

Winchester District
United Methodist
Church

David T. Forrest
District Superintendent

NEWS FROM... THE CORE OF THE WINCHESTER DISTRICT



December 2008/January 2009

Leadership Training Day

When: Saturday, January 3, 2009

Where: Shenandoah University,
Winchester, Virginia

Course outlines and registration forms are available on the district website at www.winchesterdistrictumc.org.

This is a day designed to give our local church leaders training and access to resources that will help our leaders best carry out their responsibilities. It is a day when others from the district and conference are willing to share their thoughts and ideas to help each leader gain a new perspective and lead with passion, enthusiasm, imagination, and Christian vitality.

Registration begins at 8:15 a.m. Worship will begin promptly at 9:00. in Armstrong Hall. Each person attending will be able to select two workshops to attend, one in the morning session (10:15 to 12:30) and one in the afternoon (1:30 to 3:45). Seating will be limited in some of the workshops so reservations will be taken on a first come, first served basis. Subject to the availability of the instructors, each workshop will be offered in the morning and afternoon session.

As you consider the workshops that are offered, please select and prioritize the four sessions that you would like to attend. Every effort will be made to accommodate your first two priority requests, but not everyone will be able to get both.

The cost is \$15. Fees include refreshments, lunch, materials, and quality instructors.

**ALL REGISTRATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED
BY DECEMBER 15, 2008!!**

The District Office will be closed
12/23/08 - 1/2/09!

DISTRICT CALENDAR



- 9 Clergy Exec. Committee, District Office - 9:30 a.m.
- 12 Clergy Assoc. Christmas Dinner, Mt. Olive (Shenandoah Co.) - 6-8 p.m.
- December 23 District Office Closes at 1 p.m.
- 24-31 District Office Closed

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- 1 District Office Closed
- 2 District Office Reopens
- 3 Leadership Training, Shenandoah University - 8 a.m.- 4 p.m.
- 11-15 VIM trip to Merci Mission Center
- 19 District Office Closed in memory of Martin Luther King's Birthday
- 19-21 Minister's Convocation at Blackstone
- 22 DS at Cabinet
- 27 District Council on Ministries, Braddock St. - 10 a.m.
- 28 District Committee on Ordained Ministry, Macedonia UMC - 9 a.m.



*The Winchester District Office
Staff wishes you and your
family a blessed
Christmas Season!*

*May your hearts and homes
be filled with joy and peace
as we celebrate the birth
of our Lord and Savior!*

David, Sheryl, Melanie & Ann

A word from the District Superintendent...

In his recent short work entitled, *The Catholic Church*, the eminent Swiss-born Roman Catholic priest and theologian, Hans Kung, describes his lifelong love-hate relationship with the church. Though he has been a harsh critic of his church—so much so that back in 1979 the Roman Church ruled that he could no longer teach as an official Catholic theologian—he has remained a steadfast partisan of the church.

While I'll never be a Roman Catholic priest, I don't think (I'm still too crazy about Nancy for one thing!) I can sympathize with his view of the church. He shows in his brief history how much of the growth of the church as an institution was an all too human development. Some of the popes acted more like kings and emperors than Vicars of Christ, as any history of the church makes plain.

And lest anyone accuse me of anti-Catholic bias, let me hasten to add that our own United Methodist Church is far from perfect, as well. The church is so doggone human! One experiences that everyday in this job, I assure you. And yet, of course, as Kung again makes clear in his little history, the world is a better place because the church of Jesus Christ exists in it.

I see that every night all fall as I travel around the district conducting charge conferences. At them I constantly hear of all the mission work even the smallest of our churches is engaged in. Everything from feeding the hungry in Winchester to proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to exploited Vietnamese workers in Malaysia is being accomplished through the work, giving, and prayers of our churches—that is to say, by you! For, of course, you and I are that all too human church that historians tell us about.

