

TENDING THE SPIRIT

The call

While on sabbatical the spring of 2009, I retreated on the isle of Iona in the western Hebrides of Scotland. There, I learned of "A Geadh-Glas," the wild goose, a symbol for the Holy Spirit in the Celtic Christian tradition. Wild geese frequent the island to nest; they are untamed, free spirits on that modest yet rugged land. Poet Mary Oliver writes that we are beckoned like the call of the wild geese, "harsh and exciting over and over announcing our place in the family of things."

God calls us, again and again, to an adventurous life. It

may sound odd to put it that way, but we need only look at Jesus' example. In him we see faithfulness equated with a willingness to face challenge, take risks, trust in love. Jesus didn't sit idly. Instead, he engaged the world, bringing healing and hope, inviting us to do the same. Reminding us that "of the one to whom much is given, much is required (Luke 12:48)."

April of last year, I received a call from a friend in Richmond. I was living in central Pennsylvania at the time and we hadn't spoken to or seen each other in a number of years. After exchanging pleasantries, he explained

that he was calling to tell me about Richmond Hill. "The community is looking for a new co-pastoral director," he told me, "and the type of work you are doing now seems well suited for this moment in Richmond Hill's history."

At the time, I served as an associate pastor working with adults to deepen their faith and find that place where, in the words of writer and theologian Frederick Buechner, their "deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." Along with some talented colleagues, we were hosting retreats, facilitating small group discussions, teaching spiritual practices and inspiring one another toward more engaged lives in the world. Energized by the work, I wasn't actively seeking a change. Yet I felt compelled to explore Richmond Hill further.

I was put in touch with then interim pastoral director Janie Walker and we began a conversation. She was clear in describing that entering into the Richmond Hill community was a discernment process, one that would unfold in God's time. Was God calling me to something new? The change in circumstance and locale would be dramatic — a major downsizing from the long-time home where we'd raised our family, a move from a small, idyllic college town to a metropolitan and unknown city, entering into intentional residential life.

Within a few weeks, Kristen, my partner of 28 years, was on a business trip in Petersburg and decided on the spur of the moment to stop at Richmond Hill. She didn't know the address, but as she tells it, it was as if someone else had taken the wheel and directed her to 2209 East Grace Street. She was greeted warmly and openly. She wandered through the bookstore and then out into the garden. Soon she was sitting alone in the chapel looking up at the words, "Unless the Lord watches over the city...," Overcome, she began to weep.

Within a month or so, we returned together to meet Janie in

person. What followed were a series of uncanny coincidences confirming the need to take seriously the possibility that God may be bringing us together. Looking through the bookstore window, the first book I saw was the one I was reading at that time, Wisdom Jesus, by Cynthia Bourgealt. I had it with me in the car. The Book of Common Worship, used at prayer, was the same book I'd used often in my own devotional practice. On subsequent trips to Richmond Hill we unexpectedly encountered people we knew, recognized, or had at one time or another crossed paths with.

At one point, I stood in the Richmond Hill labyrinth unable to move. The path before me, though well marked, seemed unknown, uncertain, unclear. My life back in State College was predictable and safe. Comfortable. I felt small in that moment, the work of Richmond Hill expansive. Though I believe that God calls us to wider circles, I wanted to turn around. Depth psychologist Bill Plotkin writes that a true call often feels like a compelling need to walk into the belly of a whale or into the storm, though our first inclination may be to run in the opposite direction, or at the very least stay put.

Discernment continued with the help of the Richmond Hill council, Janie, friends back home in Pennsylvania, my spiritual director of 20 years, and prayer. A formal interview followed and a couple more trips to visit sustained the call.

Entering community isn't to be taken lightly and was, perhaps, the hardest part of our decision. We were helped by the wise words of one of your Richmond Hill elders who, in my discernment interview, when I asked, "How does one knows they are ready to enter into intentional commu-

A true call often feels like a compelling need to walk into the belly of a whale...

