

Annual Conference 2026 FAQ

General Information

When is Annual Conference?

Annual Conference will be **June 17-20, 2026**

Where is Annual Conference?

Annual Conference will be held in **Harrisonburg, VA** on the campus of James Madison University. The main venue is the **Atlantic Union Bank Center (AUBC)**. Lunch & Learns and many banquets will be held at the **Hotel Madison**, with shuttle service running between the two locations. Additional banquets and events will take place at Shenandoah River District churches and restaurants in the area.

What are the addresses?

- **The Atlantic Union Bank Center:** 1700 Jeff Bourne Way, Harrisonburg, VA 22807
 - **Ballard Parking Deck:** 589 University Blvd, Harrisonburg, VA 22807

- **The Hotel Madison:** 710 S Main Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801
 - **Mason Street Deck:** 715 S Mason St, Harrisonburg, VA 22801
 - **Grace Street Deck:** 258 E Grace Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801
 - **Chesapeake Parking Deck:** 421 Chesapeake Avenue, Harrisonburg, VA 22801
(Overflow parking)

Is there a map?

You can find several maps on our website (vaumc.org/ac2026).

- [Live Google Map of AC Sites](#)
- [AUBC Floor Plan for AC2026](#)
- [JMU Campus Map](#)
- [Interactive JMU Campus Map](#)
- [Harrisonburg Map](#)
- [Downtown Harrisonburg](#)

What is the schedule?

You can find the event Agenda in the [Book of Reports](#) (Pages 9-11) and online [here](#).

Can I volunteer?

YES! The host district would welcome your service. You can see a list of job descriptions and sign up to volunteer [here](#).

Registration

What are the registration hours?

Registration hours are:

- **Wednesday**, June 17: 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM at the AUBC (**Laity**) and at the Hotel Madison (**Clergy**)
- **Thursday**, June 18: 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the AUBC
- **Friday**, June 19: 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the AUBC

I am unable to register on Wednesday, June 17. May I register on Thursday, June 18?

Yes! Registration is available Wednesday through Friday, so Thursday works perfectly. You will only need to check in at registration once during the conference.

Do we have to register each day of the conference?

Attendees only need to visit the registration tables on their first visit to the venue.

Clergy-specific Questions

How do I get a clergy badge?

First time clergy will receive their badges at Annual Conference. If they have lost their badge, they need to email ChrisMalak@vaumc.org.

Are the correct clergy badges horizontal or vertical?

The Annual Conference is using **horizontal** clergy badges. New badges and replacement badges will be printed horizontally. Clergy needing a replacement badge can contact Chris Malak at ChrisMalak@vaumc.org by **May 31**. Replacement badges cost \$10. Clergy badges for new clergy will be preprinted and available at registration at the Hotel Madison on Wednesday and at the AUBC on Thursday and Friday.

Book of Reports

Where can I find the revised Book of Reports and how can I print it?

The revised Book of Reports is available online on the Annual Conference page. A direct link to the file is: [Book of Reports PDF](#)

If you would 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 are printing double-sided, be sure to select "flip on long edge" for pages to print correctly.

If you want something similar to 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
- Look for "document printing," then upload the file and select your paper type, binding, double-sided preference, and color option
- Pay for your copy and choose pickup or shipping

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 and \$50 with those selections. Standard shipping times are usually around one week. We recommend having 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.

What changes were made to the Book of Reports?

There were a few minor changes, a few changes to the Minute Questions, a chart in the VUMPI report was left out of the initial document and was added back in, and the last few sentences of the Narrative Budget were on the wrong page. All changes are highlighted in blue in the updated version: [Book of Reports PDF](#)

If you have printed your BOR already, here is a list of pages that changed so that you can be sure to reprint those pages, highlight those changes, and/or make notes for yourself. Changes were made to pages: 1-4, 7, 57, 61, 64-65, 85, 98, 106, and 183. The copy that is dated **June 3, 2026** is the corrected copy.