Thank you for all that you have done in the name of Jesus Christ in 2008. Keep your eyes on Jesus in 2009, and He will continue to use you in many wonderful and surprising ways in the year ahead.

And may the light of the Christ Child shine in your heart this Christmas and forevermore.

David Forrest

New Extension Ministry Offers Mediation Services

Apple Valley Mediation Network, Inc. is one of the United Methodist Church's newest extension ministries in the Northern Shenandoah Valley. Extension Ministries are ministries beyond the local church that are approved by the Bishop and the Board of Ordained Ministry. Apple Valley was founded in 1994 by its Executive Director, The Reverend Ed Wilkins who once served Macedonia and Montague Ave. on the Winchester District. However, Apple Valley has just been an extension ministry for the last year.

Apple Valley began by providing mediation services at low and sometimes no cost to citizens in the valley and by 1998 had contracts with the Supreme Court of Virginia to provide mediation services to all courts in Shenandoah, Warren and Page Counties. The largest percentage of the work is in custody, visitation and support mediation. However, all kinds of general disputes or conflicts have been mediated. Apple Valley's director has significant training in church conflict management and resolution. He also has specific training in managing agricultural and rural issues.

Since 2004, Apple Valley has ventured into other areas of conflict resolution. One that caught the attention of the Virginia Conference because of its focus on justice and restoring relationships is a program called "Restorative Justice Conferencing." Restorative Justice Conferencing is used for juvenile crime, locally, but it has been used for many kinds of offenses in other areas. Restorative Justice brings together the victim's and the offender's community in a circle to determine what happened, what harm was done, who is responsible and how are they responsible. Attending the circle are the juvenile and his or her parents, the victim and a family member or friend and someone from the justice community such as the arresting/investigating officer or the juveniles probation officer. The circle is led by a trained facilitator and everyone has a chance to tell what they know about the event and offer possible solutions to restore the situation such as community service or restitution. While reconciliation is not required because some participants are not ready, often apologies and forgiveness do happen.

Should you like more information on conflict resolution or this ministry please contact Apple Valley at (540) 459-8799, toll free at (800)767-3898 or by email avcr@shentel.net. We are available for programs or workshops and worship services. Please visit our website at www.avmn.org.



Scholarships Available For Clergy

Planning on going on a Volunteers In Mission trip within the next year? In your first 5 years of full-time ministry? A scholarship application is available at: <http://www.vaumc.org/index.cfm/fa/content.view/menuID/1017.htm>.

The application requires your District Superintendent's signature before sending it to the Conference Mission Office. Please know that the Volunteers In Mission trip that you will be going on does NOT have to be in 2008 but the application does need to be in the Mission office before Christmas. We have a limited amount of money and it is pro-rated to the cost of the trip and the location of your worksite.

If you have any questions contact Keith Mottley, Pastor, Manor Memorial UMC, Harrisonburg District, Virginia Conference Coordinator UMVIM, P. O. Box 340, New Market, VA 22844. Call (540) 740-8959 (Office), (540) 740-3248 (Home), (540) 760-4376 (Cell) or Email: pastorkm@shentel.net.

Devotional Materials Available On Conference Website



“Revive Us Again: Meditations for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany,” an on-line devotional for the Advent, Christmas and Epiphany season 2008-2009 is available on the Virginia Conference Website at www.vaumc.org. These writings have been prepared by members of the Board of Discipleship Division of Spiritual Formation for both individual and group use. Based on a lectionary scripture selection for a particular week, the writings are intended to enhance your spiritual life and practices. You are welcome to print them and if you like, distribute them to others.

Christmas Thoughts from Flo



It's that time of year again when the Salvation Army bells ring and children's laughter is heard in the parks and yards as they play in the cold winter air and talk of Santa Claus.

