



Rockwood Stone News

Rockwood-Stone Pastoral Charge

The United Church of Canada

Visit our website at www.rockwoodstoneunitedchurches.com



*"The little church with
a big heart"*

Stone United Church

5370 Fourth Line
Rockwood, ON N0B 2K0

November 2021

Minister: Rev. Heather Leffler

hleffler@rogers.com

519-265-7385 or text 519-573-9642

Office:

Messages are monitored virtually.

rockwoodstoneuc@gmail.com

519-856-4160



"Live, Love, Laugh"

Rockwood United Church

119 Harris St.
Rockwood, ON N0B 2K0



Connect with us on Facebook at
Rockwood-Stone
for Contemplation and Conversation, updates
and reminders about upcoming events.

Join us for...

Worship on **Sundays** on **Zoom**. At **9:30 am** there will be time to gather.
At **10 am**, join Heather for our **Sunday Worship**. Following worship stay and visit

or for **In-person Worship** at **11:30 am** go to our website for dates, locations and to register

<https://www.rockwoodstoneunitedchurches.com/register>

To receive the **Announcements on Thursdays** and **Contemplation and Conversation on Sundays**
each week, contact the office. If you don't have email we can provide printed copies .

To join **Zoom** for **Worship and Meetings** click on the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6995074926?pwd=eTk1T1d0V2NXVVNxazlEcGpuL3JpUT09> . To join by phone,
dial +1-647-374-4685 or +1-647-558-0588 and enter **Meeting ID: 699 507 4926** and **Password: 20120701**.

If you are having trouble connecting to Zoom or would like help trying it for the first time, contact
Heather Leffler at 519-265-7385, hleffler@rogers.com or text 519-573-9642.

For pastoral concerns, to share ideas about
how we can connect when we are apart,
or just to talk, contact Rev. Heather Leffler
at 519-265-7385, text 519-573-9642 or
hleffler@rogers.com.

If you would like a copy of the worship slides each
Sunday, you can also email Heather.

November 25 and every other **Thursday**,

For Men: you are invited to

Coffee Connections

from **10 am** to **12 noon**, on **Zoom**.

Bring your coffee (or tea) and snacks and join
in the conversation and fellowship!



Spiritual Saturdays

Join us on **November 27** on **Zoom** from **1 to 3:30 pm**

We will learn to pray scripture together, take some time away from the computer to pray the scripture and then come together again to companion each other. Everyone is welcome. Please contact Lisa Leffler lleffler@live.ca by November 25 to receive the materials.

Wear Your Festive Apparel for Advent ...

On **November 28** wear something **red**

on **December 5** wear **green**

on **December 12** wear a **festive hat**

on **December 19** wear **all of the above**

add adornments like festive belts, dangly earrings and more – homemade all the better and join us for

Worship. Joining us on Zoom?

decorate your Zoom space too!

Advent Gifts In the Spirit of Christmas help us support **Anishnabeg Outreach ...**



Anishnabeg Outreach's Orange Shirt Sponsorship Program symbolizes a unified step towards reconciliation and the building of relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous

peoples. **Make a donation to Rockwood or Stone for Anishnabeg Outreach to help sponsor a bead making microbusiness.** \$150 sponsorship will provide Indigenous Artists with beading kits, a workshop and mentor so they can start their own micro business. AO will buy their pins and hope to expand the program to launch an online selling platform for Indigenous artists.

<https://aocan.org/orange-shirt-sponsorship/>

East Wellington Community Services ...



Make a donation to Rockwood or Stone to help fill Foodbank Christmas hampers for families who are food insecure. You can also

donate 1 litre tetra packs of orange or apple juice, peanut butter, jam, boxes of chocolate, toothpaste at our churches. Watch the announcements for more details. At Rockwood, you can also donate towards gift cards for families.



Communion will be celebrated on **Sunday, November 28** at **10 am** on **Zoom**

Please bring a glass of juice, water or wine and bread or crackers for communion.

Sunday, November 28

begin the Christmas season with

An Evening of Christmas Carols

at **7 pm**, on **Zoom** with our own Eramosa Ensemble.

Tell us about your favourite Christmas food.

After the 28th, enjoy the carols again on our YouTube Channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzo3XS-Ko7xb2b-bqogiyYg>



December 2 and every other **Thursday**

For Women: come to **Tea and Talk**

from **10 am** to **12 noon**, on **Zoom**.

