



The Rocktonian

Newsletter of
Rockton United Methodist Church

July 2021



Carolyn Lukasick, Pastor

Cell phone: 815-718-3022
E-mail: PastorCarolynL@gmail.com

Contact Us

Rockton United Methodist Church
102 West Chapel Street
P.O. Box 293
Rockton, IL 61072

Office Phone: 815-624-7591
E-mail: info@rocktonumc.org

Worship With Us on Sunday Morning

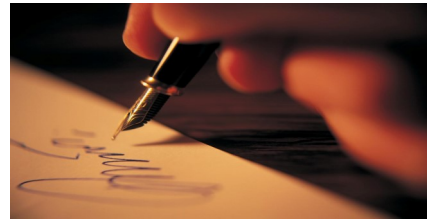
**Worship is at 9:00 a.m. or participate through Zoom.
Sunday mornings. Please visit our website for more information.**

Mission Statement

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

Visit Our Website
www.rocktonumc.org

From the Pastor's Pen



July 2021

By: Pastor Carolyn Lukasick

My husband Mark and I are so grateful for the hard work so many contributed to help make the parsonage ready for our move in. Considering the workload Trustees have had this past year, we were impressed at how much work went into preparing the parsonage for our arrival! We noticed a big difference after the cleaning crew came to work their magic. Old furniture was cleared out, a new floor was installed in the laundry room, walls were painted and carpets professionally cleaned. Volunteers continue to maintain the lawn while we wait for a new mower to become available. We could not have managed all of these details ourselves, and we already feel like we are part of a vibrant, active team.

I have only met a few of you briefly, and I look forward to getting to know you and the history and traditions of Rockton UMC in the coming weeks and months. My priority as your new pastor will be getting to know you as individuals and as a church.

I understand my calling to ministry as a passion to follow the Way of Jesus to the best of my ability on a daily basis and to encourage and invite others to join the adventure.

I believe faith is much more than a set of beliefs; faith is meant to transform us, and it is a lifelong process. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, initially understood the scriptures to describe salvation as a guarantee of sinless living. He then learned (the hard way) that being human involves ongoing lessons and making mistakes! Wesley had to adjust his beliefs, and he eventually described the process of the faith journey as "Going On to Perfection." Instead of salvation as a one-time event which makes us perfect, we continue to be works in progress our entire lives. I find comfort in this explanation, because I also continue to learn and grow in my own faith journey. I have learned from every church where I have served, and I am excited about where our journey together will take us! We look forward to meeting everyone and getting to know you!

Blessings, Pastor Carolyn

I believe church should be a place where we can encourage one another as we learn together. Faith isn't meant to be hidden or private; I believe it is meant to infuse every part of our lives.

—Col 2:6-7

(Pg. 3)

June “What’s Up with the Buildings?”

By John Carleton, Trustee’s Chair

I have considered not writing a *What’s Up?* article any more as the wall is fixed and some of the other projects have been resolved. However, another church member told me that they like knowing what’s going on with the building and encouraged me to continue so, here’s “What’s Up?” for July.

Since I have to write this at least a week before you’ll read it, there will always be a disclaimer that something here might already be done by the time you read this. A good example of this will (hopefully) be the lift. Sadly, it’s still not ready for operation but it’s closer than ever. Barcol Door put in a brand-new door and made sure its frame was solid. Once we knew the door was properly installed it became clear that the special safety switch still was not working and it is the switch that’s the problem, not the door. Barcol is looking for a new one so let’s hope this is the last time I have to write about the lift except to say it’s done.

Thanks to the Wulf’s for all the great work in putting new mulch around the church. Part of the work was hazardous as Brenda was working when the Chemtool fire started. She got a clue something was up when the fire station across the street went crazy. Then the black stuff started falling out of the sky and she knew it was time to pack up and get out of there quickly and leave the rest until some other time!

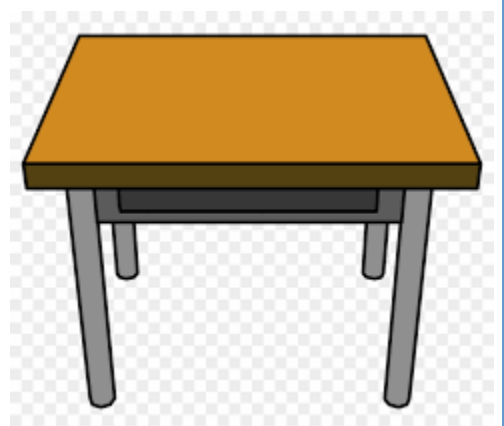
How’s the cleanliness of the building now we’re meeting weekly again? When we were only meeting remotely, cleaning was cut back to only once a month around the middle of the month and only in the more used areas. Now that we’re meeting regularly, do we need to have the building cleaned more often? June was unusual as we asked the cleaning service to hold off until later in the month just before a wedding was to be held during the last weekend in June. Obviously, with giving down, this is a way to save on cleaning bills but not at the expense of the care of our building. Our next step would be to go to cleaning every other week but we would still not clean the classrooms that are not being used. So, tell a Trustee what you think so we can balance cleanliness with cost savings.

