



THE MESSENGER

RIVERSIDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Where the Spirit runs deep...



December 2018 / January 2019

Vol. 18, Issue 11

THE PASTOR SHARES

When Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph’s world was in chaos. Mary and Joseph were called to Bethlehem, home of Joseph’s people for the census required by Caesar Augustus. The journey to Bethlehem from Nazareth may have taken them 9 or 10 days—a most uncomfortable journey for a woman ready to give birth. When Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem, the city was full to bursting. There was no room for them anywhere but in the place where the animals were fed.

There was very little peace on earth in the time of Jesus’ birth. The Jews chafed under the Roman Empire, paying high taxes and being forced to serve the Roman soldiers at their bidding. There were frequent uprisings; thus the severely cruel punishment of crucifixion for those who dared challenge the Roman rule. Add to that, the bedlam of the census! With so many people crammed into the little city of Bethlehem, people were bound to feel stressed, crowded and uncomfortable.

Our world feels much the same today. We are reeling from the violence around the world and in our own United States. We are grieving with the victims of the hurricanes and floods and fires. We are stressed and harried, and our experiences of contentment are precious!

Jesus came to bring us peace! He came to show us a new way of living in relationship with one another: loving one another as we love ourselves, praying for our enemies, treating others as we would have them treat us. Achieving peace—whether it is inner peace or peace on earth is surely not easy. But with Jesus’ help and guidance, we can experience the peace that passes all understanding.

May you find the peace of Christ this Christmas season!

In Christ’s love - *Pastor Lori*

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Christmas Eve
SERVICE

4PM · 5:30PM · 9PM

ONE SERVICE ONLY · SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30TH · 9AM

Riverside United Methodist Church · P. O. Box 128 · Park Rapids, MN · 56470

Come, Let Us Adore Him!

Stars twinkling, angels singing, Baby Jesus lying in a manger. Join us Christmas Eve for candlelight services at **4PM**, **5:30PM** and **9PM** as we celebrate the birth of our Savior. Each service will include singing of traditional carols, reading of Scripture, and candlelight singing of "Silent Night."



WORSHIP IN DECEMBER



Our sermon series for Advent is titled, "The Carols of Christmas," focusing on four well-known Christmas carols (one newer song). Each of these carols has a story behind it which can deepen our appreciation for the song and inspire us to celebrate Christmas.

Sunday, December 2: "Angels We Have Heard on High"

Sunday, December 9: "Do You Hear What I Hear?"

Sunday, December 16: "O Holy Night"
Christmas Program at the 8:30AM service

Sunday, December 23: "Mary, Did You Know?"

Monday, December 24th Celebrate Christ's birth with the traditional candlelight services at 4PM, 5:30PM or 9PM.

Sunday, December 30: **ONE WORSHIP SERVICE ONLY AT 9AM**

Special invitations are available at the kiosk and at the back of the Sanctuary - we encourage you to take a few to give to friends and family, inviting them to these special services. *Come and join us for worship!*



CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Our Christmas program will be Sunday, December 16th during the 8:30AM service. Children will begin practicing during the Sunday School hour between services, and all children are encouraged to be part of the fun. It only happens once a year, so don't miss it - the program will involve the whole congregation!

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDERS

Each year Riverside's members and friends provide beautiful poinsettia plants for the Sanctuary, given in memory or in honor of someone special. Pink order blanks are available in Sunday bulletins, or at the kiosk outside the office. Color choices this year are red, white and pink, and the cost is \$10. Orders with payment must be returned to the office no later than December 9th. Please indicate "poinsettia" in the memo portion of your check.



CHRISTMAS CAROLING AND POTLUCK



You are invited to come Christmas caroling on Wednesday, December 19th to Crystal Brook and Heritage Living Center. Meet at the church at 4:30PM. We will carpool or ride the DAC bus. Following the caroling, we will go back to the church at 6PM for a potluck dinner. The youth group will be joining us for that meal! Watch for more details in Sunday worship bulletins!

