

TENDING THE SPIRIT

The Circle of Life

Circles, half circles and circular patterns — they are everywhere.

In 1994, one day before my youngest daughter turned twelve years old, Disney released *The Lion King* movie. My daughter fell in love with the movie. Shortly after we purchased the video, she memorized the entire movie. She thought it was the coolest thing in the world to have the video playing, with the sound turned com-

pletely off, while she narrated the entire story - reciting the entire script and singing all the songs. The major theme of the movie is "The Circle of Life." Though "the circle of life" is spoken of quite often as it pertains to life and death or the food chain, I gained a deeper and broader appreciation for its meaning while sitting with my daughter watching this movie, over and over again.

The movie has a lot to teach us about life — making connections between the universal principles and cycles found in the maturation process, as well as those that connect us across generational and cultural divides. An impactful metaphor for the "circle of life" as it pertains to the maturation process is created early in the movie, as the sun is displayed rising and setting in its prominent and circular form. Simba, the main character in the movie, is taught many things about what it means to become both physically and spiritually mature-- a process which repeats itself and encompasses many obstacles. The storyline also conveys the importance of accepting responsibility for one's own life and the lives of those in the generations to follow.

For me, a recent PBS documentary on the life of quadruplets born in 2006, took the theme of consistent circular patterns of formation, maturation and reformation (found in the "circle of life") a bit further. The documentary demonstrated through visuals presented from both a scientific and a physical perspective how, from conception onward, four girls could become identical quadruplets. The lives of these four girls all began when a single cell began to split off into more cells, all of which were circular in shape. Throughout the embryotic cycle, the new cells produced critical growth and body parts for each child.

This recent experience of contemplating the symbol of the circle, especially in the birth process, added fresh expression to the many circular patterns portrayed around me- the Jerusalem mile, the oculus above the altar, the altar itself, windows and doors, the fountain and countless other places and things around Richmond Hill. It also reminded me of how often in the spiritual for-

mation work done here that repetitive cycles and patterns are identified. There is often a connection made between our personal experiences

and the seasons of life - which too repeat themselves.

te The beauty of the grounds here at Richmond Hill, regardless of the season, is a constant reminder that artisans and practitioners in soul-tending throughout the ages have offered the seasons of the year as metaphor for reflecting on the repetitive nature of the human journey. It is also a reminder to us to give attention to the circular patterns or themes in our personal lives--- the things that come and go over and over again. One which begs our attention is the creating of legacies.

Whether good or bad, the legacies we create

live on even after we cease to exist. And, the degree to which they create new life, as in the birth process, is contingent upon the number of lives we touch or impact along the way.

Just a couple of days after watching the PBS special, and for a few days following, more news of violence and murder hit the national scene-more young African American men, as well as police officers, shot to death. The news brought to bear more consideration of the circle. This time more consideration of the role of the symbolic nature of the circle and the cyclical patterns we find ourselves in. The news brought to bear our need as individuals, and as a nation, to be mindful of what legacies, patterns and themes we are creating in this life.

Today, July 17th, even as I sit here finalizing this article, again I see in the national news more violence and murder-three police officers killed and three injured, in Baton Rouge. The cycle keeps repeating itself. Over and

is everywhere — a symbol of the universal sacred and divine; representing the infinite and inclusive nature of the God of all

The circle

creation.

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TENDING THE SPIRIT

over again, the pattern is the same and we can't deny it. Just as there were many controversial and contradictory opinions about the intentions and motivations of the creation of The Lion King movie, we find that there is a continuum of thoughts and beliefs about why we might be inundated with so much violence and murder in our present time. No matter where we stand on this continuum — or circle of life — just a brief look at our nation's history means we cannot deny that patterns have developed and they keep circling and returning anew, creating seemingly endless themes of violence.

