
The Joyful Noise

ROCK RAPIDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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Comfortable, Cautious Christians?

It seems to me that we who call ourselves Christians sometimes have a bit of a problem understanding exactly what that means. It should be fairly simple – Christians are those who have chosen to be a follower of Jesus Christ. But what exactly does that mean? Well, first of all, it means that we believe that Jesus came into the world as the Son of God to save us from our sin by his death on the cross. And it means believing it not just in an abstract, general sort of way, but believing it in a personal way; each of us believing Jesus died for **me**, for **my** sin, that through his death and resurrection **I** am forgiven, **I** am given the gift of eternal life in Christ. It is also having a personal relationship with Christ, allowing Christ to change us and make us more and more like him.

And that is where we run into a problem. Sometimes we don't seem to understand what it means to be like Christ. If we claim the name "Christian" it should imply that we desire to follow Christ, to **be** like Christ; to live in a hurting, needy world with the same kind of radical, servant heart that Jesus had. Jesus reached out, met people where they were, touched the untouchable, loved the unlovable. It then follows that we who call ourselves believers in and followers of Jesus should do the same.

But it seems that something has happened to Christians down through the years. Once being a follower of Christ didn't get you arrested, burned at the stake, or eaten by lions; once it became an acceptable, even an admirable thing to be, Christians started getting comfortable. And Christians started getting cautious. And, quite frankly, neither of those is a Christ-like quality. And neither of those is what we as Christians are called to be.

I have been Methodist all my life, and I'm proud to be one. But I am not afraid to admit that oftentimes we life-long "mainline" Christians are the most guilty of acting like we believe we are called to be comfortable and cautious instead of taking radical risks and living a lavish love. All too often we get what the Church is to be about all wrong. We come to think that the Church exists to meet *our* needs, instead of the Church existing to help us to witness to the love of Jesus and meet the needs of the hurting world we are called to serve in his name. We get so caught up in worrying about whether there is going to be enough money to pay our bills and keep the doors open for us to come and worship, that we forget that it's not supposed to be all about us. It's about those we are called to serve as followers of Christ. It's about following Jesus out of those doors into the world he died for.

We (and I do mean **we**, as I am as guilty as anyone) often live out of a sense of scarcity and fear, holding on to our need to be in control, to be comfortable. We become too cautious to take risks that might require us to move out of our comfort zone or leave us with less to meet our needs. We act as though our God is too small to take care of what we need. We start to live as though we know nothing about this Jesus we are supposed to be following. We profess to be followers of an itinerant preacher who likely didn't know from day to day where he would sleep. We profess to be followers of a man who was willing to break religious and societal norms and risk being criticized and condemned and even crucified because he cared more about doing the will of God, meeting needs, and loving people than he did about himself. There is nothing about who Jesus was or how he lived and died that should lead us to believe the words *cautious* and *comfortable* are words that should be used to describe his followers, either individually or collectively as the Church of Jesus Christ.

There is a reason that this is the subject of my article this month. Thanks to the faithfulness of a few who have taken the initiative to find ways we as the Church of Jesus Christ could be serving others in this time and place, our church is beginning a new meal ministry. We will be providing a meal once a month to those who are coming to pick up food from the "Bread of Life" food distribution program through Atlas. It is one way we as a church, and as individuals in the church, can take seriously what it means to serve in the name of Jesus. I think the best, most faithful response to this news from members of the congregation would be something like "Wonderful! I want to help, what can I do to be a part of this?"

Some people have responded in that way. But a few have responded with caution and even fear. "How are we going to pay for this?" "Is this going to hurt our church budget?" "Maybe we shouldn't rush into this, let's think about it for a few more months." "Maybe we should ask for help from other churches, it might be too much work or too much money for us to handle." I don't think we as Christians are expected to be foolish; it's wise to organize, to take the time to do things right so that being unprepared doesn't lead to chaos and/or failure. It is responsible to ask the questions, to want to make sure you have a good plan before proceeding. However, it is not faithful to spend so much time questioning and planning and thinking of all the reasons *not* to do something, that nothing ever gets done. As Christians, we cannot allow ourselves to be so cautious, so controlled by our fears and our need to stay with what is comfortable, that we fail to be faithful to our calling to follow Jesus. (I'm preaching to myself here, too!)

