

# Old Stone Church - July 2023



## **Words From Wang** – *A Farewell Blessing*

As they say, my how time flies. But, alas, for me it's not so much about the time as it has been about the miles. When I started doing ministry in Winnebago County on February 1, 2021, the odometer on my van read just around 17,000 miles. Two years and four months later it reads right around 87,000 miles. And aside from two lengthy vacation trips and some obvious personal miles, those miles driven have mostly been to serve alongside all the gracious and loving people that you all are as we traveled this rather remarkable journey together. And every mile has been a marker for some event, worship service, committee meeting, fellowship opportunity, home visit, or a memorial service, a meal, a concert, a wedding, a coffee house, or simply time spent in the office.

We began this journey amid a global pandemic, and we were gathering to worship and perform ministry when many churches were still doing it remotely. And like many other communal entities, we responded the best we could to the many challenges associated with the major shift that our culture was, and still is, living through. But through it all we remained faithful to our calling. We had our losses, but thankfully we can also count the many victories celebrated enroute to the moment we find ourselves in today. We are the product of the new thing God has been doing and the road ahead is filled with nothing but opportunities.

It is with great joy and satisfaction that this epistle is being shared with a second congregation of hearty church folk as we recognize perhaps the most God-inspired accomplishment of my tenure; the formation of a shared ministry that will be forever known as Crooked River Ministries. I truly believe some of your best days and years are yet to come - but only if you keep your minds open and your hearts rich in all-things-God-in-Christ-Jesus.

I do want to acknowledge that the ministerial model that we embraced together was not ideal. I regret not being able to spend more time in the community, or to associate with you in those more informal places that a typical ministry opportunity might have provided. But we all rolled with it and made the best of what was a most challenging situation. I thank you for your understanding and for supporting me along the way.

I do hope you will always keep in mind as you move forward, and while you search for a settled pastor, that this is your church. And as it is your church remember that the healthiest church is ministry driven, not pastor driven. Pastors will come and go; each once bringing different gifts but please remember that there is no such thing as a perfect pastor. And that some pastors might even forget your name. But you can decrease the chances of that happening if you actually give it to them in the first place; and not just once, but twice, or even three or more times. Yes, we're human. BTW, wearing your name tag REALLY HELPS.

As I said in my resignation letter, it has been a privilege to work with so many wonderful people and I truly believe we have accomplished a great deal together. I can only hope that I have made a fraction of a difference in your lives as you have made in mine.

Until we meet again. With gratitude and blessings. *Pastor Bob*

Note: I have been working closely with church leaders to assist in securing coverage of pastoral duties for the coming weeks and months. We do have a couple guest preachers on board to cover Sundays in August and possibly into September. The August newsletter will provide more information on this subject so stay tuned and trust the process. And please be patient as transitions are always a little rough.

## Worship Opportunities (July)

**July 2:** The 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

**Scripture:** Mt 10:40-42

**Sermon Theme:** *Remotely Hospitable*

**Note:** The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be served



**July 9:** The 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

**Scripture:** Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

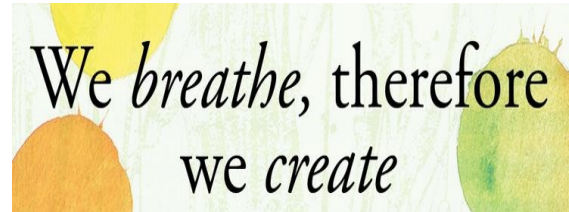
**Sermon Theme:** *We Are Beings, Not Burdens*

**July 16:** The 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

**Scripture:** Romans 8:1-11

**Sermon Theme:** *We Breathe, Therefore We Are*

**Note:** this will be a joint service and held at Hoo Haven at 10:00



**July 23:** Farewell Service for Pastor Bob

**Scripture:** TBD

**Sermon Theme:** TBD

**Note:** This is a “fellowship first” Sunday and will take place in fellowship hall. Our Associate Conference Minister, Rev. Kathy Lawes will be with us.

**July 30:** The 9<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

**Scripture:** TBD

**Sermon Theme:** TBD



## **Joint Outdoor Service** – July 16 at Hoo Haven

After our recent one-year anniversary as Crooked River Ministries, we are excited to finally offer a joint Sunday morning worship service. Members from both congregations (and friends) are invited to gather at Hoo Haven for a 10:00 a.m. worship service on July 16 (This will be the only church service offered that day). We'll have the usual liturgy, music, prayers, and uplifting message, but all in the great outdoors surrounded by "all God's critters."



Immediately following worship, we will engage in a favorite tradition: an all-church potluck luncheon. Those who are able are asked to bring a dish to pass. The combined church fellowship team will provide paper plates, napkins, utensils, and cold beverages. Folding chairs will be provided but bringing your own lawn chairs are an option.

We are most grateful to Karen and Steve Herdklotz for allowing us to use their "home turf" to gather and celebrate. For the convenience of those unfamiliar with Hoo Haven, there will be a "welcome" sign placed on route 75 at the entrance to Cleveland Rd. We hope all will choose to join us as, rain or shine, we worship and fellowship together.

