



# RIVER ROAD Connections

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
*loving people to life* **November 2023**

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**November/  
December Upper  
Room Devotionals  
are available in  
the Welcome  
Center, and  
Narthex.**

**THE UPPER ROOM**  
DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Sunday morning I heard joy and laughter coming down the halls of the church. I went to join in the fun and what did I see? Children having a three legged race down the hall. They were learning team work as they learned about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Daniel 3) Children laughing in church. Children learning in church. Children making friends in church. Children making memories in church. This is the church we love. This past spring, River Road UMC again invested in children's ministry, by hiring Jaimey Honea as Director of Children's Ministry. Our children's ministry staff, Jaimey, Elizabeth, and Blandine, are all gifted and dedicated to helping our children grow to know Jesus better. These amazing adults are responding to Jesus' call on their own hearts and lives to serve God's kingdom in children's ministry at RRUMC.

River Road has an amazing finance committee who does an excellent job of stewarding all the gifts you give to your church. When we meet and talk numbers we look at the budget line item "Children's Ministry" and we do not want to cut anything! We know this work matters. We do not want our hallways to be silent or our children's wing to be empty. We want to expand our children's ministry to invite more children and their families to be part of our church family. Your financial donation to our church matters and it makes a difference. That budget line item is used to buy children's Bibles, vibrant Sunday School lessons, fun crafts, decorations and other supplies that help bring the Bible lessons to life for our children. When you look at the budget line item for clergy and staff you know that your gifts are being used to support Jaimey and other staff members into living into the calling Jesus has put on our lives. The ministries that are happening here at River Road are making a difference in the world inside and outside the walls of our church.

Sunday, November 19 is Commitment Sunday. We will have ONE service at 10:00am. The children's choirs will sing. We will invite you to make your financial commitment for 2024 to River Road during worship. I know that when I turn in my commitment card that image of children laughing in a three-legged race down the church hall will still be in my mind. The sound of children's songs will be singing in my heart and I will make a commitment to my church because I want to see more ministry not less. Thank you for what you have already given and thank you for what you will give. Your gift makes a difference.

Pastor Sarah Sealand



**WORSHIP:**

- November 5** The Creed: What We Believe—Resurrection/Communion of Saints  
All Saints Sunday
- November 12** Daniel: Trust God No Matter What
- November 19** SMALL=big  
Commitment Sunday  
**One service at 10am followed by a covered dish lunch!**
- November 26** Daniel: Trust God No Matter What

**Mark Your Calendars:**

**Christmas Eve Morning** We will have One service at 10am

**Christmas Eve Services:**

- 4:00pm** Contemporary Family Service in the Fellowship Hall
- 7:00pm** Traditional Service with Holy Communion

**November Birthdays****November 1**

Chrisann Alexander

**November 3**Becky Yost  
Traci Craig**November 4**Dana Lang  
Kelley Kemp  
Alana Ritenour**November 5**Marge Stewart  
Meredith Oubre**November 6**Betty Simmons  
Ivy Marks**November 7**

Ethan Wilbur

**November 9**Charlie Cunningham  
Hannah Gilliland  
Layton Barrett**November 12**Terry Barrett  
John Reaves**November 14**

Emily Fuemmeler

**November 15**

Lydia Morris

**November 17**

Jenna Potts

**November 19**Dorian Dirom  
Edwin Barrack**November 20**

Aimee Barrack

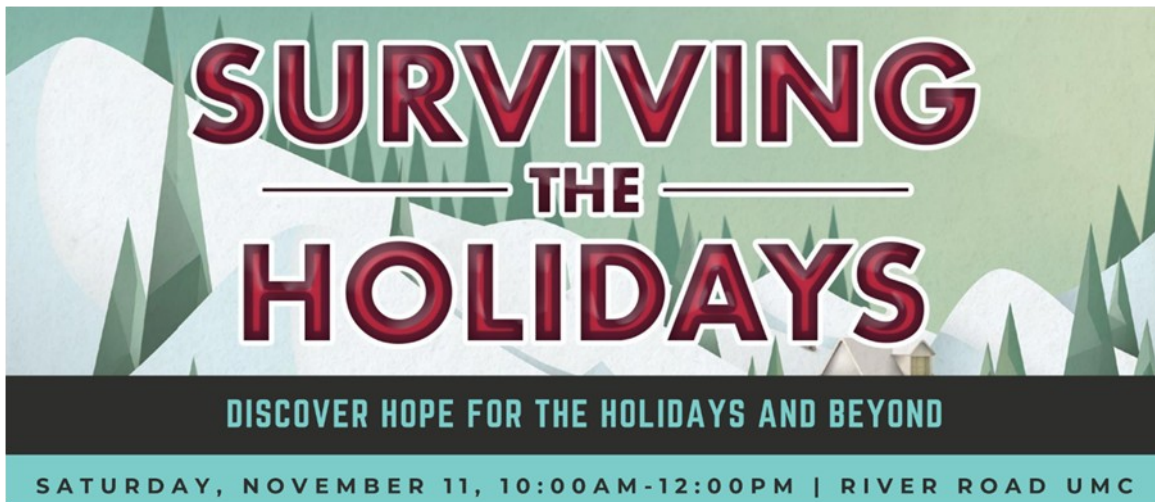
**November 22**Sandy Jolley  
Emma Benson**November 23**Nancy Seese  
Ian Conner**November 24**Marie Clarke  
Patricia Mershon  
Ali Cunningham  
Ginnie Price  
Jimmy Banta**November 25**

