

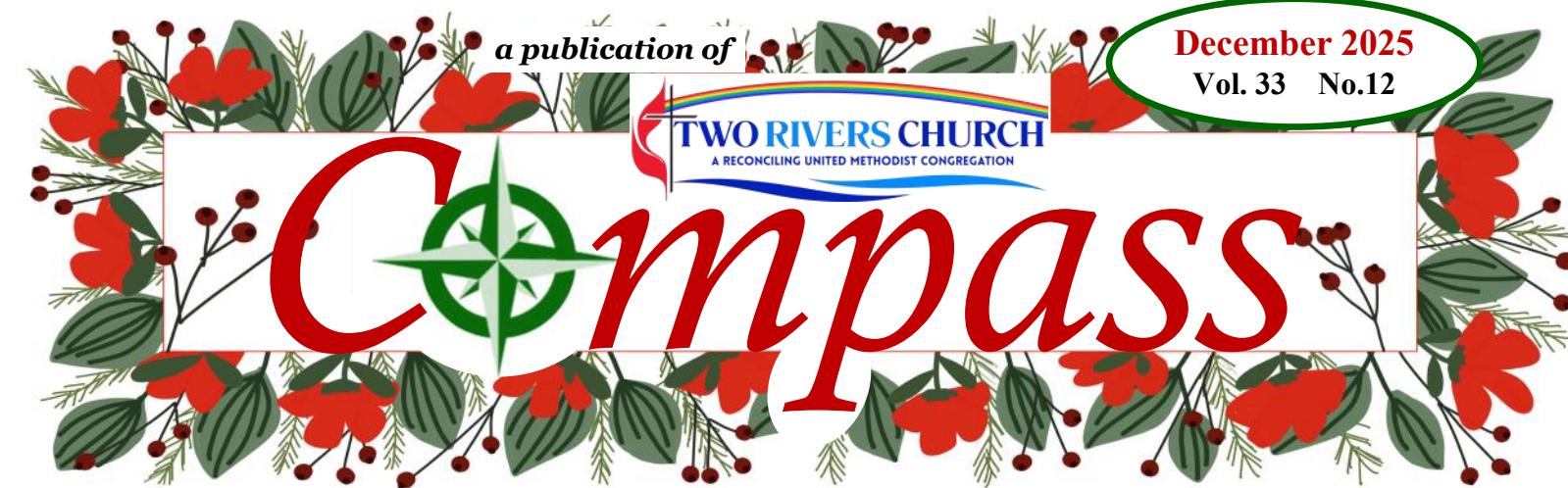
2025

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 <i>Church office Closed</i> 12:00 pm Bible Study	2 6:00 pm Making Sense of the Bible 6:00 pm Handbell Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	3 12:00 pm Prayer Group via FB & Zoom	4	5	6 11 am Young Lions Roar 12 pm Meal Site
7 Fill the Pantry Sunday 2nd Sunday of Advent 9:30 am Worship/Communion 10:45 am Sunday School	8	9	10 12:00 pm Prayer Group via FB & Zoom 6:00 pm Handbell Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	11	12	13 11 am Young Lions Roar 12 pm Meal Site
14 3rd Sunday of Advent Argrow's House Pop-up Christmas Shop 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School 2:4pm Parsonage Christmas Open-house	15	16 10:00am Two Rivers Readers 6:00 pm Making Sense of the Bible	17 12:00 pm Prayer Group via FB & Zoom 6:00 pm Handbell Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	18	19	20 11 am Young Lions Roar 12 pm Meal Site
21 4th Sunday of Advent 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School 4:00pm Blue Christmas Service @ Church of Peace UCC	22	23 12:00 pm Bible Study	24 4:00pm Christmas Eve Worship Service	25 Christmas Day 3:00pm 2nd Annual Christmas Party hosted by Jacques B. in Epworth Hall	26	27 11 am Operation Safety Net 12 pm Meal Site
28 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School	29	30	31 New Years Eve			

December 2025

Vol. 33 No.12



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www.facebook.com/RITwoRivers

Advent Sermon Series: 'We are waiting'

The theme for Advent this year will be "We are waiting." Unified by a beautiful and haunting choral anthem of that name. "We Are Waiting," by Priscilla Lamparter Landis will be our sung refrain each week as we light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love. Along with this musical element, the "We are Waiting" Advent will be supported by The Bible Project. This is an online resource that includes short videos about each theme word for Advent. There will also be daily Advent readings available.



