



The Rocktonian

Newsletter of Rockton United Methodist Church

February 2023



Rockton United Methodist Church
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Rev. Carolyn Lukasick, Pastor

Worship With Us Sundays at 9:30 a.m.



Prayer Chain — Contact Change!

There is a change in the Prayer Chain list that will make it work more like a "Prayer Tree." Our previous contact after caring for this for several years, Sharon Ruff, has moved from the area to be closer to her daughters. Ruth Melles will now be the first person to receive prayer requests from our congregation, and, after receiving a request, will contact others on the prayer team, and word will be passed along to others. Calls can be made by phone or text. Ruth's number is (815) 262-5012. Pastor Carolyn's number is (847) 271-2733 or the office (815) 624-7591 (landline, no text) is another way to get things rolling. If you have certain concerns or have someone in need of prayer, *please* let us know!



from the pastor's desk

Thank you to everyone who has been attending our Sunday morning class discussions. Our large group has almost outgrown the library! We have been learning about the issues concerning our brothers and sisters who feel their best option is to leave The United Methodist denomination. Some of us have friends and family who attend these churches. While the videos we have watched and our discussions have helped us better understand a different perspective, this process has also strengthened our own understanding as United Methodists and how we approach various issues and challenges.

We will not have class the first Sunday in February, then resume discussions for the final two sessions on February 12th and 19th.

As soon as we complete this series, Lent will be upon us. Lent is a season of 40 days (not including Sundays) where we focus on reconnecting with God. This is a season of preparation for the High Holy Day of Easter.

Our Lenten focus this year will explore what it means to be in a time of uncertainty. We live in a culture changing more rapidly than the church, and it is easy to feel like we are lost in the woods without a clear path forward.

Our worship series this Lent features a book called Gifts of the Dark Wood by Eric Elnes. Instead of assuming life is only good when things are running smoothly, we will examine the gifts and opportunities available to us in uncertain times. What if these are occasions for spiritual growth or awakening?

Dr. Marcia McFee explains, "When we allow ourselves to accept the journey within the Dark Woods, the Holy Spirit Guide tends to nudge us, awaken us, to a fuller life. Life is messy. Life is uncertain. Rather than a problem to be solved, what if we saw uncertainty, failure, emptiness, and loss as gifts?"

Friends, one of the gifts of feeling lost or uncertain in the midst of life's messiness is that we are reminded more regularly to seek God, to listen, to pay attention. We search more earnestly for God's comfort and guidance, which is itself a gift.

I hope you will join us on Sundays for worship and afterward for discussion during the Sundays in Lent.

Blessings,



What's Up with the Building?

By John Carleton, Trustees Chair

February 2023



The Trustees are setting up for some long-range planning for projects around the church. Things like getting the sidewalk to the parking lot on the west side leveled will be on the list for outdoor work this year in 2023. Big projects (read “big” both in terms of work required and cost...), such as replacing the roof on the Sanctuary will be on the list for coming years. While we won’t be doing that roof for a few years we will still need to consider fund-raising now for such a costly project that’s in the range of \$40,000 to \$50,000. Both lists are getting long enough that I’m not going to include them here, but if you should know of a project you think needs to be done, please contact a Trustee.

Sometime in early February I’ll put a copy of the lists in the Office Workroom next to the mail slots (by the closet) and if you’re interested, you can review the list and add to it. You can also send your ideas to the Office via email.

For those of you who join services online I hope you’ll continue to be patient with us as we continue to improve the Zoom experience. We just purchased some new equipment that will, hopefully, improve the sound for music from the clavinova. We also hope to get better video when we show music videos for hymns from the internet for both online and in person folks.

If you’ve been to services the last few Sundays and arrived a little early you’ve no doubt noticed the carillon playing excerpts from hymns. Thanks to Donna Granath for selecting the initial list. We hope to continue this with some new sets of hymns as the year progresses. Your suggestions for play lists would be appreciated.

Finally, welcome to our newest Trustee member, Phil Favre, and returning Trustee, Jim Johnson. (Continuing members are Brenda Wulf, Roy Croisant, Paul Chambers, Ron Zoeller, and Chair-John Carleton.)



Memorial Committee News

Our Memorial Committee falls under the Finance Committee umbrella because they manage a particular type of fund for the church. When donations are received in honor or in memory of a loved one, the Memorial Committee works to decide how those funds can be a blessing to our church and best honor the one for whom they were given. Some families have a preference for how money is to be spent, for example supporting a particular ministry. Other donations are unrestricted, which means the committee decides the best use for the funds.

