



## From Pastor Sarah

“He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.” Psalm 121:3-4

This month we start a new sermon series called Sleepytime. This series has gone through a few name changes. When doing worship planning, the first idea that popped into my head was about naps. I wondered how many people in the Bible take a nap? The first nap that came to mind was when Jesus was asleep on the boat with his disciples and there was a terrible storm. The disciples awaken Jesus and he calms the storm. From here, I tried to recall all the people in the Bible who take naps. This led me to Elijah (1 Kings 19). Before Elijah took a nap, he was done with being a prophet, fed up with people. When Elijah woke from his nap, he had new energy and new inspiration to keep truckin’ on. Now, of course, God was involved in Elijah’s heart transformation. This notion led me to wonder what other times in the Bible did someone take a nap and wake up transformed? And a sermon series was born. My first idea was to simply call it “Naps in the Bible.” When I brought this idea to my preaching team they said they would like to sleep on it. Once everyone was refreshed, we thought to call it Sleepytime, like the tea. Have you seen the sleepy bear on that package? He is in his pajamas and cap, and ready for a long slumber; in fact he has fallen asleep in his chair. This picture sparked lively conversation on our team. Together we remembered that God never rests nor slumbers. God is always taking care of all of our needs at all times, day and night. Knowing this, we are free to rest well because we know that the control of the universe is not in our hands. This is some of what I think the word peace means.

Sometimes sleep does not happen easily for us. Maybe we cannot give up our worries and surrender our stresses, needs, and fears to the Lord. Sometimes trying to fall asleep may seem like we are wrestling with God. The thing about our faith is that we can wrestle with God while trying to fall asleep, and at the same time ask God to give us peace so that we can stop wrestling and fall asleep. I saw this happen with a friend of mine who has a toddler. His toddler was fighting with him because he did not want to go to bed. His father was calm and gentle as he ushered the defiant toddler to his room. A few minutes later the house was quiet. I snuck down the hallway and peaked inside the little boy’s room. What do you think I saw? A little boy asleep in his daddy’s arms, the very one who he had been upset with just a few minutes before. The child was fighting with the one who brought him the calm he needed to peacefully fall asleep. I am grateful that God never sleeps, and I am grateful that Jesus is still calming storms in our lives. The Sleepytime sermons begin April 14 and go through May 5. Sleeping during the sermon is not encouraged.

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# New Members



Brian & Kim Peralta



Jennifer Sutherland, Leslie Wilson,  
Debbie Harvey, & Charlie Harvey

# Birthdays

April 1  
Bridget Wood

April 5  
Molly Banta

April 6  
Andraya Franklin

April 7  
Michael Moosally

April 8  
Kay Quagliano

April 9  
Becki Mann  
Brian Blevins

April 11  
Jimmy Dameron

April 12  
Joan Peterson  
Rory Buchholz

April 13  
Anne Grayson Craig  
Aubrey Cosby

April 14  
Justin Jagnarian

April 15  
Bill Bell

April 16  
Stacy Wood

April 18  
Robert Best  
Steve King  
Maria Thomas  
Amy King

April 21  
Stephen Rhodes

April 22  
Linda Vines  
Jordan Harless

April 23  
Michael Thomas  
Matt Benson

April 24  
Gerould Ward  
Harold Clarke  
Eddie Clark  
Will York

April 27  
Chip Mann  
Karen Duer-Potts

April 28  
Buddy Hiatt

April 29  
Anne Colvin  
Douglas Peterson





Consider adding one of these compelling Christian biographies to your spring reading list:

The Hiding Place  
by Corrie Ten Boom

Corrie ten Boom was a survivor of Hitler's concentration camps and one of the most remarkable evangelists of the twentieth century. During World War II, she and her family risked their lives to help Jews and underground workers escape from the Nazis.

Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus: A Devout Muslim Encounters Christianity  
by Nabeel Qureshi

Nabeel Qureshi shares how he developed a passion for Islam before discovering, almost against his will, evidence that Jesus rose from the dead and claimed to be God.

Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life  
by C.S. Lewis

C. S. Lewis—the great writer, scholar, theologian, broadcaster, and bestselling author—takes readers on a spiritual journey through his early life and eventual embrace of the Christian faith.

Confessions  
by Saint Augustine

Saint Augustine of Hippo lays bare his heart, body, and soul, revealing a man of contradictory desires and beliefs on a spiritual journey toward his conversion to Christianity.

**Wise men and women are always learning, always listening for fresh insights.**

Proverbs 18:15, The Message



*River of Lifers [adults 50+]*  
**VIRTUAL TOUR: ISRAEL**  
Led by Pastor Sarah  
**Tuesday, April 16**

Experience the Holy Land through photos, videos, and stories shared by Pastor Sarah.  
10:00am in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a snack to share.  
RSVP to Lori Alford by April 14:  
[engagement@riverroadumc.org](mailto:engagement@riverroadumc.org) or 740-7061



Connect with a Small Group!

