



Westminster Presbyterian Church

Finding Strength and Understanding in Shared Faith

Westminster Presbyterian Church Richmond, African Evangelical International Ministries explore ministry partnerships

What does dynamic discipleship really look like? That's a key question Pastor Joel Morgan of Richmond's Westminster Presbyterian Church (WPC) began asking himself and fellow congregation leaders.

"Our eagerness to serve others as Christians is literally insatiable," explains Joel, "but often we miss opportunities to foster deeper partnerships, and numerous congregations don't have a clear sense for what's happening at their church on any given weekday."

Take WPC, where within a single week nearly hundreds of people who aren't members of the congregation enter the church—refugees take drivers' education classes, 12-step groups hold meetings, a local Boy Scouts troop gathers, and more.

When the African Evangelical International Ministries (AFREIM) needed new space for its congregation to thrive, WPC gladly invited the congregation to worship in the same building. Over the years, these two congregations have blended and formed meaningful friendships.

Joel shares that he was "led down a path that got [him] thinking about worship experiences and

how many congregations approach service ministry."

Upon reflection, he called for a special worship series centered on WPC's partners in ministry: AFREIM, the Beacon Tree Foundation, ReEstablish Richmond, and CARITAS. Each partner was asked to preach and their sermons showcased the congregation's role in helping each group execute upon their core mission.

"Each sermon was packed full of real stories of people helping each other, challenging each other and befriending each other," says Joel. "All of it echoed one of the greatest commandments that we all often struggle to live by: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

A UNIVERSAL GATHERING

The series culminated May 20 in a multicultural service that united Christians from around the globe—Kenya, Cameroon, Nigeria, Ghana, India, and the United States. Tambourines rang throughout the fellowship hall peppered with eye-catching headdresses and colorful saris. One by one, these representative groups of numerous nationalities worshipped; they shared words of

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*Do not neglect to do
good and to share what
you have, for such
sacrifices are pleasing
to God.*

Hebrews 13:16

Share your copy of *The Vine*
with a friend and encourage them to
add their name to our mailing list.

The Vine is always free and
informative. Congregations may
submit their membership directories
to POJ so that every member
receives a copy of *The Vine*.

99th Stated Meeting

June 12, 2018

REVIEW

The 99th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of the James took place on Tuesday, June 12, 2018, at Westminster Canterbury Richmond (WCR). The meeting was well attended and progressed very smoothly. We adjourned before lunch, ending at 12:15 p.m. The residents at WCR were most gracious in assisting all the commissioners, guests, and visitors at the meeting. The facility was wonderful and an ease to get around. A welcoming spirit to everyone was experienced. Some of the highlights of the meeting included:

- Recognizing the retirement of two minister members of the Presbytery
Rev. Rod Spencer
Rev. Nancy Summerlin
- Welcoming into the presbytery five new minister members or ministers in new positions:
Rev. Donna Ruggles, Evangelical Lutheran Pastor, Covenant Pastor, Lakeside Church
Rev. Sarah Marsh Schutte, Pastor, Milford Church
Rev. Jeff Eason, Covenant

Pastor, Pryor Memorial
Rev. Jim Moseley, Pastor, Campbell Memorial
Rev. Fady Lous, Chaplain, Hospice of Virginia

- Celebration of and Commissioning of **Ruth Brown** as facilitator for Community Health Evangelism with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana in northern Ghana.
- Discussion about dismantling racism in our culture from the Dismantling Racism Purpose Group.
- Invitation to participate in a new initiative "Gospel Renewal 2020" involving all congregations and members by Pentecost 2020.
- Celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Small Church Intern Program where seminary students intern in our smaller congregations.
- Expression of thanks to Second Church Richmond and Rivermont Church for their contributions to Camp Hanover.

We had 106 Ministers of Word and Sacrament in attendance.

There were 102 Ruling Elders from 66 Congregations. There were 34 visitors in attendance.

