

# UPDATE

For the spirit of the city



2209 E. GRACE STREET, RICHMOND VA 23223 | WINTER 2022

## TENDING THE SPIRIT

### You're Welcome

*So welcome each other, in the same way that Christ also welcomed you, for God's glory – Romans 15:7 CEB*

The word "welcome" is one of my favorites in the English language. This is a beautiful word to me because of its power and meaning. It can be used

as a noun, an adjective, or a verb. Stop and just speak the word to yourself. Welcome! Rest in it! Welcome! Let it wash over you. Welcome! If no one else welcomes you in this day, offer yourself a welcome to the offering of this day. Welcome has the ability to bring feelings of favorable reception, acceptance, appreciation, a sense of belonging, and a knowing that your presence is desired. It is an opportunity to make room for whatever the day brings, knowing that come what may, God is in control of every bit of it and therefore we can let go of worry, anxiety, fear, and the need to control. Father

Thomas Keating helps us with this in "The Welcome Prayer":

*Welcome, welcome, welcome.*

*I welcome everything that comes to me today, because I know it's for my healing.*

*I welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, persons, situations, and conditions.*

*I let go of my desire for power and control.*

*I let go of my desire for affection, esteem, approval, and pleasure.*

*I let go of my desire for survival and security.*

*I let go of my desire to change any situation, condition, person or myself.*

*I open to the love and presence of God and God's action within. Amen.*

When we make room to welcome what's happening in our lives, it doesn't mean that we don't want change or a greater level of awareness. It means that we accept what comes, as we invite God into it. When we make room and welcome the presence of God, we demonstrate a trust in God that allows a nurturing and maturing that we would not otherwise experience if we continuously resisted those things that make us uncomfortable and anxious. When we welcome life as it happens, we can

bring to God our needs, our desires, our thoughts, our emotions, and our conditions. Instead of fighting these things and those around us, we welcome them and God in them so that we can be transformed into the people who God created us to be.

*Some have  
entertained  
angels without  
knowing it...*

One Saturday morning I was serving as one of the weekend hosts and I saw from my seat at the round desk, an elderly couple who stopped at our gate on the Grace Street side of our campus. They began to look around in amazement, almost as if to say, What is this place? They did not come any fur-

ther than the gate, but I so wished they had because this is a place of welcome. They took the pocket card from the holder and began reading it. About thirty minutes later, another couple came and informed me that they were here because they had seen the pocket card on the fence and wanted to know if they could just go to the chapel for prayer and pictures and then to the garden. My response was, "Yes! You are also welcome to stay for our noon prayers." The joyful delight expressed by these two individuals was encouraging, but it also gave me pause. The pause came because I thought what kind of world are we living in for people to be so surprised when they are invited to prayer and offered a spirit of welcome?

*continues on page 2*

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Tim Heishman

Mary Lou Rumble

Rev. Peter Hawisher-Faul

## TENDING THE SPIRIT



I thought about what a gift it is to greet people and welcome them into a space where you are authentically glad that they are present. What a gift it is to welcome people in a manner that says, you are accepted here, just as you are. What a privilege it is to offer a Christlike welcome with a warm reception that causes them to want to return. So, as we entertain during this holiday season, as we welcome people into our homes, into our places of worship, and into our hearts, may we do so with the spirit of Hebrews 13:2, which says, "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it." Please notice when you experience a Christlike welcome. More than that, become intentional about welcoming someone you encounter this week.

Our prayer is that the Lord will open our hearts to see the people who enter our lives and extend hospitality in a Christlike manner causing them to feel the warm welcome of God's love. May it be so!

*Rev. Lisa Johnson,  
Co-Pastoral Director*

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## SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

### Mary Fran Hughes-McIntyre *What is your legacy?*

When I was quarantined with COVID, I found myself rewriting my will to include Richmond Hill.

