

**Rockton United
Methodist Church**
PO Box 293
Rockton, IL 61072

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The Rocktonian

**Newsletter of Rockton United Methodist Church
April 2020**

Rev. Howie Snyder, Pastor

Email: pastorhowiesnyder@gmail.com **Cell:** 630-809-9419

Contact Us

Rockton United Methodist Church
102 West Chapel Street, PO Box 293, Rockton, IL 61072

Email: info@rocktonumc.org **Office Phone:** 815-624-7591

Visit Our Website

www.rocktonumc.org

Mission Statement

Grow FAITH in Jesus Christ.
Share LOVE with others.
Give SERVICE to our neighbors.

Worship With Us on Sunday Morning

Due to the state imposed COVID-19 quarantine, we will be live streaming our service on **Sunday morning at 10:00am**. Please visit our website for more infor-



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From the Pastor's Pen



April, 2019

I tend to be an optimist – as some of you may have noticed. Some of this is based on my personality, of course. But a lot of this is also based on my faith and trust in Jesus Christ. So as we're going through this quarantine isolation and worldwide pandemic crisis, I look for the positives in the midst of it all. I think of the positives of learning to connect with new technologies, of calling and reaching out to those we have not thought of before, for playing games with my family, for seeing the positives of people looking beyond petty issues and coming together in this crisis, for hearts in the windows, kindness at grocery store check-out lines, and so on...

Here are a couple verses that strengthen and encourage my faith:

- 2 Corinthians 7:16, "I rejoice, because I have complete confidence in you."
- Philippians 1:6, "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ."
- Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

The list can go on and on. I am also thankful that I have not heard of any cases from our congregation. But knowing that even if we do have someone in our congregation contract this illness or even be struck down, that we have confidence in Christ through life and death! Christ has won the victory over sin and death – and that ultimately we have Christ with us always! It is this kind of confidence that has not only sustained the church, but caused it to grow and thrive through the worse crises in history from wars to pandemics to persecution. And it is this same confidence that caused Paul and Silas to sing hymns praising their God after they had been beaten and thrown in prison! May we sing praises to our God in the midst of the fear and anxieties of this world. Even when we are scared, we can remember in who's hands we are. And it is the Holy Spirit that sustains us with fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control – so when we are lacking, let us pray to the Spirit to sustain us.

From the Pastor's Pen - continued on next page

From the Pastor's Pen - continued

Of course we need to remember those in prayer who are confronted with the worst of this crisis including:

- those who are suffering from this illness,
 - families of those suffering or of those who have died,
 - for freedom from panic and anxiety,
 - those who have lost jobs or are in financial hardship,
 - for healing and needed resources,
 - for medical professionals and caretakers attending to those affected,
 - for scientists and technologists striving to find a vaccine,
 - for leaders of institutions and governments,
 - for protection for those who have not contracted but are vulnerable,
 - for the most vulnerable of our society unable to get resources,
- ...Lord have mercy.

And as we look to continue our guidelines to stay in isolation through the month of April, we will be continuing our weekly combined Sunday Services with Rockton/Durand at **10:00AM Livestreaming** and will plan to do a weekly Thursday Church Check-In Gathering via Zoom Meeting also at **10:00AM**. I will be looking at improving our Livestreams and Zoom gatherings on a regular basis, so I look forward to those improvements.

To participate in the Sunday Service or Thursday Check-In Zoom Meeting audio by phone call, call 1-312-626-6799 and when prompted enter code 820-556-5380. After you are prompted and have entered the code, you may be asked for the "host key" if you are the host. Just hit the "#" symbol at that time. And if prompted to enter the meeting code again, you can just hit "#".

For joining a Zoom Meeting with a computer or smart phone, read through this page and you can learn how to join with whatever device you use: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-Meeting>

I look forward to connecting with you all in these mediums and through prayer!

Blessings in Christ,

Pastor Howie Snyder



Holy Week and Easter

Christ
is
Risen!

Every Sunday is like a mini-Easter, a continual anniversary of the original Easter Sunday when Jesus Christ rose from the dead. This is why Christians moved their holy day, their Sabbath from the seventh day (Saturday) to Sunday. This is also why Sundays are excluded as being a part of Lent. As such, we will plan to have our community celebration of Easter when we return from this Quarantine as a church, hopefully complete with flowers and resurrection songs! In the meantime, we will *virtually* observe the Western (Gregorian) Christian calendar of Holy Week, kicking off this Sunday with Palm Sunday. My wife and I are doing these together so they will be joint Rockton/Durand Services:

Palm Sunday (4/5) – At the bottom of this page you will find your instructions for Palm Sunday. Please read them and plan to participate with enthusiasm!



