

THE RICHMOND DISTRICT DISPATCH

A Newsletter of The Richmond District • Virginia Conference • The United Methodist Church
November 2016

“Chat and Chew” Sessions with Bishop Sharma D. Lewis

All Clergy and Laity of the Richmond District are invited to join Bishop Sharma D. Lewis for an afternoon “Chat and Chew” to be held Sunday, December 11 at Woodlake UMC, 15640 Hampton Park Dr., Chesterfield. The event begins at 2:00 p.m. with a clergy session, dinner will be served at 4:30 for clergy and lay, followed by a laity session at 6:15, ending at 8:15.

Bishop Lewis has suggested questions to be covered by clergy and laity.

For the Clergy:

- ◆ What are the biggest challenges that the Annual Conference is facing or will face in the near future?
- ◆ What are our promising, untapped, growth opportunities?
- ◆ What are your most creative ideas of taking advantage of our untapped growth opportunities?
- ◆ If you were the Bishop, what would you focus your attention on?



Questions for Laity:

- ◆ What would you like to know about your new Bishop?
- ◆ What do you desire from the leadership of your new Bishop?
***Bishop Lewis will take 5-7 minutes to encourage the laity to be actively involved in the life of the Virginia Conference
- ◆ How might we reach more laity in the Virginia Conference to be involved in their Local Church/District Level/Conference Level/General Church Level?
- ◆ If you were the Bishop, what would you focus your attention on?
Plan now to attend this outstanding opportunity to meet and get to know our new bishop! Watch for dinner reservation information soon or contact your church office.◆

Richmond District Virginia United Methodist Church District Conference and Leadership Training Event Sunday, January 8, 2017,

1:30-5:00 p.m.

Reveille UMC

4200 Cary Street Road,
Richmond VA 23221

Keynote Speaker, Rev. Ben Campbell *Your Community is Your Church* Breakout Sessions and Workshops

1. Trustees
2. Finance
3. Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations
4. It All Starts Here: The Role of the Nomination and Leadership Development Committee
5. Food Justice
6. Next Stop Social Media Highway
7. Mission Shift: From Temporary Relief to Lasting Community Transformation
8. Cross Racial/Cross Cultural Ministry
9. Local Church Partnerships
10. Who is my Neighbor? 6 Ways to Reach Them
11. What if Youth Designed the Church?
12. Your Community is Your Church
Members should register through their church offices
no later than December 9.
Call 521-1124 for more information.

District Mission Grant Requests Due November 15

Each year, we are excited to offer District grants to our churches to enable important congregational ministries. Many of you have participated in these grants in the past and we are excited to continue the opportunity. This year, we are adding a second grant opportunity which our Board of Missions has entitled “Five Talent Grants.” This is a very exciting and generous option which we encourage you to review. Note that the application process is different for each grant. If you desire to apply for either grant email <RichmondDistrict@vaumc.org> for the appropriate form. The Five Talent Grant application is described in a separate document. These grants are enabled by the generosity of our congregations and District apportionment giving.

The Board of Missions will be reviewing these applications in mid-November so that funds can be disbursed for 2017. The deadline for these applications is November 15.

If you have any questions, please contact Larry Cochran, Richmond District Board of Communication chair at <larrycochran@vaumc.org>, or the District Office at 521-1124.◆

UM Center Closings

The District Office and the VAUMC Conference Center will close at 1 p.m. November 23 and remain closed through November 25 in observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday.

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Richmond District

The Virginia Conference • United Methodist Church
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November 2016

A Word from the Superintendent

Friends,

These past months, I have been working my way through the letters of Paul as a part of my prayer time. I recently came across a passage that seemed particularly noteworthy given our work together during this time of the year:

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the Gospel..." (Philippians 1:3-5)

We are about halfway through our season of Charge Conferences and I have had the chance to visit and pray with about thirty churches. So many of you are doing such incredible things! The stories are too numerous to mention but there are representative highlights. Multiple congregations are seeking God's will for a new mission statement and vision. Last night I visited with a financially struggling congregation who for years had paid minimal apportionments. The Lay Leader stepped up boldly and said their first goal this year was to pay all their apportionments. I walked through a church building with one congregation, stopping at various places where we prayed for God's will and vision. Another gathered Church Council had challenging but healthy discussion at Charge Conference on how their mission statement would ensure that the congregation was focused outside the building. I believe God yearns for us to have those kind of meetings!

