



# THE COLUMNS

A Bi-Monthly Publication of Richmond First United Methodist Church

## By the Way....

May/June

Words from our Senior Pastor Bruce Nettleton

2018

### Zero Sum Giving

Many of you may already be participating in our Men's Ministry's "Kroger Card" program. If not, it's an easy thing to become involved in, and generates a fairly steady flow of income to the Men's Ministry. They in turn use these funds to do wonderful things in the life of our church and community.

The plan is simple. You register at the local Kroger, and they will attach a code to your discount card naming First United Methodist Church Men's Ministry as your charity of choice. Each time you use your card after that, a small percentage of what you spent goes to the Men's Ministry as a charitable donation. This is a winning proposition for everybody. You probably didn't spend a dime more than you were going to spend at Kroger to start with. Kroger receives the tax and community service benefits of a donation that they probably would have given to somebody anyway, and the Men's Ministry gets the money.

These zero-sum giving opportunities are popping up everywhere. Show a flyer when you go out to eat and your favorite school organization gets a portion of what you spend on the meal. By your coffee here, and three cents of every dollar goes to feed children overseas. The list is long and growing longer.

Over the last several years, the online retail giant, Amazon, has implemented their own version of this program called Amazon Smile. Smile is particularly attractive because the vast volume of business that runs through Amazon presents a great earning opportunity, and because Amazon is often the fastest and least expensive way to get the things we need (or want) every day. This high volume business also was attractive to researchers who were curious about the

effect that these zero sum giving opportunities have on their givers. Do these opportunities make us more generous?

The answer, surprisingly, is no. In fact, the data suggests that somewhat the opposite is true.

The fact is, that many of us who think of ourselves as generous may not be as altruistic as we like to think we are. When we perform an act of generosity, certain synapses fire in our brain and release chemicals which are associated with a sense of well being. In other words, generosity feels good. No surprise there. Anybody who has ever done anything generous will testify to the sense of satisfaction they receive.

The problem is that zero sum giving programs like Amazon Smile generate much the same neurochemical response. When we get the little screen message informing us how much of what we spent went to our favorite charity, we get pretty much the same feeling of warmth we get from giving. We're getting the generosity buzz without the nasty side effects of actually having to sacrifice anything. This, in turn, makes it *less* likely that we will voluntarily *give* out of our own pockets.

Should we, then, engage in these programs?

Of course we should. We should take every opportunity we can to do good, *especially* those opportunities for which we receive a return on little or no investment. Never underestimate the power of pennies gently redirected.

However, we should also never mistake these sorts of opportunities for genuine, sacrificial generosity.

When it came to soul care, Jesus leveraged every tool at his disposal. But when the time came, his ultimate act of love was also his ultimate act of sacrifice.

*Bruce Nettleton*

## *"How do we grow?"*

As spring finally breaks winter's hold on us, many of us will begin planting gardens and flowers. But before our shovels break dirt, we often begin with a mental picture of what we want that flower bed or garden to look like. With that vision in our minds, we get to work to make it become a reality!



Similarly, God has a vision for *you*. His desire is for us to be conformed to the likeness of Christ. And that happens through discipleship. At FUMC, our mission statement is "Growing disciples who make a difference." We believe God accepts us as we are but wants us to grow in knowledge and faith. As we grow, our lives become more like the one Jesus lived here on earth.



Our church offers many great opportunities for spiritual growth from small groups to mission trips. For many, especially those new to FUMC, it all might seem a bit intimidating. Where *do* we begin in our discipleship with Jesus? So we came up with a guide for those ready to take the next step in their discipleship - it's called "Stepping Stones."



"Stepping Stones" is based on four principles of growth: take root, grow, bear fruit and sow. This is the process we invite all attendees and members of FUMC to invest in for their own spiritual growth. For more information, take a look at the "Stepping Stones" brochure at *THE RAMP*.