Bring your tea (or coffee) and goodies and enjoy this time together.



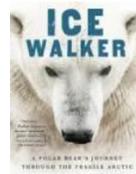
Wednesday, December 15,

Genesis Book Club

at **7:30 pm**, on **Zoom**

join us for a thoughtful, thought-provoking discussion of

Ice Walker: A Polar Bear's Journey through the Fragile Arctic, by James Raffan.



Friday, December 24th

Christmas Eve

Readings and Reflections

accompanied by flute music will be recorded and shared

on our Rockwood Stone YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzo3XS-Ko7xb2b-bqogiyYg> .

At **7 pm** join us on **Zoom** for **Communion, Scripture Story, Song and Conversation** to celebrate this holy night.



Letters, Notes and Emails ...

Brothers, Sisters and Siblings in Christ,

Pondering Jesus' ministry, the only times we hear of him worshipping is in the synagogue. He never defines what a church building should look like or what an order of worship should be. What we do know is that he preached from the Jewish scriptures and added the Good News that no one is outside of God's love. To be a faithful disciple of Jesus, we need to be guided by scriptures that draws us closer to God and each other and send us into the world to care for those on the margins. Jesus was never afraid to challenge a worship practice or tradition that stood in the way of caring for people in need. When he taught and when he healed, his message was always one of restoring people to community.

*Attending the General Council 43 meeting this fall, I was excited to be part of approving a mission for our church ... **deep spirituality ... bold discipleship ... daring justice.** I am even more excited be part of congregations who live out that mission faithfully.*

Throughout the pandemic, I have been so grateful that you continue to share your time, gifts and resources to serve God through the mission and ministry of our churches. Many of you wrestle with technology to stay connected, others continue to quietly support our churches financially or by reaching out and making personal connections to help one another through this challenging time. We have welcomed new people into both congregations and through Zoom have been able to stay connected even when we were away from home.

My prayer is that as we gradually return to our buildings, we will blend the gifts we have discovered in our Zoom worship and small groups, the creative ways we have continued our outreach and support of our partners through the pandemic with our traditions; that we won't hesitate to take new risks to continue to faithfully follow Jesus. May it be so.

Blessings,

Deather Leffler



Thank You

Your faithfulness through PAR, e-transfers, Canada Helps and postdated cheques is keeping our finances stable and allowing us to continue to serve God in our church communities and the world.

How can I continue to support our churches?

1. **PAR:** To sign up for monthly Pre-Authorized Remittances or to change your givings, contact Bill Allen at stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com or 519-841-4170 for **Stone** or Amanda Hunter-Anthony at rockwooduc.treasurer@gmail.com or 519-856-1129 for **Rockwood**.
2. **E-transfer Stone** at stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com or **Rockwood** at rockwooduc.treasurer@gmail.com. In the memo, please designate whether your offering is for your church, M&S and/or Other and include your contact information.
3. **Canada Helps** is a Canadian registered charity that enables other charities to receive online gifts. Go to <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/stoneunitedchurch/> or <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/rockwood-united-church/> to make a credit card donation. You can designate your offering to the church, M&S and/or Other in the message box.

Called by God, as disciples of Jesus, The United Church of Canada seeks to be a bold, connected, evolving church of diverse, courageous, hope-filled communities united in deep spirituality, inspiring worship, and daring justice.

The United Church of Canada

**A Message from the Chair
of the Rockwood-Stone Pastoral Charge**

Fall 2021

I had big plans for today: planting my garlic, going horseback riding, raking leaves, and walking my dogs. With no clouds in the sky and a high of 18, I figured I needed to take advantage of what is likely to be the last summer-like day of the year. But like most best-laid plans over the last 19 months, things don't always go as planned. The pandemic interferes. There isn't a day that goes by when each one of us is affected by Covid in one way or another. Today I have to stay inside because I am looking after my grandsons, one of whom is sick with an upset stomach. The rules of the school and public health say that if one child shows signs of a possible Covid symptom, then all children must stay home. When having the public health rules affect us personally, they can seem harsh and overboard. But I am reminded how lucky we are in Ontario, where numbers of new cases are relatively low and decreasing. This is happening because we have strict rules and people are following them. The number of people fully vaccinated continues to increase and we continue to wear masks and take precautions.

