The entire chapel had been covered in white vinyl, as with a pall. The soaring wooden vaulted ceiling had been replaced by a low roof with recessed lights. The floor was swathed in red carpet. To the side, at right angles to the altar, a fence blocked the low, confined space in which the permanent residents of the monastery prayed five or six times daily.

The chapel of Monte Maria, as we found it, was interesting and strange. In homage to liturgical changes commanded by the great Second Vatican Council, the architect had moved the altar away from the wall so that the priest could stand behind it, and cloaked and confined the original chapel so that it could hardly be recognized. The new twelve-foot ceiling in the nave was tacked onto three massive steel I-beams inserted in the walls above, making the alterations as permanent as possible.

But one day the false ceiling came down. The I-beams were removed. We walked into the chapel that day. The men working on the demolition, many of whom had come from south of the border, were quietly sweeping up the rubble. An otherwise noisy construction scene had become carefully silent. The floor was bare of carpet. Plaster fragments and other debris was in several piles. There were no electric lights. But the morning sun was streaming in, from eight glorious stained-glass windows high on the east wall that had been uncovered when the false ceiling was removed, glowing through the dust of demolition.

The true ceiling was high. Its dark wood seemed barely visible as it rose nearly twenty feet higher than the white vinyl barrier which had been there before. On the walls, in badly peeling paint and fragments of gold leaf, were stenciled borders that circled the room twice, next to the roof and at waist level, just above the once-wainscoted walls. A newly uncovered door revealed the entrance to a private chapel, where only vinyl had been before.

Three niches which once held statues of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus appeared on the wall above the altar. High on the northern wall were the remains of the opening words of Psalm 84 in Latin: Quam dilecta tabernacula tua, Domine — “How lovely are thy dwellings, O Lord.”

New workers continued to work in the chapel. It was a work of art. John Gass did the architectural design; Horace Walker, the floor; Harrison Higgins, the altar; Heather Watt and others, the stencils and calligraphy. The sound was so beautiful without the carpet that we put red oak on the floor instead, to warm the sound. Todd Hallawell lent a beautiful Kawai grand piano to fill the space with music. 92 churches contributed to the work, along with a dedicated Richmond family.

But the greatest glory was yet to be discovered. It was the morning light. The Chapel had been designed as a room with a right angle. On the main axis was the public area, where the students of the Monte Maria Academy and the public once sat. That axis faced the altar, and the statues, and the words of Psalm 84.

To the right side of the public area, in a room with lower ceiling and more humble appearance, behind a lattice first and later a railing, sat the Sisters of the Visitation. In their smaller side chapel, without the majestic heights of the ceiling, and with three smaller stained glass windows, they sang and chanted the daily offices and participated in the Mass.

We had known this. The side chapel seemed almost an afterthought. The permanent community of Monte Maria seemed to be situated in a far more humble place than the visiting congregants and ecclesiastical leaders who might come to worship. Seated in their side chapel, the sisters could only see the altar.

But then the false ceiling came down, revealing the secret of God’s love for the sisters. The visiting congregation had the three statues and the Latin inscription and the...
Out of our ashes

How does the burning of Richmond in 1865 provide the spark for the revival of Richmond in 2015?

It is clear that something is happening here. Walking through reenactments of the night when the city burned surrounded by a hundred people, hearing accounts of what citizens experienced and did as their homes and businesses went up in flames, witnesses to the low point in our civic and communal life. African Americans preparing for the Federalist arrival and for their freedom — this story is our story.

It is a story that we are still playing out, enacting our metropolitan city’s history together. Recently, a major national publication, The Nation, ran a story about Richmond’s Office of Community Wealth Building which grew out of the Maggie L. Walker Anti-Poverty Initiative, a concentrated effort to develop the city economically in a way that benefits all people. The story was titled, “Is the Former Capital of the Confederacy Finally Ready to Confront Its Poverty—and Its Past?”

Something is happening here as surely as the resurrection happened. If God could raise Jesus from the dead, could God not also raise our city out of the smoldering ashes of our history? How do we sharpen our eyes and tune our ears to see and hear resurrection happening? It requires a spiritual practice of listening, deep listening with all of our senses engaged. It requires a willingness to set aside our own agendas, our own striving for success or survival, long enough to deepen our being.

