

# Mountain Reflections

Rangely Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

P.O. Box 218 Rangely, Maine 04970



Annette Mott

Dear RCC Friends,

This is my last newsletter column, and as I write this I am deeply aware of the vows of release that was part of our worship service on Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>. We celebrated and concluded our pastoral relationship. You have been so very dear to me, and we have been through so much sorrow, work, accomplishment, and joy together. We have been full partners in ministry—encouraging each other, forgiving each other, and having lots of laughter along the way. Your dearness to me will not change when I leave, and know that I will continue to hold you in affection, in esteem, and in prayer.

But there are a lot of changes that will have to be made in our relationship for me to be a faithful and honorable minister as I retire, and as you prepare to choose and welcome your new settled pastor. Fortunately, I do not have to invent the appropriate boundaries I need to observe as your former minister—that has been clearly set forth for me and for you by the ethical expectations of my profession.

- 1) I cannot engage in a pastoral relationship with any of my former parishioners.
- 2) I cannot return to the church for a period of at least one year from the time your new minister begins their ministry with you, and even then, only with their express permission.

Those rules may at first seem harsh, but I have faithfully observed them in all my previous pastorates, as I will now, and for good reason: the rules are intended to encourage and secure the pastoral relationship between you and your new pastor. The most important interim task remaining for me now is to do everything I can on my part to make a smooth transition to your new minister and to facilitate the pastoral bond that will develop between you. This is my calling. This is my joy.

Shalom,

Pastor Annette



## **“Keeping Lent”** by Pastor Annette

Personal devotional practices for keeping the season of Lent vary greatly. Traditionally Lent has been a penitential season (i.e. a time for turning towards God) marked by fasting (where the custom of giving something up for Lent originates), almsgiving (generosity towards the poor and those in need), and prayer.

My family of origin did not have a custom of giving up something for Lent, which may be why my own adult observance of that practice has been rather erratic — some Lents I do and some Lents I don't. But this will be a Lent when I do. And if you are thinking of giving up something for Lent this year, I have two possibilities for your consideration:

This year, why not give up worrying, and instead substitute prayer in its place. First of all, you need to pay attention to your own emotional and spiritual state, so that you can catch yourself when you start to worry. Next you need to breathe slowly and deeply from your belly, breathing in God's Spirit and breathing out the worry. Then offer up the fear and anxiety you are feeling to God and thank God for God's continuing love and care for you. Repeat as needed. (If you are like me, you will need to repeat pretty often).

Then I was reading a column written by Rev. Michael Piazza earlier this month, and he suggested another candidate for what one might give up this Lent: “Could I give up criticism for Lent, including critiquing what passes as customer service these days? What about complaining? Could I abstain from denouncing the evils of Washington and simply pray for them instead? That sure would enhance my prayer life!”

So, whether it is chocolate or alcohol, worry or complaining, may your abstinence this Lent bless you in body and soul and draw you closer to the One who made you and who loves you best of all.



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Rick Baker

This Newsletter covers two months into the future. It is always hard to project that far ahead in our church's life when so much is going on and unknown at the time of this writing.

As I sent out in E-mail blasts, we have been getting updates on the Search Committee's enthusiastic support for their candidate and giving thought to working through what the new part-time minister paradigm will mean for us. I think it will work out with due diligence and effort on our part. We will have congregational "Café's" to further our discussions in the spring.

Pastor Annette had her last Sunday with us February 23. Her service was followed by a luncheon that was well attended. She has had a very positive influence on RCC that has helped us to move forward to enjoy each other, with each other. She will be sorely missed. At her "Exit Interview" she said many kind things about us. "The congregation is brimming with talent - people with skills and abilities who serve the church, good natured congregants with humor and forgiveness and a willingness to participate in worship." I totally echo all of that.

Please stay tuned for updates on our Pastoral Search and any announcements about Café's or Candidating Sunday.

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





## Buildings and Grounds

### Committee

Diane VanAmburg

Hi all.

Well we are told that an early spring is coming this year. We will see. We've had plowing and shoveling this past month. Thanks to Scott and Paula for the plowing. Scott is now finished with his pastoral care at Maine Med so he will be our plow person from now on. Paula is happy.

The important item on B & G this month is to find a company that does vinyl siding. The building occupied by LMS is in need of help. We will be replacing the old windows upstairs and doing the siding hopefully this summer or fall. If you look at the outside of the building you will notice that the wood in places needs to be replaced. So if anyone knows of a company would you please contact someone on the committee so we can get estimates and get this done. Thank you for your help.

Buildings and Grounds Committee:

Dick Moore, Kirby Holcombe, Derek Wendelken, Rick Baker, Fred Dubay, and Diane VanAmburg



## Deacon News

Scott Hatfield

The deadline for the newsletter fell the day after Rev. Annette's departure. I find myself reflecting on the love, respect, and appreciation that was evident in our service today. I want to thank all of those people who contributed so much. The music was amazing – choir as well as custom lyrics. The food and fellowship was top notch. It was great to have Rev. Blood with us to recognize Annette's departure as well as our church's faithful support of the Maine School of Ministry (MESOM).

