



August 2026

THE ROCKTONIAN

Welcoming all in Jesus' name
as we Grow Together in Faith, Service, and Love
Sunday Worship at 9:30 a.m.

Donations For Veterans

Our mission team cooks and serves supper for local Veterans in Rockford, and there's a way for all of us to help with the next visit on September 30.

We asked what the Veterans most need right now, and three items came up: disposable razors, 3-in-1 body wash, and deodorant (men's and women's). We'll be collecting these from Sunday, August 30 through September 30. Look for the containers at the back door and in the narthex, and leave whatever you can, whenever you can. Every item you give says thank you to the Veterans who served.

We're grateful for this congregation's generosity, and for the chance to show these Veterans they are remembered and cared for.



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What It Means To Be A Methodist

I haven't been a Methodist all my life. I was ordained in a Korean evangelical denomination, and I became a United Methodist while I was a graduate student in North Carolina. So I've had to learn on purpose what some of you have known far longer than I have. When I sat down to prepare our membership class on July 19, I was preparing for myself as much as for anyone else. Putting into plain words what it means to be a Methodist made me sort out what's essential and what isn't.

I designed the class in two parts. I gave a short lecture on Methodist history, belief, and practice. Then two of our members spoke — Christine Gustafson, who grew up as a Methodist pastor's kid and has known this tradition from the inside her whole life, and Donna Granath, who has been part of Rockton UMC for most of her life. I could explain how a Methodist church is supposed to work. They could tell us what it has actually been like. Donna remembered her sister playing piano and organ duets every Sunday while the choir came down the aisle — music this church is working to bring back. That's the difference between knowing a denomination and belonging to a church.

Two things from the lecture stayed with me.

The first is grace. Not grace as a word we say at the end of a prayer, but grace as the

thing that comes first. John Wesley taught that God is at work in a person's life long before that person knows God's name. Then grace forgives. Then grace keeps working, over a whole lifetime, changing us into people who look more like Christ. Before, at, and after. What struck me again is how much room that leaves. Nobody is too early, and nobody is too late.

The second is the sentence our whole church organizes itself around: to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Both halves matter. Disciples — that's personal, one life at a time. Transformation of the world — that's where it's meant to go. A faith that stays inside the building hasn't finished its sentence.

My thanks to Christine and Donna for sharing their experiences so generously. What they gave our new members that morning was something no book or lecture could have given them.

We'll receive our new members during a Sunday service in the coming weeks. Watch the bulletin for the date, and please come ready to welcome them. In our liturgy, the whole congregation promises to support and pray for new members — so their welcome is your welcome too.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Seong

What's Up with the Building?

by John Carleton, Trustee Chair

The long hot summer continues although it's quite nice as I write this in a much-needed cool snap. As with last month, it's been a slow summer in terms of projects around the church. One thing that has worked well this summer is the mowing crew. There's been four regulars and a volunteer once-in-a-while so many thanks to those who have kept the lawn looking trim. It's hard to believe we'll be needing a snow shoveling crew in a few months so be thinking if you'd like to help out with that.

I'll also remind you that we still need volunteers to help get rid of the weeds in



the cracks of the parking lots. Bring your weed-whacker, scraper, or whatever, whenever, you have

time. Don't feel you need to do it all, just have at an area and do what you can. Only cautions are to be careful scraping to not chip the surface and if you use a torch to avoid burning off any of the sealer. Those of you who remember long-time church member, Bill Campbell, who recently passed, may not know that Bill spent many

a summer removing weeds from the lots. Thanks to the Wulf's for spraying the weeds to get the weeds wilting this summer.

Finally, while folks have been really good, it doesn't hurt to remind everyone of some of the things you always need to be aware of when using the building. They are: turning off all the lights as you leave, grab the handle of the door you just used to leave the church to be sure it's locked, listen to be sure any water you've used is turned off or the toilet has stopped filling, let a Trustee know if something like a vacuum needs to be emptied or fixed, and be sure to clean up after yourself as our clean-up crew only comes in once a month. Finally, a special reminder to folks who bring coffee or other drinks into the Sanctuary, please be sure to ALWAYS have a lid on your cup and if some drink does spill, get some towels from the restroom and soak it up from the carpet.



PRAYER PUPS BY JEFFREY SMITH



Thank you for reading!

Rockton United Methodist Church

Pastor Seonghyun Choi

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102 W. Chapel Street
Rockton, IL 61072

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 9:30am Worship 10:30am 	3	4 Sunday School Half Day 9-1pm	5	6	7	8
9 9:30am Worship	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 9:30am Worship	17 4pm Trustees 5pm Finance	18 4:30 pm Ad Council	19	20  Newsletter articles due	21	22
23 9:30am Worship Food on the 4th Membership Sunday 30	24 31	25	26	27	28	29

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