

The Weathervane



RAYMOND VILLAGE COMMUNITY CHURCH, United Church of Christ Newsletter

February, 2021

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From the Pastor . . .

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening ~ Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

As I am writing this newsletter piece, the snow has been gently falling for the last several hours. All is quiet. It is beautiful to watch the snowflakes coming down at a steady pace. It looks like a perfect postcard picture of a crisp, calm, and white winter day in Maine.

Over the last six weeks, we have experienced snow coming in different ways: blizzard, ice, sleet, and freezing rain and most recently, gently falling snow.

What comes to mind is that weather conditions can be like a metaphor for how life can go for us. We weather through our own turbulent lives hopefully infused with a good dosage of times when everything is going smoothly like gently falling snow.

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!

This Month at RVCC . . .

- February 7, 2021- 10:00 a.m. – Worship on Zoom
2:00 p.m. – Deacons meeting on Zoom
- February 14, 2021- 10:00 a.m. – Worship on Zoom
- February 16, 2021- 6:00 p.m. – Council meeting via Zoom
- February 21, 2021- 10:00 a.m. – Worship on Zoom
- February 28, 2021- 10:00 a.m. – Worship on Zoom

If you are unable to join live Worship on Zoom, services may be viewed on our YouTube channel at:

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

The Knitting Group meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

A meal is prepared in the Vestry for the food pantry on the second Thursday of the month.

AA meets in the Vestry every Friday at 7:00 p.m.

Children's Music Class with April Masse will be every Saturday from 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.



Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Amanda, Woody Beach, Linda Bible, Jane Budlong,
Michael Cadotte, Louise Doyle, Polly Dyer,
Christine Eldridge, Linda Eldridge, Margo Fournier,
Anne Hodgman, Alan Lambert, Craig Messinger,
the family of Bob Metz, Kathy Mithoefer, Bill
N., Walt Read, Charlotte Rowe, Frank Sullivan,
Dan Tibbetts, Penny Warrickoff, Adma Willis

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

From the Pastor, continued . . .

Sometimes we forget that God is with us during all our “weather conditions”. Lent begins on February 17th giving us an opportunity to continue deepening our relationship with God through prayer and reading scripture.

As you go through the Lenten season remember that God is with us during the turbulent times as well as the quiet times.

Blessings and Peace,
Rev. Petra

February Lectionary Lessons

February 7, 2021 - Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

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

February 14, 2021 - Transfiguration Sunday

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

February 17, 2021 - Ash Wednesday

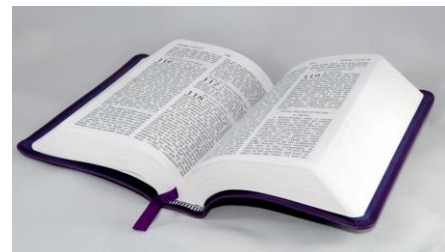
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 21, 2021 - First Sunday in Lent

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

February 28, 2021 - 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



RVCC Zoom Worship

We started offering worship via Zoom with congregation participating. It has been fun to see the people who would usually be in the pews! We even saw two of our “snowbirds”!

All are welcome to join us on Zoom for Sunday worship!

The Zoom will open at 9:45 a.m. Please join before 10:00 a.m. when the worship and recording will begin.

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”

We are using the same link every Sunday.

There is an option to join by phone - please refer to instructions below

The service will be recorded and posted to the RVCC YouTube channel for you to watch at any time.

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

Detailed Zoom Instructions:

- Worship Zoom uses the same link every week:

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

If the above link does not work for you, you can go to www.zoom.us or the Zoom app on a smartphone and click on “Join a Meeting.” You will need to enter the following information:

Meeting ID: 822 1177 4347 Passcode: worship

- You can join in by **phone**. Call 1 929-205-6099 AND Enter the Meeting ID: 822 1177 4347 #
 - If you are asked for an ID number just press #
 - Enter the Passcode: 1263403 #
 - You are now in the meeting and can “mute” or “un-mute” by pressing *6

*Note that **this is not a toll-free number** so if you're calling from a landline or a cell phone without unlimited talk/text, there may be a charge the call.

When you join with your computer:

- If your computer has speakers, you'll be able to hear, but won't be heard.
- If your computer has a microphone and speakers, you'll be able to hear and be heard.
- If your computer has a camera, you'll be able to be seen.

When you first log in for the service, you will be muted; scroll down to the lower left corner of your screen to unmute when invited to join in conversation after worship

When not speaking, please stay muted to minimize distracting background noises.

If you are unfamiliar with Zoom but would like to learn how to use it, please contact Caryl Gilman at 627-5073.

Happy Birthday!