Mostly I want to express my appreciation and awe for what Rev. Mott has done. She's served in so many roles and ways over the years – from Resource Center to Interim Ministry. She has provided wisdom and compassion to our church on many occasions over the past two years. In many gracious ways, she has touched us and made us a better church. For all the times that she made the trip from Bowdoinham to Rangeley, for all the times she welcomed me into her office to handle some concern, for her facilitation of discernment committees, Bible studies, burgers after Council meetings, visits and calls to people that will mostly go unknown.... for all those ways that she demonstrated discipleship and the love of Jesus Christ, we are enormously grateful.

As our Search Committee does their work to seek a new minister for our church, the Deacons will continue to seek pulpit supply. We anticipate having the Rev. Tony McNaughton with us on both March 1 and 15. I will be preaching on March 8. While we are hopeful that a candidate has been identified, lead times will still dictate that we need to be creative during March and April. If you have suggestions, or if you would be willing to offer a message, please reach out and contact any Deacon.

A special "Thank You" for all that this church has done for MESOM. Rev. Blood alluded to it, but be aware that our church provides \$1000 each year out of our general benevolence fund. Women's Fellowship makes a generous annual gift. A number of individuals in our church make personal gifts as well. Our church over-performs, surprise! While I don't think we can ask for more, if you do want to make an individual donation this year, please just drop a check in the offering plate with "MESOM" in the memo and our Finance team will make sure that it gets to the right place.

Our Deacon of the Month for March is Linda Caspar. For April it is Evelyn. Please reach out to any Deacon with any needs or suggestions.



Evelyn Franson

Our prayer shawl gals are busy completing winter projects, dreaming of their next patterns. As always, everyone is welcome to join our group whenever convenient. Beginners and lapsed knitters are especially encouraged to stop in at the Barn on any first or third Monday from 2-3:30, check out the yarns in our closet and see what is going on.

Here are these newest thank yous to share with all:

Dear Prayer Shawl Gals,

Thank you for all so kindly showing your support to my dear friends. I was with them when the package arrived in New York. They were touched by the gesture and we all admired the incredible craft's *womanship* and another, thank you so much for the beautiful prayer shawl!! It is the prettiest one I have ever seen! We will wear it and feel the love that went into making it.

The opportunity to pass the love and comfort is, of course, what this ministry is all about. Whenever you are aware of someone who could use a hug in the form of a cozy shawl, see Diane VanAmburg, Evelyn Franson or anyone of our gals.

Evelyn Franson



## Finance Committee

Paula Hatfield

The Finance Committee met on February 10<sup>th</sup> to review and discuss January financial activity. Activity was typical for budgeted accounts with no exceptional activity in income or expenses. At this time of year, we begin to focus on budget preparation for the upcoming 2020 – 2021 fiscal year. Each committee will be receiving financial reports to help them prepare their budgets. The committees should turn in their budget requests by April 1<sup>st</sup>. The requests will be incorporated into a proposed budget that the Finance Committee will review in April and present to the Council for review and approval in May.

Last month the purchase of a new safe was approved by the Council. By the time you are reading this, it will have been received and installed.

Kit Caspar, Derek Wendelken and I have been working on the call agreement for our ministerial candidate as requested by the Council. Kit and I are very grateful to Derek as he continues to serve as both the Search Committee Chair and as our contact with the candidate throughout this process. I have been in communication with the Maine Conference, Paychex and the Pension Board to make sure we are in compliance with recently updated IRS regulations regarding minister's pay and benefits. As the process continues, please watch for updates from the Council.

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 March 9, 2020.

Submitted by Paula Hatfield, Treasurer



*The March-April 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)*

### March-April Facilities and Events Highlights Calendar

Activity	Day	Jan. Dates	Time	Place
Worship	Sunday	March 1 March 8 March 15 March 22 March 29 April 5 April 12 April 19 April 26	10-11 am	Sanctuary
Prayer Shawl Ministry	Monday	March 2 March 16 April 6 April 20	2-3:30 pm	Barn
Men's Breakfast	Monday	March 9 April 13	8-9 am	TBA
Finance Committee	Monday	March 9 April 13	3-4 pm	East Room
Church Council	Monday	March 9 April 13	4-6 pm	East Room
Deacons	Monday	March 23 April 27	4-5 pm	East Room
Search Committee	Monday	March 2 March 16 April 6 April 20	4-6pm	East Room
Christian Ed.	Tuesday	March 3 April 7	8:30 am	East Room
C&C Meetings	Tuesday	March 31	9-10:30am	East Room