



July 2015

# Advocate



2015 - 2016 Appointments on pages 11-21

Connecting with the



Virginia Advocate

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

# FROM THE DIRECTOR



**Linda S. Rhodes**  
VAUMC Director of  
Communications

Back  
to  
basics

**John Wesley, founder of Methodism, and his brother, Charles, established small groups called “Holy Clubs” when they were students at Oxford.** These groups nurtured members in their Christian faith and held each other accountable for Christian living.

In the early days of the Methodist Church, this same idea was used. “Classes” with about 12 people in each class were formed to hold each other accountable and ensure church members were living a Christian life. A frequent question class members asked each other was, “How is it with your soul?”

From 1776 to 1850 American Methodism spread across the United States like wildfire. It grew from about 2.5 percent of those practicing religion in the American colonies in 1776 (the second smallest of the major denominations of that time) to more than 34 percent of all religious adherents in the United States in 1850 (14 percent more than the next largest religious group).

During this period, hundreds of thousands of people made professions of faith in Christ because of the preaching, testimony and ministry of American Methodists. And throughout this period of growth, every Methodist participated in a weekly class meeting.

Some scholars and historians have argued that the class meeting was the most important factor in the growth of early Methodism. People who had come to faith in Christ were immediately placed in a class meeting, where they were helped to grow in their faith and learned how to practice that faith.

George Whitefield, an Anglican preacher who helped spread the Great Awakening in Britain and the American colonies, even said about this practice: “My Brother Wesley acted wisely, the souls that were awakened under his ministry he joined in class, and thus preserved the fruits of his labor. This I neglected, and my people are a rope of sand.”

Now, the Virginia Conference is encouraging clergy and laity to participate in Discipleship Circles, small groups that offer Connection, Spirituality and Accountability.

Small groups that offer Connection, Spirituality and Accountability are basic to the heritage of United Methodists.

Let's get back to basics. 

*Linda S. Rhodes*

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## Deadlines

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## Advertising/Tributes

Rates for advertising and tributes are available upon request.

## 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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# COMMENTARY



## A message from our new *Advocate* editor

**A**fter this issue is printed and resting in your, the reader's, hands, Annual Conference will be wrapping up for its final day. Maybe your mind is already thinking about the week ahead or considering the best route you should take to get home.

But Annual Conference is so important to the United Methodist community, let's not forget what we've gained.

As the new editor of the *Advocate*, I'm not new to The United Methodist Church, but I am still learning a lot about the structure of the conference and the amount of work that goes into building our community over and over again through new initiatives and goals.

So that's why a time to come together as a whole at Annual Conference feels so integral. Together, we make big decisions for our faith, celebrate our clergy and worship together. Apart, it is so easy to feel lost and lose our course.

The importance of renewal in your life should not be understated. In any season of our lives, we need time to center ourselves and make sure we are still on the right path.

Attending Annual Conference in my first few weeks was a great way to solidify my start here by witnessing so many United Methodists in one place. In

person, I was confronted with the sheer number of people working towards the same goal.

2 Corinthians 4:16 reminds us: "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day." (NIV)

Don't doubt what one person can do, but also don't doubt how important we all are as one United Methodist body. Together, we love one another, worship as one body and challenge each other to continue pursuing our best selves in Christ.

I hope if you attended Annual Conference, in person or through the live webcast, you gained this sense of renewal. Like a small seedling, take it and let it grow in your faith and personal ministry. Let its roots spread to those in your local churches and in your daily interactions.

Until our next issue,

Madeline

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

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# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

## New credit union CEO wants to connect with United Methodists across Virginia

By Madeline Pillow

In February, the Virginia United Methodist Credit Union (VUMCU) hired James (Jim) Eads as new Chief Executive Officer. Prior to his new position, Eads was a leader with three Virginia-based financial institutions where he used his strategic knowledge and management skills to improve services for customers.

While Eads enjoyed the work, he felt a pull to serve the church in a larger way though he has participated within various committees in his local church over the years. Born a Presbyterian, Eads' wife, Karen, converted him to Methodism and the Eads family has been a part of The United Methodist Church for many years. Eads now jokes about the conversion, "I guess I was predestined to be a Methodist."

As a way to satisfy the need to serve, Eads considered missionary work. But it was when he applied for the CEO position at VUMCU that he knew he found a way to join together both service and his gifts. "I found something that I know about and it's exciting," he said. "It's neat because I found a way to serve that I thought I'd never find."

In his role, Eads knows the credit union can help

people with big problems that are unique to members of The United Methodist Church, a job that he has already found fulfilling. Through helping members, whether they are missionaries living abroad, clergy or laypersons, Eads wears a number of hats to ensure that members get the information and services they need.

"Every day, working people don't have a lot of places that they can go for trusted advice. Being that resource has been really rewarding," Eads said.

When he began, Eads was not only excited about sharing his talents but also about continuing the impactful programs already in place at VUMCU. One of these programs is the Jubilee Assistance Fund (JAF) which seeks to protect members from predatory lending companies. Through the program, Eads sees a real connection between the community and the church. The loan program allows a conference church to provide a loan with a low interest rate through VUMCU to church members.

"It allows members who really need a loan to get one with a low rate and gives them a real chance to pay it down," he said. "I can't think of anything more Methodist than this program."

Eads is already excited about new offerings the credit union will have for its members.

VUMCU now offers a new student loan product with a lower rate than standard student loans. If a student is attending seminary or a United Methodist-affiliated college or university, the rate is even lower.


Another new feature is the Reward VISA that gives members an easy way to donate rewards balances every year to their home church or to other United Methodist organizations like Heart Havens, UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), or UMFS (United Methodist Family Services).

Currently, as CEO, Eads is driven by a need to connect. Though the Virginia United Methodist Credit Union has only one brick and mortar location, the credit union serves members all across the state of Virginia, the country and even around the globe.

Through Eads, VUMCU is starting to reach out to members through e-mail and social media to share their new offerings.

Eads also plans to travel around the state to share new programs with United Methodist-affiliated colleges, clergy members and groups like Heart Havens.

He notes that many

people are unaware that there is a United Methodist Credit Union for them, and he hopes that through his connection efforts more people will find out about the credit union and its opportunities. 

— Madeline Pillow is editor of the Virginia United Methodist Advocate

Jim Eads is the new CEO of the Virginia United Methodist Credit Union.



# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



## Common Table pilots 'Ministry Accelerator' through Special and Sustaining Grants

By Christopher Bennett

The Grants Subcommittee of the Common Table is piloting a “ministry accelerator” as part of its Special and Sustaining Grants process. Special and Sustaining Grants are for local churches with innovative ministry ideas that reach beyond the walls of the local church into their communities.

The “ministry accelerator” pilot will give grant recipients, who choose to participate in the pilot, support in finance/budgeting, volunteer recruitment/

retention, long-range planning and other areas that contribute to the impact and sustainability of a ministry in addition to their grant award.

This pilot experience is geared to help grant recipients become self-sustaining more quickly and maximize the impact made in addressing a specific community need or challenge.

“We believe this pilot for the grants process helps us continue to live out the Virginia Conference’s mission, of ‘equipping local churches for ministry and providing a connection for

ministry beyond the local church’,” said Marc Brown, director of Connectional Ministries.

Each year the Common Table grants nearly \$100,000 through Special and Sustaining Grants to local church ministries that are innovative, missional (beyond the local church walls) and making a tangible impact on their communities for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

For more information about Special and Sustaining Grants and the pilot of the “ministry accelerator,” go to the conference website at [www.vaumc.org/CommonTableGrants](http://www.vaumc.org/CommonTableGrants).

— The Rev. Christopher Bennett is associate pastor of Ebenezer UMC, Stafford, and a member of the Common Table for Church Vitality



# Advocate

The Virginia United Methodist

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# EQUIPPING FOR MINISTRY

## Rethink Church offers grants

As the next evolution of the “Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.” welcoming and advertising campaign, RETHINK CHURCH seeks to redefine the church experience beyond the church doors and invite people to become engaged in the world. The campaign aims to spark a global conversation around the question, “What if church were a verb?” (To learn about the RETHINK CHURCH campaign, go to [www.umcom.org/rethink-church/learn-more-about-rethink-church](http://www.umcom.org/rethink-church/learn-more-about-rethink-church).)

RETHINK CHURCH offers resources to local churches, including three types of grant awards for churches that meet the criteria:

**Rethink Church Event Grants:** Media and marketing grants are awarded to clusters of churches (three or more working together), districts and conferences that hold a one-day service event outside the walls of the church. These events combine church and community volunteers to create a sustainable ministry in their area. Churches interested in this type of grant can complete a quick survey, which will let them know if they qualify for a grant and at what level. To take the survey, go to <https://events.rethinkchurch.org/grant-qualification-form>. To learn more about Event

Grants, visit [www.umcom.org/rethink-church/rethink-church-event-grants](http://www.umcom.org/rethink-church/rethink-church-event-grants).

**New Church Start Grants:** These recently restructured one-time grants to new church planters help support the early development of a new faith community. With this new grant process, there will be no set funds promised and grants are not offered in any monetary form. However, individual grants could possibly include promotional marketing materials or other support. As a first step, approved applicants will take one of our selected training courses, free of charge. To read about training opportunities, go to [www.umcom.org/learn/online-training](http://www.umcom.org/learn/online-training). Each applicant will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. To get started, church planters can apply at [https://docs.google.com/a/vaumc.org/forms/d/154bQWeuy2hK8LA\\_jj-8e9AAKkjpTQipqHno0Yi-EqRQik/viewform](https://docs.google.com/a/vaumc.org/forms/d/154bQWeuy2hK8LA_jj-8e9AAKkjpTQipqHno0Yi-EqRQik/viewform). To learn more about New Church Start Grants, visit [www.umcom.org/new-churchstarts](http://www.umcom.org/new-churchstarts).

**Digital Advertising Grants:** This brand-new opportunity is for individual local churches who want to raise awareness of their church in the community by means of digital advertising. A simple application

is all it takes to get started. However, the applying church will have to have a website for the advertising to point to that has an inviting and welcoming online presence. Churches can apply for a Digital Advertising Grant by going to [https://docs.google.com/a/vaumc.org/forms/d/1W3IVKWtTuE586ADMVCYbKS0d\\_kqc430dy3UI-jQdzGkY/viewform](https://docs.google.com/a/vaumc.org/forms/d/1W3IVKWtTuE586ADMVCYbKS0d_kqc430dy3UI-jQdzGkY/viewform). For more information about Digital Advertising Grants, go to [www.umcom.org/rethink-church/digital-advertising-grants](http://www.umcom.org/rethink-church/digital-advertising-grants).

All grants are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications are open year round. Event Grant applications must be

submitted at least three months prior to an event date, and New Church Start Grants must be submitted within one year of a new church being active. Also, a church can only be awarded one grant of any kind once per calendar year. ↩





# IMAGINE NO MALARIA

## Staunton D.S. views God's goodness as he kayaks down river to raise funds for Imagine No Malaria

By Dave Rochford

Inspired by Richmond District Superintendent Steve Jones, who ran in the Chicago marathon to inspire his district to raise money for Imagine No Malaria, I wondered what I might do. I do run, but only when pursued and even then not for very long. Ted Smith and Alex Joyner played basketball, but my jump shot...isn't. Still, I was convinced that I could do something, because I knew

the 83 churches and one mission community of the Staunton District can be generous when provoked.

Since I used to kayak (before superintendency!), it seemed natural that I might float my way to inspire others. As I talked the idea over with Beth Christian, district director of Congregational Resources, it occurred to us that the concept was obvious: buy nets, save lives and "send the DS down the river."

As gifts rolled in, and still are rolling in, Beth keeps asking "Wow, what did you do to this church?" Evidently, a great many United Methodists wanted to be certain I went down the river. And, indeed, some of our smaller churches have been

extraordinarily generous, on a district in which the median average worship attendance is below 65. To date, gifts have surpassed \$15,000, and more are padding their way in.

As for the trip itself, I recruited old friend and fellow kayaker Troy Rapp and his sweetheart, Jennifer Krstolic, to partner with me. Jennifer is a USGS hydrologist, which I knew could prove helpful since she could tell us all the places we were about to drown.

We launched on the Bullpasture River from a rocky shoal in Williamsville, Bath County, under cloudless skies at 2 p.m. Wednesday, May 13.

Nick Ruxton, conference videographer, drove all the way out to see us off, and he even brought one of our Imagine No Malaria portabishops. Evidently, I dressed "the Bishop" up too realistically, as Facebook commenters have been moved that he came all the way out to paddle the first day with us.

Just south of the Williamsville bridge is a mildly "technical" stretch, a rock garden. After that, it was choppy water and pleasant riffles past rolling farmlands and occasional limestone cliffs. Shortly we entered the broader waters of the Cowpasture, and almost immediately were joined by an eagle that seemed determined to stay put until we were right below it, then to fly only a short distance downstream. This

Staunton District Superintendent Dave Rochford and a cardboard cut-out of Bishop Young Jin Cho prepare to launch a kayak for a trip down the river to raise funds for Imagine No Malaria.





# IMAGINE NO MALARIA

was repeated perhaps 30 times, which was quite remarkable. I had in mind the Native American motif of a Guardian Spirit to guide your journey, which was more exciting than my later revelation: he was waiting for us to flush fish out of the channel and into the shoals. Eagles know what they're doing.

Close to 8 p.m. and 14.5 miles in, we stopped below a high, eroded limestone cliff, pockmarked with caves that only altitude and fatigue prevented me from exploring. Well, that and bears. Our first camp consisted of a tent (theirs) and hammock (mine) in a small, pine-forest clearing. Although only a few brilliant stars could be seen through a hole in the fir canopy, less than a minute after I lay down I saw a vivid streak across that very spot – a meteor I sure wouldn't have seen from the district parsonage. I made up my mind right then to tell everybody from here on out how great God is, all the time.

