

# News From The Rock

Solid Rock United Methodist Church • Warren, Indiana

March 2011

## Building Update

The Solid Rock Building/Site Committee and architect Brian Hollars presented the latest floor plan to the congregation following the worship service on February 20. The committee has worked diligently to provide space and facilities for current and anticipated ministries within the constraints of available funding.

A key feature of the 8,000-square-foot structure will be a large multipurpose area. The primary sanctuary space will seat approximately 200. The area nearest the stage will feature approximately six rows of pew seating; the remainder of the space will have movable seating, allowing for maximum flexibility in use of the area.

Classrooms will border each side of the sanctuary area and will have movable doors, opening into the sanctuary space and providing additional seating, as well as space a variety activities.

The plan also provides office space, a nursery with sight access to the sanctuary, and a narthex with adjoining kitchen and coffee area.

The congregation was also introduced to the general contractor, Steve Schell, from Muncie. If the project progresses as anticipated, construction could begin later this year.

## Youth Fellowship

The highlight of last month was, hands down, making pizzas. I have to say that whole process is a well-oiled machine and it was great to be a part of it. Thank you to everyone who purchased a pizza! I hope they were as much fun to eat as they were to prepare! Special thanks for all the people who gave up part of their day in order to make that process happen! This next month we'll be having a game night that will involve messy games, minute-to-win-it games, ping-pong, and various relays.

### Upcoming Events:

- March 6, Meeting, "Prayer," 4:00-5:30

- March 11, Game Night, 6:30-10:30
- March 13, Pizza at East of Chicago—Invite Friends!, 11:30
- March 20, Meeting, "Lent," 4:00-5:30

## Scholarship applications due

Solid Rock offers scholarship money for students pursuing higher education. If you plan to attend college in the fall, please see Rosalie Walter for scholarship information and application. Applications will be due April 15.

## Vacation Bible School

The Vacation Bible School for the Warren area will be hosted by the United Church of Christ on the corner of Main and Second Streets. The theme is "High Seas Expedition." The kickoff will be Sunday evening, June 5, at 4:30. This is a family affair. Bible School dates are June 6 through 10 from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.



## New studies beginning

Both adult Sunday school classes are beginning new studies. The upstairs class will study parables using "Mirror Image," from Thomas Nelson's "Liquid" series. According to the publisher, "Each episode introduces present-day characters whose problems and struggles mirror biblical stories, illustrating that God's Word is as true today as it was when it was written." This study will be led by Myrna Neff.

Randy Hensley will lead the downstairs class in the study of Bill Hybels' *The Power of a Whisper*, learning "what life can look like when directed by divine input from above."

Consider joining one of these studies as part of your observance of Lent!

## Just Leaning on the Rock!

by Pastor Kathy Newton



As I age it seems time goes so much faster! Here we are coming into March of 2011. It seems just yesterday we were celebrating the New Year.

March 9 will be the beginning of Lent and is called Ash Wednesday. This will be the beginning of a journey for the purposes

**"This will be the beginning of a journey..."**

of evaluating ourselves and realizing what we need to clean up in our lives, or rather what we need to

seek God's help in cleaning up. We come to this season with trepidation and trembling; however, as Jesus says in Luke 4, "The Lord's Spirit has come to me, because he has chosen me to tell the good news to the poor. The Lord has sent me to announce freedom for prisoners, to give sight to the blind, to free everyone who suffers, and to say, 'This is the year the Lord has chosen.'" (Luke 4:18-19)

Therefore let us enter into this season prepared to do the hard work of self evaluation, but temper it with the fact that we know the end of the story. Praise be to Jesus our Lord and Savior!

Shalom,  
Pastor Kathy

## Book club completing winter session

The Solid Rock Book Club is nearing the end of its study of C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Participants should read the remaining chapters for the March 1 meeting at 6:30 at the church. On March 8, the group will gather at 6:30 at the home of Gary and Rosalie Walter to view the movie. Even if you have not been able to attend the other sessions, please join us.

