

VAUMC QUARTER 2 REPORT

the

Q

SOURCE

August 2025

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THE Q SOURCE

THE NAME

The "Q source" (from the German word "Quelle," meaning "source") is a hypothetical, lost collection of sayings of Jesus, which biblical scholars believe was the primary source used by the authors of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.

WHAT IS THIS REPORT

This report aims to give Virginia Conference members an easy digest of the work that is happening across the Virginia Conference on a regular basis. The hope would be that conference clergy and laity could more readily have examples of how ministry is happening across the conference, point to "bright spots" in the VAUMC, and expect more regular updates from operational offices such as Treasurer's Office and VUMPI.

Members can anticipate an update in this format every quarter. Feedback or questions are welcome by emailing VAUMC Director of Communications at MadelineWhite@vaumc.org.

BISHOP'S CURRENT READS



1.

Honest Advent
by Scott
Erickson

2.

Restoring Sanity
by Margaret J.
Wheatley

3.

AI and the
Church by
Jason Moore

4.

The Violent Take It
By Force by
Matthew D. Taylor

5.

Caste by Isabel
Wilkerson

6.

Essentialism by
Greg McKeown

7.

Be Better than
your BS by Risha
Grant

8.

Communicating for a
Change by Andy
Stanley & Lane Jones

9.

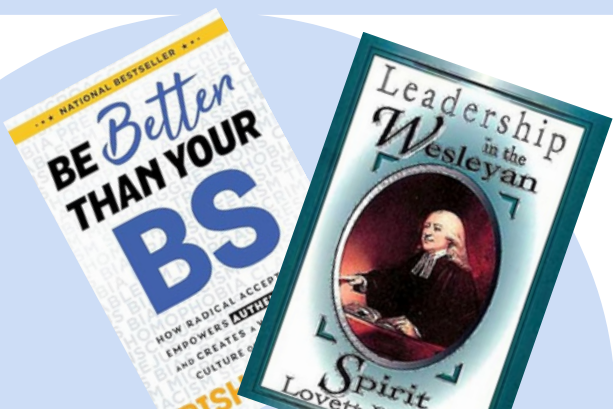
Leadership in the
Wesleyan Spirit
by Lovett Weems

10.

Unreasonable
Hospitality by
Will Guidara

11.

The 25th
Hour by
David Benioff



CLERGY EXCELLENCE



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Extension Ministers Gathering,
December 3, 2025, Williamsburg UMC

Calling all extension ministers! Come for a day apart with Bishop Sue. Our time together will include worship, the Bishop's address, and time for fun and fellowship. Registration will open on **September 1, 2025**.

- Applications for Provisional and Full Membership are open through **July 31, 2025**.

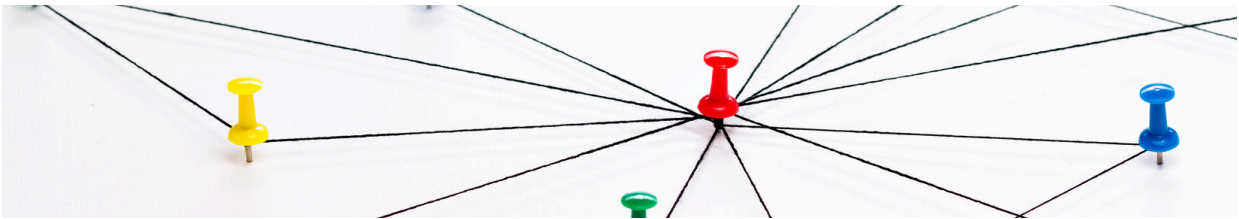
Application information can be found here:
<https://vaumc.org/BOMAPPLICATIONS/>

- The transfer application process will open on **January 1, 2026**.

