

# 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)



## CHURCH PICNIC

### In this Issue:

- Council Updates

### Calendar

- Knitting, Tuesdays at 10 AM
- ROMEOS, Fridays, 11:30 AM at Underpass Bar & Grill
- Council Meeting, September 12, 7PM
- Stephen Ministry Group I, September 9 & 23 4PM
- Stephen Ministry Group II, September 13 & 27, 7PM
- Service & Advocacy Meeting, September 14, 3PM
- Book Group, September 20 , 7PM; contact Rick Watkins
- Spiritual Growth Group I, September 26, 7:15PM
- Info for October newsletter needed week of September 19
- Next Men’s Group October 3, 6:00PM



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11  
RIGHT AFTER WORSHIP  
AT MOUNTAIN RISE UCC

We will provide hamburgs, hot dogs, and veggie burgers, as well as buns (including gluten-free). We will also provide eco-friendly plates and utensils. Yes, there will be a basket for a free will offering to offset picnic expenses. We will also provide games and the opportunity for good conversation.

What can you bring? Potato salad, macaroni salad, jello salad, baked beans, potato chips, desserts, condiments, soft drinks, iced tea, etc. Not comfortable with pot luck? Feel free to bring your own picnic lunch and join in the fellowship.

We will have plenty of hand sanitizers available, and we encourage attendees to do a home Covid test before attending this gala event.

Want to help with this event? Contact the picnic coordinator, Trisch Axsmith-Tavolette [trisch14564@gmail.com](mailto:trisch14564@gmail.com) or sign-up at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E094CAEAC2FA5FDO-mrucc1>

OR

Sign up by using this QRcode



September 5 - Office closed.

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

## Welcome to The Rev. Karl Bawel, Bridge Pastor



The MRUCC Church and Pastor Committee, Spiritual Life and Worship Committee and Church Council are pleased to announce that MRUCC has entered into covenant with the Rev. Karl P. Bawel as our Bridge Pastor. A Bridge Pastor is one who serves a congregation between the retirement of a long time pastor and an intentional interim pastor. As our Bridge Pastor, Rev. Bawel's

position will be 1/2 time (20-24 hours a week) and he will serve until June 2023, with an option to renew his contract or until an intentional interim pastor accepts our call, whichever occurs first. Rev. Bawel will provide pastoral leadership in the following ways:

- Lead services of worship and work closely with our Spiritual Life and Worship Ministry Committee
- Minister to people who are sick and/or vulnerable in our congregation
- Provide pastoral care in collaboration with our Stephen Ministries and Caring Ministry Committee
- Officiate at weddings, memorial services and baptisms
- Work with our Administrative Assistant in preparing bulletins and monthly newsletters

Rev. Karl Bawel begins his service with MRUCC as Bridge Pastor on Sunday, September 4th.

Rev. Bawel has a Master of Divinity degree from Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. He is currently the Chaplain with Livingston County Hospice serving at Kirkhaven. Rev. Bawel has served in church-based pastoral positions including as a sub-deacon of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Dansville, chaplain on the Strong Hospital Palliative Care Team and as interim pastor with St. John Lutheran Church in Minnesota. He is preparing to be ordained in the UCC. Rev. Bawel has also been a professional violist with The Florida Orchestra in Tampa and with the Arioso String Quartet.

Entering a covenant with a Bridge Pastor during our church's transition time will provide our congregation with consistent worship leadership and pastoral care. Our Stephen Ministers and Caring Ministry Committee have worked tirelessly to care for our neediest members and friends since the retirement of our senior pastor. Rev. Bawel's training and experience will provide much needed support to their efforts during this transitional time. Although MRUCC was very fortunate to have a variety of supply pastors for our summer worship, our Bridge Pastor will now be in place to plan Sunday worship with our Spiritual Life and Worship Committee with regularity. Please note, Rev. Bawel is not serving in an intentional interim pastor capacity. Our search committee will continue their efforts to find our intentional interim pastor. Neither a bridge nor an interim pastor is eligible to be a candidate for the position of our next settled pastor.

Mountain Rise New Branch

## Scripture Readings

September 4 Communion Sunday

Jeremiah 18:1-11

Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18

Philemon 1:1-21

Luke 14:25-33

September 11 with House Band

Church Picnic

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28

Psalms 14

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Luke 15:1-10

September 18

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1

Psalms 79:1-9

1 Timothy 2:1-7

Luke 16:1-13

September 25

Jeremiah 32:1-3a 6-15

Psalms 91:1-6, 14-16

1 Timothy 6:6-19

Luke 16:19-31

## Men's Group

Men's Group resumes on Monday, October 3, at 6:00 PM. Social time at 6:00, dinner at 6:30 and program at 7:15. Program subject to be announced later.

