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



OverFlow

2021

*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
 you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. ~ Psalm 23:5*

*Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together,
 overflowing, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get
 back. ~ Luke 6:38*

Turns out there are over fifty instances where scripture (depending upon the translation you choose) uses the word OVERFLOW. And these usages generally fall into two categories. First, scripture uses overflow to describe God's action towards humanity and all of creation. We hear this in Psalm 23:5 where the psalmist recognizes God's provision and purpose even when faced with opposition and struggle—aka the presence of "enemies." Thanking God for an overflowing cup becomes even more powerful when you consider that he is seated at the same table with adversity.

Secondly, overflow is also God's expectation of how we respond to God's gracious action towards us. You hear this in Luke 6:38—where Jesus teaches that if you make generosity your modus operandi, you will come to know and receive God's generosity in greater measure in your life. Jesus' words imply that you cannot recognize what you do not know; you cannot give that which you do not have. If we make giving an integral part of the time, resources, aptitudes, and skills that God has entrusted to us, we will see that they are all micro-reflections of God's great generosity. We will see God's generosity more frequently in our lives as we ourselves practice being generous!

This month, we will begin our stewardship season where we consider how God is asking us to financially support the mission and ministry of the church. Our theme? You guessed it! OVERFLOW! We first want to give thanks for God's gracious action towards us—even in the presence of challenging times and adversity that has stretched and tried us. Though we have sat at the table with a pandemic over the last 18 months, we want to thank God that we have GROWN in adaptability and ways that we are reaching out to others. Last month as we moved to a new worship schedule and moved to livestreaming the worship services, I met several newcomers who shared with me that they have been worshipping online with us throughout the pandemic but this was their first time coming to the physical building or the first time calling the church to see how they could serve. We are scattering kingdom seeds with intention and prayer through these new ways of outreach.

Secondly, we are grateful for the ways God has enabled us to overflow in missions and service over this last year. Whether it was an Easter Missions offering that saw the highest level in almost a decade to increasing our food pantry commitments to partnering with the Eva Huston Pantry and sending Christmas gifts to children in Liberia, we want to be faithful and pass along the overflow. After all, this is what God has done for us in Jesus Christ and this is what we are called to do as the church! More details are coming your way, but thanks for considering now how God is calling you to partner with your church in giving. We have hopeful and overflowing times ahead because of the God we serve!

In the Overflow of God,
 Pastor Darcey

WORSHIP SERIES:

GOD SPEAKS

- October 3** God Speaks Through People
- October 10** God Speaks Through Prompting
- October 17** God Speaks Through Pain

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 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



9:00am Sunday mornings - The Contemporary Christian class will start a new book study on Sunday October 3 - *Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven*, by Amy-Jill Levine, Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt University. As you might surmise from her name Levine is Jewish, but her story is one that intertwines and intersects with Christianity. The following interview gives you some flavor about her: <https://uscatholic.org/articles/201209/a-jewish-take-on-jesus-amy-jill-levine-talks-the-gospels/>

The book is available for \$14.39+tax at Amazon and is a prime delivery option. https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1501899899/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_ooo_soo?ie=UTF8&psc=1. Also available as Kindle book for \$9.99. Contact Randy Reaves (randalreaves@verizon.net) to get a book from his porch, get the Zoom link, if have any questions. They are contemplating whether they will be offering an in-person option in addition to Zoom in the near future.

10:00am Sunday mornings - Rev. Drew Johnson is offering a class meeting in person (we had 9 people the first week - it's not too late to join this group!) You may also attend this class via Zoom if you prefer. The study is based on a book entitled [The Language of God: A scientist presents evidence for belief by Frances Collins](#).

Here is the [link for Zoom](#) if that is your preferred way to meet. When asked for Meeting ID and password:

Meeting ID: 813 8606 8022

Passcode: 308881

Sunday evenings 5:30 - 7:00 a class meets via Zoom for a video/book study based on season 1 of the popular streaming series "The Chosen". During the zoom call you will be watching one episode of the program followed by discussion. There is a study guide that has a chapter keyed to each episode. The study guide does a nice job of showing how the context of Old Testament story threads intertwine with the New Testament in intricate and profound ways. The reading load is light, but offers thought provoking discussion questions. There are also references to other biblical passages for those of us that want to dig in just a little deeper on our own.

The class will run from September 19 to November 21, allowing a week off on Halloween. If you want to jump in on this class contact Bob Wilson (bobw23229@gmail.com) or Barb Abu-Jaber (babujaber@gmail.com) for the Zoom link and password, and info on getting a book.

