



From Your District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Victor Gómez



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." – John 15:13 (NIV)

A couple of years ago I had the blessing to travel to the Holy Land not only for continuing education purposes, but on a pilgrimage journey to visit different biblical sites. One of the sites I visited was the Garden of Gethsemane, which is located on a beautiful hill, right outside the walls of Old Jerusalem. From this place I had such a beautiful view of the old City of Jerusalem. I sat on the ground as I enjoyed this view. I closed my eyes at times imagining what it would be like for Jesus to see this City, and I bowed my head for a personal time of prayer. It was very powerful!

As I stood in this holy place, I imagined Jesus looking at this beautiful city and the walls around it. From this point, Jesus was able to see the temple and the golden gate. It is an amazing view and to

imagine that Jesus stood somewhere around there was just an experience out of this world!

Along with the Garden there are olive trees that are over 2,000 years old, they do not hide their age, but they still stand in this Garden. It means that these trees were there when Jesus walked in that area, and perhaps prayed under one of them or rested before entering the City of Jerusalem.

We are Easter people. We believe in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus went to this Garden to pray. He took with him three of his disciples: Peter, James and John and asked them to wait while he went to pray, but we know they fell asleep. We must remain awake and stay in prayer without ceasing.

The Garden of Gethsemane



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Jesus knew that his time was near and that he needed to suffer the sins of all people. As Jesus prayed, he began to tremble because of the pain. He suffered so much that he sweated drops of blood. He was suffering for all of our sins so that we can be forgiven and saved.

It was in this Garden where Jesus was betrayed by his disciple Judas, and consequently, was arrested. Try to imagine for a moment what Jesus went through at this Garden, the agony of what was to come and the arrest. Jesus prayed and spent time with God, and it was in this beautiful Garden where he had that special time. He trusted that God was with him, even in the most difficult moment of his life. I believe God has been present with us always, especially during this past year since the pandemic started.

There is a large flat stone in the Garden where it is believed Jesus prayed. As I prayed in that very spot, I remembered that God is with me everywhere, God is with us; Emmanuel. All we have to do is bow our heads in prayer and God is available, and God is listening.

As we continue to look towards Jerusalem, as we continue to follow our Master to his grave, as we are Easter people, let us also remember that Jesus was resurrected. Find your own Garden of Gethsemane and trust that God is with us, even in the most difficult moments of our lives, especially during this pandemic.

I also invite you to obtain the vaccine and to continue to be patient as we are taking steps forward. Let us continue to share God's love to all. Let us continue to be the Church that God wants it to be.

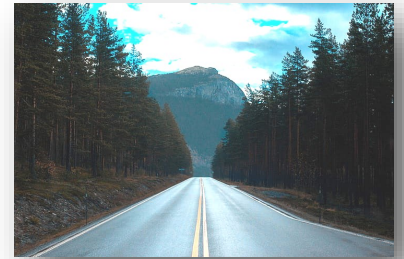
In God's Service, Rev. Dr. Victor Gómez

From Your District Director of Congregational Vitality - Rev. Gordon Meriwether



Stuck in the Middle with You, (an anthem for our times) **

*Well I don't know why I came here tonight,
I got the feelin' that somethin' ain't right,
I'm so scared in case I fall off my chair,
And I'm wonderin' how I'll get down the stairs
Clowns to the left of me, Joker's to the right,
Here I am Stuck in the middle with you.*



It's been a tough year in the ministry. I am sure there have been tougher, but I am hard pressed to find one in my lifetime. The potential split and upheaval within the United Methodist Church divided us early to choose sides and take stands. Most of us could avoid that confrontation by putting off the hard discussions until something came out of General Conference, but the beast lingers in the shadows. Then politics again came crashing into the pews splitting the congregations into a blue and red divide, pushing pastors to again choose sides or gingerly embrace the scripture to maintain the peace, and claim Christ in anonymity. Like a sledgehammer the pandemic slammed into the already fragile walls of our sanctuaries exposing the weaknesses and inadequacies of our ministries. So we closed; discovered virtual ministries, and watched our social witness disappear into the requirements of masking and distancing. And just for good measure the demons of the past social injustices burst forth into the streets of our villages and cities for all the world to see. The unresolved racial tensions and inequities confronted us from all directions. My God.....what a year to be stuck in the middle with you!

*Tryin' to make some sense of it all,
But I can see it makes no sense at all,
Is it cool to go to sleep on the floor,
You don't think that I can take anymore.
Clowns to the left of me, Joker's to the right,
Here I am Stuck in the middle with you.*

Lord, you do know we put our absolute trust in you? The wisdom of your Way will get us all through this; pastors, congregations, and communities. Love the Lord with all your heart, your soul, and your mind, and your neighbor as yourself...I got that, Lord...but they don't necessarily love me...makes it tough...and the truth be told...it's tough for me to love them without some encouragement, which is in short supply these days. What is plentiful are short tempers and thin skins. I don't have to tell you what a challenge we all face, Lord, especially your people of faith, your shepherds of hope and promise. You faced this so well in your time on earth. How can we match your ministry of Love?

