



The Open Door - May 2026

*The Reformed Church of Bushkill
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“Striving to Do What Christ Tells Us through Scripture”

Walking in Resurrection Light

Beloved congregation,

As the flowers bloom and the world turns green this May, we see the beauty of spring reflecting the greatest truth of our faith: life follows winter, and victory follows the cross. I see this earthly change on my drives to Bushkill every week and it is beautiful. Just as the earth wakes up, we are reminded that the resurrected Jesus is not just a historical figure, but a living presence in our lives today.

We know that the world around us can often feel like a “heavy suit of armor,” full of stress, division, and uncertainty. But the same Jesus who “knocked it out of the park” by defeating death has called us to live with a different kind of spirit. We have the full armor of God as our spiritual framework for believers to stand firm against evil. See Ephesians 6:10-18.

As Christians, we aren’t called to carry the weight on our own. Instead, we are called to trust like young David did with his slingshot, to share the joy of hope of an empty tomb, and to be a source of new growth just as spring rains bring life to the earth once again.

Join Us This Month

Don’t let the “troubling times” damper your spirit. We have wonderful opportunities for fellowship and worship ahead, including our communion Sunday with breakfast, movies on May 19th and Bible studies everywhere.

Focus on the tools God has given you this month. Whether it’s a word of encouragement, a talent for music, or a heart for service - that is your gift to the church for the sake of God.

In Christ,
Pastor Marisol, Transitional Minister

Breakfast will be served on
Sunday, May 3rd from
8:30-10:00 AM.



Come and enjoy good food and
fellowship with one another.

The *Open Door* is for everyone and it is a great
way to update everybody on what is going on in
the church and what your ministry doing, as
well as those seeking out a church online.

Articles for the June *Open Door* are due
by Friday, May 15th.

Leave them in the church office mailbox across
from the nursery, stop by the church office or
e-mail directly to the church office:
bshklch@ptd.net



We will have a Movie Matinee
at 12:30 PM on Tuesday,
May 19th in Rottenberg Hall,
"The Best Christmas
Pageant Ever".

Bring your lunch if you'd like;
some snacks will be provided.

We will serve a Community Dinner on
Thursday, May 21st from 5:00-6:30 PM.
and will be dine-in only.

The Community Dinner is served on
the 3rd Thursday of each month.



In honor of Mother's Day, you will have an
opportunity to help a new mom in need.
The Angel's Closet has a clothesline hanging in
Rottenberg Hall which has various items for you
to donate. Please take a tag and return the
items to the basket in the narthex in the month
of May in honor of all mothers.

Thank you all!

Happy Birthday greetings
for the month:



Dorothy Bush - May 3
Joan Hendra - May 11
Maria Romero-Tomba - May 22
Madeline Hull - May 27

Volunteers are needed to make dessert for the
monthly birthday celebration. See Kristen or
call her, 570-994-3056, if you can help.

Financial Report - Joe Bush

Month of March 2026:

Income: \$10,708.58

Year to date: \$28,705.57

Budgeted: \$101,750.00

Expenses: \$20,168.26

Year to date: \$66,048.45

Budgeted: \$198,936.00

I would like to thank everyone for sup-
porting the church through their giving.

God bless,
Joseph Bush

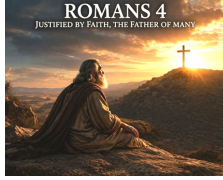
If you would like to make an appointment to
see Pastor Marisol, call the church office,
570-588-6773.

If you have a mid-week prayer request for
our e-mail prayer team please e-mail
Jen Schoonover, schooent@ptd.net or
call/text her at 570-534-5752.

If you'd like to be on our mailing list to receive
the *Open Door*, any other mailings and
weather-related updates,
please e-mail, bshklch@ptd.net
or call the church office, 570-588-6773.

Romans 4: Faith, Righteousness, and God Who Keeps His Promise!

By Bryon Kenne



One of the hardest things in life is not only finding the truth but holding on to it once it has been revealed. Romans 4 calls believers back to that truth. In

this chapter, Paul teaches that a person is made right with God not by works, family heritage, or religious performance, but by faith. Abraham becomes the great example of this truth, because “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (Romans 4:3).

In many ways, Romans 4 is a continuation from last month’s article on Romans 3, where Paul points out “There is no righteous person, not even one” (Romans 3:10). Here, in Romans 4, he shows us that is now changed through Christ Jesus’ death on the cross and resurrection.

Paul begins by making it clear that no one can boast before God. “If his [Abraham’s] good deed has made him acceptable to God, he would have had something to boast about. But that is not God’s way.” (Romans 4:2, NLT). Human effort may impress other people, but it cannot earn salvation. Before a holy God, our works cannot make us righteous. This is why Romans 4 is so important: it reminds us that righteousness is not something we achieve, but something God credits to those who trust Him.

