



# the newsletter

Stone Ridge, NY Rev. Caroline Berninger, Pastor

## From the Pastor

As I write this, I am immersed in the lectionary scriptures for the fifth Sunday in Lent, April 3rd. Though my sermon looks mostly at the Gospel reading from John 12—Mary’s extravagant anointing of Jesus in Bethany—the other readings for the week are inspiring, too. The Apostle Paul, in Philippians 3, writes with enthusiasm for his life transformed “because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.” Past achievements that he took pride in are “rubbish” by comparison to life with faith in Christ, and the passage concludes with his writing: “forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.” [NRSV] Isaiah 43 urges: “Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. 19I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?”

I think that one thing about the Philippians and Isaiah passages that fascinates me is the tension between forgetting the past and living into a new and different future. All of us have, after all, spent the past two years living into a very blurry future; so many aspects of life divide into “pre-pandemic” and “post-COVID.” And although perceiving the new things that lie before us in our present and future is exciting and often exhausting, I don’t sense that people are big on “forgetting what lies behind” or “not remember[ing] the former things.” I can’t keep count of how many times I’ve heard people say they really want “to get back to normal”—by which they mean, I think, the way everything was pre-pandemic.

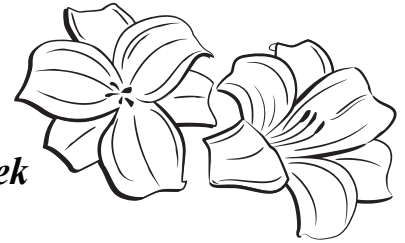
Two years in, I am pretty sure that we won’t ever go back to normal. That may actually be good in many ways! For instance, even though RVUMC has reopened for in-person worship, we will keep on doing pre-recorded brief services online. Meetings, prayer time, and study groups can meet via “zoom”. But all of this new-seeming activity is really doing familiar old things...in slightly more technological ways. A big part of our faith is remembering what our ancestors in the faith learned and experienced as it has been passed down to us. Our sacraments, Baptism and Holy Communion, explicitly remember the words of our Lord Jesus—and His command to “do this in remembrance of me.”

As we live our faith day by day, loving God and neighbor wherever we are, I hope that we can face the future with some of the contagious enthusiasm of the great “cloud of witnesses” of the past. Even your simplest words and deeds can testify to the love of Christ. As Amy-Jill Levine writes in the conclusion to our Lenten study book Witness at the Cross (A Beginner’s Guide to Holy Friday) “we all come away from the cross changed in some way. For witnesses, memories are fragile. They fade with time...Points get lost, or found, in translation....we readers do well to listen to their stories and see how their stories transform us. At that point, we pick up the story ourselves.”

May we ALL live into a future transformed by the grace of the risen Christ.

Caroline

Holy Week  
*In Person worship*



**Saturday April 9**

Easter Cookie Sale from 10 am to 2 pm.

**Sunday April 10**

Palm Sunday Service at 10 am.  
"Eco-Palms" Hosanna!

**Thursday April 14**

7 pm. Maundy Thursday Tenebrae

**Friday April 15**

& Holy Communion  
Good Friday 12 - 3

**Saturday, April 16**

Church is open for prayer  
Come and go as you are able  
6 pm. Taize Easter Vigil

at Reservoir UMC on Rte. 28

**Easter Sunday April 17**

10:00 am. Easter Service at RVUMC

*check website for livestream options*



**Yes** On May 7th the RVUMC will be hosting the ever popular “Garden Tea and Plant Sale”. This year we will be bringing back the “TEA” part of this event (weather permitting). Freshly brewed tea along with homemade cookies and scones will be offered in a garden setting around our Bell Tower Circle. Of course plants of all sorts will be available including: House, Shrub, Flowering and other Garden varieties. And just in time for Mother’s Day. So, why not bring Mom, Grandma an Aunt, Daughter and anyone you love to have tea with us here at Rondout Valley United Methodist Church and buy a plant or two for them or even yourself. The event will be held at 25 Schoonmaker Lane, Stone Ridge, NY at the corner of US 209 and Schoonmaker Ln. Reservations are not required, cost of Tea and refreshments is \$8.00 per person (children under 12 years \$4) and plants will be priced as marked. Have a Very Happy Mother’s Day from all of us at RVUMC.

