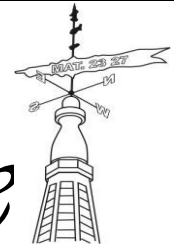


The Weathervane



RAYMOND VILLAGE COMMUNITY CHURCH, United Church of Christ Newsletter

August, 2024

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From the Pastor . . .

“Only in the darkness can you see the stars.”

- Martin Luther King Jr.

*“Thus says the Lord,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,
who brings out chariot and horse,
army and warrior;
they lie down; they cannot rise;
they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
Do not remember the former things
or consider the things of old.*

*I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?*

*I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.*

*The wild animals will honor me,
the jackals and the ostriches,
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,*

*to give drink to my chosen people,
the people whom I formed for myself
so that they might declare my praise.”*

- Isaiah 43:16-21

“Faith and Hope – a different Way”

Sitting on my fridge at home is a magnet with this quote by Martin Luther King Jr. which says, “Only in the darkness can you see the stars.” I look at it quite often and smile partially because I really love simple common sense quotes with deep meanings. And partially because it reminds me of when I found the magnet: at seminary.

Yes, I found it when I was overloaded with a hundred pages to read and three 25 page papers to write, when everything seemed bleak and overwhelming, when I was feeling quite a bit of loneliness on that hill in Newton, Mass. It was not the first time that I felt that type of despair in my life and I am sure it will not be the last. Yet in that moment, I found a magnet which reminded me of the light. It reminded me that

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 . . .

August 4, 2024- 11:00 a.m. – Worship with Rev. Brian Donovan.

12:15 p.m. – Special Congregational Meeting/Discussion with Lunch served. See page 3 for more information.

August 10, 2024- 5:00 p.m. – Take Out Pot Roast Supper

August 11, 2024- **No Worship at RVCC**

August 12, 2024- 5:00 p.m. – Combined Council & Deacon's Meeting

August 18, 2024- 11:00 a.m. – Worship at RVCC with Rev. Brian Donovan.

August 25, 2024- 11:00 a.m. – Worship with Rev. Brian Donovan at RVCC

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!

Alzheimer's Support Group will meet on August 4th and August 18th at 2:00 p.m.

The Knitting Group will meet on August 13th and August 27th from 2:00 – 4:00 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.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

We wish a very happy birthday to these individuals who have birthdays in August:

August 5	Deb Feagans
August 5	Judy Munson
August 7	Angela St. Pierre
August 17	Polly Dyer
August 17	Linda Eldridge

only when things are truly bleak in this world can we witness the light and the stars and the Creative Spirit of Christ. It reminded me that there is hope - always.

The Bible shares this truth as well, especially this passage from Isaiah which reminds us that God will make a way. We do not always know what that path is or how to achieve it now. But God does! God will make a new thing for each of us if we do not hold so tightly onto what was and allow that new thing to come. If we have faith.

Perhaps, beloved, that is what we are seeing now - here - in our Maine churches. Perhaps someone (maybe even me) prayed for us all to be faithful disciples of Christ. A good prayer for sure; but how do we witness our faith - our star - without also witnessing the darkness? How do we find the new thing without seeing the need? I am sorry if this struggle in our community has caused you any pain and I am doubly sorry if it was because I or anyone else prayed for more faith. However, what I am not sorry about is: how much faith - how many stars - how much of Christ's Light I witness in you - each of you every day. You are the light in the dark. You are the hope of this world. You are the ones who are discovering what the new thing God is creating for all of us in Maine. And I, beloved, am overwhelmed with joy to be serving our community as we walk through this very faithful journey - together.

Does this mean the way ahead will leave our church unchanged? No, we will change. God is creating a new thing through us right now. What it means is that this impending change to our ministry is only a darkness which we need to witness to witness the stars of our faith and for us to remember that there is hope. Even in the darkest of nights, there is hope - a way forward - God, who will draw us through this struggle and into the ministry they are calling us to become.

I share this truth, my friends - no - my family - my beloved family because I know how tired you are. How worn down you have become over the years with kicking the decision of what to do down the road and letting it hang over your head like an executioner's ax. I know and I believe God knows. The way forward though cannot be made in desperation - it must be made in hopeful faith. A hopeful faith for what that new thing is that God is creating in and through us as a people. Such faithful decisions though run the spectrum from closing to merging to well something else entirely, like an experiment. All of these can be and are faithful decisions. There is no wrong answer if you discern what it means, listen to God, and live into the hope of the new thing that God is creating in your life as well as all of ours. For remember - Beloved - God will make a way for our faith in the wildness of today.

God, guide us to live your faith and hope - today. Help us to discover and discern our future through Your Son, Inspire us through the loving embrace of Your Holy (united) Spirit. Amen.



Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Amanda, Angela's family & friends,
The Beach Family, Kathleen Bent, Michael Cadotte,
Bill Downes, Polly Dyer, Christine Eldridge,
Linda Eldridge, Rick Emery, Cassi Gordan,
Scott Gordan, Liz Kenaly, Shannon Lurvey,
Ron Maker, the family of Irene Morris, Brenda
Olsen, Bonnie Pierpoint and for the people of
Israel, Palestine, Ukraine, and Maine.

August Worship Updates

August 4th - Rev. Brian Donovan will lead worship. Information meeting and discernment gathering. The official meeting may change dates please check the ACE for changes and / or confirmation.

August 11th - No Worship at RVCC - Worship will be at the church where you feel called to go to in order to more fully discern where you wish to attend worship in the future. Groups may be more focused following the info. meeting on August 4th with updates in the ACE.

August 18th - Rev. Brian Donovan will lead worship with communion.

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

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. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks! Brenda (bolsen001@maine.rr.com) or 207-838-0123

CELEBRATION OF LIFE,

BETTY SHIVELY

Please join family and friends on Saturday, August 17, for a celebration of the life of Elizabeth (Betty) Shively, who passed away January 17, 2024, at age one-hundred and one.

We will gather at 1:00 p.m. at Raymond Village Church, 27 Main St, Raymond, Maine, for the service, followed by a reception in the vestry. Those who wish to will then proceed to the Raymond Cemetery for the interment of ashes and ceremony of committal; this is optional, but all are welcome. The family will return to the vestry after the graveside service.

Betty lived an extraordinary life, moving from southern New Jersey to Raymond, Maine, with her husband Ed, raising three children and traveling the world with him. She then relocated to Oceanview at Falmouth for her final twenty-four years, while continuing to travel and to volunteer for various projects and committees. There is much to celebrate, so please join us, even if you cannot attend the entire event. Head counts are helpful so RSVP to Peg if you can. If you forget, just come anyway.

If you have questions or to confirm you will be here, contact Peg Shively at (207) 294-2448 or by email at shively.ma@me.com

Special Meeting on August 4, 2024

We had originally scheduled a Special Congregational Meeting to vote on issues related to our future and changes to Bylaws for August 4. While we will still be meeting, it will likely be more of an informational/discussion meeting rather than a formal Special Congregational Meeting. We are asking everyone to please still attend, as everyone's input is important. **The meeting will be right after worship. Lunch will be served! Please check the ACE this week for further updates!**

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

Line Dancing News!

Line dancing is continuing to be offered on Friday mornings at 10:00 am with Maggie Holnaider 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!!

Summary of Council and Deacon Meeting – July 8, 2024

Rolf called the meeting to order at 5PM. Present were: Brian, Cora, Sarah, Brenda, Rolf, Caryl, Judy, Deb. Tom joined us later.

Caryl offered the opening “prayer” – “You’ve Got a Friend” by James Taylor.

Add to agenda – reflection on this past Sunday

Pastor Brian has selected hymns for 7/14 when Pastor Jeff preaches. They are in the bulletin.

We will shoot for end time of 6:30 p.m.

Treasurer: Brenda sent an email with current financials. There were no surprises. As listed in her report, she plans to move money from American Funds for cash purposes. There is a balance in the Youth Group Activity Fund within the Education Fund in the amount of \$848. She suggests sending this to Pilgrim Lodge. Council agreed to this.

Pastor: Brian taking some time off this month. Met with Pastor Lindy Howe (Oxford) shared the service this past Sunday. She is a member in discernment and has her own church. She is learning different ways to worship

Missions: Collecting Socks for Pastor Jeff on 7/14. Sarah asked if we will continue missions like school kits? The answer is yes, Judy will get info out soon. Sales on school supplies are starting.

Clerk: nothing to report.

Stewardship: nothing to report.

Trustees: Rolf reported that he did work on the outside door into hall/office. Toilet seat in one bathroom broken and has been replaced. There is a major trip hazard on the ramp where a board tips up and Rolf will fix.

Saturday Supper this weekend is on track

Moderator – Tom talked to Boy Scouts about not being around forever to sponsor them, so they may need to think about a different sponsor next year.

Old Business

Reflection on this past Sunday in Gray – happy to see that many people from RVCC attended. Deb and Craig served communion. Heard positive feedback about worship. Shared tidbits of feedback.

Prep for August 4th Congregational Meeting

- We will bring in food as we did at the previous meeting
- Warrant has appeared in print, and will be read in advance

- Discussion about our individual choices in small groups over lunch, then read out.
- Overall are we going to a) merge with Gray, b) merge with Casco, or c) split up. It is OK to say “I don’t know” (*do people need more info? Do people need a break? do people not feel a call yet?*) Knowing neither Gray nor Casco would move here...we will not be here.
- A couple of Bylaw changes will be presented.

