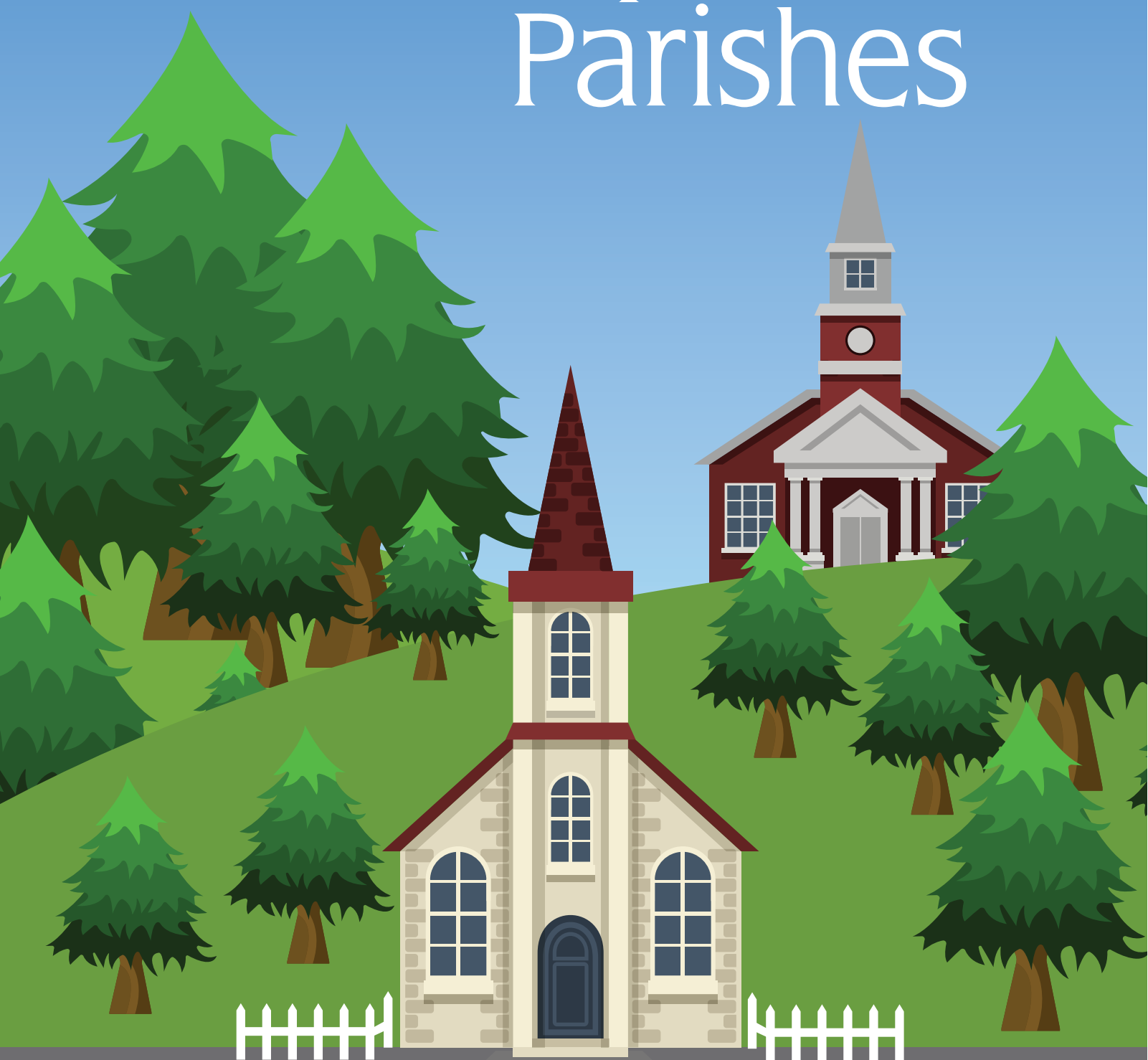


November 2018

# Advocate

## Cooperative Parishes



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Virginia Advocate

The official magazine of  
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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

Letters to the Editor are printed on a space-available basis. Letters should be limited to 150 words for space reasons. The Advocate will not print letters addressing a topic beyond two months of the publication of that issue. The Advocate editor reserves the right to edit all letters.

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# PILLOW TALK



Madeline Pillow

Editor

With our  
power  
comes  
responsi-  
bility

**I read an interesting article recently that explained exactly what you could buy if you had \$1 billion.** The author explained that an average person

doesn't understand the concept of that amount of money.

The author then did an update to his original post by sharing what the richest person in the world, Amazon's Jeff Bezos, could do with his estimated \$147.7 billion worth.

- ❖ He could end homelessness in America. An estimated 553,742 homeless persons could be handed \$50,000 to get a roof over their heads.
- ❖ He could fund every U.S. national park for 10 years.
- ❖ He could end world hunger for around \$30 billion.

The list went on and on. Ultimately, the summary was that even if Bezos did every single thing on the list, he would still be left with almost \$4 billion.

With great power comes great responsibility.

Reading this list, I immediately thought, "Come on, Jeff. Do it!"

There is responsibility in power. Power that comes through money and fame.

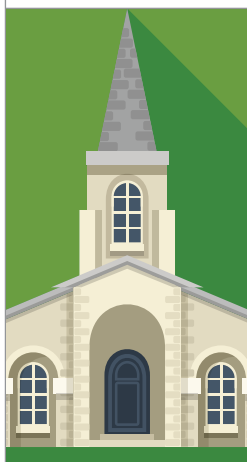
But lest we forget, we non-billionaires also have power. We have power through our spheres of influence, our contacts, our financial situations and, yes, even power in our kindness.

Who are the people we could be affecting in a positive way? What community could use our gifts and talents?

God has given us all power and with that comes responsibility. How are we living up to that task?

Until our next issue,

*Madeline C. Pillow*



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My father was a World War II veteran. My father-in-law was a member of the 8th Air Force and spent 13 months as a Prisoner of War in Stalag 13. My wife was an Army nurse in Vietnam, and I served a tour of duty in The Federal Republic of Germany. Both my father and father-in-law were quiet men of their generation and didn't speak a lot about their service, but they were proud to have made a small contribution to our country during great conflict. They were not highly militaristic or "drum beaters," but simple people of "America's Greatest Generation" who believed in the values of our nation.

bers who have served in our country's armed forces from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, to the present. A young member of our church is serving as a Marine on deployment to the Middle East. We have had soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines who have come back to become teachers, lawyers, salesmen, ministers, nurses and first responders. All of these men and women have been faithful followers of the teachings of Jesus Christ and the core values of United Methodism and have taken these values to improve our community in countless ways.

According to the Rev. G. Scott Henry, USAF retired, there are more than 400 United Methodist clergy leaders serving in our Armed Forces and Department of Veterans Affairs. We need to acknowledge, appreciate and affirm their service in caring for the spiritual needs of men and women serving on active and reserve duty. Although there are various governmental, civic and fraternal organizations that support our local veterans, our faith communities

We are certainly blessed that our United Methodist church in the Shenandoah Valley has taken the time each November to recognize the current and former members of our congregation who are currently serving our country in active service as well as the men and women veterans who have come back to our community to continue their lives. Bridgewater UMC is blessed to have mem-

## A Christian perspective on our debt to our veterans

**V**eteran's Day is one of my favorite holidays. I love the history, traditions and personal stories of the many men and women in our community who have honorably served our country in both peace and war.



*Letters to the Editor are printed on a space-available basis. Letters may be emailed to [MadelinePillow@vaumc.org](mailto:MadelinePillow@vaumc.org) by the first of the month.*




# COMMENTARY

need to be involved as well to provide for their emotional and spiritual needs which might be stressed and frayed because of multiple deployments, separation from families and recovering from horrific injuries. The tragic cases of high suicide rates, homelessness, under-employment, failure of the veteran's health care system to provide needed care and mental health issues from Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) provide everyone with a challenge to love, support and be there for our veterans.

In recent periods of our country's history, we have had a tendency to move on with our lives and forget our veterans. We must never forget that they deserve our love, respect and support. I strongly believe that United Methodist congregations have a



two-fold role during Veteran's Day. First, we should recognize the members serving on active duty either in the United States or abroad. Secondly, we should actively acknowledge, recognize and express our appreciation to all veterans for their role in our church, community and country. I would refer anyone seeking additional information on honoring our veterans to Tricia Brown's wonderful article located on the United Methodist website titled "How to Support the Military on Veteran's Day and Beyond" (<http://www.umc.org/how-we-serve/how-to-support-the-military-on-veterans-day-and-beyond>).

This is a subject that my wife and I feel quite strongly about. I believe that one of the most important functions of The United Methodist Church is the ability to connect and communicate with each and every one of its members. 

— Frank Vetting, Bridgewater, Va.

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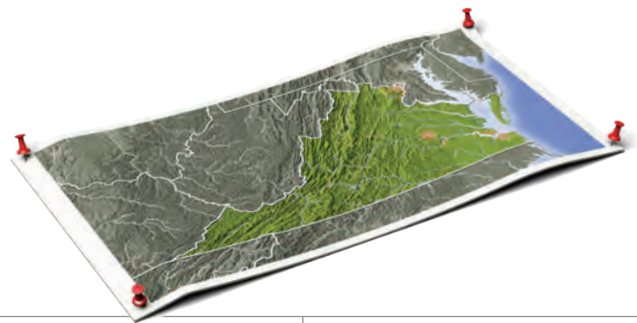
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# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



## New opportunities for mission in Haiti emerge from conference

By Jack Martin

**N**ew opportunities for Virginia Conference mission came into focus at the 2018 Partners Conference in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, an annual gathering of leaders primarily from the United States and Canada who work in close partnership with the Haitian Methodist Church (Eglise Methodiste D'Haiti, or EMH).

One of those opportunities is helping establish a Methodist School of Music to help strengthen worship in Haiti's churches by

offering training opportunities to the church's musicians.

My wife Marianne and I, along with the other attendees at the Partner's Conference, were driven to a large church about an hour from Port-au-Prince for Sunday morning worship. At one point during the service, our host pastor, the Rev. Marco Depestre, walked over to the organ and proceeded to play a couple of hymns. It was apparent that the other musicians were struggling to find the key and get the tune right to accompany the singing

of the church members. Depestre's playing brought everything together and the temporary cacophony became tuneful music.

Later that day, Marianne was chatting with Depestre and complimented him on his organ playing. He said, "Well, you saw what it was. Our people need more training, but there is no opportunity for our musicians. We need a music school for the church!"

She then told him that our background was in music, both of us having studied for a career in church music at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, N.J. We had both worked as church musicians and teachers for several years before entering pastoral ministry.

Depestre then shared his hope of bringing the Haitian Methodist Church and the Depestre Family Foundation together to eventually establish a Methodist school of music for church musicians.

After traveling back to Virginia, quite enthused that such a dream might actually become a reality, we shared this information with persons whom we knew had a genuine interest in helping

Construction is well underway for a Methodist School of Music near Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Photos courtesy of Jack Martin.





# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

the Haitian Church and especially its young people.

One such person was Bill Olson, a member of Grace Church in Manassas. After much discernment and seeing the possibilities for long-term involvement with the school of music, Olson helped secure the resources to fund the entire project, which was already in the design phase by a well-regarded Haitian Methodist architect and engineer. The upper floor will serve as the administrative office for the Petionville Circuit (counterpart to one of our districts) and the lower floor will house the school of music. The site work is well underway and the strong earthquake resistant masonry walls will soon be going up.

We will bring the first Virginia United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM? team to work on the completion phase of construction in Feb. 2019. The team will include not only builders and a dentist, but also some church musicians who will offer musical gifts to Haitian worship and may even get to work with some of the first music students.

This long-term project will allow musicians

visiting from outside Haiti to contribute in various ways to the school's needs, including helping to acquire instruments, music materials, texts and all the things that will contribute to its success.

A benefit concert to raise funds for the school of music took place at Braddock St. UMC in Winchester on Sunday, October 14. Among the instruments presently needed are electronic keyboards and stringed instruments — violins in particular. Donations of quality instruments would be greatly appreciated!

A second significant aspect to our work in Haiti has been the establishment of a matching fund of \$50,000 (again with the help of Bill Olson in finding the means) to help fund humanitarian and disaster recovery projects in Haiti. For each dollar a team raises toward a project cost, this special fund will allow a matching amount up to \$5,000 per project. This will hopefully provide great incentive to potential Virginia UMVIM teams in their efforts to raise funds.


Another incentive for potential missionaries is a scholarship reserve fund that was established by



A conceptual rendering of the Methodist School of Music near Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

a portion of the 2018 Virginia Conference Offering intended for those who may need financial assistance to participate as an UMVIM team member.

In days ahead we hope to strengthen the covenantal bond between the Virginia Conference and the Haitian Methodist Church in a variety of ways, some of which are yet to be fully determined.

Please pray for Haiti and the future of opportunity it affords for the churches of the Virginia Conference. Haiti has a profound effect on people. It can recharge people's spiritual batteries; its can open eyes to see God in new ways; it can humble believers and it won't let you forget what you have experienced. 

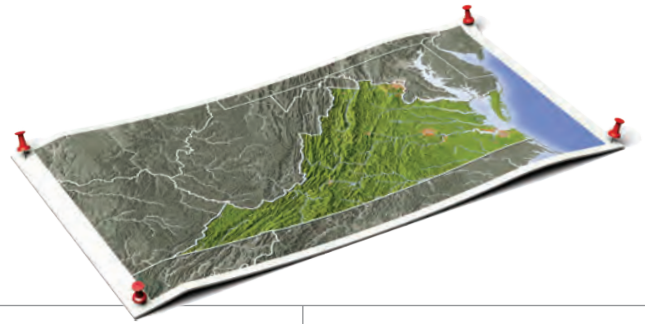
— The Rev. Dr. John "Jack" T. Martin Jr. is president of the Virginia Conference Historical Society.

**To donate money or instruments to this project, please contact:**

Rev. Dr.  
John "Jack" T. Martin  
rvjtm@aol.com  
(434) 713-0083



# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



## Uncovering fortified city in the Jericho Valley

By Ralph K. Hawkins

This was the territory of Ephraim, according to its clans: The boundary of their inheritance went from Ataroth Addar in the east to Upper Beth Horon 6 and continued to the Mediterranean Sea.

JOSHUA 15: 5-6

Figure 1: The Chambered Gate at Kh. Qeiyafa, with the Elah Valley in the background. Photos courtesy of Ralph Hawkins.



One of the most vexing issues in biblical archaeology today has to do with the nature and extent of the early “United Kingdom” of Israel, during the days of Kings Saul, David and Solomon. Was it a kingdom at all? Did it have a centralized administration or government? Were there fortified cities associated with it?

The excavation of Khirbet Qeiyafa, in the Elah Valley, which

began in 2007, was a turning point in this debate. Its biblical name, “Shaaraim,” means “two gates,” and two gates were indeed discovered there (Figure 1). This was the earliest fortified city uncovered in the territory of the Kingdom of Judah that dates to the period of Kings Saul and David. This site proves that the early United Kingdom did build walled towns, as the Bible describes.

### The Jordan Valley Excavation Project

The Jordan Valley Excavation Project (JVEP) has been funded since 2017 by The Institute for Biblical Exploration (IBEX), a nonprofit. JVEP launched in 2016, according to their website “to investigate the ancient history and archaeology of the region of the southern Jordan Valley, with a particular focus on the Iron Age.”

In 2017, the JVEP excavated a two-acre village hidden in the desert of the Jordan Valley, about five miles north of Jericho, called el-Mastarah. At the end of our excavation, we visited another site called ‘Auja el-Foqa. This is a well-preserved walled city on a hill about two

miles southwest of el-Mastarah (Figure 2). The British survey had visited this site in 1874 but, once they reported that it was the ruin of a modern village, no one bothered to visit it again for nearly 130 years. A contemporary explorer named Adam Zertal, along with his team, visited the site in 2003. They conducted a thorough survey and published a detailed report of their findings. However, the site has

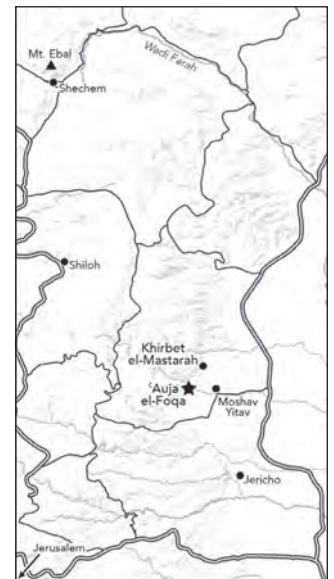


Figure 2: ‘Auja el-Foqa location

remained unexcavated.

The site is located on a high hill isolated by steep slopes, rising about 328 feet above the valley below. We climbed the stony peak and found the settlement surrounded by a special type of de-



# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

fensive wall called a casemate wall with more than 20 rooms inside it. The remains of a tower are located at the center of the site (Figure 3), as well as numerous buildings across the site (Figure 4), including what may be the remains of a “four-room house,” which appears to have been a type of house especially used by the Israelites. The structures across the site are very well-preserved, with walls standing up to six feet in height. Most of the pottery the explorers picked up in 2003 dated to the Israelite period, and they concluded that the site was a fortified town during that time.

