



The Vision

January 2017

Christmas Eve Pageant

We are called to celebrate God's presence; Nurture the spiritual life of each individual; Carry the light of Jesus Christ to the world; and Serve God by serving others.

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Worship

Worship Notes

In January and February, our worship will focus on the Confession of Belhar, which was adopted by the 222nd General Assembly.

The Belhar was birthed in South Africa by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church during its battle against apartheid. Our denomination spent a four-year-long process of study and periodic votes to make Belhar the denomination's 12th recognized confession, the first originating in the global south.

The Presbyterian News Service reported the vote on Belhar at the General Assembly as follows: *A visibly emotional Co-Moderator Jan Edmiston called for commissioners to vote at the General Assembly, and when the 540-33 vote flashed on the screen, commissioners erupted in a standing ovation as the worship team led the assembly in the song, "Oh Freedom."*

Information about Belhar from the Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar PC(USA):

*The Confession of Belhar is a powerful confession of Christian faith that emerged in South Africa during the years of Apartheid. It is named for the city in South Africa where it was first adopted. It is a statement that focuses on three themes, **Unity, Reconciliation, and Justice**, in a church environment where racial separation made it impossible for brothers and sisters in Christ to worship together or come to the Lord's Table together. Churches around the globe have recognized the power and theological insight of Belhar as an expression of Scriptural truth for their own contexts.*

The Belhar Confession was originally adopted by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church as it protested the sin of apartheid. Just a few years later it became the confession of the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa, the reunion of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church and the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa. The two principal authors were Russel Botman and Dirkie Smit.



January Opportunities



There are many ways to serve your church family.
Your help is needed with worship and fellowship.
To volunteer for one of the many service opportunities,
please sign up on the board in the corridor near the RPC office or call the office.

	Liturgists	Ushers	Flowers	Coffee Fellowship
January 1	Susan Lynch	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
January 8	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
January 15	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
January 22	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
January 29	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN

Session Notes

The December, the Session meeting was devoted almost entirely to considering and approving the budget for 2017, a duty which the elders take seriously. Although the budget as approved shows a deficit for 2017, it is hoped that **all members** will [pay their Per Capita apportionment](#) of \$33.38, which will significantly reduce the projected deficit. The Per Capita is an amount that RPC pays for each member, with portions going to Presbytery, Synod, and PC (USA) as our commitment to our denomination. All members, whether or not they pledge, can help by reimbursing RPC for the amount paid on their behalf.

- ◆ The Annual Congregational Meeting was called for February 3, 2017, following worship.
- ◆ Session approved asking members to consider making a "13th month" gift to RPC in an amount equivalent to their usual monthly offering.
- ◆ A group of non-participating members was removed from the active roll; those members had received a letter requesting that they contact the church regarding becoming re-connected, but did not respond.
- ◆ Session accepted, with regret, the resignation of Abraham Ourth.
- ◆ Session noted with sadness the deaths of Gayle Prendki and Audrey Withers.

Mary Ann Sadilek
Clerk of Session

What are those Deacons doing?

In 2017 we will focus on helping missions throughout the world. You will be hearing how we are working locally, regionally and world-wide. At our last meeting we voted to support missionaries Greg and Chris Callison. They are in the hotbed of world conflict, northern Iraq. The Callisons work with the Kurdish population, which is the largest group of people in the world without a country or a church. Greg and Chris have been missionaries for many years, and have been in northern Iraq since 2010. They work with both Christian and Muslin refugees fleeing war-torn areas. Not only do they need our financial support, but our prayers as well.

January Birthdays



Joe Ourth 1/1
Jack Baird 1/2
Laura Vanags 1/4
Terence Akebe 1/5
Matt Lisle 1/7
Monica Wood 1/7
Chris Bouse 1/8
E. Jay Van Cura 1/8
Sara Willinger 1/8
Celia Carl 1/11
Lisa Hastings 1/11

Kelly Haugland 1/12
Ron Pike 1/12
Amy Regan 1/14
DeAnn Gruber 1/15
Stella Meuyou 1/16
Chuck Niedrich 1/17
Brian Philipps 1/17
C. Victor Juister 1/19
Jack Kemper 1/20
Emma Schander 1/20

Jonathan Gruber 1/21
Mary Ann Sadilek 1/23
John Cain 1/24
Claire Chaney 1/25
Bob Gruber 1/25
Shelley Reichle 1/27
Abby Willinger 1/28
Laura McLean 1/30
Rachel McLean 1/30
Tom Booton 1/31
Isabella Cain 1/31

Trustees for January are George Meyer and Jon Jansky.

