

RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

MARCH 2020

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At Riverside Community Church, we believe that when God brings a person into a relationship with Himself, He also brings him/her into a family relationship in the local church. There is more than just believing. There is also belonging. This newsletter is intended to help those of us who are part of this church family grow in our relationship with God and each other. We want to stay in touch with one another. We want to share what God is doing in our midst.

- Kerry Nenn, Editor

Complete Forgiveness

By Pastor Paul Sommerfeld

This past month, my one-year Bible reading plan has taken me through the book of Leviticus. As you probably know, Leviticus is full of Old Testament regulations, especially those related to the temple sacrifices. It gets tiring just reading all of the regulations. I can't imagine what it must have been like to try and keep them all. Yet despite this, there was probably comfort in having a clear procedure they could follow to atone for sins.

I find that I like well-defined tasks and absolutes. Just tell me what I need to do and I'll do it. So when it comes to atonement, I could be attracted to a system that gives me a series of outward, practical steps that will ensure forgiveness. Maybe you feel the same way. Unfortunately, these feelings have given rise to legalism over the past two millennia. Many false religions thrive on the teaching of, "Say this, pay this, do this... and you will be forgiven."

God, on the contrary, gives this clear instruction to those in Christ: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness," (1 John 1:9). That's a lot easier than sacrifices, but at the same time, I think it's also harder. Here's why.

Have you ever gone to the Lord in true repentance and confessed your sin yet still come away feeling guilty? Maybe you thought, "That was too easy. I have a hard time believing that I'm really forgiven." Would you feel better if you could pay a fee or do some other work to guarantee forgiveness? This is where the hard part comes in. Not only are we saved by grace through faith, God also says, "The righteous will live by faith," (Romans 1:17). This means that when we confess our sin, we must believe that God has forgiven us. If we still feel guilty, it could be a lack of faith, and the enemy wants to exploit that and drag us back into legalism and doubt.

This is what the writer of Hebrews says: "Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful," (Hebrews 10:22-23). This is God's plan for complete forgiveness.

In faith and love,
Paul

2 Teams + 13 Crockpots = 1 Memorable Chili Bowl



On February 2, as the Chiefs and 49ers went head to head on the football field, RCC chefs battled it out in their own competition - the annual Riverside Chili Bowl.

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FAMILY PROFILE

Meet Kaytlyn Albers



Favorite Hangout

I like staying home with family/friends or going to the Connolley's for game night!

Favorite Movie

Greatest Showman or *The Lion King*

Favorite Book

I really enjoyed reading a very large amount of books growing up, but one that sticks out to me is *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls.

Favorite Game

I love the game Scategories! There's always some ridiculous answer someone tries to sneak in for points that makes me laugh.

Favorite Quote

"In oceans deep my faith will stand" - Though these are lyrics to the song *Oceans*, they stick out to me so much — no quote has ever been as impactful to me as these lyrics have been.

Three words that best describe your family

Loud, Handy, and Funny

Where are you on a typical Saturday night?

Either watching TV or movies with my family or out with Matt for dinner at a restaurant we've never tried.

How did you hear about RCC? How long have you been attending?

Through Jenna and Rose Connolley. Jenna invited me to the youth group in 2017, and I have been attending church with Matt since January 2019.

In your opinion, what is the best thing about RCC?

It's easy to get to know many people because everyone is so welcoming and friendly and genuinely happy to meet new people.

Kids and/or Pets names and ages

My dog, Shadow, is pretty old at almost 15

FROM KICKOFF TO COOKOFF

(continued from page 1)

This year, the bowl included 13 entries, ranging from sweet and mild flavors to spicy, tongue-tingling concoctions. Attendees at the bowl taste-tested each chili and voted for their faves.



Oh, and there was a football game going on, too. Fans watched and rooted for their team of choice. While loyalties varied, the Riverside family managed to overcome their differences and enjoy the game together.



When the chili votes were tallied, two recipes tied for the top choice: the submissions from Stephen Kaufman and Rick Stone (friend and guest of Dave and Jan Bohyer). In true football fashion, a coin toss determined the winner, giving Rick the victory.

In honor of his accomplishment, Rick received a Chili Bowl ring.



Congrats to the Chiefs, and congrats to Rick, on your 2020 Bowl championships!

Friends—Loving God and One Another

CREATING FIREPROOF MARRIAGES

To celebrate Valentine's Day, the Men of Acts hosted a Date Night at Riverside on Saturday, February 15th.



Upon arrival, each woman received a rose, and couples enjoyed delicious treats from the "concession stand."

After some mingling and munching, the main feature began. Couples took their seats in the "theater" to watch the Kendrick Brothers classic, *Fireproof*.



After the movie, each couple in attendance was presented with a copy of the book, *The Love Dare*, which is featured in the film. This 40-day challenge encourages husbands and wives to practice unconditional love in their marriages.



Date-night hosts, Keith and Peg Orland, encouraged couples to join them in taking this challenge. The evening was a great opportunity for fun, fellowship, and the strengthening of relationships.



REMEMBERING

At the rising of the sun and at its going down
we remember them.
At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter
we remember them.
At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring
we remember them.
At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer
we remember them.
At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn
we remember them.
At the beginning of the year and when it ends
we remember them.
As long as we live, we remember them.
When we are weary and in need of strength
we remember them.
When we are lost and sick at heart
we remember them.
When we have decisions that are difficult to make
we remember them.
When we have joy we crave to share
we remember them.
When we have achievements that are based on theirs
we remember them.
For as long as we live, we remember them.
The memory of the righteous is a blessing.
Proverbs 10:7

In loving memory:
Sharon Scull
Denise Sommer
Tom Walthour

adaptation of poem by Rabbi Sylvan Kamens & Rabbi Jack Riemer

Upcoming Events

March

- 20 & 21 LATTE Ladies Retreat, Hampton Inn, N. Aurora
- 27 Seder Dinner 6 pm @ church

April

- 4 Recalibrate - Men's Study 7-9 am @ church
- 8 Ladies of Literature 10 am-12 pm @ church
- 10 Good Friday Service 7 pm
- 18 Fusion Formal
- 25 Worship Workshop 8:30-11 am @ church

RIVERSIDE

COMMUNITY CHURCH

37 W 130 Crane Road
St. Charles, IL 60175
(630)443-7442
www.rccstc.org



FUSION

Lessons from My First Year in Fusion

This month marks a full year since I officially became the Pastor of Family Ministries at Riverside, so I've been reflecting on what I've seen and learned in the past year. Here are a few things that have stuck out to me from leading Fusion this year:

Long-term change often happens in small ways. It's easy when you first come into a ministry to see things that you could improve and want to make quick changes right away. But most meaningful change that really lasts actually happens very slowly and in small increments. Drastic change doesn't always stick. I've seen how faithfulness in small ways can build lasting change if we're patient.

Investing in people makes the most difference. Spending time on programs or systems won't produce life-change unless you know the people in your ministry well. Investing in programs can seem easier or more productive initially, but a good program for the wrong people doesn't help anyone. Jesus spent most of his time investing in 12 people, not building a program for discipleship.

Students are capable and willing to lead if you give them an opportunity. It can be easy to just do everything yourself to make sure it's done right (or how you want it done), but equipping and empowering students (and volunteers) to minister is better for you and for them in the long run. I would not be where I am if leaders did not take a chance on me and give me ministry opportunities.

There are more lessons I'm still learning, but these things have begun to shape how I move forward in Fusion during my second year.



- Pastor Jason