

Newsletter of the  
Association of Retired  
Ministers and Spouses



# To ARMS!

AUGUST 2020

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## Finding Happiness in Difficult Times

# Five Simple Rules

by Alex Steblowsky

This 92-year-old, petite, well-poised and proud lady, who is fully dressed each morning by eight o'clock, with her hair fashionably coiffed and makeup perfectly applied, even though she is legally blind, moved to a nursing home yesterday. Her husband of 70 years recently passed away, making the move necessary.

"Mrs. Jones, you haven't seen the room .... just wait."

"That doesn't have anything to do with it," she replied. "Happiness is something you decide on ahead of time. Whether I like my room or not doesn't depend on how the furniture is arranged, it's how I arrange my mind. I already decided to love it.

**Old age is like a bank account,  
you withdraw from what you've put in.**

After many hours of waiting patiently in the lobby of the nursing home, she smiled sweetly when told her room was ready. As she maneuvered her walker to the elevator, I provided a visual description of her tiny room, including the eyelet sheets that had been hung on her window. "I love it," she stated with the enthusiasm of an eight-year-old having just been presented with a new puppy.

It's a decision I make every morning when I wake up. I have a choice;

I can spend the day in bed recounting the difficulty I have with the parts of my body that no longer work, or get out of bed and be thankful for the ones that do. Each day is a gift, and as long as my eyes open I'll focus on the new day and all the happy memories I've stored away, just for this time in my life."



*Photo of Peggy Jones  
by Karsten Thormaehlen*

She went on to explain, "Old age is like a bank account, you withdraw from what you've put in. So, my advice to you would be to deposit a lot of happiness in the bank account of memories. Thank you for your part in filling my Memory bank. I am still depositing."

And with a smile, she said: "Remember the five simple rules to be happy":

1. Free your heart from hatred.
2. Free your mind from worries.
3. Live simply.
4. Give more.
5. Expect less, & enjoy every moment.



## Can We Talk?

There's more than one way to 'talk' to friends and family. While you're isolated at home, try these special communication tools:

- ◆ Telephone
- ◆ Texts
- ◆ Email
- ◆ Zoom
- ◆ Facebook
- ◆ Portal
- ◆ Instagram
- ◆ Twitter
- ◆ Letters
- ◆ Cards

Oh, yes!  
Don't forget  
drive-bys.

# Providing a Safe Place to Talk Technology Can Help Us Communicate

By the Rev. Dr. Margaret T. Kutz

Those of us who fell off the technology wagon miles ago, often lament the lack of face to face conversations. We tell people to put away the emails, texts, and tweets and just make a phone call or better yet, get in the car and go see the person. Recently, I had an experience where technology actually helped a congregation have a difficult conversation.

Last November I had the honor of serving as the interim pastor at Pender UMC in Fairfax. **One of the controversial conversations that was long overdue was the one about LGBTQ.**

Everyone, pastor and parishioners, were afraid. There were passionate views on all sides of the issue. People wanted to be heard without being judged. They wanted to hear what other people were thinking without being hurt. People wanted a safe place to explore what scripture, tradition, reason, and experience say.

One of the tasks given to me as the interim was to help facilitate this conversation. Working with Just Peace, we were well on our way to making that happen when the pandemic hit and we were not allowed to be together face

to face. So we decided to try Zoom.

**For four sessions, more than 50 households, with a total participation of some 80 people, sat in front of their computer screens to explore the topic of LGBTQ.** With that many people on Zoom, everyone had to mute themselves. Also, as the host, I could mute people if necessary though it was never necessary.

We used chat, polls, and breakout rooms. I shared my screen and showed a video from the series "Chuck Knows." We talked about how to have discussions about difficult subjects. I tried to model it in the questions I asked (questions for which there were no wrong answers).

**We started with safe questions. For example, the question for the first week's poll was "Do you have a family member or friend who is gay?"** All polls were anonymous but it gave the group a sense of where other people were coming from in terms of their life experience. People felt safe.

Breakout rooms allow people to be in smaller, random groups for discussion. One question was asked each week for

people to discuss in their smaller groups, and I found they were following the guidelines of Christian dialogue. People felt safe.