The first part of the process - the natural place to begin growth - is with seeds. "Seeds" is our ongoing, 8-week class designed to help those new to our church "take root" by connecting with others and Jesus. This class meets on Sundays at 9:40am in the library. If you meet someone who is visiting our church, invite them to "Seeds" as a place to begin!



## **Upcoming Summer Outreach/Mission Projects**

June 3-8

**Youth Trip with Christian Appalachian Project**

**Contact: Jonathan Kleppinger**

June 8

**American Cancer Society**

**Relay for Life**

**Contact: Pam Thompson**

June 25-29

**Youth's Local Mission Ministry**

**Contact: Jonathan Kleppinger**

July 17-25

**Haiti Mission Trip**

**Contact: Jamie Jordan**



## **March 2018 Guatemala Mission Team**

*(with "Son" in their eyes)*

**Front Row:** Leidy Zacarias, Courtney Kleppinger, Katherine Jeansonne, Sheryl Jurich, Trudy Tait, Hannah Nystrom, Julie Secor.

**Back Row:** Donovan Zacarias, Roger Jurich, Kim Nettleton, Kassidy Jeansonne, Tori Ellis and Mark Secor.

**Third Row:** Gabby & Alex

*Team members either worked in the medical clinic, Women's Bible Study, Kid's Worship Time or construction.*

# The Growing Place

**May is a busy month at The Growing Place.**

Mother's Day is very exciting as the children begin making gifts for their Mothers. The teachers put a lot of thought into the gifts that the children will make.



Our Preschool graduation is May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11:30 a.m. and the last day for our 4 year old part-time program. The part-time 3's last day is on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Our Kindergarten class will graduate on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 3:30 p.m. The last day of school for our Kindergarten/1<sup>st</sup> Grade program will be on May 25<sup>th</sup>. We will be providing summer care for those families that need or want it.

The Growing Place will be closed on May 28<sup>th</sup> in observance of Memorial Day.



A special *thank you* to all of the past and present military personnel. With the service that you have given, all of America can lay down at night knowing that we still have our freedom and we are safe. We pray for you and your families, asking God to shield you and bring you back home safely.



***And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. Matthew 21:22***

***Finally June and some down time.***

With June comes fun in the sun. Teachers begin doing water play with the children, walking field trips begin and classroom cook outs. Families will be taking vacations and enjoying their summer.



Connie McKinney

## LOCS MINISTRIES SUPPORTED

*Spring/Summer 2018*

\$2,400.00:	Gift Certificates (Clothing given to those in need)
\$ 456.00:	Compassion for Christ ( 2 adopted children)
\$1,900.00:	God's Outreach Food Pantry
\$1,000.00:	FUMC Sharing Ministry
\$ 200.00:	Kidz Konnection Klub, Inc.
\$ 400.00:	Red Bird Mission
\$ 300.00:	CASA (Court Appointed Special Adv.)
\$1,000.00:	FUMC MMC
\$ 200.00:	Project Read
\$ 300.00:	Health Now Clinic (In Memory of Harry Smiley)
\$ 500.00:	Hope's Wings (In Honor of Vicky Petry)
\$ 500.00:	Gilmin Home (Berea)
\$ 600.00:	New Liberty Family Shelter
\$ 500.00:	Salvation Army Canteen
\$ 700.00:	FUMC Youth Trip to Haiti
\$ 300.00:	Estill County Center for Pregnancy & Parenting
\$ 300.00:	Christian Flights International Nutrition Clinic
\$ 300.00:	Pregnancy Help Center
\$ 200.00:	Prince of Peace Orphanage (Guatemala)
\$ 200.00:	Winchester Beacon of Hope Emergency Shelter
\$ 300.00:	CHOSO Chosen Junior School (Uganda)
\$ 250.00:	Yehor Vitel Education Fund
\$ 500.00:	Aldersgate-Scholarships
\$ 300.00:	Refuge for Women
\$ 500.00:	FUMC Youth
<b>\$14,106.00:</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

