



Winchester District
United Methodist
Church

David T. Forrest
District Superintendent

NEWS FROM... THE CORE OF THE WINCHESTER DISTRICT



March 2009

DISTRICT CALENDAR



- 8 - Daylight Saving Time Begins
- 10 - Clergy Exec. Committee,
District Office - 9:30 a.m.
- 12 - District Clergy, Stephens
City UMC - 9 a.m.
- 14 - Lay Speaker Training, Duncan Memorial
UMC, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.
- 16-20 - Cabinet meets at Blackstone
- 18—DCOOM, District Office - 9 a.m.
- 24 - DCOM, Braddock St. - 10 a.m.
- 25 - DCOOM, Macedonia UMC - 9 a.m.



- 9 - District Office closes at 1 p.m.
- 10 - District Office closed
- 14 - Clergy Exec. Committee, District
Office - 9:30 a.m.
- 16 - District Clergy, Mt. Pleasant-Lamps
UMC - 9 a.m.
- 18-19 - Laity Spiritual Life Retreat, Blackstone
- 20-23 - Cabinet meets in Blackstone
- 28 - DCOM, Braddock St. - 10 a.m.
- 28 - Board of Missions, District Office—1 p.m.
- 25 - DCOOM, Macedonia UMC - 9 a.m.



Winchester District Lay Speaking Ministries Training Duncan Memorial UMC in Berryville March 14 ~ 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

- Anyone who wishes to become a Lay Speaker **MUST** attend this event.
- Anyone who has not had training in the last 3 years and wishes to remain a Lay Speaker **MUST** attend this event.

In addition there are other programs in the church that you can assist by training in the Lay Ministries Program.

The following classes will be offered:

BASIC COURSE:

This is the first training step to becoming a Lay Speaker - Teachers: Doug Rinker and Jan Sickel

ADVANCED CLASSES:

- United Methodist Beliefs - Teachers: Rev. Mike Mayton and Rev. Adam Sowder
- Exploring Bishop Robert Schnase's "Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations" - Teacher: Rev. Steve Melester
- Lay Speaking Ministers Speak Publicly - Teacher: Rev. Jim Markle

A registration fee of \$15.00 is charged to partially defray the cost of food and materials.

Please send registration along with a check made out to Winchester District UMC (please note for Lay Speaker Training on memo line) to: Winchester District United Methodist Church
21 South Kent Street, Winchester, Virginia 22601

Registration Form for Lay Speaker Training

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Church: _____

Class Choice: 1st _____ 2nd _____

Registration Deadline: March 6, 2009

A word from the District Superintendent...

Last month in this space I borrowed from my colleague, Rev. Ed Pruitt, the Harrisonburg District Superintendent, to share some of what he had written earlier in his district newsletter about “All Things New”. Well, I’m about to fall into that same sin of plagiarism again as I borrow from the newsletter of another colleague of mine, Rev. Kathleen Overby Webster, the Staunton District Superintendent. Interestingly enough, she was borrowing from yet another newsletter—that of the Lewis Center for Church Leadership from last November.

The author of the piece that caught Kathleen’s attention (and later mine) was Erwin McManus, and the sentence of his that caught her (and later my) attention was:

Churches all over the country have decided they love their traditions more than their children.

As Kathleen said, “Wow!” What McManus is saying, I think, is that many of us church people are more concerned about following practices that please ourselves than we are about reaching out to others—especially young people—in the name of Jesus Christ. Lots and lots of what we do as the church is based on our traditions—not really on the Biblical faith.

For example, I’ll never forget preaching in a small (non-United Methodist) church in Freetown, Sierra Leone, West Africa when we were there in the 1980’s. It’s about the only time I can recall ever preaching barefooted! Why? Because that was the tradition in that church. Imagine dishonoring God by wearing shoes in his house! At least that was their point of view—that was their tradition. Was it wrong? No, it was just different.

You get the point: flexibility, openness is the key—a willingness to change a little from time to time to win others (especially impressionable youth) to Christ. As the Apostle Paul says: “I have become all things to all people, so that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.” (I Corinthians 9:22b-23)

A good question for all of us as the church is: are we doing this (whatever it is we’re doing in the church) because we’ve always done it that way, or because we prayerfully believe that it will promote Christ’s mission of making disciples for the conversion of the world?

Thank you for all that you do in Christ’s name.

David Forrest

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. 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”.

A Children’s Retreat (ages 5-11) will be held at VUMAC 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.

REGISTRATION FORMS are available from our District Lay Leader, Kathy Lutman (klutman213@aol.com), or visit www.vaumc.org and select “Laity” or “Events.”

Fee for adults is \$85.00 and the fee for the Children’s Retreat is \$52.00 Day attendees are welcome and fee for registration will be \$25.00 plus lunch and/or dinner fee. Registration deadline is April 1st!

