

Welcome to Shenandoah River District

(Formerly the Harrisonburg
and Winchester Districts)

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FORMAT**

Your newsletter is a week late this month. Thank you for giving us grace to prepare for Charge Conference and District Conference last Sunday!
Many blessings to you this Thanksgiving Season!

**Physical address: 78 Brook Creek Road, Toms Brook, VA 22660
540-433-2382 District Office**

ShenandoahRiverDistrict.org

Our office hours are 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday
The District Administrator, Debbie, works remotely on Fridays and can be reached at the office phone number

Our emails are:

Rev. Victor Gómez

ShenandoahRiverDS@vaumc.org

District Superintendent

Rev. Chad Hrbek

ChadHrbek@vaumc.org

Director of Connectional Ministries

Rev. Gordon Meriwether

GordonMeriwether@vaumc.org

Director of Connectional Ministries

Rev. Jim Joyner

JimJoyner@vaumc.org

Director of Information Technology

Debbie Creech

DebbieCreech@vaumc.org

District Administrator



A Message from the District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Victor Gómez

(continued from last month's article)...In her dream of having a steeple and using this hymn as the perfect illustration, Ms. Elizabeth shared that we should either take out the part of the steeple in the hymn or add a steeple to the church. I imagine Ms. Elizabeth, who at this point is 102 years old, sitting on her porch or looking from her window seeing her church with a steeple, and singing with joy: *"as the little white church in Hayfield."* And as she is looking at the steeple and singing, she is indeed, glorifying God....

At the very next administrative council, I presented a new project where I talked about Ms. Elizabeth's proposal to put a steeple on the church building. The administrative council was very supportive and excited. The project included a plan of action and a fundraiser to obtain the necessary funds for the steeple. We presented the project to the entire congregation, and something amazing happened! Folks called me to pledge money towards this project, checks were brought and in less than one week, we had enough funds to cover the entire project. I remember going to see Ms. Elizabeth sitting on her porch and telling her an order for the steeple had been placed, and the steeple was scheduled to arrive in three months. I could see a couple of tears of

excitement rolling down her cheeks. She went inside her house and returned with a check to contribute to the project. She shared with me she received rent from a billboard she had, and she was pledging three months of that rent for this project. We were able to use these funds to include speakers in the steeple for bells and hymns.

I took out the sheet of paper she had given me of the hymn “The Church in the Wildwood,” which I still have, and together we imagined the steeple being placed in just a couple more months. We prayed together for the project, and I wanted to do everything I could to get that steeple Ms. Elizabeth had dreamed about; after all she was already 102 years old.

The steeple finally arrived and there was excitement and enthusiasm in the congregation; they were more than ready to see the church building with a brand new steeple. It was on an early, chilly morning the day the steeple was to be installed. A crew of workers and volunteers showed up. The speakers were installed inside the steeple. A large crane was used to lift the steeple up and put it in place. Several folks from the congregation came to observe this historical moment, including of course, Ms. Elizabeth, who sat in a chair with a blanket wrapped around her. We prayed as we started and watched the steeple as it was installed. A few weeks later, we had a special worship service to dedicate the steeple and a plaque was placed in the narthex to the Glory of God and to honor Ms. Elizabeth. At that dedication worship we sang together with joy “The Church in the Wildwood” using the words that Ms. Elizabeth once shared with me: *“as the little white church in Hayfield.”*

I often imagine Ms. Elizabeth sitting on her porch or looking at the church building from her window, but this time, with the steeple being there for so many years, singing with joy: *“as the little white church in Hayfield.”* And I envision her looking at the steeple and singing, and, indeed, glorifying God. After she turned 103, Ms. Elizabeth joined the promise of the resurrection, and I still imagine her looking at the church and singing with joy.

I share this with you all, because the main purpose was not the raising of funds or whose name was mentioned. Everyone contributed to the steeple in one way or another. All of us are recognized by God as each person represents a different part of the body of Christ. The purpose of the steeple was to be in unity with Christ, and especially to glorifying God. The steeple points up to heaven, and when we look up to see the steeple, we also look up to heaven as it will lead us in that direction.

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



A Message from the Director of Information Technology - Rev. Jim Joyner

Over the past three months, one of the questions that I have been asked the most is about how to upgrade the audio and visual equipment in our sanctuaries. Some wonder what is possible with the technology that is available today that has changed so much even in the last 5-10 years. Others are unsure whether they should think about using a projector or TV screens and what to do about banners or crosses that may need to be covered or moved for the system to work. Still others wonder how to upgrade a system with a limited budget or how to do it over time to avoid a big financial burden all at one time. There is so much to consider when upgrading our AV systems and for those of us for whom AV is not our career or hobby it is hard to know where to begin.

Thankfully one of our members here on the district is knowledgeable about such things and has experience with AV system upgrades. Bobby Ford is a member of Macedonia UMC and works with Acuity Audio. He will be sharing his knowledge and experience with us in a workshop on **November 13, 2:30-4:00 pm**. He will discuss current trends and what is possible with AV systems and share questions that we as church leaders need to consider as we begin the process of upgrading equipment. We are hosting the live workshop at Macedonia UMC in White Post. We will be answering questions from both sites, so please pick the one that is most convenient for you! **If you are interested in attending, please let us know at shenandoahriverdistrict.org/av**

(Note: Due to limited interest in our satellite location at Asbury UMC, we are cancelling that location and consolidating the workshop at Macedonia UMC only.)

