

UPDATE



For the spirit of the city

2209 EAST GRACE STREET, RICHMOND, VA 23223

FEBRUARY / MARCH 2019

TENDING THE SPIRIT

The Safe and The Sacred

"Thank you so much for holding this safe and sacred space for us to do this work." This was the compliment that came as a recent guest was leaving a retreat on dismantling racism. The compliment is akin to many others that have been offered as retreats here come to a close. However, this compliment seemed more impactful than usual. It could have been the intonation of speech, the degree of sincerity in which it was offered, or even that it came from a longtime acquaintance and facilitator of difficult conversations. Her use of the cumulative adjectives, safe and sacred, is what has continued to stay with me most. There is no doubt that her compliment was meant to honor the work, prayers and presence of all who live, work and volunteer here. Nevertheless, I took it personal as I felt my heart warmed by the sharing and the affirming of our intention to hold safe space for difficult conversations.

Early in my years of training and practice as a spiritual director and healing prayer minister, I became fully aware of the difficulty I would experience in holding safe space for others. I would so easily revert to my very human tendency to want to fix, give advice, or judge. Yet, I kept at this practice of holding safe space because I believe – no, I know – that it is crucial to meaningful living. I know because there are people in my life that I trust to hold space for me. They are those who have spent years supporting me in my own growth and transformation; and have walked with me as scales fell from my eyes. These are

people who have made no attempt to take away my personal power or agency by trying to fix me, shame me or overwhelm me. They make up a team of people who have prayed for me, loved me and reminded me of who I am. Today, as I consider this great gift, there is no doubt that they were willing to lovingly and prayerfully set aside their own thoughts and preferences so I could make my own choices- even when some were not in my best interest.

*Seldom do we
hold space for others
without discovering
that someone is hold-
ing space for us.*

My own years of being nurtured by and practicing spiritual disciplines that require one to hold safe space for others have taught me that, like the cumulative adjectives, holding safe space involves double duty. On one hand it's about honoring and validating someone else in whatever state they are in while being present to your own—not an easy practice. On the other hand, it begs the consideration of the manner in which we honor and validate one another. Surely, making a space sacred is not our own doing. Any space has the

potential to become sacred. We don't always know what the full makeup of the space could be. We only know that the place, the people and the philosophies, the love and trust they bring to it all make up that container, and ultimately contributes to the sacredness of its content. Sacred spaces become so when those present experience the space as holy and worthy of awe and respect.

In considering all of this, there is the possibility that the guest who complimented us that day was unaware of her own contribution to the sacredness of the space. Perhaps she was unaware of the great gift she must have given to others in choosing to hope and devote herself to goodness in the space they held. No doubt, she and others were willing

continues on page 2

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TENDING THE SPIRIT

to sit with one another in whatever manner needed without judging or making one another feel inept. No doubt, she did not try to fix anyone or forge particular outcomes. No doubt, the safety and sacredness of the space grew as hearts were opened, unconditional support expressed and egos remained parked.

I would surmise to say that a lot of holding safe space is going on when sacredness is experienced. And, seldom do we hold space for others without discovering that someone is holding space for us. As a matter of fact, it is virtually impossible to be a strong holder of safe space unless we have others who will hold space for us. Even the strongest of leaders and the most skilled of facilitators need to know that there are people with whom they can be vulnerable and weak without fear of being judged. And, it's not something that's exclusively done by trained professionals or caregivers. It is something that all of us can do for each other – for our partners, our children, our friends, neighbors, and even strangers who cross our paths.

This complex practice, unique to each person, group and situation, may not be one that is easy to master, if ever. However, it is certainly a practice to learn and use as we are faced with increasingly more challenging conversations each and every day—we need the sacred.

Rev. Janie M. Walker

Co-Pastoral Director

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Departments

1-2 Tending the Spirit,	6	Worship Services,
Revive Richmond		In Direction
3 Richmond at Prayer,	7	A Special New
ALP, Community		Year's Retreat
4-5 Retreats, Schools,		Opportunity
Groups, and Classes	8	Prayer Cycle

REVIVE RICHMOND

Reconstructing the Gospel

The chairs in the West Room were pushed against the wall so all of us could fit in a circle. Jonathan wanted us to be able to see each other and be on one level together. The Presbytery of the James' Dismantling Racism Ministries recently brought Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, graduate of Duke Divinity School and celebrated writer and activist, to Richmond Hill. Jonathan lives in an intentional community in Durham where he teaches, writes and directs the School for Conversion, a nonprofit that pursues beloved community.

