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**September/
 October Upper
 Room Devotionals
 are available
 outside the
 keypad door.**



“Let’s Go BE the CHURCH”

These are words I often speak at the end of a worship service, whether we are worshipping online from our living rooms or in person from the side lawn of the church. They are part of the benediction—the concluding words of the central of act of God’s people—that of worship. The word benediction comes from the Latin words “bene” meaning well and “dicere” meaning to speak well. The benediction conveys the “good word” of God’s blessing as we transition from worship into the details of our day. In this way, the benediction is not the “see you later” ending of worship. It is the bridge—it bridges the end of a worship service and transitions us into the week of worship to come. The benediction reminds us that while we need worship to refuel and realign us, the vital work of God is done all week long through people willing to follow, serve, and witness.

This is why benedictions—good words spoken to propel and motivate God’s people—are found all throughout scripture. Numbers 6:23-27 conveys a Jewish benediction blessing or *berakhah* when God told the priests how to bless the Israelite people with these words: “May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.” In the New Testament, we learn from the letters of the early church that the good words of benedictions were sprinkled generously within Christian communities all throughout the first century regions. One example is the words of 2 Thessalonians 3:5 that say: “May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.” The benediction reminded the congregation to hold God-sized expectations of what God could do in the coming days.

And we know that the benediction invitation holds a particular urgency during this time in our region. Because we know that people are hearing many many words these days—from social media posts to the constant news cycles, we are bombarded with numerous inputs to consider and many that give us pause or concern us. This is where the benediction—the bridging words of God from worship time to worship work—is a vital call. Because God is counting on us as the church, the people of God, to be about speaking and living the “good word” of the gospel in the places and spaces where we inhabit. We are to take the hope of the risen Christ and the gospel guidance that we experience from the prayer and proclamation of worship into our workplaces, family dynamics, and civic engagement. The church has something to say now more than ever. Will we be willing to communicate a word of mercy into an increasingly partisan reality? Will we be willing to hold fast to Christ like selflessness even when we want to retaliate? Will we be willing to love one another in such a way that the world might know who it is we follow? In other words, will we go, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to be the church?

Benediction Bridges and Everlasting Hope,
 Pastor Darcey

Worship: New Normal:

Following Jesus to live differently, love deeply, and serve humbly

We have all experienced a number of new normals in the last several months. From week to week, and even day to day, we have had to lean into adaptability and ask God to build a sense of resiliency within us. Within the life of faith, we remember that following Jesus has always called us into "new normals" or ways of being in the world that ask us to live differently, love deeply, and serve God humbly. This seven week sermon series will focus on these invitations in Jesus' ministry from the gospel of Mark. What "new normals" of mercy, holiness, and commitment might Jesus be asking you to believe in and act from in your life right now?

Join us online for worship at 10am on
Sundays.

<http://riverroadumc.org/sermons/>



October Birthdays

October 3

Carrie Pecht

October 5

Sharon McCoy

October 6

James Gilmore

October 8

Lynda Weston

October 9

Marcia Diamond

October 10

Lila Smith

October 12

Bob Hardiman
Daniel Markey

October 13

Emily Kleinholz
Lara Malbon
Mike Reaves

October 14

Elvie Hardy

October 15

Kane Alexander
David Harless
Paul Mershon

October 17

Chip Cunningham
Cleo Edsall
Doris Hardiman
Dave Johnson

October 18

Jackie Stansbury

October 20

Chuck Hulcher
Darcey Johnson

October 23

Charlotte Allred
Doug Jolley
Randy Reaves
Mary Katherine Vaughan
Jesse Wingate

October 25

Blandine Noel

October 26

Maria Francisco

October 27

Jon Francisco
John McLarin

October 28

Gurleen Ferguson
Robert Lewis

October 29

Laurel Marks
Rachel Payne

October 30

Alice Jesudian
Sam McCracken





SUNDAY MORNING 9:30



- (Room 211) Good News
- (Room 202) Contemporary Christian
- (Room 106) Preschool (3 years & fully potty trained until they start kindergarten)
- (Room 109) Early Elementary (K-2nd grade)
- (Room 105) Older Elementary (3rd-5th grade)

We have two offerings for adults on Sunday morning:

Contemporary Christian

Grow in wisdom and love as we engage in a variety of studies, have in-depth conversations about Scripture and the world around us, and support each other in discipleship and in life.

Leader: Randy Reaves

Location/Time: Zoom/11:00am

Good News

The Good News class practices in-depth Bible study to help us take in the full depth and breadth of Scripture in community with fellow disciples.

