



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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The Vision

December 2014

Pastoral Transitions

Thank you to all of you for your help and hospitality as I have been experiencing a steep learning curve getting to know you and leading worship/preaching since the beginning of November. As I fill the pulpit through December, please let me know how I can be of help to you. You may call the church office to make an appointment to speak to me when I am there.

Pastoral transitions are an important time in church life. I ask all of you to be in prayer for Scott Jansen and his family, as well as for the Riverside congregation, as we all wait to see what God has in store. I want to commend two books to you that I think are very helpful.

First, *Who Moved My Cheese?* by Dr. Spencer Johnson, is about the a-mazing way to deal with change in life and in work. There are four characters in the book, two mice named Sniff and Scurry, who are non-analytical and non-judgmental. They just want their cheese and are willing to do whatever it takes to get it. The other two characters are mini-humans named Hem and Haw. Cheese is not just sustenance to them, it is their self-image. Their lives and beliefs are built around their cheese. The cheese is, of course, a metaphor for anything in life—jobs, career paths, relationships, health, even our spiritual lives. In this time of transition we are reminded that cheese has a way of moving from time to time and we have to go through the maze of life in order to find it again or find new sources of cheese. This requires resilience and adaptability.

Biblically, I think of the verse from John 3: 8, *“The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”* God's Spirit is always on the move. We have to stay open and flexible, resilient and adaptive, to go with the wind of God's Spirit.

Second, and more focused on Advent, is a lovely book entitled *Wrestling With Wonder: A Transformational Journey through the Life of Mary*, by Marlo Schalesky. The author ponders the call of God in Mary's life and in ours. “Who is this God who calls a young girl to birth a Savior and then watch him die on a cross?” Who is this God who fulfills every promise and yet shatters expectations?

The Rev. Dr. Tom Tewell, once pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City, once said the call of God is always daring, disruptive, and delivering. How is God's call to you right now daring you to things you never imagined? How is God's call to you right now disrupting your life? How is God's call to you right now delivering you from something that wasn't working into something new, something beyond anything you would have hoped or dreamed possible?

As we journey together through Advent and Christmas, ponder the call of God for the Riverside Presbyterian Church and for your own life. *The wind blows where it chooses... let's go with the wind of God's Spirit.*

“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord, “plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.”

Jeremiah 29: 11

Emily Rosencrans

Worship

Pastoral Process

On November 23, the Congregation elected a Pastoral Nominating Committee (Diane Chaney, Frank Gangware, Allan Halline, Ellen Hamilton, Brad Staubus, Joyce Van Cura and Bryan Zander) to review applicants referred to RPC by the Chicago Presbytery. The Session had earlier voted to seek a “designated” pastor rather than an “interim” pastor. A designated pastor is a full-time pastor hired for a 2-year term who, if both the church and pastor agree, can stay on as a permanent pastor. (In contrast, an interim pastor serves for 1-2 years, but cannot become the permanent pastor.) A designated pastor may be in place by early 2015.



Rev. Emily Rosencrans is serving as RPC’s pastor until a full-time pastor is hired. She will be filling the pulpit at least until the end of the year. Emily Rosencrans graduated from Webster University in St. Louis and, after working two years, she attended Princeton Theological Seminary, where she earned a Master of Divinity degree in 1987, concentrating in Pastoral Care. Emily is a seasoned Presbyterian pastor with over 27 years experience, 20 of those years in the pastorate. Emily works full-time as a chaplain at Lake Forest Hospital, and is therefore not in the RPC office during the week. Should you need to contact her, please call the church office.

Worship at Cantata and Scottish Home

Won’t you volunteer to attend one of the monthly worship services that RPC provides for seniors in assisted living? Each service lasts about an hour, and includes scripture, a message, music and fellowship. ***Children are especially welcome.***

Cantata - December 7, 2:00 p.m.

Scottish Home - December 21, 2:00 p.m.



