



TODAY'S SCHEDULE

- 1:00 Clergy Session
(Ballrooms D, E, F & G)
- 1:00 Laity Session
(Halls B, C)
- 3:00 Call to Order
Opening Prayer
Welcome and
Organizing Motions
Elections
Announcements
Rules Committee
Commission on Status
and Role of Women
Episcopal Address
Cabinet Report
Property Resolutions
Recognition of New
Faith Communities
Consent Agenda
Equitable Compensation
Report
- 5:00 Recess for dinner
- 7:30 A Service of
Remembrance and
Holy Communion

Welcome to the 235th Virginia Annual Conference, Hampton Roads Convention Center, Hampton, Virginia

Pub Theology takes on politics & ideologies



The guys behind the Crackers and Grape Juice podcast, the Rev. Jason Micheli, the Rev. Teer Hardy, the Rev. Taylor Mertins and the Rev. Morgan Guyton, hosted Pub Theology with special guest Dr. Jeffrey Pugh.

Pub Theology was held at Bull Island Brewing Company in Hampton as a part of pre-Annual Conference events on Thursday, June 15. Pub Theology has been a pre-conference activity for the last two Annual Conferences, beginning in Roanoke in 2015.

The men behind Crackers and Grape Juice podcast, the Rev. Jason Micheli, the Rev. Teer Hardy, the Rev. Taylor Mertins and the Rev. Morgan Guyton, hosted the event with special guest Dr. Jeffrey Pugh to talk about what it means to be a Christian in

the current political climate with over 60 people in attendance. The evening began with music by Clay Motley followed by the panel launching into a discussion about ideologies and how they play into our religious and secular lives.

The Gospel spoke a different truth

Pugh's recent book, *Religiousless Christianity*, tackles the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in World War II-era Germany. Pugh noted that while many are likening the current climate to 1944

Germany, 2017 America is not 1944 Germany. However, Pugh suggested that Bonhoeffer's work can still be applied to our current state of affairs. He noted that to Bonhoeffer, "The Gospel spoke a different truth than the culture." While our country "is certainly not perfect," he said that he wouldn't want to see the United States culture collapse as 1944 Germany.

Pugh further noted that there is a sense of idolatry when it comes to political

(Con't on back: "PUB.")



Annual Conference Special Offering

Bishop Lewis has announced the annual conference mission offering goal of \$200,000 to focus on the following mission priority projects:

❖ \$50,000 Cambodia:

For continued support for our partnership with the Methodist Mission in Cambodia as they move toward being an autonomous Methodist Church.

❖ \$25,000 Brazil:

For our continued long-term support of the Shade and Fresh Water ministry with at-risk children across several conferences in the Methodist Church of Brazil.

❖ \$25,000 Mozambique:

Our partnership with the United Methodist Church of Mozambique focuses on education by

providing lay training resources that strengthens their discipleship and witness across both conferences in Mozambique.

❖ \$50,000 Virginia Long-Term Disaster Recovery:

We are committed to a long-term response to those whose lives were changed by tornadoes and Hurricane Matthew in 2016. The funding of the recovery will allow further teams to answer the call to make a compassionate response.

❖ \$25,000 Ethnic Minority Missional Ministries:

Funds for grants to go toward developing ministry outreach in the conference to immigrants and other marginalized groups.

❖ \$25,000 Virginia Volunteers in Mission:

To provide funds available to small membership faith communities who wish to engage in mission that may lack resources. 🇺🇸

("PUB," con't from front.)

affiliations and ideologies. He said that we need to hold everyone accountable, regardless of political party.

"Political structures," he said, "are by and large incapable of mercy and grace." He asserted that we live in an era where lies and truth are held with the same amount of validity.

"The lie has become an army of Orcs seeking to destroy the truth," he said. This J.R.R. Tolkien-related comment had the room smiling at his nerdy, but also poignant, reference.

The concept of justification

The group also discussed the concept of justification and how it applied to one's life. Pugh once again drew from Bonhoeffer and said that justification meant being put on a path of overflowing love. The Rev. Morgan Guyton said that, to him, "Justification means I have the freedom to be wrong." By extension, Guyton said that meant that he has the freedom to be malleable and to change.

The Crackers and Grape Juice podcast can be found on iTunes. To learn more about the team, visit their website at crackersandgrapejuice.com. 🍷



What's going on at Annual Conference?



The Pub Theology evening began with music by Clay Mottley followed by the panel launching into a discussion about ideologies and how they play into our religious and secular lives.

Snapchat takes over Conference

From Friday, June 16 at noon until Sunday, June 18 at 1 p.m. you can take a Snapchat with your friends while you are on and around the convention center and modify it with the conference logo. Simply take a normal Snapchat picture and search through your filters to see the Annual Conference logo. But why use snapchat during conference? The Communications Board is looking for new and exciting ways to engage people across the conference!

Follow conference communications throughout AC 2017

Please be sure to follow conference communications on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter during Annual Conference and join in the conversation by using the hashtag #vaumc17. Share with us year-round by using the hashtag #vaumc when you post about what's going on at your church and around

the conference on any of these social media platforms.

Photo booth at Communications display

Be sure to stop by and see members of the conference Communications Board at their display in the exhibition hall. At the table, you can subscribe to the *Advocate*, purchase conference DVDs and the *Book of Reports* as well as take a photo at the photo booth, a new feature this year!



Report on the Commission on a Way Forward

On June 16, in Ballroom B of the Hampton Roads Convention Center from 10 to 11 a.m., the Rev. Tom Berlin, a Virginia Conference

elder who is serving on the Commission on a Way Forward, will provide a report on the work of the commission. His report will include what to anticipate as United Methodists move toward the called General Conference in 2019. Berlin will discuss why marriage and ordination of LGBTQ persons is such an important and challenging matter in the life of the United Methodist Church. He will provide ways for pastors and laity to begin to prepare for the General Conference in their churches. Opportunity will be given to ask questions and consider the work of the commission. Berlin will also give a 20-minute presentation on Saturday June 17 in the afternoon that will be livestreamed and recorded for later use.

COSROW offers Friday conversation event

The Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) invites you into a sacred space for conversation about your experience as a Christian woman in light of recent political atmosphere and justice issues relating to women in today's world. The conversation is primarily by, for, and about women, however, everyone is welcome. The event will be held in room 202 in the Hampton Roads Convention Center on Friday, June 16 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Conversation facilitators will be the Rev. Erin Geoffrion, pastor at Mineral-Mt. Pleasant Charge UMC; and Janae House, a private practice clinician in Midlothian, Va.

No registration is needed. For questions, email the Rev. Mary Dadisman, COSROW clergy chair, at marydadisman@vaumc.org or call 804-733-7349. 🍷