

# Advocate



Annual Conference  
2018

Connecting with the



Virginia Advocate

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

# PILLOW TALK



**Madeline Pillow**  
Editor

Never  
forget  
to say  
thank you

**The second that Annual Conference 2018 concluded**, I'm sure you could hear the collective sigh of relief and exhaustion of many persons around the state of Virginia, including conference staff.

This was my fourth Annual Conference as a conference staff person and my second as the "producer" of Annual Conference in my role as the conference Director of Communications.

From my view of things, I see just how many people are involved in making Annual Conference happen. I also understand that many of those persons never get the real "thank you" that they deserve.

From those who are in the nitty gritty details of Annual Conference planning for months to those persons who act as camera operators, it is a big event to manage and to take part in.

I am a person who was always taught by my parents to say thank you. From presents to a small kindness, I have always said those two powerful words.

So for one last time (before we start planning for Annual Conference 2019), thank you to all who played a part, big or small, to make Annual Conference 2018. I see you, and I commend your time and talents that you brought to this event.

Our issue this month is all about wrapping up Annual Conference 2018. If you missed anything, you can also visit the AC 2018 page on the conference website that includes a link to the archived livestream; view by visiting **[www.vaumc.org/AC2018](http://www.vaumc.org/AC2018)**. You can also access pictures from Annual Conference 2018 at the conference Flickr page at **[www.flickr.com/photos/vaconf/albums](http://www.flickr.com/photos/vaconf/albums)**.

Until our next issue,

*Madeline C. Pillow*



P.O. Box 5606, Glen Allen, VA 23058

Phone: 1-800-768-6040 or  
804-521-1100

Fax: 804-521-1174

E-mail: [advocate@vaumc.org](mailto:advocate@vaumc.org)

Website: [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org)

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## Local Church News

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

## Letters

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

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**CORRECTION:** An addition to the July Advocate Appointments: Locust Grove UMC, York River District, has paid 100 percent of their apportionments.



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conference website:  
[www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org)

## The *Virginia Advocate* Staff

**Madeline Pillow** | Editor, Director of Communications  
**Forrest White** | News Associate  
**Cathryn Huff** | Graphic Designer  
**Pam Culler** | Administrative Secretary

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# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



## Church's ministry makes a space for young people

By Forrest White

A conversation with The Rev. Timothy Kirven begins with his enthusiasm level on high and rises up from there, as he talks passionately about the new Safe Zone ministry at Worship and Praise Church on

Richmond's East End.

But, then suddenly, the enthusiasm is gone, as he considers the recent past.

"I've probably done over 100 funerals for young people under the age of 25 over the last four to five years," Kirven said.

Amid the cries of those mourning such unthinkable loss, he heard a call, from parents and youth, desperate for a safe haven.

Worship and Praise Church is a United Methodist church. So, in the fall of 2017, Kirven took Bishop Sharma D. Lewis

through the basement of the church's building on East Laburnum Avenue, sharing a vision for a gathering place for young people ages 10-18.

"When it was still a mess, Bishop Lewis said, 'I can see this being a safe zone for kids,'" Kirven said. "I was like, 'Bam! That's the name right there.'"

On Easter Sunday 2018, the Safe Zone officially opened, but only as a preview of what to expect on Friday nights.

Since then, on any given Friday, you'll find the basement space abuzz, with young people shooting pool and playing ping pong while others play Xbox or PlayStation on one of seven TVs, as the sound of Christian music pulses through the basement.

You'll hear lots of chatter and lots of laughter, the sounds of young people happy, the sounds of young people safe.

And there's only one way to get inside.

"Nobody can get

Photos Courtesy of Tim Kirven.



# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

into the Safe Zone without a Bible in their hand," Kirven said. "That's your ticket."

## What is the Safe Zone?

Safe Zone begins with 30 minutes of praise and worship led by the youth of Worship and Praise Church starting at 7 p.m., followed by a message rooted in Scripture.

The fellowship time begins around 8 p.m. and goes until almost 11 p.m.

"We are steadily planting seeds and we're watering them," Kirven said. "We talk about things like not being a bully, about striving to be your best. The next Friday comes and we plant and water again. We're hoping and praying the seeds are going to produce fruit."

In its first two months, an average of about 40 young people showed up each week for the Safe Zone. Chaperones include students from Virginia Union University's

(Con't. on next page: "SAFE ZONE.")





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*("SAFE ZONE," cont. from page 5.)*

campus ministry.

"Man, I'm telling you," Kirven said, his enthusiasm level climbing again. "I'm not trying to brag, but this is the best thing since sliced bread. Starting on Saturday morning, they're talking about the next Friday. We see consistency. Once they get there, they're coming back. Very few miss. The Safe Zone is cool. It's awesome. Those are the kind of words you get from the young people."

So far, Safe Zone relies on word of mouth to draw its crowds. With a capacity of around 60 students — and the church sanctuary targeted as overflow space — Kirven

anticipates needing a larger facility soon.

Such a thought brings him great joy.

But he knows that, although it happens inside the church, Safe Zone is about preparing young people for what they'll face outside those basement walls.

"We are not just a church (building) on the corner," said Kirven, a lifelong resident of Richmond and the founding pastor. "I have a love for the community. I do as much as I possibly can for the community. I don't stay in the four walls of the church. I always want to see the community do better. I've always had a passion for kids. When I started in ministry I had more youth than adults."

He paused to say that his heart grieves for young people lost, for those making bad choices.

"But when I see these kids smiling and parents being drawn in to the Safe Zone, that's the community being

empowered," Kirven said. "The Word says a child can lead the way."

Other churches have taken note and reached out to him about starting their own Safe Zone ministry, he said.

Worship and Praise Church has big summer plans for its young people, starting on the first Monday they're out of school through August.

There will be lots of field trips and additional open days for the Safe Zone.

"The Safe Zone is my way of saying that I've seen all this bad happen and if we can save one child by planting and watering those seeds, so that a young boy or girl can grow up and have a desire to be something better, I think we've done our job," Kirven said.

If you would like to find out about ways to support the Safe Zone ministry, contact Kirven by calling 804-648-8031. 📞

— Forrest White is a news associate with the **Advocate** magazine.

# Son follows father's footsteps as a church planter

By Forrest White

**T**he Rev. Minoo Kim began his middle school basketball career the same year Yao Ming began his NBA career. Kim was 5-foot-9, tall for his age. Ming was 7-foot-6, tall for his species. But there were assumptions made

by coaches and fellow players, that Kim would grow to be the next Ming. Never mind that Kim is Korean-American and Ming is Chinese. Never mind the genetic factors at play.

The basketball community in Central New Jersey was convinced they had a Yao Ming

2.0 in their midst.

Alas, it didn't happen.

Kim grew two more inches through middle school and then stopped growing, but he was a solid contributor on his high school basketball team.

Assumptions about him weren't limited to

*(Con't. on next page: "SON.")*

The new church plants and those affiliated with them were recognized at Annual Conference 2018.



# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



The Rev. Minoo Kim with his father,  
The Rev. Young Bong Kim.

(“SON,” cont. from page 7.)

the basketball court. The son of a United Methodist pastor, Kim heard it all growing up as a “PK” or pastor’s kid, with some assuming he was a rebel and others assuming he was a saint.

“I don’t know what makes PKs so intriguing that church people have to take their time to go up and ask the question, ‘So are you the good one or the bad one?’” he said. “Church people love

to label and categorize PKs, not knowing it’s their preconceived judgments that put PKs in a whirlwind.”

On July 1, Kim begins a new role in the life of his ministry — as a church planter. He will be pastor of a new site for Fairfax United Methodist Church, moving from his associate position at Good Shepherd UMC in Dale City.

Since Fairfax is a predominantly white congregation, some assume the new church will be as well. Others assume it will be an extension of Kim’s Korean heritage.

Kim said he assumes only one thing — that God is about to do a new thing, as Fairfax UMC seeks to reach the unchurched for Jesus Christ.

“I’m called to plant a new faith community — visioning, imagining and creating a new space where God does a new thing,” he said.

## Following in his father’s footsteps

When seeking wisdom for the challenges ahead, Kim has a home court advantage.

His father, the Rev. Young Bong Kim, is pastor of the Korean UMC of Koinonia, which began as the Centreville campus of the Korean UMC of Greater Washington in 2007, with about 50 members from the “home” congregation making a long-term commitment to the new community and about 30 making a short-term commitment to seeing it become an independent and self-supporting congregation. By 2015, the planted church faced closure due to steady decline.

Young Bong Kim had been involved there since 2008. He asked Bishop Young Jin Cho and Arlington District Superintendent Cathy Abbott to appoint him as pastor to the dying church.

Bishop Cho’s response?



# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

"(He) advised me to pray more about the decision," Young Bong said.

Prayer by all parties involved led to the beginning of KUMC of Koinonia, which now has an average worship attendance of about 250.

So, what advice would Young Bong offer to Minoo and other pastors beginning a new church community?

"The two most important factors for the planting pastor are discipline and vision," Young Bong said.

"(They) need to focus on their ongoing spiritual discipline so that they may keep their spirituality healthy and profound...The vision for the community should be biblical, truthful, concrete and relevant. The pastor should be excited about that vision."

Have no doubt, Minoo is excited about his new ministry.

"I suspect the rewards will be witnessing new people claiming their identity

in Christ and finding new sense of belonging through their new community," he said. "I anticipate the challenges will be discerning and doing God's new things and not ours."

So, in a sense, Minoo finds himself following in his father's footsteps once again.

## The call to ministry

The stories of their calling are similar as well.

Young Bong was a "cradle Christian." In the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, at a revival, he stood up when the preacher called for persons to dedicate their lives to Christ.


"The sense of calling haunted me," he said, reflecting upon his high school and college years.

He surrendered to the call to be a pastor after completing college.

Minoo sensed his call to pastoral ministry as a young man, too. He was in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

"But I tried to run away from it until the end of college," he said. "I didn't want to be one of those PKs who also became a pastor. I had my own Damascus Road moment during a 10-hour drive from Virginia to Georgia, where I went to school ... I haven't looked back since."

Minoo won't hesitate to call upon his father for wisdom gained through experience of serving a new faith community.

"The planting pastors are always exposed to the temptations," Young Bong said. "When the fruit is good, you may become arrogant. When it is not, you may be discouraged. We are in ministry on the long haul ... The best rewards come from people's lives, when you see God's touch in someone's life, when you see someone return to God." 

— Forrest White is a news associate with the **Advocate** magazine.

# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



## UMC itinerancy: A pastor's story of transition

By Forrest White

When the Rev. Jonathan Page and his wife Kelly stepped inside their new home in late June, they found a gift card tree prepared for them by their new church family at Herndon UMC.

At some point in the whirlwind of their first week in Northern Virginia, the Pages learned about another gift.

About 70 members of the church had

spent time working on the parsonage at various times over six days — from the time retiring pastor Gary Robbins and his wife Phyllis moved out until the day they moved in — making sure things were just right for the young couple.

“One of my passions is hospitality and how we welcome folks,” said Page, 32. “What I saw here from the start was people not just doing hospitality well, but doing it extravagantly. That will translate well into how we welcome our neighbors, how we reach out to the larger community.”

For moving pastors across the Virginia Conference and the United Methodist connection as a whole, summer is a time of transition, not just physically, but for every part of your being.

It's not an easy task.

“My prayers continue for my clergy sisters and brothers who box up their world, trek to a new church and community, and are somehow supposed

to be at their best for Jesus and church on their first days in the new appointment,” said the Rev. Scott Parrish, associate director of Congregational Excellence for Missions and Disaster Response in the North Georgia Conference.

“That can be tough if you are dog tired from the emotion of leaving one place, the physical exhaustion of moving, and then the craziness when you can't find something basic like your belt or Bible.”

### Itinerancy

The Pages moved to Herndon from Christiansburg, where Jonathan served four years as lead pastor of Fieldstone UMC. After graduating from Duke University seminary in 2011, he served three years as an associate at St. Andrew's UMC in Virginia Beach before being ordained an elder in 2014 and moving to Fieldstone.

For Page, attitude plays a critical role in the time of transition.

“How you say good-

The Rev. Jonathan Page and his wife, Kelly





# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

bye dictates how you will say hello," he said. "When we say good-bye with love and with care and with respect and just expecting ministry will continue, that almost oozes its way into how we are welcomed as a pastor on the other end of the move. I think we need to be mindful as pastors that if we leave a place with a sour taste in our mouths it's going to be hard to arrive at a new place with a sweet taste."

Before leaving Fieldstone, Page wrote a letter and left it behind for the Rev. Ryan Schaeffer. It was, quite simply, a welcome letter, with a narrative of "some of the great opportunities ahead of you at Fieldstone."

"In my mind, a lot of the work of transition for an outgoing pastor is tilling the soil," Page said. "You turn over the soil in such a way that it's prepared for the new person once they arrive to plant and to harvest."

## A time to listen

On his first day at Herndon UMC, Page didn't write any letters, but he spent plenty of time communicating. He called every member of the church council to thank them for their leadership. He also went across the street to Herndon High School to talk with the principal about how the church and school might partner.

Soon, he had plans in place for a "listening tour" where he would meet with about a dozen church members at a time to ask them three questions: What brought you to Herndon UMC? What keeps you at Herndon UMC? What's next for Herndon UMC?

"It is important to hear their stories," Page said. "The most important thing in the early stage is to listen, rather than to speak."

Likewise, he said, it's vital to practice what you preach from the start.