CONNECTION & INNOVATION

HIGHLIGHTS

- There has been great conversation and direction around the work of metrics and measurements continued in Quarter 2 of 2025, to include a visit to Nashville, TN for a denomination-wide meeting about the potential for experimentation around how we measure vitality in the coming months. This, paired with the work in the Virginia Conference related to alpha testing for viable metrics and effective measurement tools, has the potential to reframe how we understand what it means to be a vital church, how we can enhance the data collection process, and how we can deploy these efforts to be change agents in our communities throughout the Annual Conference.
- Additionally, this office has been at work behind the scenes assisting with the development of experimentation around the Connectional Table model and other strategic pieces related to the 2024 Extended Extended Cabinet report.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The primary work of Connection and Innovation in Q2 related to the preparation and execution of the 243rd session of the Virginia Annual Conference, held in June 2025. We share with the entire Annual Conference in giving God thanks for the thousands of Annual Conference members in attendance and for the amazing movement of the Holy Spirit that happened during our Holy Conferencing this year. A special kudos goes out to Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson for her leadership, presiding, and spirit throughout the Annual Conference session. We are grateful to the Valley Ridge District for hosting Annual Conference and to the many, many volunteers and staff that made Annual Conference possible.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

A survey around experiences with Annual Conference was sent out following the session. Over 25% of participants responded – thank you for your feedback!

Some highlights from that feedback included:

- Many delegates expressed a renewed sense of hope and excitement for the future of the UMC.
- There was an emphasis on forward movement, shedding nostalgia, and embracing change as the church evolves.
- Members referenced a hopeful vision inspired by messages from leadership, especially Bishop Sue.
- Members consistently highlighted a strong sense of unity and the inclusive nature of the conference.
- There was a sense of gratitude for the worshipful attitude of the conference session. Many participants highlighted the excellence in music and preaching at Annual Conference.
- Many attendees came away with a sense of encouragement to approach ministry with creativity, using art and storytelling to navigate change, grief, and transformation.
- Several respondents praised Lunch Labs, citing the availability of lunch and an appreciation for the convenience of combining meals with learning.
- A wealth of respondents deeply valued the opportunity to reconnect with friends and colleagues, meet new people, and engage in fellowship.
- Many participants made new connections by striking up conversations during breaks, walking around the display area, or simply chatting with those seated nearby during sessions. These spontaneous moments were often cited as the most meaningful for building new relationships.
- Having unscheduled evenings was widely appreciated and enabled attendees to socialize informally, reconnect with old friends, or make new acquaintances over dinner or casual gatherings.
- Golf cart shuttles were widely appreciated and volunteers operating them received high praise.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

Additionally, it is important to note places where we might aspire for improvement moving forward.

The survey feedback centers on a few areas of note:

- A major theme was frustration with the electronic voting system, particularly internet connectivity problems, system failures, and the length of time it took to vote.
- Comments also mentioned discomfort with room temperatures, chair ergonomics, and lack of sustainability practices.
- Some indicated difficulty navigating the Book of Reports and a desire for hyperlinked, searchable PDFs. Others asked for clearer summaries of voting items, agendas, and resolutions.
- Several members reflected on the emotional impact of church closures and the challenges of decline.
- Moving forward, there is strong demand for one-page recap sheets, bullet point action items and decisions, and written summaries of each day's events.

There is a last note we would be remiss to leave out regarding Annual Conference. Shortly after Annual Conference ended, Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson shared a story about an encounter she had after adjournments. One of the techs for the week -- who works for a company we contract with to do sound, lights, and all that technical magic -- asked to speak with her as she was leaving the platform.

He told her, "I'm not particularly religious, but I've worked plenty of church events before. The way you all treat each other, the depth of your teaching, and the love that is in this place is like nothing I've ever experienced before. I've never been to a United Methodist church before, but I'm finding one to attend tomorrow."

Amidst all the feedback we have received, that story is a reminder that when we gather as United Methodists, we are bearing witness to the love of God. We are grateful for our shared experience and for the great feedback related to the 2025 Annual Conference. Preparations are already beginning for the 2026 Annual Conference in Harrisonburg, VA June 17-20, 2026. We can't wait!