February 1
February 5

Bill Feagans
Cheri Moore



Missions Corner

As we begin the year 2021, we retain the overall focus areas as 2020 with a special focus on food insecurity. Our plans for the first half of the year are to contribute to Food Pantries and their providers, like Good Shepherd. We will invite you to join us in contributing to a different organization each month.

Good Shepherd Food Bank

The mission of Good Shepherd Food Bank is to eliminate hunger in Maine by improving access to nutritious food for people in need, building strong community partnerships, and mobilizing the public in the fight to end hunger.

From their website: More than 70,000 children in Maine are living with food insecurity, meaning they don't always know where their next meal will come from, or if it will be enough. That means 1 out of every 5 Maine kids struggles with hunger – the highest child hunger rate in all of New England.

A local Raymond man is on the board of Good Shepherd and says he is proud of the way Good Shepherd does business. The website says Good Shepherd holds people struggling with hunger at the center of decisions and actions.

One of the sources for food, including USDA food, for Raymond Food Pantry is Good Shepherd Food Bank. In fact, that is what a food bank is all about – sourcing food to pantries that distribute the food directly to eligible patrons.

The Mission Fund will donate \$250 at the end of February. We invite you to contribute to RVCC to add to that amount (just send a check to PO Box 285 Raymond) or you can contribute directly online at <https://www.gsfb.org/get-involved/donate/donation-form/>

Raymond Food Pantry

Many thanks for the hot meals on Christmas Eve – and a favorite – meatloaf! Both Food pantry patrons and workers appreciated your kindness! And the kindness continued on January 14th when baked ziti dinners were delivered from the church to the Food Pantry, consumed by Pantry patrons and workers. One Pantry worker said “The meat sauce on the baked ziti is very flavorful and just the right amount of meat!” The supper team ROCKS!

As you see above, we chose Good Shepherd as the mission for February. Generally, attendance is down at the Raymond Food Pantry until April or May, so we will wait until they need us, then make the Raymond Food Pantry our mission for that month.

Moderator Musings



It seems like many people want to turn the calendar and forget about the previous year and all the hardships and inconveniences we just experienced. But before we do that, I want to thank all of our church family for their resilience and ability to adapt and change. No, it hasn't been easy nor has it been predictable.

We celebrated our most recent Easter like no other. There were no services, no flowers and the church was empty. A cold stark contrast from years gone by. But perhaps we need to look at it from the other point of view. When we stop and think about it the empty church can be symbolic of the empty cave? The stone is rolled away and Jesus is not there. But we know he was to reappear.

I think we can learn and grow from this parallel. Yes, the church was empty on Easter and quite a few weeks after but we took that time to become so much more than a building. We had search committees working diligently to bring us new staff to help lead us in the new norm. These committees used the tools of technology to bring us Pastor Petra and Pianist Keith. We had folks who continued to meet under social distance safety guidelines and had luncheons this summer. We had the formation of knitting and crocheting group meeting regularly. We had twelve step programs continue to meet in the parking lot and under the canopy as long as weather permitted. Soon we will be having a program available to teach music to all the toddlers and youngsters in the Lakes Region.

We reached out locally and globally with many mission programs. We served the folks of Raymond by working with the school on Christmas needs for local youth. We served the hungry by preparing hot meals monthly and delivered them to the Raymond food pantry for distribution. And our fund raisers for the year definitely took on new looks with the preorder take out Pot Roast supper becoming a regular event this past summer. The excitement generated from that lead us to have a Christmas cookie sale which was preorder and pick up as well.

And we have seen many of our church family come together for online worship. We are connecting with many out of staters for our weekly service. As of this writing the number of folks joining online is growing.

As you can see above, we have grown and adapted as a church family in the year 2020. Oh yes, there have been some bumps and bruises along the way but let's close out the year in thinking how much we have grown. Yes, we have reappeared. Just like the empty tomb.....

-Tom Wiley, Moderator

Maine Seacoast Mission Christmas Program

Success – RVCC played a part!

RVCC contributed personal toiletry items and items from the Amazon shopping wish-list, therefore we are a part of the Success described by Seacoast Mission:

Reviewing the Mission's Christmas Program 2020, Wendy Harrington said over 1,000 people were served throughout the Mission's communities in Washington and Hancock Counties -- including several remote islands.

There were challenges due to COVID yet Wendy said "I think the significant part of this year, is that we tried to maintain what we had built for the Christmas program -- parent choice for their children's gifts. The old in-person way we did the Elves Workshop was impossible. Instead, we created a virtual shopping experience."

The Mission made available an online shopping form people could use with their laptops, smartphones, and tablets. Plus, it gave people the opportunity to shop with a Mission elf.

The whole Mission Christmas tradition was carried on with the white wrapping paper tied with red string. "This year in particular," said Wendy, "anything wrapped was wrapped in the white paper with red string.

