

OUR SAVIOUR'S UCC

343 SCOTT STREET

RIPON, WI 54971

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OUR SAVIOUR'S
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

FAITH FAMILY FRIENDSHIP

THE MESSENGER

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Ripon, WI.

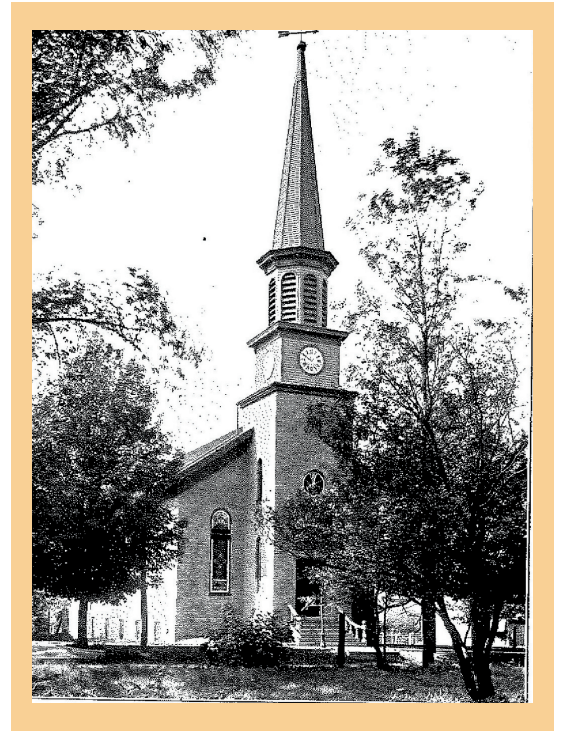


DECEMBER

Welcome to *The Messenger*

Published by Our Saviour's UCC since 1924

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Join us for Worship In-Person, Virtually, or by Radio!

Worship Services are Thursday at 6:30 pm in the Chapel and Sunday at 9:00 am in the Sanctuary. Both services are Livestreamed to Facebook, YouTube, and our website. On Sunday at 11:00 am you can also tune in to 1600AM WRPN to listen to the radio broadcast of the 9:00 am worship service.

For those who worship through our online opportunities, if you live in the greater Ripon area and would like Rev. Mundell to come by in person to visit and bring you communion, please call our church office at 920-748-2544 to set up an appointment. He is very happy to do that for you!

Deadline for the January 2025 Edition of The Messenger:

Events to be included on the calendar, committee updates, articles, etc. should be submitted to the office by **December 16th** via email to the Church office, osuccripon1@gmail.com, or you may drop your information in the office, or submit it using the the QR code at the right and filling out the short form that is automatically sent directly to the office email. Thank you.

QR Code



Our Saviour's United Church of Christ
343 Scott Street, Ripon, WI 54971 | 920.748.2544
www.OurSavioursUCCRipon.com



<https://bit.ly/OSUCCFacebook>



<https://bit.ly/OSUCCYouTube>

From the Pastor's Desk



The season of Advent, a western Christian practice, is my favorite season of the church year. It is defined as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Christ at Christmas and the return of Christ in the second coming.

There are three different perspectives to this hoped for coming. First the physical arrival of God incarnate in the baby Jesus. Second, the acceptance of Jesus Christ in the heart of the believer. And third, the return of Jesus to establish God's kingdom here on earth in our midst.

For me, part of what makes my hope so powerful is my realization of all the grief I bear. The need for Jesus to return and for our living by hope is because the consequences of our sin and the impact of death are still very real and powerful in our lives. I am not a big fan of the nostalgia of Christmas because nostalgia works by blocking out much of the story, specifically the bad parts of our memories, and over emphasizing the comforting images.

Jesus came to me on the cross, I find him in the memories that my nostalgia wants to forget. I find him in the loss of the people I won't see at Christmas this year. I find him in the places that I won't experience this year. I find him in the empty spaces where family isn't together due to work, travel, and changed life situations. I find Jesus coming to me in advent in grief that leads to hope.