DISCIPLESHIP & CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY

HIGHLIGHTS

- During the 2025 Annual Conference, the Board of Discipleship awarded the One Matters Award, which recognizes churches that turn around their disciple-making, to St. Mark's UMC in Manassas. They nearly doubled their weekly worship attendance, and after having no professions of faith for several years, had two baptisms and five professions of faith. The final Denman clergy award for evangelism recognized Rev. Joshua Orndorff, with Lay Evangelism awards going to Lauren Easter (Three Notch'd District) and Nate Birchfield (young adult from the Valley Ridge District). The Board of Discipleship will be reimagining the awards and will present new awards next year.
- The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries awarded the Francis Asbury Award, recognizing long-time support for campus ministry, to Mrs. Joan Perry Brock and her late husband, Macon Brock II. The Brocks have provided generous financial support to Randolph-Macon College and Virginia Wesleyan University, as well as to Longwood University and Old Dominion University. Among their contributions is the Center for the Study of Religious Freedom at Virginia Wesleyan, now styled the Robert Nusbaum Center.



- Conference-supported campus ministries (not including the United Methodist schools) celebrated the end of the academic year. From Fall of 2024 to May 2025, our campus ministries
 - engaged with over 500 unique students in worship, with average weekly attendance over 250.
 - Students engaged in over 100 missional opportunities, both ongoing and one-time.
 - Campus ministers supported over 210 student leaders, including 80 new leaders, and at least three graduates are moving on to seminary in the fall.
 - 326 individuals took part in discipleship opportunities during the year, with an average weekly attendance of 184.

VAUMC campus ministries continue to church leaders among our young adults, and to support their growth as disciples.

DISCIPLESHIP & CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY

HIGHLIGHTS CONT'D

- Hatching Faith: Cohort 1 (2025-2026) is well underway with Hatch Teams in local congregations beginning to implement their worship experiments. Stories from these worship experiments will be shared later in the year. Cohort 1 Church Communities:
 - Bethlehem UMC
 - Charity UMC
 - Fishersville UMC
 - Grace UMC (Parksley)
 - Haygood UMC
 - New Hope UMC
 - New Life International
 - Wesley Chapel UMC

Applications for year 2 cohorts are open and are being accepted on a rolling basis through **November 1, 2025**. [Apply here](#). Join a Zoom informational session to ask more questions on Thursday, October 16 at 7:30 p.m. The link to register for the informational session is [here](#).



- Be on the lookout in the next month for more information about an Advent resource available for local church use this Advent 2025.



HATCHING FAITH

- The conference Board of Discipleship asked Annual Conference members to share ways in which they experience the Holy Spirit moving in their heart, in their church, and in their community. The board wants to continue hearing from the conference about ways in which they face challenges and roadblocks to seeing the Holy Spirit move in their heart, their church, and their community. Share your responses by emailing bod@vaumc.org.

The board celebrates all the ways the Spirit is moving in our conference including:

- "In connecting with our community"
- "In loving others"
- "In prayer from others"
- "In the morning sun"
- "In fellowship with one another"
- "In faith questions from children"
- "In laity"
- "In curiosity"
- "In feeding our neighbors"
- "In being open to others"

MISSIONAL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

HIGHLIGHTS

Throughout this summer season, the Office of Missional and Community Engagement is engaged in a season of intentional conversation, discernment, and organizational realignment so that we can more faithfully resource our local churches throughout the VAUMC. More specific information about this season of discernment will be offered in the fall 2025 Q Source report. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to Reverend Amanda Miller Garber with questions at amandagarber@vaumc.org.

Finally, we want to offer two “bright spots” or inspiring stories within the Virginia Conference in the next column.

Would you like to share a Bright Spot with us? Please reach out to MadelineWhite@vaumc.org or AmandaGarber@vaumc.org.

CELEBRATIONS

VAUMC collected 14,917 kits (hygiene, feminine hygiene, and cleaning) prior to Annual Conference 2025 for a total value of \$245, 985.

BRIGHT SPOTS

The Outreach Clinic at Andrew Chapel Methodist Church, Montross, has reopened after suspending operations in 2020 due to the pandemic. Clinic staff and Westmoreland County volunteers coordinated efforts to reopen the outreach to better reach those living in the upper Northern Neck.

Donna Taylor, pastor of Andrew Chapel, and Dave Taylor, who is coordinating the reopening, have been instrumental in developing the processes needed for operations.

The Clinic’s Medical Director, Dr. Charles Maresh, and two staff members join a team of volunteers every other Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. to see Medical Clinic patients, help enroll new patients and dispense medications from the Clinic Pharmacy.

