



The Rolling Stone

Rollstone Congregational Church

March 2020

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Have you ever found yourself caught into a situation of thinking you are working with a finished product or recipe to find out later that it was still in process? Scenarios like this do play out in life more often than we would like to acknowledge. It is easy to imagine that with family dynamics some meals might look like they are ready to serve, but one taste and you realize that something is definitely wrong. Whenever I am creating in the kitchen there are moments that I need to allow the flavors to develop, when this step is skipped you might have an unpleasant experience. I know of another pastor who can't cook to save his life, so he has to rely on his wife and daughter to create the meals arriving at the dinner table. One evening his wife had started to make some vegan chili who had to run out to do something with one of the younger kids. He arrived home earlier than usual and saw the pot sitting on the stove, so he decided to grab a bowl to have a taste with his oldest daughter.

They sat at the table, said grace and proceeded to eat the mixture. They looked at one another and the question was asked, "Do you like this?" The response was not what one would hope for or expect because the response was, "What is it?"

The conversation continued on a downward slope because he said, "I don't know what it is, it has no flavor, and it tastes like sadness." They just couldn't eat it and decided to settle for some oatmeal. Awhile later the wife arrived home, but how was he going to tell his wife that the soup she created was a catastrophic failure. He gathered up the courage and said, "Sweetie, we love you, but that soup was pretty bad.

"What soup?" she said.

"The soup on the stove," he said, thinking it was obvious.

To his surprise, she burst out laughing. "That's not soup," she chuckled, "it's the beginning of chili that I didn't get to finish. I'll bet it tasted like wet yard work."

This event left him thinking about bigger things. How many times do we see a problem or challenge in our lives, and we scoop up a big bowl full of it and complain to God that it's tasteless and not good enough. Clergy and church leaders are notorious for this. We look at our churches and we see blandness and things not working out like we'd hoped. We're kind of like the Israelites complaining about manna and quail in the desert — seeing God's provision for the basics as less than nourishing, tasteless, "miserable food" (Numbers 21:5).

What we miss is the fact that God isn't finished with it yet; isn't finished with our churches yet; isn't finished with *us* yet. There's more to be added, more spice to mix in, more flavor than we imagined. We tend to jump the gun and think that the pot of stuff in front of us — be it a crisis, a problem, a decision, a challenge — is all that there is. But God has so much more for us if we're willing to be patient and persistent and trust the one who knows the full recipe for life. Remember, God is always cooking up something good for us if we are willing to wait and be patient.

Blessings,

Pastor Dave

Deacon News

Hi everyone, I can't believe it is almost March the months are just flying by. Some people are saying where is winter. March can be fickle, so more snow is sure to come. We will enjoy the nice weather while it is here.

We had a Yankee swap in Feb. to celebrate Valentine's day. We have been having this for several years. It is so much fun and everyone has such a good time. We had a lot of laughs.

On Feb. 23rd we had our candidate for organist, Gavin Klein, here to play for us. He has amazing musical talent. The congregation gave him a standing ovation. He will be here more often in the fall as he has previous obligations. We are all looking forward to him coming.

During Lent we will be having Bible study Sundays in the chapel from 9:00 to 9:45. Come if you are able. There is a devotional available in the sanctuary. Everyone who came last year enjoyed the discussions.

Easter will be here before we know it. There will be forms available to order plants.

Don't forget on the bulletin board there are forms to sign up for lay liturgist and ushers. There is also a bookcase in Cookman Hall to the left of the stage with books for you to borrow. If you have any books you wish to share, bring them in.

There is also a flower chart on the bulletin board if you wish to sign up to have flowers on a particular Sunday.

If you have any ideas for things, we can all do together, please see one of the Deacons or Pastor Dave

Until next time, Linda Haas

Pat Goguen wanted to share this with us.

Sunset

*The day is done
The sun is set,
Yet light still tents the sky.
My heart stands still in reverence
For God is passing by.*

Join us for some great dinners! All dinners start at 4:00 pm and end at 6:00 pm.

Saturday, March 7th, 2020

Baked Ham, with homemade Mac & Cheese
Broccoli, cauliflower and carrots
Fruit cocktail for dessert

Wednesday, March 11th, 2020

Spaghetti Supper

Church School News for March...

Kids (grown-ups too) can find it hard to explain some “church words”. What about “Lent”:



For Lent, it is good for us to PLANT- different kind of seeds. We can plant seeds of love in the hearts of others when we are kind, or helpful, or when we tell someone about Jesus. For Lent, think of something you can do that will become something beautiful for someone else, and do it in the name of Jesus, the one who did something really beautiful for you.