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2019



During the month of October, Riverside UMC held its annual stewardship campaign with many members and friends returning pledge cards for 2019. Why pledge? The more pledges that are returned, the more accurate accounting the Finance team has to establish a budget from which to fund ministries, pay staff, and maintain worship space.

The Finance team met in November and established a proposed budget for 2019. Ministry teams have submitted budgets for the upcoming fiscal year, keeping in mind the need to hold costs down while still funding programs.

On Sunday, January 13, 2019, a Charge Conference will be held between services. The 2019 budget as proposed will be presented, along with reports from all ministry teams. Everyone is encouraged to attend to review and approve the budget, and to learn about the activities ministry teams and leadership are working on.

Thank you to all members and friends that contribute to the ongoing ministries at Riverside. Your gifts of time, talents and monetary donations make Riverside a place where people can experience and share the love of Christ.

Judy Garbo - Finance Ministry Team Chair

YEAR-END GIVING

A REMINDER: If you are making an end-of-the-year donation to Riverside, it must be postmarked no later than December 31st for you to get credit for your donation in 2018. The last week in December (24th - 28th), office hours are 8:30AM - 2:30PM. The office will be open limited hours on Monday, December 31st. Thank you for your financial support of the ministries of your church!

TRUST FUND REPORT

Good news from the Trust Fund! This year, the Scholarship Fund gave out more scholarships than ever before. At the request of the Education Committee, 11 scholarship were given out ranging from \$200 to \$800, for a total of \$4,800. The Trust Fund is not a bank and likes to meet the requests from committees, if possible. No scholarships can be given out if the protected fund balance falls below \$105,000. Remember the trust fund in your giving - it is the gift that keeps on giving! If you have questions or would like more information, see Cal Moe or any other member of the Trust Fund committee.



Cal Moe - Trust Fund Committee Chair

SUNDAY BUS SERVICE AVAILABLE

Bus service is available Sunday mornings to and from the 10:30AM worship service. Regular stops are Heritage Living Center, Summerfield apartments and Crystal Brook - more stops will be added to the route as ridership needs are determined. If you live in the city limits and would like to be added to the route or need an occasional ride, call the office (218-732-5205) by 2PM Thursdays. Route schedule available in the kiosk.





Upcoming Schedules:

December

- 3 Executive Board, 9AM
- 12 Potluck Luncheon, Noon

January

- 7 Executive Board, 9AM
- 16 Circles Meet

BOOK NEWS

By: Gail Gruis

A House in the Sky, by Amanda Lindhout

As a young girl Amanda reads the *National Geographic* magazine and dreams of traveling the world. Later as a cocktail waitress, she saves her tips and begins to make her dreams come true. She backpacks first to South America, then to India and the Middle East. Amanda trains as a photo journalist. She convinces her friend, Niles, that they should travel into Somalia as they will be able to get a great story. The only problem is that Somalia is the most dangerous country in the world. On the fourth day they are abducted by a small Muslim group and held for ransom. They are held against their will for 460 days. This true story is full of tension. We also learn much about Muslim culture and why they do and think the way they do. When Amanda is most desperate, she visits a house in the sky, high above the woman kept in chains in the dark. Highly recommended for individuals and book clubs. This book is on the UMW book shelf under 2018.

UMW Potluck

The United Methodist Women will host a potluck Wednesday, December 12th at noon, with the theme, "Happy Birthday, Baby Jesus." Dessert provided! RSVP no later than December 1st to Circle leaders or Charlene Brumbaugh. You may also leave your name in the office (218-732-5205).



Help Keep Our Kids Warm!

The Friendship Circle of Riverside's United Methodist Women is collecting new mittens, hats, socks, face warmers and fleece-tied blankets to be given to Helping Hands at Century School in Park Rapids, and through CHI St. Joseph's Hospital. A collection basket will be located across from the office. Help a child stay warm this winter... *all colors and sizes needed!*



EDUCATION & YOUTH NEWS

Education and Youth Programming at Riverside.

