

THE NEW BRANCH



Mountain Rise United Church of Christ
2 Mountain Rise
Fairport, NY 14450
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Website: mtriseucc.org
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In this Issue:

- Council Updates
- Hearing Loop Info
- On-line Directory
- Prayer List

Calendar

Knitting, Tuesdays at 10:00AM
 ROMEOS, Fridays, 12:00PM

First Monday Dinner & Discussion, February 3, 6:00 PM

Game Night, February 8, 6:30-8:30PM

Council Meeting, February 10, 3:00PM

Book Group, February 17, 7:30PM

Open & Affirming Group, February 11, 7:00PM

Service & Advocacy Meeting, February 9, 11:30AM

Spiritual Growth Group I, February 24, 7:15PM

Spiritual Growth Group II, February 11, 7:15PM

Spiritual Growth Group IV, February 5, 2:00 PM

The church office is staffed on Tuesdays 10:00am-3:00pm and Thursdays 12:30-3:00pm. If you need to contact staff or access to the building at an alternative time, please email or call: office@mtriseucc.org or 585-223-2433. Please don't hesitate to leave a telephone message.

First Monday meets on February 3.

Gather at 6:00, dinner at 6:30, speaker at 7:15
 John Bednarczyk will talk about EV Cars.

Please sign-up on the bulletin board if you plan to attend.
 Questions: Rod Walters 315-986-3087.

Dear Mountain Rise,

I've been battling intense neck pain since July due to pinched nerves. I'm scheduled for cervical spine surgery on Tuesday, February 4.

My original plan was to celebrate communion and preach on Sunday, February 2. After an appointment on Tuesday, January 25, the medical team decided that working in a congregation was a high contagion environment and that I should avoid such contact prior to surgery.

During my absence, the Rev. Judith Medeiros has kindly agreed to lead worship and preach throughout the month of February. Additionally, Judith will provide on-call pastoral care. If Judith needs assistance, the Rev. Sam Kinsman will step in as a backup. As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to the church office (day or night) with any pastoral care concerns.

I hope to resume leading worship and preaching on March 2, subject to my physician's approval.

Thank you for your prayers and understanding.

The Rev. Dr. Kelly Sprinkle



SATURDAY FUN NIGHT!

Regardless of age, come join us for...



GAME NIGHT

Saturday, **February 8**
Second Saturdays 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



Mountain Rise Website Launch Party

February 16 at 11:30

In the Sanctuary

Join us after worship to see the roll-out of the new website and its features. Bring your cell phone or tablet if you would like to follow along with us. Light snacks will be provided.



**Mountain Rise
United Church of Christ**

PHOTOGRAPH/VIDEO OPT-OUT FORM

Photos and/or videos of adult staff, members, friends, and guests or visitors may be used on the church website without authorization and without notice. However, we will honor an individual's preference not to have his/her/their photo/video image appear on the website if we are given notice by the individual.

Complete and return this form to the church office ONLY if you do NOT want any photo or video of you to appear on the church website.

This opt-out request is valid indefinitely. If you change your mind about your photo or video being used, please contact the church office.

Full name (print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to the church office at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

The Mountain Rise Book Group will be meeting virtually via Zoom on **February 17 at 7:30 pm**. We will discuss the historical novel *The Glassmaker* by Tracy Chevalier. The novel tells the story of a family of glassmakers from the Renaissance era to the present day. "Chevalier, one of our great storytellers, brings us unexpected worlds: Venice and Murano, artisans and empresses, compelling us through six fascinating centuries, with one irresistible family, weaving stories that captivate and transport the reader." ~Amy Bloom.

To join us in discussing this delightful book, please email Rick Watkins at rwatkins12@rochester.rr.com for a link to the zoom meeting.

daydreams
a night of original works

jack snelling, composer and pianist

master's degree recital
thursday, february 20th, 8:30pm
hatch recital hall
eastman school of music

with performances by:

sam schaeffer · brendan nie · juan saus · shane mccandless
jordan bell · wyatt pepper · sam streeter · allison young
danica rebudiao · sarah jerrom · ivan demarjian · steve sharp
morgan chalmers · myles meader · isaac boone · lauren enos



Soulful Soup Wednesdays

The next Soulful Soup will be on Wednesday,
February 22 at 5:30pm.
Fellowship Hall, lower level

Questions: contact Elisabeth Hammer or Dave Ackroyd.
COME WARM YOUR HEART and SOUL!