The business of the day included the following matters:

1. Approved the February 17, 2018 POJ Minutes.
2. Approved **Rev. John Barton** and **Rev. Denny Burnette** to become Honorably Retired Ministers.
3. Approved 2017 annual reports from members at large, validated-specialized ministers, and certified Christian educators.
4. Elected **Rev. Ron Bullis** as Vice-Moderator, Mission and Service Team.
5. Elected these persons to be readers of ordination examinations for 2018: **Rev. Connie Weaver**; **Rev. Sylvester Bullock**; **Rev. Mark Sprowl**; **Rev. Beverly Bullock**; **Rev. Todd Davidson**; **Ruling Elder David Ross** (Ginter Park).
6. Dissolved with thanks the Administrative Commission for Wylliesburg and First Church Chase City

congregations, expressing appreciation for the work done by the commission and rejoicing that First Church Chase City withdrew their request to be dismissed.

7. Endorsed the Lily Endowment grant proposal for Community of Ministry and Worship program. The Grant requests \$969,000 in funding and POJ would provide \$65,000 in support for the five-year program.
8. Learned that the Strategic Planning Team would be elected at the October Presbytery meeting.
9. Approved the revised 2018 POJ budget reflecting a \$50,000 deficit.
10. Approved a 2% increase for the 2019 Minimum Compensation Criteria for ministers and certified Christian educators.
11. Removed from POJ Membership **Rev. Shane Roberson** in accord with G-2.0508.
12. Removed from POJ Membership **Rev. Gordon Pace** in accord with G-2.0508.

H. Carson Rhyne, Jr.

H. Carson Rhyne, Jr.
Stated Clerk

**FALL
RETREAT**

Living Life Abundantly

September 27, 2018

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Camp Hanover

Mark your calendar for September 27 for Living Life Abundantly, a one-day retreat sponsored by the Older Adult Ministry Purpose Group. Be inspired by **Rev. Denise Anderson**, co-moderator of the 2016-2018 General Assembly, as she addresses the status of the Presbyterian Church today and what we need to be doing in the future. Other presenters include **Rev. Keith Johnston**, **Dr. Sally Johnston**, and **Rev. Carson Rhyne**. Learn more and register at presbyteryofthejames.com/fall-retreat.



Rev. Denise Anderson

Co-moderator,
2016-2018
General Assembly

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Finding Strength and Understanding in Shared Faith

encouragement and lifted their hearts and voices up to the Lord in praise.

also connecting us to a whole new network of Christians here in Richmond,” says WPC Elder Faith Alejandro, who sported traditional Filipino dress with her two children. “I’m so lucky that I’ve been able to attend many services like this growing up, and now my children get to do the same.”

Faith went on to say that it’s not enough for



Members of WPC and AFREIM enjoy a moment of fellowship at the multicultural service May 20.

Westminster Presbyterian Church

The Rev. Zaccheaus Katta, who preached the main sermon for the service, said it was fitting to have such a worship experience as this on Pentecost Sunday. He then went on to dissect the day in which the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles, causing them to speak in tongues. Zaccheaus’s message stripped away layer after layer of diversity down to one spiritual truth: We are all God’s children, so we can always find strength and understanding in our shared faith.

“Even though people were expressing themselves in languages I don’t know, I could fully appreciate the intention behind each group,” said WPC member Taylor Wiegert.

In a vivid display of faith, some people put their entire bodies into the worship while dancing and singing and waving cloths. Others approached the moment introspectively with calming and meditative music.

Toward the end of the service, Zaccheaus asked all in attendance to say the Lord’s Prayer together in English before the group repeated the prayer in a multitude of different native languages.

“The whole event stretched each of us spiritually, opening many eyes to all the different ways people can worship while

churches to merely open their doors and welcome people in. She’s looking to other congregations that are similarly creating public platforms for others to speak and share their spiritual journeys.

DEPTH OF SERVICE

“My favorite thing about the final service in the series is how it wasn’t my idea,” admits Joel.

