



September 2025

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 the Veterans Drop in Center

Missions will be collecting donations of shampoo, deodorant, body wash, razors & shaving cream for the Veterans Center starting Sunday, August 31st. through Sunday, September 21st. There will be a container in the narthex as well as at the Sunday School entrance for the items. These are items that are greatly needed. If you would rather make a monetary donation you may do so.

We will be serving the Veterans supper on Friday, September 26th and it is at that same time we will give them the donated items.

Thank you in advance for helping our Veterans.

-Missions Committee



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Serving at the Soup Kitchen: A First Experience for Our Family

On Saturday morning, August 16, our family had the joy of serving at the soup kitchen for the very first time. It was a new experience for us, and one that left us deeply grateful—not only for the opportunity to serve but also for the fellowship of being part of a ministry that has been faithfully carried on by our church family.

That morning, we joined other church members to prepare and serve a meal for those in need. About 140 people came through, and together we were able to serve a hearty meal of sloppy joes with cole slaw, fresh watermelon on the side, and plenty of drinks—lemonade, water, milk, and coffee—along with various cookies and brownies for dessert. It was busy and lively, but also filled with moments of kindness, smiles, and conversations that reminded us why this ministry is so important.

For Seohee and Junia, our daughters, this was especially meaningful. In the days leading up to the soup kitchen, they decided they wanted to make something themselves to share. They had never baked chocolate chip cookies from scratch before, but they took on the challenge and, with lots of excitement (and a little bit of flour spilled along the way), baked a couple dozen cookies. On the morning of the soup kitchen, they were the ones handing out those cookies to people, alongside the brownies that other church members had made.

I could see their faces light up as they passed the cookies to each person and watched them enjoy the treats. Junia even said, with a bit of

a shy smile, “I’m happy to see people enjoying eating my cookies.” It was such a pure and honest expression of the joy that comes when we share something we’ve made with others. For them, it wasn’t just about cookies—it was about connecting with people and realizing that even a small gesture of kindness can make a difference.

As a family, we were all glad to be of help in some way. It was humbling to stand alongside church members who have been serving in this ministry faithfully and regularly, for much longer than we have. Their commitment and example showed us that this work is more than just handing out food—it’s about showing love, dignity, and care to every person who comes through the line. Serving reminded us that it’s never about feeling above anyone else—it’s simply about sharing what we can, with gratitude, in the time God gives us to help.

Walking away from that morning, we felt full—not just from the food we had shared, but from the spirit of community that surrounded us. We saw our daughters learn in a tangible way what it means to serve others with their gifts, however small they may seem. We ourselves felt the joy of being part of something larger than our family, larger even than our church—a way of being God’s hands in the world, meeting needs and offering love through something as simple as a meal and a cookie.

We are thankful for this opportunity and look forward to serving again. More than anything, we are grateful for the reminder that God often works in small acts of kindness, multiplying them in ways we may never fully see. On that morning, though, we caught a glimpse of it in every smile, every “thank you,” and every cookie shared with joy.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Seong

What's Up with the Building?

by John Carleton, Trustee Chair

By now, you probably have had a chance to see the new roof on the Sanctuary. There is a new roof on the Education Wing as well, but it's not as easy to see. As suspected, both roofs were over-due for replacement. Unfortunately, it cost a lot more than we expected as the roofers found that the decking under the shingles had deteriorated significantly. The old boards on the 1935 Sanctuary roof had holes, were cracked and they just couldn't put new shingles over them and expect the shingles to hold, so they had to redo the whole decking in new plywood. Records of when the Sanctuary roof was last done aren't really clear, but it looks like it was some time in the late 1990's. The Education Wing roof was in even worse shape. The Sisters-In-Christ stepped in to vacuum and dust as the slatted ceilings let a lot of debris coat the floors and table tops in the hall and offices. This was due to the fiber board that was used for the decking deteriorating to dust in many places. Curiously, there was also a thick layer of black tar, which explains the black powder that came out of the light fixtures when they were replaced in the upper hallway. None of this was apparent until the roofers had the old stuff removed and the decks were exposed. While it was hot,

they were able to complete the job in three rainless days (not common during that part of this summer...). The best information in the Trustee's files shows the Ed. Wing roof was last done in 2005, but only the flat parts. In the end, we now have a reconstructed roof that should last us a long time. Here are few pictures of what it looked like under the old shingles:



Listening Tours: Hopes and Dreams for Rockton UMC

In August, we gathered for three listening tour sessions—at Margo and Greg Leden's home (August 15), at Sandy Stamm's home (August 18), and at church during the Sisters in Christ meeting (August 19). Thank you to everyone who hosted, came to share your thoughts, and helped by taking notes, so that we could remember the conversations.

These gatherings gave us the chance to reflect together on who we are as a church family, how we might be seen and reach new people, and what dreams God may be placing on our hearts for the future.

