

IX. REPORTS OF CONFERENCE BOARDS AND AGENCIES

[Editor's Note: The following reports are reprinted from the *2018 Book of Reports*. To find actions taken or changes made in the reports, refer to Section IV. DAILY PROCEEDINGS of this *Journal*. The report from the Council on Finance and Administration will be found in Section VIII. FINANCIAL REPORTS of this *Journal*.]

COMMITTEE ON RULES

The Rules Committee of the Virginia Annual Conference met twice this past year and have corresponded also via e-mail. We have reviewed the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and policies and the following are our recommendations.

The first recommendation (1) is to give further clarification on lay membership to the Annual Conference from our local congregations. The Rules Committee believes that our rules are in accordance with the *2016 Book of Discipline*. We have recommended including the appropriate paragraph number from the *2016 Book of Discipline* (“Paragraph 32, *2016 Book of Discipline*”) in section I.B.3.a of our Standing Rules.

The second recommendation (2) will set limits on when a motion can be considered that has financial implications at the Annual Conference. This recommendation with the suspension of our rules is being requested to take effect this Annual Conference.

The third recommendation (3) is to gain clarity around making motions during the annual conference.

The fourth set of recommendations (4-8) will correct the nomination process for clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference to adhere to our current *Book of Discipline*. Years past, we had approved not having nominations from the floor by moving them to the Laity/Clergy Sessions of the Annual Conference, but with the most recent constitutional amendments passed in 2016, it is required to have an opportunity to receive nominations from the floor prior to voting. This recommendation with the suspension of our rules is being requested to take effect this Annual Conference.

The fifth recommendation (9-24) reflect changes made by the formerly known Communications, Virginia United Methodist, Inc. to their new structure.

The sixth recommendation (25) reflects the changes necessary for the dissolution of *The Advocate* at the end of 2019.

The seventh recommendation (26) comes as we spent time at our first meeting reflecting on the proceedings of the 2018 Annual Conference. Upon making recommendations to the Annual Conference Planning Committee, we felt it was necessary also to better educate our Rules Committee on parliamentary procedure so that we may more quickly inform and guide the proceedings of Annual Conference.

And finally, our last recommendation (27) is simply a desire to more efficiently help the Annual Conference Secretary do the work to which he/she is charged to do.

– Joshua S. King, Chair

RECOMMENDATIONS

Changes Recommended by Rules Committee

1. Paragraph I.B.3.a – insert at the end of paragraph, “(¶32, *2016 Book of Discipline*)”
2. Paragraph II.D.2 – Insert the following after “Council on Finance and Administration (CFA),”: “must be submitted by the conclusion of the afternoon session preceding the concluding day of annual conference. Such proposals or amendments which may require expenditure of funds” and continue the sentence as written “...shall be referred...”.
3. Paragraph II.D – Insert a new paragraph II.D.4 “Proposals from the Floor. A motion is a formal proposal. Anytime the Annual Conference is in session and there is no business on the floor of the Annual Conference, a proposal from the floor may be made. This proposal will need to be placed in writing and in conjunction with the rules as stated in VII.J.”
4. Paragraph III.C.2.a – after 2 ½”, strike “unless nominated at Clergy Session” and insert “unless nominated from the floor of the Annual Conference”
5. Paragraph III.C.2.c – last sentence strike “nomination forms submitted at Clergy Session of the Annual Conference” and insert “nominations made from the floor of the Annual Conference”
6. Paragraph III.D.4 – after 2 1/2” strike “unless nominated at Laity Session” and insert “unless nominated from the floor of the Annual Conference”
7. Paragraph III.E.2 – last sentence strike “nomination forms submitted at Laity Session of the Annual Conference” and insert “nominations made from the floor of the Annual Conference”
8. Paragraph III.E – Renumber entire paragraph to become new III.D.6 and all subsequent paragraphs under III.E be renumbered appropriately
9. Paragraph I.B.3.u - strike “Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc.” and insert, “the Virginia Conference Board of Communications”
10. Paragraph I.B.5.c.v - strike “Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc.” and insert, “the Virginia Conference Board of Communications”

11. Paragraph II.D.1 – strike “Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc.” and insert, “the Virginia Conference Board of Communications”
12. Paragraph III.D.2 - strike “Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc.” and insert, “the Virginia Conference Board of Communications”
13. In the Charter for the Common Table for Church Vitality section VIII.C - strike “Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc.” and insert, “the Virginia Conference Board of Communications”
14. Paragraph V.B.3 – On first paragraph and first line, strike, “Virginia United Methodist, Inc.” and insert, “The Virginia Conference Board of.”
15. Paragraph V.B.3.a – On the first paragraph and first line, strike, “United Methodist Communications, Inc.” and insert, “Conference Board of Communications”
16. Paragraph V.B.3.b – On the first paragraph and first sentence, strike, “United Methodist Communications, Inc.” and insert, “Conference Board of Communications”
17. Paragraph V.B.3.b – On the first paragraph and third sentence strike, “director of Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc., the Conference Information Systems Director, and any member of United Methodist Communications, the General Board of Publications,” and insert, “Director of Communications for the Virginia Conference, the Conference Manager of Technology, and any member of United Methodist Communications, the United Methodist Publishing House,”
18. Paragraph V.B.3.c.i – On the first paragraph and first sentence Strike, “corporation,” and insert, “board,”
19. Paragraph V.B.3.c.i – On the first paragraph and first sentence, capitalize “director” to read “Director”
20. Paragraph V.B.3.c.i – On the first paragraph and first sentence strike, “three additional members” and insert, “one additional member”
21. Paragraph V.B.3.c – On the first paragraph, second sentence strike “three non-officer members” and insert “non-officer member”
22. Paragraph V.B.3.c.i – On the first paragraph, second sentence strike, “their successors are elected and qualify.” and insert, “the successor is elected and qualified.”
23. Paragraph V.B.3.c.i – On the first paragraph, seventh sentence strike “corporation” and insert “board”
24. Paragraph V.B.3.d.i – On the first paragraph, first sentence strike “corporation” and insert “board”.
25. Paragraph II.D.1 – strike “in *The Virginia Advocate* or other media” and strike in same paragraph “*Advocate* editor” and insert “Virginia Conference Director of Communications”
26. Paragraph V.B.18 – insert at the end of paragraph “All members of the Rules Committee are encouraged to take a basic parliamentary procedure course within 6 months of their election. However, those who wish to be parliamentarians of the Annual Conference must take a more advanced course at the approval of the Rules Committee Chair. The cost of these courses will be reimbursed upon the passing of the class.”
27. Paragraph VII.J. – Insert after “shall be presented in writing.” the following, “If an approved motion is requested to be sent to entities, the maker of the motion shall provide names and addresses to the Secretary of the Virginia Annual Conference.”

CABINET

Under Bishop Sharma Lewis’ wise leadership, the Cabinet has sought to lead non-anxiously in this year marked by the challenges of the called General Conference and her own medical concerns. We are blessed to serve with Interim Bishop Peter Weaver during Bishop Lewis’ medical leave. The District Superintendents’ ministry as chief missional strategists is strengthened by our worshipping together each day we meet and through the community forged in our cluster covenant groups. Appointment-making, a core task of the bishop and cabinet, is wrapped in prayer, shaped by a careful consultative process, and focused on fruitfulness. Across our conference each district is engaging in contextual ministry and mission.

In the **Alexandria District**, we continue to focus on making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, even as we wrestle with the implications of the Special Session of the General Conference. We are nurturing an expanding number of vital new faith communities, strengthening existing churches through initiatives like Next Level Innovations, Shift Plus, and more. We are seeing a significant increase in the use of live-streaming and other online techniques to reach new people. We look forward to launching a Neighborhood Seminary this fall to equip laypeople better with theological education, missional adeptness, and spiritual direction, focused on discerning how God is leading us out of our church buildings to bless our neighbors where they are.

The **Arlington District** vision, to come alongside local churches for the sake of vitality, was lived out this year with tailored approaches for all church sizes: Three larger churches completed their Next Level Innovations weekends, approving innovations for greater vitality by more than a 90% vote. Eight mid-size churches are seeking revitalization by participating in a year long process

called “Shift Plus.” Eleven smaller churches engaged with “Small Church Checkup” led by Kay Kotan. The District thanks outgoing DS Cathy Abbott for all her hard work over the last six years in being an extremely effective missional strategist for the District and looks forward to working with incoming DS Sarah Calvert.

The **Charlottesville District** supported the Central VA Mission HUB ministry at our District Conference by assembling 150 Cleaning Kits and 100 Hygiene Kits. Children, youth and adults all participated. The District Youth had a Mission Blast Saturday where they participated in several mission projects throughout Charlottesville and finished with packaging over 10,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger. Our churches continue to be involved with justice, immigration, and racism issues. We combined our Common Table and District Missions Committees to now become District Partners in Ministry and Mission. This new team sponsored a bowling event where over 100 people bowled to raise money for the C’ville Apt. Project. A vision where individuals with intellectual disabilities will be able to live in community in their own apartments.

Danville District laity and clergy are preparing to receive a new District Superintendent and are being asked to embrace a new way in which that role will be filled. The shared arrangement with the Farmville District will require a spirit of trust and patience; yet, it has the potential to create new relationships and partnerships in our missional journey.

The **Eastern Shore District** continues to offer ministry to new populations. The Una Familia ministry has grown from after-school tutoring at four different church sites to developing a partnership with Just Neighbors to offer immigration clinics on the Shore. Craddockville UMC is working on a new Restoration Ministries to connect with persons returning from incarceration, substance abuse rehabilitation, and the military.

The **Elizabeth River District** is working hard to equip the laity and clergy to reach new people by getting out into the community. We have provided excellent training events through our clergy meeting and district-wide training for laity and clergy. This year we added Next Level Innovations and Shift Training for local churches.

The **Farmville District** will live out our vision of “being passionate about **leading, listening** and **loving** all people to build up the Kingdom,” by having our first District Convocation on Race Reconciliation led by the Rev. Dr. Ted Smith on April 14. This past year we combined our District and Charge Conferences on one day. The attendance of 305 was highest of any attendance in recent years. As we look “outside the box” of doing ministry, we look for to a “new” structure of Danville and Farmville Districts beings served by the Rev. Denise Bates and two part-time assistants to the DS.

The **Harrisonburg District** has completed the Mission Central building which is a 4,200 square feet to distribute clothing, diapers to children, and medical equipment to the community, but most importantly, reflects being the hands and feet of Jesus and assisting those in need. In addition, clergy and laity, as partners in ministry are striving to be strategic and visioning in their churches and communities. A challenge was made to returning to our Wesleyan roots and in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and creating a vision to accomplish this task. Furthermore, we seek to become a more diverse church that reflect the communities where we are. We seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to share God’s love in the name of Jesus Christ.

The **James River District** is intentionally focusing on spiritual formation and asset-based community development (ABCD) for our pastors and leaders. We have leveraged our district gatherings as well as developing smaller groups to help our clergy deepen their own spirituality while both teaching and resourcing them to help their churches live out of a place of listening to and following God’s Spirit. Furthermore, we have developed training, coaching, and grants to allow churches to understand and implement ABCD in their context with the goal of moving from ineffective ministry “to” our neighbors to transformative ministry “with” those God has placed in our community.

The **Lynchburg District** continues to live into our new structure of making disciples of Jesus Christ by focusing on revitalization, leadership development, ministry with young people, emerging ministries, reconciliation and conflict transformation, and ministry with the poor. We are blessed by the presence of Rev. Leigh Anne Taylor, Revitalization Coordinator, who sees her work throughout the district as cooperating with the Spirit wherever new life is emerging in the lives of congregations, clergy, laity, and communities. Ten clergy participated in a year-long coaching cohort led by Rev. Jim Chandler designed to equip them for transformational leadership.

The **Rappahannock River District** as a whole as well as our individual congregations continue to envision, create, and sustain many vibrant ministries. Examples include our Crossroads Mission Center, which offers “Fun Day at the Crossroads” worship, recreation, and a fellowship meal. A second example is our Heartwood Center, which provides backpack food ministries in King George, Stafford, Caroline, Spotsylvania, and Fauquier county public schools. The Heartwood Center also offers teen summer day camps.

This has been a great year for the **Richmond District**! We have begun new Hispanic ministries through soccer that are reaching many new people in our communities. We have five churches enrolled in our new Next Level Innovations project, and our growing “Safe Zone” for African American teens in our communities continues to offer a safe place for our youth

On the **Roanoke District**, the *ReGenerations: Why Connecting Generations Matter* workshop led by author Jessica Stallings addressed issues pertinent to all size churches. Shane Claiborne and Mike Martin co-authors of *Beating Guns: Hope for People Who Are Weary of Violence* offered a workshop on a faithful response to America's gun violence crisis. The Community Outreach Program rebranded as *Kids Soar* to better reflect the focus on helping children of inner city Roanoke succeed through literacy. The district is partnering with the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico along with its community outreach program ReHace (Rebuilding Communities with Hope) to install solar panels on homes on the island of Vieques following the devastation of Hurricane Maria.

Over the past Conference year, the **Staunton District** has kept focus on how we "influence others to serve" Christ in our communities. Our development of "Fresh Expressions" faith-communities continues in Waynesboro at the new Wayne Hills Ministry Center, building relationships with more than 100 lower-income families who are for the most part unchurched. In rural Swoope, new affinity-group *BlueGrass Spirit* is engaging those we'd never met before, while in the paper-mill town of Covington, one of our churches has birthed a ministry with families of children with autism, and is planning a worship experience tailored to the needs of this group. Looking beyond our boundaries, we were blessed to launch two District mission teams this Conference year, one a Disaster Relief crew that tackled Hurricane Matthew-ravaged homes near Swan Quarter NC, and an ERT that took part in on-going flood-recovery efforts on the Danville District. At home and abroad, we are connecting with our neighbors; to God be the glory!

In the past year the **Winchester District** had as its focused theme, "*Lifelong Learning, Influencing, and Serving as Christ's Disciples.*" We have explored how we can be the most effective in proactively integrating the Virginia Annual Conference's vision statement throughout the ministries and missions of the District as a clergy and laity in partnership. We were particularly blessed by The Rev. Christian Washington's prophetic presentation at our January district-wide event. In addition to many local church mission and service efforts in the community, our District has committed to at least six trips to Danville this year, and we sent our 13th team to Haiti. We also report, with eternal joy, that there were 163 Professions of Faith on the Winchester District in 2018 – may God be praised!

In 2018, the **York River District** formed a District Prayer Team to pray for individuals and congregations in the District to be one with the Triune God and with one another. The District Consultation Team worked with Path 1 consultant to identify ways to strengthen the churches and to reach out to new people in new places. Through the faithful ministry of clergy and laity, we welcomed over 140 new members by profession of faith and contributed over 2.6 million dollars for the ministry and mission of The United Methodist Church.

The Conference Lay Leader, the Conference Treasurer, the Director of Connectional Ministries, the Director of the Center for Clergy Excellence, and the Director of the Center for Congregational Excellence serve as members of the **Extended Cabinet** to inform and provide a connection between the program and missional ministries of the annual conference and the work of the Cabinet.

In March we bid farewell to the Rev. Meredith McNabb and welcomed the Rev. Lindsey Baynham as the Director of the Center for Clergy Excellence. We also give thanks for the Rev. Marc Brown's 11 year tenure as the Director of Connectional Ministries and wish him well in retirement. We look forward to continuing to work with the Rev. Dr Ted Smith as he transitions to this position.

With thanksgiving for their committed leadership, we will also say "farewell" to colleagues the Rev. Bob Parks and the Rev. Dr. Janine Howard. We will warmly welcome the Rev. Charles Bates, the Rev. Denise Bates, and the Rev. Dr. Sarah Calvert, to the cabinet table.

We are exceedingly grateful to the Rev. Tom Joyce, Assistant to the Bishop, and Mrs. Terri Biggins, the bishops' administrative assistant for their dedicated support.

We are blessed that the Cabinet Covenant shapes our life and leadership: *We the Cabinet of the Virginia Conference, covenant with each other to be a Holy Table where Christ is our servant example and Lord; where we joyfully hold each other in disciplines of prayer, study, worship, service and physical self-care; where the truth is told and honored; where we support one another in the effort to maintain confidentiality, through words/action of grace and in the spirit of love; where trust is the rule, brokenness is received with mercy, pain is healed with grace and forgiveness is sought, given and accepted; where the health of the whole Body of Christ is desired over that of any one part; where we seek perfection in love for God and for each other.*

– Kathleen Overby Webster, Dean

SITE SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Site Selection Committee is charged with identifying the location for the Virginia Annual Conference to meet and to recommend a location five (5) years in advance. Beginning this year (2019) and beyond, the Annual Conference will convene on Thursday and conclude on Saturday as set by Bishop Sharma D. Lewis. By previous Annual Conference action, the following locations have been approved for the site of the Annual Conference:

Roanoke	June 18-20, 2020
Hampton	June 17-19, 2021
Hampton	June 16-18, 2022
Roanoke	June 15-17, 2023

The Site Selection Committee recommends for 2024, Annual Conference be held in:

Roanoke	June 20-22, 2024
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The Committee, along with the Chair of the Common Table and with the assistance of the Conference meeting planner, continues to review other locations for holding Annual Conference across the Commonwealth. For your reference, we have the following requirements in evaluating potential Annual Conference sites:

- Venue to accommodate 3,500 people
- 1,500 hotel rooms in the area
- Parking for 2,500 cars
- Meeting space for the Clergy Session of 1,500 people
- Meeting space for the Laity Session of 1,500 people
- Additional meeting spaces adjacent to the Conference floor
- Two (2) banquet areas to accommodate 500 people each
- Additional banquet locations accessible to Conference
- Restaurants to accommodate 3,500 patrons within 1½ - 2 hour timeframe
- 10,000 sq. ft. of exhibit space

RECOMMENDATION:

The Site Selection Committee recommends that the 2024 Virginia Annual Conference be held at the Berglund Center in Roanoke June 20-22.

– Neal E. Wise, Chair

EQUITABLE COMPENSATION COMMISSION

The Equitable Compensation Commission continues to provide financial aid to those churches requiring supplementation to strengthen their ministries in the communities in which they are located and to provide minimum salary or salary supplementation for the pastors. Equitable Compensation support in the amount of \$225,094 was provided to 30 charges in 2018. A schedule of salary supplementation appropriations for 2018 has been provided to the conference secretary for publication in the Journal.

There were 6 charges receiving salary support in 2017 that did not require salary support in 2018. These are Bethel (Winchester), Boynton (Farmville), Fletcher's Chapel (Rappahannock River), Greenwood Montague Avenue (Winchester), Hites Chapel (Winchester) and Woods (James River). These charges and their superintendents are commended for their success in providing a ministry in the communities they serve that has enabled them to grow spiritually in their stewardship.

District Superintendents and charges setting salaries for 2020 that may require supplementation are advised that the "floor" must come from sources other than the Commission on Equitable Compensation.

The Conference Average Compensation (CAC) for 2020 is \$64,590, which is an increase of 1% percent from 2019. The Commission considered Minimum Compensation and the Floor Schedule for 2020 and recommends the schedules remain the same as 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	2020 Proposed	2019 Approved
1. The Minimum Compensation Schedule:		
a. Full Connection Pastors	\$42,000	\$42,000
b. Provisional and Associate Members	\$38,500	\$38,500
c. Local Pastors	\$36,000	\$36,000
3. The Floor Schedule:		
a. Full Connection Pastors	\$28,000	\$28,000
b. Provisional and Associate Members	\$25,600	\$25,600
c. Local Pastors	\$24,000	\$24,000

EQUITABLE COMPENSATION FINANCIAL REPORT

	Year Ending 2016	Year Ending 2017	Year Ending 2018
Apportioned	500,000	350,000	350,000
Uncollected Apportionment	(61,170)	(36,432)	(41,327)
Apportionment Income	438,830	313,568	308,673
<i>Percent Collected</i>	<i>87.77%</i>	<i>89.59%</i>	<i>88.19%</i>
Grants	193,646	175,506	225,094
Sustenance fund grant		6,513	
Meeting Expense & Other	1,033	373	63
Total Expenses	194,679	182,391	225,157
Receipts Over (Under) Expenses	244,151	131,176	83,516

- Joseph T. Carson III, Chair

VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST PENSIONS, INC.

■ Report 1: Role & Responsibilities of Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc.

The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church directs each annual conference to establish a conference board of pension, auxiliary to Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath), to have charge of the interests and work of providing for and contributing to the support, relief, assistance, and pensioning of clergy and their families, other church workers, and lay employees of the United Methodist Church, its institutions, organizations, and agencies within each annual conference except as otherwise provided for by Wespath.

On June 22, 1965, the Virginia Annual Conference (VAUMC) established and incorporated the Virginia Methodist Pensions, Incorporation, (subsequently renamed on February 2, 1971 to Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc., or “VUMPI,”) as its conference board of pension.

VUMPI, in conjunction with Wespath, develops and administers the numerous employee pension and benefit plans sponsored by the Virginia Conference. Some plans are employer-paid, while others are voluntary and 100 percent participant-paid:

<p><u>VUMPI Plans</u> Health Prescription Dental Supplemental Life Voluntary Life Long Term Care Healthcare Flexible Spending Account Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account</p>
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<p><u>Wespath Plans</u> Ministers Reserve Pension Fund (Pre-82) Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) Clergy Retirement Security Program – Defined Benefit (CRSP-DB) Clergy Retirement Security Program – Defined Contribution (CRSP-DC) United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)</p>
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■ Report 2: Virginia Conference-Sponsored Health Plans

VUMPI administers health plans for full time clergy of the Virginia Conference, as well as retired clergy who meet eligibility requirements based on years of ministry in the Virginia Conference. Details of the Conference-sponsored health plans follow:

Active Clergy Health Plans

Health plans recommended to be made available in 2020 are unchanged from the plans offered in 2019. Health plans available to clergy serving in full time appointments in the Virginia Conference include the following:

- **PPO Core:** \$1,000 individual deductible, \$2,500 family deductible, 20% coinsurance
- **PPO Buy-Up:** \$750 individual deductible, \$1,875 family deductible, and 20% coinsurance
- **HSA plan:** a plan with a higher deductible (\$2,250 individual, \$4,500 family) as required by Internal Revenue Service rules for HSAs, a Conference contribution to the Health Savings Account (\$750 for individual tier enrollees, \$1,500 for all other tier enrollees), 20% coinsurance

A fourth health plan which is currently offered, and which is made available only to clergy on medical leave with CPP disability benefits and surviving spouses and children of clergy, is recommended to continue to be offered in 2020 with no plan design changes.

A small group of participants in the previously offered Clergy Managed Care Plan, which is a high deductible health plan that is not eligible for HSA contributions, maintained eligibility to enroll in that plan in 2019 due to remaining medical credits in the plan. Clergy enrolled in the Clergy Managed Care Plan in 2019 will have the option to remain enrolled in that plan in 2020, with no changes in the plan design or participant contributions. VUMPI encourages those who elect to remain enrolled in the Clergy Managed Care Plan in 2020 to utilize remaining medical credits under the plan and to anticipate the termination of that plan at the end of 2020 or soon thereafter.

The vision plan that was offered beginning in 2019 will continue to be offered in 2020, with no changes in the plan design.

The two dental plan options currently administered by VUMPI are also recommended to continue to be offered in 2020 with no plan design changes.

The majority of the cost of the health plans made available to Virginia Conference clergy is funded through a Conference apportionment, as described in Recommendation 1. The remainder of the cost of the plans is funded by participant contributions, as described in Recommendation 2.

Retired Clergy Health Plans

VUMPI administers health plans for eligible retired clergy of the Virginia Conference. The eligibility requirements include a minimum of ten years of full time ministry in either Virginia Conference church appointments or Extension Ministry appointments with enrollment in the Conference-sponsored health plans.

Plans made available to eligible retirees are coordinated with Medicare eligibility. Specific plans for retirees who are not yet eligible for Medicare and the program for Medicare-eligible clergy are described below:

Conference-sponsored health plan for pre-Medicare-eligible retirees: retirees who are eligible to enroll in the Conference-sponsored retired clergy health plan but who are not yet eligible to enroll in Medicare may enroll in the self funded PPO Core or PPO Buy-Up plans administered by VUMPI. Pre-Medicare-eligible retirees may also enroll in the self funded dental insurance program and the fully insured vision program made available to active clergy. The majority of the cost of the health plans made available to Virginia Conference clergy is funded through a Conference apportionment, as described in Recommendation 1. The remainder of the cost of the plans is funded by participant contributions, as described in Recommendation 2.