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*Do you enjoy playing golf? Do you enjoy giving to good causes?* These two items meet for an awesome experience on Saturday, July 14<sup>th</sup> 2018 at 9:00am for the Men's Ministry's Second Annual Malcolm Poulter Memorial Golf Scramble. This fun event raises funds to help children go to the Aldersgate camp as well as other mission needs. Talk to any member of the Men's Ministry for more information, or better yet come to one of our meetings, held the second Saturday of each month in the Fellowship Hall. For more info please contact: Bryan Gardner at 859-625-5257 (h) or 859-967-9071 (c)



*Do you want your business to reach members of the church and the Men's Ministry?* If so, talk to us about sponsoring a hole at the Malcolm Poulter Memorial Golf Scramble that will be held July 14<sup>th</sup> 2018 at Battlefield Golf Club. Hole Sponsorships are a great value at only \$100.00. Contact Bobby Herbst at 859-200-5755 to sign up!



*Donations are being solicited now for the Third Annual Quarter Mania Auction.* This year the auction will be held on August 18<sup>th</sup> 2018. Be part of the most talked about charity event in the Blue Grass! New Items only, please. Gift Cards are welcome. All donations are tax deductible as allowed by federal and state law [503(c)]. For more info please contact Bryan Gardner (see phone numbers above).



*Have you signed up for the Kroger Community Rewards Program?* When you do so, you will be helping our church. Simply go to [krogercommunityrewards.com](http://krogercommunityrewards.com) and create your account. Indicate that you would like your donation to go to First United Methodist Men's Ministry. Every time that you shop, a donation will go to this group.



## Spring has Sprung and it's time to Spruce up the Courtyard!



Check out the **"Flowers for the Courtyard"** order form located at **THE RAMP**. Donations made in honor or memory of our mothers will be used to purchase ferns & bedding plants to beautify the courtyard. Also a portion of your gifts will go towards our Sharing Ministry. The deadline to submit your form is **Monday, May 7**.

*Thank You For Your Help!*

## EMERGE Youth Ministry

As we turn our eyes and calendars eagerly toward summer, the youth are beginning to prepare for one of our favorite weeks of the year: our local mission trip.

From June 25-29, we'll be doing all kinds of projects around the church and around the community, from visiting nursing homes and singing hymns to tending the yards of elderly church members to cleaning up around the church.

In addition to the help we're able to provide, this week is a tremendous opportunity for our youth to become more aware of the everyday needs of people around them in their own community — and how God calls us to respond to those needs. And it's not overnight or out of town, we have a lot of flexibility and can take kids for the whole week or only the afternoons or only a day or two.

Do you know someone (in the church or not in the church) who could use the help of some teenagers that week? Do you have other ideas for projects that would be helpful? Let me know! We'll start filling up the calendar for that week soon, and we'll keep 15-20 youth busy from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day that week (and maybe some evenings, too!). We can help with anything!

Jonathan

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**May 9 WNL Talent Show with children, adults**

**June 3-8 CAP Regional Mission Trip**

**June 25-29 Local Mission Trip**



5/1:	Brayden Nichols Jullien Ross
5/2:	Don Shadoan Andy Bentley
5/3:	Lois Beaver Hunter Ross
5/4:	Stacy Russell
5/5:	William Nettleton
5/8:	Ralph Jones Milagnos Velazquez Marisa Yerace
5/9:	W. Richard Smith
5/10:	Dammian Stepp
5/11:	Craig Myers Adam Collier Rebecca Otieno Claudia Rainey
5/12:	Don Calitri Ruth Babbitt Christina Ciolek
5/13:	Mason Lewis
5/14:	Winona Harris Ross Brown Paula Southgate Sarah Dalton
5/16:	John Dawson Sally Martin Sarah Garrison David Southgate
5/17:	Elizabeth Gale
5/18:	Steve Coe Kendra Myers
5/19:	Amy Gribbins
5/20:	Daniel Southgate
5/22:	Michael Martin
5/23:	Ken Auble Logan Jackson
5/24:	Donna Strange
5/26:	Rindy Russell
5/27:	Maison Nichols
5/28:	Doug Lippman
5/30:	Larry Shearer Gay Sweely Pat Webb Ramah Ballard
5/31:	Carol Rogow J.C. Deaton Durand Waterbury



