



# 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](http://www.rockwoodstoneunitedchurches.com)



**Rockwood United Church**

119 Harris St.  
Rockwood, ON N0B 2K0



**Stone United Church**

5370 Fourth Line  
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 at 9:45 am at **Stone** and on **Zoom Worship** 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](mailto:hleffler@rogers.com).

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

## **Congregational Packages for Advent and Christmas**

Packages will be available **November 30**. If you would like to bake Christmas cookies for **November 29**,  
submit a winter picture for our Christmas cards by **November 16**,  
write a reflection or help assemble the packs on **November 29** at **11:30 am** at **Stone**  
please contact Heather at [hleffler@rogers.com](mailto:hleffler@rogers.com) or 519-573-9642.



**Tuesday, November 18** join us for  
**Bible Study**  
at **7:30 pm** on **Zoom**.

Ask questions, share ideas and make connections between **Abraham and Sarah's story** and our lives.

**Wednesday, November 19**  
**Genesis Book Club**  
at **7:30 pm**, at **Stone** or on **Zoom**

Join us for a lively conversation of Waubgeshig Rice's **Moon of the Crusted Snow**.



**Thursday, November 20**  
**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, November 21**  
**Faith, Food, Friendship and Fun**  
beginning at **6 pm**, at **Stone**

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

**Saturday, November 22**  
plan to visit Outreach's  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Christmas Market**  
from **10:30 am to 2 pm** at **Rockwood**  
The Silent Auction will close at **2 pm**.



Please bring your family, friends and neighbours to help us fund grocery gift cards for the Rockwood food bank clients to support those in our community experiencing food insecurity during the holiday season. There will be a light lunch, yummy Christmas baking and treats, frozen chicken pot pies, fruit pies, crafts, gifts, the ever-popular Silent Auction and much more.

We are also offering our signature fresh **Outdoor Christmas Planters**. Pre-ordered until **Sunday, November 16** through Marcia at 519-856-4968 or [cmhawort@sentex.net](mailto:cmhawort@sentex.net).

**Thursday, November 27**  
**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, November 29**  
plan to attend the  
**Country Breakfast**  
from **8 to 11 am** at **Rockwood**.

Bring your family, friends and neighbours for a delicious breakfast and lively conversation. Breakfast is **\$12 per person** for eggs, bacon, sausage, toast, hashbrowns, juice, coffee or tea and apple crisp. If you would like to help, please contact Barb Parker at [bm1parker@gmail.com](mailto:bm1parker@gmail.com). Proceeds will help us raise funds for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank in the effort to combat World Hunger.



**Communion** will be celebrated the first **Sunday of Advent November 30** at **9:45 am** at **Stone** and on **Zoom** and at **11:15 am** at **Rockwood** and on **Zoom**.

**Sunday, November 30**  
begin the Christmas season with  
**An Afternoon of Christmas Carols**  
at **2:30 pm**, at **Rockwood** and on **Zoom**  
with our own Eramosa Ensemble.



Stay for hot cider and cookies.  
There will be a free will offering for EWCS Foodbank.

**Wear Your Festive Apparel for Advent ...**  
On **November 30** wear something **red**  
on **December 7** wear **green**  
on **December 14** wear a **festive hat**  
and/or **Christmas sweater**  
on **December 21** wear **all of the above**  
add adornments like festive belts, dangly earrings  
and more – homemade all the better  
and join us for **Worship!**



**Advent Gifts** – In the Spirit of Christmas help us support **Anishnabeg Outreach Spirit Bundles** by **December 14**.

Most needed items include ...

- Cleaning supplies (disinfectant, laundry soap, dish soap, etc.)
- Diapers (For ages 3 and up)
- Toiletries (shampoo, body wash, toothpaste, deodorant, etc.)
- Toilet paper, tissues, and paper towels
- Children's clothing (new or used)
- Bicycles – children, youth, and adult (new or used)
- Scooters (new or used)
- Tricycles (new or used)
- Child carriers for bikes (new or used)
- Helmets (new)
- Training wheels (new or used)
- Bicycle pumps (new or used)
- Bicycle repair parts (new or used)
- Gardening supplies (pots, seeds, etc.)
- Homemade face masks (children and adult sizes)
- Reusable grocery bags

Consider making a donation to one of our outreach partners ...

