



THE RICHMOND DISTRICT DISPATCH

A Newsletter of The Richmond District • Virginia Conference • The United Methodist Church
March 2017

Love in Any Language

Experiencing VBS in two languages; hearing the children read their new bilingual Bibles; filling the parking lot with laughing kids and adults playing games, witnessing the Living Nativity, walking through Bethlehem, worshipping God with warmed hearts and joyful voices: these are all recent memories of scenes at Ramsey Memorial UMC, 5900 Hull Street Road, Richmond. We have been diverse welcoming church with a vital ministry of outreach in our surrounding neighborhood on the Hull Street corridor of South Richmond since 1908. Ramsey serves as a demonstration of God's love as we live out God's Vision—Serving the Spirit, Serving the Family, Serving the Community. Ramsey is a blend of families who have worshipped together for generations; many who travel distances to worship and serve at our location; as well as new families and individuals from our surrounding neighborhood.

Ramsey is a host site for Bon Secours Care A Van and a trusted neighborhood hub. 2017 marks twelve years of Ramsey's Hispanic Ministry. Rev. Norma Aguilar, appointed since 2008 as associate pastor, is responsible for the 12:30 Hispanic worship service. Rev. Deborah Koontz, senior pastor since 2013, leads worship at the 9 and 11 a.m. services. Ramsey's ministry of outreach includes a bilingual VBS and a free Community Spring Festival. Community partners include: J. L. Francis Elementary School/Micah Initiative; The Bridge (offering English Language and Civics classes); Manchester YMCA; and the City of Richmond Latino Citizens Academy. A monthly community food pantry and a monthly free community meal are offered.

For more information about this program and how you can help contact Rev. Deborah Koontz, 276-4628 or <DeborahKoontz@vaumc.org>. ♦



Bishop's Prayer Convocation

Both laity and clergy are invited to attend the Bishop's Convocation on Prayer, Saturday, April 1 at Trinity UMC 903 Forest Avenue, Henrico. The Rev. Juanita Campbell Rasmus will be the plenary speaker. There will also be small group learning opportunities in the areas of prayer and Wesleyan spiritual disciplines.

Registration is \$10 which includes lunch. For a complete brochure and to make a reservation see <<https://www.etchouches.com/bishopsconvo>>. The deadline to register is March 27. ♦

Ministers' Convocation

This year's Ministers' Convocation: Making Space for Yourself and Others, to be held May 8-10, will offer a time for renewal/relaxation and learning. As pastors prepare to enter this new year in ministry, consider registering now! Come be engaged in theological and academic conversation while experiencing rejuvenation for ministry.

Speakers include Dr. Amy Oden, Professor at Saint Paul School of Theology (OK), Bishop Sharma D. Lewis, and Rev. Dr. Joel LeMon, Associate Professor at Candler.

The convocation will be held at Wyndham Virginia Crossings Conference Center in Glen Allen. Continuing Education Funds are available at <vaumc.org/clergycontinuingeducation>. For event details and registration see <www.vaumc.org/MinistersConvocation>. ♦

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Richmond District

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March 2017

Friends,

It is hard to get people to an Ash Wednesday service. Christmas Eve? Easter? Not so much. But Ash Wednesday, there are sports, activities, and what is the deal with those ashes anyway?

Truth is, we need those ashes. In this world where everybody is great, where we live in a nation that seeks to become great again, and a society consumed with the personal pronoun, we need this timely reminder of Lent. In those ashes, we are reminded that we are just dust and to dust we shall return. Though at times this rings of contemporary cultural blasphemy, truth is, in our day and age, we need that reminder. We are not that great.

But having said that, Lent, and the associated Bible readings like Joel 2 remind us that there is power in that humble place. Somehow, when we rend our hearts, when we fast, weep, and mourn, we dwell in that increasingly endangered place where we can actually see and own the truth that God is "gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love..." (Joel 2:13) The vision does not come in secular greatness, but only in spiritual humility.