Maundy Thursday (4/9) – 6PM Service

Good Friday (4/10) – 7PM Tenebrae Service with different readings from congregants

Easter Sunday (4/12) – Christ is Risen! 10AM Service

Just a note about Communion:

The Bishop has asked us not to do a virtual communion service, quoting guidelines for communion from the United Methodist Church Discipline that speak of the gathering of the people. So we will not be doing a communion service on the 1st Sunday of the months during the quarantine. We will look forward in anticipation to the day when we can come together in person and join as a community in celebrating the Lord's Supper! It will be a day of celebration, remembering and worshipping together the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and his victory over death and Hell!

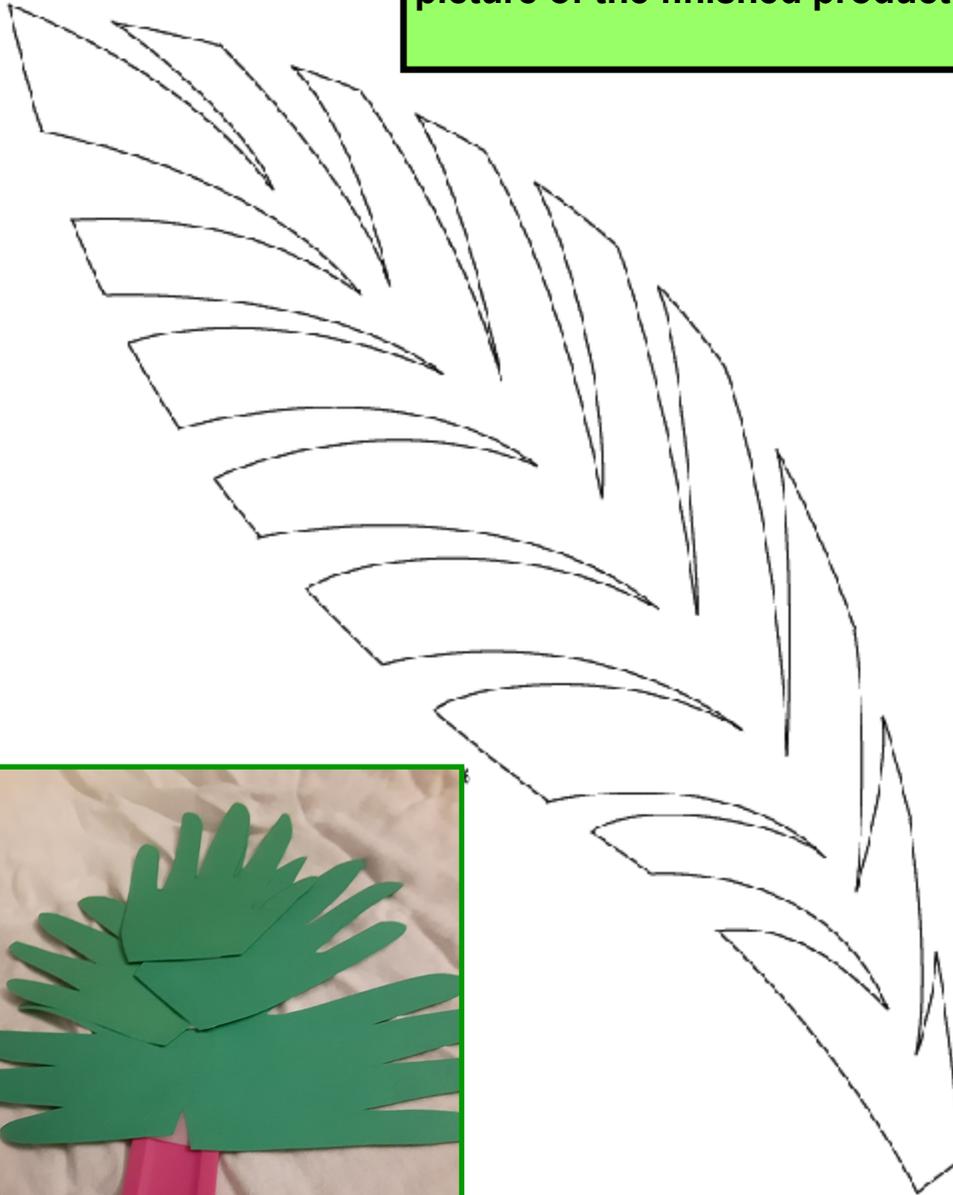


Your Palm Sunday Activity

The palm branch order from the florist has been cancelled since we won't be worshipping in the sanctuary on Palm Sunday. But that doesn't mean we can't wave those palm branches at home!! Your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to use that creativity within you to create your own palm branch. Should you need a little help in getting started, Howie found a palm branch pattern for you to cut out and color/decorate. Gail, having taught Kindergarten, can make just about anything out of a handprint, so check out her photo! Use one of these ideas, come up with one of your own, or check out ideas on the internet. We want you to have a palm branch on Sunday! That is step 1.