In a video, story, Rev. Joanna Paysour shared how Greene Memorial UMC and Trinity UMC in Roanoke have merged — not just congregations, but missions. The historic Trinity building is being transformed into 15 affordable apartments for retirees, turning sacred space into safe space. Watch the story of faith, legacy, and new beginnings on the [conference YouTube](#).

DISASTER



RECOVERY

We know that our VAUMC members want to help however we can to assist our Texan neighbors following the recent catastrophic flooding. Rev. Bob Pihlcrantz, VAUMC Disaster Response Coordinator, is sharing ways we can assist at this time.

- Do not self-deploy! This will overwhelm Texan officials who are already overwhelmed with disaster recovery efforts. We will share more information when officials have asked for Early Response Team (ERT) volunteers.
- Monetary donations are needed! To support our U.S. disaster response efforts through UMCOR, give here: bit.ly/umcorusdr

Please continue to pray for those who have lost loved ones and for all who have been impacted by this devastating disaster. Please contact missions@vaumc.org if you have questions.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Annual Conference overwhelmingly passed several key financial changes for 2026.

- Direct Billing of active clergy health and the elimination of the healthcare apportionment
 - Beginning **January 1, 2026**
 - \$19,920 per year, \$1,660 per month
 - Charge if for eligible clergy even if they don't participate
 - No Active Clergy Health apportionment
- New budget format with only 4 apportionments
 - Reduced the number of apportionments from 13 to four
 - Includes both the revenue and spending budgets
 - Has a narrative budget to more clearly explain the spending plan
 - By the end of the year, the 101 apportionment must be paid 100% before the other three apportionments can be funded.
- CFA to study how to best handle payroll for clergy.
 - Establish one payroll process for all clergy serving churches, districts and Annual Conference
 - Remove the burden of clergy payroll processing from local churches
 - Clergy would get only one W2, even if they switch appointments or serve multiple churches
 - Churches still retain all rights to set salaries, give bonuses, etc.





APPORTIONMENT OVERVIEW

The collection percentage in the second quarter of 2025 was slightly better than the same period last year, according to Conference Treasurer David Dommissie. He is projecting that the final collection percentage will be between 80.5% and 82% with a current target of 81.25%.

Dommissie notes that giving to churches across denominations is up about 2.5% in the first half of 2025 over last year which is positive. However, churches in locations that have a higher percentage of Federal workers are more likely to experience a decline in giving.

APPORTIONMENT ANALYSIS

* The VAUMC collected 35.2% in the first half of 2025, a decrease of 0.3% from the first half of 2024.

* District Administration Apportionments collections were 38.3% in the first half of 2025.

35.2 %

2025 Conference
Apportionments collected

38.3%

2025 District
Administration
Apportionments collected



TRUSTEES

The Conference Trustees continue to work with Wesley Community Development to determine the best and highest use for closed church properties. Our goal is to retain ownership of as many properties as possible. Even though there may no longer be a worshipping community present, retaining the property does continue to give us a presence in the community along with the possibility of future mission and ministry opportunities.

Unfortunately, it is not feasible to retain all closed church properties. As a result, the Trustees have sold YTD six properties with an additional two expected to close within the next several months, bringing the total proceeds of all closed church properties to over 1.3 million dollars.

The Trustees continue to work with the Property Advisory Team (PAT) and local leaders to find missional uses for some of our closed church properties.

One opportunity that we are extremely excited about is a partnership with Embrace@Waynesboro. We are currently working with the Embrace leadership team to provide and lease for a large parcel of vacant land at the former Wayne Hills UMC. Embrace@Waynesboro will then use this land to build approximately 20 450-600 square foot homes to provide permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and/or transitional housing to vulnerable residents of Waynesboro and the surrounding area. We are incredibly happy and grateful to be able to partner with local leaders to provide space for mission and ministry to happen and we ask for your continued prayers as we explore what other opportunities may exist.



VIRGINIA UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION

VAUMF's Subsidiary Offers Loans to Help Churches Improve Facilities

Whether your church is considering new construction, refinancing an existing debt, or a building renovation, the Virginia United Methodist Development Company (DevCo) can assist by providing a loan to your church. As the lending arm of the Virginia United Methodist Foundation, DevCo offers loans and mortgages to UMC churches within the Virginia Conference.

