

Rock Spring News



Kicking Off a New Year!

On September 13, Rock Spring returns to two Sunday morning worship services and launches our new program year. Staff and lay leaders have been working hard this summer to plan inspiring worship and music, develop new and refresh ongoing faith formation programs, clean and declutter the buildings, and envision new ministries that will enable us to live further into our mission and core values.

Throughout this edition of the Rock Spring News, you will read more about all that is planned for the weeks and months ahead. We hope that you will look carefully and picture the places where you will stretch and grow. Maybe you'll participate in a new faith formation offering, sing or ring in a choir, join a small group, or serve as a hospitality host.

Perhaps you'll listen more deeply to the Spirit's call to share your time and talent at Rock Spring, or listen more deeply to the Spirit's call to engage more fully in a faith practice during the week.

However it is that you choose to engage with Rock Spring this year, we look forward to learning and growing with and from you as we journey together!

~Kathy, Laura, Ashley, & Elizabeth

A "Pre-Game" Picnic

Before we kick off the new year, join us for a good old-fashioned church picnic! No business, just good food, silly lawn games, and a chance to reconnect with your Rock Spring friends after the summer.

**Sunday, September 6
11:00 a.m.
Carpenter Hall**

Special thanks to Betsey Wildhack and her Kitchen Crew for preparing our delicious lunch.



ROCK SPRING **Worship in September**

SEPTEMBER 6

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 a.m. Adult Discussion Video Series
10:00 a.m. Worship with Hymn Sing & Backpack Blessing
11:00 a.m. All-Church Picnic
11:45 a.m. Choir Anthem Sing-through

SEPTEMBER 13

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Kick-Off Sunday

9:00 a.m. Worship
10:00 a.m. Adult Discussion Video Series
10:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir
11:00 a.m. Worship & Sunday School
12:15 p.m. Welcome Party for Visitors & New Members
6:30 p.m. MH/SH YoRS

SEPTEMBER 20

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 a.m. Worship
10:00 a.m. Adult Discussion Video Series
10:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir
11:00 a.m. Worship & Sunday School
12:30 p.m. Prayer Circle
6:30 p.m. MH/SH YoRS
6:30 p.m. Sacred Conversations on Racial Justice

SEPTEMBER 27

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 a.m. Worship
10:00 a.m. Adult Discussion Video Series
10:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir
11:00 a.m. Worship & Sunday School
2:00 p.m. Handmade Ministry
6:30 p.m. MH/SH YoRS
6:30 p.m. Sacred Conversations on Racial Justice

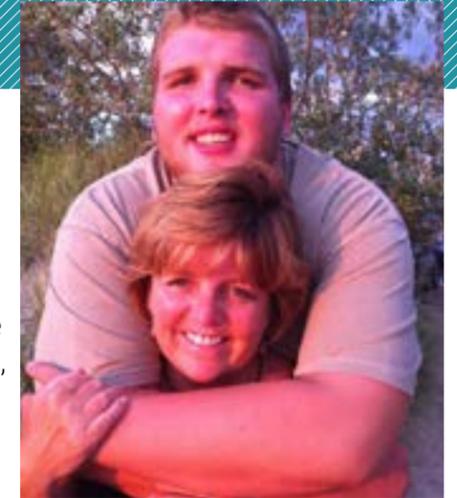
Reflections

"It was an intense time of preparation and anticipation."

It has been many years now since I had my son living at home, but it never fails: when the calendar turns to August, my mind turns to football and "two-a-days." "Two-a-days" come just a few weeks before the official football season starts and the team practices not once, but twice a day, for several hours at a time. Each August, for a few weeks, these practices would dominate the focus of our household. The "heavy lifting" (literally and figuratively) was done by my son, but as his mom I tried to do my part by being sure there was enough food and Gatorade on hand, clean socks, and a listening ear when he wanted it.

In addition to hearing about the grueling practices, I loved to hear about everything the team was anticipating: how the team was coming together, who had really improved or grown over the summer, new plays, and the skinny on the teams they would be playing against. Some of my favorite memories are from when the offensive line would gather in my kitchen and be so hyped up about how the team was coming together. It was an intense time of preparation and anticipation.

This past month has been an intense time of preparation and anticipation for the Rock Spring staff as well. While Laura does not officially begin in her new role until September 1, she has had several meetings this month so that she will be able to hit the ground running.



