



June, 2021

The Rutland United Methodist Church Newsletter

In-person Worship will be held (weather permitting) at the home of Kristen Jarvi each Sunday during June and July. These services will also be livestreamed on Facebook at 9:30 am. Contact the Church for details.

Warm Words from Pastor Shirley Oskamp

Dear Friends,

The Dalai Lama was once asked what prayer he turned to when he was tempted to judge someone. This man, known for his wise teachings about compassion said that he found it helpful to remind himself of this simple truth: *"Just like you, I want to be happy. Just like you I want to be free of suffering."* He said he would repeat this phrase to himself whenever he started to get agitated with someone. Finding the places of shared experience is valuable and it is important. It reminds us that in the heart, we are more alike than we are different.

In one of my very first classes in seminary, my professor, Dr. Peggy Way told us that the most important job of the church was to help people learn how to *stand* each other. I was taken aback that she was not talking about *loving* each other, but rather learning how to simply get along. She said Christian teaching was clear, that we needed to love one another, but that we often found it difficult to like each other. To her, it was important that we own up to this truth and work to overcome it, so that our differences did not divide us or keep us from being the church.

Now, some 30 years later, I understand the wisdom of Dr. Way's assertion. We don't always understand one another's way of seeing things. This is true of the church and of the world in general. Often this means that we don't know how to talk with each other about things that matter to us. We neglect "going deep", and have a difficult time engaging in conversations about where and how our faith intersects with our lives.

Somehow, we imagine that if we come from different backgrounds, we should not talk about how our faith informs the rest of our lives. But the truth is that we have quite a bit in common with people of different faiths. At the heart of this similarity is the fact that we bring a spiritual perspective to bear on our lives. This is true no matter what faith tradition we ascribe to. Our spirituality is a positive part of who we are and how we function in the world. It is also one of the things that unifies us with one another across all kinds of divides.

So, the next time you find yourself in conversation with someone who sees things differently than you, whether because of their faith tradition, political leanings or something else, I encourage you to remember the phrase that the Dalai Lama finds helpful. *"Just like you, I want to be happy. Just like you I want to be free of suffering."*

May this be our prayer for ourselves and may we offer it to every person we encounter. I believe there is blessing in it for all of us, and for this world too.

In the Love of Christ, **Pastor Shirley**

Spotlight on our Volunteers

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

Marsha (Belden) Johnson has been connected with RUMC for many years. As a matter of fact, she was baptized in the Church as an infant! She attended Sunday School and went through Confirmation. Marsha married the late Stephen Johnson in 1983, and their daughter, Stephanie, was also baptized and brought up in RUMC. Stephanie was also married in the sanctuary at 71 Williams Street!

Marsha has enjoyed serving as Sunday School Co-Superintendent with Linda Allen for many years, and has a particular fondness for teaching the children Christian Education.

When we moved to 60 Strongs Avenue, she came up with the concept of the “Comfort Zone” once she saw that the new location was “right in the middle of everything in the City.” The idea behind it was to welcome visitors who may be homeless or lonely, or just looking for a place to relax for a bit. With heat in the Winter and air conditioning in the Summer, this would allow folks to avoid the elements and be comfortable for a few hours a day. Comfort Zone offered guests a beverage and snack, books, newspapers, games, use of the telephone and restroom, and most importantly, the opportunity to develop relationships.

As the staff realized that most folks were food insecure, and that a coffee and snack wouldn’t suffice, they began preparing hot breakfasts for up to 20 people each morning, Monday through Thursday. Once the pandemic forced closing of the Church building to the public, Comfort Zone volunteers sprang into action and began providing “take out” breakfasts. These were eventually augmented with lunches from the Vermont Everyone Eats program, thus providing two good meals a day for up to 60 visitors.

Marsha’s hopes and dreams for the Comfort Zone are that we can get back inside to serve breakfast, and continue to serve “to go” meals. She misses interacting with the guests and following through with the original intention of the Comfort Zone – to create a relational ministry with members of the Rutland community.



Marsha Johnson busy cooking in the new kitchen at RUMC.

Bridge to Rutland

Bridge to Rutland (B2R) is a group of Rutland County residents working to bring asylum-seekers to Vermont and to support them once they're here. Asylum is a protection granted to a foreigner already living in the United States or a person arriving at the border who is unable to safely return to their home country because of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

Ellen Green, B2R's Executive Director, informs us that they are expecting a family (a mother, father and 8-month-old baby) and a single man to arrive in Rutland this week!

Consequently, they are in need of help! Firstly, cash donations would be most appreciated.

Checks can be payable to:

Bridge to Rutland (or B2R)
c/o Grace Cong. UCC
8 Court Street
Rutland, VT 05701

In addition to cash, they hope to find someone willing to drive these folks to appointments, someone who speaks Spanish to act as an interpreter, baby items, and clothing. They are also looking for a host who is willing to welcome them into their home for 3 months as they settle into the area. Ellen's number is 779-4217 for more information.

