

UPDATE

For the spirit of the city

RICHMOND
HILL

2209 EAST GRACE STREET RICHMOND, VA

DECEMBER 2010

TENDING THE SPIRIT

The locality of God

There are two passages in the Gospels, one at the beginning and one at the end, that are not often related to one another.

The first is the beautiful story of the birth of Jesus from Luke's Gospel (Luke 2:1-7): Luke does his best to record the time and place of Jesus' birth, as well as the name of his parents. It was at the time of the census required by the Roman Emperor Augustus, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. The place was Bethlehem, in Judea. The parents were named Mary and Joseph.

Jesus was a specific child born at a specific place at a specific time.

The second passage in Scripture is from the teaching of Jesus, and is represented as a final lesson at the end of Matthew's Gospel (Matthew 25:31-46). Early in his account, Matthew agrees with Luke as to the time and place of Jesus' birth, and the names of his parents. Toward the end, Matthew records Jesus' teaching about the last judgement. The fundamental criterion - the only criterion - on which a life is to be judged, Jesus says in the parable of the sheep and the goats, is on a person's relationship to the people in his or her immediate vicinity in the time of his or her own life.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem when Quirinius was governor. His parents were Mary and Joseph. Each of us is born in a particular place of particular parents. The criterion for judging our lives, Jesus said toward the end of his own life, is local -- how we live where we live with the brothers and sisters whom God gives us.

The Last Judgement is a teaching about heaven and hell, but it is not what you think. The Last Judgement defines heaven and hell. Heaven is a place where people live in community, taking the lives of the others in their community as seriously as they take their own. Hell is a place where people don't care about one another.

Heaven and hell are immediately at hand. Both are experienced in daily life. Hell is always in danger of swallowing us up. Heaven is always available, in the twinkling of an eye, in the awakening of a conscience, in the opening of a mind.

Hell is local. So is heaven.

There are so many ways of saying "no," it seems, but there is always the one glorious way of saying "yes." Every citizen has a locality, and for each of us that locality is

our Bethlehem. We can come to the stable to worship Jesus, or we can stay outside in the cold, attempting to insulate ourselves from the fate of others. We can hear the angels and take courage and seek peace, or we can stay on the hillside and count our sheep. We can go a long way across the desert following a star, or we can give up, tacitly helping Herod get rid of any challenge to the greed and power which make men miserable.

The most difficult thing for us, it seems, is to get out of the theory of our religion and into the specific practice in our own time and place. We did not choose the people we live among, except perhaps for a few family members or friends. We did not choose the time and place. We did not volunteer for these particular issues and this particular period in history. We do not possess any particular competence, any extraordinary vision, any secret answers to the struggles of our colleagues in this metropolitan city. We hardly know how to order our own lives, much less that of more people than ourselves.

We prefer charity to justice, not because it is more advantageous for people, but because we can understand it better and we know how to do it at least a little. At Christmas time we do what we can - Christmas baskets and angel trees and contributions to charity, if we can move ourselves in the way we should. The reasons that charity is needed seem so frequently beyond us - the mystery of the economy, the craziness of the employment picture, the struggles of race and class, the challenge of education, the bigger issues of generational privilege and family and jurisdiction and upbringing and generational trauma. We are subject to the great spiritual powers. We are near each other physically, but so vastly separated in familiarity and understanding.

Bethlehem could be an old subdivision a mile away in Southside and very few of us would even know that Jesus was being born there.

And yet the secret of Christmas is the secret of locality. It is not Bethlehem that is our concern. It is Woodlake, Wellesley, and Whitcomb Court. The commandment is not to go to the stable in the Judean village. It is to visit the manger in our own metropolitan city and see what God has brought to pass. The star is here. The wise men have arrived. The angels are singing, the shepherds worshipping. We must rediscover our own locality, before it is too late.

Can we possibly see that each effort makes a difference? We feel so helpless, but there is always a place to start.

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We have far more power than we know, and many of us have power that we choose not to use. We not only have money which we may give, we have the influence that money gives us. We carry our networks with us. If we isolate ourselves, the network of our lives dead-ends in our torpor.

What is most extraordinary about the birth of Jesus is that God was willing to start with one person, at one moment in time, with one mom and dad, in one place, and to build from there. It's a small start, no matter how much you ramp up the angels and magnify the shepherds, no matter how many gifts the magi bring. It's person by person, situation by situation, building up first to the great urban challenge in Jerusalem and now, twenty centuries later, to Richmond and 500 other cities of over 1 million people.

