

Mountain Reflections

Rangeley Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

P.O. Box 218 Rangeley, Maine
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Rev. Leslie Chatfield

Dear Church Family,

Can you believe we have been journeying together with God, as a people Called, for over a year now! Good heavens, indeed! I arrived a little over a year ago to lace up my Walking Shoes to join in our family of faith's journey! What blessings we have experienced while traveling such uncharted and uncertain territory as getting to learn about and share our Way together during a pandemic! For just a moment ~ take a brief tally of all the new things we have all been asked to do, to accept, to problem solve, to change, to hope for! It's quite monumental, really; the central stuff of passing through a well- lived, albeit, challenging, life. We have had an amazing opportunity to find out so much about one another; what is important, what makes us frightened, what matters to us, who matters to us. We have been offered a wondrous gift of insight during these times.

I have so delighted in serving the Rangeley Congregational Church family during this last year. And now it is time for us to be thinking about opening our arms and our hearts to folks among us who might be interested in joining our church family as new members! What an exciting time! If you are interested, or you know of someone who is, or has been interested in or pondering, becoming part of our family of faith, I am extending our warm welcome for them to join us on our journey!

As I greet folks on the Church porch at the end of our Sunday Morning Service, please feel free to share your interest with me, (you can drop me an email or text or just call me!) or share your interest with someone you know and trust during our Coffee Hour after our Service; others can let me know who might be considering coming among us, to become part of our kind and warm family of faith. We'd love to welcome ALL who wish to join us on our journey!

Even during these uncertain and tenuous times, our hallmark is that we gather safely and thoughtfully with one another, caring kindly while blessing the holy in one another! Let us welcome one another by holding out our hands to one another and journeying on the holy road before us with kindness, care, joy, laughter and blessing! If you think you can or might find a



spiritual home among us ~ ALL are welcome here with us at the corner of Pleasant and High Streets! Let me be the first to say, "YOU are welcome Here!"

Blessings for all! +Leslie

Day in the life of a pastor: the toolkit ~ the Bibles.

Recently, some Members in Discernment (MIDs) asked me if I would talk with them about everyday life as a minister. Later, I was telling some other folks in the church about these conversations and they asked if I would write about it, in installments, in the newsletter. So over the next few months I will write a bit about these chats, e.g. - the clergy library, clergy vestments, clergy friendships, etc. I hope you will find these little pieces interesting and thought provoking.

Lots of folk believe that a minister needs only one book: The Bible. Well, that's true but there are many, many translations and using one Bible is as foolish as only carrying a wooden pencil throughout every day of work. It just won't do.

The Bible is much like a physician's stethoscope; we hear specific sounds when we listen for them in particular locations: the heart, the stomach, the lungs. The different sounds are not interpreted in the same way. Biblical material is similar.

What are we listening for?

The centerpiece of any Christian ministry, liberal or conservative, revolves around our knowledge and understanding of The Bible and for many of us, other holy texts, e.g. the Qur'an, the Bhagavad Gita, the Vedas, the Dhamapada, the Popul Vuh, just to name a few, to observe God's presence among the people of the earth. When we forget, or disregard, the biblical/religious polestar, the success of our ministry is compromised. We better have a good well rounded library and use it.

When I was in seminary I was taught "the most important tool that you will ever have is a Bible and that you can't ever have too many." Well, that was only the beginning.



The Bible provides the foundational fundamentals for all decisions made in Christian ministry; it is the treasure map ~ the other primary source books for other world religions lend further support.

After serving a wide variety of called pastoral positions, in various settings, I began to recognize more clearly the diverse ways God speaks to the faithful, even within the same community among different people, different leaders, different traditions.

Over my many years in ministry, I now have found that truth to be truer than I could've ever imagined. A practice that started out, simply, with my 'study Bible' in seminary, has me consulting with a number of Bibles, every week, as I prepare for upcoming Sunday morning worship, for regular meetings, for book study's, and of course, for Bible study. Yes, I continue to use my 'study Bible', my dearest old biblio friend, fragile and falling apart, with whom I've spent hours (unlike my beloved heirloom keepsake Bible I was given at my Confirmation, white leather with my name embossed on the cover); my primary biblio buddy is either the more poetic Revised Standard Version (RSV), positioned next to the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). Added to it, now, is Eugene Peterson's *The Message* which reminds me of the human need to avoid frozen stiff language, and to make the readings clear and simple, and sometimes, when appropriate, joyous and humorous; it's The Bible with personality and emotional content.

