

RCofC Newsletter

JANUARY 2019

I am the way, the truth, and the life. John 14:6



Inside this issue:

Hey, Keith, I have a question about...	2
Wednesday Night Life	2
Hearts & Hands Cancer Ministry	2
Let Me Just Say This	3
I'm Kind of New at RCofC: What's My Next Step	3
To Not Forgive Is Unforgivable	4
Virginia Pre-teen Convention	5
New Class: Mines, Minerals, & Minecraft	5
Did You Know?	6

Let Me Just Say This by Walker Gaulding



First, congrats to the Adult Drama Team and director Hope Bunch for a successful

debut of her first-published Christmas play. There was a full house for the first performance! Theater people always say, "The show must go on." The second show was set to open during what some reporters say turned out to be the second biggest snowfall in Virginia in December since records have been kept. Nobody would have blamed them had they cancelled the Sunday show amid quickly accumulating inches and inches of the fluffy stuff. But they were not to be deterred. The show was performed as scheduled, and even with the snowy deluge, a significant audience enjoyed the show.

On the heels of "Under cover Christmas," our Kids' Choir, under the direction of Jim Ward, performed a really super full-length musical called, "We Three Spies." Two performances saw full houses, and in this preacher's opinion, the kids (along with two adults) delivered a fun, entertaining show.

It's January, and so many of us are thinking about and wondering about what's in store for us as a church in 2019. It's like a brand new, clean slate. This will be the first full year with a new Youth Minister. Chad Rice came out of the gate strong, and is running the race and

has quickly gotten up to speed. This year he begins working on a master's degree in ministry. He has been accepted at Lincoln Christian University, so we're looking forward to a great 2019 in The Dock and with teens in general, as he builds on the foundation laid by our Children's Ministry.

If all goes as planned, there are some bits of unfinished business that we plan to take care of this year. A very modern sign has been designed and submitted by a professional company to go on Rt. 360 at our entrance. At the same time, some rooftop signage is going to bring the outside of our building in line with the excellence of the inside.

There's always an annual rotation of folks serving in leadership, and so that "new blood" and "refreshed blood" holds promise for our next chapter, as well.

Thirty years ago, Rappahannock participated in our first foreign mission trip. We've come so far since then, and I'm so glad we're still a mission-minded church. Domestically, there are numerous projects that we work on and contribute to. One of the strongest is the work at the Standing Rock Reservation. This is the first year that RCofC has taken the lead in planning and execution under the leadership of Clifton Wise. We are also heavily involved with providing shelter to families in Ensenada,

Mexico, through the ministry of the YUGO organization. And, of course, our presence in Port Au Prince, Haiti, is felt year-round as Rappahannock Church of Christ is the only sponsoring church of the Leadership Training Center in Terre Noire, Haiti, and construction, medical, and dental trips are regular occurrences for our people.

We describe our purpose in the three statements of John 14:6.

The Way: Our goal is to help people find their way to Jesus. Period. A new format to our "WAY" class will begin on February 3. Four sessions, held on Sunday mornings, give folks a window into who we are and what is important to us. A little history, a little vision, and a little insight. These groups meet during all even-numbered months (February, April, June, August, October, and December) with a new group starting with each session. On the odd-numbered months, there will be a follow-up with a little more detail.

The Truth: Next, we seek to teach solid, Biblical doctrine at all levels, at all times. Whether we're talking about sermons, worship, adult morning electives, Lightning Talks, Children's Ministry, or teens in The Dock, our staff will continue to strive to be reliable, accurate, and engaging as we seek to follow God more closely.

Continued on p. 3



2 Cor 9:6-8 "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."



Hey, Keith, I have a question about...



Q. I want to start giving financially to support the ministry work of the church. Do I have to write a check? Do I have to use an envelope? Will I get some type of annual statement?

A. These are great questions, and we are very thankful for folks like yourself who generously support the ministry efforts of RCoFC. Let me answer your questions in the order in which they were asked:

1. We accept three forms of giving: cash, check, or electronic funds transfer (EFT) through our online giving application and website. Let me know if you are interested in using EFT, and I will be happy to help you get started.

2. Envelopes are optional based on the following criteria:

- Envelopes **are required** if you are giving cash and want to receive an annual statement of your giving. Please be sure to include your address so we can add your information to our database.
- Envelopes **are not required** if you are giving a check or using EFT. Checks can simply be placed in the offering tray or mailed to P.O. Box 1286, Warsaw, VA 22572. If you are not already in our database, we will create an account for you using the address on the check. EFT transactions automatically update your giving in the data-

base. Envelopes **are also not required** if you are giving cash and do not need an annual statement for tax purposes.