The theme song in the Lion King speaks to the need to address this constant circling and returning. "Even from the time of our arrival on the planet," the song says, "there is more to see than can ever be seen; more to do than can ever be done." And the song goes on to remind us that it's the "circle of life" that moves us all through despair and hope, faith and love, until we find our place on a "path unwinding." As a nation, we MUST find our place on the path unwinding. We MUST identify where we are on the circle; knowing that the identification is only the beginning. If transformation of lives and of the cycle is to happen, it will only happen when we, who make up the continuum, take some meaningful and different action.

In the late 80's, while entrenched in the study of inner healing and forgiveness, a very simple but very powerful poem, *A Hole in My Sidewalk*, by Portia Nelson, floated among healing prayer practitioners. The poem was used to speak simply and powerfully to the need to take responsibility for our own actions and to make a decision to act differently, with the hope and trust that healing and transformation will come. (The poem is captured on page 7 of this newsletter)

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REVIVE RICHMOND

A Neighborhood Reshaping

As a new member of East End's 25th Street Corridor Steering Committee, I recently joined a small group near Nine Mile Road to walk a section of the corridor, imagining its transformation. I heard about plans for community gardens, enhanced streetscapes, new businesses, residential improvements, and a town center at 25th and Venable where kids will come for afterschool programs and children's activities. The walk reminded me that everything is created twice, once in our mind's eye, a second time tangibly in the world.

The corridor hasn't always been in need of renewal. Dennis, a middle-aged man who grew up in the neighborhood, described a street once bustling with commerce and activity. He pointed out where he bought a pair of Keds as a child, remembering the storeowner by name, and the bakery that once occupied the now boarded-up storefront behind us that made his wedding cake.

District 7 Councilwoman Cynthia Newbille led our walk, pausing to engage a man at a bus stop. She spoke of the importance of surveying local residents to hear their dreams for the corridor. Talking with citizens who are actually on the ground, "making place," is critical to the process. A photo walk is planned for *National Night Out* to give residents a chance to take and post on-line photos of 25th Street in answer to the questions what do you see that you like and what needs improving.

Transforming the East End is a huge undertaking, yet the 25th Street Corridor is a good place to start given its retail history and central location. Efforts initiated by the City of Richmond, the Bon Secours Health System, and the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority are beginning to take shape thanks to careful planning, adequate resources, and people coming together around a common vision — all necessary for making the dream a reality. It's yet another example of our prayers for the healing of Richmond being answered.

To see the Corridor Strategic Plan, go to <u>www.yesrichmondva.com</u> and click on Neighborhood Revitalization.

> Rev. Joel Blunk Co-Pastoral Director

COMMUNITY NEWS

Pray for the Workplaces and Businesses of Metropolitan Richmond.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. (Phil 2:12-13)

August 7, 2016. We pray for the workplaces and businesses of Metropolitan Richmond: For safe, respectful work environments, healthy work ethics and attitudes, and sufficient salary and benefits for all workers. For owners and managers: for servant leadership, civic responsibility and ethical decisionmaking.

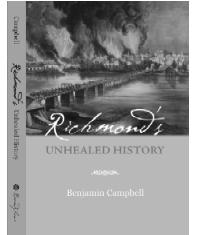
August 14, 2016. We pray for the workplaces and businesses of Metropolitan Richmond: For financial institutions, healthy and constructive investment policies, and effective development efforts to benefit the entire community.

August 21, 2016. We pray for the workplaces and businesses of Metropolitan Richmond: For economic development in depressed portions of the city, for the establishment of businesses that will create new employment opportunities.

August 28, 2016. We pray for the workplaces and businesses of Metropolitan Richmond: For full employment opportunities for our young people and heads of families, for the long-term unemployed, and for the under-employed.

AVAILABLE NOW from the RICHMOND HILL BOOKSTORE

Richmond's Unhealed



History

by Benjamin Campbell



\$15.95 plus tax at Richmond Hill or
\$18.50 postpaid, tax included, by mail from Richmond Hill.

