

2020 Annual Report River Road Church, Baptist

CHURCH CLERK

Total Membership, December 31, 2020

1895

Total Membership, December 31, 2019	1914
New members by transfer of letter or statement, 2020	3
Deaths, 2020	15
Removal by letter transfer or personal request, 2020	7

Total Membership, December 31, 2020

1895

New members by letter transfer or statement:

Borden, W. Ray Chesley, Nell W. Chesley, Everett

Deaths:

Brooks, Marian

Burke, Patrick

Cunningham, Ellis Burton

Eubank, Jean Hollins

Ezzelle, Anne Carroll Mustian

Glasco, Lovell Morris

Hooker, Elizabeth Wilburn

Howe, Murrill Norton, Jr.

Howell, Margaret Houghton

Kendall, Frank Homer, Jr.

Marsh, Peggy Gulley

Tanner, Ruth

Woolcott, Betty Gilbert

Younger, Martha Logan

Yount, Marjorie Allen

Removal by letter transfer or personal request:

Davis, Cynthis Marshall
Gates, M. David
Holly, Lynn D.
Wilson, James Jones, III
Holly, William Daniel

During this year of 2020 when the world has been affected by COVID-19, the River Road Church front office staff—Susan Young and Terri McMahon—have primarily worked from home. Yet Susan's aid with the correspondence I exchange with other churches; putting into readable form my notes from the two business meetings of 2020; generating multiple copies of the letter sent to newly elected church leaders, who began their term January 2021—and kindly signed by our assistant church clerk, Laura Thorne—and Terri's talents turning my draft of the above report into usable information: all this done willingly and with patience.

Submitted gratefully, Emily D. King, Clerk of the Church

HISTORIAN'S REPORT

"It was the best of times. It was the worst of times." In his *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens gave us those oft-quoted lines. His quotation continues: "It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair." Dickens published his work of fiction set in London and Paris in 1859; and while those first two lines could apply to most any year in history, they certainly have a global relevance in 2020 and at the opening

of 2021. And the impact was felt even at the corner of Ridge and River Roads as well as in the home of every member of River Road Church, Baptist.

As for the church, it reacted to the challenges of the year by bringing forth the congregation and clergy's best efforts at creative ministry. For the reader who might peruse this report fifty years from now, why was 2020 "the worst of times."

When the year began at the first of January, no one realized what was coming and that right soon. Worship services, Sunday school classes, missions activities, programming were continuing in the "normal" fashion. Only a few may have been aware of a strange new virus which had developed on the other side of the world.

Within the early three-fold worship bulletins at the first of the year, there was a feature on the church's banner which is placed next to the lectern at the front of the chancel and is used on first Sundays to lead the procession. The symbols in the crest include a golden ring and an open Bible, "signifying the eternity of Christ and the importance of scripture." Also included are Latin words meaning Peace and Light. The banner received special recognition in the bulletin because it was a replacement of the original banner which had become worn and frayed. The original as well as the replacement had been funded by Carol and Lou Moelchert in memory of their son Douglas.

By mid-March, the virus known as COVID-19 had made its way to Virginia and the church's crest with its words Peace and Light assumed added meaning. The Governor began to issue emergency orders regarding businesses, schools, and public gatherings. Schools began virtual learning, many employees began working from home, and masks became the new fashion. Terms including social distancing and self-quarantine and hand washing were frequently spoken.

By year's end, the statistics were grim indeed. From the World Health Organization which maintained a daily count, there were on the last day of 2020 a total of 81,475,053 global cases of the virus and 1,798,050 global deaths. In the United States, there were 19,346,790 cases and 346,043 deaths, including 5,984 Virginians. By year's end, vaccinations were beginning to be administered. Side effects of the pandemic were seen in a health system under tremendous stress and strain and an economy which had forced 40 million Americans to sign up for unemployment benefits.

The pandemic was but one impact. In the summer protests erupted in the United States and indeed in many places of the world over the death of an African-American man named George Floyd who died under the knee of a white policeman. The protests were the result of a long accumulated tension over racial injustices. The protests even came home to Richmond with day after day of marches and gatherings which focused primarily on the removal of the Confederate statues in the city yet also on other signs and symptoms of perceived injustices.

And there was a third impact. In 2020, the United States experienced one of the most divisive political campaigns and elections in its history which continued to play out long after Election Day.

Before the doors closed in mid-March, there was much evidence of the community spirit and services of River Road. The Rev. Dr. Bert Browning presented four weeks of study on the Psalms which were well attended. On January 19, the pastor prayed from the pulpit a prayer of support for Harry Phelps, a young member who was about to depart for basic training to enter the U.S. Navy. Church members were bringing bags of food on the "First Sundays" which would go to the

Richmond Baptist Centers, an act of missions which continued throughout the year. The WMU Connectors were engaged in all kinds of practical missions. The Comma Club, which primarily engaged senior adults, had a program presented by Dr. Carroll Londoner and Dr. Dean Decker on the heroic Four Chaplains who in 1943 gave their life preservers to others, as well as a travelogue presented by Bonnie and Oliver Way on their trip to Egypt and the Holy Land. The Martin Luther King National Day of Service on January 20 included some 50 persons of all ages who gathered for community service as well as a weekend learning time for 45 of the church's youth and adults who traveled to Charlottesville to join about 300 of Virginia's Cooperative Baptist Fellowship youth and adults to consider justice and advocacy. Roy, Jane, and Andrew Terry, along with Bill Thurston and Anna Perry Miller, planned a creative Lenten series for adults which focused on the theme of grace as seen through the characters of *Les Miserables*.

On Sunday, March 15, 2020, without much lead-time for preparation, the church's worship services and soon other activities were livestreamed. In his message for March 15, Pastor Daniel Glaze said: "Taking care of one another in the worst of times is what we do best. Now is the time for us to trust in God. And for those who ask 'where is God,' now is the time we give them the answer; by our faith, our love, our lives we are the answer. If we can do that, we bring light, hope, and love at the time the world needs it most."

The following Sunday, the pastor preached on "For Thou Art With Us," emphasizing the 23rd Psalm. In part, he said: "What is it about this Psalm 23? The beauty lies in its truth. Sometimes life deals us a bad hand. What shall we do when our well runs dry and our joy blows away. We turn to the 23rd Psalm because it tells us the truth: if there is to be any encouragement, comfort, hope, it comes from God, our good and constant shepherd. That alone means we do not need to fear."

