

Rockwood Stone News

Rockwood-Stone Pastoral Charge, The United Church of Canada Grounded in God, inspired by Jesus, and guided by the Holy Spirit. Visit our website at www.rockwoodstoneunitedchurches.com



Rockwood United Church 119 Harris St. Rockwood, ON NOB 2KO

May 2025

Minister: Rev. Heather Leffler hleffler@rogers.com call or text 519-573-9642

Office:

rockwoodstoneuc@gmail.com 519-856-4160 Messages are monitored virtually on Thursdays



Stone United Church 5370 Fourth Line Rockwood, ON NOB 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 at 9:45 am at Stone and on Zoom and at 11:15 am at Rockwood and on Zoom or watch on YouTube.

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, contact Heather Leffler at 519-573-9642.

To receive

the Announcements on Thursdays, and/or Contemplation and Conversation on Sundays each week, contact the office.

If you don't have email, we are happy to provide printed copies.

For pastoral concerns, to share ideas about our activities, outreach or worship, or just to talk, contact Rev. Heather Leffler at 519-573-9642 or hleffler@rogers.com.

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

100th Anniversary of The United Church of Canada

Sunday, June 8. we will be celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the United Church of Canada at *Melville United Church* 300 St. Andrw St. W., Fergus at 10:30 am. A catered lunch will follow worship. Sign up at church if you can attend or contact Heather at 519-573-9642 or hleffler@rogers.com. Calling all who would like to share their musical gifts at the 100th Anniversary *Hymn Sing Hootenanny* following worship and lunch. The afternoon will be informal and invitational. If you would like to play a song – or simply play along with others, please reach out to me. Christine Grose, christinelgrose@gmail.com or call/text 519-575-1071.

Summer Worship Schedule 2025

All services will begin at 10:00 am

3		
Sunday	Church	Worship Leader
June 22	Rockwood	Worship
June 29	Stone	Lisa Leffler
July 6	Rockwood	Lisa Leffler
July 13	Stone	Lisa Leffler
July 20	Rockwood	Heather Leffler
July 27	Stone	Heather Leffler
August 3	Rockwood	Heather Leffler
August 10	Stone	Heather Leffler
August 17	Rockwood	Heather Leffler
August 24	Stone	Lisa Leffler
August 31	Rockwood	Lisa Leffler
September 7	Leffler's	Heather Leffler



Tuesday, May 17 join us for Bible Study at 7:30 pm on Zoom.

Ask questions, share ideas and make connections between the **Parables of Jesus** and our lives.

Wednesday, May 21 Genesis Book Club at 7:30 pm, at Stone or on Zoom

Join us for a lively conversation of *James* by Percival Everett.



Thursday, May 29

For Women: you are invited to



Tea and Talk
at Rural Roots at 10 am.

Watch the announcements for dates, come join in the conversation and fellowship!

Friday, May 23 Faith, Food, Friendship and Fun

beginning at 6 pm, at Rockwood

Join us for dinner, activities, conversation, a craft, and casual time of worship. Contact Heather at hleffler@rogers.com or 519-573-9642 by the Wednesday before if you plan to attend.



Thursday, May 29

For Men: you are invited to

Coffee Connections

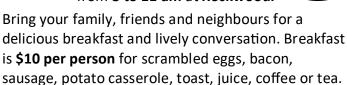
from 10:30 am to noon, at the Bearded Barista.

Watch the announcements for dates, come join in the conversation and fellowship!

Saturday, May 31 plan to attend the

Country Breakfast

from 8 to 11 am at Rockwood.





Saturday, May 31 from 8 to 11 am plan to attend

the Perennial and Plant Sale at Rockwood

There will be perennials, annuals, vegetables and more! Watch the announcements for updates!

We are looking for plastic plant pots 6 inches and up for plants for plant sale or if you think you will have plants to contribute, please contact Marcia cmhawort@sentex.net or Sherol sherol.steins@gmail.com.

