

**Welcome to the Community Church of Richmond
United Church of Christ
Our Church at Worship on the First Sunday of Advent
The Sunday of Hope
November 29, 2020 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/>

As you come to worship, we encourage you to have the Advent candles set up that we handed out yesterday and to light the first one with the candlelighters in the service. If you didn't get Advent candles, we have plenty. Call the office to arrange a pick-up or drop-off.

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

GATHERING SONG

“Everlasting God”

Penny Kraft & Kim May

Verse: **Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord,
we will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord.
Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord,
we will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord.**

Bridge: **Our God, You reign forever. Our hope, our strong Deliv'rer.**

Chorus: **You are the everlasting God, the everlasting God,
You do not faint, You won't grow weary.
You're the defender of the weak, You comfort those in need;
You lift us up on wings like eagles.**

Repeat from beginning

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WORDS OF WELCOME

Rev. Hope Molozaui

CALL TO WORSHIP from Psalm 130

ONE: We wait for the Lord, our souls wait, and in God's word we hope.
Our soul waits for the Lord, more than those who watch for sunrise,
more than those who watch for sunrise.
O people of God, hope in the Lord!
For the Lord overflows with steadfast love,
and God alone has the power to save us from all our sins.
We wait for the Lord, and in God's word we hope.

LIGHTING THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE, THE CANDLE OF HOPE

- Gail, Jeni, Jeremy, and Dayton Crutcher

One: For such a time as this,

Many: God's love becomes flesh. Again.

One: For such a time as this,

Many: a child is born to us. Again.

One: Though the night of our despair long lingers,

Many: There comes a Light no shadow can overcome.

One: Though our hearts ache for a justice we cannot yet see,

Many: the Holy One works for those who watch and wait.

One: Though distanced from one another and well-acquainted with death,

Many: our Deliverer draws near to bring us new life.

One: No ear has yet heard, no eye has yet seen God's glory fully revealed.

Many: And so we wait.

One: We don't know when or where or how our Hope will be made manifest.

Many: And so we watch.

One: The One who loves us does not slumber.

Many: So let us keep awake.

One: Hope of the nations, come.

Many: Hope of our hearts, come.

The first candle is lit.

All: For such a time as this, kindle our hope.

OPENING PRAYER

Hope of the nations, for our tendency to put our hopes in everything but you, forgive us. In the bitterness and despair we feel when our hopes are not realized, comfort us. O, that you would tear open the heavens and come into our wandering hearts with your love. O, that you would reveal your steadfast goodness and restore our hope. Honor our hope: Walk with us through these times. Redeem these times. Amen.

HYMN "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

sung by Penny Kraft, Amanda Kraft, Sarah (Kraft) Julius, and Sandra Radebaugh

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the child of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

O come, O Wisdom from on high,
and order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show,
and help us in that way to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

O come, O Key of Da-vid, come,
and open wide your hea-venly home;
Make safe the path to end-less day,
to hell's destruction close the way.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

#116, New Century Hymnal, Tune Veni Emmanuel L.M with refrain | Melody from 15th Century French Processional
Arr. Thomas Helmore, 1854 Music CCLI License No. 1908882

ADVENT PRAYER FROM THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WORD FOR ALL AGES with special guests

SCRIPTURE READING The Gospel according to Luke 1:4-25 (NRSV)

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years. Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur." Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, "This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people."

MESSAGE

For Such a Time as This: When Hope is on Mute

HYMN

“We Hail You God’s Anointed”

#104

Verse 1:

**We hail you God’s anointed, the long awaited one!
Hail in the time appointed, your reign on earth begun!
You come to break oppression, to set the captive free;
To take away transgression, and rule inequity.**

Verse 2:

**You shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth;
And joy and hope, like flowers, spring in your path to birth.
Before you on the mountains shall peace, the herald go,
And righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow.**

Verse 3:

**The wise shall bow before you and gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore you, and praise all peoples sing;
To you shall prayer unceasing and daily vows be said,
Your realm is still increasing, with you, O Christ, as head.**

Verse 4:

**O’er every foe victorious, you on your throne shall rest;
From age to age more glorious, all blessing and all blessed:
The tide of time shall never your covenant remove;
Your name shall stand forever, your changeless name of Love.**

#104, The New Century Hymnal; Tune: ELLACOMBE, Gesangbuch der herzoglichen Württembergischen katholischen Hofkapelle, 1784

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 “Angels from the Realms of Glory” #126

**Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o’er all the earth;
as you sang creation’s story, now proclaim Messiah’s birth:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, give thanks and sing.**

**Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,
suddenly, your prayers attending, Christ beside you shall appear.
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, give thanks and sing.**

#126, The New Century Hymnal, public domain

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... Creator, Redeemer, Holy Spirit, who comes to us in ways both mysterious and ordinary, bless these gifts of hope, compassion, faithfulness and gratitude. For all that your love has already done, thank you. For all you will yet do, through these gifts and by your Spirit, we praise you. Amen.

