

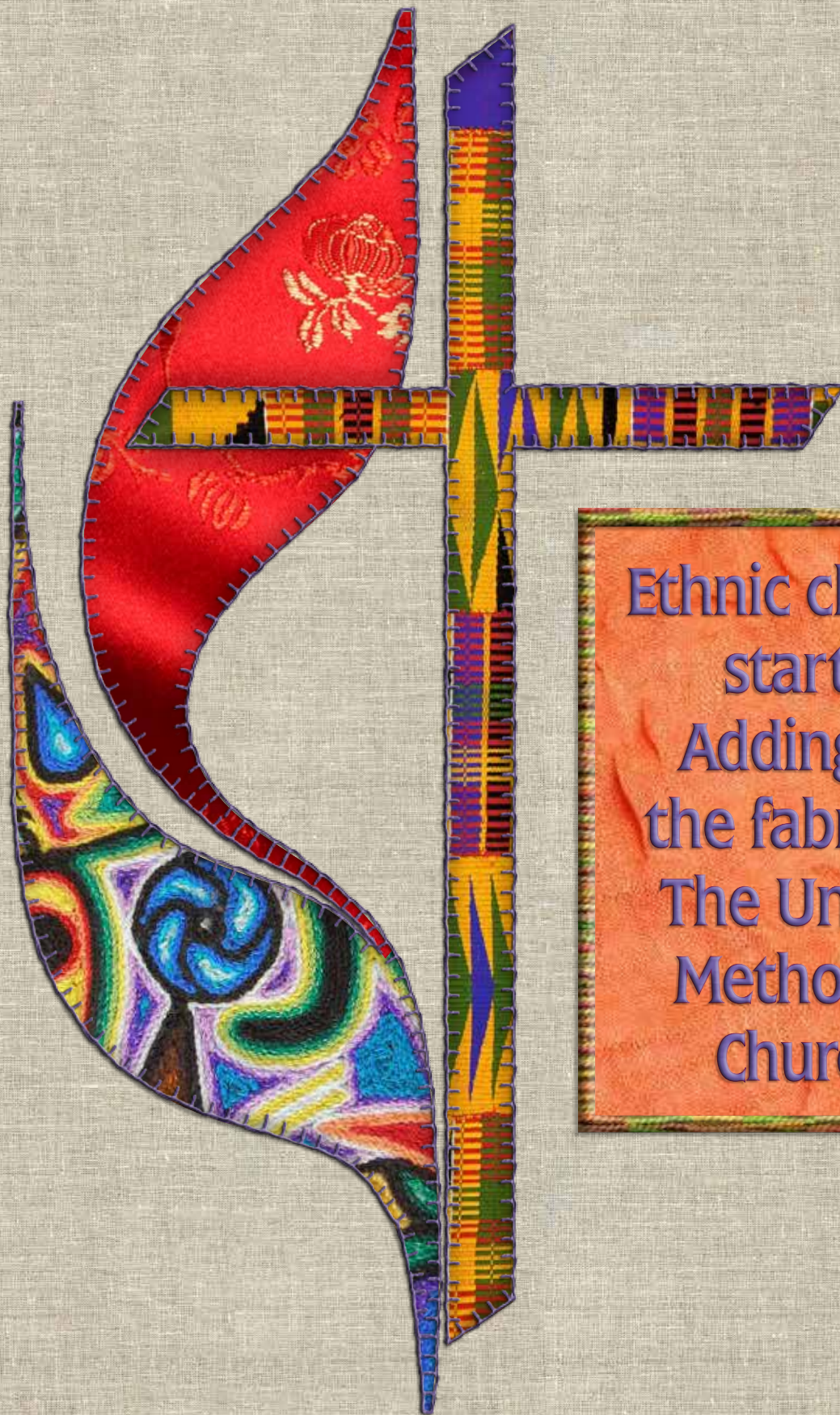
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The Virginia United Methodist

May 2013

Advocate



Ethnic church
starts:
Adding to
the fabric of
The United
Methodist
Church

FROM THE EDITOR



Neill Caldwell
Editor

We have
some work
to do in
reaching an
increasingly
diverse
Virginia



Our theme topic for the month is fairly specific: Ethnic minority new churches started by the conference in the past couple of years. Why do we want to call this to your attention?

Starting new faith communities is the “prime directive,” to speak in “Star Trek” terms, of our “All Things New” conference strategy, ever since the Rev. Keith Boyette stood up on the floor of Annual Conference several years ago and challenged us all in the effort to start 250 new churches.

(Incidentally we say “faith communities” now because they can be just about anything and meet just about anywhere: a theater, inside a strip mall, even a bar. When we talk about starting new communities of the people of God within the Virginia Conference, we’re no longer thinking of building brick and mortar buildings. Not that there’s anything wrong with that...)

But back to my point... while “All Things New” does include a key element of renewal of our existing congregations – something that is very important to me and all you members of existing congregations out there – its “root core” is creating new communities of faith. Especially where the needs and opportunities are great, and The United Methodist Church does not already have a presence.

In the 15 years between 1990 and 2005, the population of Virginia grew by some 26 percent. Over the same time period, membership of the Virginia Conference shrank by 3 percent. In a word: Ouch! Studies show that our Commonwealth will continue to grow over the next 15 years at least.

At the same time, we’ve learned from people like Dr. Lovett Weems – and even the results of the past two presidential elections in the Commonwealth – that Virginia is rapidly becoming a more diverse place, especially in the northern part of the conference, close to Washington, D.C.

“A faithful response from the Virginia Conference will require that we fulfill both purposes of ‘All Things New,’” says the Rev. Mark Ogren, director of the conference’s Center for Congregational Excellence, which helps direct new church starts. “We are learning from new faith communities how to reach out to new people, and we are now sharing those lessons in new ways.”

As a whole, The United Methodist Church has not been especially effective in reaching out to people of color. Research reported last summer by the Lewis Center for Church Leadership at Wesley Seminary and the General Board of Global Ministries provides a score card of the denomination’s success at connecting with a more racially diverse population in the U.S. Virginia was one of six annual conferences where the racial ethnic population is more than 20 percent, yet the percentage of membership that is ethnic minority falls below the median among U.S. annual conferences (4.5%). (The only positive news in that report is that Virginia is in the top five conferences with Asian-American membership.)

So in this annual time of new growth, we spotlight several new faith communities that are serving specific ethnic populations. We do this knowing full well that there is more work to do in the vineyard. 🍷

Neill Caldwell

Connecting with the



VirginiaAdvocate

The official magazine of
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The United Methodist Church

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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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Photo above: The choir from Ghana Wesley UMC

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LETTERS



History is in the process of deciding this issue

Last month, Pastor Jim Noland wrote a letter to the editor responding to my commentary on civil rights for homosexuals in the January Advocate ("The wrong side of history?" pg. 4). Although he said that my commentary "missed the mark," he didn't say anything that disagreed with the sole mark that I was actually aiming at in that piece.

I wrote my commentary to point out that public opinion is moving decisively in favor of civil rights for homosexuals and against what many take to be the traditional biblical position. The evidence for this has grown rapidly even since January. For example, Nate Silver, the statistician who predicted the results of the 2012 presidential election almost exactly, projects that by 2020 there will be just six states with a majority against gay marriage. See <http://goo.gl/3ii2i>. (The six states are South Carolina, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi; Silver has Virginia crossing over in around 2014.)

If you are opposed to any form of civil rights for homosexuals, your children are likely to disagree with you, your grandchildren more so, and your great-grandchildren almost certainly do or will. The position that God is opposed to some aspect of such civil rights is becoming less popular every day and will soon be viewed by most as a reactionary and hateful one, just as similar views about slavery, miscegenation and desegregation are viewed today.

Again – and as I said in the original commentary – the fact that an opinion is unpopular doesn't make it wrong. My commentary made no attempt at all to debate the merits of the issue. That has been done elsewhere, and I

recommend that everyone read up on the debate, with particular attention to viewpoints uncongenial to them. My point is simply that history is in the process of deciding this issue as a political matter, with or without the participation of The United Methodist Church.

Kirby Griffis, Fairfax

Cheers for SoSA's operating costs

From the Society of St. Andrew comes very good news! ("Society of St. Andrew broke records in 2012," pg. 9 March issue) The efforts of this unique humanitarian society continue to increase results.

In the first two months of this year, goals have exceeded the 2012 record-breaking year, in spite of the period, January and February, being the worst part of the year for gathering food. A remarkable facet in SoSA's operation is its extremely low administrative costs. The audit for 2012 reported an overhead cost of just 3 percent. We preachers, and many lay people, receive, read and study promotional reports from multitudes of worthy charitable organizations. Has any one of us seen such low overhead? I, for one, have not.

The Society of St. Andrew is to be applauded loudly and supported generously.

Warner Crumb, Roanoke

Washington Street UMC hosts Black History Month

I am writing to express my appreciation to all those people who took part in the excellent program presented at Washington Street UMC in February in honor of Black History Month. I attended as a guest.

The main speaker for the day was Col. Rodney Edge, garrison commander of Fort Lee (U.S. Army post near Blackstone). I learned many things from his talk and increased my knowledge of the role Petersburg has played in our national history.

The musical combo from the 392nd Army Band and their lead singer, Terra Allen, were outstanding. The Petersburg High School Choir and the Appomattox Regional Governor's School Choir also shared beautiful musical selections appropriate to the occasion. To top it off, a delicious lunch was served by the students from the Culinary Institute at Virginia State University.

It is good to know that the people from these various places are willing to share their resources with the public. I feel these kinds of cooperative efforts build church/community relations as well as improve race relations in an area that once was so polarized.

My thank you also goes to Mrs. Herbert White, who coordinated this program.

Alexis Fathbruckner, Blackstone



ALL GOD'S CHILDREN CAMP

FOR CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED MOTHERS OR FATHERS



WHAT IS ALL GOD'S CHILDREN CAMP?

Children, ages 7 to 12, spend a week at camp, participating in activities such as boating, swimming, hiking, archery, horse-back riding, music, crafts, Bible study, and conflict resolution. Partnering with Virginia United Methodist camps, the All God's Children Camp provides a week of sanctuary for children who face so many challenges in their lives: economic poverty; temporary living conditions; loneliness; low self-esteem; violence; and drugs.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

MENTORING: Volunteers come from churches across the conference to spend the week at camp. Mentors do not lead activities, but provide supervision, companionship and compassion to the children during their daily activities. They are the ones who assure the children that they are indeed all God's children and God loves and cares about them in the midst of their struggles. After camp, mentors agree to maintain their contact with their campers by phone or letters throughout the school year. Mentors are adults ages 17 and up. They attend training the Sunday morning prior to the week of camp. It is an intense, yet extremely rewarding experience.