"We were filling orders until December 23rd. We really try to fulfill the requests - those Christmas dreams kids and elders have asked for. That's another hallmark of our program," she said.

Lenten Worship

The liturgical season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17. It is a 40-day journey of reflection and preparation for Easter. The Lenten journey is modeled after Jesus Christ's time in the desert on his own, praying in the desert for 40 days leading up to Holy Week with Palm Sunday, last supper, crucifixion, and resurrection on Easter.

This year, in addition to Sunday worship, additional worship services will be offered on:

- Ash Wednesday February 17 at 6pm – a brief service on Zoom
- Maunday Thursday, April 1 at 6pm – a service on Zoom
- Good Friday, Friday April 2 – Opportunity for at home devotional

More information will be available in the next Weathervane.

Daisy's Children

January 2020, Sharon Beckwith, the founder of Daisy's Children spoke to us about how this non-profit started and what they have been able to accomplish for children in Honduras.

A Maine based organization helping over 150 impoverished children and their families in Concepcion del Norte', Santa Barbara, Honduras, with education, medical, and nutritional needs. "What began as a chance meeting of three children who lost their mother, Daisy, to malnutrition has grown to become a source of nutritional food, potable water, education, and medical intervention for 100 children in Concepcion del Norte, Honduras."

A year later, January 2021, we will focus on Daisy's Children again. This time, we would like to take advantage of a program for Christmas. They have partnered with Doles Orchard Box Shop to offer an ornament for \$20 and that same amount pays for 20 meals for a child in Honduras. In December, the Mission fund sent \$400 and in January, we will send \$100 for a total of \$500 which purchases 25 ornaments for the church Christmas tree and 500 meals for the children in Honduras.

Hats & Mittens



Our knitting & crocheting group meets twice a month at the Raymond Village Community church. It is not just a church group but is open to anyone in the community. Everyone is invited, regardless of skill. It is nice to meet and get new ideas and help with projects. Last year we made several hats and gave them to the Seafarer's Mission, and they were then distributed to sailors from all over the world, who come to Portland or other ports along the coast of Maine (ours made it to Portland). This year an idea was presented from a member of our group who told us about her friend, a teacher in Norway, who remarked that children were coming to school without hats & mittens. We realized that this probably happens a lot in our communities. We checked with the Raymond Elementary school and they were delighted to have us make hats & mittens for the young school children. We finished 25 sets and most of these were made from donated yarn.

**Summary of Monday, January 11, 2021
Coordinating Council Meeting - DRAFT**

A joint meeting of coordinating council and deacons was called to order via zoom, at 6:00 PM, on Monday, January 11, 2021 by Tom Wiley. Present were Tom, Rolf, Brenda, Caryl, Nancy, Deb, Petra, and Judy.

Tom offered the opening prayer.

The agenda was reviewed, end time was set for 7:30 PM.

Rolf made a motion, seconded by Brenda and passed, to accept the minutes of the meeting of December 15, 2020.

Treasurer's Report: Brenda presented the year end 2020 financial report. Our general operating fund will end 2020 on a better financial position than we expected in the budget. Our Balance Sheet remains strong. Positive items for the year were: net increase in the total Stock Investment fund was \$14,733. Pastoral Ministry expense was lower than budget by \$18,403. Our music director retired at the end of August. In October we contracted for a church pianist, with savings for 2020 of \$925. Secretarial hours were less than budget. Heating oil expense was \$1,266 less than budget. \$1,500 in maintenance budget for the Parsonage was not spent, this will be moved to 2021 budget.

There were, however, negative items to income: there were decreases in contribution income and fund raiser income. There were unexpected expenses in Trustees totaling \$3,988. There were expenses for paying off financing and final accounting of vinyl siding project. And there was expense of \$1,579 for audio visual equipment for recording services. Nancy made a motion, seconded by Rolf, and approved to accept the treasurer's report subject to year end review.

Budget: The operating budget for 2021 is also projected to be a loss of \$24,700. Pledges and contributions will be lower than 2020, as will fundraiser events. General operating expenses are budgeted to increase by 1.5%. Caryl asked that missions pledges show in the budget.

Reports of the Coordinators:

Clerk: nothing to report

Trustees: Rolf has been working on microphone issues. He would like to have new lights installed in the downstairs classroom by January 23.

Missions: Caryl presented the missions budget for 2021. We have a plan, but are flexible to respond to unforeseen needs. We also have monies in this budget to help people with equipment needed for zoom worship.

Stewardship: 2020 year end giving statements have been mailed out.

