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For Immediate Release

**Join Love Rising: A Community Day of Prayer & Meditation
in Newfane & Olcott**

Town of Newfane, New York – June 27, 2020 – On July 15, community organizers in Newfane are planning an event titled, “Love Rising: A Community Day of Prayer & Meditation.” All are welcome to virtually attend and participate, or to participate in person at several locations. The idea is to set aside a day to pray for and meditate on all of the challenges facing the nation during these unprecedented times, and to focus on what unites the community.

“When I listen to the news, especially over the last month, it makes my heart hurt,” says Pam Leibring, originator of Love Rising. “Pandemic, unrest, unemployment, racial tension, injustice ... there’s just so much pain right now. And I felt like I had to do something. What do many of us do when we’re experiencing great sadness? We pray. So I talked to Reverend Randi Hicks Rowe, who is the rector of St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in Burt. We discussed a prayer vigil. I brought the idea to other church members, and the idea has blossomed from there.”

While the effort’s initial organizers are members of St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in Burt, clergy and members of other churches are getting involved and the group hopes all area churches as well as secular community members will support this idea with their own energy and efforts. They want to bring people together – not only for thoughtful consideration of what we’re facing at local and national levels, but also to challenge community members to learn how to have those potentially difficult conversations, ask questions and listen to each other to find common ground, and to consider how to make positive changes together. Focusing efforts and actions on a single day – from dawn to

dusk – may renew or create connections between the local clergy and community leaders who can help lead conversations and facilitate future efforts.

Leibring expands on Love Rising’s mission: “We live in a beautiful community. We want to keep our hearts and minds open to meet the growing list of challenges our country is facing, and to create a community where everyone belongs. To do that, we know we need to have open, respectful dialogue.”

“Many of us believe in the power of prayer. But you don’t need to be a religious person to be part of this day,” explains Leibring. She emphasizes that this effort is not owned by a single church, or even by faith communities. “If you have love for your neighbors, love for your community, please join us. Set aside an hour, or whatever time you have. Join in person (at a safe social distance) or join from the peace of your own home.”

EVENT LOGISTICS:

- Website: Love-Rising.com
- Date: July 15, 2020
- Time: Sunrise to sunset (5:30 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.)
- At sunset: Faith leaders will share prayers at a virtual gathering on Facebook Live. At the conclusion, community members will be encouraged to go outdoors at sunset to reflect and to symbolize showing love to our neighbors.
- Locations: Social distancing guidelines will be observed at central prayer/meditation locations, including the Newfane Town Gazebo at 2735 Main Street, the Olcott Beach Gazebo on East Main Street in Olcott. Church locations to be announced at Love-Rising.com. Participants are also strongly encouraged to participate from home via website and Facebook Live.
- **Sign up [here](#)** to spend an hour reflecting on your role in bringing peace, hope, love and unity to our community.
- Upon signing up, participants will receive instructions for collecting a yard sign to show their support for this effort. The “Peace takes community” yard signs will be available for pick up at central locations in Newfane and Olcott. Locations will be listed on the website.
- Articles, prayers and thought-provoking conversation-starters will be shared on the website, as well as related activities for children.

For updates, please visit Love-Rising.com.

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