

# Welcome to the Community Church of Richmond United Church of Christ

Our Church at Worship on the Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 17, 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 "Above All"

**Verse 1: Above all powers, above all kings;  
Above all nature and all created things.  
Above all wisdom and all the ways of man,  
You were here before the world began.**

**Verse 2: Above all kingdoms, above all thrones;  
Above all wonders the world has ever known.  
Above all wealth and treasures of the earth,  
There's no way to measure what You're worth.**

**Chorus: Crucified, laid behind the stone.  
You lived to die rejected and alone.  
Like a rose trampled on the ground;  
You took the fall and thought of me, above all**

Words and Music: Lenny LeBlanc | Paul Baloché  
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CALL TO WORSHIP

Nicki Carter

One: We follow Christ,

**All: Who says take up your cross.**

One: We follow Christ,

**All: Who bids us come and offer our lives.**

One: We follow Christ,

**All: Who summons us to new life.**

One: Come, let us worship our Creator.

OPENING PRAYER

One: We come, dear Lord,  
to worship and praise you  
with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

**All: In you we find the source of our being,  
the foundation of love,  
and the wellspring of relationship.**

One: We turn to you today  
from the business of another week  
with all of its cares and concerns,  
joys and worries  
successes and failings,

**All: and we give thanks that you journey with us.**

One: Lord, we give thanks for those days when we make a  
difference,  
when we raise ourselves to the challenge of your Way,

**All: when we take the steps towards your ministry  
with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.**

One: And yet, we recognize that on other days, we get it wrong,

**All: we make bad decisions,**

One: we think solely of ourselves,

**All: we ignore the harm we do to others,**

One: and we fail to contribute to your Kingdom.

**All: Forgive us, Lord.**

**Encourage us to step forward again,  
not looking back,**

**that our lives, our words, our deeds, our thoughts  
might be suffused with the wonder and joy  
of your perfect presence. Amen.**

HYMN

“I Sing the Praise of Love Almighty”

#50

**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 “Love, Love, Love Your God”

**Love, love, love your God,**

**The commandment’s word is love:**

**Love your neighbor as yourself, for God is love.**

*Traditional – in the public domain*

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### Psalm 89:1-4

I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever;  
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.  
I declare that your steadfast love is established forever;  
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.  
You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one;  
I have sworn to my servant David:  
I will establish your descendants forever  
and build your throne for all generations.' "

### Mark 12:28-34, 38-44

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Then the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that 'he is one, and besides him there is no other'; and 'to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself'—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask him any question.

...

As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

MESSAGE      Not Far From the Kingdom Now

**WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD**

HYMN

“What Gift Can We Bring?”

#370

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 (we say together)

**Generous God,  
use us and these gifts we bring.  
May we give sacrificially out of our poverty,  
rather than thoughtlessly out of our wealth.  
Amen.**

\*HYMN

“More Love to You, O Christ”

#456

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

CLOSING RESPONSES

One: The cross,

**All: We will take it.**

One: The bread,

**All: We will break it.**

One: The pain,

**All: We will bear it.**

One: The joy,

**All: We will share it.**

One: The Gospel,

**All: We will live it.**

One: The love,

**All: We will give it.**

Sending Song "We are One in the Spirit"

**Verse:**

**We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,  
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,  
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored:**

**Chorus:**

**And they'll know we are Christians By our love, by our love;  
Yes they'll know we are Christians by our love.**

WORDS AND MUSIC: Peter Scholtes, © 1966 F.E.L. Publications. Assigned 1991 Lorenz Publishing Company, CCLI License No. 1908882

*Call by Rosemary Lamie; opening prayer and dedication from Spill the Beans, Issue 18, p. 32-33. Closing responses, by the Iona Community in Stages on the Way: Worship Resources and reading for Lent, Holy Week and Easter, 2000, p. 37;  
Music shared under CCLI #1908882*

