



# Rockwood Stone News

Rockwood-Stone Pastoral Charge  
The United Church of Canada

Visit our website at [www.rockwoodstoneunitedchurches.com](http://www.rockwoodstoneunitedchurches.com)



*"The little church with  
a big heart"*

**Stone United Church**  
5370 Fourth Line  
Rockwood, ON NOB 2K0

## November 2020

**Minister: Rev. Heather Leffler**  
[hleffler@rogers.com](mailto:hleffler@rogers.com)

519-265-7385 or text 519-573-9642

**Secretary: Sharyn Southworth**  
[rockwoodstoneuc@gmail.com](mailto:rockwoodstoneuc@gmail.com)

519-856-4160



Find us on Facebook. **Friend**  
"Rockwood Stone" and like our page  
"Rockwood-Stone United Churches"  
for updates and reminders about upcoming events.



*"Live, Love, Laugh"*

**Rockwood United Church**  
119 Harris St.  
Rockwood, ON NOB 2K0

Join us for...

**Worship** with us on **Sundays** on [Zoom](#). At **9:30 am** there will be time to gather. At **10 am**, join Heather for our **Sunday Worship**. Following worship stay and visit or join a conversation in a breakout room about the previous week's **Contemplation and Conversation** or the **Affirming Discernment Circle's** submission.

To join [Zoom](#) for **Worship and Meetings** click on the link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6995074926?pwd=eTk1T1d0V2NXVFNxazlEcGpuL3JpUT09>. To join by phone, dial +1-647-374-4685 or +1-647-558-0588 and enter **Meeting ID: 699 507 4926** and **Password: 20120701**.

If you are having trouble connecting to Zoom or would like help trying it for the first time, contact Heather Leffler at 519-265-7385, [hleffler@rogers.com](mailto:hleffler@rogers.com) or text 519-573-9642. Do you have more questions about Zoom? Chris Arbuckle [carbuckle11@gmail.com](mailto:carbuckle11@gmail.com) and Lisa Leffler [lleffler@live.ca](mailto:lleffler@live.ca) have also volunteered to help with Zoom.

Sharyn Southworth, our secretary works from home.  
Messages are monitored virtually.

Email the church office at [rockwoodstoneuc@gmail.com](mailto:rockwoodstoneuc@gmail.com)  
or leave a message at 519-856-4160.

**Announcements** are emailed on Thursday each week.  
**Contemplation and Conversation** is emailed on Sunday.

For **pastoral concerns, to share ideas about how we can connect when we are apart, or just to talk**, contact Rev. Heather Leffler at 519-265-7385, text 519-573-9642 or [hleffler@rogers.com](mailto:hleffler@rogers.com).  
If you would like a copy of the worship slides each Sunday, you can also email Heather.

**Wear Your Festive Apparel and Decorate your Zoom Space for Advent**

On **November 29** wear something **red**

on **December 6** wear **green**

on **December 13** wear a **festive hat**

on **December 20** wear **all of the above**



add adornments like festive belts, dangly earrings etc.  
homemade all the better and join us for **Worship**.

**Communion** will be celebrated  
on **Sunday, November 29** at **10 am** on [Zoom](#).  
Please bring a glass of juice, water or wine and bread  
or crackers for communion.

Sunday, December 6

begin the Christmas season with

## An Evening of Christmas Carols

at 7 pm, on [Zoom](#) with our own Eramosa Ensemble.



Bring your favourite memory or picture of a Christmas tree to share.

After the 6<sup>th</sup>, enjoy the carols again on our Facebook Page and Website.

## Magi March

Over 2000 years ago the magi journeyed to bring Jesus gifts. Today we are looking for magi to collect gifts for East Wellington Community Service on **Saturday, December 12** in the afternoon. **Ways to be involved:**



**Be a Drop Off Location** – the week of **December 5 to 11**, people will drop off donations at the door for you to sort into pick-up packages for the day of the march. On December 12 "meandering magi" will come to pick up packages and participate in a COVID safe activity.

**Make a Donation:** Needed items include jam, honey, Cheez whiz, butter or margarine, canned fruit, bread, Kids' school snacks – pudding/Jell-o/fruit cups, granola bars, Sidekicks, Hamburger/Tuna Helpers, tea, cereal, toilet paper, paper towels, dish soap, laundry soap. Watch the announcements for drop off locations.

**Be a Meandering Magi:** Gather a car full of people from your household to pick up packages, compete in social distanced events and go on a Christmas journey.



If you are willing to be a drop off location or would like to be a meandering magi, please contact Lisa Leffler at [lleffler@live.ca](mailto:lleffler@live.ca) by December 1.