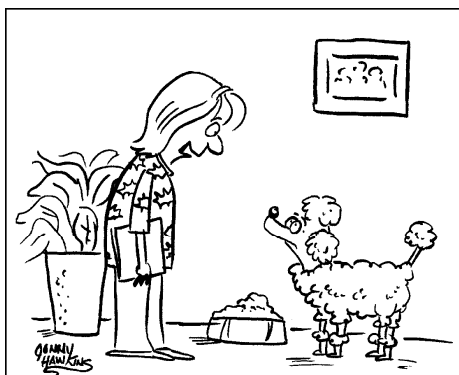
We, parents and grandparents, wonder if we can afford to buy presents for our children and grandchildren this year, in the uncertainty of the financial volatility. If all the noise that precedes the actual Christmas season, that we as Christians celebrate and enjoy, seems a bit too much, perhaps it's a reminder for all of us to focus on what is really important: family, friends, faith and all the blessings that God has given each of us.

For many years I would put this simple statement "Listen for the whispers of Christmas" in the church bulletin. I would hear them during the Christmas Eve Service, as the lights were turned off and everyone was holding a candle as we sang "Silent Night", then taking our candles into a dark night as we left the sanctuary. When I returned to the parsonage and turned on my tree lights and put on my favorite Christmas music I knew that finally the real Christmas had once again come to us in the words of the hymn, "Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright, round yon virgin mother and child." The "whispers of Christmas" speak of hope, joy and peace that are reborn in our hearts anew because of that small child, Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

This year we need to hear the "whispers of Christmas" to remind us that the important things are not found in the shopping centers or at Wal-Mart, but in sharing meals and memories with family and friends. In these final days of a year that has been filled with uncertainties, we can finally in this season of sacred days for families and friends, remember those who have gone before us.

I too will listen again for "the whispers of Christmas." I will hear them as I see my young great-grandchildren gaze in wonder at the lights on the tree and most especially in the joy of having a new great-granddaughter. Have a Merry Christmas and may God bless one and all.

Written by Flo Legg, retired pastor living on the Winchester District.



"Guess who got voted to be a sheep in the Sunday school program for the fifth year in a row?!"



Winchester District Conference Offering raises \$1,126 for Hurricane Relief



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www.winchesterdistrictumc.org

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Thirteen of our 15 men that registered were able to attend the Conference Spiritual Retreat in Blackstone, November 7-9. We joined with 407 men to hear to hear Dr. Maxie Dunnam preach four powerful messages on the theme *Rehearsing the Gospel*. The four messages being *The Essence of the Gospel* (2 Corinthians 4:1-6), *Claim the Promise* (John 14:1-14), *Prayer as Surrender* (Genesis 22:1-18) and *The Church Identity and Function* (I Peter 2:1-10).

We had a total of 70 men at our District Fall Rally hosted by the men of Duncan Memorial UMC. There were representatives from 18 of our 32 active Men's Fellowships. We are most appreciative of the seven Pastors that attended and especially of Rev. Bill Dawson of Duncan who led us in worship. We elected as our officers for 2009 the following: President - Herb Drake, Brucetown; VP Spiritual Life - Clay Emery, Marshall; VP Membership - Vacant; Treasurer - Tim Ragaller, Stephens City; Secretary - Vacant.

Ron Robey, Director of Camp Overlook, made a presentation on our district's hidden treasure, Camp Overlook. It was a wonderful presentation of the great job that Camp Overlook does, its present needs for remodeling the units at Agape Hill, and the recent purchase of additional acreage to protect the camp from development. Our offering of just over \$500 will benefit Camp Overlook. Any fellowship that didn't make the rally or has not sent a contribution to Camp Overlook can still do so by mailing your contribution to our district treasurer Tim Ragaller, 118 Trunk Drive, Stephens City, VA 22655. Jim will be taking the offering to the Camp Overlook Board Meeting on Tuesday, December 9.

