

**QUARTERLY
REPORT**



THE



SOURCE

QUARTER 3 REPORT
NOVEMBER 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.



News within the connection



NOMINATIONS CAMPAIGN: WE NEED YOUR VOICE

This year, a new nominations campaign called We Need Your Voice is launching, seeking to widen the table of leadership in the Virginia Conference by inviting more people—across lines of age, experience, culture, and background—to share their gifts in service on our committees, boards, and agencies. Martha Stokes, Conference Lay Leader and Chair of the Conference Nominations Committee, and Rev. Lan Davis Wilson, Conference Director of Belonging & Advocacy, are leading this effort. [Learn more...](#)



UNITY DATABASE CONTINUES TO GROW

Unity was developed by the Virginia Conference in response to a growing need to better organize and share information between the Annual Conference and its districts, charges, and churches. Over the last several years, it has replaced several older systems that handled different aspects of Conference administration, unifying them into one system of record. Beginning in 2021, the UnityWeb portal has allowed clergy and laity throughout the Conference to interact directly with the system, when it replaced EVC as the primary entry point for UMC-required documentation. Over the last several years, the functionality of this portal has grown. Most recently, the system has expanded to include the ability for Ministry Candidates to submit required materials and assignments to the Board of Ordained Ministry, and also for Lay Servants all over the Conference to track their educational/certification progress. As we look forward to the fall, new updates include electronic parsonage reviews, an updated Lay Servant Annual Report with automatically filled continuing education information, and a place to input information regarding church-owned cemeteries.



CHRIS MCLAIN BEGINS AS NEW DCM

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson appointed the Rev. Chris McLain as the Virginia Conference's Director of Connectional Ministries. [Learn more...](#)



ALL GOD'S CHILDREN CAMP BECOMES SEPARATE 501C3

Lori Smith, All God's Children Camp (AGC) camp director, and Beth Christian, AGC onsite director, share how the organization became a separate 501c3 and how the Virginia Conference can continue to support the camp in a recent video. [Watch video...](#)

- Visit their website at: agccamp.org
- email: allgodschildrencampva@gmail.com
- Physical address: P.O. Box 187, Fairfax, VA 22038
- Phone number: 572-245-9591
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/allgodschildrencamp>

News within the connection



VAUMC FOOD PANTRIES SUPPORTED BY NEW FUND

The Virginia Annual Conference and Virginia United Methodist Foundation have partnered on the Emergency Food Response Fund. This fund is designed to bridge the gap for neighbors facing increased food insecurity during the government shutdown. This fund helps local UMC-connected food pantries and community feeding ministries as well as larger relief networks serving the Commonwealth Feeding America, FeedMore, etc.

The week of Nov. 17, 67 food pantries in the Virginia Conference received funding. Please help us celebrate and pray over all VAUMC missions seeking to be in community for their neighbors at this time.

HOW TO GIVE

Online: visit vaumc.org/supportfoodpantries to give

By Check: Checks can be addressed to the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church at 10330 Staples Mill Road, Suite 100, Glen Allen, VA 23060

HOW FOOD PANTRIES CAN APPLY

Virginia Annual Conference food pantries can apply for funds. [Applicants need to fill out this short application.](#)



PARENTAL LEAVE FUNDING PROGRAM TO BEGIN 2026

The Virginia United Methodist Foundation (VAUMF) has joined forces with the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church (VAUMC) to provide an implementation grant as seed money to launch a parental leave funding program in the spring of 2026. [Learn more...](#)



AMANDA MILLER GARBER LEAVES CONFERENCE OFFICE

The Rev. Amanda Miller Garber will ended her tenure as Director of Missional and Community Engagement on November 14, 2025. [Learn more...](#)

Conference Lay Leader



Martha Stokes

One paragraph of The United Methodist Book of Discipline is foundational to our understanding of call to ministry. An important line from ¶ 127 - The Ministry of the Laity calls is to remember our Wesleyan roots: "Lay members of The United Methodist Church are, by history and calling, active advocates of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Here are a few highlights from across the conference of how our laity have been fulfilling this call.