Conference-sponsored health plan for Medicare-eligible retirees: retirees who are eligible to enroll in the Conference-sponsored retired clergy health plan and who are also enrolled in Medicare have two options for retiree medical coverage.

The first option is the Group Plan, which is a group Medicare Advantage plan created specifically for Virginia Conference retirees. The Group Plan integrates the retiree's Medicare benefit and includes prescription drug coverage. The majority of the cost of the Group Plan is funded through a Conference apportionment, as described in Recommendation 1. The remainder of the cost of the plans is funded by participant contributions, as described in Recommendation 2.

The second option made available to eligible retirees who are enrolled in Medicare is the Connector option. Under the Connector option, Medicare-eligible retirees are able to select any Medicare Supplement plan or Medicare Advantage plan, and any Part D prescription drug plan, offered by United Healthcare. The Conference will provide funding through a Retiree Reimbursement Account ("RRA"), and those funds can be used to partially or fully offset the cost of the coverage elected through the Connector option. The RRA funding made available to retirees who elect coverage through the Connector option is funded through a Conference apportionment, as described in Recommendation 1. The remainder of the cost of the elected health plan coverage, if any, is paid by the retiree directly to United Healthcare.

■ Report 3: Pension Plan Structure

There are four components to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP):

- A. Ministers Reserve Pension Fund (Pre-82) for service and benefits accrued on and/or prior to December 31, 1981.
- B. Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) for service and benefits accrued on and/or after January 1, 1982 through December 31, 2006.
- C. Clergy Retirement Security Program - Defined Benefit Plan (CRSP-DB) for service and benefits accrued on and/or after January 1, 2007.
- D. Clergy Retirement Security Program - Defined Contribution Plan (CRSP-DC) for service and benefits accrued on and/or after January 1, 2007.

Wespath refers to plans A - C above as defined benefit (“DB”) pension plans. That is, each year an eligible clergy member of the Virginia Conference served/serves and received/receives pension credit, the applicable plan will pay a certain benefit, or “defined” monthly income during retirement. Hence, the term “defined benefit.” Defined benefit plans do not maintain participant account balances since the employer, or in our case, Wespath, has the responsibility to manage the funds in a manner sufficient to pay the monthly defined benefit.

Simultaneous to Wespath calculating each participant’s defined benefit, it calculates each annual conference’s cost to provide these defined benefits. Wespath bills each annual conference the amount due. Each annual conference, or in our case, VUMPI, then in-turn bills and apportions our local churches for the cost of these plans.

In addition to these defined benefit plans, annual conferences provide their clergy pension benefits from the CRSP-DC, a defined contribution (“DC”) plan. Each year an eligible clergy member of the Virginia Conference serves and receives pension credit, the Virginia Conference determines how much pension contribution each clergy participant will receive in his/her pension account. VUMPI bills local churches for the required amount of pension contribution, then in-turn, makes monthly contributions into the clergy CRSP-DC accounts.

■ Report 4: Welfare Plan Structure

The welfare plans made available to Virginia Conference clergy include the Comprehensive Protection Plan (“CPP”) sponsored by Wespath, as well as supplemental benefits sponsored independently by VUMPI.

The CPP disability benefits are as follows:

- For Clergy disabled on or after Jan. 1, 2002, the CPP disability benefit equals 70 percent of Plan Compensation, with compensation capped at 200 percent of the DAC.
- For Clergy disabled prior to Jan. 1, 2002, they will continue to receive the same CPP disability benefit per the plan document in-force at the time their disability claim originated.

The following generally describes the death benefit amounts payable under the CPP to eligible participants and their beneficiaries:

Active Participant Death Benefits: payable upon the death of an eligible active CPP participant, as follows:

- Participant: \$50,000, payable in 12 monthly installments or one lump sum
- Spouse of active participant: 20% of DAC in the year of death
- Surviving spouse of active participant: 15% of DAC in the year of death
- Child of active participant: 10% of DAC in the year of death
- Annual surviving spouse annuity benefit of 20% of DAC, less the annuity benefit payable from CRSP and other Church-related sources
- Annual surviving child benefit of 10% of DAC, payable in 12 monthly installments (for those age 17 and younger; benefits are paid through the month in which the child attains age 18)
- Annual surviving child educational benefit up to 20% of DAC, payable in equal installments (for those age 18 through 24 and attending school full-time)

Retired Participant Death Benefits: to be eligible for death benefits in retirement, a clergyperson must have been covered in CPP for a specified number of years. The 2012 General Conference approved a change to the CPP program which increases the length of service requirement for retirees. Retirees with 25 or more years of enrollment in CPP are eligible for the death benefits in retirement, and the eligibility criteria for those with fewer than 25 years in CPP is phased in with one-year increments, as detailed in the table on the following page:

Retirement Year	CPP Enrollment Requirement for Death Benefit Eligibility
2013	6 of last 10 years
2014	7 of last 10 years
2015	8 of last 11 years
2016	9 of last 12 years
2017	10 of last 13 years
2018	11 of last 14 years
2019+	12 of last 15 years

The death benefit amounts associated with retired participants are detailed in the table below:

Plan Provision	Clergy Who Retired Before Jan. 1, 2013	Clergy Who Retire Jan. 1, 2013 or Later
Death of retired participant	30% of DAC in the year of death	\$20,400
Death of retiree's spouse	20% of DAC in the year of death	\$15,300
Death of retiree's surviving spouse	15% of DAC in the year of death	\$10,200
Death of retiree's child	10% of DAC in the year of death	\$8,160
Annual surviving child benefit, payable in 12 monthly installments	10% of DAC	10% of DAC
Annual surviving child educational benefit, payable in installments	20% of DAC	20% of DAC

The Conference Supplemental Death Benefit for active eligible clergy under episcopal appointment, and who are enrolled in CPP, is \$25,000. The Conference Supplemental Death Benefit is payable in addition to the CPP death benefit. During retirement, a \$5,000 Conference Supplemental Death Benefit will be payable to CPP participants, in addition to the CPP death benefit. The beneficiary will receive the Conference Supplemental Death Benefit payable in one lump sum. The Conference pays the entire cost of this Supplemental Death Benefit.

In combination, the CPP and Conference Supplemental Death Benefit provide total death benefits as follows:

- \$75,000 to beneficiaries of active clergy participants
- 30% of the DAC + \$5,000 (or \$25,400 for those retiring January 1, 2013 or later) to beneficiaries of retired clergy participants

Gift Benefit

VUMPI currently elects to provide a one time \$1,500 gift at the time of retirement or disability (once awarded disability benefits under the Comprehensive Protection Plan) to each clergyperson who has served at least ten years of service in a full-time Virginia Annual Conference episcopal appointment in the Virginia Conference with pension credit. Further, a gift to the family of each clergyperson meeting the eligibility criteria above who dies in active service is paid in the same amount as the gift to retired or disabled clergypersons.

Report 6: Denominational Average Compensation

Several of the pension and welfare plans incorporate the Denominational Average Compensation ("DAC") into the formula for determining the plan benefit. The formula VUMPI uses for funding those plans relies on the DAC, as well.

As reported by Wespath, the DAC is projected to increase from 2019 to 2020 as follows:

Denominational Average Compensation	
2019	\$71,361
2020	\$72,648



Section II: Recommendations for Annual Conference Approval

■ Recommendation 1: 2020 Pension and Health Plan Apportionment Recommendations

For 2020, VUMPI recommends a total Clergy Benefit Apportionment of \$16,520,000. This is the sixth consecutive year in which VUMPI's recommended apportionments are either unchanged from or less than the preceding year's apportionments. The total benefits apportionment amount includes funding for the Pre-82 pension, the Active Clergy Health Plan (which includes health care coverage for eligible clergy on medical leave and widowed spouses of active clergy) and the Retired Clergy Health Plan. The apportionment total is allocated among these components as follows:

Clergy Benefits Apportionment Recommendations - 2020	
Active Clergy Health	\$ 9,710,000
Retired Clergy Health	6,060,000
Pension Liability Assessment – Pre-82	750,000
TOTAL CLERGY BENEFIT APPORTIONMENTS	\$ 16,520,000

VUMPI recommends the above Active Clergy Health and Retired Clergy Health apportionments as part of its broad strategy focused on maintaining adequate health plans for Virginia Conference active and retired clergy, while moderating the financial impact on local churches and individual participants to the extent possible.

VUMPI will continue to bill Conference-responsible salary-paying-units (such as Extension Ministries) in 2020. The amount billed will be \$11,664 (\$972 per month) for each eligible clergyperson, plus their applicable Participant Contributions for active clergy as noted in Recommendation 2: 2020 Participant Contribution Recommendations.

The Pension Liability Assessment associated with the Pre-1982 pension program is calculated by Wespath, and is partially based on the projected funding liability that VUMPI is required to meet in 2020. Changes in each year's assessment are driven by multiple factors, including actual and projected investment earnings on pension assets held on behalf of the Virginia Conference at Wespath. Based on input from multiple entities, including the Virginia Conference Treasurer and the Virginia Conference Council on Finance & Administration, the recommended Pre-82 pension apportionment in 2020 is \$750,000, unchanged from the corresponding 2019 apportionment.

■ Recommendation 2: 2020 Participant Contribution Recommendations

A key component of VUMPI's strategy is the administration of clergy health plans which provide sufficient and affordable health care coverage. VUMPI works closely with consultants and advisors to construct plan designs which are designed for long term financial sustainability, while optimizing both coverage and costs for enrolled clergy and their families. VUMPI is recommending no change in participant contributions for the PPO Core plan, modest increases in participant contributions for the PPO Buy-Up plan, and modest reductions in the participant contributions for the HSA plan. These recommendations result in the following monthly participant contribution rates for 2020:

Active Clergy

As was summarized in Report 2, three new health plan designs are recommended for 2019. The recommended plans have been designed to provide a PPO Core health plan option, which is designed to be similar to the current Conference-sponsored PPO plan. Also offered is a PPO Buy-Up plan that offers a lower deductible and out of pocket cost limit, and a Health Savings Account plan option that includes Conference contributions to the HSA. HSA contributions will be prorated for plan participants enrolling in the HSA plan within a calendar year. Any HSA funds remaining at the end of the calendar year will roll over to the subsequent year and will remain under the enrollee's ownership. The recommended 2019 health benefit plan highlights are as follows:

	Medical Plans			Dental Plans	
	PPO Core	PPO Buy-Up	HSA	Core	Major
Clergyperson Only	\$102	\$130	\$80	\$13	\$34
Clergyperson + Spouse	\$308	\$351	\$263	\$49	\$98
Clergyperson + Child(ren)	\$312	\$357	\$269	\$51	\$100
Family	\$325	\$389	\$280	\$60	\$109

Note: active clergy have the opportunity to earn a \$15 reduction in Individual contribution rate or \$30 reduction in Family contribution rate through participation in the Virginia Conference wellness program.

Clergy on Voluntary Leave, Sabbatical, or Retired Under ¶358.2.a (With Twenty Years of Service) or ¶358.3 (Prior to Age 62 With Fewer Than Thirty Years of Service):

	Medical Plans		Dental Plans	
	PPO Core	PPO Buy-Up	Core	Major
Clergyperson Only	\$642	\$723	\$31	\$60
Clergyperson + Spouse	\$1,429	\$1,549	\$51	\$124
Clergyperson + Child(ren)	\$1,548	\$1,678	\$53	\$126
Family	\$1,994	\$2,162	\$64	\$137

Clergy on Medical Leave with CPP Benefits & Under Age 65 Surviving Spouses of Clergy :

	Medical Plans		Dental Plans	
	PPO (\$500 deductible)		Core	Major
Clergyperson Only	\$112		\$13	\$34
Clergyperson + Spouse	\$171		\$49	\$98
Clergyperson + Child(ren)	\$174		\$51	\$100
Family	\$185		\$60	\$109

Retired Clergy Under Age 65 – Retired Under ¶358.1, ¶358.2b, ¶358.2c, or ¶358.3:

Years of Qualifying Virginia Conference Service	PPO Core		PPO Buy-up	
	Retiree Only	Family	Retiree Only	Family
10-14	\$701	\$1,600	\$834	\$1,901
15-19	\$568	\$1,295	\$675	\$1,539
20-24	\$434	\$991	\$516	\$1,177
25-29	\$301	\$686	\$357	\$814
30+	\$167	\$381	\$199	\$453

Years of Qualifying Virginia Conference Service	Dental Core		Dental Major	
	Retiree Only	Family	Retiree Only	Family
10-14	\$31	\$58	\$60	\$131
15-19	\$31	\$58	\$60	\$131
20-24	\$31	\$58	\$60	\$131
25-29	\$31	\$58	\$60	\$131
30+	\$31	\$58	\$60	\$131

Optional Voluntary Vision Benefit Plan for Clergy and Lay Employees Enrolled in a Conference-sponsored Anthem Medical Plan

	Vision
Employee Only	\$8.34
Employee + Spouse	\$15.05
Employee + Child(ren)	\$15.05
Family	\$24.19

Retired Clergy Age 65 or Over – Retired Under ¶358.1, ¶358.2b, ¶358.2c, or ¶358.3

Under the Conference-sponsored medical plan for Medicare-eligible retirees of the Virginia Conference, there will continue to be two coverage options, as described below.

Group Plan Option: The group plan is a group Medicare Advantage plan. The group plan has a required participant contribution based on full time years of service in the Virginia Conference. The recommended 2020 participant contributions for the group plan coverage option are as follows:

Medicare-eligible Retirees - Monthly Personal Contributions		
Years of Service	Individual	Family
10-14	\$375	\$750
15-19	\$310	\$620
20-24	\$245	\$490
25-29	\$180	\$360
30+	\$115	\$230

Connector Option: The Connector option allows qualifying clergy to select any available Medicare Supplement or Medicare Advantage plan, and any Part D prescription drug plan, offered by United Healthcare. Retirees electing coverage through this option receive Retiree Reimbursement Account (“RRA”) funding, which can be used to offset the cost of the selected coverage. VUMPI recommends 2020 monthly RRA funding based on qualifying years of Virginia Conference service as follows:

Connector Option - Monthly RRA Funding		
Years of Service	Retiree Only	Retiree and Spouse
20-24	\$150	\$300
25-29	\$200	\$400
30+	\$250	\$500

The monthly RRA funding amounts will be prorated for qualifying retirees and/or spouses of qualifying retirees who gain Medicare eligibility or otherwise gain eligibility for retiree coverage within a calendar year. Any RRA funds remaining at the end of a calendar year will roll over into the subsequent year for use by the enrolled retiree and/or spouse for qualifying medical expenses.

General Virginia Conference Health Plan Information

For participants enrolled in the Anthem health plans, either as active clergy or as a retiree not yet eligible for Medicare, 2020 health plan selections will be made during the open enrollment period in the fall of 2019. If an eligible clergy person does not elect coverage options during the annual open enrollment period, the default enrollment option is the prior year’s plan selections (except for Health Savings Account, Flexible Spending Account or Dependent Care Spending Account contributions), and enrollees will be subject to the associated individual personal contribution rates.

If not selected during the open enrollment period, no Health Savings Account or Flexible Spending Account contributions can be made during 2020, in accordance with federal laws.

All who are eligible to enroll in a Virginia Conference health plan are strongly encouraged to participate in online open enrollment in the fall of 2019. Details will be distributed through normal annual open enrollment means.

Virginia Conference clergy members earn a year of service towards his or her Total Years of VAUMC Service as indicated in the coverage options above for each year that Virginia Annual Conference health plan eligibility is met.

Eligibility for the Conference-sponsored retiree medical plans requires a minimum of ten years of full time ministry in the Virginia Conference. Virginia Conference clergy on approved leave or serving in an Extension Ministry appointment earn credit towards retiree medical plan eligibility only if enrolled in the Conference-sponsored health plan while on leave or while serving an

Extension Ministry appointment.

■ **Recommendation 3: 2020 Pre-82 Pension Past Service Rate**

The Pre-82 pension provides a benefit to all eligible clergy who have served in the Virginia Conference prior to 1982. This program pays the greater of the following:

- An annual benefit equal to the Past Service Rate (PSR) times years of pre-1982 service, or
- An annuity amount based upon the participant's cash balance in his or her Defined Benefit Service Money Account

The Virginia Annual Conference establishes the PSR each year. For 2020, VUMPI recommends that the PSR be increased from \$570 to \$575.

■ **Recommendation 4: 2020 CRSP/CPP/Supplemental Plan Funding Recommendations**

Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP)

The 2020 CRSP Contribution from the local churches and/or salary-paying-units for each appointed eligible clergy member under episcopal appointment at that location shall be:

- For the Defined Contribution component of CRSP: Plan Compensation (base salary plus housing allowance or parsonage rate in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service), times 3%.
- For the Defined Benefit component of CRSP: Plan Compensation (base salary plus housing allowance or parsonage rate in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service, up to 135% of the Denominational Average Compensation ("DAC") times 9%.

Local churches and salary-paying units are to make their monthly CRSP payments to VUMPI.

Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)

The 2020 CPP contribution from the local churches and/or salary-paying-units for each appointed eligible clergy member under episcopal appointment at that location shall be:

Plan Compensation (base salary plus housing allowance or parsonage rate in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service, up to 200% of the Denominational Average Compensation) times 4.4%.

Local churches and salary-paying units are to make their monthly CPP payments to VUMPI.

If, for any reason, CPP contributions are more than 30 days in arrears, participation in the CPP is suspended. If contributions are more than six consecutive months in arrears, participation in the CPP is terminated. For terminated participants, readmission into the CPP requires payment of seven months of contributions and submission of medical statement of good health.

Erroneously enrolled clergy who are ineligible to participate in the CPP have no right to benefits under the CPP. Eligible clergy who have not been properly enrolled in the CPP have no rights under the CPP until after proper enrollment.

■ **Recommendation 5: 2019 Comprehensive Funding Plan**

The *2016 Book of Discipline* ¶ 1506.6 requires that each annual conference develop, adopt and implement a formal comprehensive funding plan for funding all of its benefit obligations. The funding plan shall be submitted annually to Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath) for review and be approved annually by the annual conference, following the receipt and inclusion of a favorable written opinion from Wespath. This document is only a summary of the information contained in the actual signed funding plan and does not contain all the information required for a comprehensive view of the conference's benefit obligations. You may request the full contents of the 2020 comprehensive benefit funding plan from the VUMPI office.

CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM (CRSP)

The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement program providing lifetime income and account flexibility designed for those who serve as clergy of The United Methodist Church. The program is designed to provide participants with one portion of their overall retirement benefits. CRSP replaced the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) effective January 1, 2007, which had previously replaced the Pre-82 Plan for service rendered prior to January 1, 1982.

CRSP consists of both a defined benefit (DB) plan, which provides a monthly benefit at retirement based upon years of credited service to The United Methodist Church, and a defined contribution (DC) plan, which provides a retirement account balance established and funded by the annual conferences.

The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP DB) annuities total liability as of January 1, 2018, is \$(1,740,019,798), while total plan assets are \$1,904,387,237, resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 109%. The Virginia Conference portion of the liability is 4.1200% and the 2020 contribution is \$4,341,391. General Conference 2012 approved a change to CRSP that provides each annual conference the discretion to determine whether to cover three-quarter and/or half-time clergy. The Virginia Conference has elected to cover clergy serving 50%+.

Effective January 1, 2014, the CRSP DC plan was reduced from a 3% to a 2% of plan compensation non-matching contribution.

Clergy can earn up to an additional 1% CRSP DC contribution by contributing at least 1% of their plan compensation to UMPIP; therefore, if a participant contributes at least 1% of plan compensation to UMPIP, the individual will receive a contribution of 3% to CRSP DC. The 2020 CRSP DC contribution is anticipated to be \$1,540,884.

MINISTERIAL PENSION PLAN (MPP)

Supplement Three to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP), provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church from 1982 through 2006. MPP is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement plan. MPP requires that exactly 65% of the account balance must be annuitized when the funds are to be distributed. The remainder may be rolled over to UMPIP, another qualified plan or an IRA, or it may be paid in a lump sum.

The Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) annuities' total liability as of January 1, 2018 is \$(3,606,807,509), while total plan assets are \$3,885,277,143, resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 108%. The required contribution for 2020 is \$0. The Virginia Conference's percentage of the total liability is 3.3695%. Future MPP annuitants have a total account balance of \$3,803,548,721 and the Virginia Conference's portion of that balance is \$136,924,411 or 3.60% of the total.

PRE-82 PLAN

Supplement One to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Pre-82 Plan, provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church prior to 1982. The Pre-82 Plan was replaced by MPP effective January 1, 1982. If a clergyperson retires within the Conference (and does not terminate), the minimum benefit payable is based on the clergyperson's years of service with pension credit and the conference pension rate (Past Service Rate or PSR), which may change from year to year.

The number of years of service with pension credit is multiplied by the PSR, and the product is the minimum annual benefit payable to those clergy eligible for Pre-82 Plan benefits. In certain situations, the benefit received from the Pre-82 plan may vary based on the applicability of what is referred to as Defined Benefit Service Money (DBSM), which is the defined contribution feature of the Pre-82 Plan. At the time that a participant retires, the DBSM account is converted to a life based benefit and, at that point, the clergy's benefit is the greater of the PSR or DBSM benefit. If the conference increases the PSR, the clergy's benefit is recalculated, but the DBSM-based benefit does not change.

As indicated in Recommendation 3 above, the 2020 PSR recommended to the Virginia Conference is \$575, representing a 1% increase from the 2019 rate. The contingent annuitant percentage is recommended to remain at the 70% level.

ACTIVE HEALTH BENEFIT PROGRAM

The Virginia Conference sponsors a self-funded health benefit program for full-time active clergy. The cost of the program for 2020 is anticipated to be approximately \$13,200,000, which will be funded primarily by apportionments and health plan participant contributions.

POST RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFIT PROGRAM (PRM)

The Virginia Conference currently sponsors a self funded health benefit program for pre-Medicare-eligible retirees and a Group Medicare Advantage plan for Medicare-eligible retirees, with optional RRA funding for the purchase of individual supplemental plans through a retiree medical exchange. The projected annual plan benefit cost for 2020, including health plan premiums, Retiree Reimbursement Account contributions and other plan expenses, is approximately \$7,250,000, which will be funded primarily by apportionments and health plan participant contributions.

COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)

The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) provides death, long-term disability and other welfare benefits for eligible clergy of The United Methodist Church and their families. It is an Internal Revenue Code 414(e) "church plan" funded by plan sponsor insurance premiums. Generally, clergy are eligible to participate in CPP if they satisfy the eligibility requirements, including full-time appointment with plan compensation of at least 25% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC). For 2020, the Virginia Conference has an expected required contribution to the Comprehensive Protection Plan of \$1,526,162, which is anticipated to be funded by direct billing to local churches.

UNITED METHODIST PERSONAL INVESTMENT PLAN (UMPIP) FOR LAY AND CLERGY

Plan Overview:

The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) defined contribution retirement savings plan for clergy and lay employees of The United Methodist Church and affiliated organizations. Participants may make before-tax, Roth and/or after-tax contributions through payroll deductions. Participant contributions, various optional plan sponsor contributions and investment earnings comprise the individual's retirement account balance.

OTHER DEFINED CONTRIBUTION (DC) OBLIGATIONS

VUMPI currently offers a supplemental life insurance benefit that supplements the CPP life insurance benefit. The estimated cost of this supplemental benefit for 2020 is \$300,000.

CONCLUSION

The 2020 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan and this summary document incorporates, to the best of our understanding, the Virginia's obligations and funding requirements of the benefits provided to the clergy and laity of the Virginia Conference.