“AFREIM’s Pastor Humphrey Muraya told me about an idea he and Zaccheaus had for a multicultural service [and] I wanted WPC to make it happen,” says Morgan.

“Whether it’s a WPC [member] attending an AFREIM service event, or an AFREIM member joining WPC’s praise band and joining forces for bible studies—we’re living out a partnership that extends beyond Sundays,” says Joel.

“I believe our congregation is taking the lead in a profound way that’s sparking action and rich fellowship among our Christian community, which can only grow as we all come together.”

Learn more at wpcrichmond.org and facebook.com/AFREIM.



Emma Manning (left) is a deacon and husband Wilbur (right) is an elder at Woodville Presbyterian.

Carolyn Spurlock

Long-serving Church Couple Surprised at Woodville Presbyterian

A church in Richmond’s East End has been such a meaningful part of a family that they wanted the congregation to be part of their celebration.

For more than 60 years, Wilbur and Emma Manning have served Woodville Presbyterian.

When the couple’s three daughters begin planning a joint surprise birthday party for their parents, the church was the natural choice of location.

“Inviting the church community to celebrate with us was important,” shared daughter Carolyn Spurlock, a Woodville elder like her father.

With their parents’ birthdays on April 23 and 24, the three daughters chose Sunday, April 22, as the date of the event. Around 75 friends, family, and congregation members joined in worship that morning with a powerful sermon by the Rev. Geraldine Sheldon.

At the end of the service, Carolyn gave a testimony on God’s role in her family’s life. She concluded by inviting everyone to lunch in the reception hall decorated in red representing love, silver for longevity, and white for purity.

Self-Development of People Purpose Group Awards Grant to Richmond Youth Group

After losing more than 30 years of his life to substance abuse and incarceration, Rudy Green wanted to prevent others from making similar mistakes.

Talking with teenagers in his community of Brookland Park in the Richmond's Northside, Rudy learned that the youth wanted a safe place to meet and job opportunities.

Seventy percent of commercial properties in the neighborhood were vacant or blighted. None of the teenagers had transportation or parental support to help them connect to employment outside the community.

In 2013, Rudy challenged the young men and women to create their own economic opportunities. He formed the Brookland Park Young Leaders Project under which to organize their efforts.

Non-profit organization Embrace Richmond, which trains residents, organizations, and civic leaders in community development, helped Rudy get the program off the ground. They taught the teens how to survey their community to discover the hopes, dreams, and gifts of their neighbors. They also partnered with local organizations to create paid internships to give the youth marketable job skills.

From the information in the survey, the group formed community action teams to address resident-defined areas of concern: crime, community connectedness (social trust), opportunities for older youth and revitalization of the blighted commercial corridor.

The action teams include four block clubs, a monthly community clean up, a community garden, a senior support team, a food coop, an oral history project, and a music team.

Serving on the teams helps youth learn how to organize projects, facilitate meetings, and



Mentors and youth members of the Brookland Park Young Leaders Project gather on the steps of All Souls Presbyterian where they originally formed.

Embrace Richmond

finesse communication skills.

The project has attracted other caring adults to mentor young people in the community in how to advance personally and professionally.

For example, resident Rob Gassie started Joe's Bike Shop in 2017 to teach teens how to repair bicycles. The youth earn a small paycheck while gaining technical skills and professional experience in fixing donated bikes in the shop located in the basement of All Souls Presbyterian. The bikes are then sold at an affordable price to community members.

In February 2018, the Brookland Park Young Leaders Project received a grant from the Self-Development of People (SDOP) purpose group of

Presbytery of the James. The funds will provide stipends for adult and youth leaders in the Historic Brookland Park area who are working together to benefit their community.

"We chose to support the Brookland Park Young Leaders Project with funding for two reasons," explained Lamar Lockhart, moderator of the SDOP purpose group. "First, they are working with youths engaged in risky behavior and, second, their involvement with the community is creating economic growth and change."