The salvation of the world is this sweet Bethlehem moment, repeated over and over again. We take courage from that. We need only recognize it ourselves, in our own time, in our own locality. Here, we find, is the kingdom of heaven. Here, as the prophets foretold, the messiah is born. We will meet him here, if we meet him at all, as we open our eyes to those around us.

**B. P. Campbell,
Pastoral Director**

"Is Christ at your table?"

Scripture is filled with images of food, eating, sharing meals, and celebrating. When thinking about our community meals at Richmond Hill, I cannot help but visualize how God's Kingdom on Earth breaks in among us. Looking out of the kitchen "window" into the refectory, I can see a picture of the Kingdom that warms my heart and enlivens my spirit. I can see black, brown, and white holding hands in prayer. I can see old and young helping each other, male and female teaching each other, rich and poor laughing together...all dining together. What is it about the sharing of a home-cooked meal around a table that brings us closer to each other and closer to God?

We can find one answer to this question at the end of the third chapter of Revelation. In this passage John is writing to the angel of the church in Laodicea. The church in Laodicea is condemned for being neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm, much like the water in the city, which came from hot springs. Have you ever had a meal that was served lukewarm? The food was supposed to be either cold or hot, but it was neither. Was that meal enjoyable? The whole time you were eating, were you wishing that the food was just a little bit hotter or colder? Maybe you even asked the server to bring you something else. Or, maybe you made a trip to the microwave to heat your food. It's amazing how important food's temperature is to our enjoyment of it (not to mention the safety of it).

John indicates that Christ feels the same way about Christians. Just as we do not take pleasure in eating food that is the wrong temperature, Christ does not take pleasure in lukewarm Christians. In fact, the church of Laodicea is going to be spit out of Christ's mouth for being so tepidly distasteful!

Take a moment to reflect on your faith... Is it dull and lukewarm, or does it radiate warmth and peace? Is it fervent and alive, or is it almost dead? Whatever temperature your faith is right now, there is an extension of grace that Christ offers to all. In John's message to Laodicea, Christ says, "Listen! I am standing at the door knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me." Even if our lives reflect a lukewarm faith we are always invited to *listen*. Christ is always there knocking, waiting to be invited in, wanting to share a hot wholesome meal with us (maybe even followed by a cold bowl of ice cream!), yearning to fan the flame of our spirits. Christ *wants* to eat with us. *Imagine that.*

The next time you sit down for a meal, invite Christ to join you. Or, look around at the people sitting at your table. Has Christ already sat down and invited *you* to eat? As you enjoy each morsel of food, think about how Christ is blessing you in that very moment. Next time you come to the table at Richmond Hill, why not share a meal with someone you don't know? Help to build one more small piece of the Kingdom of God as you build one more relationship. Hope to see you at the table soon!

December Food Tip: Though the rush of the holidays is easier to buy into than not, remember that the Advent season is actually a time to slow down in preparation for Christ's birth. Can you imagine Mary in her pregnancy rushing around buying, buying, buying? I don't think so. Meditate on Christ's time in the womb and how Mary would have nurtured and fed herself in the final days before the Savior's birth. Nourish and feed yourself in these same ways. Slow food is good food.

*Peace on Earth,
Cristina Comer
Intern*

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Metro Richmond at prayer is a cooperative, covenant-ed effort of the churches of Metropolitan Richmond. We pray together each Sunday for the common concerns of our Metropolitan Richmond community. Coordination of this effort is provided by Richmond Hill. Ask your pastor to commit your congregation to participate.

Our goal is to lift up our metropolitan city in one voice as Christians of every background covenant together to take part in Metro Richmond at Prayer. New Metro Richmond at Prayer Calendars (prayer book) and covenants are available at Richmond Hill.

To order the prayer book, or to obtain a covenant, call the Rev. Del Sledge at 783-7903 ext. 19, or email Metro Richmond at Prayer at: mrp@richmondhillva.org. You may also fill out a covenant at our website: www.metrorichmondprayer.org.

Pray for Public, Non-profit, and Religious Social Service Work and Ministries in Metropolitan Richmond

December 2010

I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. (Genesis 12:3 ESV, NRSV)

December 5, 2010. We pray for the families of Metropolitan Richmond: For single-parent families, adoptive families, foster families, families going through divorce; and for households that are communities of friends.

