

# Mountain Reflections

Rangeley Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

P.O. Box 218 Rangeley, Maine 04970



Annette Mott

This is not my “farewell” column—that will be in the March/April newsletter—but I am starting to think about some “takeaways”, both for you and for me, from our time together.

One of the biggest takeaways for me was the value and success of the three “World Café” style congregational events that we held during my time here. We are all indebted to Paula Hatfield, who discovered this model for meaningful and respectful congregational conversation around questions of importance at a workshop she attended at the BTS Convocation that was held in April 2018. After hearing about it from Paula, I researched the “World Café” model and brought it forward to the Church Council for their consideration. The Council then appointed a task force consisting of Cheryl Curris, Derek Wendelken, Kirby Holcombe, Cyndy Egan, Scott Hatfield, and me, who were charged with planning a series of events aimed at congregational healing and moving us forward into the future in a positive way. The conversations and outcomes from these events also strongly informed the work of both the Profile Committee in developing our Church Profile and the work of the Search Committee in its efforts to find a pastoral candidate who would be a good match for RCC. If you attended one of the events, you know how healing, constructive, enjoyable, and profitable they proved to be.

I encourage RCC to continue to utilize something akin to the World Café model to engage important questions in the congregation’s life and ministry. And you don’t have to wait for a situation in which conflict has arisen. Let me give you an example of what I mean:

The Church Council is aware that decisions will soon have to be made around the organ, and at their October meeting appointed Sue DB, Cheryl C, and me to start making plans about how to address this. The three of us met and agreed that this was a decision best made with the new settled pastor,



whoever that might be. But we also talked about how the question of the organ should be addressed within the context of a larger conversation about music at RCC and what the congregation would like to see in the future. We thought some sort of “World Café” model would work well for a congregational event for people to share their thoughts about music preferences and their hopes for the future.

So that is something you might want to consider after your new pastor arrives and starts to settle in.

Shalom,

Pastor Annette



Rick Baker

This February finds us full into winter and beginning to envy all who are spending this season in a warmer climate. Council’s attention has mostly been digesting updates from the Search Committee. They have been working hard and updating us when appropriate. It is good to hear they have an interesting candidate and are learning more about “part-time” concepts in ministry. As I said in an “e-mail blast” last week, we still don’t know any specific details but we remain open and hopefully flexible to new paradigms of ministry. I will do my best to keep you informed as I learn more details.

As a “FYI”. Little Mountain School has a couple of episodes of “unauthorized access” to their school that resulted in evidence of intrusion. They used to keep their key in our lock box for the barn and the adjoining door to the common room could not be locked, so it could always be opened. A new lock box for LMS has been installed by their door and a new lockable door hand was installed. Now the school is locked up when not in session. If for some reason you need access during closed hours, Diane VanAmburg has keys.



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On a sad note, this is the last month that Pastor Annette will be with us. I for one will be very sad to see her move on. She has been so instrumental in helping us to heal and move forward in our journey. Her mentorship to me, counsel, guidance, unique perspectives, and opinions offered from experience have been invaluable. She will be entering retirement, like so many of us have already. I hope she finds the free time that we thought we would have when we crossed that threshold.

Her last Sunday (February 23) will be a special Service and luncheon afterwards. I hope you can attend.

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

Rick

Peace

Treasurer: Paula Hatfield

Clerk: Linda Caspar

Members at Large: Rick Baker, Kit Caspar, Lourrie Chandler, and Cheryl Curris

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 Downs-Borko

PSP Committee: Marcia Baker

And of course Pastor Annette



## Buildings and Grounds

### Committee

Diane VanAmburg

Not much going on other than snow plowing – thanks to Scott and Paula, and shoveling. The only new item is a lock on the door into LMS. This was done because someone had been in there and messed things up. No damage done. They also have their own lock box also. Hopefully this will take care of the problem. Thank you Rick for doing this.

Other than that everything is going well. Shoveling is being done. I am looking forward to spring. Oh well, I can dream. Take care.

The B & G Board: Dick Moore, Derek Wendelken, Kirby Holcombe, Rick Baker and Diane VanAmburg.



Evelyn Franson

Our Prayer Shawl ladies have been busy distributing their gifts of consolation/celebration since our last report. Scott and Becky delivered ten shawls to Maine Med., our first opportunity to serve those patients. Two were sent to friends in New Hampshire and one each to Maine, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Thank you all.



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And here is an excerpt from a recent letter of thanks.

“The shawl is breathtakingly beautiful. Your thoughtfulness humbles me. I sent a picture to my mother, sister and sister-in-law and they were touched by your kindness. I'm excited to show it to my 91 year old grandmother since she has spent a lifetime creating beautiful knit items for others. Someday I'd like to visit your church and thank the person in person but for now a card through the mail must suffice.”

