



Winchester District E - News January 2020

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A Word from our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Steven J. Summers



What I Learned From a Muffler Shop

A few years ago I ordered a trailer hitch and light kit for Sallie's SUV. We knew that we would need to pull a trailer soon to move Sarah out of her dorm at William and Mary and back to an apartment at William and Mary for Graduate School.

To save money I told Sallie I would install it myself. "I have this!" I said.

Two hours later and with no little effort, I had the hitch installed *-at least almost* installed. In the installation process I had to remove two rubber brackets from the vehicle's frame upon which the muffler hangs. They came off fairly easily. After bolting the hitch on, I had to rehang the muffler upon the frame using the same rubber brackets. That's where the "almost" began. One bracket went on, although with great effort. I just could not get the other one on. I tried and tried until my arms were worn out and the hands scratched up. I thought, "I'll try again in the morning early before going to the church office as I'll be fresh then." Unfortunately, it was the same uncooperative bracket story that morning.

Knowing a car with a half-hung muffler is probably not a good thing, I decided to reach out to a muffler shop to see if I could hire them to take care of this last little step that had become a big hurdle. I went to a place called Tuffy's on Broad Street in Richmond not too far from the church I was serving. I told the counter guy my hitch installation muffler-hanging drama. He simply smiled and responded pointedly, "Can I have the keys?" I gave them to him. He whipped the SUV into a bay, put the car on a lift, and, literally, three minutes later a mechanic came back into the small waiting room and said "all done" as he handed me the keys. "What do I owe you?" I

asked relieved that all was well. "No charge" he said.

Having the right tools to complete a task is essential; we intuitively know that truth. Evidently, there is a special tool to reinstall the rubber things. I'm sure a car lift helped too (not to even mention the experience of having done this task many times already).

We are all, clergy and laity, called by God to grow in discipleship... to be lifelong learners. Each time we read God's Word, each time we pray, each time we worship together, each time we support the Church with our gifts, each time we meet ministry challenges head-on with grace and the heart felt desire to do no harm... each time we realize the Spiritual Disciplines in our lives, we both celebrate and *experience* the power of Christ's Resurrection.

At their core, the Spiritual Disciplines are the *essential tools* that move us closer to the Heart of God, that renew God's image within all of us as the Creator's precious children. This is why Dallas Willard once stated: "We can become like Christ - by following the overall style of life he chose for himself. If we have faith in Christ, we must believe *He knew how to live*. What activities did Jesus practice? Such things as fasting, solitude, watching, praying, intense study and meditation upon God's Word and God's ways.... The secret of the easy yoke, then... is to live and *prepare* ourselves for life as he did, so that we can be the kind of people who behave 'on the spot' like Christ."

Are we passionately "tooling" ourselves, by God's grace, to live the Resurrection life? Do we make every effort to stay focused on Christ and the mission of the Church, or do we become too easily distracted by the things that can so easily capture our energies?

My hitch-muffler experience was a vivid reminder of our need of daily Spiritual Disciplines to keep our lives ordered in God's grace - put together in the right ways as the people of The Way of Christ. This simple story has become a part of my story and consistently speaks to me; I bet you have one too and I would love to hear it! *Who would have thought that God could use a muffler shop as a reminder! God is Good.*

In Christ's Service,
DS Steve

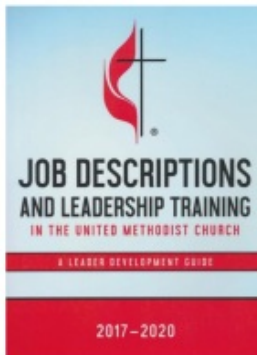


**Winchester District
Training Day
January 12, 2020
3:00 – 5:00 pm
Brandt Student Center,
Shenandoah University**



Training will begin with a sharing from Rev. Dr. Ted Smith, the Virginia Conference Director of Connectional Ministries.

