









Missions Ministry
Lloyd Jackson Memorial Bland Mission Trip

RIVER ROAD CHURCH

WINTER 2019 | VOL.VIII | ISSUE 4

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SOLI DEO GLORIA!

What a joy and blessing it was to worship and celebrate alongside you at the 50th anniversary of the Sanctuary on October 13! Several public thank-you notes are in order:

I must say a word of thanks to our musicians. While they help us worship every week through their glorious music to God, I realize the anniversary service took quite a bit more "heavy lifting." To our Chancel Choir, Chancel Bell Choir, guest brass players, and Dr. Bob Gallagher, please receive my heartfelt thanks.

I am also grateful to our guest ministers in the worship service. Rev. Terry Maples from Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Virginia brought warm greetings and words of congratulations. Rev. Dr. Nathan Taylor, RRCB member and Executive Director of the Virginia Baptist Historical Society led a litany and offered a beautiful pastoral prayer, perfectly written for the occasion, that only a minister-historian could (found on page 2).

While this may be a peculiar thank you, I must express gratitude to our former pastor, Rev. Dr. Vernon Richardson, who served from 1964 until his unexpected death in 1970. In reviewing Dr. Richardson's papers, notes, and the orders of worship from the 1969 Sanctuary consecration service, I found myself grateful for his dreaming, his witness, and his incredible wordsmanship. The prayers he wrote and the litanies he crafted for the first Sanctuary celebration deeply moved me as I read them. His words, offered to God in gratitude for a new Sanctuary, were repeated in our celebratory worship 50 years later. For that gift, I am most thankful.

Last, I must say thanks to you, the beloved past and present congregation of River Road Church. The Godgranted vision, received many years ago, inspired the construction of the sanctuary we enjoy and worship in today. I'm grateful that today we realize our own place in God's holy dream for our church, one that calls us to be energized by worship and to be sent out in love and service to our community and world.

God bless you, church. It is an honor to be your

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Love Formed a New Community

Daniel E. Glaze

Written in honor of the 50th anniversary of the River Road Sanctuary



50th Anniversary Pastoral Prayer by Rev. Dr. Nathan L. Taylor

Most gracious God, we give you praise for the marking of this day, for all that it means, and for the opportunity to take stock of the last 50 years of faithfulness, 50 years of dedications, faith commitments, marriage commitments, and funerals for loved ones. 50 years of sacred worship through song, symbol, sermon, and service. The very architecture of this space reminds us with great intentionality of the particular conviction placed upon our founders to live as a church that embodies the best of our Baptist heritage expressed through a commitment of welcoming hospitality for all of the Christian streams through which we've come to know you and your life-giving grace. From tall clear windows beckoning the unhindered light of the free church tradition, to the deep blue hues and gospel imagery of stained glass anchoring us to early expressions of your church. From the profusion of Greco-Roman columns hinting toward a free church and a free state, from the cruciform pathway, to the elevated placement of the preaching of the word, to the centrality of your holy table of abundance, forgiveness, and grace. This precious space exudes in its design and ongoing use, our best ideals, and calls us back to them in moments when we need to be reminded. And so may it be that in every moment in which we enter this sacred space, that we remember not only the faith of those who have gone before us, but, most of all, your faith in us, lo these many years. We pray with humility and gratitude that we might live up to the calling that you have placed on our lives, with the Baptists of old, with the great reformers, with the early church, may we make real your invitation to serve as priests to one another, and may your blessing upon this sacred space, and the people gathered here by your spirit continue, evermore. In your holy name we pray, Amen.



Our River Road choir pilgrimage tour was both spiritual and educational. Christians have always celebrated and deepened their faith by visiting localities that represent important moments in the history of the Church. A choral pilgrimage is unlike an ordinary tourist's experience. Our week at cathedrals and abbeys included rehearsal, prayer, study, community building, and, of course, some sight-seeing. We deepened our connection with our Christian roots, connected with the past in a meaningful way, and established lasting relationships with the contemporary church - within some of the most hallowed spaces in England. This was a rich spiritual opportunity to enter into the centuries-long tradition of choral-led

cathedral services in the Anglican tradition, part of River Road's



PRACTICING THE PROCESSION IN BRISTOL CATHEDRAL



ecumenical outreach.

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL



REHEARSING IN THE CHOIR STALLS OF TEWKSBERRY ABBEY WITH A VIEW OF ORGANIST, HUW WILLIAMS.



