

December, 2019



THE IN-SPIRE

The Rutland United Methodist Church Newsletter
Pastor Shirley Oskamp

**This Sunday, December 1st: Please join us for worship at
Church of the Wildwood in Chittenden at 11:00 am
(No 9:30 service at 60 Strong's Avenue)**

Meetings and Events

This **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30**: We will be offering GIFT WRAPPING from 11 am to 3 pm at 60 Strong's Ave. This is a fundraiser. If you wish to help, or want some gifts wrapped, stop by!

Wednesday, December 11 from 1 to 4 pm: **Painting on Glass Fundraiser with Cricket's Eye Art Studio**. Join us for a fun afternoon with Cricket's Eye Art Studio at this fundraiser at 60 Strong's Ave., Rutland. \$40 includes all supplies and instruction to create a lovely gift for the holidays, (or for yourself!) Also, if you would be so kind, please bring an item for our outreach ministry, The Comfort Zone, (see the list of supplies in this In-Spire.) 20 spaces are available for this event. Contact us on Facebook, or call the Church office (802-773-2460) to arrange payment to hold your spot. We accept credit cards.

Bible Study: Wednesdays from 11:00 am to 12:00 Noon. This is a drop-in group. Come when you are able.

There will be no Leadership Team Meeting in December. The next meeting will be on Monday, January 13, 2020, and on the second Monday of each month thereafter.

Monday -Thursday 9 am to Noon: Comfort Zone Walk-In Center. Breakfast served until 11 am.

There will be no Breaking Bread meal in November or December. **January 30, 2020** will be the next Breaking Bread, and they will continue on the last Thursday of each month at 5:00 pm.

Make sure to check out the bulletin boards for new events and announcements!

Warm Words from Pastor Shirley Oskamp

Dear Friends,

In Psalm 63:1, the writer cries out, *"O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you."* Try saying this phrase over to yourself a few times. Let it sink in. *O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you.* What does it feel like, when your soul truly thirsts for God, when your longing cannot be satisfied with anything less than God?

Longing is the theme of our first Advent at Night gathering at RUMC on Sunday, December 1st beginning at 5pm. The idea is that we will break bread together as we share what longing means to us, how longing shows up in our lives.

As we gather around the table with our bowls of soup, sharing in conversation and getting to know one another in a deeper way, the hope is that we will create and become the kind of community Jesus envisioned and the early church strove to be. I think many of us long for just this kind of relationship with God and with one another.

Belonging is the theme of our second gathering on December 8th. Many of us long for a place where we belong. We long for a place where we are accepted just as we are and where we are encouraged to become the very best we can be. Come share in the conversation and the soup, and help us create the community you long for, with Christ at the center, where compassion and care are the ties that bind us to one another in a deep communion of the Spirit.

Becoming is the theme for our third supper on December 15th. Who might you become, if you could live up to God's vision of you and your dreams for yourself? Who might you become, if you truly believed yourself to be a child of God? How might we become people who nurture the space in our hearts so that Christ can be born in us?

My vision for these Advent gatherings, and, actually, for our church in all that we do, is that we will create the kind of space we long for, a place where everyone who walks in the door knows that they are welcome, a place where they belong, and where each of us challenges ourselves to grow in faith and in love so that we become God's people right here and right now, doing the work of Christ together.

Angelus Silesius, a Franciscan priest, poet and mystic famously wrote, "*Christ could be born a thousand times in Bethlehem – but all in vain until He is born in me.*" May all that we do to prepare for the birth of Christ in you and in me, and in this world that longs for God's touch.

Blessings this Christmas Season, **Shirley**

Looking Toward Advent & Christmas

Sunday, December 1st – We will be worshipping with our sister church up in Chittenden at 11:00am this first Sunday in Advent. **There will not be a 9:30 am service this morning at 60 Strongs Avenue**, but there *will be* an evening service at 5:00 pm (see below for details.) *If you would like to carpool to Wildwood, please come to 60 Strongs by 10:15 am.*

We will be decorating the Church on December 1, 2019 at 3:00 pm. Many hands are needed!

Dinner Church – Advent at Night services on will be held on Sunday evenings on December 1, 8 & 15. We will gather in the Rutland UMC at Strongs Avenue. Beginning at 5pm, we will share a simple meal, read scripture and discuss its meaning for our lives. Dinner church has its origins way back in Acts 2 where the early Christians gathered in one another's homes and "broke bread together with glad and generous hearts". We envision these gatherings as wonderful opportunities to invite friends and neighbors to come and dip a toe in the water of Christian fellowship.

