

Connecting all generations to Jesus

Chimes

May 2021

The Value of Rockland's Care Ministry

by Paul Lucks, Pastor of Care & Missions

"Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep...

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 12:15, 21

There have been several crises in my life—times that were decision or turning points for me. The most joyous one was the moment, I committed my life to Christ as my Lord and Savior. But there were others—not so wonderful like when I spoke to my dad on the phone moments before he passed away in the hospital or when I was told that I would need to look for a new full-time job. It was in those not so joyous moments that I went through a time of great pain, heartache and self-examination. By God's grace and through the support of family and friends in Christ, I was able to slowly move on. It was through their tender listening, love, care, comfort and provisions that helped me to continue to move forward in my soul-filled grief. It was through their words of encouragement that I was reminded that I was not forgotten but deeply loved by God in the midst of my crisis and pain.

Crises are a part of the tapestry of life for all of us; no one gets through life without them. Some of our crises are difficult, painful, disruptive, even life threatening and life destroying, and some are joyful—but crises nonetheless. Think of a new marriage, the birth of a baby, buying that first home, accepting Christ into your life. In a crisis, our normal coping skills may not work as well as we thought. We can crumble under the weight of the crisis or we can learn to develop new skills to meet it head-on.

Often we can't get through the crisis alone. We need an understanding and caring friend to come alongside us, someone to listen, to encourage, to support us as we walk, or crawl, through the crisis. This is the role of the body of Christ—to be there for one another in those times of crisis. It is our calling, as members of Rockland, **to be present** to remind our loved ones, our friends, our fellow church members, and our neighbors that God has neither forgotten nor abandoned them. It is one of the most powerful witnesses we can make.

This is my hope, prayer, and vision for our CARE MINISTRY at Rockland, that we as a church can respond in a loving and compassionate way to those whose lives have been impacted by any type of loss, sickness, or tragedy. Whatever your need may be, we want to be able to come alongside you and be a blessing through our various care ministries. A crisis is a decision point—often a point where people determine whether they will turn toward Jesus or turn away from Him. My hope and prayer is that our CARE MINISTRY will continue to effectively reach those in crisis and to wisely, appropriately, and lovingly point them to the source of love, hope, and life—Jesus Christ.

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Caring Ministries

The Care Team

The Care Team is an umbrella of nine ministries the Lord uses behind the scenes to serve the people of Rockland Community Church . Unless you've had a specific need, you may not even know these many ministries exist.

Each of these ministries has teams of people actively using their gifts, talents and resources to encourage our congregation with care, comfort and prayer.

Below is a description of the ministries serving under the Care Team. Please contact Annie Barnett, the Care Associate, or Pastor Paul, our Care Pastor, if you either need any of these services or wish to volunteer. You will be blessed.



In-Home Communion



The In-Home Communion ministry at Rockland is a part of our Caring ministry. This ministry seeks to connect our congregants through the Eucharist. The Eucharist is about remembering Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross. Taking the elements parallels what Jesus and His disciples did at the Last Supper before His crucifixion. This Rockland ministry trains and equips faithful volunteers to go out and serve communion to those who are homebound or otherwise not able to be a part of our Rockland services.

Requests for In-Home Communion for either oneself or a family member can be directed by phone, email, or inperson to Paul Lucks, Care & Missions Pastor (x209), or Annie Barnett, Care & Missions Associate (x203).

Prayer Quilters

The Prayer Quilters have met regularly on Saturdays since 2001. Yes, our ministry is 20 years old! Over 225 quilts have been made and given to those in our congregation needing comfort.

As the quilt is tied, prayers are said for the intended recipient. A cross and a label, with the recipient's name and scripture verse chosen especially for that person, are sewn on the back of each quilt.

We welcome anyone to join us on Saturdays from 10:00 to 12:00 in Fellowship Hall to create these quilts. Many tasks do not require sewing skills. Join us for fellowship and fun in this ministry.



Shawl Ministries

Sharing God's Love with others

In 2010 a group of women from the Women's Ministry Team started a Prayer Shawl ministry group. Anyone and everyone was welcome, no experience knitting or crocheting was necessary. Over the years the group has become part of the Caring Ministry and we have shared over 400 shawls worldwide. In the beginning we gave shawls to church members in need of extra comfort and a reminder of God's love. A group went to Tanzania and took some shawls with them. The Romania group took shawls with them. Imagine God's love being shared with those individuals and families overseas who with think of their friends from Rockland when they wrap themselves in their handcrafted shawl.

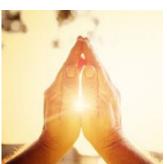
Over the years we expanded our ministry by creating baptismal blankets. It is a sweet little gift to each child being baptized that they can see and feel God's love. We create shawls, lap robes for people in wheelchairs, baptismal blankets, and most recently we have added prayer patches and memorial mats. The prayer patches and memorial mats feature a prominent cross reminding us of the sacrifice Jesus made for all of us.

Our typical group is between 10-15 women who meet on the second Monday of each month from 1:00-3:00 in Fellowship Hall. Anyone is welcome to come. We are very thankful for all the women who have created shawls over the past 11 years. The fellowship of this group is strong, nurturing, and prayerful. It is a blessing that we can use our hands to share His love with others. If you are unable to attend but would like to knit or crochet at home, please let us know.

If you know of someone who would enjoy receiving a shawl, please contact Annie Barnett, Care Associate or Pastor Paul.



Prayer Notes



As Covid isolated us a year ago, the Caring Team looked for new ways to be in touch with our Rockland congregation.

In the past, when people called the Prayer Chain to ask for prayers they just hoped and assumed the prayer chain members would pray for them. And of course we did, but they had no feedback.

It was decided to send notes to all who requested prayer unless it was confidential. Betty Snow, Amy Sidoroff and I volunteered for this task. It has been a labor of love for us to write a note to those who make requests reassuring them that we are praying

for their specific needs. Even though we don't know some of the people we feel a connection to them as we pick

a card, pray and write these notes. We have sent a couple hundred notes so far and we hope it has been a worthwhile effort.

Thanks for the opportunity, Judy Wonning, Betty Snow, Amy Sidoroff

The Daily Bread Ministry

The Daily Bread Ministry provides frozen meals for pick up or delivery to those in need. We had a quiet year with Covid but are ready to again serve those in the congregation needing a meal.

Please if you know someone who needs a meal or your family needs a meal, help yourself to the Daily Bread freezer in the kitchen. You are always welcome to take something as we have enthusiastic cooks ready to refill the freezer.

If this is a ministry you are interested in, there are foil containers that can be picked up at church for our cooks and an inventory to help us keep tract of dates and meals. Smaller meals for two people are most in demand. Please contact Annie Barnett or Jan Bakken if you are unable to help yourself to a Daily Bread frozen meal in the freezer.

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Our Daily Bread

Ministries.

Stephen Ministry

STEPHEN MINISTERS: A HEART FOR THE HURTING (Part One of Two)

We all go through tough times in life. In the midst of unsettling times, it can be extremely helpful to have someone come alongside us to give understanding and encouragement - to provide hope and emotional support to help us through the storm.

For over 10 years, Rockland has had an active Stephen Ministry, which consists of compassionate individuals within our congregation who are trained to help those adults who are hurting in their heart, mind, body or spirit. Confidentiality is the foundation upon which a Stephen Minister establishes a high level of trust with a person in need; regular interactions occur until the help is no longer needed.

If you are experiencing loss, grief, a relationship challenge, pandemic fatigue, or any one of a myriad of things that can throw your life into a tailspin, then a one-on-one relationship with a Stephen Minister might be very beneficial for you.