Jonathan came to share insights from his new book, *Reconstructing the Gospel: Finding Freedom from Slave Holder Religion*. Growing up a faithful Southern Baptist, Jonathan gradually came to realize that the gospel his Christianity proclaimed was not good news for everybody. The same Christianity that sang "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound" also perpetuated racial injustice and white supremacy in the name of Jesus.

"I wrote *Reconstructing the Gospel* because I really want to help people see that in the history of Christianity in America there is a way of being Christian that justified race-based chattel slavery, and that is deeply influential especially on religion and public life in America... In many ways that kind of Christianity is with us still. *Reconstructing the Gospel* is about how to find freedom from that kind of slaveholder religion and how to discover that there is another kind of Christianity that has been with us all along that offers good news for not only the people who are a part of it, but good news for the whole world."

He referenced Ephesians 2:14, "in Christ we are made one, the dividing wall of hostility between us has been brought down." For too long and in too many cases, the Bible has been misread to legally and religiously justify racial division. "We have to admit," Jonathan said, "that we can know something and know it wrongly."

Reconstructing the Gospel means affirming again that drawing close to God requires that we draw near to one another in healing ways. Such is the work of Richmond Hill. Just as Reconstruction after the Civil War intended to repair a desperately broken society, it's time for a spiritual reconstruction that undoes the injustices of the past so that freedom rings today and in the future for both individuals and society as a whole.

Rev. Joel Blunk

Co-Pastoral Director

Pray for the Coming of God's Kingdom in Metropolitan Richmond.

Pray then like this: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6:9-10)

February 3, 2019. We pray for the coming of God's Kingdom in Metropolitan Richmond: For a spirit of unity and cooperation among all people in all jurisdictions. Fill us with your compassion for our natural environment. We pray that all would earnestly seek the common welfare of this metropolitan city.

February 10, 2019. We pray for the coming of God's Kingdom in Metropolitan Richmond: For healthy economic development, which enhances the Metropolitan community, employs the unemployed, and contributes to the common good.

February 17, 2019. We pray for the coming of God's Kingdom in Metropolitan Richmond: For redemption of the divisions, prejudices, pettiness, despair, and discrimination of the past.

February 24, 2019. We pray for the coming of God's Kingdom in Metropolitan Richmond: For the enhancement of our common life in Jesus' Name through the Holy Spirit, and for the resurrection of metropolitan Richmond as a modern metropolitan city of hope for the world.

February 2019

Pray for Health Care in Metropolitan Richmond.

Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." (Matthew 11:4-5)

March 3, 2019. We pray for health care in Metropolitan Richmond: For persons living with terminal illnesses and for their families, friends, and communities; for persons working to find cures for diseases.

March 10, 2019. We pray for health care in Metropolitan Richmond: For all the sick and their caregivers, doctors, nurses, hospice workers, home healthcare workers, and all who minister to the health of others. For clinics, medical personnel, and all institutions that serve persons who are uninsured or underinsured.

March 17, 2019. We pray for health care in Metropolitan Richmond: For emergency response personnel and all emergency room staff. For hospitals, nursing homes, and hospice programs; and for persons diagnosed with terminal illness.

March 24, 2019. We pray for health care in Metropolitan Richmond: For a national health care system which promotes and encourages health, wellness, and well being for all people.

March 31, 2019. We pray for health care in Metropolitan Richmond: For clinics, medical personnel, and all institutions that serve persons who are uninsured or underinsured.

March 2019

On the Move with ALP

Growing Up in Civil Rights Richmond: A Community Remembers

Congratulations to our good friend **Dr. Laura Browder** of the University of Richmond for the success of her project *Growing Up in Civil Rights Richmond: A Community Remembers*. This exhibition organized by University of Richmond Museums, pairs oral histories with photographic portraits of 30 Richmond residents whose lives were altered by their experiences as children and youth during the civil rights movement. The exhibit runs until May 10 at the Joel and Lila Harnett Museum of Art at the University of Richmond's Modlin Center for the Arts.