"God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God." (Matthew 5: 9 NLT)

Ok, Lord, there is no easy way out...it will not get easier...but we do trust in you. If we spent less time worried about where we were headed and laid all the turmoil at your feet, we would certainly find a hopeful trail and maybe a bucket of optimism at the end of our spiritual rainbow. That's what holds us together....our trust in You.

"Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone." (Romans 12: 18 NLT)

With purpose and resolve, today we stand with each other in righteousness, knowing that in this time of crisis and disension we have been called to be linked together, arm in arm, shoulder to shoulder, to face the blistering winds of adversity and sin. But there will be a time when all look back at these days in humility and triumph knowing that this was our finest hour. And those who did not stand with us will curse the day of Courage and Spirit when "we happy few, we band of brothers" and sisters, faced the call to bear the full burden of the yoke of Jesus Christ. Tis days such as these that I am proud to be among the *People called Methodist*.

*"This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."
(Joshua 1: 9 NLT)*

Let us love each other and have the confidence that being stuck in the middle with each other is right where you want us, Lord.

Clowns to the left of me, Joker's to the right,
Here I am Stuck in the middle with you. Praise God!

So Be It. g

***Thanks to Stealers Wheel, William Shakespeare, John Wesley, Paul the Apostle, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Almighty God for source material.*

NEWS FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE

The District Office has a new email address! All email communication to the office should now be sent to:

DebbieCreech@vaumc.org

The harrisonburgdistrict@vaumc.org email will be phased out.



BOTH/AND: MAXIMIZING HYBRID WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

MAY 10TH 9:30 A.M.—12:30 P.M. ONLINE FREE!

Sponsored by the Harrisonburg and Winchester Districts

This 2 hour workshop will delve into strategies for how to create powerful transformative worship where no one feels like an afterthought.

It will explore:

- Re-imagining worship for both/and
- How to create interactive both/and experiences
- Bringing at home and in-person audiences together in real time
- Alternative opportunities for online audiences watching in-person livestreams
- Repurposing in-person worship for online audiences
- Strategies for adapting practices for both/and
- Avoiding letting your groove becoming a rut
- And more

About the Presenter, Jason Moore

Known for his pioneering work in collaborative worship design and guest readiness, Jason Moore has devoted the last two plus decades to resources development, training, and coaching & consulting that works for local churches of all sizes, styles and means. The author of 10 books, Jason has designed worship alongside such leaders as Adam Hamilton, Michael Slaughter, Tony Campolo, Brian McClaren and Leonard Sweet. He has also lead hundreds of seminars and keynote addresses across North America - teaching in 47 states in the USA. Jason began his ministry in the late 90s at Ginghamburg United Methodist Church in Tipp City, Ohio and later went on to co-found Midnight Oil Productions. In addition to Midnight Oil, Jason has worked with numerous denominations as a creativity consultant, media producer and trainer. In the secular world, Jason has collaborated with several Hollywood producers in film and television, and has produced numerous book trailers for New York Times best-selling authors such as Ariana Huffington, Seth Godin, Robert Greene, Ryan Holiday and Mark Ecko.

DISTRICT CALENDAR

May 1, 8, 15 (*Saturday*) Rappahannock River Lay Servant Training 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

May 3 (*Monday*) - District Alignment Listening Session via Zoom - 6:30 p.m.*

May 6 (*Thursday*) - National Day of Prayer*

May 9 (*Sunday*) Mother's Day

May 10 (*Monday*) Both/And Online District Event - 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.*

May 13 (*Thursday*) PRG Relaunch Webinar 6:30 - to 8:00 p.m. via Zoom*

May 15 (*Saturday*) VA UMW Spiritual Life Retreat 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. via Zoom*

May 17 (*Monday*) - District Alignment Listening Session via Zoom - 6:30 p.m.*

May 20 (*Thursday*) - PRG Relaunch Webinar 6:30 - to 8:00 p.m. via Zoom*

May 20 (*Thursday*) - District UMW Executive Meeting via Zoom - 7:00 p.m.*

May 24 (*Monday*) - Reignite the Call*

May 27 (*Thursday*) - PRG Relaunch Webinar 6:30 - to 9:00 p.m. via Zoom*

May 31 (*Monday*) - Deadline for PPP Applications*

June 1 (*Tuesday*) Clergy Evaluations due in the District Office

June 3 (*Thursday*) - PRG Relaunch Webinar 6:30 - to 8:00 p.m. via Zoom*

June 10 (*Thursday*) - Annual Conference Clergy Session Virtual - 10:00 a.m.*

June 18 - 19 (*Friday-Saturday*) - Virginia Annual Conference via Zoom*

June 19 (*Saturday*) Drop-Off Community Cans and Kits at either Manor Memorial UMC or Grottoes UMC - 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

June 27 (*Sunday*) - Last Sunday for Moving Pastors

June 30 (*Wednesday*) Conference Moving Day for Pastors

July 1 (*Thursday*) Annual Audits are due in the District Office

July 1 (*Thursday*) Parsonage Reviews are due in the District Office

July 4 (*Sunday*) First Sunday for new pastors

All events are subject to change.

