More to Do

A while back a note appeared in my mailbox that made me pause. It included an affirmation and a willingness to continue supporting the mission and ministry of Richmond Hill. Yet, it also raised a question, seemingly out of the blue, that caught me off guard. Why is Richmond Hill still focused on racial healing? Implied was the conviction that things are better now and enough has been done, that it’s time to move on.

In the relatively short time I’ve been here, I’ve learned that a lot of progress has been made toward racial healing and reconciliation. Things are not as they once were. The story of Richmond’s past is now out in the open. To think that as recently as 30 years ago very few knew that downtown Richmond was once the sight of the largest interstate slave market in the world still astounds me. That knowledge has led to several milestones like the unveiling of the transatlantic reconciliation statue on East Main St. and Virginia becoming the first state to publicly apologize for its hand in slavery. To today there are plans to add additional monuments to Richmond’s collection that also honor the native people who first called this area home and others who were forced to live here generations ago. Maggie Walker, a descendent of enslaved people herself, born next door to Richmond Hill while the Civil War still raged, is an example, her statue now standing prominently on Capitol Hill.

Just a few years ago, the then Mayor’s Anti-Poverty Commission led a series of public forums on poverty, race, and inclusion that lead to the formation of the Office of Community Wealth Building, a first-of-its kind city office dedicated to increasing living-wage employment, supporting the upward mobility of youth and families, and improving the quality of life in low income communities through housing policy. Today there exist a number of other local organizations that regularly host conversations on race, poverty and history, including museums, news outlets, and non-profit organizations like Richmond Hill.

Last June, the City of Richmond in partnership with Henrico County and others, launched the GRTC Pulse, a modern, high quality, high capacity rapid transit system that runs from Rocketts Landing in the City to Willow Lawn in Henrico County. Linking vital destinations, businesses and services along Main and Broad Streets, it lays a foundational life-line helping to dismantle systems that otherwise segregate and isolate our community. But is it enough?

All these things are positive and hopeful and point to real progress toward the healing Richmond Hill dedicated itself to 31 years ago this fall, a commitment made by the Sisters of the Visitation 120 years before that at the conclusion of the Civil War. It’s easy to point to the evidence of answered prayers over the course of that time, which we are grateful for. But the prayers continue. And the work must too.

The Kingdom of God is a funny thing. We’re told it’s both here (Luke 10:11) and yet to come. Imagining it to be a place where all is well for all involved, on any given day there are plenty of indicators that it’s more distant than realized. And so, God calls us as partners in the work of making it fully authentic. It’s a tall order, but we’re not in it alone. As Fr. Richard Rohr likes to put it, “Without us God will not. Without God we cannot.” We have a role in helping improve the lives of those around us; God welcomes the help and works through us.

And there is plenty to do. Systemic issues remain that perpetuate disparities among residents living in the metropolitan region. Issues of housing, education, and transportation are still unresolved. While the Pulse helps pull us together east and west, we need north and south routes into the surrounding suburbs to complete the system.

Within the City lines, the poverty rate remains at over 25% - the impact on children even greater at over 40%. The effect this has on public education is significant. Not only do the students attending carry the trauma of impoverished lives – hunger, depression, fatigue – but the tax revenue needed to fund them and main-
Spiritual Guidance Coordinator
Jabriel Hasan    Hoonie Kwon

Community and Staff
Communications Specialist
Communications Director
Communication Specialist
Communications Director
Co-Pastoral Directors

