

Advocate



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2019 VAUMC ANNUAL CONFERENCE | MATTHEW 28:18-20

**2019
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
WRAP-UP**

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Local Church News

Items should be typed (preferably sent via e-mail) or printed legibly, no more than 100 words, and of conference-wide interest. Complete names of individuals, churches and districts should be included. Because of space limitations, the Local Church section prohibits news items related to church members' birthdays (of less than 100 years), wedding anniversaries, receptions for moving and/or retiring pastors, photos of traditional Christmas trees or Easter trees/crosses, and any item over two months old. Color photos are encouraged. Photos returned only if submitted with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Photos included on a space available basis. The editor reserves the right to edit all copy or refuse publication.

Letters

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PILLOW TALK



Madeline Pillow
Editor

Finding a way to care

If you're like me, I find my heart breaking in several ways each day from news reports to stories I see on Facebook. They can be related people, our planet or animals.

I recently saw an article about a sperm whale that washed ashore dead after swallowing 64 pounds of plastic debris.

The picture itself, of all the plastic spilling from its mouth, is haunting.

In his recent book, *Unafraid*, the Rev. Adam Hamilton shares that fear can overwhelm us to the point that we believe we can't affect problems; especially the larger problems in the world like human pollution. No doubt there are large issues in front of us right now from the state of our church to the conditions for individuals in the border detention centers in the United States.

An Internet post that is making its rounds once again in light of the situation at the border detention centers says, "I don't know how to explain to you that you should care about other people."

This quote sums up a level of frustration that many people feel.

And what do we as Christians say? Loving people and caring for our "neighbors" is at the heart of what we say we believe.

With a heart of Christ, with a love for the people in this world and for the world itself, we can make a difference.

If a situation is haunting you, find a way to do something in your context. When I think about the suffering people who have come to our borders are experiencing or the suffering that animals like that whale are experiencing because of humans, I am haunted. It is easy to stay in that mindset and not move to action.

How do we move to action?

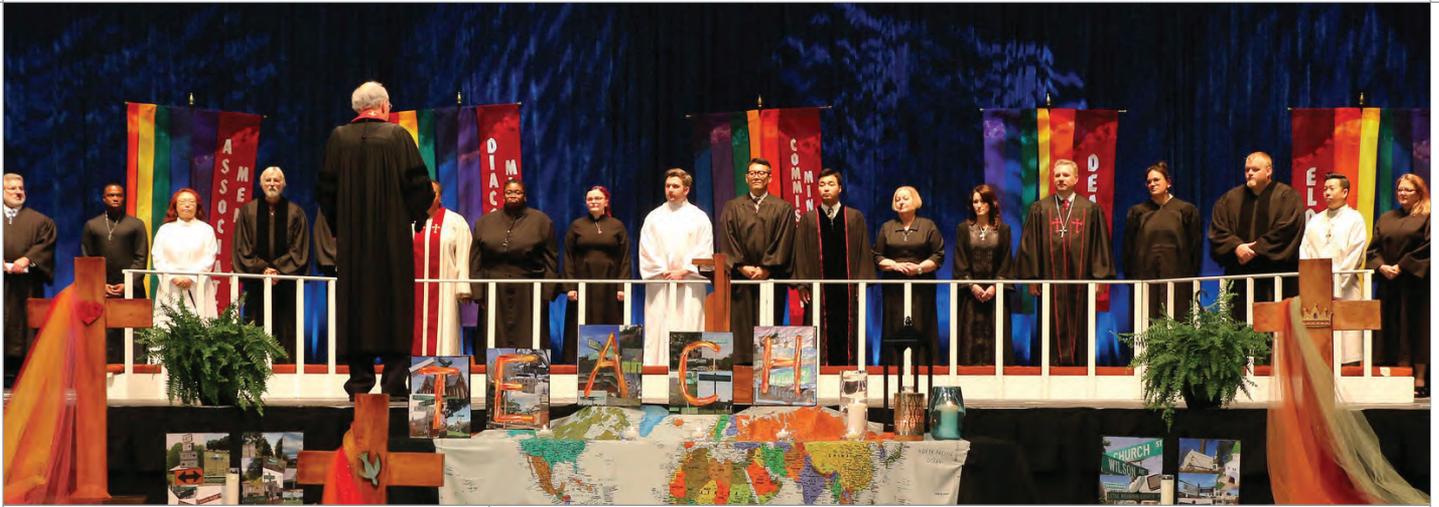
I'm reminded of the hymn "They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love" or by what Jesus said in John 13:35, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Our love, which comes from Christ, should be our guide. Our love can and should extend past others to our neighbors, to the animals on this planet and to the world. 

Madeline



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Corrections:

Appointment List (July *Advocate*): Enon Church, Richmond District, paid 100 percent of apportionments. New Town UMC, York River District, paid 100 percent of apportionments. Also in the July *Advocate*: The website for the Pace Center is www.thepacecenter.com.



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Remembrances of moving days past

This is the third in a series of remembrances of past moving days. You will find other memories in the June and July issues.

“When a weather term (snowpocalypse, polar vortex) enters the vernacular, fear grips the people. For meteorologists, weather terms aren't inherently fearsome. The trouble occurs when some cheeky meteorologist goes rogue and shares the term with us commoners. In late June 2012, Virginia learned a new weather term, and I learned my lesson.

My wife and I were finishing up a not so great experience of living in Maryland and we were called to Richmond. We packed up the apartment and said goodbye to that sweet tea-less purgatory. The moving truck was rented and a couple of guys were hired. We were set to leave on a scorching hot day.

The only problem in packing had been my lady's back. She had

a couple weeks' prior been to a wedding with some cousins of hers near Boston. Having the best party since they had that tea party way back when, my lady busted moves that tweaked her back. Her preference for activity in those weeks after was minimal; she was content laying on the ground and checking out the ceiling tiles. That left the brunt of the work to me. "Not a problem," I exclaimed, showing my new bride my magnanimous side.

So it was with the two fellas that I rode south in the moving truck while my lady would show up in RVA later that evening. We talked sports. And as people tend to do, we talked weather.

"I hear a derecho is coming," one of the guys said. A derecho? I wondered what this was that was coming? Was this one of Santa's new reindeer? On Dasher, Dancer, Derecho and Vixen? "What's a derecho," I asked. "Some sort of fast-moving frontal boundary with wind" he explained.

Cold-fronts were nothing this native Georgia boy was afraid of. I grew up knowing Alabama brought us

two things in the summer: social acceptability of not wearing shoes at Waffle House and cold-fronts. These cold fronts would sweep in from the west with gusty winds and rain and give us a reprieve from the stifling heat. Nothing to worry about, I thought.

I thought wrong.

Not too worried about this "derecho," we motored south past DC, Fredericksburg, and into our new life in Richmond. Pulling up to the apartment building, we began unloading. Moving in was hot, but a breeze. An elevator whisked us up to the fourth floor. Box was placed on top of box. The phone dinged, a text had been received. I checked my phone and saw my lady was on her way. Our sofa was brought in with an expertise a Tetris master would appreciate. Nearing the evening, my smile had begun to fade when I realized that our boxes now reached higher than our heads. That collection of vintage vests no longer seemed like a wise choice to bring.

It was at that point, with the bed, a couple leather chairs, and our dining room table yet to be moved, the derecho came. Screeching and



Letters to the Editor are printed on a space-available basis. Letters may be emailed to MadelinePillow@vaumc.org by the first of the month.



LETTERS

screaming, the wind blew out electricity from west to east across Richmond. The wind ferociously howled. Rain came down in sheets. Moving day became sauna day because the power went and so did that glorious elevator. So did the AC. We grunted and groaned taking a bed up four flights. I regretted never using that gym membership. My tiny arms cried for mercy.

We got the stuff stuffed in the shoe-box apartment and by the end of the day I scrounged to find candles to light the dark cave we would call home. My lady arrived, bad back and all, to a tiny, dark, cramped, and 85-degree apartment. Trying to save the situation the only way my 25-year-old self knew how, I called for pizza. I went to get it from Bottom's Up Pizza, brought it back and we ate it on the floor. We chewed in silence. To say that that was a glum meal is the understatement of the year. To this day, my lady spits and hisses if I suggest Bottom's Up Pizza.

So friends, next time it's moving day, here's a little piece of advice: check the weather. If there is a new term the

meteorologists are bandying about, beware. If that new term is scheduled to arrive on Moving Day, you bet your bottom (pizza), it'd be best to move on another day."

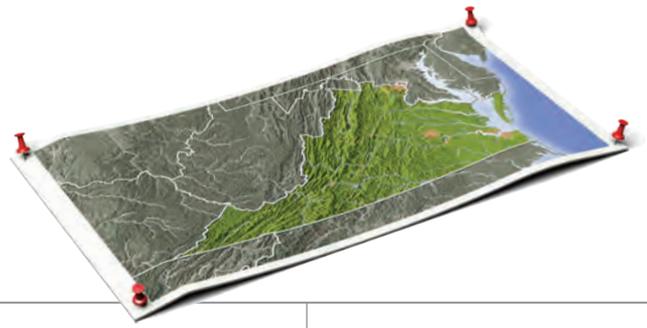
*—The Rev. Will Waller,
Rocky Mount UMC*

“We were moving as a brand new full-time associate to a house we just bought. It was raining as we moved out, and raining as we moved in, luckily using the same crew both days. We arrived and opened the door to our new house, which had been vacant for a short time. To our dismay, we had a "water feature" down the inside face of the stone fireplace. While pretty, not exactly desirable. One of the movers said with complete sincerity, "Sorry about your new house." Our realtor, a member of the church, felt so bad that he personally came to help remedy the situation.”

*—The Rev. Brian Siegle,
pastor at South Hill UMC*



The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



Church has heart for multicultural ministry

By Forrest White

NOT UNLIKE MOST FAITHFUL CHURCH MEMBERS, the people of Basic UMC in Waynesboro, Va., are eager to tell you what they love about their church home.

But what makes the Basic love story dif-

ferent is its storytellers — a 75-year-old African-American man, poor by worldly standards, who almost died in an apartment fire last year; the wife of a retired United Methodist pastor who has a heart for missionaries; the schizophrenic woman who was thrilled to be invited to have her picture in the church directory; the Hispanic mother who speaks almost no English.

“At the end of time, as Christians recognize it biblically, Revelation 7 tells us all nations, races, tribes and tongues will be wor-

shipping God together,” said the Rev. Chad Beck, Basic UMC’s pastor. “That is the kingdom right there. We’re getting a big taste of it at Basic.”

Robert Johnson escaped a fiery death last year along with his roommates — one white, one Hispanic — and turned to Basic, the church where he had eaten community meals on Wednesday nights and Saturday mornings for years. The church took up a collection so the men had temporary housing until their apartment was restored. He wasn’t surprised. There was something

Students come to the church Monday-Thursday to work on homework. Photo courtesy of the Basic UMC Facebook page.



The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

different about this church. It was welcoming to all, regardless of a person's race or what clothes they could afford to wear.

"Nice to everybody who comes," said Johnson, who invites his friends to Basic not simply for a meal but also to "learn about God's love."

A hungry friend had a question for him not so long ago.

"You reckon they'd let me get a plate?"

Johnson's response was telling.

"They'd be glad to see you."

Located in an area of Waynesboro once known as Basic City, Basic UMC was in decline and facing an uncertain future in the early 2000s. Then, the Staunton District moved a growing Hispanic ministry from Fishersville UMC to Basic, cutting down on travel time for its members and offering space for growth. In 2004, along came the Rev. Don Gibson, who served Basic for 13 years. Gibson, like Beck, is bilingual. He arrived at Basic with a heart for multicultural ministry, having been a missionary in Ecuador and Costa Rica.

"When we were in need of anything

"At the end of time, as Christians recognize it biblically, Revelation 7 tells us all nations, races, tribes and tongues will be worshipping God together. That is the Kingdom right there."

—The Rev. Chad Beck

— spiritual, financial or just emotional support — they all have been there for us," said Christy Rosas, whose family, like Beck's, is bicultural. "The members have become like family to us."

The church's mission statement reads: Basic United Methodist Church is a multicultural family of disciples sharing the redemptive love of Jesus Christ with our community and the world.

At Basic you'll find:
Sunday morning

English language worship, with a mixture of traditional hymns and contemporary praise songs, along with traditional liturgy and extemporaneous expression.

Sunday evening Spanish language worship service, with spirited music from the Latin American tradition. (Basic UMC isn't two churches — one for those who speak English, one for those who speak Spanish — but rather one congregation, with worship services in two languages.)

Wednesday evening dinner with singing during dessert (Beck describes the song list as everything from "Country Gospel to African American Gospel to Christian popular radio.") There is preaching, too. The night ends with a sharing of God's abundance, as families pick up food items they may need for the days to come. Among those who attend are the homeless, those suffering from mental illness, folks in their 70s working at fast food restaurants, others with physical and intellectual challenges

(Cont. on next page: "BASIC")

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("BASIC" con't from previous page)

and, of course, those who would be considered traditional UMC members.

Saturday morning Disciples Kitchen, where an ecumenical coalition of churches takes turns serving breakfast and sharing devotions.

Afterschool programming for children struggling academically.

"It feels right to be with those that have a heart to be in the community serving those in the margins," said Ann Klotz, a Basic member who oversees Global missionary itineration for the Virginia Conference.

Fluent in Spanish and living a bicultural life with his wife from Mexico City and their three children, Beck will begin his third year at Basic this summer.

In the midst of talking about all that's right with the church, he offers this: "I don't want to romanticize it. This is challenging, sometimes difficult work."

The biggest challenge?

"Most of the people who come, even when they give faithfully, are not able to support the ministries of the church financially," Beck said.

Basic receives financial support from the Virginia United

Methodist Foundation, having reached out for help in the fall of 2018.

Staunton District Superintendent the Rev. Dave Rochford called the Foundation's response "an extraordinarily generous gift" while describing the church as "expressly missional" and among the most highly engaged-in-the-community churches he has seen.

Occasionally, other churches offer financial support as well, recognizing the importance of Basic's ministry with and to the marginalized and poor.

But the challenges aren't limited to

The community garden at Basic UMC.



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funding.

With a congregation that is, as Beck said, “diverse economically, racially, ethnically, and in terms of their abilities and disabilities,” it requires hard work to build understanding, trust and relationships.

“How do people get to know one another when their lives are so very different?” Beck said. “People have to be willing to not only serve one another, but to sit down with one another, to hear one another, and to recognize their lives and experiences are so very different.”

Along with the cultural differences and the wildly divergent life experiences, there are language differences as well. At a committee meeting you may have some in the room who primarily speak Spanish and others who speak almost no Spanish at all.

But, in whatever language, Basic UMC practices what it preaches.

The church has been instrumental in bringing to the district Just Neighbors, a Northern Virginia non-profit which was, according to its website, “founded in 1996 by pastors and attorneys of the United Methodist Church to develop a practical

response to the legal challenges that low-income immigrants face in the United States.”

Beck speaks of practicing accompaniment.

“When people face unjust situations, when they have been targeted unfairly by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement), we’ve accompanied them and walked with them, just as Jesus walks with those facing suffering and justice,” he said. “These are people who are working, serving their communities, coming to worship God.”

It’s part of the church’s strategic move into a new phase of life, Beck said.

“We’ve already learned the lesson of welcoming all kinds of people who are diverse in every way,” he said. “We’re in a process of growing where we are welcoming those who have been welcomed to accompany us as fellow servants of Jesus Christ, to be the church with them and invite them to be the church with us, to build the kingdom of God together.”

From among its ranks of what the world considers poor, two members – one white, one African-American – now preach from time to

time at Basic. “They’ve been lifted up and the church has recognized their gifts for sharing the word of God,” Beck said.

You’ll see diversity among those serving communion, leading prayers, ushering at worship, preparing and serving meals, volunteering at the church’s thrift store and on and on.

“This is still a growth area for Basic,” Beck said. “First of all when some come here they’re not used to being seen, unless they’re being singled out for their difference. Most of the time they lead invisible lives and people do not want to hear them.”

At Basic, they find a place where they can be seen, a place where they can be heard, a place where they can serve when they’re ready.

“The most important thing I think about when I think of the ministries of Basic, regardless of what we are doing for the church or the community, is the sharing of the message that God loves us,” said Basic member Cecelia Caruso. “All of us.” 🍷

–Forrest White is a news associate with the conference Communications office.

The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



District takes on solar panel mission

By Forrest White

EIGHTY-FOUR DAYS ... Can you remember where you were 84 days ago? Think of all the things you've done in 12 weeks of life uninterrupted. You'd have to look at a calendar first, then sit down and give

it some thought.

Then imagine this ... You spent those 84 days without power. How different would those 12 weeks have played out, in the dark, in life interrupted by a hurricane? Long, hot days. Long, hot, dark nights. It would be easier to remember and impossible to forget.

The Rev. Seungsoo "R.J." Jun remembers the moment in June 2018, when a mission team from the church where he is pastor, Raleigh Court UMC in

Roanoke, sat in Puerto Rico and listened to a church leader named Dennis tell of his 84 days without power in the aftermath of 2017 Hurricane Maria.

But this wasn't just a sad story among the many sad stories in a country devastated by those storms.

This man had a plan for a better way, a vision to harness one of Puerto Rico's great resources - sunshine. He wanted to use solar panels to power homes and even the church,

SHARE THE LIGHT



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but was skeptical because of cost, logistics and his aging congregation.

