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# *The Joyful Noise*

ROCK RAPIDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
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Once again, we begin another Advent, and soon it will feel like Christmas is fast approaching. Because I grew up in the church, the concept of “Advent” has always been a familiar one to me. Lighting the Advent candles, or marking the passing of days with an Advent calendar are familiar traditions for me. Sometimes it’s easy for me to start to think that because I’ve always known what Advent is, that everyone else knows all about it, too. But, I remember that once when Maggie was little and I mentioned Advent she asked “Advent, what’s that??” It was a reminder that of course, Advent isn’t something that we’re born knowing all about. It’s something that becomes familiar to us and understood by us little by little, year by year; by hearing about what it means and participating in the traditions. I also discovered, in trying to explain it, that sometimes it’s hard to put into words something that you know well.

So, I got out my “United Methodist Book of Worship” to see if it would help me explain Advent a little better. And, as usual, I discovered that even if we’ve been in the church for years and think we know all about something, there is always more to learn. Here’s what the Book of Worship says about Advent:

Advent is a season of four weeks including four Sundays. Advent derives from the Latin *adventus*, which means “coming.” The season proclaims the comings of the Christ— whose birth we prepare to celebrate once again, who comes continually in Word and Spirit, and whose return in final victory we anticipate. Each year Advent calls the community of faith to prepare for these comings; historically, the season was marked by fasts for preparation. Each Sunday of Advent has its distinctive theme: Christ’s coming in final victory (First Sunday), John the Baptist (Second and Third Sundays), and the events immediately preceding the birth of Jesus Christ (Fourth Sunday).

So often we get the idea that Advent is just preparing for Christmas, preparing to celebrate Jesus coming into the world as the baby born in a stable. But did you notice in the description that it says “The season proclaims the *comings* of the Christ”? It is not the coming of Christ, but the comings of Christ that Advent proclaims. Because Christ did not just come as a baby and that was it. Christ comes to us “continually in Word and Spirit,” meaning that we experience Christ’s coming in our lives over and over again as we encounter him through Scripture and through his Spirit living in us and evidenced all around us. Advent is also a time to remember that Jesus said there would be a day when he would come again; so it is a time to look forward to and prepare for that final coming.

Christ’s coming isn’t a one-time event. It isn’t even a once-a-year event. It is a continuous event, moment-by-moment, day-by-day, year-after-year. Advent is a time to prepare ourselves for Christ’s comings; to prepare our hearts and lives so that no matter when we encounter Christ, he finds us ready to receive him again.

I love the hymns of the Advent and Christmas season, from the haunting sound of “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” and the longing it expresses, to the peace and joy of “Silent Night.” Some pastors firmly believe that Christmas songs don’t belong in Advent, so they won’t use the familiar Christmas carols everyone loves till Christmas Eve, or maybe the Sunday before. While this may be liturgically correct, it doesn’t satisfy my heart and soul.

As a kid I always felt cheated by the pastors who refused to let us sing Christmas carols before Christmas, and I confess I never really outgrew that feeling. So, as you may have noticed, I cheat a little. I start sneaking the Christmas carols in before Christmas, because I simply can’t stand to sing the Christmas hymns for only a few days and be done with them. So, if you’re in worship in the weeks

before Christmas, you may still sing a few Advent Hymns, but I'll sneak in some Christmas carols, too. I hope no one minds.

This Advent, may we truly prepare our hearts for the comings of Christ. May we not only look forward to celebrating his birth, but may we look for the ways Christ comes to us continually in so many ways. And maybe the best thing we could do this Advent, the way we could most honor Christ, is to be the presence of Christ for someone else; to have someone say, "I experienced Christ's love and presence today because someone cared (or gave, or called, or shared, or stopped to help, or.....)

Blessings to you and yours this Advent and Christmas season!

*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 [rockrapidsumc@premieronline.net](mailto:rockrapidsumc@premieronline.net) or Pastor Kathy at [kathysides@hotmail.com](mailto:kathysides@hotmail.com) and they will be sent out.



