



Riverside Community Church



*"We are inextricably connected to one another by a force greater than ourselves – a force grounded in love and compassion. Owning our worthiness is the act of acknowledging that we are sacred."*

*Brene Brown*

**RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
2025 ANNUAL REPORT**

# RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

## 2026 Annual Meeting

January 25, 2026

### AGENDA

11:50	Potluck Opens	
12:05	Welcome, Call to Order, Quorum	Beth Hartwell
12:10	Opening Prayer	Vicky Stifter
12:15	Set the Agenda	Beth Hartwell
12:20	Approval of 2025 Congregational Meeting Minutes	Beth Hartwell
12:25	Riverside Year-In-Review Video	Kathryn
12:30	Celebration of Service Award	Jeannie Chance
12:35	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Roundtable Discussions of Leadership Reports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treasurer and Finance &amp; Development                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderator &amp; Diaconate                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music &amp; Arts</li> <li>• Children &amp; Youth</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Adult Education / Spiritual Nurture                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justice and Witness</li> <li>• Communications</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Beth Hartwell
12:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What Surprised You?</li> <li>• What Inspires You?</li> <li>• Is there anything missing you would like to see?</li> </ul>	Pastor Vicky & Beth Hartwell
1:05	Acceptance of Board and Committee Reports	Beth Hartwell
1:10	Presentation of 2026 Budget and Endowment Fund Vote	Tom Rietmann Michael McElwee
1:25	By-Laws Revisions explained and Vote	Bob Dorband
1:35	Acknowledgement and Gratitude for those with expiring terms of service	Beth Hartwell
1:40	Nominations and Election of Leadership	Doug Roof
1:50	General Comments, Going Forward & Directives to Council	Bob Dorband
2:00	Adjourn	

# RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

## 2025 Annual Report | Table of Contents

Agenda.....	page 1
Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes January 26, 2025.....	page 3
Annual Membership Report.....	page 5
Moderator’s Message.....	page 6
Pastor’s Report .....	page 7
Children & Youth Ministry Board Report .....	page 8
Adult Education & Spiritual Nurture.....	page 10
Building & Maintenance Committee Report.....	page 11
Communications Team Report.....	page 12
Diaconate Board Report .....	page 13
Justice & Witness Committee Report .....	page 14
Kitchen Team Report.....	page 16
Music & Arts Board Report .....	page 17
Giving Campaign Report.....	page 18
Capital Campaign “Lighting the Way” Report .....	page 19
Treasurers Report & FDB Board .....	page 20
Resolution Addressing Use of the Ella Moe (Endowment) Fund .....	page 21
Balance Sheet, 2025 Actuals & 2026 Proposed Budget .....	page 23-25
Proposed By-Law Revisions .....	page 26
Nominations for 2026 .....	page 28

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES | JANUARY 26, 2025

CTO by Doug Roof at 11:50

A quorum is met with 45 adults signed in.

Opening prayer by Vicky S. and setting agenda, Doug Roof (See 2024 Annual Report).

Elaine Thompson representing Justice and Witness explains the Celebration of Service Award is deferred until February.

Video of Riverside members and friends was shared. (Thanks to Yvonne Arbogast.)

Doug Roof reviewed highlights of minutes from 2024 meeting. A vote was called and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

By-Laws Revision

Current and proposed changes reviewed (p. 28-29) by Vicky Stifter and Doug Roof. Vote taken and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Presentation of 2025 Budget

Michael McElwee presented treasurer's report and proposed budget prepared by Tom Rietmann and Michael McElwee (p 25-27). The major decision to change investment accounts was described and rationale given.

Most questions revolved around where assets show up and opinion that they should be clarified going forward. (Walton Music Fund, Capital Campaign). Eric Fauth can provide details (accountant).

UNANIMOUS APPROVAL OF 2025 budget.

LUNCH provided by Stephan Michaels

Roundtable Discussions of Leadership Reports (p. 9-25)

Each table had a spokesperson review reports, highlights, and suggestions.

Justice and Witness:

It was suggested to add Ukraine to the Friday protests of war in Gaza.

What will happen with the 2017 declaration of being a sanctuary church?

Treasurer and FDB:

Fundraising events are not reliable.

Endowments and Wills as sources of income encouraged.

Group impressed by capital campaign (LTW).

Diaconate:

A name change more reflective of the service is proposed.

Building Committee:

Hoping for approval from the city for the Jackie Light balcony.

# ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES | JANUARY 26, 2025

(CONT'D)

Communications:

Looking forward to improving communication in the digital space with the approved part time consultant and then maintenance of these changes as approved by Board.

Other leadership reports are highlights of written reports in the 2024 Annual Report.

UNNIMOUS APPROVAL OF Leadership reports.

For those persons whose terms are expiring gratitude is extended. Joan Ewing and Doug Roof received gifts recognizing their commitment and tireless energy to Riverside.

Nominations and Election of Leadership 2025-2026 (p. 30)

UNANIMOUS APPROVAL of nominees.

Beth Hartwell as new moderator added comments and requests any directives to council.

Karen Harding comments need to accommodate wide range of youth with growing family members.

Meeting Adjourn at 1:54 PM

# RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH | ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT

**ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP | JANUARY 1, 2025** **119**

**NEW MEMBERSHIPS RECEIVED** **3**

MARIN SMITH | PAUL HINSCHBERGER | LAJUAN JECKER

**ACTIVE MEMBERS LOST**

**BY DEATH** **2**

JUDY SCHOCK | JERRY MOHAR

**ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP | DECEMBER 31, 2025** **120**

## **PASTORAL ACTS**

**BAPTISMS**

**MARRIAGES** **1**

STEPHANIE HARRIS & ADAM PENNAVARIA

**FUNERALS/MEMORIAL SERVICES**

JUDY SCHOCK | LINDA ROUCHES

## MODERATOR'S MESSAGE

Beth Hartwell, Riverside Moderator

Dear Community, Beloved Individuals, Friends:

I want to begin by offering my thanks for this year of serving you, and being trusted to do so. It's been a great honor, and has provided the opportunity to get to know each of you better, grow my compassion and respect, and to see how much happens within this sacred building.