Sunday June 15th join us for Affirm Sunday & Communion at 9:45 am at Stone and on Zoom or at 11:15 am at Rockwood and on Zoom



Wear rainbow colours and help us celebrate being affirming congregations where all are welcome.

Sunday, June 22

Join our Worship Committees for Worship at 10 am on Rockwood

Rosslyn Bentley and Chris Barlow will be sharing their slides from the Camino.



join us for

Rockwood Stone

Worship and Picnic
at 10 am at Leffler's

11 Maplelawn Dr., St. Jacobs
Bring your lawn chairs and potluck to share.

Spiritual Saturdays

Watch the bulletins for dates and times. If you are praying scripture for the first time, contact Lisa Leffler to learn the practice. Email lleffler@live.ca by Wednesday 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 one another, and share in the large group conversation. Everyone is welcome.

Stone
and
Rockwood's
Puzzle
Pieces
for the
Western
Ontario
Waterways
Regional
Council

(WOWRC)

100th

Anniversary

Puzzle.





Stone United's Canadian Foodgrains Bank

Committee is excited to begin our 7th year of fundraising to respond to world hunger. Seeds for pumpkins, sunflowers, zucchini, and mystery melons are being distributed for the growing competitions along with other vegetable seeds, which we hope will be shared back as produce for the Harvest Table this

summer and fall. Watch for further details on the zucchini weigh off, zucchini races, and wrap up over the summer. Contact Barb at bm1parker@gmail.com to request your seeds.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank

A Christian Response to Hunger

Spring Harvest Table – Stone UC Foodgrains Bank Project would appreciate your support of our spring offerings by donations of any plants, shrubs or perennials you are thinning out. Mulch, cedar, dogwood, maple tree whips will be available and watch for wild leeks and fiddleheads coming soon. Please take as you need and give as you are able ... exchanges are fine too!

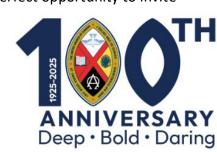
For the latest WOWRC eNewsletter and to learn about the many events and webinars our church offers go to WOW eNewsletter May 9th, 2025. Subscribe to receive the eNewsletter

Join The United Church of Canada on June 8, 2025 from 5:30 to 7:30 EDT pm at Gower St. United Church in St. John's, NL, for a historic day marking the 100th anniversary of The United Church of Canada. The *Centennial Worship* service will be livestreamed, allowing people from across Canada to participate in real time.

Consider hosting a watch party at your home or church to celebrate this milestone together.

The Centennial is a perfect opportunity to invite

friends, family, community members, and those who are new to church (or haven't come in a while).



Letters, Notes and Emails ...

Friends,

The writer of Ecclesiastes reminds us that for everything, there is a season—a timeless message that resonates deeply for individuals, communities, and our church. As we celebrate 100 years of the United Church of Canada, we recognize that ours is not a static institution, but a living, evolving community, continuously seeking to follow Jesus faithfully in a changing world.

Over the decades, we have embraced profound transformation. We moved from predominantly male leadership with the ordination of women, acknowledging the gifts and callings of all whom God calls to serve. We have sought to include and affirm people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, abilities, and backgrounds, reflecting the diverse image of God in our midst. We have faced our complicity in past injustices, offering apologies for the harm done to our Indigenous, Japanese Canadian, and other racialized siblings. Our structures and rules have adapted, responding to the needs of each new generation.

Yet, even amid this constant change, some things remain beautifully steadfast. The congregations of Rockwood and Stone are built on a foundation of deep love for God and each other. This winter, as we grieved the loss of loved ones, that love became tangible through the countless acts of kindness—flowers, food, cards, messages, phone calls, and heartfelt words. These gestures gave John, Lisa, Helen, our family, and me strength as we mourned Sarah's passing, and I know this same care extends throughout our community.

In these moments, we are reminded that, just as we support one another, God is with us—in life, in death, and in life beyond death. Our United Church's commitment to bold discipleship, daring justice, and deep spirituality assures us that, no matter the season, we can continue to make a meaningful difference in the world.