**Mission and Service,**  
**Anishnabeg Outreach,**  
**Canadian Foodgrains Project,**  
**Ecumenical Campus Ministry,**  
**East Wellington Community Services,**  
**Rainbow Chorus,**  
**Royal City Mission** or  
the **Rural Women's Support Program.**



**Christmas Eve**

on December 24, 2025  
from 6:15 to 7 pm

we will share

**Readings and Reflections**  
with **Communion**,  
accompanied by flute music  
at **Rockwood**.

At 7:30 pm we will celebrate  
**the Birth of Jesus**  
with **Communion, Scripture**  
**Story, Song and Conversation at Stone.**

**Sunday, December 28**

Join our Worship Committees for  
**Worship**  
at 10 am on **Zoom**.

You are welcome to join us in your Christmas pj's.

**Saturday, January 31, 2026**  
and the last Saturday of the month until May

**Country Breakfast**  
at **Rockwood**,  
from 8 to 11 am



Bring your family, friends and neighbours for a delicious breakfast and lively conversation. If anyone would like to **help serve, cook, clear tables or clean the kitchen afterwards**, please contact Sherol at [sherol.steins@gmail.com](mailto:sherol.steins@gmail.com). The next breakfast will be **February 28**.

**Annual Meetings**

**Stone's Meeting**  
will be held on **Sunday, February 8, 2026**.

**Rockwood's Meeting**  
to be announced.

There will be one combined **Worship** at 10 am at the church and on **Zoom**.

**Thank you for supporting  
our churches and  
outreach partners!**



## Letters, Notes and Emails ...

Friends,

When Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council formed in 2019, we were asked to write a *Living Faith Story* – a story to be updated annually and used in place of a needs assessment to call a new minister. Then the pandemic arrived, and it felt far more important to focus our energy on caring for our congregations than on documenting our story. Over the years, I have gathered pictures and ideas for a slideshow that might one day tell that story, but it always seemed that living our story mattered more than telling it.

Now, as I prepare to retire, priorities have shifted. I shared a draft of our story with the Board this week, and what a joy it was to remember all that we have shared over the past 13 years. It has been a profound privilege to serve with you.

Together, we have worshipped in our beautifully decorated sanctuaries and in circles. We have sung together, shared in conversation, and been blessed by the beautiful music of our organists, choirs, bell and chime choirs, band, and ensembles. We have shared in breakfasts, lunches, dinners, picnics, and take-out. Our fundraisers have been creative and fun – country markets, food fights, auctions, food fixes, trivia lunches, Robbie Burns suppers, growing competitions, zucchini races and more.

We have collected food, spirit bundle items, snacks, bikes, and more to help our local partners – AO, ECM, EWCS, RWSP, Royal City Mission and the Rainbow Chorus. Through Mission and Service, the Children of Bukati, Canadian Foodgrains Bank and Guatemala trips, we have supported people across Canada and around the world. With our neighbours we have worshipped on the World Day of Prayer, Good Friday, Remembrance Day and for United Church anniversaries – heard moderators and celebrated our shared faith. Through GERSP we shared in sponsoring the Al Ahmad, Al Janoud family.

We learned to worship on Zoom to stay connected during the pandemic and can now pivot online easily for storms, meetings, and events. Through the Harvest Table, the Wellness Series, and by providing space for AA, EarlyON, and East Wellington Community Services, we have reached out to our communities. Bible Study, the Genesis Book Club, Weeks of Guided Prayer, Spiritual Saturdays, Faith Food Friendship and Fun, UCW, Into the Promise, and Confirmation classes have nurtured our spirits. Coffee Connections, Tea and Talk, Garden Tours, Talent Nights, and other events have deepened our sense of community. And we became the first affirming pastoral charge.