Rev. Kathy Dwyer

While we are not out in the grueling heat, we are working hard to ready ourselves for the kick-off of a new program year at Rock Spring. We have worked together to coordinate the program calendar. We have had invigorating conversations about new educational offerings and new possibilities for our outreach and caring ministries. We are reaching out to those we haven't seen for awhile. We are recruiting volunteers for ministry opportunities. We are cleaning carpets and tidying up so that come September 13 when we "kick off" the new program year, we will be ready to welcome you to a new season at Rock Spring.

Throughout this newsletter you will read about a new sermon series, "For Such a Time as This" that begins September 13, a year-long racial justice agenda, choirs, Sunday School, youth group, a Welcome Party for visitors, and much more.

I am excited about the year ahead, and look forward to seeing you in church!

Grace and peace,
— *Kathy*

From Council

A New Season; New Opportunities

Summer can be a time for a change of pace, for relaxation, rejuvenation, reflection, and perhaps a change of focus. I hope at least some of those were possible for you this year. At one level, it may have seemed that the pace of activity slowed for us at Rock Spring. In fact a great deal has happened during the summer that leaves us, in my view, in a good position to move forward in our faith journey together.

Sadly, this summer we suddenly found ourselves bidding Pastor Mark Suriano farewell. "Too soon," we all thought, "we are going to miss you so badly." And of course we will. But part of Mark's gift to Rock Spring was a sense of calm assurance, one that we are able to bring to the transitional period that lies ahead. We are blessed to be able to start a new program year with a fully staffed and much loved team. We welcome the return of Laura Martin in her new capacity, the full-time presence of Ashley Martinage, and of course, the continued leadership of Kathy Dwyer.

The arrival of summer also marked the end of a period in which we all had devoted a great deal of thought, time, and effort to reaching a decision about our physical campus. We planned, talked, raised funds, and as a result were able to commit to a concept of what we wanted to do. During the coming months of design and preparation, it may seem as if there is a lull. In fact, all through the summer, and now going forward, a really impressive team of people is working hard on a wide and detailed list of issues, reflected in the Campus Renewal Committee's report (see page 5).

So, we can approach the new program year without being unduly concerned by matters of campus and staffing (again, not diminishing the work that remains to be done!).

There will be plenty to occupy and challenge us! Council has had a glimpse of what Church leadership – staff, boards, committees – is planning for the period ahead. There will be familiar activities and new ones; here, I mention just a couple. There will be multi-faceted opportunities for faith formation through child, youth, and adult education programs. Also, our social justice ministry will be marked by education, conversation, and witness about major issues of the day. You will find more information in the Rock Spring News and elsewhere in the weeks ahead.

Looking forward to an inspiring year in God's work together!

– *Michael*

council@rockspringucc.org



Michael Bell

From Council

Campus Renewal Committee Update

We continue to move along, turning our focus to the details that are required to move the campus renewal project forward and continuing to get ourselves organized for the work to be done.

One of the first decisions to be made is whether and how we might engage the services of a part time project manager to help assure the project is completed on time and within budget. Thanks to Karin Croft's good work, Requests for Proposals for a part time project manager were sent out to six potential candidate project manager firms. To date we have received notification that three firms are interested in the RFP and two requested a walk-through of the campus. These walk-throughs have occurred and we expect to complete the process of interviewing all interested candidates and coming to a recommendation on whether and how to proceed with the hiring of a part time project manager by the end of September.

Another important next step currently under discussion is the signing of the contract with the architects for the next phase of the project. Based on discussions with Cox, Graae & Spack, we have agreed to commit to a "first step" only contract. Proceeding in this manner offers us the opportunity to reassess costs based on better information. Taking this step means that we will enter into a Schematic Design (SD) agreement only (this is the first phase of the architectural document development process). At the end of the SD agreement process, we will select a contractor to estimate the value of the work proposed (contractors routinely do this kind of estimate for free and with no obligation). An SD set of drawings will provide the contractor with more detail and a contractor will base its estimates on materials and labor.

Once we have the contractor's estimate in hand, we will have better information on actual costs, based on current market conditions and material availability, to support the project scope and the fees associated with completing the work to be done.

The CRC has also met with Charles Spencer who requested a meeting to discuss how environmental protections for the church campus might be incorporated into construction planning details. The CRC is fully supportive of efforts to try to protect campus green space and the mature trees on our campus. The CRC will prepare a summary, in bullet form, to be given to the contractors regarding the best practices that we expect them to follow during all phases of the construction.

