

# THE NEW BRANCH



Mountain Rise United Church of Christ  
2 Mountain Rise  
Fairport, NY 14450  
Phone: (585) 223-2433  
Website: [mtriseucc.org](http://mtriseucc.org)  
email [office@mtriseucc.org](mailto:office@mtriseucc.org)



## In this Issue:

- Council Updates
- ### Calendar

Knitting, Tuesdays at 10 AM  
ROMEOS, Fridays, 11:30 AM at Underpass Bar & Grill

- Next Men’s Group October 3, 6:00PM
- Council Meeting, October 10, 7PM
- Stephen Ministry Group I, October 11 & 25 4PM
- Stephen Ministry Group II, October 6 & 20, 7PM
- Service & Advocacy Meeting, October 9, after worship
- Book Group, October 18, 7PM; contact Rick Watkins
- Spiritual Growth Group I, October 24, 7:15PM



***Barbara Jackson will be away: Friday, September 30-October 4, returning Wednesday, October 5.***

Please contact the office if pastoral care is needed 585-223-2433



## In and Out Room Back in Business

The In and Out Room is now accepting donations of the following items:

- |           |           |       |         |
|-----------|-----------|-------|---------|
| blankets  | jackets   | socks | gloves  |
| knapsacks | warm tops | boot, | hats    |
| coats     | pants     | shoes | scarves |

All items should be clean and in good condition. Donations will go to the Salem Nutrition Center and to local refugees. Items may be left in the hall by the store room on the lower level.

## Men’s Group

Welcome to a new season of the Men’s Group!

Our first meeting is on Monday, October 3 (that’s next week) at 6:00 PM. We’ll have some social time at 6:00, dinner at 6:30 and the program around 7:15.

The program for our first meeting is Dr. Lynda Powell, Professor of Political Science (retired) at the University of Rochester. Dr. Powell will be addressing voting, elections and related issues.

As for dinner, we need a Chef for the Night. It doesn’t have to be anything special. If no chef comes forward, the default is pizza and salad.

Looking ahead, a Chef for the Night is needed for November - May. If you prefer not to do it yourself, recruit a partner.

One last note: Women are invited for the program.

Dear Friends,

Since its inception at Mountain Rise in 2016, there have been two Stephen Leaders. Janis Born, who has not been able to serve as leader for several years for reasons beyond her control, and me. I have been honored to serve and will continue for as long as I am able.



Two groups of Stephen Ministers are active at Mountain Rise. Our original group was trained in 2016 and have served since January of 2017. The second group trained in 2019 and have been busy showing care in a variety of ways throughout the pandemic. Each group meets twice a month year-round to receive ongoing education and support in their caregiving relationships as well as for each other.

Now is an ideal time for Mountain Rise to train an additional person to work with me in serving as a leader in this important ministry. This person does not need to be a Stephen Minister or to receive the 50+ hours of Stephen Minister training. The qualifications for a Stephen Leader are different. Gifts of leadership, organization, teaching, and administration are needed as well as commitment and a passion for the ministry of bringing Christ's love to people going through life challenges.

An upcoming online training for Stephen Leaders, provided by Stephen Ministries of Saint Louis, will take place during October and November. Council has approved a grant to pay for the training.

Please prayerfully consider becoming a candidate. The rewards of leading and teaching our own church family members how best to care for others is beyond measure. I look forward to having a partner join me and continue this important work for our church.

Peace and blessings,  
Sherry Shaffer

## Caring Connections (Caring Ministry)

As co-coordinators of "Caring Connections" Sherry Shaffer and Cheryl Pipkin pray each day for the people listed on the prayer list. If you, or you know someone who should be included, please call or email the church office or directly contact Cheryl at [cpipkin@twc.com](mailto:cpipkin@twc.com) or Sherry at [sherks@rochester.rr.com](mailto:sherks@rochester.rr.com).

## Scripture Readings

October 2 Communion Sunday

Lamentations 1:1-6

Psalm 137

2 Timothy 1:1-14

Luke 17:5-10

October 9 with House Band

Jeremiah 29:1-4-7

Psalm 66:1-12

2 Timothy 2:8-15

Luke 17:11-19

October 16

Jeremiah 31:27-34

Psalm 119:97-104

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

Luke 18:1-8

October 23

Joel 2:23-32

Psalm 65

2 Timothy 4:6-8

Luke 18:9-14

October 30

Habakkuk 1:1-4;

Psalm 65

2 Timothy 4:6-8

Luke 18:9-14

## Dinner Groups Being Formed

Would you like to get to know a few more Mountain Rise folks better in a relaxed setting over the next year? Then sign up for a dinner group. Groups of up to 8 adults are assigned and asked to meet over dinner, either at their home or in a restaurant, at least four times during the year. If at home, the host(s) provides the entree and participants bring the other parts of the meal. The location will be on a rotating basis.

