



October 2025

THE ROCKTONIAN

Welcoming all in Jesus' name
as we Grow Together in Faith, Service, and Love
Sunday Worship at 9:30 a.m.



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Reaching New People in Today's Culture

Last Sunday during worship (September 21st), I shared briefly about a workshop I attended at Faith UMC in Freeport called Reaching New People in Today's Culture. I thought I would share a little more here, since it gave me fresh perspective that I believe is helpful for us as a congregation.

The main conviction of the workshop was simple: the world has changed, and the ways people connect with church have changed too. There was a time when a church could put up a sign, send out a postcard, and trust that people would walk through the doors on Sunday morning. But that time is no longer our reality. Sundays are busier, family schedules more complicated, and for many in our community, church is not a given part of weekly life.

So what does this mean for us? It means that simply waiting for people to come is no longer enough. We are called to go out, to meet people where they are, and to look for creative, everyday ways of building relationships. The leader of the workshop reminded us that reaching new people doesn't always require big programs or dramatic changes. More often, it is about smaller steps—ordinary encounters made intentional by prayer and openness.

That might look like choosing to hold a meeting in a local coffee shop once in a while, instead of always gathering inside the church walls. It might mean hosting a meal not just in our fellowship hall, but in a public place where neighbors can join in without hesitation. It could be as simple as attending community events with a heart ready to listen, connect, and extend hospitality.

I found myself thinking about my own rhythms as a pastor. On Mondays and Thursdays, I keep office hours here at church. Recently, I've been considering adding one more set of hours on Tuesdays across the street at the library. I would still be preparing

worship or working on the week's tasks, but being in that space could open the door to conversations with people who might not otherwise walk through our doors. In small ways like this, we can practice being present in our community, allowing God to work through us in unexpected places.

Another practice we talked about in the workshop was prayer walking. The idea is simple: walk through your neighborhood or through part of town and pray silently as you go—for the homes, the families, the schools, and the people you see. It is not about being noticed or drawing attention to yourself. It is about letting your heart align with God's heart for the community, asking God to bless, heal, and guide the people around us. Even a short walk down familiar streets can become a moment of connection between our faith and the needs of our neighbors.

The goal of all this is not to abandon the good and faithful things we already do. We will continue to worship together, to share meals, to serve at the food pantry, to support one another in prayer and care. But alongside those gifts, we are invited to stretch a little further, to look outward as well as inward, and to consider how God might use us in fresh ways.

The workshop gave me a paradigm shift. It wasn't that I heard completely new ideas, but I was reminded to see familiar practices in a new light, with a view toward today's culture and needs. We don't need to reinvent the church; we need to allow the Spirit to guide us in using what we already have—our relationships, our presence, our willingness to try—in ways that connect with people today.

My hope is that as we move into this new season, we can take these reminders to heart. Let us be grateful for the faithfulness of the past and eager for the possibilities ahead. And let us trust that when we take even small steps to meet people where they are, God will be faithful to work through us.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Seong

What's Up with the Building?

by John Carleton, Trustee Chair

Re-doing the church roofs has been on our to-do list for so long, it's hard to believe they're finally done and, hopefully, we won't have to worry about them (and leaky ceilings) for several decades to come. Thanks again to all those who contributed to helping make up the difference to pay for them. Here's hoping that this column in the Rocktonian only has to deal with more minor projects for the foreseeable future.

Soon after you get this latest Rocktonian, hopefully, the tuck-pointing project will have started and be done during the first weeks of October. Tuck-pointing can't be done when it's cold so, to beat the cold weather, the tuck pointer will be working on a couple of Saturdays in the month. As always, the weather is a factor so here's hoping it holds off long enough to get things done.

Brenda Wulf is working to put together a Fall Work Day. We'll need to rake leaves, clean-out gutters and generally get the outside things done (and maybe a few inside jobs) before winter sets in. A new job this year will be to set-up composting for the gardens and we're looking forward to some of the Garden Club folks helping us, as we help them. Brenda may have more to say about this somewhere else in this Rocktonian but, if not, be sure to check the weekly bulletins and listen in church for when this important (and fun) event will take place. There will be jobs for everyone.