If anyone has any questions or comments, you are welcome to address them to: campusrenewal@RockSpringUCC.org.

– Peter Geiger
Campus Renewal Project Chairman



Peter Geiger

From Council

The People Behind the Pipes

Reuter Organ Company is starting to build Rock Spring's new pipe organ, and we thought this would be a great opportunity to learn more about the process. Reuter, located in Lawrence, Kansas, has been in existence since 1917 and has built over 2,240 pipe organs for churches and concert halls. Gail Howell reached out to the President of the company, JR Neutel, and he was happy to answer some questions for us.

GH: Recently at coffee hour a visitor, who plays the organ, remarked to Ed Roberts and me that building pipe organs is one of the last industries where so much is crafted by hand. Tell us about the people who work at Reuter. Do they come mainly from Kansas? Do they specialize in one aspect of the process? Who has been there the longest?
 JRN: Many Reuter employees come from Kansas and surrounding states. Those in engineering, voicing, and management have joined the staff from greater distances. Our employees are grouped by specialty, for example pipe makers or voicers, but are cross-trained to be comfortable working in other areas of the shop. The majority of department supervisors have been with us for over 20 years, and Dorothy, in the front office, has been a member of our staff for over 55 years.



What happens in the first few months as you are building a pipe organ? The first months are mainly devoted to design and engineering. As plans progress and concepts are approved, work begins in the shop, often simultaneously

in several areas at once. The wind chests, reservoirs, console, casework, and pipes can all be at various stages of development until all components are completed and gathered in the assembly room. The entire organ is then assembled and comprehensively tested before it is taken apart, packed, and loaded for shipping to its destination.

Our organ will have 1,500 pipes, but how many other pieces are in the puzzle? I imagine you have to be incredibly precise in your measurements to ensure everything will fit in our small pipe chamber.

Hence, the time dedicated to the long, initial engineering phase of each project – pipe organs have many components!

What is the biggest organ Reuter has ever built? We have made some very large instruments over the years. Generally, the building process is very similar for a 2-manual instru-



ment with about 30 ranks of pipes and for a 4-manual instrument approaching 100 ranks of pipes. The larger the organ, the more time is required for all phases of work. The real differences usually are tied to engineering and installation challenges created by the soaring heights of large spaces such as University Presbyterian in Seattle or Christ United Methodist in Plano. Extensive casework and large façade displays add to the complexity of magnum opus instruments.

You are the second generation of organ builders in your family I believe. When did you realize that you wanted to follow your father into the organ building business? My mother often accompanied my father on visits to service organs in the area where I was born. As the story goes, my first "service call" was made when I was only a few weeks old. It was a Catholic Church and two nuns thought someone had abandoned a baby in the church – my parents were inside the organ case and not visible to the nuns. I was fairly certain I wanted to be an organ builder at a very young age. My mother used to show me the "what I want to be when I grow up" essay I wrote upon entering the first grade.



What are people most surprised to learn about the building of pipe organs? They are intrigued by the mix of new technology – solid state control systems, LCD screens and fiber optic connections – with traditional craftsmanship that has remained virtually unchanged for centuries – casting metal, forming and soldering pipes, cutting keyboards from a single piece of wood, voicing each pipe with a trained ear and a steady hand.

Faith Formation

From the Director of Faith Formation



Ashley Martinage

"Optimism is a strategy for making a better future. Because unless you believe that the future can be better, you are unlikely to step up and take responsibility for making it so."

~Noam Chomsky

I wouldn't describe myself as a pessimist. Yes, I like to think through worst-case scenarios and try to plan for them. Yes, I can fall prey to negative thinking. And, yes, I do tend to hear criticism where none is being given. All true.

But I don't operate from a pessimist's viewpoint, assuming that the end is nigh, that anything that can go wrong will, and that there's no use even trying to change that.

Instead, by Noam Chomsky's definition, I am an optimist. I do believe that the future can be better, and I try every day to step up and take responsibility for making it so.

Some days that is achieved simply by putting down my phone and giving my full attention to the person beside me. Other days, my efforts are a bit grander in scale, maybe cooking a meal for a family facing a challenging time, or planning a new program at Rock Spring that will challenge or inspire some in the congregation.

It's not always easy to employ a strategy of optimism. It can feel overwhelming! That's when I remind myself that optimists don't work alone. Each of us is called to embrace our share of making the future better – and we get to define what that share is on any given day.

