

## CHURCH CLERK

### TOTAL MEMBERSHIP, DECEMBER 31, 2014

2000

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total membership, December 31, 2012                  | 2013 |
| New members by transfer of letter or statement, 2013 | 23   |
| Baptisms, 2013                                       | 8    |
| Deaths, 2013   | 15   |
| Removed by transfer or personal request, 2013        | 29   |

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP, DECEMBER 31, 2014                      2000

#### New members by transfer of letter or statement:

|                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Albertis, Elizabeth Jarvis | Harris, Keith H.             |
| Albertis, Loretta Lucas    | Hawthorne, Casey Jackson     |
| Byrd, Merry Lynn           | Hawthorne, Thomas Baskervill |
| Chatterjea, Briar Harris   | Kral, Page Archer            |
| Chatterjea, Raj            | Kral, Ted                    |
| Cross, Ashlyn              | Parkinson, Carol             |
| Cross, Charlotte           | Stuhlman, Beth Burgess       |
| Dawson, Kristen Michell    | Stuhlman, Craig Brian        |
| Ellis, Jean B.             | Tamagni, Anita S.            |
| Grammer, Libby             | Tamagni, Ronald J.           |
| Groseclose, Thomas Neil    | Underwood, William Powell    |
| Harris, Jo Carol           |                              |

#### New members by baptism:

|                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Blanchard, Benjamin Joseph | Gilliam, Wilson Bryce      |
| Cipolletti, David Armand   | Hubbard, John Ryland       |
| Evans, Joshua Eubank       | Seward, Holden Mitchell    |
| Gilliam, Andrew Steven     | Thorne, Elizabeth Margaret |

#### Deaths:

|                           |                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Bailey, Carlton Davis     | Jones, Frances Elkins          |
| Carter, Robert B., Jr.    | Lawrence, Dorothy Davis        |
| Chandler, Juanita Hodnett | Musick, Robert Ryland          |
| Davis, Helen Stephenson   | Stanton, Ellen Pentecost       |
| DeHart, Doris Reininger   | Stubblefield, Sylvia Humphreys |
| Drummond, Sarah Easley    | Thomson, Gloria Pollard        |
| Gammon, Garland Wayne     | Williams, Stuart Lee           |
| Garrett, Ann Pavey        |                                |

Transfer, personal or administrative request:

Adamson, Anne Lindsey  
Carlock, Catherine Malaing  
Carlock, Catherine Shaner  
Carlock, Craig Michael  
Carlock, Joseph Shaner  
Cushman, Kelly Rhodes  
Cushman, Matthew Lee  
Daniel, Lindsay Boeuf  
Daniel, Zachary Clark  
Davis, Frederick Gregory  
Davis, Karen S.  
Foster, Ryan Alexander  
Hazelgrove, Guy Blanton, III  
Hazelgrove, Lisa Collier  
Heggie, A. Thomas

Heggie, Caroline Kelly  
Heggie, Elizabeth E.  
Hellmuth, Kelly L.  
Hoffman, Benjamin Lee  
Hoffman, Rachel Leigh  
Jones, Dewey Michael  
Lessels, Eric Christopher  
Measell, George Samuel  
Measell, Peggy  
Mumper, Laura Christine  
Muse, Linda M.  
Muse, William W.  
Shirah, Myrna  
Smith, Linda Diane

The willing assistance of River Road Church staff members Sandi Bassett and Susan Young is invaluable. Without their computer expertise, my correspondence with other churches to maintain our church membership roll, record minutes from the four business meetings in 2014 or notify congregants who have been elected to serve as officers or on boards, committees and councils for 2015 would be most difficult.

Emily D. King, Clerk of the Church

**River Road Church, Baptist  
Report of the Historian  
January 28, 2015**

Can a church experience a serendipitous year? The dictionary defines “serendipity” as “the experience of making happy or interesting discoveries *unexpectedly*.” They may not have been totally unexpected but certainly the high achievements of 2014 were “happy” and “interesting” and they filled the entire membership with awe, excitement, and profound gratitude.

One of those experiences was the unparalleled success of the capital campaign. From the time Bob Gallagher arrived as minister of music, he realized that someday, and hopefully sooner than later, the organ which has served the congregation for nearly 45 years needed major attention. In time, it was discovered that attention needed to be given to the console and the organ pipes which were greatly damaged from age. In addition, it was obvious to some that improvements were needed in the areas of lighting and sound in the sanctuary.

Music in the grand tradition of classical church music has been a hallmark of River Road since its early years. In addition, the church has become known as a venue for musical presentations. As the pastor stated: “This church is one of the premier spaces in Richmond, perhaps the region, for making music. Our music program is quickly being recognized for its ongoing excellence. Such excellence requires a pipe organ equal to its building and reputation.”

In April, the congregation approved a capital fund campaign to raise \$1.5 million to renovate the sanctuary organ and to upgrade the lighting and sound systems. Campaign leaders were co-chairs Hilton and Margaret Almond and Seth and Libby Roberts with a steering committee including Fred Bagwell, Mike Clingenpeel, Andy McAllister and Tuckie Paxton. Others engaged in the campaign included Karen Collier, Cassandra Ducca, Eric and Sheryl Johnson, Karen Cothran, Susan Phillips, Jane and Roy Terry, Bonnie and Oliver Way, Dan Bagby, Jean Cauble, Bob and Diane Shoemake, Deb Gray, and Michael Kellett.

The campaign theme was “Rejoice & Give Thanks: God’s House, Our Time.” Hilton Almond reminded his fellow members that for most of them they worshipped in a sanctuary building which they did not construct and it was in “our time” that the members needed to rally to make the needed improvements. The campaign had its own website as well as printed promotional materials. On several occasions the congregation learned more about the inner workings of the organ and toured via videos and photographs the largely unseen areas where pipes, lighting and sound systems are accommodated. Bob Gallagher even offered organ demonstrations as members gathered in the chancel and discovered more about the functions and dysfunctions of the “king of instruments.”

With a goal of \$1.5 million to be raised over three years, the campaign was launched and Sunday, June 8 was designated as “Commitment Sunday.” It was to be a time of worship and celebration. And what a celebration occurred when the announcement was

made that the amount pledged had exceeded the goal with a total of \$1,921,777. As the year continued, the amount increased as 255 families pledged \$2,008,336 with, by November, over \$736,000 in hand. With cash in hand, the project could move forward. An electronic Rodgers organ was rented for temporary use, initial steps were taken for finalizing the new console's design which would be constructed by Richard Houghten, preparations were made for allowing the new console to be rolled in the chancel on occasions such as concerts, and the wooden modesty railing was removed for reconstruction by a master craftsman.

The success of the campaign represented the overall good health and spirit of the church. As Dr. Clingenpeel enumerated the various successful qualities of the campaign he concluded: "Our church is healthy. We want this vitality to continue and flourish." It represented a pulling together by the entire congregation so the joy truly was felt within everyone. And by year's end, there already were visions cast that in the coming year the church would focus outwardly upon missions needs.