I have been reading the systematic theology of Jürgen Moltmann through the summer into fall. In his book, "The coming of God: Christian Eschatology" he says a few things that have spoken to me deeply. "If we suppress our fears, and don't take time to mourn our dead, the pain of other people will leave us unmoved too. Suppressed death disseminates a paralyzing indifference. We 'perceive' everything in the technical sense, no longer in the human one. 'The inability to mourn' becomes an inability to love (57)."

He also said this, "People who shut themselves off from the mourning process or who cut it short will discover in themselves insurmountable depression and increasing apathy. They will lose contact with the reality of the people around them and will fail to find new courage for living. The person who mourns deeply has loved greatly. The person who cannot mourn has never loved (119)."

What allows us to hope deeply is our mourning deeply for all the loss in our life, yet at the heart of the deep mourning is the reality that we loved deeply. Jesus' very coming to us is an amazing act of love born out of mourning. God did not want to let go of us even as we turned our back on God. The Good News is that God took on the pain of death and death itself, and overcame them through the blood of Jesus for our sake. Advent is the hope that all will be made new through the love of God found in Jesus.

Our expectant waiting is for a love beyond our wildest imagination to be realized. A love from God experienced in such a way that we know without doubt we are complete and fully who God hoped to see us be. The birth of Jesus is God making more space in God's life for us and taking our darkness into God's self to forgive and set free.

Let us together enter this advent season with all our hurt, brokenness, loss, pain, and truly mourn, knowing that we feel what we feel because we have loved as deeply as we have hurt. And let us wait with hope knowing that what is coming is love beyond all our hurt.

God's Grace is Sufficient, God's handiwork is amazing Rev. Dr. Kevin Mundell

Committee News

Altar Guild

The 2024 sign-up book is available on the stand outside of the church office. This sign-up is for each of the sponsorships. Altar flowers are \$25 and Organ flowers are \$16 each. Radio Broadcasts are \$50 per sponsor & \$25 per sponsor per bulletin. Checks for Altar and Organ flowers should be made out to OSUCC ALTAR GUILD. All other checks can be made out to OSUCC. Thank you!



Our next meeting is Sunday, December 15th at 10:00 am. We welcome anyone new that would like to come and join our Altar Guild group. If you have any questions, please contact Caroline Retzlaff at 920-748-2367 or Iona Altnau at 920-748-5391.

Called to Care Committee

Nurse Emily holds the Mind, Body, & Soul Clinic every Thursday from 9:00 am until Noon. On each 1st Sunday of the month, she holds a Blood Pressure Clinic in her office after the worship concludes. If you would like a home visit from Nurse Emily, please call her at 920-748-2544 during office hours or email her at osuccpnripon1@gmail.com.

Thank you to all who attended our Fall learning event on Sunday, November 10th when representatives from Fond du Lac County ADRC did a brief presentation on Advanced Directives during Coffee Hour. They left sample documents with us if you missed the event. See Nurse Emily if are interested in seeing the documents.

The Blue Christmas Ecumenical service will be held on Thursday, December 19th. This is a wonderful service for anyone who may be feeling overwhelmed by the season, discouraged, grieving the loss of loved ones or separation from family and friends. We encourage you to join us.

The next Called to Care meeting will be held Thursday, December 15th, at 9:30 am in the conference room. New members are always welcome to join us to help provide fellowship and support for members of our congregation. If interested please talk to Rev. Mundell, Iona Altnau, Julie Stellmacher, Dianne Heyn, Caroline Retzlaff, Pat Gittens, or Kathy Lang.



Christian Education Committee

Our next committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 16th, at 5:30 PM.

- **Adult Ed:** Meets at 10:30 AM after Worship Service.
- **Christian Ed Classes:** Sunday School meets at 10:15 AM after Worship Service.
- **Confirmation Class:** We have a class underway. Contact Rev. Mundell if you would like to join the class.
- **Nursery:** We have a child/parent space available in the Southwest Corner of the Sanctuary.

More Committee News

Evangelism Committee

The current issue of *The Upper Room* is available in the East Narthex, the North Narthex, and in front of the church office. There is no charge for this wonderful publication so please do take advantage of using it. There is a large print size and a small size available.



