



June 2025

THE ROCKTONIAN

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

Happening soon!!

Join us for a Church Rummage Sale Fundraiser, in coordination with the Rt 75 Stateline Garage Sales! It will take place on:

June 5, 6, & 7 from 8AM to 3PM.

We are looking for volunteers to help with set-up, manning the sale and clean-up. If you'd like to lend a hand, contact Dave Wellen or the church office. A sign up sheet will be at church as well. We look forward to your support in making this a successful fundraiser!



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One of my first memories of Rockton was getting a notification as my husband and I were driving to the airport in Denver after visiting family. Rockton was in the national news as a chemical fire was underway in our little town. We had planned to return to the parsonage when we got back into town, but since we weren't sure if the evacuation area included our new home, we spent the night at my mother's home in Huntley to be safe.

We were grateful that the damage and harm from this potentially catastrophic event was contained. I was reminded this month that as we begin to pack our household for a move this June, only four short years later, the buzz in town has been about the arrival of the settlement checks from the explosion.

I mentioned in a recent sermon that when I arrived, this congregation seemed not only tired, but *weary*. You weren't broken or disabled as much as worn out from multiple, compounded losses. The loss of your beloved sanctuary was only the beginning as major repairs were undertaken. Before you could return and celebrate those upgrades, the pandemic turned everyone's lives upside down and created more losses, including relationships, routines, and even a sense of safety.

During the months before my arrival, you had weathered those losses as well as the loss of several key lay members. You also experienced *three* pastoral transitions within three years!

As I came to know this congregation, I recognized the pain from these losses and began to honor them by naming the difficulties, which is part of the healing process and helps to rebuild strength.

Whatever awaits Rockton UMC in the future, I want you to know you are a strong, resilient church, dedicated to loving relationships and providing safe acceptance to all you encounter. Your ability to welcome and help others feel included is truly your superpower (in church language, we would say those are your spiritual gifts!)

Although I thought I might spend a few more years serving this congregation and the surrounding community, we now know that the church is entering a new chapter. I am pleased to say that our time together has been both healing and fruitful, both for the congregation and for me personally.

The teams at Rockton UMC are stronger than when I arrived. We are committed to sharing the workload and communicating with clarity and respect. We have learned to manage miscommunications and disappointments with honesty, care, and respect. We have been learning together to pay attention to where the Spirit of God is leading, and so far you have welcomed the challenge to join in God's kingdom work in your midst!

We expanded our understanding of what it means to be in ministry, both by increasing our frequency of providing meals to those in need, and also in responding to opportunities to share our building, whether it is offering bathrooms for a public event, sharing our building with local scouting troops or offering a dedicated classroom for a nonprofit to use for meetings. I am most excited about our willingness to host the Roscoe Gardening Club and their efforts to grow produce for local pantries and neighbors in need.

(Continued on page 4)

What's Up with the Building?

by John Carleton, Trustee Chair

What a difference a month can make.... Over the past few years, the incidents of roof leaks have become more frequent. Most recently they have been on the Education Wing and it seemed like every few months we were calling the roofer to come out and do some patching. We've tried to keep up with the after-leak painting but you can still see some streaks on the walls in a couple of spots where the rain came in. The roofers began to warn us that we had maybe a couple of years before things would begin to get worse as the roofs got older and it was time to get them re-done. A few years back the Conference Office on Loss Management gave us a courtesy insurance evaluation and the bottom line of that evaluation was around \$53 thousand dollars. By now inflation has probably increased that by several thousand dollars more. How will we ever pay for that?

But God has a way of providing. While it is sad that it had to come at the expense of others, the ChemTool Settlement has provided a pathway to a new roof. If you were in church last Sunday, you heard Pastor inform everyone about this. The settlement has provided more than \$33 thousand dollars. The Trustees and Ad Council agree that these funds should be a start towards getting the new roofs and it is almost a certainty that we can get one of the buildings done this year. We also hope to use some of the funds to do some of the tuck-pointing that is also sorely needed I've talked about here in previous months. If you've happened to drive by the church in the past week or so

you may have noticed panel trucks and maybe a ladder leaned up against the building somewhere. We've been seeking bids on both the roofing and the tuck-pointing and hope to start getting the bids soon. Once we have several bids, the Trustees will study them and, with advice and council from Finance and Ad Council, we hope to be able to balance things to get the most done that we can.

