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



Trending

As a Pastor, I look to several sources to continue to develop and learn as a servant leader. One of the people I “follow” is Carey Nieuwhof. He is a Canadian pastor who founded a fruitful church and then experienced burn out from some unhealthy work patterns. HW learned from the experience, and made a pivot to being a “leader to the leaders.” He blogs, podcasts, and gathers data about church and cultural trends for the purpose of the church fulfilling its mission—to make disciples and transform the world (at RRUMC we say we exist as the church to love people to life).

In July of this year he released a blog post that highlighted some of the biggest cultural trends, with explanations of how they affect the church and how we reach others. I wanted to pass two of them along to you, as I think it highlights both the opportunities and the challenges we have as the church in living out our mission. It also encourages us to realize that we are living in a mission field within our own neighborhoods and relationships. Many people these days are not anti-church, but they just don’t see the need for a relationship with God in Jesus Christ. They don’t see the current and eternal value added that this relationship brings. Now is the time to understand where people are in terms of how they see church, and to recommit ourselves to an authentic way of life with Jesus and a willingness to navigate and invite others into this as well.

But first, here are some of the cultural trends:

The highest good is now individual freedom and happiness. This is why we have seen a steady decline in civic organizations of all sorts (from Rotary and Lion’s Clubs to Scouting) while there has been an explosion in smaller groups that meet an individual’s more customized needs. The culture has shifted so that the top priority for most is personal identity and fulfillment. Nieuwhof says it this way: *Back in the day, the Bible or other sacred/religious texts (depending on which culture) set the standard on ethics, how people behaved, and what they valued. That’s been replaced by experiences, desires, preferences, and feelings.* The prevailing question is—does this make me happy, rather than is this way of life ethical, faithful, committed, etc. Thus external forms of authority are questioned and suspect, and personal self-expression is the highest ideal.

Traditions, regulations, social ties, that restrict freedom, happiness, and self expression are being deconstructed or destroyed. While Jesus talked a lot about peace, abundant life, and being found, his core message is about following someone besides our own needs and wants. He got even more specific and said that following him means serving others even when it costs us something – carrying a cross and self-denial. This is where being a Christian challenges the cultural priority of self-fulfillment. When we follow Jesus, we agree to do so as Lord, therefore giving him the authority to speak into our lives on everything from money to our job, to sex, and to forgiveness. This is quite a departure from where the culture is trending in centering this type of authority from within one’s self.

I hope sharing these trends names what you have already experienced in relationships with co-workers, family members, and even tensions within ourselves as we live out our faith. Interestingly, Nieuwhof suggests that to speak with a relevant voice into our current culture, what the church needs to do is to lead with is humility. Humility is a willingness to talk about how we have missed the mark and how God has graciously set our feet back on the path. This is particularly relevant when you consider that hypocrisy is the most often-cited complaint against Christians from folks outside the church. Thus leading with humility makes all the difference, and after all, it will keep us in stride with the one we serve and seek to communicate about with others. Nieuwhof says it this way: “[I]f I’m going to reach a culture that has shifted, I have to be able to walk with a limp.”

WORSHIP:

October 9	The Gerasene Demoniac	Ms. Lori Alford
October 16	Supernatural: God	Rev. Darcey Johnson
October 23	Supernatural: Forces of Evil	Rev. Darcey Johnson
October 30	Supernatural: Forces of Good	Rev. Darcey Johnson