I've shared with some of you that my church life began at the age of 40. The outdoors was where I spent most Sundays in my growing up, so please don't test me on scripture! My first church was a Mission Episcopal church in Battle Ground, Washington, The Church of the Holy Spirit. There I learned that *we* are the church. There was no building yet. Sunday services were held in the lunch room of the middle school, and the worship service was created, each week, by the members of the church. Chairs circled, podium wheeled over and the bucket of flowers set at its base, a stand for the pole that held the banner, the wheelie suitcase holding hymnals and books of common prayer. Coffee equipment and snacks pulled in another wheeled tub. Hallelujah. Church was created by those who gathered. Riverside is like this, within 100 year-old walls.

My second church, six years later, was Trinity Episcopal in Bend, and Father Bill empowered each of us to bring our passions. If anyone came to him with an idea, he would bless it, calendar you to lead it, and he would show up, sitting with the rest of us, inquisitive and participatory. Pastor Vicky empowers with the same grace.

You will find some wonderful things in the pages ahead. The actions and activities that happen throughout Riverside, and out into the world, created within the boards and committees and teams. You'll want to read their reports. Our finances are overseen by knowledgeable and passionate individuals. Changes will be made that allow both structure, and agility. Council has been operating using a consensus model, rather than a majority rules model, for a few years now, and that will be expanding into the moderator roles, and into the executive team. We have learned, in the Ready Together series, how to care for each other in new ways. We have stepped our care out into the greater community with our *Somos Inmigrantes* movement, signs, and ribbons. Ideas blossom and root here.

I'm not so much a data girl, but I just want to express some numbers, to reiterate how much we embody this place, and how we hold the pieces and examples of who we are together.

Our executive team is a body of six, the council is a body of 20, The boards and committees ring in at more than 40 folks. Then you add in the supporting groups like Cheers and our history researchers, and our pastoral support folks, and so many more. My point being, *we* are Riverside. Solid, impassioned, empowered, knowledgeable, skilled, and oh so very warm-hearted.

Thank you again, for your trust, faith and affection. It's been a precious year of learning.

- Submitted by Beth Hartwell, Riverside Council Moderator

## PASTOR'S REPORT

Pastor Vicky Stifter

### bittersweet

*adjective*

*/'bɪt.ə, swi:t/*

*Containing a mixture of sadness and happiness*

---

My word for 2025 is “bittersweet.”

Amidst the many, many moments of joy and gratitude this past year, a sweet sadness lingered, as I discerned that it would soon be time for me to retire from full time ministry and step down from my position at Riverside.

This final year of ministry with you has been a great gift. I've noted a few of the many highlights below.

**Leaning into Love:** As attacks against vulnerable members of our community members grew, so did our commitment to justice and solidarity. Early in the year, the Riverside Council formed the Immigrant Welcoming Team and the LGBTQ + Implementation team to ensure that our previous declarations of support were put into action.

Among the most visible outcomes of this action has been the **Somos Inmigrantes campaign**. Words are inadequate to describe the gratitude, pride, and joy that I feel to be associated with this effort, and to know that it arose from Riverside's courageous openness to movements of the Spirit. **WOW!**

**It Takes a Village:** I'm grateful for the widespread participation of Riversiders in the vibrant worship life of our community. This past year has brought new readers, new greeters, new musicians and new audio/video volunteers into our sanctuary. Special guests at the pulpit included: Graciela Gomez, Lasana Kanneh, Rev. Mary Sue Evers, Rev. Andrea Cano, and Rev. Tyler Conolley, in addition to our very own Kathy Watson and Rev. John Boonstra. I'm also deeply grateful to those daring and devoted souls who have been willing to lead worship in my absence: Doug Roof, Kim Vogel & Kathy Watson. **THANKS!**

**Church in the Wild:** I continue to be inspired by your willingness to take “church” outside of our beloved building. In 2025, this included outdoor worship with partner congregations (more than 100 people at the waterfront in July:), campfire services, a sunrise Easter service, an August campout at Toll Bridge, and a weekend retreat at Camp Magruder with more than 50 participants, including 13 children.

**Grief and Gratitude:** The precious circle of life continued, as we welcomed new members into our midst and bid farewell to several beloved Riversiders, including Linda Rouches, Judy Schock, and Jerry Mohar.  
**God in your grace...hear our prayers.**

It has been one of the great honors and joys of my life to serve as your pastor. The need for Riverside's prophetic voice and extravagant welcome is more urgent than ever before. And though it will be hard to leave, I am confident that God's grace will guide you into a strong and vibrant future.

**God is indeed good...all the time!**

- Submitted by Pastor Vicky Stifter

# CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY | BOARD REPORT

Katie Cook, Youth Director

## Church School and Nursery Care

Church School lessons are based on the lectionary and often include a reflection time, a game or outside activity and a craft project. Each week is different depending on which children are present. Kristin Daly is a great asset and is flexible about helping out with both the older and younger kids depending on what is needed.

## Spring Fundraiser

For the kid's skit in the Spring Fundraiser, they participated in a reenactment of Snow White and the Seven Dwarves. Katie played the Wicked Witch and the kids played all the other parts which included Snow White ( Abi Lytle), the Prince (Kai Kaplowe) and the Seven Dwarves.

## Parents Night Out Events

**February Event** The highlight is always the crafts, games, pizza and of course a pinata. Several church members were great about helping out with this popular event. The question becomes, who is having more fun- the parents or the kids/adult helpers?

**May Event**-Waterfront Park and Sushi outing. We began our time together by gathering at the rock climbing wall at the waterfront and then walked over to Kobi Sushi for dinner. It was a big crowd but this did not deter Kobi Sushi from making sure everyone was well fed. With this crowd of over fifteen kids, California rolls seemed to be the most popular item on the menu.

## Easter

Many thanks to Joellen and Eric Bingener for stuffing over a hundred eggs with treats and also for helping with hiding the eggs. Dave Kaplowe is such a great sport about being the Easter Bunny that this might be his new lifetime role. Since there is no church school on this day, Katie also provided a fun quiet Easter craft activity to make during the church service.