Blessings on the journey, Jim

540-433-2382 or 540-575-6405 district office

540-560-9265 cell

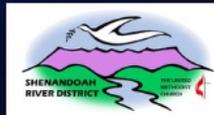
jimjoyner@vaumc.org

UPGRADING YOUR A/V SYSTEM

A Workshop with Bobby Ford
Acuity Audio
Member of Macedonia UMC

November 13, 2022, 2:30-4:00 pm
Macedonia UMC, White Post

Register at shenandoahriverdistrict.org/av



A Message from the Director of Connectional Ministries - Rev. Chad Hrbek

Recently one of my churches, Welltown UMC, was cleaning and getting ready for our week of hosting WATTS. For many years, if not since the program began in Winchester, we have hosted the first week of the season. This presents a good time for us to do some cleaning of some areas that don't get as much attention. However, the past two years we have hosted but not at our church, this meant there was a little more to do to get ready this year. This made me think about how other churches are doing as they are getting back to "Normal" or transitioning into their "New Normal".



Below are five items that I thought of that you may want to check at your church, especially as you prepare for the coming Advent and Christmas season. We all know we don't always notice the things that we see on a regular basis and if you are like me, you don't check your own website very much. Websites have generally become the way people are checking your church out before they ever step foot on the property. We need to look at our churches and ministries with fresh eyes. I am sure there are many other things that might need our attention, but I hope this will get the ball rolling and keeping it tidy.

Worship times: Many churches changed their worship times during COVID, are you still

worshipping at those times or have you changed times? Does your signage reflect this?

Worship Style: This used to be the question of Traditional or Contemporary, now it also includes In-Person or Online. Many churches started offering online worship. Are you still offering that as an option in addition to an In-Person service? Are you conveying this information in your media outlets?

Ministry Offerings: How easy is it for someone to see what you are currently offering as an opportunity for them to be connected or to serve? Have your offerings changed? Are you still advertising things that are not currently meeting or, if you had stopped doing things and are doing them again, are these things being advertised now?

Contacts: As you are preparing for the New Year, do you have new people taking over in different ministry areas? Are the names and contact information correct in your printed and electronic communications for the person working in that area?

Clutter: When our buildings were not being used as much, we could get away with not putting everything away all the time. As more people are in and out of the building are things looking the way we want them to look? We don't need our churches to look like museums but we do want to have a good first impression.

Chad
chadhrbek@vaumc.org

A Message from the Director of Connectional Ministries - Rev. Gordon Meriwether



"How can this be?"

"Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council.² He came to Jesus at night...³ Jesus replied, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.'

⁹ 'How can this be?' Nicodemus asked." (John 3: 1-3, 9)

The Master sat quietly on a rock, answering questions, but mostly he seemed to be waiting for someone to join us. Then he came out of the brush and darkness into the light of the fire that lit up the faces of those gathered around Jesus. We recognized him immediately as Nicodemus one of the Pharisees who had been following us for the last few months. Unlike the other trolling Pharisees, Nicodemus had not challenged or laid verbal traps for the Master, but had listened intently, with the curiosity of a school child. In the day's past, word reached us that he wanted to meet with Jesus privately and arrangements were made. Now here with us in the garden without the crowds or his angling Pharisee plotters sat Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. Here to ask questions of Jesus. "How can this be?" he asked.

After last month's Special Annual Conference for disaffiliation, the emotions of heartbreak and loss came over me as a failure of conscience. Surely this was not inevitable. How had we failed? Why had it come to this? Why were these churches so eager to leave the United Methodist Church over the singular issue of removal of restrictions for the LGBTQI persons to answer their call within the construct of clergy in the United Methodist Church.

We, United Methodists, are all about questions and this is a good thing because the reading and study of our sacred text leaves a lot of questions unanswered. There is so much in the Scriptures that has confounded us for two and a half centuries. The good news is that the more we study and pray, the more the presence of the Holy Spirit accompanies our journey through the scriptures and the more our faith grows. With this growing faithfulness we find acceptance in what we don't understand. Thus comes our questions, our discussions, and unfortunately, our separation.

I remember when I found my way to the UMC after years of searching, joining, embracing,

questioning, disappointing and searching again. In the United Methodist Church, I found pews full of Nicodemus. And they taught me that it was okay to question, to be Nicodemus, and ask all the hard questions; the virgin birth, the sacraments, the crucifixion, the resurrection, the second coming...and so on. Imagine a church built on knowledge, daring to ask any question without retribution or consequences, built on a legacy of tolerance, ecumenism, inclusiveness, fellowship, listening, creative discourse and unity in the body of Christ. I found that these *People called Methodist* are a tolerant lot, replete with ideas for consideration and interpretation, where the wisdom of the past collides head on with the tracings of a future church, a bold and exciting future, full of promise and grace.

John Wesley himself encouraged this pursuit of knowledge in his essay, *The Character of a Methodist*; "We believe, indeed, that 'all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God.' We believe the written word of God to be the only and sufficient rule both of Christian faith and practice; ...We believe Christ to be the eternal and supreme God;...But as to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, **we think and let think.**" We ask openly and without fear, "why? How can this be?"

Here we are reminded of Nicodemus, coming to Jesus under the cover of night to listen, learn, argue, and ask questions. Nowhere does the scripture tell us that Nicodemus was convinced, or joined the disciples, but nonetheless he wanted more....more insight, more exposure, more time with this simple Galilean prophet who preached of love and compassion, rather than the order and retribution of the law. Although change of heart and mind were not reported, what is reported is that Nicodemus had the audacity to stand before the Chief Priests and Pharisees to defend Jesus' right to challenge without retribution, to be heard without condemnation. (John 7: 51)

For fifty years there has been much discussion of the issues of sexual orientation and the ministry of the United Methodist Church. Sometimes heated, other times creative and open, but answers have been elusive. Until recently, questions and compromise have been entertained and sought with both determination and respect. Now today determination has seemingly been replaced by resignation. The enthusiasm for prayerful respectful debate has been pushed aside by some in an eagerness to flee constructive discussion, to put behind us the love, compassion, and ministries of the United Methodist Church in favor of a schism and exclusion that only promises to build additional organizational hierarchy and less effective ministries.

So much energy and time has been wasted to this point, with the promise of more in the disaffiliation process. Although much has been said about continued shared ministries, I fear that the future of our churches will take us on different paths with little to hold us in a unified approach to our Wesleyan theology. Consider your current local relationships with the Wesleyan, Free Methodist, the Nazarene, the Pentecostal, or the AME churches. The promise of cooperative coordination seems slight.

But it is done. Now there has been created in our midst in answer to the dissatisfaction and inability to reach a proper compromise, yet another Wesleyan splinter church, the Global Methodist Church. With a broken heart and a Spirit inspired determination to continue our UMC legacy of "*open hearts, open minds and open doors*", I wish them well.

As for Nicodemus, I trust he will continue to make his way to our garden of hope and promise, to forever ask of we *People called United Methodists*, "How can this be?" And under the Grace of God, in humility, with joy and assurance we will answer: "Jesus is Lord....."

But we will still chase questions with no answers and continue to ask....."How can this be?"

Your brother in Christ, Gordon

DISTRICT CALENDAR

Wednesdays, November 2nd continuing throughout the month -

Downriver Devotion at "The Pancake Underground" in Strasburg 8:00 a.m.

Saturday, November 5th - UMVIM Team Training at Floris UMC - 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 5th - Winchester United Women in Faith meeting for Zone 1 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Sunday, November 6th - Shenandoah River District Charge Conference and District Conference - In person - at Randolph Macon Academy Chapel, Front Royal, VA 3:00 p.m.

November 11-17 - Shopping for Afghan Allies

Saturday, November 12th - United Women in Faith "Looking Ahead Together" at Bridgewater UMC 9:00 a.m.

Saturday, November 12th - Winchester United Women in Faith meetings for Zone 2 and 3 North at Refugee UMC 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Sunday, November 13th - District AV System Workshop at Macedonia UMC 2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 15th - United Methodist Men "Healing Circles" via Zoom 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 23rd - District Office closes at 1:00 p.m. for Thanksgiving.

Thursday and Friday, November 24th and 25th- District Office closed in observance of Thanksgiving

Thursday, December 1st - Tuesday, December 6th- Rebuilding Outreach Trip to Buchanan County

Thursday, January 5th - UMF Executive Meeting via zoom. 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 26th - United Methodist Day at General Assembly

2022 CHARGE CONFERENCE AND DISTRICT CONFERENCE RANDOLPH MACON ACADEMY SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6TH - 3:00 P.M.

There were approximately 400 people present and filled the Boggs Chapel at Randolph Macon Academy for the First Shenandoah River District Charge Conference and District Conference.

Pastors and their Lay persons voted to pass their Officers Lists and Clergy Compensation packages for 2023. We remembered our Baptism, and the Saints who have gone on before us.

At District Conference, we voted for our new district Leadership Team, ratified the 2023 district budget and voted for our Members At Large for the 2023 Annual Conference. We dedicated the Chapel at the district office in honor of Jo Ann Liskey, who served as the treasurer for the former Harrisonburg District for 40 years!

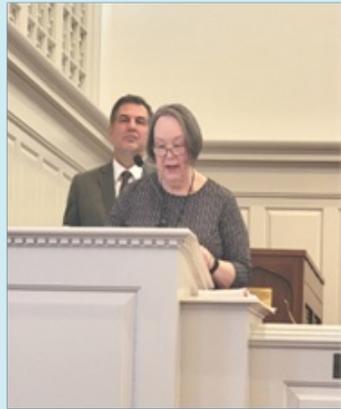
We received \$1,250 for the offering at District Conference. This will go to Camp Overlook for their ministries!



There were approximately 400 people present at the Charge /District Conference on November 6th. (The sanctuary and the Balcony were filled!)



Rev. Dr. Gómez, Rev. Chad Hrbek, Rev. Jim Joyner and Rev. Gordon Meriwether led in the Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant.



From Upper Left to Lower right:

Brig. General David Wesley—President of RMA

Rev. Monica Reynolds—Chaplain of RMA

Wilma Jennings—Co Lay Leader of the District

Rev. Michael Reaves—Co Chair of District Ordained Ministry

Rev. Kirk Nave—Co Chair of Finance Committee

Rev. Sue MacTavish—Co Chair of Finance Committee



Rev. Chad Hrbek and Rev. Gordon Meriwether read the names of the saints.



Walker Somerville, Missionary in Honduras, was the Guest Speaker for District Conference.



Rev. Brian Posey gave an update on the Cleaning Kits project at Charge Conference— As of 11-09-22—the Shenandoah River District collected 400 buckets and monies to make 118 Kits!



Thanks Emily (not pictured) John Stelzl, Tommy Stelzl, Chad Hrbek and Gary Heaton for helping load the van on Wednesday!



The Kingdom Stringers from Brucetown UMC provided music for the Conference



Jo Ann Liskey was honored for her 40 years of service as the district treasurer of the former Harrisonburg District. The chapel in the district office will be named in her honor.