## UMW Gift to Mission

Each year the Solid Rock United Methodist Women give a Gift to Mission by presenting a Special Mission Recognition to someone. This year's United Methodist Women's Special Mission Recognition does not like attention, but prefers to serve his church in a quiet and unassuming way. A lifetime member of Jefferson Center and Solid Rock, he has served in many offices on many committees and filled many roles.

To name a few, he has been church treasurer, junior youth leader, sound man, choir member, Sunday school teacher, youth mentor and a member of the Men's Fellowship Group. (By this time he had

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

### Worship Schedule

Sunday School at 9:00

Worship at 10:00

at 227 N. Main Street, Warren

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427 N. Matilda

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*News deadline for the April newsletter:  
March 20*

realized who our special person was.)

He has started a Christian book discussion group, photographs events for the church's history, manages the church's website, prepares and runs the PowerPoint for all church services, and for close to 20 years has been a writer and the editor for the church newsletter.

The president of the United Methodist Women presented the award to Gary Walter at the January 23rd worship service. Almost all of Gary's family was present to witness the event. Thank you, Gary, for all you continue to do.

## Men's Fellowship

The Solid Rock Men's Fellowship met on February 12, 2011, at Heritage Pointe with 16 men in attendance. Dale Smith opened the meeting with prayer. Breakfast was served by Kim's Katered Affair.

Marion Bell shared the history of Valentine's Day and devotions based on 1 Corinthians 13:7 and Romans 13:9-10, "What Is This Thing Called Love?"

It was reported that expenditures for local missions projects last year totaled \$1,072.

Closing prayer was offered by Bruce Preston. The next meeting will be March 12, 2011.



## The symbolism of ashes

On the first day of Lent, pastors in many churches dip a finger in ashes (often made by burning palm branches from the previous year's Palm Sunday) and make a cross on parishioners' foreheads.

God's people have used ashes as a sign of mourning, humiliation and penitence. In the Old Testament, ashes were used as a purification offering. The New Testament speaks of repenting in "sackcloth and ashes" (Luke 10:13, NRSV).

On Ash Wednesday, Christians are pained because our sins — private and public — led to Jesus' death. With repentant hearts, we begin the season of Lent, knowing it leads to resurrection on Easter Sunday.



## Who is my neighbor?

Peter Lovenheim was dismayed by the isolation he felt in suburban Rochester, New York. After a murder occurred down the street, he realized none of the neighbors seemed to know — or care — about one another. The mailman told Lovenheim most people would rather give misdelivered mail back to him than walk it over to the person next door. An elderly woman said she'd once fallen on the street and had to crawl home because no one came to help.

That prompted Lovenheim to engage in a bold experiment: He asked to spend a night at each of his neighbor's homes. Lovenheim documented the results in the book *In the Neighborhood: The Search for Community on an American Street, One Sleepover at a Time*.

As Lovenheim and his neighbors got to know one another, they learned that a single mom was being treated for breast cancer. They took her to appointments, brought her groceries, met her daughter at the bus stop after school and even installed a light over a dark staircase. By searching for community, Lovenheim and his new friends helped create it.

## An organized response

Some people today reject the idea of belonging to a church by saying, "I'm spiritual but not part of any organized religion."

It may be cute to respond by saying, "Well, you'd like our church. We're the most disorganized group of people you could imagine." But what a put-down to the body of Christ.

Instead, try saying this: "I really enjoy our church. We have something for everyone. I've learned so much and get a lift for living every week." Briefly point out what has been most helpful and meaningful to you. Then offer to take the person to worship with you as your guest.



