



Rockwood Stone News

Rockwood-Stone Pastoral Charge

The United Church of Canada

Visit our website at www.rockwoodstoneunitedchurches.com

May 2022

Minister: Rev. Heather Leffler

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Office:

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519-856-4160



"Live, Love, Laugh"

Rockwood United Church

119 Harris St.

Rockwood, ON NOB 2K0



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



*"The little church with
a big heart"*

Stone United Church

5370 Fourth Line

Rockwood, ON NOB 2K0

Join us for...

Worship on **Sundays** through **May and June**

will be held 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.

Contact hleffler@rogers.com or check your announcements for the Zoom link.

In-person Worship will be held on **May 15, 29** and **June 26** at **11:30 am** at **Rockwood**
and on **May 8, 22, June 5 and 19** at **11:30 am** at **Stone**.

Rockwood's Anniversary will be on **June 12** at **10 am** **In-person** and on **Zoom**

Summer Worship will be held at **10 am** on **July 3, 10, 31, August 7, 28** and **September 4**
on **Zoom**, on **July 17 and August 14** at **Stone** and **July 24 and August 21** at **Rockwood**.

You are welcome to attend in person worship at Rockwood and Stone.

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.

Sunday, June 12 join us to celebrate

Rockwood's 155th Anniversary

at **10 am**, on **Zoom** and at **Rockwood**.

Our guest **Stephen Jackson** will speak about
Anishnabeg Outreach and their new partnership
with Trinity United Guelph and how we can
continue to partner with them.

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.

Tuesday, May 17 join us for

Bible Study

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

Ask questions, share ideas and make connections between the Word of God and our lives, as we continue our study of the epistles.

Wednesday, May 18,

Genesis Book Club

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

join us for a thoughtful, thought-provoking discussion of

The Scarlet Pimpernel by Baroness Emmuska Orkzy.

May 19 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.



May 26 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!

Stone Takeout Dinners

Stone is planning to hold a take-out dinner of roast ham, scalloped potatoes, bean salad, a roll and dessert on **May 25**. The price will be \$20.00 per dinner. We plan on serving 80 people. Please contact Edie Ward at (519) 856-4765 or by e-mail edieward45@gmail.com by **May 20** to place your order. Payment can be made by e-transfer to stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com or cheque or cash on delivery.



Spiritual Saturdays

Join us on **May 28** and the last Saturday of each month on **Zoom** from 1 to 3:30 pm

If you are praying scripture for the first time, contact Lisa to learn the practice. Please contact Lisa Leffler lleffler@live.ca by the Wednesday before to receive the materials. Take time to pray the scripture. At 1 pm on Saturday afternoon join the group on Zoom, meet with and companion another, and share in the large group conversation. Everyone is welcome.

Fridays, July 15, August 19 and September 16

Faith, Food, Friendship and Fun

beginning at 6 pm, watch for **locations** and details about dinner.

Join us for activities, conversation, a craft, and casual time of worship.

Contact Heather at hleffler@rogers.com or 519-265-7385 by the Wednesday before each event.

Communion will be celebrated

on **Sunday, June 5** at 10 am on **Zoom**

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



Foodgrains Growing Project

Stone Church is once again holding a growing project to raise money for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Back, by popular demand, will be friendly competitions for the heaviest pumpkin, smallest miniature pumpkin, tallest sunflower, biggest sunflower head, and most flowers on a stalk. New for 2022 are categories for zucchini (longest and heaviest), and for interested farmers, their tallest corn stalk! Please let us know if you are in and which seeds you would like. Either email stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com or mail Stone UC, P.O. Box 57, Rockwood, NOB 2K0.

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6995074926?pwd=eTk1T1d0V2NXVVNxazIEcGpuL3JpUT09> . 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.

Letters, Notes and Emails ...

