

August, 2021



## THE IN-SPIRE

The Rutland United Methodist Church Newsletter

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### **In-person Worship at 60 Strongs Avenue at 9:30 am**

*Services will also be livestreamed on RUMC's Facebook page*

### **Zoom Fellowship at 9:00 am**

*Link will be emailed to you with the bulletin.*

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### **Warm Words from Pastor Shirley Oskamp**

*All my road is before me, but  
All familiar paths lie far behind me.  
My map's here in my hand,  
but I have ventured past its tattered edges.*

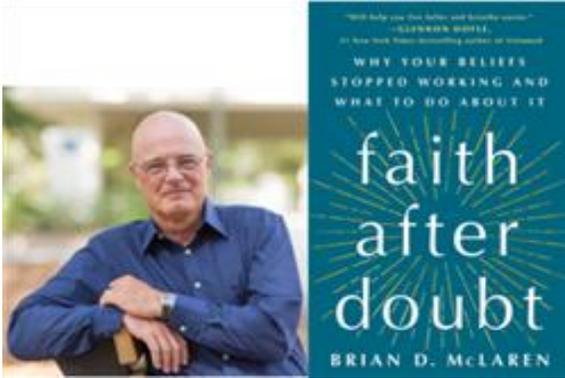
These words were written by Brian McLaren, and appear in his new book, Faith After Doubt. They reflect the feeling we can get when we venture into uncharted territory; not only into places where our GPS doesn't work, but places of the heart where we feel lost and confused.

For many of us, it is not acceptable to have doubts about anything to do with faith. We imagine that questioning matters of faith is somehow wrong, a sign of weakness. Because this is ingrained in us, when we do find ourselves with doubts or difficult questions, we don't feel comfortable bringing them up.

But what if our faith is actually strengthened by opening our minds to allow for questions? What if our relationship with God grows deeper not only when we feel solid and grounded in our faith, but also when we struggle, when we experience pain and doubt? What if our relationship with God is strengthened when we have the courage to ask and pursue answers to our honest questions?

Take a look at many of the Psalms or peruse the Book of Lamentations and you will find the words of others who have faced deep and difficult challenges in their lives of faith. Life's challenges can threaten the foundations on which we stand and cause us to ask if God has abandoned us. However, the reality reflected in these scriptures is that God walks with us in the challenging experiences of our lives. God is with us in the midst of our doubts. When our heart guides us into uncharted territory, we are not on our own. When we get to the edge of the map, the next step is often into the territory of faith. Let's go there together.

**Blessings,**  
*Pastor Shirley*



At the 2021 New England Annual Conference, Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar recommended that we read Brian McLaren's latest book, *Faith after Doubt: Why Your Beliefs Stopped Working and What To Do About It*. There will be 4 live book discussions with McLaren this fall on Mondays Sept. 13, 20, 27, and Oct 4 at 8:00 p.m. All are welcome to read the book and participate in these sessions.

## **Report from Annual Conference**

2021 New England Annual Conference (NEAC) was held via zoom June 10 – 12 with Bishop Devadhar presiding. Although it was not the same as attending in person the music, worship and keynote speakers were most inspiring. While many items of Conference business were addressed, there are three items I'd like to report on.

1. The 2022 Mission Share Apportionments for churches was reduced by \$175,000, thus lowering the amount we will be assessed in the next year.
2. Three very emotional resolutions were presented and ultimately approved, allowing for the disaffiliation of three Maine churches from the NEAC of the United Methodist Church and ending their connectional relationship with THE United Methodist Church. The reasons were in regard to the Book of Discipline's social justice issues, specifically those related to the LGBTQ community and their desire to be more supportive of this community.
3. The NEAC authorized the creation of a Vision Forward Team to join the delegation to the 2022 General Church Conference scheduled for August of 2022. This delegation consists of eight voting members made up of clergy/laity – five previously elected delegates and three newly appointed clergy/laity with the Bishop, Dean of the Cabinet and Director of Connectional Ministries as ex officio, non-voting members.

There is a statement of lament from this delegation to the jurisdictional and general conferences which is posted on the website and in the conference journal. To quote a portion of this letter, "The truth is our God is bigger than our issues of classism, ageism, racism, heterosexism, ableism and sexism. God is the God of the immigrant as well as the resident. God loves ALL creation and demands we take action in healing our earth. God's message is not only for those who agree with us but also for those who disagree. It is in these intersections that we find ourselves today".

