



# July 2024 Newsletter of Shenandoah River District

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FORMAT**

Check out the Events Page on our website, which contain real time dates and events.



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

**Web site: [ShenandoahRiverDistrict.org](http://ShenandoahRiverDistrict.org)**

**Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ShenandoahRiverDistrict>**

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**Rev. Dr. Victor Gómez**

ShenandoahRiverDS@vaumc.org

**District Superintendent**

**Rev. Dr. Andy Brock**

Director of Connectional Ministries

**Rev. Tommy Stelzl**

Director of Connectional Ministries

**Debbie Creech**

DebbieCreech@vaumc.org

and Webmaster

District Administrator

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

*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. – Philippians 4:4-7 (NIV)*

Recently, I went to see the animated film *Inside Out 2*. In the first film, Riley, who is the main character, learns to deal with the emotions of joy, sadness, anger, fear and disgust. But now she turns 13 and officially becomes a teenager with new emotions: anxiety, envy, ennui, and embarrassment. The story begins when Riley is sent to an elite three-day ice-hockey camp, where she is forced to make some tough decisions, like whether to stick with her two closest friends or hang out with the “cool” older kids. As the pressure on Riley mounts and things get more competitive, it is Anxiety who takes over and comes out as the movie’s villain.



Anxiety basically engineers a hostile takeover of Riley’s mind, banishing Joy, Sadness, Fear, Anger and Disgust to the outskirts of consciousness, and setting out to mold Riley into a more successful version of herself. What she’s unwittingly doing is making Riley more ambitious and conniving.

There is a deeper message at the heart of *Inside Out 2*, that encourages us to take a more expansive view of ourselves — to acknowledge that we all have the capacity for good and bad in the choices that we make. As in the first movie, the goal is to strive for balance, embrace complexity and learn to be okay with imperfection.

In the film, when Anxiety takes over and ignores any other emotion, chaos takes place, even to the point of a near emotional breakdown experienced by Riley. There is confusion, frustration and even lack of confidence. It is when Joy takes over the control panel again, that Riley realizes what she has done and then begins to feel joy.

And so, it is with us, when we allow Anxiety to take over, we will have chaos in our lives. Paul reminded the church of Phillipi to rejoice and not to allow anxiety to take over. Paul reminds us today the same, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” It is then that we experience peace and joy. Do not give in to anxiety or worries. Let us rejoice in the Lord. Let us say it again, Rejoice.

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

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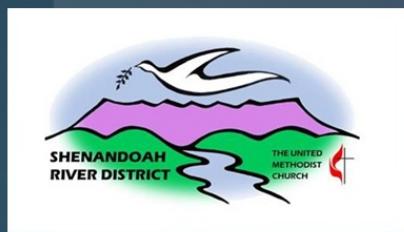
**District Superintendent Victor Gómez is pleased to  
announce Shenandoah River District has two new  
Directors of Connectional Ministries,  
effective July 8, 2024.**

**Rev. Dr. Andy Brock  
and  
Rev. Tommy Stelzl**

# Welcome

## DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES

### ANDY BROCK



I am from a blue-collar working-class family. I was born in Wilmington, North Carolina, but have been raised between there and the West Coast (mostly California and Nevada). Most of my adult life, I have lived on the East Coast except for two years in Japan and two years in the Central Valley of California.

Only three members of my generation in the family attended college: myself, Cousin Ralph, and Cousin Alpha. I earned a bachelor's degree at the University of New York, graduating 1980. I earned a master's degree of Divinity degree from Eastern Mennonite Seminary in 2011. I successfully completed a DMin in Contextual theology in 2021 from Northern Seminary. I guess you might say I am a lifelong learner!

My wife, Regina and I, have lived in Frederick County since 2005. We have been married for 27 years and counting. She has two children, both with children. One lives in Mechanicsville, VA the other in Fort Mill, South Carolina.

2009, I have served as clergy at small, mostly rural churches. I believe that small churches can be vital and produce much fruit when they serve the mission of God in their place and time. Prior to becoming an Ordained Elder, I served 12 years in a variety of laity positions in small suburban and city churches. So, I know both the struggles and joys of ministry from the pew as well as from the pulpit.

Andy will continue to serve as pastor of Reliance - Ridings Chapel United Methodist Churches as well.



