



**2021 Annual Report
River Road Church, Baptist**

CHURCH CLERK

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021 **1877**

Total Membership, December 31, 2020	1895
New members by transfer of letter or statement, 2021	10
Deaths, 2021	22
Removal by letter transfer or personal request, 2021	6

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021 **1877**

New members by transfer of letter or statement:

Bailey, Colin David	Elliott, David
Byers, Linda	Ethington, Bradley
Cowardin, Sheridan Kathleen	Ethington, Pamela
Elizabeth	Palmore, Douglas Grayson
Dixon, Ellington Marie	Tysinger, Alicia F.
Elliott, Cecilia	

Deaths:

Austin, Beverly Kritzer	Milligan, Norman Odell
Bailey, Nellie Cornelius	Morris, Joseph Richard
Blanton, Alice Allport	Moss, Johnson Clinton, Jr.
Chandler, Wallace Lee	Phillips, Eleanor Snead
Curtis, Doris Elaine	Schaffer, Alma Lee Thompson
Harmon, William Barry	Scherer, Mildred Coor
Jacobsen, Jane	Stephenson, Noralee Mellor
Kinsey, Barbara Snead	Strother, Sue
Lane, June Barker	Tyler, Beatrice S.
Manson, Richard Campbell, Jr.	Updike, Leslie Kyle
Messick, Robert Hamilton	Wolford, Eunice Schramm

Removal by letter transfer or personal request:

Hays, Ann Tyler	Parker, Bev
Hays, William Sidney	Parker, Kemper
Kennedy, Alyne R.	Tolbert, Vicki Deane

With the history of River Road Church, Baptist being affected for a second year by the COVID-19 pandemic, Susan Young, in the front office, has truly been a help mate. She has kindly put into readable form my notes from the three churchwide business meetings of 2021. She has also put into signature-ready form letters about membership status that go to other churches. And for years she has generated the multiple copies of the letter which is sent to newly elected church leaders who begin their term in 2021. Laura Thorne, the new Clerk of the Church, has individually signed them for the past two years. We will certainly miss Mrs. Young's fifteen years of "corporate memory" but wish her a contented retirement.

With gratitude,
Emily D. King
Church Clerk, Retired

HISTORIAN'S REPORT

The new year of 2021 began where the old one left off with the COVID pandemic seeing an increase in cases in Virginia; and therefore, "because of desire to love and care for our congregation" the ad hoc Re-Entry Task Force returned to online worship only. For the first two Sundays of January, the Rev. Anna Perry Miller preached and she was followed by the Rev. Dr. David Breckenridge. The Rev. Dr. Daniel Glaze, pastor, announced that these ministerial staff members were preaching to free him for long-range planning for 2021. The pastor, staff, and congregation were entering COVID Year Two with its far-reaching consequences of a pandemic which touched every segment of society. By year's end, some five-and-a-half million persons had died around the world from effects of the virus.

Yet, despite restrictions at every turn, River Road Church, Baptist continued in community with one another and in missions outreach beyond River and Ridge. At year's end, at the turning of the calendar, the pastor sent a letter to the church family in which he summarized the year: "I am filled with mixed emotions. I continue to grieve the losses that COVID has brought to our church, community, and world. So many individuals and families have suffered the loss of life, health, and income. Many in our church family have dealt with the loss of fellowship—seeing the faces of one another and enjoying the gifts of handshakes, hugs and kind words offered to one another. Even still, I remain grateful that we have not lost who we are. We remain one church family united through the love of God, committed to sharing hope and love with our neighborhood and this world."

The new year was only in its first week when, on Wednesday, January 6, 2021, a horrendous insurrection occurred at the U.S. Capitol. The building was breached by a huge mob in reaction to the results of the presidential election three months earlier and on the very day of Congress fulfilling its duty to certify the election. The rioting, destruction, and imminent threats upon members of Congress as well as democracy itself played out in real time on national television and left most of the country and the world in shock. The pastor included the national crisis in his pastoral prayer of January 10, saying, in part: "These days have been very difficult for us as a nation. We collectively have felt sorrow and pain because of our love for our nation, our commitments to democracy, for the ways we care about each other. We grieve because we love ... hear the grievings of our souls, hold our frustration, pain, confusion. Give us your hope. In this season of Epiphany, shine your light, O Christ. We pray for our elected national leaders that they might lead graciously and courageously. Give them wisdom and a longing for justice ... heal our hearts, heal our land, bring us together as brothers and sisters in a spirit of love and peace."

In her sermon, the Rev. Anna Perry Miller presented a message for Baptism of Christ Sunday yet, from the Scripture and in her own reflections, she applied the lesson to the immediate scene. She stated, in part: "This week the Capitol building of our country was breached ... I said 'O God, help our country. Bring light in the darkness.' This is what the Scripture is about today ... the Scripture is entirely relevant to our lives today." From Genesis 1:1-5, she emphasized "light from darkness" and from Mark 1:4-11 with its account of Jesus' baptism, she noted "the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." She emphasized that Jesus who was without sin chose to be baptized as a declaration that he had "come to us, to be in the middle of [our life experiences] with us ... to go where we go and to stand with us there."

In the annual business meeting held by Zoom on January 31, Ed Pruden, vice-moderator, presided in the absence of Bill Gray. Some 104 computers "dialed-in," many having more than one participant. George Davis brought the main piece of business on adoption of the new budget which was similar to the previous year's budget and it was duly approved. Chris Gobble shared from the Board of Deacons that the Fellowship Fund was very low, having experienced a record by helping 452 families, most of whom were experiencing hardships due to the pandemic. The River Road Church Endowment Fund made a special grant to the BOD to help with the demand of requests; and in the weeks following Chris' plea, many members made concerted efforts to increase the amount in the Fund which helps so many individuals.

Besides the impact of the health crisis, another carryover from the old year was the on-going stewardship emphasis. The Stewardship Committee working with the Finance Committee reported 238 pledges for the 2021 budget with the total amount pledged reaching 69% of the goal which was based upon the 2020 budgeted expenses. Across the year, members remained faithful in their offerings.

With the uncertainty of the virus, the arrival of its variants, despite vaccinations and boosters, it was a time of constant adjusting of programs and schedules. It required discernment and agility to advance two steps forward and to occasionally go two steps backwards. The Re-Entry Task Force, headed by Kathryn Norman, kept the congregation alerted as far as masking and social distancing when gathered. Some Sunday school classes found creative ways to remain in service and contact including use of Zoom and, by fall, some resuming in-person meetings. A timeline told the story: on January 10th, it was observed that the church would “worship online until further notice”; in-person worship resumed March 14; on Sunday, May 23, the pastor commented that the church had marked “a turning point” and could gather with or without masks and the next Sunday, congregational singing could resume; June 6 was the first Sunday with some choir members back in the loft, congregational singing and the pastor in the high pulpit with 102 in attendance; and on June 13, the full choir had returned.