I am grateful that life is beginning to get back to normal, and I am also grateful that our public health rules and guidelines continue to be enforced. Our churches' re-opening commission has been working hard to develop protocols that will allow us to open the churches up to in-person gatherings and keep everyone safe. It hasn't been an easy task and on behalf of our Pastoral Charge, I would like to thank the commission members for their hard work. There have been many long meetings and hours of research and planning to come up with plans for each church. As I write this, we are approaching our first services that will be held in our sanctuaries. Zoom services will continue to be held each Sunday at the regular time and for those who wish to attend in-person, Rockwood and Stone will alternate each Sunday with a service at 11:30 am. It's a first step to returning to normal!

Our Board meeting will be coming up in a few weeks. I am sure that the reopening commission will be discussing the review of the services held to date. Attention will also be given to our financial situation, as well. Again, Covid has negatively affected us, and we will have to be creative to come up with ideas to help balance the books.

We are also approaching the time of year when the Nominating Committee members will be looking to fill positions in many areas of our church committees. Please consider volunteering some of your time to serve on one of the committees of our churches. Many hands make the load so much easier for everyone involved. Your thoughts and ideas are valued and may have positive impacts on the future of our churches.

I look forward to continuing to see many of you at our Zoom services and soon in-person, as well. God bless and take care,

Randy Dewey

You make a Difference by Supporting Rockwood and Stone United Churches

Your generosity allows your local community of faith provide leadership that ...

- welcomes people of all ages to **ask and explore questions of faith** in large and small groups
- encourages fellowship that **supports and nurtures people** day to day and especially in times of crisis
- connects with partners in the community to **learn about neighbours and work together** for reconciliation and justice for all people, especially our First Nations siblings
- **embraces new ideas and initiatives** to make a difference in the local community and beyond
- works to **create safe, affirming space** where people can connect and grow
- encourages **sharing of talents in areas of music, arts, cooking** and more
- empowers and supports **personal growth and growth as communities of faith**

Committees and Groups ...

Rockwood and Stone Worship and Faith Formation

Submitted by Liz Guthrie and Barb Eley

Thank you to:

Everyone who takes part in responsive readings
Those who provide special music

- Heather for preparing and leading weekly worship services on Zoom
- Lisa Leffler for providing pulpit supply and sharing photos
- Everyone who prepared and delivered Creative Time packages

Highlights

May 2/21 – Mental Health Sunday now being recognized by the United Church. A Linnea Good and an M&S video were shared

May 9/21 – Rural Life Sunday was celebrated with a Blessing of the Seeds.

May 23/21 – Pentecost, Communion and our annual church picnic were all celebrated via our regular Zoom service.

Brent Stiles talked about the different colours of the rainbow. How would it feel if we had no colour in the world? We are all different, just like the colours of the rainbow. A video reminded us how to remember the order of the rainbow colours. Everyone enjoyed the video of “Old Turtle and the Broken Truth” by Douglas Wood (YouTube). A scavenger hunt had us looking for items in rainbow colours around our homes. We closed with “Name that Tune” and sharing of picnic memories.

June 06/21 – A Covenanting service between Western Ontario Waterways and the Rockwood Stone congregations was held via Zoom. Arthur Hill representing WOW brought the symbols of a chain, a walking stick and the flame of a candle. Randy Dewey represented our congregations. Rockwood Stone symbols were ...

Like a **tree rooted in the rocks**
our faith is grounded in God
our Rock and Redeemer.



Like a **lamb**
we continue to grow
in the love of Jesus.

Guided by the Spirit we reach
out in love to our
communities and the world.



June 13 – 154th Rockwood Anniversary with Rev. Tim Raeburn from Sauble Hepworth as our guest speaker.

Tim says, “There is no normal, only normative. Live the talk in order to reconnect with all generations. Hear their perspectives – LISTEN – It is a theological shift. To live in discomfort/difference, the truer we are.” There are stumbling blocks. If one group is empowered, then other groups feel unwelcome. Affirming churches need public spaces to continue their work.

August 8/21 – 1 pm 25 people all decked out in face masks attended Stone’s outdoor service in Stone Church Cemetery. We welcomed Nancy Fountain to our congregation. (Transfer of membership)

August 15/21 – Rockwood’s outdoor service was held at the home of Ray and Ellen Thomson with 15 present.

September 12/21 – It was exciting to look through the Creation Time booklet of reflections and activities. Also included were small packages of sunflower seeds, basil, mint leaves, maple sugar and apple cider seasoning. What activities did you enjoy?

16 people gathered in Stone Church Cemetery for an outdoor service.

