

# CROSS



# WORDS

Volume 11, Number 9

A newsletter published by  
United Church of Christ, Warren IN

September 1, 2023



Gather  
& Grow  
WUCC GROWING TO SERVE

Each of you should use  
whatever gift you have  
received to serve others, as  
faithful stewards of God's  
grace in its various forms.

1 Peter 4:10

## Looking Up WITH PASTOR TROY

### Take a Ride or Abide

I am afraid that many people who have sometime in their lives made a promise to God and to Christ, have been taken for a ride. I am certain that many Christians have been offered the ride the world has to offer and have decided that it's okay to go for a little trip as long as they are belted in with the safety net of Jesus, and a promise they made to Him many years ago. We must ALL understand that temptation is not from GOD, but from Satan and our own evil desires that attempt to drag us away from the promise we make to Jesus to abide in Him. The lure of the world and the temporary satisfaction it might offer us is sometimes very difficult to resist. Some will rationalize, "Well just this one time won't hurt anything!" BUT I am here to tell you folks, it is the start of something that could end up with dire ramifications.

The story is told of a native from a remote mountain village who had the opportunity to visit a large modern city for the first time. He could not bring much home with him, and he had little money. But he was amazed at the electric lights which he saw everywhere. So, he bought a sack full of electric lights bulbs and sockets with switches so he could turn them off and on. Arriving home, he hung the light bulbs in front of his home and on his and his neighbor's trees. Everyone watched him with curiosity and asked him what he was doing, but he just smiled and said, "Just wait until dark--you'll see." When night came, he turned on the switches, but nothing happened. No one had told him about electricity. He did not know the light bulbs were useless unless connected to the source of their power. Jesus said, "Apart from me you can do nothing." There are many people who do not know that the way they are living their lives is useless. They got an education; they got the job; they made the family; and bought the home but when the sunsets and night come, and they reach for the switch nothing happens. They do not know that there is a source, which makes all these things light up.

### **Step one, STAYED PLUGGED IN!**

So many times, people get caught up in the excitement of what Jesus can do in their lives and they make a promise to give their lives to Him, and then they forget that part of that promise is to STAY CONNECTED. Perhaps we as Christians should see the simplistic lesson of why our walk with Jesus is not working as well. Have we unplugged? Have we walked away from the power source of our Christian walk. Jesus makes it simple for us to understand when He says, "APART FROM ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING" The truth is that we cannot do anything without God, but with Him all things are possible. Staying connected is the most important thing we can do. Don't take a ride, simply ABIDE.

### **Step two, WARRANTEE NULLIFIED**

Have you ever started to fix something, and the label says, "If you open this product yourself, the warrantee will no longer be in effect?" That is what God is saying to us in the scripture. If we venture to "fix" our lives apart from the guidance of God, we are no longer given the guarantee of eternal life. It is our task to remain in Him. We live in a time where we are so disconnected from everything: A man in North Carolina bought a new car with a voice-warning system. ... At first, he was amused to hear the soft female voice gently remind him that his seat belt wasn't fastened. ... Edwin affectionately called this voice the "little woman." He soon discovered his little woman was programmed to warn him about his gasoline. "Your fuel level is low," she said one time in her sweet voice. Edwin nodded his head and thanked her. He figured he still had enough to go another fifty miles, so he kept on driving. But a few minutes later, her voice interrupted again with the same warning. And so, it went over and over. Although he knew it was the same recording, Edwin thought her voice sounded harsher each time. Finally, he stopped his car and crawled under the dashboard. After a quick search, he found the appropriate wires and gave them a good yank. So much for the little woman! He was still smiling to himself a few miles later when his car began sputtering and coughing. He ran out of gas! Somewhere inside the dashboard, Edwin was sure he could hear the little woman laughing. People like Edwin learn before long that the little voice inside, although ignored or even disconnected, often tells them exactly what they need to know.

**Romans 12:2** tells us: Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing, and perfect will. TRANSFORMED by God by simply renewing our minds that He is in control of our lives and that apart from Him we can do nothing. There is no guarantee for those that simply claim Christ and then strike out on their own to do their own thing. Jesus makes it clear that the man that decides he can do it on his own, will find out that he cannot do it on his own. Don't be taken for a ride, ABIDE.

### **Step three, THE LITMUS TEST**

Some may ask the question, and I believe it to be a legitimate question, "am I remaining in Christ or being pulled away by the world?" The answer is of course between you and God and never allow someone other than you or God to tell you otherwise. However, the test is in the fruit. We show ourselves as followers of Christ by the abundance of fruit that is displayed in our lives. It is to the glory of God that we bear much fruit, and it shows the world that we are followers of Jesus Christ. And folks there are no short cuts we can use to show spiritual fruit. It takes time spent with Christ to mature and display the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. There are no short cuts to maturity. It takes years for us to grow to adulthood, and it takes a full season for fruit to mature and ripen. The same is true for the fruit of the Spirit. The development of Christlike character cannot be rushed. Spiritual growth, like physical growth, takes time. Our world is full of lies, full of fakes, and full of people who are not doing as Christ would have them do. Our world has changed, but that does not mean we need to change as they have, it is so important that we ABIDE in Christ and allow Him, and the Word of God transform us. This is not always easy, it is not always comfortable, but it is what we are commanded to do. Folks, this is what it ALL boils down to, to:

\*BE WHERE CHRIST WOULD BE.