Things going on in Congregational Life

If you have a college student and haven't yet sent their address to the church office, please do so!! The Congregational Life Committee sends out small gifts of remembrance to them several times a year. The first gift was just mailed out, but it's not too late to have the church let them know they are in our thoughts and prayers in the months to come. Please send your student's name and mailing address to both Eva Booth (eva@riverroadumc.org) and Jill Blouch (jillblouch@gmail.com)

Ways to engage at River Road UMC

We are always on the look-out for people ready to engage in active ministry at River Road. With the recent return to two services on Sunday mornings, we have a need for helpers. The Lord gave each of us gifts and talents to SHARE with others. If you feel led to help in any of these areas, please contact Desda White for more information (desda@riverroadumc.org). You decide how often you'd like to offer your talents.

- Tech help on Sunday mornings during Sunday School and worship hours
- Nursery worker for Sunday mornings
- Children's Church (meeting during worship services on the playground until further notice)
- Youth ministry helper on Sunday evenings
- Choir members - both for Contemporary and Traditional services
- Greeters, ushers, and liturgy readers for worship services
- Care ministry—sending cards, prayers, meals, and now flamingos to those in need!

Please be in prayer as we are actively searching for our new youth minister.

We will be offering Youth Sunday School at the 10:00am Discipleship hour in the Youth Basement.



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

We wanted to let you all know that Congregational Life is still going strong and maybe more so during our pandemic months! Please take a look at our ministries listed with a brief description of each and if you feel led to participate, contact Donna Johnson, Marge Stewart, or Sandy Jolley. We can plug you in! Blessings as you walk in your faith. Sandy Jolley

Prayer Ministry

Holds a 10 AM Thursday morning prayer and praise service in the chapel.

Responds to prayer requests by praying for individuals, making visits, sending cards and meals.

Bereavement Ministry

Provides food and/or reception for families experiencing loss as directed by pastor.

Meals Ministry

“Take a Meal”—an online sign up for members to prepare and take a meal to someone in need.

Sunshine Ministry

Includes sending out cards year round to shut-ins for birthdays and holidays, as well as making calls and visits.

Flower Ministry

Provides floral arrangements from Sunday flowers to give to anyone who could use a colorful reminder of God’s love.

Prayer Card Ministry

Provides handmade cards available for anyone to send to someone in need of a prayer, hug, or reminder that they are loved.

College Ministry

Sends handmade cards and care packages to our college students encouraging them in their faith.

New Life Ministry

Gives a basket to new babies in the church along with a handmade white baptism blanket. Also follow up to encourage the entire family to be a part of the church and to assist with any needs they may have.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Provides handmade shawls for church members to give out anytime to friends, family, or neighbors near and far who need to be wrapped in God’s love. They are available in the cabinet in the Fellowship Hall.

Blood Drive Ministry

Offers church members the opportunity to love people to life by donating blood.

Community Life Ministry

Hosts graduation receptions to honor graduates and parents of high school, college and advanced degree students on Graduation Sunday.

Honors confirmands with a reception/luncheon and affirms the church family’s commitment to encourage them in their faith walk.

Provides a wedding coordinator to help make wedding preparations and to be at the church the day of the wedding to assist as needed.

Senior Ministry

Helps us to stay in touch through improved communications with senior gatherings, which may include guest speakers and field trips.

Provides a team of volunteers to make visits to church seniors at their request.

Visitation Ministry

Provides a team of volunteers to make visits to church members at their homes, rehab centers, or hospitals.

Church Wide Special Events Ministry

Provides opportunities to build relationships with each other as a church family, such as our “It’s Your Birthday” celebration.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Join us Sunday mornings for outdoor Children's Church! Parents, you have the option to worship as a family or children may join us for Children's Church outdoors at 9:00am and 11:00am (mask encouraged).

For each hour of our Sunday Morning worship (9am, 10am and 11am) we will have a short lesson in our courtyard socially distanced including coloring pages or a craft. After our lesson we head to the playground where you can pick up your children after service or your Sunday School class.

We continue to monitor shifts and changes during these times and encourage you to reach out with any questions or concerns you have!

Discipleship For October:

For the next 9 weeks we'll be studying the "Fruit of the Spirit". "These traits are called the 'fruit of the spirit' because just as fruit grows from a healthy tree that is planted in good soil and watered regularly, these nine character traits grow in our hearts when we stay connected to Jesus and let His Spirit guide our lives."

