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Advocate

The Virginia United Methodist

August 2012

2012 Annual Conference Highlights



2012-2013 Mission Opportunities Guide inside

Connecting with the



Virginia Advocate

The official newsmagazine of
the Virginia Conference of
The United Methodist Church

FROM THE EDITOR



Neill Caldwell
Editor

A time of transition



Bittersweet. It's an adjective that is thrown around a lot, especially in a cliché way to describe an ending of something.

But such was my feeling at the close of 2012 Annual Conference. I am glad that my bishop is getting to retire after 16 years of episcopal service, eight in Virginia and eight in Western North Carolina prior to coming to us. Sixteen years is more than enough time to be a bishop, believe me. It's a meat-grinder of a position, physically demanding as well as mentally. I appreciate those who are called to put themselves forward to that job, but don't envy their workload.

Still, I will miss her, and many of the people at the end of closing worship Annual Conference who had tears in their eyes feel the same way. The bishop's voice cracked and emotion overtook her as she tried to pronounce the final benediction. "I almost made it," she told me later. "But I don't think I ever said 'Amen'!" The time for honoring Bishop Kammerer on Saturday was also full of laughter and tears, especially when it was Charlene and Leigh's turn to offer their words of thanks.

By the time you read this, we will know who our new bishop in Virginia will be, but to me writing now, it's still a holy mystery. Personally, I pray for another bishop with deep spirituality.

(We will introduce our new bishop to you in the September issue of the Advocate.)

So it's a transition year, and that was reflected in our "compact-ed" Annual Conference. Bishop Kammerer pushed the agenda along as she presided, and there were fewer reports and special events. Still, we got in all the business that was needed, save for one resolution. We experienced some excellent preaching – all by Virginia Conference pastors this year – and beautiful, moving worship. We said farewell to Shirley Cauffman, who has done such a fabulous job in her six years of ministry as the conference Lay Leader. (Shirley has spent so much time in the United Methodist Center over the past few years that we considered creating an apartment for her.) We will also miss her service, but welcome Warren Harper from the York River District as the new conference Lay Leader. So, too, we thanked Clark Williams, who ended 12 years as conference Chancellor. During that time, Clark has been a solid rock that Bishop Kammerer has relied on. She introduced Steve Brown as the new conference Chancellor.

All in all it was a successful Annual Conference. Bishop Kammerer seemed to be part of just about all the important stuff this year, which was right and proper considering her retirement. 🍷

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Deadlines

The Advocate is published once a month. The deadline to submit news and ad copy for September 2012 issue is August 6. For more information on future deadlines, contact Peggy Cribbs in the Advocate office or visit the website.

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Local Church News

Items should be typed (preferably sent via e-mail) or printed legibly, no more than 100 words, and of conference-wide interest. Complete names of individuals, churches and districts should be included. Because of space limitations, the Local Church section prohibits news items related to church members' birthdays (of less than 100 years), wedding anniversaries, receptions for moving and/or retiring pastors, photos of traditional Christmas trees or Easter trees/crosses, and any item over two months old. Color photos are encouraged. Photos returned only if submitted with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Photos included on a space available basis. The editor reserves the right to edit all copy or refuse publication.

Letters

Letters to the Editor are printed on a space-available basis. Letters should be limited to 150 words for space reasons. The Advocate will not print letters addressing a topic beyond two months of the publication of that issue. The Advocate editor reserves the right to edit all letters.

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USPS 660-740

ISSN 0891-5598

Published monthly by Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc., an agency of the Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. Periodical postage paid at Glen Allen, Va., and at additional mailing offices. The Virginia United Methodist Advocate is owned by Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc.

POSTMASTER: Send changes of address to Virginia United Methodist Advocate, P.O. Box 5606, Glen Allen, VA 23058. Editorial and business offices are located at 10330 Staples Mill Rd., Glen Allen, Va. Office hours are 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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CORRECTIONS

Please note the following corrections in the Advocate for the churches that did pay 100% apportionments in 2011:

Clarendon UMC – Arlington
Enon UMC – Richmond
Mount Pisgah UMC – Harrisonburg
Mount Hermon UMC – Lynchburg
New Bethel UMC (Pittsylvania) – Lynchburg
Otterbein Chapel UMC – Harrisonburg
St. Peter's UMC – Richmond

On the Cover: Photo by Neill Caldwell



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LETTERS



June cover was strange and puzzling

The June issue was particularly informative / bemusing / saddening... but particularly relevant and fair in its representations of issues. Thank you!

The burning question which I looked through the magazine to find the answer is: What is the interpretation of the cover — the bugs / the ... what looks like a stole with an eye and the other fabrics/lace? I may have missed the explanation of this, but found it attention-getting, if nothing else... I am sure you have a specific story to tell!

Thank you — and I look forward to more and even better issues (as you promised)! I am sure I will not be disappointed!

God bless you and all the Advocate staff!

Elinor Dalton,
Virginia Beach

Editor's Note: *You're right; an explanation was not included. The June cover image, taken by Kathleen Berry on the opening night of General Conference, is from the altar on stage. Because the meeting was on the waterfront in Tampa, there was a water/"fishers of people" theme for altar decorations. The driftwood cross was adorned by silks representing the water, fish nets and schooling fish (the green things). All altar pieces for General Conference were designed by the Rev. Todd Pick of the New York Conference.*

2012 General Conference, hum bug

Imagine that most of the folks in our local churches never heard of General Conference (June Advocate) nor knows what it does. Just as well to leave it that way.

The Rev. Carl Douglas, retired,
Moneta

Evangelism in Nigeria

I would like to correct Bishop John Yambasu's statement on page 21 of the June Advocate. The Evangelical church sent missionaries to Nigeria in 1923, not the early 1980s. I was a missionary nurse in Nigeria in 1962-65 and again in 1969-72.

Marion Hartenstone Lugo
Fredericksburg UMC

The Judicial Council did us a favor

You surely know by now that on the final day of 2012 General Conference, the Judicial Council ruled that the new structure was unconstitutional. Thus the hours and hours of work by the General Conference were overturned, and we continue our current structure.

The General Conference then rushed to pass the proposals from all the general agencies (except for the General Board of Church and Society which had no proposal) to reduce the size of their boards by approximately 50 percent. That will certainly result in some savings of meeting costs, and it might even move us along a path toward more efficient operation, but we are still operating in our old structure, just a smaller version.

I personally think that the Judicial Council did us a favor for two reasons:

The proposed new structure was created "on the fly" out of compromise when three other proposed new structures failed to pass their legislative committee. It was



Commentary by
BISHOP
MIKE COYNER

a compromise, but it looked like a mish-mash created in haste. Even worse, the General Conference itself passed amendment after amendment to the plan — mostly increasing the size of the boards to be more inclusive. The final new structure was filled with contradictions, which the Secretary of the General Conference was trying to get sorted out for further action. The decision of the Judicial Council to rule the whole thing unconstitutional probably saved us from months or years of wrangling to figure out what the new structure really was.

More importantly, I believe that getting a new structure was never the point. The point of the "Call to Action" proposal was to realign the denomination around a redirecting of our resources to promote vital congregations. That is more of a "Spirit thing" than a "structure thing." Of course structures can get in the way, and of course we needed to streamline our current structure. But the real

(Continued on Page 7, "Favor")

United Methodist Church has power, influence in worldwide debate

BY LISA SYKES

Do we as United Methodists have a tendency to belabor our failures and overlook our successes? That thought has preoccupied me since Annual Conference concluded in Roanoke. I realize that as we reflect on the attempt to restructure in Tampa at General Conference, the unexpected ruling from the Judicial Counsel there, the ambiguity in reforms regarding guaranteed appointments, and difficult resolution considerations, many United Methodists are disappointed. So much effort and so little tangible progress... The effectiveness of our organization has become a question.

And while there are clearly issues that need addressing, so that our holy conferencing is more fruitful, still from that same process, there have been bountiful yields, if we will just see them and celebrated them! In 2005, the Virginia Annual Conference passed a historic resolution I had written on "Protecting Children from Mercury-containing Drugs." This resolution, with the help of the United Methodist Women, was passed by General Conference in 2008. In a mere three-and-a-half years, the critical issue of mercury-containing vaccines, and the danger that mercury in medicine represents to all persons, but especially women and children, ascended from me, a single United Methodist believer, to our global church of more than 11 million.

As an ordained minister, with our resolution in hand, and as the president of the Coalition for Mercury-free Drugs, a non-government organization, I am now part of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) of the United Nations' Environment Programme (UNEP), charged with writing a global, legally-binding instrument on mercury by 2013. In short, I am the only faith voice amid 800 diplomats helping to write the world's newest treaty.

As a Civil Society participant in this process, I have travelled to Japan, Kenya, and now Uruguay, always wearing my cross and collar. Our landmark United Methodist resolution has helped me to build bridges with the nations of Africa and South America, and my faith perspective has connected me to diplomats from the Arab region. On June 29, in Punta del Este, Uruguay, I challenged the current practice of providing wealthy western nations with mercury-free vaccines, while distributing mercury-containing ones to the developing world, before the U.N.: "This (double standard in vaccine safety) must be corrected rapidly but responsibly, and preference in production must shift to mercury-free vaccines




The Rev. Lisa Sykes testifies before a United Nations panel in Uruguay in late June.

globally, if we hope to avoid accusations of discrimination based on economics or nationality, in regard to global immunization policy."

As I finished speaking, the hall erupted in spontaneous and uncharacteristic applause from the majority of diplomats. They know I call for a ban of mercury in medicine because I have a call from God to do so. Those representatives from the developing world hear my concern, and in my concern, they also hear the concern of United Methodists from around the world, for the health of all persons, irrespective of wealth or nationality. How well we have been heard among the nations. And how little the people called Methodists have heard of our own success!

Were it not for our resolution process, I would have no United Methodist position to cite before the nations. Were it not for General Conference, the concern of the church and the voice of any faith community would be absent from this critical negotiation. In a David and Goliath battle against industry and powerful nations that would keep mercury in medicines for those who are socio-economically disadvantaged, the witness of The United Methodist Church is helping to make real and tangible and historic progress!