December Opportunities

If you are able to host Coffee Fellowship, please contact Susan Lynch
For flower contributions, please contact the RPC Office
Potential Acolytes and Liturgists, please contact Elizabeth Musick



	Liturgists	Advent Wreath	Ushers	Flowers	Coffee Fellowship
December 7	Mary Ann Sadilek	Gordon Family	John Haugland Doug, Sylvia & Eva Harvin	OPEN	Diane Chaney Elizabeth Musick
December 14	Youth	OPEN	Kemp Clarke, David Harper, Will & Susanne Vogel	OPEN	No Coffee Fellowship
December 21	Laura Vanags	Gregus Family	Lou & Martha Heine	Poinsettias	OPEN
Christmas Eve	OPEN	OPEN	Ourth Family (4:00) LATE SERVICE OPEN	Poinsettias	No Coffee Fellowship
December 28	Susan Lynch	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN

Trustees for December are Jon Jansky and Cyril Friend.

Session Notes

In November, the Session:

- ♦ noted with sadness the death of Rosemarie Slaby on November 10, at the age of 100.
- ♦ accepted, with regret, the resignation of Gerald and Gudrun Olson who have moved to Crete, IL and found a new church home.
- ♦ voted to seek a Designated Pastor rather than an Interim Pastor for RPC. A Designated Pastor serves for up to two years and is then eligible to become the permanent Pastor (an Interim may not be called as the permanent Pastor).
- ♦ approved retaining the Samaritan Center for Congregations to administer a Church Assessment Tool, using an online survey of RPC members, and for a consultant to interpret the results. This will be helpful in identifying the overall health of the church and goals for the future and will also aid in the search for a new Pastor.
- ♦ approved taking steps to mitigate the impact on Rev. Scott Jansen caused by links on the Internet to articles which appeared in *The Landmark*. While it is almost impossible to remove the articles, they can be effectively "buried."
- ♦ noted that our Gap Pastor, Rev. Emily Rosencrans, has been hired to preach and moderate Session and congregational meetings. However, since she has another full-time job, she is not expected to be at RPC during weekdays, but is available weekends and evenings for meetings or other needs if scheduled in advance.
- ♦ continued discussing the need to address the ongoing budget shortfall, including the possibility of returning the Manse to housing for a Pastor.

Mary Ann Sadilek
Clerk of Session



William Carl	12/1	Joshua Ranft	12/16	Marty Lubeck	12/25
Richard Crang	12/2	Chancellor Rayfield	12/16	Joey Richards	12/27
Christine Canavera	12/3	Elie Meuyou	12/19	Kaki Lynch	12/27
Crystal Coffman	12/3	Joe Ballerine	12/20	Michael Lynch	12/27
Luke Yachnin	12/3	Michael Hejna	12/20	Jacob Dluhy	12/28
Paul Sterner	12/4	Wesley Sedlacek	12/20	Jacob Jansky	12/28
Richard Regan	12/6	Jimmy Sit	12/20	Paige Rambeaux	12/29
Steven Staubus	12/6	Virginia Wright	12/20	Ethan Ranft	12/29
Martha Heine	12/7	Clayton Ballerine	12/21	Cal Friend	12/30
Zack Schiller	12/7	Karen Flam	12/21	Susan Lynch	12/30
Olivia Glawe	12/8	Christopher Halline	12/21	Hannah Smith	12/30
Jackson Jansky	12/8	Connor Halline	12/21	Jordan Messner	12/31
Carol Sprunger	12/8	Stanley Schade	12/21	Vicky Vogel	12/31
Ellen Mitchell	12/9	Hannah Ranft	12/22	Amanda Wright	12/31
Christine Long	12/13	Dennis Sadilek	12/22		

Sharing Our Gifts

CARERS Corner

There will be the annual "CARERS' GIVING TREE" in the Social Hall for the Constance Morris Home. There will be paper ornaments on the tree with suggested gifts for mother and children. Simply take an ornament and return the suggested gift to the tree unwrapped. There is nothing nicer than buying a gift for someone who may not otherwise receive one. There will be a list of suggestions in the church bulletin and on the trunk. Consider yourselves thanked in advance for this worthy cause.



Gardening 1.0

What a wonderful and miraculous year it was in 2014 when it comes to gardening at RPC. The Board of Deacons decided to go one step farther and actually grow vegetables on RPC property to support Share the Harvest program. While the amount of veggies that we have collected from the congregation has been fantastic, and we definitely need your support from your home gardens, the Board decided to go the extra mile.

