

Old Stone Church - November 2022



God
is still
speaking,

Words From Wang – *In All Things, Give Thanks*

By Thanksgiving Day, we will have endured another bruising midterm election cycle, with strong convictions and sharp differences. Yet, we still can say, *in all things, give thanks*. Much is said these days about the need to restore civility and dignity to our common life. Many of us pray for a renewed sense of sanity and sanctity in this beloved land. Because, sadly we can no longer wait for our public officials to set a better example. The possibility for positive change lies within each of us, as we commit anew to the golden rule and the ways of Jesus. Now is the time for us to lean in and love more.

On November the 24th, we will come together as a nation of one people, blessed so beautifully with our varied landscape and graced so richly with our diversity in race, religion, culture and language. To be blunt, many of us will celebrate Thanksgiving with family and friends who are across the political and social spectrum and therefore, civility must be our priority at these, and any gatherings where opinions might be shared.

Yes, there is a time for, what some refer to as righteous indignation, but a reading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ tells us such prophetically charged moments are most effective when they are uttered amidst a lifetime of kindness and compassion. So as you make your Thanksgiving preparations, consider setting the table of civility!

If the Spirit of God is indeed welcome around our tables, then surely there is enough room for people of all political persuasions and of every spiritual pathway. There is enough room for confessing and lamenting the wrongs inflicted upon the original people of this land, and there is enough room for celebrating the traditions and stories of our own immigrated ancestors. According to the table of grace and the invitation of Jesus, there is always enough room.

The Apostle Paul writes, “*give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*” (1 Thessalonians 5:18) We all admit the difficulty of seeing the positive in some things and acknowledging God in all matters under the sun with our gratitude. Nevertheless, it is critical to begin each and every segment of life and living with grateful hearts. Nothing else matters or it means a whole lot less when we are not thankful. In all things, give thanks; even when we don’t feel like it. It is good to give thanks and sing praises unto God’s name. May you all have a blessed Thanksgiving season. And don’t let the onslaught of Christmas hype interfere the Thanksgiving holiday like it often can. In all things, first and foremost, give thanks.

See ya’ in church.

Pastor Bob

Worship Opportunities (November)

November 6: The 22nd Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Psalm 98

Sermon Theme: *Strike Up the Band*

Note: The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be served



Recreation:

Re-Creation

November 13: The 23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Isaiah 65:17-25

Sermon theme: *Recreation or Re-Creation? Which?*

November 20: The 24th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Luke 23:33-43

Sermon Theme: *When the Reign Ends*

Note: Pastors Bob and Judy are attending a friend's wedding this weekend so enjoy our guest preacher.



November 27: The 1st Sunday in Advent

Scripture: Isaiah 2:1-5

Sermon Theme: *Provocateurs of Imagination*

Note: Worship and fellowship will take place downstairs in the fellowship hall.

December 4: The 2nd Sunday in Advent

Scripture: Isaiah 35:1-10

Sermon Theme: *2020 Vision*

Note: The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be served



Fellowship Sunday – November 27 @ 9:00-10:00

When we began our conversation with the shared ministry task force, we identified some potential challenges or drawbacks to the model. Pastor Bob pointed out that he would have less time to visit or share in fellowship with OSC members on Sunday mornings; given the travel time needed to lead worship in Pecatonica.

One possible solution to address this particular problem was to create new fellowship opportunities – thus the “Fellowship Sunday” concept. The idea is to build in some intentional fellowship time during a Sunday morning worship service. But it’s not just about creating fellowship opportunities because it’s also about applying some much-needed innovation in the life of the church and to encourage interaction between the various generations among our membership.

The plan, therefore, is to begin at 9:00 with 30 minutes of intentional fellowship time that will include the usual coffee and treats, but may also include some organized community building activities allowing participants to mix and mingle with one another. In addition to fellowship time, there will be appropriately themed activities at the tables that can carry over into worship (tailored to the ages of those in attendance).

After enjoying the planned fellowship time, worship will begin with the usual music, liturgy, readings, and a “shortened sermon;” ending at the 10:00 hour. We recognize for some that this is a bit of a change from traditional worship in the sanctuary but we feel it is actually a step in establishing some new traditions and a way to respond to our changing times. All we ask is that everyone keeps an open mind and heart to something a little out of the ordinary.



Crooked River Calendar of Events

Crooked River Coffee Houses

Both our coffee house/open mic events this fall were an overwhelming success with some great local talent as well as some not-so-local. Even Elvis himself joined in on the fun traveling all the way from Dekalb! Now that we’ve had a chance to test out the waters, the consensus is that we consider offering a couple more events of this nature. So, stay tuned for new developments.



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

Due to a lack of registrations, the autumn retreat was postponed, not simply canceled. Retreats of this kind can transform lives in positive ways so the intent is to find a better date for an event that more people can attend. Keep a watchful eye so that you don’t miss out.