Order by telephone (783-7903) or on the web richmondhillva.org

Your order from the Richmond Hill Bookstore supports Richmond Hill.

M I C A H **The heart of our volunteers**

Micah volunteers, partners and other supporters shared our wishes for Richmond Public Schools' students and their families, teachers and principals, administration and staff and the School Board at the May 2016 Micah Association Luncheon. We invite you to pray with us as we work to be God's answers to these prayers. Here is a sample that represents the heart and faith of a Micah volunteer.

For Students and Families:

2016

- A safe community in which to live
- Stable and affordable housing
- Food to eat, a roof over their heads and plenty of love
- Students respect themselves and others
- Gain access to safe housing and all their basic needs are being met
- Feel supported and cared about
- Safe, healthy learning environments and the inspiration to succeed

For Teachers and Principals:

- Support and resources to help kids learn
- More teachers and support personnel
- Support from the teachers and administrators
- To be supported in their endeavors
- More support from the City Council
- Support from [the] Community
- The resources (materials) needed to provide quality instruction

For Administration and Staff:

- To listen to your teachers
- Support from [the] Community & City officials
- The monetary resources to support quality instruction
- Provide safe facilities for our children
- Wisdom and resources to lead effectively
- Guidance to provide the best leader possible
- Adequate support & resources

For the School Board:

- First hand knowledge of what goes on in the classroom
- Walk in your teachers' shoes and listen to them
- · Resources and wisdom to use wisely
- Commitment, dedication & focus on students & parents
- To always be guided by the needs of our children and families
- To keep the child's future in mind when all decisions are made
- Open communication and true understanding of the needs

Qasarah Spencer Micah Director

Learn more about Micah through Qasarah Spencer at 804-783-7903, ext. 24, or, micah@richmondhillva.org or visit www.micahrva.org 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. David Vinson, 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: David Vinson at 783-7903 or hospitality@richmondhillva.org

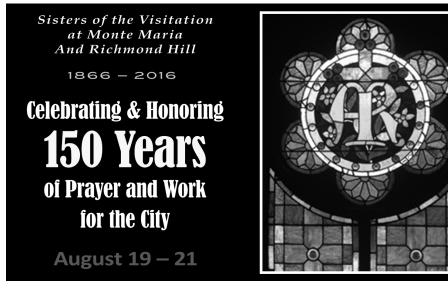
DROP-IN GRIEF GROUP

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.

Save these August Dates and Come Join in Our Celebration!



This summer Richmond Hill will mark the arrival here of the Sisters of the Visitation in August 1866, 150 years ago.

This time of celebration will be marked and synchronized with our regular daily prayer cycle over a three day period. Join us at 7:00 a.m. for Morning Prayer and breakfast **Friday, August 19**. Come for Noon Prayer and lunch in the Garden **Saturday August 20**. Hear special stories along with Evening Prayer and a reception **Sunday August 21**.

Come, worship, celebrate, and join us as we give thanks for the courage, sacrifice and blessing of the Sisters of the Visitation, as well as for the beauty and the sacred space Richmond Hill is today.

For more information or to RSVP, please contact DeBorah Cannady at 804-783-7903, or by email: retreats@richmondhillva.org

Urban Spirituality 2016-2017

Schools Groups Retreats Classes Groups Schools

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.

Revised deadline for applications is August 15. Some scholarship assistance is available. CEU's are also available for <u>this program.</u>

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

NOW ENROLLING



Apply now for Sept. 2016

7 ocare 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.

CEU's are available for this program.

Extended deadline: August 15. To inquire or apply, please contact Rev. Janie Walker at (804-783-7903) or email: jwalker@richmondhillva.org



Urban Service Corps

he 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.

The deadline for application has been extended to August 15.

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



September 15, 2016 Save the Date! Micah Kic

Learn more here: micahrva.org/upcoming-micah-events/

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 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.