Make a donation to Rockwood or Stone to give an **Advent Gift to Anishnabeg Outreach** for their **scholarships and thrifting program.**

**Scholarships** – The dropout rate for Indigenous youth is 500% higher than non-Indigenous peoples. AO hopes to significantly reduce Indigenous drop-out rates across the region through their centre of healing. Establishing scholarships for young people to obtain post-secondary education is an imperative step in closing this education gap.

**Thrifting program** – \$1000 will purchase a sewing machine for the centre so families can repurpose and modernize used clothing to have current fashions that fit. It is about socially fitting in for Indigenous people. AO also plans programs for women in prison to make clothes for themselves and their children as a day program.

Thursday, December 24

## Christmas Eve

### Readings and Reflections

accompanied by flute music will be recorded and shared on our Rockwood Stone website and Facebook page.



At 7 pm join us on [Zoom](#) for

### Communion, Scripture Story, Song and Conversation

to celebrate this holy night.



**November 19** and every other **Thursday**

### For Women: come to Tea and Talk



from **10 am to 12 noon**, on [Zoom](#). Bring your tea (or coffee) and goodies and enjoy this time together.

**Wednesday, November 20,**

### Genesis Book Club

**Wednesday, December 16 at 7:30 pm**, on [Zoom](#) join us for a thoughtful, thought-provoking discussion about articles from Broadview Magazine.

**November 26** and every other **Thursday,**

**For Men:** you are invited to

### Coffee Connections

from **10 am to 12 noon**, on [Zoom](#).

Bring your coffee (or tea) and snacks and join in the conversation and fellowship!



### Spiritual Saturdays

Join us on **November 28** on [Zoom](#) from **1 to 3:30 pm**

We will learn to pray scripture together, take some time away from the computer to pray the scripture and then come together again to companion each other. Everyone is welcome. Please contact Lisa Leffler [lleffler@live.ca](mailto:lleffler@live.ca) by November 26 to receive the materials.

**Friday, December 18**

### Faith, Food, Friendship and Fun

beginning at **6 pm**, on [Zoom](#).

Join us for activities, conversation, a Christmas craft, and a casual time of worship. During COVID-19 we invite you to prepare your own supper and eat with us.

Contact Heather at [lleffler@rogers.com](mailto:lleffler@rogers.com) or 519-265-7385 by the Wednesday before, so we can drop off your craft supplies.

## Letters, Notes and Emails ...

*Brothers, Sisters and Siblings in Christ,*

*Last March when we held our final worship in our sanctuaries at Rockwood and Stone, none of us could have imagined that in November we would still be worshipping and holding most of our events on Zoom. While there are downsides – no hugs or handshakes, no personal conversations on Sunday mornings and the challenges of low bandwidth and adapting to Zoom, there are many gifts in this strange time we find ourselves.*

*At clergy “coffee” in a backyard, physically distanced and with masks, my colleague Paul Miller drew our attention to Isaiah 37:30. “And this shall be the sign for you: This year eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs from that; then in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit. Isaiah was writing to the people of Jerusalem after the invading Assyrians had destroyed their crops. They had to rely on the seeds that sprouted up by themselves because they had none to plant. When Paul read those words, it seemed to me that Isaiah could have been writing to us in 2020. All over the world there are negative impacts of COVID-19 but there are also gifts. The produce this summer (except maybe in some of our pumpkin patches) was abundant; the fruit tasted sweeter; the fall colours were more vibrant and long-lasting. We are enjoying seeing more wildlife, though it would be nice if the coyotes would stay out of the chicken coops. In our neighbourhood, more people are walking. When we meet each other almost everyone smiles, says hello and crosses the street or steps off the path so people can pass safely. These are just some of the fruits of this pandemic in our communities. I hear Isaiah urging us to look beyond what we are missing to see the gifts we can enjoy in this time.*

*There are many gifts in our congregations too ... rich conversations on Sunday mornings ... getting to know people in our gathering time from our sister congregation ... wonderful, creative fundraisers and other activities ... the many groups and committees working together on Zoom ... the connections you are making with one another ... your generous financial support ... the care people are taking to keep one another safe ... being able to share videos and conversations that help us imagine what it means to be affirming. (Lisa continues to remind me that people who do not identify as male or female may not feel included when I use brothers and sisters.)*

*It will be wonderful to worship in our buildings again when we can sing and hug and enjoy food together. In the meantime, there is so much we can do to stay connected and grow in faith. Please watch for opportunities to help decorate the outside of our churches ... donate, sign up to collect donations for East Wellington Foodbank or to be a meandering magi ... watch for an Advent gift for your family from Rockwood and Stone and give thanks to God that we can continue to grow in deeper relationship with one another when we are physically distant from each other.*