So, don't tell me the resolution process is too cumbersome to keep. Don't tell me General Conference can't get anything done. I have seen the power of my church and denomination to do what others cannot, because we have resolutions and a many-level conference structure. As we survey our frustrations, let us not forget our successes. Ironically, though the diplomats of the world know the strength of our witness, sometimes we United Methodists forget to witness to our strengths. 

—The Rev. Lisa Sykes is pastor of St. Luke's UMC, Richmond District.

COMMENTARY

"How can I talk about my faith in Jesus Christ?"



BY LARRY DAVIES

Should we be more concerned about sharing our faith with our family, friends and neighbors?

I've been thinking about this question a lot. A seminar I attended taught about the necessity of pastors to get out of their offices and spend more time talking to people outside of church. We can join the Y, hang out at Starbucks, join a civic organization, attend high school sporting events or volunteer at the local library. We can take more walks around our neighborhood, meeting our neighbors. We can be more intentional about talking to co-workers.

Should we be more concerned about sharing our faith with our family, friends and neighbors?

Peter wrote: "The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers. Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay. God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen." (1 Peter 4:7-11)

"The end of the world is coming..." One pastor described it this way: "You may not be able to stop the ship from sinking but you can point people to the lifeboats."

"Be earnest and disciplined in your prayers." Are you praying regularly for God to guide you as you learn to witness your faith to others?

"Continue to show deep love for each other." Sometimes the best witness is for others to witness how you take care of your spouse, your kids, your

friends.

"Cheerfully share your home with those who need..." Think of someone who should be in church. Ask them over to your house for dinner.

"God has given each of you a gift..." Everyone, yes everyone, has a gift that can be used in service of God.

"Use them well to serve one another..." Everyone, yes everyone, should be using their gifts to help someone in need.

"Everything we do will bring glory to God..." Everything we do, from the trivial to the outrageous, will bring glory to God.

C.S. Lewis wrote: "The world does not consist of 100 percent Christians and 100 percent non-Christians. There are people (a great many of them) who are slowly ceasing to be Christians but who still call themselves by that name; some of them are clergy. There are other people who are slowly becoming Christians though they do not yet call themselves so. There are people who do not accept the full Christian doctrine about Christ but who are so strongly attracted by Him that they are His in a much deeper sense than they themselves understand."

If there are people who are slowly ceasing to be Christians... a timely word could be helpful toward changing their minds.

COMMENTARY

If there are people who are slowly becoming Christians... a word of encouragement could help them make a needed commitment.

Sometimes it's not the words we use as much as the passion we display.

Tim Tebow, quarterback in the NFL responded to a comment from someone who seemed upset about him constantly referring to Jesus Christ: "If you're married, and you have a wife, and you really love your wife, is it good enough to only say to your wife 'I love you' the day you get married? Or should you tell her every single day when you wake up and and at every opportunity? That's how I feel about my relationship with Jesus Christ in that it is the most important thing in my life. So any time I get an opportunity to tell him that I love him or given an opportunity to shout him out on national TV, I'm gonna take that opportunity. And so I look at it as a relationship that I have with him that I want to give him the honor and glory anytime I have the opportunity. And then right after I give him the honor and glory, I always try to give my teammates the honor and glory. And that's how it works because Christ comes first in my life, and then my family, and then my teammates. I feel like anytime I get the opportunity to give the Lord some praise, he is due for it." (*USA Today*)

Now that is what I call passion.

- ❖ **My relationship with Jesus Christ is the most important thing in my life.**
- ❖ **Anytime I get an opportunity to express that love, I'm going to take that opportunity.**
- ❖ **Right after I give God the honor and glory I will also try to give others honor and glory.**
- ❖ **My priorities are Christ, family and others.**
- ❖ **Anytime I can give praise, God is due for it.**
- ❖ **How can I talk about my faith in Jesus Christ?**
- ❖ **Join a Y, hang out at Starbucks, walk around the neighborhood but do something different.**
- ❖ **Be earnest and disciplined in prayer, share our gifts, look for opportunities.**
- ❖ **A timely word can be just what is needed by someone struggling for answers.**
- ❖ **Be passionate about our relationship with Jesus Christ.**
- ❖ **Most of all... Be bold.**

Trust in God for the rest. ❧

—The Rev. Larry Davies is superintendent of the Lynchburg District.

("Favor", (Continued from Page 4))

changes we need are not best accomplished by restructuring first. Form will follow function as we live into a new focus upon Vital Congregations.

The Judicial Council also restored the sense of bishops as "general superintendents" who supervise the church. Our United Methodist Church is an episcopal system, and we bishops are the only ones elected and set aside for the specific purpose of leading the denomination.

Please don't hear that statement as a rationale for autocratic leadership, but as a reminder of our shared responsibilities. The legislative processes of Annual Conferences and the General Conference are to establish the policies, budget and direction for our church. But then our denomination depends upon our pastors, district superintendents and bishops to lead in fulfilling those policies, living within those budgets and moving in the direction approved by the legislative process. Much like the U.S. government with its three branches and shared powers, our United Methodist Church works best when each branch fulfills its own purpose. Our judicial branch, the Judicial Council, did us all a favor by reminding us of these shared responsibilities.

Sometimes both bishops and conferences and individuals get that confused. Sometimes bishops meddle in the legislative processes of our church. Sometimes our conference sessions micromanage the policies they have voted for (and thus the many, many amendments, points of personal privilege, etc. on the floor of General Conference — which can become a kind of "democracy run amuck" as one person described it).

The Judicial Council properly ruled the new structure unconstitutional, reminded us of the proper balance of our legislative branch and our executive branch; and, most importantly, they shocked us back into the realization that structure is not the answer.

I think back on our Indiana process, and I remember that a turning point toward the vote to approve a plan for a new (merged) conference occurred when the Imagine Indiana team reported that their vision for structure was "the conference exists to support and help the local church, not the other way around." I remember the applause from the floor when that vision was shared. It was soon followed by adopting a streamlined, cost-effective structure focused upon that vision.

I yearn for such a moment of clarity. Perhaps the outcome of General Conference will move us toward that time when the whole denomination applauds a new vision for structure — and then a new structure will be forthcoming. ❧

—Bishop Michael Coyner oversees the Indiana Conference.



LOCAL CHURCH NEWS



▲ United Methodist Women at **Main Street UMC in South Boston**, Farmville District, assembled 25 birthing kits at their May meeting. The program, given by Susan Rigg, explained the unsanitary conditions in which women in Third World countries often must deliver their babies. The use of birthing kits helps to provide the essential items to promote a safe, clean delivery and to encourage good aftercare for mother and child.



▲ **Fairfields UMC** held its annual Student Awards Service on June 10. The Covington/Hurst Educational Fund (CHEF) committee awarded 18 students, including nine Northumberland County High School Class of 2012 graduates, and nine college students continuing their education. Robert Lumsden, committee chair, presented the awards to the students who were congratulated by the Rev. John Jones and Frances Hurst, honorary committee member and namesake

of the educational fund. Awards were presented to: Aaron Appelby, Ry-Shan Conaway, Sarah Duncan, Quinn Ellis, Christian Kent, Carson Klein, Kierston Lewis, Maegan Lewis, Morgan Lewis, Nicole Massaro, Tyler Mitchell, Elizabeth Newsome, Ryan Parker, Levi Payne, Brenda Santamaria, Sarah Segglelink, Asa Smith and Gabriel Smith.



▲ **Laurel Park UMC**, Richmond District, has dedicated a new kitchen. The cost of this project was \$53,410 and was funded by contributions and pledges to the Capital Campaign Fund, which the church implemented in 2010 to help fund various construction and improvement projects. The kitchen expansion provides for much-needed space and additional appliances. Pictured, from left, the Rev. Anita Mays, Minister of Christian Education; the Rev. Dwight Zavitz, interim pastor; the Rev. Dean Pittman, former pastor; and the Rev. Steve Jones, District Superintendent.



▲ **Fairview UMC** of Danville celebrated 100 years of ministry and mission for the Danville District in May. The Rev. Dr. Janine Howard, District Superintendent, was the guest speaker, and Rev. David Lewis, a former Fairview pastor, was in attendance for the Centennial Celebration and Homecoming. Following worship, a ground-breaking was held to mark the beginning of an expansion for the church. Participating (above) was James Martin, a member since 1933, and Kaitlyn Sage, the youngest full member, Scott Thompson, Building Committee chair, and pastor, the Rev. Kathleen Monge.



▲ A group of 16 members of **Cherrydale UMC**, Arlington District, recently spent a mission work week at Henderson Settlement in Frakes, Kentucky.

◀ Betsy Creamer, **Leesburg UMC's** United Methodist Women president, presented the Georgia W. Bange Scholar-

ship to Adam Stonerook on June 10. Adam is the fifth recipient of the scholarship named for Bange, a beloved church member, teacher, counselor, neighbor and friend. Adam, pictured with Creamer and his parents, Hope and Dwight, has been a strong leader in school, Scouts, sports, work and church youth programs. An all-around, exemplary young man, Adam will enter Virginia Tech this fall.



▲ A busy summer at **Main Street UMC in Suffolk** included flip-flops, Russians and lots of kids. The VBS children will collect flip-flops and toothbrushes for Honduras. Families of the church hosted a group of Russian children for a three-week respite from terrible environmental conditions in Russia. The Main Street Day Care and Preschool continues its year-round program with special summer camps built around the theme "Main Street's Got Talent." The Day Care serves children ages six weeks through 5th grade, with an enrollment of 150 kids daily.

LOCAL CHURCH NEWS



▲ The Religion, Race and Inclusivity Committee of **Belmont UMC**, along with the Belmont youth group and other members of the church, recently toured the Robert Russa Moton Museum in Farmville. Thirty-six youths and adults learned about the struggles and progress made toward equality in the school systems in Virginia, including the protest led by 16-year-old Barbara Johns at Robert Moton High School in 1951. The day was topped off with a picnic at nearby Twin Lakes State Park. The Religion, Race and Inclusivity Committee seeks to promote inclusivity through our common faith in Jesus Christ.



▲ **Main Street UMC, Farmville District**, sent a mission team to Pulaski in April to repair damaged homes or work on new homes replacing those destroyed by the tornado in April 2011. The team consisted of 18 people

from four different churches. They worked on seven homes, including finishing work on two new homes that allowed families still displaced by the storm to take ownership and move in. In addition, team members spent Friday hanging ceiling tile and staining doors for a new church and fellowship hall being built by Jordan's Chapel UMC in Pulaski.



