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⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each.

⁹ For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

1 Corinthians 3:6-9

Plant, Water, Grow

This word of planting, watering, and growth is my go-to scripture during two distinct times in life and leadership: the moment when I begin serving at a church and when I am preparing to leave leadership within a congregation. From onboarding to leave taking—during these times in particular, I think about how this passage talks about ministry and leadership. Paul, writing to the church in Corinth (a church he founded), reminds the church that while leaders have an important role in the church – planting and watering – any life transformation or missional “growth” comes from God. And that each and every person who is a “member” of the body of Christ is working together to become fertile ground through which God works to change lives. Implied in Paul’s letter is that God’s activity is magnified and multiplied when there is connection and unified direction among leaders and members. In other words, God’s offers of forgiveness, restoration, reconciliation, and healing in Jesus take root in people’s lives most powerfully and presently when people are working together while working with God.

Once again, 1 Corinthians 3 is headlining within my mind and soul as we prepare for a pastoral transition. After eight years, I will be rotating out as the Lead Pastor and I know you all will be warmly and graciously welcoming a new colleague—Rev. Sarah Sealand into the RRUMC family in July. I want to thank God for the opportunity to serve Christ with you at RRUMC. You all have been, and are, tremendously supportive of the gifts God has given to me, and God has done some good work in us, through us, and even at times in spite of us! I will be articulating and giving God thanks for our time in ministry (and all the ways you have loved me and our family to life) and we remain connected in Christ and through the United Methodist Connection. And we remember that any growth that has occurred, and will most certainly continue, is by God’s grace and to God’s glory!

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Darcey

May/June Upper Room
Devotionals are available outside the keypad door, in the Narthex, and in the Welcome Center.

Worship: Everything the Day Changes:
Living the Light of the Resurrection

May 7 Lori Alford preaching

May 14 Mother’s Day

May 21 Graduate Sunday

May 28 Memorial Day Weekend

June 4 Confirmation Sunday—

One united service with a meal to follow!

May Birthdays

May 1

Jane Gresham
 Jane Boaz
 Tom York

May 4

Charles Messer

May 5

Grayson Clarke
 Caroline Davis
 Anthony Franklin

May 6

Teddie Lawrence
 Addie Kemp

May 7

John Simmers
 Charles Messer Sr.
 Griffin Gayne

May 8

Ansel Eastman

May 9

Carter Hayes
 Will Conner

May 10

Virginia Patterson

May 13

Olivia Moum

May 14

Stephanie Jeffrey

May 15

Pres Purdum
 Ernie Weston

May 16

Missy Markey

May 18

Jim Banta

May 19

Phil Brennan
 Noah Benson

May 22

Nancy Kuehl
 Ethan Benson
 Finnegan Buchholz

May 24

Bess Traylor

May 25

Dot Patrick
 Joan Brennan
 Stephanie Reed-Wriston

May 26

Laura Talley

May 29

Trenton Bone
 Perkins Smith

May 30

Elizabeth Buchholz
 Ella Garnett





choose community



Mom, we'd be muffin without you.

On **Mother's Day, Sunday, May 14**, be sure to stop by the Welcome Center before or after worship for a treat. We're celebrating our moms and mothers in the faith with muffins, coffee, and juice.

Graduate Sunday Reception

High school and college grads will be honored on Sunday, May 21 with a reception in the Welcome Center from 10:00-11:00am. Stop by to congratulate our grads and celebrate with cake! Please contact the church office no later than May 8 to submit names of high school, college, and graduate school graduates in our RRUMC family.

River of Lifers

The River of Lifers group includes adults ages 50 and up. We gather monthly for fun and fellowship. Join us in May for BINGO and pizza!

RSVP to Lori Alford at engagement@riverroadumc.org or 740-7061.

Our Prayer Space is now open

Each Sunday the chapel (located behind the sanctuary) is open from 10:00-11:00am as a prayer space where you can pray, sit silently, light a candle for someone, receive a prayer for healing, or share a prayer request. Prayer Partners will be there to guide you. We hope you will visit this space and that it will be a holy place where you can encounter God.

YOUTH



Confirmation Retreat!



Belle Isle Hike!

Ten Commandments Study Continues!