October Birthdays

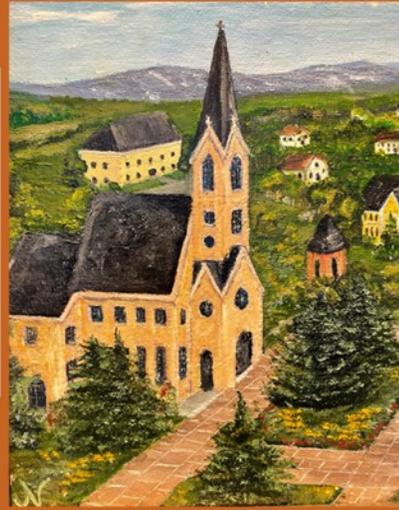
<u>October 3</u> Carrie Pecht	<u>October 5</u> Sharon McCoy	<u>October 6</u> James Gilmore	<u>October 8</u> Lynda Weston	<u>October 9</u> Marcia Diamond
<u>October 10</u> Lila Smith	<u>October 12</u> Bob Hardiman Daniel Markey	<u>October 13</u> Emily Kleinholz Lara Malbon Mike Reaves	<u>October 14</u> Elvie Hardy	<u>October 15</u> Kane Alexander David Harless Paul Mershon
<u>October 17</u> Chip Cunningham Cleo Edsall Doris Hardiman Dave Johnson	<u>October 20</u> Chuck Hulcher Darcey Johnson	<u>October 23</u> Charlotte Allred Doug Jolley Randy Reaves Mary Katherine Vaughan Jesse Wingate	<u>October 25</u> Blandine Noel	<u>October 26</u> Maria Francisco
<u>October 27</u> Jon Francisco John McLarin	<u>October 28</u> Gurleen Ferguson Robert Lewis	<u>October 29</u> Laurel Marks Rachel Payne	<u>October 30</u> Alice Jesudian Sam McCracken	





ART SALE FOR MISSIONS

Sunday, October 9 and 16



Vince Narron has generously donated a collection of original paintings to raise funds for missions. Stop by the Welcome Center on Sunday, October 9th and 16th to purchase a painting and support missions at River Road UMC!

All adults ages 50+ are invited to join the River of Lifers!

Tour of Agecroft Hall and Lunch at Mosaic

Tuesday, October 18



Carpool from RRUMC at 9:30pm | Tour begins at 10:00am (\$10) | Lunch following (\$)

**** RSVP to Lori Alford by Tuesday, October 4 ****

Agecroft Hall once stood in Lancashire, England in the 16th century. The structure was bought by a successful Richmond businessman, dismantled, and shipped to Richmond where it has stood since 1927. After decades of service as a private residence, it then became a house museum with glorious gardens paying tribute to the Elizabethan Age.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Lori at 740-7061 or engagement@riverroadumc.org

As the Fall is upon us, youth group is happening every 2nd and 4th Sunday. 6-12th graders are all welcome to come by at 5:30 in the evenings! We have a missional focus for the fall, working on ways we can best support the many missions of our church. Rebuilding Together, Safe Harbor, Prayer Shawls, Food Drives, Eva Huston Pantry, Angel Tree - all are these missions we'll be supporting and learning more about. And there will always be a game or three!

High Schoolers also have a chance to meet for breakfast each week at Chick-Fil-A.

Hope to see you this fall! Contact Tom York (804)517-2350 or youth@riverroadumc.org to learn more about how our youth can plug in with our church.

Adult Discipleship

It is great to see a number of our small groups kick off in September. Our Sunday morning hour at 10:00 has grown from 25 to 60 participants across all ages. Other opportunities within music ministry, bible studies and life groups throughout the week also remain vibrant.

Small Group leaders are a key component of our ministry. Would you like to help lead a small group? *Let Tom York know and we will get you started. Here are some FAQs I typically hear as people are discerning whether they would like to lead a small group :*

How can I lead a small group if I do not know much about the Bible or Church?

Curriculum is outstanding today and will provide the preparation tools and inputs you need to help bring a group together. For example, the UMC prepares a weekly Adult Bible Study lesson that is readily accessible and leader friendly.

I cannot commit to being there every week to lead a group.

God provides! Others within a group are more than willing to fill in for a given week. Plus, it can be a welcome relief for members of your group to have another voice lead the discussion.

I'm nervous. How could I manage a conversation around controversial topics?

The Holy Spirit helps us to maintain a loving and respectful presence. We have training available to aid in being a facilitator. Additionally, we are blessed to have a number of other small group leaders at our church that are willing to share their own facilitation techniques.

How do I know which content to choose?

Small groups exist to provide an opportunity for constant learning and for fellowship with other people. Material and content can (and will) change over time. Church staff will help to provide options in both content and formats. As a leader, you also can lead the effort to choose what to study.

“Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing”

- I Thessalonians 5:11.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Join us Sunday mornings!