- The Conference Lay Servant Academy was held virtually on August 14-15 with participation from across the conference. In addition, the Coastal Virginia, Mission Rivers, Mountain View, Shenandoah River, and Valley Ridge Districts hosted Lay Servant Trainings during the summer and early fall.
- The Shenandoah River District United Women in Faith partnered with Laurel Ridge Community College, Virginia Conference United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men, Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Northern Shenandoah Valley Coming to the Table along with individual churches, UWF units and other community organizations to present Reaching Across the Racial Divide, A Presentation by Betty Kilby Baldwin and Phoebe Kilby on Saturday, October 11. Betty Kilby Baldwin and Phoebe Kilby, the authors of Cousins: Connected Through Slavery, (UWF 2023 Reading Program selection), shared their story that reflects ties to many parts of the Shenandoah River District, its towns and counties. A March 2026 racial justice webinar is being planned as a follow-up.
- The United Methodist Men invite to you pray along with them each Friday as they have a 15-minute Zoom prayer time at noon, Knees@Noon. Prayer are offered for our Bishop and Cabinet, our Districts, District Superintendents and Clergy.

Clergy Excellence

UPCOMING EVENTS

Candidacy Summit

Those discerning their call to the set apart ministry of the licensed or ordained are admitted into the candidacy studies program. One of the requirements to become a certified candidate is to attend the Candidacy Summit (offered twice a year in February and August). The most current Candidacy Summit was held **August 8 and 9** at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Va. Candidates shared their call stories, learned about their strengths for ministry, and discerned deeper the roles of the local pastor, the deacon, and the elder. Those who are interested in the candidacy process can learn more online at <https://vaumc.org/candidates-for-ministry/> or contact Rev. Dr. Jason Stanley, the Director for Call & Candidacy, at jasonstanley@vaumc.org.

Discernment Day

The latest Discernment Day was held on **Saturday, September 6, 2025** in Bedford, Va. The event was hosted by the Mountain View District. Discernment Days are for anyone who feels a call from God to lead in a myriad of ways, through lay servant ministries, a lay staff member, justice ministries, as a Certified Lay Minister, to the set apart ministry of the licensed and ordained, and much more. Discernment Day includes a time of intentional prayer, anchoring and centering participants in God's call, discussion groups about different ways to serve, and small group experiences to share with others who are journeying to answer God's call. The next Discernment Day will be held in March 2026.

Clergy Ethics Training

On **Tuesday, October 7, 2025**, the first in-person clergy ethics training for the new quadrennium was held at Francis Asbury UMC in Virginia Beach on the Coastal Virginia District. Over 50 clergy from five districts participated, meeting their quadrennial requirement to attend a clergy ethics training. Between now and 2028, additional training will be held. Clergy can learn more online at <https://vaumc.org/ethicsvideos/>.

Clergy Excellence

C.P.E. ALTERNATIVE PILOT IN PROCESS

This fall, five provisional members are taking part in the Virginia Conference UMC's C.P.E. Alternative Program entitled: "Sacred Encounters." Completion of this program is the equivalent of 0.5 units of Clinical Pastoral Education (C.P.E.), which is required to apply for full membership and ordination. This program was created when the Board of Ordained Ministry noticed that people were delayed in the process and unable to complete this requirement for a myriad of reasons:

- The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry stopped offering its online C.P.E. option.
- Some provisional deacons found it impossible to do a C.P.E. in a hospital setting due to their non-local church setting and the hours required.
- Some provisional elders have not been able to complete this requirement due to family demands.