“The (story) sat heavy on our hearts,” Jun said. “We came home (after a 10-day trip) with a consensus that we wanted to do something to help.”

Raleigh Court members back home agreed, but knew this was probably too big for just one church. Jun reached out to Roanoke District Superintendent Kathleen Overby Webster before presenting it to the district’s Common Table, getting enthusiastic support from both. The Common Table designated the Puerto Rico Solar Panel Project as its mission initiative for 2019.

The goal? Raise \$50,000 between the 50 days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday 2019 to provide 400-watt solar panel kits for 50 homes in Vieques, an island of about 50 square miles eight miles east of Puerto Rico. That’s enough energy to power a refrigerator and a few lights within a household.

Nearly 70 district churches agreed to sup-

port the initiative, without pledging specific amounts. Checks began to arrive in the days following Pentecost. Raleigh Court raised \$11,675, Jun said. Individuals and businesses have provided financial support as well.

Bishop Hector F. Ortiz Vidal of the Methodist Church in Puerto Rico (Iglesia Metodista de Puerto Rico) heard about the initiative and pointed the Roanoke District toward Vieques, pledging to cover 25 percent of cost as well as helping with the logistics of transporting materials from San Juan and helping select households to receive the panels, Jun said.

There is goodness in the collaboration and the timing has been good as well, with so much negativity surrounding the UMC since General Conference 2019.

“I’ve been so glad to have good news to share,” Webster said. “Despite all our differences and disagreements, we are strong in mission when we work together.”

Jun agreed.

“Joining hands to-

gether in God’s mission and doing something beyond our local church reminded us why we are in this connectional system,” he said.

A Roanoke district team plans to travel to Vieques in September to help with installation. He knows that providing kits for 50 households will only transform a fraction of the community, estimating that there are about 2,000 households there.

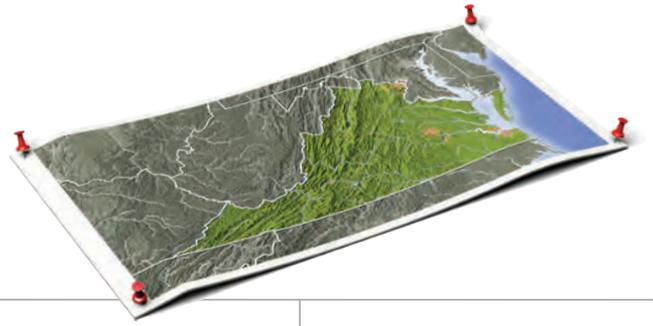
He dares to dream of a long-term partnership, believing God will make a way through a church united and focused on shedding light in the darkness.

“The church is called to respond to God’s invitation of mission,” Jun said. “When the church responds, God will provide.”

If you would like to find out more about the Solar Panel Project visit www.sharethelight.info.

– Forrest White is a news associate with the conference Communications office.

The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



Virginia Conference delegation makes a progressive turn

By Forrest White

IN THE HOUSE DIVIDED that is The United Methodist Church, denomination members agree on at least one thing — at some point, in the days following the 2019 special General Conference, hurt and anger gave way to immense resolve among those who

opposed passage of the Traditional Plan and its strengthened bans on same-sex marriage and ordination of LGBTQ clergy.

Opponents didn't simply voice outrage, they organized, determined to repeal the legislation at 2020 General Conference and create an inclusive way forward for the

denomination.

Within the Virginia Conference emerged "Virginia Methodists for a New Thing" — described on its Facebook page as "a grassroots organization that seeks to follow Jesus' call to love all people and fully include them in the life of the church" — which put forth a slate of 62 candidates who oppose the Traditional Plan for delegate election at 2019 Virginia Annual Conference.

Each of those 62 candidates was elected to fill spots on the 64-member delega-

The Rev. Tom Berlin, head of 2020 delegation, meets with all elected delegates at Annual Conference 2019.



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tion to 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences.

A 63rd progressive candidate emerged during clergy session at Annual Conference and was elected to fill the final clergy alternate spot for Jurisdictional Conference. There are 22 members — 11 clergy, 11 laity — on the General Conference delegation. The remaining 42 are either delegates or alternate delegates for Jurisdictional Conference.

“For those who were hurt and discouraged after General Conference 2019, this year’s Annual Conference was energizing and hopeful,” said the Rev. Grace Han, lead pastor at Trinity UMC in Alexandria and a clergy delegate to 2020 General Conference.

“After General Conference 2019, many clergy, lay people and churches felt like giving up and walking away. In the months that have followed, we have seen unity among churches, among clergy and lay people, among LGBTQ+ persons and straight allies, among young and old, to come together to vision for a future that draws the circle wide and welcomes God’s

children.”

The Rev. Dr. H.O. “Tom” Thomas, president of the Evangelical Fellowship of the Virginia Annual Conference, said he wasn’t surprised by the outcome of delegate elections.

“General Conferences 2016 and 2019 have unmasked centrists and forced their hand,” Thomas said. “They were forced to choose, and they have chosen to try to reconcile same-sex sex and ordination with biblical revelation, two millennia of Christian teaching, reason and experience.”

The Evangelical Fellowship posted a delegation voting guide on its website, endorsing 15 laity and 15 clergy candidates for the elections. It listed these criteria for vetting the nominees: would vote for Traditional or Modified Traditional Plan; supports the *Book of Discipline* on human sexuality and marriage; and would vote for amicable separation and the multiplication of Methodist expressions.

The newly-elected Virginia delegation isn’t representative of the “rank and file United Methodists in the pew,” said Dr. Carlos

Liceaga, the lone traditionalist among the Virginia delegation. He was among the Evangelical Fellowship’s recommended laity candidates.

Liceaga cited a February 2019 United Methodist Communications survey of United Methodists in the United States where 44 percent of 541 who responded identified themselves as theologically conservative/traditional in their beliefs (28 percent moderate/centrist; 20 percent progressive/liberal; eight percent “unsure”).

“I don’t see this as a seismic shift for the conference but as a continuation of the liberal trend that has been occurring for years in the leadership of the conference,” Liceaga said.

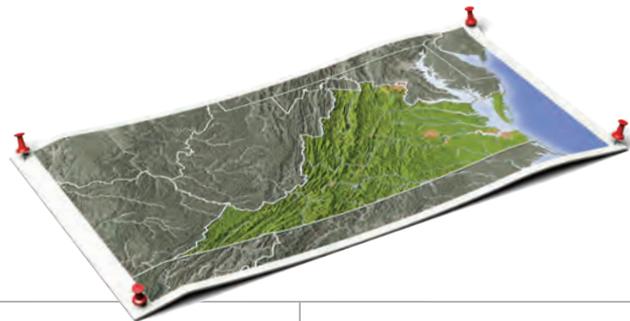
Supporters of the Traditional Plan were not alone in their displeasure over Virginia’s delegate elections.

In a statement, leaders of the Conference Ethnic Minority Caucuses (CEMCA) said they were not included in the creation of “any list of recommended candidates.”

While the intent may have been “to extend

(Cont. on next page: “DELEGATION”)

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("DELEGATION" con't from pg. 13.)

grace to a marginalized group," the CEMCA statement said, "the actions and subsequent results have denied grace to other children of God by circumventing the process of Holy conferencing."

CEMCA leaders said they were especially concerned by the results of laity elections.

There were eight laity of "color and diverse ethnic heritage" nominated and one elected — Liceaga. He will serve as the last laity alternate for Jurisdictional Conference.

"If I were an ethnic person I may wonder along with everybody

else why those who have advocated diversity for so many years could be so uninterested in a fully inclusive slate," Thomas said. "Many lay persons in our annual conference will feel disenfranchised and without voice at General Conference 2020."

The Rev. Tom Berlin, clergy head for the 2020 General Conference delegation, acknowledged the Virginia delegation was elected "in large part as a referendum on the Traditional Plan."

"(Delegation) members will need to find ways to hear the perspectives from a variety of groups — persons of color, traditionalists, persons from different

areas of the state, and persons of different size churches — on the many issues that will be voted on at the General Conference," said Berlin, lead pastor of Floris UMC in Herndon. "Only by understanding these perspectives and gaining the wisdom from the diverse membership of the Virginia Annual Conference will it be able to do its best work during the General Conference session."

There were 18,874 laity in the Virginia Conference who fall in the "color and diverse ethnic heritage" demographic in 2018. That only eight were nominated for delegate election concerns Alison Malloy, a 2020 General

Graphic created by 2020 Virginia Conference delegation.

	Conference (2018 stats)	% of membership	Conference (2018 stats)	2020 full Delegation	GC Delegation	% of GC Delegation
Total all Conference clergy members	1,602					
Clergy of color and diverse ethnic heritage	172	10.70%	5	15.60%	2	18%
Female	451	28.20%	14	43.80%	5	45.50%

Lay members	320,134					
Laity of color and diverse ethnic heritage	18,874	5.90%	1	3%	0	0%
Female	182,244	56.90%	16	50%	6	54.50%

2020 Delegation						
Persons of color and diverse ethnic heritage	19,046	5.90%	6	9.40%	2	9%
Female	182,695	56.80%	30	46.90%	11	50%

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Conference laity delegate.

"This leads me back to the failure of the Virginia Conference in recent years to equip lay leadership adequately," Malloy said. "Without intentional development of lay leaders, our lay leadership will not know to submit their nomination forms (on time)."

Delegate candidacy is primarily a process of self-nomination for laity.

Laity nomination forms go to district conferences, which for 2020 elections began in the fall of 2018. District superintendents were required to notify the conference office of Connectional Ministries of district nominees by January 15, 2019, six weeks before the March 1 deadline for clergy nominations and nearly 40 days before 2019 General Conference began in St. Louis.

Some conference boards and commissions — including CEMCA and the Commission on Disabilities — can nominate laity after the district deadline passes in hopes of ensuring a more diverse delegation. CEMCA nominated one laity candidate for the 2020 delegation, David Brown, who was

not elected.

Nominations may also be made from the floor of Annual Conference.

On the clergy side, 15 persons of "color and diverse ethnic heritage" were nominated.

Two of the 11 clergy positions on the 2020 General Conference delegation were filled by those who fall within the demographic or 18.2 percent. In 2018, among the 1,602 clergy within the Conference, 172 clergy (10.7 percent) were listed in the demographic.

The Virginia delegation is more diverse when measured by gender and age. Half of the 2020 General Conference delegation is female. There are 30 females among the full 64-member delegation.

"This is a younger delegation than we have seen in the past, which means we will hear new voices in the conversation," Berlin said.

Virginia Methodists for a New Thing also prioritized younger clergy candidates with at least 20 years of ministry left before retirement age

Around the Southeastern Jurisdiction, the Florida, Western North Carolina,

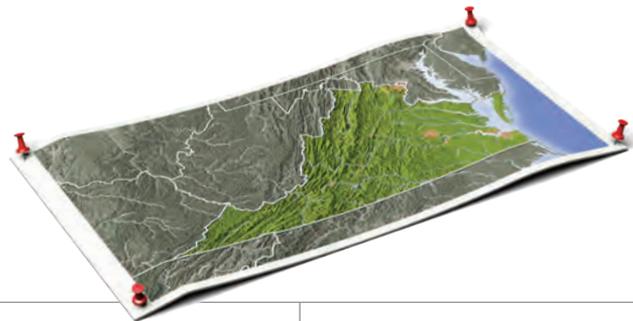
North Carolina, South Carolina and North Georgia annual conference saw similar delegate election results as Virginia, with a shift toward progressives for 2020 General Conference. A traditional majority remains in delegations from the Mississippi, North Alabama, Alabama West Florida and South Georgia Conferences.

"Over 70 percent of U.S. delegates are part of a coalition of compatibilists who want to be a part of a church that is inclusive of LGBTQ persons who would like to be married or ordained," Berlin said. "Overall, this voting indicates that Jurisdictional Conferences in the United States reject the exclusion and penalties of the Traditional Plan."

When 2020 General Conference convenes next May in Minneapolis, there will be 862 delegates — half laity, half clergy — with nearly 56 percent from the United States, though it will have fewer delegates than in 2019. African delegations gained 18 delegates, the Philippines two.

(Cont. on next page: "DELEGATION")

The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



("DELEGATION" con't from pg. 15.)

"There is not going to be a winner through all this but there could be a global church with much diversity, trust and honesty going forward, a Wesleyan movement without pointing fingers," said Warren Harper, the laity head of the 2020 General Conference delegation, who admitted shortly after Annual Conference that he is tired of "being concerned about how my father and mother's church was yesterday."

"I want a church for tomorrow, a way forward," Harper said

Thomas cautioned against "excessive celebration or demoralization over delegation shifts" in Virginia and the United States.

World delegations remain overwhelmingly conservative theologi-

cally and opposed to ordaining LGBTQ clergy and to officiating at same-sex marriages.

"Ultimately, I pray that we are not a church that is defined by this one issue because, while Jesus calls us as we are in the fullness of who we are, Jesus also calls us to be united in mission and ministry," Han said. "I pray that we can be united as a church that is committed to our primary task to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

Will gains made by progressives be enough to reverse course set in St. Louis?

Is a denominational split inevitable?

"On the face of it, General Conference 2020 looms as another titan clash between a divided house over a non-negotiable,"

Thomas said. "It has all the appearances of being a monumental turning point for our church. The United Methodist Church as we have known it is coming to an end. Something definitive, whether planned or precipitated, will result. Let us hope the result is the way of peace and blessing for all." 🇺🇸

—Forrest White is a news associate with the conference Communications Office.

PODCAST

"Letters to the Inquiring Mind on Theology and Scripture"

Hosted by

Richard N. Soulen, PhD,
Prof. of New Testament
(retired),
Virginia Union University

R. Kendall Soulen, PhD.
Prof. of Systematic
Theology,
Candler School of
Theology

at
soulenandsoulen.com

SOULEN &
SOULEN

DISCIPLES HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD



who has been the driver and the hardest worker behind Mission Central, welcomed everyone. Delores Reid, in charge of the medical equipment, shared the purpose for the Center. The Rev. Bob Talbott was the construction head; his teams worked in cold and hot weather to get the 4,200 square-foot building finished. Tom Sheets donated the hardwood flooring for the building, and Stan Michael hooked up the bathroom and installed the washers and dryers. **Mt. Pisgah UMC** and the Rev. John Crawford donated two washer and dryer sets so that clothes given away are always clean. Bill Neff donated \$100,000 to the project, and he was there to see this project become a reality.

Mission Central was one of the recipients of the Virginia United Methodist Foundation grants this year. The Foundation said it is excited to be able to help local churches and districts as they reach out the hand of "love" in the name of Jesus Christ.

Providence UMC in Yorktown held its bi-annual homecoming on May 5, 2019. This was their 170th year, 1849 to the current day. There was a 10:30 a.m. hymn sing that led into the 11 a.m. service. Former pastor, the Rev. David T. Forrest and his wife Nancy were special guests. Special music was provided by the church choir which included some former members who had moved away and came back for this day. A potluck din-

▲ *Convergence* is an 11-day experience at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Va. for high school youths who want to discover the realm where faith and science meet. At this year's event, 38 high school students from around Virginia, the East Coast, and the world attended for nine days of exploration around Christian faith and science. You can learn more at convergence.rmc.edu.

The grand opening of Mission Central in the **Harrisonburg District** in late April was a grand success. Several hundred people came to see the new building that headquarters "Mission Central." Mission Central now looks like a department store with rows and rows of clothes, shelves filled with diapers and one whole section filled to overflowing with medical supplies.

▼ At the event, Artie Frederick,



(Cont. on page 34: "DISCIPLES")

ANNUAL CONFERENCE



CONFERENCE 2019



THE THEME FOR THE 2019 VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, held June 20-22, 2019 at the Berglund Center in Roanoke, Va., was “Moving Forward in God’s Mission.” The conference theme was based on Matthew 28:18-20.

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

– Matthew 28:18-20 (NRSV)



2020 DELEGATION TO GENERAL CONFERENCE, JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE

VOTING FOR THE 2020 GENERAL CONFERENCE delegation (11 clergy and 11 laity), Jurisdictional Conference (11 clergy and 11 laity) and alternates (10 clergy and 10 laity), started the Thursday, June 20 and concluded that night. Clergy and laity conducted the voting in separate spaces.