Location, Parking, & Getting Around

Where do I park at the Atlantic Union Bank Center (AUBC)?

The Ballard Park Deck is adjacent to the AUBC and offers 1,500 spaces, including 81 ADA parking spots.

Is there a cost for parking?

Parking is available at the Ballard parking deck at Atlantic Union Bank Center and the Hotel Madison with no charge. Other parking areas have restrictions.

How do the shuttles work at Annual Conference? Are they free? Where are the shuttle stops?

Shuttle service will be available from the Atlantic Union Bank Center (AUBC) to the Hotel Madison every day (Wednesday to Friday) from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. and 7 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Saturday. **There is no cost to ride the shuttles.**

Shuttles can be found on Carrier Drive in front of the AUBC and at the lobby entrance of the Hotel Madison. Look for signage and volunteer support persons who will help guide you to pick up and drop off locations. Additional shuttle support will be provided during peak travel times such as lunch periods.

Which of the AUBC entrances will be used by the shuttle buses to pick up and drop off?

The shuttle stop at the AUBC will be on Carrier Drive. The Plaza Entrance is closer to the shuttle stop than the Champions Entrance.

Is shuttle transportation wheelchair accessible?

One wheelchair accessible bus will be available on a limited basis. The remaining shuttle buses are not ADA accessible; however, they are lowered during boarding, and a step stool can be made available upon request to assist with entry.

Do the shuttles run to other hotels or just the Hotel Madison?

The shuttles will run on a continuous loop between the AUBC and the Hotel Madison. We do not have shuttles running from the other hotels.

When we stay at a different hotel, not the Hotel Madison, what would be a great way of using the shuttle?

A great use of the shuttle for those not staying at the Hotel Madison would be to ride it from the AUBC to the Hotel Madison for Lunch & Learns or any banquets you may be attending there.

Will the shuttle from the AUBC be running early enough for the Clergy Session at Hotel Madison?

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. The shuttles run on a continuous loop, but it is about a

10-minute shuttle ride from the AUBC to the Hotel Madison, so you will want to calculate that into your planning. There will be additional shuttles for Clergy Session running from the Clergy Session overflow parking lot at the Chesapeake parking deck.

Can I walk to the Atlantic Union Bank Center from Hotel Madison?

Yes, the route between the two locations is walkable, but may be time-restrictive as it is about a 28-minute walk.

How should I travel to get to the Lunch & Learns?

Hotel Madison is about a 10-minute ride by car or shuttle bus. If you drive yourself, you can park in the hotel parking deck located behind the hotel: Mason Street Deck (715 S Mason St). Shuttle service from the AUBC to Hotel Madison runs every day from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. at no cost.

Accessibility

What accommodations have been made to help those with disabilities?

Those with special needs can check in at our ADA accessibility table located just inside the Plaza Entrance to the AUBC. Staff and volunteers will direct and escort attendees. There will be designated/handicapped seating available on both the concourse and floor levels.

One wheelchair accessible bus will be available on a limited basis. The remaining shuttle buses are not ADA accessible; however, they are lowered during boarding, and a step stool can be made available upon request to assist with entry.

Additional Accommodations:

- Hearing devices and ASL interpreters for each business session and worship service
- Closed captioning in multiple languages available via personal device
- Elevator for floor access
- Plenty of volunteers to provide guidance

Displays

Where will displays be found at the AUBC?

Vendors and displays are located on the far side of the concourse. The concourse is an oval, so from either entrance, simply head left or right to reach them. You can find a printable version of the AUBC floor plan [here](#). The display tables are indicated by red circles. A more detailed list and numbered table map will be available in the weeks leading up to Annual Conference.

Is there a list of the companies who will be attending?

A vendor guide (including a list of participating partners, table numbers, and a dedicated concourse map) will be available in the weeks leading up to Annual Conference.

Will Cokesbury be at Annual Conference?