While the Board of Ordained Ministry believes that the hospital C.P.E. setting is superior, they think this program meets a need and provides pastors with the education they will need as they go on to be elders. The beauty of this online program is that it allows the pastors to live out their contact hours within their settings. It also gives the VAUMC the ability to enable these pastors to learn from our own. We were blessed to have the following pastors lead the online didactic learning modules:

Module 1: Healthy Boundaries: Rev. Deborah Lewis
Module 2: Grief, Loss, and Suffering: Rev. Dr. Ryan LaRock
Module 4: Empathetic Listening: Rev. Meghan Roth Clayton
Module 5: Family Systems: Rev. Dr. Rhonda VanDyke
Module 6: Ministry in the Midst of Trauma: Dr. Joy Kreider
Module 7: Spiritual Disciplines: Rev. Bob Chapman

To create a non-biased and safe space for participants to share, we invited a supervisor and teaching assistant from outside of the VAUMC. Dr. Joy Kreider, a neuroscientist, also trained in trauma-informed ministry, is the supervisor and holds group meetings with these candidates as they process the didactic learning together, share verbatims, and discuss how they are living out what they are learning in their ministry settings. Rev. Stephanie Dunn, a deacon from the Tennessee/Western Kentucky Annual Conference, serves as the teaching assistant, receiving the written materials and providing feedback to the candidates. We are excited about the future possibilities of this program!



Connection & Innovation

It has been a joy to serve our Annual Conference office over the last two and a half years. I am grateful to the entire Annual Conference for your support and guidance as we have taken on new opportunities and continued or reformed existing spaces for understanding life in Christian community. In the coming weeks, Rev. Chris McLain will be taking over much of the work of connection as our new Director of Connectional Ministries. She will also engage innovation spaces along with the rest of our amazing conference staff.

In the meantime, know that preparation is well underway for the 2026 Annual Conference session, being held **June 17-20, 2026** in Harrisonburg, VA. More information about the Annual Conference will be available after the new year.

The Connectional Table experiment has begun with Connectional Table having met as a whole team once and the subteams of Connectional Table having met at least once as well. There continue to be spaces for experimentation with metrics and measurements, and I'm excited to see what will unfold with this year's iteration of the Grantmaking space.

As I move to the Lewis Center for Church Leadership at Wesley Theological Seminary, I am going with a keen appreciation for the many ways God is on the move in the Virginia Annual Conference. The scripture that guides me in ministry is 1 Corinthians 12:31 – "Strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way."

This is my prayer for our Annual Conference. May we work in every way we can to share the love of God, and may we pay attention to how God is showing us a still more excellent way.

Discipleship

The conference youth council met **September 27-28, 2025** to finalize plans for the fall retreat (November 14-16), as well as to vision for the coming year's ministry.

Among the goals for 2026 is to send a team to the Global Young People's Convocation in Dublin, Ireland in July 2026, and to host a gathering of youth choirs and praise teams for an event.

The online Lay Servant Academy included 68 students in six courses.

Plans are already underway for the next conference Lay Servant training, **February 20-21, 2026**. Meanwhile a number of districts offer training opportunities for laity as well.



2026 HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING

12

campus ministries

3

new campus roles for 2025-2026

5

UMC schools



The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries has allocated funding for 12 campus ministries and 5 UMC schools for 2026.

The campus ministries and schools have kicked off for a strong fall.

- Rev. Thomas Wynn (FLOW at Virginia State University),
- Rev. Dr. Victor Gomez (Shenandoah University), and
- a team from the Farmville area (Wesley at Longwood/Hampden-Sydney) are underway in new roles.

The campaign to raise an endowment to support campus ministry in perpetuity has received its first contribution. To learn more, contact Dwayne Stinson (dwaynestinson@vaumc.org).



Intergenerational Formation

Beginning July 1, 2025, Rev. Hannah Bryn transitioned her role to Director for the Intergenerational Formation Office.