September 19/21 – 17 people gathered for a Rockwood Outdoor service at the home of Ray and Ellen Thomson

September 26/21 – Orange shirt day.

October 3/21 – World Communion Sunday was celebrated in each of our homes.

October 10/21 – Thanksgiving decorations outside of Stone Church included the big pumpkin, the tallest sunflower, pumpkins, flowers and squash.

October 17/21 – Stone’s 159th Anniversary. Vicki Olatundun from Chalmers Community Services, Guelph, invited us to imagine what is the colour of hunger.

October 24/21 – Heather Leffler led our Zoom Service from 10 to 11:00 am.

The first in person worship service was held at Rockwood United Church from 11:30 am to 12:15 pm. 18 people attended. COVID protocols were in place.

October 31/21 – Heather Leffler led our regular Zoom Service from 10 to 11:00 am.

The first in person worship service for Stone Church was an exciting event. 18 people attended. COVID protocols were in place.

November 7/21 – The Zoom Remembrance Day service was led by the Rockwood Stone Worship and Faith Formation Committees.

Ongoing

Spiritual Saturday – Participants meet the last Saturday of each month from 1 to 3:30 p.m. to pray the scriptures and companion each other.

Bible Study – Participants meet on Tuesdays from 7 to 8:30 pm via Zoom to study the Epistles.

Choirs – The choirs continue to wait for the time when we can sing together once again. We are grateful to Heather Blair and Liz Guthrie for their leadership in recorded music at each service. The prelude and postlude are always lovely and having them sing the hymns as well as play them is much appreciated. We also give thanks to God for all those who provide recorded special music each week. We will dearly miss Lou Darcie’s wonderful voice and spirit.

Eramosa Ensemble – Barbara Eley on flute, Liz Guthrie on clarinet, Chris Barlow on violin, Chris Arbuckle on viola.

The ensemble is meeting once a week at Stone (with masks, distancing and open windows) to rehearse and record. Thanks to Chris Barlow for his recording expertise, and for arranging instrumental versions of “O Sacred Head Sore Wounded’ and “Seek Ye First” in honour of Lou Darcie. We had hoped he would be able to hear the recordings, but they were used at his celebration of life instead.

Faith Formation – Rev. Leffler has been meeting and working with the young people on Zoom, using materials from Seasons of the Spirit. Confirmation classes started this fall.

Coming Events

Regular Zoom services will happen each Sunday from 10 to 11:00 am.

In person services will happen at Stone from 11:30 am to 12:15 pm on November 21, December 5 and 19.

Rockwood’s in person services will be held from 11:30 am to 12:15 pm on November 14 and 28, December 12/21. Preregistration is required for all in person services.

The Reopening Commission will continue to evaluate the in-person services and make changes in accordance with Public Health recommendations.

November 28/21 – Annual Carol Sing via Zoom at 7 pm.

December 24/21 – Our Christmas Eve service will be enjoyed via Zoom at 7 pm.

The Christmas Readings and Reflections will be available on the church YouTube Channel.

Rockwood Stone Finance & Stewardship

Submitted by Heather Leffler

The Committee met on October 28 hearing reports from our treasurers and reviewing the draft Pastoral Charge Budget for 2022.

Dave Jagger the Stewardship and Gifts Officer wrote a letter of encouragement noting that according to our statistics, our givings from 2019 to 2020 our givings to our local mission and ministry increased by 3% and we had an increase of four identifiable givers. The Committee received Dave’s letter with cautious gratitude. PAR and other givers who have continued to support our churches through the pandemic.

Rockwood Property & Finance

Submitted by Sherol Steinberg

We are still waiting for permits for the demolition of the house and construction of parking lot. The current delays are due to staffing changes at Wellington County. Thank you to Scott Jamieson who has been checking on the house twice a week since October 2020 – we did not foresee the state of limbo lasting this long.

Thank you to Cees Braamse and Kevin Anthony for mowing the lawn at the church and the house throughout the summer and have agreed to take on snow removal for the upcoming winter.

While most projects are on hold until the property issues are settled, the stain glass window over the door in the narthex requires repairs, as a piece has fallen out of the frame. We are following the recommendation to have the window reframed and faced with tempered glass. Work will proceed this fall by Trillium Glass.

Thank you to Cees who did some outside work on drainage/eavestrough at the front corner of the church. Thank you to Kevin who removed the small trees growing from the eavestrough on the hall. Moving forward the ash tree on the side yard will have to be removed as it has been affected by emerald ash borer. This can be added to the scope of work for the new parking lot.