THANK YOU - FROM JO ANN LISKEY

It has been my joy and privilege to have served as treasurer of the former Harrisonburg District UMC. It gave me the opportunity to know how the structure of the church works and how its

mission is put to work all over the world. Many friendships were made throughout the district and I treasure each one. I am humbled that the chapel in the district office has been named in my honor. I will continue to be a servant working for the glory of God.
Blessings, Jo Ann Liskey

**DISTRICT AT LARGE MEMBERS TO 2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
ELECTED AT DISTRICT CONFERENCE 11-06-22**

DISTRICT MEMBERS AT LARGE - ELECTED AT DISTRICT CONFERENCE 11-06-22

1	Jennings, Wilma	Market Street	BY VIRTUE OF OFFICE - CO LAY LEADER
2	Lutman, Kathy	Round Hill (Loudoun)	BY VIRTUE OF OFFICE - ASSOCIATE LAY LEADER
3	Schall, Susan	Limeton (Warren)	BY VIRTUE OF OFFICE - ASSOCIATE LAY LEADER
4	Cochran, Wendell	Mount Jackson	BY VIRTUE OF OFFICE-LAY SERVANT COORDINATOR
5	Harbick, Andy	RISE	
6	Armentrout, Betty	Bennetts Chapel	
7	Brock, Robert	Braddock Street	
8	Curry, Charles	Parnassus	
9	Feiring, Carole	Bennetts Chapel	
10	Foster, Pamela	Bennetts Chapel	
11	Gómez, Heather	Otterbein	
12	Gordon, Delores	Braddock Street	
13	Gordon, Gerald	Braddock Street	
14	Gordon, Tammy	Aisle 7	
15	Hassler, Cheryl	Manor Memorial	
16	Hrbek, Susan	Front Royal	
17	Knicely, Gene	Asbury (Harrisonburg)	
18	Levesque, Paula	Braddock Street	
19	Liskey, Jo Ann	Otterbein	
20	Malloy, Esther	Sunset Drive	
21	Malloy, Michael	Sunset Drive	
22	McFarland, Johna	Bridgewater	
23	McFarland, Paul	Bridgewater	
24	Miller, Diana	Fields	
25	Nickens, James	Wesley (Winchester)	
26	Ryan, Jill	Leesburg	
27	Skiles, Pauline	Montague Avenue	
28	Spurr, Steven	Kernstown	
29	Taliaferro, Richard	Stephens City	
30	Wilson, Malissa	Cedar Grove Charge	
31	Becek, Chris	Leesburg	
32	Scheuble, Larry	Rectortown	
33	Roberson, Theresa	Riverton	
34	Lohr, Sandy	Stanley	
35	Summers, Kathy	Bethany (Loudoun)	
26	DeVore, Tom	Asbury (Hburg)	
27	Monahan, Christie	Strasburg	
28	Reid, Delores	Mountain Valley	
29	Barley, Cathy	Stephens City	
40	Ballard, Joann	Harmony	
41	Carpenter, Jr., Otis	Annex	
42	Hensley, Carol	Elkton	
43			
44			
45			
46			

YOUNG ADULT MEMBERS AT LARGE - ELECTED AT DISTRICT CONFERENCE 11-06-22

1	Newman, Raini	Macedonia	
2	Bridges, Jacques (Jac)	Bethany	
3			

YOUTH MEMBER AT LARGE - ELECTED AT DISTRICT CONFERENCE 11-06-22

1	Barsteika II, Paul	Evangelical	
2	Bennett, Berkley	Luray	
3			

We elected 42 persons to serve as District Members at Large at the 2023 Annual Conference in Roanoke. There were also 2 Young Adult Members at Large and 2 Youth Members at Large elected.

As you can see from the list above, we have space for 4 more Members At Large, 1 Young Adult and 1 Youth. On Monday, November 7th, we sent out an email asking for other nominations and to date have received 3 more nominations for At Large, and 1 for Youth!

These additional nominations will be approved by the newly elected Shenandoah River District Administrative Board by November 30th. There's still room for 1 more At Large and 1 Youth! Please let us know if you're interested!

JUST A REMINDER TO THE TREASURERS ON THE FORMER HARRISONBURG DISTRICT:

PLEASE MAIL YOUR "ASKINGS" FOR MISSIONS AND MISSION CENTRAL TO THE CONFERENCE OFFICE. IN THE PAST, SOME OF YOU HAVE BEEN MAILING THEM TO THE DISTRICT OFFICE. AS YOU KNOW, JO ANN LISKEY NO LONGER SERVES AS OUR DISTRICT TREASURER AND WE ARE NOW WORKING DIRECTLY WITH THE CONFERENCE BUSINESS OFFICE IN PROCESSING OUR DISTRICT'S FINANCIAL MATTERS.

*Please send your checks to:
Conference Office of the United Methodist Church
PO Box 5605
Glen Allen, VA 23058*

if the checks come to the district office, they will be forwarded to the Conference Center so there will not be a gap in your payment records.



DOWNRIVER DEVOTION

**Wednesday mornings in November -
returns to The Pancake Underground
at 219 W. King Street in Strasburg
8:00 a.m.**

Hosts: Rev. John Haynes, Jr., Strasburg UMC
and Rev. Gary Heaton, Kernstown UMC

Email: johnhaynesjr@vaumc.org, garyheaton@vaumc.org

John Haynes 757-620-1575 Cell Gary Heaton 540-550-8983 Cell

The Wednesday morning Downriver Devotion is meeting at The Pancake Underground through the fall and winter months. **We gather at 8:00 AM and are generally finished by 9:15.** In a desire to strengthen collegial connection, offer grace and encouragement, and anticipate the renewing of our ministry, the Downriver Devotion is offered every week. Downriver Devotion on the river will resume in June, 2023. Until then, we will be enjoying food and fellowship at the Pancake Underground!