### *Prayers~*

- ✂ Continued prayers for Dave & Barb Fegan.
- ✂ Dave & Barb's son-in-law Chris who had a stroke and for Carrie and their children
- ✂ California victims of devastating fires and all affected
- ✂ Gayle Wagenaar
- ✂ For families dealing with troubling issues.
- ✂ Barb Middle-tests
- ✂ Good tests results



### *Praise God~*

- ☺ For Grace at work in a troubled marriage
- ☺ Thank you to Sheila Maxwell for purchasing the microphone extenders. We appreciate her generosity.
- ☺ Our Veterans whose service to our American ideals and freedoms are valued beyond words.
- ☺ Phyllis TeSlaa going home.
- ☺ Thank you to all who helped in any way for Operation Christmas Child.



## December Birthdays & Anniversaries

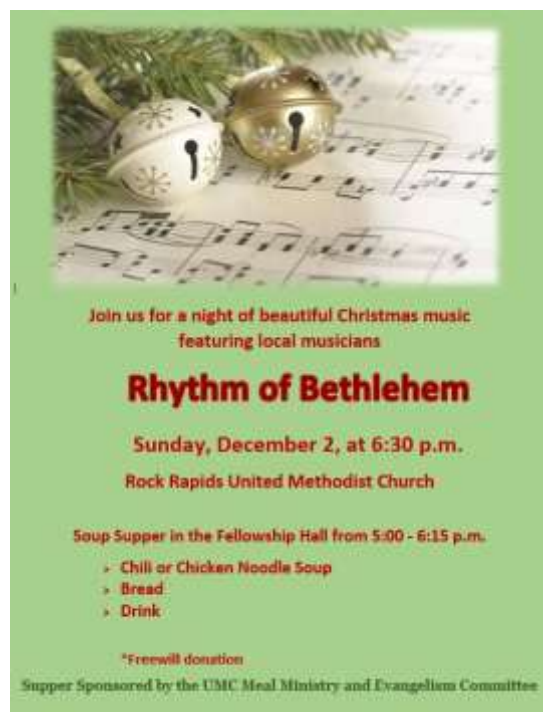
01~ Earl Sides	09~ Kane Gacke	15~ Corey Stratton
02~ Ellie Docker	10~ Gerald Berg	16~ Tom & Sue Vinson
02~ Alayna Sprock	10~ Jeremy Sprock	18~ Marilee Schleusner
03~ Larry Wibben	11~ Jaclyn Wells	21~ Nancy DeJongh
04~ Corey & Carmen Stratton	13~ Kendall Kumba	21~ Cindi Steenblock
07~ Jim Kennedy	13~ Mattie Engleman	22~ Aiden Arens
07~ Brent & Brenda Vande Weerd	15~ Rick Attig	28~ Mike Austin
09~ Char Krahling	15~ Mark Peterson	30~ Kelsey Ackerman
		30~ Lexi Ackerman

\*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 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month at 2 p.m. at the Rock Rapids Health Centre. All are welcome.



**The Children's Christmas program will be held December 9<sup>th</sup> during Worship.**



**Chancel Choir will be performing its Cantata on December 16<sup>th</sup> during worship.**



**Dear Church Family,  
I hope this finds everyone doing well. I wanted to say thank you for all of the things received in the care packages you sent to the college students. It is a great pick-me-up, and great to know we are all in your thoughts.  
~Kaylee McIntire**

## Meal Ministry Minutes

Jesus is definitely working in amazing way sin our growing UMC Meal Ministry. You, yes, you, are a BIG part of that! And for that, we thank you! In worship today, we heard about "launching" others with our generosity-making us all richer in Jesus. We see this with every sack supper we hand out. The looks on their faces are a true blessing! If you want to see those faces-join us!

There are many ways to get involved starting with donating on our list to the fellowship of preparing the meals and finally by engaging with our new friends as they gratefully receive their sack supper. Our ministry is growing! We started in March serving our Rock Rapids friends. Then, in September, we felt called to meet more of God's children in George. This next month we are going to add more suppers at both locations! We are truly blessed to be a blessing! It is not about how much we are given, but what we do with what we are given! This ministry in its' short life has been a true blessing to all who have been involved. Please join us in any way you feel God leading you!

Again, thank you so very much for making this ministry such a huge success!

