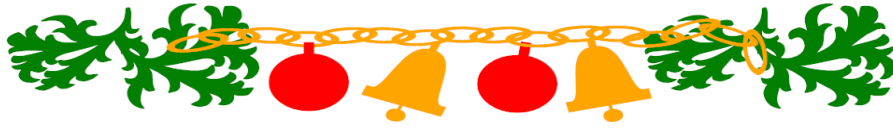


Good News Ambassador



Year of Christ 2020



CHURCH OF CHRIST UNITING

A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.
and the United Methodist Church
The Reverend Casey Bradley, 315 858 8864
Alice Mahardy, Organist & Choir Director
PO Box 896, Richfield Springs, NY 13439

I would like to share a story and a confession with you. The story comes from my own childhood. It was Christmas morning and I, like many young children, couldn't wait to tear into my presents. I had woken up before anyone else was stirring, tiptoed into the living room, and gazed with awe at the wrapped gifts under the tree. The lights were off and the sun had not yet risen, but it was light enough to see the spoils of another successful Christmas. I would try to discern what each of my gifts must be by the shape and size of the wrapped boxes. I was never the kid who could just wait for something that I wanted. Even if I couldn't tear into that shiny wrapping paper, I just had to see it ahead of time. Just that glimpse, that hint of joy to come, was enough to hold me over to when my family would wake up and I could appease my curiosity.

Time for the confession; I have not changed. In the days and weeks leading up to Christmas my anticipation still sores. Heather knows that she has to hide my gifts because I will look for them. As an adult, Christmas gifts are much less of a surprise than when I was young. I usually at least have an inkling of what I will be opening on Christmas morning. There is a small corner of my brain that doesn't want to wait, doesn't want to anticipate, and earnestly desires to at least glimpse the joy of Christmas morning.

The season of Advent teaches us to wait. As someone who hates waiting, Advent teaches me to find joy in anticipation. As someone who greatly desires some instant gratification, Advent teaches me that holy things come to those who wait. It's why it causes me such great sorrow to see how little emphasis the world gives to Advent. The world ramps up to Christmas and forgets to enjoy the holy time of waiting.

This year has been given over to a great deal of uncertain waiting. I, and I suspect many others, have found the uncertain waiting to be a time of anxiety. I'd like to suggest that we view this year as a year-long Advent, a time of waiting while something holy is being born in our midst. As we close out one year and await the next, what holiness are you waiting to be born, what good news are you looking forward to sharing with the world?

All of us, in a sense, are tiptoeing around some beautifully wrapped presents. I pray that you join me in entering this period of holy waiting. I do not know how long this experience of waiting will last, but I know that the church has been preparing us for times such as these since the early Christians set aside a period of their lives to experience the celebration of waiting in eager anticipation, with one another, in order that they might experience profound joy that was entering the world.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Casey





Online and In-person Worship

Join us **Sundays at 9:15 am.**

Facebook page: **RS Church of Christ Uniting**

You don't need a facebook login. Just go to www.facebook.com and put the above name in the search, or watch later on YouTube, by searching on **RS COCU**.

Please call the church for prayer-requests or announcements. **315 858 1553**



Giving for December is Santa Anonymous.



Santa Anonymous was started and continues to be spearheaded by the Richfield Springs Lioness Club. Santa Anonymous is our Community's own special mission. This year Santa Anonymous is working to support 30 to 40 families with food, warm clothing and gifts for the children. Due to COVID, the struggle is greater, but the Lioness Club is working harder than ever to make it possible as the members struggle to run the program, always keeping the health and safety of the families, children and workers in mind. Our help is needed. Please support the December Second Mile Giving, our own Santa Anonymous, with a generous donation to this very worthy mission.

Geri Erwin



COCU Board of Directors Meeting is Tuesday, December 8th at 6:30 pm.

Contact Pastor Casey to enjoy Bible Study, even from home.

The year 2020 was the church's 50th anniversary. We may have 51 before celebrating.

Thank You, members of the Choir for providing the music for our church services. It is very much appreciated. -- Alice

Thank You, Piscilla Edick for the November Altar arrangement of beautiful flowers.

We will not be doing Christmas poinsettias because of the virus. -- Rowena



It would be good if you have room in your December to send a card to Mort, now moved to the first floor. Address: Mort Robertson Cooperstown Center, Country Meadows, 128 Pheonix Mills Rd Rm 114, Cooperstown, New York, 13326-5716

Send us your decorations!



Since so many of us cannot worship together in person, I encourage us to show off how we are preparing our homes for Advent and Christmas. Have an Advent Wreath? Snap a picture and send it to us. Putting up a Christmas tree. Take a picture and share it with us. Got a Manger scene? Take a picture and help show us how you are making your home a sacred space. However you are preparing your space for Advent and Christmas, we would love to see it and share it with our church family.

You can send pictures to caseybradley@gmail.com, text them to 518-461-6673. Or print them out and send them to us through USPS. Make sure to include your name when you send your pictures!

