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**March/April Upper
 Room Devotionals
 are available in
 the Welcome
 Center, Narthex,
 and outside the
 keypad door.**



The Day that Changed Everything
Lent 2023

I remember talking with a church member a couple of churches ago. It was early December, and we were standing in the Advent season and knocking on the Christmas celebrations. This is when Bob made the comment, he said, “yes Christmas is wondrous, but Easter is my favorite.” Why’s that?” I asked. “Because Easter,” he said “changed everything.”

The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) agree and that is why all four include the events that led up to Jesus’ death and resurrection, in particular the events of the last 24 hours of Jesus’ life. In his book, *24 Hours that Changed the World*, Pastor Adam Hamilton breaks down this emphasis: “Jesus is believed to have died at the age of 33 after a life of approximately 12,000 days. The Gospel writers devoted most of their work to just 1,100 or so of these days, the last 3 years of Jesus’ life and their primary interest was in one particular day—the day he was crucified. They believed that this 24-hour period changed the world, and each of the Gospels drives towards it.”

This Lent, beginning on February 26th we will focus in on the events of this day, this 24-hour period in Jesus’ life. Beginning just after sunset on a Thursday evening with the Last Supper, then Jesus moving to prayer and eventual arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, then the betrayal and denial of his friends, accusations and a trial from religious leaders, and then a more public trial presided over by the Roman Prefect or Governor of Judaea – Pontius Pilate, and the death of Christ on the cross and his burial.

When the early church members were living into and making sense of the resurrection in their own life, they communicated again and again that the death and resurrection of Jesus was the foundation of how they understood themselves and their mission in the world. All throughout the book of Acts (that chronicles the early church), Jesus’ death and resurrection stood as the center reason and power (the why and the how) by which all actions of salvation, reconciliation, justice, healing, and hope restored were done. It is through Jesus’ death and resurrection that we experience God’s desire and ability to free us from sin’s grip and to untether us from death’s fear.

It is our prayer and hope (and plan), that this Lent we will follow the gospel way and hone in on the last hours of Jesus’ earthly life. That together we might go deep into this darkest time in order to experience anew the light of resurrection. That together we can reflect on how indeed this one day has changed everything, and, by the grace of God, continues to change us.

In the Power of the Resurrection,
 Pastor Darcey

**Our Lenten Series Theme is
The Day That Changed Everything**

February 26	The Lord’s Supper
March 5	The Garden of Gethsemane
March 12	Condemned by the Righteous
March 19	Peter and Judas, Denials and Betrayals
March 26	Jesus, Barabbas, and Pilate
April 2	Palm Sunday
April 6	Maundy Thursday
April 7	Good Friday
April 9	Easter

March Birthdays

March 1

Barb Abu-Jaber

March 2

Cathy Clark
Bill Gayne

March 4

Malinda Eastman

March 5

Joe Dailey

March 6

Judy Metz
Gabbie Rhodes
Sarah Rhodes

March 7

Janelle Graeter

March 8

Charlie Dameron

March 10

Barbara Gifford
Dakan Honea
Izzy Honea
Bradford Hulcher
Beth Stuckey

March 14

Becky Beattie
Pat Clark

March 15

Bob Sanford

March 18

Tom York
Meghan Grau

March 22

Carolyn McCracken

March 23

Catherine Conner

March 26

Starr Alexander

March 27

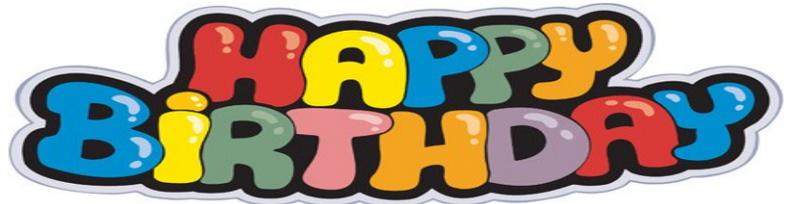
Martha Williams

March 28

Lori Alford

March 31

Jim Hotinger
Olivia Messer
Gene Waters





New Prayer Ministry Opportunities

Last fall, our Director of Engagement, Lori Alford, initiated a Prayer Ministry Team to strengthen, evaluate, and coordinate the prayer ministry of River Road. The team has been meeting since then to pray and develop a coordinated action plan for prayer opportunities at River Road.

The purpose of River Road's Prayer Ministry is to:

Raise the level of awareness, knowledge, and participation in prayer

Love people to life by praying individually and corporately for one another and for those things on the heart of God.

We are now ready to reach out to the congregation to invite you to serve as a Prayer Partner in two specific ways. First, a Prayer Space is being created in the chapel for prayer on Sundays from 10:00-11:00am. You may kneel to pray alone or with a Prayer Partner, light candles as part of your prayers, and if desired, receive healing prayer with a Prayer Partner. Second, we will be increasing opportunities for the congregation to make prayer requests, so Prayer Partners are needed to pray for these requests at home or in the Prayer Space. Prayer Partner Training will be provided.