Who We Are:

- We are a congregation that is caring, welcoming, supportive, and helpful.
- People respond when there are needs.
- We are an aging, but friendly congregation.
- The community garden is open to anyone at no cost.
- We support the pride group.
- The carillons do play, and they can be heard outside.
- The building is used by scouts and a children's group during the summer.
- We host Trunk or Treat
- We have been through lots of change—sometimes divisive, such as the new building.

How We Can Be Seen and Reach New People:

- Talk with Rockton Village President and see if there are projects where we could help.
- Get a new outside sign that is electric (check if there would be restrictions by village).
- Have more signs outside, including one with our mission statement that can be more easily seen.
- Increase social media as a way to inform the community about what our church does.
- Consider advertisements, such as online paper.
- Offer meals to the community, such as a chili supper with winter events.
- Continue helping at the grade school.
- Host children's game nights, silent auctions, or trivia nights.
- Try opening the church one day a week to see how the community responds—serving coffee for seniors, offering space for groups to gather to work on puzzles. A donation cup could be out, with one or two people on hand to host.
- Present programs about healthy meals or medical information and invite the community.
- Work together with Roscoe UMC.
- Add a new event at Christmastime during Rockton's Christmas Walk, such as serving hot chocolate.
- Pastor could teach classes open to the community (bible study, Korean cooking, history, etc.)
- Invite garden club members to a potluck dinner.
- Find out what young people want—maybe a weeknight prayer service.

(continued from page 4)

Dreams for the future:

- Have more music: choir, special music, or even a local band.
- Bring back handbells if someone could give lessons.
- Have Sunday School regularly.
- Be more involved with other churches, such as a Good Friday service.
- Take part in ecumenical conferences and be more engaged with the larger conference.
- Have the kitchen certified.
- Offer more bible studies.
- Ask Teke and Rachel to share special music.
- Pastor has taught Bible and other classes at Chapel Hill, and could offer similar opportunities here.
- Perhaps offer Korean food at the Christmas Walk.

These conversations remind us that Rockton UMC is already a caring and welcoming place, and also one that is open to new possibilities. May we keep listening for how God is leading us, and dream together about what comes next.

A Conversation for Families With Children

On 9/7, after worship during coffee hour, we invite families with children to gather together at the back of the fellowship hall.

As a church, we've been praying and thinking about ways we might better support families and nurture children's faith. But, before we make any plans, we want to begin by listening. This is a chance to share your hopes, your needs, and your dreams for what church life could look like for your children.

Your voices matter, and your insights will help us shape programs and opportunities that truly serve our families well. We hope you'll join us for this conversation- it's an important first step in walking this journey together.

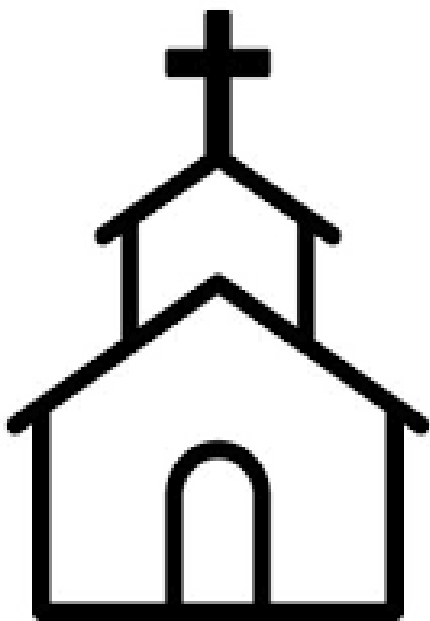


Sisters in Christ Bonfire

The annual bonfire for Sisters in Christ will be Sunday, September 21st at 6:30 pm at the home of Phyllis DeGraff, 12552 W St. Lawrence Beloit, WI 53511. Phone is 608-368-1051. If you need a ride, please let Phyllis know. This is always an enjoyable event, and all Sisters are invited to participate. Come as you are; snacks and drinks will be provided.



Continued from the Pastor's Desk



Special Music in Church 9/28

Join us in worship on Sunday, September 28th, for a special musical offering. A women's quartet-Betty Anderson, Karin Bohr, Ellen Butchardt, and Kathy Dearth-accompanied by Christine Gustafson, will share the beloved hymn "Here I am, Lord".

This won't be only about beautiful music; it's an invitation for us all to listen to God's call and respond with willing hearts.

Come be encouraged and lift your heart in worship.

Thank you for reading!

Rockton United Methodist Church

Pastor Seonghyun Choi

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Office Hours Mon & Thurs. 9am-1pm
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102 W. Chapel Street
Rockton, IL 61072

S E P T E M B E R

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Labor Day	2	3	4	5	6
7 9:30am Worship 10:30am 	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 9:30am Worship Girl Scouts 1:30-3:00pm	15 4pm Trustees 5pm Finance	16 4:30 pm Ad Council	17	18	19	20  Newsletter articles due
21 9:30am Worship Sisters in Christ Bonfire 6:30pm	22	23	24	25	26 Veteran's Drop in Dinner 3:30p	27
28 9:30am Worship Special Music Food on the 4th	29	30				

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