

# CHAPEL CHATTER

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St John's United Methodist Church

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## WELCOME PASTOR ROB AND LINDA!

Pastor Rob Stippich has served in pastoral ministry in small, medium, and large churches, largely in Southeastern Pennsylvania. He is a graduate of Temple University, with a BA in Speech and Human Communication, specializing in small group and organizational communication. His Master's Degree is from Boston University School of Theology – a special dual major in Spiritual Formation and Pastoral Counseling. He also has specialized training in a variety of areas, including church planting, church re-start, church revitalization and coaching. Pastor Rob is currently working on his dissertation in a doctoral program – on the subject of church revitalization.



Pastor Rob is married to Linda, and they have lived near Parkesburg, Pennsylvania for almost 25 years. Linda has a passion for ministry and community service. She has worked on staff at multiple universities and worked for many years in Special Education administration at the Chester County Intermediate Unit. She has retired, but still serves as an educational Parental Surrogate for special needs children without parents to advocate for them. She is a loving and caring person with a wonderful sense of humor.

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### 3 Ways to Speak Words of Life...Instead of Words of Criticism

Criticism reveals itself in our lives in many different ways (i.e. jealousy, negativity, backbiting, sarcasm) and whether we recognize it or not – our words have great power. It's really important that we get this. We are deceiving ourselves if we think that our words of criticism are not damaging and hurting people. We need to learn to speak words of life instead of words of criticism.

#### 1. Rejoice with people instead of being jealous of them.

Don't take chips at people anymore. Don't dig away at them. Instead rejoice with them. When something good is happening to somebody get behind them and be excited. If your friend pulls up in a new car, don't be looking for something wrong with it. Instead be excited for them.

Here's how you know if you've got jealousy rooted out of you. Ask yourself this question, "Am I truly happy for the good things others experience?" When other people – your spouse, your brothers, your sisters, your friends, people at work – when other people are experiencing good things, are you genuinely, truly happy for them?

#### 2. Be a cheerleader instead of being negative.

It's time to quit being a downer and start being a cheerleader. Start cheering people on. Be excited for them. So, here's the question: Who are you going to cheer on today? Who are you going to be a cheerleader for? Think about it.

Start at home. Start with your kids. Start with your spouse. Then, look at the people you see every day. Begin cheering them on, especially people who are going through tough times. Don't point out all the reasons they're going through the tough times and don't try to fix them. Just get behind them and be an inspiration to them.

### **3. Speak words of encouragement instead of words of sarcasm.**

Start encouraging people. Start building people up instead of chipping away at them. If you are married speak words of blessing to your spouse. Encourage them. Talk about all the things that you love about them. Praise them publicly. Praise them privately.

In the lives of children, instead of always policing them with words like: "Stop that. Come over here. Quit doing this. Don't hit your brother. Don't hit your sister." And so on. Instead, catch them doing good things. Say things like: "You did awesome. You cleaned up your room without being asked. Way to go! You brought over your dishes. You're amazing." Encourage them with words of life rather than always criticizing what they didn't do right.

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## **Pastor's Notes, August 2020**

### **Sow in Tears, Reap in Joy – God's Law of the Harvest**

*"Restore our fortunes, Lord, as streams renew the desert. Those who plant in tears will harvest with shouts of joy. They weep as they go to plant their seed, but they sing as they return with the harvest." Psalm 126:4-6 NLT*

Those of us who live in this beautiful part of the world might feel a bit puzzled by the words of Psalm 126 or miss the significance when the psalmist says, "*They weep as they go to plant their seed...*" Our farmers may sweat a bit as they plant their seed, but I haven't seen any of them crying! The thing is, though, if you grew up in another part of the world this wouldn't be puzzling at all - it would seem a very common experience to you.

In the arid areas of the Middle East and Africa the way the climate works is that there are certain times of the year when there is rain; times when there is moisture and growth. And then those times end and there are long periods of drought and everything dries up and withers.

In the area just below the Sahara Desert, for example, all the moisture comes in a four-month period: May, June, July, and August. After that, not a drop of rain falls for the next eight months. The ground cracks from dryness, and so do your hands and feet. The winds of the Sahara pick up the dust and fling it thousands of feet into the air. It then comes slowly drifting across West Africa as a fine grit. It gets inside your mouth. Nothing grows after September. All the year's food, of course, must be grown within those four short months.

In October and November, the granaries and other stores are still full - the harvest is in. People sing and dance. They customarily eat two meals a day. A popular practice is to ground grain into flour and then a mush. The sticky mush is then rolled into little balls between their fingers, and then people pop it into a sauce and then into their mouths.

