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The Church Mouse

June 2022 Newsletter

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www.RockyHillucc.org

Sunday Worship Services – 10:00 a.m

JUNETEENTH

Freedom, Hope and Joy Divine, Juneteenth means its Freedom Time!

From your Racial Justice Steering Committee: We are pleased to announce a very special service to commemorate '**Juneteenth**' on **Sunday, June 19**.

During the service, we will discuss:

- Do you know the meaning and significance of Juneteenth?
- Have you heard about Juneteenth “Red Punch”?
- Come learn with us about Juneteenth as the RJSC presents Opal Lee and What it Means to be Free by Alice Faye Duncan during the Message for all ages.
- After worship, please stay to enjoy the symbolic “Red Punch” the children will be serving.

Also, remember Hillstead museum in Farmington is sponsoring an event to celebrate Juneteenth. They will be featuring black artists, organization & businesses. This event, being held **on 6/25, 10-4 PM**, is free but does require pre-registration on their website:

www.hillstead.org/Juneteenth

From Where I Sit

**“I want to live in a country that loves its children
more than it loves guns.”**

Siblings in Christ, summer is truly upon us – some of us are probably wondering what happened to May and June, with so many variations of early heat and humidity. This continues to be a topsy-turvy season of peculiar weather patterns and our on-going emergence from many COVID-19 restrictions, although positivity rates and infections are still higher than just a short few months ago...Here at the church, worship in person and by Zoom remains in place and we encourage continued use of masks and distancing and most especially, vaccinations.

We are entering the school end-of-year period when studies are being completed, celebrations for rites of passage from one grade to the next or one level of educational achievement to the next are happening throughout our communities. And so it is that we have a series of special Sundays planned at RHCC, for PRIDE and children & youth, and the newest federal holiday in the US, June 19th or “Juneteenth.” There are many ways to participate in community life; let me encourage you to get back into the flow of showing up for learning or service or celebrations. We enjoy welcoming you!

I cannot complete this month’s reflection, without mentioning the tragic events of multiple mass shootings that happened last month in Buffalo (grocery store) and California (church) and Texas (elementary school). We must do better. There is so much you and I can do to respond with intentions of reducing violent episodes that involve guns; our Racial Justice Steering Committee (RJSC) will guide our worship service on 6-19 along with second hour presentations and discussions throughout the summer. Your voices and concerns shared with local and federal officials are crucial, and our church’s commitment to confronting racism with its many tendrils means these moments cannot simply be ignored. Ask yourself what actions you will take, and then do them! Suggestions and companions are available; just ask me. I personally appreciate the comment shared above, that children are so much more loveable than guns. Same goes for elders, and shoppers, and worshippers.

During our worship service on the Memorial holiday weekend, I shared the following:

It’s the poet in Psalm 13, who asks one of the most poignant questions found in the “prayers for help” within the Bible. “How long, O Lord?” From protest, and petition, to praise, [Psalm 13] is a prayer that holds all three together, “as if to teach that these three cohere in the unity of prayer.” These separate moments – ***protest, petition and praise*** - are held together because in faith, God is never absent from any life experience.... Martin Luther called the stance of this prayer the “state in which Hope despairs, and yet Despair hopes at the same time...” (J. May, *Interpretation; Psalms*, J, Knox Press, 1994:77-80)

Will you protest and petition and give praise to our Creator, so that we might continue the kin-dom work in this world? (Luke 4:18-21) Can we pray for hopefulness in the mist of despair? Can we recommit ourselves to the ways of peace? “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

Pastor Nada

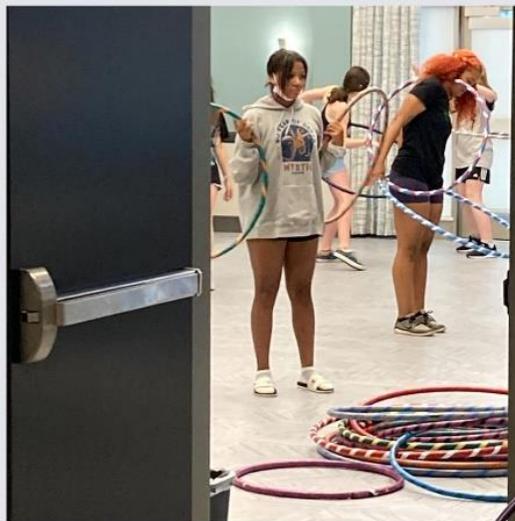


P.S. REMINDER: Please join me, as we commemorate the 8th annual National Gun Violence Awareness Day and Wear Orange Weekend, please join the Pendleton family who lost their 15 year old daughter, Haydia, to gun violence, in demanding an end to this crisis. [Wear orange June 3-5 and demand action from our lawmakers.](#) #WearOrange #NeverAgain #WeCanEndGunViolence

Diversity – Inclusion – Open & Affirming



First annual Rocky Hill town PRIDE celebration!!



