



**T H E  
M E S S E N G E R**

**February 2016**

**RiversEdge United Methodist Church**

**\*\*\*\*\* [www.riversedgeumc.org](http://www.riversedgeumc.org) \*\*\*\*\***

**\*\*\*\*\* [www.facebook.com/riversedgeumc.org](https://www.facebook.com/riversedgeumc.org) \*\*\*\*\***

500 N. Chicago Street, Spring Bay, IL 61611-9118 – Phone: 309-822-8279

**Editor:** Amy Potter, Email: [alp82673@yahoo.com](mailto:alp82673@yahoo.com)

**Pastor:** Rev. Andrew Hopp  
Cell: 309-883-1422  
Email: [try2hopp@msn.com](mailto:try2hopp@msn.com)

**Pastor:** Rev. Kristi Hopp  
Cell: 309-573-3061  
Email: [kristi\\_hopp@yahoo.com](mailto:kristi_hopp@yahoo.com)

**Secretary:** Judy Schaer  
Phone: 309-822-8770  
Email: [jude187@msn.com](mailto:jude187@msn.com)



We like predictability. We like being able to project hours, days, weeks, months, and years into the future. We like it, and we sometimes crave it. There is just something appealing about a well-humming engine. Even more so, there is something reassuring about turning the key and being almost guaranteed the engine will start.

We suspect predictability is one of the reasons people gravitate towards the Christmas season. Our traditions rarely change wildly from year to year. In addition, the date of Christmas is fixed. Every year, like clockwork, it arrives on December 25th, whether we are ready for it or not.

The same isn't true for Easter. Easter is not a set date on our calendar, even though some leaders of major Christian denominations are in talks to do that very thing. Rather, the date of Easter is calculated using a very strange formula. The end result is a wildly fluctuating date for Easter each year. This year, Easter is almost the earliest it can be - March 27th. When we were serving our first year in the pastorate, Easter was the earliest it could be - March 23rd. With Easter being so early, the season of Lent is just around the corner.

Now, Lent might still seem like a strange practice to some of you. Why, we might ask, is the purpose of giving up things for 40 days, only to do those things in excess on Easter and beyond? Indeed, isn't Lent just an old relic from the works-righteousness faith of Roman Catholics? Why should we Protestants even bother with Lent?

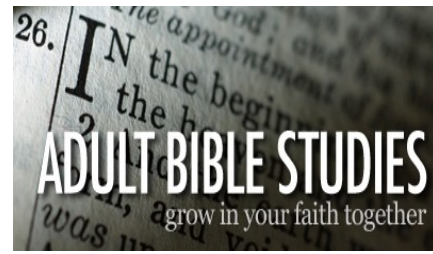
In a sense, it is silly to have a specific 40 day slot in which to give up chocolate or other vices. If these things are bad for us, shouldn't we be doing these things year round? Of course, we should. However, Lent can break through our monotonous predictability, if we let it. Just as we plant flowers in the spring to enjoy them in the summer, our faith life needs tilling and planting. Sometimes, we need something more than gradual preparation. Lent can be our boot camp of spiritual growth. We are invited to take a close look at ourselves in order to root out the weeds of sin and selfishness that may have grown during the past few months or years. The beauty of Lent is this: when we observe Lent together as a church, we can mutually encourage each other to become more faithful disciples. If I try to lose weight on my own, it is easy to get discouraged and give up. When I work with a team which also has the same goal, I am more motivated.

Our prayer for us this Lent is to grow spiritually, both in depth and in healing. May we learn once again to let go of those things which keep us far from God, and may we learn in the letting go to trust Jesus more completely. May we all observe a holy Lent, starting on Ash Wednesday, February 10th.

