



# Pilgrims' Progress

News of the journey at Vienna Baptist Church

February 2010

Volume 52, Issue 2

## Pay Attention!

I believe that each faith tradition has a basic call:  
“Pay Attention!”

Frederick Buechner summarizes his life and work with these words: “If I were called upon to state in a few words the essence of everything I was trying to say, both as a novelist and as a preacher, it would be something like this: Listen to your life. See it for the fathomless mystery it is. In the boredom and pain of it no less than in the excitement and gladness—touch, taste, smell your way to the holy and hidden heart of it, because in the last analysis all moments are key moments, and life itself is grace.” (*Now and Then*, Harper & Row, 1983, p. 87)

In a recent sermon, I said that I have worn corrective lenses since I was eight years old . . . until now. After LASIK surgery and cataract surgery on both eyes, I can see and read fairly well without corrective lenses. For most of my life my glasses were on my bedside table and were the first item I grabbed in the morning. To see the time on the

clock radio by our bed, I needed my glasses. To walk across the room, I needed my glasses. I couldn't see the large “E” on those old eye charts. Now I wake up and walk around without any glasses. I woke up one morning recently and was sad that I do not realize this great gift every day. I usually forget how bad my eyesight used to be—20x1000—and just assume good eyesight now.

Listen to your life. See it  
for the fathomless  
mystery it is, because  
life itself is grace.  
—Frederick Buechner

And I'm the same way with God's grace. Because of amazing grace, I *once was blind, but now I see!* Each day I forget how grace has changed me, and I don't remember how difficult life was without the good news about the grace of God. I wish I didn't

assume the grace of the presence of God when I wake each morning.

I think the lesson for Lent is this: “Pay attention! Listen to your life!”

—Bob Albritton, was blind but now I can see

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 3 *Sock Tree Produces Bountiful Crop*
- 3 *Living Nativity: Many Were Ready to Play Their Parts*
- 4 *Early Christmas Eve Service a Wonderful Celebration*
- 5 *Listening Sessions Have Begun*
- 8 *Kathy Staudt Begins Her Work with Young Adults*
- 9 *Sharing a Meal with Homeless People Is a Revelation for Church Members*

- 3 Missions
- 4 Worship
- 5 Opportunities to Serve
- 5-6 Youth and Children
- 6-7 Fellowship
- 8 Young Adults
- 10 Retreating
- 11 Our VBC Family

# Pilgrims' Progress

*News of the journey at Vienna Baptist Church*

---

## CHURCH STAFF

**Rev. Dr. Robert Albritton**

Senior Pastor

Balbritton@vbc-va.org

**Rev. Dr. Ben Wagener**

Pastor for Spiritual Formation

Bwagener@vbc-va.org

**Rev. Jennifer Peterson Singh**

Pastor for Youth and Children

Jsingh@vbc-va.org

**Diane Frost Gardner**

Music Ministry Director

Dgardner@vbc-va.org

**Mary Ann Christian**

Music Ministry Assistant

**Jan Just**

Interim Director

Vienna Baptist Children's Center

VBCCDirector@vbc-va.org

**Heidi Kharbanda**

Office Manager

OfficeManager@vbc-va.org

**Carol Natella**

Publications Editor

communications@vbc-va.org

**Bobbie Jean Tolson**

Financial Secretary

finance@vbc-va.org

**Betty Wiersema**

Financial Assistant

**Rev. Becky Albritton**

Volunteer Pastoral Associate

**Rev. Hank Dunn**

Volunteer Pastoral Associate

**Rev. Julie Price**

Volunteer Pastoral Associate

**Rev. Dr. Roy Woodruff**

Volunteer Pastoral Associate



## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Vienna Baptist Church**

541 Marshall Road, SW

Vienna, VA 22180

Phone: 703-281-4400

Fax: 703-281-3535

OfficeManager@vbc-va.org

www.vbc-va.org

**Lost River Retreat Center**

2015 Mill Gap Road

Lost City, WV 26810

Phone: 304-897-5935

Fax: 304-897-5816

LRRC@hardynet.com

**Vienna Baptist Children's Center**

541 Marshall Road, SW

Vienna, VA 22180

Phone: 703-281-2021

preschool@vbc-va.org

## *Our Pilgrimage of Faith*

We are a congregation of Baptist Christians with a tradition of being progressive, inclusive, and culturally diverse. We hold dear the historic Baptist principles of the priesthood of all believers, the individual's right and responsibility for his or her own relationship with God, and the separation of church and state.

As the people of God, we gather to worship our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer—but our response to God's call does not end there. We actively pursue the disciplines that form us as followers of Jesus Christ: the inward journey of individual spiritual growth and the collective outward journey of mission and social justice.

## *Find That Sermon in Print or Audio*

Pastor Albritton's sermons are available in print form on the information table in the Foyer, or you can download a printed or audio sermon from the church's Web site. If you would like printed sermons sent to you weekly, please write Pastor Albritton (Balbritton@vbc-va.org) and he will put you on the weekly e-mail distribution list.

For those with hearing or language difficulties, he provides some printed copies of that day's sermon for morning worship.

You may also go to the pastor's blog and post comments, questions, or clarifications you wish to offer about sermons. Go to <http://vbcpastor.livejournal.com> and click on "Leave a Comment."

## Missions

### CHO Grateful for VBC's Help

December 21, 2009

Dear Church Members,

Thank you so much for your donation of toys, hats, mittens, and socks for the CHO (Committee for Helping Others) Christmas Store. We appreciate your interest in helping those in our local community who are experiencing hard times right now.

So far this Christmas, we've helped 199 families with food gift cards and their 514 children with toys or gift cards. You helped make this possible.

People in the Vienna/Oakton area are wonderful. If they couldn't give a gift, they donated their time by helping us; some did both. The gifts were smaller this year, but the expectations of the clients were for "anything for my child" for Christmas. The stories we're hearing this year are more of desperation than just need.

Thanks for putting smiles on the faces of our CHO families this year—we were able to help all who came to us and will continue helping until Christmas Day, thanks to your generosity.

Very truly yours,  
Carolyn Mysel  
Food and Holiday Chairman,  
The Committee for Helping  
Others

### Sock Tree Produces Bountiful Crop

Thanks for all the many pairs of socks and the hats, underwear, and scarves that were placed on the sock tree this year. Along with the toys that so many of you donated, CHO was able to help a lot of folks make Christmas much better for their children. It is a good feeling to know that you are making a difference in the lives of

many who otherwise would have had very little of anything. We are blessed with many "cheerful givers" in our church. Thank you!

—Joyce Salgado

### VBC Groups Raise Money for ODB Holiday Program

The VBC Explorers Bible study class continued their Christmas tradition and gave contributions totaling \$1,052 for the Our Daily Bread (ODB) Holiday Program. The Chancel Choir, as their annual mission project, donated \$237 to the Our Daily Bread Holiday Program. For every \$100 donation, Our Daily Bread provides a holiday dinner and gifts for a family of four. Sharing with our neighbors is indeed a special way to celebrate the Christmas season.

Sharing with our  
neighbors is  
indeed a special  
way to  
celebrate the  
Christmas season.

### Living Nativity: Many Were Ready to Play Their Parts

Thanks to all of you who volunteered to participate in our 42nd annual Living Nativity, which, because of the blizzard, never happened.

We were all very disappointed that little Micah and Penelope didn't get to make their debuts as Jesus and the Littlest Angel. I do appreciate all of you who agreed to be kings or shepherds or angels.

I will very probably ask you again next year—perhaps we need a "blizzard make-up" date!

Thanks for all the support for this wonderful mission.