■ Recommendation 6: 2020 Housing Allowance/Exclusion**Resolutions Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired, Disabled, or Former Clergypersons of the Virginia Conference**

The Virginia Conference (the "Conference") adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/housing allowances for active, retired, terminated, or disabled clergypersons of the Conference:

WHEREAS, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church (the "Church"), of which this Conference is a part, has in the past functioned and continues to function through ministers of the gospel (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code section 107) who were or are duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministers of the Church ("Clergypersons");

WHEREAS, the practice of the Church and of this Conference was and is to provide active Clergypersons with a parsonage or a rental/housing allowance as part of their gross compensation;

WHEREAS, pensions or other amounts paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons are considered to be deferred compensation and are paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons in consideration of previous active service; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as an appropriate organization to designate a rental/housing allowance for Clergypersons who are or were members of this Conference and are eligible to receive such deferred compensation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT an amount equal to 100% of the pension, severance, or disability payments received from plans authorized under *The Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church (the "*Discipline*"), which includes all such payments from Wespath Benefits and Investments, during the period January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 by each active, retired, terminated, or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and

THAT the pension, severance, or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance designation applies will be any pension, severance, or disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the *Discipline*, including such payments from Wespath and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a Wespath plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the *Discipline*, that result from any service a Clergyperson rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, a terminated, or a disabled Clergyperson of this Conference rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other employer that employed the Clergyperson to perform services related to the ministry of the Church, or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan, annuity, or fund for such an active, retired, terminated, or disabled Clergyperson's pension, severance, or disability plan benefit as part of his or her gross compensation.

NOTE: The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergyperson's gross income in any year for federal (and, in most cases, state) income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2), and regulations thereunder, to the least of: (a) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergyperson's employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (b) the amount actually expended by the Clergyperson to rent or provide a home in such year; or (c) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year. Each clergyperson or former clergyperson is urged to consult with his or her own tax advisor to determine what deferred compensation is eligible to be claimed as a housing allowance exclusion.

– Ken Peterson, Chair

COMMON TABLE FOR CHURCH VITALITY

The mission of the Virginia Annual Conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God.

Guided by this mission, Common Table for Church Vitality coordinates and prioritizes the program ministries of the Virginia Conference. Conference program agencies relating to Common Table are: Board of Church and Society, Church Development Team, Board of Discipleship, Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries, Board of Laity, and Missional Ministries. The conference administrative agencies that relate to Common Table are Board of Communications, Commission on Disabilities, Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy, and Commission on Status and Role of Women. Through the work of these agencies, the churches of the Virginia Conference are connected with each other in ministries throughout the Commonwealth, nation, and world.

For an accounting of ministries made possible through the program agencies and commissions of the Virginia Conference, I invite you to review each agency's report that is included as part of the fuller report of Common Table. There you will read of faith filled ways the churches of the Virginia Conference witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Common Table expresses appreciation for the ministry of the Connectional Ministries staff who provide tireless leadership and support for all of these connected ministries.

At last year's annual conference, approval was given to form a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder task force for military veterans. The task force has engaged in its responsibilities with plans to develop a regional test model for ministry that will eventually be shared across the conference.

At last year's annual conference, there was discussion about the relationship of the Virginia Council of Churches and the Virginia Conference. In response to that discussion, Rev. Larry Lenow has been assigned by Bishop Lewis to represent the Virginia Conference in relationship with VCC. In this capacity, Larry participated in the VCC Annual Assembly, Nov. 7 2018, is part of the 2019 Coordinating Cabinet of the VCC and provides updates to the bishop's office and Common Table. In addition, Larry is chairing the ecumenical state committee of LARCUM (Lutherans, Anglicans, Roman Catholics, United Methodists).

Last year's annual conference budget included a reduction for the conference's financial support of the Virginia Council of Churches. As the Virginia Council of Churches continues a process of reorganizing, the recommendation from the conference grants committee is for 2020 funding to remain at its current level.

In light of possible changes to the connection of The United Methodist Church, the members of Common Table invite us to give thanks for the lives that have been impacted through the connectional ministries of the Virginia Conference. As we approach an uncertain future in the certainty of God's grace, we invite the congregations and members of the Virginia Conference to faithfully remember the encouraging words of I Corinthians 15:58:

Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Approve the following recommendations by the following boards:

- a) By the Board of Discipleship regarding the recommendation and endorsement of Gregory B. West as a General Evangelist according to the standards set by the General Board of Discipleship
- b) By Missional Ministries that the Relationship Agreements as presented to the Missional Connections Team of the Conference Missional Ministries Board between the Virginia Conference and Heart Havens, Inc.; United Methodist Family Services of Virginia; Pinnacle Living, Virginia United Methodist Housing Development Corporation; and Wesley Housing Development Corporation, be continued
- c) By Missional Ministries regarding special offerings for Heart Havens, United Methodist Family Services of Virginia, and Pinnacle Living

— Marc Brown, VAUMC Director of Connectional Ministries



The following reports, from page 157 to page 173, fall under the umbrella of the Common Table for Church Vitality.

BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY

The United Methodist Book of Discipline (1629) specifies the purpose of the Conference Board of Church and Society. The Conference Board is to help the conference, districts and congregations employ our Social Principles to connect our faith communities to the world around us. This work is both individual and societal. We are called to invite faithful disciples of Christ to lead the church prayerfully into the world.

We have organized our board to follow the issues raised by our United Methodist Bishop's letter: "God's Renewed Creation: Call to Hope and Action." In this 2009 letter, UMC bishops raised virtually the same issues, as did Catholic Pope Francis in 2015, namely that the world is awash in 1. Violence, 2. Environmental Destruction and 3. Poverty.

Following the need to address these three interconnected disasters, we have organized three work areas:

1. Peace and Non-Violence
2. Caretakers of God's Creation, and
3. Eradicating Poverty/Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministries.

Social Principles Hearing:

On May 12, the conference board held its first hearings in at Community of Faith UMC in Northern Virginia to consider the draft of the **Social Principles** re-write developed by the General Board of Church and Society for submission to the 2020 General Conference.

Peace with Justice Sunday:

The Conference Board promotes the Peace with Justice Sunday Special Offering, one of the six Church-wide offerings that The United Methodist General Conference asks of each local church. In 2018, only a fraction of our churches gave to this Special Offering, but their giving has allowed the conference to fund key ministries within the conference. We expect the 2019 total will show more churches taking the offering. One half of the offering stays in the annual conference, the other half is used by the General Board.

Caretakers of God's Creation:

The Board's Caretakers of God's Creation work area has begun a program of district workshops to help churches become "Green Churches". The Caretakers are also working to help congregations divest of stocks of thermal coal companies as required by the resolution voted on at conference in 2015. They are promoting Fossil Free Funds, a project of *As You Sow*, a corporate responsibility program (<http://fossilfreefunds.org/>.) The fossilfreefunds.org tool makes it very easy to evaluate your portfolio for all kinds of fossil fuel investments. Caretakers also co-sponsored the National Caretakers of God's Creation Climate Justice Conference held at Mt. Olivet United Methodist Church in Arlington. Each year, Caretakers awards a conference church, the Green Church of the Year award. In the fall of 2018, Caretakers is implementing the conference resolution on fracking by holding hearings in the Northern Neck (Warsaw UMC), Giles County (Mt. Olivet UMC-Newport Nov. 10) and the Richmond Area (place to be determined). Jaydee Hanson is continually scheduling and rescheduling meetings to get the fact out about fracking.

Peace and Non-violence Work Area:

The Peace and Non-violence Work Area is also working to fight gun violence, care for immigrants and refugees and to promote care of veterans. The work area proposing three resolutions to annual conference: 1. Compassionate Support for Members of the Armed Forces, Veterans and Their Families Suffering from Post Traumatic Stress and Moral Injury. This resolution did past and work has begun, they have put their team together to move forward. 2. Comprehensive Immigration Reform and 3. Study and Action on Gun Violence are area we are still doing our work to make changes in our community by continue talking with law makers.

Eradicating Poverty:

The Eradicating Poverty Work Area is working on planning our program for mentoring youth based on the resolution passed at the 2016 Annual Conference. It also is exploring how to implement the Annual Conference resolution on implementing the banning the "box" which allows prospective employers to choose to not interview persons who have served their time for crimes and are now trying to become employed. We celebrate that the Virginia state government no longer discriminates in job applicants based on an employee's past criminal convictions, but many private employers still ask potential applicants to check the box saying whether they have any criminal convictions.

United Methodist Day at the General Assembly:

This year was the 27th anniversary United Methodist Day at the General Assembly. We partner with the Virginia Interfaith Center on Public Policy to hold the United Methodist Day at the General Assembly. Each year, United Methodist Day at the General Assembly is held on the first Thursday in February. We hold this event jointly with the United Methodist Women and the Conference Legislative Network. We look forward to Bishop Lewis helping to lead the event in future years.

— James Page, Clergy Co-Chair

VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

Over the last several years, the Board of Communications has been reflecting on our role as stated in the *Discipline* to “meet the communication, publication, multimedia, public and media relations, interpretation, and promotional needs of the annual conference.” (§646) We have reviewed all of the ways we communicate as a conference, and our effectiveness in meeting the needs of the entire annual conference.

Working closely with the conference communications director and staff, the board has been working hard to develop a plan to improve and expand conference communications. We have focused on ways we can improve in three major areas: increasing our reach, removing the cost barrier, and providing access for all.

The board is undertaking a multi-step process to help chart the future of conference communications. We started by reaching out to annual conferences around the country and other key communications professionals to learn from their experiences. We then began researching the communications needs of clergy and laity across the Virginia Annual Conference. We conducted 19 listening sessions in 5 different locations, and were able to ask in-depth questions about the communication needs of 98 people from 10 districts. Participants included active and retired clergy, church staff, lay members and leaders in local churches, districts, and conference boards & agencies, and youth. This helped us gather a variety of great ideas on how we can improve conference communications. As we plan for our future, we have also looked at how we are currently utilizing our resources, and how well that is aligned with our mission. Currently, the conference communications staff and the board spend the majority of their time producing and supporting the conference’s monthly magazine, the Virginia United Methodist *Advocate*. Producing a printed magazine is a labor-intensive effort, and it is a communications medium that continues to increase in cost while decreasing in readership. The *Advocate* has been running a deficit for several years, and despite multi-pronged ideas and efforts, readership has continued to decline. Circulation is now less than 2,200 people in a conference with over 300,000 members. We are therefore reaching less than 1% of our membership with our primary communications vehicle. To better live out our *Discipline* mandate, we need to improve the way we communicate and engage with the membership of our conference.

Printing and mailing the monthly *Advocate* magazine is expensive, so people currently have to pay to subscribe. This creates a cost barrier for many people. Shifting our efforts to focus more on digital communications would dramatically expand our reach while also allowing us to distribute content for free. As we make the transition to increase our digital communications efforts across multiple platforms, we also need to remember that parts of our state do not have good Internet access, and some of our members are not able to use digital communications. We are therefore also looking at ways to continue to meet their needs, as we work to provide access for all.

In June we will distribute a communications survey conference-wide to help test the ideas we gathered in the listening sessions. The results of the survey will help focus and prioritize our efforts so we can continue improving conference communications. We want your feedback, and we encourage everyone in the conference to participate in the survey. A link to the survey will be available on the conference website, and will be emailed to everyone for whom we have an email address. Printed copies will be distributed in the July edition of the *Advocate* and at the Board of Communications booth at the Annual Conference meeting.

–Jill W. Gaynor, President

BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP

The Board of Discipleship since its movement to change in 2008 has been posturing itself to be a resource for the conference. In the last year, we trained all of the Regional Directors, along with folks in the Alexandria/ Arlington District to be coaches. Coaches are available to work with churches at reigniting the fires of discipleship, understanding and implementing Intentional Discipleship Plans and learning more about Membership to Discipleship within their churches. These coaches are clergy and laity within the conference who can be available for little or no cost to churches. In addition, Don Jamison, chair of the Board, has published a white paper on Intentional Discipleship Planning and is available to work with churches in understanding what it means to begin a discipleship movement within the local church.

The Resource Group has been diligently working at developing, tracking and sharing best practices from local churches all along the connection. They have been developing a database that can be accessed through the www.vaumc.org. There you will find links to internet resources, stories of successful discipleship within the conference and lists of books and other resources to help with your journey. Our goal is constantly to be a resource for the local churches of the Virginia Annual Conference. We have been working with the Bishop’s collaborative team to offer information about best practices to serve within our conference.

Each year the Board of Discipleship awards one youth, one laity and one Clergy the Denman Evangelism award. This year, the Board will be awarding a local congregation the One Matters award for recognition of turn around success in growth, professions of faith and fruitfulness.

Each year we endorse candidates to be a General Evangelist in the United Methodist Church and this year with great acknowledgement of his work we endorse Greg West (Chaplain of Wesleyan College) as a General Evangelist. We also participate in the Christian Education Sunday and use those funds for scholarship and grant requests for Education in our local churches, districts and conference. We work closely with the Office of Bishop by facilitating conference wide activities like the Bishop’s Convocation of Prayer and have offered assistance for the Conference Day of Prayer and Week of Prayer for the Praying Forward Campaign. Members of the Board continually work with the Conference Staff and Cabinet in areas of Discipleship and have participated in the Mid-Size and Small Church Initiatives.

It has been my honor to work with the Board of Discipleship over the last eight years and my hope is that their work will continue. We have successfully postured the Board to be a great resource of the local churches in our conference.

– Donald Jamison, Chair

Conference Council On Youth Ministries (CCYM)

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ! We write to you as your 2019 Co-Chairs of the CCYM.

This Spring, the CCYM (conference council on youth ministries) met to review and award YSF (youth service fund) requests, we had an overwhelming number of compelling applications. We were able to help fund 12 groups with the \$9,950 we raised this year. We gathered to discuss the results of General Conference, to expand leadership skills, and to elect new youth co-chairs for the upcoming year. With the graduation of 2018-2019 co-chair, Lizzy Lawrence, the nomination and appointment of Ally Shipe will be official this year after Annual Conference. We thank Lizzy for her uncanny ability to carry on a conversation with just about anyone she meets. Additionally, after many years of CCYM service (including several of those years as CCYM adult chair) Alison Malloy will be transitioning off CCYM. Juli Odell (Danville District) will become CCYM adult chair after Annual Conference. We are thankful for Alison's advocacy on behalf of conference youth ministries. Please join us in praying for Juli as she prepares to lead in this capacity.

In the coming year, we hope that all districts will actively seek and submit youth nominees for CCYM. To do so, please email Juli (juliodell1982@gmail.com).

– Chris Ganoe and Ally Shipe, Co-Chairs

Older Adult Council

The Older Adult Council is tasked with engaging and equipping pastors, local churches and districts with knowledge and skills for ministry to, for, by and with older adults within congregations and in the community at large. The Council works to provide life long learning and spiritual growth in discipleship throughout life, appreciating the great resource our older adults are to the Body of Christ. The Council works to combat the negative influence of ageism. The Council, now advised by Age Related Ministries, continues working to increase inter generational programing and encourage older adults to share their rich spiritual legacy with all ages. As the tsunami of aging adults, now including the Baby Boomers, present churches with significantly changing physical, emotional and spiritual needs, the Council provides resources through the Conference website, and offers speakers and presentations. A curriculum on Spiritual Legacy has been provided to each District Office. Classes on Sacred Circle Dance, and Ways of Experiencing God have been offered and well attended. Many older adults have fond memories of committing their lives to Jesus during a revival experience. In response to numerous requests the Olde Time Revival, being offered regionally, provides an opportunity to renew faith and refresh that commitment. Retired Bishop Peter Weaver preached the revival in 2018 at Williamsburg UMC. In April the Council joined Pinnacle Living and the Beard Center on Aging of Lynchburg University in sponsoring the third annual Faithful Aging Conference held this year at Culpeper, Virginia. Faithful Aging is among the first statewide, faith-based, nondenominational, conferences on aging. Speakers included healthcare providers, chaplains, pastors, gerontologists, and other experts on issues faced by the aging population. Representatives from the Virginia Conference are serving in leadership roles with the Southeastern Jurisdictional Wisdom and Grace Conference held each year in Lake Junaluska.

– Suzanne Spencer, Chair

Goodson Academy of Preaching

In her book, *And God Spoke to Abraham*, Fleming Rutledge writes, “*The incarnate Word of God is a mighty sword put into your hand. Those who hear it will feel their chains cut off, their prison unlocked, their lungs filled with oxygen...*”

The Goodson Academy of Preaching (GAP) exists for the purpose of encouraging excellence in preaching. Through the best use of the Scripture, and the best practices from homiletics today, we want to help preachers unlock the prison in which the people in our congregations, and sometimes ourselves, are locked.

GAP is the only Virginia Conference entity devoted to preaching. In the last year, we have been assigned to the Board of Discipleship as one of its ministries.

In March 2019 GAP offered a preaching workshop, *The Power of Storytelling for Preaching*, with Rev. Donald Davis, ordained elder (retired) from the Western NC Conference, and a well-known storyteller as our presenter. He instructed the participants in how to claim or reclaim the stories deep inside of us that have potential to impact our preaching. About 70 attended. An evening of storytelling was well attended.

We are open to new ways of sharing the Gospel and connecting with a world that needs The Word proclaimed in powerful and effective ways. We are considering live streaming, peer preaching groups, website resources, and one-day events. If you are reading this and are passionate about worship and preaching, we would love to hear your thoughts and ideas of how we might more effectively connect the Word with the People of God for the sake of the Gospel.

Our members are: Larry Buxton, Amanda Newman, Youtha Hardman-Cromwell, Jason Micheli, Derrick Parson, David Rash (Chairperson), and Greg West. Marcia Huntsman had to drop out due to family commitments. Thanks to Marc Brown as staff liaison and Bev Myers as support staff. We welcome a new chairperson as of AC 2019. It has been my pleasure to serve as chairperson for a

few years and a greater pleasure to see a bright future for this essential ministry. Preach the Word, in season and out of season.
 “May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in God’s sight.”

– David A. Rash

CONFERENCE MISSIONAL MINISTRIES BOARD

“Engaging, Connecting and Equipping Clergy and Laity of the Virginia Conference for God’s mission.”

The Missional Discipleship and Engagement Team includes the inter-related work of several Conference Committees: Disaster Response, Initiatives of Hope, Volunteers in Mission and Voices of Youth.

Disaster Response – The Disaster Response ministry completed four continuous years of disaster response and recovery in October 2018 with the completion of our work following Hurricane Matthew. This has only been possible with the help and support of volunteers across our annual conference and the great UMC connection. On behalf of all the survivors that you have helped with your gifts and talents; Thank you!. Since October, the Conference Disaster Response Team took time to rest, conduct inventory of our resources, fix or replace equipment, and refocus on training.

This pause was short lived following the impact of Hurricanes Florence and Michael in the late fall. Danville District experienced significant flooding following these storms and many homes received water damage. District clergy and laity stepped up and began conducting local disaster response and relief and it became evident early that there were many families with unmet needs. The Conference Disaster Team provided equipment and basic training and volunteers did an outstanding job in responding and assisting the survivors. Our Bishop requested financial support of the conference churches and an initial grant from UMCOR was received. Long Term Recovery operations began in March. UMCOR grants were requested and UMCOR Case Management Training was completed and several Conference tool trainers, and the large shower are on-site in support of the volunteers that are working hard during this Recovery Phase.

As always, these efforts are impossible without the love and support, both in volunteering and financial, of you, the Annual Conference of Virginia. Please continue to do so by being the hands and feet of Christ! Also thank you for your continued donations to the Conference Advance Special #5037.

–Bob Pihlcrantz, CDRC

Initiatives of Hope (IOH) mission is to increase awareness of and generate increased participation in partnership-in-mission opportunities in identified countries or local and national missional ministries. Current overseas connections are with Brazil, Cambodia and Mozambique. The 18th anniversary of the Shade and Fresh Water Ministry in Brazil was celebrated in October, 2018. This ministry combines evangelism and social justice as it teaches the love of God and provides a safe place for children of the streets. Representatives from our conference to the celebration were welcomed by Missionary Emily Everett and former missionaries Gordon & Teca Greathouse. Virginia Conference support for this ministry was recognized and is appreciated. Steps are being taken to enlarge the ministry to include older youth, ages 14-18 with a focus on drug prevention, discernment and life choices.

Juanita Csontos chairs the Cambodian initiative. She is currently working on projects with missionaries there to develop feminine hygiene kits. Nancy Yarborough traveled to Cambodia to teach in February of this year. Currently a VIM medical team is being organized to deploy Jan 17-Feb 2, 2019 and is seeking team members. Nancy Forrest is leading that team.

In Mozambique we support vital training for lay and clergy leadership. We will send a VIM team to Northern Mozambique this fall to assess needs. Significant work is being done by missionary John Nday to develop sustainable agriculture practices to support the orphanage in Cambine and Chicuque Rural Hospital.

IOH is continues support new initiatives and relationships with Native Americans and is helping sponsor “Nitapewak” (FRIENDS) Family Camp July 11-14 2019 at Camp Rockahok. It is open to all Native Americans and Friends of Every nation and will include an Intertribal Powwow.

–Judy Fender, Chair

Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) coordinated by Rebecca Makowski has organized UMVIM team leader training events with a renewed commitment to youth teams. UMVIM teams are encouraged to visit the UMVIM webpage on the conference website and facebook page for upcoming training events, best practices information and the conference policy for short term volunteer in mission teams.

Voices of Youth (VOY), coordinated by **Mary Letson**, has as its mission statement: “Fill your mind with truth, your heart with love, your life with service.” We are a group of youth and adults who have a passion for music and mission and combine those two gifts into a unique service experience. VOY will be traveling to Poland for their mission experience to return and share with churches in the conference.

The Missional Connections Team includes the work of mission contexts and relationships; mission education, interpretation and resources; and health and relief connections. Our newest Board member, **Reba Miller** will coordinate the conference’s relationship with global health and support for health ministries in local churches.

Mrs. Anne Klotz, Missionary Itineration Coordinator, has facilitated connections and visits for many missionaries with their

covenant churches during the past year.

Mission Encounter, is a cooperative school offered by the Conference Missional Ministries Board and the United Methodist Women to help us understand God's work in our world and our involvement as United Methodists. Mission Encounter 2019 will be offered July 26-28 at Smith Mountain Lake 4-H Center.

Conference Committee on Mission Personnel, (CCMP), chaired by **Kip Robinson**, guides and mentors interested persons through the application and discernment process for mission service. Applicants can access the Personnel Information Form (PIF–Application for Missionary Service) and other application materials from the Virginia Conference web site under Ministries - Center for Justice and Missional Excellence - Committee on Mission Personnel (CCMP) - Related Documentation. **All completed application materials should be sent to the Virginia Conference Committee on Mission Personnel, The Virginia Conference Center for Justice and Missional Excellence, P. O. Box 5606, Glen Allen, VA 23058.** It should NOT be sent to the General Board of Global Ministries.

–Veronica Barrell, CMMB Chair

Advance Specials 2019-2020

INTERNATIONAL

Mozambique: Chicique Rural Hospital - #09734A
 Congo: North Katanga Wings of the Morning - #08597A
 Liberia: Ganta United Methodist Hospital - #15080N
 Cambodia: Mission Initiative - #00230A
 Cambodia: Street Children Ministry - #14921A
 Macedonia: Macedonia in Mission Together - #00220A
 Brazil: Ministry with Children, Shade and Fresh Water Project - #11580A
 Israel: Bethlehem Bible College - #12017A
 Eurasia: Eurasia Mission Initiative, Ukraine, Moldova - #14053A
 Sierra Leone: Child Rescue Program - #14377A
 Sudan: Sudan Development - #184385
 Global: Anti-Human Trafficking - #333615
 Global: Sustainable Agriculture - #982188
 Mexico: Give Ye Them To Eat - #07629A
 Sierra Leone Water and Development Ministry - #181000
 Vietnam Mission Initiative - #14932A

NATIONAL

Mississippi: Choctaw United Methodist Mission - #761544
 District of Columbia: Christ House - #381215
 Kentucky: Red Bird Mission, Inc., Beverly - #773726
 Kentucky: Henderson Settlement, Frakes - #773365
 South Dakota: Tree of Life Ministry - #123615
 Tennessee: Jubilee Project, Inc., Sneedville - #781350
 USA: Justice for Our Neighbors Immigration Ministry - #901285
 USA: Volunteers in Mission, Southeastern Jurisdiction - #901875
 USA: Society of St. Andrew - #801600
 USA: Response and Recovery to Natural Disaster - #901670

VIRGINIA

Agape Christian Children's Community Center, Inc. - #5020
 Caretakers of God's Creation - #5016
 Crossroads Mission Center - #5028
 Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries of Virginia - #5029
 ESL and Immigrant Ministries Childcare Support - #5036
 Heart Havens - #6442
 Henry Fork Service Center - #5008
 Highland Support Project - #5007
 Journey Community Center - #5009
 Just Neighbors Ministry, Advance - #803002

Kids Soar (formerly UM Community Outreach Prog. of Roanoke) - #5004
 Park View Community Mission - #5019
 Pathways Virginia Advance - #5045
 Rising Hope United Methodist Mission Church - #5043
 Teens Opposing Poverty, Inc. (TOPS) - #5010
 Tuesday's Table - #5024
 Una Familia - #5027
 Virginia Conference Disaster Response & Recovery - #5037
 Wesley Community Service Center - #5025
 Abukloi Enterprises, Inc. – new
 Basic UMC-Hispanic & God's Table Ministry – new
 Belmont UMC – Belmont Community Resource Services - new

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Relationship Agreements as presented to the Missional Connections Team of the Conference Missional Ministries Board between the Virginia Conference and Heart Havens, Inc.; United Methodist Family Services of Virginia; Pinnacle Living.; Virginia United Methodist Housing Development Corporation; and Wesley Housing Development Corporation, be continued.

