

The Ashland District Connection

Connecting laity and
clergy to make
disciples of Jesus
Christ

Ashland District
Virginia Conference

January/February 2010

on the Web at www.ashlandvaumc.org

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From Your DS

Dear Friends,

Now in my fourth year of serving as your District Superintendent, I want you to know that I am very proud of the Ashland District and am very honored to serve as your D.S. Here are some reasons why:

STOP HUNGER NOW FUNDRAISER – On Tuesday, Jan. 12, the Ashland District Clergy will do a packaging event for Stop Hunger Now. In order to raise the funds we challenged our clergy during our October retreat to take \$20 and multiply it (see Matthew 25:14-30).

The UMYF at Grace: Hartwood took up the challenge and held a soup/sandwich lunch on December 13. They raised \$947. Beca Unruh at Grace: Hartwood was the youth member who emailed me the great news of their work.

We are getting reports of other Stop Hunger Now Fundraisers with totals that exceed our \$2500 minimum goal!

Now it looks like our total will be closer to \$5000 than \$2500.

ASHLAND DISTRICT 5 TALENT ACADEMY CHURCHES - 25 Churches on our District have signed up for participation in the 5 Talent Academy where benchmarks in the following areas will be the goal: ministry with the poor, worship attendance, small group participants, stewardship and professions of faith. Our total of 25 churches is twice as many as any other district in the whole conference!

My hope is that more of our churches will sign up before the next registration deadline which is February 10, 2010. The next big event for the 5 Talent Academy will be on Saturday, February 20, 2010 at Cosby High School (near Woodlake UMC).

ASHLAND DISTRICT – 1ST in CAPITAL CAMPAIGN SIGN-UP – Your All Things New Capital Campaign District Committee was the first in the Annual Conference to have all the committee members visited and making pledges. Thanks to the work of our leaders, the Reverend Mark Miller and John Nelson.

I could go on and on. Just know that I'm very proud to serve such a vibrant and faithful district!

Grace & Peace,
Mark

From Your District Lay Leader

I pray that you and your family have had a joyous Advent Season, and Christmas.

Today as I review my 2010 calendar I am aware of one of my favorite songs, "This Is a Day of New Beginnings".. I like the words in Verse 4, "Christ is alive and goes before us to show and share what love can do . This is a day of New beginnings our God is making ALL things new." These words are also the words chosen by our Conference for our All Things New campaign. A New Vision—Fruitful and Multiplying is the core strategy to help the Virginia Conference live into its vision of having "faith communities where all God's people are welcomed at table, nurtured and transformed to be Christ to others in the world."

"All Things New" is a comprehensive plan to start new faith communities and invest in strengthening existing churches over the next 30 years. The primary goal of All Things New is to transform the culture of the Virginia Conference into a *culture of fruitfulness*.

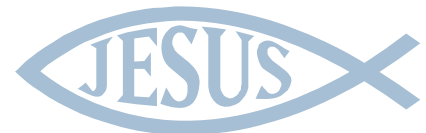
All Things New is:

- A proclamation of faith in the abundance of God's grace through Jesus Christ
- A reclaiming of our United Methodist heritage as a missionary movement of God's Holy Spirit
- A vision for spiritual renewal for all churches to be fruitful and to multiply.

My deepest wish for those entering our congregations is that when it comes to Jesus Christ, they will insist on seeing him for themselves—never being satisfied with somebody else's prayers, somebody else's services, somebody else's experiences of the power and presence of God. May there be no spiritual hitchhikers in the church, but only those with integrity who can say that Christ is Lord—their Lord.

May God bless the Virginia Conference in 2010 as a year of fruitfulness. Happy New Year!

Go Fish!



Larry Tubbs

Trail to Nails

The Ashland District Youth's 2010 Winter Retreat

The 2010 Ashland District Youth Retreat will be held **February 12-14, 2010** at **Eagle Eyrie Retreat and Conference Center** in Lynchburg. Youth in grades 6 through 12 are invited to come be a part of this exciting time of worship, fellowship and learning. Your church and the District Office have registration forms, medical consent forms, covenant of conduct forms and the campfire talent registration forms due by February 1st.

Cost: The cost of the retreat is **\$100** per person, which should be paid with registration. Checks should be made payable to **Ashland District**. You may also want to bring money for pizza orders Saturday night,

for youth t-shirts, and for items the band will be selling (CDs etc.)

Schedule: Registration will begin at **8 PM Friday** evening. The retreat program will begin at 9:30 PM on Friday evening. Sunday morning, there will be breakfast, with the retreat concluding with closing worship. Departure time is approximately 11:30AM. There will be no lunch served on Sunday.

