

RIVER OF LIFE

A photograph of a nativity scene inside a cave. The scene is viewed through the cave's opening, which frames a starry night sky. In the foreground, a manger made of straw sits on a wooden stand. The text "Good News for Christmas" is overlaid in white serif font, with "Good News" on the top line and "for Christmas" on the bottom line. The background shows a dark landscape with a cross visible on a hill in the distance.

Good News
for Christmas

Means Peace

31 JANUARY 2023



RIVER OF LIFE LUTHERAN | refreshing truth for all people

725 S. Estrella Pkwy (Suite 120) Goodyear, Arizona 85338

First Sunday after Christmas

OUR PASTOR

Pastor Lincoln Albrecht (623) 312.8650 pastor.lincoln.albrecht@gmail.com

WELCOME TO RIVER OF LIFE

Thank you for joining us this morning. In our worship service, God's children—you & I—gather together before God to be strengthened through God's Word. In response to God's message of love to us, we offer God our worship and praise.

The worship folder you're holding has the entire Order of Service. If you have questions, feel free to ask one of our ushers or anyone near you. The unfamiliar can be intimidating—let us help you. We want you to be comfortable & comforted here.

Restrooms are located in the front corner for your convenience.

God wants everyone to worship together. We recognize that public worship is a learning process for children. Parents, if you feel like you need a moment, there is a room in the back of the worship area where you can see, hear, and participate in worship without being heard.

OUR FOCUS FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING

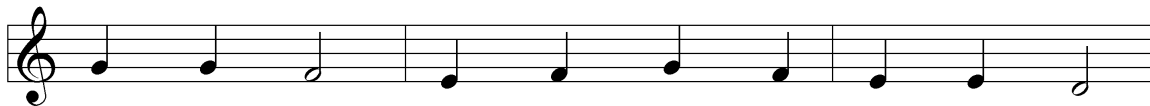
Whenever we approach the conclusion of a year, we are wont to reflect on our past and consider our future. This is the time of year many people make plans to improve their physical and financial health. They make big promises to themselves to make big changes. Unfortunately, we know how long that lasts. More often than not, big promises are broken. Big plans become big flops. In our Gospel reading, we meet two individuals who had big hopes—but not in themselves. The prophetess Anna praised God for all the things that his Son would do—and she told everyone nearby. Simeon, the Lord's servant, had been told that he would see the consolation of Israel, God's Messiah, before he saw death. God kept that promise and Simeon held his Savior in his arms, praising God for the peace and deliverance that Jesus would accomplish.

OPENING HYMN

Oh, Rejoice, All Christians, Loudly | **45 (1-2)**



1 Oh, re-joice, all Chris-tians, loud-ly, For our joys have
2 See, my soul, your Sav-ior choos-es Pov-er-ty and



now be-gun; Won-drous things our God has done.
weak-ness, too; In such love he comes to you.



Tell a-broad his good-ness proud-ly, Who our race has
Nei-ther crib nor cross re-fus-es, All he suf-fers



hon-ored so, That he lives with us be-low.
for your good To re-deem you by his blood.

Refrain



Joy, oh, joy be-yond all glad-ness, Christ has done a-way with sad-ness!



Hence all sor-row and re-pin-ing, For the Sun of grace is shin-ing!

The Gathering

INVOCATION

Minister: In the name of the Father and of the Son ✚ and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

CONFESSION OF SINS

M: Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P: **Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son ✚ and of the Holy Spirit.

P: **Amen.**

*Praise & Prayer*¹

M: Great are the works of the LORD. They are pondered by all who delight in them.

P: **Glorious and majestic are his deeds. His righteousness endures forever.**

M: The LORD is gracious and compassionate.

P: **He remembers his covenant forever.**

¹ Our dialogue of praise is from **Psalm 111**, which in Hebrew is an acrostic poem of praise to God.

M: He has shown his people the power of his works.
P: The works of his hands are faithful and just.
M: They are established forever and enacted in faithfulness and uprightness.
P: He provided redemption for his people.
M: He ordained his covenant forever.
P: Holy and awesome is his name.
M: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.
P: All who follow his precepts have good understanding.
M: Praise the LORD. Let us extol the LORD with all our heart in this assembly.