The Cowpasture is one of the major headwaters of the James River, which itself drains nearly a third of the Commonwealth. Perhaps because of the remoteness of the Cowpasture, and the relatively few put-ins and take-outs it offers anywhere above Clifton Forge, it is a remarkably unspoiled and little-travelled river. Except for a few people fishing from the shore on the Bullpasture, we saw barely anyone all



day – and no one at all on the river, as we were.

That said, we certainly saw its permanent residents: red-shouldered blackbirds, several species of heron, red-tailed hawks, a variety of ducks and geese – many supervising their young, churning along between them – and the aforementioned eagle. We also saw a weasel, badger and countless deer.

A couple of miles below the I-64 bridge, in a meadow beside an abandoned farmhouse, we saw a large bobcat. They are common in the George Washington National Forest but very seldom seen. I have always been told “they see you, alright - but you'll never see a bobcat.” Well, this fellow's tradecraft must be subpar, because I had him in full profile, dead to rights.

We made just under

20 miles on Day 2, our progress hampered by five low-water farm bridges that necessitated portaging our boats and gear. The real gem was waiting at Millboro Springs, one of very few hamlets right on the Cowpasture. There, a century-old, eight-foot spillway waits to devour unwary paddlers – with no warning save a glassy horizon and mounting roar. We scouted both banks before finding a truly ghastly passage through a swampy glen, over brush and lawn-trimming piles, across a high-grass meadow and finally down a steep, muddy bank. All told, we spent the better part of an hour, and the boats somehow got heavier than their 70 to 130 pounds as the crossing wore on. There may be reasons we saw no other through-paddlers on the Cowpasture!

**Dave Rochford, right, and Jennifer Krstolic, left, during their kayak trip to raise money for Imagine No Malaria.**



# IMAGINE NO MALARIA

At Camp 2, just below historic Nimrod Hall, we deployed in a small hardwood forest and at nightfall were serenaded by a whippoorwill. This led me to forget the pile of bear scat we came across on the edge of camp, and to recall that as a child I fell asleep every summer night to the call of the whippoorwill. I had not heard one for 30 years, at least. Around 2 a.m., I awoke to the song, and didn't begrudge it the least bit. Plus, it wasn't a bear. (There were jokes about my hammock being a taco.)

Day 3 we crossed from the verdant, rolling meadows and smooth limestone bluffs of Bath County into the drier, pine-dotted shale cliffs of upper Alleghany County. No less beautiful, certainly, but profoundly different. The day was a bit overcast but still very temperate, and the white-water picked up as if on command as our declination increased, characterizing the larger drop in the 'Ridge and Valley' geologic

region toward Roanoke.

Just after the first railroad bridge, we encountered the most formidable "technical challenge" of the trip – a double drop with a rock garden packed into the narrow balcony between. Two of us wedged at the precipice. But some grinding twists, a few thumps and lasting scratches later, we made it beyond and kept paddling.


It was a long slog, and it had us crossing beneath the I-64 bridge after 6 p.m., a bit late. I made us even later when I swamped my boat directly underneath the Rt. 60 bridge. After getting past all those hydraulic nasties, dodging islands, driftwood strainers, cows and even a John Deere tractor, I finally bathtubbed it in 16 inches of water. Keeps one humble.

While God's remarkable providence and abundant grace had been apparent throughout, our Lord saved the best for last. The delay at the bridge put us at the break-point between pushing to finish before dark and seeking a camp site. Opting for safety, we hunted for a site and explored two prospects, neither of which would work (being strewn with detritus and poison ivy). Night was falling swiftly now, and we knew that several rapids were ahead, including the weird cross-currents at the confluence of the Cowpasture and Jackson Rivers (the inception of the mighty James).

Hard paddling was not

going to be enough. When it seemed bleak, we saw a man painting the front of a small river-camp structure on the south bank. "How far is it to the Route 220 bridge?" we asked. "Pretty far," he replied. "A good 30 minutes, and impossible to do in the dark." Then, a way out of our dilemma: "you can pull your boats out right here. I have a light I can turn on so you can load them up."

Relieved, but inwardly chagrined to be quitting shy of my promise to "get the DS down the river and off the district," I helped beach the boats and called Rev. Lester Kennedy at Iron Gate, who turned out to be just one mile away. I had another, even better surprise when I asked our Good Samaritan where his farm was located. "Well, for a long time nobody knew and it seemed like nobody cared," he said. "But long about 20 years ago, Botetourt County claimed us. The line is right through here, somewhere."

So, after more than 65 miles on the water, we were provided safe passage up a bank, across the border and "off the district." God's sense of humor? "You do your part, and I will take care of the rest. When haven't I?" God is good – around every bend, in the rough patches and on the far and promised shore. Amen? 

– The Rev. David Rochford is Staunton District superintendent

At the end of his first day of kayaking down the river, Staunton District Superintendent Dave Rochford makes camp and gets some rest in his hammock in a small, pine-forest clearing.



# Appointments

## CLERGY

### KEY

Listings in italics are charge names with pastor and churches on the charge listed below the italicized listing. Designations in bold print indicate the first year of appointment. The number in parentheses ( ) indicates the year of current appointment. Ministers other than Elder in Full Connection (FE) in the Virginia Conference are indicated by the following symbols listed after years served:

<b>AF</b>	Affiliate Member
<b>AM</b>	Associate Member
<b>DM</b>	Diaconal Minister
<b>DR</b>	Retired Diaconal Minister
<b>EP</b>	Minister Recog. from other Denom. Serving UM Probation
<b>FD</b>	Deacon in Full Connection
<b>FL</b>	Full-time Local Pastor
<b>LM</b>	Certified Lay Minister (Assigned by district superintendent)
<b>MOD</b>	Minister, Other Denom., Serving Ecumenical Parish
<b>OA</b>	Associate Member, Other Annual Conf.
<b>OD</b>	Deacon Member, Other Annual Conf. or Other Denomination
<b>OE</b>	Elder Member, Other Annual Conf. or Methodist Denom.
<b>OF</b>	Full Member, Other Denom.
<b>OP</b>	Provisional Member, On Loan
<b>OR</b>	Retired FE, Other Conference
<b>PD</b>	Provisional Deacon
<b>PE</b>	Provisional Elder
<b>PL</b>	Part-time Local Pastor
<b>PM</b>	Probationary Member, '92 Disc.
<b>RA</b>	Retired Associate Member
<b>RAF</b>	Retired Affiliate Member
<b>RD</b>	Retired Deacon
<b>RE</b>	Retired Elder
<b>RL</b>	Retired Local Pastor
<b>ROF</b>	Retired, Other Denomination
<b>ROM</b>	Retired, Other Methodist
<b>RP</b>	Retired Probationary/Provisional Member
<b>SY</b>	Lay Supply (Assigned by dist. supt.)
<b>TBS</b>	To Be Supplied

### ROLL OF THE FIRST MILE

Church names in red represent congregations that paid 100 percent of their conference and district apportionments last year. Churches in blue paid 101 percent or more. Those in green represent a 10% increase in apportionments paid from the prior year.

### ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT

District Superintendent: Jeffrey P. Mickle (2)

#### ALEXANDRIA

**Beverly Hills:** Sara L. Manner (22)

**Del Ray:** **Marable F. Southall-Vess** (1)

Fairlington: **Mary Beth Blinn** (1)

Associate: **Devon M. Earle** (1) PE

Min. of Congregational Family Life: Christian S. White Jr. (5) FD

**Roberts Memorial:** **James G. Daniely** (1)

Saint Andrew's: Kitan Petreski (10)

**Saint James:** James E. Henry (24)

**Trinity:** **William A. Davis Jr.** (1)

**Washington Street:** **Thomas G. James** (1)

#### FAIRFAX

**Fairfax:** **David J. Bonney** (1)

Associate: **Amy E. Grant** (1) PE

#### FAIRFAX COUNTY

**Accotink-Cana:** Joo Sup Park (2) OE

**Aldersgate:** Dennis W. Perry (14)

Associate: Heather M.H. 'Hedy' Collver (2) OE

Aldersgate Kingstowne: **Michelle L. Matthews** (1) PE

Annandale: Clarence R. Brown (8)

Associate: Eduardo A. Carrillo (6) FL

Associate for Adult Discipleship: Cynthia D. Johnson-Oliver (8) OE

**Burke:** Lawrence W. Buxton (9)

Associate: Deborah D. Porras (2)

Cameron: Oliver J. Box (3)

**Christ:** John C. Speight Jr. (24)

Associate: Monica T. Reynolds (3) PL

**Cranford:** Lorenzo D. Hill (11)

**Franconia:** Catharine T. Guest (4)

**Lincolnia:** Raymond A. Max-Jones (2) OE

**Messiah:** Reginald D. Tuck (2)

Associate: Meghan Roth Clayton (4)

Associate for Hispanic Ministries: **Luz M. Zuleta** (1) PL

**Mount Vernon:** **Paulo C. Da Silva** (1)

New Light: **Samuel Eunkwan Kim** (1) OE

Rising Hope: Keary C. Kincannon (21)

**Saint George's:** Steven B. Wells (3)

**Saint John's:** Paula P. Werner (3)

Saint Matthew's: Neil R. Hough (2)

Associate: Grace S. Han (2) PE

Associate of Senior Adults Min. & Visitation: William E. Moberly (3) PL

**Saint Stephen's:** **A. Mark Mrini** (1)

Associate: Abigail E. Foerster (3)

Associate: Drew VanDyke Colby (3) PE

Silverbrook: M. Garey Eakes (2)

Springfield: Jeffrey J. Roberts (4)

Associate: Martha C. Ringenbach (3) PL

**Sydenstricker:** James D. Thomas (5)

Associate: Kathy B. Gochenour (2)

**Washington Farm:** Philip M. Waltz (3)

Wesley: Lydia E. Rodriguez Colon (2)

**Woodlawn-Faith:** Lyle E. Morton (7)

#### FAUQUIER COUNTY

**Bethel:** Julian H. Martin Jr. (16)

**Orlean:** James A. Leamon (12) PL

Warrenton: **Michael L. Whaley** (1)

Associate: Jiyeon Kim (2) PE

**Wesley Chapel:** Jose W. Saldana (3) PL

#### MANASSAS CITY

**Grace:** Rudolph E. Tucker (15)

Associate: Janet P. Salbert (2)

Min. of Music: C. Milton Rodgers III (15) FD

**Saint Thomas:** David T. Forrest (6)

Saint Thomas Haymarket: Edward H. Johnson Jr. (2)

#### PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

**Asbury:** Charles M. Stribula (3) PE

**Bethel:** Joseph A. Shoop (3)

**Buckhall:** Linda H. Monroe (5)

Cokesbury: Clyde T. Nelson (3)

**Dumfries:** Dale E. Gillis (3)

**Gainesville:** John E. Patterson (19)

Associate: **Sean D. Gundry** (1) FL

Ghana Wesley UM Mission: Emmanuel Nkrumah (6) PE

Associate: John Obeng (2) PL

**Good Shepherd:** R. Levi Stroud Jr. (13)

Associate: **Minoo W. Kim** (1) FL

**Nokesville:** James L. Johnson III (3)

**Old Bridge:** Burton C. Robinson (12)

Associate: Ronald T. Lanman (7) RL

**Prince of Peace:** **Larry Jent** (1)

**Saint Mark's:** Kurt D. Ludwig (3) PL

**Saint Paul:** Larry E. Craddock (4)

Spirit & Life Planter, New Site: **Matthew A. Meisenhelter** (1)

Spirit & Life Montclair: **Matthew J. Benton** (1)

**Sudley:** **Hyo Joong Lee** (1)

### ARLINGTON DISTRICT

District Superintendent: Catherine G. Abbott (3)

#### ARLINGTON

Arlington Forest: L. Michael Southall-Vess (9)

**Arlington Temple:** Alison Rosner Bass (3)

**Calloway:** Chenda I. Lee (2) PE

**Calvary:** Matthew G. Smith (2)

**Central:** Sarah Harrison-McQueen (2)

**Cherrydale:** Elizabeth A. Foss (5)

**Clarendon:** Tracy McNeil Wines (2)

**Community:** R. Carl Ripley Jr. (24)















**Rockingham Ct: Seung Hae Yoo-Hess** (1) PE  
Thrasher Memorial: Walter B. Failes Jr. (5)  
Associate: Jaeyong Song (3) PE

## SALEM

**Calvary (Salem): Jason L. Bryant** (1) FL  
Central: **Bryan K. Buckles** (1)  
First: **Bass M. Mitchell** (1)  
Associate: Jeffrey L. Dorsey (19)

## STAUNTON DISTRICT

District Superintendent: David J. Rochford III (3)

### ALLEGHANY COUNTY

**Alleghany:** Shannon Cox (3) SY  
**Callaghan:** James R. Rodden (7)  
*Fletcher Chapel, Hoke Chapel*  
**Epworth: Nathan R. Colwell** (1) FL  
**Iron Gate: William D. Bearden** (1) FL  
Iron Gate, Longdale, **Walton Mem.**  
**Mountain Valley: Howard Ray Tucker** (1) RL  
Associate: Christina Bowen (2) SY  
**Mt. Pleasant-S. Covington:** Charles H. Cole Jr. (5) PE  
Mt. Pleasant, **South Covington**  
**Potts Valley:** David C. Brown (14) FL  
Humphrey's, Persinger Mem., **Pinnell**

### AUGUSTA COUNTY

**Bethlehem-Jollivue:** Janet C. Knott (5) AM  
*Bethlehem, Jollivue*  
**Calvary: Charles F. Reynolds** (1)  
Associate: Nancy M. Vaughan (2) FL  
**Churchville Cooperative Parish: Lester W. Kennedy** (1) FL  
*Glossbrenner, Saint James*