"If I'm expecting us to be a praying congregation, I better be pray-

ing with people. If I tell my staff, 'Make sure you're spending time with family and caring for self' then I need to be doing that too. If I'm not caring for my wife it's going to be very difficult for me to care for my church family."

For Kelly Page, the summer transition brought job change as well. She taught at a juvenile detention center in the New River Valley. This fall, she'll begin teaching at South Lakes High School in Reston.

The Pages grew up in Hampton Roads. He considers it a blessing to have already served in three geographically distinct areas of the conference at such a young age.

In Christiansburg, rush hour lasted from "about five o'clock to five after five," he said, with a laugh.

In Herndon ...


"I've been told to never schedule a meeting before 7 p.m."

In Christiansburg, Page knew to never schedule anything to conflict with Virginia

Tech football on a fall Saturday afternoon. Meanwhile, Herndon UMC has a Saturday night worship service. Two different worlds, but both good places to be.

On the night of June 25, Page couldn't sleep. It was the last night for him in Christiansburg. He was anxious, not about what was ahead for him. He was poring over a mental checklist of things he had wanted to do to help with Schaeffer's transition to Fieldstone.

Then, on Tuesday night, his first in Herndon, he couldn't sleep again, but this time he was thinking about his first sermon at Herndon UMC.

"The change in geographical location shifted my perspective," Page said. "It impacted where my mind was, where my heart was. I have great gratitude for what I left behind, but great anticipation and excitement for what is ahead." 

— Forrest White is a news associate with the **Advocate** magazine.







# 2018 VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE WRAP-UP

By Madeline Pillow

The theme for the 2018 Virginia Annual Conference, held June 15-17, 2018 at the Hampton Roads Convention Center in Hampton, Va., was “Servant Leaders Making a Difference.” The conference theme was based on I Peter 4:10, “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” Service was incorporated in the conference theme and lived out in *The Great Day of Service*, a three-hour period on Saturday, June 16 when the conference session was halted for conference attendees to participate in service.





## Service of Remembrance and Holy Communion

The Rev. Ileana Rosario, pastor of Lower UMC, York River District, preached for the Service of Remembrance and Holy Communion in which 63 conference clergy and laity who died since the last Annual Conference were remembered.

## Conference Vision

Bishop Lewis reviewed her vision on June 15 that she had introduced at last year's Annual Conference: Disciples of Jesus Christ who are lifelong learners who influence others to serve. This is her vision for the Virginia Conference for the next four years.

She reminded those gathered that all Virginia United Methodist churches will have a process of intentionally-forming disciples by 2020. She clarified that each church will have to individually choose what this will look like for their context. She suggested that each church begin in prayer, have a conversation about their potential mission fields to form disciples and to study three books that she recommended:

- ❖ *Developing an Intentional Discipleship System: A Guide for Congregations* by Junius B. Dotson
- ❖ *Engaging Your Community: A Guide to Seeing All the People* by Junius B. Dotson
- ❖ *From Membership to Discipleship: Grow Maturing Disciples Who Make Disciples* by Philip Maynard



## Conference Business

Eight churches were discontinued in five districts. Two new faith communities and one chartered church and their pastors were introduced.

.....

The body discussed three of eight resolutions on Saturday, June 16.

**Resolution 6- Gracious Accommodation Virginia Annual Conference.** The resolution had to do with the implications of possible irreconcilable theological differences between that of the local congregation and United Methodist polity and discipline particularly as it pertains to ministry to and with members of the LGBTQ community on local congregations' buildings, assets and liabilities. The resolution was called out of order by Bishop Lewis as it called to ignore a part of the *Discipline*; it is improper as a matter of church law as only General Conference can enact changes in the *Discipline*.





**Resolution 3 - Compassionate Support for Members of the Armed Forces, Veterans and Their Families Suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress and Moral Injury.** The committee recommended concurrence. The resolution was approved.

**Resolution 1 - Affirm Unity in Christ.** The committee recommended concurrence. It resolves that the Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church urges the 2019 General Conference to affirm unity in Christ in the midst of our diversity, to challenge in love all that divides and to offer to all people God's saving grace through Jesus Christ that transforms the world. They urge and pray that the 2019 General Conference will resist schism and express openness to diverse perspectives in matters of sexual identity and practice. They urge all faithful United Methodists to pray for a way forward that nurtures an inclusive, evangelical, and faithful church. The resolution was approved.

.....

Two motions were made from the floor on Sunday, June 17:

The Rev. Jan Rivero brought a motion that the annual conference condemns the manipulation of Scripture to justify political policy that is contrary to the command of Jesus to love all people, especially children. She spoke to the motion about the history of children being separated from their parents and is now being done on the U.S. southern border. After speeches for and against the motion was adopted.

The full text of the Rivero Motion read:

*"I move that the Virginia Annual Conference, meeting in Hampton, VA, June 15-17, 2018:*

- *Condemns the manipulation of scripture to justify a political policy that is contrary to the command of Jesus to love one another, especially children;*
- *Calls upon all public figures to implement policies and actions that reflect the words of Ro-*

(Con't. on next page: "CONFERENCE BUSINESS.")





("CONFERENCE BUSINESS," cont. from page 15.)

*mans 13:10 which reads, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor, therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law."*

- *Calls upon the Department of Justice and appropriate agencies to release detained children, reunite families unjustly separated, and develop immigration reform that protects all children and families.*
- *And requests that a copy of this motion, be delivered to the Attorney General of the United States.*

The Rev. Tom Thomas brought a motion from the floor about an exit path to be considered by General Conference for churches pertaining to the outcome of the plans from the Commission on a Way Forward and the Council of Bishops. The motion was tabled.

Clergy and lay members voted on the corrected proposed Constitutional Amendment 1 on Friday, June 15. General Conference Secretary Gary Graves, in an email to conference secretaries, said, "It is imperative that this vote occur during the very next session of your annual conference (2018 or prior to May, 2019)." Results will be announced after all annual conferences vote on the amendment.

## Virginia Conference presented awards from Global Mission Connections

The Rev. Amy Valdez Barker, executive director for Global Mission Connections, presented six awards to the conference for categories based on the ranking with the U.S. annual conferences. These awards were: United States Disaster Response (#1), International Disaster Response (#3), Missionary Support (#1), Mission Initiatives (#4), In Mission Together (#2) and Health-related Programs (#4).

## Harry Denman Awards

The clergy Denman award went to the Rev. Larry Cochran, pastor of Belmont UMC, Richmond District. Laity award went to Kevin and Judy Mooers, members of the Northumberland Charge, Rappahannock River District. Youth award went to Justin Robins, member of Shady Grove UMC in Mechanicville, Richmond District.



## Update from Commission on a Way Forward

The Rev. Tom Berlin, member of the Commission on a Way Forward, presented a report on the work of the commission prior to the start of the Clergy and Laity sessions on Friday, June 15. The commission is a 32-member group with representatives from nine countries and held their first meeting in January 2017.

Berlin shared that materials from the commission will be available in July.

During the presentation, Berlin spoke about the phrase in the *Discipline* that says "homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching" as well as the statement that "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" cannot be ordained.





Photo by Wendell Cochran.



“This has possibly been one of the most Christian exercises I’ve ever been through.”

— Tom Berlin

“We have another issue where people are actually leaving the church over this,” Berlin said. “It’s the ‘leaving of the church’ that is one of the issues before us.” Some people are leaving because some clergy are performing same-sex marriages. Some people are leaving because clergy cannot perform same-sex marriages.

“This has possibly been one of the most Christian exercises I’ve ever been through,” Berlin said. All the meetings of the commission, he stated, had been based in Bible study and prayer. Berlin admitted that he had hoped the commission could find the one solution to bring peace to the entire church.

“We are everywhere. We are in red and blue states. In African nations, homosexuality is illegal. In six of those nations, it can be punished with the death penalty.” Berlin said this changes the conversation considerably. Eastern and Western Germany are different. It’s ludicrous to suggest that “all younger people think alike, but Gallup polls show younger people are more progressive.”

He also spoke to each of the three plans that came out of the commission’s work. In February 2019 delegates will go to a four-day General Conference. More information about the work of the Commission on a Way Forward is available on the Virginia Conference website at <https://www.vaumc.org/WayForward>. Berlin’s slides from the presentation can be accessed at: <https://www.vaumc.org/pages/resources/2018-ac/2018acfridaymorning>. The video of Berlin’s presentation can be found at: <https://livestream.com/VAUMC/AC2018/videos/176376355>.



## “Glory Sightings” video series

After their introduction last year, the “Glory Sightings” video series continued again this year. These videos were shown throughout conference to highlight mission and ministry throughout the Virginia Conference. These videos covered an afterschool program at a church, a food pantry ministry, a medical supplies ministry and a video covering the events from Saturday’s Great Day of Service. These videos can be accessed at: <https://vimeo.com/virginiaumc>.





## Great Day of Service 2018

There were 1,637 people who participated in the Great Day of Service on Saturday, June 16 from 2- 5 p.m. This day of service allowed participants three options for service: the building of 3,000 UMCOR kits, participating in three social justice talks and eight locations around the Hampton area with service projects that included cleaning historic cemeteries and alleyways as well as prayer teams in a number of neighborhoods. You can view the "Glory Sightings" video about the day at: <https://vimeo.com/275491965>.







## A Service for the Ordering of Ministry

Nineteen people were ordained elders, two were ordained deacon, 11 were commissioned as provisional members, two were recognized for orders and 32 were licensed as local pastors in the Saturday evening Ordering of Ministry service.

Bishop B. Michael Watson, retired bishop in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, delivered the sermon preached on the topic of "But, I Haven't Finished Yet."



"This is a remarkable service," he said. "I wish that all United Methodists could experience an ordination service. This is a defining time for individuals and the church. It is occasion of great challenge and great celebration."

He asked all the

Christian ministers to stand and said it is all baptized Christians who are baptized into ministry.

"Jesus came to reconcile all people to God," Watson said. "This is the unique role of Christ and it is now the unique role of the people of the church." He said people must be brought into the presence of God.

To those who are being recognized, Bishop Watson said, "I want you to hear this. Sometimes it is hard to know what to do. You are sent, you are called, and you wonder." Bishop Watson also shared that ministry can be frustrating but there are holy moments throughout ministry.

"What a holy, holy privilege. You will have that privilege. You will decide what you do with it."

Bishop Watson ended his sermon saying, "We say to you tonight with love and affection, 'Go. Go with God.' Amen."

Following the ordering ceremony, Bishop Lewis asked people to pray and invited anyone who may have a stirring of call to come forward for prayer and a continued discernment about their call to ministry.



## Closing Worship

Bishop Lewis based her sermon on the Annual Conference 2018 Scripture: 1 Peter 4:10. She shared that at her installation service in 2016 that she wanted the Virginia Conference “to stir up the gifts” and felt that the Great Day of Service the day before showed that the conference could discover those gifts and employ them to serve others.

“As the body of Christ, we no longer experience the freedom of the Holy Spirit or operate in our spiritual gifts because we are too concerned with what we may look like to our fellow colleagues or parishioners or just too afraid—as United Methodists—that we will be labeled as charismatic. Beloved, I believe just like we experienced yesterday; that it’s time for the body of Christ to discover your gifts; use your gifts and stir up gifts.

“When you use the gifts God has given you, you will discover that God will give you the power you need to operate in your gift,” she said. “It is by grace we received the gift and it is by grace that we use the gift. My brothers and sisters, spiritual gifts enable the body of Christ to function as whole.”

Bishop Lewis reminded those gathered that once you have discovered your gift, you must do something with it.

“Just think about it: when someone gives you a gift, what do they expect you to do with it. They expect you to use it.” 🍷

— Madeline Pillow is editor of the **Advocate** magazine.







## WRAP-UP STATS



Hygiene Kits	29,409
School Kits	13,367
Birthing Kits	703
Layette Kits	334
Cleaning Kits	840
Bedding Kits	16
Sewing Kits	102
Misc. Kits	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44,774</b>

## 9,000 lbs.



Attendees of conference contributed almost 9,000 pounds of canned goods and boxed dry foods as part of the "4 Cans 4 Conference" drive.

Members approved a 2019 budget of

## \$31,615,000

down \$185,000 from the 2018 budget.

A conference offering was collected of almost

## \$123,000

The offering was divided between the following: Cambodia, Brazil, Mozambique, Volunteers in Mission (VIM) teams working with Native Americans, Haiti, Cuba recovery, Puerto Rico recovery and new this year, Moscow Seminary.



