

Rock Spring News

Youth learn to make tortillas and enchiladas. They work together in the kitchen where laughter and a sense of purpose connect them. Church members then deliver the meal to SEEC.							A 95-year old congregant exuberantly plays the violin as a prelude to the worship service.						
<i>Caring & Generous</i>			<i>Joyful</i>			<i>Faith Filled</i>			<i>Inclusive</i>				
A mother from a Shelter House program speaks about how she went from owning a house to being homeless. Her 8-year old daughter, who has kidney disease, plays and waves while she speaks. Afterwards, Rock Springers come up to "Roberta" to speak with her one-on-one about the impact of her words.													
<i>Justice Seeking</i>				<i>Learning</i>				<i>Inclusive</i>					
A youth choir member approaches the microphone to introduce the anthem the choir is about to sing, and you hear how deeply the choir has reflected on the meaning of the words.							A delegate stops one of our staff members at the General Synod to thank Rock Spring for our weekly updates on the Israel/Palestine issue.						
<i>Learning</i>			<i>Faith Filled</i>			<i>Justice Seeking</i>			<i>Inclusive</i>				

On Foundations Firmly Laid

Rock Spring's core values describe the very essence of our community. As a church, we are inclusive, caring & generous, justice seeking, learning, faith filled, and joyful. These are the bricks on which the foundation of Rock Spring has been firmly laid, and on which our future will be built.

The Rock Spring community is experienced most profoundly in moments when our faith, love, and intention intersect as we seek to bring about the world that we believe God intends. The bricks above represent just a sampling of the moments we have experienced and observed over the past year as we've built on our core values.

In 2016, with the support of the congregation, we hope to extend this foundation by updating our website, which is the way most new people learn about Rock Spring and is increasingly essential in keeping Rock Springers informed and connected; deepening our relationships with our Community Partners; widening our caring and small group ministries; expanding our adult learning program; developing a church profile and beginning a search for a settled associate pastor; growing in love, expanding the circle ever wider to partner with each Rock Springer on their individual faith journey; and helping families develop further connections between church and home.

With gratitude for your commitment to our Rejoice, Renew, Reimagine Capital Campaign, we ask for your participation in our annual giving campaign to continue to strengthen the foundation of Rock Spring.

Every person and every pledge is important to sustaining our foundation.

Harvest Breakfast & Pledge Sunday

*You are invited to
Rock Spring's Annual
Harvest Breakfast
Sunday, November 22
9:30 - 11:00 a.m.*

*Carpenter Hall
Prepared & served by the
High School
Youth of Rock Spring.*

*During both worship services
that day, we will gratefully
receive and consecrate our
2016 Stewardship Pledges.*

*The Rock Spring Choirs will
perform at both services.*

Please join us!



ROCK SPRING

Sundays in November

WEEKLY

- 9:00 a.m. Worship
- 10:00 a.m. Adult Discussion Video Series
- 10:00 a.m. Faith + Life (see page 7 for details)
- 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir
- 10:15 a.m. Choristers
- 11:00 a.m. Worship & Sunday School
- 12:10 p.m. Youth Choir
- 6:30 p.m. Middle & Senior High Youth of Rock Spring (YoRS)

NOVEMBER 1

Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time/All Saints Day

12:15 p.m. Shirlington Employment & Education Center Lunch & Forum

NOVEMBER 8

Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

- 9:30 a.m. New Members Class
- 12:30 p.m. Cookies & Conversation about Fifth Sundays

NOVEMBER 15

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time/Heritage Sunday

- 12:00 p.m. Reception Honoring New & Heritage Members
- 12:30 p.m. Prayer Circle
- 4:00 p.m. Rock Spring Recital Series

NOVEMBER 22

Thanksgiving Sunday

- 9:00 & 11:00 a.m. Pledges Received & Consecrated in Worship
- 9:30 a.m. Harvest Breakfast
- 2:00 p.m. Handmade Ministry

NOVEMBER 29

First Sunday of Advent/Fifth Sunday

12:15 p.m. Fifth Sundays "Advent in Action" Event

Reflections

“Imagine if we collectively had positive expectations and were intent on seeing others with the heart of God.”

Change your expectations, especially of minorities ...” This was one of the many things our panelists said at the Forum on Racial Justice Sunday, October 25, that has stuck with me.

Dr. Alfred Taylor, an Arlingtonian, historian, author, and educator told us that we need to change our expectations. Dr. Taylor was speaking primarily about education and he is known in Arlington for saying that we don’t have an “achievement gap,” we have an “attitudinal gap.” We need to expect students to succeed. We need to expect that children can learn and perform at their highest level. We don’t know what that level is; we can only predict it.