—Joyce Salgado

## Worship

### Lectionary Texts for February

- ◆ **February 7:** Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany; Isaiah 6:1-8, (9-13); Psalm 138; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11
- ◆ **February 14:** Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany; Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1; 1 Corinthians 15:12-20; Luke 6:17-26
- ◆ **February 14:** Transfiguration Sunday; Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99; 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2; Luke 9:28-36 (37-43a)
- ◆ **February 17:** Ash Wednesday; Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
- ◆ **February 21:** First Sunday in Lent; Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13
- ◆ **February 28:** Second Sunday in Lent; Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35 or Luke 9:28-36.

### Early Christmas Eve Service a Wonderful Celebration



Photo by Jennifer Peterson Singh

*The children brought gifts to the manger.*

Our early evening, family-friendly service was once again a wonderful celebration of Christ's birth. We had lots of fun singing, ringing bells, searching all over the sanctuary to find Baby Jesus, and gathering around the rocking chair to hear the Christmas story. It was great to use all our senses to worship Jesus! For our offering, children brought forward gifts for babies in foster care and laid them in a manger, symbolizing that when we give to others, we give to Christ.

—Jennifer Peterson Singh

### Sermons for February

- ◆ **February 7:** Hank Dunn offers a Communion meditation.
- ◆ **February 14:** Jennifer Singh preaches.
- ◆ **February 21:** Deut. 26:1-11, "Radical Hospitality."
- ◆ **February 28:** Psalm 27:1-14, "Passionate Worship."

## New Member

### VBC Welcomes Rhona Kondowe

Rhona Kondowe has decided that she wants to become a Christian and be baptized in our church. She is in the fourth grade at Marshall Road Elementary School and has been very active in our children's Bible study for several years. Rhona has been thinking about taking this important step for two years, and she is now certain that she is ready. She will be baptized on January 31, before she and her family move back to Africa in early February.

---

## Opportunities to Serve

### Listening Sessions Have Begun

The Ad Hoc Study Team is still busy at work. At the moment, we are focused on discerning congregational identity and values as part of the larger issue of improving the church's finances. We are currently meeting in listening sessions with various small groups in the church and would like to meet with your group, class, or team. If you would like to be a part of the conversation, contact one of the members of our team to schedule a session. We are asking the following three questions at each listening session:

- ◆ Why do you come to VBC?
- ◆ What excites you about VBC?
- ◆ What new qualities of VBC would excite you even more?

While we certainly welcome individual responses to these questions, we would rather people meet in a small group listening session. We feel that it is more valuable for the congregation to engage these questions in small groups, where there is sharing and listening together, than for individuals to write us isolated responses.

If you would like to be a part of a listening session, but don't have a group to do it with, or can't make the session scheduled for your group, please contact one of the team members and we will try to put together a listening session that you can attend.

Grace and peace,  
The Ad Hoc Study Team

#### Members of the Team:

- ◆ Julie Price (Chair), juliemprice@mac.com or 571-203-0524
- ◆ Bob Albritton (Senior Pastor), Balbritton@vbc-va.org or 703-281-4400 x104
- ◆ Stan West (Leadership), countrycaptain@verizon.net or 703-944-5814
- ◆ Debbie Dorcus (Missions), dadorcus@verizon.net or 703-281-3223
- ◆ Susan Hall (Personnel), sphall3@verizon.net or 703-938-5436
- ◆ Ron Aprahamian, raprahamia@aol.com or 703-759-5698
- ◆ Jerry Duane, jerryduane@comcast.net or 703-743-1975
- ◆ Laurie Eek, lauris@cox.net or 703-938-9310.

### Lead Nursery Worker Sought

VBC is seeking to hire a lead nursery worker for Sunday mornings. This person would be responsible for welcoming families into the nursery, providing guidance to volunteer workers, and creating a healthy and fun atmosphere for the youngest members of our church family. If you are interested in this position or know someone who would be, please contact Jennifer Singh (jennifernpeterson@yahoo.com, 703-434-2155) for a complete job description and to arrange for an interview.