Unfortunately, Cokesbury will not be a vendor this year. Cokesbury does have a digital storefront that you can access here: [cokesbury.com](https://www.cokesbury.com).

Will there be Wi-Fi in the Atlantic Union Bank Center (AUBC)?

Yes. Once in the AUBC building, select the Wi-Fi network called "EventPublicWiFi" and follow your device directions to log in using your email.

Food & Drink

What are my food options at Annual Conference?

Lunch options are available to those taking part in the Lunch & Learns on Thursday and Friday. The campus E-Hall Dining Hall will be open to AC members for **LUNCH on Friday**, June 19. The dining hall is not open to the public on Thursday or on Friday evening. Learn more about food options in detail here: [Where to Eat While at AC 2026](#)

Will the food concessions in the AUBC be closed throughout the AC?

The concession stands will be closed during Annual Conference. Water stations will be available throughout the concourse.

Will there be drink fountains to refill our tumblers, or do we need to bring water with us?

Water stations will be available throughout the concourse, so bring your favorite tumbler, cup, or reusable water bottle and help us reduce waste while staying hydrated.

Will coffee be available in the AUBC?

No. There will be no coffee available at the AUBC. You are welcome to bring your own coffee, drinks, snacks, and beverages into the venue.

Can we carry snacks and drinks into the venue?

Yes, you are welcome to bring your snacks and drinks into the Atlantic Union Bank Center. There will not be snacks, drinks, or coffee available for purchase. Water stations will be set up in the concourse, so you may want to pack a reusable water bottle.

What is the Conference-Wide Lunch?

The Conference-Wide Lunch is an opportunity for folks to gather for a meal on campus. It will be served in E-Hall on JMU's campus across Carrier Drive from the AUBC.

This meal costs **\$14.04** and can be paid for **by credit card** at E-Hall. Participants can also prepay on the concourse level of the AUBC. Neither cash nor check will be accepted for this meal.

Is the Conference-Wide Lunch a buffet or plated meal?

It is cafeteria-style. You will get a tray and will be able to sample from several different food stations.

Are the Lunch & Learns and the Conference-Wide Lunch the same thing?

No. These are separate events, in separate locations.

Lunch & Learns

Lunch and Learn meals will have vegan, vegetarian, etc, available. Special dietary needs can be requested. You can only choose one class per day. These information sessions will not be recorded.

Is there still time to register for Lunch & Learn sessions?

Yes! Lunch & Learn registration will be available until the **end of day on June 11**. Learn more about and register for Lunch & Learn sessions [here](#). Questions about Lunch & Learns can be directed to ChrisMcLain@vaumc.org.

How much does it cost to attend Lunch & Learn on both Thursday and Friday?

Lunch & Learn sessions are \$25 per day, as each registration includes the meal for that session. **The total cost comes to \$26.06 per session after processing fees are added.** There is no cost for shuttle transportation from the AUBC to the Lunch & Learn sessions.

Is lunch provided at the Lunch & Learns?

Yes! The \$25 fee for the Lunch & Learn includes the meal that will be provided.

If a Lunch & Learn session fills up, will there be a wait list?

Lunch & Learn sessions will be assigned to spaces based on registration numbers, in order to accommodate those who sign up. We do not anticipate needing a wait list.

Can I switch my Lunch & Learn from Thursday to Friday?

Any changes to Lunch & Learns can be sent to KimJohnson@vaumc.org. Changes can be made until **June 11**.

Crop Drop

Can you explain the Crop Drop?

The Society of St. Andrew (SoSA) is delighted to partner with the VAUMC Annual Conference to host a Crop Drop at James Madison University (JMU) this year. The United Methodist Men (UMM) in Virginia welcomed the sponsorship of SoSA's hands-on service project to fight hunger, reduce food waste, and practice creation care while at conference.

The Crop Drop will take place **Thursday, June 18, from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.** in a parking lot adjacent to the Atlantic Union Bank Center. The crop drop will take place in **Lot R-4**.

