

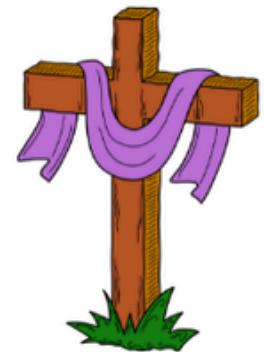


JFEBRUARY 2026

RICHMOND FIRST TODAY

Growing Disciples who make a Difference

News from Your First United Methodist Church Family



Walk with Christ: Journey through Lent

Join in with our congregational theme for the year: “Be Part of It”

Ash Wednesday Services: Begin Lent with the church family on **Feb. 18** with a meal from 5:30 to 6:15 p.m. Instead of WNL classes, we will transition to the Sanctuary for our Ash Wednesday Service starting at 6:30 p.m.

Technology Training: Want to join the Tech Team and help make worship services run more smoothly? We have training for that. We will meet in the Sanctuary at 9 a.m. Saturday, **Feb. 7**. Learn how to run graphics, video, and sound.

Youth Super Bowl Party: Calling Patriots and Seahawks fans and all who want to hang out with a great group of friends on Sunday, Feb. 8. Watch the big game, play board games, eat snacks, and fellowship. Let Amanda know if you can make it.

Unity Sunday on Feb. 15: We have lots to celebrate in our **10 a.m. joint service in the Sanctuary**: wedding anniversaries, birthdays, and new members! (No Thrive service. Lunch for those in our community who experience food scarcity.)

Van Drivers & Helpers for Grocery Delivery Ministry still needed: New drivers are needed to qualify soon. Contact: Jane Yerace in the church office (859-623-3850); Dave Purvis, current regular driver (859-619-5246); or Jo Lynn Linville, loader/helper (817-271-3941).

Make a Joyful Noise: Find your voice with the Sanctuary Choir. Rehearsals at 7:30 p.m. each Wednesday, **beginning Jan. 14**. See John Stegner to learn more.

February Birthdays



Steven Cosby: 1st

Mary Lou Stephens: 3rd

Heidi Nystrom: 7th

Michael Nettleton: 11th

Naomi Brock: 12th

Amanda Bonner: 13th

Charlotte Smith: 14th

Eric Espada: 15th

Margaret Yoder: 16th

Lisa Clevenger: 19th

Barry Tait: 25th

Kristen Wilson: 26th

Dave Alexander: 28th

WNL: Going Deeper Bible Study

Join Pastor Eric Espada at Wednesday Night Live for the Going Deeper Bible Study, exploring themes from the Sunday sermon series. Ask questions, share insights, and delve deeper into the scripture connecting to our daily lives.

During Epiphany, we uncover the "aha moments" in the lives of Jesus' disciples, as they relate to their identity, vocation, and calling

Through discussions, we explore how these pivotal moments shaped the disciples' understanding of who Jesus is and their role in His mission. These revelations help us reflect on our own identities and callings. Come to WNL live dinner at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays then join our Going Deeper class in MMC 213.



Cold Weather Got You Down?

On February 8th, let's pretend we are in the tropics!!

Come to our Thrive Service wearing your BEST Hawaiian Shirt

Yes, there will be prizes!

Join your family at:

First United Methodist Church
401 West Main Street
Richmond, KY 40475
Phone: (859) 623-3580
office@richmondfumc.org

Sundays:

9:30 a.m. Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
11 a.m. Thrive (MMC Gym)
12 p.m. Lunch

Wednesday Night Live:

5:30 p.m. Family Dinner (MMC Gym)
6:15 p.m. Class for Children, Youth, & Adults

Put church activities on your Spring calendar

Set your clocks back with Daylight Savings Time: March 8

All Church Seder Meal and Service in the MMC: April 2

United Women in Faith Retreat "The Emmanuel Experience": May 16-17

"From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace" - John 1:16

Grace Upon Grace: Spiritual Formation Retreat for Laity

The North District of the Kentucky Annual Conference is hosting a Spiritual Retreat for Laity from 7 p.m. March 27 to 7 p.m. March 28 at Aldersgate Camp and Retreat Center. This retreat offers an opportunity for the laity to step away from their busy schedules for a time to draw closer to God. All laity of the Kentucky Annual Conference are invited to attend.



