

Old Stone Church - July 2022



God
is still
speaking,

Words From Wang – “*Let Music Swell the Breeze*”

Who doesn't love singing a good patriotic song to celebrate the freedom and liberty that we all enjoy? And for those beloved community celebrations and civic functions, there's nothing better than belting out “*God Bless America*” at the top of our lungs or clapping along to a marching band handling Sousa's “*Stars and Stripes Forever*.” And go ahead and add some “apple pie and Chevrolet” and you've got the perfect down home, heartland, Norman Rockwell-esque scene at your disposal.

But the question always becomes, what is appropriate and in the best interest of all when it comes to singing patriotic songs in worship? The bottom-line answer is that we remember to prioritize and give honor where it is due; to pledge our allegiance first to God and God's church. That the emphasis be on the Creator, the Christ, the cross, the Word, and the overarching message of loving God and neighbor as ourselves - thus making our worship centered on matters of the heart and soul, matters of the Spirit; that our worship be filled with awe and wonder on the works of our God and Creator; and to always do so with an attitude of gratitude.

And when the scenario becomes different, we run the risk of allowing our worship to become idol worship or even worse, that we find ourselves making worship more about nationalism and less about honoring our faith traditions. I remember the time as a young boy scout that I was privileged to carry “the colors” (The American flag) in a civic parade. I still carry that same pride in my heart. But I have also heard the occasional words coming from a Christian that “worship is just not worship without the American flag being present in a prominent place in the sanctuary.” I find that particular perspective a little troubling.

We must always seek to strike a balance; that patriotism and faith must both be expressed in ways that further the causes for which they were each intended and with the utmost care and respect. And then there are always those specific verses of the more fitting thematic songs for worship; lyrics that truly speak to this balance; and it's not always the verses that we are most familiar with that come to mind.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees, sweet freedom's song.
Let mortal tongues awake; Let all that breathe partake;
Let rocks their silence break, the sound prolong.

Our father's God to, Thee,
Author of liberty, To Thee we sing.
Long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light;
Protect us by Thy might, Great God, our King!

May you all have a blessed Independence Day. See ya' in church.

Pastor Bob

Worship Opportunities (July)

July 3: The 5th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

Sermon Theme: *Shaking the Dust Off Our Feet!*

Note: The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be served



BE DARING
AND CARING

July 10: The 6th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

Sermon Theme: *Daring and Caring*

Note: We hope to worship outside in the parking lot, weather permitting.

July 17: The 6th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 10:38-42

Sermon Theme: *The Gospel According to Mr. Rogers*

The Gospel
According to
Mister Rogers

Be
Vigilant,
But Not
Afraid

July 24: The 7th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 11:1-13

Sermon theme: *Be Vigilant, Be Open, and Believe*

July 31: The 8th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 12:13-21

Sermon theme: *The Plain and Simple Truth*



REMEMBER TO ALWAYS



FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELTS

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



Flames of the Spirit: “Hearts on Fire”

At the beginning of the Pentecost season, we launched our second year of a three-year campaign called *Flames of the Spirit*. We are currently in the early weeks of this year’s theme, “*Flames of the Spirit: Hearts on Fire*”

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 while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?”*

Year 2 Mission: to build on the previous year with programs, events, and worship services that inspire, including the community around us (provide an alluring “glow”); that our burning hearts may create a sense of wonder from the wider community; that we might find ways to appeal to those seeking a connection with a faith community (community outreach). We will further celebrate the resiliency of our vocal and bell choirs, and will continue to build on that burning desire to praise God through music.

With our new shared ministry covenant with 1st Congregational U.C.C. of Pecatonica, 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 our own people 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 - July 17 @ 3:00

We are happy to announce that our shared ministry with the 1st Congregational UCC of Pecatonica will officially begin on July 1st. To celebrate and dedicate this partnership we are holding a special event to ritualize our covenant, share a bite and a beverage (dessert or lunch), and, most importantly, to get to know each other better.

We have dubbed the larger entity of this joint effort “Crooked River Ministries.” So, let’s consider this day a ceremonial “Crooked River Launching.” We’ve narrowed it down to three possible locations (one of the Winnebago County Forest preserves located between Rockton and Pecatonica) and will announce it as soon as a final decision is made. So, stay tuned for further announcements about this unique inaugural event. Both of our Associate Conference Ministers (Stephanie Perdew and Kathy Lawes) will be in attendance.