How can you help? - here is an IDEA!

During Lent our church family will be collecting food and health care items to share with students in need at Memorial Middle School. We will be collecting items throughout the weeks of Lent. If you are able, please consider donating an item or two - just a little each week will make a VERY BIG difference to these families. Here is a list of items we need to replenish the pantry shelves:

Food: Peanut Butter, Jelly, Mac & Cheese, Pasta Sauce, Chef-Boyardee (pasta w/meatballs or ravioli), Ramen Noodles, Ritz Crackers, Graham Crackers, Pop Tarts.

Health Care: Shampoo, Deodorant, Toothpaste (can be travel size), Sanitary Napkins

Please Look Forward to important dates:

April 5th Palm Sunday we invite all youth (and maybe some kids at heart) back of the church and enter triumphantly swaying palms during the Also join Hal in fellowship to fold palm crosses!

April 12th Easter Sunday is a Family Sunday (no church school classes will day)- all ages are invited to enjoy the Easter Service seated with their



to meet at the opening Hymn.

be held on that families!

Blessings, Beth and Hal



WAYSIDE PULPIT

Anger Released

My brother Tom has been in my thoughts this week. Saturday was his birthday. He would have turned 67, if cancer had not taken him at age 49.

Tom had a cheerful disposition and a marvelous sense of humor. He also had a temper that could best be described as volcanic. It lay concealed and dormant deep below his surface, until erupting with violent sound and heat.

Tom had two older brothers who would maliciously tease him into anger, just to watch him erupt. One day we succeeded so well that in storming away from us, he slammed the dining room door so hard that a long crack formed in its hardwood panel.

Instantly Tom's anger disappeared, replaced by a mixture of remorse and terror. "Please don't tell Mom," (who wasn't home at the time.) "Please, please, please."

It was more than a week before Mom discovered the crack. "How did this happen? How long has this crack been here?" Rich and Tom and I appeared to have no idea. I don't know how Tom managed not to give himself away.

Some twenty years passed before we told Mom what had happened to her door. We explained that Tom had slammed it in a fit of anger that Rich and I had deliberately provoked. Mom reacted with amusement, not anger. It was far too late anyway for scolding or punishment. (Statute of limitations, perhaps.)

Most of the time anger can be released very quickly, and it need not always turn to violence and remorse. But if it is not released swiftly and peaceably, sometimes something far more valuable than a door panel gets broken.

Chuck Funk

Dear Friends,

Thank you all so very much for the generous Christmas gift. You are all such dear people.

Lorna

Lorna also added this for us to share.

A New Year's Resolution

This list has remained with me through the years from one of the churches I've attended. It is so good to read God's promises. My new year's resolution is to read them daily.

God spoke creation into existence, and He says our words spoken in faith are so important!

I will not say "I can't" for "I can do all things through Christ who strengthen me." Phil. 4:13

Nor will I say, "I lack" for "My God shall supply all of my needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:19 also "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Phil. 4:11

Nor will I confess fear, "God hath not given me the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love and of a sound mind." 2 Tim. 1:7 and "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31

Nor say, "I am weak" for "The Lord is the strength of my life." Ps. 27:1

Nor talk of worry or frustrations for I am "casting all my cares upon Him who careth for me." 1Peter 5:7

Nor be lonely, for Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt 28:20 and "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5

Nor will I confess insecurity and fears of the future, because "When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: Yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet...for the Lord shall be thy confidence." Prov. 3 24-26 and "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in thee." Isa. 26.3

It is so comforting to read God's promises daily.

Happy New Year! Lorna Chabot

St. Patrick: The Man, the Myth, the Malarkey

The Irish are among the greatest story tellers in the world. From the time the indigenous dwellers of this small piece of land that floated away from the mother continent climbed out of the primordial slime and began forming tribal bands it is clear they loved a good story. While the tribal leader was called a “high king”, the shanachie, or storyteller, was arguably the most important member of the tribe. For, with no written language, how else would we know of some of the great Irish leaders such as Finn McCool, Brian Boru and St. Patrick. So, put down your green beer and let’s talk about Patrick.

The real man, who emerges from the many stories, was likely born in the fifth century, a Roman-Briton from somewhere in the North Country, maybe Scotland or Wales. His name was Maewyn Succat and he was captured as a lad by pirates and sold into slavery as a shepherd. He served for six years according to his autobiography, *Confessio* (which is worth a read). He says he was “humbled every day by hunger and nakedness” and finally escaped by convincing a ship’s captain to ferry him back to Britain.