BY SANDY ROONEY

Fall Fun for Children

Our Children's Ministry has been busy with TFC-Kids, and preschool and children recreation activities.

During the months of September and October, our TFC-Kids mission group has been learning about CBF field personnel who work with children near and far to teach others about Christ. The mission group is saving money to give a donation in December for the CBF mission programs.

Our first Preschool Fun Morning for the school year was on Saturday, September 28. We had about ten preschool-age and younger children participate. The children enjoyed playing with legos, blocks, art, puppets, music, and stories. We talked about God's world and all the wonderful things God created.

On October 12 the 1st-5th graders met at Boomerang Air Sports and enjoyed an afternoon of fun. The children jumped on trampolines, and they climbed an inflatable race course and ninja warrior course. They were exhausted after an hour! We finished the time together with lunch.

On October 26, our largest event was Trunk or Treat. It was a beautiful and fun afternoon with a balloon artist, games, crafts, and 42 trunks for trick or treating.

There were about 200 children from the church, preschool, and community. The children had blast going from trunk to trunk getting candy. Thank you to all those that donated candy, brought their trunks and gave out candy, helped with set up and take down, and ran games and booths. I truly appreciate everyone's help to make this a wonderful community event.

The fall has been a lot of fun learning, playing, and getting to know each other better.

Trunk or Treat

The weather held out on October 26 and we had a great turn out for Trunk or Treat. It had been a few years since I'd been at this River Road event and it was just as I remembered it: tons of children dressed in their Halloween costumes, trunks decorated spookily or fun and festive, and candy being passed out by the handful. I enjoyed seeing faces I knew from church, preschool children and their families, and new friends from our community all partaking in Halloween festivities together. One little girl dressed as Wonder Woman came to see me several times with her giant smile and our mutual "girl power" salute each time—a muscle flex and a high five. Trunk or Treat is an event that invites all to come and partake—it's an easy entry, not intimidating introduction to our church and a great opportunity to reach out to community members who may not otherwise come to River Road. Opportunities like these are ones we need to latch onto and grow as we strive to throw open our doors and welcome in all of God's people.



BY AMBER RYAN



THOUGHTFUL FAITH COMMUNITY

Wednesdays at RRCB

BY ANNA PERRY MILLER

Looking Back at TFC-Adults

A Time of Remembering 9/11 with Rev. Dr. Jim Slatton

Our first Wednesday night evening happened to fall on September 11, 2019. Because this has been such a significant event in shaping how we have moved forward in our country, we decided to let this night be one of remembrance. While it was a difficult subject, it was a great gift that Rev. Dr. Jim Slatton was willing to join us in recollecting his week following this tragedy and the challenge he faced in coming with a message to the church on the following Sunday. It is remembered as a day with little standing room left, as many gathered in for a word of hope and wisdom.

Dr. Slatton acknowledged the necessary process of grief through which people must go. He gave voice to the hard questions asked about God and faith in the face of such pain. There was an encouragement to remember that, in our grief, we must not take on



the behaviors of those whose behavior we grieve and detest. Finally, Dr. Slatton reminded us that, in humility, we follow a God of love who never leaves us or forsakes us, even in our darkest times. As he shared an excerpt of his sermon on September 11, here is a brief piece of his powerful message:

"After the towers came down, in the midst of the carnage, there was God. God was in the dust-caked and tear-streaked face of a New York fireman. I think I saw God also in all of those who in the best tradition of firefighting raced up the stairs, lugging their heavy gear, faces to the flames, while everyone else was rushing downstairs trying to escape. God is with us, I think, in the avalanche of compassion that has been released by this tragedy, for God and good are within us and between us as we reach out to each other. Thus we lit this morning the paschal candle to remind us of the presence of the Christ in the midst of chaos, and that "nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières) with Dr. David Elliott



It was in October we enjoyed learning about the experiences of Dr. David Elliott, retired military surgeon, who travels in serving through *Médecins Sans Frontières*, known to us as Doctors Without Borders. Hearing about the organization itself was fascinating, as they take their role of speaking out for those in need very seriously. When Doctors Without Borders persons learn of an injustice in a land where they are offering care, they point it out and bring it to light in the world, both a wonderful yet dangerous role to fill. Even more amazing are the stories he shares of heart-wrenching times when he was able to save lives, meet needs, and realize that there are limitations to controlling it all. It is remarkable and inspiring work.