A Message From the District Director of Lay Servant Ministries - Pastor Joe Amend



After over a year of doing literally nothing in Lay Servant Training due to the Covid pandemic, in late March – early April, we presented three Lay Servant Classes (Basic, Spiritual Gifts and UMC Polity). Many thanks to the dedicated teachers:

Basic (4 students) - Linda Conrad (Otterbein UMC),
Spiritual Gifts (6 students) - Rev. Bertrand Griffin (Mt. Crawford Charge)
UMC Polity (12 students)- Rev Dr. Victor Gomez (our District Superintendent)

These classes were taught via Zoom, and while we had some technological challenges to overcome, the classes were successfully presented by the three excellent teachers who taught the courses.
(The screen shot below is from the UMC Polity class.)



Three students have completed all of the requirements to become Certified Lay Speakers:

Chad Brown (Verona UMC)
David Gordon (Saint James (Pleasant Valley) UMC)
Richard Watson (Verona UMC)

**All laity are
Lay Servants**

Congratulations to these three new Certified Lay Speakers - and to the other 19 students who successfully completed their classes!!! Another four Lay Servants lack only one course to complete the requirements to become a Certified Lay Speaker.

Presently the Harrisonburg District has the following active Lay Servants:

Certified Lay Ministers – 3
Certified Lay Speakers – 15
Lay Servants – 34

Completed the Basics course - 4

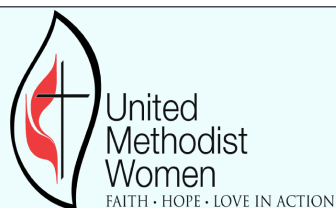


Looking over this list, these disciples serve in a variety of capacities: not all speak in front of groups of people – and serve their Churches in a variety of leadership positions. The only thing they have in common is their desire to serve the Lord.

If you are interested in learning more about the Lay Servant program, please contact me and I can get you the information. My contact information is below. We are already planning for the Fall Training opportunity and will get the information out to everyone as soon as it is available.

“ ... let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith .. ” (Hebrews 12:1-2, NIV)

Joe Amend <>> Cell: (301) 741-7633 joeamend@vaumc.org
District Lay Servant Committee



UMW NEWS:

As spring moves on with a newness, beauty and promise, our UMW units continue to work. That has included donations to the recent Remote Area Medical Clinic, volunteering at various outreach programs, and becoming more knowledgeable of the women's re-entry program at Gemeinschaft Home. There are also so many “behind the scenes” labors of love being carried out! These are the hands and feet of Christ, in action.

Many units are concentrating on the assembling of “Kits for Conference.” This year, the emphasis is on local mission. Health and School kits are needed. Toothpaste is to be included in the health kits this year. In the past, UMCOR has provided that. **Drop off sites, dates and times, along with a list of items to complete each kit is listed in the newsletter article from Brian Posey, Conference Mission Project Team Leader, Harrisonburg District - Mission Coordinator located on Page 9.** As with so many activities this year, this mission project looks different; same needs for so many, just a different means and area of serving.

We look forward to the upcoming **Conference Spiritual Life Retreat to be held on May 15th via Zoom.** This is a time for our UMW sisters to relax, refresh and reflect on the Peace of Jesus Christ. The Rev. Ileana Rosario will be the speaker. (Registration attached).

Later in the month, we will have our **District Executive Committee on May 20th at 7:00 p.m., via Zoom.** Presidents are invited to share their unit activities through written reports, emails or their attendance. I have found that women are busy serving God in very creative and unique ways. This meeting is the executive committee's way of recognizing the beautiful means of serving.

Barbara Phillips, District UMW President
(grammybp@gmail.com)
Cell 383-9972 / Home 896-7664

KINGSWAY PRISON AND FAMILY OUTREACH



Kingsway was really blessed with the Great Community Give on April 21st. We ranked 50th out of 116 non-profits in donations and won the \$2,000 prize for having all of our board of directors making donations. It was wonderful to see how our community works together. We also drew some interest from a group from JMU that has a Facebook page called "Improving Lives Post-Incarceration." Check it out. There is a post of a conversation I had with Mara, one of the students in the Social Works class.

We are also blessed with having Rev. Vicki Barb volunteering in the office with us now. To find out how you can help Kingsway better serve the community check our website at kingswayoutreach.org or call Louise at 540-830-7000 or 540-433-5658.

The office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays from 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Louise Jennings, Director

CAMP OVERLOOK



It is with great joy that we can tell you we will be holding summer camps this year which look closer to normal! We will still be following the American Camping Association field guide for the safest way to hold camps as well as follow recommended CDC guidelines. This summer our first week (June 21-25) is day camp only for grades K - 8. The first week will be very much like last summer. Then, we will hold 5 weeks (June 28 - July 30) of our normal overnight programs along with Jr. Day Trekkers.

