

# The Fishnet

**Virginia Beach  
Christian Church**  
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Virginia Beach, VA 23454

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**Newsletter** – [jeri@vbcc.info](mailto:jeri@vbcc.info)  
**Office Hours**  
8:30 a.m. – 12:30 PM



**February 2012**

**Contemporary Service**  
8:30 AM

**Sunday School**  
9:45 AM All Ages  
(Pre-K to Adults)

**Traditional Service**  
11:00 AM

Childcare begins at 8:30 AM

I am what you might call...well...technologically handicapped. And until the past couple of years I was a “technophobe.” But since I was “gently” persuaded to have a Blackberry as my phone for church, I have come around quite a bit. I still don’t know a lot about how to work all the technology out there, but the possibilities sure are amazing and my mind really does get to brainstorming on what we could do in church with all of this new fangled stuff! I mean, let’s look at all the advantages. I can use programs to track a church budget, use voice recognition software to take notes for me in meetings, and of course, stay current on all the trends in church and church growth. Yes, it has become very apparent to me that smartphones, iPads, and just technology in general have grown in their usefulness for churches.

So, here is my question. Is that exciting or scary for you? How would you feel if, on Sunday morning, instead of being handed a paper bulletin you were handed an electronic tablet with the order of worship on it? How would you react if you saw a pastor reading scripture from an iPad or smartphone (we do it all the time in ministers meetings by the way). How about a minister leading a

wedding or a funeral from an iPad or other tablet device? How you answer those questions will help you determine your comfort level with the proliferation of technology in our society. And while I don’t

expect the above scenarios to happen here at VBCC anytime soon, they do make the point that churches need to figure out the role of technology in their purpose and vision.

Some churches have already embraced this to the fullest extent; others have stood steadfastly against the encroachment of technology. I would say VBCC is somewhere in the middle.

What we’ll need to decide, as we move forward, is how we can best use technology to share the good news. In some cases, it’s a no-brainer. For example, a church without a great website is on its way to the grave. Great websites that grab the attention of the viewer are crucial for reaching new people and connecting with the community. We do have a decent website for our church, but my hope is that we will continue to make it better as we think about how we can use it effectively.

## Lagging Behind a little



**Pastor:** Rev. C. Jason Lewis ♦ **Contemporary Service Leader:** Robert Hughes  
**Director of Christian Education:** Dr. Paul R. Parker ♦ **Pastor Emeritus:** Dr. William E. Austin  
**Choir Director:** Maggie Austin ♦ **Organist:** Kimberly Golden ♦ **Administrative Secretary:** Susan Frey

Other uses of technology in the church are not nearly as universally agreed upon. The presence of audio-visual technology in the sanctuary? The ability to pay your pledge online? Churches are divided over whether or not technology should be incorporated in these ways, and each church must figure out for itself how technology fits into its overall structure and purpose. That's what I'm continuing to learn here at VBCC, and I hope and pray that you are willing to explore and learn with me.

In his theory on the diffusion of innovations, professor Everett Rogers describes five different groups of people based on their willingness to adopt new developments. The first people to jump on board are the Innovators, followed by Early Adopters, Early Majority and Late Majority. The last group to adopt new things is the Laggards. These are the folks who are skeptical of microwaves and whose phones all have cords attached to them (maybe even some have rotary dials). I encourage you to look up this theory on the internet (there's that technology again) and explore it some and see where you fit in. And my hope is that in the process, you will be able to ask yourself why you feel the way you do. Knowing why you feel positive or negative about technology, especially the use of it in the church, will help the church to discuss this honestly and figure out how VBCC can best use technology to help share the Gospel and grow our church.

So where *does* the church fall in relation to technology? Honestly, all too often the church has been Laggards, which has put us woefully behind the culture in our ability to communicate and connect with people. But I don't think it's good stewardship for us to be Innovators of new technology that may be very expensive and not useful. We should probably fall somewhere in between.

I am coming to love technology and am excited about the different ways it can be

used in the church, but I'm also sensitive to the fact that not everyone is as comfortable with it as I am coming to be. So my promise to you is that we will continue this conversation so that we can figure this out together as we move forward. You're not going to show up one Sunday and have robots leading the service! (although some may say they have one preaching every Sunday already....sorry, I wanted to beat a couple of you to it!)