*Another colleague David Shearman shared these words, “Church, as it was, is simply not important. Church, as it will be, is being developed as we speak. Pastoral care is being redefined in ways we have yet to comprehend. There is nothing but possibility ahead of us and we can’t allow the luxury of regret.”*

*Friends, I pray you will find many gifts in this time. When you or those you love face challenges, please let us know so we can hold you in prayer or support you in other ways.*

*I pray you and those you love experience many blessings in the coming Advent and Christmas season.*

*Blessings,*

*Deather Leffler*



*Kids Time on Zoom*



*Sunday Mornings during COVID-19*

Dear Friends,

*I have always been fascinated with physical signs of every shape, color, and material that range from a simple symbol to a complex array of dazzling lights and graphics. Whether we consciously realize it or not, signage plays an integral part in our lives. As I was preparing for a walk on the seventh line the other day, I decided to make an unscientific study of the types of signs I encountered in the space of a few kilometers. As I left the house, I put on a mask that had been kindly made for me by Liz Guthrie. The pictures of rulers, the alphabet, and numbers embossed on the material clearly identify my past life as a teacher and tell those who I will meet something about me as a human being who cares for others amidst the pandemic. Going out the laneway, I passed two warning signs that indicate my property is a no trespassing/hunting zone and that bio security is in effect in my farm buildings. At the end of the driveway is an Ontario Federation of Agriculture sign which identifies me as a member of a professional organization that is devoted to ethical practices. The fire number sign provides an easily identifiable address for the use of first responders. As I leave the driveway and head north, the "danger, high voltage" signs on the hydro poles remind me of hazards that one can encounter in life. The large sign placed by the Ontario Farm trust which reads "Farmland Forever" that is adjacent to Matt Setzkorn's and Arthur Churchyard's property signal their dedication to the preservation of our agricultural heritage. As I pass the landscaping business across from my farm, the trucks in the parking lot are plastered with graphics that remind me of a time when the owners helped me while I was waiting for a new well to be drilled. At this point, I haven't even traveled 0.5 of a kilometre and have just reached the northern boundary of my farm. Imagine the list of signs generated by the time I reached 20 Sideroad!*

*As the late theologian Henri Nouwen has observed, we are called to be living signs of God's faithful presence amongst us. When we make prayerful decisions about the re-opening of our churches, we do so with an abundance of care for each other. When we take the time to chat via Zoom on Sunday mornings, place a phone call, send a card or an e-mail, or visit at a safe distance on our porches, we are fulfilling the directive to love one another. When we make masks for others, gather bicycles to enhance mobility for the disenfranchised, lovingly prepare foodstuffs to donate to the food bank, collect money for the Rural Women's Shelter, or grow pumpkins in support of the Foodgrains project, we are acting as the hands and feet of Christ in the world. When we scrub floors, paint walls, repair basement foundations, dust ceiling fans, carefully arrange flowers in the sanctuary, or shovel snow off the church sidewalks, we use our gifts and talents for the glory of God and signal the wider community in which we live that we are a caring people. When we participate in worship or take part in formal groups such as Bible Study, the Affirming Discernment Circle, the Genesis Book Club, the UCW, or Spiritual Saturday gatherings, we are given unique opportunities to receive spiritual nourishment as we grow deeper in our relationship with each other and with the one we call Holy Mystery and Wholly Love. We become more secure in the knowledge that we are made in the image of God.*

*As my six year term as Pastoral Charge Chairperson comes to a close, it is my hope that we will continue to be attentive to one another and that we will find new and creative ways to be living signs of God's faithful and ever patient presence in our world. As we journey through Advent may the words of John 1:14 have renewed significance for us as individuals: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Thanks be to God.*

Brian Mack,  
Chairperson, Rockwood-Stone Pastoral Charge

## Thank you

Your faithfulness through PAR, e-transfers, Canada Helps and postdated cheques is keeping our finances stable and allowing us to continue to serve God in our church communities and the world.