**Fishersville: Charles F. Bates** (1)  
Associate: Ryan Oswald (5) FL

**Greenville:** Kevin W. Haynes (12)

**Lyndhurst-Oak Hill:** Michael W. Pettry (5) FL  
*Lyndhurst, Oak Hill*

**McKinley:** Donald L. Long (16) RE

Mint Spring: Terry L. Clark (7)

**Rankin:** Charles E. Carroll (8) ROM  
Associate: **Don Duty** (1) SY

**St. Paul's-Goshen:** Mary Pysell (2) SY  
Goshen, **St. Paul's (Craigsville)**

**Shenandoah: Reginald A. Early** (1) RL  
*Asbury, Community, Lawson, Randolph Street*

**Sherando:** Sarah Payne (2) PL

**Stonewall-West View: David Coffey** (1) SY  
*Stonewall, West View*

**West Augusta:** W. Robert Nash (3) SY

### BATH COUNTY

**Bath:** Lorrie Aikens (4) FL  
*Burnsville, Eden, Starr-Bolar, Va. Chapel*

**Hot Springs:** Vivian M. Utz (2) FL  
*Ashwood, Emory*

### BOTETOURT COUNTY

**Mount Olivet:** Doris T. Hedrick (4) PL

### BUENA VISTA

Saint John's: **Sonja Flye Oliver** (1) FL  
People United in Christ: Danta Thompson (2) SY

### CLIFTON FORGE

Central: J. Lynn Wright (2) FL

### COVINGTON

**Christ: Christina R. Bowen** (1) SY  
**Granbery Memorial: Russell T. Urban** (1)  
**Mt. Carmel:** Douglas E. Hollenbeck (14) FL

**Parrish Court:** Deborah D. Washer (3) FL

### HIGHLAND COUNTY

**Blue Grass:** W. Andre Crummett (16) FL  
*Blue Grass, Hightown*  
**McDowell:** David R. Boger (15) RE  
**Doe Hill, McDowell, McKendree, Totten**

**Monterey:** Bobbi Jo Gardner (2) SY  
*Asbury, Green Hill, Monterey*

### LXINGTON

**Trinity:** Norman Tippens (6)

### ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY

**Collierstown:** James A. Bollinger (3.5) FL  
*Collierstown, Mt. Horeb*  
**Ebenezer-Marvin:** R. Michael Long (2) SY  
*Ebenezer, Marvin*

**Fairfield:** Elizabeth von Trapp Walker (4)  
Emory, Fairfield

**Rockbridge:** Lucy Jackson Hughes (2) RL  
*Beth Horon, Elliott's Hill, Mt. Zion*

### STAUNTON

Central: Won Un (3)  
**Cherryvale:** Clayton W. Payne (2) FL  
Christ: Sarah D. Locke (2) PE  
Marquis Memorial: Robert W. Sharp (6)  
**Saint John's:** Taylor C. Mertins (3) PE  
**Saint Paul's:** T. Bryson Smith (2)

**Staunton-Grottoes:** John Benson (3) SY  
Augusta Street, **Mt. Moriah**, Mt. Tabor

### WAYNESBORO

**Basic:** Donald Gibson (12) PE  
**Glovier Memorial:** Ryan M. Schaeffer (2) PE  
**Main Street:** W. Clay Knick (2)  
Certified Lay Minister: Harold E. Baldwin Jr. (11) LM

Pleasant View: Eric Strother (3) SY

**St. Mark's-Wayne Hills: Mi Sook Ahn** (1) PL  
*St Mark's, Wayne Hills*

## WINCHESTER DISTRICT

District Superintendent: Lawrence R. Thompson Jr. (6)

### CLARKE COUNTY

**Boyce-White Post-Millwood: Geraldine R. Burkholder** (1) PL  
*Boyce, Millwood, White Post*

**Crums: Thomas R. Barnard** (1)

**Duncan Mem. (Berryville): J. Jeffrey Butcher** (2)

**Marvin Chapel:** Kenneth K. Patrick (13) RE

**Paris Mountain:** Karen D. M. Adams (11) PL  
*Mt. Carmel, Providence Chapel*

### FAUQUIER COUNTY

**Cool Spring:** Janet L. Martin (7) RL  
**Linden-Markham: Terry L. Hendricks** (1) FL  
*Linden, Markham*

**Marshall-Middleburg:** Leah A. DeLong (2)  
*Marshall, Middleburg*

**Rectortown: Thomas W. Crosby** (1)

**St. Mark's: Herbert E. Drake** (1) SY

### FREDERICK COUNTY

**Brucetown:** Yun Chol Kim (5) PE  
**Burnt Factory:** C. Steven Melester (10) AM  
**Cedar Grove: Penny L. Matheson** (1) FL  
*Little Mountain, Mt. Pleasant, Pleasant Vly.*  
Emmanuel: **Barry L. Burkholder** (1)  
**Fairview-Refuge:** John E. Lock (10)  
*Fairview, Refuge*

**Francis Asbury:** Anthony A. Wadsworth (3) RE  
*Chestnut Grove, Howard Chapel*

**Gainesboro:** Sandra A. Nottingham (3) RE  
**Grace (Middletown):** Thomas H. Keithley (6)

**Greenwood-Montague Avenue:** Andy L. Brock (3) PE

*Greenwood, Montague Avenue*

**Kernstown:** Aaron W. Fitch (2)

**Macedonia:** Michel Q. Mayton (2)

**North Frederick:** Thomas W. Reynolds (3) FL  
*Rest, White Hall*

**Old Bethel-Welltown Cooperative Parish: Carl M. Chapman** (1) FL  
*Old Bethel, Welltown*

**Pleasant View:** Haley E. Mills (2) FL  
*Mt. Pleasant-Lamps, Mountain View*

**Redland:** Melissa D. Porter-Miller (3)

**Relief-Hites:** J. Richard McDowell (2)

*Hites Chapel, Relief*

**Round Hill:** Penny L. Wilson Jr. (3)

**Shockeysville: TBS**

**Stephens City:** Robert W. Gochenour (2)

**Wesley Chapel-Pine Grove:** Philip H. Brumbach (2) PL

*Pine Grove, Wesley Chapel*

### LOUDOUN COUNTY

**Bethany (Purcellville):** Michael D. Finn-McKenzie (4)

**Evergreen:** F.W. Giessler II (17)

**Harmony (Hamilton): David R. Drinkard** (1)

**Leesburg:** James N. Wishmyer (9)

Minister of Administration: Wayne R. Reynolds (8) LM

**Loudoun:** J. Robert Schoeman (5) PE

*Aldie, Unison, Upperville*

**Lovettsville:** Eugenie Finn-McKenzie (4)

*Bethel, Mt. Pleasant*

**Mt. Olivet:** Lee J. Crosby (8) FL

**Mt. Zion (Leesburg):** Melbourne H. Bailey (7) RE

**Purcellville Circuit:** Alphonso L. Irving (9) FL

*Austin Grv, Grace Annex, Powells Grv*

**Rehoboth: Eunji Kim** (1) SY

**Round Hill:** Jeffrey A. Witt (15)

**Short Hill: Marcellus H. Jagoe IV** (1) PL  
*Ebenezer, Hillsboro*

**West Loudoun:** Wesley S. Corber (5) PL  
*Bluemont, Roszell Chapel*

**Willisville-Hamilton Cooperative Parish: Wilhelmina Sumpter** (1)

*Mt. Zion (Hamilton), Willisville Chapel*

### WARREN COUNTY

**Bethel: Ralph H. Crabill** (1) RE

Front Royal: **Alan T. Combs** (1)  
Howellsville: Francis P. Bertrand (4) PL  
John Wesley: Mary L. Marshall (3) RL  
Reliance-Ridings Chapel: Linda H. Lowe (2)  
Reliance, Ridings Chapel  
Riverton: C. Marc Roberson (2)  
Warren: Sherry L. Waddell (3) FL  
Asbury, Bennetts Chapel, Limeton

### WINCHESTER

Amor y Paz-Mt. Olive Cooperative Parish:  
Victor R. Gomez (5)  
Amor y Paz, Mt. Olive  
Braddock Street: G. Kirk Nave (4)  
Associate: J. Adam Sowder (3)  
Min. of Serve Min.: Joanna S. Dietz (2) FD  
First: William M. White (7)  
John Mann: **Laetitia Schoeman** (1) PL  
Market Street: Eric C. Song (3)  
Wesley: R. Douglas Geeting (2)

## YORK RIVER DISTRICT

District Superintendent: Seonyoung Kim (2)

### CHARLES CITY COUNTY

Memorial: **Steven D. Barbery** (1) PE

### GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Bellamy: Kenneth Stephen Waclo (7)  
Bethany (Gloucester Pt.): Deborah T. Marion (3)  
Bethlehem: Carol I. Bookwalter (3.5) RE  
Gloucester-Mathews: Paul F. Gillespie (2) FL  
Locust Grove, Mt. Zion  
New Hope: **Chong Ho Yang** (1)  
Salem-Olive Branch: Rita L. Staul (13)  
Olive Branch, Salem

Singleton: Calvin J. Griffin (6.5)

Susanna Wesley: J. Garrett Livermon (7)

### HAMPTON

Bethany: **Suzanne D. Gibson** (1)

East Hampton: Edward H. Merry (12) PL

First (Fox Hill): Brian K. Sixbey (6)

First (Hampton): **Candace L. Martin** (1)

Fox Hill Central: Eric J. Vaudt (2) PE

Kecoughtan: Jennifer A. Mercer (2) FL

Aldersgate, Central

Phoebus: Robert E. Rough (5) PL

Saint James: Dwight A. Hughes (6)

Saint Mark's: Gay Brown Hall (2)

Wallace Memorial: **Herbert Brynildsen Jr.** (1) FL

Wesley: Jason W. Snow (4)

### ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY

Benn's: Orville H. Burton (8)

Bethany: Michael T. Frank (2)

Oak Grove-Riverview: **Michael D. Guminsky** (1) PL

Oak Grove, Riverview

Trinity: Jeffery Lee Cannon (5)

Associate: Andrew S. Ensz (2) PE

Uzzell: Rebecca W. Gwaltney (4) PL

Woodland: Amanda H. Newman (2) FL

### JAMES CITY COUNTY

Mount Vernon: **Ann On-Lin Tang** (1)

New Town: J. Michael Derflinger (2)

Wellspring: Edward A. Hopkins (6)

### KING & QUEEN COUNTY

Shackelfords Chapel: Charles J. McHose (6) RE

### KING WILLIAM COUNTY

West Point: **Gordon K. Meriwether** (1) FL

### MATHEWS COUNTY

Bethel-St. Matthew: Ralph G. Satter (2) RE

Bethel, St. Matthew

Beulah-St. Paul: Delia M. Parrish (5)

Beulah, St. Paul

Central: **Ji Hoon "John" Choi** (1)

Mathews Chapel: **Lisa R. Blackmonson** (1)

Salem: Brian W. Johnson (2)

West Mathews: Jeongin Kim (2) OE

Emmanuel, Grace-Providence

### MIDDLESEX COUNTY

Clarksbury: Kenneth E. Cleveland (2) FL

Lower Church: **Ileana Rosario** (1)

Middlesex: **Timothy R. Earnhardt** (1) FL

Forest Chapel, Old Church

Urbanna: Hyung Il Moon (5)

### NEW KENT COUNTY

New Kent: Lawrence S. Brayton (4) FL

Pamunkey, Tabernacle

### NEWPORT NEWS

Asbury: **C. Leon Basham Jr.** (1) PL

Chestnut Memorial: Robert M. Chapman (2)

Christ: Thomas G. Tipton (4)

First: Robert L. Haley (4)

Grace: **Forrest H. Teague Jr.** (1)

Holy Cross International: Yoon Seok Choi (6) OE

Trinity: Valerie V. Duncan (2) PL

Parkview: Timothy M. Porter (4) PL

Warwick Memorial:

Co-Pastor: Regina Anderson-Cloud (3)

Co-Pastor: Bert Cloud (3)

### POQUOSON

Tabernacle: **James N. Earley II** (1)

Associate: **Brenton A. Staul** (1) PL

Trinity: Charles R. Stacy (4)

### WILLIAMSBURG

Williamsburg: Matthew W. Jones (6)

Associate: Kirsten 'Kay' Barré (3)

Min. of Congregational Care: Helen Casey-Rutland (3)

### YORK COUNTY

Crooks Memorial: Lisa A. Barbery (3)

Providence: C. Douglas Akers (6)

Saint Luke's: Douglas D. Gestwick (10)

Associate: Clara P. Gestwick (10)

Zion: David C. Magruder (2) PE

# EXTENSION MINISTRIES AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS

## ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT

Lindsey Baynham—Min. Dir. of Arise,

United Campus Ministries in NoVa

Keiko Foster—Bi-District Program Coordinator

Morgan Guyton—Director, NOLA Wesley Foundation, Tulane and Loyola Universities (Burke)

J. Denise Honeycutt—Deputy General Secretary, UMCOR, GBGM (St. Matthew's)

Lucretia Hurley-Browning—Director, Juniper Tree Pastoral Counseling Center and Chaplain, Joan Karnell Cancer Center, Philadelphia (Aldersgate)

Amy Dawn Johnson—Staff Chaplain, INOVA Fairfax Hospital (St. Thomas)

Karla M. Kincannon—Director of Field Education and of Vocational Formation and Church Leadership, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary (Rising Hope)

David F. McAllister-Wilson—President, Wesley Seminary (St. Matthew's)

Drema McAllister-Wilson—On loan: Minister of Congregational Care, Metropolitan Memorial UMC, Baltimore-Washington Conference (St. Matthew's)

Pamela G. Meeuwissen (PL)—Chaplain/Spiritual Care Counselor, Mary Washington Hospice (Christ)

Marianne K. Nassef—Chaplain, US Air Force (Fairlington)

James A. Noseworthy—Vice President for Administration, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary (Rising Hope)

Lemuel E. Pearsall Jr.—Chaplain, US Army (Good Shepherd)

