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**January/February
 Upper Room
 Devotionals are
 available outside
 the keypad door.**



Worship Series January 2022: ReFrame

As a recap, 2020 caught most of us by surprise, and then 2021 continued on with its pandemic adaptations and navigations. As we enter into January 2022, we are grateful for a measure of a return to normalcy. And yet, we continue to live having to make layered decisions that can make life more challenging in the day to day. While the last almost two years have been a profound reminder that we cannot control our circumstances, God does invite us to focus on HOW we live. We can gain new perspectives and choose a new direction in this new year. Jesus had an incredible ability to help people see their life differently and he did this most often by asking questions. In this series we will explore five life changing questions. One question asked of Jesus and 4 questions that Jesus asks – questions that reorient us and change our perspective and ultimately our frame of mind.

Here is a preview of the questions we will overhear and consider during the new worship series ReFrame, beginning on January 9th:

January 9th Do you come to me? Full disclosure, this is what John the Baptist asks of Jesus when he comes to be baptized. However, there is a lot of meaning in what led John to ask this of Jesus. This question is a prelude to an action that reveals to us Jesus' character and more about the God we worship.

January 16th What do you want? We all know this—what we want or desire shapes our thoughts, actions, and then entire patterns of being and doing. This Sunday is an opportunity to stop and take stock, what do we desire and is it taking us where we want to go?

January 23rd What are you focused on? We have all heard the phrase that we can look at situations as though the glass is half full or empty. While it is true that positive thinking can bring a lot of good and health into one's life, Jesus gives us a way of looking at things so that we see things as they are even if painful or hard, but can hold them together with hope. In this way, positivity does not minimize or deny pain, but is rooted in a real gospel hope. How are we seeing things not only with the power of positive thinking, but also with the power of a gospel positivity?

January 30th Why are you so afraid? Just as what we desire and focus on guides the trajectories of our lives, so can what we fear. Fear can function as a roadblock or closure, preventing us from living out the life God holds for us. Knowing what we fear and naming our fears before God can break the power they hold and allow the Holy Spirit to transform our fears into wisdom and courage.

February 6th Where is your faith? Let's land this worship series based on the questions of Christ, with several of our own. As we begin this new year, where is your faith? Are you where you would like to be in terms of your relationship with Christ? Do you struggle with the absence of faith or placing faith in the wrong things? Would you like God to help you grow in faith this year? What would you be willing to do in order to grow?

Worship January 2022

- January 3:** Epiphany Sunday
- January 10:** RE: FRAME: Do You Come to Me?
- January 17:** RE: FRAME: What Do You Want?
- January 24:** RE: FRAME: What Are You Focused On?
- January 31:** RE: FRAME: Why are You So Afraid?
- February 6:** RE: FRAME: Where Is Your Faith?

JANUARY WORSHIP SERIES

RE-FRAME



▶ Why 2022 Will Be Different

January Birthdays

January 1

Chris Oubre
Wendy Travis

January 2

Katherine Anthes
Himans Alexander

January 3

John Gresham
Roger Dowdy

January 4

Karen Carter

January 5

Chris Price
Jackson Vines

January 6

Betty Hatcher
Sarah Anthes

January 8

Paul Pitts
Mark Whetstine
Will Mann

January 10

Kate Morrison
Alexa Cornett

January 11

Melinda Sledd

January 12

Cathy Reid
Maggie Hiatt
James Gilliland

January 13

David Hudson
Zoe Bell

January 14

Sarah York

January 15

Ann York
Megan Gilliland

January 16

Gene James
Vince Narron

January 17

Drew Johnson
Mac Stuckey
Nathaniel Walunas

January 18

Burk May

January 19

Cheryl Bowles

January 20

Joyce May
Jack Stuckey
Kate Stuckey
McRae Stuckey

January 21

Ed Kross

January 22

Nick Gilliland

January 23

Betsy Hiatt

January 24

Cindy Spieth

January 25

Paula Tatar

January 26

Don Jeffrey

January 27

Whit Anthes
Carson Moum

January 28

Bill Kuehl

January 30

Adam Kemp
Cline Wood
Rhodes Ritenour Jr.

