



The Rocktonian

Newsletter of
Rockton United Methodist Church

September 2021



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Please be aware:



If you get a call/text/e-mail that looks like it's coming from the church or the pastor, we will NOT be asking for money that way. Scammers can clone phone numbers and it's being more common.





from the pastor's desk

I always thought spiritual disciplines sounded like difficult or unpleasant activities, things beyond my ability or things that other people do who are more committed disciples of Jesus.

I was introduced to several books which helped change my outlook. Spiritual disciplines are simply practices. They are ancient practices which have shaped and formed Christians for over twenty centuries. They are practices which nurture our souls and help us grow closer to God as we live our everyday lives.

Over the coming weeks we will be taking fresh looks at these ancient practices, because if they are meant to help us—if they are beneficial—then we need to understand them better in order to embrace how they might be useful in our everyday lives.

When we try to be Good Christians out of a sense of duty or through sheer willpower, we quickly find ourselves discouraged and depleted. The Christian journey is not about simply behaving in a certain way, or believing a certain thing.

The Christian journey is about transformation, which is a lifelong process of learning to work in harmony with God in our hearts and in our community.

We will be looking at ancient spiritual practices to see how they can be adapted for our lives today.

For example, if we start to explore the many options within the realm of prayer, we are encouraged to experiment and find deeply personal ways of connecting with God which nurture our souls.

Prayer is only one example of a spiritual practice. Worship (both public and private) is a spiritual practice, as are confession and repentance. Slowing down and observing sabbath rest are other practices. Seeking practices of hospitality and service become more intentional acts of faith as we grow in our understanding of what it means to follow the Way of Jesus.

I enjoy the opportunity to discover new ways of looking at old assumptions and practices. God is continually inviting each of us to connect more often and more authentically in our everyday lives. My prayer is that this worship series will help each of us experience new opportunities to connect with God and experience God's presence and influence in our lives.

Blessings,



September: “What’s Up with the Buildings?”

By John Carleton, Trustee Chairperson

Thanks to Ron Zoeller and his group of helpers/donors! Hopefully, you noticed the flat screen TVs were installed in the Sanctuary in the middle of August. The installer had some difficulties but, after a couple of more visits, as of this writing, they think they have it all working as intended. Please be patient with the AV Techs and those involved in worship as they have to learn by trial and error what looks and sounds best with what settings et cetera.

Your constructive feedback will be appreciated as they work to enhance our worship with this new equipment. This also goes along with our efforts to provide a meaningful worship experience for those who view our services either through Zoom or Facebook. That technology will be changing as well, as we try to integrate the sound from the booth online. Last Sunday we had almost a dozen members worshipping with us again via Zoom and Pastor was able to record the service and post it on Facebook for later viewing.

For those of you who are frustrated with some of the projects that seem to be taking forever, so are we. Communicating and negotiating with contractors can take weeks/months and then you have to wait for weeks to get on that contractor’s schedule. It gets worse if you have to change contractors and start all over again! It was much simpler when we could do these things ourselves but nowadays, with liability concerns and more complex technology, that is often not an option.

A good example of this is the A/C in the Sanctuary. We had the unit next to the pulpit (which is linked to the one in Fellowship Hall) fail last month. Thankfully, we still have eight other units that are working so we should be able to make it through the rest of the summer and fall. These units were put in ten years ago and were made exclusively in China. The contractor who installed them no longer does A/C work. You can see where this is going (rather, not going. . .).

While still under discussion, we probably will wait until we have set the priorities on the projects mentioned at the beginning of this article before we go about starting to fix or replace these failed units.



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Sisters in Christ Announcement

The Sisters in Christ “Campfire Kickoff” is set for Sunday, September 12th at 7 p.m. at the home of Phyllis and Ron DeGraff, 12552 W. St. Lawrence, Beloit, WI 53511. Please RSVP to (608) 368-1051 or text or e-mail. Please bring a snack or drinks to share.

Enjoy a relaxing evening with your Sisters as we plan out our year and discuss church needs. When you are in the church prior to this event, please walk around and see what the building needs done and how we can, as a group, help out. We will need volunteers to take on various projects for our church.