As I consider my own expectations for myself, my family, my colleagues, our congregation – I realize that my expectations greatly effect what gets my attention, time, and preparation.



Mondre' Kornegay, who has spent decades working with the criminal justice system, said that African Americans have been seen with the wrong heart. Kornegay encouraged us to heed the great commandment and to seek to love others as God loves us, to see others as God would see us.

These two ideas 1) having high expectations and 2) seeing others with the heart of God are intertwined. If we believe that every child is precious and full of potential and possibility, we expect them to have food to nourish their bodies, a place where they can rest well, tools for learning, attention to their particular needs, interests, and concerns, and opportunities for second chances when they make a mistake.

These two ideas, when implemented, could not only transform our schools. Imagine if we collectively had positive expectations and were intent on seeing others with the heart of God.

I expect we will continue to be challenged in ways that unlock our own potential as we continue these sacred conversations.

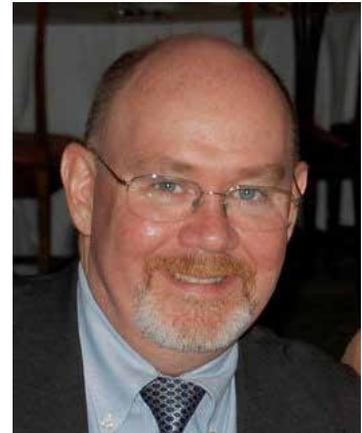
Grace and peace,
— *Kathy*

From Council

“On Any Given Sunday”

What an exciting and fulfilling time to be a Rock Springer!

That was the thought that kept popping into my head at a recent meeting of the Rock Spring Council as we heard reports from our pastor, our Finance Board, our Campus Renewal Committee, and others who help to keep this such a vibrant faith community. As we went over the proposed budget, and heard of plans for our annual stewardship campaign (On Foundations Firmly Laid), it became clear just how much is going on in our church. During a church leadership dinner at Kathy's house, we found example after example of how Rock Spring is living out its core values of being an Inclusive, Caring and Generous, Learning, Justice-seeking, Faith-filled, and Joyful community.



On any given Sunday (to borrow a seasonally appropriate football phrase), you can see Rock Springers filling the pews to worship together at our services, laughing and singing as we send our children off to Sunday School, learning together at Faith + Life sessions, getting our hands dirty serving others in Fifth Sunday activities, or watching our youth strengthen their friendships while planning their next act of service.

We're tending to our spiritual needs with deeply moving and fulfilling Sunday services. We're challenging ourselves and getting out of our comfort zones with sacred conversations about race. We're taking a hard and disturbing look at how guns have devastated our region. We're enduring some disruption and making sacrifices of time, talent, and treasure to transform our campus in a way that will better serve our mission, and ensure that the next generation of Rock Springers will have a place to worship and serve.

As days grow shorter and we approach the end of the year, Council prepares to review the progress it has made on its 2015 goals. There will, I'm sure, be areas where we excelled, and others where greater effort is needed. But I am struck by the number of opportunities our church offers to become connected and engaged in the effort to bring about the world that we believe God intends.

– *Jim Kane, Vice Chair*
council@rockspringucc.org

Capital Campaign Update

At the conclusion of our Capital Campaign on May 17, we announced that pledges collected during the campaign were sufficient to fund the entire planned campus renewal project. We are very sorry to have to report an adjustment to that figure. The total funds raised now stands at \$2.6 million, about \$75,000 short of what we estimated for the project. The change to the number is related to uncertainty in the valuation of an in-kind gift, and to the great care that we take with confidentiality. Because the operating funds and the Capital Campaign funds are kept separately and donors are kept confidential, there were some incorrect assignments across the two sets of books.

We hope to close the gap by making visits to members who were missed during the campaign, including new members and members who were out of town. It is important that we do this in the next few months so that the Campus Renewal Committee will be able to budget appropriately. If you have not begun to make payments on your pledge, please do! If you need help setting up automated payments or have other questions, please contact Susan Geiger or the church office.

~Stuart Scott and Lucy Carlson

From Council



Campus Renewal Committee Progress Report

Two important steps forward have been taken by the CRC. First, a project manager has been hired and second, the first set of schematic designs has been received and reviewed by the CRC.

At the October 18, 2015 congregational meeting, the congregation approved a motion asking Council to seek support from the Endowment Trustees for the hiring of a project manager for the facilities renewal portion of the campus renewal project. Artisan Partners was chosen as the Project Manager after a concerted and competitive process. Geoff Azaroff and Adam Prill are the principal owners of the firm. The CRC talked with other churches that had completed renovation projects about the benefits and costs of hiring a Project Manager and drafted a Request for Proposals soliciting bids for the position. Four firms submitted bids, and three were interviewed by the CRC. The bids

were highly competitive, but Artisan Partners had the most experience handling church renovations and their references were universally pleased with their support and their ability to help keep projects on time and on budget.