Every phase of church life experienced some adjustments. Rented tents were placed on the ground near the front of the Sanctuary and Wednesday evening suppers resumed, albeit under the tents, and still prepared by chefs Chris Ahart and Madelyn Albright; and an adjusted schedule for choir rehearsals offered an increase in attendance at the suppers. There were churchwide gatherings with music on the plaza. The staff offered creative ways for contact and fellowship with congregants such as a churchwide Valentine’s Day drive-thru when the ministers were stationed around the parking lot to greet members as they drove by them. Sandy Rooney offered Sunday Breakfast Chats with children via Zoom. The Thoughtful Faith Community programs resorted to Zoom and one of these featured Keith Hare, president and CEO of Virginia Health Care Association, who shared with the congregation about COVID. River Road did not overlook its budding friendship with two area congregations— Congregation Or Atid and Quioccasin Baptist Church—and via Zoom, the church offered “A Walk Through Our Faiths” featuring Rabbi Hal Schevitz and the Rev. Dr. Theodore Brown, and Dr. Glaze. The three dialogues carried the titles of “On Passover and Easter”; “What Makes a Jew and What Makes a Christian”; and “What It Means to be a Neighbor”. Lenten meditations were prepared and presented via YouTube by several church members. In October, Sunday school classes for children and “children’s church” resumed. It was not COVID but Mother Nature’s weather which brought indoors the annual “Truck or Treat” event for families.

By fall, the youth ministry resumed “an almost normal routine” including participation in CBF of Virginia’s Fall Retreat at Eagle Eyrie. Beth Rooney, a church member and first-year student at Union Presbyterian Seminary, was named Seminary Intern for the church’s Young Adult Ministry, aimed at post-high school and young professionals. The ministry coined the name Sunago which comes from a Greek word found in the Bible meaning “gather together.”

In September, the church resumed the *E. Carl Freeman Concert Series* with an organ recital by Christopher Martin, director of music and organist at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Richmond. In October, a newly-formed vocal ensemble, Vox Humana, directed by William Bradley Roberts, gave its premiere concert at River Road Church. In November, Clara Gerdes, music director at Most Holy Redeemer and Nativity Catholic Parish in New York City, presented a lively organ concert before a large and appreciative audience. The program was jointly sponsored by the church and the Richmond Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Ms. Gerdes was the winner of the 2017 AGO Mid-Atlantic Regional Organ Playing Competition held in Richmond. In December, the popular duo-organists, Raymond and Elizabeth Chenault, made a return visit to River Road for a program of Christmas organ duets. Natives of Virginia, the Chenaults are organists and choirmasters emeriti of All Saints’ Episcopal Church, Atlanta. The 2021 Series offerings concluded with the Service of Lessons and Carols presented in mid-December by the Chancel Choir. On Christmas Eve, the family service was held outside on the plaza; and for the

second year, the evening service was held at an earlier hour than in the past. There was another musical offering held in mid-summer. It was a vocal recital by Holden Seward, a bass-baritone, who had been singing at River Road since 2011 where he found several teachers and mentors including Dr. Gallagher. He had been accepted into the School of Music at the University of Miami.

On October 3, World Communion Sunday, the congregation received a tribute plaque from Grace in Christ Evangelical Church which, since 2009, had been in partnership with River Road Church, meeting in the church building. Six members of Grace in Christ participated in the presentation and one of them commented that “River Road accepted strangers like us.” While Grace in Christ had found a new church home yet it was observed by one of their members that “our churches will forever share a bond in Christian love.”

The staff remained unchanged except for the addition of the Rev. Lacey Wondree as part-time ministries coordinator. (In January 2022, Susan Young, administrative assistant, retired after having served in the front office since 2008.)

There were two ministerial staff anniversaries. On Sunday, September 19, in the worship service, Dr. Robert P. Gallagher was recognized on his tenth anniversary as minister of music. Judy Dixon spoke for the Chancel Choir and recalled the “exciting chatter” following Bob’s interview with the choir. “Thankfully, our hopes became reality,” she continued, “and we began an exciting and challenging journey with Bob Gallagher.” She directed her comments to the minister of music when she said: “You have been a ‘minister’ to the choir, our ‘leader,’ our ‘teacher’ and most of all, our ‘friend.’ You have challenged us to be the best we could be!” Griz Dixon and Seth Roberts also made comments of appreciation. Bob was presented with a framed letter of tribute from his former teacher at the Manhattan School of Music, the noted Dr. Frederick Swann, organist emeritus of the Riverside Church in New York and the Crystal Cathedral in California. In part, the letter stated: “Bob has never stopped pursuing excellence as a concert organist and as a church musician. His continued studying, his performances in this country and abroad and his reputation as a consummate choir director/organist in demanding church positions is well established. His enthusiasm is contagious and results in outstanding results with his choirs and others with whom he works. I salute Bob and wish him a continued successful and joyful career as he remains an inspiration to others.”

The pastor also offered remarks and reminded the congregation that Dr. Gallagher was “the only full-time staff member” when the pastor arrived at River Road Church and, therefore, on his tenth anniversary he was the senior member of the ministerial staff.

Dr. Glaze also observed his fifth anniversary as pastor on Sunday, December 12, in the worship service. Hilton Almond, chair of the Pastor Search Committee which recommended Dr. Glaze to become the church’s sixth pastor, spoke words of tribute. He acknowledged that the last two years had been among “the worst of times” in regard to COVID and its impact upon every phase of life yet he felt that it has been “the best of times” with “the strong leadership and spiritual guidance of Daniel.” He continued: “It has been the best of times with the solid and dedicated staff that Daniel has created. It has been the best of times as River Road Church, despite COVID, has remained strong, vigorous, and committed to all the programs which we hold near and dear.” Dr. Almond recalled the inner workings of the search committee, noting that from the list of final candidates, the preliminary vote became the final vote when Daniel Glaze received all fourteen secret votes from the entire membership of the committee. He concluded: “We look forward to many more years of ministry together.”

From the pulpit, the pastor responded with the following thoughts: “It has been my experience that good churches make good pastors—not the other way around. Should anyone offer a kind word about my ministry here, that is certainly more a reflection of you, the kind of church you are, the kind of church you

are becoming. Thank you for your faithfulness.” He paid compliments to the entire staff and added: “I can’t wait to see what God has in store for us together.”

On December 5, during the church business meeting which was held both in-person and via Zoom, Bill Gray, moderator, presided over the approval of the slate presented by the Nominating Committee for the new church year. He also recognized Emily King, church clerk for the last 25 years, who had chosen to retire from the position. She was accorded a round of applause by a standing congregation. Another matter of important business was congregational approval of a recommendation from the Board of Administration to create an ad hoc Coordinating Group for Continuous Improvement and Congregational Vitality. Robert Gray, chair of the Board of Administration, spoke to the motion, emphasizing the concepts of “vitality,” “change,” and “hope,” and commenting that the process is “how to be intentional about our hopes.” The Coordinating Group would consist of 16 persons. In the motion it was stated: “We desire to move forward into our next 75 years with strong hopes and convictions for vibrant ministry and outreach that has been part of the River Road Church tradition since our founding. This proposal will bring new ministry and fellowship opportunities for current and future members along with experimentation for new programs.” The recommendation was duly approved.

In his annual letter to the congregation, dated January 7, 2022, the pastor stated his own hopefulness. “Through our Coordinating Group and through everything we do together as a church, we have an opportunity to build upon the growth and vitality and relevance and mission of River Road Church. We want to share the great gift of God’s love with all persons. Moreover, we want to share the great gift of being connected in this family with all who may be seeking a caring and loving church home.” He concluded with one of his oft-remarked observations: “Wherever God calls us, God is already there.”