Family dinner groups work the same way. Three or four families will make up each group. Adults without children can participate in these groups as well. They are not mutually exclusive.

The sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board for 3 weeks, ending October 24. The new groups will be announced after church on Sunday, October 30. You can meet your new dinner companions at that time.

New members, long-time Mountain Risers, singles, couples and families are welcome. Join the fun!!! Questions? Call Sharon Heister at (585) 451-1404 or Julie Losee at (585) 704-8452.

## Property Committee at Work!

The following are a few more of the projects and tasks managed by the Property Committee during the past few months with assistance from volunteers. Other tasks were identified in last month's Newsletter.

- Resealed and re-stripped the parking areas
- Refurbished the signs on Mountain Rise Drive and Route 31
- Met with sign company regarding construction improvements for sign(s) on Route 31
- Obtained quote for improved lighting at lower sign
- Fixed the condensate pump on AC unit
- Contacted roofing company regarding date to make repairs
- Contacted contractor regarding date to repair woodpecker damage
- Floors stripped and re-waxed
- Fixed the elevator

## Book Group

Book Group to Discuss YA Novel

The Mountain Rise Book Group will meet in person on Tuesday, October 18 at 7:30 pm to discuss *The Fire Keeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley. The story is narrated by Eighteen-year-old Daunis Fontaine, a member of the Ojibwe nation through her father but in some ways an outsider since her mother is not a Native American. It is a page turner filled with secrets, a murder, the FBI, drugs and Daunis' reluctant decision to help the FBI as it seeks to solve the crimes that are occurring on the reservation.

Please join us for an evening of fellowship and lively discussion in the church library. We always welcome new members. If you are a teen or young adult, please know that we'd love to include you in our discussion. If you have questions, contact Rick Watkins at 203-1629 or at [rwatkins12@rochester.rr.com](mailto:rwatkins12@rochester.rr.com)

**THE GOOD WE DO TOGETHER**

**REGISTER BELOW**

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2022 - 5:30 PM TO 8:30 PM

**A GREATER ROCHESTER COMMUNITY OF CHURCHES  
FALL RECEPTION**

**"THE GOOD WE DO TOGETHER"**

AN EVENING OF CONVERSATION WITH

 

**MALIK EVANS — MAYOR, CITY OF ROCHESTER**  
**ADAM BELL — MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD — **REV. GORDON WADSWORTH**

WITH LIVE MUSIC FROM **THE JEFF CAMPBELL TRIO**

THIS IS A FUNDRAISER FOR **GROC**

WHERE: THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, 1400 WESTFALL RD.  
FLYER PRINTED BY THE PROPERTY COMMITTEE.

To register click <https://rocchurches.org/2022/09/08/save-the-date-fall-reception/>

# Church Council

**"Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much"**

**Helen Keller**

At the Council Summer Retreat, our discussion began with acknowledging that we as a congregation are on a journey and that we continue to deal with uncertainty. This uncertainty comes from a variety of areas including but not limited to the possible re-emergence of high Covid numbers, our disproportionate age demographics, and the absence of a settled pastor. Bottom line: Council is especially aware of the fragility of the congregation as related to the many uncertainties we are facing. This led our group to form the essential question: How do we "deal" with uncertainty as a church?

Interestingly, most of the Council members are either current or retired educators. As educators, most of us are very familiar with "essential questions" used with students designed to encourage further questions (and discussion) about a certain topic. With the essential question about uncertainty and the identified themes of the April 3rd whole church brainstorming session, Council came up with a common focus that each church committee could make their own to help answer the essential question of how we, at Mountain Rise, will deal with the uncertainty we face this year while maintaining each committee's mission. This focus is known as the "**3 C's**" - **C**ommunication, **C**ommunity, and **C**onnection. Council is asking all committee leaders of Mountain Rise to take the April 3rd whole church brainstorming session themes (previously handed out at the Annual June Congregational meeting and linked document below) and explore with their individual committees how to use the information with an emphasis of building improvement in the areas of the "**3 C's**".

**Sample "3 C's" Questions for Committee Leaders to consider:**

- How are you currently communicating your committee's work/events with other committee leaders? How can this be improved?
- What other committees can you work with to co-sponsor events or activities?
- Is your committee's communication reaching the people outside of Mountain Rise? How?

