

THE NEW BRANCH



Mountain Rise United Church of Christ
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Calendar

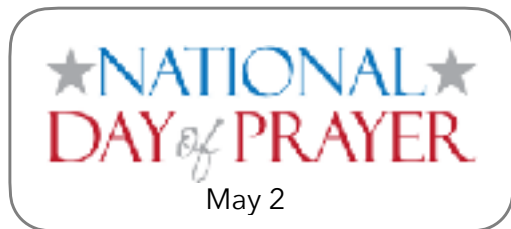
Knitting, Tuesdays at 10:00AM
ROMEOs, Fridays, 12:00PM
JULIETs, Last Friday of the month 12:00PM

- Game Night, May 11, 6:30-8:30PM
- Council Meeting, May 13, 2:00PM
- Book Group May 20, 7:30PM Zoom
- Spiritual Growth Group I, June 24, 7:15PM
- Spiritual Growth Group II, May 14, 7:15PM
- Spiritual Growth Group III, May 1, 2:00 PM

First Monday meets on **May 6 at 6:00 PM**. Dinner will be at 6:30 and the program at 7:15. The program speaker is Michael Henry, the Community Engagement Coordinator for Foodlink. Michael will address all aspects of Foodlink. Chefs are Fran Stiles, Joan Weetman and Jack Heister.



Please use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board if you plan to attend.



Sunday, May 5, following worship:
A Deeply Relevant Story For Today
A Visual meditation on Jesus' Last Day:
the art of Douglas Blanchard

This visual presentation was originally presented on Good Friday. It is being presented again, Sunday, May 5, following worship. The Rev. Judith Medeiros and the Rev. Dr. Kelly Sprinkle will guide participants through the evocative art of Douglas Blanchard and read the meditations associated with each image. Following the presentation there will be time for questions and conversation.

SATURDAY FUN NIGHT!

Regardless of age, come join us for...

GAME NIGHT

Saturday, **May 11**
Second Saturday of the Month
6:30-8:30 pm, Lower Fellowship Hall

Please bring a snack or drink to share as well as games to play.

No Sign-up is necessary.
Questions? Contact Rob Stevens at 314-1938 or robertstevens11@gmail.com



Service and Advocacy For Justice and Peace



Open & Affirming

Open & Affirming Group presents: **How to be an Ally**

"The fluidity of God's design is wondrous and vast. No matter who you are, your sexuality or gender, God makes no mistakes. You are beloved and wonderfully made."

<https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/wider-church-ministries/gsjm/>



We know that gender is a social construct originally understood as binary, i.e. male and female. However, what we know now is that:

"Sexuality, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, and anatomy are a fluid part of human identity, which is becoming more and more fluid with each generation. All of these factors may shift throughout one's life, and any combination is possible." (Seeing Gender by Iris Gottlieb, p. 24)

**Mountain Rise United Church of Christ
has been an ONA since 1996!**



May 19

**The next
Open & Affirming
Group Meeting
Tuesday, June 25
7pm @ Mountain Rise
ALL are Welcome!**



Service and Advocacy Meeting Scheduled

Next meeting is May 13, 2:30pm.

Open & Affirming



Click on 1946 and Watch the Trailer

**Friday, May 10, 7:00 PM
Mountain Rise UCC**

**Bring your own snacks and drinks
Sponsored by Mountain Rise Open
and Affirming Group**

For further information contact:
nickymcclain@gmail.com

Perinton Food Shelf Needs

An Emergency Food Relief Organization

Needed: bottled juice, frosting, cake mixes, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, baked beans (not pork and beans), granola bars, cookies, canned corned beef, beef stew, peas, pears and carrots.

Thank you so much for your support.

A reminder, bigger isn't always better. We pre-pack boxes and have to take care that they are not too heavy to lift. If you are unsure of what size, please go to our website www.perintonfoodshelf.org and click on most needed items and we do list some sizes there.



PO Box 18767 | Rochester, NY 14618

Dear Friends and Supporters of H.O.P.E.,

We know that many of you are watching the news out of Haiti with a deep sense of concern for our friends and colleagues in Borgne, and for the future of the country. We are grateful for the many messages of concern and the generous expressions of support we have received from people around the world.

The Status of Our Staff and Hospital Operations

Our hospital in Borgne remains a bright spot in what might otherwise seem like a hopeless situation. After several months of suspended operations due to safety concerns, we reopened the H.O.P.E./A.S.B. hospital in November, with a renewed commitment to providing emergency care and basic obstetric and neo-natal care.

