



Connections

Roberts Congregational United Church of Christ
March 2021

Our mission is to connect with God, as we live by faith, are known by love, and cultivate hope.

Scripture basis: We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. We remember before our God ... your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.
(1 Thessalonians 1: 2-3)



Lenten Services

- Sunday, March 7th – 3rd Sunday of Lent – Worship 10am
- Sunday, March 14th – 4th Sunday of Lent – Worship 10am
- Sunday, March 21st – 5th Sunday of Lent – Worship 10am
 - Sunday, March 28th – Palm Sunday – Worship 10am

Lenten Services

- ❖ Thursday, April 1st – Maundy Thursday – 7pm
- ❖ Friday, April 2nd – Good Friday – Ecumenical Worship -TBD
 - ❖ **Sunday, April 4th – Easter – Sunrise Worship 7am –
In Person Only**
 - ❖ Sunday, April 4th – Easter – Worship 10am
- ❖ All worship services are also being offered online unless otherwise noted at:
<https://www.youtube.com/c/RobertsCongregationalUCC>



Roberts Congregational United Church of Christ
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From the desk of Pastor Burt



*Then he laid his hands on the man's eyes again and he saw clearly;
he was cured, and he could see everything plainly and distinctly.*

-Mark 8:25

The "Healing of the Blindman at Bethsaida" has long been one of my favorite stories in Scripture because I relate so closely to it. In my experience healing is a process. There is no magic bullet or pill that takes care of what is broken or ill in just a dose, and there is almost always a time factor involved. So it is with Mark's telling of the story of this healing. What is more, is there always seems to be a chance of relapse. This too takes place within Mark's storyline. This first healing takes place in Bethsaida and then later on there is another blindman in the story of Blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-42). The whole cycle is a great reminder of why we celebrate Lent every year. This year in particular the stories seem more poignant to me. I will try to explain more fully in the paragraphs to come.

It has been a long year, a year which has been a struggle for many of us when it comes to our faith. Nothing has been as it once was in our lives and it has left many feeling very lost and in the dark. Regardless of how hard myself and the leadership have tried, all we could do is to try and provide as best we could for the spiritual needs of our congregation and keep things afloat as we made our way through this uncharted territory. There was no road map and many trials and errors along the way. As we take our Lenten Journey together this year, there is a deep need for healing for many of us, myself included. It has been an arduous journey and one in which most of us have felt very alone. So, here is the hope I see in this cycle of stories from Mark.

In our first blindman story, friends of the blindman brought him to Jesus to be healed. He did not know Jesus. He was without hope and only knew the ways of the world and how that treated him. Jesus' healing doesn't take fully on the first attempt. When asked what he could see, he said he saw people, but they looked like walking trees. Jesus makes another effort, and it is then the man can see clearly. He is excited and ready to tell everyone about what has happened, but Jesus cautions him and tells him specifically not to tell anyone or to even go back into the village.

So it was for many of us as we found Christ and began to see the world as God does, full of hope. It didn't just happen though. It was a journey and a process. Most of us had a lot of growing to do in order to get to that spiritual place. Many of us may even still be on that portion of our journeys. When it does happen, we are full of excitement about our faith and the hope which we have found. Yet, we know there is still so much more to learn. Here is where I like to believe the blindman was. I also like to believe that the blindman heeded Jesus' advice and rather than going back into the village decided to continue to follow Jesus and get to know him better.

It is at this point Jesus begins a set three times telling his followers about his death and resurrection with ever more difficult teachings about faith in between them. The entire way Jesus is in relationship and hoping his followers are understanding. Yet, with every teaching the world seems to be harder and harder to deal with and keep their faith strong. After the third time Jesus talks to them about his death and resurrection, we get the Blindman Bartimaeus story.