At the Saturday morning retirement service, 44 pastors retired. Their combined totals of years served was

## 1,223 years.

KAY A. BARSTOW-GENTRY	20.75
BRENDA J. BILER	30.00
JEFFERY L. CANNON	28.75
ROBIN L. COLWELL	34.00
MICHAEL D. COPELAND	30.00
LARRY E. DAVIES	32.00
WILLIAM A. DAVIS	37.00
DAVID R. DRINKARD	40.00
LAWRENCE A. ERBIN	27.00
DWALA J. FERRELL*	26.00
DAVID T. FORREST	45.00
PAMELA J. GABLE	15.00
JOSEPH E. HAMMOND	31.00
ERNEST T. HERNDON	45.00
ALVIN J. HORTON	43.00
BARBARA M. JACOBS	13.50
ROBERT L. JENNINGS	11.50
KARLA M. KINCANNON	38.00
DAVID C. LAGERVELD	24.00
BRUCE N. LUGN	8.00
LARRY F. MANN	49.00
DREMA M. MCALLISTER-WILSON	32.00
GORDON K. MERIWETHER III	6.00
RONALD K. MORRIS	40.00
JEFFREY C. PUGH	42.00
CHARLES F. REYNOLDS	24.00
JANICE R. RIVERO	37.25
GARY L. ROBBINS	42.00
BRENDA L. ROSE*	14.25
TERRY A. ROSS	14.00
VICKIE R. SEIBERT	25.00
ROBERT W. SHARP	41.00
THOMAS W. SHERROD*	41.00
WAVERLY C. SMITH	16.00
ROBERT L. STROUD	38.00
LAWRENCE R. THOMPSON JR	42.00
BARRY R. THROCKMORTON	26.00
PAT B. TONY	37.00
CHARLES W. TOWNSEND	22.50
PATRICK MICHAEL WATTS*	26.50
PAULA P. WERNER	19.00
VALERIE L. WHITE	8.00
DAVID J. ZUCHELLI*	32.50

# Seen and Heard around conference

## God in the midst of the Great Day of Service

By Barbara Lewis

I love how God works things. A few days before Conference, I was thinking about and praying for a clergy couple with whom I have traveled on UMMVIM trips. While waiting to board a church van for the Great Day of Service, the clergywoman who had been so much on my mind walked up. We sat together sharing updates on life and ministry.

On the bus, I realized I know about half of the team. God never sends us alone. We are always supported in the ministries to which God calls us.

As a quick response team, our bus was sent to Booker Elementary, and we were greeted by a young woman who is the principal of the school. She listed a variety of tasks she hoped we would accomplish during the afternoon, and we split up to tackle her priority items.

Throughout the afternoon, our team did not work in silence. We talked and shared. We heard from group members who volunteer in elementary schools at home. Many of us had personal connections to the Hampton area.

We learned about various students from the school and their achievements. We learned from the principal the beginning of her love of education in this very school as a student. She now tries to instill that same love of reading and learning in a new group of students. She shared her hopes, dreams and a school wish list with us.



Rev. Moon with the "Moon tree"

The afternoon came to an end as we learned of a young student whose last name was Moon who won a national poetry contest sponsored by NASA many years ago. Tree saplings were sent into space. The national winners' schools each received one of those trees when they returned to earth and were asked to plant them. Booker Elementary planted their tree in their courtyard, one of the areas we were sprucing up. The Rev. Peter Moon, Richmond District Superintendent, was a

member of our team. We took a picture of the Rev. Moon leaning up against "the Moon tree" that as a sapling went into space and came back to be planted in honor of the young woman also with the last name of Moon!

Stories like these remind us it isn't so much about the cleaning up we did – though that was needed and appreciated – it is about getting to know one another, sharing the gifts God has given us and sharing the love of Christ whenever, however we can.

– The Rev. Barbara Lewis, Richmond District

## A Family Tradition

A grandmother, daughter and granddaughter come to Annual Conference 2018.

From left to right: Susie Wolf, Farmville District, Catie Wolf Murphy, Alexandria District, and Charlotte Murphy, Alexandria District.







# Meet our new District Superintendents

## Meet the new Harrisonburg District Superintendent



The Rev. Dr. Víctor R. Gómez

### What excites you about this new position?

What excites me the most is the opportunity I have in continuing to serve God and to serve God's people in a new capacity. I am excited because I am the first Latino in the Virginia Conference to be appointed as a district superintendent. I

am excited about the new role as a district superintendent where I will have a different perspective in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. I am excited about getting to know more brothers and sisters in the Harrisonburg District, both clergy and laity. I am excited about the emphasis the Harrisonburg District has on missions. And I am excited about continuing to be a servant of God.

### What will you miss most about serving the local church as pastor?

I know I will miss the wonderful people I served, but in addition, I will miss the worship preparation on a weekly basis. I will miss "Pie with Pastor Victor," a monthly gathering with the senior citizens of the church, mainly to pray and chat about my sermons. The pies were homemade, and coconut

cream was the best. I will miss holding a baby in my arms and being an instrument of God with the sacrament of holy baptism.

### What do you see as your biggest challenge in this new role?

There will be a learning curve which I am ready to encounter. I think the biggest challenge will be to have vital churches that do not want to be vital. My question to the churches in the district will be "If the doors of your church were to be closed, how much would it matter to the community?" The answer reflects how vital the church is, and the biggest challenge is to create enough awareness so that the churches become vital in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

### When were you called to full-time ministry? What do you remember about your calling?

Since I was a teenager, God has put me in places where God has used me in amazing ways. My call to ministry has been happening throughout the years, but especially when I moved to the United States about 25 years ago. I came to Shenandoah University to do my college education. At





# Meet our new District Superintendents

that time, I was asked to lead a Latino ministry at Walmsley Boulevard UMC in the south part of Richmond. For a couple of years, every weekend, I traveled back and forth between Winchester and Richmond. At that time I responded to God and began to pursue full-time ministry.

## What is your favorite verse of Scripture? How did it come to be your favorite?

It is not a verse, but a passage. Matthew 25:31. I wrote my doctoral thesis on this passage. I have based my ministry in responding on what this passage says in taking care of the least of these.

## What do you see as the biggest challenge ahead for the Virginia Conference?

Unfortunately, the current situation in our commonwealth is being polarized. I see divisions in many aspects, especially politically and theologically. Furthermore, the church is becoming less and less relevant. The challenge I already see is for the church to be united, despite our differences — a church that is relevant and has one common mission. I believe that, yes we can, but we must return to our roots, we must

retake our mission and we must put our entire trust in God.

## What are your hobbies away from the office?

I love traveling to different countries and meeting new people. I enjoy reading a good book and watching a good musical.

## What is something about you that might surprise our *Advocate* readers?

I have been a faculty member of the Methodist Seminary in Havana, Cuba since 2010.

Also I am the Ironman in the house. I iron the clothes.

## What is the most unique job you ever had?

As a teenager I worked in McDonald's as a closer. A closer cleans the restaurant after closing.

## What is your pet peeve?

Weak coffee. When I drink coffee, I like it to taste like coffee.

## What is the achievement you are the most proud of?

Becoming a father.

## What is one thing you would change about yourself?

My fear of heights!

## Meet the new James River District Superintendent



The Rev. Sylvia S. Meadows

## What excites you about this new position?

Starting a new chapter in ministry and journeying with the James River District into deepening our relationships with God and our neighbors.

## What will you miss most about serving the local church as pastor?

I will miss leading worship, the music at Chester UMC and my friends.

## What do you see as your biggest challenge in this new role?

The ongoing steep learning curve which will involve making mistakes.





### When were you called to full-time ministry? What do you remember about your calling?

It was ongoing and persistent, and I couldn't resist following the call to leave the known and comfortable to follow Jesus.

### What is your favorite verse of Scripture? How did it come to be your favorite?

Isaiah 43:1b-4a has been one of my favorites for many years: *"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when...Because you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you."*

As I have journeyed through the mountains and valleys of

life and ministry, it is always a wonderful reminder that I am not ever alone.

### What do you see as the biggest challenge ahead for the Virginia Conference?

Being open to the work of the Holy Spirit to trust, listen, learn, remain calm and grow in loving God and our neighbors as our God does a new thing.

### What are your hobbies away from the office?

Away from the office? We get to do that? All kidding aside, I love movies, musicals, reading, traveling and being in God's life-giving creation!

### What is something about you that might surprise our Advocate readers?

Well, I'm ADD, I played the trumpet in high school and I

have social anxiety when I'm in settings without a specific role or purpose.

### What is the most unique job you ever had?

I was the first white teacher's aide ever hired at Prince Edward County Public Schools in the 70s.

### What is your pet peeve?

People being mean and rude to one another.

### What is the achievement you are the most proud of?

Striving to grow in grace to love God and all of God's people...more and more and more.

### What is one thing you would change about yourself?

Impulse control that is part of the ADD...once you've said it, you can't take it back.



# Meet our new District Superintendents

## Meet the new Winchester District Superintendent



The Rev. Dr. Steven J. Summers

### What excites you about this new position?

I am excited to have the opportunity to learn about the vibrant Christ-centered ministries taking place on the beautiful and diverse Winchester District. As the “chief missional strategist” of the district, I eagerly anticipate partnering with the clergy and laity to enhance our church’s fruitfulness and boldly share the good news of Jesus Christ in fresh ways that reach hearts and minds in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. Finally, I am very excited to minister on the Cabinet under the incredible leadership of Bishop Sharma Lewis as our conference lives into our new ministry vision “to be disciples

of Jesus Christ who are lifelong learners who influence others to serve.”

### What will you miss most about serving the local church as pastor?

I will miss hearing the deep stories of my parishioners’ lives and journeying with them through both joyous and challenging times.

### What do you see as your biggest challenge in this new role?

It’s still too early to tell for sure. However, I anticipate that time management and adjusting to a new yearly rhythm of ministry will certainly take some deeply-focused effort. There will be a lot to balance with 77 churches, 55 clergy and all the responsibilities for which a superintendent is accountable.

### When were you called to full-time ministry? What do you remember about your calling?

My call to ministry has been an ongoing daily reality in my life. Frankly, I pray for a fresh calling each day and find that prayer to be a lively and humbling reminder that I have much to learn and more growing to do.

As for those initial nudgings, I can vividly recall being asked by some wise adult VBS leaders to assist the “snack team” in keeping cookies replenished on a platter when I had aged out of VBS but showed up anyway. The Spirit stirred in me deeply as I engaged in that task, and I knew that I, someday, wanted to give my life over to serving Christ as clergy.





## What is your favorite verse of Scripture? How did it come to be your favorite?

One passage of Scripture that has been a particular favorite of mine in the last few years has been Romans 8:37-39.

*"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Sallie and I lost three parents within nine months. There was much to do and process in that season of life along with leading a growing and vital church, raising children, and navigating all the other demands of life. I found great comfort and strength in Paul's words and still do. They remind me that God's love, for me and for all of God's children, is the greatest power in creation and can "hold" us through any experience.

## What do you see as the biggest challenge ahead for the Virginia Conference?

Our biggest challenge ahead is to simply, yet passionately,

keep focused on Jesus Christ, his life, and his teachings as represented in the Gospels. This is no small task within our post-modern world, but we serve a Lord who reminds us that great things can be accomplished with a small amount of faith. [Matthew 17:20]

## What are your hobbies away from the office?

I love to work in the yard and find it relaxing to mow, trim, etc. While I'm not good at all at designing planting areas, I'm a good helper for Sallie digging the holes for plants and things such as that.

Another hobby I have is working on cars and lawn equipment. It's very satisfying to me to repair something that doesn't work or needs routine servicing and save money in the process!

## What is something about you that might surprise our Advocate readers?

I'm the son of a naval officer. Dad, now deceased, served with distinction for 31 years. Some duty stations where I have lived for extended periods of time as a child were Puerto Rico and Cuba. In fact, I was born in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

## What is the most unique job you ever had?

I'll never forget the job I had during the summertime while in undergraduate school at the University of Richmond. I worked at U.S. Gypsum in Norfolk, Virginia. Part of my duties were to unload heavy bags of lime from inside railroad cars onto conveyor belts and keep the production areas clean. It was hard and rewarding work, and I will never forget some of the great folks I worked with during those summers.

## What is your pet peeve?

Poor or insufficient planning for a task.

## What is the achievement you are the most proud of?

I am most proud of partnering with Sallie to raise two beautiful and strong young women, Laura and Sarah.

## What is one thing you would change about yourself?

I tend to misplace things (keys, wallet, hammer to hang pictures), and this has been a particularly challenging weakness in the midst of our move from Richmond to Winchester. My goal is to find a place for everything and make sure it goes back there.

# EVENTS



## JULY

### Mission Encounter July 27-29, 2018

4-H Center, Smith Mountain Lake

Mission Encounter, a cooperative event sponsored by the Virginia Conference Missional Ministries Board and the Virginia Conference United Methodist Women, will take place at the 4-H Center at Smith Mountain Lake from July 27-29. The address is 775 Hermitage Road Wirtz, VA 24184.

The event is an opportunity for your whole congregation to come alive to mission by participating in a weekend mission education experience. If you have ever wondered how we DO mission, 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 will be four courses offered: "Missionary Conference of the UMC in the USA," "What About Our Money," "Embracing Wholeness," and "Children's Study: Money Matters." Online registration is available. To register and see a detailed brochure, visit the conference website at [www.vaumc.org/missionencounter](http://www.vaumc.org/missionencounter).

## SEPTEMBER

### Bishop's Convocation on Prayer

Sept. 15, 2018, Location TBD

More information about the event and location will be forthcoming. Event will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Embrace 2018: Virginia Clergywomen's Transformational Event

Sept. 25-26, 2018

Virginia Crossings Conference Center, Glen Allen

Embrace 2018 is the first gathering of the Virginia clergywomen in 30 years! Join us for two days of worship, study and community. Engage in hands-on missions, show off your skills in a Talent/No Talent Show, and participate in panel discussions on change and growth within your own ministry context. But most importantly, connect with other clergywomen and claim a renewed sense of call. Be inspired. Be nourished. Be embraced. Continuing Education grants from \$200 to \$400 are available to part-time and full-time clergy under appointment by the Virginia Conference. The application form is available at

[vaumc.org/ClergyContinuing Education](http://vaumc.org/ClergyContinuingEducation). If you are submitting an application for grant funding, please choose "Invoice" as your payment method. The deadline for in-residence registration is Wednesday, August 15, 2018. You may register as a commuter and secure your own lodging arrangements after this date. For pricing and more registration information, visit [www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/index.php?eventid=320185&](http://www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/index.php?eventid=320185&).