The SDOP purpose group allocates grants through the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering to groups that increase the empowerment of economically poor, oppressed and disadvantaged people. Past SDOP grant recipients include The Daily Planet (a homeless shelter), Friends and Associates (homeless support), and Elevated Imagination (an early intervention learning center).

See videos and read more about the community development efforts in the Brookland Park community at embracerichmond.org/brookland-park-collective/. To join or learn more about the SDOP purpose group, visit presbyteryofthejames.com/sdop.



Rudy Green, far right, and two members of the Brookland Park Young Leaders Project hold a check awarding the program funds from the Presbytery's Self-Development of People purpose group.

A Celebration of Ministry

New Education Fund Honors Retiring Rhyne

On December 31, Rev. H. Carson Rhyne, Jr will retire from active ministry in the PC(USA) and as general presbyter and stated clerk of Presbytery of the James. At that time, Carson will have represented the Presbytery for almost 22 of his 43 years as a Minister of Word and Sacrament.

Join us at the October 20 stated meeting at Lord Jesus Korean Presbyterian Church where we will celebrate Carson's contributions and accomplishments for the Presbytery.



H. Carson Rhyne, Jr

"It will be no surprise to all who know Carson that he has requested no fancy-send-off," shared Vice Moderator **Diane Prevary**. "To honor his request yet express our appreciation for his service to the church, a fund is being established at Union Presbyterian Seminary in his name."

This fund will benefit future students in their preparation for ministry particularly in the areas of polity and Christian education. In addition to serving as general presbyter and stated clerk, Carson has served on the adjunct faculty of the seminary, teaching polity and practical theology.

Church sessions, presbytery leadership, colleagues, friends, and family are invited to contribute to the Rhyne Polity Education Fund in recognition of Carson's commitment to the church, to our presbytery and to the understanding and preservation of the Presbyterian form of government. The fund is now open and one-time or ongoing gifts may be made directly to the seminary, marked for the Rhyne Polity Education Fund. Mail to Union Presbyterian Seminary, 3401 Brook Road, Richmond, VA 23227.

Committee to Recommend an Interim General Presbyter after Rhyne's Retirement

The Communications and Coordination (C&C) Team, acting on the recommendations of the Committee on Nominations, has formed a search committee for an interim/transitional general presbyter/stated clerk.

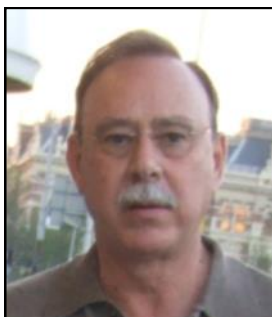
Rev. Nancy Summerlin, temporary pastor of St. Andrews Church in Kilmarnock, is moderating the search committee. **Gene Rosen**, elder, Fairfield Church in Mechanicsville, is vice moderator. Also serving on the committee are:

- **Rev. Rebekah Johns**, interim pastor, Three Chopt Church in Richmond
- **Rev. Clay Macaulay**, alumni director, Union Presbyterian Seminary
- **Linda Gueringer**, elder, First United Church in Richmond
- **Bruce Harvey**, educator and elder, The Presbyterian Church in Fredericksburg
- **Melissa Phillips**, elder, Salisbury Church in Midlothian

The presbytery is blessed that these individuals have agreed to serve on this committee and will hold them in prayer for the important work to be done.

Staff Changes at the Presbytery

Longtime employee **Clifton Edwards** retired from Presbytery of the James on March 28. As associate for communications and office manager, Clifton coordinated



Clifton Edwards

many projects during his 17-year tenure, including the ongoing maintenance of the Presbytery's website, creation of issues of The Vine and FYI publications, as well as the office move to Chamberlayne Avenue. Prior to joining the Presbytery, Clifton was the sales and marketing director for Loewen Group, a funeral service corporation. Clifton will be greatly missed for his contributions to the Presbytery. We wish him a long and enjoyable retirement of

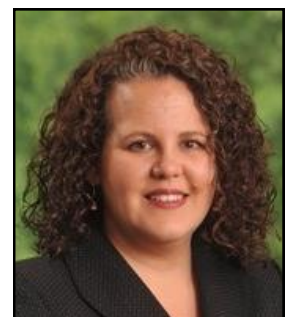
travelling the world and restoring classic cars.

