

**February 2019**

**Volume 33.2**

**St. John's  
United Church  
of Christ**

*St. John's United Church of Christ is a diverse community forming a united congregation, seeking to grow our faith, share it with others, and serve God's people wherever the need is present. We are living God's love and all are invited!!!*

**An Open and  
Affirming  
Congregation**

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



Dear All,

Though Lent this year does not begin till March 6<sup>th</sup> when we celebrate Ash Wednesday, my thoughts have been on planning for our worship through Lent. This year we are doing a series for Lent called BUSY: RECONNECTING WITH AN UNHURRIED GOD. I thought this series that invites us to think of Lent as a time to let go of hurry and worry to make room for God, a time to declutter our lives to simplify and focus on what is truly important to us.

We will be focusing our time together in worship on the fact that though we live in a clock-ticking world that runs at a break neck pace where each of us accomplish overwhelming tasks, Jesus calls us to more than unbridled consumption and production. Rather the scripture calls us to honor our lives and our bodies as gifts to be nurtured.

I invite you to start thinking about a prayer chair to make your sacred space at home for your time with God this Lent. On Ash Wednesday we will spend a little time making our prayer boxes to have a place to let go of our hurry and worry by giving it over to God. During Lent you will be given packet to take home and use in your personal worship.

As we continue our journey through Epiphany looking at all the ways God calls us to be more fully who we have been made to be, we will be focusing on committing ourselves to God. On March 3<sup>rd</sup> The Rev Charlie Summers will be here to preach and lead Communion while I am off being trained by the conference to be a social justice facilitator. We will continue in February with our call in Bible study at 2pm on Tuesdays. Please look in the newsletter for the scriptures for each week.

In Love,

*The Rev. Linda Higgins*



January 23, 2019

Dear Partners in Christ:

The vision of a body united - in purpose, in mission, in vision - is one that inspired the birth of our denomination. All of our spiritual impulses reverberate in an effort to call us into a more perfect union. Throughout our shared history as a people of faith and as a part of the Body of Christ, we have challenged ourselves to widen the circle of inclusion. Widening the circle has always come with growth pains as we shed old skins and welcome those whom we had previously thought unwelcome. And, with each new articulation of a more fully expressed Body of Christ we have realized new joy. Through it all we remain focused on the call to be one and committed to meeting the challenges inherent in that call.

We are now living in and through a season when the threats to unity are legion. Talk of walls that mark refugees as threats, labels like 'terrorist' that attach too easily to Muslims, overt racial bias that normalizes fear and hatred, a pandemic of abuse to women with the trigger reflex to forgive the men who author that abuse have turned America into a land many of us no longer recognize and that too many of us are finding harder and harder to reconcile with our faith.

Now more than ever, the Holy Spirit of the Living God and the Risen Christ is seeking to partner with anyone committed to unifying the human community. The gospel mandate to love our neighbor as we love ourselves resonates deep within us. It calls for the better angels among and within us to always resist impulses to hate, to condemn, to vilify, or to castigate. In such a time as this, the United Church of Christ's call to fulfill the prayer of Jesus, that they may all be one, stands as an urgent mandate to disciples who envision a just world for all.

United with you in God's service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John C. Dorhauer".

The Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer  
General Minister and President

*Officers of the Church*

**Rev. John C. Dorhauer**  
General Minister and President

**Rev. Traci D. Blackmon**  
Associate General Minister  
Justice and Local Church Ministries

**Rev. James A. Moos**  
Associate General Minister  
Global Engagement and Operations  
Co-executive for Global Ministries



# BE THE CHURCH

God is still speaking,  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

*Protect the environment. Care for the poor.  
Embrace diversity. **Reject racism.** Forgive often.  
Love God. **Fight for the powerless.**  
Share earthly and spiritual resources. Enjoy this life.*

## January 2019 Justice Event





# Adult Faith formation

**Bible Study** using Brian McLaren's "We Make the Road by Walking: A Year Long Quest for Spiritual Formation, Reorientation and Activation" continues during the month of February. It is a Conference Call Bible Study where you can stay home or even take a late lunch at work and join us. To join us, dial **605-486-8828** then enter the access code **237512#** and you will be connected.

