

# RIVER NEWS



From The Pastor's Pen  
~ Pastor Sarah Flack

Dear River Church,

While reading about the early years of the Christian church, I have often been drawn to the description found in Acts 2, starting in verse 41 in a section my Bible calls "A Generous and Growing Church." Clearly this group of men and women was growing in number through people being saved, but notice also that it was growing relationally. What was developing was not just an institution called "The Church" but a community. Acts 2:46-47 tells us that "every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple complex, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to them those who were being saved."

There is something deeply appealing about such a community, where people not only met together often, but were devoted to meeting together. To be devoted means that they were persistent and steadfast in spending time together. They were committed to being together, even to the point of giving up part of each day to do so. There is an inherent accountability that comes from seeing one another on a regular basis as well as a very real sense of "knowing and being known." In a world where the internet and delivery services make it possible to go for long periods of time without actually interacting face-to-face with another human being, authentic relationships based on being in the same space, experiencing the same things, are increasingly valuable.

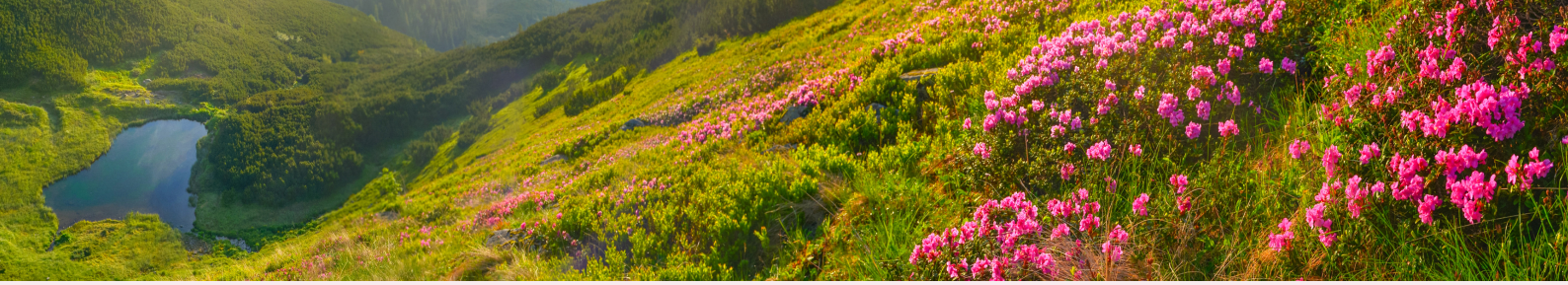
The more I talk to each of you, to those who visit our church, and to seekers in the world at large, the more I hear about the desire for a place to belong, a community. What sets a church apart from a social club or civic organization is that we are a community united around the cross of Christ. Without Jesus, there is no true Church. But with Jesus, we become a community with a purpose bigger than us, an eternal purpose for an eternal community--first, to share the Good News about Jesus to those who are lost, and, second, to love God and one another as we grow in the knowledge of our God. We get to do little things, and sometimes big things, for no other reason than a desire to represent our Savior well in how we love, extend grace and mercy, and talk about Him by our words and deeds.

Seek to be a community this summer (and beyond), River Church! Make the first move in reaching out to others. Pray for one another. Ask for prayer. Take walks together. Write notes. Send texts. Be devoted to meeting together. May this be a summer for you and for our church that sees relationships being built that will continue on into eternity.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Sarah

*Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep His promise. Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near. (Hebrews 10:23-25)*



## Elder Ministry ~ Dean Wilkie

Hello Saints of the one true God,

I don't know if everyone else has enjoyed the teaching for the last four Sundays that pastor Sarah has brought forth from the pulpit, but I certainly have enjoyed it. I've studied the book of Ruth, previous and I'm familiar with the kinsman redeemer theme. This time as pastor Sarah lead us through it I was reminded of some things that I had let slip between the cracks, and then there was always that fresh manna from heaven. So let's put a few of the points on the table as a review of what pastor said, and then I would just like to point out a few things that spoke to me afresh.

The book opens telling us it was a time that everyone did what was right in their own eyes, there was a famine in the land, famine was usually a warning from God, that Israel was in disobedience. The next thing that is added to the setting is we see that Elimelech moves his family into a foreign land, leaving the land of promise and going back into the land and the people that had enslaved Israel for years. After her sons married moabite women, and they had lived there for years, the men of the family all die leaving Naomi and two daughters-in-law to fend for themselves. This is the place where I want to start to pick up on some of the story.