- For the past 4 months Dr. Thony Voltaire, our medical director, and a stalwart team of doctors and nurses have responded to an ongoing cholera outbreak and have maintained 24 hour emergency room services that have saved hundreds of lives.
- We continue to implement our PEPFAR program which provides antiretroviral medications and other support services for those with HIV/AIDS and those affected by tuberculosis and other infectious diseases.
- Since reopening 3390 patients have been served. This includes 821 emergency room visits, 46 deliveries and 46 healthy babies, and treating 604 cases of malnourished children.
- We have continued to offer free open door clinics. Our most recent clinic on March 21, 2024 served over 420 people. We have included pictures from this clinic below.
- As some of you may know, cholera returned to Haiti last year and its spread and impact were exacerbated by the lack of medical care. From November through January we saw 84 cases of cholera, but we have not seen any new cases since January due to the prevention and treatment efforts of our staff.

We spoke with Dr. Thony this week and he expressed both hope and gratitude. He and the staff are hopeful that positive change is in the works, despite the current uncertainty. They are committed, more than ever to being a high performing health system in a country where health care is now barely functioning.

**What is needed at this time?**

The situation in Borgne is very different from what most of us are seeing on the news. Most of the news comes out of Port au Prince and Cap Haitien. These urban centers are struggling under the weight of the gang violence and political corruption that has wracked the country. H.O.P.E.'s location in a rural community provides some protective distance from that level of violence and turmoil. However, the community is still struggling under the challenges facing the country.

- **Food and fuel are incredibly expensive.** Our solar PV system is only partially operational due to lack of use during our period of closure. Getting new batteries is an essential need and your support would help us "keep the lights on" in our emergency room without incurring the high costs of fuel.
- **Our staff is small and overworked.** People are leaving the urban centers to find respite in places like Borgne, and many of these resettled people are in need of both medical and social support. Your support would help us to expand our staff and the services they provide.
- **Medications and medical supplies are expensive and difficult to get.** We are working with international donors to secure medications and medical supplies, but the need is great, and we often need to revert to the market to buy these supplies. Your support will help buy the medications and medical supplies needed to effectively respond to this crisis.

As always, you can make your donations online via our website at: <https://act.hopehaiti.org/a/donate>

We leave you with a quote from Dr. Voltaire:

"Our work is more important than ever. This is a political and economic crisis that requires doctors and nurses to stand with the people and help them survive and be healthy. The Haitian people are very resilient and resourceful. I am fortunate and grateful to be able to serve them."

Thank you sincerely for your support of H.O.P.E. and the people of Haiti.

Sincerely,



James Myers, Ph.D.
Executive Director



Carol A. DeNysschen, Ph.D.
Chair of the Board

Children's Ministry

"We have to bee-lieve!!!!"



I will never forget the glee, the smile, on the face of the youngster who said this. The lesson that day was about Cooperation: Bees and how we have discovered they are very much like people, like us. They live in communities (hives), care for and offer aid in healing one another, work together, and even acknowledge and respond to death (a loss of a hive member). They also share their food...the bountiful honey that they create which so many of us enjoy. We live in communities, love and care for each other, work together in all sorts of ways, and we acknowledge and share in loss, death in our own lives, and with others we know. We share ourselves, our gifts and talents of all kinds. Such a wonderful memory.

April offered the children an opportunity to share in an experience of serving - looking beyond your own life and giving back. The life of a bee is a perfect example of such a gift.

Kindness Bags were created and will be offered for families and individuals to take and seek out someone who might be blessed by receiving such graciousness. Putting the bags together was a team effort, and it will be another team effort to hand them out.

The children believed they were making a difference. What they were doing mattered - not just to them, but to someone else too.

Another word we might use is Faith. Trusting, even when we might not be sure. Holding onto the idea that we have friends, classmates, teachers, neighbors, parents, church members, our Mother/ Father/Creator/ God, who each support, love and care for us.

Dr. Seuss said " Today you are You,
that is truer than true.
There is no one alive
who is Youer than you."

There is a place for each of us and for each child. As we say, wherever you are on life's journey...that place may be different, and unique. We all make a difference in our own way. But one thing is certain, like the bees we learned about, the Church School has become and is a community. Each week a group of kids come together to learn, share and grow in their faith, their views, their experiences of life and this church community.