Zertal proposed that the site of ‘Auja el-Foqa might be identified with the biblical site of Ataroth, which is mentioned in the description of the boundary between Manasseh and Ephraim (Josh 16:5), because of its location as well as on the meaning of its name. The name Ataroth means “crown,” and the site definitely crowns the hilltop upon which it is located.

The site was clearly a military and administrative center in the Jericho Valley, possibly during the time of the

United Kingdom, and certainly during the time of the Kingdom of Judah. In both periods, the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites lived east of the Jordan River and were often at war with the Israelites. ‘Auja el-Foqa may have been a Judean garrison guarding the kingdom’s eastern boundary from these peoples (Figure 5). The excavation of this site may yield important evidence about the administration of Judah in the Jericho Valley during the Israelite period.

## Excavations ahead in 2019

We plan to conduct excavations at ‘Auja el-Foqa from May 26-June 23, 2019, and would like to invite you to join us in this pioneering work in the Jericho Valley either by joining us in the field or providing financial support. Be a part of uncovering what may be the earliest known Judean fortified city in the Jericho Valley! To learn more, go to our project website at [www.jvep.org](http://www.jvep.org).

– Dr. Ralph Hawkins is a professor and director of the program in Religion at Averett University. He is the co-director of the Jordan Valley Excavation Project (JVEP) and an elder in the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church.



Figure 3: Mary Hawkins standing beside remains of Iron II Tower at ‘Auja el-Foqa.



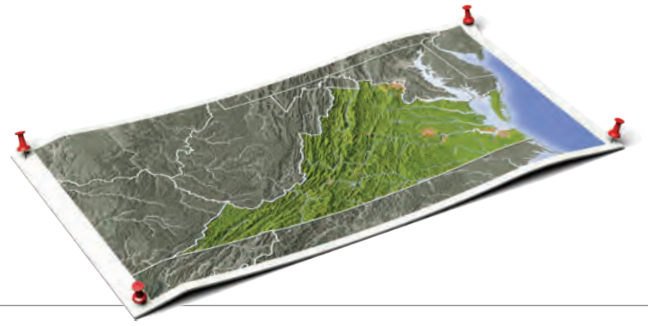
Figure 4: Remains of an Iron II building at ‘Auja el-Foqa.



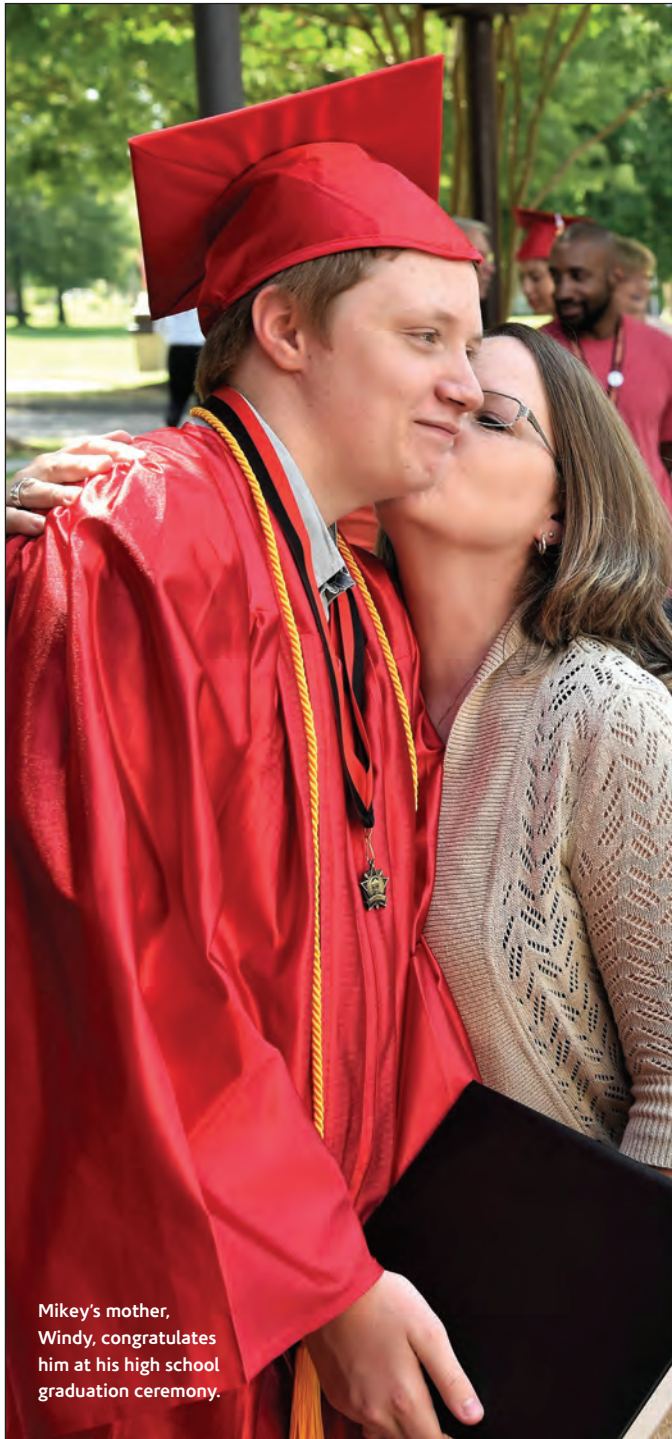
Figure 5: Looking toward Jericho and the Jordan River from the summit of ‘Auja el-Foqa



# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



## Building healthy relationships, changes at UMFS



Mikey's mother, Windy, congratulates him at his high school graduation ceremony.

By UMFS staff

Leaving the confines of a maximum-security juvenile corrections facility and entering residential treatment at the Child & Family Healing Center on the open and unlocked campus of United Methodist Family Services (UMFS) was a move Mikey was eager to make.

"I was excited," Mikey said, upon learning that his combined two-year stint in juvenile corrections and locked residential facilities was coming to an end. The transition, however, didn't go quite as he had hoped. Mikey was transported from juvenile corrections to UMFS wearing an orange jump suit, handcuffs, shackles and a chain around his waist, making for a less-than-desirable first impression. "When I walked in, people were looking at me like, 'Who's this guy?' I felt embarrassed."

But the unease didn't last long. Mikey's mother, Windy, and his father, Michael Sr.,

reminded their son that within 48 hours the spectacle had given way to curiosity. Mikey nodded in agreement. "They started asking questions," Mikey said of his UMFS peers. One young man was particularly interested, Mikey recalled. "Nick realized we had come from the same place." The two had been in the same detention facility, and Nick was nearing the end of his treatment at UMFS just as Mikey was beginning his journey.

Nick was the first child to come to UMFS directly from Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). Because of his progress and successful completion of treatment, the door was left open so others like Mikey could make the move.

"I just couldn't be more grateful, and his mom couldn't be more grateful to DJJ for allowing this to happen," Michael Sr. said.

Mikey responded well to therapy at UMFS, built healthy relationships with peers and staff, and performed well in the

# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

classroom. Therapist Kate VanDerbeek said UMFS' open campus and home-like setting is a favorable environment for kids like Mikey. "This wouldn't be the right place for everybody," she said. "But when it is the right place, it can be a really good experience." Michael Sr. agreed, noting the life skills Mikey built. "Any facility can offer treatment and therapy, but preparation for life is where UMFS has a huge leg up," he said.

Programs like Coffee Cart, for example, provide residential students the opportunity to gain work experience.

Coffee Cart is student-run and serves various events on campus. The coffee is generously donated by Ironclad Coffee Roasters in Richmond. Students must apply for a paid position with Coffee Cart.

Michael put his name in the hat but admittedly wasn't optimistic.

"With how many people interviewed, I didn't think I would get hired," he said. Not only did Mikey get hired, but he turned out to be a model employee — it just took a little conditioning.

"When I first started I had a good sales pitch but had to change it," Mikey said.

"Why'd you have to change it?" Windy asked.

"Because I was taking too long!"

Windy laughed. "I think you get that from me," she said.

Mikey later applied the skills he learned working with Coffee Cart to his culinary arts class and ultimately earned his ServSafe Certification and white chef's jacket.

Mikey's admission to



Child & Family Healing Center was conditional. He was required to wear an ankle monitor and couldn't participate in all the same off-campus events as his peers. When he did leave campus, it was with the approval of the DJJ.

So when Reveille UMC hosted prom for the UMFS residential

(Con't. on pg. 17: "MIKEY")

Graduation was a great opportunity for a selfie with Mikey's father, Michael Sr. Photos courtesy of UMFS.

"Any facility can offer treatment and therapy, but preparation for life is where UMFS has a huge leg up."

— Mikey's father, Michael Sr.