The musical program of the church did not miss a beat in spite of the campaign and the changes of organs. There was an array of offerings including guest organist Michael Kaminski performing Vierne's Organ Symphony 3 in F sharp minor as well as works by other French romantic composers; a visiting high school choir from Philadelphia – the Central Bucks High School-West Choir – which offered a selection of American music based on texts of Thomas Jefferson and other presidents; and the children of River Road performed a musical, "Oh, Jonah." The E. Carl Freeman Concert Series included the following: the Washington & Lee University Singers; the Greater Richmond Children's Choir; a voice recital by the church's own Christopher Ahart; the Chancel Choir Concert with orchestra; an organ recital by Marek Kudlicki, a Polish organist from Vienna, Austria, who in October gave the final recital before the replacement of the organ console; a classical guitarist, David Burgess; and the Advent Christmas Choral Concert with the Chancel Choir and orchestra presenting Handel's *Messiah* and Corelli's *Christmas Concerto*.

Another serendipitous event was the invitation for the Chancel Choir, under the direction of Bob Gallagher, to spend a week in residence at Canterbury Cathedral in England, providing music for evensong services and for a Sunday worship service. The organist and accompanist for the week was Chris Martin, the music director and organist at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church in Richmond. It was both a musical and spiritual experience for the choir members who participated and they returned with their own sense of accomplishment, memories of the great and historic cathedral and heightened awareness of the vastness and inter-relatedness of Christendom. Upon returning, several members of the choir shared their experiences in a mid-week program at the church.

The children and youth of River Road participated in many educational and spiritual opportunities. The children of the lower grades attended Passport Kids Camp at Eagle Eyrie. The youth attended a spring retreat at the YMCA Camp at Silver Beach; and some 18 youth participated in a mission tour in Greenville, South Carolina where they performed various service projects to help people. Youth also attended the Unidiversity Discipleship Camp in Tennessee where they were part of an event with some 400 youth. The overall theme at the camp was on forgiveness and acceptance.

In missions activities, four church members – Judy Collins, Joe Teefey, Norma Hays and Sam Hays – participated in a Virginia medical-dental missions trip to serve the needs of the Kuna Indians on the San Blas Islands of Panama. They worked in makeshift clinics and visited grasshuts to help the people. For the fifth year, members of the church participated as a mission team to the Standing Rock Reservation and a new word came into the River Road lexicon – "quillow" – which was a quilted pillow useful to the people on the reservation and church members made some or supplied fabric or cash for them to be made. In November, Pastor Boots Marsh from Standing Rock was a guest of the church and shared the current state of tribal life. A missions team once again spent a week in Bland County, Virginia where as a construction team they helped individuals in need.

Early in 2014, the congregation approved the formation of a Membership Committee to work with the staff, boards and committees "to develop and coordinate initiatives to reach out to the community and encourage persons not currently part of the River Road family to become involved in the worship, fellowship and ministries of the church." The committee also would work with inactive members to involve them in the church's ministries. In the pastor's State of the Church message he cautioned that we are no longer living in the times of the 1950s when people joined churches in great numbers and emphasized: "This means our efforts should focus on the creation of a community of caring and welcome."

In terms of recognizing persons for outstanding service with the life of the congregation, the Board of Christian Education saluted Tom and Wendy Graves as the church's "Christian Educators of the Year." In the fall, Mary Beth Scherer was recognized by Michael Kellett in an article in the church's Quarterly *Explorer*. He commended her for almost 20 years of service as preschool coordinator on Sunday mornings.

From the staff, Wendy Graves was recognized for her 20 years of service as the administrative assistant for the River Road Preschool Development Center. In the spring, Michael Price resigned as Church Administrator to accept a new employment opportunity and, in the fall, Billy Burford, a veteran of church administration, was employed as Intentional Interim Church Administrator. LeAnne Lane was named Office Manager.

Bill Rusher served as chair of the Stewardship Committee and he offered the following observations about the current scene at River Road: “The main thing I see – it’s not the bricks and mortar. It’s what we do with the bricks and mortar. When we host CARITAS, and conduct Vacation Bible School, and run hundreds of children a week through our preschool – just to name a few – we do a glorious job. I know that just keeping the lights on does not necessarily mean that lives will be changed, and I’ve been involved enough with our missions efforts to know that there’s no guarantee about when and where a soul might be saved. But we need to keep up the good work, just in case.”

River Road Church, Baptist did have a year full of high moments, serendipitous times, and throughout it all, they kept up the good work of being church to one another and to the larger community.

Fred Anderson, Historian

### **Board of Administration**

It was my pleasure and honor to serve as chairman for the Board of Administration in 2014. The Board was very active and involved with many matters that affected and changed things at River Road Church, Baptist. Here are the highlights from 2014:

- Organ Renovation – selection of campaign consultant, approval of contracts and financial review and approval of key elements of the renovation.
- Review of the Board of Administration procedures which led to more efficient and effective meetings, as well as distribution of the BOA minutes to the church.
- Review and approval of the Food Trucks that were present every Tuesday this past summer, in support of the Membership Committee’s efforts to reach out to the community.
- A well-run and successful Stewardship campaign, on the heels of the Organ Renovation/Capital Campaign.

The Committee Chairs have provided more specific reports on their respective committees’ achievements, attached to this Annual Report for your review and consideration. I would also like to recognize the Board of Administration Committee Chairs as follows:

Facilities – Ralph Nelson  
House & Grounds – Ken Lantz  
Kitchen – Wyatt Heisler  
Stewardship – Bill Rusher

Finance – Robert Gray and Bill Stanton  
Insurance – Steve Lessels  
Personnel – Susan Rucker

It is always important to have good people around you when you chair a board. This past year was no exception. Special thanks to Laura Thorne, Vice Chair, who supported me in many areas; Elizabeth Holland, Assistant Secretary, who ably filled in for our Secretary when she could not be at a meeting, and of course Emily Sumner, Secretary, for her continued role in keeping the important actions and decisions of the Board in her minutes.

Thank you also to Laura Thorne, Hilton Almond, and Dan Stevens for heading up the Board’s Nominating Committee. The Board of Administration is in good hands with Laura and a wonderful slate of leaders for 2015.

Scott Rooney, Chair, Board of Administration

### **House and Grounds Committee**

The House and Grounds Committee continued working on maintaining the church and helping the Building and Property Council to make improvements to the church.

Workdays were held on April 5, September 27, December 6, and December 20. Among the tasks accomplished were fertilization of the lawn, trimming and mulching shrubbery, leaf removal, and clean up of the parking lots.

The Committee worked with Robbie Newcomb to construct three walkways in the South Parking Lot. The project was organized and managed by Robbie Newcomb in fulfillment of his requirements for his Eagle Scout award. Construction involved excavation of approximately four inches of dirt, cutting and securing salt treated landscape timbers to form an edge, installing landscape fabric, placing slate stepping stones, and backfilling with brown pea gravel.

Ken Lantz, Chair

## **Building and Property Council**

The Building and Property Council is charged with facilitating upgrades, additions and renovations to the Church properties. In 2014 we had an exciting year with many large and small projects:

1. The handicap accessible brick ramp into the Chapel was completed.
2. The front Plaza's brick paver mortar was repointed and broken bricks were replaced. Also other brick walks on the River Road side of the Church were power washed and repaired.
3. The Reception Room was updated with new lighting, carpet, paint, and furniture.
4. The Entrance to the Pre-School (rear LL Sanctuary door) was updated with glass in the exterior and fire doors, paint and a new chandelier.
5. The Fellowship Hall main lighting was upgraded to T-8 florescent bulbs since the T-12 bulbs are no longer available.
6. Upgrades to the Main Kitchen were made including new ceiling, paint, and new oven and other equipment.
7. Also completed was a lighting upgrade in the Chapel including new spot lights, LED bulbs in the chandeliers, and a new dimmer system.

