

The Spirit

of Ridgefield-Crystal Lake Presbyterian Church

September 2015

Summer is almost over. (Sigh!)

Mark 12:28-34

As we all know God does like to take time off to enjoy the season.

Well God's people do, and so they should! Off on well deserved vacations, enjoying weekend adventures, relaxing, and refreshing themselves. Worship joyfully continues, but with so many other "things to do" church was not as well filled as usual. Yes it seems that God takes a vacation too.

Now we are busy preparing for the new church program year. Making plans for preaching, music, visual enhancement of our sanctuary, Sunday school, youth group, adult ed, fellowship, etc., etc. Even Advent and Christmas! But I have to say at this time of year I have yet to meet a pastor, a church staff person or a committed volunteer who at some point does not find themselves fretting "Will they come back?" More a fearful perception than a reality but it does cause some sleepless nights.

So it was with interest that I read of a flute playing music teacher. He too had taken the Summer off and when as he started to practice for the start of the semester he was shocked to discover that he could no longer get a single note from his flute. Well not one that he wanted anyone to hear! He checked his instrument, it was fine. So he turned his attention to himself and asked advice from his mentor. It was him. Wrong stance, wrong position of his arms, wrong breathing. When he blew over the hole in the mouthpiece it was at the wrong angle and the music had gone! Thankfully attention and practice brought it all back. "Use it or lose it", "practice makes perfection" as the sayings go.

It is an interesting metaphor for Christian living and worship. It is not that we give up, or reject it, or forget all we know. We just get out of practice, perhaps a little careless. We go on faith cruise-control and suddenly discover that the commitment and discipline is gone. No more music! We blame the flute, the timing, the busy schedule, the routine, the prayer, the whatever. The answer so often, lies within ourselves we need to get back to the discipline of thoughtful, not thoughtless, discipleship. It takes effort, as well as time. It needs singleness of purpose, practice and commitment.

"Don't shoot the pianist, he's doing his best.

Not always true, Lord.

It is not always the piano that is wrong

Nor the flute.

Sometimes it is the player,

Me.

When there's no music between you and me,

When the melody has gone,

The harmony shattered,

It is not the instrument,

It is me.

My dedication has become dusty and dormant,

Stored in a dark corner,

Wake me up, Lord.

Rescue me from the trap of complacency." Amen

(Eddie Askew, International Director, Leprosy Mission Fund)

Welcome Back! ~ Pastor John

Fall Work Day Volunteers Needed

Come join us at church on Saturday, September 26, 8 AM to noon, so we can all work together to accomplish the following tasks:

- Wash the windows
- Yard work on the grounds preparing for fall
- Clean up dead trees
- Clean the toys in the nursery
- Clean the fan blades and light fixtures
- Check and restock the first aid kits



And whatever other tasks we discover before Saturday!

Coffee and donuts will be provided. See you there!

~ Building and Grounds Team



CROP WALK 2015

Sunday, Sept. 27, 2015 1 PM

St. Paul's UCC; 485 W. Woodstock St. Crystal Lake

RCLPC has always been a supporter of the CROP Walk and each year the need is critical. The focus for 2015 is the defeat of Hunger, and provision of clean water around the world.

75% of your donation will help CWS defeat hunger globally

25% of your donation will go to the Pantry for the children's backpack program

See MJ Towne for a recruiter envelope or donate to a youth or another fund raiser at RCLPC Donate on line: Crystal Lake Crop Hunger Walk. Ridgefield/Crystal Lake has an account.

Raise Funds, Walk, Donate, Support



NEWS FROM NEW BEGINNINGS

Thanks to all those who attended the New Beginnings informational meeting in August. We had a great turnout. It was a wonderful display of commitment to the life and mission of RCLPC.

Soon we will take another big step on the journey. Ten RCLPC members have stepped forward to be small group leaders. On Friday and Saturday, September 18 & 19 they will be attending a leadership training event in DeKalb. Then, on Sunday, October 4th, we will launch a series of six small group discussion sessions.

On October 4th, we will have one service of worship at 10:00 a.m. at which we will gather around the Lord's Table. Afterwards, we will have a pot-luck lunch in the Fellowship Hall and then divide up for the first of the series of six small group sessions. In subsequent weeks, the groups will be scheduled at a variety of times in order to assure that there will be one or more that will fit your personal schedule.

