



# the newsletter

Stone Ridge, NY Rev. Caroline Berninger, Pastor

**Y**ou will notice that this Newsletter doesn't have nearly the number of upcoming dates that our "usual" newsletters did. RVUMC, like almost all of the world, has been navigating life in the time of COVID-19, and that has meant--and continues to mean--that a lot of what we love to do is off-limits. Choir singing? No. Cantatas? No. Indoor church suppers? No. Any indoor fundraisers (cookie sales, garden tea)? No. The public health circumstances have changed so drastically over the past year and a half that loving our neighbors by doing everything we can *not* to share the virus has taken priority over a busy calendar. We have thus relied much more on **email**, our website **rvumc.org**, and **Facebook** (Rondout Valley United Methodist Church) to post our current events, close to when they're happening, when we are reasonably confident we'll be able to have them. **Please, please let us know what your current email address is, if you have one.** Send it to me at [rvmethodist@gmail.com](mailto:rvmethodist@gmail.com), and I promise I won't send two emails a day like Bed & Bath! If you have a cell number/ text that could be handy, too. If you got this in the mail and would prefer to receive it by email only, let me know.

## Treasury Summary

**A**s it has been for most individuals, most businesses, and most churches, this year of Pandemic has been hard on RVUMC financially. The steadfast contributions of most pledgers have perhaps kept us afloat. We have also benefited from a technology grant that the Conference awarded us. With that, we were able to upgrade the sound system, to purchase and regularly use a video camera, and to purchase and use an integrated projector with large screen for our in-person service viewing. We did qualify for, and receive an \$8300 'loan' through the program (PPP) designed to continue paying our Pastor. All indications are that it will be forgiven and thus become a grant, and this is supposed to occur before December 5th. Though these grants helped, we are, now near the end of this calendar and budget year, very much in the negative (approximately \$20,000). We have paid our debts and apportionments, but our reserve is dwindling. The inability to have our regular fund raising events like cookie sales and Sauerbraten Dinner, and special fund raising events like the car show, have additionally dented our income. Still, Hope Springs Eternal!

## Giving


**F**irst let me thank all of you who have faithfully given to the General Fund, which keeps our operations intact. Undeniably giving to our beloved church has suffered over the past 18 months. Fewer folks are coming Sunday mornings for in-person worship and without the exposure of fundraising events fewer dollars are coming in as well. We have a fair amount of FB and .org folks but do not realise a financial benefit, yet. That being said, in order for the financial folks of RVUMC to better manage and budget the funds that do enter I would like to ask all of you to think about your giving and then make a commitment to it by December. I will be sending a Giving form out via email and/or snail mail in the next few weeks. Please, make your commitment, place it in the offering bags or mail it back to me @ PO Box 295, Stone Ridge, NY 12484. Your church Financial Secretary, Elaine Fiore

**CONGRATS!**  
to Lizzy Keukjian  
on her graduation from Smith College  
on May 30, 2021

## Children's Home:

YES, the Children's Home of the Wyoming Conference still has "wish lists" for Christmas gifts for the children they serve--several hundred children from preschool age through high school, in both residential and day programs....but NO we are not collecting gifts at RVUMC and delivering "in person" to Binghamton this year. But YES we encourage you to donate directly and tell the Children's Home that Rondout Valley UMC sent you! Wish lists are on their web page, [chowc.org](http://chowc.org), with separate links for Walmart and Amazon. If you prefer to send donations or gifts directly, contact info is:

1182 Chenango Street      Email: [info@chowc.org](mailto:info@chowc.org)  
Binghamton, NY 13901      Phone: 607-772-6904  
Toll Free: 1-800-772-6904

**WELCOME!** 

To Carson Frank Fiore  
Born to Timothy and Carlie  
January 15, 2020

Target and Walmart gift cards for \$10 or \$20, Legos, Craft projects, earbuds/headphones, MP3 players without voice or video recording, remote control cars and trucks, and sports equipment are favorites. All should be unwrapped. AND you can always donate to the Children's Home directly with the memo "Gifts." This year's **deadline is Friday, December 10.**

**Charge Conference** for the Esopus Parish (that includes us!) will be at 2 pm Sunday December 5 at Reservoir UMC on Rt. 28 in Shokan.

