

Old Stone Church - May 2026



Welcome to May

Throughout my ministry, I have led worship at a variety of care facilities. We used to call them nursing homes. The congregations were almost entirely White. Most are in their 80s and 90s. Some people have dementia. Some are sharp as tacks. All of them are closer to glory than I am.

My father turned 89 in April. While he can't remember what he had for breakfast, he remembers things I only read about. Each time we visit, I may hear the same stories as before, but the details are there. On his birthday, I mentioned I was in Beloit. Without a pause, he said, "Home of Fairbanks Morse." I realize sometime—maybe soon—he will be gone, and I will become the elder—the one who carries the memory forward. That is what I often think about when I stand before the saints in a care facility: What do you say to people who are dying when so much else feels like it is dying too? They ask me for comfort in their own ways. Not always with words. They watch the news. They've watched it for decades. Some of them remember when it looked like this before. They lived through things I only learned in books. And now, at the end of their lives, they are watching it again. The lies told from high places are repeated until repetition passes for truth. The cruelty dressed up as strength. The vulnerable were made more vulnerable by the very people who swore to protect them. They have lived long enough to recognize—and to know what it costs when the church stays silent.

What do I say to them?

I do not say, It will be okay. I don't know that. Neither do they. We are not children and this is not a bedtime story.

I do not say, You won't have to see the worst of it. That is not comforting.

I say: God is faithful. Not everything happens for a reason.

I say: God is faithful. Which means: God does not abandon. God has never abandoned. Not in Egypt. Not in Babylon. Not in the Jim Crow South. Not in the nursing home. Not now.

I say: You have been faithful as best you can. Perhaps not doing everything right, but when you knew what was right, you did it. And with time and experience, your faith increased.

Continued —

Welcome to May - Continued:

I say: the Story is not over. You will not see the end. Neither will I. Moses did not see the Promised Land. He saw it from a distance, and then he died, and Joshua carried it forward. That is how it works. That is how it has always worked. The question is not whether we see the ending. The question is whether we are faithful in our chapter.

And then I say: You are not alone.

They need to know - we all need to know—that the communion of saints is real. That the church is not just the people in this room, or in the church, but the great cloud of witnesses. That my mother, and my grandparents, are part of that company now. That they will be too. That the story belongs to God, and God is not finished.

We are all being asked the same question right now: Will you stay faithful when you cannot see how it works? The saints in the care facility are teaching me the answer. They show up on Sunday afternoons. They sing hymns. They listen to the sermon and say Amen. They speak about their joys and concerns. They pray. And at the end of each service, they sing enthusiastically “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands.” they hold my hand with trembling fingers and say, “Thank you for coming.”

The story belongs to God, and God is not finished. They are dying. And they are faithful. I think that’s the only sermon any of us need right now. The world is asking us the same question it asks them. You do not have to see how it ends. You do not have to fix it. You must be faithful in your chapter. Show up. Stay in the room. Sing the hymn, even off—key. The God who holds the whole world in his hands is holding your part of it, too.

~~ Pastor Randy ~~



Bell Choir

The Bell Choir showcased their talent on Easter Sunday playing the Hymn, Christ is Risen, Alleluia! They are so talented and play such beautiful music. Thank you Karin Bohr for organizing and teaching our fellow members this beautiful choir!!





Crooked River Ministry

Shared Ministry



With the warm weather upon us, and staying with us the Old Stone Church and the First Congregational, United Church of Pecatonica, have teamed up to enjoy each others company during our Fellowship Sunday's which happen the last Sunday of each month. Below you will find the location, dates and times of the Fellowship Sundays. Plan to be present on these Sundays to meet congregants from our sister church. They are fellow Christ followers just like us who strive to keep their church alive..

April 26th, 2026	Old Stone	10:00 am
May 31st , 2026	Pecatonica	10:00 am
June 28th, 2026	Old Stone	10:00 am
July 26th, 2026	Hoo Haven	10:00 am
August 30th, 2026	Pecatonica	10:00 am
Sept. 27th, 2026	Picnic	10:00 am



2026 Maundy Thursday Dinner and Service

This Years Maundy Thursday Dinner and Service was held on April 2nd, 2026. What a spiritual experience to be a part of. We had 38 people come and take part in this magical night. Thank you to the Worship Support and Fellowship committees for making this a wonderful event again this year.