▲ **Sydenstricker UMC, Alexandria District**, celebrated July 4th by meeting a tough goal: Make 5,000 egg salad and other sandwiches for the Washington, D.C.-based Martha's Table food kitchen. Church members ended up making 6,570 sandwiches before they ran out of bread. The remaining spread was sent along in a gallon jar. Sydenstricker UMC and other local faith communities make more than 2,000 sandwiches every month for the homeless who receive food at Martha's Table.

Volunteers at Galilee UMC sort items that will be included in the backpacks sent home with students.

Galilee UMC's 'Backpack Buddies' program honored

Galilee UMC's "Backpack Buddies" team was honored recently with the 2012 "Outstanding Volunteer Team" Award by Volunteer Loudoun (County). The program, started in January 2011, provides backpacks with healthful food that children at Meadowland and Catoctin elementary schools who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches at school can take home over the weekend, when they often do not have food at home. "Through Galilee Serve ministry we provide over 1,280 meals, which translates into over 70,000 meals per year to children in two local schools," said the church pastor, the Rev. Wayne Snead. "These children are now part of Title 1 schools which receive government grants. Loudoun County schools asked us to host an event to invite other churches and non-profits interested in doing what Galilee UMC and Sterling UMC do with 'Backpack Buddies.' From that meeting Galilee's 'Backpack Buddies' team is meeting with seven other churches in Leesburg to get this started." The meeting in March featured more than 50 representatives from Loudoun County churches, schools and civic organizations. More than 11,000 children in the county are classified as "food insecure" by Feeding America.



The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



'Mother Bishop' Leontine Kelly broke through stained-glass ceiling



Leontine Kelly, the second woman and the first African-American woman elected bishop in The United Methodist Church, died June 28.

"We must recognize the kind of culture in which Jesus and the disciples lived. It was a very male-dominated culture. However, Jesus did violate the customs of the culture in that he talked with women, shared with women. God calls whomever God would call."

—Bishop Leontine Kelly

Member of Virginia Conference, Kelly was elected by Western Jurisdiction in 1984 as first African-American woman bishop

By Kathy Gilbert

Leontine Turpeau Current Kelly is being remembered as a trailblazer, a spiritual mother, a bearer for women of color in leadership and a gift to The United Methodist Church. The former pastor in the Virginia Annual Conference died at age 92 on June 28.

"In the Council of Bishops, the women bishops have always referred to Leontine Kelly as our 'Mother Bishop,'" said Virginia Bishop Charlene Kammerer. "After the death of the first woman bishop, Marjorie Matthews, Bishop Kelly became our elder sister, mentor and friend. We stand amazed at her fierce, loving and prophetic ministry. When she began to preach anywhere, you knew she was called by God and speaking for God. We loved her dearly and she will always be with us in spirit."

Being elected as the first African-American woman bishop was just part of her "audacious life," said Bishop

Judith Craig, who also was elected a bishop in 1984 just hours after Kelly. "She made a bold journey from the Southeastern Jurisdiction to the Western Jurisdiction. It was as audacious as her whole life," Craig said. "She never ran from challenge or controversy, and she also stood fast in her convictions."

Retired Bishop Melvin Talbert, who served with Kelly on the College of Bishops in the Western Jurisdiction, also remembers her election to bishop as groundbreaking. "I remember some of my colleague bishops in the Southeastern Jurisdiction were adamantly opposed to her election," he said. Kelly was serving Asbury UMC on Church Hill in Richmond at the time.

"I was gratified she was elected," he said.

Craig said she and Kelly would seek each other out in those early days. There were only three women on the Council of Bishops at that time. Matthews was the first woman elected bishop in 1980. After Matthews' death, there were "just the two of us," Craig said. "I was very grateful for her presence. It made me realize how lonely Marjorie must have been."

"Bishop Leontine Kelly has been the spiritual mother of many clergywomen and especially the women bishops," said

retired Bishop Sharon Brown Christopher. "She called us into futures we never anticipated for ourselves, would not let us capitulate to our insecurities and druthers, and coaxed us into new lives that gave new leadership to The United Methodist Church. Her feisty, God-centered spirit is embedded deeply in our souls and will continue to form and instruct us."

Among Kelly's many contributions to the denomination was as a founding member of Africa University, the first United Methodist university on the continent of Africa. Kelly was the presiding bishop when the 1988 United Methodist General Conference approved the African Initiative, which later became Africa University.

"She is one of those pillars, the foundation of Africa University," said James Salley, associate vice chancellor for institutional advancement for Africa University. She gave money to endow two scholarships at the university. Those scholarships have provided education for many African women, Salley said.

Kelly's daughter, Angella Current Felder, followed her mother's example by giving leadership to Africa University and women of color, Salley said. Current Felder retired as director of the United Methodist Office

of Loans and Scholarships, Board of Higher Education and Ministry, in 2010.

Kelly is also survived by two sons, Gloster and John David Current, and an adopted daughter, Pamela Lynne Kelly.

Her years of dedication to the church and to society earned Kelly a place in the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, N.Y. Kelly, who was 80 when she received the honor in October 2000, is one of almost 250 women to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. That same year, Kelly's family established a scholarship in her name at the United Methodist-related Africa University in Zimbabwe.

A preacher's daughter who vowed never to marry a minister, but did, found herself called to become one. Kelly grew up in The Methodist Church. Her father, the Rev. David Turpeau, was a Methodist minister who also served in the Ohio House of Representatives. Her mother, Ila Marshall Turpeau, was an outspoken advocate for women and blacks, and she founded the Urban League of Cincinnati.

Kelly took on the mantle of pastoral leadership when her second husband, the Rev. James David Kelly, died in 1969. At his urging, the public school teacher became a certified lay speaker in Virginia. She enrolled in the Course of Study, attended summer school at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington and received her master of divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond in 1976. She was ordained a deacon in 1972 and an elder in 1977.

"Bishop Kelly was inspiring and challenging at the same time. Her forward-focused energy and her impatience with things that have prevented the church (and we, its members) from living the active, holy and fruitful lives we are called to have been a source of inspiration to me," said Harriett Olson, top executive for United Methodist Women.

Olson pointed out the extra burdens Kelly carried: "She carried the extra burden of being among the 'firsts' as the second elected woman and the first elected African-American woman on the Council of Bishops. I am personally grateful for all the ways she 'made a way' for other women and persons of color to follow God's call on their lives. We have been

The women bishops of The United Methodist Church, including Bishop Leontine Kelly (front center) and Bishop Charlene Kammerer (back center) gather for a photo at St. Simons Island.

blessed by her loving, committed and energized witness. My first time to hear her preach was at the 1988 General Conference. It was a high moment."

"Bishop Kelly was beloved, especially by laypersons in her local churches who loved her commitment to strengthen and help local churches grow their membership both in number and spiritually," said Raúl Alegría, treasurer of the South-eastern Jurisdiction and president of MARCHA, the national United Methodist Hispanic/Latino caucus. Kelly was bishop in the California-Nevada Annual Conference when Alegría served as conference treasurer from 1987 to 1994. "When persons disagreed with Bishop Kelly, she found that moment as an opportunity to 'love people into goodness' so that the issue at hand found common agreement on both sides."

Garlinda Burton, top executive for the United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women, agrees Kelly was a great preacher.

"Bishop Kelly is one of the reasons I'm in leadership in the church right now. She has been a standard-bearer for women of color in leadership, and there will be no one like her, ever. She's one of a kind," Burton said. "The first time I heard her preach, even though I was a Christian, I had a complete conversion experience all over again."

Funeral Services for Bishop Kelly were held July 5 at Jones Memorial UMC in San Francisco.

"She will never leave us," said Craig. "I am sure she died peacefully and at peace in the Lord. There is no question about her confidence she was in the presence of the one she served her whole life." 🍀

—Kathy Gilbert, United Methodist Communications, with reporting by the **Advocate** editor and the Religion News Service.



The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

Sojourn to Sacredness

By Allie Rosner



I have always loved water. Every summer, growing up, we went to the lake (my mom's family tradition) and the shore (my dad's family tradition). In high school, I joined the crew team, more to be on the water than for the athletic component. I also discovered that the little creek half a mile from my house was my favorite place to go talk to God (and myself) when I was feeling down.

But water in Northern Virginia was always auxiliary, a side thought. It was wonderful for scenery, recreation, even emotional health once in a while. On the Eastern Shore and Tangier Island, things were different. Water was at the center of everything. It was the life source of the communities it entered and surrounded. This year's Sojourn to Sacredness gave new meaning to the term "living water" for me.

When Jesus meets the woman at the well in John's Gospel, she's a woman for whom water is a necessity and a chore — not even scenery or recreation. There is certainly nothing life-giving about the water she's getting, except in the most literal sense. The other women have been to the well earlier in the day when it was shady and cool, and as they did they probably laughed, and gossiped, and shared the stories of their days, and enjoyed some time away from their husbands — and for them, maybe, it was a life-giving time. Water helped form their community. But not for this woman Jesus meets.

But when she meets Jesus, water once again becomes something that creates and shapes community. When he asks her for a drink, she meets in him the one who can give her living water, water that refreshes and includes her instead of separating her from the more acceptable people.


The Sojourn experience reminded me that when we let it, water does give life not only to us as individuals, but also to us collectively. Water

connects us and brings us together, and when it does, it becomes not just plain water, but living water.

On our first full day, we went snorkeling in an eel grass bed. I had never been snorkeling. I had also never heard of eel grass. Seaweed was all the same to me. But as we got up close and personal with that eel grass, trying to determine if it had pods attached, collecting it in big mesh bags around our necks, learning about why it's important to the environment and the local economy, the water took on new life. We are connected through water — the eel grass, the birds that fertilize its beds, the scientists who study them, the bay scallops that live in the grass, the watermen who harvest and sell the scallops, the people who buy and eat them. Living water.

Then we spent 24 hours on Tangier Island, a place only connected to the rest of the world by miles and miles of water, and barely connected, at that. We heard the stories of watermen who have spent their lives on this water learning intuitively the rhythms of the blue crab, on which their livelihood depends. I had never talked to a waterman before. They don't often agree, it seems, with the scientists whose work supports laws and quotas. But in the end, scientists and watermen both want the same thing: the health of the water which gives life and purpose to both. Living water.

