



Dear Children of God,

The Apostle Paul writes, "For this reason I fall on my knees before God, from whom every family in heaven and on earth receives its true name. I ask God from the wealth of God's glory to give you power through the Spirit to be strong in your **inner selves**, and I pray that Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith. I pray that you may have your roots and foundation in love, so that you, together with all God's people, may have the power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep, is Christ's love. Yes, may you come to know His love - although it can never be fully known - and so be completely filled with the very nature of God." (Ephesians 3:14-19)

My prayer is that these verses fall on fresh ears and that you feel something being touched deep within you.

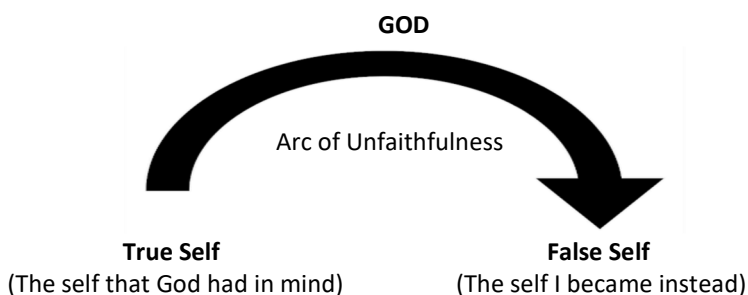
If I were to ask you who or what is your "inner self", how might you respond? Common responses include, "the self that God had in mind when God created me" or "the me that knows I am unconditionally loved and accepted by God". In what ways is this "inner self" a different self from your everyday self? What qualities characterize this "inner self"? How do you connect to your inner self? It seems as though the Apostle Paul wants you to connect to your inner self.

When asked what passages in scripture come to mind when reading this passage, top survey answers include, "you are a new creation in Christ" and "our true identity is hidden with God in Christ".

Our true self is always the self that God had in mind. Apple seeds grow into apple trees, robins' eggs hatch into robins and bulbs grow faithfully and inevitably toward the flowers they were designed to become. People aren't as predictable. Neither are organizations – this includes churches. We have free will and we make choices. We say yes or no. We do not necessarily grow toward what God intended us to be.

Much like the school-age child that promises to finish their homework but instead watches television, or the alcoholic who heads to the store to buy milk but ends up at the bar, we often end up somewhere else as someone else – our false self.

If we were to diagram this dynamic it might look like:



I humbly and whole heartedly invite you to join me on a journey to discover our true self and our congregation's intended purpose. Join me in one of the upcoming learning groups which will be offered this summer - June, July, August. Our small groups are designed to be a safe and brave space for those among us who don't have all the answers, but want to hear from the One who does...God.

Be blessed!

Pastor Bob

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

For many of us, it's been a long and lonely season missing our friends and family at St. John's. For others, it has brought new connections in small groups and virtual meetings. It has also allowed worship in our homes, which is something many of us didn't take the time to do before the pandemic. We know you are anxious to get "back to normal" at St. John's, but there will have to be a new normal for quite some time.

We want everyone to feel safe when we return and one way to do that is to wait a few more weeks until everyone has had the opportunity to receive their vaccine. We are opening our doors on **June 6 for our 9:30 am** worship service. We will continue to livestream this service on YouTube also. Prior to each service you plan to attend, please register on our website (stjohnsboyertown.org) or by calling the office.

Per CDC guidelines, we will continue to wear masks and practice social distancing as we did in the fall. This time, we are hopeful that we will be safer and stronger than we were before. We look forward to worshipping together but because we strive to be a congregation of People Caring for People, we are waiting until June 6. We want to celebrate that we are finally together again! It took a lot of Patience, Prayer, Trust and God's Amazing Grace to get us here... so just a little longer! We can't wait to see all of you in the safest way we can!