R. Kendall Soulen—Professor of Systematic Theology, Wesley Seminary (Annandale)

Ann On-Lin Tang—Chaplain, US Army (Messiah)

J. Pat Watkins—Ministry with God's Renewed Creation, Missionary, General Board of Global Ministries (St. Matthew's)

Susan E. Willhauck (FD)—Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology, Atlantic School of Theology (St. Matthew's)

## ARLINGTON DISTRICT

Sandra L. Boone—On loan: Water's Edge UMC, Baltimore-Washington Conference (Pender)

Sarah L. K. Calvert—Bi-District Coordinator for Church Revitalization and Leadership Development (Floris)

Tammie E. Crews— Brigade Chaplain, US Army (The Vine)

Melissa R. Dunlap—Bi-District Coordinator for Church Development (The Vine)

Kotosha Seals Griffin (PE)—On Loan: Pastor, St. Matthews UMC, Metairie, Louisiana Conference (Galloway)

Gary L. Hulme—President/CEO and Pastoral Counselor, Pastoral Counseling of Northern VA (Mount Olivet)

Sangkeun Kim—Professor of Mission Studies, Theology Department, Yonsei University, Korea (Korean UMC Greater Washington)

Paul A. Nixon—New Church Development Strategist, GBOD and CEO, Epicenter Group (Arlington Temple)

Martha M. Real (FD)—Executive Director, GRACE Ministries of The UMC (Floris)

Charles K. Tran—On loan: Pastor, Vietnamese Fellowship, San Jose, CA, Cal-Nev Conference (First Vietnamese)

## CHARLOTTESVILLE DISTRICT

Christopher R. Donald—College Chaplain and Director of Religious Life, Millsaps College (Crozet)

Barry Penn Hollar—Professor of Religion and Philosophy, Shenandoah U. (Madison)

Deborah E. Lewis—Director & Campus Minister, Wesley Foundation, UVA (Wesley Memorial)

Thomas W. Sherrod—Director of Pastoral Care, Iredell Hospital, Statesville, N.C. (Mt. View)

Adam James White—Chaplain, Director of Service Learning, and Religion Dept. Chair, Virginia Episcopal School (Wesley Memorial)

## DANVILLE DISTRICT

Brenda L. Rose—Pastoral Counselor, Chrysalis Counseling and Consultation Center, Inc. (Smith Memorial)

## EASTERN SHORE DISTRICT

Brenda Lee Laws (FD)—Case Manager, Intellectual Disabilities Services, ESCSB

Peter Surran (PD)—Fire Medic and Chaplain, Accomack County Fire Dept. and Eastern Shore Community College (Franktown)

## ELIZABETH RIVER DISTRICT

Frank P. Decker—Vice-President, Member Care and Development, The Mission Society (GA) (Community, Portsmouth)

James R. Driscoll—Operations and Mobilization Chaplain, Army Chief of Chaplains Office (Baylake)

Joseph T. Eldridge—University Chaplain, American University (Epworth)

Pamela J. Gable—On loan: Pastor, Moga-dore UMC, E. Ohio Conference (Great Bridge)

Anne West Kesner (PD)—Chaplain, The Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters (New Creation)

Joel M. LeMon—Associate Prof. of Old Testament, Candler School of Theology, Emory University (Ebenezer)

Charles E. Rowley—Chaplain, U.S. Navy (New Creation)

Gregory B. West—Chaplain, Virginia Wesleyan College (Ebenezer)

## FARMVILLE DISTRICT

Charles F. Baber Jr. (FD)—On loan: Minister to Youth and Families, Highland UMC, Raleigh, North Carolina Conference (Oakwood)

George H. Donigian—On loan: Pastor, New Hope UMC, Anderson, SC, South Carolina Conference (Jamieson Memorial)

Richard L. Meiser Jr.—Campus Minister/Director, Wesley Foundation, Longwood and Hampden-Sydney (Antioch)

T. McKennon Shea—Major Gifts Officer, Duke Divinity School (Farmville)

## FREDERICKSBURG DISTRICT

Robert A. Almy—Director, ChurchIngenuity.Com (Fredericksburg)

Jarvis Bailey (PL)—Fredericksburg District Program Director (Irvington)

Teresa Signer Smith—Director, New Pathways Ministries (New Hope)

## HARRISONBURG DISTRICT

Benjamin D. Burks—Executive Director, Virginia Baptist Homes (Asbury)

Julie Ann Haushalter—Director, Lavender Center for Education and Retreats (Vision of Hope)

Paul Ritter (PL)—Correctional Chaplain, Augusta Correctional Center, Chaplain Service Prison Ministry of VA, Inc., (Mountain Valley)

## JAMES RIVER DISTRICT

Kevin A. Anderson (PD)—Special Education Teacher, Marguerite Christian Elementary School (Bermuda Hundred)

Delano Douglas (FL)—James River District VSU Campus Minister and "The Flow" (Highland)

J. Stanley Hargraves—Registrar, Union Presbyterian Seminary (Chester)

Robin C.M. Jones (FL)—Director of the Spiritual Care Program, Jackson-Feild Homes (Salem)

James G. O'Quinn—James River District Director of Congregational Excellence (West Dinwiddie)

Timothy Todd Smith—Counselor, Pathways-VA, Inc. (Bethia)

John D. White (FD)—Autism Teacher, Chesterfield County Schools (Trinity/Chesterfield)

## LYNCHBURG DISTRICT

Ashley Abarca-Mitchell—On loan: Min. of Comm. Outreach and Evangelism, Franklin First UMC, Tennessee Conference (Main Street, Bedford)

Dori Baker—Dir. of Spiritual Life/Chaplain, Sweet Briar College, and Research Fellow, Forum for Theological Exploration (Lane Memorial)

Ray A. Buchanan—Founder and International President, Stop Hunger Now, Inc. (Bedford Circuit)

## RICHMOND DISTRICT

Marc D. Brown—Director of Connectional Ministries, Virginia Conference (Trinity)

David E. Carl Jr.—Ex. Dir. of Spiritual Care & Education, Carolinas Health Care System, Charlotte, NC and On loan: Pastor, Big Spring UMC, WNC Conference (River Rd.)

Allen E. Gunther Jr.—Battalion Command Chaplain, US Army (Skipwith)

Lynda W. Harding—Clinic Manager/Chaplain, Crossover Healthcare Ministry (New Song)

M. Jan Holton—Assistant Prof. of Pastoral Care and Counseling, Yale Divinity School (Reveille)

Stephen C. Hundley—On loan: Executive Director of Connectional Ministries, Cal-Pac Conference (Corinth)

Virginia A. Lee (FD)—Associate Professor of Christian Education and Dir. of Deacon Studies, Garrett-Evangelical Seminary (Reveille)

Amy V. Lenow (FD)—Pastoral Counselor, VIPCARE (Trinity)

Meredith L. McNabb—Director, Center for Clergy Excellence, Virginia Conference (Boulevard)

Mark V. Ogren—Dir. Of Congregational Excellence, Virginia Conference (Duncan Memorial)

Jinwook Oh (PD)—Director/Minister, Milal Mission (Shady Grove Short Pump)

Nancy Robinson (FD)—Continuing Education Coordinator, Sierra Leone, Missionary, General Board of Global Ministries (Lakeside)

Kendra G. Swager—Chaplain, Randolph-Macon College

Kathryn F. Talley—Deputy Exec. Dir., VA Supportive Housing (Centenary)

Michelle Renee Thorne (PE)—On loan: Community UMC, Annapolis Southern Region, Baltimore-Washington Conference (Asbury Memorial)

Joseph Torrence (FD)—Minister to Youth and Church Relations, UMFS (St. Matthew's)

Dorothee Tripodi—Assoc. Dir. of Supervised Ministry and Vocational Planning, Union Presbyterian Seminary (Westover Hills)

## ROANOKE DISTRICT

Stephen Darr—Campus Ministry Dir., Community College Ministries (Blacksburg)

Bret-Ashton G. Gresham—Director/Campus Minister, Wesley Foundation at VA Tech (Blacksburg)

Jeffrey C. Pugh—Professor of Religious Studies, Elon (South Roanoke)

## WINCHESTER DISTRICT

B. Justin Allen—Dean of Spiritual Life and Director of The Institute for Church Professions, Shenandoah University (Braddock Street)

Rhonda VanDyke Colby—Vice-President for Student Life, Shenandoah University (Braddock Street)

Joshua R. Orndorff (PE)—Chaplain, Randolph-Macon Academy (Riverton)

Sara E. Pugh Montgomery—On loan: Pastor, Coweta First UMC, Muskogee District, OK Conference (Braddock Street)

Cynthia I. Zirlott (FD)—Protestant Chaplain, United Campus Ministry, Frostburg State University (Secondary appt.: Frostburg UMC; Charge Conference: First)

## YORK RIVER DISTRICT

Koren B. Robins (PE)—Registrar, Duke Divinity School (Williamsburg)

# DIACONAL, DEACONESS & HOME MISSIONER

## ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT

Brenda Romenius (DC)—Director of Christian Education, Saint John's UMC (Saint John's)

## DANVILLE DISTRICT

Lynn Meeks (DM)—Rocky Mount UMC, Director of Music Ministries/Organist

Elizabeth "Lisa" Nichols (DC)—Exec. Dir./Church and Community Worker, Henry Fork Service Center (Redwood)

## ELIZABETH RIVER DISTRICT

Laarni S. Bibay (DC)—Children Health Advocate/Medical Mission Project Coordinator, Tidewater Pediatrics, Portsmouth (Resurrection)

Haniel Garibay (HM)—Cross Cultural Common Witness Coordinator, Methodist Federation for Social Action (Resurrection)

Olma Eleanor Garibay Olay-May (DC)—Multi-Ministry Director, Resurrection UMC (Resurrection)

Anselma "Emma" Samson (DC)—Coordinator for Leadership Development for Church and Community, Resurrection UMC (Resurrection)

## FARMVILLE DISTRICT

Diane W. Hassell (DC)—Leave of Absence

## FREDERICKSBURG DISTRICT

Susan Lewandowski (DC)—GED Instructor, Rappahannock Area Regional Adult Education (Fredericksburg)

# DISCIPLESHIP



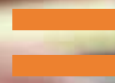
Individual  
Spiritual  
Vitality



Trust  
and  
Collaboration



Accountability  
for  
Effectiveness



Equipped and  
Interdependent  
Clergy and Lay  
Leadership

# CIRCLES

The Virginia Conference has held two Discipleship Circles facilitator training events, and more than 50 facilitators are now equipped to help form Discipleship Circles.



CONNECTED

ACCOUNTABLE

SPIRIT-LED

**D**iscipleship Circles are a new movement with a new purpose: new opportunities that will help leaders throughout the Virginia Conference support each other spiritually, collaborate with each other for increased fruitfulness, and hold each other accountable for constant improvement.

Actually, this is not a new movement, but a new commitment to live out the model of accountable discipleship offered to us by John Wesley: sharing our spiritual journeys to encourage us as we grow stronger in our obedience to Christ, discerning God's vision for our faith communities, and joining the movement of the Holy Spirit to transform the world.

Discipleship Circles, first and foremost, are about spiritual vitality – your own and within your local church. The practice of spiritual disciplines is the foundation for mutual support and accountability. The vitality of the local church will rise from this foundation as church leaders (clergy and laity) faithfully respond to Jesus' call to make disciples. Through collaborative learning and strengthened partnerships in ministry, clergy and lay leaders will be energized and empowered to lead our churches into a new future of effective disciple making.

*(Continued on next page)*

## CONNECTED

Discipleship Circles focus on relationship: relationship with God and relationship with each other. Once trust takes hold, the members will begin to focus on tasks, effectively collaborating and sharing ideas.

“Accountability helps keep those willing to engage in it moving forward with Christ.” (Steven W. Manskar, *Accountable Discipleship: Living in God’s Household*, Discipleship Resources, 2000) Discipleship Circles will keep us accountable to one another for our personal discipleship and for the work of Christ in the world today through our faith communities.

## ACCOUNTABLE

## SPIRIT-LED

Discipleship Circles call each of us to open ourselves once again to receive the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Our work together through Discipleship Circles calls us to greater sensitivity to God’s leading and allows the Spirit to work among us in worship and mission, evangelism and faith-sharing, stewardship and growth.

## Who are Discipleship Circles for?

Discipleship Circles are a resource for church leaders (clergy and laity) who want to draw closer to God through collaboration with peers for spiritual growth, relationship and learning.

### Discipleship Circles involve:

- Individual commitment to personal spiritual development and to a group practice of accountable discipleship in order to grow as disciples.
- Willingness to enter into a new level of trust and collaboration: clergy and laity partnerships in ministry and church-to-church interaction centered upon earnest prayer, spiritual renewal and supportive relationships.
- Sharing of local church data through fact-based discussions around each church’s Vital Signs and mutual accountability for work toward established goals to better equip the church in making disciples.

## What are Vital Signs?

The United Methodist Council of Bishops issued a “Call to Action” in 2011 in response to research that indicated a lack of measures and accountability within The United Methodist Church. The ultimate goal of the “Call to Action” is to help congregations faithfully respond to Jesus’ call to make disciples and increase vitality. Thus, the Vital Congregations initiative was born. Vital Congregations has five areas of focus that are being prayerfully implemented throughout The United Methodist Church through goal-setting at each local church and development of action plans to reach the vision of becoming a more vital and healthy congregation. The data gathered in each area is appropriately called “Vital Signs.”

- Disciples worship – Worship attendance
- Disciples make new disciples – Individual professions of faith
- Disciples engage in growing their faith – Participation in small groups
- Disciples engage in mission – Participation in service and outreach
- Disciples give to mission – Giving toward mission priorities

“All Things new – Equipping Vital Congregations” is the Virginia Conference initiative designed to implement the denomination’s Vital Congregations measurement system in a way that promotes collaboration, support and continued improvement among all conference churches.

