Living with Intention

It's common knowledge that the word transition gets thrown around quite frequently at Richmond Hill. I've referred to it often during these past five years of writing articles for this newsletter; mainly because Richmond Hill has been in the throes of a major multi-faceted organizational transition in recent years. Its mission mandates particular attention to the many transitions in metropolitan Richmond, and its ministry compels us to pay attention to the transitions in the lives of individuals who show up at its door. If we are honest about it, life itself is a journey filled with transitions — some small and some great; some swift, and others long and drawn out.

Having spent the past five years in an interim leadership role, knowing that a 2019 retirement was imminent, particular attention to my personal transitions ran parallel to any transition happening with Richmond Hill. A 2018 trip to Phoenix to scout out a place to live, downloading floor plans, accumulating needed furniture and housewares, financial planning and carefully planned family time, all played a role in my response to my retirement transition and required intentional actions on my part. I have come to hold a much deeper recognition and appreciation of the intentionality needed in response to life's transitions.

Living with intention requires thought about meaning and purpose and people — all people. To some degree it requires seeing the world without its usual accepted limits. Personally, it has meant seeing my relationship with a grandchild in Arizona as important and meaningful as a relationship with a grandchild in Virginia. It has meant making a home in Phoenix as meaningful as a home in Richmond. It means taking the values, the memories and the legacies of life gained in Richmond to a new place and dare to live into them with the intention of keeping life purposeful for us all. This kind of living of course would negate the thinking behind the question I was asked several months ago, “How do you choose one grandchild over another?”

It's this kind of intentionality that still validates the westward migration of the 1800’s. And, it also serves to negate our present national concern over border walls. As a new resident to the city of Phoenix, when I consider the architecture, the roadways and the lifestyles of my present environment, I see the handiwork of diverse peoples and cultures. I can't help but wonder if the world would continue to improve if people could freely move about to live, love and create where they wish. Of course, barring the risk that a world with this kind of intentionality would demand a radical rethinking of our social norms, our historical narratives, and maybe even our national immigration and trade policies, it would necessitate a re-evaluation of our understanding of ourselves as individuals and as a nation. To think of having relatives and close friends across the globe would give us a different norm for family and friend time. It will for sure require us to be more intentional about setting goals and making vocational choices.

Then too, this kind of intentionality would require a closer scrutiny of our national economic system as well as our personal finances. Perhaps it would call for more equity in commerce worldwide. People would be less likely to find their lives turned upside down by moving from place to place looking for employment and a decent way of life. Humanity as a whole might become more comfortable with the inevitability of change that comes with living life.

A few days before my official retirement, a friend asked me, “What will you miss most about Richmond?” My response was quick and precise - “the people.” On the one hand, I can't help but think...
that the clarity in this response came as a result of the time spent in the concrete preparation for retirement and personal goal setting. On the other hand, I am both comforted and nostalgic each day as I move through my new home filled with memories created with and by my Richmond family and friends. Just seeing these things, intentionally placed in strategic ways, connects me to people who have made life meaningful for me---a clock, a lamp, a drum, cups, books, paintings, pictures, furniture and gifts of all sorts, each carrying their own story. Such things are symbols of the deeper things I will miss about the people of Richmond. Things such as: meaningful relationships; long conversations where I didn’t have to explain myself; shared laughs, tears and passions; common prayers laden with the belief that God is present, listening and will act; good music by one-of-a-kind musicians; delicious meals and fellowship with people who are dearly loved and appreciated; robust personalities that seldom take no for an answer; exhibitions of southern charm, as well as personal agendas masked as southern charm. Most of all, I will miss the common consideration of possibilities and the belief that, with a little intentionality, together we could make a difference in this world.

In the midst of life’s transitions, the people of Richmond, for the most part, live with intention. I like that. I like that a lot. I will miss that and pray that Richmond keeps it, and that I will find it once again in this new place called home.

Rev. Janie M. Walker
Co-Pastoral Director
(Retired)

Tending The Spirit

Still I Rise

T

his past Easter, twenty of us gathered in the Richmond Hill garden for Morning Prayer. The dogwoods were in full bloom and we could feel the sun rising through the pines. We heard again how the grave was empty that first Easter morn.