Brothers, Sisters and Siblings in Christ,

In a time in the world when individuals, groups and countries are acting out because of perceived restrictions on their rights; war in Ukraine and unrest in other countries is impacting the lives of people throughout the world; and extreme weather events are impacting people's homes and health, I am grateful for your continued commitment to deep spiritually, bold discipleship and daring justice. Your generous donations to Mission and Service and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank will make a difference in the lives of the people of Ukraine. Your support of Rockwood Outreach's Food Fixes and the Rural Women's Support Program through the UCW's appeal is making a difference to people in need in our communities. Your support of our congregations makes it possible for us to find new ways to share our faith. In addition to our online and in-person worship, people can now watch a recording of our worship on YouTube. We are sharing your pictures, music and videos on YouTube and Facebook and we are looking into the possibility of connecting with folk on Instagram. Thank you for making a difference. Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council met on May 6 and 7. President Mark Laird chose the theme Words Matter. Our Affirming Discernment Circle is helping us see just how much our words matter. They are inviting us to see how asking what someone's preferred pronouns are can make people feel that they are in a place where they can be accepted as they are. They are asking us to create brave space in our congregations where people with needs that might conflict can talk and find ways to care for each other. These are the kinds of words and actions that can help us change our churches, communities and world for the better.

My prayer is that Rockwood and Stone United Churches will continue to be places where people through words of scripture, worship and prayer can continue to deepen relationships with each other and God.

Blessings,

Debbie Leffler

May 2022

A Message from the Pastoral Charge Board Chair

Dear friends,

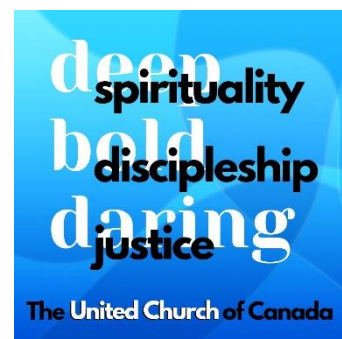
As we leave winter behind us, it's a great time of the year to look ahead with hope and positivity. When I saw the cover of the latest Broadview magazine, with the man outside, dancing, it reminded me of the statement from Vivian Greene: "Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass; it's about learning to dance in the rain." I think that we have been learning a lot of new dance steps over the past couple of years. We have had to adjust pretty much all aspects of our lives as we navigate through the Covid pandemic. In our church, we have accepted Zoom services as one of our new norms, and we are now feeling more comfortable opening up the doors of our sanctuaries for face-to-face services.

All of the changes and 'new dance steps' take time as we get more proficient and comfortable with them. We have had to be more patient and understanding of others because each of us takes different lengths of time to master the dance, and we will each have our own way of expressing it. My hope is that the warmer weather will bring more of us together and feeling comfortable and confident to get back to more normal times.

I am grateful for all the hard work that so many are doing in the various committees and discernment circles. As you will discover from reading the latest reports, our churches are very busy! It is wonderful to see that so much is happening despite having to change the way things have been done in the past. Our future looks good. Thanks to all for learning to 'dance in the rain'!

Take care,

Randy Dewey



Committees and Groups ...

Rockwood and Stone Worship and Faith Formation

Submitted by Barb Eley and Brian Mack

We are grateful to God for everyone in our congregations who have contributed to worship and faith formation. We are especially indebted to

- Liz Guthrie and Heather Blair for playing and singing on a bi-weekly basis
- Barb Eley and members of both choirs for their musical contributions on Zoom
- Lisa Leffler for music, pictures, and tech support for worship
- All congregants who have shared pictures, stories, and song during worship
- All who have led and participated in faith formation activities
- Rev. Leffler for her flexibility as she continues to offer us messages that challenge us to grow in faith, to be supportive of another and the wider community, and to reflect on how scripture and story relate to our lives in 2022

Faith Formation Activities

- **Bible Study** (Heather Leffler) – focused on the writings of Paul with lively discussions concerning the early church and our approach to contemporary worship
- **Spiritual Saturdays** (Lisa Leffler) – “Rooted in God, Growing in Faith” is the current theme
- **Tea & Talk/Coffee Connections** (Heather Leffler hosting) – participants continue to share stories and concerns in a supportive environment
- **Confirmation** (Heather Leffler) – confirmation classes have finished, and we look forward to the sharing of a reading of the entire Song of Faith
- **Kids Time/Youth** (Heather Leffler) – activities continue to be sent to young families each Sunday
- **Genesis Book Club** – meets monthly and is a lively forum for literary discussion and sharing
- **Eramosa Ensemble** (Barb Eley, Liz Guthrie, Chris Barlow, Chris Arbuckle) gather periodically to prepare and share music

