

The Weathervane



RAYMOND VILLAGE COMMUNITY CHURCH, United Church of Christ Newsletter

December, 2022

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From the Pastor . . .

Dear RVCC Members and Friends,

We are in the season of Advent. Despite all the glitter and glamor in stores, despite being inundated by Christmas messages on television and Facebook, despite the decorations and lights that are beginning to appear on the landscape, it is not Christmas time. It is Advent.

So, what is Advent? Advent is the season of the Christian year that prepares for Christmas. It lasts for about four weeks, beginning four Sundays before Christmas and ending on Christmas Eve. "So, Advent overlaps with what is usually thought of in American culture as the Christmas season. But its beginning and end are well defined, and its themes are quite different from what is commonly associated with secular Christmas celebrations.

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/markdroberts/series/introduction-to-advent/>. Accessed Nov.14, 2022

The word advent is Latin for "coming ". It is that time of year when we look to the coming of a child, the birth of a tiny baby in the little town of Bethlehem. It also signifies looking for the second coming of Christ, when Jesus will return to the earth. In clouds of glory. The most popular traditions of Advent are the Advent calendar and the Advent wreath.

I always look forward to the lighting of the Advent wreath during this season. A reminder of the hope, the peace, the joy, and the love of this season. A reminder that God's promises are always fulfilled – in God's time and in God's unexpected ways.

During this Advent season, let each one of us prepare for the birth and rebirth of the love sent down at Christmas.

Since we don't have a Weathervane edition for January, let's jump ahead to a New Year resolution adapted from a prayer from the World Healing Organization (Blackpool, England):

For attractive lips, I will speak words of kindness.

For beautiful eyes, I will look for the good in others

Continued next page . . .

The Weathervane is published monthly for distribution at the first of each month. Articles may be submitted as paper copy, electronically via disk or email by the 15th of each month preceding the issue for it to be included in. Computer files should be submitted as MSWord (.doc) or rich text format (.rtf). If you have any questions contact Debbie Feagans or Judy Munson. Articles can be dropped off at the church office, mailed or emailed to: Raymond Village Community Church, PO Box 285, Raymond, ME 04071- office@rvccme.org or to Judy Munson, 23 Lawn Ave., Gorham, ME 04038 – cmmunson24@yahoo.com – Thank you for reading our newsletter!

December and January at RVCC . . .

December 4, 2022-	10:00 a.m. – Worship – Communion Sunday
December 6, 2022-	5:00 p.m. – Council Meeting on Zoom
December 10, 2022-	5:30 p.m. – Christmas Potluck Supper
December 11, 2022-	10:00 a.m. – Worship
December 13, 2022-	4:30 p.m. – Deacon meeting (in person)
December 18, 2022-	10:00 a.m. – Worship
December 24, 2022-	5:30 p.m. – Christmas Eve service
December 25, 2022-	Christmas Sunday – No Service – visit our YouTube channel.
January 1, 2023-	New Year’s Sunday – No Service - visit our YouTube channel.
January 8, 2023-	10:00 a.m. – Worship – Communion Sunday (in person)
January 15, 2023-	10:00 a.m. - Worship on Zoom
January 22, 2023-	10:00 a.m. – Worship (in person)
	11:15 a.m. – Annual Meeting
January 29, 2023-	10:00 a.m. – Worship on Zoom

Please join us for Coffee Hour after Worship!

The Knitting Group will meet on December 13 & 27, 2022 and January 10 & 24, 2023 from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Line Dancing is every Friday at 10:00 a.m.

Scouts, BSA Troop 800 meets every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

AA meets every Friday at 7:00 p.m.

Knitting & Crocheting Group

The knitting & crocheting group is back to making hats & mittens for the next few months. These are usually easy and fast and a good way to use some of our donated yarn! We have some new patterns and have some supplies to get you started and a group with lots of knowledge. We would love to share our knitting and crocheting experience with young or old, boy or girl! You are welcome to join us for our group meeting for some instruction or assistance. We are meeting inside in the Sunday School room next to the furnace room. For those of you who are comfortable in doing so, please join us on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks! Brenda (bolsen001@maine.rr.com) or 207-838-0123

From the Pastor, continued . . .

To lose weight, I will let go of stress, hatred, anger, discontentment, and the need to control others.

For poise, I will walk with knowledge and self-esteem.

