

# Advocate



*Thy will be done*



## AC2016 *Wrap-up*

2016 VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE



2016 - 2017 Mission Opportunities Guide inside

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Virginia Advocate

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

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# PILLOW TALK



**Madeline Pillow**  
Editor

## Big shoes

**I don't know who will follow in Bishop Cho's footsteps, but somebody has to.** People say this often and flippantly, but I mean it—big shoes to fill.

I think everybody has their own "Bishop Cho" story or maybe even multiple. He is just one of those people who inspires goodness and mirrors holiness in a time when it is harder and harder to be holy let alone know how to live it.

Personally, Bishop Cho has gone from someone I would just hear about at the local church level, a figurehead, to a real person who has affected my spiritual life in just a year.


I guess I have my own Bishop Cho stories that I will carry with me. But probably my favorite was during my first week at the conference office. I was walking back to the kitchen as the bishop walked up the front hall steps. I smiled as we greeted one another, and I heard him say my name.

He continued up the stairs but I was frozen at a stop. He knew my name, and I had only been at the office for a few days. This may not seem like much, but for someone so busy and meeting new people each and every day, it's a lot. I know many people who rarely take time to do such a small act with such a big impact.

But that's who the bishop is. He is personable. He is genuine. His care and concern are not forced.

I know we are all praying as we get closer to the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference when our episcopal leaders are assigned as bishops. We are waiting for our next figurehead.

I pray, too, for this new leader who will guide our conference. But I also take time to remember Bishop Cho and the tremendous impact he has had on our conference through his quiet, passionate ministry.

To Bishop Cho, thank you for leaving such large footsteps behind. It makes our journey that much harder to carry on, but it's a great reminder of what can and should be accomplished. 

*Madeline*





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Candles burn on the altar at Annual Conference in remembrance of the Orlando, Fla., shooting victims.  
Photo: Betsey Davis

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conference website:  
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Cover: (Top) Holy Communion at AC2016. (Bottom) Provisional members gather in front of Bishop Cho.

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## 'Agree to disagree' might build unity

Wesley's quote to "agree to disagree" was lifted up in the June *Advocate* issue. Maybe this could be a principle for establishing unity between the progressive approach and the non-progressive approach within The United Methodist Church.

Uniting these two different approaches would mean that church leaders would have the option to instruct two separate paths to God's righteousness.

John 8:47 (CEB) tells us "God's children listen to God's words." Instructing two different approaches would also mean there are two kinds of "God's children," not just one.

The progressive approach has been justified by partially listening to God's words, partially casting God's words behind (Proverbs 50:17) and partially listening to an understanding found in *Hollingsworth vs. Perry*.

The progressive principles of gender identity found in *Hollingsworth vs. Perry* have been devised by the prevailing professional consensus. This understanding of humanity is an understanding that ignores the spiritual nature of humanity and is an understanding that is not seeking eternal life.

Legal experts have implemented the progressive approach based on the professional consensus that is void of the counsel from the word of God. The professional consensus is not truth but is upheld by legal authorities as a source of understanding that surpasses all understanding. This claim of a "better informed understanding" is only valid if the word of God is forbidden.

The believers' progressive approach is a "composite approach" derived from two sources of understanding: a little understanding from God and a little understanding from human experts devoid of spiritual guidance.

"Agree to disagree" would be the second step in the sequence for the progressive believer. The first step is for the progressive believer to "agree to agree" with the world of unbelief.

By agreeing with the world ruled by unbelief, the progressive believer may be successful in being loved by the world. But it also means agreeing to be "conformed to the world," agreeing to "obey the world" and agreeing to "walk as other men walk" (John Wesley, Sermon 29).

-Ed Craun, Mount Solon, Va.

## Evangelicals respond to Tom Berlin's Annual Conference presentation

At the 2016 Virginia Annual Conference, Tom Berlin reported on the recent actions of the General Conference. He spoke of General Conference's approval of the formation of a Bishops' commission to study the *Book of Discipline*'s statements regarding human sexuality, to make proposals for possible changes to the *Book of Discipline* and to consider the future composition of The United Methodist Church. We are grateful to Bishop Cho for providing the conference with an opportunity to hear a report that was timely, necessary and challenged us to seek earnestly God's will in these matters. However, we believe the presentation itself was flawed, by omission and by misrepresentation.

First, while Tom spoke passionately about the church's present plight and uncertain future, and offered a heart-felt call to prayer, he failed to name the important shift in our post-General Conference reality: United Methodists of all stripes are now acknowledging that our differences over human sexuality are deep and irrec-

# LETTERS

oncilable. Tom mentioned the theologically diverse group of top church leaders (including himself) who met confidentially with Council President Bishop Brown during General Conference. However, he neglected to reveal the remarkable consensus that emerged from this group, which asked the Council of Bishops to lead the church by forming a commission to work out plans for separation. The implication of developments at General Conference seems clear: it is neither reasonable nor responsible to expect that the Bishops' commission will pursue only one more elusive political compromise, in the hope that we may somehow keep irconcilable parties together institutionally. Rather, when the commission begins its deliberations, all things need to be on the table, including the possibility of a plan of separation. Unfortunately, Tom's report gave no acknowledgment of these new realities, but rather concluded with a declaration that the Bishops' commission must "figure out how we can stay together."

Even as bishops and leaders in the UMC were beginning to face the sobering implications of our intractable divide, 3,000 deeply-committed United Methodists in Virginia heard not a word about this growing talk of separation. Thus

they were left with only a partial picture of our real challenges. But in these times, it is not enough to continue to speak of and seek only a unity that seems no longer just elusive but also an illusion. As we encourage United Methodists to keep praying, the horizon of our prayers must expand to include the possibility that separation may be the most faithful way forward, for the good of all. That will not happen unless we are fully informed.

Second, while Tom's presentation about our differences over sexuality was instructive, it was also needlessly polarizing. Drawing upon the Rev. Tom Lambrecht's characterization of the range of our differences, Tom described the "Traditionalist Non-Compatibilist" camp (TNC, including evangelicals, conservatives, African UM's, etc.), as composed of those who "don't want to be in a church with people who don't agree with them" (In his presentation on Friday, he referred repeatedly to such UM Christians as "the far right"). But for most in the TNC camp, nothing could be further from the truth. Our 44-year history of debate over sexuality is itself a testimony to the fact that most traditional United Methodists have long been willing to live, worship and minister compatibly with more liberal United Meth-



The Rev. Tom Berlin, Floris UMC, Herndon, presents a report on General Conference. Berlin gave a longer report on Sunday morning at Annual Conference.

odists, in spite of our differences. Why? Because, with all United Methodists, our faith in Christ and "scriptural Christianity" finds particular expression in our shared rule of faith that is the *Book of Discipline*, our distinctive covenant of faith and practice. Disagreeing parties have, until recently, been able to remain united and hopeful precisely because all have understood and pledged themselves to be accountable to the *Book of Discipline*, whether or not they approved of all its language.

Times have changed: some United Methodists

(Continued on next page.)



# LETTERS

(Continued from previous page.)

have now demonstrated repeatedly that they are no longer willing to abide by the disciplinary covenant to which we are all bound. What TNC United Methodists find “incompatible” is not people who do not agree with them, but the wanton, unrepentant, often-ignored and even encouraged breaking of the *Book of Discipline* that is largely responsible for keeping us together. It is perfectly rational to expect that all United Methodists should find such blatant and chronic disregard for our covenant to be incompatible with any unity worthy of the name.

For decades, traditionalist United Methodists have prayed and worked for the strengthening and renewal of the UMC, that we may be truly one in Christ. We will continue to pray for a unity that now seems hopelessly jeopardized. We will also remain prayerfully open to the possibility that the will of the ever-creative Triune God may give new expression and form to Methodist Christianity within the Church of Jesus Christ. In these uncertain times, we remain confident that God is not finished with the people called Methodist.

If you are interested in learning more about what renewal leaders in the UMC

are saying about General Conference and the way forward for our church, we encourage you to take a look at this article: “Three Requests of My Centrist Friends – An Open Letter,” by Rev. Rob Renfroe (<http://goodnewsmag.org/2016/06/three-requests-of-my-centrist-friends-an-open-letter/>), and a thoughtful response to General Conference developments at: [www.methodistcrossroads.org](http://www.methodistcrossroads.org).

-The Evangelical Fellowship of the Virginia Conference

## Scouts have big impact on Virginia Juvenile System

The experiences of Annual Conference are everywhere, particularly when you are not looking for them. As in previous years, I showed up on the Saturday of Annual Conference, with my Boy Scout uniform on, when a conference attendee came up to me and shared a great story.

Here is a reprint of an article from the Northeast Region Boy Scouts of America (BSA) newsletter. Editor Ken Davis captured the magic of what Scouting can do in the hands of those listening to God’s call around them. Enjoy!

\*\*\*\*\*

*In 2010, the Patriot District of the National Capital Area Council worked with the Fairfax County*



*Virginia Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court to establish a Crew where the BSA could work with adjudicated youth in the Court’s Transitional Living Program (TLP). Due in large part to the success of that program, the Court asked in 2013 to establish a Scout Troop with the youth in the Boy’s Probation House (BPH). In March 2016 the Court awarded their Partner Award to the Boy Scouts of America for the work NCAC volunteers do with these two units.*

*Through this award, the agency noted that the local Boy Scout support helped achieve goals for the residents of the juvenile facilities, including:*

- *To expose the residents to new and unfamiliar educational and recreational experiences*
- *To enhance positive socialization skills with family, peers and authority figures*
- *To increase self-esteem*
- *To increase the ability to identify and meet personal needs*



Letters to the Editor are printed on a space-available basis. Letters may be e-mailed to [MadelinePillow@vaumc.org](mailto:MadelinePillow@vaumc.org) by the first of the month.

# COMMENTARY

- To provide for academic growth
- To develop and utilize functional living skills
- To develop accountability for self
- To promote respect, responsibility, and honesty

The Scouts meet with residents every week or two and teach them ways in which they can maintain the tenets of the Scout Oath and Scout Law by teaching them the importance of self-accountability, being honest and doing a good deed, among other values. BSA gives the agency boys the opportunity to learn and practice positive personal skills. BSA allows the residents of BPH and TLP to experience what it feels like to have success and to accomplish a task. The boys have earned numerous merit badges including First Aid, Cooking, Communication, Music, Chess and Swimming.

Residents are introduced to positive activities that they never thought they would get the opportunity to experience. Crew 62 and Troop 260 go on regular camping trips and participate in the yearly BSA Camporee. In 2014, Troop 260 led the opening and closing ceremonies.

It has been the goal of BSA, BPH and TLP to offer residents the continued benefit of Scouting once

they leave the programs. Each program connects interested residents to Scout troops in their own community. The BSA also offers each resident who completes the programs a laptop which BSA will repair or replace at any time, if need be. BSA has also helped to engage families in the program, by including parents in the Court of Honor ceremony where residents earn their next class and badge.

A few residents who have completed the programs have elected to continue with BSA and members of BSA have even helped residents obtain employment. This is certainly one of the best possible outcomes for the BSA partnering with other groups for the good of the local community.

Look around you. God's call is all around. Here our Scouting Ministry was the perfect fit! 🍷

-Bill Chaffin is Virginia Conference Scouting coordinator. The article mentioned was previously published with Boy Scouts of America and reprinted and modified here with permission.

## Advocate

The Virginia United Methodist

# EQUIPS CONNECTS INFORMS

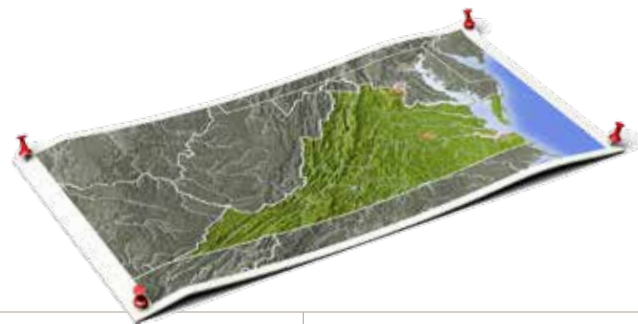
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# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



## Five-Day Spiritual Formation Academy encourages renewal

By Paul Beighley

**F**ifty participants, two faculty and five members of the leadership team assembled at the Roslyn Center in Richmond May 22 for the Virginia Five-Day Academy of Spiritual Formation. Of the 50 registrants, a majority were Virginia United Methodist clergy, although there were three other denominations and seven other states represented. The two faculty present were Dr. Roberta Bondi, retired church history professor from Chandler School of Theology and Robert Benson, poet and spiritual guide.

The Five-Day Academy model is based on Bene-

dictine spirituality, with elements that bring renewal to the mind, emotion, spirit, body and community. The theme of the Virginia Five-Day was "Shaped by the Spirit." At least four books were recommended by the faculty, to be read prior to the event.

Each day of the Academy has a theme, such as Invitation to a Journey, Covenant, Mystery, Healing, Grace and Bearing Witness. The rhythm of the Academy days begins with morning prayer then breakfast, first faculty presentation, silent reflection, community sharing, lunch, free time, second faculty presentation followed by silent reflection and community sharing, the Eucharist, dinner, covenant groups, night prayer and observance of the Great Silence until the end of the next morning prayer service.

One of the night prayer times is a healing service with anointing and laying on of hands. On the final night is a party for the community called "unstable" which consists of a celebration of baseball with peanuts, cracker jacks, popcorn and ice cream. For me, the highlights of the Academy included worship services in the Bishop's Chapel, the covenant group I facilitated and the healing service. I could see that participants were being shaped by the Spirit in various ways through the variety of means of grace offered.

In my decade-long journey with the Academy, a pattern of spiritual disciplines has grown, including morning and evening prayer, lectio divina, examen and spiritual reading. Wonderful friendships formed out of the five-day events I have attended. My spiritual life has been enriched, and I have sought opportunities to share spiritual formation blessings with my church and colleagues.

The next session of the Virginia Five-Day Academy will be July 30-Aug. 4 at Roslyn. 📍

— The Rev. Paul Beighley is a retired elder serving Bethany UMC on the Farmville district.

Participants at the Five-Day Spiritual Formation Academy in May. Photo: Bert Cloud





# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

## Five-Day retreat improves prayer life

By Julianne McMullen

**M**y prayer life. That's what I'm trying to focus on and improve in my life journey.

"It's called the Virginia Five-Day Academy for Spiritual Formation." That's what the leader of my Kindred

As I prepared to take this "journey," I was already experiencing a closer walk with God.

In preparation, I read several books, including one by each faculty member of the Academy. My spiritual life was in motion! The

"The richness of this experience put me where I needed to be."

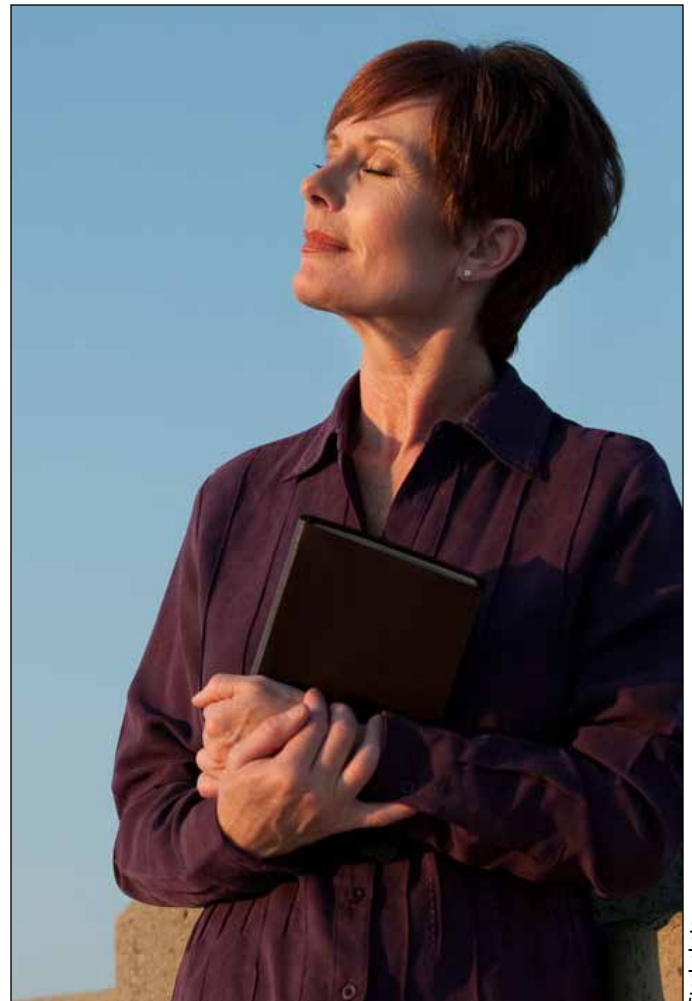
Project group, the Rev. Janet Salbert, said as she was encouraging me to participate in this Upper Room/VAUMC event.

I've been feeling called to a deeper, more powerful prayer life. That's what drew me to the Kindred Project group that meets monthly for contemplative prayer. I didn't ask Janet many questions, and I didn't know exactly what to expect; however, I did give her suggestion lots of prayerful consideration. After some time, I was finally certain that this was an opportunity to which I was called.

two faculty books were *Wild Things* by Roberta Bondi and *A Good Life* by Robert Benson.

These were, in fact, the first books that I'd been able to read since the death of our daughter which had put me in a place of deep grief. This accomplishment (the simple act of reading and retaining) proved to me that I was going to be able to read again and that God was speaking directly to me through these books.


This journey put me in a place of beauty, peace and hope both physically and spiritually. Humbling. That's



what it was. Humbling.

At the beautiful Roslyn Retreat Center in Richmond, the entire journey was orchestrated to put participants in a place where we were open to God's voice, each in our own personal place. Personal prayers, saying the Divine Offices, covenant groups, Eucharist, faculty presentations and discussions, as well as periods of silence and solitude, became part of our way of life for those five peaceful days. The richness of this

experience put me where I needed to be.

I would highly recommend this experience to anyone who is ready to be open to listening for God and to be in community with others who desire the same. 

— Julianne McMullen is from Woodbridge, Va. She is a member of Good Shepherd UMC.

# EVENTS



## August

### Lay Servant Ministries on-demand course

**Aug. 27, Virginia United Methodist Center, Glen Allen**

Lay Servant Ministries is offering a series of six on-demand learning courses in 2016. You may attend the live events 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Virginia United Methodist Center in Glen Allen for free, or pay \$30 to watch online from your own computer during a 90-day period to receive your certification. On Saturday, Aug. 27, "Preaching" will be led by Doug Forrester. For more information, contact Marge Sharp, on-demand learning registrar, at [registrarODL@vaumc.org](mailto:registrarODL@vaumc.org) or (757) 871-2809. For more information and to register, go to [www.vaumc.org/LayServantTraining](http://www.vaumc.org/LayServantTraining).