What we will see are communities of meaning springing up in all circles, in all parts of metropolitan Richmond. Communities are being born in the midst of large corporate structures, faith communities, and households. Communities seeking depth and vibrant life, these communities are God’s instruments of transformation: they know no walls. They are built on shared meals and the Word of God and movement beneath the surface of our rushed culture and exploitative economy. There is a new culture and economy in the underbrush — a dim wick still smoldering. Something is happening here — Resurrection!

The Rev. Andrew Terry
Co-Pastor
Pray the Spirit of the Resurrection in Metropolitan Richmond.

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight. (Hebrews 13:20-21)

April 5, 2015 (Easter). We pray for the Spirit of the Resurrection in Metropolitan Richmond: For a spirit of love, cooperation, peace, community, and commitment to all people in God’s name.

April 12, 2015. We pray for the Spirit of the Resurrection in Metropolitan Richmond: For a spirit of hope, of possibility, of eternal life, and of commitment to the redeeming power of God who brings new life out of death to people and communities.

April 19, 2015. We pray for the Spirit of the Resurrection in Metropolitan Richmond: For a spirit of justice, righteousness, equality, and mutual benefit.

April 26, 2015. We pray for the Spirit of the Resurrection in Metropolitan Richmond: To remove any spirit of contentiousness, prejudice, greed, jealousy, or enjoyment of others’ troubles; for spiritual renewal, leading to prayer and care for all regardless of race, national origin, religion, income, or neighborhood.

Available Now from the Richmond Hill Bookstore

Richmond’s Unhealed History

by Benjamin Campbell

$15.95 plus tax at Richmond Hill
$18.50 postpaid, tax included, by mail from Richmond Hill.

Your order from the Richmond Hill Bookstore supports Richmond Hill.

Announcing a New School and Program Offering

Koinonia means sharing in community. This School of Race and Justice provides safe space and tools to address racism in ourselves and to build justice in our city.

Lecture Topics include: History, diversity, shame, grief, lament, privilege, class, poverty, media, and law.

Process Groups: These intentional small groups process each lecture personally and its implications for the city.

Retreats: The retreats are designed to build community and delve deeper into our issues of race.

The deadline for applications is June 1. Cost: $1200. Some scholarship is available. For further information, please contact Rev. Janie Walker (804-783-7903), email: jwalker@richmondhillva.org

“THE RENEWAL”

7:30 pm Monday, April 27

The third and final of three lectures in our series marking the 150th anniversary of the Burning of Richmond. In this lecture, Ms. Christy Coleman, Co-CEO of the American Civil War Museum, explores how the United States has grappled with segregation in the legal system since the fall and burning of Richmond. The 45-minute lecture will be followed by facilitated conversation and group processing time among the audience.

Join us for worship at 5:30 pm, dinner at 6:30 pm, lecture at 7:30 pm. Dinner is $10. Lecture is FREE. To register contact DeBorah Cannady at retreats@richmondhillva.org or by phone at 804-783-7903.
Retreats

**INDIVIDUAL RETREATS**
Richmond Hill offers individual retreats for persons who desire rest and time to seek God. Retreats may be taken in 24-hr increments between Mon. 4 p.m.– Sat. 4 p.m. In addition, more formal contemplative retreats are offered periodically on weekends for individuals who wish to be a part of a facilitated retreat rhythm. Spiritual guidance is available for any individual retreat.

**Upcoming Facilitated Retreats: Sat. - Sun. Oct. 25-26**
Recommended donations: Basic $65 per 24 hrs. / Guided $90 per 24 hrs.
Contact DeBorah Cannady, 804-783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org

**FIRST FRIDAY RETREATS**
First Friday of Each Month | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
A day for quiet reflection and spiritual renewal. Structure and guidance will be provided for those who want it as well as the option for one-on-one spiritual direction, or you can simply spend the day in silence—your choice.
Suggested Donation: $20 (includes Lunch) Facilitator: Mimi Weaver, spiritual director and life coach. She can be reached at www.GraceMoves.com
Contact DeBorah Cannady at Richmond Hill to register 804-783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org
Please register in advance. Space is limited.

**LISTENING TO THE SILENCE**
Third Tuesday of Each Month | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Arrive at Richmond Hill at 8:45 to begin this spiritual experience. Lunch and chapel are included. Bring your Bible and your journal but leave the cell phone in the car.
Suggested Donation: $20 (includes Lunch) Facilitator: Rita Ricks, spiritual director
Contact DeBorah Cannady at Richmond Hill to register 804-783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org
Please register in advance. Space is limited.