From the Council:

As summer begins, we often look forward to a little slower pace along with vacations and beach weather. But our church is actively engaged in so many ministries that I'm not sure this summer will see too much of a slow-down. In addition to all our "usual" ministries, our church family has been engaged, energetic and committed to making the world a better place—one ministry at a time.

At the same time, we are also thinking ahead to discern God's vision for us and to plan for the steps we need to take to live into that vision. Here are a few out-of-the-ordinary things that are going on:

- We are hoping to update and brighten up our hallways this summer with fresh paint. We'll also be looking for volunteer painters and crew leaders. (Hint, hint).
- We will soon be actively seeking a tenant for a room or two on our top floor which will result in some income to help support our mission.
- We are working on a list of capital improvements that we would like to make—many of them before our 300th birthday in 2027. This will be presented soon and the general program will require a congregational vote.
- We have filled out several grant requests and have received a grant to cover half of the work required on the church tower.
- We are actively considering a Capital Fundraising campaign to expand our Memorial Fund to help cover the capital improvements we hope to make. This will also require a congregational vote.
- Our Signage and Wayfinding Team is looking at our signage, both inside and out, to develop a plan for improvement.
- Our Vision 300 Team had its first meeting.....we are looking for a few additional members to develop an ambitious plan for celebrating our milestone 300th birthday. Please contact me if interested (rfitzgerald@fhiplan.com or (860) 543-1520).

We recognize that we live in a greatly changed and changing world, and we strive to adapt and thrive well into the future. To do so, we need to think creatively and set an ambitious plan for the future. So, far, we seem to be very much on the right track, as demonstrated by the energy and commitment of our church family.

Ruth Fitzgerald, Moderator



Mark your calendar!



Immediately after church on June 26 (our first Sunday in Chapin Hall), we will be having an informational meeting about results of our church “Building Condition Survey” and discussion of some proposed projects that have been recommended, as well as some projects that we might like to undertake. There will be coffee and treats, so please plan to stick around for this informational meeting.

June 2022 Worship Ministry Article

Hello Everyone. As we are enjoying the warmth of summer and maybe (hopefully) a bit of travel, we in the Worship Ministry are working with Pastor Nada to prepare for our upcoming services.

Here’s our schedule of services during June:

- Sunday, June 5th: Pentecost and Communion (Pride service & Annual Meeting)
- Sunday, June 12th: Trinity Sunday (Children’s Sunday)
- Sunday, June 19th: Juneteenth-focused service.
- Sunday, June 26th: Move to Chapin Hall (now with Zoom capacity) and our Summer worship series.

Michael Andonucci

michael.andonucci@gmail.com

860.670.5940



*Pentecost & Pride Sunday, June 5.
Amazing display by Judy Graham
and Rev. Nada.
Photo by Valerie Triblets*

Racial Justice

The Rocky Hill committee on Inclusion and Innovation is hosting an event called on June 25th called "Walk a Mile in My Shoes" which will be held at Elm Ridge Park. The concept is to match walkers with a person who has a different life experience, race, culture, etc., and provide questions for them to discuss and better understand each other. For those of us who did the GHIAA leadership training, this is an excellent opportunity for one-to-one conversations, the basis of building power, and of course, understanding each other.



"A Mile In My Shoes" Community Conversations Event

Saturday, June 25, 2022

Elm Ridge Park, 376 Elm Street – 9:30 a.m.

Rocky Hill Commission on Inclusion and Innovation presents "A Mile In My Shoes", a Community Conversations event. Move. Connect. Grow. Get moving while sharing your story one-on-one. Your voice matters. Conversation starters provided. Parents with strollers welcome! Free refreshments and prizes. To register: <https://form.jotform.com/221244738294055>
Or www.rockyhillct.gov/Calendar

JUNE MAG (Monthly Abundance Gift)

As the housing crisis looms large in Connecticut, Outreach and Witness seeks relevant and justice-centered gifts from our members to assist impactful organizations. In June our abundance gift goes to Desegregate Connecticut, a program under the Regional Plan Association, which has worked for 100 years to improve the quality of life in the tri-state region.