Several things I want to point out here. The first is that Bartimaeus know who Jesus is in the story and is calling out to him to have mercy on him. The second is that Bartimaeus has a name in this story. This is a big deal in the Gospel of Mark as Mark does not typically name people in his miracle stories. The third is that it seems Bartimaeus once had sight and wants to get it back. I have had these moments in my faith life as I am sure many of you have. It seems from time to time we fall back into blindness until we shout out for Jesus to once again have mercy on us and restore our sight, our faith, our spiritual health.

It is here that many of us find ourselves in today's world as we journey this Lent. A place where to one degree or another we feel lost, or blind, or like our world is no longer recognizable. The good news is Jesus

does show mercy on Bartimaeus and tells him his faith has made him well. Bartimaeus' world is so different from what it was when his friends brought him in the first story. He has known faith, but somehow it has slipped away from him. Maybe like the situation we are currently in, that his world was just so different from that initial feeling of hope and his journey has taken him where he did not expect as the world around him changed. Yet, there was still faith. There was still hope. He just needed to refocus on Jesus and to get back to relationship with him. I have been there as well as my world has changed drastically over the years.

If this is how you are feeling in our current situation, please reach out. Reach out to others, to Jesus, to God and re-establish your faith connections. Allow the world to be seen not as we would have it, but as it is and realize that Christ is still with us. God has not left us. We are just in a different place along our journey than we once were. There is still hope and though the world will never look the same again as it once did, our growth along the journey we have taken has caused us to have a stronger reliance on Christ and our God. Blessings along your Lenten Journey.

~ Pastor Burt

Treasurer's Report

Notes from the Treasurers: Detailed minutes of the Trustees meetings, including full financial statements are available upon request.

General Fund Financial Summary as of January 31, 2020

Financial Summary as of January 31, 2021

Income/Contributions	\$	19,127.25
Adopt A Mortgage		-
Fundraising income		-
In-kind Services		-
Interest		3.79
Total income		19,131.04
Expenses		12,602.22
Transfers from other accounts		-
Net General Fund Activity	\$	6,528.82

Assets

General Accounts	\$	10,152.34
Other bank accounts		63,809.11
Fixed assets		1,874,642.28
Total Assets	\$	1,948,603.73

Liabilities & Equity

Accrued expenses	\$	569.72
Bank mortgage balance		668,837.64
Member mortgage balances		150,000.00
Total liabilities		819,407.36

Equity 1,129,196.37

Total Liabilities & Equity \$ 1,948,603.73

Thank You & See You Later

Some of you may know already that my last day here at Roberts UCC as secretary is February 19th. It was a difficult decision to resign however, I was given the opportunity to follow my heart's true passion of training and working with horses. I will miss everyone here at Roberts UCC, but I am excited to start this new journey in front of me. Thank you to all of you; you have made my time here at Roberts UCC enjoyable. It is not goodbye, just see you later! ~Tiff

MINUTES FROM REGULAR CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING OF ROBERTS CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

February 4, 2021

Dawn Budrow (Moderator), Duane Loewel (Deacons), Jennah Stoffel (Co-Christian Education), Toni Williams (Co-Christian Education), Lori Jurek (S.H.I.F.T and Women's Fellowship), Margie Ricci (Financial), Pastor Burt, and Connie Mueller (Church Clerk).

Meeting was called to order by Dawn at 6:00pm

Opening devotion was led by Dawn. Based on Psalm 11:1 "Praise the Lord"

Minutes: January minutes were reviewed. Motion was made by Lori to approve the minutes and seconded by Margie. Motion carried.

Reports

Women's Fellowship:

- No meeting in February.
- Fellowship is requesting that all meetings be removed from the calendar. Tiff will be notified when meetings are resuming.

Christian Education:

- Jennah and Toni are Co-Chairing the Christian Education Board.
- Toni is leading our virtual Sunday School. Upon surveying the families of our children, it was decided that holding a 4pm Sunday School virtually is a better option. Attendance has increased, with the addition of a child whose family has become interested in our church through the virtual service. Sunday School will remain virtual through the end of this school year.
- Plans are being made for Vacation Bible School in August. It is unknown if it will be in person or virtual at this time (plans are being made for both).
- No date has been set for Confirmation yet.

