



Our Ministry of Prayer

Our Nation

Those Affected by COVID19

Our homebound and

Shut-in members

Our church leaders

Linda M. Franklin

Rev. Joseph Franklin, Sr.

Maurice Hawkins

John Houck's Family

Lori Lohr

Chesley and Methis

Stapleton

Catherine Wallace

Goodbye 2020!

By Steve Stalnaker

There was a meme¹ circulating on the Internet last year that went: "I'm going to stay up on New Year's Eve this year, not to see in the New Year, but to make sure this one leaves."

It would certainly be easy for us to feel that way about 2020. Consider: COVID and all the pandemic-related restrictions; the partisan, vitriolic election; your editor's favorite college football team's less-than-stellar season. All these and more have contributed to our hope that 2020 doesn't let the door hit him in the backside as he leaves.



All that complaining aside, we are more blessed than we deserve. We are reminded of what the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8:28: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him..."

While many in the Greenwood/Laurel Park church family are in COVID high-risk groups, we're generally healthy and we continue to prosper under God's bless-

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¹ "an image, video, piece of text, typically humorous in nature, that is copied and spread ... by Internet users ..." – Oxford English Dictionary.

From the Pastor

Leftovers

I love the food during the holiday season. Thanksgiving has turkey, ham, baked macaroni and cheese and yeast rolls. Yum! Christmas has decorated sugar cookies and hot chocolate on steroids – serious sugar overdose! And New Year's Day has black eyed peas and collard greens!



Whatever the traditional comfort food and treats prepared during the holiday season, there are sure to be leftovers to look forward to and enjoy. And for sure, as I reflect on the year 2020, there are leftovers of another kind to be had in 2021.

I know many of us are happy to see the year 2020 come to an end, as much of what we experienced gave us no comfort. There are leftovers from 2020 which we cannot deny.

Many are still devastated by the death of loved ones and friends, hearts broken and bereaved. A political divide in our country and the effects of a shrinking economy. Hate, intolerance and racism are still very much alive.

This COVID-19 pandemic, masks and social distancing are still here. Joblessness, homelessness and poverty continue to be on the rise. These are not leftovers to be excited about—it all leaves a bad taste in the mouth. And the odor cannot be ignored.

(Continued on page 10)

*Our January
Communion Offering Goes to
the Pastor's Discretionary Fund*



The Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord

With Help from UMC Discipleship Ministries and Wikipedia

This month we celebrate the Epiphany and remember Jesus' baptism. That seems strange to us to link the baby (or toddler) Jesus being visited by the Magi and Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist.



Epiphany remembers and celebrates the revelation of God incarnate as Jesus Christ. It is the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, as represented by the Magi (Matthew 2:1–12). The word “epiphany” is generally used today to indicate a moment of sudden revelation or insight. Epiphany is about seeing Christ, about the appearance of the Savior – the Messiah – in the person of Jesus.

Jesus' baptism, described in Matthew 3:13-17, also reveals God incarnate in the person of Jesus. God's proclamation – “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased” — made as Jesus rose from the Jordan, the tearing open of the heavens and the descending of the Spirit like a dove all symbolize that revelation of Jesus as God.

Jesus' baptism reminds us that we are now the visible evidence of the presence of Christ in the world. When we claim the new life that we embrace at our baptism, we live the light that we proclaim. We are the witness to the activity of the Lord in the midst of the present-day reality.

Worship should be a celebration; this is the beginning of a new year. We survived 2020, and while there might still be lingering effects of the pandemic and the unrest, it is time to embrace a new possibility, a new hope. The heavens have been torn open. But this isn't a threat; it's a promise of something new, something better. Let us commit ourselves to a closer walk with Christ. Let the waters of baptism renew us and cleanse us for our mission and ministry as followers of Jesus.



Let There Be Peace on Earth

By Linda Walker

We have been through so much in 2020 – dealing with the coronavirus and with economic, political and social issues. *We need peace on Earth.* To get that



we need to begin with calmness, peace and serenity within ourselves and to spread those good feelings to everyone.

