

# THE RICHMOND DISTRICT DISPATCH

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

*"...they will call him Immanuel" ...  
which means, "God with us."*



Wishing you every blessing as you experience anew God's greatest gift.

***Merry Christmas!***

from the Richmond District Office

Susan Mundell Petrey

Peter M. Moon

Cindy Payne Ingroff

**Richmond District  
District Conference and  
Leadership Training Event**  
Sunday, January 7, 2018, 1:30-5:00 p.m.  
Reveille UMC

4200 Cary Street Road, Richmond 23221

**Keynote Speaker, Rev. Ben Campbell**  
*Your Community is Your Church*

**Breakout Sessions and Workshops**

1. **Trustees**--Rev. Bill James
2. **Finance**--David Dommissie
3. **Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations**--  
Peter M. Moon
4. **The Role of the Nomination  
and Leadership Development  
Committee**--Presenter: TBA
5. **Food Justice**--Dominic Barrett
6. **Next Stop Social Media Highway**--  
Madeline Pillow
7. **Mission Shift: From Temporary  
Relief to Lasting Community  
Transformation**--Wendy McCaig
8. **Cross Racial/Cross Cultural  
Ministry**--Larry Cochran
9. **Local Church Partnerships**--Bob  
Argabright
10. **Who is my Neighbor? 6 Ways to  
Reach Them**--Kim Johnson
11. **What if Youth Designed the  
Church?**--Rev. Justin Hicks
12. **Your Community is Your Church**--  
Ben Campbell, author, priest and  
former director of Richmond Hill

Members should register through  
their church offices  
no later than December 8.  
Call 521-1124 for more information.

**INSIDE**

A Word from the Superintendent.....	2
Welcome, Maria! .....	3
Bikes for Christ.....	3
Opportunities .....	4



## Richmond District

The Virginia Conference • United Methodist Church  
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December 2017

Friends,

*“And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.” (Luke 1:7)*

Most if not all of us will be hearing these words in just a few weeks, most likely at our Christmas Eve services. Many will be hearing the familiar words of how Jesus was born in a manger, because there was no room in the inn. We will likely celebrate and remember that truth with children's pageants and cantatas; all beautiful and timely reminders of the unique wonder of what we have as followers of the Christ child.

Years ago, I participated on several mission trips to Cuba. These were the heady days of revival for the church in Cuba, coming to new life after years of persecution. They were also days of substantial poverty for the people. I remember many things of those trips; hardship, hard work, and generally, folks in very difficult circumstances. But most of all, I remember the laughter. Truth is, I cannot remember being in a place where I laughed so much. The Cubans hold two hours of lively worship every night, but Saturday night, they only worship for an hour. Then, the church gathers to play games together. They laugh so hard it is contagious. They then close by singing about the joy of the Lord.

It is striking. In some of the most difficult of circumstances, the laughter is the most intense I have ever experienced. The reason is not complicated. It is the same sense of joy and wonder that found its way into this world through a manger. Joy comes simply because Jesus is there. Where Jesus is, that is enough. Earthly challenges are real and for a season hard. But one of the most wondrous gifts of Christmas is the reminder that Jesus is enough. For centuries, that is how Christians have found their way through challenge and hardship. Jesus is enough. When things arrived on the doorstep that they couldn't explain, when these seasons of wrestling with doubt and circumstance appear on the edge of our souls, there was this fundamental collective Christmas claim that as Wesley said on his death bed, “Best of all, God is with us...” Jesus transformed a lowly manger into wonder and beauty. Jesus transformed a harsh journey through taxation and rejection into enduring kingdom legacy. It is the way of the manger, it is the way of discipleship, and it is the way of the cross. The manger reminds us that no matter what, Jesus is enough and Jesus can transform even the lowliest of circumstance.

As far as I know, no one ever has a perfect Christmas. None of us have perfect lives. Likely, we are not suffering the same challenges as those in Cuba and other places in the world. But the message of the manger is the same as it always has been. Jesus is enough. And Jesus can still transform any hard manger into a lasting kingdom legacy of beauty and power.

Thank you all for all that you do and may you have a blessed Christmas!

In Christ,

  
 Pete

*Prepare Him Room*

### Concert Featuring

Chancel Choir, Cappella  
 Celebration Bells  
 Accompanied by Orchestra  
 Special Guest Mezzo Soprano  
 Helena von Rueden

Friday, December 8, 7 p.m.

### Shady Grove UMC

8209 Shady Grove Road  
 Mechanicsville 23111  
 shadygroveumc.org



### Annual Conference Theme

The theme has been announced for Annual Conference 2018. Bishop Lewis announced this week that the theme for Annual Conference 2018 will be “Servant Leadership - Making a Difference.” The corresponding Bible verse is 1 Peter 4:10, “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.”