The Committee consisted of the following members:

|                 |                 |                  |             |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------|
| Tom Ligon       | Russ Collins    | Wallace Chandler | R. C. Moore |
| Norman Milligan | Charlie Earley  | Carolyn Hartz    | Jean Cauble |
| Steve Newsome   | Patrick Barbier | Bill Rusher      |             |

John Heisler, Chairman

## **Insurance Committee 2014 Report**

The Committee included Laura Thorne, Page Highfill, Olen Stewart, Jay Howe, and Steve Lessels.

Key actions included:

- February – met with representatives of the church's insurance broker, NCG Insurance Agency, Inc. to review and discuss the 2014 insurance policy details and premium.
- Added package policy endorsements for the following coverage - electronic media liability coverage, electronic information security liability coverage, and security breach coverage.
- Assisted in coordinating travel insurance for the choir trip to Canterbury Cathedral.
- November - met with a representative of NCG Insurance Agency, Inc. to review and discuss the insurance policy details and premium for 2015.

Steve Lessels, Chair, Insurance Committee

## **Kitchen Committee**

The Kitchen Committee is responsible for the organization and maintenance of the kitchen areas of the church. These areas include the Fellowship Hall kitchen and galley, the Reception Room storage, the Social Hall kitchen, the Upper and Lower Commons kitchenette areas, and the kitchen storage room below the Fellowship Hall.

The Kitchen Committee will create and maintain inventories of equipment, items, and supplies. It will recommend the purchase of new or replacement equipment, items, and supplies. It will provide routine and specialized cleaning of areas, equipment, and items on a regular basis.

The Kitchen Committee has enlisted volunteers to serve on an auxiliary team which meets monthly to maintain kitchen areas. The Kitchen Committee works with church staff to plan and organize the Wednesday Night Dinners, and it recruits volunteers to serve the meals and help clean up. It will facilitate the use of kitchen areas by church groups and others.

The Kitchen Committee has worked with the Building and Property Council to update the Fellowship Hall kitchen. The kitchen has been cleaned and will be painted. A new convection oven and warmer have been purchased. After a gas line is run to the kitchen, the electric range will be replaced by a gas range.

Wyatt Heisler, Chair

## Board of Deacons

The 2014 Board of Deacons was comprised of 65 Deacons and the duly elected officers were:

- Chairman – Clint Hubbard
- Vice-Chairman – Gladys Fleming
- Secretary/Treasurer – Sallie Sparks

As described by Article III of the RRCB Constitution and by-laws,

***The Board of Deacons shall have general oversight of the Church membership, advising and assisting the Pastor in matters relative to the spiritual life of the church and in ministering to the membership.***

That is a heavy responsibility and one which is not and should not be taken lightly.

The year of 2014 was a busy year for the Board of Deacons at River Road Church, Baptist (RRCB). We attended to all of our required duties and also accepted the challenge to assume some additional responsibility.

### **The Duties of the Board of Deacons**

The Duties of Deacons at River Road Church, Baptist include:

- serving Communion,
- acting as Greeters at church services,
- collecting the offering,
- hosting the after-church coffees,
- hosting a church fellowship cookout,
- ministering to a care group

All told, there are 1,147 touch points of Deacon duties before any part of the care group ministry is covered. With a Board of approximately 65 Deacons, these duties, if divided equally, equate to approximately 18 per Deacon. Being a Deacon requires a commitment of time and energy to the congregation. By the same token, being called to be a Deacon is a commitment for life and the highest honor that is accorded a lay-person in the church.

From the perspective of having chaired the Nominating Committee (and thus having asked people to serve as Deacons) as well as Chairing the Board of Deacons, it seems that over the years the office of Deacon has diminished to a role that requires much work – which it does – but with a lessened sense of the honor it is to serve as a Deacon. This year, it was a personal goal to elevate the office of Deacon and encourage the Deacons to “Stand Tall” and embrace the role of honor and leadership as set forth by our charter in the RRCB Constitution and By-laws.

According to the book **A History of River Road Church, Baptist** (page 41),

*“In March of 1957 the Board of Deacon instituted for the first time a system of Deacon ‘care groups’ with twenty church members being assigned to each deacon in order to provide better contact with, and service to, the membership.”*

In a bit of nuance that has occurred sometime since 1957, the RRCB Constitution and By-laws outlines that a Deacon will serve a care group of approximately no more than 15 family units. Our current average is that a Deacon serves 9-10 family units.

We strive to minister effectively to the membership and are always looking for ways to improve our connection to the church members. One of the ways in which we did that was to explore better ways to fulfill our duty as described in the RRCB Constitution and By-laws.

### **The Team Approach**

In 2013, the then Chair of the Board of Deacons, Melanie Gray, attended a retreat and participated in a session about the Team Approach to Deacon Ministry. In brief, the Team Approach is a concept that rather than have all Deacons perform all duties, we form our board into teams and allow Deacons to choose the activities with which they are most comfortable. Such an approach allows people to play to their strengths and will hopefully accomplish several things. (1) Deacons will discharge their duties better because they are doing that which is most comfortable to them; (2) Better care is offered to the membership; and (3) the team approach will encourage more folks to serve as Deacons because they will not have to venture out of their comfort zone. An additional by-product is that it will allow for other church members to participate in certain activities without serving on the Board of Deacons.

Melanie shared the concept with me as I was the Vice-Chair and we agreed the Team Approach concept was an avenue worthy of exploration. We began that formal exploration in 2014 with the establishment of a subgroup of Deacons. Serving on this subgroup were: Bromby Bradley, Russ Collins, Charlie Early, Ashley Evans, Carolyn Foster, Jennifer Freeman, Bill Gray, Norma Hays, Henry Holland, Page Highfill, Adam Jante, Eric Johnson, Ken Lantz, Nancy Lowrance, Tracy McGuire, Julia Nixon, Eleanor Nurney, Theresa Price, Chester Phelps, Liz Seward, Richard Seward, Sallie Sparks, Jane Terry, and Will Thorne.

As the sub-group examined ways to begin implementing the Team Approach concept at RRCB, we realized it would be an evolutionary process over time rather than a revolutionary process done quickly. We decided on simplifying the plan and finding things we could do sooner rather than later to begin this process. We divided the Deacon duties into three main groups:

- Ceremonial/Liturgical – Communion, Offering
- Hospitality – Hosting Coffees, Greeting
- Outreach/Care – visitation and care group activity

We decided on things we could do right away would include:

- Invite some of the Youth to participate in collecting the offering on the second Sunday of each month – this lays the groundwork for future Deacons
- Invite former Deacons to participate in collecting the Offering – reinforces the concept of “Deacon for Life”
- Invite other Boards and Standing Committees of the Church to host a Sunday coffee where they might highlight their group and help recruit new members. The goal for 2015 is for the other groups including the Sunday School classes to host approximately 20 coffees and the Deacons host the other approximately 25.
- Foster better communication with the Ministerial staff and Stephen Ministers on visitations and outreach – shares the tasks among the stakeholders
- Coordinate with other groups such as the membership committee, social committee, and others on shared tasks

In a final step, we selected some team captains to help lead the effort toward the Team Approach in 2015. The move toward a Team Approach is an ambitious and worthy goal. In 2014, we were able to begin the journey and make significant progress toward that goal. The plan is for that work to continue in 2015 and beyond.

