

News From The Rock

August 2022

Solid Rock United Methodist Church • Warren, Indiana

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

Small group meetings will provide information on UM separation issues

Solid Rock is planning to offer a series of small group meetings to provide information to anyone interested regarding current separation issues in the United Methodist Church. Information presented will outline reasons for division in the denomination and options for churches moving forward. Pastor John will provide guidance on how we, as a church, may begin to discern God's leading.

Please indicate your interest in attending one of these meetings by adding your name to the list at the back of the sanctuary, or call Jane in the church office at 375-3783. Groups will intentionally be kept small to provide all attending the opportunity to ask questions and share thoughts. Specific dates and times will be announced after we determine how many are interested in participating.

Kids Club

Fall Kids Club is starting soon! The first session will be August 18 and will take place on the third Thursday of each month from 6:00 -7:30. A meal is provided, along with music, a lesson, crafts, and games. The first topic is

"Who is God?" All children ages four through fourth grade are welcome. Please contact Marie DeWeese or Rita Bolinger for more information. Anyone willing to assist should also contact Marie or Rita.



Parsonage Remodel

Remodeling and updating projects at the Solid Rock parsonage are progressing, though not as quickly as hoped. Rooms have been painted and flooring is being replaced. The kitchen is undergoing a complete remodel.

Thank you to all who have provided meals for Pastor John and Marsha, easing the transition and inconvenience. Donations to the Parsonage Fund are still being gladly accepted to cover remaining construction costs.

Ask the Pastor Vase

If anyone has a topic which they would like to have addressed, please feel free to write it down and place it in the "Ask the Pastor" vase on the back table.

These will be addressed in one of three ways: personally (if you leave contact information), as an article, or in a message/sermon. No topic is too small, large or taboo to discuss. We at Solid Rock want to meet your needs and answer your questions.



Foster Support

Are you a foster parent or in a foster family and need support? If you and/or a family member/friend would like to start a Foster Parent Support Group, or if you are a single parent and wish to start a support group, please contact Pastor John and let's see what we can do to get the ball rolling!



Shepherding Moments

by Pastor John Boyanowski

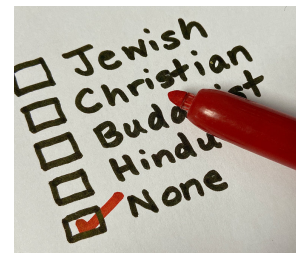
The Nones

Please read *Jonah*, chapters 3 and 4, with special emphasis on chapter 4.

I sat in the Sunday school class studying the book called *Irresistible* written by Andy Stanley in which he addresses the issue of why more and more people are leaving the church and why churches are disappearing because of the lack of attendance and worship of God. In this study, the class leader brought up a phrase which Stanley dubbed "The Nones." When I heard the term, I was captivated by what this meant by the author. This refers to the individuals who do not have a church home, a faith system, or religious belief in God or in any god – thus the term bestowed by Stanley.

As a pastor, this made my heart hurt, because there is a full world of people who can be classified in "The Nones" category. Stanley reports in his video that accompanies the study that one third of the world population identifies God/Jesus Christ/Holy Spirit and a belief in this particular faith system. However, the question was raised in the study asking why do people not attend church anymore? Several answers came up: people becoming complacent with the recent COVID restrictions,

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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.

Stewardship in Today's Times

By John Boyanowski

Please read Hebrews 13:1-19

In this modern age, a great deal of people are beginning to understand how hard it is to be able to make ends meet, develop any sort of savings plan, or be able to plan financially for the future. It is reported in the news that approximately 50% of America is living paycheck to paycheck.

With soaring gas prices, inflation, and food prices, it is difficult to be able to think about stewardship within the church. There are those who struggle with not being able to pay tithe or to give a donation to the church and therefore will not attend church because of the embarrassment they feel. Still others feel equally anxious because

they may have to decide between paying a bill, buying groceries, or paying for medication, and having to reduce the amount of donations they would normally give. And it is not just the church that is seeing a decline in giving: all of the various charitable organizations have seen a sharp decrease in giving because of each individual's economic situation. Thus, the question remains: how can we be good stewards of what God has provided for each one of us and be able to continue our charitable desires?