SUPPLIES: Your Sunday school class, UMM or UMW circle, or Vacation Bible

School can help by collecting supplies, such as...new sleeping bags (plain colors - no special characters), pillows, pillow cases, flat twin sheets (no fitted sheets). Also, love notes/ bracelets /journals can be donated as something special to give the kids. Check the website often for updates on supplies specific to the camps.

PRAYER: The camp and children need your prayers. Alarming statistics show that these children are more likely than their peers to have behavioral problems, trouble in school, and likely to eventually be incarcerated. We hope to give these children the chance to break this cycle.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION:

The camp is funded by individuals, groups, and churches. A scholarship of \$350 sends one child to camp. Please make checks payable to VA Conference UMC with AGCC in the memo.



2013 CAMP DATES

• AUGUST 4-9

Camp Highroad in Middleburg, VA

• AUGUST 4-9

Occohannock on the Bay in Belle Haven

• AUGUST 11-16

Westview on the James in Goochland

Casey Torrence, Director
All God's Children Camp

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The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



United Methodist Men's spring gathering features Bishop Cho, Gil Hanke

About 100 United Methodist Men from around the Virginia Conference met in Richmond on April 6 to hear from Bishop Young Jin Cho, United Methodist Men's General Secretary Gil Hanke, and one another.

Participants were assigned to small groups which rotated into different rooms during the morning at Good Shepherd UMC, with each room given a different question to discuss, like why men are important to the church, and how congregations can be more attractive to men.

United Methodist Church membership is currently about two-thirds women.

Bishop Cho urged the men to go back to the basics, particularly in prayer.

"Just saying hello to God a couple of times a day at meals is not enough," said the Bishop. "In prayer, we will be transformed. In prayer we will know God."

Before anyone can do effective ministry, Cho reminded his audience, "you must first become an authentic disciple and faithful of Jesus Christ. That is the secret of revitalizing United Methodist Men!"

Hanke, a Virginia native, participated in the small groups so that participants could interact with him.



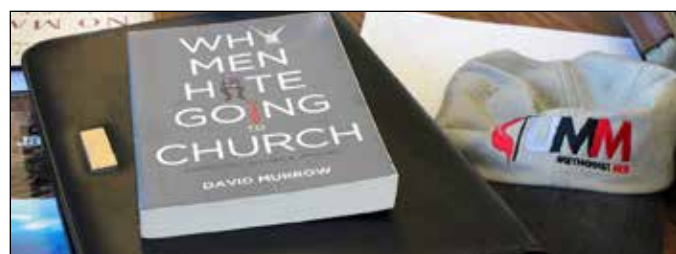
Bishop Young Jin Cho speaks to the Spring United Methodist Men's gathering, held April 6 at Good Shepherd UMC in Richmond.



Larry Burian (center) speaks during small group breakout session at the Spring meeting.



Johnnie Draughon from Virginia Beach leads a small group session. Photos by Neill Caldwell



The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

Young adults gather at conference office to discuss ideas



Alex Woody from Shenandoah University writes out information about the group's devotional.



The Rev. Derrick Parson, conference director of Ministries with Young People, facilitates a meeting with young adult leaders.



Young adults participate in discussions. Photos by Neill Caldwell

Young adults from across the conference gathered recently to toss around ideas as to how to fill in the gaps in ministry with their age group.

Young adults are defined by The United Methodist Church as those people age 18-35, a group that has seen church participation drop steadily over the past decade.

Virginia Conference Director of Ministries with Young People, the Rev. Derrick Parson, convened the gathering at the United Methodist Center to look at several key questions: Where are the young adults? How do we take our story to them if they are not in worship? What are local churches doing now to foster young adult ministry and connectionalism?

The group decided that the ultimate goal is changing the church's mindset from "young adult ministry" to "young adults in ministry."

"Young Adults are open and looking to the future and deciding what they will dedicate their lives to, yet they don't choose that just because of contemporary worship, billboards or Facebook posts," the group stated. "Lives are dedicated because of person-to-person relationships."

Among some of the tangible ideas brought forward at the meeting:

- ❖ College students need specific activities, such as a concert or movie night, because of their crowded schedules. Campus ministries and local churches should partner together to sponsor such events.
- ❖ Reaching out to young professionals at coffee shops or restaurants – anywhere beyond the normal church facilities – might be a way to attract new people to worship, Bible study or other activities.
- ❖ Providing small group meetings for young adults with children – where the event also includes childcare – ought to be a successful means to get more people involved in faith exploration.
- ❖ Give young adults more voice in leadership roles in local churches.
- ❖ Create a district training workshop on developing a "Young Adult Small Group Toolbox."
- ❖ Create an annual weekend event that brings young adults from across the annual conference together.
- ❖ Develop an "Are you Young Adult-Ready?" assessment tool for churches.
- ❖ Continue this conversation, involving more clergy and laypersons.

The United Methodist connection in
VIRGINIA

Trip to Brazil filled with love

By Al Tilson

I recently returned from a mission trip to Brazil. The Charlottesville UMC District initiated this trip, but the 10-person mission team included people from northern Virginia and Richmond as well as the Charlottesville and Mineral area.

When the trip was in the planning stages, I thought we would be building a new community center, but when we arrived we found a building of clay block and mortar already in progress. We were asked to move dirt and level the floor so that it would be ready for concrete to be poured. So, we moved dirt, estimated to be nine tons by the time we were finished. We called ourselves “the dirt movers of Virginia.”

All of the team members were very dedicated to the mission project. Our ages ranged from 32 to 71, but nothing stood in the way of our moving this dirt using shovels and wheelbarrows.

The Brazilian workers there do not have big machines to do jobs like we do. They had one electric concrete mixer, which mixed about four wheelbarrow loads at a time. This method equals a lot of hard work to get a final product.

Our team leaders were great, and the daily

devotion kept our spirits high, but nothing kept us more energized than the Brazilian people, who were so full of love and joy. Their kindness to us was overwhelming. They fixed our lunch every day and the church brought us snacks every afternoon. Our breakfasts and some dinners were provided by the hotel. We did go out for great pizza and the Brazilian “meat lovers” buffet a couple of nights.

The best part of our day was when we were with the children. The little ones were so full of love that was so real and sincere. One little girl looked up at me and stole my heart. I knew God was there... you could feel God's presence.

I pray that these mission trips continue so that we can help those in need. I know that we need help in our country and each church here does what it can to provide assistance to the needy, but the people in other countries also need our help. I know God wants us to do whatever it takes to make a difference in the lives of others. I know the people I met in Brazil have certainly made a difference in my life.

Please do not let your head and heart tell you that mission assistance should only be local. The little ones in other countries need all the help we can give them. We also need them; your heart will always be full of love knowing that you helped

a child. All of your gifts given to them are provided through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I was asked to preach on the Sunday after we arrived. I was not prepared to speak to a group but others assured me that God would provide the words. so I said I would give it a go. Something came over me and I can only describe it as the spirit of God. Our translator said she did not know what had just happened, but she felt it. too.

When I asked that we pass the peace, so many people suddenly appeared that the passing went on for probably 15 minutes. I don't know where all of these people came from, but the small storage unit which served as our church was totally full, not only with people but also with love, joy and the holy spirit.

We all left there energized even though we were physically tired from the long trip from Virginia to Brazil. This trip experience was one of the best times of my life and will remain with me always. I recommend it to anyone who is thinking about going on a mission trip. Do it! You will be so happy you did.

-The Rev. Al Tilson serves Mineral UMC



The United Methodist connection in
VIRGINIA

Preservation efforts continue to save
circuit rider's house, school site

By Jack Martin

The Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation has been eagerly moving forward with the work of preservation and interpretation of the projects given to its care on behalf of the Virginia United Methodist Historical Society.

At the Rev. Edward Dromgoole house, located just south of Valentines near the North Carolina border on Route 46, efforts are well underway to preserve the house from further deterioration thanks to several generous donations and the skills of Tom King, an expert in historical restoration. The installation of a French drain was the first effort, designed to solve a water problem; then began the work of shoring up the foundations.

“For the most part, the Edward Dromgoole house is in pretty remarkable shape,” said King. “It's not only rare; you just don't find 18th century houses in the original condition like it is.

“The worst damage has come from water entering the basement, and as a result of the water, the foundation has done a lot of tumbling, and termites ate the main structural support beam under the center of the house. After we installed a waterproofing system, the basement is bone dry. Since the termites no longer had a source for water

close enough to the wood in the house, they have left with no signs of any remaining.”

It is believed that the Dromgoole house is the only existing circuit rider home within the Virginia Conference. Dromgoole, an Irish-born circuit rider, was host to Bishop Francis Asbury on many occasions.

One other project nearing completion is the Ebenezer Academy Park near Warfield in Brunswick County, which will soon be open to the public. The Academy, established by Bishop Francis Asbury, is believed to be the first Methodist School in America and is the forerunner of Randolph-Macon College, which was originally located in Boydton.

A number of improvements have been made at the site, including opening an access road from Boydton Plank Road (Route 1). A Virginia State Historical marker is on the east side of Boydton Plank Road, and the entrance road to the site is just a few feet north of the historical marker. The main building foundation remains, and several years ago, stone from the building was used for a 12-foot high obelisk, a true Ebenezer in the biblical sense. A new wooden plaque has been installed on the obelisk.

The site will be open daily until dusk. Parking is near the obelisk. For more information, visit www.oldbrunswick.org.

-The Rev. Jack Martin is pastor of Bethel UMC in Woodbridge.



Tom King uses a broad axe to hew a new structural support beam for the floor at the Edward Dromgoole House in southern Virginia.



New floor joists were created to replace the ones destroyed by water damage and termites.

Your house...