Leader: Dr. Jim Davia

Location/Time: not meeting at this time

Over 20 years ago I read an essay on the back page of the magazine “Christianity Today” that has stuck with me. The author wrote of a conversation he had with a citizen of Egypt. Given that this person lived at the crossroads of Christianity (Egypt was a cradle for the early church) and Islam, he felt it his duty to understand both religions so he could understand his fellow Egyptians. He commented, “When I read the Quran I receive no guidance on how to live as a minority—it is assumed all my neighbors are Muslim. When I read the New Testament I receive no guidance on how to live as a member of the majority - it is assumed most of my neighbors are not Christians.”

This thought has been running through my head in these contentious times. What does it mean for me to not only be a citizen, but a disciple of Jesus in these days? What unique contributions do I make to the people around me, to the world, because I am a follower of Christ? In my own life of faith I’ve felt compelled to dive deep into Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters 5-7, which is his teaching on how we live as disciples in the face of anger, anxiety, the desire for recognition, and conflict. How do we follow Jesus in these challenging times in a way that allows our light to shine, leading people to see the goodness of God? I’ve started a Zoom study on the Sermon on the Mount—contact me if you are interested (ed@riverroadumc.org)—and I’ve also started a blog you can use to guide your own reading:

<https://riverroadumc.org/category/sermon-on-the-mount-blog/>

It is easy for us to become angry and partisan in these polarizing times. My hope is that we can live out our unique faith that speaks to all in a way that politics does not, and that we can be a source of hope and healing in these divisive times.

In Christ’s Service,

Ed

Zoom Offerings

- Sundays: 10:45 am Preschool Sunday School
- 11:00 am Contemporary Christian Sunday School Class
- 11:15 am K - 2nd grade Sunday School
- 11:45 am 3rd - 5th grade Sunday School

Wednesdays: 11:00 am Zoom in for Prayer

Thursdays: 11:00 am Prayer & Praise Service

WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED!



OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

The youth at River Road have been doing some great things this month! We have gathered for outdoor, socially-distanced events and are continuing to find new ways to connect our youth! As we have heard before, the church doors may be closed, but God's ministry remains open! Please read below how you can connect with us!



RIVER ROAD YOUTH ONLINE

Here are some ways we are staying connected through this time!

Instagram - Follow Us @riverroadyouthmc

Weekly Inspiration: We will be posting frequently on social media with latest updates on blog posts, devotionals and even some fun videos!

FALL SCHEDULE

Youth Fall Schedule: This Fall, as the situation surrounding COVID-19 is constantly changing, we are scheduling events on church grounds that will be hosted outdoors while following all safety guidelines. For the month of October, we will be meeting Sunday nights from 5-6pm outdoors and socially-distanced. If you have any questions regarding our Fall schedule, please contact me using the information below.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Jake Joseph

Email: youth@riverroadumc.org

Phone: (804) 396-9255

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

 @riverroadyouthmc

 River Road United Methodist Church



Our Zoom calls for Sunday School are now on Sunday Mornings! Join us after worship for a discipleship time specifically for preschool-5th grade. Preschool meets at 10:45 AM, K-2 at 11:15 AM, and 3rd-5th at 11:45 AM. There will be a Zoom link in every Sunday morning RRK's correspondence.

In Toddler & Preschool This Month: People of all ages experience circumstances that leave us looking for someone who can help—someone who's got our back and can help carry the load. This month, we want to begin teaching preschoolers that God is the best Someone for the job. No matter what our situation or how uncertain our circumstances may be, we can know that God is with us wherever we go, and God's got it. This kind of trust in God is what allows us to Sing in the Rain.

There's always a chance of rain in our lives or in the lives of our preschoolers. Many of us have already come through some pretty big rainstorms. Some of us are in them right now. That is why it is our sincere prayer that during this month we and our preschoolers will begin to trust that God's got it. This kind of trust in God is what will give you and me and our preschoolers the power to sing in the rain—no matter what that rain might be.

Our Memory Verse This Month: "GOD IS WITH YOU WHEREVER YOU GO."- JOSHUA 1:9, NLT

In Elementary This Month: This month we're focused on how since the very beginning, not only has God been true to His word but He's been faithful in His character. Because we know that God is good, we can live life with integrity. When Jesus lived on earth, He lived a perfect life that we are unable to live. Through His Spirit, we can become people of integrity. Who we are in private should match who we are in public. When we trust in God, we can be truthful in whatever we say and do.

Our Memory Verse This Month: "ANYONE WHO LIVES WITHOUT BLAME WALKS SAFELY. BUT ANYONE WHO TAKES A CROOKED PATH WILL GET CAUGHT."- PROVERBS 10:9, NIRV

CREATION CARE

Things to be thankful for, to be concerned about, or to DO!

