

# Mountain Reflections

Rangely Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
P.O. Box 218 Rangely, Maine 04970

February 2019

Volume 26 Issue 2



Annette Mott

As I write this column, my thoughts are all about love, and not only because Valentine's Day is February 14<sup>th</sup>. One of the Scripture readings for the first Sunday in February is St. Paul's magnificent hymn to love contained in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13—where he speaks of the kind of love that is not arrogant or rude and does not insist on its own way, but instead is patient and kind.

I saw a lot of that kind of love in evidence this past Sunday (January 27<sup>th</sup>) at the congregational event after church, where folks sat in small groups around tables to generate ideas about how best to 1) re-establish trust in our governance and 2) avoid separating into camps and polarizing when we disagree. There was an honest and respectful exchange of ideas and much good will expressed in the constructive strategies put forward. What I saw was love in action.

Derek and Linda Wendelken will gather the ideas that came out of both the event itself and the follow-up survey sent out to members and friends unable to attend. Then a document summarizing those responses will be sent to everyone through an e-blast. Some of the excellent suggestions generated this past Sunday are already being acted on (e.g. Council President Rick Baker's Council update sessions with the congregation). And we will work on incorporating more of them into our life and work together as we go along.

The Congregational Event Planning Team and Council are already looking ahead to the next congregational event (date TBD), which will address questions focusing on the future ministry of RCC and the kind of pastoral leadership required for that ministry.

**I hope this February you will take time for love:**

**--At least one day this month, take an hour to bask in God's love—let it hold you, fill you, snuggle with you.**

**--At least one day this month, take an hour to hold in loving thought your brothers and sisters at RCC, letting them come into your consciousness one by one, and blessing them as they do.**

Why don't you put it on your calendar now, so it doesn't get lost in the rush of things.

Love,  
Pastor Annette



Rick Baker

For those of you who have sought out warmer climate this winter, I think there may be a few of us in Rangeley who might want to join you. But you are missing one of the best times here, as there are no black flies or mosquitos!

My first informational update was “snowed out” on January 20. For the second time in 10 years Marcia and I were snowed in! But I am going to do it on February 3 right after the service. I’ll give an overview of governance of the church and current projects.

Council has been very busy reviewing and doing a “current status” of the Five Year Plan that was initially done 2016. It’s almost done and I will put it along with Council Minutes in the East Room. We have started on updating the bylaws. They were updated in 2006 and needed updating. Each committee has /is taking a look at their sections and adjusting them, if needed ,as to how they actually function. Other areas need clarification and organization. When a “synthesized rough version” is done, then another group will review it with the “big picture” in mind. Then it’s my intention to have a couple of sessions with those in the congregation who are interested, in the spring (so those of you “away” can participate), to review what has been done and get your thoughts. We hope to have to whole process completed by July, in time for our Annual Meeting. From our “Café” style discussions, it was clear that more participation is desired. There are always opportunities and coming up are a few important ones. We have to form a committee to up date our Church Profile (in preparation for calling a Settled Pastor), we will need to form a PSP (Pastor Staff Parish) Committee, and we’ll need to put together a Search Committee. So opportunity is there in a big way. So please keep all of that in mind.

Please keep all of our Congregation and our Church in your thoughts and prayers as we move through this journey together.

Rick

Peace

Attending Council

Treasurer: Paula Hatfield

Clerk: Linda Caspar

Members at Large: Rick Baker, Lourrie Chandler, Kit Caspar and Marge Miller

Building and Grounds and Sexton: Diane Van Amburg

Christian Ed: Corinne Sorenson

Deacons: Scott Hatfield

Finance: Millie Hoekstra

Mission: Dave Walker

Women’s Fellowship: Nancy Zambraski

Minister of Music: Sue Downes-Borko, Finance Secretary: Linda Wendelken



The Deacons are taking a short breather after a hectic Advent season. We just met this past Monday and already there is discussion of Lent and Easter. It seems like we just took the tree down and put all the decorations away.

In our free time, one of the projects that the Deacons are supporting is the updating of the church's bylaws. There's nothing particularly "wrong" with our bylaws other than they tend to need a periodic updating. For example, the use of email was a lot less common the last time the bylaws were updated.

One of the things that you might not have known is that the Board of Deacons is responsible for managing the various lists of members. We are currently working with five "categories".

1. Covenantal members are what you might think of as regular members. They come to the church through any number of ways: confession of faith, transfer from another church, etc.
2. Because we have people who only spend a part of the year here in Rangeley, we have "Associate Members". These are just like Covenantal members with the one exception that we understand that you're going to maintain a second church membership elsewhere. Just because you have another church family doesn't mean you can't join RCC too!
3. We use the category of "Student" for those members who are away for a period of time attending school. We relax our expectations of attendance and support from students while they're away.
4. "Friends of the Parish" are those people who want to be involved in the church, receive communications, but prefer not to or are not ready to "join". Anyone is welcome to be a friend at any time. Friends can't vote in church matters but we do welcome them to all meetings and discussions and want to hear their voices.
5. Finally, "Inactives" are those Covenantal and Associate Members whom we haven't heard from or seen in some time, generally more than two years.