One of my favorite hymns — “Let There Be Peace on Earth” — describes spreading peace. It was written by a husband-and-wife songwriting team (Jill Jackson and Sy Miller). They first shared the song with some teenagers. Here’s how it happened, in Mr. Miller’s words:

“One summer evening in 1955, a group of 180 teenagers of all races and religions, meeting at a workshop high in the California mountains locked arms, formed a circle and sang a song of peace. They felt that singing the song, with its simple basic sentiment – ‘Let there be peace on Earth and let it begin with me,’ helped to create a climate for world peace and understanding.

“When they came down from the mountain, these inspired young people brought the song with them and started sharing it. And, as though on wings, it began an amazing journey around the globe.”

Please join me in singing this hymn and using the words as part of your daily devotional time:

Let there be peace on Earth,
And let it begin with me;
Let there be peace on Earth,
The peace that was meant to be.
With God our creator,
Children all are we.
Let us walk with each other
In perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me;
Let this be the moment now.
With ev’ry step I take,
Let this be my solemn vow:
To take each moment and live
Each moment in peace eternally.
Let there be peace on Earth,
And let it begin with me.



Protect Yourself

AVOID COVID-19 Vaccine Scams

As COVID-19 vaccine distribution begins, here are signs of potential scams:

- You are asked to pay out of pocket to get the vaccine.
 - You are asked to pay to put your name on a vaccine waiting list or to get early access.
 - Advertisements for vaccines through social media platforms, email, telephone calls, online, or from unsolicited/unknown sources.
 - Marketers offering to sell or ship doses of the vaccine for payment.
- ✓ **Protect Yourself. Do not give out your personal information to unknown sources.**

! If you believe you have been the victim of COVID-19 fraud, immediately report it to:

- HHS-OIG Hotline: **1-800-HHS-TIPS** | tips.hhs.gov
- FBI Hotline: **1-800-CALL-FBI** | ic3.gov
- CMS/Medicare Hotline: **1-800-MEDICARE**



For accurate, up-to-date information about COVID-19, visit:

oig.hhs.gov/coronavirus
fbi.gov/coronavirus
justice.gov/coronavirus



HHS
Office of
Inspector
General



Federal
Bureau of
Investigation



Department
of Justice



Car Batteries and Cold Weather

From AAA Online

A car battery loses a third of its power in freezing weather.

As the air outside cools, the oil in your car thickens. Engine parts move more slowly so your battery has to use more power to turn over and start the engine. If the temperature drops to zero or below, your battery has only half its power. Scary stuff, right?

Here are a few quick tips on how to avoid that moment when you turn the key in the ignition and nothing happens.



Warning Signs

- Your car doesn't start immediately or makes a clicking noise when you turn the key.
- Your headlights or interior lights are dimmer than normal, or the power windows are working more slowly than usual.
- You see stains or signs of corrosion on the battery itself.
- Your battery is more than three years old.
- You take a lot of short trips often turning the car on and off, or you have long stretches of time – weeks or months – where the car is not used at all.

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Greenwood's Women's Circles

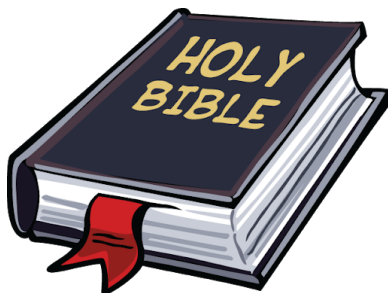


The Willing Workers Circle will meet at O'Charley's restaurant near Virginia Center Common at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 13 for dinner.

The Ruth Circle will be going out on Wednesday, Jan. 6 at 1 p.m. We will resume our regular meetings on Wednesday, Feb. 3 at 1 p.m.

The Bible in 50 Words

God made,
Adam bit,
Noah Arked,
Abraham split,
Joseph ruled,
Jacob fooled,
Bush talked,
Moses balked,
Pharaoh plagued,
People walked,
Sea divided,
Tablets guided,
Promise landed,



Saul freaked,
David peeked,
Prophets warned,
Jesus born,
God walked,
Love talked
Anger crucified,
Hope died,
Love rose,
Spirit flamed,
Word spread,
God remained.

