



2025 Congregational Meeting Packet

November 9th, 2025

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Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda

***Metropolitan Community Church of Richmond, Virginia
2503 Park Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23220***

Congregational Meeting Agenda – 12:15 p.m.

November 9, 2025

- A. Opening Prayer**
- B. Call to Order – Vice Moderator Catherine Pall**
- C. Confirmation of Quorum – Church Clerk Philip Adams**
- D. Introduction of Board Members and Parliamentarian**
- E. Approval of Minutes of Preceding Meeting (Attached)**
- F. Report of the Board of Directors and/or Officers**
 - 1. Membership Report**
- G. Reports of Committees**
- H. Unfinished Business**
- I. New Business**
 - 1. Approval of the Budget**
 - 2. Election of Board Members**
 - a. Results of Board Member Election**
 - 3. Election of Nominating Committee Members**
 - a. Results of Nominating Committee Election**
- J. Other Written Comments/Questions from the Membership**
- K. Adjournment**

Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes from November 17, 2024

Metropolitan Community Church Richmond, Virginia

Congregational Meeting Minutes

Sunday, November 17, 2024

The MCC Richmond Congregational Meeting was held in person in the Sanctuary on Sunday, November 17, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 12:02 p.m. by Vice Moderator Catherine Pall. First Lay Delegate Les Quintana-Branch opened the meeting in prayer.

Vice Moderator, Catherine Pall called on Philip Adams, Church Clerk to certify the quorum. Philip called the roll and confirmed that 42 members were present and that exceeded the requirement of 20% of the 106 members or 22 members. Catherine Pall introduced the Board members who were present – Catherine Pall, Vice Moderator; Mark James, Treasurer, Elliott Robinson, Director; M.J. Simmons, Director; Les Quintana-Branch, First Lay Delegate and Philip Adams, Clerk. It was noted that Rev. Gail Minnick was out of the country and unable to attend. Catherine Pall also introduced Carol Anderson as the Parliamentarian for the meeting. Catherine Pall gave a summary of the agenda for the meeting and recognized the Clerk, Philip Adams to discuss the minutes contained in the package.

Philip Adams indicated that the minutes from the 2023 Congregational Meeting had been included with the packet as well as minutes from the Special Congregational Meeting held on June 16, 2024. Catherine Pall asked for a motion to approve both sets of minutes as presented which was made by John Pall and seconded by John Poarch. The motion was approved on a voice vote with no negative votes or abstentions.

Catherine Pall called attention to the written reports that had been included in the membership packet. Carol Anderson made a motion to accept the membership report which was seconded by Ginny Loving. The motion was approved unanimously. Ginny Loving made a motion to accept the Committee reports as presented which was seconded by Billy Squier. The motion was approved unanimously.

There was brief discussion concerning the 2025 budget which had been presented the week prior at the Budget Forum held on Sunday, November 10, 2024. Greg Nelson made a motion to accept the proposed 2025 budget which was seconded by Kendall McKnight. The motion was approved unanimously.

The proposed Bylaw Amendment was presented as follows:

Proposed reading of Amended Article V, C. – Voting Rights – Each member in good standing has the right to vote. Proxy or any other form of absentee voting shall not be allowed. Proxy or absentee voting shall be allowed per the MCC Richmond policy.

Carol Anderson made a motion to table the Amendment until the referenced policy could be developed, distributed to the membership and reviewed by the UFMCC which was seconded by Martha Pittenger. It was noted that the Amendment, although developed and approved by the Board had not been included in the congregational meeting packet although it had been sent out in an email blast.

During the discussion, a friendly amendment was made by Ginny Loving to extend the time frame for approval until September 15, 2025, to allow time for the UFMCC to respond as they are already working on a similar Amendment. The friendly Amendment was accepted by both Carol Anderson and Martha Pittenger. Greg Nelson seconded the motion, and further discussion ensued. Carol Anderson re-stated the amended motion as follows: MCC Richmond should table the consideration of voting for the proposed Bylaw

Amendment until such time as the policy is fully developed and the UFMCC leadership meets and adopts a similar action within a timeframe between November 2024 and September 15, 2025.

Danny Burgess spoke to the significance of the policy amendment for MCC Richmond to lead the fellowship with this action. Catherine Pall located the language in the email that was distributed to the membership and read the proposed policy to the congregation. There was considerable clarification and discussion regarding the nature of the Amendment and the thought process and history behind it. John Poarch called for the question which was seconded by Tigger Grosvenor.

Catherine Pall asked for a show of hands that would support the proposed amendment to the amendment to table the amendment. The show of hands demonstrated a majority of members not in favor of the amendment to the amendment. A second vote demonstrated that the majority of the members were not in favor of tabling the amendment, so the Bylaw approval vote would move forward.

Loretta Mountcastle presented the Nominating Committee Report. She mentioned that there were two candidates for two Board positions including Catherine Pall and Philip Adams. Upon a motion by Loretta Mountcastle and a second by Tigger Grosvenor, the Nominating Committee report for Board positions was accepted and approved. The motion was approved on a voice vote with no negative votes or abstentions. Catherine Pall directed attention to the election of two positions for the Nominating Committee. Tigger Grosvenor and Chuck Bateman are completing their terms on the Nominating Committee.

Continuing in the tradition that all church members by merit of membership have a nomination already to serve on the Nominating Committee, Carol Anderson seconded Tigger Grosvenor for the Nominating Committee. Tigger Grosvenor accepted the nomination. M.J. Simmons seconded Chuck Bateman for the Nominating Committee. Chuck Bateman did not accept the nomination. Loretta Mountcastle seconded Liz Chenoweth for the Nominating Committee. Liz Chenoweth accepted the nomination.

The nominations were closed on a motion by John Poarch and a second by Ginny Loving. The motion was approved unanimously. Members were instructed to write down two names for the two positions on the Nominating Committee.

All Board candidates were provided a brief opportunity to address the membership. Stepney Setzer-Storrs and Danny Pierce, as Friends of the Church were appointed to tally the votes. The ballots were collected and tallied.

The proposed Bylaw Amendment was approved by a vote tally of 35 yes votes and 7 no votes (2/3 of the votes present required 29 positive votes to approve), so the Amendment was approved.

Catherine Pall and Philip Adams were elected to the Board for two-year terms.

Tigger Grosvenor and Liz Chenoweth were elected to the Nominating Committee for two-year terms. No written comments were received from the Membership for further discussion.

The floor was opened for comment and questions. Verbal thanks and recognition were provided to Carol Anderson for her work with the adoption of Christmas families and the Vicky Hester Food Pantry. The Board was congratulated for a successful year. Anne Herbst was thanked for her work with the Food Pantry and the DEVO ministry. Gratitude was expressed for Rev. Gail and her contributions to MCC Richmond.

Tigger Grosvenor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by John Poarch and approved by voice vote. Philip Adams offered the closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip Adams, Church Clerk

November 9, 2025



Pastor's Annual Report

Pastor's Report

Congregational Meeting
November 9, 2025

Dear Members and Friends of MCC Richmond,

What an amazing year we have had and I am excited that this year, I will be able to be with you for the meeting. There is so much good information in the congregational meeting packet and I do hope you spend some time reading through the reports, finances, and plans. Having said that, I would like to offer my high-level thoughts on the year that just passed.

We have had some fun, amazing events, blessed worship and programs, and shared good meals together. We have participated in community events such as PRIDE, created ministries opportunities, and did some TLC for our facility. We are blessed to have a very engaged and effective Board of Directors. And I see more and more folks becoming involved in new ways...think of the back yard behind the community center...just to highlight one.

I am particularly proud of the worship that we have provided to our community. We do try and keep it feeling fresh and new and are now starting to support a theme for worship each Sunday. I am encouraged by the growth in attendance and giving. More and more folks are becoming involved in worship as well as our other ministries. We have an amazing leadership team and I hope that you will take the time to read each one of their reports so you will have a full view of the extent to which we are engaged.

I do want to highlight that after much work and energy; the Safety and Preparedness team executed their first fire drill in June. We now have plans in place not only for fire but in case there is an unexpected emergency, like a visitor who may try to do us harm. I feel good knowing that we have a plan and that most folks in the church know the plan. We will continue to work on those plans.

I think throughout that more folks are feeling empowered to "be church" in whatever way they choose.

On a personal note, we have sold our home in Herndon, bought a new one down here in Richmond, and so I guess you can say that we are now a part of the community. This was a HUGE change for us, but I guess we are to stay.