## Quilts for Seniors

Andy Betzing, Matthew Fauth, Annabella Barteld, Paloma Williams, and Kylin Elliott were the honored graduates this year! Kim Vogel, Cathy Jobe and their team members provide a memorable and meaningful gift for each senior. In Kim's words, "the quilts are meant to go with them into their new adventures and be a reminder of Riverside and home, a tangible hug." Thank you, Kim, for your leadership, everyone is so very blessed by your quilt ministry.

## Earth Camp

The ABCD Days of God's Creation was a hit for young and old alike. This could not have been pulled off without all of the great help. Riversiders know how to praise God through singing, creating, laughing, making great snacks, and playing fun games with great joy. What a gift for our young people.

## Toll Bridge Park Campout

What could be more fun than an August campout? Riverside is lucky to be in near proximity to this special outdoor place. Dan Pricher, Ann Harris, Beth Hartwell, Karen and Keith Harding, Kim Morton and many others helped to make this weekend church gathering happen smoothly. As for the kids and families, a highlight is playing, swimming in the river, and making smores.

### **Camp Magruder**

Camp Magruder became the camp of choice after it became evident that Camp Adams was going to be closed this fall. This coastal camp was a magical experience all the way around. The rain and the wind did not prevent the kids from playing outside and going to the beach. A highlight was the arts and crafts boathouse which sits over the lake and everyone commented on the comfortable accommodations along with the good food.

### **Christmas Play**

Riversiders of all ages are such good sports about participating in the Christmas Play. This year, Mary and Joseph (Andrea Walter and Dave Kaplowe) had quite a time of it as they navigated their way through the various programs and committees of Riverside Church. The play opened with Mary and Joseph joining the OWL program and questioning the concept of immaculate conception. Mary and Joseph were grateful to be able to sleep in the Fireside room since there was no room in any of the local Hood River Inns. They also were a bit enamored with coffee hour since hummus was one of the food offerings. The play closed with the baby Jesus (Cora Clair) being welcomed in the manger during Sunday's worship service.

### **Caroling**

Paul Hirschberger was our fearless song leader for the caroling this year. The residents of the Hood River Care Center, Parkhurst Place and Pacific Heights were the lucky recipients of the Riverside intergenerational caroling team. Thank you, Paul, and to all the enthusiastic singers young and old.

### **OWL (OUR WHOLE LIVES)**

This year, Marge Gale became the new OWL administrator. Riverside church struck gold with Marge who has the teaching, organizational and team building skills to manage the middle school program which involves running two cohorts on Wednesday nights from the beginning of September through the end of December. Running this program requires someone who has multifaceted leadership skills which makes Marge Gale a perfect fit.

- Submitted by Katie Cook, Youth Director

## **ADULT EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL NURTURE | BOARD REPORT**

Dan Pricher, Board Chair

**Board members: Dana Pricher (outgoing chair), Ann Harris, Karen Roof, Keith Harding, Stu Watson. Incoming member Andrea Kaplowe. Ann Harris will take over as chair for 2026. Thank you for your service, Stu!**

**10 meetings held in 2025. New meeting time 4th Sunday at 12:15pm Ruth Wells room**

### **Individual Offerings:**

- Book discussion “What If We Get It Right” with John Boonstra
- Enneagram Workshop with Ann Harris and Gwen Thomas - 4 weeks
- Alternative Burial Discussion with Great River Natural Burial
- Bill Moyers video series hosted by Karen and Doug Roof
- Spring hikes with Keith
- Garden Design Workshop and Japanese Garden Tour with Dana Pricher
- Acupuncture Clinic with Rachael
- Readiness Together Training - Fire Alarm Training, CPR, Conflict Resolution,
- Skills and Vulnerabilities database with Kim Vogel and Beth Hartwell

### **Sunday Morning Series:**

- Lent series - “Wild Hope: Stories for Lent” with Vicky
- See No Stranger Discussion Series - Ann Harris
- Movement series - Tai Chi with Kim Morton
- Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery discussion series led by Kim Morton
- Advent series - Seeking the Heart of Christianity discussion led by Vicky
- October Retreat

### **Collaborations:**

- Right Relations training with Sarah Augustine - Doctrine of Discovery
- “Between the Mountain and The Sky” Blink Now fundraiser
- August Campout

### **Ongoing offerings:**

- Book Club
- Circles of Solace
- Monthly Meals with local church partners
- Meditation Group
- Book Study at Parkhurst

- Submitted by Dana Pricher, Board Chair

# **BUILDING & MAINTENANCE BOARD REPORT**

Gary Rains, Board Chair

**Board Members: Eric Bingener, Mark Callison, Jamie Gregio, Zac Lytle, Donna McCoy, Kathryn Murray, Darren Tillson, Charlie Warren, Leonard Wood**

2025 was again a very busy year. We remain under budget. Here is a progress report.

## **LIGHTING THE WAY CAMPAIGN**

We recarpeted the **FIRESIDE ROOM, SANCTUARY & RIVERSIDE OFFICE**. These Fireside Room is now ready for greater use by Riverside programs. Also, in December we reorganized and recarpeted the **STORAGE ROOM**.

We finalized the **FIRE SUPPRESSION AND ALARMS**. With the direction of Charlie Warren, we wrapped up this addition. It was fully tested and came in under budget.

In November we released an RFP for the **JACKIE LIGHT BALCONY**. We expect real costs by the end of January, with the expectation of possible approval on the project by early March.

For over a year we've been investigating adding **AIR CONDITIONING** with new fans in the sanctuary this might not be necessary, and we will continue to evaluate the need this year.

**STAINGLASS REPAIR** continues to be an enigma. The cost is very high, and would take a year. So, we have put this off until sometime in the future as a separate stand-alone project.

Leonard managed a new **OUTDOOR SIGN**. We continue looking for an electronic sign solution.

After review of the **INTERIOR ELEVATOR** it was determined that the elevator cannot be repaired. We are awaiting confirmation of the final costs for a new elevator. This project should be completed this year.

## **OTHER PROJECTS**

A budget of \$30,000 was approved by the Council for **SOUTHSIDE LANDSCAPING**.