December 12, 2010. We pray for the families of Metropolitan Richmond: For elderly persons living in their own homes, in retirement communities, and in nursing institutions; for all in the midst of life transitions.

December 19, 2010. We pray for the families of Metropolitan Richmond: For persons who are lonely or have no family; for persons who are estranged from their families; for persons who are grieving the loss of a loved one; and for all who need to feel the love of God.

December 26, 2010. We pray for the families of Metropolitan Richmond: For the care and protection of infants, children, and young people; for an end to child abuse; for healthy relationships between children and their parents; and for the intimate knowledge that each one is a Beloved child of God.

Gifts

The Travelers Foundation, the charitable arm of Travelers companies, has awarded the Armstrong Leadership Program with grants totaling \$25,000 to support the program this year. Travelers is the leading corporate sponsor of the Armstrong program, providing training for job readiness and exposure to our students, mentoring, and continuing relationship with students and staff. The Richmond office of Travelers, led by Bill Jordan and Bill Allen, has helped to plan and engage the program with Armstrong High School for the past four years.

Richmond Hill received last month an unsolicited, anonymous gift of \$10,000 to the operating fund. The gift made that particular month's budget end in the black. We give thanks to God for that gift, and to the servant of God who asked that it be sent.

Positions available

These positions are available in the residential Community of Richmond Hill. Persons occupying residential positions commit themselves for a time to the ministry of hospitality and a common life of prayer. Even if these job descriptions do not fit you, we are always willing to discuss ministry with you if you believe you may be called to membership in this Community.

Director of Facilities and Operations

Associate Pastor

Spiritual Director

To inquire or apply contact the Rev. Ben Campbell, Pastoral Director. BCampbell@richmondhillva.org. 783-7903.

Special Thanks

From the Armstrong Leadership Program

We would like to send a special thank you to our supporters of the Armstrong Leadership Program for making our October Social Gathering a huge success on October 29, 2010 at Faith Community Baptist Church. Mentors, volunteers, students and friends of A.L.P come together bi-monthly for an evening of fellowship, food, and FUN!!! If you would like to learn more about MENTORING a student at Armstrong High School, please contact either Yvette Rajput or Jeff Williams at (804) 783-7903 at Richmond Hill. You can also find more about the program on the Richmond Hill website. If your church is interested in the program, please give us a call. Again, thank you for your assistance in "Cultivating a Generation ... TODAY!"

Faith Community Baptist Church (Rev. Dr. Patricia Gould Champ) -- Hosting and Dinner

St Paul Episcopal Church -- Van Transportation

Fourth Baptist Church -- Sam Young -- Driver & Transportation

...and to all of our wonderful mentors for attending and especially Philip Jordan, guest speaker.

RETREATS

The retreats last 24 hours, from 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. A retreatant may sometimes extend the retreat for one or more additional 24-hour periods if space is available. Recommended donation is \$80 per person. Contact Karen Moore, Guestmaster, 804-783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org

Advent Retreat

Fri-Sat Dec 10-11, 2010

Annie and Ben Campbell co-lead this retreat to give a time of quiet and peace before Christmas.

Mid-winter Retreat

Sat-Sun Jan 29-30, 2011

Sometimes there will be snow, but always there is an opportunity for quiet contemplation in the stillness of winter.

February Retreat

Sat-Sun Feb 19-20, 2011

A good way to end the winter.

1st Lenten Retreat

Sat-Sun March 26-27, 2011

Many of us are in the habit of including a Lenten retreat in our annual discipline. Richmond Hill offers two alternatives.

2nd Lenten Retreat

Fri-Sat April 8-9, 2011

The Garden is fully in bloom for this Lenten Retreat.

May Retreat

Fri-Sat May 20-21, 2011

The May retreat features the comfort of Richmond Hill's beautiful Garden, with its many private "rooms" and benches for reflection and contemplation.

RETREATS

Summer Retreat

Mon-Fri June 20-25, 2011

Retreatants may come for an extended retreat of from one to four days of quiet and reflection. Richmond Hill's ample Library is always available.

**First
Fridays**

A Day of Retreat for Ministers and Other Servants

The First Friday of each month

9 am - 4 pm.