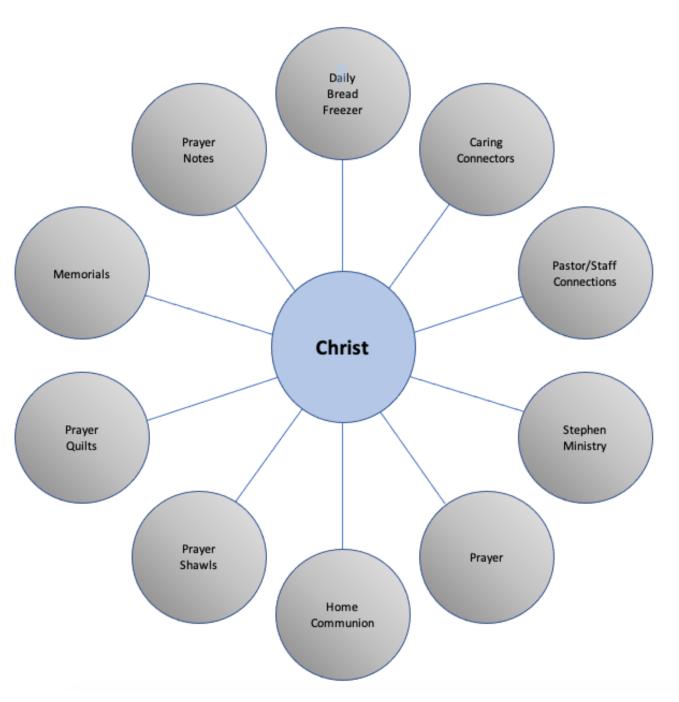
With God's help, this is what a Stephen Minister is able to provide: a listening ear, a supportive perspective, and compassionate caring. These Stephen Ministers are not counselors. They are not "know-it-alls". They are not individuals who try to fix everyone's troubles. They simply provide love, care, and support when we need it most. Perhaps you or a family member would benefit from this kind of help and support. If so, a Stephen Minister may be just what is needed to help navigate through those troubled waters that are unique to you. Dozens of people within Rockland's community have benefited from having a Stephen Minister.

We want to emphasize that this program is for <u>any</u> person at Rockland over age 18 who may be feeling overwhelmed by one or more of their life's problems. While our Stephen Ministry does serve those with a serious health issue, it also serves the person struggling with a crisis of faith. Or the person who is emotionally stressed out. Or the person who lost an important relationship. Or the parent of a teenager who is having growing pains. Or the mother overwhelmed with the demands of a new baby. The list goes on and on, as life difficulties are as varied as the people who are hurting.

So what's involved? Typically, one of our pastors refers an individual to the program. Feel free to reach out to Pastor Paul Lucks or to any of our pastors to discuss a referral. Annie Barnett, as the Care and Missions Associate, is readily available to assist in the referral process. A close friend or family member might recognize that you need some help, and suggest that you consider a self-referral to the program. Dr. Elaine Swope has been commissioned as Rockland's Stephen Ministry Leader, so she is also another resource for information about the referral process. You will find each of these individuals to be approachable and kind. Your request for a Stephen Minister will be confidential. The bottom line is: WE CARE!



"Love one another as I have loved you." John 15:12



Care Team Ministries

To share the love of Christ with those in need through prayer, presence and care.

Rockland Finance Update

While pledged giving is on track and has been consistent on a monthly basis, non-pledged giving has lagged behind forecast for two of he last four months. Non-pledged giving, in the form of contributions by cash or check during the worship service, or by check or electronic payments at other times, is a *critical* part of our annual budget.

We understand that many folks still have not returned to attend worship services in person. However, it is important that we meet our budgeted number for this category. We prayerfully ask the Congregation to continue to donate regularly as you have in pre-COVID times. You will be hearing more on this subject from the Elders in the near future.

	April 2021 Year to Date						2021 Budget		
	Actual		Budget		Variance			Full Year	
Total Contributions	\$ 365,045	\$	379,637	\$	(14,592)	Shortfall	\$	1,265,057	



Clear Creek RockHouse

The Rock House staff has been putting their heads together on how to move forward from the pandemic. Through meetings, phone calls, and a lot of collaboration we have found good ways to keep the community united in this hard time and also continuing to support our teens of Clear Creek County.

On March 31st, we hosted a Seder Dinner as a part of our Easter Bible Study Curriculum. This dinner consisted of telling bible stories, explaining the foods that we were eating and what they stood for, and bringing the students directly into that holiday and time period where it originally happened. Our most precious part of the Rock House is showing the love of Jesus as we teach the gospel in an interactive and engaging way. The Rock House gets to do this by introducing students directly to our Heavenly Father by hosting a weekly Bible study and through one-on-one mentoring. Contact Deborah Bautista at mentoring@clearcreekrockhouse.org if you want to be a part of our mentoring program.







On April 26th, the Rock House collaborated with Young Life for an event meant to help the local students get out of the house and interact safely, called the Gold Digger Dash! This photograph scavenger hunt got the students into a fun environment for the evening, and they were able to participate in a raffle drawing for prizes and enjoy pizza and s'mores. This was a great opportunity for the leaders of these organizations to meet and fellowship. We will continue these events to reach every teen of Clear Creek County.