Volunteers are needed to help unload produce from the delivery trailer, bag the product for distribution, sort bags for feeding agency pick-up, and load feeding agency vehicles. The Crop Drop is complete once all the fresh produce has been distributed. All conference attendees are welcome and encouraged!

If you wish to volunteer for the Crop Drop, please sign up through the [Society of St. Andrew Volunteer webpage](#).

For more info, contact David Collins, President, United Methodist Men
email: djcoll@icloud.com or phone: 757-434-9393

Banquets

Where can we find information about banquets?

Banquet details are listed on the Annual Conference Events calendar on the AC page of our website. [Click here](#) for a direct link to the calendar. The calendar is searchable and sortable, and clicking any banquet listing will bring up full details, including any registration or ticketing information. A printable list of banquets is also available [here](#).

I am interested in attending a banquet. Where do I find the banquet list, and how do I sign up?

You can find and register for any of the banquets being hosted by organizations in the **AC Banquets column** of our [AC Events Calendar](#). Details and registration links are within each listing on the calendar.

Reimbursement & Per Diem

I haven't received information on per diem and reimbursement of hotel costs. Where can I learn about that?

The answer depends on how you were elected or selected to attend Annual Conference. More information can be found in the Book of Reports on page 111.

- Laity elected as an Annual Conference member by their local church (at Charge Conference) should contact their church directly for reimbursement and per diem information
- District At-Large members elected at District Conference should contact their district administrator
- Those serving in a district office role should also reach out to their district administrator
- New clergy, retired clergy and clergy on medical leave may contact the conference office at katepotts@vaumc.org .
- All others may contact the Conference office for reimbursement information at katiemueller@vaumc.org.

Last year churches received a \$100 reimbursement for clergy attending the clergy session. Is this happening again this year?

There is no reimbursement for the Clergy Session this year.

AC Offering

What is the AC offering supporting this year? How can I give?

The AC Offering recipients will be the MJ Kim Fund for Immigrant Clergy and the Virginia Conference Center for Belonging and Advocacy.

Learn more about the AC offering here: vaumc.org/ac2026/#offering To give to the Annual Conference offering, you can give online or mail a check. The offering will be taken during our opening worship service, which begins at **4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 17**, at the Atlantic Union Bank Center.

Give online: [AC 2026 Offering Form](#)

Donate by check: To give to the Annual Conference offering, you can make your check out to the Virginia United Methodist Conference with AC Offering in the memo line, and mail it to:

VA Annual Conference of the UMC
Attn: Conference Treasurer & Business Office
10330 Staples Mill Road, Suite 100
Glen Allen, VA 23060

What will the offering for Belonging and Advocacy fund and why isn't that office funded in our budget since that is a Conference staff office?

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson selected the Virginia Conference Center for Belonging and Advocacy as one recipient for the Annual Conference Offering because it is a newly established department. We are still learning how to fund it and what its needs are. The conference budget reflects the minimum needed for the office to operate in 2027, and this offering will provide additional flexibility to respond to emerging needs across the conference and expand resources in this important area of ministry.

Orientation & Resources

I missed the May 28 AC orientation webinar. Where can I view it?

The AC Orientation was recorded and is now available: [Watch on YouTube](#). You can also access the slide deck from the event: [Orientation Slides PDF](#)

Volunteers

When will volunteers receive information about our responsibilities?

Information for AC volunteers will come from the Shenandoah River District in early June.

Youth Cohort

Is the youth cohort meeting open to all? If so, can an email be sent to the clergy to ensure attendance?

Youth cohort information is being communicated directly to cohort members and their guardians. If you have questions about the youth cohort, please email Dwayne Stinson at dwaynestinson@vaumc.org.

Is there more information on the youth cohort in the Book of Reports?

There is no information about the cohort in the Book of Reports. Youth cohort information is being communicated directly to cohort members and their guardians. If you have questions about the youth cohort, please email Dwayne Stinson at dwaynestinson@vaumc.org.