Grateful For The Service



Give Thanks
We are shopping for Afghan Allies
with gratitude.
Date: Nov. 11-17, 2022



Support Afghan Allies this holiday season November 11-17, 2022

It has been a year since U.S. troops left Afghanistan and many Afghan allies left their homes. Virginia United Methodists wanted to know what they could do to help, particularly those refugees arriving in the Commonwealth. So many of you took part in our Veteran's Day weekend of Amazon/Target wish list shopping that a substantial number of the items needed for Afghans at U.S. bases in Virginia were purchased in less than a week!

There are no longer any Afghan allies on military bases. Many have moved into apartments in the last year and their children have started school. Many of you have lovingly welcomed them into your communities. You have helped set up housing, delivered food, and driven someone to a doctor's appointment. You have been the hands and feet of Christ for God's children from Afghanistan.

However, the number of Afghans arriving has put a serious strain on the refugee resettlement agencies and there are still many needs. To help, the Virginia United Methodist Refugee Response Team is hosting another Grateful for Their Service: Give Thanks Shopping for Afghan Allies event this year. Although many of you will want to shop from the Amazon/Target Wish List set up by the refugee resettlement agency closest to you, you can choose from items from Amazon/ Target Wish Lists established by any agency. Opt to have your items shipped directly to the agencies for the easiest, COVID-safe free way to help!

Thank you for showing Christ's love to those who, like He was, are refugees in a new land.

[View wish lists by geographic region.](#)

DEATHS

[Rev. Elmo Pascale](#) passed away on 09-21-22 in the Crestwood Community of Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community. A memorial service celebrating the lives of Elmo and Ella will be held on November 11th at 10:30 a.m. at VMRC in the Strite Auditorium. Rev. Pascale was listed in our District directory under "Retired Clergy."

[Carol Dommissie](#), wife of David Dommissie, The Virginia Conference's Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, died on Monday, November 7th. A funeral service will be held at Good Shepherd UMC in Henrico on Friday, November 18th at 10:00 a.m. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church's mission office.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

[Minister Ansel Seeds](#), pastor of Mount Bethel UMC has been hospitalized as a result of a fall on October 31st. He will be recovering for some time. Get well wishes may be sent to: 776 Horsehead Road, Grottoes, VA 24441.



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

"We're Still Here.
Let's Celebrate Together."

Winchester District Zones 2 and 3 (North)
November 12, 2022

9:30 a.m. to 11: 30 a.m. Refugee UMC

There's no business meeting, just a time of celebrating and being together.
Light refreshments will be served.

Are we like the farmer, who plants the field and hopes for a good harvest? At this time of year, as the creation around us changes, we can see how blessed we are to have each day in these beautiful surroundings and the promise of more to come. We do not need to plant a field to appreciate our harvest of blessings. With that thought in mind, what does God have in store for us in the next year?

Mary Beth Coudal, an author for, "Response," our Women in Faith magazine, recently shared her thoughts and insights about the future. *"We need to practice a heart of gratitude, giving, gathering, and going forth. A simple thank you says so much! When we share our gifts and talents for the benefit of those in need, we give our best. We gather to fellowship with others, to learn about community needs, and to make ourselves aware of injustices and how we might make a difference. We can read books of personal trials and outcomes and discuss that together. Perhaps our problematic word is going forth. As creatures of habit, we like comfort and sameness! God provides the path, but sometimes, we hold back for fear of the unknown."*

As we enjoy our traditions of Thanksgiving and the expectations of Christmas, we often find new ideas, new programs and new traditions! This might be the year to extend our heart and hand to another in new ways. We need to see others as our sisters and brothers, not strangers. We have the tools to bring joy to one another. We are gifted with the ability to care, to help heal, to acknowledge, and to see people as whole persons.

Maybe we can be like the farmer. We can prepare ourselves for a harvest like no other. We can plant the seed of hope, we can cultivate a relationship of trust and respect and we can water all of this with kindness, patience, love, God's grace, and prayer. We may not see the harvest of our efforts, right away, but like the farmer, we will not give up! With faith, we continue to work with those tools and others on our teams. We may learn how new ideas may be a better way to move forward.

As the year ends, we have already started with the plans for the upcoming year. Our first **executive meeting of the Shenandoah River District Women In Faith will be on January 5, 2023 via Zoom.** Later in the month, **Thursday, January 26th, we will participate in the UM Day at General Assembly. February 3rd through 5th, our conference Mission Encounter will be held.** (More information to come later). On **March 4th, our northern area will have their Prayer Breakfast at Braddock St. UMC, 9:00 a.m. On March 25th the southern area will have a Spiritual Life Retreat at St. James UMC.** The Rev. Ashley Isernhagen will share with us. This event was postponed last year because of inclement weather.

So, like the diligent farmer, we plan. Our goal is to be faithful servants of mission. We gather our tools of love, action and sisterhood. As Women In Faith, we see the fields of promise before us and we prepare for the harvest of hope.

Best wishes to all for a prosperous new year.
Barbara Phillips, President-Shenandoah River District UMW/WIF

ADVANCE NUMBER FOR HUMANITARIAN NEEDS IN UKRAINE

Send you check to the Conference
office and sidemark:

ADVANCE #982450





From Sue MacTavish, District Librarian November 2022 featured item:

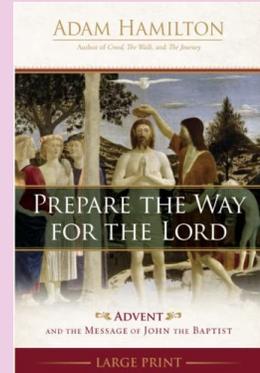
Prepare The Way for The Lord: Advent and the Message of John the Baptist by Adam Hamilton, 2022.