The small groups are the heart of the New Beginnings process. They are the "birthing place" of our collective vision for RCLPC. Although we know it won't be possible for everyone, please plan to attend all six sessions.

It would be fun for some group sessions to be held in private homes. Would you be willing to host a group? If so, please contact the church office. We will follow up to see what time(s) are best for you.

Mark Your Calendars Mark Your Calendars

September 13th Kick-Off Sunday Education Excitement

Kickoff, just like in a game of football, means to start. September 13 is the start of our new church season, and your opportunity to learn all about the educational offerings planned for the year ahead.

Bibles

Calling all third graders – Now is your chance! During the special WEE Worship time at both the 9:00 and 11:00 services, Matt will hand each of you your very own Bible. Now you can begin learning on your own about God's love for everyone. The congregation enjoys seeing who has moved up to the third grade. So, tell your families they can attend the service of their choice.

Mission Outreach Hike

Back by popular demand! Once again, we kick-off on our Sunday School journey. Don't worry, you won't have to wear a backpack for this hike, just bring yourself. All those from PreK through Senior High, and any interested parents, can join in the fun of walking the Ridgefield neighborhood. This is the RCLPC Sunday School's way of saying "Hello" to the folks in our community by handing out a small gift.

At 10:00, all the kids gather in their classrooms to take attendance and to meet their teachers. Then everyone heads on down to Fellowship Hall to set off on the trek. The walk will take about 20 minutes after which time the snack-stand opens up. Of course, that's an important part of the whole activity. Besides, now everyone will learn about all the other things planned for this year's Sunday School adventure.

Adult ED

The coming year has lots of exciting learning experiences in the works. Everyone should plan on dropping by Fellowship Hall at 10:00 for snacks and fellowship. This will give you the opportunity to hear about the new class offerings scheduled during each Sunday's education hour.



Farm to Fork luncheon

Sunday, September 20, 12 Noon

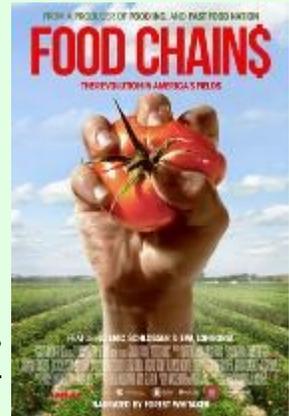
We invite you to share a family-style lunch in Fellowship Hall created with foods sourced from our local farmers. Come for lunch to enjoy our local bounty and support our local agriculture!

Featuring local foods helps us to fulfill criteria in the Presbyterian Hunger Program grant we received in February. Besides providing funds for fresh vegetables at the food distribution for our neighbors, it invites us to increase our healthy, sustainable eating by going local. In a multitude of small ways, we are able to create local jobs and economic growth, we support local family farmers, and we build relationships with those who grow our food.

Reservations are required by September 13, as limited seating is available. Look for the reservation sheet on the bulletin board in the Connecting Link. A suggested donation will be asked to cover the cost of the food.

Menu:

- Baba Ganoush (Eggplant Dip)
- Pasta with Bolognese Sauce
- Vegetarian/Vegan: Lentil Bolognese Sauce
- Fresh Baked Rolls
- Kale Salad with Pears and Raspberries
- Apple Crisp
- Coffee/Water/Iced Tea/Lemonade



Please join us afterwards to view the new documentary, Food Chains, that focuses on the tomato pickers of southern Florida who are changing farm labor. Their story is one of hope and promise for a more dignified life and a more humane food chain.

~ Sponsored by Earth Care and CPJ Teams

RCLPC Financial Snapshot

Year-To-Date (YTD) Finance Report		
	YTD Budget	YTD Actual
General Contributions	\$168,908	\$164,822
On-Line Giving	\$4,375	\$7,026
Total Contributions	\$173,283	\$171,848
Total Expenses	\$189,661	\$158,460
Contributions - Expenses	(\$16,378)	\$13,388

Reminder! October RCLPC Spirit deadline is September 25th!