### How can I continue to support our churches?

1. **PAR:** To sign up for monthly Pre-Authorized Remittances or to change your givings, contact Bill Allen at [stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com) or 519-856-0402 for **Stone** or Amanda Hunter-Anthony at [rockwooduc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:rockwooduc.treasurer@gmail.com) or 519-856-1129 for **Rockwood**.
2. **E-transfer Stone** at [stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com) or **Rockwood** at [rockwooduc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:rockwooduc.treasurer@gmail.com). In the memo, please designate whether your offering is for your church, M&S and/or Other and include your contact information.
3. **Canada Helps** is a Canadian registered charity that enables other charities to receive online gifts. Go to <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/stoneunitedchurch/> or <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/rockwood-united-church/> to make a credit card donation. You can designate your offering to the church, M&S and/or Other in the message box.
4. **Post-Dated Cheques** can be sent to **Stone United Church**, c/o Bill Allen, 4949 Wellington Rd 29, Guelph, ON N1H 6H8 or **Rockwood United Church**, 119 Harris St., Rockwood, ON N0B 2K0



*Laying a Wampum Trail  
at Anishnabeg Outreach Family Centre*



*Take Out Dinner Preparations*



*Garden Tour*

**You make a Difference by Supporting  
Rockwood and Stone United Churches**

Your generosity allows your local community of faith provide leadership that ...

- helps people of all ages **ask and explore questions of faith** in large and small groups
- encourages fellowship that **supports and nurtures people** day to day and especially in times of crisis
- connects with partners in the community to **learn about neighbours and work together** to make a difference
- **embraces new ideas and initiatives** to make a difference in the local community and beyond
- works to **create safe, affirming space** where people can connect and grow
- encourages **sharing of talents in areas of music, arts, cooking** and more
- empowers and supports **personal growth and growth as communities of faith**



*Having Fun and Raising Funds  
for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank*



*Outdoor Worship at Stone*



*Visiting after Rockwood's Outdoor Worship*

## *Committees and Groups ...*

### ***Rockwood and Stone Worship and Christian Education***

*Submitted by Liz Guthrie and Barbara Eley*

Combined Worship Committees have met via Zoom on May 19, October 1 and November 5, 2020

Our Worship services continue to be via Zoom at 10 am. and will be until it is safe for us to be back in our churches. Thank you to Heather and Lisa Leffler for hosting Zoom services each Sunday. Thank you to those providing special music and or reading scripture.

**May 31, 2020** – The Pastoral Charge

Pentecost/Communion Water themes were used for our Pastoral Charge picnic via Zoom. Those attending either wore red for Pentecost or blue to represent water. Water was used as part of communion. Using the white board, Barb Eley and Barb Parker coloured the picture of Moses striking the rock. A scavenger hunt had us looking around our house or yard for items we use with water. Others drew pictures of favourite water places.

**June 14, 2020** – The Honourable Senator Robert Black was guest speaker for Rockwood's 153<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary. His thoughtful message ended with the reading of "Oh, The Places You'll Go" by Dr. Seuss. He personalized the reading with family names from the congregation.

**July 5 to September 6, 2020** – Summer Services were led by Heather or Lisa Leffler with the exception of July 5, 2020, when we were invited to join other churches for worship.

**August 23, 2020** – The Foodgrains Committee– Bill Allen, Barb and Tom Parker led our service.

**September 20, 2020** – Rockwood gathered for a time of worship in the afternoon at Ray and Ellen Thomson's and enjoyed recordings of the Eramosa Ensemble.

**September 27, 2020** – Stone gathered in the church cemetery in the afternoon for a time of worship and enjoyed recordings of the Stone Choir.

**October 4, 2020** – Worldwide Communion via Zoom

**October 11, 2020** – A time of Thanksgiving as we shared what we are thankful for.

**October 18, 2020** – Henry Reinders, guest speaker at Stone's 158<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, showed us how The Canadian Foodgrains Bank is helping farmers in India. Pictures of the Great Pumpkin Weigh Off were shown after the service.

**November 29, 2020 – December 20, 2020** – The season of Advent. Communion will be celebrated via Zoom on November 29, 2020.

**December 6, 2020** at 7:00 pm – The Annual Carol Sing will be via Zoom. Carols will be recorded and posted on our website.

**December 24, 2020** – A Readings and Reflection service will be recorded and posted on our website for people to enjoy any time. Our Christmas Eve service will be on Zoom at 7 pm.

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### ***Rockwood Pastoral Care and Fellowship***

*Submitted by Ellen Thomson*

Although the Pastoral Care Committee has not met during this COVID-19 experience, we have continued to keep in touch with our church family. Ian Pasmore has sent out condolence and get-well cards on each occasion as requested. Ollie Darcie has made telephone calls. Ellen Thomson has also sent sympathy and 'thinking of you' cards. Email messages have also been sent for personal contact.

We plan to meet soon to discuss the telephone tree and other concerns. If you know of someone who needs support, please contact one of us.

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### ***Stone Pastoral Care and Fellowship***

*Submitted by John Leffler*

Thanks to the Stone Pastoral Care members for sending cards, keeping the phone and membership list up to date and keeping in touch with our Minister to keep her informed of life events within our congregation. We met with Heather this fall to talk about our Circle of Care and she will be following up with members of Stone to see if any changes are needed.