~In God's Love, Kathy & Rhonda

### 2018 Quilters Projects

**2 Baptisms~ Quilt & Ragdoll  
1 Prayer Shawl  
14 Receiving blankets to Africa  
8 Book covers for Bibles  
25 School Bags**

**Quilts to Church for general budget  
Quilts, ragdolls & sets for a total of  
\$697.00 donated**

**12 quilts donated to Atlas**

### Stocking Caps

**24 to Central Lyon School**

**23 to Sibley**

**24 to Goodwill Sioux City/Mitten party**

**12 ragdolls & 3 rabbits to Children's Crisis**

**12 Shut in gifts**

**Made Christmas tree on candle holder  
with ribbon**

**2018 ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL  
ROCK RAPIDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**October 17, 2018 at 7:00 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 and Finance/Stewardship; Lainn Menning – Trustees; Kathy Van\_Berkum – Worship; Kathy Sides – pastor; Sonya Peterson- Communications. Ryan Christenson, NW District Field Outreach Minister.

**CALL TO ORDER / PRAYER**

Randy called the meeting to order. Patty shared the Discipleship Process Vision and opened with prayer.

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Motion to approve: Lainn Menning. Second: Heather Heimensen

**OLD BUSINESS**

Discussion about reducing and restructuring the number of committees and move to finishing projects with volunteers and team members. Four committees are required by the Book of Discipline – SPRC, Finance, Trustees and Nominations.

**REPORTS:**

**EDUCATION/Kim:** Sunday School attendance has been averaging 35-40 children. Sunday School program is December 9 during worship.

**THIRD AVENUE YOUTH UPDATE/Heather:** Youth will be doing All I Want For Christmas Bible Study during Advent. Volunteers raked lawn at Bonnie Wilson. Pumpkin Auction is October 21. Youth will participate in Trunk and Treat on October 31 at First Reformed Church with other community youth groups. High school is also participating in Operation Christmas Child.

**THIRD AVENUE SQUARED UPDATE/Kathy:** Operation Christmas Child has started.

**EVANGELISM & WORSHIP/Rhonda & Kathy:** Information regarding Meal Ministry menu will be added to morning PowerPoint.

October 24 – Bread of Life – 150 sacks of food will be prepared. Postcard contains church events. Discussion of how to go the next step and invite them to worship with us.

November 18 – Christmas decorating of the sanctuary.

December 2 – Rhythm of Bethlehem at 6:30 p.m. Soup supper will be served from 5:00 – 6:15 p.m. Proceeds will go to UMC Meal Ministry.

December 9 – One Way Up – 6:30 p.m. – Ice Cream Sundae bar to follow.

**TREASURER/Shawn:** Deficit of \$8327.30.

**FINANCE SEC/Evelyn:**

**FINANCE/Heather:** Defying Gravity Sermon series starts October 28. A letter will be sent to the congregation and two weeks later mailing of the 2019 Giving Cards.

November 4 – Your Buck Starts Here Offering.

Budget for 2019 was presented to Ad Board. Finance is concerned about adding music directors to salaries to be fiscally responsible to the church. We are thankful for the members who donate their time and talents.

**LAY LEADER/ Patty:** The Discipleship Process Team continues to meet monthly. In the next 1-2 months, the team's next goal is to present a draft for Ad Council approval. This will include a new vision/mission statement and 4 core values in which we can base all discipleship growth/ministries/service opportunities from.

**MEMORIAL/Judy:** No report. All Saints Sunday November 4.

**MISSION/Kelli:** UMCOR is accepting donations for hurricane relief.

**SPRC/Tom:** Phyllis has been made aware that she is welcome to return to playing organ and accompanying the choir when she is ready to return following her recovery.

Recommended 2% increase in salaries for pastor, administrative assistant, and custodians. Motion to approve: Lainn Menning. Second: Evelyn Baldwin.

SPRC will meet October 28.

Choir accompanist salary was approved through February, 2019, at the rate originally set (\$75 per month). Motion: Rhonda Menning. Second: Tom Vinson.

**TRUSTEES/Lainn:** Request to help Dave and Barb Fegan move items from storage shed. Trustees will meet with the Beautification committee to talk about updating the sanctuary.

