

Union Congregational Church - High School Youth Summer Trip

Theme: A Pilgrimage Toward Truth: Remember, Repent, Repair, Restore

Dates: July 19-25, 2026

Location: Washington DC and Richmond, VA

Lodging:

- DC (TBD based on numbers— Possible homestays or church stays with Hope UCC in Alexandria or Cleveland Park UCC in DC)
- Richmond – [Richmond Hill](#) – An urban monastery and spiritual retreat center.

Meals: Five meals while in DC and all meals while in Richmond are included. Youth are responsible to pay for meals while traveling to DC and returning from Richmond.

Transportation: TBD (based on numbers – personal vehicles, rental van, etc.)

Cost: ~ \$1,000 (We are committed to ensuring that cost is not a barrier to participation.)

Deposit: \$300 due by March 15

To participate in this trip, youth must be active in youth programs prior to the trip (Sunday youth group/service/confirmation) and attend any pre-trip meetings/service opportunities.

Chaperones: Bryan Respass, Lisa Blankenship and Rev. Leah (Contact Leah with questions)

This summer our high school youth will travel to Washington, D.C. and Richmond, VA for a faith-based pilgrimage focused on truth telling, justice, and reconciliation.

We will begin at the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C., grounding our journey in an honest exploration of the history of slavery, resistance, and the ongoing struggle for racial justice in the United States. In Richmond, we will [walk the historic sites](#) connected to the domestic slave trade, [learn from Christian communities](#) engaging in reconciliation work, and [reflect on the Church's historical complicity](#) in systems of enslavement and racial injustice.

Students will also participate in hands-on service, including restoring an [African American cemetery](#) and working on food justice efforts with [local farms](#). These embodied practices of repair connect history to present-day realities.

Throughout the week, youth will engage Scripture, guided reflection, and facilitated conversations designed to be thoughtful and hope-centered. Our goal is not to induce guilt, but to form courageous followers of Jesus who can tell the truth, be open to transformation and participate in God's work of restoration.

We believe that knowing the truth sets us free (John 8:32)—and that faith calls us to live that freedom with humility, courage, and love.