Outreach

This month, the number of requests for food has grown, with lots of cereal, milk, and other shelf stable items going to families and individuals daily. Marsha met with an older couple who were hungry, and she provided them with easily prepped food. They are living in their car and can't cook anything. On a weekly basis, someone who has never visited before finds us, and the church gets many thanks for our help.

A few weeks ago, we spoke with about 16 individuals to get their opinion about the *Everyone Eats* program that provides lunch/dinner from local restaurants to find out how people felt about the program. In the process, we heard a lot about the food we give out and how important it is to families. Two men told us that they are so grateful for the meals, and that they were reliant on the breakfasts and lunches to get through the week. A young couple let us know that they were so grateful for the food provided and they look forward to picking up something warm in the morning.

This month, we were able to help a young mom who has been trying to get a job but has a vision problem and does not have the funds to afford glasses. We teamed up with Troll House to purchase glasses for her. We purchased gas for a couple living in their car, and I talked with them about their plans, about food stamps, and what their needs are. We purchased orthopedic sneakers for a person who awaits surgery on her feet.

I expect to see much more need as the state stops funding stays at the local motels.

Thank you to all for helping all of these people, by your financial support and by your concern and care for our neighbors in need.

Linda Allen
Outreach Coordinator

Comfort Zone

The Bread Loaf Mountain Zen Community who has been supplying the breakfast burritos for Thursday breakfasts, have discontinued taking part in our breakfast program. They will be involved in a similar program in their hometown of Middlebury. We would like to thank them for their participation in Comfort Zone over the past year, and wish them well in their future endeavors.

We have returned to making the breakfasts for Thursdays, and will be in need of more volunteers to cover Thursdays and for volunteers' vacations. If you can help, please contact Linda Allen or me.

Marsha Johnson
Comfort Zone Coordinator



Comfort Zone volunteers packing up breakfasts

Sunday School

It's hard to believe that Sunday School is at the end of the year. The last day of Sunday School will be June 13th and will be during the Church service at the home of Kristen Jarvi. We will have a year-end celebration with the children. Hopefully they will all be able to attend.

We will be looking forward to the children returning in September, to in-Church Sunday School. Happy Summer to all!

Marsha Johnson

Virtual Bible Study

Bible Study meets on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm at the home of Bobbi Fillioe and via ZOOM.

Here is the Zoom info:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85438229806?pwd=bzlBMU5zNmNNMzJ6dlllQmVpUzhQZz09>. To join by phone: dial 1.646.558.8656 then Meeting ID: 854 3822 9806 and enter the passcode: 178551.

Stewardship & Finances

Thank you for your continued faithful stewardship. 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. 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. Thank you for your generosity in all forms. **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 May:

May 9	2,945
May 16	445
May 23	1,230
May 30	812
Facebook donations May	465
	\$ 5,897

Birthdays & Anniversaries

	JUNE			JULY
1	Sara Reynolds		2	Allyson Stoodley
3	Chris & Terry O'Connor ♥		7	Don & Lexi Moore
4	Saylor Somers		8	Linda Allen
4	Gail Moore		9	Dave & Dottie LaFountain ♥
5	Shawn Abuel		10	Christopher Whitney
6	John Anderson		11	Pam Allen
9	Paul Whitney		11	Lorraine Dotson
10	Peg Manney		12	Caydence Lafond
10	Michaela O'Connor		15	Vikki Colomb
11	Chris O'Connor		16	Edward Hackett
14	Susana Abuel		18	Katelyn O'Connor
15	Sam Groom, III		18	Jackie Gauthier
19	David Lafountain		22	Joan Cota
19	Cathy Archer		26	Kevin & Debbie Stone
20	Erika Mead		27	Don Moore
21	Judy Blair		27	Catherine Ricketts
21	Jack & Linda Mackin ♥			
21	Mike & Jackie Gauthier ♥			
21	Scott & Linda Kuiken ♥			
22	Diane Fleur			
22	Kayla Siliski			
23	Penny Ford			
29	Steve & Peg Manney ♥			
30	Paul & Sharon Whitney ♥			

Supplies Needed for the Church

Call first, and if the front door is locked, ring the bell. Best time to drop by is 11 am to noon. Please put your name on the items so that we can thank you!!

FOR COMFORT ZONE & FOOD SHELF	
Oatmeal (individual packets)	Saltines
Cheez It	Honey Nut Cheerios
Cereal with fruit added	Shelf-stable milk
32-oz. juice	Pancake syrup
Ritz crackers	Vinyl gloves
Large reusable bags	Paper towels
Scotch tape	Bottled water (small bottles)
Quart/Sandwich/Snack bags	Baked Beans
The office could use a few reams of photocopy paper	

Rutland United Methodist Church

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Facebook: Rutland United Methodist Church



Ann Reed, Ellen Wakker and Carl Wener providing beautiful music and sound, while Pastor Shirley reflects on the pleasant day for outdoor worship.