GENERAL CONFERENCE ELECTED CLERGY:

Tom Berlin
Lindsey Baynham
Meredith McNabb
Rob Vaughn
Rhonda VanDyke
Mark Ogren
Grace Sun-khil Han
F. Elizabeth Givens
Jason C. Stanley
G. Kirk Nave
Jonathan Page

GENERAL CONFERENCE ELECTED LAITY:

Warren Harper
Martha Stokes
Shirley Cauffman
Darlene Amon
Beth Christian
Alison Malloy
Marshall Bailey
Jill Gaynor
Joshua Blakely
Jacob Paysour
Mark Elder

JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE ELECTED CLERGY:

Jeff Mickle
Doug Forrester
Leigh Anne Taylor
Dan Kim
Tim Ward
Chenda Lee
David Vaughan
Lyndsie Blakely
Lauren Lobenhofer
Brian Johnson
Jennifer Coffey

JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE ELECTED LAITY:

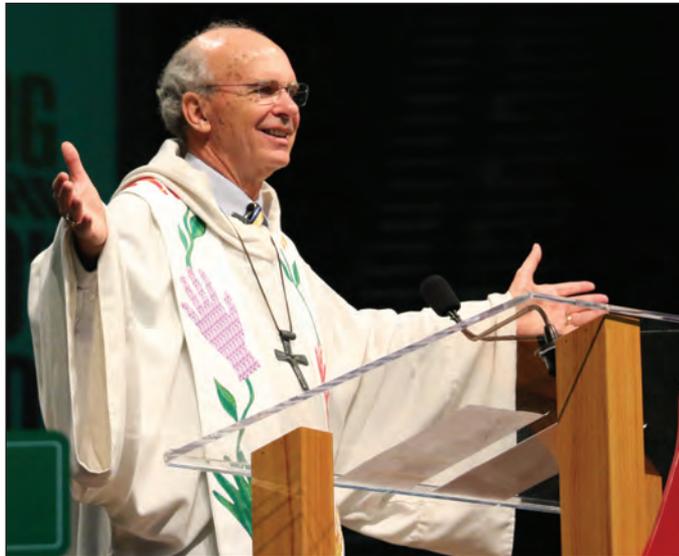
Karen McElfish
Andrew Kissell
Kim Johnson
Debbie Cali
Phillip Mohr
Deborah Angerman
Shawn Kiger
Amanda L. Holmes
Kenn Speicher
Neal E. Wise
Richard Underwood

CLERGY ALTERNATES:

Drew VanDyke Colby
Esther Nanna Agbosu
Gordon Keith Pruitt
Joshua S. King
Rachel M. Gilmore
Andrew B. Willson
M. Lynne Alley-Grant
Amy L. Crisp
Sarah Dumas Locke
Matthew Joseph Benton

LAITY ALTERNATES:

Kip Robinson
Brenda Brooks
Carl Moravitz
Marie Hawks
Jane Willson
Jerry A. Taylor
Jaydee Hanson
Maureen McKay
Michelle Hettman
Carlos Liceaga



CONFERENCE VISION

Even though Bishop Sharma D. Lewis is currently on a six-month medical leave, Bishop Pete Weaver, interim bishop, kept Lewis' vision at the forefront of the conference. A clip of Lewis introducing her vision from 2017 was played during the opening session on Thursday. That vision is "Disciples of Jesus Christ who are lifelong learners who influence others to serve."

All Virginia United Methodist churches will have a process of intentionally-forming disciples by 2020.



CONFERENCE BUSINESS

On Friday morning, six churches were discontinued in five districts. Two new faith communities and their pastors were introduced.

On Friday and Saturday, of nine submitted motions, six were discussed. Motions can be found at: www.vaumc.org/ncfilerpository/AC2019/AgendaMotions.pdf.

- ❖ **Motion 1**
"Balancing Lay and Clergy Membership of the Annual Conference" by the Rev. G. Kirk Nave: Each year, there are approximately 200 more lay members attending the Virginia Annual Conference session than clergy members. The motion prevailed.
- ❖ **Motion 2**
"Motion to Delay" by Joshua Blakely: I move that we, the Virginia Annual Conference, encourage Bishop Weaver and Bishop Lewis, and other members of the Conference Leadership team to, as an act of grace, delay any inquiry of the official conduct of clergy members (§1604.4) related to chargeable offenses outlined in the *Discipline* (§12702.1.a-b) related to LGBTQIA+ clergy, LGBTQIA+ clergy candidates, and same-gender weddings until after the General Conference 2020. The motion prevailed.
- ❖ **Motion 3**
"Removal of Incompatibility Language" by the Rev. Sara Keeling. The motion prevailed.
- ❖ **Motion 4**
"Removal of Incompatibility Language for Ministry" by the Rev. Sara Keeling. The motion prevailed.
- ❖ **Motion 5**
"Removal of Incompatibility Language for Chargeable Offenses" by the Rev. Sara Keeling. The motion prevailed.
- ❖ **Motion 6**
"Amicable Separation and the Multiplication of Ministries" by the Rev. H.O. 'Tom' Thomas. The motion failed.



UPDATE FROM GENERAL CONFERENCE 2019 DELEGATION

Martha Stokes, 2019 General Conference delegation head, and the Rev. Tom Berlin, delegation clergy head, provided an overview of General Conference 2019 as well as the April 2019 Judicial Council decision on the afternoon of Friday, June 21. They also shared the items that will be before the 2020 delegation.



BIBLE STUDY

The Rev. Dr. Kevin Watson, Candler School of Theology, presented the Bible Study on Friday and Saturday morning. On Saturday, Watson talked about the class meetings in early Methodism. "Methodists were required to be in a weekly class meeting, even in the United States. From 1776 to 1850 Methodism grew like a weed. It was one of the most explosive growths in Christianity with this requirement."

"I would not be here today if I was not a part of something like the class meeting," he said. "It's risky letting someone really know you. Being fully known and fully loved changed my life." Do not go it alone.



GLORY SIGHTINGS VIDEO SERIES

The "Glory Sightings" video series, which started in 2017, continued this year. These videos were shown throughout conference to highlight mission and ministry throughout the Virginia Conference. This year, each of the three videos focused on one aspect of Bishop Lewis' conference vision. A video about campus ministry displayed "lifelong learning"; a Fresh Expression, Skate Church displayed "influence"; and Ashland Circles, a mission to reduce and resolve poverty in Ashland, Va. displayed "serving." These videos can be accessed at: <https://vimeo.com/virginiaumc>.

"When you find yourself flagging in your faith, you will want to remember that God has already deposited something within you that is growing in you, and only you can bring forth what God has given you."

— Bishop Tracy S. Malone at the Service for the Ordering of Ministry



MISSION SERVICE

A time of worship began on Friday at 11 a.m. with guest preacher **Bishop Tracy S. Malone**, resident bishop of the Ohio East Area. She based her message on Matthew 28, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations... and I will be with you to the ends of the age."

"We see a conferring of power and authority," she said. This power that God gave to Christ has also been given to everyone. "As disciples of Christ we are given a charge and commission to go and teach EVERYONE we meet in the way of Christ." She said that "God has given us everything we need to make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world."

"Your faith journey matters," she said. "Your testimony, your faith story matters. How are we doing in making disciples? Who are the new people among us? How are we doing in moving forward in God's mission?" It matters how we show up, she said. "Do we show up in judgment or do we show up in love?" she asked. "If we are going to create spaces in our beloved and broken church, it matters how we go and it matters how we show up. We know we are living in some anxious and desperate times in the church and the world. In the midst of this web of confusion, there is the church of Jesus Christ."



SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

The Rev. Seungsoo "RJ" Jun, pastor of Raleigh Court UMC, Roanoke District, preached for the Service of Remembrance in which 63 conference clergy and laity who died since the last Annual Conference were remembered.

A SERVICE FOR THE ORDERING OF MINISTRY

Sixteen people were ordained elders, three were ordained deacons, 13 were commissioned as provisional members, one was recognized for orders, one associate member was recognized and 24 were licensed as local pastors in the Friday evening Ordering of Ministry service.

Bishop Tracy S. Malone delivered the sermon and preached on the topic of "From Start to Finish" based on Hebrews 11:29-12:3. Jesus finished the race set before him and now he is at the place of honor next to God.

She shared three significant convictions: you must keep alive the gift, be bold in your witness and keep at your work to let God do what He can do and will do.

Only you can bring forward the race that God has set for you. "When you find yourself flagging in your faith, you will want to remember that God



has already deposited something within you that is growing in you and only you can bring forth what God has given you. What God has for you!"

Paul shows us in Hebrews 11, she said, that having strong faith and strong convictions will give us the ability to lead courageously and to lead with boldness. We are also not alone in this race as we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses that God has placed around us.

Malone called the service a sacred occasion. "We are affirming and celebrating what God has been doing, not just this night, but all of the preparation and all of the fertilizing and all of the equipping and empowering in getting ready for this day."

"Ministry calls us to the mission field. Ministry calls us to the margins. Ministry calls us to the borders. Ministry calls us to the prisons. Ministry calls us to the hospitals, to the drug houses, to the schools, to the homes, to the White House and to the court house. Ministry calls us, does it not? Ministry calls us into places where we thought we would never, ever go. To be in ministry with people we never even imagined. Ministry calls us."

You will get discouraged, distracted and disillusioned in ministry, Bishop Malone shared. You will have to keep alive the gift and fan the flame that is within you.

"It is not popular to be bold. It is not popular to be prophetic. And yet that is who and what we are called to be and to do."

She mentioned that there is fear driving the divisions in the world and church today. She talked about racism, suicide rates increasing, unjust immigration policies, hateful rhetoric.

"We have to be bold in our witness. Don't be afraid to use God's gifts in you. It ain't about you. It's about God and what God wants to do in and through you."

"Don't be apologetic about how your prophetic witness and presence will shift the atmosphere. When you're speaking love, when you're speaking hope, when you're speaking justice, when you're speaking reconciliation, when you're modeling grace, when you're modeling love, you ought to shift the atmosphere. Something ought to be different because you're in the room. Something ought to shift because you are at the table. Don't be apologetic."



5K WALK, RUN, BIKE, AND YOGA EVENT

To live out the vision of Bishop Sharma D. Lewis and support the Annual Conference theme, Moving Forward in God's Mission, clergy and laity participated in the 2019 Annual Conference 5K Walk, Run, Bike, and Yoga event on Saturday, June 22 at 6:15 a.m. Over 300 people registered for the event.

The Moving Forward in God's Mission 5K raised funds for KIDS SOAR (formerly Community Outreach Program of Roanoke), a Virginia Conference Advance Special and a direct service provider for children, youth and families of poverty in inner-city Roanoke. The 5K took place in two locations -- first, outside (walking, running and biking,) on a part of the Roanoke Greenway. The second was inside (chair yoga) in a hotel event space. At last count, 1,324 books were received from Kids Soar from the event.



AWARDS

The Harry Denman Awards, the One Matters Discipleship Award and the Green Church Award were shared on Saturday morning.

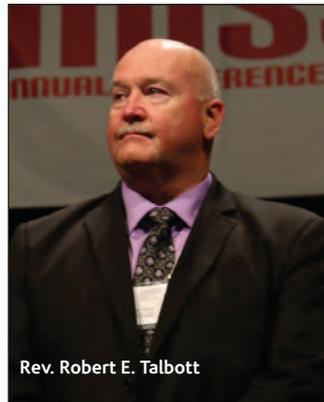
The Harry Denman Awards are named for Dr. Harry Denman, founder of The Foundation for Evangelism. The Board of Discipleship presents this award to individuals who impact their lives and ministries have on those around them.

The clergy Denman award went to the **Rev. Robert E. Talbott**, pastor of **Asbury UMC, Harrisonburg District**. The laity award went to **Artie Frederick**, member of **McGayheysville UMC, Harrisonburg District**. The youth award went to **Christopher Bryan Ganoe**, member of **Ivey Memorial UMC in Mechanicville, James River District**.

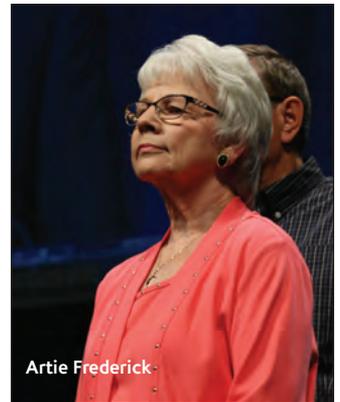
The One Matters Discipleship Award was created in 2015 to lift up churches who are focusing on intentional discipleship as they move to positive

numbers from 0 baptisms and 0 professions of faith. The 2019 award went to **Waverly UMC in the James River District**.

The Green Church Award is presented by the Caretakers of God's Creation team, a branch of the conference Board of Church and Society, for a church or churches who are answering God's call to be caretakers of God's creation. This award was presented to two churches this year: **Bethlehem UMC in Moneta** and **Oaklette UMC in Chesapeake**.



Rev. Robert E. Talbott



Artie Frederick



Christopher Bryan Ganoe



Representatives from Bethlehem UMC and Oaklette UMC



CLOSING WORSHIP

Bishop Weaver based his sermon on Matthew 28 with a sermon titled "Go, Glow, Grow."

"I want to talk just briefly about what it means to go, to glow, and to grow," the bishop said. "Go out far and near. The last place I served was New England. But United Methodism in New England owes its life to Virginia. Jesse Lee was born in Prince George County. In 1784 Jesse Lee went to annual conference at Ellis Chapel in Virginia. According to the record it lasted a month. At the close of conference, Francis Asbury, about to do appointments, was short a preacher or two. Asbury spotted Lee and he yelled to everyone, 'I'm going to enlist Brother Lee.' Someone yelled out to Asbury, 'What bounty to you give?' Asbury responded, 'Grace here, and glory hereafter.' That was all Jesse Lee needed." He first went to North Carolina and then Asbury sent him to New England where he started the first Methodist circuit.

"So when you get your appointment a little later this morning, Go!"

Lee said he had to labor and suffer alone among

the strange people. The Methodists were accused of being pickpockets but they went any way. Lee preached under an apple tree on the highway on, "Ye must be born again." It took six months for three women to sign up for a class.

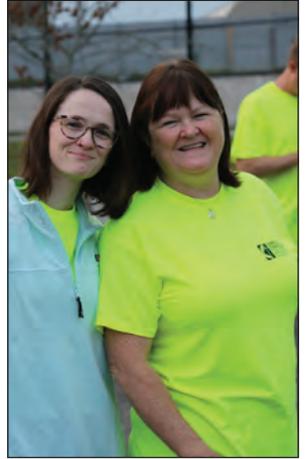
"But wasn't that where Jesus went?" asked the bishop, "the highways and the byways? Wasn't that Wesley, who went to the coalfields? Where do you and I spend most of our church time? Those old buildings. The command is 'To go!'"

The building isn't to be worshiped or developed. Souls are to be developed, the bishop shared.

The bishop continued, "The word 'go' means also to travel spiritually and attitudinally. Sometimes we have to go and look at what is right in front of us. But we need to go and build relationships and stand with those who are in drugs and impoverished."

"We started to make the decisions that Jesus wanted," Bishop Weaver said after relating stories of churches that had changed their ways of ministry, even if it was "messy."

We begin to glow "when we are willing to go and God is with us," he said. "So fear not. Go with God. Christ will be with you." 🕊



GO | MAKE DISCIPLES | BAP

WRAP-UP STATS

Hygiene Kits	36,296
School Kits	14,243
Flood Buckets	663
TOTAL	51,202



This year's kit collection required the addition of a third tractor trailer due to the influx of kits. These kits will be transferred to Mission Central warehouse in Pennsylvania for distribution by UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief).

10,000 lbs.



Members approved a 2020 budget of

\$31,450,000

a reduction from the 2019 budget.

A conference offering was collected of **\$100,000.**

The offering was divided between the following: Africa University Student Scholarships, Cambodia Pastors Leadership Training, Mozambique Lay Leadership Training, Brazil "Shade and Fresh Water" children's program and Just Neighbors Matching Funds Grant for Immigrant Legal Counsel.



BY THE NUMBERS

The Conference Statistician and Treasurer David Dommissie reported:

318,000	MEMBERSHIP
101,000	WORSHIP ATTENDANCE
90,000	PEOPLE ENGAGED IN SMALL GROUPS
3,000	PROFESSIONS OF FAITH
2,100	BAPTISMS
80,000	SERVING IN MISSION
+1M	PEOPLE REACHED IN VIRGINIA AND AROUND THE WORLD
\$200M	\$ TITHED BY VAUMC MEMBERS
\$27M	\$ GENERATED BY CHURCH-OWNED ASSETS
\$130M	CONFERENCE CASH RESERVES
\$140M	INVESTMENTS
\$2.6B	REAL ESTATE
996	ACTIVE CLERGY

OPTIMIZE | TEACH | REMEMBER

3 NEW DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS were introduced at Annual Conference and the appointments for the 16 districts were approved. Appointments are posted at: <http://www.vaumc.org/ncfilepository/AC2019/2019-2020Appointments.pdf>.

The Rev. Dr. Sarah L.K. Calvert, currently serving as the Bi-District (Alexandria and Arlington districts) Coordinator of Church Revitalization and Leadership Development, will be the new district superintendent of the Arlington District. She will replace the Rev. Cathy Abbott who has served as the Arlington DS since 2013.

The Rev. Charles F. Bates, currently serving as lead pastor at Fishersville UMC on the Staunton District, will be the new district superintendent of the Rappahannock River District. He will replace the Rev. Dr. Ted Smith who has served as the Rappahannock River DS since 2011.

The Rev. Denise P. Bates, currently serving as the lead pastor at Cave Spring UMC on the Roanoke District, will be appointed to serve as the new district superintendent for both the Danville and Farmville districts. On the Danville District she will replace the Rev. Dr. Janine Howard and on the Farmville District she will replace the Rev. Bob Parks. Both have served their districts since 2011.

1,288.75 years

The combined total years of service of the 60 retiring pastors at the Friday afternoon retirement service.

