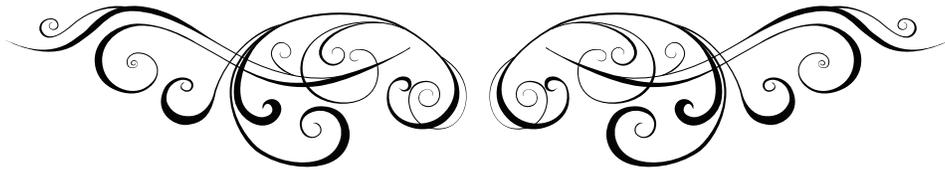


December

•Lamplighter•



Central United Methodist Church
Richmond, IN



WHOEVER TAKES THE SON... *Gets it all.*

A good friend and mentor of mine, Rev. Stuart Rammes, shared this story with me a several years ago. May its message add depth and significant to your observance of this season.

“Years ago, there was a very wealthy man who, with his devoted young son, shared a passion for art collecting. Together they traveled around the world, adding only the finest art treasures to their collection. Priceless works by Picasso, Van Gogh, Monet and many others adorned the walls of the family estate. The widowed father looked on with satisfaction as his only child became an experienced art collector. But the day came when war engulfed the nation, and the young man left to serve his country. After only a few short weeks, his father received a telegram that his beloved son had been killed while carrying a fellow soldier to a medic.

On Christmas morning a knock came at the door of the old man's home, and as he opened the

door, he was greeted by a soldier with a large package in his hand. He introduced himself to the man by saying, "I was a friend of your son. I was the one he was rescuing when he died. May I come in for a few moments? I have something to show you. I'm an artist," said the soldier, "and I want to give you this." As the old man unwrapped the package, the paper gave way to reveal a portrait of his son. Though the art critics would never consider the work a piece of genius, the painting did feature the young man's face in striking detail, and seemed to capture his personality.

The following spring, the old man became ill and passed away. The art world was in anticipation! According to the will of the old man, all of the art works would be auctioned.

The day soon arrived, and art collectors from around the world gathered to bid on some of the world's most spectacular paints. The auction began with a painting that was not on any museum's list. It was the painting of the man's son. The auctioneer asked for an opening bid. The room was silent. "Who will open the bidding with \$100?" he asked. Minutes passed with not a sound from those who came to buy. From the back of the room someone callously called out, "Who cares about that painting? It's just a picture of his son. Let's forget it and go on to the important paints." There were other voices which echoed in agreement. But the auctioneer replied, "No, we have to sell this one first. Now, who will take the son?" Finally, a friend of the old man spoke. "I knew the boy, so I'd like to have it. I will bid the \$100." "I have a bid for \$100," called the auctioneer. "Will anyone go higher?"

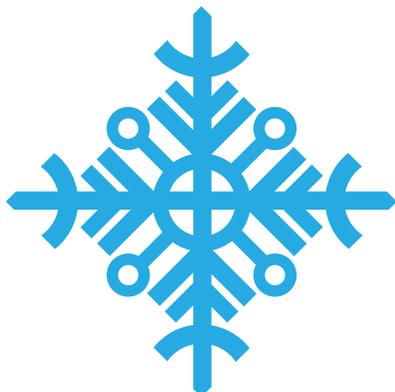
After a long silence, the auctioneer said, "Going once. Going twice. Gone." The gavel fell. Cheers filled the room and someone was heard to say, "Now we can get on with it!" but the auctioneer looked at the audience and announced the auction was over. Stunned disbelief quieted the room. Someone spoke up and asked, "What do you mean it's over? We didn't come here for a picture of some old guy's son. What about all of

these paintings? There are millions of dollars worth of art here! We demand that you explain what's going on!" The auctioneer replied, "It's very simple. According to the will of the father, whoever takes the son... gets it all."

That is the essence of the story of Christmas: Whoever takes the Son gets it all. The Bible puts it like this: "And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life" (1 John 5:11-12). The one who has the Son has it all.

But exactly what is included in the "all"? There are many things. I would suggest that one is that Advent promises new life in Christ. It means we now know what God is like. The coming of Christ gave us a living picture of who God is. Christ's coming put a face on God. The Bible says, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible" (Colossians 1:15-16). This is what we mean by the incarnation—God came to earth wrapped in a human body. The God of heaven came to live among us that we might know what he is truly like. He came to teach us. He came to die for us that we might be forgiven. He rose from the dead to help us know that we too will be raised. He promised that he would return so that eternal hope would burn in our hearts. He opened the doors of heaven. Have a blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas!

