

Annual Report ~ 2015  
River Road Church, Baptist

## CHURCH CLERK

### TOTAL MEMBERSHIP, DECEMBER 31, 2014

2000

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total membership, December 31, 2014                  | 2000 |
| New members by transfer of letter or statement, 2015 | 15   |
| Baptisms, 2015                                       | 10   |
| Deaths, 2015   | 15   |
| Removed by transfer or personal request, 2015        | 10   |

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP, DECEMBER 31, 2015 2000

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

|                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Clingenpeel, Timothy James | Sundberg, Shannon Bryant |
| Creamer, Elaine Lois       | Thurston, Amy Moore      |
| Mercer, Paula              | Thurston, William Lynn   |
| Mun, Hyeon Jeong (Heather) | Trent, James Marsden     |
| Pugh, Steven Wilkins       | Trent, Sondra Myers      |
| Stephenson, Noralee Mellor | Wagner, David Webster    |
| Story, Kristin Fowler      | Wagner, Shirley Booth    |
| Sundberg, Geoffrey Scott   |                          |

#### New members by baptism:

|                                 |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Barbier, Patrick Francois       | Ortega, Alex Loayza       |
| Collins, Brendan Hunter         | Ryan, Ella Grace          |
| Cowardin, Logan William Francis | Scholz, Edward Westacott  |
| Halloran, Martha Parrish        | Shelton, Julia Lane       |
| Mistretta, Dominic Anthony      | Tomasello, Samantha Renee |

#### Deaths:

|                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Budwell, Leigh Carter      | Perkins, Lucille, J.      |
| Felte, Edward William, Jr. | Scott, Edith McGhee       |
| Fusco, Elise Mowbray       | Sledge, George Otho       |
| Garrett, Karl Frederick    | Smart, Joan Tyson         |
| Glasco, Richard Clyde      | Street, Walter Scott, III |
| Harmon, Linda Lynch        | Thompson, Jane Bevis      |
| Leshner, David Ryan        | Woodson, Virginia Holmes  |
| Loman, Gruen McClellan     |                           |

#### Transfer, personal or administrative request:

|                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Fowler, Dorcas Hauk     | May, Courtney Henson       |
| Fowler, Franklin Thomas | Mumper, Laurie Christine   |
| Horne, Linda Anne       | Paulette, Stephen Bennett  |
| Maley, Sarah Barr       | Zimmerman, Elizabeth Burns |
| May, Brian Charles      | Zimmerman, Jarrett Gray    |

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 five business meetings in 2015 or notify congregants who have been elected to serve as officers or on boards, committees and councils for 2016 would be most difficult.

Emily D. King, Clerk of the Church

**River Road Church, Baptist**  
**Report of the Historian**  
**January 31, 2016**

The pastor - Dr. Michael J. Clingenpeel - began the year in January with Wednesday evening programs on "Jesus' Other Sermon: The Instruction for Our Mission," based upon Matthew 10:5-39. By mid-year the congregation learned that it would enter a time of transition with the announcement of the senior pastor's retirement. There will be more recorded about this transition later in this report.

In the spring issue of *Explorer*, the pastor noted that "two ingredients go into the making of a missions church - doing and being. First, doing. A congregation committed to missions goes, gives, and prays about missions. Second, being. A missions church is empowered, entrepreneurial and is focused externally. By empowered, I mean that its members are not required to obtain the blessing of their clergy before responding to a need. By entrepreneurial, I mean that missions churches are creative. They are always looking for new ways to tell the Good News and meet basic human needs. By externally focused, I mean that they understand that a consumer mindset does not match the mission of the church. They recite the mantra 'every human concern is a concern of God, and therefore the church' ..."

It was a year of extraordinary missions focus. There was the Endowment Board's gift to the Board of Missions of a grant of \$100,000, "challenging the church to move to new levels of missions outreach and participation." The congregation was polled as to local community needs and possible projects.

On a Saturday in May, the church's Fellowship Hall became a food packaging center for Stop Hunger Now and over sixty members volunteered to package over 10,000 meals. These were sent to one of Stop Hunger Now's partner organizations, ORPHANetwork in Nicaragua. In other missions activities, River Road volunteers continued to provide physical labor preparing Camp Alkulana, the Richmond Baptist camp in Bath County for inner-city children and youth from Richmond; the preparation, along with members of nearby Trinity Methodist, of food bags for students at one of the Richmond elementary schools to use over their spring break when they would have been without daily prepared lunches; a youth missions trip led by Michael Kellett to assist in the areas of homelessness and "food insecurity" in Asheville, N.C.; and the participation by church members along with those of neighboring churches in the Fifth Annual Mission Footprint "5K & Kids Fund Run" to support local missions. Further afield, the Endowment Fund pledged up to \$5,000 in matching gifts from church members to aid victims of the devastating earthquake in Nepal.

The Board of Christian Education and Spiritual Formation recognized all of the Sunday school teachers and honored two individuals, Ann and Sid Hays, as the church's outstanding Christian Educators of the Year. During the year there was the formation of a current events discussion and fellowship group for men.

In children's educational emphasis, the annual Vacation Bible School took the theme "Water U Doing?" addressing the needs of the world and 108 children attended. Charlotte Hare was among the attendees and she wrote about their experience: "I had the best time at VBS. We talked about a program called Watering Malawi that raises money to build wells in a country in Africa called Malawi. At VBS we got to raise money for Watering Malawi and we raised over \$600." Fifteen boys and girls attended PASSPORTkids! Camp at Eagle Eyrie. The camp focused on "speaking out about injustices and inequalities in our world."

Another summer learning activity was "University Youth Camp" at the University of Tennessee. Six girls from River Road attended, along with Christine and Michael Kellett. Christine reflected: "We learned what it means to be community with one another and how to love and support each other when it is needed."

The August Catacombs series when adult Sunday school classes join together for a special emphasis centered upon end-of-life concerns, i.e., grief, loss, hospice care, celebrating lives.

The Wednesday night dinners were enhanced beginning in May by contracting with a highly skilled culinary chef, Christopher Brown. Attendance increased and the kitchen committee enlisted a hearty crew to improve the weekly event. Once again, outreach and fellowship were the driving reasons for hosting food trucks on Wednesday evenings for the first half of the summer.

The church published an updated pictorial directory of the congregation which was distributed in the fall.