-- Pastor Casey



Communion for Dec 6 Pick up your Elements Dec 2nd or 3rd.

The common table will be set once again for the Communion Meal. If you are joining church online you can pick up your prepackaged communion elements on Wednesday or Thursday from 1-4pm or you can call the church to make other arrangements to have Communion.



The Upper Room Jan-Feb booklet is available. I will deliver to those who let me know they would like it. --- Donna 315 858 2357

<p><u>Happy Birthday!</u></p> <p>12/5 Heather Snyder 12/5 Christopher Michael Calkins 12/6 Mary Stanfield 12/7 Dale Ann Barra 12/10 Sam Cornell 12/11 Mary Wilde 12/12 Samantha Calkins 12/12 Lester Olmsted 12/16 Cory Mahardy 12/17 Christine Bond</p>	<p>12/20 Maggie Worobey 12/20 Aedan Osborn 12/24 Rod Sluyter 12/30 Kristy Zaitseva 12/30 Charles LaFrance 12/30 Taylor Hallberg 12/31 Ivy LaFrance 1/2 Brady Young</p> <p><u>Happy Anniversary!</u></p> <p>12/15 Mort & Rowena Robertson</p>
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Sunday school: Thanks to all who participated in our scavenger hunt. We had about ten cars and thirty people "scavenging" around town. Those who came out found out a little more about town and seemed to have a good time.

We are postponing meeting in person as a class for awhile yet. Thankful tree crafts were delivered to the elementary students. It will help them count their blessings. They also have an advent chain to put together to help them make each day a little more special and help them count down the days until Christmas.

Be well and may God bless. -- Donna



----- **LET THERE BE LIGHT!** -----

We are in the midst of replacing the old fluorescent lighting in the kitchen and fellowship hall. If you're in the building you'll notice a big difference. These have been purchased with money from our memorial fund. Also as you go to and from town, notice the church road signs church signs. These are the wonderful work of Dick Shypski.



FRIENDSHIP

December Guild Meeting

After further consideration, the next Guild Meeting will take place at COCU, after Sunday Worship on December 13 at 10:30am. (NOT December 16 as previously discussed).

We will be wrapping the gifts for Folts Home residents and signing Christmas Cards to send to past Guild Members who have moved away. We are asking that each member bring some wrapping paper, scissors, tape and a pen. This way, more than one person won't be handling these items.

We will also be discussing our 2021 Mission Project. We are considering Health Kits because there is a great need for them globally.

Due to COVID risk factors, we are asking that all members wear a face mask and gloves when wrapping presents and signing cards. The gloves will be provided by COCU.

Your health and well-being are very important to us, which is why we are taking the necessary precautions. It would be nice to see you ladies again, but we will understand if you're not comfortable getting together at this time.



NEWS FROM THE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP AND SERVICE GUILD



Pictured, left to right, Guild members Linda Ehlers, Geri Erwin, Carol Simpson and Carla Eckler stand behind the display of donated products.

Annual Food Collection Benefits Food Bank

In keeping with the mission of the Christian Women's Service Guild, members recently donated various food products that include the most requested staples by patrons of the local Food Bank.

The Women's Guild welcomes new members any time of the year. Please feel free to reach out to any member for more information or contact Carol Simpson, Guild President at 315-868-0319.

**NEWSLETTER CONTACT INFO REQUESTED**

In an effort to be more economically responsible it is our hope to, as much as possible, e-mail the monthly newsletter to those who would like to continue to receive it. We are aiming for a 2021 spring transition.

Please be assured that those who either do not have a computer or do not have an email address can opt to receive the newsletter by first class mail.

We are requesting your help to start the transition process.

We will begin with a two-step process:

Step #1 pertains to only those who DON'T have a computer/and or e-mail address:

If this pertains to you and you would like to continue receiving the newsletter by first class mail, please either:

- Call the church at 315-858-1553 and state that you do not have a computer/e-mail address, but would like to continue to receive the newsletter via first class mail. Also, please state the name currently showing on your newsletter mailing label.
- Or, send a note stating the above, to: Church Secretary, Church of Christ Uniting, PO Box 896, Richfield Springs, NY 13439

Step #2 pertains to only those who would like to DISCONTINUE receiving the newsletter:

If you would like to **discontinue** receiving the newsletter all together, we'd greatly appreciate it if you would do one of the following:

- If you have a computer and e-mail address, please e-mail cocu@verizon.net and state your desire to discontinue receiving the newsletter, and also specify the name currently showing on your newsletter mailing label.
- If you don't have a computer/and or e-mail address, please call the phone number shown above, or send a note specifying you wish to discontinue receiving the newsletter. Again, please specify the name showing on your newsletter mailing label.

Our tentative deadline for the above two steps is February 1, 2021. After that, we will move onto the below final steps:

- Because we already have e-mail addresses for some who currently receive the newsletter, we will work on finding out if there are e-mail addresses for those remaining on the current newsletter list.
- Compile a list for those we have heard from that don't have a computer and/or e-mail address but wish to continue receiving the newsletter via first class mail.

We appreciate your help!