Carrie Francisco

**November 28**Sue Stenborg  
Karen Moeller  
Lena Busscher**November 29**

Patty Hill

**November 30**Jay Davis  
Christopher Hudson



When you are grieving a loved one's death, the holidays can be especially painful. Whether this is your first holiday without your loved one or if it's been many years, we invite you to this free seminar to learn new strategies for making it through the upcoming season.

This event is open to anyone. Please invite your family or friends.  
GriefShare resources and light refreshments will be provided.

To sign up, call 740-7061 or email Lori Alford at [engagement@riverroadumc.org](mailto:engagement@riverroadumc.org).



### **PRAYER MINISTRY UPDATE**

Since November is stewardship month at River Road, the prayer ministry team encourages you to think about not only your financial giving to River Road, but also the gift of your presence, prayers, and service. One key part of River Road's prayer ministry is serving as a prayer partner. River Road is in need of additional prayer partners to pray for the prayer requests that are received weekly from members and friends.

River Road's prayer space has been available since last April. The prayer space is in the chapel and is open on Sunday mornings for prayer and meditation. Between 10 AM and 11 AM, a prayer partner is in the prayer space praying for these prayer requests. Our goal is to have at least one prayer partner, but hopefully two, present each Sunday. This can be a time of personal prayer and meditation in addition to focusing on the prayer requests that have been submitted. With enough prayer partners, persons serve about once every eight weeks.

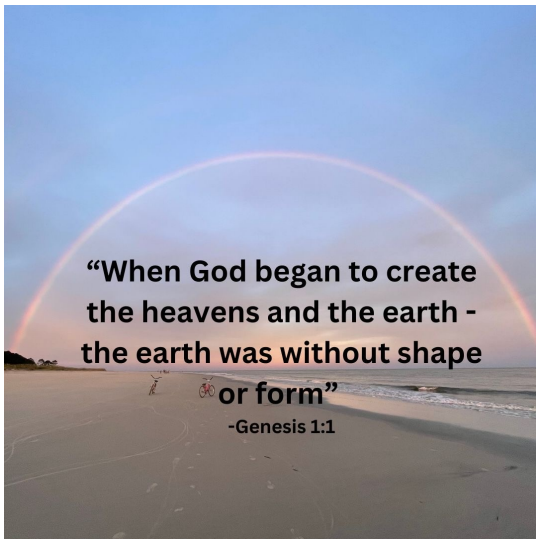
Formal training for prayer partners will be offered on Sunday, January 21, 2024, at 10 AM. In the meantime, we hope you will express your interest in serving or in learning more about this opportunity for service. Please contact Lori Alford, Director of Engagement.

Youth group every Sunday at 6:00! Other outings and small group time as well. Sign up with [youth@riverroadumc.org](mailto:youth@riverroadumc.org).



Magic time with the West End Circuit

120 youth gathered for Project Illumination and Youth Night of Worship



“When God began to create the heavens and the earth - the earth was without shape or form”  
-Genesis 1:1

Youth devotions continue online (photo credit: Claire Stuckey)

Decorating the bus for Fall Fest



**ADULT DISCIPLESHIP**

Advent is almost upon us! We plan to have two opportunities to engage with a small group study during this time in December. You can sign up in the welcome center, online, or with Tom York. Hope you can join in a small study group during this special time of the year.

