



# The Vine

News, Information and Inspiration from Royersford Baptist Church

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# **AN IMPORTANT LETTER FROM YOUR RBC SEARCH TEAM**

July 15, 2020

Dear RBC Community,

If you've been following the Search Team's journey, you know we've had some ups and downs. We've searched high and low, far and wide for the right candidate to serve as pastor to RBC and the greater community.

Just when we thought we found the right candidate, that candidate decided we weren't the right stop on their journey. And then we found ourselves in the middle of a pandemic! Nothing was as it was supposed to be and everything was in question.

But, we began our search again and what we found was that sometimes we don't have to look very far to see what God has placed right in front of us.

Our pastoral candidate is someone who is familiar to most of you. The timing was right when she and the Search Team connected. We are excited to introduce you to Sarah Strosahl-Kagi.

Sarah completed her Master of Divinity from Andover Newton Theological School in 2015. She was ordained in 2017 by the Philadelphia Baptist Association, ABCUSA. In Sarah's most recent position, she served as the Director for Emerging Leaders & Scholarships at the American Baptist Home Mission Societies where she managed the scholarship program for college and university students and the continuing education program for pastors and ministerial leaders.

Sarah is bilingual, fluent in both English and Spanish, and she has a background in music education. She's also a member of RBC!

Sarah lives in Pottstown with her husband Josh and children Asher and Ellie.

Here's what our team has to say about her:

Karen Mason says, "Sarah is energized by outreach and mission. She's collaborative, innovative and creative. Sarah is excited about building bridges between groups of people inside and outside the church so that we can provide opportunities for people to engage with us in non-church ways."

Ken George agrees "she has the skills, ability and determination to accomplish such outreach and bridge building."

Abigail Turley says, “Sarah has a vision for what church can look like in these changing and challenging times. Beyond the pandemic, Sarah is already thinking about new and exciting ways to ‘do church’.”

Lara Cifelli observed that “she's approachable and resourceful. She impressed me as being very forward thinking- proactively contemplating opportunities for outreach during and post-pandemic.”

Mark Hite points out, “The things that struck me about Sarah are (1) her innate wisdom and (2) an ability to appreciate the past and envision how who we have been has shaped who we are, and how who we are can continue to grow into who we can be.”

Herb Rogers says, “In Sarah I see a composite of the picture that we as RBC painted two years ago as we sat and discussed what the next pastor should look like. She is young with family and outward looking. At the same time I see RBC with the responsibility, challenge and joy developing a young pastor for the challenges of the next several generations.”

Weege Neiffer sees Sarah as “the person who has the insight to take us into the future. She is young with fresh ideas and I am looking forward to where God and Sarah will lead us.”

Bob Brownback notes, “She is thoughtful, well versed, and has a pleasant demeanor. She has a strong background, yet is open-minded which allows her to listen carefully to the ideas of others. These qualities will help her to quickly establish rapport with the congregation.”

And Bobby Fisher thinks “Sarah has the perfect balance of taking us where we need to go in the future, while still keeping us connected to our roots and traditions. Her energy and style are exactly what we need for RBC to thrive.”

In this virtual world, we want to provide ways to help you connect with Sarah. In this mailing, you will find a list of opportunities to meet and get to know Sarah as a person and a pastor. Please consider attending any or all of the scheduled activities.

Feel free to contact any search team member if you have any questions or if you have concerns about accessing the technology.

So mark your calendars for the week of July 26th. We hope you will get to know Sarah and be just as excited as we are to welcome her as the next pastor of RBC!

In Christian love,

Mark Hite   Lara Cifelli   Bobby Fisher

Bob Brownback   Karen Mason   Weege Neiffer

Ken George   Herb Rogers   Abigail Turley

# ***A LETTER FROM SARAH STROSAHL-KAGI***

Dear RBC,

It feels strange to be facing such a momentous occasion of church life without hugs and handshakes, without celebratory worship in the sanctuary and a potluck dinner. I have not let the uniqueness of this situation dampen my excitement in being your pastoral candidate! We have so much to look forward to together, and I am eager to join RBC in this capacity and get started on all that God has planned for us.

Over the past several months, I have grown more and more excited about joining RBC in ministry. RBC is a congregation deeply rooted in tradition; we hold on to the best of our American Baptist heritage and we have a strong connection with our history and roots. And also, RBC has an appetite for innovation, an eye for creativity, and a desire to follow where God is leading- even when it is uncharted territory.

