

CONNECTIONS

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

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WHAT'S THE CATCH TO ORDERING A MEAL?

GO TO:

Valentine's Dinner Roulette Rules
Direct Link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10yPVbbFyEIKs8fVrlsKdLGB16aLL6mqR/view



Roberts Congregational United Church of Christ

1001 Birch Drive | PO Box 116 | Roberts, WI 54023

Church Office: 715-749-3225 | https://www.facebook.com/RobertsUCC

Pastor: pastor@robertsucc.org



AND A NEW YEAR BEGINS!

It is hard to believe we are already almost one month

into 2024. The new year has been a whirlwind already. End-of-year bookwork and reporting which needs to be done, programs which are starting up and taking off. Events which are being planned. Lenten services are being planned for and pulled together in this time. By the way, Lent is early this year, beginning with Ash Wednesday on February 14th. What a wonderfully busy time of year! Before we know it, Easter will be here, and we will be heading into Spring and Summer.

Which leads me into part of what I want to be communicating over the next few months...Sabbatical. It is hard to believe, but as of last September I have been here for six years. The last 3 plus of them have been some of the craziest of my career. It has been a wonderful time to be in ministry and some of the hardest times as well as our world has been on what seems to be a never-ending rollercoaster ride moving at light speed. Yet, it has led to some wonderful opportunities for growth and change. Which again, leads me back to Sabbatical.

The first thing I would like to address is what a Sabbatical is. With regards to the ministry, it is a period of time allotted to a Pastor every so many years (in my case it is supposed to be 3 months for every five years of service) designed to give time to specifically focus on spiritual growth and renewal, study, and professional development. It is there to help prevent burnout, but also to help us stay relevant in an ever-changing world. Ministry often keeps pastors hopping with development of programs, spiritual growth opportunities and programs, and practical faith development for others, along with the service to those in need, funerals, weddings, and the day-to-day operations. There is not much time left to devote to our own professional development, spiritual growth and renewal, and study which helps us to stay vibrant and faithful for the church, especially if we are going to have any type of family life. Sabbatical is there for this exact purpose.

As much as people look at it as a three-month vacation, and there is some time programmed in for recuperation, rest, and relaxation, it is really about using the time to grow, renew, and develop

professionally. Which is what I intend to do. I will lay out a good deal of my plans over the next few articles. Some of them are still in the early stages of planning.

It is also a time for churches to celebrate. First, it is a time to celebrate the pastor-congregation relationship. It is a wonderful thing when a congregation and pastor learn to communicate and grow together in a way which is healthy and sustainable. We have gone through some pretty rocky times together – economically, socially, physically – over the last few years and we have come through it being relatively healthy and growing. Those places where we have been hurt, or things have not worked out as well as we had hoped, are areas in which we will continue to work at Overall, though, we have kept the relationship intact and will hopefully, continue to grow together.

It is also a time to celebrate the gifts of the congregation, by letting them shine out. During the time I will be gone, our church leadership, groups, and talents will have the chance to shine in ways they may not often be seen. For instance, your Christian Education team has already selected dates during my Sabbatical time where they are going to step in to lead worship and events. They are a talented group, whom I am certain will take the ideas they have already started developing and lead all of you in wonderful services and events.

It is a time to celebrate our strengths and work on our growing edges as well. It may even be a time where some of those strengths and growing edges we were not aware of show themselves. What are some of the strengths of this congregation? What are some of our growing edges? How will we celebrate them both? Do you have ideas? Bring them to your church leadership. Let's see what the Holy Spirit does in and through all of you.

Finally, this is a time to celebrate our love and integrity as a congregation. During the three months I will be on Sabbatical, it is going to take the hard work and devotion of the congregation to come together as a church family. It will become important to support one another by attending, continuing to

give of time, talents, and resources, and just being willing to try new and wonderful things as well as resurrecting some old favorites. This congregation is a strong and beautiful family, and I am looking forward to seeing what you do and how you celebrate your time together.