As confidence in the group grew, I asked more personal questions. By the fourth and final session, I invited everybody to take two minutes in their breakout room to share their view on LGBTQ and which part of the quadrilateral helped them get to that place. **Group members were simply to listen and then respond by saying, "thank you."** I modeled that by sharing briefly my viewpoints and the group responded, "thank you." Nearly all the participants shared, and people listened with great respect.

I believe this study and discussion would have been much more difficult in person. At the same time it prepared the congregation to have future conversations in person. I still prefer person to person interactions, but I learned there is a valuable place for technology in the life of Christian conversation and community.

Congratulations, good and faithful servants!

# The 2020 Clergy Retirement Class has a combined service record of 1,500 years

Pamela J. Baldwin, 15.00  
Veronica G. Barrell, 9.00  
Loretta A. Benninghove, 21.00  
Kerry D. Boggs, 36.00  
Norman B. Brooks, 30.00  
Joseph D. Carson, 31.00  
Russell M. Cheatham, 38.50  
Roderick L. Clayton, 6.00  
Mark E. Christian, 41.00  
Maxine C. Crenshaw, 13.00  
Pamela H. Culler, 17.75  
Jack E. Davis, 41.00  
Marsha L. Davis, 14.00  
Frank P. Decker, 39.75  
Phyllis R. Earley, 29.00  
Richard H. Ecklund, 30.00  
Darwin G. Edwards, 13.00  
Yunho Eo, 31.25  
Eugene L. Finn-McKenzie, 35.25  
Michael T. Frank, 32.00  
George E. Gorman, 20.00

Catharine T. Guest, 15.25\*  
John R. Hall, 23.00  
Isaac E. Harper, 15.00  
Howard F. Holley, 38.00  
Jane D. Honeycutt, 31.50  
Robert N. Hoskins, Jr., 26.00  
Marcia K. Huntsman, 13.00  
James L. Johnson, 26.75\*  
Matthew W. Jones IV, 43.00  
Teresa M. Keezel, 33.50\*  
Michelle E. Lindsey, 23.00  
Robert B. Lloyd, Jr., 13.00  
Benjamin F. Lockhart, 15.00  
Linda H. Lowe, 13.00  
Kurt D. Ludwig, 16.00  
James R. McDowell, 42.00  
Marie E. Misiasek, 3.00  
Keith D. Moore, 36.00  
Mark V. Ogren, 46.00

Dorothy L. O'Quinn, 40.00  
Margaret M. Packard, 14.00  
Barbara L. Parker, 12.00  
Stephen W. Rickman, 43.00  
Ralph W. Rowley, 44.00  
Reginald G. Rumburg, 37.00  
James C. Sprouse, 47.00  
Kathy F. Talley, 36.50\*  
Mary Sue Terry, 2.00  
Samuel R. Watson, 5.00  
Jeffrey B. Weakley, 39.00  
Kathleen Overby Webster, 37.00  
Steven B. Wells, 35.00  
Gerald L. Wicker, 9.00\*  
Susan Willhauck, 23.00  
Penny L. Wilson, Jr., 20.00  
Charles s. Winner, 16.00  
Louis G. Woolner, 12.00  
James L. Wright, 13.00