River Road Kids Discipleship Hour will be at 10 AM in the Sunday School wing and Children's Church will be held at the 9 & 11 AM worship services in the Sunday School wing.



Preschool Discipleship for October:

This month, we are talking about God's plans for us. The prophet Jeremiah shares the wonderful truth that God knows the plans He has for us. Even when we don't understand the plans and even when they are hard, we can still trust God because of Who God is, and God's plans are always a hole-in-one!

God loves us, and God keeps His promises. We can fully trust God's plans because God's plans are always best!

K-5 Discipleship for October:

As we continue our journey through God's Big Story, we take a closer look at the lives of Joseph and Moses. Both of these men trusted God through hard circumstances and would not give up. These are two heroes of the faith, and we hope to help kids see how their stories connect between Genesis and Exodus.

God has been faithful throughout history and has helped people get through and overcome incredible difficulties. God's Son, Jesus, endured the pain of the cross and death itself so that we could have a forever relationship with God. God gives us the Holy Spirit to empower us to keep going, even when life gets difficult.



Youth handing out flyers

Youth Prayers



FRANCES ALLEN/ALICE WEED CIRCLE:

You are invited to the Francis Allen/Alice Weed Circle meeting on October 11 at 10:00 AM in room 205. We look forward to seeing everyone!



United
Women
in Faith

**OCTOBER OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY:
KITCHEN ESSENTIALS NEEDED FOR CARITAS**

Each year, about 700 individuals and families in need are referred to the CARITAS Furniture Bank by caseworkers from 80+ local non-profits and social service agencies. To help in their move from crisis to long-term stability and ease the time and financial strain of setting up a new home, each referred client shops with a trained CARITAS volunteer for the essential housewares and furniture they need. The new or gently used inventory in the Furniture Bank is all donated and is clean and in working order, but with so many clients the supply is in constant need of replenishment. That's where you come in! Your good quality unwanted kitchen items may be exactly what someone else needs! Pick up a couple of the yellow Caritas Kitchen Collection cards in the Welcome Center or Narthex and share the list with friends and coworkers. Bring all donations to the **church parlor by October 24th**. Thank you for helping with new beginnings!

UMFS CHILD AND FAMILY HEALING CENTER TOUR OCTOBER 20TH 10 AM

Come tour the beautiful new CFHC building on the campus of UMFS! In addition to providing more up to date housing for those students needing residential treatment, it also offers a variety of spaces for individual and family counseling and other programs available to help children in crisis. The UMFS Auxiliary is planning a one-hour tour of the CFHC *for anyone interested* on Thursday, October 20th at 10AM. Meet at the new conference room just inside the front entrance to the Child and Family Healing Center Building. Plenty of parking is available in the parking lot in front of the entrance. If you need a map showing the new entrance to the UMFS campus and the location of the new building, contact Charlotte Allred 804-305-5423.

BOOK CLUB

Book Club will meet October 3 at Ann York's home, 2800 Chancel Lane, 907-748-0446, 7PM. All are welcome. We will be discussing *Five Presidents* by Clint Hill. To read ahead, we have decided on *It's A Small Word* by Johnathon Evison for November 7, and *Breathing Lessons* by Ann Tyler for December 5. Please call Ann so your name is included on the emails sent with all the pertinent information each month.

CREATION CARE

Things to be thankful for:

- 1) "Virginia launches program to fund clean energy projects" (RTD; 9/17; p. A2).
- 2) "It has been discovered that preserving Mangrove trees and Mangrove roots supports an ecosystem that stores four times as much carbon as inland forests. The thicket of roots also prevents soil erosion and buffer coastlines against tropical storms. Within these roots and branches, shorebirds and fish . . . thrive" (*ibid*; p. 17);
- 3) Chemists are using CO₂ instead of petroleum to make plastics.
- 4) Clean energy is attracting innovation as "[t]he United States is now becoming a magnet for clean energy innovation and investment" (NYT; 9/20; p. A22)

Things to be concerned about:

- 1) "The Arctic is heating up at an increased speed compared with the rest of the Earth, with an average temperature increasing two or three times as fast as elsewhere" (Science News; 9/10; p. 5);

HOLIDAY MISSIONS

We will be doing our usual holiday missions – filling Hearth of Henrico Thanksgiving boxes with a meal and turkey gift card, providing gifts for the children of incarcerated individuals for Angel Tree, and collecting Gifts for the Manger to support future and ongoing missions. Watch for congregational emails, signs in the Welcome Center, and posts on the app with information about how to participate in each of these important missions. Celebrate the birth of Christ by sharing with our neighbors in need.