\*TO DO WHAT CHRIST WOULD DO.

\*TO ABIDE IN HIM.

**God's love and blessings to you all!**

**Pastor Troy and Mindy**



Thank you to Linda, Julie, Jane, Cammy, Justin, Connie, and Jill for teaching with me on Sundays and Wednesdays. Your support is really helping with the enrichment of the kids. Because you all are helping me, I can spend less time helping kids and more time teaching. I am so much more focused on instructing and that just helps so much.

YOUTH DIRECTOR  
TAKARRA MYERS



WEDNESDAY  
NIGHT  
LIVE

WNL: EVERY WEDNESDAY  
AT 6PM  
PRE-K ~ 5TH GRADES

*You* BELONG *Here!*

202 East 2nd St, Warren  
260-375-2102

FOUR:12 YOUTH  
MEET ONCE A MONTH  
6TH ~ 12TH GRADES



## Scripture Power

"Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless."  
(Ecclesiastes 5:10)

## NEWS

We have many Picassos among us! We had ten kids show up to our painting party. I instructed kids to create their own mountain landscape canvas painting and they turned out beautifully! For our next gathering we will be swimming at Heritage Point. More information will be coming soon. I will be announcing the details as soon as I am able. I will also have flyers available, or you can always contact me with questions. I will be having a youth fundraiser September 29<sup>th</sup> from 7pm to 9pm at the concert out at riverside park. Please come and say hi! If you happen to be in the area, I will be selling cotton candy and popcorn. I will also be making an appearance at the Ice Cream Social on September 10<sup>th</sup>. Justin and I will have a booth set up by the bounce houses to talk to people about our church.

This Month there were two kids who really stood out in my mind. These two kids love to help others. James is a fantastic big brother. He always comforts Brooklyn when she gets upset. He also helps her with her class work. Brooklyn always helps Aria with whatever she might need. I think it's so cute the way she cleans her face after snack time or how she holds Aria's hand to make sure she won't fall going up the steps to class. These two are always serving others and I really love having them both in my class. Lastly, James and Brooklyn, you are both incredible artists and it was so fun painting with you both!





# Materialism and Greed

Oh yes, we all love to have money and the comfort that it can bring us. We live in a world that is all about instant gratification, consumerism and more, more, more! In today's world everything we could ever want is just a click or a phone call away. We are surrounded with so many comforts all the time. We are constantly coming up with new inventions to buy that make life even more comfortable and convenient. Living in a world that is so convenient and comfortable can really help ease the suffering of some people and yet at the same time it makes it so easy to fall into sin and materialism. In this way the duality between good and evil can be seen quite clearly. It can feel at times too comfortable and too convenient to the point where it becomes almost numbing. Money can bring us a false sense of comfort and security. Money can bring opportunities for fun, and perhaps even power or social status.

There are so many instances in the bible that show how greed corrupted the hearts of man. My mind instantly races back to the story of the men conducting business on the sabbath outside the temple during Jesus's time on earth. Another instance that I think of comes from Luke 12:13-21. In the Contemporary English version of the bible this story is known as A Rich Fool. In our story Jesus is strolling through a crowd of people when suddenly, a man shouts out above the noise to Jesus and wails "tell my brother to share our inheritance from our father who passed away." Jesus stopped and turned to address the man. Jesus replied and shouted out to the man and the crowd who were now distracted by the commotion on the street. He shouted, "do not be greedy!" Jesus then goes on to tell a story about a farmer who had an extra plentiful harvest one year. This farmer had so much grain that he had decided to build a bigger barn to store it all in. The farmer thought to himself, "I have so much grain I will store it up for years and then I can sit back and enjoy myself for the rest of my life." Well, the farmer's plan did not go as he planned, and he ended up dying before he could reap the rewards of his efforts. Jesus then went on to explain that that is what happens to people who store things up for themselves. He said that men who do this are seen as poor in the sight of God.

To sum up this discussion I would like to bring further attention to the wisdom in Jesus's message and the bible. The bible tells us to do all things for the glory of God, to be selfless and not selfish. We should be seeking to build up his kingdom and not our own. We can serve a higher purpose that eases the sufferings of those around us and brings glory to God. Isn't that so much better than falling into the illusion that we can keep it all for ourselves? In fact, everything around us really belongs to God and we are just borrowing it all. And it is important to remember that God can take it all away from us whenever he would like to. Fools build their kingdom on sand while wise men build their kingdoms on the rock of the lord. Do not be like the greedy men depicted in the bible. Be a superhero like Jesus and give everything away for the divine purpose of building up the kingdom of God! Wear your Christian stamped cape with pride and honor! Fly across the globe spreading the gospel to everyone you met!

*Takarra*





Please plan to stay after service on September 10<sup>th</sup> for a meeting to discuss further the information you received about the UCC Conference.