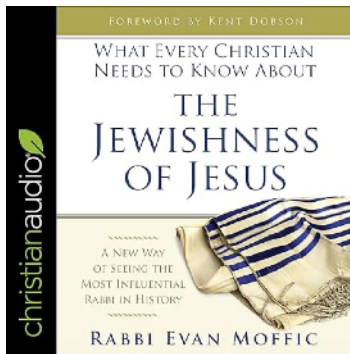
JULIET's will meet Friday, **February 28 at 12:00pm** (place to be determined). Questions: Please contact Jane Stock 585-704-2630 or send an email to janestock1995@gmail.com

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.

- Repaired door closures
- Had vacuum cleaner repaired
- Assisted with inspection of fire retardant system for stoves in the kitchen
- Reviewed security team recommendations
- Arranged for replacement of main motor in boiler
- Restocked supply of rock salt
- Presented new and revised leases to our two tenants
- New flooring for kitchen was installed

“What Every Christian Needs to Know about the Jewishness of Jesus”



A Lenten Study Program

Mondays, March 3-April 14, 1-3pm
at Mountain Rise

“As a pastor, I see tremendous value in more and more Christians beginning a serious, authentic, gracious, and honest conversation about the person at the center of their faith...Rabbi Evan Moffic’s book brings the Jewish perspective on Jesus to the table in language that is powerful, straightforward, and conversational. Not everyone can move to Jerusalem to take an academic course on early Judaism, but everyone can read this book.”--Kent Dobson, Teaching Pastor, Mars Hill Bible Church

I was introduced to Judaism in middle school by a group of Jewish friends and their welcoming families. A practicing Christian, coming to know Jesus as Jewish deepened my understanding of his ministry and message, as well as the common thread tying both religions. Serving on an Interfaith Pastoral Staff, sharing Bible Study with Christian and Jew alike, the Bible became a treasure box, glimmering with hidden truths.

Join Rev. Judith Medeiros for this 7-week study on how Jesus’ Jewishness shaped his ministry and message. Our conversations will be guided by the book, *“What Every Christian Needs to Know about the Jewishness of Jesus”* by Rabbi Evan Moffic. Books are available on Amazon or check your local library.

Open to anyone wishing to study the Jewishness of Jesus.

To Register: Email judithchristinem@gmail.com or sign up outside the church office.

Church Council

To all the members and friends of Mountain Rise,

As we store away all the decorations from Christmas, remember the good times of this holiday and review the happenings of 2024, it is time to set new goals for 2024. Many of us have had physical, mental and emotional challenges this year and are now voicing serious predictions for 2025.

Since many of us are expressing worries about the immediate future, I thought it was an appropriate theme of this letter to share with everyone. Borrowing from the topic introduction “gratitude is an emotion similar to appreciating, a state of mind, a powerful trait, an acknowledgment of the goodness in one’s life.” Everyone shared their thoughts about “gratitude” and how that simple word has affected their lives. A positive, uplifting spirit was felt by all, and as we extinguished the symbolic candle to end the meeting, our wish is that all our friends, families and members of Mountain Rise could take a moment, put aside the negatives and attempt to value the gratitude in their lives and then work hard to spread this state of mind in 2025!

Your Council Chair,
John Amrine

Council Monthly Meetings

You are welcome to attend Council meetings. The next meeting is **Monday, February 10, 3:00 pm.**

Your Council Members:

John Amrine, Chair
Jane Pierce, Vice-Chair
Kathy Nixon, Council Secretary
Jennifer Leger, At-Large
Nancy Stark, At-Large
Rick Watkins, At-Large
Nicky McClain, Communications Committee Chair

The Council Procedure for Allocation of Annual Distribution from the Endowment Fund has been updated. The link attached to the newsletter email will provide you with the updated form. Anyone interested in applying for funding from the Endowment Fund Grant Process should contact the appropriate committee chair to submit a grant request.