As a born and raised American Baptist, I have a deep love and understanding of our traditions and history. My faith journey has led me to explore mission and ministry outside and alongside the traditional church. Working at the national level of our denomination for the last five years has been a privilege that has allowed me to witness ministry in a variety of ways. As I felt God leading me towards more local ministry, I wasn't sure what to make of it, but I put my trust in God's leading. That's when the search committee reignited the search process; suddenly, it felt like God's timing was just right.

And then, a pandemic hit. Nearly everything about our lives has changed, including how we do church. We find ourselves in a time when we must lean on God, remaining firmly rooted in our traditions and open to how God is using us in new and creative ways. And yet, God's timing is still perfect. For someone with a deep respect of our tradition, extensive experience in outreach and building bridges, a heart for pastoral care, and a growing call towards local ministry- the timing was just right.

This is such an uncertain and scary time for so many of us; everything is changing and we have yet to know what a new normal might look like. In times like these, we often look to our church community and now we find that changing, too. The good news is we can lean on the promises of God, safe and secure from all unknowns. We serve an unchanging and limitless God, and I believe God has called you and me together for such a time as this. I am confident that as we face these changes and challenges together, we will continue to feel God at work at RBC and we will be inspired by how the Spirit continues to move through us.

Along with my husband Josh, our children Asher and Ellie, and our dog Stout, I am looking forward to continuing to deepen our relationships here at RBC and moving forward in mission and ministry together.

With anticipation and joy,

Pastor Sarah



# ***The Search Team is excited to announce our Candidating Week Activities!***

***During this socially distant time, we have lots of opportunities to connect you with Pastor Sarah. You are invited to any and all!***

## **Sunday, July 26th – Sermon and Sermon Talkback**

9:30 am –Candidating Sermon Premiere on RBC’s Facebook Page

\*You can also watch the sermon as part of the Sunday morning worship music YouTube playlist on the Facebook page or the church’s website (rbcabc.org) starting at 7 am.

10:00 am—Sermon Talkback on Zoom

You can use the free Zoom app on your computer or Smartphone to listen to and join in on continued conversation with Pastor Sarah and other RBC folks about the sermon:

***To join by Zoom app (on computer or Smartphone)***

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6109484170?pwd=V2czaWtBZWVZGdjRkp4SUovTUhlZz09>

Meeting ID: 610 948 4170

Password: 19468

## **Monday, July 27th—Socially Distant Drop In @ RBC parking lot**

5:00-7:45 pm

Bring a camping chair and mask and join Pastor Sarah for a short, in formal chat with a small group of RBC folks. Sign up for a 30 minute time slot by contacting Terry in the church office. We plan to meet in the back parking lot, but in case of bad weather, bring your chair and mask and drop in to the Fellowship Hall through the kitchen door. Please be mindful of social distancing guidelines.  
**NO HUGGING!**

*(Candidating Week Activities continued on Page 6)*

*(Candidating Week Activities continued from Page 5)*

## **Tuesday, July 28—Chat by Phone**

12:00-2:00 pm and 6:00-8:00 pm

Feel free to call Pastor Sarah @ 860-302-7779 for a one-on-one conversation.

Leave a message if you get her voicemail and she will call you back!

## **Wednesday, July 29th— Youth Event**

7:00-8:30 pm

S'mores with the youth

Bring a camping chair and mask

## **Thursday, July 30—Q & A Session and Live Vote on Zoom**

*To join by Zoom app (on computer or Smartphone)*

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6109484170?pwd=V2czaWtBZWVZGdjRkp4SUovTUhlZz09>

Meeting ID: 610 948 4170

Password: 19468

Sarah will be able to answer your questions. Listen on and learn more about her.

The entire RBC community is invited to join the Q & A.

The bylaws require that members are present for the Q & A prior to the vote.

The vote that will follow is for current members. If you are not sure if you are a member, contact Terry in the church office.

*If you have questions or need more information, please email Lara Cifelli at [laracifelli@gmail.com](mailto:laracifelli@gmail.com) or leave her a message at 610-246-3368 or contact Terry in the church office at 610-948-4170 between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm weekdays.*

# When We Reopen our Church Building

*Some thoughts by Reid Trulson*

*Jesus said, “The most important commandment is this: ‘Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.’ The second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ No other commandment is greater than these.” (Mark 12:30-31 NLT)*

Heart, soul, mind and strength. Jesus said this is what it takes for us to love God and neighbor. These words speak of intention, compassion, imagination and action. I believe this is what it also takes for us to reopen our church building for public worship.

**Intention.** Our goal cannot be to simply resume the kind of public worship we have had in the past. It should be to reopen and resume in-person worship in ways that nurture spiritual and physical well-being.