The 236th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference will be held June 15-17, 2018 at the Hampton Roads Convention Center, Hampton.

More information will be released soon about the conference and the logo will be made available in the new year. ♦

### Prayers for...

- ♦ Rev. Tim Gerde, retired, and family on the death of his father in Minnesota on November 21.
- ♦ Rev. Derrick and wife Natalia on the death of her brother in November, in Nassau, Bahamas.
- ♦ Paulo Lopes, Conference director of Ministry with Young People (Next Gen) and wife Juliana as she recovers from gallbladder surgery on November 15.
- ♦ Rev. Pam Culler, Sherbourne UMC, and husband Greg as he recovers from November 15 back surgery. ♦



## Welcome, Maria!

We welcome Maria Maxwell into the new role of Richmond District Coordinator for Church Revitalization and Leadership Development. She is a highly energetic, creative and organized individual who is extremely enthusiastic about using her gifts of hospitality, leadership and administration to help churches and leaders realize their full potential. You may know Maria from her recent work as the Virginia Conference Imagine No Malaria Field Coordinator during our Conference wide initiative from 2014-2015. She is a Richmond native, playing soccer and tennis for Highland Springs High School and graduating James Madison University with a degree in Psychology and an emphasis in Religion and Criminal Justice. During her free time, she enjoys singing with her church Worship Team, cheering on her two children in golf or swimming and catching up on the latest Hallmark movie. ♦

## Holy Land Tour

Bishop Sharma D. Lewis invites you to join her on a 10 day Holy Land tour, February 26-March 7, 2018, that will expand your knowledge of the Bible and this sacred land. A journey following in the footsteps of Jesus will change the way you read the Bible, and you will learn why scholars refer to it as the "Fifth Gospel." The all inclusive cost from Richmond is \$3,398. Contact <tomjoyce@vaumc.org> for an information brochure.

Please consider this a personal invitation to be a part of this adventure in faith and join Bishop Lewis in experiencing a once in a lifetime journey as you walk where Jesus walked! ♦

## Gloria! Christmas Concert

All are invited to the annual Christmas concert at Reveille UMC, 4200 Cary Street Road, Richmond, on Sunday, December 10. Come to the open house at 3 p.m. in the welcome center followed by the concert at 4:00 in the sanctuary. The inter-generational concert will feature all children's and youth choirs and handbells, the Chancel Choir, and Reveille Ringers. The Concert will culminate with the Youth Choir and Chancel Choir's joint presentation of John Rutter's Gloria!, accompanied by a 10-piece brass ensemble and organ, conducted by Robert J. Phanord II. Learn more at [www.reveilleumc.org/music-events](http://www.reveilleumc.org/music-events). ♦

## Service of Remembrance

A Service of Remembrance will be held in the chapel on Sunday, December 17, 4 p.m. at Reveille UMC, 4200 Cary Street Road, Richmond. Advent and Christmas are often described as the "most joyous time of the year." Yet the days are short and the nights are long. Many of us also face the memories of those no longer with us making it a difficult and lonely time of the year. If you are in need of community, hope, comfort, peace, and healing we invite you to sing hymns, pray, read scripture, hear an informal message, and light candles. After the service, join in a light reception in the welcome center. For more information call 359-6041. ♦

## Leisure Club Celebration

The Leisure Club will welcome The Joy Singers on Tuesday, December 19, 11:00 am at Reveille UMC, 4200 Cary Street Road, Richmond. The Joy Singers will offer an entertaining holiday program led by Josh Wortham, music director at Chester UMC. A luncheon follows the program, so please bring your favorite side dish or dessert to share. The main dish and beverages are provided. Everyone is welcome at Leisure Club, so please invite a friend or neighbor to come along! Our facilities are accessible. For more information call 359-6041. ♦

## Dodgeball Postponed

The dodgeball tournament scheduled for January 14 has been postponed until further notice. Call 276-4628 or more information. ♦



## Bikes for Christ

It's that time of year again for our "Bikes for Christ Giveaway!" Because of your support we give away hundreds of bikes to needy families every year but we also turned away hundreds of families with sad faces. Every donation of \$50 will guarantee that a child will ride away with a brand new bicycle complements of Walmart. We are asking that our VAUMC Conference Family will give a little love on Christmas Day to these families who may not have anything under the tree. All churches and small groups can participate. Make all checks payable to Worship and Praise UMC, 3006 E. Laburnum Avenue, Richmond VA 23223. The giveaway is December 16 at 12 noon. For more information call 648-8031. ♦

