

Teens Deepen Faith and Develop Life Skills Through Youth Ministry

A number of teens from Presbytery of the James participated in PC(USA)'s youth conference Triennium in July.

The event, which is held at Purdue University in Indiana every three years, attracts teenagers from around the United States and world who are excited about their shared Church.

Hannah Reasor, a member at Fairfield, decided to go after her sister attended three years ago.

"It got me away from everyday life, and I got to connect with God," she said.

Experiencing people, especially guest speakers, from across the globe was meaningful to Hannah.

"They all had different ethnicities and backgrounds, making all of their stories completely different and interesting to learn about," Hannah shared.

Hannah, as were many of the local youth who attended Triennium with her, is a member of Presbytery of the James's Youth Council.

Youth Council is composed of high school students who are members of presbytery



(ABOVE) Sophie Rounds (River Road), Joey Williams (Southminster), and Hannah Reasor (Fairfield) were among a group of local teens who attended Triennium at Purdue University in July. (BELOW) The 2019-2020 Youth Council's 20 members represent 12 churches: Bott Memorial, Brandermill, Chester, Fairfield, First Virginia Beach, First Richmond, Fredericksburg, Ginter Park, River Road, Southminster, Westminster Richmond, and Reveille UMC.

churches or connected to Camp Hanover. The students plan and lead youth retreats as well as practice leadership skills as they learn about themselves, the Church, and the world around them.

As Hannah and students like her have increasingly stressful schedules, youth ministry has become challenging to continue organizing.

However, "it's incredibly worthwhile to keep supporting young people," shared Youth, Environmental, and Service Ministries Director Colleen Earp who oversees the Youth Council. "They are watching and learning, and eager to get to work."

Getting to work was on the agenda for the Youth Council's first meeting this year in September. They spent time discussing local and global issues they wish to connect with, such as the environment, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, and anti-racism.

While youth ministry is an ever-changing program area for many of our churches and our presbytery, it remains an important way for the Church to love and support these emerging leaders.

Adult Mentors Needed for Youth Council

Presbytery of the James has long supported youth ministry in a variety of ways. Through variations in form and function, Youth Council has been a persistent and exciting part of the presbytery for at least several decades.

Presbytery of the James is expanding its youth ministry this year by adding an adult committee to mentor and support Youth Council members.

Colleen Earp is seeking volunteers eager to lift up and support student leaders in our midst. Volunteers can be parents, youth directors, Christian educators, pastors, or seminary students.

Learn more about Youth Ministry and how to get involved at presbyteryofthejames.com/youth.



STATED MEETING: October 19, 2019

New Hanover Hosts Presbytery with Warm Hospitality

The 103rd Stated Meeting of Presbytery of the James (POJ) took place Saturday, October 19, 2019 at New Hanover Presbyterian Church in Mechanicsville, VA.

The members and staff of New Hanover showed hospitality was their gift. Many participants remarked in the meeting evaluation of their warm smiles, efficient organization, and extraordinary noon meal including homemade chicken pot pie. Thank you for a job well done!

Vice Moderator Leigh Anne Ring called the meeting to order and shared that this was the 30th anniversary of POJ following the merger of three presbyteries: Blue Ridge, Hanover, and Southern Virginia. POJ officially came into existence on July 1, 1989.

Some of the highlights of the meeting included:

Rev. Robert Johnson, pastor of New Hanover, welcomed us.

Cindy Corell brought greetings from the people of Haiti with whom she works as a mission co-worker.

Rev. Joel Morgan (Westminster Richmond) introduced 2020 Young Adult Advisory Delegate Noah Morgan (Westminster Richmond) and members of the African Evangelical International Ministries (AFREIM).

Presbytery and camp staff person Colleen Earp introduced members of the Youth Council.

Rev. Karen Witt (Providence Gum Spring), moderator of the Committee on Ministry's Subcommittee on Examinations, welcomed new ministers to the presbytery:

- Rev. Shelly Barrick Parsons, covenant pastor, River Road, from West Virginia Presbytery
- Rev. Michael Jones, pastor, Aberdour and Emporia First, from National Capital Presbytery
- Rev. Dorothy Piatt, associate pastor, Westminster Charlottesville, from Detroit Presbytery



Rev. Robert Johnson and Rev. Eric Douglass, covenant pastor at New Hanover, led worship.

Dr. Deborah Rexrode, presbytery's associate for Stewardship, preached a sermon, "The Giving Church," based on Psalm 146 and 1 Timothy 6:11-19.

Vice Moderator Leigh Anne Ring read the Necrology.