## **ALL REGULAR SERVICES ARE CANCELLED FOR THE DAY.**

Hoo Haven is located at:  
10823 Cleveland Rd.  
Durand, IL 61024



## **Next Crooked River Sponsored Event: MARY POPPINS AT THE FIRESIDE**



We are excited to be able to offer a joint trip to the Fireside Theatre in Ft. Atkinson for lunch together and to see a performance of the beloved musical, *Mary Poppins*. We have a group reservation for Saturday, July 22 for a midday dinner in the dining room followed by a 1:30 matinee performance. Arrival time is 10:30 and the meals are served between 11:15 and noon. The discounted group rate is \$80.00 (dinner, show, and gratuity) per person. If you are registered but have not paid, please do so asap. Checks can be made out to The Old Stone Church.

To date, we have 28 signed up and we know it will be a fun group. Of course, those attending are responsible for getting themselves to the theatre. Fireside Theatre is located at 1131 Janesville Ave. Fort Atkinson, WI 53538



*"Crooked River Ministries is a collaboration between First Congregational Church of Pecatonica and the Old Stone Church of Rockton. Our Mission is to work together to expand ministries beyond the walls of our churches and includes forming community partnerships."*



By now you know that the joint search for a settled pastor to serve the Crooked River Ministries has been selected with representation from both churches. Since last month there has been one change so as it stands today the members are:

**OSC:** Steve Herdklotz, Jason Plessner, Chelsea Dorr, and Jim Henson (alternate: Betty Anderson)

**Pec:** Dawn Lucas, Becky Mitchell, and Kathy Spataro-McGinty (alternate: TBD)

The committee has already met twice including our first in-person meeting on June 21. The first steps are to establish roles, discuss goals and objectives, and revise and/or develop church profiles for each church.

We are happy to have the new Associate Conference Minister for Pastoral Transitions available to provide guidance and denominational direction to the process. Her name is Rev. Shernell Edney Stilley and she officially began her duties with the Illinois Conference in June though she will not be actually living in the conference until September.

At any point during the process, we will welcome any questions or suggestions. Chelsea Dorr has agreed to be the chairperson to our committee which is a real blessing. As we will throughout the whole process, we ask for continued prayers for the work of the committee that God will bless and inspire those who work on behalf of both churches.

We remain excited about the possibilities that exist as we explore and envision opportunities that our shared ministry provides. Please feel free to approach any members of the team with ideas or questions on our shared ministry.

Shared Ministry Advisory Committee (SMAC)

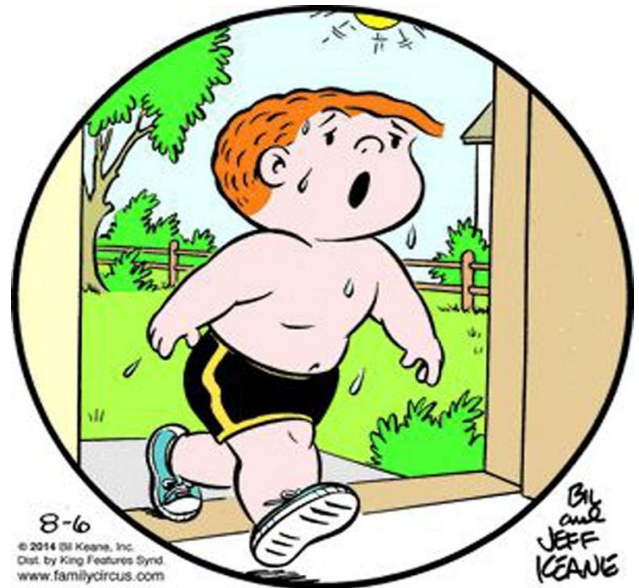
For 1<sup>st</sup> Cong. – Kathy Spataro McGinty, Dawn Lucas, and Sally Landin

For OSC – Jason Plessner, Chelsea Dorr, and Steve Herdklotz

And Pastor Bob, of course.



# Comic Corner



"I wish God would turn down the summer a little."

## 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
- 17th- George Ruper
- 18th- Marilyn Kiefer
- 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
- 30th- Pastors Bob and Judy Wang



# July 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Communion	3	4 Worship Spt. 7pm	5 Grief Group 10:30 Prayer 7pm	6 Food Pantry 9-11	7	8
9	10	11 Diaconate 7pm	12 Prayer 7pm	13 Food Pantry 9-11	14	15
16 Joint service Hoo Haven 10am	17	18	19 Grief Group 10:30	20 Food Pantry 9-11	21	22 Mary Poppins @ Fireside
23 Fellowship 1st	24	25	26 Prayer 7pm	27 Food Pantry 9-11	28	29
30	31					

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## Old Stone Church Staff:

**Pastor Bob Wang:** (262) 945-8475  
**Lindsey Lancaster:** Office Administrator  
**Bob Estrada:** Custodian