(You may come as early as 7 am to the morning prayers of the Community)

Suggested Donation: \$20 (includes lunch)

Facilitator: Mimi Weaver, Director of Grace Moves

A day for quiet reflection and spiritual renewal. Structure and guidance will be provided for those who want it as well as the option for one-on-one spiritual direction, or you can simply spend the day in silence -- your choice.

If you are serious about your spiritual life, it has been recommended that you spend a minimum of one-hour-a-day, one-day-a-month, and one-week-a-year in prayer and reflection.

RETREATS

**A
LENTEN
RETREAT**



Led by Robert Hetherington

Sat-Sun, March 26-27, 2011
4:00 p.m. Sat - 4:00 p.m. Sun

Space is limited - Register now to secure your space.

Meditations

The Meaning of Ash Wednesday
Wilderness:

Matthew 4:1-11

Nicodemus:

How can a man be born when he is old?

John 3:1-17

The Woman at the Well:

John 4:5-42

The Ability to See and Understand

John 9:1-41

Recommended Donation is \$80 per person.
Contact Karen Moore, Guestmaster,
804-783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org

SCHOOLS

SOZO: School of Healing Prayer

A new class of persons seeking to immerse themselves in the charism of Healing Prayer will begin in January, 2011. Inquiries and applications are now being received for the program. The format calls for three terms which include an overnight retreat and eight weekday evening classes. The School is led by the Rev. Sandi Kerner, Director of Healing Ministries at Richmond Hill.

The SOZO School of Christian Healing Prayer is offered to those who seek healing and wholeness in mind, body, spirit, and relationships. Participants will study Holy Scripture, the history of this ministry, its place in Church tradition, and contemporary practices of Christian healing prayer. Opportunities to receive healing prayer will be made available during most of the class sessions, on retreats, in other venues at Richmond Hill and through various healing ministries throughout the metropolitan area.

SOZO will begin its first semester, focusing on an overview of Christian Healing Prayer, with a 36-hour overnight retreat in January 2011, followed by 8 weekly sessions on Thursday evenings, from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. The evening begins with the Prayer of the Community, and continues with dinner in the Refectory and the class session. Each class session will include a presentation on a particular topic, with a small and/or large group discussion/sharing, and an experience of healing prayer will be offered.

The second semester begins with an overnight retreat in April followed by 8 weekly sessions around the theme of inner healing (e.g., our identity in Christ as Beloved Child, healing of the past hurts, listening to God, etc.).

Applicants will meet with the Dean and/or one of our faculty members prior to acceptance. Please note that every effort will be made to create a group balanced by denomination, gender, and race. The class is limited to 20 participants. Cost for the class is \$450.

Scholarships are available.

PASTORAL CARE & COUNSELING

*Now accepting applications
for 2011-2012*

Pastoral Care and Counseling is a one-year program that focuses on enhancing one's skills in ministering to those who are experiencing physical, emotional, and spiritual difficulties. It also helps persons improve the quality of their own self-reflection through journaling, prayer, meditation, and Bible reflection. The class will begin September 2011 and end June 2012. Class begins with a 24-hour opening retreat and will meet on Thursdays from 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.. The deadline for applications is July 31, 2011.

For further information, call the Rev. Dr. Alice Harris, Director, at 804-783-7903 or 804-232-8312, or e-mail at: aw_harris@juno.com

GROUPS

AA TWELVE-STEP MEETING

Tuesdays, 12:30 p.m.

CENTERING PRAYER GROUPS

Tuesdays, 4:45 - 5:45 p.m.

Karen Moore, facilitator

Tuesdays, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Helen Eano, facilitator

Each group is open to newcomers regardless of experience

*Contact: Karen Moore at 783-7903
or guestmaster@richmondhillva.org*

RUAH

The RUAH School of Spiritual Guidance exists to identify and train persons in the ministry of spiritual guidance in the context

of contemporary, urban, Christian spirituality.

As RUAH participants develop deeper intimacy with God and build the bonds of deep spiritual community within the program, we will nourish, challenge and sustain one another in living our call, and thus be part of God's transformation of metropolitan Richmond.

The RUAH School is a careful, well-developed program of training in Spirituality and Spiritual Guidance which enable lay, professional and clergy persons to serve as spiritual guides within the context of their church or Christian community, or within the extended Community of Richmond Hill.

The RUAH program is a two-year school. The first year focuses on the identification of the gift of spiritual guidance and provides opportunity for careful spiritual formation. The second year focuses on skill development and supervision in the context of developing one's own faith life.