To strengthen my arms, I will hug at least three people a day.

I will reach out to someone and touch them with love.

To strengthen my heart, I will forgive myself and others.

Keep a good Advent! May it bring you happily to the joy of Christmas! And as they say in German: Have a good slide into the New Year. (Einen guten Rutsch ins Neue Jahr)

Blessings and Joy,

Pastor Petra

Worship in the season of Advent and Christmas

- November 27th is the First Sunday in Advent and Hanging of the Greens - HOPE
- December 4th will be communion Sunday and the second Sunday in Advent - PEACE
- December 11th is the third Sunday in Advent - JOY
- December 18th is the fourth Sunday in Advent - LOVE
- December 24 – Christmas Eve at 5:30 pm – stories about the birth of baby Jesus and special music by the Christmas chorus.
- Sunday 12/25 and Sunday 1/1 – No worship. Check out the RVCC channel on YouTube for music and story ideas

Note: Our storm policy this year will be to “change to “remote” = Zoom” rather than cancel worship. The two TV stations that allow the option of reporting something like “change to remote” are WCSH and WGME.

HANNAFORD GROCERY CARDS

We have Hannaford shopping cards available for purchase in denominations of \$100 and \$50. Every \$100 you purchase means RVCC gets \$5. You buy the card for \$100, you buy \$100 worth of groceries and RVCC gets \$5!!! How great is that? I am available to get cards to you. Just send me an e-mail (bolsen001@maine.rr.com) or give me a call (207-838-0123). Thanks! Brenda



Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Amanda, Michael Cadotte, Louise Doyle,
Polly Dyer, Christine Eldridge, Linda Eldridge,
Rick Emery, Christine Horwath, Charlotte Rowe.

December and January Birthdays

December 7	Cassi Gordan
December 10	Lois Waldron
December 15	Jeff Stevenson
December 28	Caryl Gilman
January 20	Alice Richards
January 21	Petra Smyth

LINE DANCING UPDATE:

The Friday, Beginner/Low Impact class, will continue through the winter at the same time, 10:00 - 11:30. **FMI:** Contact Rachel Knights, rachelscountryhearts@yahoo.com or cell phone **207-232-1172**.

DECEMBER LECTIONARY LESSONS

November 27, 2022 - First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 2:1-5
Psalm 122
Romans 13:11-14
Matthew 24:36-44

December 4, 2022 - Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12

December 11, 2022 - Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 146:5-10 or *Luke 1:46b-55*
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

December 18, 2022 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7:10-16
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-25

December 24 & 25, 2022 - Nativity of the Lord

Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

Raymond Village Community Church, UCC

Warrant for Annual Congregational Meeting

January 22, 2023

Notice is hereby given to the members of the Raymond Village Community Church, UCC in Raymond, Maine that you are duly called to meet at our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 22, 2023 after the Sunday service, beginning at approximately 11:15am. In case of inclement weather, the meeting will be held via Zoom on the same date.

The business of the meeting shall be as follows:

Article 1: To hear and act upon the reports of all officers, Coordinators, Task Force, and Committees;

Article 2: To adopt a budget for the fiscal year 2023;

Article 3: To elect a slate of officers to serve for the year;

Article 4: To transact any other business that shall lawfully come before this meeting.

Notice of this meeting is hereby given on this the 8th (and 15th) day of January, 2023.

Respectfully,

Judith T. Munson, Church Clerk

**Summary of Tuesday, November 8, 2022
Coordinating Council/Deacons Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 8, 2022 by Tom Wiley. Present were Tom, Rolf, Brenda, Caryl, Judy, Petra, Deb, and Nancy.

Deb offered the opening prayer.

Tom reviewed the agenda and set closing time.

Tom introduced Doug Bate. Doug is a member of a UCC Church in North Andover, Massachusetts. He has worked with Petra at the Waterford, ME Church. For most of his career, he has been self employed, working in the corporate world, helping businesses find themselves, and find a new direction in times of change. He can do the same for us. We need to stay relevant, and we may become a different kind of church. The answers need to come from us, but he can help us with the process of finding a new vision and direction for ourselves. We need to think out a few years, not short term. We need to think big and see the world differently. As we commit, he believes resources will become available. As we create energy about the future, things will fall into place. It will help to hear what other churches have done. Rolf reminded us that we do a lot, but no one knows what we do, because we are terrible at P.R.