Please pray for David, along with his wife Cecelia, as he is headed to Cameroon to serve later in the week. This is a country where he has not yet served. He is planning to be home before Christmas. This commitment is one they both make as they trust the Lord to guide and direct, provide and be present with each of them. Thank you for your prayerful support for his continuing service.



Fall Kickoff

Fall for youth starts with a family-friendly fall kickoff. The youth and their families are invited for dinner and games followed by an information meeting about what all is happening with youth for the fall. It's a really good time together. This year an intense competition of Head, Shoulders, Knees, Cup was held, as you can see Amber and Jack Ryan playing. Lots of laughter, friendly competition, and fellowship happened.







Fall Retreat

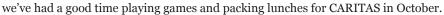
The first weekend in November the youth headed to Camp Crossroad in Lowesville, VA for the CBF Virginia youth fall retreat. We joined with about 160 other youth from around the state to discuss who are the *Faithful Voices* in our lives, and how can we be a *Faithful Voice* for others. God places people in our lives who guide and teach us, reminding us that we are not alone. Who are these people for you? It was a wonderful weekend (and cold!) spent worshipping, painting, hiking, creating, and laughing.

Retreats are one of my favorite parts of youth ministry as it takes youth out of their everyday elements, and allows them to be in community with one another learning and growing. Thank you so much to chaperones Buddy Sumner and Andrea Glaze for going with us. And thank you, RRCB for the ways you support our youth to help make the Fall Retreat and other events happen.



Sunday Nights

This fall we've been discussing the themes found in the Psalms in youth group. We've discussed Blessing, Anxiety, Praise and more so far. Good discussions have been held around each theme, and we are learning more about God and each other. On top of the Bible Study,









Fifth Quarter

Fifth Quarter was held the last Friday of September and October. It's a chance to come together with friends after the Friday night football games and run off some energy. The youth fellowship, eat and enjoy games together. At the October Fifth Quarter, we hold a pumpkin painting contest. This year's winners were Ella Glaze and Eleanor Roberts for their Bob Ross-inspired pumpkins.

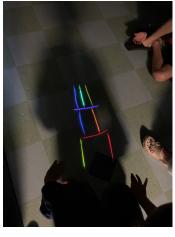






TFC-Youth

Wednesdays, we







simply play games and eat a sweet treat. It's meant to be a moment to relax and laugh with their friends. We've played all sorts of games from backwards charades to glow stick Pictionary and scavenger hunts around the church.



The CARITAS Model for Transformation: Buildings and Lives

This past October, a small RRCB group was provided the opportunity to tour the entire CARITAS program and its progress. Karen O'Brien, COO and Tiffany Hall Terry led our group which included Anna Perry Miller, David Breckenridge, Marnie Fisher-Ingram, and Daniel Ingram. We started with a tour of the vibrant and functioning Men's Healing Place.

As we moved through each section of the Healing Place, walking through the process both mentally and physically, we heard the terms Intentionality, Dignity and Accountability, and Constructed with Love.

We exited the Healing Place with an understanding of how CARITAS manifests these terms within the men in the programs. This systematic and heartfelt embrace in the men's facility model will now have a sister facility a mile away. In a nearby gigantic concrete warehouse that once contained machinery to mix tobacco leaves into cigarettes, an incredible CARITAS transformation is happening. For the next phase of the tour our group put on hard hats to see the progress of the CARITAS Center. The sense of purpose and urgency was palatable as our ears were punctured with the sounds of drills and heavy machinery. We moved through clouds of dust and cascades of water to witness the newly framed walls that will become apartments, meeting rooms, a chapel, and facilities for the CARITAS Center. This abandoned building is being transformed for the women of CARITAS to find Hope and Home in this space. It seems CARITAS has been transforming lives *and* buildings.

Such a transformation has been possible with the help of the volunteers and gracious donations—our congregation is committed to continue providing both for CARITAS.

Gospel Choir Brings Hope, Healing to Juvenile Offender

For the past 14 years, RRCB Prison Ministry volunteers have visited a unit of adolescent boys at the Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center (BAJCC) for one hour each month, lending their time, listening ears, and hearts in fellowship with these young men. Beginning in fall 2018, RRCB entered into a partnership with Bon Air Presbyterian Church to provide financial support for a new initiative: Voices of Jubilee Gospel Choir at BAJCC. Modeled on the Richmond Boys Choir, which includes character development and coaching for participating members, the choir is open to both girls and boys who are incarcerated at the Bon Air facility. In addition, it provides an exposure to the love and acceptance of the Gospel. The Board of Missions approved the allocation of funds to support hiring a choir director and a pianist to hold twice monthly practices for interested residents.

