



the newsletter

Stone Ridge, NY Rev. Caroline Berninger, Pastor

From the Pastor

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree; in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

Hymn of Promise, #707 UM Hymnal
by Natalie Sleeth

As I write this, in Stone Ridge we have just had a first half of March that really “came in like a lion”—three winter storms in the space of ten days. Fortunately for most of us, we avoided the really dramatic accumulations and extended power outages that affected many of our not-so-distant neighbors. At this point, it even seems reasonable to hope that March actually might “go out like a lamb.” That’s what I am rooting for, at any rate—especially with Holy Week the last week in March! And although it’s probably a stretch, maybe...just maybe...the daffodil cross on the church hill could emerge through the patchy snow by Easter.

Life emerging from what the world assumes to be dead and useless is the surprising gift of Easter. The women who went to the tomb where Jesus’ body had been hastily laid after his crucifixion went expecting to fulfill the sad duty of preparing his broken body more appropriately for burial. There was not a broken body waiting for them, though. Nearly 2000 years of Easter celebrations have helped us forget that the first response of Jesus’ dear friends to the empty tomb that morning was not “Alleluia!” It was shock, and fear, and doubt. An empty tomb is NOT, generally, cause for rejoicing.

Looking back at many of Jesus’ teachings about the kingdom of heaven, it is remarkable how so many of his most memorable teachings came in the form of parables featuring tiny things that don’t look like much. Consider seeds. If you didn’t know better, you would be delusional to imagine that the plump, dramatic, colorful vegetables, fruits and flowers pictured on seed packets have ANY relation to the hard, dried specks inside the packet—the seeds. You have to admit: most seeds don’t LOOK promising.

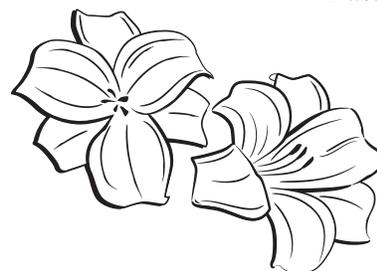
But...the power and grace of God are AMAZING. Seeds sprout, grow, and bear fruit. In Jesus, death gives way to life. And here at RVUMC, in sometimes halting, sometimes steady, and often unobtrusive ways, we continue to bear witness to the power and grace of God in Jesus. After all these years—we’re still PRACTICING Christians.

I hope you find many things in this newsletter that nourish some “seeds of faith” for you. Join us for worship if you can—we’re at 10 am every Sunday. Come for some of our other events, too; Second Sunday Suppers will be in April and May, and our Garden Tea and Plant Sale is just around the corner. On the “seedy” theme, we will host a conference program on

Sunday, May 6th called “Sower: seeds of faith & finance” which provides education on long-term personal financial planning. (This program is available to all who are interested at no cost, and is NOT a sales pitch or a stewardship drive!) As always, do check the church website at www.rvumc.org for updates on events and activities.

May God’s surprising grace in Jesus Christ renew and amaze you in this season of growth!

Pastor Caroline



Easter Schedule

- Saturday March 24** Easter Cookie Sale from 9:30 am to 2 pm.
- Sunday March 25** Palm Sunday Service at 10 am.
"Eco-Palms" Hosanna!
- Thursday March 29** 7 pm. Maundy Thursday service at RVUMC
- Saturday, March 31** Easter Cantata
“No Stone Can Hold Him” 2 pm
- Easter Sunday** 6:30 am. *Son-Rise* service at
Rochester Reformed Parsonage
- April 1** 10:00 am. Easter Service at RVUMC

Easter Cantata

“No Stone Can Hold Him”



March 31 – 2:00pm – RVUMC

Trustee Report

The pastor's new office (the small church school room) will soon be ready for her use. The room has been painted by Arnold Jones and this week he will put in the new carpet which has been reposing on the floor of the large room. With the addition of some window treatments Caroline can move in and have a pleasant place at the church to work.

The contract for the new ramp has been signed and we are just waiting for the weather to allow it to be done. We got the services of this contractor through the Brothers at Rifton and they have volunteered to provide the labor as a community service. We are very grateful and look forward to the new and spiffy entrance to the church. If the work involves a week-end and we cannot use the ramp door, there will be people at the double doors to assist those coming up the steps.

The RV Church has signed a community solar subscription with a company which has a solar array south of us which will enable the church to receive a 10% discount on our electric bill from Central Hudson. There is no cost to us to do this or to withdraw if we are not satisfied. This was recommended to the church because nonprofit facilities cannot receive a tax exemption for solar installation as individual homes can. Therefore, this seemed to be the best way to start supporting alternate sources of energy. If Marbletown starts such a program, the church can switch to it.