The business of the day included the following matters:

- Approved the June 18, 2019 POJ minutes.
- Heard Ruling Elder Jen Rowe, moderator of the Strategic Planning Team and member of the Presbyterian Church in Fredericksburg, share highlights from the team embracing the metaphor of a roller coaster and its thrilling ride!
- Concurred with the Communication and Coordination (C&C) Team in its action to enroll James V. "Jay" Morgan as a candidate for minister of the Word and Sacrament effective August 27, 2019. Jay's wedding was happening at the time of the stated meeting and POJ supported his decision to be at his wedding rather than at the presbytery meeting!
- Received the 2020 POJ Proposed Budget as a first reading. Final approval will take place at the February 2020 Stated Meeting. Commissioners are invited to share input with the C&C Team by November 20.
- Elected the current vice moderator of presbytery, Ruling Elder and Certified Christian Educator Leigh Anne Ring, to serve as moderator of the presbytery for 2020.
- Elected Rev. Patrick Dennis (Tuckahoe) to serve as vice moderator of the presbytery for 2020.
- Received the written report of the Committee on Representation including the annual report of POJ to the Committee on Representation of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic.
- Elected the following persons to serve as readers of ordination examinations for 2020: Rev. David Garth, Rev. Beverly Bullock, Ruling Elder Arnold Moody, Ruling Elder Gwendolyn Young; and an alternate reader, Ruling Elder Linda Coye.
- Amended the effective date of member-at-large status of Rev. Albert Connette (Olivet) to January 6, 2020.
- Granted member-at-large status to Rev. Christopher Tweel, Rev. Nicole Ball, Rev. Nelson Reveley, Rev. John Vest, Rev. Gay Lee Einstein, Rev. Todd

Davidson, and Rev. Shannon Hendricks.

- Granted honorably retired status to Rev. Hyun Chan Bae effective July 31, 2020.
- Approved the revised Sexual Misconduct/Harassment Policy and allowed 20 minutes for silent reading of the policy.
- Received Rev. Christian Shearer upon transfer from the Reformed Church in America pending receipt of his having surrendered membership in that full-communion denomination. Having served for more than five years within the RCA, POJ approved his being granted an exemption from all of the examinations required of candidates for ordination [G-2.0505a(2)].

A highlight of the meeting was an amazing mission fair inviting the commissioners to experience the joy that comes through Leadership Connections Team ministries and Mission and Service Team ministries. Kudos to Rev. Lisa Salita and Rev. Ron Bullis for coordinating the event and to Kelley Hope, communications specialist, who assisted many of the ministries in preparing for the fair.

Following the fair, business resumed as Doug Walters, executive director of Camp Hanover, and the Camp staff led the presbytery in praise and prayer in dedication of the Camp's new dock.

The meeting was adjourned by Vice Moderator Leigh Anne Ring.

In Christ's Service,

Fred

Fred A. Holbrook
Interim General Presbyter
and Stated Clerk

UPCOMING PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| February 15, 2020 | Westminster (Charlottesville) |
| June 16, 2020 | Salisbury (Midlothian) |
| October 17, 2020 | Orange (Orange) |

Genito Church Keeps Up with Changes in Powhatan

Genito Presbyterian Church in Powhatan County celebrates its 110th anniversary this November. As a run up to the anniversary celebration, the congregation and Pastor Rev. Lisa Salita have been reviewing its history, one decade at a time.

This series, entitled Genito Generations, highlights the church's journey as its founding families formed a community of believers; grew and prospered; rebuilt after fire on Christmas Eve 1944; and remained steadfast even during difficulty or decline.

Change is now afoot throughout Powhatan County. Cornfields are giving way to new subdivisions, and Genito Presbyterian has been blessed in the past two years with major increases in membership and exciting upgrades including an online presence and plans for new programs.

In recognition of the church's anniversary and in memory of its founders and generations of faithful members, the congregation dedicated new pew bibles in September and a new pulpit bible in November. The original pulpit Bible from 1909 is now on display in a protective case after a rededication.

As growth in the county and the church continue, the congregation is committed to maintaining the warm family foundation that has made it special all along.

(TOP RIGHT) Today's congregation at Genito includes families of charter members, long-time county residents, and newcomers to the area. (BOTTOM RIGHT) In good weather, the congregation meets outside in a new pavilion to worship together.



Presbytery Updates Sexual Misconduct Policy

At the October stated meeting, Presbytery of the James approved updates to its sexual misconduct/harassment policy.

