



RIVER ROAD CHURCH  
BAPTIST

+ thoughtful faith +

MAY/JUNE 2020 | VOL. X | ISSUE 5

explorer  
special edition

## WHEN TO GATHER SAFELY?

It's hard to believe that it was only two months ago (March 15) that we made the painful and necessary decision to cancel in-person worship services and begin worshiping via internet livestream. It feels like it's been almost a year! I miss seeing your faces, receiving your hugs and handshakes, and hearing the "noise of fellowship"—the laughter and conversation we share whenever we gather together. And while we know internet worship is not ideal, your church staff has been so encouraged by the ways you've reached out to us and told us how much you've appreciated these worship services. It is our honor and joy to bring them to you each week.

As Virginia's Governor has outlined plans for the opening up of businesses and organizations, we feel it is important to keep you well-informed regarding what that means for us as a church family. We are in the process of putting together a task force of staff and lay leaders within our congregation with religious, business, healthcare, and legal expertise to help us think through our plans for future in-person gatherings. The composition of the task force has not been finalized; when it is, I'll update you on that by email or video message.

Broadly speaking, we think the better question is not "when can we gather for in-person events?" but rather "when should we gather together?" That is, we want to be guided not simply by what is permissible, but by what is best and wisest for us as a church family. Specifically, here are a few things we'll be considering.

1. Safety—we take very seriously our call to care for one another, especially the most vulnerable among us. We will not engage any plans to gather in-person unless we feel it is safe for us to do so.
2. Christian welcome—we must think seriously about how we should gather safely together while continuing to practice holy hospitality. While I'm sure we'd all prefer *an all are welcome perspective*, how do we think about restrictions or other considerations to our worshiping together?

3. Environment—what restrictions would we need to employ in order to safely gather in the near term (masks, gloves, distancing, limited or no singing)? Consequently, it might be a more worshipful environment for us to continue our in-home worship until such restrictions might be lifted. We'll need to think and pray about that consideration.
4. Capacity—is it realistic to hold multiple services with deep cleaning in between each gathering? Would we need to use different staff leadership for each service so we're not exposing them to multiple crowds? Do we have the capacity to do this? Again, should we do this?

Just reading through this list of questions gives me a headache. This will be complicated, to be sure. We fully realize that some of us are ready to meet again soon, while many others are very anxious about doing so. Please pray for our task force as we try to discern how God is leading our church to respond during this health crisis, with the concern and anxiety it brings for us all.

Before I close, you may have noticed that I have used the language of "gathering in-person" rather than the "reopening" language I hear many others using. I know this is not a time to quibble over semantics, but this is important to me. We don't need to reopen, because our church has never been closed! Our church ministry has continued through weekly worship, mission collections, notes and calls to one another, committee meetings, and so much more. And through this season of discernment about the safety of our in-person gatherings, we'll continue to be the church—serving, loving, and worshiping together as the beautiful Christian family known as River Road Church.

More than ever, I am honored to serve as your pastor. I love you and I'm praying for you.

Daniel

# HOPE FOR TODAY

## Matthew 6:25-34

There is a tension in scripture. On the one hand, we are encouraged to prepare, to get ready, and lean into a hoped-for future. Countless Proverbs come to mind, as well as the suggestion that we endure “for the joy that is set before us.” Yes, part of our hope is based in what we believe will come. “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.”

And yet, at the same time, scripture emphasizes the present, too. “Now is the appointed hour.” “Today is the day of salvation.” “Give us this day our daily bread.” “So don’t worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble (*and beauty and joy*) is enough for today.” (*Italics mine*). It’s what the mindfulness movement calls us to. Don’t be consumed with the future. Stop and be present to what is around you today. Not just the troubles, but the roses too.

There’s no need pitting these themes against one another. They are both true. We live best in the tension, giving some thought to both. But in these days of COVID-19, what is the balance?

Admiral James Stockdale spent seven years as a POW in Vietnam. Asked why he survived such brutal conditions, he answered by contrasting himself and other survivors with what one might call fixed optimists, those whose hope was based in being released by a certain date—Christmas, Valentine’s Day, etc. Those who did so despaired as those dates came and went. Those who endured were marked by a belief that they would eventually persevere along with a willingness to turn their attention to finding meaning in the present, even if it was in prison.

So, when the end is indefinite (as it is now), I think the wisest use of our time/energy/focus is found in attending to the present. Do not abandon the hope of the future and the God who will meet us there. Make plans. I am. But primarily utilize this time to be attuned even more to the hope that is already, to the God who is with you today. Every day, ask yourself, “Where is God right now? What hope-filled beauty, joy, service, calling is mine today?”

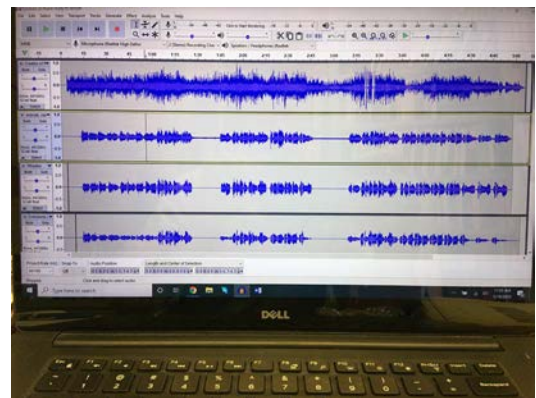
BY DAVID BRECKENRIDGE

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## MUSIC — MADE ANEW!

It sure is a very different world these days, especially in choral music. Our choir rooms have been unoccupied for several weeks now, and we are all missing the fellowship that we enjoy at rehearsals and the musical contributions we make to worship each week.

Fortunately, by using audio and video technology, we have been able to present our youth choir singing two poignant anthems by Mark Miller, one of our country’s great church musicians, and a conductor who has appeared on our podium right here at River Road (Youth Choir Jam, 2011). I am sure that many of you have been heartened by seeing the shining faces of our youth singing his music. A special word of thanks to Dr. Glaze for his expert video editing skills on these youth choir presentations. And kudos to Cassandra Ducca and Daniel Ingram who have played such an important role in the technical aspect of presenting worship each Sunday morning.