Multi generational Advent Sunday School

For the four Sundays of Advent – November 30, December 7, 14, and 21, all are invited to Epworth Hall for a One Room Sunday School from 10:45-11:45. We will gather with adults, kids, and youth. We will do our best to communicate and learn across cultures and languages. The Bible Project's Advent curriculum will guide us, but we will include coloring, songs, some simple crafts, and translations to learn together.

Parsonage Open House



The McCoy family invites you to an open house gathering at the parsonage 3912 25th Ave Ct., Rock Island. There will be snacks and a hot chocolate bar. Come any time between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 14.

Blue Christmas at Church of Peace

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. Blue Christmas is a chance to make room for those who are struggling at Christmas – when everything in our world is shouting "be of good cheer."

The Blue Christmas service will start at 4:00 p.m. and end shortly after sunset on Sunday, December 21, 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. Church of Peace UCC is at 1114 12th St, Rock Island.

Christmas Eve Services

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. Christmas Eve is a unique worship experience. Please join with us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.





12/01 Robert Combs
12/01 Edie Hafeman
12/03 Brian Breiholz
12/09 Derek Durbin
12/09 John Gripp
12/12 Milka Mwanza Kongolo
12/17 Nancy Schwegler
12/17 Tamara Baugh
12/19 Carol Atkinson
12/21 Nicole Durbin
12/21 Thom Leonard
12/28 Betty Bell
12/29 Cynthia John
12/30 Chrystal Kay Krebs
12/30 Shane Littlejohn
12/31 Lee Farrar

If you have a birthday in December and we've missed it, please call the church office to update our records.

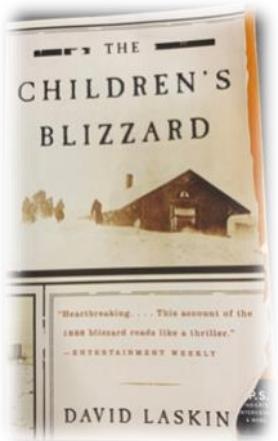
Two Rivers Readers

The Two Rivers Readers would love to see you at their next gathering on **December 15** to discuss the book, *The Children's Blizzard* by David Laskin. This is the gripping story of an epic prairie snow-storm that killed hundreds of newly arrived settlers and cast a shadow on the promise of the American frontier.

The group meets in the back of the Sanctuary at 10 am. Their discussions are always insightful, challenging, and a lot of fun.

They'd love to have you join them!

Questions? Please contact the church office.



ARGROW'S HOUSE

Pop up Christmas Shop

Argrow's House is a healing house that offers free services for survivors of domestic violence and abuse. It's also a social enterprise, which hires survivors to create bath and body products that are sold online and in local stores. On **December 14th**, after worship they will be having a Christmas Pop-up shop in the back of the sanctuary. They will be featuring the following products: Argrow's House Bath and Body Christmas Gift Sets (Bath and Body), Freedom Designs Earrings (Jordan), Hon's Honey (Baltimore, MD), Thistle Farms Candles (Nashville, TN), New Hope Girls Handbags (Dominican Republic), Vi Bella Jewelry (Mexico and Haiti), and TerraKlay Home Decor (India).



ChangeMakers Update

The ChangeMakers Team met for lunch in November to set and clarify goals for the team's work. There will be a retreat at the Benet House Retreat Center in southwest Rock Island on Saturday, January 24. This meeting will be facilitated by Rev. Eric Swanson, who was born and raised in the Quad Cities and is the newly appointed Director of Congregational Development for the Wisconsin Annual Conference of the UMC.

At that retreat we will determine our Core Values, and begin work on a new Mission Statement, a new Vision Statement, and begin to identify ministry areas for goal setting. The retreat is scheduled for 2:00-7:00, but it is unlikely it will last that long. It will include dinner at the Benet House. It will be a long afternoon – especially for members who also work at the Meal Site. We are working on getting extra volunteers for that Saturday so that some regulars can take the Saturday off.



Hygiene Ministry

Church member, Kala Lee is putting together Hygiene bags for men and women in need. She plans on filling purses and drawstring bags with many useful items including lotion, deodorant, nail files, hand sanitizer, toothpaste, combs, etc. The church will be collecting monetary donations to help purchase the items for this ministry through December. If you would like to donate you may do so on Sundays by writing "Hygiene Ministry" on the memo line of your check or on your offering envelope or you may mail your donation to: Two Rivers UMC, 1820 5th Ave, Rock Island, IL 61201. Thank you in advance for your support for this great ministry.