Service and Advocacy

For Justice and Peace



H.O.P.E

Dear Friends at Mountain Rise,
As we enter into the New Year, we at H.O.P.E. want to express our gratitude, on behalf of our friends in Borgne, for your support over the past year, and to share our aspirations for what the year ahead holds.

Our hospital continues to be a beacon of hope and reassurance for the community of Borgne. The hospital is open 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, providing both outpatient clinical services and emergency room services. On average, we treat 10 people daily in the emergency room and outpatient clinics treat upwards of 35 people daily. People pay a nominal fee for these services (the equivalent of about 1 U.S. dollar).

As many cannot afford even this small amount, we also host free "open door" clinics monthly; these clinics are often attended by over 300 people. See the pictures of a recent "open door" clinic. Our birthing clinic delivers 25-30 babies every month, and our staff support pregnant women throughout their pregnancies.



We also continue our comprehensive vaccine program covering basic childhood and adult vaccines—we typically provide vaccinations for over 200 people every month. Due to H.O.P.E.'s successful vaccine program, the vaccination rates in Borgne and surrounding areas have gone from some of the lowest in Haiti, to some of the highest. Our HIV/AIDS and infectious disease initiatives are regional resources that provide prevention education and treatment for those impacted by HIV, sexually transmitted diseases, and tuberculosis.

We very much rely on the solar energy system you all so generously supported. We cannot overstate the importance of this resource to H.O.P.E.'s work. The solar PV system helps the team in Borgne to deliver necessary care (including the services listed above), while drastically cutting fuel costs and minimizing our environmental impact. The fuel cost savings associated with the solar energy system are two-fold—it reduces our reliance on the use of a generator that consumes diesel fuel and it reduces the fuel transport costs associated with making the 4-hour round-trip travel to Cap Haitien to retrieve fuel.

Mountain Rise New Branch

The money and time that would otherwise be spent on fuel and leave the community can now be directed toward efforts and resources that will benefit community health and sustainable development—such as medicines and doctor and nurse salaries. It has been an immensely impactful investment and we are grateful to the Mountain Rise Community for your support of its development and maintenance.



Although the situation in Haiti remains highly uncertain and too often very violent, especially in Port au Prince, Borgne's geographic isolation shelters us somewhat. However, the consequences of the national economic and political crisis are felt everywhere. People have very little money, and poverty—always a challenge in Haiti—is currently more pervasive, and heartbreaking in a number of respects. The public health consequences such as malnutrition and parasitic infections can be seen throughout the community of Borgne, and we are committed to provide support for the community on these issues.

In the year ahead, we have four high priority initiatives:

1. Restart mobile clinics that will allow us to reach into, and serve, the most remote communities in Borgne.
2. We have secured improved ultrasound technology and are planning to train our staff in advanced ultrasound use for early detection of high-risk pregnancies.
3. Our battery storage capacity for our solar PV system was damaged after our closure due to the violent attack in August of 2023. We are planning to upgrade our energy storage system, a goal that would allow us to shift completely off the generator and operate with full lighting during the evening hours.
4. Targeted interventions to address malnutrition and outbreaks of parasitic infections that have become more prevalent due to the increased poverty in our community.

On behalf of H.O.P.E.'s Medical Director, Dr. Thony Voltaire, the staff at the hospital and the entire community of Borgne, thank you for your support and for your interest in our work.



Open & Affirming Group Meeting
 Tuesday, February 11
 at 7:00 pm
 at Mountain Rise
 YOU are Welcome!

Perinton Food Shelf Needs



An Emergency Food Relief Organization

Perinton Shelf Food Needs:

Listed below is what we really need. Please remember we do not accept expired food and jumbo size isn't always the best as they won't fit into our boxes or make them too heavy.

We need: juice boxes, bottled juice 64 oz., cookies, granola bars, pancake mix, pancake syrup, peanut butter, jelly, canned diced tomatoes, mustard, canned pears, canned mixed vegetables, canned beans, baked beans, beef stew, chili, hash, sloppy joes, chicken noodle soup, tomato soup, coffee, tea, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes (single packs).

