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Rochester United Methodist Church July/August 2019

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Rocking It: Introducing Our New Volunteers

There are some new faces at church these days. Outside, **Kate Phillips** is lovingly tending to our church grounds. As summer gets under way, she has begun a mission of weeding and mowing, planting and tending the soil. The result of her tender care is flowers, herbs and even a few vegetables springing up, welcoming all those who drive past or enter the building. Kate's background in nursery work and gardening, and commitment to service in God's name is bearing much fruit!

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Trading Spaces

Rooms for Growing Programs

Visitors to the church this summer can't miss the construction in the north end of the building. It's all part of some space use changes to meet the needs of several church programs including our thriving Thrift Store. The work is expected to be completed in late summer and certainly in time for Fall education programs. Here's what's going on:

Over the last few months, we've created a **Space Committee** to look at ways to house programs. The result is a revised use, maximizing space and support for a range of programs.

The **Thrift Store** provides funding for many church programs and will move to the Annex Building currently used for teen programs. This will eliminate the need for the store to set up and strike down.

High School and a new **Young Adult Program** will be housed in a new, expanded room once the Pastor Study and the Nursery. This required taking a wall down, replacing carpet, a bit of wiring and paint. This new casual space will house our **Sunday Night! Conversation Group** as well as a **Pastor Study** during the week.

The **Library** becomes the **Nursery**. This provides an improved space for our little ones. The **Sunday Morning Bible Study** will be next door. The last space change is for children and youth. **Children's Programs** will be in the **Lion's Den**.

We're excited about the improvements under way and are working to finish as soon as possible. Meanwhile, we do need volunteers to help paint, prep walls, sort and move items and clean. If you feel called to help, please contact Pastor Pam or Susie Hawes.

Better Together: What is God calling us to do?



Dear Friends,

While attending a group of pastors recently we were asked to talk about our individual calls to ministry. "Tell us your call story," we were asked. There were three of us who were new to the group. These situations can be challenging as one wonders how much to share and how open and vulnerable to be.

I decided to go deep in the brief time allotted. I shared how I came to ministry mid-career working in the community at a non-profit. Growing up, my family moved just about every one to two years because of my Father's job. I learned how to acclimate quickly, making friends and becoming part of a new community. Once the boxes were unpacked, our entire family would do two things: we'd find a church family and we would get library cards.

My Mother introduced me to faith in God. There was also struggle at home as my parents often argued. I learned, early on, about the healing power of being part of a larger community as I immersed myself in church and school. As I grew into adulthood, the experiences and heartbreaks of life would reinforce in me how I was better in being part of community.

My work, friends, family and faith would hold me and heal me in the loss of our son. I learned that in unspeakable grief and in the challenges of daily life, I was better when together with my beloved and growing community.

When I heard God call me to ministry, I initially wondered why. I remember feeling a great sense of joy and eagerness. What I found was a familiar place. As I studied and began serving churches, my sense of community was reinforced as I learned that ministry is about coming together. It is about wholeness and praying together. It is about being vulnerable and realizing that our faith gives us the courage and power to weather all things and stand up in Christ's name even when we feel small in a sea of divisiveness and disagreement.

Each day of ministry, each day of my life since I was a child, God has gently graced me with the knowledge that I am part of a growing and loving family. This is where I thrive and heal, grow spiritually and serve, celebrate and give thanks. Theologian and Pastor Brian McLaren writes in his book *We Make the Road by Walking* that: "Where the Spirit is moving, love for God always, always, always overflows in love for neighbor."

McLaren points out the many passages in Scripture about "one another." The New Testament overflows with references to "love one another," "accept one another," "be kind and compassionate to one another," and "carry each other's burdens." Scripture tells us that "one-anothering" is the road we are to travel together.

Christ teaches we are better together. We are meant to be.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Pam

Outdoor Worship: Down to the River to Pray and Play



On the morning of August 4 at 11 a.m., two church congregations will gather on the banks of the Black River for Sunday Morning Worship and a meal. As the old song says, we'll go down to the river to pray! The church campground is north of the crossroads of Highway 12 and Moon Road. It is across from the Historic Gate City Schoolhouse, 16925 Moon Road, SW.

Both Rochester and Oakville United Methodist Churches will share worship at the church campground. Afterward, there will be a potluck and barbecue. Last year, several children and adults were baptized in the river and those who seek baptism this year are invited to contact the pastor.

Why do we do this? We remember Jesus and John in the Jordan as the Spirit of God descended like a dove. We come together outside in God's Creation hearing the birds and feeling the breeze in the trees overhead. Doesn't another song talk about "peace like a river?"

We hope you plan to attend for a morning and afternoon of praise and grace, sacrament and wonder. Here are some tips for planning for worship at the river:

- If possible, carpool. There is parking above the campground, but carpooling will free up parking spaces.
- Those with accessibility issues can drive into the campground. Someone will provide direction.
- Pack a tablecloth and utensils. There will be some on site but it's fun to bring individual set-ups and set a table of welcome.
- Come early to allow time for parking and finding a table/seating.
- Wear comfortable walking shoes, a hat and bring sunscreen.
- Bring a dish to share.
- Invite family and friends!

Volunteer Story, From Page One

In the office, **Kathy Mills** is working to create a newsletter to provide information about our church, its community outreach and opportunities for serving, celebrating and building up God's Kingdom. Kathy has a background in communication and is excited about getting to know her new congregation home.

Out in the Community Closet, **Connie Todd** is becoming known as a dedicated volunteer. She helps sort and greet. Her big heart and sense of humor welcome those who come to find clothing and baby needs. Connie joins a hard-working team that sorts through a growing volume of donations and helps increasing numbers of people in need.

Are you interested in volunteering at our church? Think about what you are passionate about. What do you enjoy doing?

There is much to do inside and outside our doors. Think about it. Pray about it. Drop a note in the Offering on Sunday telling us what you are thinking, and we'll be in touch!



closing thoughts...

- *Do you have an inspirational story about something that happened to you at Rochester United Methodist Church? We'd like to hear from you.*
- *Are you interested in being a Sunday School Teacher working with our young people this Fall? Please contact Pastor Pam or Susie Hawes.*
- *We are working on improving our building and grounds. As we complete rooms inside the church, we are looking for people to adopt a room to keep it looking wonderful. If you are interested, please leave a message in the church office.*

Contact us at 360-273-5000
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coming soon >>>

In the Next Issue

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Young Adult Group

United Methodist News

Our Thriving Thrift Store

Pastor Column

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