



News From The Rock

January 2018

Solid Rock United Methodist Church • Warren, Indiana

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

When God Doesn't Fix It

After Christmas, the Sunday morning small group which meets in the kitchen will be looking at Grammy award winning Laura Story's book, *When God Doesn't Fix It*. Laura's life took an unexpected turn

when her husband was diagnosed with a brain tumor. The devastating news forever changed their lives and brought Laura's dreams of a fairy-tale life to an end.



In this five week series, Laura examines the twists and turns that took place not only in her own life but also in the lives of many of the heroes of the faith. She reveals how God used crises in the lives of people such as Abraham, Sarah, David, and Paul to bring them closer to Him and set them on the path He wanted them to take. She also shows how God used each of these individuals in spite of their flaws and brokenness.

Please join us. We would love to have you as a part of our learning journey together.

New small group sessions to begin this month

Four intentional faith development small groups will be offered beginning this month. Intentional faith development refers to ministries, outside of weekly worship, that help people grow in faith and in their understanding of and love for God. It is the goal of each group to provide an environment in which participants can experience authentic community and spiritual growth in an open, non-threatening setting. Sign-up

sheets are in the back of the sanctuary. Offerings for the spring session include:

PRACTICING OUR FAITH
Facilitators: Rosalie Walter and Joe Haney
Meeting Tuesdays from 9:30-11:00, beginning January 23 (8 weeks) at the home of Gary & Rosalie Walter

This group will be exploring how we can practice our faith — “a way to live the abundant life that is good news for our neighbors, sweet rest for our souls, and hope for the church.” Chapter topics include honoring the body, hospitality, saying yes and saying no, keeping Sabbath, discernment, forgiveness, healing, dying well, and others. We invite you to join our small group. If you are interested in purchasing the book (*Practicing Our Faith*, Dorothy C. Bass, editor), please let Rosalie know. The cost will be less than \$15.



BIBLE STUDY
Facilitator: Mike Heath
Daytime Meeting (Day of week, time, and location to be announced)

Members of this group will cooperatively decide what book they will study.

RESPECTABLE SINS (Online Group)
Facilitator: Gary Walter
Begins the week of January 21 (10 weeks)

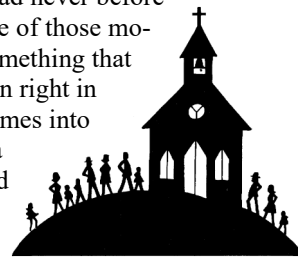
What ever happened to sin? Abortion, adultery, violence — it seems the big sins grab all the headlines. But what about jealousy, selfishness, greed, and “little” faults we live with every day? The Christian journey is a life of practiced godliness, but too often we overlook or minimize sins

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The first church I ever served was St. Paul UMC in Fort Wayne. I served there for five years as a student pastor. I normally arrived at church early, but on this particular morning our family was running late and had arrived just a few minutes before the worship service was to begin. After unloading the kids from the car, I straightened my tie in the mirror and watched something which is really rather commonplace in a rather uncommon way.

I had seen people go in and out of church many times. That morning, though, it was as though a veil had been removed from things I had never before seen. It was one of those moments when something that has always been right in front finally comes into focus. Were I a painter, I would love to paint this image the way that it



appeared to me that day. I'd paint a portrait of people walking as if unencumbered yet clearly overloaded with piles and piles of clutter on their shoulders.

It was as though God was allowing me to see the burdens that we carry with us every day and bring with us into the doors of the church every Sunday. It was as if He wanted me to know just how heavy and cumbersome those burdens are. As I watched the people filing into the church building from their sedans, trucks, and minivans, it occurred to me that each person carried his, or her, own invisible bur-

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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.

Thanks to all nut gatherers

“Thank You” to every one who assisted in the collection of seven trailers full of walnuts from the Warren area. Those nuts, along with those collected in Huntington, were sold this fall, and the proceeds, which amounted to \$3,800.00, were donated to Love, INC (Love In The Name of Christ) of Huntington County. When God blessed us with two talents, we were able to increase those two-fold more. May each of you be blessed in your ministry to those less fortunate. Praise be to the Lord!