Growing Up in Civil Rights Richmond: Student Performance

As a follow-up, UR students enrolled in the course "Growing Up in Civil Rights Richmond," taught by Browder and Patricia Herrera along with students from the Armstrong Leadership Program, will perform their docu-drama incorporating oral histories and archival materials.

Save the Date: Student Performance, April 9, 6 p.m. at the University of Richmond's Modlin Center for the Arts, Harnett Museum of Art

ALP Welcomes Devon Clapp

We would like to welcome Devon Clapp to the community. Devon is a junior in the VCU School of Social Work. She will serve as intern for the next 2 years, providing case management services and administrative support to the program. We strongly believe that Devon will be an asset to our students, program and community.

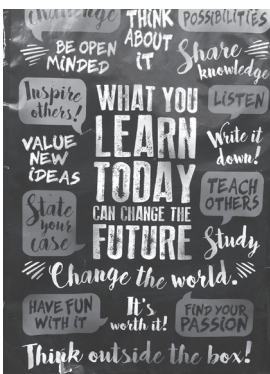
Generation Dream 2019

ALP Mentors and friends joined in **RPEC Generation Dream 2019** on February 1, 2019. This event is held annually in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy and vision for peace and social justice. Generation Dream puts on display talented youth from throughout central

Virginia, along with supporting adult artists, who perform original poems, music and dance pieces. As always, the event proved to be thought-provoking, moving, and simply inspirational.

If you are interested in participating in Armstrong Leadership Program, 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

Richmond Hill Studies in

Retreats

Classes

Groups

Schools

Retreats

Classes

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 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.*

GROUPS

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.

Connect creatively with your spirit



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.

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

JOIN US

== KOINONIA == School of Race & Justice

"CALLED TO BE RECONCILERS"

Day Seminar

Mar. 16

Sat. 9 am – 4 pm

Please join us for the fourth event in this series, focused on *Racial Reconciliation in Faith Communities*.

The First UU Community and the Unitarian Universalist Association will share their programs, Black Lives Matter, White Supremacy Teach In, Living the Pledge Workshops, White Ally Toolkit, Dismantling White Privilege, Jubilee Training and their ongoing work as an Association to re-imagine their governance systems de-centering whiteness.

Day seminar: \$50.

FACILITATORS

James Armstrong - Racial Justice Committee, Board Chairperson, First UU RVA

Anita Lee - Co creator of Living The Pledge to End Racism Workshops

Rev. Sue Sinnamon, Assistant Minister
First UU RVA

To register, call (804) 783-7903
or email retreats@richmondhillva.org.

RETREATS



The Colors of Grace:

A Lenten
Retreat
for Healing
Prayer Ministers

MARCH 29-30

This 24-hr. retreat is for renewal, reunion, and aimed as a "restart" for the healing ministry at Richmond Hill. Come and be refreshed in God's grace through prayer, sharing, reflection and silence.

Jesus said: are you tired, worn out, burned out on religion, come to me, get away with me and you recover your life. I will show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me. Watch how I do it, Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't leave anything heavy or ill fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly. (Matthew 11:28-30 MSG)

Facilitators: Paula Parker, Sandi Kerner, Sylvia King, DeBorah Cannady

Cost: \$110. (Scholarships available upon request) **Space is limited.**

To apply, please visit our website or contact Mary Lewis at 804-783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org by **Friday, March 22, 2019.**



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.

COMMUNITY DINNERS

6:30 pm each Tuesday

Donation: \$7-10

Come join us for a meal!

COMMUNITY LUNCHES

12:30 pm each Thursday

Donation: \$5-7

Are you called to serve in the City?



Apply now for
August 2019

Beginning in August, three servant-leaders can join in this mission. See website for details.

Applications are due by May 15.

WORSHIP SERVICES

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. * (No Taizé service January 1, 2019)

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.

MICAH ASSOCIATION NEWS

Micah Holds Open Space Event

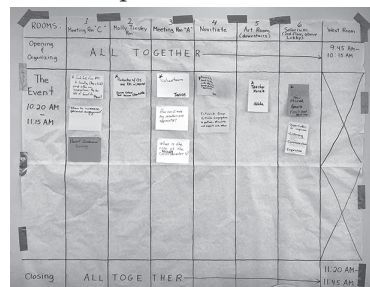
Last November, the Micah Association held an Open Space Event for Micah key coordinators representing faith communities from all over the city, at Richmond Hill. Our morning began in the chapel with music and singing accompanied by Richmond Hill's Director of Music, Jim Bennett; greetings and prayers from Rev. Janie Walker and Rev. Joel Blunk, Richmond Hill's Co-Pastoral Directors, and Rev. Vicky Bethel, Micah Coordinator; followed by poetry readings and testimonies to the importance of quality and equity in education provided by two of Richmond Hill's urban service corps interns, Hoonie Kwon and Jabriel Hasan.

