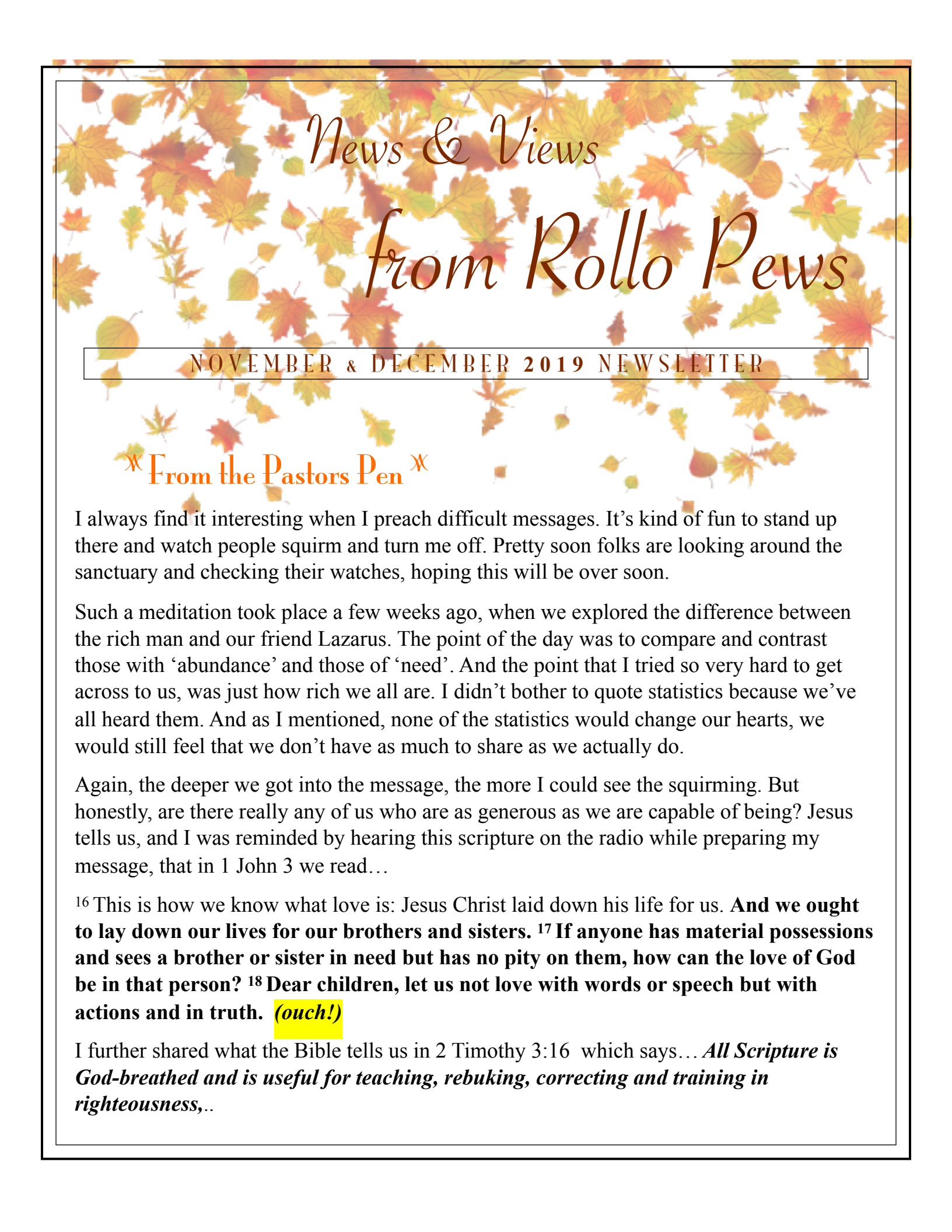




News & Views

from Rollo Pews

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

✧ From the Pastors Pen ✧

I always find it interesting when I preach difficult messages. It's kind of fun to stand up there and watch people squirm and turn me off. Pretty soon folks are looking around the sanctuary and checking their watches, hoping this will be over soon.