As I take on my new role here at Rock Spring as Director of Faith Formation, I am optimistic and excited about building on all that is here already to create an even better future together. I look forward to journeying with people of all ages as we seek together to deepen our faith and build the world that God intends.

With gratitude,
 — Ashley

Important Sunday School Changes Families with children and youth, please take note!

The Board of Christian Education has been carefully and prayerfully considering Sunday morning programming for children and youth at Rock Spring. We want to do the best job possible to meet the needs of as wide a range of families as we can. To achieve that, we are making the following changes for the 2015-2016 program year:

Sunday School will be offered during the 11:00 a.m. worship service only. With a limited number of volunteers and a very small number of children attending the 9:00 a.m. service, we have decided to focus our efforts and resources on the 11:00 a.m. service.

By consolidating classes to one service, we hope to build more consistency into the program and to better

be able to achieve the Faith Formation benchmarks that we have set for the program.

We are excited to be expanding the 11:00 a.m. program to include Sunday School for youth in 9th-12th grade on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. This will create a balance between opportunities for this group to gather to talk about faith and to gather in the worship service.

At 9:00 a.m., activity bags and special bulletins will be available to help children remain engaged in the worship service. The nursery is also available for children up to age 5.

Please see Ashley with any questions or suggestions.

Faith Formation

Sunday Mornings for Children & Youth

Nursery

The nursery is staffed from 8:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. each Sunday. Fern Lawrence, Judy Carrillo, and Blanca Cespedes are our professional childcare providers, caring for the youngest Rock Springers. The nursery is available both during and between the worship services, and welcomes children up to age 5.



Children & Youth

Rock Spring offers a full Sunday School program during the 11:00 a.m. service. Children begin in the Sanctuary with their families, and leave for Sunday School following the Time with Children. Volunteer teachers use the SHINE curriculum to engage children in learning the important stories of our faith. This Fall, the theme is "Hearing God's Call." Children will explore the many ways people have been – and continue to be – called to love, trust, and serve God. The curriculum is activity-based, and teachers are encouraged to offer a wide variety of activities to appeal to all sorts of learners.



Classes are grouped primarily by age/grade, but are flexible. Beginning at age 3, children may transition from the nursery to the preschool class, always at their parent's discretion. Classes for Preschool – 4th grade will meet weekly. On the first Sunday of the month, students will be returned to the Sanctuary towards the end of the service to join their family for Communion. All are welcome at the Table.

Classes for 5th grade and up will meet certain Sundays of the month, allowing older children and youth to experience the full worship service on other weeks. The 5th-6th Grade class will meet on the second, third, and fourth Sundays of the month. The 7th-8th Grade class and the 9th-12th grade class will meet on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. On the first Sunday of each month, the Youth Choir will lead the music at 11:00 a.m., and 5th-12th graders will be invited to play leadership roles as ushers, greeters, and liturgists.

All children are welcome in the worship service at any time. At 9:00 a.m., activity bags will be available to help younger worshipers remain engaged.

YoRS (Youth of Rock Spring) Kicks-off September 13 All Youth Grades 6 – 12 Invited to Join in the Fun

Rock Spring's youth fellowship groups gather most Sunday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in Neighborhood House and Carpenter Hall. Each week, the youth play games, learn more about themselves and each other, put their faith into action through service projects, and engage in everyone's favorite pastime: eating snack. Middle School YoRS (aka The Middlers) is for all in grades 6 – 8, while Senior High YoRS includes youth in grades 9 – 12. This year, Ashley Martinage will work with both groups, with lots of help from Jeff Dale, John & Heather Hotchkiss, John & Kathy Morland, and Jen Weidman.



On September 13, the groups will join together for t-shirt making and an extra special snack: chocolate fondue. The two groups will also spend time on their own, getting to know each other and beginning to share their hopes and dreams for the year. If you are in 6th - 12th grade (or have a child who is), you should have received an email from Ashley with more details about the coming year. If we missed you, email Ashley at ashley@rockspringucc.org to be added to our email list.



Faith Formation

Adult Faith Formation Opportunities

New and Continuing Offerings for 2015-2016

Rock Spring offers a wide variety of opportunities for adults looking to deepen their understanding of themselves and their faith. In addition to the regularly scheduled programs listed below, the Board of Christian Education will offer an in-depth examination of issues surrounding race and racial justice in the United States that will culminate in a Call to Action for individuals and our congregation as a whole. See page 10 for complete details.