It doesn't take much math to show that we will be, at least, \$20 thousand dollars short (definitely a better place than before...) of doing both buildings. As Pastor commented on Sunday, if other folks who got settlements could spare some of theirs, it would help a great deal towards getting us to where we could be sure of doing both roofs. Whether it's from ChemTool or not, anything you can provide towards this project would really help. God has provided to make this do-able but, as is often the case, he needs us to step up to get things finished. Trustees hope you will consider putting something towards completing this essential project. Finally, just a minor note that the Trustees have obtained some cameras to help keep track of the building when it's unoccupied. We hope to get a couple up in the next few weeks, one of which will keep an eye on the new gardens. They're solar powered so we won't need to be putting in batteries and knowing there's eyes on the building will hopefully prevent any problems.

Sisters in Christ

by Judy Davis



Sisters in Christ will meet Tuesday June 10 at 7:00 to assemble the birthday kits for the food pantries. We thank the congregation for the donations of cake mixes, frostings, fun plates and napkins, and birthday candles. The items will all be packaged into birthday kits for children and adults who visit the food pantries. We welcome any members of the church to join us. Refreshments will be served. Any questions, please call Judy Davis. 815-624-6504.

Memorial Committee

by Nancy Bielema

The Memorial Committee has received donations and we are considering the following areas for spending those funds:

- Building upgrades/furnishings
- New ministry startup
- Audio/Visual and technology needs
- Song Leader for worship
- Something (TBD) our new pastor might need



If congregation members have any ideas or feedback, please contact one of the members listed below.

Darlene Matlock, Paul Chambers, Peggy Wellnitz, Pam Noel, Nancy Bielema

(Pastor's article continued from page 2)

I am also grateful for the ways I have grown as a leader during my time as your pastor. Rockton UMC is an easy church to love! My personal growth as a leader included coursework for a DMin (doctorate of ministry) in Adaptive Leadership, studying under the author of *Canoeing the Mountains*. I hope to graduate from Fuller

Theological Seminary next summer after completing the final writing portion of my program this summer.

I am excited for what God has in store for Rockton UMC in the months and years to come. And I am truly grateful to be leaving Rockton a healthier, stronger, more confident pastor.



Missions Update

Our soup kitchen crew got together at the Jubilee Center in Rockford on Saturday, May 24.

They served up; mostaccioli with meatballs, green beans, fruit cocktail, rolls, brownies and cookies, milk and orange juice. We also provided peanut butter sandwiches.

It was a fun afternoon of cooking, making connections and sharing our hospitality. Thank you to everyone who made it out to help!

Please join us for our next mission events:

Soup Kitchen: August 16 & Oct 25

Veterans Drop In Center Super:

Friday June 27, Friday Sept 26

***There will be a missions meeting after church on Sunday, June 8 to plan Veterans supper.**

Community Garden Update



We have crops! The community garden is officially open and filled with lots of wonderful produce. The ribbon cutting ceremony took place on Tuesday, May 13 at 10 am and we had such a nice turnout. Thank you to those who provided cookies, fresh fruit, hospitality and support during this event.

There were 2 news crews, city officials and support from church members. The Roscoe Gardening Club did a fantastic job of orchestrating the event and it went off without a hitch. Now we have to keep the produce watered and the weeds cleared out. It looks like we will have a great first year. Be sure to join us every other Friday at 10 am to help weed and check on crops.

***Our June schedule is Friday, June 6 and Friday, June 20 at 10 am.**





**Hononegah Road
Cleanup Crew**
**Thank you to all
our volunteers!!**

Photo by Judy Davis

L to R: front-Phyllis DeGraff, Barb Walsh
middle-Janet Bridgeland, Judy Davis, Dan Davis
back- Alan Bridgeland, Dennis Boschma, Vicki Boschma, Mark Lukasick,
Pastor Carolyn, Loren Floto (Donna Chambers not included in photo)



Thank you for reading!

Rockton United Methodist Church

Rev. Carolyn Lukasick, Pastor
847-271-2733 (call or text) 9am-9pm
Call 24/7 for emergencies

www.rocktonumc.org
Office Hours by appointment
email: RocktonUMC@gmail.com

102 W. Chapel Street
Rockton, IL 61072

JUNE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:30am Worship 10:30am 	2	3 5pm SPRC	4	5	6	7
8 9:30am Worship  Pentecost	9 UMCNIC Annual Conference <i>(Pastor and congregational representatives attending)</i>	10 UMCNIC Annual Conference 7pm Sisters in Christ	11 UMCNIC Annual Conference 	12	13	14
15 9:30am Worship	16 4pm Trustees 5pm Finance	17 4:30 pm Ad Council	18	19	 Newsletter articles due	21
22 9:30am Worship Food on the 4th 	23	24	25	26	 3:30—5:30pm Veteran's Drop-In Dinner	28
29 9:30am Worship	30					
Office Hours by Appointment						