If you are interested in knowing how we edit audio, there is a photograph of my computer screen that shows a video image of the piano accompaniment part and four vocal parts. What you are unable to see are the eleven other parts that comprise the rest of the audio file. Instead of a live rehearsal, during which I actually tell people how to blend their voices, I blend them by adjusting volume, pitch, duration, and tone through technology. I am so grateful to all the youth who sat in front of their phones, computers, or tablets to provide beautiful and meaningful music for worship.

Please continue to pray for all of us who are making music “together” in isolation. We are all looking forward to that distant day when we are together singing, playing, and praying.

BY BOB GALLAGHER

# MY HOLY WEEK JOURNEY

It seemed like we were barely into Lent when the reality of facing a pandemic settled in. Suddenly everything changed. Communities were quarantined. Schools, businesses, and public spaces were closed, including our houses of worship. But Easter was coming.

At River Road Church, we marveled at how quickly and wonderfully our ministers and staff reacted to the challenges of our new reality, working to help us “be the church” while physically apart. Without missing even one Sunday, we were worshipping together online, and connected and encouraged through email and video messaging. While not together in the pews, we were gathered close in spirit. And Easter was coming.

I was not alone, I feel sure, in feeling a sense of loss as Holy Week drew nearer. The children would not wave their palms on Palm Sunday, nor hunt eggs on the lawn after worship. We would not walk the labyrinth in Fellowship Hall, nor experience the growing darkness with the reading of Christ’s betrayal and crucifixion on Maundy Thursday. No thrilling trumpets would herald the Easter message, and no lilies would be carried home. Still, Easter was coming.

But in worship on Palm Sunday, David Breckenridge shared “A Soldier’s Story,” taking us to the foot of the cross, carrying all the weight of that guilt and agony. In the hymn following, we sang, “Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon Thee? ‘Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee: I crucified Thee.” No, we could not gather on Maundy Thursday, but our journey took us by there. Easter was coming.

Our ministers offered a series of daily reflections to guide us through Holy Week, encouraging us to look for the light in the darkness. On Good Friday, Daniel Glaze and Bob Gallagher helped us to find ourselves in the crowd at the crucifixion. As we observed the darkened, draped altar of last year’s Maundy Thursday service, we listened to the Chancel Choir sing, “Were you there when they crucified my Lord?” Certainly, Easter was coming.

That Sunday morning, following a virtual walk across the grounds and through the door of our Sanctuary, we sang the hymns and listened to scripture. We heard the message from the pulpit and listened as our choir sang the Hallelujah Chorus on an Easter past. Together we celebrated God’s never-ending love. So much had changed. God had not. Easter had come.

Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Hallelujah!

BY KAREN COLLIER

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# AN EASTER LIKE NO OTHER

Back in late March when we made the unprecedented decision to announce that we needed to close the church building for public worship, but would be providing worship online, none of your staff thought that we would still be doing this two months later. But as one week stretched to two, and as the gravity of the existential threat was revealed, our spirits shuddered at the thought of being “shuttered” for our holiest of services, the celebration of Easter.

Your pastoral staff each desired to participate in this special service, so for the first time this season we pre-recorded worship so that we could safely stagger our entrances and exits, and to incorporate the Hallelujah Chorus that was so beautifully presented by the choir last year. We gathered on Good Friday to record Easter worship. To be honest, my heart was not ready. Holy Week is already an emotional marathon, and our anxiety was peaking as we rounded the corner of the fourth week of this crisis. In that moment, it didn’t feel like worship and if there’s any Sunday where you want to offer your best, it’s Easter.

I received an unexpected gift that Sunday—I worshiped at home with my family for the first time. The unexpected gift was that I *actually* worshiped. Our words recorded on Friday didn’t change. The music was just the same. But my spirit was lifted as the revelation of the risen Christ washed away the burden that had bound me up for days.

We continue to ask ourselves how we are to be Jesus’ “witnesses... to the end of the Earth” (Acts 1:8) when we are sheltered at home. I found Easter Sunday that a good start is to remain bound together in the spirit of love even when we can’t gather in person. As was true before this started, is so much more so now. God’s spirit is blanketing Richmond, Virginia and continues to knit us together through our worship and work as River Road Church. Proclaim the risen Christ by loving big, seeking peace, and remaining thankful (Colossians 3:14-15).



BY DANIEL INGRAM



# YOUTH SUNDAY

Youth Sunday was supposed to be March 22, but as our country shut down, we canceled the in-person service and our worlds moved online. Feeling the weight of having to say “No” to so many rites of passage for our youth this time of year, I wanted to give them a “Yes” – *Youth Sunday would still happen*. And so, with the help of the church staff, we dreamed of a way to make that happen. Youth practiced at home, wrote and read prayers that were videoed at home. Youth came in one at a time over several days to have the chance to preach from the pulpit. Youth sang songs so a virtual choir could happen. Youth joined me on Zoom to record words of welcome, thanks, and a Children’s Sermon. And the River Road Church staff worked together to pull off the service through editing, filming, etc.

I am grateful for youth who inspire us with their honesty of where they are right now. I am grateful for youth who will willingly participate in worship in a new way. I am grateful for youth who lead by example and with courage. I am grateful for a church that excitedly welcomes youth leadership. This is certainly not the easiest time for our teenagers (or anyone for sure), but honoring our teenagers with the chance to lead, I believe, is the right thing to do. I’m proud of their leadership and grateful they were given the opportunity. Thank you, River Road, for the ways you continually support these teenagers. It means a tremendous amount.



BY MARNIE FISHER-INGRAM

# OUR SUMMER INTERN

I am so excited to be coming back to River Road Church, Baptist this summer. I loved working with the youth last summer and am thankful to get the same opportunity this summer. Last summer my time was filled with weekly Lunch Bunch, going to Passport Camp, going on the mission trip to Lumberton, and attending service on Sunday mornings. However, this summer is going to look a little different. We are no longer going on mission trips or to Passport, there is not weekly worship taking place in the building; but there are still the same chances to connect and minister to the youth that I will work with. These chances to still get to connect are so important, and I am so thankful that they are still able to happen.