# EASTER COOKIE SALE

**Saturday, April 9th**

**10am - 2pm**

-While Supplies Last-

**25 Schoonmaker Lane, Stone Ridge NY**

*Pick up outside around the Bell Tower*

**Pre-Packaged, Homemade, Assorted Cookies**

For more information, call: 845 687-9061



## Update on "What's up with the UMC"

*from last newsletter...*

Actually, the update is...not much of an update. Last month (March) the decision was made to postpone 2020's already-twice-or-thrice-postponed General Conference to 2024. The recommendation to go to the NY Annual Conference website ([www.nyac.com](http://www.nyac.com)) and the denomination's news site ([www.umnews.org](http://www.umnews.org)) stands.

## Sympathy

Joe Kraft  
Dec. 17, 1928 to Dec. 26, 2021

## Treasurer Report 2022 January and February

**T**he relatively good news first. We continue to pay our pastor, our apportionments and all the bills that we receive (like many households, we are uncertain about our actual Central Hudson bills). During this year to date, we have received more than we have paid out. But, now putting that fact into a longer time perspective, it is noted that a sum of money came into the January deposits, which more properly was for 2021

Looking back at 2021 as a whole year, we were about negative \$20,500, significantly offset by the second round PPP 'loan', since forgiven, in the amount of \$12,300. And that year itself compared to the whole of 2020 with a negative \$6,900. And so it is that each year we run a deficit of significant proportion. I hope that this year will be different. With your help it *can* be.

*Bob Taylor*

## Trustee's report



**C**atching up from last year, items on our agenda for the end of year were to see about replacement of sanctuary flooring as it was popping up in several places. We were able to save the floor temporarily by nailing down the existing tiles and so far they are holding, we will reassess in the spring if it starts popping up again.

Since then we were able to have the flooring replaced in the Jones room, paint the walls and replace some of (most of) the trim. Thanks to Bob Taylor, Matt Robbins and myself.

We have had our annual fire extinguisher inspection and all went well with that.

We did have a problem with the furnace leaking and Matt and I replaced the water expansion tank and relief valve. Then there was a malfunction of the furnace rheostat control and Kosco had to be called for that to be done.

Since we haven't had meetings in a long while its been difficult to remember what has been reported and when, not sure if I have reported this before or not. I know that I called around and got approval to go ahead. First we needed to replace the water heater at the Parsonage which Matt & I took care of. It was cheaper to install an electric combination heat pump unit than to have the boiler domestic hot water unit replaced and is more cost efficient to run.

Then the hot water unit at the church sprung a leak so we replaced it with the same type of unit as we installed at the parsonage as Central Hudson was offering \$1000 rebates on each of these units.

We were currently having a problem with the electric baseboard heaters in the Jones room, so far we replaced the thermostat and it's better but not quite right. We had to call an electrician in to fix that problem and seems to be working better.

When spring weather arrives we will need to look into doing the repairs on the bell tower and also will need to do some repairs to the steps at the front main door as well as the sidewalk.

*Respectfully submitted*

*Thomas Fiore*

*Chairperson, Board of Trustees*

**Y**ou've read this before, if you've been getting the newsletter, but here it is again: Please let us know if you prefer to get the newsletter by email. You can email your address to: [rvmethodist@gmail.com](mailto:rvmethodist@gmail.com). USPS is more expensive and with every mailing it seems more people's addresses are no longer valid, and newsletters don't make it to their destinations intact. We also post the Newsletter on the website, [rvumc.org](http://rvumc.org).

## Sympathy

Robin Fiore  
Jan. 21, 1965 to Jan. 1, 2022

## **Save This Date!!!**

RVUMC Car Show – Sat., June 18th here at the church, 9am – 3pm. Show Cars \$15 registration fee - Spectators admitted Free. Come on out and support RVUMC. Music and Awards by DJ Brian, Food by Matt and Fun will abound.

If you would like to sponsor the show call Tom @ 845 687-9061.