IN-PERSON WORSHIP
RESUMES

June 6
9:30 am

REGISTER IN ADVANCE



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2021 CONFIRMANDS

Abigail Fretz
Ashley Gheer
Max Goodrich
Aiden Guinther
Shane Johnson
Myles Omlor

Watch the livestream on YouTube
May 23 at 9:30 am
for this special milestone celebration.

*God bless you and guide you on this important
occasion as you continue your faith journey.*



In collaboration with the Boyertown Community COVID Vaccine Project to provide area seniors with access to the COVID-19 vaccine, a group of St. John's volunteers expeditiously reached out to our members over age 65 and community members to register those wishing to receive the vaccine at local weekly vaccine clinics. Over 20,000 people have been vaccinated as result of community teamwork!

A special thank you to St. John's volunteers:

Martha Bentley	Cathy Krause
Nancy Edwards	Jerry Krause
Missy Endy	Christine Miller
Vicky Henry	Sandy Wade



WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE BIBLE VERSE ?

By: Ros Moatz

I was recently asked to submit my favorite bible verse for the People Caring for People ministry, here at St. John's. So many verses have meaning to me. Here are some of my thoughts on how God uses His Word to touch our lives of faith.

What's your favorite Bible verse? Picking a favorite Bible verse is not an easy task. When I first came to faith, my go-to verse was Jeremiah 29:11.

"For I know the plans I have for you"; declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."

This verse gave me hope and showed me that Christ cared about me as an individual and had already planned my life. This verse was very important to me for many years. It is a verse I use to encourage others often.

Over the years many verses have jumped out to me, for a season of my life. They strengthen me, they give me confidence, they give me direction, and they just help me walk through whatever the Lord puts in my life.

Last year God called my attention to Philippians 4:4-7, repeatedly. He didn't want me to miss it!

"Rejoice in the Lord always!

Again, I say rejoice!

Let your gentleness be evident to all.

The Lord is near.

Do not be anxious for anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and mind in Christ Jesus."

This verse was very relevant to what the world was facing, as well as the changes that went on in our everyday lives through the year. It also spoke to me as to the type of person that Christ wanted me to be, "gentle" and that He would use that gentleness to expose himself to others through me. It was also a reminder of how important being

dedicated to prayer, with thanksgiving, for whatever came before me, was how God was calling me to walk through life at this time.

But lately he's showing me; Proverbs 3:5-6.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths."

This is a verse that has drawn my attention many times throughout my faith journey. Jesus wants to have "first place" in our lives, daily. That's the message I hear him speaking to me, daily. He also wants to remind us that we need to lean on Him, instead of trying to do it by ourselves. When we are faithful to the Lord, giving Him "first place", meaning setting aside time to do devotion, read His Word, or just sit and listen to hear that small voice speak to us, that voice of Christ in my opinion. Acknowledging Him as our Lord and Savior, He will answer our questions, our prayers, meet our needs if we have faith in Him and allow Him to direct our steps in the life He planned for us in His will for us as individuals.

Did you see that tie, taking me back to Jeremiah 29:11?

There are so many good verses in the Bible. It's hard to pick just one.

God is relational. He is our Heavenly Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit who guides us today - 3 in 1! He wants us to be emotionally connected to who He is, and who He is to us. He wants us to get to know His nature and His character. When we have that relationship connection, I think it makes all the difference in our faith walk.

That's why I'm going to keep reading, keep studying with others, and listening. I know that there will be more important verses He'll reveal to me. He will use them to guide me through whatever He puts in my path.

I am so grateful to have a Heavenly Father, to recognize and acknowledge Jesus as His Son and to know that he's given us all, the gift of the Holy Spirit to walk with us daily when we live a life dedicated to Him.