Training will be offered at two different times in the chapel:

Sunday, March 26, 10:00-11:00am

Sunday, April 2, 12:00-1:00pm

The Prayer Space ministry will start on Sunday, April 23.

Without Prayer Partners this ministry cannot move forward. You are needed. Please [click here](#) to sign up or contact Lori (engagement@riverroadumc.org or 804-740-7061) if you are willing to serve and identify which training you can attend. If neither time works for you, we will schedule a third training as needed.

Watch for more information about River Road's prayer ministry.

Rev. Beth Downs, Prayer Ministry Team Leader

 River of Lifers (adults 50+)

The Valentine

museum

+ lunch at Joe's Inn

Tuesday, March 21st



1015 E CLAY ST, RICHMOND, VA 23219

YOUTH

Youth get together regularly for mission, devotion and good times. Join us anytime!

Every Sunday at 5:30: Youth Group for Middle and High School

Every Sunday at 10:00: Sunday School for 5th grade and up

Every Wednesday morning: High School devotional time over breakfast

Contact Tom at youth@riverroadumc.org to learn more about our programs.



Pray for our Confirmation Class that began in February



Worship at Westview during Retreat



Tubing on the last bit of snow this winter.



Good times on a cold night



ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

Lent is a wonderful time to renew one's faith and study Christianity. A number of wonderful opportunities exist to learn and hold ourselves accountable for our continuing journey of learning during the 40 days of Lent.

Join a Lenten Study! We are studying the book, 24 Hours that Changed the World by Adam Hamilton. Each week, a focus will be on a different part of the time between the Last Supper and the Crucifixion. The book will build from the sermons delivered Sunday morning. Books available in Church Office or Welcome Center (\$10 donation). Three classes occurring:
 Sundays, 6:00 PM at Church, Room 205/207. Led by Bob Wilson
 Thursday, 9:00 AM via Zoom or at Church, Room 205/207. Led by Tom York
 Sundays, 10:00 AM at Church, Room 202

Start a personal daily devotional! Lenten devotionals available in our Welcome Center, or commit to a personal favorite.

Support a mission through donations and prayer. As a church, we will focus our missional efforts for Rise Against Hunger. Save your loose change and help fill our Mason Jars! And be sure to join us the Sunday after Easter for our mealpacking event.

Keep on Learning! God's word is wonderful.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

March 2023

RIVER ROAD
KIDS

Join us Sunday mornings!

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

Preschool Discipleship for March:

Preschoolers love trying to do things like grown-ups. They like to press buttons on computers and jump high to throw the basketball or stir the food to make something yummy to eat. Being able to say they can do things like Mommy or Daddy is a big deal! This month, we are teaching preschoolers something else they can do that's a really big deal. They can love like Jesus! We want them to know that they can love like Jesus. When they love like Jesus, it's like tossing confetti everywhere! Serving others, showing kindness, helping, and loving everyone—these are things that even our youngest children can do. And when they do, they love like Jesus.

Memory Verse for March:

“A FRIEND LOVES AT ALL TIMES.” ~ PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

K-5 Discipleship for March:

No matter how much we mess up, God will always forgive us. Jesus even chose to forgive those who were crucifying Him. Because God forgives us, we should work hard to forgive others. We can decide that someone who has wronged us doesn't have to pay. With God's help, we can free ourselves from the weight of anger and bitterness, while giving the other person an opportunity to rewrite the story.

Memory Verse For March:

“PUT UP WITH ONE ANOTHER. FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER IF YOU ARE HOLDING SOMETHING AGAINST SOMEONE. FORGIVE, JUST AS THE LORD FORGAVE YOU.” ~ COLOSSIANS 3:13, NIRV



FRANCES ALLEN/ALICE WEED CIRCLE:

Come join us for the Francis Allen/Alice Weed Circle meeting on March 14th at 10:00am in room 205/207. Everyone is invited for inspiration and fellowship. When you come to the March Circle meeting, please consider bringing a couple NEW small items we can donate to the new campus store housed in one room of the just opened Caring Closet building on the UMFS campus. The store needs things teens love like make up, lip balm, hair accessories, lotions (full and travel size), fuzzy winter socks, novelty winter hats and gloves, notebooks and journals (no spiral), fuzzy blankets, art supplies, gel pens, medium sized stuffed animals, soft fidget items, and encouraging posters. Thank you in advance!



United
Women
in Faith

RRUMC-UWF Update: At our February 14th meeting, by unanimous vote, we decided to consolidate the UWF Board and the Circle, making for more streamlined leadership and offering fuller participation in planning annual goals and outreach projects! We'll still keep an eye on our District UWF goals, responsibilities and participation while excitedly moving forward with our RRUMC ladies to put "faith, hope, and love in action" wherever God leads!

BOOK CLUB:

The first Monday Book Club meets at 7PM, 2800 Chancel Lane, home of Ann York, 907-748-0446. March 6 we will be reading local author, Sadeqa Johnson, The Yellow Wife. It revolves around the slave trade in Richmond and is a very interesting and entertaining read. March 30 we will go as a group to hear Jamie Ford speak at Tucker HS auditorium. Details will follow. The group will discuss his book, The Many Daughters of Afong Moy on April 3. Everyone is welcome. All you have to do is tell Ann you are interested or call her and it is a done deal! Hope to see you all then, and keep reading!! So many books, so little time.