On May 11th, we hosted a socially distanced ice cream social. We invited all students from the fifth and sixth grade, dividing the grades up and hosting the event in separate and safe quarters. Parents were also welcomed to attend to see what the Rock House has to offer. We are very excited to see our community gather again and even more happy that we are able to do it safely following CDC guidelines.

Our tutoring program continues to help students in these hard times, having to convert from in-person school to online and or accelerated courses. We serve 6th through 12th graders in all subjects. Our tutors and mentors have been tirelessly working to keep our students happy and successful. One of our tutors, Barb Stahlhut, even tutored on Easter Sunday to help her student catch up during the holiday. Her outstanding work ethic and dedication to our students truly demonstrates how the Rock House cares so deeply for our students and community. Contact Barb Stahlhut to join our team at tutoring@clearcreekrockhouse.org.

We have continued hosting the Taco Truck on the first Thursday of the month to share food and love to the community – this will continue during the summer and we invite all to come by at 5 pm to 6:30pm and enjoy the fun and food.

We are getting close to repainting the Rock House exterior, when weather permits, due to your generous contribution last fall. We are so excited to protect the facility like this so it can continue to serve our kids for many more years to come.

The Rock House would not be possible without our incredible volunteers and donors. Contact <u>volunteering@clearcreekrockhouse.org</u> to make a difference.

-Knoelle Billingsley



The Elders meet monthly, and we have been working closely with Pastor Jim and the Church staff on the resumption of in-person activities at the Church. May 2nd, was a joyful day in the life of Rockland as Fellowship Hour resumed between services. Folks were so visibly happy to see one another after more than a year apart!

Elder Kevin Grieve and his better half **Deacon Tami Grieve** served lattes to kick off the new opening. Coffee and doughnuts will once again be served between services on a weekly basis, and we urge all of you to take advantage of this opportunity to catch up with friends. The Elders are grateful to **Lori Fulmer**, who was instrumental in making the reopening happen.

Elder Joyce Dunbar and her Caring Team have been working closely with Pastor Paul and have helped him hit the ground running. One of the reasons we all love Rockland is the care and concern we show for one another. The Caring Team has great plans in the works to ensure that continues.

Elder Patrick Heck and his Operations Team are responsible for our finances, the Church physical plant, and a whole lot of stuff in between. Patrick works closely with Kyle Buchanan, our new Operations Director. The Operations Team is an integral part of helping with the new multi-year strategic plan discussed below. In his spare time, Patrick is a worship leader who moves us with his beautiful voice at the first service each Sunday. Elder Tracy Adreon heads the Worship Team, Elder Todd Graber leads the Children's Ministry, Elder Kevin Grieve leads the Discipleship Team, and Elder Emeritus Steve Hannah is leading our Outreach Team. The Elder Team Secretary is Shirlene Haynes. We will have more to say about these folks and their ministries in the next issue of Chimes.

As mentioned above, the Elders have been working on a proposed five-year strategic plan to share with the Congregation. The process has taken more than a year and is close to completion. The exercise addresses important questions about what the Lord wants us to do as a Body of Christ over the next few years. Once the Plan is ready, we will begin to share it with you for your input and feedback. Our hope is to arrive at a plan which leverages the strengths of our Church to best serve the Lord, our Congregation and the communities we minister to.

All of the Elders welcome your input and feedback at any time. *Peter Miterko*

Widows Small Group

"Grief never ends. It is a passage not to a place, nor a place to stay, not a sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith. It is the price of love."

As a new member of Rockland, I am pleased to say I have been asked to serve in ministry with widows of the church in a small group setting. Shirley Johnson gave me a list of the widows. I have spoken to most of you and others I have tried to reach but not connected with yet. To those whom I have called and given you a date to meet, the date has changed to Tuesday, June 1st at 10 a.m. in the Adult Education classroom. I look forward to meeting each of you personally.

Our first gathering will be an introduction time for me to get to know each of you, determine a new name for our group, as well as set the dates for our future gatherings. We will also have devotions and discussion. As a widow myself, I have discovered grief recovery after loss of a spouse is a "new season" and journey of life.

