

**Welcome to the Community Church of Richmond
United Church of Christ
Our Church at Worship on the Third Sunday of Easter
April 18, 10:00 A.M.**

Our Mission: To be an inviting, caring faith community connecting with Christ.

Tune into Facebook at 10:00 on Sunday to share this time of worship. If you can't join promptly at 10:00, the video will be available later as well.

You can access that video even if you don't have a Facebook account – just type in <https://www.facebook.com/CommunityChurchOfRichmond/>

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

GATHERING SONG “Something Beautiful for God”

Verse 1:

**Know this one thing above all else:
We are loved, loved by God.
Let this be how we see ourselves:
as people loved, loved by God.
And once we know the love of Christ;
feel God's healing in our lives,
loving-service is how we give our love back to God.**

Chorus:

**Today let us do something beautiful for God!
Do something small, but do it with great love.
Do what we can, where we are, with what we got.
Today, let us do something beautiful for God!**

Words and Music by: Bryan Sirchio, ©2007 Crosswind Music Used by permission.

WORDS OF WELCOME

Rev. Hope Molozaiy

CALL TO WORSHIP & OPENING PRAYER

George Zimmermann

One: How awesome to praise God together!
We give this time to God in wide-eyed wonder.

**All: The God of all worlds is with us.
Praise God for this season of Easter.**

One: Praise God for all the signs of new life!
Praise God for all we can do together!

**All: The God of all worlds is with us.
Praise God for this season of Easter.**

One: Praise God for the life and ministry of Jesus!
Praise God for all who share that ministry today.

**All: The God of all worlds is with us.
Praise God for this season of Easter.**

One: Christ came to offer us abundant life.
We worship today to reclaim that gift.

**All: The God of all worlds is with us.
Praise God for this season of Easter.**

Let us pray:

One: In you, gracious God, the widowed find a caring one;
the orphaned find a parent; the fearful find a friend.

All: In you, Jesus Christ, we meet our Maker, and our match.

One: In you, compassionate God, the wounded find a healer;
the penitent find a pardoner; the burdened find a counselor.

All: In you, Jesus Christ, we meet our Maker, and our match.

One: In you, loving God, the miserly find a beggar;
the despondent find a laughter-maker; the legalists find a rule-breaker.

All: In you, Jesus Christ, we meet our Maker, and our match.

One: And if some need to say, "Help me" and some need to say, "Save me,"
And if some need to say, "Hold me" and if some need to say, "Forgive me,"
then let these things be said now, in confidence, by us who need them.

Silent moment

One: O Christ, in whose heart is both welcome and warning,
say to us, do to us, reveal within us the things that will make us whole.

All: And we will wait; and we will praise you. Amen.

OPENING HYMN

"Now The Green Blade Rises"

#238

Verse 1: **Now the green blade rises from the buried grain;
Wheat that in dark earth for many days has lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:**

Refrain: **Love is come again like wheat that rises green.**

Verse 2: **In the grave they laid their Love whom hate had slain,
Thinking that their love would never wake again,
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen:**

Refrain: **Love is come again like wheat that rises green.**

Verse 3: **Christ came forth at Easter, like the risen grain,
Jesus, who for three days in the grave had lain,
Quick from the dead the risen one is seen:**

Refrain: **Love is come again like wheat that rises green.**

Verse 4: **When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,
Christ's warm touch can call us back to life again,
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been:**

Refrain: **Love is come again like wheat that rises green.**

#238, The New Century Hymnal; Lyrics, Tune: Noel Nouvelet; French Noel 15th Century, 1928

WORD FOR ALL AGES "This is the Church" by Sarah Raymond Cunningham,
illustrated by Ariel Landy; read with permission from Beaming Books Publishing

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Everything Glorious”

Kim May & Penny Kraft

Songwriters: Colin Kendall Linden / Jim Weider; lyrics © Warner Chappell Music, Inc; CCLI License No. 1908882

The day is brighter here with You
The night is lighter than its hue
Would lead me to believe
Which leads me to believe:

You make everything glorious
You make everything glorious
You make everything glorious
And I am Yours

Refrain: You make everything glorious
You make everything glorious
You make everything glorious
And I am Yours.
What does that make me?