Thank you for the faithful journey we have shared. As God calls us to travel new paths, I pray your lives will continue to be enriched as you live your story as Jesus' faithful followers, making a difference in your communities and the world.

Blessings,

*Heather*

November 2025

### A Message from the Pastoral Charge Board Chair

Dear Friends,

As I look out and see yet another dreary, wet day, I realize that this rain is actually an answer to my concerns about how dry our summer and fall have been. I don't remember seeing our pond or Guelph Lake this low. I've driven by the lake and have seen people walking their dogs on the newly formed islands far from the normal shores. It is amazing how God has created seasons and systems that help reset current situations and give us new opportunities to start again.

Such is the life of the church. With Rev. Heather Leffler's announcement of her retirement in June, we find ourselves at a crossroad, filled with many emotions. First, I would like to thank Heather for her dedication and leadership to our congregations. Her hard work continues as she is ensuring we are well-prepared to begin the process of deciding what's next for our churches.

We also need to look closely at the current status of our two churches and what our needs and options are for the months and years ahead. Communication will play an important role in our upcoming decision-making. I encourage everyone to consider taking part in committees and discussions as we move forward. We may very likely need to change our Sunday worship schedule and format. To make the best decisions about any changes we will need to hear everyone's voice and ideas.

Change is always hard, but I'm optimistic that with God's guidance, we will take this opportunity to reset and move forward with new norms that align with the goals and capabilities of both our congregations.

Best wishes to you all for the Christmas Season ahead and the 2026 New Year!

Randy Dewey

## Committees and Groups ...

### **Rockwood and Stone Worship and Faith Formation**

*Submitted by Barb Eley and Brian Mack*

We give thanks to God for all who contribute their time and talent in any way to support Worship and Faith Formation.

During the summer and on the occasional Sunday when Heather has had other commitments, she has been especially appreciative for the Contemplation and Conversation pieces contributed by Barb Eley, Barb Parker, Brian Mack, Lisa Leffler, Karen Richardson, Tammy Smits, and Rosslyn Bentley.

#### **Worship, Learning and Other Activities**

- **May 4** – Heather used the WOWRC Spring Meeting Resources including Rev. Dyanne Marlok's reflection for worship.
- **May 25** – The prayers of the people included slides which focused on Rogation Sunday.
- **June 1 – Rockwood's 158<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** – At the combined service at 10 am. Rev. Andrew Hyde was the guest speaker. The Rockwood Choir sang *Benediction*. Worship was followed by a potluck lunch.
- **June 8 – Celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of United Church of Canada** – Nine people from Rockwood and 23 people from Stone joined the cluster gathering at Melville UC in Fergus at 10 am. Rockwood and Stone members sang in the choir, Heather and the other clergy led worship and Lisa Leffler and Rev. Tom Watson spoke. There were over 300 people in worship from the 11 cluster congregations.
- **June 15** – During the week it was decided to hold one service at Stone, as many people from Rockwood were away. Heather Blair played for worship which included communion. Heather focused on inclusion and shared the Moderator's 2025 Pride message.
- **June 22** – Worship and Faith Formation led the service. Rosslyn Bentley and Chris Barlow shared their slides from the Camino that had been planned for March 30.