Continue on next page →

However, mourning, crying, talking to others, and sharing stories and memories is essential to being in touch with your feelings. In small group, we allow these feelings to be expressed without judgment. Reaching out in a small group will not make grief go away, but bonding with others is a form of love and makes life worth living again. We all need and deserve the companionship of others coming along side us, where we can express what we are thinking or feeling. We actively listen and offer love and presence. It is a time of living in the presence of God, finding meaning and purpose in life as well as being present with one another. Please contact Gloria Owens, if you are interested in the Widows small group fellowship.

Written by Gloria Owens

Email: gloriaowens@centurylink.net

Phone # 602-568-7677

The Death of Joan Cherry

The historic Rockland church suffered hard times after the community dedicated it in January of 1880. The church operated intermittently for many years until the members resurrected it following World War II.

Joan Cherry was in many ways responsible for the resurrection of the church. Joan was an extremely popular young lady who died tragically at the age of 18, and her funeral brought a number of people particularly pastors to the church which resulted in it becoming a living church again.

Joan Cherry was a daughter of Elsie Cherry Lee Darling (Ralston). Her mother was a member of a group of women who were instrumental in resurrecting the church. They went by the name of The *Ladies Home Demonstration Group*. A newspaper took a picture of them in 1938, and we can see an excerpt from that picture in this article.

Colleen Connelly is another person who we can see in the photograph of the *Ladies Home Demonstration Group*. She is the young girl that we can see in the lower right of the *Ladies Home Demonstration Group* picture excerpt.



My Wife Ann and I interviewed Colleen Connolly in September of 2002. At the time, she was a retired Lawyer who was living in an assisted living home.

Joan was born in March of 1932, and she died in June of 1950 at the tender age of eighteen. We can see her as the smiling girl in the middle of the upper picture.

Joan was particularly good friends with Jean Ann Ralston who is the daughter of Strode Ralston. He is the person who built the rock wall in front of the balcony in the current Rockland Community Church. Joan served as Jean Ann Ralston's maid of honor when Jean Ann was married. A photograph of Jean Ann's wedding picture shows both Jean Ann and Joan Cherry. Jean Ann passed away recently. Her family plans to bury her in the Historic Rockland Church cemetery along with her husband. He was buried in the cemetery last year.

Continue on next page →

Joan was an exceedingly popular young lady. One can see her outgoing nature in the picture. In fact, she was so popular that the cars extended all the way from the Morrison exit on Highway 40 to the Historic Church on the day of her funeral. Colleen told us that Joan died of "a communicable disease. She did not remember the exact cause of death, but she did tell us that many of the boys who knew her were crying at the funeral.

Reverend Vernon A. Loescher of the First Plymouth Congregational Church in Denver presided over the funeral; and he noted what a charming church Rockland was, even though the members did not use the church very much. He brought this information to the attention of the Denver Association of Congregational Churches and Ministers. The ministers were so impressed with the church that they decided to try to resurrect it. For a while, they held services for the Congregation in the evening, but they quickly tired of that.

They finally hired a young student at Iliff School of theology, Cy Eberhart, to be the first full-time minister of the historic church.

It was finally a living church again.

Overheard by the Church Mouse

Walking into Rockland sanctuary seemed almost normal after so very many months of restricted attendance, three services, missing familiar faces. It has been a long time since this whole nightmare began. And then, the beginning of May, that first Sunday, it was like a reunion. Those attending were eager to greet, to talk to each other, to share coffee and donuts in Fellowship Hall. I think we all felt like it was a joyous homecoming.

This edition of Chimes is primarily focused on our MANY caring ministries. We reach out in a grand variety of care giving. We offer Daily Bread - food from our freezer for those unable to manage meal preparation. We provide Prayer Shawls and Quilts in order that the sick and homebound feel the warmth for them from our congregation. We provide a number of opportunities for those of us who need to talk through problems. We call on the homebound so that they don't feel so lonely, we call, we write, we keep in touch. We handle Memorial Services and provide Home Communion. For those who want to have someone walk beside them through difficult times we have Stephen Ministries and we are providing an opportunity for those in grief and mourning to gather for the Widows group. If you need or ask for help at Rockland you are immediately taken care of. These are all activities within our congregation.

And then we move out and we are quite involved in our community what with Rock House (for teens in Idaho Springs), Loaves & Fishes right across the street in Idaho Springs which takes care of the needy, hungry, homeless. In Evergreen we work closely with ECHO (Evergreen Christian Outreach) and then into Denver at Mean Street where we are actively engaged with the myriads of homeless and hungry.

