

# Riverside Reader

...a Biblically-based, cost-compassionate, small-camp experience

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## Checkmate?

by Elyse Erdahl, Administrative Assistant

I heard a story recently about a painting that once hung in the Louvre. Whether the story is fact or fiction, I can't be sure, but the message it sends is powerful and relevant, nonetheless.

The painting is titled, "Checkmate" and was created by a German artist named Friedrich August Moritz Retzsch in the early 1800s. It depicts a man engaged in a game of chess against the devil. One glance at the picture and you can deduce that the man has been bested. The devil is watching the man carefully with a smug smirk on his face, expectantly waiting for him to admit defeat. The man is studying the chess board, shoulders slumped, resting his forehead on his hand, with a desperate look of resignation on his face.

As the story goes, a tour guide was leading a group through the Louvre when she noticed that a member of the group was missing. He was discovered sometime later standing in front of the painting studying the chessboard. When she inquired what it was about the painting that the man found so interesting, he revealed that he was a world chess champion. He had been around chess boards his whole life, had been playing since a very young age, and admitted that he often saw things that others did not.

After studying the depicted chessboard for a time, he told the tour guide that the Louvre should consider changing the name of the painting. When the tour guide asked him why, he simply replied, "because the King has one move left."

Isn't that just the truth? When we feel defeated, the King, OUR King, Jesus, has one move left. When it feels like we are up against the impossible and all hope seems lost, The King has one move left.

Despite the enemy's relentless attempts to hinder it, the testimony of the life of Jesus still moves hearts toward an eternity spent with Him.

It is the importance of this testimony that provides our theme for 2025, "Testify."

*"And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His son."*

-1 John 5:11

Living in a world with an abundance of information available at our fingertips isn't always the blessing it should be. Half-truths, misconceptions, and twisted scripture can lead to feelings of defeat and a whole lot of confusion. This is just one of the reasons why we must continue to testify to the truth of the Gospel. Namely, that eternal life is available to all and found in Jesus Christ alone.

Most of us find no difficulty sharing about our lives to complete strangers. It's easy to talk about our families, our jobs, the weather. But in typical human fashion, we like to over-complicate the simple things. Talking about Jesus should be just as easy and natural as talking about any other part of our life. Because He is life!

Would you join us in prayer as we prepare to dig into God's truth with our campers this summer? Pray that God would already be at work in the hearts and minds of those who will be with us at Riverside during camp season, that He would prepare them to hear all that He has planned and that He would grow them in their faith. Pray for courage for our campers as they invite friends to join them for a week of Biblical teaching and fellowship. And pray for unity for the staff and volunteers, that we would have a singular mission of providing a place where campers can come to know, grow in, and share Jesus Christ, our King. ■

blessed  
Easter



### Luke 24:5b-6a

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen!"





# Zarephath Update

## Zarephath - Funded!

by Elyse Erdahl, Administrative Assistant

In Exodus 36, Moses and the Israelites were constructing all that the Lord had commanded of them. Skilled craftsman had answered the call to build, weave, smelt, and more, all of the required pieces of the ark, the tabernacle, the priests' clothing, the lampstand etc. In addition to the call for laborers went a request for materials to complete God's commands. The people responded by bringing their freewill offerings each morning to Moses.

One day, the craftsmen came to Moses from all the different projects they were working on and told him to tell the people to stop giving.

Verse 5 - *"The people bring much more than enough for doing the work that the Lord has commanded us to do."*

So Moses commanded the people to stop bringing offerings,

Verse 7 - *"for the material they had was sufficient to do all the work, and more."*

Wow! While reading this account I couldn't help thinking, "What if the church today looked like that?! What if we met every need to excess?" Not one week later, Darrie informed the staff that all the needed funds for Zarephath had been collected, and we would not be seeking more. What a beautiful community Riverside has supporting it, and what a truly great and powerful God we serve! Our deepest and most heartfelt gratitude goes out to all who gave to, served in, and prayed for this building.

Many needs are soon to be met once Zarephath is completed. The upper level will have two apartments for permanent staff as well as an office space for our Programming Team to make use of. The lower level will provide housing for our summer staff and be used by guest groups during the "off season." It will have three bedrooms (each with its own private bathroom), a shared living space, and a full kitchen. It is our hope that this 'home away from home' is a place of comfort and rejuvenation for our seasonal staff on those rare off days during the summer months.

More exciting projects are on the horizon as Riverside seeks to better-serve its growing community. ■



Original Zarephath, destroyed in 2019







## Letter from the Director

Some are blessed - or maybe, in some cases, afflicted - by the tendency to always look a few steps ahead of where they are. My urge to always be looking to and thinking about the future can cause me to forget about "being present." I hear this refrain from my wife often, "honey, you need to be in the present." This reminder usually comes about the time I just wondered off into "Darrie-land." I think she identified and named "Darrie-land" about five minutes after she married me. I imagine others have the same affliction (blessing) I just described.