January 31

Dale Huggins
Tom Simmons



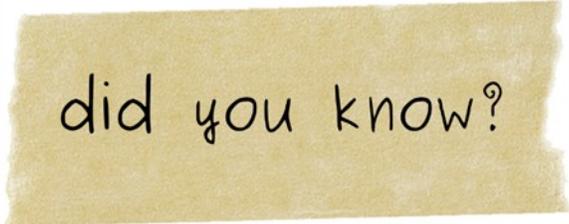
GET ENGAGED



**Join us in ministry!
Serving God and neighbor. Loving people to life.**

There are many ways to be involved in ministry here at River Road. Here are a few opportunities for you to plug in right away:

- Greeters and ushers for 11:00am worship (Welcome Center and narthex)
- Scripture readers for 11:00am worship
- Care ministry – sending cards, meals, and/or visiting those who need a little extra care
- Choir members – Chancel (singing) and Carillon (bells)
- Children’s Church volunteers (adults and youth) during the 11:00am worship service*



Research shows that when a child has five or more adults at church invested in their lives, it is much more likely that their faith will “stick” after high school [*Sticky Faith* by Powell, Griffin, and Crawford, Zondervan, 2011].

You can make a difference in the lives of our children by volunteering in Children's Church during the 11:00am worship service.* No matter your age, adults who engage with children in meaningful ways make a lasting impact.



Ready to plug in? Have questions? Email Lori at engagement@riverroadumc.org for more information on how you can get involved in meaningful ministry this year.

*Children’s ministry volunteers must comply with our Child Protection Policy

As the calendar rolls over into 2022, River Road Youth is starting up as well! With the Holy Spirit as our guide, we can identify and act on our passions. There are opportunities for every youth to engage in our church - our program will continue to help in this regard. I have enjoyed talking with a number of youth and families over the past few weeks as to development of our activities in three areas:

Spiritual Growth, Missional Opportunities, and Connections.



Spiritual Growth

Our next confirmation class will be held this spring and is open to any youth! We look forward to another group of youth taking this major spiritual step within the United Methodist Church. *Let Tom know of any youth ready to engage in this wonderful experience.*

Youth Sunday School is rolling along Sunday mornings at 10:00. Our theme in January will be on how our faith provides us courage.

Missional Opportunities

In December, our youth have been active with our Angel Tree and Care activities. Future opportunities will be planned by our youth, hoping to plug into the wide range of mission areas our church has to offer.

Connections

It was great to have our Christmas Party in the Benson home!

18 months of pandemic shutdown accumulation has been cleared out of the Youth Basement, and the space is opening back up. The Ping Pong and Pool Tables are going again. Our youth are a competitive and creative bunch!

Tom

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

Hello!

It has been great to join the River Road UMC staff and help support our wide variety of adult discipleship offerings. Our church has a great history of small group ministry, and it is great to see that tradition continue with new groups continuing to emerge over the past year.

I have enjoyed learning from our current group leaders, and continue to look for ideas. Please reach out to me anytime if you would like to:

- Lead a new small group

- Have a topic of interest you would like to form a small group around

- Look for a small group to join

- Just have a chat

I am here to serve our adult discipleship groups in any manner needed - logistics, communications, curriculum, leader training, ideas, whatever. My first few weeks have been focused on logistics - particularly in regards to ensuring we have the wi-fi bandwidth needed to engage digitally while at the church.

Blessings!