There will be many questions and much planning done over the next few months, so please feel free to

ask what is on your mind and suggest (with the understanding you will need to help) activities and things you would like to see. In the next couple of months, I will go into greater detail of what I will be doing and hopefully have more exciting things to let you know that will be happening here as well!

> Peace and God bless! -Pastor Burt

LENTEN SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

Lent is right around the corner. Our first celebration will happen February 14th at 7pm with our Ash Wednesday Service. Over our Lenten Season our theme will be "Going Home, The Jesus Story." Each Sunday we will look at a different part of the life of Jesus. We will start with the birth February 18th and move from there to Jesus in Egypt, Jesus in the Temple, Beginning of Jesus' Ministry, The Temptation of Jesus, the Teachings/Miracles of Jesus, Our Regrets/Denials (Maundy Thursday), Going Home (Good Friday), and Our "New" Home on Easter Sunday. The Deacons and I are excited to share this journey with you as we prepare to take a seven-week journey together around the life and times of Jesus.

I ENTEN DATE

	LENTEN DATES
February 14 th	Ash Wednesday Service 7pm
February 18 th	1st Sunday of Lent – Book Study after service
February 25 th	2^{nd} Sunday of Lent – All Church Leadership Meeting
March 3 rd	3rd Sunday of Lent – Book Study after service
March 10 th	4 th Sunday of Lent – Book Study after service
March 17 th	5 th Sunday of Lent – Book Study after service.
March 24 th	Palm Sunday – Last Book Study after service
March 28 th	Maundy Thursday Service 7pm
March 29 th	Good Friday Service 7 pm
March 31st	Easter Sunday Services

Sunrise Service 7am

Morning Worship Service 10am

Alongside this journey, we will be doing a book study as well. The book we will be reading will be "Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time: The Historical Jesus and the Heart of Contemporary Faith." by Marcus Borg. The books cost \$15, and I will need to order them by February 4th to have them here in time for people to get them and be prepared for our first meeting after Service on Sunday February 18th. The schedule for the Study is below in our Lenten Dates list. If you are interested in the Book Study and would like me to order a book for you, or if you have questions, please feel free to email (pastor@robertsucc.org), call (563-387-7093), or just stop me sometime after service or when you are at the church, and I will get you on the list. We should have another great Lenten Season (even though it is very early this year).



CHURCH COUNCIL ROBERTS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CHRIST January 4, 2024

Lori Jurek (Moderator, S.H.I.F.T. and Women's Fellowship), Duane Loewel (Deacons), Tony Jurek (Trustees), Toni Williams (CE), Pastor Burt Williams, and Connie Mueller (Clerk)

Meeting was called to order Lori at 6:00 P.M.

Opening devotion was led by Toni: "A Board Prayer."

Minutes: December minutes were reviewed. Toni made a motion to approve the minutes and Tony seconded it.

Old Business:

Christian Education: (Toni)

- Flyers regarding RUCCUS have gone into the school newsletter.
- RUCCUS Christmas pageant was very successful. A video is available to view for those unable to attend or enjoy again.
- Valentine's Roulette will be held on Feb. 17th. All are welcome to this "Fun-Raiser." Tickets will be available soon.
- Talking about starting a Mom's group, which would be open to all mom's community wide.

Deacons: (Duane)

- Advent and Christmas went very well.
- Nominating committee is seeking volunteers for Church Treasurer, Clerk, Deacons, Trustees, and Board of Christian Education.
- Pastor Burt presented a theme and outline for Lent "Going Home."
- Discussed Pastor's sabbatical, which is from July 1 to September 30. Communion will continue throughout.
- Pastor Burt will be taking a vacation day the last Sunday in January.

S.H.I.F.T (Lori)

- Cookie Sale was very successful. Approximately \$500.00 was raised. Of that \$500.00, \$250.00 was given to T.H.U.G. and \$250.00 was given to the church general fund. An additional \$100.00 was given to the food pantry in thanks for the pantry's support of providing food as needed for Grace Place.
- Next meeting will be in February.
- A spring plant sale will be held as a fundraiser for S.H.I.F.T.

