

The Ashland District Connection

*Connecting laity and
clergy to make
disciples of Jesus
Christ*

**Ashland District
Virginia Conference**

September/October 2009 on the Web at www.ashlandvaumc.org

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From the DS

Dear Friends,

As I begin my fourth year serving as your District Superintendent, I want you to know how grateful I am to be in ministry with the Laity and Clergy of the Ashland District. There are more examples than I have space for but I do want to mention some highlights.

Reasons why I am grateful to be the Ashland District Superintendent:

1. We have 20 churches who have signed up to participate in the 5 Talent Academy. This is more than any other one district – Winchester is #2 with 10.
2. We had the largest percent increase of church members for 2008 compared to any other district in the Virginia Conference.
3. Lyn Robeson and Lynn Manley are two of the most gifted, devoted and talented administrators I have ever had the pleasure of serving with – they run the Ashland District and keep me in line and on schedule.
4. Larry Tubbs and John Nelson, our present and most recent District Lay Leaders, are so committed to new church development that they both attended the recent School of Congregational Development in Chicago (this is a yearly national event) – John Nelson attended last year as well!
5. Miranda (Randy) Phillips, a member at Lebanon, has just concluded 14 years of service as a lay person on our Ashland District Board of Ordained Ministry. Randy is an example of Ashland District Laity who give their time and leadership in sacrificial ways.
6. The Ashland District Board of Missions consists of a group of clergy and laity who have a heart for the unchurched. These meetings always inspire my faith in our district leadership – lay and clergy.
7. Our Ashland District UMW, UMM, UM Youth are all active vibrant groups that are about Kingdom work - not just promoting attendance at their events.

For sake of space I will conclude for now. Please know that there are many more examples I could give of laity and clergy alike who inspire me each day.

Thanks for letting me serve as your District Superintendent.

Grace & Peace,
Mark

Upcoming Events:

October 4, 2009	Stewardship Education Workshop at Wright's Chapel
November 15, 2009	District Conference at St. Matthias
January 9, 2010	Leadership Training Day at Ebenezer

Lay Speaker Training

Fall Training is set to be more accessible to those in the southern part of the District, but all are welcome to attend. Classes will be offered in Richmond at Chamberlayne Heights UMC through the hospitality of The Rev. Livingstone S. Dore on October 17th and 18th:

Basic Class taught by Rev. Brooke Willson, our former DS.

Advanced Classes:

- (1) "Lay Speakers Assist with Fruitful Congregations" by Rev. Rosemary Welch, Hinton Avenue UMC in Charlottesville.
- (2) "Lay Speakers Use Demographics" by John Nelson, former District Lay Leader.
- (3) "Lay Speakers as Leaders in Contemporary Worship" by Rev. Chad Herndon, New Song UMC.
- (4) "Group Dynamics for Laity in Small Group Settings."

A class will be offered in Fredericksburg through Industrial Chaplaincy Ministries [ICM] at Peace United Methodist Church on Friday, October 30th and Saturday, October 31st.

For registration, contact Becky Guy at 540-479-3448 or through email at mwcof61@cox.net.

EXPLORING MINISTRY EVENT REGISTRATION DEADLINE DRAWING NEAR

God hasn't stopped calling young people into ministry and young people have not stopped exploring what it means to be called by God. One of the best and biggest events for helping young people in discerning the call is EXPLORATION 2009 which will be held in Dallas, TX, Nov. 13-15, 2009. EXPLORATION 2009 is a gathering for young people (high-school seniors through age 24) considering ordained ministry in the United Methodist Church. Participants will learn that all baptized Christians are called to ministry, and that some people are called to ordained ministries of Word, Sacrament, Order and Service through the church.

The ordained ministry of deacons and elders offers incredible opportunities for service in a variety of settings. Ministry settings might include the local church, campus ministry, hospital or military chaplaincy, mission at home and abroad, teaching in college or seminary, social work, counseling, music or youth ministries and many others.

Scholarships in the amount of \$150 are available for first-time attendees with demonstrated need. Talk to your local church about support as well. REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 9 and this event has filled up in the past. Don't delay in making plans to come. For more information, including a video, and to register, visit <http://www.qbhem.org/Exploration>.

The Rev. Alex Joyner of Franktown UMC on the Eastern Shore will be leading a workshop and attending as a resource person for Virginia Conference participants. He can be reached at 757-442-3481 or by e-mail at pastor@franktownumc.org.

From Your District Lay Leader

What if all of our churches were vibrant, active places where people wanted to be, not just on Sundays but all week long? **What if** we rethink church? Not in the terms of what it is, but what it could be. What would it look like? What would it feel like?

And **what if** we could offer the world a dramatically new vision of church, a vision that inspires hope, faith and action? The word “Open” in “Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors,” would no longer be an adjective that describes, but a verb that directs, so that together we open hearts, open minds and open doors.