Our District UMM has purchased 51 copies of the book, *Spiritual Fathers* by Dan Schaffer and is making it available to our pastors on the Winchester District in anticipation of the launching of Wesleyan Building Brothers in our Virginia Conference. **The Pastors' Overview is scheduled for Tuesday, January 13 at the United Methodist Center in Glen Allen and it is my prayer that several pastors and laymen from our District will make plans to attend this event.**

Chartering for 2009 is continuing and we are pleased to report 12 of our 32 active fellowships have already chartered through the District. I want to encourage all current fellowships to charter through the District before December 31. We are looking forward to adding a couple new chartered units in 2009.

I hope that all of you had a blessed Thanksgiving and may the joy and love of Christ be with you as we move into this Advent season leading up to Christmas.

Grace and Peace,
Jim Green
540-678-0243 or wincdistrictumm@hotmail.com



**VIM trip to Merci Mission Center, North Carolina
January 11-15, 2009**

Journey with David & Nancy Forrest to our denomination's warehouse & distribution center in Goldsboro, North Carolina. The team will stay in the center's Volunteer Village and work on a variety of projects such as: sorting and packing health kits, flood buckets, sewing girls' dresses and boy's shirts for Haitian children, office filing, small construction jobs in homes of needy families. **In other words - if you want to have a 'hands-on' mission opportunity, we have a job for you!** Cost of the trip: approx \$150/person including transportation, and room & board.

United Methodist Day at the General Assembly



United Methodist Day will be held on Thursday, February 5, 2009, at Ginter Park UMC in Richmond. UM Day is sponsored by the Virginia Conference Board of Church & Society and the Virginia Conference United Methodist Women.

WHAT CAN YOU DO AS A CONCERNED UNITED METHODIST?

- ◇ Follow important issues when the 2009 short session of the General Assembly convenes January 14 and concludes in February.
- ◇ During the General Assembly Session contact your legislators by phone, e-mail, fax, or mail and let them know your opinion on a particular issue or bill. Call constituent hot line for free at 1-800-889-0229. For further information on contacting legislators go to www.vaumc.org.
- ◇ Agree to receive e-mail Net Alert during the General Assembly Session and share the contents with others. Send your e-mail address to Becky Breeding at mbbreeding3@yahoo.com.
- ◇ Follow legislation through these sources: General Assembly website www.legis.state.va.us House of Delegates 1-804-698-1500, Senate 1-804-698-7410

The cost is \$20.00 per person which includes packet, cold continental breakfast, lunch, free parking at church and transportation to and from Capitol grounds. Make checks payable to Virginia United Methodist Conference and mail to: Camey Chiles, 8221 Skirmish Lane, Mechanicsville, VA 23111. If sending in registration for a group, please mail one check together with a completed registration form for each person.

Registration Required by Jan. 24, 2009

UMCOR CHRISTMAS RESOURCES

A preview of UMCOR's 2008 Gift Catalog is now available. The Christmas flyer feature some of the alternative gift suggestions that will be highlighted in the soon-to-be updated UMCOR Gift Catalog. It provides details about some of UMCOR's core programs around the world and each dollar amount represents the cost of needs that can be met with your gift. 100 percent of your contribution will support the designated program.

Download UMCOR's 2008 Christmas List Flyer www.gbqm-umc.org and share it with others to encourage them to give differently this year.

UMCOR provides emergency relief in many areas of the world. You can donate to any project by placing a contribution in the offering plate at a local United Methodist church; by sending a check to UMCOR, PO Box 9068, New York, NY 10087-9068; or by calling 1-800-554-8583, where credit card donations are accepted. You can also give online by clicking on any of the "Give Now" links.

And, please pray for those who are hungry, displaced, sick or in poverty because of these and other natural and human-made disasters, and for the workers who minister to them.

Peace,
J. Denise Honeycutt
Director of Mission & Global Outreach
Virginia Conference of the UMC



**Ministers' Convocation
January 19-21, 2009**

For all clergy, diaconal ministers, and professional youth directors in the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church

**Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center
Blackstone, VA**



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

**Winchester District Board of Missions
Annual Dinner Meeting**

Sunday, February 22, 2009
5-8 p.m.