### **Spiritual Discernment**

Another additional responsibility this year was exploring the idea of spiritual discernment. The Committee for Missional and Spiritual Growth (CMSG) requested a dialogue with the Board of Deacons about this topic. As a Deacon and a church member, I welcomed that request. A sub-group of Deacons was selected (some were chosen and some volunteered) to meet with the CMSG group. This sub-group included Susan Phillips, Stephanie Burnette, Russ Collins, Page Highfill, Henry Holland, Ken Lantz, Julia Nixon, Linda Schreiner, and Charlie Sorrell. After several meetings and substantive discussions, it was decided by the CMSG not to pursue a path of spiritual discernment for RRCB at this time.

### **Fellowship Fund**

The Deacon’s Fellowship Fund is another topic worthy of discussion. This Fund is collected monthly and “administered quietly by the Board of Deacons to those in the community in special need.” All of the requests for the fund are vetted by the local social services departments before a check is issued. In January 2014, the fund had a balance of \$1675.48. Over the course of 2014, we recorded deposits totaling \$38,283.06 and distributed over 300 checks totaling \$31,513.93. As per established protocols, we always kept a balance of approximately \$1,000 for emergencies. The ending balance of approximately \$9,000 was due to some large contributions to the fund that were made in December 2014. In addition, the Endowment Board of RRCB voted to award a grant to the Fellowship Fund in the amount of \$15,000 for 2015. Thus, the Fellowship Fund begins 2015 with a robust balance of nearly \$25,000.

### **In Conclusion**

The success of the 2014 Board of Deacons is a testament and credit to the dedication of the members of the Board. Furthermore, this report would be incomplete if I did not offer my sincere thanks to the 2014 Vice-chair, Gladys Fleming, and the Secretary/Treasurer, Sallie Sparks for their hard work and support throughout 2014. In closing, I should like to add that having the honor of serving as Chairman of the 2014 Board of Deacons has been a highlight of my life. I firmly believe that to be a Deacon is the highest honor for a lay-person to serve in the Church; to serve as Chairman is the ultimate honor.

Clint Hubbard  
Chairman, Board of Deacons 2014

**The River Road Church, Baptist Endowment Fund**

The River Road Church, Baptist Endowment Fund (the Fund) was created in 1967 to support and benefit River Road Church. The fund is a corporation separate from the church managed by a twelve-member Board of Directors. Our Endowment Fund has grown because of the foresight and dedication of church members who believed that practicing Christian stewardship included establishing and contributing to the Endowment Fund, primarily through planned giving (estate gifts).

The Fund began the year with total investments of approximately \$9.3 million and ended the year with investments of approximately \$9.3 million. The Fund's investments are managed by TIFF (The Investment Fund for Foundations). The Fund took approximately \$61,000 in distributions from TIFF in 2014, and investment appreciation replaced those distributions. As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, these investments have had an annual return while under TIFF's management of approximately 1.00% year to date, and have returned 8.14% annually since the inception of the TIFF account as of 1995.

We are grateful to and thank those who have remembered the church and the Fund in their estate plans, as well as those who have made donations to the Fund to further its goals. This year, we received planned gifts (estate gifts) from the Estate of Mr. Robert Carter and from the Wright Charitable Trust. We also received unrestricted gifts from two member families.

During 2014, the Endowment Fund paid out approximately \$205,000 in grants. This amount included payments to the church for a contribution to the Fellowship Fund administered by the deacons, the E. Carl Freeman Concert Series, a grant to cover the costs of the capital campaign, and payments for capital reserves and projects.

In addition, the Endowment Fund authorized a \$100,000 grant to the church to be used for Missions activities and a \$9,000 grant to pay the salary of a pastoral intern during 2015.

In addition to directly supporting the church and its programs, part of our mission is to support activities that the church would support if it had the funds. This year, the Fund continued our support of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond for its internship program.

During the period 2002 to 2014, the Endowment Fund contributed approximately \$2.0 million directly to the church and its programs. Over half of the grants made by the Endowment fund were for capital needs of River Road Church, Baptist. The remaining grants supported general or specific programmatic initiatives.

At the end of 2014, the Board of Directors authorized a new initiative to solicit proposals from the congregation related to support of missions. The following call to action will be communicated to the church in 2015:

The Endowment Board wants your ideas!

The River Road Church Endowment Fund was established in 1967 "to support or benefit the programs of River Road Church...through direct grants to the Church and grants to the programs and causes the Church supports...". The Endowment Board meets regularly to consider proposals and award grants. It is our joy to undertake this work, and we are grateful for the visionary leadership of those individuals whose contributions have provided River Road Church with this incredible resource.

In 2015, the Endowment Board is especially interested in "Growth Through Missions". God calls us to feed the hungry (both body and soul), welcome the stranger, clothe the poor, and minister to those who are sick or in prison. Our missions are our response to this call, the work we do to serve God and grow His kingdom. It is also true that by ministering to those in need, we minister to each other, and we grow in our own faith.

We are looking for ideas that will help us:

- Grow our outreach to others – thereby promoting God's Kingdom
- Grow our individual commitment to missions – thereby advancing our own spiritual development
- Grow our congregation – by encouraging the involvement and engagement of members and non-members alike, as they participate in missions projects sponsored by RRCB

Serving on the Board in 2014 were:

Ransone Hartz, President  
Bill Gray, Secretary  
Hilton Almond

Fred Bagwell, Vice President  
Susan Rucker, Treasurer  
Lou Moelchert, Investment Advisor/Asst. Treasurer

George Davis  
Andy McAllister  
Linda Schreiner

Eleanor Nurney  
Seth Roberts  
Dan Stevens

We are blessed to have this fund. We also recognize that both River Road's general needs and the scope of its ministry will continue to grow, and we hope our support can grow as well. We urge all members of River Road Church, regardless of their age and stage in life, to consider the Endowment Fund in their vision of Christian stewardship. We also hope that anyone with additional questions about the Fund will feel free to contact a Board member or a member of the pastoral staff.

Ransone Hartz, President

### **The Board of Christian Education and Spiritual Formation**

During the calendar year 2014 the board began many of its meetings by discussing a quote from Diana Butler Bass: "The job of the church is to be a spiritual community that forms people in faith." Interpreting this quote and implementing it into the life of the congregation is the basis of much of our work. The subject of spiritual discernment has been the topic of several Wednesday night discussions and the Sunday sermons that followed. For the second time the church offered an overnight spiritual retreat at Richmond Hill. It was organized by Sheryl Johnson and led by Suzanne Vinson, a guest.

The church usually has two baptismal services a year. The board sponsors a reception after the service for the baptismal candidates, their guests and the church family. This continues to be well received and appreciated especially by the guests. This year something new was added to the service under Michael Kellett's leadership. Each candidate prepares his/her own statement of faith and it is read to the congregation by a parent, friend, or spiritual mentor. The members of the congregation have replied that this offers a personal and spiritual depth to the meaning of baptism.

In the spring the board once again sponsored a Christian Educator Award program held on a Wednesday evening in May. This year we honored both Wendy and Tom Graves for their faithfulness and dedication as teachers in our Sunday School. Tom teaches an adult class and Wendy teaches the fifth grade class as well as being a Bible teacher for Vacation Bible School. One of Wendy's co-teachers described her as a "teacher's teacher."

The summer months presented a full schedule of activities for our children and youth. Another successful Vacation Bible School was held in July under the leadership of Kristina Barbier and Lisa Cipolletti. The children had the opportunity to go to Eagle Eyrie to attend *PASSPORTkids!* The youth had opportunities to go to a mission trip to South Carolina and to "Unidiversity" in Tennessee.