**Compassion.** Many of us have continued to worship with one another through RBC’s Saturday song and prayer service on Zoom and Sunday music and sermon service on the RBC website or Facebook page followed by the consecutive Conversation About the Sermon and Adult education sessions on Zoom. We have continued meeting together and encouraging one another as scripture urges (Hebrews 10: 24-25) but have done so virtually. When we resume meeting together physically, we must do so in ways that fulfill love for our neighbor. In the coronavirus crisis, this means modeling new behaviors including wearing face masks and practicing social distancing. Professing love for our neighbor is only a sham if we are more concerned for our own rights, comfort or preference than for our neighbor’s health.

**Imagination.** Many of us have the very human tendency of thinking that our traditional manner of meeting for worship is “the way it has always been” or “the way it should be.” In fact, there were past eras when Baptists didn’t drink grape juice for the Lord’s Supper, or use individual communion cups, or sit facing forward in pews, or observe Christmas or Easter as special days of worship, or have congregational and choir singing in worship, or put baptisteries in church buildings, or have Sunday Schools, or..... the list could go on. All of these things (and more) were first imagined.

In times of crisis, churches that remain faithful and imagine ways to adapt to new realities tend to survive and thrive in comparison to those that seek to preserve their “normal” practices. This is such a time.

Imagine! How might we greet one another without handshakes or hugs? Visualize! How might the sanctuary appear being safely rearranged with 6’ social distancing? Envision! How might we infuse worship with music without singing by the congregation or choir? Picture! How might we worship actively without touching clipboards, microphones, bulletins or offering plates? Whatever is lovely...think about such things (Philippians 4:8)! How might bold new expressions of beauty enhance and inspire our worship? Contemplate! How might we reconfigure RBC’s staffing to build substantial and sustainable online ministries? Dream! ...Imagine!

**Action.** Adapting to the new realities that coronavirus has thrust upon us is hard work. It demands new measures of mental, manual and monetary labor.

I believe our desire to reopen and resume in-person worship is of God. We want to express our love to God. We want to love our neighbors by nurturing their spiritual and physical well-being. To do so, let us

refocus our intention,

renew our compassion,

rekindle our imagination

and refresh our action.



# RBC YOUTH

Several weeks ago, we had an RBC Song service, focusing on the theme of “waiting”. It seemed an appropriate theme in the midst of our current situation, and frankly it continues to be a theme for many of us. It also holds evident for our RBC Youth as we are found waiting during what should be our busiest time of year. We feel robbed of time, fun and productivity to be honest. We are missing out on Creation Music Festival, retreats, beach trips, lock-ins, Knoebels and more. And to make it all even worse, we cannot even gather to spend time with each other. Times are tough.

While we do our best to stay connected through technology, it is just not the same. And I would be lying if I said it did not feel like my hands are tied behind my back as the youth Director. What can we do... but feel as if we are stuck waiting, and for how long must we wait?

But what if we did not look at “waiting” as a non-action but saw our waiting as an action. Time and waiting are often the enemy of our faith, as it distances ourselves from what we feel is the action of God. This

does not need to be the case if we view our waiting as a call from God and as an action of love. To wait is to love and protect, to wait is to trust, to wait is to rest and to wait is to act. Intentionally being still and meditating can be an action to better one’s self, find peace and connect with our Creator. Intentionally slowing down can fill one’s cup and support our own mental health and stability to better serve one another. So, let us be intentional during our time of waiting, to work on the areas of our lives that have been neglected, and to re-center ourselves on Christ.

We as a community, Church, and Youth ministry are wrestling with waiting. Learning new ways to connect from a distance and preparing for what is to come. The church is the people, and so we remain fully the church even when we can not meet in our building. This has been an encouragement for me as I have seen RBC interact over these past few months and show support to one another.

Continue to lift each other up in prayer.

--Ryan Seckman

## Helping Others Stay Warm

Royersford churches and service organizations are banding together to create a place where homeless people in Royersford and Spring City can stay overnight when winter temperatures dip below freezing. This ministry has been incorporated as "Guidelight Ministries Warming Center." Royersford Church of the Nazarene is generously providing rooms in their complex for Guidelight's warming center. Project Outreach, Open Door, Mayor Jenna Antoniewicz, the Royersford Police, local pastors and others are active supporters of this effort.

