



**INSIDE
THIS ISSUE:**

Sing the Lord's
song 1

28 new retirees
gave 695.5 years of
combined service 1

A Retired Pastor
continues ministry
in workplace 2

Oct. 9-10 ARMS
Retreat leaders and
registration form 3

Remembering
those we have lost
since May 4

Stacey Anthony
joins pensions
office staff 4



To ARMS! is usually
published in March,
August, and Nov. of
each year.

Send news to:
Editor, To ARMS!
1200 Pulliam St.
N. Chesterfield,
Virginia 23235
or email:
alhorton@vaumc.org

Sing the Lord's Song

By the Rev. Alvin J. Horton

As much as I love contemporary music that sings praises to God and lifts the spirits of those who come to worship God, I will always feel that something quite important is missing if that is the extent of one's musical repertoire in church. Worship should not only involve praise, but contrition and mercy and calls to justice and service. Our hymns of praise should challenge us to be all that God has called us to be.

The Wesley brothers didn't want us to simply sing of God's glory; they wanted us to live out God's glory in our everyday lives by receiving and sharing God's love. Charles Wesley's "Jesus, United by Thy Grace" (UMH No. 561) and "A Charge to Keep I Have" (UMH No. 413) are certainly only two of many examples. Their hymns challenged us to visit the Scriptures in profound ways, such as "Come, O Thou Traveler Unknown" (UMH No. 386) based on Charles' poem of the same name that explores the deep meaning of Jacob's wrestling with God. We "throw the baby out with the wash" when we simply discard these powerful hymns because they lack the recurring rhythms of today's contemporary music.

The Wesleyan theology of warm hearts and willing hands is as contemporary as you



Singing in the Wesleyan Tradition and its importance in both personal and church life

can get when you consider the deep loneliness and lack of purpose that seems to pervade our current society. We should not let the divisions in our church strip from us the wonderful gifts the Wesleys gave us more than two centuries ago.

That's why our ARMS board has put together a retreat titled "Singing in the Wesleyan Tradition: And Its Importance in both Personal and Church Life." Set for Eagle Eyrie Retreat Center, October 9-10, the event will allow us to not only sing some of the songs of our faith but explore their meaning and significance. (See page 3 for more information.)

And don't forget to check out Gene Williams' article on page 2. In retirement, he's putting the Wesley hymns into action. He's truly "singing the Lord's song" as it was meant to be sung.

The 2024 retirees served 695.5 combined years

This year's retirement class of 28 retirees has a combined service record of 695.5 years! Look and see if you can find the one retiree with the most years of service...

Edward Barnett 33	Penny Cory 34	L. Raymond McGarr 26	Donna Smith 15
Clyde Basham Jr. 28.5	David Cunningham 16.5	Linda Monroe 20	Marion Sortore 15.75
Denise Bates 28	Gary Denette 3	Kenneth Newsome 44	Claudia Stallings 23
William Bearden 21	Garey Eakes 17	Lydia Rodriguez 30	Charles Stribula 15.5
Andy Brock 15	Charles Johnson Jr. 12	James Rodden 37	Lisa Sykes 34
Susan Carlson 33	Michelle Louk 22.75	Mark Rooks 14	Ken Thrasher 25
Edwin Childress 26.5	Candace Martin 24	Joseph Shoop 27	Reginald Tuck 39

You, too, can be a chaplain!

A Retired Pastor Continues His Ministry in the Workplace

By the Rev. Gene M. Williams

My introduction to Industrial Commercial Ministries (ICM) came in 1974 when I was a 34-year-old college senior. Jerry John knew that I had just left heavy industry to answer a call to ministry and asked me to take the training seminar. Because of my industrial background, my interest was aroused. That began a 50-year love affair with ICM.

My first assignment was a poultry plant where I spent four years enjoying meeting people and listening to stories both sad and joyful, (Oh yes! And jokes). From there I served a VEPCO field office in Virginia Beach. That was a bit stuffy. I found that office workers are more inclined to be serious minded and self-sufficient. After moving to the former Roanoke District, I had the opportunity to serve as chaplain to the Botetourt County Sheriff's Office. Police work is obviously a little different and (no surprise here), some officers were very receptive and some were cold to the idea of a chaplain. However, in times when there was a death or

an attempted suicide, the deputies would often feel ill-at-ease



The Rev. Gene M. Williams, retired, has been an Ordained Elder in the Virginia Conference for nearly 50 years.

and they would call me to come and assist them. In reality, sometimes even the chaplain felt a little lost.

After I retired and moved to Augusta County near Fishersville, several people wanted to start an ICM chapter for this area. One chaplain was already serving in the area and connected to the Shenandoah Chapter in Harrisonburg. I was asked to serve on the new chapter board. Our meetings were held at a nearby Shoney's restaurant. Strangely, I had selected that restaurant as a second office to meet people I needed to talk with in confidence over a cup of coffee. The Placement Chair of the chapter asked me why not serve the restaurant as chaplain since I was there so often. My answer: "Speak to the manager and see what she says." The rest, as they say, is history. **I have served what is now Hometown Grill for the past 12-14 years and enjoyed every day of it.**

We have held training seminars almost every year and placed seven chaplains. During the pandemic, however, we did lose several who have not returned, so the need is now for active board members and people who are willing to scout out placement possibilities and help with training. Anyone who believes in The Great Commission and loves



ICM Mission & Purpose

Industrial and Commercial Ministries is an ecumenical training and placement organization which equips, places and supports clergy and laity as volunteer chaplains to serve people where they perform their daily labor. We seek to share the message of God's care and compassion and to enhance the sensitivity of persons to the changing nature of the contemporary workplace.