The challenging year of 2021 also happened to be the 75th anniversary year of the church, which brought to mind the challenges in 1946 of that brave, post-war congregation who gathered and dared to dream. Due to the unusual circumstances of the anniversary year, the uncertainty of COVID and group gatherings, in deference to the overall solemn nature of the time, there were no fireworks, no grand celebration, no festivities. Instead, the people of River Road continued to be faithfully committed to the tasks at hand. Perhaps there would be opportunities to reflect, remember and even renew in the new church year.

Fred Anderson, Historian

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The fifteen elected members of the Board of Christian Education & Spiritual Formation (BCE&SF) met via Zoom January-May and September-December of 2021 (taking the regular break during the summer months). 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 fewer opportunities to help in that way again in 2021. Chairs were: Children’s Committee-Melanie Butterworth; Youth Committee-Carl Collier; and Adult Committee-Scott Leake.

The pandemic continued to challenge the staff to come up with ways for us to “Be the Church” apart, moving our worship, education, and fellowship online, outside, or inside with masking and social distancing. Here are some highlights from the past year:

- Children:
 - Weekly multi-age breakfast chat on Zoom (bible lesson and conversation).

- Zoom activity on every other Sunday afternoon; on alternate Sundays, Sandy did driveway visits with families.
- The Sunday School teachers continue to connect by way of notes and Sunday School leaflets.
- An Easter egg hunt and VBS were held outside; Trunk or Treat was originally planned as an outside event but moved indoors (with masking) due to inclement weather.
- Unfortunately, a decision was made not to participate in Passport over the summer due to the pandemic.
- Children’s Church and Sunday School started again in September/October.
- Youth:
 - All events were held virtually during the colder months, then transitioned to meeting outside in the spring.
 - Youth Sunday was held on May 16.
 - Beth Rooney served as a summer intern supporting Marnie and the youth.
 - Unfortunately, a decision was made not to participate in Passport over the summer due to the pandemic.
 - We partnered with five local churches to put on CampRVA in July (outdoor worship with dinner, missions, fellowship—a way to provide “camp/Passport” this summer without having to travel).
 - The youth were able to participate in a fall retreat at Eagle Eyrie in November.
- Children and Youth also participated in various drive-through events throughout the year.
- Adults:
 - Some classes chose to meet via Zoom and others stayed in touch via email during the earlier part of 2021; later in the year, some were able to start meeting again either outside or inside wearing masks.
 - The Wednesday night Thoughtful Faith Community series continued to be held via Zoom earlier in the year and in person later on in 2021 when possible. Of special note was the Educators of the Year celebration held outside on May 19 honoring Kitty Davis and Bill Thurston.
 - Conducted a series for Lent leveraging the book “Lent in Plain Sight” by Jill Duffield, along with weekly meditations put together by church members, and three group conversations held via Zoom.
 - The planning committee for the February 2022 “A Weekend of Wonder” event was hard at work with all of the details.
 - In partnership with the Board of Deacons, a successful Celebration Sunday was held outdoors in September.
 - A five-week Christmas Season Bible Study with Elizabeth Newman was held as well.

Sarah Wilkinson, Chair of the Board of Christian Education and Spiritual Formation

BOARD OF DEACONS

The 2021 Board of Deacons was composed of 60 deacons and 2 alternates. The elected officers were Chair, Mary Beth Scherer; Vice-Chair, Cathy Whitty; Secretary, Janet Ahl; and Treasurer Chris Gobble. Our new deacons were ordained on January 31, 2021 in a virtual service.

The Board of Deacons began 2021 under the constraints of the COVID pandemic. Worship was held virtually only until mid-March, and other than the concerted effort to care for our congregation, most deacon duties were suspended. We continued to support our care groups. Our Re Entry Task Force continued to monitor the progress of the COVID virus using CDC guidance, and on March 14, 2021, allowed for church services using the protocol from our fall re-entry. Deacons volunteered to serve as greeters and ushers so that our church family could participate in worship safely. Our deacons helped to

seat those attending worship, assured that they were masked and socially distanced, and help them exit our sanctuary with a minimum of exposure to one another. In May, our Task Force moved to allow church members who were fully vaccinated to remove masks and seat themselves. COVID and its variants continued to cause concern, and as of mid-August, we returned to a mask requirement for all church indoor activities. In late November, the Task Force amended the mask requirement to masks recommended, and soon thereafter, we began seeing cases of a new Omicron variant. This strain of virus proved to be quite contagious. Considering all aspects of our Christmas activities, the Family Service was held outdoors on the plaza. That service, as well as the evening communion service, required that our worshippers be fully masked, and we enter 2022 with masks in place. Our Task Force has worked diligently to keep our church family safe, and we appreciate all of their work. Deacons were quick to adapt to implement necessary precautions. Their willingness and ability to adapt was commendable.

A new deacon orientation was held via Zoom in early February where we covered care groups and use of the website and Sign-Up Genius. Laura Lee Chandler covered the use of the Zoom program as well as proper etiquette during our meetings so that everyone felt comfortable.

Chester Phelps graciously agreed to kick off our March meeting. He discussed the lows and the highs of the pandemic and left us all feeling inspired.

In the early spring, R C Moore brought a proposal before the Board of Administration asking that our church consider our viability going into the future. Since we will celebrate our 75th anniversary this year, we began discussions as to what changes need to be made to make us relevant for the next 75 years. Discussions began within the Board of Administration. On Monday, April 12, at our deacons meeting, our board began to offer our thoughts on the matter. Members were called on in alphabetical order to give their thoughts. Our members continued their discussions into the May 3 meeting. Daniel Glaze took detailed notes of the discussion, and a committee was appointed to review those notes to look for common ideas and themes. We are currently in the process of forming a committee to consider how to best implement these ideas and guide the church boards as they begin implementation.

As we continued to work to help our community with the hardships of COVID, the deacons decided to focus the Fellowship Fund on helping with housing, utilities, and emergency housing. Funeral and medical expenses were removed from our handbook as a regular focus of giving and going forward would be considered on a case-by-case basis. Throughout this year of changes, our congregation and deacons continued to be faithful in their giving, and through the Fellowship Fund, 521 families received assistance in the amount of \$121,028.70. This represents approximately \$15,000 over and above our 2020 donations.

Our pastors have worked diligently throughout 2021 to provide meaningful worship and activities and maintain our sense of family and unity. This has been difficult this year for them, and their creativity has been amazing. They suggested adaptations to traditional activities that allowed us to meet. We reached out to one another as our members gathered outdoors to have safe fellowship with one another. We happily attended our Celebration Sunday, September 12, to have “street vendor food” prepared by Chris Ahart and participate in lawn games and play with inflatable toys. A lovely tent adorned with white lights allowed us to carry out fellowship activities. Thank you to our Daniels.

One small step toward “normal” was the revived tradition of delivering poinsettias to our home-bound church members. Those special members of our church family were delighted to be remembered in this way and to enjoy a visit with a caring friend from church. Thanks goes to David Breckenridge and our deacons who saw that the flowers went to those folks.

The deacons also enjoyed two opportunities to gather. Our October meeting was held outside under a beautiful lighted tent. We were served a delicious dinner, and Emily Tuck spoke to us about returning to

the basics of connecting and caring for one another. Singing around our church fireplace with cookies and hot chocolate was a December treat. Bob led us as we all raised our voices in Christmas celebration.