Three days earlier, on Good Friday, I accompanied a group of VCU students on the Richmond Slave Trail. Though most were from Virginia, none had seen this side of Richmond before. In Shockoe Bottom, at the sight of the Devil’s Half Acre, they were told about Mary Lumpkin, an enslaved African who became the common law wife of notorious slave holder Robert Lumpkin. Mary eventually inherited his assets and made the property available to start a school for freed blacks, later known as Virginia Union University. The Devil’s Half Acre became God’s Half Acre, a tangible sign of the resurrection.

We wandered over to the adjacent African Ancestral Burial Ground where enslaved Africans and freed Blacks were buried until 1810. I was drawn to a tree that seemed to be as old as the graveyard itself. Nearly split in two, a huge wound at its core, it appeared dead. But on its sprawling branches there were green shoots, budding leaves, a sign of spring and evidence of life. I pointed it out to a couple of students who had already taken notice. Their teacher opened her phone and read an excerpt from Maya Angelou:

“Out of the huts of history’s shame/I rise/Up from a past that’s rooted in pain/I rise/I’m a black ocean, leaping and wide,/Welling and swelling I bear in the tide./Leaving behind nights of terror and fear/I rise/Into a daybreak that’s wondrously clear/I rise/Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave./I am the dream and the hope of the slave./I rise/I rise/I rise.”

I was reminded then as now that we are Easter people every day of the year. The resurrection is real and continues to revive this world. Christ is risen indeed! And rising still. The signs are all around us, if we only take notice. Hope is often found in the most unexpected places. And the work of healing metropolitan Richmond continues.

Rev. Joel Blunk
Co-Pastoral Director
Pray for the Criminal Justice System in Metropolitan Richmond.

Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. (Hebrews 13:3)

June 2, 2019. We pray for the criminal justice system in Metropolitan Richmond: For all who are incarcerated in jails and prisons, their families, and their loved ones.

June 9, 2019. We pray for the criminal justice system in Metropolitan Richmond: For the police, judges, lawyers and court personnel, correctional officers and institutions, juvenile detention facilities, and probation officers.

June 16, 2019. We pray for the criminal justice system in Metropolitan Richmond: For all chaplains, staff and volunteers who minister in jails and prisons, half-way houses, work-release and after-care programs.

June 23, 2019. We pray for the criminal justice system in Metropolitan Richmond: For the victims of violent crime and for those who perpetuate violent crime. For situations and institutions that condone, promote or encourage violent behaviors.

June 30, 2019. We pray for the criminal justice system in Metropolitan Richmond: For just institutional policies and programs that foster restorative practices, leading to wholeness and healing.

Pray for Governments and Governing Bodies of Metropolitan Richmond.

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)

July 7, 2019. We pray for governments and governing bodies of Metropolitan Richmond: For the Mayor and City Council of Richmond, the Chief Administrative Officer, and all city employees.

July 14, 2019. We pray for governments and governing bodies of Metropolitan Richmond: For the Boards of Supervisors, Councils, Administrators, and government employees of Charles City, Goochland, New Kent, Powhatan, Ashland, Petersburg, and Hopewell.

July 21, 2019. We pray for governments and governing bodies of Metropolitan Richmond: For the Supervisors of Chesterfield & Hanover Counties, the County Administrators, and all county employees.

July 28, 2019. We pray for governments and governing bodies of Metropolitan Richmond: For the Supervisors of Henrico County, the County Administrator, and all county employees.

Evenings in the Limelight

May was full of performances, starting with our ALP students who went over to the University of Richmond, in front of friends, family and alumni, and performed Growing up in Civil Rights Richmond. The docudrama told stories through spoken word and dance of the civil rights movement, desegregation and the communities they affected. Following the performance, Marvin Roane moderated a powerful panel discussion where we heard from the students and the honorees. Everyone deserves to know this history — it has impacted all of us — and brings us together through History, Healing and Hope. Special thanks to Dr. Patricia Herrera and Dr. Laura Browder for our continued collaboration.

Congratulations to Jasmine, Tarquasia and Chloe in their wonderful performances in Once Upon an Island, Armstrong High School’s first full in-house theatre production in decades. Congratulations as well to our fantastic crew members Lenexus, Tamia, Mario, Deshawn, Airhiez, Yasmine and India. Kudos to Armstrong High School, Armstrong ACE and co-directors Topaz Wise and Juliane Kramer. The performances were a big hit and a great start to a promising theatre program at Armstrong.