– *Verónica Barrell, CMMB Chair*

Partnership Reports

Heart Havens

Heart Havens continues its mission of empowering people with a developmental disability to live and thrive in their community. From paint nights and tailgate parties to the gym and church choir, our VAUMC friends empower the people we support to be active members in their community. Your financial gifts and volunteer engagement make our mission of empowerment possible!

We continue to operate group homes across the Conference in seven different locations. Heart Havens was born out of listening; it was listening to the needs and desires of people with a developmental disability and their families that led to the startup of Heart Havens. Through this listening, we have learned that it is time to offer new services and means of more individualized support. Heart Havens plans to continue to operate all of our current group homes while exploring an additional group home in the Richmond area, and new services that might include a day program and community engagement program. These programs reflect our mission of empowerment; Heart Havens is about people, not houses.

We are blessed with the support of congregations and small groups throughout the Conference. Heart Havens shared our message of empowerment in February during Heart Havens Month. Additionally, we welcomed many volunteers from churches, businesses, and civic groups. These volunteers blessed us by planting flowers, assisting with maintenance, and organizing nights of fellowship. The York River District United Methodist Men — formerly known as the Peninsula District United Methodist Men — are the 2018 Brian Manwiller “In HIS Grip” Award winners. We recognize the York River District United Methodist Men for their contributions during the building of the Morrison Heart Havens house in Newport News, for their years of help in maintenance of the home and their friendship and fellowship with the individuals in the home. Further, they provided unwavering support during a difficult transition.

With your vital support, Heart Havens can continue to empower people with a developmental disability by doing more than just providing the basics but also enabling them to live vibrant, independent lives. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we invite you as the church to continue to advocate for Heart Havens and support people with a developmental disability.

– *Jennifer Boyden, Chief Executive Officer*

Pinnacle Living

As an organization, the year since the 2018 Annual Conference has been one of great celebrations and difficult decisions. With a mission of Enriching Life's Journey and a vision of a culture in which age does not define the person, Pinnacle Living has celebrated several significant accomplishments:

- Our 70th Anniversary Celebration kicked off at Cedarfield on Sept. 29 and ended with a worship service at Hermitage Richmond on September 30.
- Physical renovations focused on improving the lives of our residents are underway at Hermitage Richmond.
- Our Person-Centered culture is making a difference in the lives of our residents. Pinnacle Living is committed to changing the culture of how senior living services are offered and experienced.
- Renovations and an expansion at Cedarfield are ongoing.

In December 2018, Pinnacle Living sold Hermitage Eastern Shore to Commonwealth Senior Living. The Pinnacle Living Board of Directors also made the decision to close the Lydia Roper Home on January 30, 2019. Both these communities have been a vital part

of our mission and ministry. The decisions to sell and close were not easy ones to make, however, necessary.

Pinnacle Living has also worked diligently to strengthen our community partnerships. For the third year, Pinnacle Living has partnered in offering the statewide Faithful Aging Conference, a time in which individuals and groups can learn more about older adult ministries and available resources. Pinnacle Living has taken an active role in guiding churches and communities to become dementia friendly. Several team members have become Dementia Friends Champions, offering general information sessions to help everyone understand five key messages about dementia, how it affects people and how we can make a difference in the lives of people living with dementia in all its varied forms. Contact us if you would like to involve your church in this education and awareness effort.

Pinnacle Living is grateful to all local churches that supports the Samaritan Program. This benevolent assistance has been given in Pinnacle Living communities since the year the organization was founded. During 2018, we were privileged to recognize the following Samaritan Award Churches, the congregations across the Virginia Annual Conference with the highest level of giving to the Samaritan Program.

- Reveille (Richmond District)
- Fairfax (Alexandria District)
- Bethany - Hampton (York River District)
- Fairmount (Richmond District)
- St. Andrews - Henrico (Richmond District)
- Westover Hills (Richmond District)
- South Roanoke (Roanoke District)
- Greene Memorial (Roanoke District)
- Lawrence Memorial (Roanoke District)
- Monumental (Elizabeth River District)

In 2018, Pinnacle Living was honored to recognize two local congregations with Innkeeper Awards. The award offers appreciation to congregations of the Annual Conference for exemplary support of the mission of Pinnacle Living with older adults. Local Community Guilds select the churches based upon both the financial stewardship and volunteer service of members of the congregation.

- First - Salem (Roanoke District)
- Ramsey Memorial (Richmond District)

Rev. Dr. Bernard Via, our first administrator was consistent in ascribing the existence of the organization to “faith, hard work and prayer.” Thank you for your continued faith, hard work, prayer and generosity in support of the mission and ministry of Pinnacle Living.

– Martha Stokes, Director of Church and Community Relations

– Charles W. Wickham, Director of Donor Development

– Christopher P. Henderson, President and CEO

United Methodist Family Services of Virginia (UMFS)

For well over a century, United Methodist Family Services has had a legacy of empowering children and families. From the Virginia Conference Orphanage of 1900, to the Virginia Methodist Children’s Home of the 1950’s, to the present day state-wide agency bringing hope and healing to the whole family, UMFS has partnered with churches and church members to live out our mission. Today we are unwavering champions for high-risk children and families across Virginia, collaborating with communities to help them reach their full potential by providing foster care and adoption services, community-based services, residential treatment services, and specialized education.

In 2018 we served 2,057 high-risk children across the state through regional centers in Richmond, Northern Virginia, Tidewater, Fredericksburg, South Hill, Farmville, and Lynchburg; residential treatment centers in Richmond and Fairfax; and schools in Richmond and Edinburg. While many of our programs are focused on children, we strive to support the entire family, helping us touch the lives of 13,772 high-risk children and families in 173 communities in Virginia. We are dedicated to creating a world where caring, opportunity and generosity are passed on from generation to generation, empowering all children to contribute to society as engaged citizens.

Since 1900, the churches of the Virginia Conference have partnered with us as advocates for high-risk children and families. Churches recruit and support foster and adoptive families, serve as mentors and tutors, provide transportation for children and families, provide much-needed financial support, and donate countless gifts-in-kind. Our church partners, Child Champion Councils and the UMFS Auxiliary are critical resources for the children and families we serve. They are tireless advocates for our ministry throughout the conference.

We are also excited about our growing collaboration with local churches through our partnership with The Open Table. The Open Table is a national movement to transform poverty through community by bringing together local church volunteers who make a year-long commitment to act as a team of life specialists, encouragers, and advocates. The Table works with an individual or family

in need (often former foster children) to provide ongoing mentoring and support to help achieve major life goals. Nine tables have been formed since we started this partnership in 2017. Three of the original churches are already starting a second table, and several new churches are in the process of recruiting table members.

We recently launched the Be a Champion Capital Campaign, the first comprehensive effort to revitalize our 33-acre Richmond campus since the 1950s. This campaign will allow us to upgrade facilities and technologies while building capacity for our programs to address some of the most pressing challenges facing our communities today. UMFS will fund this project through charitable gifts, a long-term land lease on the front of our property, and internal refinancing and debt reduction. We will begin by upgrading the Child & Family Healing Center residential program from post-WW II cottages to a state-of-the-art treatment facility. In the second phase, we will build an addition to Charterhouse School which will enhance our career and technical education and expand services for elementary students and students with autism.

We are grateful for the support of the Virginia Conference and for your partnership with us as unwavering champions for high-risk children and families. It is because of your support that we are able to help children and families reach their full potential.

– Ken Huntsman, Chair, UMFS Board of Directors

– Greg Peters, President and CEO

Virginia United Methodist Housing Development Corporation

The Virginia United Methodist Housing Development Corporation (“VUMHDC”) is a covenant partner with the Virginia Annual Conference with the mission to expand the supply of affordable housing to the disabled, low-income and senior populations in Virginia. VUMHDC has an annual goal of developing, renovating, partnering in, and/or refinancing at least one new facility a year.

VUMHDC currently owns and operates eighteen (18) projects and is the non-profit minority partner of an additional seventeen (18) properties. Totalling these 36 properties, VUMHDC has approximately 2100 apartment units across the conference with an approximate land value of \$80,000,000. These apartment properties serve over 3000 residents, equally mixed between seniors and families. All of the apartments are classified as “affordable”, meaning that all receive some form of rent subsidy through HUD or VHDA.

Since our founding in 1975, VUMHDC’s program has been accomplished without operating support or allocations from the Virginia Annual Conference. Our projects and operating costs are funded entirely through governmental grants, low income housing tax credits (LIHTC), community partnerships, and income/distributions from our project operations.

VUMHDC is led by President Larry Dickenson, a lay member of Raleigh Court UMC in Roanoke. He is assisted by the corporate officers making up the Executive Committee, and the other ten (13) Directors. Our one major change in leadership is our new Treasurer, Randy Spears. He replaces Jim Branscome, who retired after serving as Treasurer continuously since the corporation’s beginnings. We salute his dedicated service!!

VUMHDC has identified a multi-year priority of strengthening the corporate financial capacity, as we evolve toward a new, sustainable business model. This direction will require some added Directors and consultants with applicable industry credentials, providing the necessary expertise to aid in expansion of our program.

During 2019, we expect complete sale of certain property assets as a means toward growing our financial base, enabling a more robust development program in the future. At the same time, we are advancing the planning for an expansion of our seniors housing in Blackstone, VA and partnering on four tax credit applications for projects Emporia, Warrenton, King William County and Henrico County.

– Larry Dickenson, President

Wesley Housing Development Corporation

Wesley Housing’s vision is that everyone in the greater Washington, DC region has a safe, quality, affordable home, serving as a foundation to thrive, and has a place of value in the community. This guides our mission of opening doors to brighter futures for our most vulnerable community members by creating and operating healthy, supportive, stable, affordable housing communities. For over four decades, we have served over 25,000 residents in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. We currently manage 31 properties (more than 2,800 residents) in Alexandria, Arlington, Manassas, Fairfax County, and the District. We also manage 11 Community Resource/Support Service Centers that offer a full range of crucially needed programs and services to support children, adults, seniors, those with chronic disease, and those with disabilities to regain their dignity and renew their lives.

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

- Wesley Housing acquired its second and third properties in the District, 1 Hawaii Ave. and 410 Cedar St. Apartments.
- Construction completed on The Fallstead, a new apartment community in McLean, which added 82 units of committed affordable housing to the area for low-income seniors aged 62+.
- Development plans began with Fairlington Presbyterian Church in Alexandria to build 81 new affordable housing units. Construction is expected to begin in 2020, with completion by late 2021.
- Development plans began on The Arden, a new Alexandria community, which will feature up to 139 affordable units. Construction is expected to begin in late 2019, with completion by 2021.

- Development plans began on The Cadence, a new Arlington community, which will feature 97 mixed-income units. Construction is expected to begin by the end of 2019.
- Development plans began on Senseny Place, a new Winchester community, in partnership with St. Paul's on the Hill Episcopal Church, which will feature 70 affordable units for seniors. Estimated completion date 2021.
- Renovations on Brookland Place (DC, 84 units) and Culpepper Garden (Arlington, 204 units) began in 2018, to be complete in 2019.
- Redevelopment plans began for 1 Hawaii Avenue Apartments; the project will nearly double the density of the current affordable residential site.

RESIDENT SERVICES

- **Housing Stability Initiative:** Every month, 400+ adults take advantage of housing stability and eviction prevention programs such as crisis intervention, referrals to community resources, financial literacy, household budgeting, resume building and job search assistance, computer training, and certification courses. Through the work of our Housing Stability Specialists, nearly 100% of "high priority" referrals (688/690 households) maintained their housing in 2018, 150 sessions of adult employment programming took place, 30 individuals obtained new and/or improved employment, and 50 residents participated in health and wellness activities each month. Over 110 children and teens participated in youth programming every month, with 90 attending a learning intensive summer camp.
- **Volunteers:** In 2018, volunteers provided 11,900+ hours of service (valued at \$416,850) by helping with food security initiatives, after school programs, adult education including ESOL, health and fitness classes, and summer camp. As a result, 350 youth received new school supplies from our annual drive, and 800+ residents received gifts through our Holiday Help program.

– Shelley S. Murphy, President/CEO

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRIES

Greetings from your campus ministries. Throughout this report you're invited to enjoy the glory sightings of mission and transformation taking place in our campus ministries. But first, I want to thank you and your congregations for your faithful support of the evangelism, care, mission and discipleship happening all the time on our campuses across the Commonwealth of Virginia. Our process for ministry is very simply the three "E's." We invite students to **EXPLORE** through events like the Pace Center's (VCU) \$1 Lunch Thursdays where students are introduced to food they can afford from a diversity of cultures. Next comes **ENGAGE**. After beginning the process of building relationships, our students are invited to engage through worship, Bible study and small groups like the nine "Communities of Grace" (COG's) small groups at Virginia Tech, or the 80+ students in weekly worship at FLOW (wesley at VSU). Finally, we **EMBODY**. To embody Christ to the world takes as many forms as there are followers, but some examples are the various ways our campus ministries facilitate students engaging the greater community like the Life Groups at Arise (GMU) who took turns volunteering at a local church's hypothermia shelter this winter.

Each year we follow the stories of young adults who find a home-away-from-home in one of our campus ministries. In these ministries, young adults are continually formed, challenged, and sent, eventually moving on to what's next for them. Many of these young adults will attend seminary, while many others will follow their careers, engaging in faithful service in local churches wherever they land. We celebrate returning a host of faithful Christ followers, lay and clergy alike, to our local churches and into God's wide mission field. Brothers and sisters, these are the fruits of your faithfulness to God and of the Holy Spirit moving in and through our campuses.

– Rob Lough, Chair

After three years of faithful service with the BHECM, Rev. Rob Lough will be stepping down as chair of the board. Personally (and I believe this sentiment is shared by the BHECM and campus ministers alike), I am deeply grateful for Rob's commitment to campus ministries, his forward-focused leadership, and his love and support for all of us who are engaged in what I understand as the ultimate American missional frontier. Rob has led us through many important decisions, transitions, and initiatives. However, I have learned most from his pastoral heart and willingness to listen and learn from those around him.

Please join us in thanking Rob for his time in this crucial leadership role!

– Paulo Lopes, Director of Next Generation Ministries

FLOW – Wesley Foundation at Virginia State University

A glory sighting for the FLOW Wesley Foundation during the year 2018 is related to the development of a new ministry stemming from the desire of our students to become intentionally involved with the Acts of Mercy by feeding the hungry. FLOW has engaged in new partnerships that facilitate opportunities to connect with the community in this regard!!

Our first new partner is the Totty Place in Ettrick, Virginia located a tenth of a mile from the Ettrick United Methodist Church sanctuary. The Totty Place is an adult group home of 22 residents. On the first Friday of each month, FLOW orders a meal from a local restaurant and serves it at the facility. Bob Lamb, Pastor of the Ettrick United Methodist Church accompanies our students and shares an inspirational devotional message from the Word of God just before the meal. This is a powerful witness to the Glory of God that has built a significant relationship between the Totty Place, the Ettrick United Methodist Church, and the FLOW Wesley Foundation!! It is now a common occurrence to see members of the Totty Place worship with the Ettrick UMC congregation on Sundays at 11:00 am!! We initiated this ministry in June of 2018 and have served a total of 132 dinners in the year of 2018. We are blessed to continue this ministry in 2019 and beyond!

Our second partner is the Downtown Churches United HOPE Center in Petersburg, Virginia. Our ministry served 120 meals each month in August, September, October and November. We were blessed to have partnered with the Metropolitan Baptist Church in Petersburg and Bermuda Hundred United Methodist Church in Chester in delivering these ministry services!! We are thankful to have been able to prepare and serve a total of 480 meals in 2018 and are thankful to also continue this ministry in 2019!!

To support the ministry of feeding the hungry, our students came up with the idea of a fundraiser to allow help with the cost of this endeavor!! Each Wednesday, our students run a snack shop on the campus of Virginia State in the Foster Hall Lobby from 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm. Our students have soft drinks, snack chips, candy bars, fruit snacks, and other popular items for ranging from 50 cents to a dollar!! The prices are the most competitive around for these snacks and generate proceeds that defer the costs of the items served during these ministry occasions! Every snack counts, as each item purchased is an opportunity for students to help us in responding to the call of God in Isaiah 58:10 to “pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.” We thank God for the glory of being able to work together as disciples of Jesus Christ. We are delighted to be involved in the process of making disciples who are “lifelong learners who influence others to serve.”

IGNITE NORFOLK – Wesley Foundation at Old Dominion University (ODU)

Our IGNITE Norfolk ministry community serves not only the spiritual needs of the ODU community but the physical needs as well. This last year, our food pantry served between 12 and 15 individuals/families per week and continues to be one of the highlights and mainstays of the four year old ministry. I was particularly blessed by a shorty but impactful conversation that I had with a young man who was one of our clients. He had already been serviced by our intern and was just about ready to leave. As I entered the area where he stood, I happily greeted him and inquired, “How is your day going?” He spontaneously gave an authentic sigh of relief. He said, “Much better, now that I know where my next meal is coming from.”

I know that statistics say 1 in 4 college students experience food insecurity. And with a student population of 25,000, some 6300 ODU students may face this problem. But to hear these words from one student was certainly touching, and I will remember the expression on his face, the words he spoke, and the feeling it ignited in my heart forever. Truly, this is what is meant when we hear the words, “Even if only one person is blessed or touched, the journey is all worthwhile.” And so, I can relate to the words of a songwriter, “If I can help somebody, I know that my living is not in vain.” This experience resonates regularly as IGNITE continues to pursue sustainability for our food pantry. And yes, we have been blessed as individuals and churches continue to give, give, give.

– Rev. Maxine Thomas

PACE – Wesley Foundation at Virginia Commonwealth University

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. – 1 Peter 4:10. After several semesters of prayer and listening to fellow students it became clear to the students at The Pace Center that God-given gifts and passions abound in the VCU community.

One engineering student was stirred by the Spirit to help fellow students use their gifts to serve God and one another. He began a ministry called Community Café where VCU students cook their favorite recipes for other members of the VCU community. Every Thursday morning, a different group of students come to Pace’s kitchen ready to share their culture with the VCU community through food. Their recipes are as local as Richmond, and as far away as Ghana, Guatemala, and Thailand. Pace provides the food and the kitchen, but it is the gifts and the passions of the student chefs that make lunch time a great feast.

With generous donations and grants from local churches, the conference, and individuals, Pace can offer this meal to VCU community members for \$1. By partnering with RamPantry, VCU’s food pantry, Pace’s Community Café reaches some of the nearly 40% of students who experience food insecurity at VCU.

Pace’s Community Café is a glory sighting where students discover the gifts and passions God has given them and celebrate those gifts and passions by serving their neighbors. The result is a great feast of people from diverse backgrounds, faiths, and sexualities. Gathering with each other. Sharing with one another. And creating community. Pace strives to be a foretaste of the Kingdom

of God on VCU's campus - the Community Café mirrors that great feast in heaven.

– Rev. Katie Gooch

Wesley Foundation at Longwood University & Hampden-Sydney College

This past year at the Wesley Foundation in Farmville has been one of change and new opportunities. After 16 years of faithful service and dedication to the ministry with and for the Students of Longwood and Hampden-Sydney we said thank you to Rev. Richard Meiser for all that he has done here at Wesley. In July of 2018 we welcomed Rev. Justin Hicks and his family to our family and we hit the ground running. We are excited about what is happening here at Wesley and on our Campuses. We are finding new and creative ways to invite and be with our college students. Our students can most accurately reflect upon and share with you the ways we are working to share the love of Christ here in Farmville.”

Over the last year, I have had the opportunity to co-lead, and now lead small groups. Leading Small Groups has allowed me to be a disciple in ways I never saw myself being before. At this time as a leader, it has helped not only my friends, but myself see and interpret the message as a group rather than just teaching ourselves. At first, I was scared to share the word due to fear of misinterpreting and misleading, but I have found that to be the opposite. Small Groups has led me to find strength in the understanding and encouraged me to share more about what gets me through each week, and that is my faith. Prior to Small Groups, I was shy when it came to sharing the gospel and now I have the enjoyment of sharing it confidently every week. Later in life, I want to become a Youth Leader, and Small Groups has allowed me the opportunity to see into my future and encouraged me not to give up my dream. Each week I find joy in researching and deciding on what I want to talk about in ways that my peers will understand. Not only has it helped me relate my life as a college student to the word, but it has also helped me create a routine to set aside more time to reconnect with God each week.

– Hailey Brickhouse, Longwood Class of 2020

I have been going to Wesley for two years now and it has become a major part of my weekly routine. This past semester, I have enjoyed planning our mission trips here at Wesley. It has given me a chance to explore the ways that I can help people while doing God's work. Planning the mission trip is my favorite part of the process. I get to think of some way that Wesley can make the greatest impact to a community outside our own. Doing mission work has allowed me to see all the people in need in the world and to discover ways that I can help them. Knowing I have ways that I can help people has allowed my faith to grow. At Wesley, I am discovering new things about God and getting closer to him every day. Once I graduate College, I plan to join the Peace Corp and try to help as many people I can all over the world. Being strong in my faith will help me make a greater impact in the lives of all the future people I get to meet and help.

– Christie Douglas, Longwood Class of 2021

I began attending Wesley Campus Ministry during my freshman year at Longwood University after being invited by a senior I met at the involvement fair. When I attended the first time, I had no idea that I would be meeting my best friend and finding my home away from home. Through Wesley I was able to make friends with people whose faith was important to them in the same way that mine was important to me. Our small group my freshman and sophomore year helped me to navigate the struggles of starting college in a new state and town where I knew no one. Wesley became my homebase at Longwood and the comfort I needed when I was stressed or missing home. Since Wesley provided this comfort, it became and has stayed important to me even now as a Senior. Attending Wesley is the reason I have stayed connected to my faith in college because I found a group of people who were welcoming, kind, and made me feel like I belonged with them.

– Anna Knapp, Longwood Class of 2019

Elwood's cabinet has been a wonderful opportunity of growth for me, both as a community member and in my faith. Through working with Elwood's Cabinet my eyes have been opened to a need in my community, and I have been blessed to be a part of the team to fulfill that need. We have seen the generosity of our peers through the amount of donations we have received and the number of volunteers wanting to help out. We are even getting to the point that we need to expand our shelves due to the number of donations we have! We have reached a few of our friends that need this service every week, and our numbers keep growing. It's nice to know that a service so new is already becoming a welcomed and appropriately used part of this community

– Madison Trebour, Longwood Class of 2019

We believe now more than ever that lives are changed and impacted by sharing the Gospel and allowing our leaders to lead and take ownership of what we are doing here and we thank all those who have supported us over the past year.

– Rev. Justin Hicks

Wesley Foundation at University of William & Mary

The Beloved Community, that was Wesley's theme last fall semester. Little did we know that on the Sunday night we were introducing the theme, we would be invited to embody it. The message came to us from the president of Hillel, the Jewish student group

on campus. She asked if, even though it was the same night as our dinner and large group, they could use our kitchen and fellowship hall for their Rosh Hashanah dinner. “Of course,” we said, and decided that we would do a picnic dinner outside for Wesley that night. The next day our campus minister, Max, was chatting with the rabbi at the local synagogue, Temple Beth El, and mentioned that Hillel was going to have their Rosh Hashanah dinner at Wesley. David, the rabbi, shared that the synagogue and Hillel were having their Rosh Hashanah worship service at the Unitarian Universalist sanctuary, because the synagogue was too small. Max asked if Wesley could meet at the synagogue while Hillel met at Wesley. “Of course,” the rabbi said.