<u>Trustees:</u> (Tony)

- Discussed what a treasurer's role and responsibilities should be.
- Began planning fundraisers for 2024.
- The 2024 budget has been finalized.
- Preliminary list of tasks that the trustees complete yearly has been developed and will be submitted by Patti.
- Audit will be done on January 13
- Reviewed the church's insurance regarding counseling liability.
- Maintenance items in progress and/or completed. Weather stripping of some doors has been done, with more to be finished. Vent in the kitchen has been cleaned. The dishwasher needs to be addressed because of the calcium buildup.
- A smart meter has been installed.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Continued from previous page.

Church Board Team: Duane

- Annual report is completed.
- Tentative schedule: February 25th after church (all church leadership meeting), early March (communication to go out to all), April (small group meetings in church and/or homes to discuss the possible changes in the governance of the church, and May 19th (congregational meeting to discuss and vote on potential changes being recommended)
- All boards and committees need to submit a list of all things that they do and when in the year it is generally completed. This is needed by the annual meeting. CE and S.H.I.F.T. have submitted their lists
- Next meeting of the Church Board Team is January 29th.

Pastor:

- The pastor's sabbatical will be July, August, and September 2024. More details will be given later.
- Thank you to all for submitting annual reports on time.
- Pastor Burt would like to establish a small group to oversee a fund set up specifically for helping community members in financial need. It was suggested that a separate checking account be set up, with the possibility of having a separate offering once a month to support such program. Discussion will be held at the next Trustees meeting regarding establishing this account. Pastor Burt will have general guidelines for the council to review.

Women's Fellowship: (Lori)

- Met today.
- Dinner committees have been published.
- Books are ready for the audit.

New Business: None

Next meetings:

February: No meeting will be held. Reports should be submitted by January 31st.

March 7th, Duane will do the opening.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Mueller

YEAR END GIVING STATEMENTS

2023 Giving statements were made available to be picked up at church beginning January 14th. Any statements that were not picked up at church, were mailed out on January 24th.

If you did not receive your statement or have any questions regarding your 2023 giving statement, please contact the church office. Email: secretary@robertsucc.org or (715) 749-3225.

ANNUAL REPORTS

2023 Annual Reports were both emailed out and made available at church. There will be a small addendum to the 2023 Annual Report with correct committee information. This will also be emailed to all members and made available at church on February 1st.

Thank you to all leadership for getting your reports in either on time or early.



For any questions about this event, please contact:

Tony Jurek

tjurek@baldwin-telecom.net (715) 531-5170

Lori Jurek

lorijurek@gmail.com (715) 386-3214

Dunk times are between 1:00pm-2:30pm and will be posted by Wednesday January 31, 2024.

The Hudson Rotary Club is once again hosting the premiere winter fundraising event in the St. Croix Valley during the *6th Annual St. Croix River Dunk*.

They are helping others raise funds for the area's favorite non-profits on Saturday February 3rd, 2024. All you must do is raise the funds and take the leap!

Last year our goal was \$3500, and because of the success of that event, we're aiming for a \$2500 (we know times are tight right now) to impact our community this year! Help us reach that goal by raising funds for the Church!

Please note: On the day of the event, the team will meet for adult comradery and beverages. Feel free to join us and cheer us on even if you didn't sign up to participate!

<u>To register as a team member</u>, please go to https://secure.frontstream.com/2024-st-croix-river-dunk/, click Register next to the Polar Bear, select Join a Team on the next screen and fill out the information. And thank you in advance for being a part of the team this year!!!

<u>To donate to the team</u>, please go to: https://secure.frontstream.com/2024-st-croix-river-dunk/team/1007424. We will also take donations at church.

Those who don't want to jump, can still participate in the fun by donating and/or coming out on Feb 3rd to cheer on those who are jumping.