Lectioary Study – Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m.

This weekly conversation is facilitated by the preacher for the coming Sunday. Explore the texts and themes that will be used in worship, learn more about the context or author of the passages, and perhaps influence the sermon through your questions or insights. Coffee and light refreshments are served. All are welcome!



Bible Basics – Third Fridays at 7:30 p.m., beginning September 18

Join Janice Langholz on a tour through the Book of the Revelation to John – a book that begins, continues, and ends with frustrating questions. In September, the class will explore Revelation 1:1 – 3:22, including the vision and letters of John, the Apocalypse, and Early Christian context. Seek answers to questions such as, "Why is John's grammar so messed up in the very first verse?" "You mean all the scholars were wrong about the wide-spread persecution of the early church?" "Why these seven cities?" and, "He saw WHAT?"



There is no homework, and no previous knowledge is assumed. Bring your questions, your curiosity, and your spirit of inquiry.

Video Discussion Group – Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Expand your Biblical knowledge base! Gather at 10:00 for a few minutes of conversation, then watch a 30-minute video presentation and engage in discussion with your fellow learners. Dwight Rodgers organizes the class, which is currently exploring the Gnostics, and brews the coffee. Class adjourns in time for the 11:00 a.m. worship service.



Faith & Life – Sundays at 10:00 a.m., beginning October 4

Drop in to learn more about the intersections between what happens on Sundays and our everyday lives. These largely lay-led, interactive conversations will explore a variety of topics under four different themes:

- 1st Sundays: Where is God in... – The facilitator will provide background information about a current hot topic (e.g. Syria, global climate change, gun violence) and lead a conversation about what our faith says about the topic and our response.
- 2nd Sundays: Family Matters – Explore ways to enrich families' faith lives and meet the needs of children and youth in our increasingly complicated world.
- 3rd Sundays: Going Deeper – Gain insight about ways to go deeper into your faith, through spiritual disciplines, prayer practices, or focused Bible study.
- 4th Sundays: Just for Fun – Get to know your fellow Rock Springers better as they share some of their talents and hobbies.

Specific topics and leaders will be announced in advance. Attend every week or when the topic inspires you. Have a topic or a talent you'd like to share? Contact Ashley Martinage.



Faith Formation

Sacred Conversations on Racial Justice

During the 2015-16 Program Year, the Board of Christian Education will offer an in-depth examination of issues surrounding race and racism in the United States that will culminate in a Call to Action for individuals and our congregation as a whole. The program seeks to:

- Help Rock Spring to understand what racism really is, particularly systemic racism and how we may perpetuate it without realizing it.
- Consider a new framework for racial justice that recognizes that race is a social construct and that all of us are called to eradicate the systemic biases that advantage some groups over others.
- Identify significant actions we can take as individuals and as a congregation to end systemic racism.

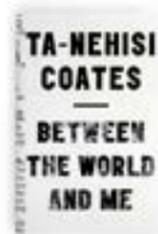


Throughout the year, Rock Spring will host a variety of speakers and programs, build connections with other congregations with demographics different from our own, and work intentionally to develop action and advocacy plans that will empower Rock Springers to make a meaningful difference on this issue. The CE Board intends to work collaboratively with the Board of Social Action & Mission to develop significant long-term plans to turn education into action.

The program will begin with **Starting the Conversation**, three Sunday evening sessions facilitated by Kathy Dwyer, Susan Henderson, Laura Martin, and Dale Dwyer that will explore the fundamental issues of racism, connecting the discussion to our church's and denomination's histories, to our own individual beliefs and actions, to the role of race in society, and to the themes of race in religion. Each session will be held from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. in the Saegmuller Room.

- **Starting the Conversation: Whose Story?** – September 20
PURPOSE: To explore why Rock Spring is engaging this issue, and how it connects to our individual and denominational histories, identities, and commitments.
- **Starting the Conversation: Racism 101 & Beyond** – September 27
PURPOSE: To deeply understand the language and behaviors of racism, and to discover the difficulties in dialogue around racism.
- **Starting the Conversation: The Bible and Racism** – October 4
PURPOSE: To explore the extent to which race is a factor in biblical texts and to examine if and how cultural and racial themes are similar to and different from society today.

Also during September, Kathy Dwyer will preach a sermon series entitled "For Such a Time as This," based on the book of Esther. See a full description of the series on page 13.