It was this living water that connected me to both of these very different communities, and to others — the friends and colleagues with whom I snorkeled, boated, and talked about God. From our conversations, a theme seemed to emerge — when the church derives its life from the living water that Jesus offers, it can act like that water too. It can be a place where different people come together — scientists, watermen, pilgrims — and find God-given life in community with each other. It can be a source of conversation, reconciliation, of people gathered around one table. Again...if we let it.

Since I've been back from the Sojourn I've found myself reading more about the environment and food and how we really are connected to each other in ways that we may know, but that are easy to forget. I think that as the church, our job is to help people remember. The people with whom we gather around the table are the same people who form our community, and perhaps extended community, every day. How we treat our environment affects these people at our table. How we treat animals affects these people at our table. And how we treat each other, obviously, affects the authenticity of the community that gathers around that table. There we remember the sources of our life: bread, wine, each other, and the living water that Jesus offers to all. 

—The Rev. Allie Rosner is associate pastor at Williamsburg UMC.



Young adults in the 2012 ecological pilgrimage, *Sojourn for Sacredness*, investigate the delicate sand dunes along the coast.



EVENTS

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN CAMP

Aug. 5-10: Camp Highroad in Middleburg;

Aug. 5-10: Occohannock on the Bay in Belle Haven;

Aug. 12-17: Westview on the James in Goochland

Children ages 7-12 who have an incarcerated mother or father spend a week at camp. Partnering with Virginia United Methodist camps, the All God's Children Camp provides a week of sanctuary for children who face many challenges in their lives. Contact Casey Torrence at caseytorrence@vaumc.org.

SERVE

Aug. 5-7: Randolph-Macon College, Ashland

Do you know of a high school student who may be interested in or has the potential for ministry? This event will help students explore this calling. The event, SERVE, will have a work camp focus and include small groups, bible study, recreation, special worship services, and much more. To receive more information, visit www.vaumc.org, click on "Events" and date; call Margie Turbyfill at (804) 368-7276 or e-mail her at margieturbyfill@rmc.edu. The program is co-sponsored by the Bailey Pre-ministerial Program at Randolph-Macon College and the Virginia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

Connect with God

Aug. 17-19: Blessings Lodge at Overlook Retreat & Camp Ministries

This will be a weekend retreat to focus on your spiritual journey, with time to listen to God, pray, share in small groups, experience creative worship and find space for your own deeper reflection. There will be opportunities on your journey to release, restore, and renew your spirit. Visit www.campoverlook.org for details. Cost is \$125 per person.

All Things New: Meeting Your Vital Congregation Goals training

Sept. 29: Staunton District (Calvary UMC, Stuarts Draft);

Sept. 30: York River District (Warwick Memorial UMC, Newport News);

Oct. 13: Fredericksburg District (Tabernacle UMC, Fredericksburg);

Oct. 20: Farmville District (Main Street UMC, South Boston);

Nov. 11: Roanoke District (Cave Spring UMC)

The Cabinet and Virginia Conference staff will continue the Vital Congregations events in the fall, which are separate from the regular district training days. Nearly 600 people participated in the five training events held in April and May. Workshops will be offered in key areas of vitality including worship, mission, small groups and invitation.

(Continued on Page 25, "Events")



The proven cure for hopelessness in children involves just two people (and you are one of them.)

At United Methodist Family Services, we see hundreds of children and teens throughout Virginia who have almost given up on life. They may be experiencing abuse at home, failure at school, and feelings of deep hopelessness for their future.

For over 112 years, UMFS has been reaching out to these youngsters giving them love, guidance, support...and most of all, a sense of real hope in their life.

We couldn't do it without you...your prayers, your support and your gifts. Last year, UMFS touched the lives of over 10,000 children and families. This year, it will be an even greater number.

Help us provide the "cure" for these young people with a gift of "hope" to UMFS.

Donate online at www.umfs.org or mail a gift to: UMFS, 3900 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23230



804-254-9450/ development@umfs.org/www.umfs.org

Religious news from around the NATION & WORLD



Finding Shade and Fresh Water

By Glenn Rowley

Before I even arrived in Virginia to begin my work, I started hearing about the Shade and Fresh Water project from Initiatives of Hope team members. I had only visited Brazil once some years ago so my knowledge of Brazil was very limited.

Like many of you, I thoroughly enjoyed the young people from the Shade and Fresh Water ministry of the Methodist Church of Brazil that visited us last year and participated in the worship at 2011 Annual Conference. I knew of the long-term dedication of the missionaries Teca and Gordon Greathouse to the needs of children in Brazil, and I heard the many wonderful inspiring stories of United Methodist Volunteers In Mission teams upon their return from working with children, staff and church members involved in Shade and Fresh Water. But it is hard to appreciate just how great an impact this vital ministry continues to have on the lives of vulnerable children in Brazil until you visit the sites where Christ's love is shared and served.

In May I had the opportunity to visit several Shade and Fresh Water sites as part of my orientation to our partnership with the Methodist Church of Brazil


There are more than 70 Shade and Fresh Water sites scattered across Brazil that are serving more than 3,000 children and growing weekly. Through Initiatives of Hope (IOH) the Virginia Conference has been a partner in that growth and witness for eight years.

Our partnership has included many opportunities for serving with the members of churches who promote and sponsor Shade and Fresh Water ministries in their communities. Some of those sites are located

in slum areas of large cities, and some are in small communities, but all are focused on children that desperately need encouragement and support from a caring community that helps them find value as children of God. Shade and Fresh Water provides just that; a place to find respite, nurturing and love even if it is just a few hours after school when they would normally be alone at home or on the streets.

As I visited these sites, talking with volunteers, staff and the children it became clear to me that Shade and Fresh Water is not just another project of the church in Brazil or a place for Volunteer in Mission Teams to go, rather it is one of those "holy ground" places writer Barbara Brown Taylor describes in her book *An Altar In the*

World, "where we wake up to God." Just as Jacob slept and encountered the ladder descending from heaven, shaken by what he had seen, he could not seem to stop talking. "How awesome is this place!" he went on. "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

We often romanticize mission and make it serve our need for a place to "find God" away from our routine lives. I definitely found God present in what I experienced Shade and Fresh Water offering to children in Brazil, but if where we wake up to God causes us to recommit ourselves to hope in the midst of despair, then it is more than just finding God. It is being renewed to the belief that caring for a child is a moment of respite and a drink of fresh water to heal from all that wounds us each day because a child healed us once and can heal us again. 

—The Rev. Glenn Rowley is director of Justice and Missional Excellence for the conference.



If where we
wake up to
God causes us
to recommit
ourselves to
hope in the
midst of despair,
then it is more
than just finding
God.

The Shade and Fresh Water program helps keep many young Brazilian children out of harm's way.

Religious news from around the NATION & WORLD



10 must-have mobile apps for church leaders

Mobile apps are becoming more and more a part of our everyday lives, simplifying ordinary tasks and providing instant access to information on the go. For example, you can easily access information about The United Methodist Church with the new UMC app, which enables access to daily devotions, news, videos, photos and social media sites. The “Find-A-Church” feature allows you to find a United Methodist church in a specific geographic location, as well as UMC conferences, agencies and administrative offices. The “Ask InfoServ” feature connects users who have questions about the church or are looking for resources with church staff who can help.

After scouring the Internet and consulting with techie pastors, laity and bloggers, take a look at 10 other leading mobile apps for church leaders.

Counting down from Number 10...

10. BC Reader

Are business cards falling out of your wallet or computer bag? Who has time to enter that information into a phone? You know what's next! “There's an app for that!” Use your phone to photograph each card, and Business Card (BC) Reader software will save the information and create a new contact.

9. Lectionary

For preaching, the Lectionary app is essential. Spend 99 cents for this app, and you can easily review this week's texts on your iPhone. Some may argue that this app should be closer to number one, but some helpful features are missing. For example, there is no search feature and no way to make notes inside the text. Still, for under a buck, it's very handy!

8. Facebook

With the new Facebook timeline, updating your church or organization's Facebook page frequently is critical! If you are among the many people who have grown an extra appendage (phone or tablet), use it to update your page whenever and wherever! Photograph the potluck or vacation Bible school gathering and post it directly to Facebook. It couldn't be easier.

7. Evernote & JotNot Pro

Evernote organizes everything! If you want to remember something, take a picture with your phone and Evernote will use text-recognition technology to make the text in the

image searchable. Do you like the message on a marquee and want to use it at your church later? Take a photo and Evernote will store the words in its long-term memory so your long-term memory is freed up for more important things – like when the youth are washing cars.

In a similar fashion, JotNot Pro turns your iPhone into a scanner. Where Evernote takes a picture and catalogues the text, JotNot Pro takes a picture and cleans up your page's background and text, making the document easier to read. If your goal is to go paperless, this app will help you get there.

6. Logos

If you're looking for the best reading app for the Bible, look no further than Logos. Navigation is a breeze. Many translations are available. It includes Greek and Hebrew references.

5. KeyNote and KeyNote Remote

Create a presentation in MS PowerPoint or Apple's Keynote and then control it from the pulpit. With Keynote, you can build attractive presentations and import PowerPoint presentations without any virtual jumbling to fix. Keynote Remote allows you to control another computer on the same network that also has Keynote. Keynote Remote also frees you to untether your iPhone and iPad and move about the room.

4. Dropbox

If you're not using cloud-based storage and file sharing at least on an elementary level, you should be! Dropbox is an easy-to-use app that adds a nice little folder icon to your desktop. It automatically syncs any file that you put in that folder to other computers with Dropbox installed. No more frantic calls to find that elusive file at 11 p.m. on Saturday! Dropbox makes it easy to access those files from virtually anywhere.

3. NOOMA

FLANNEL and Rob Bell have teamed up to make all 24 NOOMA videos available for Smartphones and tablets. The app is free. The first video is free; the rest are \$2.99 each, half of the retail price! With this app, you can have all of the 10-15-minute videos available wherever you go.

2. Toodledo

Toodledo will simplify your to-do lists. Toodledo is a powerful task and note manager that will help you organize lists and notes. Your increased productivity is a win for everyone! Use Toodledo as a stand-alone application or use it to synchronize your lists on Toodledo.com.