Many thanks to all of the CRC members who have put so much time into hiring a Project Manager, especially Karin Kroft who developed the RFP and supervised the process for us, and Jason Henderson who took two personal leave days to be a key part of the interviewing process. It's truly gratifying to have such great support for the CRC's efforts.

The second major step forward was the receipt of the first set of the schematic designs on October 19, 2015. This first set is produced when approximately 50% of the schematic design is completed. By reviewing the design with the architects at this time, the CRC is able to raise questions and discuss possible issues with the architects as they develop the basic floor plans, elevation drawings, and other technical specifications. It is these more technical drawings that allow us to seek General Contractor cost estimates based on a more complete idea of the materials and work that will be required. On November 17, 2015, the CRC is scheduled to review a 90% complete set of schematic designs with the architect in preparation for the designs to be ready for General Contractor review at the beginning of December.

If you have any questions or comments, please address them to: campusrenewal@RockSpringUCC.org.

- Peter Geiger

Campus Renewal Project Chairman

Rejoice, Renew, Reimagine Pledge Payments

We are nearing the end of the year with only 56% of the pledges for 2015 received.

If we can collect what was pledged for 2015, we will be in a good financial position for some very large bills that will be coming in soon. We will soon owe \$103,000 to Reuters for the beginning phase of construction of the organ, another \$103,000 when they start construction of the wind chests and wind system, \$207,000 when the construction is completed (which could be several months before installation), and more when it is installed. At the same time, we will be receiving bills from the architects, the Project Manager, and various construction-related invoices.

In order to keep our bridge loan as low as possible, we really need everyone's pledge to come in on time. Every dollar that comes in before we have to take out a loan helps us avoid paying more interest than necessary. Please keep those pledge dollars coming!

Susan Geiger
Capital Campaign Financial Secretary
susangeiger30@gmail.com
703.841.0021

Worship and Music

Heritage Sunday to Honor Long-term Members

As we welcome new members on November 15, we will also be honoring members of Rock Spring who have been members here for 40 years or more. Their faith, wisdom, and dedication to God and to Rock Spring have created the firm foundation that we experience at Rock Spring. Pictured here are some of our heritage members, along with their friends and family, who attended last year. Heritage members will be recognized during the worship services, and will also be honored at a special coffee hour following the 11:00 a.m. service.



First Fridays: Music & Meditation A Sacred Time to Nourish the Soul

6:40 – 7:00 p.m. Musical prelude and candle lighting

7:00 – 7:30 p.m. Music and Meditation

Join us the first Friday of each month through April for a peaceful and uplifting worship service. Arrive anytime during the musical prelude to pray, light candles, or simply be surrounded by music. Fridays November 6, December 4, January 1, February 5, March 4, and April 1.



IBIS Kicks off Rock Spring Recital Series' 2015-2016 Season

Children's Concert Saturday, Nov. 14 at 10:30 a.m.

Full Concert Sunday, Nov. 15 at 4:00 p.m.

Come and join us for the first two concerts of the Rock Spring Recital Series 2015-16 season. Both in the Sanctuary.

EARTH/AIR

Music for flute, viola, and harp by Takemitsu, Debussy and others, with guest artist Daniel Foster, principal viola of the National Symphony Orchestra.

Faith Formation

From the Director of Faith Formation



"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."

~Maya Angelou

I love Thanksgiving. Hands down, it's my favorite holiday. It's the opening gambit for the time of year best known in my household as "Butter Season," when I cook and bake and cook some more. The kitchen is warm, the house smells divine, the family gathers.

But then, it's Black Friday. And suddenly, life can feel like a sip of water being delivered by a firehose – too much is coming too quickly. For this introvert, too many events and stores crowded with too many people and too much merchandise leave me tired and cranky.

Over the past few years, I've come to realize that most of the expectations I was striving to meet were imposed by only one person: me. When I stopped and asked my kids if they felt strongly about certain things I saw as "must dos," they said no. I was exhausting myself – and, as it turns out, exhausting them!

I found Maya Angelou's quote, and felt something shifting. I had been doing the best I could – but now I knew better. So I started to do a little bit better. I discovered that if you don't send Christmas cards, the world does not, in fact, cease to spin on its axis. I learned that spending an evening snuggled on the couch eating spaghetti and watching *Elf* meant far more to my kids than running about from party to party.