Macedonia UMC
1941 Macedonia Church Road, White Post, VA

Watch for more information in February newsletter!



Virginia 'Disaster Pastor' Delivers Trailer to Texas

Cooperation, Communication, Coordination and Collaboration are the foundations of National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). The United Methodist Church's National VOAD participation adds one more "C" term - Connection - the theological understanding and foundation of The United Methodist Church where all local churches are interrelated through the global church.

A recent example of this connection was made on November 18 when the Virginia Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, Rev. Frank Jennings, traveled to League City, Texas to deliver a tool trailer to the Texas Conference. Rev. Eddie Hilliard, Texas Conference Recovery Coordinator accepted the loan of the trailer on behalf of the Conference. Rev. Hilliard has the responsibility for the United Methodist response to Hurricane Ike and will use this equipment loan to support work teams' efforts in assisting individuals.

Rev. Jennings is no stranger to disaster and earned the title "Disaster Pastor" because of his involvement in numerous disasters in Virginia. In the last 10 years, the Virginia Conference's response to these multiple disasters brought opportunities for developing resources for response and recovery inside and outside the conference. The Conference Disaster Response Ministry now has at its disposal six fully equipped tool trailers, a debris trailer and a shower trailer. The trailers are now available, upon request, for loan to other conferences to support disaster response and recovery.

Currently there is a Virginia Conference tool trailer in Iowa; a shower trailer that was constructed to support efforts following Hurricane Katrina remains in the Gulf area; and this newest partnership with the Texas Conference, of a tool trailer to be used to assist individuals in recovery efforts. If you or your organization would like to join in paying forward and can provide human or financial resources to the Texas Conference please contact Rev. Hilliard at 713-417-7536 or visit the Conference web site at www.txcumc.org and follow the link provided.

From an article by Terry Wood, Assistant Disaster Response Coordinator for the Virginia Conference and FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaison currently working in Texas

SPIRITUAL GROWTH RETREAT ~ APRIL 18-19, 2009

Being in Perfect Harmony with the Soul

Sponsored by Conference Board of Laity -Division of Retreats/Conferences and Conference Board of Discipleship - Division of Spiritual Formation
Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center, Blackstone, VA



The 2009 Spiritual Growth Retreat leader is Rev. Cynthia A. Wilson, a United Methodist clergy, a popular lecturer, preacher, teacher, conductor and concert artist. Cynthia is a native of New Orleans, and a graduate of Dillard University & Southern Methodist University and Perkins School of Theology. Cynthia was named in 2005 the Director of Religious Life at Bethune Cookman University in Daytona Beach, Florida. Cynthia holds the distinction of being the first female and African American as the Director of Music for The United Methodist General Conference in Cleveland, Ohio, and participated in worship for the 2008 General Conference in Ft. Worth, Texas. Presently, as the CEO of Free Indeed Ministries International, she serves as a consultant to Local Churches and other ministries in the areas of Worship, Music and the Arts.

Any lay, clergy, music leader, choir director or music teacher would benefit greatly by coming and learning how to bring to life the theme: "Being in Perfect Harmony with the Soul".

CHILDREN'S RETREAT (ages 5-11) will be held at Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center during the time and dates as the Spiritual Growth Retreat using the same theme. The leaders are Dr. Cecelia Short and Carol Hudgins, who have been the Children's Retreat leaders for the last several years. They have won high praises from the parents as being dynamic and creative as their children learn so much.

REGISTRATION FORMS will be available early February 2009 from each of the 18 District Lay Leader's, or visit www.vaumc.org and select "Laity" or "Events." Fee will be in range of \$85.00- \$90.00 for adults. Children's fee in range of \$52.00-\$57.00. Day attendees are welcome and fee for registration will be \$25.00 plus lunch or dinner fee.

If you have further questions, please contact Sandra W. Baker, Chair - Division of Retreats/Conferences, at 540-662-4723 or sanjeanb@comcast.com