CATHERINE G. ABBOT	13.00	DORIS T. HEDRICK	7.00
KAREN M. ADAMS	14.00	ROBERT L. HOUSE	31.00
C. DOUGLAS AKERS	39.00	LUCRETIA A. HURLEY BROWNING	44.50
MARIE B. ALLEN	3.00	FRANKLIN T. JENNINGS	35.00
PAUL S. BAKER	11.00	EDWARD W. JOHNSON	1.00
THOMAS R. BARNARD	24.00	JAMES F. LACY	12.50
MARY BETH BLINN	38.00	LARRY A. LEHMAN	8.00
JAMES F. BROWN	24.00	RONALD A. LITTEN	36.00
MARC D. BROWN	42.00	SUSANNE H. MACTAVISH	2.00
MARK A. BURGESS	42.00	PAMELA G. MEEUWISSEN	13.00
RUTH M. BURGESS	33.50	THOMAS L. MERCER SR.	40.00
A. BRUCE CARPER	28.00	JOHN E. MESERVEY	6.00
MARLENE A. CHANDLER	9.00	LYNDA D. MOORE	13.00
PAMELA CLARK EGAN	16.00	JUDY G. MORRIS	12.00
W. MARK CLAYTON	26.00	DAVID L. NESSELRODT	28.00
MARY ALICE COLWELL	4.00	CHARLES W. PARKS	27.00
WESLEY S. CORBER	8.00	ROBERT J. PARKS JR.	36.00
JANET L. DAVIS	1.00	BARRY L. PENN HOLLAR	41.00
MICHAEL T. DAVIS	20.00	DENNIS W. PERRY	43.00
MICHAEL G. DAY	30.00	BONNIE G. PIZZECK	17.50
ALEXANDER DUNCAN JR.	9.00	MARTHA T. REYNOLDS	3.00
LARRY J. EDMONDS	40.00	THOMAS W. REYNOLDS	14.00
SHARON L. FORBES	16.00	RAYMOND G. ROWLAND JR.	29.00
WALTON C. FORSTALL	30.50	BETTY JO SIMS	13.00
THOMAS E. FROST	10.00	DEBRA A. STRAUGHTER	4.75
R. DOUGLAS GUNSALUS	24.00	RUDOLPH E TUCKER JR.	38.00
STEPHEN M. HALL	6.00	RUSSELL T. URBAN	20.00
KENNETH E. HANSON	7.00	WALTER W. WESTBROOK	39.00
ROBERT F. HARDY	12.50	WILLIAM J. WINFREE	41.00
JANET D. HAWKINS	19.00	JAMES R. WINGERT	34.00

LIVING THE WORD



Audrey Smith taught students in Chesterfield County, Va., for 15 years and retired in 2014. She coupled her prior 20 years of business experience with her passion for educating and mentoring girls to serve as a co-founder of Chesterfield Innovative Academy for Girls, now The Garden Schoolhouse, a preschool that helps give children the foundation for school and life. She serves as lay leader at Chester UMC, Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Coordinator for the James River District, and serves on the Discernment Team for Petersburg, Virginia. She is a Starting Bloc Fellow (RDU '19), and currently participates in the Soul of Leadership Program with Shalem Institute of Spiritual Formation. She has a Bachelor of Music Education degree and a Masters in Educational Leadership.

August 4, 2019 **1 Samuel 18-20** **"Equality, Sacrifice and Love in Friendship"**

1 Samuel 18-20 portrays the friendship between Jonathan, son of King Saul, heir to the throne, and young David, shepherd boy and musician. We continue to celebrate and honor their intimate friendship in the 21st century.

1 Samuel 17 ends with a perplexed Saul who failed to recognize David as the soldier who slayed Goliath. Others, including Saul's son, Jonathan, had no problem recognizing David and called him "a good musician, strong and heroic, a warrior who speaks well, good looking with beautiful eyes, arrogant, a sheep herder, and Jesse's youngest son." Family, servants and soldiers ascribed these qualities to David prior to his battle with Goliath.

At the same moment Saul's mind or eyes failed to perceive or see David standing right in front of him, "Jonathan become one in spirit with David." (1 Samuel 18:1) Is that how true friendship, covenant friendship, begins? The Holy Spirit binds us together "with cords that cannot be broken," and friends promise to sacrifice for the good of each other, to speak truth in love, and resolve to honor one another with faithfulness.

David presented himself to Saul as shepherd, musician and warrior without pretense, the uniform of royalty, or the armor or weapons for war. Jonathan, seeking to honor his friend, clothed him in royal attire and armed him for battle. Being "bound up with David" allowed Jonathan to transfer loyalty from his father to his friend, David.

We know Jonathan experienced his father's mental and emotional descent into mindlessness and madness. While at the same time, David's star rose as musician, warrior and giant-slayer. Jonathan showed that he accepted the prophet Samuel's

searing pronouncement that neither Saul nor his descendants would continue on the throne.

However, could David trust that Jonathan truly loved him and was not acting on behalf of his father, himself or his descendants? David had to test the loyalty of his friend.

Jonathan proved himself trustworthy, and David bowed at the feet of Jonathan's steadfast love to lay aside his arrogance, and his warrior and kingship status to covenant with Jonathan to remember and bless his household and his descendants forever.

Jesus' view of friendship comes to mind when reading this story when he said, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friend." (John 15:13 NIV)

August 11, 2019 **Ruth 1:6-18; 3; 4** **"Home is Where You Are Loved"**

Ruth pledged to Naomi that "your people will be my people" (Ruth 1:16), and they journeyed to Bethlehem. The women of the town recognized Naomi. Yet Naomi no longer recognized herself and chose a new name to distinguish this season of emptiness, loss and bereavement.

Understandably, Naomi turns inward in her despair. Ruth understands her role as provider and, with Naomi's permission, goes to gather grain from the fields so they may eat and live. "There's an opportune time to do things, a right time for everything on the earth: a right time for birth and another for death, a right time to plant and another to reap." (Ecclesiastes 3:1-3 The MSG) The time is right for God to introduce Ruth and Boaz to each other.

It seems Boaz remained in Bethlehem during the miserable time of drought, famine and uncertainty. Can we imagine that



he endured a time of scarcity, hunger or poverty along with his laborers? Did this time of hardship develop discipline and character? He is now in a place of leadership, wisdom and wealth.

Ruth worked all day to gather leftover grain. Boaz did not recognize Ruth, and asked, "To whom does this young woman belong?" (Ruth 2:5 CEB) Of course, Naomi was Ruth's home, the person to whom she belonged and to whom she pledged her life.

Boaz invites Ruth into the circle of young women who gleaned his field. Boaz blessed Ruth, an immigrant, because she left "father, mother, and the land of her birth, and came to a people you hadn't know before." (Ruth 2:11 CEB) Boaz's character, protection and generosity planted a seed of hope for this young woman who sacrificed much.

Once Ruth reported on her interaction with Boaz, Naomi's spirit came alive. She took authority for Ruth's future and worked to secure a home for Ruth with Boaz. Ruth and Boaz married and had a son, Obed, who was the grandfather of King David. How great is our God to choose Ruth, a Moabite, an immigrant, a foreigner, to be the great grandmother of David and to be included in the lineage of Jesus.

Jesus commented on a sacrifice such as Ruth's: "You can be sure that anyone who gives up home...or mother or father or children or land for me and for the good news will be rewarded." (Mark 10-29-30)

August 18, 2019 Ruth 4: 13-17 "Our Heart's Home"

Home is predominant in the story of Naomi, Ruth and Orpah. Some individuals feel an attachment to place, and they live, marry, rear children, die and are buried in their birthplace. Others travel the world looking for a home, a place where they are fully seen, fully known and loved.

Naomi's home was Bethlehem in Judah. Then one day, her husband, Elimelech, told her to pack up their belongings for the journey to Moab. Circumstances had changed and to survive the famine in Bethlehem, Naomi and her family emigrated to Moab. Once there, Naomi made her home in a new place with her husband, sons, Mahlon and Chilion, and their wives.

Over the next 10 years, Naomi's husband and sons died. She stayed in Moab until one day she learned the famine was over in Bethlehem, and she chose to return home with her daughters-in-law.

I wonder if Naomi experienced an epiphany as she walked the road toward Bethlehem. Naomi had no input into whether she wanted to leave home 10 years earlier. Her husband made that decision. Now back on the road again, did memories resurface of a violent, sudden uprooting from her home and parents or siblings? Did she suppress her complex feelings about the move as she prepared herself and their household to emigrate to Moab?

Did the depth and angst of those memories trigger Naomi's sudden command? "Go back. Go home and live with your mothers." (Ruth 1:8) Did Naomi's mother pass away while she lived in Moab? If so, did she know where her mother was buried? Perhaps grief reminds Naomi of her sacrifice to make a home for her husband and sons in Moab. Naomi is prepared to bear that grief alone. Twice, she insists that Ruth and Orpah go back to their homes. Naomi points the way, and Orpah, of her own free will, and perhaps for the first time in her life, chooses her own path. Ruth, likewise, makes a personal choice, and her choice is not to abandon Naomi.

Three women, three choices. Orpah does not know if she will find a husband. Naomi is unsure whether she will be remembered or honored in her hometown, Bethlehem. Ruth cannot predict her life as an immigrant. Nonetheless, with unshakeable resolve, she chooses her relationship with Naomi to anchor her future, whatever that uncertain future may bring.

(Con't on page 32: "LIVING WORD".)

The 2019 Living the Word devotions are from the *Standard Lesson Commentary* from Cokesbury. Note: you can follow the August readings for the 2019 Bible Challenge from Bishop Lewis on pg 35.

CLERGY & DIACONAL



DEATHS



The Rev. Eugene Richard Hemphill, 81, of Raleigh, N.C., died May 14, 2019. He served as an ordained elder

for 22 years. His appointments included Trinity-Providence, Dinwiddie, Montross Charge, and Shady Grove-Olivet. He retired in 2000.

The Rev. Wendell Charles Beane, retired, died on June 19, 2019. He was residing in Florida at the time of his passing. Prior to his retirement in 2001, Beane spent his career as a professor at Rutgers University and the University of Wisconsin.

Lt. Col. (Ret.) Robert Dixon Childrey, 79, of Chesterfield, Va., died June 18, 2019. He is survived by his wife, Dale Childrey, former administrative assistant for Connectional Ministries.

Margaret Young Haley, 99, of Roanoke, Va., died June 7, 2019. She was the widow of **the Rev. Dr. Carl W. Haley Sr.**

Vivian Leola Hott Renner, 90, of Winchester, Va., died June 3, 2019. She was the widow of **the Rev. Harry C. Renner.**

Frederick Rosner, 77, of Vienna, Va., died June 2, 2019. His daughter,

the Rev. Alison Rosner Bass, is the pastor at Arlington Temple UMC in the Arlington District.

Mrs. Charlie Fay Collie, 94, of Statesville, N.C., died Sunday, June 2, 2019, at Heritage Place of Statesville. She once served an office manager and bookkeeper for the Virginia United Methodist Pension Fund.

Mary Louise Haywood Simpson, 90, of Suffolk, Va., died May 29, 2019. Her daughter, **the Rev. Gretchen Simpson Nelson**, is pastor of Wesley UMC, Hampton.

Joseph "Joe" Klotz, 90, of Henrico, Va., died May 27, 2019. His son is **the Rev. Joseph H. Klotz Jr.**, retired clergy of the Virginia Conference.

Betty Ruble Hayhurst Shackelford, 93, of New Martinsville, WV, died Wednesday, May 22, 2019. She was the widow of **the Rev. Robert H. Shackelford.**

Dr. Clarence W. Taylor Jr., 92, of Shawsville, Va., died Apr. 25, 2019. He was the father of **the Rev. Leigh Anne Taylor**, revitalization coordinator for the Lynchburg District.

United States Air Force Chaplain (Ret.) Miles Murphy Jr., 90, of Hampton, Va., died March 2, 2019. He was a retired affiliate member of the Virginia Conference.

BIRTHS

The Rev. Will Waller and his wife **Emily** and announced the birth of **Ezekiel James Waller** on May 13, 2019. Waller is pastor of Rocky Mount UMC in Franklin County. 🍀



("LIVING WORD" con't from previous page.)

August 25, 2019
Hebrews 12:7-13
"From Submission Hold to Partnership"

The word submission brings up the image of professional wrestling matches that my family watched on Saturday nights when I was a child. Slightly overweight wrestlers struggled to pin each other to the wrestling mat in either a sleeper hold, hammerlock or half-nelson.

My male relatives would become physically agitated and bounce a leg uncontrollably, pound a fist into an open palm, or jump to their feet and imitate the moves of the wrestler performing the submission hold. It was not unusual for my oldest brother to suddenly appear, grab me and twist my wrist and arm into one of these wrestling holds. To submit to this kind of horseplay (bullying) is gut-wrenching, deflates any sense of self, leaves a taste for revenge, or a sinking feeling of dread in preparation for the next surprise attack. It

also engenders in the “winner” a desire for more strength, more finesse and more power.

Growing up in the 1970s, our pastor often preached “wives submit to your husbands,” “children obey your parents,” and “slaves obey your masters.” It was impossible to discuss these sanctified commands with family or religious leaders who held all Scripture as inviolable. The louder volume of civil rights and equal rights for women easily drowned out the message of Ephesians, and I felt free to ignore these ancient and discriminatory passages.

Then I married at the age of 18. My husband and I heard sermons that he was head of household, and my role was to sublimate myself to him. I internalized submission as not having a voice and not being heard in my marriage. Externally, others thought I submitted to the will of my husband. In my heart, I rebelled literally against all forms of authority and those who would require me to submit.

Four decades later, I recognize “the slow work of God” to change my ideas on submission through the Prayer of Teilhard de Chardin: “Don’t try to force them (ideas) on, as though you could be today what time (that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will) will make of you tomorrow.”

Hebrews 12: 7-13 enlarges the term submission to include sharing God’s holiness as partners. It is now my joy to willingly submit to the Father of spirits knowing that I will receive joy and life, life to the fullest. 

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DISCIPLES HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD



("DISCIPLES" con't from pg. 17.)

ner was enjoyed with fellowship for all attending after the service. Providence has had a long history of old-fashioned homecomings with dinner. ▲

Afton UMC held their homecoming celebration on Sunday, June 2 this year. The day began at 10:30 a.m. when members and friends of Afton and Fairfields gathered in the Afton sanctuary for a joint worship service. The message was delivered by special guest pastor, the Rev. John Jones. Pastor Jones is a former pastor of Afton and Fairfields. The Praise Band from **Ebenezer UMC in Oldhams, Va.**, offered their special talents to the worship service. Immediately following the worship service, there was an old-fashioned home-cooked

meal, reminiscent of days gone by. There was an amazing abundance of down-home tastings, as only Chef Lennie can prepare. Side dishes and desserts were lovingly prepared by members of Afton and Fairfields church families. Afterwards there was a musical performance by Tangier Praise Band.

▶ **The Rev. Elfie Finn-McKenzie of the Edinburg Parish** received the United Methodist Family Service Circle of Courage Award. This award was given to honor her volunteer work with the Charterhouse School in Edinburg. This school serves at-risk students from seven school districts in the Shenandoah Valley. The painting was done by art students at the school. ◀

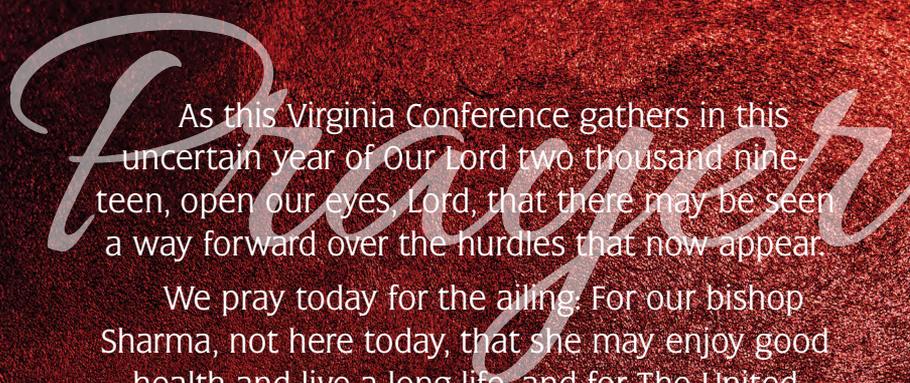




ONE LAST WORD

Bishop's Bible Challenge readings for August

August 1	Ps. 57-59; Acts 21:18-40
August 2	Ps. 60-62; Acts 22
August 3	Ps. 63-65; Acts 23:1-15
August 4	Ps. 66-67; Acts 23:16-35
August 5	Ps. 68-69; Acts 24
August 6	Ps. 70-71; Acts 25
August 7	Ps. 72-73; Acts 26
August 8	Ps. 74-76; Acts 27:1-26
August 9	Ps. 77-78; Acts 27:27-44
August 10	Ps. 79-80; Acts 28
August 11	Ps. 81-83; 1 Peter 1
August 12	Ps. 84-86; 1 Peter 2
August 13	Ps. 87-88; 1 Peter 3
August 14	Ps. 89-90; 1 Peter 4
August 15	Ps. 91-93; 1 Peter 5
August 16	Ps. 94-96; Galatians 1
August 17	Ps. 97-99; Galatians 2
August 18	Ps. 100-102; Galatians 3
August 19	Ps. 103-104; Galatians 4
August 20	Ps. 105-106; Galatians 5
August 21	Ps. 107-109; Galatians 6
August 22	Ps. 110-112; 2 Cor. 1
August 23	Ps. 113-115; 2 Cor. 2
August 24	Ps. 116-118; 2 Cor. 3
August 25	Ps. 119:1-88; 2 Cor. 4
August 26	Ps. 119:89-176; 2 Cor. 5
August 27	Ps. 120-122; 2 Cor. 6
August 28	Ps. 123-125; 2 Cor. 7
August 29	Ps. 126-128; 2 Cor. 8
August 30	Ps. 129-131; 2 Cor. 9
August 31	Ps. 132-134; 2 Cor. 10



As this Virginia Conference gathers in this uncertain year of Our Lord two thousand nineteen, open our eyes, Lord, that there may be seen a way forward over the hurdles that now appear.