ALP students, along with those from several other high schools, participated in another big performance at StageWrite’s culminating, annual show. The theme of this year’s program was transformation. The students delivered a powerful performance sharing stories from their personal journeys through poetry and spoken word. Congratulations to our students Jasmine, Chloë, Assata, Mario, Nilaja, Jacob, Jamea and Valaisha. Thanks to Laine Satterfield and Katrinah Lewis for another great year of working with our students and Capital One sponsors in developing the students’ workforce readiness skills. We look forward to continuing forward together next year.

ALP College Shower Hosting

We invite Churches, Temples, Mosques, Sororities, Fraternities, Business/Social Organizations and Alumni Associations to help out… by hosting a College Shower

The Armstrong Leadership Program (ALP) is inviting Richmond organizations to help high-achieving seniors at Armstrong High School who have been accepted to four-year colleges by hosting a College Shower for a student. At this event, the organization will work towards providing some items the student will need to furnish his/her dorm room. For the participating students, this is an important piece in making the dream of attending college a reality.

If your ministry, congregation or organization has interest in hosting a shower, please contact Yvette Davis Rajput, Director, by July 1

If you are interested in participating in the 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, 804-484-0736, or alp@richmondhillva.org

Like Us on Facebook @ArmstrongLeadership
**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 DeBorah Cannady, 804-783-7903 or dcannady@richmondhillva.org

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**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 Mary Lewis at Richmond Hill to register 804-783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org

Please register in advance. Space is limited.

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**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 Mary Lewis at Richmond Hill to register 804-783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org

Please register in advance. Space is limited.

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**CENTERING PRAYER GROUPS**

Tuesdays, 4:15 - 5:00 p.m.
David Vinson, Facilitator

Tuesdays, 7:30 - 8:45 p.m.
Jerry Deans, 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: David Vinson at 804-783-7903 or facilities@richmondhillva.org

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**DROP-IN GRIEF GROUP**

Monthly, 4th Fridays, 10 – 11:30 a.m.
Sandy Gramling, Ph.D., Facilitator

Share experiences and obtain support in a flexible group format from others who are experiencing a loss. 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 or retreats@richmondhillva.org to register.

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**A SPECIAL JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION**

As we celebrate Juneteenth and continue to commemorate 400 years since enslaved Africans were brought to Jamestown, we will honor the ancestral heritage of people of African descent from a Christocentric perspective in ritual, pilgrimage, storytelling, and study. All are welcome to participate in this 24 hour retreat.

You’re invited to bring a photo and/or belonging of a deceased loved one to share in our time of storytelling and reflection. We also advise that you pack comfortable shoes for our journey to the Lumpkin’s Jail Compound and Richmond’s African Burial Ground.

Register: Online, or call Mary Lewis at 804-783-7903, or email retreats@richmondhillva.org
Facilitating: Jabriel Malik Hasan; Participating: Rev. Dr. Paula Parker and Lili Simons

Cost: $110  Space is limited. Register today!
Now Enrolling!

Fall 2019
Opening Retreat Oct. 11-12, 2019
Friday, 4 pm – Saturday, 4 pm

Day Seminar Nov. 16, 2019
Saturday, 9 am – 4 pm

Spring 2020
Day Seminars Jan. 18, 2020 – Mar. 14, 2020
Saturday, 9 am – 4 pm

Closing Retreat May 8-9, 2020
Friday, 4 pm – Saturday, 4 pm

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Koinonia – “Called to be Reconcilers”

School of Race & Justice

Please join us for the first event in our annual Koinonia series of retreats and lectures focused on race and justice. You may sign up by event or for the whole year at a reduced cost.

Koinonia is designed to equip people in three ways: by engaging in transformative, self-reflective work; by teaching dialogue skills for handling tough conversations; and by preparing participants for social justice engagement with the wider community.

Retreats and seminars will include guest presenters, small group discussions, community engagement and time for personal reflection. Topics will include the history and theology of race, recognizing the signs of systemic racism and implicit bias, and Non-Violent Communication.

The weekend retreats are $110 each and the day seminars are $50 each. Tuition for the entire year is $325, a savings of $50.

To register for the October opening retreat or the entire year, call (804) 783-7903 or email retreats@richmondhillva.org.