We are awaiting actual plans and schedule before proceeding.

Steve Chance has volunteered to build a **BLESSING BOX** to be installed on the State Street sidewalk late this Spring.

**MARRIOT HOTEL**- On Jan 5 this was turned down by the Planning Commission. Next step is a possible appeal to the City Council in February.

## **ADDITIONAL POSSIBLE ROJECTS FOR 2026**

**Plumbing** - We are considering remodel of downstairs bathroom combining both spaces for one unisex bathroom with enclosed stalls and possibly a shower.

**Exterior Lighting** - Hoping for plan and projected costs in Spring

**Blinds in offices and Riverview Room**

**Electrical Upgrades as needed**

**Front Landing** - Area doesn't drain properly. We hope to fix early 2026.

**New Wireless Thermostats**

- Submitted by Gary Rains, Board Chair

## COMMUNICATIONS TEAM REPORT

Kathy Watson, Committee Chair

**Members: Outgoing chair: Kathy Watson Incoming chair: Marin Smith (as of November 2025)**

**Kathryn Murray, Vicky Stifter, Gean Rains, Stu Watson, Molly Fauth, Melissa Tokstad**

With financial assistance from the Frank Durringer Audio Visual Fund, we brought on Marin Smith to serve as Digital Communications Coordinator. Marin also agreed to serve as chair of the Communications Team.

Marin created a comprehensive brand kit which gives us a road map for creating visually consistent messages about Riverside. Marin re-designed our Web site. She was the project manager for Riverside's first-ever welcoming video, which leads off our web site. We also use clips of it regularly in social media posts. She also creates posts regularly for Facebook and Instagram. Recently, she has been working with Pastor Vicky to create short videos for Facebook and Instagram as well.

This year, Marin says we went from "virtually no social media presence to an active, consistent voice. People are seeing us, and many who aren't members yet are discovering us online."

Marin creates many other media "assets" including all the lovely event posters you see around the church. She also designed the new signs for both the State Street sign box, and the Sherman Street entrance, a collaboration with the Building Committee. The signs are one of the projects funded by our capital campaign. Marin also designed the Somos Inmigrantes signs, and the communications team helps advance and promote this campaign.

Kathy Watson continues to write the weekly newsletter (now in her eighth year!) and writes and distributes news releases for Riverside events.

The Communications Team invited an officer from WaFed bank to come talk to us after Sunday service about scams. As recently as last week, members of the congregation received messages from a scammer masquerading as Pastor Vicky. Please continue to be very cautious of any emails or texts that ask you to provide money or gift cards to anyone purporting to be church staff. Call the church office to confirm before you respond.

You can help Riverside grow its social media presence! If you are on Facebook or Instagram, please "like" Riverside's posts. This helps spread them to a larger audience.

- Submitted by Kathy Watson, Chef & Kitchen Team Chair

## DIACONATE BOARD REPORT

Alison Betzing, Board Chair

The Diaconate Board is proposing a name change to the “Worship and Welcoming Board.” We have been busy this year filling the weekly schedule to ensure that someone is present at both of the doors and the Sherman street elevator. We want to make sure everyone is greeted with a welcoming smile for all who come to join the Riverside family each Sunday. The Board continues to strive to provide a warm and peaceful space for all who enter Riverside.

Thank you to Sandy Spellecy, Donna McCoy, Bill Light, Sharon Scott, and Pam Riedl for leading a wonderful year of service. Sandy and Donna will be leaving our board this year so a big thank you for their dedication, time, and love of the church and willingness to serve at any moment.

Greeting at Riverside is an amazing opportunity to meet new attendees, and see the wonderment of the children's faces as they enter our historic church. Our hope is for everyone entering to feel at home in this sacred space. Our hope is for all to feel the warmth of our greetings, to feel the sense of peace and hope with the lit candles, and to feel the calm and the inspiration within the music that fills the sanctuary.

Each week the Board enlists the help of Riverside families to assist with greeting and collection of the offering. This year the outdoor elevator has been consistently working and we encourage you to come take a ride and enjoy the view of the river as it seems the more we use the elevator the better the doors are working.

Behind the scenes the Board keeps track of weekly attendees, we ensure the space is clean and inviting with candles/lights/set up as needed, we provide monthly communion, and most importantly we are your first smile as you enter this amazing welcoming space.

We would love anyone to join us in our weekly greeting duties. It is a wonderful family friendly chance for interaction and we welcome you all to sign up or to answer our call of help.

Thank you for the wonderful year! The team is eager to welcome you and all from our community in 2026!

- Submitted by Alison Betzing, Board Chair

# JUSTICE & WITNESS BOARD REPORT

Elaine Thompson, Board Chair

**Members: Jeannie Chance, Elaine Thompson, Mike Hendricks, Heather Lytle, Lynne Davidson, Brooke Anderson**

**On boarding in 2026: LaJuan Jecker. Thank you for your service: Heather Lytle!**

As 2025 began unfolding, the JW committee started serving as a touchstone for various other offshoots of interest in the church. JW members will try to participate in those meetings when we can, read their minutes and stay abreast of developments. Several new interest groups were formed: Somos Inmigrante as an offshoot of our Immigrant Welcoming/Sanctuary church status, an LGBTQ support group, while the Gaza vigils continue. As the year continued, we saw amazingly high levels of giving for POP's and other fundraisers.

## 1. POP Offerings for 2025

Date	Recipient	Amount Donated
January 19	Fire Relief UCC	\$1,909
February 16	Music Reparation	\$370
March	One Great Hour of Sharing	\$375
April 27	FISH	\$227
May 18	Music Reparation	\$406
June 22	Gorge Pride Alliance	\$369
July 20	Rowena Fire Relief MCCED	\$1,108
August	Music Reparation	\$279
Sept. 21	Safe Space	\$659
October 5	Rowena Wildlife Clinic	\$444
October 19	Music Reparation-Black in the Gorge	\$315
November 2	GNAC - propane for winter	\$858
Nov 9 - 30	SNAP	\$4,068
December 14	Columbia Insight	\$718
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$12,105</b>

**2. David Rovics concert:** Elaine and Brooke headed up the effort with Warren Goodwin to bring Rovics to RCC. Over \$2200 was raised to support medical aid for Palestinian children.