DEADLINE

DEACON HOSPITALITY

In addition to attending to the needs of RCLPC's Family Groups by providing care and assistance, hospitality is a primary focus of the Deacons. We host memorial receptions, we deliver bread to new visitors, we organize the Sunday morning fellowship coffee hour, and we host special receptions for things like Teacher Appreciation, New Member Recognition, and Recognition of New Confirmands. We're applying to the RCLPC congregation at large to help in two of these hospitality areas: special receptions and Sunday morning coffee hour.



Special receptions provide opportunities for people to help in several areas: set-up, serve, and clean-up. The Deacon responsible for special events organizes the food, drink, etc., but can always use "a little help from our friends"! We're compiling a list of people who feel this is a way they could make a contribution on an occasional basis. Could we add your name to this list? Deacon Dan Newman, 815-337-1906, or dmnewman1@att.net, is waiting to hear from you!

Sunday morning coffee hour is an ongoing hospitality/fellowship opportunity that requires a volunteer every Sunday. However, the beauty of this need is that the more people who are willing to help, the less need there is for anyone to volunteer more than once or twice per year. It involves about 1 1/2 hours on Sunday morning, during the 10:00 fellowship time, to set up coffee, provide and set up a snack, be sociable, and clean up. Except for the snack, all other supplies are provided, and volunteers are sent more detailed instructions via email the week before they serve. A sign-up sheet is available in Fellowship Hall, next to the coffee. Please check your calendar to see if you could help with hospitality at RCLPC in this way. Questions? Contact Deacon Wendy Sanders, 815-477-2825, or sanderswendy@sbcglobal.net.



McHenry County Habitat for Humanity is looking for volunteers to build homes on Wednesdays and Saturdays in Harvard. The work day is typically 9 am to 3 pm and all tools are provided. Volunteers don't need prior experience. If you are interested, go to their website at <http://volunteerup.com/ProjectCal.asp?o=193>

Or you can call volunteer coordinator Alex Goodwin at 815-759-9002 for more information.

Save the Date!

Good Samaritan
Ministries

October 13, 2015

Georgio's Pizza-Pub
4pm to 9pm



Georgio's gives back 10% on carry-out and 15% of what we spend on dinner and beverages. This is a delicious, fun and easy way to support this wonderful outreach to the community.

Coupons will be available in [connecting link](#) or contact Karen:
khutchings991@comcast.net

Serving the Hungry, an interview with Anna Larsen

In February 2015 RCLPC was awarded an \$800 grant from the Presbyterian Hunger Program. The PHP grants are given to congregations that work to transform our food system by engaging youth and multiple generations, acting to increase healthy eating and local economic growth, supporting local farmers, raising awareness about local and global hunger and poverty, and encouraging a view of food as sacred and as a right for all people. These grants are provided through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering, which PC (USA) churches receive during the season of Lent and Easter.

One aspect of our work on food and hunger issues is RCLPC's food distributions. These events bring RCLPC folks to provide hospitality and food to McHenry County neighbors. By offering local produce, we support McHenry County farmers and distribute healthy, fresh, sustainable food.

Anna Larsen, age 14, is often on the food distribution team that works outside to prepare and distribute the produce to our guests. Anna has attended RCLPC since moving to Crystal Lake in 2007. She took some time before starting her freshman year at Crystal Lake Central High School to reflect on feeding our hungry neighbors.

Lois: You and your family have been part of efforts to help people who are hungry ever since I met you. You've written for RCLPC's offering of letters, participated in the CROP Walk, and helped at a recent dinner theater that raised funds for PADS lunches. You volunteer at the food pantry and are typically found helping at food distributions at RCLPC. Why do you and your family take part in these efforts?

Anna: I think my family volunteers at these events a lot because we like to support the community by helping the less fortunate and giving back to those who need it. We enjoy the fellowship of others from our church when we work together, and by volunteering at the food pantry, CROP Walk, food truck, etc., we are showing God's love. Someone coming for the service of the food pantry might know that we are from a church and our actions of helping others might have the people wanting to join a church if they are not a member somewhere already.

Lois: What did you do at the recent food distribution?

Anna: I helped outside with bagging up fresh produce (corn, potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, cheese, bread) in an assembly line and passing the bags of food to whoever was handing them to the people who needed it. I noticed that some of the guests had a lot of people in their family.

Lois: How do you feel when you're working at the food distribution, or CROP, or the pantry?