Youth Retreat at Camp Milan

Junior High and High School youth are invited to a Christmas Retreat at Camp Milan on Monday, December 29 at 12:00 p.m. until Tuesday, December 30 at 9:00 a.m. If youth need a ride to Camp Milan, they should meet at Two Rivers Church at 11:30 a.m. We will have lunch and dinner together on Monday and breakfast on Tuesday. Youth need to bring pillows and sleeping bags. If there is a volunteer interested in helping with breakfast on the 29th, that would be greatly appreciated.

High School Youth are invited to join the Surge youth group from Bloomington at their WinterFest from January 16-19. This year the group has rented a house in Galena. They hope to do some skiing as well as other typical retreat activities.



Year End Contributions

2025 Year-End giving statements will be sent out in January.

Please have your 2025 contributions into the church office by Sunday, December 28. Any contributions received after this date will be counted toward 2026 giving.

Two Rivers Prayers Presence Gifts Service

Remember in Prayer-

Please be in prayer for all those in need of healing and strength, as well as their caregivers.

Our presence—

November 2	= 82
November 9	= 80
November 16	= 65

Our gifts—

General Fund Offerings

November 2	\$ 5,700.35
November 9	\$ 2,727.35
November 16	\$ 2,551.35

Our Service -

Members of the community served at

Two Rivers Saturday Meal Site & Operation

Safety Net (OSN):

November 1	— 96 Meal Site
November 8	— 98 Meal Site
November 15	— 82 Meal Site

Our Thanks—

Thank you to all who helped with the Hanging of the Greens on November 22 and 23.

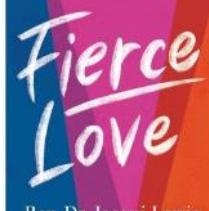
Thank you to everyone who has donated money, food and hygiene items to our Little Free Pantry and Saturday Meal Site.

Thank you to all those that served on a Two Rivers Church Committee in 2025.

Examen Book Club

Pastor Robb has been invited to continue the Examen book club at the Atlas Collective book store. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 6. The book selection is "Fierce Love," by Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis. According to Lewis, the book is "inspired by the Ubuntu philosophy 'I am who I am because we are who we are' and explained through stories from my own life and those of my mentors and inspirations, in this book I detail the nine daily practices necessary for transforming ourselves, our communities, and our world at large." Copies will be available at The Atlas for a book club discount.

A Bold Path to Ferocious Courage and Rule-Breaking Kindness That Can Heal the World



Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis



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. Sarah McCoy, now a Kindergarten teacher at RIA says that she often sees little ones without socks – even when it is cold outside. Please bring new packages of socks, underwear, and new sweatpants of various sizes and place them under the Caring Tree.

Holiday Cookie Baskets

Donations of homemade or purchased treats, (peanut butter, nut free) cookies, crackers, gum—anything you want, are being collected and may be left in the kitchen of Epworth Hall. Please mark the donations "Holiday Homebound Baskets" and bring them any time up to/before service on Sunday, **December 14** when they will be assembled and will be ready for delivery.

These baskets for our homebound members are made possible thanks to the gracious people that share their time and efforts to bake, shop, organize and deliver them. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer on this project please contact the church office at 309/788-9384.

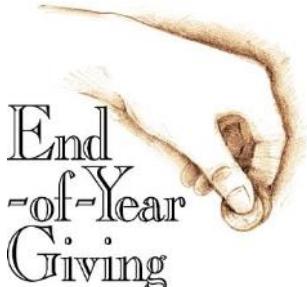


Christmas Eve Offering

As is our tradition at Two Rivers, we will be giving away our Christmas Eve offering. This year we will be dividing it between our own Good Samaritan Fund and the Reconciling Ministries Network. As a member of the Reconciling Ministries Network, we have committed to supporting their ongoing work of justice and inclusion in the Church. The Good Samaritan Fund is used to help local people in need. Our policy right now is to help people with up to \$200 for direct rent, security deposit, or utilities assistance. If it is someone with a connection to the church, we can help up to \$500 per family. These funds are meant to help people with emergencies to help them stay in their home – or get a new home. The offering will be taken as usual during the Christmas Eve worship service, but checks can be mailed in separately if marked "Christmas Gift."