A slide with a dark blue background. On the left, the word "Welcome" is written in a large, white, cursive font. Below it, the text "DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES" is displayed in a large, white, sans-serif font. Underneath that, the name "TOMMY STELZL" is written in a large, white, bold, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a portrait of a man with a beard, wearing a blue suit and a striped shirt, standing in front of a red brick wall. Above the portrait is a logo for the "SHENANDOAH RIVER DISTRICT" of The United Methodist Church, featuring a stylized bird, mountains, and a river.

My name is Thomas Stelzl, I'm a part-time licensed local pastor in the Shenandoah River District. I am also a student at Drew Theological School while I work on my Master's in Divinity. I applied for this position because I have a passion for and believe in United Methodism. Growing up on a farm in an increasingly urbanizing region taught me a lot about paradigm shifts and adjusting my sails to meet the needs of a new day.

This moment likewise calls for bold witness and nuanced thinking in our faith communities. The days ahead are full of possibilities for church vitality and opportunities for genuine engagement with folks on the margins. I'm looking forward to being part of the next steps of our denomination and spiritual life with you. In the coming months, I plan on building more relationships and listening to your memories, aspirations, and visions for the future.

I can't wait to work alongside each of you.

Tommy will continue to serve as pastor at Montague Avenue and John Mann United Methodist Churches as well.

## DISTRICT CALENDAR

**Monday, July 1st** - Parsonage Reviews due in the District Office (even if your parsonage is rented)

**Monday, July 1st** - Local Church Audits due in the District Office or uploaded to your Unity page.

**Wednesdays, July 3rd and every Wednesday throughout the month**

- Downriver Devotion at Strasburg Town Park Board Ramp- 8:00 a.m.

**Thursday, July 4th** - District Office closed in observance of Independence day

**Fridays throughout the month of July and August**- District Office closed.

**Sunday, July 7th** - First Sunday in Pulpit for New Clergy

**Tuesday, July 9th** - District PiM (Partners in Ministry) Officers meeting at the District Office - 10:45 a.m.

**Thursday, July 11th** - District UWF Executive Committee meeting via Zoom - 7:00 p.m.

**Thursday, July 25th** - District Administrative Board meeting via Zoom - 6:30 p.m.

**Friday through Sunday, July 26-28** - Mission Encounter at Good Shepherd UMC in Henrico and the VA United Methodist Center in Glen Allen. Starts at 5:00 p.m. on the 26th.

**Friday and Saturday, August 16th and 17th**- Conference Lay Servant Academy training via Zoom

**Saturday, August 24th** - Northern UWF Annual Meeting at Burnt Factory - 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Saturday, September 7th** - Latin Festival fundraiser at Braddock Street UMC - 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**Saturday, September 14th** - Southern UWF Prayer breakfast at Dayton UMC. Guest speaker - Rev. Chad Hrbek - 9:00 a.m.

**Saturday, September 21st** - District Lay Servant Training at Strasburg UMC - 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## DISTRICT WEBSITE INFO

If you notice any errors on the district website or would like any updates done (e.g., new website link, better picture, social media link, etc.),

Rev. Tommy Stelzl, District Webmaster  
tommystelzl@vaumc.org

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## KITS FOR CONFERENCE UPDATE COLLECTIONS HELD ON JUNE 1ST

### DUNCAN MEMORIAL UMC REPORT

A special note of thanks to Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church and the ladies that helped collect the items on June 1st (Shelly Turner (Mt Zion Leesburg) Marcey Kellogg, Sharon Thomas, Becky Haines and JoAnn Ballard (Harmony)

1903 Hygiene Kits  
155 Menstrual Kits  
65 Cleaning Buckets

FROM 25 CHURCHES

### OTTERBEIN UMC REPORT

179 menstrual  
514 hygiene  
27 cleaning

FROM 13 CHURCHES

Coordinator – Northern Shenandoah River District –  
Joann Ballard - 540-338-3007 [Jballard1902@gmail.com](mailto:Jballard1902@gmail.com)  
Coordinator – Southern Shenandoah River District  
Rev. Adam Blagg – 540-434-7747 [adamblagg@vaumc.org](mailto:adamblagg@vaumc.org)

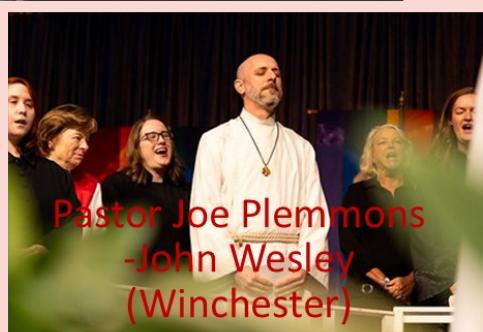


our district members that attended Conference.