There will not be a committee meeting held in December. The next meeting is January 20, 2025 at 6:30 pm.

Mission Committee

The Missions Holiday Bake Sale will take place the same day as the Children's Pageant on December 15th. There is a sign up sheet for anyone wishing to donate baked goods. Please have your goodies here by December 14 so the items can be prepared for the sale. Thank you so much!



The Ripon Santa Club collection of gift cards, books, gloves, and hats suitable for children and young adults continues until December 8th. Thank you to those who have already donated to this project.

Thank you to all who participated in Operation Christmas Child Shoebox this year! There were 10 shoeboxes filled, and cash donations of \$100 that will cover shipping to the children.

At their November meeting, our Church Council voted to donate the funds for 20 holiday family meals to Traded Treasures Holiday Meal Program. Along with donations from you, we have been able to provide 34 families in our community with a Thanksgiving meal that they might otherwise been able to have on their table.

The Holiday Meal Program also will provide Christmas meals, so we'll continue to accept donations up until December 18th to help with that. Thank you to all!

Missions Committee will meet next until Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 5:30 pm. Anyone interested in joining the committee is welcome to attend.

Scott Street Puppet Ministry

Feel free to join us for practice on Monday nights at 6:15 pm in the Puppet Room. We are always looking for new members and there are no requirements except to have fun and spread God's love. The biggest rewards are the smiles, laughter and thanks we get from people. Please consider joining us!



If you have any questions contact Amy Borgardt at 920-229-1694, email borgardt4@gmail.com, or Jim Schultz at 920-748-6416, email schuljm@hotmail.com.



Worship Committee

Our search for a new Choir Director is ongoing. If you hear of someone who may be interested, please contact Barb Stracy at 920-229-1183.

There will not be a committee meeting held in December. The next meeting is January 20, 2025 at 6:30 pm.

Ministries, Projects, and News

The Ripon Free Community Meals



Our free monthly meals help our community in a variety of ways. For Instance, a family new to Ripon worked with us this past month. We had 5 girl scouts and their 2 troop leaders working in the dining room as well.

It's a rewarding outreach, always serving around 100 people and taking in around \$200 in free will offerings. This money, coupled with our grants, sustains our program very well.

The menu for our December 3rd meal is roast beef, potatoes, gravy, vegetables, a dinner roll, fruit salad, and of course, your yummy home-made desserts. Your desserts continue to excite and delight our diners, keeping a line of indecisive diners in place at the dessert table. Our church has earned the reputation for serving amazing meals!

There will be volunteer sign-up boards in the East Narthex again for the next few months of meals. Each month has food prep needs specific to the menu being served. As volunteers there are different ways to be involved and your time is very much appreciated. We have some brand new aprons that will be used for the first time at the December meal. Come check those out!

Women's Wild Winter Weekend!

Registration opens for the February 21-23, 2025 Women's Wild Winter Weekend on December 16th! There is an option to go on February 20th as well. The theme for camp will be Kindness, and the Saturday dinner theme will be "Tailgate Party" so make sure to pack your favorite team wear and accessories!



While you can register online, we highly recommend calling 715-479-8255 instead. OSUCC generously provides scholarships to all our ladies who attend this wonderful event, so make sure to tell the registrar that when you call so that you don't pay the camp fee yourself. The camp will bill the church for our entire group at the close of registration.

WWW offers moments of personal reflection, singing, crafts, group activities, and enjoying fellowship time. Indulge in self-care at the Comfort Corner, browse the Silent Auction, savor the delights of the fabulous Saturday night banquet (featuring a chocolate fountain bar), join in uplifting worship, and, of course, relish ample time to immerse yourself in the quiet yet wild beauty of Moon Beach in winter.

Please join the many ladies from our Saviour's who will be going, and be prepared to meet more ladies from other UCC churches in Wisconsin also. If you'd like to talk to someone about camp, you can ask Boni Jensen, Judy Heitman, Becky Mulder, Debbie Han, Jackie Bogucke, Kelly Mundell, Pat Gittens, or Debbie Cluppert.