The Office of Intergenerational Formation continued its work of resourcing local churches and ministry partners in nurturing meaningful connections across generations in the spiritual formation of disciples. Highlights included:

- hosting the first meeting of the Camp Directors Association, creating space for shared learning, prayer, and visioning among the conference's five camp and retreat centers.
- The Hatching Faith team visited several Hatching Faith Cohort congregations, joining them in worship and witnessing the creative ways they are cultivating intergenerational formation through intentionally creating spaces in worship for Christ's youngest disciples to be engaged and formed.
- We are excited to share about an upcoming learning opportunity hosted by the Western North Carolina Conference, open to all Southeastern Jurisdiction ministry leaders. Save the date for the Wonder Summit: Reimagining Congregational Worship & Prayer with Children, to be held **November 4–6, 2026**, at Lake Junaluska. This conference will invite ministry leaders of all backgrounds to reimagine how children help shape the worshiping life of the Church. More information and details to come.

Missional & Community Engagement

PARTNERSHIPS OF HOPE- BRAZIL UPDATE

In September 2025, I had the privilege of representing the Virginia Annual Conference at the 25th anniversary Celebration of Shade and Fresh Water (Sombra e Água Fresca) in Brazil. Shade and Fresh Water (Advance #11580A) was born from the Methodist Church of Brazil's desire to create safe, faith-filled environments for children and adolescents after school. The program provides meals, academic support, spiritual formation, and emotional care. Its very name evokes Psalm 121's promise of divine protection—God as our shade and refreshment in a world that can often feel harsh and dry.

Our conference has long valued global partnerships that connect faith with action, and this visit was a profound reminder that God's Church knows no borders. What I witnessed in Brazil was a living testimony of grace at work through the dedication of clergy, lay leaders, and volunteers who daily care for children and families facing social and economic challenges.

Today, the program serves thousands of children across Brazil through local Methodist congregations. Each center is contextualized to meet its community's needs, whether through education, music, arts, recreation, or health initiatives. This trip reminded me that the work of the Church is not confined to our sanctuaries. The Spirit of God is alive wherever love is practiced and dignity is restored. -Rev. Nilse Furtado-Gilliam, country liaison

LESSONS LEARNED

1.

The integration of faith and daily life—teaching children to aGod in their studies, meals, and friendships.

2.

The resilience and creativity of local leaders who serve despite limited resources.

3.

The deep sense of community that makes every child feel seen and valued.

NEXT STEPS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1.

Strengthen partnership by exploring opportunities for exchange visits, storytelling, and prayer connections

2.

Encourage youth and mission engagement

3.

Support financially through conference-wide giving or designated offerings that sustain this life-changing program.

4.

Share their stories across our churches to inspire local initiatives in child advocacy and holistic discipleship.



Missional & Community Engagement

DISASTER RESPONSE UPDATE

Our Conference Disaster Response leaders are revitalizing our Disaster Response and Recovery Ministries. Each district is strongly encouraged to review your District Disaster Response plan, and ensure that you have a District Disaster Coordinator who is actively serving this role.

Kits for Conference season has begun! We encourage all of our VAUMC churches to start raising funds and collecting kit items as early as possible in order to maximize our contributions.

If you are unfamiliar with how to create cleaning buckets, hygiene, or feminine hygiene kits, or have any kits-related questions, please contact Rev. Brian Posey (brianposey@vaumc.org).

In the past 12 months Floris UMC has hosted 3 Early Response Teams (ERTs) and three UMVIM Teams to Spruce Pine and Asheville. Most of those teams were multi UMC teams, including Fairlington UMC, Woodlake UMC, Ramsey Memorial UMC, a non-denomination church and a Catholic Church. [Here is a link to a UMCOM story about an ERT visit to the Spruce Pine area.](#)



Treasurer

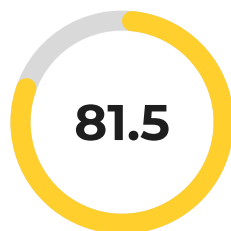


Apportionment Overview

The collection percentage in the third quarter of 2025 was higher than the same period last year, according to Conference Treasurer David Dommissie. He projects that the final collection percentage will be between 80.5% and 82.8% with a current target of 81.5%.