2024 ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE  
Hampton Roads  
Convention Center  
HAMPTON,  
VIRGINIA  
JUNE 20-22, 2024

Annual Conference has come and gone but we have many memories to share!

Here are pictures of some of



**Shenandoah River Ice Cream Social  
At Annual Conference—Wesley UMC  
Friday, June 21, 2024**

**Thanks to the 100 people who came!**



*Ice Cream Social Pictures courtesy of Rev. Dr. Patricia Meadows*

**VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE DAILY WRAP UPS**

[Click here to download the Daily Proceedings for Session 1](#)

[Click here to download the Daily Proceedings for Session 2](#)

[Click here to download the Daily Proceedings for Session 3](#)

[Click here to download the Daily Proceedings for Session 4](#)

[Click here to download the Daily Proceedings for Session 5](#)

[Click here to watch the livestream of the 2024 Virginia Annual Conference held June 20-22, 2024](#)

## WELCOME NEW PASTORS ON THE SHENANDOAH RIVER DISTRICT

Bethany (Loudoun) - Rev. Sandi Benton Plasters  
Boyce-Millwood-White Post - Rev. Jason Corron  
Braddock Street - Rev. Jason Duley  
Duncan Memorial - Rev. Daniel Wray  
First (Timberville) - Rev. Brett Isernhagen  
Fulks Run Charge (Caplingers/Mount Carmel) - Rev. Hillary Evans  
Grottoes - Rev. Eric Strother  
Hites Chapel - Rev. Gary Heaton  
Montague Avenue - John Mann - Rev. Tommy Stelzl  
Middleburg - Rectortown - Rev. TaeWon Kang  
Mount Crawford - Mount Sidney - Rev. Steve Bird  
Linville-Edom-Mount Tabor - Rev. Costella Forney  
Mount Zion - Willisville Chapel - Rev. James Page, Jr.  
New Hope - Rev. Hyungkyun Kim  
Old Bethel - Welltown - Rest - Rev. Ralph Carver  
Page - Rev. John Stelzl  
Rehobeth - Rev. James Nenninger  
Round Hill - Rev. Robert Riggles  
Saint James - Rev. Lori Valentine  
Mount Zion (Rockingham) - Rev. Lori Valentine  
Short Hill Charge (Mount Olivet/Ebenezer/Hillsboro) - Rev. Sean Kang  
Toms Brook - Rev. Linda Breeden  
Verona - Rev. Sean Gundry  
Vision of Hope - Rev. Michael Reaves  
Woodstock - Rev. Todd Gess

[Click here to download the Appointments for the Virginia Annual Conference for 2024-2025](#)

ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
COMING TO JAMES MADISON  
UNIVERSITY IN 2026 AND 2027



The Virginia Annual Conference voted on Thursday, June 20th to hold the 244th and 245th Conferences at James Madison University. For the first time since 1956, Shenandoah River District will be hosting! That means, Clergy and Lay, we will have a lot of responsibility in welcoming our Virginia Conference to Harrisonburg. The event will take place at the Atlantic Union Bank Center on campus.

### ClergyNet, other email groups to shut down July 1

Effective July 1, 2024, all the conference email groups will be shut down permanently. The conference currently has 10 email groups and the full list is below. The largest conference email groups are ClergyNet and LaityNet.

In place of this, in July, members will be invited to opt in to a number of specialized topics that will be sent to emails. Members should not experience a change in receiving information from the conference. Ultimately the new format to be released will still have the same content members have come to expect: news, local church events, resources, giveaway items, obituaries, etc., it will simply allow members to decide what content they want to opt in to rather

than receiving everything regardless of individual preferences.

This change comes as a result of years of assessing conference communications effectiveness and, most recently, a February 2024 survey in which all clergy and lay members as well other lay leadership were invited to take part in feedback on conference communications.

It is clear that over the years, the email groups, at their best, have provided an arena for community and sharing and, at their worst, have added to stress on members with too much information, too many emails, and often varied content that is not of interest to portions of our audience. This change also recognizes that the email groups were formed more than a decade ago - long before other platforms such as social media provided a space for conversation and resource-sharing.

