



January/February, 2024

THE IN-SPIRE

The Rutland United Methodist Church Newsletter

In-person Worship at 60 Strongs Avenue at 11 am

Services will also be livestreamed on RUMC's Facebook page

Zoom Fellowship at 10:45 am

Link will be emailed to you with the bulletin or contact the office for information

"Mark Your Calendar"

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

Sundays at 10:45 am: **Zoom fellowship** prior to and including worship

Sundays at 11:00 am: **Worship** (in person, by Zoom and live on Facebook)

Monday, January 8 and Tuesday, February 12 at 6:00 pm: **Leadership Team Meeting** via Zoom

Thursdays, at 7:00 pm: **Book Study** with Pastor John via Zoom

February 4: **Bishop Peggy Johnson** from the New England Conference will be joining us in worship



Message from Pastor John

Beginnings. Endings. New beginnings. New endings. Still more beginnings folding again into more endings, an ongoing cycle of Life begetting life, even as each ending is a death of sorts.

Awareness of inevitable endings can awaken us to the preciousness of Now - this miraculous moment, this amazing though transient thought, this passing but no less significant feeling, the persona Christi right in front of us and most everywhere we go, the wonder of life existing at all. Now wakes us to be attentive, to embrace the unfolding of life with all our heart and mind and strength, to love life and give it our love.

Some endings may feel like they can't come soon enough, such as times of sickness or grief. Some of them we may wish would never end, like this Christmas spent with my 90-year-old dad, sister, son and fiancé, and Sue. So soon ended and now, a few short days later, another new beginning - Dad is in the hospital with Covid.... And you know what I am wondering.... A gift in part of my own advancing age, I have been more keenly aware of the preciousness of being together this Christmas - and of not being together - with our daughter and son-in-law in VA and Mom in heaven.

Beginnings transitioning into endings giving birth to new beginnings, a continuum of Life in varied manifestations calling forth in us a greater capacity to love and to trust in the Divine Life pervading and coordinating it all. This awakesness, this awareness, this aliveness in the Now, that was, is and will always be in some form of Being and dimension of Reality, has me focused on writing this article. And the Now of now is gifting me with recollections of this Christmas just lived and of tentatively held expectations of new beginnings in the coming New Year. And right, right now, I'm thinking of you and appreciating afresh this marvelous community called Rutland.

As 2023 ends and 2024 begins, may we be mindful that "Now is the time of salvation." So let us live fully this moment, neither dwelling in the past nor preoccupied with tomorrow, but present to each other with hearts full of love. Let us be alive in the reality of Now, confident that in every ending there is a new beginning, for Life and Love never end.

Pastor John



Bishop's Day in the Green Mountain District
Saturday, February 3, 2024 - hybrid
Shelburne UMC - 30 Church St., Shelburne, VT 05482

Bishop Peggy Johnson from the New England Conference will be visiting Vermont on the weekend of February 3rd. She is making a special trip to Rutland UMC to participate in our worship on **Sunday, February 4th**.

Care and Connect Team

New Year, New Ideas!

The Care and Connect committee is considering resuming a Knitting Circle with a wrinkle or two ~ crocheters, hand crafters or artists with portable projects, prayer shawl makers, even prayer sock knitters (why not? Sick people often have chilly feet!) We can teach you how to knit or crochet too! In which case we will take donated yarn, needles and hooks.

So, we would like to know who would like to participate and if so on which afternoons - Tuesday or Thursdays.

And - if you have other activity ideas, we would love to learn those! Fellowship is an important way to promote and maintain our congregational connectedness.

Lastly, Jackie Bartenstein reported the Christmas cookies she delivered were a big hit. Thanks to all who baked, packed and delivered them to our shut-ins.

Irene Goebel
Care & Connect Team

Pastoral Care

Office hours for pastoral care: Pastor Sue ~ Tuesday and Thursday from 9 am until noon.
Pastor John ~ Wednesday from 9 am until noon.

They are also available by appointment. Pastor Sue: 570.267.8611 ~ Pastor John: 802.282.7532



COMPANIONS IN WHOLENESS
Feeding our Neighbors

We continue to stay busy at CIW! In November, we served an average of 132 breakfasts and 125 lunches. In December, we served an average of 132 breakfasts and 134 lunches. The food pantry is accessed a considerable amount with 2,750 items given out in November and 1,603 in December. We prepared special meals for guests in honor of the holidays. A delicious turkey dinner with pumpkin pie was shared the day before Thanksgiving, and a ham dinner with dessert was provided the Thursday before Christmas. This was all made possible by the incredible volunteers that gave extra time to ensure that guests enjoyed a holiday treat. In addition to the meal, guests received a bag of food and goodies to get them through the Christmas holiday.

Unfortunately, due to staff illness, we were unexpectedly forced to close the week between Christmas and New Years. We hated to have do it, but thankfully it gave everyone time to rest, relax, and get healthy as we look forward to 2024.