- **Summer Services** began at Rockwood on June 22. Lisa Leffler led worship on June 29, July 6, July 13, August 24 and August 31.
- **September 7** – The final combined service and picnic were held at Leffler's in St. Jacob's. The service included a craft and other elements from Faith, Food, Friendship and Fun. Heather shared that she will be retiring at the end of June 2026.
- **September 21** – Both congregations were invited to an 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Potluck for Carol Stiles following Rockwood's worship.
- **September 28 – Orange Shirt Sunday** – Eleanor Mackenzie Precepa, daughter of Erin Leahey and Robbie Precepa was baptized at Stone. Randy Dewey played guitar and led the choir in singing *Jesus Loves Me*. The congregation was invited to join the family for fellowship after worship.
- **October 5 – World Communion Sunday** – A variety of breads and juice were served.
- **October 12 – Thanksgiving Sunday**
- **October 19 – Stone's 163 Anniversary/World Food Sunday** with Worship focussing on Foodgrains with Bill Allen sharing his ambassador message. After worship, there was a Foodgrains wrap-up followed by lunch. At 1 pm, the Rainbow Chorus joined us to present a mini concert.
- **October 26 – Reformation Sunday**
- **November 9 – Remembrance Sunday** was held at Rockwood at 10 am with the combined choir singing.
- **November 11 – Remembrance Day Service** – Members of the Rockwood and at Stone choirs sang at the cenotaph.

#### **Faith Formation**

- **Spiritual Saturday** has not met yet this fall.
- **Bible Study** group ended their study of the epistles in June and re-started on September 30 with a study of the story of Abraham and Sarah.
- **Faith, Food, Friendship and Fun** was held on May 23, June 13, and October 17 at Rockwood.
- **Choir** – Stone Choir is meeting Thursdays at 1 pm while Rockwood Choir meets at 6:30 pm.

- **Ensemble** – The ensemble continues to practice at Stone. They played on Mother's Day in both churches.
- **Book Club** resumed on September 17<sup>th</sup>.
- **Coffee Connections** for men resumed at the Bearded Barista on October 30 and **Tea and Talk** resumed at Rural Routes on November 13.

### Coming Events

- **November 30 – Advent 1** Communion. The Carol Sing will be at 2:30 pm at Rockwood.
- **December 7 – Advent 2** – Blue Christmas will include remembrance of people who died this year.
- **December 14 – Advent 3** – The meaning of the carols will be shared.
- **December 21 – Advent 4**
- **Christmas Eve Readings and Reflections with Communion** from 6:15 to 7 pm at Rockwood followed by a **Christmas Eve Communion Service** at Stone beginning at 7:30 pm.
- **December 28** – Heather will be on holidays and Worship & Faith Formation will lead a Zoom service.
- **January 4** – Heather will be on holidays and Lisa will lead the service.
- **January 11** – Heather will be on leave to do the Annual Report and Lisa will lead worship.
- **February 8 – Stone's in-person Annual Meeting** – one service at Stone at 10 am.
- **February** to be announced – **Rockwood's in-person Annual Meeting** – one service at Rockwood at 10 am.

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### **Rockwood Stone Ministry and Personnel**

*Submitted by Rosslyn Bentley*

- Ministry and Personnel met on November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7 pm at Stone Church. Highlights of the meeting were as follows:
- Noting the change in Chair from Brian Mack to Rosslyn Bentley effective July 2025 and the resignation of Patty Lancaster from the committee effective October 2025.
- Acknowledgement of Rev. Heather Leffler's letter of October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 providing notice to retire in

effect from June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026. M and P will provide support to the Minister as outlined in the United Church Pastoral Relations December 2019 handbook and Resources for Retirement December 2021 in preparation for retirement and disengagement from the congregation to allow for a successful transition.

- Annual reviews were completed with all staff: Heather Leffler – Patty and Rosslyn; Lisa – Heather DeJonge; Liz Guthrie – Patty, Heather Blair – Ellen Thomson, Barb Eley – Rosslyn. All staff reported satisfaction in their role and with their compensation. Edie and Jack Ward – Patty Lancaster – it was noted they are retiring and Stone Council is reviewing how the duties can be divided to allow for others to support the work. The meeting expressed their sincere appreciation for their many gifts and hard work.
- 2.6% cost of Living minimum adjustments for staff salary were noted from the United Church recommendations and recommended to the joint Board along with an increase in the education allowance to \$1762, mileage of \$0.60/km, \$261 for pulpit supply and \$40/month phone allowance for the Minister (although it is noted the Western Ontario Waterways RC recommended minimum rate is \$50/month).
- The following Motion was approved: to recommend to Council to adopt the minimum COLA recommendation of the United Church for all staff positions.
- Heather reviewed her on-going work re: pastoral care, planning with Worship and Faith Formation, meeting with Finance and Stewardship and Trustees. She also outlined her main goal for the coming 6 months as being setting the charge up for success after her retirement.
- Patty Lancaster and Rosslyn Bentley met with Lisa Leffler and Rev. Leffler during the summer to update the description for Pastoral Charge Secretary. Heather and Lisa have had a chance to review the draft and make changes. The intent is to bring the description forward to the Board at the November meeting.
- Next meeting will be February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 1 pm.