Sharing Our Gifts

CARERS Corner

In January, CARERS Committee will assist The Boulevard (formerly Interfaith House). Homeless people temporarily live at The Boulevard while recuperating from illness or injury. When these folks are able to be on their own, they will need tools for basic repairs, cooking gear, utensils, towels and other essential household items. Thank you for donating these items.

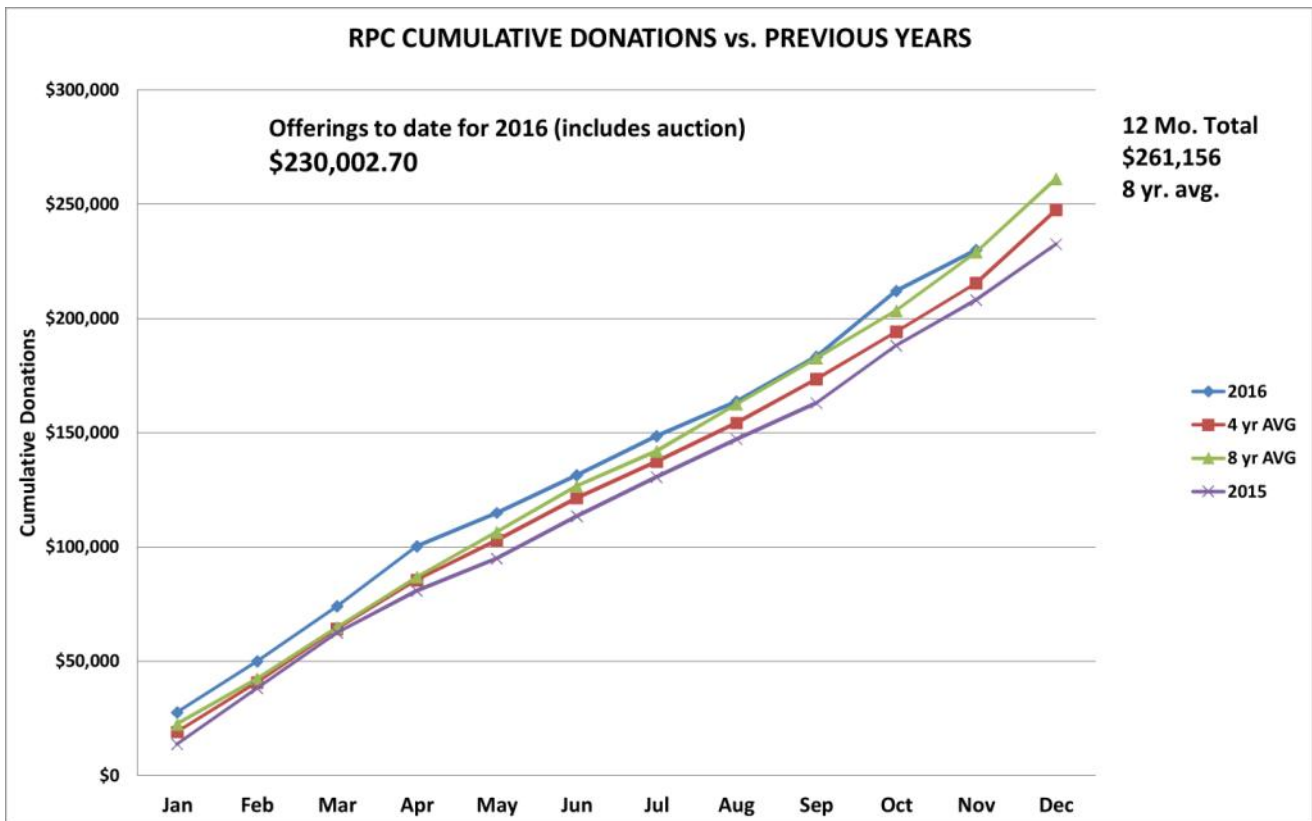


All-Church-Family Work Day

The deacons have scheduled a work day for **January 15**. All are invited to join them at 1:00 p.m. to spruce up the Church.