SONG OF PRAISE

Oh, Rejoice, All Christians, Loudly | **45 (3-4)**



3 Lord, how shall I thank you right - ly? I am saved e -
4 Je - sus, guard and guide your mem - bers; Make us chil - dren



ter - nal - ly By your life and death for me.
of your grace; Hear our prayers in ev - 'ry place.



Let me not re - gard you light - ly But on you in
Fan to life faith's glow - ing em - bers; Give all Chris - tians



faith de - pend, Prais - ing you, my heav'n - ly friend.
far and near Ho - ly peace, a glad new year.

Refrain



Joy, oh, joy be - yond all glad - ness, Christ has done a - way with sad - ness!



Hence all sor - row and re - pin - ing, For the Sun of grace is shin - ing!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Almighty God, in mercy you sent your one and only Son to take upon himself our human nature. By his gracious coming, deliver us from the corruption of our sin, and transform us into the likeness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



P: Amen.

The Word

OLD TESTAMENT READING

1 Kings 8

⁶ The priests then brought the ark of the Lord's covenant to its place in the inner sanctuary of the temple, the Most Holy Place, and put it beneath the wings of the cherubim. ⁷ The cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark and overshadowed the ark and its carrying poles. ⁸ These poles were so long that their ends could be seen from the Holy Place in front of the inner sanctuary, but not from outside the Holy Place; and they are still there today. ⁹ There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the Lord made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt.

¹⁰ When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the Lord. ¹¹ And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled his temple.

¹² Then Solomon said, "The Lord has said that he would dwell in a dark cloud; ¹³ I have indeed built a magnificent temple for you, a place for you to dwell forever."

VERSE OF THE DAY

Luke 2:30-31

Alleluia. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations. Alleluia.

SONG OF PRAISE

Joy Has Dawned | 352



1 Joy has dawned up - on the world, prom - ised from cre - a - tion—
 2 Sounds of won - der fill the sky with the songs of an - gels
 3 Shep - herds bow be - fore the Lamb, gaz - ing at the glo - ry.
 4 Son of Ad - am, Son of heav'n, giv - en as a ran - som;



God's sal - va - tion now un - furled, hope for ev - 'ry na - tion.
 as the might - y Prince of life shel - ters in a sta - ble.
 Gifts of men from dis - tant lands proph - e - sy the sto - ry:
 rec - on - cil - ing God and man, Christ, our might - y cham - pion!



Not with fan-fares from a - bove, not with scenes of glo - ry,
 Hands that set each star in place, shaped the earth in dark - ness,
 gold— a king is born to - day; in - cense—God is with us;
 What a Sav - ior! What a friend! What a glo - rious mys - t'ry!



but a hum - ble gift of love— Je - sus born of Mar - y.
 cling now to a moth - er's breast, vul - n'ra - ble and help - less.
 myrrh— his death will make a way, and by his blood he'll win us.
 Once a babe in Beth - le - hem, — now the Lord of his - t'ry.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Colossians 3

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 2

²¹ On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 2

²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required,

²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel."

³³ The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

M: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

P: Praise be to you, O Christ!



1 O Light of Gen - tile na - tions, O
 2 Dear Lord, your ser - vants meet you In
 3 Lord, when life's trou - bles touch us, You
 4 Let us, O Lord, be faith - ful Like



Sav - ior from a - bove, Drawn by your Spir - it's
 ev - 'ry ho - ly place Where your true Word has
 seem to hide your face, And through our tears we
 Sim - eon to the end So that his prayer ex -



lead - ing, We come with joy and love In -
 prom - ised That we should see your face. To -
 of - ten Can scarce - ly sense your grace. Then
 ul - tant May from our hearts as - cend: "O



to your ho - ly tem - ple And wait with
 day you still al - low us Who gath - er
 be our joy and bright - ness, Our cheer in
 Lord, now let your ser - vant De - part in



rev - 'rent mind As Sim - eon once had
 round you here In arms of faith to
 pain and loss, Our sun in dark - est
 peace, I pray, Since I have seen my



wait - ed His God and Lord to find.
 hold you As did that a - ged seer.
 ter - ror, The glo - ry round our cross.
 Sav - ior And here be - held his day."

Our Response to God's Word

M: In Christ, you have heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation.

P: We believe in Christ and trust in the truth he has revealed to us in his Word.

M: Living and serving together in trust and hope, we confess our common faith.