"There's a silver lining here. I am reminded how much I love this beautiful building [of River Road Church, Baptist] but there is a silver lining in that we are learning that church is not so much a place as it is a calling. To be the church: that means our ministry continues ... we will trust in God. We will live without fear 'for Thou art with me."

Along the way, the pastor even coined a new mission statement adopted when the Coronavirus necessitated finding a new way to "be the church." He offered these words as the new mission statement: "While our building is closed, we're still here for you."

And for the balance of the year, the pastor, the staff and the members pulled together to produce and experience some of the most creative ways of "being the church." With limited experience in the realm of "virtual church," Daniel Ingram and Cassandra Ducca and others pooled their technical and communications skills to make "livestreaming" possible and, little by little, week by week, to improve and enhance the worship experience.

Bob Gallagher, Minister of Music, had planned an ambitious year for the *E. Carl Freeman Concert Series* and had barely begun the year before he had to cancel programs. He also had to learn how to engage choirs whose members were housebound and he began including youth and adult choirs in virtual rehearsals and incorporated their selections into the livestreaming services. He even developed his own *Organ Interlude Series* as part of the *E. Carl Freeman Concert Series* and on the internet members and friends from a wide area could enjoy hearing organ selections along with Bob's commentaries which he sent on the internet. It was a challenge but the ministers, including the music minister, made the two high holy days, Easter and Christmas, almost like

"being there" in person. At times, Bob had more than one musician but usually he had a different soloist for the Sunday services and occasionally other musicians including the handbell choir.

While the pastor filled the pulpit on most Sundays, he also shared the pulpit so that the congregation heard messages from other clergy in the church as well as those from beyond the church including the Rev. Dr. Judy Bledsoe Bailey and Rabbi Hal Schevitz. When the annual Starlight Service of Remembrance was held to remember loved ones lost in recent years, the entire staff was included in a meaningful virtual service.

The clergy tried many ways to keep in touch. They offered virtual visits with fellowship and conversation and the participants were told to join them on the internet with their coffee, cookies, pie, pancakes, and even moon pies!

Traditional activities had a real challenge. Camp Alkulana, the Richmond Baptist camp for inner city youth, had to devise entirely different plans to reach low-income, at-risk children and adults in Richmond; and River Road members gave funds to support the important ministry. Vacation Bible School, called "Compassion Camp," went virtual for a two-week school in July. There were Bible lessons, handcrafts, games, songs, activities, and a mission project.

For adults, there were opportunities across the summer for dialogue via Zoom on a variety of topics including racial justice, the nation's suicide crisis and justice in consumerism, and in relationships. The Board of Christian Education & Spiritual Formation offered virtual summer vespers with the help of volunteers. Via Zoom, the subject of "prejudice in the church" was presented by the Rev. Dr. Valerie Carter Smith, Executive Director of Woman's Missionary Union of Virginia.

Several of the Sunday school classes had Zoom meetings including Life, Faith Walk, New Horizons, and Shepherd-Holland while Friendship chose a concept of Wednesday emails which provided a devotional and prayer for the members along with concerns about class members.

A Re-Entry Task Force, headed by Kathryn Norman, studied how churches were anticipating safe reopening; and they developed logistics and protocols for a safe and limited re-entry for Sunday worship services. In-person worship resumed on Sunday, September 6 with pre-registration, the listing of those seated on pews near each other in case of subsequent health contacts, masking and limitations as to singing and speaking by the congregation. In addition, the livestreaming continued for the bulk of the congregation. By September 20, it was reported that the in-person option was drawing an average of 14 households representing upwards of 35 members in attendance.

Offerings and other monetary gifts were a concern for churches; however, the River Road members responded to the crisis of the pandemic in remarkable and generous ways. Many mailed their offerings. In the first eight months of 2020, revenues were up \$50,000 compared to the same period of the previous year and total expenses were less than 2019. Yet, in October, the Stewardship Committee, led by Jack Heisler, shared that "our giving only covers about 80% of the operating cost of our church," noting that in the recent past the balance had been provided through grants from the church's Endowment Fund.

Even church business meetings had to adjust to the crisis. At noon on Sunday, December 6, Bill Gray, moderator, presided over the business at River Road's first virtual church business meeting. It required a quorum of 100 present; and as the faces of members appeared on the computer

screen, there were smiles and waves exchanged. The moderator noted that the last meeting had been held on January 26 to approve the budget of \$1,845,000. The matter of business at hand on December 6 was the adoption of the report of the Nominating Committee and its chair, Lisa Bailey Cipolletti, remotely presented the report for adoption and, in voting, it was duly approved.

At year's end, the ministerial staff sent a joint Christmastide letter to the congregation in which they stated: "We realize that we, your pastors, have been called to River Road Church to serve God by serving you—but this year, in so many ways, you have served us. You have sustained us through your love, prayers, generosity, encouragement, and faithfulness." Even in the worst of times, there was enough light and love to declare it, as Charles Dickens would say, "the best of times."

Fred Anderson, Historian

BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

2020 proved to be an interesting and challenging year for the Board of Administration. Following in-person meetings in January and February, the Board decided to cancel its regular March 15 inperson meeting in response to advice from public health authorities and governmental officials to avoid large gatherings to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Thanks to the availability of technology, the Board pivoted to virtual gatherings beginning with the May 27 meeting. The Board continued to meet virtually in September and October; the November 15 meeting was a hybrid inperson/virtual format.

Despite limited opportunities for face-to-face communication, the Board was able to effectively manage the business affairs of the church. Extensive use was made of e-mail to distribute essential information such as Board agendas, minutes, and monthly financial statements, and to solicit the Board members' approval of matters that included a youth dessert auction and a proposal for repairs to the sanctuary gutter system.

All committees and boards continued to function during the pandemic. In addition to the more routine business matters, the Building and Property Council concluded repairs to the sanctuary gutter system, renovations to the youth area, and installation of a new HVAC system for the youth area. The House and Grounds Committee oversaw the repainting of selected interior spaces and the replacement of several heating and cooling fan coil units. The Finance Committee reported that the financial position of the church remained strong through this unusual year. The Stewardship Committee conducted a year-end financial campaign that resulted in 2021 pledges that are comparable to 2020 amounts.