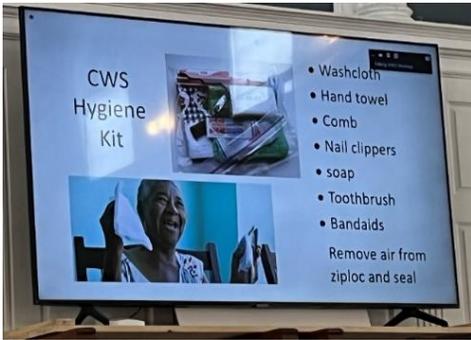
Desegregate Connecticut, formed by Sarah Bronin in 2020, is a coalition of neighbors and non-profits advocating for equitable, sustainable, and affordable housing and land use policies. Their mission closely aligns with our environmental and racial justice ministries and our long held commitment to addressing poverty.

A relationship with Desegregate Connecticut provides us with both an opportunity to offer financial support and a guide for future activism as we anticipate the housing crisis to be an important issue in upcoming legislative sessions.

If you would like to learn more, please visit: <https://www.desegregatect.org/>

As we worry about the struggles of those seeking affordable housing in this beautiful state, may our hearts be filled with gratitude for our homes and the community that welcomes us. Let us put our gratitude to work! You may donate either online through the church website or by sending a check payable to RHCC with "Desegregate CT" in the memo field. Thank you for your donations!

Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, talent and/or treasure toward the hygiene kits for Church World Service. **We assembled 112 hygiene kits in total!** They are shipped throughout the U.S. and worldwide to provide relief and comfort for those affected by famine, natural disasters and epidemics as well as to welcome refugees and asylum seekers. The kits will be ready for shipment by CWS when and where the need is the greatest.



Memorial Donations to RHCC

We are grateful to have recently received a bequest from the estate of Bea Donohue. Memorial gifts help us to carry out all of our various ministries and programs and are greatly appreciated.

Here are the donors of bequests/estate gifts to RHCC in the past five years:

Bea Donohue

Robert Simmons

Ruby Bennett

Midge Sword

Janet Rowley

Lily Hill

In Loving Memory



GREEN TIPS FOR JUNE

FoodScaping

Foodscaping is the creative integration of edible food crops among the traditional and existing landscape. Planting various vegetables and herbs in plain sight, alongside ornamental shrubs and trees.

Fresh, tasty produce is obviously the primary benefit of foodscaping. A diet with more veggies enhances health and reduces chemical exposure if organic growing methods are used. Foodscaping also saves on grocery bills.

A gardeners' tendency to over-plant a vegetable in one, pre-determined area. This lack of diversity invites disease and destructive pests, as well as lower yields. Conversely, diversity supports pollination and natural pest control. It's just as effective to plant lettuce, tomatoes, potatoes, blueberries and other produce among our landscape.

By matching a plant's needs with available spaces, gardeners can maximize the potential of their land, as well as their harvests.

Tips for Starting Foodscaping:

- Start small and only plant what you think you'll eat.
- Consider planting garlic next to roses to help discourage bugs.
- Grow enough to change your grocery-shopping habit.
- Pick a few crops you enjoy eating; don't try to grow some of everything.
- Focus on the sunniest areas since most vegetables prefer sun.
- Start by planting edibles, such as arugula, basil, garlic and lettuce, along the edges of landscape beds. Peanuts and potatoes make good edgers, too.
- Plant garlic to deter ground mammals, such as voles.
- Repurpose underutilized beds by sowing seeds directly in the soil.
- Plant vegetables and herbs in the landscape to support bio-diversity of the ornamental plants.
- Experiment with sun-loving flowering shrubs (hydrangea, viburnum, forsythia) as "live stakes" for tall tomato plants.

Memorial Garden Repair of Sunken bricks

June 1st 2022

There were 3 areas on the Memorial path where bricks had sunk and posed a risk of tripping.

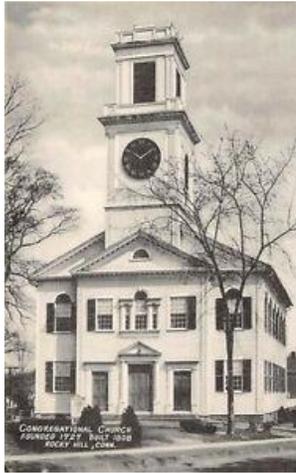
Steve Smith, Bill Hoffman and Ed Chiucarello channeled their inner masons, pulled up the brick, tamped down the stone dust and laid the brick... level.

The quote for a contractor to fix the path was \$1,200.
We paid \$6 for the stone dust.
It took us one hour.