Looking ahead, in October and November, Rock Spring will offer additional conversations, including a book study of *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates. This *New York Times* bestseller, hailed by Toni Morrison as "required reading" is written as a letter from Coates to his adolescent son which "illuminates the past, bravely confronts our present, and offers a transcendent vision for a way forward."

Social Action and Mission



SAM Announces 2015 Grants to Community Organizations

Grant awards totaling \$36,000 will go to 11 community organizations in 2015, through the Social Action and Mission board (SAM). Award amounts range from \$1,000 to \$5,500. Awardees include:

- ARISE (aka United College Ministries of Northern Virginia) \$1,500
- Arlington Free Clinic \$1,500
- Arlington Thrive \$5,000
- Community Lodgings \$2,500
- Culpepper Garden \$5,500
- Doorways for Women and Families \$1,500
- Just Neighbors Ministry, Inc. \$5,000
- Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) \$5,000
- Open and Affirming Coalition of the UCC \$1,000
- Shelter House, Inc. \$2,500
- Shirlington Employment and Education Center (SEEC) \$5,000

Seventeen applications were received this year. For more detailed information on the projects funded, a binder in the church library has a full set of applications as well as guidelines and criteria used by SAM for award decisions. For further information or questions, contact Shirley Ruhe (slrbcc@aol.com) or Claudia Scott (claudiascott.va@gmail.com) co-chairs of the grant committee.



Hunger Action Month

September is Hunger Action Month, a good time to profile AFAC, one of the six primary community partners the Social Action and Mission Board has designated for 2015. AFAC, the Arlington Food Assistance Center, provides nutritious food for all Arlingtonians in need and is currently serving 2,200 families each week. AFAC distributes food at 18 sites around Arlington and relies on the public for 90% of its funding.

In September, Rock Spring and AFAC will host a screening of *The Starfish Throwers*, a heart-warming documentary about three individuals and their efforts to feed the poor. The 45 minute film will be followed by a short presentation and Q&A session about AFAC. Watch the Bulletin and emails for more details.

The Rock Spring community supports AFAC in many ways, including a Plot Against Hunger garden, produce donation drop-off point, and a bi-monthly bagging team on the 3rd Friday of even months (contact the Overholts at overholj@yahoo.com or 703.527.9190 to participate). Many Rock Springers volunteer individually and there's always room for more, especially during September.

Details about other Hunger Action Month events, and information on how to volunteer for AFAC activities, are available on AFAC's website, www.afac.org, or by calling Laura Jackson, AFAC's volunteer coordinator and a member of SAM, at 703.845.8486 or laura.jackson@afac.org.

Did You Know...

Rock Spring continues to be a leader in supporting the four annual UCC special offering campaigns. We have been advised that Rock Spring's contribution to the 2014 Christmas Fund was the second largest of any congregation in the nation. And we are a "5 for 5" church, contributing to the four special offerings and Our Church's Wider Mission.



Worship and Music

Thank You to Summer Musicians

As we wrap up the summer here at Rock Spring and prepare for fall, we want to thank all the talented young people who played summer preludes and shared their gift and love of music with the congregation. A BIG thank you and round of applause to: Matteo Roman, Lauren Hassi, Amanda Roman, Jean-Baptiste Rallet, Abby Martinage, Elise and Graham Wiggins, Nate Niblock, Ben Levy, and Quinn Niblock.



Choir Anthem Sing-Through

Elizabeth invites all veteran choir members and newcomers too to join her and Ed on Sunday, September 6 at approximately 11:45 a.m. (following the church picnic) to sing through our fall line up of anthems. This is a chance to see what in store for the choir for the fall. I hope many of you can join us!

Mark Your Calendar to Sing & Ring

Rock Spring's singing and ringing ensembles are gearing up for the new year! New members are welcome – please speak to Elizabeth or Ed for more information about any of the groups. Below is basic information about each ensemble. All meet in the adult choir room, except the Bell Choir (Sanctuary) and Choristers (Room 203 in the Hunter Building).