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.

The VAUMC collected 54.5% through September 30, 2025, an increase of .5% from the same time period in 2024.



Target % for final
collection percentage



VAUMC collection %
through September
2025

Treasurer



Church giving Overview

New third-quarter data points to a resilient generosity picture for churches, with overall giving rising while donor patterns continue to evolve.

A national survey of 252 churches reported +7% year-over-year general-fund giving in Q3, and weekly per-capita giving rising from \$51 to \$58 versus last year.

Fast-growing churches ($\geq 10\%$ annual attendance growth) saw +13% giving increases (vs. +2% at other churches), though their per-capita giving runs lower (\$55 vs. \$63) as new attenders take time to begin giving.

Beyond the church sample, broader nonprofit data provides additional context. Total U.S. giving grew 3.3% in real terms in 2024, though giving to religion slipped slightly after inflation, underscoring continued purchasing-power pressure on congregational budgets. Early 2025 sector data show dollars up (+3.6% YoY) but fewer donors (-1.3%) and slightly lower retention — a reminder to focus on first-time giver follow-up and re-engagement.

What this means for Virginia UMC churches:

- Plan for breadth and depth. Expect healthy top-line giving but continue forming new givers; per-capita tends to dip as attendance grows. Build clear “first gift → recurring gift” pathways and celebrate impact stories weekly.
- Mind the basics. Churches in the Q3 sample devote about 51% of budget to staff and hold roughly five months’ cash — useful guardrails as you finalize 2026 budgets.
- Year-end readiness (Oct–Dec).
 - a. Identify and thank first-time givers from 2025; invite a next step before Dec. 31.
 - b. Simplify digital giving (QR code in bulletins, clear online buttons, stock/DAF instructions).
 - c. Connect giving to local mission outcomes in church communications.

Treasurer



Church giving Overview

Quick Q3 benchmarks to share with finance & stewardship teams

- Total general-fund giving (YoY): +7%.
- Per-capita giving (weekly, adults/students): \$58 (from \$51).
- Growing churches ($\geq 10\%$): Giving +13%; per-capita \$55 vs. \$63 at others.
- Staffing share / cash: ~51% of budget / ~5 months on hand.

Data sources: Church metrics are from The Unstuck Church Report (Q3 2025), based on a July 2025 survey of 252 North American churches (varied sizes and traditions). Sector context reflects Giving USA 2025 (covering 2024 results) and the Fundraising Effectiveness Project (FEP) Q1 2025 update.

Other Offices

TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees continues to strive to find the highest and best use for our closed church properties. As we work through the legal process of deeding churches in the name of the Conference Trustees, we have several exciting possibilities on the horizon for redevelopment and missional uses for a number of these properties. We will continue the work of assessing these possibilities and doing our due diligence but hope to have more information to share in future Q Source newsletters.

VUMPI

In mid-September VUMPI released a calculator that can be used to identify the amounts that will be billed for the new Compass denominational retirement savings program beginning January 2026, along with the Comprehensive Protection Plan and the new Active Clergy Health Plan Direct Bill. The calculator was accompanied by a video providing details about the amounts that will be billed in 2026.

- VUMPI is continuing to work with Wespeth on the implementation of the new Compass retirement savings program, to include the establishment of initial clergy contribution amounts which are based on current United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) contributions and the Compass program's automatic enrollment features.
- The new Via Benefits retiree health plan program for Medicare-eligible retirees is being launched in January, 2026. The new program is optional for current retirees, who will remain eligible for the current retiree health program through United Healthcare. VUMPI and Via Benefits hosted a webinar on October 14 for clergy to learn more about the new program. A recording of the webinar was made available for those who were unable to join the live session.



