

Loving, Learning and Serving Together

TODAY (8:30 am) Worship at New Hope UMC

(10 am) Worship at Highland UMC

MONDAY-FRIDAY (8:30am-5pm) Camp Bethel Day Camp at Antioch COB

TUESDAY (9 am) Community Breakfast at Maple Grove UMC *4th Tuesdays*

Pastor Amy will be taking some of her vacation time this week to see family and attend a family reunion in Waynesboro. She will be gone Tuesday-Saturday (June 26-30). As always, she cares and can be reached at her cell phone (804) 694-9759.

July 1 (7 pm) Community Celtic Worship at St. Peter's Episcopal Church

July 11 Pray for Kenny Bernard having surgery at the Mayo Clinic

July 13-15 Highland Church Camping Trip

July 14: Cassie Smith followed by Skillet Sisters at Antioch COB Pavillion

July 16 (10 am) UMW tour Fork Mountain with program

July 18: (Noon) Community Lunch at Bethany *Every 3rd Wed. of the month*

July 26 (7 pm) PPRC (Pastor Parish Relations Committee) Meeting

July 27-29 UMW Mission Encounter at 4-H Center in Smith Mountain Lake

August 4: After Jack music at Antioch COB Pavillion

August 5 (After Worship) Youth Meeting

August 12 (After Worship) Council Meeting

August 17-19 Lay Servant Academy in Wirtz, VA

August 20 Newsletter for September due to Pat Webb

August 21 (7 pm) UMW *Every 3rd Monday (No meetings Jan, Feb or July)*

September 8: Like the Moon followed by The Harwell Grice Band at Antioch COB

September 9 Mini Mission Encounter at Smith Memorial UMC

October 14 (3 pm) Danville District UMC Annual Meeting Halesford UMC

October 20 Charge Conference at Fairview UMC

February 23-26, 2019 Called General Conference of the UMC

Calling All Leaders

Please plan on attending our next Council meeting on August 12, after worship! Amy looks forward to rallying together for a new year of serving together.

Servant Leaders Make a Difference:

Annual Conference 2018 Highlights

by Madeline Pillow
You can view all the proceedings and pictures. Go to the Virginia Conference website at www.vaumc.org and then click on "2018 Annual Conference" under the "Resources" tab.

The theme for the 2018 Virginia Annual Conference, held June 15-17, 2018 at the Hampton Roads Convention Center in Hampton, Va., was "Servant Leaders Making a Difference." The conference theme was based on *I Peter 4:10*, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." Service was incorporated in the conference theme and lived out in The Great Day of Service, a three-hour period on Saturday, June 16 when the conference session was halted for conference attendees to participate in service. Over 1,000 people registered and service included clean up in the Hampton community including alleyways and a historic cemetery of freed African-Americans. Other participants stayed inside the convention center to put together 3,000 UMCOR kits and listen to three different social justice talks.

Conference Vision: Bishop Lewis reviewed her vision on June 15 that she had introduced at last year's Annual Conference: *Disciples of Jesus Christ who are lifelong learners who influence others to serve.* This is her vision for the Virginia Conference for the next four years. She reminded those gathered that all Virginia United Methodist churches will have a process of intentionally-forming disciples by 2020. She clarified that each church will have to individually choose what this will look like for their context. She suggested that each church begin in prayer, have a conversation about their potential mission fields to form disciples and to study three books that she recommended. (Pastor Amy has ordered these books and will be sharing.)

Conference Business: Eight churches were discontinued in five districts. Two new faith communities and one chartered church and their pastors were introduced. Resolution 3 - Compassionate Support for Members of the Armed Forces, Veterans and Their Families Suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress and Moral Injury was approved.

Resolution 1 - Affirm Unity in Christ. It resolves that the Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church urges the 2019 General Conference to affirm unity in Christ in the midst of our diversity, to challenge in love all that divides and to offer to all people God's saving grace through Jesus Christ that transforms the world. They urge and pray that the 2019 General Conference will resist schism and express openness to diverse perspectives in matters of sexual identity and practice. They urge all faithful United Methodists to pray for a way forward that nurtures an inclusive, evangelical, and faithful Church. The resolution was approved.

Two motions were made from the floor on Sunday, June 17: Jan Rivero brought a motion that the annual conference condemns the manipulation of Scripture to justify political policy that is contrary to the command of Jesus to love all people, especially children. She spoke to the motion about the history of children being separated from their parents and is now being done on the U.S. southern border. After speeches for and against the motion was adopted.

Update from Commission on a Way Forward: The Rev. Tom Berlin, member of the Commission on a Way Forward, presented a report on the work of the commission. The commission is a 32-member group with representatives from nine countries and held their first meeting in January 2017. "This has possibly been one of the most Christian exercises I've ever been through," Berlin said. All the meetings of the commission, he stated, had been based in Bible study and prayer. Berlin admitted that he had hoped the commission could find the one solution to bring peace to the entire church. "We are everywhere. We are in red and blue states. In African nations, homosexuality is illegal. In six of those nations, it can be punished with the death penalty." He also spoke to each of the three plans that came out of the commission's work. In February 2019 delegates will go to a four-day General Conference. More information about the work of the Commission on a Way Forward is available at the prayer wall (by the Pastor's Office). Videos are also available (ask Amy and she can send them to you) or find them on the VA Conference website.