This summer's theme is the Missionary Journeys of Paul. We will each get to participate in mission projects around camp as we play games, swim in the lake, get creative in arts and crafts, and learn of God's great love to all of us and our call to be Christ's hands and feet.

Online registration is available at
<http://CampOverlook.org>

We will be limiting group sizes to adhere to guidelines so be sure to get your registrations in as soon as possible!

Blessings to you all and thank you for your support and prayers over the past year.

Tommy Crosby, Executive Director

A CHALLENGE TO READ THE BIBLE IN 2021

- 2017 - read the Bible straight through
- 2018 - read the Bible chronologically
- 2019 - read the Bible in a blended style; a mixture of Old Testament readings and New Testament each day.
- 2020 - read the Bible with a thematic reading plan
- 2021 - read the Bible straight through from Genesis - Revelation

[Click here to view/save 2021 challenge in pdf](#)



Bible Readings for May 2021

Bishop Lewis has been encouraging the clergy and laity of the Virginia Conference to read the Bible in a year since 2017. Each year has featured a different way of reading.

Tips on reading the Bible daily:

- Start reading the Bible today.
- Set aside a specific time and place each day. Set your schedule and then stick to it.
- Mornings are great, but feel free to use any time that works consistently in your schedule.
- Get a good study Bible to help illuminate the meaning of the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek text
- Choose a translation to use during your reading.
- Say a short prayer to God before you begin, asking the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and understanding.
- Dive in and enjoy the richness of God's Word! Apply God's Word to your life.

Bible study should be practiced and applicable. These seven steps will help you begin a journey to becoming a "lifelong learner" of God's Word.

Join in 2021 and commit to reading the Bible all the way through Genesis-Revelation in one year. You can access the daily readings by [clicking here](#) → [conference website](http://conference.vaumc.org) or BibleGateway.com.

[resource: <http://www.vaumc.org/pages/bishop-Lewis/biblechallenge>]



May 1	1 Chronicles 3-5
May 2	1 Chronicles 6
May 3	1 Chronicles 7-8
May 4	1 Chronicles 9-11
May 5	1 Chronicles 12-14
May 6	1 Chronicles 15-17
May 7	1 Chronicles 18-21
May 8	1 Chronicles 22-24
May 9	1 Chronicles 25-27
May 10	1 Chronicles 28-29, 2 Chronicles 1
May 11	2 Chronicles 2-5
May 12	2 Chronicles 6-8
May 13	2 Chronicles 9-12
May 14	2 Chronicles 13-17
May 15	2 Chronicles 18-20
May 16	2 Chronicles 21-24
May 17	2 Chronicles 25-27
May 18	2 Chronicles 28-31
May 19	2 Chronicles 32-34
May 20	2 Chronicles 35-36
May 21	Ezra 1-3
May 22	Ezra 4-7
May 23	Ezra 8-10
May 24	Nehemiah 1-3
May 25	Nehemiah 4-6
May 26	Nehemiah 7
May 27	Nehemiah 8-9
May 28	Nehemiah 10-11
May 29	Nehemiah 12-13
May 30	Esther 1-5
May 31	Esther 6-10

HARRISONBURG DISTRICT MISSION CENTRAL

Physical location: 1704 Smithland Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Mailing address: Post Office Box 2026, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Website: <http://missioncentralharrisonburgva.com/mission-central/>

Mission Central Children's Clothes Closet

The Children's Clothes Closet successfully opened our spring/summer season April 14-15, serving almost 50 families and their children with clothing and/or diapers in those two days alone. We anticipate even greater turnout as the weather gets warmer.



We learned some valuable lessons during COVID, such as how much more efficiently our operations run when we keep the clients to 5 or 6 at a time. This enables them to move around more freely and have their own dedicated table, and thus complete their shopping more quickly. We expect this will become even more important as some may begin having their children accompany them again.

We have welcomed 35 new client families in 2021 so far! As the community continues to spread the word about our mission, we are interested in possibly expanding our hours, but we can't consider doing that without additional regular volunteers. We need more folks who are available on a regular basis and are able to be active (on their feet) for several hours checking out our clients. This is not limited to individuals, but also could be a circle group or Bible study group, for example, that would be willing to commit to recurring shifts on a rotating basis. Ultimately, our goal is to add another day or evening shift open to clients. Depending on the feedback we receive from interested volunteers, we will determine how and when we are able to expand our availability.

We would provide training and would have experienced volunteers available during the learning curve. Pastors and church leaders, please help us to get the word out! If you or someone you know feels led to participate in the Clothes Closet ministry, please contact Artie Frederick at (540)208-7669 or dfaf5x7@comcast.net.

Many have asked about Artie, and I am thrilled to tell you that her recent scan showed that she is cancer-free, praise God! She is back in full swing at the Clothes Closet and we are so happy and grateful. Your prayers have been powerful in many ways, thank you!

As always, we so appreciate your generosity to the Children's Clothes Closet. Every time we serve, we witness Jesus in our midst.