**WORSHIP LEADERSHIP**

	<b><u>TODAY</u></b>	<b><u>March 24</u></b>
<b>Liturgist</b>	Nicki Carter	Mike Kennedy
<b>Video Director</b>		
<b>Greeter/Usher</b>	Dick Strahs	
<b>Fellowship Hosts</b>	Nicki Carter	Youth Education
<b>Sunday School</b>	Jean Valsa	Jean Valsa

**AT CHURCH THIS WEEK**

- Worship & Spiritual Growth Mtg TODAY at 11:15 AM
- Choir practice, Wednesday, 7PM
- Bunco, Friday, 7PM

**CHURCH NEWS**

**FOR SERVICE**

**WIDER MISSION FUND-RAISER:**

Remember to pick up your Joyful Tradition Cake Rolls this Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> from 4:30 to 5:30 PM.

**ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING:** Through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering, the United Church of Christ and several other Christian denominations work with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. One Great Hour of Sharing also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response. On average, 95 cents of every dollar given to OGHS goes directly to mission programming!

Make your offerings to this good work today through Easter by using the special giving envelopes in the sanctuary or otherwise marking your donation “One Great Hour of Sharing.”

**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](http://www.raiseright.com/brands) . Contact Penny at 815-236-6172 or [mriapk@gmail.com](mailto: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.

#### **FOR CONNECTION**

**BUNCO – THIS WEEK!** Friday, March 22, 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

**SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITY!** Join us for a four-week Fellowship Study Opportunity as we explore our Christian identity. Our identity affects where we live, how and where we travel; it drives what we buy and what work we can do. Identity is important. Think about why we’re so devastated when it’s stolen! Knowing our

spiritual identity is even more important! In this four-session, small group study, we'll explore our own hearts, minds, and the Word to learn more about the power that is in our own grace-created identities.

Starting Thursday, April 4, at 6:30 PM in the church lounge. We'll wrap up after about an hour. Bring a favorite Bible if you have one or use one of ours. There's a signup sheet in the lounge to help with our planning.

**CABINET UPDATE:** Church Cabinet met last Monday. The church ended Feb. with about \$36,000 in the General Fund, and about \$104,000 in total, non-Endowment money. Offerings given were just over \$9500 in Feb., which is right on track with what we need monthly to stay near our budget – good work, church!

In other news, we're excited about the many new visitors we've had in worship, and about the new opportunities of a Youth Sunday School Class and a new Small Group meeting in April. We're looking forward to the Plant Sale and the Spring Tea coming in May and wanting to help the people planning those events as best we can (Mike Kennedy and Karen Wootton, respectively).

### **HOLY WEEK, MARCH 24-31**

#### **Palm Sunday, March 24:**

Super Fellowship and Egg Dying will follow worship on in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome to dye a few eggs and enjoy some great snacks and fellowship time.

#### **Maundy Thursday, March 28:**

Potluck supper at 6pm (the sign-up sheet is in the lounge) followed by worship at 7pm in the Fellowship Hall.

#### **Easter Sunday, March 31:**

Christ is Risen! Join us for a celebration at the 10am worship service.

### **SAVE THESE DATES!**

- Plant Sale, Saturday, May 11, 9am-4pm
- Spring Tea, Sunday, May 19, 1pm-4pm, Horticultural Hall in Lake Geneva

**PRAYERS for the WEEK OF March 17, 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.*

**JOYS:**

Thankful for Phyllis Kazimier and her afghan ministry.

**PRAYERS FOR:**

Theresa Kamen

Theresa Kaman's uncle

Blanton family

Mundelein tornado refugees

All those whose lives are affected by addiction

Trish's sister-in-law

Jan Revelle's grandson

Newly arriving refugee students and their new teachers

Bill Haase

Mike Anderson's relative, Gail

Henry Eickelberg

**Ongoing Prayers:**

Barb Haase

Marti Swanson's brother, John Baldwin

Louise Strah's niece, Amy Lenik

Rob Richardson's brother, Dale

Melissa Jones

**Our Congregational Prayer Partners** this week are Rod and Kelli Brossart, James and Anna.

**In the Wider Church:** We pray for our neighbors in Christ at First Congregational U.C.C. in Naperville and their Interim Pastor, the Rev. David Voll.