From glory to glory
You are glorious, You are glorious
From glory to glory
You are glorious, You are glorious
Which leads me to believe why I can believe

My eyes are small but they have seen
The beauty of enormous things
Which leads me to believe
There's light enough to see that

You make everything glorious
You make everything glorious
You make everything glorious
And I am Yours

...

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 111

Praise the Lord!
I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart,
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.
Great are the works of the Lord,
studied by all who delight in them.
Full of honor and majesty is his work,
and his righteousness endures forever.
He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds;
the Lord is gracious and merciful.
He provides food for those who fear him;
he is ever mindful of his covenant.
He has shown his people the power of his works,
in giving them the heritage of the nations.
The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.
They are established forever and ever,
to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.
He sent redemption to his people;
he has commanded his covenant forever.
Holy and awesome is his name.
The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding.
His praise endures forever.

The Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

MESSAGE

Fellowship of Believers

The Rev. Kathy Karch

HYMN

“Come, Let Us Join with Faithful Souls”

#383

Verse 1:

**Come, let us join with faithful souls our song of faith to raise;
One family in heart are we, and one the God we praise.**

Verse 2:

**Faithful are all who love the truth and perfect truth proclaim,
Who steadfast stand at God’s right hand and glorify God’s name.**

Verse 3:

**And faithful are the gentle hearts to whom the power is given
Of every hearth to make a home, of every home a heaven.**

Verse 4:

**O God of hosts, our faith renew, and grant us, in your grace,
To join the songs sung by the saints in every time and place.**

#383, The New Century Hymnal; Lyrics, Tune: Carl G Glaser, 1828 Arr. Lowell Mason, in Modern Psalmody 1839

PASTORAL PRAYER

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

SONG RESPONSE “Doxology”

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.**

OFFERING

Invitation to Give – We are so thankful for the continued financial support that we have continued to receive during this time! Though we rarely see each other in person these days, our church is still: providing worship; providing Sunday school for our church kids; connecting members with each other; supporting neighbors in need, locally and further away. We believe those things are parts of God’s calling for us in this place and we can do them because of steady financial support.

You may always send your check directly to the church at PO Box 246, Richmond IL, 60071.

Prayer of Dedication – You might pray as you write your check and address your envelope to the church... **Accept our lives, O God, as well as our gifts. Let the spirit in which we give them be your Spirit. Let the use that is made of them be your use. Amen.**

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Pastoral Benediction

Sending Song “Something Beautiful for God”

Verse 2:

**Ev’ry one who we meet today
is God’s child, God’s own child.
May our lives help them hear God say,
“You are my child,” God’s own child.
A smile can radiate God’s love.
Let them see the Christ in us.
Let our lives be the cheerfulness of God in this world!**

Chorus:

**Today let us do something beautiful for God!
Do something small, but do it with great love.
Do what we can, where we are, with what we got.
Today, let us do something beautiful for God!**

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POSTLUDE

Call to Worship, Lavon Baylor, Taught by Love: Worship Resources for Year A, 1998, p. 92; Opening Prayer, adapted from A Wee Worship Book, Fourth Incarnation, Wild Goose Worship Group, 1999, p. 14; Prayer of Dedication, Chalice Worship, Chalice Press, 1997, #526; Music copyright, CCLI 1908882.

NEW NEWS

FOX VALLEY MEETING The Fox Valley Association Council calls all congregations and clergy to the 2021 Fox Valley Association Spring Meeting on Sunday, April 18 on Zoom. We will begin at 2:00 p.m. with a time of worship, followed by a business meeting. Our time together will conclude with an opportunity for small-group discussions, which will conclude by 4:00 p.m. Our business meeting will include an update on the Illinois Conference from Conference Minister Rev. Molly Carlson, a presentation of and vote on the Conference budget, and more information on the Fox Valley Association Covenantal Ministry Design. Registration details are to come; contact Pastor Hope if you’re interested.