Eagle Messenger Article Deadlines

Monday, May 10 for June issue

Monday, June 14 for July issue

Monday, July 12 for August issue

REFLECTIONS ON MY TIME WITH PRESCHOOL

By: Vicky Henry

By now, you all realize that my mind is always racing. Once the transitional class was gaining popularity and the two-year play group continued to grow, God pushed me to get approval for a class that was geared toward children with special needs. I had been working as a special instructor (on my days away from St. John's) for Early Intervention. Many families were looking for a preschool where their children could get socialization experience. The Board gave the 'go ahead' to give our new class, 'Social Communications', a try. The class was led by Dawn Melcher, under the guidance of Kristina Rhodes (a behavior specialist) and me. We worked closely with specialists to offer OT, PT and language to our students. In addition, the children were in a structured environment which led to many gains in their progress. The class held for two years, and then had to be discontinued due to lack of enrollments. (The Intermediate Unit began offering similar classes that were free!)

The most recent class that has been added to our preschool was once again created from an idea that came to my mind while working with Early Intervention clients, the Mommy and Me Class. Children who were under the age of two, along with their Mommy (grandmom, uncle, grandpop, babysitter) came for an hour twice a week. During that time, the children were surrounded with music and movement activities, finger plays, stories and crafts. In addition, it gave many of them their first socialization experiences with their peers. I taught that class and still have many fond memories of the kids and their reactions. Due to COVID, the class has not been in operation this year, but we already have five children enrolled for next year!

I have traveled through my years at St. John's with you and we are almost up to present day. My reflections next month will sum up my career as parent, teacher, and director at the St. John's Preschool!



A great big thank you to St. John's members who helped make the 2021 Seed Potato Cutting event a success. We had 27 families participate this year and we cut 105 bags (5,250 pounds) from April 8 to April 11. Many hands make light work!

I am again humbled and so very grateful to experience the response from St. John's members, enthusiastically volunteering to serve when asked. Special thank you to Scott and Becky Scheiry for providing potato transport and to Mark Rohrbach, Ben Rohrbach, Charlie Grofe, Scott Scheiry, and Dave Pollock for doing the heavy lifting!

Potato Project Executive Director Walt Zawaski reports that all the potatoes are cut and ready to go in the ground. The fields have been prepared. They are just waiting for a dry window for planting. Then we pray for a good growing season!

John 13:35 "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Thank you for showing your love by helping to provide food for those in need.

Prayerfully and thankfully,

Karen Pollock

Thank you!



COUNCIL CONNECTION

By: Jen Friz, Congregation Council President

As a catechism student at St. John's about 30 years ago, I remember listening closely for the 3 points of the sermon, not to the message or what it revealed about God, but listening so that I could correctly complete my sermon reports. The more subtle structure of Pastor Bob's messages today, his three decades of experience, and the ease with which he delivers the messages may lead some to think that his sermons don't require much preparation. I can confidently say that is not the case. He spends time throughout the week beginning to gather his thoughts and listening for the message God is asking him to bring to us that week. As he approaches the end of the week and the weekend, it becomes a very critical time for him to focus and prepare his heart and mind for the message he will share. We must be conscious and respectful of his preparation time and do our best to feed him positive energy during that time of preparation.

I did a quick internet search and read a few articles on effective preaching and what makes a good sermon and they all listed similar key components. One example is the Kyle Lake Center for Effective Preaching at Baylor University's George W. Truett Theological Seminary, in which a survey in 2018 identified the 12 most effective preachers in the English-speaking world. These were the key dimensions identified:

- Biblical/Exegetical
- Relevance
- Person of the Preacher
- Theological/Orthodox
- Sermon Form
- Effective Communication
- Delivery

I agree that these are important aspects of a sermon, and the descriptions of these components are focused on explaining the exegesis (original, intended meaning) and hermeneutics (contemporary relevance) of the text and presenting it in a way that engages the listener. But after the benefit of hearing 6 years of Pastor Bob's preaching, I believe there is one thing obviously missing from their list... ACTION. While we know that our faith alone, not our deeds, saves us, God calls us to go out and make disciples. We are not just to be receivers of the Word, but doers and sharers of God's Word.