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Co-Pastoral Directors The Rev. Joel Blunk jblunk@richmondhillva.org The Rev. Janie Walker

jwalker@richmondhillva.org Administrator

Charles Williams administrator@richmondhillva.org Coordinator of Spiritual Guidance Deborah Streicker

dstreicker@richmondhillva.org Guest Master DeBorah Cannady retreats@richmondhillva.org

Development Director Debbie Winans development@richmondhillva.org

Communications Director **Richard Rumble**

rrumble@richmondhillva.org Holistic Pastoral Care & Counseling The Rev. Dr. Alice Harris

arris@richmondhillva.org Hospitality Coordinator & Facilities Manager David Vinson facilities@richmondhillva.org

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TENDING THE SPIRIT

nity?" replied, "You can't think your way there." It's true. If I had to rely on reason alone, I'd still be in Pennsylvania.

Steady growth requires a judicious combination of security and necessary divergence to keep moving forward in life. After months of prayer, talking, reflecting, and even avoiding the decision, Kristen and I decided to take action. We met at our favorite park and stood upon a large stone overlooking the valley we'd called home for so many years, iconic Mt. Nittany on the horizon. We held hands and on the count of three we jumped, landing safely in the grass below. It was a symbolic act intended to mark our willingness to heed God's call and assent to the generous invitation extended by the Richmond Hill community to come and be the next co-pastoral director. "Leap, and the net will appear!" one of my spiritual guides assured me.

We are immensely grateful for the warm welcome we've received since arriving in mid-February. We are still getting our feet under us, but feel more and more at home everyday. We're humbled by the opportunity to join in with the ministries within Richmond Hill's walls and beyond, and are especially thankful for the residential community and talented staff. This is a remarkable place, as you know first hand. The Holy Spirit is present, moving, and shaking; calling each of us to ventures as yet unknown.

Further confirmation came my first morning here. I woke early in our new living space in the Adams Taylor house to a variety of sounds. I'd camped alone on the floor the night before, Kristen away on a business trip. I listened: the train whistles along Main Street, sirens up and down Broad and the steady whine of traffic on 95. One sound resounded above them all, and I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised — that of a wild goose. On this, the highest hill in the city, she flew by my window at eye level, her call yet another sign of God's presence here at Richmond Hill and further confirmation that I'm right where I need to be.

> Rev. Joel Blunk, Co-Pastoral Director

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REVIVE RICHMOND

Intergenerational Collaboration

or days now, I have contemplated the goodness and hope I find in young adults all over metropolitan Richmond who are engaging in meaningful ways to strengthen our communities. At the same time, I see older adults taking a step back to make space for young adults to step forward. This intergenerational collaboration has not always been a consistent theme in our history. However, in recent months it appears to be done with a new-found intentionality. Call it a spirit of revival if you will. It is ultimately rejuvenating to see passionate young people responding directly and succinctly to matters of concern for themselves personally and for the good of their community, without interference.

If I were to call the young people I see each by name, or the causes they represent, I would surely miss someone or some cause. I trust they know who they are and that each of them is as important to the regeneration of metropolitan Richmond as the other. So, as I continued my inward struggle to find the right words to express my gratitude and hopefulness for the new life I see emerging, a young man stood up in the midst of the congregation gathered to address the "School to Prison Pipeline."He spoke about the difference between creativity and imagination, and the role of each in the life of youth. He spoke also about adults' need to listen to young people and refrain from having the same dialogues using the same methodologies. He reinforced his point by reading a prayer which he randomly turned to in the Book of Common Prayer:

For Young People

Almighty God, again and again you have called on young people to force change or fire human hopes. Never let older people be so set in their ways that they refuse to hear young voices or so firm in their grip on power that they reject youth's contributions. Let the youth be candid, but not cruel. Keep them dreaming dreams that you approve, and living in the Spirit of the young man, Jesus, the crucified one who now rules the world. AMEN

I would have to be living in a different city not to recognize that with prayers such as this, coupled with mutual respect between the generations, Richmonders may very well be writing their own book on wholesome revival through intergenerational collaboration.

> Rev. Janie M. Walker Co-Pastoral Director

COMMUNITY NEWS

Pray for Health Care in Metropolitan Richmond.

April 2016

Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." (Matthew 11:4-5)

April 3, 2016. We pray for health care in Metropolitan Richmond: For persons living with HIV/AIDS and for their families, friends, and communities; for persons working to find a cure.

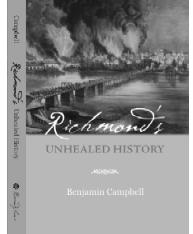
April 10, 2016. We pray for health care in Metropolitan Richmond: For all the sick and their caregivers, doctors, nurses, hospice workers, home healthcare workers, and all who minister to the health of others. For clinics, medical personnel, and all institutions that serve persons who are uninsured or underinsured.