Deacons: Caryl has agreed to be head deacon for the year 2021. Focus of Deacons now is on zoom worship, which is going well. The deacons met on Sunday afternoon, discussed Lent, even Maundy Thursday and Easter. Ash Wednesday is February 17. There will be a short zoom

worship at 6:00 PM, music will be taped ahead, Keith will not play. On Maundy Thursday, which is April 1, there will also be a service at 6 PM. There was a discussion on how to put music into zoom, just in case Keith were unable to get to church on a Sunday morning. Easter is on April 4.

Moderator: Tom thanked everyone for all their hard work. We all work well together.

Pastor: Petra has been concentrating on making zoom worship go well. We have seen snow birds joining us for worship, it was suggested that we put something in the ACE urging other snow birds to join us. There will be a Lenten Book Study, starting February 24, at 6:00 PM via zoom. The music class for young children with April Masse will start January 23.

Old Business:

Handicap access: Brenda presented a summary of past discussions and plans for improving handicap access. A committee of Brenda, Caryl, Rolf, and Bob Yates have met to try to figure out how to move forward with this. They presented their current thoughts on how to move forward with a more affordable plan. It was suggested that we take one step at a time, first step would be outside, to grade and level driveway, and apply reclaim on handicap ramp side of the building; and to remove steps of the Thrift Shop building, and grade, and apply reclaim to that area, to provide space for parking, turn around, and access to ramp into the sanctuary. Second step would be to work on entrance into sanctuary. Third step would be to build ramp from front of sanctuary to give access, through area behind pulpit, to office and rest room areas. It was also suggested that we apply for a Resourcing the Local Church grant through the Maine Conference, UCC. We do have some funds available to start this work. Brenda will rework her proposal, it will be on the agenda for the annual meeting.

Outside Groups: In addition to the Music Class due to start shortly, the only outside group using our building is AA. Scouts are meeting remotely.

New Business: Reviewed how zoom worship is working at this point. Caryl continues to work with people to help them with access problems. Even those without internet can call in. She will pass this on to people. Agenda for annual meeting was reviewed. Technical issues associated with annual meeting were reviewed. Tom has not decided where he will be. Deb will co host on zoom for the annual meeting. The ACE needs to remind people of how to get on for the annual meeting. It is the same link as for worship.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 16, at 6:00 PM, via zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Munson, Clerk

Handicap Accessibility Improvements

A. **Improve outside access to handicap ramp and Sanctuary.**

Grade and level as necessary the driveway on the handicap ramp side of the building. Remove the steps to the Thrift Shop Building and grade for parking and turn around. Apply the necessary “reclaim” to make for a smooth surface. Grade and repave the parking area directly in front of the church (to be determined after review of the town’s sidewalk plan). \$2,360

B. **Install a ramp in Sanctuary to provide access to pulpit & second level.**

Install a permanent ramp over the stairs to the right of the pulpit with access to the doorway leading to the bathrooms on the second level. This will also involve the removal of some of the pews to provide appropriate access. In Addition, to improve handicap egress, removing the vestibule door and renovations to front exterior door and an air curtain. \$4,735

C. **Enlarge doorway inside sanctuary to provide access to second level.**

Enlarge doorway on the behind the Pastor’s pulpit to gain access to the 2nd level offices and bathrooms for all. Repainting the Trompe-d’Loeil design to affected wall. \$2,175

D. **Construct a handicap accessible bathroom in second level.**

Renovate the bathroom, closest to the sanctuary doorway, to become a handicap accessible. This will require moving the structure into the hallway, but it will still provide enough space in the hall for access. This will include all new fixtures and some plumbing changes. \$8,755

Total cost is \$18,025.

1. Proceed with Step A and use the funds that were raised in the Fran Main’s Handicap accessibility fund. \$4,396
2. Apply for a grant through the UCC Cumberland Association for Step B. Determine the funding after we receive status of this grant request.
3. Step C & D will likely be pushed until 2022.

As presented at the annual meeting. Brenda & Rolf Olsen, Caryl Gilman, Bob Yates.



Raymond Village Community Church

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

Be The Influence Coalition has partnered with the Opportunity Alliance and the City of Portland to bring our community a monthly webinar health series to help with the many isolation, health and behavioral health issues that we are all dealing with. As Laura Morris, the Project Director, says: “It takes a village, so the more people we can affect, the more our village succeeds!”

Below is the webinar offering for February 17th, at 2:00 pm

EmpowerME

A Community Afternoon Series on Health Empowerment

2:00pm - 3:00pm

RSVP: director@betheinfluencewv.org



[FEBRUARY 17] NOT JUST BLOWING SMOKE

This presentation will delve into the vaping epidemic and youth use. We will be covering related topics such as vaping products and chemical components, the adolescent’s brain and decision making, addiction, youth centered data, vaping industry marketing tactics, and much more. In addition, we will be sharing helpful tips and resources on healthy decision making, alternative coping mechanisms, and quit resources for youth.