RBC has been involved in helping to plan this ministry from the very start. Now we need someone willing to represent RBC either on the Guidelight Board of Directors or on its Advisory Council. Is the Holy Spirit giving you a concern for men and women in our community that have become homeless and are forced to endure the winter under the bridge or elsewhere outdoors? If so, please speak to Reid Trulson (without obligation) about your potential involvement in this important ministry.

*If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*  
(James 2: 16-17 NIV)

## RBC's Condolences to the Family of Mr. George Floyd

On June 12, 2020, RBC sent the following message of condolences to the family of Mr. George Floyd. Our condolences were transmitted to WCCO Radio/CBS Minnesota which is receiving and conveying such messages to the family.

*To the family of Mr. George Floyd,*

*We extend our most heartfelt sympathy to you at Mr. Floyd's wrongful death. We decry this flagrant injustice and renew our commitment to work for racial justice. Surely he has not died in vain.*

*Yours in Christian love,*

*The Royersford Baptist Church  
Royersford, Pennsylvania*

## *An Invitation from Marist College to RBC Members and Friends*

Drs. Thomas Killian, Emma Fredrick, and Kristin Jay, Professors of Psychology at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY are inviting RBC members and friends to participate in a study on LGBTQ+ ally development within religious and spiritual contexts.

Who is invited to participate?

Anyone, including those who identify as LGBTQ+, who is a member or friend of RBC. This invitation is not limited to active members of the congregation.

Individuals who identify as religious, spiritual and who are allies of LGBTQ+ persons.

This study defines an ally as any person (including those who are members of the LGBTQ+ community) who actively supports or advocates for those who hold similar or differing sexual/affectional or gender variant identities.

The purpose of this study is to uncover the process and the effects of religion and spirituality on ally development. The survey is online, anonymous, and estimated to take about 20-30 minutes to complete. Here is the link to the study:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1qESaDJjmCUS6BtVve8poPxmIhqnC720ThytmM4ZAPoc/edit?usp=sharing>



## ROYERSFORD BAPTIST CHURCH NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

It is with deep regret that Leadership Council has accepted Kris Christopher's resignation as Director of Royersford Baptist Church Nursery School. Kris has served in the ministry of the Nursery School for the past ten years. She has been a dedicated leader to the teaching staff and the Nursery School Board. Her love of the school has been evident in the rapport she has with the school's families and as a nurturing and loving teacher to the children.

Kris has joined RBC as a representative of the Nursery School in outreach to the community through Community Days and has ministered to Nursery School families going through difficult times. Through Kris' amazing leadership skills, the Nursery School has continued to have an excellent reputation in Royersford and the surrounding communities. We are most grateful to Kris for her years of faithful service with RBCNS.

***WE NOW WELCOME A NEW DIRECTOR TO RBCNS!*** It is a great pleasure to welcome Melissa Moffa as the Director of the Royersford Baptist Church Nursery School. Melissa is certified in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education and Special Education.

Melissa has been a teacher in RBCNS and is well-liked by both the teaching staff and the Board. She has received a resoundingly positive response from parents, which is very important for a preschool teacher/Director. Aside from her organizational skills, leadership, and teaching abilities, and with the instability of this new era, having a Director who knows the families and the ins-and-outs of the school will be even more beneficial at this time.

Melissa and her husband, Frank, live in Royersford with their three children, Joey, Nicholas, Sarah, and a Golden Retriever puppy, Misty Bell. They are an active family and can usually be found on the slopes skiing or snowboarding in the winter or sitting on the beach in OCNJ in the summer. She and her husband are their kids' number one fans at all their sporting events and school activities. While she is not a huge reader, she absolutely loves math games, especially Sudoku! Her family loves to play cards together and their favorite game right now is Hand and Foot. Melissa is excited to continue her career at RBCNS as the new Director, even during this crazy 2020 year!

We are delighted to have Melissa Moffa join the ministry of Royersford Baptist Church Nursery School.

***Do you know a family who is looking for a pre-school?  
RBCNS is their answer!***

Call 610-948-4584 today for a tour of our school! We will be opening our doors on September 8<sup>th</sup>! We have very limited spaces available. During these uncertain times we will be following state mandated guidelines that pertain to our school. We will be able to socially distance due to the large size of our classrooms as well as the size of our school. If you have any questions, please reach out to Director Melissa Moffa through email [director@rbcns.org](mailto:director@rbcns.org) or call 610-948-4584!