And we go even further with our mission work in Romania and Tanzania. When we first started our mission work abroad we were instrumental in building an orphanage in St. Petersburg, Russia. Before we arrived our group from Rockland was concerned about the language barrier. Here we were going to help the children of the orphanage and yet we couldn't speak their language. Well, God took care of that...children recognize people who care, we recognized an immediate affection for these homeless little ones...we did not need language...we had love!

In a recent conversation the speaker was expressing his amazement at the care ministries within Rockland. He said he never has known a church that was so open, welcoming and ready to help...in a variety of ways.

And so here we are, the third oldest church in Colorado, still sharing our faith. That little mouse that sat on the altar of the Historic Church so many years ago was paying attention to the sermon...we seem to be paying attention to all that a church can do! Good job!

Mothers Of Preschoolers (MOPS)

Rockland has a ministry jewel that is waiting to be discovered! MOPS!

MOPS stands for Mothers of Preschoolers (Children 0 to 6). Yes, it's a funny name, but it describes a welcoming, safe, inviting ministry of Rockland Community Church for moms in the church and in the community. It is for moms of any age, faith or no faith, expecting a first child or mom to many. It is a place when moms can come together and be reminded of the importance of the work they are doing as moms, of who they are becoming as women, and where they are encouraged to discover they are a child of God who loves them!

The world is changing and yet there are some things that never change. The importance and influence of Moms is one of those things!

The early stages of parenting are times of decision making for the new family. This is the time when families decide how they will raise their children and what they will be connected to for this parenting journey.

There is no better connecting point for a young family than the church. Rockland MOPS introduces moms to a church community through the doors of friendship, hospitality, practical teaching, and mentoring. The success of MOPS is when the mom who feels the furthest from Jesus comes through the door and takes even one step closer to knowing Him. Because when a mom knows Jesus...her world is changed! MOPS is:

- · A community of Grace
- · Connection to women in a fleeting, yet critically formative phase of life
- · Intergenerational relationships
- Discovery and Learning Lab for moms where the next generation of church leaders are developed
- · Part of the Rockland DNA connecting all generations to Christ.



MOPS grows best through "Word of mom". It has spread around the world with one mom bringing her friends and neighbors to meet friends, a faith community and Jesus.

How can you support MOPS at RCC?

· Invite a mom in your neighborhood to come and see what MOPS is about. A MOPS leader will even call and follow up with your invitation.

- Encourage a mom when you see her wrangling a temper-tantrum throwing child in the grocery aisle. A smile and a gentle word can restore calm and give patience.
- · When you see a young family at church welcome them with warmth and a smile. They will appreciate knowing that this is a good place to find what they may be seeking.
- · Consider helping with the MOPS Kids program! Helpers/teachers are needed to make this a success. There are paid and volunteer positions available. September to May, twice a month on Wed mornings. Perfect ministry opportunity for students or empty nesters! Please consider this!
- Be a MOPS mentor. Talk to Dianne Wittman about this opportunity.
- · Always prayer. These women need prayers to sustain them in this most important phase of life.

Rockland MOPS is a dynamic, life-changing ministry. Celebrate the moms in your life, especially the new moms who are starting on this adventure. Share the gift of MOPS with them! Contact Lori Fulmer to learn more at LFullmer@Rockland.Church.

Student Ministry: summer plans!

Summer Youth Group (A.K.A Back Porch):

Come join us for Back Porch at 5:00pm each Sunday evening! Back Porch is a time to hang out at a family's home with snacks, games and a mini lesson or testimony!

Middle School Mission Trip:

Our middle schoolers will be going on local service trip on August 2nd-4th! We'll be staying local and meeting needs in our communities!

High School Mission Trip:

Our high schoolers will be going to Puerto Rico on July 8th-16th! RSVP as soon as possible to Ryan Lownsberry, Student Ministry Director, rlownsberry@rockland.church

We have various summer events coming up like soccer games, ice blocking, lock-in and more! Go to the student ministry page at rockland.com for the full schedule view!











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DATED MATERIALS – PLEASE RUSH

Connecting all generations to Jesus *As we stand for the Truth of the Gospel,* Show God's grace to all people, And raise up the next generation to do the same.

Current resident or



Welcome Home.

ROCKLAND COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sunday Services: 9:00am & 10:30am www.Rockland.Church