Our church home still needs more attention and will continue to present us with some challenges. I know that we all love our home and more and more folks are getting involved in keeping up on the maintenance and improvements. We certainly could use more folks on the facility team. It is a big and yet rewarding ministry.

I do want to give some applause to your hard-working Board of Directors. This is one of the finest Boards that I have ever worked with. And if you add to that the skill and expertise and commitment of our ministry leaders, I become overwhelmed by what and who we have been blessed with. And it all comes back to YOU! You are the very heart of this congregation and what a joy it is to be your pastor. You say "yes" to so many requests; we could not do this and we would not be who we are without you.

I ask for your continued support and for your involvement in the ministries of this church. I look forward each Sunday to seeing you and sharing time together in worship.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Gail Minnick

Ministry & Leadership Annual Reports

Loving God

by caring for and serving others

through the

Life & Ministry of MCC Richmond

Vicky Hester Food Pantry Report

Vicky Hester Food Pantry (VHFP) Ministry Report 2025

What an amazing year we have had in your Vicky Hester Food Pantry. The ministry is thriving, but our hearts and spirits were of course impacted by the death of Vicky Hester for whom the ministry is named. Vicky's unfailing commitment for this ministry cannot be overstated. Donating \$500 - \$600 of non-perishable items kept us stocked each and every week and allowed us to feed the numbers that we did. Prior to her death she made sure that this generous practice would continue, and it has! What an incredible and generous soul!

Many do not know that the donations from Wednesday night Line Dancing at Babe's (Vicky's bar) also goes to support the VHFP. The dancers, in cash donations alone, have contributed over \$3000 this year with more donated through the MCC VHFP QR code. We are truly blessed. We have served over 4000 meals and provided over 35,000 lbs. of groceries! That is right: 4000 meals and 35,000 lbs. of food! In addition, the Clothes Closet and Toiletry Center run by Tigger Grosvenor has provided all types of critical seasonal clothing and personal hygiene items (nearly 5000 items) essential for those living outside. Yes, God is Good!!!

The VHFP, as well as all other ministries like ours, has seen dramatic increases in the number of individuals served. The VHFP average number of clients served has increased to greater than 85 per week. All of this is happening because of your commitment and vision as well as the dedicated group of 20 volunteers who come to set up tables, prepare and serve meals, stock grocery items, sort clothing and serve meals! Smiles and love are always on the menu. Our clients are always amazed at the warmth and love shared!

We continue to partner with Just Compassion once a month; they are a non-profit providing much needed dental care to individuals who are underserved in rural Virginia. On the second Thursday of every month, they bring and serve 65 Subway sandwiches and provide toothbrushes and other toiletry and hygiene items. And our partnerships don't end there! We also continue our partnership with Daily Planet and Anthem in our Coats, Socks and Blankets give away that occurs in November. Over 100 coats were provided to the community, and we provided the soup lunch.

This report would not be complete without mentioning the folks who make this happen every single week (and please forgive me if I missed your name). The first names of those who are a part of this incredible ministry: Rev Georgia, Chuck, Leslie (our wonderful buyer), Tigger, Leia, Sam, Jay, Carla, Richard, Al, Anne, David, Del, Faye, Sue, Jack, Ruth, Danny, Daryl, Lucas, Helena, Philip, Janyce, Emma, Terri, Loretta and YOU! Please consider donating, volunteering and supporting this compassion ministry!

Blessings and peace,
Carol Anderson (Co-leader VHFP)

Bread Ministry Report

Bread Ministry Report – 2025

Anne Herbst - Facilitator

The Bread Ministry works in partnership with the food pantry. Every Wednesday evening, volunteers go to two different Panera shops at closing time to pick up their leftover breads, rolls, and pastries. They bring them back to the church and leave them in closed containers. Then, on Thursday mornings, volunteers go through the whole donation to make bags of bread, rolls and bagels to be distributed to our food pantry friends and the Daily Planet, who also serves the food insecure community. Loaves of bread are used to make sandwiches for our food pantry guests and pastries are bagged up to give desserts for our guests' lunches. We currently have 3 volunteers who pick up from Panera and work with several volunteers from the food pantry to process the donations Thursday mornings.

Adult Sunday School Report

Do you know that a group of folks meets every Sunday morning at 9:00 to discuss the Bible, spirituality, discipleship and more? The in-person gathering takes place in the Community Center classroom and we are joined by folks near and far on Zoom. Adult Sunday School continues to thrive, averaging 15 people who share directly in the studies and many more folks who participate by reading the materials and contributing when they are able.

There is traditional Bible Study as well as other non-canonical text study and even the study of other religions. We are a diverse group in every way with "out of the box" thinking, and where everyone feels free to express their beliefs and all welcome to participate. Sunday School is a safe place to share our experiences, our beliefs, our doubts, and our joys. This year we have studied several individual short-term studies and several books. We completed a study on the Way of Love, Elijah, Did Jesus Always Preach Non-Violence and others. Currently we are studying ***The Message of Jesus*** by Adam Hamilton.

This coming year we will continue to be a vibrant community where study, discussion, prayer, trust and support are the cornerstones of our time together. Please join us at 9:00 on Sundays for our sharing time of **15 minutes** and then for the Lesson which begins at **9:15**.

Wednesday Night Line Dance Class and Country Dancing Report

The Line Dance Class and Country Dancing Ministry is thriving. With an increased attendance and infusion of lots of young people and the energy that they bring with them, we are now averaging 70 people per night a nearly 50 % increase since last year.

Having moved to Wednesday nights from 7 to 8:30 we are thrilled with the increase in attendance and interest. We all were of course devastated by the death of Vicky Hester. Vicky opened Babe's up to our line dancing group when it consisted of about 10 people who just wanted to country dance and then she stayed with us as we grew to a ministry that supported MCC in so many different ways; including of course, the Vicky Hester Food Pantry (VHFP) and Children's Ministries over the years.

People give each and every week through a QR code and cash donations to support VHFP. The cash donations this year alone added up to over \$3000 in support of this vital ministry. What a blessing! People comment all the time that the welcoming spirit they feel at dancing changes their impressions of "church" and we have had several folks become a part of MCC as a result. So please join us at 7:00 PM every Wednesday at Babe's for lessons and then stick around to show off what you learned! I can guarantee you will be smiling throughout the night; your spirit will be lifted, and you might even be a little tired when you leave.

Thursday Night Flair, Share and Prayer Report

Flair, Share and Prayer (formerly known as Thursday Night Check-in) continues to be a way for members of our faith community to gather (virtually) and as the name implies, "check-in". The check-ins started out to keep people connected during the bleak and frightening quarantined months and now years of COVID. People were able to "see" other people, albeit on a screen. We shared fears, anxieties, concerns, but also joys. There was laughter too, and we discovered how much that was needed. Members of the group requested that we continue and so we have.

It is a community who laughs, cries, tells our stories, and supports each other with words, actions, prayer, and love. No one need feel isolated. We have met together in person a few times as well and hope to do more of this. We also volunteered as a group and helped with the Christmas gifts for families, wrapping and delivering gifts. The group is open to all and currently consists of 10 folks who join regularly. Please check the church calendar of events showing the Thursdays that we meet (every other Thursday at 7:00) and for the Zoom link. Join us for share, prayer and that touch of flair!

Blessings and peace,
Carol L. Anderson Ministry Leader

Safety Team and Gatekeepers Report

At the forefront of security, the Gatekeepers Team ensures that the doors to our sanctuary are effectively monitored and that signals are given when and if needed during worship. This ministry has been developed and grown significantly this year into its own ministry, especially in the last few months. This team makes sure that everyone is safe and accounted for during worship.

The Safety and Preparedness Team accomplishments are included in the Pastor's report, most notably that the team was able to coordinate and execute a fire drill as well as procedures for emergencies.

The following people make up and contribute to the Gatekeepers Team:

Liz Chenoweth (Lead)

Andrew Stewart (Lead)

Jae Jubilee

Kate Sachs

Michelle Seiler

Danny Pearce

Chuck Bateman

Ivan Olson

Lynette Olson

Henry Branch

Paulette Brock

Ann Studnicka

Susan Micari

David Dozier

MCC Richmond thanks you for your dedication and willingness to serve our church in such an important way. Having a plan in place is very important. We never know what might happen and hopefully we will never need it, but it is valued and appreciated for the safety preparedness of our church.