In order to create a safe environment for members wishing to return to live, in-person worship, a nine-member Ad Hoc Re-Entry Task Force was designated in May. The task force was responsible for identifying key science and metrics to determine when it is safe to resume in-person worship; developing logistics and protocols for safe execution, entry, and exit; and outlining what changes to expect during the worship service.

The incoming Board officers for 2021 are as follows:

Chair Robert Gray
Vice Chair Clint Hubbard
Secretary Ken Lantz
Assistant Secretary Tom Gilsdorf

Finance Committee
House and Grounds
Insurance Committee
Kitchens Committee
Personnel Committee
Safety Committee
Stewardship Committee

Oliver Way
George Davis
Jean Ellis
Betty Damon
Sharon Seward
Ralph Nelson
Scott Rooney

Martha Lou Green, Chair, Board of Administration, 2020 Robert Gray, Vice Chair Ken Lantz, Secretary

Finance Committee (BOA)

The Finance Committee met monthly throughout 2020 to support the Board of Administration's responsibility to oversee the financial operations and financial condition of the Church.

During 2020, the Finance Committee completed the following:

- Recommended a 2021 church operating budget to the Board of Administration for its approval and subsequent recommendation to the congregation. The budget was unanimously approved by the Board on January 17, 2021 and will be presented at the church business meeting for approval on January 31, 2021.
- Reviewed revenue and expenses of the church on an ongoing basis to monitor performance
 against the budget and identify potential concerns, initiating appropriate action when
 required.
- Reported the financial results and financial position of the church to the Board of Administration on a monthly basis.
- Reviewed revenue and expenses of the *Rejoice and Give Thanks* capital campaign to ensure funds were being expended only for approved projects.
- Reviewed monthly designated funds to ensure that the funds were expended in accordance with donor intent.
- Reviewed and approved the preschool budget for the 2020-2021 school's fiscal year and assisted with various financial matters related to the preschool.
- Received and reviewed budget requests from officers, boards, councils, and standing committees of the church in preparation for recommending the 2021 operating budget.

The highlights of the church's financial results for 2020 were as follows:

- Total revenues increased by \$24K to \$1.892Mill compared to the prior year, and was up \$47K compared to budget. Of note, offerings increased \$29K year over year.
- The Endowment Fund grant to the operating budget was \$325K and represented 18% of the budget's revenue received. This grant for the operating budget has been at this level for the past three years.
- Total expenses for the year were down \$7K to \$1.679Mill compared to prior year and down \$166K compared to the budget. Closure of the church facilities for part of the year led to some overall positive impacts on several expense categories, but expenses in most categories were generally flat, \$213K (as compared to \$182K in 2019). The Finance

Committee recommended to the Board of Administration in January that this \$213K excess be distributed as follows:

- \$50K to be transferred to the Board of Missions
- \$50K to be transferred to the Facilities Upgrade Reserve
- o the balance of \$133K to be transferred to the operating reserve.
- The balance of the *Rejoice and Give Thanks* capital campaign funds was \$153K at the end of the year. The major projects that remain outstanding are installation of stage lighting for the fellowship fall (\$75K), and the nearly completed replacement of the HVAC system in the youth area (\$50K).
- Endowment Fund grants to the church totaled \$335K, mainly consisting of \$175K towards the 2021 operating budget, \$39K to the Fellowship Fund, \$66K for the sanctuary gutter project, and \$47K for the video upgrade for the sanctuary.
- The congregation contributed \$90K towards special mission offerings and \$24K towards mission projects. Total giving for the year to missions including operating budget, endowment grants, and special mission offering and projects, was \$362K.
- The church maintains a very healthy liquidity position as the sum of cash, money market accounts, and certificates of deposit totaled \$1.908Mill at year end.
- Total net assets on December 31, 2020, were \$1.756Mill, of which unrestricted net assets were \$1.191Mill and restricted assets were \$565K. The \$1.191Mill balance of unrestricted net assets was comprised of \$697K in operating reserve, \$281K reserves for future expenses, and \$213K in excess of 2020 revenues over expenses. The distribution of the excess in revenues over expenses increases that operating reserve to \$810K and the reserves for future expenses to \$331K.
- Preschool revenue for the school year which ended August 31, 2020, was \$694K (down \$47K or 6% from the same period prior year). This decline was due to the preschool being closed for several months of its fiscal year. The \$67.4K excess of revenue over direct expenses was transferred to the Church as a contribution by the preschool towards the value of the facilities provided by, and services received from, the Church.
- In summary, despite the COVID-19 virus impact affecting our operations throughout most of the year resulting in shutdowns and having to resort to online services and classes, the results for 2020 were outstanding! This is truly a testament to our membership's commitment and affirmation of our church's mission and its leadership.

Oliver Way, Chair

Members: Hilton Almond, Fred Bagwell, Hilary Blanchard, Wallace Chandler, George Davis, Robert Gray, Steve Gilliam, Ransone Hartz, Steve Lessels, Cynthia Macturk, Mike Rucker, Brandon Story, Bill Thurston, and James Trent

Insurance Committee (BOA)

The Insurance Committee had a Zoom meeting with our insurance representatives on November 17, 2020. We thoroughly reviewed the church policy, and determined that no changes were needed to the limits and deductibles. We learned, however, that the Workers Compensation Experience Modification factor has increased, resulting in an increased WC premium. On 12/11/2020, we received the renewal premium quote for the 01/01/2021—01/01/2022 term, in the amount of \$55,881.72. This is an increase of 2% over the prior year premium of \$54,735.09.

Respectfully submitted, Jean Ellis, Chair

Personnel Committee (BOA)

While this doesn't speak to the entire scope of work performed by the Personnel Committee, as most work done by this committee is confidential in nature, here are the highlights of business transacted by on behalf of RRCB staff in 2020:

- Minister Housing Allowance: What is deemed a housing allowance was reviewed and revised keeping tax ramifications for the pastoral staff in mind.
- Thanksgiving Gift: In October the Personnel Committee discussed various ways to compensate RRCB staff in lieu of salary increases in 2020. There was concern that potential COVID-19 pandemic effects may negatively impact the RRCB budget in 2021, or longer, so an equitable way to reward and encourage our staff but not add to a budget that might be a challenge to fulfill was explored. The Committee decided on a Thanksgiving Gift plan.