## WORLD MISSION CONFERENCE GOES LIVE!

### *“20/20 Vision”*

*I once was blind, but now I see. Mark 8:22-25*

***Have you wondered what happens at World Mission Conference? Never thought you could afford to go to the Green Lake Conference Center in Wisconsin? Well...now you can participate in the WMC for FREE, live on YouTube!!!***

World Mission Conference Live Streams are happening on **July 14, 16, 21, 23, and 28 from 6:00 pm – 6:30 pm Eastern Time each evening**. You can participate in one Live Stream or all five. Join us for life-changing storytelling and the latest news and testimonies from IM’s Global Servants, who will help you see with 20/20 vision that God’s mission is alive and well around the world. Each Live Stream will feature at least two Global Servants. Register today and be eligible for door prize drawings each night. Go to: <https://www.internationalministries.org/world-mission-conference/>

#### ***Tuesday, July 14—Health & Wellness***

Kristy Engel (Global Consultant)

Katherine & Wayne Niles (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

#### ***Thursday, July 16—Abolition of Trafficking in Persons & Global Slavery and Mission From Everywhere to Everyone***

Jeni Pedzinski (Thailand)

Katie & Taku Longkumer (India)

#### ***Tuesday, July 21—Abolition of Trafficking in Persons & Global Slavery and Education and Evangelism***

Annie & Jeff Dieselberg (Thailand)

Gordon & Lee Ann Hwang (Japan)

#### ***Thursday, July 23—Theological Education and Health & Wellness***

JD & Rhonda Reed (Bolivia)

Kihomi Ngwemi & Nzunga Mabudiga (Haiti)

#### ***Tuesday, July 28—Economic Development, Mission From Everywhere to Everyone and Short Term Mission Engagement***

Ann & Bruce Borquist (Global Consultants)

# One Great HOUR OF SHARING

## Relief in the COVID-19 Crisis

COVID-19 has been an unprecedented disruption to life as we have known it. For many, it is devastatingly life changing. Some are left with severe health issues, while others succumb to the deadly virus. Still others lose their jobs overnight. While many of us practice social distancing, we know this is a luxury that many in our country and around the world do not have.

The need created by COVID-19 surpasses what most of us have seen in our lifetime. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a significant way that American Baptists can provide relief for those who are in need now and for those that will be in need in the future. Because American Baptists gave to the OGHS annual offering last year, the resources were available to provide immediate relief when coronavirus began crushing people's lives. Your gifts to OGHS in 2019 are being used today in America and in 22 countries around the world to provide personal protective equipment (PPE), food relief and economic support.

I am aware that some are struggling with uncertain financial situations from the loss of income. Not everyone may be able to give to OGHS as they have in the past, and I do not wish anyone to feel burdened to give financially beyond their ability. I encourage those who are able, however, to give as you have in the past and even more generously if possible to provide for COVID-19 relief.

With prayers for your safety and wellbeing,

Lisa Rothenberger-Winter, ABC World Relief Officer

**NOTE:** You may give online at [www.rbcabc.org](http://www.rbcabc.org) or with a check payable to "Royersford Baptist Church." Please indicate the intent of your gift.

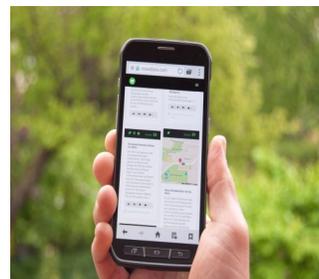
**For US and Puerto Rico pandemic relief, write "OGHS-COVID Recovery: US & PR"**

**For international pandemic relief, write "OGHS-COVID Response: International"**

**For use where most needed, write "OGHS donation"**

### HOW TO MAKE GIFTS TO RBC BY TEXTING

RBC now participates in a program, Text2Give, to supplement our on-line giving system. Text2Give allows you to make gifts by texting. Here's how it works: Text "Register" to 610-890-5200. Click the link in the response. Next, enter your contact information in the form. Then select your preferred payment method, insert your gift limit (maximum amount that can be given per text from your phone), and click Submit. Review the info and either click "Return to Input Screen" to correct, or "Complete Registration". Thereafter, each time you want to give, you'll just text the amount of your gift amount to 610-890-5200, and when you give, you'll get a confirmation with a link to designate your gift. As with on-line giving through RBC's website, you now have 10 choices for how you can direct your gifts to the missions of RBC, American Baptist Churches, and our local food pantry (if not designated, gifts go to RBC's general fund to pay our budgeted expenses).



Be aware that each gift by ACH (i.e., where the funds are drawn from your checking account) costs RBC 25 cents, while each gift made by credit card costs RBC 35 cents + 2.19% of the amount charged, so paying by ACH results in more of your gift going to RBC.