Submitted by Catherine Pall

Hospitality Ministry Report

The Hospitality Ministry is all about bringing the church family together for meals and fellowship. It's a time to spend together, getting to know one another better.

There really is no better way to communicate and get to know each other better than with food and fun.

We have had one church potluck this year on Jun 8. It was a great success as far as participation. I am planning another one in October, hopefully, as cooler weather moves in and church attendance will probably increase.

Submitted By Leslie Nelson

Fundraising Team Report

Fundraising Team Report

The Fundraising Committee is committed to its mission to support MCCR spiritually and financially. The vision of this ministry is to provide additional funding to support the ministries of the church through FUN activities and events.

By the end of the year the team will have participated in 4 events. The events are: The Spaghetti Luncheon, the Pride luncheon, The Fashion Show and the Christmas Musical.

All fundraising events are always a great success because of God's grace and the great generosity and support of MCCR members, friends and community. We thank God for all of the favor that has been shown to us.

The team members include, Ricki King, Ginny Loving, Chuck Bateman, Leslie Nelson, Kendell McKnight, Henry Quintana-Branch, Les Quintana-Branch, Liz Chenoweth, Andrew Stewart, Carol Anderson, Rev. Georgia Johnson, Elliott Robinson, David Dozier, Paulette Brock, Ann Stubnicka, Andre Somerville, Jeffrey Allen, Emma Johnson, Angela Simmons, Katie Simmons and Danny Pearce.

Submitted by Ricki King

Fine Arts / Music Ministry Report

Music Ministry Report – 2025
Ginny Loving – Music Director

The vision of this ministry is to provide individuals an opportunity to participate in a consistently sound program of music and to allow for performances of this music as an integral part of our worship service which brings joy to the participants and the congregation.

The team includes: Ginny Loving, Catherine Pall, MJ Simmons, Philip Sledd, Kendell McKnight, and Amanda Granozio.

Highlights:

- 2025 has once again been a year filled with excitement, growth, and yes, some challenges, especially noting the loss of our pianist, Ben Eisneberg, and the hiring of Russell Wilson.
- And yes, we, The Spirits of Joy (SOJ) continue to face additional (but fewer!!) health challenges over this year. The group weathered the storm and grew stronger during the illness of the Choir Director, Gospel Choir Director and several other key members, with many stepping up and leading when needed.
- We presented a Christmas Program and an Easter Musical, highlighting the talent of not only the choir, but the musicians, narrators and soloists, duets, etc.
- We continue to rehearse on Tuesdays and perform on a weekly basis during Sunday worship.
- Continued performances by our many talented soloists, both members of the SOJ and members of the congregation
- We continue to see growth in our group adding several new members.
- The Joyful Ringers, our bell choir, continues to thrive under the direction of John Pall. We have grown in number and skill moving from occasional performances during Sunday service.
- Several faithful members continue to serve as Worship Leaders each Sunday.

Goals for 2026 include:

- Continue to build the Music Ministry.
- Adding additional members to the Worship Leader Team and change the dynamics with the congregation as we grow in our knowledge and skills.
- Continue to introduce new music to the congregation.
- Strengthen our own skills in mastering music.
- Plan and host our Christmas Celebration.
- Plan for our Easter Celebration.
- Have fun!!

Devo Report

Devo – 2025

Anne Herbst – Ministry Leader

Devo is a ministry to young people of different ages. The purpose is to help them get connected to God, to our church, and to each other. We meet once a month on the first Sunday during the second half of the service. We use various methods to engage in the exploration of faith, including conversation, skits, prayer, and stories. We currently have three committed leaders and welcome (and invite) other members of the congregation to deepen the conversation and connections within our church. We do not have a large number of any one specific social group, such as children, youth, college students, young adults. So, we welcome any young person able to engage in conversation to explore faith.

TempeSTT Praise Dance Team Report

TEMPESTT PRAISE DANCE TEAM

A worship ministry through dance to share the love of God and a way to bring joy to others.

The ministry started out as one spirited and joyful prasie dancer, now happy to say we have three engaged and spirited dancers. Looking forward to the future of growing and praseing.

We look forward to making the prasie team a part of the service at different times throughout the year.

MINISTRY TEAM

Henry Quintana- Branch

Camille DeShazo

Quinn DeShazo

Submitted Respectfully by Henry Quintana-Branch

Ushers and Greeters Ministry Report

MCC USHER MINISTRY

A ministry that welcomes church members and visitors every Sunday. Also sharing in the service by participating in the worship Offering, Communion guides and being available to guide Church members and visitors to the proper person with any specific questions that an usher may not be able to answer.

The ministry has a wonderful core group of usher and I see it getting stronger and one of our church core support ministries in the future.

MINISTRY TEAM

Henry Quintana-Branch

Leslie Nelson

Georgia Thweatt-Johnson

David Dozier

Quinn DeShazo

Arthur Dewey

John Schulman

Scott Finley

Michelle Seiler

Kate Sachs

Ministry of Congregational Care and Prayer Report

Mission: To demonstrate the love of God through caring and serving our fellow congregants, and the community through the life and ministry of MCC Richmond. The Ministry of Congregational Care is founded on the teachings of Jesus words in Mathew 25: 40. "In as much as you have done it to the least of these, you have done it unto me." To be a resource of hope and channel of prayer in time of need, to extend hospitality, and worship beyond the walls of the sanctuary, and to offer the Holy Meal (Eucharist) to those unable to come to the table.

Schedule: The MOCC meets every Thursday from 8 pm to 8:45 pm via zoom and phone, and annually in person training to explore, develop, implement and update ministry skills and techniques that support the spiritual growth and well being of MCC Richmond. Meetings consist of open prayer; team self check in, a devotional offering, and reading the prayer request. The team receives prayer via mail, phone line, prayer box, and MCC's Sunday school prayer list. Prayer call concludes with closing remarks and prayer.

Current Services: The MOCC is proud to provide the following services

1. Prayer Hot line: prayer requested, and messages are checked at end of the day. 804-355-3757
2. Transportation to church, and for medical appointments. * Additional services rendered based on need
3. Home and hospital visits.
4. Eucharist service for those unable to attend in person worship

MOCC Services & Programs Offered, 2024-2025: Second Annual Evening of Remembrance & Grief service, Individual Sacred Passage Service, World Aids Day Recognition, and Kwanzaa Observation.

Objectives for 2026: To continue to increase spiritual wisdom, expand in Christ Consciousness as a people of God, diverse in expression, like minded in hope and unified in love, to continue to do the work of prayerful intercession and service, to inform the MCC family that they are being prayed for and cared by this ministry, to have a greater visibility in the church and church activities, to grow our team with willing hearts ready to serve.

Team Members: Tom Barks, , Cheryl Owen-Watson, Les Quintana-Branch, Rev. Gail Minnick, and Rev. Georgia Thweatt-Johnson, Richard Kratzer, Tia Meeks, Rochelle Doley, Donni Wright, Ricki King, Ronald Giles, Creighton Coleman, Paulette Brock, Ann Studnicka.

Respectfully submitted by Rev. Georgia Thweatt-Johnson

Centering Community Prayer and Meditation Report

Centering Community Prayer & Mediation will be observing its seventh year of continuous service to our church and community. Every Monday members and guest gather at 5:30 pm to engage in prayer, meditation, and shared conversation; this is a time of connection, reflection, and openness, centered on the foundation of conscious presence, and spirituality through the practice of contemplation, mindfulness and scared silence. Our mission remains the same, to provide a safe space for individuals, where they are welcomed, accepted with openness, supported in love and encouraged to be their authentic self in a non judgmental environment. The group strives for shared leadership by all in attendance, with facilitation provided by Reverend Georgia and other as they are lead.

Attendees are encouraged to share their daily living activities for the week; this may include discussions around work or personal life experiences, varied readings, contemplative, meditative, and spiritual practices are discussed, this is followed by twenty minutes of centering silence. The gathering concludes with a time of reflective dialogue on the experience. 2025 The CCP&M is currently located in the Celebration Hall which has afforded an intimate and embracing atmosphere. The majority of the gatherings have consist of four to eight church members and occasional visitors, however, the mission , and purpose for CCP&M is unchanged and that is to be a group of diverse sacred and secular folk sharing in a safe and supportive environment

Centering Community Prayer & Mediation is not about any particular philosophy, teachings or meditation practices; rather it is about being-ness, finding a space of peace and harmony, where one can engage, and practice collective shared consciousness of love.