The members followed the progress on the organ restoration project. The new organ console was delivered in June and took a temporary resting place in a corner of the sanctuary. It wears the restored ivory keys which had been harvested from the original console. During the year, the organ pipes were removed for restoration. Other parts of the physical improvements included the sound system, new lighting and piano refurbishment.

Special musical programs in the year included a concert by a touring group, the Schola Cantorum from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey. In the spring, a children's musical, "A Technicolor Promise," was presented. The Advent/Christmas Choral Concert featured the Chancel Choir with orchestra, performing Gloria by John Ritter and Fantasia on Christmas Carols by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

*The E. Carl Freeman Concert Series* presented varied offerings including a piano recital by Vincent Craig; an organ and choral concert for Black History Month featuring the One Voice Chorus Ensemble and Rasaan Hakiem Bourke of New York City on the organ; a piano recital by Lynne Mackey; music for two keyboards presented by Stefan Palm of Germany and our own Robert Gallagher; the Boys and Girls Choir of the National Cathedral; an organ concert by Christoph Bull, an internationally-acclaimed organist; and an Evensong with the Choir of Men and Boys of All Saint's Episcopal Church, Richmond with the River Road Camerata. In June, the Chancel Choir presented a concert accompanied by an orchestra and trumpet in selections by Franz Joseph Haydn. In August, a concert titled "Rising Stars Recital" featured Hollie Hammel, a mezzo-soprano, and Hannah Hammel, a flutist.

Within the church staff, at year's end, Sheryl Johnson resigned after serving as interim minister of Christian education and spiritual formation. Libby Grammer who served as a pastoral intern was given increased responsibilities. Chuck Ursiny, a long-time sexton, was given a new title with increased responsibilities as Building Services Coordinator. In June, the congregation recognized Raymond Street on his 20th anniversary as sexton.

On the first day of June, a message was penned by the pastor, announcing his intentions to retire at the end of November. He had served the church for eleven years and the Christian ministry for some 45 years. He concluded his message with the following: "I have never wavered in my belief that River Road Church, Baptist has a vital role in the growth of God's Kingdom. It is a great time to be a part of this vibrant congregation and to begin moving toward a new chapter of mission and ministry in Richmond and beyond."

Soon after the announcement, a congregational conversation on the pastoral transition was held in the chapel with church moderator, Dan Stevens, fielding questions. The process began with the nomination of a slate to be considered as a Pastor Search Committee. On Sunday, September 13, a church business meeting was held to elect the committee. The following were chosen: Hilton Almond, Fred Anderson, George Davis, Bill Gray, Clint Hubbard, Andy McAllister, Eleanor Nurney, Susan Phillips, Seth Roberts, and Padgett Shoemake with alternates, Norma Hays and Jane Terry. The committee elected Hilton Almond as chair and George Davis, vice-chair, and almost immediately began to undertake their assignment. An *ad hoc* Interim Pastor Committee led by Susan Phillips chose Herbert O. Browning, formerly pastor of Huguenot Road Baptist Church, to serve as interim preacher beginning in January. In further staff alignment, it was decided that Dan Bagby, minister of pastoral care, would preach during Advent and would supervise the staff and that Chester Phelps, retired minister with youth and a church member, would assist with pastoral visitations.

A Pastor Retirement Celebration committee was appointed with Nancy and Fred Anderson as co-chairs. Three events were offered: a gala reception; a fun "roasting" of the pastor; and a Sunday morning tribute followed by a church-wide reception with presentations including a portrait of the pastor painted by Loryn Brazier, a renowned artist of portraiture. Through balloting, the congregation had voted to extend the title of pastor emeritus to Dr. Clingenpeel. The gifts sub-committee comprised of Ann and Fred Bagwell presented Mike and Vivian with several thoughtful gifts as well as the announcement of a generous monetary gift from many members of the congregation.

Among the many spoken and written words of appreciation for the pastor was a tribute delivered by Nancy Brown, a church member, on the occasion of a dinner by the Connectors, a missions education group, to honor the pastor. Entitled “Wonderful Words of Life from Mike,” the tribute included the following, drawing upon her own reflections from several years of the pastor’s sermons. “I ... sat in the far back where I had a scenic view. Perhaps you never saw me pick up one of those little pew pencils to write notes which I would transfer to my home computer. Do you remember the sermon in 2009 when you memorably defined grace simply as ‘unmerited favor’? It was right to the point. Then there was that phrase in another sermon encouraging us to seek ‘islands of silence.’ You described that we tend to consider horizontal (worldly) communication more important than vertical (godly) communication in a world of cell phones and vending-machine-like prayers. (About the time you had finished was when someone’s cell phone rang with the music of ‘When the Saints Go Marching In.’”

“Then in 2012 you gave us a succinct interpretation of the Trinity: Father (above us) - Christ (beside us) - the Holy Spirit (inside us). No doubt many have had magic moments of thought from your sermons, prayers, and overall gift of using words to embrace our church’s motto of ‘Thoughtful Faith.’ What a joy it has been to have you and Vivian with us. You both have connected to us in ways that are so essential for happiness, spirituality, service, and most of all, love through Christian fellowship.”

Fred Anderson, Historian

### **Board of Administration**

The Board was very active and involved with many matters that affected River Road Church, Baptist. Here are the highlights from 2015:

- Collaboration between the Personnel Committee, the Preschool Development Center Committee, and the Finance Committee to integrate the Personnel Manual, inclusive of the preschool.
- Financial oversight and due diligence regarding expenditures of the Capital Campaign including restoration of the organ pipes, rental of the electronic organ, refurbishment of the grand pianos, sound system and lighting in the sanctuary.
- An active Kitchen Committee introduced new menus, decorations, and protocols.
- A well-run and successful Stewardship campaign, in the midst of Capital Campaign giving.
- Implementation of the new process for distributing BOA minutes to the church via an opt-in monthly email.

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 Use – Harper Alford  
House & Grounds – Ken Lantz  
Kitchen – Wyatt Heisler  
Stewardship – Bill Rusher

Finance – Bill Stanton  
Insurance – Steve Lessels  
Personnel – Susan Rucker

Special thanks to Martha Day Dumas, Vice Chair, who supported the Board in many areas; Elizabeth Holland, Assistant Secretary, who ably filled in for our Secretary when she could not be at a meeting, and Julia Nixon, Secretary, for her role in keeping the important actions and decisions of the Board in her minutes.

Thank you also to Martha Day Dumas, Jean Cauble, Ken Lantz, Steve Lessels, and Scott Rooney for serving on the Board’s Nominating Committee. The Board of Administration is in good hands with Martha Day and a talented slate of leaders for 2016.