It is important for us to know that there are controversial issues being addressed at these conferences next year that may impact the United Methodist Church as we know it. This delegation is working hard and responsibly, conducting many conversations and consultations in preparation for attending these conferences in order to speak to the vision and desires of our NEAC.

As we approach the General Church Conference in 2022, we will be kept informed as to how we move forward with the hope of healing. May we not lose any more churches as those in Maine and may we find a way to live together in peace and tranquility.

*Roberta Fillioe*  
*Lay Member to Annual Conference*

## Congratulations to Scholarship Recipients

We offer congratulations to the following recipients of Scholarship awards from the Francis & Edwina Clarke Trust:

**Brayden Moore** will be in his third year at New York University, majoring in Business (Data Science & Statistics). He is the son of Don and Lexi Moore.

**Madelyn Smith** will be in her senior year at American University, majoring in Psychology. She is the daughter of Dawn Smith.

Congratulation and best wishes!

## Resource Day

On Saturday, September 25, Green Mountain District will be hosting a Resource Event: **Food Ministry in our Communities**. This will run from 9 am to Noon via Zoom. Guest presenter will be Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Mae Magill, author of *Five Loaves, Two Fish, Twelve Volunteers*. Our Outreach Coordinator, Linda Allen, and Comfort Zone Coordinator, Marsha Johnson, will also be doing a presentation on Comfort Zone meals, warming and cooling center, and street outreach. More info will follow.

## Spotlight on our Volunteers

Rutland UMC is very grateful for the many volunteers who keep the Comfort Zone, Breaking Bread and Faith on Foot going! This month we feature **DIANE SHARROW**.

Diane and her husband, Scott, have been involved in Rutland UMC for over twenty-five years. They came here after the Church in Pittsford closed and have been very comfortable here. She has been active on several different committees, and has been a member of the Joy Choir from the beginning.

She is involved in all three of our outreach ministries: Comfort Zone, Faith on Foot and Breaking Bread. For Comfort Zone, Diane helps prepare the food and gives it out to the guests.

Faith on Foot caught Diane's eye because she was interested in walking around the city to meet folks. She began the weekly program with Pastor Hannah and Pastor John (Longworth), and liked it so much that she stayed with it, meeting with homeless and others, handing out hygiene kits, cards with helpful phone numbers, passing the word around about a free meal at Comfort Zone.

"It is a really great ministry, and helps you see things differently when you are out there. You get to know people on a different level and give them information so they can get help."

Diane enjoys doing outreach ministry, she likes to do for others, and describes herself as a nurturer. Retirement has allowed her the time to help as often as she wants to, and it makes her feel good to help in any way that she can!

Thank you, Diane, for your selfless service to the Lord!



Diane Sharrow prepares coffee at the Comfort Zone

### **Stewardship & Finances**

Thank you for your continued faithful stewardship to RUMC. You make our ministry possible by financially supporting our staff as well as all of the outreach we do as Christ's hands in this community.

Donations can be made by mail, in person, through Facebook, or by credit card Call Assistant Treasurer Kristen Jarvi (438-9805) or Lori in the office (773-2460).

Stewardship is more than finances, so we are deeply grateful for your prayers, the work of your hands, and your presence during worship and more. **In order to make our budget, an average of \$8,600 monthly** needs to be received in offerings and donations. Here are the offerings and donations for July:

|                         |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| July 4                  | 3,175           |
| July 11                 | 2,055           |
| July 18                 | 839             |
| July 25                 | 595             |
| Facebook donations July | 705             |
|                         | <b>\$ 7,369</b> |

## Outreach

What's happening in ministry this month -

Comfort Zone has seen an increase in numbers in the past 30 days. We have been serving, on a regular basis, between 60 and 85 breakfasts per day, and about 35 to 40 lunches per day. The Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday lunches are provided by The Everyone Eats program and all other meals are provided by our church, with the help of an amazing group of very hardworking volunteers.

This month we face an extra challenge because so many of our helpers are taking a well-earned break to go on vacation or to attend to health issues. If anyone is interested in volunteering, let Marsha or Linda know.