The trouble is, to paraphrase C.S. Lewis' famous words in *Mere Christianity*, we cannot decide to be humble. If we try, we will only become proud of how humble we are. True humility and the associated power that comes with it arise from an accurate vision. We aren't that great, but God is and God is good. When we embrace the gap, there is power that endures.

This week I was thinking about past presidents and what I remember most about them. The first thing that came to mind was a story about the first President Bush. On November 12, 1992, President Bush went to the Viet Nam Memorial at midnight. There was no press, no big lights. Only 30 people were gathered. No one knew he was coming. He had just conceded the election a week before to President Elect Bill Clinton. But there, out of the limelight, he joined the series of readers naming those killed in the Viet Nam War. He took his turn at the podium like everyone else, humbled by the multitude of deaths behind him on that wall. There, in the quiet midnight and inconspicuous darkness, there was a lasting power that arose from humility. A power which is all too often unbeknownst in a world that has a different image of greatness.

It is true. We aren't that great. We are a sinful, twisted, confused, dazed, and rebellious people. We can dress it up all we want with language, bumper stickers, and slogans. But in that silly dress, there is no power. But there is power in these ashes, and there is power in these 40 days. So in the words of our United Methodist Book of Worship, "I invite you to live a holy Lent..." Go and live it, because we all need it.

In Christ,


 Pete



United
 Methodist
 Women

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

The Richmond District United Methodist Women are having their 2017 Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, April 15 at Providence UMC, 901 South Providence Road, Richmond. Mary Jane Rawley, Conference UMW president will join us as our guest speaker. Registration and breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m. Program 9-11a.m. Register through your local UMW unit.

Come join us for the "On the Road in Mission" Day Bus Trip to Wesley Community Service Center, Portsmouth, Saturday, April 22. The bus will pick up and return passengers beginning at Bon Air UMC at 8 a.m., Skipwith UMC at 8:30 a.m. and Shady Grove UMC, Hanover at 9 a.m. Return trip will drop off at Shady Grove at 6:30 p.m., Skipwith 7 p.m. and Bon Air 7:30 p.m.

Our day will include:

- ◆ Working in the food storage areas to pack emergency food boxes, rotating stock, etc.,
- ◆ Polishing and refinishing two conference room tables,
- ◆ Refreshing flower gardens and outside shrubby to provide 'curb appeal',
- ◆ Window and woodwork cleaning in educational wing.

Cost is \$64 which includes transportation, insurance, lunch, dinner, gratuity and our UMW spirit. Make checks payable to Richmond District UMW and send to Ruth Wilkinson, 4209 West End Drive, Richmond, VA 23294. Full payment due by April 8. ◆

Prayers for...

- ◆ Rev. Michael Southall-Vess, medical leave, who had liver and kidney transplant surgery on February 28.
- ◆ The family of Rev. Mike Meloy, retired, who passed away following a long battle with cancer on February 26.
- ◆ Susan Lynch, widow of Rev. Al Lynch, who had knee surgery on February 27.
- ◆ Rev. Fran Cooper, who is recovering from surgery to install a pacemaker on February 10. ◆



Get Away from it All!

The VA PAUMCS (Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries) spring retreat will be held Wednesday, May 24 at Fredericksburg UMC, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Pastoral Transitions can create a most difficult time for United Methodist churches. As Administrative Church Professionals we find ourselves filled with both anticipation and sorrow as established relationships are broken in preparation for new beginnings. In order for healthy transitions to take place, we all have to work together making certain that lots of details are covered. What are the many things we must do to ensure a smooth transition? Come join us for informative conversation, great fellowship and active learning. Our speakers for the day are Larry Davis and Ted Smith.