Envelopes are always available on the back of the chairs. Boxes of envelopes are also available if you would like to keep a supply at home.

3. We create annual giving statements for everyone who gives using checks, EFT, or cash in envelopes, regardless of the amount or how often you give. These statements will be distributed in January to your email or physical address.

*Serving Christ by Serving His Church,
Keith Peyton*

Wednesday Night Life (WNL)

Applying God's word and living life together. Many of you have expressed the desire to go deeper into God's word and to apply the weekly sermons to your life in a practical way. Coming this winter/spring (January 30 through April 24), we will continue what we began this

fall—Going Deeper. Each week small groups will meet and discuss how we can apply Sunday's sermon in the real world and encourage one another as we live life together.

WNL groups will begin on January 30 with a sign-up night from 7 to 8 p.m. At

7 p.m., all children and youth groups will also meet. All adults will meet in the auditorium. Your attendance this first night is very important. This time is when you will have a chance to sign up for your group. Each group will be limited so that the groups will be small.

Hearts and Hands Cancer Ministry

The Hearts and Hands Cancer Ministry is asking for your help. We want to make gift baskets for cancer patients. For many people, cancer is the ultimate test of their faith. When we visit an individual or many patients at a cancer

center, we want to show them God's love with a gift to help provide them with hope and comfort.

If you feel led, please consider bringing items during the month of January to the donation box in the foyer. A list of

suggested items is located at the box site. Thank you in advance for your caring hearts.

*In His Love,
Janet and Connie*

Let Me Just Say This (Continued from p. 1)

The Life: Finally, we want to be a true family, as God intended the church to be. That means living life together! While special events help with that, what really brings us together is our small-group ministry. In the spring and fall, 10 to 15 people per group explore Bible topics and get to know one another in a setting we call "Going Deeper."

What all of this means is that our real goal is to share the salvation of Jesus Christ

with all the people around us. The Northern Neck community and beyond is our mission field! What we really hope to see in 2019 is more. More people finding their way to Jesus. More people worshipping with us because they've discovered that doing life as a child of God is hard, but doing life apart from God is excruciating.

Make 2019 the year that you bring some families to Jesus. There's a big old lost

world out there looking for direction. Direction that YOU have and can share with them.

Don't ask what the church is going to do for you in 2019. Ask "Who can I bring to Jesus in 2019?" That's the most important thing. And that's all I've got to say about that.

Walker



I'm Kind of New at Rappahannock: What's My Next Step by Walker Gaulding

So, you've just walked in here for the first time. Or you've been attending for a couple of months, and wondering what your next move ought to be. Or somebody forwarded this digital newsletter to you. You've been considering trying Rappahannock Church of Christ, but you want to know a little more before you do. Have we got the plan for you!

We designed a short-term group JUST FOR YOU. It meets for just 4 weeks on Sunday mornings, and it is designed to introduce you to who we are and what we're about. It's called "The Way," and the title is taken from John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

You'll get a brief history of who we are. You'll understand our vision and our purpose for existing. You'll find out the bare bones of what we believe and what the Bible says about being in a right relationship with Jesus Christ. It's just a great introduction to our

church, and there's no pressure. You'll not be pressured to become a member or to set aside one of your kids to become a priest or something.

Here's the scoop. Brian Belfield teaches a new group of students six times a year during every even-numbered month. A new group begins on February 3 and runs 4 weeks total. The next group starts April 7, and again, runs for 4 weeks: June 2, August 4, October 6, and December 1. Same deal. You just show up on Sunday morning and the group meets in the RCofC offices. Same complex as the church, just down closer to Tractor Supply. Easy, casual, and laid back. The groups are usually a dozen people or less. If at any time, you decide you don't like it, we'll give you a 100% full refund. (We're kidding. There's no charge.)

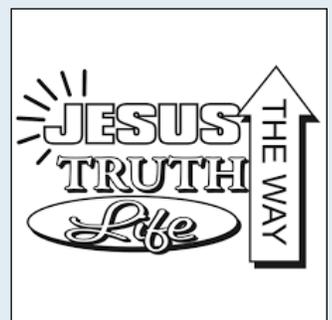
Here's the NEW part: On odd-numbered months, there will be a follow-up session with a different instructor.