A lot of conversation, planning and work has already been done by a faithful few who are excited about a hands-on ministry that will be doing something to serve others in the name of Jesus. We need to trust in their efforts and have faith that if we as a church are doing what Jesus has called us to do; the resources (people and money) to do the work will be there. It is time to go beyond *thinking* and get on with some *doing*. There are many ways all of us can be involved with this meal ministry. Please be watching and listening for them, ready to help.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, may each of us (and all of us together as the Church) grow beyond our tendency to be cautious and our need to be comfortable. If we can manage to do that, we have a far better chance of becoming a more accurate reflection of the one we profess to follow. The one who said –

'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

- Matthew 25:35-40 -

Pastor Kathy

PLEASE KEEP US INFORMED

If you have recently moved, changed your mailing address, your **email address**, phone number, **or are only using cell phones**, please contact the church office with the current information. **Thank you!**



If you would like to be included in the **Weekly Prayer Partner EMAIL** which includes scripture readings, prayer requests, birthdays, and weekly reminders, please email or call the church; especially if you have not received these lately. If you have email, but do not receive information from the church this way, please give your email address to the office. We may not have it, and it's important that we do going forward so you can stay updated. Thank you.

HOSPITALIZED

Please contact the church office or Pastor Kathy if you know a member has been admitted to the hospital. With the new privacy laws being strictly enforced there are many times we are unaware of hospitalizations. We would rather get ten calls than none at all. Thank you. **Prayer concerns** can be called into the office (472-2324) or emailed to the office at rockrapidssumc@premieronline.net or Pastor Kathy at kathysides@hotmail.com and they will be sent out.



Prayers~

- ✚ Barb Fegan- recovering from cancer surgery
- ✚ Shawn Wibben
- ✚ Kae Warren- recovering from knee surgery
- ✚ Family of Riley Meyer
- ✚ Ackerman family- Death of Dave's dad.
- ✚ Dave Griesse (Leroy & Judy's son)- back surgery
- ✚ Dale and Vicki Slack's daughter Stephanie final chemo treatment was February 12th
- ✚ Those having medical tests done.
- ✚ Steve Kwikkel
- ✚ Stephanie Slack will be seeing a cardiologist for heart issues.



Praise God~

- ☺ Kane David Gacke's baptism
- ☺ Youth of church- Youth Sundays in February; Immanuel on 2/4 and RRUMC on 2/11
- ☺ Central Lyon Robotics team who qualified for state
- ☺ Central Lyon wrestling program and Gable S. and Ross W. for qualifying for state
- ☺ Central Lyon girls basketball
- ☺ Central Lyon Jazz Band and Jazz Choir
- ☺ Central Lyon staff for meeting the needs of our students
- ☺ The Youth Group for their energy and leading the Youth service.
- ☺ Kae Warren- successful surgery- recovering at home
- ☺ Central Lyon Jazz Band qualifying for state.



March Birthdays & Anniversaries

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 01~ Chris Attig | 10~ Luetta Braun | 19~ Evelyn Baldwin |
| 01~ Jeff Parkinson | 10~ Maddox Broesder | 20~ Rick & Pam Attig |
| 01~ Tami Schweitzer | 10~ Brendin Sprock | 22~ Ken Barker |
| 01~ Dylann Van Berkum | 12~ Heather Heimensen | 22~ Bonnie Wilson |
| 02~ Brody Docker | 13~ Brian McIntire | 23~ Dave Warren |
| 02~ Ashlynn Yeakel | 13~ Brent Vande Weerd | 26~ Freda Kammarmeyer |
| 02~ Macyn Olivier | 14~ Patty Halse | 26~ Jerry Birkey |
| 04~ Steve Herman | 17~ Jon Arens | 29~ Russ Kiel |
| 05~ Jamie Schar | 17~ Shawn Wibben | 30~ Krista Sprock |
| 08~ Roscoe Pettengill | 18~ Scott Maxwell | 31~ Jim DeGooyer |
| 08~ Al & Phyliss TeSlaa | 18~ Mike Selken | |
| 09~ Ed & Marlys Brown | 18~ John Yeakel | |

*We apologize for any omissions or incorrect information. Please contact the office with the correct/missing information. Thank you!