The *Advocate* magazine publishing schedule requires that information be compiled sooner than the month for which it is published. For events you are interested in, please contact those listed for the events as points of contact for the most up-to-date information and for questions.



# DISCIPLES HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD



▲ Throughout the spring, Bishop Sharma D. Lewis has visited several churches to celebrate and promote their Scouting ministries. These dinners with Bishop Lewis had the theme of “Leave a Trace” — a different take on the outdoor credo of hikers and campers, “Leave No Trace.” Bishop Lewis spoke about leaving a trace of yourself as a child of God and as a church as a whole to your youth and those you may bring into your church via Scouting programs.

At the event in May that was held at **St. Luke's UMC in Yorktown**, the Rev. Brian Sixbey spoke about how Scouting programs help build a strong relationship between the youths of the church and those looking for a church home. To learn more about Scouting Ministries, contact Virginia Conference Scouting Ministry Coordinator Bill Chaffin at (804) 356-6075 or [bcumcbbsa@juno.com](mailto:bcumcbbsa@juno.com).

— Information provided by Bill Chaffin and Tim Ewing

**Pender UMC in Fairfax** provides an annual scholarship for an undergraduate student under Africa University's Usahwira program. The scholarship and its impact are the focus of the congregation's Easter offering. Since 2002, Pender UMC has invested more than \$85,000 through gifts for scholarships to Africa University.

“Pender (UMC) is a leader in the Virginia Conference and

it's certainly at the top of list in the conference for scholarship contributions to Africa University,” said The Rev. Lloyd Rollins, a longstanding member of the congregation and consultant to the ongoing \$50 million Campaign for Africa University.

Twenty-five-year-old Astewale Ayaleneh is a first-generation college student from Ethiopia. He's also the ninth student to attend Africa University with scholarship support from Pender UMC. In a recent letter to the congregation, Ayaleneh wrote about the experience.

“I am exposed to so many amazing and enriching experiences that I never thought would have been possible in my life...and though I may never get the opportunity to meet you in person to tell you just how



(Con't. on page 33: “DISCIPLES.”)



# LIVING THE WORD



*A native of Richmond, VA, JoAnn Batteiger will be a first-year Master of Divinity student at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, GA, in the fall. She graduated from Shenandoah University in May 2018 and has a B.A. in Religion, a B.S. in Sociology, and a certificate in Christian Leadership. She has been active in many roles with her local church, Bon Air UMC, and has also served in various capacities throughout the conference. JoAnn currently serves as the Spiritual Life Coordinator at Westview on the James in Goochland. When not talking about theology or religion, you can find her hanging in her hammock with a good book or spending time out in God's creation.*

**August 5th, 2018**  
**2 Chronicles 34:29-31**

**T**his passage is very covenant-heavy. Like many other times throughout the Old Testament, there is this common theme: that when God's people are not acting the way they are supposed to, there is a time where they are instructed to stop, pause and reset their covenant with God and with each other. Stop, pause and reset. Stop, pause and reset. How many times a day do you do this? A week? Can you remember the last time you intentionally took the time to stop, pause and reset?

Honestly, it is hard for me to stop, pause and reset because I am hardwired to be busy. Even on my days off, I find myself making so many mental to-do lists of all the things that need to get done when I get back to school or work, that before I know it, half the day is already over. It is almost counterintuitive for us to take a moment to stop, pause and reset. Like many others, I am grateful when the summer season comes around where stopping, pausing and resetting is not only the norm, but expected. We breathe a little easier, our workloads (hopefully) feel a little lighter, our moms will sometimes let us wear jeans to church, and we find ourselves in the intentional process of stopping, pausing and resetting.

As many of us are either coming into the end of summer and the start of a new school year or cabin fever is just starting to peak, I invite you to think about what are some small covenants that you can make with yourself to help

rewire our understanding of what it means to stop, pause and reset. What are some small changes that you can make in your day? Consider taking five extra minutes in the quiet of the early morning to be present with your cup of coffee in hand. Take a walk on your lunch break without your devices. It seems almost impossible to stop, pause and reset when busyness has been glorified our whole lives, but the more that we are able to take a moment stop, pause and reset are we then able to better serve God and neighbor.

**August 12th, 2018**  
**Jeremiah 18:1-6**

**“Y**ou make beautiful things; you make beautiful things out of the dust. You make beautiful things; you make beautiful things out of us.”

One Sunday evening, the camp worship team and I were preparing for worship, and as we sang “Beautiful Things” by Gungor, I kept having this imagery of God as this potter, sitting at the potter's wheel taking dust from the earth and using the water of the Spirit to uniquely shape and sculpt us, one by one. It is this same imagery that Jeremiah uses when talking about Israel and God's relationship with them by recognizing that Israel is flawed, but has the ability to start over again and to be shaped again, closer into God's vision for them, much like a potter does when the piece is not quite where they want it to be. This passage also invites us as the reader to be reminded again and again that we





are continuously being formed and sculpted into who God envisions us to be. We are part of the co-creative process! And because we are part of this co-creative process with God, then on some level, we have to trust the process.

As someone who grew up singing in church choir, the rehearsal process really helped me to understand this better. When I was in middle school, rehearsing went over my head and seemed to me to just take up time from all of the other fun activities. But when I got to high school and through college, I have realized more and more that there is such beauty in being able to sing through and work through the notes on the page as a group in order to make the song sound good. Often what would happen is that not only would the song sound better, but there was a shift inside of my being that allowed me to be renewed and reset for the rest of the week. Like the potter working with the clay, we too are part of that process with God. God is working in and through us every day continuing to shape and sculpt us so that we too might become better and live our lives well and with the love and light of God abiding within each one of us.

## August 19th, 2018 2 Chronicles 36:22-23

“Cyrus Proclaims Liberty for the Exiles” is the heading in my NRSV Bible. This short selection is important as it illustrates one of the ways in which God continues to work in the lives of people so that those in captivity could be freed. How cool is it that the same God who has worked in the life of Cyrus so many years ago, still today continues to work in our lives, too? In what ways are we called to proclaim liberty to the exiled? Maybe it is through working and volunteering at your local food bank or homeless shelter. Maybe it is through volunteering with your church’s VBS group. Maybe you have been doing it for a while and did not realize that this is what you have been doing the whole time.

In Cyrus’ proclamation is also a benediction: that the Lord God be with them wherever they go. The beauty of this passage is that God does indeed walk and work alongside us as we work toward bringing God’s kingdom a little closer to reality. God does not leave us alone to do the work, but is present with us as we work to realign ourselves closer to where God has intended for the world to

be. God continues to make all things new in our hearts, in our lives, and in ways seen and unseen. Proclaiming liberty for people who have been exiled is just the one small part of God making all things new. As we go through this week, may we be inspired to proclaim and work toward the building of God’s kingdom here on earth.

## August 26th, 2018 Lamentations 5:19-22

As I read the news headlines day after day, I cannot help but think about how much is going on in the world and how overwhelming it can be. Every time a news headline pops up on my device, my first feeling is dread. Who has been killed? How many children have been separated from their families? Who is buying out whom? It is information overload. And more often than not, I find myself asking, much like the author of Lamentations, why all of this is happening? Where is God in all of this?

I think we all ask this question at one or multiple points in our lives. The answer is sometimes never where we expect it

(Con’t. on pg. 33: “LIVING WORD.”)

The Living Word devotions will coincide with the 2018 Bible Reading Challenge from Bishop Lewis. Find the August schedule on pg. 34. Find all 2018 readings at [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org).

# CLERGY & DIACONAL



## DEATHS



**The Rev. John C. Ward Jr.**, 49, died June 24, 2018 in Huntington, WV, where he was serving

on loan appointment at Cross Roads UMC. Ward previously had served churches around the Virginia Conference.

**Charles Henry Caldwell**, 76, of Richmond, husband of **the Rev. Rita Callis**, died June 21, 2018.

**James R. Ellison**, 90, of Blacksburg died June 14, 2018. He was the father-in-law of **the Rev. Philip Waltz**.

**Gwendolyn Louis Grow Ruckman**, 95, died on May 20, 2018 in Lexington, Va. She was the wife of the late **Rev. Lee Van Ruckman Jr.** who served churches throughout the Virginia Conference.



Notice: The *Advocate*, due to the increasing number of entries for this section each month, will only publish death notices for individuals rather than full obituaries. To have additional information published, please contact the *Advocate* office at [advocate@vaumc.org](mailto:advocate@vaumc.org) or mail to c/o Communications Office, P.O. Box 5606 Glen Allen, VA 23058-5606. The Communications Office receives obituaries from a number of sources, but to ensure we receive a particular notice, please contact us with copy.

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# DISCIPLES HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD

("LIVING WORD," cont. from page 31.)

to be, and that is if we even get an answer when we are desperately praying for one. The author of Lamentations wrestles with the question of where God is in all of the suffering that is happening around them and pleads with God to be merciful and to remember God's people. It seems as though the author knows that God is merciful and grace-filled as has been shown before and is petitioning for that to be the case again.

Sometimes we will never know why bad things happen in the world around us. We will never know why people choose to use their power to their advantage or why people needlessly suffer. What we do know, though, and proclaim as Christians is that God is present in and through all of it, in ways seen and unseen. That in the depths of our hopelessness, sorrow and grief down in our hearts, God is there tending to the soil of our broken hearts so that something beautiful can be transformed with us so that we might be able to take the sorrow and grief and use it to help bring God's kingdom closer to a reality. 🍷

("DISCIPLES," cont. from page 29.)

grateful I am, I hope that these words convey clearly to you what a life-changing gift you have given me and the benefit that educating me will have on my family and my country."

"It's astounding what happens when you tell people how and where their giving makes a difference. They are moved to give," said Katie Chapin, the communications chairperson at Pender UMC.

This year, the response from church members generated more than \$19,000. It was the largest Easter Offering in 15 years and it will be split between Africa University and two other ministries—the work of Stephen's Children in overcrowded, poverty-stricken urban communities in Egypt; and the Chris Atwood Foundation which offers recovery support and advocacy for people affected by addiction.

In the case of Ayaleneh, the generosity of the members of Pender UMC is inspiring a desire to lead in transforming his country.

"My ambition is to improve the marketing system of Ethiopia's agricultural sector that is currently underdeveloped, and as a result, is leading to the stagnation of the sector's growth and development," said Ayaleneh. "Through driving this transformation, I plan to build a stronger agricultural base in my country and create more avenues for employment and job creation for Ethiopia's youth."

— Information provided by Andra Stevens, Africa University.

▼ Members of **Christ Church in Fairfax Station**, the congregation of Temple B'Nai Shalom and families and community associations from DC, Maryland and Virginia partnered with international relief organization,

(Con't. on page 34: "DISCIPLES.")





("DISCIPLES," cont. from page 33.)

Rise Against Hunger, to pack 300,000 protein-rich meals to feed the hungry at the end of May.

Over the course of four days, volunteers worked 90-minute shifts to pack approximately 37,500 meals each shift. Their efforts enabled them to exceed their goal and 300,354 meals were shipped to Honduras and the Southern African School Feeding Initiative as a result.

This was the second year that the church had worked in cooperation with Temple B'Nai Shalom in this initiative. Last year, they packed 251,808 meals that were distributed in El Salvador.


The initiative is one that is important to both faith leaders and they both realized in doing so that the event would speak volumes to their congregations

and community.

Rabbi Amy Perlin said she sees this joint effort as a "holy task" that the two are called toward to feed the hungry.

The Rev. John Speight said he finds it important task especially in the current political climate.

"In a world that is increasingly polarized, I want the people of Christ Church to show our community that people of faith, people who love and worship God, that we can join together to accomplish the sacred task of heeding God's call to feed the hungry in spite of our differences."

Rise Against Hunger is "driven by the vision of a world without hunger." The organization was started in 1998 by a United Methodist pastor as Stop Hunger Now and was rebranded in 2017. 

## Bishop's Bible Challenge readings for August

August 1	Isaiah 64-66
August 2	2 Kings 20-21
August 3	2 Chronicles 32-33
August 4	Nahum 1-3
August 5	2 Kings 22-23, 2 Chronicles 34-35
August 6	Zephaniah 1-3
August 7	Jeremiah 1-3
August 8	Jeremiah 4-6
August 9	Jeremiah 7-9
August 10	Jeremiah 10-13
August 11	Jeremiah 14-17
August 12	Jeremiah 18-22
August 13	Jeremiah 23-25
August 14	Jeremiah 26-29
August 15	Jeremiah 30-31
August 16	Jeremiah 32-34
August 17	Jeremiah 35-37
August 18	Jeremiah 38-40, Psalm 74, Psalm 79
August 19	2 Kings 24-25, 2 Chronicles 36
August 20	Habakkuk 1-3
August 21	Jeremiah 41-45
August 22	Jeremiah 46-48
August 23	Jeremiah 49-50
August 24	Jeremiah 51-52
August 25	Lamentations 1:1-3:36
August 26	Lam. 3:37-5:22
August 27	Ezekiel 1-4
August 28	Ezekiel 5-8
August 29	Ezekiel 9-12
August 30	Ezekiel 13-15
August 31	Ezekiel 16-17

# Advocate

The Virginia United Methodist

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1-800-768-6040, ext. 110 or (804) 521-1110.







## Tweets heard 'round Annual Conference 2018

.....