## UMFS NOTE:

United Methodist Family Services (UMFS) is proud to partner with the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, AMikids, and Evidence Based Associates as an alternative placement for children in detention. UMFS is committed to providing Virginia's high-risk children with a team of lifelong

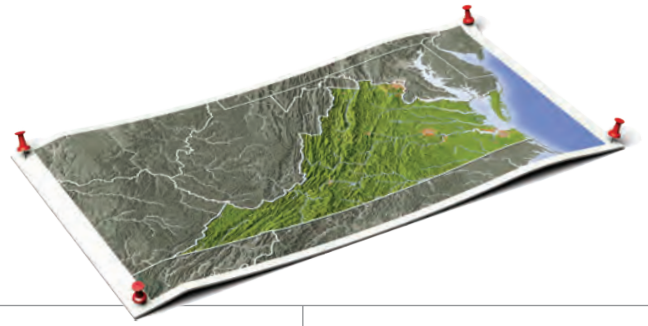
unwavering champions and tools for success to become resilient adults.

Mikey arrived at the UMFS Child & Family Healing Center in Richmond last October after having spent a combined two years in a juvenile detention and locked residential treatment facilities. He was the second child

UMFS welcomed directly from the Department of Juvenile Justice. On June 13, Mikey successfully completed his treatment program. Two days later, the 18-year-old received his high school diploma. After graduation, Mikey, his parents and one of his therapists sat down with us to talk about Mikey's progress.



# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



## New Methodist Church formally launched in Cambodia

By Elliott Wright and  
Forrest White\*

**T**he Methodist Church of Cambodia officially came into being in early September at a conference in Phnom Penh. It has 140 congregations, 11 districts, 132 clergypersons, 3,171 full members and an average Sunday worship attendance of 6,828.

"The Virginia Conference began our international partnership with the Methodist Mission in Cambodia in 2013 with a primary goal of

supporting their growth into a Provisional Methodist Conference," said the Rev. Glenn Rowley, director of Justice and Missional Excellence for the Virginia Conference, who attended the conference in Phnom Penh along with Nancy Yarborough, lay leader of the York River District. "That goal was met on September 4, 2018, as the new Methodist Church in Cambodia was established!"

Our conference has been one of the major partners in the growth of the Cambodian

Church, Rowley said. "This new church is the culmination of many years of collaborative work among five mission agencies, their missionaries and the work of indigenous leaders," said Bishop Larry M. Goodpaster (retired), the United Methodist bishop assigned to the Cambodia Mission, who represented the denomination at the September 4-7 conference.

The Rev. Lun Sophy, a pastor of two churches at Siem Reap, a city near the ancient temples at Angkor Wat, was elected president of the new church, officially and originally in Methodist parlance called a "provisional annual conference," but expected to be autonomous or self-governing.

"I am most grateful

All of the provisional annual conference attendees gather for a group photo.  
Photo credit: Myungim Kim



# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

for the wonderful support from Virginia over the last few years, and I hope we can continue to work together as the church grows in Cambodia," Sophy said. "I will do my best by God's grace to serve God's church here in Cambodia."

Late in the previous century, five mission agencies began to discuss the value of combining their separate outreach efforts in Cambodia, a country then still recovering from oppression and tyranny of the Khmer Rouge. The five are United Methodist Global Ministries, the Korean Methodist Church, the Methodist Church in Singapore, the World Federation of Chinese Methodist Churches and Connexio, the mission agency of United Methodists in France and Switzerland.

"Inauguration of the Methodist Church in Cambodia is an important event in our mission history, coming just at the start of our celebration of the 200th anniversary of the founding of what is now the General Board of Global Ministries," said Thomas Kemper, chief executive of the United Methodist agency.

The five produced a Cambodian hym-

nal together in 2001. Two years later, under the rubric of "mission initiative," they began collaborating in evangelism and church growth, missionary placements and leadership development, with strong emphasis on preparation of indigenous leaders, pastors and laity. They announced their intention to work toward one autonomous Cambodian Methodist Church.

For several years, all district superintendents and the mission superintendent have been Cambodian. Of the current clergy, 57 are elders, five deacons, eight members on trial, 26 licensed to preach and 46 lay pastors.

Evangelism and new church development are high priorities. Plans are underway to extend the Methodist Church into the five (out of 25) Cambodian provinces where it is not currently present. The first Methodist church in Mondulhiri province, population 60,811, is now being built.

While the new church is Cambodian led, the five original sponsoring agencies will continue to supply some support and missionary personnel, according to Kemper. Global Ministries at present has

seven missionaries in the country engaged in a range of ministries, including rural economic development.

Formal inauguration took place in a service of worship in Methodist tradition and with indigenous music, the usual practice in Cambodian Sunday services. Bishop Chong Chin Chung of Singapore presided at the service recognizing the provisional annual conference.

"We celebrate the movement of God's spirit in Cambodia," Goodpaster said in an interview after his return from Southeast Asia. "We also celebrate mission partnership. Collaboration is the way to do mission in the 21st century."

Rowley said he believes the church is in good hands under Sophy's leadership.

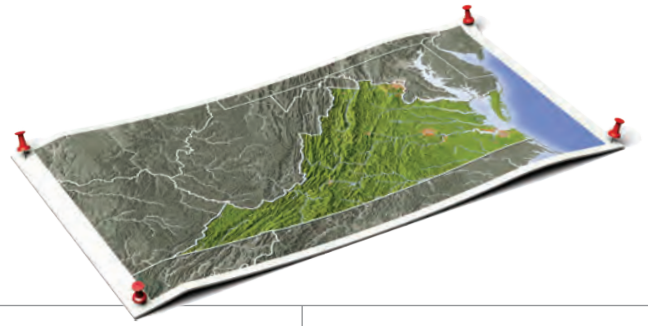
"His humble and deeply spiritual leadership style is a blessing to the new Methodist body," Rowley said. 🌸

*— \*This original article was written by Elliott Wright, a communications consultant to Global Ministries, and the Rev. Myungim Kim, Asia area liaison of Global Ministries, who contributed to this article. Forrest White, Virginia Conference news associate, contributed to portions of this original article with quotes and information from the Virginia Conference perspective.*

"This new church is the culmination of many years of collaborative work among five mission agencies, their missionaries and the work of indigenous leaders."

— Bishop Larry M. Goodpaster (retired)

# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



## Conference event shares information on upcoming General Conference

By Forrest White

**A**s head of the Virginia Conference delegation to the Special Session of the General Conference, Martha Stokes has invested countless hours in study and prayer and conversation, preparing herself as best as she can for the three-day gathering in St. Louis, now less than five months away.

This journey has taken her into local churches around the conference, where she has heard divergent opinions on issues related to human

sexuality, on ordination of self-avowing gay and lesbian clergy and on same-sex marriages.

"I've been wonderfully surprised at times, when people come up afterwards and say, 'We recognize, even in our congregation that we have lots of differences of opinions, but we didn't realize until today how much we love each other,'" Stokes said on Sept. 26, at the Commission on a Way Forward Q&A event held at Reveille UMC in Richmond and livestreamed throughout the conference at 10 other sites and online.

"When we have the opportunity to really be open and authentic and honest with each other in a very respectful, loving way, we can work through those differences and realize what is most important is the care and concern we have for each other across those differences."

At the 90-minute Q&A event, Stokes joined Bishop Sharma D. Lewis and the Rev. Tom Berlin — lead pastor at Floris UMC in Herndon and clergy head of the Virginia Conference delegation to General Conference — to provide an overview of the work done by the Commission on a Way Forward and to answer about 15 questions, some submitted in advance, some on the night of the gathering.

The questions ranged from procedural — What will happen at the Special Session and what if no plan receives the required two-thirds majority vote? — to practical — How might the plans presented by the Commission impact clergy appointments and what if churches within a charge don't embrace the same option within a plan?

One person asked if the 22 delegates from the Virginia Conference — 11 clergy, 11 lay — would be voting based on what their home churches want for the future.

"Delegates vote their own conscious," Berlin said, simply.

"It really comes down to what we are each hearing God say in terms of the way forward, the future for our church,"

The 2019 special session of the General Conference will be held in The Dome, part of the America's Center Convention Complex in St. Louis.





# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

Stokes said. “It is really a spiritual time for delegates to not only do what you might think of as the book work, having to look at all the legislation, and then to really be vessels, to have made that time of our own preparation one in which we listen to what God is calling us to be as the church.”

On multiple occasions, Berlin encouraged those attending and those watching via livestream to take time and read the 90-plus page final report of the Commission. Many of the more than 30 submitted questions are answered in the report, he said.

Bishop Lewis urged all those listening to continue in prayer, to continue to trust that God is in the miracle business.

“It is not a time for us to be afraid,” she said. “It is a time for us to continue in our churches to have conversations. The worst thing we can do is to isolate ourselves and not have conversations.”

Lewis reiterated her six 2019 Guiding Principles:

- ❖ Clergy and laity lead with a non-anxious presence.
- ❖ Pray for our church’s mission and way forward daily for

four minutes (2:23-2:36 a.m. or p.m. or at another time that fits your schedule). Pray for the General Conference, the 864 delegates, the 22 delegates from the Virginia Conference and for the “power of the Holy Spirit to lead and guide our delegates.”