"Do Not Testify Falsely Against your Neighbor "
-Exodus 20:15

Blanket Making with the West End Youth Circuit.



Confirmation Sunday June 4th

To celebrate our 4 confirmands this year, we will have one single service at 11am with lunch to follow.

- Our 2023 Confirmands
- Carlín Benson
- Elliot Eastman
- Hannah Lane Gilliland
- Claire Stuckey

Please keep them and their faith journey in your prayers.

Join us Sunday mornings!

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

Preschool Discipleship for May:

When given the opportunity, preschoolers are ready and willing to help because it shows the world they are big and can do things that matter. Need help stirring in the kitchen? Preschoolers to the rescue! Need help carrying groceries? Preschoolers to the rescue! Need help entertaining a fussy baby? Preschoolers to the rescue! Could it be that the real reason preschoolers want to help is that God made them to help? We think so! That is why we will be spending this month answering the question "Who made you to help?" God made me to help! That's who! After all, God is the ultimate helper, and we are all made in God's image.

Memory Verse for May:

"WE HAVE THE LORD OUR GOD TO HELP US."

2 CHRONICLES 32:8, NLT

K-5 Discipleship for May:

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CONFIDENCE AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH
GOD'S BIG STORY

We might try to base our confidence on what we do well, or what someone might say about us. But true confidence should be built on something different. We think it's found in understanding how God is both big enough to create the universe, but also close enough to be right here with us. We know that we can trust God no matter what. We are created in God's image. And God loves us so much! Nowhere is this more evident than in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. And, when we trust Jesus with our life, the Holy Spirit is there to help us face whatever comes our way. We can respond to God's love and care with confidence!

Memory Verse For May:

"SO WE SAY WITH CONFIDENCE, 'THE LORD IS MY HELPER; I WILL NOT BE AFRAID.'"

HEBREWS 13:6A, NIV



FRANCIS ALLEN/ALICE WEED CIRCLE

Thank you to all those who donated items and to those who assembled the 20 UMCOR Hygiene Kits. They will provide much needed necessities to those in the midst of crisis.



United
Women
in Faith

Our next meeting is Tuesday, May 9th at 11:00AM. (Note time change for this meeting.) We are hosting our annual Salad Luncheon at church honoring both the OACP staff and our church staff. They are all so dedicated and hardworking and make such a big difference in so many lives! Circle members need to arrive at 11:00AM and the Staff Luncheon will start at 11:30. Circle members are asked to contact Percy Flippen (cell 804-363-8701) to let her know if you are bringing a salad or a dessert.

Our May outreach project is to provide a lasagna dinner for 8 ladies in a Safe Harbor Shelter on Wednesday, May 10th. If you signed up to help, please bring your food to the May 9th Circle meeting and give it to Nancy Seese who will deliver the meal to the Safe Harbor office for distribution.

FAITH * HOPE * LOVE in action!

BOOK CLUB

The first Monday Book Club meets at 7PM, 2800 Chancel Lane, home of Ann York, 907-748-0446. On May 1, we will discuss West With Giraffes by Lynda Rutledge. 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 May 8 to discuss The Good Left Undone by Adriana Trigiani, presented by Marge.

This club, which has been in existence for three years, welcomes you at 11129 Woodbaron Court. I can be reached at 804-402-7494 for further questions. Email address, besstraylor@verizon.net.

Please come by for the gathering and reviews.

CREATION CARE

Things to be Thankful for: A) "A rare bipartisan solution on clean energy . . . the General Assembly . . . passed legislation to allow biomass facilities to remain open" (RTD, 4/11, p. A7); B) "Chemicals giant Albemarle announced it will build a \$1.3 billion lithium plant in South Carolina" ("CWCW", 4/9), C) "The average electric car sold in the U.S. is fast approaching 300 miles between charges . . . putting the U.S. average above all other major car markets" (RTD, 3/11, p. A10; D) "FEMA will provide extra funding for low-carbon building materials in areas that have been hit by natural disasters" (*ibid*); E) "U.S. to Add Environment to Economic Measures . . . by creating a system for assessing the worth of healthy ecosystems to humanity" (NYT, 1/20, p. B1); F) "EPA Proposes Ban on All Consumer, Most Industrial and Commercial Uses of Methylene Chloride . . . a dangerous chemical known to cause serious health risks and even death" (EPA Press Office, 4/20); but there are:

Things to be Concerned About: A) "Authors of a new study say that the federal government is likely underestimating the extent of 'forever chemicals' contamination in drinking water" (WSJ, 4/13, p. A 4); B) "Conservation areas are short on insect habitats . . . 76 percent: the proportion of insects that aren't well protected by conservation areas . . . That's a problem because the world's insect population is plummeting" (*Science News*, 3/11, p. 5); C) "Auto makers face steep challenges in transitioning the nation to electric vehicles . . . with hurdles including consumer sentiment, supply-chain issues and an evolving network of public charging stations" (WSJ, 4/13, p. A1); D) "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).

Continued on next page

EASTER OFFERING

At this writing, the Easter offering to fund missions is close to \$20,000. We are deeply grateful for these bountiful gifts and still praying for full funding of our \$25,000 budget. It is not too late to make your Easter offering. Just make the designation on your check, envelope, or online gift.

APRIL MISSIONS RECAP

Thanks to all who participated in **Rise Against Hunger** meal packing. What a fun event! Almost 100 congregants packaged 20,000 meals for the hungry around the world. Your generous donations on Christmas Eve helped fund the food purchase. Special thanks to Rob Neighbors, Michael English, Laurel Via, and Stephanie and Daniel O'Neill for their leadership of this event.

We are also thankful for all those who volunteered for **Rebuilding Together**. We worked on two homes next door to one another in South Richmond, making needed repairs for homeowners so that they can remain safely in their homes. Randy Reaves led this mission, with Drew Johnson, Tom York, Jasper Mersereau and Laurel Marks as our able crew leaders.

Finally, we enjoyed hearing from Ben Blevins and Lupe Ramirez about their outstanding work at **Highland Support Project**. We learned how the organization's model builds "hope, not dependency" and provides "opportunity, not charity." We had a wonderful opportunity to help the organization achieve these goals by purchasing goods from AlterNatives, which provides a market that creates opportunity and hope for indigenous people.

DONATIONS TO MISSIONS PARTNERS

Mark and Charlotte Allred were able to obtain generous donations of baby blankets and fleece blankets from JoAnn's Fabrics through their granddaughter. They delivered them to Little Hands, The Caring Closet at UMFS, and Housing Families First. There was yarn left over for our prayer shawl ministry. We are very grateful to Charlotte and Mark for making this happen for our partners and to JoAnn's Fabrics for the donations.

ONGOING NEEDS - FOOD PANTRIES AND SAFE HARBOR

The demand for food continues to grow, with record numbers visiting the food pantries each week. 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; oatmeal; boxed cereal; 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. We also need additional volunteers for our food pantry mission as our fantastic leaders, Tony and Jean Barnette are taking a well-deserved break starting in June. If you want to explore whether God is calling you to help, reach out to Ann Hodges.

"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.

CREATION CARE - continued

Things to Do: A) Consider refurbished electronics, which can "significantly reduce the environmental impact of electronic waste" (currently estimated at 50 million tons each year) (*The Environmental Magazine*, 4/13); B) "Six Easy Ways to Live More Sustainably" . . . 1) Save Food Scraps for Broth; 2) Buy Refurbished or Open Box Items; 3) Curate a Capsule Wardrobe; 4) Go Paperless But Clear Out Cloud Storage; D) Commit to the 6 Rs (i.e. Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Rent, Recycle & Rot (i.e. Compost).

Respectfully - and hopefully - submitted - Michael j Wriston, Chair, Earth Advocacy Committee



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

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May 2023

**Articles for the
June 2023
Connections are due
May 21, 2023.**



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

BLAST OFF WITH US FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



JULY 10-14, 2023

9:15AM-12:15PM

REGISTER BELOW:



Open Arms Christian Preschool

The children have been engaged in many learning lessons this year at OACP! Parents recently participated in conferences where they learned about their child's progress this past year. Teachers use ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE to have parents take part in the evaluations and give insight on what they see in their child. Along with those tools OACP teachers follow Virginia's Early Learning and Developmental Standards (Birth-Five Learning Guidelines) to assess progress based on each child's age. It's been a wonderful year at OACP and we are winding down this last month with the 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 Full-Time Assistant Teachers 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.