## How are Discipleship Circles formed?

There are many ways for a Discipleship Circle to form. Church leaders (clergy and laity) may decide to:

- Find others with common interests in their local area, between districts, or within same size church categories.
- Work with others who have proven successes in a particular area of focus.
- Work with specific other church leaders.
- Accept an invitation from a District Superintendent or Conference ministry area.
- Morph a current group into a Discipleship Circle.

... all with spiritual vitality at the core.



Exploratory Meeting

Commit?

no

yes

## Discipleship Circle Stages

Formation Stage

(4-6 meetings)

Connection Stage

(as long as you like)

Holy Ending Stage

(1-2 meetings)

### What are characteristics of a Discipleship Circle?

- Membership is a mixture of clergy and laity.
- A Discipleship Circle will have at least six and no more than 12 members.
- Members commit to the disciplines and practices of Discipleship Circles.
- Members must be willing to hear, share and encourage one another.

### What covenants are made by participants?

There are core areas of covenant for Discipleship Circles which will provide a spiritual, safe and fruitful environment. Individual Circles may decide as a group to add to this list.

- Daily spiritual practice of each person's choice focused around a spiritual accountability question discerned by the Discipleship Circle. As an example, members of the Circle may adopt Bishop Young Jin Cho's "Covenant for Spiritual Discipline" and engage "one hour daily" in spiritual disciplines.
- Commitment to the local church and its vitality.
- Commitment to work within the purpose and structure of Discipleship Circles.
- Presence, participation and attentiveness with the group.
- Confidentiality of personal information.
- Preparation and reflection throughout the time between meetings.
- Encouragement of one another and unusual ideas.

### How do Discipleship Circles work?

The first stage will be **FORMATION** of the Discipleship Circle. Facilitation can be provided in these first four to six meetings to assist participants in:

- Forming relationships founded upon trust and mutual respect for one another.
- Developing and practicing individual and corporate spiritual disciplines.
- Learning and practicing communication and decision-making skills to assist the Circle in its work.
- Determining meeting times and place.

**CONNECTION** will be the focus of the second stage. This will be the period of time, with the length to be decided upon by the group, during which collaborative learning and visioning take place around a shared area of focus related to Vital Signs.

- Shared leadership will be practiced.
- Data gathered from Vital Signs will be shared and discussed.
- Collaboration and mutual accountability are learned and practiced.

In the **HOLY ENDING** stage,

- Readiness to end the Discipleship Circle is collectively discerned.
- A concluding worship service is designed and conducted.
- The life of the Discipleship Circle is celebrated.
- A re-commitment to being attentive to God, to creation, to one another and to the vitality of congregations is made.

For more information, visit [www.vaumc.org/discipleshipcircles](http://www.vaumc.org/discipleshipcircles) or contact the Virginia Conference Center for Lay Leadership Excellence at 1-800-768-6040 or (804) 521-1154 or [cheryledleyworford@vaumc.org](mailto:cheryledleyworford@vaumc.org).

# John Wesley's self-examination questions help Discipleship Circle grow in faith

By Beth Christian

Being one of the first Discipleship Circles, our group wrestled with several questions. What should our meetings look like? How often should we meet? What should we talk about? While we were all excited to start something new and very different in our conference, we had no idea how to begin the work of this new covenant type group. Our initial meeting was a small group of people brought together from an invitation by our district superintendent. We are a group of seven people, both laity and clergy, representing six churches in the Staunton District.

Everyone felt that it was important to begin our time in prayer and by celebrating the Eucharist. Doing so helped separate this time from all of our worldly obligations. Through serving each other communion, we are reminded of our connection through Jesus Christ.


When it came time to figure out which topic or theme we wanted to pursue as a group, we included social justice issues, local missional needs, church attendance decline and personal faith development. We found we needed to have a group where we could safely articulate our thoughts and feelings and receive feedback so that we could be better leaders within our own churches.

After reviewing several books and other resources, we decided we would spend our time together going through John Wesley's self-examination questions randomly: Do I pray about the money I spend? How is it with my soul? Do I harbor any ill will toward others? etc. Every month we face a question or two that we cannot prepare for and we, therefore, allow the Spirit to move in us while we wrestle with the questions. Everyone takes a turn answering, and then we have a brief discussion on how this can affect us personally and our influence on those around us.

We have benefited from this practice on a number of levels, but two of the greatest gifts are: 1) We get to respond honestly about our faith. There is a sincere trust that has developed within our group. Sometimes we share things that we have not shared with anyone else. Speaking these truthful thoughts and feelings out loud allows us to admit to ourselves where we have fallen short of God's glory and begin working toward a better understanding of how we can follow Christ today. 2) We hear advice and reflective thoughts from our trusted brothers and sisters. Whatever we wrestle with as individuals is respected and addressed by others in the group. They act as a mirror so we can really hear and understand who and where we

are. We have grown because we are willing to respond to the admissions of our peers, and it has allowed all of us to grow in our faith.

A few have struggled with how these discussions will really make a difference in our own churches and, in all honesty, it will take some time for a trickle-down effect. But a lay person in the group recently admitted that she had no idea the obstacles and dissension that clergy face within their own congregations. It is clear that church work is not always easy and it sometimes gets messy. In response, clergy in our group shared that they have been inspired by some of the thoughts, ideas and actions of the laity. We have seen where we are united through Christ and that we shouldn't remain tucked away in our own ministry bubbles within our own churches. We are a connectional church and have much to gain by listening to each other and holding up each other's ministries.

Our group has met once a month for over a year. We will conclude our Discipleship Circle in August. Some have already expressed sadness that the group will end because it is the first time they have had sincere discussions about faith outside of a local church small group. I believe a few of us will find ourselves in a new Discipleship Circle where we will continue to grow with others in our walk with Christ. 

— Beth Christian is director of Congregational Resources for the Staunton District

A Discipleship Circle in the Staunton District includes, left to right, Rev. Clayton Payne, Beth Christian, Rev. Taylor Mertins, Angie Nash and Pastor Rob Nash. Not pictured are Pastor John Benson and Chris Pettyjohn.



# Did You Know?

(Over 30 facts about Discipleship Circles)

1. Spiritual growth is a key component of Discipleship Circles.
2. There are more than 50 clergy and laity trained to facilitate Discipleship Circles throughout the Virginia Conference.
3. A Discipleship Circle consists of six to 12 clergy and laity from various churches.
4. Facilitators eventually leave the Circle so that shared leadership may develop.
5. The growth of the Discipleship Circles movement has been described as a "gentle rain."
6. Discipleship Circles were created by the Bishop's Steering Team for implementing "All Things New—Equipping Vital Congregations."
7. "All Things New—Equipping Vital Congregations" is a Virginia Conference initiative designed to implement the denomination's Vital Congregations measurement system in a way that promotes collaboration, support and continued improvement among all conference churches.
8. The Bishop's Steering Team, named by Bishop Charlene Kammerer and continued under Bishop Young Jin Cho, included seven work teams made up of more than 75 clergy and laity from across the Virginia Conference.
9. These work teams met to discern, organize, design and resource implementation of a systemic response to the denomination's Vital Congregations initiative.
10. The Design Team worked for approximately 18 months to design a Spirit-led approach to connection and accountability through Discipleship Circles.
11. Implementation Team members continue working to train facilitators and assist in formation of new Discipleship Circles.
12. The Prayer Team continues to meet and pray for the Discipleship Circles movement and the Virginia Conference.
13. The next facilitator training event is planned for late summer or early fall of 2015.
14. Discipleship Circles are designed to meet at least every other week.
15. Discipleship Circles goals towards Equipping Vital Congregations directly relate to goals of the 5 Talent Academy.
16. Circle members choose an "Area of Focus" (topic) that can be related to one or more of the Vital Signs: worship, small groups, professions of faith, outreach and mission giving.
17. The Prayer Team is praying for a "Breakthrough" in the work of Discipleship Circles so that our churches are renewed.
18. Like Class Meetings of early Methodism, Discipleship Circle meetings begin with a spiritual accountability question discerned by the group, such as "How is it with your soul?" or adopting Bishop Cho's Covenant for Spiritual Discipline and engage "one hour daily" in spiritual disciplines.
19. Unlike Class Meetings of early Methodism, Discipleship Circles are not required.
20. A four-minute award-winning Discipleship Circles video is available on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/DiscipleshipCircles](http://www.facebook.com/DiscipleshipCircles) and the conference website at [www.vaumc.org/discipleshipcircles](http://www.vaumc.org/discipleshipcircles).
21. A Discipleship Circles brochure is available on the conference website.
22. A PowerPoint presentation on "All Things New—EVC" is available on the conference website at [www.vaumc.org/discipleshipcircles](http://www.vaumc.org/discipleshipcircles).
23. A comprehensive Training Manual is provided for facilitators.
24. There are currently five Discipleship Circles meeting and several others planning to meet soon.
25. The goal of Discipleship Circles is to tap into the power of the Holy Spirit for growth in spirituality, connections and disciple-making.
26. Discipleship Circles stages include a "Holy Ending" to be determined by the group.
27. New Circles are currently forming in the Eastern Shore District with "Race Relations" as the area of focus.
28. The ultimate goal of Discipleship Circles is a refocused commitment to help local churches "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."
29. Visit the Discipleship Circle Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/DiscipleshipCircles](http://www.facebook.com/DiscipleshipCircles) for a list of possible topics and "like" the page to receive regular updates.
30. For information regarding available facilitators, how you can begin a Discipleship Circle, or leading your existing Circle to fruitfulness, contact Cheryl Edley-Worford at [cheryledleyworford@vaumc.org](mailto:cheryledleyworford@vaumc.org) or 1-800-768-6040 or (804) 521-1154.
31. For more information about Discipleship Circles, visit the Discipleship Circles Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/DiscipleshipCircles](http://www.facebook.com/DiscipleshipCircles) or the Virginia Conference website at [www.vaumc.org/discipleshipcircles](http://www.vaumc.org/discipleshipcircles) or contact the Virginia Conference Center for Lay Leadership Excellence at [cheryledleyworford@vaumc.org](mailto:cheryledleyworford@vaumc.org).

## Discipleship Circles provide tool for church leaders to live out accountable discipleship

By Larry Davies

The 2012 *United Methodist Book of Discipline* describes one duty of the district superintendent as chief mission strategist of the district. Chief mission strategist is an especially tough assignment when The United Methodist Church is declining nationwide. Increasingly, aging members face the difficulty of reaching younger families who are less likely than ever to attend the churches of their parents.

The role of chief mission strategist calls for a willingness to somehow provide creative leadership in the midst of the rapidly changing cultural reality. In his book *Seven Levers*, Bishop Robert Schnase writes about three leadership strategies that don't help:

- **"All is in God's hands." This puts everything on God and leaves no role for us. We were meant to be involved in the work of God.**
- **"Analysis, Statistics, Metrics." These may be excellent tools, but metrics alone will not fix what ails us.**
- **"Purveyor of despair." Fostering a constant sense of calamity defeats the spirit. This can leave people paralyzed and feeling helpless.**



The North Accomack Discipleship Circle on the Eastern Shore includes, left to right, the Rev. Don Jamison, facilitator; Robin Lewers, Atlantic UMC; the Rev. Gary Miller, St. John's UMC; Vicky Ward-Wharton, St. John's UMC; Joslyn King, St. John's UMC; the Rev. Don Blagg, Oak Hall Charge; Larry Thornton, Downings UMC; Milton Christian, Friendship UMC; and the Rev. Barbara Cousar, Horntown Charge. Not pictured are the Rev. Rebecca McGee, Atlantic-New Church Charge; the Rev. Derek Tomek, Greenbackville Charge; Debbie Staufenberg, Union UMC; and Alice Conquest, Friendship UMC.

**So, what would help us face our reality in a way that offers no quick fixes but opens ourselves to honest sharing of the challenges we face and enables us to work together to discover spirit-filled answers?**

Since 2012, the Bishop's Task Force on All Things New-Equipping Vital Congregations, made up of clergy and lay leaders throughout the conference, has prayerfully searched for answers as they apply toward our mission: To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Using five key indicators, we asked first, how could we provide realistic and relevant data in order to guide our decision making as mission strategists and leaders of the church. Those five indicators are:

1. **Disciples worship**
2. **Disciples make new disciples**
3. **Disciples grow their faith**
4. **Disciples engage in mission**
5. **Disciples share their resources for mission**

Accurate and timely data provides realistic and honest measurements of church vitality. The question then becomes: How can we use the measurements in a way that provides an atmosphere of improvement and encouragement instead of judgment? How can a district superintendent as chief missional strategist provide leadership that will help our churches increase fruitfulness and hold each other accountable for constant improvement?

Discipleship Circles were prayerfully designed to provide a tool for district superintendents, pastors and other church leaders to live out the model of accountable discipleship offered to us by John Wesley. The key is a commitment to spiritual growth, honest collaboration with others and a willingness to hold each other accountable in working toward established goals.

First, Discipleship Circles are about connection, with God and with each other. Second, Discipleship Circles will keep us accountable to one another and to God. Third, Discipleship Circles call for us to open ourselves to the movement of the Holy Spirit to work among us.



More than 50 facilitators have been trained at Discipleship Circles facilitator training events and are now equipped to assist in formation of Discipleship Circles.

### What makes a Discipleship Circle unique?

The members of the circle are usually from two or more churches sharing and working together. They are a mixture of clergy and laity. Members of the circle must be willing to hear, share and encourage one another.

Over the last few months, Cheryl Edley-Worford, Virginia Conference director of Inclusivity and Lay Leadership Excellence, provided two Discipleship Circles facilitator training events which resulted in over 50 trained facilitators equipped to assist in the formation of Discipleship Circles. Beta groups formed in 2014 continue to meet and assist in the development and implementation of Discipleship Circles.

Rev. Alex Joyner, Eastern Shore District superintendent, used Discipleship Circles to provide a setting for conversation around race relations.