**chaz @chaz00005597**

This was my first time at annual conference and I am having a great time. Thanks to everyone who was able to make this trip possible. [#vaumc18](#)

**Douglas Forrester @forresterdoug**

If all ordained ministry ever got me was my clergy friends, it would still be worth it all. [#vaumc18](#)

**Hannah H @hannahtwins**

To the young adults and college leaders who stood to fight for our youth this morning: THANK YOU. We see you! Young people are the NOW of the church, and it's people like YOU who keep us growing! [#vaumc18](#)

**Rebecca Davis @Davre2020**

[#vaumc18](#) Question for Day of Service time: is it good or bad to trim the Hedge of Protection?

**Randy Timmerman @RTTimmerman**

Frankly, as much as resolution work can feel redundant or tedious or frustrating or convoluted, I find it to be some of the most constructive work we do. [#unpopularopinion](#) [#holysconfencing](#) [#vaumc18](#)

**Emily Stallings @emyh0pe**

The presenter for Immigration Issues, responding in love and grace to some not-so-loving questions/comments. Thank you for that. [#vaumc18](#)

**Lauren Lobenhofer @Chafinhofer**

Also, a shout-out to the Conference Communications team at [#vaumc18](#) for their work on that Glory Sightings video. The aerial drone work, the interviews, the action shots, edited together overnight while still covering Conference business? WOW.

**Laura Young Ruxton**

[@laura\\_young21](#)

When the Conference Videographer has to turn around a video in 12 hours, he gets two dinners [#corndog-sandfriedchicken](#) [#vaumc18](#) [#proud-wife](#)



**McKennon Shea @McKennon**

Had to leave [#vaumc18](#) early this year, but I'm glad I was there for the Service of Remembrance and the Recognition of Retirees. You can never show too much gratitude for a life well lived or a career in ministry well served.

**Taylor Mertins @TCMertins**

I hope that for the rest of my ministry I will be able to stand for at least one person during every ordination service [#vaumc18](#)

**Ashley Oliver @ashleynoliverr**

Takeaways from tonight:

- God has a place for us all
- Jesus came to reconcile people to God & it's our role as disciples to do so
- you can't just sit & do nothing
- you have nothing more important to do than serve & love others
- it's a holy privilege to do ministry

[#vaumc18](#)

**Bill McClung Jr. @bill\_mcclung\_jr**

"Oh Happy Day." That almost gave the sign interpreter a heart attack to keep up with! [#vaumc18](#)

**Drew @dvcolby**

To be clear: we are probably not actually the ones called to redeem the world. That position has already been filled. [#vaumc18](#)

**Justin Allen @justinallen21**

How about [#vaumc2024](#) in Winchester at Shenandoah University!? I promise a freaking great time and no traffic. [#campaignpromises](#) [#blessed](#) [#vaumc18](#)

**Hannah H @hannahtwins**

HUGE SHOUT OUT to the [#vaumc18](#) tech team who magically managed to have the words on the screen 30 secs after a song request. YALL ROCK!

**Heather Hinchey Wray**

[@HeatherLHinWray](#)

The mics on the floor are gone, closing up shop in the best way possible WORSHIP. Thank you to all who made [#VAUMC18](#) possible from our conference to the staff at the conference center All your hard work and service to the clergy and lay of the AC is greatly admired & appreciated. 🍷



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2018-2019



# MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

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







Glenn Rowley

## MISSION IN COMMUNITY – MISSION AS COMMUNITY

One of the catchy phrases of recent years in conversations about mission is, “The church of Jesus Christ certainly has a mission, but the mission of Jesus Christ also has a church!” I have used that before in mission talks and sermons. However, there may never have been a time when it is more important to consider than now as we struggle to claim our discipleship as a community of believers that our communities, neighborhoods and the world know as “the church”. When many think that the church has lost its focus and relevancy, the clear call to serve others with others as Christ’s body is still before us as sacred space called mission.

The preacher and author Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove says, “Communities are never ‘established’. They are risked one day at a time.” I think we as the church are being challenged to do the risky transformational work of mission in community because that is where we find and share in relationship the best of who we are as sisters and brothers in Christ around the world and in the pew next to us.

I pray you will find within the pages of this Mission Opportunities Booklet 2018 – 2019 the many ways we can serve as a community and in community as the church fulfilling the call to serve God’s mission. There are many resources available as you will find as you explore the many opportunities here, but remember the most valuable resource Christ offered with the words, “Let me give you a new command: **Love one another.** In the same way I **loved you, you love one another.**” (John 13: 34-35) Following that command we can serve in the community as the sacred community baptized, commissioned and called to serve the work of mission.

Glenn Rowley

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

NOTE: You will find a downloadable coloring page of our 2018 cover at: [www.vaumc.org/ncfilerepository/Mission/coloringpage.pdf](http://www.vaumc.org/ncfilerepository/Mission/coloringpage.pdf)



### Virginia Conference Mission Personnel:

#### Conference Secretary of Global Ministries and Director of Justice and Missional Excellence:

Rev. Glenn Rowley  
Virginia Conference Center for  
Justice and Missional Excellence  
P.O. Box 5606  
Glen Allen, VA 23058  
(800) 768-6040 or  
(804) 521-1100, ext. 139  
[mission@vaumc.org](mailto:mission@vaumc.org)

#### Chair, Missional Ministries Board:

Rev. Veronica Barrell  
(804) 304-0646  
[vgbarrell@gmail.com](mailto:vgbarrell@gmail.com)

### Key Mission Contacts:

#### United Methodist Volunteers In Mission:

Rebecca Makowski  
(703) 430.2203-(O)  
[rebecca.makowski@galileeumc.org](mailto:rebecca.makowski@galileeumc.org)

#### Initiatives of Hope (IOH) - Chair,

Judy Fender (703) 978-5796  
[jg1fender@verizon.net](mailto:jg1fender@verizon.net)

#### IOH – Brazil Coordinator:

Rev. David Vaughan  
(434) 825-3542  
[david.vaughan@gmail.com](mailto:david.vaughan@gmail.com)

#### IOH – Mozambique Coordinator:

TBA/Vacant

#### IOH – Cambodia Coordinator:

Juanita Csontos  
(703) 780-5851  
[juanita@csontos.net](mailto:juanita@csontos.net)

#### Mission Encounter:

Marilyn Blagg  
(540) 396-6127  
[marilynblagg@hotmail.com](mailto:marilynblagg@hotmail.com)

#### Voices of Youth:

Mary Letson  
(757) 581-7250  
[voicesofyouth@vaumc.org](mailto:voicesofyouth@vaumc.org)

#### Disaster Response Coordinator:

Rev. Bob Pihlcrantz  
(757) 482-2364 (o);  
(757) 408-6653 (c)  
[vacdrt1@gmail.com](mailto:vacdrt1@gmail.com)

#### Conference Committee on Mission Personnel:

C.M. "Kip" Robinson Jr.  
(804) 539-2494  
[Krobin7856@aol.com](mailto:Krobin7856@aol.com)



# WHOEVER WANTS TO BE FIRST MUST BE LAST OF ALL AND SERVANT OF ALL.

Mark 9:35

## 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**.

### WHERE TO SEND ADVANCE MONEY

Make your check payable to The **Virginia United Methodist Conference**. Write the ministry name and the Advance number in the memo line of the check. Send to:

**Treasurer, Virginia Conference  
UMC, P.O. Box 5605  
Glen Allen, VA 23058**

100% of your contribution goes to the Advance ministry you choose!

4	Introduction to First- and Second-Mile Giving
5	Apportionments (First-Mile Giving)
8	UMCOR and UMCOR Kits
10	Virginia Advance Specials
12	National Advance Specials
14	International Advance Specials
16	Initiatives of Hope
18	Missionaries
21	Virginia & United Methodist Volunteers in Mission
23	Disaster Response & Recovery
24	2018 Special Program Grants of Virginia
26	Open Table — A Transformational Mission Model
28	Mission Encounter (School of Christian Mission)
30	Additional Mission Opportunities
32	Special Sundays (on back)

# CONNECTIONAL GIVING

**B**eing a faithful disciple means following the commands of Jesus. 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 to help those in need and spread the love of Jesus Christ, even in places where we can't go.

## FIRST-MILE GIVING

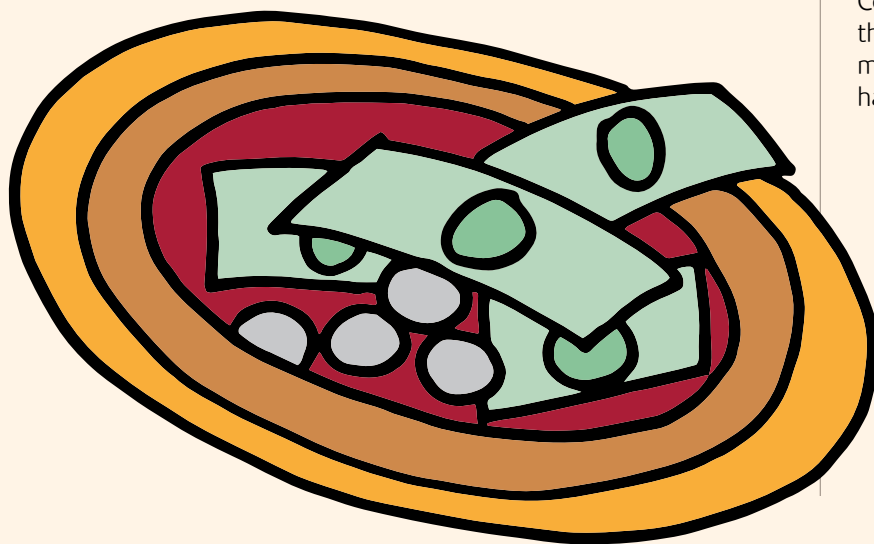
When you give to your local church, most of the money is used to support the ministries of your local congregation.

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 payments make up what is called "First-Mile Giving" and are 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.





# 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 2019 reflects no increase over the 2018 apportionment.

## 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 2019 retired clergy health apportionment reflects no increase over 2018's corresponding apportionment.

## PENSION LIABILITY ASSESSMENT, PRE-82

.....\$750,000

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 2019 pre-82 pension apportionment reflects a \$250,000 decrease from the corresponding 2018 apportionment.

## TOTAL: CLERGY BENEFITS APPORTIONMENTS

.....\$16,520,000

# VIRGINIA CONFERENCE MINISTRIES

## CONFERENCE MISSION & MINISTRIES .....\$3,225,000

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 minister to 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 minister to children, youth and adults, funding for campus ministries, disaster response, prison chaplain ministries and special and sustaining grants of the Common Table.

## CONFERENCE SERVICES .....\$1,875,000

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 3,000 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 and an Assistant to the Bishop position.

## DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS FUND .....\$2,005,000

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 .....\$300,000

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 .....\$1,125,000

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

## VIRGINIA EDUCATION FUND .....\$700,000

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.....\$9,230,000

The Conference Mission and Ministries Apportionment provides a connection for Virginia Conference churches to reach beyond themselves as they join in transformational ministries throughout Virginia. Emphasizing both personal discipleship and outreach some of the ministries supported through this apportionment include:

- Thirteen campus ministries related to and supported by the Virginia Conference
- Through Grace Inside Ministries support for 32 chaplains to 35 institutions housing 30,000 incarcerated men and women
- Disaster response (both short and long term response that included 4,270 volunteers working 39,903 hours valued at \$985,205 in volunteer service in 2017)



# WORLDWIDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MINISTRIES

## EPISCOPAL FUND.....\$875,000

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.....\$3,000,000

The World Service Fund provides the basic support for most of the worldwide missions and ministries 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." *2016 Book of Discipline* (¶1812).

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

## GENERAL AND JURISDICTIONAL CONNECTIONAL FUND.....\$420,000

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.

- Support for laity ministries (including 1,762 Virginia Conference lay servant ministers)
- Virginia Conference Initiative of Hope partnerships in Cambodia, Brazil, Mozambique and Native American Ministries Outreach
- Three camps for 82 children of incarcerated parents

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

People 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.....\$400,000

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.....\$90,000

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.....\$80,000

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**  
.....\$5,865,000

More information about the multiple areas of discipleship and outreach supported by this apportionment through the ministry of the Conference Common Table for Church Vitality and associated conference agencies and partners is on pages 73 - 113 of the 2018 *Book of Reports* at [www.vaumc.org/ncfilerepository/AC2018/2018BOR.pdf](http://www.vaumc.org/ncfilerepository/AC2018/2018BOR.pdf).

— Marc Brown, director of Connectional Ministries

# MISSION AS COMMUNITY TOGETHER WITH UMCOR



Collecting kits at AC2018.

For 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 its 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 **UMCOR Sunday Offering** (usually observed the fourth Sunday of Lent, which is March 31 in 2019). 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** 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.
- **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**.

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**. Kits may also be shipped or taken to the Central Virginia Mission Hub located at **11251 Cherry Hill Road Culpeper, VA 22701**.

Monetary donations include:

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

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

- \$12 for UMCOR to provide a Hygiene Kit
- \$11 for UMCOR to provide a School Kit
- \$65 for UMCOR to provide a Cleaning Kit



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.**





**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 and Hygiene Kits are among the items most requested by our 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. For packing and shipping instructions, please refer to [www.umcor/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies](http://www.umcor/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies).