1. BibleXpress

This app has everything you need, including multiple Bible translations and paraphrases, including ASV, ESV, KJV, LBLA

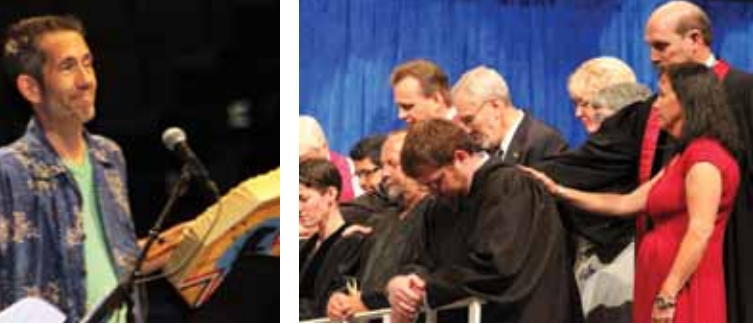
(Continued on Page 25, “Top 10 Mobile Apps”)



2012 ANNUAL CO



Vernon Gordon of Pace Campus Ministries
in Richmond sings with passion.



CONFERENCE



47.5 hours

BY NEILL CALDWELL

Speed and efficiency mark a very special Annual Conference

“48 Hours” may be a popular mystery-solving television show, but at the 2012 Virginia Annual Conference, it was the goal of a new and streamlined agenda.

Starting with the Clergy Executive Session and Laity Session, starting at 1 p.m. on Friday, June 22, the schedule developed by the Annual Conference Planning Committee ended between noon and 1 p.m. on Sunday.

There was time allowed for eating, sleeping and potty breaks, of course.

More than 3,000 clergy and laity representatives of United Methodist churches in Virginia gathered at the Civic Center in Roanoke for the 230th annual session of worship, mission projects, celebration of ministries and conducting the business of the conference.

FRIDAY



During the Clergy Session, retiring **Bishop Charlene Kammerer** reflected on her eight years in leading The clergy session, and expressed excitement in looking forward to her retirement.

Meanwhile at the Laity Session, **Shirley Cauffman** was directing her final session as conference Lay Leader. Her six-year term ended at the close of Annual Conference.

The speaker for the Laity Session, conference **Chancellor Clark Williams**, talked about the theme of the gathering this year, “You Are the Seeds.” He told some of his life story and encouraged the laity to share their own faith stories to those in need of hearing the gospel message.

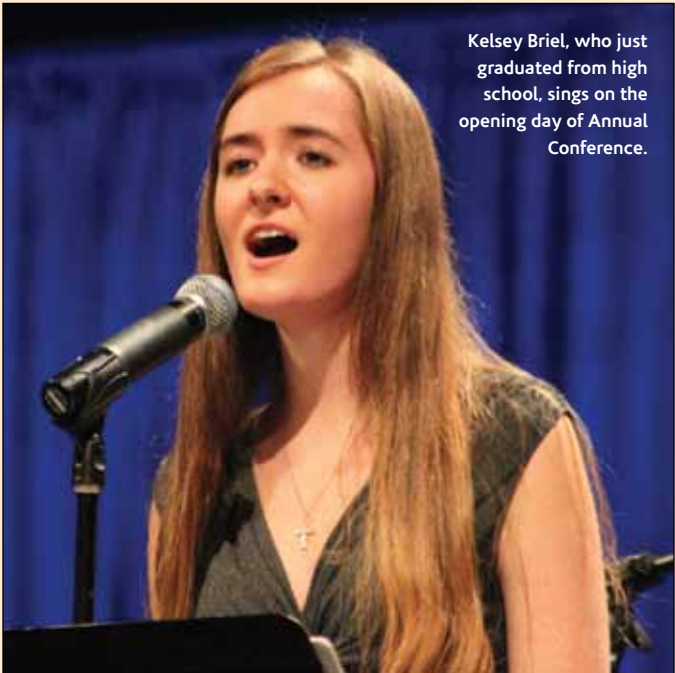


Shirley Cauffman and Clark Williams speak during the Laity Session.

“You will note the presence of the church throughout my faith journey. But not everyone is reached by the older, long-established church like me. We need to go out in our towns and cities to plant new churches where the un-churched and no-longer-churched can be reached.”

—Chancellor Clark Williams

Bishop Kammerer recognized Williams for his 12 years of service as the conference Chancellor. Williams is retiring in order to continue his work as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the School of Law of the University of Richmond. Bishop Kammerer introduced **Steve Brown** as the new Chancellor, saying he was “answering a call to serve the conference in this way.”



Kelsey Briel, who just graduated from high school, sings on the opening day of Annual Conference.

FRIDAY



Rev. Dr. Brenda Biler introduced **the Rev. Dan Elmore** (left), who is starting a new faith community, Restoration UMC, in the Charlottesville District.

.....

At the evening's Service of Remembrance, Roanoke District Superintendent **the Rev. Dr. Steve Hundley** preached, recalling the home he grew up in and that all of his immediate family has now gone on to glory. "Grief is something that is not a stranger to us," he said. Hundley also recalled his first memorial service, at the "Mosque" in Richmond, where he didn't know any of the people being honored. "I know 12 of the 17 names on the (memorial) list this year."



Hundley also talked about churches who are stuck in a previous era. "Smart people know we're living in the past," he said. "The 'now' is being stolen as we sit here. We talk about doing new things but then wait for someone to tell us when to start. ...We have to become the church of what's happening now!"



The Rev. Dr. Steve Hundley preaches at the Service of Remembrance.



The Rev. Derrick Parson addresses the Laity Session, above left. At right, Elen Grigg enjoys the music.



SATURDAY

Very early Saturday morning, conference members and friends again came out in force to work with **the Society of St. Andrew's** Potato Drop. As the sun came up, about 200 volunteers packed more than 45,658 pounds of sweet potatoes for the Southwestern Virginia Food Bank.



Photo by Rev. Jennifer V. Moore

The Virginia Conference again led the connection in giving to "The Advance." Conference Director of Justice and Missionary Excellence **Glenn Rowley** accepted the Advance Award for the conference from US-2 Missionary **Zach Ferguson**.

The Conference Offering was taken to support ministries in Mozambique, Brazil, Cambodia and the Richmond District Urban Ministry's Shalom Farms. The "4 Cans 4 Conference" collected nonperishable food items for the Southwest Virginia Food Bank. [See related chart on page 23 for totals.]

Harry Denman Evangelism Award winners include youth **Maggie Nave** of River Road UMC in Richmond; lay person **Nancy Haga** of Farmville UMC; and clergy **the Rev. Robert Lough** of Pembroke UMC, Roanoke District.



Left, Bishop Kammerer congratulates Maggie Nave. At right, conference Lay Leader Shirley Cauffman welcomes Warren Harper, her successor.

Warren Harper of the York River District and Wellspring UMC was elected as the new conference Lay Leader. His predecessor, Shirley Cauffman, delivered the Laity Address, starting with a shout-out to her "grand-dog," Neville, watching via live streaming. Cauffman urged members to freely share their faith stories. The conference expressed its great appreciation to Cauffman for six years as conference Lay Leader.

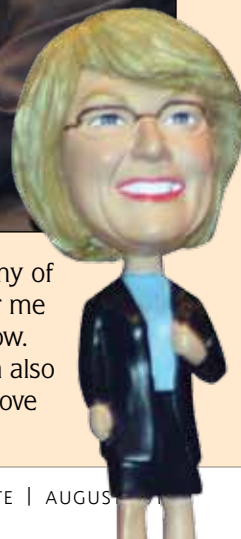
{ "[Shirley Cauffman] is "a great example of what servant leadership looks like." }

—Winchester District Lay Leader Kathy Lutman

Late in the morning the conference paused to formally bid farewell to **Bishop Kammerer**. During this time a video was shown with tributes to her ministry. "Bishop Kammerer has been a sign of hope and grace," said Eastern Shore District Superintendent **Tammy Estep**. Her commitment to mission and social justice was also recognized.



In her response, Bishop Kammerer said "many of you and your local churches have prayed for me unceasingly and I am more aware of that now. That has helped sustain me." Husband Leigh also thanked the conference members for their love and support.



SATURDAY



Alan Combs presents the bobble-head, left. Above, Chenda Lee talks about how Bishop Kammerer has influenced her life.

Young adult clergy **Alan Combs** and **Jessie Squires** presented the bishop a bobble-head doll in her likeness, which sparked great hilarity. Young adult **Chenda Lee** offered a personal story of how Bishop Kammerer has touched her life: She said she was struggling with her call, but heard Bishop Kammerer share her own faith story and was inspired to enroll in seminary. (She is the daughter of Bishop John Innis, episcopal leader of the Liberia Conference, who was also in attendance and spoke to the conference.)

Retired Bishop H. Hasbrouck Hughes, a Virginian who served as Kammerer's bishop in Florida, said "Charlene has a vision of what the church can be and should be doing... all with the heart of a pastor and sense of justice for the poor and disenfranchised."

Cauffman and **the Rev. Marc Brown** presented the Kammerers with a signed print by Virginia artist P. Buckley Moss, depicting a couple carrying a basket of apples. There was also a donation made in her honor to the "All Things New" fund.



"Pray for me," [Cho] told the audience, "but also for the revival of The United Methodist Church, the other 15 candidates, and most of all, that God's will be done."

The Rev. Tom Berlin, who heads Virginia's General and Jurisdictional delegation with Cauffman, gave the report from 2012 General Conference in Tampa. Berlin said General Conference this year was "embarrassing," and that the gathering is best at breeding cynicism. He invited United Methodists to shed that cynicism, set aside broken expectations, and consider their mutual love of the church. "You can do good every day and no one will vote you down," Berlin said.



Berlin (above) expressed his personal frustration with the failure of the General Conference to pass a restructuring plan, but noted that several general boards and agencies were voluntarily reducing the number of their members. He reported that the 2013-2016 budget was reduced by 6.6%, and the clergy pension plan was modified to be less expensive for local churches. Cauffman reported that General Conference removed guaranteed appointment for ordained elders.