It was very interesting to talk to people who passed by wondering what we were doing. When explained what the goal of the garden was, everyone was enthusiastic. It was quite interesting that two people actually gave thanks for RPC's garden. Not because we would feed people who needed the nutritious vegetables, but because the deer would feed on our garden and leave their gardens alone. Interesting! It was a minor miracle that the deer never touched our garden all summer long. This allowed us to grow and distribute a minimum of 6 butternut squash, 44 carrots, 8 cucumbers, 25 yellow pear shaped tomatoes, 2 zucchini and I have no idea how much kale we harvested. It was a bountiful year. God is good and greatly to be praised.



In closing, I want to thank the Trustees for presenting the idea to the Session, and for the Session approving the garden. A very special thank you to Sandra Kappmeyer who personally delivered the vegetables to the food pantry.



Buy a Brick For Christmas Gifts and Memorials

Engraved bricks are once again being sold to raise funds for our

capital improvement projects. The engraved bricks will be installed in the paved area in front of the manse – the center of outdoor worship and social activities. Bricks are available in two sizes and prices are \$150 and \$500. More information and order forms are available outside the church office and on the church's website www.rpcusa.org, or contact Susan Deems-Dluhy at gsdluhy@gmail.com.



From the Abraham Rotation: the blanket the kids made to be donated to Linus Project and a sand map like Abraham and Sarah's journey with their names written with sand grains. This symbolized that they too are a part of the descendants God promised to Abraham, "your descendants will number as the grains of sand on the seashore."