We pray today for the ailing; For our bishop Sharma, not here today, that she may enjoy good health and live a long life; and for The United Methodist Church, that it, too, may be in good health and live long with open hearts, open minds, and wide open doors.

Spirit of faith, come down, reveal to us the grace from above that will enable us to love those with whom we disagree, and to disagree with those whom we love.

O God, be with us as we meet today; may all we do be service rendered Thee; Instill us with the gifts of charity, firm faith, and dauntless hope; for these we pray.

Inspire us with a measure of your grace; Instruct our choices; guide our every plan, so with your heavenly guidance now we can profit from the challenges we face.

For all our blessings, Lord, we give you thanks, for all the souls committed to our care, for all the clergy in their stated place, and for our proxy bishop Peter as he leads our ranks. We thank you for the fellowship we share, and for your image, seen in every face.

Amen.

-The Rev. Raymond Wrenn, retired elder in the Winchester District, offered this prayer to start the opening session of Annual Conference 2019.



2019-2020



MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

CONNECTING GOD'S MISSION AND FAITH COMMUNITIES IN THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



MOVING FORWARD IN GOD'S MISSION





Glenn Rowley

Moving Forward in God's Mission

"Moving Forward!" That sounds like a great idea about now! Of course it should always be a good idea. One of my favorite quotes from Will Rogers, the cowboy philosopher from my home state of Oklahoma, is, "Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." Our denominational leaders and the faithful members who call The United Methodist Church home are facing calls on many fronts that we're about to get run over just sitting where we have been is not an option, even if we think it's the right track.

The second half of the theme for Annual Conference 2019 and also for this issue of the Mission Opportunities Booklet is just as important — "...in God's Mission." Serving God's mission is a calling we all can claim, and if there is one place we should be able to find common ground as faithful United Methodists it is moving God's mission forward. It is lived out in every compassionate response we make to "the least of these" in our neighborhoods, our communities, our churches and the world.

In reviewing these 2019 Mission Opportunities, you will see just how important our connection is to how we are able to move forward God's Mission through our apportionments and in our second mile giving to missionaries, mission projects and service opportunities.

This isn't the time to hold back or hold steady. It is time to move forward in God's mission of compassion, justice, peace and transformation as disciples of Jesus Christ. It's the time to do that service thing that Jesus taught us with his life: "He did not come to be served, but to serve." (Matt. 20:28) Christ called us to do nothing less!

Glenn Rowley

Conference Secretary of Global Ministries and Director of Justice and Missional Excellence



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Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.

Mark 9:35

How to use this booklet

As you look down the colored tabs to the right, you find many opportunities for your faith community to grow through being engaged in God's mission.

■ **Missional giving** is at the foundation of discipleship. As United Methodists we are a "connectional church" meaning we draw upon all our gifts and graces to bear witness to God's love wherever it is needed in our community or the world. We do that first by meeting the needs of our connection through our apportionments. This is the first mile we walk in our journey of faith in giving.

■ After this first-mile giving is shared, individuals or faith communities can consider the various **mission opportunities** offered within these pages. Gifts can be given through The Advance to mission projects, as well as supporting the more than 300 missionaries serving around the world and in our own conference.

■ This booklet can also be used as an **educational tool** in a variety of settings – new member orientation, Sunday school class, small group study and discussion groups, youth and young adult fellowships, or as a resource for

finance and stewardship teams.

■ Finally, as faith communities searching for new ways to be involved in hands-on mission activities, you will find opportunities for serving God's mission in your community, our state, the nation and internationally. The resources for engaging as disciples in **mission and outreach** are here.

■ **Have questions about anything in this booklet or need more copies?**

Call the conference office of Justice and Missional Excellence at **(804) 521-1142**; or e-mail: **CindyIngroff@vaumc.org**.

Where to send Advance money

Make your check payable to The **Virginia United Methodist Conference**. Write the ministry name and the Advance number in the memo line of the check. Send to:

Treasurer, Virginia Conference UMC, P.O. Box 5605 Glen Allen, VA 23058

100% of your contribution goes to the Advance ministry you choose!

4	Introduction to First- and Second-Mile Giving
5	Apportionments (First-Mile Giving)
8	UMCOR and UMCOR Kits
10	Virginia Advance Specials
12	National Advance Specials
14	International Advance Specials
16	Initiatives of Hope
18	Missionaries
21	Virginia & United Methodist Volunteers in Mission
23	Disaster Response & Recovery
24	2019 Special Program Grants of Virginia
26	Mental Health and Abundant Life
28	Mission Encounter (School of Christian Mission)
30	Additional Mission Opportunities
32	Special Sundays (on back)



Connectional Giving

Being a faithful disciple means following the commands of Jesus. Jesus commands us to love one another. How do we show that love? Jesus tells us to feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, provide clothing and shelter to the poor, care for the sick and visit those in prison.

While it would be wonderful if we could reach out personally to everyone who needs our help, we know that is impossible. But when we join with other members of our congregation, put money into the offering plate, and participate in the carefully planned system of United Methodist mission and ministry, our gifts can stretch around the world to help those in need and spread the love of Jesus Christ, even in places where we can't go.

FIRST-MILE GIVING

When you give to your local church, most of the money is used to support the ministries of your local congregation.

A portion is also sent to the Annual Conference to collectively support Conference Ministries Apportionments (pg. 6), General Church Apportionments (pg. 7), and Clergy Benefits Apportionments (pg. 5). These payments make up what is called "First-Mile Giving" and are expected of all United Methodists. The power of our apportionments – our collective First-Mile giving – is that it enables United Methodists to do together what no church, district or annual conference could do alone.

SECOND-MILE GIVING

But Jesus says we should do more than the basic requirement. We must walk the "second mile" as well. We can go beyond the primary gifts to the church and contribute "Second-Mile" gifts to specific programs, missionaries and ministries through *The Advance for Christ and His Church* and through contributions to Special Sunday offerings (see back cover).

All Virginia Conference faith communities are encouraged to be Vital Congregations, growing in worship attendance, number of small groups, number of disciples engaged in mission, and amount of money given to mission. This booklet can help your congregation meet its Vital Congregations goals by walking the first mile, going the second mile, and then participating in hands-on mission opportunities.



Clergy Benefit Apportionments

Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc. ("VUMPI") is the Virginia Conference's agency focused on financing health care coverage and pension benefits for clergy and lay employees. While VUMPI's mission is based on the administration and financing of these programs, VUMPI's staff members see this work as a ministry which helps enable Virginia Conference clergy and lay employees to develop and lead United Methodist faith communities.

The following apportionments allow VUMPI to carry out its mission:

ACTIVE CLERGY HEALTH\$9,710,000

The apportionment for active clergy health plans enables VUMPI to maintain the self-funded health care coverage offered to full time Virginia Conference clergy and their families. Medical issues can arise at any time, without warning, and treatment can be very expensive. The health-related programs we administer not only help to dramatically reduce the financial risks associated with medical issues, but are also designed to encourage care that will help avoid costly medical issues. Without the coverage that is offered, our clergy would be exposed to potentially catastrophic financial risk.

In addition to actively serving clergy, the Virginia Conference health plan covers disabled children and surviving spouses of deceased clergy. The active clergy health plan apportionment for 2020 reflects no increase over the 2019 apportionment.

RETIRED CLERGY HEALTH.....\$6,060,000

The health plans for retired Virginia Conference clergy help fulfill the mission of taking care of the clergy who have spent their careers taking care of others. While employer-sponsored retiree health care is not as common as it once was, we remain committed to helping support the financial security of our retired clergy. For those who are not yet eligible for Medicare, we offer access to one of the health plans that actively serving pastors can select, but the retiree is asked to pay a bit more than the active pastor pays. For those who are eligible for Medicare, the Conference-sponsored retiree medical insurance program offers multiple options for coverage, with either direct subsidy of the health plan cost or indirect subsidy through a Retiree Reimbursement Account. The 2020 retired clergy health apportionment reflects no increase over 2019's corresponding apportionment.

PENSION LIABILITY ASSESSMENT, PRE-82

.....\$750,000

We have made a financial commitment to our clergy who earned credit under the pension program in place prior to 1982. In order to fulfill that commitment, we are following a strategy that is designed to have sufficient funding for our total future pre-82 pension obligations by the end of 2021. Before this pension program was in place, surviving spouses of deceased clergy received no benefit under the program; once the clergyperson passed away, the benefit payments stopped. Under the pre-82 pension program, surviving spouses of eligible clergy receive slightly reduced benefit payments for the remainder of their own lives. This can make the difference between living the rest of their lives with dignity and potentially facing poverty. The 2020 pre-82 pension apportionment reflects no increase over the corresponding 2019 apportionment.

TOTAL: CLERGY BENEFITS APPORTIONMENTS

.....\$16,520,000

Virginia Conference Ministries

CONFERENCE MISSION & MINISTRIES\$3,140,000

The Conference Mission & Ministries Apportionment connects all churches of the Virginia Conference toward a goal of fruitfulness and multiplication. Guided by a focus on leadership development, this apportionment provides a holistic approach to ministries that seek to minister to people in the Christian faith through existing congregations, new faith communities and ministries that reach beyond the local church. Funding for the Mission & Ministries Apportionment includes support for ministries in Virginia and around the world that minister to children, youth and adults, funding for campus ministries, disaster response, prison chaplain ministries and special and sustaining grants of the Common Table.

CONFERENCE SERVICES\$1,990,000

The Annual Conference through Conference Services provides a United Methodist Center where more than 9,000 attendees meet each year to carry out the mission and ministries of the Virginia Conference. Conference Services also supports the Annual Conference session where 3,000 clergy and lay members gather to worship, pray, conduct business and carry out our connectional vision.

Our Board of Ordained Ministry and staff manage the credentialing process of the clergy in the Virginia Annual Conference and support the clergy through programs, educational training and family support.

Our Treasurer's office is responsible for handling and safeguarding funds in excess of \$30,000,000 entrusted to the conference from local church apportionments and benevolences. The Treasurer's office supports the work of the Council on Finance and Administration, conference Board of Trustees and the Equitable Compensation Commission. This office serves as a resource for local churches in the areas of finance, stewardship, administration and insurance, and leads multiple training events throughout the conference.

The mission and ministries of the Council on Finance and Administration, the conference Board of Trustees and the Commission on Archives and History are supported through Conference Services.

The Episcopal Office is supplemented and is provided a parsonage and an Assistant to the Bishop position.

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS FUND\$2,000,000

The Virginia Conference supports the work of 15 district superintendents providing salary, pension, travel, workers compensation and continuing education. All other related costs, such as housing, district office expense and staff are supported through each individual district office.

EQUITABLE COMPENSATION\$250,000

The Equitable Compensation Fund provides financial assistance for churches within the Virginia Conference which are unable to meet the minimum compensation for their clergy. Full-time pastors are guaranteed a minimum level of compensation dependent upon their ordination status. The local church or charge is required to provide a minimum amount frequently referred to as the "floor" level of compensation. The primary obligation of the Equitable Compensation Commission is to make up the difference between the minimum compensation level and the floor for churches determined to be eligible.

CHURCH EXTENSION & DEVELOPMENT\$1,200,000

The Church Extension & Development Fund (CEF) is overseen by the Church Development Team and supports new faith communities in the first five years of inception as well as assisting existing churches reach new people.

VIRGINIA EDUCATION FUND\$600,000

Churches across the Virginia Conference support the five Virginia Conference church-related colleges, universities and preparatory school. These institutions are Ferrum College, Randolph-Macon College, Randolph College, Shenandoah University, Virginia Wesleyan College and Randolph-Macon Academy. Each school provides scholarships to United Methodist students for attending. Additionally, this fund supports United Methodist chaplains on each campus that provide religious services and programs to all students. Many of our clergy and lay members come from these schools.

TOTAL: Virginia Conference Ministries.....\$9,180,000

Worldwide United Methodist Church Ministries

EPISCOPAL FUND.....\$870,000

Our bishops oversee and promote the church's spiritual and temporal interests. This fund underwrites salaries, housing, office expenses and travel costs of active bishops. It also provides pension and health benefits for active and retired bishops and their families.

WORLD SERVICE FUND.....\$2,925,000

The World Service Fund provides the basic support for most of the worldwide missions and ministries of The United Methodist Church. This fund supports the work of missionaries around the world and funds evangelistic outreach, establishment of new churches, anti-hunger projects, social justice advocacy, and resources for local church work with children, youth, singles, students, disabled persons and adults of all ages. It provides basic support for the programs and administration of most of the general agencies of The United Methodist Church.

"The World Service apportionment represents the minimum needs of the general agencies of the Church. Payment in full of these apportionments by local churches and annual conferences is the first benevolent responsibility of the Church." *2016 Book of Discipline* (¶1812).

As United Methodists, our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. One way to do this is through 100% support of the World Service Fund.

GENERAL AND JURISDICTIONAL CONNECTIONAL FUND.....\$400,000

This apportionment combines the General Administration Fund from the General Church and the Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ) Mission and Ministry Fund. The General Administration Fund finances General Church administrative activities, including General Conference (the law-making body of the church), Judicial Council (which adjudicates questions of church law), General Council on Finance and Administration (which coordinates and administers the finances of the church and safeguards the denomination's legal interests and rights), and maintenance of United Methodism's official documents and historical artifacts, landmarks and sites. This money also supports SEJ administration plus program ministries of the jurisdiction.

MINISTERIAL EDUCATION FUND.....\$990,000

People choose ordained ministry because God calls them. The Ministerial Education Fund is our way to help them answer that divine call. This fund provides educational support for United Methodist ordained elders and deacons and diaconal ministers, and provides essential support to the 13 United Methodist seminaries in the United States. Of the money received for this fund, 25% is returned to our annual conference for scholarships, clergy professional development and continuing education, and programs to encourage men and women to respond to the call to ordained ministry.

Black College Fund.....\$395,000

This fund supports the 11 United Methodist historically black colleges and universities in the United States, including one medical school. These schools provide opportunities for many students of promise who otherwise might be excluded from higher education. Graduates of these institutions — teachers, doctors, ministers, bishops, judges, artists and entrepreneurs — are leaders in the African-American community and in a rapidly changing, more diverse United States.

AFRICA UNIVERSITY FUND.....\$90,000

This vital fund supports the only United Methodist-related, degree-granting university on the continent of Africa — serving students from 21 countries. Africa University provides higher education of excellent quality, enriched with Christian values, for both men and women, developing visionary leaders of tomorrow.

Interdenominational Cooperation Fund.....\$80,000

United Methodists acknowledge that we are but a small part of the worldwide Christian church — the living body of Jesus Christ. This fund supports ecumenical efforts to foster a renewal of Christian unity and understanding as we work with other Christian communions to witness to a common faith, meet human suffering and advocate for peace and justice all over the world.

TOTAL:

Worldwide United Methodist Church Apportionments.....\$5,750,000

Moving Forward

together with UMC



Collecting flood buckets for the Texas hurricane.

For many people around the world, and even our neighbors here in the U.S., their first connection with The United Methodist Church is through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) serving as the relief and humanitarian arm of The United Methodist Church. Our goal is to assist the most vulnerable persons affected by crisis or chronic need without regard to their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. UMCOR believes all people have God-given worth and dignity.

UMCOR's work reaches people in more than 80 countries, including the United States. It provides humanitarian relief when war, conflict, or natural disasters disrupt life to such an extent that communities are unable to recover on their own.

While UMCOR cooperates with other aid organizations to extend its reach, its most important partners are the people it serves. It believes that successful solutions to emergency or chronic conditions begin with the affected population. UMCOR provides these survivors not only temporary relief but also long-term education, training and support.

UMCOR uses thousands of volunteers every year to carry out the ministry of comfort and relief, and UMCOR spends 100 percent of designated donations on the projects donors specify. When UMCOR volunteers give their time, money and supplies, we are the hands and feet of Christ.

What many United Methodists aren't aware of is that for 100 percent of your donation to meet an emergency relief need or to support a humanitarian project, the administrative and logistical costs have to be covered in another way. That way is the **UMCOR Sunday Offering** (usually observed the fourth Sunday of Lent, which is March 22 in 2020). Encourage your church to observe this important second-mile offering.

Of course you can donate to any project by placing an offering in the plate at any local United Methodist church or by calling **1-800-554-8583**, where credit card donations are accepted. In response to all disasters you can make an immediate \$10 donation by texting the word **RESPONSE** to **80888**.

You can get more information and give online by going to www.umcor.org and clicking the "DONATE" menu button.

Packing and shipping instructions for UMCOR kits:

- All items included in kits must be NEW items and should be packed in boxes with only one type of kit in each box. The contents should be clearly written on the outside or inside of the box.
- All kits are carefully planned to make them usable in the greatest number of emergency situations.
- **Do NOT include any money, personal notes or additional materials in the kits. These things must be painstakingly removed and will delay the shipment.**
- Complete two packing lists: one for your records and one to put outside the box with the shipping label. Paste the shipping label/packing list on the outside of each box you send to UMCOR. The shipping label may be downloaded from the UMCOR website at www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies.