While commercial banks may offer less favorable loan terms to new and small churches, DevCo assists existing and startup churches with favorable terms because we understand the nature of church ministry. DevCo offers two primary loan types: fixed payment loans and construction loans.

Fixed Payment Loan

DevCo's fixed payment loans are set up with a consistent monthly payment for a specified term, generally a fixed interest rate for up to five years, with the option to refinance the remaining balance for an additional term, typically in five-year increments. While the loan is structured with up to a 30-year amortization, early payoff is common.

Construction Loan

For new construction or a major renovation project, DevCo offers a non-revolving construction loan as a one-year line of credit. This period may be extended, depending on the project's timeline. During the construction phase, the borrowing church can make interest-only payments. The full loan amount is drawn over time, and repayment terms are finalized once construction is completed, a certificate of occupancy is issued, or the final draw is taken.

Thereafter, the loan converts into a fixed payment loan, with monthly payments calculated based on the final loan balance and the interest rate outlined in the original loan commitment letter, regardless of changes to prevailing market rates. Contact our team of experts to discuss how DevCo can assist your church.



VUMPI

- As was approved at this year's Annual Conference, VUMPI is implementing the details associated with the new Compass denominational retirement savings program which will be launched in **January 2026**. Those details include the new automatic enrollment and automatic contribution election features, along with the new billing methodology that will be used to bill churches for the monthly Compass plan contributions.
- VUMPI is preparing a billing calculator that will be distributed to churches in order for them to calculate the Compass billing that will begin in 2026. The Compass plan is intended to be more sustainable and affordable for churches, while providing adequate retirement savings benefits for clergy.
- VUMPI is also working with Wespeth personnel in order to prepare for the launch of the new Via Benefits retiree medical program in 2026. Via Benefits, which has partnered with Wespeth in order to make the program available to Annual Conferences throughout the United States, helps retirees select Medicare supplemental health coverage. The program, which will be an option for all current Medicare-eligible retirees, will be the retiree medical benefit program made available to eligible clergy who retire in or after 2026. VUMPI is planning to host a webinar in the fall to provide additional details about the Via Benefits program.

DISTRICT OFFICES



COASTAL VIRGINIA

CELEBRATIONS

We are excited to add a staff person, Rev. Victor Drummond, who will serve part-time as a Coordinator for Church Vitality. Victor is from the Eastern Shore and will primarily be working with churches on the Eastern Shore.

We are excited to host a workshop with the NC Rural Center on **October 18** on the Eastern Shore. This workshop will teach Asset-Based Community Development practices on getting to know our neighbors.

BRIGHT SPOT

We celebrate how our churches are reaching out to their communities. We lift up **St. Andrews UMC** in Portsmouth, Virginia, which has been reaching out to their community and partnering with ministries in their area. They welcomed Shining Light Homes, a non-profit that focuses on assistance for single mothers and their children, into their building and support their ministries.

They have had 17 new members join and 12 baptisms! They are exploring redeveloping their property to include transitional housing units for single mothers and their families.

LIVING WATERS

HIGHLIGHTS

The Living Waters District has launched several impactful initiatives.

PASTORAL SUPPORT

- We held our inaugural Minority and Cross-Cultural appointment gathering, with plans for continued collaboration.

MISSIONS

- After visiting God's Pit Crew in Danville, VA, we're imagining a mission hub at the I-85, I-95, and I-295 intersection to serve Virginia and the SE Jurisdiction.
- Since January, we've awarded over \$20,000 in Mission & Outreach grants to churches creating community-focused ministries, including purchasing a car for an Africa University student.

NEW FAITH COMMUNITY

- Our new church plant, Appomattox UMC, received additional funding from the Conference Church Development Team.

PASTORS INITIATIVE

- During Lent, one group of churches implemented an innovative pulpit rotation where pastors preached at each other's churches throughout the season.

COMMUNICATION

- We're launching a new communication platform with FinalSite, enabling simultaneous email, text, and voice messaging for comprehensive information distribution.



CHILDREN & YOUTH

- Our District Youth Coordinator has organized a Youth Kings Dominion Day for district families.
- We're also launching "The Village," a middle school ministry where adults, primarily men, serve as positive and present role models for children.

COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY

- In collaboration with the conference, we are reimagining the FLOW Ministry at Virginia State University.

TRAINING

- We have begun the brainstorming and planning for our 2026 District Training Event next January.
- These initiatives reflect our commitment to community connection, innovative ministry, and supporting both established and emerging congregations throughout the district.

MISSION RIVERS

HIGHLIGHTS

As our district name suggests, we are, as a district, focused on and committed to mission. Our Mission committee offers grants once a year to sustain our local churches with a myriad of mission projects; grant monies were dispersed beginning in April.

- We currently assist three different lunch programs: a bag lunch ministry that provides lunches to go; a once-a-month eat-in lunch and an eat-in lunch with crafts.
- We offered financial assistance to three youth ministries for summer mission trips that proved very successful, including one to hurricane ravaged areas in western North Carolina.
- We support a local church food pantry with the number of community members needing assistance rising dramatically since the beginning of 2025.
- One of our Smithfield churches has a long-time project supporting the Henderson Settlement at Christmas. The Henderson Settlement was founded in 1925 by Global Ministries in Appalachia (Kentucky) to help address the serious challenges for people to be able to live, much less thrive, in that area. They added a western North Carolina Christmas mission this year.
- One of our brightest stars is the Tabernacle (Fredericksburg) Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by giving children a free book monthly until their fifth birthday.



**ALL OUR DISTRICT CHURCHES ARE
INSPIRED TO SERVICE BOTH BIG
PROJECTS AND SMALL ONES. WE SEE
THE DISTRICT AS THE VINE AND THE
LOCAL CHURCHES AS THE
BRANCHES IN OUR SERVICE TO
CHRIST.**

HIGHLIGHTS

In our second quarter, clergy in the Mountain View District made major commitments for themselves and their churches to grow.

- In response to a deep dive into our updated MissionInsite focus in the first quarter, 12 clergy began a six-month Church Growth Cohort with Tyler Harding and Lay Leader Tammy Burdick, co-founders of Firm Foundations Marketing, Inc. to learn new ways to reach out to people in their communities identified in their MI reports.
- Many of our clergy gained insight into their natural gifts from the Clifton Strengths Assessment. We learned more about the value of identifying and calling on the strengths of our church leaders in an in-person training with Rev. Dr. William Chaney. In response, one of our churches will have its whole congregation take the Clifton Strengths Assessment in the fall to prepare for nominations.
- Many of our clergy are participating in our Summer Book Club Series by reading and discussing how they'll apply what they've learned in books as varied as "Fresh Expressions for the Rural Church" by Michael Beck and "AI in the Church" by Jason Moore.

BRIGHT SPOTS

In our 2nd quarter, the Mountain View District is thrilled to celebrate some of the ways that God is transforming the lives of young people through the ministries of the United Methodist Church.

• **Confirmation Class at Rocky Mount UMC**

- Four middle schoolers were confirmed on Easter Sunday in front of a large number of first timers to Rocky Mount UMC. Rev. Will Waller said, "They made the commitment with the same steely resolve and deep seriousness often seen in the eyes of couples getting married. These vows were taken with complete gravitas. The youth representative on the Church Council, in recalling his experience watching his peers be confirmed, shared that he was brought to tears by their commitment."

• **SPARK Youth Mission at Redwood UMC**

- SPARK (Special Projects Activating Random/ Real Kindness) is a ministry of Redwood UMC and the Mountain View District. Rev. Bryan Buckles writes, "We host youth groups from all over the conference for one week as they engage in service projects, specifically focused on the underserved in the four county area of Franklin, Henry, Bedford, and Roanoke." The missions served this summer include The Henry Fork Service Center (Rocky Mount), Lake Christian Ministries (Moneta), Bethel New Hope (Martinsville) and the Roanoke Rescue Mission (Roanoke). Specific mission activities so far have included taking inventory, stocking, and cleaning a food pantry, leading 3 children in VBS, and landscaping and home maintenance. At evening chapel each night, students study the gospel texts relevant to the day's activities and paint a picture reflecting on the grace they experienced which is shared in the sanctuary the following Sunday and displayed at Redwood UMC.

