



INTERSECTIONS

A newsletter for the Richmond Church of the Brethren community

February

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 - In the Bleak Midwinter

*In the bleak midwinter frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.*

- Christina Rossetti, first verse from *In the Bleak Midwinter*

We may not have had much snow-on-snow so far this winter, but it's certainly feeling like a bleak time of year. The excitement of Christmas has waned, the newness of 2012 is quickly wearing off, and we're all feeling a little short on sunlight and warmth as the dreary, drizzly days of winter wind on. We've had our annual opportunities to make a few snowballs, to shovel our sidewalks and driveways, and to complain about how poorly other drivers handle wintry weather. I don't know about you, but I'm already itching for springtime.

There's a certain spirituality to the bleak midwinter, though. In days gone by it was during the winter that you most relied on friends and

neighbors to help you through hard times - when the pantry was running low because of a poor harvest last fall, when getting across town for supplies proved impossible, or when you needed a hand splitting more firewood to stay warm. Our modern lives don't often require us to lean on each other quite so much for our physical needs, but if any season reminds us of how important living in community is, winter is it.

We can't survive the midwinters of our lives on our own. Not physically, emotionally, or spiritually. It may be tempting to try to hibernate, but try as you might that's simply not an ability that humans have been imbued with. Winter reminds us that we need each other most when we're aching, cranky, and light-deprived. It may not seem like anyone would want to help us, or to even be around us when we feel this way. But as we live with one another in true, authentic, Christ-led community the Light shines through and between us, warming us all the way from our cold fingers to our frosty dispositions and shivering souls.

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CONGREGATION UPDATES

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Take a moment this month to share some warmth, hope, and love with a friend or faith companion. It doesn't have to be anything profound, just let them know you're here to support them, that you care, and that we'll get through this bleak midwinter - together.

Grace and peace,
Matt



Ash Wednesday Gathering

Recognizing the beginning of the season of Lent by gathering for worship and prayer on Ash Wednesday has been a part of Christian ritual since the 6th century. On Wednesday, February 22nd at

6:15pm we will gather in our sanctuary to share in a simple time of meditation, repentance, and the traditional imposition of ashes for anyone who is interested. It will also mark the start of our Lenten series, "Questioning Lent." All are welcome to come take part in this time of deep meaning and spiritual reflection.

Your Biggest Questions

We know you've got questions. We all do. Part of the identity of our congregation is that it's a safe community to ask questions together. Not just basic questions like "why do we do certain things the way we do? Can I help lead worship? Or, where is the bathroom?" But **BIG** questions like "can God be both all loving and all powerful? Is the Bible true, or even mostly reliable? Or, what did Jesus really say about heaven and hell?" Yet sometimes we're more comfortable with creating space for asking questions than we are at helping one another to find meaningful, Spirit-led answers.

During the season of Lent this year, beginning with Sunday, February 26th, we will take time to wrestle with big, unsettling questions as part of our "Questioning Lent" worship series. But to create this special

series we need to share some of our nagging questions with each other. If you've got a question about faith, God, the Bible, etc., that you've been pondering, now's your chance to invite others to wrestle with you. We'll pick six different questions to explore as part of our journey through Lent. You can send your questions to bigquestions@richmondcob.org, or you can drop them in the Big Question box at the back of the sanctuary. All submissions will be kept anonymous unless you're interested in sharing your question as part of worship.



CONGREGATIONAL UPDATES

Lenten Devotional Books Available

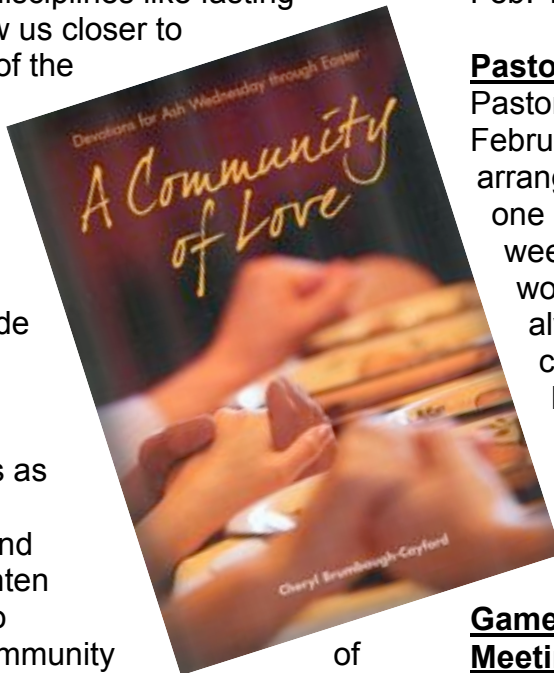
A Community of Love, by Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford

Lent is a season of introspection when we employ personal disciplines like fasting and prayer to draw us closer to God. But matters of the heart seldom

have to do with us alone:

spiritual disciplines are God-given tools that draw us outside of ourselves and challenge us to engage the world around us. Join us as we meditate on scriptures, pray, and reflect on how Lenten practices call us to participate in a community

of faith -- sustained by God's love -- and compassion for others. Copies of this devotional book are available for each family in our congregation, pick up yours from the gathering area outside the sanctuary in the weeks leading up to Ash Wednesday.



Deepening Diversity Worship Series

Jan. 29 - Cultural Diversity

Feb. 5 - Political Diversity

Feb. 12 - Racial Diversity

Feb. 19 - Gender Diversity

Pastor Matt's Weekend Off

Pastor Matt will be taking a weekend off February 10th-12th. Part of our $\frac{4}{5}$ time arrangement with Matt is that he has one out of every five working weekends off from pastoral and worship-leading responsibilities. As always, when Matt is away please contact one of our deacons (Mary Eller, Amy Ritchie, Mark Ottoni-Wilhelm) with pastoral care needs or our Ministry Team chairperson (Todd Miller) with other church-related issues.

Game Night with First Friends

Meeting

Our Quaker neighbors from First Friends Meeting have invited our congregation to join them for a night of fun and games on Friday, February 10th at 7pm. The West Richmond Friends Meeting, Clear Creek Friends Meeting, and New Castle Friends Meeting are all invited too. Bring along a snack and a beverage to share,

cards, and board games. Special treats will be available from the "Cup Cake Lady", Jenny Cox, for \$2.50 a piece. Many delectable, unique flavors! Invite your friends and come join in this great opportunity to meet and fellowship with folks from the larger Richmond community!

Office Hours Shifting to Tuesday/Thursday Afternoon

Beginning in February the church office hours will be shifting from Tuesday and Thursday mornings to Tuesday/Thursday afternoons from 1:30-4pm.



FINANCIAL UPDATES

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE YEAR 2011

THE GENERAL FUND

The contributions for the General Fund for the year 2011 were incredibly close to the budget. The budget for the General Fund was \$80,756.00. The actual contributions during the year were \$80,766.88. So we came in over the budget by \$10.88, a remarkable achievement.

SPECIAL MONTHLY EMPHASES

The special contributions totalled \$5283.83 for the year. Of this the Phyllis Miller Memorial received \$900.00 and the Lillian Calbeck Memorial received \$50.00. The special monthly emphases received \$4,333.83 for an average of \$309.56 for each of the 14 recipients. This represents generous contributions to worthy programs in this community and beyond. Let us give thanks for this generosity and pray that our support will be a blessing to many people.

Donald Miller, Financial Secretary



Food Pantry	\$252.67
New Community Proj	\$400.00
Girls Inc	\$328.16
Cope Environmental Center	\$207.00
Habitat for Humanity	\$323.00
Open Arms	\$570.50
YWCA-Genesis	\$189.00
Hope House	\$363.50
Christian Peacemaker Teams	\$256.50
InterVarsity IVCF	\$341.50
Heifer International	\$383.00
Equality Richmond	\$340.00
Phyllis Miller Memorial	\$900.00
Womaen's Caucus	\$279.00
Bnevolence-Musa	\$100.00
Lillian Calbeck Memorial	\$50.00
Other	0
SPECIAL TOTAL	\$5,283.83

OUTREACH

February: InterVarsity Christian Fellowship

ATTN: Donation Services PO Box 7895, Madison, WI 53715 phone:
(608) 443-3772 e-mail: info@intervarsity.org
website: <http://www.intervarsity.org>
Congregational contact: Bob Hunter

