



October 2026

THE ROCKTONIAN

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

"Comic" Relief



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An Unexpected Joy

This fall, I received a gift I did not ask for. It came through a preaching class I had hoped to avoid.

I was ordained in 2003 in the Korean Evangelical Church. Soon after, I became a military chaplain, and I have preached in many settings since then. However, the United Methodist Church does not fully recognize my ordination or my seminary education in Korea. To become an ordained elder in the UMC, I must complete certain courses, including one on preaching. I have continued my graduate studies over the years, but this is the first time in twenty years that I have been a seminary student. This time, the class is online.

To be honest, I did not want to take it. After two decades of writing sermons almost every week, I saw the course as a requirement and nothing more. Yet I was wrong. Within a few weeks, I realized I was enjoying every session.

The course is called "Preaching Using All the Senses." Each week we study a different way to approach a biblical passage and to present the message. One sermon may explain a text idea by idea. Another may follow the plot of a story. Another may begin with a question and reach an answer slowly. For years I had cooked with only two or three recipes. They were good recipes, but now I have a full pantry, and each

passage can suggest what it needs. Trying these forms has made me curious again, the way I was as a young preacher.

What I have enjoyed most is looking at sermon preparation from the listener's side. One of our readings points out that the order of a sermon shapes how people hear it, so arranging a sermon is also a way of caring for them. I had never thought about it quite that way. Now, as I prepare each week for our series in Luke, I picture the people in our pews and ask which path through the passage would help you most. That one question has made my Monday mornings at the desk more enjoyable than they have been in years.

This is the unexpected part. I began the course out of obligation, and it has become a pleasure. I did not expect a required class, twenty years after seminary, to renew my love for preaching.

I suspect God works this way more often than we notice. Something we would rather avoid, such as a new task or a season we did not choose, can become a source of joy. Thank you for your prayers and for listening so generously each Sunday. I hope you also find an unexpected joy this fall.

Peace,

Pastor Seong

What's Up with the Building?

by John Carleton, Trustee Chair

October 2026-

Some follow-ups from the September What's Up article. The Trustees will keep the parking lot on the agenda over the winter months but we don't plan on making a decision until early Spring. Completely redoing the surface versus having the present surface re-sealed is still part of the discussion. The determining factor, of course, is the cost. Regardless of which way we go, if any congregation member would like to make a donation towards the final decision, it would definitely help the project.

In reviewing the state of the grounds, I think all of us would have to agree that they are looking really good. The mowers, weeders and gardeners' crews have done a great job keeping things looking good this summer. As a result, the Trustees decided not to have an official "Grounds Day" this Fall. There will still probably be a weekend morning in late October or early November when a few folks will meet to rake up the leaves and generally tidy things up. Keep your ears tuned during the announcements on Sundays to hear when that might happen if you'd like to help out.

Many thanks to the Campbell family for donating a cleaning of the Fellowship Hall carpets. While the muggy weather made it difficult to dry, the carpets are looking good. The Trustees have made a note to ourselves to wait until dryer weather in the Fall or Winter to get the carpets cleaned on the lower level which doesn't ventilate as well...



Trustees are trying to put together a snow-removal crew for the winter. Crew members would shovel the walks around the church, but only the walks, as the parking lots are plowed. We'd like to get enough volunteers so we could get a rotation going and folks would only have to do it when their turn comes up. The

church does have a snow blower when needed. Crucial times would be when the walks need to be done for office hours on Thursday mornings and for Sunday Services. A Saturday snow, especially overnight, might mean the whole crew needs to meet early enough on Sunday to get them ready. Every door will have shovels just inside (unless, of course, you want to bring your favorite shovel...) as well as a salt shaker for the icier snows. Please give it thoughtful consideration as it is a crucial and timely service. If the predictions are correct, maybe El Nino will keep the need to a minimum.

Finally, the church always appreciates any donations to the building and its equipment as evidenced above. Please note, however, that anything that needs to be installed as a part of the building and it's functioning needs to be considered and approved by the Trustees before it's purchased. This way we can ensure donations will be compatible with our present facilities and plans.

Two Special Services in November



All Saints Sunday – November 1

On All Saints Sunday, we will give thanks for the people of faith who have gone before us. We will remember members of our church family and loved ones who have died, and we will give thanks to God for their lives and the ways they shaped our faith.

Veterans Appreciation Sunday – November 8

On Veterans Appreciation Sunday, we will honor the veterans in our congregation and community and thank them for their service. The Handbell Choir will also play during worship that morning. Please plan to join us for both services.

If you'll be doing anything specific on these Sundays, such as reading names, lighting candles, or asking veterans to stand, send me the details and I'll add them.



Fall Fun at Rockton UMC

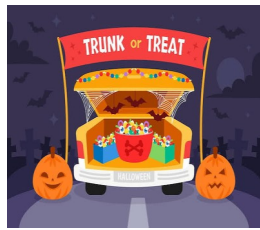
We have two fall events coming up, and everyone is welcome.

Tailgating: Bears vs. Packers

Sunday, October 11

The game begins at 12:00 pm. Whether you cheer for the Bears or the Packers, come watch the game and enjoy time together.

The church will provide hot dogs (including veggie dogs) and chips. Please bring a lawn chair and your favorite non-alcoholic drinks to share. Wear your team colors!



Trunk or Treat

Sunday, October 25, 1:00–3:00 pm

Children can go from car to car collecting treats from decorated trunks. Costumes are encouraged. If you would

like to decorate your car and hand out candy, please let Pastor Seong know.

Special Music This Fall

Our fall worship services will include two Sundays of special music.

On **Sunday, October 18**, the RUMC Choir will sing "Look at the World" by John Rutter, a well-loved anthem of thanks for God's creation. Christine Gustafson will accompany the choir.

On **Sunday, November 8**, the Handbell Choir will play in worship. The hymn they will play will be announced soon.

If you would like to ring with the Handbell Choir, please let Pastor Seong know. Practices are planned to begin on Sunday, October 18.

Please join us for both of these Sundays as we worship God through music.



Thank you for reading!

Rockton United Methodist Church

Pastor Seonghyun Choi

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102 W. Chapel Street
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OCTOBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 9:30am Worship 10:30am 	5 Nominations Committee 5pm	6 	7 SPRC Meeting 5pm	8 	9 	10
11 9:30am Worship Bears v. Packers Watch Party 12pm Girl Scouts 1:30-3:00pm	12 	13 	14 	15 	16 	17
18 9:30am Worship Special Hymn during service	19 4pm Trustees 5pm Finance	20  Newsletter articles due 4:30 pm Ad Council	21 	22 	23 	24 Soup Kitchen Lunch
25 9:30am Worship Trunk or Treat Girl Scouts 1:30-3:00pm Food on the 4th	26 	27 	28 	29 Korean Clergy Book Club 12pm	30 	31 Halloween

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