# XII. HISTORICAL STATEMENT

The Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church is the direct descendant of the original annual conference of the United Brethren in Christ and of one of the six original conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The present conference was formed in 1970, by the merger of the Virginia Conference, formerly Methodist, with the former Evangelical United Brethren Conference of the same name. It is the successor to 39 Annual Conferences of eight denominations. Since the oldest of these dates back to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, the 1970 session was declared to be the 188th session of the Conference (two "annual" sessions having been held in 1791 and 1841).

These 39 antecedent conferences are as follows:

### THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Virginia (1784-1844), Baltimore (1784-1939), Philadelphia (1784-1869), North Carolina (1836-1844), Washington (1864-1939), Delaware (1864-1939), Virginia and North Carolina Mission (1864-1868), Virginia (1868-1906), North Carolina (1869-1939), Wilmington (1869-1939), East Tennessee (1880-1939), Holston (1906-1939), West Virginia (1906-1939), Atlantic Mission (1906-1912), Blue Ridge- Atlantic (1912-1939)

### THE CHURCH OF THE UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Original ("Old" or "Mother") (1800-1829), Hagerstown (1829-1830), Virginia (1830-1946)

#### THE METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH

East Virginia (1829-1834), Maryland (1829-1939), Virginia (1834-1870), North Carolina (1860-1939)

### THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH

Virginia (1844-1939), North Carolina (1844-1874), Baltimore (1866-1939)

INDEPENDENT CONFERENCE

Baltimore (1861-1866)

#### THE METHODIST CHURCH

Virginia (1939-1968), Washington (1939-1965), Delaware (1939-1965), East Tennessee (1939-1965), North Carolina-C.J. (1939-1965), North Carolina-Virginia (1965-1968)

#### THE EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH

Virginia (1946-1968), Central Pennsylvania (1948-1964), Susquehanna (1964-1968)

### THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Virginia-M (1968-1970), Virginia-E (1968-1970), Susquehanna (1968-1969)

Virginia was the scene of the ministries of many of the pioneers of the Methodist and United Brethren churches, most notably among them Francis Asbury, one of the first two Methodist bishops; William Watters, Methodism's first Native American minister; Philip William Otterbein, bishop and leader in the founding of the United Brethren in Christ; and Christian Newcomer, United Brethren pioneer in Virginia and later bishop.

Twenty bishops of the denominations now comprising the United Methodist Church were born within the bounds of the Virginia Conference. They are: William McKendree, Enoch George, John Early, Samuel Hiestand, Beverly Waugh, David S. Doggett, William Taylor, John C. Granbery, William W. Duncan, James W. Hott, Collins Denny, William B. Beauchamp, Paul B. Kern, Paul Neff Garber, Edgar A. Love, Walter C. Gum, Carlton P. Minnick, Jr., R. Kern Eutsler, H. Hasbrouck Hughes, Jr., and Timothy W. Whitaker.

### SOME LANDMARK DATES OF THE CONFERENCE

May 11, 1766: Earliest known property for a Methodist Church in America deeded to Methodist Society in Leesburg.

November 14, 1772: Missionary work carried on during 1772 in Southern Virginia by Robert Williams, William Watters and Joseph Pilmoor results in organizing, in Portsmouth, what is now Monumental Church, the oldest church now in existence in the Conference.

May 19, 1778: The Sixth American Methodist Conference held in Leesburg.

May 13, 1781: Harry Hosier preaches first recorded Methodist sermon by a Negro, at Fairfax Chapel in Falls Church.

May 1, 1785: First Session of the Virginia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church held at home of William Mason in Brunswick County.

1792: Virginia was the center of the first schism of American Methodism, led by James O'Kelley, a member of the Virginia Conference. It resulted in the formation of the Republican Methodists, now a part of the United Church of Christ.

September 25, 1800: First Session of the Original Conference of the United Brethren in Christ (later called the Virginia Conference) at the home of Peter Kemp, near Frederick, Md.

May 25, 1808: First United Brethren Conference to be held in Virginia, at Abraham Niswander's home near Middletown.

March 31, 1816: Francis Asbury, pioneer Methodist bishop in America, died at the home of George Arnold, near Spotsylvania.

March 29, 1827: First native American itinerant, William Watters, died at his home in McLean.