Tom

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

January Newsletter

Schedule at RRUMC

- **Online service at 9am**
- **Sunday School Classes (for adults & children) at 10am**
- **Blended Worship in the Sanctuary at 11am (live streamed)**

Children's Sunday School & Children's Church at 10 am & 11 am will have a socially distanced Sunday school lesson in our courtyard or the Fellowship Hall (weather dependent). 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 January:

WEEK ONE	BIBLE STORY Jesus Is Tempted in the Desert Luke 4:1-13 (Supporting: Matthew 4:1-11)	BOTTOM LINE Be ready to do the right thing.
WEEK TWO	BIBLE STORY Broken-Down Walls Proverbs 25:28	BOTTOM LINE When you lose control, it can cause trouble.
WEEK THREE	BIBLE STORY David Spares Saul's Life 1 Samuel 24	BOTTOM LINE Don't be controlled by your anger.
WEEK FOUR	BIBLE STORY Choose Your Words Carefully Proverbs 12:18	BOTTOM LINE Think before you speak.
WEEK FIVE	BIBLE STORY Too Much of a Good Thing Proverbs 25:16	BOTTOM LINE Know when to stop.

This month in River Road Kids: we trust God no matter what. Even when we face unexpected circumstances, we can respond to them with self-control. We can trust that we don't need to rush in or take matters into our own hands. We can trust that God is working. Self-control is a Fruit of the Spirit. As we follow Jesus throughout our lives, the Holy Spirit transforms us and helps us live more like Jesus. This month we learn that we can follow His example and choose to do what we should do—instead of what we want to do. The Holy Spirit can give us the power and wisdom to show self-control.



FRANCES ALLEN/ALICE WEED CIRCLE:

The Francis Allen/Alice Weed Circle meets the second Tuesday of every month. Everyone is invited to the next meeting on January 11th at 10:00 AM in the Activities Room. Bess Traylor will be doing the program. Come and join us!



BOOK CLUB:

Book Club meets First Monday of the month. January 3 is our next meeting and we will discuss Signs by Laura Lynne Jackson. February we hope to discuss Cloud Cuckoo Land by John Doerr. We meet at 7PM at Ann York's home. If you care to join us and meet fellow book lovers, let Ann know and you will be included on our email list to keep you informed. Everyone is welcome.

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.

CREATION CARE

Things to be thankful for, to be concerned about or to do. First, things to be thankful for: 1) "State's budget includes funds for city's sewer system, Chesapeake Bay. . . [and] would also include nearly \$286 million to fully fund the Virginia Natural Resources Committee Fund, which helps farmers and land owners put in place clean water and conservation practices" (RTD, 12/16, p. A4); 2) "Lithium-ion batteries with recycled cathodes can outperform batteries made from pristine materials" (Science News, 12/4, p. 4); 3) "Air Company captures carbon dioxide and transforms it into an ingredient for its perfume. . . Air Eau de Parfum. . . and. . . [it] won a NASA conversion competition...by successfully turning carbon dioxide into sugar. . . [It] hopes to develop carbon-neutral jet fuel" (NYT, 12/16, p. D11); 4) "New York City will ban gas-powered heaters, stoves and water boilers in all new buildings...effectively requiring all-electric heating and cooling . . . to reduce the burning of fossil fuels" (NYT, 12/16, p. A25); 5) "How to Keep Your Devices Out of the Landfill for Longer. . . Samsung is partnering with people to find sustainable ways to reuse old smartphones. . . The company's philosophy is that together, we can foster the circular economy" (NYT, 12/16, p. A7); 6) "E.P.A. Will Toughen Rules on Lead in Water and Begin Replacing Millions of Older Pipes" (NYT, 12/17, p. A13); and 8) "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 p. B6).

Key concerns include: 1) A permit was granted to permit for the Mountain Valley Pipeline to. . . cross about 150 streams and wetlands in southwest Virginia. . . (RTD 12/1, p. A9 and 11/26, p. A17); 2) "Withdrawing from the RGGI hurts Virginia families. . . RGGI creates a cap-and-trade market for polluting carbon emissions. . . In its first year, RGGI netted \$237.5 million in revenue. . . By law, 45% (\$107 million) will go to bolster resilience of communities affected by recurrent flooding, and 50% (\$118.8 million) will go to assist low-income families with energy-efficient programs" (RTD, 12/15, p. A21); 3) "McDonald's struggles to fix massive methane problem. . . 'There does not seem to be any proactive involvement or serious investment by McDonald's to support its suppliers or make significant changes in its beef supply chain'" (RTD, 12/5, p. D4); 4) "Extinctions Imperil the Planet's Biodiversity. . . The extinction of plants and animals is accelerating. . . Bugs on our windshields are no longer a summer thing as insect populations plummet. Nearly three billion birds have been lost in North America. . . [F]or the biodiversity crisis. . . there are no technological fixes. And no cost-effective replacement for natural systems like wetlands. . . Climate change and biodiversity loss are locked together in a cycle of destruction that must be dealt with in tandem" (NYT, 10/4, p. A 21); and, of course: *continued on next page*

