

On the Journey ... at St. John's

May
2021

St. John's United Church of Christ
538 E. Thomas St.
Coopersburg, PA 18036
610-282-3310

Volume 22 Issue 5

From Pastor's Desk

The Rich Man Matthew 19

¹⁶ Someone came to Jesus with this question: "Teacher,^[f] what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"¹⁷ "Why ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. But to answer your question—if you want to receive eternal life, keep^[g] the commandments."¹⁸ "Which ones?" the man asked. And Jesus replied: "You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. ¹⁹ Honor your father and mother. Love your neighbor as yourself."^[h]

²⁰ "I've obeyed all these commandments," the young man replied. "What else must I do?"²¹ Jesus told him, "If you want to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."²² But when the young man heard this, he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

²³ Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is very hard for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. ²⁴ I will say it again—it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!"²⁵ The disciples were astounded. "Then who in the world can be saved?" they asked. ²⁶ Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible."

Most people look at this passage as a claim we must give all our money and all our possessions to be a good disciple. And let's be honest that terrifies us! Who will provide for us? How and where will we live? What if Jesus still does not think I am good enough and changes his mind?

This passage was a test to the person who came to Jesus. They were rich and safe and protected. They were really comfortable right where they were in life. They wanted to follow Jesus but only if they did not have to move out of the comfort zone.

Jesus saw into the heart of this man and knew what the greatest challenge for this person would be, giving up his treasured possessions. The ones that still meant more to him than God.

As long as we are alive, life is not stagnant. We are not meant to try and build a fortress around us, waiting for the Savior to come back. We are also not meant to practice trust God only to our comfort level.

“At some point we all have to get out of the boat and put a foot in the water” trusting the Jesus will guide and protect us. We also have to be willing to do a self-inventory of what we hold most dear, and is it preventing us from following God’s commands.

For instance, the thought that America should take care of America first. That is a tough one! But if we are closing our eyes to others suffering, or just a massing more and more material stuff, are we really following Jesus’ call, or are we like the person who walked away from Jesus. That is a question we have to ask ourselves personally and as a communal question.

This scripture is not meant to be an all or nothing scenario. It is a challenge to look at what we value most, and do we live that out in our daily lives. Too often we live in a polar opposite world and not seeking unity and peace in the middle. Can we develop a reasonable immigration policy that allows for those seeking asylum while we also provide for those who have needs in this country? That kind of policy is going to take compromise from everyone. You can complain that is never going to happen in Washington with those in power. But who holds the true power in this world, and how much time have you spent asking God in prayer for healing over this issue? Your own function in this world is to live out God’s plan for salvation. If you truly embrace that function; the world and all our possessions take on a different meaning.

Where is Jesus asking you to give up your most prized possession of thought and opinion, and possessions and seeking God’s will to become a disciple.

The answer may take some time to live into but with God nothing is impossible!



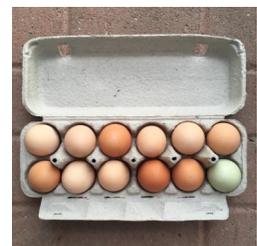
ALTAR FLOWERS

Please consider donating flowers for our Sunday worship service. Cost is \$20.



EMPTY EGG CARTONS WANTED!

The Babb family has been graciously donating hard-boiled eggs every time we pack lunches for the shelter. They are in need of empty egg cartons. You can drop them off at the church and leave them in the black bin on the porch. Thanks!



HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROTOCOLS

1. We ask that you wear a mask.
2. Refrain from physical contact.
3. Take it with you. Please take your bulletin and bottled water home and dispose.
4. The kitchen at the church is closed.
5. Wash your hands for 20 seconds and use hand sanitizer.
6. There will be no singing.
7. Please respect the signs up blocking pews to ensure social distancing. You should remain six feet apart from other families.
8. If you have any type of illness, including allergy attacks, we ask that you stay home. The greeters will be screening people to ensure the safety and confidence of all who attend worship. We will still be recording.
9. If an outbreak occurs in the state or community, we may reverse the decision to worship together.
10. Offerings are to be dropped in the plate in the church entranceway.
11. These protocols will be in place for as long as necessary.



MAY MILESTONES TO CELEBRATE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

8 Dan Humphreys
26 Elsie Bell
27 Dana Musgnung
28 Denise Knittle

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

14 John & Anne Schubert
23 Keith & Teresa Martin
27 Matt & Lenore Bamberger

Please help keep this listing up-to-date by contacting the office with additions and/or corrections! Thank you!



ONLINE GIVING

Online giving is now available through the app tithe.ly. Go to St. John's website, click on give, and then follow the cues. Credit or debit cards are accepted on our secure site. An email receipt of your giving will be sent to you.

NEW DISCUSSION GROUP FORMING

Greetings! I would like to get an adult study group together once again. I need some information from you to help me plan. You can drop off this form or email me your answers. I am looking to start early to mid May.