IN CHRIST, Pastor Tom



Hello, people of Central UMC!

I hope you are doing well as we quickly approach this beautiful season of Advent. The music ministry at Central has a lot of exciting plans for December. On December 3rd, we will hear delightful flute music by Alisa Clapp-Itnyre and Joy Swonder. On December 10th, the Richmond High School Chamber Choir will be sharing some beautiful Christmas music with us. We are so glad to have them here! On December 17th, the children of Cantus Choir, Joy Singers, the Central Preschool and the Boys and Girls Club will be doing the pageant "Michael Mouse." On that day, we will also hear the lovely Youth Choir voices. Finally, on Christmas Eve morning, we will be blessed with the voices of the Joy Singers and the Cantus Choir. At the 9:00pm service, we will hear the Wesley Bell Ringers, the Chancel Choir and four instrumentalists from Richmond High School.

As always, feel free to let me know if you have any suggestions for music in worship. If you have a special talent for singing, playing an instrument or sharing poetry, please do not hesitate to let me know. I can be reached by email at madeleine@richmondcumc.com, or by phone (614-619-3199) or during my office hours on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. With the utmost grace and peace, Madeleine.

Ponderings From Pastor Curtis

Read Philippians 4:1-9. I began the year thinking that it would take me around 8 months to work through Philippians in these newsletter articles. As it turns out, I will not finish this year! In this paragraph, Paul is beginning to wind down his letter and give instructions which serve as a summary for much of what he has already said in the letter. In v.4 he writes, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say rejoice!" Aside from being the source for a catchy Vacation Bible School song from yesteryear, these instructions are interesting particularly given Paul's present situation. As you may recall from previous months, Paul is writing this letter from prison in Rome, where as the tradition goes he will ultimately be executed. Yet he not only admonishes them to rejoice, he goes on to say "Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (v.6). He continues to tell them in v.7 that "the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension will guard" their hearts and minds.

How could one have such peace, joy, and confidence in the face of terrible adversity? The key is what Paul says at the end of v.5, "The Lord is near." Because he recognizes this one simple fact, it makes the unbearable situations more bearable. Keeping that the truth of Christ's nearness close to your mind during times of difficulty, can give you the quiet confidence Paul describes here.

Before that advice sounds like a simple platitude, can you think of a time in your life when you were going through something incredibly difficult, yet you felt the Lord's nearness to you in a particular way in that moment. As a pastor, it has been my privilege to be with people in such circumstances or hear stories of how people recognized the Lord's nearness in times of death of loved ones, illness, divorce, or even as they are approaching their own death. If you can think of one such instance, spend some time remembering it and reflecting on it.

This practice of remembering is essentially the advice with which Paul closes the paragraph. In v.8 he writes, "...whatever is honorable,

whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellent and if anything worthy of praise dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you." He admonishes them to think on the things of God and in so doing they will continually remember what God has done for them. This is how they will experience lasting peace, even if they find themselves in difficult situations. So it is with us! As we approach the season of Advent and Christmas, let's ponder the things of God together this month!

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Curtis

Primetimers

Please join us Wednesday Dec. 20th at noon in the Fellowship Hall. We will be hearing from Lynn Kennedy & Brian Rodgers as they talk about "Christmas at Central" You must reserve a seat to attend. To reserve your spot, please call the office at 765-962-8543 or email Christin at christin@richmondcumc.com

Mark your Calendars!

The church-wide Christmas Luncheon, after church, on Sunday, Dec. 3rd in Fellowship Hall. The food will be provided by UMW. No reservations necessary. Please join us for delicious home made foods and the singing of Christmas Carols. Everyone is invited!

Blessed to be a blessing, that's what we are!

Thank you so much to everyone who donated to Genesis during the Matching Grant fundraiser. Adding together a donation from the Mission Endowment, a donation from UMW, and all of your generous individual donations, Central was able to give over \$6,000 to Genesis. Amazing! Thank you also for all the donations of food for the Rock Solid Ministries Thanksgiving Give Away. Over 200 local families were blessed by your donations. God can always count on Central!

Central Children's Ministries Presents Michael Mouse, A Christmas Pageant

Sunday school children, youth, preschool students, and children from Boys and Girls Club look forward to leading worship through song and a play on Sunday, December 17th. We hope you will join us for this special Sunday!

You're Invited!