What are the must-dos on your holiday list that are truly meaningful? And which might be let go? Join me for Faith + Life on November 8 to explore some ways we might "gear down" for the holidays.

With joy,
— Ashley



Join Rock Spring's newest Adult Education offering: Faith + Life. This series of workshops meets on the Neighborhood House stage each week at 10:00 a.m. and is exploring the various ways our faith intersects with daily life. Come every week, or drop in when a topic grabs your attention. The gatherings are informal and include time for questions and discussion. Child-care is available in the nursery, and elementary students can be escorted to Choristers at 10:15 a.m.

- [November 1 – Where is God In... Politics \(Part 2\)](#)
In his new book, *The Relevance of Religion -- How Faithful People Can Change Politics*, Episcopal priest and former U.S. Senator John Danforth writes, "I want political people to stop using religion to divide Americans, but I want religious people to become more engaged in fixing politics that is currently broken." We'll spend some time discussing Danforth's ideas, and how we can become more engaged. Moderated by Jim Kane.

Faith + Life

Sunday Mornings, 10:00 a.m., Upper Neighborhood House

- [November 8 – Family Matters: Gearing DOWN for the Holidays](#)
It's early November. The mailbox is overflowing with catalogs and the calendar is already filling with holiday events. How can we regain some sanity and refocus our priorities? Moderated by Ashley Martinage.
- [November 15 – Going Deeper: Living Your Calling](#)
How can you give in ways that fill you too? What does it mean to sense your calling, and how do you live it? Join us for this exploration of what it means to feel called throughout your life, and how to let your gifts amplify your joy. Moderated by Laura Martin.
- [November 22 – Just for Fun: Welding Sculpture](#)
Is your only experience with welding what you saw in the movie "Flashdance"? Join Rock Spring artist Donna Cartwright as she shares how she got into welding and shows some examples of her work. She will also talk about Rock Spring's Handmade Ministry which meets monthly.

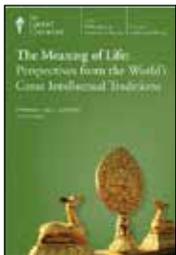
Faith Formation



YoRS (Youth of Rock Spring): No-Stress November

Middle school and high school are tough! Academic pressures, sports and other extra-curricular activities, drama with friends and family... It's a lot! But there are ways to keep things in perspective and under control. So the YoRS Leaders are dubbing it "No-Stress November" and inviting all Rock Spring youth in grades 6-12 to participate.

Throughout the month, the youth will learn about what causes stress, how to recognize its signs, and healthy ways to cope. Among the planned activities are yoga, arts and creativity, helping others as a way to also help yourself, and of course, plenty of fun and laughter. Please join us Sunday evenings from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Contact Ashley Martinage or any of the YoRS leaders (SH: John & Kathy Morland, John Hotchkiss; MH: Jeff Dale, Heather Hotchkiss, Jen Weidman) for more details!



Video Discussion Class Engages "The Meaning of Life"

Sunday Mornings at 10:00 a.m., Room 207/Hunter Building

What is the meaning of life, and how, exactly, do you find it? Engage these questions from the perspectives of the world's great intellectual traditions, including the Bhagavad Gita, Job, Confucius, Nietzsche, Gandhi, and the Dalai Lama. Each Sunday, the group watches a video and follows it with conversation. This latest series is part of The Great Courses collection, and is taught by Smith College professor Jay Garfield. Join any Sunday, or contact Dwight Rodgers for more details.



Bible Basics: Apocalypse Now & Then

A Study of the Book of Revelation

"Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?... Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!... Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow". (From Revelation, Chapters 6-8)

Can you hear the sacred conversation inspiring John's dreams? You will if you join us on Friday, November 20 at 7:00 p.m. in Room 205 of the Hunter Building for the November session of Bible Basics. We are introduced to Four Horsemen and Seven Angels with seven trumpets. And we will take a detour into *Can I Get A Witness?*, a work by Brian Blount which will help us read Revelation through African-American culture, from spiritual to hip-hop.

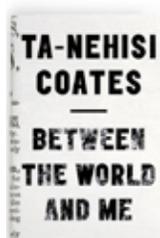


Sacred Conversations on Racial Justice

Mondays, Nov. 2 & 9, 7:00 p.m., Saegmuller Room

We will have two Sacred Conversations during the month of November.