The facility is open to the public from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month and also open on the 2nd and 4th Thursday evenings from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Donna Tinsley 703-472-8101



Equipment for Caring at Mission Central

I hope you are enjoying this beautiful spring with all the colors and green surroundings. Mission Central Equipment for Caring continues to provide medical equipment for our community through the generosity of so many people. The past 3 months we have loaned out 4 rollators, 8 walkers, 11 shower chairs, 7 shower benches, 9 wheelchairs, 2 transport chairs, 8 bedside commodes, 9 elevated commode seats, 3 knee scooters, 19 canes and various other equipment such as scales, transfer boards, chair cushions, walker trays and baskets. We are also providing ostomy and wound care supplies as well as disposable incontinence products. You continue to bless us with donations as needed and it amazes me at times as to how this works. An example is that at one point we had no wheel chairs available and within a week we had 10 donated. God certainly has his hand in this ministry. Thank you to the faithful volunteers who help with cleaning, organizing and meeting the public that comes with their gift or need.

We have ordered a small building which will be placed close to our Mission Central building to store the hospital beds. We hope when this is set up we will be able to "spread out" a little so that persons coming in can see some of the miscellaneous items we have for their care needs. Your financial donations to Mission Central is providing funds for this building and we thank you!

We remain open **Mondays 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. and Thursdays 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.** If you have questions or would like to volunteer, please contact me. We still need a laptop so that we can transition our records to this. If you have one that is in good condition and can donate it, or help with this, it would be greatly appreciated.



Delores Reid 540-383-6112

Check us out on Facebook or our website.

www.missioncentralharrisonburgva.com

www.Harrisonburgdistrict.org/ministries



FROM SUE MACTAVISH, DISTRICT LIBRARIAN MAY 2021 FEATURED ITEM:



Courage: Jesus and the Call to Brave Faith by Tom Berlin, 2021.

In *Courage: Jesus and the Call to Brave Faith*, pastor and author Tom Berlin (Lead Pastor of Floris United Methodist Church in Herndon, Virginia) challenges us to unlock the courage that we already possess as Christ followers. By examining the life of Christ, we can begin to understand what true courage is and how God works in the lives of Christ followers as they exhibit a brave faith.

Each of the 6 sessions draws upon the words and example of Christ, history, stories of others, and personal experience, providing opportunity for self-reflection and small group discussion about the features of courage (clarity, conviction, candor, hope, fortitude and love) and the need for their display in day-to-day life.

Courage can be found in the Nurture/Spiritual Development section (bottom shelf) of the District Library. We have the Book, Leader Guide, and DVD.

Stop by the District Office and "check out" the Library. Please remember to check out library items by signing the book card in pocket with your name and church and date – you may keep as long as you need – but remember to return when finished so that others may borrow. Thanks, Sue



Rev. Dr. Daniel L. Garrett, husband of former Harrisonburg District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Susan S. Garrett, passed away on **Sunday, April 25th**. The graveside service will be held Saturday, May 1st at 11am PDT at Good Shepherd Cemetery in Huntington Beach, CA.
Susan's address is: 1500 Mesa Verde Dr., E Unit B333, Costa Mesa, CA 92626-0607

**OLDER
AMERICANS
MONTH**



COMMUNITIES OF STRENGTH: MAY 2021

PASS IT ON! WHO? WHAT? WHEN? TO WHOM?

How many of us know that the first Sunday in May is designated as Older Adult Recognition Sunday in The United Methodist Church? (And if more convenient, it can also be celebrated on "Grandparents Day" in September.) Currently, is this day acknowledged during our hour of Sunday Worship? If not, let's change things.

This day is an opportunity for us as seniors/older adults. We have a wealth of information/stories to share and often don't even recognize it. We are the ones who have been present in our church family for the longest length of time. Pastors have come and gone, children have grown up and left, special events have occurred, structures have changed, but faith and mission have sustained us. Many in our current church family do not know our church or our personal faith history.

On this special day share your favorite scripture, sing your favorite hymn, tell of your faith journey. Don't forget to mention how special people made a difference in your spiritual life. Include a brief history about your church for the newer/younger attendees. Share a dream for the future. There is so much we can pass on to our current church family and if we don't, then who will? History may be lost if we choose to keep quiet.
Until next time, **Pass It On!**

