



Rockfish Presbyterian Church
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Office Hours 9-1 Tuesday through Thursday
Worship Service on Sunday Mornings in the Sanctuary at 10:00

Volume 23 Issue 1

Spreading the Word

January 2022

Chalking the Door is an Epiphany ritual that can be done at church, then repeated in the homes of the congregation. It is basically a house blessing. Using chalk, members of the congregation or household write on the door frame the year's date and the letters C, B, and M (the initials of the three wise men).

Prayer is then offered asking that the door welcome many visitors during the coming year and that all who come through the doorway be blessed. Some churches write on the church doors (if there are more than one, all are chalked) during the worship service. People who may come through the doors—parents bringing babies to be baptized, brides and grooms, people coming to remember those who have died, and lots of people coming to worship God each week can be remembered. Then households are encouraged to chalk the doors in their own homes. A simple blessing is used at both church and home.

Below are sample blessing.

**God of doors and homes, bless this home this year and every year.
Bless all who come and go through this door, both those who live here and those who visit.
May all who enter through this door come in peace and bring joy.
May all who come to this door find a welcome and love.
May the love and joy in this home overflow and spread into the community and the world.**

Interesting tidbit: I learned on another blog that C, M, B also stands for Christus Mansionem Benedicat, Latin for "May Christ Bless this House."

Jewell-Ann



Christian Education Announcement

Sunday School, which was supposed to resume on January 9th starting at 9:00 a.m., has been postponed until COVID-19 cases in the area decrease in numbers. In the mean time, you can read the book, "If You Want to Walk On Water You've Got To Get Out Of The Boat" by *John Ortberg* and be ready for discussion when Sunday School resumes. This series will have shared leadership facilitating the discussion. The Christian Education committee hopes as many of you as possible will join us!

Your Christian Education Committee

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Bill Nevill	01
Katy Gale	03
Ray Koon	03
Suzi Wisler	04
Waneta Simmons	07
Carolyn Borgman	15
Joyce Smith	15
Roger Elliott	17
Mike Chambers	22
Helen Eisenhart	22
Zoe Ogilvie	26
Dick Averitt	27
Barbara Porter	29
Marie Borgman	31
Nancy Kern	31

Thoughts from the Barn Preparing for Epiphany

Dear Friends in Christ:

By the beginning of the new year, many will have taken down the Christmas tree, put the decorations back in the attic, and will hunker down for the long winter days ahead, which will be filled with the restrictions of the pandemic. Sigh!

But Christmas is not over; the birth of Christ is only the beginning. I have always liked the wise men who followed the star to the stable in Bethlehem. Epiphany (January 6th) marks the visit of the wise men, certainly the most exotic visitors to the stable. To my mind they are placed later in the birth narrative to remind us that Christmas continues.

These stargazers from the East are called wise men or kings, but the Greek New Testament calls them magi, which is the etymological root of "magician." In scripture magicians are depicted as scoundrels, but these magi are depicted as men of faith. They ask the wicked King Herod: *"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him"* (Matthew 2:2).

What we know about the magi is that they have travelled a long way under difficult circumstances, without really knowing their destination. T.S. Eliot probably says it best in his poem *Journey of the Magi*: *"A cold coming we had of it/ Just the worst time of the year/ For a journey, and such a long journey: the way deep and the weather sharp/ The very dead of winter."* Our faith journey can feel that way sometimes; we're out there, like the magi, without a GPS or a compass, only a star to guide us.

The magi bring valuable gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh. Their gifts tell me that I am to bring my best gifts to Christ, whether they be time, money, or talents. The magi are changed by this journey, as we will be. The old in us must die and be replaced by something else – again not an easy transition. Eliot writes: *"I had seen birth and death, But had thought they were different; this Birth was/Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death,/ We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,/But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation/With an alien people clutching their gods,/I should be glad of another death."* We enter new territory with Christ, and the old ways do not hold.

But I am also aware of the magic in this story. There was a storyteller long ago that says I should be like a child (Matthew 18:3). I am also reminded that there are mysteries in this world that are neither explained or fully known – we see through a mirror, dimly (1 Corinthians 13:12). And when I stop and look and listen during this holy season, I can catch just enough of the mystery to believe that the journey is worth making.