May 27

Mountain Rise New Branch

The month of May, when everything around us is beginning to turn green, bloom, grow...the lessons will explore the themes of Inclusion (how it's important to feel like you belong); Prayer: (to think about other people, not just ourselves); Helping each other (how we care for ourselves and others) and Mysterious Encounters: (the wonder of questions we have). Each focuses in a specific area that relates to the larger theme - Community - and the wider world. The classroom awaits!!

BELIEVE....Yes, bee-lieve.

If you are out enjoying your favorite beverage on the back porch, if you are watering your favorite flowers, if you are just taking that long-awaited walk out under the sun and you see a little bee, may it remind each of you that this little creature is an example of not only part of creation, beautiful in all its glory this time of year, but also that we are all one big family, a community, connected by compassion, prayer, care and love.

N'Joy & Grace

Elisabeth Hammer

Her/she/hers

Children's Ministry Coordinator

ehammer@mtriseucc.org

Book Group

The Mountain Rise Book group will be discussing *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by David Grann May 20. Set in the 1920s, it tells the story of the Osage Nation in Oklahoma who were among the wealthiest people per capita in the world after oil was discovered under their land. That oil, however, also marked them as murder victims, targets of the greed of others. Uncovering who was guilty became the job of the newly-formed FBI. Young director J. Edgar Hoover turned to a former Texas Ranger who put together a successful undercover team that included tribal members and that finally exposed the conspiracy behind a series of horrible crimes.

We hope you'll join us. Please RSVP to Rick Watkins at rwatkins12@rochester.rr.com. Or (585) 203-1629. Rick will send a ZOOM link to you prior to the 7:30 meeting on Monday, May 20.

Calling the Mighty Wind!

Do you play a wind or brass instrument? Would you like to join the choir, House Band, and guest conductor Dick Pixley for a rousing anthem on Sunday, June 9? Please let Jeanne Grace know your availability and instrument ASAP so she can get you the proper part. jgrace@dgrace.com

Thanks for considering this!

Happy Spring, Mountain Rise!

Isn't it wonderful to see all the perennials and trees waking up from their winter sleep? The beauty of spring and its growing season is a gift for all of us. Mountain Rise continues to grow as well. Specifically, I am thrilled to share with you the 2024 Endowment Fund Grant allocations. Council voted to fund four grant applications for a total amount of \$31,591.30 at our April meeting. Here are the four projects that will be funded:

Migrant Ministry in Western NY- \$2,201.30

Submitted by: Service and Advocacy Committee / Linda Boesl
Funding will be used to provide mileage money for deliveries to migrant areas in Western NY and mileage money to take migrant workers to medical appointments. This is part of a program that exists through the Roman Catholic Diocese of Rochester.

Sobriety Sounds- \$4,000

Submitted by: Service and Advocacy Committee/ Scott Fitzgerald/ Mathew Hoyer

Funding will be used to create a documentary for Sobriety Sounds, including hardware, travel costs, social media marketing, movie theater rentals and other expenses. Sobriety Sounds' goal is to have a space of their own where they can make musical instruments, recording equipment, writing space, and music education consistently accessible to the addiction recovery community. Mountain Rise began a relationship with Sobriety Sounds and awarded Endowment Fund Grant money last year. We are pleased to continue this relationship.

Asociacion LIDERA- \$20,390

Submitted by Service and Advocacy Committee/ Nicky McClain
Funding will be used as "Seed money" to renovate a facility, purchase equipment and hire staff for the first year of operation for a "Grow and Learn Center" (nursery school) for 15 children (ages 0-4) and 5 hired staff in Honduras. This grant strengthens our connection and relationship to Honduras and the neighborhood of Flor del Campo.

Protestant Chapel Community - \$5,000

Submitted by Faith Formation Committee / Rev. Sam Kinsman
Funding will be used to hire a part-time chaplain for the PCC to increase counseling, preaching, and spiritual growth opportunities on the campuses of RIT and University of Rochester. Student participation in the PCC has grown steadily this year. This support will help allow college students to experience church on their terms and perhaps establish a more tangible relationship between Mountain Rise and Gen Z individuals.

