



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

**December 2015**

**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)

**December**

**A Note from the Pastor:**

As Christians, we typically think of salvation at Easter, when we walk with Jesus through his suffering, death, and resurrection. However, this is just one side of the coin. The other side is the season of Advent and Christmas.

This might seem strange to you - to think about salvation at Christmastime. It's ok to feel uncomfortable about it, but if we take a moment to ponder the birth of Christ, we realize that all work has to have a beginning, even the work of salvation.

It is written in the letter to the Hebrews, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4.15 NRSV) Had Jesus come as a fully grown adult male, this could not have been said about him. As it is, we have a difficult time believing Jesus is able to sympathize with our weaknesses. We like to make him more like God than human.

Christmas defies our attempts to deny Jesus' humanity. We cannot avoid the fact infant Jesus needed diapers, needed to be breast-fed, needed the love of Mary, Joseph, family, and friends. This fully human Jesus needed all of the things we humans need: food, drink, clothing, shelter. The ancients called these needs "weaknesses" but we see them as normal needs for human existence.

In this respect, the Christmas story is our story. We all came from a human mother. We all swam in a human womb. We have lived our lives - our ups and our downs - in the midst of family, friends, and the wider community. We have received love, compassion, and care. It is our turn to offer those same gifts to others.

Why? Because God cares about the body. We are not souls trapped in flesh. We are fleshy souls. Our life depends on the health of both body and soul. Jesus demonstrated the need to merge body and soul when He chose to enter this world as a human infant. His saving work included the body along with the soul. Salvation includes both Christmas and Easter. May we be reminded of both sides of salvation every time we drop a coin into a kettle this season. May we strive to be like Christ, doing our part to help others find new life this season - both in body and in soul.

Blessings,  
Pastors Andy and Kristi



- ◆ Chad Reiter is joyful for finally being listed on Renee's birth certificate.
- ◆ Katie Coe delivered a healthy baby boy last week.
- ◆ Diane Cotton's friend, Shirley Bremer, has been cancer free for 8 years!
- ◆ Larry Winkler's knee is healing well (still pray for continued healing)
- ◆ Kathy Hutchison's husband Rick is doing better.
- ◆ Thankful that Tracy Weber's angiogram showed no heart attack or heart damage (that the original tests indicated).
- ◆ Evonne is back after back surgery.
- ◆ A joy to have Larry home from the hospital.
- ◆ Randy Waldrip's brother-in-law is seeing some improvement.
- ◆ Rick Brooks had good test results.
- ◆ Family and friends in town for the holidays



Our **NEW WEBSITE** went live on September 3. 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*



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 Monday mornings at 9 a.m.

*Submitted by: Pastor Andy Hopp*





### 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*





If the Christmas season brings more sadness than thoughts of joy, please join us for a time of fellowship, prayers and a meal. It will be held on Monday, December 21, at 6 p.m.

We will eat first in the upstairs fellowship area, then continue with worship in the same room. We will gently encourage each other to receive the message of the Christ child while respecting the hurt we feel in our lives.



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 **December 14 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).