In Christ,
Jewell-Ann

STW NEWSLETTER :

JAMIE HEARD

The deadline for submitting articles **electronically** for the **February** newsletter is **Thursday, January 20**.

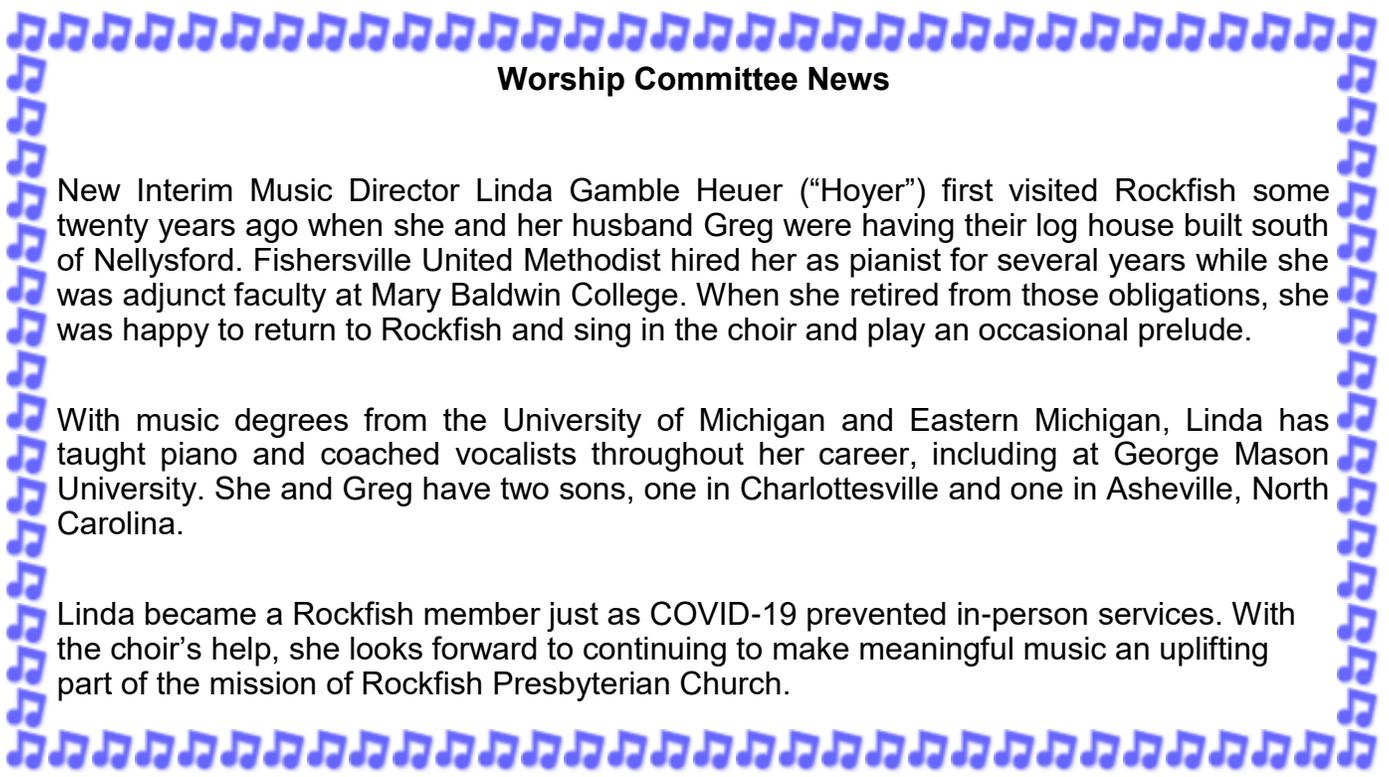
Email: rockfishpcus@gmail.com **Phone:** (434) 361-1221