Community and Staff
Co-Pastoral Directors
The Rev. Joel Blunk
The Rev. Janie Walker
Spiritual Guidance Coordinator
Deborah Cannady
Retreat Coordinator
Ronald Simmons, Jr.
Development Director
Debbie Winnas
Communication Director
Richard Rumble
Communication Specialist
Sheryl Johnson
Facilities Coordinator
David Vinson
Hospitality Coordinator
Sunny Riggs
Hospitality Assistant
James Byrd
Garden
Heather Watt
Librarian
Carol Parke
Musician
Jim Bennett
Urban Service Corps
Vicky Bethel
Gabriel Hasan    Hoonie Kwon
Residents
Kristen Snacke Blunk
Aria Kirkland-Harris
Wayne Lewis
Mary Lou Rumble
Armstrong Leadership Program
Yvette Kaiput
Marvin Roane
Micah Association
Vicky Bethel
Front Office Assistant
Marvette Craighead

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4-5 Retreats, Schools,
Opportunity
Groups, and Classes 8 Prayer Cycle

Tending The Spirit

I wish I could say that all is well in our fair city and that the mission of Richmond Hill now must become something else. But I can’t. For now, the work of racial healing in metropolitan Richmond must endure. I plan to keep at it myself. I hope you’ll join me.

Rev. Joel Blunk
Co-Pastoral Director

Revive Richmond
At Home

During my early years of spiritual formation, I was exposed to tent revivals and televised Billy Graham Crusades on a regular basis. So, every other month when I sit to write this “Revive Richmond” column, the word revive invokes memories of what those years looked like—fiery preaching, choirs singing, and musical instruments blasting out old hymns of the church and contemporary gospel songs.

These images are far removed from what I think readers are hoping for when they read of revival in metropolitan Richmond. I imagine, like me, they want to know if revival in our metropolitan community is related in any way to freedom from such stigma as “a cloud over Richmond.” Over the years, this term was heard most frequently from the lips of newcomers to the area who said they sensed a spirit of heaviness over this city. I seldom hear this anymore. Instead, what I hear most often is, “I feel so at home here.”

In a recent staff meeting, one of our staff members expressed a related sentiment after a visit to another city where he experienced a prevailing disregard for one another’s well-being. He said he could only think, “I can’t wait to get home”—meaning of course, he could not wait to get back to Richmond. He is not a native of Richmond. So, what does it mean in the way of revival when both newcomers and long-term citizens of a city say, “this feels so much like home?”

I can only hope that more and more people are experiencing what I experienced in 2004, when after a year of not being a part of a local congregation, I attended worship at a church simply because I had gotten word that an old high school classmate was preaching that day. Welcomed by a warm-hearted greeter, I took my seat in the beautiful sanctuary. I had the opportunity before the start of worship to peruse the bulletin. It included notices of various opportunities to participate in meaningful ministry offerings—things that were connected to my gifts as well as my passions. I was in the sanctuary for a short period of time when I began to experience a sense of belonging, and feelings of comfort and aliveness at the same time. By the time worship started, geography had lost its significance. I let down my defenses and began to offer thanks and praise to God who had led me to a place where I felt so revived. I felt assured that this was a place that I could easily and without reservation reinvent myself and grow. I remember saying to myself, “I feel so at home here.”

Rev. Janie M. Walker
Co-Pastoral Director

Richmond Hill
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Richard Rumble
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The Rev. Janie Walker
Cathy Woodson
Deborah Cannady
Richmond Hill

Garden

Update 2 October 2018

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Rev. Janie M. Walker
Co-Pastoral Director
Metro Richmond at Prayer

Pray for Public, Non-profit, and Religious Social Service Work and Ministries in Metropolitan Richmond.

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. (Matthew 25:35-36)

October 7, 2018. We pray for public, non-profit, and religious social service work and ministries in Metropolitan Richmond: For all in need of social services, all social service departments and caseworkers; for partnerships between the church and other institutions serving the needy.

October 14, 2018. We pray for public, non-profit, and religious social service work and ministries in Metropolitan Richmond: For all in need of mental health services, all mental health workers, counselors, and treatment facilities.

October 21, 2018. We pray for public, non-profit, and religious social service work and ministries in Metropolitan Richmond: For all who suffer from addiction, dependency or co-dependency of any sort; for twelve-step programs, recovery programs, therapists, and addiction counselors; for advocates who fight for the rights of persons who cannot fight for themselves.