Laura Thorne, 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 March 21, October 19, and December 5. Among the tasks accomplished were fertilization of the lawn, trimming and mulching shrubbery, leaf removal, and clean-up of the parking lots.

Ken Lantz, Chair

## **Insurance Committee**

The Committee is responsible for reviewing the property and casualty needs of the church and coordinating changes in the amounts of and types of insurance coverage.

Key actions included:

- Reviewed certain policy coverage and coordinated with the Church's insurance broker.
- Assisted the Preschool Development Center in analyzing student accident insurance coverage and costs, and recommending a change of insurance carriers for this insurance.
- Met with a representative of the Church's insurance broker in December to review and discuss the insurance policy details and premium changes for 2016.

Steve Lessels, Chair

Committee members: Jean Cauble, Ron Tamagni, Keith Evans, Mike Price, Laura Thorne, ex officio

## **Kitchen Committee**

An increase in attendance at the Wednesday night dinner was seen in the fall of 2015. Chef Christopher Brown, who was employed to provide dinner meals for church members, has been well received. The Kitchen Committee worked to enhance the dining experience through the use of cloth tablecloths, table decorations, and place settings. New procedures for serving and for the handling of dirty dishes were initiated.

Volunteers continued to play important parts in kitchen maintenance and operation. Volunteers assisted in the setup, the serving, and the cleanup of Wednesday night dinners and other food service events. They cleaned and organized areas on the monthly workday, not only in the main kitchen but also in the Upper and Lower Commons kitchenettes, the Chapel Hall kitchen, and related storage areas.

Kitchen maintenance issues and storage issues continue to be challenging. A "Kitchen Handbook" has been introduced to the main kitchen to help users in the operation of kitchen equipment. The handbook includes guidelines for the use of the kitchen for improved maintenance and sanitation. Storage areas near the main kitchen will be examined for greater and more efficient storage of kitchen items.

At the direction of the Building and Property Council a gas line was run to the main kitchen, and a commercial gas range was installed. The existing gas meter was determined to be too small to allow full functioning of the new gas range. The installation of a larger gas meter is expected in the near future. In addition to the gas range, a new cooler was purchased for the main kitchen to replace the existing unit which was uneconomical to repair.

Wyatt Heisler, Chair

## **Personnel Committee**

The Personnel Committee has had a year with a number of major tasks undertaken. These include the following:

- The Personnel Committee worked with the special committee comprised of members of the Personnel Committee, the Preschool Development Center Committee, the Finance Committee, and the church staff in order to integrate the policies for the preschool personnel into the overall Personnel Manual of the Church. This was done in order to

make sure that all Church employees are aware of the personnel policies that apply to them, and to simplify personnel administration for all involved in church governance. A number of changes were made to the Personnel Manual (outlined below) and to the Preschool Operations Manual as a result of this work. The Personnel Manual has been distributed to all Preschool employees, and Susan Rucker, as chair of the Personnel Committee, met with these employees to answer questions that they may have had.

- The Personnel Committee has overseen events related to the recognition of staff this year that include:
  - Service recognition for Raymond Street
  - Coordination of the retirement celebrations for Pastor Mike Clingenpeel, through the appointment and work of a special Retirement Committee that included representatives of the Personnel Committee and the congregation
- As a result of the retirement of Pastor Clingenpeel, the Personnel Committee worked with the Board of Deacons *ad hoc* Interim Pastor Committee to execute employment agreements for the Interim Pastor, the Interim Minister of Christian Education and Spiritual Formation and the Interim Minister of Visitation, and to amend employment agreements as appropriate for existing employees taking on new or expanded duties. This involved reviewing job descriptions, responsibility assignments, and benchmarking compensation arrangements. We have also worked with the Finance Committee to review the salaries of all personnel for FY 2015 and projected 2016 salaries, and will continue to monitor all staff changes/activity throughout this interim period.
- We approved a sabbatical leave policy for our ministers
- We reviewed the new health insurance for staff and made recommendations related to the adoption of that insurance policy
- We have carried out normal Personnel Committee duties in accordance with our charter and responsibilities including our annual review of the Personnel Manual

A summary of the work done by the Special Committee related to the Preschool has been previously reported to the Board of Administration, but is re-summarized below:

The committee operated with the understanding of the guiding principles as noted here:

- The Preschool Development Center Committee has been and continues to be responsible for the operations of the Preschool
- The Personnel Committee will have ultimate responsibility for personnel policy and counsel to the pastor on oversight of all personnel of the church including preschool personnel, but the Preschool Development Center Committee and preschool management will have significant responsibilities, input and day-to-day management and oversight of preschool personnel
- Our goal has been to understand the special needs of this group of personnel and to attempt to accommodate those needs as much as possible while at the same time ensuring that the overall needs of the church are being met

As a result of this work, the following tasks were accomplished:

- Job descriptions for Preschool Workers were rewritten and put into the standard format used by the church. These job descriptions were then referred for final review to the Preschool Development Center Committee
- Recommended changes to the Personnel Manual (which will be reviewed in more detail below)
- Analyzed the Preschool Operations manual to determine what sections of that manual should be incorporated into or superseded by the Personnel Manual and recommended changes which need to be made to the Preschool Development Center Committee
- Worked with the Church Insurance Committee to determine if representations about insurance that were in the Preschool Operations Manual are complete and accurate
- Worked with members of the preschool staff, church finance staff and Finance Committee to better understand the pay practices in the preschool
- Consulted with an attorney on certain benefit issues related to the integration of the preschool

- Analyzed the overall benefits comparison for the preschool and other church employees
- Reviewed the accreditation standards for the preschool to determine any impact on the personnel manual

#### Results of Review of Personnel Manual

The Personnel Committee performed a detailed review of the personnel manual, and submitted the following summary of the changes to the Board of Administration:

#### Changes related to the Preschool

1. The Committee reviewed the church governance related to the Preschool, and formally added sections related to preschool personnel to the Personnel Manual. This includes acknowledgement that the Preschool Development Center Committee:
  - a. Reviews all faculty appointment
  - b. Is responsible for Preschool operations, and that preschool personnel will be subject to these operating policies
2. The Personnel Manual now specifically mentions church employees that are employed in the preschool, and
  - a. Lists appropriate titles and types of personnel
  - b. Notes that these personnel will be covered by the Personnel Manual
  - c. Describes a new type of employment – work agreement employment – which is used by the preschool. (The work agreement language is language that has been used in the past by the preschool and is recommended by the national association to which our preschool belongs.)
  - d. Outlines that the work agreement will be the guiding document if policies of the church the work agreement are different
3. The Personnel Manual acknowledges that both the Finance Committee and the Preschool Development Center Committee have a role in determining the salaries of the preschool personnel.
4. Outlines the recommendation that the church hold an annual after church coffee at which preschool personnel will be recognized. The coffee will be sponsored by the Personnel Committee and coordinated with the Preschool Director, the Preschool Development Center Committee and the Social Committee
5. The Personnel Manual requires an annual review of all job descriptions. This has been augmented to state that the Personnel Committee may delegate this review to the Preschool Development Center Committee
6. A statement was added that abuse or neglect of children or youth are grounds for immediate employee dismissal

#### Other Changes

1. Clarified that all employees should be aware of church policies and procedures related to their jobs in addition to the contents of the personnel manual
2. Clarified the income tax and FICA status of ordained ministers
3. Clarified the process for approval and communication of salary adjustments, particularly as it relates to the preschool workers
4. Incorporated the sabbatical leave policy (The policy grants a four week sabbatical leave to ministers after each six year period of service. The leave must be planned at least six months in advance, approved by the Pastor and Personnel Committee, and there must be a written report upon completion.)
5. Clarified the coordination of unpaid family and medical leave
6. Documented that the church will pay for necessary training expenses that have been approved and are funded through the budget
7. Clarified the inclement weather policy
8. Supplemented the policy on discussions for succession planning for employees that have reached retirement age as specified by Social Security regulations (This is not requiring retirement, but does set the date at which succession planning discussions must be held)
9. Made minor changes to wording to clarify policies, make the manual internally consistent or correct for grammar and/or context

Consistent with prior practice, we have summarized the changes to the Personnel Manual. If you would like an electronic copy of the manual with changes, please contact Susan Rucker at [susanrucker1@verizon.net](mailto:susanrucker1@verizon.net).

## Stewardship Committee

Our Stewardship campaign benefited from an active committee, and also from several church members who demonstrated thoughtful faith as they spoke at the lectern and wrote pieces for the church publications. Sixty-five families increased their pledges, while forty-one families pledged less than last year. Thirty-two families who did not pledge last year have made pledges for 2016. These are some positive signs, but our total numbers are just about even with last year. As we move forward into 2016, let us strive to *Live Faithfully, Give Generously, and Make a Difference.*

Bill Rusher, Stewardship Chair

## Board of Deacons

At River Road Church, Baptist, deacons are called to be friends... and much is asked. The Deacon Family Ministry has been described as a means by which every church member can receive the love and care of the congregation when they need it, and being, there, when a person needs a Christian friend. We are recipients of God's love, and through our willingness to be agents of that love; we take the first giant step toward becoming equipped to serve others. In John 15:13 Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." Sacrifice comes from a heart that loves and cares as Jesus did. When our deacons assume the role of ministering to families, they become overwhelmed, but the intent of the ministry has to do with being a friend. As friends demonstrate love and care, the recipients benefit, and lives are changed. (From the Deacons' Handbook)

During 2015, a diverse Board of 65 Deacons fulfilling over 1100 assigned duties before any part of the care group ministry is covered. These assigned duties are serving Communion, acting as Greeters at church services, hosting the after worship coffees, hosting deacons' dinners, hosting the Celebration Sunday cook-out, and ministering to their care groups. The Deacons meet monthly, which includes four dinner meetings. Being a Deacon requires a commitment of time and energy to the congregation. This Calling is a commitment for life and is the highest honor that is accorded a lay-person in the church. The 2015 Board of Deacons duly elected officers were:

Chair - Gladys H. Fleming  
Vice Chair - Charles Early  
Secretary/Treasurer - Jennifer Freeman

I discussed the possibility of a Deacon Retreat for new deacons with Dr. Clingenpeel and Rev. Sheryl Johnson. They both welcomed the idea. Arrangements were made for a Deacons 24-Hour Retreat to be held at Richmond Hill, February 6-7, 2015. We arranged to have Dr. Bob Dale to serve as the facilitator for three sessions. The first session was held on Friday night, "building community among the deacons" and sessions 2 and 3, on Saturday, "leadership in the church." The 24-hour retreat was very beneficial to all attending. The Deacons were equipped with knowledge and expectations of knowing their role as ministers to the congregation.

In June, 2015, all members of the congregation here at River Road Church, Baptist, received a letter from our Pastor Dr. Clingenpeel, stating that he would be retiring after 40 years in the ministry and 11 of those years as Pastor here at River Road Church, Baptist, on November 22, 2015. According to our by-laws the Board of Deacons has a very special role to play when the church is without a pastor. That role is outlined in Article III, Section 1.B.2 of our By-Laws: "It shall...be responsible for the pastoral duties of preaching and ministering to the needs of the congregation whenever the Church is without a Pastor." As Chair, I named the BOD *ad hoc* Interim Pastor Committee whose charge was to select and seat an Interim Pastor and provide for other pastoral duties. The Committee members were, Charles Early, Jennifer Freeman, Emily Sumner, Linda Honaker, Charlie Sorrell, Bill Gray, Jane Terry, Marge Rusher, Gladys Fleming and Susan Phillips, chair. Dr. Dan Bagby and Dr. Thomas Graves served as advisors. The committees met regularly and discern fully to complete their charge. Dr. Bert Browning was selected to serve as Interim Preacher, Dr. Dan Bagby Minister of Pastoral Care and Rev. Chester Phelps, Jr. Interim Minister of Visitation.

The Deacons continue to quietly collect donations for the Fellowship Fund. This year the Endowment Board gave the BOD a grant for \$15,000.00 for the Fund. All the requests for funds are vetted by local social services departments before a check is issued. Our Secretary/Treasurer, Jennifer Freeman worked with the office staff to distribute to members of the community in need of assistance. January 2015, the fund had a balance of \$9,124.33. Over the course of 2015, we recorded deposits totaling \$59,865.50 and distributed over 400 checks totaling \$58,305.51. As established protocol, we always kept a balance of

\$1,000.00 for member emergencies. The \$15,000 grant awarded the FUND by the Endowment Board allowed us to serve more than 100 more needs. Compared to 2014, total giving \$31,513.93 for 300 needs. The Fellowship Fund begins 2016 with a starting balance of \$1,559.99.

