



# The Rocktonian

Newsletter of  
Rockton United Methodist Church

October 2020



**Rev. Howie Snyder, Pastor**

Cell phone: 630-809-9419

Email: [pastorhowiesnyder@gmail.com](mailto:pastorhowiesnyder@gmail.com)

**Contact Us**

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

Office Phone: 815-624-7591

Email: [info@rocktonumc.org](mailto:info@rocktonumc.org)

## Worship With Us on Sunday Morning in our Parking Lot

We are worshipping in our parking lot at **9:00am Sunday mornings**. At this time we are continuing to live-stream our service from the parking lot as well. 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](http://www.rocktonumc.org)

## Come to a Thank You Supper in the Parking Lot



### Enjoy the music of the Good News Band

Over the past year this church has made many changes and sacrifices and still survived. You have supported the many efforts of the worship team and our congregation, as they adjusted to a different sanctuary, then church from Howie's living room, and finally church in the parking lot.

As we followed the repairs to our sanctuary, and were told funds needed to be raised to pay for those repairs, this congregation has made donations and pledges to restore our church to a safe environment as we return to indoor worship.

For all of your support we wish to say THANK YOU! Join us for an outdoor concert with the Good News Band from Roscoe UMC. A light supper will be provided with prepackaged chili from Wendy's and individually wrapped sub sandwiches from Mark's Pizza in Rockton. We encourage you to come at 5:15 to set up your chairs and gather your supper.

**THIS WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7th**  
**SOCIAL DISTANCING IN OUR PARKING LOT**  
**GATHERING AT 5:15**  
**CONCERT AT 5:30**  
**YOU MUST BRING YOUR OWN BEVERAGE**

## Uganda Student Sponsorships

For \$25 you can supply one Uganda student's school uniform, supplies, and a year of education. If you would like to be part of this mission work, please contact Christine Gustafson at [cmguspt@yahoo.com](mailto:cmguspt@yahoo.com) or call/ text @ 815/871-5888.

If writing a check for this mission, please make it out to the Rockton UMC and write Uganda in the memo line.

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.

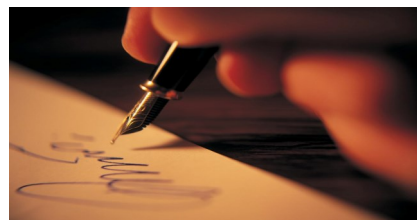
God bless you!!

Christine Gustafson



# From the Pastor's Pen

October, 2020



Our Parking Lot Services have continued to go well and it has been a blessing for us to have the connection in that space as well as those that join us online. Again, we don't know how long the quarantine will continue, but we are excited to be moving forward with completing our building project and looking forward to when we will be back in our own space.

With the cold of the season approaching and the building project nearing completion, we will look to the possibility of continuing socially distanced and masked worship within the building when the Sanctuary work is completed.

With concerns for the higher positivity rate in Winnebago County, it is a reminder for us to continue to be diligent in following the guidelines and measures to keep each other safe during this pandemic. We have already been under the restrictions of gatherings not larger than 25 with the number of people that have left their cars for the parking lot during our Sunday services, but something we'll need to consider going forward for when we go inside the Sanctuary if the number is still the same when that happens.

I am excited about our new series based on the book, "Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations". I encourage you to get the book and read it along with our 7-week series. There are copies at the church for \$15 or you can order it on your own. We are also doing book studies via Zoom Meetings with the book starting the first week of October on Tuesdays at 6:30PM and Thursdays at 10:00AM. If you would like to be part of one of our studies, please contact me and let me know.



And as we consider both our short-term and long-term futures both as a church and for each of our lives, let us be reminded of these words from Jesus in providing for us:

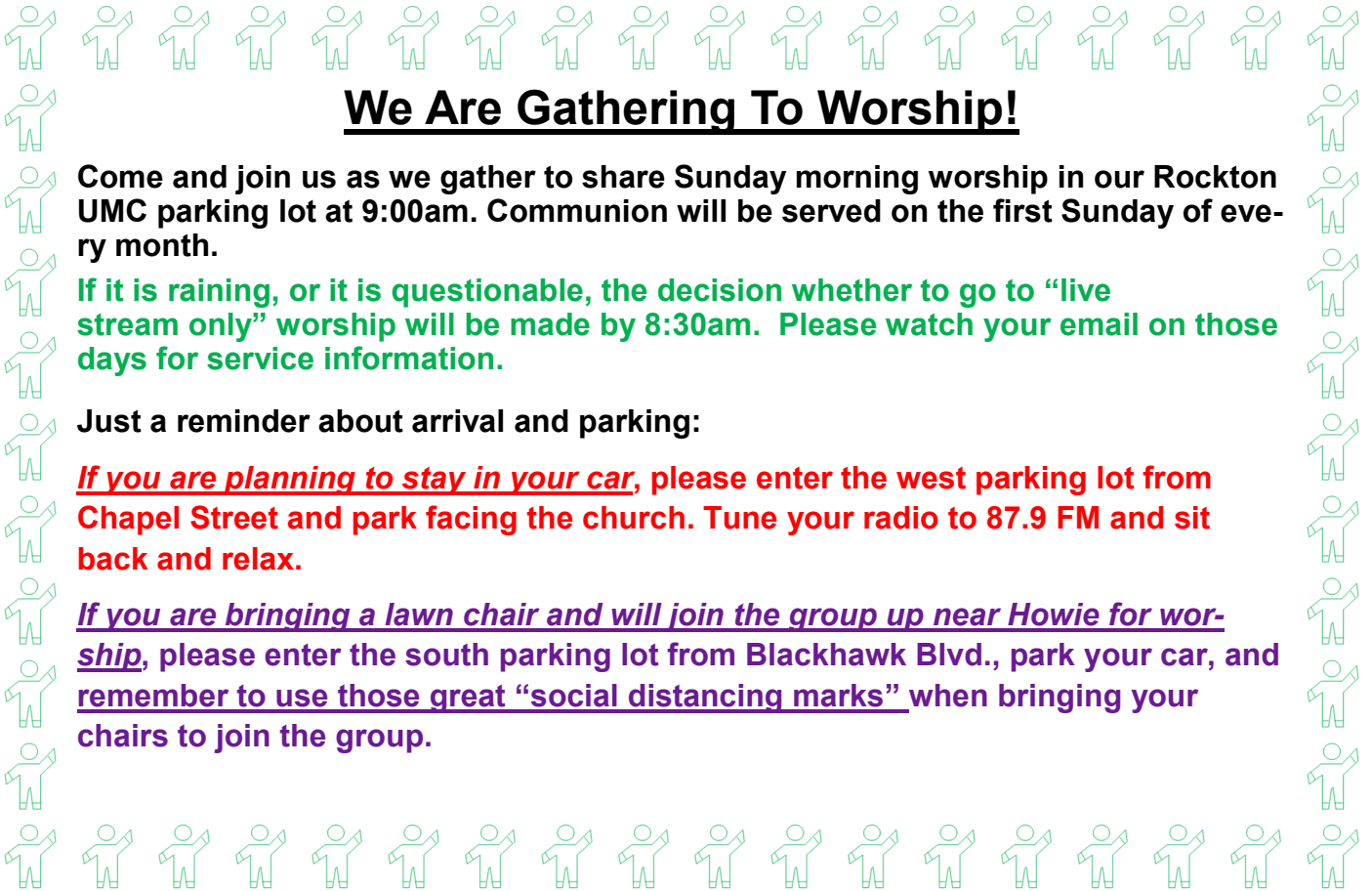
Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

*-Matthew 6:26*

Thank the Lord for his provision, care and love!

Blessings in the Love of Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior!

Pastor Howie Snyder



## We Are Gathering To Worship!

Come and join us as we gather to share Sunday morning worship in our Rockton UMC parking lot at 9:00am. Communion will be served on the first Sunday of every month.

If it is raining, or it is questionable, the decision whether to go to “live stream only” worship will be made by 8:30am. Please watch your email on those days for service information.

Just a reminder about arrival and parking:

If you are planning to stay in your car, please enter the west parking lot from Chapel Street and park facing the church. Tune your radio to 87.9 FM and sit back and relax.

If you are bringing a lawn chair and will join the group up near Howie for worship, please enter the south parking lot from Blackhawk Blvd., park your car, and remember to use those great “social distancing marks” when bringing your chairs to join the group.

## Do We Have Your Latest Email Address?

There are several things that have all come together to make communicating with you, the congregation, more difficult. Covid-19 has meant that we see each other less and we have to depend on email or bulletins to keep you up-to-date on the latest church events. Our church office has been closed and we have been without an administrative assistant for several months so keeping track of everything has been done by volunteers (bless them) when they can find time. During the early part of the office closure the office computer had a problem (storm or power surge) and had to have a new hard drive. As a result, the mail and email lists for contacting everyone had to be redone and we suspect that some emails may be old or missing.