Our topics for the month of February are:

## **February 5 Chapter 22**

"Jesus the Teacher" (*Proverbs 3:1-26, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Mark 4:1-34*)

## **February 12 Chapter 23**

"Jesus and the Multitude" (*Ezekiel 34:1-31, Luke 5:17-32; 18:15-19:9*)

## **February 19 Chapter 24**

"Jesus and Hell" (*Jonah 4:1-11, Luke 16:19-31, Matthew 25:31-40*)

## **February 26 Chapter 25**

"Jesus, Violence, and Power" (*Isaiah 42:1-9; 53:1-12, Matthew 16:13-17:9*)



## **CARITAS IS OUR FEBRUARY MISSION OF THE MONTH.**

We will be serving as the intake center for the CARITAS women's group beginning Saturday, **March 9 continuing nightly through April 20.** First English and the Church of the Good

Shepherd will be taking Monday and Tuesday nights. We need members of St. John's to serve as hosts for Wednesday through Sunday nights. There should be at least two people signed up for each day. Feel free to sign up on a day that is already taken but touch base with those people to coordinate refreshments.

We will be serving approximately 40 women each night and want to greet them with an Extravagant Welcome. As they won't have supper until somewhere between 7:00 and 8:00 p.m. and lunch was many hours earlier, we would like to serve a "substantial snack" – something sweet (cookies, brownies, cupcakes, etc.), something savory/salty (chips with salsa or cheese and crackers), and something healthy (fruit, veggies, etc.).

There will be a list with the sign up sheets of nonperishable items that we will need. All donations can be placed in the kitchen with a note indicating it is for CARITAS.

Look for more information on Sunday mornings. If you have any questions, please see **Elisabeth Burnette**. Paper sign-up sheets will be in the Parlor beginning February 10th.

# Council News

*information from us to you*

From The Council President:

With the holidays over and the renovation for the church nearly under contract, the time has come to open our vision for 2019 and beyond.

There are 125 members on the church roster but we know most Sundays, 35 folks including the choir is a big crowd. Our pledging units are down, even as some of those pledging increased their support. For St. John's to continue this must change. Certainly this is not new information for any of us. Now let me say something that might be a different thought for us, Membership in our community here at St. John's is **EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY**.

We are all a part of this community and each of us has a part to play. For example, when was the last time you asked a friend or neighbor to visit a worship service? It may be a bit outside your comfort zone but what's the worst that could happen? The person says no? Can you live with that? Of course you can. And don't stop with the first 'No'. We love St. John's and want others to share the loving, accepting and progressive community we share, right?

Talk about the missions we support. When was the last time a friend told you their church was supporting companion service dogs and welcomed them in worship; or about the homeless high school kids in Richmond and how your church community supported them; or how your church displays a 'Rainbow' flag and that all are welcome?

I'm not talking about 'evangelism ' (although that word means Good News). I'm talking about being proud of belonging to a progressive Christian community and wanting to share that. Maybe you've overheard a group that needs a place to meet temporarily, did you think of our facility.

I agree we need a plan to increase traffic here and hopefully the Council and Pastor can continue to seek ways we can make better use of our facilities as we renovate. BUT it's not just the council's job to do that. It is all of our responsibility to talk to neighbors and invite folks to visit.

We have a dedicated group of hard working members who devote their time and talents to St. John's every time something is on the calendar and we are fortunate to have them. We need everyone pulling together to continue to move forward and keep our church community vibrant. As we've heard in Pastor Linda's sermons, the church is the body of Christ, and each one of us is a vital part of Christ's body.

We all have gifts given to us by GOD. What is your gift? We need your gifts, we need your energy. We need you!

*Dreama Terrill*

Church Council President



# church council MEETING

Church Council met for their monthly meeting on Monday, January 14, 2019.

**Finance** – The Finance Committee will meet to review the report on January 15, 2019 and have previously met with Carol and Sanya to ensure proper accounting of money and contributions. Jeff moved \$5,000 to the SunTrust Vanco account and \$5,000 the Suntrust checking account from the Suntrust money market account in order to have adequate funds for expenses over the next few months. The current balance of the money market account is \$10,000 less (now \$50,000) than reflected on the 12/31/2018 financial report.