Attendance & Eligibility

Who is eligible to attend the Annual Conference?

Attendance is based on how you were elected or appointed.

- Clergy
- Laity elected as the Annual Conference member by their local church at Charge Conference
- District At-Large members elected at District Conference
- Those attending based on a district office role
- Additional participants based on conference appointment or role
- Families and guests are welcome to attend all worship services and Annual Conference sessions

A note on business sessions: the "bar" refers to a designated area for credentialed members. Guests are asked to sit outside of that area. The bar will be explained from the platform at the start of the first business session.

Is pre-registration required to attend the Annual Conference?

No. Pre-registration is not required.

I am a guest or non-member attending the Annual Conference. Do I need to register? Can I attend worship and business sessions?

Yes, guests are very welcome to our Annual Conference worship and business sessions. It is not required for you to pre-register. Guests may visit the registration table to check in and receive a paper badge. Please note that during business sessions, the "bar" refers to the designated area for credentialed members, and we ask that guests sit outside of that area. The bar will be set from the platform at the start of the first business session.

Are families invited to the memorial service?

Yes! Families and guests are welcome to attend all worship services and Annual Conference sessions.

What is the "Bar of the Conference"?

In the United Methodist Church (UMC), the "bar of the conference" refers to the specific physical or virtual area designated for credentialed members to conduct business. It is a

parliamentary term, not a physical bar, and only registered, eligible clergy and lay members are permitted to be seated there. Once the Virginia Annual Conference is called to order on June 17, the "bar of the conference" will be set.

First Aid & Security

Is there First Aid?

We will have first aid and EMT providers on-site

Will there be security?

Security and risk management are provided by RMC Events for the Atlantic Union Bank Center at JMU. Campus-wide security and risk management is provided by JMU Police Department. They provide law enforcement and campus safety patrols to protect and enforce state laws and respond to emergencies.

All members, clergy, and guests attending Annual Conference should wear their name badges at all times. Guests may receive name badges at the Registration table.

Voting

Will we be voting on?

Votes will be taken by show of hands on the following:

- Organizing Motions
- Rules Committee Report (BOR pages 18-46)
- Consent Agenda (BOR page 50)
- Cabinet Report (BOR pages 57-67, 70-72)
- VUMPI Report (BOR pages 80-89)
- CFA Report (BOR pages 97-108)
 - Clergy Payroll (BOR page 78)
 - Questions about Clergy Payroll can be sent to treasurer@vaumc.org
- Resolutions (BOR pages 167-176)

Are we voting on delegates to the General Conference?

We are **not** voting on General or Jurisdictional Delegates this year.

Miscellaneous Questions

Is there a dress code?

There is not a set dress code. Comfy business casual is recommended.

Are there evening events?

There are no official evening conference events, but there are many organizations hosting banquets. Find Banquet information [here](#).

Will there be a livestream?

Livestream will be available online at vaumc.org and vaumc.org/ac2026.

Will I be cold?

The AUBC is a basketball arena; it will be cooler, but should not be cold. Bring a light sweater or jacket just in case!

Are the seats comfortable?

The seats are cushioned, however you are welcome to bring a chair pillow if you would like additional cushioning.

What if I need help?

Visit vaumc.org/ac2026 prior to Annual Conference to find the information you need. During AC you can find help at the info table and the registration desk on the concourse level. There is also a First Aid station on the concourse.

Will there be morning communion?

Communion will be offered Thursday and Friday morning at 7:30 a.m. in the Arboretum (weather permitting). The Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at James Madison University (JMU) is a 125-acre public urban garden and forested woodland preserve located at 780 University Boulevard in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

If there is inclement weather, communion will be moved to the Multi-Purpose room on the concourse level of the Atlantic Union Bank Center.

These questions were answered by staff and Annual Conference Planning Team members, then sorted and organized with the help of AI. The final document was reviewed by a number of individuals on our AC team.