Thus, on the very first Sunday night that we shared the theme The Beloved Community:

1. Hillel was cooking and serving their Rosh Hashanah dinner at Wesley.
2. Wesley was meeting at the synagogue for pizza and Beloved Community Worship.
3. Temple Beth El and Hillel celebrated Rosh Hashanah together later that evening at the Williamsburg Unitarian Universalist sanctuary.

It was an evening of the Beloved Community indeed. During our worship, we shared that traits of The Beloved Community are that the community offers radial hospitality to everyone, an inclusive family rather than exclusive club; and recognizes and honors the image of God in every human being. Thanks be to God that we, along with Hillel, Temple Beth El, and Williamsburg Unitarian Universalist embodied those traits on that very evening.

– Rev. Max Blalock

Wesley Foundation at Virginia Tech

“We have no design but to promote the glory of God.” – John Wesley

“The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one.” - John 17:22

We begin each of our Team Meetings and Communities of Grace (Small Groups) with the question: “Where have you seen the glory of God?” We believe that the more we look for “Glory Sightings” the more we will find them in our lives and in our ministry. We are witnessing a movement of the Spirit at Wesley through the ways we see God at work in our ministries as we seek to “Love Out Loud” on our campus, in our community, throughout the nation, and in the world. We are passionate about being a faith community that is inclusive to ALL people, that seeks to grow spiritual leaders to be in mission and serve others, and to reach out to students on our campus so that they can experience the love of God in Christ Jesus.

So, let me share some of our “Glory Sightings”:

- Over this past year we have seen an increase in our Communities of Grace (Small Groups) from 4 to 9 (with about 6-8 students in each)
- We have seen our average number in worship grow from about 35-40 to now 50
- Ecclesia (our night of worship and discipleship) grew from around 10 to 15 students
- We had multiple students come to Wesley who were active in our Youth Retreats that we lead each year
- Our LGBTQ+ Community of Grace became more active and grew to almost 10 students
- A student from Liberty University stopped by our building admiring the Pride Flag and United Methodist Cross and Flame saying that this is a sign from God that she was loved even when she thought she wasn’t by the Church
- Students organized a Mental Health Seminar with other student groups and the counseling center that had over 100 students attend to hear about Mental Health and Faith
- Our food pantry (209 Manna Ministries) saw over 400 students receive the food and support they needed
- We had 30 students go to Jacksonville, FL to help UVMIM with Hurricane Irma and do homeless ministry on the streets of the city
- 31 students went to Camp Dickenson for our Fall Retreat where we shared about our Values and how to live those daily
- Our students are transforming lives of Middle School and High School students through our FUN143 tutoring ministry on Mondays and Thursdays
- We connected with First UMC, Salem, to make 10 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child
- Students traveled to Danville, VA to help with Flood Recovery in the Fall
- Worship at Mt. Pleasant UMC in Roanoke was a Spirit-filled experience with our students sharing their faith through testimony and music.
- The Fusion and Roanoke District Youth Retreats provided an opportunity to lead over 200 youth in worship and small groups
- Welcome week saw our students engage with over 500 students with Life-Sized Game Night, Swag Bags, and a Cook Out!
- And more...

This is seeing God’s glory at work in our community. Lives are being transformed and community is being strengthened. Our students are committing themselves to the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ and it is witnessed in the ways they are living out their faith in service to each other and their neighbors.

Wesley continues to be a vital, authentic, and vibrant presence on the Virginia Tech campus. Our students live out their faith in

such meaningful ways and are leaders throughout campus. Members of our Board of Directors are always speaking to the multitude of ministries our students are engaged in while still doing classes. Being student-led, it is always refreshing to see how dedicated they are to being followers of Jesus while living that out through leading our ministry in worship, fellowship, discipleship, missions and outreach.

We are excited about the opportunities to live into our new vision at Wesley and we are appreciative of our wonderful Annual Conference that supports us greatly! Thank you for being a Conference that embodies the call “To be disciples of Jesus Christ who are lifelong learners who influence others to serve” (Bishop Sharma Lewis) through ministry with college students.

– Rev. Bret Gresham

Wesley Foundation at University of Virginia

When the disciples pointed out to Jesus that the crowds were hungry, Jesus surprised them by not dismissing the crowds to go find their own food. To the tired and hungry disciples, far from town, Jesus said, “You give them something to eat.” So they scrounged up five loaves of bread and two fish, which Jesus blessed, broke, and gave to the disciples to disperse. More than 5000 ate their fill and yet there were leftovers (Mark 6: 30-44).

Through the generosity and faithfulness of the Virginia Annual Conference, Wesley has more than five loaves and two fish to share with one another and the university community. But, like the disciples, we know what it’s like to be a small group in the midst of a larger group, far from home, all cranky and hungry for something we can’t conjure up for ourselves. So we gather at Christ’s Table every Sunday evening to hear again the invitation to feast. We gather to hear that the Table doesn’t belong to us or to any iteration of the church and we gather to hear that there is a place at it for everyone born. Because we gather and are fed here each week, we can give others in the UVA community something to eat, too.

When I asked our student leaders what they wanted to communicate to you about our ministry this year, a second-year student, aptly named Justice, mentioned serving one another Communion in a circle around the Table and “bringing love to our school and community through simple acts (cookie bake, dinners, Ramadan).” We are fed; we give others something to eat. Love looks like this.

Love takes the form of heart-shaped cookies baked all weekend and handed out to frazzled students between classes on a cold February morning. Love looks like home-cooked Tuesday night dinners, offered by local churches to students too used to dining halls and food on the go. We gathered for bagels and conversation during the heavy news of the Kavanaugh hearings, in the weeks when several students shared with me their own experiences with sexual violation; we fed one another tenderly, with space to hear and absorb the pain and confusion we have endured. Last fall love was delivered in the form of warm cookies to our Hillel neighbors as they met in the wake of the Tree of Life synagogue shooting. Later this spring – during the final week of exams when Ramadan begins – love will look like United Methodists and Jews and Baptists and Catholics and non-denominational Christians all gathered together at Wesley to host a series of dinners for our Muslim neighbors, who will fast each day and be welcomed here each evening to break their fast and pray. (Thank you to the Virginia UM Foundation for the “Micah 6:8 Grant” we received to support Ramadan dinners!) As we have helped support Wesley Memorial’s ministry of sanctuary for our neighbor, Maria, love has pulled us together around pancake-laden, Mardi Gras tables and around those topped with hand-made tamales. We asked Maria to cook for us one Tuesday and then listened as she told us about her life and the journey she has taken to find sanctuary here.

You give them something to eat.

It was a Tuesday night this spring semester when I stood greeting students before our weekly dinner and a colleague texted me the General Conference final vote. Students came in bewildered, anxious, hurt, and full of questions. So we did what we do: we gave one another something to eat, we talked about what happened, we prayed, and we made room for everyone at the table. The next Sunday we came again to Christ’s Table, where at least 20% of our disciples gathered that day identify as LGBTQIA. One such person came back on that Sunday after not having been present since the middle of fall semester. It wasn’t by accident or mistake, but with the full knowledge that no matter how long it had been and no matter what else the church says, Wesley would make room for her and give her something to eat. And we did.

– Rev. Deborah Lewis

RISE Faith Community at James Madison University

Life at RISE over this past year has been exciting as we have seen significant growth in a variety of areas.

First, our college ministry is embarking on some exciting new paths. Eastern Mennonite has restructured its campus ministry and invited RISE to become an affiliate campus ministry alongside the chaplain’s office. What this has meant is that RISE has significantly more access to EMU’s campus, including monthly meetings with student ministry assistants as well as the other 4 hand-picked affiliate ministries from the area. Our focus there has been primarily working with EMU’s “Safe Space” student organization that advocates for LGBTQ+ students on campus who we joined to offer a beautiful campus-wide chapel service with in December. Our JMU student outreach has also had some exciting growth as we experimented with a new small group experience called

“Story”. We saw genuine transformation within our students as they learned to explore their life stories and discover where God has been present with them throughout their lives. We are currently in the process of launching a new, fully student-led campus ministry program in the Fall of 2019 which we have hopes will significantly grow our impact at JMU.

The larger RISE community has also experienced exciting growth and maturity. We hosted several strong community-wide events including a Disc Golf Tournament in the Summer and an enormously successful Mac and Cheese Cook-Off event in October that drew over 400 Harrisonburg residents. We have plans to expand that event even further this coming year.

The Love Packs ministry (a weekend food backpack program) continues to thrive and we are currently working on finding funding so that we can partner with several other schools in the future. RISE and Shine, a hygiene distribution ministry, continues to provide hygiene products monthly to nearly 50 primarily immigrant and refugee families in our area.

This year, we started a new outreach ministry in partnership with several other local churches, that we call “With”. This program leverages our proximity to the Harrisonburg-Rockingham County Jail and opens our doors on Saturday mornings to family members of incarcerated persons who are waiting for their scheduled visitation time to come into our facilities at 60 West Market St. (what we fondly refer to as 60 West) to get a cup of coffee, a place to sit, and kind folks to chat with. The stories coming out of this new ministry have been genuinely beautiful.

Our Sunday Worship service continues to be a vibrant and life-changing part of our community. We continue to find new ways to utilize our space at 60 West, bringing together art, music, preaching, discussion groups, and weekly communion in exciting and new ways every week. It is truly a rare Sunday that we don’t have new visitors coming through our doors on Sunday morning where they experience a diverse, inclusive, affirming, and Holy Spirit-led community of Jesus followers that seeks to Mend God’s Creation Together.

– Rev. Amanda Garber

ARISE at George Mason University

Arise has seen many Glory Sightings this year. We are in the midst of something new and seeing the new launch of our ministry in the fall of 2018 continues to bear fruit.

This year has seen two students decide to be baptized. One baptism took place in a local church and the second during our worship service on campus. It has been awesome to witness the Holy Spirit move students to seek baptism! This year also saw our first winter break mission trip to Honduras. In January, we took a team of nine to work with the Leadership Center. Our students worked with the students and staff to help teach, learn and serve. For several of the students this was the first time they had been out of the country, and students have shared that it was lifechanging. Students were sharing of the hospitality they experienced and the ways their sense of God and community were deepened as a result of the time spent in Honduras. We look forward to returning to The Leadership Center next January.

Arise continues to grow and it is in large part to the generosity of our partner churches and denominations. We look forward to fulfilling our vision for ministry, which is We believe in Jesus and thus welcome all, share God’s universal love and compassionately live out our faith on campus and in the community. In the coming months we look forward to sharing God’s love with all of our students at GMU, and will continue serving faithfully in our ecumenical community of faith.

– Rev. Drew Ensz

Campus Christian Community at University of Mary Washington

This academic year has been a big one for Campus Christian Community. Throughout the year, we have worked on a plan for reimagining what our ministry could be. With so many other ministries at the University of Mary Washington, we had to focus on what made us different and why people would want to become involved in our ministry. We decided that what we are and what we want to focus on is being an intentional community, where all are welcome and where if you come once, your name will be remembered. This has led us to have a larger group of underclassmen and it is exciting to think about what the future of the ministry will be with so many of our leaders and students being freshmen and sophomores.

Our students, as well as others on our campus, have taken up the cause of mental health and what they can do to improve their own lives as well as those of students they interact with. We also have been interested in exploring more of where our lives of faith interact with mental health. We began the year with participating in the “Out of the Darkness” walk which raises money for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. We also have had programs throughout the year focused on mindfulness, mental health in scripture, and self-care. We have built more on our tradition of having Mindfulness Weeks at midterms in order to help our students feel more grounded and connected to God in stressful times. This year we have included conversations, meditation, yoga, and a spirituality center as a part of this week.

Other highlights from our year include Pastors Panels, where we invite local clergy to speak and answer questions from our students, a bible study through the book of Acts, and working to increase our ties with local churches. A first for our ministry this year will include an alumni reunion on June 1 in conjunction with the University’s reunion weekend. We have not had the opportunity to celebrate and connect with our alumni this way in the past.

One of the big transitions for our ministry is the departure of our Campus Minister, Rev. Shannon Waite Hendricks in June. It will be a big change for our ministry after five years of journeying together, but the future holds many possibilities that we are look-

ing forward to engaging with.

– Rev. Shannon Waite

Wesley-Westminster Foundation at Norfolk State University

The Wesley-Westminster Foundation (WWF) at Norfolk State University received its second award and I celebrated my fifth year as the Director. We were awarded with the 2018 Excellence in Community Service Award. Our ministry received college-wide recognition and a plaque for our outstanding service to the college and the community. WWF Campus Ministry is an ecumenical ministry of the United Methodist and Presbyterian Churches seeking to impact the College, the Community, and the Current Culture with Christian Principles, Open Hearts and Open Minds. It is our mission to provide a safe place to explore and to experience one's faith, while offering a respectful and non-threatening environment of love, service to others and learning.

The Foundation House offers students a place to forge friendships, to spend time in prayer and study and to simply enjoy themselves. Students enjoy a space to grow and to develop their faith. Bible Study, Prayer, Small Groups and weekly meals are offered. We worship and work together. We participate in all school sponsored events as a team. We marched together in the MLK Day Parade on Campus; represent Campus Ministry at Open Houses throughout the year and offer spiritual support to faculty, staff and students. Our annual revival and concert was beyond blessed. More than 250 students were in attendance for our two-night event. Guest choirs, groups from campus and the community participated in this event. We continue to strive to make disciples for the world.

Yearly, we engage in a Spiritual Growth Retreat. This year more than 20 students gathered to stretch their faith. We not only had a Spiritual Retreat but also a trained musician hosted a music workshop and offered additional professional training to our choir. It is our goal to grow together and to strengthen those with whom we come in contact. We collaborate with other campus ministries and will host the Gospel Celebration during Spartan Fest. The WWF Campus Ministry Choir, Regenerated, opened for gospel recording artist Kierra Sheard during Homecoming. The choir has been invited to several community churches and even sang at the sold-out Roc Solid Charity Event that raises money to fight childhood cancer. Soon, Regenerated will celebrate its first Anniversary. This year we adopted seven graduate students from Ghana and assisted them with items for their homes. They continue to be an active part of the ministry.

As usual, Family Weekend was a huge success. This year we had more than 90 students and their parents present. This is double the normal attendance. We provided the music, led worship and offered the sermon for this Inspirational Service for the college. We volunteer at the Judeo Christian Outreach Center, continue to feed the homeless through our hashtag lunch bag initiative and have extended our reach to students on campus by offering food and other snacks to students who may be suffering from food shortage. Additionally, with the help of the United Methodist Women from Norfolk United Methodist Church and donations from some of our board members, we also offer toiletries and feminine products to students in need.

We continue to participate as a ministry team in Homecoming Activities, Spring Fest, Faith Fairs, all Organization Fairs, Open Houses and other events hosted by the college. It is our aim to know Christ and to make Him known throughout our campus and our community.

– Rev. Joy Carrington

BOARD OF LAITY

The Virginia Conference Board of Laity like everyone else in our denomination in 2019 anxiously awaited the results of prayer and legislative opportunities from the Called General Conference in St. Louis. Our denomination including the Virginia Conference is very diverse. The Board of Laity has expressed a very mixed set of emotions as a result of General Conference. However the one single thread we can all agree on is God is in control and God has something yet to be revealed to all.

For several years now the Board has been organized under the three focus areas of Engaging, Equipping and Empowering the laity with the help of our clergy partners. Last Annual Conference Bishop Lewis challenged all churches to intentionally continue or develop new ways to nurture groups of disciples by 2020, in all our churches.

Realizing the conference vision Bishop Lewis brought to us: to be disciples of Jesus Christ who are lifelong learners who influence others to serve, we are in the beginning process of creating a Board emphasis for the conference in the spirit of our 2019 Annual Conference theme: Moving Forward in God's Mission.

Disciples Worship, Disciples Make New Disciples, Disciples Grow Their Faith, Disciples Engage in Mission and Disciples Share Their Recourses For Mission.

These targets will be merged with our ministry of prayer, presence, gifts, service and witness. To enable the Board to be more responsive we have realigned the Board into four Prayer / Work groupings mirroring our geographical locations.

We will continue to focus on ways to enhance our Lay Servant Ministry under the direction of Richard Speirs and David Bailey. Our On Demand courses are still available and active. Lay Servant Academy is scheduled for August 2,3,&4 at Randolph Macon in early August 2019. Local District courses are being created and offered throughout the year.

We continue to advocate for the United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men. We have added our Conference Director of Scouting Ministries, Bill Chaffin, to our Board. The ministry and evangelism opportunities working with the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts,

Camp Fire and Boys and Girls Clubs is flourishing. The Bishop's Scouting Dinners have been well received. The UMMen Advance is again going to be in Virginia Beach July 27,28, 2019.

We have celebrated the leadership of three District Lay Leaders whose terms have ended on the Board. Bobby Thompson, Martha Murray, Mira Suddreth have greatly enhanced their respective district ministries. We thank them all. There are servants among us always. In addition we have celebrated new faces joining the board. We welcome Dave Berry, Harold White, Jr., Jeb Guy, John D. Glass, Gloria C Phillips and Susan White.

We thank Rev. Danny Kesner, for being our Cabinet representative, Rev. Teresa Keezel one of our co-opted members. We thank Rev. Mark Ogren our staff representative for guidance and support. Thanks to MaryKaye Cochran, and Cindy Ingroff, administrative assistants for invaluable assistance and gifted wisdom always.

Bishop Sharma Lewis challenged us in June 2017 with a Vision for our conference - A disciple of Christ is a Lifelong learner who Influences others to serve. We pray for Bishop Lewis as she heals and cannot wait for her to be back in our midst. I and the Board are partnering with Bishop Pete Weaver as we lead together in our respective service to Christ our Lord for a portion of this year. We bless this time together with him.

– Warren R. Harper, Conference Lay Leader

CHURCH DEVELOPMENT TEAM

The Church Development Team (CDT) has been working hard to fulfill its mission to assist in creating New Faith Communities and supporting the work of vitality in existing churches under the All Things New Plan. Below you will find CDT's activities toward this work.

The Five Talent Academy continues to offer training opportunities related to worship, financial stewardship, discipleship, evangelism, and ministry with the poor. In March, Rev. Rachel Billups spoke about faith development and October's focus was worship with Bishop Sharma Lewis, Greg Moore, Matt Miofsky and Jason Byassee.

The Equipping Planter team directs the invitation, discernment, and training of planters of new faith communities for the Virginia Conference. Those who are interested in planting engage in a process of discernment as to each person's gifts for this unique ministry. The first stage is the Church Leadership Institute, which is held annually each fall. The team is using a new planter assessment tool from Lifeway.

The New Faith Community subgroup of the CDT continues to help create a culture of excellence, fruitfulness and vitality in the area of new faith community development in our conference. This year we have continued to resource and encourage recently initiated new faith communities, local churches, district Boards of Mission and their equivalents, the Cabinet and others in our conference to live out the "All Things New" strategy through the planting of new faith communities. In addition to resourcing our conference in the area of new faith community development, the New Faith Community subgroup also receives, reviews and makes recommendations to the CDT and the Common Table regarding funding for new faith community development proposals. This year we received multiple proposals that were reviewed and given careful consideration. We remain prayerful and excited about the future of new faith community development within our conference. In July of 2018, two new faith communities were launched, Restoration Loudoun and Fairfax Multisite.

To further support growth and renewal in existing churches, CDT has partnered with four districts to offer Next Level Innovations, a three and a half year investment in church change and leadership development.

The Church Development Team partners with the Large, Medium and Small Church leadership teams. These teams offer training events both for pastors who have just moved (Just in Time trainings) as well as training for clergy and laity in order to increase vitality.

We would like to thank Mark Ogren and MaryKaye Cochran for their efforts that help make "All Things New" in the Virginia Conference.

– Melissa Dunlap, Chair

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

Members of the Commission on Disabilities (COD) committee continues to strive to uphold our mission statement by providing advocacy, education, and direct service on behalf of persons with challenging conditions. We do this by affirming the responsibilities of the Church to be in ministry with all persons regardless of their physical and/or mental conditions. The Commission continues to promote full inclusion of persons with disabilities and other challenging conditions in the life of the local church and the VA Annual Conference.

We meet at least three times annually at the Conference Center Office. Our committee is made up of numerous clergy and laity throughout our Conference and we strive to have a representative from each district in our VA Conference. In 2018 we approved grants to local churches totaling \$2,225 to improve accessibility in their facilities.

We continue to have a good relationship with our Camp Rainbow committee and Heart Havens by supporting them in all ways possible. We have a representative from COD that connects with Camp Rainbow and a representative from Heart Havens that is a member of our committee.

Members of COD have placed articles in the *Advocate* magazine and in the February 2019 issue we reminded churches that February 3, 2019 was Disability Awareness Sunday. We continue to work with the annual conference on educating all our clergy and laity

on how to effectively interact with people that have challenging conditions by updating our language in our literature and we are currently working on a video to share at our Annual Conference.

We would like to thank all our clergy and laity with their support toward our COD committee and if you would like to be a part of our committee in some way you can visit us at our display table at our Annual Conference. We look forward at helping empower our churches and people to continue to strive to be inclusive and be a people with *Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors*.

– Neil W. McLaughlin, Chair

COMMISSION ON ETHNIC MINORITY CONCERNS AND ADVOCACY

The Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy (CEMCA) serves to be the prophetic voice for the full and equal participation of all ethnic and racial constituents into the total life and mission of the Virginia Annual Conference. This year our work focused on education, strategic planning, advocacy, and accompaniment into account God's church at all levels. We believe that our commission can stimulate individual and group agency that will continue moving the Virginia Annual Conference forward to be more inclusive, ethnically-diverse, and racially just.

The Commission represents African-American Ministries, Latino Clergy Caucus, Immigration Task Force, Asian-American Ministries, Native American Ministries, Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR), VA FOCUS 2020, Methodists Associated for the Cause of the Hispanic-American (MARCHA/ National) and the Southeastern Jurisdictional (SEJ) Hispanic-Latino Caucus.

This year we saw many areas of continuing growth in our constituencies and our commission. We continue to use social media with #CEMCAVAUMC and are launching a Facebook page to better inform and educate on a diversity of concerns. We will continue to partner with the Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) for conference monitoring efforts at both annual conference and at district events, like the Bishop's Chat 'n Chews. We connectionally endorsed a GCORR award winner: *Faith Justice Foundation* and their social justice work around race-related issues. We had multiple members of our commission present at the called General Conference 2019, serving in varying capacities. In addition, our commission has chosen two uniquely qualified laity for election as delegates for General Conference 2020. Our primary endorsement is for commission member, David Brown.

We are excited by the continuing work of the *Latino Clergy Caucus* in Lay Servant Leadership development, grant development for ministry, mentorship, and multilingual faith resources. The SEJ Latino H/L Caucus took inspiration from Virginia's *Immigration Task Force* and held its bi-annual gathering in May 2019, focusing on faith-issues around Immigration. We celebrated with our Native American brothers and sisters during the season of Lent by following their vision quest.

As a follow up to the Bishop's Convocation on Race and Reconciliation in 2018, we invite everyone to our display to complete a survey of "where is our conference now", a year later in our conversations about racial positioning and individual bias. Links to resources are on our website (<https://vaumc.org/cemca>). We are also here to be your resource in these conversations. We are looking ahead to Bishop Lewis's return and the continuation of this bi-annual event in 2020.

We encourage all members of the Annual conference to focus on the talking points outlined in the *Race & Reconciliation* Convocation's resources when engaging in difficult, faith-driven conversations as we continue the journey ever closer to becoming the Beloved Community.

With the help of each member of the annual conference, guidance by the Holy Spirit, and by the healing love that can only come from Christ our Savior, we look forward to continuing our partnerships in educating and resourcing our conference, at each district, and through the local church, in this divine work of reknitting the fabric that injustices and prejudices have torn.

– Lori Valentine de Segovia & Lyle Morton, Co-Chairs

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN

The Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) encourages participation of women in the full life of the United Methodist church. At each Annual Conference, COSROW works with the Committee on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy (CEMCA) to observe and record the participation of women, minorities, youth and young adults, and persons with disabilities in the leadership roles of the church. This data collection continues at Annual Conference 2019.