- **Combined Choirs** (Barb Eley, Liz Guthrie) – met periodically to share song together while distanced and masked
- **Lenten Study** (Lisa Leffler) – focused on Exploring Faith through Art with contributions by Heather Nagel (fiber art), Gord Carothers (photography), Heather Leffler (faces of Jesus), Kellen Hatakana (through the Centre for Christian Studies, a video of Hatakana’s works related to the treatment of Japanese Canadians during WW II). To conclude the study, participants were invited to share a piece of art that they created or that spoke to them.
- **Lent and Easter Packages** – 130 packages focusing on the Jesus’ I am Sayings – contributions to the packages were made by Lisa Leffler (baking of bread for communion and a reflection); Diane May, Elsa Hore, Scott Jamieson, Sarah Leffler, Emma Thomson (drawings); Helen Smith (flower seeds); Brian Mack, Heather Leffler (reflections); Barb Parker (sharing of theme from Megan Ward of Harcourt United); Smits family (book mark); all who helped prepare and deliver packages and those who shared their colouring pages
- **Contemplation and Conversation** (Heather Leffler with occasional support from Lisa Leffler and Brian Mack – posted on website on Sunday afternoons
- **Prayer & Mindfulness Practices** (Lisa Leffler) – held on May 4 at Stone
- **Worship Highlights**
 - 10 am Zoom worship which has allowed us to stay together as community
 - Resumption of in-person services at 11:30 am on a rotating basis beginning March 20 at Rockwood (masked, social distancing encouraged, no food inside)
 - Introduction of “Offering Praise” (song, dance, art, poetry or other creative expressions) between the message and conversation time
- **Special Services**
 - **February 6** – based on part of *A Song of Faith*
 - **February 27** – TED talk *The Danger of a Single Story* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adicie
 - **1st Sunday of Lent March 6** – parts of World Day of Prayer service used; communion

- **March 20** – special prayers for people of Ukraine
- **Palm Sunday, April 10** – communion; gospel reading in four parts
- **Good Friday, April 15** – recorded service hosted by Speedside and led by Rev. Lynn Hamilton with pre-recorded prayers, readings, and music provided by Rockwood-Stone
- **Easter Sunday, April 17** – gospel reading in four parts

Upcoming

The following is the **Worship Schedule** from **April 24 until September 4**. Lisa Leffler will be leading services when Heather is on study leave or holidays.

- **April 24, May 8, 22** on **Zoom** at **10 am** and at **Stone** at **11:30 am**
- **May 1, 15, 29** on **Zoom** at **10 am** and at **Rockwood** at **11:30 am**
- **June 5 Pentecost** on **Zoom** at **10 am** (Communion) and **Stone** at **11:30 am**
- **June 12 Rockwood Anniversary** with Stephen Jackson from Anishnabeg Outreach (with **Zoom** broadcast from **Rockwood** at **10 am**)
- **June 19** on **Zoom** at **10 am** and **Stone** at **11:30 am**
- **June 26** on **Zoom** at **10 am** and **Rockwood** at **11:30 am**
- **July 3, 10, 31, August 7, 28, September 4** – **Zoom** only at **10 am**
- **July 17, August 14** – **Stone** only at **10 am**
- **July 24, August 21** – **Rockwood** only at **10 am**

Everyone is welcome to attend in person worship at Rockwood and Stone.

Rockwood Stone

Finance & Stewardship

Submitted by Heather Leffler

The Committee met on April 4, 2022. Brad Kosid from AVLI Audio Video Lighting Integration shared a tech design that would allow us to share hybrid worship from both churches. Each congregation will decide how they will move forward.

Thanks to a \$25,000 deposit to the Pastoral Charge from the Manse Fund to cover the minister's housing allowance, the congregations' transfers to the pastoral charge have been reduced this year.

Rockwood Stone Ministry and Personnel

Submitted by Brian Mack

Ministry and Personnel met on March 23, 2022, at 7:30 pm via Zoom. The varied contributions of Randy Dewey to the committee were acknowledged and Patty Lancaster was welcomed in her new role as a member of the group.

Highlights of the Meeting included the following:

- The roles of the committee were reviewed (consultative, healthy relationships, and supervisory)
- Discussion concerning privacy, confidentiality, and transparency
- Review of the process for handling concerns – the committee will not consider undocumented allegations, anonymous complaints, or rumours
- Discussion re: conflict of interest – members of the committee have a shared responsibility to ensure that potential conflicts of interest are openly stated
- Discussion re: procedures for reviewing the secretarial position (nature of the position, hours, rate of pay) as Lisa Leffler's term ends December 31, 2022) – a proposal was drafted for consideration by the Pastoral Charge Board on May 10
- Discussion re: police checks/vulnerable sector screening-a proposal was drafted for consideration
- Review by the Minister of her 2022 goals

Ellen Thomson indicated that she had attended an M & P workshop on March 17th entitled *The Knitting Needles of Your Community of Faith*. She was thanked for attending this workshop on our behalf.