Included in the update is a requirement for "boundary training" for all ministers of the Word and Sacrament, certified Christian educators, and commissioned ruling elders. Specified individuals can satisfy this requirement by completing an online course, "Maintaining Boundaries in a Digital Age" offered by Wesley Theological Seminary's Lewis Center for Church Leadership.

The update also clarifies how the presbytery will act upon receiving reports of misconduct. It defines a response panel, a group of people trained to respond. Response panel members "walk alongside" the parties to the complaint: anyone against whom alleged harm has been done, the accuser, and the accused and her/his family. Much of this falls under the "Rules of Discipline" section of the Book of Order.

Find the policy under "Presbytery" at presbyteryofthejames.com/forms. A special thanks to the Church and Pastor Relations Committee for their careful review and amending of the policy.

Strategic Planning Team Reaches Midpoint of Project

A strategic planning team of 15 members of Presbytery of the James is continuing its work at creating a vision for the future.

The group, moderated by Jen Rowe, a ruling elder with the Presbyterian Church of Fredericksburg, meets monthly to discuss the presbytery's strengths and opportunities.

Members draw from scripture, their diverse experience, and influences such as evaluations and surveys to develop a new mission statement and an organization structure to support it.

Through their work, common themes of community, communication, and connection are emerging.

The team will present its findings and recommendations at the June 16, 2020 stated presbytery meeting. Follow their progress at presbyteryofthejames.com/about/strategic-planning-team.

CAMP HANOVER

Immerse Yourself in the Greatest Story Ever Told

Join us at Camp Hanover for Hanover Christmas, a magical night of music and drama celebrating the birth of Jesus. This candlelight nativity experience takes place December 13 and 14. Open to the public from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. each evening, this event is suitable for all ages and physical abilities. More than "just another live nativity," you'll experience musical performances, dramatic re-enactments, and fellowship with others while leisurely strolling a candlelit wooded path. A donation of \$10 per person to the Annual Fund for Camp Hanover is appreciated.

For All Ages and Abilities

Hanover Christmas is an outdoor event, so you'll want to dress for the weather. The candlelit nativity trail takes about 30 to 40 minutes to experience. For those who have difficulty walking, Camp Hanover provides golf carts with drivers so that all who desire may travel the trail. After you wander through the woods in search of the Christ child, you'll continue into Wise Lodge where you can enjoy fellowship, refreshments, and live music while you relax by the fireplace.

Traveling From a Distance? Stay the Night.

There's Room at Our Inn.

You're invited to stay overnight at Camp Hanover and experience the hospitality of this place apart. Enjoy a holiday brunch the following morning. To reserve overnight lodging, get more information, or learn how you can be a part of this program, call (804) 779-2811 or email info@camphanover.org.



Volunteers Needed to Decorate, Join the Cast, and More

Hanover Christmas is one of Camp Hanover's most volunteer-dependent events of the year.

- Help decorate Camp Hanover for the Christmas season by stringing lights, trimming trees, and hanging the greens on December 1.
- Do you have musical talent or a flair for the dramatic arts? We'd love for you to join the cast or play an instrument.
- On event days, volunteers assist with set-up and clean-up, luminary lighting, greeting, parking, golf-cart driving, animal wrangling, and more.

Contact Harry Zweckbronner at harry@camphanover.org to get involved.

Camp Hanover Hosts Environmental Education Retreat for

Camp Hanover recently hosted an overnight environmental education retreat for a group of 4th grade students from John Gandy Elementary School in Hanover County.

"Camp Tomato" was the vision of Wendy Just, a fourth grade teacher at the school. She named it after the iconic Hanover tomato in hopes of growing the program throughout the district.

When Mrs. Just brought the idea to Camp Hanover, staff was excited about the potential for partnership.

The program included morning bird walks and evening star gazing, with lessons on forest and wetlands ecology in between.

Students participated in the beloved Camp Hanover tradition of the Great Adventure, an orienteering activity in which kids learn to use compasses and test their new skills by travelling around camp.

With a few small adaptations to Camp Hanover's typically faith-based program, Camp Tomato was appropriate and welcoming for public school students from all backgrounds.



CAMP HANOVER

Camp Board Creates Plans, Deconstructs Dock

In mid-September, the Camp Hanover Inc. Board of Directors gathered for their annual retreat, a time of fellowship, worship, spiritual growth, visioning, planning, and service.

These dedicated and passionate individuals take seriously their responsibility as stewards of this special place, shepherding its ministry, helping it grow and flourish.

During the retreat, the board was joined by worship leader Matthew Black and celebrated God all around us in creation. Fred Holbrook, interim general presbyter for Presbytery of the James, guided board members through a visioning process, to discern God's plan for the future of outdoor ministry.