The Rev. Dr. Young Jin Cho (below left with his wife, Kiok) was elected as the Virginia Conference nominee for bishop in the Southeastern Jurisdiction. A video was shown that chronicled his life and spiritual journey. "Pray for me," he told the audience, "but also for the revival of The United Methodist Church, the other 15 candidates, and most of all, that God's will be done."

Resolution 1, on developing an endowment of \$1 million over the next quadrennium for Africa University, was approved.

(Continued on page 22: "Saturday at AC 2012")

SATURDAY

"Saturday at AC 2012", (Continued from Page 21)

Martha Stokes, conference director of Inclusivity and Lay Leadership Excellence, and Darlene Amon, former conference Lay Leader and a member of the original 250 Task Force, presented a report on "All Things New – Vital Congregations." The "Invitation to Plant" has yielded 19 new faith communities so far, with many more on the planning board. The "Invitation to Harvest" is calling for a new culture for Virginia churches. Stokes described how the Virginia Conference "seed" of "All Things New" grew into the denomination's "Call to Action," and how "Vital Congregations" is an outgrowth of the "Call to Action." She said workshops for revitalizing and resourcing smaller membership churches are the priority for the coming year.

The Rev. Peter Moon, chair of the 5 Talent Academy leadership team, reported on improvements to the academy's offerings in the fall of 2012, including webcasts of events to multiple locations. Moon announced that **the Rev. Tom Berlin** and the **Rev. Mark Miller** would be the new co-chairs of the 5 Talent Academy.

The Rev. Dr. Youtha Hardman-Cromwell, assistant dean at Wesley Theological Seminary, who was representing the retiring class of 2012, delivered a sermon titled, "It's a Relay Race." Using the imagery of a track meet, she said "The baton is a symbol of the team and passing the baton successfully is key. We are part of a relay team working toward the same goal, with Jesus as our coach. We are not in the race to be winners, but so that everyone can be winners."

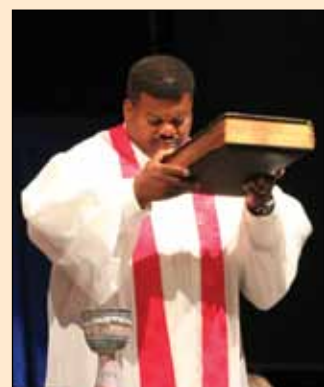
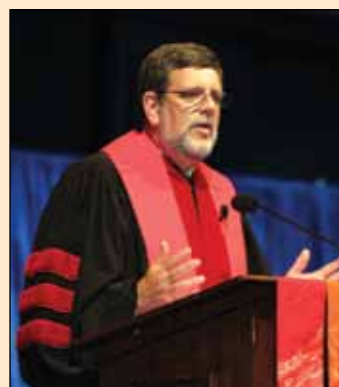


The Rev. Dr. Youtha Hardman-Cromwell speaks to the Annual Conference.

A large group of 37 clergy were honored as they entered into retired status.



The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, president of Wesley Theological Seminary, preached for the Service for the Ordering of Ministry, interestingly choosing the wedding at Cana as his text. "Becoming a clergy person is not about us, it's about the guests," he said. "It's about the party we're inviting them to called the Kingdom of God."



Left, Dr. David McAllister-Wilson speaks to the participants of the Service for the Ordering of Ministry. At right, the Rev. Lorenzo Hil presents the Bible.

During the service, 30 were ordained as elders, 29 licensed as local pastors, 24 were commissioned as provisional members, one received as an associate member, and one had his orders recognized.

Kits for Conference report 2012

TYPE OF KIT	# COLLECTED	COST OF KIT	VALUE
Health Kits	22,289	@ \$12 per kit	\$267,468
School Kits	13,163	@ \$11 per kit	\$144,793
Layette Kits	1,933	@ \$35 per kit	\$67,655
Birthing Kits	4,856	@ \$8 per kit	\$38,848
Cleaning (Flood) Buckets	415	@ \$55 per kit	\$22,825



Other Kits (Sewing Kits, partially assembled kits, and miscellaneous supplies) were also donated and have not been included in the total numbers reported above.

Total Number of Kits

42,656

Total Value of Kits

\$541,589

"4 Cans for Conference"

Pounds of food collected from 2012 Annual Conference attendees as reported by Kitty Tabor, with "Feeding America/Southwest Virginia"

9,540

2012 Conference Offering to date

\$171,697

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Save 20% on most items and Gain 5% back for Virginia Conference

Go to the Virginia Conference Web site, <www.vamc.org> and click, "Resources >> Cokesbury Virtual Bookstore."

* 5% return offer does not apply to textbooks, apparel, online downloads, or official denominational items.

SUNDAY

David Dommissie, the conference Treasurer and Statistician, acknowledged a slight decrease in total members, but noted that the percentage decrease from 2010 to 2011 was only .2%, compared with a 1.1% decrease from 2009 to 2010. He said average weekly worship attendance increased in 2011, and baptisms in 2011 exceeded those in 2009 and 2010. He also pointed out the growing diversity of the annual conference, citing increased participation by Hispanics, Asians and young adults. There was a 3% increase in baptisms, and 8% increase in small group participation, especially among children and young adults.

Dommissie also presented the treasurer's report, and highlighted an increase in apportioned fund receipts of almost 3% in 2011.

Conference Council on Finance and Administration President **Jeff Davis** spoke about a plan to balance district superintendents' salaries at a common level of \$88,000 annually. After debate, the new salary plan was adopted.

Resolution 2, "A Call for a Continued Moratorium on Uranium Mining and Milling in Virginia" was approved. Resolution 3, "Eliminate the Death Penalty," was approved, and Resolution 4, "End Life-Long Stigmatization," related to restoring rights of persons who have completed their prison time, was approved as amended.



The Drum Line of Asbury UMC in Richmond participates in closing worship.

"Virginia may be the only conference in the U.S. that has a drum roll before the fixing of appointments!" *Bishop Kammerer*

Bishop Kammerer was the preacher for the closing worship service. She opened with a description of a seventh grade science project to "grow something." She enlisted the aid of a cousin, Carlton, who was an expert tomato grower, and began what she considered an "overwhelming task... Little did I know that my junior high science project would be a metaphor for my ministry."

"We work together under the authority of God to bring in the harvest," she continued. "We're all just field hands working for God."

The bishop mentioned that her grandmother was a woman's suffragette in the early 20th century, and quoted a line from famous women's rights leader Elizabeth Cady Stanton: "This is winter wheat we're sowing, and other hands will harvest."

Ushers distributed the "Appointments" edition of *The Virginia United Methodist Advocate*, and appointments were set.



With an emotional blessing which ended with "and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be . . . I love you!" Bishop Kammerer tearfully concluded the 230th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference at 12:27 p.m. Right on time. ☞



"Top 10 Mobile Apps", (Continued from Page 15)

(Spanish), NASB, NRSV and The Message. You can also download CUV (Chinese), Latin Vulgate, LutherBible, Reina Valera and Septuagint + Greek New Testament for free. The translations are on your device so you need no Internet connection to use them. The BibleXpress intuitive search feature rivals Google. It allows you to choose how to organize your bookmarks and includes Easton's Bible Dictionary, with about 4,000 names, places and Christian-specific definitions along with Scripture hyperlinks. The app also includes a Prayer Journal that allows you to keep track of your prayers by contacts, categories and calendar. 📖

"Events", (Continued from Page 13)

Ministry as a Presence

Oct. 2-3:

Richmond Hill Retreat Center, Richmond

A diaconal retreat sponsored by the conference Order of Deacon and the Center for Clergy Excellence, will be led by the Rev. Gina Campbell, a United Methodist clergywoman, who serves as an associate at Washington National Cathedral, and as adjunct faculty at both the Edwin Friedman Center for Family Process in Bethesda, Md., and at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. The event will explore how we cultivate presence – in self, in others, in ministry, and in relationship to God? – through spiritual and Family Systems study. One CEU will be given for full participation. For information, call 1-800-768-6040, ext. 126, or (804) 521-1126, or e-mail BethDowns@vaumc.org. To register, go to www.vaumc.org and click "Events" and the date. The deadline to register is Sept. 1.

Sexual Ethics Training

Oct. 9, Oct. 27:

Virginia United Methodist Center, Glen Allen

Training for sexual ethics is required for all clergy and lay professionals. The conference Board of Ordained Ministry offers an introductory workshop on the unique needs of clergy and religious professionals engaged in United Methodist ministry exploring concepts of how to maintain healthy boundaries along with issues of access, power and control, vulnerability, and transference. An orientation to our conference policy on sexual ethics and the process utilized for seeking reconciliation and resolution upon the occasion of boundary violations is also explored. Both Saturday trainings will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The cost is \$10, which includes lunch. One-half CEU will be given. For information, call 1-800-768-6040, ext. 126, or (804) 521-1126, or e-mail BethDowns@vaumc.org. To register, go to www.vaumc.org and click "Events" and the date.

New Church Leadership Institute

Nov. 13-15:

Virginia United Methodist Center, Glen Allen

The training event will help clergy and laity discern whether church planting is a part of their call. This event is being sponsored by the conference Center for Congregational Excellence and will be led by Jim Griffith. You can register online at www.vaumc.org/NCLIRegistration

Be the Gift!

Dec. 26-Jan.5: Nassau, Bahamas

The Virginia Conference Council on Young Adults is offering a mission trip to Nassau, where the group will serve two different orphanages and an AIDS camp. The event is open to all young adults across the conference. For more information, contact Rev. Jessie Squires at pastorjessiesquires@gmail.com.

Reporting Child Abuse Training

Jan. 15, 2013: Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center; or

March 16, 2013: United Methodist Center, Glen Allen

Required training to equip clergy and lay professionals with skills to understand our Virginia Conference policy regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect is also offered by the board. A pre-workshop, on-line course is also required. You will receive information by e-mail prior to the date of your workshop. The cost is \$10, which includes lunch. One-half CEU will be given. For information, call 1-800-768-6040, ext. 126, or (804) 521-1126, or e-mail BethDowns@vaumc.org. To register, go to www.vaumc.org and click "Events" and the date.



