

Old Stone Church - August 2022



God
is still
speaking,

Words From Wang – “*I’m Tired of the Mud-Slinging*”

I’m tired of the mud-slinging. How ‘bout you?

I’m tired of the name-calling. How ‘bout you?

I’m tired of certain so-called Christians condemning others to Hades because of their different beliefs or interpretations. How ‘bout you?

I’m tired of campaign ads that do everything in their powers to make the opposition look incompetent and corrupt; or blaming those holding current positions for all the things wrong with our state or nation. How ‘bout you?

I’m tired of people using the name of Jesus Christ to push their own agendas even when there is nothing in the bible to warrant such assertions. How ‘bout you?

I’m tired of all that divides us as a nation, as states, communities, and even as churches. How ‘bout you?

All of the mud-slinging is not helping the current climate for small local churches and many of us fear for our future as an institution. That is a legitimate concern. In the end, however, I hope you will remember that we still possess a genuine trust in the God who has inspired churches throughout the ages. As one of our denominational leaders puts it, “we are not mere survivors in an uncertain chapter of Church. We are resilient explorers, nimble navigators, courageous apostles of the living Christ, assigned to a daunting task we didn’t ask for: partnering with the Holy Spirit to discern the future of the church and co-creating our way there.”

One of the underlying strengths of the wider United Church of Christ is what he calls “spiritual solidarity,” a value traceable to the denomination’s motto: “That they may all be one.” “We belong to each other and we continually seek to widen our circle of inclusion,” he said, “so much so that we proclaim, *‘No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.’*”

And the ever-widening circle extends to those different from ourselves (or those who differ). “If we are to fully practice the extravagant hospitality of Jesus, it needs to extend back to those who aren’t quite as progressive as we might like, but at the same time, forward to those who share deep experiences of the sacred beyond the walls of the institutional church,” he concluded.

These are useful words as we (Old Stone Church and 1st Cong. Pec) explore new ways to be the church. I will never get tired of saying that the key to being viable is “commitment and innovation.”

According to my calendar, I’ve been with the Old Stone Church 18 months now; my original contract being 36 months (with the option of extending). I believe we’re on the right track and with our “stronger together” motto in our shared ministry, I am confident that God is doing a new thing and it’s all good! I’m not tired of trying new things. How ‘bout you?

See ya’ in church.

Pastor Bob

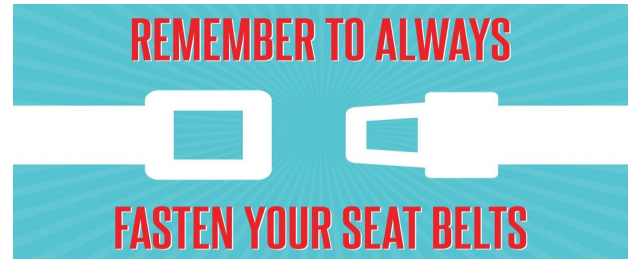
Worship Opportunities (August)

August 7: The 9th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 12:32-40

Sermon theme: *Fastening Our Belts for the Journey Ahead*

Note: The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be served



August 14: The 10th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 12:49-56

Sermon Theme: *Forecasting More Than the Weather*

August 21: The 11th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 13:10-17

Sermon Theme: *Sabbath Works*



August 28: The 12th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 14:1, 7-14

Sermon Theme: *The Table of Friendship and Love*

September 4: The 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 14:25-33

Sermon theme: *Strategic Plans*

Note: The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be served



Flames of the Spirit: “Hearts on Fire”

At the beginning of the Pentecost season, at OSC we launched our second year of a three-year campaign called *Flames of the Spirit*. We are currently in the early months of this year’s theme, “*Flames of the Spirit: Hearts on Fire*.” We can now welcome 1st Cong (Pec) into this initiative.

Our focus text is **Luke 24:30-32)** *When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us[a] while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?”*

With our new shared ministry covenant we look forward to planning joint activities and events to further our mission and outreach as the “Crooked River Ministries” as well as establishing community partners in and around both parishes.

We hope that these new endeavors will help to inspire all of us to do some personal witnessing (a.k.a. elbow evangelism) and instill in people a desire to invite their friends, family, and neighbors to church programs. Remember, faith is not taught, rather faith is “caught.”