Riverside Refugee Rescue

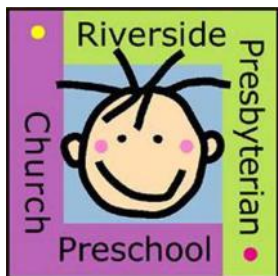
Riverside Refugee Rescue is a sub-committee of the Board of Deacons, and we are super excited. We will work with Ascension Lutheran Church to sponsor a refugee family. In the weeks and months to come, we will have many ways in which you can help change the lives of people fleeing from wars, persecution, and homelessness. We could use your support and prayers. The committee members are Doug Asbury, David Harper, John Haugland, Pastor Dale Jackson, Connie Kelly, and Steven Teune. Refugee One is the organization that RPC and Ascension will assist in this effort. To learn more, visit their website at www.refugeeone.org.



Our donations for November were comparable to previous Novembers, so we are still doing OK. As we look forward to a beautiful Christmas and New Year, we joyously share with others the gifts with which we have been blessed. We hope you will commit to sharing your time and bounty with others all through the coming year.

Sunday School

Sunday School returns on January 8. We're starting off the New Year with a fascinating rotation in which we will explore the question: *How do we recognize and witness God's presence in life today?* Together we'll reflect on stories of faith from the Bible, in life all around us, and see the impact of faith stories in our own lives. Children are sure to find inspiration and joy through stories of God's love and grace. What a great way to begin 2017! Specific information about this month's schedule will be sent out in the monthly Sunday school newsletter.



Happy 2017! We will celebrate 50 days of preschool and Wicky Wacky Wednesday this month. We will play with balls, hoola hoops, hockey, and the parachute in the gym as well as running, running, running.

We are now accepting applications for the 2017-2018 school year. Applications are available outside the church office and are due by January 15. Please feel free to call (447-1520) or email (rpcpreschool@sbcglobal.net) the preschool with any questions you may have.

Unfortunately the Campbells Company discontinued their soup label collection program, so we will not be collecting labels any more. Thank you to all who have so diligently saved labels for us for years. We have gotten many nice things from the labels including most recently a \$100 Visa gift card with which we bought bluetooth speakers for the classrooms. I'm sorry to report that the Stamp Program benefiting bird sanctuaries in Illinois has been discontinued as well.

Thanks for all your wonderful support throughout 2016 and throughout the 46 years that RPC has had a preschool!

Girls Group

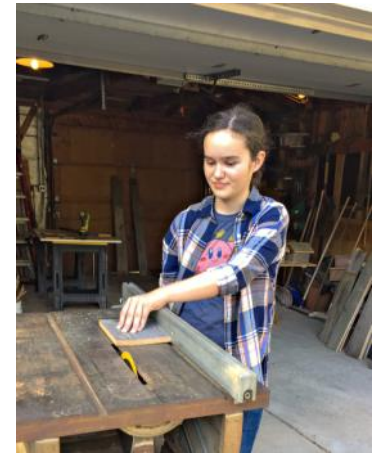
All junior and senior high-aged girls are invited to join us for Girls Group. In December, we baked cookies for Caring Christmas and decorated a few for ourselves. Here's what's coming up in January:

Friday, January 6: Game Night at Tara's house

Wednesday, January 11: Help us build birdhouses for the preschool

Friday, January 20: Guest speaker at the library

Wednesday, January 25: To be announced



Adults



Presbyterian Women's Bible Study

Best wishes for the New Year. May you be blessed with good health, warm heart and a happy home throughout the year. A January get-together luncheon is planned for a snow-free Wednesday; are you interested?

Our next gathering will be on Wednesday, February 22, in the RPC Social Hall, with Lesson 5 led by Kate Chard. Our study is entitled **Who is Jesus? What a Difference a Lens Makes**, by Judy Yates Siker. All women are invited.