## September

### UMVIM Team Leader Training

**Sept. 24, Warwick Memorial UMC, Newport News**

Team Leader Training is required for all first-time United Methodist Volunteers In Mission team leaders, but all interested persons are welcome to attend whether leading a team or not. The Virginia Conference offers sessions in different parts of the state. For more information, contact Forrest White, Virginia Conference UMVIM coordinator, at (804) 938-1026 or [VirginiaUMVIM@gmail.com](mailto:VirginiaUMVIM@gmail.com).

### UMVIM Team Leader Recertification

**Sept. 24, Warwick Memorial UMC, Newport News**

Team Leader Recertification is required for all United Methodist Volunteers In Mission (UMVIM) team leaders who completed basic team leader training five years ago or longer. The focus of this training is to update leaders on

Virginia Conference UMVIM policies and guidelines, to share best practices, and to answer any questions you may have. For more information about this event, contact Forrest White, UMVIM Coordinator at [VirginiaUMVIM@gmail.com](mailto:VirginiaUMVIM@gmail.com).

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## October

### 5 Talent Academy

**Oct. 4, Ebenezer UMC, Stafford**

The 5 Talent Academy is a group of like-minded pastors and laity across the Virginia Conference who are committed to learning the tools and techniques to have healthy, fruitful congregations. As a member of this community, you will learn new ways to increase worship attendance, professions of faith, faith development, ministry to the poor and stewardship. This event is designed to help participants equip the people of their congregations to be the church in the world. Join the 5 Talent Academy on Tuesday, Oct. 4, for "Equipping People for Ministry Outside the Walls of the Church" featuring Andy Crouch. The event will be live streamed to 10 satel-

ites locations throughout the conference from Ebenezer UMC in Stafford. Go online to see all locations at [www.vaumc.org/5TalentAcademy](http://www.vaumc.org/5TalentAcademy). Early bird rate is \$25 if you register by Aug. 31. Regular rate is \$35.

### Church Leadership Institute (CLI)

**Oct. 10-12, Virginia United Methodist Center, Glen Allen**

The Church Leadership Institute (CLI) will help you discern your ministry style by offering greater clarity in the following areas: ministry competencies, core behaviors, spiritual gifts, affinity groups and place on the apostolic/pastoral continuum. Graduates will learn the basics on how to lead renewal in their congregations. Those feeling called to be a new church planter will have the opportunity to more fully discern that call. Register by visiting [www.vaumc.org/cli](http://www.vaumc.org/cli).

### Preaching the Advent Season: Sermon Preparation for the Busy Preacher

**Oct. 11, Location TBD**

"Preaching the Advent Season: Sermon Preparation for the Busy Preacher," sponsored by the Goodson Academy for Preaching. Location to be determined. For more information contact David Rash at [davidrash809@gmail.com](mailto:davidrash809@gmail.com).

### ARMS Retreat

**Oct. 12-13, Eagle Eyrie Retreat Center, Lynchburg**

The 2016 ARMS Retreat will be held this year at the Eagle Eyrie Conference Center, near Lynchburg. All retired clergy and spouses and widows and widowers of clergy are invited. Cost: \$60 per person; \$30 for first-time attendees. Speakers include Bishop Timothy Whitaker, and John Fuller, executive director of Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc. Look for more information to be forthcoming.

## Virginia United Methodists will celebrate 250 years of Methodist presence in America on Sept. 10

The Old Stone Church Foundation of the Virginia Conference Historical Society will host the 250th anniversary celebration of the Old Stone Church Site, Leesburg Station, at the historic site in Leesburg, Va., 2-4 p.m. on Sept. 10. The event will celebrate 250 years since the deeding of the first property to Methodists in America for “no other use but for a church and graveyard.”

At 1:30 p.m., processional groups of Methodists will begin walking and singing hymns from the two original churches formed from the Old Stone Church – Mount Zion UMC at 12 North Street NE and Leesburg UMC at 107 West Market Street. The walkers will converge outside the gate and enter the cemetery property together to celebrate this historical event. The Rev. Dr. Clarence Brown, pastor of Annandale UMC, will deliver the keynote address.

Processional groups will begin forming at each church building at 1 p.m.


Come and take this opportunity to learn more about the Old Stone Church property and its rich Methodist heritage. Memorial bricks may be purchased to be placed in the prayer garden at the historic site.

The Old Stone Church Site is located at West Cornwall Street and Liberty Street in Leesburg. For more information, visit [www.vaumc.org/oldstonechurch](http://www.vaumc.org/oldstonechurch).



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# DISCIPLES HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD



◀ On May 29, Memorial Day weekend, **Bethel UMC, Oilville**, in conjunction with The American Legion Post 215, Goochland, held an "Unserviceable Flags Ceremony" following the morning worship service. The community was invited to bring American flags which were no longer fitting emblems for display. One of the "unserviceable" flags was ceremonially burned in a dignified manner representing the total collection of flags. The remaining flags were taken to another facility to be burned. Following the ceremony, a fellowship lunch was held on the church grounds. Robert Gregory (left in photo), Post Adjutant, Judge Advocate for American Legion Post 215, Goochland, served as the presenter.



◀ Stop Hunger Now gained some new advocates and over 10,000 meals for its larders when members of **Chestnut Memorial UMC, Newport News**, invited them in for the day. The event was held June 4 at the church. Some 55 volunteers aged two to 90 helped bag packets of vitamins and minerals, freeze-dried vegetables, rice and a scoop of soy protein. The bags will be distributed to the world's most vulnerable populations, some 73 nations in all.

▶ Members of **Macedonia UMC, White Post** are always trying to find ways to invite people to church. They plan special events and services, encourage people to spread the word, and occasionally hand-deliver invitations throughout the surrounding neighborhood.

They've discovered that church isn't the first place to invite someone who may be intimidated by "church people." Perhaps you start by inviting them to an event outside of church

# DISCIPLES HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD

where Christians look like regular people having fun.

Recently, they planned a pool party at the local public pool, invited a D.J. to play a mix of Christian and appropriate popular songs, provided food and prayed for good weather.

They strategically planned the party on the last day of school because they figured no one was leaving for vacation on that day. Being the first pool party of the summer added a certain excitement — like checking out the first garage sale of the summer or heading to the ball park for the first game. A local business stuffed a basket with cool things to give away, and people entered a drawing by dropping their names in a basket. Those names were used to send a thank you to guests and invite them to church.

▼ In 1914, the congregation of **Main Street UMC, Suffolk**, gathered to lay the cornerstone for their third sanctuary. In October 2014 the congregation gathered again to commemorate the laying of that cornerstone and to begin a two-year celebration that ended on June 12, 2016, 100 years after the first service was held in the building.

In 2014, it became time to assure the continuation of this worship space. Efforts were initiated to repair



Macedonia UMC pool party

and renovate this sanctuary. Now, after two years of work, the task is complete, and on June 12, within a few days of being exactly 100 years after the first service in this sanctuary held on June 18, 1916, the congregation worshiped with songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.

George Birdsong, Centennial Celebration chairman said, "I have been in many churches and cathedrals over my lifetime but none is more beautiful and meaningful to me than our facility here with its classic design and beautiful stained glass windows. Nehemiah reports in our scripture reading for today, Nehemiah 12:43, that when the people dedicated the rebuilt Jerusalem wall they worshiped with rejoicing and great joy. This rejoicing

was sincere and powerful. It was so filled with singing, and with music from harps and lyres, that Nehemiah said 'the sound of joy in Jerusalem could be heard from far away. That is the type of worship I hope we all experience today and in every worship service hereafter.'

Many of the members had an active role in preparing for and executing the restoration of the outside and inside of the building. That restoration included repairing and restoring 14 magnificent stained glass windows. They were able to accomplish their goal through a successful capital campaign raising over \$1,150,000.





# 2016 VIRGINIA ANNUAL

*Craps*





# CONFERENCE

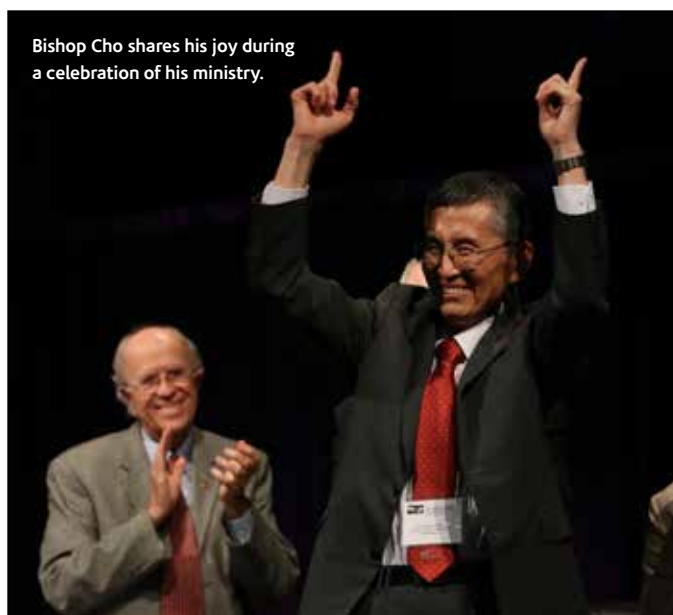


*Thy will be done*



The theme for the 2016 Virginia Annual Conference, held June 17-19 at the Berglund Center in Roanoke was “Thy Will be Done.” Bishop Young Jin Cho presided over the proceedings for the last time before his retirement.

With 49 candles on the altar representing lives lost during the Orlando shootings, Bishop Cho read a statement from the Council of Bishops and offered prayer for the victims’ families, leaders of the country and members of the Florida Conference. Annual Conference members later approved a resolution encouraging United Methodists to work to destroy the systemic fear, hatred and discrimination that leads to violence against LGBTQ persons and communities.



Bishop Cho shares his joy during a celebration of his ministry.

## Episcopal Address

In his episcopal address, Bishop Cho looked back on the accomplishments of the Virginia Conference over the last four years. He highlighted major ministry moments including the Imagine No Malaria initiative in which the conference raised more than \$1 million in 15 months.

He said he commissioned a task force to review and evaluate the strategic plan of All Things New-Equipping Vital Congregations adopted in 2008. Bishop Cho said the task force’s final report will be presented to the new Virginia Conference bishop as a guide and a way forward for the conference.



## Ted Smith endorsed for bishop

Members of Annual Conference vote by acclamation to endorse the Rev. Dr. Ted Smith, Fredericksburg District superintendent, for election as bishop at the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference to be held in July.



Rev. Ted Smith looks on as Bishop Cho calls on the body to vote.  
Photo: Barbara Lewis.

## Service of Remembrance and Holy Communion

The Rev. Myrtle Frances Hatcher, pastor of Main St. UMC, Suffolk, James River District, preached for the Service of Remembrance and Holy Communion in which 50 conference clergy and laity who died since the last Annual Conference were remembered.



Funds were raised in honor of Bishop Cho's retirement with contributions to the Bishop's Foundation endowment for spiritual leadership training.

## A Service for the Ordering of Ministry

Twenty-one men and women were ordained elders, two were ordained deacons, 14 were commissioned as provisional elders, two were commissioned as provisional deacons and 31 were licensed as local pastors in the Saturday evening Ordering of Ministry service.

Bishop Mark J. Webb, Upper New York Annual Conference, delivered the sermon and spoke about celebrating those who have chosen to be available to God's call upon their lives and the importance of a willingness to serve.

## Conference Mission Worship Service

The Rev. Eun Pa Hong, pastor of Bupyeong Methodist



Throughout Annual Conference, an outdoor memorial was displayed to honor the victims of the Orlando, Fla., shooting that took place on June 12.

Church in Incheon, Korea, preached for the Mission worship service saying he was thankful for American missionaries who came to Korea and built schools, hospitals and churches.

To date, \$131,003.58 has been received for this year's Annual Conference special offering, nearly \$19,000 shy of the goal of \$150,000. The offering will help the Methodist Mission in Cambodia train lay and clergy leadership and build churches; support the Methodist Church of Brazil programs with at-risk children; provide education and resources for training laity in United Methodist churches in Mozambique; and fund disaster response in Virginia, particularly long-term recovery work following Feb. 24 tornadoes in three districts of the conference.



## Bible Study

Dr. L. Gregory Jones, Duke University Vice President and Vice Provost for Global Strategy and Programs, led Bible study.

## Recognition of Bishop Cho's Ministry

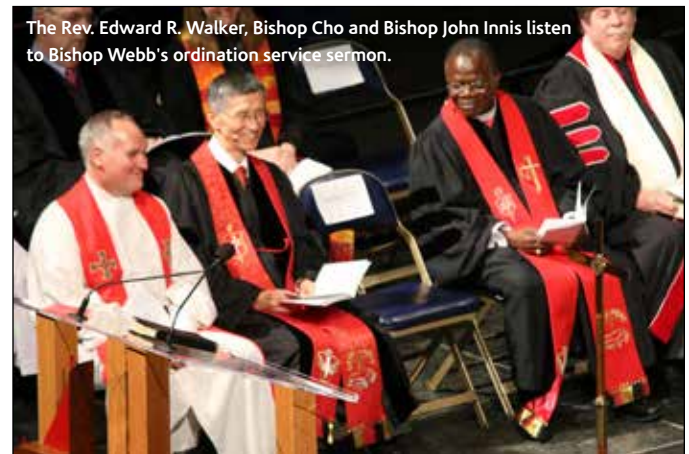
In a recognition of Bishop Young Jin Cho's ministry, Shirley Cauffman, chair of the Committee on Episcopacy, recounted his four years of service as bishop of the conference. The Rev. Tom Berlin, Committee on the Episcopacy, said, "You have reminded us that where there is great prayer there is great power."

Cauffman announced that \$14,310 has been contributed to the Bishops Foundation for spiritual leadership training in Bishop Cho's name.

A video was shown highlighting Bishop Cho's ministry. Following the video, the song "Happy" by Pharrell was played as members of the youth delegation danced with the bishop on stage.

The Rev. Clarence Brown, pastor of Annandale UMC,

started a bidding war to buy a life-size cutout of Bishop Cho. The Rev. Bob Parks offered the winning bid of \$3,200 from the Cabinet. The funds will go to the Annual Conference offering.



## Harry Denman Evangelism Awards

This year's Harry Denman Evangelism Award for clergy was presented to the Rev. Emmanuel Nkrumah, founding pastor of Ghana Wesley UMC in Arlington. Denman Laity Award went to Mary Elle Fuquay, chair of the Evangelism/Vital Church Team at St. Matthias UMC in Fredericksburg. Denman Youth Award went to Heather Galway, member of St. Paul's UMC in Staunton who has been instrumental in raising money for mission work.

## Order of Deacon

A celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Order of Deacon included a video and presentations from deacons talking about the ministries they provide.

## Conference Business

Ten churches were discontinued in five districts. Five new faith communities and their pastors were introduced. Fifteen new faith communities have been started this quadrennium.

The Rev. Marc Brown, director of Connectional Ministries, announced the retirement of Linda Rhodes, conference director of Communications, and said that Madeline Pillow has been named interim director of Communications.

Steven D. Brown was elected conference chancellor for the next quadrennium.

## Resolutions

Annual Conference voted to urge Virginia state legislators to enact legislation banning questions about criminal



history from initial job applications for public and private employment. Annual Conference members also voted to encourage all United Methodist local churches to establish a ministry to adolescents who are not reaching their full academic potential, with congregation members providing guidance and encouragement. A third resolution, "Responding to requests from Christians in the Holy Land," was withdrawn because it was already approved by General Conference.

## 2016 General Conference Report

Martha Stokes and the Rev. Tom Berlin, the laity and clergy heads of the General Conference delegation, reported on General Conference 2016.

Speaking on the issue of human sexuality and the conversations Berlin was a part of during General Conference, he talked about the number of opinions people have on this issue and the weariness people feel over the arguments. But he urged members not to trivialize this debate.

"Because even though we are weary with the argument, we've got to stick with it because we're talking about people's lives," Berlin said.

Berlin said he believes the special commission on human sexuality to be named by the Council of Bishops will do "the most important work in the next decade of the United Methodist Church."

But he reminded members that the real problems facing the denomination are the financial situation of the church and the decline of U.S. membership just as churches in Asia and Africa are growing rapidly. He emphasized the U.S. denomination is at a "pivotal, critical moment" and he asked members "to get down on your knees with us."

## Wrap-up stats

Annual Conference members brought 52,016 disaster relief kits for United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) to Annual Conference. Kits included 29,676 Health Kits; 17,637 School Kits; 2,634 Birthing Kits; 1,352 Layette Kits; 303 Cleaning Kits; 55 Bedding Kits and 359 Sewing Kits.

Attendees of conference contributed 10,039 pounds of canned goods and boxed dry foods as part of the "4 Cans 4 Conference" drive to benefit the Roanoke area Rescue Mission.

Members approved a 2017 budget of \$32,000,000, down 0.96% from the 2016 budget.

As of the end of 2015, membership stood at 327,647, down 0.46 %. Worship attendance stood at 98,253, down 4%. Reaffirmations of faith were at 4,010, down 6%. For 2017, there is a 2.2% decrease in apportionments towards mission and ministries. 🇺🇸



The Asian-American Clergy Choir performs on Saturday morning at AC2016.

## "The Things We Do Not See"— Inclusivity at Annual Conference



By Cheryl Edley-Worford

**I**n a recent Discipleship Circles Facebook post, I shared the following James Baldwin quote: "If I love you then I have to make you conscious of the things you do not see."

I, too, often find myself "not seeing" the plight of those who are somehow different than me. This became most evident to me upon beginning my work as director of Inclusivity and Lay Leadership Excellence for the Virginia Conference.

My job entails coordinating accessibility for people with disabilities during Annual Conference—a daunting new venture for me. Yet, ironically I've found this main source of my initial fears and doubts to be the most fulfilling responsibility of my job thus far, perhaps because (according to Gallup, Inc.'s Strengths Finder Survey) my greatest talents involve empathy—the ability to consider myself in other people's situations and understand what life is like for them. My Strengths Insight Report explains, "you are acutely aware of what it feels like not to belong. You probably understand the sensations that accompany not being accepted. You regularly go out of your way to welcome individuals whom others ignore" (Gallup, Inc.).