The Bible shelf next to my desk at home is now full and overflowing and among the collection are: the 21st Century King James Version, the King James Version, The Jerusalem Bible, The New American Bible, the Deep Blue Kid's Bible, The Fireside Youth Bible, The Hebrew Bible in Hebrew, The Greek Bible in Greek, the Vulgate Bible in Latin, the New International Version, the English Standard Version, and the Good News Bible sculpted more for evangelical folk, and various editions of the Soldier's Bible. Often, I take a peek at the Cotton Patch Bible - a joyous colloquial Bible written in a southern 'drawl vernacular', or the Scots Bible written in the lyrical lilt of Gaelic/English.

Each one expresses its own unique version of God's message. Each one crafts and delivers the biblical message to a particular group of folk, at a particular time, in a particular place, with a particular focus. Each one illustrates how we are all subject to our own 'interpretation' of what God wants to say to us.

Each week I go through the same process: I read different versions of the same scriptures seeking the common threads of the message looking for clues about what is it that God wants us to understand in our time, in our place -right now- among our own folk, to understand better what is before us. Reading through one interpretation and meditating on it is never enough to



deliver an adequate message; double or triple checking is required. Like the woodworking adage “measure twice, cut once!” - jumping to an idea immediately often leads to the unpleasant habit of proof texting ~ the projection of one’s own intuitions or strong held agenda to explain a truth of God.

An unpacked, clear message, guided by good scholarship to understand a particular passage reflects how and why biblical material is meaningful in our own lives, community, time and place. The additional adage “do your homework” applies; don’t just figure what it said the last time you read it or preached on it; delve into why it is it relevant now, today, under the current circumstances.

My bookshelves in my office at home are lined with various editions of Bibles; my iPhone and iPad have a variety of apps with yet more different Bibles. I cherish them all; they are my traveling companions, wherever I go and in all I do.

These multiple Bibles are the primary tools of my trade, my work, my inspiration: God’s word travels with me. Always.

I better know how to access those words; I better know them well. And even more important, while my Bibles form the fundamental foundation, ultimately, they better not be the only thing I know how to talk about, like the familiar saying - ‘if all you have is a hammer everything looks like a nail.’

Our knowledge of God acting in history had better be relatable to our own current challenging and amazing experiences in our own lives and the lives of others. We must be able to recognize, in parallel, the dynamics of the relationships that are lifted up to us, historically and currently.

In our UCC tradition, our folks, typically, come from different denominations, regions and backgrounds; a well trained minister, pastor, or clergy person must know a variety of different translations of the word of God in order to continue to have a meaningful and understanding dialogue with folks within our faith community. It can never be emphasized enough to folks, and particularly our members in discernment (MIDs), and frankly, all our congregation members, to be certain that we become literate in the many ways God speaks to us; this is central to our own calling, in our every day work, to use every day language that is understandable to the variety of people we encounter. God is still speaking through every one of us. God help us all. *And now God, nudge us kindly into tomorrow, with Love. Speak to us of Love. May it be so.*



Rick Baker

Summer is in full swing for all of us and it feels good, well most of the time. I don't think the mosquitoes and black flies were all that bad this year (I shouldn't use past tense).

I was so great to have our Annual Meeting in person! It was well attended and I could not be happier about the number of people who have stepped forward to serve in some capacity. The more folks who volunteer to share in the participation in our church, the easier it is to accomplish our goals.

Council did not meet in July, which is the norm, but we will meet in August. July (after the Annual meeting) and August are usually the only "quiet" time administratively in the year, so it feels good.

It's been so good seeing our congregation and visitors in the Sanctuary and on our Zoom screen. Having a hybrid service really allows us to have so much more flexibility. Thank you to Sam, Dave, Dan and again to Dave Walker for putting together the PowerPoint part of Zoom worship. They are the ones who really make it possible.

Rick



Scholarship

Mary Richards

This year's scholarship committee included Marge Miller, Joann Bean, Carol Ellinwood, and Mary Richards as chair. As chair I would like to extend my personal appreciation to the committee for their contribution to scholarship this year. We are excited to announce our continuing support for four deserving students.