Other Offices



FOUNDATION

Tax-Efficient Giving Through Gifts of Stock

Did you know there are ways to give to your church and avoid being charged capital gains tax? One of these strategies is called “a gift of stock.” Here’s how it works:

As a church member, you can donate stock directly to your church by transferring ownership of all or part of a stock or mutual fund. This strategy is especially helpful when investments in stocks have increased in value. This method of giving allows church members to avoid paying capital gains tax on appreciated securities and still deduct the full appreciated value of the donation even though they paid less for the original purchase. Instead of writing a check to the church, donating some or all of a stock or mutual fund to a church before selling the stock means the church receives the full value of the stock or mutual fund, and the donor pays zero capital gains tax.*

If a church does not have a brokerage account and therefore cannot accept stock donations, the Foundation can assist with stock transfers. We don’t charge a fee or commission for this gift-of-stocks service and send the full value of the stock sale to the church. If you’re interested in this service, reach out to the Foundation at foundation@vaumc.org or 804.521.1121.

We can also meet with you or a group from your church to present more ways of giving more tax-efficiently. To start a gift of stock process, [download this form](#).

* (Note: capital gains tax rates apply to assets held for more than a year. For short-term gains, which are assets held one year or less, your regular income rate applies.)

Disclaimer:

This information is provided for general informational purposes only and should not be construed as tax, legal or accounting advice. You should consult your own tax advisor or certified public accountant (CPA) regarding your specific tax situation.

Coastal Virginia District

On **Saturday, September 6, 2025**, 30 leaders from across the Coastal Virginia District came together at Baylake UMC to share in a day of visioning for the District. The leaders were members of our Leadership Team, Strategic Team, UWF and UMM President, Lay Leader and Associate Lay Leaders, and a few other voices from the Clergy Association and DCOM. The 27 participants who were not staff included one youth, three young adults, and 15 participants from South of the Bay and 12 from the Eastern Shore. One third of the participants were ethnic minorities.

In a five hour workshop, participants learned about the four times of values outlined by Patrick Lencioni in his book *The Advantage*. The focus of Lencioni's book is on the importance of clarity within organizations, and how values help us gain organizational clarity. Those gathered then identified six aspirational values for our work as a District, as well as short-, medium- and long-term goals to bring those values to life. The values, which will be shared more in depth at the 8 Regional Charge Conferences this fall are:

- **Loving our neighbors as central in our congregations.**
- **Clarity as a District about our mission and vision to guide decisions and resourcing.**
- **Celebrating and prioritizing connectional behaviors in our congregations.**
- **Practicing inclusivity and radical hospitality in our congregations.**
- **Ensuring there is an intentional, invitational discipleship model in our congregations.**
- **Increasing financial sustainability in our congregations.**



Coastal Virginia District Leaders Develop Values

Living Waters District

HIGHLIGHTS:

We are currently in **Charge Conference season**, where we conduct seven Charge Conferences. This year, Tim Beck has given the message called “Be the Bean”, based on the book, The Coffee Bean.

Thomas Wynn has been hired as the Interim Director of **Campus Ministries at Virginia State University**. He is already making powerful inroads and building meaningful relationships with students, staff, and administration.

We held our second **Minority and Cross-Cultural appointment gathering** for this year, and continue to focus on vital support and encouragement in the midst of political turmoil and VISA documentation.

Mission & Outreach Committee has awarded over \$15,000 in grants this third quarter.

UPCOMING:

The 2026 District Training will be held on **Saturday, January 17** from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Crenshaw UMC in Blackstone. We will offer the following sessions with these outstanding leaders:

- Staff-Parish Relations (Jessie Colwell)
- Nominations & Leadership Development (Jason Stanley)
- Lay Servant (Richard Speirs)
- Worship: Preparing to Lead Worship (Penny Rasnake)
- Worship: Preparing the Worship Space (Penny Rasnake)
- Simplified Accountable Structure (Alan Layman)
- Trustees (Jay Carey)
- Finance/Apportionments/ Audits/ Finance Committees/Internal Controls (Tina Gudgel & Carol Draper)



Mission Rivers District

GRANTING FOR CHURCH CLUSTERS TO INSPIRE THEIR WORK AS A MINISTRY COLLECTIVE.