If we are going to stay relevant in our culture, technology will have to be an important tool to help us do that. But our technology should serve us, not the other way around. I look forward to exploring how we can adopt new advancements while staying true to the timeless message of the gospel. And just so you know, this article was not written on my smartphone! ☺

Trying to get up to speed myself,

Jason

Mark Your Calendar 

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Feb. 4, 10-12 Noon.....Spiritual Roundtable*  
*Feb. 5, Noon.....Cabinet Meeting*  
*Feb. 8, 6:30pm.....Board Meeting*  
*Feb. 10, 7:00pm.....Casting Crowns Concert*  
*at Rock Church*  
*Feb. 12 & 26, 5-7:00pm.....Youth Meeting*  
*Feb. 13-17.....Meals on Wheels*  
*Feb. 14.....Valentine's Day*  
*Mar. 9-11,..... Men's Retreat at Corolla, NC*  
*Mondays, 6:30pm.....Bible Study Group*  
*Tuesdays, 6:30pm.....Jason's Study Group*  
*Thursdays, 7:00pm.....Choir Practice*  
*Food Pantry Hrs. . M. W. Th.- 10:00am-12:00pm*  
*Tues. 11:00am-12:00pm, Fri. closed*

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION Department

Dr. Paul Parker, Director of Christian Education

“One of the exciting things” (He said sarcastically) about being the Associate Minister of Christian Education is that I get to answer most of the calls from curriculum vendors about all the wonderful new education products, studies, videos, programs, and youth group gimmicks that have been created to save, inspire, and motivate the people of the church. I also get to sort through all the catalogs, magazines, and PR campaigns for all the children’s ministry workshops, youth ministry workshops, and Christian singing groups and rock band concerts. Our church receives over 14 copies of Oriental Trading catalogs



and three or four publications from each of the major religious publishing houses every month. Needless to say, we can fill up a few recycle bins on a regular basis.

However, in the midst of all this mess, one can find some outstanding and exciting curriculum materials to enhance the ministry of Christian Education at VBCC.

### FOR EXAMPLE:

I am reviewing four DVD Discussion Study Series from Bluefish TV.

- Why Jesus: Answering Tough Questions About Our Savior by David Nasser
- Dug Down Deep: Building Your Life on Truths That Last by Joshua Harris
- King David: Trials, Temptations, and Triumphs by David Nasser

We just ordered and received our 2012 Vacation Bible School Curriculum Planning Kit entitled SKY published by Group.

The Christian Rock Group CASTING CROWNS will be in Concert in Virginia Beach at the Rock Church on Friday, February 10 at 7:00 PM.

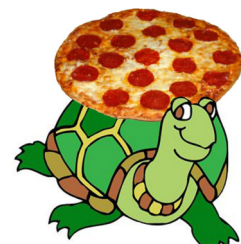
I am grateful for the wealth of material that we have to choose from, and for the quality of most of it. It makes my ministry much easier. I do enjoy creating my own curriculum and will continue to do so for the church. And I know that there are many persons in the congregation who have significant educational skills and knowledge that could be shared within the context of the church. Let’s put our heads together, think outside the box, be creative, and develop a dynamic learning community where we can share our knowledge and gifts with each other in love.

Thanks Be To God:  
*Paul (Not the Apostle)*

## Youth Ministry at VBCC



(Christian Youth Fellowship)



**P.T.U.C.**  
(Pizza Turtles United in Christ)

**Regular youth groups** will be held on Sunday, February 12 and 26. Planning for February is still in process. Check the CYF and PTUC Facebook pages for times, locations, and activities. Also it would be

nice to see all of you in Sunday School on Sunday mornings. We will meet in the evening from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Light Snack Supper at 5:00 PM. See you all there.

*Jason 757-469-1776 or Paul 276-266-1017*

## CHURCH HAPPENINGS

### *Save the Date!*



**Vacation Bible School** has been set for the dates of **July 30-August 3, 2012**. The times will be **from 6:30 PM-8:30 PM**. Don't worry, we're not going to start bombarding you just yet (we're going to hold off until after Easter for that). We just wanted those of you with children, and those who helped last year and are willing to help this year, to mark these dates and save them. The Theme this year is again from Group Publishing and is called, "Fly: All Things Are Possible With God." You can go to Group Publishing's website at [vbs.group.com/sky](http://vbs.group.com/sky). If you know you want to help again, or for the first time, please see Lori Lewis, who is coordinating VBS again this year. The bigger the jump we have, the easier and better this VBS will be, and as we all remember, last year's VBS was an overwhelming success.

### *Time for Tea!*



*It's tea time again.* Save the dates of April 14 & 15 for the "Spring Tea for Thee." Both days are scheduled for 2 PM. Last year's event was a great

success and an all-around good time. We hope to see you there again this year. Look for more information in the coming weeks.