COSROW also encourages our District Representatives to begin gatherings of women in the district for local ministry support and advocacy, such as a listening post or networking. COSROW can also send trained representatives to your district to hold a Listening Post.

Like us on Facebook for news, events, and updates at "Commission on the Status and Role of Women – VA United Methodist Conference."

Our next meeting is October 21, 2019 10 AM – 2 PM.

– Mary Dadisman, Clergy Chair



*The following four reports are from agencies that have been awarded
Conference Benevolence Grants:*

GRACEINSIDE

United Methodist affiliated staff:

- Chaplain Michael Blythe (Greensville Corr. Ctr. - 5-1 Cluster)
- Chaplain Donna Smith (Greensville Corr. Ctr. - 5-2 Cluster)
- Chaplain Paul Ritter (Keen Mtn. Corr. Ctr. & Marion Corr. Treatment Center)

Methodist Representatives to Gracelnside's Board of Trustees:

- Rev. Marilyn Heckstall, Liaison to Bishop Sharma Lewis (Virginia Conference UMC)
- Rev. Kevin Richardson, Liaison to Bishop Mary Virginia Taylor (Holston Conference UMC)
- Dr. John Spencer (Virginia Conference UMC; Chair, Development Committee)

With a mission field of more than 30,000 men and women, Gracelnside's mission to "save lives from the inside out" places over 30 amazing chaplains in 32 of Virginia's major state prison facilities. Unique in the United States as a Christian organization, Gracelnside is privately funded and has appreciated the support of the United Methodist denomination (one of our founders) from our beginning in 1920. Your enduring commitment to Jesus' mission behind bars helps incarcerated men and women. Because of you, they can find that essential connection to Jesus Christ and His redemptive love through worship services, baptisms, Bible studies, grief groups, recovery programs and pastoral care. You are building the Kingdom and making disciples! Here is a recent note received from "M."

"Chaplain, I'm not sure if you remember me, but I was on the worship team at Brunswick Women's Work Center. I was incarcerated for 5 years. I've been home for a year now and my faith is stronger than ever, and it's because of you and what you taught me! I'm getting my CSAC {Certified Substance Abuse Counselor} state certification, and I'm hoping to be able to help and give back. I will never forget being locked up and that feeling of being lost and forgotten. Very few people in there made me feel human (instead of being just a number). My calling is to help spread the Word - to help heal and to bring up women's self-worth so they can be the mothers their children need them to be. Please let me know how and what I can do to help my sisters in Christ. I want them to know and believe that they're worth so much - more than just a DOC resident or a prisoner. I want to help.... Thank you!"

The more time we spend behind bars, the more difference we can make—together! Gracelnside received its new 5-year contract with the Virginia Department of Corrections in 2019. With changes to the contract, GraceInside is in a stronger position than ever before. We celebrate that with your partnership and with the recognition of the DOC the value of state prison chaplaincy in Virginia has now increased from just over \$18 an hour to the national standard of \$25 an hour! Our chaplains now at last have a living wage! We also celebrate the fact that the amount of the money received from the Inmate Commissary Fund (i.e. non-taxpayer funds) through the DOC remained constant and did not decrease.

However, because of the hourly wage increase and limitations from the legislature, the DOC was forced to reduce its chaplaincy funding at many/most facilities, resulting in reduced chaplaincy hours under the contract. Because of your care, though, GraceInside was able to protect wages and bolster services at most facilities! You are helping us provide 1,000 additional hours of chaplaincy over and above the DOC contract! Praise God! Thank you SO much for caring and for continuing to help us strive toward s our goal of full-time chaplaincy at all major facilities (and appropriate levels of care at smaller facilities). We love you SO much in the Lord, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts!!!

– J. Randy Myers, President

SOCIETY OF ST. ANDREW

Forty years ago at Annual Conference, two young pastors and their families were assigned to a brand-new ministry. They were assigned to become the Society of St. Andrew—a covenant community, holding all things in common, living as stewards of creation, and praying for God's Kingdom and all the created order. Ken Horne, Ray Buchanan, Jean Horne, and Marian Kelly had no idea what our gracious God had in store for them! Within just a few years this covenant community had birthed a gleaning and food recovery ministry, sharing fresh produce with hungry people across the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Society of St. Andrew was the first gleaning organization of the modern era in the United States, and today it is both the largest such organization and the only organization with national scope.

Thank you, Virginia Conference, for the courage, vision, patience, and faith to breathe life into this fledgling ministry, 'way back in 1979! Thank you for being part of this ministry from its inception, for sharing with us a vision for a world without hunger, in which faith and stewardship meet God's abundance—and good food is shared with people in greatest need every day.

A new mission and vision statement, adopted in 2018, sets the path before SoSA for the next decade's work: Envisioning a world without hunger, in which physical and spiritual hungers are met by God's abundance and grace through Jesus Christ, the Society of St. Andrew brings people together to harvest and share healthy food, reduce food waste, and build caring communities by offering nourishment to hungry neighbors.

In 2018, 334 congregations of the Virginia Conference provided financial support to the Society of St. Andrew. 32 congregations and more than 2,100 Virginia United Methodists took part in "crop drops," produce pickups, farmers market gleaning or field gleaning.

Through the Virginia Gleaning Network, the Potato & Produce Project, and SoSA's Harvest of Hope mission work-camp program in 2018, 223 feeding agencies (soup kitchens, shelters, emergency food assistance programs, food pantries, and large food banks) across the state received more than 2,737,410 pounds of nourishing food to share with their clients—providing more than 8.2 million servings of health and hope to our hungry brothers and sisters. The Seed Potato Project (a "hand up" endeavor that provides seed potatoes to poor, land-owning Appalachian families) shared an additional million servings of good food with hungry Virginians. All this is work made possible because you care.

Nationwide, 23.1 million pounds of food (69.3 million servings) reached millions of hungry Americans in 2018 through the work of the Society of St. Andrew, through crops donated by more than 984 farmers/producers and through the gleaning and volunteer efforts of 30,680+ individuals. We are actively working to build the capacity in both funding and partnerships with farmers and feeding agencies, to expand into new areas over the next few years. United Methodist congregations across the United States will be integral to SoSA's growth, and the Virginia Conference has paved the way for relationships that now extend across the continent.

We're grateful for all the Virginia Conference congregations that join with the Society of St. Andrew through its spiritual life programs, including seasonal devotional materials, Vacation Bible School curriculum, and Bible studies. In 2017, 16 VAUMC congregations participated in SoSA's "Abundance Orchard" VBS; 188 congregations used SoSA's Advent devotional resources, and 272 congregations utilized SoSA's Lenten devotions or Good Friday Fast programs.

The Society of St. Andrew's mission fields are just that, fields and orchards. The need for volunteers throughout the year is great, and the opportunities are plentiful. Congregations that partner with SoSA have found the partnerships transformative, spurring deeper faith, greater support for local missions, and an abiding concern for those our Savior called "the least of these."

– Lynette Johnson, Executive Director

VIRGINIA INTERFAITH CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY (VICPP)

The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy (VICPP) is enormously grateful for its partnership with the Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. VICPP works to bring people of all faiths together to be a witness to the General Assembly and advocate economic, social and environmental justice throughout the Commonwealth. Highlights of our work during the past year include:

- **Passing Medicaid expansion.** VICPP and United Methodists across the Commonwealth were important in helping pass Medicaid expansion. This important step forward helps low-income families have access to affordable healthcare. Even though the program is new as of the beginning of 2019, more than 233,000 Virginians had applied for the program. Another 167,000 Virginians are eligible but haven't applied yet, which is why VICPP is now engaging congregations to help with outreach. Learn more about how your congregation can reach eligible people in your congregation or community by emailing visiting our website and downloading free resources, such as bulletin inserts at: <https://www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org/issues/access-health-care/healthcare-expansion-toolkit/>. If you wrote a letter, sent an email, attended the Day for All People Advocacy day, signed the clergy sign-on letter or talked with your Delegate or Senator about Medicaid expansion, you helped pass Medicaid expansion. To get involved, email Dora Muhammad at Dora@virginiainterfaithcenter.org.
- **Stopping and deterring wage theft.** VICPP worked throughout 2018 to line up support for a package of bills to stop and deter wage theft. During the 2019 General Assembly (January and February 2019), two of the bills passed, thanks to your and others' advocacy. One bill removes some of the historic Jim Crow exemptions from the Virginia Minimum Wage Act (exemptions like newsboys, shoe-shine boys, movie ticket takers, and concession workers). The other bill requires most employers to provide workers with paystubs explaining their pay (hours, rate of pay, deductions). Paystubs encourage employers to pay people fairly and provide documentation to workers if there are problems. The Virginia Conference has a good statement addressing the issue of wage theft. We came close to passing a bill to enable workers to take their wage claims to court (referred to as a "private cause of action") but was killed on the floor of the House by the patron referring the bill back to committee, even though we had the votes on the floor to pass it. We have more work to do on this for next year.
- **Creating Living Wage Certification programs.** VICPP helped create Living Wage Certification programs around the state. Programs have launched in Richmond, Alexandria, and Harrisonburg and are in the planning stages in Charlottesville and Williamsburg. These programs recognize and honor employers that pay living wages. VICPP would love your help in any of the cities with existing Living Wage Certification programs or to create a program in your community. For more information, contact Amanda Silcox at Amanda@virginiainterfaithcenter.org.

- **Standing with and protecting immigrants.** VICPP mobilized the faith community to support the two legislative priorities of the immigrant community – Drivers’ Privilege Cards for immigrants and in-state tuition for immigrant students who meet state residency requirements. Unfortunately, neither bill passed during the 2019 General Assembly. VICPP continued its work in Central Virginia in supporting the Central Virginia Sanctuary Network, which has supported congregations offering sanctuary and developed an extensive network of volunteers who drive undocumented immigrants to immigration-related government appointments. For more information about standing with immigrants, contact Benjamin Hoyne at Benjamin@virginiainterfaithcenter.org.
- **Reforming Virginia’s criminal justice system.** During the 2018 General Assembly, VICPP supported raising the felony threshold, which was raised from \$200 to \$500. VICPP also spent time developing relationships with criminal justice groups in order to work on additional criminal justice reform initiatives.
- **Merging with Virginia Interfaith Power and Light to fight climate change and environmental racism.** At the end of 2018, VICPP merged with Virginia Interfaith Power and Light. This exciting merger will enable faith advocates to help fight climate change and environmental racism. For information about what your congregation can do, contact Kendyl Crawford at Kendyl@vaip.org.
- **Responding to hate.** Immediately after the Pittsburgh massacre at the Tree of Life Synagogue, VICPP compiled information about the memorial services being held around the Commonwealth and distributed information about the services to everyone on its mailing list. Consequently, many more people from diverse faith traditions participated in the services than might have otherwise. In times of tragedy, it is important that people of faith stand with one another.
- **Expanding congregational support.** Faith Advocacy Partners are congregations that work with and offer support to Virginia Interfaith Center. In 2018, VICPP had 5 UMC partner congregations and groups: Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church (Richmond), Mount Olivet United Methodist Church (Arlington), Beverley Hill Community UMC, Doe Hill United Methodist Women, and Williamsburg UMC.
- **Tapping volunteer “witnesses” at the Capitol.** VICPP had a team of volunteers to be Witnesses at the Capitol during the 2018 (and 2019) legislative seasons and will use volunteers again in 2020. These volunteers meet with legislators, speak in committee hearings (after they are comfortable) and offer a presence from the faith community. If you would like to be a “witness,” email Kim Bobo for more information at Kim@virginiainterfaithcenter.org.
- **Reaching more people.** Throughout 2018, VICPP expanded its online presence and increased the number of people involved in the work. If you are not already on VICPP’s mailing list, get connected now so you can learn about activities around the Commonwealth and ways you can be an advocate for justice. Sign up at www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org.
- **Supporting UMC advocacy.** VICPP has helped staff the United Methodist Day at the General Assembly both in 2018 and 2019. In addition, VICPP staff and board members regularly speak at UMC congregations and programs. If your congregation, UMW chapter, or Church and Society group would like a speaker, please reach out to Yanet Limon-Amado at Yanet@virginiainterfaithcenter.org.

Mark your calendar for the following dates:

- **Thursday, September 19, 2019 – Annual Celebration at the Hippodrome Theater in Richmond (5:30 to 8:30 p.m.)**
- **Thursday, December 12, 2019 – Annual Meeting at the Innovation Center in Richmond (5 to 7 p.m.)**
- **Wednesday, January 22, 2020 – Day for All People (our Advocacy Day) in Richmond**

– Kim Bobo, Executive Director



CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP DISCOVERY & DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Chairpersons:

Ted Smith, *Director of Connectional Ministries*
Warren Harper, *Conference Lay Leader*

Monitors:

Neil McLaughlin, *Commission on Disabilities*
Mary Dadisman, *COSROW*
Lyle Morton, *CEMCA*

District Representatives:

Alexandria – John Meeuwissen
Arlington – Ellen LaCroix Fillette
Charlottesville – Charles Winner
Danville – *vacant*
Eastern Shore – Greg Duncan
Elizabeth River – Samantha Hudler
Farmville – Geraldine Sanderson
Harrisonburg – *vacant*

James River – Susan Petrey
Lynchburg – Jennifer Moore
Rappahannock River – Brad Phillips
Richmond – Lisa Sykes
Roanoke – Joanna Paysour
Staunton – Beth Christian
Winchester – Andy Brock
York River District – Melissa White

NOMINATIONS

Director of Connectional Ministries

Ted Smith

Common Table for Church Vitality

CLDDT Nominee:
Beth Christian

Bishop's Nominee:
Susie Wolf

Board of Church and Society

Clergy:
Shayne Estes
James Page

Lay:
Bill Chaffin
Jennifer Greer
Calvin Hughes
Archana Samuel

Church Development Team

Seungsoo Jun
Mike Plasters
John Speight

Board of Discipleship

Cindy Banek
Erin Geoffrion
Kathy Gochenour
Paul Greer
Kevin Mooers

Youth Council
Paula Coker-Jones

Older Adult Council
Marie Hawks
Barbara Parker

Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries

John Dunning
Jennifer Vestal Moore
Sarah Payne
Ann On-Lin Tang

Missional Ministries Board

Clergy:
Marcie Huntsman
Justin Hicks
Matt Meisenbelt
Seung Hae Yoo-Hess

Lay:
Judy Moughon
Emily Turner
Reba Miller

Commission on Archives and History

Clergy:
Linda E. F. Crabbs
James M. Smith
Arthur D. Thomas

Lay:
Robert S. Brock
Linda Stead
Jon D. Vrana
Katharine J. Wash
Neal Wise

Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc.

Clergy:
Doug Paysour
Sandra Benton Plasters

Lay:
Brian Bachrach
Michelle Clary

Commission on Disabilities

Clergy:
Neil McLaughlin
Young Sung Ryu

Lay:
Gary Ayers
Carolyn Kreider

Equitable Compensation Commission

Clergy:
Tom Durrance
Brad Phillips

Lay:
Paula Tottenr

Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy

Clergy:
Chenda Lee
Steve Snodgrass
Callie Walker

Lay:
Margie Hernandez
James Klagge
Zaccheaus Katta

At Large:
Gustavo Segovia

Council on Finance and Administration

Clergy:
June Carpenter
Elizabeth Foss

Lay:
Cindy Martin
Bret Hrbek

United Methodist Foundation

Sarah Harrison-McQueen
John Jones
Linda Monroe
Malcolm White
Amanda Wilson

Commission on Status and Role of Women

Clergy:
Lauren Wright

Conference Trustees

Clergy:
Dorothy O'Quinn

Lay:
Gene Cross
Karen Elmore
Frank Caldwell

Bishops' Foundation

Clergy:
Andy Brock

Lay:
Charles Sullivan

Society of St. Andrew

Randy Beardsworth
David Bowen
Sheila Carden

Ferrum College

David Arrington
 Jeff Davoud
 Bernice Cobbs

Randolph College

Margaret Keyes Beckstoffer
 Alison Buckley
 Elizabeth H. Crighton
 Lesley C. Morgan
 Caroline R. Noyes
 Hollis Redmond Spiller
 Eugenia Livings Welburn
 Randolph-Macon Academy
 Lawrencia Pierce

Randolph-Macon College

Macon F. Brock, III
 Grace Burke Carroll
 J. Scott Colley
 Andrea Holloway
 William B. Kilduff
 Stephen P. Long
 Louis E. Ren jel, Jr.

Shenandoah University

David Baxa
 Victor Gomez
 James Imoh
 Spencer McAndrews
 Michael Perry

Virginia Wesleyan University

Joseph Thomas
 Sharon Goodwyn
 Jean Jenkins
 Robert McFarland
 Troy DeLawrence
 Eric Nyman
 James Shumadine

**BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY**

The Virginia Conference of the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) serves as the credentialing body for persons responding to God's call as ordained elders, ordained deacons, and Associate Members. These "candidates," following the three-year provisional journey for elders and deacons, participate in late January interviews for full membership before Theology, Vocation and Leadership, and Practice of Ministry committees. "Candidates" for Associate Membership also interview in January. In late February, certified candidates are examined for a three-year provisional elder or provisional deacon journey before Theology, Personal Growth and Development, Practice of Ministry, and Call committees. Besides committee assignments, BOM team members perform other responsibilities in various workgroups (Order/Fellowship Chairs, Call Culture Committee, Candidacy Team, Clergy Effectiveness, Conference Relations, Retirement Committee, Ethics, Extension Ministries, Grants and Loans, Joint Committee on Clergy Medical Leave, Licensing School, Professional Certification, Provisional Membership Team, Spiritual Vitality, and Transfer Committee). These workgroups enhance the broad spectrum of the Board of Ordained Ministry's purpose: "to assist disciples of Jesus Christ with God's continuing work in the areas of call, development, and collegial support." The Virginia Conference BOM is composed of genuinely diligent and committed board members.

Here are reports of some of the workgroups and their noteworthy endeavors since Annual Conference 2018:

The Grants and Loans Committee awarded \$12,500 to five candidates through the Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarship with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Also, a total of \$104,742.93 was awarded to twenty-seven candidates through Service Loans, Pell Grants, Individual Scholarship Funds, and Clinical Pastoral Education Funds.

Clergy Effectiveness completed the third cohort of the Virginia Clergy Leadership Program (enhancing vocational competencies in mission, disciple-making, and worship leadership and preaching), the first under its new design, and commenced cohort four in January 2019. Also under a 2016 General Conference directive, an eight-year cycle of assessment for clergy should begin in 2020. The Virginia Aldersgate Experience will invite participants to engage in a discernment process every eight years to keep their ministry and souls rejuvenated through essential spiritual practices.

The Ethics Committee continued its clergy ethics training events across the Virginia Conference called “The Minister as Moral Theologian,” facilitated by Dr. Sondra Wheeler, longtime professor of Christian ethics at Wesley Theological Seminary. This event examined the broader ethical aspects of the role of a ministry leader in a changing world.

The Candidacy Team witnessed a steady number of people discerning a call to ministry, and a desire for information about ordination in The United Methodist Church through Candidacy Summit events in July 2018, and January 2019. Also, training of mentors for licensed local pastors, certified candidates, and provisional members occurred through a combined event called Mentor Palooza with over sixty mentors trained in August 2018.

When this article was composed, the special session of General Conference 2019 had just completed its legislative session. Certain aspects of the petitions passed could have a direct effect upon the ministry of the Board of Ordained Ministry. Several leaders of the Virginia BOM will have attended a “BOM MidQuad Gathering,” under the auspices of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, May 16-17, 2019 at First United Methodist Church of Belmont, Belmont, North Carolina (near Charlotte). This event focused upon the outcomes of the 2019 General Conference, and how Boards of Ordained Ministry will need to respond to actions adopted by the special session of General Conference.

We conclude by offering our sincere appreciation to Rev. Meredith McNabb for her committed service during these past five years as the Director of the Center for Clergy Excellence. At the end of March, she entered into extension ministry at the Lake Institute, part of the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy in Indianapolis.

We are also deeply grateful to Rev. Lindsey Baynham who has served as the Interim Director, and to Kristen Dowdy Seibert in her new position as Program and Administrative Coordinator for the Center of Clergy Excellence.

– John R. Hall Sr., Chair

COMMITTEE ON EPISCOPACY

The Committee on Episcopacy is responsible for the review and evaluation of the resident bishop as required by *The Book of Discipline*. A process for this review has been created by the Southeastern Jurisdiction Committee on Episcopacy and is used in every episcopal area in our Jurisdiction. We meet with the bishop three to four times a year to engage in conversation around this process and to hear Bishop Lewis reflect on issues in the Annual Conference and the larger connection. This has been a difficult year for our Bishop. A surgical procedure in December has led to an infection and multiple follow-up surgeries. She is currently on a six-month medical leave with plans to return in September, 2019. We are very grateful for the leadership of interim Bishop Pete Weaver who has come out of retirement to serve the Virginia Annual Conference during this time. The committee recognizes what an important time we are in following the called 2019 General Conference, and the need for episcopal leadership. We are grateful for the leadership role of members of the extended Cabinet, Conference staff, the Connectional Table, the Board of Laity and all those in leadership who work together for the good of the Virginia Annual Conference.

–Tom Berlin, Chair

Episcopal Residence Committee

The Episcopal Residence Committee is given the responsibility for the Episcopal Residence for the Resident Bishop. The committee is to give oversight in all matters related to upkeep, maintenance, upkeep and appropriate insurance coverage for the residence. (*The Book of Discipline*, ¶638)

The committee met on November 30, 2018 to do the annual inspection of the residence with Bishop Lewis. With only a few minor details to be taken care of, the residence is in excellent condition and will serve our bishop well for many years. We also oversee the landscaping and care of the grounds.

The committee consists of Carl Moravitz (Trustees), Betty Forbes (CFA) and me (representing Committee on Episcopacy).

–Shirley Cauffman, Chair

CONFERENCE TRUSTEES

The Virginia Conference Board of Trustees held their two regularly scheduled meetings in September and March. In addition, further communication via conference calls during the Conference year were also held to follow-up on other issues, including General Conference and VUMAC.

In addition to our normal work, the Board continued its involvement with the VUMAC property by having 3 members of the Trustees on the VUMAC Board. That process has involved extended meetings and conference calls throughout the year to assist in the handling and resolution of VUMAC issues, as well as, the review and study of multiple proposals received during the past year.

During this past Conference year, the sale of the Blackstone property was completed.

The Board continues to address property issues related to discontinued and/or abandoned United Methodist churches in the Virginia Conference.

The Board continues its involvement with issues pertaining to the Episcopal residence. Kathy Lutman serves as the Board's representative to the Episcopal Residence Committee (ERC). The annual inspection review of the Episcopal residence was completed in Fall 2018.

The Board of Trustees is expertly supported by the LeClair Ryan firm, our attorney and counsel, on Board of Trustees and Annual Conference matters. The Board contracted with LeClair firm in 2017, following the retirement of Benham Black. The firm, and, in particular, Andrew White and Katja Hill, has integrated well into the total work of the Board, providing expert counsel to us in our current and ongoing work.

The current slate of officers for the Conference Trustees is: Carl L. Moravitz, president; Kathy Lutman, vice president; Clyde T. Nelson, secretary; David Domnisse, treasurer.

I am thankful for the dedication of all the members of our Board as we work to meet the important tasks set out for the Board by the Conference and the *Discipline*. I am especially thankful for the continued leadership of our Vice President, Kathy Lutman, who has stepped in many times over the past year, when I was unavailable, to help me in the many tasks of our Board.

– Carl Moravitz, President

THE BISHOPS' FOUNDATION

The Bishops' Foundation provides for leadership development of both laity and clergy in the areas of evangelism, spiritual formation, preaching, and congregational leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit. The foundation is led by a board of directors (five clergy and four laity) nominated by the Cabinet. Endowment funds are invested with the Virginia UM Foundation. In 2014, the foundation was dissolved as a corporation and is now a board reporting to the annual conference.

As an event-sponsoring or co-sponsoring organization that supports the training of both laity and clergy, the foundation supported the Academy of Spiritual Formation, the Goodson Preaching Academy of 2019, and Creating a Culture of Renewal Cohort on the Eastern Shore and remains interested in supporting conference ministry programming that fosters opportunities for young adult laity and clergy to help the church in reaching all generations. Grant application forms can be found on the conference website under the tab for The Bishops' Foundation.