End of Year Giving



As the year draws to a close, we pause to give thanks for the generosity that has sustained our ministry. Each pledge, each gift, each act of faith has carried us forward. It has been an incredible year, and there is much to celebrate.

Our most recent financial reports (through October) show that generosity has outpaced our expectations but has not kept up with 2024. So far this year, we have collected about \$6500 less than this time last year. This reflects some difficult losses to our congregation. This doesn't tell the whole story, though.

Through 83% of the year, we have received 89% of the yearly pledges – which means people are giving more than they promised. This is an incredible act of faith and generosity. In addition, our non-pledged giving is far out-pacing the expectations we had for 2025. This reflects the growing attendance and excitement over what is happening at Two Rivers.

Your faithful commitment to the Church has been truly inspiring. If you have not turned in a 2026 Promise Card, they are still available in the back of the sanctuary. These can be turned in at any time. A year-end gift can help close the gap between 2024 and 2025, and a generous pledge for 2026 can set us on a great path for the year to come.

All Four Constitutional Amendments Ratified By Annual Conferences

United Methodist voters on four continents have ratified a major restructuring that aims to give the denomination's different geographical regions equal decision-making authority.

The Council of Bishops, meeting online, announced Nov. 5 the ratification of the restructuring — known as Worldwide Regionalization — as well as three other amendments to the denomination's constitution.

The other three constitutional amendments included:

Expanding inclusiveness in church membership;
Bolstering the denomination's stand against racism and colonialism; and
Clarifying who can vote for clergy delegates.

"It has been a significant week for the Council of Bishops and The United Methodist Church," said Bishop David Bard. "With the canvassing and certification of the results of the votes taken across annual conferences, with each amendment receiving more than 90 percent favorable votes, our denomination is entering into a new future. Regionalization will allow for more significant local governance of the church, as each region makes significant decisions about how best to organize for ministry. Two other constitutional amendments commit us to continued work toward beloved community in Christ, recognizing the ways we have put up barriers to such community in the past. This is an exciting time to be United Methodist, disciples who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully and lead courageously."

To be ratified, a constitutional amendment must first receive at least a two-thirds majority vote at the denomination's top lawmaking assembly, General Conference — which happened last year. Each amendment next must receive the approval of at least two-thirds of the total vote by lay and clergy members at annual conferences worldwide. The denomination has more than 120 annual conferences — bodies consisting of multiple churches and ministries — in Africa, Europe, the Philippines and the United States.

Annual conference voters supported regionalization by a vote of 34,148 to 3,124 — a 91.6 percent majority. All four constitutional amendments were ratified by a more than 90 percent affirmative vote.

For more information visit UMNews.org



COAT MINISTRY DONATIONS REQUESTED

Distribution of warm winter wear began in October, and our stock is getting lower. We have historically provided winter wear to those experiencing homelessness or who are otherwise in need. In addition to the coats, hats, and scarves distributed to our meal site and Operation Safety Net patrons, winter wear is also often provided to area schools and social service organizations. Please consider donating your gently used coats, hats, scarves, gloves, or boots to this worthy and most appreciated ministry. We especially need mittens and gloves in adult sizes and children's coats sizes 5/6 through

10/12. We also accept new items, as well as cash donations and checks made out to Two Rivers UMC; please designate either cash or checks for the COAT MINISTRY. With many thanks for your continued support, this ministry is entering its 30th year! Please contact Claudia Applegate at 309-738-2055 for more information.

All 4 amendments to UMC Constitution are ratified

Amendments	Yes Votes	No Votes	Percentage
Amendment I (Regionalization)	34,148	3,124	91.60%
Amendment II (Inclusiveness)	33,895	2,920	92.00%
Amendment III (Racial Justice)	33,875	2,969	91.90%
Amendment IV (Clergy Requirements)	33,952	2,792	92.40%

Council of Bishops announces formal annual conference vote



Compass

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Prayer Chain

If you want the prayer chain to pray for your concern or you wish to be part of this prayer ministry, please call one of the persons listed below. They will alert the remaining chain members.

Charlotte Peterson 793-7783
Nancy Schwegler 781-6609

Newsletter deadline

The deadline for items for the **January** issue of the *Compass* is **Tuesday, December 23 2025**. Please have information or articles in by this deadline date. Thank you.

Welcome Statement



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 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.

From The Entire Staff of Two Rivers UMC



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