

**Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it...** Psalm 127:1a

**Worship:**

**Tabernacle Worship Service**

**Every Sunday Evening**

St. John's Parish House  
75 East Main St. South Pottstown 5:30 pm

**Home Churches:**

**Hanover St. Home Church**

**Tuesday Evenings**

256 South Hanover Street Pottstown, PA 19465  
7:00 to 9:00

**King St Commons Home Church**

**Thursday Afternoons**

King St. Pottstown, PA 19464  
12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

**William's Home Church**

**Friday Afternoons**

61 N. Evans St. Pottstown, PA 19464  
11:00 pm to 12:30 pm

**Announcements:**

The mobile MAIN Street Shelter is hosted by our friends at St. John's United Church of Christ. Remember to pray for them.

**Prayer Requests:**

**The Ministries at MAIN Street Shelter.**

Please pray that God would bless the NorCo Board of Supervisors and hinder them in offending the poor.

Pray for the MAIN Street Staff, and for more workers to enter this harvest field.

Pray for Zenona as she completes her chemotherapy.

Lord, immerse us into your will and presence ...

**This Year's Theme:**

*hearing God in 2008*

**Next Week's Scriptures:**

January 27, 2008 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday After Epiphany (Year A)

**psalm 27.1, 4-9, isaiah 9.1-4,  
matthew 4.12-23, & 1 corinthians 1.10-18**

Get in touch with us at: i. [www.besidestillwaters.net](http://www.besidestillwaters.net) e. [Info@besidestillwaters.net](mailto:Info@besidestillwaters.net)  
256 South Hanover Street, Pottstown, PA 19465-7022 Phone: (610) 970-2444 Fax: (484) 363-4017

**Ministry:**

**The Table**

**Every Wednesday Evening**

Washington & Chestnut Sts. 7:00 pm



6:00 to 8:00

**1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday Evening**

Each Month – Check with Church  
for Transportation Arrangements

**Consumer Center Church**

**Thursday Evenings**

249 High Street Pottstown, PA 19464  
7:00 to 8:00

**Norman's Game Night**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Friday Evening** Each Month

Locations to be announced

**still waters** of Pottstown  
home churches & worship center  
"He restores my soul . . . surely goodness and mercy will follow me" Psalm 23

January 20, = 2008

Being with God  
Living with open eyes

Epiphany 2  
Worship

psalm 40.1-11

isaiah 49.1-7

john 1.29-42

1 corinthians 1.1-9

Benediction

**Tabernacle Worship**  
75 East Main Street, Pottstown, PA 19465  
Every Sunday Evening at 5:30, St. John's Parish House

[Service]

Tonight...

Worship Film ::

“ Restoration ”

Scripture Reading & Call to Worship ::

Psalm 40.1-11

Congregation Song Worship ::

~ offer thanksgiving sacrifices, and tell of his deeds with songs of joy

Focus Films ::

“ John the Baptizer ”

The Scripture ~

**Being with God**  
*Living with open eyes*

When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day.

John 1.38-39a

This week's Lectionary:

psalm 40.1-11, isaiah 49.1-7,  
john 1.29-42, & 1 corinthians 1.1-9

Reflection Film ::

“ They Don't Know ”

Benediction ::

1 Thessalonians 3.11-13

[Journaling Worship] your discussion notes...

¥ two atonements ?

¥ seeing & hearing...

¥ too aware of sin ?

“

**Meditation:**  
*He made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid me away. And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." But I said, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the LORD, and my reward with my God." (Isaiah 49.2-4)*

**Reflection:**

Anyone involved in ministry understands the discouragement God's servant feels in Isaiah 49 when he says, "I have spent my strength for nothing" - and you can't help wondering if, at times, John the Baptist felt the same.

John spent his time expecting the coming of Jesus and drew people's attention to him when he arrived (John 1:29). The servant in Isaiah was called from his mother's womb to be the one in whom God will be glorified (Isaiah 49:3). Whether the servant is Israel, a prophet, Jesus, or anyone else, the point is the same: We are called to point people to God. This is the only criterion for judging whether a ministry is successful. — Paula Gooder

# still waters

home church studies

## Psalm 40.1-11

[Worship]

1 I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry. 2 He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. 3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD. 4 Happy are those who make the LORD their trust, who do not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after false gods. 5 You have multiplied, O LORD my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you. Were I to proclaim and tell of them, they would be more than can be counted. 6 Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. 7 Then I said, "Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me. 8 I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." 9 I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation; see, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O LORD. 10 I have not hidden your saving help within my heart, I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation. 11 Do not, O LORD, withhold your mercy from me; let your steadfast love and your faithfulness keep me safe forever.

**Consider:**

[Think & Pray...]

By the time the gospel of John was written, Peter - the rock upon whom the church is built, as Matthew's gospel puts it - had become a symbol within the church of apostolic, hierarchical authority. This creeping authoritarianism threatened to betray the vision of Spirit-based, egalitarian community.

The experience is a familiar one. A small, struggling community of believers searching for truth and justice finds the Spirit present in its

midst. They are set aflame with the joy and peace of deep insight into God's call for them and for the church as a whole. They rush to their sisters and brothers in the larger church, offering the gift of their new revelation. But instead of open acceptance, they hit the brick wall of institutional rejection. Rather than being embraced, they are ignored.

If they insist on their version of truth, the reaction stiffens into anger, hatred, persecution. Eventually, they must decide: Do we in turn reject the institutional church in favor of our own Spirit-filled vision of justice and peace? Or do we continue to witness to the religious powers, no matter what the price?

This scenario, familiar to modern-day Christians who often find the institutional church hard-hearted to Jesus' message of nonviolence and love, describes the situation of that ancient community of Christians who grounded themselves in the story of Jesus known to us as the gospel of John. Frequently, "spiritualized" interpretations of the fourth gospel ignore the social crucible of love and hostility in which the text was formed. A reading of the text sensitive to political and social reality reveals a Johannine community in a life-or-death struggle with "the powers" over a Jesus who loved the world enough to die for it and to send his disciples out on a mission like his own.



[The Scripture]

John 1.31-36

31 I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel." 32 And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God." 35 The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, 36 and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!"