Richmond Hill's commitment to racial justice and healing gives me the opportunity to support an interracial organization committed to living out Jesus' teachings. Facing the painful truths of our city lays the foundation for personal and societal growth, and reminds us that our God makes way when there seems no way.

As a white Virginian, I have studied my family history and discovered that my ancestors include not only farmers, but also an overseer and an enslaver. I have had the advantage of generational wealth that paid for my college education, my health insurance, and a down-payment on a home. In contrast, people of color in red-lined neighborhoods were blocked from mortgages to buy homes, unable to build generational wealth to finance education, pay for health care, or pass along to the next generation. I feel led to orient my will towards repairing these inequities.

Richmond Hill is a beloved community for me. Tuesday evening worship blesses me with heart-felt, exquisite music and a sermon that motivates me to live justice, speak truth, and act compassionately...all this followed by our delicious community meals!

My soul is nourished by this place in so many ways. May it be true for generations after me.

*Mary Fran Hughes-McIntyre is a long-time friend and supporter of Richmond Hill.*

*Interested in having a conversation about legacy giving? Contact Associate Pastor for Development, Rev. Lindsey Franklin, at [lfranklin@richmondhillva.org](mailto:lfranklin@richmondhillva.org)*

metroprayrva.org

December 2022

### Pray for the Persons in Financial Need in Metropolitan Richmond.

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. (Luke 4:18-19 NRSV)*

**December 4, 2022.** We pray for persons in financial need in Metropolitan Richmond: For the unemployed and under-employed, for suitable work, living wages, and fair benefits for all workers in this metropolitan city; and for sufficient employment to make healthy family life possible.

**December 11, 2022.** We pray for persons in financial need in Metropolitan Richmond: For the homeless and the hungry, for the provision of safe, affordable housing and low cost nutritious food, for the personal safety, dignity, and well being of those who are unable to work.

**December 18, 2022.** We pray for persons in financial need in Metropolitan Richmond: For healthy relationships; for constructive, safe, and caring households for the bringing up and nurturing of children and caring for the elderly.

**December 25, 2022.** We pray for persons in financial need in Metropolitan Richmond: For the inclusion of all (regardless of race, age, or residency) in the economic health of Metropolitan Richmond; for effective, affordable, regional public transportation to support job access.

January 2023

### Pray to Overcome in Christ's Name the Heritage of Racism in Metropolitan Richmond.

*There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28 NRSV)*

**January 1, 2023.** We pray to overcome in Christ's name the heritage of racism: For racial reconciliation, healing, and justice in Metropolitan Richmond; for an end to all personal and structural racial prejudice and discrimination.

**January 8, 2023.** We pray to overcome in Christ's name the heritage of racism: For the elimination of discrimination in housing, policing, education, employment, transportation, and churches in Metropolitan Richmond.

**January 15, 2023.** We pray to overcome in Christ's name the heritage of racism: To experience the healing power of Jesus's resurrection over all personal and institutional results of racism and racial inequality in this metropolitan city.

**January 22, 2023.** We pray to overcome in Christ's name the heritage of racism: To overcome ignorance, indifference, resentment, and bitterness with regard to race in both private and public life.

**January 29, 2023.** We pray to overcome in Christ's name the heritage of racism: To proclaim in word and deed the establishment of a beloved community in Metropolitan Richmond.

I've been thinking a lot recently about legacy — the way our lives continuously shape the world around us, and what we leave behind when we are gone.

As we celebrate thirty-five years, we consider the many legacies we find here at Richmond Hill. The cloud of witnesses that surrounds this place is deep and wide. Richmond Hill is a living testament to gifts shared over the years — prayers that turned into ideas, ideas that turned into programs, programs then stewarded by people and passion and much more prayer. Many hands and hearts and gifts have made this place what it is.

Of course, our legacy here goes deeper than these past thirty-five years. The nuns of the Visitation of Monte Maria faithfully tended this place on the Hill for almost one hundred and twenty. And, as we lift up the stories of people enslaved here long before Richmond Hill was Richmond Hill, we think, too, of their legacy — recognizing the resilience, faith, and even joy that persisted amidst unthinkable trauma here on this land.

