

Welcome to the Community Church of Richmond

United Church of Christ

Our Church at Worship on The Baptism of our Lord

January 12, 2025

10:00 A.M.

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

Welcome, visitors!

Join us after worship for coffee and conversation in the lounge, the room right next to the sanctuary.

QUESTIONS OF BAPTISM –

which are echoed again at Confirmation and again when someone joins the church

Do you renounce the powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?

Do you profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE

Penny Kraft

WORDS OF WELCOME

Rev. Hope Molozaai

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

GATHERING SONG "Love Has Come"

see handout

CALL TO WORSHIP & OPENING PRAYER

Nicki Carter

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.

One: Let us pray:

Holy One, as we gather this day we remember your promises in the pouring of water, and we give thanks for all that the future brings that we may live and worship you this day and the next.

All: We've seen rain and rivers, floods and flows, lochs and lakes, ponds and puddles, and in every drop there is life.

One: God, may we share that life, generously; live that life, fairly; and celebrate that life, fully.

All: May we know you are in it all: every moment of story; every molecule of water; every morsel of life, which makes every drop sacred and special. Amen.

HYMN

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

#160

WE LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD

SPECIAL MUSIC

Kim May

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 "Wherever Love Is"

**Wherever love is, God is there too
God is in me, 'cause I love you
Wherever love is, God is there too
God is wherever love is.**

Copyright Crosswind Music

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 43:1-2

But now thus says the Lord,

he who created you, O Jacob,

he who formed you, O Israel:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name; you are mine.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you,

and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;

when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,

and the flame shall not consume you.

The Gospel according to Luke 3:1-22

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;

make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth,

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

And the crowds asked him, “What, then, should we do?” In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise.” Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked

him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people. But Herod the ruler, who had been rebuked by him because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done, added to them all by shutting up John in prison.

Now when all the people were baptized and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

MESSAGE Baptism is a Beginning

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD

HYMN "At the Font we start our Journey" #308

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

Rather than pass the offering plates, they are available at the front and back of the sanctuary before and after worship for you to place your gifts in. You may also give online at www.richmonducc.org/donate-now

Invitation to Give

Prayer of Dedication (we say together)

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

“Ask Me What Great Thing I Know”

#46

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Pastoral Benediction

Sending Song “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

**Go, tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!**

Call by Bruce Prewer, on <http://www.bruceprewer.com/>; opening prayer and dedication from Spill the Beans, Issue 17. Music shared under CCLI License #1908882

WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

TODAY

January 19

Liturgist

Nicki Carter

Annual Meeting

Video Director

Usher

Dick Strahs

Greeter

Cheryl Kazimier

Dawn C. & Mike K.

Fellowship Hosts

Nicki Carter

Annual Meeting

Sunday School

Jean V./Lydia B.

THIS WEEK AT CHURCH

- Worship & Spiritual Growth Meeting after worship today
- Cabinet meets tomorrow at 6:30pm via Zoom

CHURCH NEWS

FOR CONNECTION ANNUAL MEETING

Save the date of **Sunday, January 19, 2025**, for the next annual meeting of The Community Church. Our meeting will overlap with worship time as we pass a budget for the coming year, elect new officers, and dream together about what might be in store for us next.

We will have a potluck breakfast beginning at 9am. Please sign up on the sheet in the lounge.

We will not livestream on Facebook but will share the meeting to members and active friends on Zoom. Watch your email for the Zoom link.

Here are the proposed officers and standing committee members for 2025 to be voted on at next week's Annual Meeting

Congregational President: George Zimmermann

Vice President: Cheryl Kazimier

Financial Secretary: Judy Jooss

Treasurer: Kathy Speaker

Clerk: Karen Wootton

Historian: _____

Association Delegates (to represent our church at wider church meetings): _____ (Two are needed)

Pastor-Parish Relations Committee: Elise Livingston, _____ (2 more needed) _____

Memorials and Gifts Committee: Jim Speaker, Barb Howe, Betty Waspi

Endowment Committee: Robert Richardson, Cheryl Kazimier, Elise Livingston, Cheryl Heber, Jim Speaker (Memorials Liaison)

If you have questions about any of these roles, if you are interested in possibly filling one of the open positions, or if you're listed in a position that you don't plan on filling this year, speak to Pastor Hope this week!

CELEBRATE

The family of **Betty Jayne Buchert Waspi** would like to invite you all to an Open House to celebrate her 100th birthday on Saturday, January 18th, 2025 at The District on Main Street in Richmond from 1 - 3:30 pm. You're encouraged to please write on your card how you know Betty or some memory you share with her. See you there.