The success of the 2015 Board of Deacons is a true testament to the dedication of all the members of the Board. This year the BOD *ad hoc* Interim Pastor Committee and the BOD *ad hoc* Nominating Committee, Henry Holland, Chair, completed their charge with great dedication as well. I also offer my sincere thanks to my Vice Chair, Charlie Early and Secretary/Treasurer, Jennifer Freeman for their hard work and support during the year. Serving as Chairman of the Board of Deacons has been a blessing and an honor and has allowed “this little light of mine to shine” for the Glory of God.

Gladys H. Fleming, Chairman, Board of Deacons 2015

### **Board of Missions**

The Board of Missions offers oversight to the mission endeavors of River Road Church and encourages 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 at Richmond, the Baptist General Association of Virginia, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, River City Faith Network Ministries (formerly RBA), 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 mission work for us, but rather to open even more opportunities for members of our church to be involved personally.

Many from our church were personally involved providing a touch of love, as well as temporary housing, for homeless through CARITAS (Congregations Around Richmond Involved To Assure Shelter). RRCB hosted 38 women in February and 40 men in October.

A team traveled to Millboro, Virginia in Bath County to do cleaning and repairs at Camp Alkulana, a camp for inner-city youth, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2015. Budgeted funds from the Board and from the annual offering for the camp covered the cost of this trip as well as providing two scholarships to the camp. Individual church members have dedicated hours of service to this camp in the past year.

Each month clothing, food, and meals are collected for the Oregon Hill, Church Hill, and South Richmond Baptist centers. At Christmas toys were collected for the annual Christmas Stores operated by the centers. This year middle schoolers volunteered on a Saturday in December to work at the Christmas Store operated by the Church Hill Center.

River Road has been a long-time supporter of CrossOver Clinic though budgeted funds and volunteers. It provides health services for hundreds of our low-income neighbors living in the West End, especially the large population of immigrants in the area.

For many years RRCB has participated in a ministry to incarcerated persons, their families, and recently-released prisoners. A volunteer team goes monthly to visit Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center. Through BOM funds, Christmas presents are provided for the families of two incarcerated persons and scholarships for two children to attend a special camp for children of those incarcerated. The Board also contributes to GraceInside which provides chaplains inside prisons.

Two teams worked this year to build modules for two ramps to be installed at a later time through a partnership with Project Homes: Renew Crew.

Through the MICAH project at Oak Grove Elementary School, RRCB provided budgeted funds and the 2015 church Thanksgiving Offering to help purchase food for the backpacks children receive on the weekends and during school holidays. The RRCB congregation donated approximately 800 books to the school library to use in their summer reading program. Members of the congregation also travel weekly to Oak Grove to volunteer at the school in many capacities.

The BOM provided medical supplies and assisted with travel for the medical teams going to Panama. In this ministry several RRCB members partner with members of other churches in a team approach to medical missions.

The BOM sponsored two inter-generational Stop Hunger Now events in May and October. Over 10,000 meals were packaged at each of these events, at a cost of about \$0.29 a meal!

This list can go on and on and Matthew 25 challenges RRCB 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 me clothes. I was sick and you stopped to visit. I was in prison and you came to me.”

In January the Endowment Board gave a \$100,000 unrestricted grant to the Board of Missions. A special committee of eight – five from the Board of Missions and three from the church at large - were appointed to determine the best use of these funds. It was decided early on that the money could easily be given away to many very worthy organizations. But the committee saw its challenge, not to spend the money, but to use the funds in such a way as to move our church to new levels of mission involvement and commitment. The committee met over 30 times during the year, conducted a congregation-wide survey, conducted focus groups, heard from invited guests, and took two field trips to view possible opportunities. It has been a long and challenging process, and the work continues into 2016. The committee hopes to announce the first challenges and projects within the first half of 2016.

These are incredibly exciting times to be involved in the mission outreach of River Road Church. Our hope is that every person at River Road will be able to find meaningful places to be involved and to serve.

### **Building and Property Council**

In 2015, following a very successful *Rejoice and Give Thanks* capital campaign in 2014 which raised funds for the organ renovation and other improvements to the Sanctuary, we commenced working on these projects.

1. **Organ Renovation:**  
The organ console was replaced with a completely electronic system by the Richard Houghten Co. The ivory keys were salvaged from the original console due to the embargo on ivory. The pipes and wind chests were disassembled and removed to their shop in Pennsylvania by Emery Bros., Inc. for refurbishing and tuning. These items will be returned and reassembled in the spring of 2016.
2. **The Sanctuary Lighting System:**  
The engineering firm of CCRD, Inc. created drawings of the new lighting and dimming system for the sanctuary using LED technology. This work was bid out to electrical contractors in September and Folkes Electrical Company was the low bidder. This project was approved by the Church in November. Materials have been ordered and work is expected to be complete in the second quarter of 2016.
3. **The Sanctuary Sound System:**  
Design of a new Line Array sound system of two main vertical speakers was accomplished in the spring and summer with test speakers observed. Vicom was chosen as the contractor and the Church approved the project in November. Work will commence in winter and be complete in the second quarter of 2016.

In addition, replacement of the sanctuary air handler unit in the sub-basement was accomplished. This was needed due to the bottom section of the original unit rusting out and leaking condensate water.

The Committee consisted of the following members:

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

## **Arts Committee**

The mission of the Arts Committee is to enhance and educate our congregation on the importance of the arts in forming and experiencing our Christian Faith.

In 2015, we met several times for the planning and discussing our spring and fall exhibits and continuing to explore ways to enhance our bulletin coverers and ways to utilize our "Arts Outreach Account" for the good of our congregation.

The spring activity was "Watercolor 101 Exhibition," with works from members the Watercolor 101 class taught by Judy Dixon, our watercolor artist-in-residence. The exhibition consisted of more than 30 works painted by members of this class.

During the summer months, the Board of Deacons requested that various boards and committees assist with the reception held every Sunday after worship service. The Arts Committee and the Communications Committee co-sponsored the event on Sunday, August 23, 2015. The reception was delightful, tasty and well received by the congregation.

The Watercolor Art Party planned for the fall was postponed.

The Arts Committee focus is on the visual arts. We plan another exciting 2016 with more adventures in the visual arts. Members are Judy Dixon, Beth Stuhlman, Sherry Sorrell, Caroline Brown, Margaret Almond, Ann Hays, Peggy Stevens, Sue Hodder, Cassandra Ducca, Staff and Gladys Fleming, Chair

## **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-chaired the Chancel Committee. The ladies that 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 alter 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. Three weddings took place this past year.

