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In September, we will be doing a sermon series named, "Speak, Lord." It is a series on the many ways God calls us to serve. My own call story has grown through the years. When I was a child, my parents report that they would stand at my bedroom door and hear me talking to what I called "my angels." But, as I got older those angels faded into the background of my life. Every now and then I would get a hint, a nudge, or a whisper that there was more to the world than I could see, but I quickly dismissed it. I now know that God was with me even when I wandered away and got too busy.

When I was in college I was learning so much about the world and I realized that I had to make a choice about the kind of person I wanted to be. I had the advantage of being far from home, so no one had any expectations about who I was. I was free to choose my own direction. I was seeing a lot of people my age making many choices, good and bad, as they spread their wings at college. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, went off to college, and he too was exploring the kind of person he wanted to be in this new adult world. He famously formed a club, a small group of brothers in Christ, who met weekly to ask, "How is it with your soul?" and to hold each other accountable to the Christian lifestyle they professed. His fellow classmates, as a taunt, called this club "The Methodists." Like John Wesley, I tend to be methodical in my approach to life at times. I like to keep a paper planner (in addition to my electronic calendar). I love to make reservations so I know where I am going and can plot how to get there. My friends don't taunt me, but they do call me "organized." So it was natural for me, in college, to decide I needed a rule of life to follow so that I could be consistent in my choices. I wanted to be a good adult.

One evening, I shared my thoughts with a new friend. He said, "Why don't you live the life of a Christian?" I said I wasn't sure that I believed in Jesus. What he said next has stuck with me for over 20 years. He said, "If your parents died in a car accident when you were a child, would you stop believing you had parents? Just because you don't see them doesn't mean they are not a part of you." Then he said, "Why don't you study Jesus? Pretend that you believe and see how it goes?" I stopped pretending a few years after that conversation because I started to believe on my own, deep in my soul. The grace that Jesus gave me during those years, and today, gave me a new perspective on life. In those years, Jesus nudged me, waited for me, heard my prayers, and gave me Christian companions who listened and challenged me. Jesus kept showing up in what I call "God moments." The Lord definitely spoke to me in specific ways that I could understand, so that my faith would increase. I don't really know where or when God's call on my life began. I don't know a day or time that I chose to follow Jesus. What I do know is that it all started with God, who calls me "my child."

In September, we will hear all the many ways folks in our congregation are called by God. What is your call story? What part of the story are you in now? Our key verse will be 1 Samuel 3:10 "Then the Lord came and stood there, calling just as before, Samuel, Samuel! Samuel said, Speak. Your servant is listening." Child of God, are you listening to God's call? Are you brave enough to say, "Speak, Lord?"

Pastor Sarah Sealand

**July/August  
 Upper Room  
 Devotionals are  
 available in the  
 Narthex and  
 Welcome Center.**



## Upcoming Worship:

August 6—Created to Respond: Love Your neighbor

August 13—Like and Share: Are You Bent?

August 20—Like and Share: By Faith I Can...

August 27—Like and Share: What Does Healing Look Like?

## August Birthdays

### August 1

Randi Wingate  
Horace Payne III

### August 4

Gloria Jeffrey  
Rob Neighbors  
Brittany Benton  
Jamie Benson

### August 5

Ken Peterson  
Shelia Fleming

### August 6

Ryan Neighbors

### August 7

Michael Hubley

### August 9

Jonathan Barrett  
Alyona Marks

### August 12

Chuck Bartlett

### August 13

Sherrie Franklin  
Leona Williams

### August 14

Granville Patrick

### August 15

Ken Atherholt  
Joyce Painter

### August 17

Tyler Kidd

### August 18

Evelyn Hill

### August 19

Bella Benson

### August 20

Matthew Vaughan  
Ann Warren Harless

### August 21

Phil Cornett  
Brandon Rothenberg  
Christopher Jeffrey  
Matthew Jeffrey

### August 22

Sandy Irwin  
Meg Eastman  
Madi Dameron  
Micah Chang

### August 24

Ashton Gilmore

### August 25

Dave Morris

### August 26

Jim Taylor  
Beck Garnett

### August 30

Daniel O'Neill Sr.

### August 31

William Graeter  
Rhodes Ritenour





# FAITH NIGHT

AT THE DIAMOND

THURSDAY, AUGUST 10TH, 6:35PM



Cheer on the Richmond Flying Squirrels with River Road UMC.  
Don't miss the amazing fireworks after the game!

Field-level tickets are \$14 each. Pay by cash, check, or online.

All ages are invited to Faith Night at the Diamond.