## ***Rockwood Stone Finance & Stewardship***

*Submitted by Heather Leffler*

The committee met on October 29 and received a Treasurer's Report from Matt Setzkorn, Pastoral Charge Treasurer; as well as verbal reports from Bill Allen, Stone Treasurer; Amanda Hunter-Anthony, Rockwood's Treasurer; and Jack Ward, Stone Property and Finance Chair.

It was noted that our minister and secretary received the funds not paid to them in 2024 in August.

The Pastoral Charge received \$12,570 from the Manse Fund in the spring and November.

Rosslyn Bentley, M&P Chairperson shared the cost of living increases mandated by the United Church for 2026. It was noted that Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council has mandated \$50 per month for the minister's telephone. Heather is happy with \$40 per month as John has a discount from Rogers.

We are exploring moving the Pastoral Charge phone to VOIP.

Heather shared options for ministry for July to December 2026.

Following our meeting the chairperson, minister and treasurers met with Matt to prepare the 2026 Budget.

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## ***Rockwood Property & Finance***

*Submitted by Sherol Steinberg*

Thank you to all who share their time, talents and financial support that enables the church to function. Currently PAR and weekly givings are not keeping up with expenses. We hold Country Breakfasts in September, October, January, February, March, April and May, the proceeds go to the General Fund. Outreach has also given a portion of their fundraising towards the General Fund.

We applied for and received an UpFund Grant to improve Day Hall, with the intention of increasing rentability and accessibility. New lights were installed in the Hall making it a brighter and more welcoming space – and allows programs that do crafts or readings to run with more ease. The walls were mended and painted. New double paned windows were replaced in the west end of the Hall and in the two bathrooms as the old windows were single paned and not energy efficient. Programmable

thermostats were also installed in the hall and the church which allows the temperature to be controlled remotely. A reminder to all those who use the hall and the sanctuary to reserve their times so the heat will be on at appropriate times and to ensure the space is available.

Property and Finance are hoping to increase rentals now that the renovations are complete. There will also be a new fee schedule for rentals coming out shortly.

### ***House of Joy***

Thank you to Cees, Kevin, Alex, Jamie, Eric and Christine for all their work on the House. The roof was repaired to ensure that it does not leak over this winter. The leaning chimney was removed, and water damage (fallen ceilings and insulation) was removed. This is with the intention of preserving the state of the house and to prevent further deterioration as we look to sever the lot from the church property in preparation for a sale in the spring.

It has become apparent and was discussed at Council that the market has changed and the parking lot is not as saleable as the House. In the spring, we will be installing steps to the front door on the advice of the Real Estate Agent. Over the winter, an application to sever will be completed. The Real Estate Agent believes the House/House Lot is saleable and proposes it be listed for one week only and take offers. We are looking forward to spring!

With the sale of the House, we will be looking at building 1-2 sheds.

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***Thank you for all the ways***

***you are generous.***

***Your gifts to our congregations  
and to Mission and Service  
really do help to change  
the world God loves.***

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## **Stone Property & Finance**

*Submitted by Jack Ward and Bill Allen*

### **Property Update – Jack Ward**

Our takeout dinners this year were well received. A total of 343 dinners were sold. After putting out a sign in front of the church advertising our dinners, we received responses from close neighbours of the church.

