

[www.richmondipc.com](http://www.richmondipc.com)

Curtis Christian  
curtischristian@richmondipc.com

Joel Stanley  
Joel.christopher.stanley@gmail.com

Dana Miller  
danamiller@richmondipc.com

Joyce Wolf  
jhwolfsong@gmail.com

Mark Johnson  
markjohnson@richmondipc.com

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**First Presbyterian Church  
P O BOX 165  
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**OUR ROAD TO EMMAUS**

In chapter sixteen of Luke’s Gospel, Jesus tells a story of a nameless rich man who feasted sumptuously every day; while at his gate, there lay a poor man named Lazarus who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table. In death, Lazarus lives in bliss with Abraham, while the rich man lives in the torment of Hades. The rich man pleads for Abraham to raise Lazarus from the dead so that he might witness to the living about the rich man’s fate. Abraham declines the rich man’s request and answers that if the living will not listen to the witness of Scripture (Moses and the prophets), neither will they listen to the witness of someone raised from the dead (Luke 16:19-31). This story is proleptic in that it alludes to Jesus being raised from the dead and to the witness of God’s life-giving grace and love for the world.

In chapter twenty-four of Luke’s gospel, the risen Jesus joins two of His disciples as they were walking along the road to Emmaus, but they did not recognize Him. Along the way, Jesus interpreted Scripture (Moses and the prophets) for His disciples. He explained how Scripture witnesses to God’s life-giving grace and love for the world through the risen Christ. When they arrive at Emmaus, the two disciples invite Jesus to share a meal at their table. When Jesus breaks bread with them, they suddenly recognize their risen Lord (Luke 24:13-35).

Here are two stories, both of which involve scripture, resurrection, and a table. The difference between these two stories is what happens at the table. The disciples shared their table with a stranger, and discovered that they had been in the presence of the Lord all along. The rich man did not share his table with poor Lazarus; he did not show God's grace at his table, and thus, he did not know God's grace in the resurrection.

My Christian friends, aren’t we all on a spiritual journey? Aren’t we all on our own road to Emmaus? Aren’t we all seeking the loving presence of an elusive God? The prophet Isaiah makes this amazing statement: “Truly, you are a God who hides himself, O God of Israel, the Savior” (Isaiah 45:15). For much of our spiritual journey, we discover that we are looking for God in the wrong places. We expect God to be inescapably evident in our church buildings and among the lives of church people. The religious people in Jesus’ day expected the same thing. But God was “hiding” right in front of them, and they missed what God was doing through the person and work of Jesus Christ. “Now all of the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, ‘This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them’” (Luke 15:1-2). The religious leaders of Jesus’ day were looking for God in their structures and institutions, but God was “hiding” among the tax collectors and sinners. Where might God be “hiding” in our day?

What might you and I see when we share a common meal with a stranger? Whom might we encounter when we break bread with the poor and hungry? Might we recognize Jesus Christ in the face of those on the other side of the table? Perhaps we too might see the presence of God in acts of love and mercy.

If God eludes you in worship; if God eludes you among the people whom you see daily, perhaps God is hiding among our would-be table guests. If you are on the road to Emmaus looking for the loving presence of God, that road just might lead you to our community meal on the last Wednesday of the month (called “Welcome Wednesday”). Come, share a table with the hungry, the poor, the marginalized in our community. Perhaps it is in the faces of those with whom we break bread that we might find the God we seek. Perhaps we will recognize our risen Lord Jesus Christ in acts of love and mercy.

**ELDERS CLASS OF**

Bill Mitchell	2023
Courtney Lawrenz	2023
Beth Underwood	2023
David Deaton	2024
James Exline	2024
Bonnie Gray	2024
Eric Everett	2025
David Jett	2025
Jennifer Wilke-Deaton	2025

**DEACONS CLASS OF**

Chris Campbell	2023
Marti Exline	2023
Jill Hissom	2023
Linda Adams	2024
Donna Cox	2024
Lynn Shearon	2024
Sue Reeves	2025
Julie Stanley	2025
Gene Wolf	2025



**Remember Those**

**Who Served**

**May 29, 2023**



Congratulations to grandmother, Rhonda Orttenburger, and great-grandmother, Kitty Shew, along with the whole family!