## United Methodist Day at General Assembly 2018

Ever wanted to know how to create real change in our state government? Or wanted to know more about real issues facing our legislature? United Methodist Day at the General Assembly is the place for you! This is our opportunity to help faith communities become empowered to serve as missionaries of justice, as well as the more traditional missionaries of mercy. This yearly event will be held Thursday, February 1 from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Due to construction at capitol square this year and the relocation of the General Assembly Building, space will be more limited this year. Registration for the event will open soon. A briefing will be held Wednesday, January 31 at Bon Air UMC in North Chesterfield at 7:30 p.m. Questions may be directed to the Rev. Barbara Lewis at <BarbaraLewis@vaumc.org> or (434) 594-6241. Find more information at <[www.vaumc.org/Events](http://www.vaumc.org/Events)>. ♦

### 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
12/3	Beth Sholom	A Henderson
12/10	Elmcroft	G Stephens
12/10	University Park	Bessie Owens
12/17	Beth Sholom	A Henderson
12/24	Elmcroft	TBD

### Lay Servant Academy 2018

The Lay Servant Academy will be held

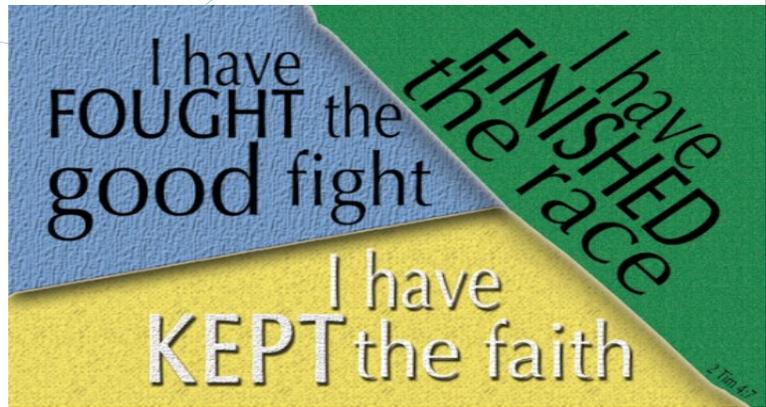
March 2-4, 2018 at the beautiful W.E. Skelton 4-H Center on Smith Mountain Lake. See <<https://www.vaumc.org/LayServantTraining>> for details and registration information. ♦



## Richmond District Youth Retreat

EAGLE EYRIE, LYNCHBURG

FEBRUARY 16-18



#### FEATURING:

Keith Cartwright as our speaker and The Arise Band as our worship music

The weekend will consist of 4 worship services, small group time, youth group time and free time. Each youth group will have a house with several bedrooms a kitchen and a living room useful for fellowship and youth group time. Saturday meals are provided and Sunday breakfast.

Weekend cost: \$125 per person

For Registration information contact Pam Hill, Retreat Coordinator, at 901-0989 or email [RichmondDistrict@vaumc.org](mailto:RichmondDistrict@vaumc.org).



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Sharma D. Lewis	Area Bishop
Peter M. Moon	District Superintendent
Susan Petrey	Administrative Assistant, Web Administrator
Cindy Payne-Ingroff	District Treasurer
Ron White	District Lay Leader
Scotty Doyle	District President, UMW
Sonny Rea	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](http://www.richmonddistrictumc.org)

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

### District Opportunities

- ◆ December 8—Prepare Him Room, Concert, Shady Grove UMC, Mechanicsville, 746-9073.
- ◆ December 10—Gloria! Christmas Concert, Reveille UMC, 359-6041.
- ◆ December 16—Bikes for Christ Give Away, Worship and Praise UMC, 648-8031.
- ◆ December 17—Service of Remembrance, Reveille UMC, 359-6041.
- ◆ December 19—Leisure Club Celebration featuring Chester Joy Singers, Reveille UMC, 359-6041.
- ◆ December 21—Alzheimer's Support Group, Reveille UMC, 359-6041.
- ◆ January 7—District Conference and Leadership Training Event, Reveille UMC, 521-1124.
- ◆ January 31, Briefing, United Methodist Day at General Assembly, Bon Air UMC, 434/594-6241.
- ◆ February 1, United Methodist Day at General Assembly, Bon Air UMC, 434/594-6241.
- ◆ February 16-18—Richmond District Youth Retreat, Eagle Eyrie, Lynchburg, 901-0989.
- ◆ March 2-4, 2018—Lay Servant Academy, W.E. Skelton 4-H Center, 521-1153.
- ◆ June 16-18, 2018—Annual Conference, Hampton Roads Convention Center, Hampton, 521-1134. ♦

### UM Center Closings

The District Office and the VAUMC Conference Center will close at 1 p.m. December 22 and remain closed through December 27 in observance of the Christmas Holiday. We will be closed January 1 for New Years. ♦