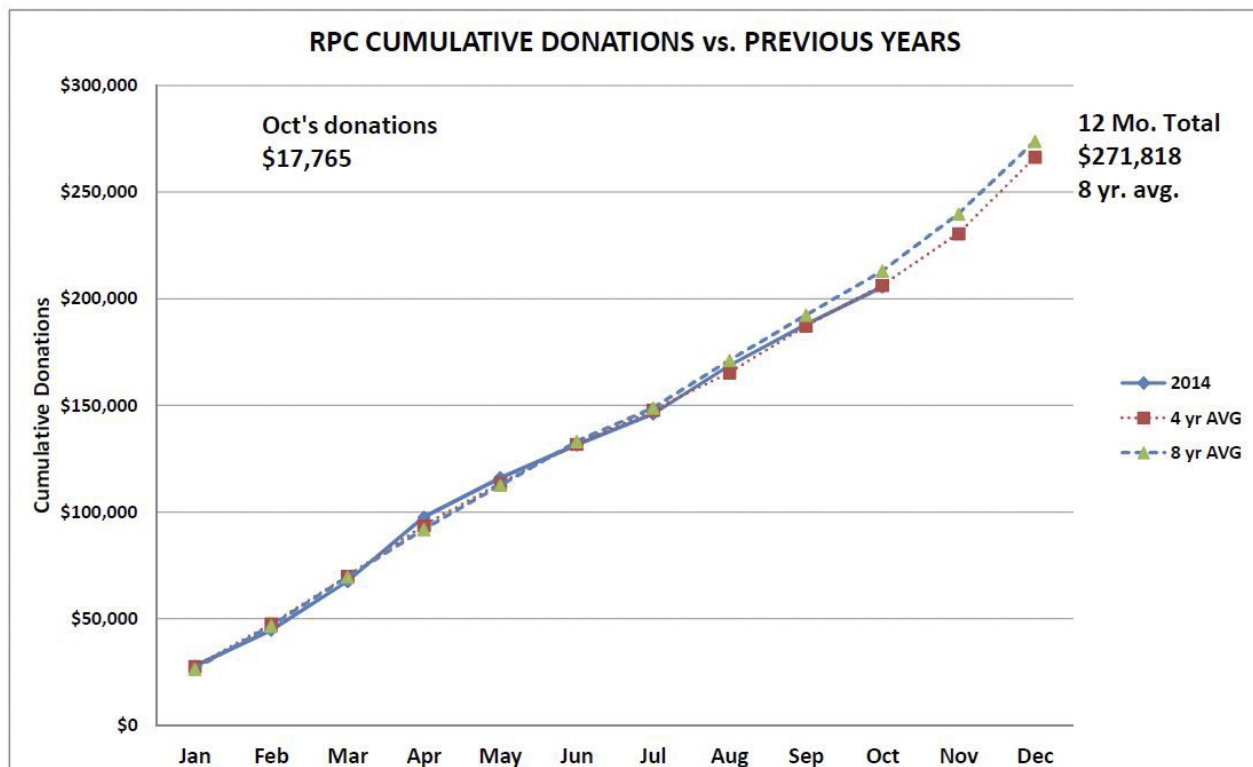
The Promises We Make

Each time we baptize a child at RPC, we are asked to make a promise. At our last infant baptism, our Clerk of Session asked us, "Do we, as members of Christ's larger church, promise to guide and nurture Avery by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging her to know and follow Christ, and to be a faithful member of his church?" And the congregation responded, "We do!"

One way you can feel confident about fulfilling your promises to the children of our church through our deeds is to participate as a volunteer with any of our programs for Children and Youth. We are in need of volunteers to teach Sunday School units, shepherd a Sunday School class, and be the second adult once in a while at Youth Group and Girls' Group meetings. Your willingness to simply sit in on an hour-long Youth Group meeting may make the difference as to whether the program happens that evening or not.

If you think you're too old to help with this, think again! One of the beautiful things about our church is the opportunity for intergenerational interaction. Kids not only enjoy getting to know older adults, but they often appreciate it when they get to attend classes or meetings where the adults aren't their parents or the parents of their friends. Plus, we have some pretty great kids at RPC. Getting to know them will give you a new appreciation for young people and hope for the future.

If you have questions about how you can get involved, ask Lisa Aulerich-Marciniak, the new chair of the Committee for Children and Youth. She can give you information and help you determine the best way you can keep your promise to the kids of RPC.



We hope our church family will continue to show its thanks to God for all His blessings as it has done in the past during November and December. This is a critical time with many people in need of our help especially with the onset of an early winter.

Hymns for the Holidays

In the RPC library there is a book. It is *Hallelujah, the Poetry of Classic Hymns*. The author-editor, Anna Marlis Burgard, writes: "Hymns present the work of God through the words of poets; they silence the hectic world and then reverberate within our spirits long after the last notes have faded. They bind us to our religious forebears, ancestors, and future generations at once, embracing Gospel as they once did and as they will."

Singing hymns, Anna Marlis Burgard writes, citing Isaac Watts, is 'breathing towards heaven... [And] ...offering our praise to God that gave us life with his own breath. But when we sing hymns in church, surrounded by our families, neighbors, and choir, we overlook the message that their authors struggle to perfect. We become so aware of our voices, in keeping time and staying in key that the ideas and emotions we sing recede into the familiar music... Once reacquainted with the poetry of hymns... [we] ... sing with understanding" and are then guided "with our spirits bound for glory."



And so, as this holiday season approaches, we sing of the Advent, Christmas and the joy of the coming words of Jesus Christ. We sing for the entire season...and beyond. "Joy to the World" is a beloved Christmas carol, but when we hear the words, the poetry of Isaac Watts has no explicit reference to Christmas or even the birth of Christ. Sing this carol viewing the majestic setting of the Grand Canyon or during a glorious walk on a fall afternoon. It works. It is a hymn to celebrate in song "the attitude toward God" or "God's purpose in human life." [Carl F. Price – The Hymn Society of North America and Canada.]

So what is a hymn, a gospel spiritual, an Advent hymn, a Christmas Carol? Is there distinction, a continuum, or a beginning? We have hymns of Advent and carols of Christmas interspersed and intertwined. Hymns of Advent during the four Sundays before Christmas include "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence," "Lift up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates," "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" and others. Our more 'Christmassy' hymns include "Silent Night," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," and other favorites. Blended into those hymns to bridge the seasons are "Angels We Have Heard on High," "Break Forth...", "It Came upon the Midnight Clear," or "O Come, All Ye Faithful" – the latter of which some might enjoy almost any Sunday! These are songs and poetry of celebration, anticipation, affirmation, and more. They tie us to our past and reach out to our future. They are songs of praise and joy for the entire season.