Camp Hanover board members gather for Saturday morning worship in the outdoor chapel.

Later, board members donned work gloves and hefted crowbars to remove debris, including the camp's old dock which was replaced this summer, in preparation for more improvements near the waterfront. Construction of access road Hadder Way and wheelchair-accessible path Pearson's Trail began October 28.

Interested in getting involved in an active way with Camp Hanover? Let us know by visiting camphanover.org/volunteer-committee-board-interest.



Virginia Hudson (Grace Covenant) and Angie Meadows (Tuckahoe) help dismantle the camp's old dock that was replaced this summer with a new floating celtic cross dock.

Local Elementary Students

After a weekend of hiking and exploring the environment, students shared their experiences: "I learned about shelf fungus!" "I'm really good at tetherball" "We throw too much trash in our rivers and lakes." "Nature is fun." "Humans need to take better care of the environment."

At Camp Hanover, we celebrate God's good creation right alongside a child's ability to play and be creative. Camp Tomato was a wonderful chance to hold those things side by side. Students worked together and treated one another with kindness, and extended that same love of neighbor to our neighbors the trees, birds, frogs, fungi, and infinite other parts of creation.

We are excited to continue building these partnerships with schools, that we might encourage more children to get more familiar with the environment around them in hopes that they'll love it more and care for it better. If you're interested in bringing a group to Camp Hanover to learn more about our planet, contact Colleen Earp at colleen@camphanover.org.



Winter Camp

Grades 5 through 12
December 28 - 30

Youth in grades 5 through 12 are invited to experience Camp Hanover's cookouts, campfires, hayrides, and hikes with a winter twist. Campers will grow closer to each other and God during this weekend getaway.

Play • Laugh • Worship • Sing

Learn more and register at camphanover.org/winter-camp.

Bott Memorial Supports Education Equity with Synod Grant

Bott Memorial Presbyterian received a \$4,000 grant from the peacemaking fund of Synod of the Mid-Atlantic this year to provide school supplies to children in Dinwiddie County.

The funds supported a project by the county's faith community, local government, and schools to make education more equitable by providing incoming kindergarteners with crayons, pencils, scissors, and notebooks.

Purchasing school supplies for the first time can be overwhelming for families. Children also observe economic differences among their peers.

The "Learn Well" initiative, shared Pastor Katherine Jackson, reduces that burden on parents and guardians. It also helps the children have an equal start at learning, regardless of their families' financial situations.

The idea began in 2017. Eight churches in the county collected \$4,400 toward the nearly \$8,000 needed for supplies for the 2018-2019 school year.

For the current school year, the churches raised \$9,500, including the grant, and the project expanded to include children enrolled in the county preschool program, reaching 456 total.

Dinwiddie Public Schools made up the difference and purchased the items in bulk for cost efficiency.

Pastor Jackson hopes the project will expand with support from more churches in the coming years.



Ruling Elder CJ Gomez, Pastor Katherine Jackson, and member Elizabeth Walker are ready to distribute supplies to students at Sunnyside Elementary.



Swift Creek congregation members embraced the garden ministry, leading to a bumper first-year crop.

Swift Creek Expands Food Ministry

A new initiative is helping Swift Creek Presbyterian tend to Jesus's sheep (John 21:15-17) in more ways. Using part of the church property, the congregation created Grace Garden, growing tomatoes, squash, peppers, and cucumbers. Produce from the garden benefits the community in two ways. Some of the harvest is given to the Chesterfield Food Bank. Some is sold, with the proceeds donated to Mercy Mall, a local charity that distributes clothing and housewares to needy people at no charge.

Madison's Senior Breakfast Draws in Community

Older adults in rural Madison County, a community one hour north of Charlottesville, enjoy meals, fellowship, and enriching programs through a ministry by Madison Presbyterian.

Breakfast Buzz, which regularly attracts about 20 people, is held at 9 a.m. on the third Friday of each month. When it began in 2015, the Christian Education team deliberately chose a morning event to appeal to seniors, some of whom don't like to drive after dark.

Topics covered at Breakfast Buzz vary, ranging from senior issues to local history and culture to highway safety. The ministry has grown steadily, shares Ruling Elder Bobbie Carroll, thanks to the church's efforts to make the events fun, informational, and inspiring.



Presbytery Ministries Share God's Gift with the World

Did you know Presbytery of the James supports 18 ministries to carry forth Christ's mission in the world? Ministries may represent an educational issue, a networking need, or a mission or service opportunity. Volunteers with these ministries shared information about their work via a ministry fair at the October 19 presbytery meeting at New Hanover Presbyterian. Find information about the ministries at presbyteryofthejames.com/ministries.