Celebrating
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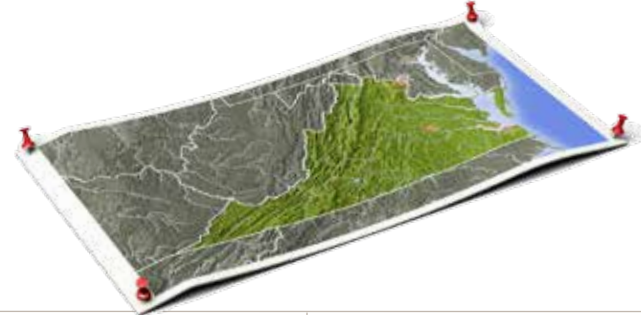
The Retired Clergy Housing Corporation of the Virginia Conference maintains a program to provide retirement homes for eligible United Methodist pastors who need them.

This program has been made possible by the gift of homes willed to the Corporation for this purpose. Other contributions come through the Covenant of Gratitude whose members contribute \$1.00 a year for each person ordained a commissioned probationer at the Virginia Annual Conference.

If you would like to consider willing your home to the Retired Clergy Housing Corporation of the Virginia Conference or if you would like to share through the Covenant of Gratitude, please mail in the coupon below with your name and address.

c/o Thomas L. Coffman,
President
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Richmond, VA 23234
Retired Clergy Housing Corp.
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E-mail: nlctlc@comcast.net
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The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



Katie Couric to deliver Randolph-Macon College 2013 commencement address



Award-winning journalist Katie Couric will speak to Randolph-Macon graduates.

Randolph-Macon College's 2013 Commencement speaker will be Katie Couric, award-winning journalist and TV newswoman, cancer-research advocate and author. She is the host of *Katie*, a daily syndicated daytime talk show that premiered in September, and also serves as a special correspondent for ABC News and is a contributor to ABC World News, *Nightline*, *20/20*, *Good Morning America*, *This Week* and prime time news specials.

"I am thrilled that Katie Couric will be addressing our seniors and their

families on such an important day," said R-MC President Robert Lindgren. "Her remarkable career, steadfast dedication to vital cancer research, and her dynamic personality and extraordinary accomplishments make her an inspiration to all of us."

Couric served for an unprecedented 15 years as co-anchor of NBC News' *Today* (1991-2006) and was the first solo female anchor of a national nightly news broadcast, as anchor and managing editor of the CBS *Evening News with Katie Couric* (2006-2011).

Couric is a co-founder of Stand Up To Cancer,

an organization that has raised nearly \$200 million in funds to accelerate cancer research that can get new therapies to patients quickly. After losing her husband, Jay Monahan, to colon cancer in 1998, Couric became a public leader in the fight against the country's second largest cancer killer.

An Arlington native, Couric graduated with honors from the University of Virginia in 1979 with a bachelor's degree in English and a focus on American Studies. She lives in New York City and has two daughters.

Randolph-Macon College's Commencement ceremony will take place on Saturday, June 1, at 10 a.m. at the Frank E. Brown Fountain Plaza. 📍

Bishop's Convocation on Prayer will be May 18

Bishop Young Jin Cho, as part of his emphasis on prayer in the Virginia Conference, has called for a Convocation on Prayer. The event will be held Saturday, May 18, at Bon Air UMC, 1645 Buford Road in Richmond.

Dr. Dwight Judy, professor emeritus of Spiritual Formation at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, will provide the keynote address on "A Quiet Pentecost: Inviting the Spirit into Congregational Life."

Judy helped design the United Methodist Professional Certification in Spiritual Formation, approved in 2000. His books include "A Quiet Pentecost: Inviting the Spirit into Congregational Life" (Upper Room Books, 2013); "Discerning Life Transitions: Listening Together in Spiritual Direction" (Morehouse, 2010); "Embracing God: Praying with Teresa of Avila" (Abingdon, 1996); "Quest for the Mystical Christ: Awakening the Heart of Faith" (OSL Publications, 2003); and "Christian Meditation and Inner Healing" (OSL Publications, 2000, 2010).

Judy, a clergy member of the North Texas Conference, is director of the Bishop Reuben Job Institute for Spiritual Formation, hosted by Garrett Seminary, and has served as

faculty for the Upper Room Academy for Spiritual Formation in Nashville since 1989.

Convocation participants may attend one of the following workshops: Prayer Discernment in Making Congregational Decisions, Prayer 101, Spiritual Disciplines, Contemplative Prayer and Congregational Prayer. There will also be time for worship and sharing. The cost of the event is \$10 per person, which includes lunch.

To register, visit the conference website at www.vaumc.org, then go to "Events" and the date. The deadline to register is **May 8**.

For more information about the event, e-mail Marc Brown at MarcBrown@vaumc.org or call (804) 521-1133. 📞

Dr. Dwight Judy will lead the Bishop's Convocation on Prayer



The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA

Fairlington UMC becomes conference's second Reconciling Congregation

Fairlington United Methodist Church has become the second Reconciling Congregation in the Virginia Conference.

A Reconciling Congregation is one that adopts a public statement welcoming all families and individuals, and specifically welcoming persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

In a recent vote, 93.5 percent of the 399 votes cast voted in the affirmative. The church entered into a discernment process in late 2011 and affirmed this statement of welcome:

"Fairlington United Methodist Church proclaims without reservation God's unconditional love and grace,

and affirms the dignity and worth of every person as created in the image of God. We commit to extend Christ's gospel hospitality, creating a place of safety and spiritual sanctuary for all people. Therefore, this community of faith welcomes into membership, participation and leadership all persons regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, family structure, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic background, political affiliation, physical or mental ability, faith history, or life experience. We recognize among us differences in theology and biblical interpretation, and covenant to accept, respect, and love one another along our faith journeys.

As God loves us, so let us love one another."

"We look to God's guidance for how we, as a Reconciling Congregation, can share better God's unconditional love and hospitality to all people, particularly those who often have felt unaccepted in the church," wrote Dr. George P. Taylor Jr., Fairlington's Church Council chair, in a statement announcing the results of the vote.

Centenary UMC in Richmond was the first local church in the conference to become a Reconciling Congregation. 📍

Lake Junaluska
1913-2013

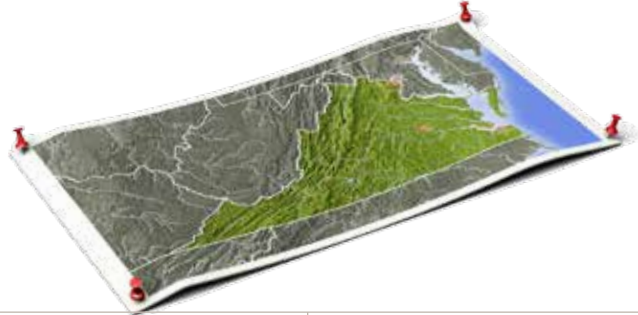
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The United Methodist connection in VIRGINIA



Hundley to join California-Pacific Conference in July



Rev. Dr. Stephen Hundley

Current Roanoke District Superintendent the Rev. Dr. Stephen C. Hundley will become executive director of Connectional Ministries of the California-Pacific Conference, effective July 1.

“Under his leadership, the Roanoke District has captured the missional heart and reason of our apportionment system and contributed at a 100 percent level every year of his superintendency,” wrote Bishop Minerva Carcaño in a March 18 statement announcing Hundley’s hiring. “Missional partnerships in local

communities as well as with mission partners in Central America have also flourished under his mentoring and leadership.”

Hundley also announced the news on his Facebook page. “I never thought this would happen to me/us,” Hundley said in his post, “but we believe this is what we are led to do.”

Hundley serves as a member of the General Council on Finance and Administration, chairs the United Methodist Insurance Inc., and serves on the Committee for Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century.

A native of Richmond, Hundley graduated from Randolph-Macon College and Wesley Theological Seminary, where he earned

his Masters and Doctor of Ministry degrees. He served local churches in Winchester, Richmond, Hampton, Falls Church and Lynchburg before being appointed Roanoke District superintendent in 2005.

“I strongly believe that Dr. Hundley bears the gifts and grace to serve with excellence as our new EDCM,” Bishop Carcaño added. “His servant spirit and great experience and wisdom will strengthen our conference efforts to faithfully lead the work of disciple-making and transformation that Christ has placed in our hands.”

Hundley and his wife, Becky, have four grown children.

The California-Pacific Conference office is located in Pasadena. 📍

Virginia launches free emergency preparedness app

There’s a new way for Virginians to become “mobile ready” for disasters. The Ready Virginia mobile app, developed by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, gives Virginians a new way to prepare for disasters and also to stay informed during emergencies with the latest information.

The free Ready Virginia app for iPhone® and Android™ mobile devices provides emergency planning and preparedness guidance along with several other important features, including:

- ❖ Location-specific weather watches and warnings as well as flood information issued by the National Weather Service;
- ❖ Disaster news from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management;
- ❖ Maps with open American Red Cross shelters, hurricane evacuation routes, hurricane storm surge zones and stream gauges;
- ❖ A template for creating a customized family emergency plan that can be shared;
- ❖ Local emergency manager contact information;
- ❖ Links to register for local emergency alerts.

“Mobile phones and tablets quickly have become a primary way for people to stay informed during disasters. Last year, social media and web-based information were critical to informing the public and keeping individuals updated with important information during the severe derecho wind storm and Hurricane Sandy,” said Gov. Bob McDonnell. “The new Ready Virginia mobile app gives people another way to stay informed and quickly identify services and other valuable resources regardless of their location.

The Ready Virginia app is available for download in the App StoreSM and in Google PlayTM for AndroidTM.

In addition to the mobile app, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) launched a mobile version of its website at www.vaemergency.gov. The mobile site contains all the information available on VDEM’s regular website, but with easier navigation for those who use smart phones and tablets to access websites.

“This new app is one of the most important ones Virginians can install on their mobile devices. Now our citizens can get ‘mobile ready’ and ensure that their families are prepared for emergencies and stay informed with official disaster information when an emergency occurs,” said McDonnell. 📱

Westview on the James selects new director



Pete Albert with his wife, Fran, and their sons Sam and Ben.

Peter Albert will become executive director at Westview on the James, effective May 1.

“God has blessed me with a very unique life and a set of experiences that I will be bringing to Westview,” Albert said. “My hope and dream is to help Westview continue to grow into an even more amazing facility where people experience God and grow deeper with God and others.”

Albert has a great deal of experience in youth camps, most recently at Sandy Cove Ministries’ 213-acre camp located in

Maryland, where he led a staff of 13 full-time and four seasonal employees, as well as many volunteers serving 35,000 guests each year in midweek, weekend and summer camps.

