



# INTERSECTIONS

A newsletter for the Richmond Church of the Brethren community

## December

### All are welcome

Sunday school: 9:15

Fellowship: 10:00

Worship: 10:30

**Continuing the  
Work of Jesus...  
Peacefully.  
Simply.  
Together.**

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### Matt's Musings - Waiting for the Light

Waiting is quickly becoming a foreign practice and patience, a lost virtue. We live in an instant gratification world where “now” is barely soon enough. As I’ve been pondering the season of Advent, the period of waiting that precedes the celebration of Christ’s coming, I’ve been trying to think of elements of our modern lifestyle that might teach us to wait.

It’s not been easy - many of the inventions of the last few centuries have intentionally served to speed things up, to eliminate waiting: faster transportation, expedited shipping, on-demand video, answering machines and cellular phones, and so on. We can hardly even wait for information nowadays - news travels faster than ever through social media, and when we’re with a group of friends where a question arises that no one knows the answer to, usually someone has a smartphone and can find the solution in mere moments.

But there is one thing I thought of that has introduced more waiting, albeit ever-so-slight, into our lives. Light bulbs. For environmental and fiscal responsibility, many of us have replaced our old incandescent bulbs with new-fangled energy-efficient compact florescent lights (CFL’s.) But unlike our old bulbs, these new ones often don’t turn on the moment you flip the switch. Sometimes there’s a short delay before the light begins and maybe even a few moments of low light as the lamp warms up.

It’s ironic that such an everyday item as a light bulb would be one of the few things to go against the grain of our wait-less lifestyles. Of course, this waiting isn’t necessarily without fuss - I’ve heard plenty of laments over how annoying it is to wait for the lights to come on.

*...continued on next page*

# CONGREGATION UPDATES

But isn't that what Advent is all about? Waiting for the Light? Waiting for light might be one of the most arduous forms of waiting. Without light, we cannot see where we are, what lies before us, or where to go from here.

Without light we find ourselves fumbling around in darkness, reaching for something familiar, trying to make sense of our world.

The switch has been flipped. We know the Light is coming. Already - but not yet.

How will you engage in the ancient practice of waiting for the Light this Advent season? Will you rush ahead impatiently? Will you reach out to those around you for strength and support? Will you grow anxious and wonder why it takes so long for the Light to arrive?

Together, we light our candles in hope, and we wait.

With hope-filled expectation,  
*Pastor Matt*

## Christmas Morning Gathering

This year is one of the infrequent occasions when Christmas Day falls on a Sunday. Since we are a congregation that travels widely during holidays, we took an informal poll of those who will be in town and interested in gathering on Christmas morning. Based on these conversations we've made the following plans:



**Our Christmas Morning gathering will take place at the McKimmy's house** (850 Hidden Valley Lane.) We will start with **breakfast at 9:45. Worship will begin at 10:30**, including carol-singing and story-sharing. We're envisioning this as a cozy, informal, relational way to celebrate the coming of Christ into our lives and our world. Feel free to come as-is, whatever your Christmas morning attire may be! If you are interested in helping with breakfast or with worship, please let Pastor Matt know.

## Christmas Eve Gathering

At 7pm on Christmas Eve we will be hosting a special worship gathering where we will welcome the West Richmond, Clear Creek, and First Friends Meetings. Together our four congregations will celebrate the coming of the Christ child with scriptures, carols, and candle-lighting. Worship is being coordinated by our congregation, and will include members of all four faith communities.

## Worship this Month

On November 27th we began the season of Advent, the four weeks leading up to Christmas. This year's four Advent themes are hope, peace, love, and joy. In addition, each week we will be sharing traditions and carols from around the world as we celebrate alongside sisters and brothers in faith across the centuries and around the globe. Alisa Clapp-Itnyre has been hard at work planning special music for this season, and we're also excited to have Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm preach with us on December 11th!