Linda has been very busy with outreach activities. Given the cold weather, there have been a great deal of requests for winter jackets, boots, gloves, hats, sleeping bags, blankets, hand/feet warmers, etc. We recently received a large donation (70 boxes!!) from the clothing store Zumiez. This was a blessing, as we help our guests who remain out in the elements. Some of our guests have been able access motel rooms through the "adverse weather" program, but there are still several of them who are unhoused and spending their nights outside.

Thanks to the generosity of donors and Church members, CIW/RUMC was able to adopt 6 families this Christmas. This included 9 children who received great gifts this holiday season. A huge thank you to Linda and Marsha who put countless hours into this endeavor.

The 2nd annual Holiday Fest and Silent Auction was held on November 4th. We thank everyone who volunteered to help make the event a success. We raised almost \$8,000 to support the work of CIW. The Board is working on a schedule of fundraisers for 2024 to help us raise much needed funds.

Thanks to our grant writer, Abbey Harlow, and Director Ellie McGarry, CIW has been the recipient of generous grant funds. This includes the Bowse Health Trust - \$100,000 over 3 years; Carris Reels - \$7,000; and Hills & Hollows Fund - \$7,500. These funds will make a big difference in our effort to support our neighbors in need.

CIW is also working towards getting on the Rutland City ballot for voter approved funds. We are requesting \$15,000 from the City. We need to collect roughly 600 signatures from registered Rutland City voters. We could use help. If you are interested in signing or helping us collect signatures, please contact Ellie or Jen.

We've got a great team of volunteers yet can always use more. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer, please contact Ellie McGarry at (802) 236-3136 or email the office at rutlandumc@aol.com.

Jennifer Yakunovich
CIW Coordinator

Items Needed for The Comfort Zone

CIW Pantry Needs: *Any type of Ready to Eat Meals (packaged or canned with pop tops)*

Chunky Soups	Mac & Cheese (Shelf stable)	Canned Pasta Meals
Canned Ravioli	Juice Boxes	Family-sized Juice
Canned Meats & Fish	Crackers	Microwavable Meals
Shelf Stable Milk	Canned Chili	Canned Fruit
Cereal	Snack Food	Coffee
Toilet Paper	Paper Towels	

Outreach Needs for the Comfort Zone:

Tents	Tarps	Sleeping Bags
Blankets	Band-aids	Toothpaste
Tooth Brushes	Body Wash	Razors
Gauze Wrap	Medical Tape	
Individual Packets of Antibiotic Ointment	T-Shirts & Underwear for Men and Women	



Music Notes
and Worship Team

The Bells of Joy and Joy Choir have been very busy during the Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas season. The Bells of Joy had an outstanding concert at the Wallingford Town Hall on December 13. The concert was enjoyed by all. In addition, members of the Bells of Joy played for the prelude of the Messiah performance on December 3.

The Joy Choir sang at the Community Thanksgiving service in November and provided music for Advent and the Christmas season. We are happy to have some new choir members, Doug Trude and Sharon Teer, who have added to worship during this season. It has been such a treat to have Sharon play her French horn and trumpet during the services. Thank you to all musicians for your hard work.

The Bells of Joy will take a break during the months of January and February. We will resume practice in the spring. A few members of the Bells of Joy will participate in a Winter Workshop at UMass Amherst the weekend of January 26 and January 27.

The Joy Choir will continue to meet at 9:15 am on Sundays and practice before worship.

The departing songs for worship services in January and February will be *Go Tell It on The Mountain* and *Oh, How He Loves You and Me*.

Ann Reed, Music Director, **Karen James**, Bells of Joy Director
Ellen Wakker, Worship Team



Sunday School

We hosted a Christmas party for the children on December 17th. As it turned out, some new faces attended, and there were nine children playing games and activities, and singing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus!

We look forward to a new year of learning and fun.

Marsha Johnson, Sunday School Co-Supt.
Linda Allen, Sunday School Co-Supt.

Financial FYI

Folks have found it helpful to have some financial information listed in the bulletin and In-Spire. Our figures show that an **average income of \$2,000 per week** is necessary to balance the Budget. Our income from tithes and offerings for 2023 totaled **\$79,302**, which averages out to **\$1,525** per week.

January & February Birthdays & Anniversaries

JANUARY		FEBRUARY	
3	Steve Dotson	5	Tanya Derstine
9	Joyce Robarge	9	Russell Perry
13	Roberta Hemmer	10	Arlene O'Connor
16	Natalia Mendoza Betts	11	Norman Desjardins
18	Amy Mackin Mills	13	Emily Pettus
28	Stephanie McMahon	14	Karen Cartier
		17	Mark & Linda Allen
	FEBRUARY	19	Allison Gauthier
		26	Bonnie Partridge
1	Craig Cota	28	Jane Jepson
3	Linda Mackin	28	Matt Fillioe

Rutland United Methodist Church, Inc. d/b/a Companions in Wholeness

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