After the Personnel Committee approved the Thanksgiving Gift plan, a formal request was made to the Finance Committee to inform and seek consent as it changed the 2020 budget. Finance approved it unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Clint Hubbard, Chair

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The sixteen elected members of the Board of Christian Education & Spiritual Formation (BCE&SF) met in January, February, and March of 2020. By April of the year, the church had stopped all in-person Sunday School, worship, and other gatherings due to COVID-19. As a result, the Board shifted to online communication, using monthly emails to report on calendar planning, upcoming events, and notes from the various committees.

The Board is organized into three committees which support staff in their ministry to the different age groups within the congregation. Committee members assist with programming development, implementation, and promotion. In a normal year if hands on assistance is needed for an event our members would be involved with that as well, but there were few opportunities to help in that way during 2020. Chairs are: Children's Committee, Melanie Butterworth; Youth Committee, Carl Collier; and Adult Committee, Scott Leake.

The pandemic forced staff to come up with ways for us to "Be the Church" apart, moving our worship, education, and fellowship online. Sandy Rooney created opportunities for children and their families to meet her virtually for stories, crafts, and mission moments. Parents could also sign up for driveway visits for a few minutes of socially distanced, but in-person contact. Marnie Fisher-Ingram offered similar experiences for the youth, gathering them for online devotions, games, and fellowship. She too, met students in their driveways for lunch or a treat. Anna Perry Miller continued the Thoughtful Faith Community (TFC) gatherings on Wednesday evenings offering a variety of speakers and educational opportunities.

Throughout the pandemic, staff created numerous ways for members to remain engaged. The act of *Christian education and spiritual formation* may have looked different, but it continued in spite of our inability to gather face to face. Here are a few of the highlights from the past year:

Children:

- Vacation Bible School was held virtually! Parents picked up materials from the church and used them to complete online lessons.
- PASSPORTkids was held on the church plaza.
- Families gathered for outdoor movie nights.

Youth:

- Students continued their Sunday evening activities online, participating in Bible study, devotions, and games.
- Youth Sunday and graduate recognition took place virtually in June.
- PASSPORT was held in the parking lot.

In addition, children and youth families gathered for family scavenger hunts.

Adults:

- Offered "Talkback" lecture series in the Spring and TFC series on social justice issues in the fall.
- Honored the Sunday School faculty in May, and recognized Ed Pruden as the Outstanding Christian Educator of the Year.
- Presented virtual Vesper Services during the summer

Staff also created drive-thru events that allowed the congregation to gather from a distance and celebrate fall, Advent, and Christmas.

Marguerite Bostic, Chair of Board of Christian Education & Spiritual Formation

BOARD OF DEACONS

The 2020 Board of Deacons was composed of 64 members and 3 alternates. The elected officers were: Chair, Bill Thurston; Vice Chair, Mary Beth Scherer; Secretary, Janet Ahl; and Treasurer, Karen Cothran.

The 2020 Board executed the responsibilities of deacons as described by the RRCB Constitution and Bylaws.

A deacon orientation was held in January, 2020, and new deacons were ordained during worship on January 12.

While 2020 began with the usual work of organizing care groups, deacon assignments, meetings, completion of the Sign-Up Genius system, and other typical beginning-of-the-year activities, normal operations and activities were completely upended in the church and across the nation by the COVID-19 coronavirus. At this point in January 2021, life continues to be quite disrupted, with surges of the virus and a new strain that is said to be even more contagious than what we have experienced to date.

Since March, neither the Board nor its committees have met in person. Instead, the Zoom platform, previously unknown to most of us, became the means of conducting the Board's formal

responsibilities. Because the church has been unable, for the most part, to meet for worship in person, worship has been online, and the usual responsibilities for serving communion, being greeters, hosting receptions and gathering for quarterly deacon fellowship dinners have all been suspended, to the frustration and disappointment of all.

Even more significantly, personal contact with care groups has been severely curtailed with contact being limited to phone, notes, and online contact. In particular, care group members living in retirement communities such as Lakewood, Westminster Canterbury, and Cedarfield have been subject to safety precautions, limitations, and quarantine all of which severely curtailed our care group service to those folks.

The church has had an Ad hoc Re-Entry Task Force to address safety concerns in the time of COVID. That committee concluded that limited in-person worship could be conducted as we went into September. Deacons were asked to supplement usher/greeter duties with substantial limitations as to how that was to be done. The task was to be completely voluntary with only those participating who felt safe in doing so. We were able to do that from September through November when the committee concluded that with virus numbers increasing in the community, in-person worship should again be curtailed.

During all of this disruption, the Board's Fellowship Fund has continued its work. For a period of time in the middle of the year, demands on the Fund were actually reduced by reason of the state's suspension of evictions and utility bills, but as those ended, the Fund became extremely busy again. Fortunately, congregational giving to the Fund continued apace, and in October, the Board of Missions transferred over \$42,000.00 to the Fund which enabled the Fund to provide more than \$113,000.00 to people in need in 2020. On behalf of the Board of Deacons, I want to express the deepest thanks for the faithfulness of the congregation in continuing to give to the Fund in levels that exceed prior years.

As we enter a new year, it appears that the barriers and frustrations that plagued 2020 will continue, at least for the foreseeable future. As they have remained faithful throughout 2020, the deacons will remain faithful in the face of continuing uncertainty. We have a wonderful, resourceful, faithful staff to lead us, and we will continue to offer them our resolute support and continued prayers into a challenging future. If God is with us, who can be against us?

Submitted by, Bill Thurston, Chair

BOARD OF MISSIONS

The Board of Missions (BOM) has striven very hard to fulfill the call of our mission statement "to feed the hungry in both body and soul, welcome the stranger, clothe the poor, and to minister to those who are sick or in prison."

BOM began 2020 with our annual trip to Panama. We consisted of both a medical/dental team and a construction team. Our group of twenty-three members included CBF missionary Sue Smith as well as members from a number of other churches, including Second Baptist. Seven of the twenty-three members had never participated in an adult mission trip. This mission has been active for over a decade and is conducted in coordination with the *Fundación Christiana Médico Social*, a Panamanian faith-based group of doctors and medical and dental students.