The fall season began with "Celebration Sunday" on September 7. The board spent a good bit of time and energy trying to reinvent what used to be called Promotion Day in Sunday School. It was the plan to make this day a celebratory event for all age classes by starting the year off strong with enthusiasm and working for a high attendance. All teachers and educational leaders were recognized in the worship service. A litany and prayer of dedication were read. Following the service, members were invited to sign a banner labeled "Renew a Right Spirit" which still hangs in the educational area. An evening picnic was co-sponsored with the Board of Deacons. A record attendance of members came to enjoy the hotdogs and hamburgers off the grill and the side dishes. Afterwards the youth gave reports of their summer trips reflecting a great deal of insight and purpose into their work. It was a day of celebrating from start to finish.

During the year we had our Youth Sunday as usual, but we also had a Sunday for children's participation in worship. We are seeing more of our children and youth participating in worship throughout the year. Church members continue to be amazed at how mature and well prepared our young people present themselves.

Youth retreats continue to involve a large number of teens. They are usually held off site twice a year. Michael Kellett offers classes throughout the year for parents to guide them in the spiritual development of their children.

In the fall a new start up was begun in the form of a discussion/seminar group entitled "Think on These Things." It meets once a month and is under the leadership of Frank Kendall. The group decides its own topics of discussion usually in the realm of contemporary social issues. It is open to any church member.

During the season of Advent the board took leadership in writing or securing writers for our online Advent Devotions. Sheryl Johnson took leadership in editing these.

The forming of faith within our community is a process. We are always growing and learning. Our board prays for guidance, insight and direction as we continue to lead the congregation of River Road Church, Baptist into becoming a spiritual community where faith is formed.

Emily Tuck, Chair

### **Board of Missions**

The Board of Missions offers oversight to the missions endeavors of River Road Church and encouragement to the membership to be involved in making a difference in our community, state, nation, and world.

Most of these endeavors are in partnership with other like-minded groups such as the Baptist Theological Seminary, the Baptist General Association of Virginia, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, River City Faith Network Ministries of the Richmond Baptist Association, Meals on Wheels, CARITAS, and Stop Hunger Now. But in each of these partnerships, our goal is not to pay for someone else to do our missions work for us, but rather to open even more opportunities for our church to be involved personally.

Many from our church are personally involved in

- providing a touch of love as well as temporary housing for homeless
- cleaning up and supporting Camp Alkulana for inner-city youth
- collecting clothing, food, and meals for the Oregon Hill, Church Hill, and South Richmond centers
- providing teachers and refreshments for ESL classes
- CrossOver Clinic
- a ministry to the incarcerated persons, their families, and recently released prisoners
- delivery of Meals on Wheels
- providing food, clothing, and teachers for the MICAH project at Oak Grove Elementary School
- constructing wheelchair ramps for needy families in Richmond area
- providing children and women ministries as well as construction and repair on the Sioux reservation in the Dakotas
- staffing and providing medical supplies for medical teams to Panama
- building decks and ramps in Bland County, Virginia

During the year plans were put into place to

- sponsor another Stop Hunger Now event in the Spring of 2015
- buy medicines and assist in transportation for the Panama team in January 2015
- send another team to the Sioux Reservation

But that list can go on and on and Matthew 25 challenges to do just that: "I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was homeless and you gave me a room. I was shivering and you gave and you gave me clothes. I was sick and you stopped to visit. I was in prison and you came to me." These are incredibly exciting times to be involved in the missions outreach of River Road Church. Our hope is that every person at River Road will be able to find meaning places to be involved.

Bob Shoemake, Chair

### **Arts Committee 2014**

The mission of the Arts committee is to enhance and educate our congregation on the importance of the arts in forming, expressing and experiencing our Christian faith.

In 2014, we met several times for planning and discussing our spring and fall exhibits and continuing to explore ways to enhance our bulletin covers and ways to utilize our Arts Outreach Account for the good of our congregation.

The spring activity was an "Art Fun Night" which had to be rescheduled several times because Mother Nature decided that she wanted to send snow our way. The activity was a grand success. Judy Dixon, our watercolor artist-in-residence lead a group of about 30 to experience the techniques of watercolor painting. Each participant completed a watercolor depicting a beautiful Hibiscus suitable for framing and place in their home. The members of the committee and volunteers baked delicious pies and served tea which was consumed during intermission. A wonderful experience was had by all... volunteers, participants, and the Arts Committee members. This event is a keeper. All of the supplies were purchased with funds from the Art Outreach Account.

In the fall, we featured and hosted a photography exhibit, both, color and black and white. This exhibition was opened to members of the congregation including adults and youth. This exhibit was very well received and the congregation observed great talent in the photography displayed. There were several images from the Canterbury trip to Kent, England that was promoted by our choir.

The Arts Committee focus is on the visual arts. We plan another exciting 2015 with more adventures the visual arts.

Gladys H. Fleming, Chair

Committee members: Judy Dixon, Margaret Almond, Caroline Brown, Ann Hays, Sue Hodder, Bev Evans and Bob Harper

### **Chancel Committee**

The Chancel Committee is made up of the following subcommittees: Flower Teams and Special Events Committee, Wedding Committee, Funeral Committee, Parament Committee, and Flower Distribution Committee. Betsy Lowery and Julia Tyler co-chair the Chancel Committee. The ladies who serve on all committees are dedicated women who act promptly to make sure their jobs are completed in a thorough manner.

Margaret Almond and Julia Tyler chair the Flower Teams and Special Events Committee. Margaret diligently makes sure flowers are ordered and delivered to the church each Thursday. The flowers are always ready for a flower team to arrange on Friday for Sunday service. There are seven teams of ladies who work together to prepare altar flowers. These teams are chaired by Margaret Almond, Betsy Robinson, Jane Terry, Betty Rose Sexton, Carol Cruickshanks, and Bonnie Way. The Memorial Flower Calendar is organized by Betsy Lowery with the assistance of Sandi Bassett.

The Wedding Committee is led by Margaret Almond, Betsy Lowery, and Bonnie Way. These women are responsible for making sure a wedding ceremony at River Road Church, Baptist is a joyful and reverent worship service. Five weddings took place this past year.

Anne Bagwell and Kitty Davis chair the Funeral Committee. Virginia Smith stepped down from this position this year and Janet Bagby took over her position. Betsy Lowery will also join these chairs during this year. These ladies along with other volunteers do an outstanding job making sure our church family is taken care of when going through the loss of a loved one. They provide comfort and assistance to the bereaved families of River Road Church, Baptist. Prior to a funeral, this committee makes sure the sanctuary is set up correctly for a service. Diane Shoemake is now assisting families with receptions following a funeral service at River Road.

Karen West is the chair of the Parament Committee. Karen follows the liturgical calendar that is set by the staff and makes sure the correct paraments are in place for Sunday worship and special events. Karen takes care of all linens for altar use. This year the altar candles were changed to oil burning candles. Presently the oil in the candles is checked each Sunday by the acolytes. Funeral Committee chairs and Wedding Directors presently check these candles before and after their services.

Betsy Lowery chairs the Flower Distribution Committee. With the help of seventeen other women serving as flower distributors on Sunday mornings, deacons are given the opportunity to take flowers to members in need of attention for special situations. Stephen Ministers are invited to come and pick up arrangements as needed. Dan Bagby is very diligent in taking flowers during the week to those in need of care.

Approximately thirty men and women participated in decorating the outside and inside of our church for Christmas. Lunch was served in the parlor and fellowship was enjoyed by all. Close to 180 Easter lilies were given in memory or honor of loved ones.