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Taizé Retreat this Fall

This weekend will consist of small group formation, conscious work in the community, chances to learn about both the mission of Taizé and Richmond Hill, and, of course, time to pray the songs of Taizé. Each of the regular prayer times will be done in Taizé fashion incorporating songs of Taizé, silence, and daily prayer for metropolitan Richmond.

Cost: $180. To register, visit our web site, or call (804) 783-7903 or email retreats@richmondhillva.org.
### 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
*1st Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. and 4th Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.*  
Deborah Cannady, Leader

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 at 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.*  
Rev. Joel Blank, 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.

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**Definitely One for the Books**

On Tuesday, May 14, over 200 folks came to honor the [Rev. Janie M. Walker](mailto:Janiewalker@richmondhill.org) on her retirement from Richmond Hill. The evening included music, stories, and the giving of gifts, and was preceded by our regular Community Worship and a fantastic heavy hors d’oeuvres reception.

Janie was an integral part of Richmond Hill almost from the beginning. She lived in residence for over seventeen years, held almost every position on staff, and over the past five years led us through a critical period of transition as Co-Pastoral Director. We share in her excitement as she begins the next chapter of her life, relocating to be near a granddaughter and a new great-granddaughter in Arizona.

Progress continues in our search for Janie’s replacement. As we press on in this process, we are pleased and blessed to announce the [Rev. Dr. Paula O. Parker](mailto:Paula@richmondhill.org) will serve as our part-time Interim Co-Pastoral Director. Paula has been involved with Richmond Hill and the community for over 25 years and brings a wealth of experience to the table. We are also pleased to report that [Lindsey Franklin](mailto:Lindsey@richmondhill.org) will be helping out as our Interim Associate Pastor. Lindsey has completed her MDiv. studies at Harvard Divinity School and brings tremendous energy and enthusiasm for community engagement. Please greet them warmly when you see them.

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**2-Week Summer Sabbath**

For two weeks in August Richmond Hill will slow down to recuperate from the previous program year and to prepare for the season ahead.

**From Tuesday, July 30 through Monday, August 12, the residential community will take a sabbath rest from the routine of meetings and hosting guests.**

The exception will be that the regular prayer times will be maintained along with the Tuesday evening worship and meal. All other meals and regularly scheduled meetings, worship offerings, or day retreats will not occur during that time.

Regular office hours will be maintained for staff from 9-5, and the gate will remain closed with the exception of Tuesday night between 5 and 7:30 for the community worship and meal. The chapel door will open daily at prayer times, 7 am, noon, and 6 pm., if you care to join us.

If you have any questions about the schedule for those two weeks or have a need during that time, please call (804) 783-7903.

**Thank you for your support and understanding as we honor a time for rest and renewal.**
Rapha (the Hebrew word to heal) is a seven-month course in contemplative healing prayer. It consists of three retreats and four six-week sessions. The course begins September 2019 and concludes April 2020. Participants are required to read selected books and articles, journal, write reflection papers, meet with a healing prayer minister and pray for and with each other.

Participants will be introduced to these topics: listening, the four types of healing, discernment, prayer, the Holy Spirit, spiritual disciplines, trauma, generational trauma, systemic trauma, forgiveness, anger, shame, guilt, grief and loss, epigenetics, moral injury, resilience and resistance.

Dates: Opening 48-hr. retreat September 13-15, 2019 (Friday-Sunday); 24-hr. retreat January 10-11, 2020 (Friday-Saturday); closing 48-hr. retreat April 24-26, 2020 (Friday-Sunday). Four six-week sessions will be held Wednesday evenings 7:30 - 9:00 pm.

Co-leaders: Rev. Dr. Sandi Kerner, Rev. Dr. Paula Owens Parker

Cost: $975. (Some scholarships available upon request) Space is limited.
To apply, please contact DeBorah Cannady at 804-783-7903, ext.14 or dcannady@richmondhillva.org by July 1, 2019.

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

Cost: $335.
(Some 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
Metro Richmond at Prayer

In June: Pray for the Criminal Justice System in Metropolitan Richmond.
…and in July: Pray for Governments and Governing Bodies of 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 will be closed
July 30 – August 12
Taking Time for Summer Sabbath

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/
You can find us, like us, share us: facebook: RichmondHillVa twitter: RichmondHillVa2 instagram: richmondhillva