*Gannon Marshall Orttenburger was born on 4/26/2023 at 11:59 AM.*

Gannon joins his mom, Ashleigh, and his dad, Lane. His three older brothers - Aiden, Elliot, and Charlie are so excited!

Grandmothers, Great-grandmothers, aunts, uncles, and cousins are too. The Lord is good and has blessed us so much. Peace to all.

**Lunch & Needs Assessment  
May 21, 2023  
following worship**

Your Christian Education committee with Session will host a church-wide needs assessment. We want to hear from ALL of you regarding YOUR vision for our church.

On May 21st, we will gather together for lunch in the Christian Life Center. Rev. Peggy Hinds will facilitate our meeting after the meal is complete. We will participate in both large and small group discussions. There will even be anonymous options for sharing your thoughts.

Please prayerfully consider your ideas and visions for our church and join us on May 21st after our worship service.

**News Brief from Session**

- Church pledges/revenues exceed expenses for the month of March. Good work!
- Active membership role up to 190.
- Joel is now a member of Camp Burnamwood Board.
- Students needed for fall classes at our Preschool.
- Property working on repairs to brick steps, back flow valves, roof repair of bell tower/sanctuary, and plaster wall in balcony.
- Security Risk Assessment completed by Raymond Duncan with recommendations for improvements.
- Church Needs Assessment set for May 21 after church with lunch catered by Lee's Famous Recipe. Yum!



Thank you again for the green beans to make the soup for Empty Bowls. \$8,513 was raised at the event!!!

Lora Danley  
Empty Bowls



*Pentecost Offering  
Sunday  
May 28, 2023*



**BLESSINGS  
ON YOUR  
BIRTHDAY**

- |    |                     |
|----|---------------------|
| 1  | Marjorie Noffsinger |
|    | Lucas Brinegar      |
| 2  | Amanda Adams        |
| 3  | Jeri Allison        |
| 4  | Paul Adams          |
| 7  | Morgan Wolf         |
|    | Susan Birney        |
| 8  | Courtney Lawrenz    |
|    | Ellen Mitchell      |
| 9  | Sharon Smith        |
|    | Jason Smart         |
| 11 | Delores Harder      |
|    | Davy Shew           |
| 12 | Judy Young          |
|    | Mason Crump         |
| 13 | Nancy Johnson       |
|    | Jean Roberts        |
|    | Hays Schrader       |
| 17 | Nancy Daniel        |
|    | Karen Milanese      |
| 18 | John Tucker Lamb    |
| 19 | Levi Toutant        |
| 23 | Grace Gutekunst     |
| 28 | Ben Walker          |
|    | Marcia Florell      |
| 29 | Lane Orttenburger   |
|    | Isabelle White      |
| 30 | Eric Calkin         |

**MISSION.....a body of people sent**

**THANK YOU NOTES FROM THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE**

- DIAPER DONATIONS!** On April 24th we delivered seven packages of diapers to the families at the New Liberty Shelter. They were very appreciative to get these essentials. Many thanks to those of you who brought in these packages of diapers for this purpose. This is an ongoing project, so please continue to keep these babies in mind as you shop over the weeks ahead. The collection box remains in the old fellowship hall.
- Our ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING** was very successful and we hope you enjoyed putting money in the fish banks. Some of you figured out that those banks accepted paper money and checks as well as coins.

For me (Bonnie), these banks provided a daily reminder of the many needs of the fellow citizens of our world. According to the recent scriptures and sermons we have heard in church, our Lord commanded us to love and minister to the needs of our neighbors, and so it is essential for us to continue in this spirit.