The United Methodist Church agency on communication is focusing on RETHINK church. Through four areas of focus—growing congregations, developing leaders for the church and the world, addressing poverty, and fighting disease—the United Methodist church is indeed, RETHINKING CHURCH, Outbound, Unbound, Active.

This was one of the classes offered at the School of Congregational Development that was held in Evanston, Ill., July 29 to August 2. I selected a ministry track called turning around existing churches which had an intense choice called “Actual insight for reaching people through new and existing churches.” My workshops’ titles were *Lay People as New Church Missionaries* and *RETHINK church*.

It was a long five days but I enjoyed the gathering of 600 other United Methodists from around the country and elsewhere. What was amazing is that the group was very diverse in racial and ethnic makeup and also diverse in gender and age. From what I could tell, it looked as though laity comprised about 10% of those attending.

I would share that several Web sites are available to you and I would recommend that you visit them (www.umcom.org/RETHINKCHURCH.org, www.10thousanddoors.org, www.Find-a-Church.org, FAC@UMC.org, www.umc.org/ChurchMarketingPlan), not to mention You tube and Hulu.

I am now trying to compile all of my notes to share with those who might be interested.

Please reread the following scriptures and remember your baptism.

Matthew 16:24, John 3:16, Matthew 22:37-39, Micah 6:8, Matthew 28:19-20

Go Fish!



Larry Tubbs

Builder’s Club Update

You are invited to become a part of the growing ministry of our district by enrolling in the Ashland District Builder’s Club by committing to respond to a maximum of three calls each calendar year in a dollar amount of your choosing to help build new churches and help existing churches expand or renovate. To request an enrollment form, please contact your pastor or the district office at 804-798-1649.

The following congregations have benefited from calls in the past: Epworth, St. Peter’s, Wright’s Chapel, New Song, Wilderness Community, Lebanon, Register Chapel, Tabernacle, Bethel, Shady Grove (Hanover), Shiloh (BG), and Providence. **We’re now pleased to announce Call #14 for Rouzie’s Chapel to add a steeple, vestibule, and to make their building more handicapped accessible.**



United Methodist Volunteers in Mission are at work all over the district. If your church or group is leading a team and would like to solicit volunteers, please contact the editor and we will include it in the next newsletter. Gary Gross is our Ashland District Mission Chair. If you have questions for him about mission service, you can contact him at garlind68@comcast.net. Here are two teaming opportunities, one local and one international.

Costa Rica January 7-16, 2010: Plans are under way for an UMVIM trip to Costa Rica from January 7-16, 2010, to allow college students on winter break to attend. This will be the 5th year a group from the Ashland District has been in ministry with this community. While there we will be in relational ministry with an impoverished community outside of Cartago, approximately 15 miles east of San Jose, the capital. This mission trip will be multi-faceted, offering opportunities to engage in construction activity (replacing a floor in a church), host a Bible school for the children of this community, participate in the ongoing ministry of a feeding program for the children, as well as engage in ministry with the community at large. The team will be based at the Latin American Biblical University (Universidad Biblica Latinoamericana) located in a residential area of San Jose, Costa Rica. The total cost of the trip is \$1,200. To learn more, contact Susan Lynch at stlynch@comcast.net. Your prayers are requested for the team and the community in Costa Rica.

Goldsboro, NC October 18-22, 2009: This trip is sponsored by the Ashland District. Participants will be helping at the Marion Edwards Recovery Center Initiatives (MERC Center). One of the priorities of the Center is working with the kits we collect at Annual Conference. Kim Weakley, Fredericksburg UMC, is the Team Leader. For more information and to be a part of the team please contact Kim at weakleya@verizon.net or 540-273-1032. The MERC Mission Center is an outreach program of the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Interested in Leading a Team? First you must attend a Team Training Session. Two are scheduled this fall, one on October 24th at Kenbridge UMC in the Farmville District and the other on November 21st at Lakeside UMC in Richmond. For more information on registration forms, online registration, costs, time schedule, obtaining a team leader handbook, etc., go to the Virginia Conference Web site (www.vaumc.org), click on Ministries, highlight Mission/Global Ministries, click on Volunteers in Mission, and then click on Training Opportunities.

Congratulations to Charles Tillapaugh, Pastor at Wright's Chapel. The Southeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Men recognized Charles for his work not only in UMM, but also in all avenues of church life. Charles was assigned to Wright's 17 years ago where he ministered to a congregation of about 25. It now has an average attendance of 300! Charles has always been an advocate of local mission work for the needy, through gleaning, making applesauce for the local food agencies, and the Polar Bear plunge in the cold waters of Lake Caroline which this year raised \$19,000 for local emergency heat assistance. A few years ago after a Weekend Harvest of Hope, the group decided to raise money to buy two loads of wood for families in need. Last winter they delivered over 100 loads through their lumberjack program, and have mentored other local churches to do the same. Charles is the 6th Virginia Conference Pastor to receive this award. His ministry is a wonderful example of what our pastors in the Ashland District do every day! Congratulations, not only to Charles, but to his family and congregants! Well done!