Click here to sign up by August 7: [Flying Squirrels Faith Night](#)

Questions? Contact Lori Alford: [engagement@riverroadumc.org](mailto:engagement@riverroadumc.org) or 740-7061

RRUMC RIVER OF LIFERS  
(ADULTS 50+)

*Summer Lunch Series*

Meet up for lunch and fellowship

Tuesday, August 22nd at 11:30am

THE GRAPEVINE

11055 Three Chopt Rd

RSVP to Lori: [engagement@riverroadumc.org](mailto:engagement@riverroadumc.org) | 804-740-7061



Helping at church!



Shalom Farms!

Youth Group will resume on Sunday Nights from 6:00-8:00 starting on August 27th.



Laser Tag!

Our Youth Summer of Service Continues!



Bus Rides!

**Adult Discipleship**

Hope everyone is having a wonderful summer! On Sept 10th, two new Bible study opportunities are starting. Please reach out Tom York at [tom@riverroadumc.org](mailto:tom@riverroadumc.org) if you are interested in joining either of these classes.

**Adult Discipleship 'Fast Track'**. A 12 week long course that dives deep into scripture. A wonderful foundational course for anyone looking to explore, deepen, or renew their understanding of the Bible. Daily readings of 3 to 4 chapters of the Bible, with class meeting on Sunday evenings from Sept 10th to Nov 19th.

**"Treasures of the Word"**. A new weekly class meeting Sunday Mornings at 10:00. Led by Vicki Keith, this class will focus on different passages from the Bible each week and the impact they have on our daily lives. Each Sunday will be a different scripture and lesson, with scripture and notes sent out ahead of time for reading and contemplation.

## 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 August:**

Which would mean more to you? Something made by a stranger, or something made by your child? Your child's creation would be the clear winner, because knowing who made something can add value to the thing that has been made. That is why we want our preschoolers to know that God made Everything, because knowing God made everything makes everything very good! And since God made SO many good things, we are going to Stack It Up this month — ALL OF IT — from day one through day seven. So, let's get ready for a whole lot of stacking!

### **Memory Verse for August:**

“GOD SAW EVERYTHING HE HAD MADE. AND IT WAS VERY GOOD.” GENESIS 1:31, NIRV

### **K-5 Discipleship for August:**

GOD VIEW: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CREATIVITY AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY

When we look outside and see the beautiful world around us, we're reminded that God is great, powerful, and creative. From the birds flying high in the sky, to the planets orbiting the sun, to animals scampering around the earth, everything we see points to God's immense creativity. Jesus used creativity in the way He told parables, performed miracles, and helped His followers understand more about what it means to be part of God's kingdom. On top of that, we're created in God's image. We can solve problems, create art and music, and design skyscrapers high into the sky. When we create, we reflect the image of God to the world around us.

### **Memory Verse For August:**

“WE ARE GOD'S CREATION. HE CREATED US TO BELONG TO CHRIST JESUS. NOW WE CAN DO GOOD WORKS. LONG AGO GOD PREPARED THESE WORKS FOR US TO DO.”  
EPHESIANS 2:10, NIRV



**FRANCES ALLEN/ALICE WEED CIRCLE**

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the next Circle meeting on September 12th at 10:00am. Have a great summer!



United  
Women  
in Faith

**BOOK CLUBS**

The first Monday Book Club is taking a break in August, and will meet again in September on the **second** Monday which is September 11 (the first Monday is Labor Day). Mark your calendar...Monday, September 11 at 7:00pm, Ann's house. The book is *The Twist of the Knife*, a mystery by Anthony Horowitz. He is the writer for the Midsummer Mystery Series on PBS. Ann will be leading the discussion. October 2, Marge will lead our discussion of *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver.

Keep reading and come with a good book to discuss in the fall. If interested in the group, email Ann York at [annyorkak@gmail.com](mailto:annyorkak@gmail.com)

The Second Monday Book Club will meet and discuss the narrative, *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek*, a novel written by Kim Michelle Richardson. The story is about a girl named Cussy living in the remote mountains of Kentucky, who delivers books, magazines, pamphlets, etc. We learn her story, along with those of the families on her route.

Join us at Bess Traylor's home, 11129 Woodbaron Court @ 1:00 pm. All are welcomed.

Bring your school backpack or other items  
as we get ready for the school year!