Great Day of Service 2018: There were 1,637 people who participated in the Great Day of Service on Saturday, June 16 from 2-5 p.m. This day of service allowed participants three options for service: the building of 3,000 UMCOR kits, participating in three social justice talks and eight locations around the Hampton area with service projects that included cleaning historic cemeteries and alleyways.

Closing Worship: Bishop Lewis based her sermon on the Annual Conference 2018 Scripture: *I Peter 4:10*. She shared that at her installation service in 2016 that she wanted the Virginia Conference 'to stir up the gifts' and felt that the Great Day of Service the day before showed that the conference could discover those gifts and employ them to serve others. "As the body of Christ, we no longer experience the freedom of the Holy Spirit or operate in our spiritual gifts because we are too concerned with what we may look like to our fellow colleagues or parishioners or just too afraid—as United Methodists—that we will be labeled as charismatic. Beloved, I believe just like we experienced yesterday; that it's time for the body of Christ to discover your gifts; use your gifts and stir up gifts. "When you use the gifts God has given you, you will discover that God will give you the power you need to operate in your gift," she said. "It is by grace we received the gift and it is by grace that we use the gift. My brothers and sisters, spiritual gifts enable the body of Christ to function as whole." Bishop Lewis reminded those gather that once you have discovered your gift, you must do something with it. "Just think about it: when someone gives you a gift, what do they expect you to do with it. They expect you to use it."

Members approved a 2019 budget of \$31,615,000, down \$185,000 from the 2018 budget. The Conference Treasurer reported that statistics show a decline but membership stood at 320,000. Worship attendance stood at 100,000. Engaged in small groups were at 95,000. Some 75,000 serve in mission reaching over 1 million in their communities and around the world. Financial resources are good. Virginia Conference church members tithed \$200 million. Eight hundred and eighty-one churches paid 100 percent of their apportionments, a 2.6 percent increase over 2016.

You are Invited to Experience the Henry Fork Center!

Come experience the Henry Fork Center on Monday, July 16 at 10 am. (71 Sandridge Road, Rocky Mount, VA) Henry Fork Center's purpose is to "make God's love visible in the Henry Fork Community by being a positive Christian presence." The Rev. Lisa Nichols, the director, will be giving a tour and offering a program about what they do at the Center. Afterwards, all invited to enjoy lunch together. We will meet at the church at 9:15 a.m. Want to know more or have questions? Contact Barbara Guilliams at 483-1723.

A Call for Prayer

"We are encouraging every United Methodist to fast weekly and to pray daily with the Council of Bishops," said Bishop Al Gwinn.

All UM's are invited to:

1. Engage in a weekly Wesleyan 24-hour fast from Thursday after dinner to Friday mid-afternoon. Those who have health situations causing food fasts to be unadvisable might consider fasting from social media, emails or another daily activity.

2. Pause and pray for our church's mission and way forward daily for four minutes from 2:23 through 2:26 a.m. or p.m. in their own time zone OR at another time. This is because the Special Session of General Conference will be held February 23 through February 26, 2019.

3. Pray using a weekly prayer calendar that will be posted on the UMCPrays.org website from June 2, 2018, through the end of February 2019. The calendar will list a unique cluster of names each week. Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett, added: "We believe that the acts of weekly fasting and prayer will help us approach General Conference both individually and corporately in a posture of humility and receptivity to one another and to the leadership of God's Holy Spirit." For more details, visit UMCPrays.org.

SAVE THE DATE

October 20 District Conference with Combined Charge Conference at Fairview UMC, 1013 Westover Drive, Danville.

UM Women's Mission Encounter: July 27-July 29

At this year's Mission Encounter, there are 3 classes to choose from: "What about Our Money", "Embracing Wholeness", and "Missionary Conferences". Also offered is a dynamic children's class on "Money Matters". The mission project will benefit Kingsway Prison Ministry. ***This year they are offering a full scholarship for one first time attendee to Mission Encounter.* Those wishing to apply for the scholarship need to send a paragraph explaining why they wish to attend Mission Encounter this year. Remit to Sherri@fcah.com or mail to 4098 Old Forge Rd Rocky Mount VA 24151. Submission Deadline June 20th. A copy of the brochure can be found on the bulletin board.

Saturday Social Live Music at Antioch Church of the Brethren Pavilion

6 pm—Food, Music, and Fellowship Donations welcome

July 14: Cassie Smith followed by the Skillet Sisters

August 4: After Jack

September 8: Like the Moon followed by The Harwell Grice Band

Community Celtic Service

The first Sunday of each month a calm, beautiful worship service is offered at St. Peter's Episcopal Church at 7 pm. "Celitic" means the songs are inspired by Irish Christians, there are moments of prayerful silence. Communion is offered. All are welcome!

2018 Lay Servant Academy, Aug. 17-19

Classes and worship is offered at the 4H Educational Conference Center (775 Hermitage Rd., Wirtz, VA). The Lay Servant Academy is about equipping Laity (those who are not clergy) to carry out the mission of the church. All of the courses are open to anyone. Each course is designed to help those serving the local church learn more about leadership, personal faith development, and a deeper understanding of the United Methodist church. Courses are designed to support those seeking to become Certified Lay Servants and Certified Lay Speakers. For more information contact David Bailey at (804) 338-3168 and see the Handout on the bulletin board.