As an African-American woman, I sometimes experience feelings of not belonging due to my perception of others not accepting, ignoring, misunderstanding and even fearing me. Yet, my own fears help me understand how others at times relate to me (or not) because of my "difference." I believe empathy requires a heart connection related to the greatest commandment to love God with our whole being and to love others as we love ourselves. This Spirit-led love for others empowers us to, not only welcome, but to truly embrace and "count in" those who are different from us—in spite of our fears.

Webster's Dictionary defines inclusion as "to take in or comprise as part of a whole or group" such as "the act or practice of including students with disabilities in regular school classes." Exclusion is defined as "to prevent or restrict the entrance of . . ."

### What does it truly mean to offer an inclusive Annual Conference?

The idea of neither preventing nor restricting the participation of others during Annual Conference and truly welcoming, including and even embracing everyone to me involves:

- ❖ accepting COSROW's challenge to allow youth members to periodically switch seats with their district superintendents (and district lay leaders);
- ❖ providing extensive options for accessible seating on all floors and sides of the coliseum; and
- ❖ making wheelchair accessible routes clearly visible and assuring that all Annual Conference members experience equal opportunities to fully participate and express their views.

To move closer to total inclusion of people with disabilities during Annual Conference the following improvements were initiated this year:

- ❖ hiring an additional ASL interpreter to cover the laity session ;
- ❖ providing an image of interpreters on screen for those viewing through live streaming;

(Continued on page 29: "INCLUSIVITY.")



# Youth delegation at annual conference



Youth delegates are joined by other members of the Annual Conference during a session.

By Paulo Lopes

One of the great things about Annual Conference is the opportunity for local church leaders and clergy from all over the Virginia Conference to fellowship, to hear stories about what God is doing in their communities, to pray and encourage each other and to challenge one another. This experience becomes even richer when we consider the meeting of multiple generations of disciples in this great gathering.

Perhaps nothing demonstrates this multi-generational encounter more than the conference opening prayers, where the delegate who has attended Annual Conference the longest shares a microphone with a youth delegate who is attending for the very first time. What a powerful moment!

As we ponder the need for and importance of such interactions, we've sought out ways to increase opportunities for old and young to come together and to learn from one another. This is not an easy task when considering the size of our Annual Conference and challenges such as Safe Sanctuaries. Having said that, we were excited to experi-

ment with a few changes this year which we think added substantially to the cross-generational experience.


First, we made an effort to select a better "location" for the youth delegation at the Berglund Center. We chose a designated area which was more visible from the stage as well as closer to microphones. More importantly, we spread the youth out a bit to allow for other delegates to come and join them. The result did not come quickly. By the end of Annual Conference, however, there were several adults, both clergy and laity, sitting next to youth delegates during sessions. We're committed to continuing this effort.

Secondly, we received support from district lay leaders and district superintendents to do a "seat swap" with youth delegates. This meant every district superintendent and lay leader gave her/his seat away for at least two hours so that youth delegates from their districts could experience conference from a leadership seat. Meanwhile, several superintendents and lay leaders joined the rest of the youth delegation for a few hours. Youth delegates were very excited with the opportunity, especially getting to meet some of their leaders for the first time.

Lastly, we chose to have the youth delegation at the Berglund Center for lunch during Friday and Saturday. This was helpful in a few different ways. The delegation did not have to leave early or arrive late to conference sessions, and youths were able to interact with other delegates in the food court and display areas.

Our hope is to continue improving upon these initiatives in an attempt to enrich the experience for all those who attend Annual Conference. We are a better church when we learn to live in this wonderful and often challenging tension between young and old.

I'm reminded of the Scripture passage in Joel 2:28, which is later referred to by the apostle Peter in Acts 2:17. It says "... I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions."

What a beautiful picture of a multi-generational, Spirit-filled church! 

—Paulo Lopes is Virginia conference director of Ministries with Young People.



# Ordination Reflection

By Joshua King

His past month has been a high point in my vocational life. Eighteen years ago, I attended Annual Conference at the Roanoke Civic Center with my father and worshipped for the first time in the Ordering of Ministry worship service. At the end of that service, Bishop Joe Pennel invited those who felt a calling to ordained ministry to come down and be anointed and prayed for.

At the age of 11, I had heard the ordinands' answers, and I, too, felt called to answer those same questions. This past June 17 and 18, I had that humbling experience of answering those questions (both the questions in the worship service and Wesley's Historic Questions at the clergy session) as I was ordained. For the many people who attended both in person and in spirit, I say thank you. For those who have prayed for me and have mentored me, I also say thank you.

At the ordinand's retreat with Bishop Young Jin Cho and the Rev. Edward Walker (chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry), we took some time to discover how ordination has been prevalent throughout Scripture. The following is some of what was shared with us as we prepared ourselves for this grace-filled act of God.

The act of ordination is an historically biblical act. In the Old Testament, ordination of priests was a seven-day process of confinement. In Leviticus 8 when priests were ordained or set apart for ministry, they were vested with symbolic clothing and hands were laid (though the hands at this time were not laid on the priests, but rather on the head of the bull for sacrifice). Throughout Scripture, the act of laying on of hands has been present in the ordaining of God's servants. In Deuteronomy 34:9, it says that Moses laid hands on Joshua of Nun, and the Spirit was with him. In Acts 6:6, the apostles laid hands on the first deacons. In Acts 13, the apostles laid hands on Paul as they set aside him for the ministry to the Gentiles.

Some of our understanding of ordination has changed over time. The sacrifice of live animals changed as Jesus Christ was the last and sufficient sacrifice needed. But still we are observant of Paul's letter to Timothy that says, "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands..." (1 Tim. 5:22). We, as the Church, desire to know that those who are being

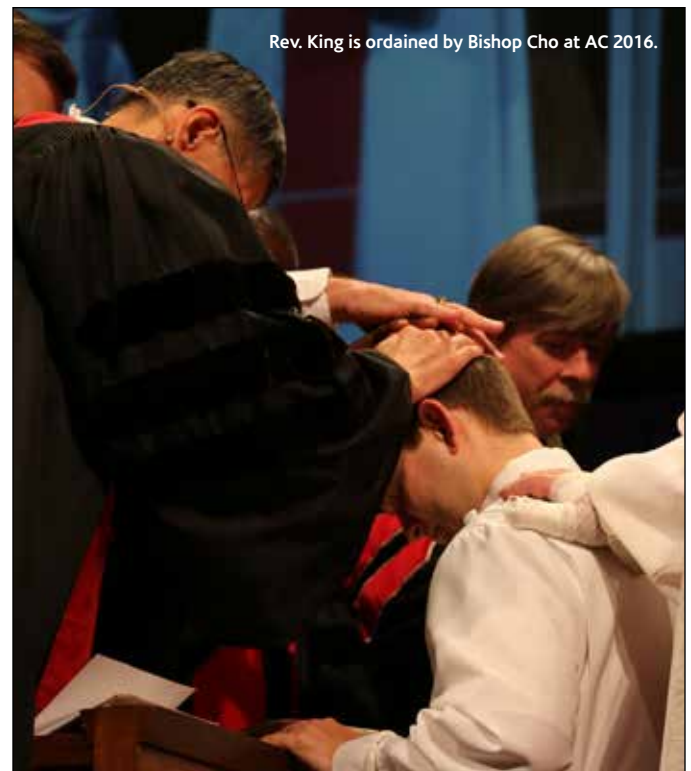
confirmed to a life of service truly have the evidence of God's gifts and graces. We also remain observant of placing special pieces of cloth, symbols of those who have been ordained, called stoles.

The ministry of the ordained, being set apart for the ministry of God, is a gift of God to the Church. Elders are ordained to Word, Sacrament, Order and Service. Deacons are ordained to Word, Service, Compassion and Justice.

But each and every Christian is first set aside for the ministry in our baptism. Our common ministry together is what God has done for us in calling us to be apart from this world, yet in and among it.

The hands that Jesus laid on Peter have been laid on bishops and pastors throughout time all the way down to Bishop Cho who laid hands on me so that when I lay my hands on a child to be baptized or a young adult who is being confirmed, it is the hands of Christ being laid on them through Christ's holy servants. 🇺🇸

– The Rev. Joshua King serves Red Valley UMC, Danville District.



Rev. King is ordained by Bishop Cho at AC 2016.

## Behind the Scenes: Who is that camera operator?

By Betsey Davis

During each Annual Conference, many people work behind the scenes to create a comfortable, working, communicating environment for the most productive conference we can have.

One team of volunteers is our video camera operators. Although the conference hires a main camera director and one full-time, professional cameraman, volunteer clergy and laity operate the additional cameras. They insure all of the cameras are providing full coverage both on the screens during conference and for all of the viewers watching the live streaming from remote locations.

In recent years, youths have been invited to participate. Rebekah Greer, a rising sophomore at Shenandoah University, was back this year after serving at AC before.

"I have always been interested in cinematography and this seemed like a good way to be involved," Rebekah responded when asked why she volunteered. "It was a good experience, so I am back."

The other camera operators this year range from teen Chris Kendall, a first timer, to former district superintendent the Rev. John Vest, who has volunteered for years.

It was the first year for the Rev. Thad Decker who said, "Being a computer geek, I was just excited to be taking part in the Annual Conference that allowed me to expand my knowledge and 'play' with a new toy! This was my first time, and I truly enjoyed it. I certainly hope to be able to help out like this again next year."

All of the camera operators agree that the best part of the job is being on the inside, seeing the action from a different perspective and feeling like they are contributing, not just attending, conference. The banter through their headsets is sometimes fun and entertaining to take the pressure off of what can be an intense, serious job. Just imagine, standing on your feet throughout every session and paying close attention to every detail. They report to duty early before each session begins and stay to the very end. It can be taxing.

In recent years, the platforms on which the cameras perch have been included in the "bar," so that delegates operating the cameras can vote on all issues, representing their districts and/or churches. They are informed voters, being present throughout entire sessions, focused on every speaker.

As camera operators, we enjoy saving the conference money, being a part of the action, and we are grateful for the opportunity to serve. 🇺🇸

*-Betsey Davis is a member of the conference Board of Communications and communications coordinator for Journey UMC, Farmville District.*

Chris Kendall worked as a camera operator for his first time at AC2016.



Camera operators are both contributors and attendees in their roles.





# Annual Conference workshop teaches forms of communication ministry

By Susan Petrey

The Virginia Conference Board of Communications held a workshop in Berglund Hall on Friday evening, June 17, during Annual Conference. Fifty-five local church communicators and board members registered to participate. The event was planned to respond to key areas for communicating inside and outside the church in a technology-infused world.

Board President Keri Marston has worked in church communications for 14 years. Opening the session, Marston said, "Communication ministry is a vital part of being the church; it is a vital part of growing the church, and most importantly it is a vital part of sharing the love of Christ outside of the church."

Keri talked about a few global communication concepts:

- ❖ Know your message. What exactly is it you want to communicate? Keep it clear. Keep it concise.
- ❖ Know your audience. You have internal and external audiences. By getting to know your audience, you can determine how best to communicate with them.
- ❖ Develop a communication strategy. Be intentional and not haphazard. Develop a plan.

Participants then engaged in four 20-minute presentations about various forms of communication ministry. These choices included:

**Facebook**—led by Betsey Davis, communications coordinator for Journey UMC, Farmville District. She also serves on the executive team of the Virginia United Methodist Women as technology coordinator.

**Communication in the Small Church**—led by the Rev. Michael Dettmer, who serves Bermuda Hundred UMC, James River District.

**Websites**—led by Kim Johnson, a digital ministry specialist working in several capacities for the conference and the local church. She works part-time for the Center for Congregational Excellence and part-time as a communications consultant for Trinity UMC, Richmond.

**Email Marketing**—led by Cynthia Lopynski, former

Member of the Communications Board Katey McCarney teaches a group about Instagram and Snapchat at the Communications workshop. Photo: Susan Petrey



director of communications at Floris UMC, Herndon.

**Instagram and Snapchat**—led by Katey Petrey McCarney, owner of the web design and hosting firm PetreyDish.com. She attends Chester UMC and is a lay member at large from the James River District.

**Blogging**—led by the Rev. Jacob Sahms who has been blogging for many years. He is former editor of **HollywoodJesus.com**, the current editor of **ScreenFish.net** and **ChristianCinema.com**, and blogs at **MustardSeed-Thoughts.com**. Jacob serves Wesley UMC, Hopewell.

Tish Borden, administrative assistant in the James River District office, found the experience informative with suggestions that she will begin to use in her local church.

"Mike Dettmer clearly explained understanding and relating to the 'culture' of a small church, using different means of communications within the small church (what may work in a mega-church may not necessarily work in a small church), and discovering new ways to publish our church's message," said Borden.

Those interested in future workshops or who have questions about this workshop should contact Board of Communications President Keri Marston at [kerimarston@yahoo.com](mailto:kerimarston@yahoo.com).

—Susan Petrey serves as administrative assistant in the Richmond District office and attends Chester UMC, James River District.

## Calling 21 celebrates 10-year anniversary



Past and present interns gathered at the Calling 21 banquet. Photo: Emily Howdyshell

by Emily Howdyshell

On Friday, July 17, 55 people gathered to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the Virginia Conference Calling 21 program. In its 10 years, Calling 21 has placed 82 interns in 38 different churches. The program allows young adults an opportunity to explore a call to ministry.

The program was started in the hopes of reaching younger generations so that they could consider their call.

"We were missing an entire generation of folks being called to work in church profession and we knew that we had to do something about it," said the Rev. Rhonda VanDyke Colby, a key member in developing the program.

In the first years of Calling 21, the Institute of Church Professions

at Shenandoah University partnered with Wesley Theological Seminary to sponsor a program that would notice, name and nurture young peoples' calls to ministry.

Since then the program has grown and developed in ways that the founders could have never imagined. Last year, one of the first alumna, the Rev. Megan Roth Clayton, was ordained. A sure sign that the program not only notices but is still nurturing the interns and churches to this day.

The Rev. Adam Sowder of Brad-dock Street UMC in Winchester reflected on the great impact the program has not only on the intern and church staff, but also on the church members.

"It gives the church a breath of life. It reminds our congregation that they are part of something amazing that is much bigger than themselves,"

Sowder said.

So what will the next 10 years hold for the program? The Rev. Justin Allen, dean of Spiritual life at Shenandoah University, is looking forward to the future.

"We are looking forward to the next 10 years because we have no idea what it will bring. That's where faith comes in," Allen said.

Allen also stressed that a key element to the success of the program is local churches.

"We need pastors with courage to call their congregations to encourage young people. So who will you call?" Allen said.

If your church is interested in learning more about becoming a host for a Calling 21 intern, email [info@calling21.org](mailto:info@calling21.org).

— Emily Howdyshell is director of Emergent Ministries at St. Luke's UMC, Yorktown.





# EQUIPPING FOR MINISTRY

## Beyond the Bake Sale: Cool fundraising ideas for everyone



**L**et's face it. Often, there's no "fun" in fundraiser. If your congregation is growing weary of the same old events every year, try some variations of familiar ideas. Giving a new twist to auctions, dinners, consignment sales and other events has the potential to bring in big dollars while involving multiple generations. Try out some of the ideas below.

### Try a youth auction.

Consider a new take on silent auctions by having your youths identify services they are willing and able to offer for auction — then let the bidding begin! A few ideas are:

- Tutoring
- Babysitting for an evening
- Pet-sitting for a weekend
- Doing yard work or housework
- Helping with holiday decorating

Invite a gregarious member of your congregation to be the em-

cee. Name the starting bid for each service. To add to the fun, have the youths dress the part (covered in strands of lights for Christmas decorating or in overalls with a rake for yard work). To increase the audience size, consider combining the auction with a spaghetti dinner or coffee and desserts.

### Sponsor a series of "An Evening with ..." concerts.

Putting on a concert can be costly if you have to hire the talent. However, your church has talent in the choir that most members would be willing to donate. Consider hosting quarterly concerts with a small admission fee. Make it a concert series and offer season passes as well as individual tickets. Cluster concerts around seasonal celebrations such as:

- Valentine's Day (Broadway melodies about love);
- Memorial Day or Veterans Day (military anthems and other patriotic songs); and
- Fourth of July (patriotic and folk songs along with a cookout and perhaps fireworks in the church parking lot or field).

A series might not yield huge profits, but it could provide enough to underwrite the music department's special needs. If you commit to a series, you may be surprised to see how many congregants — especially older members — are willing to buy a season pass. To draw even more people, make sure you publicize the concerts with front-lawn signage.

### Celebrate stewardship.

Make Stewardship Sunday a time of celebration. Involve children with a penny or loose change drive. Consider a potluck, (or catered, if funds permit) "Thanks for Giving" luncheon after worship. This is particularly timely if Stewardship Sunday falls around Thanksgiving.

### To make your fundraiser a success:

#### Remember to promote!

Always promote your events through print and digital newsletters, email, website and social media. Do not forget community newspapers, television bulletin boards and community websites.


#### Don't give up.

Often, new fundraising ideas don't appear successful immediately. Be patient and willing to try something at least twice before you gauge how effective it can be.

#### Be specific.

Keep in mind that fundraisers are not intended to pay all the apportionments or support most of the church budget. They are most effective when raising funds for specific needs such as youth mission trips or new choir robes.

#### Count the side benefits.

Never underestimate the power of fundraisers to bring your congregation together, create fun and expose your faith family to the outside community. Remember that while raising money is one goal, bringing people together is even more important. 

— Article from United Methodist Communications

# Devotions from General Conference 2016-based scripture

## LIVING THE WORD



*The Rev. Rachel May serves Boulevard UMC on the Richmond District. A graduate of Vanderbilt Divinity (MDIV) and Davidson College (BA Religion), she was licensed for ministry in the Virginia Conference in 2009 and ordained an elder in 2012. Rachel is a self-proclaimed raging introvert, defender of all things Eastern Shore and lover of what happens in the kitchen and around supper tables.*

### August 7, 2016

#### First Things First

**Romans 8:28-39** (NRSV unless otherwise cited)

**A**mong the things that grind my unsanctified gears: Passing off ideas as biblical when they are not actually biblical. Nowhere does it say that everything happens for a reason! I wonder if Romans 8 is to blame. This “all things work together for good” bit (v.28): Could Paul not sense how his words were destined for misappropriation?

The Apostle did not address his envelope to Richmond but to Rome. A wave of humility can wash over us when we recognize our snooping. It may be for holy purposes, but we are still digging through someone else’s mail.

We have to, right? Indeed, this part of the letter pours out the assurance for which so many of us long. Sometimes I use the affirmation of faith inspired by Romans 8 simply because I need to climb to safety, to that overlook where it is plain to see...God’s love will not back down.