More Ministries, Projects, and News

Matthew 25: Ministries Pill Bottle Collection

4,620 Pill Bottles in 2024!

Thank you for all your donations! We are so grateful for the steady donation of pill bottles of every type and size. Since July, we've sent 8 full shipping boxes of bunnies, make that bottles, down to Blue Ash. Let's keep them multiplying in the closet!

OSUCC is one of the last collection points in the area so this project is very important for helping keep the bottles out of landfills. We send them to Matthew 25: Ministries in Blue Ash, OH who ships the bottles to developing countries who need assistance in the improvement of available medical care.

Please continue dropping off pill bottles (with prescription labels removed) to the church office. If the office is closed, feel free to leave them in the brown plastic basket located on the table in the North Entrance vestibule. Thank you!



Pop Tabs for Ronald McDonald House

23,944 Pop Tabs in 2024!



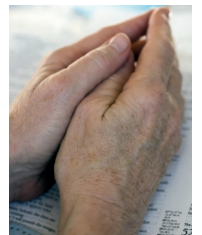
Tabs can come from a variety of cans such as pet food, beverage cans, soup cans, tuna cans, etc. We appreciate all of those who have already donated their tabs, or are still working on their collection jar at home! We understand that even friends of friends have begun collecting and donating too, how exciting! Thank you all so very much!

The tabs collected are sent to Ronald McDonald House, who recycles them and uses the proceeds to help fund the general operations expense of the House--keeping it open to serve even more families.

Prayer Chain Ministry

In our Prayers: *Sandra Badtke, Cattibree Dailey, Tara Koller, Keith Mulder, 21 unspoken, and all others.*

Feel free to use our prayer chain ministry by contacting Caroline Retzlaff at 920-748-2367.



2024 OSUCC Annual Report

As people approach the end of a year, it is natural to think back on the year, as well as forward to the next. This is also a good time for our church committees and groups to do the same to help capture what they would like to include in their committee report for the upcoming Annual Report!

We'll have more information to share on deadlines for the Annual Report as we get into January. Thank you!



From Our Parish Nurse

5 Tips To Reduce Holiday Stress

The holiday season can be a joyous time for many, but according to a survey conducted by the American Psychological Association, 38% of people reported feeling increased stress during the holidays. To make matters worse, 64% of individuals already living with a mental health diagnosis reported feeling that their condition worsened during the holidays.

Increased stress can lead to physical illness, depression, anxiety, and substance misuse. Some reasons given for the increased amount of stress included lack of time, financial pressure, gift giving, and family gatherings.

However, there are ways in which we can prepare ourselves and hopefully deflect some of the increased stress of the holidays. Here are 5 tips to reduce holiday stress.

Give yourself space and grace - *Try: Not saying “yes” to all that is asked of you, making realistic holiday plans and learning what you can “let go”, breathing deeply and slowly before starting each new task, refresh your coziest spot in your home with a soft chair, warm throw, or a candle, set aside time to read a book you've been meaning to read or watch a show you've wanted to watch.*

No matter what you're doing, be present - *Try: noticing the details that make up one of your favorite places, indulging in only your absolutely favorite treats, giving someone your complete attention, gazing at the stars.*

Connect with your whole heart - *Try: turning shopping or cooking into a pairs or team event, scheduling a festive lunch date or a walk outdoors with someone new, sharing a favorite food or recipe with a friend or co-worker, retelling a favorite memory at a gathering or in a holiday greeting.*

Note blessings big or small - *Try: listing objects that comfort you, jotting down all the things that went right today, smiling as the winter sun shines on your face, thanking someone for making your life better.*

Replenish both body and mind - *Try: sticking to a regular sleep schedule of 7-9 hours per night, renewing your stamina with exercise, yoga, or a good stretch, closing your eyes for a few minutes at work, scheduling “me” time to relax with a hot bath or cup of tea, snoozing one afternoon for no good reason.*

And, if you do put these ideas into practice but continue to feel overwhelmed or depressed, reach out to your healthcare provider for help.

