

Pastor Kenny's Annual Report – 2018

"We are journeying people. From the time we enter into the world until the moment we take our final breath we make our way as life unfolds before us. So it is with faith. It too is a lifelong journey. Along the way we encounter others, and at these crossing points we encounter the living God."

~ From *Crossings: God's Journey With Us*



It is hard to believe another year has come and gone. But what a joy it is to sit and reflect on the many ways God has blessed the life and ministry of MCC Richmond. Together, we are on a journey of *Sharing God's love with all people* ... just the way we are ... and what a brilliant, glorious, enlightening journey it is as we are challenged, learn from one another, meet new friends along the way and catch a deeper glimpse of the Divine One in our midst. I am ever grateful for the past two and a half years of journeying with you as we encounter our living God in new and unexpected places.

We encounter the living God

- ~ as we gather for worship to praise our God, learn, sing, pray, greet one another and welcome new friends.
- ~ as we pray for, support and encourage the leaders of our church and UFMCC.
- ~ as we offer our God-given gifts of time, talents and treasure to serve and make a difference in our families, our homes, our church, one another, the Greater Richmond Community and the world.
- ~ as we discern how God calls us to serve within the life and ministry of MCC Richmond.
- ~ in offering and providing our facility to be used for ministry and serving others.
- ~ when we witness and affirm the blessing of creative, inspirational, constant faithfulness and ingenuity staff.

We encounter the living God

- ~ while providing food and hygiene supplies to the Vicky Hester Food Pantry and The Lounge for those in need.
- ~ through our phone calls, emails, texts, and visits with neighbors and friends.
- ~ suggesting and experimenting with new creative elements to enhance our worship time.
- ~ in joyfully celebrating 40 years of ministry sharing God's love with others.
- ~ through the Spirits of Joy, Voices of Praise and Handbell Choir as they share their gifts of music.
- ~ when sharing our passions, hopes and dreams regarding the ministries of our church.

We encounter the living God

- ~ as we offered words of gratitude for our many blessings during Advent and Lent.
- ~ as we raised money for the Carol Adams Foundation and supported the New Shoes for Back to School Ministry and provided Christmas gifts for children and those in need.
- ~ when we openly share our joys and concerns for prayer.
- ~ in the singing of Christmas carols by candlelight.
- ~ by volunteering to be a worship assistant.
- ~ as we celebrate the renovations of the Parish House and look forward to further renovations of the Celebration Hall and Sanctuary.

We encounter the living God

- ~ when hands join together in the church kitchen to prepare meals and cleaning up from our Sunday lunch ministry and Living Wednesday Dinner Church.
- ~ while collecting items for and making treat bags for children at *The Doorways* or *Ronald McDonald House*.

- ~ when we show up and support social justice rallies in response to social injustice.
- ~ through faithfully hearing and responding to the call for donations of time, talent and treasure.
- ~ by joyfully dancing together creating a God reality for those afraid or those who have been shunned by a church.
- ~ as we consider ways to enhance our ministries and share ideas for new ministries.
- ~ by sharing our faith with family, friends, colleagues and others.

We encounter the living God

- ~ in the self-discovery, reflection, and meditation for spiritual growth.
- ~ in the laughter and joyful sounds of visiting and greeting others whenever we gather.
- ~ when volunteers share their gifts of time and creativity.
- ~ when we participate in passionate, heated, healing and affirming discussions in Sunday School or Living Wednesday Dinner Church.
- ~ in supporting and participating in community organizations such as Women's of Essence, Diversity Richmond, Transgender Day of Remembrance, Equality Virginia, Transgender Information and Empowerment Summit.
- ~ as we embrace and celebrate God's love for us and others ... *just the way we are!*

We encounter the living God

- ~ in using our facility for 12 Step Meetings, Support Groups and community advocacy and learning groups.
- ~ as we collect Panera Bread, package it and distribute it to others.
- ~ as we grow and learn new ways to offer ourselves to God's service.
- ~ while learning about and embracing different gender identities and sexual expression identifying all as the Beloved of God.
- ~ as we celebrate being a growing, thriving church.
- ~ in being willing to serve others.
- ~ when we risk being vulnerable and transparent by letting others REALLY know us ... *just the way we Are.*
- ~ as we commit ourselves to the joy and struggle of learning to do each and every part of our ministry differently in an effort to move our church and ministry forward.

I encounter the living God

- ~ in and through serving as pastor and caring for the people of MCC Richmond and beyond.
- ~ as I do my best to inspire and empower MCC Richmond members and friends in discovering their God-given gifts and finding opportunities for them to share their gifts with others.
- ~ in witnessing people grow and claim God's love for them.
- ~ meeting and encountering others in the Fan and Great Richmond.
- ~ when frustrated and discouraged by my work someone calls for prayer or expresses gratitude.
- ~ while becoming more a part of Kirk's family and being loved and welcome by them.
- ~ working with Kirk in creating a loving, beautiful home and sharing it with others.
- ~ caring for and receiving love from our pets Freddie, Ginger, Bentley and Jezebel.
- ~ while growing in Kirk's love, seeing the love of life and others in and through his eyes.

May the Great Spirit/Wind of God, Divine Parent, and Holy Child be with us as we continue our journey in 2019.

For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

~ 1 Corinthians 3:9-11

Many blessings and much love,

Rev. Kenny Callaghan

November 18, 2018