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of Life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

THANK OFFERING



God's people respond with thankful hearts. The people of River of Life have joined to offer God the first-fruits of all he has given us. Our offerings support God's work in this community and the world. If you are a visitor with us, thank you for joining us today. Please do not feel obligated to support our ministry, but we ask that you do take time to fill out a digital connect card (azriveroflife.com/connect) so we can thank you for joining us. Thank you & God bless you!

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH ²

- M: There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal,
- P: a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,**
- M: a time to embrace and a time to refrain, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.
- P: Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.**
- M: May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands. You care about us and our burdens, our worries, and our many cares. Hear our prayer, O Lord.
- P: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

² Our prayer of the church is prompted by the words of **Ecclesiastes 3** and **Psalms 90**.

Prayer of Preparation: Lord God, Heavenly Father, You called me by name and declared that I was Your child through the washing of my Baptism. I desire, now, to receive the true body and blood of my Savior, Jesus Christ, in this Holy Meal. Continue to grant me grace, that I may stand before You and the body of believers and faithfully speak of the hope that is mine through Your life, death, and resurrection. Strengthen me. Grant me the forgiveness of sins and the ability to do that which pleases you; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

M: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.

P: We lift them up to the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: It is good and right so to do.

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for in the wonder and mystery of his birth you have opened our eyes to the glory of your grace and renewed in our hearts the fervor of your love. Therefore with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:



HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Sanctus | CS



C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san -



na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san -



na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat. This is my ✙ body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it all of you; this is my ✙ blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

P: Amen.

LAMB OF GOD

Agnus Dei | CS



C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;



have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;



grant us your peace. A - - - men.

DISTRIBUTION



At River of Life, we believe that in the Lord's Supper, along with the bread & wine, we miraculously receive the real body & blood of Christ for the full forgiveness of sins. Scripture directs believers in preparation and reception: **"A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself."** (1 Cor. 11:29)

This meal is also an expression of unity with one another: **"Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf."** (1 Cor. 10:17) Therefore we ask that if you are not familiar with our teachings, please speak with Pastor Albrecht before taking the Lord's Supper. Thank you.

Refrain

Take and eat, take and eat, this is my bod - y
 giv-en up for you. Take and drink, take and drink,
 this is my blood giv - en up for you. *Last time*

Verses

1 I am the Word that spoke and light was made;
 2 I am the way that leads the ex - ile home;
 3 I am the Lamb that takes a - way your sin;
 4 I am the cor - ner - stone that God has laid,
 5 I am the Light that came in - to the world;
 6 I am the First and Last, the liv - ing One;

I am the seed that died to be re - born;
 I am the truth that sets the cap - tive free;
 I am the gate that guards you night and day.
 A chos - en stone and pre - cious in his eyes.
 I am the Light that dark - ness can - not hide;
 I am the Lord who died that you might live;

I am the bread that comes from heav'n a - bove;
 I am the life that rais - es up the dead;
 You are my flock: you know the Shep-herd's voice;
 You are God's dwell - ing place; on me you rest
 I am the Morn - ing Star that nev - er sets.
 I am the Bride-groom, this my wed - ding song.

To Refrain

I am the vine that fills your cup with joy.
 I am your peace, true peace my gift to you.
 You are my own: your ran - som is my blood.
 Like liv - ing stones, a tem - ple for God's praise.
 Lift up your face; in you my light will shine.
 You are my bride; come to the mar - riage feast.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

M: We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet that you have given us to eat and to drink in this sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

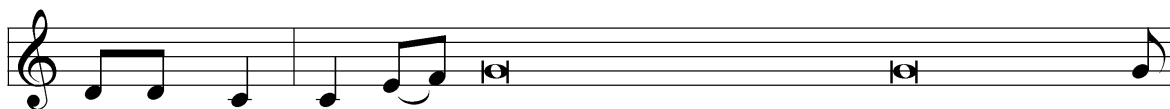
P: Amen.

SONG OF SIMEON

Nunc Dimittis | CS



C: Lord, now you let your servant de - part in peace ac-cord-ing



to your word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have pre-



pared be - fore the face of all people, a light to light - en the



Gen - tles and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

P: Amen.