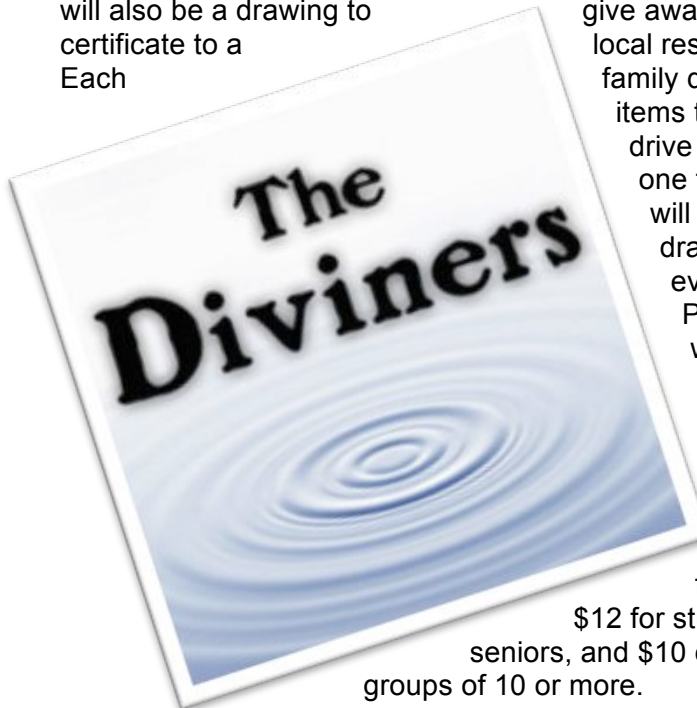
The Purpose of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA is to establish and advance at colleges and universities witnessing communities of students and faculty who follow Jesus as Savior and Lord: growing in love for God, God's Word, God's people of every ethnicity and culture and God's purposes in the world.

The InterVarsity outreach offering we collect specifically helps to support the program Bob Hunter, a member of our congregation, works with, which deals with diversity and justice. Bob also works with the InterVarsity Black Scholars & Professionals group, which leads to a natural tie-in to February being Black History month. In February we will be focusing our sermon series on the topic of diversity. Supporting the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship is one way to support the work of diversity in the world.



Richmond Civic Theatre supporting Open Arms Ministries

The Richmond Civic Theatre's next production, *The Diviners*, is written by an Indiana playwright and set in a small Indiana town during the Great Depression. Recognizing that many of our neighbors are in need still today, RCT is conducting a food drive in conjunction with this show with the cooperation of Open Arms Ministries of Richmond. (Our congregation is a partnering member of Open Arms.) RCT is asking that patrons bring any of the following items when they come to see the show: canned goods including soup, breakfast/granola bars, or even non-food items such as toothpaste or bars of soap. Smaller, non-bulky items are preferred. Cash donations, or checks made out to Open Arms Ministries will also be welcomed. For each performance there will also be a drawing to give away a gift certificate to a local restaurant. Each family donating items to the food drive will receive one ticket that will go into the drawing for that evening. Performances will be February 10th and 11th, 17th and 18th. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12 for students and seniors, and \$10 each for groups of 10 or more.



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February Calendar

You can always find the current calendar at:

<http://www.richmondcob.org/calendar>

- 2.1 Senior Lunch 12:00 p.m. (Friends Fellowship)
Choir Practice 7:00 p.m.
- 2.5 Chew and Chat 10:00 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Bring food for food-bank
Computer Hardware Co-Op 12:30-2:30 p.m.
- 2.6 Dinner and Conversations 7:00 p.m. (McKimmy's)
- 2.7 Loops of Love 5:00 p.m. (Unwind Yarn Shop)
- 2.8 Choir Practice 7:00 p.m.
Pastoral Relations Committee 7:00 p.m.
- 2.12 Chew and Chat 10:00 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Potluck 12:00 p.m.
Computer Hardware Co-Op 12:30-2:30 p.m.
- 2.13 Dinner and Conversation Gathering (McKimmy's)
- 2.15 Choir Practice 7:00 p.m.
- 2.19 Chew and Chat 10:00 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Computer Hardware Co-Op 12:30-2:30 p.m.
- 2.20 Dinner and Conversation Gathering (McKimmy's)
- 2.21 Loops of Love 5:00 p.m. (Unwind Yarn Shop)
- 2.22 Ash Wednesday Worship Gathering 6:15 p.m.
Choir Practice 7:00 p.m.
- 2.26 Chew and Chat 10:00 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Computer Hardware Co-Op 12:30-2:00 p.m.
- 2.27 Dinner and Conversation Gathering (McKimmy's)
- 2.29 Choir Practice 7:00 p.m.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

- | | |
|-------|-----------------------|
| 02/02 | Chris Muller |
| 02/03 | Marilyn & Lew Dershem |
| 02/04 | Soni Ekwealor |
| 02/17 | Hopi Stosberg |
| 02/21 | Bennett Ritchie |
| 02/24 | David Faucett |
| | Lena Stosberg (2008) |
| 02/25 | Julie & David Faucett |



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