Also retiring is **Phyllis Perross**, whose last day June 28 ended many years of service to the presbytery. She began as a volunteer in the 1980s, helping her sister Patricia (Pat) Morris, who was the administrative assistant at the time, assemble stated meeting packets. She later joined the staff as receptionist, the position she holds now with responsibilities in guest reception, database maintenance, and financial deposits. We wish her a happy retirement in the company of her sister Pat and niece Laura Jo.



Phyllis Perross

Kelley Hope joined the staff of the Presbytery of the James as communications specialist on April 2. Kelley manages The Vine and FYI newsletters, the



Kelley Hope

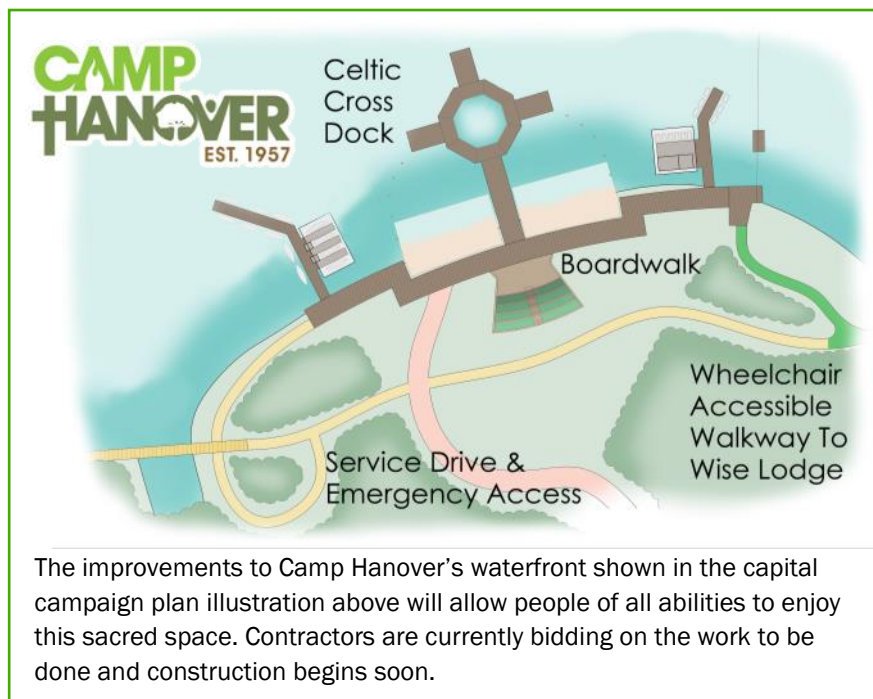
Presbytery website, and other communications. She has worked in public relations and communications in Virginia for 17 years, including positions at the Virginia Retirement System and Central Virginia Waste Management Authority. She lives in Henrico with her husband and two children. Reach Kelley by telephone at the Presbytery office or by email, khope@presbyteryofthejames.org.

Second Presbyterian Richmond's \$40,000 Gift Grows Camp Hanover Capital Campaign to \$435,000

God is good, all the time! In May, the congregation of Second Presbyterian Church, Richmond, stepped up to make a Lead Gift of \$40,000 to the Camp Hanover Reach Forward In Faith capital campaign.

This generous gift brings the total to over \$435,000 in pledges and gifts received to date. Meeting the \$750,000 goal will provide funds to renovate four cabins, rebuild the dock, construct an emergency access road, and develop a wheelchair accessible path connecting the lake to Wise Lodge.

To Reach Forward in Faith with your gift or pledge before the campaign concludes in



The improvements to Camp Hanover's waterfront shown in the capital campaign plan illustration above will allow people of all abilities to enjoy this sacred space. Contractors are currently bidding on the work to be done and construction begins soon.