Blessings,

Heather

Spring 2025

A Message from the Pastoral Charge Board Chair

Greetings Everyone,

Spring is always a great time to be excited about the future and new birth. We think about new crops, newborn animals, and new opportunities. It must have been similar, 100 years ago, when our ancestors had the vision to form the United Church of Canada. Members of the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational Churches must have been both excited and apprehensive about what the new union would mean for them. What would be the benefits and what 'good' things would they be losing. Their vision and courage have brought us to this point of celebrating our 100-year-old history.

Yes, our union has not always been straightforward and without its divisive issues. We have lost members and gained members through our endeavours to be more tolerant and accepting of everyone in the belief that we are being consistent to the teachings and practices of Jesus. But I think, because of going through those issues, we are stronger and better prepared for our future. We may have some difficult decisions to make as we face declining membership and finances, but we need to meet those issues with the same vision as our ancestors had 100 years ago, with hope, excitement, and optimism.

We have an exciting opportunity to celebrate the United Church birthday at Melville United Church in Fergus on June 8th. Many churches in the area are taking part and combining their choirs to perform anthems and add to the festivities. Our own Lisa Leffler will be one of the guest speakers for the event! I hope you will be able to attend. I also hope, at this time, that you might consider giving a special donation to your church to help support all the benefits we receive from being part of our two congregations. Maybe \$1 for every year or whatever you can afford, will go a long way to help sustain the life of our churches.

I wish you a great spring and summer ahead. All the best,

Randy Dewey

Committees and Groups ...

Rockwood and Stone Worship and Faith Formation

Submitted by Barb Eley and Brian Mack

We continue to give God thanks for all who support our worship and faith formation activities.

Faith Formation Highlights

- Contemplation & Conversation Heather continues to provide these reflections weekly.
 Lisa Leffler and Brian Mack have written pieces as well.
- **Easter Pack** Due to the many things happening in our churches, an Easter Pack was not offered.
- Spiritual Saturdays These have been held a number of times in person/hybrid format since
 January. Lisa has also provided materials for folks to pray scriptures on their own.
- Bible Study The group including members of Arthur United continue to meet on Zoom to study the parables of Jesus.
- Faith, Food, Friendship & Fun Gatherings were held on February 21 and March 21 at Rockwood.
- Coffee Connections Men meet monthly at the Bearded Barista.
- Tea & Talk Women meet bi-weekly at Rural Routes.
- Choirs Rockwood Choir continues to meet on Thursdays at 7 pm while Stone Choir meets Thursdays at 1 pm. The Rockwood Chimes Choir has not been meeting.
- Eramosa Ensemble The Ensemble practices weekly at Stone and will be playing at both churches on Mother's Day, May 11.
- Wellness Series Sessions were held at Stone.
 February 8th How to Manage Grief and Loss;
 March 1st What's Going Right in the World of Waste Resources; March 22nd Building Greatness Habitat for Humanity; April 12th Caregiving and Wellness Hospice Wellington; and May 4th Technology 101. Most sessions were recorded and are available on our YouTube channel.