That our legacies continue long after we are gone is simultaneously haunting and hopeful. How we live now shapes the world around us, present and future. What a beautiful, humbling thought.

*What is your legacy? How might it  
intertwine with the legacy of this place  
we call Richmond Hill?*

One of the ways people who care about Richmond Hill carry their legacy forward is through planned giving — when people like Mary Fran Hughes-McIntyre (*see page 2*) make the prayerful decision to include Richmond Hill in their wills.

When you support Richmond Hill in any way, you tie your legacy to this place on the Hill that seeks healing and transformation of this city.

As you consider your own legacy, no matter your age, we invite you to consider making a gift to steward this place and ministry for generations to come.

*Rev. Lindsey Franklin,  
Associate Pastor for Development*



## Advent and a Walk through the Garden

Fall has so quickly come, and will soon be gone. We find ourselves here in a season that has for millenia presented the world with a character of sublimity. Advent couldn't fit in a better context. The garden is a beautiful paradox at this time of year. Though daylight slowly decreases and much of the vegetation dies back, we still find the brilliant signs of God's beauty and vibrancy increasing all around us. We have been working to put the garden to rest for the immediate winter, uprooting some invasive plants in hopes that other plants more suitable to our garden ecosystem will flourish in the future. This work has fostered a sense of tolerance and humility within us and we are reminded that there is a place and time for everything.

We have so much wisdom to glean from the plants! Even in dormancy, they spend their energy in realms of self-care. Deciduous plants (those who drop their leaves in dormant seasons) send sugar and nutrients back down into their roots to be stored during winter. As you walk the grounds you may notice new growth that looks a little "weedy". We've seeded "cover crop" plants in the fall to hold space for what will come. They enrich and protect the soil, instilling fertility for the next season's growth.

Even in the garden, Advent marks the ignition of Christ's earthly journey, and we too are ignited to live anew. The plants lead us in recognizing that our growth is not solely evident in outward expression. There's a work that inwardly occurs as we rest. We are waiting with the light of God in the midst of the darkness, in faith and hope.

— Allison Hurst & Beth Nelson, Co-Gardeners



***Richmond Hill is closed to the public December 17-January 3.  
We eagerly look forward to being with you in 2023!***

While our Christmas Sabbath is underway, we are not booking individual or group retreats or meetings.  
Thank you for your understanding and your support.

***Are you looking to really live into  
Richmond Hill's healing mission?***

*Richmond Hill has the following open positions. To further explore these opportunities, visit [richmondhillva.org/positions](https://richmondhillva.org/positions)*

**Marketing Coordinator  
Individual Ministries Coordinator  
Urban Service Corps**

U P C O M I N G !

Thursday, December 15 | 9a-3p

## The Journey Inward: An Advent Labyrinth Retreat

To register for the Advent Labyrinth Retreat, visit [RichmondHillVa.org/advent2022](https://RichmondHillVa.org/advent2022)  
Call (804) 783-7903, ext.135 or email: [retreats@richmondhillva.org](mailto:retreats@richmondhillva.org)  
Facilitator: Rev. Katie Heishman. Suggested donation: \$40 (includes lunch)

## CREATING PATHWAYS THROUGH Grief

A Day Retreat  
9:00 am – 4:00 pm, Thursday, Jan 26

To register for the Grief Day Retreat, visit [RichmondHillVa.org/grief2023](https://RichmondHillVa.org/grief2023)  
Call (804) 783-7903, ext.135 or email: [retreats@richmondhillva.org](mailto:retreats@richmondhillva.org)  
Facilitator: Sandy Gramling. Suggested donation: \$40 (includes lunch)

**Art & Spirituality:**

## Creativity Retreat

Jan. 21,  
2023  
Saturday  
9am – 3pm

To register for the Art & Spirituality Day Retreat, visit [RichmondHillVa.org/art](https://RichmondHillVa.org/art)  
Call (804) 783-7903, ext.135 or email: [retreats@richmondhillva.org](mailto:retreats@richmondhillva.org)  
Facilitator: Brenda Giannini. Suggested donation: \$40 (includes lunch)

JOIN US

### CENTERING PRAYER GROUP

1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Patricia Garrity, Jim Thorsen, Tish Watson,  
Facilitators

**C**entering Prayer is a form of contemplative prayer where we deepen our relationship with God through inner quiet and stillness.