There is an upside to having this tendency: there is no shortage of ideas for what the future might look like for Riverside. Those ideas, to a vision for the future, give me great optimism for the coming years. Riverside's future is taking shape in dramatic ways as we complete the reconstruction of Zarephath. Plans are taking shape for what Riverside will look like five, ten, and fifty years from now. It is my hope, in whatever time I have remaining as Director, to be a part of reaching new milestones in the history of ministry at Riverside. By our Centennial celebration in 2034, I believe our journey can ultimately take us to a highly functional, year-round Family Life Center that will be the cornerstone of ministry effectiveness in the century to come. It will include a new or upgraded Chapel and Dining Hall that will function on a year-round basis and enable seismic growth in ministry reach and impact.

We are still in the planning stages and are "living in the present" by finishing Zarephath, but the time is fast approaching for a shift to the next phase. As we contemplate and prepare for "Mission 2034," there will be ways for you to be a part of the journey. In the spring and summer there will be several committees formed to enable the next chapter in the life of Riverside. Please stay tuned and maybe you're interested in helping the leadership of Riverside navigate the next steps.

On our journey to the centennial, one committee that I am excited about is a group of individuals that will compose the Historical Preservation Committee that will be identifying, gathering, and compiling the rich history of Riverside. There are many stories to be told about the history of where we have been and how it has led us to where we are today. Someday, parents who were former campers or staff will be able to visit the history wing of the Family Life Center and reminisce about their time at Riverside as their children make their own lifelong friends and life-changing decisions at a Riverside summer camp.

Other committees being formed will be the Capital Improvements Steering Committee, the Spiritual Emphasis/Prayer Committee, the Promotions Committee, and the Financial Provisions Committee.

I hope to be sharing much more with you in the coming months, and I thank you for taking a journey to "Darrie-land" for a few minutes. ■

## Infused with Truth

by Lucero Olson, Program Director

At Infuse this year, we had more than 50 high school students come to Riverside for a weekend full of winter fun, good fellowship, and growth in their faith. God blessed us with incredible winter weather that allowed for plenty of outdoor fun. Saturday was a picture-perfect day with beautifully large snowflakes falling all afternoon as we played broomball together. Many kids also enjoyed sledding down our sledding hill back in the woods, and we were even blessed with a moonlit night that required no flashlights.

Hunter Newton spoke throughout the weekend on the entire

book of 2nd Peter. Hunter broke the book down into four main points: Be certain of your salvation, Be certain of the right Gospel, Be certain that Christ is returning, and Be certain that God won't fail you. It was so encouraging to hear the entire book of 2nd Peter be read aloud throughout the four sessions, and to hear the students engaging with the ideas that were presented in their breakout sessions.

We are confident that every kid that came to Infuse heard the Gospel, and we pray that God would continue to grow their faith and draw them all closer to Himself. ■





## Igniting the Fire

by Molly McGinn, Assistant Program Director

It seems that almost every event or retreat comes with its own challenge—an opportunity for the Lord to grow our trust and dependence on Him. This year's Ignite Winter Retreat was no exception. One week before the event, we checked registration and saw that twelve girls had signed up—not a single boy. Since this retreat usually comes with 50+ registrations, this was quite a surprise! Despite the lower number, we knew this event was important, and we trusted that God would work through it in mighty ways, just as He always does. After considering which adjustments we should make to accommodate fewer campers, we decided to rework our programming.

Tessa and Molly led cozy, devotional-style sessions that created an intimate and inviting atmosphere. They focused on our theme verse, 1 John 5:11, diving into the Gospel, why we should desire to know God's Word, and dedicating a session to group worship. The smaller group also allowed us to tailor activities specifically to the girls. We had so much fun while we decorated Bible bags, went on a photo scavenger hunt, went sledding, and even got every single girl on the ice for a game of broomball!

Several girls shared that they probably wouldn't have stepped out of their comfort zones if boys had been there. Looking back, that was exactly what this retreat needed to be—a space where they could simply be girls, grow in confidence, and connect as sisters in Christ. This weekend was such a special experience and one that our staff will remember fondly for years to come. ■



## ELEVATE

by Lucero Olson, Program Director

Elevate was an awesome time for a group of over 20 young adults to come and enjoy Riverside in the winter! We didn't get to enjoy all the winter activities - like broomball - but lots of deep personal and spiritual conversations were had, many board and card games were played, and many friendships were started or renewed over this short weekend retreat. It's always a wonder to see how God can use such a short time to create a very meaningful temporary community.