Please share any questions or concerns with Director of Communications Madeline White at [MadelineWhite@vaumc.org](mailto:MadelineWhite@vaumc.org).

Email groups affected:

ClergyNet

LaityNet

RetireeNet

VaCEF

VAUMC Fresh Expressions

VaUMYouth

VAUMMusicians

VaUMTalk

VaUMChildren

VaUMAdmin



Come join us Wednesday mornings  
in July -  
Strasburg Town Park Board Ramp  
8:00 a.m.

Bring your own kayak, canoe or  
inflatable or borrow one of ours

Hosts: Rev. John Haynes, Jr.,

Strasburg UMC

and Rev. Gary Heaton,

Kernstown UMC

Email: [johnhaynesjr@vaumc.org](mailto:johnhaynesjr@vaumc.org),

[garyheaton@vaumc.org](mailto:garyheaton@vaumc.org)



The Wednesday morning Downriver Devotion continues now that the morning temperatures are perfect and the water is flowing. Ministry Leaders are welcome to participate in a one hour devotional on the water. **We gather at 8:00 AM and are generally finished by 9:15**, If you do not have your own boat, one can be provided for you, but you must call ahead to arrange for a life jacket, paddle and boat. Hats, sunglasses and closed toe shoes are advisable.

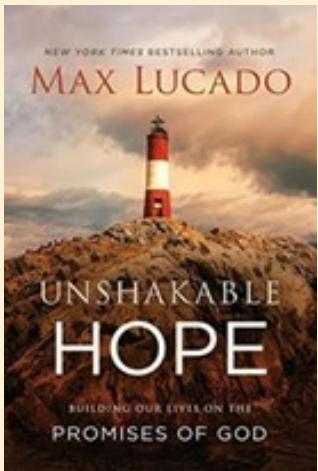
In a desire to strengthen collegial connection, offer grace and encouragement, and anticipate the renewing of our ministry, the Downriver Devotion is offered every week, rain or shine.

From Sue MacTavish, District Librarian

July 2024 featured item:



## Unshakable Hope: Building Our Lives on the Promises of God by Max Lucado, 2018.



**Many of us have just returned from Annual Conference where Bishop Tom Berlin preached on Hope in our Ordination Service on Saturday morning. So, I thought the topic just might be on our minds!**

Are things feeling shaky in your world right now? Maybe you feel worried about the future of your local congregation and/or the future of our United Methodist Church. Maybe things seem out of control by a change of Pastor. Maybe all the news of war, floods, fires, heat, mass shootings, politics is keeping you awake at night. Or perhaps you have been hurt in the past and worry about the future. If so, there is hope. For every problem in our lives, God has given us a promise, God has given us Hope for tomorrow.

In *Unshakable Hope*, Max Lucado unpacks 12 of the Bible's most significant promises, equipping us to overcome difficult circumstances by keeping your focus on the hope found in the promises of Scripture. In this book, you will be reminded that God's promises are irrevocable because:

- God is unchanging
- God is faithful
- God is strong
- God cannot lie

*Unshakable Hope* can be found in the **Bible / Bible Studies section** of the District Library. The library has the Participant/Facilitator Book and the DVD.

**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**



## SHENANDOAH RIVER DISTRICT LAY SERVANT

The Shenandoah River District Lay Servant Ministries Committee is working out the details of our September Lay Servant Academy, which will be held 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 21 at Strasburg UMC.

Here is what we know at this point:

The theme for the Academy will be “Serving with Grace in the Wesleyan Tradition.”

We will begin with a worship service led by Conference Lay Leader Martha Stokes. Martha is a wonderful speaker and leader who believes deeply in Lay Servanthood.

We will have four classes, plus a preaching review.

**Basic Course:** Taught by the Rev. Stephen Creech, pastor at Manor Memorial United Methodist Church in New Market. The book for this course is available by [Clicking here](#)

**Spiritual Gifts:** This course will be taught by Rev. Joseph Plemmons. The book will be [Click here](#). This is one of the six required courses to become a Certified Lay Speaker. It also will count towards recertification.