2026 Goals for Centering Community Prayer & Meditation

- To increase attendance, though our communication outlets as a safe and welcoming space,
- To evolve in sacred presence, mind-fullness, contemplation, and gratitude.
- To be a place of connection and restoration for anyone who is seeking harmony, and purposeful intention.
- To foster the many ways of being, expressing through our diverse path of sacredness
- To recognize each voice as valid and valuable.
- To affirm our shared humanity expressed in infinite possibilities & potential.

Respectfully submitted by Rev. Georgia Thweatt-Johnson

Communications, Social Media, Sound and Video Team Report

What We Do

- Volunteers on our team are responsible for our church website - mccrichmond.org, and also for worship service broadcasting.
- MCC Richmond's social media presence includes Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Bluesky. Unique and relevant content is frequently published on each of these platforms and acts as a face and presence of MCCR to the world.
- We provide support to church leadership and ministry leaders in creating and publishing media.

Happening in 2025

- The Sound Loft space was cleaned and organized.
- We are seeking to update and replace some of our older equipment. We applied for an Innovation Grant from the Fellowship to help our church expand and strengthen our digital presence.
- One new Team member joined us this year.
We are always looking for more team members and provide all the training needed for our volunteers..

Thank you!

The Digital Communications and Sound Team would like to thank the following individuals for their dedication and service, without you we would not be able to do all that we do.

Sound: Greg Nelson, Mo Southall, Lukas T., (Lead John Pall)

Video: Kenny Adcock, Linda Ebaugh, Billy Squier, Les Quintana-Branch, (Lead Catherine Pall)

Submitted Respectfully by John Pall

Facilities Report

Our beautiful church building stands brighter and better on its more than a century old spot on the corner of Park and Davis. Thanks to the efforts of many of you this is a true and heartwarming statement!

Certainly brighter, with a new coat of paint on the front doors and tree limbs removed from neighboring trees. Other points of light are the rigorously improved community garden and a shiny new faucet in the kitchen, to name a few.

Our church home is most definitely better, with (fire)safety updates performed and a safety-team in place, so that we are not only compliant with fire safety regulations but also prepared in case of an unexpected threat. (Thank you, Safety Team!)

The waterproofing that was done to the outside of the building also falls under the header of "better". Water no longer seeps into the walls, so repairs on the plaster downstairs in the basement can start. More better soon to come!

There are many more things that were done and still need to be done. You can find these on the ever-evolving list of tasks and projects to make our church home brighter and better, which is published weekly in the E-blast.

In last year's facilities report I mentioned that I had faith that with the help of God and all of you, a new carpet would be a reality before the next congregational meeting. Well, you all and God have shown up in a BIG way! It is happening! The exact date is not known, but more than likely we will experience the smell of new carpet before the end of the year.

I would like to thank each one of you who stepped up and helped maintaining and improving our church home. She (our building) is a gem! It has been my honor and privilege to serve as her keeper.

Respectfully submitted

MJ Simmons (She/Her)

Facilities Director

Interested in being on the Facilities Team or occasionally experience the JOY of giving of your time and talents?

Contact Torrie in the office, Pastor Gail, or myself. (MJ.simmons@mccrichmond.org)

First Lay Delegate Report

It has been a blessing to serve MCC Richmond as your First lay delegate along with my friend and Second Lay Delegate John Pall to the UFMCC, our denomination.

Our denomination is composed of more than 300 churches throughout the world of which MCC Richmond has belonged to for 47 years.

Throughout the months of January through May of 2025, John and I attended five workshops along with discussion circles and received webinars, documents and emails to get us prepared for our denomination's business meeting to be followed by our denomination's general conference held in person and online from July 3 through the 6th.

We attended the general conference online.

Of the great accomplishments at our business meeting advocated by our congregation and presented by me at our business meeting was to get our bylaw proposed amendment passed. This bylaw proposal now allows local churches more flexibility in how they conduct their annual meetings, including using electronic and absentee voting. If a church does not want to change how it conducts its meetings, it does not have to. This proposal gives local congregations more options about how they conduct business. The bylaw change was agreed to by 97% of lay delegates and 95% of the clergy.

There were many workshops at the general conference. I attended the following workshops:

- Wired for the Spirit: Innovating Faith in a Digital World
- Stewardship and giving in the modern area
- Dealing with Pain and Loss
- Styles and modern practices of worship

Additionally, during general conference I was able to fellowship with 5 fellow US Military veterans, and we agreed to create the UFMCC Veterans Kinship Group. It is my goal to recruit other fellow veterans in our congregation to join the denomination's group and to possibly create our own group.

Furthermore, MCC Richmond shot a video greeting on June 1 that was played during the first transformational weekend worship service. We were one of 14 MCCs that shot videos, and the third largest group. It was inspirational to see churches from the US, Germany, South Africa, Brazil show the different sides of MCC.

During the month of October 2025, the lay delegates along with Rev. Gail and our Board Vice-Moderator Catherine Pall attended a network gathering of the UFMCC Mid-Atlantic Network churches. MCC Richmond is one of 10 active UFMCC churches from Virginia, DC, Maryland, and Delaware that belong to this network. It is my hope that with the leadership of our own Mid-Atlantic Network co-leader Ginny Loving and the willingness of all the network's member churches to rebuild this network that fell out of existence due to the pandemic and the denomination's restructuring by communicating, collaborating, supporting and most importantly celebrating our churches and our distinct denomination with each other.

I look forward to having MCC Richmond members and friends be part of the meetings, groups, seminars and workshops and resources that UFMCC offers.

Submitted Respectfully by Les Quintana Branch, First Lay Delegate, Board of Directors

Vice Moderator Report

In the blink of an eye, another year has passed. This last year has brought a lot of changes to our church. We have persisted in the face of an ever-changing social and political climate. We have watched some of our beloved members and friends embark on their heavenly journey. We really don't know what lies ahead in the world. Despite these challenges, MCC Richmond is a place of hope, love, support, hope, and, of course, fun.

I am hoping that you have got a chance to read all the ministry reports and that you too can see what a vibrant and supportive community we have. The people that we have within our church do so much with such grateful and believing hearts, that truly God sets the limit of what is possible. Our food pantry continues to serve more and more people every week. It is truly a blessing and a miracle that we are able to provide for so many in need. We served over 4,000 meals in the last year. That is truly incredible. Other ministries are thriving and growing because they truly live the word of God and the mission of Jesus in their service. New people have joined us weekly because of the message that we put out in the community and the safe place we provide. Never discount how important that is. Our ministry to youth and young adults continues to reach new people. We are constantly singing, working, fundraising, or serving others. It is an amazing thing. We even have revived a ministry and renamed it the "Tempeste Praise Dancers". Every time they are a part of worship I see and hear Tempeste's vivacious spirit alive in the way they worship through movement, a talent I definitely was not blessed with.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the ministry leaders who work so hard to ensure that we as a church not only survive but thrive. Every one of you is a blessing. Thank you, truly, from bottom of my heart. MCC Richmond is MCC Richmond because of all that you do. None of the above which we have accomplished would be possible without the example you provide and the work that you put into ministry. I would also be remiss in forgetting that it is truly all of our members and friends that make this the church we want to be. Thank you for being authentic, true, and real, and thank you for helping others to feel the same.

Sadly, we must say goodbye (in December) to our fantastic Office Manager, Torrie Musta, who for the last year has run the office efficiently, effectively and with grace. I am thankful for her and wish her many good things for her future. Also, with the reminder that if you feel that helping in your office is ever your calling, please do let me know.

We do not know what comes next in the story of the world, but we are a community that comes together, that prays together, that facilitates change together, may it always be so. In the year ahead let us remember that we may be small, but we are not insignificant. We are truly small but mighty. Let that lead us forward as we embark on the adventure ahead.

Respectfully Submitted by Catherine Pall, Vice Moderator, Board of Directors

Board of Directors Annual Report

*MCC Richmond
2501 Park Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23220*

Board of Directors Annual Report – 2025

November 2024 – Congregational Meeting

- Catherine Pall and Philip Adams were elected as Directors at the November 17, 2024, Congregational Meeting to the MCC Richmond Board of Directors for two-year terms beginning in January 2025.
- The 2025 Budget was approved by the membership.
- Tigger Grosvenor and Liz Stewart were elected to the MCC Richmond Nominating Committee for two-year terms.
- A proposed Bylaw Amendment to establish absentee voting for the Congregational Meeting was approved by the Membership.