5/12:	Jeff & Ruth Babbitt
5/14:	Bob & Sharon Shoemaker
5/16:	Jon & Lisa Clevenger Justin & Jessica Cobb
5/20:	Bob & Bethany Keith
5/21:	Richard & Elizabeth Bendure
5/23:	Bill & Shannon Grise Zak & Kara Kratzer
5/24:	Ross & Cathie Brown
5/25:	Ken & Paula Southgate
5/26:	Danny & Amy Gribbins
5/27:	Mark & Julie Secor
5/28:	Ron & Joyce Smith
5/31:	Scott & Wilma Deyo Bob & Jackie Bliss

Did we miss your birthday or anniversary?  
Give the church office a call so we can get you added!  
859-623-3580



NewsLetter  
**DEADLINE**

Do you have something that you would like to have added to the Columns? Feel free to contact Lori by calling 623-3580 or email her at [richmondfumc@richmondfumc.org](mailto:richmondfumc@richmondfumc.org) for more info. The plan is to have a Columns every 2 months. The DEADLINE for the July/August Columns is June 1, 2018.



6/1:	Kim Nettleton Stephen Sweely Debra Sweger Dorothy Ann Lovell Bev Merten
6/2:	Shane Cartwright
6/3:	Sonnie Maas Chris Jackson Adelyn Shearer
6/4:	Hannah Nystrom
6/5:	Michael Blakeney Vicki Moore Greg Thomasson
6/6:	Val Randolph James Lamb Ashley Gribbins
6/7:	Nicholas Killin Kaley Outlaw Chris Otieno Ian Stepp Larry Bailey
6/8:	Lindsey Bendure Thomas Barker
6/9:	Bryan Gardner Linda M. Yoder Keara Koerner
6/10:	Imogene Ramsey Marie Mitchell Jack Lindsey Jude Hardin
6/12:	Jo Margaret Durham Robin Rickerson-George
6/13:	Greg Sargent
6/15:	Terri Sadler Marie Whitehouse Alex Phelps Jimmy Phelps Lisa Phelps
6/16:	Jessica Cobb
6/17:	Roger Jurich
6/18:	Helen Ferguson Sheryl Jurich
6/20:	Erin Cartwright Lauren Collier Jenna Boulden



6/21:	Barbara Shearer Alice Salyers
6/22:	Kayann Hinton Patrick Nnoromele Elizabeth Bauer
6/23:	Al Grijalba Amiee Wills Parker Jackson Aidyn Maynard
6/26:	Kathy Combs
6/27:	Phillip Foster Amos Stone
6/28:	Paula Deaton
6/30:	Missy Rice



6/3:	Paul & Linda Grant
6/4:	Don & Gloria Shadoan Scott & Denise Collier
6/5:	Bob & Tyronna Riley Kevin & Shannon Conforti
6/6:	Les & Jan Ramsdell
6/7:	Rob & Paula Ciolek
6/9:	Robert & Sharon Flanery
6/12:	John & Helen Ferguson
6/13:	Tim & Barb Singleton
6/14:	Ralph & Bev Merten
6/15:	Rodney & Sabrina Cobb
6/18:	Joseph & Jamie Lovell Mason Smith & Marie Mitchell
6/21:	Brent & MaryAnn Haynes
6/26:	Bobby & Jojean Barton

## Brillantina

Written by Courtney Kleppinger

Her story of her most recent mission trip to Guatemala

*Brillantina.*

My decade old Spanish was rusty and dull. I was frantically unpacking it every moment of every day in Guatemala, shaking words loose moments before I needed to use them. They fell from my mouth haphazardly at first. They had English dust all over them. But if you have ever learned a language and lost it, you know as well as I do that you only have one choice at the point of immersion: You must shake the dust.