Pastor Bob frequently asks me and many others, in addition to all those who listen, for feedback on his sermon. He often ends his video messages by saying, "I hope this was helpful." I typically provide very positive feedback, but I'm not sure that my responses are the kind that he finds helpful. Instead of trying to answer the question, "How was the sermon?", I've started considering different questions that might be more helpful for me to answer like these:

What is something new that I learned?

How can I look at the scripture text differently?

How has this deepened my understanding and relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

What action will I take?

Consider some of these questions and sharing your thoughts and how the messages are impacting your life and faith with Pastor Bob and others.

I believe that Pastor Bob's sermons beautifully and complexly flow together into themes that teach us how to behave and love. I always learn something new but somehow, he is able to preach consistent underlying themes each week that are delivered with passion, care and a uniqueness that doesn't feel redundant, but have a comforting consistency filled with energy and love to move us forward knowing we have the abundant and unconditional grace, mercy and love of Jesus.

Many pastors preach sermon series, and I have even seen the themes on the signs of some local churches. Pastor Bob has a deep connection to our congregation and community such that his themes are not contrived or intended to serve his own interests, but are exactly what WE need to hear at St. John's and I know it's what God is intending for him to teach us and call us to do.

PRESCHOOL NEWS

By: Vicky Henry

Our most unusual year is winding down in preschool. When we first began in September, I wasn't sure that we were going to be able to remain open all year. But, with a lot of prayers and God watching over us, we now have a little over a month left before we recess for the summer. All classes will finish by June 4.

Evaluations for each child were completed and parents who wished, had conferences with the teachers via ZOOM.

Changes are in the process for the 2021/2022 school year. There will be a new director and some new staff to introduce. Those announcements will be forthcoming in the next few newsletters.

Many of you know that we typically hold a graduation/moving up ceremony for the children in the four-year old classes and the transitional class. Due to COVID, we cannot plan our usual celebration with family and friends. This year's graduation events are planned for the last day of school for each class. There will be awarding of diplomas to the fours and transitional students, with picture taking opportunities. We hope to hold it outside.

Even though preschool doesn't meet during the summer, please continue to save your Redner's tapes for us. In addition, we are now part of the AmazonSmile

program. (You must register under St. John's.) Each purchase you make, contributes monies to our preschool!

Finally, applications continue to come in for next year. We're hopeful to be back to our pre-COVID enrollment numbers. To date, we have 70 children registered. Please spread the word! There is room for more smiling faces!



MAY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 4:30p Come to the Table
2 8:00a Parking Lot Worship 8:00a God's Word Blesses Us (Moatz) 8:00a God's Word Blesses Us (Roth) 9:30a Worship Celebration	3 9:00a One Boyertown 6:30p Daisy/Brownie Troop 1759 7:00p Joint Parking Lot Committee	4 12:00p Teacher Appreciation Luncheon 7:00p Cub Scouts 7:00p Small Group Bible Study	5 2:00p Homeless Task Force	6 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 7:00p Boy Scouts 8:00p Broadcast	7	8 4:30p Come to the Table
9 Mothers' Day 8:00a Parking Lot Worship 8:00a God's Word Blesses Us (Moatz) 8:00a God's Word Blesses Us (Roth) 9:30a Worship Celebration 10:45a Affirmation of Baptism Rehearsal	10 9:00a One Boyertown 5:00p Newsletter Submission 6:30p Daisy/Brownie Troop 1759	11 7:00p Cub Scouts 7:00p Small Group Bible Study	12 7:00p Congregation Council	13 Ascension Day 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 6:30p Preschool Advisory Team 7:00p Boy Scouts 8:00p Broadcast	14 Council Retreat	15 Council Retreat 4:30p Come to the Table
16 8:00a Parking Lot Worship 8:00a God's Word Blesses Us (Moatz) 8:00a God's Word Blesses Us (Roth) 9:30a Worship Celebration	17 9:00a One Boyertown 6:30p Daisy/Brownie Troop 1759	18 Staff Retreat 7:00p Cub Scouts 7:00p Finance Team 7:00p Small Group Bible Study	19 Staff Retreat 9:30a Pottstown Soup Kitchen	20 9:00a Community Leaders 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 7:00p Boy Scouts 8:00p Broadcast	21	22 12:00p Building an Inclusive Church 4:30p Come to the Table
23 Pentecost 8:00a Parking Lot Worship 8:00a God's Word Blesses Us (Moatz) 8:00a God's Word Blesses Us (Roth) 9:30a Worship Celebration 'Affirmation of Baptism'	24 9:00a One Boyertown 6:30p Daisy/Brownie Troop 1759	25 7:00p Cub Scouts 7:00p Small Group Bible Study	26 7:00p Congregation Council	27 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 7:00p Boy Scouts 8:00p Broadcast	28	29 4:30p Come to the Table
30 The Holy Trinity 8:00a Parking Lot Worship 8:00a God's Word Blesses Us (Moatz) 8:00a God's Word Blesses Us (Roth) 9:30a Worship Celebration 'Graduate Recognition'	31 Memorial Day Office Closed					