- Genes of Jesus. Pastor Sarah Sealand will lead a weekly discussion diving deeper into the Sunday Sermon Series during Advent. During this series, we will explore the lives of the women in Jesus’ genealogy: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Mary and how their unique stories show faith and integrity amidst a broken world, not so unlike our own, that is in need of a Messiah, in need of a Savior. Two sessions available each week:
  - o Mondays - Dec 4, 11 and 18 at 10:00 AM. In-person at church in Room 205/207
  - o Wednesdays - Dec 6, 13, 20 at 7:00 PM. Via Zoom.
- Advent Devotional: Almost Christmas. This 4 week DVD and book study from 4 Methodist leaders will be a modern exploration of the 4 pillars of advent - Peace, Joy, Love and Hope. Class to be held during the Sunday School hour on Dec 3, 10, 17 and 24.

## 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 November:**

Thanking God for Who He is, what He has done, and what He has given us is something people have been doing for a very, very, VERY long time. You could say that the people in the Bible make up this super long PARADE OF THANKS . . . and it's up to us to keep it going! We want our preschoolers to continue this Parade of Thanks by teaching them they can thank God for everything—literally everything! Their light-up shoes, their new toy, their snack, their favorite rock . . . EVERYTHING! So let's make sure the Parade of Thanks that God's people began so long ago continues with us and our preschoolers as we choose to thank God for everything!

**Memory Verse for November:**  
 "ALWAYS GIVE THANKS TO GOD."  
 EPHESIANS 5:20, NIRV

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

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

Gratitude sometimes feels like a lost art. Yet gratitude is an idea close to God's heart. Think about all of the Bible stories where people gave thanks to God. The Israelites celebrated God with feasts and festivals. The writers of the Psalms wrote songs of praise to thank God for being faithful. Throughout this month, we hope kids will learn to be grateful for everything God has done: for the world God made, for the promises God has kept, and for the new life God offers the world through Jesus. When we remember all of these things, we can always be thankful.

**Memory Verse For November:**  
 "GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD, BECAUSE HE IS GOOD. HIS FAITHFUL LOVE CONTINUES FOREVER." PSALM 136:1, NIRV



## CREATION CARE

All creation is the Lord's and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God's creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings. (UM Social Principles #160)

ATTENTION ALL LADIES OF RRUMC there are exciting things happening with...

Women's Fellowship 2.0

Frances Allen/Alice Weed Circle has been a part of United Women in Faith for many years and done amazing mission projects and enriched women's lives in service, fellowship and faith. Yet, many of you have no idea what it's about and it's time that changed.

Women's Fellowship is changing with the times. It will be BETTER and it will offer MORE! We are looking to rename and reinvent the ministry RRUMC has for women of all ages. It will be a fun and engaging time. You will help make it that way. Watch RRUMC's Connections newsletter for updates.

Are you looking for:

A casual gathering to meet and get to know other ladies?

Bible or book study?

Different learning opportunities?

Activities to get together and have fun?

Work on mission projects with like-minded peers?

We ask you to think about what interests you, when you would want to gather and maybe who may like to come with you. We would LOVE to hear from you. Our next meeting is on November 13th at 10:00 AM in room 205/207.

Please contact Tammy Hacker at [mngirlinva88@gmail.com](mailto:mngirlinva88@gmail.com) with input, questions or ideas.

### **BOOK CLUBS**

Daytime Meeting:

The Second Monday Book Club will discuss *The Personal Librarian* written by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray, presented by Anne, on November 13 at 1:00pm. This is a novel about an extraordinary woman, famous for her intellect, style, and wit. She shares the lengths she must go to become J.P. Morgan's personal librarian. There is lots of drama as she leaves her legacy for future generations. We will meet at Brenda Anderson's home in November: 605 Glendale Drive, Henrico 23229.

*The Exiles* by Christina Baker Kline will be our Monday, December 11, selection, presented by Bess. This is a story of grace born from hardship, the unbreakable bonds of female friendships, and the unfettering of legacy.

All are welcomed to 11129 Woodbaron Court to join our stimulating discussions at 1:00 pm. Call me Bess at 804-747-7494 for questions, directions or suggestions. It is great to rest from the busy months ahead with a good book. Enjoy!

Evening Meeting:

On the first Monday of each month, Book Club meets at 7 PM at Ann York's home, 2800 Chancel Lane, 907-748-0446. If you are interested in being a part of this group, please call Ann and you will be placed on the email list that goes out to remind everyone of the meeting. On November 6, we will discuss *Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett. Kate Meilink will lead the discussion. It has been published recently so will be on the new book shelf at the library.