Peace and Joy
Throughout this and the New Year
From your Worship and Music Committee
Riverside Presbyterian Church
December 2014

George Frideric Handel, the Poster Child for Perseverance



As beautiful as the Messiah is, Handel worked hard and long before reaching the final composition. The original draft of 290 pages was completed in an amazing 24 days, but that was in 1741. However, that is not the piece that we know and love. It wasn't until 13 years later that he stopped refining the orchestration, and in 1754 put the final touches on it. At RPC we have worked hard and long as well in trying to bring you the wonderful story composed by Handel. This year will be the 27th performance, and promises to lift your spirits, warm your heart, and put you in the Christmas mood. Mark your calendar for 4:00 on December 14 and see what people have been enjoying for 273 years. Now that is amazing!

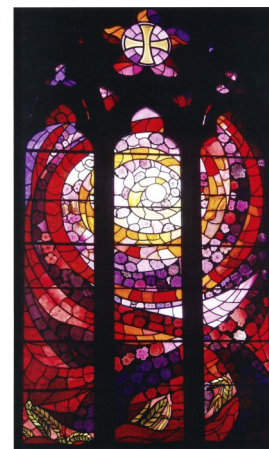


Presbyterian Women's Bible Study

This year's study is *Reconciling Paul—a Contemporary Study of 2 Corinthians* by Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, with suggestions for leaders by Irene Pak. The next gathering will be on Wednesday, **February 25**, at 10:00 a.m. in the Social Hall. All women are invited. Coffee is served.

Lesson 5: Reconciliation and the Whole Creation

Lesson leaders are Elizabeth Musick, Sylvia Schade and Joyce Van Cura.



Ascension
St. Bartholomew, Areley-Kings, Worcestershire, UK

Pecans, Pecans, Pecans

Thanks to all who purchased the seventy-five one-pound bags of freshly harvested pecans halves this year. Pecans were delivered on Monday, November 17. Thanks to prepaid orders the operation went smoothly. With buyers' names attached, the pecans were available for pick-up in the church office.

For each pound sold, \$1.55 goes to Erie House for the Team Tutoring program for college-bound high school students. This project, handled by our Riverside Presbyterian Women, has been ongoing since as early as 1997, through Marjorie Schuham, in Elmhurst.

Human Scene

December 7 — Lessons from Vietnam and Korea, Rev. Douglas Asbury

Coming back from his third trip to Vietnam and his second to South Korea, **Pastor Doug Asbury** will share insights into the histories of those two nations and U.S. relations with them in light of the wars fought there in the latter half of the 20th century along with photos from his trips. How has Christianity played a part in what went on there? (*You'll be surprised.*) What's in store for the future of those two nations?

December 14 — What You Always Wanted to Know About the Trustees, But Were Afraid to Ask, Jon Janksy

Come and find out the answers to the following: **1)** Why the name "Trustees" for the Board? **2)** Why 12 Trustees? **3)** What are the responsibilities of the Board? **4)** What talents are needed to be a Trustee? **5)** What is the Chicago Presbytery's revised outlook for Trustees? **6)** Phase III of the Capital Fund Raising Program and **7)** Wouldn't **you** like to be a Trustee?

December 21 — Teaching in Englewood: What I've Learned on Chicago's South Side, Claire Chaney, Amandia Charter School, Chicago Public Schools

This presentation will focus on Claire Chaney's experiences teaching in the Englewood neighborhood of Chicago in partnership with the non-profit organization "Teach for America." Topics of discussion will include the academic achievement gap and issues that students face in these communities. Be sure to bring questions!

December 28 — No Human Scene due to the Christmas and New Year Holidays. Join us on January 4 for a New Year of Human Scene presentations and activities!

Children

Christmas Pageant

The annual Children's Christmas Pageant will be held on Sunday, December 21. This will be a retelling of the Christmas story in the style of *T'was the Night Before Christmas*. Children will have the opportunity to portray some of the characters in the Christmas Story: Shepherds (boys & girls), Wisemen (boys & girls), Sheep (3-year-olds through Kindergarten), Angels (boys & girls), Mary & Joseph, Gabriel and the Star. There will be a dress rehearsal on Saturday, December 20, from 9:30 to 11:30 in the sanctuary. Please RSVP to Doreen Sterba DeZur, Director of Children's Christian Education at dezurd@sbcglobal.net if your child will be able to participate.