\*Ad-interim

## 2020 ARMS Leadership Team

Co-Presidents:  
John & Catherine Price

Co-Vice Presidents:  
Steve & Susan Hassmer

Secretary:  
Judy Mann

Treasurer:  
Susan Brack

Retreat Consultants:  
Harry & Gale Kennon

Sunshine Correspondent:  
Susan Hassmer

Newsletter Editors:  
Al & Cheryl Horton

Co-Past Presidents:  
Paul & Martha Phillips



## In Memoriam remembering those who have died since our last report January 2020

### Retired Clergy

Maurice S. Luker Jr. (06/04/34) RE*	March 27, 2019*
Clarence H. Barnett (05/09/24) RE	Feb. 11, 2020
Michael T. Davis (06/13/54) RA	Feb. 11, 2020
Doyle W. Wyatt (08/08/39) RA	Feb. 19, 2020
Raymond E. Pack (05/17/29) RA	Feb. 20, 2020
John H. Coffey (11/26/28) RE	March 7, 2020
William Mark Clayton (11/18/56) RL	March 10, 2020
Milton Lee Ramsey Jr (04/15/39) RE	March 14, 2020
William K. Thomas (10/01/23) RE	March 23, 2020
Edwin C. Whitlock (10/07/50) RE	March 26, 2020
Charles J. McHose (12/31/48) RE	April 13, 2020
William R. Fisher (07/16/47) RA	April 16, 2020
James W. Draper (04/04/36) RE	April 22, 2020
Alyce M. Mullen (11/01/28) RE	April 24, 2020
Gerald M. Miller (03/03/38) RE	May 02, 2020
William P. Hall Jr (02/13/32) RE	May 19, 2020
Harley R. Bender (02/06/26) RA	June 2, 2020
Robert J. Thorne (07/11/42) RA	June 8, 2020
Anthony A. Wadsworth (01/12/36) RE	July 8, 2020
Robert L. Gue (12/19/35) RE	July 17, 2020
Karl K. Tangeman (12/03/24) RE	July 21, 2020
Judy L. Loehr (10/10/42) RE	July 21, 2020
Donald H. Roberts (04/21/48) RE	July 27, 2020
William A. Martin RE	Aug. 4, 2020
Gene C. Tatum (08/29/46) RA	Aug. 19, 2020

### Spouses of Retired Clergy

H. D. Gwaltney (Rev. Rebecca Gwaltney)*	April 17, 2019*
Patrick Cline (Rev. Deborah Cline)*	October 4, 2019*
Donald Delong (Rev. Leah Delong)	April 5, 2020
Geneva Carson (Rev. Louis Carson)	June 6, 2020
Mary Jane Ricketts (Rev. William Ricketts)	July 15, 2020

### Widows/Widowers of Deceased Clergy

Caroline Manear (Rev. Carl Manear)*	Jan. 15, 2020*
Bernice Chattin (Rev. Norman Chattin)	Feb. 23, 2020
Carolyn Balcom (Rev. Roger Balcom)	Feb. 27, 2020
Helen M. Eason (Rev. Robert Eason)	March 07, 2020
Shirley Godwin (Rev. Philip Godwin)	March 13, 2020
Roberta D. Painter (Rev. Robert Painter)	March 15, 2020
Joyce Milliner (Rev. Wilber Milliner)	March 30, 2020
Eleanor Pillow (Rev. Charles Pillow)	May 7, 2020
Christine Kidd (Rev. Harry L. Kidd)	May 21, 2020
Marion Dillard (Rev. Douglas Dillard)	June 17, 2020
Evelyn G. Roberts (Rev. William T. Roberts)	June 30, 2020
Lena Williams (Rev. Thaddeus Williams)	July 4, 2020
Vera L. Thacker (Rev. Shirley R. Wade)	July 12, 2020
Suzanne W. Righter (Rev. James Righter)	July 28, 2020
Marilyn Acosta (Rev. William Acosta)	Aug. 18, 2020

\*Not listed in last ARMS newsletter report



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1200 Pulliam Street  
North Chesterfield, VA 23235

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**Virginia Annual Conference**  
**P.O. Box 5606**  
**Glen Allen, Virginia 23058**  
**Phone: 800-768-1100**

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### Want to support ARMS?

Send suggested donation of \$10 per person to:

Susan Brack,  
Treasurer  
128 Glenwood Cir.  
South Hill, VA  
23970

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

## Fall ARMS Retreat postponed due to COVID-19 virus concerns

The 2020 ARMS Retreat, originally set for Oct. 7-8 at Eagle Eyrie in Lynchburg, has been postponed until next year. The plan was to focus on the many changes that have been taking place in and around The United Methodist Church, especially how retirees and their spouses can find hope in such unusual circumstances.

The retreat, titled "Solid Hope in Changing Times," would have featured Bishop Charlene Kammerer, and the Rev. Kenneth C. Horne, Jr. (Ken) would have provided much of the music .

Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the ARMS leadership team decided to postpone the retreat until it

was safe to meet again. The leaders hope to reschedule next year with the same theme.

Look for more information in future newsletters and emails.



### Credit union helps 156 churches receive \$4million in federal aid

The United Methodist Credit Union helped 156 congregations receive more than \$4million in federal assistance through the Small Business Administration's (SBA)

Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Loans made through this program are projected to be forgiven as part of the government's response to the country's economic crisis.