Blessings, Pastor Andy and Pastor Kristi



- ♦Harold & Orda Doty celebrated their 69th anniversary.
- ♦Ron & Linda Call celebrated their 54th anniversary.
- ♦Larry & Jane left for Hawaii for their winter get-away.
- ♦April Nauman is joyful for the new Sunday School class that started for children aged 3-5.
- ♦Joanne is home from the hospital after back surgery, but family asks for continued prayers for her recovery due to the infection. Everyone is thankful for the prayers offered on Joanne's behalf.
- ♦It's a joy to have the full Praise Team back together after the holidays.
- ♦Mark Burgess Jr. and Jessica Alt are thankful for their new daughter Isabella. She's healthy and very active. Mark is also looking forward to Danial Maxwell coming home on February 15th.
- ♦Steve and Karen Hemacinski are happy Kelley Bowling's cancer is in remission.
- ♦Bill Cotton is happy his grandson Kevin Gordon and Renee bought a new house.
- ♦Megan Osenkarski has a new job at the hospital in Canton and announced her engagement.
- ♦We had 48 people in Sunday School!
- ♦Barb Waldrip is healed from her illness.
- ♦Jeanne Brennan's dad turned 85.
- ♦Pastor Saeed Abedini, a US citizen, was released from an Iranian prison after four years
- ♦Joe Helms would like to have a breakfast Sunday, February 7th, between worship services to celebrate Pastor Kristi's opportunity to fill the pulpit.
- ♦Kristina Bencher's mom, Elyse, is finally home and comfortable after two weeks in the hospital with a broken knee cap. Please continue to pray for her recovery.



Pastor Andy is leading an adult group on Sunday mornings at 9:15 a.m. We will be **DIGGING DEEPER**: deeper into the Bible passage we hear that morning, deeper into what it means to follow Jesus, deeper into how God is at work in our own lives and the world. Please come with questions and a learning spirit. Bring your favorite Bible, or use the ones we have. Let's learn together!

Often, what we believe the Bible teaches has been influenced by art, music and literature. The Mining and Brick-Laying course is open to all adults who are willing to search for the deep truths of the Bible that have often been overlaid by images created by our churches and our culture. It is my hope that in the process we will come to know Christ more fully, who is our sure foundation. The group will meet Thursday, **February 11 and February 25** at 7:00 p.m.

*Submitted by: Pastor Andy Hopp*



Pastors Kristi and Andy started a new monthly group called "**KEEPING THE FLAME ALIVE**".

They will meet on the third Monday of the month (**February 15**) at 8:30 a.m. at The Galley.

Participants will need to bring a copy of the Upper Room devotional magazine and their bibles. The goal is to meet for an hour and a half (8:30-10 a.m.). If you have questions please contact Pastor Andy via e-mail (try2hopp@msn.com) or cell (309-883-1422).

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## CHURCH EQUIPMENT POLICY

Due to potential damage to our church equipment, our kitchen equipment needs to stay in our kitchen. The white tables can't leave the church property, and the white chairs can't leave the church building. We have metal chairs available. If you want to borrow them, please contact the church office.



### TAKE CARE OF MY CHURCH

If anyone has suggestions for the trustees to improve our church building and grounds or sees a need for items necessary for our comfort, please place your suggestions on a note card or paper and place it in the wooden church sitting on top of the piano in the 'Hospitality Hall'.



### FUNERAL DINNERS

If you would like a phone call and/or email notification in order to donate food or help in set-up and clean-up when we are providing a funeral dinner, please let me know by calling me at 822-8770, emailing me at [jude187@mchsi.com](mailto:jude187@mchsi.com) or contacting me in person. I would like to create a list of volunteers. I want to thank all of you who have provided food and help in the past.



### UPDATING RECORDS

If you would like your name added to the birthday list, have had an email address change or would like your email address added to the any of the church email groups (1-receive announcements & newsletter, 2-receive prayer requests, 3 receive Pastor Andy's Thought for the week). See Judy, email at [jude187@msn.com](mailto:jude187@msn.com) or call at 822-8770. Also, check with other family members.

*Submitted by: Judy Schaer, Secretary*



10:30 a.m. **WORSHIP SERVICE HELPERS** are still needed. There really is joy in serving! If you are interested in ushering, reading scripture, greeting or being an acolyte, please sign up on the Schedule Sheet in the back of the sanctuary.

We need an additional two to three adults who are willing to **TEACH THE YOUNGER CHILDREN** who come to Sunday School. This will allow our children to have lessons which are more tailored to their grade level. If you are interested, please contact Gale Allen, April Nauman, or Pastor Andy. Please help us teach the next generation about living our lives in the image of Jesus.

If you are interested in doing **SOMETHING SPECIAL** (music, reading poetry, inspiring pictures, life testimonies or other creative ways to worship God on Sunday, contact Judy (822-8770) or Pastor Andy (883-1422). Thanks to all of you who have assisted in the past.

