



The Weathervane

RAYMOND VILLAGE COMMUNITY CHURCH, United Church of Christ Newsletter

February, 2024

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From the Pastor . . .

*“I really wanna know (who are you? Who, who, who, who?)
 I really wanna know (who are you? Who, who, who, who?)
 Come on, tell me, who are you? (Who are you? Who, who, who, who?)
 ‘Cause I really wanna know (who are you? Who, who, who, who?)”*

- *The Who*

Hello Beloved Friends,

I pray you are all well and safely held in the loving hands of God on this beautiful Monday afternoon. A day which has brought new insights and conviction of our goals ahead. A day which is unlike any day which came before. A day which holds no regret because our congregation has done everything, we could do to continually be a faithful community of God in Raymond, Maine. Yes, I pray you let those words sink in because they are true. We - you have and continue to be faithful and this truth, beloved friends, needs to be celebrated - thoroughly. I witnessed this truth again yesterday as so many people sat and engaged in a faithful discussion about our future. And for this alone, I can easily say, “well done, beloved. Well done.”

And even though we have decided again to continue our ministry through a merger, this decision and discernment is not done. We are headed this way now but like we mentioned yesterday, the vote was non - binding. We may change our minds. We may not find a partner. We may ...well... we will become what God intends us to become. Thanks be to God that in this beloved community we have a faithful family who are engaged and willing to be part of this very discussion. And thank you all for being who you are.

But who is that: who are you? The words of The Who’s song drift in and out of my thoughts even now as I write these words. “Who are you” is a song which I always felt was more of a question that I was asking someone else. But today, it feels like God is asking me that question. Is God asking it to you as well? Who are you? It’s a great question. One, we need to answer

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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!

This Month at RVCC . . .

- February 4, 2024- 11:00 a.m. – Worship with Rev. Brian Donovan
2:00 p.m. – Alzheimer Support Group in Vestry
- February 5, 2024- 5:00 p.m. – Deacons Meeting in person
- February 6, 2024- 5:00 p.m. – Council Meeting in person
- February 11, 2024- **No Worship at RVCC.** Please see ACE for updates on Worship plans.
- February 18, 2024- 11:00 a.m. – Worship with Rev. Chan Roach
- February 25, 2024- Worship with Rev. Brian Donovan

Worship videos will be available on the RVCC YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCc1hBkBTarnZF-H4O7YN5ew>

Please join us for Coffee Hour after Worship!

The Knitting Group will meet on February 13 and February 27, 2024 from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Line Dancing – will be every Friday at 10:00 a.m.

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

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

From the Pastor, continued . . .

now as a community of faith. As we start having discussions with different churches. For, they will need to know who we are to faithfully discern if they want to be one community with us. More to the point, we need to know who we are. What's our identity? What are our 'deal breakers.' What do we believe is important? How do we define our own identity as this body of Christ?

When searching for pastors, our search teams put together profiles which roughly share our identity. But this question is not just for a few, it is for everyone? Who are you as part of the RVCC? Who are we? Even a word - a sentence - a paragraph from EACH of you reading this letter will help us tell our story - our identity to the various churches we are having conversations with now. It requires little effort but quite a bit of discernment and faith. Yet, this faithful discernment and sharing beloved is the first thing we need to do to help discover our partner and the identity we will create together. So, who are you???

Humbly and gratefully yours,

Pastor Brian (He, Him, His)

faithful servant of God through the RVCC

KNITTING & CROCHETING GROUP

The knitting & crocheting group meets the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month at 2:00 p.m. in the classroom at the top of the stairs. Everyone is welcome whether you knit or crochet, or want to learn. We are usually working on projects for donations and we have plenty of yarn. Please join us and share your favorite project or a donation that you would like to be involved in. Whether you join us or not you are always welcome to make donations. Look for information about our next donation project in next month's weathervane. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks! Brenda (bolsen001@maine.rr.com) or 207-838-0123

Line Dancing News!

Line dancing is continuing to be offered on Friday mornings at 10:00 am with Maggie Holnider as our instructor. This class is a beginner low impact class. If you have any questions, you may continue to contact Rachel at 232-1172. Although Rachel may not be able to dance, she will continue to be involved in these classes!!



Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Amanda, Angela's family & friends, Kathleen Bent, Michael Cadotte, Howdy Christiansen, Bill Downes, Louise Doyle, Polly Dyer, Christine Eldridge, Linda Eldridge, Rick Emery, Cassi Gordan, Scott Gordan, John & Linda Gregoire, Liz Kenaly, Shannon Lurvey, Ron Maker, The Messinger Family, The Morris family, Deb Rand, The family of Charlotte Rowe, The Shively Family, The Thayer family - Janice (in hospice), Hilda Wiley, and for the people of Israel, Palestine, Ukraine, and Maine

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

February 1 Bill Feagans
February 5 Cheri Moore

February Worship

February 4th
- Rev. Brian Donovan will lead worship and communion

February 11th
-Worship plans are in flux for this day. Please check ACE for updates.

February 14th – Lent Begins
Ash Wednesday – no worship at RVCC as usual. However, we will share a list of places where UCC churches are having an Ash Wednesday service in the ACE by the week prior.

February 18th
- Rev. Chan Roach will lead worship.