The program consists of monthly 24-hour retreats in the context of the rhythm of life of the Richmond Hill Community. Prayer and faith sharing are a part of the discipline of all participants. Topics covered in the training include the use of Scripture in discernment, contemplative prayer, history of spirituality, dream work, vocation, social transformation, listening skills, and many other topics. Participants read a book together each month on a spiritual topic.

Applications are currently being received for RUAH X, which begins in September, 2011. If you are a person to whom people come to for spiritual conversation, and believe you may be called to develop this charism; if you believe that Jesus and the Holy Spirit want each person to find God for themselves, and long for that journey yourself; or if you are called to this ministry as a counselor or clergy person and wish to deepen your sense of the spirit's leading in this, this program may be for you.

For further information, contact Karen Moore guestmaster, or Mary Hayes, Dean of the RUAH School of Spiritual Guidance, at Richmond Hill. (804) 783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org. Some scholarship assistance is available.

DAILY PRAYERS

Morning 7:00 - 7:30 A.M.
 Noon 12:00 - 12:15 P.M.
 Evening 6:00 - 6:15 P.M.

COMMUNITY WORSHIP

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
 Every Monday

The community celebrates Holy Communion. Services are led by ministers of various denominations according to their traditions. We invite you to join us afterwards for dinner in the refectory.

TAIZÉ

Leader: Jim Bennett

7:30 p.m. first Monday of each month

Taizé worship is contemplative and meditative in character, using short songs, repeated again and again in a candle lit chapel. Using just a few words, the songs express a basic reality of faith, quickly grasped by the mind. As the words are sung over many times, the hope is this reality will gradually penetrate one's whole being. Meditative singing thus becomes a way of listening to God.

We invite you to participate in our practice of Taizé which includes singing, prayer for Metropolitan Richmond, and a period of silence. Jim Bennett is a skilled musician and leads this time of worship with a variety of musical instruments.

SOAKING PRAYER SERVICE

Leader: Fontaine Williamson
 4th Mondays at 7:30 p.m.
 1st Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.

Those struggling with illness have benefitted from being "soaked in prayer" over periods of time. Prayer ministers are available to pray with those desiring emotional, spiritual, or physical healing. Participants are invited to find a comfortable place, sit, relax, and receive prayer. Participants may also come and go during the service.

EUCHARIST FOR GENERATIONAL HEALING

Leader: The Rev. Sandi Kerner
 5th Mondays at 7:30 p.m.

Once a quarter, Richmond Hill offers a Eucharist for Generational Healing. This is an opportunity to invite God's healing into your family, including the generations that have gone before and the generations that will come after you. Please bring the blessings as well as the pains and traumas of your ancestry written on a piece of paper (not to be shared). For more information call Sandi Kerner at 783-7903.

TURN AROUND LOOK AT ME

God did not choose to signal the birth of Jesus with a showy display of mighty trumpets and celestial fireworks. He sent the joyous choir to usher the Savior into the world. The angels descended to the lowly shepherd and officially announced their message of Jesus birth. We too are called to joyfully announce today and every day the birth of Jesus and what His coming means to each of us. We are to share what it means in our lives. Let us share this meaning with others and let them see Christ in us.

We decorate our homes to celebrate the Christmas season. The colorful lights, decorative wreaths and Christmas trees provide a warm welcome holiday to family, friends and visitors. Do we invite them to meditation, prayer and Bible Study? Do we remember Bethlehem where there was no room in the inn for the expecting mother and father? The response to this couple was in a barn in a humble stable. Think about it. Are we receiving Jesus in our heart today? He desires to be born anew in our heart today and to respond to His love. He knocks again and again. He calls to us. Will we turn Him away because there's not yet a place for Him in our heart?

Live nativities are a wonderful Christmas tradition. People are excited about the parts they will portray. Young girls campaign for the honor of playing Mary. If we all could participate in the Christmas pageant this year what role would you play? Would you be too busy with your own concerns to offer shelter for the Son of God? God comes to us today in different forms but with the same role. "For God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son so that everyone who believes in Him may not die but have eternal life." (John 3:16, TEV).

The children in the Christmas pageant are such a delight to watch as they play their roles so seriously and yet spontaneously; whether it be wise men, Mary or Joseph as they gaze in awe at the Christ Child. That is how God wants us to worship His son, in spirit and in truth. We may become wise as a Magi, humble as the shepherds and obedient as Mary and Joseph until it is not a role to be played but a life to be lived.