Prior to a closing prayer, members spent time naming the many great things that the committee sees ministry personnel, lay employees, volunteers, and non-ministry paid personnel doing well. Ministry and Personnel committee members were encouraged to pass along our many thanks to those named in person.

Ministry and Personnel will next meet on May 25th to be updated on the proposals made to the Board and to discuss the nature of our annual conversations with lay employees and the Minister in September of 2022.

Rockwood and Stone Reopening Commission

Submitted by Brian Mack

At our last meeting held on April 13th, we decided to continue our current pattern of services until summer. We will continue to mask for worship and other activities held indoors. Distancing is strongly encouraged. At outdoor activities including worship, masks will be optional. We will continue to be masked to sing, unless we are outside and distanced. Solos, duets, and trios will continue to be recorded to use on Zoom and can be live in worship. Our choirs will have combined rehearsals for the next few months and will adhere to their current practice of wearing masks and distancing. We look forward to a time when our choirs will be able to perform live when distancing is not an issue.

After careful consideration, the commission decided that food can be shared when meetings and activities are held outdoors. There will still be no food indoors for any congregational events including funerals. Stone or Rockwood groups wishing to use the churches need to contact Jack Ward or Sherol Steinberg. They will remind folks of protocols concerning masking, distancing, and food.

Renters will continue to contact Jack Ward or Sherol Steinberg. Groups external to the church will set and follow their own protocols provided they are in keeping with public health guidelines. The approach taken to groups external to the church is consistent with the feeling of the commission that our primary responsibility is to keep our congregants safe.

Our church family is encouraged to continue to monitor announcements in the bulletin as they pertain to re-opening protocols. We appreciate when congregants share their questions or comments directly with us so that we can explain the rationale behind each of our decisions or re-visit a protocol as necessary. Such an approach prevents miscommunication. Everyone's voice is important to us.

The next meeting for the Commission is scheduled for late August.

Rockwood Outreach

Submitted by Marcia Haworth

We are so grateful to Rockwood UC congregation members for continuing with their generous support of Mission and Service, because of which we appear to be on track to meet our 2022 target of \$12500.

As our preferred fundraising options involving in-person activities have not been possible so far this year, we have continued with our Food Fix, by holding four food auctions. Again, we thank both congregations for your amazing support of this initiative which to date has raised \$1830 for EWCS Food Bank, Anishnabeg Outreach and the Rural Women's Support Program as well as enabling us to send \$700 through Mission and Service to support humanitarian aid to the people of Ukraine.

We are presently incubating new fund-raising ideas: one of which is a mid-summer Buckingham Palace style Garden Party – think afternoon tea, fresh strawberries, entertainment from the Eramosa Ensemble and others, an opportunity to meet the queen, and wear your medals, best hat or tiara! Stay tuned for more details.

Rockwood Pastoral Care and Fellowship

Submitted by Ellen Thomson

Although our committee has not met during the Covid time, it seems that our congregation has done a good job of keeping in touch with one another.

Cards: If you know of someone who should receive a card, please let Ian Pasmore know...special birthday, anniversary, thinking of you, get well, sympathy.

Our committee and volunteers delivered the packages for Lent.

Broadview subscription list, (formerly, *The Observer*) is being updated. If you wish to subscribe or discontinue your subscription, please let Ellen Thomson know.

Tea and Talk, Coffee and Conversation continue via Zoom. A huge "thank you" to those who host Food Fixes and small groups for decorating the sanctuary for seasonal times.

Stone Pastoral Care and Fellowship

Submitted by John Leffler

Stone Pastoral Care continues to send cards thanks to Gwen Brander; keep the membership and phone list up to date thanks to Karen Richardson; and take part in phoning members to keep in touch. Thanks to Marg and Carl Baker for connecting with folk who can't join us on Zoom.

We also assisted in the delivery of the Lenten packages.

We are grateful to Carl Baker for updating our *Broadview* subscription list.