Anne Bagwell, Kitty Davis, and Janet Bagby chair the funeral committee. Betsy Lowery has assisted with several funerals and is still being trained. 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.

Betsy Lowery is the chair of the Parament Committee. Mary Beth Scherer is assisting as needed. They both follow the liturgical calendar that is set by the staff and makes sure the correct paraments are in place for Sunday worship and special events.

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.

During the year, we continued to use oil filled candles on the altar. Chester Phelps and the acolytes fill the candles as needed. Oil filled candles were purchased for the advent wreath this year. They were cared for by Betsy Lowery. The use of the candles has been very cost effective.

Christmas in July took place this past year. Margaret Almond and Julia Tyler were the designers. Approximately 25 people gathered in the Fellowship Hall to prepare the wreaths. A group of men from the FIXERS found a special place to store the wreaths until December. Kristen and Doug Phelps were very active in strategically hanging all the wreaths in the sanctuary.

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

Betsy Lowery, Chancel Co-Chair

### **Columbarium Memorial Garden Committee**

The Columbarium Memorial Garden Committee had a relatively inactive year. The committee met on November 29, 2015. Members attending were Fred Bagwell, Caroline Brown, George Davis, Gladys Fleming, Anne Kirkup, Tom Ligon, Dick Morris and Henry Holland.

The Columbarium is composed of 368 niches of which 48 are large (holding up to four urns maximum) and 320 small niches (holding up to two urns maximum).

It was noted that George Davis has continued to handle routine maintenance in the Columbarium Memorial Garden. The committee expressed appreciation to George for his efforts. Tom Ligon mentioned that we now have a sprinkler head covering the grass in the common ground, so hand watering is no longer necessary.

LeAnne Lane reported that we have 71 niches that are purchased and 297 that are available for purchase.

Chairman Holland reported that, in response to a request, he had determined that former members and their immediate families could be inurned in the Columbarium.

There was a brief discussion of the use of the common ground. It was noted that originally specific locations where ashes were placed in the common ground were defined by use of a grid. However, several years ago this committee decided that exact locations of specific ashes would no longer be identified because of the intent of the term "common ground."

In 2015, we reached out to families of loved ones inurned or buried in the Columbarium giving them an opportunity to write a brief memorial to be placed in the Columbarium Memory Book. We received several responses which have been completed. Families are being encouraged to complete a memorial submission as soon as is practical for them following their respective service.

The chairman noted that the Columbarium seems to be functioning as it should, and there was no further business.

Henry D. Holland, Chair

### **Communications Committee**

The Communications Committee spent considerable time in self-evaluation in 2015, focusing on committee resources (volunteer and financial) and prioritizing plans for addressing communications needs in the year ahead. Looking to 2016, the committee asked for assistance from the church nominating committee in recruiting additional new members for the coming year, lifting membership to exceed that required by the By Laws, with the hope of having the manpower to support the tasks the committee would hope to address throughout the year.

In response to an invitation by the Endowment Board to the boards and committees of the church to submit grant proposals for hoped-for projects, the Communications Committee picked up again on work begun and set aside in 2014 due to lack of funding. Representatives of both the Membership and Communications Committees, together with the communications specialist, had worked previously to identify options for audiovisual installations or upgrades for the Fellowship Hall in particular, but found the cost to be in excess of a remaining grant they had hoped to use for the purpose. With the 2015 invitation, new proposals from potential vendors were updated and a grant request submitted for the installation of AV systems deemed best suited for each of three venues: Fellowship Hall, the Assembly Room, and Chapel Hall. The Endowment Board responded with an offer to grant \$75,000 for the identified purposes, following the submission of final plans, approval of the Finance Committee, Building and Property Council and ultimately, the Board of Administration. The work to identify

recommended AV set-up/technology, as well as necessary supportive systems to assure system performance, continued into 2016 with hopes to complete recommendations as soon in the new year as possible.

Plans were begun to evaluate the current website, determine the best options and resources for replacing or revising the church's web presence, as well as planning for SEO efforts for the new site. In addition to finalizing the AV installation in the Fellowship Hall and other venues, this will be a primary focus in 2016. Additionally, plans were laid to begin reinforcing our brand statement in communications, building teams to provide content for church publications, social media and other efforts.

The committee assisted the efforts of the communications specialist in publicizing numerous events throughout the year in the life of the church, including the church's involvement in Mission Footprint 5K with Trinity United Methodist Church and Third Church in September, Trunk or Treat in October, among others. For the third year, the committee produced and mailed an Advent postcard to approximately 2,000 non-member households in surrounding neighborhoods, VBS non-member families, and to the Concert Series mailing list inviting participation in the Christmas concert and all events and services of the Christmas season. The card was also distributed to the families of children in our preschool.

The committee worked to support the communication specialist in the preparation of the Nominating Committee's mailing announcing those on the ballot for the Pastor Search Committee, a new brochure for the Stephen Ministry, among others.

Karen Collier, Chair  
Cassandra Ducca, Communications Specialist

### **History Committee**

The year began with an Archives Day on Saturday, January 24, 2015, with many participants working on various projects. It was a very successful event and will likely be repeated in the future. The next major accomplishment was the production of the pictorial directory for the church for 2015. The Life Touch Company did the photography and the directory was published and provided to church members later in the year.

The main responsibilities of the committee include:

1. The continued maintenance of the church archives to be done weekly when possible
2. Photography of church events
3. The ongoing book project (the next history of the church probably 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 committee continues to attempt to keep the church archives current and organized. More work is needed on this ongoing responsibility. The archives includes a collection of past service bulletins newsletters, audio and videotapes and photographs.

Two members of the History Committee, Tuckie Paxton and Carole Royall, manage the display case in the Lower Commons of the church. This past year there has been a focus on the Chapel Crest, the Mission Footprint 5K challenge with Trinity United Methodist Church, a joint endeavor with the Board of Missions to emphasize and encourage members to become more involved with mission activities, and the annual exhibit of the Franklin Mint nativity during Advent and Christmas.

The committee last met on September 20, 2015. There was discussion regarding having another church archives day to be held in 2016 and a greater effort to work on the archives in the archives room. It was decided that Tuckie Paxton and Carole Royall would co-chair the committee next year. The committee would welcome new members to maintain our rich history and keep the archives current.