Worship Highlights

- **Sunday January 5**th Lisa shared her experiences at Iona.
- Sunday January 12th Lisa shared her experiences at the Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Center. Worship was held in the Reading Room at Stone and in Day Hall at Rockwood.
- Sunday February 9th Stone Annual Meeting –
 Worship was held in the Reading Room followed
 by Stone's Annual Meeting. A delicious chili lunch
 organized by Barb Parker and a trivia event
 organized by Tammy Smits and Tom Parker was
 much enjoyed. A free will offering was taken for
 Canadian Foodgrains.
- **Sunday February 16**th Due to inclement weather, a 10 o'clock service was held on Zoom.
- Sunday February 23rd Rockwood Annual
 Meeting Heather led worship at Stone and
 Rockwood where she shared Lectio Divinia.
 Rockwood's Annual Meeting and potluck lunch
 were held in Day Hall.
- Sunday March 2nd Worship and Faith Formation planned and led a combined service at Rockwood using Lectio Divinia in order to support Rev Leffler following Sarah's death. Thanks to Lisa Leffler for preparing the slides.
- Sunday March 9th A combined service at Stone using World Day of Prayer materials was led by the Worship and Faith Formation Committee. The service was planned by Heather, Barb, Brian, and Liz.
- Sunday March 16th Communion Communion was served in both churches.
- Sunday March 30th Worship was cancelled due to inclement weather.
- Sunday April 13th Palm Sunday We used large, coloured cloths to represent the cloaks mentioned in Luke's Palm/Passion story. People joined in laying the cloths out and folding them as they reflected on the scriptures. Communion was celebrated. Rockwood Choir sang.
- Friday April 18th Good Friday Worship was held at Barrie Hill led by Rev. Kevin Steeper, with Heather, Rockwood and Stone Choirs, and lay readers from both our congregations participating in the service.
- Sunday April 20th Easter Sunday Both Choirs sang.

Upcoming

- Sunday May 25th Rogation Sunday
- Sunday June 1st Rockwood Anniversary This will be a combined service at 10 am at Rockwood with Rev. Andrew Hyde as the guest speaker.
- Sunday June 8th Celebration of 100th Anniversary
 of United Church of Canada The service will be
 held at Melville United in Fergus. Our choirs will
 be part of a mass choir. Lisa Leffler and Rev. Tom
 Watson will be guest speakers. There will be no
 service at Rockwood or Stone.
- Sunday June 15th Affirm Sunday & Communion –
 Congregants are encouraged to dress in rainbow
 colours.
- Summer Services Heather will be on study leave June 22nd and the service will be led by the Worship and Faith Formation Committee at Rockwood and will feature Rosslyn & Chris sharing their travel experiences. Heather will be on holidays June 29th, July 6th, August 24th, and August 31st. Lisa will provide pulpit supply. Services will alternate between the two churches beginning June 22. Services will be at 10 am.

Rockwood Stone Ministry and Personnel

Submitted by Brian Mack

Ministry and Personnel met on May 8th at 2 pm on Zoom. Highlights of the meeting were as follows:

- Procedures for Compassionate Leave were reviewed and a note made in the minutes as to how Rev. Leffler's leave was handled at the time of Sarah's passing. She expressed her deep gratitude for the support of our congregations.
- Adjustments to the Minister's salary for 2024 and to the Secretary's salary for 2024 were noted.
- New resources as of March 25, 2025 for Ministry and Personnel were reviewed.
- The process for annual reviews was highlighted and these reviews will be completed by the end of September.
- Heather reviewed her on-going work re: pastoral care, planning with Worship and Faith Formation, meeting with Finance and Stewardship, serving for a time as a Pastoral Charge supervisor for Barrie Hill, Speedside, Ebenezer and Morriston, and her work with the Regional Council including the recent gathering of WOWRC in Port Elgin.

- Ministry and Personnel guidelines re: position descriptions were reviewed. Patty Lancaster and Rosslyn Bentley will meet with Lisa Leffler to update the description for Pastoral Charge Secretary/Tech Support. Rev. Leffler will join these meetings as she is able. The new position description will be brought back to M & P in the fall and the intent is to bring the description forward to the Board at the November meeting.
- Next meeting will be October 28th at 2 pm on Zoom.

Rockwood Stone Finance & Stewardship

Submitted by Heather Leffler

The committee met on May 7 on Zoom.

It was agreed that Worship and Faith Formation will be asked to let treasurers know the date, name, address, email address and mileage of individuals providing pulpit supply or speaking on Anniversaries and special occasions as soon as speakers are booked. The pastoral charge treasurer pays regular pulpit supply and congregational treasurers pay Anniversary speakers.

It was noted that with the change in pastoral charge treasurers early in 2024 the minister and secretary's budgeted raises were not passed on to ADP Payroll Service. These amounts will be paid through ADP when the spring deposit from the Manse Fund has been made to the pastoral charge. We will be looking into the office phone to see if there would be any savings in moving to a computer phone line.