The Deacons help move people through these categories, and work with the church's Clerk to keep these records straight. Everyone will get a good chance to understand the bylaws as they stand and any proposed changes over the next few months through the meetings that the Church Council will sponsor. If you'd like to better understand your membership, your options, or how any of this works, reach out to any Deacon or Rev. Annette.

The Deacon of the Month for February is Evelyn. If you'd be willing to serve as Usher or Liturgist, please let her know.



*Finance Committee*

*Paula Hatfield*

The Finance Committee met on January 14<sup>th</sup> at 3pm to review and discuss December financial activity. We were very happy to add our Music Minister, Sue Downes-Borko, back to the payroll effective December. 15<sup>th</sup>. Proceeds from the Women's Fellowship Fund were distributed for benevolences totaling \$6500! These funds were raised by Women's Fellowship through sales of craft items at the Holly Fair, Strawberry Festival and Blueberry Festival. Several of these benevolences were to other donor directed church funds including Scholarship, Deacons Relief, Bell Choir and Pilgrim Lodge Scholarship.

The first two quarters of MESOM (Maine School of Ministry) and OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) budgeted benevolence expenses were paid to Maine UCC totaling \$4000. Mission benevolences were paid from donor directed funds for One Great Hour of Sharing, Neighbors in Need, Strengthen the Church and the Christmas Offering Fund for a total of \$1956. This is an increase of 93% over last year, so thank you so much for your generosity! These contributions allow us to be a UCC 5 for 5 Church for 2018 thanks to the continued support from this congregation. Many thanks to the Mission Board for planning these wonderful giving campaigns.

Contribution statements for 2018 were mailed out to our seasonal congregants on January 31<sup>st</sup>. The statements for local congregants will be handed out at church services on Sunday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> to help the church save postage costs. Those statements not picked up will be mailed out to local congregants on Monday, February 4<sup>th</sup>. The statements are usually mailed out earlier, but due to financial system changes from our substantial software updates this year, we ran a bit later than expected. We apologize and thank you for your patience. As always, your input and participation are welcomed at our monthly meetings on the second Monday of each month at 3pm in the East Room of the Barn.

Submitted by Paula Hatfield, Treasurer



Nancy Zambraski

Women's Fellowship has taken a well-deserved break for December through January and are gearing up to start meeting for February & March when we will meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays from 10am-12pm in the Barn. We will then take April off during mud season and continue up again in May. It's a great way to combat "cabin fever" so join us for crafting and/or just good fellowship and bring your friends.

The Co-chairs met following the Holly Fair and decided to continue to participate in the two summer festivals that we have previously done, (the Strawberry Festival and Blueberry Festival), and top it off with the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Holly Fair. So, stay tuned for another busy summer and fall.

Stay warm,  
Nancy Zambraski, WF Co-chair



Music Notes

Sue Downes-Borko

Have a favorite hymn? A favorite song others would enjoy hearing? Let Sue know and she will incorporate it into a future worship service.

The Rangeley Ringers will be resuming rehearsals beginning February 11 on Monday mornings at 8:00. This group will be preparing for the Vermont Spring Ring at the end of April and for the Easter Season.

Stay tuned for an opportunity to sing with the choir soon. ALL are welcome; the only requirement is that you want to help us make a joyful noise!



Evelyn Franson



Despite snow and cold, our Prayer Shawl gals kept the needles (and loom) humming throughout the month of January. Eight shawls of comfort were delivered to Franklin Memorial Hospital recently. Eleven requests for friends here in Maine were gladly honored since our last report. There are some beautiful projects underway. Before you know it, each will be looking for a person to help heal or a celebration to honor. The closet is ready for your request. Just see Rev. Annette or any of the shawl gals to pick out your “thinking of you” gift.

And here is your invitation to join us on any or all 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of each month:

All knitters, crocheters, weavers are welcome to join with this ecumenical group. We gather from 2:00 until 3:30 in the Barn. Yarns, patterns, needles, etc. are available for you to use or bring your own. Questions? See Rev. Annette, Diane VanAmburg or Evelyn Franson.

2019 Newsletter Publications	
Publication	Submission Deadline
January	December 30, 2018
February	January 27, 2019
March -April	February 24, 2019
May	April 28, 2019
June- July	May 26, 2019
August	July 28, 2019
September	August 25, 2019
October	September 29, 2019
November-December	October 27, 2019



## February Facilities and Events Highlights Calendar

<b>Worship</b> Sanctuary	10am Sunday	February 3 February 10 February 17 February 24
<b>Rangeley Ringers</b> Sanctuary	8am Monday	February 11 February 18 February 25
<b>Men's Breakfast</b> Country Club Inn	8am Monday	February 11
<b>Prayer Shawl</b> Barn	2pm Monday	February 4 February 18
<b>Finance Committee</b> East Room	3pm Monday	February 11
<b>Church Council</b> East Room	4pm Monday	February 11
<b>Deacons</b> East Room	4pm Monday	February 25
<b>Congregational Event Planning</b> East Room	4:30pm Monday	February
<b>Christian Education</b> Fellowship Hall	8:30am Tuesday	February
<b>Women's Fellowship</b> Barn	10am Friday	February 8 February 22
<b>"Commandments" Study</b> East Room	11:30 am Sunday	February 3, 10, 17, 24 March 3, 10, 17