May 1, 1846: First General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met at Union Street Church, Petersburg.

November, 1870: Virginia Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church merged with the Virginia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Lynchburg. October 16, 1939: Virginia Conference of The Methodist Church organized, including all or parts of nine previous conferences, at Richmond.

June 10, 1968: Virginia Conference and North Carolina-Virginia Conference, formerly of The Methodist Church, are merged to form the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church, at Richmond.

January 3, 1970: Present Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church organized at Madison College, Harrisonburg.

## THE NUMBERING OF CONFERENCE SESSIONS

The Virginia Conference was organized in May of 1785. That was its first session. It was one year old at its second session in 1786, and so on, so that its age would always be one less than the number of that year's session. Then, two annual sessions were held in April and December of 1791 and in January and November of 1841, so that in 2022, the 240th annual session, the conference was 236 years old.

## SESSIONS OF THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE

No.	Place of Session	Date	President	Secretary
	Mason's, Brunswick Co	May 1785	Bishop Asbury	Unknown
	Lane's Chapel, Sussex Co	April 1786	Bishop Asbury	Unknown
	Rough Creek, Charlotte Co			
	Petersburg			
5	Petersburg	June 1789	Bishop Asbury	Unknown
	Lane's Chapel, Sussex Co			
	Petersburg			
S	Lane's Chapel, Sussex Co Manchester	December 1/91	Bishop Asbury	Unknown
9 10	Petersburg	November 1/92 November 1703	Richon Achury	Ulknown
	Mabrey's Greensville Co.			
	Salem, Mecklenburg Co			
	Mabrey's, Greensville Co			
	Lane's Chapel, Sussex Co			
	Salem, Mecklenburg Co			
	Jones' Chapel, Sussex Co			
	Blount's Chapel, Isle of Wight Co			
18	Drumgoole's, Brunswick Co	April 1801	Bishop Asbury	Unknown
	Salem, Mecklenburg Co			
	Olive Branch, Brunswick Co			
	Salem, Mecklenburg Co			
22	Taylor's, Caswell Co., N.C	March 1805	Bishop Asbury	Alex. McCaiı
23	Norfolk	February 1806	Bishop Asbury	T.L. Douglas
	New Bern, N.C.			
25	Lynchburg	February 1808	Bishop Asbury	T.L. Douglas
26	Tarboro, N.C.	February 1809	Bish on McKen Jaco	I.L. Douglas
2/ 20	Petersburg	February 1810	Bish on Mayon dues	I.L. Douglas
۷٥ ۵۵	Richmond	Eabruary 1912	Richan McKendree	TI Douglas
ະອ ເດ	New Bern, N.C.	Eebruary 1813	Richan McKendree	TI Douglas
31	Norfolk	February 1814	Rishon McKendree	TI. Douglas
32	Lynchburg	February 1815	Bishop McKendree	Iohn Farly
33	Raleigh, N.C	January 1816	Bishop McKendree	M.M. Dance
34	Petersburg	February 1817	Bishop McKendree	M.M. Dance
35	Norfolk	February 1818	Bishop Roberts	M.M. Dance
36	Oxford, N.C	February 1819	Bishop Roberts	M.M. Dance
37	Richmond	February 1820	Bishop George	M.M. Dance
	Raleigh, N.C			
39	New Bern, N.C.	March 1822	Bishop George	John Early
	Lynchburg			
	Petersburg			
12	Oxford, N.C	February 1825	Bishop Soule	John Early
13	Portsmouth	February 1826	Bishop Soule	John Early
<del>1</del> 4	Petersburg	February 1827	Bishop Roberts	John Early
<del>1</del> 5	Raleigh, N.C.	February 1828	Bish on Dahanta	John Early
	Lynchburg			
	New Bern, N.C.			
	Norfolk	•		
	Petersburg			
	Raleigh, N.C			
	Lynchburg			· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
	Norfolk	•		
	Petersburg	•	1 0	
	Richmond	•	1 0	
	Edenton, N.C			
57	Farmville	January 1840	Bishop Waugh	John Early
8	Lynchburg	January 1841	Bishop Morris	John Early
	Portsmouth			
50	Petersburg	November 1842	Bishop Waugh	John Early
	Richmond			
	Lynchburg			
	Norfolk			
	Randolph-Macon College, Boydton			
	Chrlottesville			
	Elizabeth City, N.C			
	Petersburg			
	Richmond			
	Alexandria			
	Fredericksburg			
	Lynchburg Norfolk			
	NOTIOIK	November 1854	bisnod Pierce	I.D. Couling

No.	Place of Session	Date	President	Secretary
74	Richmond	November 1856	Bishop Early	J.D. Couling
	Elizabeth City, N.C			
76	Portsmouth	November 1858	Bishop Kavanaugh	J.D. Couling
77	Lynchburg	November 1859	Bishop Early	J.D. Couling
	Alexandria			
79	Norfolk	November 1861	Bishop Andrew	Paul Whitehead
80	Petersburg	November 1862	Bishop Early	Paul Whitehead
81	Richmond	November 1863	Bishop Pierce	Paul Whitehead
82	Lynchburg	November 1864	Rev. Wm. A. Smith	Paul Whitehead
83	Danville	November 1865	Bishop Early	Paul Whitehea
84	Norfolk	November 1866	Bishop Pierce	Paul Whitehead
	Petersburg			
86	Charlottesville	November 1868	Bishop Wightman	Paul Whitehea
	Richmond			
	Lynchburg			
	Portsmouth			
	Petersburg			
	Norfolk			
	Elizabeth City, N.C			
93	Danville	November 1875	Bishop McTveire	Paul Whitehea
	Richmond			
	Lynchburg			
	Petersburg			
	Norfolk			
98	Danville	November 1990	Richan Kaanar	Daul Whitehear
	Charlottesville			
	Portsmouth			
	Richmond			
101	Lynchburg	November 1883	Dish on Vocasia	Davi Whitehead
	Petersburg			
	Norfolk			
105	Danville	November 1887	Bisnop Key	Paul Whitehead
	Portsmouth			
	Richmond			
	Lynchburg			
109	Petersburg	November 1891	Bishop Keener	Paul Whitehead
110	Norfolk	November 1892	Bishop Hendrix	Paul Whitehead
111	Danville	November 1893	Bishop Granbery	Paul Whitehead
	Charlottesville			
113	Richmond	November 1895	Bishop Galloway	Paul Whitehead
	Lynchburg			
	Danville			
116	Portsmouth	November 1898	Bishop Hargrove	Paul Whitehead
117	Petersburg	November 1899	Bishop Wilson	Paul Whitehead
118	Norfolk	November 1900	Bishop Duncan	Paul Whitehead
	Newport News			
	Richmond			
	Charlottesville			
	Lynchburg			
	Danville			
	Portsmouth			
	Petersburg			
	Norfolk			
	Newport News			
	Richmond			
	Salisbury, Md			
	Lynchburg			
131	Danville	November 1913	Bishop Denny	B.F. Lipscomb
132	Portsmouth	November 1914	Bishop Kilgo	B.F. Lipscomb
133	Norfolk	November 1915	Bishop Candler	B.F. Lipscomb
	Richmond			
135	Lynchburg	November 1917	Bishop Hoss	B.F. Lipscomb
	Charlottesville			
	Richmond			
	Norfolk			
	Richmond			
140	Norfolk	October 1922	Bishop Candler	B.F. Lipscomb
	Richmond			
1/12	Norfolk		Bishop Candler	B.F. Linscomb
	Richmond	October 1925	Bishop Candler	B F Linscomh
143			D. I D	D.E. Lingsomb
143	Norfolk		Bishop Denny	D. F. Linsconnii
143 144	Norfolk			
143 144 145	Norfolk Danville	November 1927	Bishop Denny	B.F. Lipscomb
143 144 145 146	NorfolkDanville	November 1927 October 1928	Bishop DennyBishop Denny	B.F. Lipscomb
143 144 145 146	NorfolkDanvilleLynchburgRichmond	November 1927 October 1928 October 1929	Bishop DennyBishop DennyBishop DennyBishop Denny	B.F. Lipscomb B.F. Lipscomb B.F. Lipscomb
143 144 145 146 147 148	NorfolkDanville		Bishop Denny Bishop Denny Bishop Denny Bishop Beauchamp	