- ❖ Pursuit of the UMC mission “To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” We must continue in our churches to focus on four ministry areas — engaging in ministry with the poor, improving global health, developing Christian leaders, creating new and renewed congregations.
- ❖ Pursuit of the Virginia Conference vision “To be disciples of Jesus Christ who are lifelong learners who influence others to serve.”
- ❖ Strive for unity in the Virginia conference. “Be careful what you say, be gentle,” Lewis said. “We have persons’ lives and souls in our hands.”
- ❖ Keep our promises (retiree pensions and healthcare; global commitments such as in Mozambique and

Cambodia)

The panelists saved the most poignant question until the end — Someone wanted to know their greatest hope and greatest fear for the gathering in St. Louis.

Berlin’s great hope, he said, is passage of the One Church Plan because it provides a “generous unity.”

That plan, Berlin said, honors the fact that The United Methodist Church has progressive and traditional people, as well as “a whole bunch of us in the middle,” with some leaning left and some leaning right, and it tries to “create a space for everyone.”

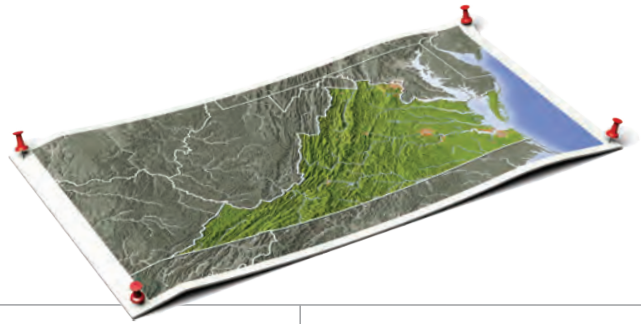
“My greatest fear ... I think if some or many of us have to part, it’s very important that we part with a blessing,” Berlin said. “It’s very important not to do this work in ways the world looks in on us and says, ‘You’re just like us. The rule of Christ really isn’t in your hearts.’ It’s important for us not to hold each other in contempt or anger or judgment, but to understand that principled people can come to different decisions.” 🇺🇸

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

**View the livestream event as well as total resources:** [www.vaumc.org/GC2019](http://www.vaumc.org/GC2019)

**View the final report of the Commission on a Way Forward in the four official denomination languages:** [www.umc.org/who-we-are/way-forward-report-released-in-all-four-official-languages-of-general-confe](http://www.umc.org/who-we-are/way-forward-report-released-in-all-four-official-languages-of-general-confe).

# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



## Young clergy journey on parks pilgrimage

By Lyndsie Blakely

A group of 12 young clergy gathered for a week of renewal and discovery as the Rev. Meredith McNabb and the Rev. Tim Ward led us to Yellowstone and Grand Tetons National Parks on the first day of September. It was a beautiful pilgrimage as we took time for renewal, devotion and conversation.

Yellowstone is America's first national park. It spans almost 3,500

miles and is located primarily in Wyoming with parts in Montana and Idaho. It sits on top of a dormant volcano, making the landscape of Yellowstone a sight to behold. Geysers and hot springs make the ground appear to be on fire as the hydrothermal features steam and sputter all over the park. These unique features of Yellowstone mean that the landscape there is constantly changing. It will never look exactly the same as it does today.

### Relating the outdoors to the church

As we learned more about the constantly changing landscape from local ranchers, park rangers and university professors, we re-

flected together on the changing landscape of the church and specifically our denomination. We know that tensions are high and anxieties abound in our lives as clergy and in the congregations we serve as we seek a way forward.

Change can be unsettling as I'm sure it was for those early explorers who stumbled upon such an otherworldly place like Yellowstone. Together we recognized that hiking an unfamiliar trail (both literally and figuratively) can stir up a lot of fear and uncertainty.

And yet, there is this magnificent beauty and hope that a place like Yellowstone offers us. Because, despite the challenges the park has had throughout the years as its landscape and ecology has changed, it still remains a wonder to behold. Groups of people have come together to talk about ways to preserve its wonder and beauty. And even when they don't fully agree on how that should be accomplished, they are still able to find common ground in the opinion that Yellowstone is worth working to preserve.

And so I found myself in Yellowstone with 11



Photos courtesy of Lyndsie Blakely.





# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



others who say Christ's church is worth working to preserve. We may have different opinions on how that might be accomplished. We may even feel completely overwhelmed at times

by the task at hand. But I am so thankful to call these wonderful people my brothers and sisters as we found hope in the mountains. 🍁

— The Rev. Lyndsie Blakely is minister of discipleship at Farmville UMC.



("MIKEY," cont. from page 11.)

program and Charterhouse School day students in May, Mikey wasn't sure he'd be able to attend. Nor was Kate. But just a few hours before the big dance, they got the call. "It was a good thing he had been fitted for a suit a few weeks before," Kate said with a smile.

Mikey arrived at prom wearing a black suit and tie and a crisp white shirt. He looked confident, sharp and classic. But in reality?

"Mikey was pretty anxious," Kate said. It was, after all, the first such social gathering he'd attended in a while. "I'm glad I was able to be there for him," Kate said.

It had been an emotional week for Mikey. On a Wednesday, he and three other residential students gathered to celebrate their completion of treatment. In front of an intimate audience that included residents' families, as well as UMFS staff and leadership, Mikey's former therapist, Angelo Cabrera, delivered a moving speech.

"The most precious commodity you have in life is time," Angelo said, looking Mikey in the eyes. "Everything

else can be replaced, but not time. And the time you have spent at UMFS, you've spent it well."

Just two days later, Mikey walked across the UMFS Charterhouse School stage in his red cap and gown to collect his high school diploma. He breathed a deep sigh once the graduation ceremony ended. The look on his face spelled relief, and the smiles on the faces of his mom and dad stretched from ear to ear.

"Mikey did really well here," said Mariko Saito, assistant director of Clinical Services, noting the progress he made despite being under a microscope. "He made steps toward successful community integration, which is one of the things DJJ is looking for."

Reached recently by phone, Michael Sr. spoke about Mikey's continued progress since leaving the Child & Family Healing Center. Mikey's living in a group home and building on the skills he worked so hard to develop while at UMFS.

"He's doing well," Michael Sr. said. "He's much more equipped now for things that used to really rattle him." 🍁



# Cooperative



# Parishes



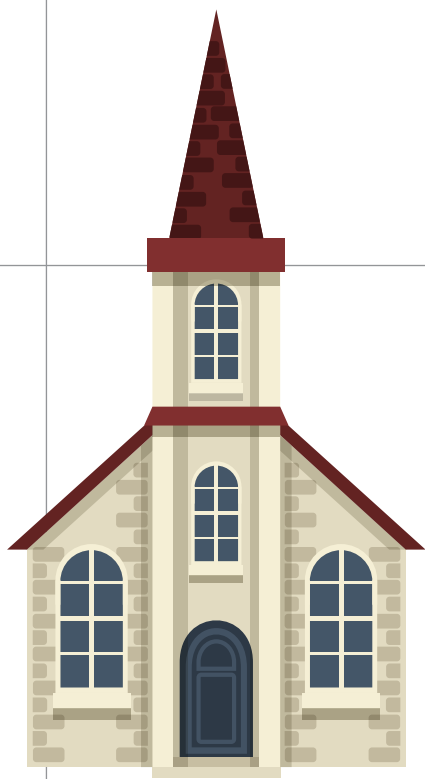
By Forrest White

A year removed from serving in a two-county cooperative parish ministry, the Rev. Blair O'Quinn looks back fondly on his experience and looks forward with hope, believing this model has tremendous potential to serve The United Methodist Church well as it faces the reality of retiring pastors outnumbering incoming elders.

"The real question is, 'How will the smaller churches adapt to this shift?'" O'Quinn said.

"For many of them, there are still members that remember when they were part of a circuit, and their pastor would take on several churches. It can be sometimes seen as a punishment to be put into a cooperative parish. If we can allay these fears, concerns and issues, we may be able to continue to do the ministry of the church long after many other denominations would have given up on a local church."

Read on to learn about the cooperative parish plan for the Virginia Conference.



## What is a cooperative parish?

A cooperative parish is a group of churches organized around shared missional and/or geographical interests, according to the Rev. Janine Howard, Danville District superintendent and a member of a team working to create a

cooperative parish plan for the Virginia Conference.

## Why is it important to have a plan?

"Firstly, the *Book of Discipline* expresses that each conference should have such a plan," said the Rev. Tobias Lutz, pastor of Concord-Mount Pleasant Cooperative Parish in Danville, also a key player in the formation of the Virginia Conference plan.