The **PRAISE AND WORSHIP TEAM** is looking for singers and musicians. If you have any interest learning more, please contact Jarrod Doty at church, by email at [jdoty69@gmail.com](mailto:jdoty69@gmail.com) or by phone at 309.657.8904.

If you, or anyone you know, want to fill in on the **ORGAN** or **PIANO** occasionally, please text or call Carla Doty at 657-8903 or email at [dougdoty@aol.com](mailto:dougdoty@aol.com).

**CHOIR**—Anyone from 7th grade up to 100 years is invited to join us. If you think that you don't sing well enough and would like to try it anyway, please come. Other members will guide you along.

Also, we welcome special numbers: solos, duets (or any number of individuals), instrumentals and other forms of worship. Music plays a very important role in our worship experience. This is an opportunity to serve. You will feel blessed.

*Submitted by: Judy Schaer, Worship Committee Chair*



"All are from the dust,  
and to dust all return."  
Ecclesiastes 3:20, ESV



Ash Wednesday Service

Please join us for the Ash Wednesday Service,  
**February 10** at 7:00 p.m.

"For God so loVed the world,  
That He gAve  
His only  
BegottEn  
SoN  
That Whosoever  
Believeth In Him  
Should Not perish  
But have Everlasting life."  
-- John 3:16



Our **NEW WEBSITE** is live. Be sure to check it out at [riversedgeumc.org](http://riversedgeumc.org). We intend to add the newsletter, calendar and announcements regularly. If you see pictures that you are in and would like them removed, please let Pastor Andy or Judy Schaer know. The committee wanted pictures to depict the life of our church.

*Submitted by: Publicity Committee*



John Schaer is still collecting **ALUMINUM CANS** to recycle. If you have any, you may leave them in the entry area of the river side of the church. You may call John at 822-8770 if you would like him to pick them up. Once he gets a truck load, he will take them to the recycle center. Not only will this help the earth, but the money will go to the Youth Group Program.

Life Is Precious,



Handle With Prayer

Pastor Kristi started a new monthly group for widows, held at the church on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7 p.m. It is called "**OUR PRECIOUS LIFE**". Participants will need to bring their bibles. The goal is to meet for an hour and a half on **February 15** (7:00-8:30 p.m.). If you have questions please contact Pastor Kristi via e-mail ([kristi\\_hopp@yahoo.com](mailto:kristi_hopp@yahoo.com)) or cell (309-573-3061).



The **DIVORCE SUPPORT** is open for anyone who would like to join. This group is for anyone in midst of divorce or who are living life after divorce. We meet on **February 8 and 22 at 7:00 p.m.** If you are interested in joining us please contact Pastor Kristi Hopp via cell (309-573-3061) or e-mail ([kristi\\_hopp@yahoo.com](mailto:kristi_hopp@yahoo.com)).



Our Missions Committee is asking us to collect "**Box Tops for Education**" for the Riverview Grade School. You may bring them any Sunday to church, and leave them in the yellow box. From time to time during the year we will take them to the school. Thank you for your prayers, and the many ways we support our local school!



Every time we have Food Pantry Day, we will have our **King's Closet** upstairs at the Annex. We have clothes, other small items, or produce for local people to take and use, if they need it. Bring items all month. It comes in free and goes out free, no charge. Anything left over will be taken to Good Will or South Side Missions.

## GOD'S VALENTINE GIFT

God's Valentine gift of love to us  
Was not a bunch of flowers;  
It wasn't candy, or a book  
To while away the hours.

His gift was to become a man,  
So He could freely give  
His sacrificial love for us,  
So you and I could live.

He gave us sweet salvation, and  
Instruction, good and true--  
To love our friends and enemies  
And love our Savior, too.

So as we give our Valentines,  
Let's thank our Lord and King;  
The reason we have love to give  
Is that He gave everything.

*By Joanna Fuchs*

"Love is patient, love is kind, is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take in account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in righteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails." *Paul the Apostle, 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8*

## MARY LOU (ZILCH) HARMAN

Mary Lou was a member of our church through her childhood and young adult years. She passed away on January 8. Her husband emailed the church with the following message:

Thank you for your prayers, and because of them Mary Lou was able to live thru cancer, and kidney problems and with Alzheimer's that finally claimed her. She battled these illnesses for 16 years. Your church was very dear to her all her life. She would always go back for the mother, daughter banquets with her mother, Ida Zilch. Your church was where we were married 58 years ago. Thanks again for your prayers.

