

## That Shocking Bible Story

In Genesis 22, Abraham obeys God's command to sacrifice his son Isaac. You have to put yourself into the darkly pagan world of that time to understand why Abraham didn't think this was unusual. These were the murky, unspeakable routines of man-made pagan religion. Abraham may have thought, "I was wondering when my deity would get around to asking for something like this."

God wanted to shock Abraham out of his pagan roots. God blows Abraham's mind by stopping the sacrifice and providing a substitute. Abraham starts to become dimly aware that this is not just another ancient near-eastern culturally-formed deity. Maybe this is the Real Deal, THE God of the universe! Abraham not only got his son back unharmed, he also received a radically upgraded view of God. A sigh of relief, a burden lifted, a realization that loving hands are at the controls of the universe, that Love itself is seeking him. The darkness was not in creation, but in the misguided, fearful heart of man. Now the darkness began to retreat; the light of God's truth expands starting with one man.

In retrospect we see the bigger picture. God was telling us that we will not be allowed to sacrifice our children, but that he will do the sacrificing for us. The cost is not to us but to him. Not only was Abraham given his son, but God provided an additional Son, his own. Jesus, the Son of God, willingly laid aside his crown to come down and sacrifice himself for me. He saw our hopeless condition and all our wrong-headed disastrous solutions. In love for us he gave his life.

In our day we are not so different from this story as we regress again to the same pagan roots from which God is trying to save us. The terminology is different. We sacrifice our sons to war, children to abortion, young people to the diseases of addiction and immoral living, to STDs, hopelessness and suicide, to meaningless dissipation. Sacrificed on a neo-pagan altar of "freedom" that enslaves. Now that is shocking! God knows how to set people free. It was what he was trying to do for Abraham... and Isaac, in that shocking Bible story.

*Mark*

TODAY...

1. **Children's Church RE-Start** begins!
2. **The Jr. & Sr High Youth Groups & Siblings:** You are invited to a pool party/barbecue after church to 3pm at Chris, Kristin, and Nicky's home
3. **Sr. High Youth Group Parent Meeting:** for 5 minutes immediately following service, in order to update contact information and for parents to **sign-up for months they would like to run activities** for the Youth Group. **You do not need to be parents to sign-up.**
4. **Ladies:** there will be a brief meeting up front immediately after Service.
5. **There is No After-Worship L.I.F.E. Group**

**SAVE THE DATE!** Sunday, October 2 at 6pm. Winterfest Dinner. Plan to join us for a great evening. Donations will help our teens attend the Youth Rally in TN., which is a huge blessing in their lives.

**Camp Manatawny Men's Retreat** this week. We are renting a van to go on **Friday, Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>**, stay over-night and return home **Saturday**. Refer to the [Manatawny.org](http://Manatawny.org) website to **sign-up & pre-pay. ALL MUST REGISTER AND BE PAID IN FULL.** After Sept. 2, there is a \$25.00 late fee.

- *Boys ages 5-12 are \$20 & have their own program.*

### **Youth Group Coordinators for 2016-17:**

Youth Group (Senior High) - **Chris and Kristin Ceraso**  
Junior High (grades 6-8) - **Ed and Laura Francoeur**  
Kids for Christ/KFC (grades 2-5) - **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**

**New Visions:** Monday, September 19th

## FALL QUARTER Classes Start TODAY!

### **Sunday 9:30 AM**

Adult Class Sept.: **Bill** Quigley, Oct.: Varies, Nov. **Mark** Finn  
Cradle Roll- **Lillian** Nuñez  
Preschool through 1<sup>st</sup> – **Brenda** Collier  
2<sup>nd</sup> /3<sup>rd</sup> – **Laura** Francoeur  
4<sup>th</sup> /5<sup>th</sup> – **Dave** Cook  
Jr. High- **Kristin** Ceraso  
Sr. High School- **Bret** Goen

### **Wednesday 7:00 PM**

Cradle Roll – **Wini** Boyle  
Adult Bible Class- **Bret** Goen  
Elementary- **Bibi** Williams  
Jr./Sr. High- **Scott & Chris** Schoener

**Ladies Area-Wide Hymn Sing Here:** Fri. Oct. 14

### **Today's Worship Leaders**

**Worship Leader:** Gerry Hogan

**Welcome & Scripture:** Bill Ceraso (Psalm 25:1-7)

**Opening Prayer:** Scott Schoener

**Lord's Supper:** Tim Jones, Carl Smith, Tony Sr., John Corbett

**Scripture Before Message:** Ed Francoeur Jr. (Romans 5:6-8)

**Announcements & Closing Prayer:** Rick Boyle

**Greeters:** Scott Schoener, Jack Swinehart, Chris Schoener, Sue Gill

**Nursery:** **Norma & Nina** Next Week: Hoa & Elizabeth

**Purple Cleaning Team:** Sept. 7-10. Becky Coordinates

### **OUTREACH/MINISTRY**

Mark Finn – Preacher

Church Office- (856) 854-0197

### **ELDERS:**

Rick Boyle (856) 986-4876

Tony Ceraso, Jr. (856) 278-6276

Bret Goen (856) 996-5267

Chet Churchill (609) 560-7179

Howard Mansdoerfer (609) 790-9969

**Worship Total** .....122

Bible Class ..... 59

Wed. .... 51

**Contribution** ..... **\$3,173**

Budget Goal ...\$4,260

**Weekly Bible Readers: 27**

## Collingswood Church of Christ

Church Website: [www.ccc123.org](http://www.ccc123.org)

300 White Horse Pike

September 4, 2016

Collingswood, NJ 08107

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“Now faith is being **sure** of what we hope for and **certain** of what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1)

