SHENANDOAH RIVER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

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Download the District Newsletter in PDF Format

A Message from Rev. Dr. Kyungsuk Cho

Watch this month's video from our District Superintendent.



DISTRICT NEWS

Charge Conference Dates

SAVE these dates!

Eastern Location – (Loudoun & Fauquier Counties)
Saturday, October 24th - 10:00 a.m
Round Hill United Methodist Church, 11 West Loudoun Street, Round Hill, VA 20142

Northern Location – (Clarke & Frederick Counties and the City of Winchester)
Sunday, November 22nd - 3:00 p.m.
Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church, 210 E. Main Street, Berryville, VA 22611

Central Location – (Page, Shenandoah & Warren Counties)
Sunday, October 25th - 3:00 p.m.
Manor Memorial United Methodist Church, 9320 North Congress Street, New Market, Va 22844

Southern Location – (Augusta, Rockingham & the City of Harrisonburg)
Saturday, November 21st - 10:00 a.m.
Vision of Hope United Methodist Church, 1723 Port Republic Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

*For details about Charge Conference, including the orientation recording and paperwork instructions, please contact **Debbie**.*

District Conference

Save the date for District Conference: **Saturday, December 5, 2026.** Details to come. If you are interested in serving as an At-Large Member to Annual Conference, please **FILL OUT THIS FORM**. Elected Annual Conference District At-Large Members will represent the Shenandoah River District at all Annual Conferences, including in-person on June 16-19, 2027, in Harrisonburg, VA.

At-Large Member Nomination Form

Clergy Payroll and Accountable Reimbursement

- **Clergy Payroll** - Learn about the three approved options for Clergy Payroll, including how the conference's centralized payroll system works and what it means for your clergy and staff. A recording of the Sept. 14 Webinar and a walkthrough of the new Clergy Compensation Agreement can be found at vaumc.org/clergypayroll. **LEARN MORE**

- **Accountable Reimbursement** - Review the updated policy for how churches reimburse pastors and staff for ministry-related expenses. Find the new cabinet policy **HERE**, AR FAQ **HERE**, and GCFA's guide to Accountable Reimbursement **HERE**.

LAY SERVANT NEWS

Lay Servant News

Happy September, friends of the Shenandoah River District! I pray you had a great summer and that this month is bringing you blessings as well. Our Fall Lay Servant Ministries training day is getting closer, and we are so excited to welcome you all to Strasburg UMC in Strasburg, VA, on September 26th at 9 AM. **REGISTER**

Just a reminder: you can still register for the fall classes, which include the following: Basic Course (Free), Leading Worship, Preaching, and Ministry and Aging in the 21st Century. Our Keynote Speaker is Rev. Dr. Jason Stanley, and we will be blessed to conclude our day with Holy Communion.

We will also have ... **READ MORE**

LEARN MORE & REGISTER

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

- **Do No Harm Registration** - Register for this important training on healthy boundaries and safe ministry practices. **REGISTER**

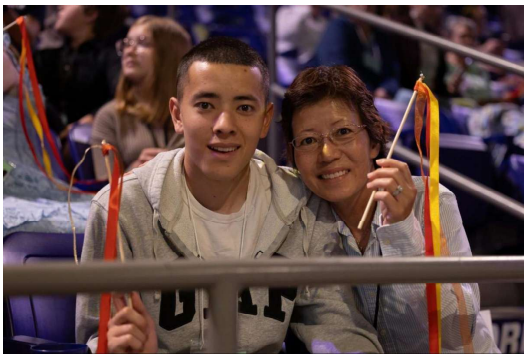
- **Congregations of Call** - Interested in helping raise up the next generation of clergy? Learn how your church can become a Congregation of Call. **LEARN MORE**

- **FX Rural Church Gathering** - Join this Fresh Expressions gathering focused on rural church ministry. **LEARN MORE & REGISTER**

- **Financial Webinars** - The Foundation is focused on providing training to our VAUMC churches to help them develop greater financial stability. Here are two upcoming webinars to support that ministry effort:
  - **Oct. 6 -- End-of-Year Giving, 11 a.m. to noon**
  - **Nov. 3 -- How to Choose an Online Giving Platform for Your Needs, 11 a.m. to noon**

CELEBRATIONS





AC 2026 - A Student Perspective

From June 17th - 20th, I had the privilege of attending the 244th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference (VAUMC) for my fourth year in a row. This year the Annual Conference was held at JMU in Harrisonburg (in our own Shenandoah River District!). Once again, it has been an honor to serve my church and my district by representing the youth inside the youth cohort.