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## ***If you haven't been to church in a while you may be wondering:***

### **What are we doing and how are we doing it?**

**We ARE back** to “in person” worship Sundays at 10 and have been since February.

**How?** Since March, masks are optional but we have kept our “spaced out” seating in the sanctuary. We sing, distanced. In-person offering is collected on table in back of sanctuary as people enter or leave; communion has been with hermetically sealed wafer-and-juice “goblettes” that people pick up on the way into the sanctuary from the table where the bulletins are set out. We thus avoid any person-to-person passing of offering plates, communion elements, or bulletins...or, we hope, of germs. We continue to ask that everyone sign in when entering the building, so that we can quickly and easily know who we need to contact in the event COVID exposure. Last month we started having a very brief time of indoor refreshment after worship, and on the 10th we will have our first indoor Second Sunday Supper since March of 2000. (We had several outdoors last year, and two drive-in/take out suppers this winter.)

Still, we continue our “online worship” as described in the “From the Pastor” insert in the Advent newsletter. If you haven't been to church, it is my strong hope that you have been watching these 20-30 minute services, because a lot of time goes into them. You can get to these services directly from the main page of our website, [rvumc.org](http://rvumc.org), and even get an order of worship with the readings and prayers. The prerecorded video is also on the church Facebook page. As of the first week in April, we have a new laptop, a new camera, and a new video editing program that I have not yet become competent at. We were able to purchase the necessary equipment thanks to a significant anonymous donation to be used for outreach to the community.

***Stay tuned.***

## **What can you do for RVUMC?**

**Glad you asked!** As you can see from everything in this newsletter, we are trying to share God's love with our neighbors in both old familiar ways and in new and different ways—some of which involve technology, most of which are affected by the same inflation everyone's dealing with. We ALWAYS need people to step up and help out, whether it be with a project on the church grounds or building, baking cookies, or putting together community events. Even something as simple as agreeing to be a reader or worship leader—for the pre-recorded service, in person, or both—helps. (If that sounds like something you could do, contact Michael Stisi—CAPTMAS1968@hotmail.com, 845-633-3258; he is making up a schedule of readers.)

And, it takes money to do almost everything. Some people resist making a pledge to their church in advance because of uncertainty about their future finances; if that sounds like you, let me reassure you that if you tell RVUMC your prayerful goal for the year's giving and your financial circumstances prevent you from fulfilling that goal, the church will not come after you or shame you in any way. Giving of all sorts—time, expertise, prayer and money—is integral to the life of faith. When you indicate to our Financial Secretary, Elaine Fiore, that you would like to donate a specific amount to RVUMC (weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually), you will also help Elaine, treasurer Bob Taylor, and Pastor Caroline sleep a little better. If you're not coming to in-person worship at RVUMC, monetary donations can always be made by check to the church's PO Box (return address), or at the secure page via the “DONATE” tab on the [rvumc.org](http://rvumc.org) website.

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## *In Memory*

Patricia A. (Patty) Jansen  
August 09, 1957 - March 28, 2022

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## **Second Sunday Supper**

**Sunday April 10 at RVUMC 5:30 pm**

**Free**

**and open to the community**

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***Please Don't Forget  
our Neighbors in need  
and We can make a difference!***

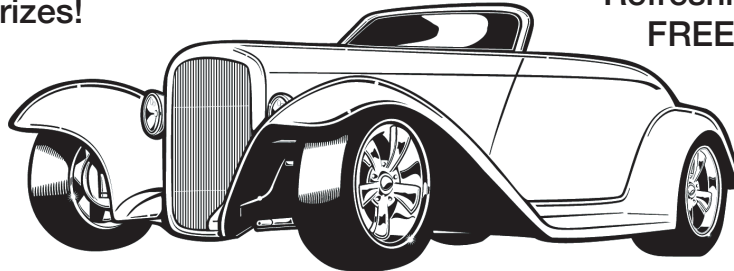


Antiques      Classics      Hot Rods

**2022**  
*Car Show*

DJ Brian!  
Door Prizes!  
50/50

Refreshments by Matt!  
FREE Water all Day!



**Spectators  
FREE!**

**Saturday, June 18      9am - 3pm**  
25 Schoonmaker Lane, Stone Ridge, NY

More info??  
Call Tom:  
(845) 687-9061

**"All Rides Welcome"**

Registration starts 9am    \$15 per vehicle    Judging at noon  
Prizes for: Best of Show, Best Motorcycle, Pre 1950's, 1960's, 1970's, 1980+  
and Pastor's Choice

**To Benefit RVUMC Bell Tower Project**

STONE RIDGE  
RONDOUT VALLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
Box 295  
Stone Ridge, N. Y. 12484