



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

January 2016

RiversEdge United Methodist Church

******* www.riversedgeumc.org *******

******* www.facebook.com/riversedgeumc.org *******

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Happy New Year!

While most of the world changes the calendar on January 1st, we know other calendars exist. The first Sunday of Advent is the first day of the Church new year. The first of October is the first day of the fiscal year for the military. Some of us mark the new year with the first day of spring training for baseball. You see, while it seems natural for us to mark 365 days as a year and a milestone, the day which begins those 365 days can be fluid.

We celebrate various milestones throughout the year. Birthdays and wedding anniversaries are the most common. As a parent, the yearly celebration of my children's birthdays is the high point of the year. While some lose interest in birthdays as we age, we do not. As our children age, we get to continually celebrate their growth in age, grace, and wisdom. The fun didn't stop when they reached a certain age. Yes, some of the fun things ended, but other joys took their place.

Tradition has us celebrate the birth of Christ on December 25th. We also have a song called "The Twelve Days of Christmas." I was in my teens before I found out the song didn't end on Christmas Day. Rather, the twelfth day of Christmas is January 6th - Epiphany. While our society is ready for the next big thing on December 26th, many of us are still singing Christmas carols well into the new year. Why? What's so special about Epiphany?

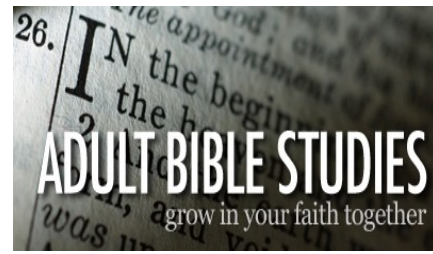
An epiphany, in the religious sense, is a sudden appearance of the Divine. When the magi finally found Jesus, they didn't just see a human child. Rather, they witnessed the appearance of God.

Our hope and prayer for each of you is to have moments of epiphany in the coming year and to reflect on the previous years' epiphanies. No, God doesn't keep coming back as the Christ child, but I'm sure all of us, at some point in our lives, have said, "Surely the Lord is in this place" (Genesis 28.16). Perhaps, it is these moments of epiphany which mark our own personal calendars the most: the day we accepted Christ into our hearts, the day we were rescued from a life-threatening situation, a reunion where every single family member was in attendance. Regardless of the calendar we use, God continues to show up in our lives. May we be aware of these epiphanies not just in hindsight, but as they are happening.

Blessings,
Pastors Andy and Kristi



- ◆ Larry Winkler was thankful Jane's surgery went well, but asks for prayers for her stitches to heal.
- ◆ Bill and Diane Cotton are thankful for the opportunity to donate 100 stuffed bears to St. Jude Hospital.
- ◆ Joe Helms was pleased with the ministry opportunity at Loaves and Fish on Saturday.
- ◆ Pastor Andy was thankful for the hard work of the church decorators.
- ◆ Evonne Cowling had a wonderful time with her daughter and son-in-law when they came to visit.
- ◆ Evonne Cowling was thankful she hasn't missed one Christmas program for which she was scheduled to play.
- ◆ Denise Newbern was thankful her mom was at church.
- ◆ April Nauman thanked all the behind the scenes help for the Children's Christmas Program.
- ◆ Della Stewart was joyful Daniel Maxwell was home from boot camp for two weeks.
- ◆ Tony and Roxanne are vacationing in Florida. Roxanne has an air cast on her broken leg in order to enjoy the trip.
- ◆ Thankful for good weather for travel.
- ◆ Bill and Dianne Cotton's 2nd grandson has bought a house.
- ◆ Pastor Kristi's parents made it home safely after a good visit.
- ◆ Randy Waldrip is happy he is retired and he celebrated a birthday.
- ◆ Joy for a full house at the Dotys for Christmas (over 90).
- ◆ Tyler Doty is moving 6 houses down the way out of his dad's (Stan) house.
- ◆ Daniel Maxwell's girlfriend Maddie was at church.
- ◆ Joy for Bernie Meyer's good health test results.
- ◆ Renee Reiter was happy her cousin Averie was visiting from Houston, TX.



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, **January 14** and **January 28** 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 (**January 18**) 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).

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.



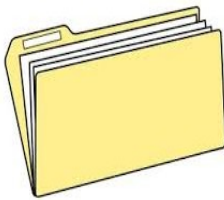
TAKE CARE OF MY CHURCH

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 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 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 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.

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

May the coming year be a time
when your faith in the Lord

Grows Stronger...

your love for the Lord

Grows Deeper...

and your fellowship with the Lord

Grows Sweeter!



Our **NEW WEBSITE** is live. Be sure to check it out at 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 **January 18** (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).



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 **January 11 and 25 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).