Stone Canadian Foodgrains Bank Project

Submitted by Bill Allen

Stone United Church is once again holding a growing project to raise money for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Back, by popular demand, will be friendly competitions for the heaviest pumpkin, smallest miniature pumpkin, tallest sunflower, biggest sunflower head, and most flowers on a stalk. New for 2022 are categories for zucchini (longest and heaviest), and for interested farmers, their tallest corn stalk!

Many area churches, including the Rockwood UC will be participating in our project. We are hoping to arrange a mid-summer gathering to judge zucchinis and a mid-October community gathering to weigh and judge pumpkins, sunflowers, and corn. Details to follow.

Global hunger will be an even greater challenge in 2022. The war in Ukraine will impact food insecurity in two ways. First, citizens fleeing the conflict will have difficulty in accessing a consistent supply of food and second, much of the crops usually grown by Ukrainian farmers will not be planted due to the ongoing danger from the conflict. In addition, many countries will continue to experience food scarcity due to drought, floods and lack of resources.

There are three ways to donate: by e-transfer to stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com; by mail to Stone UC, P.O. Box 57, Rockwood, NOB 2K0; or by Canada Helps through the following link:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/49641>

Stone Property & Finance

Submitted by Jack Ward

Once again instead of our Annual Beef Dinner in October Marg Baker, Liz Guthrie, Edie Ward and Barb Parker are planning a series of take-out dinners. The first dinner is planned for May 25.

The Maple Syrup fundraiser was another success. Thanks to all who ordered syrup and to those who picked up and delivered it (Jack Ward and grandsons Seb and Corbin, Don Martin, Ed Nagel, Frank and Janice Stokman, Bill Allen and Carl Baker).

Water samples are taken every 3 months (most recently March 31, 2022).

Thanks to Andy May for snow removal during the winter.

Financial Update Submitted by Bill Allen

The lack of in-person church gatherings has once again impacted weekly givings in 2022. However, members enrolled on PAR have provided consistent monthly income. Reduced monthly transfers to the Pastoral Charge has contributed to a positive net income of **\$555** to the end of April. The traditional Maple Syrup Fundraiser also contributed **\$3,555** to the bottom line, identical to funds raised last year.

Stone members donated **\$3,020** to Mission and Services and **\$1,525** for Ukrainian Humanitarian Relief. Church members are reminded that we are once again raising money for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank through our local growing project as well as for the Anishnabeg Outreach Initiative. Donations to these initiatives or to the Stone Church General Fund can be made through e-transfer to stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com, by mailing a cheque to Stone United Church, P.O. Box 57, Rockwood, NOB 2K0 or through Canada Helps.

The 44th General Council of The United Church of Canada is meeting from **February 13 to August 7, 2022 online**. Catch up with their learning and decision making sessions <https://generalcouncil44.ca/> or watch them on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQDu-SgFb3RgnfAE-HUiSIM3VJMAqoc6d>.

Rockwood Property & Finance

Submitted by Sherol Steinberg

We are grateful that the Reopening Commission has been thoughtfully reopening our facilities, so those who are inclined can enjoy services in person or by Zoom. To facilitate options for worship to accommodate everyone, we are participating in discussions about hybrid worship. Our current freeze on spending continues until the plans for construction of the new parking lot are able to continue. We do have the offer of a donated laptop to enable a form of Zoom worship to happen from the sanctuary as well. Our current laptop is aging and is not able to accommodate zoom worship or media players that allow videos to play. We have a volunteer who will assess the viability of the donated laptop and its capabilities to take on some of the required tasks.

Our finances continue to be stretched by the continuing delays in receiving demolition and building permits for the house and the parking lot. While we are unable to sell the current parking lot we still have the costs of maintaining the house and the additional costs associated with permit applications. We will be asking all to consider participating in our Gifts of Gratitude Campaign that will be announced shortly.

Property and Finance are hoping to run fundraisers in June and July including a Food Fix for the general fund with orders to be picked up following the Rockwood Anniversary Service in June and the Garden Tour in July. We are pleased to announce that we will be organizing a lunch and time of fellowship after church anniversary service in June-providing it does not rain. If it rains the lunch will be take out.

Thank you to Cees Braamse and Kevin Anthony for snow removal at the church and the house.

Thanks to all for decorating the outside and inside of the church for Christmas-with a special thanks to Kevin for running the power cords for the outside display (and for removing them come spring).