Pre-Packaged Communion Elements

Pre-packaged, already-consecrated Communion elements will be available for those not planning to attend monthly first Sunday in-person or drive-thru Communion services.

Elements can be picked up Wednesday — Friday at the Greenwood church office, 9 a.m. — 1 p.m. during the last week of each month for the next month's Communion.

The Virginia Annual Conference has authorized clergy to virtually bless the elements for those still listening or viewing services via virtual platforms.



Food Donation Connection

From FDC Coordinator Adamarye Patteson:

"I would like to give a **GREAT BIG THANK YOU** to everyone who picked up food in 2020.

"Also thank you to the ones who brought fresh fruit, vegetables and canned goods to stock our pantry."



January Pick Up Rotation

Wednesday, Dec. 30: Jean Mowatt and William Gibbs; Thursday, Dec. 31: Susan Johnston and Lewis Daniel; Friday, Jan. 1: Adamarye and Riley Patteson.

Wednesday, Jan. 6: Charley Banks; Thursday, Jan. 7: Susan Johnston and Lewis Daniel; Friday, Jan. 8: Carolyn and Ray Smith.

Wednesday, Jan. 13: Jean Mowatt and William Gibbs; Thursday, Jan. 14: Susan Johnston and Lewis Daniel; Friday, Jan. 15: Adamarye and Riley Patteson.

Wednesday, Jan. 20: Charley Banks; Thursday, Jan. 21: Susan Johnston and Lewis Daniel; Friday, Jan. 22: Adamarye and Riley Patteson.

Wednesday, Jan. 27: Jean and William; Thursday, Jan. 28: Susan Johnston and Lewis Daniel; Friday, Jan. 29: Carolyn and Ray Smith.



Sunday Virtual Worship

Every Sunday at 11 a.m. at Greenwood

And on Zoom (click [here](#)) or dial 301-715-8592

Meeting ID: 829 5710 1589; password: 929829

Also on Facebook Live

Tuesday Prayer Call

Every Tuesday, 8 to 8:15 a.m. on Zoom (click [here](#)) or dial 301-715-8592

Meeting ID: 851 1374 4202; password: 452446



Goodbye 2020

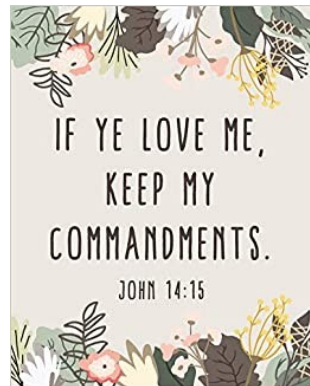
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ings. We hope that each of you have had a blessed year, too.

While this has been an eventful year for all of us, we remain convinced of God's blessings and we remember what God told us in Jeremiah 29:11: "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

With that in mind, the *Twig Bender* staff – editors, proof-readers, production team – all wish each of you a **blessed New Year!**

As you anticipate 2021, resolve to practice Jesus' commandments: Love God, love each other. And, as Linda wrote on page 3: "Let there be peace on Earth and let it begin ..." with *me* and with *you*!



Be Prepared — Read the Scriptures

January Lectionary Readings

Jan. 3	Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:(1-9), 10-18
Jan. 10 Epiphany	Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11
Jan. 17	1 Samuel 3:1-10; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51
Jan. 24	Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20
Jan. 31	Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28

Leftovers

(Continued from page 2)

The aroma of fervent prayer to God is needed. We are challenged to use the weapons that the presence of Christ makes available to us—the armor of God (*Ephesians 6:10-18*) and the fruit of the Spirit (*Galatians 5:22-23*). They are not carnal but mighty in God for the pulling down of strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). It is the only way we can transform these leftovers. The transformation will not happen overnight. But God is able.

