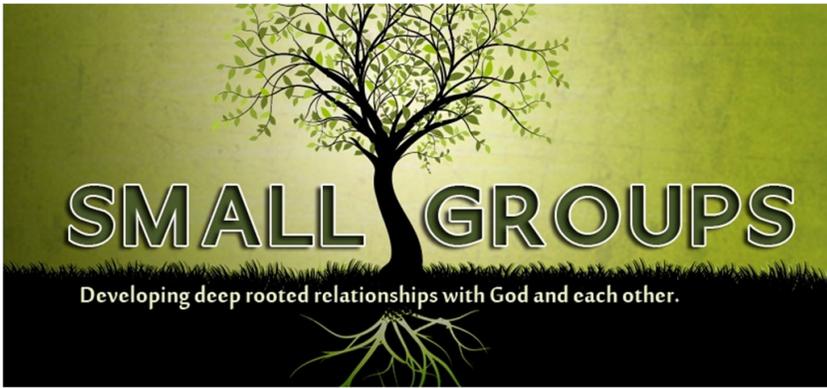


# VINCENT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Volume 1, Issue 3

July 9, 2017

Editor

Rich Baumann  
force5@verizon.net

## GROWING AT VINCENT UMC

### STRONG ROOTS

by Patricia M. Daniels

My daily walk goes by a lake that has cypress trees along the banks. One day I stopped to look more closely at one of these trees and its large, entangled roots. Some of the roots were wound tightly around the tree; others grew out from the tree. Still other roots seemed to sprout from the trunk of the tree itself. Many seemed tangled together. I marveled at the tree's strong root system.

I thought about how much our life with God is like this tree. We, too, need the support of strong roots. Some of the roots grow straight and tall, mimicking the strong and direct teachings from scripture and the church. Others wrap around on another, forming a strong support groups of friends and family, which encircle us and hold us tightly with love. Still others extend away from the tree, reminding us that we are to reach out and embrace others with God's great love. I keep this image of the strong root system on the cypress tree as a guide to live by, knowing that I need many types of support to stay strong and connected to God.

*Reprinted from the Upper Room, July 7, 2017*

### VUMC Efforts to Date

#### Survey

We have been conducting a survey of your interests in small groups. The survey remains open at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SXDYB7Y>. We seek your thoughts on the direction of this ministry.

So far, we have had strong interest in three categories:

1. Bible Study
2. Relationships
3. Hobbies, Arts & Crafts

We also have significant interest in:

1. Outdoor Lovers
2. Food Lovers
3. Book Clubs

Later this month, we will be contacting those who have responded to clarify their interests so that we can create groups that will be successful.

### Current Small Group

Starting in January of this year, Becky Olivo started a Pray and Color group on Tuesday mornings. Our Nurture Committee Chairperson, Alicia Contractor has been attending has provided this assessment:

"The flyer posted on the church door caught my attention with its clear and simple message, 'Pray & Color.' I figured, I like to pray and I like to color, so why not give it a try. Our first meeting was in January 2017, and as the flyer stated, our group met to pray and color. It was as simple as that, yet, it wasn't. My experience was so much more enriching than I ever could have imagined from a group organized to simply pray and color.

I learned how to settle myself down to pray when my mind is racing in a million directions.

I learned how to incorporate writing, doodling and coloring to organize and focus my prayers.

I learned a skill that I've been able to share with others to help them get more out of their prayer lives as well.

And through all of that, I got the opportunity to meet and get to know other members of our church that I otherwise would not have gotten to know. Because of that, I have developed deeper roots and relationships with other VUMC members and people that I now consider friends "

Alicia C.



## Programs Being Considered for September

### Parenting

During the Team Vital project conducted last fall, there was strong support for a program for a parents small group, run at the same time as a program for their children. Our survey confirms this strong interest, with added emphasis on Christian parenting. Joanna Bitten will lead this group.

### Relationships

Joe Tedesco will be leading a Relationships small group. Here are some of his thoughts on the subject.

*"RELATIONSHIPS" - a Small Group introduction.*

*"Who are we? We want privacy, yet we want others to know things about us. We define ourselves on social media, take "selfies" and share e-mails that make us laugh, make us remember and make us think. We want to be understood, appreciated, respected, liked, admired and loved. We want meaning in our lives. We want to be happy.*

*Join us in the "RELATIONSHIPS" Small Group and experience a warm and gentle exploration of the unique wonder of "Who We Are" and the countless ways that we're connected.*

### Bible Study

In addition to Bible and discipleship study offerings, we will have a "Sermon Discussion Series." I think we all agree that Rev. Dave delivers excellent sermons each week. You may not know that they are all available in print. We will email the sermons transcripts to those in the group and meet periodically to discuss how we can apply what we learn. Those who missed a Sunday, or those who are busy teaching Sunday School, or those who are not able to attend Sunday services regularly need not miss the message.

### Hobbies, Arts & Crafts

We have strong interest in this area. We need to refine our understanding of mutual interests among those who have responded and find leaders. Those who have these interests are encouraged to contact the Editor at the address on p. 1.

### Outdoors Lovers, Food Lovers, Book Clubs

As with Hobbies, Arts and Crafts, we need to refine our understanding of the interests and find leaders, though we may have a leader for Outdoors. Those who have these interests are encouraged to contact the Editor at the address on p. 1.

### Editor's Note:

Friends, we are working to build a Small Group Ministry at Vincent because we it will bless your life. Building deep root-

ed relationships with God and each other will strengthen each of us as disciples of Christ and strengthen our church. Please respond to the survey and provide us with your hopes and expectations, and feel free to share your thoughts on this ministry with anyone on the team at any time. Team members include Joanna Bitten, Alicia Contractor, Winthrop Shin, Joe Tedesco, Becky Olivo, Rev. Dave and me.

Rich Baumann

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John15: 1-10

Jesus the True Vine

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. <sup>2</sup>He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup>You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup>I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup>Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup>If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. <sup>9</sup>As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. <sup>10</sup>If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

Colossians 2:6-7

<sup>6</sup>As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives<sup>in</sup> in him, <sup>7</sup>rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.