Financial donations in honor or memory of a Virginia Conference Bishop are welcomed to continue the educational legacies of our conference leaders.

– Kevin W. Bruny, Co-Chair

UNITED METHODIST-RELATED SCHOOLS

Ferrum College

Since its founding in 1913, Ferrum College has undergone a number of transformations as it has lived out its mission. From a training school to a junior college to a baccalaureate level institution, the College has responded to changes in higher education, regional needs, and market demands, by adapting and growing. We are in an exciting period of evaluation and discernment, and over the past year have rolled out new initiatives that will strengthen the College, make us more competitive, and help us better prepare our students for the futures they will inhabit.

Utilizing the opportunities inherent in our location, the College will launch a new major in eco-tourism this fall, and will strengthen signature programs in recreation leadership, environmental and agricultural sciences. We are preparing to launch our first graduate level and online degree programs, and we are developing a new suite of healthcare related programs that will prepare our students for lives of meaningful work.

Mr. Wilson Paine '07 joined the Ferrum administrative team as Vice President of Institutional Advancement on April 1. He was an accomplished student who continued to serve on the Alumni Board as well as the College's Board of Trustees. Wilson will visit many friends of the College throughout the Virginia Annual Conference, so please extend to him your greetings and hospitality.

We anticipate important changes in the village of Ferrum, with the county's new plan for village revitalization and renewal. Many of these developments, including a pedestrian bridge increasing access to commercial venues in the area, will improve the quality of life for our students.

To provide for the medical needs of our students, we partner with the local Tri-Area Community Health Center which is currently building a comprehensive health center and pharmacy on our campus. This new facility will include space for future development in behavioral health and dental services, and will be a crucial component in our upcoming academic healthcare programs.

Ferrum College's Spiritual Life program provides a sanctuary for a diverse community of students who attend a small group, evening worship, Gospel Choir or Praise Band rehearsal, or who volunteer in an outreach opportunity. Ferrum College Spiritual Life works with United Methodist Volunteers in Mission to offer work team experiences that are organized by student leaders. In October 2018, a student work team traveled to Fayetteville, NC, and in November, another group traveled to Danville, VA. And in March

2019, 17 students traveled to Florida to assist survivors of Hurricane Irma.

As we have for the last twenty-seven years, we hosted the annual United Methodist Women's Day celebration in June. In this way and many others, Ferrum College acknowledges our connection to the Church and thanks those whose contributions assure the success of our students. We are grateful for the support of alumni and friends of the College and we encourage each of you to share in the promise of our future by becoming a generous member of the Ferrum family.

– David L. Johns, President

Randolph College

Although Randolph College has seen many changes throughout its history, our commitment to the liberal arts has remained—and continues to remain—unwavering. The College's strong programs in the sciences, the creative arts, sustainability, and career services, among others, prepare our students to move into the world ready to make a difference.

During 2018, Randolph College launched a new first-year seminar course, CE 101: The Abundant Life, designed to introduce our entering students to a variety of disciplinary traditions and to provide an opportunity for them to explore contemporary issues. The College also continued to expand its online summer course offerings. Our new Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Creative Writing held its first 10-day residency in July bringing new students to our campus from all over the country—California, Oregon, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New York, and Virginia—many of them having already published their first books. Additionally, our annual science festival had its most successful year to date, bringing over 3,000 visitors to our campus.

The College's Office of Institutional Advancement and Career Development Center collaborated in 2018 to launch **Randolph Connect**, a new online engagement platform for alumni, students, parents, faculty, and staff. **Randolph Connect** provides a one-stop site for news stories, job and internship listings, community directory, past and present photos, event promotion, and mentorship engagement.

Randolph College remains steadfast in its commitment to provide an outstanding and affordable education. Our ability to do this is made possible through the generous institutional grants the College provides to students, which totaled over \$15 million in 2018. Additionally, Randolph raised just under \$7 million during our last academic year, with just over \$2 million designated for the Annual Fund. *U.S. News and World Report* and *Forbes*, among other ranking guides, continues to name Randolph a “best college, and *The Princeton Review's Best 384 Colleges* list ranked us #18 in the nation for “Most Accessible Professors.” Accolades such as this one are a testament to our outstanding faculty and their dedication to our students.

The College continues to strengthen its infrastructure. Our final implementation of the boiler upgrades was completed in 2018, reaching the culmination of a project that began two years ago. Upcoming infrastructure improvements include renovations to the Randolph Athletic and Dance (RAD) Center, which will take place during summer 2019, and an extensive renovation and expansion of the Martin Science Building targeted to begin in 2020.

Increasing enrollment remains a high priority for Randolph College. Our Enrollment Management team has unveiled a number of new strategies designed to reach out directly to potential students who are seeking the kind of college experience offered at Randolph. Additionally, we are embarking on a strategic planning process in the coming year.

Randolph College is grateful for the work of our college chaplain, Rev. Jennifer Moore, and her ongoing efforts to provide opportunities for the spiritual development of our students. These efforts are made possible through your generous support. The College also appreciates the strong relationship it maintains with the Conference and the ongoing guidance provided to us by Rev. John Peters. We thank each member of the Conference for their ongoing support of Randolph College. Your contributions continue to allow us to fulfill our mission of preparing students to think critically and creatively, to live and work honorably, and to experience life more abundantly.

–Bradley W. Bateman, President

Randolph-Macon Academy

As president at Randolph-Macon Academy, nothing gives me greater joy than to see our students succeed. In 2018, we had much to celebrate. Our drill team claimed the Air Force Association's Virginia State Air Force Junior ROTC Drill Championship title for the first time. Our band won first-place awards in both the Firefighters' Parade and the Grand Feature Parade at the Apple Blossom Festival in Winchester, VA. Three of our bandsmen won awards at the Military School Band Festival. Our Air Force Junior ROTC unit, VA-091, was named a Distinguished Unit with Merit. Most importantly, we continued to meet our mission of being a college-prep school, as our 68 seniors earned 230 college acceptances to 139 different colleges and universities, and were offered more than \$6.2 million in college scholarships.

Our students' spiritual development continues to be important to us. In addition to the weekly required chapel service, approximately 50 students are taking advantage of small group opportunities and movie nights, and 11 are part of our Praise Team. For the fourth consecutive year, we are offering confirmation classes; there are five enrolled in the UMC class and another six in the Catholic class. New initiatives for the 2018-19 school year include an Interfaith Prayer Room, a Spiritual Life Leadership Team that has five students and three faculty members involved in Campus Ministry Institute, and a spring break mission trip.

We have successfully implemented a one-to-one computer program, ensuring that every student has a computer, and we also

opened the Hadeed Innovation Wing with a simulation labs that focus on robotics, flight, graphic design, computer science, and art. These technological and design improvements provide new tools and new opportunities for our students. Dean of Instructional Leadership and Innovation Dr. Tess Hegedus and the faculty have been implementing important changes in the classroom; as we focus on authentic, collaborative learning, we are encouraging students to create, innovate, and problem-solve.

Dr. Hegedus has added Pre-Professional Pathways (PPP) to our curriculum; these programs are geared towards students who have a strong interest in a specific area. With the arrival of the flight simulator, the Redbird TD, the final piece of our Flight PPP was complete. We now offer a program where students can take flight lessons, fly on a flight simulator, pilot drones, explore the physics of flight, and even design and build their own remote aircraft. Future PPP's will bring opportunities in entrepreneurship, leadership, biomechanics, and health fields.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that one of our Middle School teachers, Chris Peter, was named a "Teacher of the Year" by Washington Family Magazine, and our summer camp program was named "Best Summer Camp" by Northern Virginia Magazine. I am deeply thankful for the hard work that Chris and others have put in over this past year. God has indeed blessed us with talented, caring faculty and staff members.

Your support and prayers are greatly appreciated as we continuously seek ways to bring our students closer to God, and for our Academy to be a "City on a Hill". God bless you all.

– Brigadier General David C. Wesley, USAF, Retired, President

Randolph-Macon College

Founded in 1830, Randolph-Macon College is a selective, co-educational, nationally ranked liberal arts college located in Ashland, Virginia, just minutes north of Richmond and 90 miles south of Washington, D.C. The college achieves its mission of "developing the minds and character of each student" by balancing rigorous academics in more than 54 areas of study with individualized attention between our exceptional faculty and students. The student-faculty ratio is 12:1 and the average class size is 16 students. The college has an outstanding reputation for academics, national and international internships, study abroad programs and undergraduate research opportunities.

Now in our 189th year, the college is larger and more diverse than at any time in history, having experienced a significant growth in our student body in recent years. The 2018-2019 academic year opened with the largest and most diverse student body in our college history. Our student body has more than 1,480 students from 22 states and 14 countries. Of these students, 47% are male and 53% are female. Many are Presidential Scholars, recipients of R-MC's signature scholarship that recognizes students who demonstrate the highest levels of academic achievement and leadership.

Our outstanding faculty has been recognized for its achievements on countless fronts, including superior teaching, research, and mentorship, creating personalized education for students both inside and outside of the classroom.

The EDGE Career Center is focused on preparing our students for careers and post-graduate success. Faculty serve as mentors and offer important advising, linking valuable liberal arts education with important career and post-graduate success strategies and life skills. The EDGE focuses on providing students with tools that build a competitive advantage in career and post-graduate environments. The success of this program is reflected in the college's tagline, *Building Extraordinary Futures*.

The EDGE also offers Boot Camp, a signature two-day, off-campus immersion program where students learn to identify their career passions, tell their story and hone their interview and communication skills to prepare for success after college. The weekend is devoted to helping students develop their own elevator speech and "brand," learn how to communicate with confidence, and identify their strengths and capabilities—all with the help of world-class speakers, interviewers and mentors, including R-MC alumni.

R-MC's January Term (J-term) is a four-week session in which students can study abroad and immerse themselves in other cultures, conduct a regional, national or international internship, or take an on-campus course in a specific area of interest. January Term internships provide unique opportunities, and this year, 126 students interned across the country and around the world.

One of the flagship programs at Randolph-Macon is the Schapiro Undergraduate Research Fellowship program (SURF), an endowment to support scholarly undergraduate research by students in all disciplines. SURF allows students the opportunity to conduct original research, under the guidance of a faculty member, and to be paid a stipend. Many students present their findings at academic and professional conferences both nationally and internationally. Now in its 23rd year, SURF has funded research opportunities for over 670 students.

R-MC offers a Four-Year Degree Guarantee, which pledges in writing that freshmen who meet all necessary requirements will graduate within four calendar years. If not, Randolph-Macon will waive tuition costs for R-MC courses needed to complete the degree.

R-MC integrates the value of diversity into the fabric of campus life. Through a wide range of student organizations and multicultural programs, Randolph-Macon seeks to build a community that upholds the inherent worth of individuals in an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, and civility.

In 2015, R-MC completed its enormously successful Building Extraordinary campaign with over \$125 million raised from 12,129 alumni and friends. In 2018, 36% of our alumni gave back to the college. The college has experienced a campus renaissance, with over \$80 million spent on new and renovated facilities in recent years.

In 2017, R-MC's new science building, Macon F. Brock, Jr. Hall, was completed. This three-story, 30,000-square-foot facility, with state-of-the-art teaching laboratories, plus classrooms and faculty offices, houses the biology, environmental science/geology,

and chemistry departments. Additionally, a new Keeble Observatory was constructed in 2017.

The A. Purnell Bailey Pre-Ministerial Scholarship Program was established in 2004 to support students who express an interest in ordained ministry in the Christian tradition. Students awarded this scholarship receive half-tuition for the first two years and full tuition for the junior and senior years. The program includes weekly mentoring, two internships in ministry settings, and support selecting and applying to theology school. 25 out of 37 Bailey Scholar graduates are in full time ministry or currently in seminary. R-MC's class of 2018 saw graduates attending Duke Divinity School, Asbury Seminary, Reformed Seminary, Union Presbyterian Seminary, and Yale Divinity School.

Summer 2017 marked the beginning of two new summer programs for high school students offered at Randolph-Macon. *Paths to Science* invited rising sophomore Hispanic girls to campus to meet scientists and explore STEM related activities. R-MC recently received an additional \$1,082,291 grant from the National Science Foundation to continue this program for an additional three years. *Convergence*, a 9-day event in which high school students explore the many ways that Christian faith and science come together, is now in its third year, *Convergence* includes faculty lectures and hands-on experiences in regional watersheds, at Shalom Farms, and at other area parks, museums, and venues.

In 2018, the college established a new Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program, and Dr. Cindy Rubenstein was named chair. The first cohort of nursing students will enter the college in the fall of 2019. The BSN program will integrate R-MC's liberal arts tradition as it prepares students to work as collaborative members of interdisciplinary healthcare teams. A new, state-of-the-art building will house the BSN program. It is currently under construction and projected to be complete in June 2020.

R-MC's new Cybersecurity major is a computing-based discipline that involves the creation, operation, analysis, and testing of secure systems, networks, and applications to protect against a variety of digital threats. The college's new Writing major heightens students' power to use the written word effectively and with style. R-MC also boasts a new Criminology major, the central focus of which is to understand social structure and social processes in relation to crime, criminality, and punishment.

The college offers 18 intercollegiate sports (NCAA Division III) and participates in the Old Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC). 2018 was a banner year for the college: The baseball team was the top seed in the 2018 College World Series (NCAA Division III Baseball Championship), and the football team reached the second round of the NCAA Championship. In 2018, R-MC added men's volleyball to its lineup of varsity sports.

The college recently launched an eSports program. eSports—also known as electronic sports or e-sports—is a form of competition using video games in an online environment. R-MC also launched a Show Choir program. Show Choir uses vocals, choreography, staging, costuming and production to synthesize an artistic experience.

The college's equestrian program continues to flourish, and in 2018, R-MC purchased Coventry Horse Farm. Located close to campus, it boasts 70 acres of pasture, has space for 33 horses, and includes an indoor riding arena, two large outdoor areas, and space for cross-country fences.

Student outreach through community service continues to be an important aspect of the Randolph-Macon College experience. In 2017-18, R-MC students collectively amassed more than 23,700 volunteer hours and donated \$42,800, to various causes. Students in Fraternity and Sorority Life contributed more than 14,000 hours of collective service to the community and donated nearly \$27,000 to various organizations and philanthropies. In addition, \$10,600 was raised and donated to the American Cancer Society from the annual Relay for Life. The Students Engaged in Responsible Volunteer Experiences (SERVE) program, in the Office of Student Life, is an integral part of Randolph-Macon College.

R-MC coordinates dynamic opportunities for service and service-learning to help students explore the root causes and contexts of social needs through connections with the greater community. Students are actively engaged with groups such as Habitat for Humanity and the American Cancer Society Relay for Life. There are two signature events each year, The Big Event in the fall and Macon a Difference Day in April. These campus-wide community-service initiatives bring together the college's clubs, organizations and academic and administrative departments to volunteer their time and energy for environmental projects and other needs in the surrounding communities.

At Randolph-Macon College, students bond with their peers, faculty mentors and alumni to build meaningful relationships that last a lifetime.

— Alan B. Rashkind, Chairman

Shenandoah University

Calling 21, the Shenandoah University Youth Theology Institute, and the Fast Track (six years instead of seven) to a Master of Divinity partnership with Wesley Theological Seminary are just a few of the ways Shenandoah University is partnering with the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

We remain committed to working with the United Methodist Church to send nursing students to Brazil as part of the Initiatives of Hope aboard the John Wesley Medical Missions Boat. In March 2019, ten students, two faculty, and a leader from our Office of Spiritual Life went to Brazil for the fifth time this decade to care for our neighbors, to educate and inspire our students, and to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

We remain committed to working with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) to train and send students to areas that are still recovering from natural disasters. Each year for the last eight years, we have sent an UMCOR Early Response Team (ERT) of students, staff, and faculty to an area in need. This year Spiritual Life traveled to Princeville, North Carolina to help with hurricane relief. The state of North Carolina estimated that the fifteen students and three faculty and staff volunteered 576 hours and

gave \$14,031 in labor.

We remain committed to working with the United Methodist seminaries to educate and inspire our graduates that feel a call to lead the church as lay people and as clergy. Four Shenandoah University graduates just finished their first year of seminary at three different United Methodist seminaries (Candler, Wesley, and Drew). All four have full-tuition scholarships.

We remain committed to working with the United Methodist Church General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) to educate and inspire students with excellence. This year, Maggie McCampbell Lien, director of Inclusion and Diversity, was one of ten winners of the GBHEM's Cutting-Edge Curriculum Award which recognizes faculty at United Methodist-affiliated colleges. McCampbell Lien's course, "You Don't Have to Be Gandhi: Student Activism in a Global Perspective," was recognized for the engaging content and enhanced student experience.

We remain committed to the United Methodist Church in educating and inspiring young Christian leaders for our church and world. The Shenandoah University Youth Theology Institute engages high school students in a three-credit college course over two weeks in July. If you would like to nominate a dedicated high school student, or you are a dedicated high school student that would like to apply, please do so at su.edu/youththeology. Calling21 is now entering its thirteenth summer hosting college interns at Virginia Conference local congregations. College students can apply by February 1 each year at calling21.org. Finally, the 3 year plus 3 year fast-track agreement with Wesley Theological Seminary allows Shenandoah University undergraduate students to forgo their senior year and pursue their Master of Divinity degree one year sooner and with less tuition debt. This program offers a streamlined approach for those who feel a call to leading the church and faith-based non-profits from both a clergy and lay perspective.

We remain committed to the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church and have notified the Site Selection Committee that the new James R. Wilkins, Jr. Athletics and Events Center might be well suited to host Annual Conference. With a capacity of nearly 5000 people, we are exploring opportunities to engage our community through large-scale regional events. I hope you will dream about what events we can hold on our campus in Winchester that might reach others as we "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world" and share those ideas with our Dean of Spiritual Life, Rev. Dr. Justin Allen.

Shenandoah University remains committed to educating and serving the diversity of God's people, to the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church, and the international community that is the United Methodist Church as we make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

– Tracy Fitzsimmons, President

Virginia Wesleyan University

Virginia Wesleyan University has been recognized nationally as achieving one of the most profound campus transformations in higher education history. Prominently featured in business journals for innovative best practices, our business model has been profiled in a higher education case study. In recognition of our vigorous fundraising program, we were designated as the 2018 Outstanding Non-Profit in Fundraising, awarded for our philanthropic achievements by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) Hampton Roads Chapter.

Having completed the transition to university status prior to the 2017-2018 academic year, the institution graduated the first class as Virginia Wesleyan University in May 2018. Additionally, VWU added the first graduate programs—Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Master of Arts in Education (MAEd)—when transitioning to a university and graduated the first MBA student in December 2018. Developed by a campus committee, a new academic-based strategic plan—Preeminence '28—was approved by the Board of Trustees on February 21, 2018. The Virginia Wesleyan faculty approved a new general education program in 2018.

In January 2019, VWU's University College expanded online course offerings through two new partnerships: The Council for Independent Colleges (CIC) Online Course Sharing Consortium and ed2go, a short-term career-training platform. In February 2019 came the establishment of the University's fourth academic school—the D. Henry Watts School of Professional Studies—which will be in effect with the start of the 2019-2020 academic year on July 1.

Enrollment at Virginia Wesleyan is the highest it has ever been in the institution's 58-year history. Total enrollment for the 2017-2018 academic year was 1,660, a five percent increase over the previous year. The students included two from Puerto Rico on full scholarships from the Hurricane Maria-damaged University of Puerto Rico at Humacao for the spring 2018 semester.

Rebranding and trademarking of VWU symbols have entered final phases; campus and community response to the transition has been extremely positive, and we continue to be embraced with enthusiasm and support by both the cities of Virginia Beach and Norfolk as well as other areas we serve.

Two prominent additions that have created a "national niche" for Virginia Wesleyan—the state-of-the-art Greer Environmental Sciences Center (GESC) and the highly selective Batten Honors College—have remained distinctive since their start in fall 2017. The GESC has provided new prominence in the natural sciences programs, with Virginia Wesleyan receiving the "2018 Conservationist of the Year" award from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and advancement to the top-tier Model Level in the Elizabeth River Project's River Star Business program. Additionally, our faculty have distinguished themselves and VWU in this field. Dr. Deirdre Gonsalves-Jackson, Associate Professor of Biology, was recently featured in a Virginian-Pilot article about "hidden figures," women who have distinguished themselves in E-STEM fields. Assistant Professor of Education Dr. Bill McConnell, with a grant from the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation, oversaw an outdoor Environmental Explorers camp in partnership with YMCA Camp Red Feather. The Virginia Wesleyan Environmental Institute: Summer Scholars Program for ninth-grade girls also took place in the GESC.

The Batten Honors College welcomed its second cohort of Fellows and Scholars in fall 2018. The full-tuition Batten Fellows have a collective grade point average of 4.21 on a 4.0 scale, an average SAT score of 1344, and an average ACT score of 29. Sixty-three percent hail from Virginia, and over 60 percent indicate an interest in a science discipline at Virginia Wesleyan.

Partnerships continue to grow and strengthen at Virginia Wesleyan. In November 2018, the institution joined the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities, which supports its 100 cross-sector members' unique challenges and opportunities. Over 60% of CUMU's members hold the Community Engagement Classification through the Carnegie Foundation. The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (VCIC) selected Virginia Wesleyan as the location to open its first satellite office outside its Richmond, Virginia, headquarters in the organization's history. In December 2018, the University opened an office for Virginia Wesleyan's Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program. In February 2019, Virginia Wesleyan formalized a new Fair Transfer agreement with Tidewater Community College (TCC)—part of the Virginia Community Colleges' System with four branches in Coastal Virginia—eliminating previous barriers for TCC students' admission. The agreement guarantees TCC graduates junior-class status at VWU. Newly formed in December 2017, Wesleyan Engaged: Center for Civic Leadership and Service Learning at Virginia Wesleyan flourished in 2018, the Center's first year in operation. One of many successful Wesleyan Engaged initiatives includes achieving the designation for VWU as a "Voter Friendly Campus," given by the Campus Vote Project and NASPA for 2019-2020.

Each spring, in partnership with the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church, Virginia Wesleyan University hosts a workshop for UMC pastors that offers continuing-education units. The Boyd Institute complements a variety of programs offered by the University's Center for Sacred Music, Center for the Study of Religious Freedom, and Marlin Ministries.

Construction is nearly complete for Virginia Wesleyan's new Susan S. Goode Fine and Performing Arts Center, opening on March 30, 2019. This new facility, coupled with planned expansion of the existing Fine Arts Building, will enhance Virginia Wesleyan's fine and performing arts offerings and showcase the prominence of its arts programs to the community.

Also completed was construction on a new softball complex at TowneBank Park and Broyles Field for our back-to-back national championship team. Additionally, the new Betty S. Rogers Track and Field Center was completed, joining numerous other improvements of our athletic facilities. Upgrades to Bray Village, which houses five residence halls, have been completed.

In January 2019, restoration was completed on The Beacon, a symbolic campus icon previously known as "The Bell Tower" and built adjacent to Monumental Chapel in 1975. During the University's campus master planning process in 2016, the 44-year old tower was found to have structural deficiencies which prompted a generous donor to allow us to strengthen—rather than remove—the structure. The Beacon maintains its original cross at the top—a symbol of VWU's United Methodist heritage. It tells the story of those who laid the University's foundation and serves as a light of reason and knowledge that points us toward better shores of understanding, inclusion, and social justice.

– *Scott D. Miller, President*

PREACHERS' RELIEF SOCIETY

The purpose of the Preachers' Relief Society is to assist clergy families faced with emergency financial needs. In 2018 grants were given to three clergy.

If in need, clergy, retired and active, their widows and widowers should apply for help through their district superintendents. Each request is responded to in what the Society believes is appropriate after it has carefully evaluated the crisis and also considered the financial resources of the Society. As far as the Society is concerned the grants given are confidential. The recipients, of course, are free to disclose whatever they wish.

The Society welcomes contributions. In recent years these have been small in number. Fortunately, the Society's ability to provide grants has been sustained by the returns on its investments. The Dale Mercadante Riggan Financial Group with BB&T Scott & Stringfellow in Norfolk currently serves as the Society's investment advisor. Those wishing to contribute to this ministry may contact them or our treasurer, Robert F. Cofield Jr., atbcofield1@hotmail.com.