"Secondly, this model of ministry at the local church level is becoming more prevalent and many foresee it as increasingly important in the way the conference seeks to fulfill its mission. Therefore, such a plan goes a long way to help create uniformity of process and definition, along with a centralization of resources for all those involved in cooperative parish ministries."

Lutz said the plan will provide framework for the conference to accomplish three primary goals:

- ❖ Establishing guidelines for the development and support of cooperative parishes.
- ❖ Compiling resources (documentary, human, financial) to support the cooperative parishes
- ❖ Creating a support system for clergy and laity who minister within cooperative parishes

There are roughly 30 cooperative parish ministries in the Virginia Conference, up slightly from a year ago.

O'Quinn was a half-time Lay Supply pastor for a cooperative parish of five churches — Granbery, Ridgeway, Anderson Chapel, Bethel and Cascade — in the Danville District.

He served with full-time licensed local pastor, the Rev. Tim Satterfield, and with Lay Servant Tom Blair, working together as a team to provide leadership for the churches and pastoral care for their members.

## Four advantages to this unique model

While each cooperative parish ministry is unique, O'Quinn cited four advantages to the model in which he served:

### Greater pastoral leadership and planning.

"All three of us knew what was going on in all five churches at all times," he said. "We would regularly have staff meetings where we discussed what was happening in each of the churches and talk about strategies to deal with challenges that arose." They discussed plans for special worship services, kept each other apprised of dynamics within the congregation and gave each other advice on such things as music, liturgy and sermon direction. The model ensured that one of the team was able to attend a mission or activity of a church. It wasn't uncommon for all three to attend.

**Training and experience for new pastors which took place** "in an environment that is simultaneously structured but with enough freedom for them to come into their own as a new pastor," he said. "The preaching experience was also invaluable, as often associate pastors only preach on rare occasions, whereas preaching becomes the primary responsibility for the new pastor in this model."



## Communion can be served regularly.

### Increased pastoral care.

A church member within the cooperative parish was hospitalized and later died from complications. "Because we had three pastors on staff, all three of us could be there with her, as well as be present with the family in their time of need. Very few other models could provide that level of attention and care to one individual within a congregation," O'Quinn said. "Also, it freed each of the staff from concern when they were not available. Tim Satterfield was undergoing cancer treatment, and would have to periodically travel to Atlanta to receive treatment, while I was still a student at Vanderbilt for the fall semester and was commuting weekly to Nashville to finish my M.Div. This meant that if something came up while one of us was away, we could take care of pastoral care needs within the parish with someone who was very familiar with the individual already. It also meant that we could be pastor to each other as we were aware of the struggles the other faced."

## The cooperative parish model as a partnership

Lutz described the cooperative parish model as "a partnership" between two or more churches joined for the purpose of enabling all involved to better serve the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

"Factors such as human capital, spiritual gifts, financial resources and missional opportunities become more fruitfully realized through these partnerships than when the churches stand alone," he said.

There are two primary differences between a cooperative parish and a multi-point charge — the cooperative parish can be created and modified by the district superintendent and not at the conference level, thus giving more flexibility and respon-

siveness to the district.

In addition, unlike a multi-point charge, a cooperative parish allows each church to remain as independent as it desires in regards to committees and finances.

O'Quinn became a licensed local pastor at 2018 Annual Conference. He now serves Watson Memorial UMC in Chatham.

"The biggest difference to me was the structure," he said, when asked to reflect upon his time in the cooperative parish ministry. "Despite the five churches being very small, they nonetheless had more pastoral leadership than many medium-sized churches.

"As this was my first appointment, even though I was working with small churches, I had someone who could act as a mentor and give advice on anything I was doing, while I could also provide support at the two larger churches as needed. This meant any mission or activity that the churches worked on could be supported by all of the pastors."

The greatest challenge from O'Quinn's perspective was getting parishioners to understand and embrace the concept of cooperative parish ministry.

"The model is still somewhat new to most people, even if it resembles circuit riders from nearly a century ago," he said.

He speaks fondly of the experience, especially the support he received from Satterfield and Blair, his colleagues in the cooperative parish ministry.

"I could get my feet wet and not feel like I was diving head first into parish ministry," O'Quinn said. "Yet at the same time, I was granted a great deal of independence in how I conducted the services whenever I preached, and I also could gain more preaching and worship experience than if I was just an associate pastor at a larger church."

— Forrest White is news associate with the conference Communications office.



# Bears and Birds and Cooperative Ministry

By Alex Joyner

**L**oneliness is a bear. No one wants to feel unsupported, unheard, or unloved. You would think, in a world of so many new ways to connect, that loneliness would not be a problem.

But Instagram, it turns out, is no answer to the human condition.

Churches—especially churches in rural communities—often experience their own kind of loneliness crisis. Remembering days gone by, watching bright-eyed young people go off to new futures “across the bay,” faced with the challenges of reorienting old buildings for new ministries, it’s easy to feel the same sense of being disconnected and unsupported.

That’s why the recent Cooperative Parish Day of Discernment held in Richmond was such an inspiring opportunity to say, “Maybe we don’t have to be alone.” Cooperative parishes are a unique structure within United Methodism—bringing together churches in new relationships that allow them to envision a new common ministry.

What does that look like? We saw a lot of models at last Saturday’s event. On the Eastern Shore, five churches on the Accomack Cooperative Parish are beginning with worship and exploring cross-cultural ministry. A Danville area teaching parish is pairing a seasoned elder with other ministers who are new to the process. And on the top of a mountain in Alabama, nine small churches are continuing a nearly 50-year-old ministry of service and outreach in the

Upper Sand Mountain Cooperative Parish.

The Rev. Beth Crissman, a district superintendent in the Western North Carolina Conference appearing by video, said that the most important question any new effort must ask is the WHY question. To answer that she suggests asking:

“Would forming a cooperative parish here OPTIMIZE our calling and capacity to make disciples of Jesus Christ in our communities so that we become instruments of compassion and justice in our communities?”

I hope more congregations will begin to ask that question as they look around at their field of service and see that, although they may feel alone, there are other churches out there with the same desire to be about the mission of God. And what might they do together?

Because loneliness is a bear, but unity is a singing bird of a thing. 🐻

— The Rev. Alex Joyner is the Eastern Shore district superintendent. This blog post was republished with permission. Joyner’s blog can be accessed at <https://alexjoyner.com/>.





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# DISCIPLES HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD



▲ **Capeville UMC in Cape Charles** was asked to help with school supplies at Kiptopeke Elementary School. With donations from our church family we were able to fix 78 bags with erasers, pencils, crayons, colored pencils, pencil sharpeners and either a one-subject notebook or folder. Janice, Patricia and Ray (pictured) and H.H. set up for 2 hours meeting and greeting students, staff and parents. A bookmark was placed in each bag with their times of Sunday school and worship service.

► On October 10, 2016, Michele Michaelian was working as a full-time office manager at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church when she received a personal, but urgent, phone call. A fellow United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) volunteer asked her to join the City of Virginia Beach Volunteer and Donations Management Team in the Emer-

gency Operations Center following Hurricane Matthew.

Michaelian had been on several mission deployments with The United Methodist Church, but she was in for the ride of her life after accepting that phone call. She had been an Early Response Disaster (ERT) trainer for the Virginia Conference for some time. She knew how to connect people in need with the organizations that can help.

Michaelian instantly went to work with teams of volunteers from all over to help “muck-and-gut” the homes of more than 560 devastated Virginia Beach families. During the day she was doing mold remediation and demo work and by night she was calling the more than 2,000 families on the waiting list. She helped coordinate the other visiting volunteer groups and organized their work orders by priority of need and proximity to their colleagues. She was a God-send to city employees

who had only ever talked about this situation in theory — never actually experiencing such a disaster in real life.

Balancing her full-time work with St. Nicholas and her volunteer work with UMCOR, Michaelian realized something had to give. She took a leave of absence from her office manager role with the Greek Orthodox Church to devote her whole self to the mission of UMCOR. Once the immediate operations of the various voluntary agencies slowed down and the “muck and gut” folks left the area to help in other disasters, Michaelian’s work ramped up more than ever.

Long Term Recovery focuses on the families that, at the end of the day, cannot be made whole with loans or grants. Long Term Recovery is essentially the net that catches folks who have exhausted all options, whether it be financial, physical and/or emotional.

With more than 2,000 families on the “FEMA List” — the Tidewater Long Term Recovery Group had their work cut out for them. Luckily, the team of local non-profit and faith-based leaders had a secret weapon ready to guide them quietly in the background.

Michaelian, though not an official member of the Long Term Recovery Executive Team, took on a major role in ensuring that each family was contacted, assigned to a disaster case manager (many times she was the DCM), and met with a calm and therapeutic presence.

She has consoled families, hauled drywall, done landscaping, filled out grant applications, built relationships at Home Depot



# EVENTS



Michele Michaelian was nominated for the Virginia Beach city volunteer award this year.