That much confessed, I believe strongly in honoring the subjects of our eavesdropping, preferably before we get carried away with a life application for ourselves. It seems considerate.

Paul wants the Romans to know that he is coming (1:11). For the meantime he extends a retelling of the gospel. He knows of a debate there. It is over whom God means to save and thus these pointed words: The gospel is “the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek (1:16)”.

“First” is a fitting for word for a discussion on the Book of Romans. First things first, Paul names the divide between the convinced and unconvinced. [Was Jesus the Jewish Messiah or not?] In the first part of the letter, the Romans are asked to see God working in and through their disagreement. And because, in the first place, God was with those whom God called (8:28), so it will be at the last.

It has happened for a reason, this difficult season. One could survey the hardships faced by these early followers and say that. Don’t! Say instead what Paul effectively preaches: God will work it out, whatever the jam or kink. We, like the

Romans, are invited to be a part of that process. Because the ministry of reconciliation is tough, we ought to cling confidently to our belovedness. Taken together that is about as biblical as it gets.

### August 14, 2016

#### Surprise Kin

**Romans 9:6-18**

**I**f the gospel casts a net wide enough for Jew and Greek, then Paul has some explaining to do. Paul concurs. He will have to make it make sense or risk losing his Roman audience altogether. And so he carefully crafts this section of the letter. We know it as Chapter 9.

It has to be upsetting to discover that your family is smaller or larger than you thought. I am thinking of the story I just heard involving a woman introduced to a brother at her father’s funeral. She had lived over five decades of life under one impression. In an instant she gained an additional role, sister, which undoubtedly rocked her sense of identity. Can you imagine?

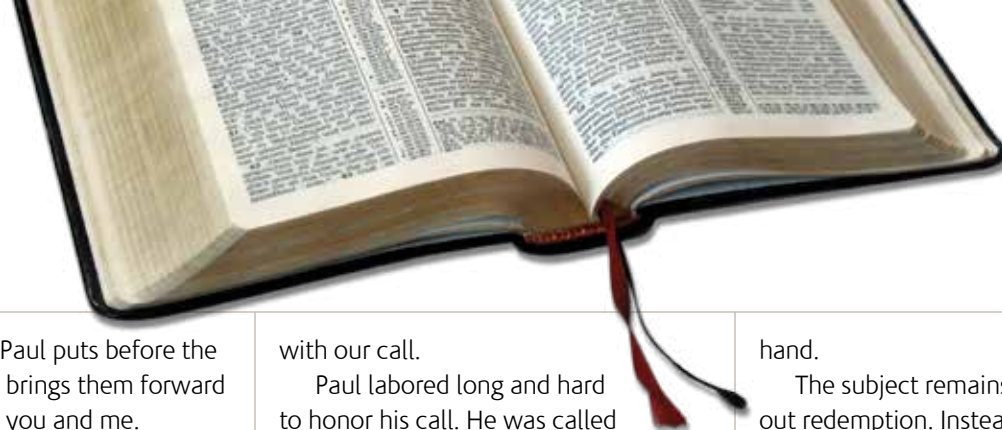
Paul introduces this sort of shock wave when he tells his “kindred according to the flesh (9:3)” that there is more to their family. I envision him bracing himself while penning these sentences about Abraham’s other children. The potential trauma is not in the fact that the Gentiles exist but in the reality that the Israelites, like the woman at the funeral, will have no choice but to see themselves differently in light of their shared origins.

They may feel as though the word of God has failed them (v.6). God was for the children of Abraham. Or so they had been taught. Whatever God had done in Jesus had to line up with God’s special care for one bloodline: Theirs. So how could Paul’s words be true?

Because, Paul writes, God is that merciful (vv.15-18). Divine compassion is such that of course numbers are being added to those deemed true descendants (v.8). A merciful God goes to great lengths to see to it that the circle of promise expands. There is nothing unjust about it (v.14).

Who are we willing to receive as kin in order to further God’s reign? And can we let God be God (without feeling slighted) when the family and, therefore, the family dynamics change? These





are questions that Paul puts before the Romans. The Spirit brings them forward in time to work on you and me.

The woman who gained a brother at her father's funeral is busy becoming a sister, I gather. God surprises us with all sorts of things; even, maybe especially, kin. Heads up!

## August 21, 2016

### Gracious Graft Marks

#### Romans 11:11-24

Once inside, insiders can forget that they were not always inside. It's a human phenomenon as old as time. It didn't take long for God to have to say: "Remember that you were once slaves in Egypt (Deuteronomy 5)."

When we are new to town, newly in charge, recently invited into a reality that preceded our participation therein, better behavior prevails. We are, at that point, still attuned to the extent to which hospitality is offered and how we present ourselves as wanting recipients.

Sometimes a circle widens. A chair bearing our name is pulled up to the table. One day we look up and see that against all odds we belong. It is a sweet realization.

With time, the graft marks fade. Nothing makes us mind the fact that we were and are an incorporated part. So begins the shift. Maybe we stop using the five minutes before a scheduled program to greet a stranger, turning instead to a familiar face, unaware that in so doing our back is to the door—the door through which we once entered for a first time. Maybe we start talking about the sorts of things that shut others out, not realizing that this is the effect even if not our intent. We grow less accustomed to asking ourselves if what we are about to do is in keeping

with our call.

Paul labored long and hard to honor his call. He was called to graft others in. The incarnation had wreaked holy havoc with the family tree. It was now plain to see, all sorts of folks were to be counted kin. Christ had asked him to take the life he had left to live and to wage inclusion.

You are a Gentile (the vast majority of you, anyway). I am a Gentile. We weren't always heirs to the presence and promises of our God. It is worth remembering because, I believe, it snaps us back to a place of Christ-like living. It puts us in our place. As we were once graciously incorporated, we concern ourselves with paying it forward.

You and I, like a wild olive shoot, were grafted in (v.17). Dare to see those graft marks and know them to be the grace that awakens us to our time as an outsider and equips us for the ministry of incorporation.

## August 28, 2016

### Love is the Law

#### Romans 12:1-2; 13:8-10

"The gospel does not challenge us to minor adjustments but to total transformation (The New International Lesson Annual, 521)." I cannot tell you the last time I have truly felt myself on the path to total transformation. Worse may be what can only be described as a lack of desire on my part to get onto that path. Total transformation is what I want to see happen to other people.

Maybe the Roman congregations were filled with people like me. In which case, Paul knows he has to address this state of being. "I appeal to you" sure sounds like someone who will beg and plead if he has to. Perhaps the Apostle recognizes the difficulty his listeners are having with the subject at

hand.

The subject remains God working out redemption. Instead of delving deeper into Israel's relationship with Jesus-following Gentiles, presuming such a thing is possible, Paul asks the Romans to consider the place of sacrifice in the practice of faith. He hopes they might be open to thinking of themselves as a living sacrifice, as an offering that keeps on offering (12:1).

As Chapter 12 gives way to Chapter 13, Paul's boldness shows no signs of letting up. There is one thing that the recipients of his letter owe each other: Love (13:8). Love not against the law, Paul writes. It is the law. And it looks like doing no wrong to a neighbor (v.10). Apparently, Paul, like the gospel he proclaims, has no use for minor adjustments.

But is this absurdity not precisely why you and I open the Scriptures? To receive the wildness of God and the bewildering requests that God has made of us through inspired authors...it is a most precious piece of our inheritance.

Augustine of Hippo's conversion is tied to Romans 13. Martin Luther was reading Romans when he finally realized that his faith was enough. It was Luther's introduction to the Book of—you guessed it—Romans, that provided the occasion for John Wesley to feel revived and hear a call to lead revival. This letter alone has facilitated all kinds of unlikely feats.

However far off total transformation feels, there is courage to find and heart to take in what we have been given to illumine the possibility. Long may Paul and the others us lead us down the lawful road of lovingly living as an offering that keeps on offering. 🍷

# CLERGY & DIACONAL



## DEATHS



**The Rev. Dr. Hunter P. Mabry**, 82, died July 9, 2016, after a long struggle with chronic radiation damage to his intestinal tract many years ago. A native of the Shenandoah Valley, he lived in the Waynesboro area and graduated with the Wilson Memorial High School class of 1951. Later, Hunter completed his B.Sc. in Rural Sociology at Virginia Tech, his B.Div. at the Candler School of Theology (Emory University) and served as a missionary to the Philippines, 1959 – 1963, under the Board of Missions of The United Methodist Church.

Hunter completed his Ph.D. in Sociology of Religion and Social Ethics at the Boston University School of Theology in 1969 and over the next 25 years served on the faculty of the United Theological College, Bangalore, under the sponsorship of The General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) where he helped to train students at the B.D., M.Th. and D.Th levels. His published writings include *Christian Ethics*, *An Introductory Reader*, *The Christian Clergy in India*, Vol. 1, *Social Structure and Social Roles* and *Manual for Researchers and Writers*.

Survivors include his beloved wife of 53 years, Dr. Esther Galima Mabry; sister Marie Lowe, who lives in Mississippi; son Philip of Waynesboro; and daughter Ruth of Oman, along with son-in-law Abdulrahim Al-Bahlani and grandchildren Malik and Zakaria.

After his retirement from the GBGM in 1996, Hunter devoted much of his time and energy to voluntarism, participated actively in other social justice established organizations such as Virginians for Alternatives to the

Death Penalty and Virginia Organizing and initiated actions on issues such as restoration of voting rights and opening of job opportunities to ex-felons who have paid their debt to society.

**Frances Burton Bottoms**, mother of the **Rev. Sandra Carol Bottoms**, associate pastor at Shady Grove UMC, Mechanicsville, died June 22, 2016. She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Norman Luke Bottoms Jr., and their infant daughter, Norma Frances Bottoms. She was the youngest of eight children born to Richard and Evie Burton in Schuyler, Va., all of whom predeceased her.

Besides her daughter, Frances is survived by a son, Norman Ernest "Ernie" Bottoms, and his wife, Taina Hall Bottoms; grandson, Jonathan Luke Bottoms; and many nieces and nephews, extended family and friends. Frances was a longtime member of Fairmount Memorial Baptist Church.

**Mary Ruth Alspaugh Parrish**, 86, widow of **the Rev. William D. Parrish**, 86, of Norfolk, died June 5, 2016. Mrs. Parrish was born in Winston-Salem, N.C., the sixth child of Carlton Gaither and Jessie Kimel Alspaugh. She graduated from Gray High School in 1946. She attended Nyack College in Nyack, New York, and The College of William and Mary. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education and a Master of Science in Education degree from Old Dominion University in Norfolk.

She taught in the public schools of Virginia in Norfolk, Prince George County, Warren County, Winchester and Prince William County. She was a reading specialist and the last 12 years of her career were spent in Prince William County where she was a supervisor of a Title 1/Chapter I reading program in 13

elementary schools.

She was a past president of the Virginia State Reading Association and the Greater Washington Reading Council.

She was also a member of The Circle of Service of Kings Daughters Hospital and Ghent United Methodist Church in Norfolk. Mary was a faithful worker in all the churches that her husband served for nearly 40 years. She taught Sunday school and worked in The United Methodist Women for over 30 years.

## BIRTHS

**The Rev. Anne West Kesner**, Elizabeth River District, and her husband, **James**, are pleased to announce the birth of **Parker James Kesner**. Born June 9, 2016, he was 7 lbs., 12 ounces and 20 inches long. Proud grandparents are Don and Marilyn West and the Rev. Danny and Barbara Kesner.

**The Rev. Intek Oh** and his wife, **Hanna**, announce the birth of their son, **Jason Yire Oh**. Jason was born Wednesday, June 1, weighing 6.9 lbs. and 20 inches long. Rev. Oh will be appointed to the Brosville United Methodist Church. He and his family will arrive on June 27 from Atlanta.

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("INCLUSIVITY," continued from page 19)

- ❖ leaving the ASL interpreters' monitor on stage during the ordination service;
- ❖ taking a survey to help provide sufficient accessible hotel accommodations in 2017; and
- ❖ removing a gate that blocked an accessible sidewalk and providing additional ushers and maps revealing accessible routes.

Future plans include research on more efficient ways to provide computer-assisted note-taking and affordable closed captioning for videos.

I value my contact thus far with boards, commissions and groups such as Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR), the Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy (CEMCA), the Commission on Disability (COD), the Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW), the Older Adult Council (OAC), the Eastern Shore Discipleship Circle focusing on Race Relations and others that help us more clearly see the things we may not as we work to grow in God's love regarding inclusivity during Annual Conference and beyond.

Regarding the human sexuality discussion, I pray that our United Methodist denomination comes to an eye-opening, Spirit-led solution that truly reflects the values of God and helps those of all viewpoints become conscious of the things we do not see.

As the people of God, may we grow in love for God, ourselves, and one another—moving beyond inviting and welcoming to truly embracing with open eyes, arms, minds and hearts all those whom God made to be different from us. I believe we will be blessed by this—better able to see the things we do not as God would have us to. 🌹

—Cheryl Edley-Worford is conference director of Inclusivity and Lay Leadership Excellence.

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# FROM THE BISHOP



## By the grace of God

Dear Friends,

*May the grace and peace from our risen Christ be with you.*

By the grace of God we had a great Annual Conference. We worshiped together and were challenged by our preachers and teachers. We celebrated what God has done among us and through us during the conference year. We listened to the General Conference report and prayed together and shared in fellowship. I am deeply grateful for those who planned, worked and prayed for our gathering and for the many volunteers from the Roanoke District.

This article will be the last one I write for the *Advocate*. For the past four years I shared my thoughts and prayers with you through this column. I deeply appreciate all of you who read this column and encouraged me.

I also thank Rev. Tom Joyce who read and reviewed my article every month before I sent it to the office of Communications. Ms. Madeline Pillow, the editor of the *Advocate*, also deserves my appreciation for her patience.

I love what Paul said in his first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 15: "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me." This is one of my favorite lessons in the Bible.

Throughout my life and for almost 40 years of ministry, I have never forgotten this lesson. I agree 100 percent with what Paul said here, and this passage has also been my confession to God. Reflecting upon my journey to this moment, there are no better words than the words of this passage to describe what I am now.

By the grace of God, I was able to fight against poverty and illness in the early stages of my life. Although those years were full of suffering and pain, by the grace of God they became golden times in my spiritual journey. By the grace of God, my life turned the corner and changed direction at every critical moment, allowing me to arrive where I am today. Truly it is by the grace of God that I became what I am now.

Paul did not forget God's grace poured out to him. He did not want God's grace toward him to be in vain. He worked harder than any of the disciples. Paul had a clear motivation for his ministry. It was his deep gratitude for the grace of God. It was with a thankful heart that Paul sacrificed himself without any reservation. He courageously faced challenges and hardships in his ministry.

If there is one thing that helped

me continue my ministry, it is gratitude for God's grace poured out to me. Whenever I faced a difficult situation in my ministry, I always tried to remember what God has done in my life. It was gratitude for God's grace that sustained my ministry and gave me strength to wrestle with challenges. Because of God's grace, I tried to work hard.

But there is another reason I love this lesson. Paul continues by saying, "It was not I, but the grace of God that is with me." Paul's mission was very fruitful. He made a decisive contribution to spreading the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Paul left a great legacy in the history of the Christian church. But he did not say, "I did it." He never attempted to steal the glory of God. He never glorified himself. He always gave glory and thanks to God.

I want to follow in Paul's footsteps. If there is any accomplishment in my ministry, it is not about me. Rather, it is because of God's grace. I know I have many shortcomings. I know nothing great comes from me. Only God's grace and the help of many friends and colleagues made it possible for me to carry out my ministry as bishop. All honor and glory should go to the Lord. It was truly God's grace that lead me to this point.

Therefore, in closing my last article for the *Advocate*, I can only say that it was by the grace of God I was able to become what I am and was able to do what I did. Thanks be to God for God's amazing grace!!! And thanks be to all of you for your love and support!!!

In our Lord,

Young Jin Cho





# ONE LAST WORD

## Tweets heard 'round #vaumc16

**@justinallen21**

So proud of all the Shenandoah University band members, dancer, members of AC, Communications people! Shenandoah taking over! [#vaumc16](#)

**@SarahWastella**

Watch out, VA! Annual Conference has ended and United Methodists are flooding back into the world. Expect to encounter grace! [#vaumc16](#)

**@VTWesley**

Wesley Singers bringing it at the [#vaumc16](#) licensing, commissioning, and ordination service! [#loveoutloud](#)

**@bertcloud**

New initiative launches at [#vaumc16](#): "Imagine More Bowties"

**@MarthaEStokes**

"Okay, this is another holy experi-

ence" says Bishop Cho with his hand on the Book of Discipline talking about AC dates and sites. [#vaumc16](#)

**@ThomasGJames**

we just turned [#vaumc16](#) into a live auction.

**@lgbtrains**

Bishop direction to Conference after lunch leading into silent prayer: "If we shut up before God, God will speak up for us." [#vaumc16](#)

**@fluteVA**

At long last, the non-English sermon(ic element) I kept waiting for at [#um-cgc2016](#) is happening at [#vaumc16](#) Welcome Pastor Eun Pa Hong!

**@DebBroadwater**

'God calls us to holy friendships...' 'we must learn new patterns of faithful-

ness.' Dr. Greg Jones [#VAUMC @UM-Women #vaumc16](#)

**@AUMCYouthCville**

Part of the @CVAUMC crew gathered for fellowship at Annual Conference [#VAUMC16 #UMC #VAUMC](#)

**@sarahe\_payne**

The Faux-Cho goes for over \$3,000! [#vaumc #vaumc16](#)

**@TheJPLopes**

Last [#vaumc](#) "Happy" dance with bishop Cho! He got his wish! [#VAUMC16 #umc](#)

**@pastorgordon**

"The average United Methodist invites a person to church every 38 years." Said by Mark Ogren with a straight face. [#VAUMC #vaumc16](#)



Newly-ordained clergy members with Bishops Webb, Cho and Innis (front center) at AC2016.

# Advocate

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2016-2017



# MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

CONNECTING GOD'S MISSION AND FAITH COMMUNITIES IN THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH





Glenn Rowley

## MISSION CONNECTS US LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY.

**A** strong case can be made that our United Methodist connection is strongest through our missional outreach! In the office of Justice and Missional Excellence we are constantly working to offer new ways to educate, interpret and enlarge our conference vision of God's mission.

For more than a decade this booklet has been providing opportunities to follow the commitment of our Conference Missional Ministries Board, "To engage, connect and equip the clergy and laity of the Virginia Conference for God's mission."

The opportunities here focus on two vital areas of our connection:

- our commitment to missional apportionments that support our local faith communities and our national and international missional relationships
- opportunities for second-mile giving and hands-on engagement in God's mission.