October 28, 2018. We pray for public, non-profit, and religious social service work and ministries in Metropolitan Richmond: For emergency shelters, women’s shelters, clinics, and feeding programs; for recreation programs, youth programs, juvenile counseling, and young people’s shelters.

Armstrong Leadership Program, Class 2018

ALP is seeking your support

I f your calling is to serve high school students, we are the perfect program for you. Please consider becoming a Mentor with the Armstrong Leadership Program.

How Can You Help? Here Are The Opportunities

We have opportunities available in the areas of tutoring, job shadowing, facilitation, or assisting with college preparation, College Shower Host, Volunteer/Chaperone, Sponsor Leadership In Action Summer Institute or provide transportation support by providing use of vans or buses.

What We Do

ALP is designed to cultivate a team of selected students who are committed to growth in areas of personal development and leadership training as the transition into emerging leaders within their school and community.

The Ultimate Goal

For students to realize his or her POTENTIAL, PURPOSE and PASSIONS in life, while actively pursuing lifelong learning opportunities. We are cultivating a generation, today!

If you are interested in participating, please contact

Yvette Davis Rajput, Director
at work: 804-783-7903, ext. 13,
or cell 804-314-2622, or: yrajput@richmondhillva.org

Marvin Roane, Assistant Director
cell 804-484-0736, or: alp@richmondhillva.org

Like Us on Facebook @ ArmstrongLeadership

Gift ideas:

Prayer Books, Beads, and Blessing Bands make thoughtful, wonderful gifts...on sale in the Richmond Hill Bookstore

Give A Richmond Hill Gift Certificate

Why not give that special someone you love a gift certificate to Richmond Hill? The certificate could be used for a retreat, a program, or for items from the bookstore. To get your certificate, contact Debbie Winans at 804-783-7903, ext. 22

UPDATE
Richmond Hill offers individual retreats for persons who desire rest and time to seek God. Retreats may be taken in 24-hr increments between Tue. 4 p.m.–Sun. 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.

Recommended donations: Basic $80 per 24 hrs. / Guided $100 per 24 hrs.
Contact Mary Lewis, 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
Second 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.

Centering Prayer Groups
Tuesdays, 4:15 - 5:00 p.m.
David Vinson, Facilitator
Tuesdays, 7:30 - 8:45 p.m.
Jerry Deans, Rev. Vallerie King, Facilitators
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: David Vinson at 804-783-7903 or facilities@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 Mary Lewis at 804-783-7903 to register.

Request a Discernment Circle
Need help navigating a life transition? Richmond Hill is pleased to offer another practice to assist you with discerning God’s direction for your life. Discernment Circles, or Clearness Committees as they are called in the Quaker tradition, offer safe space in the company of trusted others for listening deeply to what needs to be heard. Several from our Richmond Hill community are now trained in the process and available upon request to hold sacred space for you. To learn more, speak to one of our co-pastoral directors: Rev. Joel Blunk or Rev. Janie M. Walker at 804-783-7903.
To schedule a circle, contact DeBorah Cannady at 804-783-7903 or dcannady@richmondhillva.org.

Fall Garden Retreats
The garden beckons growers and tillers of the earth to offer your time and talent on the first Thursday in November (Nov. 1) to help around the grounds of Richmond Hill. Work will be performed from 9-11 a.m. The 11-noon hour will provide an opportunity to enjoy the quiet and contemplative space of Richmond Hill. All are invited to Midday Prayers in the chapel at noon followed by our Thursday Community Lunch in the refectory. Those interested should contact our Retreat Coordinator, Mary Lewis, at retreats@richmondhillva.org. We have space for 3-4 volunteers per month. Call to get your name on the list today!
Space is limited, so please get your name on the list today!