Rev. Dr. Clarence Brown and members of the district are piloting with three clusters to begin with to hear how we might best foster connection, collaboration and cooperation.

HAPPENINGS IN THE DISTRICT

- Micro Clergy Gatherings with Director of Clergy Support, Rev. Deborah Lewis
- Walk/kayak in Williamsburg
- upcoming: ornament making in Montross
- in the new year Bake + Pray event in Charles City.
- We are trying to find a "third space" for clergy to reconnect with colleagues and renew mind, body, or spirit.



Mountain View District

The Mountain View District's year of "Celebrating our Wesleyan Roots" rolled out with the first of three Clergy Training Events with a study of how the household rhythms of Susannah Wesley's formation practices were foundational to John and Charles Wesley's spiritual development and inspired the structural nature of early Methodism. With a visit from Susannah herself and guest lecturer Dr. F. Douglas Powe, clergy were encouraged to "look for the lay people in their churches who are ready to lead" and to trust that "revival doesn't begin in cathedrals, it begins in kitchens."

Charge conferences followed in a similar vein with visits from Susanna, John, and Charles Wesley who read letters of love and encouragement to the churches. They invited round-table conversation and re-commitment to invigorate the work of discipleship formation, "vile-tality" in evangelism/mission, and grace-filled vital worship.

Susanna Wesley began her circuit ride throughout the MVD "Flat Stanley" style; John and Charles will follow suit in the new year. The year will culminate with a district-wide global/local mission project in mid-April.

DS Sarah Calvert hopes that our focus on our Wesleyan roots will reconnect us with our foundational spiritual fervor as United Methodists, renew our connection with God and one another, and inspire a renewed passion to care for our neighbors near and far.



CELEBRATING OUR
WESLEYAN ROOTS
VILE-TALITY • WORSHIP • DISCIPLESHIP
with John, Charles, & Susanna Wesley

Northern Virginia

HIGHLIGHT

Northern Virginia is excited about the movement of the Holy Spirit as we deepen our commitment to empowering and supporting churches, clergy, and congregations to be the hands and feet of Christ.

Community of Faith UMC is partnering with an affordable housing developer, Pennrose, to bring approximately 90 apartments to the church's 9-acre property.

Pastor Abi Foerster recently shared updates on the project with a local media outlet, noting that the proof-of-concept came out of the Georgetown Affordable Housing Initiative, which completed a study for the church.

“Our mission has always been rooted in service, compassion, and justice,” Foerster said in a press release. “Partnering with Pennrose allows us to move from vision to action, creating homes that reflect the dignity and worth of every individual in our community.”

Community of Faith will be hosting meetings this fall to gather input from the community, neighbors, and other stakeholders. The church characterizes this initiative as an extension of its community service efforts, including their successful food pantry that has been in action for 26 years and now serves over 50,000 people annually.

SAVE THE DATE FOR TRAINING DAY



- **Saturday, January 17, 2026**
- **Floris United Methodist Church**
- **Speakers and presenters will cover range of topics, including discipleship, children's and youth ministries, communications, modern worship, Wesleyan heritage, and much more.**
- **Registration open conference-wide in mid-November**

Shenandoah River District

Across the Rockingham County and Harrisonburg area, there was a major celebration for the success of an ecumenical effort of multiple congregations, including Otterbein United Methodist Church (Rev. Adam Blagg, Pastor). These faith communities came together to address pressing social justice issues that no single congregation or local government could resolve by themselves. Two key concerns were immediately identified: public transportation and affordable, reliable childcare service.

