

Pastor's Report October 10, 2021

October tends to be a crazier-than-usual month around the church office. People begin to share ideas for meaningful ministry during the holiday season, emotions begin to stir regarding holiday gatherings with family and friends ... some with memories of painful relationships or the lack of someone special to share the holidays. The Nominating Committee begins their work and discernment, people start asking questions about serving on the Board of Directors, we review our giving and develop a budget for the upcoming year, and ministry leaders begin reviewing their ministries and all that God brought about during the year.

I love everything about this busy time of year because it reminds me of the importance of claiming who we are, why, and what we do as a spiritual community. It is our experience that we are thriving as a congregation in the many ways we *love God by caring for and serving others*.

MCC Richmond always shows up, regardless if it's volunteering as a worship leader or being a blessing to someone at worship, volunteering within a ministry, serving in leadership, giving of our financial gifts, praying for others, sharing, and listening to one another ... especially those discovering MCC Richmond for the first time, and more. We do not become discouraged with problems but seek solutions and God's blessings. In every way possible MCC Richmond is: ***The Unstoppable Church.***

Between September 20 – October 7 I have engaged in 9 pastoral counseling appointments, 2 Zoom meetings with community leaders, 2 breakfast or lunch meetings with church members, 1 Zoom meetings with UFMCC staff, 2 meetings with visitors/newbies from the virtual service, 2 intern meetings, 3 meetings with staff and ministry leaders.

The response to the Afghanistan Refugee Clothing Drive has been incredible. Carol Anderson has taken three full carloads of clothing and donations are still coming in.

Two choir microphones have been purchased and installed to help amplify the Spirits of Joy. It is very helpful to have this additional sound equipment. It helps those attending in-person worship as well as the virtual congregation enjoy the beauty of the choir. We will also purchase two monitors ... one for the choir and one for the piano ... which will allow the choir and pianist to hear the service. Funds for this equipment came from donations to the Ministry Development Fund.

The Fall Mum Fundraiser was a HUGE success. All 100 Mums were sold before worship and generated over \$1000.00 towards the new ceiling and new carpet. This fundraiser was birthed, planned, and executed in one week. There was also a tremendous amount of engagement and excitement of behalf of the congregation. Miss Ricki and her team certainly have the gift of knowing how to get people excited about raising money for MCC Richmond.

Friday, November 12 MCC Richmond will partner with Daily Planet and Anthem Healthcare Women's Network in providing winter coats, new hats, gloves, and scarves to those living outside or in need. Anthem Women's Network is collecting coats and will have them dry cleaned. They are also purchasing hats, gloves, and scarves as well as providing volunteer help for the give-away. Daily Planet will provide help with advertising this event and their mobile medical unit

will be present the day of the event. MCC Richmond will provide a hot meal of soup, cornbread, and other dining delicacies. I love this kind of community partnership as well as caring for and serving those in our community that are often overlooked, marginalized, and forgotten.

Area Access repaired the elevator mechanism that allows the doors of the elevator to open. The part for the repair was minor ... a simple nut that fell off a bolt that held two small metal plates together. The difficulty was getting to the bolt with a new nut because it was under an electrical unit on top of the elevator carriage. The technicians decided to take apart another 'antique' elevator with the same parts at their shop and replace the entire electrical unit which had the same metal plate. Talk about a lot of drama. After three service calls the elevator appears to be working well and all the doors open and close!

August and September giving allowed us to meet all of our financial obligations. This is incredible considering that in church-world January and February, August and September are usually lean giving months. This is not just true for MCC Richmond but every congregation I've served. I'm proud that even during these months we have been able to purchase needed equipment, make repairs, stay engaged with outreach ministries, and maintain a high level of effective and meaningful ministry as usual. Just one more way we see MCC Richmond as ***The Unstoppable Church.***

I'm looking forward to the next two weeks of vacation spending quality time with family and being alone with Kirk. I will work some but not much. First, the Blandford Clan will gather at Auburn to visit both our nieces colleges and attend the Auburn-Georgia game. Yes, I do know what a football is! We are also grateful to be able to return to Amsterdam to visit and encourage our close friend Willie. After 45 years of marriage he is learning to live without Maureen, the love of his life. I give thanks for excellent leadership while I'm away and have no doubt that the church is in good hands.

See you all on Sunday, October 24!

Thank you for your example of servant leadership and grace.

-Pastor Kenny Callaghan