When you give by texting, you'll be texted confirmation, and will be able to request correction of any errors that you made by texting "Refund" or "Void" to the 610-890-5200 phone number. You'll also be able to text "Update" to that number to update your info.

*If you have any questions on Text2Give, on-line giving, or RBC's finances, please contact RBC's Treasurer, George Reitnour (text or phone: 610-935-1040; email: [reitnour@reitnour.com](mailto:reitnour@reitnour.com)).*

# Weekly Online Worship & Events at RBC

As we continue to social distance, RBC has expanded its weekly online worship experiences and educational opportunities!

These events include:

- Saturday Worship Song Service at 1:00pm on Zoom
- Sunday Morning YouTube Worship Playlist posted at 7:00am on [Facebook](#) or the [church website](#)
- Sunday Sermon Facebook Premiere at 9:30am on [Facebook](#) (Marcia Ricketts will be bringing our recorded messages in July)
- Sunday Sermon Talkback at 10:00am on Zoom
- Sunday Adult Education Class at 11:00am on Zoom
- Sunday Youth Group (6th-12th grade) Meet at 6:30pm on Zoom

Please note, these events and resources are not limited to RBC members! If you know people in your community or around the world who might benefit from or be interested in our online resources, please send them the participation form links sent in the Midweek newsletters.

\*A word about Zoom video conferencing: Zoom on your computer or on your smartphone through the Zoom app are both free. Please contact [laracifelli@gmail.com](mailto:laracifelli@gmail.com) if you have questions about the

## New Adult Selectives Series

### Sunday Mornings at 11:00 a.m.

A new Adult Selectives series will begin on July 19th and run through August 9th. Led by Bucky Sydnor, "**Women in the Gospel of Mark**" is a look at the presentation of women in the Gospel of Mark. Over several classes we will look at some of the 8 times the Gospel of Mark focuses on females. Bucky will use the RSV Bible as the primary text, so that all are reading the same material. (We can send you an electronic copy if you need one. But if you have a favorite Bible, please feel free to use it and work from it.) Our time together will consist of interacting with the text itself. We will be most interested in what we can observe in the text and what questions the text raises for us.

Bucky's classes will be followed by one session class on August 16th called "**The Scandal of a Female Missionary.**" Reid Trulson will use pictures from the early 1800s to introduce the life and ministry of Charlotte White Rowe, the first woman in America to be appointed as a foreign missionary by any denomination or mission agency. We will consider who Charlotte was, why her appointment caused such controversy, what she did, and why she has largely been overlooked. The session is based on research he has conducted in India, England and the United States.

\*Adult Selectives classes are conducted via Zoom with the same sign in information as our other RBC Zoom events. If you would like to be added *for the first time* to our Zoom invitation mailing list, to receive an email with a link to the meeting, [please fill out this form](#).

## From the Green Team:

Between the coronavirus, the recent awareness and fight to gain racial justice in this country, and the environmental crisis, it is hard to know what to focus on. All of these issues are important, urgent, and in need of our continual attention. However, the topics mentioned have been addressed in the four recent midweek blurbs in June, so perhaps just an update on the Green Team would be a good place to begin. In May, the Green Team sponsored five classes, covering topics from general introduction of the environmental crisis, to plastics and recycling, to saving paper, to composting, to how food and the environment are closely intertwined. There was even a cooking class, in place of the original plan to eat a healthy, earth friendly meal together.

“Attendance” was good, and participation was lively. There was talk of another cooking class honoring another country and culture. Stay tuned for that!

In May, Reid Trulson, our representative, brought two proposals to the Church Council. First, the Green Team had come up with a Mission Statement which was unanimously adopted by the Leadership Council. It is as follows:

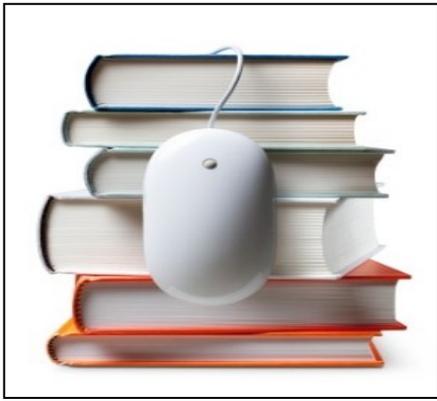
*“God calls us to care for the Earth; therefore we will strive for positive impact on the environment. We will examine ecological issues to inform decisions we make at RBC, in our homes, and beyond. We will seek to do justice in respecting and protecting the ecosystem that God has given us to support all life.”*