Crooked River Ministries Launch a Huge Success



August will already be our third month of shared ministry dubbed “Crooked River Ministries” and we remain encouraged and excited about the new prospects that await us. On July 17th, many of us gathered at the Pecatonica River Forest Preserve to celebrate and dedicate this partnership which was highlighted with great fellowship and tasty desserts. Both of our Associate Conference Ministers (Stephanie Perdeu and Kathy Lawes) were in attendance to help us formalize our covenant.

Before and after the service, which featured some of our musicians, games were played, hikes were organized, and we even painted river rocks. These rocks will be divided up between the two churches and will be on display at each building along with the ceremonial canoe paddles that will eventually have signatures on them of all the members of the two churches combined.

Moving forward, we are excited to begin plans for some shared events. Each month the newsletter will share a calendar of events detailing what will go on at each joint gathering. We are still in need of three committed people from each church to fill our shared ministry advisory board. This team will meet periodically to help oversee our joint operations. Please do your part to help us to be stronger together. May God bless the Crooked River Ministries of Winnebago County, Illinois!!

Crooked River Calendar of Events

August 27 - Bristol Renaissance Faire

A bus has been reserved with First-Student Transportation and will depart from Old Stone Church at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, August 27. Our destination is the Bristol Renaissance Faire located in Bristol, WI; about a 90 drive from Rockton. The p/person cost to ride the bus will be determined by the number of people who sign up (a minimum of \$10). When you sign up please give us an email address so that we can keep you informed on bus fees. We will return to Rockton by 8:30 p.m.



All those wishing to attend need to contact the OSC office to reserve a seat on the bus. Phone: 815-624-6212, email: oldstonechurch@oldstonechurch.net. Participants are responsible for purchasing their own tickets to the faire which are \$30 (adults)/\$15 (age 5-12, under 4 are free) at the gate or online at renfaire.com/bristol/ however, coupons can be found. Also, participating Menards stores have tickets for \$4 off. The website will give you that information. The trip is not limited to church members of either church so feel free to help fill the bus by inviting a guest or two.

September 17 - Crooked River Coffee House (Pec)

Our first coffee house/open mic night will be at 1st Congregational (Pecatonica) on September 17 in the church fellowship hall downstairs and will benefit the Pec Food Pantry. Sign up to perform will begin at 6:00 p.m. with music starting at 6:30. Music, poetry reading, comedy, whatever your talent, please join us. Or, simply come to enjoy. Admission to the coffee house is a non-perishable food donation of any size. Refreshments will be offered throughout the duration. If you wish to volunteer to help host or serve please let church leadership know.



October 8 - Crooked River Coffee House (Rockton)

The above will also be offered on Saturday October 8 but in the dining room at the Old Stone Church. Same format and time frame. This event will benefit the Rockton Food Pantry.

November 2-4 - Autumn Blessings Adult Retreat (Cedar Valley Retreat Center)



Save the dates! Nestled in the heart of Washington County and Wisconsin's Kettle Moraine region, Cedar Valley facilities are located on 100 acres of natural beauty. Cedar Valley is part of the United Church Camps, Inc. (United Church of Christ); one of three outdoor ministry sites in the Illinois Conference. We will gather at 4:00pm on Wednesday November 2nd and conclude our time together after lunch on the 4th.

Pastor Bob is planning programming for attendees to dig a little deeper in their faith, but will allow ample time for fellowship and to enjoy God's sanctuary that is Cedar Valley. The rooms for overnight lodging are quaint and include private bathrooms. The country-style dining room offers delicious homemade breakfasts, lunches, and dinners—all included in the overnight rates! A more detailed flier will be available very soon. Feel free to read about Cedar Valley by going to ucci.org.

December 9 - John Denver Christmas Concert (Pec)

The 2nd annual John Denver Christmas concert will take place on Friday, December 9th in the sanctuary of 1st Congregational Church, Pecatonica at 7:00 p.m. More details forthcoming.



December 10 - Chicago Day

How about a trip to Chicago? This event is being considered and would include bus transportation (maybe coach!) into Chicago with a stop on the Miracle Mile; Christmas lights and display on Michigan Avenue, the museum of Science and Industry, restaurants, etc.