## NOVEMBER

### Conference center closed for Thanksgiving holiday

**Nov. 21-23, Glen Allen**

The conference center of the Virginia Conference will close at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 21 in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday and will remain closed through Friday, Nov. 23.

## DECEMBER

### Conference center closed for Christmas holiday

**Dec. 21-26, Glen Allen**

The conference center of the Virginia Conference will close at 1 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 21 in observance of the Christmas holiday and will remain closed through Wednesday, Dec. 26.

## JANUARY

### Conference center closed for New Year's Day observance

**Jan. 1, 2019, Glen Allen**

The conference center of the Virginia Conference will be closed at on Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2019 in observance of New Year's Day.

### Conference center closed for MLK Day observance

**Jan. 1, 2019, Glen Allen**

The conference center of the Virginia Conference will be closed at on Monday, Jan. 21, 2019 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day observance.

and Lowe's, counseled grieving families, ensured families had shelter during construction, food when the bills got to be too much and warm clothing when the cold temperatures came. She has been their guide and their personal angel.

Michaelian has recruited, oriented, trained and deployed hundreds of volunteers. She has brought in therapy dogs and chaplains for those needing relief ... citizens and volunteers alike. She has been doing this, and so much more since October 2016 with the same sustained heart and compassion as day one.

In the midst of the Long Term Recovery, Michaelian responded to a tornado in Chesapeake/Virginia Beach, assisted with hurricane relief efforts with Harvey, Irma, Maria and helps with the winter sheltering programs with

The United Methodist Church and Judeo Christian Outreach.

On top of all of this, she is a loving mother and wife and lover of all animals. Her heart is big and her God-given talents are endless. I personally don't know what I would have done without Michaelian. I am kind of a "one-woman show" as it relates to the function of coordinating volunteerism and donations in disaster. She has taught me so much, introduced me to so many wonderful people and frankly, I just really like working with her. The stories she tells me weekly bring me to tears. I don't know how she does what she does, but I am so thankful for her service and friendship.

— The Rev. Bob Pihlcrantz, Virginia Conference Disaster Response Coordinator

Note: Michaelian was nominated for the Virginia Beach city volunteer award this year.



# LIVING THE WORD



*Tommy Crosby grew up in Waynesboro attending Basic UMC. He received a BA in Philosophy and Religion from Bridgewater College and then a Master of Divinity from Eastern Mennonite Seminary. He has always had a passion for the outdoors and attended Camp Overlook as a child and worked on summer staff for five summers. He is an ordained elder in the Virginia Conference and returned to Overlook as executive director in 2016. He enjoys spending time with his kids, officiating football and riding his motorcycle.*

## November 4 Matthew 22, Mark 12

**L**ove God and love others. Short. Simple. Fits easily on a T-shirt or bumper sticker. Jesus says the entire law and prophets depend on this simple idea. We should love God with all we have, and love others as we love ourselves. Sometimes it is easier said than done.

I believe Jesus is telling us to focus on loving God with all we have and, if we truly do that, then loving your neighbor as yourself takes care of itself. In loving our neighbors, we love God. Neighbors can be difficult. I had an apartment where my bedroom shared a wall with the neighbors' dining area. The neighbors and I had very different schedules as well as different tastes in music. They worked a second shift job and stayed up until 2:30 or 3 a.m., while I was in bed at 10 p.m. and up at 6 a.m. It was hard to love them and be a good neighbor but that is what Jesus commands. One day I got home from a class and they were struggling with a flat tire. I stopped and helped and we began to have a conversation. I learned of their struggles and was able to pray with them. I didn't really want to help these neighbors but I knew what it meant to love God, which means you love others. Had I passed on by, I would never have had an opportunity to pray with this young couple and share the love of God.

What would this world look like if we truly focused on the short, simple command to love God and love others?

## November 11 John 14-17

**I** get excited watching football. I referee high school football and, while I am impartial to who wins, I like seeing a player make a big play. I feed off their excitement and share in the energy of the crowd. My

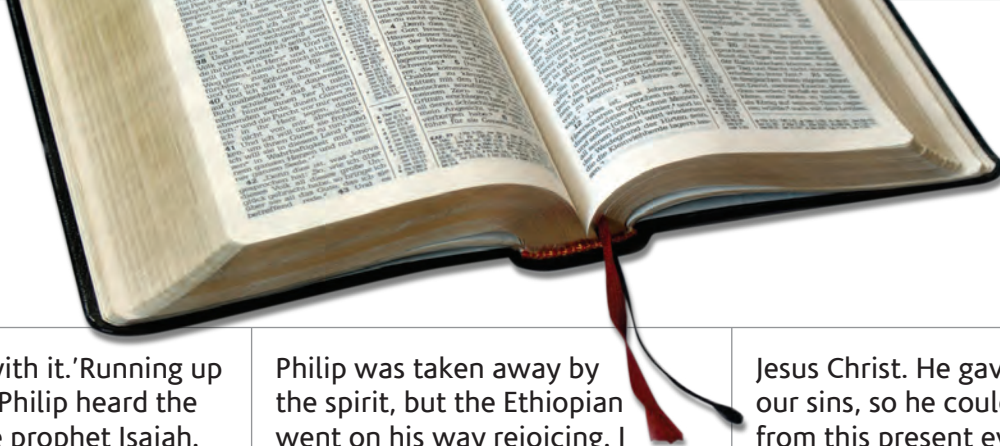
greatest officiating moment was calling a touchdown in the final seconds of a playoff game that allowed the home team to progress to the next round. The crowd seemed silent as the ball was in the air and the receiver was diving to make the catch. I seemed to see the play in slow motion as the young man reigned in the ball and made the catch. Then I felt this rush of adrenaline, as I raised my arms to signal touchdown. The sound of the crowd was overwhelming! Even the opposing coach (whose sideline I was on) said it was an amazing catch, and he was smiling.

When was the last time you were that excited in church, so excited you shouted out loud and did a well-choreographed touchdown dance? Jesus tells us to love one another so that his joy may be in us and our joy made complete. What does complete joy look like? Do you get excited when you love your grandchild? Of course you do. Do you feel complete joy when you help fill up someone's tank at the gas station or do you question their true need? When we truly love each other the way Christ loves us, I find that joy abounds. Love recklessly and fiercely so that you may know complete joy, which is so much better than any touchdown, no matter how great the catch.

## November 18 Acts 7-8

**"A**n angel from the Lord spoke to Philip, 'At noon, take the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a desert road.) So he did. Meanwhile, an Ethiopian man was on his way home from Jerusalem, where he had come to worship. He was a eunuch and an official responsible for the entire treasury of Candace. (Candace is the title given to the Ethiopian queen.) He was reading the prophet Isaiah while sitting in his carriage. The Spirit told Philip, 'Approach this car-





riage and stay with it.'Running up to the carriage, Philip heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you really understand what you are reading?'The man replied, 'Without someone to guide me, how could I?' Then he invited Philip to climb up and sit with him." (Acts 8:26-30)

"Without someone to guide me, how could I understand what I am reading?" You can almost hear the frustration of the Ethiopian, the sound of him being tired, emotionally and mentally drained from poring over his readings not making sense of it. I remember being in a philosophy class and reading the same page at least 12 times, thinking "huh?" when I reached the end. I believe it was Emmanuel Kant and his categorical imperative. I was supposed to do a presentation and teach the class this material. I went into my professor's office and, with that same frustration of the Ethiopian, said, "Without someone to guide me, how could I understand what I am reading?" I sat down with the professor and, after a time of discussion, I got it! I was so relieved and excited when I could stand in front of the class and help others grasp the concept.

Sometimes we need someone to come alongside us on the road and help us make sense of what is going on in life. Philip was obedient to God's call and journeyed with the Ethiopian. As they rode along together Philip shared the good news of Jesus Christ. The Ethiopian got it! He was so excited when they passed by some water he wanted to be baptized! After he was baptized

Philip was taken away by the spirit, but the Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing. I can't imagine him not sharing his new understanding and the joy of his baptism. I am sure he told everyone he could what had happened.

In our churches we often ask, "Where are the young people?" As I think through my life in the church, the names that come to mind are those who were like a Philip to me. These individuals walked with me at different stages of my faith journey. Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, and church members who sent me a card while I was at college or came to my high school football games all made an impact on me. Listen for God's call. Is God calling you to walk with someone and be a Philip to them? The church is full of young and old and all ages in between. We are a community and the best part of a community is knowing someone is there to help make sense of what is going on. The old can mentor the young and the young can mentor the old. This call to walk with others knows no age. Through relationships, the road we share is full of joy and growing together.