Pecans ▪ Pecans ▪ Pecans

Thank you to everyone who purchased the seventy-two bags of freshly harvested pecan halves this year. After a long wait, the pecans were finally delivered on Tuesday, November 22. Thanks to prepaid orders, the operation went smoothly. With buyers' names attached, the pecans were then available for pick-up at church.



For each pound sold, Erie House receives \$1.84 for their after-school program. This project, handled by our Riverside Presbyterian Women, has been ongoing since as early as 1997, through Marjorie Schuham in Elmhurst.

Do you have a favorite pecan recipe you would like to share? Let Carol Sprunger know.

Human Scene

January 1: No program

In the remainder of the month we will continue the "Living the Questions 2" program. Each program includes a 20-minute video segment that includes conversations: with leading voices of faith, digital stories illustrating aspects of an evolving faith, and concrete spiritual practices and disciplines. We intersperse the videos with moderator-led discussions on the subject matter. Please come and join us in January.

January 8: *Living the Questions, Chapter 9—The Prophetic Jesus.* Jesus was a troublemaker. He said and did things that upset agents of the political and religious domination systems that oppressed the weak and downtrodden. In this way, Jesus stood firmly in the tradition of the prophets of Hebrew Scripture, those who offered a clear and challenging "alternative script" to the status quo.

January 15: *Living the Questions, Chapter 10—Evil, Suffering, & a God of Love.* If God is all-powerful, all-loving, and all-good, how do you explain and respond to the existence of so much suffering and evil in the world?

January 22: *Living the Questions, Chapter 11—The Myth of Redemptive Violence.* The most potent religion in Western culture is not Christianity, but a belief in the redemptive power of violence. Although Jesus inaugurated a new order based on partnership, equality, compassion and non-violence, his example and teachings have been eclipsed by an emphasis on a human unworthiness that demands and defends the need for Jesus' violent, suffering, atoning death.

January 29: *Living the Questions, Chapter 12—Practicing Resurrection.* While much has been made of Jesus' literal and physical resurrection being the core historical event of Christianity, the Biblical texts themselves present conflicting evidence. For many today, the resuscitation of Jesus' body is less important than the idea of resurrection as a credible and meaningful principle for living.

Please check
the Website for
the most recent
calendar
updates!



January 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10a Worship 11a Coffee Fellowship 11a Open Gym 11:15a Human Scene 2p Cantata Worship	2 <i>Office Closed</i> 5:15p Volleyball	3 6:30a Men's Forum 7p Deacons Mtg	4	5 6:30a Women's Forum	6	7
8 8:45a Confirmation Class 9a Sunday School 10a Worship 11a Coffee Fellowship 11:15a Human Scene	9 <i>Office Closed</i> 5:15p Volleyball	10 6:30a Men's Forum	11 4:15p Ringers & Singers 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Chancel Choir	12 6:30a Women's Forum	13	14
15 8:45a Confirmation Class 9a Sunday School 10a Worship 11a Coffee Fellowship 11:15a Human Scene 1p All Church Workday 2p Scottish Home Worship Vision Deadline	16 5:15p Volleyball	17 6:30a Men's Forum	18 <i>Office Closed</i> 4:15p Ringers & Singers 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Chancel Choir 7:30p Session Mtg	19 6:30a Women's Forum	20 10a CARERS Comm Mtg	21
22 8:45a Confirmation Class 9a Sunday School 10a Worship 11a Coffee Fellowship 11:15a Human Scene	23 5:15p Volleyball	24 6:30a Men's Forum	25 <i>Office Closed</i> 4:15p Ringers & Singers 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Chancel Choir	26 6:30a Women's Forum	27	28
29 9a Sunday School 10a Worship 11a Coffee Fellowship 11:15a Human Scene	30 5:15p Volleyball	31 6:30a Men's Forum				

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." — Proverbs 29:18

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PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

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More information about the ministry and mission of Riverside Presbyterian Church is available by contacting any member of our church staff and by visiting our website: www.rpcusa.org

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Riverside Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Presbytery of Chicago (312) 243-8300. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)