During this trying time of the pandemic, BOM had to be more flexible in nature with our efforts. We were able to participate with CARITAS for a host week in February at the men's permanent shelter by preparing lunches for a week, one Saturday dinner for two hundred, and a group activity

on Monday and/or Wednesday. For our October host week, we made the meal and lunches and delivered them contactless to the permanent center. Since February we were not able to be in person for many of our normal missions. We could not package food for our Rise Against Hunger effort. Due to COVID-19 our mission trips to Nickelsville and Bland were canceled. Our Renew Crew's construction efforts as well as our organizing and participating in the CrossOver Ministry Moo and Brew were canceled likewise. The Camp Alkulana Golf Tournament that we support was not held. We were able to send a work day crew to Camp Alkulana in July.

Despite the cancelation of many of our in-person missions, new ones presented themselves in new forms. CARITAS was in need of extra meals for their clients housed temporarily in hotels. BOM organized and got new participants to provide and help deliver meals to temporary housed CARITAS clients. BOM funded a CARITAS apartment in the new women's permanent center. BOM organized the efforts to purchase and furnish and decorate, in person, the apartment. Circulo de Costura, the sewing circle formed of clients that are served at CrossOver, provides sewing instruction, language learning, and assimilation support. They could not meet, but they sewed masks with materials gathered by BOM. Our prison ministry could not do their usual visitation at the Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center, but they did send letters to boys at the center and provided refreshments and gifts for a Christmas party for Unit 66. Unable to assist the teachers in their classrooms, we worked with Oak Grove Bellemeade Elementary School, our partner in the Micah Project, by providing a needed collection of food, infant needs, books, games, and toys for the Hispanic families they serve. We purchased white boards and snacks for their meetups. We were able to carry on each month with our First Sunday Food Share collections by altering the drop off method. With the increased requests for food and clothing by the Church Hill Wellness Center and The South Richmond Baptist Center our deliveries increased to every month versus every two-three months. BOM gathered food to fulfill a need of Welborne United Methodist's food pantry in addition to our usual contribution at Christmas. With some changes, BOM organized and delivered back-to-school backpacks for CrossOver Ministry and Tuckahoe YMCA, over 25 Thanksgiving baskets to Oregon Hill Center and South Richmond Baptist Center, and Christmas gifts to assigned children served by Church Hill Wellness Center.

The pandemic created new mission opportunities that BOM decided to implement. We hosted three blood drives with 64 donors that provided 52 blood units helping to save over 156 people. We made over 70 children's masks for the back-to-school efforts of South Richmond Baptist Center. The Latino community in Fredericksburg, ministered by CBF missionaries Sue and Greg Smith, received hand-sewn ditty bags with toiletries and thermometers, and other personal needs. Camp Alkulana gave out to their campers close to 80 pom-poms that RRCB crafters and BOM made.

BOM not only responded to local and regional needs with hands-on efforts, but financially supported four offerings: the CBF Global Missions offering, the Akulana offering the Alma Hunt offering, and the Thanksgiving offering. We also financially supported many of the organizations that sponsor the mission activities in which River Road members participate, i.e., CrossOver Healthcare Ministry, Meals on Wheels, Camp Alkulana, River City Faith Network Ministries which is the parent organization for the three Baptist centers. Annually there are other organizations for which our support is largely or completely financial, including the Baptist General Association of Virginia (BGAV), the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF), the Virginia Baptist Women in Ministry (VBWIM), River City Faith Network Ministries, GraceInside, and a number of other organizations. Fortunately, through the generosity of RRCB members we fulfilled our budgeted finances and were able to reallocate extra funds to areas of increased needs due to COVID stresses. The allotted funds that were not used because COVID made it impossible, were given to the involved organization or partners that had additional needs during this difficult time. Some examples are: money for the Nickelsville trip was given to our Nickelsville partner; Bland's canceled trip funds helped our partner there; funds for the packaging of food for Rise Against Hunger were given to that organization; etc. In addition to these extra payments, we applied and

received two grants from BGAV to help with extra food offerings during COVID, and the Financial Committee allowed BOM to allocate money from the *Catch the Spirit* mission grant to go to the Fellowship Fund that was in great need.

As chair of BOM, I am very proud and grateful for how RRCB members and the BOM stepped up to meet the challenges of this year. In 2021 the BOM looks forward to continuing to promote good stewardship of our contributions and expand the scope and involvement of our church members in our mission activities.

Bonnie Livick, Chair

BUILDING AND PROPERTY COUNCIL

Projects for the Building and Property Council (B&PC) were severely impacted by the church shutdown as a result of COVID-19. The 2020 project work included:

- Lights for stained glass window: A fixture was tested on 12/15/19. The exterior of the sanctuary was awash with light. However, the effect from the inside was not satisfactory. Another sample fixture has been ordered and will be tested at a later date. No further action was taken in 2020. This project will continue into 2021.
- Fellowship Hall Stage Lighting: This project is funded by surplus from the *Rejoice and Give Thanks* capital campaign funds. Weston Corey was contracted to develop a plan based upon a Scope of Work developed by B&PC. Weston Corey completed the design. The proposal is based upon the use of Barbizon Lighting equipment. The all-in price (including an estimated \$5K for contracted electrical services) is \$65K based upon a \$75 budget. A contract has been executed with Barbizon. Installation will be complete by end of second quarter 2021.
- Elevators: A proposal to add an elevator to serve the upper commons was considered. Four requests for quotes for the Upper Commons Elevator were sent out for bid. These bids were reviewed by the project team on 02/06/20. The B&PC had numerous meetings to examine all aspects of this project and it was not approved. A design exists, and has been retained, in the event the church decides to proceed at some time in the future.
- Sanctuary Gutters: In May 2019, repairs were made to the hidden gutter system on the sanctuary. There remains the appearance of a stain on the brick surface. Internally, there currently is no evidence of a leak.
 - o R.C. Moore coordinated a detailed internal inspection of the gutter system. Ultimately it was determined that seams in the copper lining had failed.
 - o The B&PC developed a Scope of Work and a detailed construction schedule. The work was bid and contractors selected. The Endowment Board provided the funding. The internal gutter systems on both sides of the sanctuary were replaced. At the same time, the wood trim was repainted. There was anticipated damage to the wood trim, but this was determined to be in good shape due to the Cyprus wood originally selected for this trim. This project was completed on schedule and budget.
- Fellowship Hall HVAC VFD (variable frequency drive): B&PC met with John Dunlop and Ralph Hague regarding the proposed VFD. A cut sheet for the VFD we discussed has been provided. The drive has been ordered and will be installed by Tom Gilsdorf and Bill Rusher when it arrives.
- Youth Area Renovation: The project proceeded with a revised scope. The ceiling tiles will be replaced. Drop-in LED fixtures will replace the existing fluorescent fixtures. The

painting was contracted and completed. Bill Rusher coordinated the demolition of the old lighting fixtures and the installation of the new fixtures. Installation is 90% complete. Proposals for the flooring were solicited. The floor will be installed first quarter 2021.