It was decided that we will invite members of our churches to give a special 100th Anniversary gift to Rockwood or Stone later in the year.

Representatives from both churches will meet with Rafael Torres, Director of Property Services of Toronto United Church Corporation to learn more about renting out our churches and promoting rentals online.

The committee was reminded that grants are available from the <u>UpFund</u>, <u>Seeds of Hope</u>, PTCC <u>https://ptccorp.org/</u>, TUCC <u>https://www.tucc.ca/</u> and Western Ontario Waterways.

https://wowrcucc.ca/financial-support/.

Rockwood Property & Finance

Submitted by Sherol Steinberg

We talked with UPRC regarding the option of turning the church property over to them to manage and we would in effect become a tenant. They indicated that they would be interested, they would need to make \$3500 a month in rental fees to ensure Rockwood would not have to pay rent, but we would need to be flexible in our use of the church. Rockwood would have no control over potential renovations, and they were not currently willing to make accommodations for current long-term tenants of AA. They also would mandate the parking lot to not be sold.

Due to information lags from UPRC, and their lack of responsiveness and some of the restrictions that would be put upon the congregation, the Council decided that we would currently prefer to relist the parking lot for sale and look into the saleability of the House of Joy. UPRC were informed, we will leave the door open for further discussion. They were potentially interested in taking over the House of Joy, but would like to tour and do an assessment.

In general Property and Finance found UPRC challenging to deal with, and it was felt we would prefer to try and increase rentals on our own.

We are looking to improve the rentability/accessibility of Day Hall, to that end we have applied for an UpFund grant.

Thank you to Ros Bentley who has written the grant proposal to the UpFund. We have requested monies for electrical work, improved lighting in Day Hall, programmable thermostats in the Hall and in the Sanctuary, energy efficient windows in Day Hall (end Wall), installing a lock box for rentals, and repairs to the plaster and dry wall in the Hall. We have purchased paint and will be painting the kitchen ceiling, Day Hall ceiling and the walls and trim in Day Hall.

After improving the Hall, we will come up with a plan to increase rentals.

Stone Property & Finance

Submitted by Jack Ward and Bill Allen

Property Update – Jack Ward

Stone had one take-out dinner this year on May 8th. Sales were good and it was profitable.

Water tests continue to be done every 90 days as required by Public Health. All reports to date indicate our water is safe.

A yard clean-up is being planned for the next month to trim bushes etc.

The hybrid furnace performed well during the winter but drainage problems with water from coil defrosting will be addressed now that the warmer weather is here.

Financial Update - Bill Allen

- Operating deficit of \$6,450 to the end of April.
- Four doners have passed in the last two years and three donors are no longer contributing. One new donor has been added.
- Maple Syrup fundraiser contributed \$2,350.
- Four fundraising dinners to come.
- Operating deficit of \$7,500 projected to year-end.
- TD Wealth Management will no longer be managing out portfolio as our assets are deemed too small to manage.

Stone Pastoral Care and Fellowship

Submitted by John Leffler

The members of the committee along with other Church members helped to deliver the fall Christmas Packages to each Church family. People continue to express thanks for the packs. Thank you to the Stone Pastoral Care members and all who visit people, send cards, keep the phone and membership list up to date and keep in touch with our Minister to keep her informed of life events within our congregation. The ham dinner provided dinner for over 80 people – for many this is great Pastoral Care.

Rockwood Outreach

Submitted by Marcia Haworth

In January we were pleased to distribute funds raised during 2024 to help our partners by sending \$1500 to Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis and \$1000 to Anishnabeg Outreach for their Spirit Bundles. In addition, each adult client of the EWCS food bank in Rockwood received a \$50 Walmart gift card and we were able to increase our support for families with each family of 4 receiving a \$250 gift card and families of 5 receiving \$300. We hope this helped them over the difficult post-Christmas period.