CONTACT INFORMATION for new members of our community is available on an extra directory page in the lounge. Remember to inform the church office if your contact information changes.

FROM THE WIDER MISSION MINISTRY

January 2025 Refugee Welcome Pack

We will be collecting our Welcome to America Pack from Sunday, January 5 through Sunday, January 19, 2025. If you would prefer to make a monetary donation, please make your check out to: Community Church of Richmond.

When refugees arrive in the US., they only have what they can carry. Through these Pack Programs, volunteers can make a huge difference by providing essential supplies, food, and most especially, a warm welcome.

Our sign-up sheet can be found at the link below or scan the QR code to help.

<https://signup.com/go/QDvAbfg>

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. Karen Wootton at 815.271.0056

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

If you are interested in joining our welcome group, call Carol Richardson at 815 675-2011.

FYI: We may go out to lunch or dinner at an ethnic cuisine restaurant in the neighborhood.



PRAYERS for the WEEK OF January 12, 2025

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

JOYS: Birthdays: Annabelle Ortiz (1/14); Ronnie Obara (1/15).

PRAYERS FOR:

Joshua, son of Jennifer Cannady, who cleans our building
Those affected by the California wildfires
Charles Kemp's brother, David
Cheryl Kazimier's niece, Tricia B.
Karen Wootton's grandson, Jacob

Ongoing Prayers:

Rev. Ruth Costello
Bill Haase
Henry Eickelberg
Louise Strah's niece, Amy Lenik

Our Congregational Prayer Partner this week is Nicki Carter.

In the Wider Church: We pray for our neighbors in Christ at St. John's U.C.C. in Union and their Pastor, the Rev. Steve Welker.

Members and Friends who are Homebound: Betty Waspi

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 Bradford, 1993

At the Font We Start Our Journey

308

Jeffery Rowthorn, 1992

Col. 3:15; Acts 10:36-43

1 At the font we start our jour-ney, in the Eas - ter
 2 At the pul - pit we are fash-ioned by the Eas - ter
 3 At the al - tar we are nour-ished with the Eas - ter
 4 At the door we are com - mis-sioned, now the Eas - ter

faith bap - tized; doubts and fears no long - er blind us,
 tale re - told in - to wit - nes - ses and proph - ets,
 gift of bread; in our break - ing it to piec - es
 vic - tory's won, to re - store a world di - vid - ed

by the light of Christ sur - prised. Al - le - lu - ia,
 by the power of Christ made bold. Al - le - lu - ia,
 see the love of Christ out - spread. Al - le - lu - ia,
 to the peace of Christ as one. Al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia! Hope held out and re - al - ized.
 al - le - lu - ia! Faith pro - claimed, yet still un - told.
 al - le - lu - ia! Life em - braced, yet free - ly shed.
 al - le - lu - ia! Eas - ter's work must still be done.

This text was written for a parish in the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut, where the author served as bishop suffragan. Born and educated in Britain, Rowthorn has held positions at Union Theological Seminary and Yale University Divinity School, and more recently was appointed bishop in charge of the Convocation of American Churches in Europe.

Tune: WESTMINSTER ABBEY 8.7.8.7.8.
 Henry Purcell, c. 1680
 Arr. Ernest Hawkins, 1842

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Ask Me What Great Thing I Know

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*Johann C. Schwedler, 1741**Transl. Benjamin H. Kennedy, 1863; alt.**I Cor. 2:2; Gal. 6:14*

1 Ask me what great thing I know that de - lights and stirs me so,
 2 Who de - feats my fierc-est foes? Who con - soles my sad - dest woes?
 3 Who is life in life to me? Who the death of death will be?
 4 This is that great thing I know; this de - lights and stirs me so:

What the high re - ward I win, whose the name I
 Who re - vives my faint - ing heart, heal - ing all that
 Who holds all my days se - cure, in God's heart where
 Faith in Christ who died to save, Christ who tri - umphed

glo - ry in: Je - sus Christ, the cru - ci - fied.
 grief im - parts? Je - sus Christ, the cru - ci - fied.
 love is sure? Je - sus Christ, the cru - ci - fied.
 o'er the grave, Je - sus Christ, the cru - ci - fied.

Johann Christoph Schwedler, one of the most powerful preachers of Germany, was author of more than 450 hymns. This hymn was frequently used at funerals in Schwedler's native Silesia.

Tune: HENDON 7.7.7.7.
H. A. César Malan, 1827