Not all the 2020 leftovers are undesirable. A new-found and greater appreciation for essential workers like doctors, nurses, scientists, janitors, warehouse workers, city workers, grocery store workers, delivery drivers, post office workers — so many folks we often take for granted who were on the frontlines and continued to work allowing many of us to stay home safely. We owe them and their families our heartfelt gratitude.

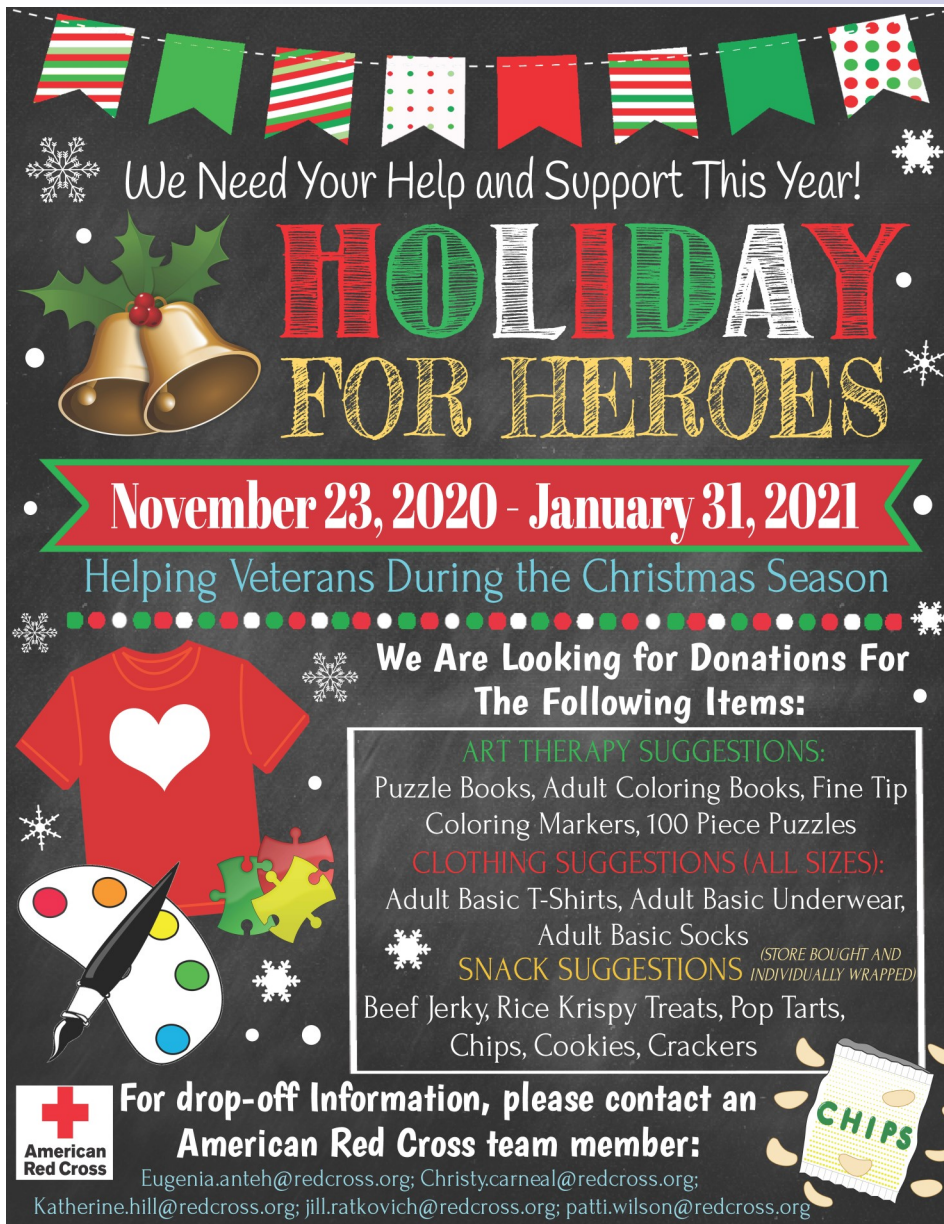
We saw churches striving to meet the needs of the community and reinvent worship services to continue to minister to their congregations and evangelize a new social media audience. Charitable and humanitarian organizations joined together to serve the marginalized and many in need. Doctors, therapists and specialists are providing care through virtual video appointments to keep people safe. Greater attention is placed on the importance of mental health and self-care. Vaccines for COVID-19 are becoming available. God has been present with us and we have seen the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living (*Psalms 27:13*).