Next steps: what does Council have to do now (e.g. Transitional meetings?) and What do people need to get to next level/make a decision.

Weathervane Deadline: 7/23 suggested.

Next Joint Meeting: Monday August 12 at 5pm

Pastor Brian led us in closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 6:32pm

Respectfully submitted,
Judith Munson, Clerk

School Kits

Although we don’t pack up school kit items and ship them to Church World Service until spring, this is the time of back to school sales, and the best time for us to collect the items needed for school kits. The items we need are:

- Blunt scissors
- 70 count notebooks (3 per kit)
- 12 inch ruler
- Hand held pencil sharpener
- Unsharpened pencil with eraser (6 per kit)
- Box of 24 crayons
- Hand held eraser

We will collect these items in church on August 25 and September 1. Thank you for your participation.

Thank You from Pastor Jeff

Please pass on my sincere thanks to Tom, yourself, Lori, the musicians and the congregation at RVCC for their kindness and generosity yesterday during and after our service together. The cornucopia of socks will be a huge help out on the street, and the kindness and generosity of your shared offertory was heartwarming.

As I said yesterday, we certainly couldn't do the work we do without the support of congregations such as yours.

Thanks for letting us bring your love to the streets of Portland.

Blessings, Pastor Jeff, Grace-Street Ministry

Beloved,

As many of you know I use the word kin-dom to share what God is calling us to instead of the hierarchical models of the past. My voice and thoughts on this idea are not unique. Included here is a beautiful letter from Pilgrim Lodge called, "Here in the Kindom. I hope you take a look. Also, I have a few books on my personal reading list - the books I have not yet read which all of you may find interesting. They are, "Living the Kin-dom: Exploring the Lord's Prayer as a Spiritual Practice for Social Transformation" and "Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living into the Church's Moral Witness through Radical Discipleship."

***Many blessings and I hope you enjoy,
Pastor Brian***

Here in the Kindom

A letter from Pilgrim Lodge Director, Liz Charles McGough

Greetings from Pilgrim Lodge where summer is in full swing! We are in the thick of our camp season here at Pilgrim Lodge and, as happens when human beings show up to spend time together, it is full and rich and deep and challenging and imbued with joy. This season, a word that keeps popping up unexpectedly is the word “kin.”

Kin: one's family and relations.

During some early season reflection time, we were reading a passage from the Bible and considered, “what happens if we substitute the word ‘Kingdom’ with ‘Kindom?’” For those of us sitting in a circle, we found that, while “Kingdom” evoked a sense of hierarchy and power, “Kindom” gave us a sense of relationship and mutuality. The “Kindom” of God felt more accessible.

During staff training, we talked about one of our camp values: “Love of Creation” and the opportunity we have to demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship. We considered that stewardship, while often evokes a sense of “taking care of,” can also mean that we know best. As we face the realities of climate change, we were taking a hard look at whether or not we have done the work of stewardship. We were curious about how we, as humans, might consider the relationship we would have to the natural world if we relate to creation as our kin...our family and relations.

This week, Climate Justice Camp is underway and the leaders of our session have invited us to consider that our camp community includes not just the people who are here, but the more than human world in the space we call camp as part of our community. In place of our traditional Family Groups when we blend campers together for opportunities to explore the curriculum and themes of the week, Climate Justice Camp is coming together in “Kinship Groups” to raise up the relationships they hope to build as they explore their relationships to climate change and issues of justice.

Our curriculum this summer is called “Linked by Love” and the opening passage is Colossians 3:12-14:12
Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

We are doing the work of kinship as we seek to ground ourselves in love. Love is not always easy, but it creates relationships that are powerful. Love challenges us to work through hard moments to move toward deep connection. Love links us together as family in relationships that travel with us after camp into the world beyond.



Raymond Village Community Church

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Raymond, ME 04071
(207) 655-7749*

**Next Weathervane
Deadline:
August 20, 2024**



**"TAKE OUT" POT ROAST SUPPERS HAVE RETURNED!!
SAVE THE DATES:**

August 10th and September 14th

Pot roast and gravy, potatoes, green beans, carrots, a roll, and a brownie for \$15.

(Cash or checks only. No credit cards.)

Meals are primarily takeout. We will have LIMITED outdoor seating available.

We are taking orders for pick up Saturday. Pick up time is between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m.

They will be hot and ready to take home!

You must order in advance! We will NOT have extra meals available.

**CUT OFF time to order is Noon on Saturday so that we can
ensure everyone receives a great quality meal.**

To order your meals please call the RVCC office at 655-7749 and leave a message with your name, number of meals and time you will pick up. Or if you prefer you can send an e-mail to office@rvccme.org with the information.