



March/April, 2025

# THE IN-SPIRE

## The Rutland United Methodist Church Newsletter

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### **“Mark Your Calendar”**

Wednesday, March 5th at 7 pm: **Community Ash Wednesday Service** at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

Sunday, March 9 following worship: Potluck and discussion (See “Care and Connect” below)

Sundays at 9:15 am: **Joy Choir** rehearsal

Sundays at 11:15 am: **Worship** (in person, by Zoom and live on Facebook)

Monday, March 10 at 6 pm: **Leadership Team** Meeting

Wednesdays at 7 pm: **Bible Study** via Zoom. Contact the office or Pastor Tom for the link



### **Message from Pastor Tom**

We all have our pet peeves. I have mine too.

One of them is when someone says “The Church is all about \_\_\_\_\_.”. Fill in the blank with anything you like: Feeding the poor. Saving the lost. Sharing the gospel. Achieving Salvation. Worship. Equipping the Saints. Really, pick anything. And whatever it is, you will be right and you will be wrong.

The problem is that little word “all”. When people say “The Church is all about \_\_\_\_\_.”, what they are really saying is that the church is about whatever is important to THEM. And the rest is not so important. Maybe not important at all. Often the phrase is meant to sound virtuous. It may even feel virtuous, because whatever you fill in the blank with, it will be a virtuous and good thing. But to say the church is ALL about that one thing? IT is not so much wrong, as incomplete.

Keep in mind that people who say that all have the bible on their side. Somewhere there is a verse that says the church is for whatever it is they want the church to be all about. But, they are not even close.

The church is for everything. All the good things God wants for us. And all the good things he wants us to do. THAT's the way you use "all" properly when we are talking about church. God has a lot of work to do and it covers a lot of ground. A church may focus on one thing or another, but there's other work to do. We may have to make choices because of resources, but that is not because the church is all about whatever it is WE do. It is about everything God wants and we can't limit what he wants. He wants us, in all things, to live, and act, and decide and do everything with him in mind. His lessons. His gifts. His missions.

Conflict happens when we think that the church is all about \_\_\_\_\_. And conflict happens when we don't appreciate that others may have a different focus and mission from us. Or that we have different gifts from us. We come into conflict because it's not about us. It's about God and the great big needy world he has created.

One of my favorite sections of scripture comes from 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:

*<sup>15</sup> Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>16</sup> And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup> But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. <sup>19</sup> If they were all one part, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many parts, but one body.*

*<sup>21</sup> The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" <sup>22</sup> On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup> and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, <sup>24</sup> while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, <sup>25</sup> so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. <sup>26</sup> If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.*

*<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*

Some mornings as I stand at the pulpit. I like to look around at everyone and say to myself "That person brings this to our church. And that other person brings that other thing." And I rejoice in how blessed we are.

The church is not all about "X". Like God himself, the church is about everything God wishes for his people. And we at Rutland United Methodist church are well poised to put that lesson to work. As it is with so many things, it is less about what we choose to do than it is that we do SOMETHING. It is less about the thing we do, than how we do it. In grace and love and with God beside us.

Gratefully, Tom

## Community Ash Wednesday Service



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

There will be a Community Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday, March 5th at 7 pm at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (6 Church Hill Road, behind Pizza Hut on Woodstock Avenue). Pastors from all over the Rutland area will be taking part. Pastor Tom will offer the sermon. All are welcome.

## Scholarship Recipient Update

Dawn Smith filled us in on **Madelyn Smith's** accomplishments. On December 15, She received her Masters degree in Education Policy and Leadership from American University. Madelyn is working as a Research Associate with The American Educational Research Association in Washington DC. <https://www.aera.net>.

She plans on starting her PhD in a year or two. We are so grateful to have been able to help Madelyn over the past years with scholarships!

## Financial FYI

For January and February, we have received \$10,700 in identified and unidentified tithes and offerings, which averages \$5,350 per month. This is short of our budgeted (anticipated) amount of \$79,500 for the year. Keep in mind that we need an average of \$6,625 monthly to keep up with expenses. We honor the Lord by helping RUMC sustain its good work in serving. Thank you for your generosity and continued faithfulness!

## Care and Connect Team

On **Sunday, March 9th** after worship, we will have our postponed chili and cornbread potluck featuring a discussion of RUMC's past and future with Pastor Tom. Our menu will remain the same. If you volunteered to bring a food item that's great! Thank you! If not, please contact me at 802-770-9849 so we can have all food categories included. I will be unavailable on that Sunday, so am counting on volunteers to carry the ball that day.

**Irene Goebel**, Care & Connect Team



**COMPANIONS IN WHOLENESS**  
Feeding our Neighbors

As you would expect, it remains busy at Companions in Wholeness. In the month of January, an average of 134 breakfasts and 119 lunches were served per day. February saw similar numbers. The cold winter weather continues, and it's been incredibly difficult for many of the people we serve. Our neighbors often share words of gratitude for the warm, safe space and healthy meals.