---

## Youth

Are you ready for some football?

Youth Superbowl Party  
February 7 at 6 p.m.

@ Harrison Stewart's House:  
3218 Plantation Pkwy, Fairfax, Va.

Admission Fee: canned goods for Our Daily Bread  
Which team's fans can bring the most?

---

## Youth and Children

### Youth Study the Bible's Relevance for Today

Our youth have just begun a new Bible study on Wednesday nights. We are using the book "Hope at the Cross," which shows us how the Bible still connects to our lives today. All youth are encouraged to attend—since we are just beginning the study, this is a great time to join the group! We meet in the Bombshelter from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Contact Jennifer if you have any questions: jennifernpeterson@yahoo.com.

#### Youth Looking Ahead:

- ◆ **Spring Retreat:** April 23–25 at Lost River.
- ◆ **Youth Up:** August 13–15 at Lost River.

### Moms' Breakfast

All mothers of young children and babies are invited to join us for a breakfast on Saturday, February 20, at 10 a.m. Come get to know other moms and enjoy someone else's cooking! Breakfast will be held at the home of Shelbia Elkins, 9737 Lawyers Rd., Vienna. Please call Jennifer with any questions, 703-434-2155.

### Mark Your Calendars for Children's Camp

Children's Camp for rising 3rd–7th graders will be August 8–13 at Lost River. Check this newsletter and your mailbox for more information in the near future.

---

## Media Center

### Israel Galindo Publishes New Book on Leadership

"In sociology the term *positive deviance* identifies the behaviors that bring about effectiveness and success in those situations where something that should not work, does. At heart positive deviance answers the question, all things being equal, why do some congregational leaders succeed, when others do not?" (Taken from back cover of ***Perspectives on Congregational Leadership: Applying systems thinking for effective leadership*** by Israel Galindo)

This new book (available from the VBC Media Center) by former VBC associate pastor Israel Galindo will challenge congregational leaders to consider a different perspective—one that can bring about a change in how we think about the nature of congregational leadership. Grounded in Bowen Family Systems Theory, the book asks the question: How can a leader be a positive deviant for effectiveness, success, and congregational health? Throughout his career, Galindo has trained leaders from across the country to think differently about the ministry of leadership.

---

## Fellowship

### Real Men Like Boogie-Woogie

#### ***Men's Fellowship Met in January***

Around the fireplace, eating shrimp and chips and drinking root beer, our Men's Fellowship shared about recent trips, ACC sports, and family stories.

In our spiritual formation conversations, Ben used the booklet *Radical Hospitality*, New Testament scripture, and various encounters with visitors in our Foyer as we wondered how we can personally greet visitors at VBC, yet respect their space.

Sam Compton played some boogie-woogie for us as we took a break. We closed with personal prayers as well as prayers for Haiti.

Those coming regularly to Men's Fellowship are: John Campbell, Sam Compton, Lee Curtis, Harry Dorcus, Lewis Dozier, Jimmy Gouge, Jim Hurdle, Don Johnson, Tom Johnson, Patrick McDermott, Jerry McKnight, Paul Montacute, Rob Ruth, Jerry Shelton, Ron Tharrington, Chris Thomas, Jim Vining, Ben Wagener, Dick Wiersema, and Roy Woodruff.

We invite you to come to our next meeting on **Monday, February 15, 7:15 p.m.**, at the home of Lee Curtis (277 Windover Avenue, Vienna; 703-938-2494).

Men's Fellowship Planning Team:  
John Campbell, Lee Curtis, Tom Johnson, Pat McDermott, Ben Wagener, and Roy Woodruff.

---

## Fellowship, continued

### 50 More or Less Group Hears Classics Played by the Grand Military Band

In January, Diana Amsbaugh and her mom, Doris Amsbaugh; Laurie and Dorothy Eek; Lauris Eek III; Marshall and Ann Potter; and Ben Wagener enjoyed a thrilling performance by the all-volunteer Virginia Grand Military Band.