Some more thoughts on upgrading our AV in the Sanctuary. This is a big deal and will mean a lot to improving our worship experience so your patience will be appreciated as we put all of this together. We will have help due to some generous donations to help pay for flat screen TV’s and all the tech that must go in the booth to manage them. I know we’ve been talking about this a long time but we want to be sure to do this right as it is a big expense.

(Cont’d.)

By waiting, we'll be able to, hopefully, include some new AV tech as well. Several members have expressed that it is important to continue to provide, and improve, our ability to offer remote services especially to our shut-ins. So, we've added to this project researching a camera that can be remotely aimed and zoomed. Fortunately, it's not quite as expensive as the TV equipment but we want to be sure it's something our AV techs can use that gives us good views of what's going on in the service. We are looking into how this will integrate with the other tech in the booth and what's needed to help the AV Techs manage all this on a weekly basis.

As you all know, over the last year we've had three pastors and many of our major committees have new chairs (including myself as head of the Trustees) so our church hasn't had a lot of continuity lately. While not a lot, we have had some incidents in the past few months of church equipment turning up missing when it's needed. This has reminded us, to remind you, about members of the congregation using church equipment. Having never had the occasion to borrow church equipment myself, I had to ask around as to how it is done and start a conversation if that's how we wish to continue doing it.



While that conversation is going on, if you would like to borrow church equipment, please be sure you notify the Church Office before you take it. It is your responsibility to be sure there is no church event or meeting that will be needing whatever it is you wish to borrow, which is why it's good to check with the office first.

As the office is staffed only two days a week, you need to plan ahead. There will be a clipboard with a form on it (thanks Ron and Margaret) on the table as you enter the Education Wing from Chapel St. where you can reserve and sign things out and back in. Be sure to use it to sign things out so we can tell if something is out of the building when no one is in the office. It should go without saying that items need to be returned promptly in good, clean condition to the same place you found them. You will be expected to fix or replace items damaged or lost.

Please note that electronic equipment such as computers, printers, sound or AV equipment, due to their integration with other technology, are not available to be borrowed. Power equipment such as lawn mowers, due to liability concerns, are also not to be borrowed. If everyone checks with the office and uses the clip board, hopefully, nobody will be saying "What's Up with the Equipment?".

Finance Committee Report – General

The Finance Committee is providing a general overview of the budget for the church. First, we would like to thank all of the members who generously donated for the numerous projects we have undertaken as a church. These present, and past, contributions have been significant in maintaining our church and sustaining our congregation. For reference, please know that our fiscal year is from January 1 through December 31 and if I use the word ‘year,’ I am referring in a general sense to a 12-month period.

Our pledges for the current fiscal year were \$69,392 which is very low. We realize that the COVID restrictions precluded an effective pledge drive, so we are praying that the unpledged donations increase to meet the difference. Past history has held pledge amounts at around \$110,000 and unpledged donations have been about \$30,000.

First, I would like to share with you the fiscal year (FY) 2021 budget. We estimated the FY 2021 budget as best we could during the COVID restrictions at \$149,080.00. Over the past three years, our spending has typically come in lower. This is dependent upon a number of things, but I’d like to keep it simple and say we, as a congregation, have been wise in keeping our spending in check. For this, I would like to thank you all very much.

Next, I would like to provide you with amounts from May 31, 2020 and from May 31, 2021 for comparison. The amounts depicted for May 2020 are those that were available before we undertook our repairs and maintenance projects this past year; the amounts reflected for May 2021 are what we currently have after making payments for the bulk of the projects. The amounts are as follows: (the amounts are rounded to the nearest dollar):

	<u>May 31, 2020</u>	<u>May 31, 2021</u>
Checking Account:	\$69,616	\$33,548
Saving Account:	\$91,265	\$41,273
*Endowment Fund:	<u>\$73,961</u>	<u>\$87,492</u>
TOTAL	\$234,842	\$162,313

**NOTE: The Endowment Fund was created about three years ago using about \$75,000 that remained from a generous contribution made by a late member. This fund is a growth investment fund and is not readily available for use.*

(Cont’d)

The amounts reflected in the checking and savings accounts consist of monies accumulated over the past years and, more importantly, amounts received so far this year as pledged and unpledged donations. Some of the unpledged amounts include donations made for use to pay for the special repair and maintenance projects completed over the past calendar year. I do not have an exact amount for these donations and pledges for the special projects, though they did exceed \$30,000. The approximate amount spent for the repairs and maintenance is about \$150,000 plus (this includes, but is not limited to the wall repair, professional services – engineering, roof repairs, carpeting, painting, and parking lot repairs).