Help us Grow

At our latest PPR meeting it was suggested and agreed upon that we need to explore ways of attracting younger folks and couples (especially those with kids). We would like to reach out to all of you for suggestions for events, alternative services or other "happenings" that might appeal to more youthful parishioners. If you have any ideas please write them down and put them in the collection plate, or See Wendy, or email me at bartok@braxtonh.com.

Sorry about this repost but I didn't get any feedback from the last one. I know some of you have some brilliant suggestions.

COOKIES ARE GOOD IN THE SPRING, TOO!

Since Easter is early this year, the time for making cookies for our Spring Sale is coming soon. It will be only one day, Saturday, March 24 from 9:30 am to 2 pm. SO—RV's excellent chefs need to start thinking about their possible contributions and we will also need people to work on that day. Good Baking!



Many thanks to Amy Capen Caster who has spoiled RVUMC with her careful and thorough work as sexton. We've all realized since she finished her duties in December how MUCH she took care of now that some of the rest of us have been "picking up the pieces" (and the grit, and the garbage, and the snow...) Which brings us to the NEXT announcement:



WELCOME to Matt Robbins who will be our new sexton. Matt and his wife Laurie have been neighbors of the Fiore in Cottekill, and some of you may have already met Matt on one of the many occasions that he has volunteered to help Tom on various more-than-one-man projects in and around the church property including parsonage.

Thank you to Tom Atkins for the gift of a heavy-duty dehumidifier for the parsonage basement, and to Tom Fiore and Matt Robbins for installing it!

Many thanks go to Maggie Colan who organized the Chili Sale on Souper Bowl Day. Several provided different kinds of Chili and there was a profit of \$226.

Thanks to Dave and Debby Dor of Bodacious Bagels Who are now making large contributions of day-old (but still delicious) bagels to the food pantry every Tuesday.

There was a small amount of money left from the redoing of the church kitchen and the Taylors suggested that we purchase a Bunn commercial coffee maker with it. We were quite sure that Peg Carro would have approved and Nancy and Bob purchased one and installed it in the kitchen. Mary Jones and Beckie Lowe figured out how to work it and it is a great improvement.

A BIG THANK YOU to Carole and Richard Eppley, who transformed the haphazard (though delicious and fairly priced!) collection of coffees, teas, olive oil and chocolates into an attractive "Fair Trade Market" in the Jones Room. New items should arrive in time for the cookie sale, but the items are also available whenever the church is open, not just during cookie sales! If you have any surplus baskets you want to give to "a good cause", bring them to the Fair Trade Market and they may find new homes, with new contents, at the cookie sale or the Garden Tea and Plant Sale

Sympathy

Mark A. Williams

April 25, 1962 - November 15, 2017

**Husband of Andrea E. (Lowe) Williams,
father of Arianna who died last March.**



Updates/reminders...

RVUMC has sent off 20 completed Flood Cleanup Buckets for UMCOR—estimated value \$1300—already and we have an ongoing collection for these as well as for the health kits. The contents are all listed in previous newsletters and there are links at both www.rvumc.org and www.umcor.org to those lists. Please note we have plenty of sponges, scrubbers and insect repellent now. We can use all the other items, including the 5G lidded buckets themselves.

Reminder—online and mobile giving now available...(but you should still come to church!)

RVUMC LOGO POLOS!

We hope to order these for the first time ever; price will be in range of \$12-15. If you are interested please contact Pastor Caroline or Elaine Fiore AS SOON AS YOU READ THIS for full details.

Come celebrate spring . . .

. . . at the Rondout Valley United Methodist Church's ***Spring Wreath Workshop***, on Sunday, April 15th from 1-2pm.

East meets West as you are taught to create Origami butterflies that will light on your own flowers! All materials plus instruction are included in this workshop. Please bring clippers as you will have to cut stalks. Suggested donations are \$25.00 per wreath as a fundraiser for the church.



Second Sunday Supper: April 8, 5:30 pm,
free and open to the community

Ad Council (Weds. April 11, Weds. May 9th)
PPR meeting (Sunday April 15 at 5)

Wednesday May 2nd (tentative): Frontier Foundation meeting
to discuss church investment options

Lord's Prayer study

Wednesdays at 4:30 and 6: RVUMC (Jones Room)

***Please Don't Forget.
The need is ever present
and We can make a difference!***





Relax and enjoy being served in the 'Garden'

featuring

Freshly brewed Tea Homemade Cookies & Scones

\$8 per person

add your choice of assorted demi-sandwiches for just \$2 more

Garden and House Plants available for sale

and

A Garden - Crafts Table for the Kids

(Make a personal gift for Mom!)

(indoors - rain or shine)

Rondout Valley United Methodist Church

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