From international mission partnerships and missionary support to Virginia neighbors who were devastated by tornadoes, you are encouraged to discover how the Holy Spirit continues to both call and guide us to not only give of our abundance to those in need, but to make ourselves available to connect as sisters and brothers in Christ.

To be sure, there are those who are suffering and wounded within these pages and need our care through our financial resources and ministry of presence. But there are also many opportunities to be in relationship with those wanting to connect with God's abundant grace like all of us who call ourselves by the name of the Christ.

So, find the opportunities here for serving, but also seek to find your mission vision. Seek opportunities to find yourself being served by those in need who may be seated next to you at God's table of grace.

In Christ,

Glenn Rowley

*Conference Secretary of Global Ministries and Director of Justice and Missional Excellence*

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#### Conference Committee on Mission Personnel:

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joannemaughlin@gmail.com



*Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ – the Message – have the run of the house. COLOSSIANS 3:15-16 (THE MESSAGE)*

## How to use this booklet

**A**s you look down the colored tabs to the right, you find many opportunities for your faith community to grow through being engaged in God's mission.

■ **Missional giving** is at the foundation of discipleship. As United Methodists we are a "connectional church" meaning we draw upon all our gifts and graces to bear witness to God's love wherever it is needed in our community or the world. We do that first by meeting the needs of our connection through our apportionments. This is the first mile we walk in our journey of faith in giving.

■ After this first-mile giving is shared, individuals or faith communities can consider the various **mission opportunities** offered within these pages. Gifts can be given through The Advance to mission projects, as well as supporting the more than 300 missionaries serving around the world and in our own conference.

■ This booklet can also be used as an **educational tool** in a variety of settings – new member orientation, Sunday school class, small group study and discussion groups, youth and young adult fellowships, or as a resource for finance and stewardship teams.

■ Finally, as faith communities searching for new ways to be involved in hands-on mission activities, you will find opportunities for serving God's mission in your community, our state, the nation and internationally. The resources for engaging as disciples in **mission and outreach** are here.

■ **Have questions about anything in this booklet or need more copies?**

Call the conference office of Justice and Missional Excellence at **(804) 521-1100, ext. 139**; or e-mail: **mission@vaumc.org**.

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5	Apportionments (First-Mile Giving)
8	UMCOR and UMCOR Kits
10	Virginia Advance Specials
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26	Advocacy Commissions
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32	Special Sundays (on back)



# CONNECTIONAL GIVING

Being a faithful disciple means following the commands of Jesus. And Jesus commands us to love one another. How do we show that love? Jesus tells us to feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, provide clothing and shelter to the poor, care for the sick and visit those in prison.

While it would be wonderful if we could reach out personally to everyone who needs our help, we know that is impossible. But when we join with other members of our congregation, put money into the offering plate, and participate in the carefully planned system of United Methodist mission and ministry, our gifts can stretch around the world, helping those in need and spreading the love of Jesus Christ, even in places where we can't go.

## FIRST-MILE GIVING

When you give to your local church, most of the money is used to support the ministries of your local congregation.

A portion is also sent to the Annual Conference to collectively support Conference Ministries Apportionments (pg. 6), General Church Apportionments (pg. 7), and Clergy Benefits Apportionments (pg. 5). These are the "First-

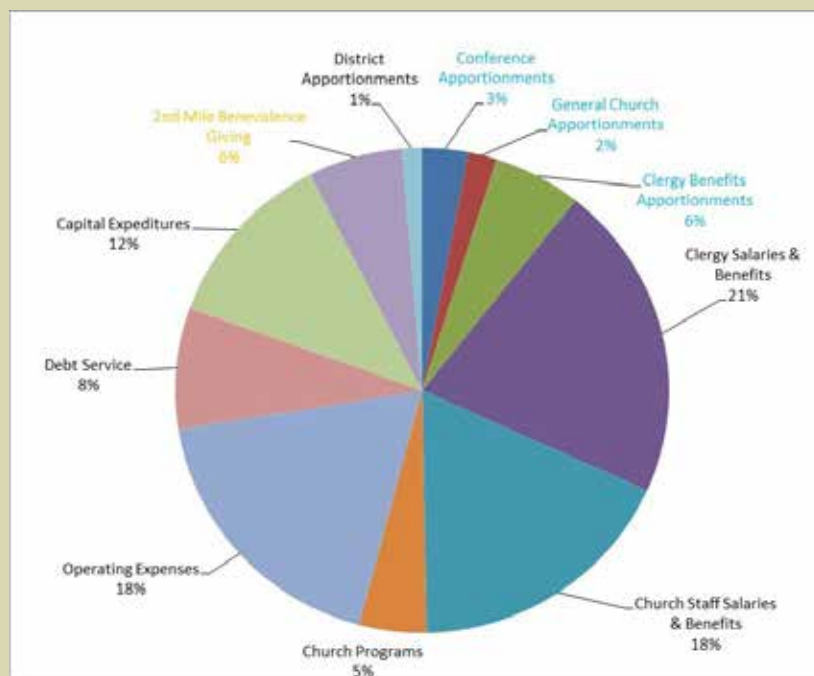
Mile Giving" expected of all United Methodists. The power of our apportionments – our collective First-Mile giving – is that it enables United Methodists to do together what no church, district or annual conference could do alone.

## SECOND-MILE GIVING

But Jesus says we should do more than the basic requirement – we must walk the "second mile" as well. We can go beyond the primary gifts to the church and contribute "Second-Mile" gifts to specific programs, missionaries and ministries through *The Advance for Christ and His Church* and through contributions to Special Sunday offerings (see back cover).

All Virginia Conference faith communities are encouraged to be Vital Congregations, growing in worship attendance, number of small groups, number of disciples engaged in mission, and amount of money given to mission. This booklet can help your congregation meet its Vital Congregations goals by walking the first mile, going the second mile, and then participating in hands-on mission opportunities.

2015 Local Church Expenditures





# CLERGY BENEFIT APPORTIONMENTS

**V**irginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc. ("VUMPI") is the Virginia Conference's agency focused on financing health-care coverage and pension benefits for clergy and lay employees. While VUMPI's mission is based on the administration and financing of these programs, VUMPI's staff members see this work as a ministry which helps enable Virginia Conference clergy and lay employees to develop and lead United Methodist faith communities.

The following apportionments allow VUMPI to carry out its mission:

## ACTIVE CLERGY HEALTH .....\$9,710,000

The apportionment for active clergy health plans enables VUMPI to maintain the self-funded health care coverage offered to full time Virginia Conference clergy and their families. Medical issues can arise at any time, without warning, and treatment can be very expensive. The health-related programs we administer not only help to dramatically reduce the financial risks associated with medical issues, but are also designed to encourage care that will help avoid costly medical issues. Without the coverage that is offered, our clergy would be exposed to potentially catastrophic financial risk.

In addition to actively serving clergy, the Virginia Conference health plan covers disabled children and surviving spouses of deceased clergy.

The active clergy health plan apportionment for 2017 reflects no increase over the 2016 apportionment. Similarly, in 2017, the personal contributions paid by those enrolled in the health and dental plans reflect no increase over the 2016 contributions. While overall medical cost trends are expected to continue to increase in 2017, provisions of the Affordable Care Act led to recent changes in the design of the Conference-sponsored health plans, and those changes are expected to mitigate the rate of growth in the health plan costs.

## RETIRED CLERGY HEALTH.....\$6,060,000

The health plans for retired Virginia Conference clergy help fulfill the mission of taking care of the clergy who have spent their careers taking care of others. While employer-sponsored retiree health care is not as common as it once was, we remain committed to helping support the financial security of our retired clergy. For those who are not yet eligible for Medicare, we offer access to one of the health plans that actively serving pastors can select, but the retiree is asked to pay a bit more than the active pastor pays. For those who are

eligible for Medicare, the Conference-sponsored retiree medical insurance program offers multiple options for coverage, with either direct subsidy of the health plan cost or indirect subsidy through a Retiree Reimbursement Account. The 2017 retired clergy health apportionment reflects no increase over 2016's corresponding apportionment. In addition, participant contributions and Retiree Reimbursement Account subsidies are also unchanged from the corresponding 2016 amounts.

## PENSION LIABILITY ASSESSMENT, PRE-82

.....\$1,000,000

We have made a financial commitment to our clergy who earned credit under the pension program in place prior to 1982. In order to fulfill that commitment, we are following a strategy that is designed to have sufficient funding for our total future pre-82 pension obligations by the end of 2021. Before this pension program was in place, surviving spouses of deceased clergy received no benefit under the program; once the clergy person passed away, the benefit payments stopped. Under the pre-82 pension program, surviving spouses of eligible clergy receive slightly reduced benefit payments for the remainder of their own lives. This can make the difference between living the rest of their lives with dignity and potentially facing poverty.

The 2017 pre-82 pension apportionment reflects no change from the corresponding 2016 apportionment. This is partially the result of VUMPI's strategy under which a portion of VUMPI's financial reserve is being deployed in order to mitigate the impact of clergy benefits apportionments on churches in the Virginia Conference. This strategy has been designed to be sustainable through 2021, at which point the expectation is that the entire projected pre-82 pension liability will be fully funded.

## TOTAL: CLERGY BENEFITS APPORTIONMENTS

.....\$16,770,000

# VIRGINIA CONFERENCE MINISTRIES

*"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now."*

Philippians 1:3-5

## CONFERENCE MISSION & MINISTRIES .....\$3,250,000

The Conference Mission & Ministries Apportionment connects all churches of the Virginia Conference toward a goal of fruitfulness and multiplication. Guided by a focus on leadership development, this apportionment provides a holistic approach to ministries that seek to disciple people in the Christian faith through existing congregations, new faith communities and ministries that reach beyond the local church. Funding for the Mission & Ministries Apportionment includes support for ministries in Virginia and around the world that disciple children, youths and adults, funding for campus ministries, disaster response, prison chaplain ministries, a unified response to natural disasters and ministries with persons from all walks of life.

## CONFERENCE SERVICES .....\$1,993,000

The Annual Conference through Conference Services provides a United Methodist Center where more than 9,000 attendees meet each year to carry out the mission and ministries of the Virginia Conference. Conference Services also supports the Annual Conference session where 4,000 clergy and lay members gather to worship, pray, conduct business and carry out our connectional vision.

Our Board of Ordained Ministry and staff manage the credentialing process of the clergy in the Virginia Annual Conference and support the clergy through programs, educational training and family support.

Our Treasurer's office is responsible for handling and safeguarding funds in excess of \$30,000,000 entrusted to the conference from local church apportionments and benevolences. The Treasurer's office supports the work of the Council on Finance and Administration, conference Board of Trustees and the Equitable Compensation Commission. This office serves as a resource for local churches in the areas of finance, stewardship, administration and insurance, and leads multiple training events throughout the conference.

The mission and ministries of the Council on Finance and Administration, the conference Board of Trustees and the Commission on Archives and History are supported through Conference Services.

The Episcopal Office is supplemented and is provided a parsonage, car and an Assistant to the Bishop position.

## DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS FUND .....\$2,055,000

The Virginia Conference supports the work of 16 district superintendents providing salary, pension, travel, workers compensation and continuing education. All other related costs, such as housing, district office expense and staff are supported through each individual district office.

## EQUITABLE COMPENSATION .....\$350,000

The Equitable Compensation Fund provides financial assistance for churches within the Virginia Conference which are unable to meet the minimum compensation for their clergy. Full-time pastors are guaranteed a minimum level of compensation dependent upon their ordination status. The local church or charge is required to provide a minimum amount frequently referred to as the "floor" level of compensation. The primary obligation of the Equitable Compensation Commission is to make up the difference between the minimum compensation level and the floor for churches determined to be eligible.

## CHURCH EXTENSION & DEVELOPMENT .....\$675,000

The Church Extension & Development Fund (CEF) is overseen by the Church Development Team and supports new faith communities in the first three years of inception as well as assisting existing churches reach new people.

## VIRGINIA EDUCATION FUND .....\$900,000

Churches across the Virginia Conference support the five Virginia Conference church-related colleges, universities and preparatory school. These institutions are Ferrum College, Randolph-Macon College, Randolph College, Shenandoah University, Virginia Wesleyan College and Randolph-Macon Academy. Each school provides scholarships to United Methodist students for attending. Additionally, this fund supports United Methodist chaplains on each campus that provide religious services and programs to all students. Many of our clergy come from these schools.

## TOTAL:

## Virginia Conference Ministries.....\$9,223,000



# WORLDWIDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MINISTRIES

## EPISCOPAL FUND .....\$900,000

Our bishops oversee and promote the church's spiritual and temporal interests. This fund underwrites salaries, housing, office expenses and travel costs of active bishops. It also provides pension and health benefits for active and retired bishops and their families.

## WORLD SERVICE FUND .....\$3,035,000

The World Service Fund provides the basic support for most of the worldwide mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church. This fund supports the work of missionaries around the world and funds evangelistic outreach, establishment of new churches, anti-hunger projects, social justice advocacy, and resources for local church work with children, youth, singles, students, disabled persons and adults of all ages. It provides basic support for the programs and administration of most of the general agencies of The United Methodist Church.

"The World Service apportionment represents the minimum needs of the general agencies of the Church. Payment in full of these apportionments by local churches and annual conferences is the first benevolent responsibility of the Church." *2012 Book of Discipline* (¶1812).

As United Methodists, our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. One way is by 100% support of the World Service Fund.

## GENERAL AND JURISDICTIONAL CONNECTIONAL FUND .....\$482,000

This apportionment combines the General Administration Fund from the General Church and the Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ) Mission and Ministry Fund. The General Administration Fund finances General Church administrative activities, including General Conference (the law-making body of the church), Judicial Council (which adjudicates questions of church law), General Council on Finance and Administration (which coordinates and administers the finances of the church and safeguards the denomination's legal interests and rights), and maintenance of United Methodism's official documents and historical artifacts, landmarks and sites. This money also supports SEJ administration plus program ministries of the jurisdiction.

## MINISTERIAL EDUCATION FUND .....\$1,025,000

Men and women choose ordained ministry because God calls them. The Ministerial Education Fund is our way to help them answer that divine call. This fund provides educational support for United Methodist ordained elders and deacons and diaconal ministers, and

provides essential support to the 13 United Methodist seminaries in the United States. Of the money received for this fund, 25% is returned to our annual conference for scholarships, clergy professional development and continuing education, and programs to encourage men and women to respond to the call to ordained ministry.

## BLACK COLLEGE FUND .....\$410,000

This fund supports the 11 United Methodist historically black colleges and universities in the United States, including one medical school. These schools provide opportunities for many students of promise who otherwise might be excluded from higher education. Graduates of these institutions — teachers, doctors, ministers, bishops, judges, artists and entrepreneurs — are leaders in the African-American community and in a rapidly changing, more diverse United States.

## AFRICA UNIVERSITY FUND .....\$92,000

This vital fund supports the only United Methodist-related, degree-granting university on the continent of Africa — serving students from 21 countries. Africa University provides higher education of excellent quality, enriched with Christian values, for both men and women, developing visionary leaders of tomorrow.

## INTERDENOMINATIONAL COOPERATION FUND .....\$81,000

United Methodists acknowledge that we are but a small part of the worldwide Christian church — the living body of Jesus Christ. This fund supports ecumenical efforts to foster a renewal of Christian unity and understanding as we work with other Christian communions to witness to a common faith, meet human suffering and advocate for peace and justice all over the world.

## TOTAL: WORLDWIDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH APPORTIONMENTS .....\$6,025,000

*As disciples of Jesus Christ, United Methodists covenant together to share in the gospel through their prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. Apportionments provide the connection through which this covenant is realized. As the good news of Jesus is shared in communities and regions across the world through The United Methodist Church, I invite you to pray with joy as you share the gift of faith in our Savior.*

—Marc Brown, director of Connectional Ministries



Collecting kits at AC2016.  
Photos by Susan Petrey

**F**or many people around the world, and even our neighbors here in the U.S., their first connection with The United Methodist Church is through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) serving as the relief and humanitarian arm of The United Methodist Church. Our goal is to assist the most vulnerable persons affected by crisis or chronic need without regard to their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. UMCOR believes all people have God-given worth and dignity.

UMCOR's work reaches people in more than 80 countries, including the United States. It provides humanitarian relief when war, conflict, or natural disasters disrupt life to such an extent that communities are unable to recover on their own.

While UMCOR cooperates with other aid organizations to extend our reach, its most important partners are the people it serves. It believes that successful solutions to emergency or chronic conditions begin with the affected population. UMCOR provides these survivors not only temporary relief but also long-term education, training and support.

UMCOR uses thousands of volunteers every year to carry out the ministry of comfort and relief, and UMCOR spends 100 percent of designated donations on the projects donors specify. When UMCOR volunteers give their time, money and supplies, we are the hands and feet of Christ.

What many United Methodists aren't aware of is that for 100 percent of your donation to meet an emergency relief need or to support a humanitarian project, the administrative and logistical costs have to be covered in another way. That way is the **One Great Hour of Sharing Special Sunday Offering** (usually observed the fourth Sunday of Lent, which is March 26 in 2017). Encourage your church to observe this important second-mile offering.

Of course you can donate to any project by placing an offering in the plate at any local United Methodist church or by calling **1-800-554-8583**, where credit card donations are accepted. In response to all disasters you can make an immediate \$10 donation by texting the word **RESPONSE** to **80888**.

You can get more information and give online by going to [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org) and clicking the "DONATE" menu button.

## Packing and shipping instructions for UMCOR kits:

- All items included in kits must be NEW items and should be packed in boxes with only one type of kit in each box. The contents should be clearly written on the outside or inside of the box.
- All kits are carefully planned to make them usable in the greatest number of emergency situations. Because of strict rules in other countries, kits must contain only the requested items — nothing more.
- **Do NOT include any money, personal notes or additional materials in the kits. These things must be painstakingly removed and will delay the shipment.**
- Complete two packing lists: one for your records and one to put outside the box with the shipping label. Paste the shipping label/packing list on the outside of each box you send to UMCOR. The shipping label may be downloaded from the UMCOR website at [www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies](http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies).