I am convinced, regardless of the leftovers which have followed us into 2021, God is able to accomplish abundantly far more than we can ask or imagine, according to Christ's power at work in us (*Ephesians 3:20*).

So, **I am trusting God** with all the leftovers. What about you? **Happy New Year!**



Pastor Josette Franklin



The poster features a dark background with festive decorations. At the top, a string of colorful bunting flags (red and white stripes, green, red, and green with white polka dots) hangs across the width. Below the flags, the text "We Need Your Help and Support This Year!" is written in a white, cursive font. The main title "HOLIDAY FOR HEROES" is prominently displayed in the center, with "HOLIDAY" in large, multi-colored block letters (red, green, white, and red) and "FOR HEROES" in yellow, textured block letters. To the left of the title is an illustration of two golden bells hanging from a green holly leaf with red berries. Below the title, a red banner with white text reads "November 23, 2020 - January 31, 2021". Underneath the banner, the text "Helping Veterans During the Christmas Season" is written in a light blue font. A horizontal line of small, multi-colored dots separates this from the next section. The text "We Are Looking for Donations For The Following Items:" is written in white. To the left of this text is an illustration of a red t-shirt with a white heart, a paint palette with various colored dots, and a paintbrush. To the right of the text is a white box containing three sections of suggestions: "ART THERAPY SUGGESTIONS:" (green text) listing puzzle books, coloring books, markers, and puzzles; "CLOTHING SUGGESTIONS (ALL SIZES):" (red text) listing t-shirts, underwear, and socks; and "SNACK SUGGESTIONS (STORE BOUGHT AND INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED)" (yellow text) listing beef jerky, rice krispy treats, pop tarts, chips, cookies, and crackers. To the right of the snack list is an illustration of a bag of chips. At the bottom left is the American Red Cross logo. To the right of the logo, the text "For drop-off information, please contact an American Red Cross team member:" is written in white, followed by three email addresses: Eugenia.anteh@redcross.org, Christy.carneal@redcross.org, Katherine.hill@redcross.org, jill.ratkovich@redcross.org, and patti.wilson@redcross.org.

We Need Your Help and Support This Year!

HOLIDAY FOR HEROES

November 23, 2020 - January 31, 2021


Helping Veterans During the Christmas Season

We Are Looking for Donations For The Following Items:

ART THERAPY SUGGESTIONS:
Puzzle Books, Adult Coloring Books, Fine Tip Coloring Markers, 100 Piece Puzzles

CLOTHING SUGGESTIONS (ALL SIZES):
Adult Basic T-Shirts, Adult Basic Underwear, Adult Basic Socks

SNACK SUGGESTIONS (STORE BOUGHT AND INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED)
Beef Jerky, Rice Krispy Treats, Pop Tarts, Chips, Cookies, Crackers

 **For drop-off information, please contact an American Red Cross team member:**
Eugenia.anteh@redcross.org; Christy.carneal@redcross.org;
Katherine.hill@redcross.org; jill.ratkovich@redcross.org; patti.wilson@redcross.org

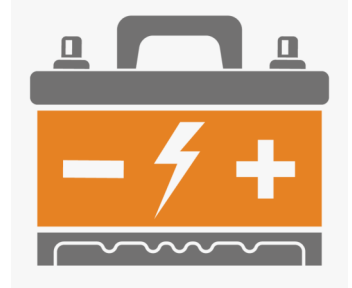
Susan Johnston will collect any donations; call her at 804-869-7098 or email her at ksngal@aol.com.