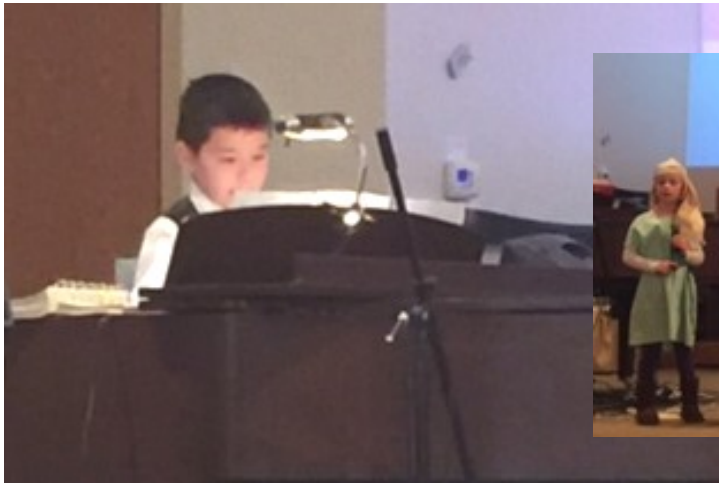
Our Missions Committee is asking us to collect "**Box Tops for Education**" for the Riverview Grade School. You may bring them any Sunday to church, and leave them in the yellow box. From time to time during the year we will take them to the school. Thank you for your prayers, and the many ways we support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

35 NEW YEAR'S TRIVIA AND FUN FACTS

1. Throughout the year, visitors to Times Square in New York City write their New Year's wishes on pieces of official Times Square New Year's Eve confetti. At the end of the year, the wishes are collected and added to the one ton of confetti that showers the crowd gathered in Times Square in celebration of the New Year.
2. The Chinese celebrate their New Year at the second full moon after winter solstice.
3. It's good luck to eat foods like black eyed peas, ham and cabbage because it is thought they bring prosperity. But if you want to have a happy new year, don't eat lobster or chicken. Lobsters can move backward and chickens can scratch in reverse, so it is thought these foods could bring a reversal of fortune.
4. The first New Year's Eve ball drop in Times Square happened in 1907.
5. According to statistics from the National Insurance Crime Bureau, more vehicles are stolen on New Year's Day than on any other holiday throughout the year.
6. The Jewish New Year is called Rosh Hashanah.
7. Due to wartime restrictions, the New Year's Eve ball was not lowered in 1942 and 1943.
8. Auld Lang Syne means Times gone by.
9. Noise making and fireworks on New Year's Eve is believed to have originated in ancient times, when noise and fire were thought to dispel evil spirits and bring good luck.
10. One of the largest annual New Year's Eve celebrations happens in Sydney, Australia.
11. Over 80,000 fireworks are set off from the Sydney Harbour Bridge.
12. The top three destinations in the United States to ring in the New Year are Las Vegas, Disney World and New York City.
13. Food plays a big role in New Year's traditions. Eating black-eyed peas, ham or cabbage are thought to bring prosperity. Stay away from bad luck foods like lobsters, because they move backwards, and chicken, because they scratch in reverse. It is believed that eating these on New Year's day might cause a reversal of fortune.
14. People in Edinburgh, UK celebrate the new year by people gather for a large organized street party.
15. According to this survey, 40 to 45 percent of American adults make one or more resolutions each year. The top New Year's resolutions include weight loss, exercise, quitting smoking and better money management. By the second week of January, 25 percent of people have abandoned their resolutions.
16. A centenary clock is lowered at 23:59:48 on New Year's Eve in Madrid, Spain.
17. In Italy, people wear red underwear on New Year's Day as a symbol of good luck for the upcoming year.
18. On New Year's Eve in Raleigh, NC, a First Night celebration is a family friendly, non alcoholic celebration of the New Year.
19. The top 10 resolutions are usually to lose weight, eat more healthily, exercise more, stop smoking, stick to a budget, save money, get more organized, be more patient, find a better job and to just be a better person over all.
20. The most popular New Year's Day parade is the Tournament of Roses.
21. Pasadena's Valley hunt clubs first parade was in 1890 Tournament of Roses.
22. New York's Waterford crystal ball is 6 foot diameter and weighs in at a whopping 1,070 pounds.
23. The crystal ball begins lowering in Times Square at 11:59 pm.
24. Father Time is a mythical personification of time.
25. A pine cone dropped on New Year's Eve in Flagstaff, Arizona; meanwhile an acorn is dropped in Raleigh, NC.
26. Bangor, Maine drops a purple beach ball decorated with Christmas lights on New Year's Eve.
27. A countdown done with an elevator is done in Seattle.
28. Many cultures believe that anything given or taken on New Year, in the shape of a ring is good luck, because it symbolizes "coming full circle".
29. Celebrating New Year on January 1 is purely arbitrary, as neither it has agricultural significance nor astronomical. Many countries still celebrate it in spring, the season of rebirth of new crops.
30. The Chinese New Year is known as the Lunar New Year or the Spring Festival.
31. To symbolize a sweet new year in Rosh Hashanah, apples and honey are eaten.
32. In the ancient Roman calendar the new year begins March 1.
33. The New Year's Ball in New York's Time Square was first dropped on December 31, 1907.
34. In ancient Babylon about 4,000 years ago the first New Year holiday observed.
35. A New Year tradition that began in Greece around 600 BC is using a baby to signify the New Year.



January 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4 7 p.m. Trustees	5 7 p.m. Pastor/ Parish	6 7 p.m. Choir	7 7 p.m. Ladies of Learning (LOL)	8 9-11 a.m. Food Pantry & Kings Closet	9
10	11 7 p.m. Divorce Support Group	12 7 p.m. Ad Council	13	14 7 p.m. MABL Bible Study	15	16
17	18 8:30 a.m. Keeping the Fl a.m.e Alive (at the Galley) 7 p.m. Our Precious Life	19	20	21 7 p.m. Ladies of Learning (LOL)	22	23
24	25 7 p.m. Divorce Support Group	26	27	28 7 p.m. MABL Bible Study	29	30
31						

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 – 5th grade)
Youth (grades 6 – 12)
Adults

YOUTH GROUPS: (6th – 12th grades)

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

CHOIR PRACTICE: (7th 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