Naomi returns to Bethlehem, where they had originally come from, and Ruth returns with her. We see the women of the city greeted Naomi upon her return, but her response to them is "the Lord has afflicted me God's hand has gone against me, I went out full, the Lord has brought me home again empty." In Naomi's bitterness she doesn't have room to see that Ruth, has bonded herself to her mother-in-law, staying with her and adopting her customs. Another thing is their timing upon returning, they return at the beginning of the barley harvest.

The next thing we see in the narrative is that Ruth goes out to glean in the fields, a common custom and something she could do to provide for the humble family. She happens upon a field that is Boaz's harvest. While gleaning in the field she finds favor from Boaz, who learns who she is and commands his men to be generous with her even leaving extra for her to glean. To these points we have to recognize/acknowledge God is in control = They returned at the time of the barley harvest, when Ruth, goes to glean, she chances to come upon a field of Boaz, and finds favor - even as a foreigner!! Next we see that Ruth gleans in those fields until the end of the barley and the wheat harvest, meaning that they were basically temporary well taken care of between the two harvest. Now we see Naomi's counsel to Ruth to secure her future, that she may have rest in her future and not have to labor all her days.

I have to interject a childhood story here; years ago growing up in Depauville, the mill pond would be covered in the summertime with a thick layer of duck weed. One spring we bought a dozen ducks and I took charge of raising the ducks. Once they were old enough to put into the water everything was good, we fed them just enough crack corn to keep them friendly, so we can mingle with them and catch them, but they were pretty much on their own. Now if any of you have ever raised ducks, you are well aware they shovel food in and shuffle it out like a steam engine! My father and I soon began to realize this was going to be an expensive proposition to cage them and feed them all winter, just for the fun of ducks on the mill pond. At approximately that same time he learned of a farmer who had harvested cow corn and that left behind corners and knockdown rolls in the field. I had a first-hand experience of gleaning the fields for what was left behind. It is an experience that by the end of the day you have screaming back syndrome. And as I read the book of Ruth and it tells that she gleaned long in you one day, or she gleaned through the barley and wheat harvest, that wasn't light weight work that she did to be faithful to her mother-in-law.





**Elder Ministry continued...**

Well to wrap this up, both Boaz and Ruth maintained a Godly character; we see a demonstration of loyal love; there were many circumstances but God was in it ALL Boaz did all of his part with integrity, before witnesses to validate his legal claim transaction. Ruth, a gentile (not of Israel) was redeemed and found her place in the lineage of Jesus. None of this is a newsflash from what the pastor presented to us; so the two points that spoke the loudest to me was A) Ruth's seeking : Ruth sought the Lord and accepted Naomi's God without full understanding of him yet. Do we do the same thing, or do we think we have to have all the answers first. Do we think we need all the information as to who God is and why he does what he does before we trust? Plus I was impressed that she worked late into the night gleaning, that she worked through 2 harvest. That just spoke anew to me. Do I seek God and into his word reading late into the night or early in the morning to harvest what I can from his word? To glean everything that he has for me, working diligently to pick up the kernels of truth he's laid down for my nourishment. God's word is there for the gleaning we just have to be actively seeking, we have to be a gleaner. Last point that I was reminded of is the roll of the kinsman redeemer. He can redeem people from their poverty, their slavery to another. There's only One Redeemer that we have with the Almighty; our Redeemer is Jesus Christ, His only Son and He is a Redeemer that is greater than any other. Rejoice brothers and sisters; we have a "greater then" kinsman redeemer, and He promises us rest and security.



**Breaking The Chains Biblical Recovery Ministry**  
~ Ken Kavanagh



**On The Highway of Sanctification**

I have not listened to the rock band AC/DC for several years now. An element of the "world" that the Holy Spirit convicted me about while singing out, "I'm on the highway to hell..." Over the loud music in the truck, I perceived that God had asked me, "ARE YOU?" I stopped the CD that was playing and I actually said, "NO," in response.

Here is how I understood God's ministering to me that day, "Then why do you praise yourself of being on a highway to hell and allow yourself to proclaim yourself on a highway to hell, with all others who sing along with the message and meaning of that song?"

The conviction was intense and I entered into a new chapter, in sanctification. In short, sanctification is to be set apart to a sacred purpose, to consecrate, to be freed from sin, to purify. All who have faith in God, are being sanctified during the remainder of their physical lifetime.

During this period of my walk with Christ, this conviction was a struggle for me and until I relented and surrendered the struggle over to God, I was always in a tug-of-war with God. I enjoy rock and heavy metal music! Once I surrendered, I was led through the process of purging all music that I had collected for many years.