“Discipleship Circles are being used to explore questions of race and how churches can be a witness to the gospel in the midst of tension,” Joyner said. “Following a fall in which the issue of race and policing arose across the country and in the aftermath of some racially-charged events on the Shore, clergy from the district met to have some holy conversation. The gatherings used a Discipleship Circle format of spiritual disciplines and invitational sharing. The conversation has been expanded to include laity and now is meeting in two circles. A second group is exploring the creation of a second circle in the southern end of the Shore.”

“There are deep issues here on the Shore surrounding challenges of diversity and race,” said the Rev. Don Jamison, a facilitator for Discipleship Circles on the Eastern Shore,

“The discussions went well and have spawned two Discipleship Circles. Both are a collection of Anglo and African-American congregations with laity and clergy participating. The first group has been meeting in the formation phase where they are learning about spiritual disciplines and the idea of inviting God into the discussion first. The group is very receptive to this idea and has embraced the idea of sharing sacraments at each gathering, at being in various types of spiritual discipline and being in prayer between sessions in order to ask God what we should do.”

There are many ways for Discipleship Circles to form whether the issue is improved race relations, increasing worship attendance or improving missional outreach to the poor.

As a district superintendent and chief missional strategist, I see the formation of Discipleship Circles as an invaluable tool that will help our Lynchburg District explore any important issue involving church vitality in an atmosphere of trust and mutual accountability. Through a commitment to spiritual growth, increasing relationship and trust, working in collaboration and mutual accountability to better equip the church in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

For more information about Equipping Vital Congregations and Discipleship Circles go to [www.vaumc.org/discipleshipcircles](http://www.vaumc.org/discipleshipcircles). For information on how to form your own Discipleship Circle, contact Cheryl Edley-Worford at [CherylEdleyWorford@vaumc.org](mailto:CherylEdleyWorford@vaumc.org).

– The Rev. Larry Davies is Lynchburg District superintendent and chair of the All Things New-Equipping Vital Congregations Bishop's Steering Team

## It's All Coming Together: Discipleship Circles

by Cheryl Edley-Worford

If you could benefit from a growth spurt in the areas of spiritual life, partnerships in ministry and effective disciple-making, a Discipleship Circle may be just where the Spirit is leading you.

Imagine collaborating with fellow church leaders (clergy and laity from various churches) in a small group focused on a particular area of ministry as you intentionally seek God's guidance regarding spiritual growth and church vitality. Imagine establishing trusting, supportive relationships as your Circle taps into the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in order to help steer members' lives and churches to greater fruitfulness.

In Discipleship Circles, church leaders grow closer to God and to each other through spiritual disciplines, supportive collaboration, mutual learning and accountability related to church vitality. Because church renewal begins with personal renewal, personal growth between an

individual and Christ provides a first step towards church revitalization. Strengthened relationships with God and fellow church leaders help equip participants and their churches to grow in spiritual vitality and accountability through Discipleship Circles.

My Introduction to Circle Dancing occurred years ago when I joined The Sacred Dance Ensemble of Central Virginia in

Lynchburg. Most of our circle dances were repetitive, long-lasting and meditative—helping participants experience the presence of the Holy Spirit and thus feel closer to God and each other. Discipleship Circles involve a similar process and outcome—joining together in Circles in order to create a Spirit-led 'dance' of harmony with the Holy Spirit, one another and God's will for our lives and our churches.

Discipleship Circles, like the latest dances, can be described as a "new movement." However, our Discipleship Circles are actually based on John Wesley's Class Meetings of the early Methodist movement. These class meetings contributed to the explosive growth of Methodism across the United States. My hope is that the addition of Discipleship Circles as a "new movement" in the Vital Congregations "dance" already in progress in the Virginia Conference will provide another important step towards completing the challenging and sometimes puzzling dance called church revitalization.

Discipleship Circles are now forming within our districts offering a unique twist on small groups. Like early class meetings, Discipleship Circles focus on the "state of our souls" through a spiritual accountability question chosen by the group—yet, these Circles go beyond the purpose of a class meeting. Trusting relationships and mutual support represent key components of Discipleship Circles, yet these Circles go beyond the mission of a support group. While Circle members hold each other accountable for effective disciple-making, Discipleship Circles go beyond the work of typical accountability groups. Discipleship Circles are designed to first ignite us spiritually so that we grow in relationship to God and each other and become more equipped to lead our churches in fulfilling The Great Commission to make disciples and transform the world.

What might this effort to equip our churches in making disciples look like? Imagine a Discipleship Circle focused on strengthening older adult ministries by working to help connect residents of Virginia United Methodist Homes with nearby churches of the Virginia Conference. Imagine a Discipleship Circle addressing race relations on the Eastern Shore or equipping youth ministries in Staunton. Does your church seek help in equipping youth ministry, small groups, vital worship, mission work, evangelism? These are a few of the many possibilities for exploration and study in a Discipleship Circle with the ultimate goal of increasing spiritual vitality through prayer and other spiritual disciplines

Cheryl Edley-Worford (left), conference director of Inclusivity and Lay Leadership Excellence, leads a training session for Discipleship Circle facilitators.



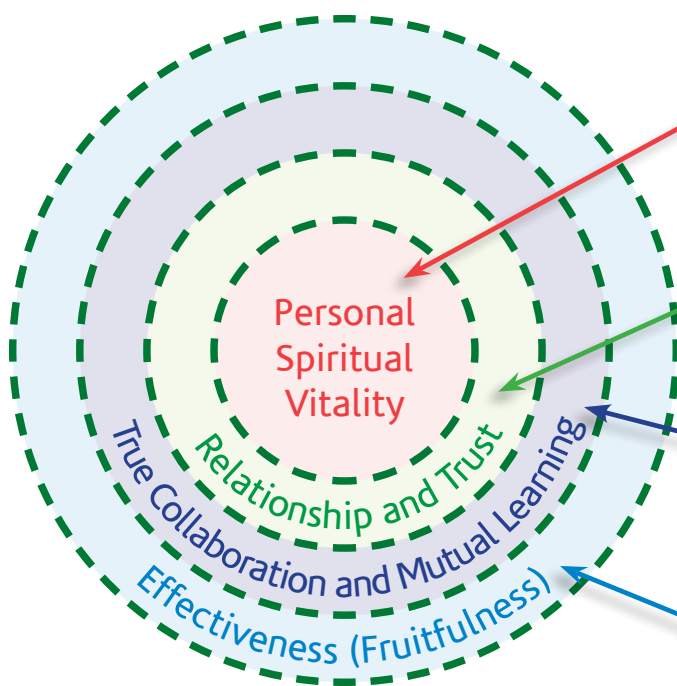
and increasing fruitfulness through collaborative learning and sharing.

During the recent Bishop's Convocation on prayer, I was intrigued by the teaching on prayer walks and breakthrough prayer—described as praying for a miracle. The Prayer Team (often seen walking the halls of the Virginia United Methodist Center seeking prayer requests and offering prayers) has held the Discipleship Circles movement in prayer since its conception and continues to pray for breakthrough of the Holy Spirit so that our lives, churches, communities and world might be transformed.

As Discipleship Circles form throughout the Virginia Conference, I ask that your breakthrough prayers be with the Discipleship Circles movement as we work to increase spiritual vitality, establish trust and true collaboration, and remain accountable for effectiveness resulting in equipped and interdependent clergy and lay leadership within all churches of the Virginia Conference. 🍀

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

## Discipleship Circles A place where...



Each participant is first attentive to his/her relationship with God. Discipleship Circle disciplines focus on personal spiritual development and vitality.

Participants are committed to developing relationship with each other — resulting in shared trust. Discipleship Circles disciplines facilitate relationship development.

Participants utilize data to inform reality. They work together and openly share experiences to help each other become more effective leaders in the church. Discipleship Circle disciplines create a mandate for true collaboration.

The outcome of spiritual vitality, relationship formation and collaboration is increased fruitfulness of the WHOLE.

## Including spiritual disciplines in Discipleship Circles improves discussion

By Don Jamison

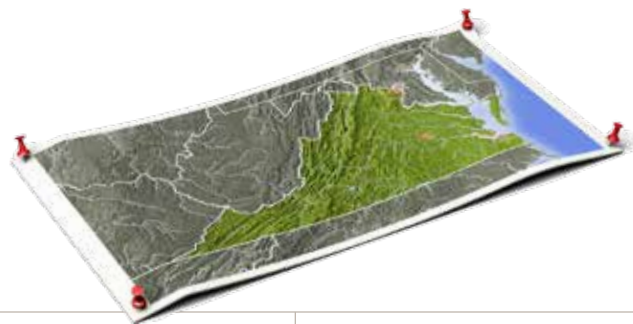
It has been my honor over the last two years to be part of the implementation team and facilitator for Discipleship Circles. As part of that team it was rewarding to listen and interact with others who truly want to see a revitalization of the local church at every level within our conference.

My own experience with Discipleship Circles has been formulated in that the implementation team used the format to conduct every meeting we had as well as trying new things to see what might work and ultimately what needed to happen to make it successful. Not all of our ideas bore fruit, but we tried to ensure that when groups began the process their efforts might be fruitful.

I have also been involved with several groups enquiring about or beginning Discipleship Circles. The folks involved with these groups truly desire to invite God in as they work through Vital Congregations challenges that face us all. What I have found to be true is that having spiritual disciplines as part of the discussion opens up new ways of

(Continued on page 33, "Circles")

# The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



## Paulo Lopes named director of Ministries with Young People

**J**. Paulo Lopes has been selected as Virginia Conference director of Ministries with Young People. He will begin his duties Aug. 1.

“Paulo is a gifted inspirational leader who has a demonstrated ability to motivate, influence and structure transformational change,” said Marc Brown, director of Connectional Ministries. “His ministry experience and his ability to envision a conference ministry of disciple-making systems for young people were primary reasons Paulo was invited to this crucial staff position.”

Lopes is currently minis-

ter of Youth, Young Adults and Family Life Center Ministries at Surfside UMC in Surfside Beach, S.C. In this ministry, he has developed an evangelism and discipleship pathway to establish campus, young adults and family ministries. He has launched an E-group (evangelistic small group) initiative and has built a youth leadership team to transition to a model targeting families. He also leads a mid-week contemporary worship service.

A native of Brazil, he has lived in both Brazil and the United States, and his ministry experiences span both countries. Among his ministry experiences are:

- ❖ Training as a Leadership Coach with Spiritual Leadership, Inc. (SLI) and co-leading leadership incubators. Training areas include spiritual leadership, coaching, change leadership and ministry team development.
  - ❖ Director of International Partnerships for Bridge International – Life Enrichment Institute.
  - ❖ Trained and led several mission teams to Brazil focused on ministry to families in poverty. Developed long-term partnerships with numerous projects including the construction of an orphanage and an economic development project in a small fishing community. Co-developed a model for partnerships with American churches
- resulting (currently) in 11 partnerships called “Kingdom Stations.”
- ❖ Co-Founder/Executive Director of Bridge International in response to needs of the Brazilian Methodist Church. Led the organization from its founding (board member recruitment, mission, vision, accreditation, etc.) to ministry fulfillment. Developed partnerships benefiting more than 500 children living below poverty level, three evangelistic outreach programs, rehabilitation center, orphanage and conference-wide holistic outreach ministry.
  - ❖ The Inner City Development Project. Co-initiated conversations between Asbury Theological Seminary and ministry leaders in Lexington to find ways for the seminary to become more involved in the Lexington community. Organized a colloquium for ministry leaders and student representatives to build relationships and develop partnerships.
  - ❖ The Acts Movement. Co-founded a young adult Christian movement to advocate for social justice in Curitiba, Brazil. At its peak more than 500 young adults and youths from more than 20 denominations were mobilized.

J. Paulo Lopes is the new director of Ministries with Young People.






Lopes graduated with a BA in International Relations from UniCurtiba in 2006, studied Intercultural Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary and is currently pursuing a Master of Arts for Christian Ministry at Crown College.

"I am both excited and humbled to join the Virginia Conference team as director of Ministries with Young People," Lopes said. "I'm excited because God is clearly up to something new in this conference, and because anytime God moves God seems to take great pleasure in using young people as powerful catalysts for God's work. I'm also humbled that the Lord would allow someone like me to be in ministry with such a great group of staff and leaders. What a privilege it is to be called for such a time as this! My family and I look forward to meeting everyone and serving with you."

As director of Ministries with Young People, Lopes will provide oversight for conference children, youth, young adult and campus ministries including the Regional Schools of Children Ministries, All God's Children Camps, Conference Council on Youth Ministries, Conference Young Adult Council and Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries.

Lopes is fluent in Portuguese and English and has basic conversational and reading fluency in Spanish and German. He and his wife, Juliana, have three daughters (ages 7, 5 and 3). 

*("Circles," continued from page 31)*

of thinking, causes us to look at issues with God in mind and creates an atmosphere where we enter into a sacred space during those discussions that assures all the participants receive the compassion and love God requires of us.

Much discussion about Discipleship Circles has filtered across the conference at this point. Some has been good; some has been less than positive; some has been misinformation. Discipleship Circles are meant to answer the proclamation of Bishop Cho that no church vitality can happen without spiritual vitality. I believe this to be a foundational building block of Discipleship Circles.

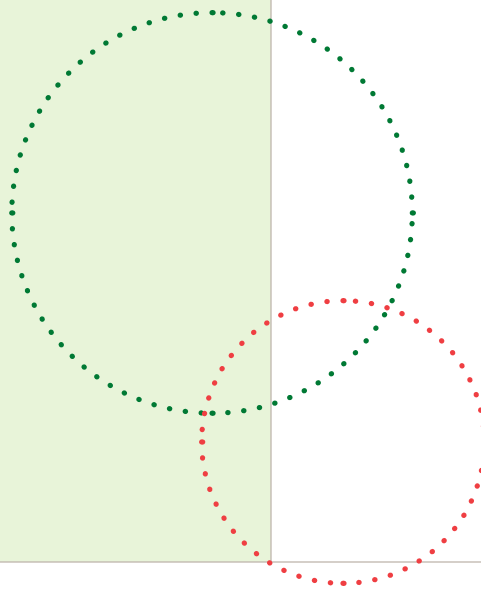
Discipleship Circles are meant to be a place where three or four churches can come together to discuss an issue or focus generated out of Vital Congregations. On the Eastern Shore, we have several groups focusing on the issue of race relations. Other groups are dealing with women's challenges in ministry, and I am aware of an interest in youth ministries as a focal point.