The total we raised for this ministry was \$2511.83. This included \$536.83 from the banks, and \$1975.00 from the offering taken up in church on Palm Sunday. All of this money will be sent to the Presbyterian Disaster Relief Fund and will be distributed in Kentucky and the United States, as well as in foreign countries where the need is great. Thanks be to God that we have the resources to aid in the recovery of the victims of floods, earthquakes, tornadoes and war.

**The Pentecost Offering** will be collected on May 28th, Pentecost Sunday. The Pentecost Offering unites us in a church-wide effort to support young people and inspire them to share their faith, ideas, and unique gifts with the church and the world. 40% of the collection will be given to New Liberty Family Shelter.

**March 2023 Love Fund Summary**

<i>Category</i>	<i># of families served</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Utilities</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>\$2,547.20</i>
<i>Rent</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>\$2,275</i>
<i>Hotel</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>\$181.89</i>
<i>Save A Lot bill (food vouchers)</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>\$1,032.94</i>
<i>Gas</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>\$425</i>
<i>Storage</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>\$105</i>
<i>Love Cupboard Pantry assisted</i>	<i>11</i>	
<i>Total</i>		<i>\$6567.03</i>

**46 Unique Families served (includes 25 children)**



**Rebecca Esther Circle**

10:30 am  
Tuesday, May 16

PW circle will meet for the annual Birthday Offering. Karen May, PW CT leader, of Presbytery will give our last lesson for the season and we will have a potluck lunch following.

Please bring sandwiches or salad. Circle will provide birthday cake.

***PW Birthday Offering!***



**Evening Women's Circle**

**Tuesday, May 9  
7:00 pm**

For our last meeting of Women's Evening Circle before we start back in the fall, we will go to Honeysuckle Dining in Berea. It is in the old Churchill Weavers building.

The address is: 100 Churchill Ct.  
Berea

You can meet at the restaurant at 7:00 pm or meet at the back church parking lot at 6:30 pm and we can carpool.

Let Linda Adams know if you are going by email or text.

Linda: Text: 859-200-0762  
or email [Ladams49940@att.net](mailto:Ladams49940@att.net)

Even if you have not been to Circle in a while or have never been, please come and have fellowship with the



Thank you to the following volunteers for covering the office while I was out with surgery:

***Donna Cox Raymond Duncan  
Carolyn Everett Eric Everett  
Jennifer Brubaker***

Thanks also to ***Bonnie Gray, Martha Marcum, and Beth Underwood*** for rolling all of the coin out of the One Great Hour special offering banks!

I appreciate your willingness to serve!

Thanks also for all of the cards, texts, and emails for my recent surgery. I appreciate all of you and consider you my church family! ***Dana***

## Welcome Wednesday

A big thank you to everyone who came out and helped cook, serve and clean for our youth group welcome Wednesday service project this month! Everything came together very nicely and our church family and our community truly appreciated all the hard work! You guys rock!



## YOUTH GROUP!

### Prayer Breakfast

Our youth continue to meet for a time of fellowship and prayer on Tuesday mornings at 6:45 at Purdy's on Big Hill Ave. Our final breakfast for the school year will be on May 23rd wherein we will decide on a time to meet that maybe isn't quite so early for the summer months.

### Youth Sunday Mother's Day—May 14th

Our annual youth Sunday service is scheduled for **Mother's Day, May 14th**. This is the opportunity for our youth to lead the congregation in worship. We will be meeting on **April 30th following worship** to write out our liturgy and run through the service. There are parts for each and every youth in the church willing to participate. This is always a fun and meaningful service. We hope to see you there!



Preschool will end its school year May 23rd.

Both classes will have an end of year celebration. Location is still yet to be determined.

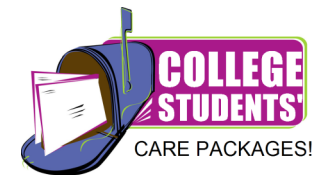
We are taking early registration for new students for the 2023/2024 school year. Please go to the church's website and click on the preschool tab for information and registration.

Thank you for your support and prayers for this school year.

Thanks to everyone who contributed snacks to our college students. Because of your generosity we were able to stuff thirteen bags and boxes for those finishing the spring semester.