2nd Annual All-Church Family Camp – (postponed)

Last year's all-church family camp retreat was so successful that there was a lot of interest in doing another one this year. However, all things considered, it didn't work out so we decided to consider another event next summer. In the meantime, let's support some of the other events on the schedule as part of our shared ministry with the Pec church (see "Crooked River Events").



THE OLD STONE CHURCH IS PROUD TO PRESENT: *The Second Annual Bag Night*

Given our fine legacy of having one of the most successful food pantries in the state line area, we want to celebrate those whose constant support help us in providing this important service to the community. Every sponsor and volunteer is inspired to offer their time and financial support because they know we are making a difference. That's why we are again hosting a special event to recognize and give thanks to the countless individuals and organizations that makes the OSC Food Pantry viable.

This year's *Bag Night* is scheduled to happen on **Tuesday, August 16 from 6:00-8:30**, featuring a **corn hole tournament** (a.k.a. "Bags") with prizes being given to the first, second, and third place winners, and free food hot off the grill. Those wishing to participate in the tournament are simply being asked to bring a "bag" of groceries (dry/canned goods) to benefit the food pantry. Spectators are welcome, and will be eligible for free food but are encouraged to make a food donation as well. A good time will be had for any and all who want to join in on the fun.

We are hoping to extend the invitation to many of our donors and do want them to come as our guests as a way of saying *thank you*. Anyone willing to share their corn hole set, please let us know. We are also looking for OSC church members to assist with hosting the event (food servers, registrars, etc.) and/or to help with securing prizes (actual items or cash to purchase). If you have questions or need more information, please speak with Pastor Bob or Donn VanSchelven.



Sunday School Starting 9/18!

The school year is quickly starting in our area, and our Sunday School is no exception! This year, we will be continuing with our one room Sunday School with class beginning Sunday, September 18th!

As our church is ever changing, we are making changes, too. This year, we will be offering Sunday School for children 4 years-4th grade. This keeps the work we do as consistent and as interesting as possible to all involved.

We look forward to seeing all of our young people back in church! If parents have any questions or concerns, please contact Lindsey in the church office, or send an email to oldstonechurch@oldstonechurch.net.



Interested

In

Choir?...

WORSHIP

IN THE MIDST OF THE CHURCH WILL I SING PRAISE TO YOU
BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHICH GOD HAS GIVEN ME
Jesus
HEBREWS 2:12-13

LET'S LIFT OUR VOICES & USE OUR TALENTS
AS WE MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE TO THE LORD!

COME TO OUR CHOIR KICKOFF EVENT & POT LUCK!

If you have longed to be a blessing to the Lord and to our Congregation join us!

MAKE THE PLAN
AT JENNY'S HOUSE

Saturday-September 10-6PM.

FIRST REHEARSAL
IN OUR CHURCH!

Sunday-September 11-4 to 5:30 PM.

JENNY'S HOUSE!

309 N. BRIDGE STREET, ROCKTON

BRING A DISH TO PASS-BEVERAGES PROVIDED

RSVP JENNY OR SIGN THIS FLYER AND PUT IN OFFERING PLATE BEFORE AUGUST 15TH
You can Call or Text Me: 815.988.3021 Email: jmmaragia@gmail.com

August Birthdays

- 3rd- Tim Coomer
- 5th- Bob Leach
- 7th- Claire Miller
- 9th- Sara Butler
- 13th- Dan Herron
- 14th- Julie Bailor
- 16th- Steven Herdklotz
- 18th- Jessica Wallace
- 25th- Dee Dee Balsley
- 26th- Suzanne Provance
- 28th- Molly Plessner
- 29th- Judy Wang



August

Anniversaries



- 4th- Jim & Carol Henson
- 4th- Steven & Karen Herdklotz
- 20th- Gerald & Laura Bode
- 30th- Gregg & Deb Seyler



August 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Grief Group 10:30	4 Pantry 9-11	5	6
7 Communion	8	9 Council 7pm	10	11 Pantry 9-11	12	13
14	15	16 Bag Night 630-8	17 Grief Group 10:30	18 Pantry 9-11	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Pantry 9-11	26 Old Guys 8:30am	27 Renaissance Fair
28	29	30	31			

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Lindsey Lancaster: Office Administrator
Bob Estrada: Custodian