The band played music of the great Glenn Miller and John Philip Sousa. The band ended the performance with "Stars and Stripes Forever."

Many thanks to Laurie Eek for coordinating this fun event. (Did you know that Laurie Eek used to play the tenor sax and clarinet in high school, college, and for many years after?)

—Ben Wagener

### *Next on the Calendar for the 50 More or Less Group*

- ◆ **February 9:** Valentine potluck luncheon in VBC Lounge, 12:30 p.m. Our guest speaker will be Fausto Vasconcelos, Director of Evangelism and Education, from Baptist World Alliance. Join us for this presentation from this important mission group.
- ◆ **March 9:** Terra Cotta Warrior Exhibit at National Geographic. Meet at VBC, 9:30 a.m.
- ◆ **April:** Wayside Theatre, "Harvey." Day and time to be announced.
- ◆ **May 11:** Potluck luncheon in VBC Lounge. Invited speaker.
- ◆ **June 8:** Celebration luncheon at Clyde's in Ashburn, Virginia.

---

## In Appreciation

### Church Staff Says "Thank You"

*We can't help but thank God for you ...*  
2 Thessalonians 1:3a (New Living Translation)

The church staff greatly appreciates the very generous love offering that you gave us this year! Your thoughtfulness amazed us as we opened our love offering envelopes at our staff Epiphany party. Thank you for the many ways you show us how much you appreciate the work we do. We are grateful for you, too!

—Bob Albritton, Mary Ann Christian, Diane Gardner, Heidi Kharbanda, Carol Natella, Jennifer Peterson Singh, Bobbie Jean Tolson, Ben Wagener, Betty Wiersema; and Lost River staff, Lisa Walker, Juanita Martz, Jessica Collier, and Linda Kelley.

---

## Welcome

### Orientation for New Members and Visitors

*Sunday, February 7*

Vienna Baptist Church invites you to an orientation session that will explore what it means to be a disciple of Christ at VBC. The orientation will be held from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the library, prior to the worship service. It will be led by Dr. Ben Wagener, Pastor for Spiritual Formation, along with members of the outreach committee, including Beth Cooke and Judy Lamont. Please join us for an opportunity to learn more about Vienna Baptist Church and to let us know how we can help you in your spiritual development. For more information, contact Ben Wagener, 703-281-4400 x105 or [Bwagener@vbc-va.org](mailto:Bwagener@vbc-va.org).

---

## Signposts

### The Albrittons Serve with D.C. Baptist Convention

Becky Albritton has been elected to serve on the executive committee for the D.C. Baptist Convention. Bob Albritton serves on DCBC personnel committee and also on the search committee for the new Executive Director. The Albrittons are featured for the month of March in the 2010 DCBC calendar. In March, you can see the photo on the calendar page at the Web site: [www.dcbaptist.org](http://www.dcbaptist.org).

## Young Adults

# Kathy Staudt Begins Her Work with Young Adults

### *Group Bids Farewell to Bill Sykes' Leadership*

VBC and the Little River United Church of Christ have joyfully called Dr. Kathleen Staudt to lead our ecumenical young adult ministry. She states that she has a "passionate commitment to nurturing the spiritual and vocational journeys of young adults." She is an adjunct professor at Wesley and Virginia Theological Seminaries and at the University of Maryland.



*Dr. Kathleen Staudt*

Photo courtesy of Dr. Staudt

Kathy Staudt's foremost interest is to get to know our young adults personally by listening to their stories. In our first supper and Bible study with her January 12, she had new participants pair with regular attendees so they could later introduce each other to the whole group. Then she described the culture and formation of the first-century Christians, as found in Acts 12.

New participants in the group included Rosa Guzman and Amanda Flynn, who were in our VBC youth group at one time. One of the young adults, Katie Price, said, "Kathy is wonderful!" She added that leaders such as Bill Sykes and Kathy are comfortable to be with and have an excellent Biblical understanding to teach the young adults.