Prior to that he served as executive director at Northbay Camp, also in Maryland, where he spearheaded the design and construction of a \$34 million, 98-acre residential environmental education facility.

Albert also has management experience through Young Life camps Saranac and Lake Champion, both located in Upstate

New York, and Young Life’s Camp Windy Gap in western North Carolina. He also served as director of Young Life’s Chesapeake Challenge.

Scott Henderson, a former director at Young Life Ministry, described Albert as a leader who “walks the talk” when it comes to his Christian faith. “Pete has been able to demonstrate authentic Christian living through his actions. He has influenced not only the youth impacted by his programs but also the staff, many of whom are impressive college and high school students that run

these programs.”

Westview on the James is a ministry of the Charlottesville, Fredericksburg and Richmond Districts in the Virginia Conference, with a mission to offer a “Place Apart” for Christian hospitality and learning “that helps people of all ages affirm and grow their faith as they experience the wonder of God’s Creation.” It is accredited by the American Camp Association.

For more information about the camp, visit www.westviewonthe-james.org. 📍

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LOCAL CHURCH NEWS



EVENTS



▲ **The Brandermill Church's** children and family ministries, under the direction of Tammy Tipton-Nay, recently traveled to Shalom Farms to plant 1,800 onions. Shalom Farms is part of United Methodist Urban Ministries of Richmond (UMUMR). UMUMR's mission is to facilitate collaborative partnerships among individuals, congregations and organizations to assure food security and build access to healthful food in areas where it is not readily available. (For more information, visit <http://shalomfarms.org>.) Many of the harvested onions will go to the Hillside Community in downtown Richmond, where residents are in partnership with the "Dream Team" that meets at Brandermill every second Tuesday to discuss and pray about the common ground where all families stand. Pictured, from left (back row), Dorothy McDowell, Caroline Thielsch, Faye Musselman, Nan Johnson, Tipton-Nay, Susan Ayers, and Chris Bachmann; (front), Kyle Thielsch, Joelle Johnson, and Kirby Johnson.



Sleepy Hollow UMC took scripture out of the sanctuary by posting Roman guards at a tomb built on the church's front lawn. The guards kept vigil continuously on the sealed tomb from Good Friday evening until Easter morning, when an angel and woman replaced them in front of the opened tomb. Many curious visitors stopped to talk to the guards and ask questions about Easter. ▼



▲ Youths from **Peakland UMC** spent a Sunday afternoon in March painting at Park View Community Mission. Park View is a ministry of the Lynchburg District, hosting a food pantry three days a week and serving a hot meal every Wednesday followed by worship.

◀ At **Woodstock UMC**, three young girls gave leadership to raising funds for Heifer International. Adele Roulston, Jessica Tracy and Anna Jeffrey helped the church exceed its goals. Lenten offerings were passed along to the girls and then to Heifer International. The church's "Women of the Well" helped by having a yard sale that brought in more than \$2,000.



▲ About 30 youths from **Main Street UMC in Suffolk** participated in World Vision's 30-Hour Famine. They raised more than \$3,000 while fasting for 30 hours, praying and serving two meals to hungry people in the community. Over the years of participating in the Famine weekend, Main Street youths have raised more than \$12,000. One of the youth said that "while we are only (going hungry) for 30 hours, you realize kids in other countries do this every single day."



▲ Following the emphasis at charge conference on United Methodist connectionalism, **Hales Ford UMC** in the Lynchburg District and **Burnt Chimney UMC** in the Danville District chose to meet together on the second Sundays of March and April. The first joint service was held at Hales Ford (pictured). The pastor at Hales Ford is Kelvin Edwards, and Doug Sasser Jr. is the pastor at Burnt Chimney.

MAY

'Live Your Commitment' confirmation retreat

May 3-5: Westview on James

Westview on the James, the United Methodist camp in Goochland, is offering its "Live Your Commitment" retreat for confirmands, based on the "Credo" curriculum. The Rev. Drew Willson, from Salem UMC, Charlottesville District, will be speaker and worship leader. Call (804) 457-4210 or e-mail 1231westview@hughes.net.

United Methodist Day

May 4: Kings Dominion, Doswell

The Virginia Conference Family Fun Day at Kings Dominion is scheduled for Saturday, May 4. The cost is \$29.99 per person for United Methodists. Purchase your ticket online by going to <http://KingsDominion.com/VAUMC> and entering User Name: KDUMC04, Password: KDUMC04. Discount tickets are also valid April 5-14, other Saturdays in May (the 4, 11 and 18) and Memorial Day weekend (May 25-27).

'Clean Up For Kids' Day

May 17: UMFS

United Methodist Family Services (UMFS) will hold a clean-up day on Friday, May 17, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Volunteers will help clean up and beautify the agency's campus at 3900 W. Broad St., Richmond. Supplies will be provided. Volunteers should wear clothes they don't mind getting dirty and closed-toe shoes. (Shorts and tank tops are not permitted on campus.) Register by May 10 at <http://cleanupforkids.eventbrite.com>. For more information, contact Volunteer Coordinator Angie Williams at (804) 239-1039 or anwilliams@umfs.org.

Camp meeting

May 18: Camp Overlook

"Light the Fire Fest — A Modern Day Camp Meeting" will be held at Camp Overlook on Saturday, May 18, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., featuring praise bands from local churches and inspirational speakers. Churches and artisans will be hosting booths offering food, crafts, games and beverages. Proceeds will provide scholarship funds for Camp Overlook campers and local churches. Other activities will include an antique car rally and a hamburger cook-off. Contact the camp office or Sherri Miles at Sharon_miles@msn.com for more information

Bishop's Convocation on Prayer

May 18: Bon Air UMC, Richmond

Bishop Cho has called for a Convocation on Prayer for Saturday, May 18, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dr. Dwight Judy, profes-

sor emeritus of Spiritual Formation at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, will provide keynote address on "A Quiet Pentecost: Inviting the Spirit into Congregational Life." Cost of \$10 per person includes lunch. Visit the conference website, www.vaumc.org, to register or for more information. (see full story, pg. 10)

Sojourn to Sacredness

May 19-24: Camp Bethel, Roanoke

The theme of this year's Sojourn is "Feeding the Five Thousand... How About the Seven Billion?" which will examine issues of food as related to our faith that calls us to be good stewards of God's creation. The retreat will begin and end at Camp Bethel, with two days of backpacking in between. Cost is \$125. Participants must be between the ages of 18-35. For questions, contact the Rev. Pat Watkins at care-takersofcreation@me.com or Becky Tate at beckytate@vaumc.org.

JUNE

Voices of Youth tour

June 27-July 14: across the conference

The Voices of Youth "In Our Own Backyards" summer tour is scheduled for June 27-July 14. The choir will travel for 2½ weeks around the conference participating in local mission projects during the day and presenting worship experiences in host churches in the evenings. For more information, e-mail Jennifer Dixon at coordinator@voyva.org or go to <http://voyva.org>.

Mini-SPY

June 7-9: Fieldstone UMC, Christiansburg

Mini-SPY will offer rising first- to fifth-graders and their parents a chance to work with the Fieldstone for a Project SPY experience: mission opportunities, worship, crafts, games and fellowship. For more information visit <http://fieldstoneumc.org/#/missions>.

JULY

Camp Rainbow Connection

July 7-12 and Aug. 11-16: Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center

Camp Rainbow Connection is a week-long respite camp for individuals with intellectual disabilities. A ministry of the Commission on Disabilities of the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church, it has been in operation since 1985. For more information, contact the office of Inclusivity and Lay Leadership Excellence by telephone at 1-800-768-6040 or 804-521-1100, ext. 153, or by e-mail: cindyin-groff@vaumc.org.

(Continued on page 28: "Events")

Korean United Methodist Church of Greater Washington has given birth to multiple faith communities in recent years.



Korean UMC of Greater Washington gives birth to new churches

By Young Bong Kim

The Korean United Methodist Church of Greater Washington (KUMCGW) was established in 1951 as a prayer meeting for the mother country in the midst of war. The only church that opened the door to this small immigrant congregation was Foundry UMC in Washington D.C. It was not until 1977 that the Korean congregation decided to join a denomination. Until then the congregation identified itself as a non-denominational church.

When the church began to consider joining a denomination, the majority of the members had Presbyterian identity. However, the leaders of the church chose The United Methodist Church. They valued the ecumenical and inclusive spirit of The United Methodist Church. Joining the United Methodist denomination wasn't easy for the original members, but they managed to share a new perceived value of identifying themselves with a strong denomination.

In 1983, KUMCGW purchased a small building in McLean and moved from the Baltimore Conference to the Virginia Conference. Since then, the church of about 80 members has steadily grown and finally become the church with the largest worship attendance in the Virginia Conference.

With three building expansion projects and the faithful giving of the members, KUMCGW was able to celebrate a huge milestone recently, as we became debt free in 2012. The senior pastor that spearheaded the purchase and expansion of all three projects was no other than our current Bishop Young Jin Cho.

In 1995 KUMCGW planted a new Korean congregation as part of a celebration of its 40th anniversary. This congregation is now the Open Korean UMC in Newport News.

Before I succeeded Bishop Cho's position as senior pastor in 2005, the McLean campus had been overpopulated for years and so the congregation began to discern God's will for the church. On any given Sunday, 1,200 worshipers had to maneuver in and out of our McLean campus over five Sunday services, which didn't include for our Saturday evening service that accommodated another 80 worshipers. To help resolve this good problem, we formed a planning committee to look at all the possibilities of planting a second campus to help ease the congestion at the McLean campus.

After a year of praying and planning, we decided to send about 70 committed members along with the Rev. Hyunsik Kang (then an associate pastor) to start a satellite campus in Manassas.

Manassas St. Thomas UMC and the Rev. Tommy Herndon gave us the opportunity to lay the foundations to start this satellite campus.

After a few years of receiving their enormous support and radical hospitality, the congregation began to pray about moving closer to where more Korean Americans reside. In 2009 I met with the Rev. Alan Felumlee of Centreville UMC, and we started to dream together about reaching the Korean Americans in the Centreville area as partners in ministry.

History is repeating itself as the confluence of cultures comes together as we share facilities once again with an established church. Centreville UMC's modern church building has been a huge blessing for us, and their congregation's energy to reach the people in that community has been amazing. The average worship attendance now is around 180 (120 adults, 30 youths and 30 children). In 2012 KUMCGW has decided to make the Centreville campus an independent congregation before the year 2015. We anticipate the dream will come true sometime in the next year.