- How are you connecting with groups outside of Mountain Rise that have a similar mission? Can you improve the quality or quantity of these connections?
- How is your committee connecting Mountain Risers to Mountain Risers? Is it working?
- How does your committee communicate with and connect with someone who is brand new to Mountain Rise?
- How does your committee include Mountain Rise children and/or youth?

Council believes that if all committees are taking special care to **communicate** with one another and the people outside of our church, building **community** inside and outside of our church walls, and developing and strengthening **connections** large and small, Mountain Rise can and will navigate this year of uncertainty and emerge stronger for it.

Faye Eaton

2022/2023 Council Chair

[Brainstorming Themes 2022](#)

## Council Monthly Meetings

You are welcome to attend Council meetings. At present they are scheduled to be held on the second **Monday** of each month at 7:00 pm at church, with October 10th as the next scheduled meeting.

## Your Council Members:

Faye Eaton, Chair

Position Vacant, Vice-Chair

Gail McClain, Past Chair

Carol James, Council Secretary

Gary Schaefer, At-Large

Linda Boesl, At-Large

Rob Stevens, At-Large

Kathy Nixon, Communications Committee Chair

## 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 - Nicky McClain

## Interim Pastor Search Update

As of September 9, 2022 the Interim Pastor Search Committee has received 5 candidate profiles from NY UCC Conference and 3 profiles from outside the denomination. It has been 7 months since we submitted our church profile. Of those eight candidates:

- One lacked intentional interim training and pastoral experience
- One we set aside and decided not to interview at this time due to very uninspiring preaching style
- When contacted, one responded that they had an offer elsewhere
- When contacted to schedule an interview, one never responded even after sending a second request
- After three conversations with a very promising candidate, that person chose another congregation
- We have reviewed the profiles of three candidates since May and interviewed all of them, two within the past 1 1/2 weeks.

Due to the small number of pastors qualified and available to do transitional ministry, we continued to broaden our search outside the NY UCC Conference structure by posting our position opening with six progressive seminaries. We have, to date, received no responses from this effort.

We requested Rev. Ryan Henderson approach the Rev. Brian Krause about doing interim ministry at Mountain Rise. Rev. Krause said he was not interested in doing interim work.

In conclusion, at this time the Interim Pastor Search Committee is in conversation with a candidate. Because we are in the initial stage of this process, we are refraining from further comment.

Thank you,  
Gail McClain  
Roger James  
Linda Boesl

## Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator Search Update, 8/6/22 - 9/10/22

The CYMC search committee continues to meet weekly via Zoom. Due to an unintentional re-post of our job listing on Indeed, the committee received a surge in applicants throughout August. Seven new applications were received along with two repeat applications from candidates who had previously been rejected. This brings the total number of applicants to 19. Of the new applicants, one was sufficiently qualified to merit an interview. Unfortunately, the candidate informed us that they were withdrawing from consideration because they could not be available for 20 hrs/wk. A second candidate had some promising entries in their work experience but did not give sufficient detail on their qualifications in their resumé. The committee invited them to submit a cover letter addressing the gaps, but they did not respond. The remaining candidates were not sufficiently qualified.

Council had previously suggested that the job listing show the annual position salary (\$22,000/yr) as opposed to the hourly rate (\$25/hr). This change was implemented in May, but very few applications were received over the summer. When updating the Indeed listing at the start of August, the website's automatic filters flagged the annual salary as being below the legal minimum wage for this area (incorrectly basing it on a full-time schedule). Rather than try to override the website filter, the committee decided to simply revert the listing to an hourly rate. The committee received five applications in the 12 hours after this change was made, though other factors certainly played a part.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Steve Grace





# Service and Advocacy



## For Justice and Peace

**Witness Palestine 2022 Film Festival**  
**@ The Little Theatre**

**Saturday Oct 22 3:00 pm**  
**Blue Box**

**Sunday Oct 23 3:00 pm**  
**Huda's Salon**

**Saturday Oct 29 3:00 pm**  
**The Journey of the Others**  
 &  
**Siri Miri**

**Sunday Oct 30 3:00 pm**  
**Boycott**

*Introducing*  
**We Never Left Palestine**  
*by Samia Abuhatoum*

www.witnesspalestine.rochester.ny.us  
 Witness Palestine Rochester  
 wpfiras

### Next Service and Advocacy Meeting

Next meeting is October 9, after worship.



Mountain Rise has a new supply of hand made Honduran note cards including Christmas Cards! All purchases go directly to support the women who make the cards and

Inglesia Viviendo en Amor y Fe. Send special cards to special friends and help our special Honduran friends. Card are still only \$2.00 each.