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Roberta Graver John Schlegel Amy Vogt
2 Barbara Spohn	3 Kristine Endy Chad Ritter	4 Walter Burkepile	5 Chris Schmoyer Andy Varzally	6 Jenna Clark Jonathan Daub	7	8 Lexi Hubler Cynthia Wentzel
9 Chase Sennott	10	11 Edward White	12 Leon Houp Erma Rohrbach Amber Shubert	13 Abby Fretz	14 Terry Wadsworth	15 Beth Ann Engle Ruth Groff
16 Karen Haas Audrey Hafer Tim Nagle	17 Phyllis Kershner Emily Smith	18	19	20	21 Thomas Daub Alma Hilbert	22 William Schlegel
23 Lela Cadwallader	24 Cole Boughter Tatum Friz Julie Sabo Lauri Stofflet	25 Tina Luciano	26 Byron Lee Kollin Miller Katie Shirey Meda Stauffer	27	28 Dona Brown Carly Weiss Pam White	29 Megan Boughter Dawn Melcher Andrea Miller
30 Stephanie Hubler Richard Moatz Paul Strauss	31 Charles Brendlinger Joselyn Trump					



EAGLE MESSENGER

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | 45 North Reading Avenue | Boyertown, PA 19512
610-369-1024 | 610-369-1463 Fax | www.stjohnsboyertown.org

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We believe God's purpose for the people of
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is to develop
joy-filled children of God who love the Lord
and share God's Word.

We do this by:

- Maintaining a trusting and welcoming environment.
- Praying daily.
- Reading scripture regularly.
- Sharing our faith through action-based service.
- Encouraging holy conversations.
- Feeding our faith with music.

With a focus on:

- Activities that build relationships.
- Worship that is relevant.
- Meeting the needs of the vulnerable in our community.

Return Service Request - Dated Material
Mailed April 27, 2021

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE:

SUNDAY

8:00 AM PARKING LOT WORSHIP

9:30 AM WORSHIP LIVESTREAM ON YOUTUBE

Office Hours (open by appointment)
Monday-Thursday 8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Friday 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

Pastor Bob Machamer
Kay Christman, Finance Team
Mason Emmert, Director of Worship and Music
Sue Grofe, Finance Team
Vicky Henry, Preschool Director
Bonnie Moatz, Finance Team
Michael Omlor, Treasurer
Shannon Omlor, Communications Coordinator
Becky Scheiry, Parish Administrator
Amber Shubert, Sexton

bmachamer@stjohnsboyertown.org
financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org
memmert@stjohnsboyertown.org
financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org
vhenry@stjohnsboyertown.org
financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org
treasurer@stjohnsboyertown.org
somlor@stjohnsboyertown.org
parishadmin@stjohnsboyertown.org
ashubert@stjohnsboyertown.org



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God's work. Our hands.