First, a few things to be thankful for: 1) "Led by a new chief executive, BP, one of the world's largest oil and gas companies, is trying to reinvent itself as an energy company in the age of climate change....shrinking its oil and gas business, revving up offshore wind power and developing solar and battery storage...It is even considering installing electric car charging kiosks at its gas stations, part of a drive to eliminate or offset its carbon emissions to a net-zero level by 2050" (RTD, 9/20, p. D4); 2) the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, an \$8 billion, 604-mile project, launched by Dominion Energy, "that would have cut a swath through the Allegheny Highlands, the Shenandoah Valley, the Blue Ridge and central Piedmont on its way to the southeastern coast...is dead, thwarted by homegrown community organizing and a legal strategy that took root in the June 2014 meeting at Francisco Farms" (RTD, 7/27, p. A1); 3) "U.S. fuel makers see economic opportunity in getting greener....The coronavirus pandemic has crushed demand for fuels such as gasoline and jet fuel, and many expect global oil consumption to remain depressed for years. But appetite for so-called renewable fuel is poised to grow because of government regulations in places such as California that are designed to reduce gas emissions" (WSJ, 8/13, p. B4); 4) "A Fixture of Construction Gets a Lot Greener... Concrete, it turns out, has a serious pollution problem..." (Continued on page 7)

FRANCES ALLEN/ALICE WEED CIRCLE:

We have missed being able to be with you and to meet together at the monthly FA/AW Circle meetings. Starting on October 13, we will have monthly Zoom meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM. Information for joining the meeting is below. We hope to see you then! An email will be sent out with information for accessing the zoom meeting.



WOMEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST:

October 8th Virtual Women's Prayer Breakfast: Please mark your calendars now and join other ladies from River Road for breakfast on the second Thursday in October. We have found that meeting virtually on Zoom (or by Conference Call) has helped us stay in touch and foster relationships. We share what's going on in our lives, prayer concerns, and even helpful ideas for meeting some of the challenges we're all facing. It's an uplifting and enjoyable way to start your day! Fix your own favorite bowl of cereal or muffin and pour yourself a cup of coffee. Then settle in on your phone or computer for a chat via Zoom!

This group is open to everyone! You will receive a church wide email a few days beforehand with the Zoom ID number and Password/Conference Call phone number to make it easy to connect. Hope to see you there!

BOOK CLUB:

Book Club continues to meet via Zoom at the same time - 7PM on the fourth Monday of the month. Zoom information will be forwarded to everyone on the Book Club current list a few days before the meeting. If you wish to be included, please phone Ann York, 907-748-0446.

On October 26 we will discuss a new novel, Mexican Gothic by Silvia Moreno-Garcia. Sounds interesting right before Halloween.

Keep reading everyone and the Club is always open to new members and book suggestions to read.
Ann York

YARD SALE 2020:

The UMW Yard Sale that never was is over. UMW wants to thank everyone who brought things early. We were able to give to Ginter Park UMC clothes closet (thank you A.C. and Judie), Salvation Army (thank you John Cather, friend, and son), and Habitat for Humanity (thank you Adam Kemp and family). We thank all of those mentioned for providing transportation to these organizations. We thank Will Fisher for his technical advice as well. Hopefully, our Yard Sale will be in person next year! With Gratitude, River Road UMC, UMW Board

I Support the Girls:

I Support the Girls collects and distributes essential items, including bras and menstrual hygiene products allowing women experiencing homelessness, impoverishment, or distress to stand tall with dignity.



During September-October the River Road United Methodist Women will have a drive at RRUMC for "the Girls." A donation box will be on the side porch.

Specific items to donate:

- Bras & underwear (new or gently used and clean) of all sizes (large also needed)
- Individually sealed sanitary napkins (overnight maxi pads with wings most needed)
- Individually sealed tampons
- Financial donation

For more information about the organization, their website is: <https://isupportthegirls.org/>

The Missions Committee is grateful for your generosity in donating to the food pantries and to CARITAS. The need continues to be great. Ginter Park is now regularly serving more than 100 families each week and Welborne recently served more than 70 families. Please continue to drop off food in the bin designated for that purpose by the keypad door. There is always a need for canned meats, soups and vegetables, peanut butter, rice and cereal. Diapers, toilet paper, paper and plastic bags are also in need. We will update you as to other needs using Slack, email and our wonderful new church app. Tony and Jean Barnette continue to deliver your donations to the food pantries each week.

In addition to food donations, both pantries could use a few more volunteers to work. Please reach out if you are interested in serving in this way.