December 2024

- A carpet color selection was made by the Board of Directors for Overflow, a blue/gray Berber muted mix.

January 2025

- Catherine Pall elected as Vice Moderator; Philip Adams elected as Church Clerk.
- New Board Covenant in place for 2025 was executed.
- Membership was affirmed with 104 persons.

February 2025

- Thirteen attendees have signed up for a membership class including two children.
- UFMCC is also considering an amendment to permit absentee voting as inspired by the actions of MCC Richmond in November of 2024.
- Anniversary Committee for the June celebration was finalized.
- Updated Nominating Committee Procedures were approved.
- Approved concert on June 1, 2025, by the James River Ringers.

March 2025

- 11 Members completed the Membership class.
- Approved participation in the Virginia Pride event scheduled for September 27, 2025.
- Special Meeting called on March 30 about plumbing issues at the church. Approved replacement of second floor vanity in the Community Center and the installation of new shut-off valves.

April 2025

- Facilities Coordinator presented the church “to do” list and Board addressed planning to accomplish a volunteer schedule.
- The board approved the concept of a Safety and Security Committee and discussed areas of coverage including active shooter procedures, fire drill, and choir observation of entrance areas.

May 2025

- Membership record of 116 members was affirmed.
- The board approved participation in Black Pride on July 19, 2025.
- Set anniversary theme of 47 Years of Loving, Caring and Serving
- Approved updated Good Neighbor Fund Policy
- The board discussed long term projects and brain-stormed a priority list.
- Catherine Pall is working on a technology grant with the UFMCC.

June 2025

- Affirmed membership list at 115 members.

- Accomplished annual membership review in preparation for Nominating Committee work.
- Approved selection of Blue Sky app for social media for the Church
- Expenditures were approved for updating fire extinguishers, first aid kits and AED equipment.
- Pastoral performance review was completed by the Board.

July 2025

- Extensive work and planning were done on the building project list.
- Work for Nominating Committee in 2025 was discussed and agreed.
- Pastoral performance review was completed with Rev. Gail Minnick

August 2025

- Approved and provided Nominating Committee Chairperson the listing of eligible members for church service.
- Fashion Show date set for November 1, 2025
- Budget Forum and Congregational Meeting dates set for November 2 and November 9, 2025, respectively.
- Considerable discussion over portfolios for Board positions which will be shared with the Nominating Committee
- Affirmed membership list at 107 members after annual review.

September 2025

- Special meeting in September for the sole purpose of discussing a gift from Lydia Melton to MCC Richmond in the amount of \$250,000.00.
- Church membership affirmed at 106 members.
- Mark James, Treasurer, ratified by the Board to participate in the signing of the gift receipt from Lydia Melton
- Establishment of 3-month CD at Atlantic Union Bank and 6-month CD at Atlantic Union Bank
- Establishment of Money Market Account
- Ratified a tree trimming project with Community Center for \$225 for removal of branches from the roof.
- Carol Anderson will head up Thanksgiving baskets and Christmas families for 2025.
- A celebration of life for Vicky Hester is scheduled for October 12, 2025

October 2025

- Church received the resignation of Torrie Musta effective in December of 2025
- The Nominating Committee presented a slate of candidates for the Board consisting of Elliott Robinson and Susan Micari for Director at Large positions; Mark James as Treasurer; Les Quintana-Branch as First Lay Delegate; Tia Meek as Second Lay Delegate; John Pall as Alternate Lay Delegate
- 2026 Budget was reviewed and discussed for presentation to the membership on November 2
- Congregational Meeting plans were finalized for mailing the week of October 20, 2025
- The church's first usage of the absentee ballot was discussed and clarified as far as process.
- The board determined that the Christmas Cantata in 2025 would be a free event as a gift to the community.
- Church membership was affirmed at 105.

Respectfully Submitted,

Philip Adams

Church Clerk



Church Membership Report

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

TOTAL MEMBERS as of January 2025:

106

DECEASED:

4 -

1. Lydia Melton	01/17/25
2. Alan Crumpler	10/25/24
3. Patricia Willis	10/15/25
4. Shari Moran	10/20/25

FORMER MEMBERS Removed on

10 -

1. Sarah Fleming	01/01/25	(Requested)
2. Michael Braun	08/17/25	
3. Joseph Gottlich	08/17/25	
4. Kevin Hanger	08/17/25	
5. Katy Keller	08/17/25	
6. Chafar Laster	08/17/25	
7. Clarie Russell	08/17/25	
8. Jay Squires	08/17/25	
9. Sean Stephens-Samson	08/17/25	
10. Pat Peters	09/18/25	(Requested)

NEW MEMBERS:

12 +

1. Jeffrey Allen	04/20/25
2. Paulette Brock	04/20/25
3. Amanda DeShazo	04/20/25
4. Camille DeShazo	04/20/25
5. Quinn DeShazo	04/20/25
6. Sherika Hall	04/20/25
7. Kate Sachs	04/20/25
8. Ruth Savino	04/20/25
9. Michele Seiler	04/20/25
10. Andre Somerville	04/20/25
11. Ann Studnicka	04/20/25
12. Sharon Talarico	04/20/25

TOTAL MEMBERS as of October 2025:

104

Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee (NC) is charged with recruitment, solicitation and presentation of candidates for election and appointment to the Board of Directors and Lay Delegates (including all members of the Board with the exception of the Pastor). It is composed of five members in good standing of MCC Richmond. The term of service is 2 years and there is no limit on the number of terms a member can serve. Members of the NC cannot serve in any of the elected positions but they can resign from the NC if they choose to run for a BOD or Lay Delegate position. Unexpected vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the BOD's until the next annual Congregational Meeting.

Nominations are taken from the floor at the annual November congregational meeting. The Nomination needs to be seconded, and the nominee needs to accept the nomination. The final selection is determined by vote of Members at the meeting.

Members of the Nominating Committee shall be familiar with the MCC Richmond Bylaws and the duties of the Board of Directors and Lay Delegates.

After the election the NC meets to select a Chair and to sign Confidentiality Statements.

In July the Board of Directors provides the NC with a list of eligible candidates with their contact information. In late August/early September the Chair prepares a Letter of Invitation and sends this with the applications to the eligible members either by e-mail or letter. The Chair then assigns each member of the NC with a list of persons they are to contact from the list of eligible members. In late September or early October the NC members contact their assigned persons to inquire if they have received the materials sent by the chair, answer questions and inquire of their interest in applying for any BOD and Lay Delegate positions. They remind their contacts of the application deadline and to send their application to the Chair. Some follow up calls may be required to persons who expressed a possible interest but who have not sent in an application. The NC members then report back to the chair the results of their contacts.

Any applications received are forwarded by the Chair to a designated member of the BOD. Prior to the annual Congregational Meeting the Chair sends a Presentation of Candidates report to the BOD by the date provided by the BOD's.

There are currently 4 positions open on this election cycle for the BOD's: 2 Member at Large positions, the Treasurer and First Lay Delegate. The Treasurer and First Lay Delegate positions are designated positions which means people need to run specifically for those positions. The Second Lay Delegate and Alternate Lay Delegate positions also need to be filled and they are also designated positions. The BOD positions are for 2 year terms with the exception of the First Lay Delegate which is a 3 year term. Other Lay Delegate positions are not on the BOD'S and will serve 3 year terms.

There will be 3 positions to fill on the NC at this 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting. The following members of the NC terms will be up this year: Loretta Mountcastle, Henry Branch-Quintana and Philip Sledd. These individuals can be nominated for another 2 year term. Two members will remain on the NC: Liz Chenoweth and Nancy (Tigger) Grosvenor. Nominations for vacant positions will be taken from the floor at the Annual Congregational Meeting in November.

Submitted Respectfully by Loretta Mountcastle, Chair Nominating Committee

Elections for 2026

Presentation of Candidates for Election 2026

The Nominating Committee would like to submit the following candidates for the available positions:

Board of Directors:

Two Member at Large Positions are open.

Applications received from Elliott Robinson and Susan Micari.

The Treasurer's Position is open: Application received from Mark James.

The First Lay Delegate position is open. Application received from Les Quintana-Branch.

Lay Delegate Positions:

The Second Lay Delegate Position is open. Application received from Tia Meek.