Such a meditation took place a few weeks ago, when we explored the difference between the rich man and our friend Lazarus. The point of the day was to compare and contrast those with 'abundance' and those of 'need'. And the point that I tried so very hard to get across to us, was just how rich we all are. I didn't bother to quote statistics because we've all heard them. And as I mentioned, none of the statistics would change our hearts, we would still feel that we don't have as much to share as we actually do.

Again, the deeper we got into the message, the more I could see the squirming. But honestly, are there really any of us who are as generous as we are capable of being? Jesus tells us, and I was reminded by hearing this scripture on the radio while preparing my message, that in 1 John 3 we read...

¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. **And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.** ¹⁷ **If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?** ¹⁸ **Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.** (ouch!)

I further shared what the Bible tells us in 2 Timothy 3:16 which says... ***All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness...***

And that's the problem. We want scripture and our meditation to leave us feeling good. We want to leave worship refreshed and renewed, understanding how very much God loves us and why he saved us in the person of Jesus Christ. But what we don't want, is for the scripture to rebuke us....or teach us.....or correct us. What we don't want is to hear scripture that tells us we are to be more giving, and to show pity on those who have need. What we don't want to hear, is how the love we show in deed, is worth so much more than what we speak in creeds promises.

Messages like this are not fun to prepare, and are certainly not enjoyable to share. However, skipping the difficult to share only in the 'feel good', would also have us skipping over the crucifixion, and only preaching the resurrection. And as we all know, it was in Jesus' dying and rising, where we truly became wealthy people of abundance.

See the situation is, that I have an obligation to preach the Word of God. Not just what I choose that makes us feel good, but also what makes us better Christians and Christ followers. And similarly, each of us who hears the Word of God, are expected to respond positively to the teaching and lessons therein. No, it's not popular, and I could take the easy way out, but if that's not what Jesus did, then I don't think we should either.

Love and blessings,

PD



✧ Trustees Report by Tami Johnson ✧

"The Trustees are preparing for the winter months by arranging for fuel and snow removal. We are also working on next year's budget and will present it to the congregation on an upcoming Sunday".

✧ Diaconate Report by Barb Bend ✧

As the end of the year approaches, the Diaconate Committee is gearing up. The shoeboxes have magically appeared at the front of the church. The fall decorations are complete and await your generous food contributions that will be passed on to the NICE Center. Both of these endeavors will be blessed and sent on their way November 17 during the service and before we celebrate our Thankful Harvest dinner.

We will be honoring eight members and friends of the church on All Saints Day, November 3. Please join us to remember these special people in our lives. The committee decided to donate \$200 to the Jesus Film Project to help in translating the book of Luke into the languages of the world. We felt this was a worthy cause to support. We are still diligently seeking a representative from our church to serve on the NICE Board of Directors. They meet six times a year. This person need only attend the meetings and report back to the church on their mission. We hope someone is willing to step up and volunteer!

Now we look forward to a meaningful Advent Season as we await the birth of Jesus.

Rollo UCC is in need of a representative to serve on the NICE Board of Directors!

NICE Center is need of canned speghettios/ravioli and canned corn



✧ N.I.C.E Center Report ✧

Hunger doesn't take a holiday. Help us provide holiday meals to our hungry neighbors this holiday season! Through our partnership with Northern Illinois Food Bank, our pantry can obtain a 12-14 pound turkey or a 9-10 pound ham and all the trimmings – potatoes, stuffing, gravy, vegetables and fruits, dessert and coffee -- for a fraction of the retail cost. Your \$16 donation will provide this entire meal box, enough to feed a family of eight! That's the equivalent of just \$2 per person for a complete turkey dinner! This year, our goal is to provide **90** Holiday Meal Boxes to hungry families in our community. Please make your donation today, and help us bring joy to more hungry neighbors this holiday season!

To donate, please mail your donation to:

N.I.C.E. Center

P.O. Box 5

Lee, IL 60530.