• **Dream/Vision Trip to Korea at Red Valley UMC**

- Eleven youth and five adults traveled to Korea to "deepen spiritual growth, foster cross-cultural relationships, and inspire global ministry" in July. Rev. Jae Song writes, "With our two host churches, Onyang Oncheon Methodist Church and Jeju Seiwom Methodist Church, our goal is to share God's love through Bible teaching and faith sharing, to develop cross-cultural friendships and deepen our understanding of God as the "God of all nations."
- The young International missionaries at Red Valley prepared for their work by committing to Friday night Bible study and prayer meetings, engaging in works of service such as serving dinner at the rescue mission, and leading VBS at Red Valley UMC. Together with many supporters their dream of "fostering faith formation, cross-cultural engagement and service" became a reality.

NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Northern Virginia had a fruitful summer—celebrating growth and expansion, and deepening our commitment to empowering and supporting churches, clergy, and congregations throughout our District.

- **Empowering Churches:** \$2 million in **infrastructure grants** were provided to several churches to help expand their ministry capabilities. The district awarded funding to 11 churches out of 56 total applicants, a nearly 20% acceptance rate. Each recipient contributes at least 15% in matching resources for projects such as renovating a church kitchen; sanctuary lighting, HVAC, carpet, painting, and accessibility improvements; installation of a new elevator to improve accessibility; and many more. The recipients are Arlington Korean, Bethel in Woodbridge, Burke, Crossroads, Floris, Friendship, Grace, Mount Vernon, Oakton, St. Stephen's, and Trinity in Alexandria).
- **New Beginnings:** **Restoration Church in Reston, VA** was officially chartered on June 8, ushering in a new chapter for the congregation, led by Rev. Daniel Park. We rejoice in seeing the fruits of commitment, hard work, and Spirit-led faithfulness. Learn more about Restoration at <https://restorationreston.org/>.
- **Laity Going Forth:** The first cohort of Go participants were commissioned in April, after nine months of learning, sharing, and discerning. Guided by leaders including Sue Nelson Kibbey, Luke Edwards, Katie Phillips, and William Chaney, participants undertook a journey marked by fresh ideas and explorations into what it means to connect with community and be disciples for Christ.
- **Staff Changes:** Kim Johnson, our longtime Director of Communications, moved to Williamsburg to join husband Brian Johnson in ministry at Williamsburg UMC; and Cynthia Lopynski retired as Director of Engagement, staying on in a consulting role. We welcomed Rebeca Ervin in June as our new Director of Engagement and are about to bring on Dylan Nichols, formerly of Floris UMC, as our new Director of Communications, effective August 1.



SHENANDOAH RIVER

The Shenandoah River District team has made the recent transition not only seamless but empowering. Hope is found in many ways, and the spirit of innovation and connection is one of them.

In Stephen City, a **fresh expression** called “Jesus and Pizza Pie” is inviting the community to a time to celebrate Christ and fellowship. This three-year-old innovation is making church accessible in the area where there is a high influx of new people. About a third of attendance is those who have not been to a church. Reading stories of Jesus, sharing food and fellowship, and praying for each other, the table is becoming a gathering place of God's beloved.

A group of United Methodist churches (Brucetown, Emmanuel, First, John Mann, Kernstown, and Montague Avenue) are making another collective effort to fight food insecurity in the Winchester/Frederick County area through a ministry called “Freedge.” Starting with one generous leader, Rev. Dr. John Copenhaver Jr., now in partnership with local nonprofits and Shenandoah University, Freedge helps people of all backgrounds access food while promoting environmental justice.

THREE NOTCH'D



“THERE’S NO INSTRUCTIONAL MANUAL OR ONE PATH TO SUCCESS. WE REMAIN COMMITTED TO EXPERIMENTING WITH DIFFERENT STRATEGIES, WHICH REQUIRES US TO BE CREATIVE, OPEN TO FAILURE, AND (PRAYERFULLY) PREPARED FOR SUCCESS.”
REV. JEREMY VEST

Our volunteers have served at community festivals, provided “Tom’s Traveling Coffee” truck for the teachers at each County school, distributed school supplies and P.E. equipment, hosted fall festivals/Trunk-or-Treats, co- sponsored an Easter Egg Hunt with the County’s Parks and Rec, and provided several Christmas extravaganzas for children and families throughout December.