After six years of enjoying the stimulating teaching and the shepherding of our young adults leader Bill Sykes, the group met on January 26 to say farewell and to share affirming testimonies.

The young adults meet every second and fourth Tuesday at 7-9 p.m. at the home of Mary and Tom Johnson (2419 Little Fox Lane, Vienna, 703-319-1916). The group includes singles and couples who have completed high school through young adults in their thirties.

Other planned events include sharing a meal with homeless men and women at Fairfax United Methodist Church on January 31. Also, once a month the young adults eat at a restaurant after Sunday worship services.

Contact Ben Wagener for more information, 703-281-4400 x105. Please come and bring a friend with you!



Photo by Tom Johnson

*Young adults gather for Bible study: front row, from left, Luis Ruiz, Rajani Das, Heidi Kharbanda; back row, Marielena Javier, Claire Peterson, Carolanne Petrusiak, Joseph Petrusiak, Paul Luscher, Joel Winstead.*

## Sharing a Meal with Homeless People Is a Revelation for Church Members

On a recent evening, six people from the Little River United Church of Christ and VBC—including a teen and several young adults—went to the Holy Cross Episcopal Church in Dunn Loring, where we joined 25–30 homeless people for supper. The outdoor temperature was about 30 degrees.

One man seated next to me at the supper table could speak two languages—French and German. When I asked another man what was most important to him, he said, “Finding a job, especially in construction work.” One woman shared that the major problems she faced in finding work were medical problems, having a felony, and having the LAMB Center as the only place to report as her residence.

At the close of the evening, it was uncomfortable observing these homeless guests as they began to lie down side-by-side on thin mats and itchy blankets in the church fellowship hall. For example, one woman insisted that she would not sleep next to a man whose feet were at her head.

I was surprised to discover that 39 percent of homeless adults work! Almost three-quarters of those who are homeless are mentally ill, addicted, or both.

FACETS (Fairfax Area Christian Emergency Transitional Services) serves men, women, and children who are homeless or living in low-income public housing communities in Fairfax, helping them to take positive steps toward self-sufficiency. FACETS coordinates this hypothermia ministry, which takes place in churches, providing shelter and meals for homeless people from December to March. According to a survey two years ago, there were 1,835 homeless people in Fairfax—the highest of the D.C. suburban counties.

I realize how privileged we are and feel a growing responsibility for us all to provide financial resources and, whenever possible, a personal presence that would treat homeless people as individual human beings and not as “lepers.”

The words of Christ are instructive and call out to us: “I was hungry and you gave me food. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing” (Matthew 25:35-36).

What an enriching and sobering evening!

Shalom,  
Ben Wagener

**The time together gave them hope and joy to forget about being homeless and to talk for a while about the many things that we all have in common.**

### ***The Gift of Good Company: A Personal Reflection***

One of the most important gifts that you can give to some of our community's most needy people is the gift of good company. On December 10, I accompanied Ben, Joyce Cheek, Rosemary McDermott, Irmgard Scherer, and Anne Wagener to the hypothermia shelter at Holy Cross Episcopal Church.

There, we had a meal with homeless men and women who had very vivid and fascinating stories to tell. However, most of these stories that they shared were not about being homeless. I listened to a group of three migrant workers talk about their favorite places in their respective home countries of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala. I listened to another fellow talk about all of the exotic places he visited in Southern Europe and Turkey during his time in the armed services. I also listened to another fellow who had a fascinating knowledge of the history of baseball.

The men and women who receive help at Holy Cross need people to understand the experience of being homeless, but I can tell that it gave them hope and joy to forget about being homeless and to talk for a while about the many things that we all have in common.