Take a look at this **New** Advent study by Adam Hamilton.

In *Prepare the Way for the Lord: Advent and the Message of John the Baptist*, Adam Hamilton explores the Advent themes of John's life and ministry, and how John calls all followers of Jesus to prepare our hearts for his coming.

In the Gospels, the story of Jesus is intertwined with that of his cousin John, the one whom the prophets foretold would come to "prepare the way of the Lord." When we hear the message of John the Baptist, it makes us and our world ready to receive Christ. Session topics include: The Annunciation, The Birth, John's ministry, and Witnesses.

Prepare the Way for the Lord is a 4-session Advent study. The book, leader's guide and DVD can be found in the **Bible/ Bible Studies section** of the District Library.



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

Religion and Race Announces New Grant Cycle Funding Initiatives that Transform the UMC and the World

The General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) is proud to announce a new cycle of the CORR Action Fund (CAF) grant program that will support creative initiatives that will transform the United Methodist Church (UMC) and the world. The 2022-2023 grant program will provide up to \$10,000 to fund projects that increase intercultural competency and support vital conversations about race, cultural diversity, and systemic equity leading to action.

UMC churches and other UMC entities are invited to apply for funding by submitting a proposal that:

- demonstrates bold and innovative thinking,
- reaches more people, younger people, and more diverse people,
- results in long-term change that could be replicated in other local churches, districts, conferences, or other entities within the UMC, and
- utilizes existing GCORR resources.

The CAF grant program was established by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church for the empowerment of diversity, inclusion, and racial justice work both inside and outside the Church.

Applications are now open. **This grant application cycle closes November 15, 2022.**

[Click Here to Learn More](#)

Grants from around the connection can be found at the conference website. [Click here to learn more about grants](#)



Please join the Virginia Conference UMM on **Tuesday, November 15 at 6:30 PM** for a Love, Learn, and Lead webinar on Healing Circles with the Rev. Dr. Rick Vance of the General Commission on United Methodist Men.

Healing Circles are a tool for working towards inclusion and equity. Healing Circles offers the opportunity for communities to build relationships and engage in authentic, honest conversations about racism, the cruelties of slavery, and ways to recognize and remedy present injustices. The Healing Circles process is designed to go deeper into the heart space so that we can tell our stories and also listen to the stories of others. This building of trust can lead to transformed hearts and communities.

We welcome the Rev. Dr. Rick Vance, Director of Operations at GCUMM, as our facilitator. Since joining the commission, Vance has published resources in leadership, discipleship and gender-based violence prevention. He leads workshops and conferences focusing on leadership, discipleship and men's ministry.

Please join us on November 15 to learn more about Healing Circles, how to have difficult conversations, and how to find common ground so that we can talk to each other such that communities are transformed.

Join Zoom Meeting
Tuesday, November 15 at 6:30 PM EST
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89824607164>

Meeting ID: 898 2460 7164
One tap mobile

+13017158592,,89824607164# US (Washington D.C)
+19292056099,,89824607164# US (New York)

Dial by your location

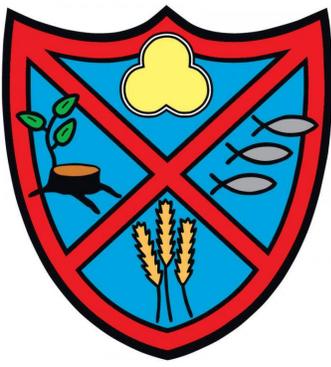
+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C)
+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)



SOCIETY OF ST. ANDREWS: ORDER YOUR 2022 ADVENT DEVOTIONALS TODAY

Look for ***Prepare the Way of the Lord*** this Advent season!

As the Advent season arrives, SoSA's annual fundraiser is new to 2022 with an exciting theme!



This year's Advent theme reminds you to prepare for the proclaimed arrival of the Christ-child. This timely reminder encourages that despite life's ups and downs, the best is yet to come.

This Advent season, encourage your congregation to look forward to what lies ahead with ***Prepare the Way of the Lord.***

Order your Booklet Today - Click here

The **Society of St. Andrew Alternative Christmas Cards** by artist Jim Harris are now available for order and will help feed hungry people. Go to **EndHunger.org/acc** to order yours by Dec. 2nd.

MISSION TRAILER

Taking a team on mission this year and need 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. We would love to see the trailer go out more this year! To reserve the trailer, please contact Joann Ballard, District Mission Chair at jballard1902@gmail.com.



Shenandoah River District Mission Central

Physical location: 1704 Smithland Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802

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

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

**Mission Central Mission Children's Closet is open to the public from
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month; the 3rd Tuesday and the 2nd
and 4th Thursday evenings from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

**Mission Central's Equipment for Caring is open Mondays from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
and Thursdays 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**



MISSION CENTRAL

September was surprisingly busy, being the end of our summer clothing season. We served 314 children and gave out 8,375 diapers. We began our fall/winter season on October 12, and, after only our first three client sessions, we had already served 238 children and provided 5,575 diapers and still had two October sessions to go!

We continue to get many new families, and most of our clients are struggling more than usual to make ends meet. Their deep gratitude for Mission Central's help touches us all.