Lastly, I want to share where we are financially as a church for the current fiscal year (FY21). The amounts I am sharing are the amounts the church has received as part of the pledges and unpledged amounts that have been received as of May 21, 2021. The amounts do not include special or designated donations.

Donations as of May 21, 2021

Loose cash/holiday offerings	\$122
Pledges	\$30,808
<u>Unpledged</u>	<u>\$15,347</u>
TOTAL	\$46,277

If we intend on meeting the FY21 budget amount of \$149,080, the church needs to collect \$12,422 per month. We are currently averaging between \$2,313-\$2,426 per week. If I project the current donation average for the period of January 1 through May 31, we are about \$11,043 short of our projected FY21 budget amount. If I forecast this for the rest of the fiscal year, we could be facing a budget shortfall of as much as \$26,503.

We realize that a lot of donations have been made to support the repair and maintenance projects and these are greatly appreciated. Our hope is that we do not have to rely on our reserves to a great extent as unknown repairs and maintenance can be costly. I hope that by keeping you posted as we progress through the year, you can be an informed congregation as we can work as a team to meet our needs and missions.

I thank you for your constant and continuing support.

Sincerely,

Dan Davis

A Big Welcome/Introduction to Our New Organist!



We welcome Marcia to our church and appreciate her dedication. She is retired and lives at Wesley Willows Retirement Home. Marcia comes to Rockton by way of Tomahawk, WI, where she was a middle school math/science teacher since 1975 and a theatre director/actress since 1990. She has been a church organist for over 20 years and is enjoying playing again since her move to Rockford last year. Born and raised in the Chicago West suburbs to a Methodist minister father and music teacher mother, the move to Rockford has been like coming home.

Welcome Marcia!!!

Sisters in Christ “Mission of the Month”

A recent message purportedly from Sisters in Christ was *not submitted* by them concerning “Mission of the Month” for The Sparrow’s Nest

The Sparrow’s Nest is a homeless shelter in Beloit, opened in 1977 and serves men, women and children. A handwritten note was left on my desk that said, “Sisters in Christ, Mission of the Month” but was not identified with a person’s name.. It did not come from Phyllis DeGraff. My apologies! Henceforth, please identify submissions with a name...much appreciated!

—Margaret Downing, Office

June Disaster

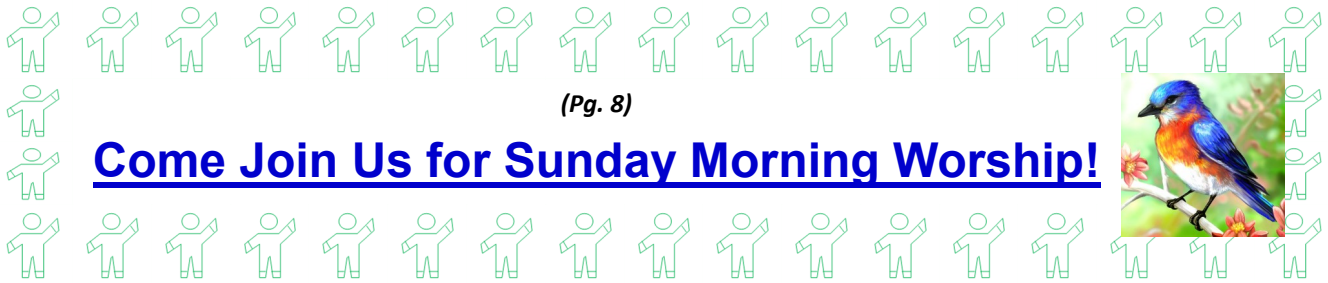
The effects of the Chemtool Industrial Fire on June 14 were felt and seen throughout the stateline area.

Pictured near left is the cloud 3 ½ miles away from the site, the other picture is from the I-90 exit that morning taken at South Beloit.. Pastor Rolland noted how flaming pieces of debris were falling out of the cloud onto the church roof!



Prayers for Pastor Howie

We understand Pastor Howie is now on the mend from his cycling accident. We continue to keep him in our prayers as he recovers!



Come Join Us for Sunday Morning Worship!

BEST WISHES TO PASTOR ROLLAND!

By Margaret Downing, Office

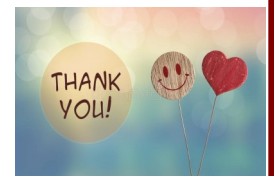
It has been a real pleasure working with Pastor Rolland. He is very dedicated to his profession within the Methodist Church family, and we were very lucky to have him, if only for a few months. As has been noted, he is now moving on to United Methodist Church of Pecatonica, another area Methodist church and town with a long history.