Your Name _____

Topic you might be interested in (book study, bible study, discussion group)

Preference In person or Zoom. Zoom is so easy to use if you have a computer. I can even give you a personal lesson. The advantage of Zoom is that I can record the session so if you miss one, you can watch at a later date. In person we will be wearing masks and/or sitting 6 feet apart. There is an advantage of in person discussion too. _____

Best times for you to meet (daytime, evening, after church on Sunday)



CARDS FOR SHUT-INS

Send a Little Love

Shortly, a group of St. John's members will begin an ongoing campaign of reaching out to shut-ins and others who are struggling with significant stress.

They will be sending cards and writing notes to hurting members of our church family. This program was

initially conceived last year among a women's group. There is no reason it should be limited to women or to those who were present at the meeting. It is open to anyone who wants to enrich the lives of someone less fortunate.

Cards, stamps, and names will be provided. If you have not already signed up but would like to join us in spreading a little love and cheer, please email me to sign up at jmatsinger@ptd.net or contact the church.



CAT'S MEOW STATUES

We are taking orders for Cat's Meow Statues of our church. The cost is \$20. Please contact Linda Belke at LThomer712@gmail.com or contact the church office.



If you are looking to give back in a small way, check out <https://www.blackoutcoffee.com>

This is some of the best coffee ever! (From Paul Belke) and with every purchase they support our troops or give you the opportunity to say thank you to our troops overseas by donating coffee.

Check them out on the internet!



**PLEASE REMEMBER OUR WEBSITE
(STJOHNSCOOPERSBURG.ORG) OR OUR FACEBOOK PAGE
(ST JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, COOPERSBURG)
HAS UP-TO-THE-MINUTE CHURCH INFORMATION**

EVENING VESPERS

SUNDAY, MAY 16, 2021, 5:00-6:00 pm

Spring is here bringing with it a more hopeful outlook than last year! In celebration, Evening Vespers will be held as an OUTDOOR EVENT, under the portico; and moving into the Sanctuary in case of rain. Vespers will be recorded and open to the community. Masks and social distancing will be required.

The theme is "Understanding & Compassion". Our guest musician is Mike Holliday. Mike is a folk singer-songwriter, storyteller. He has performed in many venues throughout Pennsylvania, Virginia and Tennessee. Locally, you may have seen him at Godfrey Daniels in Bethlehem.

Hope to see you there!
Blessings, Marlene



BETTY LOU'S PANTRY



Needs are Boxed foods such as cereal, meat helper, macaroni and cheese.

For our own Blessing Box we need socks preferably over the ankle.



WE ARE PART OF THE AMAZON SMILE PROGRAM!

This is the way the corporation of Amazon.com gives back to the community. Your Prime membership and passwords stay the same and are not shared. .05% of every sale goes to the church. Below is the link to take you directly there. Any questions, speak to Pastor Teresa. Her email is RevTeresaMartin@outlook.com <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-6286946>

Evening Vespers

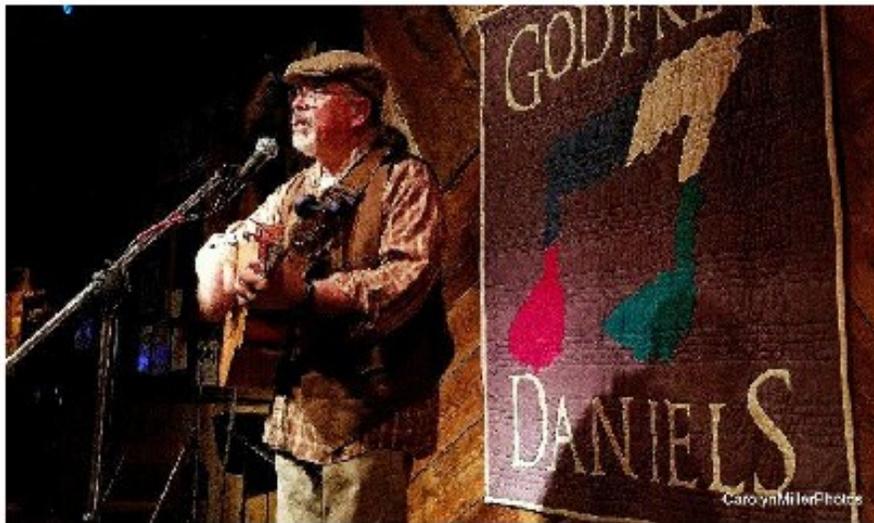
Outdoor Event*

SUNDAY, May 16, 2021 5:00 – 6:00 PM

Evening's Theme **"Understanding & Compassion"**

Music by

Mike Holliday



ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
538 EAST THOMAS STREET * COOPERSBURG PA, 18036
610-282-3310

FREE WILL OFFERING * *Masks and social Distancing*

Recorded Vespers link available through

Stjohnscoopersburg.org

Or

[Facebook.com/StJohnsUCCCoop](https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsUCCCoop)

*Vespers held in the Church in case of rain

St. John's United Church of Christ
538 Thomas Street
Coopersburg, PA 18036

www.stjohnsuccoop.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

OUR MISSION:

To know and share the love of God through worship,
fellowship and outreach to the community.

May