No.	Place of Session	Date	President	Secretary
	Norfolk			
	Lynchburg			
	Danville			
154	Richmond	October 1936	Bishop Mouzon	R.M. White
	Norfolk			
	Lynchburg			
	Danville			
	Richmond (Organizing Session)			
	Roanoke			
	Richmond			
	. Roanoke			
	. Lynchburg			
	. Richmond			
	. Lynchburg			
	Roanoke			
166	Norfolk	October 1948	Bishop Peele	R.M. White
	Richmond			
	Richmond			
169	Roanoke	October 1951	Bishop Garber	R.M. White
170	Norfolk	October 1952	Bishop Garber	R.M. White
171	Roanoke	October 1953	Bishop Garber	R.M. White
172	Richmond	June 1954	Bishop Garber	R.M. White
173	Norfolk	June 1955	Bishop Garber	R.M. White
	Harrisonburg			
	Roanoke			
	Richmond			
	Norfolk			
	Fredericksburg			
	Virginia Beach			
	Norfolk	*	*	
	Virginia Beach			
	Roanoke			
	Virginia Beach			
	Norfolk	*	*	,
	Virginia Beach			
	Norfolk			
	Harrisonburg (Uniting Session)			
188	Virginia Beach	Iune 1970	Rishon Herrick	CT Boyd
189	Norfolk	June 1971	Rishon Cannon	C T Boyd
	. Hampton			
	Roanoke	,	1	/
192	Hampton	June 1974	Bishop Goodson	Edward H. Kvle
	Richmond (Special Session)	December 1974	Bishop Goodson	Edward H. Kvle
	Norfolk			
	Hampton			
195	Roanoke	June 1977	Bishop Goodson	Edward H. Kyle
	Hampton			
	Roanoke			
	Richmond			
	Hampton			
	Virginia Beach			
	Roanoke			
	Virginia Beach			
	Hampton			
	Roanoke			
	Virginia Beach			
	Roanoke			
	Norfolk			
	Hampton			
	Roanoke			
	Virginia Beach			
	Hampton			
	Roanoke			
	Virginia Beach			
/15	Hampton	juiil 1///		
	Hampton	June 1998		
216	Roanoke	*	*	Robert Watts
216 217	Roanoke	June 1999	Bishop Pennel	
216 217 218	Roanoke	June 1999 June 2000	Bishop Pennel Bishop Pennel	Robert Watts
216 217 218 219	Roanoke	June 1999 June 2000 June 2001	Bishop Pennel Bishop Pennel Bishop Pennel	Robert Watts Robert Watts
216 217 218 219 220	Roanoke	June 1999 June 2000 June 2001 June 2002	Bishop Pennel Bishop Pennel Bishop Pennel Bishop Pennel	Robert Watts Robert Watts Robert Blinn
216 217 218 219 220 221	Roanoke	June 1999	Bishop Pennel	Robert Watts Robert Watts Robert Blinn Robert Blinn
216 217 218 219 220 221	Roanoke	June 1999	Bishop Pennel	Robert Watts Robert Watts Robert Blinn Robert Blinn Robert Blinn

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No. Place of Session	Date	President	Secretary
225Roanoke	June 2007	Bishop Kammerer	Robert Blinn
226Roanoke	June 2008	Bishop Kammerer	Robert Blinn
227Norfolk			
228Norfolk	June 2010	Bishop Kammerer	Robert Blinn
229Roanoke	June 2011	Bishop Whitaker	Robert Blinn
230Roanoke	June 2012	Bishop Kammerer	Robert Blinn
231 Hampton	June 2013	Bishop Cho	Robert Blinn
232Hampton	June 2014	Bishop Cho	Susan Reaves
233Roanoke	June 2015	Bishop Cho	Susan Reaves
233Roanoke	June 2015	Bishop Cho	Susan Reaves
234Roanoke	June 2016	Bishop Cho	Susan Reaves
235 Hampton	June 2017	Bishop Lewis	Susan Reaves
236 Hampton			
237Roanoke	June 2019	Bishop Weaver	Susan Reaves
238Richmond	October 2020	Bishop Lewis	Susan Reaves
239Richmond			
240Hampton	June 2022	Bishop Lewis	Joshua King
241Roanoke	June 2023	Bishop Haupert-Johnson	Joshua King
242Hampton	June 2024	Bishop Haupert-Johnson	Joshua King
243Roanoke	June 2025	Bishop Haupert-Johnson	Claire Miller