



December 17, 2020

Dear Richmond Hill Community,

It is with pleasure that I write to inform you that we have a new Co-Pastoral Director! At our meeting Tuesday evening, the Richmond Hill Council approved the call of the Rev. Dr. Alesia Johnson to the position. “Lisa” will join us in this full-time role beginning the first of the new year.

Lisa has been serving as part-time Interim Co-Pastoral Director since late January. Her duties have included assisting with the spiritual development and well-being of the residential community and staff, supporting the effective operation of Richmond Hill ministries, and helping us adapt our programs and offerings, including worship and prayer, during this time of pandemic. Going forward Lisa will lend her prophetic voice as a primary representative of Richmond Hill to the greater community, working alongside Rev. Joel Blunk, our other Co-Pastoral Director.

Lisa has proven herself worthy of this position time and time again over the course of the past eleven months. A limiting consideration for her earlier interest in the Co-Pastoral Director position was its requirement for membership in the residential community. However, given the experiences of her participation with residents during this time of pandemic (when they themselves are meeting virtually) and the uniqueness of the gifts Lisa brings, Council made the exceptional decision to wave the call to residency for her. Correspondingly, Lisa will have living space on site to join the residential community in hosting duties, be present in the absence of the other Co-Pastoral Director, and to engage regularly with the residential community.

Lisa was born and raised in Richmond and educated in our public school system. She is a graduate of Maggie Walker High School and Virginia State University. She earned her M.Div. from the Samuel D. Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University and her Doctorate in Ministry in formational counseling from Ashland Theological Seminary in Ohio.

Lisa’s journey includes 30 years of service as a teacher and administrator in the Richmond Public School system. A long-time member of St. Paul’s Baptist Church, Lisa organized the women’s ministry there and served in the Barnabas Counseling and Care Center. More recently, Lisa served as an associate minister at First Shiloh Baptist Church where she led small group ministries and served as a counselor with the Healing Place, specializing in counseling for victims and survivors of sexual and domestic violence. She is currently chaplain of the Henrico County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

In reference to her new call to Richmond Hill, Lisa writes: *My mission and purpose is twofold: Passion and People. It is my desire to pastor, counsel, teach, train, develop, empower, encourage, and pray for the people in residential, regional and global communities. I look forward to our engagement in prayer, hospitality, racial reconciliation and spiritual development. I want to journey with others as we seek both individual and communal healing, pursuing the mystery of our God!*

It has been a joy for me to get to know her this past year and engage in Richmond Hill's ministry with her. Please join me in welcoming the Rev. Dr. Alesia Johnson—Lisa—into this full-time role and in encouraging her as she joins us in fulfilling our healing ministry to the Metropolitan City.

With thanksgiving,

Cathy Woodson
President