Kits may be brought to Annual Conference in June\* or shipped prepaid to: **UMCOR Sager Brown Depot, P.O. Box 850, 131 Sager Brown Rd., Baldwin, LA 70514-0850.**

Monetary donations include:

- \$1.00 per kit for processing and shipping
- \$1.00 for UMCOR to purchase toothpaste (Health Kits only)
- \$1.50 per cleaning bucket

If you prefer UMCOR to provide kits for you, include:

- \$12 for UMCOR to provide a Health Kit
- \$11 for UMCOR to provide a School Kit
- \$45 for UMCOR to provide a Baby/Layette Kit
- \$8 for UMCOR to provide a Birthing Kit
- \$65 for UMCOR to provide a Cleaning Bucket

SEND ALL MONETARY DONATIONS (including \$1 shipping for each kit and \$1 for toothpaste) ON ONE CHECK, payable to: **Virginia United Methodist Conference** (earmarked for "UMCOR Kits") and mail to: **Treasurer, Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 5605, Glen Allen, VA 23058**

**\*DO NOT PACK MONETARY DONATIONS IN BOXES WITH KITS! CHECKS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE! Send money before or immediately after.**

To learn about other UMCOR kits, Cleaning Buckets (formerly known as Flood Buckets), and Medicine Boxes that are needed throughout the world, visit the UMCOR website at [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org), the conference website at [www.vaumc.org/Mission](http://www.vaumc.org/Mission), or contact the conference Mission office at **1-800-768-6040, (804) 521-1100, ext. 139; e-mail: [mission@vaumc.org](mailto:mission@vaumc.org).**



**L**ittle things do mean a lot — especially when those little things are brought together as United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) kits. The contents of each of these “starter sets” are such simple, small things — pencils, tablets, wash cloths, latex gloves — but having or not having them can make a world of difference. That’s why School, Health, Baby/Layette and Birthing Kits are among the items most requested by our overseas partners each year. The need is great, and we can never have too many on hand. Collecting materials for kits is a great group hands-on project for young and old alike. The full list of additional UMCOR kits is available at [www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies](http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies).

## SCHOOL KIT

Note: no advertisements, religious, patriotic, military or camouflage symbols please; cartoon characters are acceptable.

- 1 pair blunt scissors, rounded-tip only; no plastic scissors
- 3 units of 8½" x 11" paper – consisting of any combination of single-subject spiral notebooks, top-bound pads or loose leaf paper (if using loose leaf, no more than 150 sheets counts as 1 unit). No bound composition books.
- 1 hand-held pencil sharpener; must be at least 1 1/2 inches long – remove from packaging
- 1 30-centimeter ruler, hard or flexible
- 6 unsharpened pencils
- 1 2½" eraser
- 24-count box of crayons; only 24-count boxes please
- 14"x16" cloth bag; homemade or purchased bags are both acceptable; heavy duty fabric only: denim, corduroy, drapery fabric etc.; closures are optional, but must be buttons, snaps or Velcro sewn in middle of opening if used.

*Assembly: Place all loose items on top of paper. Turn items sideways and slide into the cloth bag. Fold over the top of the bag so loose items do not fall out. Important notes: A pattern for the bag can be found on the internet at [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org). Go to “Relief Supplies” and download the “School Bag Pattern” PDF.*

## LAYETTE KIT

- 6 cloth diapers prefolded or plain diapers only; no disposable diapers
- 2 shirts; undershirts or onesies
- 2 wash cloths; infant size only – no adult cloths
- 2 gowns or sleepers
- 2 diaper pins; must have protective plastic closures – no regular safety pins
- 1 sweater or jacket; open from the front; may be hand-knitted, crocheted or sewn; hooded sweatshirts are acceptable
- 2 receiving blankets: 30"x30" or 32"x32" recommended; no crib blankets

*Assembly: Lay one of the receiving blankets flat on a table. Set aside the diaper pins and place all remaining items (remove from packaging) on top of the blanket. Fold the blanket around the items and secure the bundle with the diaper pins.*

## BIRTHING KIT

- 1 small bar soap, 1 oz. to 2 oz. size; do not remove from original packaging; small hotel bars are acceptable
- 1 pair latex, surgical or thin rubber gloves; no kitchen or thick

rubber work gloves. Gloves are not required to be sterile

- 1 square yard of clear plastic sheeting; must be 4 mil thick. Plastic trash bags and shower curtains are not acceptable
- 3 12"-long pieces of cotton string; must be clean. Secure the pieces of string by bundling and tying them together; no yarn please
- 1 single-edge razor blade; must be covered in paper or cardboard to keep it from causing injury. Regular shaving razors are not acceptable
- 2 receiving blankets; 30"x 30" or 32"x 32"; no thermal or fleece blankets please
- 1 plastic bag; one gallon size sealable bag only

*Assembly: Fold the plastic sheeting and blankets so they will fit easily into the plastic bag. Lay the loose items on top of the blankets and plastic sheeting. Slide all items into the plastic bag. Squeeze as much air out of the bag and then seal it.*

## HEALTH KIT

- 1 hand towel 15" x 25" to 17"x 27"; kitchen cleaning and microfiber towels not acceptable
- 1 wash cloth
- 1 comb – needs to be sturdy, no pocket combs or picks; rattail combs and combs without handles are acceptable
- 1 metal nail file or clipper – no emery boards
- 6 adhesive bandages – ¾" to 1" size common household band aids
- 1 bath size soap – 3 oz. and larger sizes only; all brands are acceptable, do not remove from original packaging
- 1 toothbrush – adult size only; do not remove from original packaging
- 1 plastic bag one gallon size; sealable bags only
- \$1.00 to purchase toothpaste

*Assembly: Lay out the hand towel flat on a table. Lay the wash cloth flat in the center of the hand towel. Place all remaining items on top of the wash cloth. Fold over the sides of the hand towel to cover all of the items. Fold over one end of the hand towel so that it covers all of the items. Grasp the bundle of items tightly and roll over the remainder of the hand towel tightly. Place the bundle in the plastic bag and seal the bag.*

UMCOR is now purchasing toothpaste in bulk before shipping to ensure that the product does not expire. **Do not put single dollar bills in each kit.** Toothpaste money must be sent to the Virginia Conference with shipping monies.

# MISSION CONNECTS US in Virginia

**G**od's mission in the world has no boundaries. Although when we first think of mission we usually think of ministry in some other part of the world, we also know that the need for us to participate in God's mission is most evident next door. Our call to mission and ministry in Virginia is represented by the following Virginia Advance Specials, which have been chosen for special emphasis by the conference Missional Ministries Board. These mission opportunities provide individuals and churches an opportunity to know that 100 percent of their gift goes directly to the project — another benefit of our United Methodist connection! For more information about these Virginia Conference Advance Specials, visit the conference website at [www.vaumc.org/Mission](http://www.vaumc.org/Mission).

## Virginia Conference Advance Specials

- 1. Roanoke: Shalom Zone/Grace Ministries:** Urban ministry that assists the residents of Roanoke in growing beyond their current circumstances while facing the challenges of life. Providing resources for those who seek to develop new skills, participate in healthy activities, and need the encouragement to make changes.  
[ncdickison@gmail.com](mailto:ncdickison@gmail.com) ..... (#5046)
- 2. Rocky Mount: Henry Fork Service Center:** Henry Fork Service Center seeks to make God's love visible by being a positive Christian presence in the neighborhood south of Rocky Mount, Va. Age appropriate activities for children ages 2-14 include Christian education, academic enrichment, nutrition, recreation and opportunities for the arts.  
[www.henryforkcenter.org](http://www.henryforkcenter.org) ..... (#5008)
- 3. Roanoke: United Methodist Community Outreach Program:** A direct-service provider for children and youths of poverty in inner-city Roanoke. It addresses basic needs of poverty such as food and clothing, and provides a safe environment for children and youths in dealing with issues of violence, racism, drug and alcohol abuse. ...  
[www.communityoutreachroanoke.org](http://www.communityoutreachroanoke.org) ..... (#5004)
- 4. Virginia Conference Disaster Response and Recovery:** Coordinates preparation, response and recovery in the conference during times of disaster. This addresses the personnel needed, equipment required and Christian witness that is desired in such situations.  
[vacdrt1@gmail.com](mailto:vacdrt1@gmail.com) ..... (#5037)
- 5. Eastern Shore: Agape Christian Children's Community Center, Inc.:** An outreach ministry to children at high risk for abuse, neglect and school drop-out on the Eastern Shore. Sharing Christ through programs like preschool, Vacation Bible School and computer training.  
[dougchild@gmail.com](mailto:dougchild@gmail.com) ..... (#5020)
- 6. Arlington: GRACE Ministries of The United Methodist Church:** A network of six churches in the Arlington District. Provides support and empowers the low-income immigrant community in northern Virginia through its ministries, distribution and job-training classes.  
[mreal@florisumc.org](mailto:mreal@florisumc.org) ..... (#5035)  
[www.graceministriesumc.org](http://www.graceministriesumc.org)

Photo from the Pathways  
Facebook page





- 7. Northern Virginia: ESL and Immigrant Ministries:** A network of churches offering English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to northern Virginia immigrant communities. Provides volunteer recruitment, student recruitment and administrative support for its partner ESL programs.

[www.eslim.org](http://www.eslim.org) ..... (#5036)

- 8. Teens Opposing Poverty, Inc. (TOPS):** Provides opportunities for youths to serve and share Christ to the poor and homeless. .... (#5010)

[www.teensopposingpoverty.org](http://www.teensopposingpoverty.org)

- 9. Virginia: Heart Havens:** Provides residential support for adults with intellectual disabilities through a network of 12 homes across Virginia. Heart Havens' homes offer a Christian, faith-based home environment, empowering individuals to be independent, contributing citizens in their community.

[www.hearthavens.org](http://www.hearthavens.org) ..... (#6442)

- 10. Lynchburg: Park View Community Mission:** The United Methodist Church's Four Areas of Focus converge at Park View Community Mission, an outreach ministry of the Lynchburg District.

[Phil12\\_13@yahoo.com](mailto:Phil12_13@yahoo.com) ..... (#5019)

[parkviewcommunitymission.org](http://parkviewcommunitymission.org)

- 11. Portsmouth: Wesley Community Service Center:** A national mission institution related to the United Methodist Women, Inc., offering programs and services in the tradition of the historic settlement house movement in America, aimed at empowering the poor and marginalized while conveying a message of human dignity and worth for all persons. .... (#5025)

[wesley@wesley.hrcoxmail.com](mailto:wesley@wesley.hrcoxmail.com)

- 12. Gloucester County: Helping Hands Mission Camp:**

A Christ-centered, youth-focused, multi-denominational community service mission for youths and adults. Youth campers are divided

into work teams with adult mentors to complete home maintenance, home repairs and small construction projects for people in Gloucester County that need our helping hands.

[www.hh-missioncamp.org](http://www.hh-missioncamp.org)..... (#5026)

- 13. Virginia: Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries of Virginia:**

Ministry whose mission and vision is to take Disciple Bible studies to the inmates of every state and federal prison in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[gene.mims@comcast.net](mailto:gene.mims@comcast.net).... (#5029)

[www.disciplebibleoutreach.org](http://www.disciplebibleoutreach.org)

- 14. Pathways:** Advancing community restoration, spiritual and physical health, and economic growth in Petersburg through partnerships. Programs include youth and workforce development, affordable green housing production, civic engagement, and free specialty health services. .... (#5045)

[www.pathways-va.org](http://www.pathways-va.org)

- 15. Charlottesville: Tuesday's**

**Table:** An outreach ministry that provides meals to the hungry in the community. .... (#5024)

[www.stanardsvilleumc.org](http://www.stanardsvilleumc.org)

- 16. Alexandria: Rising Hope United Methodist Mission Church:**

This ministry meets the needs of the poor through programs such as food, clothing, emergency assistance, after school care and others. The programs are run by volunteers.

..... (#5043)

[www.risinghopeumc.org](http://www.risinghopeumc.org)

## Virginia Advance Specials that are also supported through General Board of Global Ministries

- **Marion: Project Crossroads, Inc.:**

Rehabilitation of older homes and first-time home ownership for low-income families. .... (#781380)

[www.projectcrossroads.holston.org](http://www.projectcrossroads.holston.org)

- **Arlington: Just Neighbors Ministry:**

Offering immigration legal services to low-income immigrant communities. Also, involved in bringing immigrant and non-immigrant communities together through community clinics. .... (#803002)

[www.justneighbors.org](http://www.justneighbors.org)

# MISSION CONNECTS US

## *throughout our country*

**P**articipating in God's mission and ministry is where our United Methodist connection may be strongest. Through our participation in programs and projects across the United States by giving to the Advance we make a difference in the lives of people who need our caring presence.

The "Caring Connection" of National Missions Institutions related to the Missional Ministries Board includes 103 institutions located across the United States such as community centers, schools, colleges, health care facilities and women's residences. Through these ministries we can participate as witnesses to the redeeming love of God in Christ to those in special need: the stranger, the hungry, the broken and hurting. Your gift makes a difference, and 100 percent of your gift through the Advance goes to the project or ministry. The mission and ministries listed below are being promoted by the conference Missional Ministries Board for 2015-2016. For more information about these projects, visit [www.vaumc.org/Mission](http://www.vaumc.org/Mission).

## National Advance Specials

- District of Columbia: Christ House**  
A recovery facility that provides for the physical and emotional needs of homeless men and women. .... (#381215)
- Kentucky: Red Bird Mission, Inc., Beverly**  
Community education and outreach programs in rural Appalachia. .... (#773726)
- Tennessee: Jubilee Project, Inc., Sneedville**  
Leadership development and community organizing in an impoverished area. .... (#781350)
- Kentucky: Henderson Settlement, Frakes**  
Programs for disadvantaged teenagers, parents and the elderly. .... (#773365)
- South Dakota: Tree of Life Ministry**  
A ministry with Native Americans at the Rosebud and Crow Creek Reservations. .... (#123615)
- USA: Justice for Our Neighbors Immigration Ministry**  
Engaging congregations to welcome immigrants and provide free, quality immigration legal services. ... (#901285)
- Southeastern Jurisdiction: Volunteers In Mission**  
Assists those offering their skills in this country and abroad. .... (#901875)
- USA: Response and Recovery to Natural Disaster**  
Responds to emergencies such as tornadoes and flooding throughout the United States. .... (#901670)
- Society of St. Andrew**  
Provides direct relief to the hungry through three main programs: Gleaning Network, Potato Project and Harvest of Hope education retreat program. The ministries provide unique opportunities for United Methodists to live their faith as disciples of Jesus Christ. .... (#801600)
- Mississippi: Choctaw United Methodist Mission**  
Progressing towards health and wholeness and developing Choctaw leadership. .... (#761544)
- USA: Project Crossroads**  
Providing homes, firewood, meals and disaster response for the elderly, the handicapped and families. .... (#781380)



**F**or more than 60 years, The Advance is an official program of the United Methodist Church for voluntary, designated, second-mile giving. The Advance allows local churches and individuals to extend their reach into the world.

- The Advance works with church leaders around the world to ensure that approved projects are aligned with the goals of The United Methodist Church in the local area, and helps develop partnerships that are mutually advantageous.
- The Advance also communicates with donors, sharing stories about projects and missionaries as well as reporting on how gifts are making an impact.
- Advance funds provide the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) not only a source to meet needs through its programming but also a source of private funds that can be significantly leveraged with other grant funds to scale programs to meet even more needs and duplicate these gifts.
- When there is a disaster, The Advance sets up an emergency Advance number so that churches and individuals can immediately donate to the disaster relief. This provides funding for immediate use and helps plan for long-term response.
- All project leaders complete an application and go through a review process to attain Advance status. Accountability is assured through annual reporting and Global Ministries' audits to ensure that funds are used as described in the application.

### Why Should I Give Through The Advance?

- One hundred percent of each gift reaches the project, missionary or ministry you choose. Administrative costs are paid for by the apportionments of United Methodist churches. One Great Hour of Sharing covers UMCOR's administrative costs, as UMCOR receives no apportionment funds.
- All Advance projects are related to annual conferences, central conferences, partner churches or interfaith organizations. They are screened by the General Board of Global Ministries and authorized by The Advance Committee.
- Giving through The Advance enables United Methodists to partner with one another in mission and ministry around the world.
- Churches and annual conferences receive Advance credit by having their gifts included in each year's total giving by the annual conference.
- The Advance tracks each gift and ensures that gifts reach their intended recipients. This methodology provides an additional layer of accountability when you give.



# MISSION CONNECTS US *around the world*

(Below) During the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone, Child Rescue Center instituted a CRC CARES Radio Program, which provided hope-filled messages to families impacted by the crisis. This boy won a much-needed bag of rice for his family after winning a radio contest for the best song. The radio program was made possible by UMC #GivingTuesday donations made last year.

**O**ur conference participates in God's mission in many places around the world. We have long-term partnerships in Brazil, Mozambique and Cambodia through our Initiatives of Hope ministry as well as a history working with United Methodist partners in Africa, Cuba, the Philippines, Central and South America, the Caribbean and Russia.

We also continue to explore new ways and places of being in mission through our United Methodist connection as global needs emerge and Christ's church develops and grows internationally.

The international Advance Specials listed below have been selected by the conference Missional Ministries Board for special attention this year. They represent mission and ministry settings across the globe and encompass various missional needs. Remember that by giving to them through the Advance you ensure that 100 percent of your gift goes to the mission or ministry that you designate. For more information about these projects, visit [www.vaumc.org/Mission](http://www.vaumc.org/Mission).