TURNING POINT INC. invites you to help Turn the Night Purple! They write: “As we end an incredibly challenging year of providing services during the COVID-19 pandemic, we are all looking forward to the fresh hope of a new year. Unfortunately, many women, men, and children are still living in unsafe, potentially deadly situations. The isolation that came with stay-at-home orders and social distancing meant people living with domestic violence have felt more trapped and alone than ever. As our communities open back up, we want these individuals and families to know that Turning Point is here for them, just like we have been every single day for the past 40 years.” Join Turning Point for a virtual tribute to hope and healing in honor of those affected by domestic violence – April 30, 6 PM on Facebook Live at McHenryCountyTurningPoint. For more information, and to donate now, visit <https://www.turnpt.org/paintthenight>

WIDER MISSIONS UPDATE Late last year, the Wider Missions Ministry gave the gift of a goat through Heifer International on the church’s behalf. Here’s a recent note we’ve received: “Your goats are transforming lives! Heifer’s ‘Empowering Women Farmers in Nepal’ project is helping thousands of once struggling people meet rising market demand for sustainably produced food, including goat milk and products like cheese. With your support, project farmers are learning the value of working together instead of on their own... Once isolated, the women have formed self-help groups and cooperatives, gaining access to savings, loans, insurance and other business resources.” Fun goat facts: Goats were among the earliest animals tamed by humans; they were being herded as many as 9000 years ago. Goat milk is easier to digest than cow’s milk, has more calcium, and can even help lower cholesterol. Female goats give birth to an average of 2 kids a year.

UPDATES FROM CHURCH CABINET

- + We’ve received \$20,000 from the second round of Payroll Protection Program (PPP) money; as it did in 2020, this money will help make up for the fundraisers we’re not able to hold in 2021, as money that we don’t receive from visitors who would be coming worship. Our 2020 PPP was completely forgiven, as we expect this round to be.
- + With that money secured, Cabinet voted unanimously to provide a salary for Kim May through the 12 months of 2021 (instead of the 9 months expected under her choir director’s contract). We also voted to increase Pastor Hope’s salary by 3% for the remainder of 2021.
- + The church ended March with just over \$24,000 in our regular bank account. Our (non-endowment) assets currently total about \$179,000.
- + Pastor Hope hopes to hold an outdoor worship service on church property by the end of May if conditions allow.
- + The Beef Roast will be held in August in a format similar to last year. We are looking into purchasing more beef this year since we sold out last year. Stay tuned for more details.

ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

GIFT CARD FUNDRAISER

Penny Kraft regularly places orders of gift cards on our behalf, and the church gets a percentage of the cost of those cards. As you might be starting to get out into the world more often again, remember that there is a HUGE variety of gift cards available, from specialty stores to gas stations and grocery stores. Jewel, Walmart, Meijer, Marathon Gas, SO MANY RESTAURANTS, department stores, etc. Though the percentages might seem small, small bits can add up to a meaningful contribution to the church, and are especially great with places that you’re going to shop at anyway. (Remember, you get the full value of the gift card; the church gets our donation when you purchase the card, whether you lose, spend, or whatever.) Find the full list of participating retailers at

<https://www.shopwithscrip.com/shopwithscrip-retailers>. Contact Penny with your order any time by calling/texting her at 815-236-6172 or emailing her at mriapk@gmail.com.