Henry D. Holland, Chair

## Music Committee

The Music Committee has the responsibility of overseeing and assisting in the planning of programs, and of supporting the Minister of Music, Dr. Robert Gallagher, in fulfilling the goals of the music program at River Road Church, Baptist.

2015 was an excellent year for music programs for children and youth at RRCB. Our choirs and directors are as follows:

- Cherub Choir - Christine Kellett
- Carol Choir - Kara Harman
- Crusader Choir - Bob Gallagher
- Youth Choir – Bob Gallagher
- River Road Camerata – Bob Gallagher
- Children’s Bell Choir - Paul Honaker
- Youth Bell Choir – Paul Honaker

Appreciation is expressed to these music directors for outstanding leadership. We also thank the choir parents and others for their help and support. The three older choirs sang for many of the worship services during the year including the Christmas Eve Family Service. Additionally, the Youth Choir led the music on Youth Sunday and as a group or individually, on several occasions, joined the Chancel Choir in Sunday worship. They also sang for Baptismal and Vesper services. The Youth Bell Choir provided worship leadership in several services, including during Advent and the Christmas Eve Family Service.

On May 20, the Children’s Music Ministry presented *A Technicolor Promise*, a musical version of the well-known story of Noah and the ark. The annual Christmas pageant, directed by Linda Honaker, was presented by the Cherub, Carol and Crusader choirs on December 16. It was a beautiful retelling of the story through readings and song.

The Chancel Choir continues to lead our Sunday morning worship services. On Easter Sunday they sang for two services accompanied by organ and a brass quintet. On All Saints’ Sunday, November 1, the Chancel Choir presented Maurice Duruflé’s *Requiem*.

A Summer Choir, consisting of Chancel Choir members and other volunteers, sang for worship services throughout the summer.

The Chancel Bell Choir, directed by Charles Todd, enhanced our worship services throughout the year and as well as the 11:00 Christmas Eve service.

New groups were added to the music program this year. Bob Gallagher is working with a dedicated and talented group of choristers as they learn the music of the Masters in the River Road Camerata. Paul Honaker has added a Children’s Bell Choir. Additionally, at Bob Gallagher’s request, and with the Committee’s support, the Endowment Board has funded a program of Choral Scholars for the Fall 2016 – Spring 2017 term. This will consist of eight students from local colleges who will sing with the Chancel Choir. The goal is to offer them the opportunity to experience great music with excellent direction as they share their talents in a church choir setting.

On November 20 - 21 River Road Church again hosted the Youth Choir JAM. This weekend of music workshops and fellowship involves youth choirs from throughout the state, Richmond, Hampton, Blacksburg, and Roanoke were represented. The event ended with a concert on Saturday afternoon.

The second half of the 2014-2015 season of the *E. Carl Freeman Concert Series at River Road Church* included the following concerts:

- Sunday, January 25, 3:00 pm, Sanctuary – piano recital by Vincent Craig.
- Sunday, February 8, 3:00 pm, Sanctuary – organ and choral concert for Black History Month by One Voice Chorus Ensemble directed by Lynn G. Atkins, Jr., with Rasaan Hakiem Bourke as organist.
- Sunday, March 15, 3:00 pm, Sanctuary – piano recital by Lynne Mackey.
- Sunday, May 3 (moved from April 26), 3:00 p.m., Sanctuary – Music for Two Keyboards with Stefan Palm (Cologne, Germany) and Robert Gallagher featuring organ, harpsichord, and piano.
- Sunday, June 7, 8:00 p.m., Sanctuary – Chancel Choir Concert with Orchestra & Trumpet, music by Franz Joseph Haydn including the *Trumpet Concerto* played by Mary Bowden.

- Sunday, June 21, 3:00 pm, Sanctuary – organ recital by Maurice Clerc, Titular Organist at the Dijon Cathedral (Cathédrale Saint-Bénigne de Dijon).

The 45th season, 2015-2016, started with the following programs:

- Friday, August 28, 5:00 p.m., Sanctuary – choral concert by The Choir of Boys and Girls of Washington National Cathedral, Michael McCarthy, Choirmaster.
- Tuesday, September 15, 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary – organ recital by Christophe Bull, the organist of First Congregational Church in Los Angeles, CA.
- Sunday, November 15, 3:00 p.m., Sanctuary – Evensong by the Choir of Men and Boys of All Saints’ Richmond with River Road Camerata, directed by Brian J. Taylor and accompanied by Robert Gallagher, organist.
- Sunday, December 13, 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary – Advent & Christmas Choral Concert by the River Road Chancel Choir with Orchestra.

Other musical events included in 2015 were:

- “A Concert of Choral Transformations” on May 15 by the James River Singers (who also rehearse at River Road Church)
- The “Rising Stars Recital” on August 15 with mezzo-soprano Hollie Hammel, flutist Hannah Hammel, and pianist/organist Robert Gallagher

Members of the Music Committee hosted “Meet the Artist” receptions following the concerts that were part of the regular concert series. They also assisted the Social Committee with the reception following worship on June 7 in recognition of the Chancel Choir.

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

As part of the ongoing *Rejoice and Give Thanks* capital campaign undertaken in spring 2014 to support the refurbishment of RRCB’s Möller organ and the sanctuary sound and lighting systems, a new solid-state organ console was built by the firm of Richard Houghton. The new console was delivered to the church in June. The power lift for the new console was installed by John Heisler. Doug Phelps reworked the modesty rail to install a gate allowing the console to move into the chancel for concerts. The pipes and wind chests were removed in September. The rented Rodgers electronic organ will continue to be used until the refurbished pipes can be reinstalled and the new console put in place. Vendor relationships and technical considerations are primarily managed by Bob Gallagher, with assistance from Seth Roberts and others and with input and oversight by the Music Committee. The Music Committee extends deepest thanks to all those involved in the management and support of the organ refurbishment.

At the church business meeting on January 28, the membership approved a motion from the Finance Committee that \$60,000 of capital campaign funds be authorized for restoration of three of the church’s grand pianos. A technical report, prepared in the fall of 2014 by the Music Committee, on the state of the church pianos revealed the need. Technician David G. Hughes, RPT, has been contracted to perform the restoration.

In addition to a face-to-face meeting in August, other committee business was conducted through email. At the August meeting, Eric Johnson resigned his position as chair and Margaret Phelps was elected by the committee members to finish his 2015 term.

River Road Church is the beneficiary of a music program and a musical tradition of the highest caliber. This Committee extends its heartfelt thanks to all the musicians and members of this congregation who have provided leadership and support for our worship experience.

