

Welcome to the Community Church of Richmond United Church of Christ

Our Church at Worship on the 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

January 14, 2024

10:00 A.M.

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

Welcome, visitors! Our greeters have welcome bags to share with you, so please make sure they know you are visiting.

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE

Penny Kraft

WORDS OF WELCOME

Rev. Hope Molozaiy

Sharing of joys and concerns

GATHERING SONG "More Light"

More light, more truth is breaking from your word.

More light, more truth,

Holy Spirit, help us hear what needs to be heard.

Words & music by C. Grundy, © Hand and Soil Music, 2012

CALL TO WORSHIP

Cheryl Heber

One: Let us start this service well, by reminding ourselves:
That it is not we who chose Christ,

All: but Christ who chose us,

One: That we are not here because of our goodness

All: but because of Christ's grace,

One: That we are not here to enlighten ourselves,

All: but to allow Christ to enlighten us,

One: That we have not come to be entertained

All: but to worship God with heart, soul, mind and strength

OPENING PRAYER

One: Parent God,
thank you for giving us your Son,
and for coming to live among us.

All: Today we see Your Son has grown up.

One: He is baptized,
he is tested,
he is ready to start his mission
and call his disciples.

**All: Whatever our age,
 may we also be ready to grow up,
 to move forward,
 to leave behind the games,
 and be ready to answer your call
 to come and follow.
 Amen.**

HYMN

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”
(Jesus, the Light of the World)

#160

WE LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD

THE CHANCEL STEPS

The children are invited to join the pastor at the front of the church at this time. Afterwards, they are dismissed to Sunday School for the remainder of worship. They will return upstairs at the end of worship.

SONG RESPONSE “This Little Light of Mine”

**This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine.**

Tune: this Joy irr. | African American Spiritual | Arr. Jeffrey Radford 1993

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 91:9-12

Because you have made the LORD your refuge,
the Most High your dwelling place,
no evil shall befall you,
no scourge come near your tent.
For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.
On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.

The Gospel according to Mark 1:1-20

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ.
As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way,
the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.’”

so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tested by Satan, and he was with the wild beasts, and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the good news of God and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

MESSAGE Who Trusts the Good News?

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD

HYMN "O Radiant Christ, Incarnate Word" #168

TIME OF PRAYER

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.**

THE OFFERING
Invitation to Give
Prayer of Dedication

**O God,
You have been so generous to us, even giving us your Son.
As we return to you our offerings, receive what we give.
Take and use these gifts for the work of your realm
here on earth. Amen.**

*HYMN “God of Change and Glory” #177

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING
Pastoral Benediction

Sending Song “Jesus, the Light of the World” #160
**We will follow the light, beautiful light,
Come where the dew drops of mercy are bright,
Shine all around us by day and by night,
Jesus the light of the world.**

Call, by Bruce Prewer, and posted on www.bruceprewer.com/. Opening prayer and
Dedication, from Spill the Beans, Issue 17, p. 53. Music shared under CCLI
#1908882

WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

	<u>TODAY</u>	<u>January 21</u>
Liturgist	Cheryl Heber	
Video Director	Nicki Carter	ANNUAL
Greeter/Usher	Bob Jooss	MEETING
Fellowship Hosts	The Vezinas	
Sunday School	Mike Kennedy	

AT CHURCH THIS WEEK

- Today—Worship & Spiritual Growth Mtg at 11:15am
- Choir practice Wednesday at 7pm
- Breakfast Potluck next Sunday at 9am

CHURCH NEWS

FOR CONNECTION

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION will be next Sunday, January 21, combined with our 10AM Worship Service. Prior to the meeting, there will be a Potluck Breakfast at 9AM. Please look for the Breakfast Sign Up Sheet this morning.

At the meeting, we will approve a budget for 2024 and elect the officers of the church, as well as share general discussion about the life of the church.

2023 PICTURES

If you have pictures from church life in 2023, please share them with Pastor Hope by January 17, so they can be a part of our celebration of the year at the annual meeting!

FOR SERVICE

GIFT CARD ORDERING: Contact Penny Kraft to order gift cards for your regular shopping, dining out, gas stations, or, of course, for gifts! You can see a full list of vendors and the % we receive at www.raiseright.com/brands . Contact Penny at 815-236-6172 or mriapk@gmail.com or leave an order form and payment in the mailbox labelled “GIFT CARDS” in the upper hallway.