**3. Plastic Collection** was discontinued after June, as GSP closed, in anticipation of new recycling standards in the Gorge.

**4. Photo Directory:** On-going **Service opportunity for RCC members:** Send in your photo to the office, if you haven't already, and feel free to keep your photo current.

## JUSTICE & WITNESS BOARD REPORT, CONT'D

Elaine Thompson, Board Chair

**5. Fish Foodbank:** Long time organizer Judith Poage was having health issues, so our committee helped restructure and Tim Foley and Elaine Thompson now take turns coordinating volunteers every 3 months.

**6. Trunk or Treat:** Beth Hartwell organized hot dogs/cocoa and volunteers in three locations for the Gorge Native American Collaborative. JW supported this with \$212 of our yearly funds.

**7. Special 4 week-long POP offering for Columbia Gorge Foodbank and WaGap.** \$4,069 was raised over the month of November and \$3052 was given to CG Foodbank, and \$1017 to WaGap

**8. Holiday Market:** Lynne Davidson organized the sale of goods provided by the women's center at BlinkNow in Nepal. Over \$1500 was raised. The RCC book group helped staff the sale.

**9. Giving Tree:** This year we again chose two non-profits: Helping Hands Against Violence and the Gorge Native American Collaborative.

**10. Celebration of Service Award:** Kathy Watson was our 2025 recipient. She designated CASA as the recipient for the \$250 award.

- Submitted by Elaine Thompson, Board Chair

## **KITCHEN TEAM REPORT**

Kathy Watson, Committee Chair

We currently have 14 members on this team, chaired by Kathy Watson:

Andrea Walter  
Barb Dworschak  
Beth Hartwell  
Besty Brown  
Donna McCoy  
James Holloway  
Judie Mohar  
Karen Roof  
Kathy O'Neil  
LaJuan Jecker  
Mary Ellen Homes  
Pamela Krause  
Stu Watson

Here are the events the Kitchen Team provided food preparation and organization for this year:

January 20 MLK dinner 80

March 7 Dinner for the launch of the Somos Inmigrantes campaign for 100

April 20 Easter Brunch for 75

June 19 Juneteenth Celebration for 200

October 2 Somos Inmigrantes celebration for 100

April 11, Judy Schock's memorial service

May 3 Spring Fling for 100

November 27, Community Thanksgiving: We are responsible for obtaining the county permit, setting the food prep schedule, and managing kitchen staff for this event, our largest yet in our ten year history.

This team is open for anyone who would be interested in food preparation, service and clean-up. Please contact Kathy Watson if you would like to receive notices of upcoming events. We make this fun, educational and rewarding! Thanks to all those who help.

- Submitted by Kathy Watson, Committee Chair

## MUSIC & ARTS BOARD REPORT

Karen Harding, Board Representative

Riverside continues to be fortunate in the outstanding caliber of musicians available each week. Diana Beterbide continues as Sunday service musician and director of the Chancel Choir twice a month. Tim Mayer continues as Sunday service musician and Director of the Gospel Ensemble once a month. However, Tim generously increased his availability to Riverside to two services a month following the April 2025 departure of Kristen Warnock (Sunday service musician and Director of the Gospel Ensemble).

We advertised for a third musician throughout spring and summer, Council Moderator Beth Hartwell identified a wonderfully talented candidate (Lydia Warren) who began to fill in on some Sunday's during the fall and has applied for the musician position for 2026. We also enjoy a variety of guest musicians during the year.

Additional musical offerings at Riverside throughout the year include the Howl O Ween Concert (directed by Diana Beterbide – a fund raiser for the Rogue Detection Team), Three Advent Concerts in December (directed by Janet & Leonard Wood and funded through the Walton Music Trust). On the “Arts” side of things, we have 2 new cross/candelabra sets for use on the altar. Karen Harding has repaired some of the beautiful banners that hang at the front of the sanctuary, bringing them back into circulation!

One of our 2026 goals is to interest more of the congregation in participating in keeping our sacred art fresh within our beautiful building, to that end we are planning to hold a banner making workshop sometime in 2026.

Board members (Charissa Callison, Jo Herring, Paul Hirschberger, Barb Dworschak and Karen Harding) remain loyally committed to meeting 8 times during the year (4 meetings are “musician’s optional” to make more efficient use of their time). Betty Shalhope has to step off of the board for 2026, we are so grateful for her talents and guidance.

Meetings are dedicated to planning of music for Sunday services throughout the year and holidays and coordinating with the Diaconate team around decoration and banners in the sanctuary. The Music & Arts board is also responsible for planning and creating prayer stations at various times of the year.

We are continuing with “music reparation” Sundays 4 times a year (in observation of the large body of historic gospel music we enjoy without acknowledgement of the composer. A special tithe that is donated to the “Black in the Gorge” scholarship fund is collected on these Sundays. The Riverside Children’s Choir continues to gain momentum, under the leadership of Jo Herring and Pam Reidl.

- Submitted by Barb Dworschak, Board Chair

# GIVING CAMPAIGN REPORT

Kim Vogel, Committee Chair

## Committee Members:

- **Vicky Sifter**
- **Joellen Bingener**
- **Kathryn Murray**
- **Kim Vogel, Chair**

The “*Chorus of Generosity*” giving campaign began on November 16, 2025, and concluded on December 7, 2025 with a Dedication Ceremony. Pledge materials were distributed on the first Sunday with the remainder being mailed the following week. Members and friends of Riverside were encouraged to make a 5% increase in their pledge from the previous year. As in the past, congregation members shared why they financially support Riverside during worship.

**As of January 19, 2025, (year to date YTD) 61 pledges had been received for a total of \$156,144. An additional 12 recurring electronic contributions were added to total \$179,518.**

**This is \$16,217 less than the 2025 final pledge campaign and an average pledge of \$2459 per pledge unit.**

## Highlights of the 2026 campaign:

- Slightly over half (39) of the total 73 pledge units increased their pledges.
- There are two new pledge units from 2025 totaling \$1800.
- While the average pledge amount increased, the number of total donors YTD has decreased from the past two years.
- The amount pledged is approximately \$20,000 less than the campaign goal amount.