Noah Richard Durand will be entering his junior year, this fall, at the University of Rhode Island. He is enrolled in the School of Business with a major in Supply Chain Economics. To date he has maintained an impressive GPA of 3.21. From the time he was a little boy Noah summered in Rangeley with his grandparents Les and Millie Hoekstra and attended Sunday school, Bible school and church. His time in Rangeley became limited when there was a need to work for college tuition. Noah now holds down several jobs during the summer. We wish him much success this coming year and miss his time spent with us.

Our second recipient is Brooke Egan. Brooke is the daughter of Patrick and Cyndy Egan and will be a junior at the University of Maine, Orono. She is changing programs of study and will now be working on a degree in psychology. Brooke has made an enormous contribution to the Church over the years attending Youth Retreats, serving as an usher, participating in Christmas Eve services and volunteering at the annual Turkey Supper. We wish her much success in the upcoming year.

Our third recipient is Haley Morrill. Haley completed a bachelor's degree with honors, as well as receiving the Latin Honors Summa Cum Laude from the University of Maine this spring, 2021. She will be attending graduate school at the University of New England College of Pharmacy and is pursuing a doctoral degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences. Haley is a most impressive student as she achieved a 3.96 GPA across all four years of her undergraduate studies. Essentially that amounts to a perfect A average in every course she completed at the University. We know she is going on to be highly successful at UNE!

Our fourth and last recipient is Amber Morrill who will be entering her junior year at the university of Southern Maine this fall. She is working towards a degree in nursing and has maintained an impressive GPA of 3.8. She is holding down two jobs this summer to help with tuition costs. She loves Rangeley and wants to return after graduation to contribute to the community through nursing. We look forward to having her back full time after she graduates!

We had the opportunity, thanks to generous contributions from the church family, to award a total of \$8,400.00 to these deserving students. We are also fortunate the Rangeley Congregational Church has this many gifted students affiliated with our congregation. We look forward to Scholarship Sunday when we can showcase these fine young people. Thank you to all in our church who have supported this important committee. We are enormously grateful.

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Richards



Buildings & Grounds Committee Rick Baker

As you know Diane VanAmburg, who was our Sexton, moved closer to family down in New Hampshire. So Fred, Kirby, myself and most recently Nancy Z (who unwittingly got drafted to help) are wearing the “Hat” for B&G. We are extremely busy. Our focus is to get the Annex/ Little Mountain School structure repaired and “up to snuff”. Getting the various “subs” in to look at our needs for the roof leak, electrical, plumbing, dry wall, windows and exterior siding is no small task. It’s fairly frustrating to get folks to do mostly small repair tasks, but we are working on it.

Nancy is helping us with this project(s), but she is not expected to continue as she wears a number of “Hats” herself. Fred and Kirby both travel in the winter season. So I really, really need a couple of volunteers to join our merry little group. We don’t necessarily do the actual “fixing” ourselves, but discuss and organize who should we get to do the work. So if you’re interested please consider joining the committee (B&G). Drop an email to the church office and I’ll give you a call (or just contact me, by phone or in church).

Enjoy the rest of our summer, it’s far too short!

Rick





Deacon News

Kelsey Meehan

How wonderful it is to be back in the church worshipping together – Zoom and in person alike! We have been so lucky to have a Zoomigo team that was able to make the transition so easy (or looks easy to us!). A very big heartfelt thank you to all of our Zoomigos past and present who help keep our church family all involved no matter where we are. What a joy! We want to thank all who helped to get the church ready for in-person worship again. From the inside cleaning to the outside sprucing up all of the Deacons say thank you to all who helped!

Our Deacon of the Month for August is Linda Caspar. Please reach out to any Deacon with any needs or suggestions.



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Nancy Zambraski

Our first in-person Women's Fellowship meeting was held on June 11 in the Barn and it sure was good to see everyone. Our first meeting involved some reorganization of Women's Fellowship to include the Prayer Shawl group, determining interest in participation in the summer festivals, (including the Holly Fair), and other options for holding meetings and festivals. It was decided to go ahead with the summer festivals, so it was *"all hands-on deck"* to get ready for the Strawberry Festival. We decided to concentrate on selling jam, homemade breads, Rada cutlery, and any crafts we could put together in a short period of time. Boy, did the ladies come through. Even though the weather was "iffy" the day of the festival, the people came out and supported us and we came out with just under \$2,700 in proceeds (which will all go to the charities of our choice). Thanks to all the jam makers and bread bakers and volunteers the day of the festival. Our next summer festival will be the Blueberry Festival held in Rangeley on August 19, so we will again be asking our women to bake and make jam and volunteer. Mark your calendar, now!