Sanctuary Choir (adult choir)

- Anthem Sing-through – Sunday, Sept. 6 – 11:45 a.m.
- Rehearses Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. beginning September 10
- Sings each Sunday, usually at the 11:00 a.m. service

Men's Ensemble (male singing ensemble)

- Rehearses Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. beginning September 10
- Sings approximately once a month

Youth Choir (singing ensemble for students in 5th – 12th grades)

- Rehearses Sundays following the 11:00 a.m. worship service (approx. 12:10 p.m.), beginning on September 20
- Sings the first Sunday of the month at the 11:00 a.m. worship service beginning Oct. 4

Choristers Choir (singing ensemble for students in Kindergarten – 4th grades)

- Rehearses Sundays at 10:15 a.m. beginning September 20
- Sings the choral introit with the Sanctuary choir at the 11:00 a.m. service beginning in October
- Sings an anthem during the 11:00 a.m. service approximately once a month.

Handbell Choir (instrumental ensemble that rings various size handbells)

- Rehearses Wednesdays at 7:45 p.m. beginning September 23
- Accompanies the choral introit most Sundays beginning in October

Worship and Music

“For Such a Time as This”

Sermon Series to Begin September 13

The book of Esther is a dramatic story in the Hebrew Bible that is about an imbalance of power, privilege, prejudice, and taking risks to effect change. For three weeks, Kathy Dwyer will reflect on Esther's story and its connection with our lives, especially as it connects with the concerns about racial justice in America today. The story is a page-turner! Consider reading it in preparation for these three weeks of worship together.



Bring Your Backpack to Church

Blessing of the Backpacks Sunday, September 6

Getting ready to go back to school – or to begin school for the first time – is exciting! It can also be a little bit scary. The anticipation of new classes, new teachers, and new classmates can bring a host of mixed emotions. It's easy to feel like you're the only one who is nervous – but you aren't!

Bring your backpack to church with you on Sunday, September 6 for a “blessing of the backpacks.” We'll say a prayer together and give each person a small tag to hang on their backpack to remind them that they are not alone – the love and support of Rock Spring goes with them to school each day!



HELP

WANTED

Sunday Morning Help Wanted volunteer@rockspringucc.org

Would you like to play a more active role in the life of Rock Spring? There are many ways to be involved on Sunday mornings, most of which require only a small time commitment but all of which make a big impact.

Here are some examples, along with the name of the person who coordinates:

- Greeters welcome people to worship (Claudia Scott)
- Ushers hand out bulletins, collect the offering, and help seat people (Will Martyn)
- Liturgists read the scripture and help to lead the worship service (Barb Keish)
- Sunday School assistants provide an extra pair of hands in the classrooms and help young Rock Springers to “catch” faith (Ashley Martinage)
- Hospitality hosts provide light refreshments after worship (Sarah Gilmour)
- Spirituality & The Arts folks work with the pastors to add creative elements to the Sanctuary and worship services to engage all of our senses (Kathy Dwyer)
- A/V technicians control the microphones and videotape the service so people who aren't able to be in the Sanctuary can watch online (Dale Dwyer)

Want to know more about any of these jobs and how you can get involved? Sign up in the Saegmuller Room or send an email to volunteer@rockspringucc.org.

Congregational Life

From the Director of Mission Integration & Congregational Care

*"The place God calls you to is where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."
-Frederick Buechner*



"Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly—now. Love mercy—now. Walk humbly—now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it." - from The Talmud

I sat with Henry and he showed me the marks on his body from where he stabbed himself. He told me how he had gay thoughts, and his parents had sent him to live with a priest to purify him from those thoughts. Every time he had a "gay impulse," he told me, he tried to stab it out of himself.

I met him at the homeless shelter where I was working as a case manager. The priest had told Henry that because of his self-injurious behaviors, Henry could not stay with him any longer. And he was in a cycle of stabbings and hospitals, of release and hurting himself again...

My calling to ordained ministry came in part from this experience with Henry, and the profound encounters that I have had in nearly 14 years of working with homeless adults and families. I feel led to connect this work explicitly with theology. This means not just offering resources of the secular world but living out the audacity of our faith in doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God.

In 2009, I began attending Wesley Theological Seminary part-time while working as the Director of Programs for Chronically Homeless Adults at New Hope Housing. In 2010, I transitioned to Shelter House to become the Director of the Patrick Henry Family Shelter and Housing Programs. I graduated from Wesley in May 2015 with my Masters in Divinity and am pursuing ordination in the UCC after I complete my Clinical Pastoral Education in March, 2016.

It is with genuine excitement that I receive the opportunity to work as the Director of Mission Integration and Congregational Care. The position's focus will be on lived theology, on our mission meeting the world's hungers. It will also be in working together alongside the congregation to deeply care for one another through our caring ministry. I want to spend September getting to know you better one-on-one or in small groups, and learning more about our community partners. Please contact me at laura@rockspringucc.org or at 703.538.4886 to set up a time if you would like to meet—over coffee, on a walk, in my church office, at your home, where you work, or beyond!
~Laura



Welcome!