## International Advance Specials



1. **Global: Sustainable Agriculture** Provides training in environmentally friendly and technologically appropriate practices in farming and off-farming activities to small-scale farmers to improve their livelihoods. ... (#982188)
2. **Guatemala: Highland Support Project** Works with marginalized indigenous women and communities in Guatemala in the building of stoves and planting trees. .... (#15022A)
3. **Mexico: Give Ye Them To Eat** Strengthens the capabilities of marginalized people and communities to meet their own basic needs and to assist them in determining and sustaining a just and integrated development process. .... (#07629A)
4. **Macedonia: Macedonia In Mission Together** Developing leaders and working with the poor, orphaned and disabled. .... (#00220A)





The aviation ministry of the United Methodist Church provides life-giving access to remote villages in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Photo credit: Paul Jeffrey

5. **Brazil: Ministry with Children, Shade and Fresh Water Project**  
Outreach to children who are hungry, uneducated and endangered by life on the streets. ...(#11580A)
6. **Sierra Leone: Child Rescue Center Program**  
Operation of a residential facility and community outreach program for orphaned children and those impacted by poverty. ...(#14377A)
7. **Sudan: Sudan Development**  
To assist the people of Sudan in meeting acute human needs due to drought, locust invasion, civil strife and floods. Funds will be used to provide food relief, medical assistance, clothing, blankets and shelter. ....(#184385)
8. **Anti-Human Trafficking**  
Working with those ensnared in trafficking of humans for commercial and sexual exploitation. ....(#333615)
9. **Israel: Bethlehem Bible College**  
Training Christian leaders to serve the community and stem the decline of churches in the Holy Land. ....(#12017A)
10. **Cambodia: Street Children**  
Improving quality of life through education, nutrition and fellowship support. ....(#14921A)
11. **Vietnam Mission Initiative**  
Supporting congregational development, pastors' salaries, orphanage ministry and building projects. ....(#14932A)
12. **Mozambique: Chicuke Rural Hospital**  
Serving as a model in the delivery of quality primary and preventative health care and staff training. ....(#09734A)
13. **Mozambique: Cambine Agriculture Program**  
Training farmers in sustainable agriculture and strengthening the local leadership and community. ....(#3020561)
14. **Congo: North Katanga Wings of the Morning**  
Meeting critical medical needs through air transportation for the needy in rural areas. ....(#08597A)
15. **Chile: Methodist Construction Projects**  
Constructing churches, parsonages, and community centers. ....(#3020485)
16. **Liberia: Ganta United Methodist Hospital**  
Providing community and curative health services and training through hospital and village work. ....(#15080N)
17. **Haiti: Haiti Emergency Projects**  
Supporting emergency relief and development efforts. ....(#418325)
18. **Cambodia: Mission Initiative**  
Supporting new churches, pastors' salaries, leadership development and outreach ministries. ....(#00230A)
19. **Sierra Leone Water and Development Ministry**  
Providing clean water, medical care, education and spiritual inspiration for the community. ....(#181000)

# MISSION CONNECTS US

## *to partner with countries and peoples*

*The primary mission focus partnerships of the Virginia Conference*



Initiatives of Hope (IOH), the primary mission focus of the Virginia Conference, seeks to create and nurture partnerships based on God's hope and love in mission with people of other cultures, not ministry to them. Currently IOH promotes relationships in four areas – Mozambique, Brazil, Cambodia, and the newest partnership, Native American Peoples. Through these partnerships in God's mission, Virginia churches have special opportunities to visit, work, worship and share in grace upon grace across borders, oceans and cultures.

The work we do through IOH doesn't just change the lives of those with whom we are in partnership, it changes our lives too. When we engage in risk-taking mission and service, we begin to see the world in relationships rather than divisions.

Our partnerships are aimed at providing opportunities for connection and understanding as well as resources that can be shared mutually and sustainably. Among them are:

- **Church leadership training** for clergy and lay leaders of The United Methodist Church of Mozambique and Cambodia;
- **Early childhood intervention** through the Shade & Fresh Water program in cities across Brazil;
- **Medical and dental care** through the United Methodist medical boat on the Amazon in Brazil and at Chicunque Rural Hospital in Mozambique;
- **Promoting education** through scholarships for children and youths in Cambodia and Mozambique.
- **Creating Opportunities** for learning and growing relationships between Virginia United Methodists and the Native Peoples of Virginia and across the U.S.



Brazilian children at the Methodist Church of Brazil.



Representatives of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes are recognized May 18 at the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Ore., where delegates received a tutorial on the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre, in which U.S. troops led by a Methodist preacher-turned-cavalry officer attacked unsuspecting Indians.

## How you can participate

### Learn

- Go to the IOH webpage to learn more about our partnerships with Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia and Native Peoples: [www.vaumc.org/Mission](http://www.vaumc.org/Mission), click on "Initiatives of Hope."
- Review and use the IOH mission worship and education resources found at [www.vaumc.org/Mission](http://www.vaumc.org/Mission), click on "Initiatives of Hope."
- Invite an UMVIM volunteer who has visited Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia or Native Peoples to come to a mission event at your church.
- Plan a Mission Awareness event at your church.

### Go

- Participate on an UMVIM team serving Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia or Native Peoples.

### Give

- Support the Annual Conference Offering for Initiatives of Hope.
- Support the Advance projects related to our partner ministries with Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia and Native Peoples.
- Support individuals and teams that are serving as short-term UMVIM volunteers with Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia and Native Peoples.
- Enter into a covenant relationship with a missionary from Brazil, Mozambique or Cambodia.

### Pray

- For Native Peoples and the people of Brazil, Mozambique and Cambodia.
- For the Virginia Conference Mission teams serving Brazil, Mozambique, Cambodia and Native Peoples.
- For God to guide you in how you might serve.



# MISSION CONNECTS US

## *as the hands and feet of Jesus*



Clara  
Biswas



Esther  
Gitobu



John  
Elmore



Poto Valentine  
Shutsha



Jacques Akasa  
Umembudi



Kim King  
Torres



Lisa  
Nichols



Dr. Quynh-Hoa  
Nguyen



Mark  
Stransky



Pat  
Watkins



Jeremias  
Franca



Nancy  
Robinson



Don  
Edwards



Rebecca  
Parsons

**G**od continues to call persons to full-time mission service through the General Board of Global Ministries, the global mission agency of The United Methodist Church, its annual conferences, missionary conferences and local congregations. Your congregation participates in support of missionaries through your connectional apportionment to World Service.

These missionaries are serving in more than 60 countries sharing their gifts of teaching, health care, evangelism, refugee assistance, community development and congregational development as they serve God's mission and share the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed. Through their work, these missionaries serve in partnership in ministry and mission with those in need of support and love.

There are several categories of mission service that seek both financial and prayer support:

■ **Missionaries Serving Internationally:** Persons who have answered the call to serve outside their home country for a term, usually three years (renewable).

■ **Church and Community Workers (CCW):** Persons commissioned to serve in mission ministries and settings that uplift the poor and disenfranchised in rural and urban areas primarily in the United States. CCWs are assigned to cooperative parishes, ethnic ministries, criminal justice ministries, congregational health ministries, immigration, rural and urban ministries and disaster response.

■ **Individual Volunteers Program:** Persons who have answered the call to serve in mission for a determined period of time, from two months to two years as a volunteer. This is for individuals or couples ages 18 and over who wish to use their personal gifts to engage and live in community with those whom they serve. The type of work is as varied as the placement sites, offering service opportunities around the world and in the U.S.

■ **National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries (NPHLM):** NPHLM is a coordinated effort of The United Methodist Church to focus on the development and strengthening of Hispanic/Latino ministries. It seeks to incorporate the missionary placements into the ongoing ministries of the annual conference by the end of the first or, at the most, at the end of the second term of a three-year assignment.



**T**here are more than 350 Global Ministries missionaries serving in more than 60 countries who are available for support through a Covenant Relationship. Individuals and churches can partner with a missionary and provide financial, spiritual and emotional support. The missionaries listed on these pages have been highlighted for support because of their work in mission settings supported by the Virginia Conference. You are asked to consider supporting them through a Covenant Relationship.

### HOW TO SUPPORT A MISSIONARY: Covenant Relationships

A local church or church group	An individual or family
Commit to an annual gift of a minimum of \$5 per member.	Commit to an annual gift of \$500 per individual or family.
Complete the Covenant Relationship Form which is found on the Virginia Conference website at <a href="http://www.vaumc.org/Mission">www.vaumc.org/Mission</a> , click on "Missionaries" then see "Start a Covenant." Complete the form and e-mail, fax or mail it to the Center for Justice and Missional Excellence as directed on the form.	

This partnership is much more than a financial commitment. It is a dynamic relationship where the church and missionary pray for one another and communicate regularly. When you covenant with one missionary, you are supporting the entire United Methodist missionary community on their behalf and in their name.

#### **Cambodia:**

Clara Biswas (#13952-Z)  
clarabiswas@online.com.kh

Esther Gitobu (#13959Z)  
netcam@online.com.kh

#### **Chile:**

John Elmore (#13109Z)  
elmor59@gmail.com

#### **Democratic Republic of Congo:**

Poto Valentine Shutsha (#14163Z)  
ujacques1@yahoo.com

Jacques Akasa Umembudi (#14020Z)  
ujacques1@yahoo.com

#### **Florida:**

Kim King Torres (#982904)  
ktorres@branchesfl.org

#### **Marion, Virginia:**

Mark Stransky (#803003)  
fullcreel56@comcast.net

#### **Mozambique:**

Jeremias Franca (#3019570)  
health.missions@yahoo.com

#### **Roanoke, Virginia:**

Don Edwards (#982026)  
donedwards.esq@gmail.com

Rebecca Parsons (#3021143)  
communityoutreachroanoke@gmail.com

#### **Rocky Mount, Virginia:**

Lisa Nichols (#982953)  
henryforkcenter@cs.com

#### **Board of Global Ministries:**

Pat Watkins (#3020927)  
pwatkins@umcmmission.org

Nancy Robinson (#3021816)  
nancyrobin7856@aol.com

#### **Vietnam:**

Dr. Quynh-Hoa Nguyen (#3021965)  
QNguyen@umcmmission.org

(Left): Okako Okenge Adolphine, known as "Maman Olela," is director of the United Methodist orphanage in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo. Photo by Mike DuBose, UMNS



# MISSION CONNECTS US

## *to our calling in the world*



**[GEN]ERATION  
TRANSFORMATION**  
GLOBAL MISSION FELLOWS

Is God calling you to help change the world through mission service? Young people all over the world are encouraged to apply to serve as a United Methodist Global Mission Fellow, Global Justice Volunteer or Individual Volunteer. For more information visit [www.umcmmission.org/gt](http://www.umcmmission.org/gt).

### Global Mission Fellows

Fellows commit to 24-25 months of service. Applicants from the United States can choose to serve either domestically or internationally. At this time applicants outside of the United States will be serving internationally outside of one's home country.

#### Global Mission Fellows U-2 Track

- Serve 24 months in a marginalized community within the United States.
- 1 month training and itineration
- 23 months of service within the United States
- Service begins in July and ends in July, 24 months later.

### Global Mission Fellows International Track

- Serve 25 months outside of one's home country.
- 1.5 months of training and transition
- 20 months of international service
- 3.5 months transition, itineration, and project-oriented reintegration
- Project-oriented reintegration could include helping to train the next class of Global Mission Fellows, itineration, being a missionary-in-residence, or developing/joining a local project.
- Service begins in July and ends in August, 25 months later.

The Global Mission Fellows  
US-2 class of 2015-17 (below.)





**V**irginia Volunteers in Mission (VAVIM) is an opportunity for short-term hands-on ministry that offers everyone the opportunity to serve in mission. VAVIM follows the United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) model of being “Christian Love in Action” with teams building ongoing relationships with communities as they serve locally to internationally. VAVIM partners with projects which empower others and promote sustainability. VAVIM teams call for persons of various skills and abilities from construction to mentoring and teaching, from supporting health care initiatives to assisting in cleaning up debris after disasters, from leading Vacation Bible Schools to the selfless act of simply being present in mission settings with those who need a listening ear and a caring word.



Teams are especially encouraged to work in the three countries of our conference Initiatives of Hope mission partnerships in Brazil, Cambodia and Mozambique. In those settings your team may be asked to work in construction or repair of homes, churches, parsonages or schools. Working with street children or helping with a medical team to teach primary health care or help with a clinic are other possibilities. In all cases, VAVIM teams are encouraged to build relationships that bring new understanding of how serving God's mission in the world addresses injustice and transforms lives on both sides of the borders that are crossed.

## What is required to send out an UMVIM team from your church?

The Virginia Conference Volunteers in Mission requires the following:

- Each team will be led by a trained VAVIM team leader. Team leaders must have participated in at least one Volunteer in Mission trip. There are several team leader training events held across the conference throughout the year. Visit the website at [www.vaumc.org/Mission](http://www.vaumc.org/Mission) for more details.
- Team leaders must have a cleared background check prior to the trip, and all team members must also have a cleared background check if the team is working with children, youths or at-risk adults.
- The team must be insured. Insurance is provided through the Southeastern Jurisdiction UMVIM office ([www.umvim.org](http://www.umvim.org)).

## How does your church send out a team?

- Determine the team's focus for the project (construction, educational, informational, medical, etc.).
- Decide where you want to go, when you plan to go and return, and then determine the cost. This all needs research. You can find team sites at [www.umvim.org](http://www.umvim.org) or by checking the VAVIM page of the Virginia Conference website: [www.vaumc.org/Mission](http://www.vaumc.org/Mission). You may also decide that persons from your church may want to join team members from other churches who are going on one of the VAVIM conference promoted trips.
- Present your proposal to your Outreach or Mission chairperson as well as your pastor for support. Next, go to the administrative council for approval as a church mission project.



For more information about **UMVIM** opportunities, contact:

**Forrest White**  
Virginia Conference  
UMVIM coordinator  
(804) 938-1026 (c)  
[virginiaumvim@gmail.com](mailto:virginiaumvim@gmail.com)

**Center for Justice and Missional Excellence**  
1-800-768-6040  
(804) 521-1100, ext. 139  
[mission@vaumc.org](mailto:mission@vaumc.org)  
[www.vaumc.org/Mission](http://www.vaumc.org/Mission)

# MISSION CONNECTS US

## *to our neighbors in need*

**W**hen you cross borders, national borders or imaginary borders right in your community that divide classes, races or ethnic groups, you will find Christ on the other side of that border and it will change your life! If your faith community is exploring taking your first VIM team or you are looking for team members to complete your team, check out the VAVIM page on the conference website, [www.vaumc.org/vaumvim](http://www.vaumc.org/vaumvim), or scan the QR code and the VAVIM facebook page at [www.facebook.com/VirginiaUMVIM](http://www.facebook.com/VirginiaUMVIM) for a listing of teams going from our conference. Make contact with the team leader and inquire about joining one of those teams.

Just remember, Volunteers in Mission is first about relationships and then about what work you do. Long after the work is completed, the relationships you built that changed your life will still be touching you and those around you.

### Registering your team

The Virginia Volunteers in Mission (VAVIM) policy requests that every team representing a faith community in the Virginia Conference register their team online with the Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ) office at [www.umvim.org](http://www.umvim.org). This is important for many reasons but primarily it is to make sure that each team has met the requirements for best practices of United Methodist Volunteers in Mission. Registration also allows your team the option to purchase medical insurance from the SEJ office if your team is traveling outside the U.S. When you register, it also allows SEJ to provide information on all the teams that travel from our conference to the conference office of

Justice and Missional Excellence.

Teams that select not to use the insurance program may register with SEJ at no cost. Teams that select to use the insurance program continue to pay the additional processing fees. The insurance processing fees provide vital funding for staff and resources since UMVIM SEJ receives no funds from the Southeastern Jurisdiction or through apportionments. For information on the insurance, cost and fees, go to: [http://umvim.org/send\\_a\\_team/insurance\\_faq.html](http://umvim.org/send_a_team/insurance_faq.html).

For a video tutorial of the SEJ registration process go to: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qd\\_iB4B9hPE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qd_iB4B9hPE).

A team from New Town UMC Williamsburg before departing for Charleston, W. Va., to help flood survivors.



If you have a Smartphone, scan the QR code below to visit the VAVIM Facebook page for the most updated information on leader training and trip details.



**D**isaster Response and Recovery is a vital part of our church mission, and the Virginia Conference Disaster Response Team has a strong history and commitment to being the hands, feet and face of Christ to those who have been affected by natural disasters. Response and Recovery happens on five levels at once: our Conference-wide efforts, the work of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), district response and recovery, local church efforts and community support.

With the increase in numbers of disaster events across our conference, it is important that all of us in the faith community recognize and embrace the reality that the first response to any disaster is local. Our local faith communities have a call to serve those to whom we are living and witnessing as the body of Christ when that community is at its most vulnerable after a disaster, so advance preparation is critical.

Many disaster events are small in scale and can be addressed in a few weeks or months, but occasionally the disaster is of a much larger scale such as the tornadoes which struck three different sites in Virginia in February 2016, and require a long term recovery (LTR) over a year or

more. After the first responders complete their work, volunteer teams are needed for repair and construction. Currently, teams are needed all through 2016 and into 2017.

Churches can be prepared to respond by having a disaster response plan in place. Volunteers are also needed to be part of the disaster response team. You can find more information about the Virginia Conference Disaster Response and Recovery Team on the conference web page: [www.vaumc.org/Disaster](http://www.vaumc.org/Disaster).

For further information please contact Disaster Response Coordinator Rev. Bob Pihlcrantz at **(757) 482-2364 (office)** or **(757) 408-6653 (cell)**.



The Disaster Response display at Annual Conference 2016.



# MISSION CONNECTS US

## *within our conference*

*Special Program  
and Sustaining  
grants to local  
churches/faith  
groups reaching out  
into communities*

**B**ecause the mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, the Virginia Conference has long seen the need to assist churches which are reaching out into their communities. The Common Table, Committee on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy, and United Methodist Women have combined their resources, including a designated portion of the Church Extension apportionment, to assist in this work.

A total of \$175,500 will be distributed to the mission projects listed on this page. Descriptions of these projects can be found at [www.vaumc.org/special-programgrants](http://www.vaumc.org/special-programgrants). For more information about a specific project, or how you can assist, contact the appropriate persons listed below; or call Bev Myers in the conference office of Connectional Ministries at (804) 521-1100, ext. 134, or e-mail [BevMyers@vaumc.org](mailto:BevMyers@vaumc.org).