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### ***Stone U.C.W.***

*Submitted by Edie Ward*

Due to Covid-19 no meetings have been held this year. Flowers were sent to Jean Jackson for her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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## **Rockwood Outreach**

*Submitted by Marcia Haworth*

COVID-19 has of course impacted the lives of everyone in so many ways, and we are so grateful to have received wonderful support from our congregations as we try to come up with fund-raising ideas during our changed circumstances. We are determined to continue to support our community folk that depend on our help, as well as our partners through Mission and Service in Canada and around the world.

Our Food Fix was embraced by many determined, strategic, hilarious bidders resulting in a profit of \$2,304. The Rockwood-Stone Garden tour was successfully put together at the last minute and was well attended, given the inconvenience of a tornado warning, thunderstorm and downed trees. Six very different gardens were on the tour and many hope that it will be an annual event. We made \$635 shared between our two congregations. At present the new Feeding Our Flock event is underway which will see our committee making chicken dishes with generous donations from Maple Lodge Farms, all in the church kitchen and all while masked, sanitized and physically distanced. We are also offering some gift items for sale.

We have been able to support the East Wellington Community Services food bank by filling their freezer several times with meats, cheese etc. We donated hams at Thanksgiving and are helping to provide requested items for the Christmas hampers. We plan to purchase grocery gift cards at Christmas for the food bank clients and Rural Women's Support Program participants in the same way as before, especially as we anticipate the need will be greater this year. We have also made significant donations of food to the Guelph Drop-In Centre.

In August, a group from Rockwood-Stone participated in creating a two row Wampum laying two rows of pathway linking the teaching lodge and the pollinator garden and toured the outdoor space with its raised beds for strawberries, medicinal herbs, tobacco, etc. We also visited the newly created healing lodges and teaching lodges. It is always inspirational to spend time with our Anishnabeg Outreach partners.

Rockwood and Stone will participate jointly in an Advent collection to support the food bank, and Anishnabeg Outreach.

At present we predict a shortfall this year in our M & S givings and it seems unlikely that we will reach our \$12,000 target.

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## **Stone Canadian Foodgrains Bank**

### **Bushels for Change Project**

*Submitted by Bill Allen*

Stone United Church wrapped up its Foodgrains Growing Project on October 17<sup>th</sup> with a community pumpkin weigh-off with strong participation from Rockwood and Barrie Hill United Churches. Over 25 pumpkins were weighed, judged, measured, or dissected (to determine it was a legitimate pumpkin). The Benham family of Brian, Sarah, Flora and Hazel from Barrie Hill Church won the trophy for the heaviest pumpkin, weighing in at 150 pounds. Honourable mention went to Heidi Smits from Stone for the smallest pumpkin. Murray Oliver won for the longest pumpkin, Marcia Haworth for the best decorated and Lisa Leffler for the best carved. Over thirty church members participated in the pumpkin growing challenge. Unfortunately, not all pumpkins made it to maturity. Thank you to all participants for a fun pumpkin challenge.

COVID-19 has resulted in an increase in the people, globally who are experiencing food insecurity. The Canadian Foodgrains Bank has been providing strong leadership and much needed funds in responding to this crisis.

The Stone United Church Project has received \$7,200 in donations so far. This matches the dollars raised through last year's project. This is an amazing accomplishment given the challenges faced this year as a result of the pandemic. Every dollar raised is matched by the federal government 3:1 for a total of \$22,000 from our project. Thank you to all our generous donors who helped make this year's project a tremendous success.

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## **Stone Property & Finance**

*Submitted by Jack Ward*

Instead of our Annual Beef Dinner in October, Marg Baker, Liz Guthrie, Edie Ward and Barb Parker planned a series of take out dinners. Dates were July (ham dinner), August (pulled pork), October (roast beef) and November (chili). Great response from everyone. See below for financial report on these meals.

Water samples were continued in July and October due to using the Church for preparing these meals.

Yard cleanup was attended by 17 people. We all social distanced and was good to see each other.

Volunteers took the opportunity with the church building closed to renovate the Jeanne Jackson Reading Room. The door to the accessible washroom was moved and drywall installed to create an informal meeting area. The paneling on the remaining walls was painted as well.