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Finally, some miscellaneous items. You’ve probably noticed that John Wesley is back in his usual place on the north wall. Still missing as of this writing, however, are the memorial plaques that were on the west wall of the overflow room, one of which had half a hand-bell on it. If you remember where those might be, please let a Trustee or the Office know.

Another call for pictures for the website. We got some good close-ups of Pastor but we need some new shots of the Sanctuary with folks in the pews and Pastor. Any other congregation pictures of events would be great as well. Smiling folks together doing something (listening is fine) with as few empty seats as possible. If you see something, get out your phone and start snapping and send them on. Thanks!



Underneath the picture Ron wrote, “We’ve come a long way in a year!” And, indeed, we have, when you think at that point last summer, we had not enjoyed our place of worship for many months. Thanks for the perspective Ron!

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

From the Rockton Herald:

When News was Interesting to Read!

as noted by Herald Editor Edson Carr

1877

*“There was but a small number of worshipers at the several churches last Sunday evening owing to the slight storm that prevailed. Had there been a minstrel show in town that night, the hall would have filled.”

*“A young man named August Scott, residing at Madison, Wis., died suddenly on the 12th last of paralysis caused by the excessive use of tobacco.”

*“Postal-card communications embrace all sorts of subjects such as business, religion, law, love, sense and nonsense. It may be news to some people that the postmasters have a perfect right to read any postal card passing through their hands.”

1929

On Nov. 29 a small write-up noted, “Railroad business is declining. The railroads of the United States performed 24 percent less passenger service per inhabitant in 1928 than in 1911. The passenger business of the railroad has been declining steadily in recent years due to the competition of the motor bus and private passenger automobile.”

Church news was always evident in local newspapers. A “Bazaar and Chicken Supper” was announced Nov. 8. The item read, “The annual bazaar and chicken supper of the the Methodist Church will be held on Thursday evening, Nov. 14. Fancy articles, aprons, quilts, rugs and homemade candies will be on sale in the church beginning at 8 o’clock. The following menu will be served commencing at 5:30 and continuing until all are served: roast chicken, mashed potatoes, biscuits and gravy, cranberries, cabbage salad, creamed carrots and peas, rolls, pickles, coffee, cake and jello. Supper tickets 35 cents and 50 cents.”

In November 1929, the paper reported, “Only 68,000 Veterans of Union Army left. Although the blue lines of the Civil War are growing thinner at the rate of 12,000 a year, there are still 68,000 of the dear old boys marching bravely, eyes to the front, into the sunset. Sixty-eight thousand survivors 68 years after the great conflict opened. It is a wistful contrast to the 2,000,000 enrolled under the Union banner to the 1,000,000 under arms when the war closed and to the 745,000 on the pension rolls when it reached its high water mark 50 years ago. The decrease of 6,000 in the last six months, noted by a report of the Interior Department, is a ratio which, if kept up, will mean the dissolution of the blue line into the mists of history within another ten years.”*

**(Note: The last surviving Union Army vet died in 1956 (Albert Woolson of Minnesota). The last Confederate veteran died in 1959 (Walter Washington Williams of Texas.)*

Soup Kitchen — Sept. 12th
The JUBILEE CENTER SOUP KITCHEN
(Submitted by Donna Chambers)



Our next Mission Project is to provide a meal for the Jubilee Center in Rockford on Saturday, Sept. 18th. Due to the Covid situation, we will again prepare “to-go” meals.

A sign-up sheet is available in Church on Sundays for volunteers and listing items needed (i.e. commercially prepared cookies, small snack bags). We will make sandwiches and put together brown bag meals starting at 9:30 a.m. in our church kitchen, Sept. 18. If you have questions, please call or text Donna at



9/2 Paul Chambers

9/4 Erin Tamar

9/5 Hannah Bridgeland

9/5 Ryan Kerch

9/7 Harold Wulf

9/8 Alan Bridgeland

9/9 Rachel Cooper

9/9 Brian Zimmer

9/10 Greg Leden

9/11 Georgia Lee Colby

9/16 Scott Hellinga

9/16 James LaForge

9/24 Mary Louise

Shakespeare



9/6 Bill and Cheryl Campbell

9/20 Steve and Susan Able

9/23 Richard and Jean Cooper

9/25 Loren and Jan Floto