## 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).

### Interim Pastor Search Update

Dear Mountain Rise Friends

Hercalitis is quoted as saying "change is the only constant in life", I believe the same can be said for the life of church- as is evident from the last few years of Covid in our midst.

I've been asked to write a little about what happens after a long-tenured Pastor leaves a congregation; normally this is called the Interim Time. Any of you who have served on pastoral search teams may flinch when you hear the term "interim", but I am here to tell it's not that scary! An interim time after a long tenured-pastor is a time to reset. Reset for the tomorrow and not the yesterday of ministry, Reset for the needs and demographics of your ever-changing community, Reset the vision that God has given the faithful community by seeking a leader to address your current and future evolving needs.

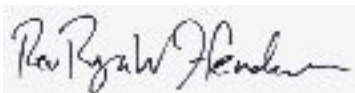
The constant change of life can sometimes be overwhelming, and my hope is that we, as Church and Conference, can walk together in balance. Realize that some days will be scary, some days will have grief, and yes some days will be joy-filled. Pastoral search is more digital and more streamlined than it has ever been, but the work of old-fashioned discernment-seeking God's will for next steps-is the slow work of prayer and the spirit.

Your interim search team, lead by Gail McClain, is doing a faithful and diligent job at this moment. They are working with myself, Reverend Gary Ferner, Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call, along with looking and finding wisdom from Mountain Risers and Reverends Martha Koenig Stone and Elaine Hiscock. It truly takes a village to do this work.

I am grateful to each of you and hopeful that in this moment you will find the patience you need to wait, the willingness to pray constantly for your search, and the courage to know that your next pastor is preparing him/her/them-self to be in ministry with as much emotion and hope as you feel right now.

My email is [RHenderson@uccny.org](mailto:RHenderson@uccny.org) if you have any further questions.

In Greatest of Hope,



Rev. Ryan W Henderson  
Associate Conference Minister for  
Communication and Online Community  
New York Conference of the United Church of Christ

### Children & Youth Ministry Coordinator Search Update

Thee committee received six new applications in August through online job boards. One of the applicants appeared well-qualified and was invited to interview for the position.

Unfortunately, the candidate notified the committee that they did not feel capable of supporting a 20 hr/wk workload and withdrew their application. The committee continues to reach out directly through local contacts to identify qualified candidates, and welcomes referrals or suggestions from the congregation. Respectfully submitted,  
Steve Grace, Chairperson

### Book Group

The Mountain Rise Book Group met recently to select books we will be reading during the coming year. We have a great lineup of books to read! We meet on the third Tuesday of each month except December. For our first meeting on September 20 we will be discussing *The Midnight Library: A Novel* by Matt Haig.

Matt Haig's new book is a contemporary story that explores the choices that make up a life, and the regrets that stifle it. Would we really make better choices if we could step back in time? *The Midnight Library* discusses just that, and what really makes a perfect life.

If you enjoy reading or listening to audio books, we invite you to join our book group. If you would like to receive informative monthly emails about our current selections and meetings, please send an email to Rick Watkins at [rwatkins12@rochester.rr.com](mailto:rwatkins12@rochester.rr.com), and I will add you to our email list.

### Ministry Committee Chairs:

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

# Church Council

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." - Maya Angelou

On an August Sunday morning in 2003 a visitor attended her first Mountain Rise worship service. She arrived early to church but not too early so as not to stand out. Much to her surprise, all the worship attendees were leaving their cars and rather than head into the church, they appeared to be walking into the woods. This visitor was unprepared for a venture into the woods, let alone an outdoor worship space! Instead of an outdoor folding chair of her own and sneakers on her feet, she had a purse that matched her dress and wore tan sling back pumps. Slightly embarrassed about how her outfit did not fit in with the rest of the attendees' attire and worried about seating options, she wondered if this was not the right time or place for her. Sheila Limburg had parked by this visitor that morning and noticed the concerned look on her face. A short introduction turned into a reassuring conversation that then turned into a side by side worship companion. Sheila may not remember this Mountain Rise visitor... but I remember Sheila!