This summer will be my last summer that I have the chance to serve in a church as an intern, and River Road Church provides such an amazing opportunity for serving and growing in my call to ministry. This summer I hope to experience God through the new ways that we are connecting. I am hoping to develop a deeper understanding of what it can mean to be His church when we are not physically with each other. I am excited to join Marnie in leading the youth in different meetings, and virtual activities this summer. Lastly, I pray that we are able to gather as a church before the summer is over, but if not, we are still connected in many ways.

I am so thankful and excited for this second opportunity to serve at River Road Church, Baptist this summer in a world that is so different from what we are used to.



BY MEGAN PARRISH

# CHILDREN AND YOUTH SUMMER PLANS

In light of the current situation, plans for this summer look quite different than previous summers. In this moment, as we write, the plan is to remain virtual for the summer. If things change and we conclude that we can do otherwise, we will of course communicate that. Our goal is to provide opportunities for engagement, fellowship and spiritual connection without being on a screen all the time.

**Children:** Sandy will be offering driveway visits with children. A way to visit briefly, while physically distancing. Look for a Sign-up to come out soon.

**Children:** Vacation Bible School will be held during the month of July. *More information below.*

Both **Children and Youth** will offer Virtual Lunch Bunch every other week. Look for fun themes for these, and games.

Both **Children and Youth** will participate in Virtual Passport the week of July 6-10. Any child (3-5 grades) and any youth (6-

12 grades) may participate. You did not have to be signed up to join in the fun this week. There will be a t-shirt, daily devotions, Bible Study, Lampy (Kids!), 12th Night, a Variety Show, and more. Passport is providing a ton of resources for us to use during that week.

Both **Children and Youth** will provide a mission project or activity weekly for families to participate in. Look for these as an opportunity to do something together and help neighbors feel loved.

Both **Children and Youth** will offer the occasional game nights that serve as a means of fellowship and laughter.

**Youth:** Marnie will have youth group every other week on Sundays at 5 pm. The first one will be Sunday, May 31. We encourage youth to follow our youth Instagram (@riverroadyouth) page as it will be active this summer with fun challenges and activities.

BY MARNIE FISHER-INGRAM & SANDY ROONEY

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Yes! We are having Vacation Bible School this summer! However, it will be a little different. Due to COVID-19 and the uncertainty of when we would be able to gather safely in large groups, it has been decided to hold VBS virtually this year. Our virtual VBS will extend over a two- to three-week period starting the week of July 20, and will be called *COMPASSION CAMP: Be Loved, Be Kind, Be You*. Each day, families will receive a link that will have an opening session with the Bible focus for the day and songs, a Bible lesson, and a closing session describing the activity for the day. Each session will have a different activity. These activities will be either a craft/art activity, games, mission project, or music. Prior to July 20 each family will receive a VBS bag which will include directions and items needed for the activities, and a script for each day. If you are interested in helping with VBS this year, please contact Sandy Rooney. We are looking for individuals to teach a Bible lesson, lead some activities, collect and bag items for family VBS bags, and help with distribution. Registration for VBS will open in June.



BY SANDY ROONEY



**River Road celebrates all graduates this season. We are proud of your hard work and accomplishments particularly during this season. We will recognize graduates during worship on Sunday, June 7.**

# A FINAL LOOK AT *LES MISÉRABLES*

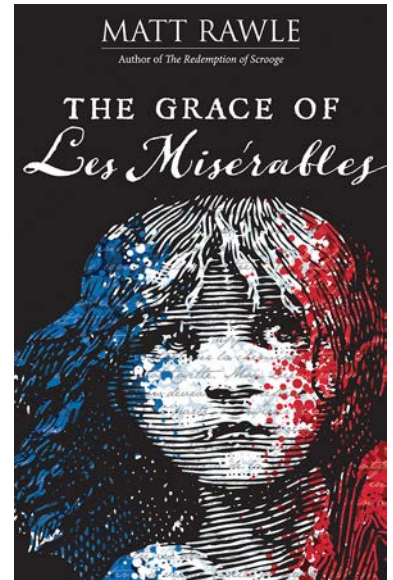
It seems long ago that we began our Lenten series with a movie night in the Fellowship Hall to watch the 2012 musical film version of *Les Mis*, and to enjoy supper together. Following that movie night, we gathered twice more for Wednesday night Thoughtful Faith Community sessions in the Assembly Room. Then came the closure of our church facilities due to COVID-19. The remaining three weekly sessions of our series proceeded, but all by video made available for viewing. Anna Miller cheerfully rolled with the punches brought about by our changing world. Daniel Ingram devised our set for recording. Cassandra Ducca provided her technical wizardry. The result was a series that hit home with each of the presenters, and hopefully with the participants. Consider these comments from Bill Thurston and Andrew Terry:

Bill Thurston—The historical setting for *Les Mis* was a period of very uncertain future. When many of the characters in the story found themselves with nothing to hold on to or depend upon, they simply gave in to the shredded social fabric in which they found themselves. We, too, live in fractured times of great uncertainty and apprehension, so it is important to hold on to one another in the fellowship which is River Road Church, embracing the faith that God is with us for strength and comfort. Completing our study of *Les Mis* was an act of faithful perseverance similar to online worship, class and committee meetings, and frequent phone calls. Persevere!

Andrew Terry—It was meaningful for us to explore the spiritual theme of grace as a family through *Les Miserables*. It's fascinating to me that when we concentrated on this particular spiritual theme as a family how it shaped our conversations around the dinner table and how I began to see grace everywhere.