- On Monday, November 2, join Kathy Dwyer for a conversation about Ta-Nehisi Coates' powerful book, *Between the World and Me*. The book, written as an impassioned letter to Coates' 15-year-old son, is a deep and intimate exploration of America's racial history that faces head-on some of the biggest questions facing the people in our country right now: How do we reckon with our history of racial violence? How do we understand the concept of race? How do we find reconciliation? What is it like to inhabit a black body and find a way to live within it? The value of the book is largely in coming to a new and deepened awareness of why these questions so urgently need to be discussed.
- On Monday, November 9, we will gather to explore the topic of colorblindness. What is colorblindness? Why does it not work, and why does it appeal? Add your voice and perspective to our ongoing conversation about race and racial justice as we delve more deeply into these topics.



Social Action and Mission



Advent in Action! A Rock Spring Fifth Sundays Event

Mark Your Calendar for Sunday, November 29

Join us on November 29 for a Fifth Sunday dedicated to celebrating Advent. We will gather in Carpenter Hall immediately following the 11:00 a.m. worship service for our 3rd annual chili cook-off. After lunch we will pack winter coats and thermal underwear to be handed out by Shirlington Employment and Education Center (SEEC) and make a hot meal to be delivered to SEEC clients. We will also create evergreen advent centerpieces for members to bring home and make crafts to give out through the Rock Spring Caring Ministry and at Culpepper Garden.

We are collecting the following items in bins in the Saegmuller Room throughout November:

- new and used men's winter coats
- new men's thermal underwear (medium and large)

In addition, the Christmas tree with ornaments of gift wishes for Shelter House, AFAC, ASPAN, and Culpepper Garden will be in Carpenter Hall during the Fifth Sunday event.

Thank you for your participation and support. Please call or e-mail Allison Crawford or Susan Olson with questions.

Join Rock Spring's Safe Haven/SEEC Cooking Team



For almost five years now, a Rock Spring team has been cooking and serving nutritious, hot lunches on a regular schedule for up to 100 homeless and/or hungry men, women and children at "Safe Haven" in Falls Church. Safe Haven is a Fairfax County program that provides a variety of social services along with breakfast and lunch, and is housed in the fellowship hall at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) near Seven Corners. Starting a year ago, the same Rock Spring team has cooked lunch once a month at Carpenter Hall and delivered it to 30 or 40 unemployed day workers at an outdoor shelter at the Shirlington Employment and Education Center (SEEC) in South Arlington. Approximately ten men and women comprise our team, but typically only six to eight are available to help on a given service day. We need some more helping hands (and hearts). Three to five new volunteers would be great!

All service days are either a Tuesday or a Thursday, about twice a month. In addition to cooking and serving lunches, volunteers are asked to consider choosing the menu and purchasing the food in advance, on a rotating basis. Rock Spring's Wider Mission budget reimburses for the purchases. Volunteers drive themselves or carpool to the volunteer site, and typically work from 9:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Among the rewards for our team are the heartfelt expressions of gratitude we hear in these face-to-face encounters, and the camaraderie and deepening friendships among the members of the team.

If you would like to volunteer, or get more information, please contact Laura Martin at the church office, or team leader Don Johnson (jclan2@aol.com).



Arlington Thrive 40th Anniversary Celebration & Fundraiser

You are invited on Wednesday, November 18, 6:30 to 9:00 p.m., at the Army Navy Country Club in Arlington to help Arlington Thrive celebrate its 40th anniversary of providing emergency funds for neighbors in need. This organization was started by Anna Barber, Ellen Bozman, and JoAnn Cabbage-the first two were members of Rock Spring. Tickets are \$100 and Young Professionals (35 and under) are \$60. For further information visit: www.arlingtonthrive.org.

Social Action and Mission



Rock Spring's Community Partner of the Month: Shirlington Employment and Education Center

In the month of November Rock Spring will be focusing on the Shirlington Employment and Education Center (SEEC), one of the Community Partners chosen by the Social Action Board in 2014. The events will include a panel discussion and lunch after the 11:00 a.m. service with the Director of SEEC and two immigrants on November 1, a collection of thermal underwear and lightly used coats during the month, and as part of Fifth Sunday on November 31 an opportunity for families to cook a meal together for SEEC workers.

SEEC was established in 2000 as an Arlington County program to match day laborers with employers who are in need of temporary labor. Potential workers who have the skills and background required are referred to employers who then negotiate over the working conditions and wages. Work performed varies from construction to yard work, domestic services to handy man jobs. Almost all of the workers are men and most are Hispanic. SEEC also supports a new Green Housecleaning program that has been training immigrant women to clean homes and businesses using green house cleaning products. A more recent initiative is to provide technical workshops and assistance for educating immigrants on how to develop a proper business plan in order to start their own businesses. This was supported by Rock Spring's Community Grant of \$5,000 for 2015.

