



March, 2021

THE IN-SPIRE

The Rutland United Methodist Church Newsletter

**Join us on Zoom and Facebook for Worship
each Sunday at 9:30 am, Fellowship at 9:00 am**

*We will email or mail the link to you with the bulletin.
The ZOOM Worship & Fellowship link does not change;
once you have saved it, you can use it each week.*

Warm Words from Pastor Shirley Oskamp

Dear Friends,

How is the amazing grace of God changing your heart, your life, and your relationship with other people? This is a pretty powerful question and most likely one we don't ask ourselves all that much. I encourage you to sit with the question for a little while, let it sink in as you consider how God has touched your life this week, this month, this year.

This question is at the heart of what early Methodists called *The Class Meeting*, a weekly small group gathering that lay at the center of congregational life. This small group was where your faith found expression as you shared it with friends around the circle, supporting one another as your relationship with God grew in maturity and depth. Attending Class Meeting was considered to be as important as coming to church on Sunday morning.

The class meeting is different from educational groups such as Sunday School and Bible Study, which focus on teaching and learning information. The Class Meeting invites each of us to share our faith experience, encouraging us to talk about how our relationship with God is going in that particular week. As people get to know each other, they share the ups and downs of everyday life, offering support, encouragement and prayer. They also help one another put their faith into action in ways that flow from their particular gifts, and helps each be a disciple of Christ in his or her own unique way.

As a part of their Lay Leadership training, Linda Allen, Lori McVeigh, Diane Sharrow and Ellen Wakker are currently learning about Class Meetings. Seeing how beneficial these groups can be to individual members and to the life of the church as a whole, we have been talking about starting them at RUMC. If you are interested in learning more, please reach out to them, or to me. Let's dream about how to grow in faith together! Meanwhile, I encourage you to consider how God's amazing grace is showing up in your life.

Blessings,
Pastor Shirley

Worship Liturgists

It is so nice to hear a diversity of voices serving as liturgist for our Sunday worship services. If you are interested in reading the scripture and other parts of the service one week, please reach out to Lori or Shirley. We film at the Church on Wednesday afternoons, but can film you at a time that is convenient to you, or you can film yourself at home.

Holy Week & Easter

Palm Sunday falls on on March 28th this year, followed by Maundy Thursday on April 1st and Good Friday on April 2nd. Easter will be celebrated on Sunday, April 4th. We will send out information about the variety of ways we will be commemorating these special days in the life of our Church as our plans solidify.

Valentine Cookies

Valentine cookies were delivered to many members of our Church family, generating a whole lot of joy! Many thanks to the creative hands of many bakers, and to Nancy Hodgson who organized this offering of love. Happy Valentine's to all!

*May God's love brighten your day when everything feels difficult,
May God's love encourage you when you are feeling down,
May God's love strengthen you when you are feeling weak,
May God's love be with you always, with love from your church family.*

United Methodist Higher Education Foundation Extends Application Deadline to March 19!

The last 12 months has been a year like no other. Students have been impacted in many unexpected and unseen ways. In light of these challenges, we've heard from many students requesting a little more time to complete their applications.

We have decided to extend the application deadline for United Methodist Higher Education Foundation scholarships to Friday, March 19.

For more information: <https://www.umhef.org/apply/>

Virtual Bible Study

Bible Study meets on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm 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 then enter the passcode: 178551.

Comfort Zone

We are passing out between 30 to 40 meals daily at the beginning of the month, and it goes up to 50 to 60 meals daily by the end of the month. We are also, once again, receiving 28 lunch meals from the Everyone Eats Program three days a week!

Because we aren't doing Breaking Bread meals at this time, we are making lunch to give out with breakfasts on Mondays. We have received many donations of money, food and supplies that are very much appreciated, and they help us to keep going.

Marsha Johnson
Comfort Zone Coordinator

Outreach

This month the Emergency fund has come in handy, providing a 2-night stay during some really cold weather. We also provided gas for someone with medical issues, needing gas. She was totally out of gas and had to get to her doctor's office the next day. We also provided some food and clothing for her since finances are really tight. She was very grateful to the church and thanked us many times.

In February, we gave out lots of items, including 8 jackets, 2 pair of boots, 13 articles of clothing, and 8 pair of socks. Our food shelf was busy too. We gave out 107 items including lots of canned soup, stew, canned chili, tuna and chicken and shelf stable milk.

Funds for missions

This past month, Pastor John Longworth presented us with a check for \$7000.00 to help fund Comfort Zone, and to help cover ministry expenses! This is going a long way toward keeping the program going. We are also working on several small grants, one from *Vermont Foodbank*, and one from *Thrivent Insurance*, to help fund the food bank and the Comfort Zone breakfast.



We have also been chosen again to receive funds from *Hannaford's* 'Fight Hunger' program. For every one of these special reusable bags purchased, the church receives a dollar to help fund Breaking Bread. During the month of April, make sure to purchase any specially marked reusable bags at Hannaford!

And as always many of you have given items to keep the church running and to stock our food shelf and feed the hungry visitors that come our way.

Thanks to all who support the programs with pray, monetary donations and food and supplies. We couldn't do it without all of you!

Linda Allen
Outreach Coordinator

Sunday School

It's hard to believe that we're coming into Spring again and are still fighting the pandemic. I'm looking forward to the time when I can once again have the children gather in person.

I am delivering lessons about Lent and the events leading up to Easter. One of the little boys told me he really likes the crafts. The crafts are all geared to the theme of the lesson. Last week's lesson was "The Legend of the Lenten Pretzel." Did you know that the pretzel was first created by a Monk and was made to represent children praying? At that time, children prayed by crossing their arms across their chest.

Happy Spring!

Marsha Johnson

Sunday School Co-Superintendent

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 simple 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 February:

February 7	1,812
February 14	1,527
February 21	405
February 28	1,400
Facebook donations January	465
Facebook donations February	25
	\$ 5,634

Supplies Needed for the Church

Call first, and if the front door is locked, ring the bell.

The 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	
#8 Lunch bags	Hearty soups
Sugar packets	Canned chicken
Canned stew	Crackers (Ritz type)
Canned chili	Latex/vinyl gloves: M or XL
Ziploc bags: snack, sandwich and gallon sizes	

March & April Birthdays and Anniversaries

1	Richard Fales, Jr.	2	Jan Senecal
3	Kristina Pettis	4	Brenda Lear
4	Gary Archer	5	Marsha Johnson
6	Ashley McVeigh Somers		Katie Gauthier
	Laura Lafond	11	Arianna Allen
11	Sharon Crosby	13	Sarah Gee
14	Sue Smith	14	Linda Kuiken
20	Scott Kuiken	15	Cee Cee Hall
	Brayden Moore		Nancy Hodgson
26	Brody Scott Somers	17	Alan Betts & Karen James ♥
29	Ely & Susana Abuel ♥	21	Jackie Bartenstein
			Scott & Lori McVeigh ♥
		22	Bobbie Fillioe
	Comfort Zone: 3 years!	24	Lydia May Reynolds



Marsha Johnson, Linda Allen & Lori McVeigh

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