EVA HUSTON PANTRY

Thank you for your donations for the Eva Huston Pantry to make Christmas special for the children in Liberian orphanages. As a result of your generosity, Missions has sufficient funds to pay for shipping the donations as well, which allows EHP to spend its funds to support the children. “Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 19:14.

ONGOING NEEDS - FOOD PANTRIES

Thanks to your generous contributions, we continue to supply food to the pantries at Ginter Park United Methodist Church, Belmont United Methodist Church and St. Paul’s Catholic Church and to residents of the shelter at Safe Harbor. Most-needed items remain peanut butter; tomato sauce in 15 oz. cans; 1 lb. spaghetti noodles; canned fruit and vegetables; canned soups and beans; canned chicken and tuna; ravioli/spaghettios; boxed cereal; oatmeal; non-refrigerated microwave meals; diapers (sizes 4, 5 and 6 are most needed); and wipes. Standard container sizes are appreciated for packing purposes and no glass containers. Watch for weekly updates regarding particular needs. We are welcoming new volunteers to assist Tony and Jean Barnette, who have been carrying a heavy load supporting all four organizations. Thanks to Charlotte and Mark Allred, George and Sari Eapen, Daniel and Stephanie O’Neill, and Connie and Mark Whetstine for stepping up to help with packing and deliveries and to the youth for help with loading.

OAK GROVE ELEMENTARY

The RRUMC congregation is a blessing to the Richmond community. Your school supply donations for the Kindergarten and 1st grade classrooms are much appreciated! The items will ensure the 2022-23 year gets off to a strong start. Thank you for your continued support of the teachers and students of Oak Grove Elementary School.

“And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” Hebrews 13:16.

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

CREATION CARE - continued

2) "The rapid rise in temperature is causing plant and animal species, and people, to move toward higher, cooler ground. This exodus has not only begun, it's begun to overwhelm. People are going to be on the move. The U.N.'s High Commissioner for Refugees reported that the world had 100 million displaced people . . . and that by 2070 as many as three billion could be living in areas stressed by high heat." (NRYB; 10/6; pp 6-10)

Action we can take:

Advocate and support organizations who are committed to working and fighting for an equitable and sustainable future.



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 2022

Articles for the
November 2022
Connections are due
October 20, 2022.



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

Summer 2023 Mission Trip Opportunity

Greetings! As a church, we are starting to plan a weeklong mission opportunity for the **Summer of 2023**. In October, we will hold a couple of interest meetings as our plans come together. Our trip would focus on community oriented projects and would be open for both Youth and Adults. Mission trips are a wonderful way to experience another part of our country, help communities in need and enjoy fellowship within our own church family.

If you would have an interest for either yourself or your family to join, please come to one of our interest meetings to be held on
Sunday, Oct 9th at noon at church
Monday, Oct 10th at 7:00 pm via zoom

Or just contact Tom York directly at tom@riverroadumc.org or (804)517-2350

Open Arms Christian Preschool



Welcome Back to School! Open Arms Christian Preschool began the 2022-2023 school year on Tuesday, September 6th with 5 open classrooms, 11 staff, and over 50 students attending this year. The children are in full swing with the new school year, learning about our new classrooms, new friends, and the families at OACP. We've all settled in to routines, and begun attending enrichment classes (chapel, library, and P.E.) and an extra-curricular class (soccer). The children have all participated in many learning activities throughout their day. We're so excited to bring back the Fall Pumpkin Patch Field trip with children and families on October 3rd!

We will be returning to the Hanover Vegetable Farm this year to get the full hands-on experience with everyone! All children and their families are welcome to join us! If your family or friends are interested in joining the field trip or attending OACP please reach out to Nora Hamlet, 804-754-0227, openarms@riverroadumc.org.



OPEN ARMS
CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

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