**United Methodist Polity:** The course gives students insights and understanding into how the United Methodist Church is organized and how decisions are made in the denomination. It will be taught by Martha Stokes, who recently served as a Virginia delegate to the General Conference. This is one of the six required courses to become a Certified Lay Speaker. It also will count towards recertification. The book is available by [Clicking here](#)

**Aging and Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:** This advanced course will explore how we can create and lead effective ministries for the older members of our congregations and communities. The book for the course can be found by [Clicking here](#). It will count toward recertification as a lay servant or lay speaker. Teacher - TBA.

**Preaching Review:** This is not the required Preaching course. Instead, it is an opportunity for lay speakers (and others) to present a short sermon to a group of experienced pastors, who will offer critiques and constructive criticism. Eventually, we envision that a review such as this will become part of the District Lay Speaker certification process. Rev. Gary Heaton is coordinating this session.

Online registration for the classes will begin in early August. Registration will be \$20, with a free will offering for lunch.

Wendell Cochran  
Co-Chair, District Lay Servant Ministries Committee

## RECONCILING MINISTRIES NETWORK

The 2024 Virginia Annual Conference birthed many holy moments, and among them is the ongoing journey of the Resolution for the Virginia Annual Conference *Apology for Harm Done to LGBTQ+ persons*. From Thursday evening through Saturday morning, the realization evolved that a vote on the resolution would reflect division rather than unity. We struggled in our intentionality to create spacious inclusion within a *large tent* UMC. By God's grace and through humble reflection anchored by prayer, a third way emerged on Saturday morning that opens the door wider to intentional conversations and deeper listening crucial to this process. As Conference Lay Leader, Martha Stokes, concluded in her Wednesday evening address, "We've got work to do."



Reconciling Ministries Network Executive Director, Jan Lawrence, encourages all to explore the resources of the RMN ([rmnetwork.org](http://rmnetwork.org)) and promotes the sharing of resources on the RMN website. Please take time to explore these materials containing information you are welcome to copy and share, as well. One resource may be especially useful as we "get to work."

<https://rmnetwork.org/resources/say-more/> **Say More** is a resource meant to support you and your community as you engage in thoughtful reflection and conversation around LGBTQ+ inclusion. We hope to empower you to share your story with others to further the causes of inclusion and justice both within The United Methodist Church and your own local context.

**Say More** is for communities and congregations who want to begin or continue facilitating conversation around LGBTQ+ inclusion. Whether this is your first time, or one opportunity among hundreds, we all benefit when we allow the stories of others to touch us deeply while also sharing our own reflection, testimony, and witness.

The foundation of Say More was developed by Rev. Dr. Tiffany Steinwert.

Participant Workbook options:

[Download with \\$10 donation](#)

[Download with \\$20 donation](#)

[Download for free - no donation](#)

Facilitator Guide:

[Download with \\$10 donation](#)

[Download with \\$20 donation](#)

[Download for free – no donation](#)

Laura Douglass, DFC, retired

[lauradouglass@vaumc.org](mailto:lauradouglass@vaumc.org)



United  
Women  
in Faith

## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH NEWS

Greetings, sisters! The summer is going by so quickly and I'm sure your days are full of activities. Many of you are helping with VBS, attending graduations, spending time with the grandchildren and enjoying well deserved vacations. It is so great to see our graduates; Pre-K, elementary, middle

school, high school and college transition into new areas of their life! Soon school will start again and another season of activity will appear!

A high light for me during our United Methodist Conference was the commissioning of Deaconess, Amy Purdom. Our conference president, Nancy Walsh, stood with her for this very special recognition. Amy will serve as a special Education Teacher at Staunton High School. This is a wonderful witness to Christ's love, justice and service.

Our next event to look forward to is **Mission Encounter, from July 26-28, 2024**. It's a wonderful time of worship, singing, sharing food and fellowship and being a part of a hands-on mission project. The "Welcome Home" curriculum leads participants into a closer relationship with God, as individuals, members of community and persons of faith. This study explores how we can know God as an intimate friend who welcomes us. As we abide in God's safety and dwell in His provisions, we become more aware of the full embrace of His power and presence in our hearts. This is another opportunity to grow spiritually, together in community!

**The northern area will celebrate their year at Burnt Factory Church on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Also, remember our **southern area Prayer Breakfast on September 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. at Dayton UMC**. Our guest speaker will be Chad Hrbek, Director of Camp Overlook.

I offer this reflection from our General Secretary and CEO of UWF, Sally Vonner:

...."God will continue inviting us to step out of the boat in faith, saying yes to God for the sake of love for God, our neighbors and ourselves."