Teachers Still Needed for Sunday School

We are still in need of teachers for future rotations. Special thanks to Lorraine Meyer, Paige Rambeaux, Kathi Roccanova, and Bryan Zander, who volunteered last fall to teach after the new year! We need three teachers for each rotation. (In November we had to double up classes as we had only two teachers!)

Below is a schedule of the lessons and tentative teacher assignments. Please sign up for a time to teach a rotation. If we, as a church, think that Sunday School is important for the children of the church family, then we need to sign up to help with that ministry. There will be a sign-up poster outside the Christian Education office beginning December 1.

December 7, 14, 21 (no class on December 28) *Messengers of the New Covenant*

2 teachers needed (thanks to Kathi Roccanova)

January 11, 18, 25 (no class on January 4) *The Good Samaritan*

1 teacher needed (thanks to Paige Rambeaux & Bryan Zander)

February 8, 15, 22 *The Prodigal Son*

3 teachers needed

March 8, 15, 22 (no class on March 29) *The Woman with the Alabaster Jar*

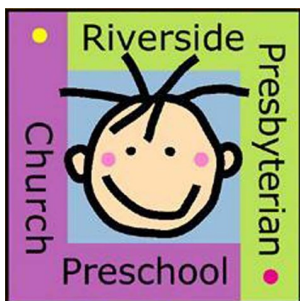
3 teachers needed

April 12, 19, 26 (no class on April 4) *Crucifixion & Resurrection*

1 teacher needed (thanks to Lorraine Meyer & Bryan Zander)

May 10, 17, 24, 31 *Kingdom Parables*

3 teachers needed



December brings a time of joy and wonder for our preschoolers! I hope you will be able to join us for our Christmas Program scheduled for the morning of Thursday, December 18, in the sanctuary, after which we will have a party in the social hall with a special visit from Santa.

Thank you to all who bought wreathes or garlands! We really appreciate your support! Registration for the 2015-2016 school year is starting. Applications are available in the rack outside the church office (lower left-hand corner) and are due on or before January 7, 2015.

As the school year comes to an end, all of us at the preschool extend a special thank you to Linda Hutcheson, Donna Jones, Jeanine Buttmer, Fred Kitch, Jim Sit, Jon Jansky, and Cyril Friend, and the entire church community for their warmth and wonderful support of the preschool and the new staff. We all feel welcome and appreciated! Wishing you a very Merry Christmas!

Youth Group News

This month, we prepped for a worship service at the Scottish Home in North Riverside. The youth were very well represented at the service, and we had a great turnout from both the Junior and Senior High Youth as well as some parents. The youth then sat with the residents of the Scottish Home for coffee and cookies, and got a chance to engage in conversations about things that we are thankful for. We look forward to possibly going again in the future, and thank you to Nancy Dvorak and the Scottish Home Service Committee for allowing us to take part in worship.



December 7—Service Event, TBA

December 13—Junior High only: Downtown Trip

December 14—Discussion Day

December 19—Senior High Christmas Dinner

December brings the Season of Advent, and also fun activities for the Junior and Senior High groups. On December 13, the Junior High group will take a trip downtown to enjoy ice skating by the “Bean” and to see the sights in the loop. On the 19th, the Friday before Christmas, the Senior Highs will have a potluck Christmas Dinner. We will plan on having meat provided, but everyone will be invited to bring a dish to share. We are also looking for a location for this event, so if there are RPC Senior High parents who are interested, please let Matt know. Questions? Email Matt Gauen at mjgauen@gmail.com.

Girls' Group

Come join us for fun, learning and laughter in December. We meet every Wednesday in the parlor from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Here's what's happening in December:

Wednesday December 3: To be announced

Wednesday December 10: Make Christmas cookies

Wednesday December 17: Christmas party!

Wednesday December 24: Christmas Eve—no Girls Group

Wednesday December 31: New Year's Eve—no Girls Group

All girls in junior high and high school are welcome. Bring a friend! Questions? Contact Tara at taragregus@yahoo.com.