New Offerings

Discernment Circles
A Clearness Committee

Request a Discernment Circle

Fall Garden Retreats
A dvent is a time when we begin anew a year of focusing on God’s holy intention for our personal lives as well as the world about us. Discerning how we are personally called to share the presence of God in the world is seldom easy. When each of us hears in our own hearts an annunciation or an invitation to participate in the birthing of new life in the world, like Mary, we want to say “Yes.”

Reflecting on the events of Mary’s life from the annunciation to the birth of Christ, we will explore how the events of Mary’s life called forth the attributes needed to birth something holy. Using various spiritual disciplines, including written reflections, periods of silence, lectio divina, music and storytelling, participants will be invited to contemplate what is being birth in their own lives. The retreat will end with a period of proclamation.

Facilitators: Reverend Janie M. Walker is Co-pastoral Director of Richmond Hill and long-term spiritual director, healing prayer minister and retreat facilitator. Ms. Elnora Allen, a spiritual director and retreat leader, has spent over 30 years accompanying individuals and communities through their journey of healing, both physical and spiritual healing. Janie & Elnora are both passionate about exploring how life’s experiences bring meaning and purpose to our lives.
DAILY PRAYERS
Morning 7:00 - 7:15 a.m.
Noon 12:00 - 12:15 p.m.
Evening 6:00 - 6:15 p.m.

COMMUNITY WORSHIP
Every Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
The community celebrates Holy Communion. Services are led by ministers of various denominations according to their traditions. We invite you to join us afterwards for dinner in the refectory.

PRAYING WITH THE SONGS OF TAIZÉ
First Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.
Jim Bennett, Leader
Taizé worship is contemplative and meditative in character, using short songs, repeated again and again in a candlelit chapel. The songs express a basic reality of faith, quickly grasped by the heart. The hope is this reality will gradually penetrate one’s whole being; thus the meditative singing becomes a way of listening to God. Our practice of Taizé includes singing, prayer for Metropolitan Richmond, and a period of silence. Jim Bennett, a skilled musician, leads this time of worship with a variety of guest musicians and instruments.

SOAKING PRAYER SERVICE
Deborah Cannady, Leader
1st Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. and 4th Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.
Those struggling with illness have benefitted from being “soaked in prayer” over periods of time. Prayer ministers are available to pray with those desiring emotional, spiritual, or physical healing. Participants are invited to find a comfortable place, sit, relax, and receive prayer. Participants may also come and go during the service.

GENERATIONAL HEALING SERVICE
5th Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.
Rev. Dr. Paula O. Parker, Leader
Once a quarter, Richmond Hill offers a service for Generational Healing. This is an opportunity to invite God’s healing into your family, including generations that have gone before, as well as generations that will come after you. Participants are encouraged to bring the blessings as well as the pains and traumas of their ancestry written on a piece of paper (not to be shared). However, careful preparation of your personal genogram will help you pray more specifically for your family members.

MEN’S CIRCLE: PRACTICING THE WAY OF COUNCIL
2nd Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Rev. Joel Blunk, Leader
Men of all ages and stages of life are invited to participate in this monthly gathering at Richmond Hill to practice The Way of Council, an ancient spiritual practice of storytelling and deep conversation. The process is simple. Plenty of silence creates spaciousness for meaning—both spoken and unspoken—to be offered and received. We hold the space with intention. The time is closed with a prayer, a group gesture or a few moments more of silence.

It Came to Pass
I was a residential staff member of the Richmond Hill community for over 9 years. It began with a 3 to 6 year commitment and the commitment just kept going.

In the Fall of 2002 I was visiting Charlie and Marsha Summers, my former pastor and his wife, from Charlotte. Marsha and I were shopping in Careytown when Marsha remarked that she wanted to take me to see a place on Church Hill.

We drove through very large gates into a parking lot. It was raining and the parking lot was a sea of mud. We entered the office area through a side door which was also an entrance to the Chapel.

I picked up a brochure and left after poking my head into the chapel for a minute.