Step 2... **Take a photo of your finished palm branch and text or email it to Gail.** We will put those photos in an email next week so all can enjoy our creative efforts. Something fun to do while spending time at home!

Get out those scissors, markers, colored pencils, paints, glitter, etc. and get to work on those palm branches. Don't forget to keep the camera handy to take a picture of the finished product!



I drew around my hand 5 times, cut them out, and taped them to the backside of a ruler. Now it's time to get out my craft supplies and decorate! What will yours look like?

There's Always More to the Story

As I was thinking of what this Rocktonian might look like, my thoughts turned to the upcoming Easter season, which lead me to think about Pauline Lawhorn. I am sure that you are wondering about the connection between those two things so sit back, relax, and let me tell you the story.

Many of you have known Pauline most of your lives, through church, school, or your personal lives. Some of you have never met her. As for me, she has been part of my life as long as I can remember. We lived on farms near each other when I was growing up and Pauline would substitute teach in my classrooms when I attended Shirland Grade School. She also was a wonderful seamstress and used to make beautiful matching dresses for my sister Gloria and myself. (I remember standing on her dining room table while she pinned up the hem!) When I was in 8th grade, we made the move to Rockton and I had to switch Methodist churches. Pauline attended the Rockton UMC and I would see her every week at church. She was a person of such strong faith and courage and would offer words of encouragement when I needed it.

After graduating from college, I returned to Rockton and eventually started teaching at Rockton Grade School where Pauline was teaching. As the student population grew and we ran out of classroom space, Pauline and I were called to the Superintendent's office to see if we thought we could share a classroom. The two of us took some time to think it over, work out a plan (And yes, we put tape on the floor to define our spaces for my 5-year-olds and her remedial reading students!) and for the next year we spent our working lives together. At the end of the year, as we packed up our spaces, we realized that there was a bond between us that was stronger than either of us could have imagined.

Pauline, of course, retired ahead of me. When it came my time to retire, she came to me and offered words of retirement wisdom, knowing me well enough to understand that there was an emptiness within me that would need some attention. Her suggestion... to decorate the church Christmas tree in the upstairs hallway with all the ornaments from my students, remembering each of them as I hung their ornament. With that activity I finally began to retire.

So there's the back round of our friendship that would provide me the privilege of knowing something special about Pauline. Pauline had a talent. Pauline decorated eggs - LOTS of eggs!

She would cut out the side of a blown out egg shell and fill the egg with the most beautiful little scene. She would patiently decorate the outside of each one with ribbons, beads, flowers... There were diorama eggs for every season and occasion. When I was talking with her daughter, Judie Heinschel, about taking pictures of some of the eggs for this Rocktonian, I learned about their family Christmas tree decorated with hanging eggs as ornaments and the many eggs that Pauline has gifted to friends and family. Judie commented that she rotates the eggs that are displayed in Pauline and Bob's home because Pauline takes such pride in her decorated eggs, and looking at them still brings her such enjoyment! I hope these photos that Judie passed along to me bring you great enjoyment as well.

So Easter makes me think of eggs, and eggs make me think of Pauline, so... Easter makes me think of Pauline! It makes sense to me!!

Gail Johnson

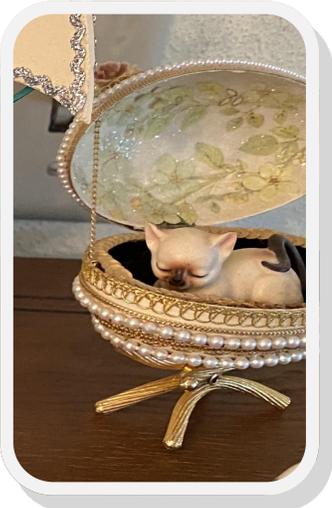
A Gallery
of
Eggs



My sister Gwen wanted her egg from Pauline to be part of this Rocktonian page. She treasures this gift and will tell you that she believes it is the prettiest one!