Keep praying for the grants that we have applied for to come through. We need a larger refrigerator and freezer, and help paying for some of the CZ expenses. The two grants applied for would address all of those needs.

Pastor John Longworth is looking for volunteers to meet at our church and help to put together hygiene bags. If anyone is interested in helping, give him a call at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. Phone number is 802-773-9659.

**Linda Allen**  
Outreach Coordinator

### August & September Birthdays & Anniversaries

| <b>AUGUST</b> |                                  | <b>SEPTEMBER</b> |                         |
|---------------|----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| 3             | Debbie Stone                     | 1                | Karen & Chris Cartier ♥ |
|               | Fay Tucker                       | 3                | Daphne Hemmer           |
| 5             | Robert Colomb, Jr.               |                  | Craig & Joan Cota ♥     |
| 7             | Ed & Daphne Hemmer ♥             | 10               | Alan Betts              |
|               | Trudy Billings                   | 11               | Elyvian Abuel           |
| 11            | Ed & Peggy Hackett ♥             | 14               | Elijah Abuel            |
|               | Marge Davis                      | 16               | Scott Tucker            |
| 18            | Hannah Sotak                     |                  | Thelma "Teddy" Murphy   |
|               | Scott & Diane Sharrow ♥          | 17               | Karen James             |
|               | Blanche Kelley                   | 23               | Mike Estey              |
|               | Peter Colomb, Sr.                | 24               | Edith Partridge         |
| 19            | Marilyn Watson                   | 26               | Mary Barnes             |
| 20            | Gary Lindorff & Shirley Oskamp ♥ | 27               | Scott McVeigh           |
| 22            | John & Dianne Anderson ♥         |                  | Lynn Gee                |
|               | Peggy Hackett                    | 28               | Malia Madison Allen     |
| 25            | Evan Drake                       |                  | Andrew McMahon          |
| 26            | Danielle Wakker Yango            |                  |                         |
| 28            | Kristen Jarvi                    |                  |                         |
| 30            | Peter and Stacy Colomb           |                  |                         |

## **Supplies Needed for the Church**

**Call first to make sure we can meet you.**

**Please put your name on the items so that we can thank you!!**

| <b>For the Food Shelf:</b>                                     | <b>For CZ meals:</b>               |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Jelly  | Ziplock bags (all sizes)           |
| Cereal   | Napkins                            |
| Shelf stable milk  | Frozen sausage links               |
| Microwaveable complete meals                                   | Granola bars                       |
| 64-oz. & larger juice bottles                                  | Chips, cookies, fruit snacks, etc. |
| Canned chicken breast  | Unscented medium trash bags        |
| Crackers   | Pancake syrup                      |
| Bags with handles  | Juice boxes                        |
| For general Church use: Scotch tape, a few reams of copy paper |                                    |

## **As we reopen for in-person worship...**

We are glad to be joining in worship online and in person at 60 Strongs, but recognize that doing so is not without risk, particularly to the vulnerable folks in our midst. As a way of reducing risks, we ask that anyone who has not been vaccinated please wear a mask and sit on the left side as you enter the doors where air exchange is better.

Congregational singing and speaking, while allowed by the CDC, are not recommended by The Ecumenical Consultation on Protocols for Worship, Fellowship and Sacraments. We request that you use restraint in these activities and hum or mouth the words rather than singing or speaking aloud. For more info: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DhfgclYRUomeWApWtRGPr\\_tZJ4pe5ew6/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DhfgclYRUomeWApWtRGPr_tZJ4pe5ew6/view)

***We are grateful for your expressions of care for one another in these and so many other ways.***

## **Bible Study**

**BIBLE STUDY** meets on Tuesdays at 1:00m at the home of Bobbie Fillioe and via ZOOM. Join us as we read and discuss the scriptures for the upcoming Sunday. Contact Pastor Shirley for additional information.

Rutland United Methodist Church, 60 Strongs Avenue, Rutland, Vermont 05701  
802.773.2460 - Fax: 802.773-8491

Email: [rutlandumc@aol.com](mailto:rutlandumc@aol.com) - Website: [rutlandumc.com](http://rutlandumc.com)

Facebook: Rutland United Methodist Church

YouTube for past sermons: Rutland United Methodist Church

Contact Pastor Shirley Oskamp for any pastoral emergencies at 802-779-7146