Blue Christmas – Saturday, December 21st at 5:30 pm we gather at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church for a special service of remembrance. We come together to honor our grief and to seek out glimpses of light, in what can be a difficult time of the year for those of us who have experienced loss.

Christmas Eve – Tuesday, December 24th we gather for worship at 6:30 pm at RUMC with candlelight and carols, and the familiar, beloved tale of Jesus' birth.

Church of the Wildwood's Christmas Eve Service will be held at 8:30pm up in Chittenden, and you are welcome there if that timing works better for you.

Comfort Zone

Comfort Zone continues to be busy! We served 289 people during November, and gave out 46 items, including jackets and sleeping bags.

News and Notes

Angel Tree will begin on Sunday, December 8, 2019. Twenty gifts are needed for five families. Pick a tag from the tree on December 8th, and the gift should be back by December 15th. For more information, contact Dianne Anderson (775-4923) who is coordinating this ministry.

R.S.V.P. Operation Dolls & More Open House – Thursday, December 5, 2019 from 12 pm until 4 pm at Trinity Church, 85 West Street, Rutland.

The 20th annual Homeless Prevention Center Candlelight Vigil – Friday, December 20, 2019 at 5:00 pm at Depot Park.

Inspiration for your Daily Walk of Faith – *Our Daily Bread* and *The Upper Room* each offer a Scripture verse and a reflection for the day. Feel free to take one or both.

Chocolate Fest Update

Chocolate Fest proceeds checks will be presented at the December Project VISION meeting on **Thursday, December 12, 2019 at Noon at Alliance Community Fellowship**, 1 Scale Ave., Rutland (at the Howe Center). Please join us as we give back, and celebrate all of the hard work and contributions by our Church family and members of the community.

Friends of Asylum Seekers Team At Grace Congregational UCC

Grace Church reports that its immigration study group offered by the Spiritual Growth Committee has become a working group of members of Grace, other faith communities, and partners from other community organizations. They ask that we share this information with the family here at RUMC:

At our last meeting we adopted the name FAST: Friends of Asylum Seekers Team and committed to seriously pursuing bringing a couple of asylum-seeking families to Rutland. At that meeting we looked at our strengths and resources, our challenges and barriers, and how to use what we already have to overcome the bumps and seek new support. We invite YOU to come to our next meeting: a potluck lunch on December 1, at noon in the Youth Center. The 12:00 time is to accommodate members of the group from other faith communities and organizations. At that gathering we will have reports back on legal questions, tax exempt questions, housing questions and support from our partners. This is an exciting venture that includes all of Rutland – we will need many volunteers and much brainpower.

We look forward to sharing time with you! If you have questions, call Ellen Green at 438-0010.

Supplies Needed!

For Comfort Zone, Breaking Bread and General Church Use:

Butter	Syrup	Half & Half
Sugar	Juice	Bacon
Napkins	Ziploc bags (gallon)	Regular & decaf coffee
Paper towels	Toilet paper	Granola bars
Heavy-weight socks	Warm gloves	Foil blankets
Combs	Wash cloths	Granola bars
Hand & foot warmers	Toothbrushes	Travel-sized mouthwash

Facts and Figures

Attendance in November:

November 3: 59	November 10: 55
November 17: 46	November 24: 51

FINANCES

Estimated Monthly Income: \$8,300

Estimated Monthly Expenses: \$14,300

Shortfall: \$6,000 per month – *May we all prayerfully consider ways of lessening this shortfall.*

Actual Income for November: \$ 7,926

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

7	Judy Wood	3	Steve Dotson
8	Ericka Wakker	7	Phyllis White
9	Kevin Stone	8	Ralph Perry
11	Mark Allen	9	Dottie Lafountain
12	Lori McVeigh	10	Ava Clair Moran
15	Cathy Fleming	11	Edmund Hemmer
16	Julia Reynolds	13	Roberta Hemmer
18	Lexi Moore		Emily Long
19	Carol Marold	28	Stephanie McMahon
	Ann Reed	31	Marsha Johnson
	McKenzie Barnes		
	Alec Barnes		
20	Glenda O'Connor		
21	Mike Gauthier		
24	Terry O'Connor		
30	Dori & Al Lyon ♥		
31	Kathryn & Tom Shanahan ♥		

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Office Hours: Monday – Thursday: 9:00 am to 2:00 pm