**The Movies with Spirit** series (resumed in September) after its 18-month COVID hiatus. RVUMC was again in the rotation – with the 2017 Lebanese Drama, “**The Insult**” in October. Movies are shown at various houses of worship on the third Saturday of the month at 7pm. Dec. 18’s and Jan 15’s movies will both be in Kingston,, at St.James UMC and Old Dutch Church, respectively.

Anyone interested in a “hybrid” book-or-Bible study in the near future? By “hybrid” I mean: even if you are not able to come to RVUMC, we can gather by way of the church’s “Zoom” account if you have a computer and internet. If you are able to come to RVUMC, you can come that way. LET ME KNOW! And let me know what time(s) and topic(s) will work for you.

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## **Trustee EMERGENCY Report**

### **Subject: Sanctuary Floor**

The trustees had an emergency meeting to speak about the flooring in the Sanctuary. We have been having problems with sections of the parquet flooring separating from the base flooring and popping up since last year just after Christmas. Since Repairing that section, more and more sections are coming loose. Just since last week when we discovered three sections about the room now there are four more sections.

It has gotten to the point that the only correct safe repair would be to remove all of the flooring and replace it with something new after inspecting the subfloor to determine it to be in sound condition.

This will be a large and expensive undertaking, requiring some volunteer help to remove the old flooring and prep for the new floor which is yet to be determined. This is not something we were prepared to do at this time as funds are extremely low. We will be getting estimates for the new flooring and then have to have targeted fundraising to cover the cost. The Trustee’s budget is very low at this time and some of that which has been donated specifically for the bell tower repairs can not be used for the floor

If you would like to help save this Church in a desperate time we would graciously accept all donations. Please designate on your check or include a note if making cash donation that its to be put in Trustee’s fund for the flooring, not the General Fund.

As Chairperson of the Board of Trustees you can call me if you have any questions or if you want to help with the demolition of the old floor. Leave a message on the answering machine if I'm not home.

*Peace and God Bless, Tom Fiore*  
**(845)687-9061**

## **Egg Distribution Update**

**A**s the Covid-19 pandemic began to alter all of our lives in early 2020. Dianne and Ken Paulson wondered what they could do to help mitigate the influence the virus was having on others. They became aware of a surplus of eggs at the Brey Egg Farm in Jeffersonville, NY. The egg farm produces over 300,000 eggs each day and with the demand from restaurants, schools, etc, declining due to state restrictions, the surplus of eggs was growing. Dianne contacted a number of local Food Pantries and found a need for eggs. Dianne and Ken quickly matched up the need with the supply and by the end of 2020 had delivered approximately 1,500 dozen eggs to Food Pantries in Rondout Valley, Rochester, Ellenville and Ulster Heights. They were able to do this with the help of a number of ladies from the Rondout Valley Methodist Church. A special thanks goes to them for all of their support. We plan to continue the supply of eggs as long as the need exists.

*Dianne Paulson*

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## **From the Financial Secretary**

**T**o reduce church expenses RVUMC did not issue Offering Envelopes. We do have available a few old boxes of envelopes and if you wish one please reach out to me. You may use your own envelopes or if you choose to place your check in the offering plate please put your envelope number in the memo area. If you want me to recognize your cash donation please use an envelope or wrap it in a piece of paper with your name or envelope number on it. If you do not know your envelope number let me know. Thank you for your support of the vision and mission of RVUMC.

*Elaine Fiore*

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## **What’s up with the UMC?**

**T**hat remains a pretty big question. The news of the proposed “Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation,” which became public on January 3rd of 2020, was interpreted by many who followed the news in the national media as a “done deal.” It is not that simple! Our Bishop, Thomas Bickerton, is one of the denominational leaders deeply involved in the negotiating of the Protocol, which still must come before the General Conference of the UMC whenever GC – already postponed twice due to the pandemic – eventually meets. For more clarity on the many, many details and timelines involved I encourage you 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). In the meantime, let’s continue to love God and neighbor where we are.

*Sympathy*

*to the Kocher family  
on the death of Mike's father, Palmer Kocher  
Dec. 28, 1943-Dec. 28, 2020*

## Cookbook

As you might know, Bishop Bickerton has divided the Catskill-Hudson District into groups of "cooperative parishes" to foster more communication and cooperation within the district. RVUMC is part of the Esopus Parish, and I have been chosen to be Laity Parish Coordinator.