This wonderful ministry continues as we enter the Rangeley winter. All are welcome to stop by and/or join the eight-twelve gals who gather in the Barn around the candle on the first and third Mondays from 2-3:30. Newly completed shawls are blessed around 3:00 with the rest of the time spent in knitting, crocheting, weaving, visiting, advising, sharing ideas, etc. Our bottomless closet is holding a shawl of love and caring for your giving. Just let any of the gals, including Pastor Annette, know of your need, come on by and choose the one that speaks to you. All are free for the loving!



Deacon News

Scott Hatfield

After a busy December, your Deacons are pleased to report that January has been a welcome respite.

We are planning for a special service on February 23 when we will say “goodbye” to Rev. Annette. Our Maine Conference Minister, the Rev. Dr. Deborah Blood, will be in attendance that day to help us celebrate Annette’s ministry. Please mark that on your calendar and plan on staying after the service for a reception to honor her service to us and her retirement.

While we’re talking about February 23, please know that that Sunday has been designated “MESOM Sunday” by the Maine Conference. This Sunday has traditionally been known as “Seminary Sunday”. It was traditional to welcome seminary students and offer our seminaries financial



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support. With the closing of Bangor Theological Seminary and the consolidation of Andover-Newton, we don't have any UCC seminaries functioning in Maine. The Maine School of Ministry, operated by the UCC's Maine Conference, is working to stand into that void and offer multiple paths to authorized ministry. This is a vital service given how many small, rural Maine churches will need leadership over the coming years. It is with great pride that we report that our small church is already a significant sponsor of MESOM. Thank you, and know that your support is recognized and appreciated.

On a personal note, I want to express my appreciation for all the interest and support that this congregation has offered to Becky Walker and me (Scott) during our service at Maine Med in Portland. We both graduate (hopefully!) on February 6. As you may be aware one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education is required by our Living Water Association on the pathway to ordination. While this has been a lot of work, I can say that it has been a unique and powerful opportunity to minister to so many people during their times of need. Thank you all for the prayers and caring.

Your Deacons continue to manage our membership lists. At our most recent meeting we reviewed our lists for anyone who had not engaged with our church over the past two years. As our Bylaws dictate, those people were moved to a list of Inactives.

Our Deacon of the Month for February is Claire Chase. Please reach out to any Deacon with any needs or suggestions.



## Finance Committee

Paula Hatfield

The Finance Committee met on January 13th to review and discuss December financial activity. Activity was typical for budgeted accounts with no exceptional activity in income or expenses. The mid-year financial review was completed and shared with the Finance Committee. As of December 30, 2019, we are within our approved budget overall in both income and expenses. There are some seasonal variances within accounts that historically have evened out by year end. We will continue to monitor and further analysis will be done in April as we begin to put together next year's budget. Please email me if you have any questions at [rangeleyucfinance@gmail.com](mailto:rangeleyucfinance@gmail.com).

We discussed the need for a new safe due to the advanced age and difficulty opening our current safe. The new safe will have an electronic keypad permitting us to have greater control over access and combinations. We voted and approved that we present this purchase to the Church Council. The Council approved the motion and we will move forward with the purchase.

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, Kathy Brittain and I met to produce the 2019 Contribution Statements for the congregation. Kathy assumed the role of Financial Secretary for our church in May 2019 and has been doing an outstanding job for us. The statements were generated and mailed out on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. 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. Our next meeting will be on February 10, 2020.

Submitted by Paula Hatfield, Treasurer



*The February Facilities and Event Highlights Calendar is located below*

*A full list of Calendar Events can be found on our website: [www.rangeleyucc.org](http://www.rangeleyucc.org)*

### February Facilities and Events Highlights Calendar

Activity	Day	Jan. Dates	Time	Place
Worship	Sunday	Feb. 2 Feb. 9 Feb. 16 Feb. 23	10-11 am	Sanctuary
Genesis-Bible Study	Sunday	Feb. 2 Feb. 9	11:20 am (after a short fellowship time)	East Room
Prayer Shawl Ministry	Monday	Feb. 3 Feb. 17	2-3:30 pm	Sanctuary
Men's Breakfast	Monday	Feb. 10	8-9 am	Country Club Inn
Finance Committee	Monday	Feb. 10	3-4 pm	Barn
Church Council	Monday	Feb. 10	4-6 pm	TBA
Deacons	Monday	Feb. 24	4-5 pm	East Room
Search Committee	Monday	Feb. 3 Feb. 17	4-6pm	East Room
Christian Ed.	Tuesday	Feb. 4	8:30 am	East Room
Pastor "Walk-In" Hours	Tuesday	Feb. 4 Feb. 11 Feb. 18 Feb. 25	1-3 pm	East Room