# CONGREGATIONAL UPDATES

## **Mitten Tree**

Each Christmas we collect hats, scarves, gloves and mittens to donate to the local Salvation Army. You're invited to bring purchased or hand-knit items to add to our "mitten tree." This year we'll be making a special collection as part of worship on December 11th, so if you plan to be present that day you can bring them then.

## **Christmas Caroling & Dinner**

Our annual Christmas Caroling outing is scheduled for December 11th at 3pm. Show up at the church, where we'll distribute song sheets and arrange carpooling. If you would like carolers to come visit you please contact Amy Ritchie, our music coordinator.

After we return from caroling all are invited to a light dinner, starting at 5pm. We'll have soup and bread as well as hot chocolate to warm us from the cold. Esther Lang is coordinating the meal - contact her if you would like to contribute.

## **Buy Local this Holiday Season!**

Shop for one-of-a-kind gifts at Clear Creek Food Cooperative's 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Bazaar. Enjoy a large selection of unique locally made

gifts and merchandise. Chair massages, hot drinks, holiday goodies and holiday baking supplies, too! Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 6-8pm and Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> from 11am-4pm. Clear Creek Food Cooperative is located at 710 East Main Street in Richmond, Indiana. Call [\(765\) 939-4390](tel:765-939-4390) for more information or to reserve vendor space.

## **Pastor Matt on Vacation**

After Christmas, Pastor Matt will be taking time off for the end-of-the-year holidays and his last week of vacation. He will be out of the office from December 26th through January 4th. During this time please contact Enten Eller, Ministry Team Chairperson, or one of our deacons (Mary Eller, Amy Ritchie, Mark Ottoni-Wilhelm) with any administrative or pastoral care concerns.

## **Office Manager**

Our Office Manager, Anna Woofenden, will be working remotely December 8<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> and then will be on vacation from December 21<sup>st</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>.



# BUSINESS MEETING REPORT

## Congregational meeting wrap-up

On November 20th our congregation held its fall congregational council meeting. We discussed and acted on several important matters in the life of our community, including the calling of new leadership, approving a budget and pastoral renewal agreement for 2012, adopting a statement of welcome and inclusion, and choosing to join the Supportive Communities Network.

**New Leadership** - After thanking Enten Eller and Travis Poling for their time spent as part of the Ministry Team, we approved the following slate of leaders for 2012:

Ministry Team Chairperson:

Todd Miller (3-year term)

Ministry Team At-large :

Aidan Ottoni-Wilhelm (3-year term)

*(Joining Jenny Williams-clerk, Jane Muller-treasurer, Matt McKimmy-pastor, Margaret Buroker, Mark Stosberg)*

Annual Conference Delegate:

Matt McKimmy

District Conference Delegate:

Kurt Ritchie (2-year term)

*(Joining Todd Miller, Mark Stosberg, and Matt McKimmy)*

District Conference Alternate :

Mary Eller

All of our currently-serving area coordinators were re-affirmed. In addition we happily received the news that two Outreach Co-coordinators have answered the call to help lead us in this area: Karen Poling and Becky McKimmy. Also, Hopi Stosberg was officially recognized as Assistant Financial Secretary and Josie Tolton was affirmed as an alternate representative to the Open Arms Ministries board for times when Pastor Matt is unavailable.



**2012 Budget** - Our budget for next year posed several challenges: 1) we are committed to contribute \$2,000 towards repaying our loan from the South/Central

Indiana District, 2) we have chosen to keep Pastor Matt at  $\frac{4}{5}$  time and on the denominational pay scale, and 3) based on our stewardship campaign earlier this year and the insight of our financial secretary, we are expecting congregational giving to be approximately the same next year as we anticipate for this year - \$80,000.

The Ministry Team proposed two budget options. One included some cuts in budgeted expenses but absorbed most of these increases as a ~\$3,700 deficit. The other included a more comprehensive re-alignment of budgeted expenses with actual expenses from the past few years along with additional reductions in some areas, resulting in a balanced budget of \$80,000. After discussion, those gathered chose to move forward with the balanced budget option. Pastor Matt's 2012 compensation and benefits, including a housing allowance re-allocation, were also approved.