Ed, Steve & Bill holding identical mason hammers once belonging to Ed's dad. We never used them.





Happy Birthday to RHCC! Did you know that on June 7th, our church will be 295 years old! We will celebrate this significant anniversary on Sunday, June 5th – join us for cake after worship and our Annual Meeting - as we begin the five-year countdown to our 300th birthday in 2027!

The Rocky Hill Congregational Church occupies a prominent position in the town center of Rocky Hill, on a triangular parcel bounded by Church, Old Main, and Center Streets. It is a two-story gable-roof wood-frame structure resting on a brownstone foundation. It has distinctive late Georgian styling, with a projecting gabled entry section with corner pilasters, and three doorways. A three-stage square tower, housing a clock and belfry rises at a small setback from the projecting entry section.

The first church in Rocky Hill was built in **1727**, after it was established as a separate parish of Wethersfield. By 1800 there were calls in the congregation for a new church. In 1805 it was agreed to build a new structure, modeled on a church in Middletown. Construction was begun the same year, and the new building was dedicated in 1808.



NEWS FROM THE FACILITIES MINISTRY

Earlier this year we applied to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for a grant to fund 50% of the construction costs of a project to replace the parapets on the steeple; late in May we learned that our grant application has been approved by SHPO. The next step is to get construction bids. Once we have construction bids, we would hold a congregational meeting for a decision on the project. The parapet project is one of the projects identified as critical in the Conditions Assessment that was done in 2019. We expect this project to cost about \$120,000.

We have been developing a comprehensive list of potential projects for the next five years; so far with Council we have identified over 20 projects. Some projects are the maintain or restore type; while others are upgrades that support our church vision. The five-year timeframe fits with our 300-year anniversary in 2027. Facilities is working with Council to set project priorities that are consistent with our church vision. We are gathering budget estimates for the projects not identified Conditions Assessment report. The total cost of projects is large and beyond what we could fund from our memorial fund; therefore, we think that a capital fund campaign is needed, and Council is already looking into such a campaign.

NEWS FROM THE FACILITIES MINISTRY (cont.)

The Little Scholars Preschool has received a grant from the state office of Early Childhood Development for classroom upgrades. The funds will be used for new classroom carpet and painting the classroom, ground floor hallway and bathrooms. The tentative plan for the hallway is to paint the wainscoting a much lighter color, such as off white. This would brighten the hallway; it is likely that we will want to brighten the other hallways this summer too.

If you have questions or comments, please contact a member of Facilities.

Our de-cluttering/organizing team has been hard at work!

After a long pandemic, there are many areas of our church that have accumulated treasures. We are going through closets, hallways, and cabinets and deciding what to keep and what to pass on. We invite you to see our progress in:

Library/parlor: We are in the process of getting rid of outdated items and replacing them with high-interest books. We want this room to become an open and welcoming place for people to sit and read, or to select a book to borrow and take home. We will have books for both children and adults.

Nursery: If you haven't seen our updated nursery, please stop by! We have new flooring, paint, and curtains, and have selected our favorite toys to share with our youngest visitors.

Resource Room: An upstairs room that has long been used for storage of Faith Formation supplies and materials. This is a big job, but we are working on discarding un-usable items; donating extra supplies to local recipients; and organizing what remains so that it can be found and used.

Costumes: Our church owns many, many costumes for children and adults, mostly from Epiphany pageants. We are moving these to a central location as we find them, and this summer, a team will be sorting through them, repairing those that need it, and making an inventory so that our children will be beautifully outfitted for any upcoming dramatic events.



If you want to help with these or any other de-cluttering initiatives, please contact Heather Wolfe-Taylor at oulinguist@gmail.com or (347) 821-1288



Fellowship of the Grape – Saturday, June 18, 5pm-7pm

Have you experienced this? We go to Sunday service, meet and greet each other, and leave wondering “Who was that person I was talking to?”. In the spirit of community and getting to know each other for the first time or better (note the use of “spirit”), we are kicking off our first of many (I hope) times for adult fellowship aptly named the Fellowship of the Grape (FOG).

Our Fellowship of the Grape kick-off will be held on Saturday, June 18th, 5-7 PM at the Copes/Smith backyard (weather permitting, otherwise inside the house). We ask everyone to bring their own bottle of wine (or beer if you prefer) and an appetizer to share - oh and a yard chair. We will have glasses, plates, water, seltzer, and I'm sure wine & snacks of our own. We do have some lawn chairs but probably not enough.