December 10 - John Denver Christmas Concert (Pec)

After careful review of the dates, the 2nd annual John Denver Christmas concert will take place in the sanctuary of 1st Congregational Church, Pecatonica at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 10th. There will be a freewill offering as well as a possible raffle. Profits from this event will go directly to the good people of *Hoo Haven*; one of our first community partners to collaborate with the Crooked River Ministries. Refreshments will be served during the intermission.



2023 Stewardship Drive Cause for Celebration

Thanks to all who participated in our 2023 Stewardship Drive! Despite the challenges all churches, and we as individuals and a congregation continue to face, our OSC and our congregation remain as committed and hopeful as ever. As of Thursday, November 3rd, \$80,800 has been pledged in support of our 2023 budget goal of \$110,000.

While this still leaves some additional fundraising to do, the pledges we've already received are an inspiring vote of confidence and hope for our historic OSC and our many ministries. Together, we will indeed continue to work with God to set *Hearts on Fire!*

On November 13th Pastor Bob will ask God's blessing as we dedicate our pledges and ministries for the new year. Known as "Consecration Sunday," everyone is invited to participate in this annual celebration of the joy of giving as a congregation.

It's never too late! Every pledge matters. If you haven't yet, but still would like to pledge your support for 2023, pledge cards are always available from our church office and from our ushers at Sunday service.

2 Corinthians 9.7: *"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

With sincerest appreciation,
Your OSC Stewardship Committee



Old Stone Church
HEARTS ON FIRE!
2023 STEWARDSHIP DRIVE

Meet Our Guest Pastor: Duane Lahti

Duane is currently a Member in Discernment with the Fox Valley Association of the Illinois Conference of UCC, awaiting his ecclesiastical council for approval towards ordination. Duane graduated from Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary in May 2022 with his Master of Divinity. Duane was born and raised in Minnesota, and has lived in the Chicagoland area for the last 40 years. He attended North Park College and Loyola University in Chicago, receiving a B.A. in Psychology and an M.A. in Community Counseling. He and Lenore, his wife, currently reside in the Rogers Park neighborhood in Chicago and treasure the rich ethnic diversity of culture, neighbors, and food. They are avid nature lovers and enjoy all things focused on environmental justice and sustainability. Their days when not working are filled with hikes and walks with their 2-year-old golden retriever Amber Gingersnap.



Blue Christmas: A Service of Wholeness and Healing
Wednesday December 7, 2022 @ 10:30



“Comfort, comfort my people, says our God” (Isaiah 40:1)

Christmas can be a time for many when we are in need of that reassurance and comfort. Perhaps we are grieving over the loss of a loved one, struggling with illness, or have experienced the loss of a job. We wonder how we will get through the holidays.

There are many moments in our lives when we need comfort. There are tough times when we yearn for consolation. The suffering people who looked for the long-awaited Messiah were given a hope-filled image of God in the writings of Isaiah. It expresses the belief that no matter what happens to us, God will be there to comfort and support us.

Our Grief Group is hosting ***Blue Christmas: A Service of Wholeness and Healing*** in the Old Stone Church sanctuary on Wednesday December 7 at 10:30 a.m. and will last about 30 minutes. Any and all who are feeling a little “blue” during this holiday season are welcome to join us.

Immediately following the service there will be casual conversation along with fresh coffee and “something” sweet to enjoy. Any questions contact the church office at 815-624-6212.

“Let There Be Christmas”
a Cantata by Joseph M. Martin

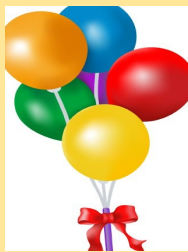
Sunday, December 4th, 2022
2:30pm

Pecatonica United Methodist
Church

528 Washington St.
Pecatonica, IL 61063
Refreshments to Follow



November Birthdays and Anniversaries



Birthdays

3rd- Theresa Adams
6th- Randy Stutzel
7th- Shaun Newmes
8th- Nora Lancaster
10th- Nate Steward
11th- Barb Anderson
14th- Dean Middleton
14th- Scott Wallace
18th- Lois Proudfoot
18th- Donn VanSchelven
18th- Lindsey Lancaster
19th- Amanda Newmes
22nd- Bob Estrada
22nd- Megan Stutzel
26th- Alberta Kane
30th- Adelaide Coomer



Anniversaries

2nd- Tim & Jaci Coomer
4th- Neil & Jan Cuthbertson
26th- Donn & Judy
VanSchelven
28th- Mark & Amy Steward
30th- Darrell & Jeannie
Williams



November 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Grief Group 10:30	3 Food Pantry 9-11	4 Girl Scouts 5:30p	5
6 Communion Clocks back 1 hr	7	8 Council 7pm	9	10 Food Pantry 9-11	11	12 V-Day Turkey Dinner
13	14	15	16 Grief Group 10:30	17 Food Pantry 9-11	18 Girl Scouts 5:30p	19 Turkey Baskets
20	21 Boy Scouts 6pm	22	23	24 Happy Thanksgiving	25	26
27 Fellowship Sunday	28	29	30			

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