**GROUPS**

**CENTERING PRAYER GROUPS**
*Tuesdays, 4:45 - 5:45 p.m.*
Deborah Streicker, Facilitator
*Tuesdays, 7:30 - 8:45 p.m.*
Helen Eano, Facilitator

Centering prayer is an ancient prayer method designed to facilitate the development of contemplative prayer by preparing us to cooperate with this gift. Each group is open to newcomers regardless of experience.

Contact: Deborah Streicker at 783-7903 or dstreicker@richmondhillva.org

**DROP-IN GRIEF GROUP**
Monthly, 4th Fridays, 10 – 11:30 a.m.
Sandy Gramling, Ph.D., Facilitator

Share experiences and obtain support from others who are experiencing a loss in a flexible group format. Discussion and reflection on the impact of loss, coping, meaning-making, etc. follows the brief presentation.

Preregistration is helpful but not required. Contact DeBorah Cannady at 804-783-7903 to register.

Workshop: Prayer, Spiritual Journaling and Art

This retreat is about spending time in quiet reflection, prayer, or meditation while listening for God in your life.

This time of prayer can be guided or on your own as long as you remain in silence. At a designated time you will be asked to journal about your private prayer experience. What were your thoughts, insights, or inspirations? What did you sense or learn in your time of silence? Once you have written all you want to say, sit with your words and visualize them in a colorful design or image. How would your reflection expressed in your words look as a work of art?

Come and enjoy for a day the beauty and the sacred space of Richmond Hill. Pray, Write, Create.

Brenda Giannini, facilitator. Suggested donation $30. includes lunch and art materials. Sign-up: DeBorah Cannaday at 804-783-7903, or email: retreats@richmondhillva.org
RUHA XIV  
SCHOOL OF SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE  
New Class Begins September 2015

The RUHA School of Spiritual Guidance at Richmond Hill exists to identify and train persons in the ministry of spiritual guidance in the context of contemporary Christian spirituality. The school is a well-developed 2-year program of training which enables lay, professional and clergy persons to serve as spiritual guides within the context of their church, Christian community, or as a part of the Community of Richmond Hill. The first year focuses on the identification of the gift of spiritual guidance and provides opportunity for careful spiritual formation. The second year focuses on skill development and supervision in the context of developing one’s faith and gift in this area of ministry.

Applications are currently being received for RUHA XIV, which begins September 2015. The program consists of monthly 24-hour retreats in the context of the rhythm of life of the Richmond Hill Community. Prayer and faith-sharing are a part of the discipline of all participants. Topics covered in the curriculum are: Use of scripture in discernment, listening, healing, forms of prayer, history of spirituality, dream work, social transformation, depth psychology, and many other topics. Participants read at least one book a month on the topic of the month.

If you are a person to whom people come for spiritual conversation, and believe you may be called to develop this charism; if you believe Christ wants each person to find God for themselves; and you wish to deepen your own sense of the Spirit's leading, this program may be for you.

For more information, please contact Rev. Janie Walker, Co-Pastor and Dean of the RUHA School of Spiritual Guidance, at Richmond Hill. (804)783-7903 or jwalker@richmondhillva.org.

ENROLL NOW!

The Richmond Hill Urban Service Corps provides a rare opportunity to gain understanding of how the Holy Spirit engages with both the people and the social structures of a City as well as how the life of a Christian community can provide a powerful witness for the possibilities of reconciliation and healing in a metropolitan area.

The Richmond Hill Urban Service Corps is a one-year commitment beginning in August of each year. Typically, we will have four servant-leaders in the Community per year.

Applications are due to Richmond Hill by June 1.

To inquire or apply, please contact Rev. Janie Walker at (804) 783-7903 or jwalking@richmondhillva.org.

2016 Class of Pastoral Care & Counseling

The School of Pastoral Care and Counseling is now accepting applications for the 2016 Class which begins in September 2015 and ends June 2016.

Pastoral Care and Counseling is a one-year program that focuses on enhancing one’s skills in ministering to those who are experiencing physical, emotional, and spiritual difficulties.

It is designed to help persons improve the quality of their own self-reflection through journaling, prayer, meditation, and Bible reflection.

This course is also offered on-line as Directed Study.

To inquire or apply, please contact the Rev. Dr. Alice W. Harris, Director of Holistic Pastoral Care and Counseling Services at (804) 783-7903 ext. 28 or by email at: aharris@richmondhillva.org.

