



## From the Pastor's Perspective

### Spring Small Groups Will Follow 1 John Message Series

*"Beloved, let's love each other, because love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God. The person who doesn't love does not know God, because God is love." -1 John 4:7-8*

Small groups will start again after Easter, running from April 8 - May 23! Once again, we are inviting everyone in the church to join...sign up in the church lobby! Groups are offered Sundays before and after worship, Monday morning, and Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. It is a seven-week series in which we will study the book of 1 John together. I will also preach through 1 John as we study it together. See the article below about the spring message series.

Last small group series we followed Peter as he followed Jesus. We renewed our commitment to follow Jesus, and we listened to the Holy Spirit as He spoke to us through the Bible passages. We then shared with each other what we heard the Holy Spirit saying, and then we discussed how we could apply that directly to our daily lives.

This time, the small group experience is intended to help us engage Scripture in a transforming way. The series will teach us how to approach and read Scripture, as well as how to listen to God's inspiration through Scripture. Yet instead of just teaching us how to read Scripture, this series will invite us to participate actively in the practice of encountering Scripture modeled in the small group sessions together.

All small group participants also will be invited to read a daily devotional (provided) as we read through 1 John together.

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### Monthly Church Events

For weekly events see the calendar

April 1	HAPPY EASTER! 6:30 am Sunrise Service 8:30 am Breakfast 9:00 and 11:00 am Easter Worship
April 2	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
April 4	5:30 pm M&M (Pot luck) Talent Show
April 8	Small Groups Begin 11:15 Youth group swimming at Rozanne's
April 11	M&M (Pancakes) Small groups/ board games
April 12	6:30 pm AMT Meeting
April 15	Hymn Sing 6:30 pm Lifeline
April 17	12:00 pm Wednesday night work group meeting
April 18	5:30 pm M&M (TBD) Small groups/ board games
April 25	5:30 pm M&M (Nancy's kitchen) Small groups/board games

## Pastor's Perspective Cont'd

During our group sessions we will learn about what we are reading, discuss the questions in the daily devotional, share how we can apply what we are learning to our daily lives, pray and fellowship together. Small groups will be inter-generational. Families with kids will be encouraged to join the Wednesday evening groups. Kids will begin in the groups for the first half hour (6:15 - 6:45) and then the kids will go to a kids group from 6:45 - 7:30 p.m.

We have a goal to have 80 people involved in these small groups. Invite your friends and neighbors! Invite the person you sit next to in worship. People who were a part of small groups last time said:

"It is so amazing to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to other people."

"I joined two groups so I could hear other perspectives."

"Although I attend, I really didn't feel connected to this church. But this group helped me make friends with new people. This is my church!"

"Every time we met, people shared such good insights."

"This really helped me take seriously my own daily walk for Jesus."

"We could be open and honest. I worked on my faith."

"It's so good to hear other people have similar struggles."

"I'm so sad to have the group stop. I can't wait for April!"

So, don't miss out! Sign up the next time you're at church or call the church today! Let's learn to love as God loves, who is Love!

Pastor David



## Spring Message Series: Core Strength!

We have given ourselves to God "At the Rail." We have surrendered ("I Give Up!") those parts of our lives that keep us from God's plan for us. Now we work our cores ("Core Strength")! This means we focus on and build the core [spiritual] strength that is the center of who we are, whose we are, and all that we do in and for God. That core is God's love in us! To work our cores, we invite God to give us His love, we strengthen that love through toning and conditioning, and we exercise that love in how we relate to God and to others around us.

We will read through, study, and apply the book of 1 John as a church, both in Sunday morning messages and in the church-wide small groups. It will be a seven week series, with an introduction week, one week for each of the five chapters of 1 John, and a conclusion week where we will take the core learnings of 1 John as a foundation for our lives with Jesus. We will also read through a daily devotional book of reflections on 1 John, *This Is How We Know* (The Seedbed Daily Text: 1 John) by J.D. Walt.

1 John can be divided into two broad sections. The first section describes the fellowship of love that God's people enjoy, and the second section explains how to live that out in our daily lives. Our core strength is the core of the Gospel: God's love for us lived out in love to others.

We need this. This is a core foundation of who we are, both as individuals and as a church. Come, and let's work our core together!

Pastor David

## AMT Update

This past month the Action Ministry Team declared the church in "full pause". This means we are focusing only on the three directives from our HCI Recommendation Report:

1. Simple, Soulful Sunday mornings
2. Wednesday Community Meal and activities
3. Small Group series

Our bulletin, weekly email and monthly newsletter are also focusing on these three directives by advertising only those ministries that fit in the three categories. Also, fitting within that is prayer of all kinds, "Lifeline", prayer vigil, prayer team and prayer chain.