In a recent letter of thanks to River Road Church, Baptist, Choir Pastor Rev. Lauren Ramseur writes: "...since October we have met twice a month with 24 youth, singing and sharing the joy and peace of God's love. This ministry is making a significant impact on the lives of our youth and all who are involved, including Officers who regularly join us in song, infusing joy and love into the shared experience."

In April, RRCB Prison Ministry members attended the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet at BAJCC and were treated to an emotionally-moving concert performed by the young people happily wearing their choir t-shirts. In a piece selected by the youth, we heard the lyrics:

Who the Son sets free Oh is free indeed, I'm a child of God, Yes, I am. In my Father's house There's a place for me. I'm a child of God, Yes, I am.

I am chosen, not forsaken, I am who You say I am. You are for me, not against me. I am who You say I am. I am who You say I am.
I am a child of God,
Yes, I am.
(A Child of God by Hillsong
Worship)

Asked to share with banquet attendees what being in the choir meant to him, one young man said: "They believe in us enough to know we are not going to let our mistakes become who we are, but, in fact, are going to let our success become who we are going to be. (W)hat you are teaching us will live forever in our hearts and minds and...maybe one day what you all taught us will show up through the way we speak, walk and think. Thank you for caring and believing in us when nobody seems to."

Rev. Ramseur's letter continues: "This is the heart of our ministry, bearing witness to God's love for our youth, so that their voices and the inner whisper of their heart will sing out: 'I am a child of God....Yes, I am.' ...We are deeply grateful for [RRCB's] partnership...which has created a space for beauty, love, and grace to grow. We are committed to keep on serving and hope you will continue to partner with us as we...deepen our ministry to incarcerated youth."

BY CHRISTIE LESSELS

Lloyd Jackson Memorial Bland Mission Trip

The 2019 trip took place from September 15-20. Our home base was The Bland Ministry Center which is supported by the BGAV and several other organizations. During our week there, we were assigned projects requiring many different skill sets.

Our team members consisted of many long-time volunteers and some first timers joined us as well. The returning cast included **Brock** and Bonnie Livick, Steve and Betsy George Lowery,



Davis, Ronnie Jones, and John Hays. The newcomers were Harper Alford, Julia Nixon, Sallie Sparks, Ron Benton, Tom Gilsdorf, Bill Rusher, and Scott Leake. They were a welcome addition to the team. This was Scott's first experience cooking for the crew after Nancy Anderson's retirement from 10 years of service. Many thanks to all members who participated during the week.

After breakfast on Monday, we met with Dee Dee Hoosier, long-time leader of the Bland Ministry Center. She detailed several projects for us to tackle during the week, so with our large number of workers, we split into two teams. A team of eight traveled to the small town of Newport back towards Christiansburg to meet a gentleman from Dublin. He is part of a volunteer group, Hearts and Hammers, consisting of several churches in that area. We

were given the task of digging, forming, and pouring a concrete sidewalk 3' wide and 45' long. With his help, we were able to complete the job in two days for a 16-year-old boy, legally blind and facing yet another ankle surgery. A smaller group drove to an area near Rural Retreat, VA. They designed and built a ramp for a lady dealing with cancer treatments weakening effects.



Mid-week we were able to work closer to Bland, vastly reducing travel time. Again we formed two teams. Four of us were given the test of rehabbing a deck and ramp that were



sinking. Proper care had not been observed by the previous group. With some creative techniques, we accomplished our goal for a gentleman with stage four cancer. Upon completion, he cried and asked us to pray for him.

The larger team started on an 8x8 deck with a 25' ramp for a widow who volunteers at the center four days a week. She is not ill, but is all alone, being estranged from her only



daughter. When we completed the job Friday morning, she cried tears of joy.

In addition to construction projects, time was spent at the food pantry and clothes closet helping regular volunteers. Bill and Ron took care of several electrical issues at The Center and somewhere in the mountains on a mobile home. Bill was led there by a young lady who was much better than GPS! Many of you know former church member Linda Cash, she is part of a non-profit organization which collects clothing, shoes, bedding, etc. for folks in need—thanks to John and George for transporting 37 bags of items for delivery to Appalachia. A young couple from Tazewell met us Sunday night to collect the items. Also, thanks to Tom for volunteering to drive his truck to pull the church trailer.