Water is tested every 90 days, and we are pleased to report our water is good.

Public Health inspected our kitchen in August and we passed.

### **Financial Update – Bill Allen**

The Stone United Church ended the month of October with an operating surplus of \$3,510.50. This surplus is primarily a result of a very generous legacy gift from the Estate of Evelyn Farr. We are very appreciative of this gift, allowing our church to continue the important faith support for our congregation and our community outreach activities. Fundraising activities also contributed to this surplus, with \$2,350 raised from maple syrup sales and \$5,689.19 from the four take-out dinners on offer.

This is our seventh year for a Canadian Foodgrains Project. To-date we have raised \$4,826 from donations and fundraising activities. We will be closing out our project year with a fundraising breakfast on November 29. Donations are still being accepted until the end of November. Donations can be made by e-transfer to [stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com) or by mailing a cheque to Stone United Church, P.O. Box 57, Rockwood, N0B 2K0. Write “Foodgrains Project” in the memo line. In addition to money raised for this year’s project, a decision was made to donate the balance from the Children of Bukati project to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

Once again, Stone Church delivered a very successful “Wellness Series” attracting both church and community members to hear presentations on important wellbeing topics. This initiative was supported by a grant from the UPFund.

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## **Stone Pastoral Care and Fellowship**

*Submitted by John Leffler*

Thank you to:

- the Stone Pastoral Care members for keeping our minister informed of life events within our congregation
- Marg Baker for sending sympathy cards, delivering a 60th anniversary gift to Ray and Ellen Thomson, a 50th anniversary gift to Frank and Janice Stockman and special birthday gifts, as well as taking responsibility for our Broadview subscriptions
- Karen Richardson for keeping the contact list, phone tree and historic role up to date

Our committee takes an active role in the Wellness Events and Take Out Dinners. The committee met with Heather in September and reviewed our mandate suggesting minor changes. We are grateful Patty Lancaster has agreed to send cards to our congregation.

The committee also prayerfully reviewed our church membership list.

- We asked the minister and Council chairperson to send a letter of gratitude to our active members, including those members who do not attend worship but give regularly or help with cleaning the church, take out dinners and other activities.
- A second letter was sent to other members telling them that in a world where people are lonely, wanting to belong and seeking meaning we are able to offer caring community, meaning and purpose. People will be invited to remember their time at Stone and asked to send a legacy gift once a year to help us continue to our ministry. They will be encouraged to update their contact information with Karen so that a new minister is able to connect after Heather retires in June.
- A third letter will be modified for people living at a greater distance.
- A final group of 15 people who we have no contact information for or very limited contact with was removed from our membership roll by Council.

The roll will be reviewed again in the spring while we have Heather’s knowledge of who has been active in the 14 years of her ministry.

## **Rockwood Outreach**

*Submitted by Marcia Haworth*

We are busily preparing for our major fund raiser of the year – the Christmas Market and we have been baking and cooking up a storm. The beautiful fresh greens were harvested yesterday by Cees and are waiting to be converted into festive outdoor arrangements, which can be pre-ordered by contacting Marcia at 519 856 4968 or [cmhawort@sentex.net](mailto:cmhawort@sentex.net). The event is on Saturday November 22 from 10:30 am until 2 pm and will feature frozen chicken pot pies and fruit pies as well as a large assortment of Christmas goodies, decorations, preserves and crafts. There will be an exciting Silent Auction and a light lunch will be served. We hope to make this the best ever so that we can support the ever-growing number of Rockwood families needing help from the food bank.

In May we held a very successful plant sale in conjunction with Property and Finance. We made \$1,840 of which \$740 was donated to Property and Finance to help with kitchen and hall renovations.

In the fall we made \$100 from holding a Food Fix by auctioning off a meal generously provided by Darlene, Marion, Kay and Phyllis.

We have supported the food bank on many occasions, spending over \$700 purchasing many items for the freezer and we held a back-to-school food drive in August with an overwhelming response from both congregations of children's snacks etc.