### Volunteers Needed

Who: We need you! (6 volunteers each month)

What: Serving meals at New Life Meal Ministry

When: 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday every month, 4:30-6:30pm

Where: 323 N Jefferson St, Huntington

Why: It's fun and rewarding!

Contact a member of WUCC Missions Committee or the church office if you would like to volunteer to serve.

## REFRESH YOUR WEDNESDAY

GROWING IN COMMUNITY IS WHAT WE DO.

Take a night off from kitchen duty to join us for a delicious meal and to share in our love for Jesus. Bring the kids for Wednesday Night Live all starting at 5:45pm.

### Join us for our: FOOD PANTRY CHALLENGE

Our September challenge is Salad Dressing!



Sunday, September 10, 2pm  
Riverside Park, Warren  
(Rain - KBC)

Featured Speaker:

**Gage Bustos**

All are Welcome!

Helping at the Food Pantry is a great way to give back to the community. WUCC's next scheduled day is September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2-4pm.

Please let Sarah know if you would like to volunteer. Thanks



## FALL PARTY & HAYRIDE!

At The Wilson's  
6780 E. State Road 218 Lafontaine

A FUN NIGHT  
FOR THE WHOLE  
FAMILY!

COME ONE, COME ALL!  
Saturday, October 28th, 5:30 pm

All the food will be furnished. There will be an apple bob and pumpkin decorating. We will have Hot Chocolate and roast marshmallows after the hayride. Dress according to the weather. You might need a blanket for the hayride!

We will be in the barn rain or shine!!



Coat collection is under way! This year we are collecting children's coats only. Boys and Girls all sizes are needed. We will also accept money donations towards this project. Please see Julie or Shayna if you have any questions. Thanks for your support!



**FAMILY DAY**

October 22nd

Following Service

Mark your calendars!  
Invite your family and friends.



**Warren United Church of Christ**  
202 East Second Street, PO Box 344, Warren, Indiana 46792  
Church Telephone: 260-375-2102  
Pastor Troy Drayer Cell Phone: 260-228-0064  
Church Email: [wucc@citiznet.com](mailto:wucc@citiznet.com)



FIND MORE  
PICTURES AT  
WARRENUCC.NET

Luke Trickle  
Sophia Tolen  
Colsen Brubaker  
Ceaten Brubaker  
Blake Stucky  
Graeme Stroud  
Claire Eckert  
Anikah Eckert





# SEPTEMBER 2023

| SUNDAY   | MONDAY  | TUESDAY                                     | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY  | FRIDAY  | SATURDAY  |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|-----------|
| 27   | 28  | 29  | 30   | 31  | 1   | 2         |
| <b>SUNDAY SERVICE 9:30AM</b><br><b>BILL &amp; LINDA SHUTTLEWORTH</b>                                       | <b>LABOR DAY 4</b><br><b>BOB &amp; BARB JONES</b><br><b>MADDOX MCCOOL</b> | <b>5</b><br><b>MIKE &amp; KAREN JOHNSON</b> | <b>6</b><br><b>REFRESH WNL 6PM</b><br><b>NEIL &amp; WENDY LAYMON</b><br><b>LARRY POULSON</b> | <b>7</b>  | <b>8</b><br><b>SOPHIA TOLEN</b>   | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>COMMUNION SUNDAY SERVICE 9:30AM</b><br><b>MEETING</b><br><b>ICE CREAM SOCIAL</b><br><b>ANDY GEBHART</b> | <b>11</b>   | <b>12</b>                                   | <b>13</b><br><b>REFRESH WNL 6PM</b><br><b>FOOD PANTRY 2-4PM</b>                              | <b>14</b>   | <b>15</b>   | <b>16</b> |
| <b>17</b><br><b>SUNDAY SERVICE 9:30AM</b><br><b>CONNIE MOUNSEY</b>   | <b>18</b><br><b>WENDY LAYMON</b>  | <b>19</b><br><b>MARCIA STROUD</b>           | <b>20</b><br><b>REFRESH WNL 6PM</b>  | <b>21</b><br><b>ADAM JONES</b><br><b>SHELBY DEAKYNE</b> | <b>22</b><br><b>NATASHA GROVER</b>  | <b>23</b> |
| <b>24</b><br><b>SUNDAY SERVICE 9:30AM</b><br><b>ADAM &amp; MELISSA JONES</b>                               | <b>25</b>   | <b>26</b>                                   | <b>27</b><br><b>REFRESH WNL 6PM</b>  | <b>28</b>   | <b>29</b><br><b>YOUTH FUNDRAISER RIVERSIDE PARK 7-9PM</b><br><b>ELIZABETH SHAPE</b> | <b>30</b> |

Church Operating Cost  
 \$3,775 weekly  
 Offering Totals  
 8/6 - \$4,577  
 8/13 - \$1,835  
 8/20 - \$2,115  
 8/27 - \$1770

**Take a night off  
 in the kitchen!**

Join us Wednesdays at  
 5:45pm for a meal  
 before the start of our  
 evening activities.



warrenucc.net