I did tell God I enjoyed the music but understood the spiritual side of "proclaiming" the message of the lyrics when I voiced (quite loudly) the very words and thus gave authority for the meaning and message of the lyrics over my life.

James 3: 10 *Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.*

I began to understand how I was double-minded, proclaiming one moment, "Praise God, for He is Holy" and in a breath later in the day proclaiming, "I'm on the highway to hell..."

Once I understood this ministering and applied what I learned as I studied Scripture, God answered a prayer that I voiced during this time. I was led to a Christian "Rock" station on the internet and found many artists and bands that praised and worshiped the Lord through the rock and heavy metal genre of music.



A point that needs to be made, until I surrendered to what God convicted me about, I didn't understand how I was proclaiming curses and living double-mindedly. Once I surrendered, then the Holy Spirit began to walk me through the Bible and He illuminated both what and why I felt the conviction for.

We are all convicted in the ways we are convicted in accordance of Scripture. It has been years since I was convicted about the specific bands I listened to. Today I have a greater understanding of why God had to convict me long ago as He began to place me where I am today in the Body of Christ. Back then, I didn't have a clue concerning the "spiritual" side of being a member in the Body of Christ. I never understood, let alone believed, how the tongue can both bless and curse. Nor how such lyrics are a "wile" or a scheme of the devil.

*Ephesians 6: 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

I didn't know and truth be told, did not believe that music is influenced by the devil, who strives to devour me.

*1 Peter 5: 8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.* Music was just one of his means of destruction and I was deceived into believing there was "nothing" wrong with cursing myself as I sang along with the lyrics of so many songs.

I was blind to this at that time in my walk with Christ. Many are blind about all this while they proclaim cursing words of lyrics as they sing along. In church I called out LORD, LORD, and after church, proclaimed, "I'm on the highway to hell!" Such was the devouring deception of the devil.

When you are convicted, be obedient to that conviction. If you don't understand or are struggling with the conviction, seek God for wisdom and understanding.

*James 1: 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

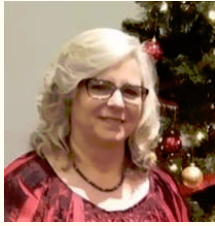
## What does River Community Church mean to me?

The River Community Church is a label on a building. A gathering place, to worship God's Word with like minded people. I am so proud to be a part of a caring and loving community.

Patsy







## Grief Ministry

~ Laura Schafer

### Feelings of Grief

The loss of a loved one brings on a lot of emotions and feelings. In the beginning shock may keep the emotions at bay. As you begin to travel the journey of grief the emotions and feelings begin to sneak in. Here are some common emotions people may experience, to experience some or all of these feelings is very common on your journey with grief.

- Panic-your world has been turned upside down. It is common to feel overwhelmed and out of control.
- Anxiety-feelings of “what will I do now” or “how can I ever make it without...”
- Fear- fear of how you will be able to survive, fear of emotions you have never felt before or even fear of losing someone else.
- Anger- Anger at the person who died, at family or friends who say things that aren’t helpful or perhaps even God.
- Guilt - you may blame yourself for your loved one’s death or for not doing something to prevent it.
- Failure - You may feel you let your loved one down.
- Emptiness- You may feel like “what’s the use” does anything really matter any more.
- Despair - You may feel like King David felt when he wrote:

Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I am in distress;

my eyes grow weak with sorrow,

my soul and my body with grief.

My life is consumed by anguish

and my years by groaning;

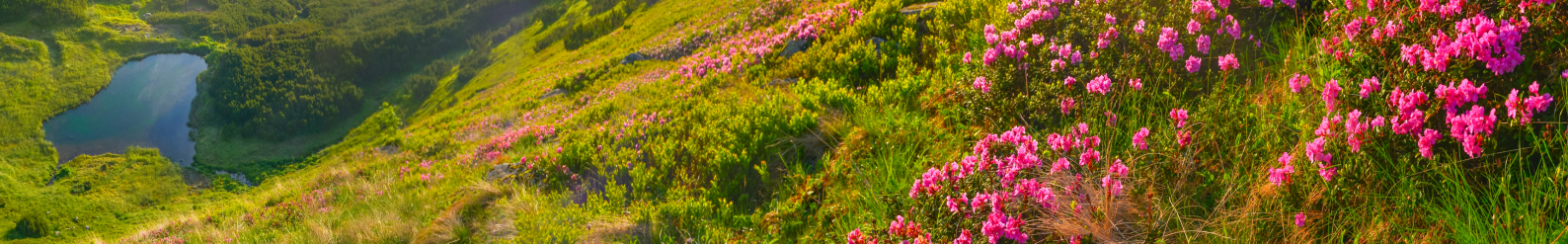
my strength fails because of my affliction,

and my bones grow weak. Psalm 31:9-10

- Loneliness - once the business of the funeral is over; and others get back to “normal” a great sense of loneliness may be felt.
- Relief - If your loved one had suffered from disease or was in chronic pain.
- Happiness - When you feel windows of happiness while you grieve. People who are grieving may feel guilty when this happens.