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



# I Sing the Praise of Love Almighty

Gerhard Tersteegen, 1757

Transl. Madeleine Forell Marshall, 1993

1 I sing the praise of Love al - might - y, which shines re - vealed in  
 2 How lov - ing - kind you are, how gen - tle, how your heart reach - es  
 3 Se - cure my heart and all my be - ing, in you, my Sav - ior,  
 4 May my heart bear the deep im - pres - sion of love that Je - sus

Je - sus' face. I of - fer up all that de - lights me,  
 af - ter mine! My heart re - sponds in el - e - men - tal  
 cru - ci - fied. You gave your life to work my heal - ing,  
 shares with me, My life be - come a pure ex - pres - sion

all mean de - sires, each fond em - brace, Turn from my - self, in  
 sym - pa - thy, beat - ing per - fect time. This mu - tual love, this  
 bleed - ing for me, you groaned and died. Be - lov - ed Je - sus,  
 of all that Chris - tian love can be: Each word, each act, a

pure de - vo - tion, and ea - ger plunge in love's vast o - cean.  
 strong at - trac - tion, I know no oth - er sat - is - fac - tion.  
 my sal - va - tion, you have, through love, re - stored cre - a - tion.  
 bright re - flec - tion of joy in Love's own res - ur - rec - tion.

*Gerhard Tersteegen was an eighteenth-century hymnwriter and mystic, nurtured in the German Reformed Church. The four stanzas that comprise "Ich bete an die Macht der Liebe" were drawn from a longer poem and became popular in this form when published by Pastor Johannes Evangelist Gossner in his Choralbuch of 1825.*

Tune: ST. PETERSBURG 9.8.9.8.9.9.

*Dimitri Bortniansky, 1825*

## What Gift Can We Bring?

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Jane Marshall, 1980

1 Sam. 9:7; 1 Cor. 3:8-9; 1 John 4:13-16

*Unison*

1 What gift can we bring, what pres - ent, what to - ken?  
 2 Give thanks for the past, for those who had vi - sion,  
 3 Give thanks for to - mor - row, full of sur - pris - es,  
 4 This gift we now bring, this pres - ent, this to - ken,

What words can con - vey it, the joy of this day?  
 who plant - ed and wa - tered so dreams could come true.  
 for know - ing what - ev - er to - mor - row may bring,  
 these words can con - vey it, the joy of this day!

When grate - ful we come, re - mem - bering, re - joic - ing,  
 Give thanks for the now, for stud - y, for wor - ship,  
 The Word is our prom - ise al - ways, for - ev - er;  
 When grate - ful we come, re - mem - bering, re - joic - ing,

what song can we of - fer in hon - or and praise?  
 for mis - sion that bids us turn prayer in - to deed.  
 we rest in God's keep - ing and live in God's love.  
 this song we now of - fer in hon - or and praise!

Jane Marshall received the first "Woman of Achievement" award at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, where she teaches. She wrote this hymn for the twenty-fifth anniversary of her home church, Northaven United Methodist Church in Dallas.

Tune: ANNIVERSARY SONG 11.11.11.11.

Jane Marshall, 1980

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# More Love to You, O Christ

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Elizabeth P. Prentiss, c. 1856; alt.

1 More love to you, O Christ, more love to you! Hear now the  
2 Once earth-ly joy I craved, sought peace and rest; Now you a -  
3 Then shall my lat - est breath whis - per your praise; This be the

Refrain  
prayer I make faith to re - new.  
lone I seek, give what is best: In all I say and do,  
part - ing cry my heart shall raise:

more love, O Christ, to you, more love to you, more love to you!

Elizabeth Prentiss, a teacher and author of numerous books, wrote this hymn at a time of grief and physical illness. It was published some fifteen years later, together with William H. Doane's tune.

Tune: MORE LOVE TO YOU 6.4.6.4.6.6.4.4.  
William H. Doane, 1870