Treasurer: Brenda reported that October had been a good month. Income, and specifically contributions were better than budget.

Reports of the Coordinators:

Clerk: nothing to report

Trustee: Rolf reported that he replaced a CO2 detector in the Parsonage. He and Craig also replaced some lights on the outside of the church.

Missions: Caryl reported that we have received enough donated items to fill 12 ditty bags for Seafarers. In December we will be urging donations for Maine Seacoast Missions, and on Christmas Eve for the UCC Christmas Fun, formerly Veterans of the Cross. Judy reported that she has been in contact with the social worker for the Raymond Schools. We are giving them twenty \$40 Hannaford gift cards for those who need help with Thanksgiving dinner. We will also give them Walmart gift cards for those who need assistance at Christmas.

Christian Education: nothing to report

Stewardship: Petra extended thanks to Craig, Brenda, Bonnie, and Deb who all have spoken so eloquently about Stewardship over the past few weeks. Everyone remarked on the messages on All Saints Sunday, as well.

Deacons: Caryl shared that the beginning of Advent is coming up soon. The Christmas Eve service will be at 5:30 PM. There will be no worship on Christmas Day or New Years Day. We will offer something on our U tube channel, some music for the holidays.

Moderator: Tom thanked all who helped with the dinner and fun on Saturday night. It was a great evening.

Pastor: Petra shared that this Sunday we will be celebrating Chan Roach's 50 years of ministry. It should be a special service.

Old Business:

Halloween: A great success once again. Cora Sullivan counted 1068 kids. **Winter Worship:** January 1, no service; January 8, in person and communion; January 22, in person with annual meeting. January 15 and 29 – zoom. In February, the first Sunday in person with communion, rest via zoom. In case of bad weather on an in person day, it will switch to zoom. **Update on change in Pastoral Hours:** Petra is tracking her hours to see how reduced hours is working.

New Business: Craig will come to our next meeting to discuss plans for Pot roast suppers for next year. Caryl spoke briefly about the new Pastoral Compensation Recommendations from the Maine Conference. She will email the document to us for our review. **Weathervane** deadline will be 11/18, Lori will print on the 22nd. There is no Weathervane printed in late December for January, so this issue must include information for both December and January. Our next meeting with Doug Bates should include our Imagine Group of Alice Oldford, Chan Roach, and Bob Yates.

Our next meeting will be on December 6, at 5:00 p.m., via zoom.

Respectfully submitted, Judith Munson, Clerk

COVID

As we proceed into winter the council has decided the following will be our COVID policy until reviewed again. As of this writing the incidence of COVID in Cumberland County is LOW. *As is the case now and if the level changes, we will continue to provide sanitizers and masks for those who may not have one. But we have decided as the RVCC council that we will NOT be requiring masks. Folks who would like to wear masks are certainly encouraged to do so on their own.*



**Come and Join the Fun
Invite your friends, family, neighbors**

CHRISTMAS SEASON

POTLUCK SUPPER

Food: Bring a dish, hot or cold, and your favorite Christmas cookie to share

Ornament Swap: Bring any ornaments that you are not using and decorate the Christmas tree. At the end of the evening take home any that you wish!

Candy: Guess the number of candies in the jar – the closest to the actual count takes it all home!

Games: Christmas Friendly Feud (Family Feud with a Christmas theme). Special prizes for the winners!

SATURDAY, DEC. 10TH 5:30PM

RAYMOND VILLAGE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Please sign up on the list in the vestry

MISSION CORNER

Mid-October through Mid-November – Seafarer’s Friend



Thank you all for your contributions. We filled 12 ditty bags sewn by Sarah Allen with items you contributed directly or through cash donation. One bag in the picture has the contents displayed on top. Caryl delivered the bags to Portland Seafarer’s Friend Portland Chaplain Tom Kircher on Wednesday November 16th. He was grateful for them and said he would be visiting the ships through Thanksgiving and Christmas and hand out the bags. He hopes to send Caryl a report about it the first of the year.

Missions in Our Local Community

Note: For the last couple of years the Food Pantry has worked with Our Lady of Perpetual Help to provide Thanksgiving baskets to Raymond Food Pantry Patrons. Our mission for Thanksgiving and Christmas is to help families identified by the Raymond School System. We have provided Hannaford Gift Card to the Raymond Schools for them to provide to families in need of assistance with a Thanksgiving meal. We will provide Wal-Mart Gift Cards to the schools at Christmas time.