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Devotions from International Lesson Series

LIVING THE WORD



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Tasi Perkins is an ordained Elder in the Virginia Conference and a Ph.D. student in the Georgetown University Department of Theology. From 2005-2009 he served the three churches of the Buckingham Charge in the Farmville District. He received degrees from Cornell and Duke Universities and began doctoral studies at Boston University before moving to Georgetown. Perkins has ministered in military, prison and hospital chaplaincies. His research interests include restorative justice, Christian theological understandings of Islam and narrative bases for active nonviolence.

August 5, 2012
"Justice is for the Other"
Psalm 146:1-10

The scriptures sing the praises of people who care for others. Jesus tells us that the law and prophets hang on the principle of love for God and neighbor. A lawyer once asked Jesus to define the word neighbor — he wanted to know the minimum amount of love which God requires. Jesus responded with the story of the Good Samaritan, the moral of which is that neighbors are not just the people who look, act, and talk like us. In fact, to be a good neighbor we have to be willing to go beyond our own communities, our own families, our own political, ethnic, and religious groups. We have to be willing to love everyone. We have to be willing to love "the Other."

Who is the Other? The Other is that person who is unlike us. Maybe the Other is someone who gets under our skin. Maybe the Other is someone whose lifestyle we consider to be dirty or shameful. Maybe the Other is someone with whom we simply have nothing in common. Do we love the Other? If so, then we fulfill the commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves.

There is a certain kind of Other for which the scriptures seem to have a particular fondness. This Other is the Marginalized Other. This Other is on the fringes of society and has not necessarily had a good life. Maybe this person made some mistakes or maybe life just dealt him or her a bad hand. Jesus was chastised for associating with the Marginalized Other — women, Samaritans, gentiles, lepers, the sick, children, unclean people, prostitutes, tax collectors. You don't always make a lot of friends when you have a heart for the Marginalized Other. But God befriends those who care about the Marginalized Other. After all, God cares for the Other; God is the Other's advocate and friend. The psalmist celebrates God's concern for the Other's justice and welfare:

"[The LORD] executes justice for the oppressed [and] gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous. The LORD watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow." (Psalm 146:7-9a)

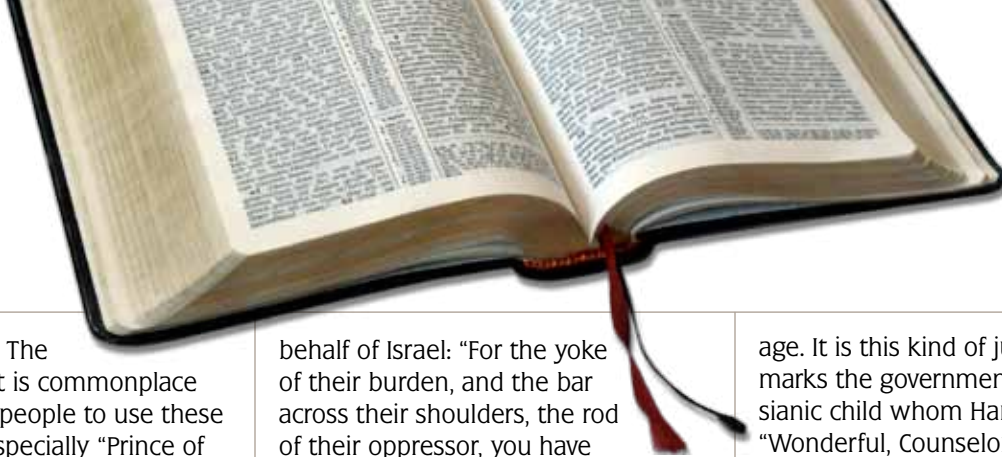
The litany is striking: the oppressed, the hungry, the prisoners, the blind, those who are bowed down, the righteous, the strangers, the orphan, the widow. So the question is, If God has a special agenda for restoring the Marginalized Other, why don't we?

Some of us think that taking care of the Marginalized Other is a good idea as long as we aren't the ones to do it. We have our own problems; we need someone to take care of us. And this is true, of course. Everyone is in need of grace, and there are some from whom the world has taken so much that they simply have nothing left to give. When we do give, we often give to people who share our own particular struggle. We are more likely to take care of someone who suffers from the same affliction that we do.

But every once in a while, we see examples of people who devote themselves to working on behalf of people who have a very different set of struggles. Francis of Assisi was a rich child of the aristocracy who worked for the cause of the poor. Frederick Douglass was a freed black slave who worked for the rights not just of African Americans, but also women. Abraham Heschel was a Jewish victim of Nazi persecution who worked for the cause of African Americans, marching alongside Civil Rights leaders. These people saw the Marginalized Other and out of a deep sense of love and justice they took care of people from other walks of life, just as the Good Samaritan took care of the half-dead Jew. They looked beyond their own self-interests, went outside of their comfort zones, and extended radical, active, loving justice to the Marginalized Other. They were good neighbors. So who are the Others in your world? Are they Marginalized? God works on their behalf. Perhaps God can do so through you.

August 12, 2012
"Justice is Liberation and Restoration"
Isaiah 9:2-7

A seminary professor of mine used to refer to Isaiah 9:2-7 as the "Gospel according to Handel." George Frideric Handel wrote the oratorio *Messiah*, which we usually hear during Advent. We know that stirring line from Part I, Scene 3, "For unto us a child is born" with the famous celebration of that child's names: "Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The



Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” It is commonplace in Christianity for people to use these labels for Jesus, especially “Prince of Peace.” But, as my professor liked to remind us, it is Handel and not the New Testament that quotes Isaiah 9:6 as a direct reference to Jesus. The “Gospel according to Handel” is very influential for many Christians. But while the Messiah quotes Isaiah 9:2 and 9:6, it leaves the rest of the passage alone. Because we hear these verses almost exclusively in Advent and generally through Handel’s filter, we tend to neglect the larger context of Isaiah 9:2-7.

The first two-thirds of Isaiah were written during a dark time in Israel’s history. The mighty kingdom of Assyria swept across much of the known world in the 8th century before Christ, conquering the northern Kingdom of Israel in 722-21 B.C. and reducing the southern Kingdom of Judah to a vassal state. Israel was subject to a mass deportation and exile. Isaiah prophesied in the midst of this great catastrophe. His message would have given great hope to those who believed it, but it would have been difficult for most people in his time to have shared his optimism: “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light...They rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest” (Isaiah 9:2-3).

Isaiah’s message is not some flowery sentiment, not some Hallmark card with lots of well-wishes but little substance. In fact, Isaiah’s message is political, practical and real. He doesn’t just talk about feeling better. He proclaims justice, liberation, and fairness. The people of Israel aren’t simply going to put on a happy face in the midst of unfortunate circumstances; they are going to be relieved of the source of their suffering. God will vindicate the oppressed people. Isaiah uses the language of social justice in anticipating God’s action on

behalf of Israel: “For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.” (Isaiah 9:4)

Two early Methodists show us that Christianity is empty without justice. Richard Allen and Absalom Jones were African American preachers from St. George’s Church, a mixed-race Methodist Church in Philadelphia in the late 1700s. The white trustees of the church resented Allen’s evangelical success, which was drawing more and more African Americans to the congregation of St. George’s. In order to keep the black parishioners from gaining influence, the trustees constructed an upstairs gallery and required black congregants to sit there. The tension behind this segregation came to a head one day when Jones walked into the church during a prayer. In piety, he dropped to his knees in the aisle and bowed his head. The trustees immediately responded to this violation of church etiquette, forced the praying Jones into the gallery. The black congregants filed out of the church en masse in protest of this injustice, and they never returned. Soon thereafter Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church, which remains one of the largest Methodist denominations to this day.

The black congregants of St. George’s had been forced into a sort of exile in the church balcony, treated as second-class citizens. But, thanks to the leadership of Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, the injustice did not go unchallenged. Isaiah knew God as the God who breaks yokes of burden, bars across shoulders, and rods of oppressors. He proclaimed political liberation in a time of national humiliation and demoralizing suffering. Isaiah declared what Allen and Jones also realized: God’s justice restores dignity and liberates those in bond-

age. It is this kind of justice which marks the government of the messianic child whom Handel rightly calls “Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”

August 19, 2012

**“Justice is Hope for a Better Tomorrow”
Jeremiah 23:1-6; 33:14-18**

The word “prophecy” often is believed to mean “predicting the future.” This misunderstanding makes sense: the Greek word for a prophet who speaks for God can be confused with a word for an oracle who tells your fortune. But biblical prophets were not primarily in the business of looking into crystal balls and handing out omens of things to come. Rather, their job was to speak God’s word to God’s people. Sometimes this meant foreshadowing events of the near or distant future, but more often it meant saying something timely to a people who needed to hear a specific message. A popular saying suggests that God’s word always “comforts the afflicted and afflicts the comfortable.” This is certainly true of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah’s prophetic career witnessed one of the most cataclysmic events in the history of God’s people. The mighty nation of Babylon swept into Judah, exiling the cultural elites, ransacking cities, and destroying the Temple which Solomon had built in Jerusalem. To these people Jeremiah gives a bold prophecy. Perhaps in one sense it is a prediction about the future, but it is so much more than that. It is a message of hope to people here and now, wherever here may be and whenever now may be. Jeremiah is promising the people something of which circumstances did not even permit them to dream. He is promising that God’s people will be restored, and is promising this pre-

(Continued on next page, “Living the Word”)

"Living the Word", (Continued from Page 27)

the future, but it is so more than that. It is a message of hope to people here and now, wherever here may be and whenever now may be. Jeremiah is promising the people something of which circumstances did not even permit them to dream. He is promising that God's people will be restored, and is promising this precisely at a moment when restoration seems utterly unthinkable:

"In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land...For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel." (Jeremiah 33:15, 17)

It is a remarkable thing to ask a hopeless people to hope. The kind of hope which celebrates God's future is found in the John Dwight version of *O Holy Night*: "A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices." Are you weary? May the thrill of hope for God's future cause you to rejoice. And like Jeremiah, may you look forward to a day when God's will reigns on earth and when justice and righteousness pervade.