With 3 meetings under our belts, we continue to try to boost our crafts to sell at the festivals. We have had very good participation. And the knitters have been busy as well. I have included a thank you note we received from good friend, George Adams (*see below*). It is heartwarming to know our shawls bring comfort to others in good times and in difficult ones. If you know anyone who could use a prayer shawl (either for those who need extra comfort or for a celebration), please contact me and we can arrange pick up or mailing.

“What about the Holly Fair?” “You haven’t mentioned anything about the Holly Fair?” We have not decided whether we can hold the Holly Fair due to the ever-changing environment with COVID-19 AND our limited space. But don’t think we don’t have our “wheels turning” to look at all options, so stay tuned for updates to come.

On August 23rd, the Women’s Fellowship will be providing a memorial luncheon in the Barn for Christopher Cummings, who raised his family in Rangeley in the house attached to the Congregational Church barn (in the Little Mountain School space). Be on the lookout for the sign-up sheet in the Barn during coffee hour following Sunday Service. We will be responsible for setting up the room and providing food and beverages. It will be self-serve and the family will clean up following the luncheon.

We meet in the Barn on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month from 10 am to 12 pm. All women of the community are welcome. So, bring a friend and come enjoy some lively fellowship either crafting or knitting, or just chatting.

Blessing to all,

Nancy Zambraski, Women’s Fellowship Co-Chair



Stop by our booth at the Blueberry Festival to choose from an amazing selection of homemade jams, baked goods and hand-crafted home decor!



Rangeley Congregational Church
Rangeley, Maine

Kathy Brittian and Church Friends,

Your mailing came a few days ago, and I was excited to be remembered, even as my loss of a month ago. But clearly, we know it is never too late. I tried to guess the contents, and soon remembered your virtue of the prayer shawl. In deed, after eight years I was this moment a recipient of love.

Being some forty such cards of "always remembered" received, a prayer shawl deeply covers that feeling as well. Kind folks are there in Rangeley, a place where my heart truly remains. Earlier, Linda Caspar's words were especially touching, and now you have made the point so nicely again.

Thank you, Kathy and all the rest of you in the Rangeley Congregational church. Your handiwork runs deep and everlasting.

With blessings,
George Adams

George

June 7, 2021



August Calendar

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY
Sun. Aug 1	10:00am - 11:00am	Worship Service – Sanctuary
Sun. Aug 1	11:00am - 12:00pm	Coffee Hour – Barn
Mon. Aug 2	8:00am- 9:30am	Rangeley Ringers Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Sun. Aug 8	7:00pm - 8:00pm	Worship Service – Sanctuary
Sun. Aug 8	11:00am - 12:00pm	Coffee Hour – Barn
Mon. Aug 9	8:00am- 9:30am	Rangeley Ringers Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Mon. Aug 9	3:45pm - 5:00pm	Finance Committee Meeting, East Room
Mon. Aug 9	6:30pm - 8:30pm	Church Council, Zoom
Fri. Aug 13	10:00am - 12:00pm	Women’s Fellowship/Prayer Shawl, Barn
Sun. Aug 15	10:00am - 11:00am	Worship Service – Sanctuary
Sun. Aug 15	11:00am - 12:00pm	Coffee Hour – Barn
Mon. Aug 16	8:00am- 9:30am	Rangeley Ringers Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Thur. Aug 19	10:00am- 3:00pm	Blueberry Festival, TBD
Sun. Aug 22	10:00am - 11:00am	Worship Service - Sanctuary
Sun. Aug 22	11:00am - 12:00pm	Coffee Hour – Barn
Mon. Aug 23	All Day	Barn Main Room - Amanda Cummings Luncheon
Mon. Aug 23	4:00pm - 5:30pm	East Room - Reserved for meeting
Mon. Aug 23	6:30pm - 8:30pm	Deacons’ Meeting - Virtual Zoom
Mon. Aug 23	8:00am - 9:30am	Rangeley Ringers Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Thur. Aug 26	4:00pm - 6:00pm	Spiritual Direction Group - Zoom



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Fri. Aug 27	10:00am - 12:00pm	Women's Fellowship/Prayer Shawl, Barn
Sun. Aug 29	10:00am - 11:00am	Worship Service - Sanctuary
Sun. Aug 29	11:30am - 12:30pm	Coffee Hour - Barn
Mon. Aug 30	8:00- 9:30am	Rangeley Ringers Rehearsal, Sanctuary