December, to learn about naming opportunities, or to discover how you or your congregation can help make

Camp Hanover a place apart, accessible for all, contact Doug Walters, Executive Director, at (804) 779-2811.



Virginia Adams, a high school senior who attends Second Presbyterian Church Richmond, spoke of the impact Camp Hanover has had in her life as she thanked her congregation for making a Lead Gift for the capital campaign. Virginia is a member of the Camp Hanover Ministries Board Purpose Group.

Rivermont Presbyterian Gift Transforms Screened Pavilion into Housing For Camp Hanover Mission Volunteers

The congregation of Rivermont Presbyterian Church has done an amazing thing. With an incredibly kind gift of \$7,500, the congregation funded the purchase of materials to kick off the transformation of Kirkwood III, an old, dark, cobweb-filled screened pavilion shelter, into comfortable living space for volunteers. For years a "storage space of last resort," the renovated space features two bedrooms, a common area, and small kitchen.

Volunteers are a key ingredient when it comes to providing Christian hospitality for campers and retreat participants. In the past, when all the longhouses, cabins, and lodges were in use, there was nowhere for dedicated servants to rest and recharge their

batteries for the next day of work. Now, Camp Hanover's volunteers have a place they can call "home."

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The next steps in the renovation include painting the interior and exterior, installing kitchen cabinets, framing a small concrete pad and hallway to connect the living area to the bathroom, and constructing a small deck. Individuals or groups of volunteers who are skilled with hammers, power tools, or paint brushes can lend a hand. Call the Camp Hanover office at (804) 779-2811 to get connected and schedule a time to do some work.



A COMFORTABLE SPACE FOR THOSE WHO SERVE. When complete, the Mission Volunteer House will give long-term volunteers a place to relax, cook meals, and get some rest, while they work at camp.



Summer camp staffer Deborah Keyes stands before the mural that will hang in common area of the Mission Volunteer House. Deborah painted the tree with bare branches. Each leaf is a prayer, added by campers during Vespers.

How to Keep Camp Hanover Ministry Viable, Effective, and Sustainable?

With Camp Hanover the only traditional Presbytery Summer Camp remaining in Virginia, this question is critical as the Presbytery looks to the future. One way to keep Camp Hanover healthy and strong is to make sure the ministry is always organized and structured in a way to best meet the challenges of operating in today's complex world.

In the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, and across the PC(U.S.A.), other Presbyteries have transitioned their camps to incorporated structures. The Camp Hanover Ministries Board Purpose Group (CHMB), after examining this trend and consulting with

ministry professionals at the Presbyterian Mission Agency, is preparing a recommendation that the Presbytery of the James incorporate Camp Hanover as well.

One of the most important benefits of incorporation is how this structure secures the future of the camp and helps insulate both the presbytery and the camp from liability risks. As the recommendation is developed, in addition to collaborating with Presbytery leadership, the CHMB will hold discussion forums this fall across the Presbytery to gather your input and answer questions about incorporation. Stay tuned!

Register For Adult Retreats Happening at Camp Hanover



WOMEN'S RETREAT LEADER: Patricia Bord

Patricia Bord is a former FBI agent and 2017 World Classic bench press champion. She will share the story of her physical and faith transformations that steered her toward a higher perspective of God's hand in her life.



ATTENTION MEN: Play Hard. Goof Off. Eat as Much as You Want. Try New Things. Listen to God.

Take advantage of this time for fellowship, good food, and reflection. Relax. Go fishing. Take a hike. Play disc golf. Enjoy a campfire. The Manover at Hanover. A retreat for men.

Each retreat begins at 6 p.m. on Friday evening with dinner.

Programs end on Saturday at 5 p.m. Cost \$60 per person.

REGISTER ONLINE: www.camphanover.org/register

Forums Address Unique Needs of Small Churches

On June 2, representatives of fifteen churches gathered for the first of a series of forums geared to the unique needs of small congregations. Called "A Clearer Look at Today's Church," the forums are sponsored by Presbytery of the James and the Presbyterian Foundation to enable pastors, elders, clerks, and treasurers to engage in conversation with colleagues who have similar roles and responsibilities as well as similar challenges.