Whether you are new to the practice or have been centering for years, you are welcome! Following the 20 minutes of centering prayer, there is an interactive group discussion on a spiritual topic, song, or pertinent literature. We close our time together with a short period of intercessory prayer.

Please consider joining us on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month from 7:30-8:30 p.m. The Zoom link for those unable to attend in person is available on the website calendar.

**Next meeting dates are December 20, January 3 and January 17.**

Contact: Richard Rumble at 804-783-7903, ext.124 or [rrumble@richmondhillva.org](mailto:rrumble@richmondhillva.org)

### Hello's, and good-byes

**W**e are pleased and excited to announce the newest addition to our Richmond Hill Family — **Rev. Daniel Willson** joined the residential community in November 2022. He is serving as Retreat Host.

After completing her three-year commitment here as Micah Coordinator, **Pam Smith**, our resident historian, moved to Fairfax, Virginia at the end of November to pursue her historical research and other projects. We are blessed and grateful for her diligent service in uncovering our buried stories here at Richmond Hill.



## Time for True Social Justice

Earlier this month, we attended a Strategic Communication training where the group was asked, "What is the thing that you liked about RVA?". One attendee shared how much she liked the exponential growth and development in the city which affords families the opportunity to live, play, and thrive in RVA. Although this statement holds true for some, it is not a reality for many others. This dichotomy mirrors the morals in *A Tale of Two Cities*, where realities are not always as they may seem. Due to the disinvestment in certain neighborhoods, often those of black and brown communities, many are impacted by structural racism which results in inadequate housing, poorly funded schools, crime and violence, low expectations, trauma, and poor access to healthy living and care. Unfortunately, these issues impact our youth as well in a myriad of ways.

As we pray for equity, healing, and justice, we must pause and ask ourselves, "What is social justice and how do we as believers respond to the needs of all communities?" Social justice has to be placed in its proper context in order to develop a complete understanding of the elusive concept. Is it possible that social justice can provide those without boots, boots to somehow pull themselves up by their bootstraps? Imagine, an individual who lives in poverty lacks generational wealth, hails from a broken home, and was born to parents who have given up and turned to substances just to cope with societal injustices. Or the fact that they must continue to survive even when society judges them based solely on the color of their skin. Skin color has never determined the intelligence or aptitude of any human being. It is culture, environment, educational opportunities, and access to resources that truly assist in the development of an individual's character.

As it relates to humanity, it is an individual's character that shapes, molds, builds, and ultimately enhances an individual. Now imagine a world that provides opportunities to individuals (human beings) who are simply the best qualified. To qualify that statement, take a child who grows up under systemic racism, like one who is a member of the Armstrong Leadership Program, juxtaposed with a child that has benefited from opportunities created by generations of laws, systems, and wealth acquired at the direct expense, marginalization, and complete

degradation of others. Unless there is a balance created to rectify the imbalances within this society's social structures that foster both equity and equality, "Social Justice" cannot exist, only social conformity, covered by social band-aids, which in essence leads to continued social apathy.