Deacons:

- Will be reviewing and updating the active church membership list.

S.H.I.F.T:

- Serving a meal at Grace Place on February 18th.
- The Glenwood City School has requested more "Feel Good" kits.
- Grace Place will be sending correspondence of needs directly to the S.H.I.F.T. Team, rather than just Lori. Should a team member be able to cover a specific need, that member should just communicate with Grace Place. In the event of the need of covering a meal at Grace Place that has not been scheduled, all team members will be involved in determining if S.H.I.F.T. is able to handle the request.

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MINUTES FROM REGULAR CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING OF ROBERTS CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

February 4, 2021

(Continued from previous page)

Treasurer:

- See the report in the newsletter.

Trustees:

- Anyone with fundraising ideas, please contact the Trustees.
- New copier was delivered in December.
- Working on replacing computers, beginning with Tiff's. May need to have a specific fundraiser for the purpose of purchasing a new computer.
- Looking for ways to thank those who are contributing to the church.

Pastor:

- Looking for new Blood Drive coordinators.
- Confirmation is on task.
- Looking for individuals to assist in singing hymns used during Lent and for Easter.
- Has two more services to write and will then begin the process of taping the virtual services.
- Ash Wednesday: There will be a regular and a virtual service. In addition, a time will be available to receive ashes through drive up.
- Easter: Will have two services. Given good weather, the sunrise service will be held outside.
- Looking at weekly updates via email, regarding dates that have been changed, etc.
- Discussion groups will be held during Lent. One may participate on Wednesdays at noon or Sundays shortly after the service has concluded.
- Discussed the use of palms and lilies to beautify the church this year.

Other Discussion:

- Fundraising Ideas for Consideration:
 1. Virtual Polar Plunge: Donations for this can be gotten during February and March. A team needs to be put together. Each person on the team must video tape his or her own polar plunge (jumping into a kiddie pool, a bucket of ice on one's head, making a snow angel on the church property while wearing a swimsuit, etc.) These videos are to be uploaded to the site and available for viewing.
 2. Envelope Fundraiser: One hundred envelopes are hung on a clothesline. Each envelope is numbered. Each envelope will have a donation amount on it, from one dollar to one hundred dollars. No numbers will be duplicated. Those interested may take an envelope, donate that amount of money, and return it to the church. Discussion was held about doing this online instead, in the hopes of reaching out to more people.
 3. \$500 Wheelbarrow: A wheelbarrow is brought into the church and people are asked to contribute change to that wheelbarrow. A goal would be enough pennies for \$500.00.
 4. Daily Indulgence Drop: Given a specific period of time, someone would give up one daily indulgence. For example, giving up one cup of coffee purchased. The cost of that cup of coffee would then be given to the church. If it lasts for one month, the cost of the coffee times the number of days in the month would determine the amount pledged to be given.

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MINUTES FROM REGULAR CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING OF ROBERTS CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

February 4, 2021

(Continued from previous page)

Other Discussion (Continued):

- Fundraising Ideas for Consideration (continued):
 5. BINGO: Hopefully to happen again this fall.
 6. Silent Auction Online: Lori is going to look at the program run by Our Neighbor's Place as a model for a possible silent auction. She will check on fees if an auction is organized and held through their site.
 7. Church Auction: Ask former coordinator if interested in taking on this project again as done last year.
 8. Adopt-a-Project: Using some type of clothesline or online posting, expenses of the church could be listed, and people could pledge to pay for that project. Example: one week's electric bill, one month's phone bill, etc.
 9. Spring Rummage Sale: Already scheduled.
 10. Celebrate Reopening Dinner: Katy has offered to organize the dinner. A ticket price or free-will be collected. The expenses of the dinner will be paid through the donations or ticket price. The remainder of the amount collected will go to the church.
 11. Drive by Church Dinners: Consult with Katy or the Lindquists about how to organize and run a Drive by Dinner.
 12. Talent Show: Tape a variety of talent acts. People must buy access to view the Talent Show. Dawn will check into how others have used a talent show as a fundraiser.
- A suggestion was made that a committee be formed to coordinate the 2021 fundraisers so that they are not overlapping or too close. It was stated that the Constitution should be checked into regarding what group is ultimately in charge of fundraising for the church. Trustees will discuss fundraising at the next meeting.
- Everyone should be aware, that if one is paying for something through PayPal, PayPal collects a portion of the contribution.