Blessings to each of you!

Barbara Phillips, District UWF, Co Vice President

## MISSION ENCOUNTER JULY 2024

<https://vaumc.org/ME/>

Mission Encounter is an opportunity to study current issues impacting society based on current social justice and mission-related topics. Participants grow in understanding the mission of the church in the current world context; conference events are open to all.

Dates: July 26-28, 2024 (Friday-Sunday)

Location: Good Shepherd UMC

9155 Hungary Rd, Henrico, VA 23294

and

VA United Methodist Center

10330 Staples Mill Rd, Glen Allen, VA 23060

Plenary: Rev. Audrey Smith

Class Leaders:

Rev. Dr. JaeHaeng Choi (Korean)

Rev. Brenda Laws (English)

Rev. Evelyn Penn (English)

[Click here](#) for the detailed schedule, curriculum description, and online event registration.

## REPORT OF CEMCA AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE (COMMISSION ON ETHNIC MINORITY CONCERNs AND ADVOCACY)

The Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy (CEMCA) of the Virginia United Methodist Conference is dedicated to promoting racial and ethnic inclusivity within our church community. This vital commission works tirelessly to address issues of inequality and advocate for the rights and voices of ethnic minorities. By fostering dialogue, providing educational resources, and supporting leadership development, CEMCA challenges us to confront and dismantle systemic barriers that hinder true inclusivity.

In this context, we are reminded of the powerful words of German Lutheran pastor Martin Niemöller, who wrote:

"First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—Because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—Because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—Because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me..."

Perhaps you have already heard this before; this is the poetic form of a 1946 post-war confessional prose by Niemöller. It is about the silence of many people and clergy, including himself, that happened so many years ago.

CEMCA's mission is both a comfort and a call to action. It comforts us by providing a supportive community that values diversity and challenges us to be active participants in the pursuit of justice and equity. It urges us to speak out against injustice, reminding us that silence can be complicit in perpetuating oppression.

Through CEMCA's work, we are reminded of our shared call to embody Christ's love for all people, living out the gospel in ways that honor the rich tapestry of our faith community. Let us embrace this mission wholeheartedly, striving to create a church where everyone, regardless of their background, feels valued, respected, and empowered to live in the diverse kingdom of God.

For More information, go to [vaumc.org/cemca](http://vaumc.org/cemca)

Eduardo Carrillo, Co-Chair CEMCA

## Shenandoah River District Mission Central Clothes Closet

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 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**



### MISSION CENTRAL - CHILDREN'S CLOTHES CLOSET

"Hello and happy 4th from the Children's Clothes Closet! Meeting so many people in our work from foreign countries and hearing their stories, we know that we are truly blessed to be Americans.

So much to be thankful for! We are thrilled with our new entrance sign by Eddie Edwards Signs! Doesn't it look great? And we so appreciate all the hard work put in for us by the Keezletown UMC Men, who have worked on our sheds and repaired our bathroom floor. Thank you, guys, for all you do for us. It really does "take a village" to make our mission run successfully.

We are still in great need of infant clothing of all sizes, 0-24 months. We have absolutely no refills for 24-month boy clothes and are out of 18 month and 24-month sleepers. We are considering reducing the number of baby outfits from 5 to 3 per month unless our inventory improves. Hopefully this will be temporary as we do know that God provides! Also, we continue to be (and will remain all summer if history repeats itself!) short on shorts for boys of all sizes! Especially 5T through teen (adult) sizes. We will likely be in need of girls' shorts as well before long. So please keep us in mind when cleaning out the closet or hitting the yard sales, thank you!

There is great need in our community that is increasing, and it is becoming harder for us to support. But with God's help, we will keep moving forward. Thanks to all who bless us in this endeavor."

**Donna Tinsley, 703-472-8101**



### **Shenandoah River District Equipment for Caring**

Physical Location: 8335 North Valley Pike, Rockingham, VA 22802

PHONE NUMBER FOR EQUIPMENT FOR CARING: 540-404-1159

**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.**

## EQUIPMENT FOR CARING

We continue to work at meeting the local community needs for medical equipment and supplies with your help and donations. I am always amazed at the outpouring of our community to help with those needing these things. During May we loaned out 8 rollators, 9 wheelchairs, 4 transport chairs, 2 knee scooters, 6 shower and tub benches, 6 bedside commodes as well as a motorized scooter and lift recliner chair. We gave out over 1300 incontinence products (adult pullups, diapers and bed pads) with half of these being large pullups. Multiple adaptive and safety items were given along with wound care supplies.