In March we indulged in a chicken pot pie-making marathon, making 44 pies which sold in no time. Once again, we thank Maple Lodge Farms for their donation of chicken.

Our congregations have also continued to support Outreach by donating generously, which enables us to help the food bank on a regular basis. We are in regular contact with the coordinator who tells us which staples are in short supply. So far this year we have purchased large quantities of cheese, eggs, butter, frozen vegetables; frozen fish and single serving frozen meals.

We are now organizing a spring fund-raiser along with the Property and Finance Committee. We hope to have a very successful plant sale on May 31st outside the church, in conjunction with the Country Breakfast from 8 am until around noon. There will be perennials, including unusual hostas; vegetables including heirloom tomatoes; herbs and small trees. If anyone would like to donate items, please contact Marcia cmhawort@sentex.net or sherol.steins@gmail.com. We can help with the digging if needed.

Stone Canadian Foodgrains Bank Project Submitted by Barb Parker

Stone UC's Canadian Foodgrains Bank Project Committee has been actively promoting our 7th year of local activities, as well as CFB nationally, and here in Ontario. An CFB Update regarding US Foreign Aid cuts impact, and the Sudan crisis, prepared by Bill, was included in the March/April Bulletins. We also promoted and attended the March 27th Spring Information Meeting at Barrie Hill, with Ontario CFB Coordinator Henry Reinders.

Our Harvest Table initiative has returned, and offers the community mulch, spring leeks, trees/plants, seed potatoes, etc., with the theme – Take as you Need, Give as You are Able. Seeds for pumpkins, sunflowers, zucchini, and mystery melons are being distributed for the growing competitions along with other vegetable seeds, which we hope will be shared back as produce for the Harvest Table this summer and fall.

With the United States Administration drastically cutting funding of International Aid, it is even more critical that aid agencies such as the Canadian Foodgrains Bank step up to fill the gap. Conflict in areas such as the Gaza and Sudan continues to be the leading driver of food insecurity. Donations to our growing project can be made through e-transfer to stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com or a cheque sent to Stone United Church, P.O. Box 57, Rockwood, NOB 2KO.

Western Ontario Waterways

Submitted by Liz Guthrie

2025 Spring Hybrid WOW Meeting Report

Where: Unifor Centre, Port Elgin, ON

When: May 2 and 3, 2025

Theme: "We are One — Deepening our

Connections."

How did new connections happen at this meeting?

- People introducing themselves what church they represent and their pronouns whenever they are speaking
- Table discussions about other information to be included on name tags.
- Meeting new worship leaders. Singing.
- Puzzle pieces for the 100th Anniversary: 130 pieces were sent out and 115 have been returned.
- Admissions Presentation with slides. 44 people are looking for jobs in the United Church.
 Because of racial backgrounds of potential worship leaders, churches looking to hire are not hiring. Table and breakout room discussion.
- Video message from the Moderator, Carmen Lansdowne.
- Workshops: Hybrid: Affirm Network Gathering or Collaborative Ministry. In person: Crystal bracelet, If I Had a Million Dollars or Palestine Land Exercise.
- Entertaining presentation from the Pastoral Relations Commission.
- Rev. Andrew Hyde shared how 2024 grants were distributed by the Discipleship and Justice Commission.
- Rev. Jacob Birch shared how the Bible Society is translating, publishing, distributing and engaging in the sale and distribution of Bibles.
- Brenna Baker shared a Mission & Service update.
- Youth led a "Mingle Bingo". Those at each table had to find out about others in order to play bingo.
- Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) shared how it helps with property stewardship.
- Westminster United Church in Orangeville has become Affirming.
- President Jennifer Irving has completed her presidency. The new president is Rev. Rebekah Duncan

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 support our churches?

- 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 Stone https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/80455/ or Rockwood https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/48574 to make a credit card donation. You can designate your offering to the church, M&S and/or other in the message box.
- Cheques can be sent to Stone United Church, PO Box 57 Rockwood, ON NOB 2KO or Rockwood United Church, 119 Harris St., Rockwood, ON NOB 2KO