

IX. REPORTS OF CONFERENCE BOARDS AND AGENCIES

[Editor's Note: The following reports are reprinted from the 2017 *Book of Reports*. To find actions taken or changes made in the reports, refer to Section IV. DAILY PROCEEDINGS of this *Journal*. The report from the Council on Finance and Administration will be found in Section VIII. FINANCIAL REPORTS of this *Journal*.]

COMMITTEE ON RULES

This year, the work of the Rules Committee has been many small projects. The first of these projects was to consider a proposal in regards to the nomination form for delegates to General and Jurisdictional conferences. The Rules Committee was in favor of and is requesting the following to be added to the reverse side of both Lay and Clergy nomination forms:

Those who consent to or desire nomination are asked to commit to the following expectations:

- 1) *Pray for God's guidance in decision-making;*
- 2) *Commit the time needed to read and study the issues;*
- 3) *Attend the meetings of the Virginia Conference delegation; and*
- 4) *Attend the General and Jurisdictional Conference as needed.*

Dependent upon choices in housing, food, and transportation, delegates may expect to spend an additional \$250- \$1,500 during the two-week General Conference-over and above the reimbursement.

Dependent upon choices in housing and meals, delegates may expect to spend an additional \$100-\$500 during the three days of the SEJ Conference-over and above the reimbursement.

(link will be provided here for more information on conference website)

Please contact the Heads of the previous delegation, lay and clergy, for additional information.

In addition to this project, there were some changes for conference relationships within the Virginia Conference this past year. First, it was recognized that though the Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center, Inc. has been a major part of this conference's history, this entity no longer exists and thus needs to be taken out of the Standing Rules as an administrative agency of the Annual Conference. Also, the Common Table voted last spring to restructure the Board of Communications and our Rules Committee has worked with them to account for their new structure. Also, the Rules Committee is recommending, with the approval of Common Table, the addition of the "Professional Association of United Methodist Secretaries" to the Administrative Agencies of the Annual Conference.

And onto some general maintenance of our Standing Rules. In the 2015 *Book of Reports*, in the Committee on Rules Report, it was recommended and passed that we change the speaking allotment times in section II.B.3. for delegates to speak to two minutes. There were other places in our current Standing Rules that also needed to be changed to be uniform throughout the Standing Rules with this change. Therefore, the Rules Committee is seeking to make those necessary changes to concur with the action of the previous annual conference. In addition, the Rules Committee is recommending that all speakers, including the signer of the resolution, be given two minutes to address the resolution.

Also, because within The United Methodist Church districts have many differing names for differing boards and agencies, for ease of reading the Standing Rules, the Rules Committee has recommended the placing of asterisks in VI.C to mean "Designates or equivalent body."

And finally, Members of the Rules Committee reviewed and updated the disciplinary references based on the 2016 *Book of Discipline*.

– Rev. Joshua S. King, Chair

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Rules Committee recommends the addition of language found in the above report to the Nominations form of both Lay and Clergy nominees. The recommended changes to the Standing Rules are:

Changes Recommended by Rules Committee

Paragraph I.B.3.u – strike, "Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center, Inc.;"

Paragraph I.B.5.c.v – strike, "Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center, Inc.;"

Paragraph II.B.3 – In the sentence that begins, "The member of annual conference who has signed the resolution shall have a maximum of three minutes to address the resolution." Strike the word three and add two.

Paragraph V.B.2 – Strike this entire paragraph, and renumber subsequent paragraphs.

Paragraph V.B.4.b – In the opening sentence, strike 28 and insert 24, strike 16 and insert 14. In the next sentence, strike 16 and insert 14, strike 12 and insert 10. In the sentences that begins, "The ex-officio member shall be the Director.." capitalize each word of the following, "conference information systems director".

Paragraph V.B.4.c – strike section c in whole and replace with the following:

c. Organization There shall be the following committees:

- i. Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of the corporation, the conference director of Communications and three additional members of the board. The three non-officer members of the Executive Committee shall be elected quadrennially by the Board of Directors and shall hold office until their successors are elected and qualify. Vacancies may be filled at any meeting of the Board of Directors. All non-officer members of the Executive Committee shall be chosen from among the directors. The Executive Committee shall include both laypersons and clergypersons. The president shall act as chair of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall also serve as the committee on Nominations, with the corporation vice president overseeing the business of nominations. The Executive Committee shall review board membership annually and recommend changes in membership to the board.

ii. Project Committees. As needs arise, project committees may be appointed by the president to function on behalf of specific projects or activities of the corporation. Any two (2) members of a project committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the committee's business. The president shall be an ex-officio of all such project committees. It is strongly encouraged that all board members serve on a project.

d. Finance

i. The Director of Communications for the Virginia Conference shall be designated as the person who can authorize expenditures on behalf of the corporation under the direction of the Board of Directors.

ii. Budget. The Director of Communications for the Virginia Conference, working closely with the board president, committee chairs and communications staff will annually develop the various communication budgets and submit them to the board for approval and will regularly review expenditures to insure compliance with the adopted budgets. The Board of Directors, prior to the budget deadline of the annual conference Connectional Ministries office each year, shall recommend an income and expense budget covering all activities for the next fiscal year, including capital improvements or expenditures.

Paragraph V.B – Insert a new number 17 following the new numbering system from the deletion of V.B.2 and insert the following:

17. Professional Association of United Methodist Secretaries. There shall be a Chapter of the Professional Association of United Methodist Secretaries (VAPAUMCS), which is to provide church secretaries and other administrative professionals a supportive base for unity and fellowship so as to promote individual growth, professional development, continuing education, and spiritual enrichment. There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of a President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer and the Standing Committees Chairs. There shall be standing committees: Communications composed of five members; Finance composed of four members (the President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President and Treasurer); and Nominating composed of six members in classes of two for three-year terms.

Paragraph VI.C. – In the second paragraph, place an asterisk following the words: “include”, “district youth council”, “United Methodist Young Adults”, “family ministries”, “five youth members”, “district youth council”, “five young adult members”, “District Council on Ministries”. In the opening sentence of the second paragraph, make a deletion of “or equivalent body”. Delete “(or equivalent body)” at the end of paragraph 2. Insert asterisk following the last word of paragraph 2 that states, “*Designates or equivalent body.”

Paragraph VII.G. – Under article 3, delete both mentions of “five” and replace with “two”.

Changes under Discipline Update

Update all references of “2012 *Book of Discipline*” to “2016 *Book of Discipline*”

Paragraph I.B.3.m – delete “17” and insert “18”, delete “35” and insert “30”, delete “¶ n. below:” insert “2016 Book of Discipline, ¶ 602.4.”

Paragraph I.B.3.n – delete “17” and insert “18”, delete “35” and insert “30”.

Paragraph I.B.5.a.i – delete “17” and insert “18”

Paragraph I.B.5.a.ii. – delete “35” and insert “30”

Paragraph I.B.6.d – delete ¶¶ 1) and 2) and insert so d. is to be read, “Part-time and full-time local pastors who have completed the educational requirements and have been under uninterrupted appointment for two years (2016 Book of Discipline ¶316.6).”

Paragraph I.B.6.d – insert “e.” before sentence that begins with, “Retired local pastors...” and delete “¶316.6” and add “¶320.5”

Paragraph III.C.1.a. – delete “¶355.7” and insert “¶354.8”

Paragraph III.C.1.b.i.d) - delete ¶¶ 1) and 2) and insert so d. is to be read, “Part-time and full-time local pastors who have completed the educational requirements and have been under uninterrupted appointment for two years (2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶316.6).”

Paragraph III.C.1.b.ii – delete “¶316.6” and insert “¶320.5”

Paragraph III.E.2 – delete “¶III.D.3” and insert “¶III.D.2”

Paragraph V.B.5 – delete “¶I.E.1” and insert “¶I.D.1”

Paragraph V.B.13 – delete “¶2703” and insert “¶2703.2”

Paragraph V.B.21 – delete “¶¶ 2512-2516” and insert “¶¶ 2512-2517”

Paragraph VI.A – delete “¶ 657 and” and leave it to read “¶658).”

Paragraph VI.B – delete “¶659.2” and insert “¶660.2”; delete “¶668.1,2” and insert “¶669.1,2”; delete “¶2517” and insert “¶2518.2”; delete “¶665.1” and insert “¶666.1”; delete “¶2518” and insert “¶2519”.

– Rev. Joshua S. King, Chair

CABINET

The Virginia Conference Cabinet seeks to equip the clergy and laity to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The 16 district superintendents strive to live into the role of chief missional strategists. The cabinet is in constant prayer asking God to lead us in our conference to be more effective and fruitful in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

The past year called each of us to a time of transition as we said “thank you and farewell” to Bishop Cho and “hello and welcome” to Bishop Lewis. It is

an exciting time in the life of the conference and I invite you to celebrate with us the examples of vitality and fruitfulness that is happening in our districts:

Arlington District: Our vision is to come alongside churches in the District with contextual revitalization and excellent training of clergy and laity. Our new church planting continues with Vine Church launching a satellite congregation at Graham Rd UMC; and Floris UMC initiating an online satellite beginning July 1, 2017. Existing churches are also multiplying with Korean United Methodist Church of Greater Washington sending close to 100 of their members to join the Caucasian Chesterbrook UMC; and sending their lead pastor, Young Bong Kim to revitalize their Centreville campus, now an independent new church start with 200 in worship renamed KUMC of Koinonia. The Arlington District partnered with the Alexandria District to start Next Level Innovations, which invests in a disciplined two to three year process to help them move “to the next level” of vitality. Our first cohort began with 6 churches in the fall of 2016, and we have obtained funding for two more cohorts of 8-10 churches each. Central UMC received approval from Arlington County for their innovative plan to replace their existing church (right next to the Ballston Metro in a “walkable urban” community) with an 8 story building containing a new church, space for a preschool, and a mix of affordable and market-rate apartments.

The laity and clergy of the **Alexandria District** welcomed Bishop Sharma Lewis for a “Chat and Chew,” a great day of worship, conversation and fellowship on January 28, 2017, at Grace UMC in Manassas. Three churches (Fairlington, Old Bridge, and St. Matthew’s) participated with three churches from the Arlington District in a pilot program for church revitalization called “Next Level Innovations.” In the coming year, plans are to expand the number of churches in this in-depth process to build on our churches’ strengths. At this annual conference, we expect to launch at least two new faith communities as multi-sites of our fastest-growing congregations.

The **Charlottesville District** is continuing to raise funds for the C’ville Apt. Project which will be providing apartments for people with a developmental disability partnering with Heart Havens. We hosted a prayer event with Rev. Terry Teykl. The Lay Servant ministry work area held two training events. We supported Emmanuel Youth Mission in El Salvador.

The churches and people of the **Danville District** are learning how to identify and participate in contextualized ministries, for the transformation of lives and communities we serve. We are building flexible and responsive approaches to our shared efforts. Clergy/Lay teams are formed and sent throughout the District to provide resources for mission, ministry and vital discipleship.

On the **Eastern Shore District**, events led by Rev. Laura Martin and Shane Claiborne spurred attention to the district theme of Ministry with the Poor. Una Familia, a tutoring program for Latino children, grew to 5 congregations, including two Episcopal churches. Camp Occohannock on the Bay is in the midst of a capital campaign to upgrade its facilities for ministry.

The **Elizabeth River District** is working hard to equip the laity and clergy to reach new people by getting out into the community. We have provided excellent training events through our clergy meetings and district-wide training for laity and clergy. Many churches are experiencing new vitality in their congregation especially as they reach out into their communities and get to know new people.

The **Farmville District** celebrates an increase in giving to our apportionments (Conference 95% and District 97.7%) in 2016. As the chief missional strategist, I listen and pay attention to our leaders, give the work back to the leaders who draw on their own strength and communicate hope and encouragement to them. Vitality and fruitfulness are present in several more congregations according to the Equipping Vital Congregation goals of disciples in worship, disciples making new disciples, disciples growing in their faith, disciples engaged in mission and disciples sharing their resources for mission. We are living into our new vision “being passionate about leading, listening and loving all people to build up the Kingdom.”

The most recent development for the **Fredericksburg District** was an action taken at a March 4th Called District Conference in which we voted to change our district name to the Rappahannock River District (R.R.). We made this change for three reasons. We desired a name that reflected a better representation of the 13 geographic regions of our district; we wanted a name that would be a tribute to the American Indian persons who are natives to the land; and the Rappahannock River flows through the entirety of our geographic area. While our name has changed, we continue to engage in ministry through our four- part vision foci. Our district continues several vital ministries. We are in our fourth year of an International Mission Partnership with the El Salvador Evangelical Methodist Church. We are in the fourth year of mission and community ministries through The Heartwood Center. The children’s summer and holiday food ministry of the Heartwood Center began serving 97 children in two locations. This year we are facilitating an expended ministry that serves more than 400 children in locations all across the western and southern areas of our district. We have also taken the bold step of establishing a store front mission ministry called Crossroads Mission Center in the Central Garage area on our district. The Crossroads Mission Center provides Messy Church worship, outreach ministries, and special seasonal ministries. Last, but not least, we are also exploring locations where we can establish new faith communities.

The **Harrisonburg District** is hard at work building “Mission Central”. This will be a 5,000 square foot building that will house our clothing ministry. Last year we distributed clothing to more than 3,000 children and gave away many thousands of diapers. We hope this ministry will grow into a clothing closet for adults and a food pantry plus house a social worker who will work individually with folks in need. Aisle 7 started out of Verona UMC and is now worshipping every Sunday morning a different crowd of people who wouldn’t normally go to church. It is open seven days a weeks as a community center. Aisle 7 is a store front with a café, classrooms and meeting space for everyone. There are computers to use, a coffee shop and space to hang out. Many groups are using the space and the community is excited to have a center. We have UMVIM teams going everywhere. These teams are helping in Lumberton, N.C., Waverly and Forest, Va. and in several places in West Virginia as well as local projects. Our churches are involved in a backpacks ministry in almost every school in the district. Many of our churches have food pantries and many work with community food pantries.

The churches on the **James River District** continue to focus on God’s vision of, “Disciples Making Disciples,” as we strive for the revitalization of existing churches and the formation of new faith communities. The recovery work from last year’s devastating tornado in Waverly has brought new life and revival to both church and community. Although UMCOR has completed their work, we are continuing to host mission teams in the newly remodeled Dendron Mission Center to continue helping low-income families. The churches on the district stepped up apportionment payments for 2016 and many of our small/mid-size churches saw increases in worship and small groups. A new task force has been created to study the possibility of a new faith community in Windsor and we hope to begin two new house churches. We are excited that the campus ministry at Virginia State Univ. is becoming a Wesley Foundation which will be the first at one of the state’s historically black colleges.

The **Lynchburg District** is in the process of discerning how to best structure our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We envision equipping clergy, training laity, resourcing congregations, engaging in ministry with the poor, offering conflict transformation,

and caring for the property entrusted to us. We are using our six geographical clusters to deepen relationships among clergy and create connections for congregations to partner in ministry. The district office is located in the Park View Community Center, home to nine ministries and agencies serving our neighbors in one of the poorest communities in Central Virginia.

Like the James River that moves through our midst, God’s goodness continues to flow through the **Richmond District!** We continue to celebrate the work of Shalom Farms, as it moves to a larger farm to meet the growing need for fresh food and produce for those in need in our Richmond area. We are kicking off a new adventure at our Pace Center, on the campus of VCU in downtown Richmond. In conjunction with the Fredericksburg and Charlottesville districts, we celebrate Westview on the James with its increasing enrollment and many opportunities to offer Christ in a beautiful outdoor setting. And as always, our churches continue to seek our Lord, seek his ministry, and multiply his risen grace for God’s kingdom. We look forward to another year of this abundant grace flowing through the Richmond District!

Equipping clergy and laity centered the **Roanoke District’s** work this year. The Clergy Summit reflected on the recent General and Jurisdictional Conferences and welcomed Carol Draper from the Conference Treasurer’s Office for a work session on statistics, “Stories by Number”. Over 400 lay and clergy leaders have participated in a variety of programs sponsored by the The District Common Table including: a day with Jacob Armstrong, author of *The New Adapters: Shaping Ideas to Fit Your Congregation*; a second group cohort of *How to Reach New People*; Plowpoint’s “Choosing the Faithful Path”; the annual District Leadership Event; and Staff-Pastor/Parish Training. For the first time, twenty “Social Media” communications grants were awarded to local congregations.

Reflecting a year of open-heartedness for Christ, **Staunton District** churches sent mission crews to redress tornado damage in Waverly and flood-caused devastation in neighboring Greenbrier Co. WV, and gathered thousands of pounds of supplies to further this work. In July, we were blessed to send a Youth mission team of more than 30 persons to Raleigh NC, comprised almost equally of African-American, Latino and Anglo youth from six local churches. In September, we were greatly honored to receive an early visit from our new Bishop, who preached the 150th anniversary of Augusta Street UMC (Staunton). That same month, a collaborative ministry hosted by Wayne Hills UMC (Waynesboro) was launched: *The Secret Boutique* (which has served more than 70 youth to date) provides a “clothes-shopping experience” for low-income teens, and aims to build relationships between clients and active UM Youth. As the Conference year drew to a close, many of our churches were already responding to a District-wide challenge to think “outside the box” in order to invest in their communities via life-transforming missions. To God be the glory.

The **Winchester District** participated in the 250th anniversary of the Old Stone Church in Leesburg. OSC is the first Methodist-owned property in America. The WD hosted the Rev. Jorge Acevedo in a two day event for laity and clergy designed to enable churches of all sizes to be vital and fruitful. A second cohort of churches participated in Jim Griffith’s, Reaching New People and the first cohort of laity and clergy were trained in Plowpoint’s “Choosing the Faithful Path. The WD continued its Haiti Initiative by sending three UMVIM teams.

The **York River District** celebrated its 6th anniversary as a new district with multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural worship during the District Conference. By the leadership of the Superintendency Committee, District Youth Ministry Advisory Team was formed to develop and strengthen the ministry with youth. The District Board of Missions continued partnering with the churches and agencies to support their local, regional, national, and international missions. Various trainings and workshops were offered for clergy and laity to enhance their spiritual development and ministry excellence. Clergy peer learning groups continued to be formed to cultivate mutual support and accountability. Twenty churches have become Prayer Covenant Congregations. In 2016, the people of the York River District welcomed 496 new members, including 304 by profession of faith, and gave over 2.4 million dollars through apportionments and other benevolence.

The district superintendents remain grateful to our Extended Cabinet members: Rev. Marc Brown, Warren Harper, Rev. Mark Ogren, David Dommissie, and Rev. Meredith McNabb for their valuable ministry and guidance. We are also grateful to Rev. Tom Joyce, the bishop’s assistant, and Mrs. Terri Biggins, the bishop’s administrative assistant for their dedicated and constant support of us all.

Since Bishop Lewis has seen fit to make no cabinet changes this year, each of us commitment ourselves anew to the role of district superintendence and look forward to the journey with our new bishop all to the glory of God.

– Larry Thompson, Winchester DS, Dean of the Cabinet

EQUITABLE COMPENSATION COMMISSION

The Equitable Compensation Commission continues to provide financial aid to those churches requiring supplementation to strengthen their ministries in the communities in which they are located and to provide minimum salary or salary supplementation for the pastors. Equitable Compensation support in the amount of \$170,048 was provided to 31 charges in 2016. A schedule of salary supplementation appropriations for 2016 has been provided to the conference secretary for publication in the Journal.

There were 10 charges receiving salary supplementation in 2015 that did not require salary support by the end of 2016. These are Bowling Green Charge (Fredericksburg), Brookneal (Lynchburg), Cumberland (Farmville), Galloway (Arlington), Montross (Fredericksburg), Nottoway-Lunenburg (Farmville), Olyer’s Chapel-Rehoboth Cooperative Parrish (Danville), Southview (Charlottesville), St Paul (Roanoke), and Twin Lakes Charge (Lynchburg). These charges and their superintendents are commended for their success in providing a ministry in the communities they serve that has enabled them to grow spiritually in their stewardship.

District Superintendents and charges setting salaries for 2018 that may require supplementation are advised that the “floor” must come from sources other than the Commission on Equitable Compensation.

The Conference Average Compensation (CAC) for 2018 is \$63,199 which is an increase of 0.2 percent from 2017. The Commission considered Minimum Compensation and the Floor Schedule for 2018 and recommends the changes as outlined below.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Equitable Compensation Fund apportionment for 2018 be \$350,000.
2. The Minimum Compensation Schedule for 2018 proposed to be:

| | <u>Proposed</u> | <u>Current</u> |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| a. Full Connection Pastors | \$42,000 | \$41,500 |
| b. Provisional and Associate Members | \$38,500 | \$38,000 |
| c. Local Pastors | \$36,000 | \$35,500 |

3. The Floor Schedule for 2018 proposed no change to be:

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| a. Full Connection Pastors | \$28,000 | \$28,000 |
| b. Provisional and Associate Members | \$25,600 | \$25,600 |
| c. Local Pastors | \$24,000 | \$24,000 |

The financial results 2014-2016 for the Equitable Compensation Fund are provided below:

EQUITABLE COMPENSATION FINANCIAL REPORT

| | Year Ending 2014 | Year Ending 2015 | Year Ending 2016 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Apportioned | 500,000 | 500,000 | 500,000 |
| Uncollected Apportionment | 56,252 | 76,908 | 61,170 |
| Apportionment Income | 443,748 | 423,092 | 438,830 |
| <i>Percent Collected</i> | <i>88.75%</i> | <i>84.62%</i> | <i>87.77%</i> |
| Grants | 325,061 | 222,495 | 193,646 |
| Meeting Expense & Other | 1,727 | 1,030 | 1,033 |
| Total Expenses | 326,788 | 223,526 | 194,679 |
| Receipts Over (Under) Expenses | 116,960 | 199,566 | 244,151 |

Tom Nealley, Chair

VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST PENSIONS, INC.

Section I: Reports

Report 1: Role & Responsibilities of Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc.

The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church directs each annual conference to establish a conference board of pension, auxiliary to Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath), to have charge of the interests and work of providing for and contributing to the support, relief, assistance, and pensioning of clergy and their families, other church workers and lay employees of The United Methodist Church, its institutions, organizations and agencies within each annual conference except as otherwise provided for by Wespath.

On June 22, 1965, the Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church (VAUMC) established and incorporated the Virginia Methodist Pensions, Incorporation, (subsequently renamed on February 2, 1971 to Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc., or “VUMPI,”) as its conference board of pension.

VUMPI, in conjunction with Wespath, develops and administers the numerous employee pension and benefit plans sponsored by the Virginia Conference. Some plans are employer-paid, while others are voluntary and 100 percent participant-paid:

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| <p>VUMPI Plans Health Prescription Dental Supplemental Life Voluntary Life Long Term Care Healthcare Flexible Spending Account Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account</p> |
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|--|
| <p>Wespath Plans Ministers Reserve Pension Fund (Pre-82) Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) Clergy Retirement Security Program – Defined Benefit (CRSP-DB) Clergy Retirement Security Program – Defined Contribution (CRSP-DC) United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)</p> |
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Report 2: Funding Wespath Plans

As noted in Report 1 above, VUMPI administers several Wespath programs for the benefit of Virginia Conference clergy. The funding requirements associated with the various programs are determined by Wespath, and VUMPI assumes the responsibility for raising the funds necessary to meet those obligations.

Wespath has calculated the Virginia Conference’s 2018 required funding obligation associated with the Pre-82 pension program’s unfunded liability. That funding obligation is based on the Virginia Conference’s total projected liability and asset values as of January 1, 2016. Due to the combined impact of weaker than expected investment market performance in 2015 and the adoption of a new mortality table reflecting improved projected participant longevity, the required Pre-82 funding obligation in 2018 is approximately 3.5 times the 2017 Pre-82 funding obligation.

The impact of weaker than expected investment market performance and the adoption of a new mortality table had a similar impact on all annual conferences with an unfunded Pre-82 pension liability. Recognizing the potential adverse impact of significantly higher Pre-82 funding obligations in 2018, Wespath has instituted a Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) premium redirection program in 2018 and 2019. Wespath’s expectation is that annual conferences will continue to bill local churches and other salary paying units for CPP program participants in 2018, but will redirect the proceeds toward the Pre-82 pension liability.

VUMPI intends to proceed in accordance with Wespath’s expectations, and recommends that the Virginia Conference approve the continuation of the current CPP billing methodology, as is detailed in Recommendation 4 below. One of VUMPI’s strategic objectives is minimizing the volatility in clergy benefits apportionments, and the CPP premium redirection enables VUMPI to maintain a stable Pre-82 pension apportionment recommendation. In the absence of the CPP premium redirection, VUMPI would face a funding obligation that exceeds the recommended 2018 Pre-82 apportionment by over \$1 million, and would likely need to consider a significant increase in the Pre-82 apportionment amount.

Report 3: Virginia Conference-Sponsored Health Plans

VUMPI administers health plans for full time clergy of the Virginia Conference, as well as retired clergy who meet eligibility requirements based on years of ministry in the Virginia Conference. Details of the Conference-sponsored health plans follow:

Active Clergy Health Plans

Health plans made available to clergy serving in full time appointments in the Virginia Conference include a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) plan, a Health Maintenance Organization Point of Service (HMO) plan, and the Clergy Managed Care Plan (CMCP), which pairs a plan with a relatively higher deductible with a Health Reimbursement Account that is funded by VUMPI.

The majority of the cost of the health plans made available to Virginia Conference clergy is funded through a Conference apportionment, as described in Recommendation 1. The remainder of the cost of the plans is funded by participant contributions, as described in Recommendation 2.

Retired Clergy Health Plans

VUMPI administers health plans for eligible retired clergy of the Virginia Conference. The eligibility requirements include a minimum of ten consecutive years of full time ministry in the Virginia Conference immediately prior to retirement. As is detailed in recommendation 2, clergy having ten or more consecutive years of ministry who go on approved leave or are appointed to an Extension Ministry may freeze their years of service by paying the Retiree Health Plan Monthly Access Fee.

Plans made available to eligible retirees are coordinated with Medicare eligibility. Specific plans for retirees who are not yet eligible for Medicare and the program for Medicare-eligible clergy are described below:

Conference-sponsored health plan for pre-Medicare-eligible retirees: retirees who are eligible to enroll in the Conference-sponsored retired clergy health plan but who are not yet eligible to enroll in Medicare may enroll in the self funded PPO plan administered by VUMPI. Pre-Medicare-eligible retirees may also enroll in the self funded dental insurance program made available to active clergy. The majority of the cost of the health plans made available to Virginia Conference clergy is funded through a Conference apportionment, as described in Recommendation 1. The remainder of the cost of the plans is funded by participant contributions, as described in Recommendation 2.

Conference-sponsored health plan for Medicare-eligible retirees: retirees who are eligible to enroll in the Conference-sponsored retired clergy health plan and who are also enrolled in Medicare have two options for retiree medical coverage.

The first option is the Group Plan, which is a group Medicare Advantage plan created specifically for Virginia Conference retirees. The Group Plan integrates the retiree’s Medicare benefit and includes prescription drug coverage. The majority of the cost of the Group Plan is funded through a Conference apportionment, as described in Recommendation 1. The remainder of the cost of the plans is funded by participant contributions, as described in Recommendation 2.

The second option made available to eligible retirees who are enrolled in Medicare is the Connector option. Under the Connector option, Medicare-eligible retirees are able to select any Medicare Supplement plan or Medicare Advantage plan, and any Part D prescription drug plan, offered by United Healthcare. The Conference will provide funding through a Retiree Reimbursement Account (“RRA”), and those funds can be used to partially or fully offset the cost of the coverage elected through the Connector. The RRA funding made available to retirees who elect

coverage through the Connector option is funded through a Conference apportionment, as described in Recommendation 1. The remainder of the cost of the elected health plan coverage, if any, is paid by the retiree directly to United Healthcare.

Report 4: Pension Plan Structure

There are four components to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP):

- A. Ministers Reserve Pension Fund (Pre-82) for service and benefits accrued on and/or prior to December 31, 1981.
- B. Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) for service and benefits accrued on and/or after January 1, 1982 through December 31, 2006.
- C. Clergy Retirement Security Program - Defined Benefit Plan (CRSP-DB) for service and benefits accrued on and/or after January 1, 2007.
- D. Clergy Retirement Security Program - Defined Contribution Plan (CRSP-DC) for service and benefits accrued on and/or after January 1, 2007.

Wespath refers to plans A – C above as defined benefit (“DB”) pension plans. That is, each year an eligible clergy member of the Virginia Conference served/serves and received/receives pension credit, the applicable plan will pay a certain benefit, or “defined” monthly income during retirement. Hence, the term “defined benefit.” Defined benefit plans do not maintain participant account balances since the employer, or in our case, Wespath, has the responsibility to manage the funds in a manner sufficient to pay the monthly defined benefit.

Simultaneous to Wespath calculating each participant’s defined benefit, it calculates each annual conference’s cost to provide these defined benefits. Wespath bills each annual conference the amount due. Each annual conference, or in our case, VUMPI, then in-turn bills and apportions our local churches for the cost of these plans.

In addition to these defined benefit plans, annual conferences provide their clergy pension benefits from the CRSP-DC, a defined contribution (“DC”) plan. Each year an eligible clergy member of the Virginia Conference serves and receives pension credit, the Virginia Conference determines how much pension contribution each clergy participant will receive in his/her pension account. Hence, the term defined contribution. VUMPI bills local churches for the required amount of pension contribution, then in-turn, makes monthly contributions into the clergy CRSP-DC accounts.

Report 5: Welfare Plans Structure

The welfare plans made available to Virginia Conference clergy include the Comprehensive Protection Plan (“CPP”) sponsored by Wespath, as well as supplemental benefits sponsored independently by VUMPI.

The CPP disability benefits are as follows:

- For Clergy disabled on or after Jan. 1, 2002, the CPP disability benefit equals 70 percent of Plan Compensation, with compensation capped at 200 percent of the DAC.
- For Clergy disabled prior to Jan. 1, 2002, they will continue to receive the same CPP disability benefit per the plan document in-force at the time their disability claim originated.

The following generally describes the death benefit amounts payable under the CPP to eligible participants and their beneficiaries:

Active Participant Death Benefits: payable upon the death of an eligible active CPP participant, as follows:

- Participant: \$50,000, payable in 12 monthly installments or one lump sum
- Spouse of active participant: 20% of DAC in the year of death
- Surviving spouse of active participant: 15% of DAC in the year of death
- Child of active participant: 10% of DAC in the year of death
- Annual surviving spouse annuity benefit of 20% of DAC, less the annuity benefit payable from CRSP and other Church-related sources
- Annual surviving child benefit of 10% of DAC, payable in 12 monthly installments (for those age 17 and younger; benefits are paid through the month in which the child attains age 18)
- Annual surviving child educational benefit up to 20% of DAC, payable in equal installments (for those age 18 through 24 and attending school full-time)

Retired Participant Death Benefits: to be eligible for death benefits in retirement, a clergyperson must have been covered in CPP for a specified number of years. The 2012 General Conference approved a change to the CPP program which increases the length of service requirement for retirees. Retirees with 25 or more years of enrollment in CPP are eligible for the death benefits in retirement, and the eligibility criteria for those with fewer than 25 years in CPP is phased in with one-year increments, as detailed in the table below:

| Retirement Year | CPP Enrollment Requirement for Death Benefit Eligibility |
|-----------------|--|
| 2013 | 6 of last 10 years |
| 2014 | 7 of last 10 years |
| 2015 | 8 of last 11 years |
| 2016 | 9 of last 12 years |
| 2017 | 10 of last 13 years |
| 2018 | 11 of last 14 years |
| 2019+ | 12 of last 15 years |

The death benefit amounts associated with retired participants are detailed in the table below:

| Plan Provision | Clergy Who Retired Before Jan. 1, 2013 | Clergy Who Retire Jan. 1, 2013 or Later |
|---|--|---|
| Death of retired participant | 30% of DAC in the year of death | \$20,400 |
| Death of retiree's spouse | 20% of DAC in the year of death | \$15,300 |
| Death of retiree's surviving spouse | 15% of DAC in the year of death | \$10,200 |
| Death of retiree's child | 10% of DAC in the year of death | \$8,160 |
| Annual surviving child benefit, payable in 12 monthly installments | 10% of DAC | 10% of DAC |
| Annual surviving child educational benefit, payable in installments | 20% of DAC | 20% of DAC |

The Conference Supplemental Death Benefit for active eligible clergy under episcopal appointment, and who are enrolled in CPP, is \$25,000. The Conference Supplemental Death Benefit is payable in addition to the CPP death benefit. During retirement, a \$5,000 Conference Supplemental Death Benefit will be payable to CPP participants, in addition to the CPP death benefit. The beneficiary will receive the Conference Supplemental Death Benefit payable in one lump sum. The Conference pays the entire cost of this Supplemental Death Benefit.

In combination, the CPP and Conference Supplemental Death Benefit provide total death benefits as follows:

- \$75,000 to beneficiaries of active clergy participants
- 30% of the DAC + \$5,000 (or \$25,400 for those retiring January 1, 2013 or later) to beneficiaries of retired clergy participants

Gift Benefit

VUMPI currently elects to provide a one time \$1,500 gift at the time of retirement or disability (once awarded disability benefits under the Comprehensive Protection Plan) to each clergyperson who has served at least 10 years of service in a full-time Virginia Annual Conference episcopal appointment in the Virginia Conference with pension credit. Further, a gift to the family of each clergyperson meeting the eligibility criteria above who dies in active service is paid in the same amount as the gift to retired or disabled clergypersons.

Report 6: Denominational Average Compensation

Several of the pension and welfare plans incorporate the Denominational Average Compensation (“DAC”) into the formula for determining the plan benefit. The formula VUMPI uses for funding those plans relies on the DAC, as well.

As reported by Wespath, the DAC is projected to increase from 2017 to 2018 as follows:

| Denominational Average Compensation | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 2017 | \$68,876 |
| 2018 | \$70,202 |

Report 7: VUMPI Financial Reserve Strategy

The health benefit plans administered by VUMPI for the benefit of active clergy in the Virginia Conference are self-funded health plans. Because VUMPI assumes the financial liability associated with payment of medical claims under the terms of those plans, VUMPI maintains a financial reserve recognizing the potential for claims which exceed the funding made available through apportionments and participant contributions. VUMPI’s financial reserve also supports the projected financial liability associated with the health plans made available to retired Virginia Conference clergy, as well as pension funding and other financial obligations.

In 2014, the VUMPI Board of Directors approved a financial reserve strategy that is primarily intended to mitigate the burden of clergy benefits apportionments on Virginia Conference churches. Under the terms of the strategy, the VUMPI Board of Directors identified a portion of VUMPI’s financial reserve that has been dedicated to the unfunded liability associated with the Pre-82 pension apportionment. The strategy is specifically intended to reduce the volatility in the Pre-82 pension apportionment. Reserve funds that have been dedicated under this strategy for the 2018 through 2021 period amount to over \$6.6 million.

Section II: Recommendations for Annual Conference Approval

Recommendation 1: 2018 Pension and Health Plan Apportionment Recommendations

For 2018, VUMPI recommends a total Clergy Benefit Apportionment of \$16,770,000. This total includes funding for the Pre-82 pension, the Active Clergy Health Plan (which includes health care coverage for eligible clergy on medical leave and widowed spouses of active clergy) and the Retired Clergy Health Plan. The apportionment total is allocated among these components as follows:

| Clergy Benefits Apportionment Recommendations - 2018 | |
|--|----------------------|
| Active Clergy Health | \$ 9,710,000 |
| Retired Clergy Health | 6,060,000 |
| Pension Liability Assessment – Pre-82 | 1,000,000 |
| Total Clergy Benefit Apportionments | \$ 16,770,000 |

VUMPI recommends the above Active Clergy Health and Retired Clergy Health apportionments as part of its broad strategy focused on maintaining adequate health plans for Virginia Conference active and retired clergy, while moderating the financial impact on local churches and individual participants to the extent possible.

VUMPI will continue to bill Conference-responsible salary-paying-units (such as Extension Ministries) in 2018. The amount billed will be \$11,671 for each eligible clergyperson, plus their applicable Participant Contributions for active clergy as noted in Recommendation 2: 2018 Participant Contribution Recommendations.

The Pension Liability Assessment associated with the Pre-1982 pension program is calculated by Wespath, and is partially based on the projected funding liability that VUMPI is required to meet in 2018. Changes in each year’s assessment are driven by multiple factors, including actual and projected investment earnings on pension assets held on behalf of the Virginia Conference at Wespath. Based on input from multiple entities, including the Virginia Conference Treasurer and the Virginia Conference Council on Finance & Administration, the recommended Pre-82 pension apportionment in 2018 is \$1 million. As is noted in Report 2 above, Wespath’s CPP premium redirection program enables VUMPI to recommend a flat apportionment to fund the 2018 Pre-82 pension liability, in spite of an actual funding obligation in excess of \$2 million.

Recommendation 2: 2018 Participant Contribution Recommendations

A key component of VUMPI’s strategy is the administration of clergy health plans which provide sufficient and affordable health care coverage. VUMPI works closely with consultants and advisors to construct plan designs which are designed for long term financial sustainability, while optimizing both coverage and costs for enrolled clergy and their families. VUMPI is recommending no increase in participant contributions, resulting in the following monthly participant contribution rates for 2018:

Active Clergy:

| | Medical | | | Dental | |
|------------|---------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| | HMO | PPO | CMCP | Core | Major |
| Individual | \$113 | \$102 | \$90 | \$13 | \$34 |
| Family | \$351 | \$318 | \$294 | \$56 | \$105 |

Note: active clergy have the opportunity to earn a \$15 reduction in Individual contribution rate or \$30 reduction in Family contribution rate through participation in the Virginia Conference wellness program.

Clergy on Voluntary Leave and Sabbatical:

| | Medical | | Dental | |
|------------|---------|---------|--------|-------|
| | HMO | PPO | Core | Major |
| Individual | \$687 | \$626 | \$31 | \$60 |
| Family | \$1,852 | \$1,659 | \$58 | \$131 |

Clergy on Medical Leave with CPP Benefits & Under Age 65 Surviving Spouses of Clergy

| | Medical (\$500 deductible) | | Dental | |
|------------|----------------------------|--|--------|-------|
| | PPO | | Core | Major |
| Individual | \$112 | | \$13 | \$34 |
| Family | \$180 | | \$56 | \$105 |

Clergy Retired Under ¶358.2.a (With Twenty Years of Service) or ¶358.3 (Prior to Age 62 With Fewer Than Thirty Years of Service)

| Medical (\$1,000 deductible) | | Dental | | |
|------------------------------|--------|------------|------|-------|
| | PPO | | Core | Major |
| Individual | \$626 | Individual | \$31 | \$60 |
| Family | \$1659 | Family | \$58 | \$131 |

Retired Clergy Under Age 65 – Retired Under ¶358.1, ¶358.2b, ¶358.2c, or ¶358.3

| Individual Tier - Personal Monthly Contributions | | | |
|--|-------|-------------|--------------|
| Years of Service | PPO | Dental Core | Dental Major |
| 10-14 | \$698 | \$31 | \$60 |
| 15-19 | \$567 | \$31 | \$60 |
| 20-24 | \$433 | \$31 | \$60 |
| 25-29 | \$301 | \$31 | \$60 |
| 30+ | \$167 | \$31 | \$60 |

| Family Tier - Personal Monthly Contributions | | | |
|--|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Years of Service | PPO | Dental Core | Dental Major |
| 10-14 | \$1,607 | \$58 | \$131 |
| 15-19 | \$1,301 | \$58 | \$131 |
| 20-24 | \$995 | \$58 | \$131 |
| 25-29 | \$690 | \$58 | \$131 |
| 30+ | \$381 | \$58 | \$131 |

Under the Conference-sponsored medical plan for Medicare-eligible retirees of the Virginia Conference, there will continue to be two coverage options, as described below.

Group Plan Option: The group plan is a group Medicare Advantage plan. The group plan has a required participant contribution based on full time years of service in the Virginia Conference. The recommended 2018 participant contributions for the group plan coverage option are as follows:

| Medicare-eligible Retirees - Monthly Personal Contributions | | |
|---|------------|--------|
| Years of Service | Individual | Family |
| 10-14 | \$375 | \$750 |
| 15-19 | \$310 | \$620 |
| 20-24 | \$245 | \$490 |
| 25-29 | \$180 | \$360 |
| 30+ | \$115 | \$230 |

Connector Option: The Connector option allows qualifying clergy to select any available Medicare Supplement or Medicare Advantage plan, and any Part D prescription drug plan, offered by United Healthcare. Retirees electing coverage through this option receive Retiree Reimbursement Account (“RRA”) funding, which can be used to offset the cost of the selected coverage. VUMPI recommends 2018 monthly RRA funding based on qualifying years of Virginia Conference service as follows:

| Connector Option - Monthly RRA Funding | | |
|--|--------------|--------------------|
| Years of Service | Retiree Only | Retiree and Spouse |
| 20-24 | \$150 | \$300 |
| 25-29 | \$200 | \$400 |
| 30+ | \$250 | \$500 |

The monthly RRA funding amounts will be prorated for qualifying retirees and/or spouses of qualifying retirees who gain Medicare eligibility

or otherwise gain eligibility for retiree coverage within a calendar year. Any RRA funds remaining at the end of a calendar year will roll over into the subsequent year for use by the enrolled retiree and/or spouse for qualifying medical expenses.

General Virginia Conference Health Plan Information

Virginia Conference clergy members earn a year of service towards his or her Total Years of VAUMC Service as indicated in the coverage options above for each year that Virginia Annual Conference health plan eligibility is met.

For participants enrolled in the Anthem health plans, either as active clergy or as a retiree not yet eligible for Medicare, plan selections will be made during the open enrollment period in the fall of 2017. If an eligible clergy person does not elect coverage options during the annual open enrollment period, the default enrollment option is the prior year’s plan selections (except for Flexible Spending Account or Dependent Care Spending Account contributions), and enrollees will be subject to the associated individual personal contribution rates.

If not selected during the open enrollment period, no Flexible Spending Account contributions can be made during 2018, in accordance with federal laws.

All who are eligible to enroll in a Virginia Conference health plan are strongly encouraged to participate in online open enrollment in the fall of 2017. Details will be distributed through normal annual open enrollment means.

Eligibility for the Conference-sponsored retiree medical plans requires a minimum of ten consecutive years of full time ministry in the Virginia Conference immediately prior to retirement. Virginia Conference clergy on approved leave or serving in an Extension Ministry appointment do not earn additional years of service toward retiree health plan eligibility while on approved leave or appointed to the Extension Ministry, and such leave or Extension Ministry appointment would reflect an interruption of the consecutive years of full time ministry required for retiree health plan eligibility. However, clergy having at least ten consecutive years of full time ministry in the Virginia Conference prior to going on approved leave or taking an Extension Ministry appointment are able to “freeze” their years of service until they retire or until they return to an appointment within the Virginia Conference. Clergy desiring to freeze their years of service under this provision are required to pay a Clergy Retiree Health Plan Monthly Access Fee, which will be billed monthly by the VUMPI office. As part of the recommended participant contributions for 2018, VUMPI recommends that the Clergy Retiree Health Plan Monthly Access Fee remain at \$20 per month for 2018.

Recommendation 3: 2018 Pre-82 Pension Past Service Rate

The Pre-82 pension provides a benefit to all eligible clergy who have served in the Virginia Conference prior to 1982. This program pays the greater of the following:

- An annual benefit equal to the Past Service Rate (PSR) times years of pre-1982 service, or
- An annuity amount based upon the participant’s cash balance in his or her Defined Benefit Service Money Account

The Virginia Annual Conference establishes the PSR each year. For 2018, VUMPI recommends that the PSR be increased from \$564 to \$565.

Recommendation 4: 2018 CRSP/PPP/Supplemental Plan Funding Recommendations

Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP)

The 2018 CRSP Contribution from the local churches and/or salary-paying-units for each appointed eligible clergy member under episcopal appointment at that location shall be:

- For the Defined Contribution component of CRSP: Plan Compensation (base salary plus housing allowance or parsonage rate in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service), times 3%.
- For the Defined Benefit component of CRSP: Plan Compensation (base salary plus housing allowance or parsonage rate in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service, up to 135% of the Denominational Average Compensation (“DAC”)) times 9%.

Local churches and salary-paying units are to make their monthly CRSP payments to VUMPI.

Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)

The 2018 CPP contribution from the local churches and/or salary-paying-units for each appointed eligible full time clergy member under episcopal appointment at that location shall be:

Plan Compensation (base salary plus housing allowance or parsonage rate in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service, up to 200% of the Denominational Average Compensation) times 4.4%.

Local churches and salary-paying units are to make their monthly CPP payments to VUMPI.

If, for any reason, CPP contributions are more than 30 days in arrears, participation in the CPP is suspended. If contributions are more than six consecutive months in arrears, participation in the CPP is terminated. For terminated participants, readmission into the CPP requires payment of seven months of contributions and submission of medical statement of good health.

Erroneously enrolled clergy who are ineligible to participate in the CPP have no right to benefits under the CPP. Eligible clergy who have not been properly enrolled in the CPP have no rights under the CPP until after proper enrollment.

Recommendation 5: 2018 Comprehensive Funding Plan

The 2012 *Book of Discipline* ¶ 1506.6 requires that each annual conference develop, adopt and implement a formal comprehensive funding plan for funding all of its benefit obligations. The funding plan shall be submitted annually to Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath) for review and be approved annually by the annual conference, following the receipt and inclusion of a favorable written opinion from Wespath. This

document is only a summary of the information contained in the actual signed funding plan and does not contain all the information required for a comprehensive view of the conference's benefit obligations. You may request the full contents of the 2018 comprehensive benefit funding plan from the VUMPI office.

CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM (CRSP)

The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement program providing lifetime income and account flexibility designed for those who serve as clergy of The United Methodist Church. The program is designed to provide participants with one portion of their overall retirement benefits. CRSP replaced the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) effective January 1, 2007, which had previously replaced the Pre 82 Plan for service rendered prior to January 1, 1982.

CRSP consists of both a defined benefit (DB) plan, which provides a monthly benefit at retirement based upon years of credited service to The United Methodist Church, and a defined contribution (DC) plan, which provides a retirement account balance established and funded by the annual conferences.

The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP DB) annuities' total liability as of January 1, 2016, is \$(1,422,046,473), while total plan assets are \$1,530,170,830, resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 108%. The Virginia Conference portion of the liability is 4.0401% and the 2018 contribution is \$4,590,440. Additionally, General Conference 2012 approved a change to CRSP that provides each annual conference the discretion to determine whether to cover three quarter and/or half time clergy. The Virginia Conference has elected to cover clergy serving 50%+ under CRSP effective January 1, 2018.

Effective January 1, 2014, the CRSP DC plan was reduced from a 3% to a 2% of plan compensation non matching contribution. Clergy can earn up to an additional 1% CRSP DC contribution by contributing at least 1% of their plan compensation to UMPIP; therefore, if a participant contributes at least 1% of plan compensation to UMPIP, the individual will receive a contribution of 3% to CRSP DC. The 2018 CRSP DC contribution is anticipated to be \$1,614,963.

MINISTERIAL PENSION PLAN (MPP)

The Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) annuities' total liability as of January 1, 2016 is \$(3,422,875,264), while total plan assets are \$3,600,174,516, resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 105%. There is no required contribution for 2018. The Virginia Conference's percentage of the total liability is 3.2819%. Future MPP annuitants have a total account balance of \$3,787,199,647 and the Virginia Conference's portion of that balance is \$137,653,799 or 3.63% of the total.

Supplement Three to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP), provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church from 1982 through 2006. MPP is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement plan. MPP requires that exactly 65% of the account balance must be annuitized when the funds are to be distributed. The remainder may be rolled over to UMPIP, another qualified plan or an IRA, or it may be paid in a lump sum.

PRE-1982 PLAN

Supplement One to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Pre 82 Plan, provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church prior to 1982. The Pre 82 Plan was replaced by MPP effective January 1, 1982. If a clergy person retires within the Conference (and does not terminate), the minimum benefit payable is based on two factors:

The number of years of service with pension credit is multiplied by the Past Service Rate (PSR), and the product is the minimum annual benefit payable to those clergy eligible for Pre 82 Plan benefits. In certain situations, the benefit received from the Pre 82 plan may vary based on the applicability of what is referred to as Defined Benefit Service Money (DBSM), which is the defined contribution feature of the Pre 82 Plan. At the time that a participant retires, the DBSM account is converted to a life based benefit and, at that point, the clergy's benefit is the greater of the PSR or DBSM benefit. If the conference increases the PSR, the clergy's benefit is recalculated; but the DBSM based benefit does not change.

The 2018 PSR recommended to the Virginia Conference will be \$565, representing a \$1 increase from the 2017 rate. The contingent annuitant percentage is recommended to remain at the 70% level.

ACTIVE HEALTH BENEFIT PROGRAM

The Virginia Conference sponsors a self funded health benefit program for full time active clergy. The total cost of the program for 2018 is anticipated to be \$12,766,000, which will be funded primarily by apportionments and health plan participant contributions.

POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFIT PROGRAM (PRM)

The Virginia Conference currently sponsors a Group Medicare Advantage plan for Medicare-eligible retirees, with optional RRA funding for the purchase of individual supplemental plans through a retiree medical exchange. The projected annual plan benefit cost for 2018 (subsidies, RRAs, claims or premiums) is \$7,140,694.

COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)

The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) provides death, long term disability and other welfare benefits for eligible clergy of The United Methodist Church and their families. It is an Internal Revenue Code 414(e) "church plan" funded by plan sponsor insurance premiums. Generally, clergy are eligible to participate in CPP if they satisfy the eligibility requirements, including full time appointment with plan compensation of at least 25% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC). Plan sponsors may elect to cover participants with three quarter time appointments and/or to continue to cover clergy who, due to certain leaves or appointments, are not otherwise eligible to continue coverage.

For 2018, the Virginia Conference has an expected required contribution to the Comprehensive Protection Plan of \$0, due to Wespeth's CPP premium redirection.

UNITED METHODIST PERSONAL INVESTMENT PLAN (UMPIP) FOR LAY AND CLERGY

The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) defined contribution retirement savings plan for clergy and lay employees of The United Methodist Church and affiliated organizations. Participants may make before tax, Roth and/or after tax contributions through payroll deductions. Participant contributions, various optional plan sponsor contributions and investment earnings comprise the individual's retirement account balance.

OTHER CONFERENCE BENEFIT OBLIGATIONS: DEFINED CONTRIBUTION (DC) TYPE

The Virginia currently offers a supplemental life insurance benefit that supplements the CPP life insurance benefit. The estimated contribution for 2018 is \$230,000.

CONCLUSION

The 2018 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan and this summary document incorporates, to the best of our understanding, the Virginia Conference's obligations and funding requirements of the benefits provided to the clergy and laity of the Virginia Conference.

Recommendation 6: 2018 Housing Allowance/Exclusion

Resolutions Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired, Disabled, or Former Clergypersons of the Virginia Conference

The Virginia Conference (the "Conference") adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/housing allowances for active, retired, terminated, or disabled clergypersons of the Conference:

WHEREAS, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church (the "Church"), of which this Conference is a part, has in the past functioned and continues to function through ministers of the gospel (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code section 107) who were or are duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministers of the Church ("Clergypersons");

WHEREAS, the practice of the Church and of this Conference was and is to provide active Clergypersons with a parsonage or a rental/housing allowance as part of their gross compensation;

WHEREAS, pensions or other amounts paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons are considered to be deferred compensation and are paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons in consideration of previous active service; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as an appropriate organization to designate a rental/housing allowance for Clergypersons who are or were members of this Conference and are eligible to receive such deferred compensation; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT an amount equal to 100% of the pension, severance, or disability payments received from plans authorized under *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (the "Discipline"), which includes all such payments from Wespeth Benefits and Investments, during the period January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018 by each active, retired, terminated, or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and

THAT the pension, severance, or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance designation applies will be any pension, severance, or disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the *Discipline*, including such payments from Wespeth and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a Wespeth plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the *Discipline*, that result from any service a Clergyperson rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, a terminated, or a disabled Clergyperson of this Conference rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other employer that employed the Clergyperson to perform services related to the ministry of the Church, or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan, annuity, or fund for such an active, retired, terminated, or disabled Clergyperson's pension, severance, or disability plan benefit as part of his or her gross compensation.

NOTE: The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergyperson's gross income in any year for federal (and, in most cases, state) income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2), and regulations thereunder, to the least of: (a) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergyperson's employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (b) the amount actually expended by the Clergyperson to rent or provide a home in such year; or (c) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year. Each clergy person or former clergy person is urged to consult with his or her own tax advisor to determine what deferred compensation is eligible to be claimed as a housing allowance exclusion.

– Ken Peterson, Chair

COMMON TABLE FOR CHURCH VITALITY

The mission of the Virginia Annual Conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God.

Guided by this mission, The Common Table for Church Vitality coordinates and prioritizes the program ministries of the Virginia Conference. The conference program agencies that relate to Common Table are Board of Church and Society, Church Development Team, Board of Discipleship, Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries, Board of Laity, and Missional Ministries. The conference administrative agencies that relate to Common Table are Board of Communications, Commission on Disabilities, Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy, and Commission on Status and Role of Women. Through the work of these agencies, the churches of the Virginia Conference are connected in ministries throughout the state and the world. As it coordinates and prioritizes the ministries of the Virginia Conference, Common Table continues to emphasize alignment toward leadership development of both laity and clergy. The desired result of this emphasis is the formation of new faith communities and the strengthening of existing congregations that has been the focus of the Virginia Annual Conference since the approval of *All Things New* in 2008.

Included among the significant ministries made possible through the connection of the Virginia Conference are:

- This alignment has resulted in the formation of 22 new Anglo and 20 new Ethnic faith communities since 2008 and the participation of over 500 Virginia Conference congregations in renewal ministry offerings.
- Disaster response through the construction of new homes and restoration of damaged homes that resulted from tornado and flooding. This work is in its second year of ministry and will continue into the upcoming year through the disaster response coordination of our conference and the ongoing generous mission response of many of our conference's churches through financial support and volunteer in mission teams.
- Launch of FOCUS 2020 pilot ministry for best practices and coaching for nine African American congregations in the conference.
- In excess of 70 persons from the Virginia Conference participating in Convocation for Pastors of Black Churches.
- Initiatives of Hope partnerships in Brazil, Cambodia, and Mozambique.
- Volunteer in Mission training and support of local church VIM teams.
- Virginia and International Advance Specials.
- Lay Servant Academy training and support of additional district level training
- Oversight of the mission and ministry of the 13 campus ministries related to and supported by the Virginia Conference.
- Communications support for local church communicators.
- Technical support of annual conference sessions.
- Monitoring and training for inclusion by our conference commissions.
- Voices of Youth Mission Tour.
- United Methodist Day at General Assembly.
- Peacemaking in the Holy Land.
- Bishop's Convocation on Prayer.
- Co-sponsorship with the Beard Center on Aging at Lynchburg College to equip local congregations in "Faithful Aging."
- Conference Youth Retreats.
- Sponsorship of Academy for Spiritual Formation for the first time in the Virginia Conference.

For a full listing of ministries made possible through the program agencies and commissions of the Virginia Conference, I invite you to review each report that is included as part of the complete report of Common Table. Common Table for Church Vitality expresses appreciation for the ministry of the Connectional Ministries staff who provide leadership and support for these ministries. There was one change in the Connectional Ministries staff this year with the approval of Madeline Pillow as the Director of Communications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The delegates and reserves elected as Virginia Conference delegates for the 2016 General Conference serve as Virginia Conference delegates and reserves for any called General Conference session held prior to 2020
2. Approve the formation of FLOW ministry at Virginia State University as a Wesley Foundation of the Virginia Conference effective July 1, 2017
3. Approve the following recommendations by the following boards:
 - a) By the Board of Discipleship regarding the recommendation and endorsement of Gregory B. West as a General Evangelist according to the standards set by the General Board of Discipleship
 - b) By Missional Ministries regarding special offerings for Heart Havens, United Methodist Family Services of Virginia, and Virginia United Methodist Homes, Inc.

- c) By Missional Ministries that the Relationship Agreements as presented to the Missional Connections Team of the Conference Missional Ministries Board between the Virginia Conference and Heart Havens, Inc.; United Methodist Family Services of Virginia; Virginia United Methodist Homes, Inc.; and Wesley Housing Development Corporation, be continued.

– Marc Brown, VAUMC Director of Connectional Ministries



The following reports, from page 147 to page 165, fall under the umbrella of the Common Table for Church Vitality.

BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY

The United Methodist Book of Discipline (§629) specifies the purpose of the Conference Board of Church and Society. The Conference Board is to help the conference, districts and congregations employ our Social Principles to connect our faith communities to the world around us. This work is both individual and societal. We are called to invite faithful disciples of Christ to lead the church prayerfully into the world. We have organized our board to follow the issues raised by our United Methodist Bishop's letter: "God's Renewed Creation: Call to Hope and Action." In this 2009 letter, our bishops raised virtually the same issues, as did Catholic Pope Francis in 2015, namely that the world is awash in 1. Violence, 2. Environmental Destruction, and 3. Poverty.

Following the need to address these three interconnected disasters, we have organized three work areas: 1. Peace and Non-Violence, 2. Caretakers of God's Creation, and 3. Eradicating Poverty/Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministries.

The Conference Board promotes the Peace with Justice Sunday Special Offering, one of the six Church-wide offerings that The United Methodist General Conference asks of each local church. In 2015, only 98 of our churches gave to this Special Offering, but their giving has allowed the conference to fund key ministries within the conference. We expect the 2017 total will show more churches taking the offering. One half of the offering stays in the annual conference.

We recently funded:

1. Scholarships for participants to join the Conference Board of Church and Society study trip to Israel and Palestine. We have now led two trips to Israel/Palestine to study peacemaking in the Holy Land.
2. Remember and Recommit: A program of racial reconciliation and study of race relations by two Richmond churches.

The deadline for conference Peace with Justice Grant proposals each year is Jan. 30.

The Board's Caretakers of God's Creation work area has begun a program of district workshops to help churches become "Green Churches". The Caretakers are also working to help congregations divest of stocks of thermal coal companies as required by the resolution voted on at conference in 2015. They are promoting <http://fossilfreefunds.org/> a project of As You Sow, a corporate responsibility program. The fossilfreefunds.org tool makes it very easy to evaluate your portfolio for all kinds of fossil fuel investments. Caretakers also co-sponsored the National Caretakers of God's Creation Climate Justice Conference held at Mt. Olivet United Methodist Church in Arlington. Each year, Caretakers awards a conference church, the Green Church of the Year award. This year's award is going to Fairlington United Methodist Church in Alexandria for its work developing a program of Spirituality in Nature that has been holding monthly worship and nature explorations in natural areas near the church. Caretakers is also working on the issues related to fracking of shale deposits to release natural gas and is submitting a resolution proposing further work related to fracking at this annual conference meeting.

The Peace and Non-violence Work Area is giving continued leadership to persons interested in peace in the Middle East. Our resolution to General Conference to establish a denomination wide taskforce on the Middle East passed and we have been consulting with the General Board of Church and Society on how to proceed with the taskforce. The Peace and Non-violence Work Area is also working to fight gun violence and to promote care of veterans. The work area is proposing two resolutions to annual conference:

1. Compassionate Support for Members of the Armed Forces, Veterans and Their Families Suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress and Moral Injury and
2. A Resolution on Travel to the Holy Land.

The Eradicating Poverty Work Area is working on planning our program for mentoring youth based on the resolution passed at the 2016 annual conference. It also is exploring how to implement the Annual Conference resolution on implementing the banning the "box" which allows prospective employers to choose to not interview persons who have served their time for crimes and are now trying to become employed. We celebrate that the Virginia state government no longer discriminates in job applicants based on an employee's past criminal convictions, but many private employers still ask potential applicants to check the box saying whether they have any criminal convictions.

This year was the 25th anniversary of United Methodist Day at the General Assembly. We partner with the Virginia Interfaith Center on Public Policy to hold the United Methodist Day at the General Assembly. Each year, United Methodist Day at the General Assembly is held on the first Thursday in February. We hold this event jointly with the United Methodist Women and the Conference Legislative Network. We are pleased that in the first year of her tenure, Bishop Lewis has been a key participant in this event and her presence helped stop the weakening of Virginia's rules for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. We look forward to Bishop Lewis helping to lead the event in future years. Our annual conference luncheon speaker this year will be Kim Bobo, the executive director of the Interfaith Center for Public Policy. We hope that many members of the annual conference will join us for an excellent speech by Ms. Bobo of how we can truly make the "world, our parish" in Virginia.

– Jaydee Hanson, Lay Co-Chair

VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

The mission of Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc. is to assist faith communities in communications and related technologies, empowering their mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Board of Communications continues to seek ways to live out its mission by supporting our Conference and its local churches. One of the most direct ways we do this is through our Annual Conference training event. In June 2016 we hosted a brand new training about social media. We are excited to return to Annual Conference in 2017 with more training for our local churches. Members of the Board and the Communications staff are also available to hold special trainings at District Training Events or for individual churches. Please contact the Conference Communications office for more information.

In August 2016, after nine years of serving our Conference, Linda Rhodes, Director of Conference Communications, stepped into the wonderful world of retirement. We appreciate all the service and dedication that Linda gave our Conference and our Board over the years and we wish her much peace and joy (and beautiful flowers as she pursues Master Gardening) in retirement.

After a four month interim, our board was very excited to welcome Madeline Pillow, *Advocate* Editor, as the new Director of Communications in January of 2017. Serving both the role of director and editor is a very large task, and we plan to offer Madeline much support as she navigates this new combined role.

Having established a local church communicators group in 2016, we continue to find ways to support the ministry of communications within our local churches. Currently we host a local church communicator's Facebook group, and we hope to offer a large group event sometime over the coming year.

We have spent a lot of the last year studying our organization and how we can most effectively complete our work and continue to seek new ways to be in ministry. As we continue to live into our current reality, we look forward to new ways to serve.

Last but not least, our board also enjoys supporting the operations of Annual Conference. We help to provide camera operators with appropriate training, help on the tech desk, provide daily Conference news updates and photography and staff our VA Conference Communications display where conference attendees can access communication resources as well as order Conference DVDs and subscribe to the Virginia Advocate, our conference magazine.

Do you subscribe to the *Virginia Advocate*? If not, you should! Be sure to visit us at the display. If you tell us you read this in the *Book of Reports*, we may even have a special gift for you!

The Board of Communications continues to look for new ways to support the work of our local churches. Please feel free to reach out to us either through the Conference staff or through the Conference website.

—Keri L. B. Marston, President

BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP

The Directing Board of the Board of Discipleship continues its work toward offering resources for the churches of the Annual Conference. Our Regional Directors will begin working closely with the Cabinet Clusters of District Superintendents and District Lay Leaders to determine the needs of the local churches throughout the Annual Conference. We have been working toward Best Practices information that can be available to any and all local churches about Discipleship, Fruitfulness, Growth, etc. We have been in contact with various groups to facilitate discussion about resources that can be used to promote and develop Discipleship and Growth particularly in small and mid-size churches especially in rural and urban ministries.

After a series of learning we will shortly have available a web site center with “Best Practices” in the area of Discipleship. Local churches will be able to find resources including books, programs, and consulting sources to assist them in their efforts to be fruitful. Regional Directors are compiling lists of Clergy and Laity in areas of Vital Congregations, Five Practices, etc. so that local churches will have consulting resources without the prohibitive cost that generally keeps smaller to mid-size churches from these resources. We are working closely with the Cabinet to develop our own leaders through training and agreement with top name organizations with proven records of transformation. Areas will include church assessment, From Membership to Discipleship, Vital Congregation areas, etc.

The Board of Discipleship this year has worked closely with Cokesbury and has awarded churches scholarships towards the use of the Covenant Bible Study. The Board has also awarded scholarships to the Academy for Spiritual Formation. There continues to be money available for two more persons accepted to that program. Each year the Board of Discipleship awards one youth, one laity and one Clergy the Denman Evangelism award. Beginning this year the Board will be awarding a local congregation the One Matters award for recognition of turn around success in growth, professions of faith and fruitfulness.

Each year we endorse candidates to be a General Evangelist in the United Methodist Church and this year with great acknowledgement of his work we endorse Greg West (Chaplain of Wesleyan College) as a General Evangelist. We also participate in the Christian Education Sunday and while an offering is no longer collected, use funds from prior offerings for scholarship and grant requests for Education in our local churches, districts and conference. We work closely with the Office of Bishop by facilitating conference wide activities like the Bishops Convocation of Prayer and have offered assistance for the Conference Day of Prayer and Week of Prayer for the Praying Forward Campaign. Members of the Board continually work with the Conference Staff and Cabinet in areas of Discipleship and have participated in the Mid-Size and Small Church Initiatives. The Board of Discipleship continues to work with Discipleship Circles and has trained facilitators to work with groups that desire to use this effective tool.

— Donald Jamison, Chair

Older Adult Council

The Older Adult Council is responding to an increasing recognition of the needs of local congregations to respond in ministry to, for, by and with older adults. With the Baby Boom generation rapidly aging into older adulthood, it is essential we recognize the changing and increasing needs. Older adults in our churches are an enormous resource. Often that resource goes unappreciated for the value for the building of the kingdom. The Council's programs are designed to equip and engage. Presentations on Spiritual Legacy, Liturgical Dance, Olde Time Revival, and

Experiencing God are available and have been offered around the Conference for District Training events and United Methodist Women District Leadership events. Council members are working in co-sponsorship with the Beard Center on Aging at Lynchburg College to equip local congregations in “Faithful Aging.”

— Susanne Spencer, Chair

Center for Next Generation Ministries (Formerly known as Ministries with Young People)

Over the years, as Conference level ministries have evolved, so have the ways in which we have referred to them. This has been no different in the case of the office I have the privilege of serving. Throughout the years, and based primarily on staff configuration, we have been called “Age Level Ministries,” “Life Span Ministries,” “Children, Youth, Young Adults and Singles Ministries” (we later dropped “Singles” and added “Higher Education”), and for the last few years we have been called “Ministries w/ Young People.” We began using the latter after downsizing staff from three positions to one.

In March of 2016, we began an initiative which involved launching a team that would imagine what the big picture of Ministries w/ Young People could look like within our unique context. At the same time we hoped to align with the priority stated in the All Things document, to focus on leadership development. After a year of work, I'm pleased to report that we have developed a Ministry Action Plan that aligns us with conference ministries, while giving us clarity of purpose. Our stated mission is “to raise up next generation spiritual leaders to follow Jesus Christ into the world.” We've identified three strategic steps to help us carry this mission out: Connect (opportunities that identify, gather, and discover leaders), Equip (opportunities that resource, train, coach, and develop leaders), and Send (opportunities whereby leaders are mobilized and commissioned to live out their call). Furthermore, we sought approval from the Common Table for Church Vitality to rename this area of ministry as a way to better describe our purpose. So “Ministries With Young People” is now called “Next Generation Ministries.”

Lastly, we have realized that in order to carry out ministries with such a wide demographic, and in such a large conference, we would have to multiply our efforts by launching area-specific teams. To that end, in October of 2016 we launched a Campus Minister Operational Team in partnership with BHECM, and we are currently getting ready to launch a Children's Ministry Operational Team in the Fall. We're grateful for the ways God has blessed this work and allowed us to identify leaders to join us in the journey.

For more information on Next Generation Ministries, or if you would like to find ways to get involved, contact us at 804-521-1139, or email us at nextgen@vaumc.org.

— Paulo Lopes, Director

Conference Council on Youth Ministries

The last year for Conference Council on Youth Ministries has been fruitful.

During our September council meeting, we enjoyed meeting with several campus ministers from across the Conference. We learned about opportunities on their campuses and ways we could get involved if we go to college. Our Saturday morning during the council meeting was spent working on a service project at Camp Overlook.

As a council, we supported the Office of Ministries with Young People to facilitate the VAUMC Fall Retreats. The theme was CALLED 2016: Just Move. It was our pleasure to learn more about the Just Water campaign; several local Just Water events organized by youth have been sparked from this initiative.

Throughout the year, young people across the Conference raised Youth Service Funds. This money was gathered in several ways: local church initiatives, district fundraisers, collections gathered at Conference Youth Retreats, and other opportunities. Any person, group or church can join CCYM in raising these funds. If interested, we would be glad to help!

Our March council meeting focused on discernment and Youth Service Fund Grant review. The Office of Clergy Excellence led us through discernment activities to help us discover our call and learn more about how we can breathe life into these calls. We had \$20,000 to distribute for Youth Service Fund grants and we received over 20 applications.

Youth Service Fund Grants are intended for ministries done BY youth and FOR youth. The hope is that organizations receiving funds will use the dollars as seed money and establish self-sufficient ministries. As self-sufficiency is the goal, repeat grant applications are not always approved.

In conclusion, we are thankful for the opportunity to help organizations engaging with young people to make disciples of Jesus Christ who WILL transform the world in the coming year and beyond.

Alison Malloy, Adult Chair

CONFERENCE MISSIONAL MINISTRIES BOARD

The Missional Discipleship and Engagement Team includes the inter-related work of several Conference Committees: Disaster Response, Initiatives of Hope, Volunteers in Mission and Voices of Youth.

Disaster Response - The Virginia Annual Conference has been actively engaged in Disaster Response and Recovery operations and ministry during 2016. On February 24th nine tornados crossed Virginia, three of which caused major damage and loss of life in three very different Virginia communities. Following our initial response and relief efforts, the VAUMC began Long Term Recovery in the James River District (Waverly), Farmville District (Appomattox) and Fredericksburg District (Tappahannock) . During this period, 893 volunteers formed 69 teams and worked 18,769 hours to help the survivors of these storms recover. That is valued at \$490,000 in volunteer service. In Waverly we have repaired 13 homes with one pending, in Appomattox we have repaired five homes are in progress of repairing five more but we also have finished one new construction and have two more in progress and three pending! In Tappahannock we had eight homes to work on, we have completed six and have one pending and one new construction in progress.. This has only been possible with your volunteer efforts and your financial gifts. Hurricane Matthew hit us on October 8th. On October 15th our Early Response Teams were requested by the City of Virginia Beach and deployed within 24 hours. Under the leadership of Michele Michaelian our VAUMC ERT Coordinator/Trainer, 265 ERT and other volunteers worked 1,930 hours during the relief phase, contacting over 150 survivors and providing direct service to over 80. There were over 5000 families affected by Hurri-

cane Mathew, FEMA data shows us that there a minimum of 500 families with unmet needs and of those we can expect to have contact with as many as 200 of those survivors. Our Long Term Recovery ministry is fully engaged in the Elizabeth River District and we are currently doing recovery operations in 12 homes with another 23 already pending. Even as we have been working hard to provide support and recovery to the survivors of these events, we have continued with our training of ERT members as well as Spiritual and Emotional Care Team members which increases our capacity and capability to respond and recover from these terrible storms. We have been the lead voluntary agency in both of these long term recovery efforts. This would not be possible without the care and support of our congregations within the VAUMC. There are 1,176 churches in the VAUMC and 374 have made a financial donation to the Disaster Response Advance Special #5037. That's 31% of our congregations. If you have donated thank you so much, your gifts have allowed us to be the hands and feet of Christ to the survivors. If you have not yet donated, please consider a financial gift and/or signing up to volunteer to work for the many survivors that are waiting. Thank you all for what you have done, what you are doing and what you will do in the future to support this important and vital ministry and mission. The survivors are looking and waiting for us to help; and we will be there with your prayers, presence, gifts and service.

– *Rev. Bob Pihlcrantz, Conference Disaster Response Coordinator*

Initiatives of Hope (IOH) mission is to increase awareness of and generate increased participation in partnership-in-mission opportunities in identified countries or local and national missional ministries. Our overseas connections are currently with Brazil, Mozambique and Cambodia. **Rev. David Vaughn** chairs the Brazilian Initiative. Volunteer in Mission (VIM) teams to Brazil in 2017 include: 1. Shenandoah University Spring Break Medical Boat Trip in March, 2017; 2. VA Conference Youth/Young Adult team in July, 2017 coordinated by Paulo Lopes; 3. Senior Adult Learning/Serving team in Fall, 2017 led by Dot & Dan Ivey. Brazilian Bishop Adriel Maia will visit Mission Encounter 2017 in July. The Brazilian Methodist Church continues to grow and values their mutual relationship with Virginia United Methodists. **Juanita Csontos** chairs the Cambodian and led a team a very successful VA Conference VIM team there in January of 2017 which met in various district churches for teaching and learning seminars. Cambodia is appreciative of support provided to all their programs that help develop local church leaders and support sustainable agriculture/livelihood projects and rural health. Rev. Glenn Rowley traveled to Vietnam and IOH will be entertaining further development of relationship with the Vietnam Methodist Church. Our primary ministry in Mozambique is supporting lay and clergy leadership and training. Annandale UMC will send a VIM team there in May, 2017 to work in Cambine and Chicouque. Assistance has been sent to help with clean up from winter floods. Cyclones in February 2017 have inflicted serious damage and assistance will be provided and possibly a VIM team in the spring. IOH is continuing to learn and exploring new initiatives and relationships with Native Americans. Forrest White, UMVIM Coordinator and Long-Term recovery Manager keeps committee updated on team training and need for funding recovery projects on the Eastern Shore and Norfolk area.

– *Judy Fender, Chair*

Volunteers In Mission (UMVIM) coordinated by **Forrest White**, offered eight team leader trainings with 107 trained; and 6 team leader recertification trainings with 29 trained during 2016. In November, we reduced the cost of team leader training from \$55 to \$35 per person and the cost of recertification training from \$25 to no cost. We had 59 UMVIM teams from Virginia Conference Churches and a team from Ferrum College (with a VIM trained team leader) serve in one of the three areas affected by the February 2016 tornado outbreak, where the Conference has established Long Term Recovery ministry. The Facebook page, (<https://www.facebook.com/VirginiaUMVIM>) continues to be a place for inspiration, information, and connection. Team leaders are invited to share the specifics about their trip: i.e. church or district sending the team, location and ministry project particulars by emailing the conference UMVIM Coordinator who will post to the Facebook page. Others are invited to pray for the team and those they'll be serving. Teams looking for additional information are invited to "recruit" via the Facebook page. Our prayer is that we truly embrace and live the UMVIM mission statement based on 1 John 3:18 -- "Christian Love In Action."

Voices of Youth (VOY), coordinated by **Ryan Brown**, has as its mission statement: "Fill your mind with truth, your heart with love, your life with service." We are a group of youth and adults who have a passion for music and mission and combine those two gifts into a unique service experience.

The Missional Connections Team includes the work of mission contexts and relationships; mission education, interpretation and resources; and health and relief connections.

Mrs. Anne Klotz, Missionary Itineration Coordinator, has facilitated connections and visits for many missionaries with their covenant churches during the past year. Under the new Global Mission Fellows program to engage young persons in short term mission ministry, the Conference hosted one fellow in 2016, and anticipates more placements.

Mission Encounter, is a cooperative school offered by the Conference Missional Ministries Board and the United Methodist Women to help us understand God's work in our world and our involvement as United Methodists. Mission Encounter 2017 will be offered July 28-29 at Bon Air UMC in Chesterfield. Topics for this year: Climate Justice, Living as a Covenant Community, The Missionary Conferences of the UMC in the US (Red Bird, Oklahoma & Alaska).

Conference Committee on Mission Personnel (CCMP), chaired by **The Rev. Joanne Maughlin**, guides and mentors interested persons through the application and discernment process for mission service. Applicants can access the Personnel Information Form (PIF--Application for Missionary Service) and other application materials from the Virginia Conference web site under Ministries - Center for Justice and Missional Excellence - Committee on Mission Personnel (CCMP) - Related Documentation. **All completed application materials should be sent to the Virginia Conference Committee on Mission Personnel, % The Virginia Conference Center for Justice and Missional Excellence, P. O. Box 5606, Glen Allen, VA 23058, NOT to the General Board of Global Ministries.**

Health and Relief Initiative, led by **Katie St. Germain**, is responding to the focus on health and wellness ministries by developing a series of videos that churches can use as outreach to their local communities. At this time in which we are divided as a society, we are hoping to use health as a unifier; we hope to equip churches to be wellness resources for their communities. The videos are topic based presentations which have an individual, a congregational, and a Missional focus. Our first video in production is Disaster Response. We will be exploring other topics such as food security, exercise, and clean water. We anticipate having them available early next year.

– *Verónica Barrell, CMMB Chair*

PARTNERSHIP REPORTS

Heart Havens

Throughout 2016, Heart Havens continued its mission of empowering adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live and thrive in a safe and nurturing environment. The people we support participated in all sorts of wonderful things during the year, including Special Olympics, community theater, Venture Scouts, and so much more. We are so thankful for the support we receive from our VAUMC friends; you make this empowerment possible!

We continued to operate group homes across the Conference in 2016. However, after much prayer and deliberation, we found it necessary to close the Morrison home in Newport News. The gentlemen who lived in that home had reached the point of needing more intensive medical supports than Heart Havens could provide, and needed to move to a higher level of care. Because of the changes to the Medicaid Waiver program, we were unable to fill the vacancies in the home as the other gentlemen moved out.

Heart Havens was born out of listening; it was listening to the needs and desires of people with a developmental disability and their families that led to each of our group homes. We've never stopped listening to our stakeholders, and what we're learning now is that families are looking for more individualized means of support. To this end, Heart Havens is in the process of establishing programs for in-home services and supported apartments. These programs are absolutely in keeping with our mission of empowerment; Heart Havens has always been about people, not houses.

We continued to strengthen our connections with congregations and small groups throughout the Conference. We were pleased to share our message of empowerment at over 50 different churches, small groups, and events. Additionally, we welcomed many volunteers from local churches. These volunteers blessed us by raking leaves, painting, or simply having fellowship with the people we support. The theme for Heart Havens Month 2016 was "A Place at the Table," and was themed around Communion and celebrating the fact that all God's children have a place at the Communion table. For the first time, we provided many worship resources, and these were well received.

We were proud to honor Jim Green from the Winchester District as our 2016 Brian Manwiller "In HIS Grip" Award winner. Jim was unable to join us at Annual Conference, so we took the award to him and held a reception at our Saratoga home in Winchester in Jim's honor. Jim was a tireless advocate for Heart Havens from the very beginning, and was very active with the Winchester District UMM in planning fundraisers for Heart Havens.

With your continued support, Heart Havens can continue to empower people with a developmental disability to live vibrant, happy lives with as much independence as possible. We invite you as the church to continue to advocate for Heart Havens and for people with a developmental disability. After all, we're all part of the body of Christ!

– *Jennifer Boyden, Chief Executive Officer*

United Methodist Family Services of Virginia (UMFS)

For well over a century, United Methodist Family Services has had a legacy of empowering children and families. From the Virginia Conference Orphanage of 1900, to the Virginia Methodist Children's Home of the 1950's, to the present day state-wide agency bringing hope and healing to the whole family, UMFS has partnered with churches and church members to live out their mission. Today we are unwavering champions for high-risk children and families across Virginia, collaborating with communities to help them reach their full potential by providing foster care and adoption services, residential treatment services, and school-based services for kids with special needs.

With regional centers in Richmond, Northern Virginia, Tidewater, Fredericksburg, South Hill and Lynchburg; intensive treatment centers in Richmond and Centreville; and offices in Farmville, Charlottesville, Roanoke, Tazewell, and Loudoun counties, our reach is across the Conference. We are dedicated to creating a world where caring, opportunity and generosity are passed on from generation to generation, empowering all children to contribute to society as engaged citizens. Through our five core values, we believe relationships are our building blocks, passion unleashes greatness, collaboration multiplies impact, and we always start with strengths and relentlessly pursue solutions. We are truly transforming the lives of children and families across the Commonwealth.

Since 1900, the churches of the Virginia Conference have partnered with us to be an advocate for high-risk children and families. Our most recent initiative in collaboration with local churches has been in the Richmond area through partnership with The Open Table. The Open Table is a national movement to transform poverty through community by bringing together local church groups of volunteers that make a year-long commitment to act--through relationship--as a team of life specialists, encouragers, and advocates. Over the course of a year, the Table works together with an individual or family in poverty to set goals, foster accountability, and implement a plan to create change. Plans are underway to extend this partnership with The Open Table movement beyond Richmond in the coming year.

Our 60 church partners are ministering in their communities by recruiting and supporting foster and adoptive families; serving as mentors and tutors; conducting work projects and special events; providing transportation for children and families; and donating countless gifts-in-kind. Our church partners, our Child Champion Councils and the UMFS Auxiliary are a critical resource to the children and families we serve. The members of these partnering groups are tireless advocates for our ministry in their districts and local churches throughout the Conference. Our relationship with the United Methodist Church is vital for us to achieve our mission.

We are grateful for the support of the Virginia Conference and for your partnership with us as an unwavering champion for high-risk children and families. It is because of your support that we are able to help children and families reach their full potential! We value our Virginia Annual Conference connection and feel privileged to be a part of the ministry of the United Methodist Church. Together we can continue to empower children and families to reach their full potential.

– *Margaret Hardy, Chair, UMFS Board of Directors and Greg Peters, Chief Executive Officer*

Virginia United Methodist Homes, Inc.

Much has changed in the fields of aging and senior living since Bishop William Walter Peele led the Virginia Conference in responding to repeated requests to establish a “Home for the Aged” in 1944. Today’s options for community living could never have been imagined when The Hermitage in Richmond opened its doors in 1949. For almost 70 years, Virginia United Methodist Homes, Inc. (VUMH) has been a leader and innovator in developing and providing communities, services and programs to meet the needs of older persons. With the support, hard work and dedication of our board, volunteers and team members, VUMH has grown from that first “Home for the Aged” to providing quality services to enhance the lives of nearly 1,300 people in our seven communities.

Our efforts to improve quality and engage residents continued during this past conference year. A few of our significant accomplishments reflecting our culture change efforts include:

- New construction of our first health services households at WindsorMeade of Williamsburg;
- Planning and initial work on a dining services expansion at Cedarfield;
- Construction of a new country kitchen in our health care neighborhood at the Hermitage in Roanoke; and,
- Our Richmond, Alexandria, Onancock and Norfolk communities all working diligently to move from our traditional health care model to person centered neighborhoods.

Much work has been undertaken to reflect upon the statement of our mission, vision, core values and goals. This work will create a strategic framework which reflects our commitment to safeguard a resident-driven culture; continuously update and maintain safe, secure and appealing communities; create forward thinking programs; and strengthen our engagement with local churches and community partners. One particular example of a strengthened partnership during this year has been our collaboration with the Beard Center on Aging at Lynchburg College to sponsor the first statewide *Faithful Aging Conference*. Several local churches, districts and the Conference Older Adult Ministries Council were also involved in planning and hosting this event.

Since 1948, the Samaritan Program, the heart of the mission at VUMH, has provided benevolent assistance to residents who outlive their finances. Traditionally, VUMH has recognized the ten local congregations across the Virginia Annual Conference with the highest level of giving each year to the Samaritan Program. During 2016, we were privileged to recognize the following congregations as *Samaritan Award Churches*:

- Westover Hills (Richmond District)
- Reveille (Richmond District)
- Fairmount (Richmond District)
- Fairfax (Alexandria District)
- Sydenstricker (Alexandria District)
- Trinity (Richmond District)
- Williamsburg (York River District)
- Greene Memorial (Roanoke District)
- Main Street - Emporia (James River District)
- Lawrence Memorial (Roanoke District)

The Innkeeper Award honors and offers appreciation to congregations of the Annual Conference for exemplary support of the mission of VUMH with older adults. Local Community Guilds select the churches based upon both the financial stewardship and volunteer service of members of the congregation. In 2016, *Innkeeper Awards* were presented to:

- Mount Pleasant (Roanoke District)
- Forest Grove (Richmond District)

Recognizing that the senior housing market and needs of future residents will continue to change drastically, more than two years ago we began to explore our current and future residents’ perceptions of our communities. We learned that many adult children searching for a new home for their parents, as well as many potential residents in the earliest stage of planning for their future moves, found words in our current name that were unappealing. People do not want to move to “The Home” or to have the wonderful residence they live in referred to as part of “the Homes.” Many current and future customers assumed you had to be a United Methodist to live at our communities. Some called and learn that our doors and hearts are open to all, but many others moved on to other options because they believed our name excluded them. With the blessings and encouragements of residents, team and board members, we began to search for a new aspirational way to describe our mission that will serve us for a new generation. We will have more to share about this during the session and at our display at the Annual Conference.

VUMH is committed to honoring our heritage and building upon our strong foundation as we grow into something even greater. Thank you for your continued generosity in support of the Samaritan Program, for the countless hours of volunteer service for the benefit of our residents, and for the ongoing advocacy you provide for those who are aging in your congregations and in the greater community.

2017 RECOMMENDATIONS From Virginia United Methodist Homes, Inc.

1. The Relationship Agreement between the Virginia Conference and Virginia United Methodist Homes, Inc. be continued.
2. The period between Mother’s Day and Father’s Day be designated in support of

the Virginia United Methodist Homes, Inc. Samaritan Program, and each church promote an offering during this time dedicated to this purpose.

– *Christopher P. Henderson, President and CEO and Martha Stokes, Director of Church and Community Relations*

Wesley Housing Development Corporation

Wesley Housing’s mission is to preserve, develop, own, and operate affordable housing and sustain quality communities for low- and moderate-income families and individuals who might otherwise face homelessness. Since 1974, for over four decades, we have served over 25,000 residents in the Washington DC metropolitan area. We currently manage 21 properties (more than 2,100 residents) in Alexandria, Arlington, Manassas, Fairfax County, and the District. We also manage four Community Resource Centers (CRCs) and five special needs Resident Services Centers that offer a full range of crucially needed programs and services to support children, adults, seniors, those with chronic disease as well as those with disabilities to regain their dignity and renew their lives.

Real Estate Development Projects

- Union on Queen, formerly Pierce Queen Apartments (Arlington): The recently completed Arlington County project marks the preservation and renovation of two garden apartment buildings and construction of a 12-story residential tower, resulting in a total of 193 total units with 78 affordable apartments. Project construction was completed in November 2016 and the property began to accept residents in December. All 78 affordable apartments have been leased. A grand opening celebration is being planned for April 2017.

- The Fallstead at Lewinsville Center, formerly Lewinsville Senior Residences (McLean): Wesley Housing is renovating and expanding the McLean property from 22 to 82 units of affordable, independent housing for low-income seniors. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved an agreement with Wesley Housing who is partnering with Hamel Builders on the project. A groundbreaking ceremony took place in September 2016 and construction is now well underway.

- Renovations-Wexford Manor Apartments (Falls Church/Fairfax County): Critically needed renovations are being made in two phases to this 74-unit community. All interior renovations are complete for Phase I and residents moved back into their apartments in January. Exterior renovations for Phase I are still underway, and the expansion of the Community Resource Center and Phase II will commence in the coming weeks.

- Culpepper Garden (Arlington): Wesley Housing was selected to lead the preservation of this landmark seniors’ community. The existing 204 affordable units will undergo improvements. The project includes upgrades to the community space, the apartments, and the extensive grounds. The closing and start of the construction are scheduled for Summer 2017.

- Brookland Place (Washington, DC): In November 2016, Wesley acquired its first property in the District of Columbia, Brookland Place. The property, comprised of 80 rental units and located near Catholic University and two Metro stations, was acquired in partnership with the tenant association through the District’s Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA). In addition to overall property management by Wesley Property Management Company, Wesley is actively engaging residents in its Housing Stability Initiative.

Resident Services & Volunteers

- Housing Stability Initiative: Every month, approximately 200 adults take advantage of housing stability and eviction prevention programs such as resume and job search skills training, computer training, crisis intervention, referrals to community resources, and financial literacy and household budgeting. In 2015, 754 households accessed our services, including 249 children in youth programs and 52 adults who found first-time or better employment.

- Thirty-two Wesley Housing families, including 155 children, enjoyed a special holiday because of hundreds of volunteers who participated in our 2015 Adopt-A-Family program. St. John’s UMC again donated space for volunteers who worked to sort and wrap Adopt-A-Family gifts as well as the donations from Toys for Tots. During the holiday season, Wesley distributed quality food items to 400 families, as well as sponsored a flu shot clinic.

- In 2015, 540 volunteers served Wesley Housing and its residents.

– *Shelley S. Murphy, President/CEO*

Advance Specials 2016 -2017

INTERNATIONAL

Mozambique: Chicouque Rural Hospital, Advance #09734A

Congo: North Katanga Wings of the Morning, Advance #08597A

Liberia: Ganta United Methodist Hospital, Advance #15080N

Cambodia: Mission Initiative, Advance #00230A

Cambodia: Street Children Ministry, Advance #14921A

Macedonia: Macedonia in Mission Together, Advance #00220A

Brazil: Ministry with Children, Shade and Fresh Water Project, Advance #11580A

Israel: Bethlehem Bible College, Advance #12017A

Eurasia: Eurasia Mission Initiative, Ukraine, Moldova, Advance #14053A

Sierra Leone: Child Rescue Program, Advance #14377A

Sudan: Sudan Development, Advance #184385

Global: Anti-Human Trafficking, Advance #333615
 Global: Sustainable Agriculture, Advance #982188
 Mexico: Give Ye Them To Eat, Advance #07629A
 Sierra Leone Water and Development Ministry, Advance #181000
 Vietnam Mission Initiative, Advance #14932A

NATIONAL

Mississippi: Choctaw United Methodist Mission, Advance #761544
 District of Columbia: Christ House, Advance #381215
 Kentucky: Red Bird Mission, Inc., Beverly, Advance #773726
 Kentucky: Henderson Settlement, Frakes, Advance #773365
 South Dakota: Tree of Life Ministry, Advance #123615
 Tennessee: Jubilee Project, Inc., Sneedville, Advance #781350
 USA: Justice for Our Neighbors Immigration Ministry, Advance #901285
 USA: Volunteers in Mission, Southeastern Jurisdiction, Advance #901875
 USA: Society of St. Andrew, Advance #801600
 USA: Response and Recovery to Natural Disaster, Advance #901670

VIRGINIA

Agape Christian Children's Community Center, Inc, #5020
 Caretakers of God's Creation, #5016
 Crossroads Mission Center – New for 2017, #5208
 Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries of Virginia, #5029
 ESL and Immigrant Ministries Childcare Support, #5036
 GRACE Ministries of The United Methodist Church, #5035
 Heart Havens, #6442
 Henry Fork Service Center, #5008
 Highland Support Project – New for 2017, #5007
 Journey Community Center – New for 2017, #5009
 Just Neighbors Ministry, Advance #803002
 Park View Community Mission, #5019
 Pathways Virginia Advance #5045
 Proclaiming Grace Outreach – New for 2017, #5011
 Rising Hope United Methodist Mission Church, #5043
 Teens Opposing Poverty, Inc. (TOPS), #5010
 Tuesday's Table, #5024
 Una Familia – New for 2017, #5027
 United Methodist Community Outreach Program of Roanoke, #5004
 Virginia Conference Disaster Response and Recovery, #5037
 Wesley Community Center, #5025

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Relationship Agreements as presented to the Missional Connections Team of the Conference Missional Ministries Board between the Virginia Conference and Heart Havens, Inc.; United Methodist Family Services of Virginia; Virginia United Methodist Homes, Inc.; Virginia United Methodist Housing Development Corporation; and Wesley Housing Development Corporation, be continued.

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRIES

Partnering for Success:

Approaching Campus Ministry as an Emerging Mission Frontier

Campus ministries are one of the most important *strategic* mission fields in the world today. The idea that campus ministries are just a faith based student organization or a carryover from high school youth fellowship is an understanding best suited for the past. We have the largest college-going generation of all time, international student enrollment is at an all-time high and we are entering a post-Christian culture. While Higher Education students make up 16.1% of our national population, they grow up to be leaders in every sphere and their impact on the world far exceeds their numbers. To meet this challenge, our campus ministries must prepare for the new generation of students by undergoing an intentional process of deep change, shifting from a traditional approach to a missional approach. The traditional ministry focuses on building large groups, while a missional approach *adds the perspective* of reaching and transforming large campuses. We need to invest our time, energy and resources in comprehensive campus-saturating strategies — why? There are huge segments of the campus population we will never see at our weekly large group meetings

The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries oversees the mission and ministry of the 13 campus ministries related to and supported by the Virginia Conference. As such, the board's role is to *partner* with local boards and campus ministers to assist in this transformation and to *ensure their success*. To meet this challenge the following changes have been made this academic year (2016-2017):

- The BHECM has been restructured to include committees/teams that can directly partner with local boards and campus ministers. We added a local board assessment committee, a technology committee, and ministry resource team. These complement the existing property managers and finance committees.
- Campus Ministry Funding has been changed to a grants based system to provide consistency and equity, to empower local boards, and to establish a system of accountability that can be linked to campus ministry effectiveness
- All Campus Ministry Reports now relate to overall effectiveness. Criteria have been established to clarify what exceeds, meets and does not meet expectations.
- The Campus Ministry System (metrics) has been revised to produce data that will assist local boards, campus ministers and student leadership teams evaluate progress and trends, examine where additional resources are needed, and provide a tool for dialogue (what works, what doesn't and why).
- To support local boards, a revised handbook has been published and a local board resources/training web site was established.
- To support our newly appointed campus ministers, the Director of Ministries with Young People, Paulo Lopes, established a leadership incubator where participants are supported and encouraged to develop their competencies and leave with a new plan to reach students and to transform campuses. Our newly appointed campus ministers are Drew Ens (ARISE at George Mason University), Forrest Teague (United Campus Ministries at Christopher Newport University) and Katie Gooch (Pace Center at Virginia Commonwealth University).

As stated in individual campus ministry reports, we strive to be “a dynamic, diverse demonstration of God's creative and inviting love” expressed through the ministries of seven Wesley Foundations, six ecumenical campus ministries and six chaplains at United Methodist educational institutions in Virginia. These campus ministries touch the lives of tens of thousands of students with invitations and opportunities “to explore, engage and embody an active faith in God.” In varied ways appropriate to each campus ministry context, God is worshipped, faith is explored, communities and people are served and lives are changed — all in the name and through the power of Jesus Christ. We invite you to read the stories shared by each of our campus ministries in this Book of Reports. Further, we invite you to pray for the continued fruitfulness of Higher Education ministries.

– Rob Lough, President

The Wesley Foundation at Longwood University & Hampden-Sydney College

The Wesley Foundation is a full-time campus ministry program, active in many ministry settings. Our weekly Tuesday Night Dinner and Worship is a very popular ministry and has grown considerably this year. Students are invited to enjoy a home-cooked meal prepared by local churches and may stay for the Worship that follows. The worship time is designed to be contemporary and interactive. There is time in our Tuesday night schedule for small group discussion and prayer. Here are some of the feelings of students that attend the Wesley Campus Ministry. Andrew Landis, senior at Longwood University “Wesley is a fun place to be on Tuesday nights where you feel welcomed and at home. Where you get fed both physically and spiritually”. We also have weekly student-led Bible studies and men's and women's small groups that meet on campus. On Hampden-Sydney's campus we have a late-night men's bible study led by the campus minister. Praise and worship are important parts of our community and come in a variety of forms and settings. There are many opportunities for service and mission work (Habitat for Humanity, annual mission trips, Faces Food bank, and other local outreach). Our Student Center is a comfortable, air-condition setting where one may pray & study, laugh & love, play & grow. The Wesley Foundation is a place for “good clean fun,” individual pastoral care, conversation, and spiritual direction. Our students often provide “people resources” for local churches with their service, musical talents, and even their fellowship. They also assist with local District and Conference youth events as well as participate in worship in area churches when invited. All this is made possible by generous District support, a strong Local Board of Directors, a core of Student leaders and a vital partnership with the Campus Ministry Team at Farmville UMC.

The Wesley Foundation Student Center is a busy place! Along with regular Wesley events, various campus, church, and community groups use our facilities for their meeting needs. For the last several years the Wesley Foundation student center has been the location of the AA/NA Christmas and New Year Marathon. Members of the AA/NA community gather over a 24-hour period on Christmas and New Year for mutual support and encouragement. We house the District Office, a Prayer Chapel, a game room, a great living room with big screen TV/DVD, and a large kitchen with plenty of coffee and other light refreshments. This year we have taken advantage of the several resources of Longwood University. The Longwood Design Lab has worked on the design of a new logo for our campus ministry. We have also been working with the Longwood Small Business Center to use our logo in the “Branding” of our ministry to provide a consistent image across the board. Within the office, we have hired a part-time office assistant to help with financial accounts, data entry, social media and connections with students, and coordination of events. We also have a new venture with an internship through the Business Department. The internship will be focused mainly on property management. It will involve after-hours availability for residents, developing work orders for apartment maintenance, overview and work on the current leases, maintenance of a building use calendar, maintenance schedule for the facilities, and over-all knowledge of the property and its function. It is a great opportunity to build another bridge between Wesley and the local college campus. All of these things exemplify the reasons students come each week excited about sharing the love of God and learning together. They are not only welcomed into our building, which certainly is “a place to belong,” but they are ready and capable of going out and spreading God's love to those on campus and in the community around them.

Over Spring Break a team of six students and four adults traveled to Groveland, FL to work on a gleaning mission with the Society of St. Andrews “Harvest of Hope”. We worked with two other college groups from UVA and NC State in gleaning of oranges and cabbages that will be distributed to local food banks in the central Florida area. A total of 1,800 pounds of oranges and 36,000 pounds of cabbages were gleaned during three days. We also learned about how hunger has impacted our nation on many levels. The team also worked at a local food bank in Orlando called Second Harvest. We learned about the work of the food bank in the area as well as helped to repack donated food items into boxes for distribution.

The spring break mission ties in well with an upcoming project with “Rise Against Hunger” in which we will package over 30,000 meals to distribute to impoverished areas around the world. Our goal is to raise \$10,000.00 to do this.

– Rich Meiser, Director

The Wesley Foundation at UVA

If I had to capture the expression of this year’s ministry in three words, it would be these: Love your neighbor. We began the fall semester with an overnight retreat called “24 Hours of Community,” focused on loving our neighbor, but we had no idea then how often we would come back to this mandate as we struggled to live out our faith together.

The morning after our national presidential election, a scared and angry student texted me to say, “I’m having an extremely hard time loving my neighbors this morning because now I’m afraid I’m the one who’s blinded by fear and hate. In need of guidance.” After a cup of coffee and some prayer, I sent out word inviting students to gather that evening for Pizza and Prayer, to talk and pray together, regardless of how they had voted or how they were feeling about the election. The invitation was to bring their whole selves to the gathering and included this sentence: “No matter who you are, we will call you neighbor and extend the hand of love.”

Incidents of hate speech, especially towards those in our community who are Jewish, Muslim, Black, or LGBTQ, have been on the rise this year, even here at UVA. Among the blessings of our UMC campus ministry are the relationships we have developed over time with our neighbors in the university community, including hosting the LGBTQ student group in our building and traveling on interfaith spring break service trips with our Jewish friends from Hillel. One of our challenges this year has been to raise our voices and to reach out even more broadly in solidarity and support with these neighbors, including publishing multiple public statements condemning hate speech and supporting our neighbors under attack, and publicizing and pushing ourselves to attend events sponsored by other student groups, like The Black Monologues, to listen and learn from the stories of students who have very different experiences of the UVA community than many of us do. As campus minister, I have worked with the interfaith United Ministries clergy group to develop relationships and better support for all students in our community, and I was one of the leaders in an interfaith worship service commemorating Charlottesville’s first “Liberation & Freedom Day,” celebrating the day in 1865 when 52% of the local population began to be freed from slavery at last.

With our neighbors at Wesley Memorial UMC, we helped host the PACEM homeless shelter for men. Along with our Presbyterian campus ministry friends, we traveled to the Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women, to lead worship for our neighbors there. We volunteered doing maintenance on the Appalachian Trail and with the Virginia Institute of Autism during their 5k race, cheering on our neighbors with special needs.

In March we hosted Virginia Conference pastor and writer Jason Micheli (Cancer is Funny) as part of the Virginia Festival of the Book, in partnership with the School of Nursing and the Compassionate Care Center at UVA. We also helped bring author Sue Klebold (mother of one of the shooters at Columbine) to the Festival, in partnership with several other university and community neighbors focused on mental health.

As you know, we have also been engaged in our Building a Foundation for the Future capital campaign, which has raised \$805,000 in gifts and pledges so far! We completed “phase one” last summer and will begin “phase two” this summer, as we continue to work towards our total fundraising goal and the end of the campaign. It’s not too late to make or increase a contribution to support this effort – or to view our video: wesleyatuva.org/ccvideo.

As we gather weekly for meals and conversation, for worship and Communion, and in times of prayer and small group sharing, we ask God to nourish our spirits and our strength for the hard and holy work of loving our neighbors – especially when they seem difficult to love or understand. And we ask God to guide us and transform us to be the neighbors we are created and called to be. Thank you for sending us to be in ministry and mission – to be loving neighbors – in this place and at this important time, both in the life of these students and in the life of the world.

– Rev. Deborah Lewis, Campus Minister & Director

The Pace Center for Campus and Community Ministries

(The Wesley Foundation at VCU)

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 9:11 “You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous in every way. Such generosity produces thanksgiving to God through us.” (CEB) The Pace Center has been made rich in so many ways! We are located at the heart of VCU’s campus – surrounded by dorms and Monroe Park. Our building has large windows that let God’s sunlight stream in and constantly remind us of the mission field outside our walls. Our beautiful sanctuary, large kitchen, and fellowship hall have a rich history of hospitality and openness. We have support and dedication from local churches throughout the Richmond District. And we have a Gospel that proclaims God’s love and grace. It is hard to not walk into Pace and feel overwhelmed by God’s blessing. The question is – how can Pace share its gifts generously, so to produce thanksgiving to God?

Since 2015, The Pace Center has been going through a transition which included a decision by its Board and the Board of Higher Education to put the ministry on pause. This pause has allowed Pace to step back and appreciate the many blessings and opportunities God has laid upon its doors. It has allowed leadership to make significant repairs to the building and to take steps to make Pace more financially stable. Now Pace’s leadership is tasked with discerning the difficult but exciting question – What is God calling Pace to do with its many gifts? How are we called to reach out to the students, faculty, and staff of VCU’s community in a way which will produce thanksgiving to God?

The more we ask this question, the more we find that God’s blessings upon Pace never cease. Potential opportunities have already begun to emerge including partnering with VCU’s student food pantry, housing an ongoing faculty Bible Study, and connecting with student groups focused on social enterprise and ministry with Indigenous communities (Highland Support Project). God is surely at work in this place! We are aiming to open our doors once again in the fall of 2017. As we continue to discern how to build a community of faith that embodies God’s Kingdom, we invite you to pray with us, send us names of VCU students, faculty, and staff, and share with us the gifts God has given you!

– Katie B. Gooch, Director and Campus Minister

Wesley at Virginia Tech

Campus Ministry is constantly changing; new students each year, the landscape of the campus, student leadership, and much more. This constant change is what makes campus ministry so exciting, yet also so challenging. If you remain static and unbending, then you will find that students and the environment in which you do ministry will pass you by and you are left wondering where to go. Therefore, it is vital that in campus ministry you keep re-focusing and remaining flexible while also keeping centered in the Triune God and what makes your campus ministry unique. In one word, campus ministry is all about visioning. At Wesley at Virginia Tech, we love to sing the song “Be Thou My Vision.” We believe that if we keep our vision on God our Creator, in Christ Jesus our Redeemer, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, then we will continue

to build the Kingdom of God here on earth.

We are in a season at Virginia Tech where we are trying to discern what is next for our ministry. In order to stay in front of the change, we are in the midst of a strategic plan/vision for the next 5 to 10 years. We know that part of what makes Wesley at Virginia Tech so special is our sense of community and that is where we are to start, but we also know that what makes Wesley such a vibrant community is needed by more students. Over the past two years we have deeply considered what makes Wesley unique and what Wesley needs to be for the students at Virginia Tech in the coming years. This process is tedious, but we feel well worth it. We hope that our vision will be about growing in our love of God and neighbor, while extending that love to more people.

One of our students recently wrote, “*Normally we focus on numbers. How many people are we reaching? How can we get more people in the door? How can we get more involved? But numbers aren’t everything. We are re-centering and refocusing. Focusing on relationships, embodying our motto, “Love Out Loud”, and discerning what our path should be in the future. It doesn’t really matter if we get 300 people to come to our Welcome Week events if we can’t capture them with meaningful relationships, and provide them with a place to be loved while they figure out the craziness of their future. This year many of our students have been more intentional in what they do, what they say, and how they connect with people in order to show God’s love and be in ministry with those around them in ways that uplift God and their peers.*” – Kelsey R.

Even though our process of discerning our vision is not complete, we do know that we want to continue to be a vital and vibrant community that will “Love Out Loud” in everything we do. This past year we have seen an increase in our Discipleship ministry area; Communities of Grace (small groups) are creating a deeper spirituality in our students to do exactly what Kelsey spoke about above, Bible Study continues to develop students love for God, and prayer is at the center of everything we do. Our Worship ministry remains a foundational part of our ministry; our worship service, which is now 4 years old, continues to grow in all areas, Wesley Singers, led by Rev. Leigh Anne Taylor, is a mainstay for our students, and we lead retreats for the Roanoke District at Wesley and the Fusion Retreat at Eagle Eyrie for youth in our conference. The Mission ministry is always a passion for our community as we still have the food pantry for college students (209 Manna Ministries), weekend build days, collecting cake mixes for the Montgomery County Christmas store, Operation Christmas Child, Matthew 25: 35 Concert, Relay 4 Life, Big Event, and, of course, our Spring Break Mission trip which is always incredible! The Fellowship ministry is probably the easiest to do at Wesley because community and relationship building is ingrained in Wesley’s DNA, but we always strive to create an environment where students can grow in their love for one another. Finally, our Outreach ministry continues to be at the forefront of our ministry as we seek to invite students to be a part of the wonderful ministry we have.

These fundamental aspects of our ministry are developing leaders that will carry the vision of the Church into the world. We look forward to the ways God is calling Wesley to continue to adapt and change our vision to enable us to grow in all these aspects of our ministry. We desire to be ahead of the change so that we can be the best possible witness to God’s love on our campus, in our community, and in the world. We, however, want stories like this to remain the norm:

“*Going to a large university fresh out of high school felt daunting. Fortunately, I was welcomed with open arms by the Wesley community at Virginia Tech. Upon move in, I already had people from Wesley knocking on my door to check on me and give me a goody bag. The hospitality I felt when I first arrived continued the entire four years that I spent there. Wesley provided me with a place to call home away from home. I had doors that were always open to me, arms ready to embrace me, and opportunities to help me grow. The amazing thing is Wesley has been that home for students for generations and will continue be for generations to come. I can tell you without a doubt in my mind that being a part of Wesley has changed my life and shaped me in my call to ministry.*”

– Emily T.

So, what’s next? We are open to the Spirit’s leading, but one thing is for sure – we will keep God as our vision so that others will see in us the love of God in all that we do.

– Bret Gresham, Director

The William and Mary Wesley Foundation

This year has been another amazing year of ministry at Wesley. The numbers of students, their passionate commitment to following Jesus, as well as our mission and ministry, are all strong. Our campus ministry community continues to lead the way, as our vision statement says, “Through following Jesus, we embrace God’s radical hospitality towards all.” Not only are the students involved in Wesley aware of the grace and love that is embodied here, other students and the college recognize it as well. The students are following Jesus and leading the way.

Speaking of leading the way, our new Leadership Team took office in January. They are Jen Peek, President; Leah Griffith, Devotions; Erin Kitchens, Discipleship; Kate Sandberg, Communications; and Sarah Grace Frary, Kathryn Weilacher, and Matt Brown, Fellowship. This group of dedicated, passionate students leads the way in the focus and direction to our entire ministry. This spring semester, we are building on the momentum from our powerful fall focus on Faith and Social Justice for our theme of Hope and.... Thus, each Sunday night Large Group focuses on a different ways that hope can impact our faith and our lives. Our Bible Study, as well as our Faith and Fellowship events, has the same themes.

Students are coordinating our partnerships with local churches in mission and ministry, as our connections with Williamsburg and Wellspring continue to be strong. Nothing exemplifies this better than the Exam Break that we have at the end of each semester, led by the Williamsburg UMC United Methodist Men. We have over 200 students coming to the Wesley House to share in over 450 cookies, gallons of hot chocolate, water, coffee, and lemonade. In addition, we have folks from all three churches and the community bring 8-10 dogs to help relieve the stress of finals. In addition, we are also partnering with Williamsburg UMC in their respite and homeless shelter ministries, as well as their new community kitchen.

Wesley has also begun two new initiatives this year. First, is an outreach to international students and scholars on campus. We are focusing our outreach on building relationships and meeting the needs of these students, especially during the breaks, when they are the most isolated, providing meals and times to come together. As the relationships grow, the ministry will grow as well. Second, Wesley is partnering with the Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail to provide activities for the persons incarcerated there. We look forward to all the opportunities for embodying the love and grace of God than we can even imagine now.

Our partnerships with other campus ministries and student groups in events, service, mission, and ministry continue to grow. Already this year, Wesley has partnered with the Lutheran, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Episcopal campus ministries, as well as the Muslim Student Association from

hosting speakers, to partnering in events, to joining together in service projects. Furthermore, Wesley continues meet the very real needs of students in crisis on campus. Finally, Wesley continues each semester to coordinate a service day at Shalom Farms and an interfaith worship service for the entire campus community.

It continues to be a joy and a privilege to serve with the students and board of The Wesley Foundation, as the students actively follow Jesus and embody God’s radical hospitality for persons on campus, locally, regionally, and beyond.

– *Max Blalock, Director*

RISE

The RISE Community has experienced a tremendous amount of transition throughout the past year. We sold and moved out of our previous property on South Mason Street, and we worshipped in seven different locations as we waited for construction on our new space to begin. We have learned a tremendous amount about ourselves and about God, and we are extremely excited to see what the future holds as we move into a renovated space that will offer much needed stability and room to dream and seek to mend God’s Creation together. Now, we’d like to introduce you to our two (new-ish) College Ministry Leaders, Nathan and Sarandon.

My Name is Nathan Scarborough, and I am the Campus Ministries Inreach Leader at RISE. RISE has been enormously important to me over the past year and I expect it will continue to be for a long time to come. I started coming to RISE at a point in my life when I was going through a great deal of change theologically, and I needed a safe space to wrestle with questions without being given quick, cookie cutter answers that were becoming increasingly problematic and unsatisfying. After spending quite some time hearing about RISE from a friend, I finally decided to check them out at their Ash Wednesday service, and I left feeling like I had finally found a church that my wife and I could call home.

I have found that RISE is special for so many reasons. One of the things that sticks out most to me is the vulnerability, humility, and deep honesty of the Pastor, Amanda Garber. She and other leaders are willing to ask really difficult questions, both of the theological nature, and otherwise. I truly cannot express how greatly I value this in RISE. RISE is also very involved in the community with ministries such as Love packs, which feeds children over the weekend who rely on school meals for food during the week, and RISE and Shine, which provides hygiene items for those who wouldn’t otherwise be able to afford them. Our Stop Hunger Now event in January drew hundreds of students and was a beautiful sight. We also provide a meal and social gathering space for college students every week called Breakfast for Dinner Club. I’ve spent time with numerous college students this year, and I’m excited to say that a number of them are connecting with the larger RISE community. I am also incredibly excited for the future of RISE.

Construction has begun on our new space, and the future is full of hope. So, all of this to say that RISE is a vital part of my own life, and a vital part of the community. For some in the Harrisonburg area it is the only church they feel safe attending, and we all need and deserve a place where we can seek the God who loves us as we journey, struggle and are transformed in community.

My name is Sarandon Smith and I’m a junior at Bridgewater College studying Fine Arts. I came to RISE after moving to Harrisonburg and beginning my search for a welcoming, diverse faith community. I have been regularly attending RISE since September of 2016, and two weeks ago I began serving as the College Outreach Team Leader. What drew me to RISE was the unconditional acceptance, and knowing that I have space to explore and develop my beliefs and relationship with God, without having to fit my faith into a box. I come from a diverse faith background, and it was important for me to be in a community that allowed me to live through my own faith journey. What really kept me coming back though was the unique vulnerability that is fostered in the RISE community. I have never been part of a faith community where I felt I didn’t need to “save face” or pretend that things were OK. Being able to step into worship, truly as I am, knowing that I am loved as I come has been more of a blessing than I could have imagined.

Because of this experience I have gladly stepped into the role of College Outreach Team Leader, because I know there are many more young people who are thirsting for a community like RISE where they are welcomed as they are and supported as they grow. RISE has several outreach systems established, including muffin mania, meet and feed, and Breakfast for Dinner Club which is new but growing faster than we can keep up with. We are also working on developing new programs for the next academic year that will reach further out into the surrounding college community. I couldn’t be more excited about the work that RISE is doing in the college community, and I am so grateful and incredibly blessed to be part of it and watch it grow!

– *Nathan Scarborough, Campus Ministries Inreach Leader at RISE*

IGNITE

IGNITE had quite a year in 2016.

We were certain of our vision: IGNITE people’s hearts to change the city. But more importantly, we were became certain of how we would achieve that vision: we would be a church that initially connected with people not through worship, but through missions.

James Monroe Elementary School was one of the first and most important places that we began to serve. We adopted a third grade class and committed to volunteer twice each month. We created events that allow us to build relationships with the children, while also adding to their education. Our experience was so positive that we decided to move up with the kids we had served in the previous school year. Thus, we moved from adopting one class in the third grade to all three classes of the fourth grade. And instead of volunteering twice a month, we chose to volunteer each week. This proved to be incredibly successful. We now had more opportunities to build relationships with the children, and more opportunities for volunteers to serve. By the end of the year, we had as many as 12 volunteers per class on a given Friday.

Small Groups were another area where we saw growth in 2016. At the beginning of the year, we had one small group: a weekly Monday Night Dinner Group. However, in the fall, we were able to expand to three groups. We continued the Monday Night Diner Group and added the James Monroe volunteer group, and a Young Women’s Group.

This was a critical step for us in the process of discipling the students and young people who connected with IGNITE. While we knew that people could experience God in our volunteer opportunities, we also knew that there needed to be a place for them to deepen their faith. Small groups would be one opportunity for this. Worship would be another.

After over a year of waiting, God finally made it clear that summer 2016 was the appropriate time for us to begin worship services. However, because of the energy and resources required for each worship service, we sensed God telling us to start worshipping only once a month, rather than weekly. This way, we would not be pulled away from our primary focus of serving.

Worship proved quite successful. Each month, we were filling the room and beginning to have conversations about where we might go if we outgrew the space. Our highlight, however, was in September, when we baptized 3 people and had several commitments to Christ.

In fact, over the past year, we have seen many people make decisions for Christ. So far, 14 people have either begun or renewed their relationship with Jesus. This is in addition to the four people we have baptized, and the two student leaders who have gone into full-time ministry.

Much of this excitement occurred in the fall, as we began a new school year. We watched our numbers increase dramatically. In fact, we grew so much in the fall that we were reaching more students in a week than we had over the course of 3 months the previous year.

A large part of our growth came once we opened our food pantry. In August, we started IGNITE Pantry in partnership with ODU. It is a food pantry made available to the students, faculty, and staff of ODU. Quickly, the pantry grew beyond our expectations. Within a few months, we were averaging around 15-25 families each week, and 15 volunteers. Many of these volunteers also become involved in other ministries at IGNITE. In fact, we gained so many new volunteers through IGNITE Pantry that in just the first two months of the semester, we have had more volunteers than the previous six months combined.

IGNITE is poised to end the year on a strong note, and begin 2017 even stronger. God is continuing to surprise us by opening doors that allow us to impact lives in ways we never imagined. And we can’t wait to see what’s next.

– *Brandon Robbins, Director*

Arise Campus Ministry at George Mason University

This year has been a very exciting, and transformative year at George Mason University (GMU). Last spring (2016), it was determined that Arise Campus Ministry ought to go through a full academic year of discernment in order to minister more effectively to the students at GMU. In this year of prayerful discernment the Holy Spirit has been moving amongst the leaders, board members and the students at Arise. Our staff and volunteers are finding ways of engaging in discussions with students, faculty members and other groups on campus to discover areas in which Arise can truly be an inclusive and unique voice at George Mason. Our wonderful board members have been meeting, and continue to meet, with local church leaders from the various denominations supporting Arise. These meetings have created additional avenues that we can be in mission together to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and God’s love for all persons. We have formed a launch team of nine, and been meeting regularly to seek God’s vision for the ministry in the fall. We continue to be open to God’s guidance, and ask for your prayers as we continue to seek what God’s vision is for the ministry.

While this academic year has been focused on the fall 2017 launch, there is still amazing ministry happening at GMU. Arise has launched two different small groups and have seen both groups bring in new members. These groups pray for one another, have lively discussions about faith, and are developing future leaders. We are seeing students developing a deeper understanding of the ways God is moving in their lives and it has been exciting seeing them respond to God’s grace. The students are excited about small groups, inviting their friends to be a part of the ministry, and getting involved in worship in local faith congregations.

Serving others has also been an important part of our year. In the fall, we hosted a Stop Hunger Now event and saw over 15,000 meals go to the people of Haiti. We have also collaborated with others to help those in our local community. Our students hosted an evening Hypothermia Shelter in March, partnered with local congregations to feed the hungry and have served those who have housing needs in April.

We are so excited at what God is doing currently at GMU, and what God is inviting us to do in the future. We also want to officially thank all of the churches who support Arise, the volunteers who pour their time and resources into our students, the board members who selflessly serve and the students who continue to invest in our ministry. Please keep up to date with everything happening at Arise Campus Ministry through our website and various social media accounts. I thank you for your continued support and for your prayers for all of the Virginia UMC campus ministries throughout the state. I humbly submit this report and am always

– *Drew Ensz, Director*

The Campus Christian Community at the University of Mary Washington

The Campus Christian Community (CCC) is an ecumenical campus ministry that ministers to the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, VA. We have had an exciting year this year and it has been a joy to watch our students grow and the leaders develop into a team. One of the highlights of the year has been a new partnership that was created by students at the CCC with the Boys and Girls Club here; each week a group of students goes to spend time with the youth tutoring and playing games. Each week our students share where they have seen God that week and it almost always highlights the time spent with these youth. Talking about “God moments” has been something that we are trying this year and it has been fruitful in having conversations about faith amongst the students in the CCC in order to prepare them to talk about their faith with others outside of our group. Another new thing that we have been doing this year is finding new and creative ways to reach out to students with whom we may not normally interact. One of the most popular ways that we have done this is through our Paint Night events. Once a semester, we host a night where we have a preset design and students can come and paint them with assistance from our artists. These have been very popular and have been a great access point for new people who may have been uncomfortable coming to something else first. We have also moved some of our events to campus, providing a familiar location for doing something new for students. We have re-envisioned some of our standard programs after some dreaming and investment on the part of our student leaders. We have been working to make sure that everything we do falls in line with our mission statement and has intentionality behind it, as opposed to in the past when the focus was filling in all of the holes in the calendar.

We are excited about returning the New Jersey this year for our mission trip in May. We will again be working on Hurricane Sandy recovery work. Even though it has been several years since the storm, there is still a lot of work in the area. The CCC students have developed a relationship with the community and have enjoyed working alongside people there to be a positive change there.

After a several year hiatus, we have started back up with a monthly newsletter, the CCC Correspondence, in order to share with our supporters and alumni about what is happening around the CCC. You can check it out on our website at www.campuschristiancommunity.com.

– *Shannon Waite, Campus Ministry Director*

Community College Ministries

Community College Ministries is your campus ministry with community colleges in southwestern and central Virginia where over 54,000 students deal with faith, family, classes, careers, and a wide range of challenges every single day! Colleges include Virginia Western Community College in Roanoke, Blue Ridge Community College in Weyers Cave, Dabney Lancaster Community College in Clifton Forge, Central Virginia Community College in Lynchburg, Danville Community College in Danville, New River Community College in Dublin, Patrick Henry Community College in Martinsville, Wytheville Community College in Wytheville, Virginia Highlands Community College in Abingdon, Southwest Virginia Community College in Richlands, and Mountain Empire Community College in Big Stone Gap. The Presbyterian Church USA is our partner with the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church. Community College Ministries sponsors Alliance for Excellence involving hundreds of students in a partnership of community colleges with African American congregations, launched in 1986 with support from the EMLC, the United Methodist Self-Development Fund, the Presbyterian Self-Determination Fund, and the Episcopal Presiding Bishop's Fund. Alliance for Excellence provides vital ministries through fellowships, seminars, choirs, and mission, and outreach. For the eighth year now, Community College Ministries sponsors the "Rally in the Valley" bringing community college students of faith together from across the entire Commonwealth! The gathering is organized in cooperation with the Blue Ridge Christian Fellowship and over 100 students assemble each year for this program. New this year is an outreach program to support foster youth who are aging out of homes or institutions and entering our community college system. In cooperation with the Great Expectations program at our community colleges, local churches can provide emergency assistance, resources, and mentoring for a population that struggles with academic and personal success. Your campus minister is the Reverend Stephen Darr (stevedarr@vaumc.org). The office is at 620 N. Main St., Blacksburg, VA 24060, phone (540) 230-8581. Sandy Saunders of Danville Community College is board president. Others who share this ministry are Jean Wilson in Martinsville and Jamesia Harrison in Lynchburg. We welcome your participation in this exciting ministry with students at our community colleges!

– Stephen Darr, Campus Minister

FLOW (United Campus Ministries at Virginia State University)

The year 2016 was indeed a blessed one for UCM FLOW! In our first full year of a partnership with Ettrick United Methodist Church, we continued to witness the move of God through our Lord Jesus Christ in a mighty way!! The church continues to host weekly worship services at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. We are thankful for a host of blessings resulting from this historic ministry partnership and are excited about the following highlights from the year!

- As Virginia State University welcomed Dr. Makola Abdullah, 14th President of the university on February 1, 2016, United Campus Ministries "drafted" the president to play with campus minister, Rev. Delano Douglas and eight students on the first UCM FLOW intramural basketball team, *Witness!* After a slow start to the season, Witness went on the advance to the league's final four, falling three points short of playing for the championship! For the season, Dr. Abdullah and Rev. Douglas were the only faculty and staff members to play in the league with and against the students! In the fall of 2016, Dr. Abdullah also played with the first ever Witness flag football team.
- In May of 2016, the Ettrick United Methodist Church was featured as the location of the chapel in the filming of the motion picture *Burning Sands*. Virginia State University was the primary site for this production which was released on March 10, 2017 through Netflix. The church was blessed with an honorarium from the project for use of the facility for filming and as a location for holding and feeding the cast.
- The second annual Village of Ettrick Fair was held on October 1, 2016 from 12 noon to 3 p.m. More than 200 members of the community was on hand to enjoy hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, and drinks as they connected with support agencies in the area. We were blessed to celebrate the restoration of the historic Summerseat building in our town and to have local talent on hand to provide entertainment for the community! The Thomas Dale High School Football Cheerleading Squad performed stunts and cheers for the community and the Ettrick Elementary School Music Department, under the leadership of Music Teacher Mrs. Sara Davis performed the soundtrack of their summer rendition of the *Wizard of Oz!*
- In October 2016, The Rev. Delano Douglas and The Rev. Dorothy McNeer O'Quinn, pastor of Highland United Methodist Church and chairperson of UCM FLOW's Board of Directors
- VSU students continued to grow in their support of the Ettrick United Methodist Church through volunteerism and offerings through the 2:00 pm services. On several occasions in July, September, and October, students assisted with cleaning and demolition projects in the basement as part of ongoing efforts to renovate the fellowship hall working with church members to haul the refuse to the GCA dumpsters at Virginia State University. Offering totals for the calendar year amounted to \$4,600.00. We praise God for the increase!

Some of our ministries that we have engaged in over the years have transformed to accommodate the evolving needs of our campus community! Our Wednesday night Bible Studies previously held in the cafeteria at 6 p.m. shifted to a new location with a new schedule! *Soul Food Bible Study* is now *FLOW Bible Study* and is held on Wednesdays at two different times for multiple audiences at 12 noon and 5 p.m. Our praise team, *Avodah* rehearses on Mondays and Wednesdays at 7 p.m. with our performing arts ministry *Chara* following at 9 p.m. Our Praise and Worship team coordinator, Ms. Constance McLaughlin hosts a devotional period in between the two sessions at 8:30 p.m. Our Lilly Endowment Grant supported Oikonomia student leadership ministry experienced another great year with its second class concluding in the spring and its third class beginning in the fall!

Special thanks to the Virginia Conference, the James River District, Ettrick United Methodist Church and Highland United Methodist Church in Colonial Heights for supporting us in our ministry! May God continue to bless every church, campus ministry, and extension ministry in our connection!!

– Delano Douglas, Director &
Dorothy McNeer O'Quinn, Board Chairperson

United Campus Ministries (UCM) @ CNU

This year has been a year of Change for UCM. We had an interim campus minister for the fall semester and I just came on in the spring semester. I am a recent graduate from Virginia Wesleyan College and have lived in the Hampton Roads area my entire life. I got the call to ministry from the Lord my junior year of college and the Lord has put me in positions to serve him since. He has given me the chance to serve as a local pastor and now reach students at Christopher Newport. I am excited to come in with a new vision and see how God continues to impact the campus and how UCM can be a part of it. I am still very new so my main focus is on building relationships with students, faculty, staff, and local churches. Here is my vision for UCM and what has been happening lately.

- We continue to meet Thursday nights at 7pm and are currently going through 1 Peter with our students that average about 3 per meeting. We also partner with the Lutheran ministry so John Ericson and I switch off on who leads each week.
- Many connections with students are being made, I am on campus every day that I can. The reputation and face of UCM is changing in a good way. It used to be an unknown among other ministries as to what they were and believed. I have been able to reach out to other ministries and show who I am and explain what UCM and where we are missionally.
- My vision for UCM is one that is much more mission oriented and personal. To long we have thought students will just come to us. We need to go to them wherever they are. No matter who they are, what they look like, background, we must go to them all. Starting with a few solid students and pouring into them and growing them so that they impact everyone they meet on campus, that is the goal.
- As a way to help do outreach but also to help grow us closer together we have started game nights. These are either held on Friday or Saturday night, we play board games, eat home cooked meals, and usually end up in great conversation. What is even better is that it is held off campus at either my house or a board members house.

We are hoping that with the progress and stability now in place at UCM we can take off hard into the Fall '17 semester. Growth has been slow but growth is still growth and we know that even Jesus's ministry started with only a few and those few changed the world. I am looking forward to a full year at CNU and what the Lord is going to continue doing. There is seriously something amazing happening on this campus. So we are very thankful for the continued support of the conference, especially through prayer. We seek to have more unity and support through all ministries of the Lord.

– Forrest Teague, Director

Wesley-Westminster Foundation at Norfolk State University

The Wesley-Westminster Foundation (WWF) at Norfolk State University is the 2015-2016 NSU Program of the Year. College officials presented this award during an awards ceremony. Our ministry received college-wide recognition and a plaque for our outstanding service to the college and the community. WWF Campus Ministry is an ecumenical ministry of the United Methodist and Presbyterian Churches seeking to impact the College, the Community, and the Current Culture with Christian Principles, Open Hearts and Open Minds. It is our mission to provide a safe place to explore and to experience one's faith, while offering a respectful and non-threatening environment of love, service to others and learning. Our goal is to

Friendship, fellowship and faith are enhanced at The Foundation House, where we offer a place of refuge. In essence, we are family and support our student's matriculation, boasting 100 percent graduation of all students who participate in our ministry. Students enjoy a space to grow and to develop their faith. Bible Study, Prayer, Small Groups and weekly meals are offered. We worship and work together. On Mondays we share in Monday Night Fire Worship. Wednesday evenings include Bible Study and group fellowship. Our Signature Bible Study, Thirsty Thursday is held weekly and is a time when we study together and provide a meal to all present. In our growing together several of us attended the District Christian Education Training Day as well as attending worship together. Our choir is often asked to sing and was featured at the Martin Luther King Celebration Service at Great Bridge Presbyterian Church. As a family, we support one another and seek to strengthen our Christian walk.

Yearly, we engage in a Spiritual Growth Retreat known as our Faith Enhancement Retreat where we spend a weekend together engaged in formational therapy with a trained therapist. It is our goal to grow together and to strengthen those with whom we come in contact. We collaborate with other campus ministries and hope to involve them in our future retreats. Periodically, we continue to host No Strings Attached Bible Study and fellowships for students to interact socially. Following these studies we often create avenues to provide tokens of appreciation to faculty, staff and sometimes students as well. As a group we adopted a foreign student and collected toiletries and other needed items to support this student.

Once again, Family Weekend was a huge success. This year we had more than 40 students and their parents present. We provided the music, led worship and offered the sermon for this Inspirational Service for the college. The WWF Choir sang for the first Faith Partners Network Fund-raising Basket Ball Game. As the Campus Ministry Director I was asked to participate in this game along with other area pastors. My team won. The Faith Partners Network raised more than \$17,000 for the athletics department of Norfolk State University. Additionally, as a member of the Faith Partners Network, I was asked to chair the Speaker's Bureau Committee and provide leadership in this area.

Campus Ministry Week is a blessing and always reaches many students on campus. This week of worship includes, panel discussions, concerts, worship through the arts and outreach. We concluded this week with our Annual Benefit Banquet, which was held on campus this year in our University Ballroom. We continue to participate as a ministry team in Homecoming Activities, Spring Fest, Faith Fairs, all Organization Fairs and other events hosted by the college.

– Joy Carrington, Director

BOARD OF LAITY

The Board of Laity continues in 2017 to create a culture of call by engaging, equipping, and empowering laity to effectively partner with each other and our clergy to live out God’s call upon our lives.

Associate Conference Lay Leader, Larry Creamer (S) leads a team of the board for Engaging (Holistic Stewardship) and is developing a culture of call for all laity focusing on prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness identifying networking and learning opportunities for District Lay Leaders and Local Church Lay Leaders, establishing and giving oversight to various means of communication between members of the Board of Laity (i.e. email groups, articles for The Advocate and other print communications, website). Additionally developing and offering communications alternatives for meetings of teams.

Associate Conference Lay Leader Joyce Duncan (L) leads Equipping (Leadership Excellence) This office is responsible for developing and offering training to new District Lay Leaders overseeing Lay Servant/Speaking Ministries, developing resources for District and Local Church Lay Leaders, and resourcing Local Church Leadership Development and Nominations Committees.

A team of the board for Empowering advocates for the laity and promoting Laity Sunday, encouraging the presence of the District Lay Leaders, Associate District Lay Leaders, or other laity involved in District ministries at all local church Charge Conferences and the assessment of needs of District and Local Church Lay Leaders in order to better support their service.

In September 2016, Jodi Cataldo, Director of Laity in Leadership, Discipleship Ministries led an all day Lay Leader training for all District Lay Leaders and District Directors of Lay Servant Ministry at the Conference Center.

Lay Servant Ministries, led by David Bailey have had a year of fruitful ministry. David and the District Directors continue to implement our new structure reflective of The Discipline 2012 and 2016 requirements. In an effort to spread our teaching abilities, “On Demand Learning for Laity” has been a great success. We met the goals set by a team of dedicated individuals to feed those Lay Servants needing Advanced Courses by the end of 2016 for Lay Speaking certification. This is an exciting time for our ministry.

The Lay Servant Academy led by Beth Christian and her dedicated team created a weekend of learning and fellowship at 4H Educational Conference Center at Smith Mountain Lake with approximately 150 attending including teaching staff the first week in April.

We have celebrated the leadership of three District Lay Leaders whose terms have ended on the board. Gene Mims, Kathy Lutman and Iris Smith have greatly enhanced their respective district ministries. We thank them all. With sadness we also say good bye to Beth Christian and thank her for tireless hours as Co - Director of Lay Servant Ministries. Additionally we thank Joyce Winston, UMW President and Jeff Hall, UMM President for jobs well done. In addition we have celebrated new faces joining the board. We welcome Wilma Jennings, Winchester District Lay Leader, Jennifer W. Hume, Eastern Shore District Lay Leader, Keith Jordan, James River District Co - Lay Leader, Mary Jane Rawley, UMW Conference President, and Andrew Kissell, President of the Conference UMM.

We thank Rev. Danny Kesner, for being our Cabinet representative. We continue to thank Cheryl Edley-Worford, the Director of Inclusivity and Lay Leadership Excellence for much needed guidance. Thanks to Cindy Ingroff, Administrative Assistant for invaluable assistance and gifted wisdom always.

Bishop Sharma D. Lewis challenged us last September 2016 to make disciples of Jesus Christ as we welcomed her into our Virginia Annual Conference as our new Episcopal Leader. Since last November I and my wife Sandy have accompanied her to her famous Chat and Chews in all 16 districts. Our new bishop is not new to Virginia any longer but one of us. I cherish her partnership with the laity.

– Warren R. Harper, Conference Lay Leader

UNITED METHODIST MEN

The Virginia UM Men’s key initiatives in 2016 were to recruit UM Men District Leadership; find a new site for our annual spiritual weekend (Randolph-Macon College); and establish a new vision statement, values, and goals. The UMM are excited about our future under the leadership and support of our new Bishop.

The UMM conducted a spirit-driven retreat in late September 2016 facilitated by Jim Boesch, GCUMM, and established the following:

Vision: *Men Building God’s Kingdom led by the Holy Spirit through Christian Fellowship*

Values: Service, Excitement (passion), Teamwork

2017-2020 Goals

- In support of our District Superintendents, re-establish District Level UMM organizations in six Districts and strengthen them in the other ten using partnerships and by nurturing our “mustard seeds” (strong, faith-filled fellowships and clusters)
- Prepare men for service:
 - Train new officers using electronic resources.
 - Mentor replacements by going out two by two.
 - Encourage Men’s Bible studies and daily prayer at all fellowships
 - Conduct project oriented events to attract Late Boomers, Gen Xers and Millennials
 - Integrate all men into servant leadership and fellowship in God’s Kingdom (increase proportion of men under 50 in leadership to 25%).
 - Increase enrollment in Men’s Ministry training by 25%.
- Reach new men and their families:
 - Establish fifteen new scout troops conference-wide
 - Introduce ourselves to one new person every week while being prepared to share our witness
- Connect with other Conference agencies and boards:

- Preventing Domestic Violence initiative jointly w/ UMW.
- Increase Chartering and Every Man Shares membership by ten percent.
- Revitalize service to Heart Havens, Prison/Jail Ministry, Hunger Relief, Camp Rainbow, Wesleyan Building Brothers, All God’s Children, Scouting, Prayer Advocacy, etc., increasing UMM participation by 20%.
- Holy Spirit led Christian Fellowship:
 - Revitalize our annual spiritual weekend and our annual leadership meeting focusing on attracting new men (20% increase over 2 years).
 - Assign sixteen men to be prayer advocates for their Districts.

Ongoing ministries

Wesleyan Building Brothers (WBB): WBB has been endorsed by the GCUM Men as an independent ministry of discipleship providing leadership training for spiritual fatherhood. Four hundred thirty-two men have completed the training in Virginia. We are expanding into the North Carolina and the Western North Carolina Conferences, and into Cuba, during 2017.

Men’s Ministry: Three certified Men’s Ministry Specialists are engaged in training and support activities offering Understanding Men’s Ministry and other courses around the Conference.

Scouting: We serve over 16,000 youth with over 9,000 adult volunteer leaders Scouting is a key element to our strategy to reach new people since half of scouting families do not have church homes. Since over half (634 out of 1,167) of our churches are small congregations with fewer than fifty members, our focus is on helping churches grow through scouting. About 340 churches currently support scouting.

Prayer Advocacy: Our vision is to: Pray Daily to God on behalf of the World Wide Church. Our goal is to advocate prayer as Holy Dialog with God that needs to occur daily in each man’s life leading to pursuit, engagement, and faith in action.

Heart Havens: UMM support the intellectually disabled through fund raising, community events involving residents, and providing volunteer maintenance and repair to group homes.

Camp Rainbow Connection: This is a week-long respite camp held once in July and once in August for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Prison Ministries: UMM provides volunteer support to: Disciple Bible Outreach Ministry (DBOM) which provides the thirty-two week Disciple Series to prisoners; Good News Jail Ministry serving inmates in Virginia’s County and City Jails; Kairos which provides an Emmaus Walk experience for inmates of Virginia’s Correctional Institutions; and GraceInside, a ministry supporting Prison Chaplains.

Hunger Relief: The Society of St. Andrew with the help of our UMM volunteers have provided an estimated 1.2 million servings of food through July of 2017.

All God’s Children: In 2017 Virginia will have three different summer camps with thirty kids each week. This ministry serves the children of incarcerated adults.

Young Men’s Ministry: In coordination with the SEJ Conference we have established this ministry to explore ways to integrate and grow participation by late Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials.

Our values of teamwork, passion, and service mirror Bishop Sharma Lewis’ exhortation from 2 Tim 1:6-7 and the UMM motto from James 1:22. Our goals clearly identify the challenges that lie ahead as we work to fulfill our vision of building God’s Kingdom. You may visit our website VACUMM.ORG for updates and postings.

– Andrew Kissell, President

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

From the beginning, United Methodist Women has focused on ministries with women, children and youth. Our entire program and organization focuses on mission. Our five Mission Initiatives are providing opportunities to grow spiritually, equipping women and girls to be leaders, providing transformative educational experience, organizing for growth and flexibility, and working for justice through service and advocacy.

United Methodist Women is the women’s mission organization of The United Methodist Church, putting faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth in the United States and internationally. We are a creative, supportive community of women organized around the Purpose, which is “to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ” and “to expand concepts of mission by participation in the global ministries of the church.”

Throughout our nearly 150 year history, United Methodist Women and its predecessor organizations brought women together in small groups to grow in faith, learn about their own needs and potential, learn about others, and organize and raise funds so that we could reach out to marginalized neighbors in our local communities and around the world.

United Methodist Women offers several opportunities to grow spiritually to women by attending retreats. Each spring a UMW Spiritual Life Retreat is held that brings together 150-175 women from all over the conference. On April 28-30th, the retreat theme was the “Spirituality of Relationships” with the Rev. Dr. Denise Honeycutt as the retreat leader.

The second opportunity for spiritual growth is for the young women of our conference. Held in September each year is our Young Women’s Retreat and is always a great opportunity for young women between the ages of 18-40 to come together for worship, music, sharing, and crafts around a theme. We had 33 in attendance last year. The event’s date is September 15-16, 2017 at the Blessings Lodge at Camp Overlook in the beautiful mountains of Keezletown, VA. The retreat leader will be Rev. Devon Earle speaking on the theme “Encountering God in Everyday Life: Nurturing Your Relationship with God through Spiritual Practices”.

One of our Church’s best kept secrets is its Mission Encounter Event held each summer. This is an event shared by Virginia United Methodist Church and United Methodist Women and is for everyone, clergy, laity, youth and children. The dates for the event for 2017 are July 28-29 at Bon Air UMC in Richmond. Our website vaumw.com has registration forms.

UMW Annual Meeting in October is always a time for celebration. In October 2016 we honored our outgoing President, Joyce Winston, who holds such a special place in all our hearts for her four years of service as our President.

United Methodist Women around the Virginia Conference are putting their faith, hope, and love in action. We would love to have more women join us in our mission!

– *Mary Jane Rawley, President*

CHURCH DEVELOPMENT TEAM

The Church Development Team has been working hard to fulfill its mission to assist in creating New Faith Communities and supporting the work of vitality in existing churches under the All Things New Plan. Below you will find CDT's activities toward this work.

The Five Talent Academy continues to offer training opportunities related to worship, financial stewardship, discipleship, evangelism, and ministry with the poor. We also continue to offer these events via web-based simulcast to regional locations throughout Virginia.

The Equipping Planter team directs the invitation, discernment, and training of planters of new faith communities for the Virginia Conference. Those who are interested in planting engage in a process of discernment as to each person's gifts for this unique ministry. The first stage is the Church Leadership Institute, which is held annually each fall. We had more than 50 participants this past October. Some who attend this event decide that they wish to explore this call more deeply. These prepare a self-reflective paper and are interviewed by members of our Church Development Team. Summaries of these interviews are given to the cabinet, to help inform their appointment of planters of new faith communities. Once appointed, church planters attend a boot camp during the summer of their appointment, and coaches are assigned to help guide their ministry.

The New Faith Community subgroup of the CDT continues to help create a culture of excellence, fruitfulness and vitality in the area of new faith community development in our conference. This year we have continued to resource and encourage recently initiated new faith communities, local churches, district Boards of Mission and their equivalents, the Cabinet and others in our conference to live out the "All Things New" strategy through the planting of new faith communities. In addition to resourcing our conference in the area of new faith community development, the New Faith Community subgroup also receives, reviews and makes recommendations to the CDT and the Common Table regarding funding for new faith community development proposals. This year we received multiple proposals that were reviewed and given careful consideration. We remain prayerful and excited about the future of new faith community development within our conference.

The CDT deeply appreciates our working partnerships with the Cabinet and Conference Finance and Administration as we have negotiated conference policy regarding legacy congregations, adoptions and church planting mergers.

The Church Development Team partners with the Large, Medium and Small Church leadership teams. These teams offer training events both for pastors who have just moved (Just in Time trainings) as well as training for clergy and laity in order to increase vitality.

All Things New Capital Campaign

In June of 2008, The Virginia Annual Conference adopted a core strategy to renew our existing churches and to create new faith communities that is called All Things New. One central component of this strategy was to have a capital campaign that would raise funds to help "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world".

The giving for All Things New Capital Campaign was started in December of 2009 and the last donation was received in January of 2017. Between 2009 to 2017, the Virginia Conference received \$2,016,255 for this effort to renew our existing churches and to create new faith communities.

Over the last eight years the Church Development Team has granted this money to a variety of ministries focusing on leadership development at the local church, district and annual conference levels. At the local church level funds were primarily used to strengthen ethnic minority ministries. Money was granted to Latino ministries, second generation Korean and African immigrant ministries for additional staffing. In some cases, funds were used to secure gifted clergy leadership for African-American congregations. Through a grant to districts, churches have been trained in Phil Maynard's Shift ministry and a new strategic church consultation, Next Level Invocations has been developed. At the conference level, funds have supported a pilot program in partnership with West Ohio Conference, Missional Church Consultation Initiative. The funds have been used to offer Virginia Focus 2020 and Fresh Expressions training, as well as subsidizing travel on the Korea immersion for conference church planters. In addition, funds have been used to help create a culture of invitation in the Virginia Conference through a district coordinated workshop called, "How to Reach New People" where over 300 churches were trained between 2011-2016.

In conversations with church leaders and district superintendents, the CDT regularly receives feedback about how All Things New funds have contributed to new ministries and greater church vitality. Though money raised through this campaign has now been completely disbursed, the ministry of All Things New continues through the fruit of the investment in ministries described above and through the Church Extension apportionment.

We would like to thank Mark Ogren, Ellen Heatwole and Pat Hickman for their efforts that help make All Things New in the Virginia Conference.

– *Melissa Dunlap, CDT Chair*

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

The Commission on Disabilities (COD) continues to meet 3 times annually. We continue to improve ways we can be advocates for the disabled in the Virginia Conference.

In 2016 we approved six grants totaling \$4,000 for churches and organizations to improve accessibility. This is an increase over previous years as we have promoted this opportunity more.

At the 2016 annual conference, we surveyed the attendees to know the need for accessible rooms at annual conference so to better provide information to the conference attendees about their availability.

In 2015 we created three committees to better focus on the needs of the conference. In Feb 2017, we consolidated to two committees:

- **Education, Programs, Accessibility, and Advocacy**
- **Grants, Finance, Monitoring, and Nominations**

Our primary focus is on Education and we continue to search for new ways to enlighten the members of the conference about accessibility and how to interact with disabled persons and incorporate them into the church community as equal partners. An effort is underway now to improve our literature and disseminate the same to all churches.

We look forward to sharing a program for ramp building to empower churches to build their own ramps, where they have capable people.

– *Shaun Smith, Chairperson*

COMMISSION ON ETHNIC MINORITY CONCERNS AND ADVOCACY

The commission has continued in its mission: to serve as a prophetic voice for the full and equal participation of ethnic and racial constituents into the total life and mission of the Virginia Annual Conference (its churches, boards and agencies, and institutional and connectional structures) by educating, advocating, and holding to account God's church to inclusivity as God's intended design for all structures and processes, towards the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world in word and deed.

We encourage all members of the Virginia Annual Conference to remain prayerful and continue the great work God has allowed us to be a part of. With God's help and the great work of our former Bishop Young Jin Cho and our New Bishop Sharma Lewis we are hopeful that Virginia will be a lead conference in inclusiveness and racial justice.

We are indebted to the following ethnic agencies:

- **African-American Ministries**
- **Hispanic/Latino Ministries**
- **Immigration Work Group**
- **Asian-American Ministries**
- **Native American Ministries**
- **Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR), Inc.**
- **VA FOCUS 2020**
- **MARCHA**
- **Ghanaian Church**

for the work these groups are doing within our conference. We would like to highlight the Asian-American Ministries for their annual gathering that has become a model for ethnic groups within our conference. We give thanks for Bishop Lewis leading the largest delegation from Virginia to the Convocation for Pastors of Black Churches. This year CEMCA seeks to partner with other focus groups within our conference to increase our minoring of boards and organizations to help highlight the inclusive efforts that are being witnessed in our conference.

With your help, prayers and support, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we look forward to continuing the work of living more fully into this vision.

– *Gary Miller, Lori Segovia, Co-Chairs*

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN

The Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) encourages participation of women in the full life of the United Methodist church. To further this mission, COSROW collects data on the participation of women, minorities, youth and young adults, and persons with disabilities in the leadership roles of the church. Data collection continues at Annual Conference 2017.

Data collection at Annual Conference 2016 continues to suggest women are encouraged to participate, yet we still have work to do. During the planned worship services, men and women are both involved at a relatively equal rate. This modelling of women in leadership has a massive impact, encouraging our congregants to recognize women have an important and active role in the church.

Further challenges remain in the plenary and business portions of the annual conference. Women's level of active participation continues to be lower than men's level of active participation. Likewise, the same pattern emerges for racial and ethnic minority participation compared to that of those of Caucasian descent, and youth and young adults relative to adults. The proportion of persons of disability participating is negligible.

We who serve the Virginia Conference still have work to do. We encourage women, racial and ethnic minorities, young people, and persons with disabilities to be active stakeholders in the life of the United Methodist church. Our churches must welcome all God's children in the leadership of their churches. This includes, but is not limited to, welcoming women as pastors in all churches in the Virginia Conference, encouraging women to be lead pastors in large membership churches, and encouraging women to serve as leaders in committees, such as Finance and Trustees. Women, racial and ethnic minorities, young people, and persons with disabilities have gifts and talents. They make significant contributions to the life of the church. Any artificial limits on these persons deny the church body the blessings that God has bestowed on this Conference.

We are called to make disciples of all nations. To make all feel welcome, all need to be visible and active in the life of the church. Let us strive to become the church for and of all persons.

In 2016-2017, two members attended national training with the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women in Nashville, Tennessee. Our event, "For Such a Time as This," a listening post to share women's experiences was held at Chamberlayne Heights UMC on February 11, 2017. Like us on Facebook for news, events, and updates at "Commission on the Status and Role of Women – VA United Methodist Conference."

– *Mary Dadisman, Clergy Chair*



*The following five reports are from agencies that have been awarded
Conference Benevolence Grants:*

GRACEINSIDE (FORMERLY CHAPLAIN SERVICE PRISON MINISTRY OF VIRGINIA)

This word of thanks to a chaplain was made possible by YOUR generous support of GraceInside. Listen in:

“I have great admiration for and gratitude to you for being a loving and caring shepherd who has guided me continuously through my ‘wilderness’ experience. I have been in a time of great testing since September. Being able to meet with you, as well as share fellowship with the Worship Leadership Team, has kept my faith intact. Although I know God will not test me beyond what I can bear, I am finding this period to be the most difficult I have ever experienced... I thank God for you.”

Because of your support, GraceInside provides 31 chaplains to 35 institutions housing 30,000 incarcerated men and women. Because of you, these children of God have the opportunity to experience spiritual support through worship, Bible studies, support groups and individual pastoral care. Because of you, stories like the above are not uncommon. Prison can be a time of great testing – and great growth. With the proper care and guidance, women and men can not only change their lives, but have their lives saved as well.

Addiction related offenses remain the number one reason for incarceration. Men and women arrive in prison broken, angry, often having been abused, and struggling with how and where God might be in their lives. Because of you, GraceInside’s chaplains are present to provide that loving Christian guidance so many need.

Yet, the biggest challenge GraceInside’s chaplains face is the need for more time to minister among their congregations. One institution with a 30-hour-a-week chaplain has over 1,350 men - with waiting lists to attend worship! Ninety percent of men and ninety-eight percent of women will return to the community at some point. GraceInside’s chaplains are desperate to ensure that when they do get out, they take the love of Jesus Christ with them. In so doing, they not only transform their own lives, but the lives of their children, families and communities.

With your help, we can increase the hours GraceInside chaplains serve the incarcerated. More time equals more ministry: more love of Jesus, more healing, more grace and more hope. On behalf of those GraceInside serves, thank you for doing your part to honor Jesus command to “visit those in prison.” For when grace is on the inside, everyone wins.

– J. Randy Myers, President

INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL MINISTRIES

Searching for a way to make a difference in the lives of others? Want to serve in the mission field right within your own community? You might want to explore the possibility of becoming an ICM Chaplain.

Since 1972 ICM-Industrial & Commercial Ministries has been training and placing men and women, clergy and laity, to be “a caring presence” as ICM Chaplains at different workplace settings. These men and women, all volunteers, give up to four hours a week at their assigned facility, right within their own community, reaching working men and women, available to provide counseling, guidance, assistance and referral service to the employees for personal needs, upon request.

ICM Chaplains are Christian men and women, active members of their church, believing that there is a mission field outside the walls of a church within their own communities. Many of our ICM Chaplains are United Methodist and several serve as members of our National ICM Board and Chapter Leaders within local ICM chapters.

Our financial support come from individuals, churches and some of the facilities that have allowed the placement of ICM Chaplains. Biggest fundraiser is ICM Labor Day Offering held on Sunday before Labor Day.

Many of the founders of ICM were Methodist and their prayers asked God that ICM would make a difference in the lives of those in the workplace. The workplace has changed, but the needs of people have not. Our prayers today are that ICM might remain “a caring presence” sharing God’s love for all.

– Wayne Wright, ICM Executive Director

SOCIETY OF ST. ANDREW

Over the last 38 years, the Virginia Conference has been a critical partner in the work of the Society of St. Andrew. In that time, you’ve helped SoSA grow from a home-based intentional Christian community to a nation-wide gleaning and food recovery network that has engaged more than a half million volunteers in simple hands-on service to feed hungry neighbors. Thank you for being part of this ministry from its inception, for sharing with us a vision for a world without hunger, in which faith and stewardship meet God’s abundance—and good food is shared with people in greatest need every day.

In 2016, 289 congregations of the Virginia Conference provided financial support to the Society of St. Andrew. Forty-eight congregations and more than 1,000 Virginia United Methodists took part in “crop drops” or field gleaning. A potato drop, partially funded by a grant from the Virginia United Methodist Foundation, engaged Annual Conference attendees from every district in service to feed hungry people in the Roanoke Valley.

Through the Virginia Gleaning Network, the Potato & Produce Project, and SoSA’s Harvest of Hope mission work-camp program in 2016, 209 feeding agencies (soup kitchens, shelters, emergency food assistance programs, food pantries, and large food banks) across the state received more than 3,875,000 pounds of nourishing food to share with their clients—providing more than 11.6 million servings of health and hope to our hungry brothers and sisters. This is work made possible because you care.

Nationwide, 27.6 million pounds of food (82.8 million servings) reached millions of hungry Americans in 2016 through the work of the Society of St. Andrew, through crops donated by more than 1,000 farmers/producers and through the gleaning and volunteer efforts of 32,700+ individuals. The Board of Directors has instituted an ambitious strategic plan, that calls for nearly doubling that quantity of food shared over the next three years. We are actively working to build the capacity in both funding and partnerships with farmers and feeding agencies, to expand into new areas over the next few years. United Methodist congregations, across the United States, will be integral to SoSA’s growth, and the Virginia

Conference has paved the way for relationships that now extend across the continent.

At the end of 2016, the Society of St. Andrew’s second Executive Director, Steven M. (Mike) Waldmann, retired after 22 years of service to the organization. The Board of Directors selected Lynette Johnson, of Buena Vista, as SoSA’s new Executive Director, effective January 1, 2017. Johnson had previously served as a Regional Director for Tennessee and Alabama and as Church Relations Director for SoSA.

The Society of St. Andrew’s mission fields are just that, fields and orchards. The need for volunteers throughout the year is great, and the opportunities are plentiful. Congregations that partner with SoSA have found the partnerships transformative, spurring deeper faith, greater support for local missions, and an abiding concern for those our Savior called “the least of these.”

– Lynette Johnson, Executive Director

VIRGINIA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

*“At a time like this, when a large part of the world is in turmoil, the work
of a council of churches becomes more significant than ever.”*

The Rev Henry Lee Robison, Jr, 1st Executive Secretary VCC 1945

These words of **Rev. Henry Robison** seem even more prophetic today as we face challenges on all fronts. The year 2016 was dominated by a very rancorous political campaign and election. With the nation evenly split and passion running high it has created a very tumultuous season that continues even now after the inauguration of a new president. We continue to face difficult economic times as we adjust to the significant drop in funding of recent years. Your council remains strong, albeit on very fragile financial footing, and is seeking ways to respond during these exciting yet chaotic times.

At our Annual Meeting in 2016 our council president, the **Rev. Dr. John Myers**, of the Eastern Association, Southern Conference, UCC called for a strategic planning retreat in May of this year to articulate the mission and vision of the Council in this new century and to prepare for a transition of leadership in 2018. At our executives retreat in December the Council was asked to prepare a statement for release on the use of the Death Penalty in Virginia. The statement was drafted and released ahead of the execution of Ricky Gray and was signed by twelve of our judicatory executives.

The Council continues to work closely with our **Armenian Orthodox** brothers and sister assisting in the introduction of their new priest Rev. Fr. Tatev Terteryan. Over the course of the year we have worked with the **Virginia Synod ELCA** and **Bishop Mauney** in efforts to reduce child-hood hunger within the Commonwealth. The Council continues to support **LARCUM**, the **National Workshop on Christian Unity**, and **The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**, as well as other expressions of ecumenism within the Commonwealth. Rev John Myers’ challenge to the denominations is bringing renewal, excitement and technology to the way the Council relates and functions. This challenge has brought new excitement and energy to the Council as we discern God’s call in the 21st Century. We also play an enlarging role in **Interfaith Dialogues**, including our long-standing dialogue in Richmond involving five of our judicatory executives, including **Bishop Lewis**, three Rabbis, and two Imams.

We continue to stand with our **Native American** brothers and sisters of the six Virginia Tribes as they continue to seek federal recognition we are now in our 18th year of this effort. Our partnership with the **VICPP** and the **Virginia Catholic Conference** helps give voice to our shared concerns for justice on the floor of the General Assembly. Our **Rural Family Development Program** continues to serve children in Caroline County through the Head Start Program.

Jesus prayed “that all may be one so that the world may believe” (John 17). The Apostle Paul reminds us we may not all look alike, but we need each other, and together we comprise one body. When we come together through the Virginia Council of Churches, we provide a common voice that becomes believable in the midst of turmoil and change that the Lord God is one.

The Rev. Dr. John Myers – President

The Rev. Lauren Ramseur – Vice President

Ms. Cathy Griffin – Treasurer

Mr. Edward Rossmoore – Secretary

For further information, contact Virginia Council of Churches, 1214 West Graham Rd., Richmond, VA 23220-1409, (804) 321-3300, FAX (804) 329-5066. The website at www.vacouncilofchurches.org has information about the council and links with member denominations at national and Virginia levels.

– Jonathan M. Barton, General Minister

VIRGINIA INTERFAITH CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY (VICPP)

The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy is pleased to partner with the United Methodist Church in Virginia. We partner with UMC congregations and other people of faith to bring a faithful witness to the General Assembly and advocate economic and racial justice throughout the Commonwealth. Below is a description of the key work done on issues in 2016 (and a few of the results from the General Assembly in January-February, 2017).

ISSUES

Criminal Justice Reform/Driver’s Licenses: One out of six Virginia drivers have had their licenses suspended for not paying court fines and fees. Many have called this practice Virginia’s “debtor’s prison.” Essentially, poor people lose their licenses because they are poor and can’t pay the debts. In most communities in Virginia, it is hard to get or keep a job without a license, and so poor people get trapped into poverty.

VICPP educated people of faith and elected leaders about how important this issue was to poor people and that Virginia needed to change its policies. VICPP encouraged the lead House sponsor to introduce a bill and then VICPP engaged its members in advocating with the Courts of Justice Committees that heard the bills. Several good bills passed the General Assembly and will reduce the number of people who lose their licenses for unpaid court fines and fees.

Fair Wages/Wage Theft: VICPP made some great strides in positioning itself as a leader on wage theft in 2016. VICPP convened a Wage Theft Taskforce, composed of some of the top experts in the state. The Taskforce met to outline general plans and then met with the Secretary of

Labor and Industries (DOLI) and staff from the Department of Commerce.

In 2014, the Governor created a Misclassification Taskforce with great fanfare. Misclassification is when an employer calls a worker an independent contractor when the person is really an employee. This is one of the most common forms of wage theft. It not only hurts workers, denying them overtime, unemployment, workers compensation, employer-side of payroll taxes and other labor protections, but it robs the government of needed revenue. A JLARC committee said Virginia loses more than \$26 million in revenue by not cracking down on misclassification. This taskforce met three times in 2015 and did not meet once in 2016. VICPP advocated with the Commerce Department and the Governor to get this Taskforce moving again. The Taskforce is scheduled to meet in March, 2017 and has begun doing some joint taskforce investigations.

During the General Assembly, VICPP volunteers met with Delegates and Senators about the issue of wage theft. In 2017, VICPP will be working to improve both the Minimum Wage and the Payment of Wages bill and will seek sponsors for bills for the 2018 General Assembly. These state laws are very poor. The laws have no overtime provision, no “right of private action” (ability to take a case to court), no protection against retaliation, and exclude every category of work that was historically held by African Americans (farm work, domestic work, ticket takers, shoe shine boys, and so forth).

The Richmond VICPP chapter is partnering the Mayor’s Office of Community Wealth Building to develop a Living Wage Certification program. As this program develops, other chapters may build programs as well. The program identifies, honors and promotes business that pay living wages.

Healthcare: VICPP was the leading grassroots advocacy organization in 2016 supporting expanding health care for low-income families. As David Beckman, President of Bread for the World said, “Health and hunger are inextricably linked.” VICPP produced a Congregational Toolkit, organized a press conference in the Capitol, organized dozens of meetings with Delegates and Senators, organized people to work on city/town/country resolutions calling on the General Assembly to expand healthcare and provided a faith voice on the issue. In this year’s General Assembly VICPP supported efforts to expand healthcare for mental health and substance abuse services in Virginia. Several strong bills were approved this year.

Protecting Immigrants and Muslims: Given the uptick in hate crimes against immigrants, Muslims and Jews, VICPP stepped up its work to create circles of protection. VICPP began supporting the creation of Rapid Response Networks and providing congregations information about being a sanctuary. VICPP helped sponsor many unity events that have drawn significant crowds. VICPP was a lead witness opposing the anti-immigrant and anti-refugee bills introduced into the 2017 General Assembly.

Stopping TANF cuts: In the 2017 General Assembly, proposals were made to reduce the length of time people could get TANF (public assistance) from 24 months to 12 months and the lifetime limits from 60 months to 24 months. United Methodist Day at the General Assembly happened right before this bill came to the floor. United Methodist talked with most legislators about this issue and helped defeat it on the floor.

ORGANIZING

Faith Advocacy Partners: VICPP developed a new Faith Advocacy Partners program as a means of strengthening its ties with congregations. For more information, visit www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org.

Witness at the Capitol: VICPP recruited a team of volunteers to serve as Witnesses at the Capitol. These volunteers met with legislators, spoke in committee hearings and offered a presence to the faith Community. Two Methodists, Rev. Pat Shipley and Mr. Warren Hottle, participated in the program.

Campus Outreach: VICPP reached out to many faculty and student groups at faith-based colleges. VICPP began building ties with the five Methodist colleges in the state.

Day for All People: VICPP’s annual advocacy days in both 2016 and 2017 were well attended and positive events. Mark your calendar for Tuesday, January 23, 2018.

Chapters: VICPP reconnected with all its chapter leaders, held an annual chapter leader retreat and organized monthly chapter calls to engage and deepen ties between the Center and its volunteers around the state.

If you would like to get involved personally, as a congregation or in your community with VICPP and its issues, please sign up on the VICPP website at www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org. If you have specific questions and requests, email Kim@virginiainterfaithcenter.org.

– Kim Bobo, Executive Director



CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP DISCOVERY & DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Chairpersons:

Marc Brown, *Director of Connectional Ministries*

Warren Harper, *Conference Lay Leader*

Monitors:

R. Shaun Smith, *Commission on Disabilities*

Mary Dadisman, *COSROW*

Gary Miller, *CEMCA*

District Representatives:

Alexandria – Burton Robinson
Arlington – Karen McElfish
Charlottesville – Charles Winner
Danville – vacant
Eastern Shore – Tampa Miller
Elizabeth River – Christa Springstead
Farmville – Mike Davis
Fredericksburg – Carolyn Nelson

Harrisonburg – vacant
James River – Jim O’Quinn
Lynchburg – Jennifer Moore
Richmond – Lisa Sykes
Roanoke – N.L. Bishop
Staunton – Won Un
Winchester – Jeff Butcher
York River District – Angie Hoen

NOMINATIONS

Director of Connectional Ministries

Marc Brown

Common Table for Church Vitality

CLDDT Nominee:

Carlos Liceaga

Bishop’s Nominee:

Harold White Sr.

Board of Church and Society

Clergy:

Eduardo Carrillo

John Copenhaver

David Magruder

Lay:

Suzanne Shrader

Kenn Speicher

Monica Sprague

Tootie Urrutia

Church Development Team

David Bonney

Greg Duncan

Rachel Gilmore

Han Sung Kim

Board of Discipleship

Robin BeMiller

Erin Geoffrion

Kathy Gochenour

Timothy Hazlett

Young Adult Council

Jacob Montague

Older Adult Council

Tom Lee

Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries

Emilie Berger

Barbara Cousar

Robert Gates

Joshua McCauley

Ann On-Lin Tang

Missional Ministries Board

Clergy:

Esther Agbosu

Veronica Barrell

Lay:

Betsy Davis

Judy Moughon

Darlene Runaldu

Commission on Archives and History

Clergy:

Paul A. Beighley, Jr.

Michael H. Browder

Carlton D. Casey

Robert T. Casey

Thomas L. Coffman

William R. Freeman

R. Douglas Geeting

Myrtle F. Hatcher

H. Hasbrouck Hughes, Jr.

James M. John,

Alexander B. Joyner

Hyo Joong Lee

Barbara D. Lewis

John T. Martin, Jr.

Reginald H. Potts, III

Lee B. Shaeffer

James C. Sprouse, Jr.

James M. Tongue

Margaret A. Turbyfill

Roy P. White

Walter A. Whitehurst

J. Brooke Willson

Elizabeth A. S. Wright

Gary A. Ziegler

Laity:

Thelma Crowder

Betty Duley

Jesse Fanshaw,

Nina Frederick

Queen Green

Ann Keeling

Mark Leep

Audrey Lewis

Myra P. Lindsey

Stephen S. Mansfield

Marianne R. Martin

Harold “Rockie” McKee

Sam McKelvey

David Meyer

Margaret Mock

Catherine Morgan

Brenda NeSmith

William A. Olson

Laurie Preston

Leona Salter

William Stead

Craig Swain

Betty Whitehurst

Kathi Hughes Wise

[Italics – new to position]

Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc.*Clergy:*
Jacob Sahms*Lay:*
Joel Joyner
Phyllis Shepherd**Commission on Disabilities***Clergy:*
Timothy Barth
Claire Miller
Donna Mott
Barry Throckmorton*Lay:*
Sharon Angle
James Mitchel
Susan Rigg**Equitable Compensation Commission***Clergy:*
Joe Carson III
Brad Phillips*Lay:*
Edward Federico
Roy Staton**Committee on Episcopacy***Clergy:*
Rachel May
John B. Peters
Elizabeth von Trapp Walker
Sung Il Yoo (*Bishop*)*Lay:*
Shirley Cauffman
John P. Clarke
Melissa Holmes (*Bishop*)
Clark Williams**Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy***Clergy:*
Faith Evans
Seungsoo Jun
Yun Chol Kim
Robert Schoeman
Seung Hae Yoo-Hess*Lay:*
Minoka Gueneskera
Mary Jeffries
Becky Parsons
At Large:
David Brown**Council on Finance and Administration***Clergy:*
Doug Gestwick*Lay:*
Betty Forbes
Betty Rough
Bill Talley IV**United Methodist Foundation**B. Leigh Drewry, Jr.
Brandon Gilmore
Mark Manasco
Will Robinson
Jim Smith
W. Richard Smith**Board of Ordained Ministry**

Bobbie Hanby (Lay)

Preachers' Relief Society

James S. Matthews

Committee on Rules*Lay:*
Tom Hassler**Commission on the Status and Role of Women***Lay:*
Marie Hasselbach**Conference Trustees***Clergy:*
Michael Copeland*Lay:*
B. Leigh Drewry
Karen Elmore
Kathleen Lutman**Society of St. Andrew**Drew Colby
Bill Moore
Jim Tongue**Randolph College**Jane J. Hampson
Page Crider LeMay
F. Anderson Morse
Edna Aguirre Rehbein
Marc A. Schewel**Randolph-Macon Academy**Pamela McInnis
Major General David Puster**Randolph-Macon College**Gilbert T. Bland
Roland B. Boney
Thornton C. Melton, III
R. Geoffrey Neville, Jr.
John B. Peters**Virginia Wesleyan College**Mary C. Haddad
Bishop Sharma D. Lewis
Lee T. StevensonHoward P. Kern
Mavis N. McKenley
Michael J. White**COMMITTEE ON EPISCOPACY**

The Committee on Episcopacy is responsible for the review and evaluation of the resident bishop as required by the *Book of Discipline*. The committee welcomed Bishop Sharma Lewis following her election and assignment at the Southeast Jurisdictional Conference. In meetings this year we oriented new members to the responsibilities and processes of the committee. We have met with Bishop Lewis and heard her plans to meet members of the Virginia Annual Conference and engage them in dialogue. Bishop Lewis is taking intentional steps to discern both a vision and priorities for the years ahead with laity and clergy. In her first year she has held meetings on every district as well as with clergy from small, medium and large churches and many other organizations in the Annual Conference. We are grateful for her prayerful leadership and her desire to hear from the members of the Annual Conference as she leads us.

– Rev. Tom Berlin, Chair

Episcopal Residence Committee

The Book of Discipline (§638, 4.) states: It shall be the responsibility of the Episcopal Residence Committee: a) To make recommendations to the annual conference(s) regarding the purchase or sale of an episcopal residence.

When the current Episcopal residence was built in Hanover County, it was predicated on future development of the area but that has not happened. It was believed that improvements would be made to roads and lighting and building of some shopping areas. In fact, because of zoning restrictions Hanover County has not fostered development of the area. There have been no new houses built in the development where the Episcopal residence is located, nor are any contemplated any time soon.

We looked at the distinctive needs of the Episcopal office in the practice of ministry and felt that the current residence will not meet these needs in such a way as to fully realize the vitality of any bishop among us and within our larger Connection.

It is the intention of this recommendation that this purchase and sale be as cost-neutral as reasonably possible. The current residence has been appraised for \$475,000. It has been determined that an appropriate replacement for the current residence could be readily obtained with little or no net cost to the Annual Conference, after the sale of the current residence.

Therefore, we submit the following recommendation:

That the Episcopal Residence Committee find an appropriate residence in a different location to be purchased as an Episcopal Residence and that the Trustees be authorized to sell the current residence and purchase one identified by the Episcopal Residence Committee. To fund this new purchase, CFA is authorized to spend no more than \$500,000 on the new residence out of Reserves and is additionally requested to appropriate an amount not to exceed \$50,000 out of Reserves to be used, if needed, in the acquisition of and transition to a new residence. The Reserve will be replenished by the sale of the current residence, with all profits from the sale of the current residence additionally placed in reserves.

– Shirley Cauffman, Chair; Rev. Steven Summers, CFA and Kathy Lutman, Trustees

BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

The impact of General Conference in May 2016 brings fresh and revised opportunities of purpose, and function to the Virginia Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM). With an already strong organizational structure in place, the BOM continues to enable disciples of Jesus Christ to become effective clergy and certified lay professionals as it assists these persons in the areas of call, development, and collegial support. Since the publication of *The Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church 2016, the BOM has begun to implement these new directives into its established structured processes. One specific matter that the BOM and the Cabinet will address in the near future is the new in-depth assessment process that will occur every eight years for clergy. The plan is to be developed and initiated no later than January 1, 2020.

A few members of the BOM leadership attended the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry's "Board of Ordained Ministry Quadrennial Training Event" in Chicago in early October 2016.

From this training, the BOM inaugurated three new "core values" to guide the Board in its ministry for 2017-2020.

Whole Person – In working with candidates and clergy, the whole person is considered, including their theological knowledge, emotional intelligence, practical skill and cultural competency.

A Changing World – Effective ministry leadership is needed in the pulpit and far beyond it: Christ is present—and our witness is needed—in and for a rapidly changing world.

Spiritual Discernment – The Holy Spirit is at work in the BOM's practice of discernment; being prepared, being prayerful, and being healthy all help the Spirit to move among us.

The work of the board includes sponsoring the annual Licensing School for all first-time appointees, support for the Orders of Deacon and Elders, and the Fellowship of Associate Members and Local Pastors. Other endeavors involve examining persons seeking credentialing as ministers, interviewing United Methodists and those of other denominations who wish to transfer to the Virginia Conference, offering two Candidacy Summits for those who desire to learn more about pursuing ministry leadership in the Virginia Conference through the candidacy process, interviewing clergy seeking retirement status, reviewing requests for appointments beyond the church (extension), traveling to eight seminaries to visit Virginia students and others who have an interest in possibly serving in Virginia, awarding service loans and scholarships to seminary students, training District Committees on Ordained Ministry, providing continuing education assistance to clergy, guiding and directing provisional members on their journey to ordination, promoting and encouraging lay professional certification, developing essential ethics training for clergy, giving assistance to clergy on medical leave, and concentrating on conference relationship matters that come before the board.

Other supportive efforts include the board's promotion of the Calling 21 Intern Program, now in its 11th year to connect college students and local church ministries and foster vocational discernment. This summer there will be six Calling 21 interns serving in various church settings around the Conference. They are: David Anderson (Braddock St UMC, W), Liam Fairfax (Belmont UMC, Rd), Sarah Hutchinson (St. Luke's UMC, YR), Julianna Smith (Warwick Memorial UMC, YR), Emily Stallings (Culpeper UMC, C), Katie Wax (Franktown UMC, ES)

The Clergy Effectiveness Team is in the planning stage for a Cohort III (2017-2018) of the Virginia Clergy Leadership Program. This program helps clergy to be radically and profoundly open to the transformational power of God in their lives and their practice of ministry. Applications are available now.

Shenandoah University and Randolph-Macon College will offer this summer a Youth Theology Institute which encourages young people to examine theological traditions, to probe contemporary issues, and how their faith journey calls them to lives of service to others.

In some measure the work of the BOM begins in the local church. It is often through the local church where an individual receives an awareness from God to begin the journey of discernment for clergy ministry. And at some point the journey may travel through the Board of Ordained Ministry for the Virginia Conference. Thank you, Virginia Conference for your encouragement to those whom God may use in clergy servant leadership in the days and years ahead.

Finally, the BOM wishes to thank the Center for Clergy Excellence (Meredith McNabb, Director, Lindsey Baynham, Associate Director for Call, Candidacy and Discernment, and Kristen Seibert, Executive Assistant) for their committed support to the Board of Ordained Ministry throughout the year.

John Hall, Chair

CONFERENCE TRUSTEES

The Virginia Conference Board of Trustees held their two regularly scheduled meetings in September and March. In addition, we held a special meeting in December via conference call.

In addition to our normal work dealing with the real property of closed and abandoned churches, the Board continued its involvement with the VUMAC property by having three members of the Trustees on the VUMAC Board. That process has involved extended meetings and conference calls to assist in handling and resolution of VUMAC issues. It is our sincere hope that, as of Annual Conference, the sale of the Blackstone property will be complete.

The Board has also been involved with issues pertaining to the Episcopal Residence. We anticipate that quite a bit of time will be expended in the coming year contingent upon Annual Conference action.

Over the past many years, the Board has been expertly supported by Benham Black, our attorney and counsel, on both Board of Trustees and Annual Conference matters. With his retirement, the Board appointed a search committee, which was tasked with finding a replacement for our long time legal counsel Benham Black. We are happy to report that the law firm of LeClair Ryan has been retained to represent the Board of Trustees going forward. The Board feels that LeClair Ryan, with its numerous offices throughout the state of Virginia, will be able to provide the services needed by the Board in the future. We welcome Andrew White and Katja Hill and look forward to working with them in the future. We would again like to thank Benham for his long-time service to this work and wish him the best in the future.

During the past year and a half, a major family emergency continued to draw me away from some of the management work needed to lead the Board. The Board extends a special thank you to our Vice President, Kathy Lutman, who has stepped in so effectively to help me and the Board out during this time.

– Carl Moravitz, President

SITE SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Site Selection Committee is charged with identifying the location for the Virginia Annual Conference to meet and shall recommend a location five (5) years in advance. By previous Annual Conference action, the following locations have been approved for the site of the Annual Conference:

| | |
|---------|------------------|
| Hampton | June 15-17, 2018 |
| Roanoke | June 20-22, 2019 |
| Roanoke | June 18-20, 2020 |
| Hampton | June 17-19, 2021 |
| Hampton | June 16-18, 2022 |

Beginning in 2019 and beyond, the above dates represent Annual Conference convening on a Thursday and concluding on Saturday as set by Bishop Sharma D. Lewis.

The Committee, along with the Chair of the Common Table and with the assistance of the Conference Planner, continues to review potential locations for holding Annual Conference across the Commonwealth. We have the following requirements:

- Meeting space for 4,000 people
- Parking space for 2,000 to 3,000 cars
- 1,500 hotel rooms
- Meeting space for the Clergy Session for 1,500 people
- Meeting space for the Laity Session for 1,500 people
- Two (2) banquet areas to be able to accommodate 500 people
- Break-out area and display space of 30,000 square feet
- Restaurants to accommodate 4,000 patrons within 1½ - 2 hour timeframe
- Ease of participants moving between the various areas

– Neal E. Wise, Chairperson

THE BISHOPS' FOUNDATION

The Bishops' Foundation provides for leadership development of both laity and clergy in the areas of evangelism, spiritual formation, preaching, and congregational leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit. In 2011, by conference action, three predecessor organizations – the Goodson Foundation for Preaching, the Stockton Endowment for Evangelism, and the Pennel Wesleyan Heritage Foundation – merged and formed the assets of the Bishops' Foundation into a corporation. The foundation is led by a board of directors (five clergy and four laity) nominated by the Cabinet. Endowment funds are invested with the Virginia UM Foundation. In 2014, the foundation was dissolved as a corporation and is now a board reporting to the annual conference.

As an event-sponsoring or co-sponsoring organization that supports the training of both laity and clergy, the foundation supported the following 2017 events: Spiritual Formation Academy and the 5 Talent Academy on Evangelism. The foundation produced and distributed *The Bishops of the Bishops' Foundation* commemorative document written by the Rev. Alex Joyner to recognize and inform the conference of the Bishops' Foundations.

The board remains interested in addressing any gaps that may exist in current conference ministry programming to foster opportunities for young adult laity and clergy to help the church in reaching all generations. Grant application forms can be found on the conference website under the tab for the Bishop. See "The Bishops' Foundation".

– Kevin W. Bruny, Co-Chair

UNITED METHODIST-RELATED SCHOOLS

Ferrum College

The 2016-2017 academic year at Ferrum College has been a time of change, transition, and transformation as I became the 11th President of Ferrum beginning in August 2016. I am delighted that my journey through life has provided me with this incredible opportunity to lead a liberal arts college nestled in the beautiful foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. My wife, Nicole Gelfert, and I are in awe of the magnificent mountains and lakes surrounding Ferrum, and we have been blessed to meet a multitude of the Ferrum Family as we traveled throughout the state of Virginia and further beyond. We have been personally touched by the remarkable stories of alumni whose lives have been changed forever due to the care and concern they were given by the faculty and staff at this amazing institution. Ferrum has become our treasured home, and we are now strongly connected to the place, the people, and the unique culture of the campus community.

I have truly enjoyed my first year at Ferrum, and I look forward to continuing to work together with our Ferrum Friends to preserve our mission of providing an outstanding education for deserving students and to enhance the growth and prosperity we envision for Ferrum's future. We are thankful for the assistance of so many friends in The United Methodist Church and for the tremendous help of The United Methodist Women who have been a significant part of Ferrum's history since the early days of the Ferrum Training School.

As we look back in Ferrum's history and remember the special people who have worked together to make Ferrum the great institution it is today, it is important to note the passing of a greatly revered and beloved Ferrum leader, former Ferrum College president Dr. Joseph Hart. I was honored to attend the Celebration of Life service in early January and hear about the many contributions he made to the Ferrum campus commu-

nity through his life of service to higher education.

Jan Nicholson Angle, our Dean of the Chapel, has begun her fourth year of service to the campus. The Chapel continues to be the hub for regular weekly worship services with music by our student-based Praise Team under the direction of Eugene Hacker, Applications Systems Specialist for the College. Vaughn Chapel is also used as space for classes, special activities, campus-wide gatherings, and annual services such as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration in January and The Virginia Conference United Methodist Women's Day at Ferrum in June.

Rev. Dr. Nicholson Angle directs the Office of Spiritual Life which offers various opportunities for spiritual formation and growth for students and staff. Our annual Praise on the Patio attracted nearly 200 students with our Ferrum College Praise Band debut and over 20 local churches who welcomed and connected with our campus community. Fall Semester saw over 100 students gathering for our first Ferrum College FCA Field of Faith event with featured speaker Dave Gittings, FCA VA Tech Football Chaplain and Director of Campus Ministry. In addition to our regular small group Bible and Topic studies, 13 students embraced putting their faith in action by participating in Alternative Fall/Spring Break Work Teams. Ferrum College students, faculty, and staff work teams were the first Virginia Based United Methodist affiliated college teams to volunteer with The Virginia Conference United Methodist Volunteers in Mission Disaster Recovery efforts in Waverly and Virginia Beach, Virginia. Living out "Not Self, But Others," these teams assisted three families affected by the EF-1 tornado that ripped through Waverly, Virginia, in February 2016 and Hurricane Matthew that devastated the Virginia coast in October 2016.

Please feel free to contact my office if you would be interested in having me speak during your Sunday morning worship service or at a special meeting at your church. We appreciate your continued prayers for our faculty, staff, students and Board members. We will work together to make this journey for our students an exciting and rewarding adventure, and we will continue to strengthen our college and our mission so that Ferrum will thrive today, tomorrow, and always.

— Jody Spooner, President

Randolph College

During 2016, Randolph College celebrated 125 years of rich history as Randolph-Macon Woman's College and the now coeducational Randolph College. While much has changed over those years, our commitment to the liberal arts has remained steadfast. Today, Randolph stands as an institution that teaches our students to be their best original self. Through strong programs in the creative arts, the sciences, and sustainability, among others, Randolph students leave our community ready to make a difference in the world.

This has been another strong year for the College. Enrollment remained approximately 700 students and giving by alumnae, alumni, and friends, such as the Conference, reached its highest total in our history, buoyed by a \$7.82 million bequest from Laura Maud Battle Winstead '50 and her husband Emerson Clarence Winstead.

We continue to make improvements to our campus. Our focus in recent years has been renovating our campus infrastructure. We now have an updated electrical grid and have completed year one of a three year project to add two satellite boilers to each building in order to eventually close our central boiler. So far, generous donors have contributed nearly \$6 million to this effort. These projects have helped in our sustainability efforts, which were also strengthened by the certification of the recently renovated Wright Hall as a LEED silver building. We were also pleased to complete the third and final phase of our dining hall renovations, which included renovations in portions of the kitchen area. We also made it easier for guests to locate the facility by creating a new entrance that features a beautiful water fountain. Work has also begun on converting a historic home just outside the main campus into our new admission welcome center, which is slated to open in the summer of 2017.

U.S. News and World Report, *Forbes*, *The Princeton Review*, and *The Washington Monthly*, among other ranking guides, continue to name Randolph a "best college." These accolades are a testament to our outstanding faculty. We are delighted to provide this quality education at an affordable cost, many times lower than the cost of a public university. This is made possible through the generous institutional grants the College provides to students, totaling over \$14.3 million last year. Randolph remains steadfast in its desire to provide an outstanding, affordable education.

We are grateful for the work our college chaplain, Rev. Jennifer Moore, is doing to strengthen the opportunities for spiritual development of our students, which are only made possible through your support. In February, we opened a campus labyrinth, and the Rev. Moore has used this as an opportunity to provide ways for students to engage spiritually. We remain thankful for the strong relationship that exists between the College and the Conference. We were delighted to host the district and our new superintendent on campus in December. We also remain thankful for the leadership the Rev. John Peters provides as our connection to the Conference. Most of all, we thank the members of the Conference for their ongoing support of Randolph College. Your contributions help us to fulfill our mission of preparing students to engage the world critically and creatively, live and work honorably, and experience life abundantly.

— Bradley W. Bateman, President

Randolph-Macon Academy

At Randolph-Macon Academy, we are particularly mindful of both our blessings and our roots in the United Methodist Church as we celebrate the 125th anniversary of our founding in 1892. The excellent work by our chaplain, Joshua Orndorff, has resulted in the growth and revitalization of our chapel programs that outpaces anything in the last few decades.

Under Chaplain Orndorff's direction, we have weekly Bible studies for both the Middle School students and the Upper School students enrolled at Randolph-Macon Academy. In the spring of 2016, 15 students received Confirmation; it was the first such ceremony held on campus in at least a dozen years. As part of their faith walk, these students, along with others on campus, teamed up with Teens Opposing Poverty and took a trip into DC to feed the homeless. They also attended a two-day retreat at Camp Overlook, an event that was supported by several R-MA staff members. During this school year, Chaplain Orndorff has worked with the local Catholic Church to arrange Confirmation classes for six of our Catholic students, and coordinated with Front Royal United Methodist Church to begin a second Confirmation class for another fourteen students. This group will receive their Confirmation during a chapel service scheduled for Sunday, April 30, 2017, as part of our 125th Anniversary Founder's Weekend.

Our commitment to community service remains strong. Chaplain Orndorff arranged for students to participate in Kelsey's Big Give this past fall, a program in which the students and local church members planted gardens and assisted with various home clean-up projects and renovations around Warren County. Our Middle School Interact Club has worked hard to assist community and international organizations, help provide food

for the needy, and clean up the roads outside of our campus. We also have several groups on campus that regularly hold bake sales and "poetry slam" events to raise funds for international causes.

We have been blessed with a talented faculty who are eager to share their gifts with our students, resulting in many accomplishments. Our band took first place in the "Military School Band" category at both the Firefighters' Parade and the Grand Feature Parade at the Apple Blossom Festival last May. Our 2016 graduating class earned over \$5.1 million in college scholarship offers, with three of our students being offered the opportunity to enter the Echols Scholar program at the University of Virginia. Perhaps most notably, however, was that a special chorus made up of members of our praise team, chorus, and drama department was selected to perform at the United Methodist General Conference held in Oregon last May. It was indeed a high honor to be selected, and we are thankful that God provided the right talent at the right time, and also provided some generous hearts to help fund the trip.

We invite everyone to come celebrate our 125th Anniversary with us during 2017. We will have events throughout the year that will be open to the general public. In celebrating our history and heritage, however, we are mindful that we need to continue to move forward and grow. To that end, we are examining ourselves with the assistance of outside consultants, and we welcome your prayers that throughout this year, God would reveal the path He would have us follow.

Thank you for your continued prayers and your financial support, which allow us to help students soar.

— Brigadier General David C. Wesley, USAF, Retired, President

Randolph-Macon College

Founded in 1830, Randolph-Macon College is a selective, co-educational, nationally ranked liberal arts college located in Ashland, Virginia, just minutes north of Richmond and 90 miles south of Washington, D.C. The College achieves its mission of "developing the minds and character of each student" by balancing rigorous academics in 54 areas of study with individualized attention between our exceptional faculty and students. The student-faculty ratio is 12:1 and the average class size is 16 students. The College has an outstanding reputation for academics, national and international internships, study abroad programs and undergraduate research opportunities.

Now in our 187th year, the college is larger and more diverse than at any time in history, having experienced a significant 26% growth in our student body in recent years. The 2016-17 academic year opened with 1,446 students from 25 states, the District of Columbia, and 24 countries. Of these students, 46% are male and 53% are female. In addition, 19% are minorities, and 40% are Presidential Scholars, R-MC's signature scholarship that recognizes students who demonstrate the highest levels of academic achievement and leadership.

Our outstanding faculty has been recognized for its achievements on countless fronts, including superior teaching, research, and mentorship, creating personalized education for students both inside and outside of the classroom.

The Edge Career Center is focused on preparing our students for careers and post graduate success. Faculty serve as mentors and offer important advising, linking valuable liberal arts education with important career and post-graduate success strategies and life skills. The Edge focuses on providing students with tools that build a "competitive advantage" in career and post-graduate environments. The success of this program is reflected in the college's tagline, *Building Extraordinary Futures*.

The Edge also offers Boot Camp, a signature two-day, off-campus immersion program where students learn to identify their career passions, tell their story and hone their interview and communication skills to prepare for success after college. The weekend is devoted to helping students develop their own elevator speech and "brand," learn how to communicate with confidence, and identify their strengths and capabilities—all with the help of world-class speakers, interviewers and mentors, including R-MC alumni.

R-MC's January Term (J-Term) is a four-week session in which students can study abroad and immerse themselves in other cultures, conduct a regional, national or international internship, or take an on-campus course in a specific area of interest. In January 2017, 1,316 students participated in J-Term.

January Term internships provide unique opportunities, and this year, over 125 students interned across the country and around the world. Our students experienced internships at organizations as exciting and diverse as Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, the National Aquarium in Baltimore, a church in Okinawa, Japan, a title company in Houston, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, and the United States Congress.

In addition, 115 students participated in study/travel courses during J-Term 2017, traveling to Wroxton, England; Dublin, Ireland; Paris, France; Australia and New Zealand; Japan; and Cambodia, a new destination for R-MC.

One of the flagship programs at Randolph-Macon is the Schapiro Undergraduate Research Fellowship program (SURF), an endowment to support scholarly undergraduate research by students in all disciplines. SURF allows students the opportunity to conduct original research, under the guidance of a faculty member, and to be paid a stipend. Many students present their findings at academic and professional conferences both nationally and internationally. Now in its 21st year, SURF has funded research opportunities for over 600 students.

R-MC offers a Four-Year Degree Guarantee, which pledges in writing that freshmen who meet all necessary requirements will graduate within four calendar years. If not, Randolph-Macon will waive tuition costs for R-MC courses needed to complete the degree.

This year, Randolph-Macon is commemorating its 50th anniversary of desegregation by highlighting the events that led to this historical moment and honoring the pioneers who led efforts to achieve equality at the College. The College continues to integrate the value of diversity into the fabric of campus life. Through a wide range of student organizations and multicultural programs, Randolph-Macon seeks to build a community that upholds the inherent worth of individuals in an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, and civility.

In 2015, R-MC completed its enormously successful *Building Extraordinary* campaign with over \$125 million raised from 12,129 alumni and friends. For two years in a row, 40% of our alumni have given back to the College, making us 14th in the country in alumni loyalty. And, the College has experienced a campus renaissance in recent years, with over \$80 million spent on eight new and renovated facilities in the past six years.

With an anticipated completion this summer, the new science building will connect to the Copley Science Center. This three-story, 30,000-square-foot facility, with state-of-the-art teaching laboratories, plus classrooms and faculty offices, will also house the biology, environmental science/geology, and chemistry departments. Additionally, a new observatory will be constructed to replace the existing Keeble observatory.

The A. Purnell Bailey Pre-Ministerial Scholarship Program was established in 2004 to support students who express an interest in ordained ministry in the Christian tradition. A limited number of select students are awarded this scholarship each year and receive half-tuition for the

first two years and full tuition for the junior and senior years. Additionally the program includes weekly mentoring, two internships in ministry settings, and support selecting and applying to theology school. We have recently received a grant to create a Leadership in Ministry experience much like our existing Career Boot Camp Program. Pre-ministerial students will have four experiences off campus (including visits to Candler School of Theology, Duke Divinity School, and Wesley Theological Seminary) to help in their professional development as they prepare for ministry.

Summer 2017 marks the beginning of two new summer programs for high school students offered at Randolph-Macon. *Pathways to Science* invites rising sophomore Hispanic girls to campus July 23-28 to meet scientists and explore STEM related activities. *Convergence* is an 11-day event, June 22-July 2, inviting high school students to explore the many ways that faith and science come together. The event will include faculty lectures, hands-on experiences on the James River and at Shalom Farms, and an opportunity to create resources to help other high school students explore the topics that the group engages this summer.

Student outreach through community service continues to be an important aspect of a Randolph-Macon College education. In 2015-16, Randolph-Macon students logged more than 27,400 volunteer hours and donated \$49,897.71 to various causes through their student organizations. The SERVE program (Students Engaged in Responsible Volunteer Experiences), in the Office of Student Life, is an integral part of Randolph-Macon's community engagement and leadership initiatives. R-MC coordinates dynamic opportunities for service and service-learning to help students explore the root causes and contexts of social needs through connections with the greater community. Students are actively engaged with groups such as Habitat for Humanity and the American Cancer Society Relay for Life. There are two signature events each year, The Big Event in the fall and Macon a Difference Day in April. These campus-wide community-service initiatives bring together the college's clubs, organizations and academic and administrative departments to volunteer their time and energy for environmental projects and other needs in the surrounding communities.

At Randolph-Macon College, students bond with their peers, faculty mentors and alumni to build meaningful relationships that last a lifetime.

— Alan B. Rashkind, *Chairman*

Shenandoah University

Our vision statement says, “Shenandoah University will be highly valued for a campus culture of compassion, responsibility, advocacy and justice which graduates are inspired to replicate in communities beyond Shenandoah.” While our students are present on campus for 16 weeks twice annually, we are also excited to welcome other groups to experience Shenandoah's culture. Each year we are thrilled to welcome high school students participating in the Shenandoah University Youth Theology Institute, college students participating in Calling21, and so many other groups. Our United Methodist affiliation and partnership is a vital part of creating communities and our campus culture.

As I write this report, we are accepting nominations, recommendations, and applications for the 2017 Shenandoah University Youth Theology Institute (SUYTI). Without you, this would not be possible. Shenandoah partnered with Wesley Theological Seminary, the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church, and the Lilly Endowment to create the SUYTI. We believe in this valuable opportunity to develop young leaders for our Church and world! I challenge you to identify rising high school sophomores, juniors and seniors who will benefit from a two-week youth theology institute in which they learn from faculty of Shenandoah University and Wesley Theological Seminary, participate in small groups, and explore faith and vocation in rural and urban environments. Please send the names of prospective students to spirituallife@su.edu and we will work to help these students strengthen their knowledge, faith, and leadership. In July we were also excited to welcome the Rev. Colleen Hallagan Preuninger to Shenandoah University as the director of the SUYTI. As an ordained United Methodist elder from the Upper New York Annual Conference, Colleen came to us from Syracuse University. Now she is with the real SU!

Students engage weekly with worship arts leadership and planning through the Office of Spiritual Life at Shenandoah University. They plan, implement and assess elements of worship services in dance and movement, liturgical writing and reading, and musical and theatrical embodiments of the Gospel through a theologically informed lens at our chapel services. As an additional result, many students bring these processes and products to their home churches. At the 2016 Virginia Annual Conference, Joy Chappell, dance major and religion minor in the class of 2016, used liturgical dance to lead our conference in worship. Additionally, current students Amy Robertson, Andrew Dietz, Zach Hubbard, Max Stribula, Daniel Kelly and others led music for the Virginia Annual Conference in 2016. Alumni who participated in Spiritual Life's worship arts serve among the clergy of Virginia and Greater New Jersey Annual Conferences and as worship leaders in many states including Florida, Georgia, Maryland, New York, and Virginia.

Nearly 90 college students have attended Annual Conference, explored God's call upon their lives, and discerned their life in ministry through Calling21! Nineteen of those students have been from Shenandoah University, with the rest joining us from many other institutions as far away as Iowa and as close as Virginia. Calling21 is another partnership with the Virginia Annual Conference and another way to educate and inspire a new generation of leaders for the Church and the world. Interns who have completed the program move forward to replicate compassionate communities far beyond Shenandoah.

In May 2016, Shenandoah University took 12 students from its Faith Seeking Justice Christian Leadership Program to General Conference in Portland, Oregon, to observe and participate in the process that organizes our denomination. Additionally, Shenandoah's Harambee Gospel Choir auditioned and was accepted to sing at two events at General Conference. In total, 32 Shenandoah students learned about, led, and invested in our denomination at General Conference!

This year, the Faith Seeking Justice program actively studied justice while advocating for it as well. In October, they traveled once again to Taizé, France to experience a community that exemplifies a culture of compassion, responsibility, advocacy, and peace with justice. This January they took to the road once again. This time they traveled to Richmond to participate in the Day for All People, a gathering of faith communities from around the state at the Virginia General Assembly to advocate for justice and organize for a bigger impact.

How else can we partner with the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church to create communities of compassion, responsibility, advocacy and justice? Whatever the future holds, we are excited to walk together with you as we make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!

— Tracy Fitzsimmons, *President*

Virginia Wesleyan College

Virginia Wesleyan College hosted the visiting committee of the University Senate of the United Methodist Church in November 2016 and reviewed all the ways in which we define ourselves as a United Methodist-related institution. We were proud to receive official notification in February of our 10-year reaffirmation of affiliation with The United Methodist Church. Virginia Wesleyan College is a community of faith, learning and service, and we are very grateful for this notification of reaffirmation of affiliation. Underlying all that we do is a deep commitment to the United Methodist tradition of education. Our mission takes inspiration from that heritage, preparing students for global citizenry, service to their communities, personal and professional leadership, and lives of continual learning and meaning.

Building on our excellent academic and co-curricular reputation, we also earned an unqualified report of reaffirmation of accreditation—no reports, no follow-up required—for the next 10 years by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). That's an exceptional, rare “report card” coveted by any college or university.

SACSCOC also approved Virginia Wesleyan as a Level III institution in December 2016, enabling the College to offer the master's degree as the highest degree. The College will soon expand its academic program to include a traditionally delivered Master of Arts in Education (summer 2017), an online Master of Business Administration (fall 2017), and online degree-completion programs at the undergraduate level (fall 2017). The addition of these programs marks a pivotal moment in Virginia Wesleyan's history and underscores our reputation and competitiveness as a leader in American higher education.

Last fall, Virginia Wesleyan announced the development of the Batten Honors College, which will provide a transformative experience for high-achieving students and offer full-tuition scholarships to an eventual cohort of 80 Batten Fellows. It will equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of an ethical, thoughtful, and influential global citizen who understands the complexity of contemporary society, our interdependence with the natural world, and the interrelatedness of society, culture, economics, and the environment. The first cohort of the Batten Honors College will begin in fall 2017.

Construction is 80 percent complete on the 40,000-square-foot Greer Environmental Sciences Center, scheduled for completion in summer 2017. It will provide unprecedented opportunities for students in state-of-the-art instructional and laboratory facilities and foster regional collaboration with organizations such as the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Brock Environmental Center, the Virginia Aquarium and the Virginia Institute for Marine Science (VIMS). The Greer Environmental Sciences Center will feature sophisticated indoor and outdoor learning spaces that embody “science on display” and promote hands-on experiences, interactive learning and interdisciplinary research.

We also broke ground in December 2016 for a joint partnership facility with the YMCA of South Hampton Roads. As a college growing and reaching out to the community for new collaborative opportunities, we are especially honored to join the YMCA. The “Frank Blocker Youth Center” will serve the Y's well-respected programs and Virginia Wesleyan's expanding academic and conference needs.

Another important facility that will benefit the entire institution and the community is the new Goode Fine and Performing Arts Center. Virginia Wesleyan's rich program of cultural events, performances, lectures, presentations, exhibits, and concerts will benefit from a new, fully equipped home where the arts will continue to flourish on our campus. The arts are essential to the liberal education experience, and our programs in art, music, and theatre enrich not only our campus community but the wider service area of the institution.

As our College continues to grow and mature, we'll seek to further strengthen and expand our connection to the United Methodist Church and ministry in higher education. I am confident that this institution will embrace new opportunities and make exceptional contributions to all who look to us for leadership. From its first days into the present and beyond, Virginia Wesleyan has been in partnership with the Church—our United Methodist heritage is strong, influential, and growing.

— Scott D. Miller, *President*

ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED MINISTERS AND SPOUSES (ARMS)

ARMS is an association of retired clergy, spouses, and surviving spouses in the Virginia Conference that promotes fellowship, encouragement, support, learning, and sharing. ARMS provides a voice for retirees by facilitating vital connections with each other and the church. All retired clergy, spouses, and surviving spouses are members of ARMS.

The main ARMS event has traditionally been an annual fall retreat. The keynote speaker for our 2016 retreat was Bishop Tim Whitaker, who gave us a look at the Early Church Fathers. As usual, the retreat also featured great worship, inspiring music, and wonderful fellowship. Leigh Anne Taylor, Minister of Music at Blacksburg UMC, led a highly participatory music program at the retreat. Our net retreat is scheduled for October 11 and 12th at Eagle Eyrie. Retreat brochures are available at the ARMS Display Table, the Retiree Banquet, and from VUMAC. Rev. Larry Jent will be our key note speaker.

We also look forward to our Annual ARMS Retirees Banquet where we have the opportunity to present and congratulate our new clergy and their spouses who retired that after at Annual Conference.

Retired clergy and spouses are encouraged to stay in touch through the ARMS newsletter To Arms and electronically through the conference Retiree Net.

— Paul & Martha Phillips, *Co-presidents*

PREACHERS' RELIEF SOCIETY

Since it was first chartered in 1870 by the state of North Carolina when the Virginia Conference extended into that state (It was chartered in Virginia in 1884), the Preachers' Relief Society has been providing grants to clergy families facing financial emergencies. During 2016 the Society assisted three families. It was glad to assist these, but it is also glad that only three needed to apply for help, the lowest number in recent memory.

At the annual meeting of the Society in November, K. Dane Mills retired as treasurer of the Society and indicated that he would retire as a director at the 2017 annual conference. Unexpectedly Dane died in February. Dane was dedicated to the work of the Society. He not only served as treasurer and as a member of the executive committee but provided legal counsel when needed. All of us who worked with him not only appreciated his dedication and the thoughtful input he brought to issues, but are thankful for the privilege of having known and served with him.

Larry Field who served for many years as financial advisor to the Society retired at the end of 2015. Much of the financial growth and stability of the Society can be attributed to Larry's good advice. We are indebted to him. Donald R. Watson has taken his place. Those wishing to contribute to the work of the Society may contact him at dwatson@bbtscottstringfellow.com or may contact our treasurer, the Rev. Robert F. Cofield, Jr.

at bcfield2@hotmail.com. Those needing assistance should apply through their district superintendent.

The current directors of the Society are: Robert T. Casey, president; Edward Lilly, vice-president; James R. Bergdoll, secretary; Robert F. Cofield, Jr., treasurer; Robert N. Baker, III; Sallye Bowen; Katherine Kidwell; and Harold E. White, Sr.

– Robert T. Casey, President

RETIRED CLERGY HOUSING CORPORATION

The Retired Clergy Housing Corporation (RCHC) was founded in 1932 and for many years was known as the Home Corporation. The purpose of the Retired Clergy Housing Corporation is to provide housing for needy retired clergy of the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, for their widows, widowers and dependent children.

RCHC owns 21 single family homes throughout the Commonwealth that are made available to eligible retired clergy persons at an affordable monthly fee. The RCHC is an independent not-for profit corporation with a board of directors made up of clergy and lay persons. In July of 2016, RCHC contracted with Virginia United Methodist Homes, Inc. to provide day to day management services to RCHC. For the past year the board of directors has been actively involved in updating by-laws, policies and procedures to ensure the future of the organization.

–Rev. Charles Wickham, Chairperson

VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Virginia United Methodist Housing Development Corporation (“VUMHDC”) is a covenant partner with the Virginia Annual Conference with the mission to offer affordable housing to the disabled, moderate income, and senior population. The goal of VUMHDC is to build or purchase at least one new facility a year. We are pledged to maintain alignment of our program with the Virginia Conference as we continue this mission.

The Housing Corporation is the full owner of 18 projects and a partial owner in another 20 affordable housing efforts. In total, VUMHDC has over 2000 apartment units across the conference with an approximate value of \$50,000,000. We reached this achievement without receiving financial support from the Annual Conference for construction, maintenance, or ongoing development. VUMHDC is funded entirely through project proceeds, HUD grants, tax credits, community partnerships, and revitalization money. Annual financial records are filed with the Conference Treasurer’s office.

We wish to honor our founding president, the Reverend Robert Regan, who served as president of the board of directors from 1975-2010. And we honor our recent past president, Dr. Julius (“Mal”) Malinowski. Mal joined the Board of Directors in 2008 and upon the retirement of Rev. Regan was elected president of the corporation. Mal was instrumental in the life and work of the Corporation until his retiring in November 2016. The board wishes to express our thanks to Mal Malinowski for his leadership and direction.

The board recently elected our third president in our 42-year history, Lawrence B. (“Larry”) Dickenson, a member and lay leader of Raleigh Court UMC in Roanoke. Larry has taken leadership with gusto. He will lead VUMHDC with deliberate direction and transparency as it enters into the next phase of service.

In this conference year, we expect to begin a comprehensive renovation of a facility in Staunton, provide targeted upgrades for two other projects, begin a partnership with the James River District to develop an affordable housing project which will hold a new church start in Windsor, and shepherd our existing properties keeping to the mission of VUMHDC.

– James G. O’Quinn, D.Min., Vice President VUMHDC

THE UNITED METHODIST CREDIT UNION

John Wesley was among the first to organize financial cooperatives among the faithful in the Methodist movement and it is in the spirit of Wesley that in 1952 a group of Virginia clergy established our credit union to pool their financial resources to help each other. As we celebrate 65 years of service in 2017, our name has changed to The United Methodist Credit Union and we are now serving other United Methodist Conferences including: North Carolina, Virginia, Western North Carolina, West Virginia and Baltimore-Washington (churches and organizations).

We are a full service financial institution and we operate solely to serve the financial needs of our member owners. Our all volunteer board of directors is comprised of a cross section of lay and clergy. We help our members by providing quality financial products and services, including savings and checking accounts, loans, Visa rewards credit cards, online services and resources to assist our members with personal financial management. We offer SnapLoan, an educational line of credit for college and seminary students. We partner with conference churches to establish Jubilee Assistance Funds; a program that assists churches with short term loans to help their church members who may be experiencing a financial emergency. We are partnered with a financial services firm that can assist our members with college planning/529s, annuities, long term care and saving for retirement.

Our church loan program helps conference churches with the refinance of current loans, loans for parsonages, renovations, and vans and buses. We also offer project loans (up to \$50,000 unsecured) and Visa rewards credit cards for church business.

Our goal is to be a primary resource for encouraging sound stewardship principles and helping United Methodist churches, individuals and institutions “to earn all they can and save all they can so they can give all they can” as servants of Christ in the world.

– Alvin J. Horton, Chair of the Board

VIRGINIA CHAPTER PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SECRETARIES

The purpose of the Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries (PAUMCS) is to provide a supportive base for the unity and fellowship of its members in order to provide individual growth, professional development, continuous education and spiritual enrichment. PAUMCS promotes and encourages the training and support of United Methodist church secretaries; serves as an advocate for emerging concerns that affect church secretaries; encourages and assists in the establishment of chapters of church secretaries and staff, within or across jurisdictional and annual conference boundaries, and assists in coordinating the program and work of these chapters.

Legislation was adopted at the 1988 General Conference which states that the General Conference of Finance and Administration (GCFA) has the authority and responsibility to provide guidance and consultation for continuing education of church secretaries, including establishment of

professional standards, training and certification programs and to provide assistance to PAUMCS (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶807.18).

The Virginia Chapter of PAUMCS sponsors two meetings during the year: a one-day fall training event and an all-day spring retreat event. Members are persons presently or previously, full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer, engaged in administrative work in any local church or agency of The United Methodist Church.

Highlights of Virginia PAUMCS activities in 2016-2017 include a six-page mailing sent to the administrative staff of the 1,200 charges of the Virginia Conference and the fall “Experience Your Conference Connection” event held in November. This gathering featured Cheryl Edley-Worford, Director of the Virginia Conference UMC Center for Inclusivity and Lay Leadership Excellence. “Person-to-Person” was the title for our session. Led by Cheryl, we explored tools for living the abundant life we were designed for through developing healthy, loving relationships with God, self, and others.

Our spring training/retreat event was held at Fredericksburg UMC in late May, “Get Away From It All” was led by the Rev. Larry Davies and Fredericksburg District Superintendent Ted Smith. “Pastoral Transitions” included information to help us as Administrative Church Professionals to make healthy transitions as we find ourselves filled with both anticipation and sorrow for the preparation involved with ending relationships and new beginnings. Attendees also valued the networking and spiritual component of this time together.

VAPAUMCS is excited that the Committee on Rules is recommending to the 2017 Annual Conference that our organization now be recognized in the Virginia Conference Standing Rules as an Administrative Agency of the conference.

If you have administrative staff in your church, either paid or volunteer, we encourage you to help them become a part of Virginia PAUMCS for their professional growth, to the benefit of your church!

– Sandra S. Fulcher, President

VIRGINIA CONFERENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Highlights of the VCHS during 2016 include:

- Two outstanding issues of *Heritage*, focusing on Old Stone Church, the oldest Methodist-owned property in America (spring) and the history of Blackstone College from its closing to the final days of the Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center (fall). Subscription: Print, \$10; Online, \$7; both \$12. Two issues yearly. Subscriptions can be purchased at the VCHS table or online at www.vaumc.org/subscribeheritage.

- Clearing the debt on the Old Randolph-Macon College/Boydton Institute property in Boydton through generous Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation member contributions and developing plans for preserving and interpreting this heritage site through the efforts of the Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation

- 250th Anniversary Celebration of the Old Stone Church site in Leesburg

- Dedication of heritage signage at the William Watters site in McLean and addition of screen plantings

- DVD presentation to the 2016 Virginia Annual Conference, highlighting the work of the VCHS, and the increased visitation to the display table, where historical interpreter the Rev. Gary Ziegler portrayed an 18th century circuit rider preacher. This interpretive DVD is available on YouTube to assist districts and churches in promoting the preservation and interpretation of their own significance within the Wesleyan heritage of the Virginia Conference.

- The closing of Blackstone Assembly Center and historical materials coming to the Conference Archives at the UMBR

- Strengthening of the VCHS web presence

- Growth of the Patti Russell Endowment to over \$272,000.00, providing a portion of the salary support for our Conference part time Archivist, Stephanie Davis.

Coming Events:

- Fall meeting of the VCHS, 10 a.m., UMBR, October 7, 2017, Keynote Speaker: Laurie Preston, Librarian/Archivist, Randolph-Macon College, and Trustee of the VCHS.

- VCHS hosting of the SEJ Historical Society, July 17-20, 2018, Williamsburg, VA. Theme: *Religious Liberty in the Historical Spread of Virginia Methodism*

The following persons are presented to the Annual Conference for election as clergy and lay trustees of the Conference Historical Society to 2017-2018: CLERGY: Paul A. Beighley, Jr., Michael H. Browder, Carlton D. Casey, Robert T. Casey, *Thomas L. Coffman*, William R. Freeman, *R. Douglas Geeting*, Myrtle F. Hatcher, H. Hasbrouck Hughes, Jr., James M. John, Alexander B. Joyner, *Hyo Joong Lee*, *Barbara D. Lewis*, John T. Martin, Jr., Reginald H. Potts, III, Lee B. Shaeffer, *James C. Sprouse, Jr.*, James M. Tongue, Margaret A. Turbyfill, Roy P. White, *Walter A. Whitehurst*, J. Brooke Willson, Elizabeth A. S. Wright, Gary A. Ziegler; LAITY: Thelma Crowder, Betty Duley, Jesse Fanshaw, *Nina Frederick*, Queen Green, *Ann Keeling*, Mark Leep, Audrey Lewis, Myra P. Lindsey, Stephen S. Mansfield, Marianne R. Martin, Harold “Rockie” McKee, Sam McKelvey, David Meyer, Margaret Mock, Catherine Morgan, Brenda NeSmith, William A. Olson, Laurie Preston, Leona Salter, William Stead, Craig Swain, *Betty Whitehurst*, *Kathi Hughes Wise [Italics – new to position]*

Ex Officio: Foundation Presidents: Williams Watters Foundation - Jean Balcom; Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation - Jim Mott; Old Stone Church Foundation - Charles Williams

– John T. Martin, Jr., President

The Old Stone Church Foundation

The Old Stone Church Foundation was established by the Virginia Conference Historical Society in 1974 to be responsible for the care and preservation of Methodism’s Old Stone Church site in Leesburg ,the first Methodist owned property in America. Members of the foundation help support this mission and we are grateful for those who maintain their membership in the foundation year after year.Our Brick Prayer Garden continue to grow.

The annual meeting was held at Leesburg UMC on September 10, 2016. Board members elected were: Charles Williams, Lou Legard, Shirlita

West, Dennis Hanrahan, John Creamer, Ralph Carver, Michael Browder and James Roberts. It was an afternoon of celebration and contemplation at the historic Old Stone Church Site following our annual meeting. One hundred and thirty-two United Methodists from around the Virginia Conference — including our new bishop — Rev Sharma D Lewis — proudly marked the event of 250 years.

– *Charles Williams, President*

William Watters Foundation

The William Watters Foundation was established by the Virginia Conference Historical Society in 1996 to protect and preserve the small Adams-Wren-Watters cemetery in McLean, Virginia. William Watters, the first American born itinerant Methodist Minister, and his wife are buried there. The cemetery, a circular plot 90 feet in diameter and one-quarter acre in area, is located at 6430 Linway Terrace (off Old Dominion Drive) McLean, VA. It has been registered as the United Methodist Historical Site #7 since 1970.

David Todd, a member of Trinity UMC McLean, working on his Eagle Scout Project refurbished the wrought iron fence surrounding the obelisk.

William Watters now has a website thanks to Myra Lindsey. The address is: WattersFoundation@vaumc.org. The home page is: www.vaumc.org/williamwattersfoundation.

For additional information write to:

The William Watters Foundation, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd, McLean, VA 22101

– *E. Jean Balcom, President*

THE VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION

“Serving God does make us very rich, if we are satisfied with what we have.

For we brought nothing into this world, so we can take nothing out ...

Command those who are rich with things of this world not to be proud, but to hope in God, not in their uncertain riches. God richly gives us everything to enjoy.

Tell them to do good, to be rich in doing good deeds, to be generous and ready to share.

By doing that, they will be saving a treasure for themselves as a strong foundation for the future.” – I Timothy 6:6-7, 17-19

Your perspective is the way you see something. If you think that toys corrupt children’s minds, then from your perspective a toy shop is an evil place.

Perspective has a Latin root meaning “look through” or “perceive”, and all the meanings of perspective have something to do with looking. If you observe the world from a dog’s perspective, you see through the dog’s eyes. In art, perspective gives your drawing the appearance of depth or distance. If we say someone “has perspective,” we mean she has a sensible outlook on life.

Our approach to finances and stewardship is also a matter of perspective. Living. Giving. Sharing. Saving. Our perspective is impacted by how we were raised, or how we view needs vs. wants, or how we choose to live and give, or how we perceive threats in society. Our perspective is never neutral, and is often shaped by events around us.

The Apostle Paul sought to give counsel to his ‘son in the Lord’, Timothy, about the importance of a proper perspective toward life and wealth, giving and saving. The thread of his advice was that “life is short”, “wealth is temporary and uncertain”, and “sharing creates a timeless impact.”

At the core of building endowments is the weaving of those thoughts together into a strong cord. An endowment is focused on the long haul – not the immediate need. An investment is planning for the future and setting aside to meet its uncertainties with wise planning. Its perspective is to create a resource that can feed the hungry for now and later or to minister hope and healing to coming generations – to leave a lasting legacy that continues its impact!

Over the past year, the Virginia United Methodist Foundation served churches and donors across the Conference in creating ministries for the future. Our perspective is governed by our mission statement: **Stewarding Potential to build His kingdom!** Our service to local churches is helping them think and discern about ministry into the future. Our service to individuals is focused how they can plan and prepare for future impact through their giving and saving. For each, it is quantifying their POTENTIAL and maximizing their STEWARDSHIP with a view toward God’s ultimate purpose! It may be ...

- A church who received a sizeable bequest and invited our staff to assist in discerning and strategizing what God was calling the church to do in mission – and how these new resources could be effective in opening doors and extending ministry.
- An investor who served their church through a major building project and made a significant gift of highly appreciated stock to fulfill a pledge commitment to support ministry in the coming year.
- A district that worked through the process of re-purposing and selling a church property. Then, following the sale, they sought counsel on how to steward those funds to develop new ministry initiatives in their district.
- A church who sold their parsonage and invested those funds with the Foundation, so that they could provide a housing allowance for their pastor.
- A couple who saved and invested carefully for years have now caught the vision of missional investing with the Development Company. Their investment helped reduce their church’s mortgage interest rate while they received increased fixed income to meet their monthly expenses.
- A grant through the Foundation that helps provide support for a skate park ministry outreach in one community and ‘on the job’ training program in another community – both with a focus on being the hands of Christ in providing services to needy and disadvantaged in their community.
- A couple who share a missional alignment with a UM agency created a personal endowment to benefit that ministry. Their heart perspective

is to ‘do their giving while their living, so they’re knowing where it’s going.’

Each of these witness a perspective built on sacrifice and service with a goal toward Kingdom impact. Their potential is long-term and their strategy is stewarding to meet immediate needs and make an imprint on others through their planning and giving. The Virginia United Methodist Foundation exists to serve congregations and congregants in perceiving their potential impact – current and future – by leveraging their current resources.

Foundation assets continue to grow as services and staff expand to meet the needs of donors and churches. Since 2011, both the number of churches served and the assets managed have more than doubled!

| Account Type | Count | Value as of 12/31/2016 |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| Local church-related accounts | 227 | \$37,365,197 |
| Endowment | 89 | 7,234,295 |
| District and Agency funds | 31 | 10,842,712 |
| Foundation-controlled funds | 3 | 592,551 |
| Charitable Gift Annuities | 45 | 532,777 |
| Total | 395 | \$56,034,755 |

Our vision is to sharpen our perspective while we strengthen our service in helping create lasting ministries through strategic planning, continuing education, capital campaigns and effective stewardship. The role of the Foundation is to educate and elevate the importance of charitable gift planning in endowing the church’s vision into the future. Our commitment is to live out our Core Values with a vision for relevant ministry that leaves a lasting legacy for generations to come. I am grateful for each fund – large and small – and each church relationship – urban or rural – where we serve as a fiduciary and assist in fulfilling their mission and vision.

Capture the potential for impact! Catch the wave of generosity! Create a fresh perspective for eternity!

– *Stephen B. Clark, President*

VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, LLC

Stewarding Potential to Build His Kingdom

In a past political campaign, one candidate’s appeal was: “It’s all about the economy, stupid!” People caught the rationale related to their feelings or perspective on forces and finances that appeared beyond their grasp.

A telescope helps to bring far away objects into perspective and become near, while a microscope makes the tiny become perceptible. Helping church leadership discern how to manage short-term assets and prepare for long-term loans requires different lens. At the core of managing time-based deposits is the need for liquidity and often an aversion to risk and volatility. By contrast, a church loan for a major capital expansion is often a long-term commitment based on envisioning its mission and ministry 10-20 years into the future. Both require clear vision on potential and purpose for both investment and expansion. It’s all about balancing perspective!

Over the past year, the Virginia United Methodist Development Company, LLC, has expanded its reach with loans to more than 20 churches across the Conference and impacted more than 16,000 Methodists. Thanks to 316 churches, agencies and individuals who have become investors in the Development Company, we have been able to make a difference by helping them with church extension loan financing. These churches are now saving more than \$620,000 in debt service and, thereby, increasing their operational cash flow to enable them to expand their local ministry outreach!

Our impact can be seen with:

- Helping a church in the Farmville District with a short-term remodeling loan and a capital campaign to engage donors in their support.
- A re-finance loan for a church whose loan interest rate was the highest in the conference and was impeding their ability to maintain their budget or pay apportionments.
- Equipping a church in the Alexandria District to launch a comprehensive strategy for donor engagement to cover expanded ministry and reduce debt on their new building.
- A combo loan for a church in the Elizabeth River District who sought to re-finance a previous loan while planning for facility expansion with a multi-purpose community center.
- Initiating a capital campaign for a church in the Richmond District as they plan for a major facility expansion to reach their growing community

These are just a few of the examples of how your investments enable the Development Company to fulfill its mission: **Stewarding Potential to build His kingdom!** As a connectional ministry, our goal is to help local churches become effective stewards of the resources entrusted – both building and budget – and re-envision their impact in mission and ministry in their local community. Each loan has a unique story of connecting with their community and impacting lives as the hands and feet of Christ.

The Development Fund is a registered Offering with the Commonwealth of Virginia. Although investments are not insured, they are safeguarded through

strict investment and lending policies, healthy collateral coverage on its loans and strong oversight by its board and competent staff. The Development Company offers construction loans with terms up to one year. Permanent loans with terms of five years and amortization up to 30 years are also available. Our purpose is to enable United Methodist investors to fund church capital improvement loans. Deposits continue to grow though not sufficient to meet the loan demand. Our continuing prayer for the coming year is increased participation in the deposits to help meet the loan demand! Thereby, our motto: United Methodists Investing to Impact Virginia!

In 2016, the Development Company realized significant growth in investments and loans. As of December 31:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Deposits | \$19,337,566 |
| Total Assets | \$20,076,267 |
| Total Outstanding Loans | \$17,307,945 |
| Loan Commitments for future | \$5,375,000 |
| Loan to Collateral Value | 38.42% |

Our focused perspective remains: Strengthening the local church to expand ministry in its community through effective planning and ongoing consultation as we manage assets and provide support to fulfill its enduring local mission!

– Stephen B. Clark, President/CEO



PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Proposed Constitutional Amendment – I

On May 16, 2016, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Portland, Oregon, the following Constitutional Amendment was adopted by a recorded vote of 746 Yes, 56 No (Calendar Item 121, DCA p. 2106). It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In the 2012 *Book of Discipline*, Division One, add a new paragraph between current ¶¶ 5 and 6:

As the Holy Scripture reveals, both men and women are made in the image of God and, therefore, men and women are of equal value in the eyes of God. The United Methodist Church recognizes it is contrary to Scripture and to logic to say that God is male or female, as maleness and femaleness are characteristics of human bodies and cultures, not characteristics of the divine. The United Methodist Church acknowledges the long history of discrimination against women and girls. The United Methodist Church shall confront and seek to eliminate discrimination against women and girls, whether in organizations or in individuals, in every facet of its life and in society at large. The United Methodist Church shall work collaboratively with others to address concerns that threaten the cause of women’s and girl’s equality and well-being.

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, this would become the new ¶6, and the current ¶¶ 6-61 would be renumbered as ¶¶ 7-62.

AND

Proposed Constitutional Amendment – II

On May 20, 2016, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Portland, Oregon, the following Constitutional Amendment was adopted by a recorded vote of 509 Yes, 242 No (Calendar Item 429, DCA p. 2212). It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In the 2012 **Book of Discipline**, Division One, ¶4, Article IV, amend by deletion and addition as follows:

After “all persons” delete “without regard to race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition”. After “because of race, color, national origin,” delete “status,” and add “ability”. At the end of the paragraph, add “nor shall any member be denied access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church because of race, color, gender, national origin, ability, age, marital status, or economic condition.”

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, ¶ 4 would read:

The United Methodist Church is part of the church universal, which is one Body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth. All persons shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection. In the United Methodist church, no conference or other organizational unit of the Church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the Church because of race, color, national origin, ability, or economic condition, nor shall any member be denied access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church because of race, color, gender, national origin, ability, age, marital status, or economic condition.

AND

Proposed Constitutional Amendment – III

On May 16, 2016, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Portland, Oregon, the following Constitutional Amendment was adopted by a recorded vote of 767 Yes, 22 No (Calendar Item 111, DCA pp. 2105). It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In the 2012 *Book of Discipline*, Division Two, Section VI, ¶ 34, Article III, (2016 Book of Discipline, Division Two, Section VI, ¶ 34, Article III) amend by addition as follows:

After the first sentence, add, “Such elections shall include open nominations from the floor by the annual conference, and delegates shall be elected by a minimum of a simple majority of the ballots cast.”

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, ¶ 34 would read:

The annual conference shall elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference and to its jurisdictional or central conference in the manner provided in this section, Articles IV and V. Such elections shall include open nominations from the floor by the annual conference, and delegates shall be elected by a minimum of a simple majority of the ballots cast. The persons first elected up to the number determined by the ratio for representation in the General Conference shall be representatives in that body. Additional delegates shall be elected to complete the number determined by the ratio for representation in the jurisdictional or central conference, who, together with those first elected as above, shall be delegates in the jurisdictional or central conference. The additional delegates to the jurisdictional or central conference shall in the order of their election be the reserve delegates to the General Conference. The annual conference shall also elect reserve clergy and lay delegates to the jurisdictional or central conference as it may deem desirable. These reserve clergy and lay delegates to the jurisdictional or central conferences may act as reserve delegates to the General Conference when it is evident that not enough reserve delegates are in attendance at the General Conference.

AND

Proposed Constitutional Amendment – IV

On May 20, 2016, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Portland, Oregon, the following Constitutional Amendment was adopted by a recorded vote of 621 Yes, 15 No (Calendar Item 468, DCA p. 2217). It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In the 2012 *Book of Discipline*, Division Three, ¶ 46, Article I, amend by addition, as follows:

To the end of the paragraph, add “provided that episcopal elections in central conferences shall be held at a regular, not an extra, session of the central conference, except in the case where an unexpected vacancy must be filled.”

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, ¶ 46 would read:

The bishops shall be elected by the respective jurisdictional and central conferences and consecrated in the historic manner at such time and place as may be fixed by the General Conference for those elected by the jurisdictions and by each central conference for those elected by such central conference, provided that episcopal elections in central conferences shall be held at a regular, not an extra, session of the central conference, except in the case where an unexpected vacancy must be filled.

AND

Proposed Constitutional Amendment – V

On May 17, 2016, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Portland, Oregon, the following Constitutional Amendment was adopted by a recorded vote of 715 Yes, 79 No (Calendar Item 446, DCA p. 2214). It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In the 2012 *Book of Discipline*, Division Three, ¶ 50, Article VI, amend by addition, as follows:

After the last paragraph, add “These provisions shall not preclude that adoption by the General Conference of provisions for the Council of Bishops to hold its individual members accountable for their work, both as general superintendents and as presidents and residents in episcopal areas.”

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, ¶ 50 would read:

The bishops, both active and retired, of The Evangelical United Brethren Church and of The Methodist Church at the time union is consummated shall be bishops of The United Methodist Church.

The bishops of The Methodist Church elected by the jurisdictions, the active bishops of The Evangelical United Brethren Church at the time of union, and bishops elected by the jurisdictions of The United Methodist Church shall have life tenure. Each bishop elected by a central conference of The Methodist Church shall have such tenure as the central conference electing him shall have determined.⁹⁴

The jurisdictional conference shall elect a standing committee on episcopacy to consist of one clergy and one lay delegate from each annual conference, on nomination of the annual conference delegation. The committee shall review the work of the bishops, pass on their character and official administration, and report to the jurisdictional conference its findings for such action as the conference may deem appropriate within its constitutional warrant of power. The committee shall recommend the assignments of the bishops to their respective residences for final action by the jurisdictional conference.

These provisions shall not preclude that adoption by the General Conference of provisions for the Council of Bishops to hold its individual members accountable for their work, both as general superintendents and as presidents and residents in episcopal areas.

RATIONALE FOR PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

The United Methodist Church Voted General Conference May 2016

- I. (New ¶ 6) The Constitution contains a paragraph on racial justice but not one on gender justice. The language of this petition is parallel to the language of Article 5 on racial justice already in our Constitution. It is an affirmation that, as part of our core foundational beliefs, this church will forever stand against any actions, organizations or individuals that discriminate or dehumanize women and girls anywhere on this planet.
- II. (¶ 4) Adding “gender” (meaning male and female) to the Constitution affirms and protects The United Methodist Church’s commitment to gender equity throughout our worldwide connection. “Gender” is the disciplinary term for fair treatment of women and men (e.g., ¶16). The addition of the proposed final clause allows gender-specific groups like United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men.
- III. (¶ 34) The provision in ¶ 13. *Article I. 2*, “Delegates shall be elected in a fair and open process by the annual conferences,” is unduly vague. The addition of this one sentence to paragraph 34 of *The Book of Discipline* helps clarify that General Conference delegates shall be elected by the body of annual conference instead of simply being appointed by the bishop. Bishops appointing delegates without delegates being properly elected has been a practice in some central conferences.
- IV. (¶ 46) As is the case for the jurisdictions, episcopal elections in the central conferences should be held in the regular sessions of those conferences, except when unexpected vacancies occur because of the death or early retirement of one or more bishops.
- V. (¶ 50) Judicial Decision 475 ruled unconstitutional the Council of Bishops holding its individual members accountable for their work, referencing ¶ 50 of the Constitution. This legislation follows Judicial Decision 1275 requirement of a legislative resolution from General Conference so the Council of Bishops may provide oversight of its members.



*Resolutions and Petitions are ordered alphabetically by title.
This does not indicate the order in which they will be considered.*

RESOLUTION 1

An Appropriate Restraint on Leadership

Total Number of Pages: 2
Suggested Title: An Appropriate Restraint on Leadership
Discipline Paragraphs: *Discipline* ¶ 244.3, *Discipline* ¶ 246 Preamble
General Church Budget Implications: None
Global Implications: Yes

WHEREAS, the book of *Social Principles* over the years has been changing the emphasis from describing basic principles to describing solutions – for example, P160.B has changed from being a fairly general statement on the principle of Energy Resources Utilization to one specifying the individual lifestyle that should be adopted to support it;

WHEREAS, there is always more than one solution that can be implemented to support a principle;

WHEREAS, depending on a person’s worldview the ranking of solutions will be different. Specifying one solution as “the” solution to be pursued instead of another becomes divisive;

WHEREAS, depending on viewpoints different solutions can be in conflict and cannot be supported by individuals even though the underlying principle is the common point of connection;

WHEREAS, the *Merriam-Webster* definition of loyal for students is “Loyal: having or showing complete and constant support for someone or something”;

WHEREAS, the current requirement in the *Discipline* of being loyal to the ethical standards can be in conflict with the exercise of conscience of an individual which then would preclude them from being able to hold a leadership position on the church council or be a member of the church charge conference;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Virginia Annual Conference recommend to General Conference a change to the *Discipline* in P244.3 from “are loyal to the ethical standards” to “strive to follow the principles”. Thus the paragraph would change from:

P244.3 Members of the church council or alternative structure shall be persons of genuine Christian character who love the church, are

morally disciplined, are committed to the mandate of inclusiveness in the life of the church, are loyal to the ethical standards of The United Methodist Church set forth in the Social Principles, and are competent to administer its affairs. It shall include youth and young adult members chosen according to the same standards as adults. All persons with vote shall be members of the local church, except where central conference legislation provides otherwise. The pastor shall be the administrative officer and, as such, shall be an ex officio member of all conferences, boards, councils, commissions, committees, and task forces, unless otherwise restricted by the Discipline.

To:

P244.3 Members of the church council or alternative structure shall be persons of genuine Christian character who love the church, are morally disciplined, are committed to the mandate of inclusiveness in the life of the church, strive to follow the principles of The United Methodist Church set forth in the Social Principles, and are competent to administer its affairs. It shall include youth and young adult members chosen according to the same standards as adults. All persons with vote shall be members of the local church, except where central conference legislation provides otherwise. The pastor shall be the administrative officer and, as such, shall be an ex officio member of all conferences, boards, councils, commissions, committees, and task forces, unless otherwise restricted by the Discipline.

THEREFORE, be it further resolved that the Virginia Annual Conference recommend to General Conference a change to the *Discipline* in the preamble to P246 from “are loyal to the ethical standards” to “strive to follow the principles”. Thus the preamble would change from:

Members of the charge conference shall be persons of genuine Christian character who love the church, are morally disciplined, are committed to the mandate of inclusiveness in the life of the church, are loyal to the ethical standards of The United Methodist Church set forth in the Social Principles, and are competent to administer its affairs. It shall include youth and young adult members chosen according to the same standards as adults. All persons with vote shall be members of the local church, except where central conference legislation provides otherwise. The pastor shall be the administrative officer and, as such, shall be an ex officio member of all conferences, boards, councils, commissions, committees, and task forces, unless otherwise restricted by the Discipline.

To:

Members of the charge conference shall be persons of genuine Christian character who love the church, are morally disciplined, are committed to the mandate of inclusiveness in the life of the church, strive to follow the principles of The United Methodist Church set forth in the Social Principles, and are competent to administer its affairs. It shall include youth and young adult members chosen according to the same standards as adults. All persons with vote shall be members of the local church, except where central conference legislation provides otherwise. The pastor shall be the administrative officer and, as such, shall be an ex officio member of all conferences, boards, councils, commissions, committees, and task forces, unless otherwise restricted by the Discipline.

– Submitted by Roger Rippens

RESOLUTION 2

Annual Conference Resolution Process

WHEREAS, the Virginia Annual Conference uses the Resolution process to change conference policy, to propose policy changes to the General Conference, and to take a stand on public issues;

WHEREAS, clergy and laity use the Resolution Process to voice concerns, make proposals, and offer ideas to our Bishop and the Virginia Annual Conference;

WHEREAS, the publication of Resolutions in the *Book of Reports* and their disposition at annual conference have served these purposes for many years;

WHEREAS, Resolutions in written form are sent to all delegates about one month prior to conference and authors or representatives are given five minutes to speak to the conference, no equivalent written and verbal opportunity is given to delegates with an opposing view;

WHEREAS, there is little evidence that the current Resolution process contributes to making disciples of Jesus Christ or transforming the world;

WHEREAS, the existing Resolution process could be improved in the short run with technical solutions, solutions for the long run must have the flexibility to respond quickly to changing conditions and requirements;

WHEREAS, long-range, adaptive change is hard, the Resolution Process as it exists today does not provide useful tools, such as holy conferencing, finding common ground, and reaching consensus, that have the ability to lead us to common cause and united effort;

WHEREAS, the Resolution Process transforms our conference into a committee of more than 2000 voters that meets annually to conduct the conference’s business, an annual meeting is ill equipped to take action on time-sensitive, urgent matters arising throughout the year;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Virginia Annual Conference asks our Bishop to form a team with the mission of: 1) Developing a plan for resolving the concerns and proposals of the clergy and laity in this annual conference; 2) Ensuring the plan provides an opportunity to reach common ground and consensus through holy conferencing; 3) Providing for an optional extension of time beyond one year; 4) Providing for timely response to urgent matters; and 5) Promoting unity. This team is to present its findings and recommendations to the 2018 Virginia Annual Conference.

– Submitted by Thomas A. Hassler

RESOLUTION 3

Compassionate support for members of the armed forces, veterans and their families suffering from post-traumatic stress and moral injury

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church acknowledges; “When persons choose to serve in the armed forces, we support their right to adequate care for injuries suffered, and advocate for sufficient resources to meet their physical and mental health needs, both during and after their service. We are aware that we can become guilty both by military action and by conscientious objection, and that we all are dependent on God’s forgiveness.” (§ 164 I) and

WHEREAS, the *Social Principles of The United Methodist Church* profess the struggles for human dignity and social reform are in response to “God’s demand for love, mercy, and justice in the light of the Kingdom.” (§ 102), as well as, the Nurture and Mission of the Church, emphasizes “the nurturing and serving function of Christian fellowship in the Church” through a personal experience of conviction, nourished by a community faith. (§ 102) and

WHEREAS, we believe that suicide is not the way a human life should end and that a Christian perspective on suicide begins with an affirmation of faith that nothing, including suicide, separates us from the love of God (Romans 8:38-39). Therefore, we deplore the condemnation of people who complete suicide, and we consider unjust the stigma that so often falls on surviving family and friends. (§ 161 N) and

WHEREAS, data released by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, in January of 2014, estimates that, during the course of their study, 22 US veterans per day were taking their own lives. The Department concluded that the rate of veteran’s suicide “are astronomically high and climbing” according to Jan Kemp, Veterans Affairs’ National Mental Health Director for Suicide Prevention, and

WHEREAS, in recent years there has been a spike among service members and veterans in the occurrence of Post-Traumatic Stress, in the past referred to as shell shock, battle fatigue or combat stress, stemming from experiences of severe trauma or life-threatening events. With this profound stress it is normal for the mind and body to react after such events, but this normal response becomes harmful when individuals feel trapped in a cycle anxiety, anger, and shame, disconnecting from relationships of family and community. and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of all who seek the Kingdom of God and Kinship of Christ to preserve the dignity of all persons without regard to religion, race, nationality, or gender, and seek to enhance the quality of life in the entire community of humankind thus fulfilling an obligation to God (Matthew 25:31-40).

THEREFORE, be it resolved, that the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church, encourages, endorses and strives to equip congregations in providing open safe spaces for active duty service members, veterans and their families to share their stories and find sanctuary within the faith community, without condemnation, judgement or the obligation of contribution or confession of faith.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Virginia Conference will appoint a task force to discern the requirements for implementing training courses to teach qualified individuals in techniques of engaging service members, veterans and their families in an atmosphere of compassionate and productive dialogue.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Church commits itself to extending its pastoral ministry to members of the armed forces, veterans and their families by providing trained clergy and qualified lay leadership in cultivating and inaugurating care groups focused on spiritual formation and healing for those suffering with post-traumatic stress and moral injury, through God’s forgiving grace.

– Submitted by Rev. Darin M. Busé, Pastor, Fulks Run Charge, Harrisonburg District on behalf of the Board of Church and Society

RESOLUTION 4

Resolution on Holy Land Travel

WHEREAS, indigenous Palestinian Christians, descendants of the original followers of Jesus, have asked their fellow Christians around the world to meet with them when visiting the Holy Land stating, “We intend to fulfill our role to make known to you the truth of our reality, receiving you as pilgrims coming to us to pray, carrying a message of peace, love and reconciliation. You will know the facts and the people of this land, Palestinians and Israelis alike.”¹

WHEREAS, General Conference resolution outlining a Pathway for Peace in Israel and Palestine affirms “strategies including favorable trade and shipping arrangements, student and work-related visa policies, and diplomatic initiatives that will engage both Israelis and Palestinian in an effort to understand the fears, hopes, and aspirations of each other. Such strategies should actively seek...an end to the current occupation and violence and the creation of a viable Palestinians state living side by side in peace with Israel,”²

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church opposes Israeli settlements on Palestinian land and urges “all United Methodists to read about the suffering of Israelis and Palestinians and non-violent ways of ending the Israeli/Palestinian conflict from the perspective of all faith communities including the Kairos Palestine document; and encourage members of each congregation to study the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from all perspectives,”³

WHEREAS, “all United Methodist missionaries serving in the Holy Land over the last twenty-five years support concrete actions by our denomination to show our support of Palestinians rights”⁴

WHEREAS, all United Methodist mission personnel past and present have for many years invited United Methodists to “come and see” what they have seen during their time in Israel and Palestine, to participate in responsible tourism by consulting with the United Methodist Liaison

¹ The Kairos Document (2009) is an ecumenical document written and promoted by Christian leaders in Palestine and supported by the “Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem.” The fifteen authors took a year and half to formulate the document. The patriarchs and heads of churches write “We support [the authors] in their faith, their hope, and their vision for the future. . . . We also support the call . . . to accelerate the achievement of justice, peace and reconciliation in this Holy Land.” <https://kairopalestine.ps/index.php/about-us/Kairos-palestine-document>

² 2016, United Methodist Book of Resolutions #6114 “Pathway for Peace in Palestine and Israel”

³ 2012, United Methodist Book of Resolutions #6111 “Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land”

⁴ 2016, United Methodist Book of Resolutions #8008 “Task Force on Israel and Palestine”

Office in Jerusalem to seek opportunities to worship with indigenous Christians congregations and to visit United Methodist supported mission sites, and urge “that travelers use, as advance study materials, positions adopted by General Conference and by general church agencies relating to the Middle East as well as resources such as ‘Working for a Just and Lasting Peace in Israel and Palestine’ (an advocacy packet prepared by the boards of Church and Society and Global Ministries)”⁵

WHEREAS, the United Methodist Church “expresses deep concern that many tours sponsored or arranged by United Methodist bishops, pastors, and laity do not schedule program time for participates to enter into relationship with the indigenous Christians so that they may ‘Walk with the Living Stones’ in their strides toward Palestinian self-determination, their rich spiritual heritage, and their faithful contemporary witness” and “urges all United Methodists planning, organizing, and/or participating in a trip to the Holy Land to apply to their Holy Land trip planning the guidelines outlined in the General Conference Resolution #6030,”⁶

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2017 Virginia Annual Conference urges the bishop, clergy, and laity of the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church who are planning individual or group tours to Israel and Palestine consult with the Methodist Liaison Office (MLO) in Jerusalem (admin@methodist-jer.org and/or encounter@methodist-jer.org) to seek opportunities to meet with United Methodist missionaries living and working in the region, to visit United Methodist supported mission sites, to worship with a Palestinian Christian congregation, and to include in their tours at least one overnight stay in Bethlehem in accordance with 2016 General Conference Resolution #6031; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2017 Virginia Annual Conference urges anyone from the Virginia Annual Conference intending to visit the Holy Land to read before they travel the “Kairos Palestine Document: A Moment of Truth: A word of faith, hope and love” and study the United Methodist resolutions regarding Israel and Palestine.

– Submitted by John Copenhaver on behalf of the Board of Church and Society

RESOLUTION 5

Hydraulic Fracturing Oil and Gas

(resubmission of 2014 res.)

WHEREAS new methods of extracting oil and gas from rock formations using hydraulic fracturing of oil and gas containing shale formations are being proposed for use in Virginia, including the George Washington National Forest¹ and areas around the Rappahannock River and on the Northern Neck²;

WHEREAS, oil and gas hydro-“fracking” brings with it a complexity of impacts: economic, environmental, property values, health, traffic, road conditions, and relationships among members of the community;

WHEREAS, natural gas companies use proprietary blends of chemicals to force the gas out of the shale rock, and are exempt from reporting the chemicals under the Safe Drinking Water Act amendments, it is known that chemicals coming out of wells include mercury, arsenic, bromide and chloride salts, radionuclides including strontium and barium, and volatile organic compounds including cancer causing benzene, toluene and ethylbenzene^{3,4};

WHEREAS, United Methodists lift up the Bible, which states “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world, and all who live in it” (Psalm 24:1-2);

WHEREAS, the *United Methodist Social Principles* call us to care for God’s Creation through our stewardship of water, air, soil, minerals, plants (§160.A), use of energy resources (§160.B), care for animal life (§160.C) and global climate stewardship (§160.D), and contains statements on rural life (§162.P), sustainable agriculture (§162.Q) and the many facets of the economic community (§163), including property (§163.A), consumption (§163.D), family farms (§163.H) and corporate responsibility (§163.I);

WHEREAS, water utilities such as those in Fairfax County and Washington, D.C., question whether even such large water utilities can adequately filter out from their water chemicals used in fracking, and

WHEREAS, people on the Northern Neck are concerned about the damage to roads and the environment from fracking equipment and the effects of the chemicals used to extract oil and gas from the shale formations,

WHEREAS

1. Virginia Conference United Methodists become familiar with the contents of the Social Principles outlined above.
2. Virginia Conference United Methodists be intentional in engaging their faith principles, respectfully and constructively, in conversations and decisions about methods used by fossil fuel extracting industries, including hydro-fracturing.
3. We urge a moratorium on hydro-fracturing for gas and oil in Virginia until the environmental issues, damage to our water supplies, and local economic impacts can be further explored.
4. We further suggest that the churches in the Virginia Conference refrain from leasing their property for oil and gas fracking until safer methods of fracking gas and oil can be found.
5. We encourage dialogue within the church so that we can to educate ourselves about how oil and gas extraction from the earth by hydrofracturing affects God’s creation in communities where fracking could occur and in communities downstream from fracking sites.
6. We direct the conference Board of Church and Society to convene meetings on the issues raised by hydrofracturing in areas near the George Washington National Forest, areas between Richmond and Charlottesville, and the Northern Neck where hydrofracturing is proposed.

– Submitted by Frances Wilkins and Suzanne Shrader, Warsaw UMC, on behalf of the Board of Church and Society.

⁵ https://umc-gbcs.org/content/general/Working_for_a_Just_and_Lastning_Peace.pdf

⁶ 2016, United Methodist Book of Resolutions #6031 “Holy Land Tours”

¹ Robert McCarthy, "Fracking in George Washington National Forest could threaten DC area drinking water" Washington Post, Feb. 1, 2014. http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/fracking-in-george-washington-national-forest-could-threaten-dc-area-drinking-water/2014/02/01/834cb8d2-8ad5-11e3-916e-e01534b1e132_story.html

² Renss Greene, "Former Del. Pollard suggests [Northern Neck] localities take a 'conservative' approach to hydrofracturing" Rappahannock Record, Feb. 20, 2014, <http://www.rrecord.com/-news/2014/2-20-14/news1a.asp>

³ Comments from the Delaware River Keepers to the US EPA on the effects of fracking on the Delaware River. Aug. 26, 2015 <http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/sites/default/files/resources/Comments/Cmnt%20to%20EPA%20HF%208.26.15.pdf>

⁴ "The Fracturing of Pennsylvania," The New York Times Magazine, Nov. 20, 2011, available at: www.nytimes.com/2011/11/20/magazine/fracking-amwell-township.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0