AA continues to meet in the sanctuary. Other church rentals are being considered on a case-by-case basis.

Rockwood Trustees

Submitted by Rosslyn Bentley

Our insurance provider has asked that we implement a screening policy in accordance with the United Church Manual and Faithful Footsteps. We will be asking the Board to draft a policy about screening volunteers who work with vulnerable people including children, youth and seniors.

Bills related to our application to build a new parking lot have used up our investment. We have borrowed funds from the Building Fund to cover the remainder. We are waiting on approval from the Ministry of Transportation.

Christine Wenger is now a cosigner for the Trustees along with Darryl Nichol.

Rockwood United received a cheque for \$1000 from Capitol Paving for use of our parking lot.

Stone UCW

Submitted by Edie Ward

Due to Covid-19 no meetings have been held.

February 2022 Marg Baker sent out a newsletter for UCW which contained a word search puzzle. The answers were names of members who have passed away and recipes in the Stone 2012 cookbook celebrating 150 years in Eramosa Community. A call to worship and devotion for February 2022 was included and in memoriam to our friend Shirley Leslie. A UCW name puzzle of current members was fun to do.

During the month of April, we supported Women in Crisis.

Even though we are not meeting we are reminded that we can continue to make offerings for the months of April, May, June, September, November and December (our regular monthly meetings). This will enable us to make donations to our outreach projects at the end of the year. For info contact Edie Ward at 856-4765.

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

Western Ontario Waterways (WOW) Regional Meeting May 6 and 7, 2022

Submitted by Liz Guthrie

Theme: Our Words Matter: Reconsidering the Word “Mission”

A virtual meeting that was led by president Mark Laird and his team who were located in Kincardine.

Worship

UCW – A history and all the ways that UCW ministers to various needs in the church and community.

Voices Against Bullying/Power Abuse – A monologue and music illustrated how David abused by using his power. How do we abuse by using bullying and abusing power in the church?

Our Words Matter – Reconsidering the Word *Mission*. Thérèse Samuel and Teresa Burnett-Cole (Clear Mind) asked, “What does *mission* really mean?” *Mission* started with church union in 1925 when indigenous presbyteries were absorbed. Havoc was created with racism, residential schools and lack of adherence to treaties. What parts of *mission* do we let go of and what parts of *mission* do we hold on to?

Speakers

Our Words Matter: Respecting Pronouns with King Julez

Pronouns like they/them, it/its, ze/zir, fae/faer and xe/xem take time to learn. Do not create nicknames. Do not use slights, eg our church is not accessible – slight towards those who are disabled. Be respectful. Make the effort: ask if we are not sure of the correct pronoun to use and apologize if we use the wrong pronoun. Introduce ourselves as name and pronouns.

Then Let Us Sing Project:

The United Church Publishing House is working with churches of many faiths to create a digital music resource. It will include many selections from *Voices United, More Voices* plus many new selections.

GIA, Hope Publishing, One License, and possibly CCLI will be under one copyright. I will also include a Broadcasting License.

A House Sampler will be available in 2023. A printed book, available in 2025, will be in time to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the United Church

Disbandments: Dungannon United Church, Fordwich United Church, Nottawa United Church, Underwood United Church, Wesley United Church, Kincardine

Name Changes: Rob Roy Pastoral Charge, from Nottawa-Rob Roy Pastoral Charge and Rob Roy United Church, from Rob Roy Zion United Church

Collaborative Agreement: Ebenezer United Church, Campbellville (WOWRC) and Trinity United Church, Acton (HFRC)

In Memoriam: Rev. Kenneth Beal, OM, Rev. David Courtlan Northey, OM and Rev. Ellice Agnes Oliver, DM

Anniversaries of Ordination, Admission,

Commissioning and Recognition: Folks from 5 years of service to 71 years of service were recognized.

Financial Statements along with the PricewaterhouseCoopers report was included in our workbook.

Presentations:

Teresa Coulthard was received as a Licensed Lay Worship Leader.

Jenn Brown was presented as an Designated Lay Ministry. Jenn was accepted into ministry at her placement at Knox United Church, Clifford. Guest speaker was Adele Halliday.

Korea Peace Appeal

Encouraged to sign petition.n

Next Meetings:

Virtual WOWRC Fall Meeting is November 18 and 19, 2022

In person WOWRC Spring Meeting is May 26 and 27, 2022

To view the New Ministries service and the Regional Meeting, go to <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtNUcub3St5941GPwyu7yOA>.