Week 1- Love 1 John 4:19

Week 2- Joy Psalm 16:11

Week 3- Peace John 14:27

Week 4- Patience Ephesians 4:2

Week 5- Kindness 2 Corinthians 6:6

Week 6- Goodness Philippians 4:8

Week 7- Faithfulness 1 Samuel 12:24

Week 8- Gentleness Philippians 4:5

Week 9- Self Control 2 Timothy 1:7



CREATION CARE

Things to be thankful for, to be concerned about or to do. First, things to be thankful for: 1) "World leaders advocate for climate action. . . . (RTD, 9/18/21, p. A11); 2) "Carbon County [Wyoming] is soon to be home to one of the biggest wind farms in the nation . . . creating jobs and much needed tax revenues" (NYT, 3/4/21, p. A18); 3) "Under pressure to reach net-zero emissions by 2050, airlines are experimenting with so-called sustainable aviation fuels, or SAF" (WSJ, 2/12/21, p. R9); 4) "A large-scale ecodistrict designed to be a sustainable commercial, entertainment and residential community that reduces the surrounding ecological footprint soon could be taking root in Henrico County. The proposed GreenCity development" (RTD, Metro Business, 8/30/21, p. D6); and 5) "Some buried wetlands can be brought back from the dead with a few hours work With chain saws, an excavator and plenty of sweat, it took just a few hours to resurrect one dying pond" (RTD, 11/6/19, p. B6).

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FRANCES ALLEN/ALICE WEED CIRCLE:

You are invited to the Francis Allen/Alice Weed Circle meeting on October 12th at 10:00 AM in the Activity Room. We have been busy during the pandemic. Below is a list of some of the things that we have been doing. Come join us for fun and fellowship while continuing to help women and children in need.

BOOK CLUB

October will be The Fault in Our Stars by John Green.

Our November book is Silent Patient by Alex Michaelides.

The meetings will be the fourth Monday of each month, Sept. 27 and October 25. We will meet at my house, 7PM. If anyone is interested, contact Ann York, annYorkak@gmail.com and you will be put on the mailing list. I will sent out notifications of the meetings to everyone on my list.

UMW at River Road UMC Accomplishments during the pandemic:

Circle in 2020:

- Made 40 Valentine goodie bags for UMFS in January.
- Held an Information Session on Human Trafficking in February.
- Visited Hermitage and provided a birthday party for March birthdays just before the pandemic started.
- Since the church closed for the COVID-19 pandemic in mid-March meetings were cancelled until the fall. They continued on Zoom in October.
- Sent out an info packet to Circle members to regroup with members we hadn't seen due to the pandemic.
- Provided box of food for Hearth of Henrico Thanksgiving Boxes.
- Sent Christmas cards to "Members at Home" instead of stockings because we can't deliver to care facilities because of the pandemic.

Board in 2020:

- The Yard Sale was cancelled in March of 2021 but very generous monetary donations were made, so we were still able to donate \$4,950 to 24 organizations to help women and children around the world.
- The items that were left from the cancelled Yard Sale were donated to Ginter Park Clothes Closet, bikes to the Micah program, Habitat for Humanity, and Goodwill plus more.
- Sent out monthly "Women in Ministry" newsletters to stay connected.
- Made fall goodie bags for students living in the cottages at UMFS to lift their spirits.
- Collected 49 bras and 5 shipping boxes full of feminine products for "I Support the Girls".
- Created a "social distancing" type of Christmas craft night for the students at UMFS.
- Collected donations to provide for 16 Christmas presents for UMFS students in cottages.
- Continued to support and provide schooling for Kavie Sheriff in Sierra Leon.
- Sent birthday cards to UMC missionaries all around the world.
- Provided church staff appreciation gifts at Christmas.
- Met all the UMW District requirements and received the top gold award for 2021.

Board and Circle in 2021

UMW and the Missions Committee collected diapers for Little Hands VA and food pantries. The UMW Board distributed \$3,000 to various organizations to help women and children in the Richmond area and around the world, including sponsoring Kavie Sheriff in Sierra Leone through Helping Children Worldwide. The UMW at River Road continued to meet all the UMW District requirements and earned the top gold award for 2021.

The Circle made 24 Valentine bags for our "At Home Members" and the Congregational Care Committee delivered them to the church members who can't come to church. Bess Traylor created and provided beautiful birthday bags for Hermitage. Marcia Diamond presented a wonderful program on "Finding Joy". The Circle made "Joy" packets for UMW members that we haven't seen for a while due to COVID. The Circle also provided lunch for the preschool staff to show them how much we appreciate their efforts. More activities to help women and children will continue in the fall.

EVA HUSTON PANTRY

Once again our congregation demonstrated its overwhelming generosity in responding to the drive for the Eva Huston Pantry. Christmas will be joyful for the children in the schools and orphanages in Liberia supported by EHP. The Activity Room was overflowing with gifts for the children. These gifts will be shipped to Liberia and ready for distribution when our fellow church member Esther Tuopay arrives in December. We look forward to seeing pictures from her visit. In addition to this drive, the Missions Committee has provided the organization with funds to help with other expenses. We are blessed to be able to support this wonderful ministry.