This year Council received 7 substantial grant proposals! With that level of success came the difficult decision of which projects to fund as the amount of grant money available was not enough to fund all the projects. Council had to discern which projects would make the biggest impact on a targeted population. As you can see, targeted populations included local neighbors as well as international neighbors. We looked for opportunities for children and youth in need, as well as adults in need.

Mountain Risers can expect to hear about these different projects and the progress made in the coming months. Grant recipients are responsible for communicating with Mountain Rise so that we can continue to grow our relationships with our new extended "family".

Please don't hesitate to reach out to the committees that helped present the grant applicants to Council for more information.

Blessings and Peace,
Faye Eaton, Council Chair



Council is looking for two people interested in representing Mountain Rise as delegates at the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ to be held in Binghamton on Friday, May 31 and Saturday June 1. Your travel and lodging expenses are covered by Mountain Rise. If you are interested in attending as a family with children, there are children's programs provided while the adults are in the meetings. For more information, please contact Faye Eaton, Council Chair or Pastor Kelly.

Your Council Members:

Faye Eaton, Chair
Position Vacant, Vice-Chair
Gail McClain, Council Secretary
Jennifer Leger, At-Large
Len Leger, At-Large
Nancy Stark, At-Large
Kathy Nixon, Communications Committee Chair

Council Monthly Meetings

You are welcome to attend Council meetings. The next meeting is **Monday, May 13 at 2:00 pm** at church.

Ministry Committee Chairs:

Faith Formation - Steven Grace
Fellowship - Dave Ackroyd
Caring Connections - Sherry Shaffer and Cheryl Pipkin (co-chairs)
Spiritual Life and Worship - Ted Nixon
Service and Advocacy - Jack Heister

Property Committee at Work!

The following are a few more of the projects and tasks managed by the Property Committee during the past month with assistance from volunteers.

- Replace dolly for folding chairs
- Replace switch plate in sanctuary
- Clean and wax the floors
- Provide 5a.m. access to building for voting crew
- Arrange access to building for removing voting machines
- Purchase a replacement light fixture for sanctuary
- Organize volunteers to clean up grounds
- Obtain a scissors-lift for repairs in sanctuary ceiling lighting
- Purchase and install a fire extinguisher in the Storage Room
- Put in metal stakes to mark the southern property line
- Commence process of cleaning/reorganizing the Storage Room
- Commence process of disposition of former sanctuary chairs



Mountain Rise has two updated assisted listening opportunities. One is a loop system to connect with individual hearing aids; the second is new headsets (located on the bench outside the sanctuary).

Anyone interested in learning how to connect hearing aids to the loop can contact Sherry Shaffer at sherks@rochester.rr.com.

We pray especially for these members, friends, and loved ones of Mountain Rise:

Please advise the church office of any changes.

- Carol Klinger
- Dave and Barbara Ackroyd
- McFadden Family and Friends on Peg's passing
- Kirsten, Hux and family on the passing of her father Jonathan, support and comfort
- Ann-Marie Bresnahan, health concerns
- Fred Thorne, health concerns
- Mary Hershey, on the passing of her sister Charles Willard, health concerns
- John Meyer, health concerns
- Liz Webb, health concerns
- Barb Ackroyd, health concerns
- HOPE and people of Borgne, Haiti
- Deb Sponable, health concerns
- Pam Miller, health concerns
- Dorie Starks, health concerns
- Kersting's daughter, health concerns
- Matt O.
- Kay Uthman

Available

Pronoun stickers are available and are a great way to raise awareness about gender inclusiveness. Wear these in support of inclusivity: a simple act toward a just world.



Pastoral Care

If you feel a need for pastoral care or know of someone who does, and would like to meet with the on-call pastor, please contact the office by phone or e-mail. Respecting your need for privacy, our pastoral care team will not automatically call, or may not be aware of your need. Please let us know how we can help. Call 223-2433.

MOUNTAIN RISE

The UCC was founded in 1957 as the union of several different Christian traditions: from the beginning of our history, we were a church that affirmed the ideal that Christians did not always have to agree in order to live together in communion. The United Church of Christ is one of the most diverse Christian churches in the United States. To read stories about our history and future visit ucc.org.

- The United Church of Christ Seeks to...
- Be Inclusive, not Exclusive
 - Celebrate diverse membership & Christian belief
 - Be united and uniting, yet...
 - Affirm each congregation's autonomy
 - Be Committed to Justice & Peace

God is still speaking... life evolves. we evolve. faith must evolve...are we still listening?