After this time of celebration, we moved to the Adams-Taylor House, where we engaged in a process known as "open space," in which meeting attendees selected discussion topics and formed their own small groups, based on the overarching question: "The unique role of Micah: how can our partnership of faith communities continue to make an impact?"

Lively discussions took place in rooms all over the Richmond Hill facility, with small groups reporting back to the larger group at the end of the morning. Topics included possibilities for parental and family engagement; how Micah connects and interacts with Communities in Schools (CIS), Richmond Public Schools, and other Richmond education-related partners; volunteer recruitment and increasing opportunities for service; increasing collaboration between Micah and other community groups and between faith partners serving the same schools; and how to provide effective communication between Micah staff and advisory council, Micah faith community partners, and the schools.

Feedback from the participants was positive and enthusiastic. A summary of the discussion group conversations was sent by email to all of the meeting participants and to all Micah key coordinators, as well as to the seven members of the new Micah Advisory Council. This council has been meeting monthly since September 2018 to discuss and discern future structure, direction, and goals of Micah. The summary report from this Open Space event will be central to the council's deliberations and recommendations as it continues its work through the 2018-2019 school year.

Rev. Vicky Bethel
Micah Coordinator



Micah Winter Luncheon

Weinstein Jewish Community Center,

Thursday, February 7, 2019,

12:00 pm - 1:15 pm. Mark your calendars!

JULY 16 - 19

Cultivating THE TRUE SEED *within*

2019 SUMMER INSTITUTE



Adult Faith Formation & Holy Becoming / Cultivating the True Seed Within

We are to grow up in every way...into Christ. – Eph. 4:15

Meister Eckhart identified the “true seed” as the living presence of God’s image implanted in the human soul. He went on to suggest that if the seed of divine nature in each of us were to have a “good, wise and industrious cultivator” we would thrive and grow up into our truest nature – the God-image or True Self.

At the 2019 Summer Institute we will explore the process of authentic and whole adult faith formation. Time together will include small group discussion, solitude in nature, storytelling and artistic expression.

Come ready to explore

- A nature-based model of human development and personal growth
- Second half of life spirituality
- A deeper understanding of True Self/false self
- Age and stage appropriate tasks
- Common life-stage themes and patterns of human evolution

Register now...

Cost: \$335. (Limited scholarships available upon request) **Space is limited.**

To apply please visit our website or contact Mary Lewis at retreats@richmondhillva.org

by **Tuesday, July 9.** (CEUs available for some professions.)

Facilitators: Kim Hunziker & Rev. Joel Blunk



MAY 14 *Save the Date!*

Join us in celebrating Rev. Janie M. Walker's
ministry on Tuesday, May 14 at 7:30 p.m.
Details to come...

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(804) 783-7903
www.richmondhillva.org

February / March 2019



Metro Richmond at Prayer

In February: *Pray for the Coming of God's
Kingdom in Metropolitan Richmond.*

...and in March: *Pray for Health Care in
Metropolitan Richmond.*

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 healing of metropolitan Richmond; for
the sick and those in our hearts; for the welfare
of all our residents; for the establishment of
God's order in our community.

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

TUESDAYS: Our residents who live in Ha-
nover 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 residents.

THURSDAYS: Our residents who live in Ash-
land, Hopewell, Colonial Heights, and Peters-
burg, 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 residents who live in Henrico
County, the Supervisors, School Board, and
County Manager. All who work in the manufac-
turing 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 residents 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 perpe-
trators of abuse.

SUNDAYS: Our residents 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 prej-
udice. All places of prayer or worship: churches,
mosques, and synagogues. Universities, col-
leges, 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.*

Share your comments, or sign up to receive our monthly printed UPDATE newsletter here: rrumble@richmondhillva.org
If you would like to subscribe to eUPDATE, our email newsletter, go here: www.richmondhillva.org/subscribe/

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