The current members of the Memorials Committee at Rockton UMC are Chairperson Nancy Bielema, Treasurer Donna Granath, Darlene Matlock, Peggy Wellnitz, Paul Chambers, and Pam Noel.

Last month's article highlighted memorial purchases made in the past year. There are several new projects being evaluated or in process. We are having updates made to some of the furniture to provide concealed storage in the front entry. New banners have brightened our sanctuary, so more are being ordered.

"Parament" is the word used to describe the various special cloths which drape over the communion table (altar) and pulpit. Many of Rockton UMC's paraments have been in use for decades and are in need of replacement, so the committee is looking at options. Our pew bibles are from 1977 and feature a translation we no longer use in worship, so the committee is also considering new bibles for the sanctuary.

The largest project underway is part of an effort to refurbish and update our library/meeting room, which will soon receive a fresh coat of paint. For this project, the Memorial Committee is spearheading the design of a custom bookcase which will house historical items and reference materials. The new bookcase will replace the current shelving and lower cupboards in the Library.

The television used for bible studies and online meetings will be relocated to bookcase wall. We welcome input and suggestions for this project. Please speak to anyone on Memorials if you have ideas about this project or other possibilities you recognize for our church.

Please join us in thanking the members of our Memorial Committee for their hard work and faithful stewardship of these important resources.

Tidbits of Our History

—Rockton Herald, Edson Carr, Editor—



1889

*"A religious tempest has started up in Rockford over a little performance proposed to be given in the Court Street Methodist Church. The preparations had nearly been completed when J.W. Hart, one of the strait-laced members, objected to the use of a curtain on the grounds that it was like the worldly theatrical performances. This led to a heated discussion in which others joined in denouncing the whole scheme as being a plan of the devil to induce the church to engage in a play like ordinary worldlings."

"The meeting adjourned with considerable temper manifested. Last night an adjourned meeting of the committee was held and it was determined to abandon the project. There is much indignation among the less puritanical members and especially those who have given much time and labor in preparing their parts. It is an innocent representation of a district school with recitation and some humorous by-play and has been rendered by a good many orthodox churches throughout the country. The Christian Union Liberal Church has take the project and will produce it, taking advantage of the advertisement and excitement that the action of the Methodists has aroused."

*"Mr. Goodman, cashier of the Cook County Treasurer's office, has skipped with a wad of the county's money. It seems he wasn't such a 'Good-man' as he was supposed to be."

1908

*"Reliable Dentistry. Prices Within Reach of All. Set of Teeth \$4.00. Dr. Eakin's Union Painless Dentists. **See the Big Electric Tooth.** 418 E. State St. Nash Block, Rockford."



*"The 50th anniversary of the Lincoln and Douglas Debate will be celebrated at Freeport on August 27."

*"East Alton, Illinois...Following the gift of a \$100 sidewalk, which saloon keepers built for them, members of the East Alton Methodist church raised a \$100 fund for the relief of wives and families of drunkards. The saloon keepers recently built the sidewalk and after it was laid, announced their identity, saying that the gift was in recognition of the splendid fight which the church made on the saloons at a local option election some months before."

February 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 Worship 9:30am Bible Study 10:30am	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Worship 9:30am Bible Study 10:30am	13	14 Small Group Prayer Team 10 a.m.-noon 7 p.m. Sisters in Christ Valentine Day	15 4 p.m. Trustees	16	17	18
19 Worship 9:30am Bible Study 10:30am	20 President's Day March Newsletter Submissions Due	21 10 a.m. Small Group Prayer Team	22 Ash Wednesday  Lent Begins	23	24	25
26 Worship 10:30am Food on the 4th Sunday Bible Study 10:30am	27	28 Small Group Prayer Team 10 a.m.-noon 7 p.m. Finance Team				

A “Wimpy’s Fund” Thank You!

Submitted by Margo Leden



A big thank you to everyone who donated gifts for the Wimpy's Fund Christmas project! We provided gifts for 22 children ranging in ages from infant to 14 years old. Thank you so much for getting the gifts to church so quickly. We received the

information a little late but you all came through! And thanks to you all for labeling the gifts well. It is a huge project for the Lions Club, and is impressive how organized it is. Great job everyone!

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