My task is to work with other laity coordinators in the other parish groups to develop projects that involve all churches in our district and disseminate appropriate information about these projects. Our first district-wide project, this spring, was a district-wide COOKBOOK, created with contributions from all over the district, and available for purchase from your church. RVUMC has a number of them (yes, there are some favorite recipes from some of us) and you can have one for a very reasonable \$10. For details contact [layleaderbecca@yahoo.com](mailto:layleaderbecca@yahoo.com).

Blessings,  
Becca Lowe

### **DO YOU SHOP ON AMAZON?**

DO YOU WANT TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE CHURCH?

If you go to amazon by using [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) instead of the regular amazon, then when the window opens, on the top there will be a place to search for your charity. In the search window put Rondout Valley United Methodist Church, click on it and shop away. If you were previously logged in you will probably need to log in again. As long as you always shop via the [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), amazon automatically sends a portion of what you spend to the church. A great way to help the church from no matter where you are or where you live. We know a lot of people are shopping online, so now you can shop online and raise money for the church. *A win-win for everyone!!*

### **Christmas Cards for prisoners:**

The NYAC Board of Church and Society is again sending Christmas Cards to prisoners, and we will send a packet right after the first Sunday in December (Dec. 5th) If you wish to send to the project coordinator directly here is everything you should know:

Include no specific salutation. Cards may go to either men or women. Some may be posted to share with everyone in a housing unit. Write a brief handwritten note (not just a signature) in the card that shares God's love and your best wishes.

Consider if message is appropriate: Sentiment, humor, and reminders of life outside can "fall flat" to those feeling isolated from friends and loved ones during holidays.

Please follow these correctional facility requirements to ensure cards can be delivered to inmates.

DO NOT use markers, colored pencils or crayons – ordinary pens and pencils only (marker ink can be "sniffed", for example)

Include NOTHING in the card – use NO GLITTER, STAMPS, STICKERS or FOIL

If you use envelopes, DO NOT SEAL – institutions will inspect for contraband. Some facilities prefer cards with envelopes (white), others prefer without.

Sign card using FIRST NAME ONLY - Include no personal identifying info. No family photos.

Collect and deliver cards by the first Sunday in December to Rev. Matthew Querns 2300 Crompond Road, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598.

Have you noticed the cross outlined by floor tiles at the back of the sanctuary?



Our huge Christmas tree rather

messed up the floor and matching varnish could not be found so Tom Fiore and our sexton Matt, cleverly used a lighter color and made it in the shape of a cross. They also have put new toilets in each bathroom. They are the higher type and will be appreciated.

Speaking of Christmas, it was suggested at one of the Administrative Board meetings that we should plant a big tree (or one that will grow into a big tree) outside and decorate it and have a smaller one inside. Any comments? Where would we put an outside one? If you have opinions see Brian Lowe, chairman,

Thanks to all of the COOKIE BAKERS for a very successful Thanksgiving sale!!

### *Sympathy*

to the family of  
Virginia "Ginny" Leone  
August 11, 1943 - July 12, 2021

### **THANK YOU to RVUMC**

for the "pour my own tea party" tea tray, mug and gift certificate at Christmas. Very, very appreciated--and appropriate!

THANKS to Dan and Debby Dor of Bodacious Bagels for their weekly contribution of day - old but still delicious bagels to the Rondout Valley Food Pantry

### *Sympathy*

to the family of  
Don Wells  
February 21 1960 - August 28, 2021

### *In Memory*

F, Ralph Shirak, Almost 99 joyful years  
and Janet L. Shirak at 99<sup>1/2</sup>  
Father and Mother of Stephen Shirak

### *Sympathy*

to the Burr family on the death of Carolyn Keith Burr,  
Matt's mother  
and grandmother to Keziah and Fenagh

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



# We are Still Here, Loving God & Neighbor



Rondout  
Valley  
United  
Methodist  
Church

**Joy to the world, and cookies too!**  
**3-5 Friday December 17 & 10-2 Saturday December 18**  
*while supplies last.*

Prepacked assortments, \$8 per pound  
Drive-up; Cash and checks accepted  
District cookbooks and Fair Trade treats also on hand

## **IN-PERSON WORSHIP**

(masked & distanced)

10 am Sundays

BRIEF ONLINE WORSHIP

Posted weekly on our FaceBook page  
and our website,  
[rvumc.org](http://rvumc.org)

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