The writer of Hebrews (the Scriptures that are provided above) shares with us that there is more than one way to be able to bring sacrifices pleasing to God. The first and greatest is the fact that the writer talks about love. And I would like to point out that there's two forms of love here that I feel that the writer is focusing on: agape love, which is unconditional/unearned love, and unlovable love – this is a love which is defined as following: a love which is once given that can never be taken back, regardless of whatever the person may have done; the person given such love never stops loving that individual or lessens the amount of love given to that person. And not only is this the most important aspect of stewardship, it is also the most abundant resource for stewardship.

Everyone needs love and acceptance and a place to fit in. When a person takes time to love someone, it not only transforms the world, it can also save lives literally. And the writer continues on in this passage to talk about showing hospitality to strangers, remembering those who are in prison/mistreated, and being able to teach others how to avoid various circumstances in their lives which may have brought on the negative situations that they are facing.

Another thing that the writer shares in this passage is to be able to know and understand what it is to follow God. The writer shares that we need to imitate the lifestyle that Christ has taught us through the example of his apostles and Jesus Christ himself (who was the One who disciplined the apostles). The writer goes on to say, "Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." (verses 15 and 16).

So, one might ask, "What does the church do with the tithes and offerings?". Of course, some of the tithes are used for operating expenses: utilities, building maintenance, supplies and so on; but for the most part, the tithes and offerings are given back into the community in forms of services: these may include, but are not limited to, food banks, utility assistance, rent/mortgage assistance, medical emergencies, various missions, education, mental health, and I can go on.

It is not only the individuals that have to become good stewards, but also the churches themselves, who must lead by example with good stewardship practices which are pleasing to God.

How can an individual begin to become faithful in their stewardship? First, pray to God. Allow him to

be able to lead you in the various ways of giving of your time, gifts, talents, and finances. He knows your heart. Allow him to direct you. If you do not have the financial means to be able to give, use some of the other ways that God has empowered you to be able to give of yourself: maybe volunteer, keep people in prayer, send notes of encouragement, take time to visit a shut-in, or whatever else God places on your heart. If you are able to give financially, that's amazingly great, but it should not be the point where you are neglecting your own or your family's needs to make the contribution. Decide what organizations/ministries you'd like to donate to and place yourself on a budget to where you are also able to meet your own needs.

One final thing: give cheerfully. God wants us to give because we are happy to give and not just because we were obligated to. I invite you to see how your money is utilized to help meet the needs of those in our fellowship and community. Be inspired to see how your giving brings hope to those who have been worried and anxious about how they are going to make ends meet, how are they going to get the help needed in various forms, and to be able to see the life-changing impact of how even the smallest gift can make the biggest difference.

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."

—Mother Teresa



News From The Rock

is published each month by

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 - Thursday
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Closed Friday

Pastor: Rev. John Boyanowski
pastorjohn@solidrockumc.com
(260) 580-8305

Youth Programs
youthministry@solidrockumc.com

Newsletter Editor: Gary Walter
gary@solidrockumc.com

Office Manager/Treasurer: Jane Hitzfield
jane@solidrockumc.com

Financial Secretary: Wanda Spahr
wanda@solidrockumc.com

News deadline for the September newsletter: August 21

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people being comfortable away from the organized religion, because of the absence of attending worship services that people began to forget about their faith/interaction with God. It was also brought to the attention of the gathering that because of what I personally call the Church Proper (the church that dictates by rules and regulations and not allowing God to be the head of the church), people have stopped attending churches because of the judgmental attitudes of many of the believers and being victimized when a believer falls instead of being restored by the church as Christ has called us to do with one another. I can personally testify that in my early walk in my faith, I took a 10 year vacation away from the Church Proper because of church politics that were going on within that belief system. Thankfully, God never left me and helped me to return to the church and to serve Him.

Let's get back to The Nones: Do you know any of these personally? Maybe they are in your family, maybe your friends, or maybe coworkers? Could this possibly be you? Have you listened to their hearts to find out why they may not be attending? Have they left the church or have no religious affiliation because they have been wounded/destroyed by the church? Are you not attending because maybe somebody inside your faith system has wounded you so deeply that you refuse to be hurt anymore?