Lent is our annual, expected time in the wilderness, following upon the example of Christ, and of the Israelites before him. The forty days falling after Ash Wednesday embody a time for personal reflection and spiritual formation as we each prepare for the events of Holy Week and Easter. The *Les Mis* story was a natural choice for adaptation by author Matt Rawle into a Lenten series. What resulted was more than our finding symbolism because we were assigned to do so. Victor Hugo himself describes Jean Valjean as carrying the wounded and unconscious Marius through the tomblike Parisian sewers, with Marius draped across his back like Christ carrying his cross.

Each week of our series, we focused upon a different *Les Mis* character or event, as well as the theme represented by each. As we progressed through the sessions, our focus also necessarily shifted from Lent to the pandemic and the distancing which it required. The result has been an unprecedented extension of our time in the wilderness. The themes drawn from *Les Mis* also served to gift us the perfect tools for navigating our wilderness journey: learning to receive the graces offered us by God and by others with awareness, gratitude and humility; finding opportunities for our own acts of grace, both large and small; and loving and caring for one another, as we are sensitive to the plight of others. Near the close of the *Les Mis* film which we shared together, Jean Valjean sings to Cosette and Marius that to love another person is to see the face of God.



BY ROY, JANE, & ANDREW TERRY  
BILL THURSTON

## Revisit *The Grace of Les Mis* programs at [rrcb.org/lesmis](http://rrcb.org/lesmis)

Audio and/or video for The Grace of Les Mis programs are still available on the church website.

## More TFC programs are available at [rrcb.org/tfc-archive](http://rrcb.org/tfc-archive)

While we have not been able to gather this spring, we have provided a variety of weekly TFC content for you to view. Videos are available on the church website or YouTube channel.

- Self-Care for Our Current Time with David Breckenridge & Anna Miller
- Earth Day & Care for Creation with the Congregation
- Three-part Interview with Tiffany Terry, CARITAS
- Three-part Interview with Greg & Sue Smith, CBF Missionaries and LUCHA Ministries
- Two-part Interview with Elijah Brown, Baptist World Alliance



# EDUCATOR APPRECIATION

Each year, a large number of individuals agree to serve the Lord by serving as teachers and leaders in our ongoing Bible study ministry, much of which happens on Sunday mornings. Their commitment requires regular presence, hours of weekly preparation, caring for their respective groups, and teaching in the classroom. River Road Church wants to express in a very real way, deep thanks for sacrifices made, time devoted, and love shared by each and every teacher and leader.

What happens in Sunday School contributes to the development and nurturing of a Thoughtful Faith in our church members and children who are growing up in our midst. Scripture study, activities, and dialogue allow us to gain knowledge, understand in new ways, and be stretched in our faith walk with God. Our leaders also give an example of what it means to be part of God's church and a faithful disciple. By giving of themselves with joy and regularity, sharing true concern for others, loving God's Word, and serving in their own capacities, they lead others to do the same. And our children are associating their teachers with God and the church in ways that will shape them for a lifetime. For, when they are loved and develop trust at church, they have a healthy and beautiful picture of God and what it means to be part of the church in their lives.

So, teachers and leaders, please always know how important the roles are that you fill. Be encouraged as you continue to serve the Lord, doing Kingdom work through River Road Church.

Here is a list of those who are currently filling our Sunday

teaching roles:

- Infants: Jennifer Didlake
- Preschool 1: Emily Hicks
- Preschool 2: Caroline Koskinen and Elizabeth Holland
- 1st and 2nd Grades: Marge Rusher, Marguerite Bostic, Deb Gray, and Anne James
- 3rd-5th Grades: Sharon Seward, Wendy Graves, and Jane Leake
- Missions Teacher: Sarah Collier, Elizabeth Holland, Caroline Koskinen, Bryn Taylor
- Middle School Girls: Diane Shoemake
- Middle School Boys: Leslie and Matt Straw
- High School: Nathan and Bryn Taylor
- Discovery: Katie Merritt
- Shepherd-Holland: Tom Graves
- Robert Smart: Ed Pruden
- FaithWalk: Christie and Steve Lessels
- New Horizons: Bill Thurston
- Life Class: Scott Leake and Ken Lantz
- Friendship: Emily Tuck, Fred Anderson, and Martha Lou Green

Because we are unable to celebrate at our annual Wednesday night celebration, these individuals are being recognized with a special "Thank You" they are receiving in the mail and in our virtual TFC presentation on May 27.

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## EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

As part of our annual celebration of teachers, for several years it has been the practice to select an individual who will be shown special appreciation as the Educator of the Year, recognizing their longstanding commitment to educating others through the life of our church. This year, it is our privilege to honor and thank, **Dr. Ed Pruden**, for his longtime service in the classroom. For years, Ed served as a teacher of our youth in Sunday School, sharing with many who are now part of church as adults. Currently, Ed serves as the educator of the Robert Smart Sunday School Class, made up of our median adults. He has served a number of years in this class. Each week, Ed prepares his own lesson, in line with the lectionary passages of the week, and offers inspiring insights from scripture, commentary, and experience.



To celebrate Ed, he is receiving a gift that is being delivered to his home on Sunday, May 24 at 2:30 p.m., during a "Parade of Celebration," in which all are invited to participate ([rrcb.org/parade](http://rrcb.org/parade)).

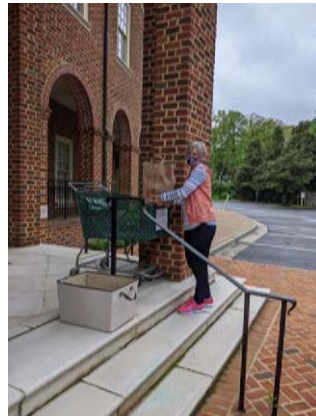
A video prepared for this recognition, including the parade, will be shared on Wednesday, May 27, as our TFC program (sent via email and available on [rrcb.org/tfc-archive](http://rrcb.org/tfc-archive)). Thank you to all who are participating in making this recognition meaningful.

