



2016 VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

- 7:30 Morning Eucharist
(Prayer Room, Parlor A)
- 8:15 Singing our Faith
- 8:30 Bible Study
- 9:15 Minutes Committee
Laity Address
Pensions Report
Common Table Report
Elections of Boards and
Agencies
Nomination of Confer-
ence Chancellor
Consecration of Confer-
ence Leadership
- 10:15 General Conference
Report
- 10:30 Nomination for
Episcopal Election
- 10:45 Recognitions
- 11:00 Conference Mission
Worship Service
- Noon Recess for lunch
- 1:45 Singing our Faith
- 2:00 Recognition of Retirees
- 3:00 Recognition of
Bishop Cho's Ministry
- 3:25 Recognitions
- 4:00 Resolutions
- 5:00 Recess for dinner

Welcome to the 234th Virginia Annual Conference, Berglund Center, Roanoke, Virginia

Bishop Cho gives his last Episcopal Address

On Friday, June 17, Bishop Young Jin Cho delivered his last Episcopal Address to laity and clergy gathered for Annual Conference 2016 inside the Berglund Center.

Time played a large part of the Bishop's address as he looked back on the accomplishments of the Virginia Conference over the last four years.

"We have been focusing on more basic and major things in our ministries," Bishop Cho said. "And the culture of our annual conference has improved. Fruitfulness is no longer a strange word, and we are becoming more aware that ministry as usual is no longer an option."

During his address, Bishop Cho highlighted some major ministry moments including the Imagine No Malaria initiative with the Virginia Conference reaching its goal of saving 100,000+ lives from malaria after 15 months. Although Bishop Cho regretted not being able to dance again after the work together as a conference for such a great cause, he was thankful to the members of the Task Force



Bishop Cho leads the body in *Messiah's Hallelujah Chorus* by Handel at the end of his address.

team led by Maria Maxwell and the district superintendents and coordinators as well as the entire conference who took part in the mission.

Bishop Cho talked about commissioning a task force that will review and evaluate the strategic plan of All Things New-Equipping Vital Congregation that was adopted in 2008. Bishop Cho felt it was time to check on the progress for this initiative, and members of the Cabinet, Common Table, CF&A, Board of Pensions, Office of Clergy Leadership Excellence, Board of Laity and Committee on Episcopacy discussed three questions:

- ❖ Where are we now?
- ❖ Are we on the right track?
- ❖ What will improvements be if they are necessary?

In the midst of honest conversation, Bishop Cho said this final report, which looks at where the Virginia Conference started on this initiative and where it needs to be, will be presented to the new Virginia Conference bishop as a guide and a way forward for the conference.

Bishop Cho also focused on the Prayer Covenant Congregations throughout the 16 districts and said he hopes

(Con't on back: "BISHOP CHO")



Service of Remembrance and Holy Communion

The Rev. Myrtle Frances Hatcher, Main St. UMC, James River District, preached for the Service of Remembrance and Holy Communion on Friday night.

Hatcher noted that the service was to focus and celebrate "the lives and work of our dear sisters and brothers who served faithfully on this earth and have now claimed the promise of the resurrection in their transition to the church eternal."

She mentioned that serving for God can take people in unexpected places but that you should always be ready.

"God's servants are called into the places of need wherever that is," Hatcher said, "These servants that we honor tonight have given countless hours waiting with folks

in all kinds of circumstances because they have been committed to the mandates of the gospel that say we will offer love and hope and caring whenever it is needed. It's how we bring God's will into reality."

Hatcher emphasized that attendees of the service should allow time for times of celebration and memorial just like the Service of Remembrance and Holy Communion.

"We all know how the days come and go. But some days are special and we give significance to these days with ceremonies such as this. Scripture encourages us not to let evil triumph."

The Friday night service named Virginia Conference clergy and laity who died since the last Annual Conference as well as Holy Communion by intinction.



The Rev. Myrtle Francis Hatcher preaches at the Friday night service.



("BISHOP CHO," con't from front.)

that the conference will continue to focus on strengthening the spiritual foundation of its mission and ministries.

"From these visits to each district and listening to people's stories on their prayer life and their ministries, I confirmed that seeds for the spiritual vitality of our churches have been sowed and that we need to continue to water these precious seeds," he said. "We may not see the fruit of these seeds soon, but we should not stop here. We should continue to move on."

The end of the Bishop's address focused on appreciation.

"First of all, I cannot thank enough my best friend, companion, partner in ministry and my boss, Kiok. Without her prayers, support, sharp criticism and love, my ministry would not have reached this point," he said.

The Bishop also thanked the Rev. Tom Joyce, assistant to the Bishop, and Terri Biggins, the Bishop's administrative assistant, for making his "ministry possible and effective."

To members of the Committee on Episcopacy led by Shirley Cauffman, the Bishop said he found them constant sources of encouragement.

But he offered thanks and praise foremost to God.

"I used to say that there were three miracles in the late stage of my life: being nominated as an episcopal candidate by our conference; being elected at the last minute as bishop; and assigned to my home conference, Virginia," Cho said. "Now, I would like to add one more miracle: serving this conference without any major mistakes in spite of my many shortcomings."

Bishop Cho related that it was through God's presence and help that he was able to do ministry.

He only had one word to close his last address, "Hallelujah!" 🌸

Special Meeting about GC2016 wrap-up



Martha Stokes and Tom Berlin address the sizable crowd gathered in the Exhibition Hall for a talk about the large issues facing the denomination.



A large group of participants gathered in the Exhibition Hall on Friday, June 17, to hear a special discussion about General Conference (GC) 2016. Martha Stokes and the Rev. Tom Berlin, chairs of the Virginia Conference delegation to GC 2016, held the meeting to offer information about the GC as well as address topics like the new Bishop's Commission on Human Sexuality.

Berlin talked about how complex United Methodists are and can be on any number of issues.

He joked, "Most of us should be in therapy."

He addressed the issue of human sexuality and how painful the discussion can be, as witnessed at GC 2016. Describing himself as a centrist in this debate, Berlin mentioned that for some people he can be seen as too

progressive and for others too conservative.

He said he hoped that the church would be able to offer United Methodists options on this issue.

Berlin noted that United Methodists need to be aware of the decline of membership in the U.S. while membership continues to climb in Asia and Africa, areas that are very conservative.

"They make our most conservative people look liberal," Berlin said. He noted this because as these areas continue to grow, General Conference will become very conservative.

He mentioned with a shift of larger membership outside the U.S. and 97 percent of the global budget still depending on the U.S., the system the denomination currently has will not last.

"If our voting damages two sides of our denomination, then the money will not be present to offer the ministry. It's not about the money until it is," Berlin said.

Berlin said he believes the denomination's systems only have so much energy for the number of issues facing it.

An additional report on General Conference 2016 will be given today at 10:15 a.m. 🌸



2016 Pictorial Directory

This year the Virginia Conference will publish a new online Pictorial Directory of the Virginia Conference Ministry.

Remember Church Directories will have a booth in the Exhibit Hall at Annual Conference today, for the final day, to take photos. All clergy (active and retired), diaconal ministers, certified professionals, those serving as pastoral supply, retired bishops and conference staff attending Annual Conference are asked to go to the booth. No reservations are needed and two photographers will be available. 🌸



"Okay, and now for the church directory... flash those reconciliation peace signs."