Car Batteries and Cold Weather

(Continued from page 6)

What You Can Do

- Park your car in a garage whenever possible. The less frigid the air is around your car, the better for your battery.
- If you live in an area with temperatures frequently below freezing, consider buying an engine heater to reduce the power the battery needs to start your car.
- Turn off your lights, wipers, and heater before you turn off your engine at the end of a drive to prevent an unnecessary drain on the battery the next time you start your car. Unplug phone chargers and USB cables for devices as soon as you turn off your engine.
- Avoid using your car's heater longer than you have to; heaters put high demands on your battery.
- If you see corrosion on your battery, clean it or have it cleaned by a trained technician.
- If you consistently go two weeks or longer without using your car, invest in a battery tender to keep the battery charged.
- If you plan on not using your car for an extensive period of time during snow season, it is important to turn it on every 6-12 hours and let it run idle for 15-20 minutes so that it reaches operating temperatures. This provides current to the battery, allowing it to regain its charge.



GREENWOOD'S ON FACEBOOK:
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GUMCVA





Greenwood Church Family Birthdays

Linda Walker	1/6	Kaye Powell	1/20
Jeremy Coleman.....	1/10	Jalayah Shuler.....	1/26
Patricia Davis Lawson.....	1/16	Jayden Shuler	1/26
Warren Murphey	1/20		

*Don't see your birthday or wedding anniversary in The Twig Bender and would like to have us publish it? Send your dates to admin@gumcva.org or call the church office at 804-266-5341; likewise, let us know if you'd like your birthday or anniversary **re-moved**.*

Still Available!

We have one item left from October's Silent Auction: A \$25 Gift Card from Fin 'n Feather on Lakeside Ave. It can be yours for a contribution to the Greenwood General Fund. Call Glenda at 804-755-6767. First come, first served.



Twig Bender

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Pastor

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Email

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Jackie Schultz

Steve Stalnaker



Greenwood United Methodist Church

January 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 New Year's Day 6 p.m. Free Food 	2 Science Fiction Day No Men's Breakfast 
3 Communion Sunday 11 a.m. In-Person and Virtual Worship	4 Nat'l Spaghetti Day 	5 Twelfth Night 8 a.m. Prayer Call	6 Epiphany 1 p.m. Ruth Circle Meets 	7 Old Rock Day 	8 6 p.m. Free Food 	9 Do Something Good Today 
10 Epiphany Sunday 11 a.m. In-Person and Virtual Worship 3 p.m. Richmond District Conference:	11 Learn Your Name in Morse Code Day --- ..- - - - -	12 Nat'l Hot Tea Day 8 a.m. Prayer Call 	13 Nat'l Rubber Ducky Day 5:30 p.m. Willing Workers Circle	14 Dress up Your Pet Day 	15 6 p.m. Free Food 	16 Religious Freedom Day 
17 Human Relations Day 11 a.m. In-Person and Virtual Worship	18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 	19 8 a.m. Prayer Call 5 p.m. Admin Council 	20 Nat'l Cheese Lover Day 	21 Nat'l Hugging Day 	22 <i>Twig Bender</i> Deadline 6 p.m. Free Food 	23 Nat'l Pie Day 
24 11 a.m. In-Person and Virtual Worship 31 11 a.m. In-Person and Virtual Worship & Holiday for Heroes Donations Due	25 Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day 	26 Peanut Brittle Day 8 a.m. Prayer Call 	27 Chocolate Cake Day 	28 Int'l Lego® Day 	29 6 p.m. Free Food 	30 Croissant Day 

Have a Blessed New Year!

Mark Your Calendars

Feb. 15 President's Day
Feb. 17 Ash Wednesday
March 28.....Palm Sunday
April 4.....Easter Sunday

Our Mission

The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Matt. 28:19



Our Vision

*Loving
Growing
Serving*

"A Few Things or Just One"

Is the theme of the **Richmond District Conference**, set for Sunday, Jan. 10, 3—4 p.m. "Vital Congregations," the first of three Leadership Training events will be presented immediately following the Conference, 4—6 p.m. by the Rev. Jorge Acevedo. Conference and Training Events will be on Zoom. A Zoom link, good for one or all of the events, will be provided upon registration.