Another dream just became a reality when KUMCGW decided to help plant another congregation in Ashburn. Once again, Rev. Kang is starting a brand new congregation with a group of people he met with for over a year for Bible study. With the support of the Virginia Conference and the Korean National Plan, Ashburn Korean Church started in April of 2013. What better place to plant a new congregation than with the partnership of Crossroads UMC of Ashburn, because Crossroads, with its leaders the Rev. Dave Norman and the Rev. Jim Chandler, has been in the same track for many years. KUMCGW will help make this new congregation a reality by sending short-term and mid-term worshippers in addition to spiritual and monetary support.

We are so grateful for being given this vision of being "a church that gives birth to churches."

-The Rev. Dr. Young Bong Kim is senior pastor at Korean UMC of Greater Washington in McLean.



By Flor Norris

The Crossroads Latino congregation gathered for worship for the first time in October 2007.

The desire to have a worshipping community in Spanish came from the spiritual need of the Latinos in the Ashburn, Leesburg and Sterling areas.

In 2005, I started a Hispanic Call Group. This group met regularly once a week to pray, discern, listen and learn more about what God wanted from us and for this community.

The vision for Crossroads Latino UMC is to move into a more integrated, more relational congregation with our Crossroads community at large, embracing one another and working together as the Body of Christ.

We are a community that intentionally celebrates and extends God's unlimited welcome and unconditional love to people both inside and outside the walls of the church building.

Our desire is that everyone, whether they enter our doors or not, would discover the sacredness of their own stories, celebrate their spirituality, and fully enjoy an "everyday life with God."

Crossroads Latino gathers every Saturday evening at 6:30 p.m. We have a teaching time for children offered in English at 6 p.m., before our worship gathering. At 6:45, the children join their parents for the service.

The Crossroads leadership has been a key factor in our ability to serve our Hispanic community. Sandra and Danilo Cardona, Martha Cruz

Crossroads Latino UMC serves Hispanic community in northern Virginia

Hernández and Mario Hernández, Mónica Padilla and Elisa Barrios de Estrada form a strong group of leaders from different countries in Latin America. They have a strong faith and commitment to God and God's people.

To be able to better help our immigrant friends, we offer English as a Second Language (ESL). Terri Kennedy, our ESL director, has helped many of our Latino and non-Latino friends by offering scholarships to those who cannot afford tuition.

I would like to share a story of transformation: "My name is Franci Maldonado. I moved from Honduras to the U.S. nine years ago with my two children and husband, Wilmer. Sofia was 21 months old and Wilmer Jr. was 6 years old. I came to this country full of dreams, and I was sure that I was going to accomplish them from the moment I arrived. We lived with my sister in Sterling. At first I worked as a breakfast hostess at the Hampton Inn. After six months we were able to move to Ashburn Meadows Apartments. As a family we were very happy to have our own place again. I went to Dominion Trail Elementary School to register Wilmer Jr. I could not speak any English, so the process was hard. Once I was done with the registration, I asked the parent liaison of the school if she had information about places that offered ESL classes. She did not have detailed information, but she said that some churches offered ESL. Crossroads was the first one that I visited, and to my surprise I found three AMAZING ladies with golden hearts: Terri Kennedy, Karleen Hagan and Barbara Bennett.

"I started in level two and I attended school every night with my family. I felt so blessed to have a place to

learn that had child care included. During my time at ESL, I was promoted to guest services at the Hampton Inn and then I was able to get a job as a medical receptionist. Eventually, the company provided me a scholarship and I got my Medical Assistant certificate. It was not easy, but after several years at ESL, when I reached the highest level of the program and graduated, I promised myself that I would come back to the church as a volunteer to be an assistant or teach my own class.

"Six years ago I opened a licensed home daycare. Now I am pursuing my associates (degree) in Early Childhood Development at NOVA. Wilmer Jr. attends Broad Run High School and was recently inducted into the National Honor Society. Sofia started middle school and is a wonderful, loving and caring girl. Presently, I am teaching Level 1 at the Crossroads ESL program."



Through spiritual practices, serving our community, weekly worship gatherings, spiritual retreats, Bible studies, children's time and Imagine Guide Formation, we are reaching out to our Both/And Latino community in Northern Virginia. God is moving throughout our community and we feel blessed by so much radical grace and love we see around us. ☞

-Flor Norris is associate pastor at Crossroads UMC in Ashburn.



Pastor Julio Serrano and his family came to Virginia from Cuba.

Cuban pastor felt call from God to minister to Virginia's Latinos

By Larry Cochran

Resting in the hands of God." This is a phrase that Julio Serrano often shares as he ministers with the Latino community in southside Richmond and in northern Virginia. Serrano and his wife, Estrella, arrived in the United States from Cuba in November 2011. A year later, their three children, Lili, Angel and Ester were able to join them.

Serrano felt called by God to serve the Latino community in Virginia, which led to his move here. He had served as a pastor in the rapidly growing Cuban Methodist church for 14 years. Each appointment in Cuba bore fruit, as four house churches were planted along with five "children" churches. The method that works well in Cuba related to church growth includes the establishment of cell groups and house churches along with training leadership. The leadership meets weekly in a covenant group setting as they each seek to grow in their spiritual lives so they can be effective in their calling. All

of the church growth efforts in Cuba are sustained through a foundation of fervent prayer.

When Julio and Estrella arrived in Virginia, they began a new faith community at Belmont UMC in the Richmond District. This ministry currently supports three small groups along with a vibrant worship service on Sunday afternoons. The worship service is lively and full of praise music. The music is currently led by the entire Serrano family, as Julio plays the keyboard while his son, Angel, plays the drums and Estrella, Lili and Ester lead the singing. Six-year-old Ester can be seen in the worship services enthusiastically dancing to the music.

Worship often includes liturgical dance. Often, the children will present to the congregation songs they have learned in Sunday school.

The Serranos are proactive in their evangelism efforts as they regularly go out to trailer parks and Latino stores to share the message of Jesus Christ. Recently, Serrano convened an Evangelism Congress at the church which brought together leadership

from the Latino ministries at Trinity UMC in Amelia, Ramsey UMC and Floris UMC. The day-long event, led by an evangelist from Cuba, provided valuable insights to help with evangelistic efforts in the Latino community.

Every Friday at the Belmont Feeding Ministry, devotions are offered to the food pantry guests in English and Spanish. Serrano is able to share a message of hope to the Latino guests during this time. Julio and Estrella have led marriage retreats at Belmont, which have been effective in helping couples with the challenges of married life. Julio has also had the opportunity to train leadership from Trinity UMC in an eight-week course on Methodist doctrine, preaching and Bible study.

Recently, Serrano has begun preaching and teaching at Floris UMC in Herndon in addition to his work at Belmont. The worship services in Herndon are held every Saturday night, and Serrano can be seen traveling the I-95 corridor between Richmond and Herndon on a regular basis. His role at Floris includes being the regular preacher for their Saturday night service along with training the Latino leadership of the church. Jacqueline De Los Rios, director of Latino Ministries at Floris UMC, will continue to provide pastoral care and lead small groups during the week. If successful, this model of a traveling preacher with laity sustaining the ministry during the week may be an effective model for Latino ministries in the future.

Serrano's ministries at Belmont and Floris have been made possible through a grant from the conference office of Congregational Excellence. The vision of the grant would be that many people of the Latino communities in Richmond and northern Virginia would be transformed through a life-giving relationship with Jesus Christ. ☞

-The Rev. Larry Cochran serves Belmont UMC.

Ghanaian UMC has grown (and doubled) in a dozen years

By Emmanuel Nkrumah

About 10 years ago, a few middle-aged men and women from Ghana residing in the United States, who were born and baptized into Methodism, began a fellowship of Ghanaian Methodists in Northern Virginia. In 1998 this community applied to become affiliated with the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church and was accepted at Annual Conference that year as a mission congregation through the Arlington District, then under the superintendency of our current Bishop, Young Jin Cho.

I have been serving as pastor of Ghana Wesley United Methodist Mission Church since November 2009, and I am very excited about what God is doing here. The strengths of this community of faith are: vibrant worship,

strong lay leadership, a strong and very talented choir, small group Bible and prayer cells, weekly Bible study, prayer in various communities where members live and a prayer line ministry where intercessory prayers are done on telephone Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9-10 p.m.

The challenges for Ghana Wesley lie mainly in our generational differences, along with cross-cultural adaptation. The older generation brings much to the community by way of experience and rich tradition, but there is a resistance to changes that the youngest generation finds inspiring. The generation which was born in America sees some aspects of the traditional worship as boring. Leaders are working on how best to solve this problem.

Language is another issue. Most members understand English, but a good number do not. Again those who

do not are among the first generation of immigrants. Ghana has about 35 different languages, though most people understand the Akan language. Each Sunday the sermon must be in both English and Akan from the same pulpit and the same preacher. Leaders are hoping that in future, a separate English service would draw a bigger proportion of the Ghanaian population and people of other nationalities in the northern Virginia metropolis.

In spite of the above, we know that our strengths far outweigh our weaknesses. In July 2010, a satellite campus was started at St. Paul UMC in Woodbridge. Most Ghanaians and other Africans live in Alexandria, Woodbridge, Dumfries, Manassas and other cities south of Arlington, where the mission church is located. In 2009 the average Sunday attendance of Ghana Wesley at Calvary UMC in Arlington was 50. Presently the average is up to 80. In 2010 the satellite campus in Woodbridge had an average Sunday attendance of 45; presently it is 70.

The current vision is to merge these two congregations at St. Paul UMC in Woodbridge. This is to help gather the momentum that will propel us spiritually, numerically and financially to help prepare Ghana Wesley UMC to become a self-sustaining congregation in the next few years.

On Feb. 10, when we baptized 10 infants in a joint service at St. Paul, the attendance was 209! On Easter Sunday this year the attendance was 228, with 198 adults and 30 children! Minus the seven new attendees who stood up during the worship introduction, I believe those who have not attended church for a while are excited about the idea of merging both congregations to help prepare Ghana Wesley



for the future.

Visitors keep coming on most Sundays; some are invited by friends who are members, and a good number of our visitors become new members.