Annie Pierce, Older Adult Representative

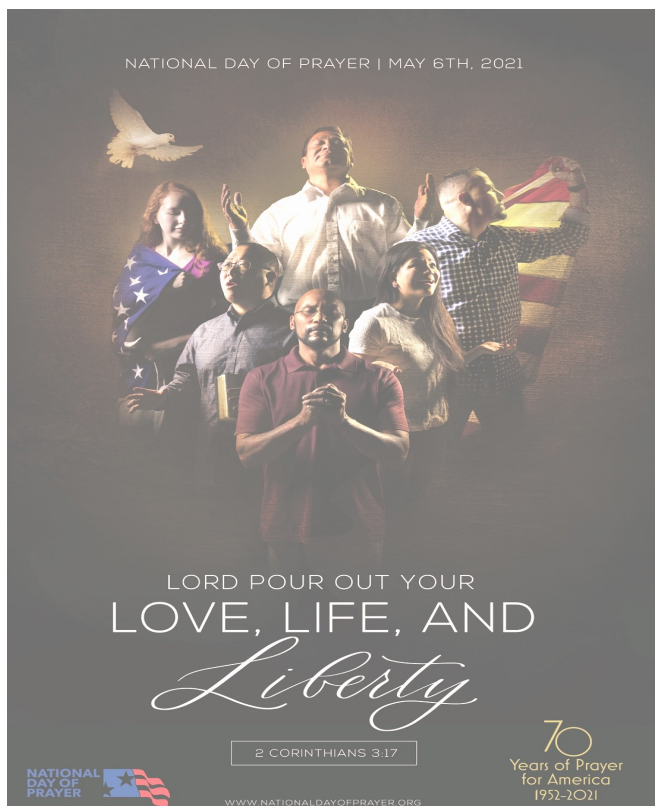
To spread the news of Older Adult Sunday and to provide pastors with a Sunday "off," the Older Adult Council is, with the link provided below, making available a recorded worship service for churches to use to commemorate Older Adult Sunday. The service uses the lectionary for this coming Sunday, **Sunday, May 2**, which is Older Adult Recognition Sunday in The United Methodist Church. However, the service, or any part that the local church may find useful, may be used throughout May and June. All churches within the Virginia Conference are invited to support older adult ministries by sending prayers and taking an offering to support ministries with older adults. This year's offering will go to support Pinnacle Living's Samaritan Offering. The Samaritan Offering is from Mother's Day-Father's Day annually and your gifts go to ensure the personal security and peace of mind of Pinnacle Living's most vulnerable residents.

Click here to see the service -- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JTJwtn53bjJQHItu8ejuuNdLXk6qUJx0/view?usp=sharing>

Congratulations to Rev. Gordon Meriwether and his wife, Dana, on the birth of their sixth grandchild, Benjamin Lewis Amateis, born on Easter Sunday morning (April 4th). He weighed 6 lbs., 5 ozs. Benjamin's parents are Eric and Jenny Amateis. Gordon is pastor of Mt. Horeb UMC as well as the Harrisonburg District Director of Congregational Vitality.



It's A Boy!



VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE JUNE 18-19, 2021 VIRTUAL



The 2021 Virginia Annual Conference, “**United As One**,” will be a virtual event held **June 18-19** with the Lumi platform. The guiding Scripture of John 17:20-23 (NRSV) is the theme. **The business of the Annual Conference will be limited to Friday, June 18. Worship services and other opportunities will be conducted on Saturday, June 19.**

Annual Conference members can expect practice sessions closer to the June session to test their devices and learn about the Lumi platform.

As more information becomes available, clergy and lay members to Annual Conference can find resources and more at the (click here →) [2021 Annual Conference website](#).



MUSICIANS NEEDED FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Gerald Lee Ricks, the Worship Leader for Annual Conference 2021, is asking for musicians, virtually and in-person, for the two-day event. Specifically needed are: Acoustic Guitarist, Electric Guitarist, Alto, Bass, Soprano, Pipe Organist.

To share your interest in these positions, please email music@vaumc.org. You can learn more about Rick [at the link](#).

ACTIVE CLERGY MUST REPORT TO CONFERENCE SECRETARY IF NOT ATTENDING ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Rev. Joshua King will be the Annual Conference Secretary for the upcoming conference in June and reminds you if you will not be attending (virtually), you need to send him a letter with a reason for your absence to:

Rev. Joshua King, PO Box 487, Purcellville, VA 20134

CLERGY SESSION—JUNE 10TH—10:00 A.M. VIA ZOOM

The Center for Clergy Excellence is preparing for the virtual Clergy Session on June 10th, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon via Zoom. The session will be open to participants at 9:30 a.m. The proceeding will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. All clergy participating in the session will have their voice/vote taken into consideration. Clergy will receive registration information in the coming weeks.

PHOTOS CELEBRATING MISSION AND MINISTRY AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Annual Conference Worship Planning Team is requesting photos celebrating the ongoing mission and ministry around the Virginia Conference.

We are looking to incorporate photos of active, ongoing mission & ministry in congregations throughout this Pandemic Season. We request 2-3 digital photos of these service engagements. Please email them to Serving@vaumc.org by May 3rd.

COMMUNITY CANS AND KITS— PROJECT OF 2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

COVID-19 demanded a certain level of adaptability throughout the life of the church. In the same way, the Conference Kits and Cans4Conference collection needs to be adaptable. UMCOR reached out and shared that it will be challenging to process 50,000+ UMCOR kits collected through our Annual Conference. So, the Annual Conference Kit collection team came up with an idea to use the familiarity of collecting kits to benefit local ministries as we become adaptable.