Discipleship circles are designed to put us in a spiritual place, a safe sanctuary where discussion can happen and the Holy Spirit can work through the Body of Christ. Discipleship Circles are not accountability groups, nor are they gripe sessions or places to voice

personal agendas. Discipleship Circles are not meant to replace valid ministries already in place, but rather to enhance our ability to discuss issues and challenges we face. Discipleship Circles are meant to foster collegial relationships among churches within a geographic region and enhance the role of both clergy and laity in those discussions. Cooperative relationships are a goal of Discipleship Circles. Spiritual renewal is a goal of Discipleship Circles. Allowing the Holy Spirit to work within the Body of Christ and provide guidance is a goal of Discipleship Circles.

I look forward to facilitating more Circles and enjoying the conversations that will come out of putting God first, developing our spiritual disciplines and tackling the hard challenges of Vital Congregations as we move toward church revitalization. 

*– Rev. Don Jamison is incoming chair of the Virginia Conference Board of Discipleship*



# DISCIPLES HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD



▲ On April 13, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of United Methodist Women, the women of **Bethany UMC in Forest, Lynchburg District**, planted "Vivian's Roses." The roses are named for Vivian Wilson Overstreet, a dedicated member of years gone by who always stood at the church door on Mother's Day with her basket of roses. Carol Lee had each member bring soil from her home. Vivian's roses were dug up at the home of Edith O. Shelton and Betty H. Arrington. As all gathered around the garden in front of the church, 100-year-old Ralphine Coffey Overstreet and 94-year-old Annice Martin Williams shoveled and graveled the soil to plant the roses to assure that Bethany UMW will create a legacy of spirit to continue to put faith, hope and love into action for women, children and youth. The poem, "Vivian, Our Sister in Christ," was written by Edward M. Hawkins, c. 1950:

*Now that Vivian has gone to rest,  
In our memory's eye we can see her best,  
As she stood by the threshold of God's Holy Place,  
With a basket of roses and a smile on her face,  
"Wear a rose for your mother," she would softly say,  
As she gave us her roses on Mother's Day.*

The **James River District** recently sent a United Methodist Volunteers In Mission (UMVIM) team to North Carolina to help rehab and rebuild homes destroyed by last year's tornadoes. ▼

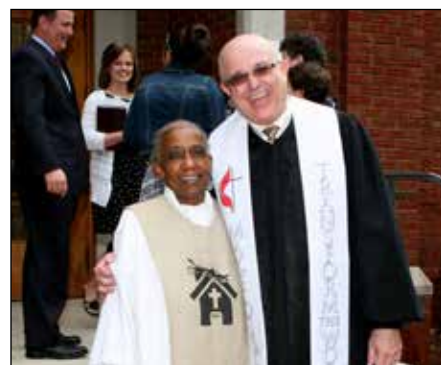


Pictured are Debbie Reckart, Angie Reckart, Brenda Chandler, Iris Hoye, Jaylen Pumphrey, Nathan Decker, Elijah Decker and Ethan Decker from **Ivey Memorial UMC**; and David and Linda Roane from **Matoaca UMC**. At one location the team assisted in plumbing, insulating and decking Leon's home. Leon, an elderly gentleman, was there each day telling us the story of his and his families homes. Out of 11 houses on that street, only one was left standing. While everyone was home and all the homes had to be rebuilt, no one was hurt. Leon said "thank you," so many times we were embarrassed. At Danny's house, the other work site, the team finished a deck and helped level the dirt under

the deck outside. Inside, the team mudded, sanded and painted. Danny's son kept telling the Rev. Nathan Decker how grateful he was that folks like us would help out, especially since he is so far away (he lives in Georgia). While we didn't get to finish it all, we can tell we were a part of God's grace building a Kingdom of peace, justice and mercy in a broken world.



▲ Scott Phillips, a member of **Main Street UMC, South Boston, Farmville District**, dedicated his race car to his church by having the hood painted with the United Methodist cross and flame and the name of the church. Scott races at the South Boston Speedway and is an active member of the Main Street congregation.



▲ On April 19, members of **Main Street UMC, Suffolk**, hosted a Homecoming event. Former Pastor Bob Parks was guest preacher, and more than 300 people attended. Main Street is in the middle of a two-year celebration commemorating 215 years of ministry in Suffolk and 100 years in



its present sanctuary. Several other ▲ events will be held until the culmination in June 2016.

(pictured bottom left) The Rev. Myrtle Frances Hatcher and the Rev. Bob Parks



▲ For Lent, **Great Falls UMC, Arlington District**, borrowed an idea from the Holy Name of Mary Catholic Church in New York. A cross was constructed, and each Sunday Pastor Denise Childers invited the congregation to write their prayers on small purple crosses and pin them to the cross. By Palm Sunday, there were more than 500 prayers on the cross. The cross was draped in white on Easter Sunday, and the prayer crosses were placed in a bowl at the base of the cross. This focus on prayer created a connection within our congregation and started a meaningful tradition for our church.



▲ The Fellowship Committee at **Lebanon UMC in Dinwiddie County** recently hosted its 13th annual Widow's Night Out event, a special dinner for about 12 widows who are members of the three churches that made up the former Dinwiddie Charge. The event starts with special entertainment, and then participants are treated to a fine dining experience with china, crystal, nice napkins and tablecloths, fresh flowers, candlelight and personal attention from the waiters (men of the church dressed in white shirts and black pants). To ensure high quality

*To have your church or church organization featured in the "Disciples helping to transform the world" section, e-mail your story and photos to MadelinePillow@vaumc.org by the first of the month. Stories should be approximately 100 words, and photos should be 300 dpi jpgs.*

service, there is at least one waiter for every two guests.

After dinner, the widows are each given a gift bag and one of the flowers that adorned the dining tables. The widows say they look forward to this event each year, and committee members say they are truly blessed by being allowed to provide this service to such a wonderful group of ladies.

1800 baskets. 180 minutes. 1800 dollars. These were the goals for our Free-Throw-a-thon to benefit Imagine No Malaria. In the middle of March Madness, the youths at **Skipwith UMC, Richmond**, led the way on this active, fun project to promote awareness and raise money.

On Saturday, March 21, kids from 8 to 80 shot baskets in the parking lot, baked goods were sold outside fellowship hall, and chili cooked in a giant pot near the front. All kinds of folks stopped by to buy chili and baked goods, and to shoot a few baskets.

Our small church, led by the youth, met the goal and ultimately raised \$2,417.96 for Imagine No Malaria, raised awareness, and had fun together fulfilling God's purpose. ▼



# EVENTS



## July

### Small Membership Congregation Pastors-Only Training Day

**July 11, Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center, Blackstone**

All Virginia Conference pastors of small congregations (fewer than 150 in worship) are invited to a training event specifically designed around opportunities and challenges of the small congregation. This event will be 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, July 11, at the Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center in Blackstone. Dr. Lew Parks, professor at Wesley Theological Seminary who has specific interest in the small congregation, will be featured speaker. Bishop Cho will lead worship to close the day. Cost is \$25 and includes lunch. 0.5 CEU will be offered. Registration deadline is July 1. Register at [VAUMC.org/SMC-Training](http://VAUMC.org/SMC-Training) or go to the conference website, [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org), click on "Conference Calendar" and the date.

### Helping Hands

**July 16-17, Christ UMC, Staunton**

This exciting two-day mission experience is for rising 4th through 6th graders, parents and adult leaders of all member churches of the Virginia Conference. Come and learn about mission opportunities and the importance of being a caring Christian. Cost is \$36 per person which includes t-shirt, meals, snacks and overnight stay. Participants will sleep on the floor and will not have shower facilities. Registration deadline is June 10. For more information, contact **Beth Christian at (540) 932-1055 or [bethchristian@vaumc.org](mailto:bethchristian@vaumc.org)**. Or go to the conference website, [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org), click on "Conference Calendar" and the date.

### LAUNCH: Explore Your Call to Ministry

**July 20-22, Shenandoah University, Winchester**

The office of Spiritual Life at Shenandoah University and the Virginia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry invite rising high school sophomores, juniors and seniors to explore their calls to ministry while discovering their spiritual gifts from God. Participants live on the Shenandoah University campus and meals are provided. Cost is \$50. For more information, contact **the Rev. Dr. Justin Allen, dean of Spiritual Life at Shenandoah University, at [jallen3@su.edu](mailto:jallen3@su.edu) or [spirituallife@su.edu](mailto:spirituallife@su.edu)**. Or go to the conference website, [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org), click on "Conference Calendar" and the date.

### Helping Hands

**July 23-24, Woodlake UMC, Midlothian**

This event gives rising 4th-6th graders the opportunity to do

hands-on missions in the Richmond area. Participants have the option of early-bird registration which includes three on-site mission opportunities or regular registration which includes two on-site mission opportunities. For more information, contact **MaryKaye Cochran at (804) 639-8872 or [mcochran@woodlakeumc.org](mailto:mcochran@woodlakeumc.org)** or go to the conference website, [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org), click on "Conference Calendar" and the date.

### Mission Encounter

**July 24-26, Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center, Blackstone**

Mission Encounter is an opportunity for clergy and laity, including men, women and youths, to learn about being partners in God's global mission and to grow spiritually through study and worship. Participants may attend one of three workshops: Geographic study on "Latin America;" Spiritual Growth study on "Created for Happiness;" or Issue study on "The Church and People with Disabilities." For registration questions, call **JoAnn Liskey at (540) 434-2997**. For scholarship information, call **Nancy Yarborough at (757) 877-2155**. For more information, go to the conference website, [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org), click on "Conference Calendar" and the date.

## September

### School for Children's Ministries

**Sept. 12, Timberlake UMC, Lynchburg**

The School for Children's Ministries is on the road again featuring the same school at four different locations on four different dates. The second will be 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 12, at Timberlake UMC, 21649 Timberlake Rd., Lynchburg. Learn "Extraordinary Lessons from Ordinary Objects" plus three more workshops. A .5 CEU offered. Only \$20 per person. For more information and to register online, go to the conference website, [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org), click on "Conference Calendar" and the date.

### Goodson Preaching Academy

**Sept. 21-24, Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center, Blackstone**

The Bishops' Foundation will sponsor the 2015 Goodson Preaching Academy, "Craft and Creativity: Preaching in the Context of a Rapidly Evolving World," Sept. 21-24 at the Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center in Blackstone. Presenter will be Dr. Paul Scott Wilson, professor of Homiletics at Emmanuel College, Toronto, author of many books on preaching and past president of the Academy of Homiletics. This ministry venture for clergy seeking excellence in the craft of weekly preaching was modeled after the former Goodson Academy for Preaching and approved by the

Bishops' Foundation which is assuming most of the costs of the event. The event is designed to energize your preaching and help you find creative ways to build disciples in your church. 1 CEU will be awarded. For more information and to register, go to the conference website, [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org), click on "Conference Calendar" and the date.

## October

### Five Day Academy for Spiritual Formation

**Oct. 4-9, Roslyn Retreat Center, Richmond**

The Five Day Academy for Spiritual Formation is a program of Upper Room Ministries, providing an opportunity for clergy and laity to deepen their relationship with God through a daily rhythm of prayer, worship, learning and reflection. Each day will include teaching by Dr. Robert Muhlolland and Dr. Roberta Bondi. It will also include periods of silence, morning and evening prayer, Eucharist, covenant groups and community time. Focus of this academy is Sacred Journey: Shaped by the Spirit. A \$100 non-refundable registration fee is required to reserve your academy space by July 25. This amount will be applied to your total cost. Early registration is recommended as space is limited. For more information and to register, go to the conference website, [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org), click on "Conference Calendar" and the date.

### Annual ARMS Retreat

**Oct. 7-8, Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center, Blackstone**

"Journey of a Lifetime" will be the theme of the Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses (ARMS) annual retreat Oct. 7-8 at Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center in Blackstone. Dr. Joseph Eldridge, chaplain at American University, will speak on "Looking Back/Looking Forward: Viewing Justice Inter-Generationally." Dr. Kenneth Patrick, chaplain at Blue Ridge Hospice, will speak on "Journeying through the Winter of Life with the Lord." Fee is \$50 per person (\$25 if this is your first ARMS retreat.) For more information, e-mail **Harry Kennon at [RevHarry@aol.com](mailto:RevHarry@aol.com)**.



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# LIVING THE WORD



*Dr. Elma T. Jocson is a Pediatric Surgeon from the Philippines. She has been a commissioned General Board of Global Ministries missionary since 2001, but she is now in her second year of sabbatical leave. She served at the United Mission Hospital Tansen in rural Nepal for six years and at Ganta Hospital in Liberia for three years. While currently in her home country she works in a government hospital and is a companion to her 80-year-old mother. Before her tenure with Global Ministries, she worked in Good News Clinic and Hospital in Banaue, Ifugao. She is an active member of the Marikina United Methodist Church in Marikina City, Philippines, where she teaches Sunday school, is Youth Coordinator and chairs Health and Welfare.*

## July 5, 2015

**No rest for the wicked**  
**Micah 2:4-11**

Rice is the main food for half the population of the world. It is the predominant staple in 17 Asian, nine American and eight African countries (according to RiceFacts/ usriceproducers.com). Americans eat twice as much rice now as they did 10 years ago. With so many people in the third world consuming rice, it is not surprising that the rice trade has been controlled by rice cartels. Importation, distribution and retail sales at grass roots levels are all infiltrated by evil men. Poor people suffer because of ever-increasing prices. Even when they are able to buy, the market scales are tampered -- so much so that people suffer injustice twice over.