The list can be continued but you get the point. Again and again I have said that there are two ways we church people can make decisions. All too often, we gather, offer a perfunctory opening prayer, and then decide what we want to do. As a result, we basically ask God to bless what we have already decided.

But of course there is a better way. We can seek first God's kingdom and will. This of course involves those hard discipleship words like submission, surrender, listening, and humility. This seeking recognizes that we could be wrong and often takes more time.

I can't tell you how encouraging it is to see our Richmond churches seeking this second way. It is my conviction that God honors those decisions in a fashion God does not honor the first. The famous verse from 2 Chronicles reminds us that ...

"...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and heal their land." (2 Chron. 7:14)

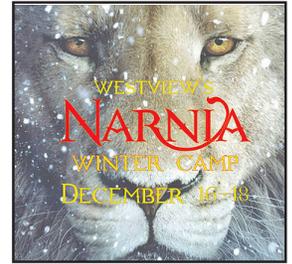
Thank you United Methodist Churches of the Richmond District for offering such solid spiritual work in this spirit of humility! During this season of thanksgiving, I humbly join the Apostle Paul in thanking God for you and thanking you for taking this spiritual "road less travelled." We have lots of challenges before us and none of us know the full answers. I do believe, however, this is the beginning to that better kingdom place that all of us desire for our church. Thanks be to God and to you and may you have a blessed Thanksgiving time!

In Christ,


Pete

Narnia Winter Camp

Westview on the James' Winter Camp, December 16-18, is focused on helping campers get into the Christmas



spirit. Not the spirit of wanting lots of presents for themselves, but the spirit of giving to others, and receiving the gift of Jesus Christ our Savior. We will learn from C.S. Lewis' The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe, about what it means to have Christmas and how without the birth of Jesus we would have always winter, but never Christmas.

Campers will enter the magical world of Narnia and along the way meet inspiring characters and participate in activities such as canoeing, hiking, making ornaments, wrapping presents, baking cookies, singing carols, playing games and having campfires!

The cost is \$125 per person, ages 7-14. See <<http://www.westviewonthejames.org/winter-camp>> for more information.

Visit <<http://www.westviewonthejames.org/>> for a prompt to join Westview's monthly newsletter. ♦

Richmond CROP Walk

The 46th Annual Richmond Church World Service CROP Hunger Walk will be Sunday, November 13, beginning and ending at St. John's UCC on Stuart Circle. Registration begins at 1:00 p.m., and the walk/run begins at 2:00 p.m. Register as a team or as an individual and/or make a donation at <crophungerwalk.org/richmondva>. End poverty one step at a time!

Prayers for...

- ♦ Rev. Katie B. Gooch and husband Matt on the birth of their first baby, Leonard Holland Gooch, on October 26.
- ♦ Rev. Katie B. Gooch and family on the death of her father-in-law, Leonard "Ed" Gooch, on October 18.
- ♦ Rev. Mike Meloy, retired, who continues at home under hospice care for stage 4 liver cancer.
- ♦ Rev. Michael Southall-Vess, Central UMC, who has gone on medical leave for potential kidney and liver transplants.
- ♦ Rev. Rita Callis, Lakeside UMC, who is continuing treatment for pancreatic cancer. ♦



Bikes for Christ

You are invited to join the Rev. Tim Kirven and the members of Worship and Praise UMC in their "Bikes for Christ" drive. They would like to give away 1000 bikes this year to children living in the community and surrounding counties. These bikes are given to needy families, the unemployed, and single mothers. The bike give-away takes place on December 17 at 12 p.m. at the church. The deadline for making donations is December 5. The cost of a bike \$50. Make all checks payable to "Worship and Praise UMC" and mail to the church at 3006 E. Laburnum Ave., Richmond, VA 23223. Worship and Praise UMC is calling November 27, "Bikes for Christ Sunday." Perhaps your church might use this day to invite your members to support this ministry by buying a bike! ♦

Youth Retreat 2017

I am very excited to announce that the theme for the district youth retreat of 2017 is "Forgiveness." Our weekend will revolve around giving AND receiving forgiveness. The staff and I are working toward finalizing speakers and bands, but God has laid this aspect of His character on our hearts, so we are assured He will make His presence known. Please join us in praying for this weekend.