**PASTOR/Kathy/Amber:**

Charge Conference November 11 at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

Action Plan prepared by Pastor Kathy was presented. Plan is based on the Visioning Day and CAT (Congregational Assessment Tool) findings, and lists teams formed and areas of focus, including what has been done so far, and what future expectations are. Permission was asked to use this six-item Action Plan as the goals listed on the "Mission and Ministry Plan" form to be completed for Charge Conference. The Ad Council was agreeable to this.

In response to questions about how the pastor spends her time, Pastor Kathy presented a detailed report of a 7-day period, along with general information on how long some typical pastoral tasks take, and other duties she has beyond the local church. Summary of the 7-day period: In addition to regular day-to-day duties such as attending meetings, planning worship and preparing bulletin information, 6 care center or home visits, sermon preparation and writing, and creating sermon slides; during the 7-day period Pastor Kathy also had a funeral, met in Sheldon with the licensed local pastor for whom she is a mentor, wrote an article for the newspaper, read the book "Canoeing The Mountains" and attended a 6-hour Peer Mentoring Group meeting. Time spent on work during the 7-day period was 67 hours, with days ending as late as 1:15 and 1:45 AM. (Full report available from Pastor Kathy)

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE/Sonya:** Projector system is under warranty and the part that needs to be replaced will be installed.

**UMW:** Election of officers was completed during the October meeting. Pinning will be Sunday, October 21.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Pastor Ryan – Peer Mentoring Group meets monthly.

**Next Meeting:** November 14 at 7 p.m.



## Pastor Kathy's Information and Interest Survey for Upcoming Events and Opportunities

I would like to get some input from folks to help me plan a couple of studies and a sermon series beginning after the first of the year. I'll explain what I have in mind, and then I'd appreciate getting input back on your interest and availability for the studies, and your ideas for the sermon series. You can either respond on this sheet and return it to me, or if you prefer, email or call me with your responses. Please let me know about the following three things:

1. Are you interested in an ongoing weekly Bible Study? If there is enough interest, I could offer it at two different times each week, one in the daytime and one in the evening. One idea is to have it at Premiere Estates during the day if residents there are interested in participating, and then at the church in the evening.

Yes, I am interested in a weekly Bible Study \_\_\_\_\_  
Name

I would be interested in the following times: (check all possibilities)

Monday: 10:30 AM \_\_\_\_ 1:30 PM \_\_\_\_ 5:00 PM \_\_\_\_ 7:00 PM \_\_\_\_

Tuesday: 5:00 PM \_\_\_\_ 7:00 PM \_\_\_\_

Wednesday: 10:30 AM \_\_\_\_ 1:30 PM \_\_\_\_

Thursday: 5:00 PM \_\_\_\_ 7:00 PM \_\_\_\_

Sunday: 5:00 PM \_\_\_\_ 7:00 PM \_\_\_\_

2. Are you interested in a 4-week study using a book entitled *The Caring Congregation*? The study seeks to help equip people to be involved in congregational care ministries such as prayer, support, hospital visitation and grief and death ministry. The hope is that people that complete the study would become a part of a "congregational care team" to reach out to people experiencing the need for prayer, visitation and support.

Yes, I am interested in *The Caring Congregation* study \_\_\_\_\_  
Name

I would be interested in the following times: (check all possibilities)

Monday: 5:00 PM \_\_\_\_ 7:00 PM \_\_\_\_ Tuesday: 5:00 PM \_\_\_\_ 7:00 PM \_\_\_\_

Thursday: 5:00 PM \_\_\_\_ 7:00 PM \_\_\_\_ Sunday: 5:00 PM \_\_\_\_ 7:00 PM \_\_\_\_

3. I would like to do a sermon series starting in January dealing with people's faith questions. Is there a particular scripture passage you struggle with? What things do you wonder about God or God's ways? What do you wish you understood better about faith, theology, God, etc.? Please list any question or subject you would like to see addressed:

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If you want to respond by email: [kathysides@hotmail.com](mailto:kathysides@hotmail.com)  
Phone numbers: Home: 712-2770 Cell: 515-201-3634

Thanks for your interest and input!