BY ANNA PERRY MILLER

# MISSIONS

*“Life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass. It’s about learning to dance in the rain.” Vivian Greene*

We at River Road Church, Baptist are learning how to dance in this storm of COVID-19. Our dance steps are ones of CREATING SMILES. Within our church family there are tales of smiles sprouting from the marvelous youth choir virtual production, the choir solos, the Honaker’s bell choir offering, the inspiring worship services, and the extensive work of our talented, cherished ministers. Our members through these months have produced smiles from frowns of sadness, loneliness, boredom, and stress by communicating with those known to be in need by texts, calls, video chats, cards or safe distancing visits.



River Road Church members dance beyond our family community CREATING SMILES. Smiles were abundant on the faces of residents in Oak Grove Bellemeade’s Hispanic community when two van loads of items collected during our donation drive April 26 and 27 were distributed to grateful families. Many, many packs of diapers in various sizes and baby wipes were put to use immediately. Family meals were enriched by our donations of dried beans, rice, cereal, and fruit cups. More than 30 cars pulled up to the doors of the Lower Commons during the four-hour period of collection and members safely deposited bags and boxes into waiting grocery carts. Micah and Mission Board volunteers supervised the event. Bob Argabright, Trinity UMC Micah volunteer, made the deliveries. Also donated were lots of gently used games, books, and toys which were included in care packages given to the children throughout the entire school zone.



Our collection of food for Welborne United Methodist’s food pantry was equally successful. We delivered monetary donations and two packed car loads of food to Welborne on May 4. Welborne’s drive up pantry is open to families of need on Mondays 5-6:30 p.m. They provide for families living in zip codes 23226, 23229, 23233, 23238, and 23294. During the pandemic they have been servicing up to 100 families. Donations of food are accepted Monday-Thursdays 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. or on Sunday mornings at the church office. They will unload your car in a safe manner. Though all were wearing masks you could see the germinated smiles through their twinkling eyes!



Our membership spreads smiles beyond the RVA area. Recently, friend and CBF missionary, Sue Smith made us aware of a growing need among the Latino population she and husband Greg minister to in Fredericksburg. The number of sick people in the Latino community has rapidly increased and they are afraid. Most of the families share housing; some share with extended family members, while others rent rooms in the homes of strangers and share kitchen and bathroom privileges. Personal space is a luxury, and makes quarantine very difficult. Having individual toiletries, masks, and soap for those ill reduces the spread of COVID-19. Fortunately, RRCB had your previous kind donations of toiletries in the missions closet.



With Julia Nixon, Margaret Phelps, and Joyce Lesher sewing masks and toiletry bags, we were able to supply the requested number of individual care bags plus additional masks for family members. “Thank you for helping us prevent the spread of the virus in the Latino community. *Dios les bendiga!*”

All of our efforts not only CREATED SMILES on the faces of those receiving donations, but brought ear to ear smiles on our members’ faces. Smiles are prevalent when we know we have fulfilled a purpose. That purpose for us is helping to show our Lord’s love and light. Your BOM and our partners in donation deliveries are so very grateful for the compassionate and continuing generosity of River Road Church!

BY BONNIE LIVICK, SUSAN RYAN, & NORMA HAYS



# RIVER ROAD PRESCHOOL UPDATE

Distance Learning in the Preschool setting is not an easy concept to get your head around—especially for a program like River Road Preschool that specializes in a hands-on developmental curriculum for students. While not easy, it is doable, and a task the RRP Staff have excelled at! We have all learned lots more about technology and teaching than we ever thought we would.

RRP teachers have been communicating daily learning activities to their families for each day of school that their child would typically attend. The ideas they share are ones that can be implemented at home and cross a wide variety of skills—language, math, social, fine motor, gross motor, and more. In addition to these at home activities, teachers and assistants have communicated weekly with families. From Zoom meetings to personal notes, communication has come in all forms.

In this time away, it has been important for our young students to have a chance to see the faces of both their teachers and friends. At class Zoom meetings, everyone gets to do just that! In addition, teachers have asked that parents share their photos from home. These have been posted on classroom Shutterfly accounts for all to see.

The RRP staff has taken this time at home to expand their own Professional Development Learning. Each teacher is completing two hours a week of training. I often see ideas from webinars shared with parents in their weekly emails.

There are far too many teachers who have gone above and beyond for our families during this pandemic for me to share them all, but here are just a few of the amazing things our RRP staff have been doing!

- Marge Rusher has ridden her bike down to visit with a friend at their house at a safe distance.
- Two teachers delivered painted rocks to play hide and seek with to class families.
- Bags of craft and activities that have been both mailed and delivered on doorsteps for students to have and enjoy.
- Beth Crews assembled Mother's Day craft kits for the dads to assemble the perfect present.
- Amy Matney took home student work and filmed an "Art Show" on her back porch.

Again, there are far too many special things to name them all, but please follow our Facebook page (@RiverRoadChurchPreschool) for great pictures of all our amazing teachers are doing.

I am very appreciative of the River Road Church Preschool Committee who has worked with me during this difficult time to make some very tough decisions. I have not had to stand alone, but have been fully supported by this amazing committee. All teachers at RRP have been paid in full throughout this closure. Without the support of the church, this would not be possible. We are thankful for your prayers and well wishes as we all work together to help our families and their children navigate their new learning environment.



# UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

Our ministries are fluid, shifting and falling into place weekly, even sometimes daily. The opportunities listed below are subject to change and further details may be announced at a later date. Mark your calendars and keep an eye on your email inbox.

## Educator of the Year Celebration Parade

**Sunday, May 24**

**2:15 p.m., North Parking Lot (RRCB)**

**2:30 p.m., Depart to the Pruden Home**

A parade of cars from RRCB will travel past Ed Pruden's house in celebration of him being named Educator of the Year. All participants must remain in their cars while a few staff members direct traffic in the parking lot. A traffic officer will assist us with exiting the lot. If you are unable to attend, please find your own special way to offer words of affirmation to Ed Pruden, and doing so may just lift your spirits, too. Please sign up online at [rrcb.org/parade](http://rrcb.org/parade).