- "Let us sing even when we do not feel like it, for in this way we give wings to heavy feet and turn weariness into strength." —John Henry Jowett
- "The highest reward for a person's toil is not what they get for it, but what they become by it." —John Ruskin
- "I am so made that worry and anxiety are sand in the machinery of life. Faith is the oil." —E. Stanley Jones

## Unexpected return

As a therapist for special needs students, I have the privilege of going into all the general education classrooms for kindergarten through third grades in the school corporation. My lessons are based on the premise that the ability to use language efficiently is essential for success in the academic world. With that as a goal, my focus is to enable the children to express thoughts, ideas, information and opinions appropriately and to encourage critical thinking, as well as learning the listening skills necessary for following directions. I strive to give *every* student the opportunity to respond to *every* stimulus *every* time.

The periods are fast-paced and intense. At the end, if the students have earned a "thumbs up," they enjoy a "fun" activity. Kindergartners and first graders are given the task of being detectives to determine why certain classmates are chosen to be in my Club of the Week. They are learning how to compare and contrast or think critically, when they try to give a reason why some are chosen to come to the front of the room. Those students called may be the only ones wearing T-shirts with a picture of an action hero, or have shoes with laces, have first names beginning with a vowel, or a last name with only five letters. (I write those names on the board.) The rest of the class then has to guess why they all belong to the same club. Third graders have been introduced to the nonsensical Elephant Jokes.

However, the activity for the second graders is my favorite. It was introduced to them as a challenge to learn at least one new fact or idea every single day of their life so "their brains would never grow old." My contributions have included: "the shortest river in the U.S. is in Oregon. It is 121 feet long and is named the D River; Michael Jordan shaves his head every Tuesday and Friday; Charlie Chaplain once came in third in a Charlie Chaplain look-alike contest"; or a silly law, like, "It is against the law to chain your pet alligator to a parking meter in Michigan." These students and their teachers have stepped up and are now giving me equally inane facts at the end of every lesson. Did you know that an eggplant is a fruit and not a vegetable? It took a second grade boy to set me straight. And I have been warned that should I decide to go tadpole hunting in Pennsylvania on a Sunday, it is illegal. Tell me who is having more fun.

Barbara Kleinhaus

## Choir Non-Quorum

*Editor's note: Many such stories which circulate via e-mail ultimately prove to be untrue. This one, however, has been verified by snopes.com.*

When a Nebraska church exploded in 1950, no one was injured because every member of the choir was late arriving for practice that evening.

As unbelievable as this story is, it did happen. Despite the explosion's taking place five minutes after choir practice was scheduled to begin, not one of the fifteen people who should have been present had yet arrived when the building collapsed: Choir practice at the West Side Baptist Church in Beatrice, Nebraska, always began at 7:20 on Wednesday evening. At 7:25 p.m. on Wednesday, March 1, 1950, an explosion demolished the church. The blast forced a nearby radio station off the air and shattered windows in surrounding homes.

But every one of the choir's fifteen members escaped injury, saved by a fortuitous coincidence: All were late for practice that night. Considering the sanctified site of the explosion, it was not surprising that some attributed the near miss to divine intervention.

They supposed rightly that the odds of unanimous tardiness were slim indeed, especially when the reasons were examined. Car trouble delayed two women. The minister and his wife and daughter were delayed by a dress that needed ironing at the last minute. Others were late because they paused to complete homework, finish a letter, or hear the end of a favorite radio show. One awoke late from a nap. Some could think of no special reason; they were just late.

It is impossible to calculate precise odds for all these events occurring at once. But past performance indicated that each person would be late for practice one time in four - producing a one-in-a-million chance that the entire choir would be late that night. As to what those reasons were, whether they were of the garden variety or divine intervention ilk, judge for yourself: It happened on the evening of March 1 in the town of Beatrice, Nebraska. In the afternoon the Reverend Walter Klempel had gone to the West Side Baptist Church to get things ready for choir practice. He lit the furnace—most of the singers were in the habit of arriving around 7:15, and it was chilly in the church—and went home to dinner. But at 7:10, when it was time for him to go back to the church with his wife and daughter Marilyn Ruth, it turned out that Marilyn Ruth's dress was soiled. They waited while Mrs. Klempel ironed another and thus were still at home when it happened.