Registration details can be found at <vaumc.org/paumcs>. ♦

Christian Yoga

Reveille UMC, 4200 Cary Street Road, Richmond, invites you each week to a Christian yoga or Pilates class being offered to all women as an opportunity to get fit in body, mind, and spirit during a Christ-centered workout. Complimentary child care is provided for children 4 and younger. Everyone is invited, so please bring a friend. Bring your own mat to class. Class meets every Tuesday at 9:45 a.m. in the Reveille Narthex. Upcoming class schedule includes Yoga on March 14 and 28, and Pilates on March 21. For details see <www.reveilleumc.org/women-together> or call 359-6041. ♦

Christian Camping

The United Methodist Church has long supported Outdoor Ministry and specifically, Christian Camping. Fifty years ago, Westview on the James was founded in order to offer a “place apart” where children can experience and grow deeper with God. In this busy, often stressful world, Christian camps offer children a sacred space in the natural world where they can encounter God, enjoy Christian hospitality and community, nurture their faith and discipleship, and learn creation care and appreciation. Oh, and have lots of fun! Leaving behind their normal routines and distractions, Westview campers can enjoy zip lining, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, biking, hiking, music, crafts, a new bouldering wall and high ropes course, worship, and more! Voted Style Weekly’s favorite sleep-away camp for 2016, Westview offers a variety of camp sessions including Mini-Camp, Resident Camp, Adventure Camp, and new this year, Two-Week Camp. Counselor in Training Camp will also be offered July 9-14 for 15-16 year olds who desire to develop their leadership skills while participating in camp activities. This summer, consider supporting your local United Methodist camp by registering your child for Summer Camp 2017 at <www.westviewonthejames.org>. ♦

The Screwtape Letters

First published in 1942, C. S. Lewis’ masterpiece of religious satire The Screwtape Letters, continues both to entertain and inform readers with its ironic and insightful portrayal of human life. Readers will both laugh and cry at Lewis’s wit and serious critique of human nature. This class will be led by Rev. Doug Forrester, Reveille UMC, 4200 Cary Street Road, Richmond, on Sundays, 4:30-6 p.m., and Wednesdays, 10-11:30 a.m., March 5-April 5. Register at <www.reveilleumc.org/study> or call 359-6041. ♦

Monday Morning Prayer

Start your week connecting with God through prayer and Holy Communion, every Monday morning during Lent in the Reveille UMC Chapel, 4200 Cary Street Road, Richmond. For more details see <www.reveilleumc.org/len> or call 359-6041. ♦

Envisioning Christ’s Kingdom: Finishing the Puzzle

How often have you thought your church might need to do more to serve the Lord? Or perhaps we do so much serving Christ we become overwhelmed. It seems we live in a world that either leaves us wanting or overburdened. The Virginia Conference United Methodist Men has recognized this and is offering a Visioning event March 25 at the Virginia United Methodist Conference Center in Glen Allen.



Men, consider bringing your UMMen Chartered group, your Men’s fellowship, Mission team, or Men’s Bible study as we present a day to help them discern their place in Christ’s Kingdom. The Vision event starts promptly at 8:30 a.m. with a Plenary Session led by the Rev. Glenn Rowley, director of the Conference Center for Justice and Missional Excellence. We will then offer breakout sessions encompassing Values and Vision led by Conference UMMen president Andrew Kissell; Mission and Social Justice led by Glenn Rowley; The United Methodist Connection led by Conference director of Connectional Ministries Marc Brown; Men’s Ministry led by Johnnie Draughon Men’s Ministry Specialist, and Reverse Mentoring where three men from the Conference Communications office, Nick Ruxton, Dwight Bragg and Bryan Compton will help you in negotiating websites, email and apps on smart phones. Learn how to communicate with the younger men of your church using methods familiar to them. We will have a period of time set aside for all to visit with our Advocates: Prayer Ministry, Scouting, Wesleyan Building Brothers, Heart Havens, Disciple Bible Outreach (Prison) Ministries, Camp Rainbow, and the Society of St. Andrew (Hunger Relief)