Central Preschool invites you to their open house on Tuesday, December 12th from 6-7pm. This is a great opportunity to meet the students and their families, see their artwork, and bring someone along who might be looking for a place to send their child to preschool. We are accepting new students to start in January! We hope you'll join us to support this wonderful ministry.

Goodies needed!

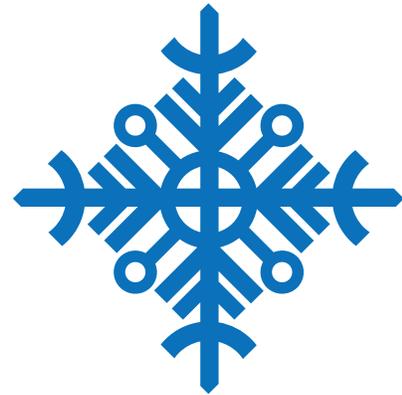
Please let Pastor Jen know if you can provide cookies or brownies/bars for this holiday season. We would like to use them for the Preschool Open House (December 12th) and for the morning of the Christmas Pageant (December 17th). You are welcome to bake enough for both and we can freeze them in between events. Thank you for helping us welcome families to these events by offering some yummy treats!



A Note from Pastor Jen:

We are in the middle of a season of great joy and light. When we look at one another, many of us expect to see a smile on another person's face and a twinkle in their eye. However, for many, Christmas can feel more like a season of great darkness and shadows. We may be experiencing loneliness, grief, loss, separation, pain, and/or sickness. With so much joy surrounding us and long, lonely nights, we can feel lost in the hustle and bustle.

One of the ways in which we can survive the holiday season is to claim and acknowledge our feelings, both the good and the bad. The longest and for many most difficult night of the year is December 21st. It has been a practice of mine the past few years to create a space where people can be themselves and bring their sadness to the Lord. The Longest Night Service (sometimes referenced as Blue Christmas) will offer us a way to claim those feelings and still feel surrounded by the compassionate love of God. If you are searching for a place to just be, for a place to experience God's love, and for a place to feel a glimmer of hope and peace, join me on Thursday, December 21st at 6pm for this contemplative service



Genesis Appreciates You

The board, staff, and clients of Genesis of Richmond want to say a heartfelt "thank you" for your generosity of giving during the Wayne County Foundation Challenge Match. You helped make this our best year ever for this event. You went a long way in putting us beyond our challenge goal. Thank you again for all of your support over the years and now.

The Friendship Circle Important Changes

The Friendship Circle will not meet on December 21. Instead, we will meet with the Circle of Friends on December 19th in the Friends Fellowship Private Dining Room. Please join us.

UMW Pop-Up & Creative Hands

Thank you for the support of the UMW Pop-Ups. Look for more to come! And yes there is a Garage Sale this March. Creative Hands will meet December 14th. We will meet again in January. Happy Holidays!

THE TRIBE NEWS

“FOR WHERE TWO OR THREE GATHER IN MY NAME, I WILL BE WITH THEM” - MATTHEW 18:20



TRIBE MEETINGS

Who loves Rudolph, Frosty, and Charlie Brown Christmas stories? You know you do! Join us as we explore some of the themes found in these beloved cartoons that fit with our walk with Christ.

December 3rd: at Central

December 10th: at Central

December 17th: Progressive Dinner

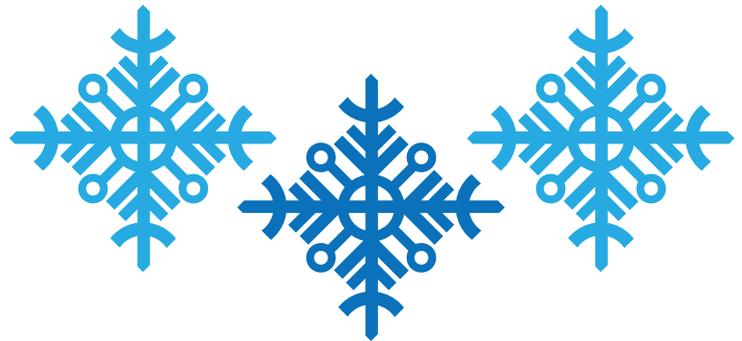
December 24th: **NO TRIBE**

December 31st: TBA

PROGRESSIVE DINNER CHRISTMAS PARTY

Sunday, December 17 from 4-7pm

We have 2 host homes for this event but are looking for one more Please contact Sheri at sheri@richmondcumc.com if you can help out with this



-- conundrum on the -- CRACKERJACK CRUISE MYSTERY DINNER SHOW FUNDRAISER

January 27th at Centerville UMW at 6:30pm

January 28th at Central UMC at 12:00pm

Food served at both shows

A “Who Dun it?” audience participation
mystery play

performed by TRIBE youth group members



Can your table solve the mystery of
the stolen “Rose” Diamond?