Ladona Vandergrift, a high school sophomore, was having trouble with a geometry problem. She knew practice began promptly and always came early. But she stayed to finish the problem.

Royena Estes was ready, but the car would not start. So she and her sister called Ladona Vandergrift, and asked her to pick them up. But Ladona was the girl with the geometry problem, and the Estes sisters had to wait.

Sadie Estes' story was the same as Royena's. All day they had been having trouble with the car; it just refused to start.

Mrs. Leonard Schuster would ordinarily have arrived at 7:20 with her small daughter Susan. But on this particular evening Mrs. Schuster had to go to her mother's house to help her get ready for a missionary meeting.

Herbert Kipf, lathe operator, would have been ahead of time but had put off an important letter. "I can't think why," he said. He lingered over it and was late.

It was a cold evening. Stenographer Joyce Black, feeling "just plain lazy," stayed in her warm house until the last possible moment. She was almost ready to leave when it happened.

Because his wife was away, machinist Harvey Ahl was taking care of his two boys. He was going to take them to practice with him but somehow he got wound up talking. When he looked at his watch, he saw he was already late.

Marilyn Paul, the pianist, had planned to arrive half an hour early. However she fell asleep after dinner, and when her mother awakened her at 7:15 she had time only to tidy up and start out.

Mrs. F.E. Paul, choir director and mother of the pianist, was late simply because her daughter was. She had tried unsuccessfully to awaken the girl earlier.

High school girls Lucille Jones and Dorothy Wood are neighbors and customarily go to practice together. Lucille was listening to a 7-to-7:30 radio program and broke her habit of promptness because she wanted to hear the end. Dorothy waited for her.

At 7:25, with a roar heard in almost every corner of Beatrice, the West Side Baptist Church blew up. The walls fell outward, the heavy wooden roof crashed straight down like a weight in a deadfall. But because of such matters as a soiled dress, a catnap, an unfinished letter, a geometry problem and a stalled car, all of the members of the choir were late - something which had never occurred before.

Firemen thought the explosion had been caused by natural gas, which may have leaked into the church from a broken pipe outside and been ignited by the fire in the furnace. The Beatrice choir members had no particular theory about the fire's cause,

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but each of them began to reflect on the heretofore inconsequential details of his life, wondering at exactly what point it is that one can say, "This is an act of God."

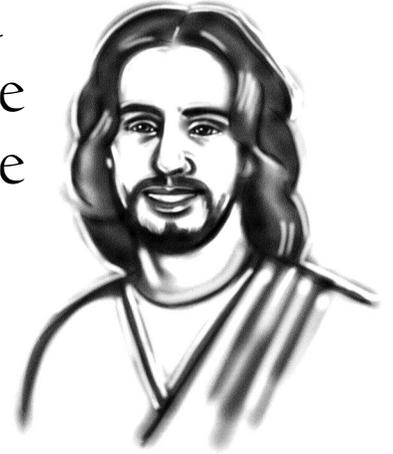
**January Offerings**

General Offerings ..... \$16,321  
Building Fund Contributions ..... \$16,136

**Soup Supper Thanks**

A great evening for a bowl of soup to warm your stomach and great fellowship to warm your soul was shared by all who attended the soup supper on February 15. We served vegetable, chili, and chicken and noodle soup, ice cream and cookies to over 150 friends and neighbors. Thank you to everyone who provided items for the supper and to all of those who helped the night of the supper. A special thank you to PJ Flowers & Gifts and Gebhart's Floral Barn for providing flower centerpieces to decorate the tables. When you see Joyce or Sharon, tell them thank you.

Our Father, you called us and saved us in order to make us like your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Change us, day by day, by the work of your Holy Spirit so that we may grow more like him in all that we think and say and do, to his glory.  
**Amen.**



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