**Stewardship/Budget** – St. John's received 35 pledges for \$86,000, which is down from the 2019 budget of \$100,000.

**Trustees** – Council discussed whether we should proceed with renovations or sell the building. Heat/AC in parlor has been replaced. Trustees are seeking a general contractor to manage the smaller projects. By mid - February, Council would like a quote and plans for repairing the ceiling on the third floor. Linda will determine what needs to be moved out and a work day will be planned. Trustees are moving ahead with LLC, and are days away from signing contract for HVAC replacement.

## **Committee Updates:**

- Mission: The remaining money from the Grant will be dispersed in the next two months. Marcie will prepare the 2019 application. St. John's Community Players donated \$1400 to St. John's from the Cabaret proceeds.
- Worship and Music: The service will be live-streamed on Facebook and recordings of the sermons are available upon request. The theme for the January 27 service is talents. The sign up for altar flowers will be in the Parlor. The candles and holders for the sanctuary need to be repaired. The Welcome Teams desperately need members. The consensus is to have the service remain at 10:00.
- Christian Education: Kids are reviewing worship practices.
- Congregational Life and Care: The Congregational Life & Care Ministry reviewed the roster and sent letters to people who had not attended or given money in the last twelve months. Eight letters were sent, two people asked to remain on the roll, three people asked to be removed, and no response was received from three people. The membership directory has been updated. The freezer has been restocked with soup.

Council asked Pastor Linda to enhance her report to provide more detailed information.

## **Motions:**

Minutes – November 12, 2018 Council Meeting Minutes and December 2, 2019 Congregational Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted.



# Worship and Music

We thank everyone who helped to “green” and “de-green” the church sanctuary before and after the Advent/Christmas season. Our beautiful sanctuary seems meant to be adorned with garlands and ribbons and lights. It seems a shame to only decorate her for 6 weeks out of the year. If anyone has any creative ideas for adorning her with festal finery at other times of the year... we would welcome your ideas and your willingness to “make it so.”

We also wish to thank all those who took part in our Advent and Christmas worship services – candle-bearers, candle-lighters, readers, musicians and audio/visual technicians. We were inaugurating a new worship format during Advent/Christmas using worship resources from Worship Design Studio. We are grateful for your willingness to “go with the flow” and let us change things up a bit and do a new thing. We have invested in a year’s subscription to Worship Design Studio and we will be using their materials again during Lent and at other times during the year. This resource explores different themes in the context of worship and connects current spiritual, communal or ethical concerns with scripture, music, art, prayer, meditation, movement, etc. It will help us integrate our new TV screen/projection system into worship, introduce us to new congregational and choir music and inspire us to connect to God in refreshing ways.

The congregational approval of the 2019 budget meant that you have given us permission to reach out to the community and invite local professional musicians and their protégés to share their talents to enhance our worship services. We may not have a full choir every Sunday, but we hope to have gifted singers and instrumentalists, both professionals and aspiring students, to enliven our worship experience.

As Linda announced in last month’s Messenger, our services are now being lived streamed on Facebook each week. Hopefully, this will help those who are ill or unable to get to worship to stay connected to the community and know what is going on. Hopefully, it will also attract those who are seeking to become connected to a diverse and inclusive, yet traditionally grounded Christian community of faith. Having our services live-streamed raised a red flag for us as we realized that our heartfelt sharing of prayer concerns in worship could pose a problem with respect to rights of privacy. Therefore, we now ask that only a name be lifted up in prayer, but no details regarding the need for prayers. Details may be shared in private during Coffee Hour. As we expand our use of technology to reach the least and the lost, we also must expand our boundary awareness to shelter those whose privacy needs to be respected.

If you wish to donate altar flowers in memory or celebration of a loved one, the sign-up sheet has been moved from outside Pastor Linda’s office to the Parlor next to the sign-up sheets for Liturgist and Hospitality Hosts. We hope that this will both encourage donations and reduce confusion. If you have any questions about floral donations, please contact Johanna Gilbert.

We hope that you will prayerfully consider signing up to host a Coffee Hour or be a liturgist during this quarter. If you have any questions or concerns about either of these commitments, please call Rev. Beverly Lindsey at (804) 275-7165. May you have a safe and blessed Epiphany season.