We will have trainings for the Administrative Work Areas of the church:



Staff/Pastor Parish Relations – Rev. Dr. Steve Summers

Trustees – Mr. Kevin Lewis

Finance – Ms. Carol Draper

Nominations and Leadership Development –
Ms. Wilma Jennings

Whether you are new to the committee or a veteran, we encourage you to attend to make sure you are covering your Disciplinary requirements in this area.

An additional session will be held from 5:00 – 6:00, by Carol Draper on Financial Best Practices and Church Risk Management for anyone connected to money in the church (Fundraising, UMM, UMW, etc.)

Please Contact Chad Hrbek,
chadhrbek@vaumc.org, or (540) 662-7332
with any questions.



You will be able to attend one topical session following our opening session with Rev. Dr. Ted Smith.

Session Leaders are:

Staff/Pastor Parish Relations - Rev. Dr. Steve Summers, District Superintendent

Trustees - Mr. Kevin Lewis, Trustee Chair. Braddock St. UMC and Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, Loudoun County Public Schools
Finance - Ms. Carol Draper, Assistant Treasurer, Virginia Conference
Nominations/Lay Leader - Ms. Wilma Jennings, District Lay Leader

The Brandt Student Center is located on the North Side of the Main Campus of Shenandoah University. The street address is 703 University Dr., Winchester, VA 22601. There is parking at the bottom of the hill, leading up to the Chapel, or in the parking garage behind the building (From the second floor you can walk right in).

If you know that you are coming on January 12th, please let Chad know,

chadhrbek@vaumc.org, so we make sure the presenters have enough materials.

DS Summers is hosting **Lunch Conversations** for the Clergy of the Winchester District during January, February, & March. All clergy of the district are encouraged to attend one of these lunch gatherings for a time of no agenda sharing.

Laity will have an opportunity for a similar time as well. Be watching for more information from our District Lay Leader, Wilma Jennings.

District Mission News

We hope your Christmas Holiday and New Year were great!

A district mission team is scheduled to go to Danville Va to help with the final 2 homes affected by hurricane damage last year.

Dates: January 17 to 20th, 2020 (Over Martin Luther King Holiday)

We leave on Friday, plan to work Saturday, Sunday and Monday and return home Monday late afternoon.

If you can join us for only a few days - that works too!

Cost - \$75 per person. Checks made out to Winchester District UMC

Cost covers transportation, meals and a small fee for the church we will stay at.

One home needs finish work and another is in need of major demolition and rebuilding.

Informational Meeting about the January trip on Thursday January 9th in Berryville

Location: Camino Real 16 Crow Street Berryville, VA.

If interested in joining us please email or call Joann Ballard

at jballard1902@gmail.com 540-338-3007



Mission Trailer

Taking a team on mission this year and needing the equipment to take with you? The District has a trailer packed and ready to go for you to take. You do need a vehicle and experience pulling a large trailer to take it, but we'd love to see the trailer go out more this year! To reserve the trailer, please contact [Joann Ballard](#), District Mission Chair.

[Click Here to Go to the District Mission Facebook Page](#)

Events across the District and Conference

Leesburg UMC is hosting a Town Hall style meeting on Sunday, **January 26th from 3:00 - 4:30** focused on the 2020 General Conference and our way forward on issues of LGBTQ inclusion. They have invited two VA Conference clergy the Rev. Rob Vaughn, Community of Faith UMC in Herndon, and the Rev. Keith Boyette, Retired, to be presenters. We have several basic questions that they will be addressing:

- 1) What major proposals are being brought forward to General Conference?
- 2) What do they anticipate coming out of General Conference?
- 3) How can local churches best prepare ahead of time for what may come after General Conference?



Winchester District churches are invited to attend and participate, but please keep in mind that space may be limited.

Bishop Sharma D. Lewis is inviting laity from around the conference for a time of connection following her return from medical leave.

The event will be held

February 8, 2020, from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Woodlake UMC in Chesterfield.