Remember we are blessed to be a blessing!

John & Marcia Florell



## Easter Egg Hunt



Teaching With Soul  
By Joel

A big thank you to everyone who participated or helped in this year's Easter egg hunt! We had a good turnout and the kids had a blast.



**Our spiritual discipline for this month is the discipline of celebration.** At first blush, celebration might not seem to make sense as a discipline. At least it didn't to me as I started preparing for this article. It's almost like an oxymoron to put the two terms together; discipline and celebration. This is because disciplines are things we have to endure and work at while celebrating is something that is fun and comes naturally. So the question is: who in their right mind has to work at having fun? Well it turns out that the answer to that question, more often than not, is Christians. Please let me explain.

When I say that Christians have to work at having fun, I don't mean to say that we are all a bunch of stick-in-the-muds. We know how to have fun but I do think we sometimes have a problem with letting our fun and our faith overlap too much. We tend to see our faith as more of a serious matter and, while taking your faith seriously is important, there is something to be said for enjoying the work we do in the church. Fun and faith can and should coexist in worship, in mission, in education and indeed in all of the realms of the church. I believe this is part of what the discipline of celebration strives towards. Celebration calls us to not just toil in the vineyards of the Lord, but to learn to enjoy that toil. We should be deriving joy from the good works that we do for our church and for others, even the really hard stuff. I see that as being the core of the discipline of celebration.

Spiritual celebration also has to do with our attitude towards faith. There is a strong tendency with Christians to look at their faith as being more of an obligation than a celebration. I feel I can safely say that we have all been guilty of this from time to time. It is more common for us to say I HAVE to go to church than I GET to go to church. We tend to carry our faith around as if it is some kind of burden. But, I believe, this kind of thinking represents a fundamental misunderstanding of what faith is (especially in the reformed tradition).

Faith is not a burden but a gift. We are not forced to be faithful by a God who will punish us otherwise. We have the opportunity to be faithful because it pleases a God who loves us very much. So it is that the spiritual discipline of celebration, at its roots, is an attitude adjustment. It is the conscientious decision to see your faith and the work your faith leads you to undertake through a positive filter. It is a shift in motivation away from obligation and toward self actualization.

I think this is a good thing to remember as we emerge from this pandemic. There is joy to be found in the work of the church and we can find that joy, if we look for it. So that's my charge to you all in this month, find the celebration in your obligations and reclaim the joy that comes from the good works we do in Christ's name.


***THE LORD LOVES  
A CHEERFUL GIVER!***



MAY 2023

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

P O BOX 165 Richmond, KY 40476-0165  
 859/623-5323 (fax) 859/623-5329  
 www.richmondipc.com

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Bible Study 10:30 am	2 Youth prayer b'fast 6:45 Tuesday crew 9:00 Mission mtg. 7:00 pm	3 Bible Study 6:30 pm	4	5	6
7 Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11:00 am Deacon's mtg. noon	8 Bible Study 10:30 am	9 Youth prayer b'fast 6:45 Tuesday crew 9:00 Evening Circle 7:00 pm	10 Church wide Potluck/game night 6:00 pm	11 Needle Arts Fellowship 11:30	12	13
14 <b>Happy Mother's Day!</b> Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11:00 am <b>Youth Sunday</b>	15 Bible Study 10:30 am	16 Youth prayer b'fast 6:45 Tuesday crew 9:00 Presbyterian Women 10:30 Preschool/CE mtg. 4:30 Budget/finance mtg. 7:00	17 Bible Study 6:30 pm	18	19	20
21 Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11:00 am  <b>Needs Assessment Lunch</b>	22 Bible Study 10:30 am	23 Youth prayer b'fast 6:45 Tuesday crew 9:00 Session mtg. 7:00 pm	24 Bible Study 6:30 pm	25	26	27
28 Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11:00 am  <b>Pentecost Offering</b>	29 <b>office closed</b>  	30 Tuesday crew 9:00	31 Welcome Wednesday 6:00 pm			