Our speaker, Jed Haas, spoke on our theme of "Testify," as we went through portions of 1st John. We were all reminded of the ever-important work that Jesus accomplished in His time as a man on Earth, and that that is the testimony we should always be proclaiming as it says in 1st John 1:3-4, "...that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have

fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete."

We were also joined by Kurt Olson (of Go Multiply) for our afternoon Bible Study sessions. Kurt shared many testimonies of people in foreign countries being brought to the Lord through the work of missionaries sent to them. He shared stories of how God equips people to disciple one another and spread the Gospel not just through one pastor or missionary, but through many disciples who are constantly multiplying.

There were many more spiritual and theological ideas spoken about, of which there was much good discussion, but it was clear that what we must focus on, and can always know and depend on, is the Gospel - which is the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus our Savior who saves us from our sins. ■





## Sustaining Riverside Financial Report Fiscal Year: May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025

	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Budget</u>
General Fund Income:	\$ 215,332	\$ 175,000
General Fund Expense:	\$ 221,512	\$ 175,000
Current Surplus/(Deficit): <small>as of March 2025</small>	(\$6,180)	



*"Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain! Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways."  
-Psalm 119:36-37*

## RIVERSIDE ON THE ROAD - ESCANABA

On March 8th, RBC Connections took a trip to the UP and shared a meal with local Riverside "formers" at the historic House of Ludington in Escanaba, MI. These events are so special because we get to connect with those who don't often make it to the Riverside campus anymore. While they may be far away geographically, Riverside is close to their hearts. These trips give us the opportunity to share with them, in person, all that God is doing at Riverside.

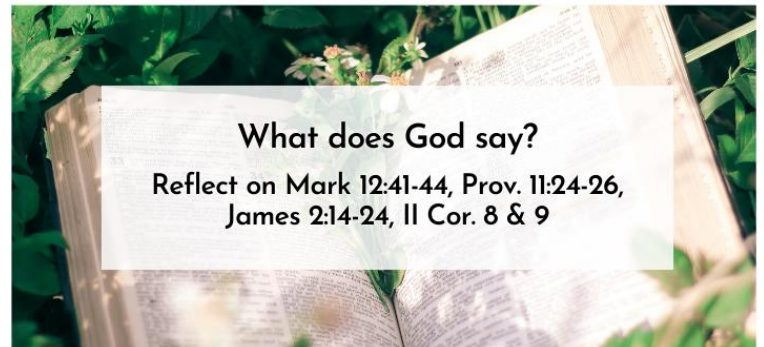


**Upcoming RBC Connections Events – Details coming soon!**  
May 3rd – Highland Church in Wausau, WI  
May 17th – Tipton, IN (location TBD)  
June – Sparta, WI (date & location TBD)

## Reap What you Sow

by Mickey Kaufman, Director of Stewardship Ministries

A key text on stewardship is II Cor. 8 and 9. At the end of the text, there are two harvest principles that are applied to Biblical giving. One is that we reap what we sow. What is this harvest that we reap? When we sow God's seed, "...in all things" (not only in material things), we will have all we need and also we will "have an abundance for every good work." The second principle is that we have enough to eat ("bread") and also enough for further sowing ("seed for the sower"). Sowing the seed that God supplies allows us to meet the "needs of the saints" and to bring thanksgiving to God. Let's use all that God has given us to reap harvests of good works that will glorify God and further His Kingdom here on earth. That's what it is all about! "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift." ■



### What does God say?

Reflect on Mark 12:41-44, Prov. 11:24-26,  
James 2:14-24, II Cor. 8 & 9

## Scholarship Fund

Last year, 15 students were able to attend summer camps at Riverside because of the faithful donors who contributed to the Scholarship Fund. At Riverside, our desire is to never turn away a child due to financial limitations. The Scholarship Fund makes this possible. If you'd like to give a gift to the Scholarship Fund this year, please designate it in the memo line.

**Praise the Lord! Funds were generously donated this spring for the purchase of a six-seat UTV for our Programming team to use throughout the year. This piece of equipment is such a blessing to Riverside, THANK YOU!**