It looks as though we may again fall a little short of our target for Mission and Service by year end, but we will be close.

We continue to help support people with gift cards when requested and were able to help a young woman who, after paying her rent was unable to pay for her medications and groceries. \$175 of gift cards and cash solved her problem.

We are sending \$1,000 to Anishnabeg Outreach to help with delivery of Spirit Bundles.

Before Christmas we hope we will have raised sufficient funds to purchase grocery gift cards for the food bank and Rural Women's Support Program clients as well as send cheques to support Women in Crisis, Anishnabeg Outreach and continue to replenish the supply of drop-in gift cards as needed.

We are forever grateful for the incredible support we receive from Rockwood and Stone congregations and the community at large.

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## **Stone Canadian Foodgrains Bank Project**

*Submitted by Barb Parker*

Stone UC's Canadian Foodgrains Bank Project Committee has been actively promoting our 7<sup>th</sup> year of local activities, as well as CFGB nationally, and here in Ontario.

In **February**, we held a Chilli Lunch and Trivia event following our AGM, which was well attended, and very enjoyable; over \$200 was raised to kickstart our project for 2025.

A CFGB Update regarding US Foreign Aid cuts impact, and the Sudan crisis, prepared by Bill, was included in the **March/April** Announcements. We also promoted and attended the **March 27<sup>th</sup>** Spring Information Meeting at Barrie Hill, with Ontario CFB Coordinator Henry Reinders.

Our **April-October** Harvest Table initiative returned for its third year and offered the community a wide variety of products and produce, with the theme- Take as you Need, Give as You are Able. Seeds for pumpkins, sunflowers, zucchini, and mystery melons were distributed for the growing competitions along with other vegetable seeds. We appreciate all of the contributions from our church and community members, including sweet corn from the Parkinson family. The Harvest Table has also been the site of several chance meetings with interested folks, providing an opportunity to share information on our project.

Anecdotal reports were received on the success, or lack of success, with seeds for pumpkins, sunflowers, zucchini, and mystery melons distributed in the spring for the growing competitions along with other vegetable seeds. It was a very hot, dry summer after a cold spring; squirrels and other critters seemed to enjoy many of the seedlings that did survive!

We would like to thank all those who attended our weigh-off after the service on Sunday, **August 24<sup>th</sup>**, provided refreshments, and participated in the friendly competition. Congratulations to the Parker family for the longest zucchini at 21" and the heaviest zucchini at 9 lbs. The runner-up was Murray Oliver with a 19.5" zucchini weighing 7 lbs.

The following CFGB Update on global food insecurity, prepared by Bill, was included in the **August/September** announcements:

A recent report from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization updated on the state of global food security and nutrition to 2024.

The report indicates an estimated 720 million people globally are facing chronic or severe hunger with the most acute occurring in Africa where 20% of the population is experiencing hunger. The top three drivers of food insecurity, continue to be violent conflict, climate-related disasters and economic instability, the last factor exacerbated by the increase in food costs over the past few years. These numbers do not include the impact of this year's drastic cuts to US funded humanitarian aid programs. The Canadian Foodgrains Bank continues to fund emergency food aid and promotion of conservation agricultural practices. Please consider supporting the CFGB by donating to our Foodgrains Project.

Donations can be made by e-transfer to [stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com) or by mailing a cheque to Stone United Church, P.O. Box 57, Rockwood, N0B 2K0. Write "Foodgrains Project" in the memo line.

Our Foodgrains Growing Project Wrap up was held on **October 19<sup>th</sup>**, in conjunction with Stone's Anniversary Service. We appreciate the presentation and update that Bill Allen provided as the message for the service, and everyone who donated to our project and/or the great lunch and helped with set up and clean up.

