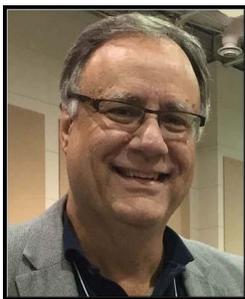


# THE BEACON

News from the Virginia Conference United Methodist Men

## President's Message | Andrew Kissell

### *Love, Learn, and Lead*



### Good Morning,

It was great to see nearly forty brothers and sisters who joined us for our first in a series of *Love, Learn and Lead* Conference-wide informational webinars on Wednesday, May 13th. There will be at least six more as well as the Annual Meeting on June 13th at 8:30am where we will induct officers and revise our bylaws by teleconference.

Every two weeks over the next 3 months, we will share how our connection is being strengthened through

- prayer, fellowship, worship and praise (Love),
- ministry information (Learn), and
- ways our men's ministry can continue to build the Kingdom and make disciples (Lead).



"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves..."

[Philippians 2:3 \(NIV\)](#)

Otherwebinar topics will include mentoring, prison and jail ministries, scouting, and hunger relief. Continue reading this issue of *The BEACON* and visit our web site [vaumc.org/UMM](http://vaumc.org/UMM) for details on topics, dates, time, how to connect, and recordings.

Our first webinar was on *AMENDING Through Faith*, a program to address domestic violence which, as you can imagine, has been increasing during the isolation brought about by the pandemic. *AMENDING Through Faith* is designed for Christian men and challenges a culture that supports violence against women by looking at the roots of gender bias. The program uses scriptural sources to cultivate healthy masculinity and change the future for women and girls.

Your Virginia Conference UMMen obtained a Micah 6:8 grant from the Virginia United Methodist Foundation and will use those funds for training materials and scholarships.

I look forward to seeing you at our Love, Learn, and

"...And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

[Micah 6:8 \(NIV\)](#)

Lead webinars!

Grace and Peace,

**Andrew**

Andrew Kissell, President

757-839-0790

[Andrew.Kissell@aecom.com](mailto:Andrew.Kissell@aecom.com)

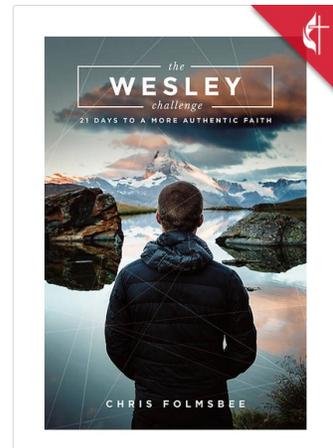
## Mentoring

***Love, Learn, and Lead Webinar Coming on Wednesday, May 27***

Are you called to lead a small group or to mentor a friend to a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ? Not sure how to mentor?

The Virginia Conference UMMen has just released a [Mentor Guide](#) from Chris Folmsbee's book [The Wesley Challenge: 21 Days to a More Authentic Faith](#). The Mentor Guide provides training materials necessary for preparing mentors and helping new Christians become disciples.

Reading and discussing a chapter a week from *The Wesley Challenge* will deepen your faith and lead those you mentor to a closer relationship with Jesus. The best way to prepare to mentor a friend is to ask a trusted friend to go through the study with you.



While *The Wesley Challenge* is both a challenging and interesting study, the journey is worth pursuing.

For more information, please join us for the next Love, Live, and Learn webinar on Wednesday, May 27 at 6:30pm (<https://zoom.us/j/92101976396>) or contact David Bean at [davkarbean@comcast.net](mailto:davkarbean@comcast.net).

Wesley Building Brothers (WBB) will also be featured during the May 27th webinar. WBB is a year-long process that guides men in their relationship with others, their faith in Jesus Christ, and discovering the most effective ways to serve God. To learn more about starting the WBB process within your local church or a group of local churches, contact David Bean at [davkarbean@comcast.net](mailto:davkarbean@comcast.net) or Johnnie Draughon at [johnnie.draughon@cox.net](mailto:johnnie.draughon@cox.net).