We are in great need of winter coats, both boy and girl, all sizes from 2T through Teen Extra Large (i.e., Men's size Extra Large and Misses Size Extra Large or size 16). We are currently well stocked with infant-size coats and snowsuits. This Thanksgiving, we are especially grateful for the support of our churches and community that makes our mission possible, and for the blessing God grants us every time we serve our neighbors.

Donna Tinsley, 703-472-8101



EQUIPMENT FOR CARING

Equipment for Caring remains **open Mondays from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** to provide needed medical equipment to persons in our local and surrounding communities. We average 40-50 volunteer hours monthly and provide medical equipment to approximately 60 persons monthly along with disposables to 38 persons. During the month of September, we gave out over 1600 disposable diapers and pullups along with skin cleansers and protective creams. Wound care supplies and colostomy products continue to be needed and requested. Durable medical equipment loaned includes hospital beds, 5 wheelchairs (which we are in need of), transport chairs, bedside commodes, 8 walkers, 16 shower benches and shower chairs as well as numerous other items. We presently have lift recliner chairs which are available if needed.

We still have 2 large (each 8 ft 6 inches by 12 ft) blue gray carpet that are looking for a home. They are both in very good condition. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact us at 540-383-6112. We will give away or accept a donation for these.

A big thank you to all who help with this mission by your volunteer hours, donations and/or prayers. Contact Delores Reid 540-383-6112 if you are interested in volunteering or have questions. Messages may also be left at the district office at 540-433-2382. Monetary donations may be mailed to Equipment for

Caring, PO Box 2026, Harrisonburg, VA 22801. You can learn more about us on Facebook and our websites are www.missioncentralharrisonburgva.com or <https://www.shenandoahriverdistrict.org>

Taylor Rizzari from WHSV-TV in Harrisonburg recently prepared an article about Equipment for Caring. To view this 2 minute TV piece, click here: <https://www.wHSV.com/2022/10/25/valley-organizations-working-get-donated-medical-equipment-those-need/>

Remember our hours:

Mondays 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. and

Thursdays 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Contact Delores Reid, 540-383-6112

Rebuilding Outreach Trip - Buchanan County VA

There was massive flood in Buchanan County VA on July 14, 2022. Many homes and roads were affected or washed away. We have been in contact with those organizing the rebuilding efforts and are finally able to send teams in to assist. **We are planning our first trip Thursday, December 1st to Tuesday, December 6th for a maximum group of 8 people** to go down and scope out the need and work on homes. The current need is for drywall and flooring work. We will travel down on Thursday, work Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday and travel back on Tuesday.

If you are interested and able to join us, please reach out to Joann Ballard (jballard1902@gmail.com) or Mark Pugh (mpugh4738@gmail.com)

Joann Ballard - Mission Outreach Coordinator
Shenandoah River District

UMFS December Offering – supporting high-risk children

United Methodist Family Services (UMFS) is grateful for the faithful support of local churches in the Shenandoah River district. Your generous gifts help children in foster care, children struggling with mental health challenges, and special education students get the support they need to thrive.



The UMFS Charterhouse School in Edinburg (Shenandoah County) serves special education students from Harrisonburg up through Winchester. UMFS serves students with behavioral, emotional, and developmental challenges, like Sophia. Sophia was easily distracted and overstimulated in a traditional classroom. That led to increasing behavioral challenges. The small class sizes and trauma-informed, therapeutic support at UMFS helped Sophia thrive.

Your support through the UMFS December offering will help more students like Sophia get the help they need to achieve a brighter future. You can access UMFS

bulletin inserts, short videos, images, and more at www.umfs.org/church. Please contact Jill Gaynor (jgaynor@umfs.org or 804-254-9463) with any questions. Thank you for your support!



UNITED METHODIST GENERAL ASSEMBLY DAY JANUARY 26, 2023

We are very excited to announce that UM Day at the General Assembly is happening on January 26, 2023 in Richmond. You can register [here](#).

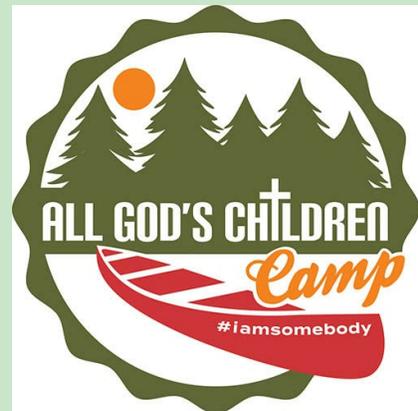
If you aren't familiar with this incredible event we'd love to tell you all about it! Faithful Virginia United Methodists from across our great Commonwealth have gathered in Richmond in January for over 30 years to advocate for our neighbors. When we gather together we arrange visits with our Senators to discuss issues that are relevant to our faith with direction from our friends and partners at Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy. If you are interested in putting your faith into

action, [register today](#).

You can learn more about the event and our schedule on the [VAUMC website](#).

Registration is \$25 for early registration and \$10 for students. We can't wait to see you in Richmond!

All God's Children Camp is taking applications for mentors for 2023. Please consider joining us for a week of camp this summer and come hang out with some pretty amazing kids and do some awesome activities! Don't forget, the only cost to attend is \$20.00 to cover your background check! So if you are looking for a low cost service project or mission trip for your group, this is a wonderful opportunity to give back. For more information, check the website at www.vaumc.org/agcc/ or contact Lori Smith at agcc@vaumc.org.



SPECIAL CALLED ANNUAL CONFERENCE SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2022 MINUTES FROM THE CONFERENCE

Two called special Annual Conference sessions were held on Oct. 29, 2022.