## Pancakes with Pastors

**Tuesdays, June 2, 16, 30**

**9:00 a.m., Zoom**

During the month of May, our ministerial staff hosted four fellowship gatherings, Coffee with Clergy and Cookies with Clergy. These gatherings provided the opportunity for us to see familiar faces and ask important questions like what is your favorite album, what is your favorite TV show, and chocolate or vanilla? The sign up form is emailed on Fridays, sign up by Monday at 4PM to receive the Zoom invitation.

## Pie with Pastors

**Tuesdays, June 9, 23**

**8:00 p.m., Zoom**

## First Sunday Food Share for Baptist Centers

**Sunday, June 7**

**1:00-3:00 p.m., North Parking Lot**

If you are able to safely come to the church, please drop off donations during the above time. There will be two volunteers at the church to assist with directions and will maintain appropriate distancing. Please wait if there are others dropping off at the same time, do not gather and socialize, and remember to wash your hands with soap and water when you get home.

## Suggested Shopping List for Baptist Centers:

- cans of vegetables and fruit
- boxed macaroni and cheese
- cans of soup and canned entrées
- packages of powdered milk
- small cans of tuna, chicken
- boxes of cereal
- cans of pork and beans or other beans
- rice and dry pasta
- peanut butter and jelly

We encourage those who would like to continue donating to Welborne to drop off their specified items directly to Welborne. If more convenient, you may drop off those bags of food on First Sunday Food Share, but please mark those bags with a LARGE W since they have specific food requests for Welborne.

## Talkback Sessions

**Wednesdays, June 10, 17, 24, July 1**

**2:00 p.m., 6:30 p.m., or 8:00 p.m., Zoom**

A TheoEd Talk will be selected and promoted for previewing. Anyone who wants to sign up to join in conversation about the topic can do so. We will form dialogue groups of no more than 12. One guide will direct the discussion while others can bring their insights and reasoning regarding the subject. These will be done in a manner that is respectful of all participants and allows thoughtful, positive discussion.

## Sunday School Classes

If you would like to connect with a Sunday School class, contact Anna Miller.

### Robert Smart Class

Thursdays, 7:30 p.m., Zoom

### Life Class

Sundays, 9:45 a.m., Zoom

### Shepherd-Holland Class

Sundays, 2:00 p.m., Zoom

(bi-weekly)

Emailed lesson by Tom Graves

### Faith Walk Class

Sundays, 9:45 a.m., Zoom

### Friendship Class

Emailed devotion and prayer time

### Discovery Class

Emailed devotion and prayer time

### New Horizons Class

Sundays, 9:45 a.m., Zoom

### High School Class

Tuesdays, 5:00 p.m., Zoom

### Middle School Class

Thursdays, 4:00 p.m., Zoom

### Children's Bible Lesson

Emailed lesson

## Meet with your Sunday school class, committee, or small group via Zoom.

The church has joined Zoom and we would like to invite you to continue to #BeTheChurch in order to connect with your congregation. The ministerial staff, youth and children's ministries, and the Sunday School classes are already using Zoom to meet.

### How does Zoom work?

Zoom is a virtual conference call system that allows you to gather via computer, mobile app or phone call. Once your meeting is scheduled you are given a unique meeting code to be shared within your group.

**If you're interested in gathering your group via Zoom, please contact your staff liason to schedule your meeting.**



# BE THE CHURCH

Since shifting to a virtual world, there is a lot more digital noise. This isn't new, we're always in competition with the other organizations, stores, and brands you get subscription emails and social media posts from, but since March, does anyone else's inbox receive emails at the same rate as Black Friday to New Year's? It has been our goal to make it easy for the congregation to find the information they need, this resulted in developing the **Be The Church page on our website — [rrcb.org/BTC](http://rrcb.org/BTC)**. I have called this page a hub for all things River Road during this time. You can find it by visiting [rrcb.org/BTC](http://rrcb.org/BTC), on the slider on the homepage, and in every church email, there is a Be The Church section at the bottom. If you are not receiving emails from the church, you can subscribe to our email list on the Be The Church Page. Scroll to the bottom, and you will find a blue box with more information and a button that says "Sign Up Now."



*The building is closed, but we are open for ministry.*

In an effort to promote health and safety in our community, River Road Church has closed its building to in-person gatherings for the time being. However, we are still open for ministry! We encourage you to join us online for LIVE worship via video stream—[rrcb.org/BTC](http://rrcb.org/BTC)—and engage through the resources provided below.

#bethchurch

- [Worship Livestream](#)
- [Online Giving](#)
- [Staff Contact Page](#)
- [Worship Audio and Video](#)
- [Sunday School Classes](#)
- [Church Calendar](#)
- [TFC Announcements, Audio, & Video](#)
- [Missions](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [Cookies with Clergy](#)
- [Holy Week](#)
- [COVID-19 Updates](#)

This page is constantly adapting to how our ministries are changing. In addition to links to worship, online giving, missions, and programming, you can find social media links, birthdays and anniversaries (updated monthly), as well as the church family/prayer list (updated weekly). I hope you will continue to use this page and it helps you find what you're looking for!



Facebook  
@RRCBaptist



YouTube River  
Road Church,  
Baptist



Instagram  
@RiverRoadCh  
urch



Twitter  
@RRCBaptist

## Minister to your church family from home

Check the prayer list (updated on Wednesdays), send a couple an anniversary card, call a friend to wish them a happy birthday, or simply get in touch to let them know you're thinking about them today.

#bethchurch



Church Directory



Prayer List



May Birthdays/Anniversaries

In addition to the Be The Church webpage, we've taken the motto to our social media pages, #BeTheChurch. "Ministry in times like these call us to #BeTheChurch," and let me tell you, this church has answered the call. In these posts we highlight our faith community serving our neighbors, friends, and beyond.



This collage is just a sample of the many ways you have shown up to #BeTheChurch. You have celebrated birthdays from afar; prepared and delivered meals for CARITAS; made masks for CrossOver clinic and the VA hospital; sewn quilts for the children's hospital; called, gathered virtually, and visited to check in with friends; delivered flowers; created cards for patients; donated food and supplies for Oak Grove-Bellemeade community, Welborne UMC food pantry, and LUCHA Ministries clients. If you have a #BeTheChurch story to share, email me a photo and a few sentences to accompany it (if there are other people in the picture, please check that we have permission to share it on church social media pages).