**Blessing of  
the Backpacks**

**Sunday, August 20th**

**EVA HUSTON PANTRY**

We will begin collecting for the Eva Huston Pantry Christmas donations later this summer. We plan to collect funds to purchase food for the orphanages in Liberia, both to support businesses in the country and avoid shipping costs. Current instability in the country makes shipping both costly and risky, as the goods may not make it to their destination. We can provide much more and guarantee delivery by making the purchases in Liberia. You will have the opportunity to donate funds to buy a bag of rice or other staples to help feed the children.

**FALL SERVICE DAY**

The missions committee is planning a fall day of service on Saturday, September 23. There will be opportunities to participate in several hands-on missions in the morning, followed by lunch at the church. Watch for more information and sign-ups to come. Thanks to George and Sari Eapen and Lori Alford for leading this mission.

**HELPING CHILDREN WORLDWIDE PRESENTATION AND BOOK SALE**

Mohamed Emmanuel Nabieu (“Nabs”), Director for Mission Advancement & Partnership at Helping Children Worldwide, has written a book about how he survived life on the streets in Sierra Leone and overcame severe trauma to find joy in bringing hope to vulnerable children. Nabs will join us on September 17 to talk about his book and his mission. You will have an opportunity to purchase a signed copy of the book and to learn more about this mission that we have long supported. Many church members and groups currently sponsor children through this mission.

**ONGOING NEEDS - FOOD PANTRIES AND SAFE HARBOR**

Our food pantry partners are seeing record numbers almost every week. Most-needed items remain the same - peanut butter; 15 oz. cans of tomato sauce; 1 lb. spaghetti; canned fruit and vegetables; canned soups and beans; canned chicken and tuna; boxed cereal; oatmeal; ravioli/spaghettios; non-refrigerated microwave meals; diapers and wipes (sizes 4, 5 and 6 are most needed). Standard, non-glass container sizes are appreciated for packing purposes. Watch the app, as well as email, for weekly updates that highlight particular needs. Thanks to Daniel and Stephanie O’Neill for leading this ministry.

“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. We are always happy for new mission volunteers. For more missions information, contact Ann Hodges, [ahodges@richmond.edu](mailto:ahodges@richmond.edu) or 804-339-9440.

<b>PRAYER SPACE</b>
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**PRAYER SPACE IS AVAILABLE ON SUNDAY MORNINGS**

Every Sunday morning from 9 am to noon, River Road offers a quiet space for prayer and meditation in the chapel, located behind the sanctuary. Whether you stop by for 5 minutes to light a candle or stay for 30 minutes for a time of quiet, you are welcome to use the Prayer Space. Between 10 am and 11 am, two Prayer Partners are in the Prayer Space, praying for the prayer requests that have been received during the previous month. They are available to pray with you and for you as well. If requested, they can offer a healing prayer.

You are also invited to use the Prayer Request cards, located in the sanctuary pew racks and in the fellowship hall, to state any request for prayer by the Prayer Partners. Alternatively, you may email the church office. The Prayer Ministry Team and the Prayer Partners are helping to lead River Road into a more intentional life of prayer. We encourage you to use these resources.

Beth Downs, for the Prayer Ministry Team



**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

August 2023

**Articles for the  
September 2023  
Connections are due  
August 16, 2023.**



We're on the web at  
[www.riverroadumc.org](http://www.riverroadumc.org)

### **CREATION CARE TIP:**

Consider a vegan diet. It leaves less of a carbon footprint in the world and it's healthier for you too. Not ready to go all the way vegan? Consider removing chicken, beef, and pork from your diet for one day or one week. Want to know more? Here are some Netflix documentaries that are eye opening: Cowspiracy, Kiss the Ground, Rotten, Vegucated, David Attenborough: A life on our planet.

Michael J. Wriston  
Earth Advocacy Chair



Summer Office  
Hours

### **SUMMER OFFICE HOURS**

Through Labor Day, the office will be open from

7:30am—5:30pm Monday—Thursday.

**The office will be closed  
on Fridays**



Summer Camp has been so much fun for all the children in attendance at OACP! The focus this summer has been on STEAM, with units on Dirt, Waves, Rockets, Water, Clouds, Energy and so much more! We've had special visitors come and volunteer their time to share projects with the children and help

out around the classrooms. It's been a summer filled with lots of fun!

We are now in the process of finalizing 2023-2024 school year classes and accepting applications for Substitutes for the new school year. No experience is needed to help out in classrooms when our staff need to take time off. Please contact the Preschool Director, Nora Hamlet, at 804-754-0227, or email her at [openarms@riverroadumc.org](mailto:openarms@riverroadumc.org) if you are able to join our substitute teacher list.



**OPEN ARMS**  
CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

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