Maine Seacoast Mission Christmas Wish List – Due December 4th

Following a custom that began more than 100 years ago, when the Mission brought gifts to island residents and lighthouse keepers, **the Mission distributes holiday gifts to children, families, elders, prisoners, and nursing home residents at Christmas time.** Generous donors bring or send new items to the Mission throughout the year to be distributed throughout the communities, and the Elves’ Workshop gives families the chance to choose gifts for one another. Gifts are wrapped, as per Mission tradition, in white parchment paper tied with red string.

How can we help? Two ways and both need to be completed by December 4th

1. As an individual, choose from their Amazon Christmas wish list and buy something that will be shipped free to Seacoast Mission. <https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1V3LB3G19X56U>
2. Contribute money to RVCC and label for Seacoast Mission. The Mission team will either buy something from Amazon or buy/send gift cards.

December Mission – Christmas Fund

On December 24th, envelopes will be available to make an annual contribution to the Christmas Fund. The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a Special Mission Offering that congregations have been supporting for over 100 years. The offering is administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Active and retired clergy, lay employees, and their surviving spouses may be eligible for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and/or Christmas “Thank You” Gift Checks.

Late December through January – Heat Assistance

As we are all aware, the cost of fuel of any type for heating is much higher this year. We want to help others, but, as a church, do not really know how to determine who should receive funds. The Missions team has decided to send \$2000 to the Raymond fuel assistance program. At the same time, we also realize that some of our own RVCC members or friends may be trying to find the money for fuel as well. If you have already exhausted the resources available from the town or other, please contact Pastor Petra to discuss your needs. We want to help you if we can.

STEWARDSHIP

We are now in the season of Stewardship, where we look to budget our operations for next year. If you have not received a Pledge card, or need a replacement card, you can use the one I have included in this article for the Weathervane. Pledge cards can be mailed to the church to the attention of Nancy Yates, at PO Box 285, Raymond, Me. 04071. Alternatively, your card can be brought to church and placed in the offering plate, or you can make a pledge online through PayPal and set up automatic contributions on a weekly, monthly or one time basis.

Our current financial situation, assuming that we will budget a deficit again for 2023, means that we only have enough cash in our General Fund to provide for operations through mid-year 2024, without liquidating other assets. This is not a surprise. We expected, when we initially hired Pastor Petra, that we would only be able to operate financially for 3 years, or until June 1st, 2023. We have therefore been able to better this by one more year. The decisions that we make in 2023 will determine the future of Raymond Village Community Church. We welcome your participation in the support and planning for our church.

2023 FINANCIAL COMMITMENT – RAYMOND VILLAGE COMMUNITY CHURCH

NOW IS THE TIME

	<u>Pledge Amount</u>		<u>Annual Total</u>
For our church ministries (general fund)	\$ _____ weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Specifically for our mission programs	\$ _____ weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Church Cleaning	\$ _____ weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Please return your Pledge card on November 13, Stewardship Sunday or mail directly to the church at P.O. 285, Raymond, Me. 04071

We encourage you to use automatic debits to make your gift. Information available from the office.

I will use automatic debits to my credit card or checking account.



Raymond Village Community Church

*27 Main Street, P.O. Box 285,
Raymond, ME 04071
(207) 655-7749*

IMPORTANT REMINDERS & WORSHIP UPDATES . . .

We will NOT publish a Weathervane edition for January, 2023. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Safe New Year!

Starting in January, we will be having a combination of in person and Zoom worship, likely through March. The schedule will be as follows:

- January 8 – In person worship with Communion
- January 15 – Zoom worship
- January 22 – In Person worship and Annual Meeting after worship
- January 29 – Zoom worship
- February 5 – In person worship with Communion

For February and March, we plan to have Communion Sunday (the first Sunday of the month) in person, with the other services during those months on Zoom.

You can access Zoom worship with the following link:

Just click the following link then “Open Zoom Meeting”, then “join with video” and “join with computer audio”.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82211774347?pwd=bkZvL0lIT21ROXR2d1phaEhiZ2MzQT09>

There is a waiting room so the host will admit you.

The host receives a message that you are there as soon as you “join with video”

(Meeting ID: 822 1177 4347 Passcode: worship)