One last thing, I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't ask you to *Like* us on Facebook, *Follow* us on Instagram and Twitter, and *Subscribe* to our YouTube channel.

BY CASSANDRA DUCCA



# Communion at Home



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DANIELGLAZE@RRCB.ORG

DR. F. DAVID BRECKENRIDGE  
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+ thoughtful faith +

RIVER ROAD CHURCH  
BAPTIST



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# Happy Birthday!

## May 3

Debbie Hailes  
Pat O'Bannon

## May 4

Jane Hiser  
Jim Holdren, Jr.  
Leslie Straw

## May 5

Eleanor McGee

## May 6

Carl Collier  
Martha Day Dumas

## May 7

Bev Evans  
Jack Grady  
Jenks Marrow  
Karen West

## May 8

Spencer Macturk  
Cary Ralston  
Matt Rooney  
Merle Showalter

## May 9

Adeline Heisler  
Emily King

## May 10

Rell Cary  
Cynthia Lantz  
Anna Perry Miller  
Ron Toney

## May 11

Catherine Both  
Janet DeShazo  
John Heisler  
J.T. Whitty

## May 12

Isabel Martin  
Craig Martin  
Sharon Wake

## May 13

Ted Chandler, Jr.  
Ronnie Jones

## May 14

Lee Schaffer  
Eunice Wolford

## May 15

Emily Bower  
Logan Cowardin  
Hannah Frank  
Clyde Stoakley

## May 16

Cynthia Macturk

## May 17

Eva Grace Harman-  
Barrios  
Jackson Koskinen  
Peter Moon  
Rebecca Ralston

## May 18

Chris Johnson  
Sue Kalbaugh  
Barb Merritt  
Zachary Stevens

## May 19

Katherine Clark  
Chris Gobble  
Richard Seward  
Georgia Vaughan

## May 20

Caroline Brown  
Carolyn Whitley

## May 22

Bert Browning  
Rose Browning  
Susie Rommel

## May 23

Alex Blanchard

## May 25

Rick Scherer  
Sherry Sorrell  
Charlie Williamson

## May 26

Andrea Glaze

## May 27

Martha Robertson

## May 29

Scott Powell

## May 30

Dan Bagby  
Judy Collins  
Grace Cruickshanks  
Lee Perkins

## May 31

Bob Gilliam  
Andy McAllister  
Kristen Phelps

## June 1

Marnie Fisher-  
Ingram  
Daniel Ladnier  
Amber Ryan  
Jim Trent  
Webb Tyler  
Doug Wallace

## June 2

Ethan Butterworth  
Carol Cruickshanks  
Beverly Geissler

## June 3

Georgia Mayo  
Carol Moelchert  
Judy Ware

## June 4

Betty Martin  
Ruthie Mustian

## June 5

Parker Dixon  
Linda Honaker  
Rob Sandford

## June 6

Helen Carter  
Bobby Hubbard  
Terry Marsh  
Marjorie Yount

## June 7

Ed Pruden  
Beth Wilson

## June 8

Paula Brown  
Diana Mahoney  
Tara Savedge  
Mary Lou Sims  
Amy Thurston

## June 9

Stephanie Cauble

## June 10

Bryan Bostic  
Bobbette Newsome  
Joe Teefey

## June 11

Gale Higgins  
Craig Martin  
Charles Phillips

## June 12

Edwin Cothran  
Dexter Gulick  
Ted Kral  
Jim Paxton

## June 13

William Nurney

## June 15

Caroline Suwal

## June 16

Doug Anderson  
Andy Cruickshanks  
Tim Merritt  
Bob Oakes  
Margaret Oliver  
Kenton Sumner

## June 18

Miller Alvis

## June 19

Julia Nixon  
Betty Rose Sexton

## June 21

Leigh Ann  
Breckenridge  
Kaylee Butterworth  
Bill Gray

## June 22

Charlotte Hare  
Richard Strauss

## June 23

Andrew Blanchard  
Warren Johnson

## June 25

Zachary Bostic  
Sarah Bower

## June 26

Edward Bass  
Lynda Oakey

## June 27

Anne James

## June 28

John Wood

## June 29

Nicholas Both  
Kenzie Grady  
Steve Newsome  
Chris Wilkinson

## June 30

Margaret Daniel  
Bob Gallagher  
Lowell Shelton

## July 1

David Cipolletti  
Bill Payne

## July 2

Steve Gilliam  
Vanessa Jante  
Roy Terry

## July 3

Ty Hays  
Bill Thurston

## July 4

Frances Cloe  
Don Cruickshanks  
Bob Tyler

## July 5

Doug Glasco  
Libby Roberts

## July 6

Kennedy Groseclose  
Anne Carrington  
Hall

## July 7

Austin Clark  
Dean Decker

## July 8

Kara Harman-  
Barrios

## July 9

Chris McGee  
Ken Wilson

## July 10

Malcolm Briggs  
Paul Honaker  
Robbie Williams

## July 11

Melanie Ladnier  
Jessica Thorne

## July 12

Addison Van Tiem

## July 13

Ella Glaze  
Ethan Johnson  
Betty Rose McGee  
Jane Terry

## July 14

John Gordon  
Jacob Ladnier

## July 15

Lowry Cowardin  
Ted Gary, IV  
Grace Johnson  
Bill Shirah

## July 16

Dick Schaffer  
Geoff Sundberg

## July 17

Adam Miller

## July 18

Peggy Ford

## July 19

Diane Cary  
William McGuire  
Scott Rooney

## July 20

Hilton Almond  
Tuckie Paxton

## July 21

Briar Chatterjea  
Donna Payne  
Kathy Tran  
Dean Wilkey

## July 23

Cecil King  
Cam McGuire  
Peggy Pruden  
Stacy Rooney

## July 24

Marian Brooks  
Jim Freedman  
Bertie O'Neal  
Joan Robertson

## July 25

Sarah Bain  
Jim Brown  
Geoff Burnett

## July 26

Joseph Collins  
Deb Gray  
Arlene Fransen

## July 28

Marian Jones  
J.R. Pruden

## July 29

Harper Alford  
Bill Gottwald, Jr.  
Ann Stewart  
Jeanette Welsh

## July 30

Norman DeLong  
Joey Mistretta  
John Wake, Jr.