The Alternate Lay Delegate Position is open. Application received from John Pall.

Nominating Committee:

There are three positions open. Nominations will be taken from the floor.

The candidates listed above are prepared to serve to the best of their ability. They are Members of MCC Richmond and meet the criteria stated in our bylaws to be considered for service as determined by the Board of Directors. The Candidates have submitted their applications and they have been forwarded to Catherine Pall who is the designated person on the Board of Directors to receive the applications.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nominating Committee:

Loretta Mountcastle, Chair
Tigger Grosvenor
Henry Quintana-Branch
Philip Sledd
Elisabeth Chenoweth

Susan Micari - Board of Directors Candidate

BOD Application from Susan Micari 2025

Provide a brief personal history of yourself including educational background, work/professional experience,

Short Bio:

Susan Micari is a nationally board-certified educational therapist and activist whose career began teaching homeless children in New York City. She helped secure grants that funded libraries and workshops for families in shelters, and earlier fought a landmark 1983 civil rights case that defined sexual harassment as an illegal act in New York City. Today, she continues her work at the intersection of education and advocacy, including teaching Afghan women English while they are denied access to formal education under the Taliban. organizational participation and outstanding accomplishments. She worked for two years in the homeless ministries Feedmore and Grace and Holy Trinity Church.

Provide a brief Vision Statement for MCC Richmond and your commitment toward meeting that vision.

I believe that we should focus on service ministry, like our choir and homeless outreach. I wonder if we should include outreach to other churches, mosques, temples and sanghans to explore the connections we all have to the One, in order to work toward respect and unity among believers and seekers. Our strength is diversity, and I believe we'd be valuable contributors to any discussion among seekers and believers.

This might take the form of visits to other institutions, meditation retreats, or dinners and discussions on topics we all want to understand better. The talk we had on the problem of evil is one example of a good night. It might be enriched by participation of other spiritual seekers.

Provide a summary of your participation in ministry and ministry positions held at MCC.

I have done the fashion show, contributed food to the homeless ministry, will serve on the cleaning crew, and have provided Christmas gifts for kids during our outreach.

Include a statement of ability or calling toward a particular position or responsibility with supporting experience.

I don't know where I'd be most useful, but am willing to participate as needed.

Elliott Robinson - Board of Directors Candidate

Elliott is a native of Hampton and a graduate of Christopher Newport University. He has a 19-year journalism career and has overseen the award-winning VPM News team, based in Richmond and Charlottesville, for four years. Along with being an incumbent member of the board, the Fundraising Committee, the Choir Safety Volunteers and the Spirits of Joy,

Elliott is on the board of the Virginia Coalition for Open Government. Previously, Elliott has served as vice president of the Virginia Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and multiple terms as national secretary and national editor of Tau Delta Phi Fraternity's Executive Council. Elliott also gives yearly talks to University of Virginia students interested in journalism and also reviews the portfolios of graduating journalism students at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Elliott's vision for MCC Richmond is for it to continue to serve the Greater Richmond community through its ministries and continued outreach at our nearby colleges and community organizations. Elliott is willing to use what he has learned and the connections he has made in nearly 20 years in Central Virginia in furtherance of MCC Richmond's goals.

On the Board of Directors, Elliott currently aids in writing and updating our policies and procedures and is the primary in charge of the church alarm system. He would like to continue with these duties and, if reelected, is able to adjust his work schedule to accommodate any expansion of duties.

Mark James - Treasurer Candidate

Mark James – Candidate for Treasurer

Name: Mark James

Position applying for: MCC-Richmond Treasurer

Education: BS in Business Administration

Vision Statement: Continue to support MCC-Richmond

Current MCC-R participation: Currently in the position of MCC-R Treasurer

Prior MCC-R Board experience: Previous terms as MCC-R Treasurer

Statement of Ability or Calling: I can... so I will... if needed and wanted.

Peace, Love and Joy!

Lester Quintana Branch - First Lay Delegate Candidate

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Creator and the Son and the Holy Spirit." Matt 28:19-20

Personal History: I was born in San Francisco, California, but moved to Nicaragua at a very young age. Born in the Catholic faith, I was raised as a Pentecostal during my teenage years by my grandmother. I lived in Richmond, VA since 1996 and became a member of MCC-Richmond in 1998. I left MCC for a time and became a member again in 2009 and have been a member in good standing ever since, where I worship with my husband of four years Henry Quintana-Branch. Currently, I work as a business analyst for Gainwell Technologies.

Vision Statement: to see MCC-Richmond as a place which accepts ALL God's people regardless of their race, gender, gender identification, nationality, orientation, income status, marital status, disability or anything that separates them from God's love. I want this church to be a place where we can reach out into the community and not just confine ourselves to the confines of 2501 Park Ave. A place open to all not just "gay" people but truly encompass LGBTQIA as well as the heterosexual community.

MCC Ministry: I have served in many capacities including:

1. Member of the MCC Board of Directors from 2023 thru 2025 1st Lay Delegate.
Member of the Board of Directors 2014 thru 2020; Strategic Planning 2014-2016 and Clerk of the Board 2016-2020
2. 1st Alternate Lay Delegate 2022 to 2024 and 2nd Alternate Lay Delegate from 2012-2014 and 2020-2022
3. Pastoral Search Committee member in 2016
3. Member of the Spirits of Joy Choir from 2009-Present and Section Leader from 2016-2024
4. Member of the Voices of Praise from 2009-2019
5. Member of the Handbell choir from 2017-2019 and 2022 thru present
6. Communications Team Member from 2009-2014 and 2021 thru Present
7. Member of the Ministry of Care from 2012-2014 and 2020 thru Present
8. Fundraising Team from 2019-2023
9. Capital Fundraising Committee 2010-2011 and 2018-2019
10. Generosity Team member 2013-2015

and in many roles during worship as a worship leader, reader, communion server, prayer person

Statement of Ability: We are the Chosen to truly follow Jesus' message to spread the Word starting in Richmond and reaching the world through our various means of communication. I will endeavor to assist with connecting our church to our denomination UFMCC should the need arise.

Education:

Juris Doctor from T.C Williams School of Law at University of Richmond
BA from University of Lynchburg in Journalism and International Relations

Tiana Evette Meek - Second Lay Delegate Candidate

My name is Tiana Evette Meek, commonly known as TiA around the church. I am applying to serve as the 2nd Lay Delegate for the upcoming term. I'm a published and cited author, concert violist, Mensan, rugger, certified holistic life coach, qualified mental health professional, sister, daughter, god-parent and so many things. I was raised in Northern Virginia where I attended Prince William County Public schools and Good Shepherd United Methodist Church, the round building in Dale City, Virginia. I studied music and business (B.S. Arts Management) at the Conservatory for Performing

Arts at Shenandoah University on both a talent scholarship and a United Methodist Church affiliation grant. After completing undergrad I served with AmeriCorps in Providence, Rhode Island where I worked with Trinity United Methodist Church to resurrect their historic theatre by creating and developing a summer youth arts camp that included dance, drumming, music, and visual arts such as mural painting, photography and sculpting.

After my service time was completed, I moved back to Virginia to begin working full-time first for a number of bookstores then I fell into teaching. Chasing a romantic interlude, I moved to Baltimore, Maryland where I started my first contract as a special education teacher. I agreed to work in a correctional school, Harbor City High School. I found my work there very rewarding, not because I was passionate about teaching but because I was compassionate as I learned about my students and their lives and how it was they came to be placed in a correctional school; single parenthood due to rape, LGBTQIA+ identity leading to homelessness, truancy due to a parent's drug addiction leaving students to care for siblings. For all these reasons, I have remained in alternative and therapeutic educational settings for over two decades. I spent a few years working full and part-time at a United Methodist outdoor adventure camp. I loved it there for the people and the wonderment of watching God's creation bloom and become, season after season.