## **Financial Update – Submitted by Bill Allen**

At the end of October, Stone UC is showing a \$4,288 operating deficit. Thank you to the 19 families enrolled on PAR and the families who have been donating by sending Bill cheques or e-transfers. Your continued support is appreciated. The three take-out dinners completed to date have raised \$3,030. We have received \$7,200 so far in support of our Canadian Foodgrains Project. The current balance in our bank account is \$43,000 and in the Memorial Fund is \$12,500. Church members wishing to donate to the general Church operations, Mission & Service or the Foodgrains Project before year end, can submit by e-transfer to [stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:stoneuc.treasurer@gmail.com) or by sending a cheque to Bill Allen, 4949 Wellington Rd 29, Guelph, N1H 6H8.

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## **Rockwood Property & Finance**

*Submitted by Sherol Steinberg*

**House of Joy:** With the end of the lease with East Wellington Community Services, Rockwood had hoped to renegotiate the lease and continue EWCS occupancy of the house. However, EWCS decided to re-locate and have moved out as of September 1, 2020, ending the income we had been receiving monthly for rent. The mortgage which is held by Waterloo Presbytery Extension Council is also up for renewal in November and the Trustees are negotiating with them. The decision to sell the church parking lot, demolish the house and construct a parking lot on the site of the house was recommended by Trustees and adopted by Council. This allows the church to occupy adjacent properties enhancing future development opportunities and allows the church to pay off the mortgage held by Extension Council. Following approval from the County and Township to demolish the house and create a parking lot, our committee will put forth a list of possible assets to the Trustees that can be salvaged from the HOJ prior to demolition. For example, it is our recommendation to move the generator over to Day Hall so it may become a refuge centre in case of power outages. Some items may be put up for sale. Current plans approved by Council allows for the proceeds from the sale of the parking lot to pay off the remaining mortgage on HOJ, cover the cost of demolition and paving the house lot and making the church more accessible.

The water has been shut off in the basement and heat turned down until approvals are granted then we will look at disconnecting the gas, hydro and water. The HOJ is being checked biweekly for insurance purposes.

**Church:** The stonework on the outside of the Narthex has been completed – thanks to Kevin Anthony. We had

scheduled to renovate the Narthex – removing the plywood walls, insulating, improving access to the tower, and creating a stone feature wall but have decided to wait to start this project until the issues around the House of Joy and parking lot are settled. Other upcoming tasks include replacing the fans in the sanctuary as the low speed setting has burned out on them. The water heater in the kitchen was leaking and has been fixed thanks to Scott Jamieson.

**Church Use:** Our church rentals were put on hold with the advent of COVID-19. The Early ON program despite having no use of the building has continued paying rent at a reduced rate – the last payment will be in December. We have not heard if they wish to continue. AA used the parking lot for meetings throughout the summer. With approval of the Re-Opening Commission, the church was opened for use to AA to provide ongoing support to those who need it. They are currently meeting in the Sanctuary. Girl Guides will be using the hall on Thursdays. Rural Women's Support will be conducting in person emergency interviews intermittently Monday and Thursday mornings as needed. These are users with a community partnership with the church and each provide an important community service. We have provided them with strict protocols that support the Provincial and Public Health protocols in order to keep everyone safe. All rentals/users will be considered on a case to case basis, but we do not anticipate any further users at this time.

All who enter the church must contact [sherol@rockwoodfc.com](mailto:sherol@rockwoodfc.com) prior to entering to ensure that traffic in and out of the building is managed safely. All must fill out the contact forms by the door and follow the posted protocols.

**Finances:** These are difficult times and we would like to thank you – your generosity and support make the work of the church possible. With the loss of the rental income from HOJ, our finances will be a balancing act until the parking lot is sold. Property and Finance has directed our Treasurer to use monies from building fund to supplement any shortfalls in the general fund for the near future.

We are able to accept donations through PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance), cheque, e-transfer sent to [rockwooduc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:rockwooduc.treasurer@gmail.com) and Canada Helps. If you would like more information on any of the donation methods, please contact Amanda or call the church office 519-856-4160. Please note for donations to be included on a 2020 tax receipt they will need to be received by December 20, 2020.

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## **Rockwood Stone**

### **Finance & Stewardship**

*Submitted by Heather Leffler*

Thanks to our Treasurers who have continued to meet with our minister throughout the pandemic to monitor givings and expenses. Thanks to Roy Steinberg for all the paperwork, we received the 10% Temporary Wage Subsidy for Employers from the Government of Canada until May. Thanks to our congregations for their ongoing support.

It was decided that we will send a flyer to the community this Christmas thanking them for their support and sharing some of the exciting things we have been doing during the pandemic.

Chris Barlow is designing a new website for us and will host it.

As a result of the pandemic we have added a podcasting license to our copyright license. We will be purchasing a Zoom license for the pastoral charge in the new year so that we can continue blended worship when we go back to worshipping in our church buildings.