Years later he had a St.-Paul-on-the-road-to-Damascus experience when, according to his confessions, he had a thunderclap of a dream in which Irish voices were begging him to return. He changed his name to ‘Patricius’ or father and returned to the land that had treated him so harshly. During his ministry in Ireland, which lasted roughly from the 430 CE to his death on March 17, 461, he is credited with establishing 300 churches and converting 120,000 people.

Many miracles too numerous to go into are ascribed to him, including fistfights with the evil druids in which Patrick flew up into the air and came down to crack their skulls. But, as I see it, the greatest miracle was his ability to change the minds of a notoriously distrustful and stubborn demographic. Some historians, however, believe that the Irish were only too happy to be provided an alternative to the dark world of the druids. Others point out that Christianity had already begun to take hold in the southern-most part of Ireland through other saints who, some argue, outshine St. Patrick. (See St. Declan.) In County Cork, Declan is still a very popular name for boys.

As for me, I’ve always wondered: “Why the shamrock?”. If I were trying to win souls to Christianity, I would start with something simpler than the Holy Trinity, which has always confounded me. Historians are of two minds about this: 1) There is no real evidence that Patrick used the shamrock, and 2) The ancient Irish had a fascination with the number three and three-person deities, so the shamrock metaphor was spot-on.

What most agree upon about St. Patrick is that he worked to improve the lives of the exploited. In *Confessio*, he condemns and calls out the bondage of Irish women, while taking note of their bravery and resilient spirit. He also vowed to wipe out slavery, which ended in Ireland several years after his death.

Did he wear green. Who knows? The “wearing of the green” had more to do with Irish rebels recognizing fellow travelers during the troubles of the last four centuries. Did his famed shepherd’s crook suddenly flourish into a beautiful tree? Does it matter? Did he drive the snakes out of Ireland? Of course, he did. Everyone knows the snakes were too drunk to drive themselves.

When I think of St. Patrick, I think of a man whose story continually invigorated a captive people, who were able to retain their culture, their stories, their sense of humor and even their language under the most difficult circumstances. St. Patrick was a superstar – a dreamer, a fighter, a man of God, and a poet. As evidence, I give you the prayer St. Patrick wrote and handed down to us.

-Eileen Kelliher Berger

The Prayer of St. Patrick

*I arise today
Through the strength of heaven;
Light of the sun,
Splendor of fire,*

*Speed of lightning,
Swiftness of the wind,
Depth of the sea,
Stability of the earth,
Firmness of the rock.*

*I arise today
Through God's strength to pilot me;
God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me,
God's hand to guard me,
God's way to lie before me,
God's shield to protect me,
God's hosts to save me
Afar and anear,
Alone or in a multitude.*

*Christ shield me today
Against wounding
Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in the eye that sees me,
Christ in the ear that hears me.*

*I arise today
Through the mighty strength
Of the Lord of creation*

Easter Plants

Given in Memory of:

Given By:

Plant selection (please circle)

Azalea - Hydrangea - Lily - Tulip

The deadline for ordering Easter plants to beautify the sanctuary for Easter is April 2nd. The flowers will be \$12.00 per plant. The varieties are Azaleas, Hydrangeas, Lilies, and Tulips. Please include payment with your order.

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 26

Ash Wednesday Service of Ashes

Please join us at 6:00 p.m. For our service that marks the start of the Lenten Season. We will have ashes available for those who wish to be marked with the sign of the cross. This service is open to all.

SUNDAYS OF LENT

Lenten Study

We will be having a bible/devotional study each Sunday morning from 9:00 until 9:45 using materials from the Lenten Devotional - "From Suffering to Salvation". The devotional is based upon the 20th century spiritual author Henri J. M. Nouwen's writings and books. He wrote 39 books on spirituality as he served as a Dutch Catholic priest, professor, writer, and theologian. His works are embraced by people of all the various Christian faith traditions. The devotionals will be available soon, please consider making a donation to offset the costs of these devotions if you are able.

March 4th

Deacon's Meeting

The Deacon's will be meeting in the church parlor beginning at 6:00 P.M.

As are all church meetings, this meeting is open to all members of the church.

By-Law Review Committee Meeting

The By-Law Review Committee will be meeting in the Cookman Hall beginning at 7:00 P.M.

March 10th

Wellville Board of Director's meeting at 7:00 pm

TBA

The Trustee's Meeting

Due to some scheduling conflicts the date for the Trustee's meeting has not been finalized. Once this information is known we will be posting it in the Sunday bulletin.

March 29th

Following worship, we will have a meeting to receive reports from committees and accept the minutes of the annual meeting