- Fan Coil Units (FCU): Four FCUs were identified for replacement. Replacement of these units by H&G will continue in 2021.
- The Lower Commons AC: The unit serving the youth area failed. Funding was designated by surplus from *Rejoice and Give Thanks* capital campaign. The equipment is installed and is being tested.
- Funding for renovation of the pastor's office was transferred to House & Grounds. This work is nearly complete.

Submitted by, Tom Gilsdorf, Chair

ARTS COMMITTEE

The mission of the Arts Committee is to educate our congregation in the importance of the Arts in informing and expressing our Christian faith. We strive to accomplish this through exhibits, classes, and our Art Party.

In the year 2020 we met in January to plan our year. We had two exhibits and an Art Party on the calendar. Due to COVID-19 these plans were negated. Each committee member was notified that plans were on hold until further notice.

Cassandra Ducca continues to be our staff liaison and contacts us when changes are made concerning church regulations involving "The Virus."

We did not use our \$500.00 budgeted allocation.

Beverly Evans, Co-Chair. Arts Committee Committee: Leighann Breckenridge, Co-Chair. Judy Dixon, Letty Wood, Nancy Anderson, Michelle Harman-Gulick, Gladys Fleming, Sherry Sorrell, Margaret Almond, and Erica Gilliam

COLUMBARIUM COMMITTEE

The Columbarium Committee is charged with the oversight of the Columbarium and its associated gardens. Primary responsibilities of the Committee include the periodic review of the guidelines for the use of the Columbarium and maintaining the appearance and dignity of the gardens.

The Columbarium is composed of a total of 368 niches, (48 large and 320 small). Each large niche can accommodate up to four urns, while each small niche can accommodate up to two urns. Currently there are 28 large niches and 249 small niches available for purchase. There is also a "common ground" where ashes can be buried.

The Committee meets on an ad hoc basis. The first and only meeting in 2020 was held virtually on June 29, 2020. At this meeting, several maintenance issues were discussed. The first concerned the common ground, which was noted to be overgrown with weeds. The decision was made to sod and reseed in the fall. The common ground was subsequently sodded and reseeded in October, but heavy rains thereafter caused some damage that will require further work in 2021. The second issue discussed was the need to power wash the brickwork of the walls and walkways. During the

subsequent power wash, necessary repair of brickwork joints and recaulking was identified. The plan is for this work to be completed in 2021. The Committee wishes to express its appreciation for the periodic assistance provided by the RRCB FIXERS in maintaining the physical structure of the Columbarium and its associated gardens.

Also, at the June 29 meeting, the Committee discussed a practice followed by another church which allows the display in its columbarium of plaques memorializing members whose ashes have been placed elsewhere. The Committee discussed whether this policy might be considered for implementation for our Columbarium. The Committee decided not to pursue this issue further since such a memorial has not been requested to date.

The Columbarium is an important addition to River Road Church, Baptist and the Columbarium Committee looks forward to ensuring its lasting and meaningful value.

Steve Lessels, Chair

Members: Fred Bagwell, Caroline Brown, George Davis, Gladys Fleming, Anne Kirkup, Dick Morris; Daniel Ingram, Staff Liaison

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

In 2020, the Communications Committee focused its efforts on two big projects during the shutdown of in-person worship – interior signage and worship recording video upgrades. We could not accomplish our work without the support of our church's Communication Specialist Cassandra Ducca and other staff.

During 2020, some initiatives for improving communications for the church included:

- Improvements behind-the-scenes of our worship video. With the aid of committee members and several other outside experts, our current video recording system was reviewed for opportunities to improve the quality and location of the cameras and the recording systems. The objective is to bring the congregation a first-class worship experience online. The compiled information was presented to the Building and Property Council, who then identified and vetted a vendor and engaged in a contract for installation.
- Creating and installing new interior church signage. As our church has developed over the years, nomenclatures have evolved as well as how people traverse the church to get to their intended destination. We worked with Image360 to update and add new interior signage from the perspective of a first-time visitor. Around 40 signs were replaced or added, including overhead signs to identify the elevators and bathrooms down a hallway. As supplies and manpower were in short supply during the pandemic, the sign installations took many months—and a few corrections along the way. Image360 stepped up their quality and commitment and produced a great product for the signage.
- Subscribing to Zoom and Sign-Up Genius to help keep the congregation connected. The church subscribed to a paid account for the Zoom videoconferencing platform in order to hold meetings and fellowship opportunities. This has allowed our church to continue with regular business, committee and board meetings, children and youth gatherings, TFC-Adults programs, and other churchwide fellowship events. Additionally, we subscribed to a paid account for Sign Up Genius to allow us to have more customization for in-person worship sign ups as well as other events or volunteer opportunities.
- In a year where we relied on **digital efforts for virtual ministry**, our **email** list, **website**, and **social media** became critical to communicating with the congregation.

- We temporarily paused our **newsletter publications**, the *e-Spire* (weekly email), the monthly *Explorer* (mailed), and the quarterly *Explorer* (mailed), and focused on daily emails with updates or highlights. We did mail out several newsletters when there were big updates or reports to share.
- In October we revamped our **email communication strategy**, planning to send out three emails a week, prayer-focused email on Sundays, *e-Spire* on Tuesdays, and worship reminder on Thursdays.
- We continue to update our **website**, and added a **page** called **Be the Church**, a central hub for all things RRCB including events and missions, instructions to access the church directory, a prayer list, birthdays and anniversaries, sign up for church emails, and more. You can access this page at *rrcb.org/connect*.
- Our **social media pages** are sharing stories our congregation as well as ministry reminders, if you have not done so already, like us on Facebook (@RRCBaptist), follow us on Instagram (@RiverRoadChurch), follow us on Twitter (@RRCBaptist), and subscribe to us on YouTube (@RiverRoadChurch).