Winners in the friendly competition categories were:

#### **Sunflowers**

- Tallest – Ed Nagel at a whopping 160 inches, second – Sharman family
- Largest Head – Parker family at 17 inches, second – Ed Nagel
- Most Heads – Ed Nagel with 45, second – Liz Guthrie

#### **Tallest Corn Stalk**

- Faith and Kenneth Nixon – Treleven 130 inches, second – Parker family

#### **Largest Zucca Melon**

- Tie between Hazel and Flora Benham – 29 x 33, 28 x 35

#### **Largest Pumpkins**

- No entries this year due to poor growing conditions

#### **Best Carved Pumpkin**

- Helen Smith with her giant rabbit, second – Lisa Leffler

#### **Best Decorated Pumpkin**

- Brian Mack – Igor, second – Ollie Darcy

#### **Best Decorated Zucchini**

- Karen Richardson with Miss Pink Piggy, second – Lisa Leffler

#### **Zucchini Races**

7 zucchinis on wheels, all very differently engineered, competed for the farthest distance travelled.

The eventual winner was Murray Oliver, with Karen Richardson second, and honourable mention to Eva Oliver. We will definitely continue with this fun event next year.

#### **Guess # of Pumpkin Jellies in Jar** – Henry Smith

#### **Guess # of Sunflower Seeds in Jar** – Helen Smith

We look forward to our **November 29<sup>th</sup>** Fundraising Breakfast. We encourage donations to this very worth while cause, by the end of November, if possible, so proceeds can be forwarded to Canadian Food Grains Bank, Winnipeg.

Fundraising and donations received to date total over \$4800.

In addition, we are very pleased that it has been agreed that as providing food to those in need was in the mandate of both the Children of Bukati and Foodgrains; therefore, the remaining money in the Stone UC Children of Bukati Fund is being transferred to the Foodgrains project for this year.

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## **Western Ontario Waterways**

*Submitted by Liz Guthrie*

Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council sends out a weekly eNewsletter. It includes information about grants, training workshops, toolkits and even a cross-country check-in to keep us well informed of what is happening in our region.

Since summer break, Regional Reps have been meeting virtually with John Neff once a month. In September, we learned about statistic forms, while in October, we learned about ChurchHub.

The Spring WOWRC meeting was held in May. The Fall WOWRC meeting will be held virtually on November 7 and 8, 2025.

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## **Rockwood Trustees**

*Submitted by Rosslyn Bentley*

Rockwood Trustees met on August 19<sup>th</sup> and on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

- On August 18<sup>th</sup> a local developer made an offer to purchase the parking lot land at \$550k. Trustees met to review the offer and counter offered lowering the price to \$600k after approval from the Church Council but noting not to support any additional reduction in profit, having worked out a breakeven minimum price beyond which the sale of the house would be more cost effective than sale of the lot and construction of the new car park.
- The counteroffer was accepted on August 20<sup>th</sup> and the sale was approved on August 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- The potential buyer's lawyer advised to finalize the deal only if the church agreed to pay half the cost of the geological survey and any subsequent environmental clean-up. Trustees met on September 4<sup>th</sup> and taking account of the advice of our Realtor, declined and the sale fell through.
- WOWRC Congregation Support Commission was kept informed of the process throughout.
- Extension Council who continue to hold the mortgage for the house have agreed to continue to hold on any mortgage repayments.
- A letter was sent to WOWRC Congregation Support Commission on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025 seeking permission to list the house and sever the lot the following motion was approved at their October 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

"that the Congregational Support Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council supports the decision of the Board of Trustees of Rockwood United Church to seek severance of the lot containing the manse for the purposes of listing for sale. Listing information to be received once lot is severed."

*Wising you &  
your loved ones  
a wonderful Chrismas  
& a blessed New Year!*

## **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?**

1. **PAR:** To sign up for monthly Pre-Authorized Remittances or to change your givings, contact Bill Allen at [stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com) or 519-841-4170 for **Stone** or Amanda Hunter-Anthony at [rockwooduc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:rockwooduc.treasurer@gmail.com) or 519-856-1129 for **Rockwood**.
2. **E-transfer Stone** at [stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com) or **Rockwood** at [rockwooduc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto: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.
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