AA continues to meet in the sanctuary. Other church rentals are being considered on a case-by-case basis. We will be contacting Early ON to see if they will be resuming use in the near future. Ideally with church moving back to in person worship, we prefer to keep 48-72 hours between usage.

In the spring we had 23 PAR givers. Prior to the pandemic we had 43 regular givers. While we are unable to sell the parking lot, and still have the costs of maintaining the house and the additional costs of applying for permits, we needed to inform the congregation of our challenging financial situation. We sent a financial appeal letter and received strong support with several members increasing their PAR, a new registration for PAR and one-time gifts of about \$14,550.

Property and Finance ran fundraisers including Breakfast for Dinner (\$506), Food For Fathers (\$840), and with Stone ran the second Annual Garden Tour (\$400). The construction company working on Hwy 7 used our parking lot for the duration of the work and will be providing us with compensation.

Trustees have asked us to provide our recommendations on capital projects after the current parking lot is sold–

our priorities include: maintenance on stain glass windows, accessibility ramp in sanctuary, possible removal of pews to create a multi use space, creating an additional room by walling off the current choir loft and moving the choir, addressing accessibility issues around lighting and sound system, reimagining Day Fellowship Hall space and considering professional guidance to create a plan.

Stone Property & Finance

Submitted by Jack Ward

Once again Instead of our Annual Beef Dinner in October Marg and Carl Baker, Liz Guthrie, Edie Ward and Barb Parker planned a series of take-out dinners. In 2021 dinners were as follows – June 2 Roasted Smoked Ham, July 8 Pulled Pork, September 29 Turkey and October 27 Roast Beef. Thanks to all who supported our dinners and to the drivers who made the deliveries.

Volunteers helped with the yard cleanup on August 4 prior to our outside service on August 8 at 1:30 pm.

The Insulation project on the church addition was completed in March of 2021 and we subsequently received a grant of \$4,000 from the United Possibilities Fund of the United Church.

In April of 2021, one of our stoves stopped working and it was not economical to repair it. We purchased a new stove from Shuh Appliances and it was well received by the takeout committee.

Financial Update – Submitted by Bill Allen

With the suspension of in-person church services this year as a result of the pandemic, weekly givings are approximately half of a normal year. However, PAR givings remain stable. Mission and Services Fund givings are at \$8,700, down slightly from last year at this time. The four take-out dinners noted above, raised \$4,400 which came close to replacing the funds normally fundraised from our in-person beef dinner. Donations to the Stone Foodgrains Growing Project so far have topped \$7,300. In summary, the Stone United Church is showing a deficit of \$9,900 from operations. However, it should be noted that the Church is still financially solid with \$55,000 remaining in the Oakes Fund and \$40,000 in General Fund investments.

Rockwood Outreach

Submitted by Marcia Haworth

Mission and Service

We are so grateful for the generosity of our congregation who have continued to support the work of Mission and Service. The donations will be sufficient to ensure we can meet our 2021 target of \$12000. In September the M & S publication "Your Generosity Matters" was included in the Creation Time package. This, along with the M & S videos presented on Zoom on a monthly basis showcases some of the amazing life-changing assistance that people receive both within Canada and worldwide.

Fundraisers

Our August summer chicken picnic take-out dinner was quite successful, and we made \$830. We are bringing back the Food Fix for a final time this year on November 21 with four options on offer.

Coming up

We are currently taking orders for outdoor fresh Christmas arrangements and wreaths, as well as gift boxes of red pepper jelly and cranberry sauce. Our gift-boxed jam assortments sold out the first week. The deadline for ordering is 21 November and we are happy to deliver around the end of November. All proceeds will support our ongoing Outreach initiatives.

Anishnabeg Outreach

We have donated quantities of clothing, footwear and hand-made blankets, however they are currently not accepting further clothing donations. During Advent we will be supporting their new beading initiative. AO will send beading kits costing \$150 each to many Indigenous communities who will make beaded orange shirt pins for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation recognizing the legacy of residential schools and honouring the survivors. The pins will be sold therefore providing a business opportunity as well as supporting and Indigenous culture and traditions

East Wellington Community Food Bank

In the summer we filled their freezer and this Christmas we plan to provide grocery gift cards for each client of the food bank. Families with children

under 18 are also being sponsored by the Children's Foundation.