Below is a recap of the past 6 years of giving campaigns:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Pledges</b>	<b>Total Amount</b>	<b>Average Pledge</b>
2020	76	\$164,394	\$2,163
2021	79	\$169,028	\$2,134
2022	77	\$169,172	\$2,197
2023	75	\$168,822	\$2,251
2024	92	\$195,364	\$2,123
2025	82	\$195,735	\$2,382

We wish to thank everyone who contributes so generously to the ministry and mission of the Riverside Community Church. Our *Chorus of Generosity* swells with resounding joy!

- Submitted by Kim Vogel, Giving Campaign Committee Chair

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN | LIGHTING THE WAY

Gean Rains, Campaign Chair

At Riverside's 2024 annual meeting the congregation launched the Lighting the Way Capital Campaign: the largest fundraiser in the history of the church. The campaign was the result of a strategic planning process which examined the vision for Riverside's future and what it would take to bring that vision to fruition. A top priority was to ensure the ongoing viability of the church building. A list of needed capital campaign projects was developed and organized into the categories of Growth, Safety, and Welcome with a total cost of \$800,000, which became our campaign goal.

Thanks to the contributions from Riverside members and friends, we have received to date \$760,798 in pledges to the Lighting the Way campaign. Eighty pledges ranging from \$10 to \$150,000 resulted in this success. And, since this is a three-year campaign, there is still time and opportunity to get us to the goal of \$800,000.

A huge amount of gratitude goes to the 20+ members who volunteered their time and talent to make this campaign a success. We had teams dedicated to campaign communication and publicity, printed materials, hospitality, planning and organizing group and one-on-one meetings, distribution of materials, administrative support, record keeping, and follow-up with those who had questions. Overseeing the campaign was Pastor Vicky, Moderator Doug Roof, and Jill White of the UCC Building Fund who provided us with invaluable guidance.

Your contributions went to work immediately! The church now has a new roof, the Riverview Room has been restored with new flooring and paint, a new emergency exit has been built in the Fireside Room, new carpet has been installed in the sanctuary and stairway, the sanctuary was painted and new fans installed, a security system has been put in place, the parking lot has been repaired, and more is planned for 2025 and 2026. See the report from the Building Committee for a detailed list of completed and planned projects.

As Pastor Vicky said at the beginning of the campaign, "We see the building not as an object, but as a full partner in ministry." By restoring the Riverside building we are positioning ourselves to continue our ministry to our community, and for that we say "thank you God for bestowing your blessings on Riverside Community Church.

- Submitted by Gean Rains, Campaign Chair

## TREASURER'S REPORT | FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Tom Rietmann, Treasurer | Michael McElwee, FDB Chair

The FDB set several goals for 2025. Due to the active work and sustained involvement of committee members, most goals were achieved.

- In January the Moe Fund, with a balance of \$558,129 was invested in the "*Beyond Fossil Fuels Fund*" managed by United Church Funds, the financial arm of United Church of Christ. \$24,035 was transferred into the operating budget and at year end the total value of the portfolio was \$644,437.
- We updated RCC's Financial Policy to streamline some financial processes for efficiency and accuracy.
- We assessed RCC's revenue streams, recognizing that the forgivable loan from the COVID era was ending, we lost a significant tenant early in the year and general operating costs continued to increase. Through some fortuitous events and actions, we ended 2024 with a \$48,356 operating surplus and 2025 with an operating surplus as well. These surpluses will be set aside in a reserve fund to balance future budgets.
- The FDB discussed opportunities and challenges for RCC's operating budget in future years, and the need to establish long-term sustainability. This led to significant recommendations: that the Moe Fund, our sole investment portfolio, be designated as an Endowment Fund, that a legacy giving effort be undertaken to grow the fund, and that additional flexibility be granted to allow the fund to better support the general operations of Riverside. The 2026 budget will be presented to the congregation at our annual meeting.
- Funds from the "Lighting the Way" campaign for future capital improvements continue to be held in the Key Bank and accrue a reasonable interest. We acknowledge and celebrate the loan from RCC member Bill Light that jump started the recent and considerable capital improvements to our church.

A huge thank you to the sustained and committed work during 2025 of FDB members **Barbara Grant, Melissa Tokstad, Gary Rains** and **Joellen Bingener**. We also acknowledge the fine work of Eric Fauth, RCC's accountant.

- Submitted by Michael McElwee, Finance & Development Board Chair

## **RESOLUTION ADDRESSING USE OF THE ELLA MOE FUND**

### **RECITALS**

1. On September 27, 1988, Anna Ellen Moe bequeathed to Riverside Community Church (“RCC”) assets whose cash value at probate totaled \$376,980; and
2. The bequest included no instructions as to the gift’s intended use. It was named the Ella Moe Fund (“Fund”), invested in a socially responsible portfolio, and utilized to fund Youth Ministry programs, refurbish the Pioneer (Riverside) Room and to offset annual shortages in the operating revenue of the church; and
3. On October 27, 2007 the Congregation approved a resolution designating that investment decisions would be made by RCC’s Endowment Ministry, that expenditures from the principal could be made only with Council approval, and that 80% of the annual withdrawal allocated to Youth Programs, 10% to Outreach Ministry and 10% to other Church needs (“Resolution”).
4. Thereafter, the Endowment/Planned Giving Ministry wrote an Investment, Withdrawal & Disbursement Policy (“Policy”) with two primary objectives: 1.) Maintain the purchasing power of the portfolio; and 2.) Provide income for Church programs. The Policy also identified an annual withdrawal rate of 4.5% of market value and emphasized that withdrawals should be designated primarily for programs based on the 2007 Resolution, except in emergencies.
5. For several years, the 4.5% withdrawal has occurred annually and utilized to support the annual budget in accordance with the aforementioned Resolution and Policy. In early 2025, the Fund was transferred to United Church Funds and deployed in a portfolio entitled “Beyond Fossil Fuels Fund”. The value of the Funds now totals approximately \$625,000.
6. The Finance & Development Board (“FDB”) has discussed financial opportunities and challenges of RCC, including the need to adequately fund general operations. The challenges include increase in general operations costs and decrease in rental revenue; the opportunities include better returns from the church checking account and the potential to initiate an endowment fund to support long-term financial stability.
7. The FDB and Church Council recommend Congregational approval of changes to the “Investment Withdrawal and Disbursement Policy”.