The current directors of the Society are: Robert T. Casey, president; Edward Lilly, vice-president; James R. Bergdoll, secretary; Robert F. Cofield Jr., treasurer; Robert N. Baker, III; Sallye Bowen; Katherine Kidwell; James S. Matthews and Harold E. White Sr.

– *Robert T. Casey, President*

THE UNITED METHODIST CREDIT UNION

Our goal is to be a primary resource for encouraging sound stewardship principles and helping United Methodist churches, individuals and institutions. Our objective is to help our members "to earn all they can and save all they can so they can give all they can" as servants of Christ in the world.

We are a full service financial institution and we operate solely to serve the financial needs of our member owners. Our all volunteer board of directors is comprised of a cross section of lay and clergy. We help our members by providing quality financial products and services, including savings and checking accounts, loans, Visa rewards credit cards, online services and resources to assist our members with personal financial management. We offer SnapLoan, an educational line of credit for college students that comes with an interest rate discount for students attending a United Methodist affiliated college or seminary school. We have partnered with several conference churches to establish Jubilee Assistance Funds; a program that assists churches with short term loans to help their church members who may be experiencing a financial emergency. We recently partnered with a financial services firm that can assist our members with college planning/529s, annuities, long term care and saving for retirement.

Our church loan program helps conference churches with the refinance of current loans, loans for parsonages, renovations, and vans and buses. We also offer project loans (up to \$50,000 unsecured) and Visa rewards credit cards for church business.

John Wesley was among the first to organize financial cooperatives among the faithful in the Methodist movement and it is in the spirit of Wesley that in 1952 a group of Virginia pastors pooled their resources to help each other and established our credit union. As we celebrate 67 years of service in 2019, our membership has grown to include United Methodist churches, church members, clergy, organizations, agencies and institutions in the conferences of North Carolina, Western North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia and Baltimore-Washington (*churches and organizations only*).

– Alvin J. Horton, Chair

UNITED METHODIST MEN

The Virginia UM Men’s key initiatives in 2018 were to: relaunch our annual spiritual weekend following the South Carolina model; test a Disciple mentoring program; encourage the formation of Wesleyan Transformational Small Groups at fellowships; focus on service ministries; and continue to accomplish the other goals we established in 2016. Praise God for our success!

In 2019 we will continue to pursue our goal to have our leadership be representative of our membership. We will continue emphasizing the importance of service and discipleship and build on the success of our 2018 Spiritual Advance where lives have been changed for 40 years. Next fall we will update our vision, values and goals for 2020-2023. All these efforts help us to fulfill the conference vision of disciples who are life-long learners influencing others to serve. Glory to God!

Vision: *Men Building God’s Kingdom led by the Holy Spirit through Christian Fellowship*

Values: Service, Excitement (passion), Teamwork

2019-2020 Goals (summary)

Prepare (disciple) men for service and leadership; succession management aligned with church demographics; reach new men and their families and mentor new Christians; connect with other conference agencies and boards; prevent domestic violence jointly w/ UMW; Holy Spirit-led Christian fellowship through Wesleyan Transformational Small Groups (class meetings) at all fellowships; Bible studies; grow attendance and improve the Men’s Spiritual Weekend; Ignite Younger Men’s Ministry.

To accomplish this we need to fill four key vacancies: All God’s Children Advocate; Chaplain; Vice President for Membership, and Young Men’s Ministry Advocate. Please pray for us!

MINISTRIES

Men’s Spiritual Advance: Building on 2018’s success, our Spiritual Weekend in the fall of 2019 will continue to follow the model of the South Carolina Conference while taking into account the context of the Virginia Conference’s vision. Our two-day Spiritual Advance (September 27-28), will again be in a family-friendly vacation location hosted by Baylake UMC in Virginia Beach with multiple clergy speakers including our Conference Bishop Sharma Lewis and author of *The Class Meeting*, Rev. Dr. Kevin Watson. Our theme is *Transformational Grace*.

A new initiative designed to attract at least 12 men per church is now underway. Spouses are again welcome with special rates for couples, first timers, pastors, and early-birds. By the grace of God our numbers will continue to grow, and we will regain financial stability. Please celebrate our success with us!

Wesleyan Building Brothers (WBB): Leadership training continues throughout Virginia and WBB graduates have undertaken the task of developing mentors for both new and young Christians. Advocate David Bean and his team will be establishing mentor qualification criteria having already developed a training program. They are currently conducting pilot mentor training at the fellowship level (Culpeper UMC) using Wesley’s 21 questions and corresponding scripture. This initiative will help us address generational gaps in our churches and focus our discipleship on service.

Men’s Ministry: Three certified Men’s Ministry Specialists (Todd Hoar, Johnnie Draughon and David Bean) are engaged in training and support activities offering *Understanding Men’s Ministry* and other courses around the conference.

Young Men’s Ministry: In coordination with the SEJ Conference we have established this ministry to explore ways to integrate and grow participation by late Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials. We have initiated a survey asking young church members how to improve the UMM to better serve them.

Scouting: We serve more than 16,000 youth with more than 9,000 adult volunteer leaders. Scouting is a key element to our strategy to reach new people since half of scouting families do not have church homes. Part of our success in 2018 is attributed to the addition of girls into the Scout program, now known as “Scouting USA”. Bishop Lewis will participate in two more Bishop’s Dinners in 2019 having led two others in 2018. These events recognize Scout leaders and support the Scouting Ministry throughout the conference.

AMEND Together: AMEND Together is an innovative, prevention initiative dedicated to ending domestic violence against women and girls by engaging and educating men. The General Commission on United Methodist Men has partnered with AMEND Together to create a training course in which men will learn to recognize, respond to, and prevent violence against women. “Good men” must play a critical role in creating a community where all women and girls are valued and safe. This is accomplished through education and mobilization. Only with the support and involvement of men and boys can the cycle of gender violence be stopped. To find out

more visit the GCUMM website or view this video: <https://youtu.be/KskVFJktm0g>

Refocusing: We have developed a new logo, motto, and flyer (<http://www.vaumc.org/ncfilepository/UMMen/MenintheSpiritflyer.pdf>) reflecting our values of service, excitement, and teamwork in making disciples and building God's kingdom. In some instances, districts and other conferences, as well as the General Commission, have recognized that the UMM brand may have a stigma of "Retired Old Men Eating Out" (ROMEOS). As a result, we have refocused on service through men's ministry with a vision of building God's kingdom.



Prayer Advocacy: United Methodist Men supported The Upper Room prayer line with a gift of \$312.50 for fiscal year 2018. There are currently five District Prayer Advocates. Districts that are in need of an

UMM Prayer Advocate are; Alexandria, Arlington, Charlottesville, Danville, Harrisonburg, James River, Lynchburg, Rappahannock, Roanoke, Staunton, and York River. Todd Hoar, our Conference Prayer Advocate spoke at the annual York River prayer breakfast on the power of prayer through the Upper Room and on Kairos prison ministry, and distributed Upper Room materials throughout the year.

Heart Havens : The UMM, through our advocate David Campbell, supports the developmentally disabled through fundraising, community events involving residents and providing volunteer maintenance and repair to group homes.

Camp Rainbow Connection: This is a week-long respite camp held once in June and once in July for individuals with developmental disabilities. Like so many of our ministries, finances are rarely the challenge—it's having enough volunteers! The camp is held at Richard Bland College in Petersburg, and Ron Rumsey is our advocate.

Prison Ministries: UMM provides volunteer and monetary support to: Disciple Bible Outreach Ministry (DBOM) which provides the 32-week Disciple Series to prisoners (Gene Mims, advocate); Good News Jail Ministry serving inmates in Virginia's county and city jails; Kairos which provides an Emmaus Walk experience for inmates of Virginia's Correctional Institutions; and GraceInside, a ministry supporting prison chaplains.

Hunger Relief: Wade Mays with The Society of St. Andrew, with the help of our UMM volunteers, will have provided an estimated 1.2 million servings of food through July of 2019.

All God's Children: We continue to advocate for the children of incarcerated adults. Each year our Annual Conference sponsors 90 youth and children with an opportunity to grow in Christ. Thirty different children enjoy one week outdoors for a breath of fresh air and learning at three different camps. One-on-one mentors pair with the campers giving spiritual support. Our current advocate, Bill Crosley, is retiring after many years of faithful service. We are actively seeking an advocate for this ministry, and are training four young men as a support team. When you see Bill, thank him and wish him the best!

The Beacon: Our monthly e-newsletter has strong readership especially from clergy, with laity and subscribers outside the conference taking regular notice of our men's activities. *The Beacon* is the envy of other Conference UMM boards, providing insightful articles, timely news items and promoting UMM sponsored events. Our new editor, Jon Simons, welcomes input!

Recognition: This past year the Virginia Conference UMM honored Larry Burian for his years of service and dedication to men's ministry with a fellowship in the Society of John Wesley. We also recognized Brenda Capen, our conference webmaster, with the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence for her years of dedication and support to both the UMM webpage and event promotions.

Web Page: Visit us at <https://www.vaumc.org/UMM>

– Andrew Kissell, President

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

United Methodist Women is the women's mission organization of The United Methodist Church, putting faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth in the United States and internationally. We are a creative, supportive community of women organized around the Purpose, which is "to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ" and "to expand concepts of mission by participation in the global ministries of the church."

Throughout our nearly 150 year history, United Methodist Women and its predecessor organizations brought women together in small groups to grow in faith, learn about their own needs and potential, learn about others, and organize and raise funds so that we could reach out to marginalized neighbors in our local communities and around the world.

Our theme this year has been "Sisterhood of Grace". As UMW we are striving to be a covenant group as we build relationships, speak truth, listen to one another, hold each other in prayer, and do what is best for each other as well as the United Methodist Women in Virginia. We seek God's presence among us in our meetings and our mission work with women, youth, and children.

United Methodist Women offers several opportunities to grow spiritually to women by attending retreats. Each spring a UMW Spiritual Life Retreat is held that brings together 150-175 women from all over the conference. On May 3-5, 2019 the retreat theme was "A Second Cup of Tea with Jesus" with the Rev. Dawn-Marie Singleton as the retreat leader. The event was held at Eagle Eyrie in Lynchburg.

The second opportunity for spiritual growth is for the young women of our conference. Held in September each year is our Young Women's Retreat and is always a great opportunity for young women between the ages of 18-40 to come together for worship, music, sharing, and crafts around a theme. The event's date is September 13-14, 2019 at the Blessings Lodge at Camp Overlook in the beautiful mountains of the Shenandoah Valley. The retreat leader will be the Rev. Genevieve Bowles.

One of our Church's best kept secrets is its Mission Encounter Event held each summer. This is an event shared by Virginia United

Methodist Church and United Methodist Women and is for everyone - clergy, laity, youth and children. The dates for the event for 2019 are July 26-28 at Smith Mountain Lake 4H Center. Our website vaumw.com has registration forms.

UMW Annual Meeting in October is always a time for celebration. It will be held at Reveille UMC on October 26. The CEO of United Methodist Women, Harriette Jane Olson, will be our speaker.

United Methodist Women around the Virginia Conference are always looking for women to join us in our work and mission! If you are not a member, we would love to have you!

– *Mary Jane Rawley, President*

PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATORS OF THE UNITED METHODIST CONNECTIONAL STRUCTURE (PAUMCS)

The purpose of PAUMCS is to provide a supportive base for the unity and fellowship of its members in order to provide individual growth, professional development, continuous education and spiritual enrichment. PAUMCS promotes and encourages the training and support of United Methodist Church secretaries; serves as an advocate for emerging concerns that affect church secretaries; encourages and assists in the establishment of chapters of church secretaries, within or across jurisdictional and annual conference boundaries, and assists in coordinating the program and work of these chapters.

The Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries was organized on April 14, 1982 in Dallas, Texas. Since that first meeting, conferences have been held annually, by-laws and a logo were adopted, working committees were formed, a quarterly newsletter was established and chapters were organized across the connection. Legislation was adopted at the 1988 General Conference which states that the General Conference of Finance and Administration (GCFA) has the authority and responsibility to provide guidance and consultation for continuing education of church secretaries, including establishment of professional standards, training and certification programs and to provide assistance to the Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶807.18).

The Virginia Chapter of PAUMCS was established March 1999 at the Virginia United Methodist Conference Center (VUMAC) in Blackstone. Since that time the membership of the Virginia chapter has grown to as many as 90 members and an all time high of 130 attendees at a fall event at the Virginia United Methodist Conference Center. The chapter sponsors two meetings each year: normally, a one day fall training event and a one day spring spiritual growth retreat.

At their National Conference in Chicago in May 2017 the Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries voted to change their name to the Professional Administrators of the United Methodist Connectional Structure, thereby broadening their vision while retaining their acronym, PAUMCS.

VA PAUMCS members are persons presently or previously, full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer, engaged in administrative work in any local church or agency of the United Methodist Church. For a member to be in good standing, annual dues must be paid for the current year. Membership advantages include reduced rates on workshop registration fees, a bi-annual chapter newsletter and networking with other church secretaries throughout the Virginia Conference.

During the Annual Conference year 2018-2019 VA PAUMCS:

- This year our annual mailing went digital. All newsletters, events and updates are posted to our webpage at www.vaumc.org/paumcs and promoted by MailChimp.
- On Wednesday, October 31 we held our “Experience Your Conference Connection” Fall Event 2018 featuring Madeline Pillow, director of conference Communications, who updated us on the use of social media in the church and how to keep up with changing technology and communication trends in the world. The event was attended by 35 from across the conference.
- Our National PAUMCS Conference will be held March 14-18 on board Royal Caribbean’s Independence of the Seas, sponsored by Educational Opportunities Tours. Our guest speakers will be Mike Slaughter, his wife Carolyn, and his Administrative Assistant Catherine Crowell. Topics will include caring for your spiritual life, your personal health, your professional growth, and the others in your community and world.
- Our VA PAUMCS spring event will be held Wednesday, May 1, at the VAUMC Conference Center. John Fuller, executive director of Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc. will present an overview of the Virginia Conference health plans. Rev. Chris Bennett, a consultant with The Spark Mill, a Richmond-based strategic planning and consulting firm, will lead us in Discipleship through Volunteer Management.

Bishop Lewis has said, “United Methodist Church secretaries are called to ministry as surely as any pastor. Our administrative staff persons are a part of the ministry teams of our local churches and other United Methodist agencies. It is critically important that we work to develop effectiveness and vitality in the life of these teams. To that end the VA PAUMCS is committed to providing a supportive base for the training and fellowship of its members.”

– *Susan Mundell Petrey, President*

VIRGINIA CONFERENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Much of the work of the VCHS this past year focused on our hosting of the Southeastern Jurisdiction Historical Society's Annual Meeting, July 17-20, 2018 at Williamsburg UMC. The theme of the event was Religious Liberty in the Historic Advance of Virginia Methodism and included lectures on various aspects of our history, historical interpretations, displays, field trips, worship, and a banquet followed by a retrospective and concert celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Uniting Conference of 1968. There was a record attendance of 132 persons and reviews from across the Jurisdiction were of a highly positive nature. The 2019 SEJ/HS meeting will take place July 9-12 at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.

The principal work of the VCHS since that time has related to the work of our three foundations and the Conference Archives.

The Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation

The Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation has sought to give greater visibility to its work through various exhibits and articles, along with the development of a professional-level brochure, all of which were utilized during the SEJ/HS Annual meeting and can be seen in the display area. At the old Randolph-Macon College site in Boydton, the emphasis has been on determining the structural soundness of the Helensha Cottage and preparing the building for future improvements. Much of the work has been done by partnering with various volunteers, United Methodist colleges and youth groups. Efforts are being made to secure grants to fund this on-going enterprise. At the Dromgoole site, the home of pioneering circuit-rider, the Rev. Edward Dromgoole, has been stabilized, with the age of the house recently determined by dendrochronology (late 1790's). Plans are underway to provide a caretaker's house and rustic campground on site. At the Ebenezer School site plans are underway for repair/replacement of signage and for a more extensive interpretive display at the site, telling its history as the first Methodist school in America. The OBCF elects its own Foundation Board as a certified 501 (C) 3 non-profit organization.

The Old Stone Church Foundation

The Old Stone Church Foundation has developed a display explaining the significance of this first-owned Methodist property in America and is available to be seen in the display area. The Rev. Michael Browder was the keynote speaker at the annual meeting on September 12, 2018, addressing the topic German Methodists Loudoun and the Origins of the United Brethren in Christ. The Old Stone Church Foundation aspires to make the Old Stone Church Site a meaningful pilgrimage destination for all visitors, becoming operational in May 2019.

William Watters Foundation

The William Waters Foundation serves to oversee the preservation, care and interpretation of the McLean gravesite of William Watters, the first American-born Methodist itinerant preacher. In June of 2018, the WWF and the Virginia Commission on Archives and History nominated the site for designation as a Heritage Landmark, United Methodism's highest honor for its Historic Sites, and will be voted on at the General Conference of 2020. The WWF has developed a fine display of its work, which was utilized at the SEJ/HS Annual Meeting and is available in the display area of this Conference. Much effort has gone into keeping the site well kept with removal of dead trees and plans for on-going repairs and maintenance, funded by generous donations. Heritage is now reporting updates about the site and the work of the WWF.

Archives Committee

The Archives Committee has done extensive work this year developing a detailed plan of structure and oversight, job description for the Conference Archivist (Stephanie Davis) and budget, all of which were approved at the March 2, 2019 meeting of the VCHS. The budget for the Archives totals \$17,000, including salary, supplies, dues, training and misc. Their report is as follows:

The *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church, 2016, assigns responsibilities for United Methodist Church (UMC) archives to the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH), which in turn assigns archival responsibilities to Jurisdictional and Annual Conferences.

In accordance with church guidance and mandates, the mission of the Virginia Annual Conference Archives (VAC) is to collect, organize and preserve materials that document the historical development of the UMC and its antecedents in Virginia, the VAC Archivist is tasked with implementing this mission.

To ensure the maintenance of VAC records as prescribed, the archivist is tasked with a vast array of records responsibilities including:

- ensuring VAC records are deposited in the Archives in accordance with *The Discipline* and GCAH guidance;
- arranging VAC records to make them accessible when needed;
- providing research assistance to VAC churches, districts, committees and other entities when requested;

- maintaining the collections in accordance with prescribed guidelines for preserving archival records in all formats, including photographic and electronic formats;
- providing guidance to VAC churches and committees for maintain and subsequently transferring to the Archives records as identified in *The Discipline*; and staying up-to-date with current archival practices and implementing changes as needed.

The current VAC archivist is contracted and paid to work 15 hours per week, which does not allow her ample time to implement all aspects of the job. Most of her time is spent responding to information requests from local churches, district superintendents, and researchers, and accepting new acquisitions. Answering research requests requires meticulous, detailed and time-consuming work. As a result, she is unable to perform many of the critical tasks relating to the maintenance of the Archives.

Acquisitions to the Archives can represent multiple boxes and weeks of assessing, organizing and filing. In recent years the archivist has processed records from over 20 closed churches, several closed districts, the entire Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center Collection, and the collection from the Blackstone College Alumnae Association. With the prediction of more church closings, this job will, of necessity, become even more challenging.

Many of the critical jobs necessary to ensure the collection of VAC records and to provide guidance to AC churches and committees on the identification and disposal of local AC records and the disposition of permanent records are traditionally provided by a records manager or an archivist/records manager. The current, part-time archivist simply does not have the time needed to perform these additional jobs.

The Program Budget request for the VCHS for the coming year is \$6,400.

The Archives Budget request for 2019/20 is as follows: Salary, \$16,000; Supplies, \$650; Dues, \$170; Training, \$400; Miscellaneous, \$380. Total: \$17,600

Note: The Patti Russell Endowment now stands at approximately \$356,000, interest earnings of which help to support the salary and work of the Conference Archivist. [It is hoped that the principal will grow substantially before interest earnings are fully utilized.]

As a final, significant note, the Trustees of the VCHS have placed in nomination with biographical support the names of the Rev. Dr. Raymond Fitzhugh Wrenn and Catherine D. Morgan for the GCAH Ministry of Memory Award.

– John “Jack” T. Martin, Jr., President

RECOMMENDATION

The Trustees of the Virginia Conference Historical Society, meeting March 2, 2019, unanimously approved the following request to the Virginia Annual Conference and/or District Boards of Mission of the Annual Conference, 2019:

That 10% of the funds received by the Virginia Annual Conference and/or District Boards of Missions from the sale and/or closing of churches be directed to the Conference Treasurer and reserved for the salary and operating costs of the Conference Archives.

THE VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION

In accordance with the Socially Responsible Investing principles of the United Methodist Book of Discipline, the Virginia United Methodist Foundation manages over \$68 million dollars from local churches, investing this money to create scholarship funds, mission funds and growth funds for the Virginia Conference. Our commitment is to live out our core values with a vision for relevant ministry that leaves a lasting legacy for generations to come.

We have a Grant Program where we tithe money that comes to us for operating the Foundation. In 2018, the Foundation awarded more than \$80,000 to local church projects and district mission events. We had 76 applicants from all districts across the Virginia Conference. One of our most rewarding grants was to a mission church that serves a multi-cultural community. We are thrilled that our grant was able to make their budget end up in the black so they can begin a new year of service for their community. This church serves the needy with a massive garden in the summer, a food pantry all year long, Wednesday night dinners for the community and a special worship service in Spanish. It is a haven for the lost, lonely and hungry. This Grant, along with twenty-four others, assisted Virginia United Methodist Churches as they serve all of God’s children.

Additionally, another aspect of our mission is to visit local churches and invite them to start Endowment Programs. Such programs can grow each year and yield a percentage towards the funding of mission projects, music funds, building programs, youth programs, etc. The various items that Endowment Funds can fund for eternity is nearly endless. Scholarship funds are popular and are a wonderful way to make sure that younger generations will have the education needed to proclaim the message of Christ.

Over the past year, the Virginia United Methodist Foundation has served hundreds of churches across the Virginia Conference in creating ministries for the future. We are committed to serving every local church and dedicated to helping all God’s children, both present and forthcoming generations. We stand ready to help your church or your members design a program that will grow and serve others.

– Board of Directors

Virginia United Methodist Development Company, LLC

The Virginia United Methodist Development Company (‘DevCo’) is growing exponentially. It has grown to over \$45 million dollars in approximately four years. DevCo loans money to churches who want to buy land, construct buildings or refurbish current structures. Currently, we have over fifty active loans. To fund these loans, DevCo has investment certificates that pay great interest rates. Churches, as well as individual, can invest in these certificates; hence, our motto has come to be known as “Methodists helping Methodists”.

DevCo loan rates are tied to Wall Street Prime. We are competitive with banks. However, it should also be recognized that the Federal Reserve increased rates four times in 2018. We can reduce interest rates by up to 75 basis points dependent upon how much money the church has with DevCo as well as other factors, such as the payment of apportionments. Additionally, investing with DevCo will produce a wonderful rate of return and help reduce a church’s loan rate.

DevCo offers construction loans with terms up to one year. Permanent loans with terms of five years and amortization up to 30 years often provide lower payments and allow the church to pay more on principle.

An example of DevCo’s mission is Rising Hope UMC, which started in 1995 when Rev. Keary Kincannon was appointed in Northern Virginia to make a difference to the poor and homeless. He started Rising Hope out of the back of his car. The church moved several times until Mr. Edwin Lynch gave about a half million dollars to acquire the present building at 8229 Russell Road, Alexandria, Va. Today, this site serves about 300 families each week. The Food Pantry supplies about 200,000 meals each year. Rising Hope also has a Soup Kitchen that supplies 20 to 40 meals per day – over 16,000 meals in 2018. The church also has a Hypothermia Shelter that can house 24 individuals per night or about 2800 Bed Nights per year. It takes about 250 volunteers to make these ministries operate. During Thanksgiving, they gave away 430 baskets of food and fed 150 hot meals. They reciprocated these same efforts on Christmas Day. How has DevCo served? We helped Rising Hope UMC with a loan to expand their facilities and the Foundation has helped their ministry through the award of several grants.

As DevCo grows, our focused perspective remains: Strengthening the local church to expand ministry in its community through effective planning and ongoing consultation as we manage assets and provide support to fulfill its enduring local mission! We are “Methodists Helping Methodists!”

Total Assets	\$44,165,446
Total Outstanding Loans	\$36,842,641
Loan Commitments for future	\$4,946,251
Loan to Collateral Value	33.28%

– Board of Directors