Beth Bertneau will lead us in discussing *A Sea Between Us* by Yosely Pereira on December 4. Keep reading and come and join our group for great discussions.

### **COAT DRIVE**

The Women's Fellowship 2.0 is collecting winter coats for men and women this winter for CARITAS. There is a huge need for these as the cold weather arrives. We will collect them through November in room 203 or the yellow cooler near the keypad door. Thank you River Road for caring and participating in this endeavor!

### UPCOMING MISSIONS

The **Hearth of Henrico Thanksgiving box** collection is underway. These food boxes provide a Thanksgiving meal that many would not be able to have otherwise. To participate: (1) pick up a box from the church and pack it with the food items from the packing list; (2) make a donation via check payable to RRUMC with “Thanksgiving box” in the memo line in the amount of \$50.00 and someone else will shop and pack; and/or (3) make a donation in the amount of \$25.00 to purchase a gift card to be included in the box. Sign up in the Welcome Center or Narthex. If you’d like to participate but are unable to sign up in person, please contact Laurel Via ([laurel.via@richmond.edu](mailto:laurel.via@richmond.edu) or (276) 492-6795). We’re hoping to pack 75 boxes this year. **Please return all boxes to Room 203 by November 12.**

The angels for **Angel Tree** will be available soon. We plan to provide gifts for 100 angels this year. If you would like to help call families, deliver gifts, or shop for gifts with donated funds, reach out to Laurel Marks, [laurelmarks@yahoo.com](mailto:laurelmarks@yahoo.com). And take an angel when available to make Christmas real for a child.

**Gifts for the Manger** – This year Gifts for the Manger will go to four missions. (1) The Karl and Jane Bren Center – a new office space at Virginia Supportive Housing named for the founders, our own Karl and Jane Bren; (2) Helping Children Worldwide; (3) UMCOR (for disaster relief as needed); (4) Food Partnerships. Donate at any time, but more information about the options is coming later in the month.

### FALL MISSIONS REPORT

We concluded the campaign for **Eva Huston Pantry** with a total of \$2660. You donated over \$500 for each of the five orphanages that EHP supports. Special thanks to George Eapen for leading the rice and beans challenge, and to Pastor Sarah and Robert for participating with an amazing rice and beans recipe. Esther Tuopay, who leads this mission, will be traveling to Liberia to purchase and distribute the food.

Our first **Serve Day** was a huge success, in spite of rainy weather! Over 45 church members participated by baking cookies for Kairos, playing Bingo with residents of Lakewood Senior Living, assembling and moving furniture at UMFS, and doing some much needed organization around the church. Other members prepared and served lunch to the volunteers and prayed for the success of the mission. What a blessing to join in community to serve others.

### ONGOING NEEDS - FOOD PANTRIES AND SAFE HARBOR

The Missions Committee is still seeking additional assistance to continue this mission at the current level of support. If God is calling you to help, reach out to Daniel and Stephanie O’Neill, Ann Hodges, or anyone on the Missions Committee. 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. Updates regarding particular items are on the app.

“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](mailto:ahodges@richmond.edu) or 804-339-9440.



RIVER ROAD  
UNITED METHODIST  
LOVING PEOPLE TO LIFE

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November 2023

**Articles for the  
December 2023  
Connections are due  
November 17, 2023.**



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

SCHOLASTIC

# WE'RE HAVING A BOOK FAIR!

OPEN ARMS CHRISTIAN  
PRESCHOOL

## SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

### AT RIVER ROAD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

In the Education Building of the Church is a Book Fair (Sunday, Nov 5<sup>th</sup> & Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>)! Visit the Book Fair for books & other fun items for your family & friends!

All your purchases benefit the Preschool to replenish books for the children in the school!

### Open Arms Christian Preschool

The children have been hard at work at OACP learning about many interesting and fun things! They were learning about the Fall season and all about the changes that happen and why they happen. The children visited the Farm in October and had a chance to go on a hayride and pick their very own pumpkin in the pumpkin patch. As we go into November we start our month of "Thanks-giving" by giving back to others. The classrooms will be decorating their food boxes and collecting canned foods that we will donate to the RRUMC food collection for the local food pantries. The children always have a fun time giving back!



Open Arms Christian Preschool is now accepting applications for those families/students interested in joining our program in the 2024-2025 school year. Please contact the Preschool Director, Nora Hamlet, at 804-754-0227 or email her at [openarms@riverroadumc.org](mailto:openarms@riverroadumc.org) for more information for the 2024-2025 school year.



**OPEN ARMS**  
CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

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