April 17, 2016. We pray for health care in Metropolitan Richmond: For emergency response personnel and all emergency room staff. For hospitals, nursing homes, and hospice programs; and for persons diagnosed with terminal illness.

April 24, 2016. We pray for health care in Metropolitan Richmond: For the full restoration of health, wellness, and well being to all people residing in our metropolitan community.

AVAILABLE NOW from the RICHMOND HILL BOOKSTORE

Richmond's Unhealed



History

by Benjamin Campbell



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Your order from the Richmond Hill Bookstore supports Richmond Hill.

Now enrolling for Fall 2016



School of Race & Justice

Koinonia means sharing in community. This School of Race and Justice provides safe space and tools to address racism in ourselves and to build justice in our city.

Lecture Topics include: History, diversity, shame, grief, lament, privilege, class, poverty, media, and law.

Process Groups: These intentional small groups process each lecture personally and its implications for the city.

Retreats: The retreats are designed to build community and delve deeper into our issues of race.

The deadline for applications is June 1. Cost: \$1200. Some scholarship is available. For further information, please contact Rev. Janie Walker (804-783-7903), email: jwalker@richmondhillva.org



Monday, April 25 at 7:30 pm



This lecture is about uncovering and breaking down the code words embedded in today's media coverage and how bias helps contribute to racial divides.

About the lecturer: Michael Paul Williams is a metro columnist for the <u>Richmond Times-Dispatch</u>. He won Virginia Press Association awards for column writing in 1992, 1994 and 2007.

Join us for worship at 5:30 pm, dinner at 6:30 pm, lecture at 7:30 pm. Your donation of \$20 includes both dinner and the lecture.

Contact DeBorah Cannady at retreats@richmondhillva.org or by phone at 804-783-7903 to register.

This lecture is provided by the Koinonia School of Race & Justice at Richmond Hill.

Retreats Classes Groups Schools Retreats Classes

RETREATS

INDIVIDUAL RETREATS

Richmond Hill offers individual retreats for persons who desire rest and time to seek God. Retreats may be taken in 24-hr increments between Mon. 4 p.m.– Sat. 4 p.m. In addition, more formal contemplative retreats are offered periodically on weekends for individuals who wish to be a part of a facilitated retreat rhythm. Spiritual guidance is available for any individual retreat.

> Recommended donations: Basic \$65 per 24 hrs. / Guided \$90 per 24 hrs. Contact Deborah Cannady, 804-783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org

FIRST FRIDAY RETREATS

First Friday of Each Month | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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.

Suggested Donation: \$20 (includes Lunch) Facilitator: Mimi Weaver, spiritual director and life coach. She can be reached at www.GraceMoves.com

Contact DeBorah Cannady at Richmond Hill to register 804-783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org Please register in advance. Space is limited.

LISTENING TO THE SILENCE

Second Tuesday of Each Month | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Arrive at Richmond Hill at 8:45 to begin this spiritual experience. Lunch and chapel are included. Bring your Bible and your journal but leave the cell phone in the car.

Suggested Donation: \$20 (includes Lunch) Facilitator: Rita Ricks, spiritual director Contact DeBorah Cannady at Richmond Hill to register 804-783-7903 or retreats@richmondhillva.org Pleas register in advance. Space is limited.

GROUPS

CENTERING PRAYER GROUPS

Tuesdays, 4:45 - 5:45 p.m. Deborah Streicker, Facilitator Tuesdays, 7:30 - 8:45 p.m.

Jerry Deans, Rev. Vallerie King, Facilitators

Centering prayer is an ancient prayer method designed to facilitate the development of contemplative prayer by preparing us to cooperate with this gift. Each group is open to newcomers regardless of experience.

Contact: Deborah Streicker at 783-7903 or dstreicker@richmondhillva.org

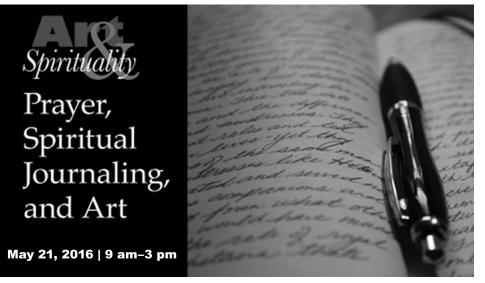
DROP-IN GRIEF GROUP

Monthly, 4th Fridays, 10 – 11:30 a.m. Sandy Gramling, Ph.D., Facilitator

Share experiences and obtain support from others who are experiencing a loss in a flexible group format. Discussion and reflection on the impact of loss, coping, meaning-making, etc. follows the brief presentation.