Spring Tea Party

Saturday May 16th, 2026 at 11:30 am

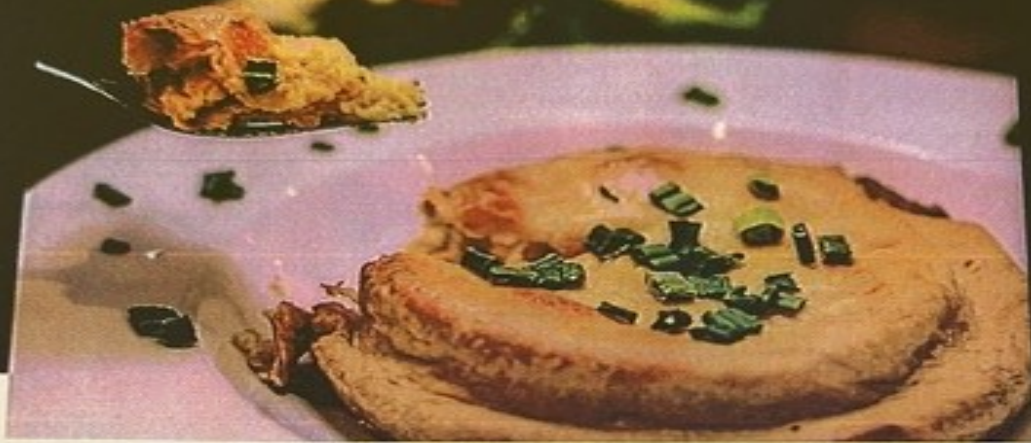
Don't be left out of the fun on **May 16th, 2026**. Join us for the 4th annual Spring Tea Party at the Old Stone Church , Rockton, IL. at 11:30 am. This years theme is The Founding Mothers with guest speaker, Laura Keyes focusing on the women who contributed to the founding of our nation. The Tea Party committee has been working hard to make this year's Tea Party a huge success. Tickets are on sale for \$20.00 each. See a committee member for a ticket or contact the church office at 815-624-6212 to purchase your ticket. There will also be gift baskets and prizes raffled off during the Tea. Last years Tea Party was a huge success. Let's make this years event even better!



Saturday May 16th 2026
11:30 am

—-Pantry News —-

The Old Stone Food Pantry is looking to restock their shelves this summer season — If you can help, the Pantry is in need of Boxed Cereal, Macaroni and Cheese, Canned Fruit, Canned Vegetables or any nonperishable food items. If you can help please bring to the church Monday—Friday mornings. All donations are greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance—



Mary's *Sunday Table*

Join us each Sunday as we partner with a local church and give back to the community. Mary's will give back 15% of sales when your church is featured—it's our way of bringing everyone to the table.

From warm apple pie to comforting lunch favorites, there's something for everyone. Bring your family, invite your friends, and make Sunday a tradition worth savoring.

SUNDAY, MAY 17TH 11AM-2PM
SUNDAY, JUNE 21ST 11AM-2PM

Mary's Market Fundraiser

Have lunch or dessert at Mary's Market , 4866 Bluestem Rd Roscoe, Il. on May 17 2026 between the hours of 11:00 am –2:00 pm and the church will receive 15% of all sales during that time. What a great way to earn some extra and enjoy a great lunch with family or friends. Hope to see you there on May 17th between 11am and 2pm.....

—Bring a Friend to Church —

With the weather turning nice and the sun shining why not ask someone to come visit our church? As church members we all can invite our friends and family to visit our church. God, invites everyone to his church and he asks us to reach out to others and invite them to come hear his words. We at the Old Stone Church have a lot to offer and we are a friendly bunch.. New faces are always welcome!!

Happy Mothers Day
May 10th 2026



May Birthdays

- 25th- David Black
- 25th- Heather Bode
- 26th- Scott Heumiller
- 27th- Jodi James



May Anniversaries



- 3rd- Mike & Julie Bailor
- 20th- Tom & Patti Christenson
- 21st- Randy & Becky Stutzel

May 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Bible Study	2 Stateline
3 Communion	4 Bells—6:00	5	6 Grief Group 10:30	7 Food Pantry 9-11	8	9
10	11 Bells—6:00	12 Council Meets 7:00	13	14 Food Pantry 9-11	15	16 Spring Tea 11:30
17 Mary's Market 11-2:00	18 Bells—6:00	19	20 Grief Group 10:30	21 Food Pantry 9-11	22	23
24	25 Memorial Day	26	27	28 Food Pantry 9-11 Woman's club	29	30
—31— Pec 10:00						

Old Stone Church
 101 E. Union St
 Rockton, IL 61072
 (815) 624-6212
 Email: oldstonechurch@oldstonechurch.net



Old Stone Church Staff:

Pastor Jim Benzing

Sheli Funk-Bright— Office Secretary

Bob Estrada: & Jack Eck— Custodians

