

PRESBY NEWS

Glorify and Enjoy God; Make Disciples; Serve Human Need



December 2023



Dear Church Family,

My advent sermons are always a little short. Why?

Well, last year, it was because I was pregnant with Jeremiah John, and I didn't know if my baby would arrive early. I had written every Advent sermon far in advance, and I had made each of them about 2 pages rather than 4. That way, our faithful emergency sermon readers, Diane Whitehead, Luann Spicer, Steve Stoller, Jon Richwine and Kimber Klingman, would not have to stand at the pulpit reading for too long. Since JJ came the Saturday before the Fourth Sunday of Advent and then Christmas Eve/Christmas Day services were cancelled due to weather, we only needed Jon to step up. Even so, I'm grateful for the peace of mind all five of our emergency readers provided.

This year, without any emergency readers needed, I'm still writing shorter sermons for Advent. This time, it's because I've noticed the announcements can get pretty long during this season. One person comes to the mic to invite people to their home and exchange socks. Another person comes to the mic to invite people to bring food to the church to provide for families in need. Come to this joyful concert! Come to this charity event! We're getting together after church on Sunday for a meal! We're stuffing stockings for our adopted Starr School classroom! We're giving to the Christmas Joy Offering! We're adding an extra Advent choir anthem! And, oh! Of course! We have the Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy too!

I know I could keep the sermons 4 pages instead of 3, and we could just get out 5-10 minutes later than normal; but I won't. One, because I like to honor your expectations for an hour-long service where I can. And, two, because I don't think y'all are missing out on hearing the good news proclaimed. In those announcements, you are caring for one another by providing opportunities for fellowship and service. You are being good-news-bringers for the church family and for the community! You are letting the love of Christ that we preach from the pulpit on Sunday overflow in love for the world every day of the week.

My heart is full of gratitude for every single one of you. In this Advent Season (which will quickly turn towards Christmas and then Epiphany), this stays the same: I love being your pastor.

With hope, peace, joy, and love in Christ,
Pastor LydiaGrace





Christmas Services

Blue Christmas Service, December 21, 7 PM

Sunday, December 24, 10:30 AM

Sunday, December 24, 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Stewardship Campaign Update

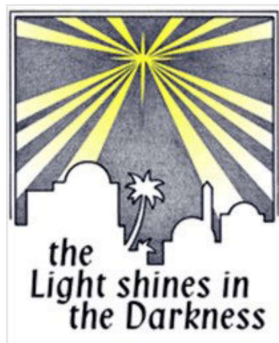
As of Dec. 11, we have received 26 pledges, totaling \$72,446.00.

If you did not receive a pledge card for 2024 please contact the church office asap.

Session thanks you for your financial support which is so vital to the work of First Presbyterian Richmond in the service of the Lord.



Blue Christmas Service ~ December 21 ~ 7 PM



The holiday season in our society tends to be a time of year that many of us feel pressure to be joyful. We are all invited to participate in the frenetic holiday spirit of the season or else be labeled a "Scrooge." For many, however, this time of year is a difficult one: there are struggles at work or with finances; there is grief at the loss and absence of loved ones; and there are sometimes points of upheaval in our lives that just make it difficult to enjoy the season. Our Blue Christmas Service is a time that we gather together on the darkest night of the year to recognize the reality of these experiences and to remind ourselves that there is hope in the darkness. Please join us on Wednesday, December 21st at 7:00pm in the sanctuary for a time of prayer, music, and scripture.





Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday/Anniversary
to all those celebrating in December!



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

During November volunteers from our church packed **105** shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child! **YOU** provided all the supplies used to fill these shoeboxes-- jump ropes, combs, pencils, band aids, bars of soap, and much, much more! Thank you for your help! Our 105 shoeboxes joined millions, yes millions, of other shoeboxes being shipped to children all over the world.

Now that our shoeboxes are filled and shipped, is this exciting outreach program finished until next November? **NO!** You can be a secret shopper for **OCC** all year long! Little by little we build our stockpile of contributions for shoeboxes in 2024! By keeping **OCC** on your mind and in your heart all year, you will help make it possible for many children to have some of their basic needs met -- all because **YOU** became a secret OCC shopper!



JOY BASKETS 2023

With your help, the Deacons and Mission & Evangelism Commission have prepared 25 baskets of food for delivery on December 19th.

Thank you for prayerfully considering your 2023 Christmas Basket Fund Offering, monetarily and with food donations. Together we are making Christmas more joyful for a few more families.

Here & There



Financial Statements - If you need a copy of your current 2023 pledge/giving statement please call the church office, 765.966.2234. A final statement will be sent in January.

Church Office is closed December 20 (noon), Dec, 21-26, 2023; January 1, 2024

January Book Club meets Jan. 8, "Library of Lost & Found," Phaedra Partick

Officers elected at November 19, 2023 Congregational Meeting

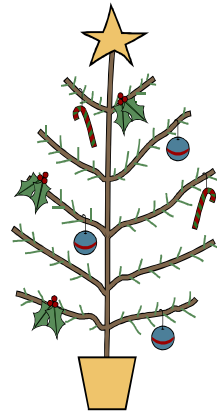
Class of 2026
Elder: (3 year term)
Natalie Kirkman
Ashley Stephen*
Debbie Tipton*

Deacon: (3 year term)
Allison Green*
Deacon: (1 year term-class of 2024)
Dick Miller
Vicki Robinson

*denotes second term



The 2024 Flower Calendar will be posted in the parlor soon. Please sign your name next to the date you want to provide Sanctuary flowers. Let Emily know what wording you in the bulletin



2024 Per Capita is \$43.61 per active member; *please consider rounding up you per capita to \$44 to help those unable to pay*

Thank You

Thanks to everyone who sent cards, prayers, and good wishes or attended my birthday party on Nov. 18. Special thanks to numbers 1 thru 6 for planning the party. Special thanks to granddaughter Amy (& Betty) for the delicious cupcakes. It was a great day.
Flo Fleenor

Reminder

As a way to save paper and postage PresbyNews will be sent by e-mail beginning in January 2024—it might take a few months to get things worked out—please be patient. If you are not receiving an email copy be sure the office has your correct email address.
Thank you to Flo Fleenor for getting our newsletter ready to mail these past 10+ years!

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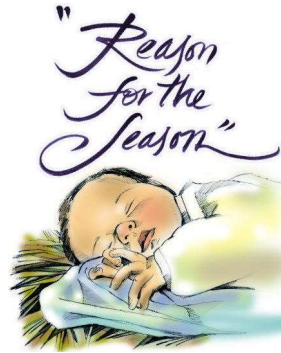
Pastor: Rev. LydiaGrace Quine-Espiritu
Gray: lydigrace.espiritu@gmail.com

Youth Director: Jon Richwine;
richwinejon41@gmail.com

Emily: emilyaflee@gmail.com

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

2023 Contribution Reminder

Due to IRS regulations, as of January 1, 2024 all contributions will be posted in your 2024 account, **unless** your contribution is received or postmarked by December 31, 2023.

Church Office Closed:

Dec. 20 (noon), 21, 22, 25 & 26, 2023

Jan. 1, 2024

Merry
Christmas