The information:

- ♦ When: February 17-19, 2017
 - ♦ Where: Eagle Eyrie
 - ♦ Cost: \$120 due by January 31, 2017 (\$125 if received after January 31)
 - ♦ T-shirts can be pre-ordered for \$12
- If you are a smaller church who struggles to find chaperones, we may be able to partner you with another church.

Please do not hesitate to call with any questions.

Robert Smith
District Youth Director
382-8659

UM Day at General Assembly

The Church should continually exert a strong ethical influence upon the state, supporting policies and programs deemed to be just and opposing policies and programs that are unjust."---Social Principles of the United Methodist Church, 2012-2016.

UM Day at General Assembly will be held Thursday, February 2 beginning at 7 a.m. with registration and breakfast at Bon Air UMC, 1645 Buford Rd, North Chesterfield. Travel to the Assembly will depart at 8 a.m. Attending Committee meeting and meeting with legislators will begin at 8:30 a.m. An effort will be made to arrange meetings with legislators for large groups of registrants. If you wish a private meeting, contact your legislator in advance. Events of the day include meeting with Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy staff members in Senate Room A at 11 a.m. or attending Joint Session of House and Senate at 11 a.m. Depart from Tunnel Entrance at 12:30 p.m. for lunch at Bon Air UMC and a 25th Anniversary Celebration in the sanctuary at 2 p.m. including music, a video presentation and a keynote speech by Bishop Charlene Kammerer.

Pre-Event Briefings include:

- ♦ Teleconference, Monday, January 30 at 7 p.m. Dial (712) 432-1500. Enter 743648# as the passcode.
 - ♦ Wednesday, February 1, Briefing at Bon Air UMC at 7:30 p.m.
- Hotel accommodations:

A block of rooms have been reserved for Wednesday, February 1 at the Hyatt Place Arboretum Place, Richmond 23236, near Bon Air UMC. Call 560-1566. Mention "United Methodist Day" for a special room rate of \$89/night (single or double). The reservation deadline is Wednesday, January 11.

General questions regarding these events should directed to Rev. Pat Shipley at <plsrevdoc@aol.com> or 353-1387.

Register and pay online at <<http://www.vaumc.org/UMDay2017>> or print form and mail to UM Day at the GA, Rev. Barbara Lewis, Registrar, Greenwood UMC, 10040 Greenwood Road., Glen Allen, VA 23060. Make checks payable to: "Virginia United Methodist Conference". All questions regarding



Coed Christian Pilates

Join director of Children's Ministries Tammy Tipton-Nay for an hour-long gentle Pilates class. Participants will be renewed in both body and spirit. The class takes place every Wednesday, 2-3:00 p.m., in the youth center at Reveille UMC, 4200 Cary Street Road, Richmond. Men and women are welcome and no registration is required. Please bring your own mat and join us for this uplifting workout. For more information visit <www.reveilleumc.org/coed-christian-pilates>. ♦

UMVIM Training

Team Leader Training is required for all first time United Methodist Volunteers In Mission (UMVIM) team leaders, but all interested persons are welcome to attend whether leading a team or not. The following training events are currently scheduled:

- ♦ ERT Recertification to be held Friday, January 13, 5-9:00 p.m., Bethlehem UMC, 13586 S. Old Moneta Road, Moneta, VA 24121-0458. Please provide full name, phone number, e-mail, which training is needed (and badge expiration date if applicable). Contact Bethlehem UMC to sign up (540) 297-7957 or Carolyn Koontz (540) 719-0555 to register. Cost is \$40 for recertification.