### **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**

- A. The Ella Moe Fund will hereinafter be named the Riverside Church Endowment Fund (“Endowment Fund”).
- B. In 2026 the Finance & Development Board shall prepare a new Investment, Withdrawal & Disbursement Policy describing the utilization of the Endowment Fund, which shall include the following key provisions:
  - a. The Endowment Fund shall be defined as a Quasi (“Board Designated”) Endowment Fund

- b. The Endowment Fund may be used to support both programs and the general operations of Riverside Church.
  - c. The maximum annual withdrawal rate shall be no more than 9% of total portfolio value.
  - d. The annual withdrawal percentage shall be based both on the need to support the annual budget and the objective to grow the Fund over time.
  - e. The withdrawal amount, recommended by the Finance & Development Board must be approved by Council as part of the annual budget process.
- C. In 2026, the Church Council, in coordination with the Finance and Development Board, will initiate a “Planned Giving Campaign” to raise awareness of the potential to designate the Church as a beneficiary of wills, trusts, Charitable Rollovers and other vehicles to increase the assets in the Fund by at least \$250,000 in 5-7 years.

**Approved** by vote of the Congregation of Riverside Community Church, the **25th day of January, 2026.**

ATTEST:

Vicky Sifter  
Pastor

Beth Hartwell  
Moderator

# TREASURER'S REPORT – 2025 YEAR END BALANCE SHEET

## Riverside Community Church Balance Sheet December 31, 2025

<b>ASSETS</b>	
KeyBank Checking/Savings Accounts	
Operating Account	14,646.49
Savings Account	495,716.25
Pastor's Discretionary Account	1,082.70
Total Checking/Savings Accounts	<u>511,445.44</u>
Investment Accounts	
United Church Funds Endowment Account	635,554.40
Total Investment Accounts	<u>635,554.40</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u><u>1,146,999.84</u></u>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; FUNDS</b>	
Current Liabilities	
KeyBank Credit Card Payable	1,123.06
Employee Payroll Tax Withheld	2,025.30
Employer Payroll Taxes	319.38
Prepaid Pledges & Grants	15,000.00
Long-Term Liabilities	
Capital Campaign Loan	0.00
Total Liabilities	<u>18,467.74</u>
Funds	
Operating Fund	114,859.31
Designated Funds	
Art Procurement Fund	4,240.25
Camp Adams Retreat	2,980.82
Camp Adams Scholarships	965.00
Chancel Choir Fund	624.00
Communications Fund	791.76
Disabled Access Fund	241.03
Graduation Gifts Fund	(280.69)
Grants Fund	0.00
Guest Speaker Fund	524.73
Kitchen Fund	3,199.60
MLK Justice Fund	4,840.06
Music Memorial Fund	0.00
Personnel Reserve Fund	0.00
Riverside Memorial Fund	9,674.54
Thanksgiving Meal Fund	0.00
Capital Outlay Funds	
Capital Improvement Fund	0.00
Durringer Audio Visual Fund	3,679.41
Jacquelyn Light Fund	97,966.75
Lighting the Way Fund	241,573.76
Organ Fund	6,014.67
Endowment Fund	635,554.40
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	1,082.70
Total Funds	<u>1,128,532.10</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; FUNDS</b>	<u><u>1,146,999.84</u></u>

# TREASURER'S REPORT | YEAR END RESULTS VS BUDGET

Tom Rietmann, Treasurer

## RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH 2025 Results vs. Budget

Operating Fund	YTD Actual	2025 Budget
<b>Income</b>		
Endowment/Funds Transfers	36,642.00	36,642.00
Giving Income	222,014.51	220,469.00
Fund Raising & Interest	27,487.87	24,000.00
Building Use	48,571.16	44,700.00
Program Income	7,510.00	10,550.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>342,225.54</b>	<b>336,361.00</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
<b>Worship &amp; Ministry</b>		
Worship	2,717.15	2,350.00
Pastoral Ministries	611.60	1,050.00
<b>Total Worship &amp; Ministry</b>	<b>3,328.75</b>	<b>3,400.00</b>
<b>Christian Nurture</b>		
Director of Christian Nurture	13,577.87	23,980.00
Sunday School & Youth Groups	13,383.07	8,950.00
<b>Total Christian Nurture</b>	<b>26,960.94</b>	<b>32,930.00</b>
<b>Outreach</b>		
Total Outreach	4,446.55	4,835.00
<b>Music</b>		
Total Music	13,665.01	13,865.00
<b>Communications</b>		
Total Communications	11,391.23	14,600.00
<b>Administration &amp; Office</b>		
Total Administration & Office	50,916.61	53,982.00
<b>Property Maintenance</b>		
Custodial Expenses	36,524.98	35,720.00
Maintenance and Equipment	11,696.28	9,170.00
Utilities	30,495.60	30,499.00
<b>Total Property Maintenance</b>	<b>78,716.86</b>	<b>75,389.00</b>
<b>Pastoral Leadership</b>		
Minister's Salary	63,587.41	66,183.00
Benefits	63,347.77	68,127.00
Professional Expenses	3,624.06	3,050.00
<b>Total Pastoral Leadership</b>	<b>130,559.24</b>	<b>137,360.00</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>319,985.19</b>	<b>336,361.00</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>22,240.35</b>	<b>0.00</b>