Group Facilitation and Spiritual Formation Ministry Available for Small Groups

Richmond Hill’s Staff and Council consists of several experienced spiritual directors, healing prayer ministers, pastoral counselors, small group facilitators, and persons trained in several areas of spiritual formation and personal development. With adequate notice, these persons are available to work with small groups upon request. Suggested donations for these services (areas of ministry) are minimal and assessed based on the needs or requests of the group.

Requests for these services may be directed to Reverend Janie Walker at (804) 783-7903 or by email: jwalker@richmondhillva.org.
Faith

This is a lack of our faith to know how to get the things we need in our life. We need to pray for more as a thirsty human pray in a desert in a desert for rain. With faith help comes swift and strong. Our faith in God should be strong. It should be so strong knowing that God never forsake us. We are to be as sure as we are of our breathing. As long as we are healthy we are not aware of our breathing. It comes natural. We must trust as much as we trust our mother and father or our very best friend who us standing on the road and need help.

Faith allows us to pray daily that our faith increases. We must pray for unquestioning faith that does require proof or evidence. God created us to an act of acknowledging the existence of a Supreme and the reality of a Divine order. We need the acceptance as real or true that which is not supported by evidence of sense of by rational proof, as affirmative response of the will of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. It is compounded by belief, trust and an attitude of mind, will or Spirit. Jesus expresses faith in terms as the first condition for entering the kingdom of God. We hold to that faith as a prerequisite for the miracle of healing physically, mentally and spiritually. Faith brings to human a union with God through Jesus Christ. Faith comes by deposit of God’s Grace in the heart of the believers.

The writer of the Gospel of Matthew helps gives Jesus’s analogy of faith: “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink or what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more than they? Which of you by worry about can add more value then they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and I say to you that neither toil nor spin; yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God clothes the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more cloth you, O you of little faith?” (Matthew 6:25-30).


Rev. Dr. Alice W. Harris
Pastoral Counselor
**Reflection on Ministry**

**Obedience** — Living one’s life in response to God’s will, in a commitment to the mission of the community.

The primary motivation for me to leave my life, friends and job behind to live and work here at Richmond Hill was that it seemed like an invitation from God to be more myself. This place was an open door that aligned with my mission and passions, so I decided to walk through it. In saying yes to Richmond Hill, I was saying yes to my calling to community, racial reconciliation, to seek the peace of the city and my own spiritual formation. It was an act of obedience.

Vocare has been a wonderful space to explore God’s will for me in relation to calling. The other day, guest speaker, Dick, said “know your gifts and know God’s will for you.” He encouraged us to identify our God-given gifts, strengths and talents so that we could use them to glorify God and help others. That provided such clarity. We are always trying to figure out God’s will and purpose for us and it often feels like walking in the dark. The idea that our gifts and passions are the path to His will for our lives was like turning on a light.

Another Vocare speaker, Dr. Nathaniel West, talked about personal mission statements. This statement outlines your values, passions and purpose in a concrete way. He’s had job offers he was able to easily say no to because they were not in line with his mission. Alternatively, he was able to say yes to other opportunities that were. It is another way to stay on the path toward purpose and live into a deeper sense of self. After that session, I dug my mission statement out from under a pile of papers and committed to spending my time and energy in ways that bring me closer to the passions and purposes I had identified.

In the *The Artist Rule*, Christine Valters Paintner says “what brings me joy and energy also brings me closer to my calling.” Touché! She also says, “obedience is listening deeply to the ways God calls you in everyday life and how you respond.” I have gotten excited about obedience as listening for God in my gifts, in things that bring me joy and energy and responding by doing those things as often as I can. I hope you have the courage to answer your call by saying yes to what brings you life.

*Ebony Walden*
*Urban Service Corps*

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**In Direction**

**Placing a call**

Richmond Hill is a special place where a lot of folks pass through for lots of different reasons. Some come for quiet reflection, some for wonderful worship. Some come thirsty for knowledge. Others come simply to be fed, either at the altar or in the refectory, and maybe enjoy some fellowship. Whatever your particular need, this place holds us all.

Richmond Hill holds many special places. The chapel is one such special place here. In addition to praying there for the City three times a day, the community comes together there for a Eucharist every Monday evening. During his sermon Monday night not long ago, Bob Hetherington commented on the particular importance of maintaining balance among one’s spiritual practices: personal, corporate, and, your work in the larger world.