If you’ve been getting our Saturday Bulletins each week and the monthly Rocktonian by email recently then you are fine and don’t need to do anything.

But... If you used to receive those publications by email in the past and don’t receive them by email anymore, we would really appreciate it if you would let us know by just sending a simple email to [info@rocktonumc.org](mailto:info@rocktonumc.org) Also, if you are aware of anyone who might have mentioned they aren’t getting emails from us then please let us know so we can try to contact them or urge them to send us an email or call so we can update our records. If you have any questions, call Gail Johnson.



## What's Up With the Building?

### October

As I write this month's "What's Up?" article things are proceeding really fast and what I write will probably be out of date by the time you read it. And that is good news! I encourage you to continue to monitor the progress of the project on the Happening Page of the website as Ron feeds me pictures almost every day. The jacking is done, the structural work is done, and now the cosmetic work to cover over the new structural reinforcements is close to done as well. As of Friday, Day 28, the drywall is all up and the plaster crew was hard at work filling in the gaps and patching up the cracks. You can tell that things have gone well as we are on Day 28 of what was originally thought to be a 60-day project. Thanks to Ron Zoeller's monitoring of the site, this patching will include cracks in the narthex which were not originally a part of the project. We were able to get Sjostrom to fix the ceiling in the stairway down to the Fellowship Hall and add in the plaster work in the narthex.

Due to the quick work by Jerry Ruff, Jim Johnson and Ron, the Trustees were able to get Superior Roofing on-site Thursday (Day 27, September 24<sup>th</sup>) so they could patch the leaky roof on, and around, the bell tower. There was quite a bit to be done but they were on schedule to have finished it in a couple of days to protect the new drywall from the rains forecast for Sunday. The Trustees are also going to have the carpet cleaned in the Fellowship Hall once all the work is finished and there will be no more chance of it getting construction dirt.

For those of you who have already donated to Fund the Fix, bless you! Its hoped that many of you will consider making a pledge to support all that's been done and allow for some of the other projects to take place as well. As you can tell, there's been a priority put on doing those things which are much more easily done while the Sanctuary was being fixed. These include getting the cracks repaired and putting in some cables in the walls so we have the potential to go to flat screen TVs for worship. We will be waiting on replacing the carpeting, the TV equipment, and any other improvements until the bills come in and we can get a clear look at the state of our finances.

Do you remember last October, the 14<sup>th</sup> specifically? We spent that day taking out the pews and storing things away and praying that the winter of 2019/20 would be kind to the building. Well, here we are almost a year later and the Sanctuary is now **safe and solid** and only waiting for some more of the plaster and painting mentioned above to be done. It's a big empty room just longing for the instruments of worship and the pews to return. But more than anything, it is a place waiting for the faithful to return and fill its spaces with music, hymns, prayer and the Word of God! We're getting close to when we'll need folks to get things out of storage and back in their proper place so watch the bulletins. Covid-19 doesn't seem as though it will be letting us get back in to have our normal worship any time soon but, when it does, it looks like our Sanctuary will be ready and waiting.

John Carleton  
Chair of the Building Committee



## Congregational Care Team



October 2020

Hello October! I have no idea how September slipped by, but it did. We must have all been having a good time. "Time flies when you are having fun." They talk about signs of spring, but I see signs of completing the sanctuary and signs of the church moving forward with new members taking leadership from where we left off in March. All good things are happening here at Rockton United Methodist Church.

So when I thought about what to write in October for Congregational Care Team, I decided to thank all the wonderful team we have here in our midst. In the 4 years I have been part of this team I couldn't ask for more dedicated people. Each in their own way enjoyed keeping in touch with those who cannot attend our worship service on Sunday. A visit from one of these special people not only cheered the visatee up but cheered the visitor also as they never knew what new experience they would be having. Sadly we cannot go inside anymore with this virus so our visits have come to a halt. Sadly some of the visatees have passed away. Many good times with them are now just memories.

I appreciate my team and their special talents:

NANCY BIELEMA is known to take books for her visatees to enjoy.

MELINDA CROISANT is known for her love and visitations of many folks outside of our church.

LOREN FLOTO is known for the laughs he had with his visatee as they ate popcorn and wandered around the facility to meet with other people there. He went to visit one and ended up visiting 3 or more. A good time was had by all.