We are excited about the opportunities that are ahead for River Road Church, Baptist and look forward to the opportunity to help communicate the great things going on at our church. If you have a communication need, please remember we are here to help you craft your strategy.

Respectfully submitted, Laurie Gray, Chair (2020) Cassandra Ducca, Communications Specialist

HISTORY COMMITTEE

It seems appropriate for this report to attach the annual report from 2019 in order to focus on three of the new initiatives listed which were begun before the March COVID-19 shutdown.

These initiatives include:

- Merging older photos, print and digital to the SmugMug account managed by Cassandra Ducca. This step involves sorting, culling and moving photos into existing PC files in the Archives. Some culling is required in the PC files to create space. This is a large project that will require some time to finish.
- Working on organization in the Archives to include an index and room schematic. Many files have been created throughout recent years with some duplication. Most files are now received and stored electronically. The remaining older file boxes need an indexing system for the contents of each box and for their location in the room.
- **Refining guidelines for what is archivable**. The History Committee will have a written set of guidelines for what items of historical significance can be kept or maintained in the Archives.

Among the **continuing responsibilities** of the History Committee is the creation of displays in the History Cabinet in the Lower Commons. The last display created was for Lent in 2020 and remains in the case to this day.

In 2020, we were scheduled to **photograph an updated church directory** in May and June, we were later rescheduled to October and November, and then once again rescheduled to spring

2021. Unfortunately, Lifetouch has ended their church directory program so we will need to explore other companies, and schedule dates once it becomes safe for us to do so.

Carole Royall, Chair

MUSIC COMMITTEE

After an exciting start to the year 2020, many of the activities of the music ministry were severely curtailed by the pandemic as of mid-March. With rare exceptions, none of our choirs have been able to meet in person to sing. Rehearsals with the Chancel and Youth choirs have been held with the Zoom platform. Our Youth Choir held some outdoor rehearsals with a portable piano during the fall, and a limited number of our Chancel Choir singers were able to rehearse in the sanctuary for several Wednesdays from September through December. Music for our regular worship services has consisted mostly of solos and duets depending on the health restrictions that we have needed to follow. Both the Youth and Chancel choirs have participated in virtual renditions of anthems with great success. Members of our handbell choir have presented music for our worship services and the full Chancel Bell Choir, directed by Mr. Charles Todd—meeting in the Fellowship Hall within the necessary safety guidelines—produced music for our virtual Christmas Eve service.

Every live concert in 2020 *E. Carl Freeman Concert Series* had to be canceled. Starting in September, we produced some short organ recitals which we called "Organ Interlude Series." These recitals have been performed by the Minister of Music and a guest organist during those four presentations. The series will continue on a monthly basis during the pandemic.

Starting in April of 2020, Rev. Paul Honaker got busy helping out with some organizational tasks that will result in smoother rehearsals, improved administrative workflow, and better communication throughout our church's music ministry. The countless hours he has spent with our anthems and service music, our concert music, our overall music storage, and your choir folders, cubbies, and robes since early April have already been invaluable. Paul joined our staff officially with the title "Music Associate" beginning September 1. Paul's part-time work includes many of the less glamorous logistical and administrative tasks—tedious work that simply needs to get done. This includes his working with volunteers who would be willing to continue organizing the tools and resources of our ministry in the music suite. Paul is also called upon to work on various musical (rehearsal/performance) tasks as needed.

River Road Church is the beneficiary of a music program and a musical tradition of the highest caliber. This Committee extends its heartfelt thanks to all the musicians and members of this congregation who have provided leadership and support for our worship experience.

Prepared by Sallie Sparks, Chair.

2020 Music Committee members: Rose Browning, Russ Collins, Tom Gilsdorf, Kara Harman-Barrios, Susan Gordon, Tyler Hays, Anne James, Georgia Mayo, Don Robertson, Jane Terry, Phyllis West.

PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT CENTER COMMITTEE

In 2020, the Preschool Committee consisted of Lisa Cipoletti, Peggy Pruden, Miggie Mustian, Tara Savedge, Mary Beth Scherer, Elizabeth Holland, and Caroline Koskinen as Chair.

Danielle Simone continued as the Preschool Director after being selected by the Preschool Search Committee in late 2019. Beth Howe served as the Assistant Director.

The committee met in early March at the request of Danielle. She shared current enrollment and class projections, summer camp projections, teacher intents, staffing needs for the 2020-2021 school year, the 2020-2021 teacher pay scale, and vendor plan for 2020-2021. Current projections were up from the 2019-2020 school year and Danielle was seeing that parents want more enrollment days. The committee approved the change of class names to be in more parent-friendly terms (example: 1's class instead of Developmental II's class) and the addition of another three-day 2's class and five-day 4's class for the 2020-2021 school year.

Danielle announced that summer camp would be increased to 6 weeks in 2020 including a week of lunch bunch after Vacation Bible School. Summer camp teachers would be paid \$18 per hour and a 3's summer class camp was added because of a wait list. The committee approved that the school year substitute rate be increased to \$50 per day, and the implementation of a new hiring scale Danielle created with Bill Stanton, her budget liaison. The committee requested Danielle put into writing that a Bachelor's degree is required for lead teachers. A two percent pay increase for staff who are not at the current max out level was also voted on, and approved.

It was announced that four veteran teachers would be retiring at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, Marge Rusher, Anne Waldruff, Laura Eure, and Amy Matney. In addition, Meg Simonton would be moving from an assistant to a substitute, and Alison Crenshaw and Erin Firement would be leaving the school. Amy Matney and Anne Waldruff agreed to serve on the Preschool Advisory Counsel for the 2020-2021 school year. Rachel Fendly will move to the lead JK (Junior Kindergarten) teacher replacing Anne Waldruff. The committee approved Danielle's request to add an additional JK class. More outside vendors will be included in the tentative 2020-2021 vendor schedule due to fact that they have drawn higher enrollment numbers in after-school enrichment class sign-ups. The final approval by the committee at this meeting was to move from quarterly to monthly chapel services starting in October. The last chapel of the school year will tie into Vacation Bible School with possible parent sign-up at the end. This is part of an effort to increase connections between the church and the preschool.