You may have noticed how our sermon series these last few months have been building and readying us for opening our hearts and minds to God's calling. We have been "At the Rail", confessing our sins. We are surrendering and opening ourselves up to God with our "I Give Up" series. Now we will be applying the book of 1 John both in our Sunday morning messages with the series "Core Strength" and in the church-wide small groups with the book "This is How We Know". We will work on our spiritual cores by focusing on God's love in us, toning it through teaching and learning, and exercising it by living out how we love God and others in our daily lives.

The AMT team has also been surrendering, giving up through our monthly meetings. These meetings have been full of energy and vigor as we try to encourage ministries to stop and rest. Just declaring the "pause" has taken us several meetings. We struggle with stopping ministries that have defined our church the past decade. However, most of us agree that the painful steps we are taking are what our church needs. Like our new small group series, we must focus on the center of who we are, whose we are, and all that we do for God.

So, please use our next daily devotional 1 John series as a way of stopping the busyness within ourselves. Our limbs are going in too many directions. We need to let our Creator prune and trim us before new growth can come forth.

Christ is Risen, He is Risen Indeed!

Marilee Leonard

Lay Leader





Forged, Forest Hills youth group, has been following along with the "I Give Up" series discussing the themes from a teen perspective. I have really enjoyed looking at this series in both the main service and during youth group. We will be finishing up the series on March 25th, then taking a weekend off for Easter.

Each month we like to get out of the church space and have some fellowship time. This time we went bowling. It was so much fun but none of us will be joining a league anytime soon.

We are looking forward to a swimming party on April 8th at Rozanne's. Then we will be starting our new series "Liked: Whose Approval are You Looking for." We will be discussing how to live eternally in world focused on 15 minutes of fame.

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## KID'S CORNER

This month we will be starting up our next round of small groups! Small groups are an incredible way to grow and develop in faith. They also allow us to engage with each other in purposeful and meaningful ways. However, many things that are worth doing are not necessarily easy. Developing small groups brings with it many challenges, but we are determined to work through the hurdles that arise because we know the end result is worth it.

One of these challenges is the intergenerational nature of the groups we are trying to establish. We love the idea of having kids and adults mixed into groups! It reflects a true picture of the church! But what looks good on paper can be tough to implement.



So, beginning April 11th, after our Wednesday night meal, we will put families with kids into groups much like we have done in the past. Groups will begin with everyone and they will work through an activity or game together. This time might be deemed as a little silly, but it is important to have fun with each other! Group hosts will then transition into the content for the week. This will include kids as well. They will have an opportunity to get their feet wet, to be involved with the Bible in the context of a supportive group. After this exposure and maybe a bit of discussion, the kids will then be invited to join me for a time designated just for them. We will look at the same passage, but from a kid's perspective.

We have found that groups do not always end right on time. This is a good thing! It means that people are conversing and connecting. As a result, we have arranged to have kids be watched over by those who are at church, but not attending a group on Wednesday nights. If groups finish a few minutes late, those parents can know that their kids are cared for by the greater church family.

Our goal is discipleship! We want to see people transformed and not merely informed. Small groups are our way of getting there, and we pray for the Holy Spirit to work in and through these groups.

For the King,

Andrew

## RED ROCK CAMP



It's that time of year again! Time to sign up for Red Rock! This year, we will be going the week of June 24 through July 1st! Red Rock is celebrating it's 150th Anniversary, and we get an extra day at camp as a result! Check the website for registration forms and cost, as well as scholarship information

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# Events and Info

## Small Groups

Small Groups will begin again on April 8th, and run through May 23rd. Make sure to sign up for the time that works best for you!

## M&M April

**April 4th—Pot Luck/Talent Show**

**April 11th—Pancakes/Small groups  
And board games**

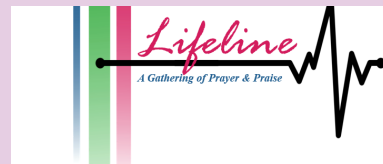
**April 18th—TBD/Small groups  
and board games**

**April 25th—Nancy's Kitchen/Small  
groups and board games**

## Lifeline Sunday April 15h at 6:30 pm

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5.

We take these words of Jesus seriously. We depend upon him. Our connection to the vine cannot be ignored. Lifeline is a way for us to come together to be with God. There will be songs to sing and prayers to pray, but you can simply come to enjoy the presence of God. All are encouraged to attend because we need Jesus! Our church needs Jesus! Hang on tight to the lifeline.



Happy  
*April*