- **Wednesday Morning Release Time** - Elementary and Middle School children
- **Sunday School** - Sunday mornings from 9:45AM - 10:15AM, pre-school thru 5th grade.
- **Wednesday Evening Youth Group (6-7:30PM)** - Middle School & Senior High Youth
 - » High School meets 1st & 3rd Wednesdays
 - » Middle School meets 2nd & 4th Wednesdays



SUPPORTING OUR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS!

Thank you all for your generous response to our plea for school supplies for high school teachers! We had more than enough items to fill 39 care packages which have been delivered to the teachers at the high school! Your generosity and kindness are much appreciated!

HEALTH & WHOLENESS DECEMBER TIP

Sugars are a part of the modern diet, and while small amounts are fine, large amounts can wreak havoc on metabolic health. High intake of hidden sugars in foods and drinks are linked to numerous diseases including obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and many forms of cancer. More information is available at the Health & Wholeness display in the Fellowship Hall.



GREEN MINISTRY TEAM FOCUS -

On Clean Water

What the Bible says: And God said "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together God called the Seas. And God saw that it was good. (Genesis 1:9-10)

To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. (Revelation 21:6)

What the United Methodist Church says: All creation is the Lord's and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God's creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings. (Social Principles ¶160)

Facts: Worldwide, 780 million people lack access to safe and clean water. Average water use (in gallons) per person per day: US - 100; Europe - 50; Sub-Saharan Africa - 2.5. Gallons of water needed to produce one pound of wheat: 25. Gallons of water needed to produce one pound of beef: 2500.

Tip of the month: Be mindful of your use of water: turn off the tap while brushing your teeth, take shorter showers, fix leaky faucets in your home and use a reusable water bottle.

10:29 BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER UPDATE!



Thank you for keeping your church in prayer as we have been seeking God's will for our next ministry! It has not been easy waiting, but we are now feeling called to move in some new directions. And, we have been surprised by the direction God is leading us! We were expecting to begin a big ministry project that would involve our whole church, but this is not what has happened. Instead, we are feeling called to begin two new ministries and consider a third - each with a very different focus that will allow church members to become involved where their gifts and talents can best be used.

First, we will be building a Community Pizza Oven this spring. This will be used in ministries with our youth and young families, to connect with our neighbors and community to offer a friendly way for them to get to know us, and to serve local organizations. Marilyn Berry is leading this ministry initiative. We have applied for an Investing in Congregations grant to help us fund this ministry.

Second, we are going to begin a ministry for caregivers. We are calling this ministry "A Morning Out". Caregivers can drop off their loved ones at church on Monday mornings from 9:30-11:30AM for some respite time. We will have activities, games and snacks planned for those who attend. This will begin in January! Ruth Ann Brady is leading this ministry.

The third ministry involves creating care packages for those released from prison. Often these men or women have nothing but the clothing they are wearing and this is a tough way to begin a new, better chapter of life. Marilyn Berry is our liaison to the Law Enforcement Center.

There will be opportunities for you to learn more about each of these ministries soon! In the meantime, keep these new ministries, their leaders and those who are working on them in your prayers! Prayer makes a difference!

NOTES FROM SPPRC



One of the primary responsibilities of the Staff Parish Relations committee is staffing the church. Hopefully staffing isn't the first thing that comes to your mind when asked what great things your church does, but it is a significant part of who we are and what we do. Working in a church is a unique situation requiring a unique person. From the pastors on down, each staff member is not only called upon to do the specific duties their position requires, but also is looked upon, to a certain degree, to be a step on the road to salvation.

Jeremiah 3:15 tells us, "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." As members of Riverside, we have been extremely blessed with amazing pastors over the years that have embodied this verse. However, the pastors will be the first to tell you that although their job is of utmost importance, the church itself wouldn't survive without the staff and volunteers that make it possible. When you see a staff member or a church volunteer, be sure to express your gratitude for all that they do. Let them know how much we appreciate them being "a step in the road."