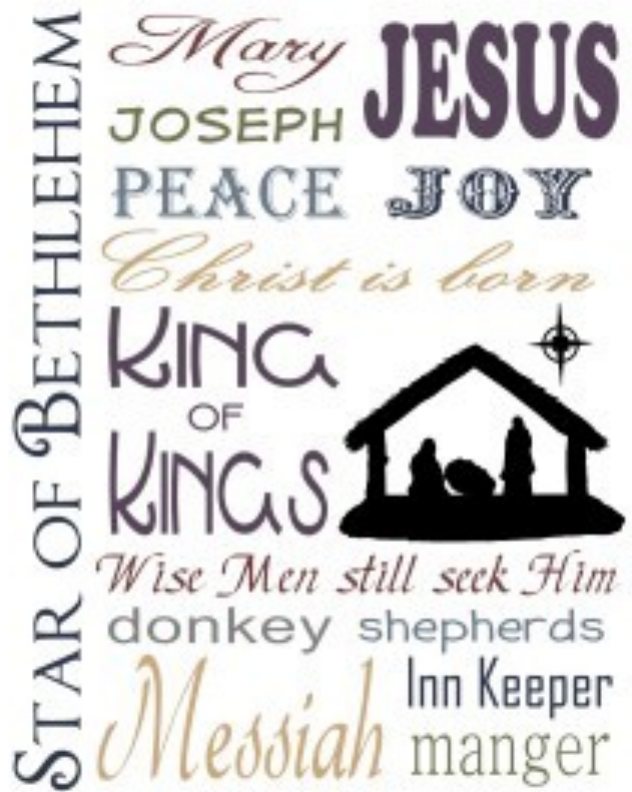


John Schaer is still collecting **ALUMINUM CANS** to recycle. If you have any, you may leave them in the entry area of the river side of the church. You may call John at 822-8770 if you would like him to pick them up. Once he gets a truck load, he will take them to the recycle center. Not only will this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

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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.



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.



A big thank you goes out to all those that brought in suitcases and bags for the foster children. DCFS was thrilled to get all of them and said they were really needed because this is the busiest time of year for the foster children coming and going. They took all we gathered large and small. A big thank you goes out to Barb Jacobs and Roxanne Ruder for taking the time to take the suitcases over to Peoria.

There will be a small tree in the sanctuary where you may place hats, scarves, mittens, gloves or any personal care items for the Chaddock children. These will probably be sent to them after Christmas.

Thank you for supporting the children again this Christmas. We know they will appreciate the gifts we send.

Do you think we should also support the Babyfold in Bloomington? Are there other places you would like to support?

Thanks for all you do.

***Submitted by: Deb Kamp, Missions Committee Member***



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 (7:00-8:30 p.m.). If you have questions please contact Pastor Kristi via e-mail (kristi\_hopp@yahoo.com) or cell (309-573-3061). **There is no December meeting.**



This year's Christmas program, Shepherds, Sheep and a Savior, will be during the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service on December 13.

It is a musical about one of the most familiar parts of the Christmas story. Songs include:

No Ordinary Night  
Shaggy, Smelly Sheep  
Glory To God In The Highest with Angels We Have Heard On High  
Headin' Down To Bethlehem  
This Is Jesus with Away In A Manger  
Go And Tell with Joy To The World!

If you have any questions, please contact Joanne Helms at 822-8905, April Nauman at 265-8221 or email [april.nauman@gmail.com](mailto:april.nauman@gmail.com), or Dianna Delinski at 696-8822 or email [delnski6@mtco.com](mailto:delnski6@mtco.com)

***Submitted by: April Nauman, Sunday School Teacher***



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

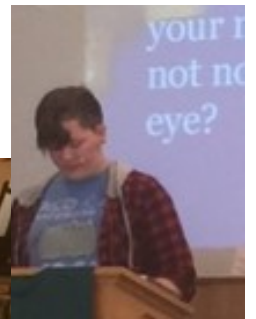
They will meet on the third Monday of the month at 8:30 a.m. at a restaurant of the group's choosing. **There will not be a meeting in December.**

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](mailto:try2hopp@msn.com)) or cell (309-883-1422).





## Youth Led *Worship* Service



# December 2015

| SUNDAY  | MONDAY                                     | TUESDAY                | WEDNESDAY                    | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY                                     | SATURDAY   |
|---|--|------------------------|------------------------------|--|--|--|
|   |  | 1                      | 2<br>7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal  | 3<br>7 p.m. Ladies of Learning (LOL)   | 4  | 5<br>8:30 a.m. Loaves & Fish (meet at Church)<br>10 a.m. Decorate the Church |
| 6   | 7<br>7 p.m. Trustees                       | 8<br>7 p.m. Ad Council | 9                            | 10   | 11   | 12   |
| 13<br>10:30 a.m. Children's Christmas Program | 14<br>7 p.m. Divorce Support Group         | 15                     | 16<br>7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal | 17<br>7 p.m. Ladies of Learning (LOL)  | 18<br>9-11 a.m. Food Pantry/ King's Closet | 19   |
| 20  | 21<br>6 p.m. 'Blue Christmas' Service/Meal | 22                     | 23                           | 24<br>Christmas Eve<br>7 p.m. Worship Service<br>11:30 p.m. Lessons & Carols | 25   | 26   |
| 27  | 28   | 29                     | 30                           |  |  |  |
|   |  |                        |                              |  |  |  |

**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



6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

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