When December and January come, the granaries and other stores are lower. Most families begin to omit the morning meal and eat only one meal each day. There's no plenty; no extra, but there's enough.

By the end of February, the one meal is reduced to smaller and smaller portions. The meal shrinks even more during March and people who are more vulnerable become more susceptible to illness. You just don't stay well on half a meal a day.

April is the month that produces haunting memories. You hear crying in the night. Most days pass with only a cup of thin gruel.

Then comes May and the rains return... but there's still no food. It takes time for plants to seed and grow.

Missionary Del Tarr who served fourteen years in West Africa tells this story:

"Inevitably, a six-or seven-year-old boy comes running to his father one day with sudden excitement. 'Daddy! Daddy! We've got grain!' he shouts. 'Son, you know we haven't had grain for weeks.' 'Yes, we have!' the boy insists. 'Out in the hut - there's a leather sack hanging up on the wall - Daddy, there's grain in there! Give it to Mommy so she can make flour, and tonight our tummies can sleep!'

'Son, we can't do that,' the father softly explains. 'That's the seed grain. It's waiting for the rains, and then we must use it.' The rains finally arrive, and when they do the young boy watches as his father takes the sack from the wall and does the most unreasonable thing imaginable. Instead of feeding his family, he goes to the field and with tears streaming down his face, he takes the precious seed and throws it away. He scatters it in the dirt! Why? Because he believes in the harvest."

African pastors, when they preach on Psalm 126, say, "Brother and sisters, this is God's law of the harvest.

Don't expect to rejoice later on unless you have been willing to sow in tears."

The whole world has been going through a period that's been like a drought in many ways – a physical factor beyond our control has been forcing us to “lay fallow” as a church – to remain unproductive, ineffective, impeded, fruitless, unnourished, for a time. The pandemic has reduced many of our fields of ministry and mission to dust.

What we have to ask ourselves is this: How much is it going to cost us in our lives now? What will it mean for us to sow in tears?

By this kind of sowing, I don't mean just giving God something from our abundance, but finding a way to say, "I believe in the harvest so much that I will give of myself in ways that seem to make no sense. The world would call me unreasonable to do this - but I must sow regardless, in order that I may someday celebrate with songs of joy."

This has been a particularly difficult time for churches and for our church. Any momentum we may have had has been lost in this viral “drought” – this time of separation and isolation.

And yet, if you look at history, it is in times like these when adverse circumstances and world events have

challenged us, that churches have grown; it is in times like these that large numbers of believers have experienced renewal and revitalization; it is at times like these that people have come to the Christian faith in large numbers.

Given the difficulties of our situation and the overwhelming problems in the world, it's unreasonable to expect our church to attempt to engage in ministry at a level that will change our community, our region, our world. It's unreasonable to even go beyond what we've done before – after all, we're not even sure of how much it's going to take to recover from the losses we've had! It's unreasonable to decide to sow the seeds of our resources and energy in difficult and uncertain times...

But the law of the harvest calls us to sow the seed generously, and the example of Jesus Christ calls us to outlandish sacrifice - sowing until it hurts - so that the harvest may be great!

There is seed to sow and the rains are here! The harvest may still be weeks or months or a season away, but let us sow what God has given us!

Blessings!  
Pastor Rob

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## **Message Series Beginning August 23rd: Priority One: The Way of Worship**

There are many things we are called to be and to do as believers – live in fellowship, grow in spiritual maturity, lovingly serve in ministry, bring Good News to people... These are all non-negotiable parts of our lives as Christians and of central importance to our lives. We can't not do these and truly say that we are following Jesus Christ.

But there is one thing we are called to as believers that has the highest priority – living a life that expresses love to God: Worship is priority one! On August 23<sup>rd</sup> we'll begin this series exploring the Biblical truths about worship and what it means for our lives personally and as the people of God.

In “normal” times, people gather each week in local church buildings for “Worship”. (Lately, we've had to “gather” in other ways!) But what does gathering for worship really mean? What does God mean by worship? Where does worship take place? Why do we

worship? What does God expect from us in worship? During this season, we'll cover many facets of worship. Most importantly we'll look at how we can make every area of our lives, everything we do, become acts of worship and help each of us to break through to a more powerful life of worship and praise!