Kits may be brought to Annual Conference in June* or shipped prepaid to: **UMCOR Sager Brown Depot, P.O. Box 850, 131 Sager Brown Rd., Baldwin, LA 70514-0850**. Kits may also be shipped or taken to the Central Virginia Mission Hub located at **11251 Cherry Hill Road Culpeper, VA 22701**.

Monetary donations include:

- \$1.00 per kit for processing and shipping
- \$1.00 for UMCOR to purchase toothpaste (Hygiene Kits only)
- \$1.50 per cleaning kit

If you prefer UMCOR to provide kits for you, include:

- \$12 for UMCOR to provide a Hygiene Kit
- \$11 for UMCOR to provide a School Kit
- \$65 for UMCOR to provide a Cleaning Kit



SEND ALL MONETARY DONATIONS (including \$1 shipping for each kit and \$1 for toothpaste) ON ONE CHECK, payable to: **Virginia United Methodist Conference** (earmarked for "UMCOR Kits") and mail to: **Treasurer, Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 5605, Glen Allen, VA 23058**

***DO NOT PACK MONETARY DONATIONS IN BOXES WITH KITS! CHECKS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE! Send money before or immediately after.**

Little things do mean a lot — especially when those little things are brought together as United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) kits. The contents of each of these “starter sets” are such simple, small things — pencils, tablets, wash cloths, latex gloves — but having or not having them can make a world of difference. That’s why School and Hygiene Kits are among the items most requested by our partners each year. The need is great, and we can never have too many on hand. Collecting materials for kits is a great group hands-on project for young and old alike. For packing and shipping instructions, please refer to www.umcor/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies.

School Kit

- 1 pair blunt scissors, rounded-tip only; no plastic scissors
- Three 1-subject notebooks; no marble composition books; no 3-or 5-subject notebooks
- 1 pack of loose-leaf paper; 100-200-page packets are acceptable; wide or college-rule accepted
- 1 hand-held pencil sharpener; must be at least 1" or longer – remove from packaging
- One 12" or 30-centimeter ruler, sturdy or flexible material accepted
- 6 unsharpened pencils
- One 2" or larger eraser
- 24-count box of crayons; only 24-count boxes accepted
- One 2-gallon re-sealable plastic bag.

Assembly: Stack all paper items on top of each other. Place all loose items on top of paper; small, loose items may be placed in a smaller re-sealable bag. Place kit inside of re-sealable bag and seal

Hygiene Kit

- 1 hand towel 15" x 25" to 17" x 27"; no kitchen, cleaning or microfiber towels
- 1 wash cloth
- 1 comb – must be sturdy with at least 6" of teeth; no pocket combs or picks; rattails and combs without handles are acceptable but must have at least 6" of teeth
- One toenail or fingernail clipper; no emery boards or metal nail files
- 10 adhesive bandages (3/4 by 3 inches); common household bandages acceptable
- 1 bath size soap – 3 oz. bar or larger; no Ivory or Jergen’s soap; do not remove from original packaging
- 1 adult-size toothbrush; do not remove from original packaging; personal advertising not acceptable
- One one-gallon size re-sealable bag
- \$1.00 to purchase toothpaste

Assembly: Lay hand towel flat on a table; lay the washcloth in the center of the hand towel; place all remaining items on top of the washcloth (except the plastic bag); fold the sides of the hand towel to cover the items; grasp the bundle tightly and roll over the remainder of the towel; place the tightly rolled bundle in the plastic bag, remove air, and seal.

Note: “All Items must be new. Do not wash any of the items, as they will no longer be considered new. Do not include any personal notes, money or additional materials in the kits. Contents of kits or the containers of kits should not be imprinted with

cartoon characters, advertisements, religious, patriotic, military or camouflage symbols.

UMCOR is now purchasing toothpaste in bulk before shipping to ensure that the product does not expire. **Do not put single dollar bills in each kit.** Toothpaste money must be sent to the Virginia Conference with shipping monies.

Cleaning Kit

- One five-gallon round bucket with resealable lid (14.35" h x 12.19" w x 12.19" d); no screw lids; may be used, but must be free from all residual product; advertisements on the outside acceptable
- One 32-64 oz. bottle liquid laundry detergent
- One 16-40 oz. bottle liquid concentrate household cleaner; no spray cleaners
- One 16-34 oz. bottle dish soap
- One 4-8 oz. pump spray air freshener (three solid, or three gel fresheners also acceptable)
- One 6-14 oz. pump spray insect repellent (pack of 10-20 wipes also acceptable); pump spray bottles must have protective covers
- One scrub brush; with or without handle
- 18 re-useable cleaning wipes: no terrycloth, microfiber or paper towels; remove from packaging
- 5 scouring pads sponges; no stainless steel pads with soap in them, remove from packaging
- 36-50 clothespins
- One 50-100 ft. clothesline (cotton or plastic line)
- 24-roll of heavy-duty trash bags (33-45 gallon sizes); remove from packaging
- Five N95 particulate respirator dust masks (1-3 mm thickness); no surgical masks
- 2 pairs kitchen gloves; durable for multiple uses; remove from packaging
- 1 pair work gloves; cotton with leather palm or all leather

Assembly: Place all liquid items in the bucket first. Place remaining items in the bucket fitting them around and between the liquid items. Scouring pads and trash bags can be separated in order to fit all of the items in the bucket. Clothes pins may also be placed in a small re-sealable bag. Secure the lid on the filled bucket.

Notes: All items must be new with the exception of the bucket and lid. All cleaning agents must be liquid form. No powders are accepted. If items have been omitted, label bucket. Please indicate which items are missing.

God's mission in the world has no boundaries. Although when we first think of mission, we usually think of ministry in some other part of the world. We also know that the need for us to participate in God's mission is most evident next door. Our call to mission and ministry in Virginia is represented by the following Virginia Advance Specials, which have been chosen for special emphasis by the conference Missional Ministries Board. These mission opportunities provide individuals and churches an opportunity to know that 100 percent of their gift goes directly to the project — another benefit of our United Methodist connection! For more information about these Virginia Conference Advance Specials, visit the conference website at www.vaumc.org/Mission.

Virginia Conference Advance Specials

- 1. Rocky Mount: Henry Fork Service Center:** Henry Fork Service Center seeks to make God's love visible by being a positive Christian presence in the neighborhood south of Rocky Mount, Va. Age appropriate activities for children ages 2-14 include Christian education, academic enrichment, nutrition, recreation and opportunities for the arts.
www.henryforkcenter.org (#5008)
- 2. Roanoke: United Methodist Community Outreach Program:** A direct-service provider for children and youths of poverty in inner-city Roanoke. It addresses basic needs of poverty such as food and clothing, and provides a safe environment for children and youths in dealing with issues of violence, racism, drug and alcohol abuse. ...
www.communityoutreachroanoke.org (#5004)
- 3. Virginia Conference Disaster Response and Recovery:** Coordinates preparation, response and recovery in the conference during times of disaster. This addresses the personnel needed, equipment required and Christian witness that is desired in such situations.
vacdrt1@gmail.com (#5037)
- 4. Eastern Shore: Agape Christian Children's Community Center, Inc.:** An outreach ministry to children at high risk for abuse, neglect and school drop-out on the Eastern Shore. Sharing Christ through programs like preschool, Vacation Bible School and computer training.
dougbchild@gmail.com (#5020)
- 5. Abukloi: Virginia:** This 501c3 organization, started by clergywomen of the Virginia Conference is located in Virginia and works to improve education in Rumbek, South Sudan Africa by supporting and helping operate a Secondary School.
nelanb@aol.com (#5033)
- 6. Northern Virginia: ESL and Immigrant Ministries:** A network of churches offering English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to northern Virginia immigrant communities. Provides volunteer recruitment, student recruitment and administrative support for its partner ESL programs.
www.eslim.org (#5036)

(Below) Rising Hope UMC in Alexandria



- 7. **Teens Opposing Poverty, Inc. (TOPS):** Provides opportunities for youths to serve and share Christ to the poor and homeless. (#5010)
www.teensopposingpoverty.org
- 8. **Virginia: Heart Havens:** Provides residential support for adults with intellectual disabilities through a network of 12 homes across Virginia. Heart Havens' homes offer a Christian, faith-based home environment, empowering individuals to be independent, contributing citizens in their community.
www.hearthavens.org (#6442)
- 9. **Lynchburg: Park View Community Mission:** The United Methodist Church's Four Areas of Focus converge at Park View Community Mission, an outreach ministry of the Lynchburg District.....(#5019)
parkviewmission@gmail.com
www.parkviewcommunitymission.org
- 10. **Portsmouth: Wesley Community Service Center:** A national mission institution related to the United Methodist Women, Inc., offering programs and services in the tradition of the historic settlement house movement in America, aimed at empowering the poor and marginalized while conveying a message of human dignity and worth for all persons. (#5025)
www.wesleycenterportsmouth.com
wesley@wesley.hrcoxmail.com
- 11. **Richmond: Belmont Community Resource Services:** Is a non-profit ministry of Belmont UMC addressing community development needs and activities in a neighborhood in transition
larrycochran@vaumc.org..(#5039)
- 12. **Pathways:** Advancing community restoration, spiritual and physical health, and economic growth in Petersburg through partnerships. Programs include youth and workforce development, affordable green housing production, civic en-

agement, and free specialty health services. (#5045)
www.pathways-va.org

- 13. **Charlottesville: Tuesday's Table:** An outreach ministry that provides meals to the hungry in the community. (#5024)
www.stanardsvilleumc.org
- 14. **Alexandria: Rising Hope United Methodist Mission Church:** This ministry meets the needs of the poor through programs such as food, clothing, emergency assistance, after school care and others. The programs are run by volunteers.
www.risinghopeumc.org... (#5043)
- 15. **Caretakers of God's Creation:** Virginia Conference Bd. Of Church and Society project that develops and promotes resources for churches to become "Green Churches" in their efforts to become environmentally sustainable.(#5016)
jaydeehanson@gmail.com
- 16. **Highland Support Project:** HSP networks Indigenous communities of the Americas with financial, technical and political support to enlarge people's freedom and opportunities and improve their well-being. (#5007)
ben@highlandsupportproject.org

- 17. **Journey Community Center:** A multi-program mission of Journey Church to at risk children and adults in rural western Amelia County. (#5009)
director@jccenter.org
- 18. **Waynesboro: Basic UMC – God's Table Ministry:** Providing a ministry of outreach to poor and marginalized in a bilingual, multi-cultural community through meals as well as serving other missional needs.
chadbeck@vaumc.org..... (#5038)
- 19. **Una Familia:** Ministry of the Eastern Shore District serving migrant and immigrant families in the areas of after school tutoring, translation, accompaniment and advocacy. (#5027)
veronicabarrell@vaumc.org
- 20. **Crossroads Mission Center:** A mission center of the Rappahannock River District providing worship (Messy Church), missional outreach in the form of food, clothing, hygiene supplies and school tutoring in King William County. (#5028)
www.crossroadsmissioncenter.org

Virginia Advance Specials that are also supported through General Board of Global Ministries:

- **Arlington: Just Neighbors Ministry:** Offering immigration legal services to low-income immigrant communities. Also, involved in bringing immigrant and non-immigrant communities together through community clinics. (#803002)
www.justneighbors.org
- **Jeremiah Project:** Empowering middle school students and providing home repairs for God's people in need (#3021220)
www.jeremiahproject.org

Participating in God's mission and ministry is where our United Methodist connection may be strongest. Through our participation in programs and projects across the United States by giving to the Advance, we make a difference in the lives of people who need our caring presence.

The "Caring Connection" of National Missions Institutions related to the Missional Ministries Board includes 103 institutions located across the United States such as community centers, schools, colleges, health care facilities and women's residences. Through these ministries we can participate as witnesses to the redeeming love of God in Christ to those in special need: the stranger, the hungry, the broken and hurting. Your gift makes a difference, and 100 percent of your gift through the Advance goes to the project or ministry. The mission and ministries listed below are being promoted by the conference Missional Ministries Board for 2018-2019. For more information about these projects, visit www.vaumc.org/Mission.

National Advance Specials

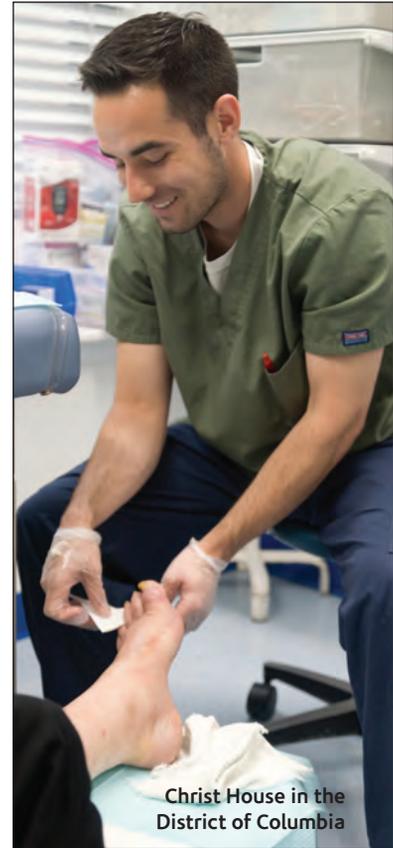
- 1. District of Columbia: Christ House**
A recovery facility that provides for the physical and emotional needs of homeless men and women..... (#381215)
- 2. Kentucky: Red Bird Mission, Inc., Beverly**
Community education and outreach programs in rural Appalachia. (#773726)
- 3. Tennessee: Jubilee Project, Inc., Sneedville**
Leadership development and community organizing in an impoverished area. (#781350)
- 4. Kentucky: Henderson Settlement, Frakes**
Programs for disadvantaged teenagers, parents and the elderly. (#773365)
- 5. South Dakota: Tree of Life Ministry**
A ministry with Native Americans at the Rosebud and Crow Creek Reservations. (#123615)
- 6. USA: Justice for Our Neighbors Immigration Ministry**
Engaging congregations to welcome immigrants and provide free, quality immigration legal services. ... (#901285)
- 7. Southeastern Jurisdiction: Volunteers In Mission**
Assists those offering their skills in this country and abroad..... (#901875)
- 8. USA: Response and Recovery to Natural Disaster**
Responds to emergencies such as tornadoes and flooding throughout the United States. (#901670)
- 9. Society of St. Andrew**
Provides direct relief to the hungry through three main programs: Gleaning Network, Potato Project and Harvest of Hope education retreat program. The ministries provide unique opportunities for United Methodists to live their faith as disciples of Jesus Christ..... (#801600)
- 10. Mississippi: Choctaw United Methodist Mission**
Progressing towards health and wholeness and developing Choctaw leadership. (#761544)

For more than 60 years, The Advance is an official program of the United Methodist Church for voluntary, designated, second-mile giving. The Advance allows local churches and individuals to extend their reach into the world.

- The Advance works with church leaders around the world to ensure that approved projects are aligned with the goals of The United Methodist Church in the local area, and helps develop partnerships that are mutually advantageous.
- The Advance also communicates with donors, sharing stories about projects and missionaries as well as reporting on how gifts are making an impact.
- Advance funds provide the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) not only a source to meet needs through its programming but also a source of private funds that can be significantly leveraged with other grant funds to scale programs to meet even more needs and duplicate these gifts.
- When there is a disaster, The Advance sets up an emergency Advance number so that churches and individuals can immediately donate to the disaster relief. This provides funding for immediate use and helps plan for long-term response.
- All project leaders complete an application and go through a review process to attain Advance status. Accountability is assured through annual reporting and Global Ministries' audits to ensure that funds are used as described in the application.

Why Should I Give Through The Advance?

- One hundred percent of each gift reaches the project, missionary or ministry you choose. Administrative costs are paid for by the apportionments of United Methodist churches. One Great Hour of Sharing covers UMCOR's administrative costs, as UMCOR receives no apportionment funds.
- All Advance projects are related to annual conferences, central conferences, partner churches or interfaith organizations. They are screened by the General Board of Global Ministries and authorized by The Advance Committee.
- Giving through The Advance enables United Methodists to partner with one another in mission and ministry around the world.
- Churches and annual conferences receive Advance credit by having their gifts included in each year's total giving by the annual conference.
- The Advance tracks each gift and ensures that gifts reach their intended recipients. This methodology provides an additional layer of accountability when you give.



Christ House in the District of Columbia



Red Bird Mission in rural Appalachia



Our conference participates in God's mission in many places around the world. We have long-term partnerships in Brazil, Mozambique and Cambodia through our Initiatives of Hope ministry as well as a history working with United Methodist partners in Africa, Cuba, the Philippines, Central and South America, the Caribbean and Russia.

We also continue to explore new ways and places of being in mission through our United Methodist connection as global needs emerge and Christ's church develops and grows internationally.

The international Advance Specials listed below have been selected by the conference Missional Ministries Board for special attention this year. They represent mission and ministry settings across the globe and encompass various missional needs. Remember that by giving to them through the Advance you ensure that 100 percent of your gift goes to the mission or ministry that you designate. For more information about these projects, visit www.vaumc.org/Mission.

(Below) A Kamina woman who needs medical care is helped onto Wings of the Morning for a flight to Lumumbashi. (Photo courtesy of Betty Kazadi Musau from umnews.org.)