Hopefully, if this is something we all enjoy, we can continue the tradition each month and rotate who hosts. Don't forget we sell Total Wine scrip!

Please RSVP to deb.copes@gmail.com before Wednesday, 6/15. Our address is 320 Wolcott Hill Road, Wethersfield, CT. My cell is 860-729-6541 if you'd rather RSVP by phone or text. (just as a warning- we have an over-friendly puppy who loves people, wine and food).



Sunday, June 12 – be sure to join us for worship on Children's Sunday with recognition of our graduates!



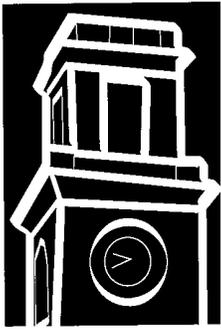
JUNE BIRTHDAYS

| | | | |
|----|------------------|----|------------------|
| 1 | Harry Schmidt | 21 | Glenn Hunter |
| 1 | Zachary Rupaka | 21 | Jack Pawlich |
| 2 | Eric Jokl | 22 | Gail Hall |
| 4 | Alexander Gau | 22 | MaryAnn Libera |
| 6 | John Van Epps | 24 | Douglas Toft |
| 7 | Linda Marchand | 26 | Nancy Robbins |
| 8 | Thomas Kainamura | 26 | Douglas Sudell |
| 9 | Samuel Dean-Lee | 28 | Matthew Flynn |
| 9 | Julia O'Connor | 28 | Lynn Webster |
| 11 | John Goff III | 28 | Bruce Gengenbach |
| 15 | Bob Carberry | 29 | Jaye Veley |
| 20 | Elaine Motta | | |

June Anniversaries



Michael and Doretta Andonucci
David and Nadine Bell
Bill and Jennifer Cordes
Raymond and Donna Gagnon
John and Karen Hoffman
Don and Polly Pagnucco
John and Marilyn Van Doran



| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY |
|--|--|---|---|
| Worship at 10am in The Sanctuary & by Zoom. Followed by fellowship in Chapin Hall. |  | | 1 Bells & Choir rehearsal 6:30pm and 7:30pm |
| 5 Pentecost/PRIDE Communion Sunday 10am Worship 11am - Annual Meeting | 6 5pm Pastoral search committee (every Monday) 7pm Women's AA Chapin Hall | 7 395years! Happy Birthday RHCC! | 8 Bells & Choir rehearsal 6:30pm and 7:30pm |
| 12 Children's Sunday 10am Worship | 13 Office closed this week → 7pm Women's AA Chapin Hall | 14 | 15 |
| 19 Juneteenth 10am Worship Father's Day | 20 7pm Women's AA Chapin Hall | 21 | 22 Rocky Hill Farmers' Market RHCC table 4-6pm |
| 26 10:00am Worship In air-conditioned Chapin Hall w/Zoom | 27 7pm Women's AA Chapin Hall | 28 | 29 |

Our Church Office is open, virtually, Monday – Friday, 9am-3pm

Church Building Office Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 10am – 2pm

WORSHIP SCHEDULE
Sunday Morning Worship
Communion 1st Sunday
10:00 a.m.

2022

| THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--|---|
| <p>2 Rocky Hill PRIDE EVENT 4-6pm</p> <p>7pm Men's AA</p> | <p>3</p> | <p>4 Dividend Pond Hike 9:30a.m. National Trails Day 11am – Indian dance class</p> |
| <p>9</p> <p>7pm Men's AA</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>11 11am – Indian dance class</p> |
| <p>16</p> <p>7pm Men's AA</p> | <p>17 July/August Newsletter Deadline</p> | <p>18 11am – Indian dance class</p> |
| <p>23</p> <p>7pm Men's AA</p> | <p>24</p> | <p>25 Walk a Mile in my Shoes, 9:30am Elm Ridge Park, RH</p> <p>Hill Stead Museum Juneteenth event, Farmington, 10am-4pm</p> <p>11am – Indian dance class</p> |
| <p>30</p> | | |

ROCKY HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
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Jesus didn't turn people away. Neither do we.
The United Church of Christ:
No matter who you are,
Or where you are on life's journey...
You're welcome here.



We will celebrate our Fathers, Grandfathers and our **Great-Grandfathers** during
our online worship service on Father's Day, Sunday, June 19.

If your name is not listed below or if you have recently become a new great-
grandfather, please contact the church office at 860-529-4167 and we will add your
name to our list:

Tom Boccaccio

David Dean

Ralph Lexa

John Sword

Mark Walworth

Happy Father's Day!