Reminders and Announcements



Community Bingo will be held the 1st Friday of each month at 2 p.m. at the Rock Rapids Health Centre. All are welcome.



United Methodist Church~ Thank you so much for the \$100 Casey's gift card and \$80. They both have been very helpful for our trips to Sioux Falls. The love and support from everyone at Church has been amazing and we feel it every day.

**Love,
Brice & Stephanie**



Thank you to all of the 2nd through 5th grade Sunday School children for the Valentine that was delivered to me on Valentine's Day. ~ Dorothy Rockhill

• **Mid Sioux Opportunity, Inc.** is now accepting applications by appointment only for our Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (LiHEAP) until April 30, 2018. Each applicant will need to furnish a copy of their most recent heating and electric bill, original Social Security or I-94 card for each household member, and proof of the household's income for the past month (30 days), the past twelve (12) months, or the most recent calendar year (tax return). Eligibility for participation is established according to the federal income guidelines listed below. Applicants eligible for an award will be paid on a first come, first served basis, and all payments are subject to availability of funds.

MAXIMUM GROSS INCOME

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	ANNUAL INCOME
1	\$21,105
2	\$28,420
3	\$35,735
4	\$43,050
5	\$50,365

For families with more than five members, add \$7,315 for each additional member. Please call your local outreach office for an appointment to apply for LiHEAP: 712-472-3746 or 712-722-3611 Wednesday 9:00-4:00. Visit us on the web at www.midsioux.org

**4th Sunday/Sunday, March 25th
Sunday School Offering & Food Collected for the
Central Lyon Backpack Food Program**



The offering collected from the Sunday School classes on each 4th Sunday of the month (Sept.-May) will be donated to the **Central Lyon Backpack Food Program**. Students can also donate food items for the program. The school supplied a list of needed items, and that info is printed below. There is a backpack as you enter the Sunday School hallway. Any food items that the Sunday School students bring for donation can be placed in that backpack (4th Sunday or any time).

Donations from non-Sunday School students are welcome too ☺. We will have a collection in the fellowship hall.

Thank you in advance for your generosity and support of this program that makes a difference to kids right here at home.

Here are a few items that are used frequently with the backpack program.

Individual servings of:

peanut butter
Ramen noodles
any type of Chef Boyardee
Easy Macs
100% juice boxes
fruit snacks
Rice Krispies
granola bars
oatmeal
Nutri Grain bars

Also used are a few items that are kept frozen or refrigerated until bags are packed.

Those items would be:

Uncrustables
any flavor muffins
mini muffins
string cheese
beef sticks
Gogurts



RRUMC is in charge of delivering Meals on Wheels from Monday, March 19th through Friday, March 30th.

RR UMC MEAL MINISTRY

Announcing a new meal ministry right here in Rock Rapids. RRUMC will be distributing “Sack Suppers” at the monthly Bread of life. Atlas “Bread of Life” works with approximately 60 to 80 families on a monthly basis.

Evangelism and worship committees were approached to organize a meal ministry and will be looking for volunteers to prepare the night before and to serve the night of the distribution. We also will be adding a UMC postcard with a monthly message, devotion in each bag along with a candy kiss or hug. Schedules will be located in the narthex to sign up with starting in early March. A donation list will be located on the same table in the narthex. Monetary donations will be welcomed to help fund this RRUMC ministry. More information to come as the months unfold.

Please contact Rhonda Menning or Kathy VanBerkum

Luke 6 vs. 38

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”



BE THE HANDS AND FEET OF JESUS!

Donations for meal ministry

Brown or white lunch bags

Napkins

Sandwich bags

Snack bags

Saran wrap

Plastic spoons

Chocolate candy kiss

Chocolate candy hugs

To those of you in United Methodist Women, if you are thinking of giving a pledge, now is the time. Thank you!