Bill Allen, Brian Mack, Sherol Steinberg and Heather Leffler are taking part in a series of Stewardship Best Practices workshops led by Dave Jagger, WOW Stewardship and Gifts Officer.

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## **Rockwood Country Breakfast**

*Submitted by Sherol Steinberg, Marica Haworth  
and Kay Mathies*

The Country Breakfast ground to a halt after February as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. When it became apparent that the restrictions were not going to end any time soon, we donated the supplies we had on hand. The EWCS Food Bank received the sausages and bacon and the Drop-in Centre in Guelph gratefully accepted the pancake mix and a gallon of maple syrup. We are donating another 2 gallons of maple syrup to EWCS Christmas food drive. The remaining maple syrup will become part of the Breakfast for Dinner pop up items.

The Country Breakfast has been reimagined and brought back as Breakfast for Dinner – where food items are posted mid month, bid upon for the last weekend of each month, and delivered to the winning bidder. All proceeds go to the general fund. Thank you to those providing items and to those who take competitive bidding to a new level.

For New Year's Eve – we are looking at providing a Hassle Free New Year's Celebration, to be delivered on December 31 – details to be released soon!

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## **Rockwood Trustees**

*Submitted by Heather Leffler*

The Trustees have met once in person and four times on Zoom since we learned that East Wellington Community Services would not be renewing their lease for the House. They left at the end of August.

Francis Jamieson has been working with realtors in Rockwood to establish a price for the parking lot. She and Darryl Nicol have been consulting with the Township and County to seek permission to move forward with the development of a new parking lot.

Christine Wenger agreed to be the corresponding secretary for our Committee. She has been communicating with Waterloo Presbytery Extension Council as our mortgage came due this month, as well as the Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways. When the Rockwood Council accepted our recommendation to sell the parking lot, demolish the house, construct a new parking lot beside the church and make the church more accessible, Christine wrote to the Covenant Commission for approval of our plans. The parking lot will not be listed for sale until we know we can demolish the house and relocate the parking lot.

We have been working with Property and Finance with regards to the contents of the House.

The insurance for the church and house has been renewed and is being paid monthly.

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## **Rockwood Stone**

### **Ministry and Personnel**

*Submitted by Rosslyn Bentley*

Rosslyn Bentley and Brian Mack met with Heather in September to complete her annual review. Heather was thanked for the flexibility and creativeness of her response and leadership both initially and ongoing during the COVID emergency.

The M&P Committee met in November and will recommend to the Pastoral Charge Board that the minister and secretary receive the 2.2% cost of living increase mandated by the United Church.

Our secretary continues to work from home. A new laptop that is being recommended by the Finance and Stewardship Committee will facilitate her work.

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## **Rockwood and Stone Reopening Commission**

*Submitted by Heather Leffler*

The Commission has met five times since it was put in place by the Board in June. Out of an abundance of caution, the decision was made to continue to worship on Zoom. Cleaning products and hand sanitizer were purchased for both churches. Contact tracing sign in sheets along with guidelines for being in the churches were placed at the entrances of both buildings. Activities and rentals have been reviewed to ensure that members of our congregations, staff and community members are kept safe. Outside groups who meet for mutual support were given priority for meeting in Rockwood. Protocols continue to be updated to adhere to public health guidelines and are shared through the announcements. Below are the most recent protocols.

Planning a meeting or activity, please follow our ...

**Rockwood Stone Reopening Protocols** – The Reopening Commission continues to set and review protocols for our worship and activities to continue our mission and ministry while keeping people safe. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please contact Bill Allen, Ros Bentley, Barb Eley, Liz Guthrie, Marcia Haworth, Brian Mack, Kay Mathies, Sherol Steinberg, Steve Thomson, Jack Ward, or Heather Leffler.

**On-line** – In order to care for our congregations, worship, gatherings and meetings for Rockwood and Stone will continue to be held virtually, or outdoors, if there is enough space to social distance.

**Outdoors** – Church groups can meet in person, outside following public health guidelines, including self-assessment, ensuring there is adequate space to physical distance and wearing masks if needed. Outdoor spaces must have at least two full sides open to the outdoors and not be substantially blocked in any way. No food will be served. If people bring individual snacks, they need to take their garbage home to care for the host and participants.

**Indoor Gatherings** – In order to care for our congregations, we will continue to use Zoom for worship, groups and committees. Where it is not possible for a committee to meet on Zoom, speak to Jack Ward [jfward44@gmail.com](mailto:jfward44@gmail.com) or Sherol Steinberg [sherol.steins@gmail.com](mailto:sherol.steins@gmail.com) about meeting in our churches in groups no larger than 10. They will review the protocols and let you know what space is available. Everyone must sign-in, wear a mask, use hand sanitizer, keep physically distanced and sanitize the room after the meeting.