2023 CHRISTMAS CLOTHESLINE PARTICIPANTS

An Expression of Deep Gratitude

Dear Members of the United Church of Christ,



On behalf of St. Croix County Adult Community Support Services Team (ACSS), we want to express our deepest gratitude for your generous donations to our clients during this holiday season. The individuals the ACSS program supports are strong, brave, and resilient; however, many are also isolated, marginalized, and feel disconnected from friends, family, and their community. Some have lost "hope" and a sense of "purpose" in their lives, and they feel that no one cares about them. Sometimes the holidays are a difficult reminder of what they don't have instead of a reflection of what they do. This is why RUCC's generous donations mean so much to them. It is not just about the gifts (although each one is thoughtful, personal, and cherished by the clients), it is the realization that someone took the time to purchase them, wrap them, and give them; someone who doesn't even know them, as simply a way of saying "you matter" and "I care".

The mission of our ACSS program is to partner, promote, and advocate for mental health recovery, and we are so grateful to have such an incredible PARTNER in your congregation. You are a true blessing and reminder to our clients (and all of us on the ACSS team!) that love, kindness, and connection is powerful and very much alive in our community.

Warm Regards, St. Croix County Adult Community Support Services Team

TREASURER'S REPORT

**Detailed minutes of the Trustees meetings, including full financial statements are available upon request.

General Fund Financial Summary as of December 31, 2023

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Statement	OI -	ACHVILV

Income/Contributions \$ 191,179.20

Fundraising Income 23,081.91

Facility Use 6,125.00

Interest 1.90

Total Income 220,388.01

Expenses 227,327.11

Transfers from other Accounts 22,375.03

Net Activity \$ 15,435.93

Statement of Financial Position

Assets

General Accounts\$ 4,7481.64

Other Bank Accounts 57,322.48

Fixed Assets <u>1,874,642.28</u>

Total Assets \$ 1,936,746.40

Liabilities & Equity

Accrued expenses \$ 4,685.93

Bank mortgage balance 560,419.65

Member mortgage balances <u>150,000.00</u>

Total liabilities 715,105.58

Equity 1,221,640.82

Total Liabilities & Equity _____1,936,746.40

COMMUNITY DINNER

Thursday, February 1, 2024 4:30 p.m.- 6:30 p.m.

Everyone is welcome!

MENU

Lasagna

Lettuce Salad

French Bread

Assorted Bars

Milk & Coffee

Adults: \$ 7.00

Children (5-13) \$ 4.00

Under 5 \$ FREE

Sponsored by Women's Fellowship

Roberts Congregational United Church of Christ

1001 Birch Drive

Roberts, WI 54023 715-749-3225

Take-out meals are available upon request.

1st & 3rd Wednesdays of each month **October through May

R UCCUS

Roberts UCC Understanding Scripture

Join us! All are Welcome!

(Whether you have children or no children – whether you are single or married & from the youngest of us to the oldest of us)

5:30pm Potluck meal

All are invited to come and join us as a church family for this meal together. Please bring a dish to pass, beverages for your group/family, and plates/utensils to use. We look forward to seeing you there!

<u>6:00pm – 7:15ish Program</u>

Music, Discussion Groups, Worship & Prayer

Have some friends who you think might enjoy this time of family worship and learning?? Invite them and their family along!

Let us know if you have any questions!

drtonidc@gmail.com.

**Please note, due to the winter season, the calendar on our website will have any cancellations or changes to our regular meeting dates and times. If you are already on our email list, you should also receive an email with any changes.



ELECTRONIC TRANSFER OF FUNDS (EFT)

Instead of writing a check each week, try EFT. Your donations will be automatically withdrawn on the 15th each month. Forms are available in the Narthex and can be dropped in the office or mailed to the church. EFT's can be changed at any time.

Contact the church office with any questions. (715) 749-3225 or email secretary@robertsucc.org.



DID YOU KNOW GIFT CARDS SUPPORTS OUR CHURCH?