We are making small steps in terms of returning to “normal,” although to many of us, it seems painfully slow. We have gathered in the parking lot and held VBS outside. Deacons are taking offering to the altar once again. Traditional programs such as the Fellowship Fund and church picnic have continued with modifications. Looking back over 2021, there has been much joy in the midst of the chaos. The love we have for one another is apparent when we gather on the plaza after worship to catch up. We know that we, through River Road Church, do God’s work each day in spite of an ugly virus. We have such wonderful uncomplaining, competent, and loving ministers and staff to care for us. And under all of this, you have the deacons who pitch in whenever we have asked. I have heard VERY FEW answers of NO during my time as chair. You warm my heart. Thank you for your prayers, your love, and your support this year. I was truly blessed.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Beth Scherer
Chairperson, Board of Deacons 2021

BOARD OF MISSIONS

2021 was a unique, challenging, and in the end, fulfilling year for the Board of Missions. This year’s theme was “Road to Recovery” and the goal for the year was to help all of our Mission partners with recovery from the devastating events of 2020. Despite our greatest hopes and prayers, 2021 turned out to be another challenging year, which made some of these recovery events very difficult. Despite these obstacles, our board accomplished some great things in 2021. The below quote from Jana Stanfield does a nice job of summing up how I feel about the year for the board.

“I cannot do all the good that the world needs. But the world needs all the good that I can do.”

There were a number of events to highlight our year as a board:

First Sunday Food Shares: On the first Sunday of each month, a team of board members faithfully stood post at church and collected food donations for Church Hill Wellness Center, South Richmond Baptist Center, and Welborne UMC food pantries. Many church members participated and we collected hundreds of pounds to donate to the ministry.

Partnership with CARITAS: Throughout the year we did several things with CARITAS to assist in the services they provide for the community. During bridge weeks we helped with meals for people staying in their shelter. Another was to participate in missions focused on their new women’s housing unit called The Healing Place. These included collecting items to make comfy kits for arriving residents and also using some of our funds to purchase workout clothes for ladies who choose to use their gym.

Bland County Missions Trip: In September we sent a group to Bland County, Virginia to assist in making wheelchair ramps for people in need of this service. A wonderful time was had by all and our missionaries were so grateful to have this opportunity to travel after a forced year off in 2020.

Nickelsville Craft Bags: In many cases the pandemic did not allow for participation in our normal in-person missions trips, such as our annual trip to Nickelsville. This however did not change our desire to help this group and this year it was determined that putting craft bags together for use by seniors in that area was a need we could help fulfill. The funds for this mission were used to buy supplies in 2021, and a group of church members will gather to put these bags together in early 2022.

Afghanistan Mission Support: One of the devastating world events from 2021 was the displacement of thousands of people from Afghanistan when the Taliban came back into power. Many of these people landed in Virginia and the call went out to help with the great need that this created. The membership took up a collection and collected thousands of personal hygiene items and put together kits for these people to use while staying in shelter. We also used some of our funds to purchase baby formula for infants that had been displaced with their families.

Christmas Store: In November, our church participated in the annual Christmas store mission and “adopted” a record 51 families. Our members stepped up in a big way and donated socks, hats, toys, games, puzzles and even some bikes! The team in Church Hill who runs this mission was overjoyed with our support!

In closing I would like to thank all of our board members for their work over the year. Without their efforts none of this would have been possible!

Tim Merritt, 2021 Board of Missions Chair

BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

2021 was another interesting year for the Board of Administration. This year marked the 75th anniversary of River Road Church Baptist, and during the first meeting there was a motion to consider the vitality of the church for the next 75 years. During the ensuing months the Board of Administration in conjunction with the Coordinating Council conducted a series of listening sessions to understand people's view on this. The topic was generally embraced by all. The topic implies change is needed which can bring questions and concerns. The listening sessions were conducted via video conference with the Board of Administration, the Board of Christian Education and Spiritual Formation, and the Board of Deacons. This enabled all who want to speak the opportunity and an opportunity for all to hear one another. Careful notes were taken, compiled, and affirmed. These details are documented in the minutes. A motion was approved by the Board, and the church at large, to form a new committee focused on church vitality. It is to be composed from members of the other boards and committees to act in a way to align and not supersede efforts in the other committees.

All committees and boards continued to function during the pandemic. In addition to the more routine business matters, the House and Grounds Committee and Building and Property Council coordinated work closely with a strong series of projects and well attended workdays. Additionally, a multi-year capital plan was formed so that projects could be planned, prioritized, and balanced. The Stewardship Committee completed a successful campaign. The Finance Committee kept close watch during this unusual time. The church continues to have a strong balance sheet. The kitchen committee oversaw the reopening of the kitchen from COVID-19 for Wednesday night dinners in the fall.

Finally, COVID-19 continued to have an impact on how we gathered. Most of the year the Board meet using a hybrid model. Some people met in person while others participated via video conference from their home. Additionally, the ad hoc Re-Entry Task Force continued efforts to create a safe environment for members wishing to return to live, in-person worship. This was managed dynamically though the year to balance the desire to meet in person, risk, and government guidelines.

2021 Leadership Team
Chair - Robert Gray
Vice Chair - Clint Hubbard
Secretary - Ken Lantz
Assistant Secretary - Tom Gilsdorf

Finance Committee - Oliver Way
House and Grounds - George Davis
Insurance Committee - Jean Ellis
Kitchens Committee - Betty Damon
Personnel Committee - Sharon Seward

Safety Committee - Ralph Nelson
Stewardship Committee - Scott Rooney
Facilities Use Committee -Harper Alford
2022 Leadership Team
Chair-Clint Hubbard
Vice Chair-to be named
Secretary-Ken Lantz
Stewardship Committee - Ed Pruden

Safety Committee - Margaret Collins
Facilities Use Committee -Harper Alford
Finance Committee - Buddy Sumner
Kitchens Committee - Betty Damon
Insurance Committee - Jean Ellis
Personnel Committee - Sharon Seward

FACILITIES USE COMMITTEE (BOA)

The Facilities Use Committee of the Board of Administration is responsible for making recommendations to the Board relative to the establishment, review, revision, and implementation of policies concerning use of the buildings and grounds of the church by church groups, non-church groups and individuals. When specific requests are received from these groups, the Facilities Use Committee reviews the request for approval or disapproval. If approved by the Committee, and it also requires Board of Administration approval, the request is then presented to the Board for approval.

During 2021, the Facilities Use Committee received and approved a request from the church staff for the St. Olaf Choir to hold a concert in the sanctuary at River Road Church, Baptist on February 6, 2022, and for which an admission fee would be charged and items would be for sale. Also in 2021, the Facilities Use Committee received and approved a request from Bill Rusher, on behalf of Camp Alkulana, for a fundraising dinner and silent auction to be held in the Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, and Upper Commons classrooms on April 30, 2022. Both of these requests were presented to the Board of Administration for its approval.