Lodging & Meals: Each youth group will be assigned a cabin on the campus of Eagle Eyrie. Smaller youth groups will be assigned a cabin with other smaller youth groups. Really good meals are included in the retreat cost. You are welcome to bring snacks, drinks etc. Your cabin (really a house) has a refrigerator, stove, oven, coffee pot, microwave, etc.

Westview on the James

Middle School Confirmation Retreats at

Westview on the James: With two Confirmation retreats offered in 2010, choose the weekend that works best for your Confirmands. Both retreats are based on *Claim the Name Retreats'* curriculum. We are blessed to be joined by Rev. Chris Donald, Associate Pastor at Reveille UMC, as the keynote speaker for both weekends with the Steve Kropp band leading us in lively worship.

Following Jesus: March 12-14, 2010. This Middle School Confirmation experience is designed to help Confirmands explore the humanity of Jesus and the impact of his life, death and resurrection. Register by January 15th for the early-bird rate of \$83 per person or by the deadline of March 1st for \$85 a person—a complete brochure and online registration are available at

www.westviewonthejames.org

True North: April 23-25, 2010. At this Confirmation retreat for 5th-8th graders, students will discover the importance of using faith as a compass for setting direction in life. Register by February 15th for the early-bird rate of \$83 per person or by the deadline of April 6th for \$85 a person—a complete brochure and online registration are available at www.westviewonthejames.org

Statistical Table Deadlines

Deadline for Table 1 is Jan. 15

Deadline for Tables 2 and 3 is Jan. 31

As we start a new year and you begin your list of resolutions, you might be thinking of adding to your list “Do more for God’s Mission.” Perhaps you are asking yourself how and what to support. Here is a list of Missionaries serving in Virginia, with their Missionary Advance number, and their Project Advance number. You can enter a covenant with them three ways: through your local church, individually or youth/campus ministry. You will find more information about the covenant

forms and the missionary bios on the Conference Web site

<http://www.vaumc.org/NetCommunity/Missionaries>

Mark Stransky #803003 & Linda Stransky #803004, Marion, VA—Project Crossroads #781380

*Don Edwards, Roanoke, VA #982026--
Shalom Zone, Grace Ministries,*

Deb Keeney #982014 & Rebecca Parsons #3021143, Community Outreach Program, Roanoke, VA #904

*Lisa Nichols, Rocky Mount, VA #982953
Henry Fork Service Center #908*

Pat Watkins, Virginia #3020927, Caretakers of God’s Creation #711

If you have questions please contact

terribiggins@vaumc.org or 804-521-1144

Jubilee Assistance Fund

The Jubilee Assistance Fund (JAF) is a loan program where a local church establishes an account at the Virginia United Methodist Credit Union to provide collateralized small, short term loans for individuals who would not qualify for loans otherwise. To qualify for JAF, the borrower agrees to receive financial counseling, loan monitoring and payroll deduction. The program is a way to provide your church members short term help during a financial crisis and financial management tools to assist them with long term financial stability.

For information on partnering with VUMCU to establish a fund at your church call 866-657-0004 or email: creditunion@vumcu.org.

Thank You!

Our thanks to Brad Robins of Shady Grove, Won Un and his children, Lili and John, from Highland Springs and Lynn and Steve Manly for working on a Friday night unloading a truck full of computers that had been donated to the Conference. On a busy night during the holidays, this group gladly shared their time for the greater good.

News from the Pews

Much is going on in our district, in small, large and medium-sized congregations. Here is an article about one of our smaller churches who signed up to be a member of the 5-Talent Academy. Dean Pittman, pastor, sent in this information on one of the things Laurel Park is doing.

History of Aggie's Attic

Laurel Park United Methodist Church began looking at ways that they, the church, could be a church **of** the community and not just a church **in** the community. Agnes Dalton had the idea of having a thrift store and giving back to the community and as our delegate to annual conference, this idea was reinforced as she participated in conference. In July a meeting was held at Laurel Park to investigate the interest in such a mission. In a church with an average attendance of about 35, 16 people agreed to support this mission project and the ball started rolling. A store front was located in a near-by shopping center and a one-year lease signed. The word went out that we were going to shoot for an opening by the end of September. It was determined that **ALL** profits of the store would be distributed back into the community. The first weekend in October Aggie's Attic opened for business.