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

5 Talent Academy Introductory Event

At Ebenezer UMC in Stafford
on the Ashland District
March 30, 2009
from 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

All are welcome to come and learn
about the goals for the
Five Talent Academy

Keynote: Jorge Aceveda from the
Florida Conference
who led the Florida Conference
Delegation to General Conference

Pete Moon, Chair of 5 Talent
Academy, will explain the 5 Goals
Lunch Included --- \$25 per person

5 Goals of the Five Talent Academy

Numbers matter in disciple-making because they represent lives in the process of being transformed in the name of Jesus.

1. **Ministry with the Poor:** 10% of annual giving ministry with the poor.
2. **Worship:** 5% annual increase in average worship attendance.
3. **Faith Development:** Small group participation represents 50% of average worship attendance.
4. **Stewardship:** 10% annual increase in giving.
5. **Evangelism:** Professions of faith represent 10% of average worship attendance.

***The Congregation will prayerfully consider a plan to plant a new faith community in the next five years.

**Register on the Conference Website
at www.vaumc.org.**

A Day of Listening Virginia United Methodists Consider Amendments to the Church Constitution

Cosponsored by The Virginia Common Table for Church Vitality, the Virginia Evangelical Fellowship and the Virginia Chapter of the Methodist Federation for Social Action.

Thirty-two amendments to the church constitution were approved by the 2008 General Conference. In order for the amendments to become church law, they must be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the members of all the annual conferences. A "Yes" or "No" vote will be taken on each amendment at the 2009 Virginia Annual Conference, meeting June 14-17, 2009, in Norfolk, Virginia.

Three key issues have emerged among the proposed amendments.

- Voting rights for local pastors
- Regional conferences world-wide
- Definition of "inclusiveness"

In order to help prepare the members of the annual conference for this important vote, three "Day of Listening" events have been planned around the conference. All interested persons are welcome to attend one of these events. **All clergy and elected lay members of annual conference are urged to attend.**

Saturday, March 7, Heritage UMC, Lynchburg
Saturday, March 21, New Town UMC, Williamsburg
Saturday, March 28, Culpeper UMC, Culpeper

Each Day of Listening will begin at 9:00 am, and conclude at 1:00 pm. Each Day of Listening will include welcome and singing, an historical overview, key issue presentations, time for discussion, and Holy Communion. There is no charge for attendance.

To view the text of the constitutional amendments, and to read articles summarizing reasons for and against each amendment (coming March 1), please visit: www.vaumc.org/index.cfm/fa/cal.view.htm.

For more information about the Day of Listening, contact Rev. Robert C. Blinn, Methodist Federation for Social Action, at 804-798-7224 or e-mail robert.blinn@duncanmemorialumc.org OR David V. Ford, Evangelical Fellowship, at 757-258-1072 or e-mail pastor@newtownumc.org.

Church Loans? We Handle All Sizes

In 2008, the Virginia United Methodist Credit Union's church loans ranged from \$6000 to over \$2.7 million. Contact us first when your church needs to *refinance current debt* or is seeking loans for *renovations, new construction, vans and buses or parsonages*. Contact Mike Haydon at mhaydon@vumcu.org or call 866-657-0004.



Winchester District
United Methodist Church
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Winchester, Virginia 22601
540-662-7332

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www.winchesterdistrictumc.org

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Virginia Conference Responds to Economic Challenges

The Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church recorded unrealized losses on investments in 2008 similar to the average losses of other organizations and individuals who had balanced investments in the equity and fixed income markets. While the United States and other countries are hopeful for a quick rebound in the financial markets, the Conference Council on Finance and Administration will prepare for a slow economic recovery.

The leaders of the Conference are encouraged and grateful for the continued contributions by the 1200 churches in Virginia. Despite the economic changes, the receipts from churches in 2008 were up by \$732,653. The percentage of budget received was only down by two percent. The 2008 receipts are an encouraging sign that United Methodist Churches continue to reach out in ministry and mission.

The Virginia Conference has an outstanding history of strong support for ministry through the apportionments. In 2002 churches funded an all time high of 97 percent; however, there has been a gradual decline to 90 percent in 2008. In past years, the Conference had adequate reserves to make up the shortfall in apportionment receipts. With no reserves to cover shortfalls, the Conference can now only spend what is

remitted by the churches. By action of the Council, a balanced budget is mandated.

The Council on Finance and Administration is reviewing every opportunity to adjust the 2009 annual budget based on income received in 2008 and the anticipated 2009 receipts in light of the weak state of the economy and recession we are all experiencing. In addition to adjustments to the 2009 expense budget, the Council plans to recommend a 2010 budget that will help relieve the financial pressures that the churches are feeling.

The Executive Committee of the Council is examining in detail the areas of the budget for which it is directly responsible to find ways to continue administrative services while reducing the cost. The Common Table is adjusting programs to align with the "All Things New" emphasis and prioritize the program ministries.

To be good financial stewards of the funds collected by the churches, will require the conference to make difficult decisions. With the prayers and support of Virginia United Methodists, we will get through these difficult times, all the while continuing to be in ministry.

--J. D. Berlin, President Conference Council on Finance and Administration

--Dennis Scheer, Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services