We can imagine how Joseph and Mary must have felt when there was no room for them in the inn that night. Do we realize how Jesus might feel today when we are still refusing Him? We do not have room in our lives and heart for Him. We let Him stay in our desk draw or in the Bible which we do not open. We do not allow Him to abide in our inner recesses of our soul. "Listen! I stand at the door and knock if anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into his house and eat with him and he will eat with me." (Revelation 3:20, TEV. Let Him Rule All.

*Rev. Dr., Alice W. Harris,
 Pastoral Counselor*

I TALK TO GOD

Close your eyes that you might see the Invisible, You say a lot by listening 'cause prayer is reciprocal. It doesn't matter whether you're Baptist, Catholic, or Episcopal God hears your prayer, Even the ones you didn't know were prayer The ones you prayed when you thought even God wasn't there The Spirit translated your groans and sighs Into the prayer language, received by the Most High Close your eyes that you might see the Invisible, You say a lot by listening 'cause prayer is reciprocal. Talk to God when things go wrong When blues is your only song. When bills are unpaid Burdens heavy on your back are laid When anger grips your heart, Because you're stuck in line (and they only have two lines open) at Walmart. Talk to God when fear waxes and courage wanes Talk to God when everything is right as rain. When the river flows, The wind blows, The flowers are in blossom, And all I think is that God is awe- some. When you're in right relation With all of God's Creation When instead of weeping you can dance In the arms of life's true love romance Talk to God. I talk to God and He talks back: My heavenly Father helps get me on track. My self, my stuff, my life to unpack And work through. He loves me no matter what I do. I close my eyes that I might see the Invisible I say a lot by listening 'cause prayer is reciprocal. I talk to God and She talks back:	Mother to Son/ a staircase with exposed tacks She encourages me and comforts me She's patient... even when I dis- agree She wraps her arms around, "I Thank God, I'm found!" She loves me no matter who I be. I close my eyes that I might see the Invisible, I say a lot by listening 'cause prayer is reciprocal. I talk to God and I get answers Not always the ones I like either How can God's plan include some- thing like cancer? Although my mind is too meager, God shows me pieces of the Vision And I aspire to fulfill my part in the mission. What has God revealed in my life? How can I alleviate another's strife? What can I do about racism? Is there real Peace? How do I raise these children? What do you want now? Should I really give more to the church? Am I really special if there are 7 Billion other people you love? Am I alone? Are you there God? It's me Margaret... I mean Jeff. Can I work in corporate America with integrity? I've lost myself, do you know where I left me? For all these questions and any more, Talk to God and get some Sophia You won't get it all, but at least you'll have an idea Prayer is the one discipline that combines the immiscible, The concrete fleshy World, with the abstracted obscure spiritual Close your eyes that you might see the Invisible, Say a lot by listening 'cause prayer is reciprocal.
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*Jeff Williams,
Intern*

LOCATION AND VOCATION

The essence of Spiritual Guidance is location and vocation.

By location I do not mean shall I live in Richmond or Northern Virginia, and by vocation I do not mean what you can do to earn enough money to live in the chosen city.

Let's look at location first. In the Spiritual life location refers to where you are in relationship to God. Where you have put yourself in proximity to God - and it really is you who have chosen the proximity of yourself to God. For God's part, God is always as near to you as the next breath you take.

Are you running out in front of God, making that 5-year plan that you are counting on to bring you success and security in the eyes of your family, friends and neighbors (not to mention yourself)? All the time telling God what a wonderful plan it is and how great it would be if God would just bless it and help you bring it into fruition.