*Prepared by Margaret Phelps (chair, August – December 2015) and Eric D. M. Johnson, (chair, January – August 2015)*

*2015 Music Committee members: Betty Damon, Beth Hooker, Anne James, Eric Johnson, Anita McAllister, Tuckie Paxton, Margaret Phelps, Carole Royall, Jane Terry, Paul Thompson and Richard Wood.*



## Membership Committee

The Membership Committee had a busy 2015 coordinating initiatives to better engage church members, reach out to new members and encourage involvement by less active members.

Some of our initiatives include:

- Coordinating Food Trucks during part of the summer
- Sending notes to guests who provide their contact information in the friendship register and who visit Sunday School
- Providing "Guest Greeters" in the Narthex each Sunday
- Providing guest information at several locations throughout the church

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: Ann Domyan, Bill Rusher, Russ Collins, Deb Gray, Patsy Kendall, John Heisler, Kate Knerr, Mark Cipolletti, Sara Heisler, Shelly Shirkey

## WMU

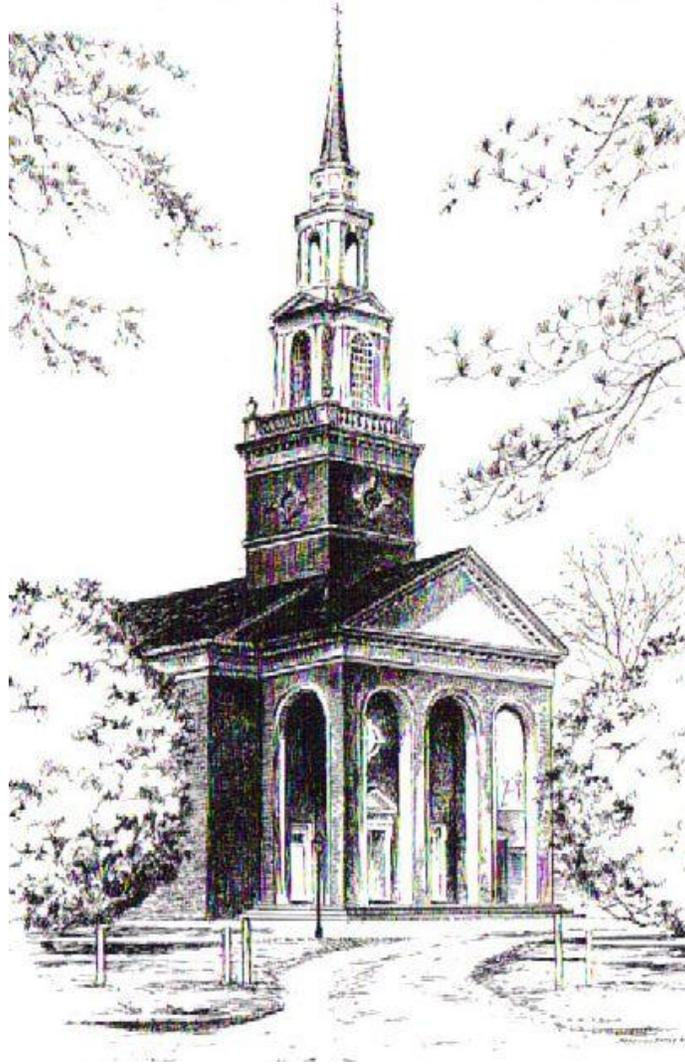
The Woman's Missionary Union at River Road Church, Baptist was represented by the Women on Mission's Evening Group, aka the Connectors. The Connectors met monthly for nine months of the year, usually on the second Tuesday evening, in members' homes.

During their monthly meetings, speakers were often invited so that the group could learn about specific missions endeavors. The Connectors donated to Meals on Wheels, Church Women United, Interfaith Council of Greater Richmond, the Elizabeth Kates Foundation, and LAMB'S Basket. Monthly Missions Involvement assignments from the River City Faith Network of the Richmond Baptist Association to support the three inner city Baptist Centers and Camp Alkulana were carried out. Mission Involvement assignments from the RCFN varied from preparing and serving meals to the homeless at the Oregon Hill Baptist Center to providing office supplies to the Church Hill Christian Wellness Center.

Highlights of the year for the Connectors included hosting a dinner in the Courtyard in honor of Mike Clingenpeel in October, and hosting the annual dinner meeting of the River City Faith Network WMU in April. The Connectors also prepared 105 snack food bags for the homeless, provided Christmas gifts to a family sponsored by CrossOver Ministries, collected toiletries for inmates at the Virginia Correctional Center for Women, and baked 232 dozen cookies for the Kairos program at VCCW.

River Road WMU Connectors group is open to all women at River Road Church.

Wyatt Heisler, Coordinator



RIVER ROAD CHURCH  
ENDOWMENT FUND

ANNUAL REPORT

## **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 12 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 \$8.9 million. The Fund's investments are managed by TIFF (The Investment Fund for Foundations). The Fund took approximately \$126,000 in distributions from TIFF in 2015, and investment depreciation caused the remainder of the decline in value. As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, these investments had an annual return while under TIFF's management of - 1.72% for 2015, and there has been a return of 7.64% 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 unrestricted gifts from one member family, and also received from the church unrestricted memorial gifts given during 2015.

During 2015, the Endowment Fund paid out approximately \$367,000 in grants. This amount included grants to the E. Carl Freeman Concert Series, a grant of \$100,000 to the operating budget, and payments for capital reserves and projects.

In addition, the Endowment Fund paid a \$75,000 grant to the church to be used for communications projects, and also funded grants for expenses related to the retirement of the pastor, our pastoral intern, and the pastor search committee.

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 supported disaster relief for the earthquake in Nepal and the Mission Footprint 5K. Additionally, in 2014 the Fund made a special grant to the church of \$100,000 to support Missions. The Missions grant has not yet been expended by the church.

During the period 2002 to 2015, the Endowment Fund contributed approximately \$2.3 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.

Serving on the Board in 2015 were:

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Ransone Hartz, President | Fred Bagwell, Vice President                      |
| Bill Gray, Secretary     | Susan Rucker, Treasurer                           |
| Hilton Almond            | Lou Moelchert, Investment Advisor/Asst. Treasurer |
| George Davis             | Eleanor Nurney                                    |
| Andy McAllister          | Seth Roberts                                      |
| Linda Schreiner          | 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