A Blessing Called Sanctuary

You hardly knew
 how hungry you were
 to be gathered in,
 to receive the welcome
 that invited you to enter
 entirely—
 nothing of you
 found foreign or strange,
 nothing of your life
 that you were asked
 to leave behind
 or to carry in silence
 or in shame.
 Tentative steps
 became settling in,
 leaning into the blessing
 that enfolded you,
 taking your place
 in the circle
 that stunned you
 with its unimagined grace.
 You began to breathe again,
 to move without fear,
 to speak with abandon
 the words you carried
 in your bones,
 that echoed in your being.
 You learned to sing.
 But the deal with this blessing
 is that it will not leave you alone,
 will not let you linger
 in safety,
 in stasis.
 The time will come
 when this blessing
 will ask you to leave,
 not because it has tired of you
 but because it desires for you
 to become the sanctuary
 that you have found—
 to speak your word
 into the world,
 to tell what you have heard
 with your own ears,
 seen with your own eyes,
 known in your own heart:
 that you are beloved,
 precious child of God,
 beautiful to behold,*
 and you are welcome
 and more than welcome
 here.



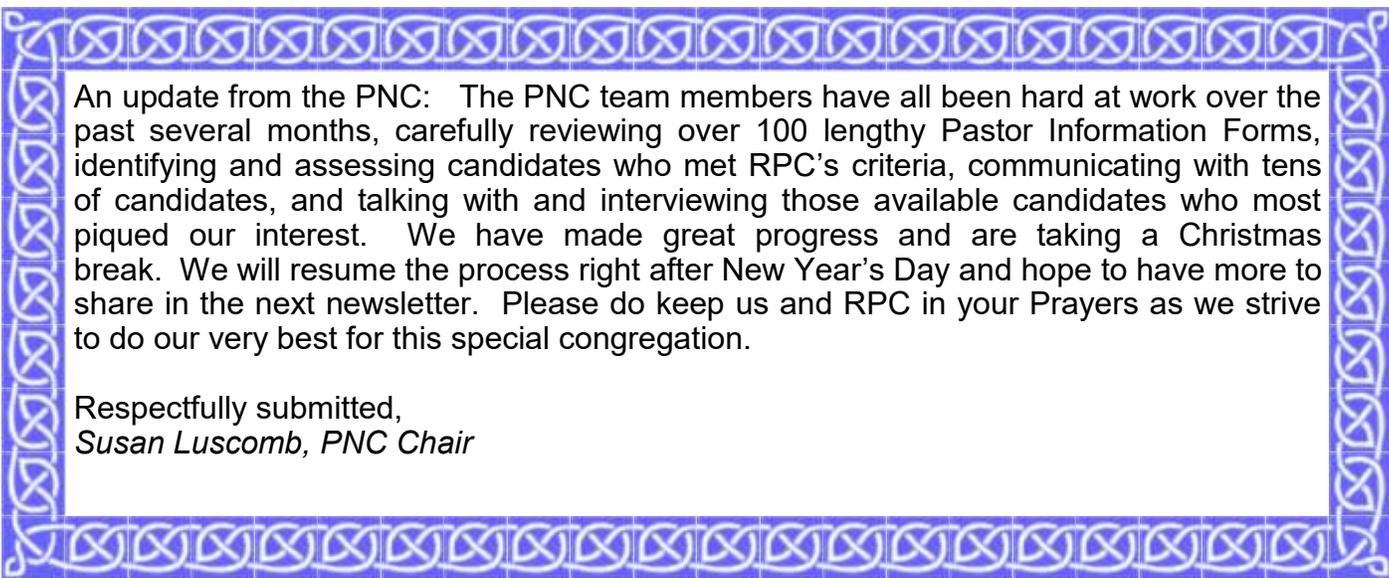


Worship Committee News

New Interim Music Director Linda Gamble Heuer (“Hoyer”) first visited Rockfish some twenty years ago when she and her husband Greg were having their log house built south of Nellysford. Fishersville United Methodist hired her as pianist for several years while she was adjunct faculty at Mary Baldwin College. When she retired from those obligations, she was happy to return to Rockfish and sing in the choir and play an occasional prelude.