Dr. Herndon notes, “The name of the game continues to be building coalitions, shaking hands, and a significant follow-up effort. In addition to the Three Notch’d District and the Conference Development Team (CDT), we have unique partnerships with the Mission Rivers District, the NAACP for meeting space, and with local clergy who share this desire to point all persons to Christ.”

As Rev. Vest recently shared in a recent sermon, “Love ALL - Jesus says so!” This mantra is leading the way towards the launch of regular worship services this fall, along with continuing outreach efforts to new subdivisions and ministry opportunities. There will be dates for church groups who might be interested in assisting with door-to-door outreach efforts in August-September (stay tuned)! Rev. Vest invites any questions or suggestions, and encourages everyone to pray for the launch and impact of New Song: King William!

CHURCH PLANT HIGHLIGHT

Rev. Jeremy Vest, church planter for New Song: King William, leads the endeavor to make connections, serve all, and establish the foundation for regular worship.

Rev. Dr. Chad Herndon, New Song: Mechanicsville’s lead pastor, reports, “This King William plant is teaching us to be strategic with our resources in an entirely new way. We’re seeing fruit from prioritizing community connections and building relationships. We learn new names and new lessons each week!”

Rev. Vest leads a team to serve at a local relief agency each month. The church plant’s “Dream Team” has organized collections for everything from coats to paper towels and even toilet paper. The bond with Cornerstone Community Development has been transformational for all participants - one of our volunteers even serves on their Board of Directors. Each Saturday, food and essentials are distributed to 500+ households in King William County.

VALLEY RIDGE

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Faithfully Embracing Autism Symposium:** Over 100 Lay and Clergy attended our Faithfully Embracing Autism Symposium, with keynote speaker Alexandra Jackman, who at age 14 produced the award winning video "Teens Guide to Autism." Now at age 24, Alexandra advocates for those with autism, who often feel marginalized, even within the church. Her powerful barstool interview with Shannon White, daughter of Dale White and a graduate of Wilson Workforce Rehabilitation Center, was the centerpiece of the symposium.
- **Annual Conference:** The Valley Ridge District served as host to the Virginia Annual Conference in Roanoke. Behind the scenes, Valley Ridge District staff, in coordination with conference staff, worked for many months to ensure a smooth welcome, registration, parking, transportation, and numerous other operational details. It was our pleasure to host thousands of United Methodists in the place we call home for a few days!

BRIGHT SPOT

Starting July 1, Staunton opened a new cooling shelter for unhoused individuals at Augusta Street UMC, located at 325 N. Augusta St. The shelter will operate Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on days when the temperature exceeds 90 degrees.

The idea for the shelter emerged during a meeting of local churches brainstorming how to better use their facilities for community outreach. Pastor John Benson of Augusta Street UMC offered his church as the shelter site. Several churches already involved with the Waynesboro Area Refuge Ministry (WARM), which provides cold-weather shelter, saw this summer initiative as a natural extension of their work.

The shelter will offer bottled water, light refreshments, and entertainment options such as board games, a TV, and internet access via a computer with Wi-Fi. Organizers are currently seeking volunteers, aiming for four people per day, with training sessions planned in the coming weeks. Those interested can contact Won Un at Central UMC (WonUn@vaumc.org) or John Benson at Augusta Street UMC (JohnBenson@vaumc.org).



UPCOMING VAUMC DATES

**Q SOURCE FOR
QUARTER 3**

NOVEMBER 2025

**FALL YOUTH
RETREAT**

NOVEMBER 14-16

**Q SOURCE FOR
QUARTER 1 2026**

FEBRUARY 2026

**ANNUAL
CONFERENCE
2026**

JUNE 17-20, 2026

**YOU CAN FIND THE Q SOURCE FOR 2025 QUARTER 1 HERE:
[HTTPS://VAUMC.ORG/Q-SOURCE-REPORTS/](https://vaumc.org/q-source-reports/).**

**NEXT QUARTER, EXPECT UPDATES FROM THE BELONGING
& ADVOCACY OFFICE AND UPDATES FROM OUR LAY
LEADER AND LAY LEADERSHIP IN VAUMC.**