## SCHOOL KIT

- 1 pair blunt scissors, rounded-tip only; no plastic scissors
- Three 1-subject notebooks; no marble composition books; no 3-or 5-subject notebooks
- 1 pack of loose-leaf paper; 100-200-page packets are acceptable; wide or college-rule accepted
- 1 hand-held pencil sharpener; must be at least 1" or longer — remove from packaging
- One 12" or 30-centimeter ruler, sturdy or flexible material accepted
- 6 unsharpened pencils
- One 2" or larger eraser
- 24-count box of crayons; only 24-count boxes accepted
- One 2-gallon re-sealable plastic bag.

*Assembly: Stack all paper items on top of each other. Place all loose items on top of paper; small, loose items may be placed in a smaller re-sealable bag. Place kit inside of re-sealable bag and seal*

## HYGIENE KIT

- 1 hand towel 15" x 25" to 17" x 27"; no kitchen, cleaning or microfiber towels
- 1 wash cloth
- 1 comb — must be sturdy with at least 6" of teeth; no pocket combs or picks; rattails and combs without handles are acceptable but must have at least 6" of teeth
- One toenail or fingernail clipper; no emery boards or metal nail files
- 10 adhesive bandages (3/4 by 3 inches); common household bandages acceptable
- 1 bath size soap — 3 oz. bar or larger; no Ivory or Jergen's soap; do not remove from original packaging
- 1 adult-size toothbrush; do not remove from original packaging; personal advertising not acceptable
- One one-gallon size re-sealable bag
- \$1.00 to purchase toothpaste

*Assembly: Lay hand towel flat on a table; lay the washcloth in the center of the hand towel; place all remaining items on top of the washcloth (except the plastic bag); fold the sides of the hand towel to cover the items; grasp the bundle tightly and roll over the remainder of the towel; place the tightly rolled bundle in the plastic bag, remove air, and seal.*

*Note: "All Items must be new. Do not wash any of the items, as they will no longer be considered new. Do not include any personal notes, money or additional materials in the kits. Contents of kits or the containers of kits should not be imprinted with*

*cartoon characters, advertisements, religious, patriotic, military or camouflage symbols.*

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.

## CLEANING KIT

- One five-gallon round bucket with resealable lid (14.35" h x 12.19" w x 12.19" d); no screw lids; may be used, but must be free from all residual product; advertisements on the outside acceptable
- One 32-64 oz. bottle liquid laundry detergent
- One 16-40 oz. bottle liquid concentrate household cleaner; no spray cleaners
- One 16-34 oz. bottle dish soap
- One 4-8 oz. pump spray air freshener (three solid, or three gel fresheners also acceptable)
- One 6-14 oz. pump spray insect repellent (pack of 10-20 wipes also acceptable); pump spray bottles must have protective covers
- One scrub brush; with or without handle
- 18 re-useable cleaning wipes: no terrycloth, microfiber or paper towels; remove from packaging
- 5 scouring pads sponges; no stainless steel pads with soap in them, remove from packaging
- 36-50 clothespins
- One 50-100 ft. clothesline (cotton or plastic line)
- 24-roll of heavy-duty trash bags (33-45 gallon sizes); remove from packaging
- Five N95 particulate respirator dust masks (1-3 mm thickness); no surgical masks
- 2 pairs kitchen gloves; durable for multiple uses; remove from packaging
- 1 pair work gloves; cotton with leather palm or all leather

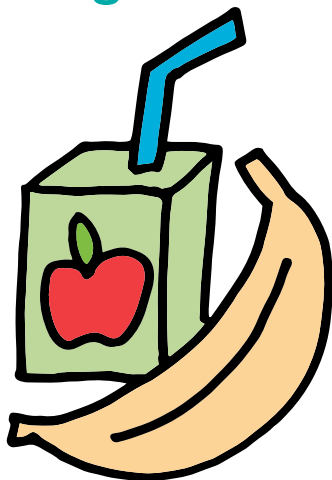
*Assembly: Place all liquid items in the bucket first. Place remaining items in the bucket fitting them around and between the liquid items. Scouring pads and trash bags can be separated in order to fit all of the items in the bucket. Clothes pins may also be placed in a small re-sealable bag. Secure the lid on the filled bucket.*

*Notes: All items must be new with the exception of the bucket and lid. All cleaning agents must be liquid form. No powders are accepted. If items have been omitted, label bucket. Please indicate which items are missing.*

# MISSION AS COMMUNITY IN VIRGINIA

God'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



(Below) Girl Scouts packing food at Crossroads Mission Center on the Rappahannock River District.

- 1. 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)
- 2. 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)
- 3. 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)
- 4. 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.  
[doughchild@gmail.com](mailto:doughchild@gmail.com) ..... (#5020)
- 5. 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@florismc.org](mailto:mreal@florismc.org) ..... (#5035)  
[www.graceministriesumc.org](http://www.graceministriesumc.org)
- 6. 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)







7. **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)
8. **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)
9. **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.....(#5019)  
[parkviewmission@gmail.com](mailto:parkviewmission@gmail.com)  
[www.parkviewcommunitymission.org](http://www.parkviewcommunitymission.org)
10. **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)  
[www.wesleycenterportsmouth.com](http://www.wesleycenterportsmouth.com)  
[wesley@wesley.hrcoxmail.com](mailto:wesley@wesley.hrcoxmail.com)
11. **Virginia: Central Virginia Mission HUB:** A mission supply warehouse of the Susquehanna Conference of the UMC located in Culpepper, VA that collects and transports UMCOR kits and supplies. .... (#5047)  
[www.culpeperumc.org/cumchub](http://www.culpeperumc.org/cumchub)
12. **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)
13. **Charlottesville: Tuesday's Table:** An outreach ministry that provides meals to the hungry in the community. .... (#5024)  
[www.stanardsvilleumc.org](http://www.stanardsvilleumc.org)
14. **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.  
[www.risinghopeumc.org](http://www.risinghopeumc.org).... (#5043)
15. **Caretakers of God's Creation:** Virginia Conference Bd. Of Church and Society project that develops and promotes resources for churches to become "Green Churches" in their efforts to become environmentally sustainable. .... (#5016)  
[jaydeehanson@gmail.com](mailto:jaydeehanson@gmail.com)
16. **Highland Support Project:** HSP networks Indigenous communities of the Americas with financial, technical and political support to enlarge people's freedom and opportunities and improve their well-being. .... (#5007)  
[ben@highlandsupportproject.org](mailto:ben@highlandsupportproject.org)
17. **Journey Community Center:** A multi-program mission of Journey Church to at risk children and adults in rural western Amelia County. .... (#5009)  
[director@jccenter.org](mailto:director@jccenter.org)
18. **Proclaiming Grace Outreach:** Provides a holistic approach to the needs of the community by providing food, clothing and other services to help the disadvantaged and those with economic hardships in Barhamsville, VA..... (#5011)  
[jcrouse@yahoo.com](mailto:jcrouse@yahoo.com)
19. **Una Familia:** Ministry of the Eastern Shore District serving migrant and immigrant families in the areas of after school tutoring, translation, accompaniment and advocacy. .... (#5027)  
[veronicabarrell@vaumc.org](mailto:veronicabarrell@vaumc.org)
20. **Crossroads Mission Center:** A mission center of the Rappahannock River District providing worship (Messy Church), missional outreach in the form of food, clothing, hygiene supplies and school tutoring in King William County. .... (#5028)  
[www.crossroadsmissoncenter.org](http://www.crossroadsmissoncenter.org)

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

- **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)
- **Jeremiah Project:** Empowering middle school students and providing home repairs for God's people in need ..... (#3021220)  
[www.jeremiahproject.org](http://www.jeremiahproject.org)

# MISSION AS COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT OUR COUNTRY

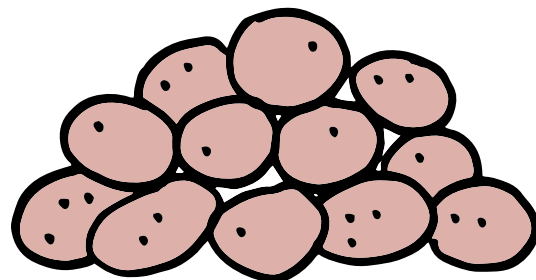
**P**articipating in God's mission and ministry is where our United Methodist connection may be strongest. Through our participation in programs and projects across the United States by giving to the Advance, we make a difference in the lives of people who need our caring presence.

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 2018-2019. For more information about these projects, visit [www.vaumc.org/Mission](http://www.vaumc.org/Mission).

## National Advance Specials



1. **District of Columbia: Christ House**  
A recovery facility that provides for the physical and emotional needs of homeless men and women. .... (#381215)
2. **Kentucky: Red Bird Mission, Inc., Beverly**  
Community education and outreach programs in rural Appalachia. .... (#773726)
3. **Tennessee: Jubilee Project, Inc., Sneedville**  
Leadership development and community organizing in an impoverished area. .... (#781350)
4. **Kentucky: Henderson Settlement, Frakes**  
Programs for disadvantaged teenagers, parents and the elderly. .... (#773365)
5. **South Dakota: Tree of Life Ministry**  
A ministry with Native Americans at the Rosebud and Crow Creek Reservations. .... (#123615)
6. **USA: Justice for Our Neighbors Immigration Ministry**  
Engaging congregations to welcome immigrants and provide free, quality immigration legal services. ... (#901285)
7. **Southeastern Jurisdiction: Volunteers In Mission**  
Assists those offering their skills in this country and abroad. .... (#901875)
8. **USA: Response and Recovery to Natural Disaster**  
Responds to emergencies such as tornadoes and flooding throughout the United States. .... (#901670)
9. **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)
10. **Mississippi: Choctaw United Methodist Mission**  
Progressing towards health and wholeness and developing Choctaw leadership. .... (#761544)







**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 AS COMMUNITY AROUND THE WORLD

**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).

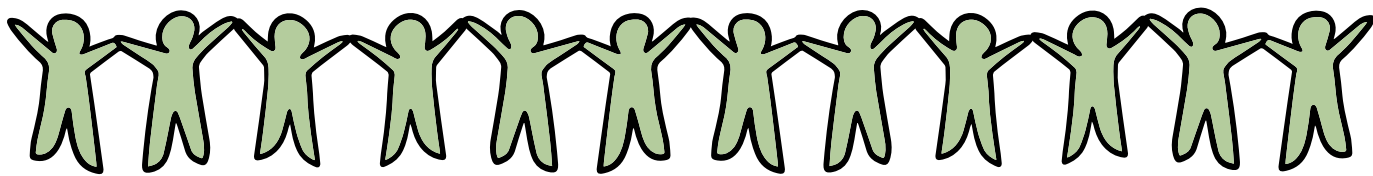
(Below) A Medical team distributes food through "Give Ye Them to Eat" in the community of Tochimizolco Mexico. (Photo from the Give Ye Them to Eat Facebook page.)

## 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. **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)
3. **Macedonia: Macedonia In Mission Together** Developing leaders and working with the poor, orphaned and disabled. .... (#00220A)
4. **Brazil: Ministry with Children, Shade and Fresh Water Project** Outreach to children who are hungry, uneducated and endangered by life on the streets. .... (#11580A)





Young men donating blood at the Chicique Rural Hospital in Mozambique. Chicique Hospital has the only blood storage capacity in the surrounding area. (Photo by Noe Cenal from the Chicique Rural Hospital Facebook page.)

## 5. Sierra Leone: Child Rescue Center Program

Operation of a residential facility and community outreach program for orphaned children and those impacted by poverty. ... (#14377A)

## 6. 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)

## 7. Anti-Human Trafficking

Working with those ensnared in trafficking of humans for commercial and sexual exploitation. .... (#333615)

## 8. Israel: Bethlehem Bible College

Training Christian leaders to serve the community and stop the decline of churches in the Holy Land. .... (#12017A)

## 9. Cambodia: Street Children

Improving quality of life through education, nutrition and fellowship support. .... (#14921A)

## 10. Vietnam Mission Initiative

Supporting congregational development, pastors' salaries, orphanage ministry and building projects. .... (#14932A)

## 11. Mozambique: Chicique Rural Hospital

Serving as a model in the delivery of quality primary and preventative health care and staff training. .... (#09734A)

## 12. Congo: North Katanga Wings of the Morning

Meeting critical medical needs through air transportation for the needy in rural areas. .... (#08597A)

## 13. Liberia: Ganta United Methodist Hospital

Providing community and curative health services and training through hospital and village work. .... (#15080N)

## 14. Cambodia: Mission Initiative

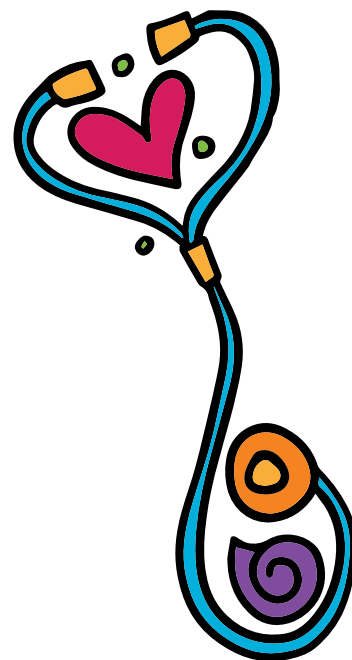
Supporting new churches, pastors' salaries, leadership development and outreach ministries. .... (#00230A)

## 15. Sierra Leone Water and Development Ministry

Providing clean water, medical care, education and spiritual inspiration for the community. .... (#181000)

## 16. Eurasia: Ukraine & Moldova Projects

Funding pastors' salaries and church ministries and establishing new churches. .... (#14053A)



# MISSION AS COMMUNITY TO PARTNER WITH COUNTRIES AND

## THE PRIMARY MISSION FOCUS PARTNERSHIPS OF THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE



**I**nitiatives of Hope (IOH) serves as the team, which guides and monitors the mission partnerships of the Virginia Conference. It seeks to create and monitor those partnerships based on a mission theology of mutuality, respect, compassion and accountability. IOH offers travel-learning opportunities that promote long-term relationships between individuals in Virginia United Methodist faith communities and our partners that break down cultural and national borders.