**NEW** The Miracles of Jesus  
Sundays at 10:00am, Room 206  
Six Sessions, April 14–June 2  
OR

Mondays at 10:00am, Room 205/207  
Six Sessions, April 15–May 20  
Sign up here: [Miracles of Jesus group sign up](#)

Contemporary Christian Life Group  
Sundays at 10:00am, Room 205/207

Brunchin' Believers  
1st & 3rd Sundays at 10:00am, Room 210  
20–40-something young adults

Prayer & Praise Healing Service  
Thursdays at 10:00am in the chapel

Christian Women in Action  
Second Tuesdays at 10:00am, Room 205/207

For more information about small groups or adult discipleship, contact Lori Alford: [engagement@riverroadumc.org](mailto:engagement@riverroadumc.org) or 740-7061.

# Youth

Retreat at Westview: Worship

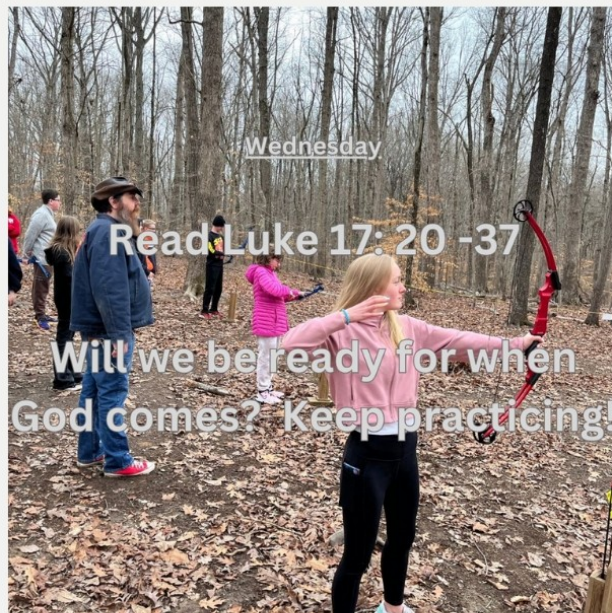


Retreat at Westview: Board Games!



Retreat at Westview: Basketball

Youth Breakfast at Panera



# River Road Kids

Join us Sunday mornings!

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

## River Road Kids Nursery Devotional

Have you ever been somewhere where it was so dark you couldn't even see your hand in front of your face? No light shining under the door. No stars in the sky. No screen glaring back at you. Just darkness. So much darkness that you have to shuffle slowly, stumbling your way across the room with arms stretched out, hoping, searching . . . and then finally, with the flip of a switch, LIGHT! Light changes everything. This month, we're talking about light, but not just any light. We're talking about Jesus—the light of the WORLD—and how when we do what Jesus says, we shine. We shine the light of Jesus! After this month, we hope every time you and your preschoolers see a lamp or a star-filled sky, you remember that people were made to shine, and we have Jesus—the light of the world—to show us how. So let's not hide our light. Let's SHINE and light up the dark so others can see their way to Jesus.

“Let your light shine.” Matthew 5:16, NIV

## River Road Kids Connect Devotional

Waiting is a part of life. Thankfully, we don't have to wait on our own. Through the Holy Spirit, God can help us experience the patience we need to wait well. After all, God is patient with us. God is in control and knows what's best for us. Even though God's people had been waiting for years for the promised Savior, at just the right time, God sent Jesus. Because we're created in God's image, we can reflect God's patience in our lives. We can be patient when we remember what God has done. We can lean on God's Holy Spirit to give us the strength we need to trust God and show patience with the difficult circumstances in our lives.

“Wait for the Lord. Be strong and don't lose hope. Wait for the Lord.”

Psalm 27:14, NIRV



# Women's Ministry

Spring has sprung, friends! We can see God's hand in the beauty all around us, including our Women's Ministry. Like the new buds and blooms we see everywhere, new and wonderful things are beginning to emerge and take shape. There is now a core team in place that will be meeting, planning and working to offer activities, events, opportunities and more to enrich the lives of the beautiful women here at River Road and beyond. Please keep your eye on the newsletter, website, app and Sunday leaflet for new small groups and future happenings. As always, we welcome your ideas and suggestions, and are here to answer your questions. Contact Tammy Hacker at [mngirlinva88@gmail.com](mailto:mngirlinva88@gmail.com).

CHRISTIAN WOMEN IN ACTION (CWA) – Fellowship/Service/Education Jul Branch, a representative from Mardi Bras VA, came to speak with us. It is an initiative of the not-for-profit group, Into the Neighborhood, which connects people to organizations that serve women who are homeless, incarcerated and on a low/restricted income. Several boxes of much needed bras, underwear and feminine hygiene products were collected and donated to them. Bess also collected items to be given to Bon Air United Methodist Church for their annual bazaar that benefits Change the World RVA. It is a foundation helping homeless students succeed in high school, college and life.