Fee is \$12 which includes all materials; continental breakfast served starting at 7:30 and a hearty lunch. For more information contact Dann Ladd, vice-president, Virginia Conference United Methodist Men at <ladddann@gmail.com>. Because of space limitations we are limited to 150 participants so register early for this event. We look forward to seeing you and helping you discern a vision for your group. ♦

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
3/5	Beth Sholom	A Henderson
3/12	Elmcroft	G Stephens
3/12	University Park	Bessie Owens
3/19	Beth Sholom	A Henderson
3/26	Elmcroft	B Stephens

Lay Servant Academy

The Lay Servant Academy will be held at Smith Mountain Lake. March 31-April 2. Join in the worship, fellowship and learning! The LSA is about equipping Laity (not clergy) to carry out the mission of the church. Clergy are invited to encourage laity to attend! All of the courses are open to anyone who would like to take one. Each course is designed to help those serving the local church learn more about leadership, personal faith development, and a deeper understanding of the United Methodist Church. For course descriptions, contact information, and registration see <www.vaumc.org/Events>. ♦



“Defying Gravity”: Breaking Free from the Culture of More

Saturday, March 18, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Woodlake UMC, 15640 Hampton Park Drive, Chesterfield

Please plan to arrive by 8:30 a.m. for Registration, the event will begin promptly at 9. Defying Gravity explores what is required to sustain a vibrant life, what we need versus what we want, and what we can do to avoid being pulled into the orbit of materialism.

WHO SHOULD COME?

This event is designed for those who want to learn and lead others to live fruitfully and faithfully. This includes but is not limited to, treasurers, and finance folks.

Event Cost: \$35/person

Registration deadline: 3/6

Group Pricing:

Team pricing discounts are available

REGISTER: vaumc.org/5talent

Learn More:
vaumc.org/5talent



Rev. Tom Berlin serves as the Lead Pastor of Floris United Methodist Church in Herndon, Virginia, a congregation that has pursued intentional generosity that has blessed their local community and global projects in partnership with the Sierra Leone Annual Conference. Tom serves on the Southeastern Jurisdiction Committee on Episcopacy and has been appointed to the United Methodist Church’s Commission on a Way Forward.



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Cindy Payne-Ingroff	District Treasurer
Ron White	District Lay Leader
Scotty Doyle	District President, UMW
Claude Stocky	District President, UMM
Bill Chaffin	District Ministry of Scouting Coord.
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.

District Opportunities

- ◆ March 3-4—Clergy Spouse Retreat, Richmond Hill, 521-1126.
- ◆ March 5-April 5—The Screwtape Letters Lenten Bible Study, Reveille UMC, 359-6041.
- ◆ March 14-28—Christian Yoga and Pilates Class, Reveille UMC, 359-6041.
- ◆ March 18-5 Talent Academy, Defying Gravity: Breaking Free from the Culture of More, Woodlake UMC, 521-1155.
- ◆ March 25—Conference UMMen Visioning Event, VAUMCenter, 521-1139.
- ◆ March 31-April 2—Lay Servant Academy, Smith Mountain Lake, 521-1153.
- ◆ April 1—Bishop’s Convocation on Prayer, Trinity UMC, 521-1134.
- ◆ April 15—UMW Prayer Breakfast, Providence UMC, 640-5355.
- ◆ April 22—District UMW On the Road in Mission Day Trip to Wesley Community Service Center, Portsmouth, 218-0627.
- ◆ May 1—Youth Theology Institute, Shenandoah University, (540) 535-3546.
- ◆ May 8-10—Ministers’ Convocation, Wyndham Hotel and Conference Center, Glen Allen, 521-1126.
- ◆ May 24—VA PAUMCS Spring Event, Fredericksburg UMC, 521-1124.
- ◆ June 2-3—UMW Day at Ferrum College, 218-0627.
- ◆ June 16-18—Annual Conference, Hampton, 521-1124. ♦