Mike Boettcher - SPPRC Chair



MONTHLY BOOK CLUB AND BIBLE STUDY GROUPS

THE RIVERSIDE READERS are reading *One Summer: America, 1927*, by Bill Bryson for our meeting on Monday, December 17th at 2PM. ***There are multiple copies of this book available at the library, but you will need to reserve your own copy!***

In January, we will meet Monday, January 21st at 2PM, and are reading *The Lighthouse Road*, by Peter Geye. ***This also is available at the library, and you will need to reserve your own copy!***

THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY, 8:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Study meets year-round in the Lounge. New members always welcome.

Let the Missions Team Help You With Your Christmas List!

The Missions team has always put together some great gift options for you to consider when doing your Christmas shopping. This year is no different. They will have a display set up in the Fellowship Hall Sunday mornings in December where you can purchase an animal through Heifer International, help prevent malaria through Imagine No Malaria, or keep someone warm with a blanket from Church World Services. Gift enclosures are available for you to give to your family and friends.



BAKED GOODS AUCTION



The Missions Team is hosting a Baked Goods auction on Sunday, December 16th between services, so stop by and bid on your favorite goodies for a good cause! Proceeds go toward mission projects.

UMCOR Cleaning Kits and Hygiene Kits

With recent hurricanes and flooding in southeastern United States, the need for cleaning kits (flood buckets) has wiped out UMCOR's supply. We can help replenish the shelves at the UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) warehouse for the next disaster.

1. Help us fill 20 Cleaning Kits (formerly "flood buckets")

Each bucket has cleaning supplies needed for a family as they return to their flooded home. One bucket of supplies costs about \$75 which will be purchased and filled with the help of youth and members of the Church and Society team.

2. Help us fill Hygiene Kits

Each hygiene kit has about \$12 worth of supplies and is handed to each person as they arrive at a shelter during a disaster. Thousands of these kits were used in North Carolina and Florida. Your money will be used to purchase the supplies and make the kits.

****Put cash or check in an envelope marked "Hygiene Kit" or "Cleaning Kit" and place it in the offering (envelopes provided on UMCOR display table). Make your check payable to RUMC and mark the memo line "Cleaning Kit" or "Hygiene Kit."****



Enjoy *The Messenger* - your way!

Riverside's newsletter, *The Messenger*, is available in a format that fits your lifestyle. You may receive it on your e-mail, regular mail delivery or on our website at www.riversideumcchurch.com. **Articles must be submitted for publication by the 15th day of each month.** Space is limited, and we reserve the right to review for content and appropriateness.



OFFICE HOURS

Monday thru Thursday, 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM

Building Open: 8:00 AM

December 2018 Schedule

- 16** Christmas Program 8:30AM / Missions Bake Sale 9:30AM
- 24** Christmas Eve! Services at 4PM, 5:30PM & 9PM
- 25** Christmas Day! Building Closed.
- 30** **ONE SERVICE ONLY - 9:30AM**

January 2019 Schedule

- 1** New Year's Day! Building Closed
- 6** Epiphany!
- 13** Church Conference - 9:30AM
- 21** Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday

CONTACT US:

Riverside UMC

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Visit us on the web at
www.riversideumcchurch.com

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

OFFICE HOURS

Mon. -Thurs: 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Building Open: 8:00 AM

Sunday Worship

8:30 AM Traditional Service
9:30 AM Education
10:30 AM Contemporary Service
Fellowship follows each worship service

Minnesota Annual Conference:

www.minnesotaumc.org

United Methodist Websites:

www.rethinkchurch.org
www.umc.org
www.unitedmethodistwomen.org

"Casting the net of Christ's love to all through Faith, Action and Compassion."



Riverside United Methodist Church

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Park Rapids, MN 56470

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Christmas Eve Worship Services

4:00 p.m.

5:30 p.m.

9:00 p.m.

All are candlelight services