True social justice requires both change and opportunity. This means a change in the minds and hearts of both the perpetrators of injustice which created the need for social justice and their "victims" who continue to possess a desperate need for justice socially, economically, culturally, mentally and emotionally. With that stated, we agree with Frederick Douglass' assertion, "It is easier to build strong children than repair broken men" due to the fact that when an individual is broken for any reason, one is hard-pressed to find a doctor or therapist skilled enough to repair an individual who has been afflicted by a flawed, unjust and unethical system. The truth is, as humans our perceptions of social

justice can and do vary, but the realities simply cannot continue to go uncontested. Social Justice can never be achieved if left solely to the "powers that be" who have established and continue to lead an unjust society. Social justice is ultimately the inherent responsibility of every member of the human family.

Too often youth who live in poverty and attend poorly funded schools are less likely to graduate on time, properly prepare for college or the workforce, and/or at the least, dream of a brighter future for themselves and their families. The Armstrong Leadership Program has invested in the students at Armstrong High School by offering positive youth development, mentoring, leadership training, and post-graduate preparation along with pouring into our youth as their lives are transformed and better outcomes are increased. Social justice ultimately is the inherent responsibility of everyone who considers themselves a part of the human family. Do you believe it is easier to build strong children than repair broken men? We invite you to join us in this ministry or encourage you to get involved with any program that seeks to repair the injustice which plagues our under-resourced communities so that everyone has a chance to thrive.

— Peace & Blessings, Yvette Davis Rajput and Marvin Roane



### Are you interested in participating in the Armstrong Leadership Program?

Contact: Yvette Davis Rajput, Director at work: 804-783-7903, ext. 113, cell 804-314-2622, or yrajput@richmondhillva.org

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

Like Us on Facebook @ArmstrongLeadership



## An “Unveiling” to remember

**O**n the evening of October 22nd, our south-side wall overlooking the city came alive with light before a crowd of amazed onlookers. The unique projections, designed by partner organization Reclaiming the Monuments, pulsed in perfect coordination with the unveiling of a new mural that has been months in the making with partner organization Mending Walls.

It was the grand finale of an evening filled with magic — both powerful and poignant. While the sun was still bright, the five Mending Walls artists each shared about their portion of the mural and their collaborative creation process. As golden hour hit its peak, small groups engaged more deeply with the mural’s theme of Transcending Walls in rich conversations facilitated by students from The Warmth, the weeklong reading and writing-intensive for black young adults that takes place annually here at Richmond Hill.

Then, after some hot cider and cookies, all were invited inside the Richmond Hill walls for a tour of the Dwelling of Enslaved Africans situated in the northeast corner of the Richmond Hill garden.



Used as a tool shed for generations, this Dwelling that likely dates to the 1840’s or 1850’s is now understood to have housed some of the more than 200 people enslaved by the owners of the property we call Richmond Hill. After more than a year of community input, a clear consensus has been reached: to rehabilitate the Dwelling and create space to honor the ancestors, lament, acknowledge, atone, repair, and tell stories as a way to live into our mission to help the city heal.

Led by Richmond Hill historian Pam Smith, Dwelling archaeologist Tim Roberts, and Associate Pastor for Development Rev. Lindsey Franklin, the tours dove into the history of enslavement on the land, the plans for the Dwelling rehabilitation, and some of the deeper questions about our present and future that engaging directly with this history ignites.

Darkness had fallen by the time most of the more than 60 people who came to the tours left out through the chapel doors — just in time for the projections to begin.

It was an evening rich in storytelling, history, art, and community. In the words of one of the artists, “it was a whole vibe,” as people from all walks of life came together to transcend the walls of Richmond Hill and the many metaphorical walls that divide us here in this city.

And, it is just the beginning. We are still dreaming up ways to continue the collaborative spirit of the Transcending Walls project — a spirit very much alive in the plans to rehabilitate and reimagine the Dwelling of Enslaved Africans at Richmond Hill.







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## Winter 2022

### Metro Richmond at Prayer



[metroprayrva.org](http://metroprayrva.org)

**In December:** *Pray for the Persons in  
Financial Need in Metropolitan Richmond.*

**...and in January:** *Pray to Overcome in  
Christ's Name the Heritage of Racism 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.*