As children of God, how are we to respond to such injustice? Our United Methodist Church has business people as members. I can vividly remember our pastor preaching about accurate scales. He said honesty in business honors the Lord Jesus Christ. As I grew older and read more of the Scripture, I discovered Proverbs 11:1 that says the Lord abhors dishonest scales.

Whether it's rice or something else, don't we sometimes use dishonest scales when we deal with people? We favor special friends or people belonging to the same group or church. I remember during a bad storm in the Philippines, a lot of people needed evacuation. A church was said to have refused to open its doors to non-members. Our 'scales' -- are they accurate or tilted?

## July 12, 2015

**No tolerance for corrupt leaders and prophets**  
**Micah 3:5-12**

I met a Congolese surgeon when I was serving in Liberia. I was introduced as the surgeon from the Philippines. I was taken aback by his getting-to-know you question. He asked, "So who is your dictator?" To that I answered Ferdinand Marcos. The Marcoses ruled the Philippines for 20 years, but they were ousted in 1986 through a bloodless People's Revolution. A leader of the Catholic Church called on the people to take to the streets and protect the military who had defected against the regime. People of all

faiths responded in throngs.

Although we were successful in throwing out our dictator, one wonders why it took us 20 years to do so. Is it because nobody dared speak up and go against the current power? It is said that the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. And if we look hard enough and are honest, we will find unjust and unfair dealings amongst us. Do we dare speak up about it? Or do we take an unusually long time to investigate, then rationalize, then forget.

We are called by God to speak up and against wrong doings. We are called to stand up for truth and justice. The Spirit of the Lord will enable us.

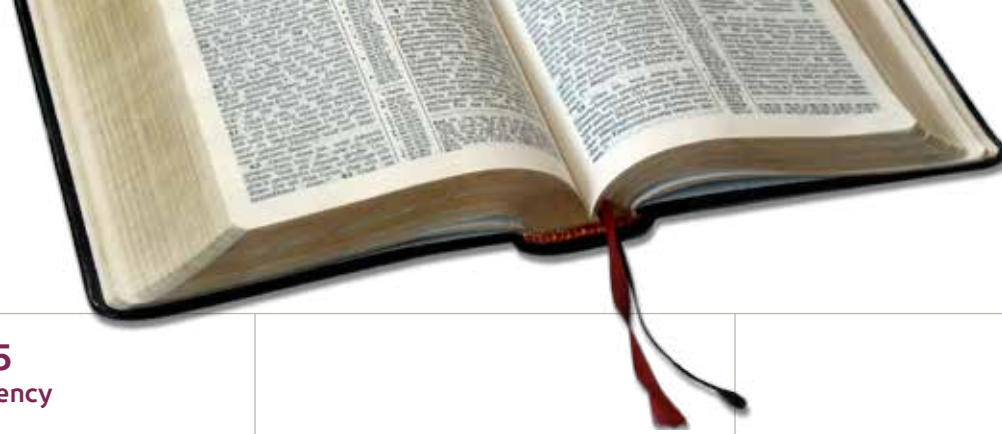
## July 19, 2015

**Justice, Love and Humility**  
**Micah 6:3-8**

I come from an amazing place with very resilient people. The Philippines is visited by an average of 20 tropical storms per year. We also have active earthquakes, fault lines and we sit on the Ring of Fire, a collection of countries with active volcanoes. Because tragedies and calamities are regular occurrences, our faith in God is real. Or so we say. We boast that we are the only Christian country in Asia. But if we look closely and are honest with ourselves, we do not live out our faith.

Our top level national leaders are repeatedly accused of corruption, building political dynasties and amassing wealth. And the corruption permeates to all levels of society. Honesty, fairness and integrity are rarely found. But there is hope! Followers of Jesus are boldly encouraging fellow Christians to take a stand for God's call for justice and love. Christians are living out what God demands God's children.

We honor God by following God's commands, and God tells us to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with Him. I am reminded of what Jesus himself said, "that all men will know that you are my disciple."



**July 26, 2015**  
**God shows clemency**  
**Micah 7:14-20**

**T**here are nine people sitting on death row in Bali, Indonesia, for drug trafficking: eight men and one woman. There were two Australians, four Nigerians, one Indonesian, one Brazilian and one from the Philippines. Mary Jane Veloso, the lone woman, was convicted when she was arrested in April 2010 for possession of 2.6 kilograms of heroin in her luggage. She denied being a drug courier, saying she was tricked into bringing the luggage to Indonesia by a Filipino friend who is also her recruiter.

When I first heard of the story, the skeptical me thought, “that’s a lie, one cannot be totally clueless.” Most Filipinos who are arrested for trafficking are poor, therefore vulnerable to the promise of quick, big money. And so I remain detached from the person of Veloso and the people she represents.

As the execution drew near and her requests for reprieve were continuously denied, my country started uniting in prayer for this woman. It was like people from all walks of life asked God for mercy, even as President Joko Widodo chose to pursue the death penalty by firing squad. Me? I remained level-headed.

April 28 came, and I was surprised by the news. Only Veloso was spared temporarily, the eight others were executed. The official reason is that new evidence has surfaced that can be pursued to get to the drug ring. But I believe that the real reason is that God showed mercy. God chose to display kindness to Mary Jane Veloso and to my people. God showed me that God is equally just and merciful. Praise, praise to our loving God! 🇺🇸

# CLERGY & DIACONAL



## DEATHS



**The Rev. Darreld R. Shoop**, retired, died May 28, 2015. He served as an associate member of the Virginia Conference beginning in 1969 and became

an Elder in Full Connection in 1973. In Virginia, he served South Brunswick, Prince George, North Garden, St. Matthias, Fairmount, Trinity (Ashland District), and Mechanicsville churches and was also director of Westview, Inc., from 1974-1977. He retired in 1988 but served at Thomas Chapel on the Farmville District in 2002. He was living in Staunton at the time of his death. The Rev. Darreld Shoop is the father of **the Rev. Joe Shoop**, senior pastor of Bethel UMC (Woodbridge).

**Mrs. Mary Cora Lee Davis**, a resident of Sentara Village Norfolk, died May 23, 2015. Her husband of 50 years, **the Rev. LeRoy W. Davis**, died in 1990.

**Mrs. Betty Jo Rice**, 78, died April 15, 2015. She was preceded in death by her husband, **the Rev. Albert Rice III**. She is survived by her children, Keith Boseman (JoAnn), Paula Beverley (Devon) and Richard Barkley; stepsons, Albert Rice IV (Violaine), Tim Rice (Margaret), David Rice; and 11 grandchildren.

**Mrs. Rosie Newsome**, mother of **the Rev. Kenny Newsome**, died May 21, 2015. She was a member of Melrose UMC in Lottsburg where she sang in the choir and served as treasurer of the cemetery fund for many years. Kenny is senior pastor at Pender UMC, Arlington District.

**Mrs. Susan Long**, 74, mother of **the Rev. Michelle Louk**, died May 14, 2015. Michelle is pastor of McKendree UMC in Norfolk.

**Inis Blair**, mother of Janet Pittman and mother-in-law of **the Rev. Dean Pittman**, died on Saturday, June 6. A memorial service was held at Greenwood UMC, Richmond District.

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# FROM THE BISHOP



## No cross, no discipleship

Dear Friends,

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

The 2015 Annual Conference session is over! We are now in a new conference year. During the summer months the conference office will be a little slow, but we will continue to work for our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

I thank God that this Annual Conference gave us a chance to think about our mission more seriously. What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? What are the differences between members of the church and disciples of Jesus Christ? How can we develop a system or a road map to make Jesus' disciples? We were challenged and learned that the time has come for us to move from members to disciples.

As we heard and learned, members are concerned about "me" and my

needs. In today's world, membership means seeking maximum benefit with minimum investment. It is important to members whether the church will meet their needs or not. I do not think it is wrong for the church to work to meet the needs of its members. We need to provide care and love that members need.

But if the ministry of the church only stays there, meeting the needs of its members, we cannot be faithful to our mission. Being and living as disciples of Jesus Christ is a life-long journey. We need to help our members grow to become disciples of Jesus Christ. Growing into disciples of Jesus is more than taking a class and learning about Jesus' life and teaching. It is related to our values, our priorities and lifestyles. The call to discipleship is a very serious challenge for us, although it is what the Christian life is.

In his book, *Shift*, Phil Maynard defines discipleship as follows:

- ❖ Discipleship is not just about learning about Jesus. It is about becoming like Jesus.
- ❖ Discipleship is not just about education. It is about transformation.
- ❖ Discipleship is not just about knowledge. It is about behavior.

Meditating on the meaning of discipleship, I found that one word is a key for our discipleship. It is the "Cross." In growing from members of the church to disciples of Jesus, the most critical decision we have to make is whether we are willing to bear the cross to follow Jesus or not. Our Lord Jesus Christ made it clear to his disciples: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it." (Mark 8:34-35)

Members seek self-satisfaction, but disciples seek self-denial. Members

seek saving their life, but disciples seek losing their life for the Lord. I think this is a fundamental difference between members of the church and disciples of Jesus Christ. But in today's church, "Cross" is not a popular word. Bearing the cross is the thing we want to avoid. We like to follow Jesus without bearing the cross. Many people want to follow Jesus as long as they feel comfortable while doing so.

This is one of the reasons we are losing the vitality and authenticity of our faith. This is also a reason people outside the church criticize us as hypocrites. We need to rediscover a biblical and authentic discipleship. We need to get out of our comfort zones and follow our Lord, although that road has many challenges. Even though that road asks us to die for the Lord, we need to say, "Yes" to the Lord because by dying we live in Christ. We need to remember, "No Cross, No Discipleship."

It is still true, even in today's IT era, what Thomas A Kempis said in his book, *The Imitation of Christ*:

Jesus has now many lovers of His heavenly kingdom, but few bearers of His cross.

Many He has who desire consolation, but few tribulation.

Many He finds who share His table, but few are willing to endure anything for Him.

Many follow Jesus to the breaking of bread, but few to the drinking of the cup of His passion.

Many revere His miracles, but few follow the shame of His cross.

Many love Jesus so long as no adversities befall them.

Where will we find a person willing to serve God without receiving something in return?

In our Lord,

Young Jin Cho

# ONE LAST WORD



## Tweets heard 'round the conference

**Alan Combs @thricemantis**

I just don't think any of these guys see the world through the eyes of children  
[#TheBachelorette](#)

**Morgan Guyton @MAGuyton**

The laziest way to "glorify" God is by taking a stance on someone else's sexuality. Discipleship is much harder and much more useful to God.

**McKennon Shea @McKennon**

Does the Virginia Conference have the most resolutions this year? 8 res. + 16 for GC. = 24! [#vaumc](#) [#umc](#)

**Alan Combs @thricemantis**

Seriously [#vaumc](#)? It is a voting year and there are EIGHT resolutions and SIXTEEN GC petitions.

**Pastor Jason Elmore @PastorJasonE**

[#WCWS](#) going into extra innings is causing me to stay awake longer than expected! [#stillgottapreachtomorrow](#)

**Bert Cloud @bertcloud**

What joy it was to spend time with a great group of new and transitioning colleagues at the Va UM Licensing School. Makes me hopeful.

**Courtney Layman @CML1133**

Found it appropriate that @VAUMC hired a creative writing major as Editor of the *Advocate*. [#vaumc](#) [#UMC](#) [#got-tobecreative](#)

## Patmos UMC sends two couples on mission trip to Tanzania, Kenya

Months before two couples from Patmos UMC, in Huddleston (Lynchburg District), went to East Africa, the entire congregation helped make preparations for the mission trip.

The trip was arranged for the last week of May and the missionaries, Mitch and Suzanne Hooper and Wayne and Carroll Brown, would visit both Tanzania and Kenya.

In order to prepare, the church's weekly knitting group and other ladies hand-crocheted 200 cotton washcloths for the children at the New Mercy Care Centre Academy in Kenya's Mathare slums of Nairobi. Other items were made and sold at the annual bazaar to help buy malaria medicine and basketballs for the Maasai school in Tanzania.

The mission trip opportunity came from Ole Kuney, a Maasai chief overseeing 2 million Maasai in Tanzania and Kenya. Kuney, a Christian doctor, is a longtime friend of the Browns. The couple met Kuney when they served at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center as missionaries while he studied there for his doctorate.

The missionaries' trip began in Tanzania among the Maasai, tribesman that wander the plains of Tanzania and Kenya raising cattle. Though there are many chiefs among the Maasai people, Kuney is a chief that oversees nearly 2 million people in Kenya and Tanzania. To welcome the couples from Patmos, Kuney invited over 30 chiefs who presented them with native costumes as gifts and a cake made by Kuney's daughters.

While in Tanzania, the Patmos couples visited the Maasai high school that was built by the Maasai and other Christian groups. There the missionaries presented basketballs and medicine to the school.

After touring more of Tanzania, the missionary group traveled to Kenya



where they stayed at the Methodist Guest House in Nairobi. Here, they visited the New Mercy Care Centre Academy. The Academy is located in the Mathare slums in Nairobi, slums where over 1 million people live in a two square mile area with huts made of cardboard, mud, and tin.

The oldest slum in Africa, the Mathare slums are no stranger to crime, disease and despair. In an effort to stem this hopelessness, a small Christian school was founded to feed children and offer education nearly 20 years ago. The Academy, now a school to nearly 200 children, welcomed the Patmos visitors, and the children entertained them with plays, skits and songs. Many of the teachers at this school have been there since the beginning which deeply touched Carroll Brown, who has been involved with the school for more than 15 years.

The whole experience left the Patmos visitors with a profound sense of hope. From the teachers of the New Mercy Care Academy to Maasai tribe, the couples witnessed significant strides by people who are improving the world around them in large ways with a small amount of resources. 🇰🇪

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