GIFTS FOR THE MANGER

Thank you for remembering Christ in your Christmas giving by supporting Gifts for the Manger. It is not too late to make gifts online for Open Table, United Methodist Family Services and Housing Families First. You have made a difference in the lives of families, youth and children in the name of Christ. Thanks to Karen Carter for leading this ministry.

ANGEL TREE

All of our angels were adopted! We took additional angels this year as a result of your past generosity and you met the challenge. Once again you have made Christmas special for the children of incarcerated parents. We are so grateful for your support of this mission every Christmas. Thanks to Laurel Marks for leading this mission and to all of the volunteer callers and delivery people as well.

UMFS

As a result of your generous giving to missions, we were able to purchase Christmas gifts for four youth who arrived at the Child and Family Healing Center at UMFS just before Christmas. Thanks to Charlotte Allred, Karen Carter and Tony and Jean Barnette for shopping for the youth to fulfill their Christmas wishes.

OPEN TABLE

Open Table is recruiting for members for a table for Mothers in Recovery starting in January 2022. If you are interested in serving, contact Rachelle Butler, rachellebutler@theopentable.org

FOOD PANTRIES

We are grateful for your continued support of the food pantries and Safe Harbor during the holiday season. Most-needed items remain peanut butter and jelly; spaghetti noodles; canned fruit and vegetables; canned soups and beans; canned chicken and tuna; ravioli/spaghettios; boxed cereal; bags of pinto and black beans; 15 oz canned tomato sauce or 24 oz (approximately) pasta sauce; non-refrigerated microwave meals; and diapers and wipes. Standard sizes are appreciated for packing purposes and no glass containers.

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

Things we can do include: 1) Speaking up, advocating and voting for *creation care* (not only at the ballot box but by what we buy and how we spend); 2) Reducing our consumption and footprint by, for example, considering, "The Joy of Buying Nothing New for the Holidays"; 3) Embracing the 7 R's of shrinking your personal footprint: *Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Rent* (or borrow), *Recycle & Rot*; 4) Reflecting on conservation biologist and author Thor Hanson's rejoinder when asked "what a concerned citizen should do to combat climate change: "Everything you can" (Science News, 12/4) 5) Buying a bottle or two of Air Eau de Parfum (instead of McDonald's hamburgers); and 6) 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, Wild Virginia, 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

January 2022

**Articles for the
February 2022
Connections are due
January 20, 2022.**



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

The church staff would like to express our gratitude to each of you who contributed so generously to the year-end love offering on our behalf. It is a pleasure and a joy to serve Christ with you! Thank you, and may God bless each of you in the new year!

Thank you!

Open Arms Christian Preschool

At OACP we share with the children teachings of the bible through the Beginner Bible Curriculum. In December it is a time for us to let the children experience the true meaning of celebrations this time of year - we are celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ! The children, as they grow older, become the "teachers" and teach others. Our ministry is hard at work daily helping all the little children see it, hear it and experience it! The Christmas Performance in December was a huge success with over 100 guests in attendance to watch the children perform The Christmas Story. The children had a wonderful performance and then were able to celebrate the birth of Jesus with a Birthday Party in their classrooms.



We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

If you, or your family or friends are interested in our program please have them reach out to Nora Hamlet, 804-754-0227 openarms@riverroadumc.org. We are currently taking students on our waitlist for the 2022-2023 school year program.



OPEN ARMS
CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

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