Commission on the Way Forward, Version RD
--One Site, One Time--
Saturday, April 28, 9-11:00 a.m.
Trinity UMC
903 Forest Avenue, Henrico VA 23229

Come and receive up-to-date information for all Clergy and all Lay Leadership on the issue of Human Sexuality, learn to speak together around hard topics, and explore options that help maintain and strengthen the unity of the Church. Register through your local church office, clergy/church secretaries should report the number attending to <RichmondDistrict@vaumc.org> no later than Wednesday, April 25.

See the March 1, 2018 Issue of the e_Advocate at <www.vaumc.org/e-Advocate> for the sketches presented to the Council of Bishops from the Commission on the Way Forward.

District AC Orientation--Change of Date--May 31, 7 p.m.

An orientation session for the Richmond District members of the 2018 Virginia Annual Conference will be held on Thursday, May 31 at 7 p.m. at Good Shepherd UMC, 9155 Hungary Road, Richmond. It is important that clergy, church lay members, and district lay members be present to be briefed on issues coming before the Conference. Questions? Call 521-1124.

Kits for Annual Conference 2018

As your church begins preparation for collecting items for kits, there is currently an appeal from the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) for Hygiene, School, and Cleaning Kits only. Click <www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies> for the complete list of items and instructions on packing each kit. Collection times at Annual Conference will be on Thursday, June 14 from 12 noon to 8 p.m. and on Friday, June 15 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. For questions, contact the Kit Collection coordinator, the Rev. David Magruder at Zion UMC in Seaford at (757) 898-7417 or <davidmagruder@vaumc.org>. Money for the kits should be sent to the Conference Treasurer, Virginia Conference UMC, PO Box 5605, Glen Allen, VA 23058. Checks should be made payable to Virginia Conference UMC.

Bishop’s Convocation on Race and Reconciliation

Bishop Lewis has called a convocation on Race and Reconciliation for Saturday, April 14, at Annandale UMC. It will begin with registration and a continental breakfast at 8:30 a.m. and end with Communion at 3:45 p.m. Lunch will be served. The convocation will empower participants to become life-long learning disciples who will be able to conduct the difficult conversations we all need to have related to issues of racial division, justice, and God’s call to ministries of reconciliation and peace.

The keynote speaker for the event is Romal Tune whose ministry has impacted the lives of thousands through examining their own lives and stories in transparent and honest ways; in short, to “help hurting people find healing.” Register at <www.vaumc.org/events>. Call 521-1139 for more information.

UM Center Closings

The District Office and the VAUMC Conference Center will close Friday, May 25 at 1 p.m. and be closed on Monday, May 28 in observance of the Memorial Day holiday.

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Friends,

A while back, I served for a season on the Theology Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry. During that tenure, we interviewed hundreds of candidates for Ordained Ministry. For years, we listened to reflections on sacraments, prevenient grace, and the mission of the church.

I was often struck by one question that would surprise and sometimes stump the candidates. We set the scenario of preaching on Easter Sunday with the crowds, the music, the bigness of the day. We then asked, what do you tell your people about the meaning of Easter Sunday when they go back to the routine of work and life on Monday morning? What does the resurrection mean in the “regular-ness” of life?

How would you answer? Most of us have reasonable answers on Sunday but what about post Easter Monday?

We could go a couple of places here, but let me simply remind you that Easter still has meaning on Monday, perhaps especially on Monday. Easter means that when I go into work, when I face the challenges and joys of co-workers, when I deal with the struggles that come with family and marriage, when I deal with injustice on a local and global level, when I am at my wit’s end...it means that I am not nor ever alone. If Jesus rose from the dead, it means that he is alive and present in the challenges I face. Granted, sometimes that presence is hard to find and sometimes we are seeing it dimly through a darkened glass, but there is that promise at the end of Matthew when Jesus said I am with you always, to the end of the age. That promise is not rendered null and void by a Monday morning.

Easter Monday also means that what I do for the kingdom matters. Bible scholar N.T. Wright speaks to this in his book “Surprised by Hope.” Using Paul’s description of the resurrection, he reminds us of the lasting impact of what we do for the kingdom:

“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:58)

His point is that because of the resurrection, every act of love that we offer in this life, goes on eternally. Somehow, someway, when you offer a word of kindness to someone, that will be multiplied in eternity. When you offer a beautiful song or prayer to God or for someone, that unfolds in the eternal realms. When you write a card, take a meal, love the unlovable, when we sacrificially give...somehow, someway, God makes that act of love blossom in his kingdom. To put it in colloquial language, every act of love in this life pays forward in the next one, when God resurrects this creation in beauty in Jesus.