Also needed: sturdy plastic reusable grocery bags like Wegmans, clean and in good shape, they would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your support.

Service and Advocacy Meeting Scheduled

Next meeting is on February 12, 11:30 am

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 - Gail McClain

Pastoral Search Committee:

Matt Deknatel, chair

Kathy Simpson, vice chair

Kirsten Erman, secretary

Ted Nixon, chaplain

Linda Boesl

Faye Eaton

Gary Schaefer

Mountain Rise New Branch

Children's Ministry

As winter's chill greets us each morning, may we be grateful for the warm homes, food, drink, comfortable beds, and support and love that we are fortunate to experience. There are many in our community and around the world less fortunate, waiting for a meal, seeking shelter, hoping that someone will reach out with comfort and offer aid, an act of kindness with the even smallest gesture.

During the month of February, we will be exploring homelessness, loneliness and humility. **The LOCK IN DAY activity will be rescheduled.**

Sunday School has continued to flourish with activities, one being creating a Quilt of Love, now hanging in the classroom. During the first week of the month, our service project we will be making and decorating Cookies to Share. Who doesn't like a cookie now and then to enjoy with your favorite beverage! Some of our areas of learning & exploration will be Blessings, Worries(Woes) and Faith & Love. The children have some very insightful comments and ideas, always leading to a fruitful discussion.

In a month where hearts, roses, candy, special jewelry and love are often part of what we hear and see every day, may we be reminded and remember to open our own hearts, to those we love, care for, share interests, remember and miss, gather with regularly, visit and offer support, send greetings or maybe to those who just cross your mind now and then.

1 Corinthians 13:4-13 (4) Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. (5) It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. (6) Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. (7) It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (8) Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. (9) For we know in part and we prophesy in part, (10) but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. (11) When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. (12) For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. (13) And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Love is not expensive, it can be offered freely. Love is not a specific object, it's a feeling, a gift expressed through compassion and understanding. Love can be offered by good deeds, kind gestures or simply a supportive hand or friendly smile. It's yours to give.

N'Joy and Grace,
 Elisabeth Hammer, Her/she/hers
 Children's Ministry Coordinator



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


Please advise the church office of any changes.

- Jane Stock and family on Harold's passing
- The Rev. Dr. Kelly Sprinkle, health concerns
- Janel Egli, health concerns
- Hannah Driskell, health concerns
- Ruy Silva-Duffy, health concerns
- HOPE and people of Borgne, Haiti
- Jim Ebaugh, Mary Hershey's brother
- Dorie Starks, health concerns
- Carol Klinger, health concerns
- Morgan Riley, health concerns
- Sally Kersting, health concerns
- Wilan Uthman, health concerns
- Don, health concerns
- Scott Parsons, health concerns
- Jonathan, support and comfort
- Ann-Marie Bresnahan, health concerns
- Fred Thorne, health concerns
- John Meyer, health concerns
- Deb Sponable, health concerns
- Pam Miller, health concerns
- Kersting's daughter, health concerns
- Matt O.
- Kay Uthman



Available

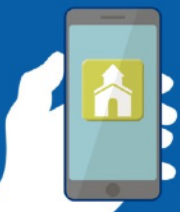
Pronoun stickers are available and are a great way to raise awareness about gender inclusiveness. Wear these in support of inclusivity: a simple act toward a just world.



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.

VIEW OUR CHURCH DIRECTORY ON YOUR MOBILE DEVICE!
 FREE App for iPhone, iPad & Android




Our church directory is a great resource tool that allows you to get to know our church family better!

Simply go to the App Store, search for *Instant Church Directory* and download the FREE app to begin.

You will use your email address listed in the directory to CREATE A LOGIN the first time you use the directory app.

If you're not listed in the directory, OR if you have trouble logging into the app, please contact the church office.



Caring for Each Other

Are you facing a health challenge or other need for a caring connection? Do you know someone else at Mountain Rise in need? Our pastoral care team (Pastor Kelly Sprinkle, Sherry Shaffer, and Cheryl Pipkin) may not be aware of the situation or that contact would be welcomed. Please let us know how we can help by calling 585-223-2433 or sending an email to office@mtriseucc.org.

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?