### **Schedule of Messages**

August 23.. First Love

August 30.. Showing Love

September 6.. Communion - Power of Love

September 13.. Music and Dancing in Love

September 20.. Healing Love

September 27.. Surrendering in Love

October 4.. World Communion - Life Changing Love

October 11.. Acts of Love

October 18.. Ways of Love

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## August Happenings

### Worship Details for August

August 2 - Communion

**Message:** Part 4 - I'm Stuck

**Pastor Rob on Vacation (two weeks)**

August 9

**Message:** Presented by Tom Dittoe

August 16

**Message:** Presented by Tom Dittoe

### Second Series

#### Priority One: The Way of Worship

August 23

**Message:** Part 1 - First Love

August 30

**Message:** Part 2 - Showing Love

### Scripture Readers for August

**August 2** – Sue Mallory

**August 9** – Wanda Gregg

**August 16** – Bettie Wrigley

**August 23** – Sue Sensenig

**August 30** – Jerry Thompson



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## Missions Team Corner

### Treasure Box Donations

The mission for August is “Lifeway for Kids/Food Pack Program.” We are collecting money and soup this month as well. The soup can be Progresso or Campbells as long as they contain a protein, such as beef or chicken. How they will be distributed this year depends on the opening of school. At the end of last school term, they were packed and taken to “The Factory” to be distributed. This may be how distribution will start at the beginning of this school year. At this time they need all the support we can give them. At times they may ask for something additional they need. Thank you!

### Soles for Souls Update

Thank you to everyone who donated shoes for “Soles for Souls.” This year we collected and packed 135 pairs of shoes. They were taken to St. John’s Episcopal Church in Lancaster. From there they are shipped to New Year to be sorted and distributed throughout the United States and around the world. This is a mission we will continue in the future. Please keep your shoes, boots, slippers, and sandals for this cause.



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You may put them in the plastic tub in the coat room at the ramp entrance. They can be put there throughout the year and we will put them in the closet until the next shipment date. Thank you again!

Please help with either or both of these worthwhile causes as you are able.

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## A New Way to Pay

St. John's is pleased to announce that you may now make your weekly donations online. No need to find the checkbook or search your pockets for cash on Sunday mornings to make your weekly offering. No need to make up for missing weeks when you were unable to attend in person. Thanks to the Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation there is no cost to the church for this service. All payments are paid directly to the church through Fulton Bank on a weekly basis and helps provide a consistent stream of income for St. John's. It only takes minutes to sign up at <https://bit.ly/stjohnsepay>. Click on the link or copy and paste it into your web browser to check it out.



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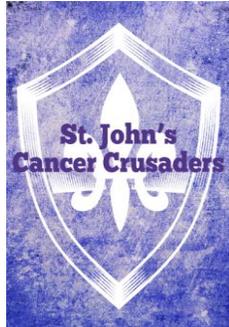
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## Relay For Life Update



As with many other things in 2020, the Lancaster County Relay For Life has also been changed. There is not going to be a “normal” event this year. While they did hold a drive through Relay on Saturday night, they are

not going to have an event bringing everyone together. What to do with your bottles of dimes? There are two options: 1.) bring your bottle to church and I will hand in the money; 2.) keep your bottle and continue filling it for next year’s event. If you want to bring in your bottle, please let me know ahead of time. I will have new bottles available in August for anyone who would like a new one, or a second one.



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## The Church Picnic is Near!

St. John’s church picnic will be held on Sunday, September 6 immediately following the 9:00 am church service, both of which will be held outside on the church grounds. The picnic committee will provide the hot dogs, rolls, and bottles of water. If you want something to drink other than water, please bring it with you, but not to share.

We ask that everyone please bring the following:

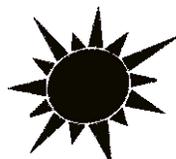
1. Chairs for yourself and your family members
2. Plates, cups, tableware
3. Whatever side dishes you want to eat to go with the hot dogs. **NO FOOD WILL BE SHARED!**

There will be a sign-up sheet for those planning to attend in the Gathering Place as you enter the sanctuary on August 23 and 30 to know how many hot dogs and rolls we will need. We hope to see everyone there!

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## Welcome to Our New Administrative and Financial Assistant

Carol Dittoe has been hired as the new Administrative Assistant and Financial Secretary. We thank Vicki Worst and Dawn Brackbill for their many years of faithful service to the church.



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## Birthdays



August 1 – Pastor Rob Stippich  
August 5 – Scott Chretien  
August 6 – Jean Strubel  
August 8 – Alice Bowman, Nannette Denlinger

August 12 – Jim Bowman  
August 15 – Tammy Knosp  
August 16 – Joanne Schenke  
August 22 – Carol Nickel  
August 23 – Jane Williams  
August 27 – Brian Gregg  
August 28 – Dean Seese, Carol Moseng

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## Anniversaries

August 6 - Curt & Carol Moseng  
August 17 - Dick & Margaret Richards  
August 18 - Ken & Evelyn Miller  
August 23 - Tom & Carol Dittoe  
August 24 – Steve & Lindsay Chretien  
August 27 – Dick & Anne Zimmerman

*Happy Anniversary*



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## Schreiber Sunday is Coming!