RETREATS



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 to share what has been created with other retreatants. Other expressive art opportunities will

Activities include: • Collage (Vision Board) • Writing (various exercises) • Create a Mandala

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

Now enrolling for Fall 2016





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.

Extended deadline for applications is August 15. Cost: \$1200. Some scholarship is available. For further information, please contact Rev. Janie Walker (804-783-7903), email: jwalker@richmondhillva.org

TENDING THE SPIRIT

A PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Continued from page 2

I would venture to say that the cycle of violence we find among ourselves is a reflection of our society's institutionalized social constructs — based on the "us and them" precepts predicated and saturated in dualistic thinking, as well as what our eyes can see. Whether intentional or unintentional, put or kept in place, these constructs serve to keep the circle of life going as we presently know it. Less we forget reminders are everywhere — the circle is everywhere — a symbol of the universal sacred and divine; representing the infinite and inclusive nature of the God of all creation. As people of faith, we walk, not according to what we can see but according to our faith — the remedy for our dualistic thinking.

Walking by faith means we move past our dualistic thinking in order to experience the healing and forgiveness that Christ intends for us all. There is no "us" and "them." Martin Luther King, Jr. puts it this way, "We must live together as brothers (and sisters) or perish together as fools." Jesus puts it this way, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

> *Rev. Janie M. Walker, Co-Pastoral Director*

A Hole in My Sidewalk

by Portia Nelson

I walk down the street. There is a deep hole in the sidewalk. I fall in. I am lost... I am helpless. It isn't my fault. It takes forever to find a way out.

I walk down the same street. There is a deep hole in the sidewalk. I pretend I don't see it. I fall in again. I can't believe I am in the same place. But, it isn't my fault. It still takes me a long time to get out.

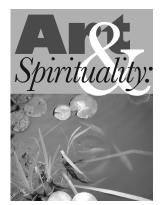
I walk down the same street. There is a deep hole in the sidewalk. I see it is there. I still fall in. It's a habit. My eyes are open. I know where I am. It is my fault. I get out immediately.

I walk down the same street. There is a deep hole in the sidewalk. I walk around it.

I walk down another street.

Art & spirituality

Richmond Hill has been offering many day retreats for the past four or more years under the heading of *ART & SPIRITUALITY*. The purpose of this series has been to open us to the sacred dimensions of our own lives through the gifts of the visual arts. The retreats have been on Saturdays and offer a break from the normal



routine. Participants have spent the day, from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., in the rhythm of life at Richmond Hill and getting in touch with their creativity in our spacious art room.

The day can be spent doing your own particular art that you bring with you or you can use our materials to investigate topics such as collage, stained glass win-

dows, illuminated manuscripts, journaling, and creating a piece of hope and praise. This year we will be introducing some other ways to express your creativity that will deepen your spiritual journey.

We are creative beings whether we are in touch with it or not. We were created in God's image and are his creation. Art can stop us, whether it is hanging on a wall in our house, or in a museum, or you see God's spectacular work of art in his natural world. Art asks us to take a moment, to look in wonder, to feel something, to experience the message and the beauty someone has offered us by their creation. Personal exploration into our creative gifts is a way to awaken our senses to the sacred dimension of God in our lives.

Making art is a form of prayer or can be used as a prayer tool. Our final product, which can be as simple as a line drawing or choice of color, or as complicated as a huge landscape painting, is a way for us to return the gift of creativity back to our creator God.

We hope that these different retreats will help you walk closer to and with your God in the present moment that you will be encouraged to listen to your inner creative voice, God's gift, and to offer it up in thanksgiving to your Creator in thanks and praise.

Come join us and enrich your spiritual journey while trying something new or continuing with your own work. Creativity is God's gift to us all. Amen.

> Brenda Giannini Facilitator, Art & Spirituality Dean, RUAH



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

August 2016



In August:

Pray for the Workplaces and Businesses of 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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