The requests for items such as sleeping bags, tents, blankets, tarps, and winter clothing continue. So many of our neighbors are street homeless and struggling to find a safe, warm, dry place to sleep. As winter continues, our neighbors need **battery packs, hand warmers and foot warmers, thermal items, tarps, tents, extreme weather sleeping bags, and sturdy but lightweight duffle bags or backpacks**. If you're able to help, please let us know.

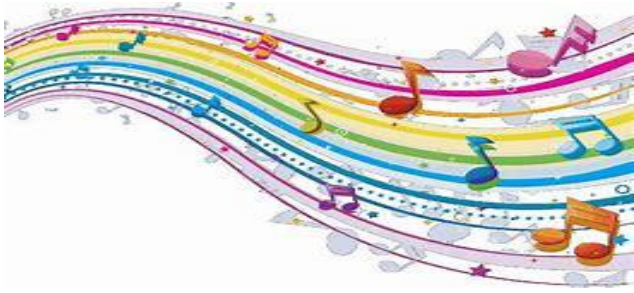
We participated in the Point-in-Time Count on Thursday, January 20<sup>th</sup>. This is a national effort that collects data on the number of individuals experiencing homelessness across the country. CIW staff and volunteers interviewed neighbors to learn where they resided the night before. On the night of January 20, there were 29 individuals who were still living outside in the elements. They were walking the streets all night, sleeping in tents, or living in buildings with no heat. We had 4 individuals who were living in a camper.

CIW staff and volunteers have been creating opportunities to build community and have fun. Neighbors have been enjoying activities such as "Minute to Win It," word searches, rock painting, and Legos. This has been a great way for everyone to relax and get to know each other. Activities are led by staff and volunteers. If you have a hobby or activity that you enjoy and would like to share it with our neighbors, let us know.

CIW is so incredibly grateful to the many volunteers who generously give their time. It simply could not happen without their support. We continue to need volunteers to come in on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday around 10:45 a.m. to assist with serving lunch and cleaning up. Any help is truly appreciated. This is great opportunity to get to know our neighbors.

Book group continues to meet every Friday at 10:00 a.m. The current book is "Gather" by Kenneth Cadow and discussion is being facilitated by Marsha Cassel. Please join if you'd like!

**Jennifer Yakunovich**, President, CIW and **Ellie McGarry**, Director, CIW  
*companionsinwholeness@gmail.com or 802-236-3136*



## Music Notes and Worship Team Update

It is hard to believe that it is already March! Lent will begin on the Sunday of March 9. The Ash Wednesday service will take place at Good Shepherd Church at 7:00 p.m. on March 5. The Choir will soon be busy preparing music for Lent and Holy Week. Psalm/Passion Sunday will be on April 13, and Easter Sunday will be on April 20. The Joy Choir practices from 9:30 - 10:45 a.m. Contact Ann Reed if you are interested in joining the Choir.

The Bells of Joy will resume practice later in the spring. We are planning another joint concert with Grace Congregational Church on June 8. Stay tuned for more details. If you are interested in joining the Bells of Joy contact Karen James.

The Worship Team met on Thursday, February 27. We discussed the order of worship and made plans for Lent, Palm Sunday, and Easter. Our closing song for Lent will be Seek Ye First and our closing song for Easter/Eastertide will be Every Morning Is Easter Morning.

**Ann Reed**, *Music Director*

## RUMC's BELLS OF JOY



Karen James, Nina Keck, Bobbie Fillioe, Ellen Wakker, Ally Packard-Stoodley, Lori McVeigh, Alexis Scangas, Ann Reed, Trudy Billings, Sharon Teer, and Judy Blair





## Sunday School

We have been enjoying a somewhat new experience - teaching older students including teens. It is a little different teaching older kids instead of young children.

We studied Advent and Christmas, and the kids enjoyed their Christmas party. They also presented a Christmas skit "Camel Tales" to the congregation, and they are enthusiastic about doing a skit again.

We have done lessons on baptism and the life of John the Baptist. We are now starting lessons on Lent and Easter. Hopefully the coming of Spring will bring back more of the kids in attendance, and I am looking forward to the weather becoming warmer.

**Marsha Johnson**, Sunday School Co-Supt.

### March & April Birthdays & Anniversaries

MARCH		APRIL	
1	Richard Fales, Jr.	2	Jan Senecal
3	Kristina Pettis	4	Brenda Lear
4	Gary Archer	5	Marsha Johnson
6	Ashley McVeigh Somers	5	Katie Gauthier
11	Sharon Crosby	11	Arianna Allen
20	Scott Kuiken	13	Sarah Gee
20	Brayden Moore	14	Linda Kuiken
21	Gregory O'Connor	15	Cee Cee Hall
26	Brody Somers	17	Alan Betts & Karen James ♥
29	Ely & Susana Abuel ♥	21	Jackie Bartenstein
		21	Scott & Lori McVeigh ♥
		22	Bobbie Fillioe
		24	Lydia May Reynolds

**Did we forget anyone? Please email the office if you wish to add someone to the list!**

### **Rutland United Methodist Church**

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