Joseph Petrusiak,  
Little River UCC and member of Young Adults

## Happy Birthday!

### February

- 2 Jake Berkowitz  
Maxine Burke  
Yu Mi Choi
- 3 Wendy Daywalt  
Alex Pratt-Jalloh (10)
- 5 Sarah Muse (12)
- 6 Cyndy Isibel
- 7 Dave Hall
- 9 Sylvia Linke
- 10 Debby Ruth  
Megan Pauley
- 11 Cassy Chandler (1)

- 12 Esthleen Myllyoja  
Bets Thomas  
Matt Behnke (19)
- 15 Rob Ruth
- 16 Judy Lamont
- 17 Betty Frederick  
Debbie Dorcus
- 18 Judy Campbell  
Hank Dunn  
Tim Lam Jr.  
Logan Wiersema (13)
- 19 Janet (Rish) Thompson  
Lisa Perez
- 20 Pete Reed  
Bill Korby

- 21 Jerry Shelton  
Linda Beamer  
Jessica Dorcus
- 22 Nancy Sessions
- 24 Ward Kay
- 25 Mariah Williams (19)
- 26 Danielle Cuppett (10)
- 27 Harry Brandenburg Jr.
- 28 John Blair  
Maggie Blair (21)  
Grace Miller (5)
- 29 Charlcie Steuble  
Caroline Perez (10)

## Retreating

### Poets & Writers & Artists Retreat

#### *Lost River Retreat Center* **February 26–28**

We gather as a creative community in the beautiful mountains of Lost River, West Virginia, to relax and focus and pay attention to a creative endeavor. Many of us will be relishing the time

away to write or paint, draw, do needlework, journal, or any number of other creative endeavors. This is an opportunity to *Be* as much as to *Do*.

The cost is \$135, or \$185 if you would like a private room. The fee includes room and five meals at Lost River. If you would like more information, contact Myra Bridgforth, 703-281-4703, Myralpc@verizon.net.



Lost River Retreat Center  
2015 Mill Gap Road  
Lost City, West Virginia 26810  
Phone: 304-897-5935  
Fax: 304-897-5816

## Deadline for March Newsletter



Please submit any announcements or articles for this monthly newsletter by **February 14**. The deadline is important so that the newsletter can be mailed to arrive by March 1. If you miss the deadline, and you have a contribution to the newsletter, please let me know that it is on its way and when I can expect to see it. You can bring your material to the office, or you can send a Word file to [communications@vbc-va.org](mailto:communications@vbc-va.org) (type "for newsletter" in the subject box).

—Carol Natella, publications editor

## Our VBC Family

### Circle of Concern

VBC Study Team

Jennifer Daniels Carter, health  
John Campbell, hip replacement  
Audrey Grena, hip replacement  
Turner Bridgforth, knee surgery  
Virginia Walterick, surgery  
Bets Thomas, radiation therapy  
Evelyn Gouge  
Terri Klear  
Linda Beamer, health  
Tim Anderson, working overseas  
Phyllis Balsler, recovery  
Sandy Turner, health  
Dee and Sara Jo Keys  
Jerry and Barbie Walling  
Mary Wiley, health  
Jim and Mary Vining  
John Blair, in Afghanistan  
Sam Southern, Navy

### Prayer Requests for Friends and Family

The people of Haiti, in the aftermath of the earthquake  
Diane Gardner's mother, Arlene Frost, health  
VBCC teacher Sara Stone's husband, Steve, in hospital  
Darlene Morse's nephew, Andrew Beneigh, health  
Jeannie Flynn's niece and sister  
Sylvia Linke's friend, Janice, cancer  
Mary Burns' father, Ed Person, health  
Evon Cassell's friend, C. D., health  
VBCC mother Caroline Quezada, ankle broken in several places  
Ben Wagener's brother, Ken, health  
Jan Barker's father, cancer treatments  
Lewis Christian's father, Lewis Sr., cancer  
Chris Thomas's father, Larry Thomas, critical condition  
Linda Gooding's cousin, chemotherapy