DARLENE MATLOCK is known for her sweet smile. Everyone always feels better and smiles back when Darlene enters a room. Darlene and Nancy Bielema often go together to visit one or more of our members. The two of them are quite a team and made so many people happy

MARILYNN READ is another faithful visitor to our sweet Pauline Lawhorn and Bob. Because of the virus she is unable to go into their house for health reasons so Pauline, Bob and Marilyn are following the rules and keeping healthy.

GAIL TERRY must be added as another faithful visitor, but personally, she was not able to help others because of her own health reasons. Now that she is ready to start visiting again the virus has kept her from her helpful routine with the members

DARLENE WEAVER has quite a few people she is greeting and taking something to cheer them up. She does not go into their houses, she just hands them flowers or whatever over the fence. Many times just a bit of chatter is enough.

PASTOR HOWIE continues to visit folks that need his visits. Whether they are members or not, he is willing to put on his mask and give peace to those who need it. Recently he sang hymns with one of our members. A good time was had by all.

I praise God for these faithful helpers. I do hope when the time is right we can get back to "normal" and proceed with our visits.

Mary Louise Muench  
Co-ordinator Congregational Care Team  
815-623-7556



## More pictures from Sunday Service in the parking lot!



Find a dot and set up your chair -  
and don't forget your mask!



Do you see yourself in any of these  
pictures? Maybe next time!



### Letters to Charlie Cunningham

Charlie is in a prison with covid so they are on 24/7 lock down. If you have time and a stamp, please send him a card or note:

Charles Cunningham R70222  
Shawnee Prison  
6665 Old State Route 146 East  
Vienna, IL 62995

I know he would appreciate it - It is HOT and humid in southern Illinois with no air conditioning. He says he can't do anything because he is so sweaty. Thank you for caring.

Judy Cunningham

## News from Missions

Members of Missions would like to thank all of you that purchased and donated hair products to Caritas during the month of September. Those products are always needed and appreciated.

Thank you, also, to those who donated money and food to prepare sack lunches for the soup kitchen and to everyone who took time to assemble those and get them ready to deliver. We appreciate all that Donna Chambers does to organize this mission project and arrange for the delivery of the food.

Mark your calendars for the annual Empty Bowl fundraiser for Caritas. This year it has a different look with a Drive Thru Chili Dinner coming up on Saturday, October 17th. All of the proceeds go directly to Caritas to serve those needing assistance in Beloit and nearby northern Illinois communities. See details on the flier included here.

**The COVID  
Edition!**



# Empty Bowl 2020

A Fundraiser for Caritas Food Pantry

100% of the day's proceeds benefit neighbors in the Beloit area!

## DRIVE THRU CHILI DINNER

**\$10**



- \* 12 oz Cup of Chili  
(chili served frozen)

- \* Crackers

- \* Brownie

- \* Bottle of Water

**Saturday, October 17**

**1-3 PM**

Pick up at the Caritas Parking Lot

Thank You for paying with Cash!

**Only 200 Dinners Available!**

Our Sponsors : Culvers and E&D Water Works...Thank You!

**Caritas Food Pantry 2840 Prairie Ave, Beloit**

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:

- ◆ All who donated or pledged a donation for Funding the Fix of the sanctuary
- ◆ Dan Davis for helping Howie set up for the parking lot service each week
- ◆ Peg Hayelan for taking attendance each week at the parking lot service
- ◆ Margo Leden for helping Pastor Howie get ready for Charge Conference
- ◆ Mark Alcorn for keeping the Adult Sunday School Class going using Zoom
- ◆ Peg Hayelan, Gail Johnson, and Pastor Howie for arranging the Thank You concert and meal



# October 2020

*These events are scheduled for October:*

- Each Sunday at **9:00am Worship** in the Rockton UMC parking lot  
Communion on the first Sunday of each month
- **Wednesday, October 7th, Thank you Supper and Open Air Concert** by the Good News Band in our parking lot

*These events are happening every week using ZOOM:*

- Sunday School meets every Sunday morning at 7:00am - 8:00am  
with Mark Alcorn facilitating
- Study Group every Thursday morning at 10:00am - 11:00am  
with Pastor Howie facilitating

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 4 Ed Miller  
Jillian Stevens
- 6 Jenna Cooper
- 8 Melissa Schellenberger
- 10 Pauline Lawhorn  
Merle Sprague
- 18 Laurie MacMartin
- 25 Janet Turner

## OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 4 Dave and Pam Noel
- 14 Alan and Janet Bridgeland
- 13 Robert and Donna Hayenga
- 24 Keith and Jill Knoespel