Due to the pandemic, the Schreiber Pediatric Softball Marathon was postponed from June to the weekend of August 21-23.

Donations to Schreiber Center for Pediatric Development will be collected at the 9:00 am service on August 16. As you know, Schreiber provides pediatric therapy services to over 4,000 Lancaster County children at no cost to their families.

While Schreiber has had to cancel some fundraising activities, they have received a \$250,000.00 matching grant for any funds raised, so every dollar

you give will be matched dollar for dollar. If you are unable to attend church on the 16th, you may give your donation to Tom Dittoe or Steve Chretien. If you feel uncomfortable attending church due to the pandemic you can send a check to St. John's UMC, P.O. Box 86, Paradise, PA 17562.

**All checks should be made out to SCPD.** Thank you on behalf of all the children served by Schreiber.

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## Pastor Rob on Vacation

Pastor Rob and Linda will be on vacation from August 3 to August 22. Please call or email the church office with any pastoral needs you may have at that time.

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## The Beatitudes, Matthew 5:3-10

Find the words from the given clues and then find the words hidden in the puzzle.

- \_\_\_\_\_ are the merciful:
- Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
- Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be \_\_\_\_\_.
- Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be \_\_\_\_\_.
- Blessed are the pure in \_\_\_\_\_: for they shall see God.
- Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Blessed are they which do \_\_\_\_\_ and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
- Blessed are the meek: for they shall \_\_\_\_\_ the earth.
- Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the \_\_\_\_\_ of heaven.
- Blessed are the \_\_\_\_\_: for they shall inherit the earth.
- Blessed are the \_\_\_\_\_: for they shall obtain mercy.
- Blessed are they that merciful: for they shall obtain \_\_\_\_\_.
- Blessed are they that \_\_\_\_\_: for they shall be comforted.
- Blessed are the \_\_\_\_\_: for they shall be called the children of God.
- Blessed are the \_\_\_\_\_ in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are the \_\_\_\_\_ in heart: for they shall see God.
- Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after \_\_\_\_\_: for they shall be filled.
- Blessed are the poor in \_\_\_\_\_: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are they which do hunger and \_\_\_\_\_ after righteousness: for they shall be filled.





Presence

Prayers

Gifts

Service

Witness

# DISCIPLESHIP JOURNEY

## Discipleship Journey Seminars

Discipleship Journey seminars, taught by Pastor Rob, are new opportunities for experiencing Spiritual Growth and enhancing our Spiritual Lives, as well as building up our Fellowship as a church. They can be life changing! Starting in the fall, we will have a series of opportunities to take part in these important, and very interesting seminars.

### **Discipleship Journey 1 - Presence and Prayers:** *Focusing on Our Relationships with God and One Another*

This first seminar in the Discipleship Journey series is a foundational one. It is all about discovering, experiencing, and belonging as believers. This seminar can be presented in two sessions, four sessions, or as single all-day sessions on a Saturday or Sunday. We will allow participants to choose their preferred format as much as possible.

#### **This Seminar Covers:**

- Our life together as a church family
- Our connection as believers
- The reasons why we are here
- Experiencing the presence of God
- Vision that God gives us

This is a great way to get to know each other and Pastor Rob better. Class sizes will be limited to 4-5 people. Masks and social distancing protocols will be followed as needed.

- Core values
- The true meanings of membership and ministry
- Distinctive United Methodist ideas
- The Biblical design for a church
- Much, much more!

This is a real opportunity to experience growth in your spiritual life and to focus your faith life – Opportunities to participate will be offered in the near future

#### **Other Seminars in this Series Include:**

Discipleship Journey 2 – Prayers and Gifts:  
Making Commitments Necessary for Growth in Spiritual Maturity

Discipleship Journey 3 – Gifts and Service:  
Discovering and Using Spiritual Gifts

Discipleship Journey 4 – Service and Witness:  
Growing through a Life Mission

The Discipleship Journey Seminars build on one another. To participate in Discipleship Journey Seminar 2, you must first participate in Discipleship Journey 1, and so on.

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<http://www.facebook.com/stjohnsunitedmethodist/>  
Church Website: [www.stjohns-paradise.org](http://www.stjohns-paradise.org)



**Worship Service – 9:00 am**  
**Sunday School – 10:30 am**

Nursery Care Provided  
Handicap Accessible

**Join Our Journey!!**

**Mission Statement:** ~ St. John's UMC is a warm, welcoming church where all are invited to build relationships with Christ and each other. ~

**Vision Statement:** ~ To be a growing, giving, praying church that responds to the needs of our congregation and community. ~



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