2024 december

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 **Fill the Wagon Sunday for the Little free Pantry** **1st Sunday of Advent** **9:30 am** Worship/ Communion **10:45 am** One-Church Sunday School	2 **12:00 pm** Bible Study	**3**	**4** **12:00 pm** Zoom & FB Live Prayer & Devotion **6:00 pm** Bell rehearsal **7:30 pm** Choir rehearsal	5 **6-7 pm** RI Community Conversations	6	7 **12 pm** Meal Site
8 **2nd Sunday of Advent** **9:30 am** Worship **10:45 am** One-Church Sunday School **1-3pm** Christmas open-house at the McCoys **6-9pm** College Group dinner at the McCoys	9 **12:00 pm** Bible Study	10	11 **12:00 pm** Zoom & FB Live Prayer & Devotion **6:00 pm** Bell rehearsal **7:30 pm** Choir rehearsal	12	13	14 **12 pm** Meal Site
15 **3rd Sunday of Advent** **9:30 am** Worship **10:45 am** One-Church Sunday School *Delivery of Holiday Baskets for Two Rivers Seniors*	16 **12:00 pm** Bible Study	17	18 **12:00 pm** Zoom & FB Live Prayer & Devotion **6:00 pm** Bell rehearsal **7:30 pm** Choir rehearsal	19	20	21 **12 pm** Meal Site **4:00 pm Blue Christmas Service**
22 **4th Sunday of Advent** **9:30 am** Worship **10:45 am** One-Church Sunday School	23 **12:00 pm** Bible Study *January Compass Deadline*	24 **4:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**	25 **Merry Christmas!** **3:00 pm Christmas Party in Epworth Hall**	26	27	28 **11am** Operation Safety Net **12 pm** Meal Site
29 **9:30 am** Worship **10:45 am** One-Church Sunday School	30 **2:00 pm** Bible Study	31 **New Year's Eve**				

a publication of

TWO RIVERS CHURCH
A RECONCILING UNITED METHODIST CONGREGATION

Compass

December 2024
Vol. 32 No. 12

Connect Online: **www.tworiversumc.org** **www.facebook.com/RITwoRivers**

Advent through Epiphany Series

Advent is a season of endings and beginnings. As the calendar year comes to a close, a new church year begins. Christ's birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving; and yet, the world as we know it spins madly on. In many ways, pregnant Mary was surrounded by endings—large and small, personal and political. But Mary proclaimed hope in a God who was and is making all things new.

Christ's birth offered a beautiful new beginning for shepherds and Magi alike—all the while, King Herod tried to bring Christ's story to an end. When we navigate seasons filled with endings and beginnings, we need reminders. We need words that can feel like steady ground, like a path for our feet to find as we step forward into the unknown.

This Advent series is filled with blessings, with the scriptures and reminders we need to hear again and again as we begin a new season. So, you are invited to move through this Advent season as if you are entering a sacred new chapter, holding fast to the reminders that will sustain you for the journey ahead.

As you journey through this season, may you find words for belovedness and hope. May you find words for beginning again. For no matter what you are facing, no matter what this new day brings, love is your beginning.

Blue Christmas

Saturday, December 21 at 4:00 p.m. will be our Blue Christmas service. This year we will include people from Church of Peace UCC. This combined service will be a chance for people to express their anxiety and grief in a season which usually does not make room for such things.

Christmas Eve Services

Christmas Eve service will be on Tuesday, 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.

Open House at the Parsonage

On Sunday, December 8, the McCoy family will host an open house at the parsonage from 1:00-3:00. There will be a hot chocolate bar, light snacks, and Christmas records spinning. All are welcome to drop in any time between 1:00 and 3:00. There should be time to enjoy the One-Church Sunday school, get some lunch, then come to have a sweet treat with the McCoy family.

12/01	Robert Combs
12/01	Edie Hafeman
12/03	Brian Breiholz
12/04	Sue Camp
12/09	Derek Durbin
12/09	John Gripp
12/15	Virginia Cline
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.

Online Giving at Tworiversumc.org

1. Website Giving:
Go to www.tworiversumc.org to give through the church website. It's a safe and easy way to give any time.

Two Rivers Donate QR Code

OR

2. Tithe.ly Giving App:
Download the Tithe.ly App from the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play Store (Android). Once you've downloaded the app select your church and follow the instructions given.

A Season of Giving and Reflection

As we approach the end of 2024, we are reminded of the many blessings we have received throughout the year. This season of Advent is not only a time of anticipation and preparation for the birth of Christ but also a time to reflect on our commitments and the ways we can continue to support our church community.

We are deeply grateful for the generosity and faithfulness of our congregation. Your pledges have enabled us to carry out our mission and serve those in need. As the year draws to a close, we kindly remind you to complete your 2024 pledge. Your contributions make a significant impact, and fulfilling your pledge ensures that we can continue our work without interruption.

Looking ahead to 2025, we invite you to prayerfully consider your pledge for the coming year. Your commitment helps us plan and budget for the various ministries and programs that enrich our church and community. By making your 2025 pledge, you are investing in the future of our church and the lives we touch.

In addition to your regular pledge, we ask you to consider making a special year-end gift. This additional contribution can help us meet unexpected needs, support special projects, and ensure that we start the new year on strong financial footing. Every gift, no matter the size, is a testament to your love and dedication to our church family.

We are continually inspired by the generosity and spirit of our congregation. Your support allows us to be a beacon of hope and love in our community. As we celebrate the birth of Christ and look forward to the new year, we thank you for your unwavering commitment and generosity.