Gift Card App

We can now also support this fundraiser through the RaiseRight app with your smartphone. Gift cards for many places are available digitally for you to purchase and then use right away at the store you're shopping in or the restaurant you're eating at! Using the app cuts down on our shipping costs and gets funds delivered back to the church account quickly. Penny Kraft, Ronnie Obara, and Kathy Speaker are all very familiar with using the app and can help you get started if you're interested.

THANK YOU, CHURCH!

Wow! The total amount pledged for 2024 is \$114, 136. That's an increase of roughly \$9,000 from the pledge total for 2023. It's also the highest pledge amount we've had in a decade. Wow! Most of this increase came from many households increasing their pledging by a few percentage points – it all adds up! A few of you also became pledgers who hadn't been recently bringing our total of pledging units up to 33. Thanks to you all for your support of what this congregation might yet be.

2024 REFUGEE WELCOME PACK

Please sign up!

Exodus World Service has had an overwhelming number of new immigrants arriving in Chicago this year. The refugees coming to Chicago has more than tripled in recent months and Exodus is asking for a little extra help settling new families with extra Welcome to America Packs.

We will collect our first pack in January and welcome a family in February. We will be collecting our Welcome to America Pack from Sunday, January 7 through Sunday, January 21, 2024.

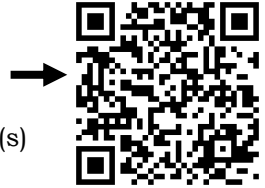
When refugees arrive in the U.S., they only have what they can carry. While refugees receive three months of help through a resettlement agency, starting over from scratch is daunting, both financially and emotionally. Through these Pack Programs, volunteers can make a huge difference by providing essential supplies, food, and most especially, a warm welcome.

Help us turn an empty apartment into a home by collecting and delivering basic household items for the kitchen, bath, and bedroom, as well as personal grooming needs. Our Wider Mission will purchase the first month's supply of food staples.

We hope to deliver our Welcome Pack to a family in February.

Find our sign-up sheet at this link or by scanning the QR code.

- 1) Click this link to see our SignUp:
<https://signup.com/go/jhLphqR>
- 2) Or Scan this code with your smartphone camera now:
- 3) Review the options listed and choose the spot(s) you like.
- 4) Sign up! It's Easy - you will NOT need to register an account or keep a password on SignUp.



Note: SignUp does not share your email address with anyone. If you prefer not to use your email address, please contact me and I can sign you up manually.

BUNCO!

This Friday, January 19 with the dice rolling at 7PM in Fellowship Hall. \$15/person will raise money for the church and provide multiple winners with a cash payout! Bring a snack or appetizer to share, and lots of luck! Sign-up sheet is in the lounge. Please RSVP to Dawn Conley 815-236-5982



BIBLE BACKGROUND

As we pick up with the gospel of Mark, here's a little orientation to what's been going on with the people of Israel since the last writings of the Old Testament: The exile ended about 500 years ago. King Ezra reestablished worship at the site of the original temple, with permission from the Persian emperor. We've been through a couple occupying empires in the meantime, including a century of Judean independence; the current masters of the universe are the Romans. There are Jews living in Judea and speaking Aramaic; Jews living in diaspora and speaking a variety of other languages; and most everybody in this part of the world deals with each other in Greek these days.

The glory days have never returned, but this has been a rich and complicated period in the history of Judaism. There's a temple in Jerusalem, complete with a priesthood, apparently some tax-based support, and dispensation from the Roman imperial cult. There are Jewish groups who think the temple is illegitimate, either because the priestly lineage was disrupted by the exile or because the whole operation is in cahoots with the pagan empire. There's a movement toward decentralized worship, based on applying the priestly purity laws to daily life instead of focusing on the temple. There are groups who want to fight an armed insurgency against the occupying power, and there are other groups who want to abandon the mainstream world and practice radical faithfulness off the proverbial grid. The theologies vary in many ways, but many groups talk in terms of ancient promises about an anointed successor to reclaim David's throne.

PRAYERS for the WEEK OF JANUARY 14, 2024

If you have prayer updates or announcements to share, please send them to BOTH Pastor Hope (pastorhope@richmonducc.org) AND our office manager, Kathy Smietana (office@richmonducc.org). THANKS!

We will leave a person on our list for four weeks, unless asked to leave them on longer.

Note: If your birthday has not been listed, please email Kathy with your birthday and/or anniversary information. We don't want to miss anyone!