## Special Program Grants

### ARLINGTON DISTRICT

**Ministerio Amigos Latino-americanos (Sterling UMC)**  
Marcela Jarman, 304 East Church Rd., Sterling, VA 20164;  
(703) 430-6455; [marcela.jarman@sterlingumc.org](mailto:marcela.jarman@sterlingumc.org)

### CHARLOTTESVILLE DISTRICT

**Tuesday's Table (Stanardsville UMC)** Doris Swenson, PO Box 740, Stanardsville, VA 22973;  
(434) 985-9620; [sprngchckn44@embarqmail.com](mailto:sprngchckn44@embarqmail.com)

### ELIZABETH RIVER DISTRICT

**Heritage UMC Food Pantry**  
Alexander Duncan, JR., 300 W. Palmyra Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 23462;  
(757) 497-3953; [alexduncan@vaumc.org](mailto:alexduncan@vaumc.org)

### FARMVILLE DISTRICT

**Neighbor Helping Neighbor (Kenbridge UMC)**  
Tim Beck, PO Box 926, Kenbridge, VA 23944; (434) 676-8117;  
[kenbridgeumc@gmail.com](mailto:kenbridgeumc@gmail.com)

### HARRISONBURG DISTRICT

**Luray UMC Preschool:** Sue Raeburn, 540 Walnut Hill Rd., Luray, VA 22835;  
(540) 742-1112; [soraeburn@gmail.com](mailto:soraeburn@gmail.com)

### RICHMOND DISTRICT

**Beulah UMC House Church Ministry:** Keith Mottley, 69300 Hopkins Rd., N. Chesterfield, VA 23234;  
(804) 275-4345; [keith@beulahumc.org](mailto:keith@beulahumc.org)

**Ginter Park UMC Food & Clothing Ministry:**

Dennis Lipke, 1010 W. Laburnum Ave., Richmond, VA 23227; (804) 262-8651; [dlipke@ginterparkumc.org](mailto:dlipke@ginterparkumc.org)

### ROANOKE DISTRICT

**Community Literacy Program (UM Community Outreach Program of Roanoke):**

Rebecca Parsons, 305 Mountain Ave. SW, Roanoke, VA 24016; (540) 342-3103; [financeumcpr@roacoxmail.com](mailto:financeumcpr@roacoxmail.com)

### STAUNTON DISTRICT

**Calvary UMC Food Pantry:**

Rev. Nancy Vaughan, 2179 Stuarts Draft Highway, Stuarts Draft, VA 24477;  
(540) 337-2980;  
[associate@umc2179.com](mailto:associate@umc2179.com)

**God's Table (Basic UMC):**

Jennifer Strother, 1200 Club Rd.,  
Waynesboro, VA 22980;  
(540) 946-7958  
cdeajenn@comcast.net

**Goodness Sustainability Ministry (Basic UMC):**

Jenelle Watson, 1200 Club Rd.,  
Waynesboro, VA 22980; (540) 649-  
7149; jenellewatson@gmail.com

**Soulfood: Mind, Body and Spirit (Basic UMC):**

Jenelle Watson, 1200 Club Rd.,  
Waynesboro, VA 22980; (540) 649-  
7149; jenellewatson@gmail.com

**YORK RIVER DISTRICT****Beulah/St. Paul Backpack/Backpack Program:**

Mary Lou Sterling, 1012 Sandbank  
Rd., Port Haywood, VA 23138;  
(804) 725-7418;  
papaba5@VA.metrocast.net

**Sustaining  
Program Grants****ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT****Rising Hope Food Ministries:**

Keary Kincannon, 8220 Russell Rd.,  
Alexandria, VA 22309; (703) 360-  
1976; kearykincannon@vaumc.org

**DANVILLE DISTRICT****Henry Fork Service Center:**

Lisa Nichols, PO Box 888,  
Rocky Mount, VA 24151;  
(540) 483-2819;  
lisanichols@cs.com

**EASTERN SHORE DISTRICT****Agape Christian Children's Community Center:**

Brenda M. Child, 12021 Robinson  
Ferry Rd., Broadnax, VA 23920;  
(434) 848-3329;  
doughbchild@gmail.com

**ELIZABETH RIVER DISTRICT****Club Sandwich:**

Debbie Winn or Joann McClung,  
288 East Little Creek Rd., Norfolk,  
VA 23505; (757) 587-2996;  
church@norwumc.org

**Wesley Community Service Center:**

John G. Hatcher Jr., P.O. Box 1396,  
Portsmouth, VA 23705;  
(757) 399-0541;  
wesley@wesley.hrcxmail.com.

**FARMVILLE DISTRICT****Jane Jones Food Pantry (Main St. UMC):**

Edward Rigg, P.O. Box 119 South  
Boston, VA 24592; (434) 572-3290;  
mainstreetumc@embarqmail.com

**HARRISONBURG DISTRICT****Shiloh UMC Enrich Program:**

Lucinda Erbach, 392 Thompson St.,  
Strasburg, VA 22657;  
(540) 465-3382;  
luellie392@hotmail.com

**LYNCHBURG DISTRICT****Amherst Cares (Emmanuel UMC):**

Beth Gamble, 297 Ridge  
Drive, Amherst, VA 24521;  
(434) 946-7657;  
bethgamble3@comcast.net

**Weekend Meals (Anderson Memorial UMC):**

Joan Yeatts,  
P.O. Box 773, Gretna, VA 24557;  
(434) 656-2604;  
joanyeatts@comcast.net

**RICHMOND DISTRICT****Belmont UMC Food & Clothing Ministry:**

Larry Cochran, 3510 Broad Rock  
Blvd, Richmond, VA 23234;  
(804) 275-6336;  
belmontumcrichmond@gmail.com

**Sherbourne Food Pantry:**

Sandy Sahnaw, 2619 Sher-  
bourne Rd., North Chesterfield,  
VA 23237; (804) 559-0705 or  
(804) 921-2187;  
sahnaws@comcast.net

**ROANOKE DISTRICT****Shalom Zone (West End UMC):**

Don E. Edwards, 4819 Golfview  
Dr., Roanoke, VA 24019;  
(540) 266-7262;  
donedwards.esq@gmail.com

**STAUNTON DISTRICT****Casa de Amistad:**

Jennifer Strother,  
1200 Club Rod., Waynesboro,  
VA 22980; (540) 946-7958;  
cdeajenn@comcast.net

**Greenville United Methodist Women (UMW):**

Beth Haynes, 66 Almo Chapel  
Rd., Greenville, VA 24440;  
(540) 377-6220;  
blkh@comcast.net

**South Covington Care Pantry:**

Linda Black, 5015 Castile Rd.,  
Covington, VA 24426;  
(540) 747-5261;  
llblack47@aol.com

# MISSION CONNECTS US

## *to lend a louder voice*

*"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream." Amos 5:24*

The mission of the Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy (CEMCA) is to serve as a prophetic voice for the full and equal participation of ethnic and racial constituents into the total life and mission of the Virginia Annual Conference (its faith communities, boards and agencies, and institutional and connectional structures) by educating, advocating, and holding to account God's church to inclusivity as God's intended design for all structures and processes, towards the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

### Vision Statement

The United Methodist Church is the instrument and servant of God's creative spirit in our communities, districts, regions, and at state levels. Our goal is to make visible God's gift of unity of

all people in Jesus Christ and the quality of community that God wills for the whole human family. Church diversity is one platform to change the way we think, live, learn, and work together.

### WHAT IS NEEDED FOR EFFECTIVE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION?

#### Self Awareness

Understanding one's "cultural" self

#### Other Awareness

Exploring other cultural norms, values, and beliefs

#### Bridging Skills

Learning to be culturally adaptive

- Reflect back on what is being said. Use the speaker's words, not your own.
- Begin where people are and not where you want them to be.
- Be curious and open to what people are trying to say.
- Notice what people are saying and what they are not.
- Emotionally relate to what people are feeling. Nurture the relationship.
- Notice how you are feeling. Be honest and authentic.
- Take responsibility for your part in conflict or misunderstandings.



RELIGION & RACE

General Commission on Religion and Race

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH





*"She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue."* Proverbs 31:26

**T**he Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) encourages participation of women in the full life of The United Methodist Church. To further this mission, COSROW collects data on the participation of women, minorities, youths, young adults and persons with disabilities in the leadership roles of the church.

"We exist to uphold the call of Galatians 3:28 that all are one, all are equal and all are part of God's plan through Christ Jesus. Specifically, we challenge the church to overcome the sin of sexism, sexual exploitation, gender discrimination and idolatry as expressed in patriarchy. Either we are all equally beloved, called, sent and anointed as children of God or we fall short of the gospel mandates we proclaim." – Garlinda Burton, Former Top Executive of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women

We in the Virginia Conference still have work to do. We need to encourage women, racial and ethnic minorities, young people and persons with disabilities to be active stakeholders in the life of the United Methodist Church. Our churches must welcome all God's children in the leadership of their churches. This includes, but is not limited to, welcoming women as pastors in all churches in the Virginia Conference, encouraging women to be lead pastors in large membership churches and encouraging women to serve as leaders in committees, such as Finance and Trustees,

Women, racial and ethnic minorities, young people, and persons with disabilities have gifts and talents. They have and continue to make significant contributions to the life of the church. Any artificial limits on these persons deny the church body the blessings that God has bestowed on this conference.



Photo from the COSROW Facebook page.

# MISSION CONNECTS US

## *through understanding*

### Mission Encounter 2017-2018 Courses

#### 2017

**Weekend Session:**  
July 28-30, 2017

- **Spiritual Growth Study:** A Covenantal Community (Part 1)
- **Geographic Study:** The Missionary Conferences of The United Methodist Church
- **Issue Study:** Climate Justice
- **Youth:** The Missionary Conferences
- **Children:** The Missionary Conferences

#### 2018

**Weekend Session:**  
July 27-29, 2018

- **Spiritual Growth Study:** Seeking Health and Wholeness (Part 1)
- **Geographic Study:** The Missionary Conferences of The United Methodist Church
- **Issue Study:** What about our Money?
- **Youth:** What about our Money?
- **Children:** What about our Money?

For more information, visit [www.vaumc.org/Mission](http://www.vaumc.org/Mission), or contact the conference Mission office at: 1-800-768-6040 or (804) 521-1100, ext. 139 [mission@vaumc.org](mailto:mission@vaumc.org)

The best kept secret in the Virginia Conference! That's how this event has been described. Although its history began more than 70 years ago by the then-named Women's Society of Christian Service, and known as the School of Christian Mission for most of that history, the renamed Mission Encounter is a cooperative event sponsored by the Virginia Conference Missional Ministries Board and the Virginia Conference United Methodist Women. This event offers a wonderful opportunity for your whole congregation to come alive to mission by participating in an exciting week-end or weekday mission education experience.



If you have ever wondered not only how we **do** mission but also where we **are** in mission and, most importantly, why we are called to live out missional lives as disciples of Jesus Christ, this is the event to attend.

There are classes for adults where men, women, clergy and laity alike (of all ages) come to learn and be involved in mission groups by choosing one class out of three choices – a spiritual growth study, geographical study or social issue. Each study helps us to understand God's work in our world and how we are involved as United Methodists. The event is designed to challenge us to be in mission as individuals in our personal lives and in the lives of our local churches. Meeting others involved in mission and sharing ideas and mission stories as well as

meeting missionaries are highlights of the event.

It is an excellent "mission trip" for your youths. They have a fun time together as they learn about what United Methodists are doing around the world to alleviate suffering while spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. The youths participate in hands-on mission projects that range from gleaning to working in a shelter to helping the elderly in the area.

Participants are encouraged to share their new knowledge with their local church congregations. The courses being offered for the next two years are listed on the left.

To watch a video about Mission Encounter, go to: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKDDWeqa9\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKDDWeqa9_Y).





# The Samaritan Program



Virginia United  
Methodist Homes, Inc.

## The heart of our mission.

Gifts given to the Samaritan Program help to ensure the personal security and peace of mind of our most vulnerable residents, those who have outlived their monetary resources and, through no fault of their own, can no longer afford the full cost of their care.

**THANK YOU** from the residents, families, and team members of VUMH for your gifts to the Samaritan Program. A special **"THANK YOU"** and expression of gratitude goes to the following *Samaritan Award* congregations for the VUMH fiscal year 2016:

**Westover Hills UMC** (Richmond District)

**Reveille UMC** (Richmond District)

**Fairmount UMC** (Richmond District)

**Fairfax UMC** (Alexandria District)

**Sydenstricker UMC** (Alexandria District)

**Trinity UMC** (Richmond District)

**Williamsburg UMC** (York River District)

**Greene Memorial UMC** (Roanoke District)

**Main Street UMC - Emporia**

(James River District)

**Lawrence Memorial UMC**

(Roanoke District)

Please consider making a gift today to help those who are in need of your generosity.

Contributions may be made through the VUMH website at [www.vumh.org](http://www.vumh.org) or by mail to:

**VUMH • 5101 Cox Road, Suite 225 • Glen Allen, VA 23060 • For more information, call VUMH at (804) 474-8700.**





*For children of incarcerated mothers or fathers*



## ALL GOD'S CHILDREN CAMP

**T**he All God's Children Camp provides a week of sanctuary for children who face so many challenges in their lives – economic poverty, loneliness, low self-esteem, violence, drugs and temporary living conditions – while their mothers or fathers are incarcerated. Children spend a week at camp participating in activities such as boating, swimming, hiking, archery, horseback riding, music, crafts, Bible study and conflict resolution. The camp is now offered during the summer at different United Methodist camps. How to help:

**Financial Contributions:** Gifts from individuals, groups and churches make this ministry possible. A scholarship of \$350 sends one child to camp.

**Mentoring:** Volunteers come from churches across the conference to spend the week at camp. These mentors model to the children what God's presence means in their lives. Mentors do not lead activities, but rather provide supervision, companionship and compassion to the children during their daily activities.

**Supplies:** Your Sunday school class, United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women or Vacation Bible School can help the camp by collecting needed supplies.

**Transportation:** Help drive some of the campers to and from camp. Caregivers do not always have the car, money for gas, time or energy to provide their own transportation for the children.

For more information, visit [www.vaumc.org/agcc](http://www.vaumc.org/agcc) or contact **Lori Smith** at **1-800-768-6040** or **(804) 521-1100, ext. 138**; or [lttlelori@gmail.com](mailto:lttlelori@gmail.com).



## COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

*Embracing the inclusiveness of Christ:*

- Accessibility, Program and Respite Grants and Scholarships
- Annual Conference accessibility
- Camp Rainbow Connection for adults with intellectual disabilities
- Disability Awareness Sunday (Feb. 5, 2017)
- Support and resources for ministries with persons with disabilities



Funds for programs and activities of the Commission on Disabilities come from individual and local church contributions and the support of United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women and other mission groups. Programs of the commission have been a mission focus of the conference United Methodist Men since 1972.

For more information, contact the Center for Inclusivity and Lay leadership Excellence: **1-800-768-6040** or **(804) 521-1100, ext. 153** or **154** or **Cheryl Edley-Worford** at [CherylEdleyWorford@vaumc.org](mailto:CherylEdleyWorford@vaumc.org).

# YOUTH IN ACTION MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

**Y**outh in mission can be found across the conference sharing the love of God by being God's hands and feet. The conference website ([www.vaumc.org/youth](http://www.vaumc.org/youth)) lists mission opportunities for youths with information on location, age, cost and length of trip.

**Youth Service Fund - For youths by youths** Throughout the year, youths raise money so other youths can participate in mission. Churches can apply for grants from the Youth Service Fund by submitting an application by Feb. 27 2017. Go to <http://vaumc.org/YSF> for an application.

**Voices of Youth:** Virginia high school students participate in a 3½-week mission experience. They receive hands-on training in how The United Methodist Church answers the call to mission locally and throughout the world, and they come to understand the fruits of personal involvement in mission. Musical concerts are held in local Virginia churches to challenge church members to become involved in God's mission.

VOY Contact: **Rebecca (Becca) Minor**, (757) 870-8265, [beccaminor@vaumc.org](mailto:beccaminor@vaumc.org) or [voicesofyouth@vaumc.org](mailto:voicesofyouth@vaumc.org)

**For more information on youth mission opportunities:**

Visit [www.vaumc.org/youth](http://www.vaumc.org/youth) or contact **Paulo Lopes** at the office of Ministries with Young People: **1-800-768-6040, ext. 135**; or **(804) 521-1135**; or [PauloLopes@vaumc.org](mailto:PauloLopes@vaumc.org).



## VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST HEALTH & RELIEF

**T**he ministries of the Health & Relief Team touch many lives, providing service throughout the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church. We value our relationship with the Virginia Conference and feel privileged to be a part of this ministry team. We are grateful for all of the support received each year from individuals, congregations and communities. Thank you. **If you or someone you know is seeking assistance, please contact us.**

*We have differing missions but share a common ministry: To invest in supportive communities for seniors, families, children and people with disabilities.*



**703-642-3830**  
[www.wesleyhousing.org](http://www.wesleyhousing.org)



*"Provider of Affordable Housing"*

Virginia United Methodist Housing  
Development Corporation  
**540-825-7654**



### Virginia United Methodist Advocate magazine

This award-winning publication is the conference's official magazine. Published monthly, it includes local church and denominational news, features and Bible lessons. Upcoming training opportunities, resources and information of interest to local church leaders are also included. Print and online versions available. To subscribe, call **1-800-768-6040** or **(804) 521-1100, ext. 110**; e-mail: [advocate@vaumc.org](mailto:advocate@vaumc.org); or go online at [www.vaumc.org/Advocate-Subscribe](http://www.vaumc.org/Advocate-Subscribe).



10330 Staples Mill Road  
Glen Allen, VA 23060  
1-800-768-6040  
(804) 521-1100  
[www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org)

# SPECIAL SUNDAYS IN 2017

**S**pecial Sundays in The United Methodist Church are intended to illustrate the nature and calling of the church and are celebrated annually. Special Sundays are placed on the calendar in the context of the Christian year, which is designed to make clear the calling of the church as the people of God, and to give persons the opportunity to contribute offerings to special programs. Your support is critical to the survival of these important ministries (listed below) and for sharing God's gifts around the world.

Six General Conference-approved Special Sundays with offerings are listed in **boldface type**. Special Sundays, or time periods, with Virginia Conference-approved offerings are marked with an asterisk (\*). Other times of special recognition approved by the General Conference and/or Virginia Conference are also listed.

Men's Ministry Sunday  
(any Sunday in the year)

United Methodist Volunteers In Mission (UMVIM) Awareness Sunday  
(any Sunday in the year)

### January 15

**Human Relations Day**  
(Sunday before Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday observance)

**The month of February**  
Heart Havens, Inc., Month\*

### February 5

Disability Awareness Sunday  
(First Sunday in February)

### March 26

**One Great Hour of Sharing** (UMCOR)  
(Fourth Sunday of Lent)

### April 30

**Native American Ministries Sunday**  
(Third Sunday of Easter)

### May 7

Older Adult Recognition Sunday  
(First Sunday in May)

### May 7

Rural Life Sunday  
(First Sunday in May)

### May 14

Mother's Day/Father's Day  
Samaritan Fund Offering\*  
(Virginia United Methodist Homes)

### May 21

Heritage Sunday  
(Sunday on or preceding Aldersgate Day, May 24)

### The month of June

Virginia Annual Conference Offering\*

National Hunger Awareness Day  
recognition during Worship  
(Any Sunday in June)

### June 11

**Peace with Justice Sunday**  
(First Sunday after Pentecost)

### June 11

Children's Day  
(Second Sunday in June)

**The month of September**  
Christian Education Sunday\*  
(Any Sunday in September)

### September 3

Industrial & Commercial Ministries\*  
(Sunday in September nearest Labor Day)

### The month of October

Virginia Advocate (conference magazine)  
Promotion Campaign

### October 1

**World Communion Sunday**  
(First Sunday in October)

### October 8

Children's Sabbath  
(Second Sunday in October or any time during the year)

### October 15

Laity Sunday  
(Third Sunday in October)

### November 12

Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday (Second Sunday in November)

### November 26

**United Methodist Student Day**  
(Last Sunday in November)

### The month of December

UMFS of Virginia Month\*