I took a break from teaching school aged children and moved into higher education for five years. With all my experience in the classroom as a special education teacher, I immediately found myself creating and growing a team of academic advisors that supported and engaged adult students with existing and brand new disabilities while at the American Public University System (APUS). There I became an advocate for those injured and/or disabled as I published articles, provided lectures and mentored new advisors by request and nomination with the National Academic Advising Association. As a student (because it was a benefit to employment) at APUS, I began a Masters in Peace and Conflict Resolution. In the process of building a thesis on Christian-Islamic relations Post 9-11, I realized that the breakdown of peace and unity between christians and muslims went as far back as the (rumored) brotherhood of Ishmael and Isaac. I abandoned that degree. I left APUS, resigned due to administrative differences, and applied to Wesley Theological Seminary as a student in their Masters of Theological Studies program. I loved seminary and often wish I could go back. I attended the traditional classes (Hebrew Bible, New Testament, Counseling for Pastoral Ministry) as well as unconventional courses such as The Bible as Literature, Masters of Suspicion (Freud's illusions, Nietzsche's nihilism, Marx's ideology), and Community Building through Drama. What I liked most about my time at Wesley was having the ability to attend partnering institutions through the Washington Theological Consortium: The Catholic University of America (Ancient & Modern Philosophy, Logic), the Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University (Christian Ethics), Virginia Theological Seminary (Writing as Ministry, Imaginative Writing), and the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences (Peacemaking in Muslim and Christian Traditions).

My time at Wesley was the catalyst to my Becoming. My religious faith was drastically changed; my immanent spirituality was confirmed; and I chose to live openly in my personal identity as a black queer feminist theologian (swearing and spitting and all). In my years at APUS and then at Wesley, I was in a committed relationship and briefly married to Katie, my now "late" ex-wife, who identified as a "trans woman" (her words). After we separated, we remained friends until her passing in 2018. Before meeting her, I was already working in a professional aspect with the young trans community in the DC Metro area with organizations and individuals such as DC Black Pride, Casa Ruby, and the indelible activist and writer Rayceen Pendarvis of The Ask Rayceen Show. Though relocating to central Virginia has altered my relationships with these specific community groups, I have created new connections here in the Richmond area mostly through my associations and bonds within MCC Richmond.

Prior to joining Metropolitan Community Church of Richmond, I had worked with United Methodist, Episcopal and a Unitarian Universalist Congregation; choir director, pre-school music teacher, religious education assistant, resident assistant, youth counselor, Sunday school leader, library assistant, children's church leader, team building facilitator. Though growing up United Methodist, I often felt like I didn't fully belong. Now with MCC Richmond, I finally feel like I am allowed to be my whole self and not just the parts of me. After participating in the many facets of the United Methodist Church, I was approached by a female church leader (whom I admired) who wished to support me in Global Missions through the United Methodist Women. However, being queer at that time in the history of the United Methodist Church, I could not as the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church explicitly stated: While persons set apart by the Church for ordained ministry are subject to all the frailties of the human condition and the pressures of

society, they are required to maintain the highest standards of holy living in the world. The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.

Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church. So I did not accept the support of my esteemed church member and I could no longer accept the stance on ordination within the church in which I had been raised for 32 years.

In anger and disappointment I wrote the essay Jesus Loves Me but The Church Hates Me: How Misogyny, Racism and Homophobia have Dismembered the Body of Christ for the Eighth Annual Ecumenical Essay Contest of the Washington Theological Consortium. I left the United Methodist Church. I struggled for a short time finding a new faith community, but gratefully was led to MCC Richmond. I was quickly welcomed and inundated by the goings-on of MCC Richmond.

Before becoming a full member, I often referred to MCC as the “Flaming Gay Church”. Now I know it to be so much more; more like a family and not segregated to only those typically viewed as marginalized but an welcoming open door to everyone. Since joining MCC Richmond I have served a term on the Board of Directors, aided in supporting the Fundraising Committee, sang with the Spirits of Joy, and helped the Communications team. Sometimes I come to make sandwiches at the food pantry, and before the pandemic I attempted to organize a younger adult group to help encourage new membership and further expand MCC’s outreach to the greater community of Richmond. I am happy to see DEVO has taken off and delighted to see families of all ages and generations joining the church post-COVID. As I was approached by a few members of the current Board to consider the position of 2nd Lay Delegate, I suppose there is a purpose for me there.

If selected, I will do my best to serve in accord with all the GOD-given talents and abilities possessed in my mind and body. Hopefully, the details provided will account for my experience and capabilities to offer support to the church in this manner. Thank you for your review and consideration.

~ TiA

John Karl Pall - Alternate Lay Delegate Candidate

Dearest Friends.

It was a wonderful responsibility to serve our Richmond community as Lay Delegate for the last six years, to faithfully represent MCCR's interests at the 2025 and 2022 Global General Conference Meetings for our Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (UFMCC).

As we elect lay delegates for the 2026 - 2028 period, I am reminded of how this Lay Delegate ministry is a special one that connects our local church and our denomination. I wish to continue support of this ministry's work by being available if there are any questions by the team or as requested.

I am asking for this opportunity to serve as Alternate Lay Delegate because I would like to be considered as our MCCR community's replacement for Delegate if one would happen to be needed. I've enjoyed my time so far, and look forward to the future challenges, special projects, and opportunities.

John Karl Pall

Ministry Experience at MCC

- 2nd Lay Delegate for MCC Richmond: 2020 - Present
- MCC Handbell Choir, Director,
- Spirits of Joy Choir, guest Drummer
- Sound Ministry: Volunteer and Team Lead
- Worship Assistant: Reader, Communion Holder

UFMCC Gatherings Attended:

- Global General Conference, 2025, 2022
- Eastern Network Gatherings:
 - Hampton Roads, Fall 2025;
 - D.C., Spring 2019;
 - Hagerstown, Fall 2018;
 - Hampton Roads, Spring 2018

Other Noteworthy Items:

- B.A. Education; Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.
- Currently working as a Quality Assurance Analyst, Virginia State Supreme Court.
- I was on the MCCR Board of Directors as Member at Large for 2 years, 7 months.

Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2025

Balance Sheet

Metropolitan Community Church of Richmond

As of September 30, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Assets	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
10100 Atlantic Union Operating (7748)	98,788.13
10101 Atlantic Union Money Market (4147)	125,000.00
Total for Bank Accounts	\$223,786.13
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable (A/R)	84.74
Total for Accounts Receivable	\$84.74
Other Current Assets	
Certificates of Deposit (CDs)	100,000.00
Prepaid Expenses	731.00
Total for Other Current Assets	\$100,731.00
Total for Current Assets	\$324,601.87
Fixed Assets	
11710 Building (2501 & 2503)	119,000.00
11715 Building Improvements	460,898.65
Total for Fixed Assets	\$579,898.65
Other Assets	
Total for Assets	\$904,500.52
Liabilities and Equity	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable (A/P)	2,645.35
Total for Accounts Payable	\$2,645.35
Credit Cards	
Other Current Liabilities	
Total for Current Liabilities	\$2,645.35
Long-term Liabilities	
Total for Liabilities	\$2,645.35
Equity	
30000 Opening Balance Equity	350,332.76

Balance Sheet
Metropolitan Community Church of Richmond
As of September 30, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Owner's Investment	\$90,000.00
31100 - Building Fund	6,511.95
31110 - Food Pantry Fund	20,410.00
31120 - Good Neighbor Fund	1,540.07
31130 - Lay Delegates General Conference Fund	-195.56
31140 - Pastor's Discretionary Fund	29.54
31150 - Ministry Development Fund	175.02
32000 - Capital Campaign 2018	107,334.38
Total for Owner's Investment	\$225,805.40
Retained Earnings	85,966.70
Net Income	239,750.31
Total for Equity	\$901,855.17
Total for Liabilities and Equity	\$904,500.52

Designated Funds as of September 30, 2025

MCC RICHMOND FINANCIAL REPORT SEPTEMBER 2025

(As of SEPTEMBER 30, 2025)

Account Balances

Atlantic Union Bank Operating Acct (7748)	Current Month-End Account Balance	Previous Month-End Account Balance	EOY 2024 Account Balance	Undesignated Funds Available (Acct Bal – Des. Funds)
	\$ 102,861.10	\$ 74,707.16	\$ 92,612.33	\$ 74,399.08

Designated Funds Monthly Totals

DESIGNATED FUNDS	BEGINNING BALANCE	CONTRIBUTIONS	EXPENDITURES	ENDING BALANCE
Building Fund	\$ 6,291.95	\$ 220.00	\$ 0	\$ 6,511.95
Food Pantry Fund	\$ 18,259.36	\$ 3,053.38	\$ 902.74	\$ 20,410.00
Good Neighbor Fund	\$ 1,985.07	\$ 55.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 1540.07