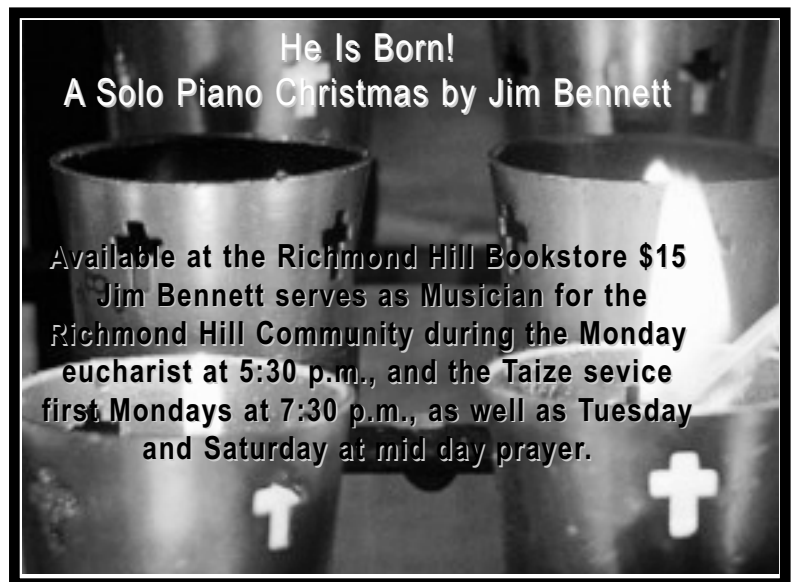
Or is your proximity to God that of being on your knees at the foot of the cross waiting on God to show you the way, the next right step. I often refer to this as the act of "whining and beseeching" and it is, in actuality, a pretty good place to be. It may feel neither comforting nor secure, but it is, in actuality, a very good place to be.

When you are in trouble do you run to this or that for comfort and solution? Or do you just bear it, being uncomfortably quiet, uneasily silent, patiently unhappy, praying all the time "lead me, oh Lord, lead me?"

And now a word about vocation. Vocation is simply the by-product of location. Vocation is the living out of what you have heard at the foot of the cross. Vocation is living out the answer to the whining and beseeching. Vocation is the doing of the next right thing God has shown you to do. Vocation is the journey of a life lived while listening and waiting on God.

The essence of Spiritual Guidance is location and vocation.

*Karen Moore,
Guestmaster*



For the spirit of the city



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December 2010



Metro Richmond at Prayer

December

Pray for the Families of
Metropolitan Richmond.

Richmond Hill is an ecumenical Christian fellowship and residential community who serve as stewards of an urban retreat center within the setting of a historic monastery. Our Mission is to advance God's healing of Metropolitan Richmond through prayer, hospitality, racial reconciliation and spiritual development.

RICHMOND HILL'S DAILY CYCLE OF PRAYER

Pray for Metropolitan Richmond
Every Day: For the healing of metropolitan Richmond; for the sick and those in our hearts; for the welfare of all our citizens; for the establishment of God's order in our community.

MONDAYS: Our citizens who live in the City of Richmond, the Mayor, Manager, City Council, and School Board. Non-profit organizations and their ministries. All schools: students, teachers, and staff. Day care centers. All who suffer from addiction, dependency, and co-dependency. The Council, residents, and staff of Richmond Hill.

TUESDAYS: Our citizens who live in Hanover County, the Board of Supervisors, School Board, and Manager. The print and broadcast media. The churches of metropolitan Richmond: members and clergy. All who live in poverty. All who suffer from mental illness.

WEDNESDAYS: The Governor of Virginia, the General Assembly, and all who work in State Government. All who work in businesses which provide services to others. All who work in construction. Hospitals and nursing homes: patients, resi-

dents, and staff; all who provide health care. Victims of violent crime; all who commit violent crime. All senior citizens.

THURSDAYS: Our citizens who live in Ashland, Hopewell, Colonial Heights, and Petersburg, the town and city Councils and Managers. All who work in banks and finance; all making financial decisions for greater Richmond. Prisons and jails of metropolitan Richmond: prisoners and staff. All who are unemployed or underemployed. All public servants.

FRIDAYS: Our citizens who live in Henrico County, the Supervisors, School Board, and County Manager. All who work in the manufacturing industry in metropolitan Richmond. The police, fire, and rescue workers. The courts. All young people. All who hurt, need inner healing, or are unable to love.

SATURDAYS: Our citizens who live in Chesterfield County, the Supervisors, School Board, and County Manager. All who work in retail trade in metropolitan Richmond, and those who own our businesses. Counselors and spiritual directors. The Sisters of the Visitation of Monte Maria. All victims of abuse; all perpetrators of abuse.

SUNDAYS: Our citizens who live in the Counties of Charles City, Goochland, Powhatan, and New Kent, the Supervisors, School Boards, and Managers. An end to racism and racial prejudice. All places of prayer or worship: churches, mosques, and synagogues. Universities, colleges, and technical schools. All who seek God.

We pray daily at Richmond Hill for persons or situations for which our prayers are requested. Call us at 804-783-7903.



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www.metrorichmondatprayer.org
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