Sitting in my room at the Summer’s house that night I read the information on the brochure telling me that should I be interested in coming to Richmond Hill for an individual retreat around discernment for a residential staff position to contact the Administrator at 804-783-7903.

I went home to Charlotte and I waited three days, then called Charlie and asked for his immediate reaction to my asking for discernment about joining the Richmond Hill community. His response was, “It is a perfect match.” He also said that discernment was about walking down the road as long as it felt right, and it always felt right, it never stopped feeling right.

And so it came to pass.

I loved my time there more than I can say. It was not always easy. But it always felt right. Sacred time always feels right.

Karen Moore, Spiritual Director and former Residential Community Member

Art & Spirituality

Upcoming Retreat Dates in 2019:
January 19 | March 16 | May 18
always held on Saturday, 9 am - 4 pm

Take a break from the rush and hurry of your busy day and join us in a creative retreat in the inspiring, prayer-soaked walls of Richmond Hill. Slip into the spiritual rhythm of prayer and quiet here. Enjoy personal time with your creative self. Connect with your inner spirit while using your creativity.

Facilitator: Brenda Giannini. Suggested donation: $30.00 (includes lunch) To register, please contact Mary Lewis, at (804) 783-7903 or email: retreats@richmondhillva.org
CLERGY CONVOCATION 2018

Richmond has long been a crossroads bringing people in from all directions. But too often we have ended up apart rather than together. The issues we face are multiple and persistent: disparate educational opportunities, inadequate public transportation, meager affordable housing, and growing pockets of poverty, which hit our minority populations hardest and threaten the fabric of our community. So, what are we to do as pastors? How are we to preach in ways that inspire engagement in the world, even if we are not of it?

Join us to consider how we might bridge our preaching with a practice that “looks out for one another’s interests” after the example of Christ found in Philippians 2. Our time together will include a brief overview of our cultural narrative by the Rev. Benjamin Campbell, small group discussion among colleagues, and inspirational preaching provided by Dr. Patricia Gould-Champ, Faith Community Baptist Church, Samuel D. Proctor School of Theology (VUU); Bishop Susan Goff, Episcopal Diocese of Virginia; Dr. Earl Bledsoe, (Retired Pastor), Samuel D. Proctor School of Theology (VUU); Dr. Corey Widmer, Third Church Presbyterian. Dr. Corey Walker, Dean, STV at Virginia Union will give the benediction and charge.

Join us Thursday, Oct 25th from 9am-Noon. There’s an open invitation to stay for community prayers and lunch. Please RSVP by calling Richmond Hill (804) 783-7903, or sign up online at www.richmondhillva.org

Embracing Our Shadow

Saturday to Sunday, November 3-4

There are parts of us that are hard to see and even more difficult to accept, even good things. It’s true for us as individuals and as a collective society. In Richmond, it’s the history of slavery and the legacy of racism that must be faced if we are going to make progress toward healing and becoming whole. Individually, we must own our failures, shortcomings and flaws to avoid projecting pain onto others. At the same time, we must reclaim those qualities of goodness and light that we project onto others as well. It’s about knowing ourselves as human beings — the good, the bad, the ugly — and accepting it all!

Join Mimi Weaver and Joel Blunk for a 24 hour retreat Saturday to Sunday, November 3-4, 4 PM to 4 PM, to consider the wholeness that genuine shadow work can bring individually and to our community. We’ll discuss the concept of the shadow and consider how embracing it can lead us to healing and wholeness.

To register, contact Mary Lewis at retreats@richmondhillva.org

This offering meets continuing education requirements for Richmond Hill adjunct ministers.

Space is limited. The cost is $95.
**Help the Hill**

Richmond Hill participates in Amazon Smile, so whenever you buy from Amazon, you can help support the work of Richmond Hill. Go to smile.amazon.com for details and to sign up.

**Richmond Hill Mission Statement**

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 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.