Have you been visiting Rock Spring for awhile? Would you like to get to better know some of us who call ourselves "Rock Springers?" Visitors and new members from the past year or so are warmly invited to a "Welcome Brunch" on Sunday, September 13 after the 11:00 a.m. service at Kathy and Dale's home, 4969 Rock Spring Road. Kathy & Dale Dwyer, Laura Martin, and Ashley Martinage will all be present and look forward to sharing a meal and getting to know you a little better. Please RSVP by emailing joinus@rockspringucc.org or see Kathy with questions.

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Janet Parker Married in Oregon

The Rev. Dr. Janet Parker, Associate Pastor for Parish Life at Rock Spring Church from 2005 to 2012, was married to the Rev. Robyn Hartwig, a Lutheran minister, on August 15, 2015, in Salem, Oregon. Janet was called as Senior Pastor to First Congregational UCC of Salem in 2012. Robyn is Associate Pastor of St. Andrew Lutheran Church in nearby Beaverton, Oregon. They first met in 2011 at a conference at Ghost Ranch, New Mexico, while Janet was still at Rock Spring.



Janet and Robyn were married in a large, formal, celebratory church wedding officiated jointly by the UCC conference minister for Oregon, the Rev. Walter John Boris, and the Lutheran bishop for the area, the Rev. Dave Brauer-Rieke. Special features of the wedding ceremony included a 20-minute pipe organ concert preceding the ceremony, played by Tim Bibelheimer, the resident organist of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Salem; and a drum circle with spontaneous dancing on the church's front lawn immediately after the ceremony, symbolizing the strong intellectual interests of both Janet and Robyn in the spiritual lives of indigenous peoples around the world.

Approximately 375 persons filled the church, including congregants from both Janet's and Robyn's churches. By coincidence, Salem's annual GLBT Pride Festival was taking place in the Riverfront Park, a few blocks from the wedding church, on the same day.

Family, relatives, and friends of the two brides attended from all over the United States, including the Midwest, Texas, and New York. The Rev. Dr. Chuck Wildman, senior pastor of Rock Spring Church when Janet was first called to ministry here, flew in from his retirement home on Cape Cod. Two current Rock Springers, Lucy and Charles Spencer, also witnessed the wedding. Janet specifically asked to be remembered to all her friends at Rock Spring, and expressed her deep love and appreciation for the warm embrace she felt from this church during her years in Arlington.



Rock Spring has planted a tree on our campus in perpetual celebration of Janet Parker's ministry here, which included strengthening our commitment to preserving and restoring all of God's Creation. You can visit "Janet's tree" on the front lawn, a few yards behind the large brick sign. It is a three-year-old black gum or "tupelo" tree, healthy and growing fast.

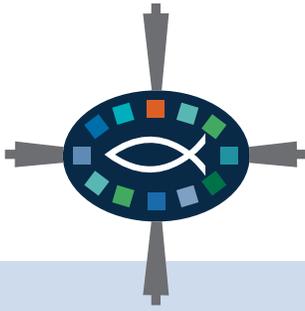
Linda Carder Art Show

You are invited!
Rock Spring's Linda Carder is both a wonderful pastor AND an accomplished artist. Westmoreland Congregational Church UCC is hosting an art show of Linda's watercolors, and all are invited. There will be an opening reception on Sunday, September 20 from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. Westmoreland has kindly extended their coffee hour/art show opening, so that friends from Rock Spring will be able to come to the show after our worship service. The church is located at 1 Westmoreland Circle, Bethesda, MD 20816. The show will be on display until November 1.

Markers and Milestones

We offer sympathy to Daena Kluegel and Elizabeth Kluegel Niblock and their families on the death of **Ken Kluegel** on Friday, August 21. A service to celebrate his life will be held at Rock Spring on Saturday, September 12 at 1:00 p.m.

We also offer sympathy to Meredith Baratz on the death of her mother, **Cynthia Young**, Sunday, August 23. Cynthia was a long-time member of Rock Spring, and several of her large paintings are on display in the Saegmuller Room and Carpenter Hall. A Memorial Service will be held at Arlington National Cemetery.



Rock Spring

CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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The Congregation, *The Ministers*

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Rock Spring Congregational

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