### *Save the Date!*

On Saturday, May 18, 2019 at 4 p.m., St. John's United Church of Christ members Chris Wing and Scott Siefert will become husband and wife. All members of St. John's UCC are invited to attend. The ceremony and reception will be held at St. John's beginning at 4 p.m. and the dinner reception will be held in the fellowship hall immediately after the ceremony. Chris and Scott met and fell in love at St. John's and very much wish for all members to be a part of their celebration of faith, thanksgiving and commitment. Please reserve this date to be with them. Street parking will be available as well as parking at the VCU deck. There will be RSVP sign-up sheets after services in March. We hope you can join us!



### 2019 Lenten Worship Series

#### **"Busy"**

*"God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference"*

We live in clock-ticking world at a break neck pace trying to accomplish overwhelming tasks. Jesus calls us to more than unbridled consumption or production. Rather, the scripture calls us to honor our lives and bodies as gifts that should be nurtured.

The Question....What does it cost us to be so busy? Join us for a Lenten fast from so much hurry and worry.

- Wednesday, March 6th Ash Wednesday **"Busy"**
- Sunday, March 10th **"The Right Tempo"**
- Sunday, March 17th **"Preparing a Table"**
- Sunday, March 24th **"Tuning In"**
- Sunday, March 31st **"Living Light"**
- Sunday, April 7th **"A Time for Every Matter"**
- Sunday, April 14th **"Give it a Rest"**

### MUSIC NOTES FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

**February 3rd** ~ *"The Greatest of These Is Love"* by Roberta Bitgood, David Townsend, Soloist

**February 10th** ~ *"Because You Love Me"*, Virginia Clark, Soloist

**February 17th** ~ *"Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit"*, Amber DePass, Soloist (Luke 6:20-23) New Beatitude Paraphrase, Tune: ANNIKAS DANCE (NCH 180)

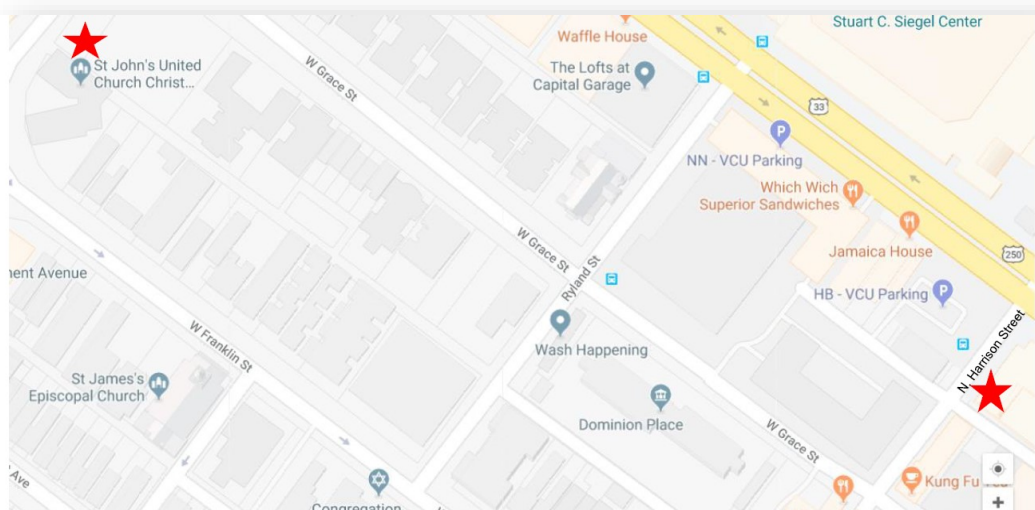
**February 24th** ~ *"I Waited for The Lord"* by Mendelssohn Doret, Kathy Freise and Helena DeLigt, Vocalists







Sunday parking is available at the VCU deck located at Broad and Harrison Streets. You will receive a ticket to access parking. Shuttle service is available one hour before service to transport members and guests from the parking lot to church and at the church following service and coffee hour. The bar code to use as you exit the parking lot, so you do not pay for parking, **is on the weekly bulletin cover**. Parking is also available on Sundays from 7 am to 2 pm on the island side of Monument Avenue. For more information, call the office at 358-9291.