Just buy a card as a gift or use it where and when you already shop.

BROWSE RAISERIGHT FIRST

Go to: https://www.raiseright.com/. Once you find your shops, create an account.

OR

Print out a form NOW!

http://www.robertsucc.org/mtcontent/uploads/2023/05/raiserightform.pdf

And either drop off or mail in your completed form to church. We will contact you when your gift card(s) are ready.

To obtain a CODE for ordering, or with questions:

Dianne Loewel: dianne.loewel@gmail.com

We have 4 - \$100 County Market gift cards and 1 - \$50 Walmart card available on site available for immediate purchase.



<u>LENTEN SERVICE PROJECT</u>

Kids will collect change/ ask for donations.

FMSC event : April 27th Time: 9:30am to 11:15am

Where: Eagan FMSC

*We can carpool - meet at church at 8:30am

FMSC requires a reservation.

If you are interested or have questions, please contact Michelle Hansen as soon as possible. shell_329@hotmail.com; (715) 377-8887



PLEASE HOLD THE FOLLOWING IN PRAYER

Earl Pechuman Linda Hall Terry McKinley Audrey Ackley Tom Sullwold Allison Terrill Florcyk Joyce Johnson Brian Wille

For all those serving in our law enforcement, first responders, military, healthcare settings, and those in Ukraine.

For all those not listed above but needing prayer, we lift you up.

If you have any prayer concerns, please let us know.

Thank you for helping to keep the prayer list up to date.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES



<u>February 9</u>

Danielle & Justin Johnson

February 15

Jamie & Melissa Delander



February	1

Mark Clay

February 17 Leslie Dull

February 25 Barb Haas

February 2

Pete Amendt

February 19 Shelly Dull

February 26
Brian Poulin

February 13

Dave McKenna

February 20

February 27

February 15

Delila Johnson

Laurene Ray

Ken Fern Axl Korn

February 21

Carol Dull Roger Ray February 28 John Vorwold



Tuesdays & Thursdays 9am – 11:30am

Wednesdays 6:30pm - 8:00pm

OPEN WEEKLY

Do you or anyone you know need help with groceries? The Roberts Food Pantry can help.

Or if you are looking for a way to donate, the pantry could use the following items:

Paper Products, Hamburger Helper, Pastas, Canned Pineapple, Canned Mandarin Oranges, Jell-O (all flavors).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
FE	BRUA	RY 202	4	1 3:30pm WF 4:30pm Community Dinner	2	3 1:00pm-2:30pm St. Croix River Dunk (Our team time to be posted on 1-31.)
4 10:00am Worship w/Holy Communion Baptism for Barrett Edward Larson	5	6 6:00pm Deacon's Meeting	7 5:30pm RUCCUS Potluck 6:00pm RUCCUS Program 6:15pm Bell Choir	8	9	10
11 10:00am Worship RaiseRight Orders Due	Meeting	13	14 Ash Wednesday 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Worship Valentine's Day	15 5:00pm SHIFT @ Grace Place	16	17 5:00pm Valentine's Roulette Dinner
18 10:00am Worship	19 President Day	20 6:30pm Trustee's Meeting Newsletter Deadline	21 5:30pm RUCCUS Potluck 6:00pm RUCCUS Program 6:15pm Bell Choir	22	23	24
25 10:00am Worship 11:00am All Church Leadership Meeting RaiseRight Orders Due	26	27	28	29		

BULLETIN SPONSORSHIP

Is again available and is typically done in honor, celebration, or memory of someone, or of a special event.

Sign-Up Genius for date selection is available. Below is the direct link: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4EABA92AA3FAC61-46632879-2024#/. Paper sign-up is available in the narthex.

Free-will donations are accepted. (\$15/Sunday suggested). If you choose to donate, please include "Bulletin Sponsorship" in the memo of your check. Your sponsorship will appear in the Sunday bulletins. Donations are used to off-set paper and printing costs. If you have any questions contact the office.*



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