It took me about ten years to find Mountain Rise. You see, I grew up "on" Long Island (if you are from Long Island then you know it is "on" and not "in") and had attended Mount Sinai Congregational Church UCC all of my life. Mount Sinai UCC was a vibrant church committed to justice and extending an extravagant welcome to all people. Church had always been an integral part of my life growing up. When I moved to the Rochester area and was looking for a church home, I naturally looked for a UCC church. Naively, I transferred my church membership to the first UCC church I attended; I just assumed that all UCC churches would be the same! I was mistaken. And after a few years, I stopped attending the church I had joined. This decision was especially sad because at that point I had started a family and had wanted my family to experience the connectedness and sense of community that I had experienced growing up in an active and progressive UCC church family. Being a mother of twins and a full-time public school teacher, time was a precious commodity and there didn't seem to be any allocated for finding a new church home...until the summer of 2003! This time, the Internet proved to be a great source of information about different churches and I found that I could locate the open and affirming UCC churches, a prerequisite for my search. I made my first visit to Mountain Rise in August of 2003 and have never left.

[Mountain Rise New Branch](#)

Why Mountain Rise? Simply, Mountain Risers made me feel like there was a special place in their church family for me and my family. I remember my boys' very first visit and how at the end of church they each exclaimed, "Everyone here is so nice and they like us so much!" So many adults took the time to talk with my then seven year olds to get to know them and then to look for them each week. Almost twenty years later, those now young men can still remember how Bob Larsen and Ellie Bradley, their very first church school teachers, made them feel so special and important to the church from the start. Now, truth be told, I was slightly concerned that perhaps Mountain Rise wouldn't be the church for us. After all, in 2003 and most of 2004 the church did not have a settled pastor and was in the midst of their interim work with a trained interim pastor. My concern was short-lived. In the end, the decision to join this very special church was based on the people of Mountain Rise and how they made the Eaton-Nolan family feel.

I became a member of Mountain Rise UCC on June 27, 2004 with Interim Pastor Lynn Carman Bodden officiating.

Faye Eaton,  
2022 / 2023 Council Chair

You are welcome to attend Council meetings. They are scheduled for the second Monday of each month at 7:00 pm at Mountain Rise, starting September 12.

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

# *Service and Advocacy*

## *For Justice and Peace*



### **From the Mountain Rise Team for Just Peace in the Holy Land**

#### COMMITTEE FOR A JUST PEACE IN THE HOLY LAND EXPANDING FOCUS

It is an exciting time for CFJP (Committee for a Just Peace in the Holy Land) as we expand our horizons beyond Palestine and Israel to global concerns and needs. Included in our new focus will be border control and the refugee (asylum) dilemma at the southern U.S.-Mexico border.

Refugees from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador have walked over 1000 miles to ask for asylum from the United States. This movement of people has overrun control efforts in Mexico, Arizona, California and Texas. Several US UCC churches are providing assistance for these folk. Knowing this, CFJP contacted several of these churches asking what support we could give. Pastor Susan Valiquette of a Phoenix UCC church wrote to CFJP stating the dire need for money to provide clothing, meals and other necessities. Our committee has decided to make a request to the Mountain Rise Service and Advocacy Committee for funding of a year of meals for these refugees.

Our concerns about the situation in Palestine continue. The newspaper Aljazeera reported that 40+ Palestinian children have been killed in 2022 in the occupied Palestinian territories. In many incidents the Israeli military used lethal force, a violation of the UN High Commission for Human Rights.

It is the intention of CFJP to assist people in need, wherever they may be. CFJP does due diligence to problems by appraising each as best we can and determining whether the situation is something it can contribute to in a meaningful way. If upon reading this you feel you would like to volunteer to be part of CFJP, please contact Jack Heister at [jsheister@gmail.com](mailto:jsheister@gmail.com).

### **Next Service and Advocacy Meeting**

Service & Advocacy committee meetings are held on the **second** Wednesday each month at 3:00 pm. Meetings generally run until 4:30 pm. Anyone is welcome to attend all or part of the meeting.

Next meeting is September 14, 3:00pm.

### **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.

- Power washed all the outdoor worship seating including all of the upper platform worship area
- Oversaw the installation of the hand railing base for the outdoor worship area
- Stained, sealed and installed an ADA compliant hand railing for the outdoor worship area
- Installed a second banner sign at the roadside of Rt. 31
- Prepared the parking lots for sealing and striping
- All the flooring was stripped and re-waxed
- Removed small tree in the play area
- Inspected the roof and found a spot needing repairs and obtained quote to fix it
- Obtained quote for additional tree removal
- Obtained quote for a hand rail for outdoor service walkway
- Conducted a grounds cleanup
- Tried to fix leaking outdoor faucet but requires major work (TBD)
- Signed contract to repair back-flow plumbing
- Planted memorial tree honoring tenure of Greg Osterberg
- Signed contract for resealing both parking areas
- Completed 3-year contract for Perinton Nursery School



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.**

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