**Voting for Cabinet Officers Starts June 1**

**VA Conference UMM Cabinet Announces Nominee Slate**



The Virginia Conference UMM Cabinet is pleased to introduce nominees for Cabinet officers for the 2020-2021 term of office. Voting for Cabinet officers opens on Friday, June 1 and will continue through June 8. You will be notified by email when the polls open. Officers will be installed at the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, June 13.

Please reach out and contact these nominees with questions or comments about your men's ministry.

Remember to vote starting June 1. Your vote is important!



*President*

**Albert Weal, Jr.**

Year of service if elected: First

Church: St. Paul's UMC

District: Elizabeth River

Previously served as: Vice President, Spiritual Life

Email: [mastercook3@cox.net](mailto:mastercook3@cox.net)



*Vice President, Spiritual Life*

**David Collins**

Year of service if elected: First

Church: Community UMC

District: Elizabeth River

Previously served as: President, Elizabeth River District

Email: [djcoll@icloud.com](mailto:djcoll@icloud.com)



*Vice President, Membership & Development*

**Dann Ladd**

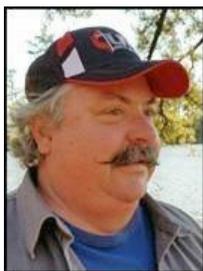
Year of service if elected: Second

Church: Good Shepherd UMC

District: Richmond

Previously served as: Chaplain

Email: [ladddann@gmail.com](mailto:ladddann@gmail.com)



*Secretary*

**Todd Hoar**

Year of service if elected: Fourth

Church: West Point UMC

District: York River

Currently also serving as: Prayer Advocate

Email: [thorb4u2@yahoo.com](mailto:thorb4u2@yahoo.com)

*Treasurer*

**Gary Lupton, Sr.**



Year of service if elected: Second  
Church: Community UMC  
District: Elizabeth  
Retired from TowneBank  
Email: [gluptonsr@gmail.com](mailto:gluptonsr@gmail.com)



*Chaplain*  
**Paul Smith**  
Year of service if elected: First  
Church: Hopewell-Chesterfield UMC  
District: James River  
Currently also serving as: Interim Chaplain and  
President, James River District  
Email: [logsplitter2004@yahoo.com](mailto:logsplitter2004@yahoo.com)

## Annual Meeting Scheduled for Saturday, June 13 at 8:30am

*Join by Zoom for Breakfast | Strength for Service*



Mark your calendars for the 2020 Annual Meeting on Saturday morning, June 13 at 8:30am.

Normally held in conjunction with Annual Conference Breakfast, the 2020 Annual Business Meeting will be conducted over Zoom this year because of the postponement of Annual Conference due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

So, join us for the business meeting with breakfast (in your kitchen) as we:

- Install Cabinet Officers for the 2020-2021 year, and
- Confirm updated [bylaws](#) which are now available for your review. Last revised in 2010, the Cabinet has reviewed and amended the bylaws for men's ministry now and in the future. A majority of those present at the Annual Meeting must confirm or reject changes to the bylaws for the changes to be effective (Amendment XIII).





Our featured speaker is L.W. Smith, Vietnam veteran and chairman of Strength for Service, Inc., whose mission is to publish and provide spiritual and inspirational literature for members of the armed services, law enforcement officers, fire fighters, EMTs/paramedics and other community servants. Smith will provide background on the *Strength for Service to God and Country* and *Strength for Service to God and Community* daily devotional booklets as well as plans to expand this ministry to those on the front-line of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Please join us for the Annual Business Meeting using Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92101976396>

Meeting ID: 921 0197 6396

## My Friend Mook

*"... I was in prison and you came to visit me." (Matthew 25:36)*



Prison ministry is chock full of happy stories. I have written here often of being witness to residents having life changing encounters with Christ, of men changed forever through God's grace, and of love returned in the simplest and most meaningful ways. KAIROS team members always say that we are the ones who get the blessing. But it's not always roses. Sometimes we have to listen to the hard stuff, the broken dreams and crushed hearts. We have to live through the dark night of suffering with residents doing hard time for poor choices to get to the resurrection light of the morning, of the rebirth.