Through shared discernment and collaboration, the religious leaders founded a nonprofit organization named Valley Interfaith Action, which is dedicated to responding to these needs through collective action. Their first fruition is marked by the opening of an early education center, a first-of-its-kind public partnership in early childhood education. Families in the region now have access to a trusted space for their children's growth, hosted at a local Mennonite church by the support of various congregations across the community.

Methodism, as a church grounded in grace, has long been a beacon for ministries of justice and mercy. It is inspiring to witness United Methodists playing such a vital role in this initiative. The coalition continues to address transportation challenges faced by vulnerable neighbors, especially those struggling to reach medical appointments. Friends of Shenandoah River District together pray that this ministry will keep bearing fruit as more congregations and community members join for the common good.



Three Notch'd District

NEW FRESH EXPRESSION

St. Matthew's UMC in Goochland has started a fresh expression in Montpelier. On the third Sunday of each month, Saint Matt's North meets at 4 p.m. at the Montpelier Center for Arts and Education. The worship service features music and an informal message with an invitation afterwards to participate in a service opportunity.

In August, the group did a prayer walk at the local elementary school. In September, the group made sandwiches for CARITAS. St. Matthew's is excited to be connecting with people outside of their congregation that worships Sunday mornings at 1706 St. Matthew's Lane, Richmond.

CHURCHES START YOUTH COLLABORATIVE

How can our local churches—many with few or no youth and limited resources—reach youth in our communities for Jesus Christ? With the support of the Three Notch'd District, three United Methodist churches—**Providence (Chesterfield), Ramsey Memorial, and Westover Hills**—are collaborating for an innovative district cluster youth ministry.

Providence and Ramsey, led by Pastors L. Bryan McClain and Chad Thomas Beck, respectively, first joined together to provide a weekly ministry for their youth and have completed a pilot period since February 2025.

The churches recognizing the need for sustainability and growth would require funding and a staff member, reached out Westover Hills, led by Pastor Larry Cochran, which had an emerging youth group and an experienced and talented staff member, Adria Kilbreath. Westover Hills has welcomed this opportunity for collaboration and sharing of resources and volunteers.

To fund this district cluster youth ministry, the three churches partnered with the Three Notch'd District for spiritual support and ministry guidance. We are also sharing the funding contributions over a three-year period: 50% from the Three Notch'd District and 50% from the three churches. The funds pay for the salary of the part-time youth minister plus youth ministry needs, such as curriculum, teaching resources, food, activities, and service opportunities.

So that we can invite the youth in the neighborhoods of our churches, each month we meet at Westover Hills on the first Sunday, engage in a service opportunity in the community on the third Sunday, and meet at Providence or Ramsey on the fourth Sunday.

Does your church have a limited capacity to reach out to the youth in your community for Jesus Christ? Your church can answer God's call by collaborating and sharing resources!

-Written by Rev. Dr. Chad Thomas Beck, Pastor of Ramsey Memorial UMC, Three Notch'd District

Valley Ridge District

Lay Servant Training in February was hosted at Genesis UMC in Roanoke.

The response was so overwhelming, with almost 50 attending, many of whom took the Basic Course, that we have scheduled a second training session to ensure those who wish to be certified as Lay Servants get the opportunity locally to take a required advanced course.

The Basic Course, along with the advanced Preaching and Spiritual Gifts Courses, was offered in person and online from Granbery UMC in Covington, VA on October 18.

Currently the Valley Ridge District has around 87 Lay Servants, of which 18 are Certified Lay Speakers, and of which three are Certified Lay Ministers.

Laity are the foundation of our Methodist heritage, and we look forward to training and certifying the 25 non-certified members who attended training in February, aiming to have a certified Lay Servant in every church in the district.

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”





Upcoming VAUMC Dates

GLEN ALLEN OFFICE

Closed December 24, 2025- January 1, 2026 for Christmas observance

NEXT Q SOURCE (Q4 AND 2025 IN REVIEW)

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ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026

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