The Chancel Committee is blessed to have these dedicated women and men offer their time and gifts at River Road.

Betsy Lowery, Chair

### **Columbarium Memorial Garden Committee**

The Columbarium Memorial Garden Committee had a relatively inactive year. The committee met on November 19, 2014. The Columbarium is composed of 368 niches of which 48 are large (holding up to four urns maximum) and 320 small niches (holding up two urns maximum).

The committee and the church appreciate the work that George Davis has done in improving the grass area and in cleaning the columbarium with power washing.

LeAnne Lane reported that so far in 2014 there have been two purchases of niches (one small and one large), representing income of \$3,000.

Several maintenance issues were accomplished. Repairs were made to the walk this summer at the time of the brick plaza restoration, and it now looks good. It was suggested that it probably should be power washed every six months because of the shady location. A sprinkler head is to be added so that the common ground can be regularly watered. The railing needs some work.

LeAnne reported that the memorial book in the narthex of the chapel hasn't been updated. Families of those inurned are asked to provide brief biographical information that is inscribed in the book, but apparently this hasn't been done since about 2010. When a family doesn't provide the information, a sheet is inserted in the book with just the name and dates of birth and death of the deceased.

Gus Sledge has resigned from the committee, which reduces membership for 2015 to the minimum of 6 people. Several possible additions to the committee were discussed, and their names were provided to Gladys Fleming to take to the Nominating Committee.

Henry D. Holland, Chair

### **Communications Committee**

Early in the year, Communications Committee resources were utilized in support of the capital campaign — an effort designated to secure funds for the renovation of the sanctuary organ as well as other related improvements to our place of worship. The communications program was extensive and included working with the campaign committee to choose a theme, design a campaign logo, and coordinate print, video and website communications, including mailings to members and friends of the church.

The committee assisted the efforts of the communications specialist in publicizing numerous events throughout the year in the life of the church, including the presentation of *Noye's Fludde* by the Greater Richmond Children's Choir in the Sanctuary in March, the church's involvement in Mission Footprint 5K with Trinity United Methodist Church in September, and Trunk or Treat in October, among others.

For the second year, the committee produced and mailed an Advent postcard to approximately 2,000 non-member households in surrounding neighborhoods inviting participation in worship and the events of the Christmas season.

Long-term considerations included discussion of an integrated communications plan for internal and outreach communication efforts and the potential for audio-visual/technology upgrades to enhance communication options.

Late in the year the committee facilitated the request of the Board of Administration to provide approved minutes to interested members of the church by introducing an opt-in email distribution publication. Members were notified through existing publications of the opportunity to opt in to the email publication, and the distribution began in January 2015.

Karen Collier, Chair

Cassandra Ducca, Communications Specialist

### **History Committee**

The History Committee of River Road Church has continued to promote and support a number of activities and proposed projects for the church.

In 2014 some of the ongoing activities of the history committee included the activities below

1. The continued maintenance of the church archives to be done on weekly basis when possible
2. Photography of church events
3. The ongoing book project (the next history of the church will probably be on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church).
4. The display cabinet in the lower commons
5. The audio visual project and taping project
6. The conversion of many of Chester Phelps' slides from youth projects to computer files.

The History Committee met formally on two occasions in 2014.

We met on March 30, 2014. At that meeting plans for the next church pictorial directory were discussed. A subcommittee was formed to gather more information regarding this project. There is also the possibility that the next directory would have a virtual capability on the church website.

Tuckie Paxton presented the plans for the remainder of the year regarding the display cabinet in the Lower Commons. Carole Royall

informed the committee that she and Sandi Bassett are working on the taping project and the goal is to complete the index of all the holdings and then the list can be made available to the congregation.

Several members of the committee are involved with maintaining the church archives in regard to weekly bulletins, concert series, funeral and memorial services, and other special events in the life of the church.

The committee met again on October 12, 2014. We discussed the possibility of using the Life Touch Company to do our next church directory in 2015. Henry Holland determined the local representative for Life Touch. This company could do the directory for no cost to the church. Further arrangements will be pursued in early 2015.

We would still like to attract some younger members to the History Committee. We decided that we would plan for a church archival day on Saturday, January 24, 2015 to run from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. We will publicize this event in an effort to get younger members who are interested in history to take part in this event.

This summarizes the main activities of the church's history committee for 2014.

Henry D. Holland, Chair

### **Music Committee**

The Music Committee has had the responsibility of supporting the Minister of Music and organist, Dr. Robert Gallagher, to fulfill the goals of the music program at River Road Church, Baptist.

2014 was an excellent year for music programs for children and youth at RRCB. Christine Kellett continued her service as director of the Cherub Choir (pre-kindergartners and kindergartners.) The Carol Choir (grades 1 and 2) continued to be directed by Kara Harman. Bob Gallagher directed both Crusader (grades 3-5) and Youth (grades 6-12) Choirs. Paul Honaker directed the Youth Bell Choir. Several young persons joined the Canterbury Pilgrimage/Concert Choir who started rehearsing in fall 2013 in preparation for the summer 2014 choir trip to Canterbury, England.

Appreciation is extended to these music directors for their outstanding leadership with these groups and also the choir parents and others for their help and assistance. The three older groups sang for many of the worship services during the year including the Christmas Eve Family Service. On occasion the Youth Choir and individual members of the Youth Choir participated with the Chancel Choir. The Youth Choir led the worship music on Youth Sunday and sang for baptismal services. The Youth Bell choir played in multiple services in 2014.

On May 21, the Children's Music Ministry presented *Oh, Jonah*, a musical by Allen Pote and Carole McCann. Musical preparation was by Bob Gallagher and Kara Harman with stage direction by Michelle Harman-Gulick. The annual Christmas pageant was presented by the Carol, Crusader, and Youth choirs through dramatic readings and song on December 17 directed by Linda Honaker. Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus were portrayed by Marty Halloran, Logan Cowardin, and Lawry Cowardin.

The Youth Handbell Choir provided worship leadership in several services, including during Advent and at the Christmas Eve Family Service.

The Chancel Choir sang at almost every Sunday morning worship services including two services on Easter Sunday accompanied by a brass quintet. On All Saints' Sunday (November 2), the Chancel Choir sang four of Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry's *Songs of Farewell* (1916-1918) in remembrance of those departed during the past year. The preceding week, at the Wednesday night program (October 29), Drs. Bob Gallagher and Mike Clingenpeel led a discussion about Parry's works.

During the summer months, the "Summer Choir," consisting of regular Chancel Choir members and other volunteers who wished to sing as part of the group and participate in worship, sang for all worship services through the month of August.

The Chancel Bell Choir, directed by Charles Todd, provided musical leadership for regular Sunday worship services throughout the year and for the 11:00 Christmas Eve service. Members also accompanied the children's and adult choirs on a few Sundays in the course of 2014.

Several other RRCB musicians and choristers were featured during 2014 in roles as soloists for Vespers or accompanists for choirs.

On November 21-22, River Road Church hosted the Youth Choir JAM, a weekend of music workshops and fellowship with students

from youth choirs around Virginia, including: Richmond, Hampton, Blacksburg, and Roanoke. The event ended with a public concert on Saturday afternoon.