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Hey! How did those people get to go to the sanctuary for worship?! They contacted Kelli Brossart at kellibrossart@gmail.com. We remain cautious and follow all CDC and State of Illinois guidelines, including wearing a mask, maintaining social distancing, and sitting with members of your household in the assigned pew(s). We also ask everyone to bring a copy of the bulletin. We are taking ‘reservations’ now for upcoming Sundays. If you would like to sign up, email Kelli. You’ll be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. You’ll receive an email reminder before the Sunday you are scheduled to attend. We know this is not a replacement for “regular” church, but we hope it provides a chance to reconnect with our beautiful worship space.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Thanks, all you “snow sponsors and “snowmen” and “snow-women” for supporting our snow clearing costs from this past winter. Even with our efforts to reduce the needed services, we’ve still had to pay nearly \$1900 in 2021 for snow removal. (No, they didn’t plow the parking lot, but they did still shovel much of our sidewalk, which we felt was the right thing to do for our neighbors in town as well having safe access to the office entrance. And the shoveling is the expensive part.)

Through special gifts from nine households, we’ve received \$950 toward those costs! – Thank you! If others of you still want to contribute, your special gift of \$50 will make you a “snow sponsor”! If you’re able to give \$100, we’ll consider you a “snowman” (or woman) and maybe even arrange for a token of our appreciation. Thanks for any way you can help!

ZOOM BIBLE STUDY continues Tuesday at 2PM open to everyone to read and discuss the Bible passage for the coming Sunday. Tell Pastor Hope if you want the Zoom link.

SUNDAY SCHOOL BUT ON A SATURDAY continues at 10:30 on Saturday mornings. Contact Pastor Hope or the church office for the Zoom information.

OUR PART IN THE STORY: DEVOTIONS ON SUNDAY'S TEXT

Stephen's Witness

Acts 6:1-7:2a, 44-60

Read a different text each day, and consider how it relates to Sunday's lesson and to your daily experiences.

Monday: Stephen's Speech to the Council Acts 7:2-16

❖ How would you have responded if God had given you a promise that included generations of slavery and persecution?

Tuesday: Stephen's Speech to the Council Acts 7:17-34

❖ Moses' ministry began when he was 40 years old, and came to fruition when he was 80. What does this say to you about the trajectory of your own life's ministry?

Wednesday: Stephen's Speech to the Council Acts 7:35-43

❖ Why is it important that a prophet would be raised up from Israel's own people?

Thursday: Saul Persecutes the Church Acts 8:1-3

❖ What do you think was in Saul's heart and mind to cause him to persecute the believers so fiercely?

Friday: Philip Preaches in Samaria Acts 8:4-13

❖ What do you think would bring great joy to your city?

Saturday: Philip Preaches in Samaria Acts 8:14-25

❖ Simon wanted the power of God that he saw in the disciples and offered what he had for it-money. Do you see people who act in this way today? In what situations?

www. theartoffaith.net

PRAYERS FOR APRIL 18, 2021

If you have prayer updates or announcements to share, please send them to BOTH Pastor Hope (pastorhope@richmonducc.org) AND our office manager, Brandi Pletcher (office@richmonducc.org). THANKS! *We will leave a person on our list for four weeks, unless asked to leave them on longer.*

JOYS: Birthdays: Sarah Warren (April 20)

OUR CONDOLENCES surround Gail Crutcher and his family on the passing of his brother, Ron. We also embrace Jake Blanton and his family at the loss of his uncle, Tim.

CONCERNS

Dawn Conley's mother, Diane

Deann Workmon

Debbie Franzone's brother-in-law, George

Pastor Hope's aunt, Liz Boehne

All who are worried about the health of loved ones and family members

Leaders trying to make wise decisions

Ongoing Prayers:

School teachers, staff, administrators; school children and their parents, including college students

Those whose household relationships are strained

Healthcare workers, especially Cheryl Kazimier's niece and Rob Rummel's daughter-in-law

Marti Swanson's brother, John Baldwin

Ella Watts, Melissa Jones's mother

Louise Strah's niece, Amy Lenik

Members and Friends who are Homebound or in Nursing Facilities:

Mercedes Ahlgrim (New Mexico), Sharon Mensing (Sterling), June Whitney (at home)