Second, our Leadership Council also voted unanimously to apply to join the Creation Justice Network, an organization of the ABC. The application has been submitted, and accepted, and we are awaiting the certificate. It is an organization which “is designed to encourage and support congregations as they discern what the embodiment of creation justice ministry looks like in their unique context.” Both of these steps are significant to all members of RBC, as they require our members to look at all we do through the lens of environmental justice. The Mission Statement, as it says, asks us to examine, seek justice, respect, care for, and protect the Earth, in all decisions we make. Joining the Creation Justice Network has requirements which are to be completed to be a fully participating member. They help us to be more intentional about our decisions, making sure they are in line with caring for the Earth. For example, are our cleaning supplies earth friendly? Are the heating and cooling systems as energy efficient as possible? Is our water safe? Will any repairs be environmentally friendly? What about our coffee? Does it help or harm our Earth? And are we adding to the huge litter/landfill problem by using disposable, single use supplies instead of reusable ones? Are we promoting community connection, by inviting others to join us

in caring for the Earth? We could band together to choose and fight for an issue, like clean air, or reducing the huge problem of recycling and reducing the use of plastic? Or even being a carbon neutral facility? The Green Team will lead the way, but it takes a village to make a greater impact. There will be suggestions forthcoming in all these areas, as we formulate the next issue to address. After our plastics and recycling class led by John Hite, he took the time to send a list of suggestions of how we could all work to address the problems of recycling, and too much plastic. Between John’s list, and the Creation Justice Network’s requirements, there are suggestions to follow up on:

- 1) Creation Justice Network. There are 3 stages of involvement. In stage 1, the “take action” section encourages us to plant some trees or gardens, have our water tested for lead and other toxins, and increase the energy efficiency of our church buildings and homes. Perhaps our stewardship team could get the water checked, and ideas to increase energy efficiency will be forthcoming in another midweek blurb. One idea is to turn up the air-conditioning one degree. If everyone did that, it would help make a positive impact on our Earth.
- 2) After John Hite, who works for Conservation Law Foundation, gave his Zoom presentation on May 10<sup>th</sup>, he sent a list of Anti-Plastics Organizing Guidance for RBC. We have our own personal coach who works in the business of reducing plastics in this world! He made several suggestions, but the first one is to reduce the use of plastics in our own lives, and the life of the church as much as possible. He gave a website of a person who has 100 ideas of how to do this. It is <https://myplasticfreelife.com/plasticfreeguide/>. It is “incredibly difficult” to live a plastic free life, but we can certainly reduce the amount we use. Another bigger step is to call for companies to reduce their use of plastic, and for politicians to pass laws holding those companies accountable. Let’s just begin there, and a couple ideas in “my plastic free life” are to carry reusable bags, to give up using bottled water, and stop using single use plastics. Examples of single use plastics are straws, disposable cups, polystyrene (Styrofoam) plates and cups, and plastic silverware. It takes intention, and failing to remember a few times, before it becomes a habit to do all these actions.

Enough already! But these are exciting as well as upsetting times. Changes are being made in areas that have long been abusive or neglectful, including caring for our Earth. Please jump on board the Environmental Express, and be a part of helping, not harming the Earth. In doing so, we are honoring God as well as the Earth.



# RBC BOOK CLUB GOES VIRTUAL!

I'm not a fan of the phrase "social distancing". I prefer "physically distant" but "socially close". It's important to maintain connections, whether to our friends and family, co-workers and neighbors, or remaining connected to our faith and healthy practices. One of the practices some of us missed during the Together at Home phase in our county, was meeting to discuss a book. We decided to take the RBC Book Club online and meet virtually using Zoom. You're invited to join us!

The RBC book club was founded more than 12 years ago by Terry Vaughn, a devoted lover of all kinds of books. He knew there was great value to be gained when people met to discuss a book. Since its founding, we have read more than 135 books including detective novels, fiction, biographies, historical works, books to encourage our faith, books to stretch us. We have read stories of great adventures and classic literature, favorite books from childhood, fantasy and dystopian novels, and current best sellers. And yes, there have been a couple of "clunkers" along the way that nobody enjoyed but they made for some lively discussions!

At RBC we like to encourage growth in numerous ways, including exploring the world of books. If you'd like to grow in some new directions, expand your mind or your perspective, and get to know some of the folks with whom you worship, then let me know, and I'll send you the Zoom invite. No worries if you can't participate every month – join us whenever you can. We meet at 7:00pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month. Send me an email at [K26mason@gmail.com](mailto:K26mason@gmail.com)

Our next book club meeting is July 16th and we will discuss "**Caleb's Crossing**" by Pulitzer prize winning author Geraldine Brooks. Inspired by a true story, this piece of historical fiction takes place in the 1660s on Martha's Vineyard. It's the story of Caleb, a member of the local Wampanoag tribe who becomes the first Native American to graduate from Harvard.