Harper Alford, Chair
Facilities Use Committee

FINANCE COMMITTEE (BOA)

The Finance Committee met monthly throughout 2021 to support the Board of Administration in carrying out its responsibilities to oversee the financial operation and condition of the church. Finance Committee activities and actions during the year included:

- Recommending a 2021 church budget to the Board of Administration for its approval and subsequent recommendation to the congregation, which unanimously approved this proposed budget at the business meeting on January 31, 2021.
- Reviewing revenue and expenses of the church on an ongoing basis to monitor performance against budget, identify potential challenges, and initiate appropriate action, as necessary.
- Reporting the financial results and financial position of the church to the Board of Administration on a regular basis.
- Reviewing the designated funds to ensure that funds were expended in accordance with the donor intentions.
- Reviewing and approving the preschool budget for the 2021-2022 school year and assisting with various financial matters related to the preschool.
- Considering budget requests from officers, boards, councils, and standing committees of the church in preparation for recommending a 2022 operating budget.
- Requesting a grant of \$325,000 from the Endowment Fund to support the 2022 operating budget.

- With information provided from House and Grounds Committee and Building and Property Council, developed a prioritized list of capital projects which need to be addressed in future. This list will be updated no less than every six months from the input of the Committee and Council.
- Prepared a ten-year financial projection for better understanding of future challenge presented by the church's aging demographics.

Highlights of the church's financial results for the year were:

- Total revenue decreased by 11K from the prior year to 1.881Mill and was 2% (32K) above the budgeted revenue. Offerings with pledge finished the year on budget while offerings without pledge (members) were 25K ahead of budget.
- Total expenses were 1.706Mill which was 28K (2%) above prior year actual and 143K (8%) below budget. The expenses were lower than budgeted as a result of the pandemic limiting church operations.
- The 31K revenues over budget plus the 143K expenses below budget resulted in an excess of revenue over expenses for the year of 174K. The finance committee recommended to the BOA that this excess should be distributed as follows:
 1. 25K to the Board of Missions for its further distribution to organizations in our community for community outreach,
 2. 50K additional provision to the Facilities Upgrade Reserve, and
 3. 99K to the Operating Reserve. This recommendation was approved by the BOA on January 16, 2022.
- The church ended the year in a very liquid position with cash and cash equivalencies totaling 2.033Mill. All reserves have been replenished and are adequate for the purposes intended.
- Preschool through the calendar year-end (four months into its fiscal year), reported revenue ahead of last year by 20% (117K) while expenses were higher by 23% (55K). The preschool has in its budget directing 240K to the church for the 2022 overhead offset.
- In summary, the church had a very successful 2021, which is remarkable considering the challenges the pandemic presented. The church leadership and staff should be congratulated for its flexibility and skill to make changes necessary to successfully negotiate this difficult environment.

Oliver Way, Chair

Members: Hilton Almond, Fred Bagwell, George Davis, Robert Gray, Ransone Hartz, Steve Lessels, Bill Thurston, James Trent

HOUSE AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE (BOA)

In 2021, the House and Grounds Committee addressed many "opportunities" regarding our church's 20- to 70-year-old buildings and the grounds around them. One of the primary areas of concern was (and still is) the integrity of the brick masonry and the roof and gutter system of all the buildings. A crack in an interior drainpipe in the west wall of the Sanctuary had created a long-standing wet spot on the brick exterior. R C Moore worked with the various contractors to identify the source of the problem and then correct it. In addition, R C coordinated the repair of the loose railing in front of Fellowship House, the two brick landings which lead to the courtyard, the roof leak above the Sanctuary's west transept, and several significant masonry cracks around the Sanctuary. Water issues remain, the most pressing one being water coming in through the Sanctuary steeple. This and the other gutter and slate issues will be addressed in 2022.

While evaluating painting needs around the church, Hilary Blanchard worked with Daniel Ingram to develop a prioritized painting, carpet, and furniture plan for all interior spaces. They determined that the office areas (both church and preschool) were most in need of refurbishment and put together a two-year

implementation plan. Under Hilary's coordination most of the offices received new carpet, paint, and furniture. In 2022, we plan to have the remaining offices and hallways receive fresh paint and carpet, and for the preschool classrooms to have new area rugs.

The Sanctuary pews need to be refinished and the obsolete speaker boxes removed. With the church not worshipping in person during the first quarter of the year due to COVID, there was a possible window of time when that work could be done. John Whitty met with a number of pew refinishers, both local and out of state, and had several of the companies refinish small sections of the pews to demonstrate their technique and quality. Due to significant environmental concerns and potential damage to the organ, it was decided the pews would have to be shipped to the refinisher's factory. The cost to do so was much greater than available funding, and thus the project was put on hold.

There was termite damage in the Lower Commons, both interior and exterior, around the doorway leading to the courtyard. Jack Heisler coordinated bringing together the various trades to have that area repaired.

Bob Shoemake worked with Daniel Ingram to have new blinds installed in Fellowship Hall.

Bill Rusher compiled a prioritized list of over 30 "small" electrical projects that he and others had identified. When he was not working on the "large" electrical projects for the Building and Property Council, Bill was steadily knocking them out, and the list is now down in the low 20's.

Other miscellaneous projects that took place during the year include replacement of the "grass" carpet in the toddler playground, repair of the two storm water treatment tanks, and removal of five dead trees.

The committee sponsored the usual spring and fall workdays, and there was tremendous participation by the congregation. Much was accomplished both days to "spruce up" the church grounds.

The committee would like to thank those faithful **FIXERS (Frequently Ingenious eXtremely Energetic Righteous Servants)** who twice a month gather to take on a myriad of odd jobs to help make our church look nice.

2021 was a busy year, and I would like to thank everyone on the committee for their participation and support. As can be seen, much was accomplished. A special thank you goes to our unflappable Minister of Administration, Daniel Ingram, for his unceasing effort to stay on top of the physical needs of our church during a most difficult year. But as with a home, there are always more things that need to be addressed, from roof and gutter issues to new fan coil units to refinished pews to ongoing routine maintenance. Thus, it is critical for us as a congregation to have a strong commitment to fund facility upgrade and repair so that our beloved church can not only retain its beauty and functionality, but more importantly also continue to be a special place for us to worship God in word and deed.

George Davis, Chair

INSURANCE COMMITTEE (BOA)

The Insurance Committee, along with Daniel Ingram and LeAnne Lane, met with our insurance representatives on October 26, 2021, via a Zoom meeting. The church policy and coverages were thoroughly discussed. The only changes were to the building coverages, as these are adjusted annually per the commercial building index for our area. We learned that throughout the insurance industry, property rates, liability rates, Auto and Workers Compensation rates have increased across the board. We received the premium for the renewal term of 01/01/2022 - 01/01/2023, on December 17, 2021, in the amount of \$60,473. This is an increase of 11% over the prior year premium.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Ellis, Chair
Insurance Committee

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE (BOA)

The Personnel Committee was involved in various RRCB personnel events and milestones in 2021, including:

- Departure of Terri McMahon;
- Approval of sabbatical proposals for Anna Perry Miller (2021), Marnie Fisher-Ingram (2022), and Daniel Ingram (2022);
- Events marking the ten-year RRCB anniversary of Bob Gallagher, Cassandra Ducca, and Zelda Goode, as well as the five-year anniversary of Daniel Glaze;
- Restructuring of one of the administrative roles to a "ministries coordinator" and hiring of Lacey Wondree for that position;
- Approval of hiring of Beth Rooney for summer intern; and
- Approval of "seminary intern for young adults" position and hiring Beth Rooney.