CHRISTIAN WOMEN IN ACTION  
FELLOWSHIP | SERVICE | EDUCATION

## CWA DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR:

**Tuesday April 9** – We will meet at church in Rooms 205 & 207 at 10:00am. Katherine Moore from Safe Harbor, will speak about the non-profit, which works to save, transform and rebuild lives of survivors of sexual and domestic violence and human trafficking. Ms. Moore will be educating us on how Safe Harbor does this and what we can to help. Also, if it is springtime cleaning at your house, consider bagging up your new and gently used purses/handbags, wallets, jewelry of any kind, watches, belts, scarves, shawls, hats and even jewelry boxes, for the BAUMC bazaar. Items can be put on the marked table in Room 203. The final planning for the bake sale will be completed as well.

**Sunday May 12** – Our Annual Mother's Day Bake Sale will benefit Safe Harbor this year. So come by and pick up a wonderful dessert for dinner and maybe a snack for the ride home!

**Tuesday May 14** – We will meet at church in Rooms 205 & 207 at 10:00am.

On the first Monday of each month, Book Club meets at 7:00pm at Ann York's home, 2800 Chancel Lane, 907-748-0446.

For our meeting on April 1, Nancy Seese will lead the discussion of *The House Is on Fire* by local author, Rachel Beanland. The book is about the burning of the theater in downtown Richmond in 1813.

At our May 6 meeting, we will discuss *Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman.

Here are some of the recommended books that others suggested.....

Kitchen House  
The Community Board  
The Field of Lost Shoes  
The Little Man  
Violin Conspiracy

## Other Women's Activities

The Second Monday Book Club meets at 1:00pm at Bess Traylor's home. On April 8, Tammy will review of *The Radium Girls* by Kate Moore. Our May book selection is *The Lost Bookshop* by Evie Woods, presented by Judy Metz.

Please join us at 11129 Woodbaron Court, Henrico. We look forward to seeing you. Call Bess @ 804-402-7494 for more information.

Monthly Women's Breakfast  
April 26 at 9:00am at Cracker Barrel at 3620  
Mayland Court.

# Missions

## EASTER OFFERING:

The Easter offering funds our church's missions projects throughout the year. Your generosity will help us continue to support our missions this year – local, state, national, and international. In recent years, with God's help and yours, we have been able to expand our missions activities. We are blessed by the congregational support and look forward to seeing where God and the congregation are leading us in 2024.



## APRIL MISSIONS EVENTS:

On April 7 we will be packing 20,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger. Worship will be included! Breakfast will be provided by the missions committee, as will fried chicken for lunch. Bring a dish to share for lunch following our completion of the packing. If you haven't experienced this event, you have a treat in store. Join us for this fun event with roles for the entire family. Watch for detailed information by email and on the app.



On April 27, we will join Rebuilding Together to repair homes for homeowners unable to do the repairs and upkeep necessary to remain safely in their homes. Whatever your skills, there is a role for you in this day long project. We will be working on two homes and have ace team captains in place. Our work helps rebuild and retain community in local neighborhoods. If interested in volunteering, contact Randy Reaves, [randalreaves@verizon.net](mailto:randalreaves@verizon.net)

## ONGOING NEEDS - FOOD PANTRIES:

The demand for food at our food pantry partners continues. This is an excellent opportunity to be involved throughout the year as you are able. 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/spaghetios; boxed cereal; oatmeal; and non-refrigerated microwave meals. Standard container sizes are appreciated for packing purposes and no glass containers. Weekly updates will highlight particular needs. These updates are available in the app.



# Prayer Ministry

Prayer is defined as a reverent petition, a communication with God—and it is truly a holy habit which will have a positive impact on those who pray and those for whom we pray.

We are a praying church and YOU can participate!

Here are ways you can be involved:

- by requesting prayer for your family, friends, colleagues, or yourself
- by letting others know that your church will pray for them
- by joining our Prayer Team

We have prayer request cards available in all services or you can request prayer by emailing the church or prayer team. We have dedicated prayer warriors who pray over these requests daily for 30 days. We also have an opportunity to sign up to pray in our beautiful chapel for those requests on a Sunday between 8:30 and 12:00, choosing the time most convenient to you.

If you have questions or think you might be interested in joining the Prayer Team, our next planning meeting is April 14 at 10 AM in Room 210, or you can contact Lori Alford at [engagement@riverroadumc.org](mailto:engagement@riverroadumc.org).



**OPEN ARMS**  
CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

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

What a great time we've had in Preschool! In March we took our annual Spring Field trip to the Metro Richmond Zoo. While at the zoo, the children and families were able to explore and see all of the animals that we had been learning about. It was a beautiful day to explore the zoo, seeing the animals being fed and riding the train to see the animals around the zoo. We also celebrated "Holy Week" the week before Easter. Each day the school children gathered together and learned about the days leading up to Easter. The children were taught about how Jesus loves us and died for us, but he came back and is always in our hearts. Also, Pastor Sarah shared a special Chapel with the children and taught them about communion, and each child got to take communion that day in Chapel. It was such a special day for the children and teachers to share together.

OACP is currently in the process of finalizing class enrollment for the 2024-2025 School Year. If you have friends or family that are interested in joining our preschool, it's not too late! 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.