Preregistration is helpful but not required. Contact DeBorah Cannady at 804-783-7903 to register.

Workshop: Prayer, Spiritual Journaling and Art



 $T^{\rm his\ retreat\ is\ about\ spending\ time\ in}_{\rm quiet\ reflection,\ prayer,\ or\ meditation}$ while listening for God in your life.

This time of prayer can be guided or on your own as long as you remain in silence. At a designated time you will be asked to journal about your private prayer experience. What were your thoughts, insights, or inspirations? What did you sense or learn in your time of silence? Once you have written all you want to say, sit with your words and visualize them in a colorful design or image. How would your reflection expressed in your words look as a your work of art?

Come and enjoy for a day the beauty and the sacred space of Richmond Hill. *Pray*, *Write*, *Create*.

Brenda Giannini, facilitator. Suggested donation \$30. includes lunch and art materials, (note: you may want to bring your own journal). Sign-up: DeBorah Cannaday at 804-783-7903, or email: retreats@richmondhillva.org

Urban Spirituality 2016-2017

Groups Schools Retreats Classes Groups Schools

ENROLLING

Now

RUAH XV School of spiritual guidance

New Class Begins in September 2016 for Clergy & Church Professionals

Richmond Hill will begin a new weekday session of the RUAH School of Spiritual Guidance in September, 2016.

This weekday design is particularly intended to make the program available to clergy and other church professionals for whom Sunday classes are impossible.

The two-year program is composed of two 48-hour retreats and eight 24hour retreats for each of two years. The 24-hour retreats are held on the third Monday evening and Tuesday each month; the 48-hour retreats extend from Monday supper through Wednesday.

The program consists of monthly 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. Books are assigned each month on the upcoming topic.

Acceptance in RUAH XV is primarily limited to clergy and church professionals. If you are interested in this program, please inquire immediately to the Rev. Janie Walker.

The deadline for applications is May 1. Some scholarship assistance is available.

For more information or an application, please contact Rev. Janie Walker, Co-Pastoral Director, at Richmond Hill. (804)783-7903 or email: jwalker@richmondhillva.org



Apply now for Sept. 2016

Vocare means to call or to summon. This school is intended to provide tools, space, and community for discerning God's call in each of our lives.

- **Fall Tuesday Workshops:** Tuesday workshops are designed to move you from your personal inner-work towards outward engagement with the wider community.
- **Spring Discernment Groups:** These small groups meet monthly. The meetings will take place on the last Tuesday of each month. Each session will provide opportunity for a participant to discern vocation in community as guided by the Holy Spirit.

Applications are due May 1. To inquire or apply, please contact Rev. Janie Walker at (804-783-7903) or email: jwalker@richmondhillva.org



Urban Service Corps

The Richmond Hill Urban Service Corps provides a rare opportunity to gain understanding of how the Holy Spirit engages with both the people and the social structures of a

City as well as how the life of a Christian community can provide a powerful witness for the possibilities of reconciliation and healing in a metropolitan area.



The Richmond Hill Urban Service Corps is a one year commitment beginning in August of each year. Typically, we will have four servant-leaders in the Community per year.

Applications are due to Richmond Hill by May 1.

To inquire or apply, please contact Rev. Janie Walker at (804) 783-7903 or jwalker@richmondhillva.org



Friday, May 6 – Sunday, May 8

RVA East End Festival 2016 hopes to Give \$100,000 Gift of Music to Thousands of Students in Richmond's East End

The festival is intended to attract thousands of people from throughout the region over the course of the weekend.

Local restaurants, vendors, businesses and non-profits will also be featured. *Festival admittance is free and open to the public.*

RVA EAST END FESTIVAL

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.

PRAYING WITH THE SONGS OF 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

DeBorah Cannady, Leader 3rd Mondays at 7:30 p.m. and 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 5th Mondaus at 7:30 n m

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 DeBorah Cannady at 783-7903.

