

THE NEW BRANCH



Mountain Rise United Church of Christ
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- Council Updates
- Caring Connections
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Calendar

- Knitting, Tuesdays at 10:00AM
 ROMEOS, Fridays, 12:00PM
 JULIETs, Last Friday of the month 1:00PM
- Men’s Group, May 1, 6:00PM
 - Game Night, May 6, 6:30-8:30PM
 - Stephen Ministry Group II, May 7 & 18, 7:00PM
 - Council Meeting, May 8, 7:00PM
 - Stephen Ministry Group I, May 9 & 23, 4:00PM
 - Service & Advocacy Meeting, May 14 , 11:30AM
 - Book Group, May 16, 7:30PM; for Zoom link contact Rick Watkins
 - Spiritual Growth Group I, May 22, 7:15PM
 - Spiritual Life & Worship Meeting, May 30, 4:00PM
 - Worship Advisory Meeting, TBA

If you have had an address, phone or email change please email the office at office@mtriseucc.org or call 223-2433.

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.




Men’s Group meeting is on Monday, **May 1**. Gathering is at 6:00 PM, dinner at 6:30 and the program at 7:30.

The program topic is a presentation on Taiwan. Dr. Philip Guingona, Assistant Professor of History at Nazareth College will be the speaker.

The congregation is invited! It is important for dinner planning to place your name on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

May 4



SATURDAY FUN NIGHT!

Regardless of age, come join us for...

GAME NIGHT

Saturday, **May 6**

First 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

Horse: A Novel is May Book Group Choice

The Mountain Rise book group will meet on Zoom on Tuesday, **May 16 at 7:30 pm** to discuss *Horse*, an historical novel by Geraldine Brooks. Its central story, about the great race horse Lexington, is set in the pre-civil War and Civil War South. It is a story of race: the whites who own the horse, and the young black slave who trains him to become the greatest race horse of all time. The book is also set in the present day: at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, a young woman scientist accurately articulates the bones of Lexington's skeleton. Outside work she forms a friendship with a Nigerian art history graduate student. Their story is also shaped by the story of race in the United States today.

Please join us for our discussion by sending an RSVP to Rick Watkins at rwatkins12@rochester.rr.com or 585-203-1629. He will send you a ZOOM link prior to

Cal Dickerson is having a house warming on Saturday, **May 13** from **11:00 - 4:00**. The congregation is invited. The address is 9868 Dye Road, Forestville, NY 14062. Cal's phone is 716-418-9922 and email is westernwishes06@yahoo.com. No RSVP is needed.

Planning a meeting/event? Please contact Barbara in the Mountain Rise office to schedule your meeting/event and avoid calendar conflicts!

Juliet's will be meeting on Friday, **May 26, 1:00PM** at Fruit and Salad Co. Please contact Jane Stock at (585) 704-2630 or hjs@frontiernet.net to make your reservation or with questions.

New Signage Planned for MRUCC on Rt. 31

Plans are in the works to place a new Mountain Rise UCC sign on Rt. 31. The sign will be surrounded by a colorful pollinator garden and placed a short distance east of where the trees that for years have held our church's banners. The design will include sections that can be swapped in and out to advertise our Jazz, Easter, Christmas and outdoor worship services as well as the names and logos of Etz Chaim and Perinton Nursery School.

Renderings of the sign and garden will be on the kiosk in the welcome area in mid to late May for everyone's perusal. A generous grant from the estate of **Julie Francis** is helping make this project possible.

A variance from the Town of Perinton will be necessary to place the new sign close enough to Rt. 31 to be visible to traffic traveling east and west. If you haven't done so, please take a look at the incredible work done by several people to clear out dead trees and brush to make the church building much more visible from Rt. 31. Thank you to all who participated; this is a huge gift.

The current sign on the corner of Mountain Rise and Rt. 31 has served us well, but is in pretty rough shape. Additionally, the sign is only slightly visible from the east. Many a guest has mentioned they have driven by the church 2 or 3 times before finding it. We look forward to letting more people know where MRUCC is housed and welcome them to join us.

Nicky McClain, Kathy Nixon, Wally Hazelton

Church Council

Happy Spring, Mountain Rise friends!

A quick walk outside reinforces that the natural world around us is waking up and sharing the beauty of its growing season. Mountain Rise continues to grow as well. Specifically, I am thrilled to share with you the Endowment Fund grant allocations and the MRUCC Transition Team members that will guide our interim ministry work with Pastor Kelly.

Council is pleased to announce the allocations for the Endowment Fund distribution this year. We accepted four grant applications and recommended a fifth one be funded using monies already in the 2023 budget. The total amount awarded to date is \$18,792. Here are the four projects that will be funded:

Caring Ministry Committee / Stephen Ministry- \$ 1,687 *

Funding was actually part of the Endowment Fund distribution from 2022*; Caring Ministry asked for an extension on their 2022 grant which will support the participation of one layperson from Mountain Rise in the Bridge Leader's Training Course required to become a Stephen Leader. Adding another Stephen Leader will strengthen our Stephen Ministry program so that we can continue to provide confidential one-on-one caring support to individuals going through a difficult time by providing a sustained weekly compassionate relationship for as long as needed.