We hope this gives you an idea of the type of service we perform in SW Virginia... helping those who are in need. Our departure date next year will be Sunday, September 20, 2020.

BY STEVE & BETSY LOWERY



Enrichment, Farm Animals, Chapel, & Family Fun Night

We have had a fun-filled fall here at River Road Preschool!

Afternoon enrichments have kept our little learners extra busy! Coach Chad with Kickers is working on ball handling skills and Mrs. Ryan has her group cooking away as they munch their way through the alphabet. Ms. Crews students are creatively cutting as they learn scissor skills, Coach Searles has friends racing for the ball in tennis, and ArtHaus is bring out our creative side. Village Dance has girls up on their toes, Ms. Fendely is exploring the five senses through play, investigations are underway in Ms. Crew's science, and all kinds of movement and games are being explored in Hop, Pop, and Rock!

Our students enjoyed visiting with the friends from Laughing Farm on the front plaza.

With goats, alpaca, chicks, and more, I'm not sure who enjoyed it more—the children or the teachers!

October found us having our first chapel service of the year. Mrs. Starke shared the story of the Good Samaritan through a great children's story about two boys who become friends on the playground. Lisa Patten joined us from the Evelyn D. Reinhart Guest House at St. Mary's to thank the children for the items that families had donated and to explain to them how this house with 16 rooms worked! Her story was much like that of the Good Samaritan, as they reach out daily to support families in their time of need.

Our Family Fun Night took place at the end of October. Families joined us for a night of fall festivities, food, and music. The ponies took children for rides out on the front plaza, the smells of pizza filled

the Fellowship Hall and also many tummies, fall crafts were made and games played. The book fair arrived at the same time for all to enjoy! A giant thank you to Leslie Crenshaw for planning this evening packed with fall fun!













The Arts Committee hosted the Watercolor Art Party on October 22, 2019. The party was led by Judy Dixon, who supplied the painting and drawings for the night. Thank you Judy and the Arts Committee for a wonderful night. Thank you to the family of Mary Ann Brandt, whose desire was for everyone to have an opportunity to experience the joy of art.

Highlights from Art Party attendees...

Judy and all her assistants were incredible! Lots of fun and great pies! —Bev Beck

The art party was a wonderful time of fellowship! The project was fail-proof with the lovely and informative instruction. The most interesting part was that everyone had the exact same resources and information, yet every painting looked different. The pies were delicious and made the evening just perfect. —Pam Proffitt

The pie was great! A fun time was had by all. —Richard Fowler

The best part of the evening, for me, is that you are made to feel you are a true artist! You get to try something just for fun, not a grade. Also you enjoy being with friends and meeting new friends. I must say, I did feel a little stress when I got the wrong color to paint something, [but] that is when I learned the magic of painting... you just start mixing the paint and the color you like appears. Then you find your style and you get permission to paint it your way! What a wonderful gift! The true artists are so kind to share their knowledge with a smile and great compliments to make us feel good about ourselves. Then to add to all the good feelings you get to have yummy pie! Thanks to all that gave their time to made the evening such a success! —Deb Gray

The art party was an intergenerational event for me with my grandchildren and the youngest of all did the best painting in our family. —Fred Anderson

While at the art party, I had a choir member say, "I had so much fun, and learned a lot, unlike some other art classes I've taken. I'd like to be apart of [the] Art Committee that brings art to life!" —Sherry Sorrell

I had a wonderful time. I loved how everyone's painting was unique even though we all had the same materials, instructions, and inspiration piece. My favorite part was doing the snow at the very end; although, I think I got more snow on me than the paper! The pies were also excellent and made painting much easier. —Kate Proffit

The Watercolor Art Party was a wonderful experience. Not only was it fun to be with friends and enjoy learning together, but even those of us with little to no painting experience left with a lovely work of art! Huge thanks to Judy Dixon and all on the Arts Committee who planned a beautiful event and were right there with the help we needed as we worked along. Oh, and did I mention the pie? So many delicious pies! Painting and pie make for a special evening, and I look forward to next time. —Karen Collier







Celebration Sunday

September 8, 2019: Worship, Picnic, & Presentations









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