Throughout the conference, I had the opportunity to participate in discussions, observe the conference proceedings, and witness how important new decisions are made for the church. Each year, this opportunity gives me a greater appreciation for hearing all voices and thoughtfully considering every topic that comes before the conference.

Once again, I am grateful for this wonderful opportunity to attend, and I would love to attend next year for the fifth and final time (as a youth delegate)!

Joshua Foster

We ran this article last month but didn't include the photos, so we are sharing it again!

IMPORTANT DATES

- **September 19:** Pride Worship, Harrisonburg
- **September 26:** Lay Servant Training
- **October 4:** Lay Servant Sermon Day
- **October 6:** End-of-Year Giving Webinar
- **October 10:** Accompaniment Congregation Training
- **October 11:** Miracle Sunday
- **October 24-25:** Charge Conferences (East & Central)
- **October 26:** Poetry for Preachers (CLERGY)
- **November 3:** How to Choose an Online Giving Platform for Your Needs Webinar
- **November 6-8:** Conference Youth Retreat
- **November 21-22:** Charge Conferences (North & South)
- **December 5:** District Conference

Full Calendar

Submit Events

Local Church Events

*Charge Conferences begin **October 24**. See dates/times **HERE** and on the list above.*

VAUMC NEWS

Find links and information from the Virginia Conference below.

VAUMC News
Find links and information from the Virginia Conference and the UMC below:

- New Q Source Newsletter Released
- Annual Lay Servant reports
- Interested in being a Poll Chaplain?
- Learn More about the UMC Solar and Battery Pilot Program
- UM Foundation webinar on stewardship (Recording)
- Tax Planning —The Housing Allowance Exclusion Benefit

Ministry Toolbox Articles

- Nominations 101
- Backpacks Are Blessed, School Is in Session: Getting Ready for Fall Kickoff
- How to evaluate worship and church events
- Mileage Reimbursement
- Breakthrough Prayer: An Intentional Congregational Prayer Practice
- Supporting our College Students–at Home and Away

Miracle Sunday is October 11

Every congregation is encouraged to receive a special offering on October 11; worship and small group resources are available at **vaumc.org/miraclesunday.**

Hatching Faith

The Hatching Faith Cohort program is designed to help churches more fully engage and include children in worship and prayer**. Registration is open now for Cohorts 4 & 5,** which will run simultaneously, joining together in a Kick-off Event in Spring 2027**.** The registration link as well as FAQs, cohort timeline, and contact information, can be found at **vaumc.org/hatchingfaith**.

HATCHING FAITH
VAUMC INITIATIVE PREPARING THE WAY FOR CHILDREN

LEARN MORE & REGISTER

MINISTRY PARTNERS

Find the latest news and information from our **Ministry Partners** using the links below!

RMN: Helen Ryde (they/them)

September 2 is the first anniversary of Helen Ryde's death**.** Their support and advocacy through the Reconciling Ministries Network brought her to the Shenandoah River District where they listened, laughed, lamented and encouraged us to stay the course toward full inclusion for all in the UMC. I witnessed Helen advocate in non-polarizing ways not only on the SRD, but at Academy for Spiritual Formation #42 at Camp McDowell in Alabama, as she responded to my emails, when she sat at table with those of opposing views near her home at Lake Junaluska, NC, and at the 2024 General Conference in Charlotte**.** She knew ... **READ MORE**