Rolland has been a pleasure to work with...and considering both of us were new to the job, we managed to make our way with the help of church members and are both very grateful for their help and knowledge! Rolland, we hope to hear from you periodically in the future!

Thank You's

We would like to thank Gail Terry and the Fellowship Committee and RUMC for the graduation card and gift. We are excited for the new chapters in our family where Gretta will be attending Southern Illinois University (Carbondale), and Kelsey, who was married June 26 in this church, who is then moving to Waterloo, Iowa.

We again thank Rockton United Methodist Church for the continued support through the years. — *Gretta and Kelsey Wulf*



We Thank you so much for the special recognition and Target gift card! I wish I could have been able to attend but my parents told me all about it. I am so excited to have graduated and do thank all of you for your support.

Thanks again! — *Hannah Bridgeland*

Message from Judy Cunningham and Charlie C.

A letter has been received from Charlie Cunningham: "To my beloved prayer warriors and family. This has been very difficult for me. I am recovering very slowly in the "arm" department but very fast in the "heart" department.

Praise be to God! Bless you all for your support. Love Charlie."

Charlie's address, if you wish to write to him, is R70227, P.O. Box 1000, Menard,

*****TIDBITS OF HISTORY*****

***From the Rockton Herald 1879:
When News was Entertaining to Read!***

1879

*Reported in the Chicago Daily News was, "A member of the Illinois Legislature while under the influence of liquor a few days ago, incautiously remarked to a few fellow members, 'By ginger, I wish this here circus would adjourn. I'm tired of this town.' His friends became alarmed regarding his mental condition and before he had an opportunity of straightening himself up, he was sent to the Lunatic Asylum at Jacksonville. The members of the Legislature believe him incurably insane. They argue that no man who was in receipt of his per diem and in possession of his senses, could think of leaving Springfield while there was a spark of life in him. When a member of the Legislature so far forgets himself as to hint at the probability of his going home, he is a marked man. From that moment he is shunned."

*From Herald Editor Edson Carr: "Every man who owes us a dollar is very urgently requested to pay us. We want it."

*"Judge Henry G. Smith of Memphis, Tenn., who died a few days ago, is described as a man of singular bravery as is illustrated by the story of one of his cases tried years ago in Tennessee. Friends of the murderer let it be known that they would kill whoever appeared as prosecutor. Mr. Smith began the trial by producing two pistols, which he kept by him until the man was convicted."

*"A well, about 20 feet deep, has been discovered on the court house grounds at Rockford, covered only by a few rotten boards and a little dirt. This well was probably of ancient origin, having been dug by Christopher Columbus when he built the old court house in 1492."

*"A Mississippi farmer recently plowed up a Spanish coin dated 1300."

*"In Stanstead, Canada, a man sold 10-ct. packages 'warranted sure death to potato bugs; no risk of poisoning animals as with Paris Green.' The packages were not to be opened until time to use them. One victim, having three, opened one and found two square blocks of wood, on which of one was written: 'Place the bug on this block and press firmly with the other.'"

1893

*"If people would just remember that flour would extinguish blazing gasoline the knowledge would be inestimable,' said a man of the house today. 'Sunday, the tank of our gasoline stove was blazing. Wet clothes were used without effect when I remembered that I had read that flour would extinguish the blaze. A handful did almost put it out and another snuffed it completely. It would be a good idea to post this up so that in an emergency it might save both life and property.'"

*"The Union Pacific has taken the 'Lincoln car' out of service, and in a few days will bring it to the shops of the company in Chicago to be restored with a view to sending it to the World's Fair (Columbian Exposition). The car is the one which usually carried President Lincoln on his trips to visit the army, and was the one which bore the body of the President from Washington to Springfield. It was made bullet proof with boiler iron below the line of the high small windows."

Worship on Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Prayers for Pastor Howie

Pastor Howie was in a cycling accident last week near Idaho Springs. He was at St. Anthony Hospital in Lakewood. They did head-to-toe CT scans, X-rays, ultrasounds...he has a collapsed lung with a tube inserted between his ribs in an attempt to re-inflate—a minimum of 48 hours in the hospital. Also, a fractured T1 vertebrae, compressed spine, massive hematoma in right distal thigh. MRI done on head/spine to determine whether ligaments/tissue between vertebrae are affected and to determine whether surgery is needed. There is apparently a little tear in the artery behind his left knee that they happened to see when scanning that leg...now keeping an eye on it to make sure it can heal on its own, other surgery will be needed to repair it. He is getting a second look at his spine and after all the specialists get results and confer we will know more...thank you

HAPPY JULY BIRTHDAYS



Jan Floto, July 10

Maryellen Kinney, July 18

Courtney Kerch, July 21

Jeff Schultz, July 26

Nicole Alcorn, July 29

**HAPPY JULY
ANNIVERSARY**



Don and Sue Miller, July 9