This year, during 2021 Annual Conference, we will collect Cans and Kits, which local churches are asked to collect prior to the conference, to be dropped off at either of the two district sites on June 19. A collaborative team of Conference Kits and Cans4Conference made this possible, as the collected goods will benefit local ministries.

What will we collect on the Harrisonburg District?

Non-perishable/ canned food: Each church is asked to conduct a food drive prior to Annual Conference, and drop off the food and any assembled kits to one of the designated drop off locations in the Harrisonburg District. If you would like some materials to assist you with conducting your food drive, please contact Rev. Brian Posey at brianposey@vaumc.org

Please note that money will not need to be sent with kits or sent to the conference office this year.

The kit items will be modified as follows from the usual UMCOR Kits:

School Kits: (1) pair of blunt scissors (round tip, no plastic scissors), (1) box (24 count) crayons, (3) one subject spiral ring notebooks, (1) pack of loose-leaf paper (100-200 pages, wide or college rule), (1) hand held pencil sharpener, (1) 12" ruler, (6) unsharpened pencils, (1) 2" eraser, (1) one gallon re-sealable plastic bag
All exterior packaging should be removed except for: crayons, loose-leaf paper

Hygiene Kits: (1) hand towel (15X25 – 17X27 – No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels), (1) washcloth (no kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber cloths), (1) sturdy Comb w/ 6" of teeth (no picks, or combs with handles), (1) toenail / fingernail clipper, (1) bath sized soap (3oz bar or larger), (1) toothbrush, (1) toothpaste (6oz), (10) Adhesive bandages (3/4x3 inches), (1) shampoo (12-15oz), (1) One-gallon size re-sealable bag. *All exterior Packing should be removed except for: soap, toothbrush, adhesive bandages.*

When do we collect these items?

For individual churches, we recommend to start your food collection and kit collections by Mid-May to give time to get the items gathered.

On June 19, 2021 between the hours of 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. have a volunteer(s) bring all collected food and kits to:

Manor Memorial UMC
9320 N. Congress St.
New Market, VA 22844

Grottoes UMC
300 4th St.
Grottoes, VA 24441

Who do we need to contact for information specific to our District?

For any questions related to the "Community Cans & Kits" Mission project, please contact Rev. Brian Posey, brianposey@vaumc.org, (540) 236-2472

Does this mean we will not collect UMCOR kits next year?

Next year please plan to return to the regular Kits for Conference Kit Assembly based on UMCOR Standards.



2021 VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MISSION PROJECT

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OFFERING
&
COMMUNITY CANS & KITS COLLECTION



**2021 ANNUAL
CONFERENCE OFFERING**

This year's Annual Conference Offering will provide a solution to address poverty and food insecurity in the Commonwealth. We will dedicate an equal portion to continue our missional reach through Partnerships of Hope! We ask local churches to present the offering, during the 'United in Mission and Ministry' worship, on the last day of the Conference

For more information visit
WWW.VAUMC.ORG/AC2021



PRG (POST-COVID RE-ENTRY GROUP)

Bishop Lewis announced a shift in the way the Annual Conference will address the current pandemic at a progress report webinar held on April 26. A new Post-COVID Re-entry Group (PRG) convened by the Rev. Seungsoo 'RJ' Jun will take over the duties of the existing COVID work groups (Back to In-Person Worship and Mission & Ministry) as of May 1, 2021.

The new PRG will incorporate members of the current workgroups and will begin the proactive work of resourcing churches for ministry in the coming post-pandemic environment. The group will also continue the focus on assisting churches to engage in safe practices as they conduct in-person worship and ministry.

There is big news for local churches in the shift as well. Healthy Church Teams (HCTs) have done extensive work through the pandemic in developing plans for ministry based on the Technical Assistance Manual (TAM) and other resources provided by the workgroups. **During the month of June, churches will be invited to celebrate the work of the HCTs and bring them to a close while transitioning to local church Post-COVID Re-entry Groups. Major decision-making on COVID-mitigation methods will revert to local churches as of July 1, with district superintendents providing a review of plans.** A new, greatly-reduced document will succeed the current TAM to guide local churches as they develop their plans.

In preparation for this transition, the new conference PRG team will host a series of four webinars to assist the local church PRG teams. Every Thursday evening, starting on May 13, the conference will host a Zoom webinar for local churches. Each webinar will offer updates on health mitigation guidelines, as local churches establish their PRG groups. The webinars will also feature special guests, who will offer foundational information for "Relaunch" into the Post-COVID era.

To read about changes to indoor singing, other pertinent information regarding this group and the updated Technical Assistance Manual (TAM), go to <https://vaumc.org/prg/>.



PRG RELAUNCH WEBINAR

Thursdays beginning at 6:30 P.M.

May 13—Nuts and Bolts PRG/Relaunch (6:30—8:00 p.m.)

Special Guests: Paul Nickerson & Jim Griffith

May 20—Ultimate Relaunch Playbook (6:30—8:00 p.m.)

Special Guest: Kay Kotan

May 27—Both/and Hybrid Worship (6:30—9:00 p.m.)