The Personnel Committee also advised RRCB on administrative matters in 2021, such as:

- Approval of personnel budget 2022 and housing allowances;
- Redistribution one annual leave day at New Year's to make Martin Luther King Jr. Day (in January) an annual leave day for RRCB staff going forward.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Seward

SAFETY COMMITTEE (BOA)

The Board of Administration approved our request for additional video monitoring at the Ridge Road and North Parking Lot entrances as part of an overall system updating and modernization plan. Further, this plan has been funded by the Finance Committee and placed on the list for implementation.

A Safety Sub-Committee consisting of Leigh Ann Breckenridge, Melanie Butterworth, and Margaret Collins is working on editing and revision recommendations for the Safety Procedures Flip Chart. Target date for initial recommendations is March 31, 2022.

Ralph Nelson
2021 Chairperson

BUILDING AND PROPERTY COUNCIL

In 2021 the Building and Property Council addressed and completed a wide variety of projects. These included:

1. Fellowship Hall Stage Lighting. The design was completed, and materials were ordered and received. Lighting panels and light hanger racks have been installed. Bill Rusher has been spearheading the installation and doing most of the labor, thus saving the church significant dollars.

2. Fellowship Hall Air Handler VFD: The variable frequency drive was ordered and installed by Tom Gilsdorf and Bill Rusher. To optimize its capabilities the air flow needs to be balanced and sheaves on the motor replaced. Currently this drive is operational and in service.
3. Youth Area Renovation: This project is nearing completion. The walls have been painted. New LED lighting has been installed. The ceiling tiles have been replaced. A new LVL (vinyl plank) floor has been installed. The FIXERS group is nearing completion of the baseboard installation. Video, AV, refrigerator, and microwave purchases remain.
4. Youth Area Air Handler and Air Conditioning: The unit serving the Youth Area was replaced. Funding was provided by the surplus from the *Rejoice and Give Thanks* capital campaign.
5. Preschool Classroom: In response to required lower classroom density due to COVID, an additional preschool class was added. The new classroom is located under the office area in a former adult classroom. This necessitated (among other things) providing an additional bathroom. The project was completed in December.
6. Safety Committee recommended upgrades: The Building and Property Council received a request for security upgrades. In response, video cameras were added to Lower Commons and Ridge Road doors. In addition, the DVR system associated with the facility cameras will be replaced. To provide remote access control, a video answering/unlocking system for preschool and office doors was installed.
7. The Building and Property Council reviewed copies of the "Landscape Master Plan" developed by Higgens & Gerstenmaier in 2013. The council discussed how to improve the curb appeal of the corner of River and Ridge. A subcommittee consisting of Diana Mahoney and Jean Cauble was formed to solicit revised design proposals for this area.
8. Lights for stained glass window. An audio-visual contractor has been located that has done work for River Road Presbyterian Church. This includes the illumination of a Rosette stain glassed window. Investigation into possible illumination options will be pursued in 2022

CHANCEL COMMITTEE

The Chancel Committee is made up of the following subcommittees: Flower Teams and Special Events, Weddings, Funerals, Parament, and Flower Ministry. Betsy Lowery is the chair of the Chancel Committee.

Margaret Almond and Julia Tyler chair the Flower Teams and Special Events Committee. Easter time this year was a little different. Margaret and Julia decorated the chancel for Easter Sunday. Instead of ordering lilies in honor or memory of loved ones, church members made a donation to the Fellowship Fund in honor or memory of a loved one. This change proved to be very successful and people in need were assisted during Easter time along with a beautifully decorated sanctuary. Margaret and Julia did a beautiful job once again organizing the decorating of our church for Christmas. Our wreaths and poinsettias were purchased by a new vendor, Stranges on Broad Street. Everyone was more than pleased with the wreaths and poinsettias...they were beautiful! The FIXERS were a major part of putting up all decorations with the direction of Margaret. Betsy Lowery and Carol Cruickshanks kept the poinsettias watered during the holiday season. They were so healthy this year we were able to leave them in place for an extra week

The Wedding Committee is led by Margaret Almond, Bonnie Way, and Betsy Lowery. Two weddings took place this year.

The Funeral Committee continues to be assisted by Janet Bagby and Ann Bagwell as these ladies are called for guidance as needed. Our ministers and deacons were a major part in following through with funerals this past year. Excellent care was provided to the families going through the loss of a loved one.

Betsy Lowery is the chair of the Parament Committee. Betsy follows the liturgical calendar and changes the paraments as needed. Members of the chancel committee assist as needed.

Deb Gray and Betsy Lowery chair the Flower Ministry. Teams of two ladies are organized per month to break down the alter flowers. This year flowers were left outside the Lower Commons area for pick up at 12:30 after worship. Flowers were usually picked up by church members and delivered to loved ones by the end of the day on each Sunday. We were very pleased with how well this ministry ran this past year. Once the church opened up for worship, members had the opportunity to pick up flowers in the sacristy as needed.

Betsy Lowery organizes the alter flower calendar. With the help of Cassandra Ducca, each Sunday was provided with alter flowers in honor or memory of a loved one. We were very thankful for the continued love and support of this service. We have seven flower teams who diligently work together on Fridays to arrange the alter flowers for each Sunday. These ladies share their time and talent graciously and we are so thankful them.

In addition to the chairs of these committees, the chancel committee is blessed to have so many dedicated women and men who offer their time to support all chancel jobs.

Betsy Lowery, Chancel Chair

COLUMBARIUM MEMORIAL GARDEN COMMITTEE

The Columbarium Memorial Garden Committee, also known as the Columbarium Committee, is charged with the oversight of the Columbarium and its associated garden. 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 garden. Located behind the Chapel, the Garden was dedicated on Palm Sunday of 1997 to receive ashes from cremation and is available to current and prior members of River Road Church and their immediate families.

The Columbarium wall 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 246 small niches available for purchase. Plaques are mounted on the niches to commemorate those inurned within.

There is also a “common ground” where ashes can be buried. Plaques mounted on the Chapel wall in the Garden commemorate those whose ashes are buried in the ground.

The Committee meets on an ad hoc basis. It met once in November in 2021 in virtual session. At this meeting, several maintenance issues were discussed. The first concerned the common ground grass which had been partially overtaken by weeds. The decision was made to treat the area with a weed killer and then reseed. If there has not been significant improvement by fall 2022, the area will be resodded. The second issue dealt with the possible replanting of four mulched areas near the common ground. Pachysandra had been planted in these areas previously but had not thrived. The decision was made to defer consideration of how to proceed to 2022. The third issue involved whether to use some of the funds in the restricted account for columbarium maintenance to enhance the area on the north side of the chapel. The Committee will decide in 2022 what action to take, and any planting would not be done until fall.

During 2021, necessary repair of brickwork joints and recaulking was completed. Power washing of brickwork and paving was also done. 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.

The Columbarium provides a beautiful and sacred place for members of our faith community to choose as a final resting place for themselves and their family. The Columbarium Committee will continue to ensure its lasting and meaningful value.

Respectfully submitted by:

Steve Lessels, Chair

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

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee worked on finishing the indoor signage installation that began in 2020. With many ministries and projects on hold, and in-person and indoor activities in flux, the committee did not take on any new projects.

That said, communication within the church did not halt. The Communications Specialist continued to work closely with the missions and music ministries to promote their projects and events, as well as the rest of the ministerial staff and other church groups.