SONG OF DEPARTURE

Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing | 329



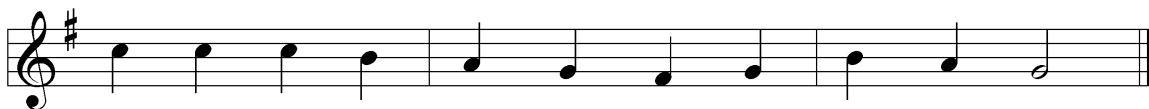
1 Lord, dis - miss us with your bless - ing; Fill our hearts with
2 Thanks we give and ad - o - ra - tion For the gos - pel's
3 So when - e'er the sig - nal's giv - en Us from earth to



joy and peace. Let us each, your love pos - sess - ing,
joy - ful sound; May the fruits of your sal - va - tion
call a - way, Borne on an - gels' wings to heav - en,



Tri - umph in re - deem - ing grace. Oh, re - fresh us,
In our hearts and lives a - bound! Ev - er faith - ful,
Glad the sum - mons to o - bey, May we ev - er,



oh, re - fresh us, Trav - 'ling through this wil - der - ness.
ev - er faith - ful To your truth may we be found.
may we ev - er Reign with Christ in end - less day.



RIVER OF LIFE LUTHERAN | refreshing truth for all people

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US THIS MORNING

We recognize how busy this world and your life can be. Thank you for setting aside a Sunday morning to be with us in God's house. Stick around for a bite to eat and a refreshing drink. One of life's greatest pleasures is meeting new people and growing lasting relationships. We'd love to get to know you better.

INTERESTED IN JOINING RIVER OF LIFE?

Would you like to learn what the Lutheran church believes and teaches? Are you interested in joining our church, or going through a refresher class? We would love to meet with you and study God's Word. If you're interested, speak with Pastor Albrecht.

MEN OF HIS WORD

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20TH (8 AM-4 PM)

Men of His Word is an annual one-day men's conference that helps equip Christian men to embrace God's role for them within their family, congregation, and community. Men, if you'd like to find out more about how to live resiliently, father courageously, or how to tackle difficult social issues, go to menofhisword.org and register today. You'll save \$15 if you register before 2024!

MINISTRY TEAM COMING TO HELP US

JANUARY 1-6

In early January, we have a team of seven (maybe 8) people from Wisconsin looking to help our mission congregation. If you are willing to host/sponsor a lunch for them, talk with Pastor Albrecht.

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

Portions of our service are from Christian Worship, Christian Worship Supplement (NPH Electronic Ed.), and Luther's Catechism (Revised) and are reprinted under One-License.net License #A-723544 and CCLI Copyright License #20992728 & Streaming License #20992735. All Scripture references taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION ® Copyright © 2011 by International Bible Society.

Hymn #45 **Oh, Rejoice, All Christians, Loudly** Text: Christian Keimann, 1607-62; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.

Hymn #352 **Joy Has Dawned** Text: Stuart Townend, b. 1963; Keith Getty, b. 1974 Tune: Stuart Townend, b. 1963; Keith Getty, b. 1974 Text and tune: © 2005 Thankyou Music, admin. CapitolCMGPublishing.com.

Hymn #78 **O Light of Gentile Nations** Text: Johann Franck, 1618-77, abr., adapt.; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.

Hymn #741 **Take and Eat** Text (refrain): Michael Joncas, b. 1951 © 1989 GIA Publications, Inc. Text (verses): James Quinn, S. J., b. 1919 © James Quinn, S. J., Selah Publishing Co., Inc.

Hymn #329 **Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing** Text: John Fawcett, 1740-1817, alt.

RIVER OF LIFE

Certainty & Hope In The Coming Days

- 
- Jan. 6** (8:00 am) The Bible Breakfast Club
- Jan. 7** (9:00 am) Worship (w/ Lord's Supper):
Good News: For the World
- Jan. 7** (10:20 am) Family Bible Study: **Immanuel:
Inspires Sinners to Sing for Joy**
- Jan. 11** (4:30 pm) Church Council Meeting
- Jan. 14** (9:00 am) Worship: **Enduring Joy:
The Joy of Belonging**
- Jan. 14** (10:20 am) Congregational Long-Range Planning
- Jan. 21** (9:00 am) Worship (w/ Lord's Supper):
Enduring Joy: The Joy of Real Reconciliation
- Jan. 21** (10:20 am) Family Bible Study: **Immanuel:
Breaks Bread With Sinners**

CONNECTING WITH RIVER OF LIFE

Videos of recent worship services and audio recordings of weekly sermons are available online. Check out our website or our Facebook page.

AZRiverOfLife.com facebook.com/AzRiverOfLife

refreshing truth for you