COMING EVENTS

September 17-19: The Virginia Conference Common Table's African-American Church Resource Team will sponsor a leadership training event at Regester Chapel UMC in Stafford for African-American, Asian, multi-cultural, Hispanic/Latino, small membership and mid-size congregations. Bishop Robert Schnase, author of *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*, and the Rev. Rudy Rasmus, pastor of St. John's UMC in Houston, TX, will be the leaders. For more information and to register, go to www.vaumc.org under Event Calendar.

September 25: 11th Annual Heart Havens Golf Tournament will be held again at The Gauntlet Golf Course in Curtis Park, Stafford, off Route 17N. Registration and coffee are at 8 am; then 9 am shotgun start; and at 1 pm free lunch, awards and door prizes. If you are able to play that Friday, call or email Fred Coppell (540-903-6201 or fcoppell@cox.net) or Larry Tubbs (540-898-0876 or TubbsL@verizon.net). This is an annual fundraiser for Heart Havens, a United Methodist-sponsored organization supporting the mentally disabled. Go to www.hearthavens.org for more information on how you can help.

October 17: Are you new to a leadership position in your church? Want to sharpen your leadership skills? A workshop entitled "From ORDINARY to EXTRAORDINARY Leadership" will be offered at Ebenezer UMC in Stafford on October 17th. It is primarily designed for new church leaders and emerging leaders, although anyone interested in leadership development will benefit. Lay leaders are encouraged to attend and bring a new or emerging leader from their congregation with them. The workshop leader is the Rev. Glen Langston, consultant with Four Seasons Ministries. Registration deadline is October 9th. Cost is \$10 which includes lunch. Register online at www.vaumc.org, click on Events, then select October 17th.



Children's Sabbath Manual: This year's theme is "Create Change for Children Today: Bring Hope and a Better Tomorrow." Children in our nation desperately need change. The more than 13 million children living in poverty need us to create change. The 9 million children without health coverage need us to create change. The children who are being swept along in the pipeline to prison need us to create change. This year's manual has worship and education resources as well as a "Children's Concerns Primer" section. In the primer section, there is a story about a child, a snapshot of the big picture of the issue, an overview of terms and effects and detailed suggestions for creating change around that issue. Topics included in the primer are children and poverty, children and healthcare, and children and the pipeline to prison. The manual is available from United Methodist Family Services. Contact Linda Ray at UMFS (lray@umfs.org) for a copy.

ASHLAND DISTRICT CALENDAR SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2009

Date	Time	Event	Location
9/1	9:30 a.m.	District Clergy Association	Wright's Chapel
9/4	12:00 p.m.	Closing Early for Labor Day Holiday	District Office
9/7		Closed for Labor Day Holiday	District Office
9/14	6:00 p.m.	District Council/Board of Laity Combined Meeting	Aunt Sarah's, Carmel Church
9/15	10:00 a.m.	District Committee on Ordained Ministry	District Office
9/17-19		Leadership Transformation Training	Register Chapel UMC
9/18-20		Conference UMW Young Women's Retreat	VUMAC
9/19	9:00 a.m.	District UMW Annual Meeting	Mechanicsville UMC
9/20	2:00 p.m.	District Youth Council	Wright's Chapel UMC
9/25	8:00 a.m.	11 th Annual Heart Havens Golf Tournament	The Gauntlet, Fredericksburg
9/25-27		Kids Workcamp	Westview on the James
10/1	7:00 p.m.	District Board of Church Location & Building	TBA
10/3	8:30 a.m.	Conference Older Adult Event	Mt. Pisgah UMC, Midlothian
10/4	2:00 p.m.	Stewardship Education Workshop	Wright's Chapel UMC
10/5	7:30 p.m.	District UMM	Wright's Chapel UMC
10/7	9:30 a.m.	PAUMCS Fall Retreat	UM Center
10/16-18		Middle School Mission Weekend	Westview on the James
10/17	8:30 a.m.	From Ordinary to Extraordinary Leadership Event	Ebenezer UMC
10/17	10:00 a.m.	District UMM Installation of Officers	Wright's Chapel UMC
10/17&18		District Lay Speaking Ministries Event	Chamberlayne Heights UMC
10/18	2:00 p.m.	District Youth Council	Andrew's Chapel UMC
10/20	10:00 a.m.	District Committee on Ordained Ministry	District Office
10/20	10:00 a.m.	Large Church Lead Pastor Gathering	Shady Grove (H) UMC
10/20	7:00 p.m.	District Board of Missions	New Season UMC
10/23	9:00 a.m.	Autism and the Local Church	UM Center
10/24		Family Fun Camp	Westview on the James
10/24-25		Conference UMW 37 th Annual Meeting	VUMAC

PAUMCS – Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries

VUMAC – Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center

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