Women in Crisis/ Rural Women's Support Program

We plan to provide each family with a Wal-Mart gift card to assist them over the Christmas season

In the fall we assisted a woman who reached out to RUC for assistance. She was moving to new accommodation after experiencing a series of unfortunate events. We were able to provide her with gift cards for purchasing household items and food and help her obtain items from the Mission Store at no cost.

Stone Canadian Foodgrains Bank Project

Submitted by Bill Allen

In spite of the inclement weather on Sunday, October 17, an enthusiastic crowd from area churches joined the Stone United Church to wrap-up our 2021 Foodgrains Growing Project. There were many entries of both pumpkins and sunflower plants for various competitions. Liam Anthony had the heaviest pumpkin at 275 lbs. Second were Laurel and Alec Parker with a 117 lb pumpkin. Laurel and Alec also grew the tallest sunflower, topping out at 14 feet. Second was Andy May at 12.3 ft.

Last year in the face of the pandemic, \$49 million was raised by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank through donations, contributions from partner organizations and the Canadian government. These funds helped feed almost one million people suffering from hunger and malnutrition in 33 countries. This was the Canadian Foodgrains Bank's best year ever. Donations to our project so far total \$8,650, surpassing the funds raised last year by more than \$1,000. When matched by the Canadian government, this will translate to almost \$35,000 in support for combating global hunger. Donations will be accepted until the end of November and can be made either through an e-Transfer to stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com or a cheque sent to Stone United Church, Box 67, Rockwood, NOB 2K0.

Stone Pastoral Care and Fellowship

Submitted by John Leffler

We contacted by email and phone to check in with our Stone Church family in regards to Church re-opening and to see how people were feeling as COVID continues. This feedback was passed onto the Re-opening Commission.

Thank you to the Stone Pastoral Care members for sending cards, keeping the phone and membership list up to date as people move and keeping in touch with our Minister to keep her informed of life events within our congregation. Thanks too for committee members and volunteers who delivered Creation Packs.

Rockwood Pastoral Care and Fellowship

Submitted by Ellen Thomson

Pastoral Care has not met since December 2020.

Telephone calls, cards and support for one another have continued. These activities help to build community and relationships with one another.

Tea and Talk, Coffee Connections and Spiritual Saturdays have continued. Faith, Food, Friendship and Fun took a break over the summer.

Our committee delivered Lent and Creation Packs.

We mourn the loss of Lou Darcie. He visited so many people in the hospital or in their homes over the years. For this, we give thanks.

Our plans for the series of workshops about the end of life, living wills, funeral planning are on hold until the COVID restrictions are lifted for larger indoor meetings.

If you have a question or concern, please forward your idea(s) to anyone on the committee: Ellen Thomson, Ollie Darcie and Ian Pasmore.

Rockwood Trustees

Submitted by Rosslyn Bentley

We are grateful to Darryl Nichol who continues to work with the Township and County with regards to our application to build a new parking lot at 107 Harris Street. Sale of the current parking lot is on hold waiting for this approval.

Stone U.C.W.

Submitted by Edie Ward

Due to Covid-19 no meetings have been held.

As friends of Ollie Darcie, we served sweets at the Celebration of Life for Lou Darcie at Rockmosa September 28, 2021.

Looking forward to being able to meet in person sometime in 2022.

Rockwood Stone Ministry and Personnel

Submitted by Brian Mack

At the meeting held on October 21, 2021 via Zoom at 7:30 pm. Members of the committee ...

- Received oral reports re: annual reviews of all lay personnel
- Received an oral report presented by Brian Mack and Rosslyn Bentley concerning Rev. Leffler's annual review. Rev. Leffler was thanked for her innovative and supportive work in "building community" over the course of the past year especially in the areas of preaching, faith formation, pastoral care, and outreach. The extra time she devoted to learning new technology and encouraging our faith community to make the best use of this technology both in worship and in governance was recognized.
- Discussed ways in which our churches can support our lay employees and Rev. Leffler
- Provided recommendations to the Pastoral Charge Board for budget considerations re: salary and benefits for Rev. Leffler and our Secretary, Sharyn Southworth
- Encouraged our Councils to review honorariums unique to each church
- Received Rev. Leffler's goals for 2022: Use technology and learnings from the pandemic to create blended worship that includes people on Zoom and in our churches to deepen relationships within our communities of faith; support our Trustees at Rockwood and Stone; continue to engage our children and young people outside of Sunday worship including through Confirmation; work with our secretary to begin digitizing and organizing files so that all church leaders have access to them

The committee will next meet in March of 2022.

