

Name _____

- First time guest
- Returning guest
- Interested in baptism or membership
- Member

New Contact Information

Phone _____

Email _____

Address _____



From the beginning of the Jesus movement, followers of Christ declared that there is no Jew or Greek, no slave or free, nor is there male and female. We, the people of Two Rivers United Methodist Church join in this movement of the Holy Spirit and declare that we celebrate the diversity of our neighborhood and the world.

We welcome and affirm people of every gender identity, gender expression, and sexual and affectional orientation, who are also of every age, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, family structure, and of every economic, immigration, marital, and social status, and so much more. We believe that the body of Christ is more vital in its ministry when the whole diversity of the human family may enjoy full participation and leadership in the Church.

We welcome all who have known the pain of exclusion or discrimination in the Church and society, and acknowledge the pain caused by the history of exclusionary policies of the United Methodist Church. We will continue to work toward a more inclusive Church and invite you to join us in following Jesus Christ on the Way, marked by greater hospitality, kindness, justice, peace, understanding, and mutual respect.

Announcements for December 21, 2025

Swahili Sunday School—10:45 am in the Swahili Classroom

Advent Multi-generational Sunday School - 10:45 am in Fellowship Hall

Adult Sunday School - 10:45 am in Asbury Parlor

Discipleship Schedule

Monday Bible Study meets at noon in Epworth Hall. Wednesday Prayer & Devotion Time meets on Facebook Live and Zoom at noon every week. Zoom Meeting ID # for Wednesday is 961 006 728. The Zoom meeting can also be joined by phone simply by dialing 312-626-6799. Once connected, dial the Meeting ID # 961 006 728, and you will join in the conversation.

Caring Tree (Socks, underwear and sweatpants) Our Caring Tree in the sanctuary will be used to collect items for Rock Island Academy. All through the Advent season, you are encouraged to bring in children's socks, underwear, and sweatpants. These are items that are always needed at elementary schools. Please bring new packages of socks, underwear, and new sweatpants of various sizes and place them under the Caring Tree.

Blue Christmas at Church of Peace Today On the longest night of the year, people of Two Rivers UMC and Church of Peace UCC will gather together to express our struggle, grief, and lament. The Blue Christmas service at Church of Peace UCC (1114 12th St, Rock Island) will start at 4:00 p.m. and end shortly after sunset this afternoon providing a poignant entrance into the longest night of the year. Pastor Robb will share the message. We will share Communion and create our blue Christmas floral display.

Service of Candles, Carols & Communion Christmas Eve service will be on Wednesday, December 24 at 4:00 p.m. We will celebrate with wonderful music, the Christmas story retold, and share in Holy Communion. Please join with us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Christmas Day International Pot-luck Supper Please join us on Christmas day at 3:00 pm for this wonderful time of great food, singing and fellowship.

Guest Wifi



Online Giving Follow us @RITworivers



Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 21, 2025

1 John 4:7-21

Dear friends, let's love each other, because love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God. The person who doesn't love does not know God, because God is love. This is how the love of God is revealed to us: God has sent his only Son into the world so that we can live through him. This is love: it is not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son as the sacrifice that deals with our sins.

Dear friends, if God loved us this way, we also ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God. If we love each other, God remains in us and his love is made perfect in us. This is how we know we remain in him and he remains in us, because he has given us a measure of his Spirit. We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the savior of the world. If any of us confess that Jesus is God's Son, God remains in us and we remain in God. We have known and have believed the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who remain in love remain in God and God remains in them. This is how love has been perfected in us, so that we can have confidence on the Judgment Day, because we are exactly the same as God is in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear expects punishment. The person who is afraid has not been made perfect in love. We love because God first loved us. Those who say, "I love God" and hate their brothers or sisters are liars. After all, those who don't love their brothers or sisters whom they have seen can hardly love God whom they have not seen! This commandment we have from him: Those who claim to love God ought to love their brother and sister also.

GATHERING TO HEAR THE GOOD NEWS

PRELUDE "O Come All Ye Faithful" -arr. David Lanz

GREETING

*LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

One: We are waiting for Jesus

All: We are waiting with hope because we know that God's steadfast love endures forever.

One: We are waiting for Jesus.

All: We are waiting with peace that surpasses all understanding. It is peace from knowing we are fully loved in this moment.

One: We are waiting for Jesus.

All: We are waiting with joy that comes from knowing God is already present and that the Kingdom of God is at hand.

One: We are waiting for Jesus.

All: We are waiting in love because Christ first loved us. Amen.

*ADVENT REFRAIN (See screens) "We are Waiting for Jesus"

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: God of Advent Love, we confess to you that in our waiting, we are not always loving. We are impatient with others, quick to anger or frustration. We are unkind to ourselves, dwelling on our faults and failures. We are comfortable in a world that is unloving, unjust, and unwilling to care for people. We are waiting for Jesus even as we ignore his command to love each other as he first loved us. Forgive us for forgetting the reason we wait - to fulfill a promise of love that is made to all people.

Pause for silent confession and reflection

One: Hear the good news: We do not have to wait for Jesus' love until Christmas morning. Forgiveness is a gift that we may open today.

All: We love because Christ first loved us, in the name of Jesus Christ, are forgiven and loved. Amen.

we

*PASSING THE PEACE

PRAYER SONG #211 UMH "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" vs. 1

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

ANTHEM "In the Bleak Midwinter" - arr. Bernard Sexton
Feat. Adele Shirkey, Flute

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

All: Holy Spirit, open our hearts and fill us with Advent love as we hear the words of this letter and reflect on the love we are called to live. Amen.

SCRIPTURE 1 John 4:7-21 (CEB)

*HYMN #218 UMH "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

Children are invited to gather at the Chrismon tree as we sing.

SERMON We Are Waiting for Love – Rev. Robb McCoy

RESPONDING TO THE GOOD NEWS

RESPONSE HYMN #206 UMH "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

*OFFERTORY #204 UMH "Emmanuel, Emmanuel" x2

All are invited to place your offering and the detached part of the bulletin in the offering basin at the front as we sing

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in hope. It is courageous and tenacious. It is a hope that remembers where we have been and what we have already overcome.

We believe in peace. It is the shalom that God intended for creation. It is not the absence of tension, but the presence of justice. It is not only in the calming of the storm. It is also in the breaking of the bread.

We believe in joy. It is the true happiness that is bigger than a momentary feeling. It is rooted in God's Instruction and walking in God's ways.

We believe in love. It is steadfast and endures forever. It pursues goodness and mercy. It seeks the good for others no matter the cost.

We believe in the Kingdom of God, the Coming of Christ, and the fulfillment of hope, peace, joy, and love in this life and the next. Amen.

DOXOLOGY #94 UMH

*BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE "Joy to the World" - arr. Dan Coates

**=please rise if you are able*

UMH = United Methodist Hymnal (red book) FWS = Faith We Sing (black book).
Music used with permission under CCLI License:

PRAYERS FOR THE WEEK

December 21, 2025

Your Name _____

Prayers for our Church and its ministry:

Prayers for people I know:

I have permission to publish this prayer.

I do not have permission to publish this prayer.

Prayers for the community/world:

Prayers for myself:
