

BOOK OF REPORTS

244th Session of the
Virginia Annual Conference



The 244th session
VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
of The United Methodist Church

Harrisonburg, Virginia

June 17-20, 2026

Book of Reports

May 15, 2026

Edited by
The Office of Communications

On the cover: The 2026 Annual Conference theme is
"A Conference in Three Movements."

The 2026 *Book of Reports* is using the font ***Atkinson Hyperlegible***
in order to be more accessible to those with dyslexia and visual impairments.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Below you will find a Table of Contents with live page links. We hope this will help you move throughout the *Book of Reports* more easily as you participate in the business of the conference. You can click on the words or the page number and you will be taken to that page within this document. Each section also has a mini table of contents and you will find links at the bottom of each page to get you back to this Table of Contents (TOC) page as well as to that particular section's page header. You will find other links throughout the *Book of Reports* in **red**.

General Information	<u>5</u>	Financial Reports	<u>97</u>
Important Registration Information.....	<u>6</u>	Report of the Conference Statistician.....	<u>98</u>
Welcome to Annual Conference	<u>8</u>	Financial Commitment Report.....	<u>99</u>
Agenda	<u>9</u>	Balance Sheets.....	<u>100</u>
Annual Conference Offering.....	<u>12</u>	Statement of Changes in Conference Reserves.....	<u>101</u>
Plenary Speakers.....	<u>12</u>	Conference Apportionments	<u>102</u>
Responsibilities	<u>13</u>	CFA Designated Funds with Carryover Balances	<u>103</u>
Reporting Guide for Lay Members.....	<u>14</u>	Donor Designated and Miscellaneous Funds	<u>104</u>
Annual Conference Procedures	<u>17</u>	Narrative Budget Report for 2027	<u>105</u>
Standing Rules	<u>18</u>	Conference Apportionments - Proposed Budget	<u>106</u>
Name Badge Colors.....	<u>47</u>	Supporting Schedule for Conference Apportionments (101 and 102)	<u>107</u>
Business of the Conference	<u>49</u>	CFA Report.....	<u>108</u>
Consent Agenda	<u>50</u>	Boards & Agencies	<u>114</u>
Charter for the Common Table for Church Vitality	<u>51</u>	Children and Family Ministry Council.....	<u>115</u>
Committee On Rules.....	<u>55</u>	Board of Church and Society to Virginia Annual Conference.....	<u>115</u>
Minute Questions	<u>57</u>	Church Development Team.....	<u>117</u>
District Committees on Church Building and Location.....	<u>66</u>	Commission of the Status & Role of Women (COSROW).....	<u>117</u>
District Committees on Ordained Ministry.....	<u>67</u>	Commission on Disabilities.....	<u>118</u>
Reports	<u>68</u>	Committee on Episcopacy (COE).....	<u>119</u>
Office of Belonging and Advocacy Report	<u>69</u>	Board of Communications (Communications Advisory Team).....	<u>119</u>
Cabinet Report	<u>70</u>	Conference Commission on Religion and Race (CCORR).....	<u>120</u>
Site Selection Committee	<u>73</u>	Business to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences.....	<u>122</u>
Equitable Compensation Commission.....	<u>74</u>	Board of Discipleship.....	<u>122</u>
Just Compensation Task Force	<u>75</u>	Hatching Faith	<u>124</u>
Clergy Payroll.....	<u>78</u>	Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (BHECM).....	<u>125</u>
Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc.	<u>80</u>		
Connectional Table Report.....	<u>90</u>		
Conference Nominations Team	<u>93</u>		
AI Task force	<u>95</u>		

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Virginia Conference Historical Society.....	<u>125</u>	Schools of Theology	<u>162</u>
Board of Laity.....	<u>130</u>	Candler School of Theology.....	<u>163</u>
Missional Ministries Board	<u>131</u>	Duke Divinity School.....	<u>164</u>
The Virginia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.....	<u>133</u>	Wesley Theological Seminary	<u>165</u>
Board of Trustees.....	<u>134</u>	Resolutions	<u>167</u>
United Methodist Men.....	<u>135</u>	Safeguarding Creation and Community from Unsustainable Data Center Growth	<u>168</u>
United Women in Faith	<u>136</u>	Resolution for the Old Brunswick Circuit to Be Listed as a United Methodist Historic Cluster Site with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church	<u>170</u>
Virginia United Methodist Development Company.....	<u>137</u>	Resolution for the Ebenezer Academy Memorial Park to Be Listed as a United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Historic Cluster Site with the General Commission on Archives of the United Methodist Church.....	<u>171</u>
Virginia United Methodist Foundation (VAUMF).....	<u>139</u>	Resolution for Randolph-Macon College of Boydton to Be Listed as a United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Cluster Historic Site with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church	<u>173</u>
Partnership Reports	<u>140</u>	Resolution for the Sapony Church Shrine to Be Listed as a United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Cluster Historic Site with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church.....	<u>175</u>
GraceInside (Virginia Prison Chaplains).....	<u>141</u>	Resolution for Elim, (Meander), the Rev. Henry Fry Home, to Be Listed as a Historic Site with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church.....	<u>176</u>
Heart Havens.....	<u>141</u>	Welcome to Harrisonburg	<u>179</u>
Pinnacle Living.....	<u>142</u>	Welcome to Harrisonburg.....	<u>180</u>
Retired Clergy Housing Corporation	<u>144</u>	Venues.....	<u>180</u>
Shineforth Child and Family Services (Formerly UMFS).....	<u>145</u>	Parking	<u>180</u>
Society of St. Andrew	<u>146</u>	Where to eat while at AC 2026	<u>181</u>
Campus Ministries	<u>148</u>	Explore the City.....	<u>181</u>
Pace Center	<u>149</u>	Maps.....	<u>182</u>
RISE Faith Community at James Madison University and Eastern Mennonite University....	<u>149</u>	AUBC Floor plan	<u>183</u>
Virginia State University (VSU)	<u>150</u>	Downtown Harrisonburg	<u>184</u>
The Wesley Foundation at Old Dominion University.....	<u>151</u>	JMU Campus Map	<u>185</u>
Wesley at the University of Virginia.....	<u>152</u>	Index	<u>186</u>
Wesley at Virginia Tech.....	<u>152</u>		
William & Mary	<u>153</u>		
Wesley Westminster Campus Ministry at Norfolk State University.....	<u>153</u>		
United Methodist-Related Schools	<u>155</u>		
Randolph-Macon Academy.....	<u>156</u>		
Randolph-Macon College	<u>156</u>		
Shenandoah University.....	<u>158</u>		
Virginia Wesleyan University	<u>159</u>		

GENERAL INFORMATION



Important Registration Information.....	<u>6</u>
Welcome to Annual Conference	<u>8</u>
Agenda	<u>9</u>
Annual Conference Offering.....	<u>12</u>
Plenary Speakers.....	<u>12</u>
Responsibilities	<u>13</u>
Reporting Guide for Lay Members.....	<u>14</u>
Annual Conference Procedures	<u>17</u>
Standing Rules	<u>18</u>
Name Badge Colors.....	<u>47</u>

Registration Procedures - Please Read Carefully

All members of the Virginia Annual Conference will have an issued badge that should be worn during the conference.

Clergy received hard badges beginning at the 2024 Annual Conference session. These badges can also be used year round as clergy identification in the community. (i.e. hospital visits) Clergy are expected to keep possession of this badge for use at subsequent Annual Conference session. If a hard badge is lost, clergy should contact Chris Malak, ChrisMalak@vaumc.org, for a replacement. There will be a \$10.00 replacement fee. Any changes to your address, contact information, or appointment may be addressed separately. Clergy can go to unity.vaumc.org and update their information at any time. (You will need access to your Unity login information).

Lay members will receive their issued badges at the Registration Area when you arrive at the Annual Conference. It will not be sent to you prior to the Annual Conference. For any changes to a lay member's information, please contact your local church or district (for at-large members) to ensure that the Unity System has your correct information.

Please follow the procedure below:

On **Wednesday** registration will be at both the Atlantic Union Bank Center (for laity) and the Hotel Madison (for clergy). Please check in with the volunteers at the registration tables. A registration help desk will be available at both sites.

Thursday-Saturday registration will only be at the AUBC for all clergy, diaconal, and lay members.

Persons who need special attention regarding registration will be asked to go to the Registration Help Desk. Here, name badge corrections, alternate/reserve registrations, and other such situations will be handled. You will receive your updated name badge, if necessary.

Guest name badges may also be obtained at the Registration Help Desk.

This *Book of Reports* will be available online in May at vaumc.org/AC2026. You may wish to print these documents ahead of time if you desire a printed copy. Persons using the electronic version may want to download the *Book of Reports* to their phone, computer, or tablet prior to arrival for easy access.

ALTERNATES AND RESERVES

Alternates and Reserves who become the primary member AFTER MAY 31st should download an Alternate Member form, which needs to be completed and signed by the appropriate person before coming to Annual Conference. The form is available at vaumc.org/AC2026. Please be sure to download the appropriate form, either the Alternate Member Form for local church members or Alternate Member DISTRICT for District At-Large members. Bring your form directly to the Registration Help Desk. A new badge will be provided and scanned there.

Registration hours:

Wednesday, June 17: 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Laity Registration at the AUBC; Clergy Registration at the Hotel Madison

Thursday, June 18: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Laity and Clergy Registration at the AUBC

Friday, June 19: 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Laity and Clergy Registration at the AUBC

Per Diem: By conference action, retirees, persons receiving their first appointment, and selected others are authorized to receive reimbursement for expenses to attend Annual Conference. This reimbursement is not to exceed \$200 per night (\$600 maximum reimbursement, receipts required) and is subject to the limitations of conference approved rates. Vouchers will be available online at vaumc.org/AC2026 and at the VUMPI display in the Hall and should be submitted to the Conference Treasurer's Office with appropriate receipts. The Conference Treasurer encourages all reimbursements to be made by direct deposit. Instructions will be attached to the vouchers to make provisions for direct deposit. **Vouchers will not be accepted after July 31st.**

Banquets: A list of banquets is available on the Annual Conference webpage at vaumc.org/AC2026. Other information may be obtained from the banquet host or from the information desk at the Atlantic Union Bank Center.

Accessible parking: The Ballard Parking Deck, adjacent to the Atlantic Union Bank Center, provides ample parking. The deck has designated accessible parking spots.

Accessible seating: The concourse level and floor level will have accessible seating. The spaces will be clearly marked.

Access for those with hearing and vision challenges: Assisted listening receivers will be available with sign-out of the equipment at the Accessibility Assistance table (in the concourse). American Sign Language interpreters will be provided for all sessions. Real-time captions and translation in multiple languages (French, Korean, and Spanish) to personal devices will be available for this event provided by Captional. Instructions will be provided at the start of Annual Conference and will be available at the Help Desk throughout.

PRINTING THE *BOOK OF REPORTS*

If you'd like a printed version of the *Book of Reports*, you are free to do that on your own. For a "less formal" approach, simply print the file from your computer.

If you want something similar previous printed copies of the *Book of Reports*, take the following steps:

- Download the *Book of Reports* file from vaumc.org/ac2026.
- Visit the website of your preferred printing vendor. Some options include OfficeMax, FedEx Office, and Staples.
- Once on the website of choice, look for "document printing". From there, you'll be able to upload the *Book of Reports* file and select the kind of paper you'd like, the kind of binding you'd like, whether you prefer double sided printing, and if you'd like the document to be in full color or black and white.
- Pay for your copy.
- If you have a store near where you live, you can opt to pick up your printed *Book of Reports* from that store. Otherwise, you would choose to have the printed *Book of Reports* shipped to you.

NOTE: The least expensive option tends to be standard copy paper, spiral/wire bound, double sided, and black and white. This year's Book of Reports should cost between \$40-50 with those selections. Standard shipping times are usually around one week. We would recommend you have the Book of Reports sent for printing no later than June 1 to allow sufficient turnaround time to have it in hand before Annual Conference.

WELCOME TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Friends of the Virginia Annual Conference,

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ! We are joining you in anticipation of the 244th session of the Virginia Annual Conference! We are excited to gather together this year in a new venue, the Atlantic Union Bank Center, located on the beautiful campus of James Madison University.

This new setting offers not only a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere, but also enhanced accessibility features that will help all attendees fully participate in worship, learning, fellowship, and conferencing. We are grateful for a space that allows our connection to gather comfortably and intentionally as we continue the work God has called us to do together.

We will be continuing our theme: “A Conference in Three Movements.” This year we are entering into the historical movement by reclaiming the heart of Methodism. The historical movement of Methodism is capturing our past, living in our present, and pointing toward our future. This is the movement of the Holy Spirit in the church.

This year’s conference will also include two meaningful teaching moments led by Dr. Ashley Boggan and Rev. Dr. Candace Lewis. Their wisdom, insight, and leadership will help deepen our conversations and strengthen our shared ministry as we reflect on where God is leading the church and the rich history we share together.

In addition, we are pleased to offer “Lunch and Learn” opportunities on both Thursday and Friday. These gatherings are designed to continue fellowship and learning in an engaging setting, allowing attendees to share ideas, ask questions, and build meaningful connections across our conference.

After sessions, enjoy the lively Harrisonburg community. The surrounding area is filled with restaurants, shops, gathering spaces, and opportunities to connect beyond our scheduled sessions. We hope you will reconnect with friends and colleagues from across the conference in the spirit and hospitality of the area.

Most of all, we are excited to welcome the energetic congregation of members, volunteers, exhibitors, and leaders who make the Virginia Annual Conference such a meaningful and Spirit-filled gathering each year. Your presence and participation bring life to this time of holy conferencing.

We look forward to worshiping and celebrating together with you.

The Annual Conference Team

AGENDA

244th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference

June 17 - 20, 2026

Atlantic Union Bank Center - Harrisonburg, VA
Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson, Presiding

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17TH

(Registration 12:00PM -5:00PM)

1:30pm	Laity Session	Atlantic Union Bank Center, JMU Campus
1:30pm	Clergy Session	Shenandoah Grand Ballroom, Hotel Madison
3:00pm	Laity Fellowship Reception	
4:30pm	Opening Worship	Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson
	<i>Communion</i>	
	<i>Conference Offering: MJ Kim Fund and Advocacy Work</i>	
6:00pm	Recess for the evening	

THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 18TH

(Registration 8:00AM -5:00PM)

8:30am	Sacred Starts: Asian American Ministries Celebration	
9:00am	Call to Order	Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson
	Opening Prayers	
	District Welcome	Rev. Dr. Kyungsuk Cho
	Mayor Welcome	Mayor Deanna Reed
	Elections	Rev. Claire Miller
	Consecration of Leadership	Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson
	Recognition of New Lay and Clergy	Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson
	Monitoring Introduction	Commission Chairs
	<u>Rules Committee</u> (vote)	Rev. Joelle Gotwals
	<u>Consent Agenda</u> (vote)	Rev. Claire Miller
	<u>Cabinet Report</u>	Rev. Jay Carey, Dean
	New Faith Communities Recognition	Rev. Stephannie Kimec-Parker
	Churches Receiving Strategic Salary Support	Rev. Stephanie Kimec-Parker
	<u>VUMPI Report</u> (vote)	Mr. John Fuller
	Francis Asbury Award	Ms. Sherry Wright
		Rev. L. Glenn Tyndall, <i>posthumously</i>
	<u>General Delegation Report</u>	Rev. Lindsey B. Freeman
12:00pm	Recess for lunch	

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 18TH

2:00pm	Memorial Service	Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson
3:00pm	Break for 15 minutes	
3:15pm	Laity Address	Mrs. Martha Stokes
	Asian Ministry Celebration	Rev. Hungsu Lim
	<i>MJ Kim 60th Ordination Anniversary and Fund</i>	
	<u>Equitable Compensation Report</u>	Mr. Tom Durrance
	<u>Just Compensation Report</u>	Rev. Lan Davis Wilson
	<u>Foundation Report</u>	Rev. Dr. Steven Summers
	<u>Treasurer's report</u>	Mr. David Dommissie
	<u>CFA Report</u> (vote)	Mrs. Angie Williams
5:30pm	Recess for the Day	

FRIDAY MORNING, JUNE 19TH

(Registration 8:00AM -12:00PM)

8:30am	Sacred Starts: Recognition of Full Clergy Women's Rights 70th Anniversary	
9:00am	Call to Order	Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson
	Monitoring Update	Commission Chair
	The Heart of Our Mission	Dr. Ashley Boggan
	Reclaiming the Heart of Our Mission	Rev. Dr. Candace Lewis
	Panel Conversation	Rev. Lan Davis Wilson, Dr. Ashley Boggan, Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, Rev. Dr. Candace Lewis,
12:00pm	Recess for lunch	

FRIDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 19TH

2:00pm	Juneteenth Worship	
	<u>Campus Ministries:</u> Birthplace of Methodism	Rev. Joshua McCauley
	<u>VA Conference Educational Institutions Report</u>	Dr. Michael Hill
	Award Presentations:	Rev. Nilse Furtado-Gilliam Rev. Robin BeMiller
	<i>The Wesley Flame Award</i>	
	<i>One Matters Award</i>	
	<i>Green Church Award</i>	
	Monitoring Report	Commission Chair
	<u>Connectional Table Report</u>	Rev. Chris McLain
	Micro-Communities Session	Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson, Ms. Kathy Merry, Mr. Tom Neally
	Miracle Sunday	Rev. Dr. Rob Vaughn
5:00pm	Recognition of Retirees	Mr. John Fuller

AGENDA

SATURDAY MORNING, JUNE 20TH

8:30am	Sacred Starts: Deacons 30th Anniversary Celebration	
9:00am	Monitoring Report	Commission Chair
	Fixing of Appointments	DS Jay Carey
	<u>Resolutions</u> (vote)	Rev. Drew Ensz
	<u>Church Development Team</u>	Rev. Stephanie Kimec Parker
	Outdoor Ministries	Camp Director Association
	<u>Children Family Ministries</u>	Rev. Renée Delgado
	Youth Service Fund Offering	Youth Delegates
	Any unfinished business	
10:45am	Recess- Preparation for Service of Call and Ordination	
11:00am	Service of Call and Ordination	Rev. Candace Lewis

PLENARY SPEAKERS

We are honored to welcome three distinguished United Methodist scholars and leaders as our plenary speakers on Friday, June 19.

Dr. Ashley Boggan, General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History, will open with her teaching on "The Heart of our Mission." Dr. Boggan earned her PhD from Drew Theological School's Graduate Division of Religion, and her connection to Methodism runs deep, as her great-great-great grandfathers were Methodist circuit-riders in the early 19th century.



Rev. Dr. Candace M. Lewis, President and CEO of Gammon Theological Seminary and a proud Gammon alum, will teach on "Reclaiming the Heart of our Mission." An ordained elder in the Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church, she brings both institutional leadership and personal faith formation to her teaching.



Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President of Wesley Theological Seminary, will join the Teaching Panel. A member of the Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, he was ordained Deacon in 1988 and Elder in 1993, and holds both his Master of Divinity (1988) and Doctor of Ministry (2001) from Wesley Theological Seminary.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE OFFERING

This year's Annual Conference Offering will be shared between the MJ Kim Fund for Immigrant Clergy and the Virginia Conference Center for Belonging and Advocacy.

Named for the Rev. Myung Johng "MJ" Kim, the first Asian-American pastor to be ordained elder in the Virginia Conference, the MJ Kim Fund will support the unique needs of our Virginia Conference immigrant clergy, especially as they face the challenges of and expenses related to navigating our nation's immigration process so that they may serve our churches and their communities.

The Center for Belonging and Advocacy is the newest ministry area of our Conference. Led by the Rev. Lan Davis Wilson, this new ministry area equips our congregations and our Conference to develop and deploy resources and strategies to create a true culture of inclusion in Virginia and beyond.

The Annual Conference Offering will be taken during the Opening Worship service on **Wednesday**.

If your church wants to send your Annual Conference Offering ahead of time, **please denote AC offering on your check or statement with Fund #5500**. You can also give **electronically** using this link:

cognitofrms.com/VAUMC/VAUMCAC26Offering

Responsibilities of the Clergy Members of the Annual Conference

Each clergy member has the responsibility to:

1. Ensure that lay members from your congregation are fully prepared to participate in the annual conference, including having access to the necessary equipment and internet service.
2. Attend the annual conference orientation session whether held in-person or virtually.
3. Attend all the sessions (in-person or virtual) of the annual conference and leave only under emergency conditions and with the knowledge of your district superintendent. Attendance is not optional. "Any such person unable to attend shall report by letter to the conference secretary, setting forth the reason for the absence." (2020/2024 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 602.8.)
4. Become familiar with the organizational structure and existing programs of the annual conference, parliamentary procedure, and the conference standing rules as provided in the 2026 *Book of Reports* and discuss with the lay member(s) from your charge.
5. Read pre-conference reports and become familiar with specific programs and items that might be presented during the sessions. Prior to annual conference, consult with your lay member(s) so that they might understand the various reports and their implication for the life of the church. Keep in mind that the lay member(s) as well is/are obligated to express views and vote as each feels is best.
6. Participate fully at the annual conference and help in policy-making decisions.
7. Form your own opinions on issues and vote your convictions.
8. Serve as interpreter of the annual conference actions to your charge along with the lay member. (2020/2024 *Book of Discipline* ¶ 251.2).

Responsibilities of the Lay Members of the Annual Conference

It is an honor to be elected as a lay member to the Virginia Conference, one that comes with much responsibility. By virtue of this office, you are also a member of your church's council (¶ 252.5.g), finance committee (¶ 258.4), and the pastor-parish relations committee (¶ 258.2.a) (2016 *Book of Discipline*).

Each member has the responsibility to:

1. Attend the annual conference orientation session whether held in-person or virtually.
2. Attend all the sessions (in-person or virtual) of the annual conference.
3. Become familiar with the organizational structure and existing programs of the annual conference, parliamentary procedure, and the conference standing rules as printed in the 2026 *Book of Reports*.
4. Read pre-conference reports in the *Book of Reports* available to download and print from the conference website and become familiar with specific programs and items that might be presented during the sessions. Consult with the pastor and church lay leader. Dialogue with others ahead of time if there are issues for which you need additional information or insight.
5. Participate fully in the work of the annual conference policy-making decisions.
6. Form your own opinions on issues and vote your convictions.
7. Report back to your charge. This report may be presented through virtual opportunities available at each local church, newsletters, or other means. This report should be done "not later than three months after the close of the conference" (¶ 251.2, 2020/2024 *Book of Discipline*). Consult with your pastor before conference about scheduling and expectations for reporting. The *Book of Reports*, the Virginia Conference web page (vaumc.org) and personal notes on the sessions can be used as a basis for the report. Be certain to mention major issues raised and any action that might affect the local church

A Reporting Guide for Lay Members of the 2025 Virginia Annual Conference June 17-20, 2026

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson, presiding
Martha E. Stokes, Conference Lay Leader

*Lay Ministry is the work of mission or ministry to which each believer is called.
As Christians we are called to this ministry or priesthood – not just clergy.
Each of us has a responsibility to proclaim the Good News and reach out to others in love.
– Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church*

Dear Lay Member of the Virginia Annual Conference:

Thank you for serving as a member of the 2026 Virginia Annual Conference. We come to this role in a variety of ways. You may be representing your local charge or district. Your service may be determined by virtue of your role on a Virginia Conference or General Church board or commission. No matter how we have been chosen to serve as lay members of this Annual Conference session, we share the same responsibilities to:

- Interpret the actions of the Annual Conference to our congregations,
- Build the connection between the congregation and all United Methodist churches, and
- Connect the church of God with people who are not yet part of it.

These responsibilities come from the stated purpose of the Annual Conference as found in The 2020/2024 *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (BOD)*, Chapter 4, Section IX: THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE, ¶601: “... the 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.” As the lay member of Annual Conference, YOU ARE THE CONNECTION from your church/district/board to the Annual Conference and from the Annual Conference to your church/district/board. An effective lay member of Annual Conference informs these groups about The United Methodist Church – in the conference and around the world – bringing our United Methodist connection to life.

To carry out your responsibilities as a lay member, the **BOD** notes that you shall:

- Attend and participate in this session of the Annual Conference: “The lay members of the Annual Conference shall participate in all deliberations and vote upon all measures except...” matters of ministerial relations (¶602.6, **2020/2024 Book of Discipline**). Come prepared to participate. As we do our work during the conference session and in the months that follow, we must hold one another accountable to the mission and vision of the church.
- “Connect” with your local church when you return: “...The lay member(s) of the annual conference, along with the pastor, shall serve as an interpreter of the actions of the annual conference session. These persons shall report to the local church council on actions of the annual conference as soon as possible, but not later than three months after the close of the conference” (¶251.2, **2020/2024 Book of Discipline**). You have a key role in linking the mission and vision of the local congregation to the mission and vision of the annual conference.

This reporting guide is offered to:

- Aid lay members in recording your experiences and feelings about the actions and events of this Annual Conference session;

- Encourage you to interpret the mission and ministry we have together through our Annual Conference; and
- Assist you in preparing your report and interpretation of the actions and business of the 2025 Annual Conference session for sharing back in their local church. Communication truly improves connection.

SPEAKING DURING ANNUAL CONFERENCE

You have the right to speak and vote on all issues except those that have to do with clergy and ministerial orders and relations. Listen for specific instructions regarding communicating at this session. Follow the instructions that are given to be recognized in this setting.

If you wish to speak, take a few moments to think about what you want to say. Take notes; keep your comments direct and to the point. Then, addressing the chair, identify yourself. For example: “Bishop Hauptert-Johnson, I am *your name*, a lay member from name of *your local church and district*.” State the reason for seeking recognition and wait for a response from the bishop before continuing. If recognized, then ask your question, call for clarification of parliamentary procedure, or make a statement in support of or opposition to the matter under discussion. Be brief and to the point! If you have a motion you wish to present, introduce yourself and declare that you have a motion you would like to have considered. You will be asked to write the motion in the proper format as approved for this session and communicate it to the Conference Secretary.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- To help you while attending Annual Conference, please follow the agenda as printed in this *Book of Reports*. Be on time for all scheduled events.
- Standing Rules govern the session. Read and be familiar with the Standing Rules of Order and Procedure printed in this *Book of Reports*.
- Items to be voted on come from this *Book of Reports* and from issues raised from the floor by members of the conference.
- There is an equal number of lay and clergy making the decisions. You are a representative of the approximately 246,074 United Methodist laity in 833 churches divided into eight districts across the Virginia conference. It is important that we be faithful to this responsibility.

CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP

- Presiding Bishop: Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson
- Assistant to the Bishop and Chief Operating Officer: The Rev. Doug Forrester
- Director of Connectional Ministries: The Rev. Chris McLain
- Conference Secretary: The Rev. Claire Miller
- Conference Lay Leader: Martha Stokes
- Conference President of United Women in Faith: Karen McElfish
- Conference President of United Methodist Men: David Collins
- Your District Superintendent: _____
- Your District Lay Leader: _____

REPORTING

A balanced and interesting report interpreting the work of Annual Conference should include:

- Significant happenings and impressions. Make sure to take your own notes and use daily proceedings reported on the VAUMC website. A summary video will be available through the Conference Communications Office.

- Observations on the diversity and unity of our conference. Identify some of the challenges this creates and some of the benefits this brings.
- Reflection on the importance of what is happening here for you, for your local church, district, and your conference.

How will you share your experience and the action of the Annual Conference with your congregation?

- Write an article(s) for your church newsletter.
- Display pictures, resource material, etc.
- Use the summary video.
- Facilitate a panel with members presenting various aspects of conference work and activities.
- Share a dialogue between clergy and lay members.
- Be interviewed by someone in the congregation.

When will you share your report?

- Sunday morning during worship
- Church Council/Leadership Team meeting
- Meetings of the United Women in Faith, United Methodist Men, and youth
- Adult church school and/or small groups
- Conversation with others
- Special all-church gathering

What will you share?

- Observations and notes you have written down during sessions and events
- Highlights of reports offered during the conference sessions and from the *Book of Reports*
- Materials received both online and in your official conference packet
- Resources found for programs in your church (people, ideas, materials)

You will receive an evaluation survey after the conference via email. We encourage you to share your thoughts and suggestions. Your comments will assist the planning committee for the next annual conference.

If you have questions, please reach out to your District Lay Leader or Virginia Conference Lay Leader, Martha Stokes, by email at marthastokes@vaumc.org or call (804) 366-7162.

Speaking on a Motion/Making a Motion

Many motions important to the Annual Conference operation and program are functional and are voted on as a matter of course. Other motions invite much debate. You may find you desire to speak on a motion or even introduce a motion concerning an issue on the agenda.

The proper way to speak on the floor of Annual Conference is as follows:

- Be recognized by the presiding officer (usually the bishop) by standing at your seat, raising your hand and holding up the brightly-colored half-sheet that you received at registration.
- When recognized, move to the microphone designated by the presiding officer.
- Identify yourself using the guide affixed to the microphone.
- If you are making a motion regarding a report on the floor (being discussed), state the motion with no verbal introduction. State, "If seconded, I would like to speak to it," and then, if seconded, give your comments and supportive details.

NOTE: Motions must be written out and turned in to the Conference Secretary, even if not passed or seconded. If you are commenting on a report or motion on the floor (being discussed), then state if you speak in favor or opposition to the motion and make your comments (limit two minutes unless a shorter time has been established). If you desire to make a motion introducing a new issue or concept that is not part of a report presented to the conference, then you must write a motion.

STANDING RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE

As Approved by The Virginia Annual Conference at Its 2025 Session

The annual conference shall elect a Rules Committee as allowed by ¶604 of the *Discipline* and as set forth in ¶V.B.18 of the Standing Rules.

The Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies shall be those published in the *Journal of The Virginia Annual Conference United Methodist Church* of the preceding annual conference and shall be published in the *Book of Reports* of each annual conference.

The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall apply to any and all situations not covered elsewhere by these rules.

I. THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A. THE PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The purpose 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.

B. MEMBERSHIP

- 1. Clergy Membership.** The clergy membership of the annual conference shall consist of deacons and elders in full connection, provisional members, associate members, affiliate members, and local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment to a pastoral charge.
- 2. Campus Ministries.** Campus ministers, chaplains and Wesley Foundation directors shall be included in the annual conference composition. In districts where United Methodist laypersons serve as campus ministers/directors of Wesley Foundations, they shall be added as district-at-large lay members to the annual conference. In districts where United Methodist clergy who are members of the annual conference serve as chaplains, campus ministers, or directors of Wesley Foundations, the laypersons elected as their balancing counterpart shall be elected from and by either that campus ministry board of directors or the students from that ministry/foundation and their expenses paid by the district. Special consideration shall be given to the inclusion of United Methodist young adults who are active participants in campus ministry.
- 3. Lay Membership.** All lay members of the annual conference shall conform to the requirements for membership of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* in ¶ 602.4, and consist of the following (or designated alternate), if lay persons:
 - a. a professing member elected by each charge; except that each charge served by more than one clergy member under appointment (including deacons in full connection for whom this is their primary appointment) shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are clergy members under appointment. (¶ 32, 2016 *Book of Discipline*)
 - b. diaconal ministers;
 - c. the active deaconesses and home missionaries under episcopal appointment within the bounds of the annual conference;

STANDING RULES

- d. the conference president of United Methodist Women (hereinafter “United Women in Faith”);
- e. the conference president of United Methodist Men;
- f. the conference lay leader;
- g. district lay leaders;
- h. the president of the conference young adult organization;
- i. a member of the conference youth organization;
- j. the chair of the annual conference college student organization;
- k. the conference secretary of global ministries;
- l. the conference director of lay servant ministries;
- m. one youth between the ages of 12 and 18 and one young adult between the ages of 18 and 30 from each district, to be selected as set forth in *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶ 602.4;
- n. at least three additional youth between the ages of 12 and 18 and at least three additional young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 from each district, to be selected by the District Council on Ministries or equivalent body.
- o. the conference Treasurer;
- p. the Chancellor(s) of the annual conference;
- q. the Director of Connectional Ministries;
- r. lay members of general boards, councils and commissions, and lay members who serve on agencies related to the general church and are mandated by the *Discipline* because of their office to serve on related annual conference agencies, who are members of such as of August 31 of the previous year;
- s. district presidents of United Methodist Men;
- t. district presidents of United Women in Faith;
- u. conference Scouting coordinator;
- v. the president or chairperson of the following annual conference agencies: Commission on Archives and History; Board of Church and Society; Church Development Team; Commission on Disabilities; Board of Discipleship; Commission on Equitable Compensation; Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy; Council on Finance and Administration; Missional Ministries Board; Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries; Board of Ordained Ministry; Rules Committee; Resolutions Committee; Site Selection Committee; Commission on Status and Role of Women; Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc.; Trustees of the Virginia Annual Conference, Inc.; and Virginia Conference Board of Communications and Virginia United Methodist Foundation.
- w. And by annual conference formula to equalize the number of lay and clergy membership of the annual conference (¶ 32, *2016 Book of Discipline*) additional lay members to be elected by the lay members of the district conference of each district in such numbers as to provide that the total number of lay members from that district shall bear the same ratio to the total lay membership of

the annual conference as the church membership of that district bears to the total church membership of the annual conference. Each district conference shall also elect alternates to those elected under this paragraph in number to equal at least one-third of the numbers provided under this subparagraph. The computations that form the basis for the determination of the additional lay membership to be elected by each district here under shall be based on the various membership categories as of the adjournment of the preceding annual conference. In making these computations, a lay person shall not be counted in more than one membership position. The Director of Connectional Ministries shall furnish to the Bishop by September 1 of each year the totals of each category of members together with the number of additional lay members to be elected by each district.

4. Members of Next Succeeding Annual Conference. By the adoption of Paragraphs I.B.3.d-v, all lay persons holding the positions enumerated in those sub paragraphs are elected as lay members of the next succeeding annual conference. In the event of a change in the persons holding a position in ¶ I.B.3. between sessions of the annual conference, the person holding the position at the time of the next succeeding annual conference shall be the member of the annual conference.

5. Expenses. Unless otherwise covered by a local charge, expenses of attending annual conference shall be borne as follows:

a. By the districts:

- i. two youth between the ages of 12 and 18;
- ii. two young adults between the ages of 18 and 30;
- iii. the district lay leaders;
- iv. the district president of the United Methodist Men;
- v. the district president of the United Women in Faith;
- vi. additional district members at large;

b. By the annual conference:

- i. the Director of Connectional Ministries
- ii. the Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries;
- iii. the president of the conference young adult organization;
- iv. a member of the conference youth organization;
- v. the conference Treasurer;
- vi. the conference Chancellor(s);
- vii. lay members of general boards, councils and commissions, and lay members who serve on agencies related to the general church and are mandated by the *Discipline* because of their office to serve on related annual conference agencies, who are members of such as of August 31 of the previous year;
- viii. the chair of the annual conference college student organization;
- ix. the conference scouting coordinator;

- x. the chair of the Resolutions Committee.
- c. By annual conference boards or agencies:
 - i. the Conference Lay Leader
 - ii. the conference president of the United Methodist Men;
 - iii. the conference president of the United Women in Faith;
 - iv. the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries
 - v. the president or chairperson, of the following annual conference agencies: Commission on Archives and History; Board of Church and Society; Church Development Team; Commission on Disabilities; Board of Discipleship, Commission on Equitable Compensation; Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy; Council on Finance and Administration; United Methodist Foundation; Missional Ministries Board; Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries; Board of Ordained Ministry; Rules Committee; Site Selection Committee; Commission on Status and Role of Women; Virginia United Methodist Pensions; Inc., Trustees of the Virginia Annual Conference, Inc.; and Virginia Conference Board of Communications.

6. Right to Floor and Right to Vote. With the exception of provisional members, associate members, and local pastors serving full-time and part-time appointments, those members of the conference listed in ¶¶ I.B.1.,2., and 3. shall be full members of the conference with the right to the floor and the right to vote. Provisional members, associate members, and local pastors serving full-time and part-time appointments have the right to the floor and the right to vote on all matters except the following:

- a. Constitutional amendments.
- b. Matters of ordination, character and conference relations of clergy. These shall be the sole responsibility of clergy members in full connection.

For the election of delegates to the General and the Jurisdictional conference the following clergy are eligible to vote:

- a. Active and retired members (elders and deacons)
- b. Active and retired provisional members
- c. Active and retired associate members
- d. 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).
- e. Retired local pastors (including those under appointment) are NOT eligible to vote for the election of delegates (*2016 Book of Discipline* ¶ 320.5).

7. Roll of Conference. The roll of the conference shall be the official registration signed by the members of the conference.

8. Privilege of Floor Without Vote. The following shall be seated in the annual conference and shall be given the privilege of the floor without vote: official representatives from other denominations, especially from member churches of Churches Uniting In Christ, invited by the annual conference; missionaries regularly assigned by the General Board of Global Ministries and serving within the bounds of the annual conference; lay missionaries regularly appointed by the General Board of Global

Ministries in nations other than the United States and certified lay missionaries from nations other than the United States serving within the bounds of the annual conference (quoting *2016 Book of Discipline* ¶ 602.9).

C. ANNUAL CONFERENCE OFFICIALS

- 1. The Presiding Officer.** The resident Bishop of the conference shall preside at all sessions of the conference but shall have the privilege of appointing a presiding officer to preside in his or her stead in the event of illness or temporary absence from the annual conference floor.
- 2. Annual Conference Secretary.** The secretary of the annual conference shall be elected quadrennially by the annual conference upon nominations arising from the floor at annual conference following each regular General Conference of The United Methodist Church. In the event a vacancy occurs between sessions of the annual conference, the Bishop, after consultation with the District Superintendents, shall appoint a person to act until the next session.
- 3. Assistant Secretaries.** The secretary shall annually nominate a sufficient number of assistant secretaries who shall be elected by the annual conference to handle properly the work of the annual conference.
- 4. Treasurer.** The annual conference Treasurer shall be nominated by the Council on Finance and Administration. He or she shall be elected by the annual conference at the first session of the annual conference following the regular General Conference. He or she shall be elected for the quadrennium or until his or her successor has been elected and qualifies. If a vacancy should occur during the quadrennium, the Council on Finance and Administration shall fill the vacancy until the next session of the annual conference.
- 5. Statistician.** The annual conference statistician shall be elected by the annual conference on nomination by the Cabinet at the annual conference following each regular General Conference of The United Methodist Church. In the event a vacancy occurs between sessions of the annual conference, the Bishop, after consultation with the District Superintendents, shall appoint a person to act until the next session of the annual conference.
- 6. Assistant Statisticians.** The annual conference statistician shall annually nominate a sufficient number of assistant statisticians who shall be elected by the annual conference for the annual conference year.
- 7. Editor of the Annual Conference Journal.** The annual conference secretary shall nominate annually the editor of the conference Journal, who shall be elected by the annual conference for the next calendar year. He or she shall be responsible for editing and printing the *Journal of the Virginia Annual Conference* and shall be amenable to the conference secretary.
- 8. Conference Parliamentarian.** The Bishop may appoint a conference parliamentarian whose duty shall be to advise and counsel concerning rules of order and procedure.

D. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF BOARDS, COUNCILS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

- 1. The Conference Nominations Team:** There shall be a Conference Nominations Team. The team shall meet at least quarterly. The Director of Connectional Ministries and the Conference Lay Leader shall serve as co-chairs. The Conference Nominations Team shall consist of 18 members in addition to the co-chairs. Two members (one clergy, one lay) shall be appointed by the Bishop to ensure appropriate age, ethnic and gender representation on the Conference Nominations Team. The Bishop

will make replacement appointments in a manner that continues to ensure appropriate age, ethnic and gender representation and in a manner that maintains the clergy/laity balance on the Conference Nominations Team. Of the remaining 16 members, eight shall be clergy and eight shall be lay. Each district of the Virginia Annual Conference shall be represented. Representatives of the Commission on the Status and Role of Women, the Commission on Disabilities, and the Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy shall monitor and have voice at these meetings.

All persons shall serve terms of four years, and no person shall serve for more than four consecutive years. As terms of district representatives expire, each District Nominations Facilitation Committee will name one replacement individual to serve on the Conference Nominations Team, clergy to replace lay, lay to replace clergy. In the event that a member moves from the district, resigns, or dies during his/her term, a replacement shall be selected in the manner which was applicable to the departing member, with the replacement only serving until the end of the original term.

Each District Nominations Facilitation Committee shall designate one of its members as an alternate to its District Representative on the Conference Nominations Team.

- 2. District Nominations Facilitation Committee.** There shall be on each district a Nominations Facilitation Committee composed of the District Superintendent as chair; the district lay leader; president of United Methodist Men; president of United Women in Faith; a representative of United Methodist Youth; a college chaplain or a campus minister (applies only to districts with Wesley Foundation or ecumenical campus ministry programs), the district representative to the Conference Nominations Team, plus one to three persons (lay and clergy) elected by the district council on ministries. The committee shall meet on the call of the chair at least twice a year between annual conference and March 1. The committee shall develop and maintain a talent bank of lay and clergy persons from the district who could be qualified nominees for the various boards and agencies of the annual conference. The committee shall prepare a profile on each person nominated and upon having a person nominated to a board or agency of the conference, will provide a copy of that profile, including address and phone number, conference boards or agencies the individual is already serving, and the person's willingness to serve, to the co-chairs of the Conference Nominations Team.
- 3. Information to Be Furnished to Each District Nominations Facilitation Committee.** Each board, council, commission and committee of the annual conference shall furnish to the co-chairs of the Conference Nominations Team on a timely basis for the use of the District Nominations Facilitation Committees:
 - a. A summary of its responsibilities and the specific division/committee for which a vacancy exists;
 - b. A list of the gifts and talents desired;
 - c. Length of service expected;
 - d. Demographic information about its current makeup (e.g., number of men, women, ethnic representation, district representation, etc.); and
 - e. Schedule of times and locations of its meetings during the year.

It may also suggest names and profiles to the Conference Nominations Team through its co-chairs.

- 4. When Conference Nominations Team Should Make Nominations.** The Conference Nominations Team shall annually or quadrennially, as set forth by Disciplinary provision or Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies, nominate the membership of the boards, councils, commissions, and

committees of the annual conference. Nominees for boards and other agencies shall be published in the *Book of Reports*.

- 5. Removal Due to Absences.** Any member of any board, council, commission or committee who is absent from two meetings of such board, council, commission or committee without excuse, or from three consecutive agency meetings for any reason, shall automatically cease to be a member of such board, council, commission or committee. The secretary of each board, council, commission or committee shall notify the co-chairs of the Conference Nominations Team of vacancies. Any vacancy shall be filled by action of the board, council, commission or committee until the next annual conference session, at which time the annual conference shall fill the vacancy.
- 6. Request at Annual Charge Conferences for Names to be Given to District Nominations Facilitation Committee.** At each annual charge conference the elder presiding at the charge conference shall ask if the Lay Leadership Committee has any names to recommend for conference boards, councils, commissions or committees. Such names shall be given to the district Nominations Facilitation Committee.
- 7. Multicultural Inclusiveness.** The Conference Nominations Team shall strive to insure multicultural inclusiveness.
- 8. Normal Term of Service is Four Years.** Unless otherwise specified in these rules or in the *Book of Discipline*, a person elected to a board, council, commission or committee of the annual conference is elected for a four-year term of service and is eligible for re-election to an additional four-year term. However, if one is first elected to fill an unexpired term of two years or less, that person is eligible for re-election to two full terms. A person completing two consecutive full terms is eligible for re-election to that agency after an interim of one year. In the case of a board or agency with an eight-year term, members elected to fill unexpired terms of three years or less shall be eligible for re-election to one full term of eight years. Program boards and agencies other than the Board of Ordained Ministry may co-opt specific persons for specific projects for short periods of time as consultants, without vote. Any combination of continuous service as either a regular or co-opted member shall count on the eight-year time limit for consecutive service. The term of office of members of conference boards and agencies shall begin with the adjournment of the Annual Conference at which said members are elected and shall extend until their successors are elected.
- 9. Ex-Officio Members.** Members of general boards or agencies shall be members ex-officio of the corresponding conference board or agency.
- 10. Nomination or Election to Only One Board, Council, Commission, or Standing Committee with Limited Exceptions.** No person is eligible for nomination, election, or interim appointment to more than one board, council, commission, or standing committee, except where permitted by the *Discipline* and/or conference structure.
- 11. District Superintendent Not Eligible to be Chairperson or President of Board, Council, Commission, or Standing Committee.** No District Superintendent shall be eligible to serve as a chairperson or president of any board, council, commission, or committee of the annual conference. The Bishop may appoint a representative of the Cabinet to any board, council, commission, or committee which is not program-related of which a member of the Cabinet is not already an elected member. The appointment of District Superintendents to boards, councils, commissions, or committees which are program related shall be made annually.

- 12. Officers of Quadrennially Elected Boards, Councils, Commissions or Committees.** Officers of boards, councils, commissions, and committees whose members are required to be elected quadrennially shall be elected by the representative agency at the session of the annual conference at which new members are elected or within ninety days after adjournment. Nominations shall come from a nominating committee appointed by the outgoing president of the agency and/or from the floor. The organizational or first meeting of each agency shall be convened by a person designated by the Bishop.
- 13. Officers of Other Boards, Councils, Commissions and Committees.** Officers of other boards, councils, commissions and committees shall be elected by the representative agency at the agency's last regular meeting prior to each annual conference. Nominations shall come from a nominating committee appointed by the outgoing president of the agency and/or from the floor.
- 14. Tellers.** For those sessions of the annual conference where there is no election of delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference, the Conference Nominations Team shall, as necessary, appoint a chief teller, who shall be ineligible to serve again for a quadrennium. It shall additionally appoint a team of tellers composed of four persons, two clergy and two lay, from each district. Each time a count vote is called for in the annual conference session, the chief teller shall have the tellers ready to count the vote, having previously trained them to accurately and efficiently perform their duties.

II. REPORTS, RESOLUTIONS, PRESENTATIONS, PETITIONS, PROPOSALS AND CONSENT AGENDA

A. REPORTS

- 1. Submission of Annual Reports and Publishing of *Book of Reports*.** Agencies shall submit annual reports to the designated person before the date set annually by the Common Table for Church Vitality. The Director of Connectional Ministries shall make available the *Book of Reports* to each clergy and lay member of annual conference at least 30 days before the opening session of annual conference.
- 2. Reporting at Annual Conference.** For reports printed in the *Book of Reports*, verbal introductions shall not exceed five minutes, and there shall be no further reading of reports or resolutions, unless requested for clarification or requested by a majority vote of the annual conference. The presiding Bishop may amend the Annual Conference agenda or schedule as needed.
- 3. Amendments to be Submitted in Writing.** Persons proposing amendments to any report must submit them in writing to the secretary upon presentation to the annual conference.
- 4. Submission of New Reports, Changes, or Additions to Printed Report.** Persons proposing new reports, changes or additions to the printed report of an agency in the *Book of Reports* must submit them in writing for delivery to members of the annual conference at or before the opening session, but not to be considered by the annual conference before the morning session of the second day of annual conference, or at such time as directed by the resident Bishop or presiding officer for consideration.
- 5. Presiding Officer of Agency giving Report has Privilege of Floor, without Vote, for that Report.** When the annual conference has before it the report of any agency, or a matter concerning any agency, the presiding officer of that group, if not a member of the conference, shall have the privilege of the floor, without vote, for that report.

B. RESOLUTIONS

- 1. Resolutions.** Resolutions proposed for presentation to the annual conference shall be submitted to the Resolutions Committee no later than January 31 each year for consideration at that year's annual conference. The Resolutions Committee shall meet as necessary throughout the year in order to review and process submitted resolutions in a timely manner. All properly submitted resolutions shall be organized by the Resolutions Committee for submission to the Conference Secretary, or the Conference Secretary's designee, along with a Resolution Committee report, for publication in the *Book of Reports*.

 - a. The Resolutions Committee will determine if the below requirements under Rule II.B.2 and 3 have been met for any and all submitted. The final version of all resolutions must be submitted by the January 31 deadline to be properly considered for presentation to the annual conference. Upon the January 31 final deadline for submission, the Resolutions Committee shall meet within 30 days in order to review, process and, if necessary, refer a resolution to an appropriate board, agency or committee for consideration and input.
 - b. A resolution may be submitted for consideration after January 31 only if the resolution concerns an issue that has clearly arisen after the January 31 deadline. Such resolutions must be submitted to the Resolutions Committee as soon as possible after the triggering event regarding the issue and no later than 14 days prior to the opening session of the annual conference.
 - c. The Resolutions Committee shall be the final arbiter to determine if the subject of the proposed resolution arose after the formal submission deadline. Such resolutions, if considered by the Committee, will be distributed via all conference e-mail groups, and the submitter of any such resolutions shall provide sufficient copies for all members attending annual conference, with the costs of such copies borne by the submitter, and submit such copies to the Conference Secretary for inclusion in the member packets prior to the opening session of the annual conference.
- 2. Who May Submit a Resolution.** The following persons and entities may submit a resolution before the annual conference:

 - a. Any conference board, agency or committee;
 - b. Any group of at least ten (10) conference clergy members (full connection, provisional, or local pastor, including retired pastors) and/or lay members of the Annual Conference; or,
 - c. Any lay member of the Annual Conference who is a member of a local church within the conference and whose church council, or equivalent governing body, has endorsed the resolution in a duly-called church council (or equivalent governing body) meeting . For purposes of this section, a meeting shall be considered duly-called if notice of time and place of the meeting are provided (i) at least ten (10) days in advance; and (ii) by two or more of the following: from the pulpit of the church, in its weekly bulletin, in a church publication, or by mail.
- 3. Submission of Resolutions.** To submit a resolution for consideration by the annual conference, the document must be properly formatted and submitted to the Resolutions Committee at an email address provided by the conference. The following process must be followed:

 - a. All resolutions shall be limited to one issue. If the *Book of Discipline* is affected, each resolution must address only one paragraph of the *Discipline*; except that, if two or more paragraphs in the *Discipline* are so closely related that a change in one affects the others, the resolution may call for

the amendment of those paragraphs to make them consistent with one another (§1507.2. The *Book of Discipline*);

- b. All resolutions must be accompanied by a statement of: (i) any estimated financial impact; (ii) an estimate of any conference staff resources and time required; and (iii) the source(s) of funding required to implement its provisions, if any;
- c. For those resolutions submitted by a lay member and endorsed by a church council (or equivalent governing body) pursuant to II.B.2.c., a copy of the minutes of the meeting endorsing the resolution must accompany the submission;
- d. All resolutions are to be written in the following format: “Whereas, ... Whereas, ... Whereas, ... Therefore, be it resolved ,, Be it further resolved ...” structure;
- e. All resolutions must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word format, in 12 point, Times New Roman font, single-spaced.
- f. All resolutions shall be limited to no more than 1,000 words, including any rationale or further documentation (to the exclusion of meeting minutes required in II.B.3.c); and
- g. Each resolution must be signed by the person(s) submitting it, and accompanied by appropriate identifying information, including the name(s), title(s), phone number(s), and email address(s) and conference district of the person(s) must be included with the resolution. Electronic signatures will be accepted in accordance with common business practices.

4. Committee Actions. The Resolutions Committee shall meet as necessary throughout the year to timely take the following actions upon properly receiving and considering resolutions:

- a. Accept the resolutions as presented with no changes and recommend it for consideration at annual conference;
- b. Accept the resolutions after working with the submitter regarding formatting and to comply with the Standing Rules and the *Book of Discipline*, and recommend it for consideration at annual conference;
- c. Refer a resolution to another annual conference board, agency or committee for consideration and possible inclusion in that body’s report if the subject of the resolution involves the work of that conference body. Should the board, agency or committee to which a resolution is referred choose not to include the resolution in its report, then the Resolutions Committee shall be timely informed of this decision so that resolution may be included in the Resolution Committee’s report.
- d. Refer a resolution to the Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) for review and to obtain an opinion or comment when such a resolution has a potential financial impact on the conference; or,
- e. Refer a resolution to the conference Chancellor for review and to obtain an opinion or comment when such a resolution has a potential legal impact on the conference.

5. Scheduling and Debate of Resolutions.

- a. The Resolutions Committee shall determine the order for debate of all properly submitted resolutions included in the Resolutions Committee report for consideration by the annual conference.
- b. For resolutions that have come from or been referred to a conference board, agency or committee, the chairperson of that body will be entitled to speak once before the annual conference (prior to

floor debate) to share any comments of the board, agency or committee concerning the resolution. This speech will not count against any time limitations.

- c. For resolutions that have been referred to the CFA or the conference Chancellor, the chairperson of the CFA or the Chancellor will be entitled to speak once before the annual conference (prior to floor debate) to share comments germane to the financial or legal impact concerning the resolution. This speech will not count against any time limitations.
- d. Debate on each resolution will begin with the submitter, or a representative of the submitter if submitted by a group of individuals speaking for a maximum of two (2) minutes. The resolution shall then be subject to floor debate and the speaking limits set forth under Standing Rule VII.H. Two speeches for concurrence and two speeches for non-concurrence shall be permitted.
- e. After debate has concluded, and prior to voting, the submitter of the resolution may offer to modify the resolution as referenced in Rule 6.b, below, or may withdraw the resolution from consideration.
- f. Prior to any floor debate on a resolution, the presiding chairperson may entertain a motion to table the resolution without debate. This motion may come from any full member of the conference, requires a second, and must be approved by a majority vote.

6. Voting on Resolutions.

- a. Voting on resolutions shall be on each individual resolution, not on a recommendation of any conference board, agency, committee, the CFA or the Chancellor to which a resolution may have been referred to for review.
- b. The annual conference shall vote on the resolution, including the “whereas” language. The “whereas” language is not amendable during debate, although the submitter of the resolution may modify or strike the language of any “whereas” statements at any time prior to a vote on the resolution or during the debate. Any such modifications will not be subject to further debate.
- c. As deemed necessary by the presiding chairperson during consideration of resolutions, if the outcome of any voice or standing vote on a resolution is deemed inconclusive, a recorded vote may be taken with the assistance of the Chief Teller. Every resolution upon which a recorded vote has been taken shall have the vote count attached to it in all distributions of that resolution.

7. Time Limit of Resolutions. Every resolution passed by the annual conference shall be valid for the lesser of one year, or until the resolution is specifically rescinded, amended, or superseded by action of subsequent session of the annual conference. If the intent of a resolution is to be binding upon the annual conference for more than one year, the resolution must provide the appropriate language to amend the Standing Rules to allow for the indefinite implementation of the resolution. Such indefinite implementation must pass by a separate 2/3 vote majority of the annual conference; failing such a vote the resolution shall be valid under the one year time limit.

8. Conference Secretary Recordkeeping. The Conference Secretary shall maintain a list of resolutions passed by the annual conference and the list shall be published in each year’s Journal and such other places as may be helpful.

C. PRESENTATIONS

Requests for inclusion of presentations for the annual conference agenda shall be submitted to the Director of Connectional Ministries by the due date for the publication of the *Book of Reports*. The author or originating agency must be identified if other than the submitter(s) of the proposal.

D. PETITIONS

An area designated by the annual conference planning committee shall be determined for receiving signatures for petitions.

E. PROPOSALS

- 1. Proposals Requiring Publication of Materials.** Proposed annual conference action that includes publication or dissemination of information shall be referred to the Print Media Committee of Virginia Conference Board of Communications for its consideration and report on the proposed action, including the financial consequences, prior to conference action. The committee may act through its chairperson, the Virginia Conference Director of Communications, or other representatives to make its report and recommendation.
- 2. Proposals Requiring Funding.** Proposals or amendments which may require expenditure of funds, which have not been considered by the Council on Finance and Administration (CFA), must be submitted by the conclusion of the afternoon session preceding the concluding day of annual conference, or at such time as directed by the resident Bishop, presiding officer, or the CFA. Such proposals of amendments which may require expenditure of funds shall be referred to CFA for its consideration and recommendation prior to final annual conference action.
- 3. Proposals for Consideration as Additions to the Agenda.** During the first business session of annual conference, the agenda shall include time to introduce items in addition to the printed agenda. Any such items not referred to conference agencies under the preceding paragraphs shall be referred to the Rules Committee for its consideration and recommendation prior to adjournment of annual conference.
- 4. Proposals from the Floor.** A motion is a formal proposal. Anytime the Annual Conference is in session and there is no business on the floor of the Annual Conference, a proposal from the floor may be made. This proposal will need to be placed in writing and in conjunction with the rules as stated in VII K.

F. CONSENT AGENDA

Agenda items and reports not requiring action by the Annual Conference other than a vote to receive said items for publication in the Journal shall be placed on a Consent Agenda. For any item or report to be eligible for placement on the Consent Agenda, it must have been distributed in the pre-Conference materials. Determination of items to be placed on the Consent Agenda shall be made annually by the Bishop in consultation with the Consent Agenda Committee. This committee shall be composed of the Conference Secretary, the Conference Lay Leader, the Chair of the Conference Rules Committee, and the Director of Connectional Ministries. An individual item may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of no less than 30 members of the annual conference. The process for making that request will be determined by the Consent Agenda Committee, and the deadline for such requests will not be prior to ten minutes after the call to order of the annual conference session. The Consent Agenda will be made available electronically one week prior to the annual conference. When an individual item has been removed from the Consent Agenda, it shall be placed into the regular agenda.

**ELECTION OF DELEGATES TO GENERAL CONFERENCE
AND THE JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE**

A. AN INCLUSIVE CHURCH

We are an inclusive church. We desire to have a Business that will capably represent the annual conference. The Business should be representative of the annual conference considering such factors as sex, age, race, disability, ethnic background, economic conditions and geographical locations.

B. ELECTION PROCEDURES

Clergy and lay delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be elected in a fair and open process at the session of the annual conference held not more than two years preceding the session of General Conference.

- 1. Special Sessions.** Clergy and lay delegates elected to the preceding General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be the delegates to special sessions of the respective conferences.
- 2. Number of Delegates.** The number of clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be that number of delegates to such conferences respectively as furnished by the secretary of the General Conference.
- 3. Election of General Conference and jurisdictional conference Delegates.** The number of General Conference delegates authorized by the secretary of the General Conference shall be first elected, followed by balloting on the authorized number of the jurisdictional conference delegates who shall be reserves to General Conference in the order of their election. After the authorized numbers of the jurisdictional conference delegates have been elected, 10 clergy and 10 lay reserve delegates to the jurisdictional conference shall be elected on a single ballot with the 10 persons receiving the greatest number of votes in each category being elected in the order of the number of votes received.
- 4. Speeches/Printed Materials.** No speeches may be made or printed materials distributed at the site of the Annual Conference on behalf of any nominee.
- 5. Nominee Participation.** Nothing herein shall prevent any nominee from
 - a. appearing and speaking, once recognized, for the purpose of conducting Conference business.
 - b. fully participating in activities of the Conference including the debate over budgets, proposals or resolutions pending before the Conference. This shall include the right to bring petitions, amendments, or resolutions to the Conference and encourage votes for or against the same.
 - c. conducting one-on-one conversations about the election of delegates to the General Conference and the jurisdictional conference including how that nominee proposes to represent the Conference at such events. Nominees are reminded to respect the need of the Conference to conduct business and are asked to take such conversations off the floor of the Conference.

C. CLERGY NOMINATIONS

1. Eligibility

- a. To be nominated. All clergy members in full connection and those who are recommended by the Board of Ordained Ministry to full membership in the connection are eligible to be nominated (2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶35), except as provided in 2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶354.8.

- b. To vote
 - i. The following clergy are eligible to vote:
 - a) Active and retired members (elders and deacons)
 - b) Active and retired provisional members
 - c) Active and retired associate members
 - d) 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)
 - ii. Retired local pastors (including those under appointment) are NOT eligible to vote (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶320.5).

2. Nomination Process.

- a. All eligible clergy have the opportunity to serve as delegates to General Conference and jurisdictional conference. Clergy persons desiring nomination/election as delegates to General and jurisdictional must follow the process outlined below. No exceptions to the process, including deadline dates, will be granted except as mandated by changes in The *Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church and/or the Annual Conference in changing these rules.

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 Business s;
- 4) Attend both General Conference and jurisdictional conference.

Each clergy nomination shall be submitted on a clergy nomination form. Clergy nomination forms will be posted on the conference web site in January preceding the Annual Conference session of delegate elections. The form shall include the names one clergy who is eligible to vote who is making the nomination. Alternatively, any clergy who desires nomination must complete a clergy nomination form. All nominations shall include the nominee's name, picture not to exceed 1 1/2" by 2 1/2" unless nominated from the floor of the Annual Conference, address, phone number, e-mail address if available, church, district, and should include a personal statement not to exceed 150 words in which may be indicated the nominee's experience, qualifications, and reasons for wanting to serve. There shall be a box to be checked stating: "Nominee is aware of nomination and agrees to serve if elected.", and a line for the signature of the nominee. The completed nomination form or facsimile thereof must be returned to the Director of Connectional Ministries no later than March 1 preceding the Annual Conference session of delegate elections. The deadline is non-negotiable.

- b. **Clergy Nominations from the Floor.** After the convening of the Annual Conference session, prior to entering block voting, the presiding Bishop will ask for any nominations from the floor. Any nominations made from the floor must be made by eligible clergy (III.C.1.b.i) and the nominee must be present to accept or decline the nomination. Nominations from the floor shall be closed by the presiding Bishop.

c. **Clergy Nomination Review Committee.** The committee shall be composed of two persons appointed by the bishop plus one clergy member of the Rules Committee designated by that committee. The Director of Clergy Excellence shall serve as an ex-officio member. The committee shall review and compile all nomination forms alphabetically according to the last name of the nominee. This clergy nomination booklet will be available on the conference web site. Printed copies will be available at cost from the office of the Director of Connectional Ministries. An alphabetical listing will be included in the clergy *Book of Reports* packet. This committee will also be responsible for reviewing and validating any nominations made from the floor of the Annual Conference..

D. LAY NOMINATIONS

1. **Lay Nominations from Districts.** Nominations for lay delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be made by the lay members of the district conference of each district from names submitted by the District Council on Ministries and/or from names of all persons given by any member of The United Methodist Churches of the district to the District Superintendent. These names shall be submitted by the superintendent to the District Conference. Additional nominations at the district conference may be made from the floor, provided that no nomination may be made without the agreement of the nominee to serve if elected. In the event of a tie for the final nominee(s), the nominee(s) shall be selected by lot.

Each district may nominate up to one person for each 2,000 members of The United Methodist Church or major fraction thereof in that district, based upon figures reported at the preceding annual conference. District nominees need not be from the district which nominates them.

2. **Agency Nominations.** The lay members of the following agencies of the annual conference may also nominate one additional lay delegate: Board of Church and Society; Commission on Disabilities; Board of Discipleship; Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy; Council on Finance and Administration; Missional Ministries Board; Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries; Board of Laity; Commission on the Status and Role of Women; United Methodist Men; United Women in Faith; Virginia Conference Board of Communications; and Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc. In addition to the aforementioned nominees, the Conference Council on Youth Ministries, and the Virginia United Methodist Student Movement each may nominate one delegate.

3. **Church Membership.** All nominees shall have been professing members of The United Methodist Church for at least two years preceding their nomination and must be members of churches in the Virginia Annual Conference and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years preceding their election. They also must be active members within The United Methodist Church at the time of holding General Conference and jurisdictional conference. The four-year participation and two-year membership requirements may be waived for young persons under twenty-five years of age. Such persons must be members of The United Methodist Church and active participants at the time of election.

4. **Nomination Forms.** All nominations shall include the nominee's name, picture not to exceed 1½" x 2½" (unless nominated from, the floor of the Annual Conference), address, phone number, e-mail address if available, church, district, and should include a personal statement not to exceed 150 words in which the nominee may indicate his or her experience, qualifications and reasons for wanting to serve. There shall be a box to be checked stating: "Nominee is aware of nomination and agrees to serve if elected.", and a line for the signature of the nominee. The nominations shall be on

a form or facsimile thereof furnished by the Director of Connectional Ministries. It is recommended that the nomination forms for persons to be voted upon by the district conference be circulated to the members of the district conference in advance of the district conference at which voting is to take place.

5. Lay Nominations from the Floor. After the convening of the Annual Conference session, prior to entering block voting, the presiding Bishop will ask for any nominations from the floor. Any nominations made from the floor must be made by lay members of the Annual Conference (I.B.3) and the nominee must be present to accept or decline the nomination. Nominations from the floor shall be closed by the presiding Bishop.

6. Conference committee on lay delegate nominations

- a. **Membership.** The committee shall be composed of two persons appointed by the Bishop plus one member of the Rules Committee designated by that committee.
- b. **Function.** Each District Superintendent shall by January 15 of the year of election submit to this committee in care of the Director of Connectional Ministries completed forms for all nominees from the district. The committee shall then forward a list of all nominees to the agencies named in ¶ III.D.2. Each agency of the annual conference shall be responsible for forwarding to the committee any completed nomination form no later than March 1. The committee shall review and compile all nomination forms alphabetically according to the last name of the nominee. This lay nomination booklet will be made available on the conference website. Printed copies will be available at cost from the office of the Director of Connectional Ministries. An alphabetical listing will be included in the *Book of Reports*. This committee will also be responsible for reviewing and validating any nomination forms made from the floor of the Annual Conference.
- c. **List of Nominees.** The lay nominees shall be those persons named on the nomination forms and nominated from the floor.

E. BALLOTING PROCEDURES

- 1. Separate Voting Areas.** Following the convening of Annual Conference, clergy and laity will separate to elect General and jurisdictional delegates and alternates, allowing five (5) hours to complete the process.
- 2. Ballots Shall Be Counted Electronically.** The Rules Committee shall determine the electronic equipment and procedures to be used and shall do so in consultation with the chief lay and clergy tellers.
- 3. Valid Ballots.** To be valid, a ballot:
 - (a) must be cast on the ballot bearing the number designated by the presiding officer for that particular ballot; and
 - (b) must be voted for the number of delegates and/or alternates to be elected on that ballot, no more and no less.
- 4. Voting Area.** The presiding officer shall designate the areas for Lay and Clergy voting. Ballots shall be cast from only those present and seated within the voting areas of the annual conference and displaying the proper credentials.
- 5. Ballot Reporting.** After a ballot has been counted, the chief teller, either clergy or lay, shall furnish a written report to the Bishop which shall contain (a) number of ballots cast; (b) number of invalid

ballots; (c) number of ballots counted; (d) number of ballots necessary to elect; and (e) list of names of persons voted for, including the number of votes received by each, beginning with the largest number of votes.

- 6. Conditions for a Revote.** After the ballots have been counted and reported, if the number of collective invalid ballots exceeds 15%, the Bishop shall declare the prior ballot invalid and shall order a revote.
- 7. Majority Required for Election.** On every ballot, a majority of the valid votes cast shall be necessary for the election of a delegate, except on the ballot to elect reserve delegates to the jurisdictional conference.
- 8. Reading or Distributing Names.** On the first ballot for General Conference, the presiding officer shall read or display all names receiving votes with the number of votes cast for each. After the first ballot, the 25 nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be read or displayed, according to the highest number of votes received. In the event of a tie between two or more nominees for the last available position on the General or jurisdictional Business, a run-off election will be ordered by the bishop to select the person to fill that position. Only the names of those in the run-off are open for votes. The names will be read in order of their election. The person with the highest number of votes cast will be seated with the appropriate Business.

When all General Conference delegates have been elected, the same procedure shall be followed for jurisdictional conference delegates.

- 9. Handling of Ballots after Counting and Recording.** Upon completion of the counting and recording of a ballot, the chief teller shall seal the ballot results and deliver them to the annual conference secretary. The annual conference secretary shall retain all ballot results until the adjournment of the annual conference after which they shall be destroyed.

F. TELLERS

- 1. Appointment of Chief Tellers, Assistant Chief Tellers, and Tellers.** The Conference Nominations Team shall appoint a chief teller and an assistant chief teller for the clergy tellers and a chief teller and an assistant chief teller for the lay tellers. The chief tellers shall not be eligible to serve in the year of the next election of delegates to General Conference and jurisdictional conference. The Conference Nominations Team shall additionally appoint four (4) clergy and four (4) lay members of the annual conference from each district to form a pool of tellers from which as many teams shall be formed as the chief tellers deem advisable. One member of each team shall be designated as the captain for that team.
- 2. Expenses for Balloting.** All expenses incident to the balloting for and election of delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be borne by the annual conference.

G. EXPENSES OF CLERGY AND LAY ALTERNATES

The expenses of two clergy and two lay alternates to General Conference and to the jurisdictional conference shall be borne by the annual conference. Such expense allowances shall not exceed the expense allowances, per diem and travel, as are paid to the regular delegates.

H. DELEGATES UNDER THE AGE OF 18

When a General Conference or jurisdictional conference delegate will be under the age of 18 at the time of General Conference and/or jurisdictional conference, the Virginia Conference Child Protection Policy will be observed for this person. The leader of the General Conference Business will be responsible for implementation of the Child Protection Policy.

IV. NOMINATIONS FOR EPISCOPAL ELECTION

At the annual conference immediately preceding the jurisdictional conference, nominations for the office of Bishop may be made by submitting the name of an elder and a biographical sketch of not more than 100 words to the secretary of the conference signed by not fewer than 50 members of the annual conference. To be eligible for nomination the person must not have attained his or her 68th birthday prior to the first day of the month in which the jurisdictional conference is held. Nominations shall cease at the close of the afternoon session of the first day of the annual conference.

The conference secretary shall cause copies of each sketch to be prepared and distributed to the members of the annual conference. Ballots shall be prepared containing the name of each nominee and, beside each name, a square followed by the word "yes." The ballots shall be distributed to the members of the annual conference immediately before they are to be cast. A member of the annual conference may vote for one or more nominees, but not more than the number of episcopal vacancies to be filled, or may choose not to vote for any of the nominees. To be nominated to the jurisdictional conference, a nominee must receive an affirmative vote of not less than 60 percent of the total ballots cast.

V. ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMS – COMMON TABLE FOR CHURCH VITALITY, BOARDS AND AGENCIES

A. THE COMMON TABLE FOR CHURCH VITALITY.

The Common Table for Church Vitality ("Common Table") exists to resource mission and ministry to fulfill the conference mission and vision. As a diverse body of representatives, the Common Table coordinates with Boards and Agencies, assists in the disbursement of ministry and program grants, and oversees the personnel of the Annual Conference offices that are under its guidance. The Common Table supports the Director of Connectional Ministries to fulfill the requirements of Paragraph 608 in the *Book of Discipline*. The mission, values, membership, officers, committees, meetings, finances, as well as the responsibilities of the Director of Connectional Ministries are set forth in the Charter for the Common Table for Church Vitality. This Charter is an Appendix to these Standing Rules of Order and Procedure for ease of reference but is not incorporated into these Standing Rules.

B. BOARDS AND AGENCIES

The following are defined as program boards and agencies: The Board of Church and Society, the Church Development Team, the Board of Discipleship, the Missional Ministries Board, the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries, and the Board of Laity. Each board and agency shall meet at least annually.

- 1. Membership.** All program board and agency members shall be elected for a four-year term by the annual conference. So far as possible, board membership shall be composed of an equal number of clergy and laity. No elected member may serve more than eight consecutive years except as authorized by the *Discipline* or in ¶ I.D.8 of the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies. The bishop shall annually appoint for one year terms at least one District Superintendent to each board,

agency or commission. Except for the Board of Ordained Ministry, the presiding bishop and the Director of Connectional Ministries are members of all boards, agencies and commissions with vote unless otherwise provided for by the *Book of Discipline*.

- 2. Organization.** The boards shall organize in the several divisions or equivalent structure listed below to carry out their respective functions. Each member of a board shall serve on one division or equivalent structure. There shall be an executive committee of each board whose duties and responsibilities shall be determined by the board. A board may develop such additional structure, including the election of division members-at-large, as it deems necessary to discharge its assigned responsibilities, provided, however, that where additional funding is required for such structure, prior approval of the Common Table for Church Vitality shall be obtained by the board. Division members-at-large are not members of the board.
- 3. Function.** The conference boards will provide consultative services and resources to the local church, the District Councils on Ministries, the annual conference and the Common Table for Church Vitality. Each board will make program recommendations to the Common Table for Church Vitality, will be responsible for the essential functions of the area of concern assigned by the Common Table for Church Vitality, or by the *Book of Discipline*, and will be related to the objectives and scope of work set forth by its General Board. Each board is amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality.
- 4. Responsibilities.**

- a. **Church and Society.** The Board of Church and Society, in cooperation with the General Board of Church and Society and the Common Table for Church Vitality, shall develop programs on Christian social concern within the bounds of the annual conference. To discharge its responsibilities it shall divide its membership into committees, which so far as practical shall be patterned after the divisions of the General Board of Church and Society. The total membership shall be 20 (10 lay and 10 clergy).
- b. **Church Development Team.** There shall be a Church Development Team dedicated to working on strategies for and implementation of church development and new faith communities in the annual conference. This team/board will consist of a minimum of 12 and up to 16 persons: six nominated by the bishop and Cabinet, six nominated by the Conference Nominations Team, and up to four additional persons who may be co-opted by the team for expertise and diversity. The membership of this team will be placed in four classes to ensure continuity. The team is amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality.
- c. **Discipleship.** The Board of Discipleship, in cooperation with the General Board of Discipleship and the Common Table for Church Vitality, shall create partnerships by providing a network of experience, knowledge and coaching, through intentional connection, to enhance or create effective disciple-making processes. These partnerships are created by: (1) coaching at local levels and pulling in identified district and conference resources as needed; (2) training at district or regional levels; (3) celebrating churches and individuals whose discipleship is a model for the Annual Conference; and (4) organizing regional support.

Consistent with each of these functions the Board of Discipleship shall consist of four Teams: (1) an Operations Team; (2) Equipping Team; (3) Celebration Team; and (4) Regional Cultivator Team. The Operations Team will (a) provide clarity for disciple-making ministries in the Annual Conference; and (b) support research on best practices, gathered and distributed by Equipping, Celebration, and Regional Cultivator Teams. Membership of the Board shall include the members of the Operations

Team, and additional at-large representatives from the Equipping, Celebration, and Regional Cultivator Teams, as determined by the Leader of each Team. Composition of all Teams shall seek to balance representation of laity and clergy, with additional attention to gender and ethnic representation.

The Operations Team shall consist of the following members, to be nominated by the conference Nominations Team: the chair of the Board of Discipleship; the Team Leaders of the Equipping, Celebration, and Regional Cultivator Teams; and the Team Leader of the Operations Team. The conference staff person for the Board of Discipleship serves *ex officio*. The Operations Team will select individuals to serve as leads of the other Teams (Equipping, Celebration, and Regional Cultivator).

- d. **Missional Ministries.** The Missional Ministries Board in cooperation with the General Board of Global Ministries and the Common Table for Church Vitality shall develop programs to assist and invite districts and local churches to carry out all phases of the work of the church in mission and of church extension within the annual conference. The Associate Director of Serving Ministries shall serve as the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries (CSGM), fulfilling the responsibilities outlined in ¶ 633.3 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*. To discharge its responsibilities it shall divide into three (3) mission teams: (1) Missional Discipleship and Engagement and (2) Missional Connection and (3) Partnership of Hope. The position of Conference Coordinator of Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (CUIC) shall be appointed by the Bishop and shall be an *ex-officio* member of the Mission Connection Team of the Conference Missional Ministries Board, as outlined in ¶ 633.2 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*.

The membership of the board shall be 20, with 6 or 4 persons (one-half lay and one-half clergy) elected each year to replace outgoing classes.

- e. **Higher Education and Campus Ministries.** The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries in cooperation with the General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries and the Common Table for Church Vitality, shall develop programs to provide for higher education and ministry objectives as set forth in ¶ 1405 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*, and to perform the responsibilities in regard to education and professional campus ministries as set forth in ¶ 634 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*.

Membership: With an effort to maintain a balance of clergy and laity, the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries shall have 12 Conference elected members (placed in four classes): a current campus minister, a current Campus Ministry Local Board Chairperson, a current local church pastor with passion for campus ministry, a current United Methodist College or University President (or their designee), a young adult/student, a member with expertise in property management, and six general members (with a preference for expertise in executive leadership, finance, communication, and marketing). The member who has expertise in the area of property management shall also serve as the chairperson of the Conference Board of Property Managers of the Wesley Foundation, Inc. *Ex officio* members shall be: the Director of Connectional Ministries, a Liaison District Superintendent (liaison between the BHECM and the Cabinet), the Conference Treasurer, and any Virginia Conference member to the General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries. The designated conference staff person will serve as a member with voice but no vote. The term for chairperson shall be four years and terms for members shall also be four years and follow section I.D.8 of the Conference Rules and Policies. Nominations and election of the chairperson shall follow section I.D.11 of the Conference Rules and Policies. The

Executive Committee of the BHECM shall consist of the chairperson, the Liaison District Superintendent, the current campus minister, the member with expertise in property management and three general members.

Organization: The BHECM will meet a minimum of every other month. The Executive Committee will meet as needed. The BHECM will also be responsible for a minimum of one annual meeting for the following: Effectiveness Training Forums for Local Campus Ministry Boards, Effectiveness Training Forums for Campus Ministers/Chaplains, and Effectiveness Discussion Forums for District Superintendents. The incorporated entities of the board are the Wesley Foundation, Inc., and Francis Asbury Loan Fund, Inc. The conference board of property managers is a sub-group of the Wesley Foundation, Inc. The Executive Committee of the Board shall function as the board of directors of both the Wesley Foundation, Inc., and Francis Asbury Loan Fund, Inc.

- f. **Laity.** The Board of Laity shall act as an advocate for the Virginia Annual Conference laity in all forums of the annual conference. The purpose of the Board of Laity is to fulfill the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world; and carry out the vision of the Annual Conference. Membership of the Board of Laity shall be composed of the conference lay leader, four associate conference lay leaders, the Conference Director(s) of Lay Servant Ministries, the presidents of the conference organizations of United Methodist Men and United Women in Faith or their designees, Young People's Representative selected by the Youth or Young Adult Council, district lay leaders, one Connectional Ministries staff representative, one District Superintendent appointed by the Bishop, and the Bishop. No more than three clergy who model excellence in the lay-clergy partnership for ministry will be appointed by the Executive Committee. The Conference Director of Scouting Ministries is to be appointed by the President and approved by the Board with voice representation. The Board of Laity shall nominate to the annual conference for election a layperson to be the conference lay leader for the ensuing four (4) years. Any person elected to the office of conference lay leader shall not be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms, or a total of eight (8) years.

C. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES

The following agencies having administrative responsibilities are grouped together under the general title "Administration" with duties and responsibilities as indicated.

1. **Archives and History, Commission on.** There shall be a Commission on Archives and History and a Virginia Conference Historical Society. The duties and responsibilities of the commission shall be as set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 641). Members of the annual conference shall be members of the Virginia Conference Historical Society, which will elect 48 members to the commission who will also serve as the directors of the Virginia Conference Historical Society. The officers of the commission and the society shall be the same.
2. **Bishops' Foundation.** There shall be a Bishops' Foundation whose purpose is to provide funding for leadership development of both lay and clergypersons of the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church in the areas of evangelism and preaching in the Wesleyan spirit, and whose Board of Directors shall consist of nine (9) directors nominated by the Cabinet of the Virginia Conference and elected by the Annual Conference: five (5) clergy members and four (4) lay members serving for staggered terms of three (3) years after the initial term of 1, 2, and 3 years. The director of Connectional Ministries of the Virginia Conference or his/her designee will serve as an ex officio member of the Board of Directors.

- 3. Communications, Virginia Conference Board of.** There shall be a Conference Board of Communications which is to serve all of the agencies of the annual conference in the area of communication. It shall be administratively related to and amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality. The board and/or its subunits may be incorporated.
- a. **Function** The mission of Virginia United Methodist Communications is to assist faith communities in communications and related technologies, empowering their mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- b. **Membership** Virginia Conference Board of Communications shall consist of 24 persons, 14 of whom (half lay and half clergy) shall be elected by the annual conference. The 14 members thus elected and ex-officio members shall elect 10 additional members-at-large selected with regard to professional expertise, nonprofessional objectivity, and media representation. The ex-officio members shall be the Director of Connectional Ministries, a Cabinet representative, Director of Communications for the Virginia Conference, the Conference Manager of Technology, and any member of United Methodist Communications, the United Methodist Publishing House, and any other general board or agency whose purpose or function is included with the purposes and functions of this organization, or their successors, who is a member of a local charge in the Virginia Annual Conference or a clergy member of the Virginia Annual Conference. There shall be a president, vice president and secretary.
- c. **Organization.** There shall be the following committees:
- i. *Executive Committee* shall consist of the elected officers of the board, the conference Director of Communications and one additional member of the board. The non-officer member of the Executive Committee shall be elected quadrennially by the Board of Directors and shall hold office until the successor is elected and qualified. 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 board 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 board. 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.
- iii. *Finance.* 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.
- iv. *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.

- 4. Conference Nominations Team (CLDDT).** (See ¶ I.D.1. for composition and function of the Conference Nominations Team.)
- 5. Disabilities, Commission on.** The commission shall consist of 18 members, half clergy and half lay. Membership shall include persons with physical disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities. The Bishop may appoint to the commission a District Superintendent to serve as Cabinet representative with voice but not vote.
- 6. Episcopacy, Committee on the.** There shall be a Committee on the Episcopacy, the membership and duties of which shall be as prescribed in ¶ 637 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*.
- 7. Equitable Compensation, Commission on.** The Commission on Equitable Compensation shall be composed of an equal number of lay and clergy persons including at least one lay and one clergy from churches of fewer than 200 members who are nominated by the Conference Nominations Team and elected by the annual conference. In addition, one District Superintendent named by the Cabinet shall be a member. It shall perform the duties assigned to it by the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 625). It shall receive all requests from or on behalf of all pastoral charges for aid to be used solely for clergy support. It shall administer the Equitable Compensation Fund and may employ money from other agencies, including those which may be granted by the Missional Ministries Board, as appropriate in each case, to meet these requests.
- 8. Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy, Commission on.** There shall be a Virginia Conference Commission on Minority Concerns and Advocacy amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality. The commission will provide for the functions as outlined in the current *Book of Discipline* for the Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns and Commission on Religion and Race. The membership of the commission shall consist of 10 clergy and 10 laypersons elected upon nomination of the Conference Nominations Team. A minimum of two members shall be youth and young adults between the ages of 12 - 35. The commission will be constituted so that two-thirds of the membership be representative of people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. The presidents or chairs of conference caucuses, fellowships, or associations for racial and ethnic constituencies shall be ex-officio members of the commission with voice but not vote. The bishop may appoint to the commission a district superintendent to serve as Cabinet representative with voice but not vote.
- 9. Finance and Administration, Conference Council on.** There shall be a Conference Council on Finance and Administration elected and organized with responsibilities as set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (See ¶¶ 611-619), provided that membership of the council shall be composed of five clergy, five lay women, and five lay men nominated by the Conference Nominations Team.
- 10. Foundation, United Methodist.** There shall be a United Methodist Foundation organized with responsibilities as set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶2513 and pursuant to the Foundation charter the directors elected by Annual Conference shall be no less than fourteen (14) or no less than 60% of the total Foundation Directors. As the total number of Foundation directors can fluctuate from year to year, the Foundation will confirm annually with the Director of Connectional ministries on the number necessary to meet the Annual Conference 60% requirement.
- 11. Clergy Medical Leave, Joint Committee on.** There shall be a Joint Committee on Clergy Medical Leave consisting of two representatives from the Board of Ordained Ministry, two representatives from the Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc., one representative from the Cabinet and one representative of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Their duties shall be as prescribed by the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 652).

- 12. Investigation, Committee on.** There shall be a Committee on Investigation nominated, elected, and with duties as set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 2703.2).
- 13. Minutes, Committee on.** There shall be a Committee on Minutes consisting of seven members nominated by the Cabinet for a term of eight years, provided that the terms of four members shall expire at the end of one quadrennium and terms of the other three shall expire at the end of the next quadrennium. At least three members shall be lay persons and at least three shall be clergy. The chair shall be designated by the Cabinet. The committee shall review the daily minutes of the annual conference proceedings and report at the next session. Within three weeks of the close of the annual conference session, the committee will meet with the conference secretary to review and correct the minutes of proceedings before submitting the same for printing in the conference Journal.
- 14. Ordained Ministry.** The Board of Ordained Ministry in cooperation with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministries and the Common Table for Church Vitality, shall develop programs to assist districts and local churches in preparing and aiding persons to fulfill their ministry in Christ as historically understood by United Methodism. The Board of Ordained Ministry shall perform all the duties and functions as set forth in the *Book of Discipline* (2016 BOD ¶635.2) and shall be directly amenable to the annual conference. The Board of Ordained Ministry shall have no more than sixty-seven (67) persons nominated by the bishop, (2016 BOD ¶635.1a) in consultation with the Board Chair and Cabinet, and elected by the annual conference at the beginning of each quadrennium. The Board shall elect from its membership officers deemed necessary to fulfill its duties (2016 BOD ¶635 1c). The annual conference registrar and at least one District Superintendent appointed by the bishop shall also serve as members of the Board of Ordained Ministry. At least one person from each district shall be included on the Board. If during the course of the quadrennium a district loses its representation on the Board, an additional person shall be appointed ad interim to the Board by the bishop in consultation with the Board Chair and the Cabinet, ensuring inclusive representation from each district. Ad interim members will be voted on at the next annual conference.
- 15. Pensions and Related Benefits, Virginia United Methodist, Inc.** This agency, which is incorporated as Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc., shall be composed of twenty-four (24) members serving eight-year terms, and arranged into classes at the agency's discretion. It is recommended that all classes consist of one-third laywomen, one-third laymen, and one-third clergy. Any clergy member of the conference or lay member of a church within the conference who is a member of the Wespath shall also be a member of the agency (2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶639.2a) If no District Superintendent is a member of this agency the Bishop may name one to represent the Cabinet. He or she shall have voice but not vote.
This agency shall perform the duties set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (see ¶ 639). In addition, it shall administer the conference program for participant supplemental benefits including the various insurance programs, shall study on a continuing basis the problems of participant disability, making recommendations relative to these problems as needed, and shall provide for a continuing pastoral ministry to disabled participants.
- 16. Preachers' Relief Society.** This is an incorporated body with invested trust funds, the income from which is used from time to time for the relief of needy members of the clergy and their families.
- 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.

18. Rules Committee. There shall be a Rules Committee consisting of nine members elected by the annual conference on nomination of the Conference Nominations Team or from the floor for a term of eight years. The terms of four members shall expire at the end of one quadrennium and the terms of the other five members shall expire at the end of the next quadrennium. Five members of the committee shall be lay and four members shall be clergy. The chancellor(s) of the annual conference shall be ex officio members of the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee shall review the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies between sessions of the annual conference, and make its recommendations to the annual conference. Proposed amendments to the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies and any other matters of parliamentary order or procedure in the business of the annual conference shall be referred to the Rules Committee. All members of the Rules Committee are encouraged to take a basic parliamentary procedure course within 6 months of their election. However, those who wish to be parliamentarians of the Annual Conference must take a more advanced course at the approval of the Rules Committee Chair. The cost of these courses will be reimbursed upon the passing of the class.

19. Site Selection, Committee on. There shall be a Committee on Site Selection consisting of four members, one-half lay and one-half clergy, elected on nomination of the Conference Nominations Team for a term of eight years. The committee shall be divided into two classes with the terms of one class to expire at the end of one quadrennium and the terms of the other class to expire at the end of the next quadrennium. This committee shall make arrangements for the meeting of the annual conference and shall recommend a location for the meeting of the annual conference a minimum of three years in advance.

20. Status and Role of Women in the Church, Commission on the. There shall be a Virginia Annual Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women in The United Methodist Church amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality. The membership shall consist of up to two representatives from each district plus six persons at large elected by the annual conference. In addition, the conference United Women in Faith shall name one member. The Bishop may appoint to the commission a District Superintendent to serve as Cabinet representative with voice but not vote. The majority of the commission, including both lay and clergy, shall be women. The chairperson shall be a woman.

21. Trustees, Board of. There shall be a Board of Trustees consisting of 12 members, elected by the annual conference, organized and with responsibilities as set forth in the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (§§ 2512-2517).

22. Resolutions, Committee on. There shall be a Resolutions Committee consisting of up to eleven (11) members, with no less than six (6) at-large members elected by the annual conference on nomination of the Conference Nominations Team or from the floor, with three being lay members and three being clergy. Other appointed members shall be (i) the Director of Connectional Ministries; (ii) a member of the Rules Committee; (iii) a member of the Board of Church and Society; (iv) the Conference Secretary or the Conference Secretary's designee; and, (v) upon appointment by the Bishop, a representative of the Cabinet. The Resolutions Committee shall review and process each

proposed resolution to determine if it can properly come before the annual conference; make revisions as needed in consultation with the submitter of the resolution; ensure consistency and adherence with The *Book of Discipline* and the Annual Conference's Standing Rules of Order and Procedure; and present approved resolutions to the annual conference. Proposed resolutions for consideration by the annual conference shall be referred to the Resolutions Committee and handled pursuant to the procedures set forth under Standing Rule II.B.

23. Religion and Race, Commission on. There shall be a Virginia Conference Commission on Religion and Race as outlined in the *Book of Discipline* (§ 643). The membership of the Commission shall comprise 5 laity and 5 clergy nominated by the Nominations Team. The commission will be constituted so that two-thirds of the membership be representative of people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. The bishop may appoint to the commission a district superintendent to serve as Cabinet representative with voice but not vote.

D. TASK FORCES

A task force may be established to accomplish a specific objective. If it is organized by direction of the annual conference, the authorizing legislation shall contain a termination date for the task force. Such task force desiring continuation beyond its termination date shall seek and receive their established termination dates (June or December). Task forces should not as a general rule exist beyond a four-year term. Task forces may request funding for conference projects, but no task force shall disburse funds unless so directed by its parent board or requested to do so by the Common Table for Church Vitality and approved by the Council on Finance and Administration in its report to annual conference. A conference-organized task force continuing beyond its first year shall annually request, in its report to annual conference, funding to cover operational costs in the succeeding year.

E. CHANGING STRUCTURE OF PROGRAM BOARD OR AGENCY

Any proposal to the annual conference to amend or change the structure of any program board or agency at the division level or above may originate (1) upon recommendation of the board or agency itself and shall be submitted to the Common Table for Church Vitality for its recommendation; (2) upon recommendation of the Common Table for Church Vitality, provided such proposal shall have been submitted to the board itself for its recommendation; or (3) on petition of a member or members of the annual conference if such a petition has been previously submitted to the Common Table for Church Vitality and the board or agency for their recommendations, or if not previously so submitted in time for consideration by these organizations, such petition shall be referred to the Common Table for Church Vitality and the board or agency for their recommendations prior to action by the annual conference. Internal change below the division level shall be the responsibility of each board.

F. MEETINGS OF THE COMMON TABLE, BOARDS, COUNCILS, COMMISSIONS, FOUNDATIONS AND COMMITTEES

For the Common Table for Church Vitality, and all District, Board, Council, Commission, Foundation and Committee sessions or meetings, the terms "meet" and "meeting" shall include meetings where members are physically present in one room or area ("in-person" meetings), and when deemed necessary by the presiding Chairperson, may also include meetings held through electronic means such as the Internet or by telephone.

VI. THE DISTRICT CONFERENCE

A. DISTRICT CONFERENCE SHALL MEET AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR

Each district within the Virginia Conference shall hold a session of the district conference in the manner designated by the District Superintendent at least once during the annual conference year (in accordance with the 2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶658).

B. AGENDA

The district superintendent, in consultation with the district lay leader, shall set the agenda for the district conference. The agenda shall include a report from the district committee on ordained ministry.

Members of the district conference shall elect the district lay leader (¶660.2) to serve a four-year term, not to exceed two consecutive terms. The district conference shall also elect the committee on the district superintendency (¶669.1,2), the district trustees (¶2518.2) and such other officers as it deems appropriate. The district committee on ordained ministry (¶666.1) and the district board of church location and building (¶2519) are approved or elected by the annual conference.

C. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of each district conference shall be composed of the following: all ordained and commissioned clergy, licensed local pastors, lay supply pastors, certified lay ministers, diaconal ministers, and deaconesses and home missionaries related to that district; a church lay leader, chairperson of the church council*, church school superintendent, president of the United Women in Faith, and president of the chartered United Methodist Men from each local church in the district; the district steward from each charge; the lay member of the annual conference from each charge; and three members at large, one of whom shall be a youth, elected by each charge conference;

District officers who are members of the district conference include*: the chairperson of the district Council on Ministries*, the district trustees, the district treasurer, the district lay leader and associate lay leaders, the president of the district United Women in Faith, the president of the district United Methodist Men, a representative of the district youth council*, the president of the district United Methodist Young Adults*, the district coordinators of children, youth, young adult, adult, and family ministries, other district coordinators and directors, five youth members elected by the district youth council and five young adult members* elected by the District Council on Ministries*. Special attention shall be given to inclusiveness. *Designates or equivalent body.

D. ELECTION OF DISTRICT LAY MEMBERS AT LARGE OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

District members at large of the annual conference shall be elected by the lay members of the district conference. Nominations may be made in whatever manner the district determines, but provision shall always be made for nomination from the floor. Districts are encouraged to include members-at-large from non-chartered faith communities being served by clergy with voting rights at Annual Conference, provided that they meet the provisions of 2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶602.4. Election shall be by written ballot, and those nominees receiving the most votes shall be the members at large, and the rest shall be alternates in order of the votes received up to the number of members at large and alternates allotted to each district by the annual conference.

E. RECORD OF DISTRICT CONFERENCE

The secretary of the district conference shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings and send a copy to the secretary of the annual conference within 30 days following the district conference.

VII. RULES OF ORDER AND PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

A. RULES THAT APPLY WHEN THE CHAIRPERSON STANDS

When the chairperson stands and calls the conference to order, no member shall speak, address the chair, or stand while the chairperson stands.

B. VOTING AREA

The annual conference shall fix the voting area of the conference at the opening business session and voting on all annual conference matters must take place within the prescribed area. The voting area of the conference shall be separated from other areas at the meeting site. All entrances to the voting area shall be staffed by ushers and admission shall be by official badge only. All members of the conference within the voting area when the vote is taken shall be entitled to vote except such persons as otherwise are ineligible to vote.

C. SUFFICIENT SEATS SHALL BE PROVIDED

Sufficient seats shall be provided for all lay, clergy, provisional, and associate members and all youth members, members on special assignment, and all other persons entitled by the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies to be within the voting area of the conference.

D. VOTERS TO DISPLAY PROPER CREDENTIALS

Members of the conference and others entitled to be seated within the voting area of the conference shall be furnished proper credentials as set forth in Appendix "A" (attached). During balloting, ballots will be distributed to and collected from only those persons displaying the proper credentials.

E. METHOD OF VOTING

Method of voting shall be determined by the presiding officer. A count vote may be ordered on call of any member supported by one-third of the members present and voting, in which case the members shall arise as they are able from their seats and stand until counted.

F. ELECTRONIC VOTING PROCEDURE

Anytime the presider opens the floor, during an electronic meeting, whether for questions, discussions, motions, and/or amendments he or she shall wait at least 3 minutes before putting the question, motion, report or amendment to a vote.

G. EXCEPTIONS TO THE NO INTERRUPTION RULE

No member who has the floor may be interrupted except for a question on the matter under consideration, a breach of order, a misrepresentation, to direct the attention of the conference to the fact that the time has arrived for a special order, or to raise a very urgent question of high privilege.

H. LIMITS ON SPEAKING

No member shall speak: 1. more than once on the same question if any member who has not spoken desires the floor; 2. more than twice on the same subject under the same motion; 3. any longer than two minutes, unless this two-minute period may be limited or extended by a two-thirds vote of the conference.

I. HIGH PRIVILEGE

A member claiming the floor for a very urgent question of high privilege shall be allowed to indicate briefly the nature of the question, and if it be adjudged by the chair to be such, he or she may proceed until the chairperson judges that he or she has exhausted the privilege.

J. CALL FOR DIVISION OF ANY QUESTION

Before a vote is taken any member shall have the right to call for a division of any question, if it is subject to such division as he or she indicates. If no member objects, the division shall be made; but if there is objection, the chair shall put the question of division to vote, not waiting for a second.

K. MOTIONS TO BE PRESENTED IN WRITING

For the benefit of the secretary, and for the sake of clarification, motions, including amendments, shall be presented in writing. If an approved motion is requested to be sent to entities, the maker of the motion shall provide names and addresses to the Secretary of the Virginia Annual Conference.

L. MINUTES OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The transcript of the video recording of the annual conference session shall serve as the official minutes of the annual conference session once it has been reviewed and approved by the Minutes Committee for accuracy

M. SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

The operation of any of the provisions of the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies or of these Rules of Order and Procedure may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the conference.

N. CHANGE OR AMENDMENT OF THE RULES

The Virginia Annual Conference Standing Rules of Order and Procedure, including these Rules of Order and Parliamentary Procedure, may be amended or changed by a two-thirds vote of the conference; provided the proposed change or amendment has originated in the Rules Committee, or has been presented to the conference in writing and referred to the Rules Committee, which committee shall report as soon as practicable taking into account all of the facts and circumstances of the proposed rule change.

O. ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER APPLIES

The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall apply to any and all situations not covered elsewhere by these rules.

Name Badge Colors

Green (lay vote with full lay voting rights, ¶602.4)

- Lay Members
- At-Large District Lay Members
- District and Conference Lay Leaders
- Conference President of United Methodist Men
- Conference President of United Women in Faith
- Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries
- Conference Scouting Coordinator
- President or equivalent of Conference Young Adult Organization
- President of Conference Youth Organization
- Chair, Conference College Student Organization
- District Youth and Young Adult Members (one of each from each district)
- Diaconal Ministers
- Retired Diaconal Ministers
- Deaconesses (see also ¶1314.5)
- Home Missioners

White (ordained deacons and elders in full connection with full voting rights, ¶602.1a)

- FE Elder in Full Connection (¶334.1)
- FD Deacon in Full Connection (¶329.2)

Note: Clergy on voluntary leaves of absence (personal, family, transitional) may vote for other clergy delegates to general or jurisdictional conferences and may be elected to serve as delegates themselves (¶354.7). Clergy on involuntary leave of absence may not vote on or be elected as delegates to general or jurisdictional conference (¶355.7).

- RM & RD Retired Full Member (¶602.1a)

White (May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments and clergy matters)

- AM Associate Members (¶35 and ¶602.1c)
- PM Probationary Member under 1992 *Discipline* (¶413.2, 1992 *Discipline*)
- PD Provisional Deacon (¶35, ¶327.2 and ¶602.1b)
- PE Provisional Elder (¶35, ¶327.2 and ¶602.1b)
- EP Full member other denomination serving as a UM Provisional Elder (¶35, ¶347.3b, ¶327.2)
- DP Deacon recognized from other denomination serving as a UM Provisional Deacon (¶35, ¶347.3b and ¶327.2)
- RA Retired Associate Member (¶35, ¶602.1c)
- RP Retired Probationary/Provisional Member (¶35, ¶327.2)

And the following who have completed the educational requirements (Five Year Course of Study, equivalency for the Five Year Course of Study based on approval of GBHEM and VA Conference BOM, or an M.Div. from an approved seminary) and have been under uninterrupted appointment for two years at the time of voting (see ¶35 and Judicial Council ruling 1181):

- FL Full time Local Pastor (¶316.6 and ¶602.1d)
- PL Part time Local Pastor (¶316.6 and ¶602.1d)
- RL Retired Local Pastor serving an appointment (¶320.5 and ¶316.6)

White (May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference, and clergy matters)

- OF Full member of another denomination (¶346.2)

And the following who have not met the requirements in the section above:

- FL Full time Local Pastor (¶316.6 and ¶602.1d)
- PL Part time Local Pastor (¶316.6 and ¶602.1d)
- RL Retired Local Pastor serving an appointment (¶320.5 and ¶316.6)

White (voice but no vote)

- AF Affiliate Member, non-voting (¶334.5)
- RL Retired Local Pastor (¶320.5)
- OE Elder Member of other Annual Conference (¶346.1)
- OD Deacon Member of other Annual Conference (¶346.1)
- OA Associate Member of other Annual Conference (¶346.1)
- OP Provisional Member of other Annual Conference (¶346.1)
- RAF Retired Affiliate Member, non-voting (¶334.5)

Red (no voice or vote)

- SY Lay Supply
- LM Certified Lay Minister
- HL Honorable Location (¶359)
- RHL Retired – Honorable Location (¶359.3)
- MOD Minister of Another Denomination Serving an Ecumenical Parish in VA
- G Official Guest
- ROC Retired full member, other annual conference

Brown (not official)

- All others

BUSINESS OF THE CONFERENCE



Consent Agenda.....	<u>50</u>
Charter for the Common Table for Church Vitality.....	<u>51</u>
Committee On Rules.....	<u>55</u>
Minute Questions	<u>57</u>
District Committees on Church Building and Location.....	<u>66</u>
District Committees on Ordained Ministry...	<u>67</u>

Consent Agenda

Per parliamentary procedure, a consent agenda allows for the collection of several reports into a single agenda item. These reports are from mission and ministry groups that would often have time to speak to their report from the floor of Annual Conference, but are not able to due to time constraints. Their reports are included in the 2026 Book of Reports for members to view.

This year, the following reports will be considered as a part of the consent agenda:

- Resolutions*
- Site Selection

*The Resolutions team is presenting six resolutions to the Annual Conference. Five were brought forward by the Historical Society for consideration. These five resolutions are represented on the consent agenda for approval before moving to the General Conference. The sixth resolution has been brought to the Resolutions team by the Board of Church and Society. **This resolution will be present on the floor during the Resolution's report time on Saturday, June 20th.**

An individual item may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of no less than 30 members of the annual conference. A page with the name, church, district, clergy/lay identification, and signature of those 30 or more unique members must be submitted to the Conference Secretary, Claire Miller, via email (Secretary@vaumc.org) **no later than 10:00am** on Thursday, June 18. The consent agenda will be voted on near the conclusion of the morning business session on Thursday, June 18.

NOTE: At the 2025 Annual Conference we began to live into a new reality of the Connectional Table. While the Common Table Charter (below) remains in place, we are actively living into the new Connectional Table model. You can learn more about it [in their report here](#).

CHARTER FOR THE COMMON TABLE FOR CHURCH VITALITY

Effective Jan. 1, 2006

Approved as Amended June 18, 2021

I. PURPOSE

The Common Table for Church Vitality exists to resource mission and ministry to fulfill the conference mission and vision. As a diverse body of representatives, the Common Table coordinates with Boards and Agencies, assists in the disbursement of ministry and program grants, and oversees the personnel of the Annual Conference offices that are under its guidance. The Common Table supports the Director of Connectional Ministries to fulfill the requirements of the *Book of Discipline*.

A. MISSION

The mission of the Virginia Annual Conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

B. VALUES

- Integrity in the work.
- Good communication.
- Diversity of voices at the table.
- Creative thinking to benefit the whole.
- Advocate for justice and non-discrimination for all.

II. MEMBERSHIP

The Common Table provides spiritual leadership for the Conference to carry out the Purpose of this Charter. It is both desirable and consistent with our Conference values that the members of the Common Table represent the diversity of our Conference. The Common Table includes the following 12 voting positions and 3 non-voting positions:

A. VOTING MEMBERS

1. Presiding Bishop
2. Conference Lay Leader
3. Director of Connectional Ministries
4. Cabinet representative assigned by the bishop
5. Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy representative (in accordance with *The Book of Discipline*)
6. Chair of Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries (in accordance with *The Book of Discipline*)
7. Six at-large members equally divided between clergy and laity in annual classes, including two young adult/youth representatives, as elected in III

B. NON-VOTING MEMBERS

1. Representative from Council on Finance and Administration assigned by the Council on Finance and Administration
2. The elected Secretary of the Annual Conference shall serve as Secretary for the Common Table.
3. Representative from contributors such as the United Methodist Women to Grants committee only.

III. SELECTION OF AT-LARGE COMMON TABLE MEMBERS

All Members of the Common Table at-large (3 clergy and 3 laity) are nominated by the Conference Nominations Team in consultation with the Bishop and elected by the annual conference. Two of these at-large members must be young adult/youth representatives.

IV. TERMS OF SERVICE FOR AT-LARGE MEMBERS

At-large members serve up to two four-year terms and are placed in annual classes. If a person is elected to fill an unexpired term of two years or less, that person is eligible for reelection to a full four-year term. In the event that a member resigns or dies during his/her term, a replacement shall be nominated by the Conference Nominations Team or the Bishop, according to method of nomination, and elected by the Annual Conference with the replacement serving until the end of the original term. Any at-large member of the Common Table who is absent from two meetings without excuse or from three consecutive meetings for any reason shall automatically cease to be a member of the Common Table.

V. MEETINGS

Common Table will prioritize the work that needs to be accomplished in a timely manner. We plan to meet as often as we need to complete this work, meeting at least quarterly. Quarterly meetings would include a time for team building and operational issues. Meetings shall be open, consistent with the provisions of *The Book of Discipline*. In the event it is determined that the Common Table will meet electronically, the Director of Connectional Ministries shall use all reasonable means to ensure the opportunity for participation by all interested individuals. Non-members of the Common Table may attend without voice and vote unless granted voice by the meeting presider.

The Common Table will move to closed executive meetings to discuss confidential information when deemed necessary by a majority vote of the Common Table. Approved Common Table minutes will be on the conference website for public viewing.

VI. OFFICERS

The Bishop, Conference Lay Leader and Director of Connectional Ministries will lead the Common Table in interpreting the Conference vision. The Director of Connectional Ministries is the Chairperson. The Conference Lay Leader is the Vice Chairperson. Meetings may be led by the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, or a designated meeting presider. The Secretary of the Annual Conference is the Secretary of the Common Table, without vote.

VII. COMMITTEES

A. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Common Table shall appoint a Personnel Committee annually from within its members to assist with the selection and employment of all Conference program staff, both lay and clergy. The Common Table shall appoint the chair of the Personnel Committee from within its members. The Director of Connectional Ministries shall serve as an ex officio member of this committee without vote.

B. GRANTS COMMITTEE

The Common Table may appoint a Grants Committee annually from among the members of the Conference to advise the Common Table on the following:

1. Grants for connectional ministries beyond the local level, funded through the Conference Benevolence apportionment, and
2. Program grants for local ministry projects funded through the Conference Benevolence apportionment, the United Methodist Women, and the Church Extension Fund.
3. Ministry programs that advance the conference vision, funded through Conference apportionment.

C. OTHER COMMITTEES

The Common Table may designate such other committees as are necessary for its functioning.

VIII. SELECTION OF DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES AND STAFF

A. The Annual Conference shall elect annually upon nomination of the Bishop, and in consultation with the Common Table an executive officer to be known as the Director of Connectional Ministries. The Director shall serve a maximum tenure of eight years in keeping with the Appointive Cabinet practice. The responsibilities of the Director of Connectional Ministries shall be but are not limited to the following:

1. To serve as the Chairperson of the Common Table and Co-chairperson, with the Conference Lay Leader, of the Conference Nominations Team.
2. To be a communication link between the Conference program agencies and Jurisdictional and General Conference program agencies.
3. 3. To facilitate communication among the Conference program agencies, laity, clergy and the local churches.
4. 4. To serve as a resource person Virginia Conference Appointive Cabinet, Districts, clergy, laity, local churches and Conference ministries to include program planning, ministry evaluation and Conference vision implementation.
5. 5. To serve on other Conference agencies as determined by the Annual Conference, Bishop and/or by the Common Table.

B. Each staff person shall be nominated annually by Common Table in consultation with the Bishop and appropriate resourced Boards and Agencies.

C. The Business Manager/Treasurer of the Annual Conference shall serve the Common Table in direct support of their work and shall have oversight of financial operations of the Common Table. In that capacity, the Business Manager/Treasurer shall coordinate this work with the Director of Connectional Ministries.

D. All Connectional Ministries program staff shall be employed by and amenable to the Common Table. The Director of Connectional Ministries shall be responsible for the oversight and supervision of the program staff.

E. Administrative/Technical/Professional Staff of the Common Table shall be employed by the Director of Connectional Ministries. The Director of Connectional Ministries will give oversight to and supervise the Administrative/Technical/Professional staff in accordance with the personnel policies and the staff manual.

IX. FINANCES

The Common Table shall present a budget to the Council on Finance and Administration to cover the expenses for the work of the Common Table and the boards and agencies, committees, commissions, task forces and other groups for which it is responsible. The right of the Annual Conference boards and agencies to be heard by the Council on Finance and Administration shall not be denied, as provided by *The Book of Discipline*.

X. MEETINGS OF BOARD AND COMMISSION CHAIRS

Semi-annual (or as often as necessary) meetings of Chairs (or designated representatives) of Conference Program Boards and Commissions that are under the oversight of Common Table will be held for the purpose of aligning conference program and mission with the vision of the Conference. A report of the Chairs' meetings will be provided to Common Table to assist in its responsibilities for its purpose of coordinating and prioritizing the ministries and resources of the Virginia Conference. The boards and commissions that are amenable to Common Table are:

- Board of Church and Society
- Board of Communications
- Board of Discipleship
- Board of Global Ministries
- Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries
- Board of Laity
- Church Development Team
- Commission on Disabilities
- Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy
- Commission on Status and Role of Women

OTHER ATTENDEES

- a. Conference Staff serving as primary staff resource to these boards and commissions will attend these meetings with voice but without vote.
- b. The Presidents (or designated representatives) of the Conference United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women will be encouraged to participate in these meetings.
- c. Chairs (or designated representatives) of Conference Administrative Boards that are not under the purview of the Common Table will be encouraged to participate in these meetings.

The Director of Connectional Ministries shall chair these meetings.

XI. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the charter not in conflict with *The Book of Discipline* may be made by a majority vote of the Annual Conference and originate as follows:

1. upon recommendation of the Common Table, or
2. upon petition of a member of the Annual Conference at least 60 days prior to the next annual conference session.

The Common Table shall review the petition(s) and submit its recommendations to the Annual Conference together with the proposed amendment.

XII. EFFECTIVE DATE OF CHARTER

The Charter for the Common Table for Church Vitality shall become effective June 18, 2021

Report from the Rules Committee

The Rules Committee of the Virginia Annual Conference met several times this year to make both technical corrections and clarifications, as well as substantive changes, to the Virginia Conference Standing Rules of Order and Procedure. This year's proposed amendments and the rationale for each amendment follow:

RECOMMENDATIONS

Proposed amendments to the Standing Rules of Order and Procedure as recommended by the Rules Committee:

- **Technical changes:**
 - **Rule I.D.7 — Change “insure” to “ensure”;**
 - **Rule VI.D — In the last sentence, add “or electronic voting” after “written ballot.”**

Rationale: The Standing Rules referenced above require these minor technical changes due to past inadvertent oversight in not revising all references to written ballot voting or due to other typographical errors.

- **Rule V.B.4.f — insert the phrase “The United Methodist Church’s” before the word “mission” and add quotation marks around the phrase beginning “disciples” and ending “world.” Thereafter, insert the phrase “who will serve as Chair” after “Conference Lay Leader” and strike the word “four.” Next, insert the phrase “appointed by the Chair and approved by the Board of Laity” after the word “Representative” and strike the phrase “selected by the Youth or Young Adult Council”; strike the words “Connectional Ministries” and replace with “Conference.” Next, strike the word “will” after ministry and replace with “may”; strike the words “Executive Committee and replace with “Conference Lay Leader.” Finally, strike the word “is” after “Scouting Ministries” and insert the words “and the Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries are”; strike the word “President” and replace with “Chair”; insert the words “of Laity” after “Board” and strike the phrase “with voice representation and vote.”**

As a result, the proposed new text for Rule V.B.4.f is:

f. Laity. The Board of Laity shall act as an advocate for the Virginia Annual Conference laity in all forums of the annual conference. The purpose of the Board of Laity is to fulfill The United Methodist Church’s mission of making “disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” and carry out the vision of the Annual Conference. Membership of the Board of Laity shall be composed of the Conference Lay Leader who will serve as Chair, Associate Conference Lay Leaders, the Conference Director(s) of Lay Servant Ministries, the presidents of the conference organizations of United Methodist Men and United Women in Faith or their designees, Young People’s Representative appointed by the Chair and approved by the Board of Laity, district lay leaders, one Conference staff representative, one District Superintendent appointed by the Bishop, and the Bishop. No more than three clergy who model excellence in the lay-clergy partnership for ministry may be appointed by the Conference Lay Leader. The Conference Director of Scouting Ministries and the Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries are to be appointed by the Chair and approved by the Board of Laity. The Board of Laity shall nominate to the annual conference for election a layperson to be the conference lay leader for the ensuing four (4) years. Any person elected to the office of conference

Rationale: These changes to the section describing the Board of Laity were brought to the Rules Committee by the Board and the Conference Lay Leader. The proposed language reflects the actual and functional structure of the Board of Laity (and includes minor technical changes, such as the addition of quotation marks around the mission). This rule change is recommended so that the Rules’ description of the Board of Laity reflects its new structure.

- **Rule VI.D** — at the end of the paragraph, insert the sentence “Where a district has more than one designated lay leader (as in the case of co-lay leaders) a district may include among its elected at-large members one or more co-lay leaders for the annual conference.”

As a result, the proposed new text for Rule VI.D. is:

D. ELECTION OF DISTRICT LAY MEMBERS AT LARGE OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

District members at large of the annual conference shall be elected by the lay members of the district conference. Nominations may be made in whatever manner the district determines, but provision shall always be made for nomination from the floor. Districts are encouraged to include members-at-large from non-chartered faith communities being served by clergy with voting rights at Annual Conference, provided that they meet the provisions of 2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶602.4. Election shall be by written ballot or electronic voting and those nominees receiving the most votes shall be the members at large, and the rest shall be alternates in order of the votes received up to the number of members at large and alternates allotted to each district by the annual conference. Where a district has more than one designated lay leader (as in the case of co-lay leaders) a district may include among its elected at-large members one or more co-lay leaders for the annual conference.

Rationale: At the request of the Conference Lay Leader, the Rules Committee added this language for clarity, in those situations where a District is represented by more than one lay leader. Districts may have already followed this method or intended to; the addition of this language in the rule by the Committee makes clear that it is expressly authorized.

Proposed amendments to the Standing Rules of Order and Procedure recommended by the Rules Committee, after referral from the Common/Connectional Table, to update the Rules to reflect the change from the Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy (“CEMCA”) to the Conference Commission on Religion and Race (“CCORR”):

- **Rule I.B.3.v** — strike “Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy” and replace with “Conference Commission on Religion and Race”;
- **Rule I.B.5.c.v** — strike “Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy” and replace with “Conference Commission on Religion and Race”;
- **Rule I.D.1** — strike “Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy” and replace with “Conference Commission on Religion and Race”;
- **Rule II.D.2** — strike “Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy” and replace with “Conference Commission on Religion and Race”;
- **Rule V.C.8** — strike paragraph 8 in its entirety and renumber paragraphs 9 through 23.

Rationale: In 2024, the Annual Conference eliminated CEMCA and re-instituted CCORR (adding it to Rule V.C. at paragraph 23), to be more consistent with the *Book of Discipline* and to allow more concentrated efforts on systemic issues within the conference as intended. The above rule changes were recommended by the Connectional Table to reflect the return of CCORR throughout the Standing Rules.

MINUTE QUESTIONS

MINUTE QUESTIONS 10-13

PART II: ORGANIZED AND CLOSED CHURCHES

10. List local churches that have been:

a) Organized or continued as **New Church Starts** (§259.1). Continue to list congregations here until listed in questions 10. c, d, e, or f. Only add church type if blended congregations, new expressions, new faith community or other established type.

GCNO	CHURCH NAME	DISTRICT	MAILING ADDRESS	PHYSICAL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	DATE FOUNDED	CHURCH TYPE
411675	Impact	Coastal Virginia	1200 Chesapeake Ave., Chesapeake, VA 23324	1200 Chesapeake Ave, Chesapeake, VA 23324-2304	757-545-7481	7/1/2020	New Faith Community
140704	Appomattox	Living Waters	175 Old Courthouse Road, Appomattox, VA 24522	175 Old Courthouse Road, Appomattox, VA 24522	757-692-0073	1/7/2024	New Faith Community
475051	Journey	Living Waters	PO Box 190 Jetersville, VA 23083	19210 Patrick Henry Hwy Amelia Court House, VA 23000	804-307-0369	2011	New Faith Community
141264	Connect	Mission Rivers	19 Red Oak Lane Aylett, VA 23009	3493 King William Road, Aylett, VA 23009	804-994-1009	1/1/2026	New Faith Community
140393	Hope UMC	Northern Virginia	1014 Country Club Road NE, Vienna, VA 22180	1014 Country Club Drive NE, Vienna, VA 22180	703-309-1329	7/1/22	New Faith Community
140943	Nooma	Northern Virginia	1428 N Jackson St, Arlington, VA 2220	Virtual Church	251-586-3019	1/1/25	New Faith Community
096278	Restoration UMC	Three Notch'd	5145 Dickerson Rd, Charlottesville, VA 22911	5145 Dickerson Rd, Charlottesville, VA 22911	434-973-9077	7/1/2012	New Faith Community
TBD	Southwood Village Mission	Three Notch'd	2834 Sweetbay St, Charlottesville, VA 22902	2834 Sweetbay St, Charlottesville, VA 22902	571-221-1068	7/1/2026	New Faith Community

b) Organized or continued as **Mission Congregations** (§259,1-4 continue to list congregations here until listed in questions 14.c, d, e, or f)

GCNO	CHURCH NAME	DISTRICT	MAILING ADDRESS	PHYSICAL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	DATE FOUNDED
140312	The Gathering @ Washington St.	Living Waters	225 Claremont St., Petersburg, VA 23805	225 Claremont St. Petersburg, VA 23805	804-631-3335	Continued
411254	Accotink Cana (Mission)	Northern Virginia	9043 Backlick Road, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060	9043 Backlick Road, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060	703-447-9677	Continued
41178	Ghana Wesley (Mission)	Northern Virginia	1400 G Street, Woodbridge, VA 22192	1400 G St Woodbridge, VA 22191-1605	703-494-1588	Continued
470311	Rising Hope	Northern Virginia	8220 Russell Rd., Alexandria, VA 22309	8220 Russell Rd Alexandria, VA 22309-8218	703-360-1976	Continued (with designation as mission congregation 2016)
410842	First Vietnamese American	Northern Virginia	4701 Arlington Blvd. Arlington, VA 22203	4701 Arlington Blvd. Arlington, VA 22203	703-465-8505	Continued
480742	Belmont	Three Notch'd	3510 Broad Rock Blvd., Richmond, VA 23224	3510 Broad Rock Blvd., Richmond, VA 23224	804-275-6336	Continued
41047	People United in Christ	Valley Ridge	2446 Sycamore Ave., Buena Vista, VA 24416	2455 Sycamore Avenue Buena Vista, VA 24416	540-319-4009	Continued

c) Organized or continued **Satellite Congregations** (§247.22). Continue to list here until listed in questions 10.a, d, e, or f:

GCNO	CHURCH NAME	PARENT CHURCH	DISTRICT	MAILING ADDRESS	PHYSICAL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	DATE FOUNDED
095651	The Chapel at Landsdowne Woods	Galilee UMC	Northern Virginia	45425 Winding Road, Sterling, VA 20165	19375 Magnolia Grove Sq Lansdowne, VA 20176-5180	(703) 430-2203	10/1/2007
140393	Hope UMC	Ghana Wesley UMC	Northern Virginia	1014 Country Club Road NE, Vienna, VA 22180	1400 G Street Woodbridge, VA 22191	703-494-1588	7/1/22
140353	edges	Blacksburg UMC	Valley Ridge	706 Harding Ave, Blacksburg, VA 24060	706 Harding Ave, Blacksburg, VA 24060	(540) 552-5424	9/9/12

140949	New Song Church: King William	New Song	Three Notch'd	7450 Colts Neck Rd., Mechanicsville, VA 23111	7450 Colts Neck Rd., Mechanicsville, VA 23111	804-559-6064	7/1/24
TBD	St. Matt's North	St. Matthew's UMC	Three Notch'd	1706 St. Matthew's Ln, Richmond, VA 23233	1706 St. Matthew's Ln, Richmond, VA 23233	804-784-3176	8/1/2025

d) Organized as Chartered (§259.5-10)

GCNO	CHURCH NAME	DISTRICT	MAILING ADDRESS	PHYSICAL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	DATE CHARTERED

e) Merged (§2546, 2547)

(1) United Methodist with United Methodist

GCNO	NAME OF FIRST CHURCH	GCNO	NAME OF SECOND CHURCH	NEW GCNO	NAME OF MERGED CHURCH	DISTRICT	DATE MERGED	MERGER TYPE
963622	St. John's UMC (Atlantic)	41186	Bloxom Mission	963622	St. John's UMC	Coastal Virginia	7/1/2026	Consolidated
481440	Fairmount UMC	480968	Highland Springs	481440	Fairmount UMC	Three Notch'd	8/31/2025	Consolidated

(2) United Methodist with Interdenominational. The newly merged church will receive a new GCNO:

GCNO	NAME OF FIRST CHURCH	NAME OF SECOND CHURCH	DENOMINATION	NAME OF MERGED CHURCH	DISTRICT	DATE MERGED	MERGER TYPE

f) Discontinued, abandoned, withdrawn, unreported disaffiliated 2023 actions (§641), separated, exigent circumstances or financial. Include the reason for closure for each church listed.

(1) New Church Start (§259.1)

GCNO	CHURCH NAME	DISTRICT	CHARGE	LOCATION	DATE CLOSED	REASON FOR CLOSURE

(2) Mission Congregation (§259.1a)

GCNO	CHURCH NAME	DISTRICT	LOCATION	DATE CLOSED	REASON FOR CLOSURE
41186	Bloxom Mission	Coastal Virginia	5585 Shoremain Dr, Bloxom, VA 23308	7/1/2026	Merger

(3) Satellite Congregation (§249.22)

GCNO	CHURCH NAME	DISTRICT	LOCATION	DATE CLOSED	REASON FOR CLOSURE

(4) Chartered Local Church (§259.5)

GCNO	CHURCH NAME	DISTRICT	CHARGE	LOCATION	DATE CLOSED	REASON FOR CLOSURE
474136	Mears Memorial UMC	Coastal Virginia	Mears Memorial	18186 Second Street Keller, VA 23401	12/29/2025	Exigent Circumstances
474147	Melfa UMC	Coastal Virginia	Melfa	19444 Main Street Melfa, VA 23410	9/16/2025	Church Vote
474331	Ocean View UMC	Coastal Virginia	Ocean View	31 Main Street Wachapreague, VA 23480	6/30/2026	Church Vote
474103	Signpost UMC	Coastal Virginia	Greenbackville	3089 Fleming Road New Church, VA 23415	4/14/26	Exigent Circumstances
474320	Swain Memorial UMC	Coastal Virginia	Swain Memorial (Tangier)	16094 Main Ridge Road Tangier Island, VA 23440	12/1/2025	Exigent Circumstances
473815	Woodberry UMC	Coastal Virginia	Woodberry	18121 Charles M. Lankford Jr. Memorial Highway Parksley, VA 23421	9/12/2025	Exigent Circumstances
470696	Arlington Temple UMC	Northern Virginia	Arlington Temple	1835 N Nash St, Arlington, VA 22209	6/30/26	Church Vote
484988	Mount Jackson UMC	Shenandoah River	Mount Jackson	141 Orkney Dr., Mount Jackson, VA 22842	1/12/2026	Exigent Circumstances

485540	Quicksburg UMC	Shenandoah River	Mount Jackson	4281 Ridge Road, Quicksburg, VA 22847	1/12/2026	Exigent Circumstances
485540	Haden Chapel UMC	Three Notch'd	Haden Chapel	47 South Boston Rd, Palmyra, VA 22963	4/16/2026	Exigent Circumstances
968761	Pierce Chapel UMC	Valley Ridge	Foothills Charge	80 Timber Ridge Road, Fincastle, VA 24090	1/18/2026	Church Vote
482570	Grace UMC	Valley Ridge	Grace	4404 Williamson Road, Roanoke, VA 24012	10/4/25	Church Vote

(g) Readmission of Disaffiliated Church to the UMC (§2553). Churches will receive a new GCNO for the newly admitted church:

CHURCH NAME	DISTRICT	OLD GCNO	CHARGE	MAILING ADDRESS	PHYSICAL ADDRESS	DATE READMITTED

(h) Moved physical location and indicate new address:

GCNO	CHURCH NAME	DISTRICT	MAILING ADDRESS	PHYSICAL ADDRESS	DATE RELOCATED
411857	Kingstowne Communion UMC	Northern Virginia	5510 Cherokee Ave Ste 300 Alexandria, VA 22312-2320	6507 Telegraph Rd Alexandria, Virginia 22310-3324	5/3/26
481473	Emmaus UMC	Three Notch'd	6100 Chamberlayne Rd, Richmond, VA 23227	6100 Chamberlayne Rd, Richmond, VA 23227	11/1/2025
470823	Chesterbrook UMC	Northern Virginia	7 Dean Dr McLean, VA 22101-5442	6817 Dean Dr McLean, VA 22101-5442	9/1/25

(i) Changed name of church – For example, "First" to "Trinity":

GCNO	FORMER NAME	NEW NAME	PHYSICAL ADDRESS	DISTRICT	EFFECTIVE DATE
481473	Emmaus at Stratford Hills UMC	Emmaus	6100 Chamberlayne Rd, Richmond, VA 23227	Three Notch'd	11/1/2025
N/A	Madison Charge	Madison-Rose Park Charge	505 S Main St, Madison, VA 22727	Three Notch'd	1/1/2026

j) Transferred this year into this conference from other United Methodist conference(s) and include membership (¶¶42, 260)

GCNO	PARISH NAME	CHARGE NAME	CHURCH NAME	DISTRICT

k) What cooperative parishes in structured forms have been established (¶206)

GCFA PARISH NUMBER	LOCAL PARISH NUMBER	PARISH NAME	GCNO	CHURCH NAME	DISTRICT
Vine: 470275	Nooma: 140943	Vine-Nooma			Northern Virginia
Wright's Chapel: 480855	Bowling Green: 480800	Bowling Green-Wright's Chapel			Mission Rivers

l) Organized or continued as Wesley Foundations:

NAME	DISTRICT	MAILING ADDRESS	PHYSICAL ADDRESS	PHONE	DATE FOUNDED
The Pace Center at Virginia Commonwealth University	Three Notch'd	PO Box 5161 Richmond, VA, 23220	700 W. Franklin Street, Richmond, VA, 23220-0161	(804) 658-4064	Unknown
The Wesley Foundation at Longwood University and Hampden-Sydney College	Living Waters	204 High St. Farmville, VA, 23901	204 High St. Farmville, VA, 2390-1873	(434) 392-8089	Unknown
United Campus Ministry at Virginia State University	Living Waters	P.O. Box 9200 Virginia State University, VA, 23806	1 Hayden Drive, Virginia State University, VA 23806-0001	(804) 524-5214	Unknown
Wesley Foundation at Old Dominion University	Coastal Virginia	1338 49Th St Norfolk, VA, 23508	1338 49th St Norfolk, VA, 23508-1800	(540) 820-5601	Unknown
Wesley Foundation at University of Virginia	Three Notch'd	1908 Lewis Mountain Rd Charlottesville, VA, 22903	1908 Lewis Mountain Rd Charlottesville, VA, 22903-2413	(804) 977-6500	Unknown
Wesley Foundation at Virginia Tech	Valley Ridge	209 Roanoke St W Blacksburg, VA, 24061	209 Roanoke St W Blacksburg, VA, 24061-1073	(540) 552-2827	Unknown
Wesley Foundation at William & Mary	Mission Rivers	526 Jamestown Rd Williamsburg, VA, 23185	526 Jamestown Rd Williamsburg, VA, 23185-4044	(757) 229-6832	Unknown

11. List all Ecumenical Shared Ministries in the conference (¶¶207, 208)

a) Federated church

GCNO	NAME	DISTRICT	OTHER DENOMINATION(S)

b) Union Church

GCNO	NAME	DISTRICT	OTHER DENOMINATION(S)
482318	Shiloh	Valley Ridge	Union
492694	Stonewall	Valley Ridge	Church of the Brethren
470856	United Christian Parish	Northern Virginia	Disciples of Christ, Northern Virginia Presbyterian USA, United Church of Christ

c) Merged Church

GCNO	NAME	DISTRICT	OTHER DENOMINATION(S)

d) Yoked Parish

GCNO	NAME	DISTRICT	OTHER DENOMINATION(S)

12. What changes have been made in districts and charge lines. Please list the GCNO beside each church name.

GCNO/ CHURCH (1)	GCNO/ CHURCH (2)	GCNO/ CHURCH (3)	OLD CHARGE	NEW CHARGE	OLD DISTRICT	NEW DISTRICT

a) District Move Changes

GCNO NUMBER	CHURCH NAME	OLD DISTRICT	NEW DISTRICT

b) Alignment/Charge Line Changes

Coastal Virginia

Bloxom Mission (411846) from 50% to 25%

Covenant (479537) from 100% to 75%

Greenbackville Charge (Union (474284) and Sign Post (474103)) Dissolved, Union UMC becomes 25% station

Mt. Pleasant (476487) From 100% to 50%

Lower Shore Charge Cheriton UMC (473928) Capeville (473883) and Trinity (473861) Dissolved

Northampton Charge: Epworth (473985), Cheriton UMC (473928) Capeville (473883) Trinity (473861) and

New Mission (473952) Becomes a new 100% charge with both a full-time pastor and a 50% lay supply

Oaklette (476864) from 100% to 75%

Oak Grove (477004) Associate eliminated

Onley (474227) from 100% to 75%

St. Thomas (474091) from 75% to 50%

The Garden (476647) from 50% to 25%

Virginia Beach (477208) 100% Associate added

Living Waters

Nottoway-Lunenburg Charge (Laurel Hill (475233), St. Marks (475244), Thrifts Chapel (475255) Discontinue Charge (Thrifts Closed 4/27/2025)

Nottoway-Lunenburg Charge (Laurel Hill (475233), St. Marks (475244) move to 50%

West Buckingham Charge (Mt. Tabor (475734), Trinity (475756), Woodland (475778) Discontinue Charge (Trinity Closed 12/13/2024)

West Buckingham Charge (Mt. Tabor (475734), Woodland (475778) move to 25%

Sycamore UMC (Prince George) (479138) move to 75%

Mission Rivers

Hopewell Caroline (480753): Reduce from 50% to less than 25%

Lower (480332): 1/1/2026 reduced from 100% to 50%

Lower (480332) 7/1/2026 increase from 50% to 100%

Bethany Reedville (479960) 7/1/2025 reduced from 100% to 50%

Bethany Reedville (479960) 7/1/2026 increase from 50% to 100%

Bethel Lively (480070) 7/1/2026 reduce from 100% to 75% (this is the Bethel Emmanuel Charge 50%/

Bethel 25 Emmanuel)

Fox Hill Center (477367) 11/30/2025 reduced from 100% to 50%

Richmond Charge (Hopewell 480560/ Oakland 480571/ Calvary 480558) 5/1/2026 reduced from 100% to 75%

Mountain View

Bethany UMC (475370): decreased from 100% to 75%

Stanleytown UMC (473520): decreased from 100% to 50%

Northern Virginia

Annadale UMC (470424) associate pastor eliminated

Clarendon UMC (470583) associate pastor eliminated

Floris UMC (470435) one associate pastor added, one associate pastor reduced to (50%)

Gainesville Bristow House Churches (295997) associate pastor eliminated

Saint Matthews UMC (470710) associate pastor increased from (25% to 50%)

Shenandoah River

Dissolve Mount Jackson Charge (Mount Jackson 484988, Quicksburg 485540) Churches closed under exigent circumstances.

New Hope (483905): Decrease from 100% to 50%

Three Notch'd District

Ginter Park (481462): Decrease from 75% to 25%

Shiloh (481611): decrease from 100% to 50%

Reveille (481622): decrease associate from 100% to 50%

Skipwith (481256): decrease from 100% to 50%

Rodes (471793): decrease from 100% to 75%

Belmont (480742): increase from 50% to 100%

Westover Hills (481746): increase from 50% to 100%

Aldersgate (471031) : increase associate from 75% to 100%

Asbury Church Hill (970525): decrease from 50% to 25%

Gordonsville Charge (Gordonsville 471964, Barboursville 471953): increase from 50% to 75%)

Dissolve Bethel-Mountain View Charge (Bethel UMC (Rochelle) 472321 and Mountain View UMC (472194). Both churches become 25% station churches.

Valley Ridge

Blacksburg (482125) Associate: Increase from 50% to 100%

edges (140353): Decrease from 100% to 75%

COASTAL VIRGINIA

Tim Craig (C), Greg Duncan (C), Gary Chivarotti (L), Tom Mercer (C), Jon Woodburn (C), Bob Talbott (C), Peggy Wilson (L), Stephanie Kimec-Parker (C), Kathy Hershey (L)

LIVING WATERS

Chair: District Superintendent Jay Carey (C),

Class of 2027: Rennie Bridgeman; Joe T. Carson (C), Rich Meiser (C), Proctor Peebles

Class of 2028: Debbie Baugham (C)

Class of 2029: Betty Forbes, Lane Speigner (C)

MISSION RIVERS DISTRICT

Lindsey Baynham Freeman (C), Justin Williams (C), Kristie Askew (C), Chris Czubowicz (L), Jeffery R. Harrison (C), Carl Perez (C), Nancy Ransome (L), Tom Tipton (C), Kristina Williams (L), Art Sheffield (L)

MOUNTAIN VIEW DISTRICT

Sarah Calvert (C), Leigh Anne Taylor (C), Ryan Ware (C), Jeffery White (C), Joe Cailles (C), Susan Hughes (C), Mark Tucker (C), Keith Vernon (C), Robert Hardy (C), Steve Weedling (C), Kathryn Ware (L), Dustin Wilcox (L), Terri Chaplin (L), Lynn Watson (L), Caroll Stinnette (L), Nancy Dickison (L), Garland Harper (L), Tammy Burdick (L), Frank Prohaska (L), Anne Tweedy (L)

NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Jeff Haugh, Chair (C), Marjorie Hobart (L), Karen Hunt (L), Bill Logan (L), James Henry (C), Gene Cross (L), Marti Ringenbach (C), Larry Miller (L), Pat Sawhney (L), Betsy Hudson (C), Kirk Nave (C)

THREE NOTCH'D DISTRICT

Jim Chandler (C), Diana Foster (C), Katie Frooman (L), Grace Han (C), Laura Maher (L), Bill Pike (L), Bessie Owens (L), Kip Robinson (C).

SHENANDOAH RIVER DISTRICT

Susan Catlett (C), Sean Devolites (C), Mary Madden (L), Alexis Owens (C), Barbara Phillips (L), Bob Riggles (C), Sarah Stelzl (L). Tommy Stelzl (C), Lisa Tri (L)

VALLEY RIDGE DISTRICT

Alan Combs (C), Brian Boettcher (C), Rex Buel (L), William Bushman (L), Becky Grandle (L), Doug Urbaniak (L), Dr. Nathaniel L. Bishop (L), Debbie Brown (L), Cynthia Martin (L), Doug Mitchell (C), Joanna Paysour (C), Peggy Rosen (L), Patsy Sparks (L), Don Witt (L)

COASTAL VIRGINIA

Greg Duncan (C) - AM, Tammy Estep (C) - RE, Beth Givens (C) - DS, Jennifer Hume (L), June Kernutt (L), Brenda Laws (C) - FD, Won Lee (C) - FE, Sarah Locke (C) - FE, Bill McClung (C) - FE, John O'Grady (L), Scott Rimer (C) - FE, Ann Tang (C) - FE, Randy Timmerman (C) - FE, Amanda Webber (C) - FE, Judy Worthington (C) - RE

LIVING WATERS

Tim Beck (C) - FE, Lyndsie Blakely (C) - FD, Jay Carey (C) - DS, Nathan Decker (C) - FE, Stan Hargraves (C) - RE, Virginia Jones (L), Margaret Kutz (C) - RE, Rich Meiser (C) - FE, Jesse Moffitt (C) - FE, Brian Posey (C) - FE, Jacob Sahms (C) - FE, Richard Speirs (L), Renee Teague (C) - FE

MISSION RIVERS

Kathy Angel (L), John Choi (C) - FE, Lindsey Freeman (C) - DS, David Hindman (C) - RE, Brian Johnson (C) - FE, Debbie McDaniels (L), Mandy Newman (C) - FE, Sarah Newton (L), Rebecca Rumburg (C) - FE, Brian Sixbey (C) - FE, Marcus Stallworth (C) - FL, Mina Sumpter (C) - RE, Owen Taylor (C) - AM, Eric Vaudt (C) - FE, Bertina Westley (C) - FE

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Susan Ackers (L), Tim Barth (C) - FE, Bryan Buckles (C) - FE, Sarah Calvert (C) - DS, Yusang Chung (C) - FE, Dawn Compton (C) - FE, Liz Ecklund (C) - FE, Sandra Fulcher (L), Mary Hancock (L), Ben Horrocks (C) - FE, Nancy Johnson (C) - FL, Andrew LaBar-Dietz (C) - D, Leigh Anne Taylor (C) - D, Keith Vernon (C) - FE, Faith Weedling (C) - FE

NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Matt Benton (C) - FE, Mary Beth Buchholz (L), William Chaney (C) - FE, Drew Colby (C) - FE, Bill Gray (L), Janine Howard (C) - FE, Sara Keeling (C) - FE, Minoo Kim (C) - FE, Mary Ann Kral (L), Keith Lee, (C) - FE , William "Mac" McKenney (C) - AM, John Meeuwissen (L), Barbara Miner (C) - PL, Kirk Nave (C) - DS, Emmanuel Nkrumah (C) - FE, Katie Phillips (C) - FE, Mike Plasters (C) - FE, Melissa Porter-Miller (C) - FE, Matthew Smith (C) - FE, Jason Snow (C) - FE, Neal Wise (L)

SHENANDOAH RIVER

William Braddy (L), Eduardo Carrillo (C) - FE, James Page (C) - FL, Amy Pannell (C) - FE, Barbara Phillips (L), Sandra Plasters (C) - FE, Debbie Powell (C) - FE, Michael Reaves (C) - FE, Joel Robinette (C) - FE, John Stelzl (C) - FL, Laura Stratton (C) - FE, Al Tuten (C) - FL, Daniel Wray (C)- FE, Heather Wray (C) - FD

THREE NOTCH'D

Yoon-Seok Choi (C) - FE, Beth Downs (C) - FD, Chip Giessler (C) - FE, Amy Grant (C) - FE, Oveta Jenkins (L), Chad Herndon (C) - FE, Gil Lee C - FE, Grace Han (C) - DS, Lauren Leggett (L), Laura Loper (L), Josh Munnikhuysen (C) - FL, Judy Oguich (C) - FD, Frank Osburn (L), Sarah Sealand (C) - FE, Dave Stoakley (L), Tracey Lyons (C) - FE, Tim Worley (C) - RL

VALLEY RIDGE

Adam Blagg (C) - FE, Brenda Brooks (L), Peter Choi (C) - FE, Tim Craft (C) - FD, Karen Davis (L), Tom Davis (L), Jennifer Fletcher (C) - FE, Eileen Gilmer (C) - FL, Jonathan Greer (C) - FE, John Hemming (C) - FE, Leigh Iberg (L), Charlotte Keagy (L), Hyeon Ho Lee (C) - FE, Craig Newman (C) - FE, Doug Paysour (C) - RE, Tom Rose (L), Jeff Wilson C - FE

REPORTS



Office of Belonging and Advocacy Report	69
Cabinet Report	70
Site Selection Committee	73
Equitable Compensation Commission	74
Just Compensation Task Force	75
Clergy Payroll	78
Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc.	80
Connectional Table Report	90
Conference Nominations Team	93
AI Task force	95

Belonging and Advocacy

“...cease to do evil; learn to do good; seek justice; rescue the oppressed...” – Isaiah 1:16b-17a

As I stepped into the role of Director of Belonging and Advocacy, I shared with the Bishop and Conference leadership that my intention for this first season of ministry in Virginia was to listen. I remain captivated by how Jesus, even in his divine wisdom, moved from town to town asking people their names and what they needed from him. In doing so, he modeled not only mercy and justice ministry, but cultural competency—reminding us that healthy relationship is rooted in listening, not assumptions.

In this first year, our work has centered on building relationships, reviewing systems, and laying the groundwork for cultural competency and implicit bias formation across the Conference.

This work has included:

- Cultural Competency 101 training with Conference staff
- Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) assessments and debriefs with Conference staff
- Intro to Implicit Bias training with the Board of Ordained Ministry
- A Cabinet book study on bias, alongside intentional work in relationship-building
- Ongoing Coffee Hour Tours across the districts, with more than 25 stops engaging clergy and laity in conversations about who they are, the realities of their churches and communities, the inequities present in their contexts, and how the Conference can better support this work
- Formation of a covenant between the Cabinet and the Conference Commission on Religion and Race, committing to shared work in addressing inequities
- Collaboration with the Immigration Response Team to develop resources and trainings for clergy, churches, and communities
- Strengthening relationships with the Ethnic Minority Caucuses across the Conference
- Serving as staff liaison to the Commission on Religion and Race, Commission on Disabilities, Commission on the Status and Role of Women, Nominations Committee, Board of Church and Society, and the Cross-Racial Cross-Cultural Committee (in partnership with the Center for Clergy Excellence). We have amazing people serving on all of these teams doing and leading amazing work throughout the conference!
- Continued leadership in the work of Just Compensation

My prayer is that we remain diligent, proactive, and responsive...not reactive. The work of justice often moves slower than we hope. Yet, we persist with fervor so that change might come sooner than later. Even as we observe the daily news around our world, I am reminded of Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians when he stated, “We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.” So let us be not weary in our well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we do not faint.

Beloved, our work is far from done. Yet, we remain committed to the fact belonging and advocacy is not a trend, program, or a fad. It is a culture shift. It is social holiness. It is discipleship. Together we shall continue building beloved community until every person in churches and throughout our communities experience sacred worth.

Rev. Lan Davis Wilson, *Director of Belonging and Advocacy*
Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church

Coastal Virginia District – Rev. Elizabeth Givens, District Superintendent

The Coastal Virginia District has continued to **develop 8 regional community cohorts** and encourage those as our core places of connection. To guide our churches, a group of leaders identified **core values: loving our neighbors, missional clarity, connectionalism, radical hospitality, discipleship pathways and financial sustainability**. Charge Conferences focused on explaining and resourcing around these core values for each church. We have added two staff positions, a **District Developer for the Eastern Shore, and a Director of Resourcing**, and relocated the District Office to move toward more financial sustainability as a District. **Finally, we are working on a ministry called The Table on the Eastern Shore in the closed property of Melfa UMC, which we dream of being a missional hub for the Eastern Shore.**

Living Waters District – Rev. Jay Carey, District Superintendent

The Living Waters District has experienced a fruitful year of ministry.

In July 2025, the **district King's Dominion Youth Day** invested in the church's next generation. August brought a welcome luncheon and new appointment training for incoming pastors. Fall Regional Charge Conferences in October **centered on a message from The Coffee Bean – challenging leaders to bring transformation to the world around them**, regardless of their circumstances. November's District Conference and a **December gathering of retired pastors** rounded out a full and meaningful year.

The new year opened with momentum. **EMPOWER**, the district's January training day, drew nearly **200 pastors and laity** for equipping in Finance, Trustees, Lay Servanthood, Disaster Response, SPRC, Nominations, SAS, and Youth ministries. **Four vision grants** totaling \$2,500 were awarded to support creative local ministry. In February, **Bethel UMC in Alberta welcomed the traveling monks on their walk for peace, and the Missions and Outreach Committee awarded nearly \$20,000 in ministry grants across the district.**

March **marked one full year of Cross-Cultural and Minority Pastors Gatherings** – an intentional space for encouragement, relationship, and support for those in uniquely challenging appointments.

We are excited about the leadership development and relationship building across our district, its churches, and communities.

Mission Rivers District – Rev. Lindsey Baynham Freeman, District Superintendent

The Mission Rivers District is passionate about empowering churches to be **bold agents of change** – bringing hope and transformation to the communities around them. We shaped this past year, around a simple but powerful vision from our council of bishops: “**...to love boldly, serve joyfully and lead courageously**” as those empowered by the Holy Spirit. We welcomed new staff, **strengthened partnerships between clergy and laity** and kept asking the hard but necessary question: **how do we work better together?** We continued investing in our churches through **Mission and Capitol Grants** and we supported individuals stepping into greater leadership through **Lay servant training, or Certified Lay Ministry**. We also made space for **our clergy to connect, recharge and support one another** at various events. Looking ahead to the next conference year, we're leaning into our **Wesleyan tradition** while actively pursuing renewal in our churches and in the communities we call home.

Mountain View District – Rev. Dr. Sarah Calvert, District Superintendent

What a year it has been for the Mountain View District! For the entire year, we leaned deeply into our Wesleyan heritage, and the connections have been profound.

Our year centered on **Celebrating Our Wesleyan Roots**, lifting up the extraordinary legacy of Susanna, Charles, and John Wesley as living inspiration for ministry today. Their passion for practical discipleship, worship, and holy living shaped our gatherings and our shared identity as a district family. We explored their legacy across three clergy meetings and six group charge conferences and even met them in life-size cartoon form!

Our **“One In Mission Together”** District Mission Project connected us in hands-on service across the whole district. Over 250 people and more than half of our congregations from the smallest to the largest, participated in that mission day. We continue our twice-a-year Lay Servant Ministry training, equipping gifted laypeople to preach, teach, and lead with confidence; we doubled our participation in this work.

We also hosted neighboring districts for **Cultivating Generous Congregations**, equipping our churches to grow communities of joyful, sustainable giving.

Through all of it, one thread held: we are a people shaped by grace, energized by the Spirit, and rooted in a tradition that believes the world can be transformed.

Northern Virginia District – Rev. Kirk Nave, District Superintendent

The Northern Virginia District is equipping our laity and clergy to make disciples. Our **District Training Day** was offered to our entire Annual Conference, and featured **Dr. Ashley Boggan**, General Secretary of Archives and History, speaking on the concept of Wesleyan Vile-tality. We continued our **Go! Training** to equip laity in sharing their faith. The District offered **no-interest loans to United Methodist federal workers** whose income was interrupted during the first federal government shutdown. We continued the distribution of infrastructure grants to local churches as they reported on their progress in and the new ministries enabled by those grants. We also began offering **deep-dive training for our lay leadership**. This year covered staff-parish and finance committees.

Shenandoah River District – Rev. Dr. Kyungsuk Cho, District Superintendent

In the past year, the Shenandoah River District entered a season of meaningful renewal, shaped by three guiding commitments: **Connect, Listen, and Focus**.

To **'connect'** more intentionally, the district launched "Office on the Move." Dissolving the fixed office in Toms Brook, now the district staff team is moving across the district to meet leaders where ministry is already happening. A district initiative, "Coffee on Us," further invited clergy and laity to gather at local coffee shops, share conversation around mission and discipleship—with the district covering the tab.

To **'listen'** more deeply, the district hosted a District Training Day, designed with a theme of community listening. Featuring a plenary session and 6 workshops, district leaders are being equipped to hear their communities' needs with greater attentiveness and love.

To **'focus'** on our long-term mission, the district is launching the Vision Cohort—bringing together 10+ congregations to dream, plan, and grow together around a shared commitment to serving their communities with clarity and purpose.

As the 2026 Virginia Annual Conference comes to our district, we welcome the wider connection with gratitude and hope. We anticipate greater opportunities to connect, listen, and focus, with friends across the Annual Conference.

Three Notch'D District Rev. Dr. Hyo Lee, District Superintendent

By God's grace and through the faithful leadership of laity and clergy, we have witnessed signs of God's kingdom at work among us in three areas.

First, while some congregations face decline and closure, there are also encouraging signs of vitality. Approximately four churches are planning to add additional worship services in response to growth. In addition, two clusters are collaborating in youth ministry for maximum impact.

Second, amid social and economic uncertainty, innovative ministries are emerging and bearing fruit. New Song King William and St. Matthew's satellite, St. Matt's North, are growing as they reach new people. The Charlottesville Cluster is preparing to launch the Southwood Village Mission to engage a nearby mobile home community, effective July 1, 2026.

Third, as Wesleyan people, we continue advancing ministries of justice and compassion through participation in IMPACT, RISC, and immigration and racial justice initiatives.

In all these ways, we seek to remain faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, living out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

We look forward to welcoming **Rev. Grace Han** as our new District Superintendent and we give thanks to God for the leadership of the **Rev. Dr. Hyo Lee** over these last six years.

Valley Ridge District Rev. Jay Carey & Rev. Dr. Sarah Calvert, District Superintendents

What a year of faithfulness and forward movement for the Valley Ridge District!

Alongside our friends in the Mountain View District, our year was enriched by **Celebrating Our Wesleyan Roots**, lifting up the legacy of Susanna, Charles, and John Wesley as living inspiration for practical discipleship, worship, and holy living. Their witness grounded and energized us throughout the year.

One of our greatest highlights was the **extraordinary growth of Lay Servant Ministry training**. Over 80 people were trained this year, an outstanding achievement that reflects the hunger for equipped, confident lay leadership across our congregations. We are so proud of that number!

We also continued expanding Simplified Accountable Structure training, introducing many new churches to this transformative model of focused, mission-driven governance.

A year like this calls for gratitude. We **celebrate and honor Rev. Dr. Dale White**, retiring District Director of Congregational Development, whose faithful leadership shaped so much of what this district has become. Alongside him, **lay leader Larry Dickenson** has kept Valley Ridge focused and moving forward through this interim season. What a gift they both are.

And now, with joy, we welcome **Rev. Alan Combs** as our new District Superintendent. The best is yet to come!

SITE SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Site Selection Committee is responsible for making the arrangements for the Virginia Annual Conference to meet each year. By Annual Conference rules, the Committee recommends the location for the Annual Conference three (3) years in advance. The Annual Conference Session dates are set by Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson.

By previous Annual Conference action, the following locations have been approved for the sites of the Annual Conference

Harrisonburg	June 16-19, 2027
Harrisonburg	June 14-17, 2028

The Site Selection Committee recommends for the 2029 Virginia Annual Conference

Harrisonburg	June 20-23, 2029
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The Committee with the Director of Connectional Ministries and the Annual Conference Event Planner, continue to evaluate locations for holding Annual Conference all across the Commonwealth. After careful consideration of venue sites, we are pleased to again recommend holding Annual Conference at the Atlantic Union Bank Center at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

For your reference, the following criteria is used in evaluating potential Annual Conference sites:

- A venue to accommodate 3,000 people
- 1,300 hotel rooms in the area
- Headquarters hotel in close proximity to Conference site
- Parking for 2,000 cars
- Meeting space for the Clergy Session of 1,400 people
- Meeting space for the Laity Session of 1,400 people
- Additional meeting spaces adjacent to the Conference floor
- Twelve (12) Banquet areas to accommodate from 50 to 500 guests
- Additional banquet location options - Hotels, Restaurants & Churches
- Restaurants to accommodate 2,500 patrons within 1½ - 2 hour timeframe
- Conference accessibility
- 5,000 to 8,000 sq. ft. of special events space for Displays and Mission Opportunities

Neal E. Wise, *Chair*

RECOMMENDATION:

The Site Selection Committee recommends that the 2029 Virginia Annual Conference be held at the Atlantic Union Bank Center, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA, June 20-23, 2029.

Report of the Equitable Compensation Commission

The Equitable Compensation Commission continues to focus on two primary areas:

1. Recommending the Minimum Compensation Schedule for full-time clergy each year
2. Providing salary support for full-time clergy who are experiencing a salary arrearage, not related to church closures

In 2025, Equitable Compensation salary support in the amount of \$8,337 was provided to 1 charge who required assistance where the church was unable to provide for the salary of their pastor.

2027 Minimum Compensation Schedule Recommendation:	<u>2027 Proposed</u>	<u>2026 Approved</u>
a. Full Connection Pastors (FE/FD)	\$50,300	\$48,800
b. Associate Members	\$47,400	\$46,000
c. Provisional Members (PE/PD)	\$45,300	\$44,000
d. Local Pastors (completed Course of Study)	\$43,700	\$42,400
e. Local Pastors	\$42,600	\$41,400

Rev. Tom Durrance, *Chair*

2025 SUMMARY

Last year, the Just Compensation Task Force conducted a comprehensive review of clergy compensation across the Virginia Conference, utilizing statistical analysis to examine trends and disparities related to gender, race/ethnicity, clergy status, district, and years of service. The findings highlighted areas of both progress and concern, particularly in identifying compensation gaps and the influence of multiple variables on clergy pay. The report also emphasized the need for continued, multi-year analysis in order to better understand long-term trends and to determine whether observed disparities reflect deeper concerns related to equity and fairness in clergy compensation.

FRAMEWORK

“And whatever else you get, get insight.” — Proverbs 4:7b (NRSVUE)

This work continues to call us beyond surface-level understanding and into deeper insight. As your Director of Belonging and Advocacy, I continue to work closely with our Cabinet, Office of Clergy Excellence, and Commissions on Religion and Race, Disabilities, and Committee on the Status and Role of Women, to ensure we are actively and collaboratively working to tend to inequities that exist within the annual conference. Yes, it is our work as the church to call out and dismantle inequities in the world. But, Jesus reminds us that this work is our own to do as well when He asks, “How can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while the log is in your eye?” (Matthew 7:4 NRSVUE). Therefore, as we engage questions of just compensation, equity, and accountability, we must be willing to name what we see with honesty and clarity.

You cannot dismantle what you will not name.

CONTINUATION OF THE WORK

It was the recommendation of the Just Compensation Task Force that this work be entrusted to the Office of Belonging and Advocacy. That work has continued through ongoing study and analysis in partnership with:

- Dr. Kwang Yoon, statistical analyst
- Rev. Hungsu Lim, Chair of the Conference Commission on Religion and Race
- Chris Malak, Conference Data Manager
- Rev. Jessie Colwell, Director of The Center for Clergy Excellence

Together, this team has continued the work of examining clergy compensation data in order to provide insight, clarity, and accountability for the Virginia Annual Conference.

DATA UPDATES AND ADDITIONAL CONTEXT FOR 2026

- This year, we did include deacons who are appointed full-time in local churches are now grouped in with elders. This includes 5 deacons: 4 full and 1 provisional. The second category of full-time clergy you will see in the data consists of Licensed Local Pastors and Associate Members.
- You will also note an ATC (Adjusted Total Compensation) for pastors living in parsonages which for the data accounts for 35% of the base compensation added to the total to show comparables to those receiving housing allowances, which reflects the 35% configured into compensations in Wespath’s new Compass Plan for clergy residing in parsonages.
- This year, the number of full-time pastors decreased from 413 to 389.
- One additional factor not reflected directly in the data is the Fair Market Housing Allowance form. This form was created by the Task Force and many churches have already begun using it. This year it will be a required form in the Charge Conference paperwork for all those charges with clergy receiving housing allowances.

- The use of this Fair Market Housing Allowance form will also be utilized to set housing allowances for Conference Clergy Staff which also extends to our campus ministers. The housing allowance for Conference staff clergy is proposed to increase from \$15,000 to \$24,000 in the 2027 budget pending approval by this Annual Conference.

KEY FINDINGS

Annual Pay difference based on:

Individual-level Variables

Age: \$23 per additional year

Gender – Female relative to Male: \$155

Martial Status – Single relative to Married: **(\$284)**

Clergy Status – Elder/Deacon relative Local Pastor/Associate Member: \$2,830

Position – Associate pastor Relative to Lead: **(\$3,189)**

Years under appointment – Per additional year: \$64

Prior appointments – Per additional appointment: **(\$162)**

Moved this past year – Yes relative to No: \$9,246

Moved with Limited Itinerancy – Yes relative to No: \$1,290

Race/Ethnicity of Pastor:

African-American/Black relative to White: **(\$1,446)**

Asian relative to White: \$1,895

Hispanic/Latino or Multi-Racial relative to White: **(\$7,527)**

Church-level Variables

Race/Ethnicity of Church

African-American/Black relative to White: **(\$130)**

Asian relative to White: **(\$3,848)**

Hispanic/Latino or Multi-racial relative to White: \$3,780

Reside in Parsonage: Yes relative to No: \$4,534

Apportionments: Per additional dollar: \$0.03

Worship attendee: Per additional attender: \$12

Total Churches Served

2 churches relative to 1: **(\$3,490)**

3-4 churches relative to 1: **(\$5,112)**

District-level Variable

Northern Virginia (NoVA) relative to Other Districts: \$3,271

Celebrations

- Continuation of the work through ongoing collaboration
- Improved Compensation Modeling with Adjusted Total Compensation (+35% for parsonages in total compensation figures)

- Inclusion of deacons appointed full-time to charges
- Adoption and required use of the Fair Market Housing Allowance form
- Recognition of housing impact on compensation
- Clarity around role-based compensation differences
- Visibility into impact from multi-church/charge appointments
- Greater transparency in patterns across race/ethnic, marital status, years of service, moves, and limited itinerancy

Our Continued Work

1. We will continue monitoring compensation across all data points.
2. Expansion of work to include a Beloved Community Audit that tracks clergy compensation, demographic make-up conference staff and leadership, and budgeting around anti-racism and inclusion work as well as youth and young adults.
 - There remain clergy serving below the Conference's minimum compensation guidelines. While some of these cases are already being addressed, continued review is needed to identify how frequently this occurs and what structural factors and procedural gaps may be contributing to these outcomes. It is important to note that, in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*, responsibility for setting clergy compensation, including salary and housing, rests with the Charge Conference upon recommendation of the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relationship Committee and Church Council in consultation with the District Superintendent. As such, this work requires shared accountability between local churches and Conference leadership.
3. The data clearly shows lower compensation for clergy serving multiple churches. This raises important questions to be addressed regarding workloads, expectations, and equitable compensation for these appointments, particularly as these types of appointments often require increased labor and complexity,
 - Disparities across clergy status – The difference in compensation between associate and lead pastors reflects not only role distinction but differences in access to salary growth; as the data reflects associates receive far less salary increases relative to lead pastors.
 - Race and ethnicity disparities and representation gaps – The disparities for African-American/ Black, Hispanic/Latino and Multi-Racial clergy require continued attention in how the conference is addressing equitable compensation particularly within these groups as well as the broader context of appointment patters and access.

CFA has diligently been researching the possibility of a single-payer payroll including using a test group. They have already sent out survey for feedback and will present their findings and a potential way forward soon.

With the mandated implementation of the Fair Market Housing Allowance Form, we expect to see more faithful steps towards equity in housing pay across all appointments.

As we continue this work, we are reminded:

We cannot dismantle what we will not name.

Data spreadsheet: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xGdVeEQ1_xD_05VU1Mvr_eIC4sDGjNGs/edit

Humbly Submitted,

Rev. Lan Davis Wilson, *Director of Belonging and Advocacy,*
Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church

Single-Payer Payroll

At the 2025 session of the Virginia Annual Conference, the Just Compensation Task Force reported on its second year of work. This report included a recommendation for “the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) in consultation with the Office of Pensions and Benefits (VUMPI) to study the possibility of creating a system in which the Virginia Conference UMC would administer payroll processing and tax related reporting for all clergy appointed to local churches within the Conference.”

Upon receiving this recommendation, CFA diligently and immediately explored the feasibility of creating a single-payer payroll system for clergy appointed to local churches in the Virginia Conference. Different payroll systems were considered, as were issues of cost and capacity for this very important work. Learnings gleaned from the existing process for processing payroll for district/conference staff were gained. In addition, we had conversations with clergy serving local churches and clergy and local church treasurers completed a conference-wide survey to share both their needs and experiences with clergy payroll.

The survey had **320 respondents**, just more than half of whom are **pastors**, with the remainder being **church treasurers, finance committee members, or church administrators/office staff**.

Our learnings include the following:

1. Church and Church Treasurer Data

- 82.5% of respondents indicate having staff other than the pastor on payroll.
- 45.9% of respondents use a third-party payroll provider or payroll software.
- 38.8% of respondents manage payroll via spreadsheets, paper records, or hand calculations.
- The remainder of respondents indicate that they use a combination of the above or “are not sure.”
- 73.1% of respondents who handle local church payroll are volunteers with the remainder being full or part-time church staff.

2. Pastor Data

- 31% of pastors indicate receiving a late paycheck.
- 60.3% indicate receiving an incorrect W-2.
- 29.9% indicate receiving a late W-2 or other tax forms.
- 20.1% indicate having experienced pension errors.
- 29.9% indicate experiencing errors in compensation.

In exploring the possibility of moving towards a single-payer payroll system, the office of the Conference Treasurer learned the following benefits:

- Moving to a single-payer payroll system provides an opportunity for consistency in how payroll for the clergy of local churches is handled so that the burdens to our clergy and their families listed in section 2 above can be avoided.
- Issues of capacity in managing a large payroll system were considered and rectified through partnership with a payroll company. After exploring available vendors, ADP was chosen as the best option.
- Clergy can have the option of having tax withheld by the conference, which will offer them the opportunity to no longer have to pay quarterly federal and state estimated taxes and even to receive tax refunds.

- A single-payer payroll system would have an immense benefit for our immigrant clergy as they navigate an increasingly complex immigration system. The conference creating a single-payer system opens the door for these pastors to have easier access to the H1-B visa without being subject to the limits of the H1-B cap, as they often are now. This single-payer system also allows clergy to move to a new local church appointment to a local church without their employer (the Conference) changing, which also provides a benefit to these pastors who would not have to file additional costly petitions related to their immigration.
- Pastors of our smaller churches would no longer be faced with the sometimes onerous challenge of finding volunteer treasurers who are willing to manage their pastor's payroll.
- Clergy will not need to complete a new I-9 form when they move to a new appointment.
- The treasurers of local churches will not need to learn how to do payroll to serve their local congregation.

Concerns Raised

- Both in the survey and in separate conversations, concerns were raised that creating a single-payer system is a step towards the creation of a uniform system where the salary and/or housing allowances of clergy in local churches would be standardized and set by the conference based on factors such as years of service or some other metric. However, doing so would be a violation of our denominational polity. Per ¶252.4.d of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2020/2024*, it is the responsibility of the church council to “recommend to the charge conference the salary and other remuneration of the pastor(s) and staff members after receiving recommendations from the committee on pastor-parish relations (staff-parish relations). The same is true for clergy housing (see ¶252.4.e).
- There is a concern that the implementation of a single-payer system creates an unnecessary redundancy for our larger churches who already have staff who are managing clergy payroll or who are already contracting with a payroll service provider.

CFA's Proposal to the Virginia Conference

In the interest of caring for our clergy with accurate and timely compensation, our local church treasurers, and the congregation that they serve, for the next Conference year (July 1, 2026 - June 30-2027), the Council on Finance and Administration of the Virginia Conference (CFA) implement a policy where the clergy of local churches have their pay handled in one of the following ways:

- By a professional staff person of the local church who already manages payroll.
- By an outside payroll vendor chosen by the local church at the church/charge's expense.
- By the office of the Virginia Conference Treasurer. This option would not cause the local church/charge to incur expenses for this service.

Onboarding for this new system for those who choose to have their payroll managed by the Conference will begin September 1, 2026, with clergy beginning the process of receiving their paychecks from the Conference October 1, 2026. The Conference will send an invoice for the pastor's pay, as well as for housing, healthcare direct bill, pension, and any reimbursements, as appropriate to the appropriate person at the local church (typically by email) and churches can either pay online or send a check.

At the 2027 gathering of the Virginia Annual Conference a report will be shared with the body about how this process has worked for our clergy, local churches, and for the Treasurer's office so that a decision can be made regarding an expanded roll out of this service.

Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc.

Section I: Reports

REPORT 1: ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST PENSIONS, INC.

Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc. ("VUMPI") is the Virginia Conference's agency that is charged with administering Conference-sponsored clergy benefit programs and denominational pension and welfare plans.

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

<u>VUMPI Plans</u>
Medical
Prescription
Dental
Vision
Supplemental Life
Voluntary Life
Healthcare Flexible Spending Account
Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account

<u>Wespath Plans</u>
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)
Compass
United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP)
Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)

REPORT 2: 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 recommended to be made available in 2027 are unchanged from the plans offered in 2026. Health plans available to clergy serving in full time appointments in the Virginia Conference include the following:

- **PPO Core:** \$1,000 individual deductible, \$2,500 family deductible, 20% coinsurance
- **PPO Buy-Up:** \$750 individual deductible, \$1,875 family deductible, 20% coinsurance
- **HSA plan:** a plan with a higher deductible (\$2,250 individual, \$4,500 family) as required by Internal Revenue Service rules for HSAs, a Conference contribution to the Health Savings Account (\$750 for individual tier enrollees, \$1,500 for all other tier enrollees), 20% coinsurance

A fourth PPO health plan with a \$500 deductible, the PPO 500 plan, is made available only to clergy appointed to medical leave status with CPP disability benefits prior to 2026, along with surviving spouses and children of clergy who passed away while in active ministry status prior to 2026. That plan will continue to be maintained in 2027, with no plan design changes, for members enrolled in the plan as of the end of 2026. The PPO 500 plan is closed to new enrollment; clergy newly appointed to medical leave status with CPP benefits, and surviving spouses and children of clergy who pass away while in active ministry status are eligible to enroll (or remain enrolled) in the Conference-sponsored health plans for active clergy at active clergy participant contribution rates.

The two dental plan options currently administered by VUMPI will also continue to be offered in 2027 with no plan design changes.

The vision plan will continue to be offered in 2027, with no changes in the plan design.

Retired Clergy Health Plans

VUMPI administers health plans for eligible retired clergy of the Virginia Conference. The eligibility requirements are based on years of full time ministry in either Virginia Conference church appointments or Extension Ministry appointments with enrollment in the Conference-sponsored health plans.

Plans made available to eligible retirees are coordinated with Medicare eligibility, with separate programs made available to retirees who are not yet eligible for Medicare and for those who are Medicare eligible.

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 Core or PPO Buy-Up plans administered by VUMPI. Pre-Medicare-eligible retirees may also enroll in the self funded dental insurance program for retirees and the fully insured vision 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, which is detailed in the Council on Finance and Administration's report, with the remainder of the cost of the plans funded by participant contributions that are based on retiree health plan years of ministry credit, as described in Recommendation 1.

Medicare-eligible retirees who entered the retired status prior to 2026 and who are eligible to enroll in the Conference-sponsored retired clergy health plan have two options for retiree medical coverage. Spouses of such retirees who were married at the time of retirement are also eligible to enroll in the following options.

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 noted above, with the remainder of the cost funded by participant contributions as described in Recommendation 1.

The second option currently 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 option. The RRA funding for retirees who elect coverage through the Connector option, which is based on the retiree's health plan years of ministry credit, is detailed 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.

All retirees who retired from the Virginia Conference prior to 2026 will remain eligible for the retiree health program for Medicare-eligible retirees as described above.

Medicare-eligible retirees who retire in 2026 and thereafter are eligible to enroll in health plans made available through Via Benefits. The Via Benefits program provides access to Medicare supplemental coverage from a range of insurance carriers nationwide. The program includes Medicare Supplement, Medicare Advantage, Part D prescription drug, dental, vision and hearing plans. Retirees who retired from the Virginia Conference prior to 2026 have the option to enroll in health plans made available through Via Benefits. The recommended Virginia Conference subsidy provided to eligible retirees who elect coverage through the Via Benefits program is detailed in Recommendation 1.

REPORT 3: COST TRENDS IN THE CONFERENCE-SPONSORED HEALTH PLANS

The Virginia Conference-sponsored health plans for active clergy are self-insured, with the primary drivers of cost trends including actual medical and pharmacy claims and stop loss insurance premiums. The group Medicare Advantage plan made available to qualifying retirees who retired from the Virginia Conference prior to 2026 is fully insured, with cost trends being driven by a combination of aggregate plan claims costs along with legislative and regulatory changes impacting all Medicare Advantage plans.

Over the past year, VUMPI has observed higher than usual costs in both the active clergy health plans and the group Medicare Advantage plan made available to retired clergy. From 2024 to 2025, cost trends in the active clergy health plan rose 12.9%, exceeding an average rate of increase of approximately 8% in prior years. That higher cost trend is primarily attributable to higher prescription drug claim costs and an increase in stop loss insurance premiums.

The group Medicare Advantage plan premium has grown by over 56% between 2024 and 2026. The share of the plan premium paid by VUMPI has increased by more than \$200 per month during that time period, while the participant contribution for retirees receiving the highest Conference subsidy has grown by a much smaller \$9 per month. Cost trends in the group Medicare Advantage plan have been driven primarily by legislative and regulatory changes impacting all Medicare Advantage and Part D prescription drug plans.

In 2026 VUMPI launched new wellness programs that are designed to address specific cost drivers in the Conference-sponsored health plans, including diabetes, prediabetes and musculoskeletal conditions. These programs are expected to lead to a reduction in aggregate claims costs, which would help counter the observed recent increases in medical cost trends in the Conference-sponsored health plans for active clergy.

As is detailed in Recommendation 1 below, VUMPI is recommending increases in participant contributions for both active and retired health plan participants. The recommendations reflect a rate of increase ranging from 5% to 10%, which is below the overall rate of increase in costs. As the rate of increase in the recommended participant contributions is less than the rate of increase in overall health plan costs, VUMPI is anticipating the necessity to utilize financial reserves to meet total health plan expenses in 2027.

REPORT 4: CLERGY BENEFIT PROGRAM BILLING METHODOLOGIES

Churches and other salary paying entities are billed directly for the employer share of various clergy benefit programs administered by VUMPI.

For 2027, no changes are being recommended in connection with the billing methodologies that have previously been approved by the Virginia Annual Conference. Those billing methodologies include the following:

- » For the Comprehensive Protection Plan and the Conference-sponsored supplemental life insurance program for clergy, VUMPI will continue to bill 4.4% of total plan compensation for active clergy enrolled in CPP
- » For the Compass denominational retirement savings program, VUMPI will continue to bill 7% of total plan compensation plus \$150 per month, prorated by appointment percentage, for all active clergy enrolled in Compass

Additionally, VUMPI receives funding for the active and retired clergy health plans through a combination of direct billing for the active clergy health plan and a retiree health plan apportionment for the retired clergy health plan. VUMPI is recommending no changes to the active clergy health plan direct bill amount of \$1,660 per month or to the retiree health plan apportionment in 2027.

REPORT 5: PENSION PLAN STRUCTURE

The denominational pension and retirement savings program in The United Methodist Church includes several distinct plans, as follows:

- The “Pre-82” Plan for benefits accrued prior to 1982
- The Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) for service accrued from 1982 through 2006
- The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) for service accrued from 2007 through 2025
- The Compass plan for all service accrued beginning in 2026. Compass includes the following components:
 - » Automatic 3% contribution of clergy total plan compensation, which includes base salary, housing allowance, and a 35% parsonage factor for clergy living in parsonages
 - » \$150 flat monthly contribution, which is prorated by appointment percentage
 - » Matching contribution of up to 4% of total plan compensation, with the opportunity to receive the matching contribution based on qualifying student debt repayments

The Compass plan also includes automatic features, with automatic enrollment and automatic contribution escalation each year. As approved by the Virginia Annual Conference in 2025, all eligible clergy will be automatically enrolled in Compass at 4% of total plan compensation on a pre-tax basis, with automatic escalation of 1% each year up to a maximum of 10% for automatic escalation. Clergy may opt out of automatic features and may elect a different Compass contribution if desired.

REPORT 6: WELFARE PLANS STRUCTURE

The welfare plans made available to Virginia Conference clergy include the Comprehensive Protection Plan 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 January 1, 2002, the CPP disability benefit equals 70 percent of Plan Compensation, with compensation capped at 200 percent of the Denominational Average Compensation “DAC.”
- For Clergy disabled prior to January 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 in 2026; benefit amounts may change in 2027:

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

- Participant: \$50,000
- Spouse of active participant: \$16,300
- Surviving spouse of active participant: \$12,200
- Child of active participant: \$8,650

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

- Participant: \$24,450
- Spouse of retired participant: \$16,300
- Surviving spouse of retired participant: \$12,200
- Child of retired participant: \$8,650

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 was 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

VUMPI administers a supplemental life insurance benefit for active and retired clergy that is paid in addition to the CPP life insurance benefit. The Conference Supplemental Death Benefit for active clergy under episcopal appointment, who are enrolled in CPP, is \$25,000. The Conference Supplemental Death Benefit for retired clergy, who are eligible for a CPP death benefit and who continue to be members of The United Methodist Church, is \$5,000. The beneficiary will receive the Conference Supplemental Death Benefit payable in one lump sum.

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 ten 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 7: 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 Wespeth, the DAC is projected to increase from 2026 to 2027 as follows:

Denominational Average Compensation	
2026	2027
\$81,603	\$83,235

Section II: Recommendations for Annual Conference Approval

RECOMMENDATION 1: 2027 HEALTH PLAN PARTICIPANT CONTRIBUTION RECOMMENDATIONS

In administering the Conference-sponsored self-insured health plans, an element of VUMPI’s strategy is to maintain plans that are similar to national average employer-sponsored health plans. In addition, VUMPI recommends participant contributions that are similar, as a percentage of the total health plan cost, to national employer-sponsored plan averages. For 2027, VUMPI is recommending an increase of approximately 5% across each of the Conference-sponsored medical and dental plans for clergy only, clergy + spouse and clergy plus child(ren) enrollment tiers. VUMPI is recommending a 10% participant contribution increase for family tier coverage in the Conference-sponsored medical and dental plans. No changes are recommended in the Conference-sponsored vision insurance plan.

Following are the 2027 participant contribution recommendations for the Conference-sponsored health plans:

Active Clergy:

	PPO Core	PPO Buy-Up	HSA	Core	Major	Vision
Employee Only	121	158	95	16	37	8.34
Employee + Spouse	362	431	305	42	105	15.05
Employee + Child(ren)	368	436	310	47	110	15.05
Family	402	495	341	61	127	24.19

Clergy on Voluntary Leave, Sabbatical, or Retired Under ¶358.2.a (With Twenty Years of Service) or ¶358.3 (Prior to Age 62 With Fewer Than Thirty Years of Service):

PPO 500 Plan for Grandfathered Clergy on Medical Leave with CPP Benefits & Under Age 65 Surviving Spouses of Clergy

The following are the recommended participant contributions for clergy and spouses/children who are enrolled in the PPO 500 plan as of the end of 2026. As is detailed in Report 2, the PPO 500 plan was closed to new membership beginning in 2026, with all newly eligible clergy receiving CPP disability benefits and surviving spouses and children of clergy being eligible for the Conference-sponsored health plan for active clergy at active clergy participant contributions.

	PPO 500	Core	Major	Vision
Employee Only	131	16	37	8.34
Employee + Spouse	200	42	105	15.05
Employee + Child(ren)	200	47	110	15.05
Family	226	61	127	24.19

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

	Medical			
	PPO Core		PPO Buy-Up	
	Retiree	Family	Retiree	Family
10-14	761	1,890	882	2,315
15-19	672	1,533	824	1,874
20-24	515	1,171	630	1,433
25-29	357	814	436	992
30+	200	452	242	551

	Dental			
	Core		Major	
	Retiree	Family	Retiree	Family
10-14	32	68	63	147
15-19	32	68	63	147
20-24	32	68	63	147
25-29	32	68	63	147
30+	32	68	63	147

	Vision
Clergyperson Only	\$8.34
Clergyperson + Spouse	\$15.05
Clergyperson + Child(ren)	\$15.05
Family	\$24.19

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

As detailed in Report 2 above, Medicare-eligible retirees who retire in or after 2026 are eligible to enroll in health plan coverage through the Via Benefits program. Qualifying retirees will receive Health Reimbursement Account funding in order to offset part or all of the premiums for selected health plans. The following monthly Health Reimbursement Account funding from the Virginia Conference, which is based on the retiree’s health plan years of ministry credit, is recommended for all retirees who elect coverage through the Via Benefits program in 2027:

Years of Ministry	Via Benefits Funding
15-19	\$100
20-24	\$150
25-29	\$200
30+	\$250

The above amounts will be provided to both the retiree and eligible spouses who enroll in coverage through the Via Benefits program. Eligible spouses are those who are married to the retiree at the time of retirement.

The annual HRA 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 HRA 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.

The Conference-sponsored medical plan through United Healthcare that is currently in place for Medicare-eligible retirees with a retirement date prior to 2026 will continue to be made available to those, along with their eligible spouses, unless the retiree and/or spouse elects new coverage through the Via Benefits program. For those retirees and spouses who wish to remain enrolled in the current program, 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 2027 participant contributions for the group plan coverage option are as follows:

Years of Service	Retiree Only	Retiree & Spouse
10-14	457	914
15-19	380	760
20-24	297	594
25-29	220	440
30+	143	286

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 eligible to select coverage through the current retiree medical program through United Healthcare and 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 2027 monthly RRA funding based on qualifying years of Virginia Conference service as follows:

Years of Service	Retiree Only	Retiree & Spouse
20-24	150	300
25-29	200	400
30+	250	500

The annual 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

For participants enrolled in the Anthem health plans, either as active clergy or as a retiree not yet eligible for Medicare, 2027 health plan selections will be made during the open enrollment period in the fall of 2026. If an eligible clergyperson 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 2027, 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 2026.

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.

Virginia Conference clergy on approved leave or serving in an Extension Ministry appointment earn credit towards retiree medical plan eligibility only if enrolled in the Conference-sponsored health plan while on leave or while serving an Extension Ministry appointment.

RECOMMENDATION 2: 2027 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 2027, VUMPI recommends that the PSR be increased from \$659 to \$672, representing a 2% increase from 2026.

RECOMMENDATION 3: 2027 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 Wespath Benefits and Investments, during the period January 1, 2027 through December 31, 2027 by each active, retired, terminated, or disabled Clergy person 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 Clergy person; 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 Wespath and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a Wespath plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the *Discipline*, that result from any service a Clergy person rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, a terminated, or a disabled Clergy person 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 Clergy person 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 Clergy person'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 Clergy person'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 Clergy person'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 Clergy person 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.

Rev. Nancy Johnson, *Chair*
John Fuller, *VUMPI Executive Director*

In January of 2024, Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson convened the Extended Extended Cabinet (Virginia Annual Conference Leadership, including the Cabinet and members from the Board of Ordained Ministry and Common Table) to set the focus for the next four years (a Quadrennium), “as **a conference that:**

- **Embodies the fruits of the Spirit to live a transformed life.**
- **Follows Jesus in a way that leads to disciple-making.**
- **Practices extravagant inclusivity.”**

Under the guiding principle that, “**the Virginia Annual Conference exists to support the transformation of lives by facilitating Christ-centered connections between individuals, local churches, communities, and across the wide array of God’s creation,**” two priorities were named:

- “Make time to grow in relationship with God and one another.
- Define the practical roles of the Annual Conference, the District, and the Local Church within VAUMC.”

Five quadrennial benchmarks were, therefore, identified:

- **“Develop a comprehensive leadership framework.**
- **Engage a culture of call.**
- **Build a narrative budget.**
- **Tell great stories.**
- **Emphasize a United Methodist ‘catechesis,’” (comprehensive teaching of the faith).**

In pursuing the Quadrennial Emphasis, the Common Table determined that efforts at resourcing the local churches across our connection can be piecemeal and siloed. Therefore, at the 2025 Virginia Annual Conference, an experimental Connectional Table model was proposed in place of the Common Table to be a, “strategically focused centralized team which will work in collaboration with sub-teams grouped by disciplinary responsibilities and missional outreach,” namely:

- Operations
- Leadership Development
- Church and Community Engagement

To accomplish these goals, the Connectional Table would be shaped by a common covenant and practices of shared spiritual formation. Meetings would take place 4-6 times per year to look at the big picture, strategic vision, and decision-making that impacts the whole Virginia Conference as well as becoming the catalyst for the strategic and cooperative function of boards and commissions.

The Connectional Table began meeting in August 2025 and named a covenant of behaviors and mindsets needed for strategic visioning grounded in the local ministry of churches, campus ministries, and our relationship partners. Sub-teams were envisioned to meet 4-8 times per year. The Leadership Development sub-team has been a pace-setter. Early Connectional Table recommendations have included:

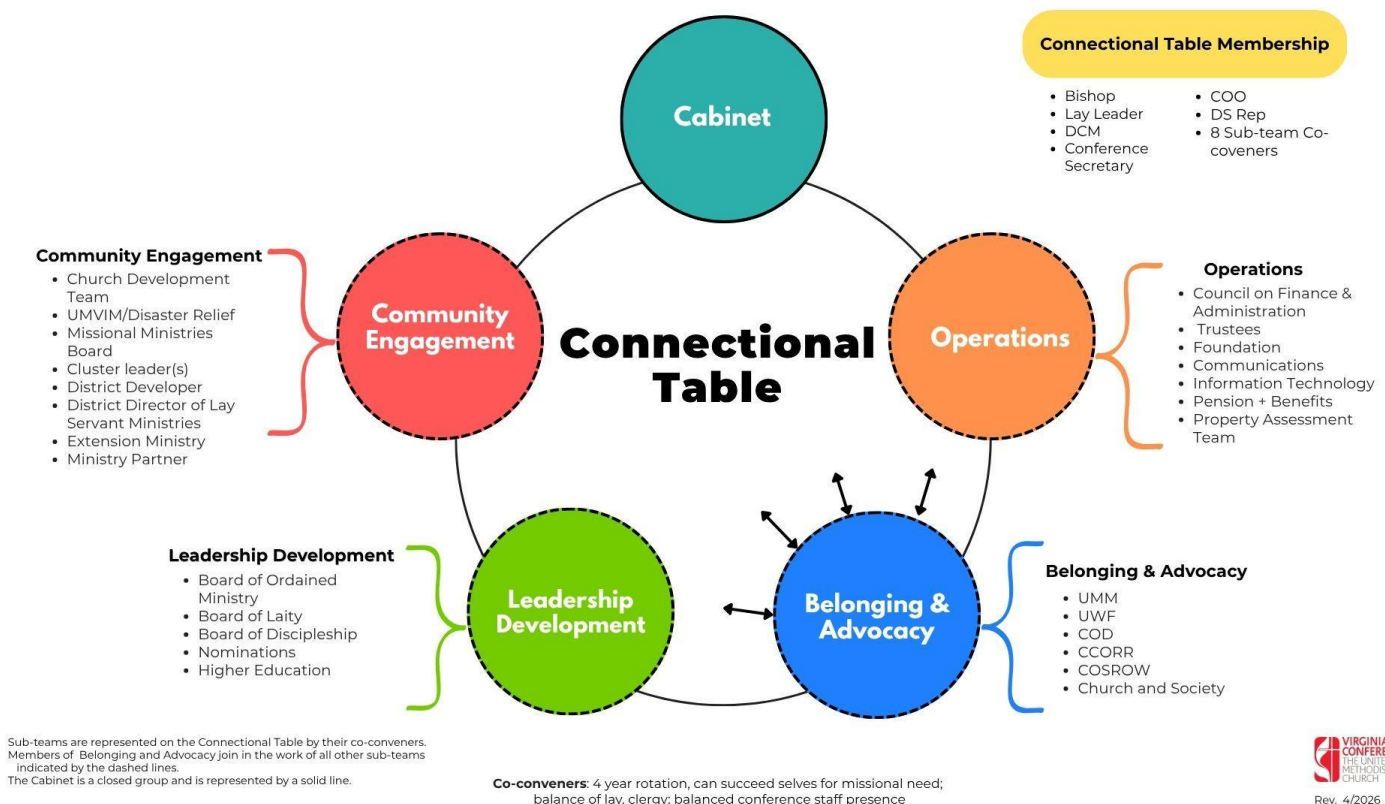
- Creation of new leader orientation materials and onboarding for Board and Agency leaders
- Resource and priority alignment, and ensuring more efficient use of resources
- Alignment among Districts and reduced redundancy
- Increased coordination with the Virginia United Methodist Foundation and a Property Advisory Team
- Engaging people-centered models and tools to equip local churches in carrying Christ’s light into communities

CONNECTIONAL TABLE REPORT

- Evaluating the Connectional Table model and responding with shifts for greater effectiveness

Key growth edges for the Connectional Table model are better empowering the Community Engagement sub-team to focus intently on local church and local ministries engaging in their communities, opening the influence of Belonging and Advocacy work throughout the sub-teams, balancing lay and clergy leadership, utilizing Conference staff without overrepresentation, and codifying best practices for sub-teams to gain traction in their resourcing work. Therefore, the following changes to the model have been adopted:

- Adding the Belonging and Advocacy Sub-team, which will send representation to other sub-teams
- Bringing more local church and local ministry representation to the Community Engagement sub-team, such as Cluster/Cohort Leadership, District Leadership, Extension Ministry, and Ministry Partners
- Having each sub-team led by a partnership of lay and clergy co-conveners responsible to gather their sub-teams, share information back and forth with the Connectional Table, set agendas, guide conversations to fulfill goals in partnership, and create intentional space in sub-teams to see and hear
- Adhering to four year term limits, with succession possible for mission-critical work, for non ex-officio members
- Ensuring each Connectional Table member caucuses with one of the sub-teams
- Holding 10 meetings per year to keep productive momentum



Visit vaumc.org/glossary for a glossary of terms, abbreviations, and acronyms used in this graphic.

The Connectional Table is grateful for the focus of the Quadrennial Emphasis and the hands which have carried all aspects of it, including this Connectional Table model to today. It is hoped that the 2026-2027 Annual Conference year will yield fruit of this servant body in our local ministries, including:

- A renewed sense of connection and effective networking
- Courage and conviction in forming disciples who carry Christ's light in our communities
- Resources which offer hope and direction in the midst of newness, grief, joy, and challenge

CONNECTIONAL TABLE REPORT

- Greater alignment among lay and clergy around Leadership Development, Community Engagement, Resourcing Ministry (Operations), and Belonging and Advocacy
- Focus on our local churches, ministries, and lay and clergy ministers, so that timely resources are offered in user-friendly ways
- Evaluation of effectiveness of the Connectional Table model and proposal of a permanent model to be implemented in January 2028

We humbly submit this report with gratitude for God's transforming work in and through each lay and clergy minister and our shared work, and we ask God's blessings of incarnation in each local place in the Virginia Conference. May God, who began a good work in us all and in our shared work together, be faithful to complete it. (Philippians 1:6).

Submitted on behalf of the Connectional Table by,
Martha Stokes, Conference *Lay Leader and Co-Convener of the Connectional Table*
The Rev. Christina Mclain, *Director of Connectional Ministries and Co-Convener of the Connectional Table*

The role of the Conference Nominations Team is to facilitate the identification of people to serve in various leadership roles within Virginia Conference boards, councils, commissions, and committees and then to invite those people who are nominated to serve. Each district has a representative on the team, alternating terms between clergy and laity. In addition to these eight members, representatives of the Commission on the Status and Role of Women, Commission on Disabilities, and Commission on Religion and Race monitor and have voice in team meetings.

This year, a new nominations campaign called *We Need Your Voice* was launched. This initiative sought to widen the table of leadership in the Virginia Conference by inviting more people—across lines of age, experience, culture, and background—to share their gifts in service. We believe this work created opportunities this year to strengthen the witness of our church by ensuring that the voices shaping our shared ministry reflect the diversity and depth of our Conference. The *We Need Your Voice* campaign is far from complete and will continue in our work in the year ahead.

On behalf of the Conference Nominations Team, we present the following list of nominations for election and/or affirmation as stipulated in specific bylaws by the 2026 Annual Conference session.

Martha Stokes, *Conference Lay Leader and Co-Chair, Conference Nominations Team*
Rev. Lan Davis Wilson, *Conference Director of Belonging & Advocacy and Interim Co-Chair, Conference Nominations Team*

BISHOP'S FOUNDATION

Mr. Albert Weal, Class of 2030
Ms. Nita Cortada, Class of 2030
Mr. Larry Dickenson, Class of 2030
Rev. Jim Fry, Class of 2030
Rev. Nicholas Grainger, Class of 2030
Rev. Peter Choi, Class of 2030
Rev. Rebecca Leathers, Class of 2030
Mr. Richard Bensinger, Class of 2030
Rev. John Choi, Class of 2030

BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP

Ms. Jennifer London, Class of 2027
Rev. Ellis Crum, Class of 2030

OLDER ADULT COUNCIL

Rev. Ann Tang, Class of 2030
Ms. Lori Beech, Class of 2030
Mr. Andrew Kissell, Class of 2030

MISSIONAL MINISTRIES BOARD

Rev. Bill Greer, Class of 2030

COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY TEAM

Rev. Rachel Chen, Class of 2030
Mr. Michael Byers, Class of 2030
Rev. Eduardo Carillo, Class of 2030

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

Rev. Robert Michalides, Class of 2030

Re-Elections

Rev. Frederick C. Brockhausen III, Class of 2030
Ms. Martha Daggy, Class of 2030
Mr. Chris Howell, Class of 2030
Rev. Kendra S. Powell, Class of 2030
Mr. Sonny Rea, Class of 2030
Ms. Karen Wilhelmsen Robison, Class of 2030

COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Ms. Sangeeta Jacob, Class of 2030

Re-Election

Mr. Mark Manasco, Class of 2030

UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION

Affirmations

Rev. Dr. Seungsoo (RJ) Jun

Ms. Alison Malloy

Mr. Gary Bonnewell

Mr. Adam Greene

Rev. Angeline Hoen

Rev. Justin White

COMMITTEE ON RULES

Re-Election

Mr. Rogers Petersen, Class of 2030

CONFERENCE TRUSTEES

Mr. James Turpin, Class of 2030

Mr. Clark Williams, Class of 2030

Ms. Jess Houser, Class of 2030

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

Ms. Frances Underwood, Class of 2030

Rev. Archana Samuel, Class of 2030

BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

The following names have been lifted up by the board for affirmation.

Rev. Jennifer Fletcher

Rev. Dan Kim

Rev. Amanda Webber

Rev. Bertina Westley

Report of the AI Task Force

Preface

Artificial intelligence (AI) is no longer on the horizon; it is here, quietly embedded in the tools, platforms, and devices that shape how we work, communicate, learn, and connect.

The church is navigating a rapidly changing technological landscape, and we have a responsibility to engage it thoughtfully, theologically, and proactively rather than reactively. Earlier this year, the Conference Cabinet and Leadership established the AI Task Force to help the Virginia Annual Conference discern its relationship to AI.

What We Mean by AI

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to a class of computer systems trained on very large collections of text, images, and other data to generate responses that resemble human writing, speech, and reasoning. AI is already present in many of the tools churches use every day, including search engines, email platforms, and smartphones, often without being identified as such. More recently, tools like ChatGPT have brought AI into direct conversation with users, producing human-sounding responses to questions and requests. These systems are impressive and genuinely limited. They do not understand what they produce. They generate responses based on patterns, not comprehension. The principles that follow are intended to guide the more intentional uses of these tools in ministry.

A Starting Point

This document represents the Task Force's *interim* guidance, a **starting point**, not a final policy. It has been written with the expectation that it will be revised and refined as the technology evolves, as the church grows in its understanding, and as our collective discernment continues to develop.

Think of these as a **framework for paying attention**. We are a Wesleyan people. We do no harm, we do good, and we stay in love with God. We trust Scripture, tradition, reason, and our own experience. We lean on the Holy Spirit. These principles are meant to be held the same way. AI is a tool. The Spirit is the source.

Faithful ministry is still what we are called to, and no technology changes that.

Guiding Principles

- 1. Verify AI-generated content.** AI can produce false, biased, fabricated, or misattributed material with confidence. Facts, scripture references, quotations, citations, and theological claims should be checked before use in preaching, teaching, administration, or public ministry.
- 2. Protect private information.** Pastoral confidences, congregational data, financial information, health information, and personally identifiable information must not be entered into public AI tools. Treat AI inputs as communications that may leave the room unless the tool's data protections are clearly understood.
- 3. Preserve pastoral boundaries.** AI must not replace direct pastoral care, counseling, spiritual direction, sacramental ministry, or human presence. AI may assist with preparation and administration, but it cannot substitute for incarnational ministry: the Eucharist, baptism, the hospital visit, the funeral, the spoken sermon, or the pastor's prayer at a family's table.
- 4. Commit to AI formation.** Clergy, staff, and lay leaders need enough AI literacy to use tools faithfully, recognize risks, and guide others. The Conference should provide training and resources that make faithful use more accessible, not more confusing.

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- 5. Honor legal, contractual, and denominational obligations.** AI use must comply with applicable law, copyright and intellectual property obligations, privacy requirements, terms of service, Conference policy, and the *Book of Discipline*.
- 6. Disclose substantive AI use.** When AI materially shapes content, research, writing, images, or public communication, disclosure may be needed to preserve trust and integrity. Routine or embedded assistance, such as grammar suggestions, search summaries, scheduling tools, and productivity features, does not normally require disclosure. We've offered an example attribution at the close of this report and have more on our AI resource page.
- 7. Acknowledge serious concerns.** The use of AI carries serious harms, including encounters linked to suicide and self-harm; environmental costs of data center expansion in Virginia; workforce displacement, disproportionately affecting clerical, customer-service, and content-moderation workers, along with creative and knowledge workers; algorithmic bias reproducing racial, gender, and economic injustice; deepfake fraud; and the concentration of power. Members of the Conference acknowledge these harms openly and partner with the relevant boards and agencies, among them the Board of Church and Society and the Board of Ordained Ministry, so the Conference's response is coordinated rather than fragmented.
- 8. Embrace what AI makes possible.** For the solo pastor who is also the administrator, the communications director, and the visitation team, AI can help carry some of that load. It can help draft a newsletter, research a theological question, generate ideas for a sermon series, or structure a grant application. For smaller congregations without full staff, these tools can level a playing field that has long been tilted toward larger churches with more resources.

For lay leaders and committees, AI can help organize meeting notes, summarize long documents, and draft routine communications, freeing up more time for the relational and spiritual work that only people can do.

Using AI does not mean outsourcing your ministry. It means having a fast, capable, **imperfect** assistant who never sleeps. If you are ready to learn how to use the tools and keep the above principles in mind, the possibilities for assistance are vast.

Context Matters

These principles are the Conference-wide floor. Boards, agencies, districts, ministry settings, and credentialing bodies may set stricter standards for their own contexts. Where a stricter standard applies, that standard governs.

Disclosure of AI Assistance

In keeping with Principle 6, the Guiding Principles Subgroup discloses the use of AI in the preparation of this document. AI research and drafting tools assisted at multiple stages: suggesting language, structuring sections, and helping to surface theological frames. The subgroup discussed each principle, reviewed every section, and authored the final language. The theological reasoning, pastoral judgments, and final decisions are the subgroup's own, and the full Task Force reviewed the document.

This is the fifth revision of these principles. It will not be the last. The Task Force commits to ongoing review and **welcomes feedback** from across the Conference.

Submitted by Kim Johnson, AI Task Force Convener

FINANCIAL REPORTS



Report of the Conference Statistician.....	<u>98</u>
Financial Commitment Report.....	<u>99</u>
Balance Sheets.....	<u>100</u>
Statement of Changes in Conference Reserves.....	<u>101</u>
Conference Apportionments.....	<u>102</u>
CFA Designated Funds with Carryover Balances.....	<u>103</u>
Donor Designated and Miscellaneous Funds.....	<u>104</u>
Narrative Budget Report for 2027.....	<u>105</u>
Conference Apportionments - Proposed Budget.....	<u>106</u>
Supporting Schedule for Conference Apportionments (101 and 102).....	<u>107</u>
CFA Report.....	<u>108</u>

Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church represents the holy power of the people of God working together, US, to help bring God’s Kingdom to bear in this time and with our communities. It represents and demonstrates a means by which we show the world how we can and will do more together than any of us could do alone. It is a sign-act, an equipping of saints for ministry, all for the glory of God.

Report of the Conference Statistician

Report of the Conference Statistician

2025

	Total Professing Members at Beginning of Year	Received and Restored on Profession of Christian Faith	Net Transferred in (out) from other United Methodist Churches	Net Transferred in (out) from non-United Methodist Churches	Removed by Charge Conference action and prior year corrections	Withdrawn from Professing Membership	Removed by death	Total Professing Members at End of Year	Net Change in Membership	Percent Change	Average attendance at all weekly worship services	Number of Persons Baptized
Coastal Virginia	30,592	200	-61	59	766	83	327	29,614	-978	-3.2%	8,754	163
Living Waters	19,961	111	102	27	618	37	191	19,355	-606	-3.0%	5,726	101
Mission Rivers	35,004	135	-300	-14	1,531	66	326	32,902	-2,102	-6.0%	9,393	133
Mountain View	13,659	62	-518	11	87	10	187	12,930	-729	-5.3%	4,638	22
Northern Virginia	60,131	640	64	47	1,566	54	296	58,966	-1,165	-1.9%	15,739	383
Shenandoah River	23,095	88	-19	-5	304	207	235	22,413	-682	-3.0%	6,224	100
Three Notch'd	43,591	258	-232	44	310	84	351	42,916	-675	-1.5%	12,282	208
Valley Ridge	24,186	111	-183	7	295	191	341	23,294	-892	-3.7%	8,331	88
Totals for 2025	250,219	1,605	-1,147	176	5,477	732	2,254	242,390	-7,829	-3.1%	71,087	1,198

FINANCIAL REPORTS

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT REPORT

Cash Receipt for the Year Ending December 31, 2025
Virginia Conference

Apportioned Funds	YTD 12/31/2025	YTD 12/31/2024	Increase (Decrease)	Pct. Pd 2025	Pct. Pd 2024
<i>Conference Apportionments</i>					
401 Conference Mission & Ministries	2,284,472	2,611,002	(326,530)	78.8%	80.7%
402 Conference Services	1,456,236	1,608,126	(151,890)	76.6%	83.8%
403 Appointive Cabinet Fund	1,007,113	1,078,972	(71,859)	77.5%	83.0%
404 Equitable Compensation	39,205	145,540	(106,335)	78.4%	80.9%
405 Church Extension Fund Apportior	266,112	305,088	(38,976)	76.0%	76.3%
Total Conference Apportionments	5,053,138	5,748,728	(695,590)	77.7%	81.7%
<i>Clergy Benefit Apportionments</i>					
407 Active Clergy Health	7,530,058	8,416,365	(886,307)	83.7%	84.2%
408 Retired Clergy Health	4,136,405	4,894,802	(758,397)	81.7%	82.6%
Total Clergy Benefit Apportionments	11,666,463	13,311,167	(1,644,704)	83.0%	83.6%
<i>General & Jurisdictional Apportionments</i>					
410 Episcopal Fund	676,518	663,628	12,890	75.2%	76.7%
411 World Service	1,364,417	1,652,439	(288,022)	75.0%	76.9%
412 General & Jurisdictional Fund	294,092	245,329	48,763	74.5%	75.5%
413 Ministerial Education	465,960	512,138	(46,178)	74.0%	75.9%
414 Black College Fund	193,692	242,868	(49,176)	76.0%	77.1%
415 Africa University Fund	46,220	56,276	(10,056)	77.0%	80.4%
Total General & Jurisdictional App.	3,040,899	3,372,678	(331,779)	74.9%	76.7%
Total Conference Apportionments	19,760,500	22,432,573	(2,672,073)	80.3%	82.0%
<i>Second Mile Giving</i>					
GBGM Advance Specials	654,600	909,955	(255,355)	2025	80.3%
Virginia Advance Specials	58,377	170,253	(111,876)	2024	82.0%
Special Sundays	52,125	47,354	4,771	2023	80.3%
World Service Specials	100	670	(570)	2022	84.4%
Conference Special Offerings	36,407	44,397	(7,990)	2021	80.6%
Total Second Mile Giving	801,609	1,172,629	(371,020)	2020	74.3%

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

Balance Sheets

	December 31, 2025	December 31, 2024
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash	1,850,258	2,211,170
Investments	19,586,083	19,383,890
Receivables and accrued interest	1,729,277	1,949,953
Real estate held for sale or to be determined	9,338,850	5,311,500
Prepaid expenses	178,138	85,296
Total Current Assets	32,682,606	28,941,808
 Fixed Assets		
Land	13,182,519	4,941,019
Buildings	16,804,586	12,094,285
Furniture & equipment	704,140	1,169,273
Accumulated depreciation	(3,634,648)	(3,789,896)
Total Fixed Assets	27,056,597	14,414,681
 Other Assets		
Loans receivable	234,764	108,612
Total Other Assets	234,764	108,612
Total Assets	59,973,967	43,465,101
 LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable	4,691,118	3,839,439
Note payable	964,673	1,038,749
Accrued and payable personnel expenses	121,482	115,417
Total Current Liabilities	5,777,273	4,993,605
 Net Assets		
Without Restrictions	842,538	1,832,812.31
With Board Designations	40,758,775.12	25,625,929.11
With Board Designations - Trustees	8,465,452.53	5,293,126.24
With Donor Restrictions	4,010,714.77	5,585,846.11
Miscellaneous Connectional Funds	119,214.39	133,782.65
Total Net Assets	54,196,695	38,471,496
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	59,973,967	43,465,101

Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

Statement of Changes in Conference Reserves

For the Year Ending December 31, 2025

Beginning of Year Balance		1,832,812
Income (Expenses) charged directly to reserves:		
Investment income	630,297	
Bank and investment fees	(38,764)	
		591,533
Conference Apportionment Closeouts		
Conference Mission & Ministries	(473,029)	
Conference Services	(500,778)	
District Superintendents Fund	(329,912)	
Equitable Compensation	16,279	
Funds released from board designations	(294,368)	
		(1,581,807)
End of Year Balance		842,538

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Virginia United Methodist Conference of The United Methodist Church
 Conference Apportionments
 Financial Summary

12/31/2025

Project Name	Apportionment Receipts	Revenues from other sources	Total Revenues	Total Expenses	Revenues Over	Beginning Balance	Transfer	Closeout to Reserves	Ending Balance
					(Under) Expenses				
401 - Conference Mission & Ministries									
Program & Board Administrative (see below)	896,152.83	60,750.00	956,902.83	1,216,069.65	(259,166.82)	-	-	259,166.82	-
Conference Benevolence Grants	71,458.29	-	71,458.29	70,000.00	1,458.29	-	-	(1,458.29)	-
CommonTable Grants	30,634.79	25,000.00	55,634.79	49,000.00	6,634.79	-	-	(6,634.79)	-
Campus Ministry and Higher Education	857,476.70	142,075.57	999,552.27	1,200,386.81	(200,834.54)	-	-	200,834.54	-
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	16,333.96	595.99	16,929.95	38,050.24	(21,120.29)	-	-	21,120.29	-
	1,872,056.57	228,421.56	2,100,478.13	2,573,506.70	(473,028.57)	-	-	473,028.57	-
Program & Board Administrative									
Connectional Table	2,444.38	-	2,444.38	3,577.31	(1,132.93)	-	-	1,132.93	-
Connecting All Ministries	34,289.93	-	34,289.93	46,999.63	(12,709.70)	-	-	12,709.70	-
Belonging and Advocacy Office	-	58,000.00	58,000.00	59,788.15	(1,788.15)	-	-	1,788.15	-
Board & Agency Administration	20,400.34	2,750.00	23,150.34	16,081.07	7,069.27	-	-	(7,069.27)	-
Personnel Costs - Common Table	586,424.05	-	586,424.05	793,493.72	(207,069.67)	-	-	207,069.67	-
Personnel Costs - Communications	225,637.34	-	225,637.34	286,666.91	(61,029.57)	-	-	61,029.57	-
Video Production	6,533.60	-	6,533.60	9,462.86	(2,929.26)	-	-	2,929.26	-
CT Contingencies	20,423.19	-	20,423.19	-	20,423.19	-	-	(20,423.19)	-
	896,152.83	60,750.00	956,902.83	1,216,069.65	(259,166.82)	-	-	259,166.82	-
402 - Conference Services									
Treasurer's Office	363,389.17	156,650.01	520,039.18	729,873.63	(209,834.45)	-	-	209,834.45	-
Information Technology	375,091.54	42,000.00	417,091.54	349,282.18	67,809.36	-	-	(67,809.36)	-
Annual Conference Session	319,469.08	33,017.79	352,486.87	528,420.80	(175,933.93)	-	-	175,933.93	-
Conf Publications Committee	1,601.84	-	1,601.84	10.00	1,591.84	-	-	(1,591.84)	-
Council on Finance & Admin	1,601.84	-	1,601.84	2,420.80	(818.96)	-	-	818.96	-
Board of Trustees	800.94	-	800.94	1,520.48	(719.54)	-	-	719.54	-
Committee on Episcopacy	1,601.84	-	1,601.84	213.00	1,388.84	-	-	(1,388.84)	-
Historical Society	3,189.15	-	3,189.15	610.29	2,578.86	-	-	(2,578.86)	-
Pastor Relocation Transition	3,990.07	-	3,990.07	3,990.07	-	-	-	-	-
Episcopal Residence	7,980.18	10,000.00	17,980.18	12,273.26	5,706.92	-	-	(5,706.92)	-
Conference Liability Insurance	15,974.91	-	15,974.91	19,626.00	(3,651.09)	-	-	3,651.09	-
Audit	29,547.04	-	29,547.04	38,488.00	(8,940.96)	-	-	8,940.96	-
Human Resources	35,939.90	-	35,939.90	71,538.82	(35,598.92)	-	-	35,598.92	-
Contingencies	3,990.07	-	3,990.07	-	3,990.07	-	-	(3,990.07)	-
CFA Discretionary	-	(37,560.00)	(37,560.00)	37,576.12	(75,136.12)	-	-	75,136.12	-
Postage, Printing & Phone	28,746.10	2,400.00	31,146.10	44,640.30	(13,494.20)	-	-	13,494.20	-
BOM Personnel Costs	228,658.22	-	228,658.22	284,285.70	(55,627.48)	-	-	55,627.48	-
Clergy Excellence Admin.	9,989.77	-	9,989.77	12,356.25	(2,366.48)	-	-	2,366.48	-
Board of Ordained Ministry	56,705.85	-	56,705.85	58,427.89	(1,722.04)	-	-	1,722.04	-
	1,488,267.51	206,507.80	1,694,775.31	2,195,553.59	(500,778.28)	-	-	500,778.28	-
403 - Appointive Cabinet Fund									
Cabinet	1,007,112.51	(22,000.00)	985,112.51	1,315,024.82	(329,912.31)	-	-	329,912.31	-
	1,007,112.51	(22,000.00)	985,112.51	1,315,024.82	(329,912.31)	-	-	329,912.31	-
404 - Equitable Compensation									
Equitable Compensation	39,204.55	(14,587.96)	24,616.59	8,337.15	16,279.44	-	-	(16,279.44)	-
	39,204.55	(14,587.96)	24,616.59	8,337.15	16,279.44	-	-	(16,279.44)	-

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Virginia United Methodist Conference of The United Methodist Church
 CFA Designated Funds with Carryover Balances
 Financial Summary

12/31/2025

Project Name	Apportionment Receipts	Revenues from other sources	Total Revenues	Total Expenses	Revenues Over (Under)		Beginning Balance	Transfer	Closeout to Reserves	Ending Balance
					Expenses					
CFA										
Property & Equipment Fund	-	(453,483.31)	(453,483.31)	(13,169,475.96)	12,715,992.65	13,375,931.66	-	-	-	26,091,924.31
United Methodist Center	135,779.46	416,730.36	552,509.82	749,246.40	(196,736.58)	-	-	196,736.58	-	(0.00)
Long Term Building Maintenance Fund	-	(300,000.00)	(300,000.00)	-	(300,000.00)	300,000.00	-	-	-	-
Legal Expenses	59,894.99	-	59,894.99	182,526.12	(122,631.13)	-	-	-	122,631.13	-
Funds Held for Future Benefits	-	1,355,894.22	1,355,894.22	-	1,355,894.22	10,815,020.10	-	-	-	12,170,914.32
Apportionment Relief Endowment	-	-	-	-	-	-	600,000.00	-	-	600,000.00
Archives	20,765.92	33,000.00	53,765.92	40,921.09	12,844.83	51,632.62	-	-	-	64,477.45
Sustentation Fund	-	-	-	-	-	15,000.00	-	-	-	15,000.00
District Support Fund	-	-	-	175,000.00	(175,000.00)	200,000.00	-	-	(25,000.00)	-
	216,440.37	1,052,141.27	1,268,581.64	(12,021,782.35)	13,290,363.99	24,757,584.38	600,000.00	-	294,367.71	38,942,316.08
Connectional Table										
Connectional Ministries Programming	51,035.12	(19,692.95)	31,342.17	7,880.43	23,461.74	-	-	-	-	23,461.74
Fall Youth Retreat	-	60,080.41	60,080.41	60,080.41	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conference Youth Council Leadership Retreat	-	5,099.78	5,099.78	5,099.78	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disaster Response Committee	-	5,473.10	5,473.10	5,473.10	-	-	-	-	-	-
UMVIM - Team Leader Training	-	394.81	394.81	6.00	388.81	-	-	-	-	388.81
Conf. Legislative Network	-	5,958.20	5,958.20	4,301.55	1,656.65	-	-	-	-	1,656.65
Advocate legacy funds	-	-	-	-	-	55,836.85	-	-	-	55,836.85
Wesley Fdtn Maintenance Fund	32,690.73	-	32,690.73	64,545.22	(31,854.49)	28,395.99	-	-	-	(3,458.50)
Wesley Foundation Proceeds	-	(50,000.00)	(50,000.00)	-	(50,000.00)	104,444.99	-	-	-	54,444.99
All God's Children Camp	-	29,436.59	29,436.59	64,181.45	(34,744.86)	34,744.86	-	-	-	-
Safe Sanctuaries Training	-	-	-	-	-	744.58	-	-	-	744.58
Lay Servant Ministries	-	4,026.87	4,026.87	2,982.17	1,044.70	11,454.95	-	-	-	12,499.65
Lay Servant Ministry Events	-	7,167.00	7,167.00	8,576.75	(1,409.75)	1,207.28	-	-	-	(202.47)
Discipleship Training Events	-	-	-	-	-	1,248.63	-	-	-	1,248.63
Commission on Disabilities - program funds	-	200.00	200.00	-	200.00	3,034.17	-	-	-	3,234.17
Voices of Youth	-	-	-	-	-	1,549.94	-	-	-	1,549.94
UMVIM	-	-	-	370.97	(370.97)	22,247.48	-	-	-	21,876.51
Caretakers of God's Creation	-	3,842.71	3,842.71	4,348.78	(506.07)	8,063.17	-	-	-	7,557.10
CDT Training Events	-	3,863.38	3,863.38	3,863.38	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant Making Cooperative	51,035.12	-	51,035.12	144,250.00	(93,214.88)	50,000.00	150,000.00	-	-	106,785.12
Funds Committed for Grants	-	1,028,254.75	1,028,254.75	-	1,028,254.75	-	-	-	-	1,028,254.75
	134,760.97	1,084,104.65	1,218,865.62	375,959.99	842,905.63	322,972.89	150,000.00	-	-	1,315,878.52
Board of Ordained Ministry										
Licensing School	-	28,734.08	28,734.08	18,642.44	10,091.64	8,159.60	-	-	-	18,251.24
Order of Elders	-	-	-	-	-	9,209.99	-	-	-	9,209.99
Order of Deacons	-	1,541.96	1,541.96	2,111.86	(569.90)	4,045.33	-	-	-	3,475.43
Welcome Meal at AC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Local Pastor's Retreat/Lunch	-	1,760.85	1,760.85	1,760.85	-	-	-	-	-	-
Clergy Womens Retreat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seminary Scholarships	-	(17,187.77)	(17,187.77)	-	(17,187.77)	17,187.77	-	-	-	-
BOM Training Events	-	8,612.66	8,612.66	8,612.66	-	-	-	-	-	-
Clergy Education	-	166,108.47	166,108.47	70,618.00	95,490.47	124,080.75	-	-	-	219,571.22
Calling 21	-	4,500.00	4,500.00	13,500.00	(9,000.00)	13,270.41	-	-	-	4,270.41
Trauma Informed Clergy Cohort	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ministers' Convocation	-	175.00	175.00	9,068.73	(8,893.73)	24,484.44	-	-	-	15,590.71
Exploration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CPE Alternative	-	16,675.70	16,675.70	14,142.45	2,533.25	-	-	-	-	2,533.25
Cross Culture/Cross Racial	-	2,250.00	2,250.00	500.00	1,750.00	3,966.55	-	-	-	5,716.55
VA Clergy Leadership Program	7,980.18	-	7,980.18	-	7,980.18	47,277.79	-	-	-	55,257.97
Candidacy Summit	-	9,000.61	9,000.61	6,543.31	2,457.30	9,874.13	-	-	-	12,331.43
Restore and Renew Cohort	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Clergy Spiritual Vitality	-	218.69	218.69	218.69	-	-	-	-	-	-
United Methodist Studies Program	-	175.60	175.60	-	175.60	-	-	-	-	175.60
	7,980.18	222,565.85	230,546.03	145,718.99	84,827.04	261,556.76	-	-	-	346,383.80
Board of Trustees Funds										
Board of Trustees	-	2,483.94	2,483.94	136,897.36	(134,413.42)	193,433.62	(8,654.69)	-	-	50,365.51
Property - Undetermined or Available for Sale	-	17,974,350.00	17,974,350.00	13,947,000.00	4,027,350.00	5,311,500.00	-	-	-	9,338,850.00
Property Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Undetermined or Available for Sale properties	-	1,756,674.58	1,756,674.58	1,319,955.39	436,719.19	(159,037.19)	(832,872.60)	-	-	(555,190.60)
Missional properties	-	221,846.86	221,846.86	769,076.95	(547,230.09)	(59,525.90)	91,527.29	-	-	(515,228.70)
Investment properties	-	302,104.53	302,104.53	162,203.92	139,900.61	6,755.71	-	-	-	146,656.32
	-	20,257,459.91	20,257,459.91	16,335,133.62	3,922,326.29	5,293,126.24	(750,000.00)	-	-	8,465,452.53

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Virginia United Methodist Conference of The United Methodist Church
 Donor Designated and Miscellaneous Funds
 Financial Summary

12/31/2025

Project Name	Apportionment Receipts	Revenues from other sources	Total Revenues	Total Expenses	Revenues Over (Under)		Beginning Balance	Transfer	Closeout to Reserves	Ending Balance
					Expenses					
Ministerial Education Funds										
Ministerial Education Funds	116,489.94	(62,142.35)	54,347.59	183,965.95	(129,618.36)		283,815.08	-	-	154,196.72
	116,489.94	(62,142.35)	54,347.59	183,965.95	(129,618.36)		283,815.08	-	-	154,196.72
Church Extension Funds										
Church Extension Fund	266,112.12	1,766.90	267,879.02	1,559,200.28	(1,291,321.26)		2,204,674.37	-	-	913,353.11
	266,112.12	1,766.90	267,879.02	1,559,200.28	(1,291,321.26)		2,204,674.37	-	-	913,353.11
Donor Restricted										
NFC - New Town	-	12,179.33	12,179.33	23,062.96	(10,883.63)		10,883.63	-	-	-
Strategic Salary Support	-	14,587.96	14,587.96	139,587.96	(125,000.00)		125,000.00	-	-	-
Disaster Relief Fund	-	13,382.20	13,382.20	17,029.67	(3,647.47)		28,001.19	-	-	24,353.72
AC Serving Response Fund	-	2,307.25	2,307.25	84,373.55	(82,066.30)		89,785.09	-	-	7,718.79
Partnerships of Hope	-	(2,012.59)	(2,012.59)	221.43	(2,234.02)		66,224.84	-	-	63,990.82
POH - Mozambique	-	-	-	4,565.00	(4,565.00)		23,980.69	-	-	19,415.69
POH - Brazil	-	-	-	19,918.32	(19,918.32)		29,190.15	-	-	9,271.83
POH - Cambodia	-	10,113.00	10,113.00	-	10,113.00		27,802.21	-	-	37,915.21
POH - Vietnam	-	-	-	-	-		22,000.00	-	-	22,000.00
POH - Native Americans	-	-	-	23,386.51	(23,386.51)		37,830.87	-	-	14,444.36
POH - Haiti	-	66,733.81	66,733.81	73,600.00	(6,866.19)		6,866.19	-	-	(0.00)
The Olson Mission and Justice Fund	-	514.23	514.23	76,912.50	(76,398.27)		76,398.27	-	-	-
The Olson Historical Society Fund	-	-	-	10,000.00	(10,000.00)		30,255.91	-	-	20,255.91
Francis Asbury Education Funds	-	171,418.46	171,418.46	-	171,418.46		1,289,050.72	-	-	1,460,469.18
CCORR-Hispanic Aid Fund	-	-	-	-	-		9,616.78	-	-	9,616.78
Bishops' Foundation	-	-	-	-	-		1,714.09	-	-	1,714.09
Youth Service Fund	-	4,632.63	4,632.63	6,450.00	(1,817.37)		20,312.07	-	-	18,494.70
Peace with Justice	-	1,878.00	1,878.00	-	1,878.00		30,065.73	-	-	31,943.73
Native American Awareness Sun.	-	2,818.87	2,818.87	-	2,818.87		7,763.05	-	-	10,581.92
Treasurer's Discretion	-	341.66	341.66	-	341.66		2,077.68	-	-	2,419.34
CFA Strategic Mission Fund	-	-	-	-	-		247,798.27	-	-	247,798.27
AC Youth Gift (Children's ministry)	-	918.03	918.03	2,980.00	(2,061.97)		7,653.98	-	-	5,592.01
Campus Ministry Endowment	-	10,276.07	10,276.07	-	10,276.07		-	-	-	10,276.07
Annual Conference Offering	-	20,975.22	20,975.22	20,975.22	-		-	-	-	-
Emergency Food Response Fund	-	34,945.00	34,945.00	33,000.00	1,945.00		-	-	-	1,945.00
Hatching Faith Cohorts	-	-	-	113,756.09	(113,756.09)		1,190,900.33	-	-	1,077,144.24
	-	366,009.13	366,009.13	649,819.21	(283,810.08)		3,381,171.74	-	-	3,097,361.66
Other Connectional Funds										
Richmond Area Episcopal office	21,202.91	94,372.13	115,575.04	122,082.99	(6,507.95)		90,302.73	-	-	83,794.78
Bishop's John Wesley Service Fund	-	2,232.04	2,232.04	-	2,232.04		5,852.13	-	-	8,084.17
ARMS	-	10,255.00	10,255.00	17,927.06	(7,672.06)		19,070.34	-	-	11,398.28
Heritage	-	392.00	392.00	1,260.50	(868.50)		7,198.63	-	-	6,330.13
Scouting Ministries	-	-	-	1,751.79	(1,751.79)		11,358.82	-	-	9,607.03
	21,202.91	107,251.17	128,454.08	143,022.34	(14,568.26)		133,782.65	-	-	119,214.39

Narrative Budget Report for 2027

Why do we “Conference?” One of the historic purposes of our time together is discerning what to teach, how to teach, and what to do. So, what do we teach, how do we teach, what would God have us do **in our time, in our several places**—filled as they are with brightness and despair, challenge and playfulness, closure and new beginning, confusion and clarity? We conference about the budget of the Virginia Annual Conference for 2027 because it exists to resource the teaching and enacting of the love of Jesus Christ in each local community served by the ministries you represent as members of the Virginia Conference.

On behalf of the Council on Finance and Administration, we are grateful for shared resources, and above all, we are grateful for you, for your congregations, your campus ministries, your schools, and your mission partnerships. Why, you? Because in this Annual Conference session, we will learn the **power of people for Christ**. We will learn that 99.7% of persons in the bounds of the Virginia Annual Conference live within 15 minutes of a United Methodist ministry. We will hear that we are an incredible missional force, by the power of God working through us! Therefore, it is the intent of this budget to resource YOU, Spirit-filled people, to love and serve with your neighbors as you extend Christ’s life-changing invitation to your communities in Virginia and beyond. This means:

- Heightening collaboration around community engagement through the work of our boards, agencies, and staff working with local ministries engaged in missions and community transformation. This work is augmented by our church development team (CDT) and disaster response leadership.
- The conference has heard the call for support to local leaders during these challenging times. Our Board of Laity and Discipleship, along with the staff who support those boards, are investing in our lay leadership and emphasizing discipleship development and congregational renewal.
- We are funding our Office of Belonging and Advocacy to honor every person’s sacred worth in all the interactions between those within and outside our connection.
- Ensuring collaboration between all the ministries named above and connecting them to local ministries is the work of the Director of Connectional Ministries and the newly created Connectional Table. This work will maximize the effectiveness of the ministries supported by the budget.
- In addition to guiding eight districts, the Cabinet resources local ministries through clergy deployment and helping churches connect to available resources. All this work is done to strengthen local ministries and communities.
- The Conference and its Foundation partner offering grant funding to local ministries through the Grantmaking Cooperative. Other direct financial support comes from Church Development, Benevolence Grants, and local church support for moving expenses and pulpit support during clergy parental leave.
- The Virginia Annual Conference invests heavily in our campus ministries and Methodist educational institutions to ensure our students have opportunities to continue their faith journey as United Methodists.
- One of the greatest strengths of our church is the skill and effort of our clergy. The Center for Clergy Excellence supports our clergy currently serving as well as those discerning their call to ministry. They support clergy from their call, through credentialing, and all the way to retirement.
- Undergirding the connection are dedicated support staff working in Communications, Information and Data Technologies, and the Treasurer’s Office to support both the local ministries and those serving to resource local ministries.

In a letter dated August 2, 1789, John Wesley writes of how, as the people called Methodists, we “find companions or make them: the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion.” As such, the 2027 budget of the

Council on Finance and Administration

Conference Apportionments - Proposed Budget					
	2027	2026	Increase (Decrease)	Pct Change	Pct Budget
101 - Conference Mission and Ministries - Committed	5,770,000	5,459,400	310,600	5.7%	35.7%
102 - Conference Mission and Ministries - Expected	1,176,000	1,346,600	(170,600)	-12.7%	7.3%
Total Conference Mission and Ministries	6,946,000	6,806,000	140,000	2.1%	42.9%
103 - Retired Clergy Health	5,170,000	5,240,000	(70,000)	-1.3%	32.0%
104 - General and Jurisdictional Ministries	4,063,000	4,060,000	3,000	0.1%	25.1%
Total Apportionments	16,179,000	16,106,000	73,000	0.5%	100.0%

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Supporting Schedule for Conference Apportionments (101 and 102)

	2027			2026			Diff
	Section I(b)		Total	Section I(b)		Total	
	101 - Conf. Mission & Ministries Committed	102 - Conf. Mission & Ministries Expected		101 - Conf. Mission & Ministries Committed	102 - Conf. Mission & Ministries Expected		
Conference Mission and Ministries							
1 Connecting and Supporting All of Our Ministries	263,000	15,000	278,000	223,000	15,000	238,000	40,000
2 Engaging in Missions and Community Transformation	210,000	15,000	225,000	290,000	15,000	305,000	(80,000)
3 Discipling and Congregational Renewal	175,000	18,000	193,000	130,000	15,000	145,000	48,000
4 Investing in Lay Leadership	151,000	30,000	181,000	145,000		145,000	36,000
5 Belonging and Advocacy		75,000	75,000			-	75,000
6 Church Development		200,000	200,000		300,000	300,000	(100,000)
7 Boards and Agencies	75,000	36,000	111,000	79,700	30,000	109,700	1,300
8 Conference Programs		50,000	50,000		50,000	50,000	-
9 Disaster Response Leadership	10,000		10,000			-	10,000
Total for Connectional Ministries	884,000	439,000	1,323,000	867,700	425,000	1,292,700	30,300
10 Cabinet	1,558,000	150,000	1,708,000	1,495,000	120,000	1,615,000	93,000
11 Ministries at Educational Institutions	800,000	200,000	1,000,000	682,500	437,500	1,120,000	(120,000)
12 Operational Infrastructure	961,000	41,000	1,002,000	957,000	41,000	998,000	4,000
13 Annual Conference Session	395,000		395,000	350,000		350,000	45,000
14 Center for Clergy Excellence	390,000	22,000	412,000	343,000	21,600	364,600	47,400
15 Communications and Resourcing	350,000	30,000	380,000	286,000	20,000	306,000	74,000
16 Grantmaking Cooperative & Benevolences	70,000	130,000	200,000	70,000	130,000	200,000	-
17 Building Operations and Services	177,000		177,000	170,000	-	170,000	7,000
18 Legal, Audit & Clergy Immigration	65,000		65,000	112,000		112,000	(47,000)
19 Equitable Compensation		25,000	25,000		50,000	50,000	(25,000)
20 Human Resources	33,000		33,000	43,700		43,700	(10,700)
21 Parental Leave Policy		40,000	40,000			-	40,000
22 Wesley Foundation Maintenance	20,000	20,000	40,000	20,000	20,000	40,000	-
23 CFA Contingency for Unforseen Expenses		40,000	40,000		40,000	40,000	-
24 Episcopal Office Support	26,500		26,500	26,500		26,500	-
25 Archives	26,000		26,000	26,000		26,000	-
26 Bishop's Discretionary		20,000	20,000		20,000	20,000	-
27 Pastor Relocation and Transition		15,000	15,000		15,000	15,000	-
28 Episcopal Residence	12,000		12,000	10,000		10,000	2,000
29 Historical Society		4,000	4,000		4,000	4,000	-
30 General Conference	2,500		2,500	-	2,500	2,500	-
	5,770,000	1,176,000	6,946,000	5,459,400	1,346,600	6,806,000	140,000

Supporting Schedule for Other Apportionments (103 and 104)

	2027	2026	Diff
103-Retired Clergy Health			
1 Retired Clergy Health	5,670,000	5,650,000	20,000
2 Funds Held for Future Benefits distribution	(500,000)	(410,000)	(90,000)
	5,170,000	5,240,000	(70,000)
104-General and Jurisdictional Apportionments			
1 Episcopal Fund	905,000	914,000	(9,000)
2 World Service	1,834,000	1,820,000	14,000
3 Ministerial Education	635,000	630,000	5,000
4 Black College Fund	253,000	255,000	(2,000)
5 Africa University Fund	57,000	60,000	(3,000)
6 General Administration	310,000	313,625	(3,625)
7 Interdenominational Cooperation Fund	26,000	25,000	1,000
8 Southeastern Jurisdiction	43,000	42,375	625
	4,063,000	4,060,000	3,000

SECTION II – Recommended Apportionments to Districts and Local Churches

A. TOTAL RECOMMENDED APPORTIONMENT LEVELS:

The Council of Finance and Administration (CFA) recommends that the amounts apportioned from the General, Jurisdictional, and Annual Conference be apportioned to the districts as follows. The proposed budget is a 0.5% increase from the 2026 Annual Conference Budget.

2027 Virginia Annual Conference Apportionments

101 - Conference Mission and Ministries - Committed	5,770,000
102 - Conference Mission and Ministries - Expected	1,176,000
	6,946,000
103 - Retired Clergy Health	5,170,000
104 - General and Jurisdictional Ministries	4,063,000
	\$ 16,179,000

B. CONFERENCE APPORTIONMENT RECOMMENDATION SPECIFICS:

The Conference Apportionments are intended to carry out the mission and ministry of the Virginia Annual Conference. All balances at the end of the year are to be closed to Conference Reserves unless an exception is granted by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration.

All apportionments are important to the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church. Starting in 2026 by the end of the calendar year, churches must fulfil the 101 Apportionment (Conference Mission and Ministries - Committed) before the other apportionments can be funded. This is important to protect the required reserves of the Annual Conference for committed costs.

Report on 2025

As set in the Annual Conference procedures, the Annual Conference is informed through this report of shortfalls in the apportionments that impact Conference reserves. These shortfalls were managed through budget cuts, contingency funds, and Conference reserves in accordance with Annual Conference-approved policy.

Below are the stated Apportionment shortfalls for 2025.

	Shortfall
401 Conference Mission & Ministries	615,528
402 Conference Services	443,764
403 Appointive Cabinet	292,887
404 Equitable Compensation	10,795
	1,362,974

SECTION III — Apportionment Procedures

A. APPORTIONMENT FORMULA:

- **All Apportionments**

Apportionments are calculated using the last year of available statistics of each local church (i.e. 2027 apportionments are calculated using 2025 statistics). The formula is based on total net paid expenses which are the total expenditures of the church minus expenditures for benevolent causes, apportionments, capital improvements, and payments on loans and mortgages. The apportionments for each church are sent to each district based on decimal calculations from the formula below:

$$\frac{\text{Individual Church Net Paid}}{\text{Total of all Conference Churches Net Paid}} = \text{Church Decimal}$$

- The district then passes the apportionments on to the local church.
- The Council on Finance and Administration, in consultation with the Church Development Team and Cabinet, has the authority to set a policy for apportioning newly chartered churches, legacy churches, and 2nd sites of chartered churches.
 - Effective January 1, 2016, the policy will be to phase in the apportionments for new chartered churches over a five year period with the first year beginning at 20% and increasing 20% for each subsequent year until the church is at 100%.
 - Effective January 1, 2016 for 2nd site (satellite & multi-site) locations that are recognized as new faith communities by the Church Development Team and the Cabinet, the existing chartered church may exclude direct expenses of the second site from the apportionment calculation based upon the following schedule:

<u>Months since est.</u>	<u>Percentage excluded</u>
0-42 months	100%
43-54 months	80%
55-66 months	60%
67-78 months	40%
79-90 months	20%

B. REPORTING GUIDELINES:

- District superintendents will report the apportioned amounts for each church to the Conference treasurer and the apportioned amounts will be shown on the monthly Treasurer’s report sent to each church.
- Apportionments are to be calculated and distributed annually rather than on a quadrennial basis.

SECTION IV - Annual Conference Special Offerings

Annual Conference offerings provide important and life-giving support for key Conference programs. The following are recommended for approval for 2027:

- Heart Havens. It is recommended that February be designated as Heart Havens Month and that each church promotes an offering during this time for this purpose.

- Pinnacle Living (Samaritan Fund). It is recommended that the period between Mother's Day and Father's Day be designated in support of the Pinnacle Living (Samaritan Fund), and that each church promotes an offering during this time for this purpose.
- Partnerships of Hope. It is recommended that September be designated as Partnerships of Hope Month and that each church promote an offering during this time for this purpose.
- Shineforth (formerly United Methodist Family Services). It is recommended that December be designated as Shineforth Month and that each church promote an offering during this time for this purpose.
- Annual Conference Offering. CFA recommends continued support for this important offering.

SECTION V - Policies

A. CABINET

Overall Policies for the Fund:

In compliance with the Book of Discipline, the current salaries and expenses for district superintendents (DS), and those under special appointment, will be published in the Conference Journal with each DS's salary individually calculated and assigned each year as part of the appointive process, using the following criteria:

- Each District Superintendent's salary shall be \$106,000.
- Each year, the annual salaries of the District Superintendents are to be recommended by CFA to the Annual Conference.
- CFA also administers salary-related expenses, to include such items as pensions, supplemental benefits, travel by voucher, continuing education, and other Cabinet-related expenses. CFA, in consultation with the Bishop, sets the Assistant to the Bishop's salary and related personnel costs.
- The total cost of salaries and related expenses apportioned to Districts are to be based on the current approved decimal system (upon recommendation of CFA).
- All other District Superintendents' costs, such as housing, district office expenses and staff, are to be paid at the district level.

B. TRAVEL & MEETING EXPENSES

Board and Agency members and staff engaged in Conference business are provided reimbursements for travel and meeting expenses per the guidelines below:

- The mileage reimbursement rate is set at the IRS business rate for Conference staff. The mileage reimbursement rate is set at the IRS volunteer rate for those serving as volunteers of Conference boards and agencies.
- Meals are to be reimbursed at actual costs, but not to exceed \$50 per 24-hour period. (breakfast on the date of departure from home/office is not accepted; dinner on the date of return is not accepted, except when the arrival to home/office is after 7 p.m.).
- Reimbursement for daily room charges is set at \$200 if the travel incurred extends to a period over three hours prior to the starting time of 10 a.m. on the day of the meeting.
- Spouse expenses are not part of allowable expenses.

- To encourage stewardship in this area, CFA suggests: (1) that advance reading materials be provided for study prior to meetings; and (2) that there be use of teleconferencing, where feasible.

C. INDIVIDUAL EXPENSES FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Reimbursements for Annual Conference expenses will be provided per the guidelines below:

- Each charge is responsible for the expenses of both the clergy and lay members (including diaconal ministers) from that charge to the annual conference, working out its own plan of compensating for actual expenses.
- Persons not covered through local church appointment shall receive annual conference reimbursement not to exceed \$200 a night for mileage, meals and lodging; the Conference treasurer shall reimburse the claimant through voucher of approved expenses. Coverage under this section extends to:
 - (a) retired clergy who retired with pension under one of the Disciplinary options and who are not serving full-time;
 - (b) clergy on medical leave;
 - (c) clergy on sabbatical leave who are members of the Virginia Annual Conference;
 - (d) retired diaconal ministers who served at least eight years in the Virginia Conference and who are granted a retired relationship by the Conference;
 - (e) persons expecting their first appointment;
 - (f) members of the conference who have been appointed to attend a theological school;
 - (g) those serving as chaplains in Armed Forces;
 - (h) deaconesses under appointment;
 - (i) furloughed missionary members of the Virginia Annual Conference;
 - (j) those on loan to other annual conferences, whose expenses are not otherwise provided for; and
 - (k) clergy returning from an approved leave of absence receiving local church pastoral appointments.
- Each district is responsible for the expenses of its district superintendent, youth members and members-at-large.
- Each board, agency or committee is responsible for the expenses of its chairpersons, if that person is not a clergy or lay member whose costs are covered by their charge or district.

D. CONFERENCE RESERVE FUNDS

Policies on the Maintenance of Reserve Fund Levels:

- The Council monitors the Conference Reserves to ensure the ability to cover future contingencies including:
 - a) Reserve funds for emergencies and catastrophic needs related to the maintenance of Conference property held by the Conference trustees and include: (1) Virginia United Methodist Center; (2) Wesley Foundation buildings; (3) the Episcopal residence and (4) closed church properties.
 - b) Reserve funds for cash flow purposes.
 - c) Reserve funds for economic and financial downturns.
 - d) Council on Finance and Administration has the authority to utilize reserves in excess of the minimum to preserve the Conference's financial stability.
- The Council has set the following target for Conference Reserve Funds:

Core Reserves:

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| A. 20% of the Conference budget that closes to reserves | \$ 1,230,000 |
| a. 401 – Conference Mission and Ministries | |

b. 402 – Conference Services	
c. 403 – District Superintendents Fund	
d. 404 – Equitable Compensation Fund	
B. 15% of Invested Assets not including cash equivalents and investments designated for specific purposes	<u>626,000</u>
	<u>\$ 1,856,000</u>

On December 31, 2025, the Annual Conference had reserves less than the target amount (see Treasurer’s Report for details).

- Consistent with approved Annual Conference policies (effective January 1992), the use of investment income is authorized to maintain reserve levels. At the discretion of CFA, excesses may be used to: (1) meet shortfalls in Conference benevolences; (2) meet shortfalls in Conference Services; and/or (3) reduce apportionments from the Annual Conference to local churches.
- Reserve funds in the amount of \$300,000 are available to cover actions emerging from Annual Conference vote, emergencies, support of advances for campaigns, and potential liabilities of the Conference.
- Of the amounts reserved: (1) up to \$50,000 is available for emergency needs of the Connectional Table, with the approval of CFA; and (2) up to \$100,000 may be allocated by CFA between sessions of Annual Conference, as deemed necessary.
- The status of Conference reserves at the end of the prior actual year is to be reviewed each year by CFA and included in the Treasurer’s Report to the Annual Conference Session.

E. PASTOR RELOCATION TRANSITION FUND

1. By action of the June 2003 Annual Conference, CFA has established the Pastor Relocation Transition Fund and has provided funding through the Conference Services apportionment.
2. Churches/charges which are served by full-time clergy appointed to their charge as pastor may request reimbursement on the following schedule for an incoming pastor, if the previous pastor served two years or less in the appointment to their charge:
 - One-year appointment – Verified moving expenses up to a maximum of \$1,500 reimbursement.
 - Two-year appointment – Verified moving expenses up to a maximum of \$1,000 reimbursement.
3. No moving expenses will be reimbursed that are not in compliance with the Virginia Annual Conference Guidelines for Moving Expenses as printed in the Journal of the Virginia Annual Conference.

F. AUDIT REPORTS

The Council on Finance and Administration reminds all agencies, institutions, and organizations receiving any financial support from conference funds or from any authorized conference-wide appeal to be in compliance with the *2024 Book of Discipline* to submit audited financial statements to the Conference Treasurer no later than six months after the end of the organization’s fiscal year.

G. IRS REGULATIONS

CFA reminds all church and/or charge treasurers to comply with the IRS regulations.

H. REQUESTS FOR BUDGET FUNDING

CFA requires that all groups requesting funding from CFA submit requests for budget funding to CFA by January 15 each year for the following year’s budget (i.e. budget requests for the 2028 budget must be

submitted by January 15, 2027). This will allow the requests to be reviewed by CFA in sufficient time for consideration at the Annual Conference Session each June.

I. FINANCIAL COMMUNICATIONS

When CFA proposes significant changes in apportionments (10% or more) for any board, agency, or other recipient of financial support, such proposed changes and the guiding rationale shall be presented to the Annual Conference for its final approval, with the information being conveyed no later than 30 days prior to the Annual Conference session.

J. LEGAL EXPENSE POLICY

The Annual Conference shall not pay for the legal expenses for local church or district matters such as non-appointed personnel, churches seeking disaffiliation, property issues, etc.

Angie Williams, President

BOARDS & AGENCIES



Children and Family Ministry Council.....	<u>115</u>	Virginia Conference Historical Society.....	<u>125</u>
Board of Church and Society to Virginia Annual Conference	<u>115</u>	Board of Laity.....	<u>130</u>
Church Development Team.....	<u>117</u>	Missional Ministries Board	<u>131</u>
Commission of the Status & Role of Women (COSROW).....	<u>117</u>	The Virginia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.....	<u>133</u>
Commission on Disabilities.....	<u>118</u>	Board of Trustees.....	<u>134</u>
Committee on Episcopacy (COE).....	<u>119</u>	United Methodist Men.....	<u>135</u>
Board of Communications (Communications Advisory Team).....	<u>119</u>	United Women in Faith	<u>136</u>
Conference Commission on Religion and Race (CCORR).....	<u>120</u>	Virginia United Methodist Development Company.....	<u>137</u>
Business to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences.....	<u>122</u>	Virginia United Methodist Foundation (VAUMF).....	<u>139</u>
Board of Discipleship.....	<u>122</u>		
Hatching Faith	<u>124</u>		
Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (BHECM).....	<u>125</u>		

Children and Family Ministry Council

The Children and Family Ministry Council completed their work with a ministry coach in early 2026. From this work, we formed the following vision. The Children & Family Ministry Council aims to promote sound theological and Wesleyan foundations, ultimately creating spaces where all God's children can experience God's love, grace, and mercy. The goals of the Council are to support leaders through providing resources, building relationships, offering consistent messaging, and sharing best practices for ministry as the culture shifts. The Council continues to meet and discern opportunities for supporting Children and Family Ministry Leaders throughout the VA Conference.

Board of Church and Society to Virginia Annual Conference

The Annual Conference Board of Church and Society is charged by the *Discipline* of The United Methodist Church with the task of linking together the ministry of the Conference with the General Board of Church and Society such that our districts and local churches can participate in connectional ministries of advocacy for justice. The Virginia Board of Church and Society is composed of an equal number of lay and clergy members, members representing their districts, The social action coordinator for United Women in Faith, and members of the General Board from Virginia, and the coordinator of prison ministries are ex-officio members. The *Discipline* directs the annual conference board to appoint a Caretaker of God's Creation Coordinator and a Peace with Justice Coordinator. The Peace with Justice Coordinator promotes the Peace with Justice Offering to Virginia churches. The work of the board is to provide education to our churches on the issues in the Social Principles and those issues in resolutions passed by the annual and General Conferences. Currently the board is organized into three working committees: 1. Peace and Non-Violence. 2. Creation Care/Creation Justice. 3. Human Rights and Ending Poverty. In person meetings of the whole board are held twice a year and board working committees are expected to meet monthly. The board jointly with United Women in Faith cosponsors a legislative day at the Virginia General Assembly (Usually at the end of January.)

Submitted by Rev. Ellen Comstock and Jaydee Hanson, *Board Co-Chairs*

Creation Justice Team Report

The 2026 Creation Justice Team (CJT) celebrated a year of education and advocacy dedicated to the integrity of God's creation. A major highlight was Earth Day 2026, where Bishop Sue and the CJT presented a comprehensive roadmap for "Creation Justice," combining theological calls to action with practical success stories from local congregations.

Key Achievements:

- Green Church Awards: Six congregations were honored for their environmental stewardship.
 - GCA Recipients: Church of the Good Shepherd, Madison Rose Park UM Charge, and Charlottesville First UMC.
 - SGCA Recipients: Cranford UMC, St. Stephen's UMC, and Bethlehem UMC.
- Regional Growth: The team initiated Green Team efforts in at least four districts and conducted training across three.
- Collaborative Campaigns: In March 2026, the team launched the "Growing NoVA Green Churches" initiative in partnership with Interfaith Power and Light and the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions. This program provides resources to congregations pursuing green ministries.

- District Impact: Efforts in the Coastal Virginia District included new outreach via district newsletters, while the Northern Virginia District focused on "Creation in Crisis" educational awareness.

The CJT also supported local events, such as St. Stephen's UMC's Fourth Annual Green Day. Through these partnerships and awards, the team continues to provide a vital vision for congregational sustainability and justice.

Respectfully submitted, *The Creation Justice Team*

Peace & Nonviolence

As federal policies regarding immigration led to deportations, abusive enforcement, and growing fear in many of our communities, the Peace and Nonviolence (PNV) group made this a priority. Some of us are also members of the Conference Immigration Response Team, through which we helped develop an information page on the Conference website. The site contains important data such as UMC Social Principles on immigration, details on federal immigration and refugee laws and processes, nongovernmental organizations with which congregations and individuals can partner, and measures churches and ministries can take for dealing with immigration enforcement.

Other PNV priorities are Palestine and gun violence prevention. PNV's work with the Conference communications team to develop informative resources on these priority areas will resume later this year.

In the meantime, we refer congregations to study guides available on the resources page of the General Board of Church & Society website. Particularly recommended are Bible studies on immigration ("Called to Journey, Called to Welcome, a Biblical Perspective on Immigration" and gun violence prevention ("Kingdom Dreams Violent Realities", drawing from Micah 4:1-4). On

Palestine, we recommend "A Congregational Study Guide for Kairos Palestine II,"

PNV endorses the work of the Peace with Justice program of the United Methodist Church, and its efforts for peace in war-torn countries, just peace for Palestine, and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

The Peace With Justice special offering on May 31 funds UMC General Board of Church and Society peacemaking ministries and grants (50%) and the Virginia Conference's Church & Society programs (50%).

Julianne Paunescu, *Chair of Peace and Non-Violence Working Group*
Kenn Speicher, *VAUMC Peace with Justice Coordinator*

United Methodist Day at Virginia General Assembly

In January 2026, the Conference Board of Church and Society co-hosted with Conference United Women in Faith a day of lobbying the General Assembly on issues of concern to our boards. We do this jointly with Interfaith Center on Public Policy and Virginia Interfaith Power and Light. This year, we were hosted by Centenary United Methodist Church, which is only one mile from the Virginia Capitol buildings.

This year, nearly all the legislation we advocated for passed. The General Assembly finally raised the Virginia minimum wage, provided paid family and medical leave, made prescription drugs more affordable, provided voting rights for most felons, reduced energy bills, funded wildlife corridors, put a marriage equality clause into the constitution, banned assault weapons and ghost guns.... and more. The Affordable Housing in Faith Institution Premises did not pass. but it is likely to pass next year.

Conference Legislative Network—Jaydee Hanson, Susan Shrader and Karen McElfish are *BCS representatives*.

Church Development Team

The Church Development Team (CDT) has been in a season of deep listening and discernment, as we desire to address the current needs of the church. Since 2008, our mission has been to fulfill the mandates of All Things New. During the Annual Conference of 2008, members voted to begin 250 new faith communities in 30 years, the All Things New Vision. Using Conference resources, CDT has provided grants, guidance, and accountability to new faith communities and supports leadership opportunities that disciple more people, more young people, and more diverse people for Jesus Christ in Virginia United Methodism.

This year, we conducted listening sessions across our conference to learn what is working and how others are adapting to our changing world. We recognize that almost every church is trying to do more with less. How can the Church Development Team best equip our churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world?

CDT has continued to fund existing New Faith Communities, and we are excited about what God is doing at Appomattox UMC, Nooma, and New Song: King William campus!

This is our first full year in partnership with the Cabinet in providing Strategic Salary Support. The Cabinet recognized that several churches have the potential for revitalization, and five churches have been in a cohort this past year. All churches set and achieved goals, and had individual coaching to support the revitalization efforts. These five churches have all experienced growth this year and are reaching out once again to their community. We are excited to continue to partner with the Cabinet as we continue with these 5 churches, and will be supporting several new churches with Strategic Salary Support.

I want to thank the talented and gifted clergy and laity who serve on CDT. Their experiences and passion for church development will continue to bear fruit in the Virginia Conference. Additionally, I want to thank Rev. Amanda Miller Garber, who was our Conference Staff liaison through Mid-November, for her leadership and support this past year. I would also like to thank our current Conference Staff liaison, Dwayne Stinson, Director of Lay Leadership Development for our Conference, for his guidance and collaboration this past year. Finally, I want to thank all the local churches in the Conference. Apportionments paid through the sacrifices of local United Methodists provide the funding that makes great things happen with Church Development in Virginia.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Stephanie Kimec Parker, *Chair of Church Development Team 757-331-6729*

Commission of the Status & Role of Women (COSROW)

This year we celebrate 70 years of women's ordination in the Methodist Tradition. As a body of the UMC who advocates for complete participation of women in the full life of The United Methodist Church, COSROW celebrates this important milestone. When I began pastoral ministry 20 years ago, I attended a worldwide UMC clergywomen's gathering in Chicago. I remember sitting in a hotel room with a handful of other clergywomen from Virginia. 5 of us were fresh in ministry, literally 2 months in. The rest were more like 20 years in. These women, Revs. Rhonda VanDyke, Denise Honeycutt, & Tammy Estep, sat with us newbies and shared their history with us. The specific struggles that many women experience in ministry. They told us the story of how in their early ministry days in the mid-1980s, all the VAUMC clergywomen could fit in that hotel room, whereas then, in 2006, we needed a convention center to hold the thousands of clergywomen who had come from around the world. It was something to be celebrated for sure. Looking back on this special moment in my own life, it started me thinking, who are the women who blazed the trail

for me and my clergy sisters? I'm ashamed to admit I don't know the history like I should, history that's an important part of our story as United Methodists.

Did you know, Bosanquet Fletcher was the first Methodist woman to defend women's right to preach? She wrote to John Wesley in 1771 arguing, "I do not believe every woman is called to speak publicly, no more than every man to be a Methodist preacher, yet some have an extraordinary call to it, and woe be to them if they obey it not." Because of this sound argument, John Wesley began to formally license women to preach (*General COSROW Resource in Celebration of 70 Years of Women's Ordination*).

Did you know, Lillian Russell and Mildred Long were the two earliest clergywomen in Virginia Methodism? Lillian Russell was ordained an Elder in 1947 while remaining a probationary member and Mildred Long was ordained an Elder in 1959 and received in Full Connection in 1961. (Rev. Marg Kutz is the author of a fantastic book about these 2 incredible women, entitled, *Nevertheless She Preached*. We encourage you to check it out).

Did you know in 1956, when the General Conference of The Methodist Church granted women full clergy rights, Maud Keister Jensen became the first woman to receive these rights?

Did you know, Bishop Leontine Turpeau Current Kelly, who was ordained in the Virginia Conference as a deacon in 1972 and an elder in 1977, became the second female bishop in the history of The United Methodist Church, and the first African American female bishop of any major denomination in the world when she was elected Bishop in 1984?

Currently we, the VAUMC, have 445 clergywomen in ministry. We've come a long way in 70 years, and it's important to celebrate that! Yet, at the same time, friends, there is still much work to be done. How many of our own churches resist having a clergywoman appointed to them still today? How many VAUMC clergywomen receive significantly less pay than their male counterparts? How many VAUMC clergywomen are shamed by congregation members for things like what they wear or how they cut their hair, when the same people would not think to say such a thing to a male pastor? How many VAUMC clergywomen have been sexual harassed or put in unsafe situations by church members? You may be surprised to know how often clergywomen experience such things. But we can be the change. So let us celebrate our 70 years of history and let us also look forward to the next 70 years. Where can we be the positive change? How can we better support our clergywomen? How can we nurture the call we see in young women in our lives? Let this be our challenge and our mission for 70 more years and beyond!

Rev. Jenny Day, *Chair of the VA Commission of the Status & Role of Women*

Commission on Disabilities

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ,

This year, the Commission on Disabilities participated in training with the Rev. Dr. Leo Yates focused on understanding ableism and the ways the church is called to become more accessible, welcoming, and inclusive for all people. As we prepare for our second Disability Awareness Sunday on July 26, we look forward to sharing some of these resources with you and your congregations.

Friends, disability is a broad spectrum that encompasses visible and invisible disabilities, physical and cognitive differences, mental health challenges, neurodiversity, chronic illness, and more. Each person's experience is unique, and each story reminds us of the beauty and diversity within the body of Christ.

Each year, our hope is to highlight different areas of disability awareness so that we may continue growing

in understanding, compassion, and faithful action. Disability Awareness Sunday is not simply about acknowledgment; it is an invitation for the church to listen deeply, examine barriers, celebrate gifts, and embody the radical hospitality of Christ. This year, our focus moment will be on neurodiversity.

Here are several books and resources on disability ministry and inclusion that I would lift up for those interested in learning more and continuing the work of creating accessible and welcoming faith communities.

The #ActuallyAutistic Guide to Advocacy By Jenna Gensic

Deaf Ministries: Ministry Models for Expanding the Kingdom of God, 4th Ed. By Leo Yates Jr.

Disabling Leadership: A Practical Theology for the Broken Body of Christ (Center For Disability and Ministry Books) Paperback by Andrew Thomas Draper

The Bible, Disability, and the Church: A New Vision of the People of God By Amos Yong

Blessings

Rev. Timothy Joseph Barth

Committee on Episcopacy (COE)

The Virginia Conference Committee on Episcopacy (COE) is responsible for the review and evaluation of the resident bishop as required by the 2024 *Book of Discipline*. A process for this review has been created and is used by all Conferences in the Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ). The Virginia Conference COE has met with Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson at least two or three times this year to engage in conversation around this process and discuss matters present in the Virginia Annual Conference and larger connection. Most recently our discussions have focused on Bishop Sue's faith formation, her preaching and teaching around the conference and beyond and appointment making, the itinerancy and work with the Cabinet. The COE communicates parts of the results and insights of this review with the SEJ COE for use in their assignment process.

The Virginia COE is pleased with Bishop Sue's leadership and forward thinking style and care for our annual conference and we are looking forward to another great year of ministry here in Virginia with Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson.

Warren R. Harper, *Chair*

Board of Communications (Communications Advisory Team)

Over the past year, the Communications Advisory Team (or Board of Communications as it is still listed) has been in a season of discernment and definition. We have been asking a simple question: who are we called to be for the Annual Conference?

Out of that work, we recognized that to be more effective in ministry, we needed to realign with our core purpose. The former Board of Communications began reimagining its role, moving toward an advisory team model rooted in collaboration, shared expertise, and practical support. Our purpose is to help ensure that the Conference and its churches have the tools, knowledge, and support needed to communicate clearly and faithfully with the Annual Conference and within their local communities.

This shift is still taking shape, and there will be a need to amend our structure in the Conference Standing rules in the future. At the same time, it is already shaping how we understand our work in this time—and the immediate future.

This year, we took initial steps toward living into that purpose. One of our primary goals was to build stronger connections across districts. Team members were asked to reach out to District Superintendents, administrators, and communications leaders to better understand where support is most needed. The hope was to begin forming a network of relationships that could lead to more responsive and contextual support for local churches.

We recognize that at this time, we have not fully lived into this vision. Some connections are still forming. Some systems are still developing. Naming that is important. It also points us toward our continued work ahead.

As we look forward, our goal is to continue building a structure where each district has access to people who can offer guidance in communications and technology. This includes areas such as website development, social media strategy, livestreaming, and general communication practices (both in terms of traditional and digital communication methods). The long-term vision is not centralized control. It is a shared capacity. Churches helping churches, supported by a connected and resourced team, that can be a place of collective support branching out across the Conference.

We also want to encourage greater use of the resources already available. The Conference Communications resource page and communications office exist to support you. These are not static tools. They are starting points for collaboration, problem-solving, and growth.

Our commitment moving forward includes:

- Helping churches explore and improve access to reliable internet where possible
- Supporting livestreaming and digital worship practices
- Offering guidance for newsletters, websites, and social media engagement
- Strengthening the way we tell the story of the church within our communities
- Ensuring clear and consistent communication across the Conference and connection

At the center of this work is a simple belief: communication is not an add-on to ministry. It is part of how ministry happens. When churches are equipped to communicate well, they are better able to connect, invite, and respond to the needs around them.

We invite you to engage with us in the coming year. Reach out. Ask questions. Share your needs. Let us know where you are trying to grow or where you feel stuck. This team exists to serve alongside you.

There is more work to do. There is also a clear sense of direction. We are committed to continuing this work with intention, openness, and a desire to help every church tell its story with clarity and purpose.

Conference Commission on Religion and Race (CCORR)

Members: David Jimenez-Cardenas, Judy Diggs, Sara Keeling, Mino Kim, Hungsu Lim, Lynda Moore, James Page, Talina Sarmiento, Heather Wray

The Commission on Religion and Race (CCORR) continues its vital work in alignment with the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) and the *Book of Discipline*. Our mission remains: to challenge,

lead, and equip the Virginia Conference to become interculturally competent, ensure institutional equity, and facilitate transformative conversations regarding religion, race, and culture.

In 2025, we celebrated the arrival of Rev. Lan Wilson, Director of Belonging and Advocacy, whose support has been instrumental in advancing CCORR's initiatives. We have also strengthened our connectional ties with General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) and other CCORR chairs, ensuring a holistic approach to advocacy across the conference. Members of the commission have actively served on the conference's immigration team, AI task force, nominations team, and AC monitoring team.

A central highlight of this conference year, through collaborative partnership, is the establishment of a Covenant of anti-racism work among the Bishop, the Cabinet, and CCORR. This document is not an indictment, but a collaborative invitation to align conference structures with our professed theological values.

Theological Framework

Our work is rooted in Covenant Theology, specifically John 13—the command to love one another as Christ loved us—and Galatians 3, which speaks to the ecclesiology of being one body in Christ. This framework reminds us of our baptismal vows and commitment to “resist evil, injustice, and oppression.” In our discipleship, we view anti-racism work as a necessary component of communal repentance and sanctification.

To move beyond symbolic commitments, the Covenant establishes key objectives and concrete metrics for accountability among us. These include:

1. Intentional Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Relationships Among Local Churches

We commit to cultivating intentional, transformative relationships across racial and cultural lines through partnership, shared ministry, and honest dialogue that fosters belonging, accountability, and community impact.

2. Recruiting and Developing Leaders of Color and Investing in Youth and Young Adults

We commit to increasing representation, equity, and sustainability in leadership by recruiting, developing, and supporting leaders of color and investing intentionally in youth and young adults of color.

3. Reinvestment, Reparations, and Closed Church Funds

We commit to reinvesting resources, particularly from closed church properties, into historically underfunded and marginalized communities as an act of justice, repair, and faithful stewardship.

4. Funding for Advocacy, Equitable Salary, and Apportionment Reform

We commit to aligning financial practices with our values by strengthening advocacy funding, ensuring equitable compensation, and reforming structures to promote fairness and sustainability.

5. Training, Education, and Implicit Bias Review

We commit to sustained education, accountability, and systemic review to ensure our Conference actively dismantles bias and builds a culture of equity and belonging.

As we move into the 2026–2027 conference year, CCORR stands committed to partnership and accountability as we fulfill the work of the covenant. This work is not optional. ¶643 of the *Book of Discipline*, we are mandated to monitor our structures and ensure full participation. We offer this report as an invitation to lean into our shared stewardship, trusting that the Spirit is shaping us into a more faithful, equitable, and vital Conference. We do this in a spirit of partnership, seeking to build the “Beloved Community” in which our systems fully embody belonging.

Rev. Hungsu Lim, Chair

Business to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences

Grace & peace in the name of our risen Savior, Jesus Christ!

The Virginia Conference General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegation has been steady and faithful since being elected in 2019. Through years of preparation — navigating postponements, uncertainty, and a rapidly changing church landscape — this delegation showed up, studied up, and stood ready to represent Virginia with integrity and passion at both the 2020/ 2024 General Conference.

Last year, our delegation helped to educate around one of the most consequential moments in modern United Methodist history: the charge toward ratifying Worldwide Regionalization. And the church answered. Annual conference voters around the globe supported regionalization by a remarkable vote of 34,148 to 3,124 — a 91.6% majority. Under this newly ratified restructuring, the U.S. and each central conference in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines become regional conferences with the same legislative authority — a shift described as the most significant structural change in the church since the merger forming The United Methodist Church in 1968. Virginia was part of making that happen!

Now, the Council of Bishops has named U.S. General Conference delegates to form the Interim Committee on Organization that will organize the U.S. Regional Conference, and preliminary work has already begun across the connection. Our delegation continues to engage through webinars and preparation for the October Leadership Gathering in Calgary, Canada, where two laity and one clergy will represent the Virginia Annual Conference. Be sure to pay attention to our own VAUMC communications as well as UMNews for updates.

To your delegation, your commitment to this church — in all its complexity, its beauty, and its call to make disciples for the transformation of the world — does not go unnoticed. Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and your faithfulness. We are grateful.

grace upon grace,

Rev. Lindsey Baynham Freeman & Mr. Warren Harper (*heads of delegation*)

Board of Discipleship

The Virginia Conference Board of Discipleship continues its work of equipping local churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Over the past year, the Board has focused on strengthening spiritual formation, supporting leadership development, and creating accessible pathways for discipleship across the Conference.

A central commitment of the Board has been helping churches develop sustainable discipleship practices that reach people at every stage of faith. Through collaboration with Conference ministries and district leaders, the Board has supported efforts that deepen spiritual growth through small groups, Bible study, prayer practices, and intergenerational learning. As congregations reimagine how they form disciples both inside and outside the church building, the Board has sought to offer encouragement, resources, and theological grounding for this essential work.

Leadership development remains a key priority. Healthy discipleship requires healthy leaders, and the Board continues to explore ways to support clergy and lay leaders who guide faith communities. This includes encouraging mentorship relationships, identifying emerging leaders, and promoting training opportunities that equip leaders to serve faithfully in their local contexts. Particular attention has been given to

strengthening lay leadership, recognizing that the vitality of the church depends on the gifts and callings of the whole body of Christ.

The Board has also emphasized the importance of discipleship rooted in community and connection. Discipleship is not simply an individual pursuit but a shared journey in which people learn to follow Christ together. As congregations navigate changes in membership patterns, worship participation, and community engagement, the Board continues to highlight practices that help churches build meaningful relationships and create spaces where people can grow in faith.

This year, the Board also re-visioned our Conference celebrations and awards. Through the creativity and faithful witness of our local churches, we have established a renewed list of ministries that highlight the innovation, resilience, and disciple-making work happening across the Virginia Conference. A new recognition, the “Wesley Flame Award”, was introduced to celebrate the spirit-filled creativity, courageous discipleship, and transformational ministries that ignite a renewed passion for Christ in local congregations. We also continue to honor churches that have moved from none to one or more professions of faith and/or baptisms as a sign of renewed vitality and intentional disciple-making.

To strengthen our shared mission, the Board conducted a review of the *Book of Discipline*, examining our stated responsibilities and inviting other boards and agencies, supported by Conference staff, to share the work they are doing. This collaborative process has helped identify areas of overlap, clarify our shared mission, and discern the “gaps” within our Conference where additional support, resources, or leadership development may be needed.

The Board of Discipleship is grateful for the clergy and lay leaders across the Virginia Conference who faithfully nurture discipleship in their local churches every day. Your commitment to teaching, mentoring, serving, and sharing the love of Christ is the foundation of this work.

As we look ahead, the Board remains committed to strengthening discipleship pathways, equipping leaders, celebrating the creative ministries of our local churches, and fostering communities where people can encounter God’s grace and grow in their faith.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Robin BeMiller and Rev. Nilse Furtado-Gilliam
Co-Chairs, Virginia Conference Board of Discipleship



Annual Program Report

VAUMC Initiative Preparing the Way for Children

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Hatching Faith Cohorts project is to discover how to more meaningfully engage children in corporate worship by leading congregations through a three-phase process.

THE THREE PHASE MODEL



Nesting

Preparation

Congregations get ready.



Hatching

Design & Experiment

Try new worship practices.



Nurturing

Sustainability

Spread and sustain the model.

YEAR 1 IMPACT

98% of those who noticed change said worship now includes **more** opportunities for children to be creative.

8

churches in
Cohort 1

87%

said their worship
experience has **improved**

86%

noticed **more** children
present in worship

+19%

ave. **improvement**
in bulletin accessibility

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WORSHIP

Family-focused worship services centered on family participation, across several congregations.



Child-led liturgy

Child written and led
liturgical elements



Worship arts program

Liturgical dance and displayed
art created by children



Table-based worship

Coloring, snacks, fidgets and
family-style communion



Multi-sensory scripture

invitation for congregational
participation in storytelling

LOOKING AHEAD

Winter 2026

Spring 2026

May 2026

Fall 2026

April 2027



Cohorts 2 & 3
enter Nesting phase



Cohort 1 completes Hatching phase
Cohorts 2&3 enter Hatching phase



Cohort 1 enters
Nurturing phase



Hatching continues with initial
experiments + micro-grants for Cohorts 2&3



Cohorts 2&3 complete
Hatching phase

LEARN MORE:
vaumc.org/hatchingfaith

Rev. Hannah Bryn
Director of Hatching Faith Cohorts
Email: hannahbryn@vaumc.org

Rev. Jennifer Coffey
Hatching Faith Cohort Coordinator
Email: jennifercoffey@vaumc.org

Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (BHECM)

In the past year, we've spent a great deal of time discerning our values and defining our roles and responsibilities as a board so that we may more equitably serve our campus ministers and chaplains, as well as our local churches and conference. To fully understand the needs of those we serve, our board is working to build relationships between the board and campus ministers - to truly see and hear them. Dwayne Stinson's leadership and guidance, along with his connection to all parties involved, is instrumental in our ability to carry out this work.

As a board, we value inclusiveness, innovation, taking risks and trying new things. These values come alongside the values of campus ministry we use to measure fruitfulness: welcome and hospitality, discipleship, service and justice, and leadership development. With this foundation in place, we are moving to ensure that funding decisions are values-based vs. history-based. We're grateful for the funding the Annual Conference and Council on Finance and Administration continues to provide.

At our April meeting, we had the privilege of having four of our campus ministers share the joys and challenges of their ministries, and we'll continue to offer this at each of our meetings. We're also planning a summer gathering to bring all of our campus ministers and chaplains together, at their request, to share their stories and problem solve, together. Students are arriving less and less prepared for college. Food insecurity, isolation, lack of meaningful leadership opportunities and not knowing how to talk across lines of difference and hard topics plague all campuses, in addition to the need for more programming, ministry leaders and funding. Bridges are being built across multi-faith communities, yet much work remains to keep these life-changing programs sustainable.

In addition to this work, there has been significant transition within the campus ministries we support. A new combined ministry position supports both the Wesley Foundation in Farmville and ministry at Farmville UMC, and hiring was complete in March. Rev. Thomas Wynn, interim campus minister at FLOW at Virginia State University will remain in the position long-term. Revs. Joy Carrington (Wesley Westminster Foundation at Norfolk State University) and Michael Burnette (Flourish at Christopher Newport University) are transitioning to new roles. The Campus Christian Community at the University of Mary Washington is discerning options for continuing the ministry. Finally, the Wesley Foundation at William & Mary is experiencing transition as well. The Board has taken these transitions as an opportunity to evaluate how we can continue ministry in new ways that ensure the best stewardship of the resources of talents and funds.

How can we advocate for and equip this next generation of leaders? As we continue to explore higher education and training opportunities at the local church and conference level, we envision increased partnerships between the conference, local churches, campus ministers, chaplains, students and the surrounding communities being served. We want to continue to provide a seat at the table for all, ultimately equipping community members that will bring light and change to future generations.

Sherry Wright, *Board Chair*

[See Campus Ministries section for reports from individual campus ministries.](#)

Virginia Conference Historical Society

The Trustees of the Virginia Conference Historical Society met on March 1 at Randolph-Macon, when Dr. Anna Lawrence spoke on "Revolutionary Era Methodism and Black Believers," and October 4, at Boydton Church when Dr. Lacey Warner spoke on "An 'Extraordinary' Woman: Dorothy Ripley of Mecklenburg County"

The reports of our foundations and committees are presented below.

Mike Browder, *President*

THE OLD BRUNSWICK CIRCUIT FOUNDATION (TOBCF)

Canaan/Dromgoole House

After the grant freeze, TOBCF had a virtual meeting with the contractor, Clint Hobbs, on Sept 4, 2025 to confer on restarting the restoration work on the brick and stone foundation of the Dromgoole House. After getting the approval of VDHR and under the guidance of Bob Brock, TOBCF revised the contract (to reduce the scope of work as described in our previous report). The revised contract was subsequently signed by vice president, Marc Thompson on behalf of TOBCF. Due to uncertainty caused by the government shutdown of Oct 1-Nov13, the contractor didn't sign the contract until Nov 20, 2025, began procuring needed supplies and material by Nov 28 and restarted his work on Dec 2, 2025. Ann Keeling and Louis Malone made a site visit mid-way of the construction on January 8, 2026, and visited again with Bob Brock and Mark Thompson on Feb 10, 2026, after all the work on the restoration of the foundation of the Dromgoole house were completed on January 22, 2026. Mr. Hobbs has submitted a signed, notarized, final lien waiver to TOBCF and has been paid in full for the work that he has done for TOBCF.

Randolph Macon College and Boydton Institute

Oct 4, 2025--TOBCF hosted the meeting of the VAUMC HS at the Boydton Methodist Church where everyone enjoyed hearing a presentation by Dr. Layce Warner as arranged by Dr. Mike Browder. Lunch was served to attendees after which everyone took a tour of TOBCF's Randolph-Macon College and Boydton Institute historic site to celebrate the restoration work that had been done on the Helensha Cottage.

TOBCF continues working with VDHR on the historic district designation for the RMC/BI site with the issue of insurances on historic properties being the main issue to resolve.

Oct 28, 2025--Board member Walter Beales attended a VDOT public meeting regarding extension of the Rails to Trails and advocated for connecting this trail to our Randolph Macon College & Boydton Institute grave site which is located adjacent to the proposed extension.

Walter Beales, Laurie Preston and Kendra Grimes are working to engage with the new president of the Randolph-Macon College in Ashland to build stronger relationships around shared history & heritage.

Oct 15, 2025-- Board members Ann Keeling and Deborah Hanson set up an all-day Boydton Institute display at Boydton Day festivities on the Boydton town square.

The Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation

Art Thomas, Laurie Preston, Walter Beales and Ann Keeling are working with Madeline White and Hunter Byrn to produce video clips on TOBCF's three sites to use in conjunction with the VAUMC Annual Conference in June 2026.

Art Thomas is taking the needed steps to nominate two of our historical sites and perhaps several others as a Methodist Historical site, and if successful will combine them together as a single Cluster site for nomination as a Methodist Heritage Cluster site.

Three meetings of TOBCF were held: Sept 15, 2025; Dec 6, 2025; and February 21, 2025.

Nov 30, 2025--renewed TOBCF's registration in federal govt. System for Award Management (SAM).

Dec 19, 2025 --Walter Beales and Alice Carol Maitland completed and submitted the Annual Report for the

Virginia State Corporation Commission and paid the required dues. Dec 2025 -- Dr. Art Thomas contributed the article in the Fall 2025 Heritage Bulletin: “Henry Fry and the Planting of Methodism in Culpeper and Madison Counties in 1774 at Elim, Meander Farm”.

THE OLD STONE CHURCH FOUNDATION

The Old Stone Church Foundation continues in its mission to preserve and interpret the site in Leesburg that bore witness to much early American Methodist history.

With respect to preservation, in recent months, the site has benefited from professional removal of dead trees and stumps and trimming of overgrown trees. This work had to be coordinated with the town and utility companies, as one tree was near overhead power lines. In July, members of the Evergreen Church community dedicated one day of their week of service to trimming bushes, manicuring the areas around gravestones, cleaning up flower beds, and mulching. In February, the Foundation held an introductory meeting with a local cemetery conservancy to explore opportunities to accurately map and photograph marked graves and to use ground penetrating radar to identify unmarked graves.

With respect to interpretation, in August, the Old Stone Church site was included in a new self-guided walking tour celebrating the bicentennial of the Marquis de Lafayette’s visit to Leesburg in 1825. This tour, and a “Highlights of Historic Leesburg” tour also featuring the site, are found on the TourLeesburg app, which can be downloaded to mobile devices or accessed online at townleesburg.stqry.app. Where these tours provide a historical interpretation, another effort is underway that will provide a spiritual interpretation. This will be an audio tour, accessed from a QR code at the site, that will take pilgrims through a story of beauty and failure, of courage and division, and will demonstrate how God invites us into a life that is bigger than ourselves.

More information on the work of The Old Stone Church Foundation can be found at vaumc.org/oldstonechurchfoundation.

Chris Becek, *President*

THE WILLIAM WATTERS FOUNDATION

The William Watters Foundation Board of Directors met for a short meeting via Zoom on October 14, 2025, to elect our officers and catch up on recent happenings.

We elected our officers for the year. They are:

- President Myra Lindsey
- Vice President David Meyer
- Secretary Ann Callender
- Treasurer Jeff Haugh

The Rev. Jeff Haugh, pastor at Chesterbrook UMC, McLean, is our new treasurer. He has recommended Rebecca C. Bowen, Esq., Richmond, VA, as the foundation’s registered agent. We are working to officially register her with the state.

Pastor Rudy Tucker, who has faithfully served as the William Watters Gravesite property caretaker for the last two years, has stepped down. We are searching for a new caretaker.

In early October, a deer attempted to jump over the fence that encompasses the cemetery. It was impaled by a finial and died. Jesse James Critter Gitters came to remove the poor deer. A nearby neighbor was very helpful in attaining the service.

Myra P. Lindsey, *President*

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Rev. John (Jack) Martin, former VCHS President, has agreed to join the Archives Committee in an advisory capacity, replacing Rev. Jim Smith.

The Committee is pleased to report that we are taking actions to ensure long-term preservation of the records of the Virginia AC, currently stored on fragile 8-track tapes and audio cassettes. We sent one box, with tapes and cassettes covering 1969-72, to Methodist-Audio, Mid-Coast Communications (M-A M-CC), an organization that has digitized more than 1,000 audio programs important to the history of the United Methodist Church. Once the process is completed and checked for completeness and accuracy, the original tapes and cassettes will be returned to us along with a thumb drive containing the digital files. Digitation costs are very reasonable. Programs may be included online at SoundTheology.org and archived at the United Methodist General Commission on Archives and History as appropriate to their guidelines.

If funds from the existing Archives budget do not cover the complete cost of digitization, the Committee will use funds from the Patti Russell Foundation Fund. It is important to note that the Fund was established to support of the Conference Archives. Additional funds may be required to continue this project, whether it is with M-A M-CC or another service. Eighteen boxes of tapes and cassettes remain to be digitized.

We conducted and submitted Stephanie Davis' annual review to the Conference Treasurer and Business Office and Mike Browder. The review includes a listing of her accomplishments during the review period, prepared by Stephanie, and includes items she was not able to complete, and it clearly identifies her many frustrations and barriers to getting her job done in accordance with the *Book of Discipline* (BOD). The Committee is concerned that Stephanie's allotted 18 weekly work hours are insufficient to accomplish the tasks and address the required archival jobs assigned by the BOD. For example, it is obvious that time restrictions bar her from dealing with incoming records from newly closed and disaffiliated churches and responding to all requests for information as an archivist should.

To address these problems, Stephanie is preparing a detailed list, in priority order, of the jobs that need to be done to insure a well-organized, efficient and easily accessible archives in alignment with the BOD. The Committee will review this list, adjust if appropriate, and use it as a basis to address possible solutions including, but not limited to extending her formal working hours, engaging a qualified intern to assist her, and finding additional space for the collection. The Committee will ramp up action on our previous requests for an increase in salary. To date, the archivist has not received even a cost-of-living increase since she was hired in 2009. It is our understanding that she is considered a conference staff employee.

The Committee is also addressing the need to educate people on the difference between an archive and a museum as Stephanie is unable to respond to many requests for objects that are not available in an archive. While archives may have collections of museum objects relevant to their mission, these are usually very limited in scope and number.

Finally, the Committee plans to once again have a display table at Annual Conference to publicize the three sources of archival material in Virginia relating to the United Methodist Church.

Nina Frederick, *Chair*

HERITAGE

The HERITAGE Publications Committee met to discuss the Spring 2026 issue of HERITAGE on February 19, 2026. Our next issue will feature:

- Henry Fry: "Mover" of the Emancipation Bill of 1785 and His Role in the Second Great Awakening in

Virginia – by Art Thomas. This is a follow-on to Art’s story in the Fall 2025 issue.

- Far from Home... but Near to God: RMC Alumni Chaplains in World War II- by Laurie Preston
- Saddlebags – by Mark Leep. Mark will present another anecdote about the life of a circuit rider.

Please note: Due to the lengths of our featured stories, this issue will not include a church mini-history or updates by our foundations. All articles are due to our copyeditor, Boyd Lucas, by March 17, 2026 and to our layout contractor, Cathryn Huff, by April 17, 2026. Pastor Linda Crabbs, our circulation manager (subscriptions and mailings) has indicated that HERITAGE will be mailed by May 9, 2026.

The blog team of the Library of Virginia’s UncommonWealth Blog uncommonwealth.lva.virginia.gov, has asked permission from Laurie Preston to print her article from last fall’s HERITAGE, Serving God and the Boys “Over There,” in an upcoming post. The HERITAGE Publications Committee agrees that this would be an excellent move!

Art Thomas recently contacted Jonathan A. Klenklen, Director of the Library at Wesley Theological Seminary, asking if he thought HERITAGE would be suitable for listing on ATLAS or other databases that include indexes of religious periodicals. Klenklen’s answer was positive, giving us useful information with which to research the opportunities available. The Publications Committee agreed that connecting with these indexes is a great idea, and we intend to pursue this.

Upcoming story ideas include:

- Arise Campus Ministry in Northern Virginia, beginnings seeded by the Rev. Carl Ennis, mid-1960s.
- Rising Hope UMC, a Northern Virginia mission church, a majority of whose members have been homeless at some time in their lives.
- The Pace Center, a student center at Virginia Commonwealth University where United Methodists partner with English Lutheran, Episcopalian, Presbyterian (USA) and United Church of Christ churches.
- Disaffiliated Churches of the Virginia Conference.
- “Francis Asbury and Mr. O’Kelly” – how James O’Kelly fell out of favor with Francis Asbury.

Due to much lower subscription sales at recent VAUMC Annual Conferences, the HERITAGE Publications Commission has not yet determined if we will reserve space in this year’s Annual Conference display hall in Harrisonburg. We continue to search for alternatives to advertise our amazing Virginia Conference HERITAGE!

Myra P. Lindsey, *Editor*

HISTORY BOOK UPDATE COMMITTEE

Our committee met by ZOOM on November 25, 2025. We continue our work on updating the history of the Virginia Conference since the last published history in 1955 and are gradually completing chapters on selected topics drafted by our committee members and other writers. We set April 28 as a target for submitting drafts still awaiting completion ahead of our next meeting on May 5. It has been a slow process and we still would like to engage a general editor. We would like to include some treatment of the disaffiliation story and a vision of the Virginia Conference looking forward.

Jim Athearn, *Chair*

Board of Laity

One of the areas of work for the Board of Laity (BOL) and a benchmark of the *Next Faithful Step Quadrennial Focus* is developing a comprehensive leadership framework. As part of this focus, the BOL has continued to work toward our vision of a new organizational structure which builds and utilizes networks of Associate District Lay Leaders (ADLL) in each district. Identifying ADLLs and utilizing their gifts multiplies lay leadership with the intention of expanding the voices and diversity of lay leaders willing to step into new roles in their local churches, districts, and the Virginia Conference. These district networks strengthen communication, expand resourcing, and develop vital relationships with Local Church Lay Leaders in micro-community groupings. As part of this work, teams within the BOL have been focusing on the leadership qualities needed of next Conference Lay Leader(s) and revisiting the nominations process to allow for a new model of identification and discernment of gifts and responsibilities. The Board of Laity (BOL) is not yet ready to bring formal recommendations for revisions to the structure of the board to the Annual Conference. It is anticipated that this will be part of our report for the 2027 session.

To prepare for the work of the Leadership Development sub team of the Connectional Table, the BOL completed an analysis of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) during its September 2025 meeting. Identified strengths included a strong network across the conference. People listen to each other, build trust, and work together. The Board is changing: more people, including youth and young adults, are getting involved. More people are participating in Lay Servant Ministries and Certified Lay Ministry. Regular meetings, mentoring, collaborative work, and shared resources help the work move forward. The SWOT also showed areas to improve including recognition that some people are not sure what the Board's role is or how it works with other conference groups. Communication is not always clear or consistent across districts or with local churches. Many local lay leaders do not know about opportunities, or they have trouble getting access. There are also chances to do more; the Board can invite more people and include a wider mix of voices and share information in a consistent way across the conference. The Board can offer training and opportunities for spiritual growth in ways that work for busy schedules. The Board can also partner with other groups and with Annual Conference and campus ministries to reconnect with communities. The threats are real. Many lay leaders are tired. Recent church conflict has caused hurt and division. Change is difficult. Local churches face many challenges. Yet, the main priority is clear: use the Board's strong relationships, and pair them with clear roles, better teamwork, and steady communication to local churches.

District Lay Leaders made a commitment to hold at least one listening session during December in each district with local church lay leaders. Some districts sent out an open invitation for conversation. Others invited select congregation to participate. Five questions guided the conversation in each session. The listening sessions revealed both appreciation for and frustration with the current relationship between local churches and the Virginia Conference. Churches seek more accessible resources, clearer communication, and stronger, more personal connections. Leadership development, practical training, and support for outreach and discipleship were recurring needs. The feedback provided actionable insights for the BOL and Leadership Development sub team to strengthen our support for local churches and foster a more connected and effective ministry across the Conference.

Successful Conference Lay Servant Academy sessions were held in August 2025 and February 2026. The conference sessions involved 170 laity. District Lay Servant Ministry training sessions were active and ongoing. More than 240 laity participated in district Lay Servant Ministry training events during this conference year. District Lay Leaders and District Coordinators of Lay Servant Ministries also worked with district staff to offer workshops as part of district leadership training and discernment days. Certified Lay

Ministry (CLM) training offered under our conference Lay Servant Ministries continues to equip lay servants who are called to care for a small congregation, develop new and existing faith communities, or establish community outreach ministries. Certified Lay Ministers accomplish this in collaboration with a ministry team and support from an assigned clergyperson. Thirty-four students participated in training this year. Three individuals will be recognized for completion of the CLM modules at this Annual Conference session. To explore Lay Servant Ministry, including Certified Lay Ministry, visit the Lay Servant Ministry pages of the VAUMC website or reach out to Richard Speirs, Director of Lay Servant Ministries at richardspeirs@vaumc.org.

This spring, our Conference Director of Scouting Ministries, Alan Webber, offered a practical overview to clergy of why local churches are encouraged to utilize affiliation or facility use agreements instead of traditional chartering agreements. The guidance included a historical reflection on The United Methodist Church's response to governmental demands on scouting, including how Scouting America has responded and how our Social Principles and John Wesley's understanding of grace inform our approach. There is growing interest in local Girl Scout Councils about greater connection with United Methodist churches. If your church would like additional information about Scouting Ministries or support with establishing or strengthening troops/units, contact Alan Webber at aewebber33@gmail.com, plan to visit the Scouting Ministries display while at Annual Conference, or visit the Scouting Ministry pages of the Conference website.

The vitality of the church depends on the continuing renewal movement from which we began: a lay-led movement. We cannot be reminded too often of our United Methodist understanding of the ministry of the laity.

“The ministry of the laity flows from a commitment to Christ's outreaching love. Lay members of The United Methodist Church are, by history and calling, active advocates of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Every layperson is called to carry out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20); every layperson is called to be missional. The witness of the laity, their Christ-like examples of everyday living as well as the sharing of their own faith experiences of the gospel, is the primary evangelistic ministry through which all people will come to know Christ and The United Methodist Church will fulfill its mission.” - ¶ 127. *The Ministry of the Laity*, **The United Methodist Book of Discipline 2020/2024**.

The opportunities are before us. We can let it go by or we can be part of an intentional lay movement of renewal and revitalization. How will we respond?

Martha E. Stokes, *Conference Lay Leader*, (804) 366-7162

Missional Ministries Board

General:

The VAUMC Missional Ministries Board (MMB) serves alongside our Districts and Local Churches in **resourcing** and **facilitating** missional opportunities for the Kingdom of God. Currently structured into three teams – Missional Discipleship and Engagement, Missional Connection, and Partnerships of Hope – the MMB was eager to participate in the Conference's Connectional Table Experiment model for the 2025-26 conference year. Despite some initial scheduling and staffing delays in executing the new model, the MMB achieved partial success in finding space for collaboration, prioritization, and strategy development as noted in the missional ministries below.

2025-26 Conference Year Missional Ministries:

- VAUMC collected 14,917 kits (hygiene, feminine hygiene, and cleaning) prior to AC 2025 for a total value of \$245,985

- The Outreach Clinic at Andrew Chapel UMC (Montross) has reopened after suspending operations in 2020 due to the pandemic
- Greene Memorial UMC and Trinity UMC in Roanoke have merged – not just congregations, but missions – with the historic Trinity building being transformed into 15 affordable apartments for retirees ... turning sacred space into safe space
- Prayer and monetary support following catastrophic flooding in the Texas hill country
- 2025 VAUMC Mission Trips – Calvary UMC, Floris UMC, Good Shepherd UMC, Haygood UMC, Main Street UMC, New Song UMC, and Trinity UMC ... plus more – all sharing God’s love in action
- Disaster Recovery Response – Ways your local church can respond – (1) Pray, (2) Give via financial generosity, (3) Give via Amazon Registry for supplies to equip volunteer teams, and (4) Give via time and skills
- The Mission Central Children’s Clothes Closet (a ministry of the Shenandoah River District & located behind Cedar Grove UMC) formally received a proclamation from the Secretary of the Commonwealth on Sept. 16, 2025 as one of the “Diaper Banks” in Virginia, with close to 100,000 diapers given
- Rev. Nilse Furtado-Gilliam’s September 2025 Brazil POH trip for the 25th anniversary celebration of the Shade and Fresh Water initiative – providing safe, faith-filled environments for children and adolescents after school
- Rev. Nancy Robinson’s October 2025 Mozambique POH trip to strategize and meet with key leaders
- VAUMC’s Emergency Food Response Fund to counter government shutdown and SNAP benefit uncertainty and the impact on UMC food pantries and community feeding needs
- Giving to UMCOR’s response to Mozambique rainy season flooding (Nov25 – Feb26)
- UMC Giving Sundays and Virginia Advance Specials
- Directed Missionary Support
- Various Refugee Response efforts
- Continued ERT Certification Trainings and UMVIM Leader Trainings

2026-27 Conference Year Focus/Plans:

Based on our past successes and a renewed Conference emphasis on the Connectional Table model, the MMB is ready to explore a potential collaborative space which includes mercy, justice, discipleship, and mission. Such an endeavor would not be an immediate change and would not forgo the basic tenets of missional ministries, but would afford our Churches, Districts, and Conference an avenue to explore social holiness and impactful mission work.

Where to Find Additional Information:

Contact our Conference’s Missional and Community Engagement Office at vaumc.org/missions to find Community-wide, State-wide, or World-wide mission opportunities; and learn all about the following missional ministries:

Advance Specials	Disaster Response	Emergency Response Teams
Gen Bd of Global Ministries	Global Mission Fellows	Missionaries
Mission Volunteers	Partnerships of Hope	Relationship Partners
Special Sundays	UMCOR	UMVIM

John Meeuwissen, *Chair*

The Virginia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry

BOM is made up of 43 clergy and laity who meet 3 times a year: in November for training, in January for interviews of candidates for full membership, and in February for interviews of candidates for provisional and associate membership. This year, we recommend 8 candidates for ordination as elders in full membership, 2 for ordination as deacons in full membership, 10 candidates for commissioning as provisional members, and 2 candidates for recognition as associate members. BOM's core values are 1: The Holy Spirit is at work in the BOM's discernment 2: In working with candidates and clergy, the whole person is considered 3: Effective ministry leadership is needed in the pulpit and far beyond it in a rapidly changing world. We seek to follow the General Rules of our Church: "Do no harm, to do all the good we can, and to live in the ordinances of God."

Many of our seminaries do not offer Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), which is required of VA conference candidates for full membership, and CPE settings are not available in certain parts of the Conference. Therefore, BOM created its own alternative to Clinical Pastoral Education called **Sacred Encounters**. The first **Sacred Encounters** cohort was held with 5 participants in the fall of 2025 and was led by Dr. Joy Kreider, a neuroscientist and certified trauma coach, and her teaching assistant, Rev. Stephanie Dunn, an ordained deacon and certified coach from the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Annual Conference. 7 didactics by 7 different clergy of the VA Conference were offered on healthy boundaries, grief, family systems, cultural competency, spiritual *Disciplines*, holy listening, and ministry in the midst of trauma. The feedback from the participants and leaders was so positive that we will offer our second cohort in the fall of 2026. While an accredited CPE program is the required norm, **Sacred Encounters** is available to candidates in unusual circumstances that prevent them from taking an accredited CPE program.

BOM received a 1-million-dollar grant, The Francis Asbury Fund, to be used in support of missionaries and clergy seeking post-seminary degrees. More information about this grant and how to apply can be found at the Center for Clergy Excellence website.

BOM's November training event was on the CliftonStrengths led by Rev. Amanda Webber to help us learn and better understand our individual and corporate strengths and how they impact our work as a board.

In March, the Board sponsored a clergy retreat, "Rooted in Grace", which gave clergy the opportunity to gather for learnings from Rev. Dr. Kendall Soulen, workshop leaders, small group gatherings, and fellowship with our Bishop and colleagues.

The Board of Ordained Ministry and the district Committees of Ordained Ministry (dCOM) are grateful for your support through your financial gifts to the Conference Budget and the Ministerial Education Fund and for your recognizing and affirming the call of God upon the lives of people of all ages. We are grateful for the leadership, presence, and support of the staff of the Center for Clergy Excellence: Rev. Jessie Squires Colwell, Rev. Dr. Jason Stanley, and Rev. Lyn Harding.

At our February meeting, BOM elected new officers:

Rev. David Vaughan, Chair,
Rev. Sarah Locke, Rev. MiKang Kim, and Rev. Adam Blagg, Vice Chairs
Rev. Tracy Bass, Chair of the Conference Relations Committee.

I thank those who are leaving the Board for their faithful service through the years: Rev. Alan Combs, Rev. Grace Han, and Rev. Marilyn Heckstall. Thank you to Rev. Janine Howard, who faithfully served the Conference Relations Committee over the last 6 years and will remain on BOM to serve in other ways. The BOM continues to be awed and hopeful by God, who continues to call individuals into ministry.

Grace upon Grace,

Rev. Tammy L. Estep, *Chair, VA Conference Board of Ordained Ministry*

Board of Ordained Ministry Nominations 2026

3RD QUADRENNIUM

David Bonney
Blair Ellis (Lay)
Stan Hargraves
*Janine Howard
*Keon Huh
Shawn Kiger (Lay)
*Mikang Kim
*Sarah Locke
*Lynda D. Moore
Leigh Anne Taylor (Deacon)
*David Vaughan
Neal Wise (Lay)

2ND QUADRENNIUM

Esther Agbosu
Tracy Bass
Adam Blagg
Brian Brown
Debbie Cali (Lay)
*David Edinger (AM)
Amy Grant
*Teer Hardy
Chad Herndon
Seungsoo "RJ" Jun
Michelle Kim
Lauren Leggett (Lay)
*Cynthia Lopynski (Lay)
Craig Newman
*Camille Pentsil
Nancy E. Robinson (Deacon)
Patty Slattum (Lay)
*Bill Slingerland (Lay)
Jae Song
Laura Stratton
George M. Warner, Sr.
Sarah Wastella
Heather L. Wray (Deacon)

1ST QUADRENNIUM

Nathan Decker
Morris Fleischer
*Jennifer Fletcher
*Dan Kim
*Ryan LaRock
Lisa McGehee (Deacon)
*Amanda Webber
*Bertina Westley

Chair: David Vaughan

Registrar: Jessie Colwell

District Superintendent: Lindsey Baynham Freeman

*Those who were elected mid-quadrennium are eligible to serve for another quadrennium

Board of Trustees

During this past Conference year, the Board of Trustees has continued to assess and manage closed church properties.

To date we have sold nineteen properties for a net income of \$2,359,027.

We have thirty-six properties that are either For Sale, under contract, or being assessed by the Trustees for viable alternative uses. Of these thirty-six properties, five are parsonages. The total value of these properties is \$7,973,850.00.

We are holding eleven properties for missional use. Of these properties, one is a parsonage. The total value of these properties is \$10,562,300.00.

We have nine properties which we are holding for investment purposes which are producing income for the Annual Conference. Of these properties, five are parsonages. The total value of our investment properties is \$12,629,500.00.

Of the thirty-six properties mentioned above, two currently have contracts which will result in Affordable Housing being built on these properties. In addition, we are currently collaborating with interested parties to redevelop the Epworth UMC property in Norfolk. We are hopeful that the historic sanctuary will be used as a performance venue for the growing Arts Community in that area and the education wing will be redeveloped into Day Care/Child Education facilities.

We are happy to report that due to our Real Estate activity, the Board of Trustees was able to release \$750,000.00 to the Annual Conference. These funds were distributed as follows: \$600,000 to the Apportionment Relief Endowment and \$150,000 to the Grant Making Cooperative. We anticipate that these distributions will continue and increase in the coming Conference year.

The Board of Trustees would like to thank our partners at Williams Mullen Law Firm as well as Wesley Community Development for their tireless efforts in assisting us with this work. We would also like to thank the Conference Treasurer's office for their assistance and support.

I would personally like to thank the members of the Board of Trustees for their commitment to this work of being good stewards of the assets entrusted to us.

Kathy Lutman, *President*, 540-454-2836, Kathy.lutman@gmail.com

United Methodist Men

The Virginia Conference UMM (VAC UMM) are excited to report our ministry Objectives and Goals. Each objective has a goal as to how we plan to accomplish the objective. Our eight objectives are:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Encourage spiritual development | 5. Embrace Scouting |
| 2. Encourage and support women clergy | 6. Advocate for creation care |
| 3. Improve race relations | 7. Encourage and support prayer life |
| 4. Support campus ministries and younger men | 8. Show compassion and care |

We support twelve ministries within our 2026 budget and strive to have advocates from most ministries on our Cabinet. The twelve ministries are:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Black Methodists for Church Renewal | 7. Society of St. Andrew |
| 2. Asian American Ministries Assoc | 8. All God's Children Camp |
| 3. Native American Caucus | 9. Camp Rainbow |
| 4. Latino/Hispanic Caucus | 10. Scouting |
| 5. Heart Havens | 11. Younger Men's Ministry |
| 6. Grace Inside | 12. Campus Ministries |

To help fund these ministries, a \$10 Campaign is in place. Each man in the Virginia Conference is asked to donate \$10 per man per year to support these ministries. Donations can either be made by check or through our electronic giving option. Donations: [UMM Support | VAUMC](#)

The VAC UMM seeks for each district within the VA Conference to have a District President. Their role is to promote Objectives and Goals within their district and promote VAC UMM events and ministries. A District President is needed for the:

- Mountain View District
- Three Notch'd District
- Valley Ridge District

The VAC UMM sends out The Beacon, our quarterly newsletter. To keep communication going in-between editions, we submit periodic events and announcements to be included in The Advocate and VA Conference UMC emails. *The Beacon* Signup: [Subscriptions | VAUMC](#)

The VAC UMM support *Knees@Noon*: a prayer initiative where men stop and pray each day at noon. Then, each Friday at noon, we have a Zoom prayer meeting, "15 minutes max." We pray for Bishop Sue and her Cabinet, for District Superintendents and Clergy, and for personal joys and concerns. All are welcome to join any Friday! **Zoom Meeting ID: 884 9441 6113 - Passcode: UMMNOON**

The VAC UMM are hosting a retreat at Massanetta Springs in Harrisonburg, September 18 thru 19, 2026. Our goal is to kick off our Spiritual Growth campaign at the retreat with an inspirational speaker. All men across the Conference are invited.

A Crop (Potato) Drop will take place during Annual Conference sponsored by the VAC UMM. Approximately 100 volunteers are needed. This will occur on parking lot C-12 on the JMU campus. This is open to all people at Annual Conference and beyond supporting hunger relief. Please consider registering for this event. [JMU Crop Drop - Society of St. Andrew](#)

The VAC UMM and VAC UWF are hosting a Creation Justice breakfast, Caring for God's Creation, on Friday, June 19 at 6:30 AM at Dayton UMC during Annual Conference. Our speaker is Jeremy Harold, an arborist. Registration is open through June 12. <https://forms.gle/HLvjrWHY3yz1WFjV8>

Respectfully submitted,

David Collins, *President, VA Conference UMM*, (757) 434-9393

United Women in Faith

Faith, hope, and love in action – United Women in Faith!

Our **Purpose** states: "United Women in Faith shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church." Our actions are guided by this purpose.

To know God, to grow in faith, we encourage the practice of spiritual *Disciplines*. We pray for one another, for mission workers and mission projects. We participate in programs on spiritual growth and discipleship. We host district and conference **Spiritual Life/Soul Care Retreats**.

To experience freedom as whole persons, to grow in hope, we work on our social justice priorities, which

include ending mass incarceration of people of color and climate justice. We cohost **United Methodist Day at General Assembly** with the Virginia Board of Church and Society, advocating for justice for our neighbors. We respond to United Women in Faith Action Alerts. We utilize our **13 Steps to Sustainability** principles to guide event planning. We implement the **Charter for Racial Justice** policies, hosting racial justice events. This year we have collaborated with United Methodist Men on two such racial justice events.

To develop a creative, supportive fellowship, to grow in love, we gather virtually and in person, at our local units, in our districts and at the conference. We host a **Young Women’s Event** in September. We gather for our **Annual Meeting** in October, to do the business of the organization and most importantly celebrate the work we accomplish. We attend our United Women in Faith national **Assembly**, held this year May 15-17, in Indianapolis.

To expand concepts of mission, to grow in love, we read from **response** magazine and books on our reading program, to understand the missional needs of the world. We host **Mission u**, our school of Christian mission, open to everyone, educating to transform the world. We support mission projects globally and locally, including the **National Mission Institutions** of United Women in Faith, such as **Wesley Community Service Center** in Portsmouth, VA. We hold hands-on missions and put together UMCOR kits. We pledge our financial support through **Mission Giving**, for mission work at home and abroad.

Join us in our local units, as a district at-large member, or as an **All-Access** member through the national website (uwfaith.org)

Join us in our two social justice campaigns: **Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline** and **Just Energy for All**.

This year we will be cohosting breakfast at Annual Conference with United Methodist Men, one of several collaborative events this year. Our focus will be Creation Care. Please register at vauwf.org to join us.

Our upcoming events (go to our website for more information vauwf.org):

Annual Conference Breakfast	June 19, 2026
Mission u	July 24-26, 2026
Young Women’s Event	September 18-19, 2026
Annual Meeting	October 24, 2026
United Methodist Day at General Assembly	TBD January/ February 2027

United Women in Faith – we believe faith, hope, and love in action can change the world!

Karen McElfish, United Women in Faith Conference President

Virginia United Methodist Development Company

The Virginia United Methodist Development Company, LLC, commonly known as DevCo, continues to thrive in its mission to support churches and related ministries across the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church. In this critical season, as local churches navigate changing ministry needs, shifting community patterns, and significant facility decisions, DevCo remains steadfast in its commitment to come alongside congregations with faithful stewardship, practical financial resources, and hopeful vision.

Formed in 2014 as a wholly owned subsidiary of the Virginia United Methodist Foundation, DevCo manages and operates a church extension loan fund that provides loans to United Methodist churches, institutions, and related organizations throughout Virginia. These loans support development, construction, refinancing,

expansion, renovation, capital improvement projects, building purchases, and land acquisition. Through this work, DevCo helps churches strengthen the physical spaces where ministry takes place.

One of the clearest signs of DevCo's continuing vitality is the strength and stability of its lending ministry. As of December 31, 2025, DevCo had 40 outstanding loans totaling \$38,879,437. Since its founding in 2014, DevCo has made more than \$52.93 million in loans to 60 churches and ministries across Virginia. These loans have helped congregations renovate aging facilities, expand ministry capacity, refinance existing debt, purchase property, and prepare their buildings for new and emerging forms of ministry.

DevCo's work is made possible through missional investing. As part of the connection, DevCo makes loans to United Methodist churches and related entities, funded by savings, investment, and retirement certificates from churches, related ministries, individuals, families, and friends. At year-end 2025, DevCo held 689 certificates totaling \$47,491,099. These certificate holders are not simply placing funds in an account; they are participating in a larger connectional witness. Their investments help provide capital that supports the mission and ministry of local churches throughout the Virginia Conference.

This work reflects a deeply connectional understanding of stewardship. Through DevCo, resources entrusted by one part of the Church are put to work for the strengthening of another. A church may refinance debt and redirect dollars toward ministry. A congregation may purchase adjacent property for parking, accessibility, or future expansion. A ministry may renovate space to better serve children, families, or an underserved community. In each case, DevCo serves as a conduit for missional investing, helping financial resources become tools for Gospel-centered impact.

DevCo's record also reflects *Disciplined* stewardship and careful oversight. Since its inception, DevCo has never experienced a loan default. That strong record is a testimony to prudent underwriting, faithful board governance, careful financial management, and relational partnership with the churches and ministries we serve. DevCo takes seriously both its desire to help local churches fulfill their God-given mission and its fiduciary responsibility to protect the funds entrusted by investors.

Financially, DevCo remained strong in 2025. Total assets increased by 17.41%, rising to \$49,838,980, compared with \$42,449,831 at year-end 2024. DevCo also maintained strong liquidity, with \$5,637,404 in cash and cash equivalents and \$5,017,300 in certificates of deposit at year-end. The 2025 financial audit report notes that DevCo met or exceeded the financial standards required under its offering circular.

At DevCo, we consider ourselves partners in ministry. Our concern is not only the financial health of the churches we serve, but also their spiritual vitality, missional capacity, and long-term sustainability. In a season when the Church needs institutions that are both faithful and adaptive, DevCo remains committed to helping congregations steward their resources wisely, strengthen their facilities, and build for the future with courage, wisdom, and hope.

Thank you for your continued trust, investment, and partnership in this sacred work. On behalf of our dedicated Foundation team, our Board of Directors, and our Board of Managers, it is a joy and an honor to serve the churches and ministries of the Virginia Conference through prudent lending, faithful stewardship, and connectional ministry. We look to the future with gratitude for what God has already made possible through DevCo and with renewed faith in what God will yet do through the ministries of our local churches across Virginia.

Rev. Dr. Steven J. Summers, *President and CEO, Virginia United Methodist Foundation,
Virginia United Methodist Development Company, LLC*

Virginia United Methodist Foundation (VAUMF)

The Virginia United Methodist Foundation (VAUMF) continues to thrive and grow in its capacity to serve churches and other ministry partners across the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church. In this critical season, when the needs of local churches and ministries are changing rapidly and requiring adaptive responses, the Foundation remains steadfast in its commitment to come alongside them with faithful stewardship, practical resources, and hopeful vision.

One of the clearest signs of that growth is found in our philanthropic work. Since 2013, the Foundation has provided grants and other philanthropic expressions totaling more than \$904,000, supporting important ministries across the Virginia Conference. In 2025 alone, our grantmaking and philanthropic activity increased by 170.23% over the previous year. That remarkable increase reflects not only expanded capacity but also a deepened commitment to investing in ministries that proclaim the Gospel, strengthen communities, and bear witness to the love of Christ in tangible and transformative ways. In 2025, we launched a new department solely dedicated to philanthropy and development, a witness to our commitment to lead boldly and with excellence as we build meaningful good in all we do.

Another area of vitality is the volume of assets under management that we steward on behalf of churches, etc. Looking back over the past 16 years, we continue to see the fruit of faithful leadership, *Disciplined* stewardship, and clear mission focus. During that period, total Foundation assets have grown from \$24.12 million to \$171.33 million, an increase of 610.32%. In just the last calendar year, assets have grown by 11.72%. Such growth is not simply a financial measure. It is a testimony to the confidence placed in the Foundation, the faithful work of boards and staff, and the enduring importance of a ministry partner dedicated to strengthening the churches and ministries of Virginia.

Churches and partners who invest with the Virginia United Methodist Foundation can be assured that the stewardship of their investments is grounded in our longstanding, deeply embedded commitment to socially responsible investing. As our Investment Policy Statement affirms, all Foundation investments seek to conform “as closely as possible to the socially responsible investment guidelines as set forth in The United Methodist Church *Book of Discipline* [¶ 717].” We are also grateful to report that in 2025, our investment strategies performed exceptionally well, highlighted by strong performance across our diversified funds, including an 18.25% yield in our stock fund. These results illustrate that our commitment to values-based investing can align with *Disciplined* stewardship and strong performance. Together, they serve as expressions of wise, *Disciplined*, and faithful stewardship.

Since 1971, the Foundation has sought to stand beside Virginia United Methodist churches and ministries as a trusted partner in stewardship, investment, lending, and ministry development. That mission remains as important today as ever. In this season, the Church needs institutions that are both deeply rooted and forward-looking, both faithful and adaptive. The Foundation is committed to being that kind of partner: one that helps churches and ministries navigate change, seize opportunity, and build for the future with courage, wisdom, and hope.

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership in this sacred work. It is a joy and an honor to serve the Church in this season. I look to the future with gratitude for all God has already done, and with renewed faith in what God will yet do through the Virginia United Methodist Foundation and the ministries of our local churches across Virginia.

Rev. Dr. Steven J. Summers, *President and CEO, The Virginia United Methodist Foundation*

PARTNERSHIP REPORTS



GraceInside (Virginia Prison Chaplains).....	<u>141</u>
Heart Havens.....	<u>141</u>
Pinnacle Living.....	<u>142</u>
Retired Clergy Housing Corporation	<u>144</u>
Shineforth Child and Family Services (Formerly UMFS).....	<u>145</u>
Society of St. Andrew.....	<u>146</u>

GraceInside (Virginia Prison Chaplains)

Our Mission and Vision

We have been sent by the church to nurture faith and hope in Virginia prisons. GraceInside exists to be an incarnational ministry, serving the 23,000 incarcerated men and women in Virginia prisons, as we have since our founding in 1920. We are a critical partner in public safety, supporting moral and spiritual rehabilitation and providing resources for the faith needs of the prison population. It remains our conviction that this work belongs most properly to the church; all our chaplains are credentialed ministers of the Gospel who have been trained for this “special ops” ministry behind the fence.