Pauline worked with a variety of egg types which would give her many different sizes of eggs. Bob would "saw" through the eggs with thicker shells so Pauline could add the hinges and make doors that would open and close.





JOIN OUR PRAYER TEAM IN APRIL!

Our Prayer Team meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month and would love to have you join our group. At this time we are not meeting face-to-face but are exploring the possibility of connecting another way using the technology we might have available to us. Please keep checking emails from the church as we work to make this possible - and continue to pray for those listed below.

Let Us Pray For:

Hannah Bridgeland

Peg Hayelan

Jim Stamm

Lorraine Gorr

Judy Heinschel

Bev Wedrig

Gail Johnson

Derek Polzin

Nicole Snyder

David Dach

Charlie Cunningham

Prayer requests will appear for about 1 month after submission. Contact the church office to add or remove names. **For an urgent prayer request, call Sharon Ruff to start the prayer chain: 815-229-1932**



What's Up With the Building?

April

This will be a very short "What's Up" this month as there isn't a lot to report at this point. The engineer who will be developing the plans was travelling a lot during the first part of March so not much happened. On Thursday the 19th he asked to spend some time in the sanctuary. He and an assistant examined the wall and the joints where the rafters meet the wall using the holes from the exploratory demolition done late last year. Upon leaving he told Pastor Howie that he had the information he needed so here's hoping things are back on track. Thankfully, this got done before we all were asked to shelter in place. Many thanks to Howie for being there to let him in. Once we have the engineering plans, we can hopefully move on to finding a contractor and getting some estimated costs.

John Carleton
Chair of the Building Committee



Congregational Care Team



April 2020

Our Congregational Care Team members are not April Foolers. Even though we are restricted from visiting our chosen ones in person, we are being creative to let that person know they are not forgotten. As Pastor Howie had suggested Sunday during worship, CALL - PRAY - TEXT those who are not able to have visitors at this time. Smiles are still being shared with a note or card, with prayer and if possible with a text. So have a happy April 1st by sharing with someone a Call, Prayer or Text. (CPT for short). That is what our Congregational Care Team is doing. HAPPY APRIL FOOLS DAY and blessings to each one of you.

Mary Louise Muench
Coordinator of the Congregational Care Team



Uganda Student Sponsorships

Greetings to all of you!

It is once again time to consider your continued support for children's education in Uganda. Currently, just as in the US, their schools are not in session, although our church would be wise to collect needed funds so that money may be shipped to their country once school has opened.

The cost remains \$25 for one student's school uniform, supplies, and a year of education. If you previously sponsored a student and wish to continue, please notify me. If you have not sponsored a child in the past but would like to in the coming year, I encourage you to contact me. My e mail is cmguspt@yahoo.com; I can be reached by phone or text @ 815/871-5888.

Thank you for your partnership in this venture! The children and their families are so grateful for our financial support as well as the prayers of Rockton United Methodist Church.

God bless you!!
Christine Gustafson





Judy Cunningham found this recipe in one of her mom's cook-books. The date on the article was just a month before her mom's stroke. Judy wanted to share with her church family what she is sure her mom was planning to share with her grandchildren.



Resurrection Cookies

READ THE WHOLE RECIPE BEFORE BEGINNING. TRY TO DO TOGETHER SATURDAY NIGHT BEFORE EASTER SUNDAY.

Ingredients: 1 cup whole pecans 1 tsp. vinegar
 3 egg whites Pinch of salt
 1 cup sugar

Preheat oven to 300 degrees.

Place pecans in zipper baggie and let children beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. **Read John 19:1-3**

Let children smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp. into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross He was given vinegar to drink. **Read John 19: 26-30**

Add egg whites to the vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. **Read John 10: 10-11**

Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. **Read Luke 23: 27**

So far the ingredients are not very appetizing. Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. **Read Psalm 34: 8 and John 3: 16**

Beat with a mixer on high speed for 11-15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the color white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleaned by Jesus. **Read Isaiah 1: 18 and John 3: 1-3**

Fold in broken nuts. Drop by tsp. onto waxed paper-covered cookie sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Put cookie sheet in the oven. Close the door and turn the oven OFF. Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. **Read Matthew 27: 65-66**

GO TO BED!

Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. **Read John 16: 20 and 22**

On Resurrection morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie! Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Resurrection Day, Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. **Read Matthew 28: 1-9**

HE HAS RISEN! HALLELUJAH

EASTER FREE WORD-SEARCH PUZZLE



- RISEN
- JESUS CHRIST
- TOMB
- RESURRECTION
- STONE
- CROSS
- GOOD FRIDAY
- CRUCIFIED
- EASTER
- EASTER SUNDAY
- EASTER MONDAY
- DISCIPLES

- LINEN
- ANGEL
- GOD
- SOLDIERS
- MARY MAGDALENE
- CENTURION
- PONTIUS PILATE
- PHARISEE
- MARY
- JAMES
- JUDAS ISCARIOT

- GETHSEMANE
- BETRAYED
- DENIED
- JERUSALEM
- SON OF GOD
- PETER
- COCK CROWS
- HE IS RISEN
- EMPTY TOMB
- LORD'S SUPPER
- PASSOVER
- LAMB OF GOD

Soup Kitchen Photographs

Because of social restrictions suggested by the county due to the Coronavirus, we couldn't prepare and serve the pasta dinner that we had planned for the Soup Kitchen. We switched gears and packed a sack lunch for those that needed a meal on that Saturday. Approximately 90 brown bag lunches were assembled by a fearless crew of 10 - and they put the lunches together in an hour and a half. Many thanks to all of you who donated to this cause!



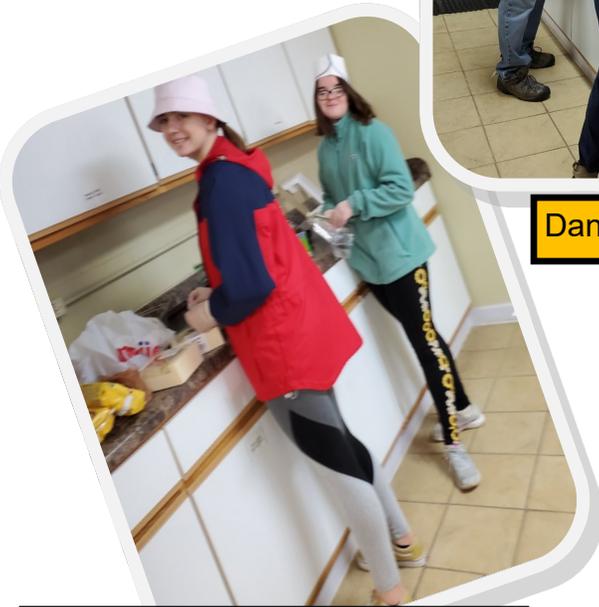
Paul & Donna Chambers



Pam & Laura Noel



Dan & Judy Davis



Elizabeth & Katherine Chambers



Judy Schellenberger & Phyllis DeGraff

Thank You!

Thank You!

Thank You!

There are many things that get done for our church and congregation by members that expect nothing in return for their good deeds. **If you know someone that we should acknowledge please let the church office know.** This month it was mentioned we should express our thanks to:

- Those that quickly switched gears and donated supplies to pack lunches for the soup kitchen and those that assembled nearly 100 meals
- John Carleton for all his work on the website
- Phyllis DeGraff for staffing the office on Tuesdays in March
- Brenda Wulf and Donna Hellinga for volunteering to count the offerings received through the mail or drop off
- Pastor Howie for arranging a joint Sunday church service with his wife, Pastor Nicole, and the Durand UMC
- The Fellowship Committee and Phyllis DeGraff for taking down and packing away the Snowman winter tree
- All of our members that are continuing to honor their pledges which supports our church and lets us continue our mission.
- (From Howie) Gail Johnson for all the help with the Bulletin each week

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Roy Croisant
- 6 Sandy Stamm
- 10 Jean Cooper
- 12 Robert Hayenga
- 18 June Althoff
- 20 Sadaf Safavinejad
- 27 Lesa Stevens

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 7 David and Linda Martin
- 23 David and Patsy Dach



April 2020

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			1	2 Stay in Touch With Zoom 10:00 am	3	4
5 Palm Sunday  Combined Worship Services with Durand UMC online 10:00am	6	7	8	9 Stay in Touch With Zoom 10:00 am Maundy Thursday Service online 6:00 pm	10 Good Friday Tenebrae Service online 7:00pm	11
12 Easter Sunday  Combined Worship Services with Durand UMC online 10:00am	13	14 Prayer Group 10:00 am	15	16 Stay in Touch With Zoom 10:00 am	17	18
19 Combined Worship Services with Durand UMC online 10:00am	20	21	22	23 Stay in Touch With Zoom 10:00 am	24	25
26 Combined Worship Services with Durand UMC online 10:00am	27	28 Prayer Group 10:00 am	29	30 Stay in Touch With Zoom 10:00 am		