United Methodist Women

The United Methodist Women met in the Calico Room at Heritage Pointe on December 7, 2017, at 9:30 a.m. President Bar-

bara Hart welcomed everyone and shared a meaningful devotional entitled “The True Christmas Story.”

The purpose of the United Methodist Women was recited by the members. The prayer calendar listed the mission focus as the Cookson Hills Center, East Oklahoma Conference. The birthday of the month is Cara Mridula Biswas, missionary in Cambodia.



Joys and concerns were taken by Bernie Garrett who then offered prayer for those mentioned. She also gave the mission moment. Roll call and the secretary’s report were voiced by Martha Plummer and the treasurer’s report by Barbara Hart. The program, entitled “The Purpose of Christmas,” was given by Martha Plummer.

The next meeting will be held March 1, 2018.

The meeting closed with the singing of “Silent Night.”

Scarecrow Festival Chili Cook-off proceeds

Thank you to the Chili Cook-off participants and the fantastic crowd for donating to great causes! \$200 was donated to “The WAY,” Warren Area Youth. \$242 was donated to WAMA, Warren Area Ministerial Association. Thank you for giving back to our Community!



Solid Rock’s Pastor Paul, Chili Cook-off chairperson, donating to Pastor Alan, representing The WAY and WAMA

News From The Rock

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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 February newsletter: January 21

Beginning the New Year

Try a new venture for 2018; join with fellow faith-travelers on a Monday evening Bible study. We explore from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., in the church kitchen, the passage Pastor Paul will be using the next Sunday morning at worship. Previous experience is not needed, just an open heart and mind. This is a neat way to put a New Years Eve resolution into action! The schedule for January is as follows:

- January 8: James 2:14-26 (Joe Haney, leader)
- January 15: Ezekiel 37: 1-14 (Perry Spahr, leader)
- January 22: Isaiah 5:1-7 (Jorita Banter, leader)
- January 29: Romans 1:16-17, 3:22-31 (Joe Haney, leader)

Come join with us to “Feast on the Word.”

November Financial Update

General Offerings	\$13,679
General Fund Expenses	\$14,217
Mortgage Balance	\$56,478

A penguin “parable”

During storms, emperor penguins huddle for warmth, taking turns at the center and on the perimeter of the group. While incubating eggs, up to 6,000 male penguins have been observed clustering for shelter against the harsh Antarctic winter. Partially grown chicks gather in protective “crèches” (French for “cribs”); often surrounded by a colony of adults, these groupings ward off predators and cold.



In stormy times, humans also need supportive groups; we can’t survive alone. A church family allows us to take turns giving and receiving care. Amid social upheaval, injustice, illness, natural disaster and any loss or crisis, God invites us to gather for protection and warmth. In the church community, we support and strengthen one another and are empowered to go out again into the less-sheltered world.



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den.

Some carried the burden of guilt for past sins. These people hoped that by regularly attending church they would convince God to forgive them. Some of them carried the burden of fear, depression, and anxiety. These people came into the church hoping to find peace – even if only for an hour on Sunday morning. Whatever their burdens were, one thing became clear to me: most of us, all of us, carry burdens that we were not intended to carry alone.

As I watched all of these people, many of whom I knew well, making their way into the church that Sunday, I was struck with the sense that so many of us come to church and generally live out our Christian faith out of what is largely a sense of obligation rather than of love. We fill our lives with repetitious, albeit well intentioned, deeds in order to fulfill our obligations rather than living a life which flows from the love of God working in and through us.

Imagine the folly of a man who chooses day in and day out to hoard and heap burdens upon his shoulders which are not his to carry alone. Imagine the woman who works diligently to earn the forgiveness which she has already received.