These are some things that some people do not want to discuss because it is a painful discussion to have. But this question merits an answer, and we as believers who follow Christ need to have a proper answer for those individuals seeking to find healing from God and support from the believers rather than telling them that God does not like them and that we have a right to hate them. Nowhere in the Scriptures does Jesus ever state that we are to hate sinners. And that statement that is out there in the religious world where it claims "love the sinner, hate the sin" does not bring us closer together in love; au contraire, it actually separates us all the more because we feel that sin is like a disease that a person can catch and that if we expose ourselves to "sinners," we may catch their sin.

If you look at the life of Jesus and his ministry for his last three years of his life, along with what he's doing from that time forward, Jesus went to the very places where "The Nones" lived, interacted, gathered and met their needs. Jesus gave them

what they were looking for as far as hope, love, acceptance, value, respect and the ability to be united with God in the same way that he was in constant communion and intimacy with God. This is what every believer should strive for. This is what I strive for as a pastor.

Can we reach "The Nones"? Yes, God desires the none are left behind.

Bible Study

For school families, summer vacation is just about over. For a retiree, like me, new opportunities are always opening up. With a list of Pastor John's messages for the month of August, we in "Feasting on the



Word" Bible study will first of all have a theme of "Unity" to be followed by "Finding Peace." If

either of these themes seems to catch your interest or if you feel led by the Spirit of God to learn more in these ways of Christian discipleship, come to Solid Rock UMC on Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m. We try our best to limit our time to one hour. Our anticipated schedule is as follows:

- August 1: Ephesians 4:1-7, "What Are We Willing to Do for Unity?" Joe Haney, leader
- August 8: 1 Corinthians 12:12-30, "Dealing with Non-Unity," Jorita Banter, leader
- August 15: Romans 5:1-11, "Is Peace Possible?" Joe Haney, leader
- August 22: Luke 18:18-30 & Matthew 6:25-34, "Worldly Peace vs Spiritual Peace," Jorita Banter, leader
- August 29: James 1:2-18, "When Chaos Invades Peace," Joe Haney, leader

I am looking forward to an exciting August series, and I hope you will join us in absorbing God's Word!

—Joe Haney, Coordinator

A Whale of a Time at Solid Rock

The Warren Public Library recently had a 40 foot long, 30 foot wide whale inside our sanctuary! The whale was an inflatable replica of a real whale and was part of the library's summer reading program.



The Whalemobile was brought to Warren by Cynde McInnis. Growing up in Fort Wayne, IN, Cynde became interested in whales at a young age. She is currently co-chair of the North Atlantic Whale Watch Naturalists Association.

The whale she brings is an exact replica of Nile, a whale she first met in October 1995. Children were taken, in groups, inside the life-sized inflatable humpback whale for a 30 minute program. While inside, they learned about how whales and humans are similar and different, and had a chance to touch baleen, teeth and bones.

Other programs presented at Solid Rock during the library's summer reading program were Pretty Funny Balloons with Brian Getz, A2 Magic with Jeff Wawrzaszek, and The Traveling Lantern Theater Company.

The staff of Warren Public Library and the Friends of the Library group would like to thank Solid Rock United Methodist Church for allowing us to hold our summer reading special programs at the church. This is the second year we have done so, allowing us the room to bring fun and educational programs to the children.

No kind action ever stops with itself. One kind action leads to another. Good example is followed. A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees. The greatest work that kindness does to others is that it makes them kind themselves.

—Amelia Earhart



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June Financial Update

General Fund Receipts.....	\$11,260
General Fund Expenses	\$13,029

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

Safe and secure

The Resurrection is an exploding flare announcing to all sincere seekers that it is safe to believe. Safe to believe in ultimate justice. Safe to believe in eternal bodies. Safe to believe in heaven as our estate and the earth as its porch. Safe to believe in a time where questions won't keep us awake and pain won't keep us down. Safe to believe in open graves and endless days and genuine praise. ...

Because of the Resurrection, everything changes. Death changes. It used to be the end; now it is the beginning.

—Max Lucado, *When Christ Comes*



Dear God, pour out Your Holy Spirit on our lives, our church, and our community.

Establish this church as a beacon of Your love and power in this community and in the world. Help us to discern where Your Spirit is leading so we can be the church You have called us to be.

Transform us so that we, in turn, can transform the world.

Break down any barriers that hold us back from Your intended future for our church. Fill us with Your faith, courage and strength in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

—Wauwatosa Avenue United Methodist Church



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P.O. Box 322
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Solid Rock