Five years ago Rock Spring joined other local churches that provide regular lunches to serve between 20-60 workers depending on the season and to deliver it to the site on S. Nelson Street where the workers wait to get jobs. YoRS took on this commitment bimonthly during the 2012-13 school year and have continued to the present. On Sunday nights, the high school youth prepare a Hispanic meal such as tamales, enchiladas, or tamale casserole. As their enthusiasm grows, so does their cooking skill. On alternate months other Rock Spring members or groups such as Sacred Circles prepare or buy lunch for SEEC workers. Last year the "Safe Haven" group began preparing an additional meal for the SEEC workers each month and now our service has grown to provide meals on the second and third Tuesday of each month.

While Rock Spring helps support the needs of workers by providing food and clothing, the real goal is to employ these workers so they can become proudly self sustaining members of the our community. This means hiring the workers so that they can eventually become self-employed. Last June in a special ceremony Rock Spring was presented the Emily DiCicco award for their work assisting the immigrant population by Leni Gonzalez, Chair of the SEEC Board of Directors.



Kudos to Rock Spring's CROP Walkers

More than 20 Rock Springers gathered on a chilly fall morning to participate in the annual CROP Walk. The CROP walk raises funds to help eliminate hunger and assure access to clean water in the local community and around the world. One-fourth of the Arlington CROP Walk's proceeds go to the Arlington Food Assistance Center, and the remaining three-fourths are directed to Church World Service.

It's not too late to donate! Go online to www.crophungerwalk.org/arlingtonva and click on Donate to a Team, then click on the Rock Spring UCC team. Thank you!

Social Action and Mission



Hopeful Developments in Colombia

Members of Rock Spring may recall meeting UCC missionary Michael Joseph, who has described to us his long-term work for peace and justice amidst the long-running civil war in Colombia. So it is with personal joy that we celebrate news of formal negotiations between the Colombian Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). According to an announcement from the UCC, "The warring sides have a framework in place for a final agreement and are expected to hammer out details in the next six months. Guerrilla forces, such as the FARC, will lay down their weapons within two months of that final agreement." Leaders from the UCC and the Central Atlantic Conference praised the agreement for addressing human rights abuses: both sides will make reparations to victims and, except for war crimes, offer amnesty to combatants.

Michael Joseph points out that much work remains. "Of course there is so much more still to do—peace-building, reconciliation, restorative justice work. . . ." as well as stemming pre-election violence from paramilitary groups. The UCC and Global Ministries will continue their commitment to peace and justice for all Colombians throughout this hopeful and challenging time.



From the Palestinian Travelers

We thank Laura, Kathy and Michael for the many unexpected hours that they gave in the decision to postpone the trip to Palestine. This included many communications with our partners at Church of the Redeemer and with those making all the arrangements in programs in Palestine. They gave information that gave us a sense of what was happening in an unbiased way. They were intent on our making the decision.

After much thought especially on the part of Michael, Laura and Kathy the travel group made the hard decision to postpone our trip to Palestine.

We had a lengthy conference call sharing our hopes, disappointments, and fears about the trip. We shared concerns for the people in Jerusalem who have been working hard to make sure our trip would help us understand the magnitude of the issues in Palestine.

One significant factor in deciding to postpone was Pastor Barhoum Ibrahim Azar's saying that it "would be easier" for them if we postponed. Norms for hospitality are very high in middle-eastern culture. It would be very difficult for them to say directly "don't come - neither we nor you would be safe." We recognized that we might be putting members of the Church of the Redeemer at risk if we came. There are times when having company is too much of a hardship.

Please keep the people of that region in your prayers.

Mary Helen Harris, Ann Baker, Charles Spencer, Kate Spencer, Mary Spencer, Barbara Keish, Jo Porter, Jo Hoge, Joan Edson

Congregational Life

From the Director of Mission Integration & Congregational Care

When Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel was asked if he found time to pray when he was marching for Civil Rights, he replied, "I prayed with my feet."

Heschel was a devout Jewish man, and made time in his life for many kinds of prayer. It is this "praying with his feet" that resonates with me at Rock Spring.

In the nearly two months that I have been in my current position, I have watched people "pray with their feet." I have watched prayer happen as members have offered Chip Woodward a ride to church each week. I have witnessed prayers as you have cooked chili, or lasagna, or brownies, for the Kinneys, Alversons, and Fultons. I have heard prayers said in cereal boxes as you built the Great Wall for AFAC and Heritage UCC. I have seen prayers turn in the wind in the form of t-shirts in the Heeding God's Call gun violence memorial. I have tasted prayers in Carpenter Hall, as we have feasted on lunches and as you have come together to cook for SEEC. I have listened to you pray in your presence with people with dementia.