Equipment for Caring

Hello to all! I hope you have enjoyed your summer, even though it has certainly been a hot one! Our Equipment for Caring volunteers have remained busy providing medical equipment and disposable supplies for people in our community who have personal care and wound care needs**.** We increasingly encounter people who are not covered by insurance, cannot afford insurance, or simply "fall through the cracks" when insurance coverage leaves gaps in their care**.**
Chronic care needs can be ... **READ MORE**

Children's Clothes Closet

The summer flew, and now we are preparing for the fall and winter season**.** We are closed in September to transition operations but continue to provide diapers on Wednesday mornings to clients**.** We now have about 1700 clients on our books, signing up around 10 new families in August**.**
Our biggest shortage in the fall/winter season is traditionally ... **READ MORE**

UWF News

First, our prayers continue for our President, Mary Preston. She has been a great inspiration to so many and is certainly a true example of a woman of faith.
We had a wonderful gathering at Shenandoah County Park on August 15th. It was truly a “get-to-know-you” event, providing an opportunity for fellowship and connection. I hope this gathering will encourage us to ... **READ MORE**

September UWF Newsletter

Camp Overlook News

After a successful Summer Season, we are in full Fall Retreat mode at Overlook. This year we welcomed 157 campers to Summer Camp, which is an increase from last summer. Most of our increase came through our Day Camp program which we hope will translate to future overnight campers. We started our summer off with a week of Day Camp (our traditional program and an Art Camp) and we welcomed some campers at our Friends Together Camp (our camp for adults with intellectual disabilities). The rest of the summer had traditional Overnight and Day campers. Some of our specialty camp programs included ... **READ MORE**

Kingsway Prison and Family Outreach Annual Banquet

On August 27, 2026, Kingsway Prison and Family Outreach held its Annual Banquet Fundraiser at the Weyers Cave Community Center. Cosmic Bar-B-Q catered the event with a delicious meal of pulled chicken, macaroni and cheese, coleslaw, and baked beans. Dessert included homemade sugar cookies or molasses cookies, along with a bag of Route 11 chips to round out the meal.
More than 200 guests attended, creating a festive atmosphere—even as the heavens opened, the wind blew, and rain came pouring down. Guests hurried inside, where ...
READ MORE

Brotherhood Mutual: News & Updates

Inflation & Property Values: Keep Your Property Inventory Up to Date
With inflation driving up property values, now is a good time to make sure your church's property inventory is current. An up-to-date inventory helps your ministry know what to replace and how much contents coverage you need in the event of a disaster or damage. **Read the full article here** for tips on getting started, and reach out to church insurance agent Herb Bennett at **herb@sanfordinsuranceva.com** with questions. You can also visit our **Ministry Partner page** for more resources.

Office On The Move

We continue to offer our services to the churches in our district. Please note the days of the week our staff are available to serve you in your area.

Kyungsuk - Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday
Tommy - Monday, Friday
Debbie - Monday through Thursday

Kim- Availability varies weekly

Staff members' calendars are linked to their names above. Click the name to schedule an appointment.

The Shenandoah River District

Office Phone: 540-433-2382

Our Mailing Address: PO Box 1995
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Website: ShenandoahRiverDistrict.org

Facebook: facebook.com/ShenandoahRiverDistrict

District Staff

Rev. Dr. Kyungsuk Cho - District Superintendent - **ShenandoahRiverDS@vaumc.org**

Rev. Tommy Stelzl - Developer of Congregational Innovation - **Tommy Stelzl@vaumc.org**

Mrs. Debbie Creech - District Administrator - **DebbieCreech@vaumc.org**

Kim Johnson - VAUMC Director of Resourcing, SRD Communications - **kimjohnson@vaumc.org**

Do you have any changes, errors, or additions to the District Website?
Click here to complete the form.

If you would like to include an article in this newsletter, please email Debbie Creech, District Administrator, at DebbieCreech@vaumc.org by the 25th of each month.

Shenandoah River District of the UMC | PO Box 1995 | Harrisonburg, VA 22801 US

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