With music degrees from the University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan, Linda has taught piano and coached vocalists throughout her career, including at George Mason University. She and Greg have two sons, one in Charlottesville and one in Asheville, North Carolina.

Linda became a Rockfish member just as COVID-19 prevented in-person services. With the choir’s help, she looks forward to continuing to make meaningful music an uplifting part of the mission of Rockfish Presbyterian Church.



An update from the PNC: The PNC team members have all been hard at work over the past several months, carefully reviewing over 100 lengthy Pastor Information Forms, identifying and assessing candidates who met RPC’s criteria, communicating with tens of candidates, and talking with and interviewing those available candidates who most piqued our interest. We have made great progress and are taking a Christmas break. We will resume the process right after New Year’s Day and hope to have more to share in the next newsletter. Please do keep us and RPC in your Prayers as we strive to do our very best for this special congregation.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Luscomb, PNC Chair

Thank you to all those who supported our Care Bears ministry this holiday season! Through your generosity, we were able to provide Christmas gifts to a total of 60 children at Rockfish River and Tye River elementary schools. The coordinator at Rockfish River said, "Christmas will be great for these kids this year," so know that our support is greatly appreciated.



A special thank you to Linda Williams, Ute Kitching, Sharon Gress, and Lynne Carson who helped with shopping for gifts. And a special **thank you** to Wendy Culberson for heading up the program.

Youth News

Thank you to the Agnes Schrider crew that filled the Children's Food Pantry bags for December. Pictured are Sharon, Liam, Victor, Katie and Kieran. 75 bags were filled with nutritious snack food for the children of Nelson County.



Congratulations to the Nelson County High School One Act play that won the VSHL state competition by performing "Charley's Aunt." Ella Manthey and Sophie Ogilvie were a part of the play. We are so proud of the talented, Ella Manthey, for being named the top actor in the state!!

Session Highlights 12/21/21

In lieu of the in-person Stated Meeting of the Session of Rockfish Presbyterian Church on 12/21/21 and given the new COVID directives, Session voted by email approving the following:

1. Remove Marianne Lampert from the church rolls per her request.
2. COVID restrictions were reexamined. The current thinking is there's going to be a lot of COVID, including a lot of break-through cases over the next 4 to 6 weeks. Evidence already suggests they won't be severe for vaccinated and boosted folks. The suggestion was made to go back to requiring masks inside (including at the Christmas eve services) until we have more clarity as to what we're dealing with. Choir and congregation will be permitted to sing in masks.
3. The 2022 budget was passed but may be amended as we begin the new year. The budget will be presented to the congregation at its annual meeting, date TBD.
4. Linda Heuer will lead the choir.
5. Sunday School to begin January 9*, using the study by John Ortberg entitled "If You Want to Walk on Water, You'll Have to Get out of the Boat."

All email votes will be ratified at the January Session Meeting 1/18/22.

Next Stated Session Meeting: Tuesday, 1/18/22 at 7 P.M. in the Fellowship Hall. Opening Prayer: Elder Kate Humphrey Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Fulton, Clerk

**To be delayed due to COVID concerns*



January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 10:00 a.m. Worship Service Five Cents a Meal Offering	3 7:00 p.m. Mission Team Meeting	4	5 10:00 a.m. Knitting and Nurture	6 Noon—Men's Group Lunch 4:00 p.m. Worship Committee Meeting	7	8
9 10:00 a.m. Worship Service	10 5:00 p.m. Stewardship Meeting	11	12 10:00 a.m. Knitting and Nurture	13 Noon—Men's Group Lunch	14	15
16 10:00 a.m. Worship Service	17	18 7:00 p.m. Session Meeting	19 10:00 a.m. Knitting and Nurture	20 Noon—Men's Group Lunch Spreading The Word Articles Due	21	22
23 10:00 a.m. Worship Service 9:30 a.m. Pack Pantry Bags for Kids Emergency Relief Offering	24	25	26 10:00 a.m. Knitting and Nurture	27 Noon—Men's Group Lunch	28 Pantry Bag Packing	29 9:00 a.m. Distribution at Food Pantry
30 10:00 a.m. Worship Service	31					