And I have heard people challenge us--how can we pray more deeply with our collective feet? How can we advocate together and raise our voices in a way that will be impactful? How can we be more intentional and focused with our community partners? How can we care for each others more fully?

As a result of these voices and the response to the gun violence display, we are launching a weekly "Gun Violence action alert" e-mail that you are invited to be part of. The e-mails will offer specific actions that you can take on gun violence in your community. If you would like to be added to the list, please let me know. If you feel led to focus on advocacy in other areas, I also welcome your thoughts and inspiration.

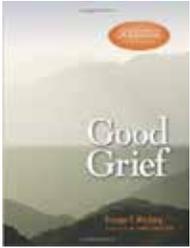
Additionally, in November Caring Ministry will launch two new initiatives--a discussion on life's transitions and a Companions in Grief group. We hope that these opportunities will give voice to some of our deep experiences, and allow us to share them in a way where we are nurtured and strengthened. (For more on these opportunities, see page 13.)

And as we continue to pray with our feet, I also invite you to join me in praying with our words and hearts---for those in the congregation who are sick, for our partners at Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem, for this sacred and broken world, for what has woken you up today.... Please reach out to me at any time with your own prayers, and share them with each other. Several of you have told me about your personal prayer practices and the ways that you hold each other in prayer. May we continue to do that--with our feet, our words, our outstretched hands, our open spirits....

In gratitude and joy,
—*Laura*



Congregational Life



Companions in Grief

The holidays can be a particularly difficult period of time for those of us grieving the loss of someone close. You are invited to walk through this time with others at Rock Spring. The four-session gathering time will be co-facilitated by Laura Martin and Jerry Kamens. Gatherings will be on Tuesdays, November 17, December 1, December 15, and January 5 from 2-3:30 p.m. The conversation will be based on the book *Good Grief*, which will be provided for you to read.

Please RSVP by contacting Laura Martin (laura@rockspringucc.org, 703.538.4886x12). If you would like to attend the group but cannot make this time, please also reach out to let Laura know that. Transportation can be provided. This will be a closed group after the first session.

Rock Spring's Caring Ministry Presents: Adjusting to Life's Changes As We Age

Tuesday, November 10
12:00–1:30 p.m.
Saegmuller Room



This program will explore adjustments to the physical and emotional changes that come with aging. Issues regarding decreased independence, death of a spouse, adjusting to home care and transitioning to senior living will be addressed. We welcome people who are in the process of transitioning in any way or those who have made the transition to come and discuss.

The program will be facilitated by Stephanie Chong, LICSW, Director of Community Outreach & Education at Lifematters. Please feel free to bring your own lunch; drinks and soup will be provided. If you would like a ride, contact Laura Martin (laura@rockspringucc.org, 703.538.4886x12) or Mary Helen Harris (mhhmsw@gmail.com; 703.645.0084).



New Library Books

These titles will be newly available in the Rock Spring Library this month. Check them out!
The Child Garden, by Catriona McPherson; amateur sleuth, bookworm, librarian, in Scotland
Fates and Furies, by Lauren Groff; marriage, two views
The Green Road, by Anne Enright; Irish family
How I Shed my Skin: Unlearning the Racist Lessons of a Southern Childhood, by Jim Grimsley
Ice Cream Summer, by Peter Sis; Caldecott winner, picture book
Leo: A Ghost Story, by Mac Barnett; not spooky, children's book
Most Dangerous: Daniel Ellsberg and the Secret History of the Viet Nam War, by Steve Sheinkin
The Nature of the Beast: A Chief Inspector Gamache Novel, by Louise Penny
Palace of Treason, by Jason Matthews; a Russian agent and a CIA man, Nate Nash
Pretty Girls; a mystery, by Karin Slaughter
The Round House, by Louise Erdrich; Native Americans, tender novel of a family and culture
The Secret Chord, by Geraldine Brooks; bringing to life David, from shepherd to king
Felicity: Poems, by Mary Oliver; Pulitzer Prize winner, collection of love poems, happiness

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Markers & Milestones



Congratulations to former interim Senior Pastor **Doug Griffin** on the publication of his book, *If You Find Jesus Bury Him! Reforming Biblical Spirituality*. Writes Doug, "In the book I show why I think that doubt can be a gateway to faith. The Bible can be taken seriously without having to read it literally. And there are more ways than one to understand the significance of Jesus and develop one's Christian spirituality."

Congratulations, too, to **Conor Kelly** who was selected for the Virginia Senior Honors Choir. Conor is the son of **Joe and Joanne Kelly**.