The Second Monday Book Club will meet March 13 to discuss The It Girl, by Ruth Ware presented by Anne Dudley.

Please come by 11129 Woodbaron Court for the gathering and reviews.

CREATION CARE

Preamble: Newsletter written monthly to guide our commitment to care for God's Creation (and **all** of God's people and creatures). "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it" (Genesis 2:15).

Things to be Thankful for: A) "Varina land within battlefield area will be protected forever . . . 28 acres donated to Capital Region Land Conservancy" (RTD, 7/25, p. A1); B) "Paradise for pelicans. Nesting brown species now makes Chesapeake Bay its breeding grounds" (RTD; 7/24, p. E6); C) "Couple donates land to ensure public access to . . . Buttermilk Trail" (RTD, 11/2, p. A2);

Things to be Concerned About: A) The ways in which climate shifts are impacting weather and in particular U.S. flood maps" (RTD, 9/5, p. A12). B) "Scientists decry loss of tiny ocean organisms . . . and they are critically important to sustaining larger marine life up the food chain" (RTD, 1/23, p. A10);

Things to Do: A) Continue to develop an understanding of God's call for us to care for creation; B) Commit to the 6 Rs (i.e., Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Rent, Recycle and Rot (i.e., Compost)

Respectfully - and hopefully - submitted - Michael j Wriston, Chair, Earth Advocacy Committee (River Road United Methodist Church)

ONGOING NEEDS - FOOD PANTRIES

The demand for food at Ginter Park UMC, Belmont UMC and St. Paul's Catholic Church, and for residents of the shelter at Safe Harbor continues. The temporary increase in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits implemented during the pandemic ended after February's benefits, so food pantries are seeing a rise in the need for food. Your support is much appreciated. 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. Weekly updates will highlight particular needs. Thanks to Tony and Jean Barnette, George and Sari Eapen, Mark and Connie Whetstine, Stephanie and Daniel O'Neill, Tom York, and the youth group for their work on this mission.

UPCOMING MISSIONS

Mark your calendars for **April 16** when we will be doing **foodpacking** for **Rise Against Hunger**. Join us for this fun event with roles for the entire family. We are excited to have enough funding to pack 20,000 meals.

Rebuilding Together, which is a day of repairing homes for families and individuals who own their homes but don't have sufficient income for repair and upkeep, will occur on **April 29**. Whatever your skills, there is a role for you in this day long project. We will be working on two homes. If interested in volunteering, contact Randy Reaves, randalreaves@verizon.net.

This year, we will only do a late summer/early fall collection for **Eva Huston Pantry**. We will collect Christmas gifts for the children and funding to purchase food in Liberia for the orphanages. Your past support has made a real difference for these children. Watch for more information on this year's collection, coming in late summer.

"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. For more missions information, contact Ann Hodges, ahodges@richmond.edu or 804-339-9440.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Join Ann York and Bess Traylor on the 4th Thursday of each month at 11am, in the Parlor, to learn about community resources, build a support system, exchange information on challenges and possible solutions, and share feelings, needs, and concerns with other people who understand.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, March 23 at 11am.

This is a group open to anyone in our community who is a caregiver.

Caregiver Support Group

Sponsored by:


**ALZHEIMER'S[®]
ASSOCIATION**



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

March 2023

Articles for the
April 2023
Connections are due
March 20, 2023.



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

Mark your calendars

Church Grounds Clean Up Day!

Church grounds spring clean-up day will be Saturday, March 25 from 9:00 - 12:00.

Let's show our beautiful church grounds some love and get it ready for the spring flowers to bloom and Easter to arrive.

Snacks will be provided! You can bring your favorite tool(s) or use ours, bring a water bottle and your enthusiasm.

Feel free to come for just part of the day if that works for your schedule (or your back!) and know there will be tasks designed for everyone and every ability. Credit for Service hours for youth will be given.

If you plan to make it please email Kate Meilink at meilinkk@gmail.com so we can better plan, but know that if you don't RSVP, you are certainly welcome to join us!

Open Arms Christian Preschool

Last month the children spent additional time focused on "Love and Kindness" and how to treat others. Children shared some of the things we can all do to show love; smile, spend time together, give hugs, say "I love you", share and give. We also talked about how God made us all different, but even though we are different we are all God's children.

OACP is in open registration for the 2023-2024 school year. There are currently open spots in the Pre-Kindergarten Program for the 2023-2024 school year. All other classrooms are full, but we are accepting waitlist applications. OACP is also hiring for a Full-Time Assistant Teacher beginning Summer 2023. If you or any of your family and friends are interested in the open position or in enrolling a child at OACP, please contact the Preschool Director, Nora Hamlet, at 804-754-0227 or email her at openarms@riverroadumc.org.



OPEN ARMS
CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

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