✧ Treasurer Report by Wayne Davey ✧

✧ From the Money Counter ✧

BUDGET \$73,247.00		Budget	Actual	Over/Under Budget
REVENUE	September 30, 2019	\$54,933.48	\$66,201.85	\$11,268.37
EXPENDITURES	September 30, 2019	\$54,933.48	\$49,542.94	(\$5,475.36)

Current Balance in Checking Account: \$ 37,316.93

Current Balance in Savings Account: \$ 21,293.74

150 Anniversary Fund: \$ 1,215.73

Bathroom Fund: \$ 650.21

Building Fund: \$ 1,015.00

Diaconate Fund: \$ 1,536.72

Memorial Account: \$10,481.23

Undesignated: \$ 6,394.85



Current CD Balance as of 10/28/2019: \$ 4,435.92

Memorial Fund: \$ 13,882.81

* Memorial Funds are currently located within the CD Investment
And savings account

Church is hard.

Church is hard for the person walking through the doors, afraid of being judged.

Church is hard for the pastor's family, under the microscope of an entire body.

Church is hard for the prodigal soul returning home, broken and battered by the world.

Church is hard for the girl who looks like she has it all together, but doesn't.

Church is hard for the couple who fought the entire ride to service.

Church is hard for the single mom, surrounded by couples holding hands, and seemingly perfect families.

Church is hard for the widow and widower with no invitation to lunch after service.

Church is hard for the deacon with an estranged child.

Church is hard for the person singing worship songs, overwhelmed by the weight of the lyrics.

Church is hard for the person insecure in their role as a leader.

Church is hard for the wife who longs to be led by a righteous man.

Church is hard for the nursery volunteer who desperately longs for a baby to love.

Church is hard for the single woman and single man, praying God brings them a mate.

Church is hard for the teenage girl, wearing a scarlet letter, ashamed of her mistakes.

Church is hard for the sinners.

Church is hard for me.

It's hard because on the outside it all looks shiny and perfect. Sunday best in behavior and dress.

However, underneath those layers, you find a body of imperfect people, carnal souls, selfish motives.

But, here is the beauty of church—

Church isn't a building, mentality, or expectation.

Church is a body.

Church is a group of sinners, saved by grace, living in fellowship as saints.

Church is a body of believers bound as brothers and sisters by an eternal love.

Church is a Holy Ground where sinners stand as equals before the Throne of Grace.

Church is a refuge for broken hearts and a training ground for mighty warriors.

Church is a converging of confrontation and invitation, where sin is confronted and hearts are invited to seek restoration.

Church is a lesson in faith and trust.

Church is a bearer of burdens and a giver of hope.

Church is a family. A family coming together, setting aside differences, forgetting past mistakes, rejoicing in the smallest of victories.

Church, the Body, and the circle of sinners-turned-saints, is where Jesus resides, and if we ask, He is faithful to come.

So even on the hard days at church—

The days when I am at odds with a friend, when I've fought with my mate because we're late once again.

Days when I've walked in bearing burdens heavier than my heart can handle, yet masking the pain with a smile on my face. Days when I've worn a scarlet letter, under the microscope, and when I've longed for a baby to hold, or fought tears as the lyrics were sung. On days when I've walked back in, afraid and broken, after walking away.

I'll remember, Jesus has never failed to meet me there.

Church is a body, a family, a place to love God and love others through our struggles!

~Author unknown

Announcements

Today - *Cookie Fellowship*: Martha B. & Betty G.
Nov. 3 - Diaconate Mtg after worship & All Saints Day
Nov. 10 - Trustees Mtg after worship
Nov. 16 - Men's Breakfast at 7 a.m.
Nov. 17 - Food for NICE, Shoebox Dedication
& Thankful Harvest Dinner
Nov. 24 - *Cookie Fellowship*:
Katie K. & Ellen Sue K. & Barb B.
Dec. 1 - Diaconate Mtg after worship
Dec. 8 - Trustees Mtg after worship
Council to follow