Year-End Giving

A Rock Spring Tradition And Vital Element of Support



Traditionally, Rock Spring has benefited in the final months of the year from multiple gifts from members and friends who find themselves in a position to give extra support to our church. These gifts, large and small, make up a vital element of our church budget. So please consider giving the church a helping hand by making a year-end gift to Rock Spring if you are in a position to do so. Just drop an extra check in the collection plate or convey appreciated stock.

We also generally experience a drop off in pledge income during the summer months when many folks are away. This usually picks up and pledges are brought current in the fall. If your pledge is not current, please consider this a friendly reminder to try to bring it current so that we can end the year in a strong financial position.

If you have questions about year-end giving or any aspect of church finance, please feel free to contact John Morland, Chair, Board of Finance.

P.S. Making year-end contributions by donating appreciated stock enlarges both the size of the gift to the church and the charitable tax deduction for you. If you have questions about how to donate stock, please contact our Financial Secretary, Don Johnson.

Gift From the Rock Spring Cooperative Preschool

This note was received, along with a donation from the Rock Spring Cooperative Preschool.

"Dear Rev. Dwyer and Rock Spring UCC, Please accept this small gift as a token of our appreciation for 70+ years of a cherished partnership. We at RSCP truly appreciate your support and look forward to a continued partnership for years to come. With gratitude on behalf of the RSCP families and staff, Kristina Aberg, President"



Congregational Life



Women's Fellowship Invites Your Participation Many Opportunities to Engage

Rock Spring's Women's Fellowship is the umbrella sponsor for a number of different activities that are part of Rock Spring's foundation. Women – and men! – are invited to share their gifts and talents and to nourish their spirit in a variety of ways. Contact Jacki Brown with any questions (womensfellowship@rockspringucc.org).

Memorial Service Receptions

Do you have a gift for hospitality? The Memorial Service Receptions Ministry is looking for several more women or men who feel called to organize memorial service receptions. It is hard to overstate how appreciative grieving families are to receive this gift. Organizers recruit teams of helpers to setup, serve, and clean up after the reception, as well as inviting people to contribute food. Training is provided, and members of the organizing team split duties as their schedules permit. For more information, contact Peggy Greenwood (peggygreen@aol.com).

The Handmade Ministry

Do you like to knit, crochet, weave, quilt or sew? The Handmade Ministry handcrafts comfort shawls for those who are in need of prayers. The pastoral staff often delivers them to Rock Springers who are ill or grieving, and the gift is always deeply appreciated. Yarn is available to anyone who would like it, and can be found in the cedar chest in the Saegmuller Room. Finished shawls can be left there as well. The group gathers on the 4th Sunday of the month from 2:00-4:00 p.m., and plans are in the works to add additional gatherings. You are also welcome to create on your own and leave your donations in the chest. Contact Donna Cartwright (donnavigt1@verizon.net), Peggy Greenwood, or Joan Yocum (jyocum3630@aol.com).

Bead Workshop

Are you crafty? Do you believe in recycling? Do you value continuing a Rock Spring tradition? Since the 1970s, women have rolled paper beads from the Sunday bulletin covers and strung them into gorgeous necklaces and lanyards. Sales of the creations have earned money for a variety of efforts (currently the Youth Mission Trip). We are seeking new energy and leadership for the Bead Workshop. Contact Florence Otstot (cmotstot@jumo.com) for details.

Sacred Circles

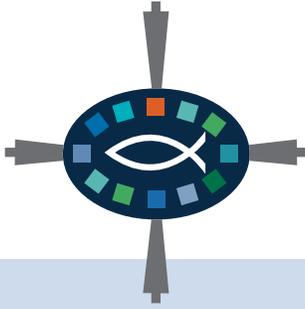
Would you like to be part of a small group of women who meet regularly to discuss topics of spiritual interest, pray, and support one another? Rock Spring's Sacred Circles do just that. Each group takes on its own character. For instance, one group discusses books, while another occasionally cooks for SEEC or Rock Springers in need of meal assistance. There is a group for everyone! If you are interested, contact Peggy Greenwood (sacredcircles@rockspringucc.org)

Women's Spirituality Retreat

Do you crave a time to recharge your spiritual batteries? For 16 years, the Women of Rock Spring have benefitted from one and two day spirituality retreats where they deepen friendships and take steps on their spiritual journey. This year's retreat, Composing a Life, will be held April 8-10, 2016 at the Carter Hall Conference Center. Plan to join us!

The Library

Love books? The Rock Spring Library, serving the Church and the local community for 100 years, is maintained by women and men of Rock Spring. To help with shelving, checkouts, or book selection, contact Anita Cline (a_cline1@aol.com).



Rock Spring

CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Custodial Staff

Willis Gardner & Vicky Morales

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