At the end of March 2020, the Governor of Virginia announced the closure of all schools due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. River Road Preschool fell under this umbrella and closed. The committee met on March 30, 2020 on a Zoom call to discuss the logistics regarding the school closure. The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) had allowed for schools to reopen for essential personnel. Based on survey results of parents and staff after the closure occurred, and options presented, the committee voted to remain closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. Families were offered a tuition compensation with three options because of the school year closure. Returning students could receive a one-month tuition credit to lower their tuition for the 2020-2021 school year. Non-returning families were offered two weeks of camp of their choice at no charge. The third option was allowing families to use their tuition payment as a donation to the preschool.

Danielle gave an overview of lead teacher expectations during the closure. These included continued regular communication with families in the form of newsletters and emails, communication not in the form of email such as phone chats, Zoom calls, and personal mail, Spring parent-teacher phone conversations, weekly plans in three different cognitive areas sent via email, and two hours of Professional Development per week. Instructional assistants were expected to email families weekly, share one idea with class/lead teacher each week, and complete

two hours of professional development weekly. Reopening the school for camp was considered and decided to be evaluated in May. The committee was informed that spring enrichment payments were returned to parents and vendors were given notice of cancellation of running those programs in the spring.

In May, the committee met via Zoom to discuss Summer Camp. Danielle recommended, based on the Virginia Governor's "stay at home" order in Phase l at that time, that camps not start until July 20 when the state was well into Phase ll. Danielle proposed that camp run the weeks of July 20, July 27, and August 3. Teachers would be trained with new COVID-19 safety measures to be implemented during camp. The committee voted to approve Danielle's camp proposal and have her inform parents that week of the school's plan. It was noted that all would be subject to change if the state was not well into Phase II and no other changes arose with public safety in July and August. Additionally, at this meeting, the committee approved the addition of COVID-19 employee and family disclosure statements as well as changes to the parent handbook. After this meeting, the summer camp opening request was taken to the church Re-Entry Task Force and approved.

In July, the committee met via Zoom for the 2019-2020 preschool financial review and the 2020-2021 budget submission. Danielle shared the financial impact to the preschool due to the COVID-19 closure, revenue at that time, expenses, and financial policy considerations for the 2020-2021 school year. The committee voted to remove the \$200 deposit from the parent tuition schedule and instead increase the yearly registration fee. Student contracts for the fall would be rewritten and reviewed by Ron McGurkin, NACELL Legal Consultant. Teacher new hire intentions were also brought to the attention of the committee. The 2020-2021 budget and an update of the staff wording for lead teacher Bachelor's degree requirement was approved.

In the fall of 2020, the committee met several times to discuss retirement gifts that due to the spring school closure did not happen. Mary Beth Scherer and Caroline Koskinen, with financial guidance from Daniel Glaze, purchased and delivered gifts to the four retired personnel that reflected years of service to the preschool. It was decided that in lieu of a retirement luncheon, the retired teachers as well as the preschool committee would be invited to the Spring celebration hosted by the preschool in May 2021. In addition, staff turnover, school climate, mask mandates and concerns, and the creation of a teacher survey for personal feedback to help guide the preschool committee were discussed. These agenda items will be continued in 2021.

Respectfully Submitted, Caroline Koskinen

USHERS COMMITTEE

The 2020 River Road Church Usher's Committee performs usher duties for all Sunday morning Church services.

The attendance numbers for In-Person Services for the year 2020 are as follows:

January 5	278	February 2	285	March 1	263
January 12	268	February 9	235	March 8	233
January 19	265	February 16	250		
January 26	262	February 23	268		
Total January	1073	Total February	1038	Total March	496

Average Sunday attendance is 261.

After March 8, Sunday Services were held only on livestreaming via internet—until September 6. From September 6 thru November 22, 12 in-person Sunday Services were held in addition to the livestreaming.

The attendance for the 12 in-person Services averaged 40 for members and staff. The usher and greeter duties for these services were performed by volunteer members of the Usher and Deacon committees.

Respectfully submitted, John A. Hays, Chair

WMU CONNECTORS

Connectors does not usually meet in January. In February, we met at Brio Tuscan Grill for dinner and social time. In March, COVID shut down further meetings as a group. Members continued to be involved in mission's work by donating items for Oregon Hill and by monetary help as noted in our budget. Donations in January thru September benefited the following groups: VCCW Chaplaincy Fund, Bibles for Camp Alkulana, dues and a contribution to Elizabeth Kates Foundation at the Goochland Women's Prison, and the South Richmond Baptist Center.

In September, the Co-chairs met at Ray Nelson's house to make plans to regroup for the September 2020—August 2021 time frame. Anna Perry Miller was invited to attend and give input as to possible mission's directions with COVID changes and community needs.

We have had Zoom meetings monthly since September. Communications via email have also been increased to do a better job keeping members informed of news and involved in the WMU at RRCB. Peggy Pruden has lined up speakers for each Zoom meeting with a business, verbal member catch up discussions, and prayer.

Our hope is to continue to Zoom through May 2021. We will take the summers off meeting-wise but still be following up with our missions activities and donations over the summer. Newsletters will continue to keep members in the loop with the church, ministers, and each other.

Support beginning in September 2020 was earmarked for the following: Oregon Hill, South Richmond Baptist Center, Camp Alkulana golf sponsorship, Lamb's Basket, Bright Beginnings at the YMCA, and Hilliard House Emergency Shelter. After discussion, it was decided to divert remaining funds to community COVID needs. Donations were made to FeedMore, and the RRCB Fellowship Fund.

Ann Bagwell and her committee made certain holiday cards were sent to 51 shut-ins who are church members.

Connectors continue to be involved with the Doorways. We have made a contribution and are collecting toiletries the month of January 2021. We also have continued supporting the VCCW by sending a donation to Emmaus Christian Church to go towards correspondence items and toiletries for prison residents. These items can no longer be donated but must be ordered directly by the prison staff.

Finally, a donation was made towards CBF Global Missions.

Connectors is continuing to be "connected" in these difficult times. Friends Helping Friends...

Respectfully submitted by, Ray Nelson, Betty Damon, and Peggy Pruden, Co-chairpersons