



The Rocktonian

January Newsletter 2025

Rockton United Methodist Church

102 W. Chapel Street Rockton, IL 61072

Office Hours by appointment
email: RocktonUMC@gmail.com
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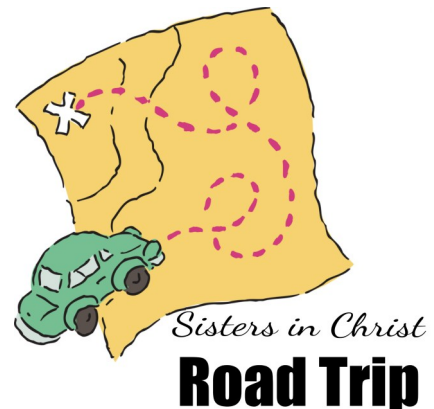
Rev. Carolyn Lukasick, Pastor
847-271-2733 (call or text) 9am-9pm

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

Sisters In Christ

by Phyllis DeGraff

Ladies, it's time again for our annual Eagle Viewing Trip to Sauk City. It will be January 11, beginning at 9:00 a.m. for an all-day trip. Inclement weather date is January 18. There is a signup sheet in the Narthex or you can e-mail me to get added to the list. We will visit Clasen's Bakery in Middleton, Sauk City Eagle Viewing areas, lunch at Culvers in Sauk City area, Wollersheim Winery, Shoe Box in Black Earth, and Duluth Outlet store in Belleville. It's a long and fun day and I hope you will join us. If you have any questions, please call me at (608) 368-1051.





Thank you to everyone who joined us on December 4 for our annual Church Conference. We celebrated the year in ministry, approved a budget for the coming year, and elected members to serve on various leadership committees. There is a lot of work that goes into running a volunteer organization, and when everyone contributes as they are able, the whole functions well.

On January 5 we will mark the New Year with a modernized version of Wesley's Covenant Service. This is a formalized opportunity for us to recommit our lives to God. Since Epiphany is on January 6, we will also observe the newer tradition of star words.

The concept is drawn from celebrating the Magi who were seeking Jesus by following a star. (Matthew 2:1-12) We too seek to be closer to Christ. The word we receive written on a star is an invitation to use this word as a guiding word throughout the year.

Sometimes we receive a word that does not have apparent meaning to us. We are encouraged to trust the word we receive. People who have observed this tradition for years share that the words which have had the most meaning for them were often the words they wanted to throw back or exchange.

The star words provide a new way for us to seek God's presence in our everyday lives. We start paying attention in different ways, which can help us recognize God at work more often.

Here are several ways Star Words help us:

The Magi followed a star, which led them to Jesus. We can also use all the resources available to us (including creative prayer practices and intention words for the new year) to move closer to Jesus.

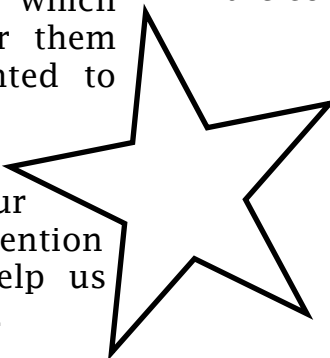
We trust that God is able and willing to use a variety of ways to speak to us. Star words are one way God might help us focus differently as we seek God's presence in our midst.

It is often easy to miss God in our everyday routines. Star words can help us become present in a new way as we seek to pay better attention to God's activities in the world and in our lives.

Star words provide a new prayer option, in addition to speaking to God or listening in prayer. New rhythms of reflection can become sources of spiritual nourishment.

When we do not choose a word knowingly, we practice the spiritual task of receiving. We are not in control! We trust God is present in the choosing, and we trust God will help us learn and grow in the coming year through this word.

Blessings,



What's Up with the Building?

January 2025

by John Carleton, Trustee Chair

Our church has kind of settled into a new normal where we have periods where the building is used for a concentrated amount of time and then there are periods where it is not used at all. Obviously, when we're using the building, we want everyone to be comfortable and have what they need for whatever activity is going on. During the times when not in use, just like your home, we have an opportunity to save money by cutting back on the heat to a level that protects the building but can save on our heating bills. I've talked before here that we will soon be installing new thermostats (some of the old ones are originals from the 1960's) to help better control the heat. When that happens, especially if you're the first or last person out of a room or heat zone, you'll need to take some time to learn how to use any new thermostat. More when it happens.

Along the same line, we all need to be aware of how we use the water. In the past couple of years, we've had a situation where something has started leaking and it's run up our water bill. In both cases, if anyone who had come through the building had stopped to ask themselves if they should be hearing water running, it would have helped a great deal. Just recently, a flush lever broke on a toilet in the women's restroom and the toilet didn't shut off. Luckily, it was noticed but not until after our water bill ran up some. It was definitely noticed by the Village at billing time as our water usage went way up and they called us but, by then it was already fixed. Now, in the winter, with a water heating system, it can be hard to hear a leak with all the normal gurgling sounds going on all the time in the walls and ceilings. But, as you're passing a bathroom or are in the kitchen and hear a sound like running water, please take a moment to check it out or call a Trustee. And, as always, it helps to take that extra moment to be sure the toilet stops running or that you've shut the water off completely.

Finally, I'll mention turning off the lights but, frankly, folks have been really good about doing that and it hasn't been a big problem. So, thanks to everyone for being observant and careful with the lights!

As you won't read this until the New Year, I hope you had a blessed and merry Christmas. I hear stories of churches that have trouble keeping the building warm, the water bill paid and the lights on. I'm thankful that RUMC does not have that problem and I pray for the folks our missions crew help who do not have a warm place with lights and running water. Let us all pray for them and for peace in the New Year.



JANUARY 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 	2	3	4
5 9:30am Worship 	6  EPIPHANY	7	8	9	10	11  <i>Sisters in Christ</i> Road Trip
12 9:30am Worship	13	14 10am Small Group Prayer Team	15	16 Pastor at regional meeting all day	17	18
19 9:30am Worship 1:30pm Girl Scouts	20 Newsletter articles due 4pm Trustees 5pm Finance	21 10am Retirement Home Worship 4:30 Ad Council	22	23	24	25
26 9:30am Worship Food on the 4th	27	28 10am Small Group Prayer Team	29	30	31	
<i>Office Hours by Appointment</i>						