Currently IOH promotes four partnerships – Mozambique, Brazil, Cambodia, and Native Peoples in the U.S.

The ministry and mission of IOH is risky and challenging as it seeks to address issues of dependence, privilege and sustainability. However, it is also life changing as we begin to see the world in relationship rather than divided by wealth and power. Our partners are our teachers as well as fellow sojourners in the faith.

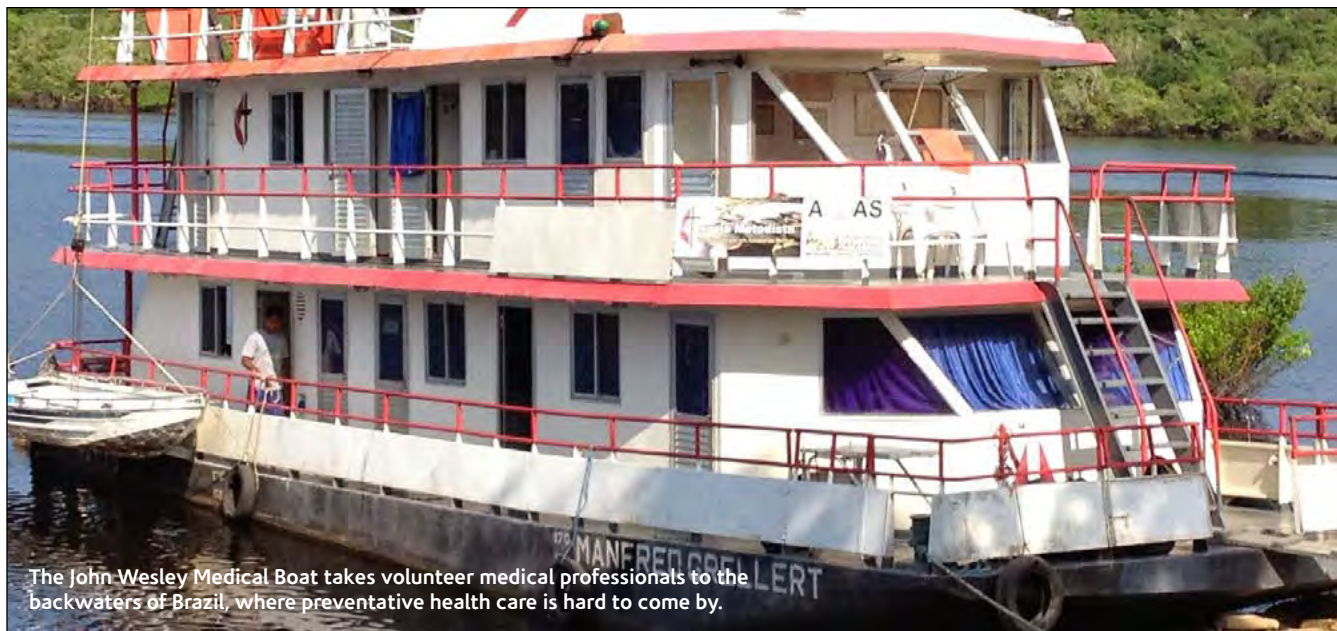
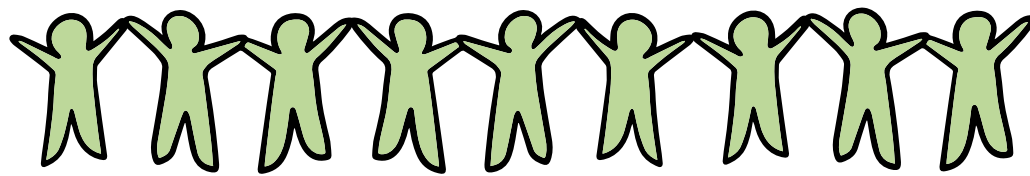
Our partnerships are aimed at providing opportunities for connection and understanding as well as resources that can be shared mutually and sustainably. Among them are:

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



Children in Cambodia.  
Photo by Nick Ruxton.





The John Wesley Medical Boat takes volunteer medical professionals to the backwaters of Brazil, where preventative health care is hard to come by.

## 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 AS COMMUNITY

## THE HANDS & FEET OF JESUS



Clara  
Biswas



Esther  
Gitobu



John  
Elmore



Poto Valentine  
Shutsha



Jacques Akasa  
Umembudi



Lisa  
Nichols



Dr. Quynh-Hoa  
Nguyen



Mark  
Stransky



David  
McCormick



Elizabeth  
McCormick



Nancy  
Robinson

**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 connexional 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.

### INTERNATIONAL

#### Cambodia:

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

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

#### Chile:

John Elmore (#13109Z)  
jelmore@umcmmission.org

#### Democratic Republic of Congo:

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

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

#### Vietnam:

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

#### Mozambique:

David McCormick (#3022179)  
DMcCormick@umcmmission.org

Elizabeth McCormick (#3022180)  
EMcCormick#umcmmission.org

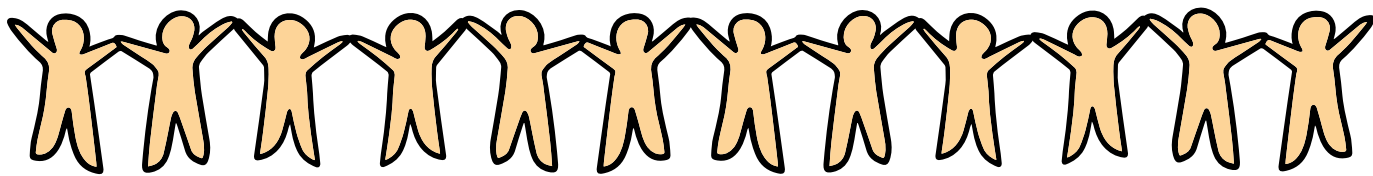
### U.S. BASED

Lisa Nichols (#982953)  
henryforkcenter@cs.com  
lisanichols@cs.com  
Rocky Mount, Virginia

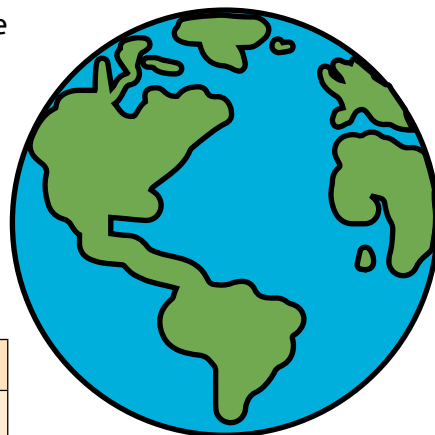
Mark Stransky (#803003)  
fullcreel56@comcast.net  
Marion, Virginia

Nancy Robinson (#3021816)  
nrobinson@umcmmission.org  
Mission Interpreter/Southeast  
Jurisdiction





There 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.



(Left): Nancy Robinson, an UMVIM missionary formerly assigned to Sierra Leone, returns from the market.

# MISSION AS COMMUNITY

## OUR CALLING IN THE WORLD



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 or Individual Volunteer. For more information visit [www.umcmmission.org/gt](http://www.umcmmission.org/gt).

### Global Mission Fellows

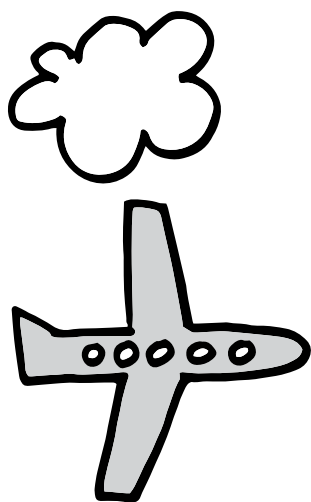
Fellows commit to 24-25 months of service. Applicants from the United States can choose to serve either domestically or internationally. At this time applicants outside of the United States will be serving internationally outside of one's home country.

### 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.



Global Ministries welcomes the Global Mission Fellows 2017-2019.

Global Mission Fellows group pictures were taken at Emory University-Woodruff Residential Center on July 11, 2017. Photo by Cynthia Mack, Global Ministries







**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. International travel 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.



Bill and Karen Poole hard at work in Virginia Beach with their mission team from Trinity UMC, Chester.

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

**Center for Justice and Missional Excellence**  
**Glenn Rowley**  
 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 AS COMMUNITY 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.

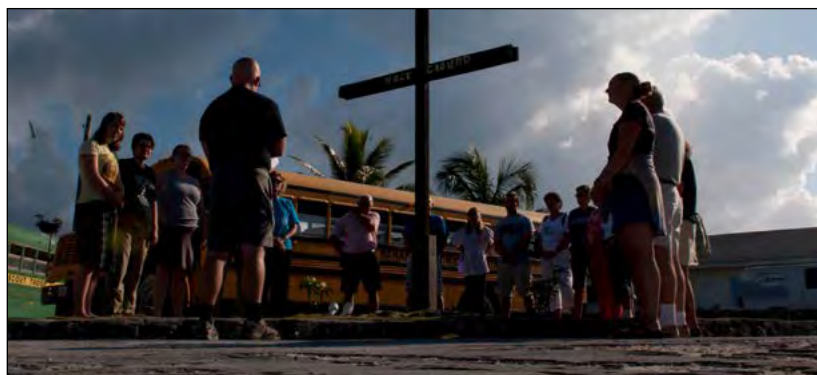
## Registering your team

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. at a nominal fee. 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. UMVIM SEJ is again able to offer travel medical insurance for teams traveling in the U.S. 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).

The conference team that served with Bahamas Methodist Habitat in 2013, sharing scripture and prayer before boarding the BMH bus for the ride to the airport to return home to Virginia.



Scan the QR code below with your phone to visit the VAVIM Facebook page for the most updated information on leader training and trip details.





# MISSION AS COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO DISASTER

**A**ctively engaged in Disaster Response across the Virginia Conference, the VAUMC Disaster Response Team has been conducting response and recovery operations since February 2016. Currently, disaster recovery projects are ongoing in the Farmville District following last year's February tornado outbreak and in the Elizabeth River District from the October 2016 landfall of Hurricane Matthew. These projects are rebuilding not only the homes of the survivors of these events, but their lives as well.

Whether it is through the efforts of our Early Response Teams, our Spiritual and Emotional Care Teams, or our UMVIM/Long Term Recovery Teams, we are being the hands and feet of Christ to those neighbors of ours that have experienced devastation by severe and dangerous storms.

Every disaster is a local disaster, and it begins and ends within the local church community. Programs are available to help communities be prepared if a disaster strikes. UMCOR's training program titled "Connecting Neighbors" is a great resource for local churches and is available for digital download from UMCOR. In addition, the conference offers Early Response Team training ([ert@vaumc.org](mailto:ert@vaumc.org)) and Spiritual and Emotional Care ([ellencomstock@vaumc.org](mailto:ellencomstock@vaumc.org)) team training through our UMCOR certified trainers. There are also many telephone apps available including ReadyVirginia which is from the Virginia Department of

Emergency Management which can help you in the event you experience a disaster.

Disaster ministry is a mission field. We touch the lives of many through the generous efforts of volunteers and financial supporters. Many times survivors have said that they had no idea the church would help, and without us they felt there was no hope. Please help be the face of Christ to your neighbors so they can have hope and a new tomorrow following a disaster. Please consider volunteering on a team to one of our active disaster areas ([virginiaumvim@gmail.com](mailto:virginiaumvim@gmail.com)), or consider a financial gift to our Disaster Advance Special #5037. Whatever you can do makes a difference for the glory of God.

For further information please contact the Disaster Response Coordinator, Rev. Bob Pihlcrantz at either [vacdrt1@gmail.com](mailto:vacdrt1@gmail.com) or (757) 408-6653.



The Ocran UMC Sutherland team found a little piece of home when they arrived to serve with the Florida UMC Disaster Response ministry in Big Pine Key, Florida.