# Happy Anniversary!

## May 3

Bonnie and Walter Suwal – 6 years

## May 4

Kara Harman-Barrios and Pablo Barrios – 7 years  
Carl and Karen Collier – 46 years  
Don and Val Pate – 29 years  
Richard and Letty Wood – 29 years

## May 11

Bob and Beth Musick – 24 years

## May 13

Malcolm and Carolyn Briggs – 20 years  
Tara and Kent Savedge – 14 year

## May 14

David and Michelle Gulick – 43 years  
Tom and Anne Kirkup – 54 years  
Melanie and Daniel Ladnier – 4 year

## May 19

Ron Crawford and Melanie Bailey – 2 years

## May 20

Sara and Jack Heisler – 9 years

## May 21

Scott and Cheryl Powell – 21 years  
David and Janet Stevens – 26 years

## May 22

Roy and Jane Terry – 44 years

## May 23

Martha Day and Mark Dumas – 39 years

## May 24

Kristi and Lloyd Scholz – 23 years

## May 26

Richard Fowler and Pam Proffitt – 47 years  
Bill and Deb Gray – 47 years  
Chris and Sarah Wilkinson – 19 years

## May 29

Tom and Wendy Graves – 50 years  
Clint and Amy Hubbard – 21 years

## May 30

Kristin and Neil Groseclose – 5 years  
Seth and Libby Roberts – 22 years

## June 1

Matt and Leslie Straw – 24 years  
Buddy and Emily Sumner – 18 years

## June 2

Dean and Carol Decker – 63 years  
Steve and Kathryn Knerr – 13 years  
Scott and Janet Spencer – 46 years

## June 3

Andrea and Daniel Glaze – 20 years  
Chris and Cynthia Macturk – 25 years  
Craig Martin and Erika Juhasz – 31 years

## June 4

Marshall and Joyce Parker – 63 years  
Bill and Emily Tuck – 60 years

## June 8

Don and Pat Powell – 62 years

## June 9

Rose and Bert Browning – 46 years

## June 10

Steve and Cara Bowen – 20 years  
Charlie and Sherry Sorrell – 20 years  
Nathan and Bryn Taylor – 14 years

## June 11

Tom and Janet Ahl – 26 years  
Dan and Alice Lynch – 32 years

## June 12

Janet and Dan Bagby – 55 years

## June 13

Rob and Anne James – 61 years

## June 14

George and Kitty Davis – 51 years  
Jason and Jane Hiser – 12 years  
Bill and Donna Payne – 51 years

## June 15

Lee and Bromby Bradley – 24 years  
Brock and Bonnie Livick – 46 years

## June 16

Erin and John Gray – 13 years

## June 17

Rob and Sue Baldwin – 53 years  
Chester and Margaret Phelps – 53 years

## June 19

Ben and Catherine Burkett – 21 years  
Ed and Peggy Pruden – 49 years  
Jeff and Shannon Sundberg – 21 years

## June 20

Kim and Charlie Early – 28 years  
Sam and Katherine Hall – 22 years  
Mike and Theresa Price – 28 years  
Bill and Virginia Smith – 61 years

## June 21

Carol and Harper Alford – 6 years  
Don and Karen Farmer – 45 years  
Tim and Katie Merritt – 12 years  
Grover and Betsy Robinson – 52 years

## June 22

Ted and Laura Lee Chandler – 46 years

## June 23

John and Wyatt Heisler – 41 years  
Olen and Ann Stewart – 58 years

## June 24

Fred and Nancy Anderson – 53 years  
Elizabeth deTreville and Seth Sommerville – 10 years

## June 25

Harold and Joyce Gibson – 60 years  
Jim and Barbara Holdren – 54 years  
John and Ronda Zukowsky – 37 years

## June 27

Anne and R C Moore – 50 years  
John and Pat O' Bannon – 49 years

## June 28

George and Carolyn Thomas – 51 years  
John and Cathy Whitty – 34 years

## June 29

Mark and Lisa Cipolletti – 24 years

## June 30

Shawn and Amber Ryan – 19 years

## July 2

Rob and Becky Spicer – 37 years

## July 7

Jim and Caroline Brown – 58 years

## July 8

David and Mary Lou Sims – 67 years

## July 9

Russ and Margaret Collins – 54 years  
Charles and Kelly Gresham – 37 years  
Page and Doris Highfill – 9 years  
Caroline and Jason Koskinen – 15 years  
Steve and Bobbette Newsome -37 years

## July 10

Bob and Julia Tyler – 22 years

## July 12

Fred and Ann Bagwell – 51 years

## July 13

Emily and Jeff Carretto – 1 year  
Randy and Jo Ann Weinhardt – 7 years

## July 15

Gregg and Ann Cothran – 3 years

## July 17

Edwin and Karen Cothran – 43 years  
Frank and Bettina Hinckle – 27 years  
Michael and Alyson Stoakley – 16 years

## July 19

Dick and Pat Harwood – 40 years

## July 21

Paul and Linda Honaker – 41 years

## July 22

Mike and Vivian Clingenpeel – 48 years  
Tom and Bev Evans – 59 years  
Wilson and Miggie Mustian – 14 years

## July 23

Gene and Ellie Cox – 54 years

## July 26

Cary and Janet Ralston – 46 years

## July 27

Ron and Anita Tamagni – 46 years

## July 28

Jim and Tuckie Paxton – 58 years

## July 29

Henry and Betty Rose McGee – 69 years

## July 30

Ralph and Ray Nelson – 37 years