As a compassionate outreach of the church, we share the message of God's care with employees and employers. ICM chaplains serve as a supportive presence, lend a listening ear and provide effective referral to those in need.

ICM National Office

Woody Sanders, Exec. Director
57 South Main Street, Suite 606
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
540.432.1919
ICMmin@aol.com

meeting and talking with people would be a good candidate. If you are anything like me, a person who cannot sit still but for so long, you would fit right in!

Singing in the Wesleyan Tradition

— Retreat Leaders —

October 9-10,
2024



The Rev. Roger Dowdy



Roger Dowdy, an ordained Deacon in the Va. Conference, is founder/director of CROSS-PATHS Ministries, a field-based, ecumenical ministry devoted to strengthening worship liturgy and the arts, spiritual life, and leadership of congregations. Roger’s two presentations will center around *I Corinthians 14:15* — “*I will sing praise with the spirit, but I will sing praise with the mind also.*”

“Paul is writing to the faithful in Corinth regarding the worth and use of spiritual gifts,” Roger explains. “As a ‘spiritual gift’, singing in the liturgy with the gathered body, or singing individually in private, each should carry the prerequisite of growing in the understanding of what one is singing and why.” He says, “John Wesley was equally intent that the ‘Methodists’ should ‘...attend strictly to the sense [the meaning] of what one is singing.’ Our time together at Eagle Eyrie will be a prime opportunity to explore the spiritual richness of sacred songs, ‘ancient and modern.’”

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson

“**Bishop Sue**” will join us by way of a video for a Thursday morning greeting. A native of Florida, she served the N. Georgia Conference (2016-22), and was assigned to the Virginia Conference last year. She is married to the Rev. Allen Johnson and together they have a daughter, Samantha.



Ken Horne & the NiteKAP Folk Band



Ken Horne is a retired pastor and co-founder of the Society of St. Andrew. In retirement he helped form NiteKAP, a trio of Bedford musicians who perform an eclectic mix of American folk music. The trio includes **Ken, Allison Johnson, and Paul**

Brockman and will provide an evening of music during the retreat that will be entertaining, inspiring, and of course a lot of fun.

John W. Fuller

John Fuller is exec. director of Virginia U.M. Pensions, Inc. (VUMPI) and a regular at our ARMS retreats. He will provide an update on our health-care and pensions programs, especially as they may have been affected by changes in the United Methodist denomination.



REGISTRATION

Minister’s Name: _____

Name tag should read: _____

Spouse: _____

Spouse name tag should read: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Preferred Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Special physical needs: _____



RETREAT COSTS

Fee: \$75 per person (double occupancy)
\$95 per person (single occupancy)

First Time Retreaters:
Discount of \$25 per person off regular price

Scholarships available.
Contact Registrar.

Deadline for Registration: Oct. 1, 2024

(NO REFUNDS AFTER OCT. 1)

Make check payable to:

Virginia Conference UMC

(In memo: “ARMS Retreat 2024”)

Then, mail check & completed form to:

Keary Kincannon, Registrar
P.O. Box 243, Mount Vernon, VA 22121
kearykincannon@vaumc.org



Return Address:
1200 Pulliam Street
North Chesterfield, VA 23235

Board of Pensions & Health Benefits
Virginia Annual Conference
P.O. Box 5606
Glen Allen, Virginia 23058
Phone: 800-768-1100

To Arms! Is published on line via RetireeNet, ClergyNet, SpouseNet, and sent to ARMS members upon request.



Want to support ARMS?

Send suggested donation of \$10 per person to:
Betty Jo Sims,
Treasurer
110 Ridgeway Rd.
Warsaw, VA
22572-4255

Make check payable to "Virginia Conference UMC" with "ARMS donation" in memo line.

New Health Administrator Joins Pensions Staff

There's a new face (and voice) at Virginia United Methodist Pensions (VUMPI) these days. It's that of **Stacey Anthony** who joined the VUMPI staff in June as Health Plan Administrator. She has worked for several employers in the health insurance industry during her career. Her first and most recent job in Virginia was with Anthem.

For the past 10 years, she has served as a member of the VUMPI Board of Directors, holding the positions of Supplemental Benefits Committee Chair and most recently as President. She previously held roles of Finance Chair and interim Treasurer at Duncan Memorial UMC in Ashland.

Stacey and her husband of 35 years have two grown sons and live in the Ashland area with their dog and chickens.

Questions about conference health plans? Contact Stacey by phone (804-521-1131) or email at staceyanthony@vaumc.org.



In Memoriam



Remembering those we have lost since our last report in May 2024

Retired Clergy

Alfred M. Green (2/17/46) AM

July 26, 202

Active Clergy

Douglas D. Gestwick (1/2/1958) FE
Donald W. Baldwin (6/30/1961) FL
Edward F. Rigg (2/26/58) FE

May 24, 2023
July 26, 2023
July 18, 2024

Widows/Widowers of Deceased Clergy

Stella Couch (Rev. Robert E. Couch)*	May 10, 2022
Kate Angle (Rev. James Angle)*	May 13, 2022
Elizabeth J. Wright (Rev. William A. Wright)*	May 25, 2022
Stephen T. Claris (Rev. Karen Claris)*	June 11, 2022