Tickets:

\$10.00 per adult & \$5.00 per child (ages 3-10)

This is our mission trip and summer camp fundraiser

Donations are welcome

Calendar of Events

12/3	UMW Christmas Luncheon	12:00pm
12/9	Our Neighborhood Christmas	11:00am
12/11	Medical Monday	1:00pm
12/12	Preschool Board Meeting	6:00pm
12/12	Trustees Meeting	6:30pm
12/14	Creative Hands	9:00am
12/14	Soup Kitchen	9:00am
12/14	Ad Council	6:30pm
12/16	Bread Baking	8:00am
12/16	Disciples Hand	8:30am
12/18	Monday Morning connection	9:00am
12/19	Bread Basket	4:30pm
12/20	Primetimers	12:00pm
12/21	Friendship Circle	9:30am
12/21	Thursday Evening Circle	6:00pm
12/24	Family Christmas Eve Service	10:00am
12/24	Candlelight Service	9:00pm
12/25	CHURCH CLOSED	
12/26	CHURCH CLOSED	
12/27	Lamplighter Assembly	10:00am

Altar Flowers

We are in the process of updating our Altar flower orders. If you would like to give flowers to be placed on the altar, please contact Christin at 765-962-8543. The cost is \$25 per order. If you have given orders in the past and would like to continue to give, please call the office at 765-962-8543 so we can make sure we have the correct billing information and message. **If we do not hear from you, the order will NOT continue in 2018.** all orders for the remainder of this year, will be placed. If you have any questions, please contact Christin.

Planning an event?

If you are planning on an event you would like to be held here at the church, please contact the church office at 765-962-8543 at least a week before the event to make sure the date and time are available. Please make sure to fill out a church event form, located in the office, so we know how you would like your event set up and where you would like to have it. If you have any questions, please call Christin at 765-962-8543 or email christin@richmondcumc.com

Greeters

TBD

Acolytes

12/3 Jamie Puckett & Dylan Puckett
12/10 Ike Khamis & Olivia Swonder
12/17 Ava McCurdy & Anna Claire Ream
12/24 Mark Brunton & Madelyn Brunton
12/31 Madelyn Brunton & Mark Brunton

Ushers

12/3 Rick Eyer, Phil Scott, Jackie Scott, Roger Clark, Beryl Wesler, Ned Toms
12/10 Lowell Robinson, Sam Willman, Jim Puckett, Jamie Puckett, Dylan Puckett
12/17 Lowell Robinson, Sam Willman, Jim Puckett, Jamie Puckett, Dylan Puckett
12/24 Eric Burkhardt, Electa Berk, Larry Parker, Linda Witter, Jim Robinson, Lester Robinson
12/31 Eric Burkhardt, Electa Berk, Larry Parker, Linda Witter, Jim Robinson, Lester Robinson

Scripture Readers

12/3 Anna Claire Ream
12/10 Donna Jurgens
12/17 Mary Alice Bolser
12/24 TBD
12/31 TBD

Children's Message

12/3 Pastor Tom / Pastor Curtis
12/10 Ann Cashner
12/17 Pastor Jen Huff
12/24 Jeff Sheridan
12/31 Sheri Koyles

Altar Guild

Ann Cashner



Dec. 1 Luke 1:26-27	Dec. 2 Luke 1:30	Dec. 3 Luke 1:31	Dec. 4 Luke 1:32	Dec. 5 Luke 1:38	Dec. 6 Luke 2:1	Dec. 7 Luke 2:3	
Dec. 22 Matthew 2:11	Dec. 23 John 3:16	Dec. 24 2 Corinthians 9:15	Dec. 25 Merry Christmas!				Dec. 8 Luke 2:4-5
Dec. 21 Matthew 2:11a			Dec. 9 Luke 2:6-7a				
Dec. 20 Matthew 2:2			Dec. 10 Luke 2:7b				
Dec. 19 Matthew 2:1			Dec. 11 Luke 2:8				
Dec. 18 Psalms 95:6	Dec. 17 Luke 2:16	Dec. 16 Luke 2:13-14	Dec. 15 Luke 2:12				Dec. 14 Luke 2:11