Fellowship & Events

Holiday Stroll

Come hear RPC's acaBELLa Ringers during Riverside's Holiday Stroll on Friday, **December 5**, at 7:00 p.m. We are playing LOTS of Christmas carol arrangements at First American Bank across from Guthrie Park. Come join in Christmas cheer while cheering us on!

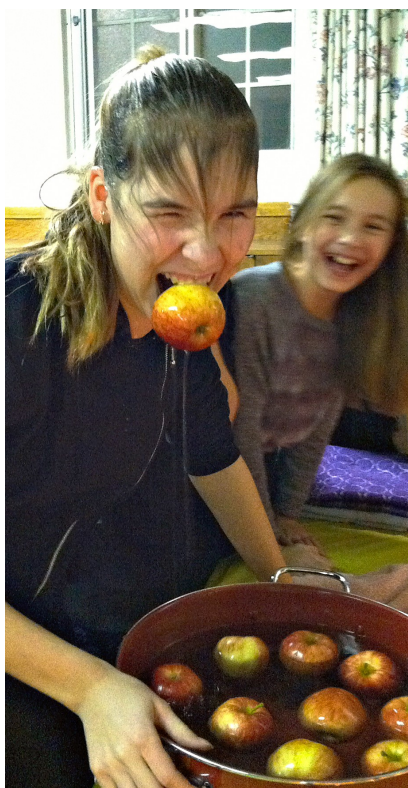


Caring Christmas

Help those who need some Christmas cheer by giving three hours of your time. The Deacons guarantee laughter, music, pizza, and a smile on the face of the person who receives a gift basket that we will create on **December 7** starting at 4:00 p.m. If you are able to contribute a dozen or more cookies, please bring them on December 7.

Wassail Bowl Volunteers Needed

We are in need of volunteers to help with our traditional Wassail Bowl following the Messiah performance on Sunday, **December 14**. If you can bring baked goods, or are able to help with set-up, serving or clean-up, please contact Susan Lynch at skstrause@us.ibm.com



Youth Group and Girls' Group events from October.

Please check the
Website for the
most recent
calendar
updates!



December 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 5:15p Volleyball	2 6:30a Men's Forum 7p Stewardship Comm Mtg 7p Personnel Comm Mtg	3 Office Closed 4:15p Ringers 4:45p Singers 6:30p Bell Choir 7p Girls' Group 7:30p Chancel Choir Comm Mtg	4 6:30a Women's Forum	5	6
7 9a Sunday School 10a Worship 11a Coffee Fellowship 11a Congregational Mtg 11a Fellowship Mtg 2p Cantata Service 4p Caring Christmas	8 5:15p Volleyball 7p Finance Comm 7:30p Trustees	9 6:30a Men's Forum	10 Office Closed 4:15p Ringers 4:45p Singers 6:30p Bell Choir 7p Girls' Group 7:30p Chancel Choir	11 6:30a Women's Forum	12	13
14 9a Sunday School 10a Worship No Coffee Fellowship 11a New Member Mtg 11:15a Endowment Mtg 4p Messiah 5p Wassail Bowl	15 5:15p Volleyball	16 6:30a Men's Forum 7p Deacons	17 Office Closed 4:15p Ringers 4:45p Singers 6:30p Bell Choir 7p Girls' Group 7p Session 7:30p Chancel Choir	18 6:30a Women's Forum	19 10a CARERS Comm Mtg	20
21 9a Sunday School 10a Worship-Children's Pageant 11a Coffee Fellowship 2p Scottish Home Service	22 5:15p Volleyball	23 6:30a Men's Forum	24 4p Christmas Eve Service Time TBD—Late Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas 6:30a Women's Forum 	26	27
28 10a Worship 11a Coffee Fellowship	29 5:15p Volleyball	30 6:30a Men's Forum	31			

There will be no Sunday School classes at 9:00 for grades K-8
on **December 28** and **January 4** due to the Christmas holidays

**RIVERSIDE
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

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Website: www.rpcusa.org

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

Place mailing label here

Riverside Presbyterian Church

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Riverside Presbyterian
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More information about the
ministry and mission of Riverside
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