I met "Mook" (his prison name) in April 2013 at KAIROS 5 in Sussex II State Prison. I'd guess he was in his mid-forties, wheelchair bound because of multiple sclerosis. He had a bright shining face and an infectious smile; you could not help but smile back when he looked at you. He had heavy tremors; his hands shook so relentlessly that he could not write. It took serious effort to grab a cookie and direct it into his mouth. The effort was mostly a swiping motion resulting in cookie crumbs across his precious face. Because his head shook one way and his hands another it was sad to watch. But Mook loved those cookies and smiled like a Cheshire cat with each bite. Other residents, those rough, tough prison inmates sitting beside him, would gently wipe his face with a paper towel as necessary.

He had amazing faith in his redemption, salvation and the unending grace of God. Mook made an impression on me as I am certain he did the other team members. By the end of the Four Day Weekend, Mook had established himself as a very, very special person to me.

After the weekend, Mook attended a monthly reunion every now and then. We didn't see him much because just getting from point A to point B required such an effort. Other residents would pass along his good wishes and we'd send them back to him. I

wrote to him a number of times over the years, never expecting a letter in return, just wanting him to know that he was not forgotten and that he was loved indeed!

He was moved to a geriatric institution last year. I can only guess that his physical condition had deteriorated to a point he could not be cared for adequately at Sussex II. He was added to my every morning prayer list with a big intentional heart by his name!

What a thrill it was this past December to receive a Christmas card from him. It was obviously written by a female but oh my, it's the thought that counts. What a blessing that someone was there willing to take the time to write the card for my friend Mook. I treasured that Christmas card!

Then comes the coronavirus. I looked for Mook in the "Inmate Locator" provided by the Virginia Department of Corrections to confirm his address so I could write to him. No Mook. All it said was "No offender match is found". Oh my gosh, what has happened to my friend Mook? Were my prayers answered? How? Did he rise up from that chair and walk out of prison? How God, how did you answer them? Oh my gosh.

I started contacting everyone I could that I thought may have the "pull" to answer my question to no avail. The answer I got, if I got an answer, was "Inmate information is confidential."

Today I received this from a friend with connections: "XX was granted discretionary parole on 4/17/2020 from State Farm Enterprise Unit Infirmary and released to supervision in the Tidewater Virginia area."

Sometimes it is all roses. Thanks be to God. I ask your prayers for my friend Mook.

Lee Davis  
April 30, 2020  
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## Dates for Your Calendars

### *Staying Connected with Men's Ministry*

**2020**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Love, Learn, and Lead (LLL): Wesley Building Brothers and Mentoring New Disciples	Wed., May 27 6:30pm	Watch your Inbox
Elections	June 1-8	Watch your Inbox
LLL: Hunger Relief and Scouting	Wed., June 10 6:30pm	Watch your Inbox
	Sat., June 13	

Annual Meeting	8:30am	<a href="https://zoom.us/j/92101976396">https://zoom.us/j/92101976396</a>
<p>Upcoming LLL Webinars</p> <p>Wednesdays at 6:30pm EDT</p> <p><a href="https://zoom.us/j/92101976396">https://zoom.us/j/92101976396</a></p> <p>Meeting ID: 921 0197 6396</p> <p>One tap mobile</p> <p>+13017158592,,92101976396#</p> <p>8558801246,,92101976396#</p> <p>US Toll-free</p>	June 10	Hunger Relief and Scouting
	June 24	Jail, Prison, Grace Inside, and All God's Children
	July 8	YoungER Men's Ministry
	July 22	Communications: Website and <i>The BEACON</i>
	August 5	Heart Havens and Camp Rainbow

## Words to Live By . . .



### *Remembering VE Day*

"There is only one thing worse than fighting with allies, and that is fighting without them"

Winston Churchill

Recommended Reading: [Job 26](#) (NRSV)