And very soon, it will settle to the floor, leaving you with the *palabras* you need.

But when the unpacking is finished, and you're happily gaining control over the words you brought with you, immersion brings you a gift.

*Mas palabras.* (More words.) And I left Guatemala with a new *palabra favorita*: *Brillantina*.

During one of our first evenings in Guatemala, we went to a local dollar store to buy supplies for crafts. We left with plastic bags full of things that litter every church supply closet in the United States: construction paper, kid scissors, glue, decorative stones and buttons, and one very important thing: Glitter.

My husband hates glitter. Hate is a strong word, and one that I don't use very often, but in this case it's appropriate. He shudders at the word, and we do not have glitter in our house. After years of marriage, I have learned to toss glittery Christmas ornaments. To assure him that glittery logos on our daughter's shirts will not leak glitter into our life. To protect him from his fear.

But I do not share his feelings about glitter. I think it's beautiful.

And as I helped place new bottles of glitter onto the tables we used for crafts, I realized I did not know the Spanish word for it.

I looked down at the bottle: *brillantina*.

As with many of the new words I learned, I forgot it several times. I said it wrong just as many times.

That is how it goes with *palabras nuevas*. And then they stick.

I have always found it very difficult to tell other people I am going on a mission trip.

And it's not necessarily because of my personal feelings about the trip or the work that lay in front of me. It's mostly because of how it makes other people feel.

Some people understand it well; oftentimes, it is those who have gone before you. They know what awaits you, and they share in your joy. They encapsulate you in their prayers. They buy your cookies. They send money in envelopes, and they do not let their left hand know what the right is doing.

They send you.

But for every one of those people, there is at least one more person who appears to be uncomfortable at the drop of those words.

They believe mission trips are somehow reserved for "good" Christians. That only the perfect go. That if you go, your faith must be an intricately sewn masterpiece.

That *you* must be a masterpiece.

That mission trips are reserved for the greatest among us. And that if you have decided to go, you must believe that about yourself: that you are great among the followers of Jesus.

And there is a tinge of judgement in their eyes that I immediately see, and it permeates my entire being. Who am I to go?

And then I question why I am going. Why I've gone. Why I will go.

*But then the wheels of the plane are up, and I'm gone.*

At the clinic we ran in the mornings, I had a tiny makeshift pharmacy. I spent a lot of time counting basic medicines with a tongue depressor and pouring them into plastic baggies. I said the same Spanish words over and over again to the dozens of people we cared for each day. What I did was small. What we did was small. But what God did was impossibly large. And He was everywhere.

When it was possible for me, I made conversation with women and children as they waited to be seen by the doctor. I also kept a few *dulces* at the edge of the table, and that attracted kids. (Candy is candy. Everywhere.)

One day, I was asking a couple of little boys all their favorite things. It's an easy conversation to have because the question is basically the same each time, and little kids love to talk about themselves. The conversation arrived at food, and I asked one of the boys a funny question:

*¿Te gusta la comida de tu mamá?* (For lack of better phrasing, I asked him if he liked the food his mom made.)

And he laughed and said, "No!" And at this point, the women and children who had been listening to us talk erupted in laughter.

And so did I.

Laughter is wonderful because laughter is easy to translate. It is also magical; a solvent of sorts. The divides in the room became more difficult to see. Between the white and the brown. Between the haves and the have-nots. Between the sick and the healthy. Between the English and the *español*.

The word they used for smile was beautiful to me: *sonrisa*. Like a sunrise.

There were a few dozen *sonrisas* in the room, and they lit up the darkness.

In the afternoons, we led a time for kids. And it was kind of wild.

We met many different obstacles during those two hours each day, and for me, it became almost comical. Kids were everywhere. We were everywhere. And every day, I was supposed to teach a lesson.

As the week progressed and kinks were smoothed, I became falsely confident in my ability to perform that particular duty.

The lessons were based on pictures projected onto the wall. Like laughter, pictures don't need translators. And for every lesson that week, I referred to neatly organized notes I had stored on my phone. It was easier to me than shuffling papers, and I had made them available offline so there would not be any issue viewing them.