Service & Advocacy Ministry Committee- \$5,000

Funding will be used to support the "Sobriety Sounds Inc. Community Workshop Supplies" project. This project supports a creative approach through music to provide a healing space and opportunity for those in our community with addictions. Scott Fitzgerald is the Director of Communication for the organization.

Service & Advocacy Ministry Committee- \$12,292

Funding will be used to support the "Solar for a more sustainable and resilient ASB hospital in Borgne, Haiti" project. This grant will help to support the installation of solar systems at the HOPE-ASB hospital to reduce energy costs and environmental impact in a rural community in Haiti.

Universal Justice Committee- \$1,500

Funding will be used as a one-time donation to the "Perinton Ambulance Funding" project. This donation will support the Perinton Ambulance 2023 budget.

Property Committee

A grant request was made to fund church roof repairs. Council decided that there are currently sufficient funds (\$38,791) in the Capital Reserve Restricted Funds that can be used for repairs at this time. If such a time arises that the current amount in the Capital Reserve Restricted Funds does not cover needed expenses, Council will be contacted.

There are still Endowment Grant Funds available for distribution this year. Committee Chairs are encouraged to apply again if there is a creative idea for Mountain Rise to foster better connections and community. Council will share more information with these chairs in May.

A month ago Council looked to the congregation to suggest names of people who might best serve on a Transition Team for Mountain Rise. Council received thirty-one responses to our request! Thank you to all who took the time to nominate a person(s) for this extremely valuable team. This team, with the guidance of Pastor Kelly, will lead our community of faith through a process of self-study, discernment, and visioning to rekindle our call to mission. Council is pleased to announce that the following Mountain Risers have agreed to commit their time to the Transition Team:

Matt Deknatel
Liz Webb
Ted Nixon

Kathy Simpson
Roger James

Please take the time to thank these individuals for their willingness to serve our congregation as we take this journey of faith.

Blessings and Peace,
Faye Eaton
Council Chair



**Open Elected Positions
Starting September 1, 2023**

Your Council Members:

Faye Eaton, Chair
Position Vacant, Vice-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 - Jack Heister

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; next scheduled meeting is **May 8**.

	<u>Position</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>Term</u>
1	Council Chair & Trustee	2024	**
2	Vice Council Chair & Trustee	2026	*
3	Council Secretary	2024	1 - year
4	Council At-Large Council Member #1	2024	1 - Year
5	Council At-Large Council Member #2	2024	1 - Year
6	Council At-Large Council Member #3	2024	1 - Year
7	Endowment Com. Member #5	2026	3 - year
8	Finance Chair & Trustee	2026	3 - Year
9	Financial Secretary	2026	4 - Year
10	Church & Pastors At-Large Member	2024	1 - Year
11	Finance Comm. At-Large Member	2025	1 - Year
12	Communications Comm. At-Large Member	2024	1 - Year
13	Nominating Comm. At-Large Member	2024	1 - Year
14	Property Comm. At-Large Member	2024	1 - Year

*Vice Council chair is a 3 year term, year 1 as "Vice Chair", year 2 as "Chair", and year 3 as "Past Chair"

**Vice Council chair is presently vacant which opens up the Chair position in September 2023.

If you would like more information or are interested in fulfilling any of these upcoming positions, please contact Jerry Kersting, Gail McClain, or Sally Kersting (Nomination Committee Members).

Children & Youth

I am thrilled to be taking the journey of working with the children and youth at Mountain Rise as the Children & Youth Ministry Coordinator.

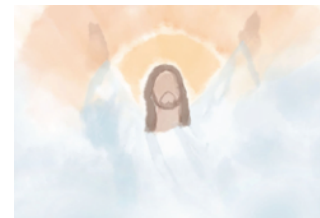
Thank you for all your encouragement to start such an exciting road of learning, sharing and discovery together!

Elisabeth Hammer,
 Children & Youth Ministry Coordinator

Available Now



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.



Ascension of the Lord – May 18

Notice for Mountain Rise UCC in Perinton

Annual Meeting to occur on Sunday, June 4, 2023, at 11:15, immediately following the worship service.

This meeting is called for the election of Church Officers, to receive Annual Reports, and such other business as may appropriately be brought before the congregation.

Copies of the 2023 Annual Reports will be available in the Welcome Area for pickup and review any time after Noon on Friday, May 19 and will be in your email May 21.



Service and Advocacy

For Justice and Peace

Committee for Universal Justice

"This can't be the right place."

"I think it is."

"But I can't drop you off here."

"Jim, it's fine. You go on home."

"But I hear our mother's voice in my head right now. I'd at least better walk you to the door."