I have realized that, at Ghana Wesley, our key method for evangelism is personal invitation by members of the faith community. This is very exciting to me. Some have expressed joy at the love and warmth of fellowship they have experienced. Our Church Council secretary told me that her 8-year-old granddaughter, who celebrated her birthday here with her family, said: "Grandma! I love to come to your church. People were happy hugging and dancing and some shook my hand, including the pastor."

Our short-term goals are to connect effectively with our community, raise our children and youth to be passionate about Christ and The United Methodist Church, and get most people into small groups for effective discipleship. We look to the future with hope, not of our own, but that of the risen Christ who has brought us thus far. I know that the God who has begun a good work at Ghana Wesley will bring it to a successful conclusion (Phi; 1:6), and therefore I always make it my aim to provoke everyone to love and good works (Hebrew 10: 24). Thanks for your time in reading this article and please remember Ghana Wesley in your prayers. 🍀

-Emmanuel Nkrumah is pastor of Ghana Wesley UMC.

A "new faith community"...

- Did not exist before
- Ministry is consistent with the doctrine and polity of The United Methodist Church
- Is an entity that has a primary focus of reaching new people who are not in existing churches
- Knows why it exists and has a clear sense of mission/vision and who God is calling it to reach
- Is different from a parent congregation (geographical, language, ethnicity, and/or generational)
- Gathers for regular worship
- Receives new members
- Has intentional disciple-making, mission and financial stewardship systems
- Has the understood expectation of starting a new faith community in 10 years



Nativity from: <http://nativitycollection.wordpress.com/2012/11/29/corn-husk-and-fabric-nativity-from-guatemala/>



The choir from Ghana Wesley UMC sang during worship at 2011 Annual Conference.



A little love goes a long way at Worship and Praise UMC

By Tim Kirven

I am so grateful to write about the grace God has placed on this new church called Worship and Praise United Methodist Church. Only God could have taken a non-denominational church of about 150 members and transitioned it into becoming a part of the United Methodist family.

We started off as a church just looking for a place of worship, and we were given that great opportunity by Aldersgate UMC. But God had other plans in mind. After about five years of co-mingling and having two separate congregations in one building, we decided to make them one. On July 1, 2010, the two became Worship and Praise UMC. We allowed the Holy Spirit to take charge and we were in agreement that it was our duty to have a church best for ministry and the community and not for ourselves.

Change is never easy. But I learned that this mighty intense and historical move was not a change but a "transition," which means there will be psychological effects. As pastor of both churches, a predominantly white congregation which was steadily

declining and a predominantly black congregation which was growing tremendously, I had to seek God for divine direction. One of the hardest things was to understand that everybody would not be happy and that there would be losses of good people on both sides. I wanted to be sensitive to the people of Aldersgate, who opened their doors for us to have a place of worship but also were bold enough to know that God was going to do something bigger and greater than Aldersgate or Worship and Praise.

Many times I was the loveable pastor and other times I was the villain or the bad guy. But through it all we moved forward. Some stayed and some left, but where one left, God gave us three more. Since our historic transition to being the church in place for this wonderful Virginia Conference, God has truly confirmed our walk and direction.

We started by doing some major work to the building because of neglect and lack of funding that I know so many churches go through. Once we replaced the roof and remodeled 15 classrooms, we began a vision that God gave me years ago for a children's daycare and after-school

program. It has become a great vehicle for evangelism and winning souls for Christ. We have infants to age 12 in the program. We also have more than 15 small group ministries. Our church has grown steadily each month.

One of our greatest strengths is outreach. We feed one of the YMCA men's transitional houses once a month with a spaghetti dinner to give them hope, love and Jesus. We also play a major part in the innercity with families who are less fortunate than we are. We've set up "soup corners," where we go into neighborhoods quarterly and feed people and give away clothing, especially in the wintertime.

My heart has often been pointed toward youth. We have more than 40 kids in our ministry and it is still growing. We just started an outreach program called "A Place to Go." Most kids in the city and surrounding counties say they do not have any place to go that is safe. Our job at Worship and Praise is to bring them in through our youth department and give them a healthy environment to grow spiritually, psychologically and artistically.

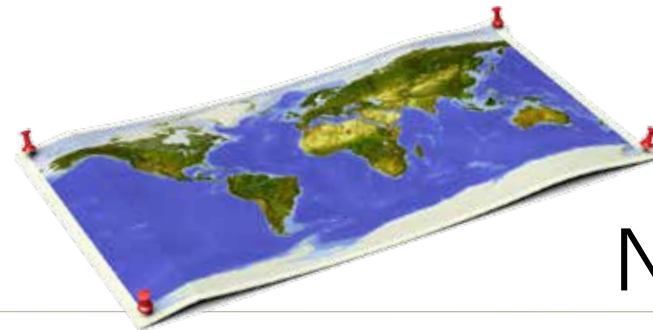
None of this could have ever been possible without the help of such a great annual conference.

If you ride past our church on East Laburnum Avenue you will see a 10-foot by 12-foot sign that says "WE LOVE YOU." It is not there just for show. At Worship and Praise UMC we understand the power of love. How can any church exist effectively without the love of Jesus? We started it off by loving the members of Aldersgate UMC, who gave us a place of worship. Now the whole community is experiencing it through Christ, and I pray that this love will always be our reputation and our mandate for now and for years to come.

-Tim Kirven is pastor of Worship and Praise UMC in Richmond.



Worship and Praise UMC worships in the former Aldersgate church on the east side of Richmond.



Religious news from around the NATION & WORLD

Two from Virginia Initiatives of Hope have whirlwind visit to Brazil

Dot Ivey and the Rev. David Vaughn, co-chairs of the Virginia Conference Initiatives of Hope Brazil Initiative, recently returned from a five-day visit with leaders of the Methodist Church of Brazil in Sao Paulo.

Ivey and Vaughn visited the Shade and Fresh Water project in Liberdade, where children who visited Virginia in 2011 are from. The two Virginians were welcomed by signs and bulletin boards proclaiming how important the project is to the children who participate, who otherwise would be living in the streets.

"It was a special treat to see the children who had come to Virginia," said Ivey, "many of whom have aged out of the program but returned to greet us."

They also visited the Shade and Fresh Water project in Planalto (on Palm Sunday); met with the national Shade and Fresh Water committee; met with the Rev. Joana D'Arc Meireles, executive secretary for Life and Mission of the Methodist Church in Brazil; toured the Methodist-related university in Sao Paulo; met with Bishops Stanlet Moraes da Silva and Carlos Peres; talked to Professor Luis Ramos about sharing worship and song leaders, particularly in the area of children's worship;

met with the president of the young adult confederation and the conference Communications staff.

The two also met with Teca and Gordon Great-house, our missionaries to Brazil, and had a meal with Claudia and Eduardo Maia, former General Board of Global Ministries missionaries to Mozambique who were supported by the Virginia Conference.

More than 300 people from the Virginia Conference have gone to Brazil as United Methodist Volunteers In Mission since the initiative was begun, working in 14 locations and five of the eight annual conferences there. While most teams have worked with the Shade and Fresh Water project children, five teams have worked on the Methodist medical boat on the Amazon River. Virginians have contributed more than \$270,000 to Shade and Fresh Water, plus more than \$200,000 in building and repairing churches, camps and educational facilities.

The tour helped the Brazil Initiative team "honestly evaluate the last seven years and look at what worked and what didn't," Ivey said. "Together we began planning for the next four years and looked as expanding the partnership in new regions and new directions while keep-

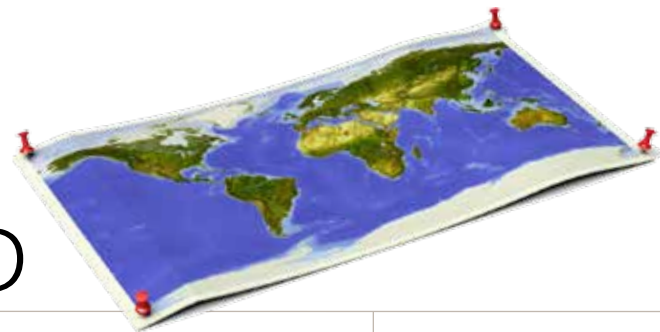
ing the focus on children at risk."

In July a team of young adults from Curitiba, Brazil, is scheduled to spend time in Virginia, participating in worship and mission activities at several locations.



Dot Ivey and the Rev. David Vaughn, co-chairs of the conference's Initiatives of Hope Brazil Initiative, were treated as VIPs during their recent trip to meet with leaders of the Methodist Church of Brazil, speaking during worship (top) and receiving gifts.

Religious news from around the NATION & WORLD



Africa University celebrates 20th birthday

By Kathy Gilbert

Pauline Shongo believes that one day Africa University will be the key to peace on the continent of Africa.

So do the many who gathered on the campus of the United Methodist-related university March 22-24 to celebrate the school's first 20 years.

The university, located in Zimbabwe and established by The United Methodist Church in 1992, draws students from all over Africa. The current enrollment of 2,000 represents students from 29 countries.

From the beginning, Africa University has been a place where dreams come true.

"I think because of the diversity and the opportunity to get to know each other as friends we will

someday bring peace to all of Africa because we have learned to love each other," said Shongo. A student from the Democratic Republic of Congo, she is majoring in economics and French.

Fanuel Tagwira, vice chancellor of Africa University, opened the weekend of celebration by reminding visitors, students, faculty and staff that "God has brought us this far to this beautiful valley of dreams."

In what seems a short 20 years, Africa University has grown from a school with classes in refurbished farm buildings to a world-changing university with more than 4,000 graduates throughout Africa and the world.

"We are creating new leadership for Africa. We seek to produce brave, bold, determined leaders to change the continent of Africa," Tagwira said.

The Rev. Roger Ireson, who was top executive of the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry when the 1988 United Methodist General Conference approved the university, and the Rev. John W.Z. Kurewa, the university's founding vice chancellor, received honorary Doctor of Letters for their contributions. The Ireson-Kurewa building, completed in 1996, houses the Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Sciences and Humanities.

The two men met as young seminary students

at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in the 1960s.

Ireson jokingly warned the students now at Africa University, "Be careful who you are in school with; you never know what might happen."

Both Kurewa and Ireson talked about the difficulties and the joys that led to the university celebrating its 20th anniversary.

Kurewa accepted his award by recalling two stories of pioneers – one a faculty member and the other a student.