**Pastoral Care** – Heather is happy to connect with you by phone or Zoom or will arrange to meet with you outside.

**Rockwood and Stone** – If you need to enter either church please follow the posted instructions and sign-in so contact tracing can take place if needed.

**Rentals** – People are asked to consult with Jack Ward [jfward44@gmail.com](mailto:jfward44@gmail.com) or Sherol Steinberg [sherol.steins@gmail.com](mailto:sherol.steins@gmail.com) about rentals. Protocols have been set up for existing renters to follow at Rockwood and Sherol Steinberg [sherol.steins@gmail.com](mailto:sherol.steins@gmail.com) is coordinating with renters. If you need to enter Rockwood, please contact her first to ensure no one will be in the church.

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## **Affirming Discernment Circle**

*Submitted by Brent Stiles*

The Affirming Discernment Circle began meeting again in September via Zoom after a short break due to the pandemic and having to move online. We met again in November. We continue to educate ourselves on what it means to become affirming churches. This coming year we plan to focus on educating the congregations on the affirming process and how we can become an intentionally and explicitly inclusive pastoral charge.

Over the coming months, we will add an addition to the weekly “Contemplation and Conversation.” This may be a reading or a video to watch. The first one is called “On Rocking the Boat.” There will be a chance on some Sundays after the service to come together on Zoom and discuss the reading or video. Please listen for when that might be! We would love to discuss with you!

In January, the Affirming Discernment Group plans to lead one of the church services on Zoom while Heather is away. We also wish to bring a “workshop” to you in the new year which may help to answer some of the questions you may have for the Affirming Discernment Group. Stay tuned for these exciting educational opportunities! Peace be with you!

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## **Zoom Discernment Circle**

*Submitted by Heather Leffler*

Chris Arbuckle, Lisa Leffler and Ed Nagel have been working with Heather this fall to improve worship on Zoom, support Heather in hosting worship and help more people become comfortable with Zoom. The Circle is planning a survey of the congregations to see how we can help more people connect with worship. One possibility being explored is recording the service and sharing it by

USB or DVD for those who don't have access to the internet.

The Circle is also researching the hardware and software we will need to provide blended worship – some people worshipping from home – when we return to in person worship.

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## **Western Ontario Waterways (WOW) Regional Meeting**

*Submitted by Liz Guthrie*

- Western Ontario Waterways was unable to hold its Annual Meeting in Port Elgin in May due to COVID-19. So, from October 15 to 17, 150+ executive, ministers and lay people met via Zoom for pre-set 1 ½ hour time slots to manage the business of the Regional Council. The President and staff support were set up at Avondale United Church Stratford.
- Theme: “Honey from the Rock” from Psalm 81:16
- Breakout times to discuss how our congregations are doing.
- All three regional councils – Antler River Watershed, Western Ontario Waterways and Horseshoe Falls are all affirming.
- The Ordinands all told about their journey into ministry.
- PowerPoint presentations honoured retirees.
- Bruce Dickson, Dublin Street United Church, presented the work of the Mission and Discipleship Commission.
- Andrew Hyde talked about supporting students at Ecumenical Campus Ministries, University of Guelph.
- Camp Bimini, Menesetung and Silver Lake are all looking at ways to raise funds.
- Dave Jagger reminded us of all the resources available for Mission and Service and stewardship.
- Ann Harbridge told of how the Covenant Commission provides staff support, and oversees yearly Community of Faith Profiles, Self-Assessment and Rural Connect.
- Moderator, Richard Bott, in his video presentation, said, “We are in a virtual space, but worship is real.” “Amazing things are happening.”
- The 2021 budget was passed. Price Waterhouse Cooper were appointed as auditors.
- Micol Cottrell told us that the Human Resources Commission supports healthy pastoral relationships through a programme called United Fresh Start. A resource team trains, supports and offers licensing for Licensed Lay Worship Leaders (LLWL).
- Mark Laird was elected to be the next president for WOW.
- Remit: “The order of ministry be open to persons of all gender identities and the basis of union be amended.” Passed.
- The Jubilant List honoured six people who have served in ministry for 50 years
- An In Memoria reading of names remembered those who have passed away.
- Disbandments of congregations included Marsville, Walters Falls, Holland Centre and Emmanuel Sebringville.
- The meeting was well planned. Some little glitches happened, but solutions were found right away.



**Wishing you and your family  
hope, peace, joy and love  
this Christmas  
and all the best in 2021!**