October 2009

- Store opened for the sale of items three days a week
- Profits for the first month = \$643

- Distributed : \$200 Henrico Christmas Mother, Longdale Elementary school (2 families with \$100 each), Trevett Elementary school (2 families with \$100 each) and \$43 savings for a scholarship
- In addition, clothes have been donated to the homeless, books given to the local library, and items to Family Services



November 2009

- Store continues to open three days a week
- Profits for the month = \$889
- Distributed : \$200 Henrico Christmas Mother, Holladay Elementary school (2 families with \$100 each), Lakeside Elementary school (2 families with \$100 each) and \$200 – Lambs Basket (local food pantry) and \$89 to scholarship fund
- In addition, coats donated to local coat drive for kids, shoes for overseas mission by Juma Semakula and items to Crump Nursing Home and Hilliard House

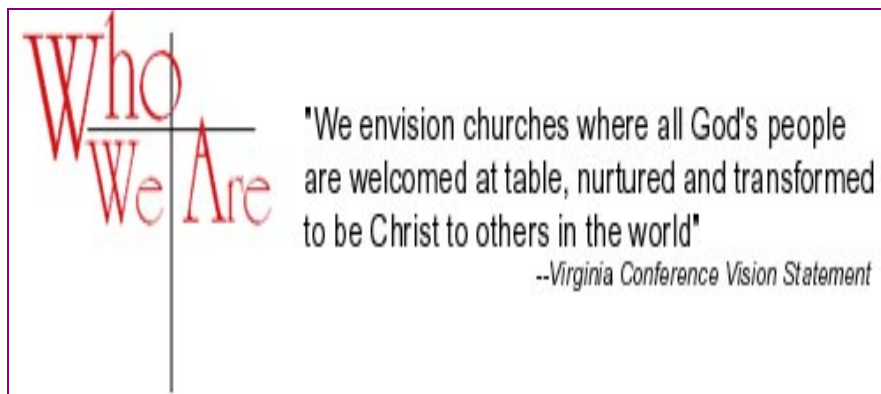
(Editor's note: see what God can do with just a few of his disciples! Thank you, Laurel Park, for your willingness to be disciples.)

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

District Leadership Training Event

Our annual district training event was held on Saturday, January 9th, in Stafford. A total of 109 participants from 32 churches within our district attended workshops, shared ideas with each other, engaged in conversation around display booths, shopped at Cokesbury and had a great time. Many of the presenters were highly complimented in the exit evaluations and very creative, very helpful ideas were offered to help make the next event even better.

Ebenezer UMC modeled radical hospitality for us throughout the day -- and attendees took note of the exceptional welcome and organizational structure that allowed us to move freely from workshop to workshop - being sustained with treats along the way. If you were there -- thank you again for coming. If you missed out, plan now to attend our next event.



From Your Editor

I have had the pleasure of editing *The Ashland District Connection* since C. B. King was our District Superintendent—all told, a total of five years. I have worked with many wonderful disciples in the district during this time. It's time to pass the editorship to someone else so they too can enjoy working with all of you.

My sincere thanks to Lyn Robeson and Lynn Manley for the wonderful support they have given me, and a special thanks also to Mark for his quiet guidance.

Best of luck to the best district in the Virginia Conference!

Sincerely,
Kate Cook

Ashland District Calendar January and February 2010

Date	Time	Event	Location
1/3	4:00 p.m.	Heart Havens Groundbreaking Ceremony	North Snead St., Ashland
1/4	7:30 p.m.	District UMM	Wright's Chapel UMC
1/5	9:30 a.m.	District Ordained Ministry Committee	District Office
1/5	7:00 p.m.	District Board of Missions	New Season UMC
1/9	8:30 a.m.	District Leadership Training Day	Ebenezer UMC
1/11	6:00 p.m.	District Council and Board of Laity Combined Meeting	Aunt Sarah's, Carmel Church
1/12	9:00 a.m.	District Clergy Stop Hunger Now Event	Wright's Chapel UMC
1/15		Deadline for Statistical Table I and all Profiles	COLTS and Eagle System
1/18		Closed for Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday	District Office
1/19-21		Minister's Convocation	VUMAC
1/26	7:00 p.m.	District All Things New Committee Meeting	Wright's Chapel UMC
1/30	9:00 a.m.	District UMW Prayer Breakfast	Wright's Chapel UMC
1/31		Deadline for and Statistical Tables II & III	Eagle System
2/1	7:30 p.m.	District UMM	Wright's Chapel UMC
2/4		UM Day at General Assembly	Richmond, VA
2/4	7:00 p.m.	District Committee on Church Location & Building	District Office
2/12-14		District Youth Retreat	Eagle Eyrie, Lynchburg
2/16	9:30 a.m.	District Committee on Ordained Ministry	District Office
2/18-20		UMM Workdays	Westview on the James
2/20		Five Talent Academy Teaching Event	Cosby High School, Midlothian
2/23	9:00 a.m.	District Clergy Meeting	Wright's Chapel UMC
2/23	7:00 p.m.	District All Things New Committee Meeting	Wright's Chapel UMC
2/26-28		Lay Ministries Academy	VUMAC
2/27	9:00 a.m.	Bishop's Convocation on Creation Care	River Road UMC, Richmond

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