"It is my deep desire to reconnect with you in a personal and special way having been away from you for six months on medical leave," Lewis said. "Let us come together both in person and through satellite locations to have a time of worship, fellowship, anointing, sharing our hearts, and reconnecting. I want to hear from you and I want to share my journey with you."

Location for the event will be at Woodlake UMC (15640 Hampton Park Dr, Chesterfield, VA 23832).

There will be five satellite locations for the event as well:

Pender UMC, Arlington District;
Bridgewater UMC, Harrisonburg District;
New Creation UMC, Elizabeth River District;
Thrasher Memorial UMC, Roanoke District;
Adams-Bloxom Mission Cooperative Parish, Eastern Shore District.

The event is free and open to all laity. Lunch will be served.

Click [here](#) to register.

Questions may be directed to the Rev. Dr. Ted Smith, Director of Connectional Ministries, (804) 521-1133. TedSmith@vaumc.org

Bishop Lewis Hosting 2020 Holy Land Tour

Bishop Sharma Lewis will be hosting a 10-day Holy Land Journey for the clergy and laity

of the conference, February 24 – March 4, 2020. This once-in-a-lifetime adventure will provide participants the opportunity to walk where Jesus walked and to engage the life and ministry of Jesus.

Prices start at \$3,298 and includes the Basic Tour, Round-trip airfare, Hotels, Breakfast, and Dinner, and Ground Transportation.

A day-by-day tour description and registration information may be found at <http://www.eo.travelwithus.com/tours/hl20022420l#eotours>.

Job Opportunities in the District

Overlook Retreat and Camp Ministries (Camp Overlook) is seeking to fill the position of Assistant Director/Program Director. The Assistant Director will work closely with the Executive Director and have the primary responsibilities of designing/implementing camp programs for various age groups, implementing and overseeing our summer programs, recruiting staff, promotion and advertising for programs and support the overall mission of Overlook with other tasks as they arise. For details, visit the Virginia Conference website at www.vaumc.org/jobs.



**From the
Bishop**

2020 Bible Challenge

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.

- 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.

For 2020, Bishop Lewis is challenging the entire conference to read the Bible with a thematic reading plan.

The thematic plan is found on www.intentionalbygrace.com and Bishop Lewis has

selected the following themes below for 2020. Links are provided below as well to access the Bible readings for each theme .

- January 1-January. 21 (21-day plan): Seeking God's Presence
- January 22- February 11 (21-day plan): Knowing God
- February 12- March 3 (21-day plan): Intentional Living
- March 4- March 24 (21-day plan): Redemption
- March 25- April 14 (21-day plan): Fruit of the Spirit: Love
- April 15- May 5 (21-day plan): Fruits of the Spirit: Joy
- May 6- May 26 (21-day plan): Fruit of the Spirit: Peace
- May 27- June 16 (21-day plan): Fruit of the Spirit: Patience
- June 17- July 7 (21-day plan): Fruit of the Spirit: Kindness
- July 8- July 28 (21-day plan): Fruit of the Spirit: Goodness
- July 29- August 18 (21-day plan): Fruit of the Spirit: Faithfulness
- August 19- September 8 (21-day plan): Fruit of the Spirit: Gentleness
- September 9- September 29: Fruit of the Spirit: Self-Control
- September 30- October 20: Trust
- October 21- November 10: Mercy
- November 11–December 1: Bearing Fruit
- December 2-December 23: Cares of this world
- December 24- January 13: Rest

There are 18 plans to cover this year. Each is 21 days long. Start at the beginning and

work through the year (and a few days into January 2021)!

In this new year, challenge yourself to study the Bible and strengthen your faith in the process.

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 with your schedule.
- Get a good study Bible to help to 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 practical and applicable. These seven steps will help you begin a journey in becoming a "lifelong learner" of God's Word.

[Click here for Monthly Readings](#)

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www.winchesterdistrictumc.org