International Advance Specials



- 1. Global: Sustainable Agriculture** Provides training in environmentally friendly and technologically appropriate practices in farming and off-farming activities to small-scale farmers to improve their livelihoods. (#982188)
- 2. Mexico: Give Ye Them To Eat** Strengthens the capabilities of marginalized people and communities to meet their own basic needs and to assist them in determining and sustaining a just and integrated development process. (#07629A)
- 3. Macedonia: Macedonia In Mission Together** Developing leaders and working with the poor, orphaned and disabled. (#00220A)
- 4. Brazil: Ministry with Children, Shade and Fresh Water Project** Outreach to children who are hungry, uneducated and endangered by life on the streets. (#11580A)



Graduates from the Bethlehem Bible College. (Courtesy of the Bethlehem Bible College Facebook page.)

- 5. **Sierra Leone: Child Rescue Center Program**
Operation of a residential facility and community outreach program for orphaned children and those impacted by poverty. ... (#14377A)
- 6. **Sudan: Sudan Development**
To assist the people of Sudan in meeting acute human needs due to drought, locust invasion, civil strife and floods. Funds will be used to provide food relief, medical assistance, clothing, blankets and shelter. (#184385)
- 7. **Anti-Human Trafficking**
Working with those ensnared in trafficking of humans for commercial and sexual exploitation. (#333615)
- 8. **Israel: Bethlehem Bible College**
Training Christian leaders to serve the community and stop the decline of churches in the Holy Land. (#12017A)
- 9. **Cambodia: Street Children**
Improving quality of life through education, nutrition and fellowship support. (#14921A)

- 10. **Vietnam Mission Initiative**
Supporting congregational development, pastors' salaries, orphanage ministry and building projects. (#14932A)
- 11. **Mozambique: Chicuque Rural Hospital**
Serving as a model in the delivery of quality primary and preventative health care and staff training. (#09734A)
- 12. **Congo: North Katanga Wings of the Morning**
Meeting critical medical needs through air transportation for the needy in rural areas. (#08597A)
- 13. **Liberia: Ganta United Methodist Hospital**
Providing community and curative health services and training through hospital and village work. (#15080N)
- 14. **Cambodia: Mission Initiative**
Supporting new churches, pastors' salaries, leadership development and outreach ministries. (#00230A)

- 15. **Sierra Leone Water and Development Ministry**
Providing clean water, medical care, education and spiritual inspiration for the community. (#181000)
- 16. **Eurasia: Ukraine & Moldova Projects**
Funding pastors' salaries and church ministries and establishing new churches. (#14053A)



The primary mission focus partnerships of the Virginia Conference



Initiatives of Hope (IOH) serves as the team, which guides and monitors the mission partnerships of the Virginia Conference. It seeks to create and monitor those partnerships based on a mission theology of mutuality, respect, compassion and accountability. IOH offers travel-learning opportunities that promote long-term relationships between individuals in Virginia United Methodist faith communities and our partners that break down cultural and national borders.

Currently IOH promotes four partnerships – Mozambique, Brazil, Cambodia, and Native Peoples in the U.S.

The ministry and mission of IOH is risky and challenging as it seeks to address issues of dependence, privilege and sustainability. However, it is also life changing as we begin to see the world in relationship rather than divided by wealth and power. Our partners are our teachers as well as fellow sojourners in the faith.

Our partnerships are aimed at providing opportunities for connection and understanding as well as resources that can be shared mutually and sustainably. Among them are:

- **Church leadership training** for clergy and lay leaders of The United Methodist Church of Mozambique and Cambodia;
- **Promoting education** through scholarships for children and youths in Cambodia and Mozambique.
- **Early childhood and youth intervention** through the Shade & Fresh Water ministry in cities across Brazil;
- **Creating Opportunities** for learning and growing relationships between Virginia United Methodists and the Native Peoples of Virginia and across the U.S.
- **Medical and dental care** through the United Methodist medical boat on the Amazon in Brazil and at Chicuque Rural Hospital in Mozambique;

The Shade and Fresh Water Project is a national network to help local Methodist churches in Brazil develop supervised activities to keep children off the streets





People waiting to be seen at the Chicique Rural Hospital in Mozambique. (Photo credit: Nick Ruxton)

HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

Learn

- Go to the IOH webpage to learn more about our partnerships with Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia and Native Peoples: www.vaumc.org/Mission, click on "Initiatives of Hope."
- Review and use the IOH mission worship and education resources found at www.vaumc.org/Mission, click on "Initiatives of Hope."
- Invite an UMVIM volunteer who has visited Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia or Native Peoples to come to a mission event at your church.
- Plan a Mission Awareness event at your church.

Go

- Participate on an UMVIM team serving Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia or Native Peoples.

Give

- Support the Annual Conference Offering for Initiatives of Hope.
- Support the Advance projects related to our partner ministries with Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia and Native Peoples.
- Support individuals and teams that are serving as short-term UMVIM volunteers with Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia and Native Peoples.
- Enter into a covenant relationship with a missionary from Brazil, Mozambique or Cambodia.

Pray

- For Native Peoples and the people of Brazil, Mozambique and Cambodia.
- For the Virginia Conference Mission teams serving Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia and Native Peoples.
- For God to guide you in how you might serve.



Clara Biswas



Dr. Quynh-Hoa Nguyen



John Elmore



Poto Valentine Shutsha



Jacques Akasa Umembudi



Lisa Nichols



Ngoy Mulanga Kalangwa



Umba Ilunga Kalangwa



Emily Everett

Cambodia

Virginia

Vietnam

God continues to call persons to full-time mission service through the General Board of Global Ministries, the global mission agency of The United Methodist Church, its annual conferences, missionary conferences and local congregations. Your congregation participates in support of missionaries through your connectional apportionment to World Service.

These missionaries are serving in more than 60 countries sharing their gifts of teaching, health care, evangelism, refugee assistance, community development and congregational development as they serve God's mission and share the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed. Through their work, these missionaries serve in partnership in ministry and mission with those in need of support and love.

There are several categories of mission service that seek both financial and prayer support:

■ **Missionaries Serving Internationally:** Persons who have answered the call to serve outside their home country for a term, usually three years (renewable).

■ **Church and Community Workers (CCW):** Persons commissioned to serve in mission ministries and settings that uplift the poor and disenfranchised in rural and urban areas primarily in the United States. CCWs are assigned to cooperative parishes, ethnic ministries, criminal justice ministries, congregational health ministries, immigration, rural and urban ministries and disaster response.

■ **Individual Volunteers Program:** Persons who have answered the call to serve in mission for a determined period of time, from two months to two years as a volunteer. This is for individuals or couples ages 18 and over who wish to use their personal gifts to engage and live in community with those whom they serve. The type of work is as varied as the placement sites, offering service opportunities around the world and in the U.S.

■ **National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries (NPHLM):** NPHLM is a coordinated effort of The United Methodist Church to focus on the development and strengthening of Hispanic/Latino ministries. It seeks to incorporate the missionary placements into the ongoing ministries of the annual conference by the end of the first or, at the most, at the end of the second term of a three-year assignment.

INTERNATIONAL

Brazil:

Shade and Fresh Water Program
Emily Everett (# 3022399)
EEverett@umcmmission.org

Cambodia:

Clara Biswas (#13952-Z)
clarabiswas@online.com.kh

Chile:

John Elmore (#13109Z)
jelmore@umcmmission.org

Democratic Republic of Congo:

Poto Valentine Shutsha (#14163Z)
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Jacques Akasa Umembudi (#14020Z)
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Vietnam:

Dr. Quynh-Hoa Nguyen (#3021965)
QNgyuen@umcmmission.org
Nguyenlqh@yahoo.com

Tanzania:

Ngoy Mulanga Kalangwa (#15162Z)
umbakalangwa@hotmail.com

Umba Ilunga Kalangwa (#14211Z)
umbakalangwa@hotmail.com

U.S. BASED

Lisa Nichols (#982953)
lisanichols@cs.com

There are more than 350 Global Ministries missionaries serving in more than 60 countries who are available for support through a Covenant Relationship. Individuals and churches can partner with a missionary and provide financial, spiritual and emotional support. The missionaries listed on these pages have been highlighted for support because of their work in mission settings supported by the Virginia Conference. You are asked to consider supporting them through a Covenant Relationship.

HOW TO SUPPORT A MISSIONARY: Covenant Relationships

A local church or church group	An individual or family
Commit to an annual gift of a minimum of \$5 per member.	Commit to an annual gift of \$500 per individual or family.
Complete the Covenant Relationship Form which is found on the Virginia Conference website at www.vaumc.org/Mission , click on "Missionaries" then see "Start a Covenant." Complete the form and e-mail, fax or mail it to the Center for Justice and Missional Excellence as directed on the form.	

This partnership is much more than a financial commitment. It is a dynamic relationship where the church and missionary pray for one another and communicate regularly. When you covenant with one missionary, you are supporting the entire United Methodist missionary community on their behalf and in their name.



(Left): Missionary Clara Mridula Biswas gathers with some of the poor children with whom she serves in the slums of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. She assists children at an orphanage center with education, offers Christmas and Easter programs and religious education, and works with families who pick through garbage dumps to earn a meager living. (UMNS file photo/courtesy GBGM)

Moving Forward

our calling in the world



Is God calling you to help change the world through mission service? Young people all over the world are encouraged to apply to serve as a United Methodist Global Mission Fellow or Individual Volunteer. For more information visit www.umcmmission.org/gt.



Global Mission Fellows

Fellows commit to 24-25 months of service. Applicants from the United States can choose to serve either domestically or internationally. At this time applicants outside of the United States will be serving internationally outside of one's home country.

Global Mission Fellows U-2 Track

- Serve 24 months in a marginalized community within the United States.
- 1 month training and itineration
- 23 months of service within the United States
- Service begins in July and ends in July, 24 months later.

Global Mission Fellows International Track

- Serve 25 months outside of one's home country.
- 1.5 months of training and transition
- 20 months of international service
- 3.5 months transition, itineration, and project-oriented reintegration
- Project-oriented reintegration could include helping to train the next class of Global Mission Fellows, itineration, being a missionary-in-residence, or developing/joining a local project.
- Service begins in July and ends in August, 25 months later.

(Below): Global Mission Fellows in Detroit May 2019.



Virginia Volunteers in Mission (VAVIM) is an opportunity for short-term hands-on ministry that offers everyone the opportunity to serve in mission. VAVIM follows the United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) model of being “Christian Love in Action” with teams building ongoing relationships with communities as they serve locally to internationally. VAVIM partners with projects which empower others and promote sustainability. VAVIM teams call for persons of various skills and abilities from construction to mentoring and teaching, from supporting health care initiatives to assisting in cleaning up debris after disasters, from leading Vacation Bible Schools to the selfless act of simply being present in mission settings with those who need a listening ear and a caring word.

Teams are especially encouraged to work in the three countries of our conference Initiatives of Hope mission partnerships in Brazil, Cambodia and Mozambique. In those settings your team may be asked to work in construction or repair of homes, churches, parsonages or schools. Working with street children or helping with a medical team to teach primary health care or help with a clinic are other possibilities. In all cases, VAVIM teams are encouraged to build relationships that bring new understanding of how serving God’s mission in the world addresses injustice and transforms lives on both sides of the borders that are crossed.



Forrest White with Alejandro in Havana.

What is required to send out an UMVIM team from your church?

The Virginia Conference Volunteers in Mission requires the following:

- Each team will be led by a trained VAVIM team leader. Team leaders must have participated in at least one Volunteer in Mission trip. There are several team leader training events held across the conference throughout the year. Visit the website at www.vaumc.org/Mission for more details.
- Team leaders must have a cleared background check prior to the trip, and all team members must also have a cleared background check if the team is working with children, youths or at-risk adults.
- The team must be insured. International travel insurance is provided through the Southeastern Jurisdiction UMVIM office (www.umvim.org).

How does your church send out a team?

- Determine the team’s focus for the project (construction, educational, informational, medical, etc.).
- Decide where you want to go, when you plan to go and return, and then determine the cost. This all needs research. You can find team sites at www.umvim.org or by checking the VAVIM page of the Virginia Conference website: www.vaumc.org/Mission. You may also decide that persons from your church may want to join team members from other churches who are going on one of the VAVIM conference promoted trips.
- Present your proposal to your Outreach or Mission chairperson as well as your pastor for support. Next, go to the administrative council for approval as a church mission project.

For more information about **UMVIM** opportunities, contact:

Rebecca Makowski
(703) 430-2203
rebecca.makowski@galileeumc.org

Center for Justice and Missional Excellence
Glenn Rowley
(804) 521-1142
CindyIngroff@vaumc.org
www.vaumc.org/Mission

Moving Forward

to our neighbors in need



(Below): UMVIM activities from the UMVIM SE Jurisdiction Facebook page.

When you cross borders, national borders or imaginary borders right in your community that divide classes, races or ethnic groups, you will find Christ on the other side of that border and it will change your life! If your faith community is exploring taking your first VIM team or you are looking for team members to complete your team, check out the VAVIM page on the conference website, www.vaumc.org/vaumvim, or scan the QR code and the VAVIM facebook page at www.facebook.com/VirginiaUMVIM for a listing of teams going from our conference. Make contact with the team leader and inquire about joining one of those teams.

Just remember, Volunteers in Mission is first about relationships and then about what work you do. Long after the work is completed, the relationships you built that changed your life will still be touching you and those around you.

Registering your team

The Virginia Volunteers in Mission (VAVIM) policy requests that every team representing a faith community in the Virginia Conference register their team online with the Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ) office at www.umvim.org. This is important for many reasons but primarily it is to make sure that each team has met the requirements for best practices of United Methodist Volunteers in Mission. Registration also allows your team the option to purchase medical insurance from the SEJ office if your team is traveling outside the U.S. at a nominal fee. When you register, it also allows SEJ to provide information on all the teams that travel from our conference to the conference office of Justice and Missional Excellence.

Teams that select not to use the insurance program may register with SEJ at no cost. Teams that select to use the insurance program continue to pay the additional processing fees. The insurance processing fees provide vital funding for staff and resources since UMVIM SEJ receives no funds from the Southeastern Jurisdiction or through apportionments. UMVIM SEJ is again able to offer travel medical insurance for teams traveling in the U.S. For information on the insurance, cost and fees, go to: http://umvim.org/send_a_team/insurance_faq.html.

For a video tutorial of the SEJ registration process go to: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qd_iB4B9hPE.



Scan the QR code below with your phone to visit the VAVIM Facebook page for the most updated information on leader training and trip details.



Response to Disaster

Moving Forward

When people talk about disasters, most are referring to natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornados, and floods. United Methodist Disaster Response is so much more. By definition, a disaster is “a sudden event, such as an accident or a natural catastrophe, that causes great damage or loss of life” or “an event or fact that has unfortunate consequences.”

In the last several years, the people of the Virginia Annual Conference have truly been a missional church. They have responded multiple times with Early Response Teams to tornados, hurricanes, and floods as well as having responded to a mass casualty incident with Spiritual and Emotional Crisis Care Teams. Disaster response is about doing church by being the face, hands, and feet of Christ to God’s children in their time of greatest need.

Every disaster is a local disaster, and it begins and ends with the local church community. Programs, through UMCOR, are available to help local churches plan and respond to disaster events within their own communities. One of these programs, Early Response Team training, teaches people how to be first responders to a natural disaster. Teams learn how to make homes safe, sanitary, and secure for the affected families. The class is eight hours long and is taught by trained and certified UMCOR trainers within our own conference. For more information about this program or to schedule an ERT class, please email the **Rev. Kirk Culpepper** at disaterinfo@vaumc.org. Another training opportunity is UMCOR’s Connecting Neighbors program, which offers “just in time” resources to local churches to assist them in helping their local communities after a disaster. For more information about these and other UMCOR programs please visit www.umcor.org.

In this digital world, information is available at the touch of a button. Smart phone applications (apps) are

available for download from UMCOR, FEMA, Red Cross, and Ready Virginia to help people prepare for disasters. A good weather app is also important!

Disaster ministry is a mission field. We touch the lives of many through the generous efforts of volunteers and financial supporters. Many survivors have said that they had no idea the church would help and that without us, they felt there was no hope. You too can be part of your neighbor’s recovery efforts following a disaster by volunteering, making UMCOR kits, or by giving to the Annual Conference Advance Special #5037. Giving to the Advance Special is important because it is our first line of funding for any disaster within the Annual Conference. Remember, every disaster is a local disaster.

For further information about these and other disaster related questions, please contact the Virginia Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, **Rev. Bob Pihlcrantz**, at vacdr1@gmail.com or by calling **(757) 408-6653** or **1 (866) 264-8488**.



Special Program and Sustaining grants to local churches/faith groups reaching out into communities

Because the mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, the Virginia Conference has long seen the need to assist churches which are reaching out into their communities. The Common Table and the United Methodist Women have combined their resources to assist in this work.

A total of \$58,600 will be distributed to the mission projects listed on these pages. Descriptions of these projects can be found at www.vaumc.org/specialprogramgrants. For more information about a specific project, or how you can assist, contact the appropriate persons listed below; or call Bev Myers in the conference office of Connectional Ministries at (804) 521-1100, ext. 134, or e-mail BevMyers@vaumc.org.