For information about events happening in our region of Western Ontario Waterways consider signing up for the email list by visiting <https://wowrucucc.us20.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=3430c44e426848fe31d8afb4b&id=65ceaaaf22>

Affirming Discernment Circle

Submitted by Lisa Leffler

The Affirming Church Discernment circle continues to meet to look for education opportunities for the group and the congregation. Some things we would like to lift up since the last board meeting are:

- Shared videos in worship and Contemplation and Conversation such as Black History, PIE Day, The TED Talk – *The Danger of Single Story* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adicie
- Encouraged Rockwood Outreach's PIE Day Fundraiser
- Hosted Wellness Day at Stone in recognition of Mental Health Week

At the Annual Meetings, we led a word cloud activity to explore what the mission and vision of our churches are. From those word clouds we developed the following **Affirming Vision Statement**:

As Rockwood and Stone United Churches, we are communities of faith that are grounded in God, inspired by Jesus, and guided by the Holy Spirit.

We strive to be safe and inclusive places for all people – especially those oppressed, excluded and marginalized by age, ability, dietary needs, mental health, economic status, language, racial and cultural backgrounds, marital status and family configurations, gender expression, and sexual orientation.

We are committed to creating a space where the unique gifts and skills of each person are valued, lifted up, and shared in service of God, our communities, and the world.

Recognizing our imperfections as a people of faith, we continue to seek God's forgiveness and we commit to learning and growing together.

We encourage members the Board and all who are a part of our church communities to reflect on whether this statement resonates with your understanding of our churches. Is there anything you would like clarification about?

Our next step is to create an action plan that describes how we would be an actively affirming pastoral charge. This is a plan we will use to guide

our practices if we vote to become an Affirming Pastoral Charge. Before we can vote we have to send the Action Plan to the Affirm Network for approval. Below is the first draft of our action plan. We would appreciate your feedback.

Is there anything to add, change or remove? How do you see this action plan fitting in with the life and work of the church?

Action Plan

Visible Signs and Physical Space

- Installing rainbow decals, flags or/and signs.
- Creating a banner for the sanctuary.
- Gender neutral washroom signs.
- Directional signs for people coming into the building for the first time.
- Land acknowledgement displayed somewhere visible (possibly on the website and/or a bulletin board)
- Creating accessible washrooms at Rockwood
- Finding ways to make our existing spaces more accessible such as hybrid worship and small groups, better microphones, online bulletins so people can adjust font size.

Education

Encouraging ongoing education in all areas for the congregations, committee members and all people in leadership roles through worship, workshops offered by the Region and National Church as well as local community workshops, sharing resources in small groups (i.e. Book Club, Bible Study, Lenten Study) and encouraging relationship building with marginalized groups in our communities.

Following a list of special Sundays that can be found at <https://united-church.ca/worship-special-days> we will encourage that these days will be acknowledged in different ways including but not limited to sharing resources in the announcements or Contemplation and Conversation, recognizing them in worship or small groups, and encouraging people to attend workshops or special events.

Asking each committee to have an Affirming Advocate who is intentional about being Affirming

- Property and Finance – accessibility and funding support for church activities, budget for Affirming activities

- Worship and Faith Formation – special dates and workshops, inclusive music and language, using a variety of different mediums that will speak to different people
- Outreach – sharing ways to support marginalized groups in the community
- Pastoral Care – to establish and support a small group of people from the congregations (two or three at each church) that anyone who has concerns about inclusion can connect with

Relationship Building

- Creating space for people to name their oppositional needs to find compromises that care for *all* people
- Having a designated person or people you can go to with your concerns
- Hearing concerns and taking them to the committee or person that can address the issues
- Talking about brave space where we have the courage to engage in the tough conversations
- Creating spaces where it is okay to make mistakes

Website and Communications

- Affirming symbols on the home page of the website and letterhead
- Updating the website to show we are affirming – including the mission statement and action plan on an Affirming page and inclusive marriage policy
- Posting the names and contact information of the people designated to hear concerns in visible places around the church and on the website

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.
4. **Cheques** can be sent to **Stone United Church**, PO Box 57 Rockwood, ON N0B 2K0 or **Rockwood United Church**, 119 Harris St., Rockwood, ON N0B 2K0