Special Guest: Jason Moore

June 3—Relaunch Ministries (6:30—8:00 p.m.)

Special Guests: Dwayne Stinson & Nickie Moreno-Howard



MORE DISTRICT ALIGNMENT INFORMATION SHARED

If you haven't already heard about the work of the District Alignment Team (DAT), you are encouraged to go to www.vaumc.org/dat and view all the resources including the first video from February 8, 2021 with Bishop Lewis and the most recent video from April 5 concerning the position of district developers.

The District Alignment Team (DAT) and the subsequent team called the Implementation District Alignment Team (iDAT) have been diligently deliberating over the last 12 months.

The teams are now inviting all clergy and laity in the Virginia Conference to two opportunities to learn more about district alignment and take part in this ongoing conversation.

The first listening session will be held **Monday, May 3 from 6:30-8 p.m.** The second session will be held **Monday, May 17 from 6:30-8 p.m.** Both sessions will be held through Zoom.

Interested clergy and lay members should choose the session that works best for their schedule. Each listening session will begin with a short update on the efforts thus far, a few discussion questions, and a period of Q&A. Recordings of both sessions will be shared following the May 17 listening session.

To view current district alignment information and resources and register for the Listening Session, visit www.vaumc.org/dat.

SPECIAL SESSION OF GENERAL CONFERENCE—MAY 8, 2021

CANCELLED

The Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church met on March 22nd in an additional meeting to consider pressing matters related to the Council's work. After much conversation, the bishops reached a decision that in the best interest of the church at this time, they would cancel the Special Session of the General Conference which was set for May 8, 2021. They will dedicate their regularly scheduled April meeting to conversation based on results of listening sessions that are occurring and discern a possible need for a new timeline toward GENERAL CONFERENCE 2020 set for August 29 – September 6, 2022 in Minneapolis, Minn.



ALL GOD'S CHILDREN CAMP CANCELLED FOR 2021



All God's Children Camp will be canceled for overnight camp for 2021 according to Lori Smith, camp director. The leadership for the camp will still be reaching out and ministering with the camp families by sending resources and care packages. If you would like to get involved in this outreach, please contact Smith at lttlori@gmail.com.



Apart for Renewal on May 24. [Learn more...](#)

CLERGY ENCOURAGED TO REIGNITE THE CALL

For the past year, there has been a relentless pace to ministry. Despite the extraordinary amount of work needed to be done, Jesus taught his disciples to find a sustainable pace of work and time apart. When his energy was depleted, Jesus would find time to go apart, to rest, to sleep, to pray, to relax with friends and family, and this is what he modeled and taught his disciples.

In this joint letter from Bishop Lewis, the Virginia Cabinet, and the Center for Clergy Excellence, learn more about the three distinct ways these entities want to help clergy to survive and even thrive during these days which includes a specific Day

The United Methodist Credit Union (TUMCU) is proud to have helped hundreds of United Methodist churches and related organizations receive critical funding through the SBA's Paycheck Protection Program. So many churches and faith-based organizations are struggling to keep their doors open and their ministries alive - and this program can help. TUMCU is ready to assist members in securing these forgivable loans as quickly as possible. Because of the extended timeframe of the COVID-19 pandemic, the SBA is sponsoring another round of PPP funding, and TUMCU would like to

assist as many ministries as it can. To this end, TUMCU has just opened the online portal to these new PPP funds and ask that you share this information with a trustee, finance committee member, pastor, or COM chair at your church. Since some of the rules have changed since the first round of loans (including some eligibility changes), please check out their [PPP information page](#).

The deadline for new applications to the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) has now been extended until May 31, 2021.



THE
UNITED
METHODIST
CREDIT UNION



VIDEO SERIES CURRICULUM FOCUSES ON RACE RELATIONS

This is a video series designed to engage clergy and laity in authentic conversations about race and reconciliation. Learn more and access curriculum and videos at www.vaumc.org/racerelations.

Videos available for viewing to date are:

- Video 1: Old and New World Roots - Larry Jent
- Video 2: New World Slavery - Judy Ledbetter
- Video 3: Early Black Methodism - Kim Young
- Video 4: The Bible of Nat Turner - Mark Person
- Video 5: Civil War/Lost Cause - Ben Campbell
- Video 6: Jim Crow/ Women's Suffrage - Barbara Batson



The Virginia Roots, Race, and Discipleship curriculum is a first step to address racism in the Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. This series includes participant's guide, facilitator's notes, a one-minute introductory video for each episode. The small group study encourages participants to listen, learn, and engage in healthy dialogue about history, race, and discipleship. The goal is for all clergy and laity to acknowledge racism as a sin and take action to dismantle racism in our families, houses of worship, our community, and the workplace.

The Harrisonburg District
Virginia Annual Conference
of the United Methodist Church



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Harrisonburg, VA 22801

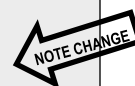
540.433.2382 office phone
202.285.5767 DS: call/text

Office Hours: Monday - Friday
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Harrisonburg District on the web at
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Virginia Conference on the web at
www.vaumc.org