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Pastoral Benediction

Sending Song “When the Lord’s in You”

**When the Lord's in you, and the Lord's in me,
there's a bridge between our spirits, wherever we may be.
'Til we meet again let us hold the Mystery
of the Lord in you and me.**

(Used with permission. Crosswinds Music, Madison WI)

POSTLUDE

Call to Worship, adapted by H. Molozaiy; Advent candle lighting, opening prayer, and Prayer of Dedication, from 2020 Offering Guide from The Christmas Fund of the United Church of Christ.
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NEW NEWS

WORSHIP & SPIRITUAL GROWTH MINISTRY meets Wednesday at 6:45 on Zoom. If you're interested in joining this discussion, ask Pastor Hope for the link.

VISITING HOURS: None this week.

SAVE THE DATE Our annual, super-fun-for-all-ages Advent party will be held on Zoom on Saturday, December 19. from 4-5PM. We'll play a game or two, sing a carol or two, and generally have a great time together. Everyone should bring at least one Christmas JOKE to share! More details later.

ONGOING NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES

CHRISTMAS APPEAL FAMILY As is our tradition, we'll work with the Richmond/Spring Grove Food Pantry to help a family in the community have a merry Christmas as we supply some gifts for "Family S." Wider Mission Ministry is still finalizing details, but here's what we know so far:

- Our family has 4 kids, ages 9 years to 10 months.
- All gifts need to be brought to church by Sunday, Dec 13. We'll be at the building until 1:00PM that day for drop-offs. You can also drop off before that by arranging a time with Pastor Hope or Brandi Pletcher.
- All gifts need to be wrapped and labelled to indicate what family member they're for. (Such as, "Family S, Boy, age 9". More details about this will follow.)
- If you helped us buy gifts last year, a member of Wider Mission will be calling you soon to see if you can help out again this year. If you want to help and don't get called, contact Karen Wootton directly at 815-271-0056 or kaywool0@yahoo.com.

THAT'S MY PAN FUNDRAISER Check out our church's own website for this fundraiser at <https://www.thatsmypan.biz/communitychurchucc>

There you can look at the LARGE assortment of baking pans, cookie tins, mugs, and SO MUCH MORE that can be personalized in SO MANY ways, and place your order. If you don't want to order online, you can contact Kim May who will take your order. (She's at kimbuh74@gmail.com or 262-903-1419.) You can also support this fundraiser by SHARING this website to friends and family; you can copy it and share in an email.

Orders should be placed by December 1.

Some of you have asked if you can simply make a bonus donation to the church if you aren't inspired to order any pans at this time. The answer is OF COURSE! We always welcome any extra donation you're able to share with us. Thank you.

ZOOM BIBLE STUDY meets at 2:00 this Tuesday afternoon on Zoom. Everyone is welcome to join in this weekly discussion of the Bible text for the coming Sunday; we just read the Bible together and stop and explore the story – no advanced homework necessary! Contact Pastor Hope for the meeting link.

SUNDAY SCHOOL BUT ON A SATURDAY While we'd rather be together, we're excited to continue holding weekly Sunday school on Zoom from 10:30-11:00 each Saturday morning. The kids have a good time seeing each other and hearing some of the great Bible stories. If you have a school-aged child in your household, we'd love to have you attend. And you're welcome, as always, to invite a friend to Sunday school.

PRAYERS FOR NOVEMBER 29, 2020

Names are added to our prayer list when shared with Pastor Hope or by contacting the church office (office@richmonducc.org). We will leave a person on our list for four weeks, unless asked to leave them on longer.

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!

JOYS: Birthdays: Kenneth Kazimier (11/28), Mary Ann Keil (12/3)

Rob Rummel shares: Blair Rummel was recently engaged to Matt Navis of Bloomington, MN. They're planning a December 2021 wedding.

CONCERNS

Carol Sligting

Bill Haase

Carol Sligting's great-grandson, Aiden

Pastor Hope's brother, Jacob

Char Kania

Lee and Linda Swenson and family

For our nation and our ongoing democratic process

The many people in our immediate community affected by COVID-19

Deann Workmon

Ongoing Prayers:

Sarah Richardson, Rob and Carol's daughter-in-law, pregnant with twins

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

Those whose household relationships are strained

Those whose employment has been lost or put in jeopardy due to the pandemic

Those who wait in self-quarantine after exposure to COVID-19

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:

Ruthann Walters (Indiana)

Mercedes Ahlgrim (New Mexico)

Sharon Mensing (Sterling)

June Whitney (at home)