JOYS: Birthdays: Annabelle Ortiz (1/14); Ronnie Obara (1/15). The kids are thankful for their 12th Day Party, and for their visit with their grandparents.

PRAYERS FOR:

Jonathan Kaman's barber, Greg, and family
All those sick at home (Kim M, George Z, Charles K, Dick S.)
Carol Richardson
Nicki Carter
Aidan Zimmermann
Theresa Kaman's uncle, David
Charles Kemp
Cheryl Heber's friend, Chris
Elise Livingston's friend, Jennifer

Ongoing Prayers:

Marti Swanson's brother, John Baldwin
Louise Strah's niece, Amy Lenik
Rob Richardson's brother, Dale
Melissa Jones
Pastor Hope

Our Congregational Prayer Partners this week are Bill and Sheryl Vezina.

In the Wider Church: We pray for our neighbors in Christ at First Congregational U.C.C. in Geneva and their Pastor, the Rev. Mike Daly.

Members and Friends who are Homebound or in Nursing Facilities: Betty Waspi

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Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

(Jesus, the Light of the World)

John 8:12; 9:5

Charles Wesley, 1739; alt.; adapt. George D. Elderkin; alt.

1 Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing, Je-sus, the light of the world;
 2 Joy-ful, all you saints a-rise, Je-sus, the light of the world;
 3 Christ, by high-est heaven a-dored, Je-sus, the light of the world;
 4 Hail the Bear-er of God's peace! Je-sus, the light of the world;

Glo-ry to the Christ-child bring, Je-sus, the light of the world.
 Join the tri-umph of the skies, Je-sus, the light of the world.
 Christ, the ev-er-last-ing Word, Je-sus, the light of the world.
 Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness! Je-sus, the light of the world.

Refrain

We will fol-low the light, beau-ti-ful light, come where the

dew-drops of mer-cy are bright, Shine all a-round us by

day and by night, Je-sus, the light of the world.

The original version of Charles Wesley's hymn has received various alterations throughout the years. This adaptation by

Tune: ELDERKIN 7.7.7.7. with refrain
 George D. Elderkin
 Arr. Jeffrey Radford, 1991

O Radiant Christ, Incarnate Word

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Ruth Duck, 1989

Isa. 60:19-20; Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11

1 O ra - dant Christ, in - car - nate Word, e - ter - nal
2 Our bar - tered, bus - y lives burn dim, too tired to
3 Your glo - ry shone at Jor - dan's stream, the font where
4 O Light of Na - tions, fill the earth; our faith and

love re - vealed in time: Come, make your home with - in our
care, too numb to feel. Come, shine up - on our shad - owed
we were born a - new. At - tune your church to know you
hope and love re - new. Come, lead the peo - ples to your

hearts, that we may dwell in light sub - lime.
world: your ra - diance bathes with power to heal.
near; il - lu - mine all we say and do.
peace, as stars once led the way to you.

Commissioned by the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, Ruth Duck's text provides a fitting center for Epiphany celebrations, with its sense of wonder at the incarnation and petition that through Christ's revelation our lives may be changed.

Tune: DICKINSON COLLEGE L.M.
Lee Hastings Bristol, Jr., 1962
Alternate tune: WAREHAM

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God of Change and Glory

1 Cor. 12:4-27

Al Carmines, 1973

1 God of change and glo - ry, God of time and space,
 2 God of man - y col - ors, God of man - y signs,
 3 Fresh-ness of the morn - ing, new-ness of each night,

when we fear the fu - ture, give to us your grace.
 you have made us dif - ferent, bless - ing man - y kinds.
 you are still cre - at - ing, end - less love and light.

In the midst of chang - ing ways give us still the grace to praise.
 As the old ways dis - ap - pear, let your love cast out our fear.
 This we see, as shad - ows part, man - y gifts from one great heart.

Refrain

Man - y gifts, one Spir - it, one love known in man - y ways.

Al Carmines, composer, playwright, performer, and teacher, has served as minister for two United Church of Christ congregations in New York City. This hymn, commissioned in 1973, was one

Tune: KATHERINE 6.5.6.5.7.7.
 Al Carmines, 1973

In our dif - fer - ence is bless-ing, from di - ver - si - ty we praise

one Giv-er, one Word, one Spir-it, one God known in man-y ways,

hal-low-ing our days. For the Giv-er, for the gifts, praise, praise, praise!