Next Meeting: March 4th

Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Mueller, Church Clerk



Food Pantry

The Roberts Food Pantry is stocked and ready to serve! Curbside service is still being offered during normal Pantry hours.

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 9-11:30am

Wednesdays: 6:30-8pm

RUCC SCRIP PROGRAM

SCRIP orders can be placed on the forms available in the Narthex or can be placed online at www.shopwithscrip.com under our Roberts United Church of Christ organization. Our enrollment code is: D7L4154436429.

SCRIP has national cards available. Many of them are represented on the order forms. There are reloadable cards available also which allows you to use the same card and reduce shipping charges for new cards. Family Fresh and County Market cards are ordered locally by Dianne Loewel and must be ordered on the paper forms. Checks for SCRIP should be made out to **Roberts UCC SCRIP** and paid at the time you place your order.

Currently, orders are collected on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. Once orders are placed, all cards are shipped to Dianne at her home to reduce shipping charges incurred if shipped directly to the church with morning delivery. Cards are typically available for pick up on the 1st and 3rd Sundays.

Cards currently in stock are:
10 – \$100 County Market

If you are looking to place an order, please strongly consider ordering online and using a rechargeable card if possible.

Thank You from St. Croix Adult Community Support Services Team

On behalf of St. Croix County's Adult Community Support Service's Team, we want to express our deepest gratitude for giving our clients an AMAZING Christmas this year! This year has been one of the hardest years for many of the community members that we serve. Due to the impacts of the pandemic, many have felt hopeless, forgotten, and isolated. **The immense generosity that our clients experienced this holiday season was not only a blessing for us to witness but left our clients feeling valued and hopeful.**

It should be stated that many of our clients do not have natural supports in their life to celebrate holidays with which makes the holiday season even more difficult to cope with. However, receiving support from your congregation left a profound impact! There are no words that could capture the emotions and overwhelming happiness that we were privileged to witness. Here are some statements expressed that we wanted to share with you:

"There are people praying for me and that makes me feel so supported and loved."

"WOW! I can't believe there are people out there who don't even know me but want to wish me a Merry Christmas!"

As stated on your website, "we believe the church's mission is to change lives." **The United Church of Christ has not only lifted spirits during such a challenging time but has graced many individuals with an understanding that they are not alone.** Again, we are so incredibly grateful for your support and we wish you all a Happy New Year!

Many Thanks,
St. Croix County Adult Community Support Services Team



Gracie Delander – 3/1
Dan Nelson – 3/1
Hailey Schultz – 3/1
Bill Snoeyenbos – 3/2
Faron Fuller – 3/3
Margie Ricci – 3/3
Ryley Jurek – 3/3
Chris Bohl – 3/7
Deb Holmes – 3/7
Mary Thorsen – 3/8
Jeff Hinkel – 3/9
Logan Nelson – 3/10
Erin Weiss – 3/11
Mary Grupe – 3/12
Leo Weiss – 3/12

Pat Colbeth – 3/13
Daryl Jones – 3/13
Jo Fenstermaker – 3/17
Avery Rogers – 3/17
Rick Risberg – 3/20
Josie Armagost – 3/23
Tony Nelson – 3/23
Collin Nelson – 3/24
Cheryl Cowles – 3/25
Brita Lindquist – 3/26
Mark Morgen – 3/26
Betty Schultz – 3/27
Michelle Hansen – 3/29
Cheryl Lindquist – 3/30

♥ Don & Connie Gillis – 30 Years!



Help Wanted!