More about Witness Palestine Rochester click: <https://wpff.us/about-us/>





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](mailto:sherks@rochester.rr.com).

**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.

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

**Please advise the church office of any changes.**

- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Richard Nettle           | Conor             |
| Allison Riley            | Ted               |
| Family of Jean Golden    | Michelle          |
| Marisa Roach & baby Remi | Kelly             |
| Family of Jim Lahman     | Jessica           |
| Julie Francis            | Kay Uthman        |
| Family of Esther Hammer  | Dorie Starks      |
| John Meyer               |                   |
| Ruth Tavolette, Donna,   | <b>Challenges</b> |
| Laura & Nancy            | Jackie Barker     |
| Pam Miller               | Rick & Julie Peet |
| Harold Stock             | Erik              |
| Bob Stock                | Jonathan True     |
| Gary Bresnahan           | Matt O.           |
| Wilan Uthman             |                   |
| Hilary T.                |                   |
| Peggy                    |                   |
| Courtney & Joe Germain   |                   |
| Sue                      |                   |
| Tim Tyler                |                   |
| Tristan                  |                   |



## 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](http://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?*

### All Church Brainstorming Themes from April 3, 2022

1. **Become more engaged with specific organizations in our community and see what needs are**– Invite community leaders and government entities to our church to identify what the needs are. It is important to have regular interaction and listen to the various community groups we support at Mountain Rise to better understand their needs and how to effectively engage.
2. **Have more internal and external speakers to share what is going on in our community and Mountain Rise** – We are already involved with many things, but we need to find more ways to share during worship or other events. Host seminars, workshops, information sessions on community concerns and open to the broader community.
3. **Create more groups, help the congregation become more aware of existing groups and open groups to community and friends outside of the congregation** – Small groups enhance friendships and good communication. Encourage members to create special interest groups, e.g. hiking, music, religious study, hobbies, games, etc.
4. **Political Action** – Connect with local politicians, organizations and other churches to work for legislation in support of the causes Mountain Rise embraces. Maintain a relationship with our elected representatives to help achieve a greater impact. Invite speakers to provide ideas on issues our community faces and invite the broader community to attend.
5. **Getting the word out about Mountain Rise (advertising)** – More actively seeking ways to share the Mountain Rise experience (articles in newspaper, improve street signage both directions, flier, website focus on what members do in our church, social media, presence at events, invite community to Mountain Rise events, target populations such as families moving into area, retired communities, etc.)
6. **Collaborate with other churches to leverage resources, strengths and build connections** – Join forces with other churches on political and social justice issues. Share worship or events with other congregations (sister UCC churches, inner city churches) and other religious traditions. And consider combining youth programming with other churches. Become more involved with GVA and NY Conference.
7. **Find Creative Uses of Church Space and Resources and Engage with those using our space** – Increase fellowship activities such as game night, open house highlighting Mountain Rise activities, meal, and guest speakers to get a wide range (young and old) of church and community friends and members engaging with each other. Reach out to attract more groups to utilize our space and have members actively participate with the groups. Become more involved with groups currently using our space.
8. **Improve Internal Communications** - Explore multiple ways to communicate with the congregation. Develop different formats for listening to one another. Create ways to communicate with people about “spontaneous” events that others may be interested in participating in.
9. **Listening and Being There for our Mountain Rise Community** – Open sanctuary for quiet time, second service, continue uplifting messages, various types of worship services (retreats), providing transportation for people for worship, create an active more supportive community at Mountain Rise to better anticipate and address the needs of people, provide opportunities for people to share their personal journeys and experiences, develop different formats for listening to one another.
10. **Attracting New Families/Supporting Families** – Look at other churches as models for attracting young people and explore ways to reach out to young families within our immediate geographic area, provide family activities such as retreats, game nights, trips, hikes, and provide babysitting during adult activities.
11. **Follow up with new people who attended Mountain Rise** – Reach out to people who join us for worship for the first time, livestream or in person, in a “non-pushy” way. Perhaps people who have joined on-line would be interested in attending in person worship. To become better acquainted with the church, invite newcomers to an activity or group of interest.
12. **Follow up with young adults and families who once attended Mountain Rise** – Reach out to people/families who once attended Mountain Rise in tangible ways, i.e. cards, homemade bread, etc. Seek feedback from people who are no longer coming, especially young adults to see what might attract them back. Reflect on the Mountain Rise “traditions” that people/families have enjoyed in the past and review for possible implementation or revision. Consider establishing new Mountain Rise tradition opportunities.