February 25th
- Rev. Brian Donovan will lead worship.

FEBRUARY LECTIONARY LESSONS

*February 4, 2024 -
Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany*

Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39

*February 11, 2024 - Transfiguration Sunday
(Last Sunday before Lent)*

2 Kings 2:1-12
Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9

February 14, 2024 - Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or *Isaiah 58:1-12*
Psalm 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 18, 2024 - First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 9:8-17
Psalm 25:1-10
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:9-15

February 25, 2024 - Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Psalm 22:23-31
Romans 4:13-25
Mark 8:31-38 or *Mark 9:2-9*



Summary of Tuesday, January 16, 2024 Coordinating Council Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 5:10 PM on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, via zoom by Rolf Olsen in place of Tom. Present were Rolf, Brenda, Caryl, Pastor Brian, Judy, and Deb. Tom joined us shortly after the start of the meeting.

Caryl shared opening prayer, music "God holds future in his hands".

Treasurer's Report: Brenda shared fourth quarter report of 2023, no surprises. She reported that she forgot to add interest income from sale of Parsonage into figures for 2024. This will be corrected, interest is expected to be about \$8800. It will not be put in the American Funds. She did report that she recently had to withdraw from American Funds for cash flow purposes.

Deacons: Caryl reported that she is stepping down from position as Head Deacon, although she will continue to serve as a Deacon. Duties have been divided up among all Deacons, there will not be a Head Deacon. Sarah Allen will help out as available. Caryl was thanked for her service as Head Deacon.

Missions: Caryl is resigning as head of Missions. She does not want to be listed as part of the Mission team, although she will continue to do some mission work. She reported that we have completed our financial commitments to the Fuller Center. Judy will step up as head of Missions, she has met with Caryl and Pastor Brian, there will be some changes in what we can do.

Moderator: Tom thanked Caryl for her work in Missions, as well as for serving as Head Deacon. He reported that he had given Michael an extra weeks pay for his extra time during Advent.

Trustees: Rolf reported on various problems during recent storms. There was water in the vestry, although not as much as in previous storms. There was also damage to the Weathervane. He has met with contractors and insurance company representatives, still waiting on final numbers. Rolf reported that he hopes for a closing on the Parsonage in early February, if not sooner. Rolf asked for a motion to approve him to sign papers at the closing. A motion was made by Caryl Gilman, and seconded by Brian Donovan to allow Rolf to sign papers to close on sale of the Parsonage. The motion was approved. Rolf is also clerk of the corporation of the church, so there should not be a problem.

Report of the Pastor: Brian presented his plans for the annual meeting. He will present five options for the future of the church:

1. We would find a way to grow and continue as RVCC;
2. A shared ministry with another church;
3. A merger with another church, there are pluses and minuses, and time considerations;
4. A big farewell and we close our doors; and
5. His surprise, church in a new way and place, via zoom, because cost of building is prohibitive.

He will ask for show of hands that people can physically and emotionally support one of the options above, or we will have to close our doors. He will also ask for help, in some way, from everyone. Brian also presented possibilities of churches to merge with, in order of who we would contact first etc. They are Casco/Raymond Chapel, Windham Hills Church, Highland Lake Church, N. Windham Union Church, Gray UCC, New Gloucester Church, and North Gorham Church.

Agenda of the meeting was reviewed, logistics were reviewed, where to meet, when to have lunch, zoom etc.

Other Business: Weathervane will be printed hopefully on the 25th, deadline is this weekend. There was discussion of possibly having a Sweetheart Brunch, before or after church?? No final decision was made. The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 6, at 5PM, in person.

Pastor Brian offered a closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Munson, Clerk

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 (bolson001@maine.rr.com) or give me a call (207-838-0123). Thanks! Brenda



MISSIONS CORNER

As the dust settles from the annual meeting, I want to let you know the details of our mission plans for 2024. First, Caryl Gilman is not listed as head of Missions, but she will certainly continue to be part of our mission efforts. Caryl, Pastor Brian, and I have met to discuss missions for 2024, and although there will be some changes, we will continue to be an active church where missions are concerned.

First, and most importantly, our efforts at the local level will continue much as they have in the past. We will continue to help our local food pantry in any way that we can. We will continue to work with the local schools to ensure that needy families have the help they need for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We will continue to provide funding to the local fire department to ensure that each home in Raymond has CO detectors. Our relationship with the Fuller Center will continue to be strong. We have paid our financial commitment to them for 2024. We will continue with our outreach at Christmas to Maine Seacoast Mission. We will continue to collect socks each year for the homeless in Portland through Grace Street Ministry. And we will continue to respond personally to each and every phone call for help which comes into the church office, should it be for food, heating, housing, or whatever. If we can not help them ourselves, we know the resources available in local communities, and will guide them accordingly.

In addition, through the Maine UCC Conference office, we can and will continue to respond quickly with \$\$ for disaster relief, either locally or globally. We will continue as a 5 for 5 church, supporting the four UCC special offerings, as well as the work of our Maine Conference, UCC. And through Church World Service, we will continue to provide School Kits and Hygiene Kits to those in need throughout the world.

I feel good about these plans, I feel that we are continuing with a strong mission program. I may need help, and I won't hesitate to ask.

Thank you,

Judy Munson, Missions Coordinator

Holy Humor





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