Be thinking if you'd like to help with snow and ice removal this year. Last year wasn't too bad (I



suppose climate change has to have some upside to it...) but every year is different. I'm not even sure if they had to use the church snow-blower last year? The job goes better if we have several folks that can rotate (or at least fill-in) when needed.

One of our main workers last year is off to college this Fall so we'll be missing one of our regulars. For most snows it's really not that bad. The worst time is when we get snow or ice overnight on a Saturday so the walks have to be cleared before services. Hope you can help us and please let a Trustee know if you're interested.

Next time you go by the windows at the front of the Education Wing you'll notice they are looking much better. Thanks to our resident artist, Dan Enderle, who found time during the start-up of school to repair where the special paint had peeled. The Trustees are seeking advice as to whether or not to replace the plexiglass that was over some of the windows. While the plexiglass does provide some insulation, it appears that those are the windows that needed the most repair. Most of the windows did not have the plexiglass. We would appreciate your thoughts/insights on putting the plexiglass back on.

Finally, we're missing a couple of new keys. Specifically, the last two we had available, numbers 44 and 45. We are trying very hard to keep track of all the keys and those were our last two left but they were not signed out. Please, if you take a key for yourself or someone, else please let Lindsey or John Carleton know so we can get them on the list. Thanks!!

Honoring the Saints Among Us

On Sunday, **November 2**, our congregation will join Christians around the world in observing All Saints Day. This is a holy time set aside to remember and give thanks for those who have gone before us in faith.

During our morning worship service at 9:30 a.m., we will especially honor and name those from our own congregation who have passed away in the past year. As we remember their lives, we will celebrate the love they shared, the faith they lived, and the witness they leave with us.

This service is also a time of comfort and hope. We gather not only in grief but in the assurance of God's promise that "whether we live or die, we belong to God" (Romans 14:8). In worship, we are reminded that we are surrounded by a great "cloud of witnesses" who continue to cheer us on in faith.

Families who have lost loved ones in the past year are warmly invited to join us for this meaningful service. Together, we will light candles, lift prayers, and sing hymns of hope as we remember the saints among us and proclaim the eternal life we share in Christ.

Please mark your calendars and join us on Sunday, November 2, as we give thanks for those who now rest in God's eternal peace.



Fellowship Committee Updates

Fire Prevention Week - The Fellowship Committee will continue our tradition of honoring our Rockton firefighters during Fire Prevention Week. We will deliver a large gift basket of treats for their enjoyment to let them know that our Rockton United Methodist Church appreciates all they do! Fire Prevention Week starts on October 5th. There will be an open house that evening so stop by if you are able to thank them.



Veterans' Appreciation Sunday - We will be honoring our RUMC veterans on Sunday, November 9 during the church service. Here is our list of current RUMC veterans: **Bob Lawhorn, Paul Chambers, Dan Davis, Bruce Muench, Eldon Hamilton, Tom Hilgeman, Greg Leden and Phil Favre.** If there are any of our

members or constituents that are veterans and not listed, please call Pastor Seong at the church or Gail Terry at 815-988-0498. Following the service we will have coffee and treat in Fellowship Hall. We invite everyone to join us and celebrate our veterans.

Sisters in Christ

We will not be having a meeting in October. We are planning a Friendsgiving Potluck Supper on Tuesday, November 18, 2026, at 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. More details will be announced closer to the potluck date. Bring your appetite and a dish to pass!



Thank you for reading!

Rockton United Methodist Church	Pastor Seonghyun Choi
www.rocktonumc.org Office Hours Mon & Thurs. 9am-1pm email: RocktonUMC@gmail.com	102 W. Chapel Street Rockton, IL 61072

OCTOBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 9:30am Worship 10:30am 	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 9:30am Worship Outreach Meeting after service Girl Scouts 1:30-3:00pm	13 New Clergy Orientation (Glenview, IL) All-Day	14	15	16	17	18
19 9:30am Worship	20 4pm Trustees 5pm Finance	21 4:30 pm Ad Council	22  Newsletter articles due	23	24	25 Soup Kitchen Lunch
26 9:30am Worship Trunk or Treat Food on the 4th	27	28	29	30	31 Halloween	

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