All this is true, but it is hard to recall and claim in the midst of what can be a secular Monday. But, if Jesus rose from the dead as Lord of all creation, he reigns over our Monday world just as much as our Easter Sunday worship. Sometimes, we just need to remember that truth as we pour that first cup of coffee in that workplace on Monday morning. May you all have a blessed post-Easter week and beyond!

In Christ,

Pete
Get Away from it All!

The VA PAUMCS (Professional Administrators of the United Methodist Connectional Structure) spring retreat will be held Wednesday, May 16 at W.E. Skelton 4-H Center in Wirtz, Virginia.

Our speaker for the day, Martha Stokes is the director of Church and Community Relations for Pinnacle Living, formerly Virginia United Methodist Homes, Inc. She has been honored to represent the laity of the Virginia Conference at the 2008, 2012, and 2016 General and Jurisdictional Conferences. Martha served as the chair of the Virginia Conference delegation. She and Rev. Tom Berlin will lead the delegation back to the called 2019 General Conference session. The General Conference is an international body of nearly 1,000 delegates that meets every four years to wrestle with today’s issues in light of scriptural teachings and the church’s understanding of that teaching. It is the only body that can set official policy and speak for The United Methodist Church. The Jurisdictional Conference meets every four years in the months following the General Conference with the primary responsibility of electing bishops to serve within each jurisdiction. Martha will be sharing her reflections on the experience of the 2016 General and Jurisdictional Conferences and expectations for the called General Conference in 2019. This special meeting of the denomination’s top lawmaking assembly will be held February 23-26, 2019, in St. Louis, Missouri. The work before the 2019 Conference will be limited to acting on a report by Council of Bishops based on the proposals from the Commission on the Way Forward. The 32-member commission, appointed by the bishops, has the charge of finding ways for the denomination to stay together despite deep differences in our understandings of scripture, ordination and marriage relating to ever-changing expressions of gender identity and human sexuality.

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

Priscilla Shirer Simulcast

Fellow Sisters in Christ, join women from around the world on Saturday, April 28 for this inspiring one-day event with Priscilla Shirer! You are invited to be part of this global, one-day simulcast, that focuses on the power of prayer and learning to study God’s Word for yourself, in the fellowship hall of Providence UMC, 4001 New Kent Highway, Quinton.

If you are unaware of Priscilla Shirer, she is the daughter of Dr. Tony Evans and supported by Lifeway Christian Resources. Most famous for her role in the movie “War Room,” Priscilla is also a New York Times best-selling author, speaker, and founder of Going Beyond Ministries. Some of her recent book work includes The Armor of God and Fervent.

$5 Tickets are available by calling 901-0989. The cost includes the simulcast, morning coffee and lunch.

Children’s Choir Concert

Hear the combined voices of the Swansboro Elementary School choir and Reveille children’s choirs on Wednesday, April 25, at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary of Reveille UMC, 4200 Cary Street Road, Richmond. Donations benefit Reveille’s Swansboro Community Ministries. Before the concert come to dinner at 5:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. For dinner reservations, visit <www.reveilleumc.org/dinner>.

Rebuilding Together

Reveille UMC is working with Rebuilding Together to organize a day of service in the community to help homeowners repair and maintain their homes.

When: Saturday, April 28, 7:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., with full and half day shifts available

Who: 40-50 volunteers are needed. If you are age 10 or older, you can help work on our neighbors’ homes. Helpers under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Participants under 18 years old need a parent’s signature on the liability waiver to participate.

Where: The worksites will be located at 10 W. Lancaster Road and 109 W. Lancaster Road, Richmond, Virginia 23222.

To learn more and register for a shift, visit <www.reveilleumc.org/rebuilding-together>.

The Richmond District United Methodist Women will gather for the UMW Prayer Breakfast on April 7 at Mt. Pisgah UMC, 1100 Mt. Pisgah Drive, Midlothian. The guest speaker is Reggie Stewart, the 2nd Assistant Chief of the Chickahominy Tribe.

◆ 8:30 a.m.–Registration opens
◆ 9-11 a.m.–Breakfast and Worship

Call Scotty Doyle, 640-5355, to register.

Join women from the Virginia Conference as they meet on April 20-22 for the Conference UMW Spiritual Life Retreat, Eagle Eyrie, Lynchburg. Deadline for registration is April 13. Register online at <vaumw.com> under EVENTS, Spiritual Life Retreat. Call 640-5355 for more information.