Income and Expense Monthly and YTD Totals

	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
MONTHLY INCOME	\$ 263,078.25	\$ 15,549.83	\$ 247,528.42	1,691.84%
MONTHLY EXPENSES	\$ 15,641.98	\$ 14,067.65	\$ 1,574.39	111.19%
YTD TOTAL INCOME	\$ 365,893.32	\$ 139,648.47	\$ 226,244.85	262.01%
YTD TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 126,143.01	\$ 139,495.81	(\$ 13,352.80)	90.43%

*** Bequest of \$250,000 in honor of Lydia Melton is included in this report

\$ 200,000 in Certificates of Deposit

\$ 25,000 in new Money Market Account

\$ 25,000 remains in Operating Account (Undesignated Funds less this amount is \$49,399.08)

MCC Richmond 2026 Budget		2025	Actual Thru	2025	2026
		Budget	Sept 2025	Projected	Budget
Income					
41000 Contributions Unrestricted					
41100 Regular Offerings	\$169,000.00	\$113,681.82	\$151,575.76	\$169,000.00	
41500 Fund Raising - Undesignated	\$15,000.00	\$1,351.13	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	
41570 - Kroger Community Rewards	\$100.00	\$62.59	\$83.45	\$100.00	
Total 41500 Fund Raising - Undesignated	\$15,100.00	\$1,413.72	\$3,083.45	\$3,100.00	
41700 Special Events					
41800 Building Fees Collected	\$2,000.00	\$840.00	\$1,155.00	\$1,500.00	
41901 Hospitality Living Wednesday					
41902 Hospitality Sunday Fellowship	\$100.00				
Total 41000 Contributions Unrestricted	\$186,200.00	\$115,935.54	\$155,814.21	\$173,600.00	
51000 Interest Income	\$18.00	\$20.37	\$970.00	\$7,050.00	
Total Income	\$186,218.00	\$115,955.91	\$156,784.21	\$180,650.00	
Expenses					
71000 Admin Expenses					
71100 Bank Fees	\$50.00				\$50.00
71200 Background Check	\$160.00				\$160.00
71300 Payroll Service	\$960.00	\$737.30	\$994.20	\$1,024.20	
71500 Admin Misc Expense	\$0.00				\$0.00
71600 Merchant Service Fees	\$600.00	\$2,694.03	\$3,194.03	\$720.00	
Total 71000 Admin Expenses	\$1,770.00	\$3,431.33	\$4,188.23	\$1,954.20	
72000 Pastor Expenses					
72100 Pastor Salary	\$27,450.00	\$19,500.00	\$24,125.00	\$19,600.00	
72200 Pastor Housing Allowance	\$27,450.00	\$19,500.00	\$24,125.00	\$19,600.00	
72300 Pastor Health Insurance					
72400 Pastor Church Retirement Contribution					
72800 Pastor General Conference	\$900.00				
72800 Pastor Travel Expenses	\$6,900.00	\$1,650.60	\$2,494.60		
72900 Pastor Other [Clergy License]	\$175.00	\$175.00	\$175.00	\$175.00	
Total 72000 Pastor Expenses	\$62,875.00	\$40,825.60	\$50,919.60	\$39,375.00	
73000 UFMCC Expenses					
73100 Fellowship Tithes	\$18,621.80	\$12,579.84	\$15,678.42	\$18,065.00	
73200 Fellowship Pension Expenses	\$2,268.00	\$1,723.75	\$2,070.25	\$2,373.00	
Total 73000 UFMCC Expenses	\$20,889.80	\$14,303.59	\$17,748.67	\$20,438.00	
74000 Church Office Expenses					
74100 Office Assistant	\$15,600.00	\$10,470.00	\$13,670.00	\$15,600.00	
74120 Office Assistant Payroll Taxes	\$1,201.20	\$800.96	\$1,047.36	\$1,201.20	
74200 Copy Paper	\$500.00				\$500.00
74300 Office Supplies	\$150.00				\$150.00
74400 Postage	\$400.00				\$468.00
74500 Phone/Internet Expense	\$5,444.00	\$3,977.37	\$5,444.00	\$5,444.00	
74600 Copier Expense	\$2,500.00	\$2,017.55	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	
74700 Software Expense	\$3,180.00	\$400.00	\$1,195.00	\$3,180.00	
74800 - Cleaning Expense	\$5,400.00	\$3,900.00	\$5,400.00	\$5,400.00	
74900 - Office Expense Misc.		\$36.00			
Total 74000 Church Office Expenses	\$34,375.20	\$21,601.88	\$29,506.36	\$34,443.20	
75000 Building Expense					
75100 Building Operating Expense		\$313.75	\$313.75		
75120 Building Security Service	\$3,000.00	\$1,104.54	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	
MCC Richmond 2026 Budget		2025	Actual Thru	2025	2026

	Budget	Sept 2025	Projected	Budget
75130 Insurance & Workers Comp	\$10,000.00	\$5,029.00	\$7,943.00	\$8,700.00
75140 Building Maintenance	\$6,000.00	\$5,132.33	\$4,500.00	\$6,000.00
75150 Pest Control Services	\$2,200.00	\$1,900.00	\$990.19	\$3,000.00
Total 75000 Building Expense	\$21,200.00	\$13,479.62	\$15,246.94	\$19,200.00
75220 Utilities				
75220 Electric				
75221 Electric - Church	\$4,500.00	\$3,434.68	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00
75222 Electric - Community Center	\$1,050.00	\$913.72	\$1,050.00	\$1,050.00
Total 75220 Electric	\$5,550.00	\$4,348.40	\$5,550.00	\$5,550.00
75230 Water				
75231 Water - Church	\$1,000.00	\$1,328.86	\$1,771.81	\$1,800.00
75232 Water - Community Center	\$1,200.00	\$930.96	\$1,241.28	\$1,300.00
Total 75230 Water	\$2,200.00	\$2,259.82	\$3,013.09	\$3,100.00
75240 Gas				
75241 Gas - Church	\$4,000.00	\$2,913.60	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
75242 Gas - Community Center	\$2,000.00	\$1,142.48	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Total 75240 Gas	\$6,000.00	\$4,056.08	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
Total 75220 Utilities	\$13,750.00	\$10,664.30	\$14,563.09	\$14,650.00
76000 Worship & Ministry				
76100 Ministry of Care	\$200.00			\$200.00
76150 Ministry of Prayer & Congreg. Care	\$3,780.00	\$2,835.00	\$3,780.00	\$3,780.00
76200 Ministry of Involvement				
76300 Worship	\$1,000.00	\$618.96	\$825.28	\$1,000.00
76350 Audio-Visual/Communications	\$1,500.00	\$167.90	\$300.00	\$1,500.00
Total 76300 Worship	\$2,500.00	\$786.86	\$1,000.00	\$6,480.00
76400 Hospitality	\$450.00		\$0.00	\$450.00
76450 Special Social Events		\$250.00		
76800 Communication & Publicity	\$312.00	\$278.50	\$358.00	\$318.00
Total 76000 Worship & Ministry	\$7,242.00	\$4,150.36	\$5,263.28	\$7,248.00
77000 Fine Arts & Community				
77100 Fine Arts				
77110 Music Director	\$11,688.00	\$9,224.62	\$11,688.00	\$12,100.00
77112 Music Director Payroll Taxes	\$894.15	\$705.68	\$894.15	\$925.44
77120 Pianist	\$7,740.00	\$6,170.00	\$8,570.00	\$9,600.00
77122 Pianist Payroll Taxes	\$595.98			
77124 Substitute Pianist		\$525.00	\$525.00	
77130 Piano Expense	\$550.00		\$275.00	\$600.00
77140 Choir Expense	\$800.00	\$464.21	\$600.00	\$800.00
77160 Handbell Choir Expense	\$500.00	\$221.82	\$400.00	\$500.00
Total 77100 Fine Arts	\$22,768.13	\$17,311.33	\$22,952.15	\$24,525.44
77300 Community Connection & Networking Ministry				
77310 VA Pride	\$500.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$400.00
77330 Social Justice	\$200.00			\$200.00
77340 Black Pride	\$350.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$200.00
Total 77300 Community Connection & Networking Ministry	\$1,050.00	\$425.00	\$425.00	\$800.00
Total 77000 Fine Arts & Community	\$24,868.13	\$18,161.33	\$23,802.15	\$26,125.44
Total Expenses	\$186,970.13	\$126,618.01	\$161,238.32	\$163,433.84
Net Operating Income	-\$770.13	-\$10,682.47	-\$5,424.11	\$17,216.16



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