

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

7:00 to 9:00

Bright Hope Community Home Church

Thursday Afternoons

Myrtle Street, Pottstown

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm **Beginning again this week.**

Ministry:

The Table

Every Wednesday Evening

Washington & Chestnut Sts. 7:00 pm

MAIN Street Shelter

On Summer Hiatus Until November

Fund raising and shelter cleanup efforts are beginning this month

Norman's Game Night

3rd Saturday Evening Each Month

King St Commons, 7:00 pm

Announcements:

Shenkel UCC in North Coventry, in their attempt to host our shelter for 2 years now, might be coming to the end of a long road, legally with North Coventry. The ACLU has filed a law suit on their behalf. Our friends at Shenkel have done this reluctantly, not wanting conflict with the Township, but when the world's kingdoms come into conflict with Christ's kingdom and following Him, we must be obedient to our King. Keep them in prayer!

Your Prayer Notes:

The Ministries at MAIN Street Shelter.

2008/2009 Season has come to an end and the work of fund raising, laundry, and storage are beginning. Please pray to see where God would have you to help!! See Ron Caulk for details, and remember the host churches that have extending the love of Christ to all of us in operating the MAIN St Shelter. Thank God for them!!

Remember in prayer, those requests from last week:

Pray for our shelter friends, for fulltime employment, apartments, and strength during temptation.

Please remember to pray for Glenn too, and if you would write him, affirming Christ's love for him. Here is his address:

Glenn Dransfield
MCCF # 09-2289
60 Eagleville Rd
Norristown, PA 19403

Please, also keep all of us in prayer; as we seek rest, and to be graceful to those who misunderstand us, our mission, and judge us out of ignorance.

Next Week's Scriptures:

May 17, 2009: **EASTER 6 (Year B)**

psalm 98, john 15.9-17, acts 10.44-48, & 1 john 5.1-6

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still waters
home churches & worship center

May 10 = 2009

Common Ground
Or, abandoned fields
recovered

Easter 5

Worship

psalm 22.25-31

john 15.1-8

acts 8.26-40

1 john 4.7-21

Benediction

Tabernacle Worship

75 East Main Street, Pottstown, PA 19465

Every Sunday Evening at 8:30, 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



ENCOURAGE YOURSelves...
MATERIAL FOR ENLIGHTENMENT

[Service]

Tonight...

Focus Film ::

“The True Vine”

Scripture Reading ::

Psalms 22.25-31

Congregation Song Worship ::

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

Scripture Reading ::

1 John 4.7-21

Focus Film ::

“Mission Moms”

The Scripture ~

Common Ground **Or, abandoned fields recovered**

...seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: 'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.' "

Acts 8.28b—33

This week's Lectionary:
EASTER 5 (Year B)

psalm 22.25-31, john 15.1-8,

Focus Film :: acts 8.26-40, & 1 john 4.7-21

“Jesus & the Kingdom”

Benediction ::

Romans 16.25-27

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

✧ knowing your audience

✧ prosperity & loss

✧ abiding in God's dream

Meditation:

“ God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4.16b—19

Reflection:

"When John says that fear is driven out by perfect love, he points to a love that comes from God, a divine love. He does not speak about human affection, psychological compatibility, mutual attraction, or deep interpersonal feelings. All of that has its value and beauty, but the perfect love about which John speaks embraces and transcends all feelings, emotions, and passions. The perfect love that drives out all fear is the divine love in which we are invited to participate."

—Henri J.M. Nouwen

Psalm 22.25-31

[Worship]

25 From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear him. 26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD. May your hearts live forever! 27 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him. 28 For dominion belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations. 29 To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him. 30 Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord, 31 and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

Consider:

[Words]

On the one hand, it's no surprise in Acts: A high government official is intrigued and perplexed by a classic biblical text of nonviolence. And yet his questions are lucid ones (indeed the scholars still ask them of the servant songs in Isaiah): Of whom does the passage speak? The prophet? Someone else, perhaps a messianic figure? Or is this a more collective image, of a remnant or even Israel as a whole?

Philip seizes the question as an opening. He begins where the Ethiopian official is. He tells the story of Jesus as though its form and outline were there to be seen on the page with the suffering servant, or as though gospel nonviolence and the way of the cross could trace its roots to this very text.

Nonviolence is of the moment in these chapters. Stephen's fiery and forgiving martyrdom is accomplished and a full tilt persecution is abroad (chapter 7). Saul, still breathing threats, will be stopped dead in his tracks in the next (chapter 9). Between Stephen and Paul is Philip, crossing barriers first to

the hated Samaritans, now to a black African (a Gentile even?) from beyond the imperial borders. The conversation concerning the servant song is a still point around which much is swirling.

In Luke-Acts, love of enemies is the acid test of the gospel. In the letters and gospel of John, the acid test is to love one another in community. (I won't presume to judge which is the tougher.) The commandment to love is connected to the vine (another image that goes back to Isaiah, 5:1-7). In fact, the vine in John is essentially an equivalent for what St. Paul calls "the body." You can't bear the fruits if you don't have the roots. The branches stay connected. They abide in love.

Philip, for his part, speaks as though the roots were nourished in the servant songs. He acts as though the vine could sprawl across the map. As though its branches needn't stop for barriers or border guards. As though love of strangers or even enemies and love of community were not so different as we like to imagine.

Do these Isaiah and Acts verses speak of your divine community; In finding a confessional point of agreement to begin righteous connections, do they refer to you as well?

[Scripture]

Acts 10.34-40

34 The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" 35 Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. 36 As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" 38 He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. 39 When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.