### **Looking for Some Ideas**

*Jason and Paul are looking for mission/outreach activities for the middle school youth group.* In many instances, there is an age limit and that prohibits our middlers from participating in mission oriented activities. If you have some ideas or know of some work our middle school group can do, see either Jason or Paul. Thanks for your help.



### *Spiritual Roundtable*

*The Spiritual Roundtable* will meet on Saturday,

February 4, at 10 AM to view and discuss the movie Thrive. This movie is a documentary that weaves together breakthroughs in science, consciousness and activism, offering real solutions and strategies for reclaiming our lives and our future. You can view the trailer at this site: <http://www.thrivemovement.com/>.

If you are interested in viewing this movie, feel free to join members of The Spiritual Roundtable on February 4.

### **MEN'S RETREAT COMING NEXT MONTH**



*The annual VBCC Men's retreat* is coming up March 9-11. And once again we will be

heading to the Outer Banks and staying at the Hampton Inn. Marty Phillips will be returning to lead our sessions. The theme is still being put together for the weekend. The cost will be \$120.00 for the weekend. The cost includes two nights, double occupancy, a good hot breakfast every morning, and the use of the conference rooms. As always, we will go out to dinner as a group on Saturday night so you'll need money for that. And for Saturday lunch, we will probably have a couple of the guys bring crock-pots of chili, chowder, etc. You can also bring snacks to share if you wish (it's always appreciated.)

☺ We need to send a room list and final count to the Hampton Inn by February 24. So, if you plan to attend, the sooner we know, the better, so we can get room lists together. To that end, on page 6 of the Newsletter, you will find a registration form that you can cut, fill out and return to the church office. If you are paying by check, make it payable to "Virginia Beach Christian Church," and put "men's retreat" in the memo line. We always have such a great time at this retreat, and this year will hopefully be no different. So why not make plans to join us! Hope to see you there. See Jason if you have any questions.



***From the Treasurer:***

The Financial Picture for the Church's General Fund through 18 January 2012

The Church's General Fund (GF) is the Fund that supports the everyday operating expenses (i.e. payroll, utilities, supplies and other department expenses etc) of the Church. The GF receives income from the Sunday services collections and other sources such as the Pre-School rental income and uses this income to pay for those

expenses. The goal for the GF is to at least break even for the year. The Church began a new financial year which started on 1 January 2012. The balance in the GF is +\$20,368 for the year to date (i.e. 1 January 2012 through 18 January 2012). Most of this positive balance is due to a carry-forward of +\$14,943 from 2011. However, this is a great way for the General Fund to start the year. There are many possible uses for this large positive balance in the GF and the Stewardship Department is evaluating the best use of this money.

Here is a comparison of actual income and actual expenses to their respective budgets for the period 1 January 2012 through 18 January 2012. The budgeted figures are computed based on the completion of 3 weeks in 2012.

**Income** (not including the \$14,943 carry-forward from 2011)

**Actual:** \$14,791; **Budget:** \$14,877.

**Expenses** for 1 Jan through 18 Jan 2012

**Actual:** \$9,366; **Budget:** \$14,927.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thanks,  
*Jim Carbone*

## DEPARTMENT NEWS

**OUTREACH:** Claire Carbone,  
Lisa Crawford  
Co-Chairpersons

***In November the food pantry*** serviced 107 families with 504 individuals. In December, we had 89 families with 366 individuals in three weeks, since the pantry was closed for a week. Additionally, we handed out about 25 turkeys, hams or other meats for Christmas.

Starting in January, a portion of the local outreach budget is being given to the food pantry. That does not mean that we do not need donations of food or money, just that we have an additional source of funds which will help greatly.

The food pantry has received donations of food (or money) from the Samaritan House, the Salvation Army, Francis Asbury United Methodist Church, and various groups which meet at the church. We appreciate all donations and put them to good use.

Most non-food items have been eliminated, except toothpaste and bar soap.

I would love to give a tour of the food pantry to anyone, either while in operation or after the church service, so you can see what we do. Helping others in this way is so rewarding for the volunteers, the church, and the clients. Thank you.

Please continue to save hotel samples; boxtops, soup labels and Farm Fresh receipts; paper or plastic bags; calendars and other "freebies". I can pass on almost any item except large furniture to the appropriate agency.

Grateful for your generosity to others,  
*Claire Carbone*

(Continued from page 5)



**Registration for 2012 VBCC Men's Retreat** (please return to office, or drop in offering plate with payment and this form)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/email \_\_\_\_\_

Room-mate preference \_\_\_\_\_

Snacks you'll bring \_\_\_\_\_

Payment \_\_\_\_\_