1. Rev. Jill Duffield (left) shares information about the Community of Ministry and Worship, a mentoring program for pastors in their first seven years of ministry. **2.** Rev. Brint Keyes (right) describes the work of the Disaster Relief Ministry, including a trip to North Carolina, October 26 through November 2. **3.** Representing the Dismantling Racism Ministry, Rev. Darren Utley (right) encourages visitors to attend a screening and discussion of the new movie about Harriet Tubman. **4.** Miriam Bailey (right) promotes a retreat sponsored by the Older Adults Ministry. **5.** Rev. Mary Jane Winter (right) discusses World Mission Ministry's trip to Guatemala October 28 through November 4 to learn about the causes of migration.

SMALL CHURCH MINISTRY

Internships Benefit Seminary Students and Churches Alike

Small churches with memberships of 100 or fewer are invited to apply now to host a seminary intern from September 2020 to April 2021.

Internships help both churches and students in meaningful ways.

Students gain experience in a range of pastoral responsibilities. Especially because the majority of PC(USA) churches are considered small, preparing for the unique aspects of life as a solo pastor in a small church is an important part of seminary education.

Congregations are exposed to new ideas and concepts. They also gain extra hands to grow their ministry or explore new projects with the 11-plus hours a week that an intern is expected to serve in the host church.

The Small Church Ministry of Presbytery of the James offers grants to assist small churches with half of the intern stipend.

Learn about Small Church Ministry and the intern program at presbyteryofthejames.com/small-churches.

COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES

New Leadership at Three Collegiate Ministry Programs

Collegiate Ministries keep college students engaged with the church and provide a place of support and counsel. Three of the five campus ministries Presbytery of the James supports have new campus ministers this year. Please welcome:



Elizabeth Snader
Campus Christian Community
University of Mary Washington

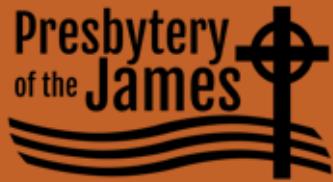


Rev. Jasmyne Graham
Faith, Love, Outreach, & Worship
Virginia State University



Rev. Dorothy Piatt
Westminster Church, Charlottesville
(UKirk, University of Virginia)

Learn about Collegiate Ministries at presbyteryofthejames.com/collegiate-ministries.



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Interim general presbyter Fred Holbrook (left) with PC(USA) co-moderator Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri.

PC(USA) Moderator Visits Presbytery of the James

Co-moderator of the 223rd General Assembly Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri visited Presbytery of the James in October for two events. On the morning of October 23, Cintrón-Olivieri preached at Union Seminary. That afternoon, she visited with members of the presbytery at Ginter Park Church. Cintrón-Olivieri is an ordained ruling elder at First Spanish Presbyterian Church in Miami and an educator. She was elected in June 2018 as co-moderator with Rev. Cindy Kohlmann.

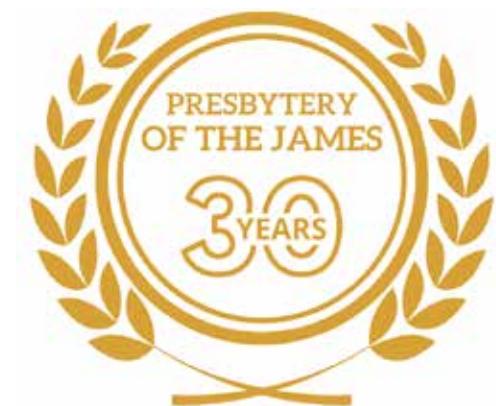


Hebron Hosts First Annual Service Day

Hebron Presbyterian participated in an international day of service in July. Calling it GVA Serve Day (for Goochland, Virginia), the congregation participated in a variety of projects included installing siding on a Habitat for Humanity house, cleaning a local charity's food pantry, and visiting with neighbors who needed cheer. The event was organized by Elder Diane Luczkovich.



Members of Hebron Church baked cookies and made cards that they delivered to local first responders for GVA Serve Day.



Happy Anniversary, Presbytery of the James

2019 is the 30th anniversary of creation of Presbytery of the James.

On July 1, 1989, three presbyteries—Blue Ridge, Hanover, and Southern Virginia—merged to create the James, named after the major waterway crossing central Virginia and the new presbytery.

Read a history online at presbyteryofthejames.com/about/history.