FAMILY NIGHT OUT

Everyone is invited to attend

Sidewalk Prophets "Something Different Tour"



Thursday, March 8th, 7 pm
University of Sioux Falls
Jeschke Fine Arts Center

Also includes special guest Bonray.

General Admission tickets are available
individually \$10
through [Life 96.5.com](http://Life96.5.com) or eventbrite.com

Carpooling from the church - 5:15 pm

Contact the church office or Patty Halse~ 605-496-4711
for further information, assistance with getting tickets,
or to volunteer for driving

~CALLING ALL COOKS~

Our church Meal Ministry is **seeking 10 frozen meals** to be readily available as the need arises.



Simple meals (soups/stews, casseroles, meat & vegetable/potato) work best. Meals enough for two servings should be packaged in non-returnable (disposable) containers and be dated and labeled as to what they are. They will be kept in our church freezer and, as they are given out, more will be sought.

To start out we are **in need of TEN frozen meals**.

A sign-up clipboard for those willing to participate will be passed. You can also contact Jackie Austin, Meal Ministry chairperson, at 472-2330, or by email at jackiea@premieronline.net



Thanks in advance to those cooks willing to blend caring and cooking for this ministry! Finally, if you know of someone who would be blessed by receiving a meal, please let the church or Jackie know.



Join us for an unforgettable
Family experience this Easter!

Where:

First Reformed Church
512 S. Union St.
Rock Rapids IA 51246
712.472.3729

When:

March 18, 2018

Register today!

www.tinyurl.com/walkwithjesus2018

2018 ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL ROCK RAPIDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

January 31, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

Members of Ad. Council: (Names of Absentees underlined)

Randy Waagmeester – chairperson; Al TeSlaa – Member at Large; Jill Schlumbohm – Christian Education; Shawn Wibben – Treasurer; Rhonda Menning – Evangelism & Lay Member to Annual Conference, Evelyn Baldwin – Financial Secretary & Stewardship/Financial; Patty Halse – Lay Leader; Judy Griesse – Memorial Committee; Kelli Docker – Missions; Tom Vinson – S/PRC; Kim Waagmeester – SS Superintendent; Heather Heimensen – Youth; Lainn Menning – Trustees; Kathy Van Berkum – Worship; Kathy Sides – pastor; Sonya Peterson – Communications; Mary Peterson.

CALL TO ORDER / PRAYER: Meeting opened with prayer by Evelyn Baldwin. Randy called meeting to order.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Motion to approve: Evelyn Baldwin

2nd: Randy Waagmeester

OLD BUSINESS Thank you to Kelli Docker for organizing the Christmas Program. The congregation and Sunday School students enjoyed the Star Wars theme.

REPORTS:

EDUCATION/Kim: Donations to the Back Pack program from Sunday School \$344.62. Discussed need for Sunday School teachers. Curriculum is excellent and easy to follow. Would like to involve more parents to assist with Sunday School class.

THIRD AVENUE YOUTH UPDATE/Heather:

- Third Avenue had a successful fundraiser at Immanuel with the Soup and Pie Meal, the group raised \$1,681.00.
- In December, the youth group went shopping and purchased 5 stockings, filled them with goodies, and gave them to Avera's Stuff a Stocking. Stockings went to patients who were in the hospital during the holidays.
- Third Avenue Youth purchased the tickets for both youth groups to attend No Apologies on January 31.
- Youth Sunday is scheduled for February 4 at Immanuel Lutheran Church and February 11 at our church.
- Third Avenue Youth is planning to do the Urban Plunge Mission Trip in Omaha the weekend of April 27-29, tentatively planning on a parent meeting on February 7 at 6:30pm. We will be looking for 1-2 adult volunteers for this trip.
- February 29 Third Avenue Youth will be volunteering their time at the Denim Project.
- Third Avenue Youth would like permission to have a Lock-In the weekend of March 3-4, this will coincide with our French Toast Breakfast, which is the morning of March 4.
- Third Avenue Youth gave Sarah Halse a donation for her upcoming mission trip to Ireland and gave Bailey Herman a donation for her upcoming trip to Haiti. These donations were given directly to the organization that they are going on these mission trips with.