The second half of the 2013-2014 season of the E. Carl Freeman Concert Series at River Road Church included the following concerts:

- Sunday, January 26, 3:00 pm, Sanctuary – organ recital by Michael Kaminski, including Louis *Vierne's Organ Symphony No. 3 in F sharp minor*.
- Sunday, February 23, 3:00 pm, Sanctuary - Choral concert by Washington & Lee University Singers including works by Holst, Nystedt, Morricone, plus new works by Eric Barnum, Shane Lynch, Dan Forest, and Ēriks Ešēvalds.
- Saturday and Sunday, March 22 and 23, 4:00 p.m., Sanctuary - River Road Church hosted performances of *Noye's Fludde* by Benjamin Britten. This production was presented by The Greater Richmond Children's Choir in cooperation with Capitol Opera Richmond and River Road Church. The cast of this performance included RRCB's Robert Gallagher as Noah, Michelle Harman-Gulick as Mrs. Noah, and Martin Erb as God. Members of the Chancel Handbell Choir also performed.
- Sunday, May 4, 7:00 pm, Sanctuary - Vocal Recital, RRCB Tenor Christopher Ahart, including music by Handel, Mozart, Schubert, Lalo, Duparc, Chabrier, and Burleigh.
- Sunday, June 8, 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary - Chancel Choir Spring Concert with Orchestra, an all-Mozart concert including: *Mass in C major (Sparrow Mass)*, K. 220; *Ave verum corpus*, K. 618; *Church Sonata in C major*, K. 336; and *Vesperae solennes de confessore* (Solemn Vespers), K. 339.

The 44th season, 2014-2015, started with the following programs:

- Sunday, October 5, 3:00 p.m., Sanctuary - Organ Recital by Marek Kudlicki of Vienna, Austria (the final recital before the replacement of our venerable Möller organ console). The program included music by Warsaw Organ Tablature; Jean-Francois Dandrieu; Johann Sebastian Bach; Sigfrid Karg-Elert; Ferruccio Benvenuto Busoni; Felix Nowowiejski; and Felix Borowski.
- Sunday, November 16, 3:00 p.m., Chapel - Classical guitar recital by David Burgess, whose program included Brazilian, Spanish Flamenco, & Cuban guitar pieces by: Garoto, Raphael Rabello, Jose Gallardo del Rey, and Ernesto Lecuona.
- Sunday, December 7, 8:00 p.m., Sanctuary - Advent & Christmas Concert by the RRCB Chancel Choir with orchestra performing Handel's *Messiah*, Part I and Corelli's *Christmas Concerto*.

Other musical events included in 2014 were:

- The April 26 spring concert by the James River Singers (who also rehearse at River Road Church).
- The choirs of Saint Christopher's School performing Services of Lessons and Carols on December 9 and 11.
- The Central Virginia Masterworks Chorale presenting their Christmas concert at RRCB on December 19.
- The TubaChristmas concert on the RRCB plaza on December 20.

Members of the Music Committee hosted "Meet the Artist" receptions following the concerts that were part of the regular concert series. They assisted the Social Committee with the reception in recognition of the Chancel Choir following the June concert.

The E. Carl Freeman Concert Series continues to be self-sustaining through supplemental support from the Endowment Fund of RRCB and individual contributions.

A major highlight of the musical calendar in 2014 was the invitation extended to RRCB's singers to spend a week in residence at Canterbury Cathedral, providing musical leadership at services there at one of the most important and renowned houses of worship in the world. The choir formed and started rehearsing in fall 2013, spending countless hours in preparation for the trip. Members and friends of River Road Chancel Choir (and singers from Crusader and Youth Choirs) left on July 21 and arrived in Canterbury on July 22, returning on July 29. They sang for Evensong on five different evenings, and led the Sung Eucharist service at 11 a.m. on July 27. Their organist/accompanist for the week was Chris Martin, Director of Music and Organist at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church here in Richmond. Works they sang included those written by David Gulick, Alice Parker, William Bradley Roberts, Harold Friedell, and Moses Hogan. The entire experience was of deepest musical and spiritual satisfaction. Great thanks go to Bob Gallagher and to Margaret Collins for organizing the trip and to many others who contributed to its success. Thanks, too, to the twenty-one singers who sang and to David Gulick who filled in as organist/choir director at RRCB while the pilgrims were in Canterbury.

The Chancel Choir, Children's Choirs, Chancel Bell Choir, and the Youth Bell Choir each had the high honor of lighting one of the candles in the Advent wreath during the Advent season.

In spring 2014, in response to a report by the organ committee that was established in 2012, the church undertook a highly successful capital campaign to raise funds for the generational refurbishment of RRCB's Möller organ and to refurbish the sanctuary sound and lighting systems. The Music Committee has been involved throughout the process. The organ work will be done in phases, with the console having been removed in fall 2014 so that a new, solid-state console can be constructed for installation in late winter/early spring 2015. In summer 2015, the pipes will be removed for refurbishment; it is anticipated that they will be reinstalled by fall 2016. In the meantime, a Rodgers electronic organ was rented for use during services and it is anticipated that it will be rented as needed during the refurbishment. Vendor relationships and technical considerations are primarily managed by Bob Gallagher, with assistance from Seth Roberts and other individuals and consultants and with regular input and oversight by the Music Committee. Deepest thanks are extended to the many, many people and groups involved in this process who have contributed so significantly to the success of the campaign and the project, from the original organ committee to the consultants and experts to all who have supported the capital campaign.

In October 2014, at the behest of the Music Committee, a report was delivered to Bob Gallagher by a local technician regarding the needed generational refurbishment of three of the church's grand pianos, gifts from earlier generations of RRCB members. The Committee is pursuing funds to ensure these important gifts are maintained according to principles of sound church stewardship in order that future generations and the entire community might benefit.

In addition to face-to-face meetings in September and December, other business was conducted through email.

In January 2014, the Music Committee and the whole of River Road Church, Baptist, were deeply saddened by the death of Stuart Williams, who was a longstanding member of the Music Committee and a stalwart supporter of RRCB's music programs. He is missed.

River Road Church continues to experience the tradition of a music program of the highest caliber. Thank you to all the musicians and members of this congregation who have provided leadership and support for our worship experience.

Eric D. M. Johnson, Chair

2014 Music Committee members: Betty Damon, Beth Hooker, Anne James, Eric Johnson, Anita McAllister, Cindy Mistretta, Tuckie Paxton, Margaret Phelps, Carole Royall, Jane Terry, and Richard Wood.

### **River Road Church Preschool Development Committee**

The 2014 year was a year of program enhancement for the River Road Church Preschool. Late in 2013, a survey was sent to parents and church members about what programs they would like to see the preschool offer children. With direction from the Preschool Committee, River Road Preschool began to offer children and their families some new and innovative programs that would further enrich the lives of the children they served. Some of the new offerings included:

- The Early Morning Drop Off Program was changed to begin at 7:30 a.m., with a carpool service offered for 7:55 to 8:00 a.m.
- The Afternoon Extended Day became more flexible with children able to use Extended Afternoon but allowed to go to the new afternoon offerings and still come back to Extended Afternoon.
- In the afternoons, the preschool now has three enrichment programs for children 3 through 5 years of age.
  1. Programs in the community that parents would be taking children to after preschool hours were offered during school hours. Vendors coming to the preschool include Soccer Kicks, the Village Ballet, Core Exercise, Amazing Athletes, Art Haus, tennis, yoga, and many more.
  2. The Explorers' Club offers 4 and 5-year-olds the opportunity to promote kindergarten readiness skills three afternoons a week. It features activities such as yoga, science experimentation, art exploration, activities promoting critical thinking, and even an emphasis on manners and social skills.
  3. The Adventures program, which is the oldest program, offers four-week sessions in enriching activities such as cooking, gardening, exploring the universe, Santa's Workshop, etc.