The first session passed three resolutions that closed three local churches under Paragraph 2549 of the 2016 Book of Discipline. The three churches that closed are

- New Hope UMC, Rocky Mount, VA, Mountain View District
- Lafayette UMC, Lafayette, VA, Valley Ridge District
- Starr Bolar UMC, Warm Springs, VA, Valley Ridge District

The following 10 churches were disaffiliated under Paragraph 2553 in the second session.

- Center Point, Bedford, VA, Mountain View District (\$22,543.00 disaffiliation amount)
- Harmony, Dry Fork, VA, Mountain View District (\$66,602 disaffiliation amount)
- Mountain View, Forest, VA, Mountain View District (\$344,694 disaffiliation amount)
- Payneton, Mountain View District (\$38,539 disaffiliation amount)
- Swansonville, Dry Fork, Mountain View District (\$67,200 disaffiliation amount)
- Hobsons Chapel, Powhatan, VA, Living Waters District (\$22,618.00 disaffiliation amount)
- Payne Memorial, Cumberland, VA, Living Waters District (\$37,976.00 disaffiliation amount))
- Painter-Garrison's, Painter, VA, Coastal Virginia District (\$45,763.00 disaffiliation amount)
- Crums, Berryville, VA, Shenandoah River District (\$158,646.00 disaffiliation amount)
- Harriston, Grottoes, VA, Shenandoah River District (\$24,381.00 disaffiliation amount)

The Minutes of the conference sessions will be shared when they are available from the conference Minutes Committee. They will be posted on the conference website at <https://vaumc.org/ac2022oct/> / and also shared on ClergyNet and LaityNet.

A livestream recording of the conference may be **viewed HERE**.

Mrs. Martha Stokes, conference lay leader, opened both sessions with prayer. The Rev. Crystal Sygeel led a closing litany she wrote for the conference.

Mrs. Madeline Pillow White, accompanied by the Rev. Jessie Colwell, sang the closing song, Hymn of Promise. **Click here to see the recording on YouTube.**



A challenge to Read the Bible in ONE YEAR Bible Readings for November 2022

Bishop Lewis has been encouraging the clergy and laity of the Virginia Conference to read the Bible in a year since 2017. There are 4 readings from the Old Testament, New Testament, Psalm and Proverbs.

[resource: <http://www.vaumc.org/2022biblechallenge>]



**Click Here to view the 2022 Bible
Challenge**

2023 VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE NEWS

The 241st session of the Virginia Annual Conference, to be held in **Roanoke, Va. from June 15 to June 17, 2023**, will be focused on the theme, United as One in Mission. Bishop Sharma D. Lewis announced the theme at the Annual Conference Team's recent meeting as planning for the 2023 June session is now underway.

The theme is based on Acts 1:8b, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." NIV

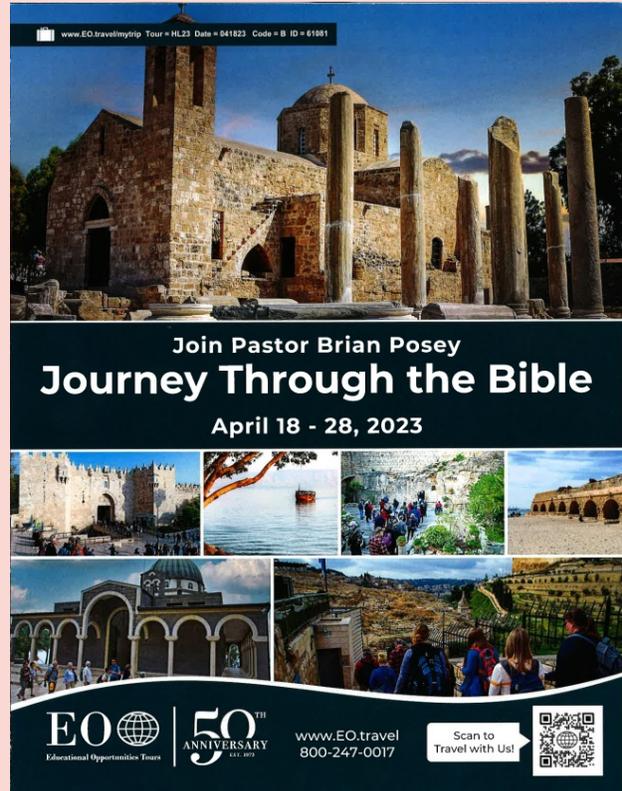
**10 DAY TRIP TO
THE HOLY LAND
HOSTED BY REV. BRIAN POSEY
APRIL 18TH - 28TH 2023**

I am looking to host a 10 day trip to Israel/ Holy Land. The trip is scheduled for April 18 - April 28, 2023. If you would be interested and would like to be a part of this trip, please let me know ASAP. If you know of someone else who might be interested in this trip, please forward this to them. I will try to assist with any questions that folks may have.

This trip can also give clergy 4 CEU credits.

Brian Posey
Grottoes UMC Pastor
(540) 236-2472 (C)
(540) 249-4239 (O)

[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE BROCHURE](#)
[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE ITINERARY](#)



www.EO.travel/trip Tour = HL23 Date = 041823 Code = B ID = 61881

Join Pastor Brian Posey
Journey Through the Bible
April 18 - 28, 2023

EO Educational Opportunity Tours | 50TH ANNIVERSARY 1973-2023 | www.EO.travel 800-247-0017 | Scan to Travel with Us!

**If you would like to have an article included in this newsletter,
please email Debbie Creech, District Administrator, at
debbiecreech@vaumc.org by the 15th of each month.**

Shenandoah River District of the United Methodist Church | 78 Brook Creek Road, Toms Brook,
VA 22660

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