Experiencing these intense feelings may often feel overwhelming, most people can work through these feelings by talking to God and a trusted friend. If you feel drawn to unhealthy ways of coping such as drugs, alcohol or you begin to think about harming yourself, be sure to talk to a pastor, counselor or other professional.

“By embracing the pain, by looking into it and beyond it, I have come to see God’s presence in even the worst situations.” -Joseph Cardinal Bernardin “The Gift of Peace”



## RCC Women's Ministry ~ Wendy Falzano

We are very excited to be meeting again!

We have had two gatherings so far and what fun and fellowship.

Our gathering in April was an organizational kick off where we discussed what the women were looking for from our Circle gatherings.

It is there that we decided that we would be meeting the 3rd Saturday of every month 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. Mark your calendars.

At our gathering in May we played a game, shared some laughs and praised our LORD by reading some of our favorite Psalms.

At our meeting June 24th, we will be creating vision boards. Come see what it is all about as Angela Taylor leads us in this project. Bring along any used magazines you are done reading, scissors and glue sticks if you have them.

We will also be starting up the Sunshine Sisters at the next meeting. If you are interested but won't be able to make the meeting, fill out the form and get it to Char, Angela or Wendy by June 24th. We will have the forms available on the Circle bulletin board located across from the women's restroom.

Friday and Saturday, July 16-17, we will be holding our annual rummage sale. Wendy is looking for volunteers to help sort Monday, July 12th through Thursday July 15th. She is looking also for people to help during the sale. Because storage is limited, donations will be accepted that week. If you do have donations that must be out of your household before then, reach out to Wendy to see what can be arranged. (518-526-6149)

The women have also adopted a garden and a big thank you to those volunteering to maintain it!

We look forward to seeing you on the 24th and remember to keep an eye on the bulletin board!



Robert Williams - June 1st  
Douglas Patterson Sr - June 2nd  
Nancy Carey - June 7th  
Janelle Matthews - June 13th





**Thank You!**

We would like to say thank you to all who assisted with Jerry Spears memorial. We were so grateful for all of the help. It was a beautiful memorial and we couldn't have done it without you!

**UPCOMING EVENTS!**

Coming soon...Freedom Sunday Picnic! You won't want to miss it! Stay tuned for more details to come!

Friday, June 11th @ 7:00pm - Bonfire and Smores

Sunday, August 15th - Ice Cream Social and Rain Gutter Regatta. More information to come!

**Future Events To Look Forward To:**

- Chili Cookoff
- Community Dinner
- Progressive Dinner

If you have any ideas for a fun filled fellowship time, please email Laura Schafer at [lschafer@riverchurchnny.com](mailto:lschafer@riverchurchnny.com)

**Fellowship Meeting**

On Monday, June 14th at 6:30pm, we will have a Fellowship Meeting to plan the details of the Freedom Sunday Picnic. Everyone is welcomed to attend this meeting.

**Communications**

**Would you like to receive your communications faster?  
Would you like to help us save on postage?**

Let us know and we can send all your communications by Email. If you would like to switch to email correspondence, contact the church office at [lschafer@riverchurchnny.com](mailto:lschafer@riverchurchnny.com) or call (315) 686-3194.

**Community Outreach**

River Community Church is reaching out into the community by providing a meeting place for the following organizations:

- St. Lawrence River Quilters Guild
- American Red Cross Blood Drives
- AA
- T.O.P.S.

RCC is also reaching the community by hosting a Farmer's Market every Friday from July 9th - August 27th from 4:00pm - 7:00pm.

If you have an activity and need the space to hold it, call the church office.

**Annual Meeting**

The RCC Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, July 25th after Sunday Service.

All ministries are to hand their reports into the church office no later than June 28th.

***Congratulations!***

Congratulations to the following graduates:

- Jacob Burns - Thousand Islands High School
- Noah Flack - Thousand Islands High School
- Danny Moore - LaFargeville High School
- Dominick Questel - Judson High School, (Texas)

*Happy  
Father's  
Day*

**We'd like to wish all dad's a very happy  
and blessed Father's Day!**