Special Program Grants

ARLINGTON DISTRICT

The Joseph Initiative (Herndon UMC)

Johathan Page
1005 Van Buren St.
Herndon, VA 20170
403-707-6271
JonathanPage@vaumc.org

DANVILLE DISTRICT

NetworX (Redwood UMC),

Susan Hughes
3001 Old Franklin Tpk.
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-493-8715
SusanHughes@vaumc.org

EASTERN SHORE DISTRICT

UNA FAMILIA

Veronica Barrell
P.O. Box 317
Parksley, VA 23421
804-304-0656
unafamilia2013@gmail.com

FARMVILLE DISTRICT

SHEEP (South Hill UMC)

Nancy Merrel
105 Franklin St.
South Hill, VA 23970
434-774-7885
sheep@southhillumc.org

HARRISONBURG DISTRICT

Learning Mountain (Mt. Hermon UMC)

Darlene Wilkins
P.O. Box 1105
New Market, VA 22844
540-758-1311
DarleneWilkins@vaumc.org

RICHMOND DISTRICT

Nurturing the VCU Community

Katie Gooch
The Pace Center
700 West Franklin St.
Richmond, VA 23220
804-658-4064

Ginter Park Food Pantry & Clothes Closet

Dennis Lipke
1010 W. Laburnum Ave.
Richmond, VA 23227
804-262-8651
dlipke@GinterParkUMC.org



Henry Fork Service Center



Kids Soar

**Skipwith Backpack Ministry
(Skipwith UMC)**

Lois Parker
7501 Century Dr.
Henrico, VA 23229
804-288-4944
lois7501@verizon.net

STAUNTON DISTRICT**God's Table (Basic UMC)**

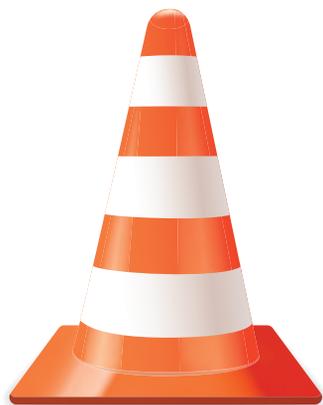
Chad Beck
P.O. Box 2447
Waynesboro, VA 22980
540-949-8947
chadbeck@vaumc.org

**Out of Our Hands
(Casa de Amistad)**

Chad Beck
P.O. Box 2447
Waynesboro, VA 22980
540-949-8947
chadbeck@vaumc.org

Just Neighbors Waynesboro

Chad Beck or Jenelle Watson
Wayne Hills Ministry Center
932 Fir St.
Waynesboro, VA 22980
540-649-7149
ChadBeck@vaumc.org
JenelleWatson@vaumc.org

**Sustaining
Program Grants****DANVILLE DISTRICT****Henry Fork Service Center:**

Lisa Nichols
P.O. Box 888
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-483-2819
lisanichols@cs.com

ELIZABETH RIVER DISTRICT**Club Sandwich**

Joann McClung
Wesley Memorial UMC
288 East Little Creek Rd.
Norfolk, VA 23505
757-587-2996
church@norwumc.org

FARMVILLE DISTRICT**Jane Jones Food Pantry
(Main St. UMC)**

Rev. Wayne Rickman
P.O. Box 119
South Boston, VA 24592
434-572-3290
mainstreetumc@embarqmail.com

LYNCHBURG DISTRICT**Amherst Cares
(Emmanuel UMC)**

Beth Gamble
297 Ridge Dr.
Amherst, VA 24521
434-946-7657
bethgamble3@comcast.net

**Weekend Meals
(Anderson Memorial UMC)**

Joan Yeatts
P.O. Box 773
Gretna, VA 24557
434-51-4628 (cell)
434-656-1800 (church)
joanyeatts@comcast.net

RICHMOND DISTRICT**Belmont Community
Resource Services
(Belmont UMC)**

Larry Cochran
3510 Broad Rock Blvd.
Richmond, VA 23234
804-516-9195
larrycochran@vaumc.org

**Sherbourne UMC
Food Pantry**

Sandy Sahnaw
2619 Sherbourne Rd.
North Chesterfield, VA 23237
804-559-0705 or
804-921-2187(c)
sahnaws@comcast.net

ROANOKE DISTRICT**KIDS SOAR**

Jan Keister
305 Mountain Ave. SW
Roanoke, VA 24015
540-342-3103
jkeister@kidssoar.org

STAUNTON DISTRICT**South Covington Care Pan-
try (South Covington UMC)**

Linda Black
5015 Castile Rd.
Covington, VA 24426
540-747-5261
540-968-6480 (c)
llblack47@aol.com


 Moving Forward

 with mental
health


It is difficult to ignore the statistics and daily stories surrounding the growing mental health crisis in our families, communities, churches, nation and world. Moving from awareness of the problem to discovering an appropriate compassionate response as Christian disciples is a challenge we cannot ignore.

We know according to John's gospel that Christ came for all to have life in abundance, yet for those suffering from mental illness abundant life may be seen as an impossible goal as they struggle daily to find meaning and purpose.

The Virginia Conference Missional Ministries Board (MMB) through the Abundant Health Initiative is encouraging faith communities to begin to address this crucial issue. The information on these two pages is offered as a resource to challenge you and your church to consider what role you can play in a ministry of serving and caring to those struggling with mental health challenges.

United Methodism statement on mental health

The World Health Organization defines mental health as “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

Unfortunately, mental health eludes many in our world resulting in considerable distress, stigma, and isolation. Mental illness troubles our relationships because it can affect the way we process information, relate to others, and choose actions. Consequently, mental illnesses often are feared in ways that other illnesses are not. Nevertheless, we know that regardless of our illness we remain created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) and that nothing can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8:38-39).

No person deserves to be stigmatized because of mental illness. Those with mental illness are no more violent than other persons are. Rather, they are much more likely to be victims of violence or preyed on by others. When stigma happens within the church, mentally ill persons and their families are further victimized.

Persons with mental illness and their families have a right to be treated with respect on the basis of common humanity and accurate information. They also have a right and responsibility to obtain care appropriate to their condition.

The United Methodist Church pledges to foster policies that promote compassion, advocate for access to care and eradicate stigma within the church and in communities.

¶ No.162, 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline

Statistics about Mental Illness in Virginia

■ Approximately 1,137,259 to 1,497,870 adults in Virginia (age 18+) have any mental illness. "Any mental illness" is defined based on diagnostic criteria in the 4th edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV). "Any mental illness" among adults aged 18 or older is the presence of any mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder in the past year that met DSM-IV criteria. Source: NIMH; SAMHSA NSDUH Report (2011)

■ Approximately 239,750 to 305,000 have a serious mental illness. Serious mental illness is defined as adults with a disorder meeting DSM criteria whose disorder caused substantial functional impairment (i.e. substantially interfered with or limited one or more major life activities) and the most urgent need for treatment. Source: NIMH; SAMHSA NSDUH Report (2011)

■ National prevalence rates suggest that about 100,000 children and adolescents in Virginia have a serious emotional disorder (SED) with about 65,000 of them being extremely impaired. Source: NIMH.

■ Almost a quarter million adults in Virginia live with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. Source: SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)

■ Almost 1 in 4 of Virginia's jail inmates live with a mental health disorder. Source: Virginia Compensation Board Annual Jail Survey.

■ The national rate of post-deployment mental health problems among returning veterans is about 15-20% at any given time.

■ Within Virginia, suicide ranked 11th for cause of death among residents and was the third leading cause among 10- to 24-year-olds. Source: Virginia Performs

■ Suicide rates have increased in Virginia and the nation, coinciding with the economic recession. In 2010, Virginia experienced 11.6 suicide deaths per 100,000 people, which is 39th out of the 50 states, or the 11th lowest age-adjusted suicide rate in the country. Source: Virginia Performs

– National Alliance on Mental Illness

Mental Health First Aid

■ Why Mental Health First Aid?

One in five Americans has a mental illness or substance use disorder, yet many are reluctant to seek help or simply don't know where to turn for care. Recognizing mental health and substance use challenges can be difficult, which is why it's so important for everyone to understand the warning signs and risk factors. Even when friends and family of someone who may be developing a mental illness recognize that something is amiss, they may not know how to intervene or direct the person to proper treatment. All too often, those in need of mental health services do not get them until it is too late.

■ What is Mental Health First Aid?

Mental Health First Aid teaches how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The 8-hour course introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health concerns, builds understanding of their impact and provides an overview of common treatments. Through role-playing and simulations, it demonstrates how to assess a mental health crisis; select interventions; provide initial help; and connect people to professional, peer and social supports as well as self-help resources.

Mental Health First Aid encourages early detection and intervention by teaching participants about the signs and symptoms of specific illnesses like anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, eating disorders and addictions. The program offers concrete tools and answers key

questions like "What can I do?" and "Where can someone find help?" Participants are introduced to local mental health resources, national organizations, support groups and online tools for mental health and addiction treatment and support. Mental Health First Aid USA is operated by the National Council for Behavioral Health. Contact Information is below.

■ HELPFUL RESOURCES

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

NAMI Virginia State Office
P.O. Box 8260 Richmond, VA
23226-0260
Helpline (800) 950-6264
(804) 285-8264
namivirginia.org

National Council for Behavioral Health

1400 K Street NW, Suite 400
Washington DC, 20005
www.thenationalcouncil.org

For more information on exploring mental health ministry outreach please contact:

Reba Miller

Virginia Conference coordinator for the Global Health Initiative and Health Ministry
(703) 966-3984
msrebamiller@gmail.com.

You may also contact the Virginia Conference Office of Justice and Missional Excellence:

Glenn Rowley

(804) 521-1143
glennrowley@vaumc.org

Mission Encounter 2020 Courses

2020

Weekend Session:
July 24-25, 2020

- **Spiritual Growth Study:** Finding Peace in the Midst of Anxiety
- **Anniversary Study:** United Methodist Women History
- **Issue Study:** Mass Incarceration
- **Children:** Growing in Peace Instead of Fear

For more information, visit www.vaumc.org/Mission, or contact the conference Mission office at: (804) 521-1142 CindyIngroff@vaumc.org

The best kept secret in the Virginia Conference! That's how this event has been described. Although its history began more than 70 years ago by the then-named Women's Society of Christian Service, and known as the School of Christian Mission for most of that history, the re-named Mission Encounter is a cooperative event sponsored by the Virginia Conference Missional Ministries Board and the Virginia Conference United Methodist Women. This event offers a wonderful opportunity for your whole congregation to come alive to mission by participating in an exciting weekend mission education experience.



If you have ever wondered not only how we **do** mission but also where we **are** in mission and, most importantly, why we are called to live out missional lives as disciples of Jesus Christ, this is the event to attend.

There are classes for adults where men, women, clergy and laity alike (of all ages) come to learn and be involved in mission groups by choosing one class out of three choices – a spiritual growth study, geographical study or social issue. Each study helps us to understand God's work in our world and how we are involved as United Methodists. The event is designed to challenge us to be in mission as individuals in our personal lives and in the lives of our local churches. Meeting others involved in mission and sharing ideas and mission stories as well as

meeting missionaries are highlights of the event.

It is an excellent "mission trip" for your youth. They have a fun time together as they learn about what United Methodists are doing around the world to alleviate suffering while spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. The youth participate in hands-on mission projects that range from gleaning to working in a shelter to helping the elderly in the area.

Participants are encouraged to share their new knowledge with their local church congregations. The courses being offered for the next two years are listed on the left.

To watch a video about Mission Encounter, go to [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search "Mission Encounter Virginia."



Healing and Hope for All

The Virginia Institute for Pastoral Care (VIPCare) is an interfaith counseling center open to everyone.

Our mission is to restore healing and hope through spiritually integrated counseling for clients of all ages (children, families, couples, and adults).

Call us if we can help.



VIPCare

VIRGINIA INSTITUTE
OF PASTORAL CARE

804.282.8332 • VIPCare.org



For children of incarcerated mothers or fathers



All God's Children Camp

The All God's Children Camp provides a week of sanctuary for children who face so many challenges in their lives – economic poverty, loneliness, low self-esteem, violence, drugs and temporary living conditions – while their mothers or fathers are incarcerated. Children spend a week at camp participating in activities such as boating, swimming, hiking, archery, music, crafts, Bible study and conflict resolution. The camp is now offered during the summer at different United Methodist camps. Below are ways to help break the cycle of incarceration:

Financial Contributions: Gifts from individuals, groups and churches make this ministry possible. A scholarship of \$425 sends one child to camp.

Mentoring: Volunteers come from churches across the conference to spend the week at camp. These mentors model to the children what God's presence means in their lives. Mentors do not lead activities, but rather provide supervision, companionship and compassion to the children during their daily activities. This is always our biggest need. Without mentors, camp would not be possible.

Supplies: Your Sunday school class, United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women or Vacation Bible School can help the camp by collecting needed supplies.

Transportation: Help drive some of the campers to and from camp. Caregivers do not always have the car, money for gas, time or energy to provide their own transportation for the children.

For more information, visit www.vaumc.org/agcc or contact **Lori Smith** at (804) 521-1138 or (571) 245-9591; or lori-smith@vaumc.org.



2020 Camp Rainbow Connection dates:
June 23–28 &
July 28–August 2

Commission on Disabilities

Embracing the inclusiveness of Christ:

- Accessibility, Program and Respite Grants and Scholarships
- Annual Conference accessibility
- Camp Rainbow Connection for adults with intellectual disabilities
- Disability Awareness Sunday (Feb. 2, 2020)
- Support and resources for ministries with persons with disabilities



Funds for programs and activities of the Commission on Disabilities come from individual and local church contributions and the support of United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women and other mission groups. Programs of the commission have been a mission focus of the conference United Methodist Men since 1972.

For more Commission on Disabilities information, contact MaryKaye Cochran at marykayecochran@vaumc.org or (804) 521-1155.

For more Camp Rainbow information, contact Cindy Ingroff at cindyingroff@vaumc.org or (804) 521-1142 or Stacy Roberts at stacyroberts@vaumc.org or (804) 521-1144.

Youth in Action Mission Opportunities

Youth in mission can be found across the conference sharing the love of God by being God's hands and feet. Check the Conference website for upcoming youth events and activities.

Voices of Youth

Youth Service Fund - For youths by youths:

Throughout the year, youths raise money so other youths can participate in mission. Churches can apply for grants from the Youth Service Fund by submitting an application by Feb. 24, 2020. Go to www.vaumc.org/YSF for an application.

Voices of Youth: Virginia high school students participate in a mission team as well as share their experience and personal vision of mission through concerts held in local Virginia churches to challenge church members to become involved in God's mission. VOY Contact: **Mary Letson at (757) 581-7250 or maryletson@gmail.com.**



For more information on youth mission opportunities:

Visit www.vaumc.org/youth or contact **Paulo Lopes** at the office of Ministries with Young People: **(804) 521-1135**; or PauloLopes@vaumc.org.

Virginia United Methodist Missional Partner Organizations

The ministries of the Health & Relief Team touch many lives, providing service throughout the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church. We value our relationship with the Virginia Conference and feel privileged to be a part of this ministry team. We are grateful for all of the support received each year from individuals, congregations and communities. Thank you. **If you or someone you know is seeking assistance, please contact us.**

We have differing missions but share a common ministry: To invest in supportive communities for seniors, families, children and people with disabilities.

PINNACLE
LIVING
888-673-1037
PinnacleLiving.org



703-642-3830
www.wesleyhousing.org

Heart Havens
877-442-8368
www.hearthavens.org

UMFS
855-367-8637
www.umfs.org

"Provider of Affordable Housing"
Virginia United Methodist Housing
Development Corporation
540-825-7654



10330 Staples Mill Road
 Glen Allen, VA 23060
 (804) 521-1100
 www.vaumc.org



Special Sundays in 2020

Special Sundays in The United Methodist Church are intended to illustrate the nature and calling of the church and are celebrated annually. Special Sundays are placed on the calendar in the context of the Christian year, which is designed to make clear the calling of the church as the people of God, and to give persons the opportunity to contribute offerings to special programs. Your support is critical to the survival of these important ministries (listed below) and for sharing God's gifts around the world.

Six General Conference-approved Special Sundays with offerings are listed in **boldface type**. Special Sundays, or time periods, with Virginia Conference-approved offerings are marked with an asterisk (*). Other times of special recognition approved by the General Conference and/or Virginia Conference are also listed.

Men's Ministry Sunday
 (any Sunday in the year)

United Methodist Volunteers In
 Mission (UMVIM) Awareness Sunday
 (any Sunday in the year)

January 19
Human Relations Day
 (Sunday before Martin Luther King Jr.'s
 birthday observance)

The month of February
 Heart Havens, Inc., Month*

February 2
 Disability Awareness Sunday
 (First Sunday in February)

March 22
UMCOR Sunday
 (Fourth Sunday of Lent)

April 26
Native American Ministries Sunday
 (Third Sunday of Easter)

May 3
 Older Adult Recognition Sunday
 (First Sunday in May)

May 3
 Rural Life Sunday
 (First Sunday in May)

May 10–June 21, 2020
 Mother's Day/Father's Day
 Samaritan Program Offering*
 (Pinnacle Living)

May 24
 Heritage Sunday
 (Sunday on or preceding
 Aldersgate Day, May 24)

The month of June
 Virginia Annual Conference Offering*
 National Hunger Awareness Day
 recognition during Worship
 (Any Sunday in June)

June 7
Peace with Justice Sunday
 (First Sunday after Pentecost)

The month of September
 Christian Education Sunday
 (Any Sunday in September)

October 4
World Communion Sunday
 (First Sunday in October)

October 11
 Children's Sabbath
 (Second Sunday in October or any time
 during the year)

October 18
 Laity Sunday
 (Third Sunday in October)

November 8
 Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday
 (Second Sunday in November)

November 29
United Methodist Student Day
 (Last Sunday in November)

The month of December
 UMFS of Virginia Month*