in Egypt helped them establish this new nation. Yet it wasn't until their exodus, from Egypt, which also meant leaving all the gods of the Egyptians, that they were able to firm up the definitive aspects of the way they would relate to their God. This was when the Law was introduced. This provided them with the boundaries and parameters of their new found faith in Yahweh.

This Law was not just the restrictions and boundaries of this God's ways, but it was a covenant, it was an agreement, where both parties had expectations and benefits. When a person outside of this nation wanted to join them they also had to agree to follow the Law.

Basically the priests made sure the rules were followed the right way and were called to make sure the people did not step out of line, that is cross these rules. The priests were the Gate Keepers of this faith. This faith was in a God to whom they were committed and worshiped.

The blessing from God could only come to those people who bought into the Jewish way of life and who were willing to accept and commit towards this covenant which God had established.

In Christianity Jesus came to let us know that God is not bounded by geography nor by rules. It was the intent behind the rules that was important. It was the message that was important not the structure from whence it came.

We all know that the ten command-

ments, which are a distillation of the Law, can easily be divided into two parts. The first four help us maintain our relationship with God. The following six help us maintain our relationship with our neighbor or those people with whom we are in contact. Yet Jesus came to not only show us how to live out the rules (Matthew 5:17), but what was behind them. He came to show us that God's love for us is so deep that we can't fathom how far it goes. He also came to show that everyone, Jews and Gentile (that is everyone who is not a Jew) has an opportunity to receive that love and to live it out by sharing that same love with those around us.

The blessings to the nations can come through us. We are the new agents, we are the priesthood, the chosen race, the holy nation, God's own people, "in order that you (we) may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you (us) out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)."

We are to be the Gate Greeters. We are to be the ones who welcome anyone who comes to us seeking to experience a relationship with the almighty God. This God is not bound by geography, this God is not bound by our own understanding, this God is a God which longs to have a relationship with everyone on earth.

We are to follow the mission which Jesus voiced in his first sermon in Nazareth in Luke 4:18-19, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Jesus did not come to shore up the gate against those who are not worthy to enter, but to throw open the gate wide to allow any, and all, who seek a relationship with God, and so they too can have a meaningful relationship with each other.

It is my prayer that we can all become Gate Greeters and not Gate Keepers. Our calling is an expansion of the one God gave to Abraham. We are not only to be a blessing to the nations, but we are to help others become the disciples God desires all of us to be.

See you Sunday,  
Paul

### June Financial Update

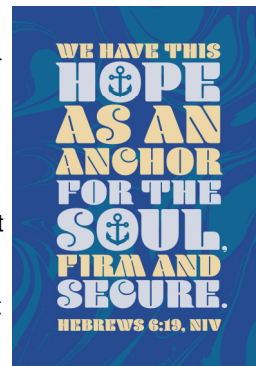
General Fund Receipts.....	\$16,434
General Fund Expenses.....	\$15,681

## Hope defined

Hoping does not mean doing nothing. .... It means going about our assigned tasks, confident that God will provide the meaning and the conclusions. It is not compelled to work away at keeping up appearances with a bogus spirituality. It is the opposite of desperate and panicky manipulations, of scurrying and worrying.

And hoping is not dreaming. It is not spinning an illusion or fantasy to protect us from our boredom or our pain. It means a confident, alert expectation that God will do what he said he will do. It is imagination put in the harness of faith. It is a willingness to let God do it his way and in his time. It is the opposite of making plans that we demand that God put into effect, telling him both how and when to do it.

—Eugene Peterson,  
*A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*



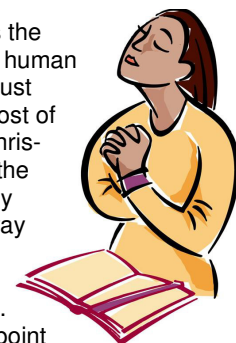
## A surprising solution

The only solution for being broken is ... brokenness. By brokenness, I mean the acknowledgment of it, the full and unflinching acceptance that we are bankrupt, poor in spirit and have nothing to offer. In our culture, that's a hard sell. ... Brokenness is not trending on Twitter. It's not written on anyone's résumé, and it's no business strategy at all. It is, however, the one hope Jesus holds out for us, the inside-out, upside-down way that is somehow the only path that ultimately is right side up. Embrace the paradox: brokenness is the way to wholeness.

—Kyle Idleman, *The End of Me*

## That's the point!

If prayer stands as the place where God and human beings meet, then I must learn about prayer. Most of my struggles in the Christian life circle around the same two themes: why God doesn't act the way we want God to, and why I don't act the way God wants me to. Prayer is the precise point where those themes converge.



—Philip Yancey



NEED A REASON TO BUY A CARD?

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Today's  
housekeeping tip:

Always keep several  
Get Well cards on the  
Mantlepiece. That way,  
if unexpected  
guests arrive,  
they'll think  
you've been  
**SICK** and  
unable to clean.



**Get Well Cards are now 3 for \$1.00**

*Find them in the hallway  
next the church office.*

- "Teaching a child not to step on a caterpillar is as valuable to the child as it is to the caterpillar." —Bradley Miller
- "Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible." —Corrie ten Boom

Lord, my Dwelling Place, I give thanks for the blessing of my church family. I love that we can gather to worship you and mutually encourage one another. I thank you that we have the privilege of praying together and praying for each other. I thank you for the sweet fellowship we have while eating, working, or serving together. I am incredibly blessed by my brothers and sisters in



Christ and how our individual gifts and personalities blend into a precious whole. Amen.

—connectusfund.org