# MISSION AS COMMUNITY

## 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 and the United Methodist Women have combined their resources to assist in this work. A total of \$58,600 will be distributed to the mission projects listed on these pages. Descriptions of these projects can be found at [www.vaumc.org/specialprogramgrants](http://www.vaumc.org/specialprogramgrants). 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; 703-587-0221(cell)  
[marcela.jarman@sterlingumc.org](mailto:marcela.jarman@sterlingumc.org)

#### RICHMOND DISTRICT

##### Skipwith Backpack Ministry (Skipwith UMC)

Lois Parker  
7501 Century Dr.  
Henrico, VA 23229  
(804) 288-4944  
[lois7501@verizon.net](mailto:lois7501@verizon.net)

#### FARMVILLE DISTRICT

##### SHEEP (South Hill UMC)

Nancy Merrel  
105 Franklin St.  
South Hill, VA 23970  
(434) 774-7885  
[wingspan2.4u@gmail.com](mailto:wingspan2.4u@gmail.com)

#### STAUNTON DISTRICT

##### God's Table (Basic UMC)

Wanda Crosby  
P.O. Box 2447  
Waynesboro, VA 22980;  
(540) 949-8947  
[momawanda8@aol.com](mailto:momawanda8@aol.com)

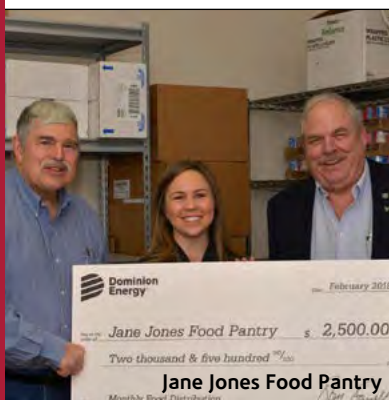
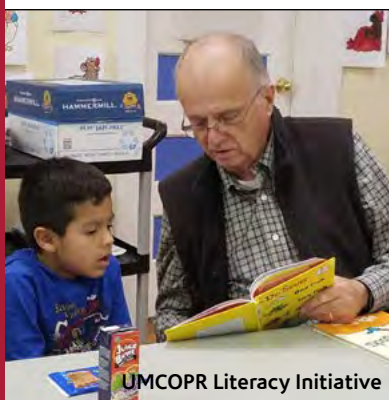
#### HARRISONBURG DISTRICT

##### Learning Mountain (Mt. Hermon UMC)

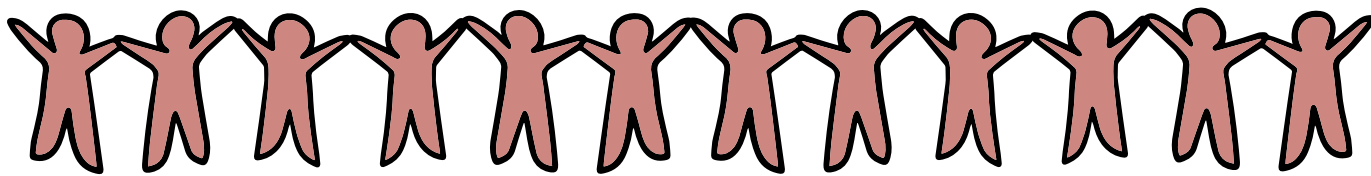
Darlene Wilkins  
P.O. Box 1105  
New Market, VA 22844  
(540) 758-1311  
[DarleneWilkins@vaumc.org](mailto:DarleneWilkins@vaumc.org)

##### Out of Our Hands (Casa de Amistad)

Jennifer Strother  
P.O. Box 2447  
Waynesboro, VA 22980  
(540) 946-7958 or (540) 490-1812  
[cdajenn@comcast.net](mailto:cdajenn@comcast.net)







## Sustaining Program Grants

### ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT

**Rising Hope Food Ministries**  
Sandy Miller  
8220 Russell Rd.  
Alexandria, VA 22309  
(703) 360-1976  
smiller@risinghopeumc.org

### DANVILLE DISTRICT

**Henry Fork Service Center**  
Lisa Nichols  
P.O. Box 888  
Rocky Mount, VA 24151  
(540) 483-2819  
lisanichols@cs.com

### ELIZABETH RIVER DISTRICT

**Club Sandwich  
(Wesley Memorial UMC)**  
Debbie Winn or Joann McClung  
288 East Little Creek Rd.  
Norfolk, VA 23505  
(757) 587-2996  
church@norwmumc.org

### FARMVILLE DISTRICT

**Jane Jones Food Pantry  
(Main St. UMC)**  
Rev. Wayne Rickman  
P.O. Box 119  
South Boston, VA 24592  
(434) 572-3290  
mainstreetumc@embarqmail.com

### HARRISONBURG DISTRICT

**Mt. Olive/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 Dr.  
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 (cell)  
(434) 656-1800 (church)  
joanyeatts@comcast.net

### RICHMOND DISTRICT

**Belmont Community Resource  
Services (Belmont UMC)**  
Larry Cochran  
3510 Broad Rock Blvd.  
Richmond, VA 23234  
(804) 516-9195  
larrycochran@vaumc.org

**Sherbourne UMC Food Pantry**  
Sandy Sahnaw  
2619 Sherbourne Rd.  
North Chesterfield, VA 23237  
(804) 559-0705 or (804) 921-2187  
sahnaws@comcast.net

### ROANOKE DISTRICT

**UMCOPR Community Literacy  
Initiative**  
Rebecca Parsons  
305 Mountain Ave. SW  
Roanoke, VA 24015  
(540) 342-3103  
communityoutreachroanoke@  
gmail.com

### STAUNTON DISTRICT

**South Covington Care Pantry  
(South Covington UMC)**  
Linda Black  
5015 Castile Rd.  
Covington, VA 24426  
(540) 747-5261 or (540) 968-6480  
llblack47@aol.com





For more information, contact  
**ANGIE WILLIAMS**  
 angiewilliams@  
 theopentable.org or (804) 852-3862

Scan these QR codes to meet Jessica and Courtney, two Open Table Sisters — two amazing stories of how transformational relationships foster lasting results:

JESSICA



COURTNEY



**A**re you looking for a sustainable and relational way to address poverty? Are you interested in going beyond soup kitchens, clothing programs, and shelter ministries to a long-term relationship alongside another person to journey out of economic and/or relational poverty? If so, then become part of the Open Table movement!

The Open Table model is a missional movement that provides a direct, hands on approach — that equips congregations to form sustainable, transformational relationships with real and lasting results. As followers of Jesus Christ, Open Table provides ways for the church to be relevant to our communities.

Open Table is a movement that began through one United Methodist Church's chance encounter with a homeless man in 2005. Today it is a national non-profit, building relationships and transforming communities in 28 states.

*Join a Movement to shift your mission focus from  
 TRANSACTIONAL to TRANSFORMATIONAL!*

## A summary of the THEORY OF CHANGE for Open Table

A *Theory of Change* defines the fundamental underpinnings of a movement by stating the non-negotiables, without which the goals of the movement will not be achieved.

- **Relationship:** Open Table is about a faith community being in direct relationship with those in poverty (economic and/or relational poverty). The ability to establish long-lasting relationships is crucial to success.
- **Faith and a Shared Purpose:** Through a shared purpose, a faith community builds a powerful understanding of the human potential of each and every individual, and of how to actualize true love for each other through mutual and humble service.
- **A Safe Place:** A faith community creates Tables as a way of understanding that community and personal judgment may have contributed to poverty. We have to create a safe place for a community and Tables to recognize that poverty is not about character but rather about experience. The safe place is free from blame and shame, moves at the pace of the Sister/Brother, and is based on the Sister's/Brother's own definition of success, culture, and support.
- **Transformation and Reconciliation:** Transformation occurs when a community is released from preconceived notions of poverty, people in poverty and poverty solutions, including transaction-based interventions. As the community moves into mutual, direct relationship to those in poverty, reconciliation between races, social groups and families begins to occur. This shift forever abandons the paternalistic, dependent model of change and reveals the opportunity to be mutually healed by each other.
- **Local Determination and Ownership:** The Open Table model provides a foundational, consistent, tested and proven process for addressing poverty and provides training for communities. However, exactly how the community forms into a local movement and what population is served are all locally-determined and managed as part of a community vision.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

■ **What is Open Table?** Open Table trains congregations to form communities — called Tables — that transform their vocational and life experiences into tools our marginalized Sisters and Brothers in poverty (economic and/or relational poverty) can use to develop and achieve their life goals. Tables meet weekly for one year.

■ **Who do we work with?** Tables work with individuals or families in the community who are marginalized. We call these individuals “Brothers and Sisters” — not clients — to reiterate the primary importance of relationship. Many populations can be served, such as homeless, working poor, transitional youth, formerly incarcerated, victims of human trafficking, veterans, immigrants, etc.

■ **How are Sisters and Brothers identified?** Participants are identified through referral partners in a community. Sisters/Brothers complete a readiness assessment to determine their level of openness to the Table process. If results do not indicate the Brother or Sister is “ready,” additional supports are recommended, and the assessment can be taken again in six months.

■ **How much does it cost?** The church pays a \$500 annual licensing fee if under a thousand members, or a \$1000 annual licensing fee if over a thousand members. Additionally, there is a fee of \$10 a month for 12 months per table member. The church can pay this fee, or table members can fundraise and/or pay personally (like paying to go on a mission trip).



■ **What does the money pay for?** It pays for extensive training of the church’s Open Table “mission team” and 4 weeks of training for Table members through Open Table University (an online Google Classroom platform), membership to Base-camp online project management system for Table member communication, resources, technical and administrative consulting support, quarterly “continuing education” trainings throughout the year, readiness assessment for Sisters/Brothers, outcome measures and reports, etc.

■ **Why do we have to pay?** Any mission trip or service project requires funding. Open Table brings churches into a missional way of life. Many churches only experience mission through transactional interactions (shelters, feeding programs, clothing donations). Open Table offers an opportunity for transformational relationships with Sisters and Brothers experiencing economic and/or relational poverty. Open Table creates sustainable long-term relationships, so the funding supports life-long change rather than one-time transactions.

■ **What if we cannot pay?** Scholarship opportunities are available.

■ **As a Table member, how much time is required?** The Open Table “Mission Team” is responsible for recruiting the table members, overseeing the training process, and making sure the table(s) get “launched.” This commitment is 3-5 hours per week until the table starts, then 2 hours a week. Table members commit to 1 hour per week for the weekly table meetings and an additional 1-3 hours per week for additional work and relationship building with the Brother/Sister outside table meetings for an average of 2-4 hours per week. Occasional missed meetings due to vacation, sickness, etc are expected. Tables end after a year, but relationships continue for a lifetime!

■ **How many people are on a table?** There are 6-8 members to serve an individual or 9-12 to serve a family. “Positions” or roles around the table vary depending on the needs of Sisters/Brothers. Roles are based on volunteer willingness to offer support in a particular area and not on professional experience (i.e. the finance chair need not be a CPA, but simply someone willing to offer support in creating a budget, balancing a checkbook, filing taxes, etc).

# MISSION AS COMMUNITY THROUGH UNDERSTANDING

## Mission Encounter 2019-2020 Courses

### 2019

**Weekend Session:**  
July 26-27, 2019

- **Spiritual Growth Study:** Gospel of Mark (Radical Discipleship)
- **Anniversary Study:** United Methodist Women History
- **Issue Study:** What about our Money?
- **Youth:** Gospel of Mark (with United Methodist Women Connections)
- **Children:** Gospel of Mark (with United Methodist Women Connections)

### 2020

**Weekend Session:**  
July 24-25, 2020

- **Spiritual Growth Study:** Finding Peace in the Midst of Anxiety
- **Anniversary Study:** United Methodist Women History
- **Issue Study:** Mass Incarceration
- **Children:** Growing in Peace Instead of Fear

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 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 youth. 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 youth 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 YouTube.com and search "Mission Encounter Virginia."



CELEBRATING

70

YEARS



Taking pride in our team members and their dedication to fulfilling the Pinnacle Living mission of Enriching Life's Journey.

PINNACLE  
LIVING

[PINNACLELIVING.ORG](http://PINNACLELIVING.ORG)





**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 \$400 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 [lorismith@vaumc.org](mailto:lorismith@vaumc.org).



## 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. 3, 2019)
- 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 Office of Inclusivity and Lay leadership Excellence: **1-800-768-6040** or **(804) 521-1100, ext. 153** or Cindy Ingroff at [cindyingroff@vaumc.org](mailto:cindyingroff@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. Check the Conference website for upcoming youth events and activities.

Voices of Youth

## 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. 25, 2019. Go to [www.vaumc.org/YSF](http://www.vaumc.org/YSF) for an application.

**Voices of Youth:** Virginia high school students participate in a mission team as well as share their experience and personal vision of mission through concerts held in local Virginia churches to challenge church members to become involved in God's mission. VOY Contact: **Mary Letson at (757) 581-7250 or [maryletson@gmail.com](mailto:maryletson@gmail.com).**

## 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 TEAM

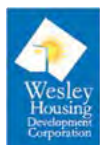
**T**he ministries of the Health & Relief Team touch many lives, providing service throughout the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church. We value our relationship with the Virginia Conference and feel privileged to be a part of this ministry team. We are grateful for all of the support received 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.**

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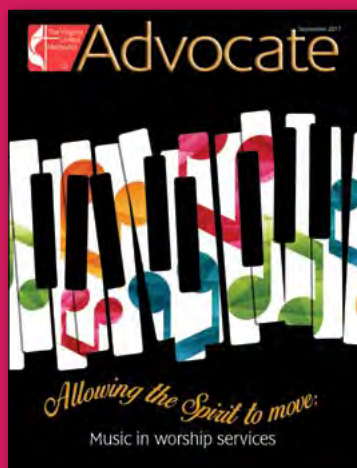


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### Virginia United Methodist Advocate magazine

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**; or go online at **vaumc.org/SubscribeAdvocate**.



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# SPECIAL SUNDAYS IN 2019

**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 20

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

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

### February 3

Disability Awareness Sunday  
(First Sunday in February)

### March 31

**UMCOR Sunday**  
(Fourth Sunday of Lent)

### May 5

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

### May 5

Older Adult Recognition Sunday  
(First Sunday in May)

### May 5

Rural Life Sunday  
(First Sunday in May)

### May 12-June 16, 2019

Mother's Day/Father's Day  
Samaritan Program Offering\*  
(Pinnacle Living)

### May 19

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 16

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

### The month of September

Christian Education Sunday  
(Any Sunday in September)

### October 6

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

### October 13

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

### October 20

Laity Sunday  
(Third Sunday in October)

### November 10

Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday  
(Second Sunday in November)

### November 24

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

### The month of December

UMFS of Virginia Month\*