As the school was looking for faculty members, Kurewa knew he wanted Athanasius Mphuru as the dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

His determination to hire Mphuru led him on a long and messy journey – he fell in a hole of mud up to his neck at one point – to Tanzania. He was unable to see the professor, and he had to return home without talking to him. However, he left him a long letter that resulted in Mphuru calling him two days later to accept the position.

"At times this is what it takes to dig for something precious," he said. Mphuru is one of the pioneer staff members at Africa University, where he still teaches today. Twenty-two members of the pioneer staff still at the university also were honored during the celebration.

Kurewa's other story was of Solomon Kupa, a young man who was accepted at



Children play a game near one of the original buildings used when the school opened in 1992.



Athanasius Mphuru is recognized as a "pioneer staff member" during the 20th anniversary celebration of Africa University.

the university but had no money for transportation. He just started walking to the university from his home in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. When he reached the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe, someone called the university to tell them the young man was there.

Kurewa said they were astounded and told the caller they would be there to get him. When they arrived at the border, the man said, "He is no longer here. When he heard he was accepted at Africa University, he left running."

Kupa eventually graduated with a bachelor of divinity degree in 1997 and is an evangelist/pastor today.

"Don't be scared; it is better to do something that has never been done before," Kurewa said. "If you believe this is what God wants you to do, go ahead and do it."

Ireson said of the many awards he has received, this Doctor of Letters means the most.

"It represents my friendships with many African people, church leaders, church members and is the fulfillment of many people's dreams.

"Africa University is God's work," Ireson said. "Africa University can fix the hearts of people of Africa and open up a new future."

-Kathy Gilbert is a reporter for United Methodist News Service

Religious news from around the NATION & WORLD

Church fires challenge United Methodists

By Barbara Dunlap-Berg

It's every congregation's worst nightmare. Fire strikes and the church building that members have loved for decades is suddenly gone or seriously damaged. Three churches in the Arkansas Conference and congregations in six other states understand that nightmare all too well as they recover from recent fires.

The first fire, ignited by lightning, destroyed the Hickory Plains UMC on May 30, 2012.

In September, an arsonist torched Living Waters at Centerton (Ark.) United Methodist Church, and the building was a total loss.

"The fire was caused by someone pouring gasoline all over the altar and igniting it," said the Rev. Blake Lasater. "After the first fire was extinguished that night, the arsonist came back with more gasoline and reignited the fire, causing it to travel underneath the flooring and out the back of the church where it wasn't spotted until the next morning."

"There really is no way to assess the dollar value of the building," Lasater said. He reminded other congregations, "Insurance only replaces. It does not rebuild. Make sure you have adequate funds to actually rebuild the church,

not just its value. Those two items may seem to be the same, but they are totally different."

God is still present, even in difficult times, Lasater said. "You've still got a mission and a ministry."

Congregations in Georgia, Indiana, Nebraska, South Carolina, Virginia and Illinois also experienced recent fires. On Jan. 23, fire engulfed the 135-year-old Adams Memorial United Methodist Church in Parkersley, on the Eastern Shore. The sanctuary appeared a total loss, but firefighters tried to save the adjacent fellowship hall. According to a local news report, reports suggested the fire was not the result of arson.

-Barbara Dunlap-Berg for United Methodist Communications

Fire completely destroyed the historic sanctuary of First UMC in Ada, Ohio, south of Toledo, in 2012.



Dr. Jim Holsinger (center) enjoys a moment with the Rev. John W. Z. Kurewa (right) and the Rev. Roger Ireson before they received honorary Doctor of Letters degrees. Holsinger is a former Virginia Conference Lay Leader. UMNS photos by Kathleen Barry.



Devotions from International Lesson Series

LIVING THE WORD



The Rev. Kendra Swager serves as director of Discipleship and Youth Ministries at Duncan Memorial UMC in Ashland. Her M.Div. is from Candler School of Theology at Emory University, and her undergraduate degree is from Berry College in Rome, Ga. She was ordained elder in 2000 in the North Georgia Conference and transferred into the Virginia Conference in 2006. Kendra lives in Hanover County with her husband, Dave, two children, a dog, a cat, two chickens and five ducks.

May 5, 2013
Faithfulness = Suffering?
Scripture: 1 Peter 1:3-12

Suffering is a prominent theme in 1st and 2nd Peter. I know many people who are suffering. Do you? I have relatives suffering the loss of memory and abilities as a result of dementia. We’ve met folks at Monroe Park in Richmond who are suffering from deep poverty and often homelessness. Some, but not all, of those friends also suffer from addictions or mental illness. Cancer, migraine headaches, arthritis, death of a loved one, divorce and job loss are all causing suffering in our local congregation... real suffering that leads to pain, despair and hopelessness.

The Bible is God’s living word that can refresh and bring hope to those who are suffering. God’s Spirit speaks and moves as we commit ourselves to the study and meditation of these texts. There is good news within its covers. There is Word within its words. All who suffer can find hope here.

And yet there is something different about the suffering of those to whom 1st and 2nd Peter were first addressed. Though they might have also known disease and grief, these letters address the suffering they met because of their faith. Believing in and professing faith in Christ meant persecution to them. This was a time in history when membership in the church meant discrimination, court trials, or even execution.

How different their world is from ours! They were persecuted in a way that we pray we never will be. But things are changing in our culture. Being Christian is no longer assumed of those we meet in our post-modern, multi-cultural world. As people of faith, we can choose to let this anger and scare us, or we can embrace this new opportunity. When Christianity was the majority religion and social pressure was toward church membership, faith was easily diluted into a thing that some people did in order to secure country club membership, a job in the “right” firm, or just general social acceptance. Now, fewer people care if you are a church member, in fact they may be cautious and suspicious of you if you are. But this is an opportunity for us as believers to claim that our faith is about discipleship and not about conformity to Western culture. Being Christian can once

again be counter-cultural. In fact, these changes and our radical obedience in the face of such changes might make us more like the first hearers of these texts. Our faithfulness may lead to increased suffering, and yet it will certainly also lead us to increased trust and hope in God.

May 12, 2013
Recipe for fruitful churches
Scripture: 2 Peter 1:3-14

“Vital Congregations... The 5 Talent Academy... The Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations”... These titles and phrases are familiar to pastors and laity across the Virginia Conference. These words reflect our denominational and conference awareness that many of our congregations seem to be stagnant, and we want to equip and inspire ourselves to a higher call than simply meeting our annual budget.

The language of verse 8 in the NRSV hits me like a quote from a modern-day church leadership seminar; *For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ* (2 Peter 1:8). “Ineffective” and “unfruitful” are the very labels we are trying to cast off in the contemporary life of the church. It is interesting that the author of 2 Peter tosses out these adjectives as a warning to the early church, too. Of course, the author doesn’t just hint at the negative state – he actively describes what actions will prevent the church from growing “ineffective” and “unfruitful.”

Faith supported by goodness, and then add knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, mutual affection, and love... this is the foundation for a living, healthy church. These are challenging and tough words; they are concepts which demand more from us than casual attendance and occasional service. Too often we have acquainted Christianity with mere polite “goodness.” Table manners, along with “please” and “thank you,” are nice, but they don’t make us Christian. Memorizing the books of the Bible is useful, but it falls far short of the “knowledge” the text inspires us to grasp.

This is the dawning of a new day! These are days of hope, not despair. Once we recognize that the boat is sinking, we can patch the leak

and bail the water. There are places the wind of the Spirit wants to take us, and many of us desperately want to follow.

This week, I invite you to spend one day on each of the words in boldface above. Begin your day in prayer and ask God to cultivate that trait in you that day. Be mindful of your words and actions, of your inactions or failures. At the end of the day, return in prayerful reflection to the trait you were attending to. Thank God for new insights you gained, ask for help as you seek to grow stronger in that practice. Seek forgiveness, pray for boldness. The next day, work with a new attribute. At the end of the week, reflect with others in your church family about what you have learned. Perhaps you might move forward spending a full week with each trait. Prayerfully consider how these traits are manifested both in your church family and in your work and home life.

For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May 19, 2013
Stewardship of Grace
Scripture: 1 Peter 4:1-11

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. 1 Peter 4:10 NRSV

Stewardship is a word that, for many church goers, conjures up the annual campaign to collect financial pledges. We emphasize that we are but stewards of the financial resources under our control. Our finances are a gift from God.

More recently our congregation has intentionally begun focusing on stewardship in a broader context. We are asking, not only, “Are we using money as God would have us to

do?” but also “Are we using our building and our space faithfully?” Are we caring for Creation as we go about our ministries? Stewardship includes conversation about eco-palms, fair trade coffee, diet and exercise, and our church ministries are reflecting this broadened understanding.

But today’s text pushes us even farther. We aren’t merely stewards of our money, of our bodies and of our church property. We are even stewards of God’s grace. What does this mean?

First, we recognize that even though we have received God’s grace, it doesn’t end with us. We are not the final destination. We are a conduit. God’s grace flows through us rather than resting within us.

Secondly, we have the image of a steward as a property manager. Just as the owner of the property might demand of a steward, “Have you managed my property as I would have wished?”, we have the image that God might ask us if we have managed or shared grace, which is really God’s not ours, as God would wish. Reflect on how you would answer God if God were to ask you such a question.

Finally, the text states plainly how God expects us to manage this gift. We are to serve one another with the gifts we have each received. This is no time to claim false humility. Oh, I’m no good at anything. I don’t have special talents. No! Whatever gifts God has given to us, we are expected to share with others. Bake a cake for a lonely neighbor, write a letter to a senator to speak up for justice, sing in the choir, go to nursing school. The list is as varied, as beautiful, and as endless as the long line of Christ-followers throughout history.

May 26, 2013
Righteousness at home
Scripture: 2 Peter 3:1-15a

But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. 2 Peter 3:13 NRSV

I have a weekly meeting at a church of another denomination. On the lectern recently was a flyer advertising a class they were offering. This three-week seminar would tell you everything you ever wanted to know about heaven! They would cover details about what our bodies will be like in heaven, the capital city, and who one will be married to (in the event you were married to more than one person in your earthly life.) The claims were, in my opinion, preposterous. How sad that so much time and energy has gone into trying to map the details of heaven.

Today’s text includes a phrase that fills me with peace and hope. It describes the “new heavens” and “new earth” as a place (or is it a time?) where righteousness is at home.