The expressive arts have long been helpful in processing our grief. It is often restorative to bypass the intellect and work with our hands and heart. We can

express our grief and find new insights about the journey. People are often amazed by what unfolds from their creative efforts. The retreat also includes an opportunity

Activities include:

- Collage (Vision Board)
- Writing (various exercises)
- Create a Mandala

to share what has been created with other retreatants. Other expressive art opportunities will also be available including a dream work exercise, a choice of various writing exercises and an art for "stuck points" in the grief journey exercise.

Facilitator: Sandy Gramling, Ph.D., Spiritual Director and Coordinator of Grief Ministries at Richmond Hill.

Suggested donation: \$20.00 (includes lunch)

To register, please contact DeBorah Cannady, at (804) 783-7903 or by email: retreats@richmondhillva.org



This retreat is about spending time in quiet reflection, prayer, or meditation while listening for God in your life. This time of prayer can be guided or on your own as long as you remain in silence. Come and enjoy for a day the beauty and the sacred space of Richmond Hill.

David Vinson, facilitator. Suggested donation \$90

To register, please contact DeBorah Cannady, at (804) 783-7903 or by email: retreats@richmondhillva.org

RETREATS

Faith

This is a lack of our faith to know how to get the things we need in our life. We need to pray for more as a thirsty human pray in a desert in a desert for rain. With faith help comes swift and strong. Our faith in God should be strong. It should be so strong knowing that God never forsake us. We are to be as sure as we are of our breathing. As long as we are healthy we are not aware of our breathing. It comes natural. We must trust as much as we trust our mother and father or our very best friend who us standing on the road and need help.

Faith allows us to pray daily that our faith increases. We must pray for unquestioning faith that does require proof or evidence. God created us to an act of acknowledging the existence of a Supreme and the reality of a Divine order. We need the acceptance as real or true that which is not supported by evidence of sense of by rational proof, as affirmative response of the will of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. It is compounded by belief, trust and an attitude of mind, will or Spirit. Jesus expresses faith in terms as the first condition for entering the kingdom of God. We hold to that faith as a prereqrequisite for the miracle of healing physically, mentally and spiritually. Faith brings to human a union with God through Jesus Christ. Faith comes by deposit of God's Grace in the heart of the believers.

The writer of the Gospel of Matthew helps gives Jesus's analogy of faith: "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink or what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more than they? Which of you by worry about can add more value then they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and I say to you that neither toil nor spin; yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God clothes the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more cloth you, O you of little faith?" (Matthew 6:25-30).

O God give me faith in You, Your power, Your love. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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



First thing

As I looked out my back window this morning I opened my heart to God in prayer. A small and beautiful cardinal, first landing on the fence then dropping down to the ground to feed, visited me. Seconds later I hear the morning dove sending out her love in song. My heart is already nearly full when I notice the trees in my backyard view standing tall, with their crooked limbs and covered in vines, reaching up to the blue sky. Their arms are wide open to catch and hold the sun. I can hardly hold this beauty and wonder playing out in front of me. I say thank you to the creatures and trees and to God I say, "Eucharisteo."

God shines his love and light in and through his children every day hoping we will receive it and light up too letting his gifts shine through. Just like the sun shines on all trees whether in forests or gardens, pruned or twisted, young or old, God shines his love on all of his children every day unconditionally. We just need to be more like his trees, turning our face and hearts to our creator God and raise our arms up to receive his love blessing. We love God back by doing so and by loving all of his creation-- one another and all in nature. There is a gift in every moment for us to receive and an opportunity to return our love for that gift by being present and grateful. *Eucharisteo*.

> Brenda Giannini Dean, Ruah XIV



2209 East Grace Street Richmond, Virginia 23223 (804) 783-7903 www.richmondhillva.org

Return Service Requested

April 2016



In April:

Pray for Health Care in Metropolitan Richmond.

Share your comments, or sign up to receive our monthly *UPDATE* newsletter by emailing us your contact information: rrumble@richmondhillva.org

Richmond Hill is an ecumenical Christian fellowship and intentional residential community who serve as stewards of an urban retreat center within the setting of a historic monastery. Our Mission is to seek 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, residents, 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.



Show your support with a Metro Richmond at Prayer bumper sticker Order online: www.metroprayrva.org or call (804)783-7903.

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