Anna: When I'm volunteering at these events, it makes me feel really helpful and that I'm making a difference in people's lives. To me, volunteering isn't a chore because I enjoy doing it. It makes me feel good on the inside, and I know it's also making other people happy. I think that the guests feel cared about and grateful that there are people looking out for them.

Lois: Do you think this food makes a difference for the families and individuals who come?

Anna: I think that the food we distribute to these families makes a difference in their lives because they can spend their money on the "bigger" things they need instead of having to spend all of it on food they need every day. We're saving them so much of their money by giving them food so they don't have to worry about not having enough money to buy food for their family.

Lois: Nearly 10% of the children in our county live in poverty, which almost always means they are hungry. Have you seen evidence at school that there are many hungry kids?

(Continued)

Anna: At my middle school, my Language Arts teacher told us during a class discussion that there are homeless people in our school right now. None of us had seen anyone who seemed homeless/hungry. So, I don't think that it's so obvious on the outside that someone is hungry.

Lois: Do you think food distribution is a good thing for the people of RCLPC to do?

Anna: I think that doing the food distribution events is a really good thing for everyone in the church to do because it just makes everyone there feel good and know that they can be a help in the community to the less fortunate.

Lois: You traveled with the church youth to Rosebud Reservation in July. Did you see signs of hunger there?

Anna: While we were on Rosebud, there was a program at the "Kid's Club" which offered free lunch to kids 18 and under. But I could tell that for some of the kids, that might be their only meal a day. The only other food I saw kids eating were bags of their own chips and junk food. I don't think they have access to healthier options.

Thank you to Anna for sharing her perspective on hunger needs and how and why we help. May our efforts bring health to God's people and Creation.

~ Anna Larsen, RCLPC youth, and Lois Johnson, Mission Team

Session Highlights

July 27, 2015

Rev. John Dillon Moderator

- Approved Session Meeting Minutes from June 22, 2015
- Discussed Disaster Planning Training provided by Joy Medrano from Lutheran Social Services. RCLPC Disaster Planning team is being formed.
- Approved Lori Thompson and Steve Connell as voting elders at Blackhawk Presbytery Meetings
- Reviewed the June 2015 Year to Date financial report
- Discussed New Beginnings Vision planning process
- August 13th – New Beginnings Assessment Session at RCLPC – Pastor John sending letter to congregation explaining process
- September 18th & 19th – New Beginnings Cluster leaders training at Westminster Presbyterian Church, DeKalb
- Concurred Pastor John's vacation August 9th through August 22nd. Pulpit supply is Rev. Phyllis Mueller August 9th and 16th
- Approved Position Description with changes for Assistant Treasurer
- Approved Pat Kay as Assistant Treasurer
- Approved Behavior Covenant to be signed by Session Elders and Deacons.
- Discussed fall Stewardship approach and worship focus on joyful praise of offering
- Discussed Crystal Lake Food Pantry Strategic Plan. Did not approve the requested motions from Strategic Team. A letter to be sent to Food Pantry Board covering RCLPC concerns.

FIESTA CHILAMA

A Family Open House

Hosted by Friends of Chilama

Kathy Lewis, Carlos Leiva, Ann Legg, Kristin Thurow, Evelin Fischer, Mary and Jay Fox, Brian and Libby Pappalardo

Saturday, September 12, 2015, 3-7 p.m.
at the home of Brian and Libby Pappalardo
1610 Broadway Ave., Crystal Lake, IL 60014

Enjoy Music and Salvadoran Food!

3-4 p.m. Sergio Fiuroa – classical Latin Guitar

4-5 p.m. John Morefield – Keyboard Jazz

5-6 p.m. The Taylor String Trio: Svetlana, William and Katya Taylor
Beer, Wine, Lemonade and Freshly Made Salvadoran Pupusas



This event benefits our work in our sister community, Chilama, El Salvador. Chilama is a remote community where families live in extreme poverty with little access to jobs or health care. Donations will help support our projects including the new youth tilapia farm, expanded organic kitchen gardens, women's sewing cooperative, an on-going healthcare project, and student scholarships.

If you are unable to attend the fiesta but would like to make a tax-deductible donation, please send a check payable to US-El Salvador Sister Cities (or USESSC) and send to Brian Pappalardo, 1610 Broadway Ave., Crystal Lake, IL 60014



*RSVP at lib4paz@comcast.net or
call/text to 815-353-7473*