For additional information and resources, you can visit: <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/mental-health-and-wellbeing>

Emily Burk, RN, OSUCC Parish Nurse



December Duties

Liturgist

December 1 Kelly Mundell
 December 8 Jeremy Schouten
 December 15 Jamie Prellwitz
 December 22 Heidi Schwanke
 December 24 TBD, 4 PM
 December 24 Jeremy Schouten, 9 PM
 December 29 Phil Manthei

Audio Operator

December 1 Kelly Mundell
 December 8 Keith Mulder
 December 15 Phil Mathei
 December 19 Phil Mathei
 December 22 John Kwiatkoske
 December 24 Kelly Mundell, 4 PM
 December 24 Phil Manthei, 9 PM
 December 29 John Kwiatkoske

Gatekeepers

December 1 Sue Wrzinski, Dennis & Emily Burk
 December 8 Pat Gittens
 December 15 Keith & Becky Mulder
 December 22 Pete & Kathy Schieler
 December 29 Tom & Julie Stellmacher

Usher/Greeters

December 1 Team 5
 December 8 Team 6
 December 15 Team 1
 December 22 Team 2
 December 24 Team 3
 December 24 Team 4
 December 29 Team 5

Van Drivers

December 1 Jackie Bogucke
 December 8 Tom Carr
 December 15 Bob Lueck
 December 22 Ricky Prellwitz
 December 29 Tom Stellmacher

Altar Guild Monthly Committee

Emily Burk, Dianne Heyn, Kathy Lang,
 Caroline Retzlaff, Sue Wrzinski

Coffee Hour

After 9:00AM Worship with Coffee and Juice - For those who feel comfortable, feel free to join us!

Call Church Office by 12PM Thursday before the following Sunday to reserve a seat!

Communion Servers

December 3 Rick Stracy & Patti Schaalma

December 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|---|--|---|---|-----------|---|
| 1 9:00 am Worship Service with Communion 10:00 am BP Clinic 10:15 am Pageant Rehearsal 4:30 pm Pack 3735 mtg 6:30 pm Lego Club | 2 6:15 pm Puppets | 3 5:00 pm Sharing Table <i>Community Meal</i> 6:30 pm Pack 3735 Den Mtg | 4 | 5 9:00 am Mind, Body, Soul Clinic 5:15 pm Sr Choir 5:45 pm Lego Club 6:30 pm Christmas in the Air Concert | 6 | 7 |
| 8 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Pageant Rehearsal 4:30 pm Pack 3735 mtg 6:30 pm Lego Club | 9 6:15 pm Puppets 6:30 pm Church Council Mtg | 10 6:30 pm Pack 3735 Den Mtg | 11 | 12 9:00 am Mind, Body, Soul Clinic 5:15 pm Sr Choir 5:45 pm Lego Club 6:30 pm Worship Service | 13 | 14 Holiday Bake Sale items to the Church please |
| 15 Children's Pageant 9:00 am Worship Service 10:00 am Holiday Bake Sale 10:15 am Sunday School 6:30 pm Lego Club | 16 5:30 pm Christian Ed Mtg 6:15 pm Puppets | 17 6:30 pm Pack 3735 Den Mtg | 18 | 19 9:00 am MBS Clinic 9:30 am Called to Care 5:15 pm Sr Choir 5:45 pm Lego Club 6:30 pm Blue Christmas | 20 | 21 January Messenger Deadline |
| 22 9:00 am Worship Service 10:15 Sunday School 10:00 am Altar Guild 6:30 pm Lego Club | 23 6:15 pm Puppets | 24 Christmas Eve 4 pm Early Candlelight Service 9 pm Late Candlelight Service | 25 Christmas Day No Services | 26 9:00 am Mind, Body, Soul Clinic 5:15 pm Sr Choir 5:45 pm Lego Club 6:30 pm Worship Service | 27 | 28 |
| 29 9:00 am Worship Service 10:15 Sunday School 6:30 pm Lego Club | 30 6:15 pm Puppets | 31 New Year's Eve | | | | |