As many of you know, we have been working extremely hard to find ways of bringing everyone back together again. One of those ways is to start live streaming our services. Our goal in this is to help everyone feel involved in the service, even when you are not physically here with us. We have gotten close and the time has come to find some people that are interested in helping. The need is simple really, we are looking for anyone interested in running the camera, running a computer, or running sound. No experience is necessary as all training will be provided. Pastor Burt has been talking lately about being called, I am asking all of you to prayerfully give this some consideration and then let the deacons, Pastor Burt, or Tiff in the office know if you are feeling called to help us out. We are looking for enough people to step forward so that nobody must feel overwhelmed. Ideally, we would like to have multiple groups of 2-3 people so that no one must commit to every Sunday.



If you have placed someone on the prayer list, please update us on how they are currently. If you would like to add or remove someone, please contact Tiff in the office at ruccsecretary@gmail.com or (715) 749-3225.

Those currently on the Prayer List:

Carol Moenke	Lisa Briess	Earl Pechuman	Mary Fredrick	Joann Libby
LaVere Wolske	Amy Moshier	Bernie McGaver	Todd Knochenmus	Dean Hansen
Spence Porter	Brian Wille	Lois Hall	Bobbie Kuhnke	Tracy Grabau
Linda Hall	Renate Koch	Danielle Anderson		

- Baldwin Care Center: Marcia Graf
- Those serving on active Military duty.
- Those serving our state & community in Law Enforcement

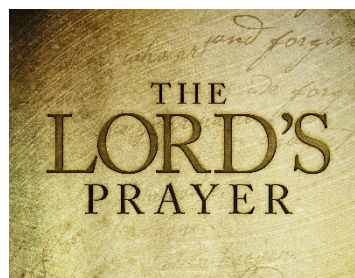
Bulletin Sponsor Information

This year, due to restrictions, we are using Signup Genius as our Bulletin Sponsor Sign Up sheet. Dates listed below are the currently available Sundays to sponsor the bulletin. The cost for sponsoring bulletins is \$15 per Sunday. If you are interested in sponsoring the bulletin on a date available, please let the office know so we can get you signed up.

-April 4th Easter 6:30am -April 4th Easter 10am -April 11th - April 25th - May 16th
- May 23rd - May 30th - July 11th - July 18th - July 25th - August 1st
- August 8th -August 22nd - August 29th -September 12th -October 31st
-November 7th - December 12th - December 24th Christmas Eve 4:30pm

The Lord's Prayer Discussion Group

During Lent, from February 14th through March 31st, there will be a discussion group held on the topic of each week's Sermon on the Lord's Prayer to go a little deeper and ask questions on each week's topic or section. The discussion groups will be held on Sundays at 11:30am after Sunday's services and Wednesdays at noon. The groups will be held via Zoom and if there are those interested in doing in-person that could be done as well. If you are interested, please email Pastor Burt at pastor@robertsucc.org.





2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 6:30pm Deacons Meeting	3 Noon – Lord’s Prayer Discussion Group 6:30pm DISCIPLES 2	4 4pm Women’s Fellowship 6pm Council Meeting	5	6
7 10am Worship with Holy Communion 11:30am Lord’s Prayer Discussion Group	8	9	10 Noon – Lord’s Prayer Discussion Group 6:30pm DISCIPLES 1	11	12	13
14 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME STARTS SCRIP Due 10am Worship 11:30am Lord’s Prayer Discussion Group	15	16 6pm Trustees Meeting	17 Noon – Lord’s Prayer Discussion Group 6:30pm DISCIPLES 2 <i>St. Patrick’s Day</i>	18 6pm Christian Education	19 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	20
21 10am Worship 11am PPRC 11:30am Lord’s Prayer Discussion Group	22	23	24 Noon – Lord’s Prayer Discussion Group 6:30pm DISCIPLES 1	25	26	27
28 SCRIP Due 10am Worship 11:30am Lord’s Prayer Discussion Group	29	30 <i>Quarterly Donation Statements Available</i>	31			