

Worship:

Tabernacle Worship Service

Every Sunday Evening

St. John's Lutheran Parish House

75 East Main St. South Pottstown 5:30 pm

Home Churches:

Hanover St. Home Church

Tuesday Evenings

256 South Hanover Street Pottstown

7:00 to 9:00

Announcements:

The Ministries at MAIN Street Shelter.

Please pray to see where God would have you to help!! See Pastor Kork or Ron Caulk for details, and remember to thank God for our host churches!!

New Home Church Series every Tuesday evening at The Moyer's

Recycle Your Faith

Questioning God.



We all see through a glass darkly... Our misunderstandings and questions can make us feel as though we have little, or NO, faith. God is BIG enough to answer our doubts through simplicity and honest questioning. Join us in questioning our faith.

Your Prayer Notes:

Remember those prayer requests from last week and:

Please pray for; Andrew, Kerri and their grandmother who is diagnosed with terminal cancer, for a glorious and rich time preparing for her home-going; for Toni in her break-up, for Lynn—a 20 year old who is diagnosed with a tumor on the pituitary gland, for April's broken heart, and some tough family decisions, Hank and Helen Hankens. Hank has been diagnosed with stage four cancer and has tumors in his lungs, and inoperable tumors in his brain. Let's help them all we can! Please pray for Ron's health, to keep him strong; for Patrice's thyroid treatments; for Diana's family to be reunited; for Jeff, who was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's Disease, for Bruce's health, for the folks staying at the shelter, that they would find love and grace during their struggle, for fulltime employment, apartments, and strength during temptation, for those who have fallen away, due to addictions and cultural narcissism; and keep all of us in prayer, as we seek rest, and to be graceful to those who misunderstand us.

Please keep our church—the future of Still Waters, in prayer while trying to remain faithful to God's calling to the least around us.

Next Week's Scriptures:

March 27, 2011: Lent 3 (Year A)

Psalm 95, Exodus 17.1-7, John 4.5-42, & Romans 5.1-11

Get in touch with us at:

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Ministry:

The Table

Suspended until the end of

Shelter Season in April

Washington & Chestnut Sts. 7:00 pm

MAIN Street Shelter

Every evening at 10:00 pm

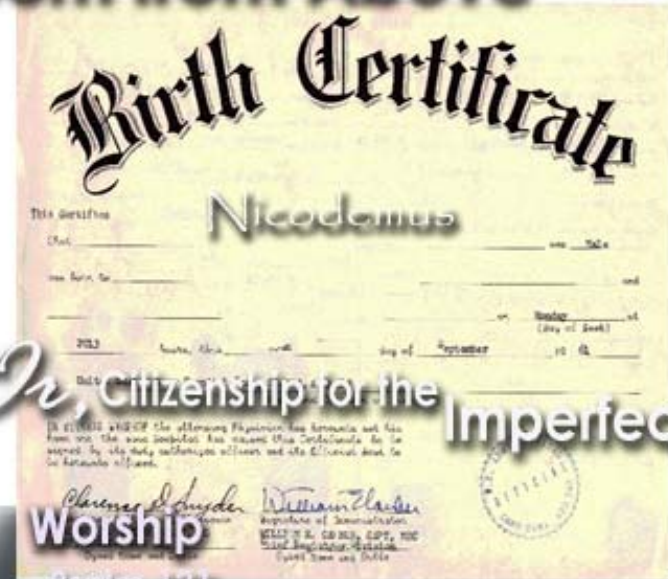
Zion's UCC N Hanover & Chestnut Sts.

There are many volunteering opportunities.



March 20 - 2011

Born from Above



Or, Citizenship for the Imperfect

Worship

Psalms 121

Genesis 12.1-4a

John 3.1-17

Romans 4.1-5, 13-17

Benediction

Tabernacle Worship

75 East Main Street, Pottstown, PA 19465

Every Sunday Evening at 5:30, St. John's Parish House



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Still Waters is a member church of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, P.O. Box 384 Winona Lake, IN 46590

[Service]

Tonight...

Scripture Reading & Call to Worship ::

Genesis 12.1-4a

Worship Film ::

"Psalm 121"

Congregation Song Worship ::

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

Scripture Reading ::

Romans 4.1-5, 13-17

Focus Films ::

"Dying to Self"

This week's Lectionary Text:

*Psalm 121, Genesis 12.1-4a,
John 3.1-17, & Romans 4.1-5, 13-17*

The Scripture ~

Born from Above
*Or, Citizenship for the
Imperfect*

"...No one can see

the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' **John 3b.3-7**

Benediction ::

1 Thessalonians 3.11-13

[Journaling Worship
your talking points notes...
for this Week's Church Discussion]

✚ Where Do I Belong?

✚ Actively 'Believing' God

✚ A Lack of Compulsory Law

Meditation:

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. Romans 4.1—5

Reflection:

" 'Born again' is a wonderful gift, but it's not the end of the journey - it's just the beginning." - **Thomas Keating**



still waters

home church studies

Psalm 121

[Worship]

1 I lift up my eyes to the hills-- from where will my help come? 2 My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. 3 He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. 4 He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. 5 The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand. 6 The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. 7 The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. 8 The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

Consider:

[Words]

It is by the power of God that we may begin anew. Everyone knows about being mired down, fatigued, discouraged, or even immobilized. Everyone in such a state knows that one cannot be a self-starter and lift one by one's own effort. We are not and cannot be that self-sufficient! These readings are studies of exemplars of faith who have begun again by the power of God.

Father Abraham is in a state of hopelessness, because he and his wife Sarah are barren and have no heir. And then God intervenes and addresses Abraham and Sarah. God commands them to go in obedience, and promises them a radical, durable newness if they go. And they go! They receive a new land and eventually they receive a son who will be their heir. They had a future opened for them. Their story is all about the power of God's promise. Paul's exposition in Romans 4 takes Abraham as a carrier of the newness that is to be initiated again by God's grace so that all can begin again, not by merit or worth, but by God's ready power. Indeed, not only human persons can begin again. But so it is even with the world. For the creator God calls worlds into being that do not exist, even as the Lord of life "gives life to the dead" (Romans 4:17).

John's gospel concerns the case study of Nicodemus, the Jewish teacher. He is invited by Jesus to begin again, to be born "from above" (3:3). He does not quite get it, and so he disappears from the text. But the point is clear enough. The God who loves the world is the God who gives new life to those in it, because God's spirit-wind blows freely where it will (John 3:8). It is the wind of love, the offer of new life that is inexplicable and quite beyond our control.

Both the Abraham text and the Nicodemus text entail going where we have not yet been ... into God's new life. For that reason Psalm 121 is a fitting companion

piece. That psalm is about a journey, being safe on the way even if the route is dangerous. Thus we can imagine father Abraham being one for whom God will "neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalm 121:4), and Nicodemus being invited to be kept by God in his "going out and [his] coming in" (verse 8). The journey is to God's newness again; we may be safe in God's care as we travel. – Walter Bruggemann

[Scripture]

John 3.1-17

1 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 2 He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." 3 Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." 4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" 5 Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. 6 What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' 8 The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." 9 Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" 10 Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? 11 "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. 12 If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14 And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. 16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. 17 "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.