



**All who are able, please stand*

Gathering Music & Lighting of Candles

Centering Silence & Prayer

Words of Welcome

This is the day that our God has made...
let us rejoice and be glad in it!

*Call to Worship & Advent Candle Lighting
We light God's candle of hope

*Opening Song

“Awake! Awake, and Greet the New
Morn” *#160 verses 1 & 2*

Sharing God's Peace

Preparing our Hearts

Reading “Drawing Near: A Blessing
to Begin Advent”
Jan Richardson

Choral Anthem

“Let Us Break Bread Together”

Blessed to be a Blessing

A Time of Offering, Dedication &
Announcements

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

Offertory “Draw the Circle Wide”
Gordon Light

***Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.***

Children's Time

***Star Child, earth Child, go-between of God.
Love Child, Christ Child, heaven's lightning rod:
This year, this year let the day arrive when
Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!***

Bible Bits & Scripture Mark 13:24-37

Sermon “Into the Dark”

Silent Reflection

Song of Response “More Light” *2x*
Christopher Grundy

***More light, more hope
is breaking from your Word
More light, more hope; Holy Spirit,
help us hear what needs to be heard.***



Holy Communion

*This is Christ's table and all are welcome. Please
come forward by the center aisle and return by the
side aisles. If you would like to remain seated, raise
your hand and we will gladly come to you.*

A Time of Prayer “Out of the Ashes”
Fay White

*The Prayer of Jesus

***Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your
name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on
earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily
bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive
those who trespass against us. Lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Yours is the
kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.***

*Closing Song

“Awake! Awake, and Greet the New
Morn” *#160 verses 3 & 4*

*Benediction

*Congregational Response

“Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord”
Godspell

Rev. Vicky Stifter | Minister
Katie Cook Youth Program Director & Kristen Daly | Nursery Care Provider
Kristen Warnock | Music Minister
Alison Betzing, Betty Shalhope | Diaconate Team
The Kaplowe Family | Lighting of the Advent Candles
Bonnie New | Reader
Kathryn Murray | Audio-Visual & Sound System
Lorene Murray & Patricia Mitchell | Hospitality

Welcome to Riverside Community Church
United Church of Christ

VISITORS We are blessed to worship with you today. Thank you for the gift of your presence. We invite you to fill out a “welcome card” and place it in the offering plate or give it to Worship Leader, Kim Vogel, after the service.

CHILDREN AT RIVERSIDE We joyfully welcome children of all ages at Riverside. Those 5+ are invited to join Katie Cook for Sunday School after Children’s Time. Those birth-age 4 are invited to the nursery, located in the Fireside Room from 10:15 am – 12 noon.

THIS WEEK & NEXT SUNDAY AT RIVERSIDE

Today. All are welcome after worship for coffee & conversation in the Riverview Room.

Tuesday. Bible Study at Down Manor 10:30-11:30 AM

Wednesday. Meditative Prayer - 3:30 PM | OWL 6:45 PM
Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM

Next Sunday. Second Sunday of Advent. Christmas Play.
Pockets of Plenty offering to benefit Helping Hands Against Violence.

ADVENT CONCERT SERIES. Fridays at noon through Dec. 22nd.
Chris Crosman, jazz guitarist performs Dec. 8th.

GIVING TREE. Your donation of gently used or new items such as towels, warm blankets, & sleeping bags will support The Hood River Warming Shelter. A complete listing of items is on display in the Riverview Room.

BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING Thank you for your generous support of Riverside’s mission and ministry. If you have not yet returned your 2024 pledge card, you’re welcome to do so in the coming week. Extra materials are in the back of the sanctuary.

“ALL CREATION WAITS: The Advent Mystery of New Beginnings” Our Advent journey includes an exploration of the themes of this beautiful book. We’ll gather to discuss on Dec. 10th & 17th from 9:15-10:10 a.m. in the Ruth Wells room. All are welcome.

Riverside is blessed by your presence.

We are . . .

. . . a vibrant, Spirit-filled community of people who seek to follow in the ways of Jesus: loving our neighbors, doing justice and sharing the extravagant welcome of God with the whole of creation.

. . . an “*Open and Affirming*” congregation—affirming the full inclusion of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons (LGBTQ+) in the church’s life and ministry.

. . . an “*Immigrant Welcoming*” congregation—called by our faith to stand together with our undocumented and documented immigrant brothers & sisters and their families.

We seek to honor and protect the gifts of God’s creation--divesting our financial resources from the fossil fuel industry, reinvesting in renewable energy and reducing our use of fossil fuels.

Riverside’s youth ministry team supports: Sunday School, teen groups, and Our Whole Lives (OWL)--a comprehensive human sexuality program. *Contact Youth Leader Katie Cook at katie@riversideucc.com.*

Our Justice and Witness team promotes engagement with the Warming Shelter, FISH Food Bank, Somos Uno, Columbia Gorge Climate Action Network. *Contact Ann Harris at harris.annj@gmail.com*

Our “Cheers” team offers care, comfort and meals to those with health, aging issues, new parenthood or other transitions. *Contact Pastor Vicky if you have a need: pastor@riverssideucc.com*

More ways to connect, learn and feed the spirits of those of all ages: Men’s Discussion Group, monthly book group, adult education classes and a Tuesday Bible study & reflection group. *Contact office@riversideucc.com for more information.*

Keep up on what’s happening! Sign up for our weekly online newsletter, *The Current*, by contacting editor Kathy Watson, kathy@watsonx2.com. Or visit our Facebook page: Riverside Community Church, UCC.

On the Web: Riverside’s web site, www.riversideucc.com, includes: a calendar of all events, the most recent Current newsletters, a way to give electronically, and everything about the life of our congregation.

Riverside is one of more than 5,000 communities of faith that make up the “*United Church of Christ*” (UCC). The UCC has been on the cutting edge of justice movements in the U.S. since its work to abolish slavery in the 1800’s. For more information about the United Church of Christ visit <http://www.ucc.org>

*For more information about Riverside
contact the church office at 541-386-1412 OR office@riversideucc.com
or visit www.riversideucc.com*



“Light One Candle” Rebecca Cohen

Riverside Community Church
United Church of Christ

Sunday, December 3, 2023