River Road Preschool is excited about the programs which have been incorporated. With all of these offerings, the Preschool is now serving 218 children and their families from 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

In 2014, the Preschool improved its website as well as set up a Facebook page. Many of the teachers contributed more than a dozen articles pertaining to child development to the Facebook page. Most of the articles received from 3,000 to 5,000 hits from interested parents, teachers, etc., who visited the Preschool site on the Internet. What a way for the Preschool to contribute some of its expertise with others.

The Preschool also made some improvements to the Church facilities:

- The toddler playground was enlarged to accommodate the number of children in each toddler class.
- Railings were installed on the upper playground and stairs.
- A carpet was installed in the Church's Assembly Room.
- In addition, the preschool contributed \$80,503 to the church budget.

Lisa Cipolletti, Chair

### **Stewardship Committee**

Our Stewardship campaign benefited from a creative committee, and also from several dozen of our church members who produced thoughtful and meaningful letters, lectern spots, and video clips that answered the question, "What do you love about RRCB?" Eighty families increased their pledges, while twenty-nine families pledged less than last year. Eighteen families who did not pledge last year have made pledges for 2015. These are some positive signs, but our total numbers are just about even with last year. As we move forward into 2015, let us strive to Live Faithfully, Give Generously, and Make a Difference.

Bill Rusher, Stewardship Chair

## Transportation Committee

We are still serving 4 to 6 members at Lakewood Manor each week, and driving for special events.

There is good news in that Raj Chatterjea has agreed to take the fourth Sunday run to replace Warren Johnson who is stepping down from the committee.

Brian Ezzelle (co-chair) Warren Johnson (co-chair)  
Gary Burnett and Ron Geisler

## Ushers Committee

The 2014 River Road Church, Baptist Ushers served for all Sunday services, Special Easter and Christmas services, and Concert Series services.

Average monthly attendance figures for the 11:00 a.m. Sunday Services are:

|          |     |        |     |           |     |
|----------|-----|--------|-----|-----------|-----|
| January  | 340 | May    | 296 | September | 330 |
| February | 325 | June   | 291 | October   | 298 |
| March    | 332 | July   | 255 | November  | 296 |
| April    | 329 | August | 235 | December  | 348 |

**Average Attendance for 11:00 Sunday Services: 304**

Special Services Attendance:

|                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| Maundy Thursday      | 203 |
| 8:30 a.m. Easter     | 223 |
| 11:00 a.m. Easter    | 650 |
| 5:00 p.m. Christmas  | 531 |
| 11:00 p.m. Christmas | 310 |

**Average Attendance – All Services: 311**

John Hays, Chair

## Membership Committee

The Membership Committee was created at the January 29, 2014 church business meeting by a motion that stated the committee, which shall have no more than 12 members, is to coordinate initiatives to reach out to the community and less active/inactive members to become involved in the worship, fellowship and ministries of our church. John Heisler chaired the committee in 2014.

Since its creation, the Membership Committee has been busy:

- Successfully hosting Food Trucks every Tuesday from May - August
- Sending new neighbor letters on a monthly basis - welcoming neighbors who have bought a house within a three-mile radius of RRCB and inviting them to visit our church. We mail approximately 70 letters each month.
- Sending notes to guests who provide their contact information in the friendship register.
- Providing "Guest Greeters" in the Narthex each Sunday to answer questions about RRCB and to walk guests to the reception in the Fellowship Hall.
- Providing guest information at several locations throughout the church.
- Hosting a VBS parent breakfast and writing notes to VBS participants that are not RRCB members.
- Sending letters to RRCB preschool families who requested information about RRCB and it's children's ministries

Remember - every member was once a visitor! If you are interested in helping with the Membership Committee, please contact anyone on the committee.

Katie Merritt, Membership Committee Chair

Committee Members: Russ Collins, Brian Ezzelle, Deb Gray, John Heisler, Sara Heisler, Patsy Kendall, Kate Knerr, Bill Rusher, and Shelly Shirkey

### **Committee for Spiritual and Missional Growth**

At the November, 2012, business meeting the church unanimously voted to create the ad hoc Committee for Spiritual and Missional Growth (Growth Committee.) The purpose of the committee was to develop specific strategies, measurable objectives, and assigned responsibilities to grow the church, not only numerically but also in the fulfillment of our spiritual mission and fellowship. The committee included the pastor and eight members of the congregation. This is the Growth Committee's second and final annual report to the congregation.

Due to the initiative and leadership of John Heisler, the church voted at January, 2014, business meeting to create a special Membership Committee. The purpose of the committee is to work with the staff and groups in the church to develop programs that reach out both to the community and to the less active members of the church to encourage persons to become involved in the life of River Road Church. The Growth Committee, in its early discussions and brainstorming in 2013, had developed a number of possible ways to expand involvement in the church. These ideas were passed along to the Membership Committee.

In 2013 the Growth Committee had proposed to the four major boards of the church that River Road embark on a corporate spiritual discernment process to answer the question, "What is God calling River Road Church to be and do, here and now?" Both the Board of Deacons and the Board of Administration raised concerns, so the proposal was not brought to the whole church. To more fully explore and understand the concerns and possibilities associated with corporate spiritual discernment, in January of 2014 the Growth Committee began a series of discussions with various members of the church and in the spring with a sub-committee of the Board of Deacons. From these discussions it was agreed that in September the pastor would offer a month-long series of sermons and Wednesday night talk-back sessions on spiritual discernment. This he did.

After the sermon series members of the Growth Committee again met with Board of Deacons sub-committee. From that discussion it was decided that there was no clear consensus as to what our church's next step should be, and thus it was not the time for the church to consider a congregational spiritual discernment process. The Growth Committee still strongly encourages individual members and groups within the church (Sunday School classes, boards, and committees) to strive to answer the question of what God is calling them to be and do.

Regarding River Road Church becoming more missional (outward looking), in 2014 the Growth Committee met with several mission-focused churches in the community (HOPE and First Presbyterian.) The committee developed a list of fourteen suggestions and passed them along to the Board of Missions for their consideration. The Growth Committee wholeheartedly supports the church-wide emphasis being placed on missions in 2015. With the generous gift from the Endowment Fund, designated for mission programming, and the Endowment Fund's call for mission-oriented grant requests, the committee is hopeful that 2015 and beyond will see River Road become even more concerned with our community, both near and far.

The Committee for Spiritual and Missional Growth made specific recommendations to the Board of Deacons and the Board of Christian Education and Spiritual Formation in 2013. In 2014 it provided suggestions to the Board of Missions. In its first year the committee created a formal process for church members to offer ideas through the suggestion boxes in the commons areas. While the committee is disappointed that the church did not move forward with the spiritual discernment process, it feels that the congregation is much more informed about the importance and potential of both individual and corporate spiritual formation. The Growth Committee is excited about the possibilities River Road Church has to become a truly "missional" church.

We believe our work is done and now is in the hands of the church's boards and committees. We thank the congregation for the support and encouragement you have given us these past two years. We look forward to the years ahead when River Road Church will be well known as a growing church – growing in all the right ways.

Respectfully submitted,

Harper Alexander  
Kristina Barbier  
Lisa Cipolletti

Mike Clingenpeel  
George Davis  
Eric Johnson

Tim Sexton  
Padgett Shoemake  
Leslie Straw