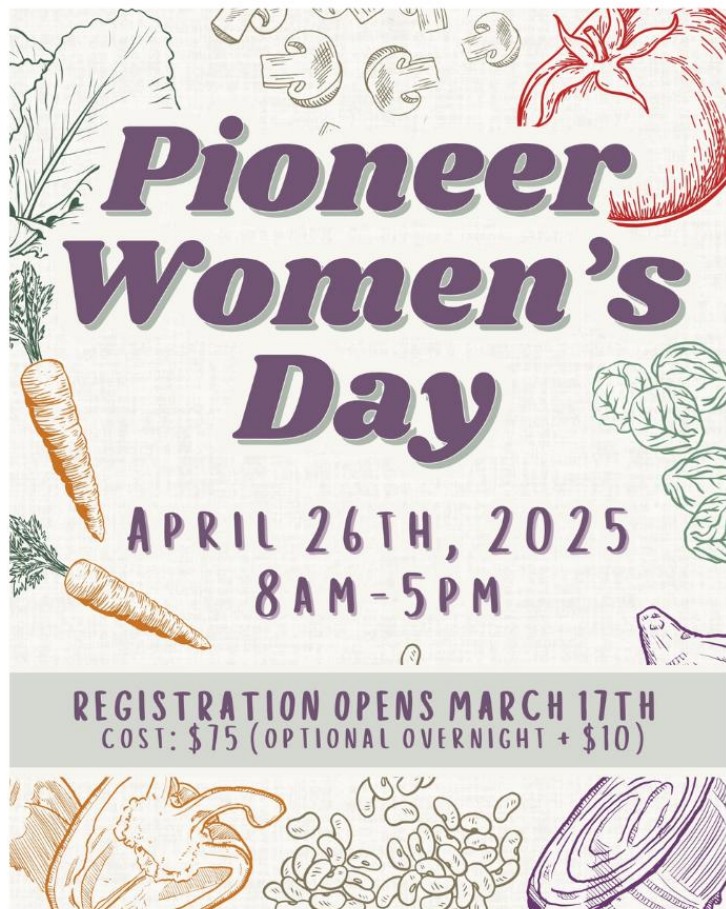
## WONDERING HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT RIVERSIDE? THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO GET INVOLVED!



- "Donate" Tab on our Website
- Use the MyWell Giving App
- Text "riverside" to 40101
- List Riverside in Your Will or Estate Planning
- Mail a Check
- Volunteer
- Join our Prayer Team
- Give Equipment or Property (Gift-in-Kind)



## Upcoming Events



# Pioneer Women's Day

APRIL 26TH, 2025  
8AM-5PM

REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 17TH  
COST: \$75 (OPTIONAL OVERNIGHT + \$10)



RIVERSIDE BIBLE CAMP'S

# SPRING WORK DAY

MAY 10TH, 2025 | 9AM-4PM



PROJECT CREW

OPERATIONS

MAY 2ND - 4TH | AGES 14-18

# RSI TRAINING CAMP

Looking for a way to serve God this summer? Come learn about the different areas where you can serve at Riverside, while growing in your faith!

FARM CREW

CO-CABIN LEADING

## Spring Open House & Pancake Breakfast

May 24th, 2025 8am-11am



RIVERSIDE BIBLE CAMP



## TOP 10 most-wanted

In-kind donations are a wonderful blessing to Riverside's ministry. Please let us know if you would like to donate an item listed below or if you would like to provide the funds needed to purchase it.



- Wooden Bench Swings (4)\*
- Gently Used Tennis Balls
- iPad (Camp Store & Registration)
- Funds for Rocking Chairs \*\*
- 9-12ft Artificial Christmas Tree
- Funds for River Tubes
- 6ft Plastic Tables (Folding Legs)
- Refrigerators
- Funds for Van Roof Rack
- PTO Generator

\*One bench donated, more still needed

\*\*\$200 donated, \$200 still needed



Looking for more information about one of our events?  
Visit [riversidebiblecamp.org/programs](http://riversidebiblecamp.org/programs)

## 2025 Schedule

### April

- 11-12 Association Mtg
- 15 Marriage Café
- 26 Pioneer Women's Day

### May

- 2-4 RSI Training Weekend
- 10 Work Day
- 24 Spring Open House

### June

- 9-13 VBS Day Camp
- 13 Family Fun Night
- 17-19 Adventure Camp

### July

- 6-11 Junior High Camp
- 13-18 Junior Camp
- 22-27 TREK (Teen)

### August

- 4-10 Homecoming Camp
- 8-12 TREK (Young Adult)
- 15-17 Summer Family Camp





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Permit #3

"The camp was named 'Riverside,'  
God's presence does still there abide.  
Special things have happened there  
in answer to a lot of prayer.  
Children came to learn, sing, and play.  
They also learn that they can pray.  
The Bible tells them of Jesus' love,  
how He came from Heaven above  
to give His life for everyone.

Riverside is dear to many a heart  
to everyone who has had a part  
in serving the Lord the best he can  
to carry out God's great plan.  
So much yet to do - pray, work, and give  
that still others may eternally live.  
Oh yes, here there's many a goodbye  
and occasionally a permanent tie.  
But God has blessed right from the start  
Riverside is special to all our hearts."

*excerpt from Thoughts About Riverside, a poem written by  
Bobbie Phillips, year unknown*



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