We’re also looking for a few volunteers from each church to guide us in the planning process. There’s a rumor that we might even have a special choral piece prepared just for the occasion featuring singers from both churches. Don’t miss it.

Meet Our New Director of Music Ministry: Jenny Maraglia (pronounced Ma-rah-gee)

Since the beginning of May, we have been blessed with Jenny's musical leadership as she has demonstrated her keyboard skills. Now that she has been with us a bit, we have learned that she also has a background in vocal/choral music and we have happily negotiated a contract with her to take over leadership of our choir program as well.

She will therefore continue her duties at the piano but will also be making plans for the vocal choir as well as helping to coordinate any special music during the summer months. She is the owner of her own business, Studio Three, and has over 30 students that come to her for private music lessons in her home which is located just two blocks from the church on Bridge St. She is the mother of two teen age boys, Jakob and Solomon, and is very happy to be joining our OSC community.



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.



2nd Annual All-Church Family Camp – August 7-9



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, the camp is limited to dates that they can offer so we're polling members from both OSC and the Pecatonica church to see in the level of interest is high enough to confirm it with the camp.

We would gather at the camp on Sunday afternoon to share in some time of fun and fellowship, stay two nights with Monday being designed for more programming and plenty of free time ending the day with vespers and a campfire. Tuesday would be more of the same but will conclude with lunch. The p/person cost is \$220 for a single or first in a family with additional family member's cost to be \$120. The cost covers two night's lodging in the hotel-style conference center and six delicious meals in the camp dining hall.

Those who are interested please let Pastor Bob or Lindsey know asap so we can get a preliminary count and determine if it's a go. This is survey of interest and not a firm commitment though we are optimistic that it will happen as we hoped.

OSC Gardens & Green Team Updates

Here is a little update on the OSC gardens and the newly formed Green Team. The gardens are a continuous work in progress, but we would like to continue to thank those who have donated to help our gardens grow. Thank you to the volunteers who help with watering, but we are still in need of volunteers to help with weeding in front and around the A/C units. Please talk to Wendy Eltman if you can spare some time. A big thank you to Bud and Sue's Market, Roden's Elegant Gardens, S&H Nursery, Lowe's, Lane's Market, and Home Depot, for your plant donations.

Our newly formed Green Team has been working on the west side of the building where the old bushes were removed. Steve Herdklotz has generously agreed to grade some of the areas where bushes have been removed, and bring in some top soil as well. On Sunday, 6/26, this team started to get some of the newly bare areas ready for planting. Putting in some good, old-fashioned, hard work were **Ken Thomson, Bonnie Estrada, Diane Roth, Jeannie Williams, and Wendy Eltman**. The team has also been working with Sarah Sallinger of Rockton Garden Works (who is a part of our Green Team) to create a design for our new landscaping. With the purchase of 2 Roses of Sharon's, (in memory of Sharon Funk) and some wildflowers donated By Ken Thomson and Mari Weikel, the gardens will soon begin to take shape. In the gardens, we would love to add one or two birdhouses, so if you or someone you know would be interested in donating a birdhouse, please reach out to Wendy Eltman.

As always, we would like to extend a big thank you to Tom Christenson for mowing the grass, and keeping the Old Stone Church grounds looking impeccable every week. (There is always room for a volunteer lawn mower to help out Tom, too!)

July Birthdays

- 2nd- Howard Harshbarger
- 6th- Dick Truman
- 7th- Bonnie Estrada
- 10th- Barb James
- 11th- Jordan Plessner
- 12th- Jennifer Bode
- 13th- Kadie Herron
- 14th- Jason Plessner
- 14th- Jake Piper
- 17th- George Ruper
- 18th- Marilyn Kiefer
- 22nd- Terry Eck
- 24th- Jeannie Williams
- 29th- Jack Eck, Jr.



July Anniversaries

- 9th- Kevin & Lisa Rudy
- 13th- Larry & Barb Anderson
- 23rd- Russ & Barb James
- 28th- Dave & Suzanne Provance



July 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Communion	4 Independence Day	5 Worship Team 7p	6 Grief Group 10:30	7 Pantry 9-11am	8	9
10 Outdoor Service	11	12 Council 7pm	13	14 Pantry 9-11am	15	16
17 Crooked River Launch 3pm	18	19	20 Grief Group 10:30	21 Pantry 9-11am	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Pantry 9-11am	29 Old Guys 8:30am	30
31						

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