I’m a little bit of a homebody. I love to travel and I love to go places, but nothing compares to the feeling of coming home after being away. There is a sense of belonging, of rest and peace, of not needing to think or work but simply to be.

Righteousness sometimes can have a negative connotation to us. We associate righteousness with false-piety, but scripturally righteousness means right-living, it means being perfectly in tune with God. Buried like a treasure in the midst of this passage about judgment and the Second Coming is this beautiful image of righteousness being perfectly at home.

Rather than argue about the details of heaven or debate about eschatology, I am inspired to imagine what this world (or the next) will be

(Continued on page 29: “Living Word.”)

CLERGY & DIACONAL



Deaths



The Rev. Edgar U. Hoover, 97, of Roanoke, died March 28, 2013. A native of South Carolina, he graduated from Wake Forest and Southern Baptist

Theological Seminary and also was a Navy veteran. Hoover served churches in Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina and Virginia, including Greene Memorial UMC in Roanoke and Fairlington UMC in Alexandria.

The Rev. Carl Edward Manear, 93, died March 21, 2013, in Emporia. He was a West Virginia native and attended Fairmont State University. Manear served in the South Pacific during World War II and his was the first unit to go into Tokyo, Japan, in 1945. When he returned home he taught science, but was soon called into



the ministry. He served six years in the West Virginia Conference, then several churches in Virginia: Del Ray, Nokesville, Arlington, Sterling, Crooks

Memorial and Main Street and, finally, First UMC in Emporia, where he retired in 1984. He is survived by his wife of 71 years, Caroline Rose (Tobias) Manear.

Robert Chesley "Bob" VanGilder, 82, of Staunton, died March 29, 2013. He retired in 1989 from the Mineral County, West Virginia, Public School System, and graduated from Eastern Mennonite Seminary in 1992. He served as local pastor for churches in West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland and Ohio. Most recently he attended St. Paul's UMC in Staunton, where his funeral was held.

The Rev. Glenn G. Williams, 87, died March 30, 2013, in Ashland. A fourth generation Methodist pastor, Glenn served congregations on the Eastern Shore, Northern Virginia, Saluda, West Point, Smithfield, Hampton and Richmond. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Jean, and two children. His funeral service was held at Duncan Memorial UMC in Ashland.

Elizabeth Marie Banister, of Machipongo, died March 31, 2013. She was the mother-in-law of the **Rev. Reason A. Chandler**, pastor of Fairview UMC, Lynchburg District.

Robert L. Blagg, 90, died Feb. 8, 2013. He was the father of **Rev. Donald L. Blagg**, pastor of Oak Hall Charge, Eastern Shore District.

Martha Ernestine Huff Corley died Feb. 6, 2013. She was a member of Chester UMC and the mother of the **Rev. Cynthia A. Corley**, retired United Methodist pastor.

("Living Word," continued from page 27)

when righteousness is at home. I am inspired to live in such a way as to place a welcome mat and open door for righteousness to enter here and now. Picture it... righteousness... at home.

Let it be! ☞

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("Events," continued from page 15)

JULY

Camp Loud and Clear

July 12-14: Appomattox County
Camp Loud and Clear will be held at Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center for the third year. The camp is designed to meet the needs of children who are deaf and hard of hearing regardless of their degree of hearing loss or their chosen communication mode. For more information, contact Dr. Lissa Power-deFur at powerdefurea@longwood.edu or (434) 395-2972 or Jennifer Kingsley at jkingsley@hotmail.com or (434) 391-3679. The camp flyer and application can be found on the Virginia Conference website at: www.vaumc.org/loudandclear.

'Helping Hands'

July 18-19: Woodlake UMC
July 29-30: Springfield UMC
July 29-30: Fairview UMC, Danville
"Helping Hands" is an annual two-day mission experience for rising 4th-6th graders, parents and adult leaders. Check the "Children's Ministry" web page at www.vaumc.org/Children for more information.

'Launch'

July 21-23: Shenandoah University, Winchester
The Spiritual Life office at Shenandoah University and the Virginia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry invite high school students to an outdoors adventure in the Appalachian Mountains while exploring a call to ministry. For more information, contact Beth Downs at bethdowns@vaumc.org, (804) 521-1127 or 1-800-768-6040 x127.

LEAD

July 26-Aug. 4: Roanoke
LEAD is a leadership training event offered by the conference Council for Youth Ministry. District and local church youth councils are encouraged to select as many as 3-5 youths who are willing to commit to this 10-day intensive experience.

AUGUST

All God's Children camp

Aug. 4-9: Camp Highroad
Aug. 4-9: Occohannock on the Bay
Aug. 11-16: Westview on the James
The All God's Children camps provide a week of sanctuary for children age 7-12 with a mother or father who is incarcerated. For more information, contact director Casey Torrence at (804) 521-1138 or 1-800-768-6040, ext. 138; or caseytorrence@vaumc.org.

FROM THE BISHOP



Our Proud History

It was the fall of 1951. Thirty-two Korean-Americans living in the Washington, D.C. area gathered at Foundry UMC. After having a worship service, they met and decided to start a Korean Methodist Church. It was the beginning of Korean UMC of Greater Washington which I served from 1983 to 2005 until I was appointed Arlington District Superintendent.

There is an interesting story in the beginning of this church. To pray for their home country in war the founding pastor and a key layperson agreed to start a Korean church. They visited a Presbyterian church first because both of them were Presbyterians. But the Presbyterian church minister did not support their plan and told them to join his church instead of starting a new church. They were deeply disappointed.

Then, they heard good news. The Rev. Frederick Brown Harris, then pastor of Foundry UMC, heard that Koreans had been looking for a place to worship. He opened his church and

welcomed Koreans. Rev. Harris had known Dr. Syngman Rhee who used to attend his church while he stayed in Washington, D.C. for the independence movement for Korea during 36 years of Japanese colonization. Later, Dr. Rhee was elected the first president of the Republic of Korea.

The United Methodist Church opened the door for Korean-Americans and supported their mission and ministries from the beginning of the 20th century. Most of the oldest Korean churches in the large cities (Honolulu, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Oakland, Chicago, New York and Washington, D.C.) are all United Methodist churches. Our denomination opened the door early for ethnic people and supported their mission. This is our proud history.

The Virginia Conference started a Vietnamese-American mission church and also Latino-Hispanic ministries at some churches. We have a Ghanaian mission congregation, and some of our churches have diverse members from African countries. In some areas – especially in northern Virginia – the population is getting more diverse, and their missional needs are becoming urgent. Starting new ethnic churches is no longer an option, but a must for our future mission.

Our mission field has been rapidly changing. The mission of reaching out to diverse populations brings us not only challenges but also opportunities. It is not easy to overcome cultural and language differences. Sometimes differences may give us challenges, but being different is God’s design. God created all people as unique beings. Being different is not wrong. Difference means just being different. And we can learn and grow from each other’s differences.

It was my great joy to serve the Arlington District which is the most diverse district in the Virginia Annual Conference. I experienced many differences, but at the same time I found a great potential for God’s mission.

Starting ethnic churches will be one of the great ways to expand our mission. Through these ethnic churches we can reach out to the people who have different cultures and languages.

But these ethnic churches can also open our eyes to better ways. We can learn the joy of praise and worship service from our ethnic brothers and sisters. We also learn the depth of spiritual life and strong commitment to the Lord from other ethnic churches. And ethnic churches can also learn democratic leadership and faithfulness in supporting missions from many Anglo churches.

I still remember the 2011 Arlington District Conference. After a brief business meeting, we had a choir festival on that day. Six churches (Anglo, African-American, Korean, Vietnamese, Ghanaian and Hispanic-Latino churches) took part in this choir festival, and all choir members sang Handel’s “Halleluia Chorus” together at the end. It was really a joyful celebration of our diversity. I felt gratitude to God for creating us differently and for the power of oneness in Christ. It was truly a foretaste of the kingdom of God. Having ethnic churches on our district was truly a blessing.

Starting ethnic churches will also give us many challenges. Our limited financial resources will sometimes delay or prevent us from carrying our vision of starting new ethnic faith communities. But we cannot give up these mission opportunities. We need to be more creative and prayerful in moving in this direction. Remember, “Where there is a will, there is a way.” If I change a couple of words, “Where there is God’s call, there is a way.” And I would like to say that I am one of the fruits of this mission. I am what I am because of the openness of our proud history.

Young A. Cho

ONE LAST WORD



Tweets heard ‘round the conference

- Patti Money @pattimoney**
A wise clergy colleague told me that it’s impossible to be on vacation while in the parsonage. He was right. #furtheralnumber1hereicome
- Morgan Guyton @MAGuyton**
Can I be Jesus’ bride even though I’m a dude? #FutureGospel
- Rachel Held Evans @rachelheldevans** New Post: “Why I Don’t Witness to People on Airplanes”
- Alan Combs @thricemantis11@rachelheldevans** You should do a complimentary piece to this about why pastors try not to reveal their professions on airplanes.
- Steve Jennings @SteveJennings7**
We in the church have to become more righteous before we can change our world.
- Rev. Sarah Wastella @SarahWastella** Full of Grace: Yesterday I did something I almost never do: I ate practically an entire loaf of bread.
- Jon Woodburn @JonWoodburn**
NASA Launch from WallopsFF scheduled on 4/17@1700. I’m watching from my porch
- Lindsey Baynham @LMBaynham**
the heat is still on in the church and its like 80 outside....I’m meltingggggg.



A homeless man who gave him name as “D” tells Pastor Keary Kincannon he has been homeless for 25 years and living in this spot in the woods along Route 1 for the last four years.

Rising Hope UMC participates in ‘100,000 Homes’ effort

Rising Hope UMC in Alexandria is participating in a nationwide effort called “100,000 Homes,” where its members are conducting interviews of the homeless population in the area around the church. Fairfax County signed up for the campaign, run by the New York-based group Community Solutions. The campaign is targeting the chronically homeless, with the national goal of providing 100,000 homes for them by July 2014.

The county Office to End and Prevent Homelessness and other agencies are participating, with volunteers from non-profits and churches like Rising Hope UMC providing the legwork. Rising Hope members have been interviewing the homeless along Route 1 to prioritize the most vulnerable for housing needs.

Rising Hope UMC has been providing a strong ministry to the homeless community along the Route 1 corridor since it opened.

To learn more, visit <http://100khomes.org>.



Rising Hope members visit a homeless camp in the woods off Route 1 to interview the persons living there.

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