The word for righteousness here carries rich meaning. The Greek word is **δικαιοσύνη** (*dikaioσύnē*), meaning justice or righteousness. The Hebrew idea,) **דִּקְיָה** (*sedāqāh*), includes honesty, justice, and right standing within a covenant relationship. In Romans 4, righteousness is not presented as human moral perfection, but as a right standing before God that He graciously gives. Abraham did not earn this standing; he received it by believing God.

That is the heart of the gospel. Faith is the only condition, not because faith has merit in itself, but because it is the only way to receive what God freely offers. There is nothing we can physically do to earn forgiveness or eternal life. God accepts faith in place of works, not because faith is a work, but because faith honors Him. Faith says that God is true, that His promises are trustworthy, and that His grace is enough.

What, then, has God promised us? He has promised forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Christ died on the cross for our sins so that we might be forgiven and brought into a right relationship with God. He also died and rose again so that those who belong to Him may one day be raised into eternal life. Jesus Himself said, “for just as the Father gives life to those he raises from the dead, so the Son gives life to anyone he wants” (John 5:21, NLT). This promise stretches beyond the present moment and reaches into eternity, where God will make all things new (cf. Revelation 21:1–4). The believer’s hope is not temporary improvement, but everlasting life with God.

Romans 4 also emphasizes the joy of forgiveness. Paul quotes David, saying, “Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sins are put out of sight. Yes, what joy whose record the Lord has cleared of sin.” (Romans 4:7–8, NLT). What joy there is in knowing that sin is not counted against us. Our record, once stained by guilt, can be cleared by the grace of God. This joy is not shallow happiness; it comes from restored fellowship with God. When sin is forgiven, the barrier between us and God is removed, and we are brought near to Him again.

David, the Greatest of the Kings of Isreal, understood this personally. He was a great sinner, yet he also experienced God’s mercy. After David confessed his sin, Nathan told him, “yes, but the Lord has forgiven you, and you won’t die for this sin” (2 Samuel 12:13, NLT). That same mercy is offered to all who trust in God’s saving work. Through Jesus Christ and His shed blood, our sins are covered. The blessed person is not the sinless person, but the forgiven person.

Paul also shows that God's promise is bigger than physical ancestry. Abraham is called the father of all who believe, not only of those descended from him by blood, but of all who share his faith. God had told Abraham that through him all nations would be blessed (cf. Genesis 12:3). Romans 4 teaches that this blessing comes not through lineage or law, but through faith. A person may not be able to trace their family tree back to Abraham, but through faith they can belong to the family of God. The true people of promise are those who believe.

This truth also corrects a common misunderstanding: works do not lead to salvation. Rather, salvation received by faith leads to a life of obedience and good works. Works are the fruit, not the root. We are not saved because we do good things; we do good things because we have been saved. Faith justifies, and then that justified life begins to glorify God through worship, prayer, and obedience.

Romans 4:20 (NLT) says that Abraham "never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger and in this he brought glory to God." Faith glorifies God because it takes Him at His word. In a world full of doubt, faith declares that God tells the truth. This raises a personal question: do we believe that God is telling the truth, or is doubt beginning to creep in? Faith does not mean we understand everything. It means we trust the God who does.

Abraham's situation made faith especially remarkable. There was nothing around him that made God's promise seem possible. Sarah's womb, humanly speaking, was barren and lifeless. Yet from that place of lifelessness, God brought life. Abraham believed it anyway. This points us forward to Christ, whose death and resurrection are the center of our faith. As Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced as he

looked forward to my coming. He saw it and was glad" (John 8:56, NLT). Abraham's faith looked forward to God's saving power; the Christian's faith looks to Christ crucified and risen. Note the picture in this article is of Abraham staring across the landscape at the empty cross.

This is why the resurrection matters so much. Faith is not only in the death of Christ, but also in His resurrection. Christ died to pay our debt, and He rose again to declare the work complete. Also to give us something substantial and concrete on which to believe, a blessing that Abraham didn't have. As Romans 4:25 (NLT) says, He "was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God." Through His death our sin is dealt with; through His resurrection our belief is made strong, and through his ascension our acceptance before God is assured.

Romans 4 therefore calls every believer to rest not in self, but in God. There is no merit in faith itself. Abraham had nothing visible to hold onto. He simply believed God. That is still the call today. Man was created to glorify God, and the only way to truly glorify Him is to believe Him. The question of Romans 4 is deeply personal: have you gone that far with God? Do you believe Him?

Amen and Amen

Book Recommendation: The pursuit of Holiness, Jerry Bridges.

Play Ball!

Thank you to Pastor Marisol and husband Paul. I had never heard of Holy Humor Sunday before this April. Thank you for reminding me that laughter - especially joy - is a blessing from our Lord Jesus. God bless all who participated. AND the hot dogs and fixings after Worship were appreciated too!

-- Yvonne Rodriguez