Current Ministry Impact

- **Presence:** In 2025, we served over 40,000 hours with a staff of 30 part-time chaplains. The \$55,000 grant we received from VAUMC supported the equivalent of 1 full-time chaplain. Among our chaplains, we had four United Methodist ministers. (We have several vacancies; visit graceinside.org to learn more!).
- **Collaboration:** We coordinate with all partner ministries such as Kairos, Kingsway, and Prison Fellowship/Angel Tree; our chaplains coordinate the ministry efforts of over 3,000 volunteers in Virginia.
- **Revitalization:** Our "2030 Plan" initiatives include a focus on recruitment, enhanced training, and better support for our chaplains through new field reports and anonymous morale surveys. We have a desire to see our chaplains being fruitful and spiritually vibrant in their roles.
- **Leadership:** Under GraceInside's new Executive Director Chaplain, Nick Meyer (appointed in January 2025, former chaplain at Coffeewood Correctional Center), GraceInside continues to have “pride of place” in the Virginia Department of Corrections and remains Christ-centered, missional, and adaptive. Even with our recent growth, we currently only staff about 50% of the “industry standard” for chaplaincy (in Virginia, it would be 45 Full Time Equivalent chaplains).

The Importance of Conference Support

The VAUMC, which helped found GraceInside in 1920, **remains a faithful partner and is our largest denominational sponsor.** We rely heavily on this pillar of support in our \$2 million balanced budget. We are limited only by personnel and funding, and hope to continue expanding our reach.

For more information or to support your neighbors in prison, please visit graceinside.org.

Heart Havens

Our Mission: Over 25 Years of Providing a Haven

The Heart Havens story began in 1994 with a phone call from a mother to a pastor. “Does the United Methodist Church have a place for my child when I’m gone?” she asked. Her child had developmental disabilities, and she had spent a lifetime protecting, advocating, and planning. But as she looked toward the future, she faced a painful reality: there was no safe home waiting for her child when she could no longer provide care.

Thanks to the love and faithful devotion of the United Methodist Church, Heart Havens opened its first home, Macleigh-Holland, in 1997 in Virginia Beach. We are more than just a home; we are a community. We are a family.

Heart Havens’ mission is to empower adults with developmental disabilities to live and thrive in the community. We live that mission every day, as evidenced by the lifelong commitment we make to our

residents and their families. We take pride in sharing that we still support one of the original residents of Macleigh-Holland.

How to Get Involved

Heart Havens is profoundly grateful for the foundational and ongoing support of the Virginia Annual Conference and its members. Your financial gifts, volunteer engagement, and advocacy make our mission of empowerment possible. We invite your continued partnership:

- **Schedule a Speaker:** Share the Heart Havens message with your church or small groups. We will visit you to share a missional video and updates with your congregation.
- **Plan a Heart Havens Sunday:** Utilize our available resources and collect a special offering.
- **Donate:** Support our mission directly or through the Conference.
- **Volunteer:** Participate in workdays at one of our eight locations or explore other hands-on opportunities.
- **Partner:** Help us fundraise for specific initiatives, such as our new Virginia Beach home. We have raised nearly \$25,000 toward expansion for a men's home in Virginia Beach. If you would like to be a part of this initiative, please let us know.
- **Board Membership:** We are seeking dedicated community members willing to share specific skills (e.g., legal, financial, business development, or marketing) to benefit the organization's growth.
- **Open Your Home & Heart:** If you have the space and the compassion to support an adult with developmental disabilities, we'd love to meet you. Join us as a Sponsor and walk alongside someone during a meaningful chapter of their life. We provide all the training, resources, and ongoing oversight and support you need to begin your caregiving journey with confidence. Reach out today to learn more.

Thank you for your interest in our mission. Your support ensures that Heart Havens continues to be a place where individuals with developmental disabilities are empowered to thrive.

Rebecca Huff, CEO, 804-463-1584

Pinnacle Living

The connectional system plays a crucial role in our denomination. This was evident in the 1930s, as churches previously associated with the Baltimore Conference became part of the Virginia Conference following a restructuring. Many of the churches that were part of the Baltimore Conference had been supportive of a ministry with what is now Asbury Methodist Village in Gathersburg, Maryland. These faithful churches challenged the Virginia Conference to study the need for senior living. In 1944, the Annual Conference appointed a committee with authority to incorporate a board for the "Home for the Aged" and to seek out gifts, bequests, and offerings to support this mission.

As part of our Wesleyan heritage and our continued mission of *Enriching Life's Journey*, Pinnacle Living continues to grow. In the fall of 2024, we added two new Pinnacle Living communities, Hermitage Deep Run and Hermitage Three Chopt. Now six communities strong, Pinnacle Living offers diverse living options and price points. Cedarfield and WindsorMeade are entrance fee Continuing Care Retirement Communities; Hermitage Richmond and Hermitage Roanoke, offer Independent Living, Assisted Living and Health Care without entrance fee requirements and Hermitage Deep Run and Hermitage Three Chopt offer Assisted Living and Memory Support services on a month to month basis.

Along with six senior living communities, Pinnacle Living offers the Pinnacle Advantage Program which is made available to individuals and couples who want to stay in their personal homes with the guarantee of Assisted Living, Memory Support or Health Care if and when they need it.

Pinnacle Living also manages the separate United Methodist, faith-based, not-for-profit Retired Clergy Housing Corporation – which provides attractive, affordable housing for clergy with residential needs.

Pinnacle Living remains committed to honoring our heritage and building upon our strong foundation as we create new opportunities for adults to age faithfully and well. A few of our significant accomplishments during the past year include:

- More than 1,172 volunteers gave over 24,353 hours of service to engage with residents, community outreach, and organizational support. The number of volunteers and their gifts of time continue to increase annually. If you and/or your church would be interested in connecting with one of our communities, you can find contact information for Volunteer Coordinators on the Pinnacle Living website at pinnacleliving.org/volunteer.
- Residents, community volunteers, and team members, in partnership with 78 local organizations, continued to do amazing work that impacted the broader community.
- Pinnacle Living communities offered supervised internships, onsite training, and career exploration opportunities to 184 students last year, making a tremendous impact on the future workforce needed for aging services.
- Our Richmond communities – Cedarfield and Hermitage Richmond – along with the Pinnacle Living office, were recognized for the eighth year in a row as one of the Top Workplaces in the large size company category in the Metro Richmond Region. The Richmond Area Program is sponsored by the *Richmond Times Dispatch*.
- WindsorMeade was named a top workplace in the midsize company category for the fourth year through the *Hampton Roads Inside Business* Top Workplaces initiative.
- Efforts continued to enhance support for those living with Alzheimer’s and other dementias, and 264 new Dementia Friends were made in Virginia.
- Residents made an impact on the lives of team members by providing 8 team members with scholarships to further their educational journey. The total in financial support was \$22,788 to further develop workforce skills.

A primary commitment to Pinnacle Living residents is the Samaritan Program. This program provides support to Pinnacle Living residents who have achieved longevity and have outlived their financial resources. We extend our deepest appreciation to all local churches that included the Samaritan Program in your second mile giving. Each year, we recognize the top ten giving churches of the Virginia Conference as *Samaritan Award Churches*. For Fiscal Year 2025, we are pleased to acknowledge the following congregations.

1. Reveille UMC, Three Notch’d District
2. Trinity UMC, Richmond, Three Notch’d District
3. Rocky Mount UMC, Mountain View District
4. New Hope UMC, Mission Rivers District
5. Fairmount UMC, Three Notch’d District
6. Kilmarnock – Mission Rivers District
7. Providence – Richmond – Three Notch’d District
8. Annandale – Northern Virginia District
9. Westover Hills – Richmond – Three Notch’d District
10. Fairfax – Northern Virginia District

Pinnacle Living is proud to be carrying on the tradition of advocacy and support for older adults that the Methodists of Virginia began discussing at Annual Conferences in the 1930s. We ask for your continued advocacy on behalf of the needs of older adults in your local community and across the Commonwealth. Our goal is to be the aging ministries resource you turn to when you have questions about aging or want to learn more about what is available for seniors today. Together, as relationship partners in the mission outreach of the Virginia Conference, we can enhance health, wellness, and faithful aging for all people as we strive to build a culture in which age does not define a person. Thank you for your continued trust, hard work, prayer, and generosity in support of the work of Pinnacle Living.

Christopher P. Henderson, *President and CEO*
Seungsoo "RJ" Jun, *Church and Community Director*
Charles W. Wickham, *Donor Development Director*
804-474-8700

2026 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PINNACLE LIVING

We recognize these recommendations are the responsibility of the Missional Ministries Board and are traditionally included as part of the Common Table report and Council on Finance and Administration report. However, we do not want them to be forgotten.

1. The Relationship Agreement between the Virginia Annual Conference and Pinnacle Living to be continued.
2. The period between Mother's Day and Father's Day to be designated in support of the Pinnacle Living Samaritan Program, and each church promotes an offering during this time dedicated to this purpose.

Retired Clergy Housing Corporation

Matthew chapter 25 provides a vivid image of the separation of sheep from goats. In the Scripture, the King says to the sheep, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." The Virginia Conference is one of the few conferences in all of Methodism who offer attractive, affordable housing to retired clergy and their family who qualify. RCHC has been an agency of the Virginia Conference for over 94 years.

We are an independent living housing provider with the majority of our 19 properties being accessible to people with physical limitations and disabilities. Therefore, this ministry has opened itself to retired clergy families dealing with accessibility-related housing needs.

The individuals we serve have been very fortunate to access funding from The Shepherd's Fund which allows us to update the properties. This organization has made a huge difference in the lives of our residents as well as RCHC.

In this past year, our resident, Rev. Dennis Lipke, earned his heavenly reward. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with his wife, Dale. Also, even though they had to move because they could no longer live independently, Mrs. Betty Westbrook earned her heavenly reward. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with Rev. Walt Westbrook.

The RCHC budget is a faith budget. The rental income charged to those we serve does not cover all costs. We depend on donations from individuals, churches, and organizations. This is why I am asking you to participate in our Covenant of Gratitude.

The Covenant of Gratitude is based upon the number of commissioned Provisional Elders and Deacons at this Annual Conference session. The Board of Directors has increased the minimum requested amount to \$10 per commissioned Provisional Elder and Deacon. Your ongoing support is important to meet the needs of those we serve.

I also invite you to make RCHC a part of your estate planning. If you are interested in learning more about how to support this mission, please contact Rev. Charles Wickham at 804 474 8724 or email him at cwickham@pinnacleliving.org and he will be happy to meet you.

On behalf of the RCHC Board of Directors, I thank you in advance for any assistance you give. All the hard work is so worthwhile when you hear a resident say, "I wake up in the mornings and give thanks for my home you provide for me. When I go to bed, again I thank God not only for my home but also all who participate in any way with RCHC."

In Christ,

Mahood Fonville, *Chair, RCHC Board of Directors*

Shineforth Child and Family Services (Formerly UMFS)

2025 was a big year for us. We celebrated our 125th anniversary by hosting our first-ever Anniversary Gala where we gathered with community members, donors, volunteers and staff to unveil our exciting new name: **Shineforth Child and Family Services**. Though our name has changed, our mission remains the same: to be the unwavering champions that every child deserves. We fulfill this mission through more than a dozen programs, services, and partnerships at eight locations throughout Virginia. In 2025 alone, we touched the lives of 10,279 children and families in 225 communities. Shineforth strives to strengthen Humanity by serving vulnerable youth and families through foster care and adoption, specialized schooling for grades K-12, and a state-of-the-art therapeutic youth residential treatment facility located on our Richmond Campus. Programs such as Courage to Succeed and Project LIFE help facilitate and foster independence and job training for those preparing to transition out of care and into independent living, college, and the workforce.

Since our founding in 1900, the churches of the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church have partnered with us as advocates for vulnerable children and families across the state. We rely on our church partners to help recruit and support foster and adoptive families, volunteer across Shineforth programs, provide much-needed financial support through offerings, and donate countless gifts-in-kind. Methodist churches across the state – along with the Shineforth Auxiliary – provide steadfast and critical resources for a vast array of programs and services.

As we settle into our new name and brand, Shineforth continues to grow, evolve and build on our ongoing legacy of service to children, teens, family and the community. This year, we embarked on an exciting new project designed to teach essential life skills like healthy cooking and cleaning. Thanks to a very generous grant from the Virginia United Methodist Foundation, we are creating an independent "Living Laboratory" space on our Richmond campus where students will have access to a full working kitchen and laundry room to get hands-on training in a safe environment, thereby fostering self-reliance on the path toward adulthood. Another incredible addition to our campus is the new hydroponic greenhouse, where students are seeding, harvesting and packaging produce for donation to local food pantries. This process of growing and giving back to the community is fun, collaborative, and therapeutic for many of our youth with mental, emotional, and behavioral challenges. In keeping with our commitment to high-quality, trauma-informed care, we recently launched LightWorks Counseling and Wellness, an outpatient therapy clinic serving individuals and families at Shineforth and the greater community.

Lastly, we have expanded our Generosity Collective initiative, leaning on our 125-year legacy of generosity in our community. We currently host 12 local grassroots organizations on our campus, providing rent-free space so they can focus their efforts on strengthening their programs and expanding their impact. Building on our belief that collaboration multiplies impact, these organizations share our mission of empowering high-risk children and families to achieve a brighter future. Our Generosity Partners include Caring Closet, Fit4Kids, Green Spring, Methodist Ministries Network, Art for the Journey, VAISEF, Virginia Kids Belong, Voices for Virginia's Children, Work of Art, Pathway to Promise, Sylvia's Sisters, and Worthdays.

We are grateful for the support of the Virginia Conference and deeply value your continued partnership serving Virginia children and families for 125 years. We welcome you to visit our dynamic campus made possible by our collective efforts. If traveling to Richmond presents a challenge, let us know and we'll come to you. Our online Speaker Request form makes it easy to schedule a visit to any group, big or small. We ask for your continued advocacy for vulnerable children, youth, and families. Together, we can create a world where care, opportunity, and generosity are passed on from generation to generation, empowering all children to contribute to society as engaged citizens.

Kate Ockerman, *Director of Philanthropy and Volunteerism*, kockerman@umfs.org, 804-239-1039

Society of St. Andrew

Over the last 47 years, the Virginia Conference has been an integral 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 2025, 182 Virginia congregations provided financial support to the Society of St. Andrew. 20 congregations and more than 1,100 Virginia United Methodists took part in crop drops or field gleaning. Through the Virginia Gleaning Network, the Potato & Produce Project, 289 feeding agencies (soup kitchens, shelters, emergency food assistance programs, food pantries, and large food banks), including 13 at United Methodist Churches across the state received 1.9 million pounds of nourishing food to share with their clients—providing almost 8 million servings of health and hope to our hungry brothers and sisters. The Seed Project (a “hand up” endeavor that provides seed potatoes and vegetable seeds to poor, land-owning Appalachian families) shared an additional 3 million servings of good food with hungry Virginians. All this is work made possible because you care.

Nationwide, 21.5 million pounds of food (86 million servings) reached millions of hungry Americans in 2025 through the work of the Society of St. Andrew, through crops donated by 794 farmers/producers and through the gleaning and volunteer efforts of 22,170 individuals. The Board of Directors is actively working to build the capacity in both funding and partnerships with farmers and feeding agencies to expand SoSA's work 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 USA.

We're grateful for all the Virginia Conference congregations that join with the Society of St. Andrew through its spiritual life programs, including seasonal devotional materials, Vacation Bible School curriculum, and Bible studies. In 2025, 18 Virginia congregations participated in SoSA's “Abundance Orchard” VBS; 150

congregations used SoSA's Advent devotional booklets and another 61 congregations downloaded digital resources. 153 VA congregations utilized SoSA's Lenten devotional booklets, and another 280 churches and individuals downloaded digital copies.

SoSA's longstanding Harvest of Hope (HOH) mission work camp program welcomed 82 participants at two summer HoH events at Camp Occohannock on the Bay on the Eastern Shore and one at Camp Overlook near Harrisonburg. Cherrydale UMC Arlington and Providence UMC attended the HOH at Camp Overlook in September of 2025. Rocky Mount, Powhatan, Burke, Vale, Community of Faith, St. Stephens, Christ Chincoteague, Franktown and Trinity UMCs all participate and hosted groups with hospitality, food, and distributions on the Eastern Shore.

More than 13,940 pounds of produce was rescued during these events and shared across Virginia.

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."

Gratefully submitted by:

Chesley R. Vohden, *Virginia Regional Director, Society of St. Andrew*

CAMPUS MINISTRIES



Pace Center	<u>149</u>
RISE Faith Community at James Madison University and Eastern Mennonite University	<u>149</u>
Virginia State University (VSU)	<u>150</u>
The Wesley Foundation at Old Dominion University	<u>151</u>
Wesley at the University of Virginia	<u>152</u>
Wesley at Virginia Tech	<u>152</u>
William & Mary	<u>153</u>
Wesley Westminster Campus Ministry at Norfolk State University	<u>153</u>

Pace Center

In 2025, Pace's ministry has centered around three major areas of growth: leadership development, faith formation, and expanding access to meals.

Leadership Development

This year marked a milestone in Pace's long-term goal of creating a comprehensive, written leadership curriculum. We now employ two paid student interns who are dedicated to developing and teaching this curriculum to Pace's student leaders. Each week, during our peer-led leadership badge training, students gather to explore the core principles of servant leadership - including how to introduce themselves with confidence, create welcoming and inclusive ministries, identify their personal gifts, recognize the God-given gifts of others, and foster genuine, lasting connections within their communities.

Over thirty students participated in Pace's leadership training ministry in 2025. These sessions strengthened our student leaders' ability to build inclusive, asset-based ministries at Pace. In addition to integrating servant-leadership principles into our existing ministries, students are developing new initiatives such as a game night ministry and an eco-stewardship ministry. They are also collaborating with Muslim and Jewish student organizations to establish an interfaith event that promotes dialogue and connection across faith traditions.

Food Ministry Expansion

Pace has also deepened its commitment to expanding our food ministries. We now host two weekly communal meals - Weeknight Cooking and Stories & Lunch - which together have provided over 1,700 meals this year. In addition, most of our other 25+ weekly student-led ministries provide a meal component. These meals nourish students physically and emotionally, offering meaningful opportunities for connection and a much-needed respite from technology.

This year, we shifted our food ministry focus toward more nutritious, homemade offerings. Many of our students enjoy making food for their events, so we provide their requested ingredients to help bring their love of cooking and hosting to life. Additionally, each week, volunteers from local churches donate homemade soups, fresh fruits, and baked goods for students to enjoy throughout the week. Our part-time cook, Brian, supplements these offerings with two additional hot meals weekly, ensuring that students always have access to wholesome food while attending Pace events or using our space to study and connect.

Faith Formation

In 2025, Pace launched a new ministry, Food & Faith, which invites students to explore the intersection of faith and daily life. Each gathering begins with personal check-ins, followed by a discussion of scripture and its relevance to participants' lived experiences, and concludes with the sharing of a simple meal. This new ministry has drawn twenty students and has become a cherished space for reflection, conversation, and community building.

RISE Faith Community

at James Madison University and Eastern Mennonite University

I could go on and on about the amazing students RISE journeys with at James Madison and Eastern Mennonite Universities. I could talk about how their lives are being transformed, how they are working to mend God's creation, how they think outside of the box and don't shy away from hard questions, but I thought it would be best if you heard directly from one of them.

Rev. Alexis Ward Owens, *RISE Campus Minister*

The reason I went to RISE the first time is not nearly as important as the reason I went to RISE a second time. You can go to any church just once, or any event really, and never have any need to return. It happens all the time. But what convinces you to go a second time? I had heard RISE was weird, that it was a bunch of strange hippies- and even that I wouldn't "fit in" with a group "like that." To be honest I have no idea why I went the first time. As a college freshman and a tired out Christian, I was looking for any group to plug into and anyone who would help me feel like I belonged. The world was very black and white when I started school, and easy was better. Easy was safe.

Which ironically (or not so ironically if you think about it), is not who RISE is. I have asked more questions with RISE than I think I'm particularly comfortable with, and black and white turned more and more into a gray; a gray which I'm convinced is starting to be the true color of love and forgiveness. Gray is not easy, which I think is why I went back a second time to RISE and many more after that. It was the first place I had come across that didn't try to explain everything all at once; I wouldn't find any answers to the universe here. And to be honest it was uncomfortable and fascinating at the same time. It wasn't what I was looking for, but I know now that these are the people that I needed. With this community I consider to be my disastrously beautiful family, I have grown to live in the fraying gray of here and now. I have fallen in love with an immensely diverse group of people (which keeps things spicy), and been okay to ask the hard questions without really looking for an answer. We don't work towards answers; we work towards acceptance, honesty, love, and something we call God's dream. These are the things I needed most, and I found them in the most unlikely places.

I am proud of the work we do in our community, and the way we unconditionally love everyone we meet. That's something I think is really hard to find, inside or outside of a church. I am so thankful for the love I have been given here and the unconditional love I have been taught to show to others. I have never been part of a group that is so aware of every story that walks through our doors. We ask no questions. We make no judgments. One of our sayings is "Everyone means everyone." We don't care what you look like or what you might believe. We're just glad you came and that we got to meet you, because you matter to God and so you matter to us. That makes things messy sometimes and really painful. It's a big risk to be brutally honest and authentic, but that's how the most beautiful relationships are built.

Anna Schaeffer, James Madison University First Year

Virginia State University (VSU)

The 2025-2026 academic year for VSU Campus Ministries has been a year of transition coupled with amazing moves of God in the lives of students that has gloriously impacted the campus as a whole. Our goal is to provide a Christ-centered community to all students that supports and nurtures them in their faith walk while encountering all that college life entails, from admission to graduation. We obtain this community through 7 student-led campus ministries that seek to meet each student where they are and journey with them through their walk with Christ while attending Virginia State University. Besides our student-led ministries, Campus Ministries gathers every Tuesday afternoon at 12:30 in front of the University Library for weekly corporate prayer; and we meet every Thursday on a stage in our student commons for student-led Thursday Worship, complete with a band, singers and messages.

Christ-Centered community is available Monday through Friday of each week on VSU's campus. On Monday evenings Women of Victory meet to hold Bible studies, fellowship events, and mission activities. On Tuesdays, Injoy provides Bible study, Mission activities and fellowship opportunities. On Wednesdays, Men of Faith gathers to have Bible study, fellowship opportunities and evangelism. On Thursdays, Shots Up Guns

Down, a ministry that was started to confront and decrease gun violence through the medium of basketball, provides weekly Bible study and discussion groups with an emphasis on reaching the unchurched. They held a campus-wide basketball tournament that reached hundreds of students and gave away numerous iPads, Smart TV's, Beats Headphones, X-Box gaming systems and even donated an electric guitar to the Campus Ministry Thursday Worship Team. On Fridays, Bethel Campus Fellowship meets to provide discipleship, evangelism training and fellowship activities. On Saturdays, Godly Gates, a student-led non profit organization meets to provide discipleship, Bible study and mission opportunities. Every Monday through Friday morning at 5:30am, One More For Jesus Run Club meets at the University track to workout and engage in physical activity while listening to Christian music on loud speakers around the track. After the workout is complete, they go to the Cafe together to eat breakfast, pray and start their day.

This academic year has seen us touch over a thousand students through our weekly routine gatherings, and special events such as Prayer Walks, special Christ-centered fellowship activities, Jesus Parade, Picnics and evangelism activities. We personally text almost 200 students on a weekly basis throughout the academic year.

VSU Campus Ministries is thankful for what Father has done with, through and to us this year, and we are excited to see what He does in the 2026-2027 academic year. We will start the next year off by greeting freshmen at their cars when they are first dropped off, and will prayerfully start Christ-centered relationships that will bless and edify them from that moment until the moment when they receive their degrees and shake the University President's hand!

Hail State!

Thomas L. Wynn, Jr., *VSU Campus Minister*

The Wesley Foundation at Old Dominion University

The 2025-2026 academic year was one of gratitude for a season of growth, connection, and faithful ministry at Old Dominion University. This year was marked by expanded leadership, deepened relationships, and meaningful engagement with students.

This year, thanks to the Coastal Virginia District, a significant milestone was the hiring of an Associate Director for Campus Ministry, strengthening WesleyODU's capacity to reach students and grow its programs. This added leadership has allowed for more consistent outreach, stronger relationships, and increased opportunities for student involvement.

Weekly hospitality remained central to the ministry. The free lunch program welcomed an average of 30-40 students each week, offering a space of belonging, conversation, and care. Supported by local churches and partners, this continues to be a key point of connection for new and returning students.

Students engaged in regular worship, small group, and Bible study. With fun events like going to play mini golf and our annual Easter egg hunt, students found ways to take community off campus. Service remained an important expression of faith. Students assembled hygiene kits and created blankets for children at CHKD, putting compassion into action and engaging the needs of the wider community.

This year more than ever proved the importance of having a United Methodist presence on our college campuses. With the on campus shooting, WesleyODU was able to provide consistent pastoral care, walking with students through both challenges and fears with prayer, support, and presence. When the University was seeking ways to care for students Joshua was one of the first to be called.

WesleyODU is focused on expanding outreach, strengthening discipleship, and developing student leaders. With continued support, the ministry is well-positioned to grow its impact and remain a vibrant, welcoming presence on campus. To learn more please visit wesleyodu.org

Wesley at the University of Virginia

Wesley at the University of Virginia is an open and honest faith community located on the edge of Grounds, where students can bring their authentic selves, including their questions and doubts. It is a space where undergraduate and graduate students can connect with God and others and become leaders who make a difference in their community.

This year, we focused on connection. We launched the year with large invitational events to help students connect with Wesley, and throughout the year, we hosted opportunities on Grounds, such as handing out flowers for Valentine's Day and hosting a dirty soda bar during Holy Week to share more about Wesley. We partnered with other faith groups, co-leading a "What is Advent?" event with the Interfaith Center, co-hosting an Interfaith Iftar with the Muslim Life Center for over 115 students, and participating in a service project with Brody Jewish Center. We listened to our community's needs and focused on serving our unhoused neighbors during the fall semester by partnering with the Haven, a multi-resource day shelter in Charlottesville. During the spring semester, we partnered with UVA Hospital, volunteering with their Flowers for Patients Program and their Children's Hospital. We also continued our weekly Tuesday night dinners, followed by worship, a forum, a service project, or a fun activity together, where we often served over 30 students. We offered weekly small groups, including one specifically for first-year students and another for graduate students, where they could deepen their faith with their peers.

As students reflected on what Wesley means to them, a second-year student shared, "Wesley means a welcoming community of people where I can grow in my faith, build strong relationships, and feel a sense of home away from home even at a large university like UVA." Thank you for all your support in making this community all that it is.

Wesley at Virginia Tech

In my 16 years of ministry at Wesley, I continue to be impressed by the students and their desire to live out their faith with passion, hope, and a heart for serving others. Higher Education is facing challenges people never thought would happen, but students are even more diligent about being the body of Christ to our campus, our community, and throughout the world. Over this past year, Wesley has worked to welcome new students, help students grow in their faith and leadership, and seek to serve those in the margins of society. Student leadership is the hallmark of Wesley's ministry and our hope is to see that leadership enter into local UMC churches when they graduate.

Wesley continues to be very active as a ministry through our ministries of fellowship, worship, discipleship, outreach, and missions. 26 students traveled to Clemson, SC on their spring break to work with UVMIM Disaster Relief after Hurricane Helene. We held the Annual Valley Ridge District Youth Retreat at Wesley again this past year and we hope to continue getting more churches to be a part of that as well. This year we had 7 churches participate and 60 youth sharing in fellowship, worship, and small groups. Our Outreach Team led 12 Welcome Week events over 15 days to meet new students and connect them to our ministry. Our Fall Retreat was a huge success again this year at Camp Dickenson. We had 35 students attend the retreat where we had worship, small groups, and lots of fellowship.

Weekly our students participate in our small groups, worship every Wednesday night, a tutoring ministry at a local mobile home park, our food pantry for college students, mission days, family dinners every Sunday night, intramurals, and times of fellowship.

We are also in the midst of a \$1.4 Million Capital Campaign to make our building accessible, inclusive, and safe. Wesley would like to thank our wonderful Annual Conference for all of your support! Without you we would not be able to "Love Out Loud" on our campus, in our community, and around the world.

William & Mary

As I prepare to transition roles, there is much to celebrate here at William & Mary Wesley! Over the past two years, our common goal has been to restore a sense of identity and purpose aligned with our commitment to living out the values of campus ministry in the Annual Conference.

Our current student leadership leads from a place of positivity and has worked intentionally to address gaps in spiritual formation by reintroducing a weekly worship space and strengthening our weekday large-group/dinner ministry. This year, guest speakers included the Reverend Lan Wilson, Director of Belonging and Advocacy, who shared what these values mean in the context of campus ministry; Jennifer Seck-Shields, who spoke to the relationship between faith and science; and the Reverend Brandan Robertson during his *Queer & Christian* book tour. Throughout the week, students lead small groups, engage in local outreach, and host exciting fellowship events, such as our interfaith Super Bowl party, where we welcomed nearly 70 ecumenical and interfaith friends! Our fall break trip this year involved partnering with grassroots organizations in southwest Virginia committed to resisting the devastating socio-economic impacts of the Mountain Valley Pipeline.

A renewed interest in our residential community has happened in the last year and a half, with between 7 and 9 students participating in an intentional Christian community each semester. The house culture has shifted away from a crisis housing model and back toward a dynamic, emphasizing Wesley involvement and radical hospitality.

We are grateful for our long-standing local church partners and are equally fortunate to have new churches on the district step forward to provide meals for our students in addition to financial support. Capping off these highlights, we launched a successful annual campaign by forming a development team and pairing it with regular gatherings to engage alumni, including Homecoming Weekend brunch and worship led by me and former campus minister, the Reverend Dr. David Hindman. The Wesley Foundation at William & Mary is a vital ministry in our Conference, and I truly believe this iteration of students, with the support of the local board, embodies the core of who Wesley continues to be in the heart of Williamsburg.

With gratitude and hope,

The Rev. Dr. Ryan LaRock, *Director and Campus Minister*

Wesley Westminster Campus Ministry at Norfolk State University

This moment marks the close of a significant chapter for the Wesley-Westminster Foundation (WWF) at Norfolk State University (NSU). After 12½ years of steadfast leadership and service, Rev. Dr. Joy Carrington will conclude her tenure as Director of the campus ministry. Over the past decade, WWF has earned multiple campus and community awards and has become widely recognized for its spirit of hospitality—exemplified through shared home-cooked meals, community cookouts, and innovative models of ministry. Rev. Carrington’s directorship also catalyzed the comprehensive renovation of the Campus House at the outset of her appointment. Moreover, through successful grant acquisition, she expanded material and programmatic support for students, including toy and food distribution initiatives and the installation of free solar panels for the house.

Under Dr. Carrington’s leadership, the Campus House became institutionally known as “The Foundation House,” reflecting its distinct identity and enduring presence within the university community. She was repeatedly invited to offer invocations for milestone university events, including commencements, NSU’s Prayer Breakfast, donor awards dinners, student scholars’ luncheons, and Convocation. For more than five

consecutive years, WWF also led worship for Parent Weekend and further enriched campus spiritual life by hosting Campus Ministry Week, revival gatherings, and concerts—initiatives designed to draw students, faculty, and families into deeper engagement with the Divine. Among the most anticipated annual traditions has been the ministry’s vibrant participation in the Homecoming Parade, a visible testament to WWF’s enduring commitment to NSU.

Most recently, Pastor Carrington and a student leader from the ministry were selected to attend the Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE) in Atlanta, Georgia. With all travel and program costs covered by FTE, the student received an exceptional formation experience—one that affirmed vocational possibility and expanded theological imagination. In another notable milestone, one of WWF’s recent graduates was hired full-time by the university, underscoring the ministry’s contribution to student development and institutional life. WWF’s consistent participation in university-sponsored events remains a defining hallmark of its approach to campus engagement. This year, that presence extended even to student leadership in campus pageantry, where a ministry leader participated and placed. The era of hesitant or invisible campus ministry students has ended; in its place stands a confident, publicly engaged community of leaders.

Collectively, the WWF Campus Ministry Board and the broader community have advanced a shared commitment to student well-being and holistic formation—addressing food insecurity, connecting students to meaningful volunteer opportunities, and providing sustained spiritual support through mentoring relationships. Although Rev. Dr. Carrington is now passing the torch, the ministry she strengthened is not ending; it is poised to continue. The flame of WWF will remain a steady light—on campus and beyond—bearing witness to a legacy of service, excellence, and faithful innovation.

UNITED METHODIST-RELATED SCHOOLS



Randolph-Macon Academy	<u>156</u>
Randolph-Macon College	<u>156</u>
Shenandoah University	<u>158</u>
Virginia Wesleyan University	<u>159</u>

Randolph-Macon Academy

Randolph-Macon Academy holds the unique status of being the only United Methodist affiliated secondary school in the Virginia Conference. Consistent with our 133 years of commitment to developing young people in mind, body, and spirit to lead and positively impact the world they inhabit, R-MA continues to evolve and adapt for modern world realities while standing on the unchanging foundation of God and holding fast to our covenant with the United Methodist Church.

In a boarding school environment, we are uniquely equipped to share all aspects of life together, including academic and spiritual formation, intergenerational relationships, sports, clubs, meals, prayers, worship, community, and fellowship. This year, 215 students plus 42 faculty and staff attended chapel service every week. Scripture reading, proclamation, song, prayer, and sacraments are part of the regular formative practices.

35-40 students voluntarily lead and/or attend weekly Bible study. 26 students are enrolled in World Religions class. 5 students participated in the Confirmation course. Over 25 students and adults participated in faith-based mission and service opportunities.

In the interfaith arena, 15 Muslim students were actively supported and accommodated during the holy month of Ramadan. Muslim students also participated in weekly Isha prayers and helped educate non-Muslim students about their faith practices. Approximately 5% of R-MA's student body is Jewish, Buddhist, or Hindu. The community held educational and ceremonial events for Diwali, Holi, and Bodhi Day. Participating in interfaith dialogue is a regular part of campus life.

Academically, 100% of our students were accepted into college or university, to include 15 appointments to military academies. Our students are globally, racially, socioeconomically, ethnically, and religiously diverse, representing 18 countries and every major world religion. Academic and spiritual formation, along with character and leadership development are embedded into the fabric of R-MA. In keeping with our United Methodist roots, we understand that formation must always be intentional, relational, and immersive. As such, we create structures and rhythms to ensure that happens. We believe the United Methodist Church should enhance its support for mission and ministry at R-MA, as R-MA commits fully to our covenant, discipleship, academic excellence, and fruitful ministry.

Randolph-Macon College

In our 196th year, Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia, just north of Richmond, remains steadfastly committed to a mission of “developing the minds and character of each student.” We celebrate rigorous academic programs together with opportunities for learning beyond the classroom and serving the broader community. Our mission is fulfilled thanks to our exceptional faculty and staff along with the generous support of our alumni and friends.

The 2025-26 academic year marked another period of strength and momentum for the College. We opened the year with another milestone in enrollment - more than 1,800 total students, including another record-setting incoming class and our largest class of Physician Assistant graduate students too. Our campus continues to be primarily residential, and we maintain a student-faculty ratio of just over 12 to 1 with an average class size of 17 students. Though we have grown, we've been fortunate to maintain a scale in which our students enjoy remarkable personal attention from faculty and staff. In fact, we have strengthened our approach to intentional career pathways this year with the pilot of a new program we intend to roll out more fully next year. Our strong reputation in this area has earned us another top 20 ranking for career services in the Princeton Review -now for five years in a row.

This year also marked a historic leadership transition. Following the retirement of President Robert R. Lindgren after nearly two decades of service, Randolph-Macon welcomed its 16th president, Dr. Michael E. Hill. Since arriving in August 2025 (from a successful tenure as the President of the Chautauqua Institution), Dr. Hill has engaged deeply with the campus and broader community, listening, learning, and helping to articulate a forward-looking vision grounded in the College's liberal arts tradition. His early priorities include strengthening student outcomes and re-invigorating the College's commitment to character as part of our mission. He has announced new initiatives such as the RMC Pluralism Project and a renewed institutional commitment to the humanities and arts—*Disciplines* he sees as essential in an increasingly complex and technologically driven world.

The College continues to make progress on key strategic initiatives. A refreshed strategic framework emphasizes student success during and after college, including the development of a unified Center for Student Success and expanded academic offerings such as data science. In parallel, work continues on an updated Campus Master Plan to guide future investments in facilities and campus life, ensuring that our physical environment supports our growing and evolving community.

We value our relationship with the Virginia UMC and demonstrate this commitment in many ways: Foremost is our pre-ministerial program, anchored by our generous A. Purnell Bailey Scholarships for those students discerning a call to Christian ministry. We are excited to report a record number of applicants to the pre-ministerial program this year. We are also honored to be home to a significant portion of the Va UMC Conference Archives in our library. Indeed, we invite interested parties to visit these Archives and discover many amazing historical pieces. Our *Convergence Summer Youth Theology Institute on Faith and Science* has been in place for more than ten years, serving a number of youth across the Annual Conference. Also, we strive to open our campus doors to host VaUMC events like Candidacy Summits, staff retreats, and Licensing School.

Duncan Memorial UMC is located immediately adjacent to our campus and serves as our College Chapel. Duncan offers a number of worship, service, and leadership opportunities to our campus. The Church hosts the weekly RMC Student Fellowship, visits our college cafeteria following worship once a month, and invites students to join in opportunities such as the twice weekly *Child Watch* for adult English classes, *Rise Against Hunger*, and more. A dedicated group of RMC students and DMUMC members also regularly visit the local nursing home monthly to lead Bingo Games and social time together. We also visited on Christmas Morning to walk the halls and sing Christmas Carols. Duncan Memorial also celebrates their Duncan Buddies program which matches RMC students to individuals/families in the church for monthly activities and a supportive relationship.

Of interest, Dr. Hill's professional experiences prior to joining RMC and his academic scholarship focused on interfaith engagement and that remains a priority for him at Randolph-Macon where he appointed a task force to examine the College's service work and its connection to the Methodist Church.

As the oldest continuously operating Methodist college in America, Randolph-Macon College greatly appreciates our historic and ongoing relationship to the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and the mutual resources and support that we offer one another.

Michael E. Hill, Ed.D., *President, Randolph-Macon College*
OfficeofthePresident@rmc.edu, (804) 752-7211

Trustees of Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, VA

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**New Board members-need to be confirmed at Annual Conference*

Shenandoah University

Shenandoah University celebrated its SESQUICENTENNIAL this year, and we are larger and stronger than ever! After 150 years of impact, our mission at Shenandoah remains steadfast: “Shenandoah University educates and inspires individuals to be critical, reflective thinkers; lifelong learners; and ethical, compassionate citizens who are committed to making responsible contributions within a community, a nation and the world.”

A Year of Record-Breaking Growth Amidst a shifting financial and political landscape, Shenandoah University (SU) continues to thrive. In 2025, we celebrated a historic milestone: welcoming our **largest-ever classes** of both first-year and graduate students, surpassing the records set just last year. This growth

is bolstered by the unwavering generosity of our community, highlighted by a record-breaking **Day of Giving**. We are deeply grateful for this support, which directly fuels our mission and our students' success.

Academic Innovation and Excellence SU's six schools remain dedicated to equipping students for the modern workforce while empowering them to shape the future. To meet evolving global needs, we launched **six new programs** this year:

- BA in Art and Design
- BA in Animal Health and Welfare
- BS in Animal Health and Science
- MS in Music Therapy and Professional Counseling
- MS in School Counseling
- BS in Engineering

Our alumni continue to make a profound impact, serving as leaders in non-profits, performing on Broadway, and excelling as healthcare providers, educators, and cybersecurity experts.

Expanding Horizons: The Global Citizenship Project (GCP) The GCP continues to break down barriers to international travel—addressing financial constraints, time limitations, and travel anxiety. Thanks to the legacy of Dr. Nancy Larrick Crosby, hundreds of students, faculty, and staff have traveled to six continents. These journeys foster cross-cultural relationships and provide life-changing opportunities for students who might otherwise never have the chance to explore the world.

Spiritual Life and Community Connection The Office of Spiritual Life has significantly expanded its capacity to support students by adding The **Rev. Dr. Víctor Gómez** as a part-time United Methodist Chaplain, as well as new staff members, community partners, and student organizations. This growth facilitated the first international mission trip since the pandemic, taking a Business to Mexico during Spring Break. From weekly worship services and Bible studies to dedicated pastoral care, SU remains committed to the spiritual formation of our diverse student body.

Looking Ahead We remain profoundly grateful for the support and prayers of the Virginia Annual Conference. Rooted in our shared Wesleyan heritage, we are proud to be the “Big Little University Rising.” Our passion for education and service has never been stronger.

It's a great day to be a Hornet!

Respectfully Submitted,

Tracy Fitzsimmons, Ph.D., *University President, Shenandoah University*

Virginia Wesleyan University

For the eighth time in the past ten years, Virginia Wesleyan University is celebrating record enrollment growth. Under the transformative leadership of President Scott D. Miller, the University has emerged as a model of academic innovation and institutional growth. VWU welcomed the largest fall class in its history, with more than 700 new degree-seeking students representing 30 countries and every region of the United States. Across all traditional and Global Campus programs, enrollment has surpassed 5,100 students for the first time. The most significant growth has occurred within VWU Global Campus, which includes VWU Online, the talent development partnership with the City of Virginia Beach, the Batten & Black School for International Studies with Lakeland University and Lakeland University Japan, and additional lifelong learners in credit and non-credit programs offered by VWU Global Campus.

A defining milestone for the institution will occur on July 1, 2026, when Virginia Wesleyan University becomes Batten University, honoring the visionary philanthropy and leadership of Jane P. Batten, longtime benefactor and Trustee emerita, and the Batten family. This historic transition will unify Virginia Wesleyan University, the Sentara College of Health Sciences, and the Batten & Black School for International Studies (Lakeland Japan) under one institutional identity, expanding academic offerings while advancing the values that have guided the University since its founding: innovation, growth, achievement, community, and environmental stewardship.

The University continues to receive strong national recognition for academic excellence. VWU was selected by *The Princeton Review* for inclusion in the 2026 edition of *The Best 391 Colleges* and featured in the publication's *Best Colleges: Region by Region—Mid-Atlantic* listing. The University also earned the Arts & Sciences designation in the newly released Carnegie Classifications of Institutions of Higher Education, a distinction awarded to only six percent of the nation's colleges and universities. VWU was further awarded the 2026 Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, recognizing institutions with a deep and sustained commitment to community partnership through teaching, learning, scholarship, and service for the public good. In recognition of its environmental leadership, the Arbor Day Foundation again named VWU as a 2026 Tree Campus.

Innovation in academic programming continues to distinguish the University. A partnership with Western Atlantic University School of Medicine (WAUSM) provides a six-year accelerated pathway allowing high-achieving students to complete both their undergraduate degree and Doctor of Medicine (MD). Through Global Campus, the University also continues to expand access to higher education for diverse populations of learners, including the Prison Education Program (VWU-Chesapeake), which provides incarcerated individuals with pathways to degree completion and opportunities for successful reentry.

The integration of the Sentara College of Health Sciences into the University continues to progress toward a July 1 launch, pending final approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The collaboration will significantly expand health sciences programming and strengthen workforce development opportunities for the Coastal Virginia region.

The University is also enhancing its role as a cultural and educational leader in the region. The Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art (Virginia MOCA) has moved into its new home on the campus of VWU. The 35,000-square-foot facility now anchors the David R. Goode Arts Complex, joining the Susan S. Goode Fine and Performing Arts Center and other arts facilities to create new opportunities for experiential learning, artistic engagement, and community partnership.

Virginia Wesleyan remains deeply connected to its Methodist heritage. This year the University announced the formal naming of Epworth Campus Ministries, made possible through a significant endowment from the Epworth Foundation of Epworth United Methodist Church in Norfolk, VA. Earnings from the endowment support the University's collaborative campus ministry program operated in partnership with Haygood United Methodist Church and the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. Epworth Campus Ministries provides student-led worship, fellowship gatherings, mission engagement, pastoral care, and service opportunities that connect the campus with the broader Coastal Virginia community while welcoming students of all faith backgrounds.

The University also provides strong pathways for students discerning a call to ministry. Early assurance agreements with the Boston University School of Theology, Candler School of Theology at Emory University, and Duke University Divinity School create opportunities for students to continue their theological education and leadership formation within the broader Methodist and ecumenical traditions.

The Robert Nusbaum Center continues to serve as a hub for civil dialogue, civic learning, and community engagement. Through programs designed to cultivate mutual understanding, build civic skills, and empower individuals to become agents of positive change, the Center remains vital to the University's mission of preparing students for leadership in a complex and changing world.

Lori Harris, *Executive Assistant to the President, Virginia Wesleyan University, (757) 455-3215*

SCHOOLS OF THEOLOGY



Candler School of Theology.....	<u>163</u>
Duke Divinity School.....	<u>164</u>
Wesley Theological Seminary	<u>165</u>

Candler School of Theology

As **Candler School of Theology at Emory University** continues in its second century of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world, we are heartened by the work and witness of The United Methodist Church and look forward to our enduring partnership as the denomination moves into its next chapter with a vision to **love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously**.

An official seminary of The United Methodist Church, Candler has a strong Methodist presence among our students, faculty and staff, while holding true to the Wesleyan value of ecumenical openness. Our student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 507 from 11 countries, 42 states, 45 denominations, 34 UMC annual conferences, and 50% persons of color. We see this diversity as a blessing, enriching our life together and providing the perfect context for training for relevant ministry in the 21st century—ministry that cultivates community across difference, welcomes all to contribute and belong, and embodies Christ's love in and among us.

Last fall Candler welcomed its largest incoming class in over a decade. This strong enrollment reflects years of intentional work to reimagine programs, continue to invest in faculty excellence, and offer robust scholarship support through the generosity of alumni and friends. And even more importantly, it reflects that God is still calling people to join the holy work of transforming the world in Jesus' name.

Candler offers six degrees, most of which are available in hybrid or online formats. Nearly a quarter of MDiv students participate in Candler's Teaching Parish program, earning course credit by serving as student pastors in local churches. And our proven DMin program—with a remarkably high 94% completion rate—is 90% online. These flexible options along with Candler's recognized academic excellence and hands-on learning opportunities are opening possibilities for more people to follow God's call to ministry.

Reducing financial barriers to high-quality theological education remains a top priority at Candler. This year, we are on track to award nearly \$8.5 million in scholarship support across degree programs. All MDiv students receive scholarships, with those who are certified candidates for ordained ministry in the UMC receiving full tuition.

Several programs beyond our formal degrees make Candler a true hub of Christian learning. The Candler Foundry, our public theological education initiative, offers in-person and online courses, events, and certificate programs. The United Methodist Course of Study School at Candler worked with 19 annual conferences to educate licensed local pastors in 2025. The Candler Center for Christian Leadership, which trains United Methodist leaders in best business practices, now has certified facilitators in 33 annual conferences. And a recent \$10 million grant from Lilly Endowment will further develop Candler's La Mesa Academy, a multicultural, multilingual program dedicated to the theological education of lay ministers.

We are preparing for a leadership transition in summer of 2026, as Jonathan Strom completes his tenure as dean of Candler in July. We invite your prayers as we search for the school's next dean.

When we talk to Candler alumni and students about their call, one thing becomes clear: The specifics may be different, shaped by their unique gifts, contexts, and life experiences, but their drive to join God's work of transforming lives and the world is a constant. We recently launched a series called "Candler Changemakers" highlighting the range of fascinating ways our alumni are leading change as they fulfill their call. Follow along on our website (candler.emory.edu) and social media to see how God is working through them. You'll be inspired!

Office of Communications, *Candler School of Theology, Emory University*

Duke Divinity School

Duke Divinity School celebrated its 99th Opening Convocation in August 2025 with a sermon from Dean Edgardo Colón-Emeric to begin the Nicene Creed Preaching Series at Duke Divinity School. He emphasized that the Nicene Creed is both a Pentecost profession and a peace proclamation:

“Perhaps this is the season for untangling the Nicene Creed from state theology and church theology. Perhaps this is a task for a divinity school whose mission claims to ‘engage in spiritually *Disciplined* and academically rigorous education, in service and witness to the Triune God in the midst of the church, the academy, and the world.’ ... Christ did not preach peace looking for recognition or awards. His life is a single extended sermon on peace. Peace is believing that our lowest point does not limit our highest hope, because we acknowledge the power of baptism, the possibility of repentance, and the forgiveness of sin. We believe. We believe. This is a Pentecost profession, a peace proclamation, and also a praise pronouncement.”

This year we have joined with Christians around the world to commemorate the 17th centennial of the Council of Nicaea and the Nicene Creed. Duke Divinity scholars and ministry leaders published the book *Trinitarian Matters: 1700 Years of Shaping Christian Identity and Practice*. The school hosted two conference events to explore and learn from Nicaea: Convocation & Pastors’ School, focused for those in church and vocational ministry; and “Visible and Invisible: Surprising Encounters in Theology and the Arts,” with musical performances, poetry, and artistic expressions informed by the richness of the Nicene Creed.

Through God’s sustaining grace, we continue to welcome students from across the nation and around the world to be trained for faithful ministries serving God in churches, chaplaincy, and community service. In 2025, we were joined by 219 students. The Master of Divinity program gained 120 new students in both residential and hybrid programs, a 10 percent growth over last year. The Master of Arts in Christian Practice enrolled six new students; the Doctor of Ministry, 34; Master of Theology, seven; Master of Theological Studies, 32; and the Doctor of Theology welcomed five new students to campus. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care welcomed 14 students.

Duke Divinity is committed to facilitating clear and supportive pathways into theological education to encourage and equip those who are discerning a call to ministry. We confirmed an MOU with Huntingdon College, reaffirming our mutual dedication to nurturing vocations, strengthening the United Methodist tradition, and investing in the next generation of Christian leaders.

We welcomed four new faculty this year: Jonathan Tran, professor of theological ethics; Natalie Carnes, professor of theology; Matthew Whelan, associate research professor of theology; and Nina Balmaceda, Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of the Practice of Reconciliation and director of the Center for Reconciliation.

Duke Divinity School continues to be grateful for our ongoing participation in The United Methodist Church and partnership with this annual conference. We look forward to our ongoing work with you as we join the leading of God’s Spirit in the task of preparing people for Christian ministry. To learn more about Duke Divinity School, please visit our website at divinity.duke.edu.

Respectfully submitted by Edgardo Colón-Emeric, *Dean of Duke Divinity School*

Wesley Theological Seminary

As I complete my tenure as president of Wesley Theological Seminary, I am confident in handing the leadership to Dr. Carla Works, the 11th President of our school. Dr. Works, Dean and Woodrow and Mildred Miller Professor of Biblical Theology at Wesley DC, is a distinguished New Testament scholar, educator, and church-centered theologian.

Wesley Theological Seminary (Wesley DC) remains steadfast in its mission to equip persons for Christian ministry and leadership in the church and the world, to advance theological scholarship, and to model a prophetic voice in the public square. In a season marked by institutional change, civic uncertainty, and renewed hope for the United Methodist Church, Wesley DC actively forms leaders who are spiritually grounded, intellectually rigorous, and engaged with the world God loves through the following programs.

Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, Master of Theological Studies Degrees: Wesley DC offers Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, and Master of Theological Studies degrees through residential, hybrid, and fully online formats. Our programs serve a diverse student body representing a wide range of denominations, cultural contexts, and vocational callings. Across all modalities, Wesley DC emphasizes ministerial formation that integrates theological depth, spiritual practice, and contextual engagement. wesleyseminary.edu/study

Doctor of Ministry Degree: Wesley DC remains one of the largest Doctor of Ministry programs in the United States and serves experienced ministerial leaders from across the world. In May 2025, ten chaplains from southern Africa graduated through a landmark partnership with Africa University, reflecting Wesley DC's growing global reach. Our DMin tracks for military chaplains continue to grow, including through a renewed partnership with the U.S. Army Institute for Religious Leadership. New tracks in Church Leadership Excellence, Soul Care, Global Church Leadership, and others begin in 2027; learn more about how you can grow in wisdom and leadership at: wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/program.

Course of Study: As the regional Course of Study school for the Northeast Jurisdiction, Wesley DC delivers the full Course of Study curriculum online. Scholar-practitioners teach these courses, equipping Local Pastors across the denomination with flexible, high-quality preparation for ministry. wesleyseminary.edu/degree-programs/course-of-study

Ministry Certificates and Lifelong Learning: Wesley Pathways for Ministry offers online courses and certificates to help you discover your passion for ministry and strengthen your leadership skills, whether you are a layperson or a pastor. Courses and certificates help people gain ministry and leadership skills for church, community, and specialized ministry settings. Many courses/certificates are stackable for master's or doctoral credit and/or can be taken for CEUs. wesleypathways.com

Office of Admissions: Are you ready to explore your next faithful step? The Admissions Office regularly holds in-person and online open houses for potential master's and DMin students, and admissions officers are available to answer your questions and help you discern. wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/explorewesley

The Hub for (Re)imagining Ministry: Is your church ready to engage new generations or journey toward thriving in new ways? The Hub is currently accepting applications for its [Engaging Young Adults](#) nationwide, virtual cohort for congregations beginning August 2026, and will be recruiting new cohorts of Wesley Theological Seminary (Wesley DC) - 2 congregations for [Bringing Church Home](#) (helping churches better accompany and support parents/caregivers in sharing their faith) and [Children of Faith](#) (helping churches center children in worship and formation) in fall 2026. The Hub is also entering into partnerships with UMC districts and annual conferences, equipping leaders to experiment, learn, and adapt faithfully in

their local contexts. wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub

The Lewis Center for Church Leadership: The Lewis Center welcomed Rev. Dr. Jonathan Page as its new Director in 2025. Dr. Page brings deep experience in leadership development across ecclesial and secular contexts and is guiding the Center into its next chapter of service to the Church. Through its widely read Leading Ideas newsletter and the Leading Ideas Talks podcast, the Lewis Center reaches thousands of leaders across the denomination. churchleadership.com

The Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion: The Luce Center welcomed Rev. Timothy Chon, MDiv, MFA as its new Director in 2025. Since Spring 2025, the Luce Center, which serves as a vital intersection of theology, creativity, and public imagination, has presented four exhibitions in the Dadian Gallery. In 2025, the Luce Center completed a major studio renovation that expanded capacity to support multiple artists-in-residence simultaneously. The Center welcomed professional Artist-in-Residence Khaleelah Harris alongside new Student Artists-in-Residence, strengthening its commitment to nurturing artists at every stage of practice. luceartsandreligion.org

Center for Public Theology (CPT): CPT builds on its nearly fifty-year legacy by equipping faith leaders for thoughtful, courageous public witness. In collaboration with the Florida Annual Conference and with support from Trinity Wall Street, CPT leads a Public Theology Fellowship addressing immigration and public witness in politically diverse congregations. CPT continues to offer its flagship course, Faith and Politics in the Public Square, which remains open to seminarians nationwide. The course brings participants to Washington, DC for sustained engagement with policymakers, journalists, scholars, and activists. This year's cohort engaged leaders including Senator Chris Coons, NPR's Michel Martin, Judge Thomas Griffith, and Tope Folarin of the Institute for Policy Studies—preparing leaders to serve faithfully amid rapidly shifting public realities. wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology

Community Engagement Institute): CEI forms leaders for justice-centered, community-rooted ministry. In March 2025, CEI hosted Fostering Urban Vitality and a Heart for the City, a two-day urban ministry conference in Baltimore, with support from City Seminary of New York and the Lilly Endowment. CEI offers traditional courses and immersive travel seminars open to all Master's-level students. With grants from the General Board of Global Ministries, CEI continues to offer the Heal the Sick Health Minister's Certificate. Since its inception, the program has trained more than 500 health ministers across 38 states and seven countries. In Spring 2026, CEI will offer Trauma-Informed Congregations, equipping leaders to address trauma with theological, cultural, and communal wisdom. wesleyseminary.edu/ice/about-us/overview-2

Wesley Theological Seminary remains deeply committed to the United Methodist Church and to the formation of leaders who serve with humility, imagination, and courage. As the Church continues to discern its future, Wesley stands ready—faithful to its mission, responsive to the moment, and hopeful in God's ongoing work. For the Church. For the world. For such a time as this.

Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President

Submitted by Lyvonne Briggs, *Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing*

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RESOLUTIONS



Safeguarding Creation and Community from Unsustainable Data Center Growth **168**

Resolution for the Old Brunswick Circuit to Be Listed as a United Methodist Historic Cluster Site with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church **170**

Resolution for the Ebenezer Academy Memorial Park to Be Listed as a United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Historic Cluster Site with the General Commission on Archives of the United Methodist Church **171**

Resolution for Randolph-Macon College of Boydton to Be Listed as a United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Cluster Historic Site with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church..... **173**

Resolution for the Sapony Church Shrine to Be Listed as a United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Cluster Historic Site with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church **175**

Resolution for Elim, (Meander), the Rev. Henry Fry Home, to Be Listed as a Historic Site with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church.. **176**

Safeguarding Creation and Community from Unsustainable Data Center Growth

WHEREAS The UMC Social Principles (p. 9) declares: “We affirm that all creation belongs to God and is a manifestation of God’s goodness and providential care... Rather than treating creation as if it were placed here solely for humanity’s use and consumption, we are called to practice responsible stewardship and to live in right relationship with the Creator and with the whole of God’s creation”,¹

WHEREAS, the data center industry provides processing for Artificial Intelligence and has quickly overwhelmed social, environmental and economic resources across the country. In Virginia there are more data centers than anywhere else in the world² and it’s where the industry began,³ the Virginia Annual Conference should call for this currently unregulated industry to abide by sustainable standards.

WHEREAS, data centers pose health risks to the young, the unborn, and the old,⁴ which include pre-term labor, miscarriage, respiratory illnesses, developmental issues, heart attack, stroke, cancer and depression,⁵

WHEREAS, The UMC Book of Resolutions (p. 52) states: “The public health risks of technological development and waste must be fully researched and openly assessed before new technologies are introduced into the home, the workplace, the community and the environment,”

WHEREAS, in Virginia, energy needed to power data centers exceeds the capacity of Dominion Energy to power them, antiquated coal burning power plants and gas power plants are being revitalized, or re-constructed in marginalized communities, substantially increasing CO2 emissions. In Chesterfield County, Commonwealth Fusion Systems plans to build the world’s first grid scale commercial fusion power plant by the early 2030s.⁶

WHEREAS, Local governments race to secure data center contracts. Sound policies are not in place, and local ordinances do not yet have the strength, to provide adequate fiscal and environmental protections. Communities are vulnerable to often-unfulfilled financial revenue and job projections while giving tax breaks to the wealthiest companies on the planet⁷. In 2025, tax breaks offered to Virginia’s wealthiest companies cost Virginians \$1.6 billion in revenue.⁸

WHEREAS, communities awaken to sudden approvals of data centers near their homes and neighborhoods, despite zoning ordinances and laws designed to protect residential and community integrity. Nondisclosure agreements leave citizens without any warning that a data center is imminent. The failure to share information erodes trust between citizens and industry and citizens and elected officials.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

We call upon the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, through its Board of Church and Society, its leaders and participating local congregations to:

- Promote policies that uphold the highest level of sustainability for data center development which protect all living creatures, data centers should be sited away from vulnerable populations, historic sites and protected lands,
- Call for standards for onsite energy generation, air quality, water containment and reuse and for zoning of data centers as “heavy industrial,”
- Oppose the use of non-disclosure agreements, proprietary data claims, and tactics that deprive the public of information, public officials must disclose financial contributions and/or conflicts of interest,
- Advocate that data centers, not local citizens, pay for developing their facilities,
- Urge lawmakers/regulators to develop, enforce, and obey the environmental planning laws to assure a full and fair evaluation of the threats to the community,

- Encourage our districts and congregations to work across district/county lines to advocate for environmental and human justice, to support sustainability in the data center industry, and establish working relationships with nonprofit ecumenical and environmental advocacy organizations in Virginia, to equip Virginia United Methodists to advocate for sustainable standards and managed growth of the data center industry.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

We call upon the Conference Secretary to send this resolution to Virginia Governor Spanberger, Senators Kaine and Warner, the State Corporation Commission and share it through Conference Communication Services, so that our witness on this issue may be known and effective.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Conference Board of Church and Society (2/28/26)
 Jaydee Hanson, Lay Co-Chair jaydeehanson@gmail.com
 Rev. Ellen W. Comstock, Clergy Co-Chair ellencomstock@vaumc.org
 Rev. Lisa K. Sykes VA UMC Elder, retired. Three Notch'd District lisasykes@vaumc.org

¹ umcjustice.org/documents/124

² Virginia houses more data centers than anywhere else on Earth, American Edge Project

³ In the 1960s, the Department of Defense created a network of universities, with offices located in Arlington, Virginia. As the internet developed, America Online located its headquarters in Ashburn, Virginia. A major internet exchange resulted, with miles of fiber infrastructure to support a global communications system based in Loudon. Amazon, Google, Meta, and virtually all communication companies have data centers in Northern Virginia. Loudon's Department of Economic Development reports that there are "more than 30 million square feet of data centers...currently operational with another 5 million square feet in development"

biz.loudoun.gov/key-business-sectors/data-centers

⁴ Most vulnerable to the toxic emissions and low frequency soundwaves are young and old people. In the young, these exposures cause asthma, bronchitis and developmental issues: pregnant women are more likely to miscarry a pregnancy or go into pre-term labor, and growing children may experience developmental delays. In the old, COPD and respiratory distress as well as cancer, stroke, and heart attacks are outcomes of such exposures. These outcomes are made more likely when data centers are placed by schools and senior-living communities.

⁵ Amazon data center linked to rare cancers and miscarriages in Oregon, report warns | TechSpot; Data Center Boom Risks Health of Already Vulnerable Communities |TechPolicy.Press.health_issues_46196868514666.pdf; What Are the Dangers of Long-Term Exposure to Low-Frequency Noise? | Walton Co.; The Double-Edged Sword of Emergency Generators In Data Centers: Balancing Air Quality Compliance and Operational Continuity - Ryankmetz.com

⁶ Virginia Regulators Weigh Data Center's Polluting Generators - Inside Climate News
 We urge discussion of nuclear power generator use be governed by the NRC guidance in Title 10, Chapter I, of the Code of Federal Regulations, Volume 1 (Parts 1 – 50) and Volume 2 (Parts 51 –199).

⁷ With Transmission Line Controversies, Local Leaders Look to Move Away from Data Center Growth | News | loudounnow.com

⁸ Virginia's datacenter tax breaks cost state \$1.6B in 2025 • The Register

Resolution for the Old Brunswick Circuit to Be Listed as a United Methodist Historic Cluster Site with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church

Whereas, the Brunswick Circuit, formed in 1773 by Robert Williams, is the oldest continuous circuit in American Methodism and the first circuit of the Methodist faith in Virginia. Originally named the Petersburg Circuit in 1773, it was renamed the Brunswick Circuit in 1774. Devereux Jarratt and Robert Williams laid the groundwork for the formation of this circuit, because in 1773 Devereux Jarratt, Anglican rector (of Methodist persuasion) at Sapony Church in Dinwiddie County, met Robert Williams in Petersburg and directed him to Brunswick County to preach the gospel. In 1775 John Wesley appointed five preachers to the Brunswick Circuit: William Glendening, Robert Lindsey, Edward Dromgoole, Sr., Robert Williams, and George Shadford; and

Whereas, Rev. Edward Dromgoole, Sr. described the original Brunswick Circuit as "one circuit, which extended from Chesterfield County...to the north of Petersburg to the south of the Tar River in North Carolina, including many counties, making several hundred miles to ride once around. "This circuit is thought to include present day southeastern Virginia counties south of the James River (Cumberland, Powhatan, Chesterfield, Prince George, Surry, Prince Edward, Amelia, Nottoway, Dinwiddie, Sussex, Charlotte, Lunenburg, Brunswick, Halifax, Mecklenburg, Greenville, and Southampton Counties) plus present-day Warren and Franklin Counties, North Carolina," and

Whereas, these five men and Devereux Jarratt contributed to the Methodist phase of the First Great Awakening in Virginia, a powerful revival movement that led to extraordinary increase of membership. Because of this glorious revival, more than half of the Methodists in America by the end of 1776 lived in Brunswick Circuit. Thus, Wesley M. Gewehr called it "the cradle of American Methodism in the South," because of its amazing church growth. During the Second Great Awakening, the preaching of John Easter, Edward Dromgoole, Sr., Bishop Francis Asbury, and others led to other notable revivals during the Second Great Awakening from 1785 until 1815 and beyond. Moreover, the Virginia Conference of the newly formed Methodist Episcopal Church held its first

annual conference within the circuit at Mason's Chapel (which no longer stands) near the home of Edward Dromgoole, Sr.; and

Whereas, because of the historical significance of the Brunswick Circuit for early American Methodism, the Virginia Conference desires to establish The Old Brunswick Circuit Cluster of United Methodist Historic Sites, which will include the following United Methodist Historic Sites:

- (1) **Sapony Church Shrine (built in 1725-1726) in McKenney, Virginia where the Rev. Devereux Jarratt,** the celebrated Anglican and Methodist evangelist of the First Great Awakening in Virginia preached;
- (2) **Canaan (built 1796 to 1798), the home of the Rev. Edward Dromgoole, Sr. (1751-1835) in Valentines, Brunswick County** (the previously approved United Methodist Historic Site #564}, which is the only extant home within the bounds of the Virginia Conference now standing that once belonged to an eighteenth-century Methodist circuit rider. Dromgoole immigrated from Ireland to Baltimore, Maryland in 1770 with a letter of introduction to Robert Strawbridge, the founder of American Methodism. Dromgoole received an appointment in 1775 to minister on the Brunswick Circuit; and
- (3) **Ebenezer Academy Memorial Park (circa 1784-1792) Warfield, Virginia,** the site of one of the earliest Methodist schools in the United States and the experimental forerunner to the Randolph-Macon College;
- (4) **Randolph-Macon College in Boydton, Virginia,** the oldest Methodist- affiliated College in the United

States in continuous operation by date of its 1830 charter; and

Whereas, realizing a number of properties central to United Methodist history were threatened by neglect and that many were unaware of their local and national significance, a group of interested individuals organized a Virginia charitable corporation with the mission "to identify, preserve, and interpret sites" on the original Brunswick Circuit. The Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation was originally chartered under the umbrella of the existing Virginia Conference Historical Society in 2004. In 2012 the foundation applied for and received individual status as a charitable corporation from the SCC and the IRS granted it tax exempt status. After organizing, the corporation set out to save significant

properties central to the original Brunswick Circuit, such as Ebenezer Academy Park, Canaan-the Dromgoole House, and the original campus of Randolph-Macon College, which later became the Boydton Institute (1879-1840), a training school for freed slaves and Black Americans; and

Whereas TOBCF took over the management of the Ebenezer Academy Memorial Park from the Virginia Conference Historical Society, then improved the grounds, the stone foundation, and memorial stone and installed a gravel right-of-way to the site. In 2008 TOBCF purchased 16 acres of the Edward Dromgoole property containing his plantation house in Brunswick County. It is currently stabilizing and restoring this house. TOBCF in 2009 purchased 12.5 acres of the original campus of Randolph-Macon College and Boydton Institute comprising the four-story building (constructed in 1831-1832); and the Helensha Cottage, built for the headmaster of the Boydton Institute (circa 1890).

Be it resolved that the 244th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church at its session June 17-20, 2026, petitions the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church to designate the Old Brunswick Circuit Cluster as a United Methodist Historic Cluster Site and submits the completed application form "Registration of a United Methodist Historic Site" to the said General Commission on Archives and History with the signature of the bishop and conference secretary.

The resolution was approved by the Virginia Conference Historical Society and its Commission on Archives and History on February 28, 2026, and was signed by our bishop, conference secretary, and president of the Virginia Conference Historical Society and chair of the Commission on Archives and History. The accompanying copy of the minutes of these conference entities are submitted with this application as proof of these actions.

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Arthur Dicken Thomas, Jr.

**Resolution for the Ebenezer Academy Memorial Park to Be Listed as a
United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Historic Cluster
Site with the General Commission on Archives of the United Methodist Church**

Whereas Ebenezer Academy is one of the earliest Methodist schools in the United States. Its stone foundations may be seen at 14680 Boydton Plank Road, Warfield, Virginia 23889. William Warren Sweet in *Virginia Methodism* stated that "Ebenezer Academy in Brunswick County seems to have been the first Methodist School in Virginia. It was opened in 1784 near Merritt's Meeting House (p. 306)." Some of the brightest lights of early Methodism, such as Bishop Francis Asbury and Edward Dromgoole, had a hand in its establishment. A firsthand account from an elderly man born in 1796, who was the son of one of the original Ebenezer Academy trustees (Henry Merritt), had attended this school in his youth. He reported that it was opened in 1784; and

Whereas, other more recent researchers, such as John A. Smith prefer the date of 1792, the year in which Asbury was at the home of Edward Dromgoole where Methodists on the Brunswick Circuit "formed a constitution for a district school, which, with a little alternation, will form a general rule for any part of the continent;" and

Whereas, that Asbury would establish a school in Brunswick County Virginia is understandable. The county had been a Methodist stronghold since the First Great Awakening there in 1775-76. Feeling strongly as Asbury did that Methodism must establish a school like John Wesley's Kingswood School in England, the logical location to start such a school was in the Brunswick Circuit - referred to as the "Cradle of Methodism in the South" by Wesley M. Gewehr in *The Great Awakening in Virginia* p.144. "-the place that could give this undertaking both the financial and moral support that was needed; and

Whereas, on August 6, 1796, a deed was signed by Drury B. Stith agreeing to sell to the trustees of the Ebenezer Academy "51 acres of land situated in the said county of Brunswick and parish of St. Andrews on both sides of Burches Road," (later referred to as the Boydton Plank Road) for "the said Ebenezer School forever." This deed was recorded in Brunswick County Court on September 25, 1797. Ira Ellis, Edward Dromgoole, John Paup, Henry Merritt, and John Easter, who had served as Methodist Circuit Riders, were named as trustees along with Aaron Brown, Stith Parham, Peter Pelham, Peter Robertson; and

Whereas, Inhabitants of Brunswick County petitioned the Virginia General Assembly on November 15, 1796 saying they "have by public subscription and private donation lately completed an house on fifty one acres of land situated in the said county of Brunswick.....to be appropriated to the use and purpose of a public school to teach our youth...by the name of Ebenezer Academy, which in a measure hath already taken place there being tutors and a number of students that now attend at the said house, " Edward Dromgoole, John Easter, John Paup, and Henry Merritt were listed as trustees; and

Whereas, after serving for 20 or 25 years as a Methodist school, Jeremiah Lee records that Ebenezer passed out of Methodist control by 1809. However, this Methodist school building was used by the community rent-free for academic purposes until the mid-nineteenth century; and

Whereas, fortunately, this school building was photographed in its later years, thus providing a valuable image of this historic 20 by 40-foot two-storied edifice; and

Whereas, in 1829 a subscription of \$20,000 was raised in Brunswick County to entice the proposed Randolph-Macon College to locate near Ebenezer Academy. The fundraising success attests to the fact that the education that had been offered at Ebenezer was sufficiently valued since the inhabitants of the county were willing to continue to support such a scholastic endeavor. The Brunswick County location was rejected in favor of Mecklenburg County; however, Ebenezer Academy was considered the experimental forerunner to the Randolph-Macon College, which a year later was chartered by Methodists in Mecklenburg County, Virginia; and

Whereas, in 1864 the trustees sold Ebenezer Academy; and

Whereas, in the early twentieth century the Ebenezer Academy came back into ownership of the Methodists, who later determined that the building had deteriorated beyond restoration. The Petersburg District ordered its demolition between 1924 and 1929; and

Whereas, two-foot stone walls mark the foundation of the original academy and a memorial obelisk made of the original stones is centered within its perimeter. On the obelisk there is a reference to 1 Samuel 7:12. In 2005, the Virginia United Methodist Historical Society gained ownership of the 120 by 120-foot square property on which this memorial stands as well as the right of way to it and appointed The Old Brunswick

Circuit Foundation the caretakers of the Ebenezer Academy Memorial Park.

Be it resolved that the 244th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church at its session June 17-20, 2026, petitions the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church to designate Ebenezer Academy Memorial Park a United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Cluster and submits the completed application form "Registration of a United Methodist Historic Site" to the said General Commission on Archives and History with the signature of the bishop and conference secretary.

The resolution was approved by the Virginia Conference Historical Society and its Commission on Archives and History on February 28, 2026, and signed by our bishop, conference secretary, and president of the Virginia Conference Historical Society and chair of its Commission on Archives and History. The accompanying copy of the minutes of these conference entities are submitted with this application as proof of these actions.

Submitted by Arthur Thomas and Ann Keeling.

**Resolution for Randolph-Macon College of Boydton to Be Listed as a
United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Cluster Historic Site
with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church**

Whereas, Randolph Macon College is the oldest Methodist- affiliated College in the United States in continuous operation by date of its 1830 charter. It is located at 175 Jefferson Street, Boydton, Virginia. The impetus for its founding was the action of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church urging the jurisdictional conferences to establish institutions of higher learning, which would help offset the lack of educated clergy. The Virginia Conference resolved to found a college at Boydton, Virginia, the county seat of Mecklenburg County, close to the state line and near the Conference's geographic center; and

Whereas, Methodism had grown throughout the Old Brunswick Circuit because of the work of Bishop Francis Asbury and circuit riding pastors he appointed during the Second Great Awakening. Asbury's legacy was manifested in the college's founding. As a result of his conversion of the Edmund Taylor Family of Boydton, a son, Howell Taylor, became a charter college trustee and a pastor. Methodists Hekezia G. Leigh, Bishop John Early, and Gabriel Poillon Disosway are credited as the college's founders; and

Whereas, the college is named for the two most prominent public figures of the bistate region, Congressmen John Randolph of Roanoke of Charlotte County, Virginia and Nathaniel Macon of Warren County, North Carolina. When the General Assembly of Virginia was petitioned for a charter, opposition to creating a theological seminary forced a revision of curriculum. That is why there were instead required Moral Philosophy classes each semester; and

Whereas, the remains of the four-story original building are now in decline and undergoing restoration. When constructed in 1832, it was the largest building between Petersburg and Raleigh. It housed the entire college except for the refectory, and its massive brick walls still reflect the masterful artistry of prominent masons Dabney Cosby and William Howard.

Whereas, also, still found on the campus are other privately owned buildings, which are not part of this historic site designation and not open to tourists, yet they are an important part of the college's history. These include: Steward's Hall (Refectory and Student Union, 1832), 118223 Highway Fifty-Eight, Boydton; the Professor of Languages House (original home of first Professor Edward Dromgoole Sims, 1832), 17934

Highway Fifty-Eight; and the Professor of Mathematics House (home of first Professor Martin Parks), 17828 Highway Fifty- Eight. Edward Dromgoole Sims, "a pious and educated Methodist," developed and taught the first course in modern English grammar in collegiate America. He was the grandson of Rev. Edward Dromgoole, Sr. Rev. Martin T. Parks was a Methodist Episcopal elder in the Virginia Conference. He served as Acting President from October 1832 until March 1834 when Stephen Olin finally assumed the college's presidency; and

Whereas, for the 36 years the college operated at Boydton with a student population that rarely exceeded 150, composed also entirely from Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. Alumni became prominent educators, Methodist clergy, and other professionals, such as Braxton Craven, president of Trinity College, now Duke University; and Methodist bishops John C. Granberry and Holland N. McTyeire; and

Whereas the college cemetery is on the rear portion of the Steward's Hall property, but it is not open to the public. The most prominent burials include Hezekiah Leigh and Bishop John Early; and

Whereas, the College was always open to students of all denominations, and there were trustees from not only Methodist but also other denominations. The early Methodist presidents also carried the title Professor of Moral Philosophy, yet the college did not teach religion as a subject until the twentieth century. While Moral Philosophy and attendance at chapel were required, students were allowed to practice other religions and attend services in other churches; and

Whereas, eventually Randolph-Macon became the flagship of the Methodist- affiliated Randolph-Macon System numbering five institutions: Randolph-Macon College in Boydton and later in Ashland; Randolph-Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg; the two Randolph-Macon Academies at Bedford and Front Royal; and Randolph-Macon Institute in Danville.

Whereas, because of the remote and less accessible location by railway the college's trustees decided to relocate the school to Ashland, Virginia in 1868; and

Whereas, Charles Cullis acquired the original campus to establish the Boydton Academic and Bible Institute, a Christian training school for freed slaves and African Americans, which operated from 1878 to 1935. One of its students, Vernon Johns is often referred to as "Father of the Civil Rights Movement." In 2009 the Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation purchased 12.5 acres containing the the Main Building and the "Helensha Cottage," built for the headmaster of the Boydton Institute (circa 1890). The original site of Randolph-Macon College displays a historical marker.

Be it resolved that the 244th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church at its session June 17-20, 2026, petitions the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church to designate Randolph Macon College of Boydton as a United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Cluster Historical Site and submits the completed application form "Registration of a United Methodist Historic Site" to the said General Commission on Archives and History with the signature of the bishop and conference secretary.

The resolution was approved by the Virginia Conference Historical Society and its Commission on Archives and History on February 28, 2026 and was signed by our bishop, conference secretary, and president of the Virginia Conference Historical Society and chair of the Commission on Archives and History. The accompanying copies of the minutes of these conference entities are submitted with this application as proof of these actions.

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Arthur Dicken Thomas assisted by Laurie Preston and Walter Beales

Resolution for the Sapony Church Shrine to Be Listed as a United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Cluster Historic Site with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church

Sapony Church Shrine

Whereas the Sapony Church Shrine in Dinwiddie County, Virginia is a place where United Methodist pilgrims honor Devereux Jarratt, 18th century Anglican evangelist, who led revivals with Methodists during the First Great Awakening. Church historian William Warren Sweet called him "the forerunner of Methodism in Virginia." Philip Gatch referred to him as "a nursing father to Methodist preachers." In 1781 Francis Asbury claimed that Jarratt had won more converts to Christ than any other preacher in Virginia. Historian David L. Holmes asserted that he was "a seminal figure in the southern phase of the Great Awakening;" and

Whereas, when Devereux Jarratt (1733-1801) went to England to be ordained as an Anglican priest in 1763, he met George Whitefield and John Wesley. He was delighted that they had remained within the Church of England as agents of its revival. Returning to Virginia, he became in 1763 the rector of Bath Parish, Dinwiddie County and began to preach evangelistically in churches, barns, and the open air from 1764 to 1772 throughout central Virginia and the upper parts of North Carolina even before the arrival of Methodist missionaries sent by Wesley;

and

Whereas, when the Methodist preacher Robert Williams came to Virginia in 1773, Jarratt encouraged and assisted him. Jarratt saw Methodist preachers as agents of revival within the Church of England. His cooperation with Methodists resulted in the revival of 1775-1776, the Methodist phase of the Great Awakening; and

Whereas Jarratt desired in late 1775 or early 1776 that the Sapony Church be included on the Methodists' Brunswick Circuit so that parishioners could attend Methodist classes and societies, and he could preach on this circuit with Methodist missionaries appointed by Wesley. Although careful never to offend Anglicans by holding Methodist meetings inside Sapony Church, Jarratt allowed Methodists to use his barn. Philip Gatch recalled that Jarratt "fitted up his barn for our [Methodist] accommodation, and it became a regular preaching place, where Quarterly Meetings were occasionally held." Methodists attended his worship services at Sapony Church to hear him preach, read prayers from the *Book of Common Prayer*, and to receive the sacraments; and

Whereas, Methodist lay preachers joined Jarratt in conducting revivals. In 1776 Jarratt wrote *A Brief Narrative of the Revival of Religion*, which was delivered to John Wesley and published in London. This work along with *The Life of the Reverend Devereux Jarratt, Written by Himself* (1806) and *Sermons on Various and Important Subjects* (3 vols., 1793-94) are important primary sources of Anglican and Methodist spirituality; and

Whereas Jarratt wrote John Wesley: "Cannot you send us a minister of the Church. of England, to be stationed in that one vacant parish I have mentioned?... The people around it are anxious to hear the truth. The parishes around it afford a white field of itineration; for I would have no minister of Jesus, as matters stand, confined to the limits of one parish;" and

Whereas, after the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed in 1784 when its members separated from the Church of England, Jarratt chose to stand in the newly-formed Protestant Episcopal Church, since this was the church in which he had been ordained. Bishop Francis Asbury, his long-time friend, preached his funeral

at Sapony Church on Matthew 25: 21: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" and

Whereas, Jarratt served as an Anglican priest from 1763 to 1801 at Sapony, a church, which was constructed in 1725-1726 as one of two chapels in Bath Parish. Jarratt and his wife, Martha Claiborne, are buried inside the church where one may see their memorials, the communion table and the communion tankard from his time. Because of two renovations, first in the 1870s following the collapse of the church when Jarratt and his wife were re-interred under the church floor and another renovation in 1896, the colonial architecture of Sapony was altered, but church leaders used the original pews that were cut down in height. The bishop's chair and lectern were made from the original pulpit and reading desk used by Jarratt. The church is located at 15555 Sapony Church Road, McKenney, Virginia 23872. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and

Whereas Sapony is currently a shrine of the Episcopal Church USA. The rector and leaders of The Church of the Good Shepherd in McKenney, Virginia of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, who care for this church, have agreed to having Sapony Church listed as a United Methodist Historic Site. The General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist also agrees to this recognition based on the contribution of Jarratt and the Sapony Church to early American Methodist history; and

Be it resolved that the 244th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church at its session June 17-20, 2026, petitions the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church to designate the Sapony Church Shrine as a United Methodist Historic Site on the Old Brunswick Circuit Cluster Historic Site and submits the completed application form "Registration of a United Methodist Historic Site" to the said General Commission on Archives and History with the signature of the bishop and conference secretary.

The resolution was approved by the Virginia Conference Historical Society and its Commission on Archives and History on February 28, 2026, and signed by the bishop, conference secretary, and president of the Virginia Conference Historical Society and chair of its Commission on Archives and History. The accompanying copy of the minutes of these conference entities are submitted with this application as proof of these actions.

Submitted by Arthur Dicken Thomas, Jr., Ph. D.

Resolution for Elim, (Meander), the Rev. Henry Fry Home, to Be Listed as a Historic Site with the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church

Whereas, it is believed that Elim (now called The Estate at Meander), built by 1766, the home of Henry Fry (1738-1823), a plantation owner who moved in the social circles of leading Virginians, and Sarah Walker Fry, his wife, is **the earliest surviving regular eighteenth-century Methodist meeting place now standing within the bounds of the Virginia Conference where regular Methodist preaching, class and society meetings took place** since 1774 under the leadership of Henry Fry, a local Methodist preacher, society and class leader, general steward, and substitute preacher; and

Whereas, with John Wesley's approval Robert Williams, the first travelling preacher to come to America, preached in 1774 in Culpeper County, converted Henry Fry to Christ and Methodism, and preached that year at Elim where he with the help of Fry first planted Methodism in Culpeper County (later Madison County,

Virginia), which Fry expanded and sustained through meetings at Elim until circa 1823; and

Whereas, Philip Gatch preached in Culpeper County and with Fry made Elim a regular meeting place for Methodist preaching; and

Whereas, Henry Fry attended a Methodist Quarterly Meeting in Manakin Town in 1776 at the invitation of Gatch and met early Methodist preachers, but when Fry could not prevail upon these to preach in Culpeper, he gathered a few neighbors and began preaching regularly at Elim after Christmas Day 1776; and

Whereas, Henry Fry accompanied Methodist itinerant John Littlejohn on May 21, 1777 to preach in Culpeper Court House and following this time with Littlejohn succeeding preachers raised a small society with Henry Fry as their leader at Elim, from which he travelled through area counties preaching salvation and entire sanctification, procuring preaching places for visiting Methodist preachers, and forming Methodist societies in surrounding area; and

Whereas, Bishop Thomas Coke described the meetings at Elim on May 22, 1785: "I preached in Mr. Fry's great room, which he had built for a ball room, but (I think) before he had used it for a single ball, the Lord caught hold of his heart and turned it into a preaching room;" and whereas this room still may be seen inside his intact home; and

Whereas Henry Fry is recognized as a person of faith who served to bring about social and political reform as a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses (1764- 1765) and member of the Virginia House of Delegates (1785-1786), who, with the support of Bishop Thomas Coke and antislavery petitions that had been gathered by Methodist travelling preachers, was the mover of the General Emancipation Bill in 1785 before the House of Delegates calling for the gradual emancipation of slavery; and

Whereas, Bishop Coke wrote that Henry Fry was "a precious man, and I trust will be eloquent in the House of Delegates for the emancipation of the Slaves," for "he is to present our petition;" and

Whereas, despite the concerted efforts of Fry, an extensive planter and slaveowner himself, Fry wrote: "The Methodists' petitions for the gradual abolition of slavery were presented and voted out with contempt, though on all hands agreed to be equitable, and what must come to pass, but the time was not yet;" and

Whereas, Bishop Francis Asbury when visiting Elim on different occasions noted on May 5, 1782, that Asbury preached at Elim and remarked that Fry "professeth sanctification;" Asbury held the Methodist Quarterly Meeting at Henry Fry's House on April 17, 1784 where the congregation consisted of about 700 people; and "a living power went through the people in our love feast;" and Asbury noted on October 13, 1790 that Fry preached to about 80 people and:

Whereas, in 1805 Henry Fry gave seven acres to build a Methodist Church with the specification in the deed that only ministers authorized by general or annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church should be authorized to preach there; and

Whereas, since Henry Fry and President Thomas Jefferson were friends from youth, Jefferson used to visit Elim and maintained a correspondence on religion between Fry, an evangelistically-inclined Methodist, and himself, an Episcopalian with Deistic and Unitarian beliefs; and

Whereas, William Wirt, an evangelical and noted essayist, lived at Elim during the early years of his career, and later served as United States Attorney General under Presidents James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, and family tradition indicates that General Lafayette, George Washington, and George Mason visited Elim: and

Whereas, The Estate at Meander, previously called the Inn and Tavern at Meander, 2333 N. James Madison Highway, Locust Dale, Madison County, Virginia, has since 1993 beautifully restored and preserved the room where the early Methodists worshipped and has maintained in tact Fry's historic house as a place where people can dine or stay overnight in Fry's historic bedrooms and slave quarters and where Methodists can visit and remember the revivals of the First and Second Great Awakening;

Be it resolved that the 244th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church at its session June 17-20, 2026, petitions the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church to designate Elim (now called Meander), the home of Henry Fry as a United Methodist Historic Site and submits the completed application form "Registration of a United Methodist Historic Site" to the said General Commission on Archives and History with the signature of the chair of the Virginia Conference Historical Society, its Commission on Archives and History, the bishop, and the conference secretary.

The resolution was drafted by The Rev. Dr. Arthur Dicken Thomas, Jr. and approved by the Virginia Conference Historical Society on October 4, 2025 and the Virginia Conference Commission on Archives and History on February 28, 2026.

WELCOME TO HARRISONBURG



Welcome to Harrisonburg.....	<u>180</u>
Venues.....	<u>180</u>
Parking.....	<u>180</u>
Where to eat while at AC 2026.....	<u>181</u>
Explore the City.....	<u>181</u>
Maps.....	<u>182</u>
AUBC Floor plan.....	<u>183</u>
Downtown Harrisonburg.....	<u>184</u>
JMU Campus Map.....	<u>185</u>

Welcome to Harrisonburg

We are excited to be hosted by the Shenandoah River District in Harrisonburg, VA for Annual Conference. In this section you will find information that will help you acclimate to our new city and venue.

Venues

THE ATLANTIC UNION BANK CENTER (AUBC)

The 244th session of the Virginia Annual Conference will take place at the Atlantic Union Bank Center (645 University Blvd, Harrisonburg, VA 22801). You can take a virtual tour of the AUBC [here](#).

Find a printable diagram of the AUBC [here](#) to become more familiar with the venue before Annual Conference.

THE HOTEL MADISON

Our Host Hotel is the Hotel Madison & Shenandoah Valley Conference Center, 710 S Main St Ste 149, Harrisonburg, VA 22801. Clergy Session, Lunch & Learns, and some banquets will take place at the Hotel Madison.

Parking

AUBC

We'll have access to all 1500 spaces in the Ballard Parking Deck, which is adjacent to the AUBC. The address is 589 University Blvd, Harrisonburg, VA 22801. Annual Conference members can exit the parking deck and cross the plaza to enter the **AUBC**.

ADA parking spaces are available in the Ballard Parking Deck and it provides easy access to the concourse level of the arena through the Plaza Entrance (main entrance).

The C12 parking lot, adjacent to the Ballard Parking Deck, along Jeff Bourne Way, will also have a limited number of additional spaces.

Hotel Madison

If you're staying at the **Hotel Madison**, parking is available on-site in the Mason Street Deck, located at 715 S Mason St, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

Clergy Session

Parking will be available at the **Mason Street Deck**, located at 715 S Mason St, and the Grace Street Deck, 258 E Grace Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

Overflow parking will be available at the **Chesapeake Parking Deck**, located at 421 Chesapeake Avenue, corner of Chesapeake Avenue and Grace Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801. A shuttle will be provided to the lobby entrance of the Hotel Madison.

Shuttle Service

Shuttle service will be available from the Atlantic Union Bank Center to the Hotel Madison every day **from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.** Shuttle can be found on Carrier Drive in front of the Center and at the lobby entrance of the Hotel Madison.

Walking

Prefer to walk? The Hotel Madison is a 28-minute walk from the AUBC through the JMU campus.

Where to eat while at AC 2026

Attending Annual Conference and wondering where to find meals during your time in Harrisonburg? Here are a few important dining details to help you plan ahead.

Lunch available during Lunch & Learns

Lunch will be provided on Thursday and Friday for those participating in Lunch & Learn sessions. [Register for a Lunch & Learn session.](#)

The Dining Hall is open on Friday

On Friday, June 19, the award-winning East Campus Dining Hall—known as **E-Hall**—located across from the Atlantic Union Bank Center, will be open for Annual Conference members for both lunch and dinner. Amongst a host of awards, the dining hall placed #13 for their dining experience with the Princeton Review.

According to JMU, the dining hall “celebrates endlessly diverse cultures, perspectives, and cuisines. Our menus reflect the rich variety of our campus communities, offering options that cater to a wide range of dietary needs, cultural preferences, and lifestyles. From vegan and allergen-friendly meals to global cuisine, we ensure everyone feels represented.”

To account for the lunch/dinner rush, you will be able to prepay at the concourse level in advance of Friday meals at the Atlantic Union Bank Center (AUBC) prior to making your way to the Dining Hall. The cost is fourteen dollars and four cents. Cards are accepted only. No cash or check will be accepted.

Concessions at Atlantic Union Bank Center

Please note: concessions inside the Atlantic Union Bank Center (AUBC) **will not be open** for food purchases during the conference.

Downtown Harrisonburg

For a full list of breakfast, lunch, and dinner options around Harrisonburg, visit the [local dining guide](#) at Visit Harrisonburg. (visitharrisonburgva.com)

Explore the City

While you're here for Annual Conference, here are a few great ways to explore the city. Start in Downtown Harrisonburg, where you'll find local shops, vibrant murals, and plenty of great places to grab a bite.

Learn more: downtownharrisonburg.org

SHOPPING

Some local shopping might include:

- The Lavender Farm – whiteoaklavender.com
- The Heritage Market – shenandoahmarket.net
- The Shops at Agora – shopsatagora.bio.link
- Liberty Street Mercantile – visitharrisonburgva.com/places/liberty-street-mercantile

NATURE/OUTDOORS

Need some fresh air? Take a walk through the beautiful Edith J. Carrier Arboretum or enjoy the scenic views of the Shenandoah Valley—perfect for a peaceful reset between sessions.

Visit Grand Caverns, a National Natural Landmark and the oldest continually operating show cave in the United States. grandcaverns.com

Some free activity spots outdoors include:

- Ralph Sampson Park Spraygrounds – harrisonburgva.gov/ralph-sampson-park
- Westover Park Disc Golf Course – harrisonburgva.gov/disc-golf
- A Dream Come True Accessible/Inclusive Playground – harrisonburgva.gov/dream-come-true-playground

Whether you're here for a day or the whole week, Harrisonburg has plenty to offer. Enjoy your time, explore a little—and we'll see you back at Annual Conference!

Maps

On the next few pages you will find printable maps of the Atlantic Union Bank Center, Downtown Harrisonburg, and JMU's campus. You can also use the links below to access a virtual map of JMU's campus and a Google Map designed to showcase Annual Conference-specific areas and locations.

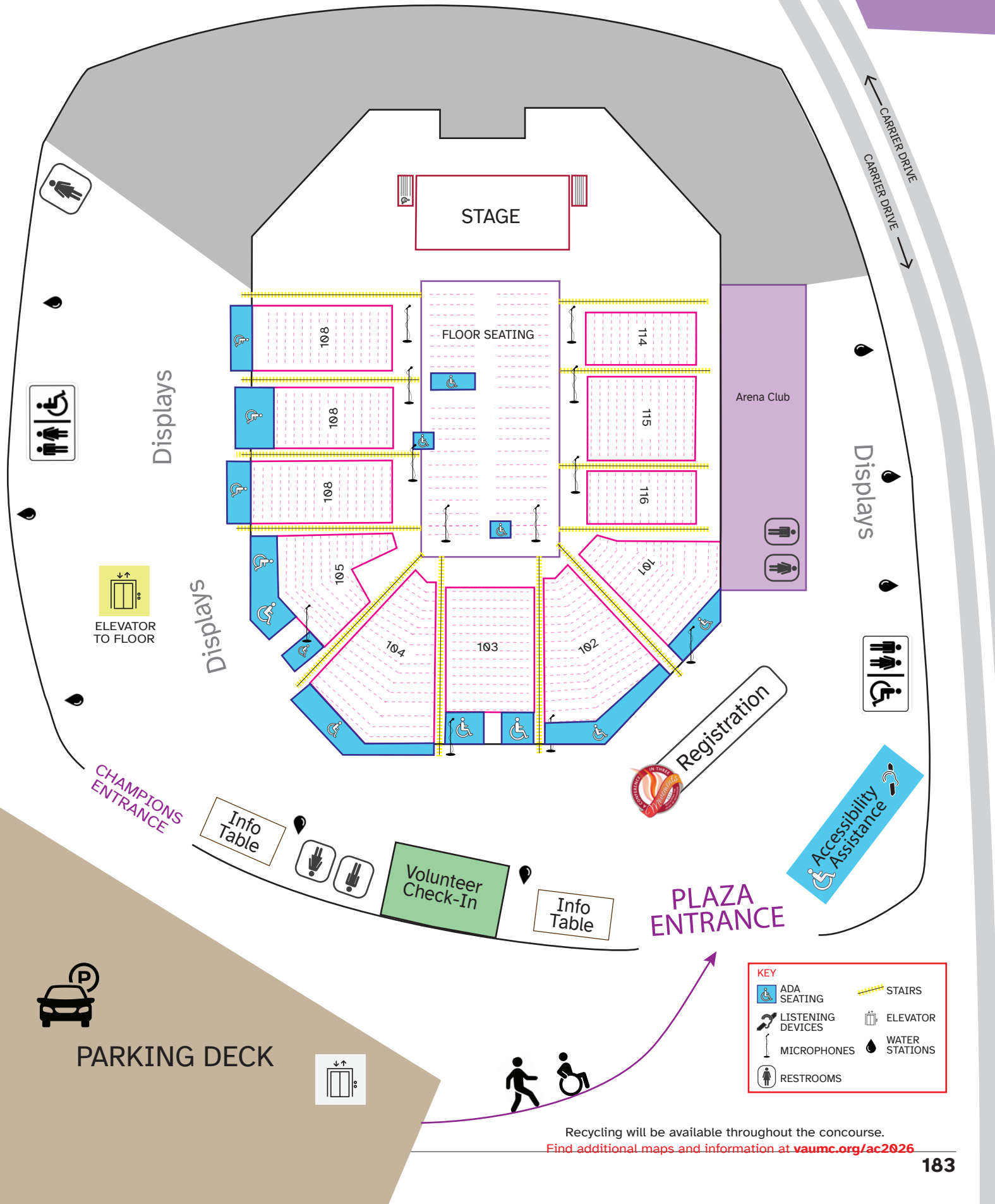
- [Event Diagram of the AUBC and Conference Floor](#) (Printable)
- [Downtown Harrisonburg map](#) (Printable)
- [JMU Campus Map](#) (Printable)
- [JMU Campus Map](#) (Virtual, Interactive)
- [Annual Conference Event Locations](#) (Google Map)

On the [Printable AUBC Floor Plan](#) we have highlighted places of interest on the concourse level as well as the seating areas, floor, and stage. While not noted on the floor plan, there will be recycling stations available throughout the venue.

Those needing first aid can visit the accessibility table in the concourse or speak to an usher on the floor level. Volunteers will be stationed throughout to provide information and assistance.

Atlantic Union Bank Center Floor Plan for AC 2026

E-Hall Dining



CARRIER DRIVE
CARRIER DRIVE

Displays

Displays

Displays

Arena Club

Registration

PLAZA ENTRANCE

CHAMPIONS ENTRANCE

PARKING DECK

ELEVATOR TO FLOOR

Volunteer Check-In

Info Table

Info Table

KEY	
	ADA SEATING
	LISTENING DEVICES
	MICROPHONES
	RESTROOMS
	STAIRS
	ELEVATOR
	WATER STATIONS

Recycling will be available throughout the concourse.
Find additional maps and information at vaumc.org/ac2026

INDEX



INDEX

Agenda	<u>9</u>	Consent Agenda	<u>50</u>
AI Task force Report	<u>95</u>	District Committees	
Apportionments	<u>102</u>	Church Building & Location.....	<u>66</u>
Belonging & Advocacy Report.....	<u>69</u>	Ordained Ministry	<u>67</u>
Board of Church and Society	<u>115</u>	Duke Divinity School.....	<u>164</u>
Board of Communications (Communications Advisory Team).....	<u>119</u>	Equitable Compensation Commission Report.....	<u>74</u>
Board of Discipleship.....	<u>122</u>	Explore the City.....	<u>181</u>
Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (BHECM).....	<u>125</u>	Financial Commitment Report.....	<u>99</u>
Board of Ordained Ministry.....	<u>133</u>	Financial Reports	<u>97</u>
Board of Trustees.....	<u>134</u>	Font.....	<u>2</u>
Boards & Agencies.....	<u>114</u>	General Information	<u>5</u>
Business of the Conference.....	<u>49</u>	GraceInside (Virginia Prison Chaplains).....	<u>141</u>
Business to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences.....	<u>122</u>	Hatching Faith	<u>124</u>
Cabinet Report.....	<u>70</u>	Heart Havens.....	<u>141</u>
Campus Ministries	<u>148</u>	Just Compensation Task Force Report... <u>75</u>	
Candler School of Theology.....	<u>163</u>	Maps.....	<u>182</u>
CFA Report.....	<u>108</u>	Minute Questions	<u>57</u>
Charter for the Common Table for Church Vitality	<u>51</u>	Missional Ministries Board	<u>131</u>
Children and Family Ministry Council....	<u>115</u>	Name Badge Colors.....	<u>47</u>
Church Development Team.....	<u>117</u>	Narrative Budget Report.....	<u>105</u>
Clergy Payroll.....	<u>78</u>	Norfolk State University.....	<u>153</u>
Commission of the Status & Role of Women (COSROW)	<u>117</u>	Offering	<u>12</u>
Commission on Disabilities.....	<u>118</u>	Old Dominion University	<u>151</u>
Committee on Episcopacy (COE).....	<u>119</u>	Pace Center	<u>149</u>
Conference Commission on Religion and Race (CCORR).....	<u>120</u>	Parking	<u>180</u>
Conference Nominations Team Report	<u>93</u>	Partnership Reports.....	<u>140</u>
Connectional Table Report.....	<u>90</u>	Pinnacle Living.....	<u>142</u>
		Plenary Speakers.....	<u>12</u>
		Boggan, Ashley.....	<u>12</u>
		Lewis, Candace	<u>12</u>
		McAllister-Wilson, David.....	<u>12</u>

Printing.....	<u>7</u>	Virginia United Methodist Development Company.....	<u>137</u>
Randolph-Macon Academy.....	<u>156</u>	Virginia United Methodist Foundation (VAUMF).....	<u>139</u>
Randolph-Macon College	<u>156</u>	Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc. (VUMPI) Report	<u>80</u>
Registration		Virginia Wesleyan University	<u>159</u>
Hours.....	<u>7</u>	Welcome Letter.....	<u>8</u>
Procedures	<u>6</u>	Welcome to Harrisonburg.....	<u>179</u>
Reporting Guide	<u>14</u>	Wesley Theological Seminary	<u>165</u>
Reports.....	<u>68</u>	Where to Eat.....	<u>181</u>
Resolutions	<u>167</u>	William & Mary	<u>153</u>
Responsibilities	<u>13</u>		
Retired Clergy Housing Corporation	<u>144</u>		
RISE Faith Community.....	<u>149</u>		
Rules Committee.....	<u>55</u>		
Schools of Theology	<u>162</u>		
Shenandoah University	<u>158</u>		
Shineforth Child and Family Services (Formerly UMFS).....	<u>145</u>		
Site Selection Committee Report.....	<u>73</u>		
Society of St. Andrew	<u>146</u>		
Speaking.....	<u>15</u>		
Speaking on a Motion.....	<u>17</u>		
Standing Rules	<u>18</u>		
Statistician's Report	<u>98</u>		
Table of Contents.....	<u>3</u>		
United Methodist Men.....	<u>135</u>		
United Methodist-Related Schools.....	<u>155</u>		
United Women in Faith	<u>136</u>		
University of Virginia.....	<u>152</u>		
Venues.....	<u>180</u>		
Virginia Conference Historical Society.	<u>125</u>		
Virginia State University (VSU)	<u>150</u>		
Virginia Tech.....	<u>152</u>		