

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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

### New Contact Information:

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

### Opportunities to serve

Scan this Code to schedule a time you can be an usher, liturgist, or greeter.



- Every 4th Sunday of the month Usher
- RSVP to Christmas day party at 3:00 p.m.

**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.

### Announcements for December 22, 2024

**One-Church Sunday School –10:45am—Downstairs in Epworth Hall**

**Discipleship Schedule** Monday Bible Study meets every Monday in Epworth Hall at noon. . 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. *Note: No bible study or prayer group this week.*

**Christmas Eve Worship** On Christmas Eve we will have our special service for **Christmas Eve at 4:00 p.m.** This Christmas Eve service will feature “candles”, carols, and Communion.

**Christmas Day 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.

Date	Liturgist	Ushers	Assistant Greeter
12/22	The Cooley Family	Kevin & Brianna Pollock	
12/24	Harold Truitt	David Dehnel, Candy Canik, and Charlotte Peterson	
12/29		Kevin and Brianna Pollock	

Network: Two Rivers Sanctuary  
Password: TwoRivers2013  
www.TwoRiversUMC.org



Donation QR Code



December 22, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Advent

## Matthew 1:18-25

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn’t want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly. As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:

*Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,*

*And they will call him, Emmanuel.*

(Emmanuel means “God with us.”)

When Joseph woke up, he did just as an angel from God commanded and took Mary as his wife. But he didn’t have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. Joseph called him Jesus.

**GATHERING TO HEAR THE GOOD NEWS**

PRELUDE "Echolocation" - Shaun & Abigail Bengson

INTRODUCTION

FOR THE BEGINNING "Lessons From The Schoolyard" by Sarah Speed

\*ENTRY OF THE LIGHT (see screens) "We'll Dress the House"

One: In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?

All: Let us begin with tenderness. Let us begin with our hearts on our sleeve. Let us begin from a place of vulnerability and hope. Let us begin with love.

One: Yes, let us begin with love. Today we light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and finally we light love.

All: May the warmth of these lights be our cornerstone. May the truth in these lights help us begin again .

One: May it be so. Amen.

\*HYMN (see screens) "We'll Dress the House"

\*CONFESSION, FORGIVENESS, AND ASSURANCE

One: Gracious God, you paint pictures of what could be.

All: But we declare those visions impossible.

One: You tell us that justice will roll like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

All: But our hearts are dammed up, unable or unwilling to let love flow.

One: You tell us that the city gates will be open, and the Lamb will beckon all to "come!"

All: But we lock the doors and hide in our own upper room.

One: Open our hearts to see the world as you see it.

All: Open our hearts to risk hope, to dream dreams, to see visions, and not live in fear. We dare to risk this prayer.

(Pause for silent reflection and confession)

One: Friends, God is holding onto you. That good news will never change. So hear and believe the good news of the Gospel: Today is a new day. Today, you are loved. Today, we are forgiven. And it will be true tomorrow as well.

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

\* PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

\* HYMN (see insert) "Hope is Worth the Risk"

**PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

All: God of beginnings, create space in us to not only hear these words, but to believe them. We are hungry for your wisdom, so speak to us now. With hope and curiosity we listen. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 1:18-25

CHILDREN'S MOMENT AND PRESENTATION OF CHRISMON

REFRAIN (verse 6) "Hope is Worth the Risk"

SERMON 'Hope is Worth the Risk' - Rev. Robb McCoy

**RESPONDING TO THE GOOD NEWS**

HYMN #184 "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

ANTHEM "Come, Jesus, Holy Son of God" - Handel  
Two Rivers Sanctuary Choir

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

\* HYMN #196 UMH "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"  
(All are invited to place your offering and the detached part of the bulletin in the offering basin at the front of the sanctuary as we sing)

\* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a God who gives us reason to hope, a God who fills our nights with stars, who follows winter with spring, who dwells with and among us. We believe that God has dreams for creation, dreams of justice like a mighty stream and swords that will be beaten into plows. Therefor, we push cynicism aside. We risk vulnerability. We hold onto hope, and we declare, "My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my savior."

\* DOXOLOGY #94 UMH

\* BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE "And the Glory of the Lord" - G.F. Handel  
from The Messiah

\* You are invited to stand as you are able.  
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**PRAYERS FOR 12/22/2024**

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 share this prayer.

Prayers for the community/world:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Prayers for myself:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_