# TREASURER'S REPORT | 2026 PROPOSED BUDGET

Tom Rietmann, Treasurer

	2025 Budget	2026 Proposed
<b>Income</b>		
Endowment/Funds Transfers	36,642	37,575
Giving Income	220,469	215,000
Fund Raising & Interest	24,000	32,000
Building Use	44,700	44,700
Program Income	10,550	12,700
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>336,361</b>	<b>341,975</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Worship &amp; Ministry</b>		
Worship	2,350	2,750
Pastoral Ministries	1,050	250
<b>Total Worship &amp; Ministry</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>3,000</b>
<b>Children and Youth</b>		
Children and Youth Director	23,980	13,080
Children and Youth Ministries	8,950	10,550
<b>Total Children and Youth</b>	<b>32,930</b>	<b>23,630</b>
<b>Justice and Witness</b>		
Our Church's Wider Mission	4,160	3,880
Local Missions	675	6,475
<b>Total Justice and Witness</b>	<b>4,835</b>	<b>10,355</b>
Music	13,865	18,300
Communications	14,600	11,600
Administration & Office	53,982	65,850
<b>Property &amp; Maintenance</b>		
Custodial Expenses	35,720	43,220
Maintenance and Equipment	9,170	13,500
Utilities	30,499	31,091
<b>Total Property &amp; Maintenance</b>	<b>75,389</b>	<b>87,811</b>
<b>Pastoral Leadership</b>		
Minister's Salary	66,183	72,165
Benefits	68,127	45,564
Professional Expenses	3,050	3,700
<b>Total Pastoral Leadership</b>	<b>137,360</b>	<b>121,429</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>336,361</b>	<b>341,975</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## RCC BY-LAW REVISION CONSIDERATION

(ONLY THOSE SECTIONS WITH AMENDMENTS SHOWN)

### Article V – THE CHURCH COUNCIL

- B. MEMBERSHIP: The Church Council shall be composed of the Moderator, Moderator-Elect, **Past Moderator**, Secretary, Treasurer, Pastor, and six at-large members. ~~The Children and Youth Program Coordinator shall be a member ex-officio, without a vote.~~ Chairs of ministry boards, or their representatives, shall also be members of the Church Council and **may-should** attend and vote. ~~but are not required to do so, but they can be used to establish a quorum.~~

-----

### Article VII - OFFICERS

- A. QUALIFICATION AND TERMS: All officers shall be active members of the church. Officers **(except for Moderator and Moderator Elect)** shall be elected for a term of two years. No officer shall serve more than three (3) consecutive terms without a one-year rest. Officers are to be elected by a majority vote of the members at the Annual Meeting.
- B. MODERATOR: The Moderator shall **be elected for a term of one (1) year, shall** be chief lay officer and president of the church, and as such shall preside at all meetings of the congregation and the church council, shall serve as the corporate president of the church for legal purposes, shall be ex-officio member of all boards and ministries with voting rights. The Moderator shall diligently attend to the affairs of the church, its programs, and ministries, in consultation with the pastor, as necessary to coordinate and implement the work of the congregation.
- C. MODERATOR ELECT: **The Moderator Elect shall be elected for a term of one (1) year, and** in absence of the Moderator, the Moderator Elect shall perform all duties and functions of the Moderator, and generally assist the Moderator in the exercise of assigned duties. The Moderator elect shall be automatically nominated for election as Moderator for the term following.

D. PAST MODERATOR: Shall, **for a period of one (1) year immediately following their term as Moderator**, assist the Moderator in the exercise of assigned duties. In addition, the Past-Moderator shall serve as chair of the nominations committee.

-----

#### Article VIII - THE MINISTRY BOARDS OF THE CHURCH

- A. MINISTRY OF **DIACONATE-WORSHIP AND WELCOMING** : A minimum of six (6) members shall constitute this ministry. It shall provide a friendly and welcoming environment for those attending worship services, especially for visitors and guests; and shall assist and support the pastor with the spiritual life and vitality of the congregation, plan and assist in normal and special worship services, including staffing and assisting in the observance and administration of the sacraments of communion and baptism. The ministry will share in pastoral care to the sick, shut ins, and members with special needs and call on absent members and promote regular attendance at church services, and generally assist in pastoral care to the spiritual interests of the church and the community.
- B. MINISTRY BOARD OF CHILDREN & YOUTH. A minimum of three (3) members shall constitute the Board of Children and Youth Ministry. In cooperation with the Children and Youth Coordinator, the Board will be responsible for the development of programs and activities to nurture the spiritual development and education of children and youth. This includes Sunday school, community service projects and intergenerational events. **The Children and Youth Coordinator may be a member of the Board.**

-----

#### Article X - QUORUM

Quorum must be present to conduct the business of any ministry board or the church council. A quorum shall consist of 50% plus 1 of the voting members. **However, in determining the quorum for church council business, board chairs (or their representatives) are only considered "voting members" when they are in attendance at council meetings.** The pastor is a voting member of the council.

# 2026 BOARD MEMBER NOMINATION WORKSHEET

## Riverside Community Church Nominations Worksheet for Year Beginning 2026

Final Year	Council At Large	Diaconate (Worship Support)	Children & Youth	Justice & Witness	Music & Arts	Finance & Development	Adult Education & Spiritual Nurture	Building & Maintenance
2026	Yvonne Arbogast Gean Rains	Bill Light Sharon Scott	Christy King Eric Bingener	Mike Hendricks Elaine Thompson	Barb Dworschak Charissa Callison Karen Harding	Joellen Bingener	Ann Harris	Leonard Wood Gary Rains
2027	Gail Lyon Ann Becker	Alison Betzing Pam Riedl	Dave Kaplowe Tertia King	Lynne Davidson Brooke Anderson	Paul Hirschberger	Melissa Tokstad	Dana Pricher Keith Harding	
2028	Evelyn Charity Michael McElwee	Ann Becker Beth Hartwell	Steve Chance Heather Lytle	LaJuan Jecker Jeannie Chance	Jo Herring	Chris Gray Michael McElwee	Karen Roof Andrea Kaplowe	Zac Lytle Kathryn Murray Tom Rietmann
						<i>Standing Members by Position:</i> Treasurer- Tom Rietmann Building & Maintenance- Gary Rains		

**Note:** Terms begin and end with Annual Meeting

**2026 Officers:**

Moderator: Bob Dorband  
 Past Moderator: Beth Hartwell  
 Moderator Elect: Adam Brake  
 Treasurer: Tom Rietmann  
 Secretary: Tim Foley