Sincerely,

Lewis Harman, her husband in Glasford, IL

*Submitted by: Judy Schaer, Secretary*

## VALENTINE QUOTES

"Love is the master key that opens the gates of happiness." Oliver Wendell Holmes

"There is more hunger for love and appreciation in this world than for bread." Mother Teresa

"Love is the history of a woman's life; it is an episode in man's." Germaine De Stael

"Love means never having to say you're sorry." Love Story

"The only gift is a portion of thyself." Ralph Waldo Emerson

"A man is not where he lives, but where he loves." Latin Proverb

"The best portion of a good man's life, His little, nameless, unremembered acts, Of kindness and of love." William Wordsworth

"Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be." Robert Browning

"Gravitation is not responsible for people falling in love." Albert Einstein

"At the touch of love, everyone becomes a poet." Plato

"True love stories never have endings." Richard Bach

"Love is the true means by which the world is enjoyed: our love to others, and others' love to us." Thomas Trahern

"It is best to love wisely, no doubt; but to love foolishly is better than not to be able to love at all." William Thackeray

"We find rest in those we love, and we provide a resting place in ourselves for those who love us." Saint Bernard of Clairvaux

"Tis better to have loved and lost than to have never loved at all." Tennyson

"I love thee to the depth and breadth and height my soul can reach." Elizabeth Barrett Browning

<http://www.examiner.com/article/happy-valentine-s-day-quotes-romantic-poems-religious-and-sentimental-sayings>



*Valentine's Day Every Day*

For a sweetheart or a friend  
There's just no better way  
To show how much you care for them  
Then a gift on Valentine's Day

It doesn't have to be expensive  
A simple card will do  
As long as you put your heart into it  
And show that it's really from you

Share love with family or with friends  
Tell them in your own way  
Let them know you really care  
Make every day Valentine's Day

L O V E

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# FEBRUARY 2016

| SUNDAY | MONDAY   | TUESDAY                    | WEDNESDAY                          | THURSDAY                              | FRIDAY                                    | SATURDAY |
|--------|--|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|----------|
|        | 1<br>7 p.m. Trustees   | 2<br>7 p.m. Lay Leadership | 3                                  | 4<br>7 p.m. Ladies of Learning (LOL)  | 5<br>9-11 a.m. Food Pantry/ King's Closet | 6        |
|        | 8<br>7 p.m. Divorce Support Group  | 9<br>7 p.m. Ad Council     | 10<br>7 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service | 11<br>7 p.m. MABL Bible Study         | 12  | 13       |
| 4      | 15<br>8:30 a.m. Keeping the Flame Alive @ the Galley<br>7 p.m. Our Precious Life | 16                         | 17                                 | 18<br>7 p.m. Ladies of Learning (LOL) | 19  | 20       |
| 1      | 22<br>7 p.m. Divorce Support Group   | 23                         | 24<br>7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal       | 25<br>7 p.m. MABL Bible Study         | 26  | 27       |
| 8      | 29   |                            |                                    |                                       |   |          |



**OUR MOTTO:** "The Church That Cares"

**OUR MISSION** (our purpose): "Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ through our welcome, worship, and witness."

**OUR VISION** (what we hope to be): "We are a community of caring people striving to meet the spiritual and physical needs of our neighbors."

**WORSHIP SERVICES:**

Sunday 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

**NURSERY:**

Sunday 8-11:45 a.m.  
(infant-kindergarten)

**SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUPS :** 9:15-10:15 a.m.

D.O.C.K. (Preschool – 5<sup>th</sup> grade)  
Youth (grades 6 – 12)  
Adults

**YOUTH GROUPS:** (6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades)

Sunday Once a Month TBA  
11:45 a.m. – Jr. High & Sr. High

**CHOIR PRACTICE:** (7<sup>th</sup> grade-Adult)

September through May  
7 p.m. Wednesday evenings, as announced

**O.U.R.: Outwardly Upwardly Righteously**  
(first Sunday of month)

**LOL: Ladies of Learning**

7 p.m. 1st & 3rd Thursdays

**OUR PRECIOUS LIFE:**

7 p.m. 3rd Monday

**DIVORCE SUPPORT GROUP:**

7 p.m. 2nd & 4th Mondays

**KEEPING THE FLAME ALIVE:**

8:30 a.m. 3rd Monday