**Statement of Welcome, Joining SCN** - After a multi-year process of conversation and discernment, we unanimously consented to adopting a statement of welcome and inclusion. The full statement is available online at [www.richmondcob.org/welcome](http://www.richmondcob.org/welcome), or upon request from the church office. The centerpiece of the document is the following statement:

**Following the example of Jesus, the Richmond Church of the Brethren welcomes and invites the full participation of every person. We embrace diversity in age, nationality, race and ethnicity, marital and family status, gender identity and sexual orientation, physical and mental ability, educational background, socioeconomic situation, and faith experience.**

We hope this statement will help us to share this part of our identity and ministry with others, and will challenge us to live more fully into our calling as followers of Christ.

A second statement, relating to the larger church on issues of LGBTQ inclusion, was also approved and is available in the same places listed above.

In addition to adopting this statement, we also approved joining the Supportive Communities Network of the Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Interests. Congregational leaders will follow-up with the application process in the coming weeks and months. This network will help connect us with other similar-minded congregations for support, advice, and ministry opportunities.



# OUTREACH FOCUS



## **Heifer International**

1 World Avenue, Little Rock,  
AR/USA 72202 phone: (800)  
422-0474 e-mail:  
info@heiferfoundation.org  
website: <http://www.heifer.org>

## **Bringing an End to World Hunger Through Unimaginable Blessings**

Today, millions of people who were once hungry will be nourished by milk, eggs and fresh vegetables because of the work of Heifer International and your contributions to it. Families who for generations knew only poverty will be building new homes and starting businesses. Children who once headed out to the fields to do backbreaking work will be heading into schoolrooms to learn to read. And people who never thought they'd be in a position to help someone else will be experiencing the joy of charitable giving. How is this possible? With Heifer's proven approach – more than 65 years in the making – to helping people obtain a sustainable source of food and income.

# December Calendar

You can always find the current calendar at:  
<http://www.richmondcob.org/calendar>

- 12.4 Worship 10:30 a.m.  
Bring food for food-bank
- 12.5 Dinner and Conversations 7:00 p.m. (McKimmy's)
- 12.6 Loops of Love 5:00 p.m. (Unwind Yarn Shop)
- 12.7 Senior Breakfast 8:30 a.m.  
Choir Practice 7:00 p.m.
- 12.11 Worship 10:30 a.m.  
Christmas Caroling 3:00 p.m.  
Pot-luck Dinner 5:00 p.m.
- 12.12 Dinner and Conversations 7:00 p.m. (McKimmy's)
- 12.14 Choir Practice 7:00 p.m.
- 12.18 Worship 10:30 a.m.
- 12.19 Dinner and Conversation Gathering 7:00 p.m. (McKimmy's)
- 12.20 Loops of Love 5:00 p.m. (Unwind Yarn Shop)
- 12.21 Choir Practice 7:00 p.m.
- 12.24 Christmas Eve gathering 7:00pm
- 12.25 Christmas Day (at the McKimmy's)  
9:45 Breakfast  
10:30 Worship

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 12/02 Don Miller
- 12/05 Kim Hill
- 12/06 Peter Martin
- 12/07 Ruth Skillings
- 12/07 Aidan Ottoni-Wilhelm
- 12/13 Natasha Heulton
- 12/15 Allison Miller (1999)  
Jonathan Ulrich
- 12/18 Susan & Todd Miller
- 12/19 Margaret Buroker  
Pat Amburn
- 12/21 Nancy Faus Mullen & Tom Mullen (in memory)
- 12/23 Laura Ellis
- 12/29 Tom Shultz
- 12/30 Isaac Ottoni-Wilhelm  
Mark Ottoni-Wilhelm  
Christina & Alfred Singh



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