

It was exciting to begin serving at River Road Church to find an already functioning, meaningful, adult education ministry. It is a blessing to have such rich resources of knowledge within our membership and an eagerness to connect with others outside of our church, and even denomination, in order to learn and grow.

In the winter and spring, we enjoyed the leadership of Bill Tuck as he taught from his book, The Difficult Sayings of Jesus, and also the insights of Dan Bagby as he shared regarding forgiveness. The overall program offered a variety of shared times that included a balance of rich opportunities. These included:

- fellowship and relationship building across age groups.
- missions highlights and learning from the experiences of those serving.
- significant and thought – provoking educational and worship experiences.

River Road used great Intention in choosing the name for the adult educational ministries of the church when they selected, ***Thoughtful Faith Community***. The name expresses the church's love for theological thought, deep study, and inquisitive question-asking. These are found in both our Sunday morning Bible study classes and in our Wednesday night offerings.

This fall we will enjoy exceptional leaders and topics. We began with Dr. Jim Slatton last week as we observed the 911 anniversary. This week Dr. Mark Biddle, former Old Testament professor at BTSR will be with us. His discussion title is The Value of Liberal Arts in Higher Education. In a few weeks, Dr. David Elliott will talk on growing through serving with Doctors Without Borders. And, later in the fall, Dr. Samuel Adams from Union Seminary will be with us.

The Adult Board of Christian Education is also offering additional growth & learning opportunities. We will add seminars to educate and grow our knowledge, spirits, skills, and relationships. For many of these, we will bring in knowledgeable and seasoned presenters on specific topics. One example is the upcoming parents' seminar -- Mindful Screen-time for Families. This will be held on September 29 at 6:00p.m. in the Assembly Room.

The board will continue exploring to find even greater ways to develop so that we might love and serve the Lord more fully with our hearts, souls, minds, and strength. Some examples of the ideas being discussed are: day retreats, a churchwide weekend retreat, spiritual pilgrimage walks, welcoming speakers and presenters in a way similar to our Freeman Music Performances, and deeper discipleship studies. Discipleship studies might be like the one beginning Sunday evening, October 6, titled, SoulFeast, starting at 6:00p.m. weekly until December 8.

Adult missions opportunities abound at RRC. I am amazed at the number of ways our church is connected in meaningful ways meeting needs, loving others, changing the world through Christ's goodness. May we continue to expand ways to serve, use our gifts, and answer our calling with strength & commitment.

Our giving supports these amazing studies, events, trips—all opportunities to grow while being equipped to engage the world, and do Kingdom work in ever more meaningful ways.

You have filled in your staff positions for this very purpose, of growing and stretching into the future. Now, consider what offerings you will commit and give to God's work at River Road Church in the coming year, to enthusiastically support growing, vital educational and mission endeavors.