Dear children of God, if we are ever to learn to live lives which are filled with the grace of God, if we are ever to live the grace-filled life, we must let go of obligation and embrace love. We do not do good works to earn God's favor; we do good works because we have received His favor. Good works, duty, stoic obligation are not what is pleasing to God. While people tend to be mostly concerned with the outward appearance of things, God is concerned with our hearts. (1 Samuel 16:7)

See You Sunday,
Pastor Paul

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that, while corrosive and destructive to ourselves and those around us, are overshadowed by more flashy, headline-grabbing sins. Using the book *Respectable Sins* by Jerry Bridges as a starting point, we will seek to understand and commit to a life of holiness by examining patterns of behavior we often accept as normal, rather than as violations of God's law. This group meets online, using a private Facebook page.

WHY? THE QUESTION THAT NEVER GOES AWAY

Facilitators: Lisa Sabinske, Paul Burris

Meeting Thursdays from 6:30-8:00, beginning January 11 (10 weeks)

This group will be looking at the book *The Question That Never Goes Away* by Philip Yancey. In his classic book *Where Is God When It Hurts*, Philip Yancey gave readers permission to doubt, reasons not to abandon faith, and practical ways to reach out to hurting people. And now, thirty years after writing his first book, Yancey revisits the cry of "Why, God" in three places stunned into silence by the calamities that have devastated them. At some point all of us will face the challenges to faith Yancey writes about and look for the comfort and hope he describes. There are reasons to ask, once again, the question that never goes away: Where is God when we suffer? And Yancey, once again, leads us to find faith when it is most severely put to the test.

Food Pantry Needs

- Cereal
- Canned Ravioli
- Pop-Tarts
- Ramen Noodles
- Macaroni & Cheese
- Cocoa Mix
- Snack Crackers
- Fruit Cups



Also needed: plastic bags, books and magazines (6 months through adult)

Please leave your items in the wooden boxes in the narthex.



Solid Rock youth who participated in the 11:00 Christmas Eve service

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

—Martin Luther King Jr.

Come back to Christmas

When January comes along, we can continue that sense of comfort and warmth that comes at Christmas by returning to the Christmas story, which gives us two great promises: God understands you, and God can redeem you.

I encourage people to make it a point to reread the Christmas story every month, and allow Christmas to be Christmas every month. We need to keep coming back to it.

—Max Lucado,
Publishers Weekly interview

Three questions

There's a tale of a traveling priest who was confronted by a soldier in pre-revolutionary Russia. Rifle in hand, the soldier barked, "Who are you? Where are you going? Why are you going there?"

Instead of answering, the priest asked how much the soldier was paid — and offered double if the soldier would challenge him with those three questions each day as he passed by.

Those three important questions can guide us on our journey through the brand-new year ahead. For Christians, thankfully, the answers are clear:

- Who are you? "I'm a child of God!"
- Where are you going? "I'm going out into the world!"
- Why are you going there? "I'm going out of love for Jesus, who died for me!"

Place these questions and answers in a spot where you can see them each day. Then go forward confidently, knowing "whose" you are and what your purpose is.

How long is the Christmas season?

Christmas is not just one day, but a season of twelve days from sunset Christmas Eve (December 24) through Epiphany (January 6).

The twelfth day of Christmas, Epiphany, an even more ancient Christian celebration than Christmas, originally focused on the nativity, God's incarnation (God made flesh) in the birth of Jesus Christ and Christ's baptism. Today, it commemorates the visiting of the Christ Child by the Magi (Wise Men) with their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Gift giving in some cultures extends throughout the 12 days of Christmas; elsewhere, gift giving is limited to Christmas Eve or Christmas Day or January 5 or 6.

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IN HIM
and through
FAITH
IN HIM
we may approach
GOD
with
FREEDOM
and
CONFIDENCE.

EPHESIANS 3:12, NIV

“Year’s end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us.”

—Hal Borland

A New Year's Prayer

Lord, You make all things new
 You bring hope alive in our hearts
 And cause our Spirits to be born again.

Thank you for this new year
 For all the potential it holds.

Come and kindle in us

A mighty flame

So that in our time, many will
 see the wonders of God
 And live forever to praise
 Your glorious name.



Amen

—A modern prayer for the New Year from www.lords-prayer-words.com