Cookie Fellowship List

Nov. 24 - Katie Koks &
Ellen Sue Kupecz & Barb Bend

Jan. 26 - Maegan Gletty &
Becky Oest & Jeff Svendsen

Lay Reader List

Nov. 3 - Barb Bend
Nov. 10 - Susan Foster
Nov. 17 - Bob Gilmore
Nov. 24 - Curt Foster
Dec. 1 - Carol Bend
Dec. 8 - Tami Foster
Dec. 15 - Becky Oest
Dec. 22 - Katie Koks
Dec. 29 - Carol Bend
Jan. 5 - Jeff Svendsen
Jan. 12 - Ron Wald

Usher List

Nov. - Dakota Goble & Darryl Kupecz
Dec. - Dave Bend & Harold Svendsen
Jan. - Jeff & Larry Svendsen

Please Remember In Your Prayers & Thoughts

All our Service men & women
The Lost
'Shut-Ins'

Lorna Roberson (*Laura Fassig*)

Carol & Larry Svendsen

Duane Fassig

Swede Svendsen

Fred Weiss (*Carol Svendsen*)

Greg Delay

Ray McInerney

Janna Smith

JR Gardner

Jan Jensen

Lane Glenewinkel (*Jan Jensen Grandson*)

Family of Scott Blair

Family of Bill Rider

Family of Rev. Dan Hinkley



Nov 02 – Mike Johnson

Nov 03 – Deb Davey

Nov 11 - Gage Gibson

Nov 19 – Matt Maple

Nov 23 – Delaney Bend

& Joshua Johnson

Nov 23 – Mike Martin

Nov 24 – Curt Foster

& Randall Wald

Nov 29 – Gail Marquardt

Dec 02 – Joetta DeLay

Dec 07 – Dave Bateman

Dec 09 – Katie Simmons

Dec 19 – Sara Lyons &

Ann Gilmore

Bob Gilmore

Dec 24 – David Marquardt

They say that the only constant in life is change, and for our family, life is indeed changing. As most of you know, I have tendered my resignation with the church. It's my plan to see the confirmation class through their journey, and then finish our church ministry the last Sunday of April. There are many reasons for the changes in our lives and the need for leaving the church, and here are but a few;

- The last year has been hard on us. Spending time in Bloomington with Mom, and with that overlapping my spring work schedule, along the busy spring/Easter church schedule, we went into the summer exhausted. I'd like to say we've caught our breath but we haven't.
- Gail's mother is also slowing down. She has made a conscious effort to spend more time with her, and to help out where she can. We are painfully aware of how precious these times are and that they can't be recreated.
- What we've realized over the last year or so, is that the older we get, the more important family becomes. And as you know, our kids and grandkids are in Bloomington, as are most of Joshua's cousins, along with my siblings.
- Cayla and Max are getting bigger and their schedules are getting busier. This means that we not only see them less, but also miss all of their events and activities. Living in or near Bloomington will let us spend more time with, and watch these loves of our lives grow.
- As far as church is concerned, this seems to be the right time to end our ministry together, and see what God has in mind for each of us. One of the things I learned while sitting on ministries of the UCC, was that way too often, ministers stay too long. There comes a point where churches and pastors become too comfortable and dependent on one another, and that's not good for either. I believe that our church is ready for new challenges and leadership, that will open your hearts to new ways of worship and wonder, as you grow together in your faith.
- Beyond the fact that I think the time is right for new leadership, the church is healthy. This is important and will be a major factor as you interview and call your next pastor, since seldom do ministers want to interview with churches that are 'troubled' and having internal 'issues'. While most churches struggle to pay their bills, Rollo does not. Further, our churches stewardship efforts are well documented in the way you've taking care of the church property.

I could go on, and we will have much conversation in the weeks and months ahead, but for now, please hold us in your prayers, as we hold you. This is both an exciting, as well as scary and nervous time for us, and your support, best wishes and prayers are greatly appreciated.

Much love,

PD, Gail and Joshua

✧Roll UCC✧

Pastor David Marguardt
2471 Weddell Road
Earlville, IL 60518