The main outlets for communication are weekly emails, church website, and social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.) Church emails are sent out three times a week: e-Spire newsletter on Tuesday afternoons, worship reminder on Thursday afternoons, and prayer email on Sunday evenings. Other reminder emails are sent out as needed. We try our best to space these emails out to not overwhelm inboxes, but some weeks it is difficult. If you do not currently receive emails from the church, you can sign up at rrcb.org/connect.

Events and announcements continue to be posted on the church website. Those can be found on the front page of the website by scrolling down. And upcoming events, prayer list, and birthdays and anniversaries continue to be compiled on the Be The Church page (rrcb.org/connect). There are a lot of resources and information available on the church website. We continue to encourage members to use our website to keep up-to-date of church activities and to sign up/register for events and activities.

Social media is a powerful tool that we have available to us. Not only is it used for promotion and posting photos and videos of church life, but it also allows the congregation to share posts with their social media friends and family. Additionally, if post about church-related things on your personal pages, please tag the church! This is helpful for both the church social media presence, but it's also another touchpoint of sharing the church outside of our community. *Pro tip: the more you engage with the church posts (like and share) on social media, the more likely you are to see church posts!*

If you haven't already...

- Like/Follow on Facebook: @RRCBaptist
- Follow on Instagram: @RiverRoadChurch
- Follow on Twitter: @RRCBaptist
- Subscribe to YouTube channel: @RiverRoadChurch

It's important for the congregation to remember that word of mouth is still one of the most effective forms of communication. Personal invitations go a long way with others.

Devotions were made available during the Lenten and Advent seasons. The Lenten devotions were video devotions recorded by church members, and posted on our YouTube channel as well as our social media pages. The Advent devotions were curated by Tom Graves and written by church members. The devotions were published in a limited print booklet, and published daily on our website. A new email list was created for people to opt-in to receive devotions in their email inbox daily.

Two print newsletters were published and mailed out, one at the beginning of the summer and one before the Advent season. As ministry continues to be fluid, it is hard to plan, prepare, produce, and mail a print newsletter.

At the end of the year we signed a contract communications consultant, Digital Congregations. The contract includes a communications audit, a communications plan, and additional consulting hours as needed. The contract was signed in 2021, but the audit and implementation will occur in 2022. The Communications Specialist will work closely on this project along with the Communications Committee.

2021 also marked the 10-year anniversary since Cassandra Ducca joined the church staff as the Communications Specialist.

Laurie Gray
Communications Committee Chair

Cassandra Ducca
Communications Specialist

HISTORY COMMITTEE

The History Committee did not meet as a committee during the second year of COVID; however, the work behind-the-scenes continued. Carole Royall remains engaged in various special projects and these include working the physical archival materials. She has been greatly responsible for the development of a gift form and gift policy. Due to several factors, the History Committee must narrow the acceptance of gifts to items directly related to River Road Church, Baptist. During the year, the Church Archives received items from the family of the late Wallace Chandler, Emily and Bill Tuck, and Chester Phelps. Chester's gift was the large collection of slides taken of youth missions trips across the years. From the Church Archives there were transfers of several items: the church's retired worship banner as well as sermon audio tapes were transferred to the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, and a watercolor painting by the late Lois Creamer, a church member, was transferred to the Second Presbyterian Church of Richmond which was the subject of the painting.

On a routine basis, the Archives receives copies of printed bulletins, newsletters and other publications of the church and these require filing. Carole was assisted in the backlog of filing by the volunteer help of Brenda Holland, a former member of the History Committee. The History Committee also routinely places exhibits in its display cabinet in the Lower Commons; however, with the church mainly closed during much of the year, it seemed unnecessary to mount exhibits. At the Advent Season, Carole and Byrd Latham, a member of the committee, spent several hours placing a seasonal display in which they used the treasured nativity set which had been presented in years past by Joyce and Harold Gibson as a gift of her aunt, Frances Still.

In concern that it is a challenge for a person unfamiliar with the layout of the Archives to make use of the collection, Fred Anderson made a schematic inventory of the items on each wall of shelving and the printed inventory is on the magnetic board just inside the doorway to the Archives. It should prove helpful for those who are not acquainted with the layout. The History Committee will forever be grateful for the Archives space which was equipped with fire suppressant devices; however, it should be noted that the

space became immediately full when the collection was relocated to the room. The Church Archives needs additional appropriate storage space within the church building for an ever-growing collection.

The History Committee continues to embrace goals of upgrading media holdings to current technology. Such an endeavor will require funds for outside expertise.

The History Committee was mindful that 2021 was the church's 75th anniversary; however, the COVID crisis with its damper upon large events made it impractical for a public event. Tuckie Paxton and Fred Anderson, both members of the committee, met with pastoral staff and ideas were shared as to possible ways to celebrate or commemorate the anniversary. Tuckie and Fred also began work on updating the 50th anniversary history book with a Timeline of important events from 1996 to 2021. It is hoped that in some way the Timeline may be used and/or published in 2022 along with some appropriate recognition of the anniversary.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Anderson, Chair

MUSIC COMMITTEE

In 2021, the Music Ministry continued to face significant challenges due to restrictions and adjustments that became necessary due to the COVID pandemic.

As a result of safety requirements, the Chancel Choir was unable to rehearse in person on the church grounds or provide live music for worship until the end of April. Throughout the early part of the year, they held Zoom rehearsals on Thursday evenings, while a group of ten fully masked singers met, distanced, in the sanctuary on Wednesday evenings. As a result of these meetings and rehearsals, adult singers and bell ringers were able to offer virtual renditions of various choral pieces for Easter and a few other Sunday worship services. Our church staff and members of the choir were involved in the technical aspects of these productions. Through the first several months of 2021, various River Road singers and ringers—youth and adults—provided solos, duets, trios, and quartets for worship services.

On April 29, 2021, the Chancel Choir met for its first full in-person rehearsal in the church courtyard. As the weather improved, choirs of all ages resumed rehearsals in the church courtyard, often accompanied by the singing of birds. A digital piano was set up and plugged in for each rehearsal, and hundreds of pages of the director's choral music were scanned or downloaded to an iPad so that paper copies (susceptible to the wind, even on fairly calm days) would not be needed. Between 30 and 35 chairs were moved to and from the courtyard by choir members each week. Choir folders and other materials were moved from the robing rooms to the Lower Commons and an adjacent classroom for easy access. As the weather became uncomfortably warm outside, the Chancel Choir was able to rehearse masked and distanced in a well-ventilated Fellowship Hall. The Chancel Choir rehearsed throughout the summer, which accounted for their confident sound as soon as they returned to their continuing role in the leadership of worship. They have led worship every single Sunday since their return on June 6, 2021. Special thanks to Rev. Paul Honaker and a team of cheerful volunteers who organize and take inventory of all of the choirs' music throughout the year. This included continued improvement in the storage of choral music in the music storage room and in choir room cabinets.

The June 2021 Spring Chancel Choir Concert with organist, David Briggs, was postponed until June 5, 2022 due to COVID. The Chancel Choir was originally scheduled to sing John Rutter's *Requiem* for All Saints' Sunday of 2021: they will sing all of the movements of this piece as anthems during the Lent and Easter seasons of 2022.

Hannah Hammel, Principal Flute of the Detroit Symphony, returned to River Road to enhance our Christmas Candlelight Service with her extraordinary flute playing. She provided twenty minutes of music before the service, and she played flute accompaniments for the Chancel Choir's choral offerings.