## November 25

### Galatians 4-6

There is eloquence to the way Paul begins his letters. In just a few words he seems to encapsulate the gospel message and ground us in who we are. "Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord

Jesus Christ. He gave himself for our sins, so he could deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father. To God be the glory forever and always! Amen." (Galatians 1:3-5 CEB) Paul draws us in to the core of who we are and how we are the family of God.

Paul goes on in the letter to the Galatians about the place of the law and the Jew / Gentile arguments of his day. Is salvation only for Jews and do you need to be fully Jewish? Paul says, "Now if you belong to Christ, then indeed you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:29, CEB) Through Christ we are heirs of Christ! We are the family of God! There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, man or woman. We are all one in Christ! As we face challenges in our local church, in our denomination and in our world, perhaps we need to make sure we are grounded first in the gospel message –Jesus gave his life for the forgiveness of our sins. When we ground ourselves as the family of God, we know we love each other even if we disagree. We love each other even though we may not always like each other. We are all heirs in the Kingdom of God through Jesus Christ. 📖

The Living Word devotions will coincide with the 2018 Bible Reading Challenge from Bishop Lewis. Find the November schedule on pg. 28. Find all 2018 readings at [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org).

# CLERGY & DIACONAL



## DEATHS

**Dolores Haines Jones**, 80, of Sutherland, VA, died April 22, 2018. She was married to the **Rev. Harry Byrd Jones** for 62 years.

**Vicki Poindexter**, 66, who served in Lay Speaking ministry roles on the Arlington District and annual conference, died Sept. 6, 2018.

**George "Sonny" Rash** died Aug. 22, 2018 in Harrington, Delaware. His brother, the **Rev. David Rash**, is retired clergy on the Staunton District.

**Leonard (Len) Elizabeth Scott**, 99, of Healdsburg, CA, died Aug. 4, 2018. Born in Ocran, VA, she was the widow of the late **Rev. Frederick A. Scott**.

**Carol Mann**, 76, died Aug. 12, 2018. She served the New Hope-Southall Memorial Charge for five years and then the West Brunswick Charge for five years before retiring.

**Irene Comer Guill**, 86, of Danville, VA, died Aug. 9, 2018. Guill was the widow of the **Rev. Charles H. Comer** who died in 2004.

**Reuben Blanton**, 78, of Amelia, VA, died Aug. 17, 2018. His brother-in-law is the **Rev. Gene Tatum**, retired.

## BIRTHS

**The Rev. Katie B. Gooch**, Pace Student Center at VCU, and husband Matt celebrate the arrival of son **Henry**, born Aug. 16.

**The Rev. Jennifer Vestal Moore**, pastor of Bethany UMC Rustburg and chaplain at Randolph College, and husband Barry celebrate the birth of a granddaughter, **Sophia Barrow Moore**, born Aug. 22, 2018. 🌸



Notice: The *Advocate*, due to the increasing number of entries for this section each month, will only publish death notices for individuals rather than full obituaries. To have additional information published, please contact the *Advocate* office at [advocate@vaumc.org](mailto:advocate@vaumc.org) or mail to c/o Communications Office, P.O. Box 5606 Glen Allen, VA 23058-5606. The Communications Office receives obituaries from a number of sources, but to ensure we receive a particular notice, please contact us with copy.

## Bishop's Bible Challenge readings for November

November 1	Matthew 20-21
November 2	Luke 18:15-19:48
November 3	Mark 11, John 12
November 4	Matthew 22, Mark 12
November 5	Matt. 23, Luke 20-21
November 6	Mark 13
November 7	Matthew 24
November 8	Matthew 25
November 9	Matthew 26, Mark 14
November 10	Luke 22, John 13
November 11	John 14-17
November 12	Matthew 27, Mark 15
November 13	Luke 23, John 18-19
November 14	Matthew 28, Mark 16
November 15	Luke 24, John 20-21
November 16	Acts 1-3
November 17	Acts 4-6
November 18	Acts 7-8
November 19	Acts 9-10
November 20	Acts 11-12
November 21	Acts 13-14
November 22	James 1-5
November 23	Acts 15-16
November 24	Galatians 1-3
November 25	Galatians 4-6
November 26	Acts 17-18:18
November 27	1 Thessalonians 1-5, 2 Thessalonians 1-3
November 28	Acts 18:19-19:41
November 29	1 Corinthians 1-4
November 30	1 Corinthians 5-8



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15 g) Copies not Distributed	-37	-45
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16 c) Total Print Distribution + Paid Electronic Copies	2,905	2,131
16 d) Percent Paid (16b divided by 16c x 100)	90%	96%

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# DISCIPLES HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD

## The future of UMFS is bright!

Dear Advocate readers,

We made an exciting announcement this summer about the future of United Methodist Family Services (UMFS). For more than 100 years, UMFS has been an unwavering champion for high-risk children and families. Now we're moving forward with plans that will allow us to serve children and families for another century and beyond.

Our UMFS Richmond campus will be changing in both its appearance and reach over the next several years. We took the first step in our evolution in August when we finalized a long-term land lease deal with Spy Rock Real Estate Group. Spy Rock's plans for a mixed-use development on the 4.5 acres of UMFS property along Broad and Hamilton Streets will help generate a portion of the funding needed to build a new Child & Family Healing Center, as well as an addition to Charterhouse School.

The new Child & Family Healing Center building will offer expanded residential treatment services and upgrades to current accommodations for children statewide. For

Charterhouse School, we'll add a new building next to the current school to meet the needs of our growing student body.

At UMFS, we want to continue to meet the needs of high-risk children, needs which are constantly changing. We're committed to ensuring that all of Virginia's children have a team of unwavering champions and tools for success to become resilient adults, for today and for the future.

We're positioning ourselves for longevity in a future that is very, very bright!

Thank you,

**Greg Peters, LCSW**  
*President and CEO, UMFS*

## "I don't want to be another statistic."

— **MARK**, FOSTER CARE YOUTH

**The national statistics for youth in foster care are grim:**

**50%**

don't complete high school by age 18

**91%**

don't graduate from college

MARK HAD A ROUGH CHILDHOOD, which included the imprisonment of his father and the death of his mother. He was struggling and behind in school when he entered the UMFS Treatment Foster Care program in 2014. UMFS matched Mark with a loving foster family. With his new support, Mark was able to catch up in school and graduate with honors. This fall, he became the first person in his family to attend college. Help other foster youth like Mark.

Donate online at [umfs.org/donate](https://umfs.org/donate)

  
**UMFS**  
Unwavering champions for children and families.



# ONE LAST WORD

## 30 WAYS to LOVE your PASTOR

The “official “Pastor Appreciation Month” (October) may have come and gone, but pastors can use encouragement every day of the year. Here are 30 ways to let your pastor know that you appreciate the load he or she carries: the pressure of caring for a congregation, the administrative responsibilities and the daily sacrifices he or she makes for ministry.

1. Pray for your pastor every day, and let them know it.
2. Share a post on social media from or about your church and tag your pastor.
3. Send your pastor a greeting card with an encouraging message.
4. Invite your pastor and their family over to dinner.
5. Sit up front at church and smile a little during the sermon.
6. Sing your heart out (or pretend to!) at your church worship service.
7. In addition to saying “great sermon,” identify something specific from the sermon and comment directly on that.
8. Drop off some doughnuts, bagels or fruit to the church office for the entire staff to enjoy.
9. Babysit your pastor’s kids so the pastor and spouse can go out.
10. Perform a surprise pastor appreciation skit.
11. Write an article for the church newsletter about how thankful you are for your pastor.
12. Support your church financially.
13. Bring friends to church and introduce them to your pastor.
14. Send a card or care package to your pastor’s son or daughter away at college.
15. Host a barbeque with your small group and invite the pastor’s family.
16. Give your pastor a surprise birthday party or organize a “card shower” from the whole congregation for your pastor.
17. Take your pastor golfing.
18. Loan your pastor your boat, four-wheeler or snowmobile.
19. Let your pastor’s family use your cottage or timeshare.
20. Buy your pastor’s entire family tickets to a sporting event or a movie theater.
21. Volunteer to chair a committee.
22. On Sunday, ask your pastor what you can pray about for them this week. Then next Sunday ask your pastor how things went regarding what you prayed for.
23. If time is given during a service for sharing, talk about something positive your pastor did recently that few people know about.
24. Mow your pastor’s lawn, shovel the driveway or ask if there is a home project you can help with.
25. Write a letter to your church’s staff parish committee expressing your gratitude for your pastor.
26. Listen openly to your pastor’s ideas for change.
27. Give your pastor a copy of the latest release of his/her favorite author or book related to ministry.
28. Write a letter to your pastor’s district superintendent expressing your appreciation for your pastor or noting a specific example God has used him/her in your life or the life of the church.
29. Defend your pastor against critics.
30. Never publicly criticize your pastor. If you have a concern or complaint, speak directly to your pastor about it. Or better, remember that your pastor is human, forgive your pastor and forget it. 🍷

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