On August 20th, we will be talking about "**If The Creek Don't Rise**" by Leah Weiss. Set in Appalachia, the story centers on about Sadie Blue, married for 15 days and she already knows she made a mistake. Sadie finds an unexpected lifeline to leaving a town where hope often gets stomped out. This novel is an intimate insight into a fiercely proud, tenacious community of the forgotten people of Baines Creek.

## Data on COVID-19 in Montgomery County (July 13, 2020)

Montgomery County has confirmed 8769 COVID-19 cases and a total of 811 related deaths. In our area:

	CASES	DEATHS	HIGHEST POSITIVES BY AGE GROUP
COLLEGEVILLE	18	0	80+
LIMERICK	99	0	50-59
L. PROVIDENCE	471	9	30-39
POTTSTOWN	155	3	40-49
ROYERSFORD	35	0	40-49
TRAPPE	29	1	30-39
U. PROVIDENCE	205	54	80+

People in the County between the ages of 20 and 69 currently have relatively similar positivity rates. Positives by Age Group:

0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80+
13.3	38.3	115.7	117.7	104.2	107.6	117.4	155.4	360.2

Montgomery County’s past 14-day average was 32.1 new daily cases. NOTE: Before moving from RED to YELLOW phase, the County was supposed to have a 14-day average of 30 or fewer new daily cases. Despite not meeting that metric, the County moved into YELLOW and then on Friday, June 26 into GREEN. The County moved to GREEN because:

- a. there is free testing available for anyone who requests it,
- b. there is space for people in the hospital who get infected,
- c. there are workers available to trace the people who have spread the virus,
- d. there are hotel rooms available into which those individuals can be moved if that is needed to quarantine them.

Source: <https://data-montcopa.opendata.arcgis.com/pages/covid-19>



Bob & Sharon Brownback	July 10
Fred & Weegee Neiffer	July 14
Janelle & Reid Trulson	July 24
Abigail & Shawn Turley	July 26
Marty & Stan Murray	August 4
George & Melissa Reitnour	August 6

**JULY**

Elaine Fitzgibbons	2
Sandy Smoyer	3
Mark Fisher	5
Melissa Reitnour	5
Ronald McCorkle	14
Nancy Ritchie	17
Nancy O'Neil	27
Judy Denning	28
Susan Vaughn	29
Cathy Slade	31

**AUGUST**

Marge Henkel	2
Peter Dramby	9
Kris Lutton	12
Joyce Hedrick	15
Reid Trulson	15
Sherman Hess	19
Emily Parker	26
Margoth Hinostroza	30

*If there are any additions/changes that need to be made to the birthday and anniversary list, please contact the church office.*

**Royersford Baptist Church**  
452 S. Lewis Road  
Royersford, PA 19468

**Royersford Baptist Church (RBC)**

**Office - 610-948-4170**

**Email - [rbcabc@rbcabc.org](mailto:rbcabc@rbcabc.org)**

**Website - [www.rbcabc.org](http://www.rbcabc.org)**

**Staff:**

Pastor -

Youth Director- Ryan Seckman

Worship Coordinator- Lara Cifelli

Choir Director- Sharon Brownback

Accompanist- Alex Cifelli

Administrative Assistant- Terry Myers

Custodian- Elle Crist

Nursery School Director- Melissa  
Moffa

***RBC is affiliated with American  
Baptist Churches USA***

***(Office & Youth Pastor's  
hours may vary during  
COIVD-19 closure)***

***Office Hours:***

**Monday through Friday,  
9 am - 3 pm**

***Youth Pastor's Hours:***

**Monday Off**

**Tuesday 11 am – 3 pm**

**Wednesday 9 am – 2 pm**

**Thursday 11 am – 3 pm**

**Friday 11 am – 3 pm**

If these times don't work for you,  
please call the office. We will help  
you schedule an appointment at a  
time convenient for you.

**Sunday Schedule**

**9:30 am – Worship**

If you have been touched  
by the ministry of RBC, you  
can be part of continuing  
our ministry together  
through your financial  
gifts. Our website has  
online giving options that  
make it possible for you to  
be a part of supporting the  
work of Royersford Baptist  
Church. Your gifts and your  
prayers make a vital differ-  
ence in the Kingdom of  
God.