And then on Friday, as I started to teach about the shield of faith, my phone failed me.

My notes would not open.

I was already sweating, and I started sweating more. But the show had to go on, so I laid my phone down and started to make it up.

I remembered a lot of what I had planned on saying, and because I had a translator for the lesson, I had a moment of lag time between each phrase to think.

To scramble.

And I hobbled well enough through the lesson with our first group of kids. Unfortunately, as it concluded, I realized that the kids who were in other stations (crafts and snacks) were nowhere near finished. Without my notes, my lesson time had been cut in half.

I had dead air, and I had no idea how to fill it. The translator was looking at me expectantly, and I was looking back with not a word of my own prepared to say.

*And then words just started coming out of my mouth.*

"And now we're going to play a game," I said. "Everyone line up in the front of the room."

At this point, a conversation started in my mind: one between the person saying things out loud and my actual self, who could not believe what was going on.

I had no idea what game we were about to play.

I walked over to the stacks of plastic chairs they used for church and I started grabbing them and placing them randomly around the room. And then I looked back over at the kids and said, "I am going to teach you about faith."

But I can promise you that I had no idea how that was going to happen, or why I had decided to litter the room with chairs.

The kids were looking at me expectantly, and I cast the same look toward Heaven.

Because only God knew what we were about to do.

More words spilled out of my mouth: "I want you all to close your eyes and hold hands with each other. And I'm going to lead us through this maze of chairs, and none of you will be hurt."

And so I grabbed the little hand of the kid in the front of the line and started weaving Guatemalan children around an empty room of plastic chairs. And I grabbed the hand of God invisibly stretched in front of me, and I walked. I looked behind me, and saw several little smiles. I saw kids laughing in fear.

Shaking in pretend nervousness. Peeking ahead. They were enjoying the adventure.

And a few moments later, after successful weaving through the chairs, I asked them to open their eyes, and I had another conversation with God. Because it was time for me to talk again, and I didn't have a clue as to what I was going to say.

"There are two things I want you to learn from this," I said.

*Oh really, I thought. I wonder what they are.* And then words kept flowing.

"One, that it's important to listen to God. He will lead you through life's hard things. And right now, because we are here on Earth, the eyes of our faith are closed. So until we get to Heaven, where our faith is made sight, we have to listen."

I heaved a small sigh of relief. That sounded OK, especially for words I had not known before they touched my lips.

"And the second thing..." I said.

In the moment the translator spoke those words, I scrambled again. *What is the second thing?*

"...is that it's important to belong to a church. You will need help listening to God, and help from other Christians. It's why I had you hold hands."

*It was?* I thought, with my heart laughing.

It was.

And so it goes with the love of God.

It was scattered throughout the rooms of the church we visited. In the poverty we held in front of our wet eyes. In the hurting, dirty, and dying. In the *brillantina*.

On one of the last lays, just before our closing music, I watched a couple of little Guatemalan girls shake glitter from their hair. It joined other bits of glitter on the dusty concrete floor, and I couldn't help but take a picture.

*Brillantina.*

God does not take us on mission trips to eradicate the world's problems. Because we can't.

We can try, and the effort is certainly part of our purpose. We are to give our second cloak away. Meet the woman at the well. Sing hallelujah with the dying. Fumble for *palabras*.

It is easy to feel defeated. Some of the people we see in poverty will never leave it in this life. Some of the people we gave medicine to will never get more. We want to fix it all, and when we cannot, we grow discouraged.

But in the words of Kailen Taylor, who belongs to Heaven now but left her words behind, we must "grand-scheme" it.

It is not about this life. This tiny speck of a life.

It is about the next one.

And for now, all we can do is scatter the love of God across the world, in an amount so great that children must shake the excess off onto the dusty floor below them.

And in the midst of the going, the doing, we find the same glitter on ourselves.

***Brillantina***



## Pics from Guatemala