Explore Great Reads

Everyone is invited to attend Book Club at Reveille UMC, 4200 Cary Street Road, Richmond, on Thursday, April 19, at 11:00 a.m. in the church parlor. The club will discuss Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng. For more information, contact <ctuzzle@gmail.com>.

Convergence

Convergence: Where Faith and Science Meet is a 9-day program, June 23-July 1, that allows rising 10-12th grade students to come to Randolph-Macon’s campus in Ashland and learn about the intersection of science and Christian faith. They will dive deeper into their religious beliefs, deeper into the study of science. The cost to participate is only $100 for this 9-day program. Upon high school graduation, if a Convergence participant chooses to attend Randolph-Macon, they will receive a $1,000 annual scholarship for each year they participated in Convergence. Please visit <http://convergence.rmc.edu/> to learn more or contact <convergence@rmc.edu> with any questions about the program.
Lay Servant Schedule
Donna Seward, director, Lay Servant Ministries has retired to Texas. Thanks for your wonderful years of service.

Direct questions about Lay Servant ministries to the District office, 521-1124. Richmond District Certified Lay Servants lead worship regularly at the following care centers:

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>Beth Sholom</td>
<td>A Henderson</td>
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Lay Servant Training
◆ Danville District, April 20-21, at Concord UMC, Chatham, Basic and Advanced classes.
◆ Arlington District, April 27-28, at Herndon UMC.
◆ Rappahannock River District, May 4-5, at Warsaw UMC, Basic and Advanced classes.

See <https://www.vaumc.org/LayServantTraining> for details and registration information.

Ministers’ Convocation
This spring, April 23-25, The Center for Clergy Excellence invites all clergy, diaconal ministers, and professional/paraprofessional certified ministers in the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church for a time of Sabbath retreat, learning and fellowship together as ministry leaders at Ministers’ Convocation. Come be engaged in theological and academic conversation while experiencing rejuvenation for ministry. Theme is “The Paradox of Perfection: Our Wesleyan Heritage” with an emphasis on Christian Perfection. Dr. Rex Matthews, professor in the Practice of Historical Theology and Wesleyan Studies at Candler School of Theology will be teacher for the event. Bishop Sharma D. Lewis and the Rev. William Lamar, pastor of Metropolitan AME Church in Washington, D.C., will lead in worship. Worship, keynote and workshop sessions, lodging and meals will be held at Virginia Crossings Conference Center in Glen Allen.

For event details and to register visit <www.vaumc.org/MinistersConvocation> or call 521-1126.

District Opportunities
◆ April 7–District UMW Prayer Breakfast, Mt. Pisgah UMC, 744-3034.
◆ April 7–District UMW On the Road in Mission day trip to Rising Hope UMC Mission Church, Alexandria, 744-3034.
◆ April 14–Bishop’s Convocation on Race and Reconciliation, Annandale UMC, 521-1139.
◆ April 19–Explore Great Reads, Reveille UMC, 359-6041.
◆ April 20-21–Lay Servant Training, Concord UMC, Chatham, 521-1153.
◆ April 23-25–Ministers’ Convocation, Virginia Crossings Conference Center, Glen Allen, 521-1126.
◆ April 27-28–Lay Servant Training, Herndon UMC, 521-1153.
◆ April 25–Children’s Choir Concert, Reveille UMC, 359-6041.
◆ April 28–Commission on a Way Forward, Version RD, Trinity UMC, 521-1124.
◆ April 28–Priscilla Shirer Simulcast, Providence UMC, New Kent, 901-0989.
◆ May 4–District UMW On the Road in Mission Day Trip, 218-0627.
◆ May 4–5–Lay Servant Training, Warsaw UMC, 521-1153.
◆ May 16–VAPAUMCS Spring Retreat, WE Skelton 4-H Center, Wirtz, 321-1124.
◆ May 19–Immigration Summit, Ramsey Memorial UMC, 521-1100.
◆ May 31–Annual Conference Orientation, Good Shepherd UMC, 521-1124.
◆ June 1-2–Conference UMW Day at Ferrum College, 744-3034.
◆ June 16-18–Annual Conference, Hampton Roads Convention Center, Hampton, 521-1134.
◆ June 16–Great Day of Service, Annual Conference, Hampton, 521-1134.
◆ June 23-July 1–Convergence, Randolph-Macon, Ashland, 752-7374.

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

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