May the peace and joy of this season fill your hearts and homes. Together, let us continue to shine the light of Christ in all that we do.

Year End Contributions

2024 Year-End giving statements will be sent out in January.

Please have your 2024 contributions into the church office by Sunday, December 29. Any contributions received after this date will be counted toward 2025 giving.

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.

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 15** 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.

Right before the clock strikes midnight on December 31, make sure you lift your left leg; that way you'll start 2025 on the right foot!
—via Lorene Irving
Lutherville, MD

Two Rivers

Prayers Presence Gifts Service

Remember in Prayer-
All those in need of prayers for healing and strength.

Our presence—

October 27	= 67
November 3	= 71
November 10	= 81
November 17	= 74
November 24	=75

Our gifts—
General Fund Offerings

October 27	$1,412.94
November 3	$2,418.94
November 10	$4,276.94
November 17	$2,457.94

Our Service -
Members of the community served at Two Rivers Saturday Meal Site & Operation Safety Net (OSN):

October 26	— 91 Meal Site, 79 OSN
November 2	— 61 Meal Site
November 9	— 67 Meal Site
November 16	— 57 Meal Site
November 23	— 70 Meal Site

Our Thanks—

Winter Hats

A BIG THANK YOU to Carolyn Koch for donating dozens of knitted hats to our Operation Safety Net Ministry. These hats will go to members in the community that struggle to stay warm as the temperatures drop.

Prayer Chain

Charlotte Peterson	793-7783
Nancy Schwegler	781-5334

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 above. They will alert the remaining chain members.

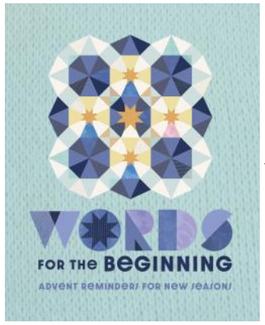
Jacques invites you to a Christmas Party

3:00 p.m. on Christmas Day, all are invited for a special celebration. Barutwanayo Jacques has shared that it is tradition for African families to gather on Christmas Day for food and music. On Christmas afternoon we will share a Christmas party in Epworth Hall.

There will be African food such as fufu, greens, beans and rice, and various stews. We will share music videos of African songs. People are encouraged to bring desserts to share or food from their own family tradition.

Everyone is invited to come to the party – even if you don't bring food. This will be a lively celebration of Christ's birth with church family.

One-Church Sunday School



We are in an amazing moment in the life of Two Rivers UMC. There has been an influx of visitors and new families over the last few months, including many refugee families who speak English only as a second, third, or even fourth language. During Advent, instead of dividing up in different Sunday school classes, everyone in the church is invited to come to Epworth Hall for a special One-Church Sunday School.

The lessons, stories, and activities will all be tied to our Advent-Epiphany Series called "Words for the Beginning." This series has an intergenerational Sunday school plan, and we are adopting it to be multi-lingual as well. Participants in the Sunday school will have a chance to learn some basic Swahili and Karen. More importantly, it will be a chance for us to get to know each other better.

The One-Church Sunday school promises to be a unique and rewarding experience and a chance to learn about all the new faces in our worship services every Sunday.

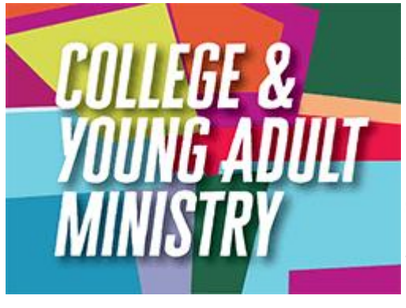
Christmas Eve Offering

It is our tradition to give away our Christmas Eve offering. The money collected on Christmas Eve this year will be divided between our Good Samaritan Fund and the Midwest Distribution Center.

The Good Samaritan Fund is our local fund to help people in need. Requests are made to Pastor Robb to help with housing or utility bills. We also have an arrangement with the Rock Island Housing Authority so that people who need help catching up on past bills can make arrangements to find affordable housing. This fund has kept several families in their homes over the last year, and will continue to do so with the help of your generosity.

The Midwest Distribution Center is near Springfield, Illinois. It is an incredible storage facility for disaster relief and many other mission projects. We recently supported their feeding programs with a rice packing day at Riverside UMC (Moline). You can learn more about this ministry by visiting www.midwestmission.org.

College Group



The Two Rivers College group meets every Tuesday at the Geology Museum at Augustana College from 4:15-5:30 p.m. They had a great Dipsgiving celebration at the McCoys' home on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Eight young adults came for a great evening of food and fun. They played a game called Priorities, which was a great way for them to get to know each other. The college group will gather again at the parsonage on December 8 from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This is the Sunday before finals at Augustana and everyone will have a chance to take a study break, have some comfort food, and get ready for a big week.

Nursing Home & Senior Members

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Rock Island, IL 61201

Virginia Cline
2350 1st Street A Dr. Apt #8
Moline, IL 61265

Nancy Cornish
3740 Thunder Ridge Rd. Apt 308
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Pauline Durham
3720 35th Street Apt 4
Moline, IL 61265

Edie Hafeman
1829 17th Street
Rock Island, IL 61201

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2217 31st Avenue
Rock Island, IL 61201

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Allure of Quad Cities Rm #919
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Janice Peterson
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Rock Island, IL 61201

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Rock Island, IL 61201

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Rock Island, IL 61201

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Antony Moddermanstraat 32
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All of us

Newsletter deadline

The deadline for items for the **January** issue of the *Compass* is **Monday, December 23, 2024.** 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.

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