You're not going to be pressured to go, but we think after 4 weeks with Brian, you might want to (joking, of course). This group also meets for just 4 weeks and gives you a more in-depth idea of who we are, how we are impacting our community and the world, and what we plan to do to get better at that. And if you want, you can find out what YOU can do to be a part of that. A new group begins every odd-numbered month: March 3, May 5, July 7, September 1, and November 3. Same spot, so you can even keep your "regular" seat.

Take the next step. Both groups are open to you even if you've been coming here for years. Don't just come and warm a pew. Figure out how God wants to use you. Whether you stay here or not, at least you'll have a good reason for whatever you decide, because you've done your homework. *

*There may or may not be homework!

"For every scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the person dedicated to God may be capable and equipped for every good work."
2 Timothy 3: 16-17





To Not Forgive is Unforgivable

Excerpt taken from *Love Like You've Never Been Hurt* by Jentezen Franklin

C. S. Lewis wrote, "Everyone says forgiveness is a lovely idea until they have something to forgive." Forgiveness is like money. We want to get it, not give it.

An unpardonable sin, found in Matthew 12: 31-32, is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. For years I believed this was the one and only sin that could not be forgiven. I was wrong.

Jesus also said, "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matthew 6:14 NKJV)

The second truth of forgiveness is that it is unforgivable not to forgive. If you refuse to forgive others, God will not forgive you.

Do you need God to forgive you for something? If you are human, of course, you do. Well, then, forgive those who have wronged you, betrayed you, cursed you, abused you, harmed you, abandoned you, stolen from you, or were unfaithful to you.

All of us carry debts we cannot pay.

After Jesus offered Peter the mathematical equation for forgiveness, He illustrated His point with a parable. "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants" (Matthew 18:23 NKJV). You can read the entire story in Matthew

18, but here is my summary.

This king must have had a meeting with his CFO, or maybe he was a really smart man and did the accounting himself. As he scrolls through the financial records, he realizes a servant owes him ten thousand talents.

According to scholars, a talent at that time was the equivalent of a thousand dollars today. Therefore, this servant is in the hole for ten million dollars. I love what verse 25 says about this guy—"He couldn't pay." Well, that's obvious. No one I know has an extra ten million dollars lying around.

But the deeper meaning of this is that it is a direct reference to our sin debt. Jesus is our king. He knows we owe Him. He knows we have not paid up. He knows our outstanding debts.

So what does the king do? Does he send a team of tall and burly armed goons to find the guy, drag him to the palace and make him cough up the dough, or else? Well, that is sort of what happened, minus the scary-looking goons. When the servant shows up before the king, he throws himself on the ground and begs for mercy.

"I'm so sorry. Please show me some grace. I have a wife and kids! Give me some time, and I'll pay you back. I promise!"

The king is so moved with compassion, he agrees to forgive the debt and lets the

guy go. Just as the highest authority in the kingdom forgave a servant, so Jesus, through the cross, forgives our debt.

The King of kings forgives all the vows we make and break. He forgives all the lying, cheating, and stealing we do. He forgives our nasty attitudes. He forgives our gluttonous appetites. He forgives our idolatry. He forgives the stuff we look at on the computer. He forgives our addictions, our toxic behaviors, our gripes, our hatred, our biases, our prejudices.

Jesus forgives period. Period.

I imagine the servant leaves the palace on a high. I would have. His slate is wiped clean. He is no longer weighed down by a staggering financial burden. He can finally get a good night's sleep.

On his way home, the guy runs into a man who owes him money—a hundred denarii, to be exact. In modern times, this chum's debt would be the equivalent of ten to fifteen thousand dollars. You might expect the servant to pay forward the mercy he received an hour or so ago.

He doesn't.

The newly debt-free man rushes toward the other servant, puts his hands around his throat and starts choking him. "Pay me what you owe!" he yells.

Continued on p. 5

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."
Ephesians 4:32



"All of us carry debts we cannot pay."

To Not Forgive Is Unforgivable (Continued from p. 4)

It's like déjà vu. The fellow servant wriggles out of the death grip, crumbles to the ground like a rag doll and begs for forgiveness. "I'm so sorry. Please show me some grace. I have a wife and kids! Give me some time, and I'll pay you back. I promise!"

The first servant refuses even to give the guy a grace period, let alone forgive the debt. Instead, he has him thrown in prison. Other servants milling around watch the brutal exchange and are horrified. One translation

describes them as "grieved." These eyewitnesses hurry off to tell the king what has happened.