Motion to approve youth group Lock In by Rhonda Menning, seconded by Patty Halse.

THIRD AVENUE SQUARED UPDATE/Kathy: Youth will be asking for Soup Pot Donations on Super Bowl Sunday. Youth will be volunteering at Kids Against Hunger in March.

EVANGELISM & WORSHIP/Rhonda & Kathy: UMC Meal Ministry was discussed with Atlas staff. The group needs commitment for volunteers, financial donations, and organization of the meals. Evangelism and Worship Committee will meet on Sunday, February 4, to discuss the details.

Kathy organizes volunteers for sound, nursery, and Sunday evening DVD ministry. Will discuss "Next Generation" worship ideas with Pastor Kathy.

Current and former choir members are ordering a memorial for Betty Vinson. Wall words "He Will Raise You Up" will be placed on the sound booth wall.

Volunteers from the congregation are delivering communion to the shut ins.

TREASURER/Shawn: We ended 2017 in the black - \$655.99. Thank you to everyone for your extra donations to accomplish this and overcome our deficit.

January expenses -- \$13,378.22

January income -- \$13,405

\$26.78

FINANCE SEC/Evelyn: 2017 Statements of Giving were sent to donors.

FINANCE/Heather: The financial audit is nearly complete. We just have one checkbook that needs to be audited, the Friends in Need account. Pastor Kathy has this information. This will be completed when she returns. Once this completed, the audit will be forwarded to Amber so she can get the report to the Conference. The Finance Committee would like to thank Corey for doing the Audit.

LAY LEADER/ PATTY – Take-aways from Rev. Slaughter's Workshop

- 1) Restructure the *Nominations/committees* this fall.
- 2) *Worship* team/music ministry work in conjunction with Pastor Kathy for possibility of 1 Sunday/month contemporary service and/or sermon series.

- 3) ATLAS meal ministry/worship prior to Bread of Life ministry 1x/month, *Evangelism* will lead this project.
- 4) Goal for congregational mission trip in 2018-19. *Mission* Committee to take the lead possibly through Justice For All or VIM
- 5) Two new cell groups - targeting a men's group and a young family/adult group. *Who is willing to facilitate these?*
- 6) Recommend Mike Slaughter's "Dare to Dream" all-congregation series start either the Sunday after Easter for 6 weeks or beginning fall. This includes youth and adult studies AND sermon series. *Pastor Kathy, Worship, Education to take the lead. Heather Heimensen already planned to teach high school. Patty will facilitate adult study.*
- 7) "Care systems" - laity training for making disciples who wish to minister more effectively to shut-ins and those in medical, emotional or spiritual crisis. *Who will teach?*

MEMORIAL/Judy: Continuing to receive memorial donations.

MISSION/Kelli: Rainbow Covenant met for 2017. Rainbow Covenant will be revamped in 2019. Silent Auction for donated items will start February 18.

SPRC/Tom: Patty and Tom met with Pastor Kathy to create a weekly schedule to visit shut ins and care center residents starting in February 5.

Christmas gift for staff donations: \$275. Gifts were distributed to Pastor Kathy and Earl, Amber, Heather & Wyatt Stubbe, Phyllis TeSlaa, Dave Fields, and Julie Taylor. Thank you to all who donated.

Donation of \$1600 was given to the United Methodist Church Music Ministry from Betty Vinson's family.

TRUSTEES/Lainn: Will be getting estimate on carpet for sanctuary and air conditioners.

PASTOR/Kathy/Amber: See attached note regarding Phone Tree operation difficulties. Pastor Kathy is out of the office this week for compassionate leave.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE/Sonya: Asked for counter height tables for sanctuary for coffee kiosk. Plan to create a survey for congregation "What I Want From My Church/What I Can Do for My Church."

NEW BUSINESS

Next Meeting: February 28th at 6:00 p.m.

Motion to adjourn: Randy Waagmeester, second by Evelyn Baldwin.