### **St. Johns Church Shuttle**

The vans will pick up at the parking structure at 534 N. Harrison Street and transport to the alley behind the church. **Shuttle service from parking structure to church begins at 9:00 am and will run until 10:15 am.**

After the church services are complete the shuttle will begin transporting the congregation from the alley behind the church back to the parking structure at 534 N. Harrison Street. **The return shuttle will begin at 11:30 am and run until 12:15.**



Expiration Date: 06/30/2019 11:59:59 PM

Validation Number: WB-603

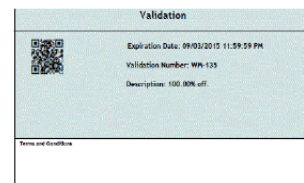
Description: 100.00% off.

### Steps to Using a QR Code:

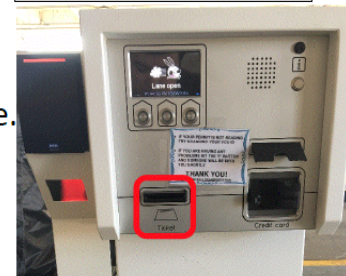
1. When coming into the deck press the button on the machine to receive an entry ticket.



2. Obtain a copy of the QR Code while at the church.



3. When exiting the deck reinsert the entry ticket into the machine so it can calculate time spent and the associated fee.



4. Scan your QR Code on the scanner just left of the machine.



5. If you are experiencing problems and there is no attendant nearby, please hit the "I" button and someone from our 24/7 Command Center will be with you shortly.







# Volunteer Ministries

Ministry	February 3 Team 3	February 10 Team 4	February 17 Team 4	February 24 Team 1
Welcome Team Leader	Pam Miller	Dorothy Cook	Dorothy Cook	Richard Bighinatti
Sound System	Bruce Miller	Jeff Michel	Jeff Michel	David Pittman
Tellers				
Liturgist	Erin Burnette	Sarah Allen		Chris Wing
Facilities		Bud Higgins	Bud Higgins	Richard Bighinatti
Altar Guild	Erin Burnette Georgianne Stinnette	Lynda Merry	Johanna Gilbert Charlotte Quick	Helen Bunch
Fellowship Hosts	Richard and Betsy Bighinatti	Lynda Merry	Don and Beth Stiegler	Charles and Terri Weaver
Altar Flowers				

**Teller Coordinator:**  
Bud Higgins  
804-301-5059

**Fellowship Host Coordinator:**  
Rev. Beverly Lindsey  
804-275-7165

Celebrating a special occasion?  
Honoring a loved one?



*Please find a substitute if you are unable to perform your ministry and contact your Team Coordinator AND the office to let them know who will be filling in for you. Thank you for making our church ministries run smoothly!*

# February 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 10 am Worship Special CARITAS Presentation "February Birthdays" Reception	4 5:30 pm Finance Team Meeting	5 2 pm Conference Call Adult Formation	6	7 1:00 pm Worship & Music Mtg. @ St. Johns 6:30 pm Endowment Mtg Don Stiegler Home	8	9
10 10 am Worship Mission & Outreach Meeting after Service	11 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting	12 2 pm Conference Call Adult Formation	13	14 1 pm The Fellowship Luncheon @ O 'Charley's 6291 W. Broad St.	15	16
17 10 am Worship Congregational Life & Care Meeting after Service	18	19 2 pm Conference Call Adult Formation	20	21	22	23
24 10 am Worship	25	26 2 pm Conference Call Adult Formation	27	28		



7 Griffin Allen  
 10 Kristina Gilbert  
 12 Brent Trefsgar  
 Agapito Ruiz-Millan  
 11 Dan Trent  
 17 Helena DeLigt  
 18 Linda Stiegler  
 21 Bryan Totty  
 24 Bud Higgins

25 Shirley Townsend  
 26 Cheryl Goode  
 27 Bettie Staton  
*If you are celebrating  
 a birthday  
 in the month of  
 February, join us in  
 the Fellowship Hall  
 on Feb. 3rd for  
 a special reception  
 to honor you!*