The retreat will be lead by the Rev. Trish Archer, a Deacon from the North Carolina Annual Conference. She is a ministry coach with Passion in Partnership. She served in local churches for 25 years after a career as a middle school science teacher.

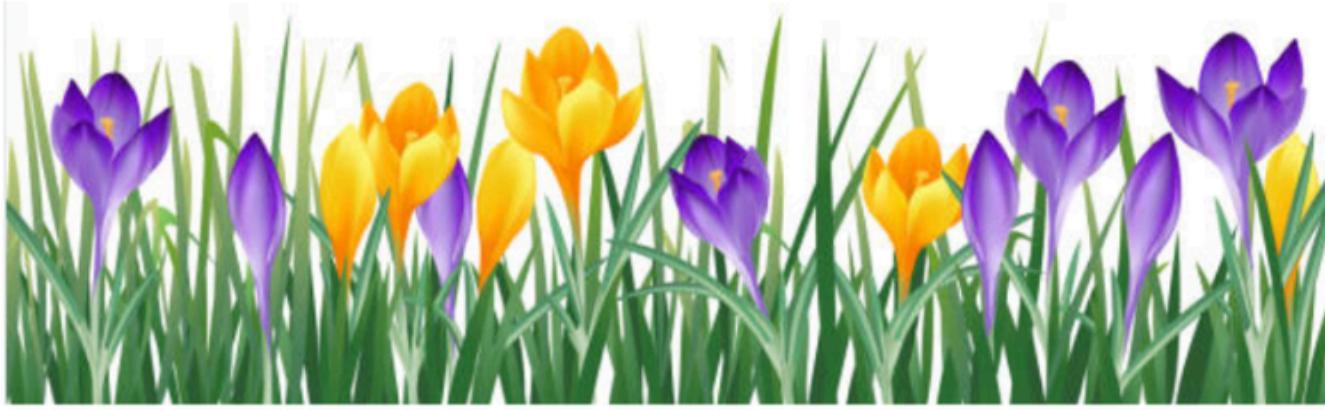
Cost of this retreat is \$90 per person, which includes overnight accommodation and three meals.

Register at <https://kyumc-reg.brtapp.com/LaitySpiritualRetreat>

Keep your Stewardship Pledge with Pushpay



Winter weather sometimes keeps the hardiest of church members away from worship services. Offerings tend to drop on snowy and icy Sundays. You can still keep your promised pledge through Pushpay, even if you are unable to put your gift in the offering plate. Link through this QR code or visit the church website. You may want to consider using Pushpay to make scheduled donations or special gifts. Thank you for supporting your church family. You are a gift from God.



Message from our pastor

Church: Are you ready to look ahead?

Ash Wednesday: A Fresh Start

We embark on this 40-day journey with Ash Wednesday. It may seem somber, marked by the call to “return to the Lord with all your heart.” When we receive the ashes, we are reminded of our mortality: “Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

However, this is not a message of despair. It is a revelation and a honest reflection on our lives, inviting us to stop hiding and let go of distractions. We turn away from what breaks our hearts and God’s heart. This “do-over” leads to a deeper and more authentic life.

Finding Identity in the Dust: “We are Part of it”

Lent is often perceived as a time of giving things up, but it is more accurately understood as a time of self-discovery. In the midst of the hustle and bustle, we often forget our true identity as beloved children of God. In our fasting, quiet reflection, and introspection, we are stripped down to the essentials. As you navigate the desert of Lent, remember that you are an integral part of it. You are part of the story of redemption. You are part of a community walking together. You are part of a broken, loved, and hopeful creation waiting to bloom.

There is Hope for Spring

Just as the crocus pushes through the cold earth, Lent prepares our hearts for the joy of Easter, the springtime of the soul. The ashes on our foreheads, shaped like a cross, symbolize that even in our brokenness, we are marked by hope. As we look to the new life of spring, let us walk together with intentionality. Let us take a long, loving look at our lives and allow God to reshape our hearts.

May you be guided by the Holy Spirit and find true blessings in your journey,
Rev. Eric Espada