The king is furious. He summons his goons and demands they hunt the servant down and drag him back to the palace. When the two are face-to-face, the king says, "You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. Shouldn't you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?"

The king is so enraged, he turns the guy over to palace torturers to do whatever they want until he can pay back every single penny of the original ten-million-dollar debt.

Jesus ended this powerful parable by saying, "That's what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart" (verse 35).

If you do not release forgiveness, you will not receive forgiveness.



"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."
1 John 4:7-8

New Class: Mines, Minerals, & Minecraft by Chuck Bell

Starting on Wednesday, January 16, we will be having a new technology in the Bible class. The Bible study will cover geology in the Bible and the practical portion will be learning how to customize Minecraft using Python on the Raspberry Pi.

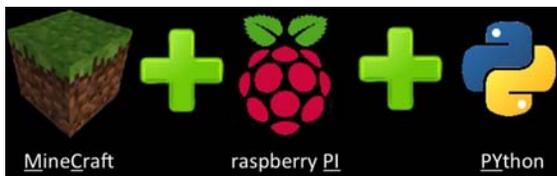
Students will learn about the Raspberry Pi and Python programming while hacking a

free version of Minecraft. While there are a few Raspberry Pi computers available on a first-come, first-served basis, students are encouraged to bring their own Raspberry Pi. There will also be a few available for purchase for about \$40 each.

All ages are welcome to attend! You will learn more about geology in the Bible,

how to program with Python, and the Raspberry Pi.

If you'd like to know more about the class, please see, email, or call Chuck Bell or Chad Rice.





RCofC: 4324 Richmond Rd
 Church Offices: 4268 Richmond Rd
 Mailing: PO Box 1286
 Warsaw, VA 22572
 Phone: 804-333-9669
 Email: Walker@rcofc.org
 Email: Penny@rcofc.org

Mission Statement: Our mission and purpose as a congregation of believers is to lead people to Christ, by helping them to mature in their relationship in Him, teaching and enabling them to minister to others both inside and outside of the family of God, and providing opportunities to share and fellowship together that in all things we might bring glory to God.



Newsletter Deadline
 Please send submissions for the February newsletter to ahbell@me.com by Wednesday, February 20.

Did You Know? by Jim Ward



Did you know that **all of the Bible is true, all of the time, all at the same time?** Many

times, I've heard influential people who have contempt for God and truth say that the Bible contradicts itself and then continue on with their argument as though their first statement was a foregone conclusion. In reality (and many of them do not live there), their first statement is a false assumption. The fact is the Bible is true, coherent, reliable, contains no errors, and is incapable of failing. No statement in the Bible can be "broken" or proven to be untrue and is totally accurate in everything it says. These are the facts.

So, for someone (especially one who has not studied the Bible) to say that the Bible contradicts itself is simply foolishness and folly. Some have described this kind of behavior as being stupid on purpose. Worse, there are Christians who believe the Bible is inerrant and infallible, yet their conclusions of what the Bible says **are** contradictory to the coherent doctrines of the Bible. In other words, these well-meaning Christians have taken

verses out of context and given those verses a meaning that does not harmonize with the rest of scripture. Or, another version of that is, some will hear a scripture, misquote it, and come up with a teaching that is simply false.

Case in point: 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." Many well-meaning people, hoping to help some friend going through difficulties in life, have misquoted this verse to say, "God will never give you more than you can handle." Quite the contrary! God often allows us to get into situations we **can't** handle so that we will rely on Him and not ourselves.

The Bible contains divine revelation, which means that God communicated to mankind information that was previously known only to God. God revealed specific information about Himself, who He is, and what He intends to do on behalf of and for the benefit of His creation. He revealed this

information by His Holy Spirit to the prophets and Apostles. The Holy Spirit also inspired men to write what God wanted mankind to know—not through dictation, but through some kind of "editorial oversight" as He guided their thoughts and words such as the Psalmist and Luke the physician.

The entire Bible was written under the oversight of the Holy Spirit in two ways: through revelation—giving information to a chosen spokesperson, and inspiration—supervising the presentation of His message to mankind. The word of God is powerful! It contains the truth of the ages! It is a love letter to you from your Creator. All of it is true, all the time, all at the same time.

Now, as we go into a new year, I encourage you to read His word. Seek His truth. Dive deep for the hidden meanings. Uncover those pearls of wisdom. Expose the connections to your life He has just waiting for you to discover—all in the Bible.

Jim



"For the word of God is right and true; He is faithful in all He does."

Psalm 33:4