In addition to addressing those challenges, the first session also discussed the following:

- Does the Presbyterian Church USA look like the rest of American Protestantism?
- Does the Presbytery of the James look like the rest of the PC(USA)?
- What is the source of philanthropic giving today?
- What do members and pastors require/expect of their facility?

Paul Grier, vice-president of institutional services for the Presbyterian Foundation, led the discussion.

Paul works with congregations and institutions that are exploring new ways of undertaking their mission and the financial implications that such reinvention entails. He is an eighth-generation Presbyterian and a ruling elder in Greenville, South Carolina.

Nearly 30 people attended the first session at Laurel Presbyterian. The second forum will be held on Saturday, October 6 from 12:00-1:30 p.m. at Forest Hill Presbyterian Church.

Contact Deborah Rexrode at deborah@presbyteryofthejames.org to participate.



Paul Grier

The Vine

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3218 Chamberlayne Ave. Richmond, VA 23227
office@presbyteryofthejames.org

UPCOMING PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

October 20, 2018..... Lord Jesus Korean Church, Midlothian
February 16, 2019 Three Chopt Church, Richmond
June 18, 2019 INVITATION NEEDED
October 19, 2019..... INVITATION NEEDED

This issue of *The Vine* especially prepared for

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Mission Co-worker Heads to Ghana

At the June 12 Stated Meeting, Presbytery of the James commissioned **Ruth Brown** for her latest assignment in northern Ghana as a community health worker.



Ruth Brown

The northern region of Ghana differs significantly from the rest of the country. The population is more sparse, maternal and infant mortality and illness are higher, and fewer children attend school.

Ruth's work will support the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana (EPCG) in leading Bible studies and teaching strategies for health promotion and disease prevention. She will help community members learn to identify local health concerns and resources and to implement programs for positive, sustainable change.

Ruth reports that just nine pastors serve more than 100 churches in the region. Bible studies she leads will supplement their efforts.

Another value Bible study provides is fostering discussion among the people.

"Learning in Africa consists of listening to a lecturer and repeating back information," she shared. The collaboration encouraged in Bible study will be a novel approach for participants.

Ruth also will work with EPCG leaders on economic initiatives to reduce poverty and support health improvement efforts. These include programs for income generation, community savings and loans, and entrepreneurship training.

"I am eager to help groups learn to write grant proposals to fund their needs," Ruth added.

She hopes to encourage groups like the agricultural community and school leaders to share resources and work together to evaluate their programs and develop grant proposals to benefit each other.

Explore New Ideas for Your Annual Stewardship Campaign

If your congregation has been conducting its fall stewardship program the same way for many years, something new and fresh could inspire and encourage spiritual and financial giving. Here are some ideas:

Provide a **simple meal** at which your congregation can gather and share their stories of generosity. In your table fellowship, talk about some of the most generous people you have met on your spiritual journey and what it means to benefit from someone else's good works.



Invite everyone in the congregation to bring in an ingredient for a "**Stewardship Stew**" or have several individuals or families prepare and bring in pots of stew to add to one big pot at the church for a fellowship meal. Invite people to share their thoughts about what living simply means.



Coordinate hosts for **small group Bible studies** or conversations at members' homes or at the church. Participants bring a dessert or snack to share. Give a brief presentation of the ministries of the congregation and invite attendees to share ideas and to ask questions about these ministries.



Schedule a **visit to every member household** to connect individuals in your faith community with your congregation's ministry and show them how their generosity makes it all possible.



Deciding what type of annual stewardship program is best for your congregation should be based on the life and health of your congregation. Contact **Deborah Rexrode**, associate for stewardship, at Deborah@presbyteryofthejames.org or 434-996-6032 for assistance.

Follow Ruth's journey in Ghana at presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/ruth-brown/.