Rockwood and Stone Reopening Commission

Submitted by Brian Mack

The Commission met on July 1 and October 5, 2021 via Zoom. At these two meetings, our decisions as to the timing and nature of re-opening were informed by the following:

- advice from the national church and updates from Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council
- Guidelines provided by the Government of Ontario
- Wellington-Guelph-Dufferin Public Health Guidelines and the guidelines for Waterloo Region
- the expertise and experiences of the members of the Commission (many thanks to Sherol Steinberg for her knowledge of how sports organizations have handled COVID and to Rosslyn Bentley who brings the public health perspective through her position with Woolwich Community Health Centre)
- Rev. Leffler's work on the executive of Western Ontario Waterways and her networking with other churches
- the needs of our congregations
the congregations have had an opportunity for input during Zoom worship, through our various committees and discernment circles (especially Worship and Faith Formation), through conversations at outdoor worship gatherings, and through contact by e-mail or phone (thanks to Sherol Steinberg at Rockwood and Pastoral Care at Stone)

As required, we have established a detailed, written set of protocols which cover screening of employees and worshippers, calculation of church capacity based on physical distancing of 2 metres, procedures for pre-registration to ensure equal access for all, procedures for entry and exit from our churches, etiquette to be observed during worship, procedures for cleaning and sanitizing, and procedures if a possible exposure to COVID-19 occurred. This set of protocols is subject to change as new guidelines are issued by the Government of Ontario or the local Department of Health. Such changes in guidelines will be carefully considered by the members of the commission but not necessarily automatically adopted as we continue our practice of erring on the side of caution to ensure the safety of staff and worshippers.

The Commission wishes to thank all members of our congregations for their co-operation and patience as we further refine our plans for re-opening in the upcoming months. Special thanks is extended to Rev. Leffler for helping us to establish a vision for re-opening which is sensitive to providing a parity of experience for those worshipping on-line and those who worship in person. Our congregations have grown in their capacity to "be in community" during the past twenty months and our task is to further enhance this growth as we continue to wrestle with the ups and downs of COVID-19.

Affirming Discernment Circle

Submitted by Lisa Leffler

The Affirming Discernment Circle continues to meet via Zoom. In June we invited Rev. Tim Raeburn to speak at Rockwood's Anniversary service about his experience with the Affirm Process and his personal experiences. In October, Vicki Olantundun from Chalmers came to talk about Chalmers Community Centre and being colour brave.

We are looking for people who are interested in sharing their personal stories. Stories of when you or a loved one have faced discrimination or rejection in a church or in the community because of your race, ability, economic status, sexuality, age, gender or gender identity or an experience you want to share of how you felt when you or someone close to you came out as LGBTQ+. We are looking for people who are willing to be interviewed for a worship service (either live or pre-recorded according to your comfort level). If you are able to share your experience to help deepen understanding within our congregations or have questions about the process, please contact a member of the Affirming Discernment Circle – Barb Eley, Brent Stiles, Brian Mack, Lisa Leffler, Liz Guthrie, Marion Bascom.

Zoom Discernment Circle

Submitted by Heather Leffler

We continue to gather information about technology to help us blend Zoom with In-person Worship.

Western Ontario Waterways (WOW) Regional Meeting

Submitted by Liz Guthrie

- May 13-15/21 – The Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council Meeting was conducted via Zoom. The theme was: “Being Kicked out of the Boat” especially during these Covid times.
- May 28/21 – WOW offers workshops. One of particular interest was with the Honourable Murray Sinclair, a former member of the Senate and Chairman of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He was very knowledgeable about the history of our indigenous peoples. There is still much work to be done.
- June 6/21 – An Affirming service with Horseshoe Falls, Antler River Watershed and Western Ontario Waterways Regional Councils was held via Zoom. Affirming certificates were presented to the chair of each of the councils
- November 1/21 – Thérèse Samuel and Joyce Johnson hosted “Together in Song.” It was a time of remembering the children of residential schools through song.
- November 12-13/ 21 – The regional fall meeting was held via Zoom.

*Best Wishes to Sharyn Southworth
as she ends her time as our church secretary
and begins her new position
with the Arthur Public Library.*



*Wishing you and your family
hope, peace, joy and love
this Christmas
and all the best in 2022!*