FOOD PANTRIES

Thanks for your continued support of the food pantries and Safe Harbor with your generous donations. We have one addition to the list of most-needed items – non-refrigerated microwave meals are beneficial to those who are staying in hotels without full kitchens. Other most-needed items remain peanut butter and jelly; spaghetti noodles; canned fruit and vegetables; canned soups and beans; canned milk; canned chicken and tuna; ravioli/spaghetios; cereal; individual snacks such as fruit cups, apple sauce, and crackers; meal boxes like Hamburger helper; mashed potatoes; bags of pinto and black beans; and diapers and wipes. Standard sizes and no glass containers are appreciated for packing purposes.

SAFE HARBOR

Your donation of funds to Missions enabled us to purchase school supplies for two children staying at Safe Harbor who had to leave their home as a result of domestic violence. What a blessing to be able to ease the burdens of a family in difficult circumstances due to violence in the home.

OAK GROVE

Looking for a great way to make a difference in the Richmond community? Volunteers are needed during the school day and on Saturdays at Oak Grove Elementary. To be a part of this wonderful mission of our church contact Mary York tmews.york@verizon.net.

Thanks be to God for leading us to love our neighbors. For more missions information, contact Ann Hodges, ahodges@richmond.edu or 804-339-9440.

CREATION CARE - continued

A key concern: "In 2016, the U.S. generated more plastic trash than any other country - 46.3 million tons of it, . . . 297 pounds per person in a single year. . . And then there's what happens when you throw them away. If you're like most people, you probably assume that when you toss plastic into the recycling bin it will be processed and turned into something new. The truth is that only a fraction of plastic is actually recycled, . . . just 8.7 percent. . . [I]t is landfilled, incinerated or littered. . . Plastic production is expected to double by 2050. . . [T]he only way to stem the rising tide is to use less of it (see below), causing companies to make less of it and to retool recycling programs so that more of what we throw away is actually turned into something useful" (Consumer Reports, 10/21, pp 42-49); 2);

And, of course: Things we can do include: 1) Reducing our consumption of plastics by: a) Bringing our own reusable bags and refusing single-use plastic ones which can last 500+ years; b) Bringing our own empty containers to restaurants for leftovers; c) Carrying and using reusable coffee cups and water bottles and *not* buying drinks in plastic bottles; d) Replacing the use of plastic wrap for storing leftovers with reusable stretchy silicone covers or aluminum foil; and e) Avoiding buying products packaged in plastic, disposable plastic razors, synthetic sponges (replace with natural), trash bags (composting, recycling and our garbage disposals should take care of most everything; 2) Embracing the 7 R's of shrinking your (personal) footprint: *Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Rent* (or borrow), *Recycle & Rot*; 3) Speaking up and advocating; 4) Joining and supporting 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; Audubon Society; WWF, etc.); Amen....Respectfully submitted, Michael j Wriston, Chair, Earth Advocacy Committee, RRUMC



**RIVER ROAD
UNITED METHODIST**
LOVING PEOPLE TO LIFE

**8800 River Road
Henrico VA 23229
Phone: 804-740-7061
Fax: 804-740-3367
Preschool: 754-0227**

October 2021

**Articles for the
November 2021
Connections are due
October 20, 2021.**



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

There's a new bird in town, well several actually, and they have been landing on church member' lawns! Our new Flamingo Ministry has been showing up on front lawns, along with signs reminding members they are part of our flock. We are lifting these folks in prayer as we progress through the pandemic. D Many families with small children have been visited, as well as several of our older members who haven't yet felt comfortable returning to in-person activities. River Road UMC wants you to know we are not only loving people TO life, but THROUGH life and its difficult uncertainties. If you know of someone who might enjoy a few days of encouragement and company, please contact Desda White (Desda@riverroadumc.org)



Open Arms Christian Preschool



OACP returned Back to School on Tuesday, September 7th with full classes! This school year we have 5 preschool classrooms with children ranging from ages 15 months to 4 years old! This school year we have introduced an online system, ProCare, to support our Early Childhood Education goals along with having direct communication with families. Each family is given access to the App where they are able to “check in” their child (answering our health questions) each day. The family is able to receive information about their child’s day, they are able to message the teachers directly and the teachers have access to lesson planning, VA developmental milestones, and the ability to send families updates via the APP on children’s weekly learning in the classroom. Having this technology has allowed better documentation and communication in our Preschool! Each classroom has been provided a tablet to use for communication and lesson planning documentation. We are all very excited to have this new platform for communication and it has already proven very successful this first month!

As we continue through this school year, we are currently at enrollment capacity, but we are accepting students on our waitlist for the 2022-2023 school year. If you have a child (or know a family that has a child) that is interested in our school please have them reach out to Nora Hamlet at 804-754-0227 or email at openarms@riverroadumc.org! We are also hiring for Substitute Teachers for the 2021-2022 School Year. Substitute Teachers do not need experience and have very flexible schedules based on needs substitutes in the classrooms! If you, or anyone you know, is interested in being part of this extraordinary ministry at RRUMC please reach out!



**OPEN ARMS
CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL**

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