Ginter Park is having a **Clothes Give Away** in their parking lot on October 10th from 9am - 12noon. Volunteers are needed! Social distancing and masks are required. You can work 9am - 12noon or take a 1 hour shift. Arrive at 8:45am for set-up. Help is needed to clean up at the end as well. Contact Judie Little at jwl2243@hotmail.com or (804)690-0976 for more information.

We are also still collecting toiletries and underwear for CARITAS. Thank you for continuing to support this long-time partner of our congregation in new ways.

This month we delivered grocery gift cards to Side by Side as we are unable to provide meals to them for their youth support groups due to Covid limitations. Thanks to Karen Carter for her work with this mission.

The pandemic has limited our opportunities to serve in person but has created even more needs in our community. We are grateful for the many blessings God has provided us, enabling us to share with the least of these. For more information about missions or volunteer opportunities, contact Ann Hodges, ahodges@richmond.edu or 804-339-9440.

CREATION CARE - continued

responsible for about 8 percent of global carbon emissions...Central Concrete, in San Jose California....part of U.S. Concrete, a manufacturer based in Texas is making progress....Low-emission concrete makes up 70 percent of the material the company produces" (NYT, 8/12, p. B7); 5) "U.S. utilities are increasingly exploring the use of what is called green hydrogen made from wind and solar energy to reduce emissions" (WSJ, 9/8, p. B1); and 6) "In a sign of how much corporate attitudes have changed, the Business Roundtable, one of the country's most prominent business groups, is throwing its support behind broad-based measures to slash greenhouse gas" (WSJ, 9/17, p. A2).

Things to be concerned about: 1) "Methane levels in the atmosphere are at an all-time high....Agriculture, landfill waste and fossil fuel were the main reasons...Although there is far less methane than carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, methane can trap 30 times as much heat" (Science News, 8/15, p. 8); 2) "The world is failing to address a catastrophic biodiversity collapse that not only threatens to wipe out beloved species and invaluable genetic diversity, but endangers humanity's food supply, health and security, according to a sweeping United Nations report" (NYT, 9/16, p. A10); 3) "Some parts of the country have been burning this month while others were underwater in extreme weather disasters...Climate change is magnifying both extremes....'I don't know where you can go to outrun climate change anymore' said North Carolina State climatologist Kathie Dello. 'I'm thinking Vermont'" (RTD, 9/20, p. B1); and 4) (here in Virginia) "The EPA has failed to ensure that Pennsylvania and New York are doing enough to reduce pollution that flows...into the Chesapeake Bay, according to a lawsuit filed..by the nonprofit Chesapeake Bay Foundation" (RTD, 9/13, p. A6).

Things we can do include: 1) Speaking up!; 2) With the elections coming up, make your (*Creation Care*) voice heard at the ballot box; 3) Support the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and a host of other non-partisan nonprofits working *daily* to create a more sustainable world (e.g. The Nature Conservancy; Greenpeace; EDF; Ducks Unlimited; Sierra Club; Audobon Society; WWF, etc.); and 4) Buy a little BP gas...Amen....Respectfully submitted, Michael j Wriston, Chair, Earth Advocacy Committee, RRUMC



RIVER ROAD
UNITED METHODIST
LOVING PEOPLE TO LIFE

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Phone: 804-740-7061
Fax: 804-740-3367
Preschool: 754-0227

October 2020

Articles for the
November 2020
Connections are due
October 20, 2020.



We're on the web at
www.riverroadumc.org

WORSHIP PLAN for OCTOBER

As you know, church leadership seeks to offer both an online and in-person worship format.

For the month of October, the in-person worship format will be a **Drive in Worship Service at 9am** where you can either remain in your car OR there will be a designated area where you can set up your lawn chair and worship outside. We will provide more details in email or mail communication and an email sign-up will be forthcoming! You can also call the church office at 740-7061 to sign up for worship during the month of October.

Open Arms Christian Preschool



We've had a GREAT start to our school year at Open Arms Christian Preschool! With a lot of strategic planning and great support we have been able to successfully accomplish social distancing, small groups/classes, teachers remaining with their classes and individual learning materials for the children! In September we were able to implement and put into action all the hard planning and the children (and families) have LOVED it! We thank everyone for their support as we continue to offer this ministry to the children (55) and families that are with us this school year! Our classrooms are currently full for the school year, but we are taking children on our interest and waitlist for future availability. If you have family or friends that may be interested in having their children in our program please have them reach out to Nora Hamlet, 804-754-0227 openarms@riverroadumc.org for more information.



*Helping children grow with open hearts,
open minds and open arms.*