Jeremiah is often called the "weeping prophet" because of his traditional association with the Book of Lamentations and because of the heartache he endured during his career. His hope for justice is all the more remarkable because he so rarely experienced it. Two 20th century martyrs show that the spirit of Jeremiah still exists in the church. Edith Stein, a Jewish-born convert to Catholicism, was one of the leading philosophical minds of her day. As a woman she was prevented from teaching at Germany's Göttingen University in the late 1910s despite her excellent credentials and unquestionable intelligence. By the 1930s she began facing discrimination not just for her gender but also for her ethnicity. Her Jewish background led her to be fired and forced out of Germany, and in 1942 the Nazis arrested her. Despite her efforts to challenge Nazi power and the opportunities she had to save her own life, Stein ultimately died in the Auschwitz gas chambers, a prophet of tolerance killed by a regime of prejudice.

Oscar Romero, an Archbishop in El Salvador, was an open critic of the military junta which seized power in 1979. Opposing terror and the persecution of poor people, Romero called on Christians to resist the government's repressive policies. In early 1980, while lifting the chalice during a communion service, Romero was gunned down by a political death squad. Like Stein and the prophet Jeremiah, Romero suffered at the hands of the unjust, yet his life remains a testimony to a hope for God's tomorrow. Even in the midst of hardship, we can join Jeremiah, Stein, and Romero in celebrating the fact that God's justice is just around the corner.

August 26, 2012

"Justice is Spiritual and Physical"

Ezekial 34:23-31

"How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed." These famous words from one of the English language's best known hymns, *Amazing Grace*, take on a special meaning when understood in light of their author's life story. John Newton lived in England as Methodism was emerging; he knew and admired Methodist founders like George Whitefield and John Wesley.

In 1744 Newton was pressed into service aboard a British naval ship. Though an able mariner, Newton grew to loathe the conditions which sailors endured. In protest, he deserted. When he was recaptured he was publicly flogged and stripped of his rank. He continued to speak out against the harsh conditions which he and his fellow sailors had to endure, and finally secured a transfer to a slave ship. Off the coast of Sierra Leone he became the servant of a tyrannical slave trader, and Newton frequently endured severe beatings and deprivations of liberty.

In 1748 his deliverance finally came – in two ways. First, he was rescued from a life of abuse when a friendly sea captain gave him passage back to England. Second, he experienced a spiritual conversion when, on May 10, his ship became caught in a violent storm off the coast of Ireland. From then on this twice-rescued sailor began to work for two kinds of liberation in God's world. He began to soften his stance on slavery, advocating the causes of legal rights and humane treatment for slaves.

In 1780 as rector of a large parish in London, Newton became a primary influence on the young William Wilberforce, whom history remembers as one of the great abolitionists. Newton's concern for social justice and physical liberation was equally matched by his fervent work toward the spiritual redemption of all. He understood with greater Christian Church that physical and spiritual justice are one.

Newton understood that justice has two dimensions, physical and spiritual, but each is incomplete without the other. Love of God is manifest in love of neighbor, and rescue from physical bondage is as important as rescue from spiritual bondage. The word "salvation" comes from a Latin word connoting health and wellness (from this word we also get terms like "salve" and "salutation"). To be saved is to be healed, and those who have been saved are called to extend Christ's healing to all who are broken.

Enslavement may be physical or spiritual. Newton, who celebrated his twofold deliverance in *Amazing Grace*, understood that as one who had been delivered, his Christian task was to work for the emancipation of all. Let us, too, work tirelessly and joyfully to extend God's justice to the whole world. 🍷



CLERGY & DIACONAL

Deaths



The Rev. James A. Edmonds, 75, of Palm Coast, Fla., and Blackstone, died on June 19, 2012. He is survived by two daughters, Tammy Tiltman and the Rev. Michelle Edmonds Lindsey. Edmonds served churches in the Virginia Conference for 31 years. His life was celebrated on June 28 at Wes-

ley Chapel UMC, South Chesterfield.



The Rev. James William Meredith Sr., 74, of Bassett, died June 29, 2012. Meredith received his Master of Divinity from Temple University. He began a ministry serving Powellton and Deepwater Methodist churches in West Virginia. In the Virginia Confer-

ence, he served Epworth, Selma, St. Mark's (Staunton District), Kenbridge, Round Hill and retired from Bassett Memorial UMC in 2000. Surviving are his wife, Connie Meredith; a daughter and two sons.



The Rev. James A. Pace, 49, Director of Discipleship at St. Luke's UMC, Yorktown, died July 1, 2012. Before serving St. Luke's he was formerly Minister of Education at North Riverside Baptist Church. Survivors included his wife of 26 years, Rachel, and their daughter, Emily. A memorial service was held at St. Luke's UMC and also in his home state of Louisiana.



The Rev. Michael Jamieson Putnam, 72, Chesapeake, died July 7, 2012, on his birthday. After retiring from a 20-year career in banking, he was called to the ministry. He went on to Duke Divinity School and became the pastor for Community UMC, Portsmouth, where he has been the pastor for the past 11 years. A service was held at New Creation UMC, Aldersgate Campus, in Chesapeake.

Arthur Breeden, father of the Rev. Terri Hoffman, died June 5, 2012. Rev. Hoffman is the pastor of the North Madison Charge, Charlottesville District.

Andrew Cousar, 87, father of the Rev. Barbara Cousar, died June 11, 2012. Rev. Cousar is the pastor of Horntown Charge (Friendship, Deas Chapel, St. Mark's churches), Eastern Shore District.

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CLERGY & DIACONAL

Ann Crenshaw Fox, mother of Caitlyn Fox Bailey, died June 1, 2012. Caitlyn is a third-year student at Union Presbyterian Seminary and a certified candidate for ordination in the Richmond District.

Joanne Walton Giessler, 75, of Mount Vernon, died July 3, 2012. She was the **mother of the Rev. Chip Giessler** of Evergreen UMC.

Julia McDermid Horner, mother of the Rev. Daniel William Horner, died June 9, 2012 in Roanoke. Dan is on leave of absence from the Roanoke District and his wife, the Rev. Pam Horner, is retired from the Virginia Conference.

Hikie Kirven, 74, of Richmond, the father of the Rev. Timothy Kirven, died June 12, 2012. Rev. Kirven serves Worship and Praise UMC, a new faith community in Richmond.

Andrew Olshavsky, 94, of Sharon, Pa., died July 6, 2012. He was the **father of the Rev. Rita Staul**, pastor

at Salem-Olive Branch Charge, York River District.

Woodrow "Woody" V. Satterfield, 75, died June 25, 2012. He was the **father of Tim Satterfield**, lay supply pastor serving Calvary and Kerns Memorial UMC, Danville District.

Yang Lim Song, 96, mother of the Rev. Paul Song, died July 1, 2012 in Fairfax. Rev. Song is pastor of Washington Farm UMC, Alexandria District.

Births

A daughter, Gineen Ellen Leamon, was born June 27, 2012 to the **Rev. Jim and Eileen Leamon**. Gineen has a big brother, James Franklin Leamon. Rev. Leamon is pastor of Orlean UMC, Alexandria District.

Hannah Siobhan Porter-Miller was born to the **Rev. Melissa Porter-Miller and her husband, Robert**, on July 7, 2012. She has a big brother, Shea. Rev. Porter-Miller is associate at St. Stephen's UMC, Burke.

The Old Stone Church Memorial Prayer Garden Project moves forward

The Old Stone Church Foundation announces the launching of Phase II of its Memorial Prayer Garden project at the site in Leesburg. Site work has begun for the installation of 50 additional engraved bricks as an expansion of Phase I of the Prayer Garden, which was dedicated in September 2011.

The Old Stone Church Site is the site of the first Methodist-owned property in America, deeded in 1768, and is administered through the Foundation by the Virginia Conference Historical Society.

For a tax-deductible gift, a commemorative brick will be engraved and placed in the Prayer Garden to

serve as a lasting tribute to those who are being honored. For more information, or to obtain an order form, contact Marge Williams, c/o The Old Stone Church Foundation, P.O. Box 426, Leesburg, VA, 20178-0426.



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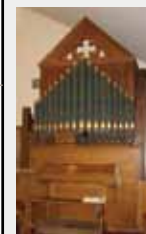
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ONE LAST WORD



Tweets heard 'round the conference

Morgan Guyton @MAGuyton

Why zombie apocalypse is a good metaphor for sin. Seriously! Ephesians 2:1-10.

Sarah Wastella @SarahWastella

Perhaps God wonders why I always eventually heed the call of my alarm clock's irritating beeps, but not the cajoling of the Holy Spirit

Kirk Nave @knav25

The truck is gone. All of our worldly possessions are gathered herein. I'm thinking itinerating was easier back in the day with saddlebags

Alison Carmack @lilmeezer

Failure is an option...volunteer youth leader declares I did not properly inform him he's actually leading youth VBS tomorrow

Dan Elmore @revdanelmore

"@lensweet: Some days I feel more like a dolt than a disciple." Amen!

Alan Combs @thricemantis

I think I would be good at being one of the re-enactors on "I Didn't Know I was Pregnant."

Kristin Holbrook @HolbrookRev

Communion with VBS kids tonight. My fave: "Wow, that DOES taste good!"

tbrysonsmith @tbrysonsmith

So thankful for the good people of @FieldstoneUMC. Overwhelming generosity. Wow. Tell It!



Pass it on...

During 2012 Annual Conference, Immanuel UMC, which is merging into the Annandale UMC congregation this month, gave its silver chalice and paten (used by the church in the 1960s and 70s) to the emerging congregation The Gathering UMC, located in Virginia Beach.

"We pray it will bless their worship!" said Immanuel's pastor, the Rev. Deborah Austin (at right, above). "I know they celebrate Holy Communion every Sunday."

"We have also given our children's preaching stole, as a way of planting a seed," Austin continued. "It has given us such delight to envision children and youth preaching the gospel and wit-

ness God answer our prayer."

Immanuel created a children's program in 2008 that began simply for children within the church to read scripture regularly. "So we began to pray to God, 'send us children with a vision to preach,'" said Austin. "About a year and a half later, two children came to me saying, 'we want to preach.'"

Immanuel is challenging The Gathering to also pray in this way. The Rev. Rachel Gilmore (center, above), pastor of The Gathering, says there are 30 to 40 children in their faith community.

Also pictured at left is Betsy Clevenger, Lay Leader at Immanuel UMC.

The day the photo was taken was retirement day for Austin and ordination day for Gilmore. ☞

"You gotta have a website. Period. 80-85% of persons looking for a church search on the internet."

Thomas G. James @ThomasGJames

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