That was the parting conversation that my brother and I had as he dropped me off at the Welcome Center in Phoenix, Arizona, a place where migrants who had recently crossed the border stopped for their first taste of American hospitality. Sponsored by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), asylum-seekers are provided food, medicine, legal assistance, shelter, showers, and clean clothing. Many of them arrive having had their personal belongings confiscated by ICE officials at the border; some have been detained for two or three weeks. All are weary.

Four to five buses (approximately 150-200 migrants) arrive daily in Phoenix. Many are fleeing unimaginable violence, and many are traveling with small children. Most do not speak English. Contrary to popular opinion, however, these folks have host families who are expecting them. The somewhat dilapidated structure that concerned my brother is actually an abandoned elementary school that has been organized to provide a safe place for the travelers to rest before resuming their journey. Though most come from Latin American countries, many who departed the buses when I was there came from Russia, China, and other countries where personal freedoms are denied.

IRC relies on local churches and humanitarian organizations to do most of the work. These volunteers come, primarily, from First Church UCC, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salvation Army, Refugee Aid, a local synagogue and other government and charitable organizations.

Though the Heister's and I visited at different times, our experiences were similar. Yes, we were appalled at the treatment the migrants received at the border, and the fatigue and anxiety of the travelers was very apparent, but so was their joy. I worked at the women's shower stalls, and I will never forget the relief experienced by the young women,

especially, when they exited the shower room and were able to indulge in body lotions, deodorants, hair products, and toothpaste. We used a great deal of sign language, of course, but nothing spoke as loudly as their sighs and smiles and hugs.

Finally, I can't begin to tell you enough about the UCC church where the three of us worshipped. I do not know which is greater...their commitment to service or their joy. This diverse congregation celebrates on Sunday as passionately as they serve the community on the other days of the week. Pastor Susan's messages remind her people of the joys and costs of discipleship. And the music? Phenomenal.

The Service and Advocacy Committee has allocated funds for this mission through your support of the church's current budget. The Team for Universal Justice is excited to share this news. We would also like to thank one of our own - Jim Mietz - for calling our attention to this plight at the southern border and for urging us to act on our own disbelief, to respond. As a sign on the lawn of First Church reads: "Jesus didn't reject anyone; neither do we."

In closing, I would like to share a prayer of blessing recited on the Sunday I attended their service: "As you leave this place, may God bless you with seeking. Seek out the hungry. Seek the weary. Seek the good in every person you pass. Seek out the hopeful. Seek the faithful. Seek God in each of us. As you seek and as you wonder, may you find what you are looking for. In the name of our loving God, who is always seeking us, go now in peace. Amen"

May God bless us with seeking...

Linda Boesl





Save the Date
Saturday, July 15

Rochester
Pride Parade

Support Our
LGBTG+ Community

If you would like to help organize our effort please contact Nicky McClain (he, him, his) at nickymcclain@gmail.com

Perinton Food Shelf Needs

An Emergency Food Relief Organization

Needed: Boxed plain potatoes, bottled juice, brownie mixes, frosting, beef stew, corned beef or roast beef hash, mustard, diced tomatoes, cereal, and tomato sauce (not pasta sauce).

Thank you so much for your support. You can always check the web site to find the current Food Shelf needs. It is www.perintonfoodshelf.org.

REQUEST FOR DONATIONS OF CLOTHING, LINENS AND BASIC HOUSEHOLD ITEMS.

A record number of guests continue to receive lunch, clothing and household items at the Salem Nutrition Center. Therefore, donations are requested for monthly distribution.

All sizes of men's clothing are needed, especially jeans, hoodies, sweatshirts, t-shirts, dress shirts, sneakers, boots, jackets, new and used socks. Women's jeans, practical shoes and boots, socks, bras and accessories are welcome, as well as extra large and extra small sizes of practical clothing. Raincoats and waterproof jackets were requested by men and women.

Guests also need sheets, blankets, pillows, linens, and basic household items. No glass or breakable items, please.

Large household items can be donated to Saints' Place, which supplies refugees who are resettling here. Questions? Contact Fran Stiles or Kathy Nixon.



May 28

Service and Advocacy Meeting Scheduled

Next meeting is May 14, 11:30am after worship.

Property Committee at Work!

- Vacuum cleaner repairs (3 times)
- Visited Perinton Town offices for map of property
- Changes to church usage policy
- Responded to security alarm two separate incidents
- Fixed electrical outlets
- Contact Magic Seal to reseal/re-stripe part of parking area
- Arrange for annual spring grounds cleanup (11 people helped)
- Purchase grass seed and fertilizer
- Repair grass areas (4 days with help from several people)
- Purchase long light bulb changer
- Cut up and removed two dead trees along Route 31.



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.

- Bill Stratton, health concerns
- Dorie Starks, health concerns
- Barbara Ackroyd, health concerns
- Beth & family, tragedy
- Lisa Lydum, health concerns
- Phoebe Coats, health concerns
- Kersting's daughter, health concerns
- Matt O.
- John Meyer
- Gary Bresnahan
- Wilan Uthman
- Kay Uthman



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?