The *E. Carl Freeman Concerts* series manifested itself through both virtual and live performances during the year. Guest organist, Daniel Stipe, and Bob Gallagher played short virtual organ recitals for the continuing Organ Interlude Series in the early part of the year. Live concerts resumed on Sunday, September 19 with a recital by Richmond organist, Christopher Martin. River Road also hosted the newly-formed Vox Humana (performing masked); organist Clara Gerdes; and duo-organists Elizabeth and Raymond Chenault. The Chancel Choir (masked) was able to lead a beautiful Lessons and Carols service on evening of December 12, preceded by an extended organ prelude played by Christopher Martin. The service included works by Richmond composers Mary Beth Bennett and William Bradley Roberts. Earlier in the month, Dr. Roberts accepted an invitation to a Wednesday evening rehearsal, during which he worked with our Chancel Choir on his piece, "Twas in the Moon of Wintertime."

On Youth Sunday three of our youth provided excellent piano music before and after the service. The Youth Choir provided a virtual anthem, accompanied by Ella Glaze, that was pre-recorded in the courtyard. Youth Choir and Camerata members sang anthems at the 4 pm service, which took place on the front plaza. James Gray was an excellent accompanist for a jazzy setting of "God Rest Ye Merry." Youth Choir attendance was diminished due to COVID infections and exposure by the end of 2021.

During 2021, the Chancel Bell Choir, under Charles Todd's leadership, rehearsed in the south transept, which allowed them to be safely distanced. They provided live music for several services during the year, including Easter morning and Christmas Eve Candlelight services.

During the September 19 worship service, River Road Church recognized Bob Gallagher's ten years as Minister of Music. The Chancel Choir presented Bob with a framed, hand inscribed copy of "The Chorister's Prayer" and a framed copy of a tribute to Bob from his former teacher, Frederick Swann, who served for several decades in music ministry at The Riverside Church and Crystal Cathedral.

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.

2021 Music Committee members: Rose Browning, Tom Gilsdorf, Deb Gray, Tyler Hays, Anne James, Jane Terry, Phyllis West.

PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT CENTER COMMITTEE

The River Road Preschool Committee met safely during 2021 via Zoom and in-person. Danielle Simone and Beth Howe continued as the director and assistant director of River Road Preschool. Peggy Pruden became the vice chair of the committee. A notebook for all members of the committee was created along with an organization document, responsibilities chart, and an agenda for quarterly meetings. Daniel Glaze, Caroline Koskinen, and Peggy Pruden, along with input from Danielle Simone and Ed Pruden, collaboratively created these documents and were approved by the committee. Sandy Rooney joined the preschool committee since her role in preschool changed from classroom teacher to Curriculum Coordinator. She also agreed to serve in the newly created teacher representative role. At all meetings during 2021, it was noted by school staff or committee members of the positive comments on social media and in the community about River Road Preschool.

River Road Preschool met its budget for the 2020-2021 school year and contributed \$228,000 to River Road Church, Baptist. All RRP staff received a 2% increase in pay. A budget line was approved for Danielle to include a line for legal expenses in the 2021-2022 budget. There was no tuition increase for the 2021-2022 school year. The 2021-2022 budget shows an increase of \$232,196 in revenue with an overall anticipate budget of \$1.1 million.

For the 2021-2022 school year, five staff members did not return, three returned after taking a year off due to COVID, two new teachers were hired, and Sandy Rooney moved from a classroom teacher to Curriculum Coordinator. Four current teachers were given full-time status with benefits based on afternoon hours and expansion needs within the preschool.

The preschool committee approved a new Monday-Friday 2's class and a new Monday-Friday 3's class for the 2021-2022 school year. Four sections of afternoon enrichments were offered for the 2021-2022 school year with 15-18 children student spots available. Summer camp was offered for six weeks in 2021. As of this report, the preschool has 177 students enrolled, with 14% diversity.

The committee approved, at Danielle's request, that River Road Preschool move from NACELL accreditation to the Virginia Quality program that is a component of the Virginia Department of Education. It was agreed that this program is a better fit for independent preschools, matches River Road Preschool's philosophy, and focuses on teacher interactions and the classroom environment.

Due to COVID, the preschool continued reduced class sizes to maintain a lower ratio. Team isolation for all parts of the day with divided age groups was continued as well.

There were several school policy changes made in 2021. The River Road Preschool music program expanded to Movement and Music with incorporation of ASL and Spanish. Fun Fitness expanded for students age four and older. The committee approved the opening of the preschool to open one week earlier for the 2022-2023 school year to better align with Henrico County Public Schools. The preschool joined the Virginia Quality rating stem in December 2021. A quarterly budget template was approved by the committee to assist in supporting River Road Preschool. A tuition discount to staff members with children enrolled in the preschool was approved as well as no charge for early morning drop-off, lunch bunch, extended day, and for summer camp days the staff member is working. These policies had been in place, but not voted on or put in writing as part of staff benefits.

The committee continued to work on ways to show their appreciation to the staffs' dedication to River Road Preschool. A schedule of staff appreciation five times a year was put in writing. The committee will collaborate throughout the year on items to provide. In addition, a years of service gift will be implemented. These gifts will be awarded at the beginning of a school year, starting with 2021. They will start with five years of service and continue in five-year increments. The gifts will be determined by the preschool administration and committee members.

The River Road Preschool re-worded its curriculum in the summer of 2021 to align with Virginia's Early Learning and Development Standards. It was broken down into five age groups instead of three as in the previous curriculum. Key content remained the same, but wording was updated and more examples given for teachers. Items such as Learning Without Tears letter acquisition and monthly concepts were added.

Lastly, it was noted that the 50th anniversary of River Road Preschool is in 2022. Danielle requested a separate committee be put in place for this celebration. A date was agreed on of Sunday, October 16, 2022. The committee will coordinate with deacons and social committee to make this a very special day of celebration in honor of this historic anniversary.

The committee, as well as the church staff involved with the committee of River Road Church, Baptist, is very pleased with community feedback of River Road Preschool, enrollment numbers, enrichment offerings, curriculum in place, and policies and procedures in place, especially those that are allowing the preschool to operate in-spite of COVID challenges. It is noted that the administration team of Danielle Simone and Beth Howe, in conjunction with Sandy Rooney as Curriculum Coordinator, has worked extremely hard during 2021 and put in extra hours to communicate with parents, provide teacher support, and mitigate COVID situations that have arisen.

Respectfully submitted by Caroline Koskinen, Chair of Preschool Committee

USHERS COMMITTEE

The Ushers Committee for 2021 coordinated with the Deacons to provide ushering and greeting duties for all in-person services at River Road Church.

We followed the guidelines set by the Re-Entry Task Force, serving when in-person services were held, and limiting personal contact with members.

The attendance for the 2021 services varied from 50 to 200 during the year, with the last quarter averaging 140 attendees per Sunday.

John A. Hays
Chair, Ushers Committee 2021

COMMITTEES WITH NO REPORTS TO SUBMIT

- Kitchen Committee (BOA)
- Stewardship Committee (BOA)
- Arts Committee
- Auditing Committee
- Baptismal Committee
- Lord's Supper Committee
- Member Engagement Committee (Hosted two summer concerts.)
- Recreation Committee
- Social Committee
- Tellers Committee
- Transportation Committee