For more information call 521-1139. ♦

Anniversary Celebration

The Conference Legislative Committee is hosting a 25th anniversary celebration of United Methodist Day at General Assembly, Saturday, January 14, 2017, at Centenary UMC, 411 E. Grace Street, Richmond. The event will start with registration at 11 a.m., lunch at noon followed by a program at 1 p.m. Pre-registration is necessary and child care will be available. For more information, email Randy Harlow at <crhncboy@aol.com>. ♦

Lay Servant Schedule

Donna Seward, director, Lay Servant Ministries: <donna_t_seward@yahoo.com>, 897-3309. Richmond District Certified Lay Servants lead worship regularly at the following care centers:

Date	Place	Speaker
11/6	Beth Sholom	A Henderson
11/13	Elmcroft	G Stephens
11/13	University Park	Bessie Owens
11/20	Beth Sholom	A Henderson
11/27	Elmcroft	TBA

On Demand LSM Course

Lay Servant Ministries is offering a series of On Demand Learning courses. You may attend the live events 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Virginia United Methodist Center in Glen Allen for free, or pay \$30 to watch online from your own computer during a 90-day period to receive your certification.



Upcoming on demand training events:
 ◆ November 12- "UMC Heritage" led by Martha Stokes.
 Call 521-1153 for details. ◆



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

VIRGINIA CONFERENCE
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 10330 STAPLES MILL ROAD
 GLEN ALLEN, VIRGINIA 23058-5606

SHARMA D. LEWIS
 RESIDENT BISHOP

October 25, 2016

TELEPHONE: 804/521-1102
 FAX: 804/521-1178
 E-MAIL: terribiggins@vaumc.org

Dear Friends in Christ,

Although I have been serving as your bishop for less than two months I have observed immediately the love and compassion that is deeply grounded in God's people known as the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church. I knew before I arrived that you were involved in a long term recovery effort after the tornadoes that struck across the state in the spring. I also became quickly aware that Virginia is known for its well organized and efficient disaster response team.

It didn't take long after my arrival to experience firsthand the compassionate response of the Virginia Conference Disaster Response Team (ERT). Hurricane Matthew struck several southeastern states and while other neighbors experienced more devastation from the storm than Virginia, coastal flooding has created a crisis for many families in the Hampton Roads area and more than 2,300 homes were damaged by the storm primarily from flooding.

Our conference emergency response team members have already been working for more than a week helping mop up, clean up, and dry out homes. Following their work Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) teams will also be required to help with home repair for the affected families.

I invite you to first hold these families in your prayers as their lives have been disrupted and in some cases displaced by the effects of the storm.

Second, I am asking you to consider making a donation to the Virginia Conference Disaster Response Advance Special #5037. Your gift will help provide needed personnel, required equipment, and a faithful Christian witness not only for this current disaster, but also for disasters that may occur in the future.

You can make a gift through your local church. Or, send a check payable to "Virginia United Methodist Conference" to the Virginia Conference Treasurer, P.O. Box 5605, Glen Allen, VA 23058. Designate "Conference Advance #5037 - Disaster Response" on your check or apportionment statement.

Your sister in Christ,

Sharma D. Lewis
 Resident Bishop

District Opportunities

- ◆ November 1–On Demand LSM Course, UMC Heritage, VAUMC Center, 521-1153.
- ◆ November 13–Richmond CROP Walk, St. John's UCC, 901-6594.
- ◆ November 15–Richmond District Board of Mission Grant applications due, 521-1124.
- ◆ December 11–Chat and Chew with the Bishop, Woodlake UMC, 521-1124.
- ◆ December 16-18–Narnia Winter Camp, Westview on the James, 457-4210.
- ◆ December 17–Bikes for Christ giveaway, Worship & Praise UMC, 648-8031.
- ◆ January 8, 2017–Richmond District Conference and Leadership Training Event, Reveille UMC, 521-1124.
- ◆ January 13–UMVIM ERT Recertification training, Bethlehem UMC, Moneta, 521-1139.
- ◆ January 14, 2017–25th Anniversary of UM Day at General Assembly, Centenary UMC, 521-1139.
- ◆ January 30–February 11–UMVIM Holy Land Tour, 929-2491.
- ◆ January 30–UM Day at the General Assembly, Teleconference, 353-1387.
- ◆ February 1–UM Day at the General Assembly, Briefing, Bon Air UMC, 353-1387.
- ◆ February 2–UM Day at the General Assembly, Bon Air UMC, 353-1387.
- ◆ February 17-19–Richmond District Youth Retreat, Eagle Eyrie, 382-8659. ◆



DISTRICT DISPATCH

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 Donna Seward Director, Lay Servant Ministries

We're on the web at:
www.richmonddistrictumc.org

The DEADLINE for the NEXT ISSUE is the 15th of the month.