Michelle Vann's coworker, Sarah, chemotherapy for lung cancer  
Diane Gardner's uncle, Dale Hendrix, cancer  
Linda Beamer's father, Maurice, treatments  
Ray Salgado's brother-in-law, Gene, and family  
Pete Reed's sister, Ellen Fuseler, cancer treatment  
Audrey Grena's son-in-law, Ken Nowack, dialysis

### Bereavement

Our condolences to Stan Hastey, former executive director of the Alliance of Baptists, upon the death of his father, Ervin Hastey, in El Paso, Texas.  
... to Bruce Pickle on the death of his father, Cecil L. Pickle, in Florida.  
... to Sally Reno's coworker, Amanda Rittenour, on the death of her father (age 54) on Nov. 28.  
... to Nancy, David, and John Linn on the death of their husband and father, Arnold, on December 10.  
... to Michelle Vann on the death of her cousin, Nicole, on December 11.  
... to Darlene Morse and family on the death of her brother, John Beneigh Jr., on December 15.  
... to Will and Norma Daniels on the death of his cousin, Jack Daniels, in North Carolina on December 15.  
... to Brenda Finegan and family on the death of her mother, Joan Odle, on December 19.  
... to Sheila Hodges on the death of her uncle, Stanley Gilliland, on January 6.  
... to the family of VBCC mother Linda Weinhardt, who died January 8.

... to Wolfie Scherer on the death of his Uncle Jim, in Vermont on January 13.  
... to Anne Reed on the death of her uncle, David Fuson, in South Carolina.

### Births

We celebrate the birth of Amelia Lurabelle Edwards to Mitch and Ashley Edwards on December 16. Beverly Gladney is the proud great-grandmother, and Mary and Tom Johnson are the proud grandparents.  
We celebrate the birth of Andrew Cooper Ellis on Christmas Eve. Parents are Derek and Susan (Boomer) Ellis. Proud grandmother is Elaine Boomer.  
We celebrate the birth of Isabella Dunn, to Aaron and Christie, on January 3. Proud grandfather is Hank Dunn.

### Thank You

To Our Dear Friends at Vienna Baptist Church,  
Our family cannot find adequate words to express our gratitude for the care we received from our church family during Bill's illness and passing. We especially thank the Pastoral Staff and the Diaconate for the comfort they provided. We thank the Bereavement Team, the Hostess Team, and the Office Staff for making the day of Bill's funeral so smooth and for caring for our family and friends that day. We could not imagine going through this without your love and care.  
God bless you all.  
—Juanita Mathews & family

## Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations

For our Lenten stewardship emphasis this year, we will learn about the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations. Many congregations have used this study to highlight the five basic emphases which help every church multiply its ministry. Beginning on Feb. 21, and continuing for each Sunday in Lent, adults will gather each Sunday at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall for study. Morning worship at 11 a.m. will focus on one practice each week.

Here are the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations:

- ◆ Radical Hospitality
- ◆ Passionate Worship
- ◆ Intentional Faith Development
- ◆ Risk-Taking Mission and Service
- ◆ Extravagant Generosity

The study will culminate during worship on Palm Sunday, March 28, when we're asked to present our commitment cards indicating how we will offer to God our time, talents and treasures for the following year. Each person is encouraged to commit to specific ways to incorporate these five practices into his or her faith journey.

We're invited to meditate on each practice for a week, and we'll each have copies of the daily devotional guide (*Cultivating Fruitfulness: Five Weeks of Prayer and Practice for Congregations*) to help.

The Generous Living team hopes that in the coming months and years Vienna Baptist can multiply our ministries by repeating, deepening, and improving on the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations. If you wish to learn more about these five practices, please visit the Web site [www.fivepractices.org](http://www.fivepractices.org).



A people of faith on the journey of life

541 Marshall Road, SW

Vienna, VA 22180

Periodicals  
Postage Paid,  
Oakton, VA