Making oneself available to listen to what God might be saying to you is important work. There are many ways to do this work, but I think it really is a question of how engaged are you in hospitality of the heart? Open eyes and ears help open the heart to receive the Lord when he call on us.

The open heart allows our mind to open — open up to possibilities of engaging our selves in our surroundings. So far, so good. As long as we are open and receptive to the prompts and nudges the Spirit provides, we’re all done here, right? Not exactly. Openness and receptivity is great. But if that’s all we do, it’s a little like Roger Federer swinging at a tennis ball, then coming to a screeching halt just as the ball touches the strings of his racquet. Of course he doesn’t do that. He follows through his stroke, usually with stunning results.

Whatever we see, hear, or feel as a spiritual prompt, we need to follow through. And our follow-through ought to be grounded. This requires solid footwork and a place to stand. You want to understand your calling, your vocation? Look at where your feet are pointing.

Location is a huge part of vocation. Does location inform vocation? Yes. How? Responding to the call involves posture. Where are you? What are you doing? Sitting? Standing? Attentive? Are you running to it? Or, running away?

As you begin to heed your call, pay attention to where you are. You might be strategically placed to build a little bit of God’s kingdom right here, right now.

Are you willing? That’s a good place to be.

*Richard Rumble*
*Communications Director*
April 2015

Metro Richmond at Prayer

In April:

Pray the Spirit of the Resurrection in Metropolitan Richmond.

Share your comments, or sign up to receive our monthly UPDATE newsletter by emailing us your contact information: rrumble@richmondhillva.org

Richmond Hill is an ecumenical Christian fellowship and intentional residential community who serve as stewards of an urban retreat center within the setting of a historic monastery. Our Mission is to seek God’s healing of Metropolitan Richmond through prayer, hospitality, racial reconciliation and spiritual development.

RICHMOND HILL’S DAILY CYCLE OF PRAYER

Pray for Metropolitan Richmond Every Day: For the healing of metropolitan Richmond; for the sick and those in our hearts; for the welfare of all our citizens; for the establishment of God’s order in our community.

MONDAYS: Our citizens who live in the City of Richmond, the Mayor, Manager, City Council, and School Board. Non-profit organizations and their ministries. All schools: students, teachers, and staff. Day care centers. All who suffer from addiction, dependency, and co-dependency. The Council, residents, and staff of Richmond Hill.

TUESDAYS: Our citizens who live in Hanover County, the Board of Supervisors, School Board, and Manager. The print and broadcast media. The churches of metropolitan Richmond: members and clergy. All who live in poverty. All who suffer from mental illness.

WEDNESDAYS: The Governor of Virginia, the General Assembly, and all who work in State Government. All who work in businesses which provide services to others. All who work in construction. Hospitals and nursing homes: patients, residents, and staff; all who provide health care. Victims of violent crime; all who commit violent crime. All senior citizens.

THURSDAYS: Our citizens who live in Ashland, Hopewell, Colonial Heights, and Petersburg, the town and city Councils and Managers. All who work in banks and finance; all making financial decisions for greater Richmond. Prisons and jails of metropolitan Richmond; prisoners and staff. All who are unemployed or underemployed. All public servants.

FRIDAYS: Our citizens who live in Henrico County, the Supervisors, School Board, and County Manager. All who work in the manufacturing industry in metropolitan Richmond. The police, fire, and rescue workers. The courts. All young people. All who hurt, need inner healing, or are unable to love.

SATURDAYS: Our citizens who live in Chesterfield County, the Supervisors, School Board, and County Manager. All who work in retail trade in metropolitan Richmond, and those who own our businesses. Counselors and spiritual directors. The Sisters of the Visitation of Monte Maria. All victims of abuse; all perpetrators of abuse.

SUNDAYS: Our citizens who live in the Counties of Charles City, Goochland, Powhatan, and New Kent, the Supervisors, School Boards, and Managers. An end to racism and racial prejudice. All places of prayer or worship: churches, mosques, and synagogues. Universities, colleges, and technical schools. All who seek God.

We pray daily at Richmond Hill for persons or situations for which our prayers are requested. Call us at 804-783-7903.

Show your support with a Metro Richmond at Prayer bumper sticker
Order online:
www.metrorichmondatprayer.org
or call (804)783-7903.