We meet so many people who are seeking the physical presence of Jesus and I believe we provide that love and caring in what we do. You may want to consider this as something you can help with in cleaning, safety checking and organizing equipment and supplies as well as helping persons in the moment they are facing changes and challenges. We appreciate groups who do fund raisers and support us by providing specific supplies or money to help buy needed equipment and supplies. We often find the need to buy large adult pullups as well as rollators and transport chairs which are often requested. We remain grateful for our opportunity to have a central location at Mount Tabor UMC where people can easily come and get in without physical barriers. Praise be to God for his hand in all of this.

**CHECK US OUT AT:**  
[www.missioncentralharrisonburgva.com](http://www.missioncentralharrisonburgva.com) or  
<https://www.shenandoahriverdistrict.org/mission-central>  
and Facebook

**Contact Delores Reid, 540-404-1159**

## **CAMP OVERLOOK NEWS**

We are about half way through the Summer Season and things are rolling along. The last week of Camp ends on July 26th.



Programs include Day Camp, Mini Camp, ChrisKids (Elementary), Voyagers (Middle School), Mission Camp (Middle and High School), Survivor (Middle School), Horse Camp (Middle School), Adventure Quest (High School) and Night Flight (High School). This year we will be Journeying through the Life of Christ with a Christmas experience at the beginning of the week and ending with Easter. In between, we will witness Jesus' Baptism, Miracles, Parables, and the events of Holy Week. We will also be enjoying Swimming, Hiking, Arts & Crafts, trying out the new Climbing Wall and Zipline, Playing Games, and Making new Friends.

If you would like to support our Staff directly, you can make donations to our Partners in Mission Program which gives our Summer Staff a little bonus at the end of the summer. Our Staff truly are Missionaries as they serve for the 8 weeks making far less than they would in another job. Scholarship assistance helps us to allow Campers join us that may not be able to pay the full price for a week at camp. Summer Camp sessions range in price from \$200 for Day Camp to \$620 for Horse Camp. For more information about these ways of supporting Overlook, feel free to reach out to us.

After summer winds down, Chad is looking forward to being able to visit churches either on Sunday Morning or for meetings during the week. Reach out to us to see when Chad can come and share what is happening at your camp.

Chad Hrbek  
Executive Director - Camp Overlook  
chadhrbek@vaumc.org

## **CONNECT STUDENTS TO CAMPUS MINISTRIES**

As high school seniors graduate this season, you can help connect those planning to attend college with a ministry home away from home. The Virginia Annual Conference supports 13 campus ministries and 4 United Methodist colleges/universities across Virginia. Our chaplains and campus ministers are excited to connect with students from your congregation as they head off to school.

Please take a moment to provide the conference office with contact information for every student who will be enrolled in a college or university this fall (Para. 232 and 256.3d in the Book of Discipline). Our VAUMC campus ministers and chaplains reach out to incoming students over the summer, and welcome freshmen as they arrive on campus in the fall. You can find the form to submit information [here](#).

**Here's a video** featuring our campus ministries, and more information about contacting our ministries [here](#).

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## **CONFERENCE LAY SERVANT ACADEMY TRAINING - VIA ZOOM AUGUST 16 AND 17, 2024**

Registration Fee: \$30 for the 10-hour courses/\$15 for the CLM Orientation Course

Registration will Close on Monday, August 12, at 4:30 p.m.

Note: Two hours of class time have been spent on reading the required materials for the class! \* This applies only to those who are working

towards Lay Servant Certifications of CEU's

Here is the course selections--

- Basic
- Children's Faith Formation
- Spiritual Gifts
- Social Principles
- Certified Lay Minister Orientation
- Leading Worship

**[Click here for more information on this event](#)**

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Hope Through Immigration Legal Services

# LATIN FESTIVAL FUNDRAISER

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 5:30PM - 8PM

TICKET PRICE: \$25/PERSON

KIDS 12 AND UNDER ARE FREE!

MUSIC

FOOD

GAMES

Braddock Street UMC  
115 Wolfe St., Winchester, VA 22601

SCAN THE QR CODE  
TO BUY TICKETS



If you have any questions, then email  
Eric Dillon, Senior Development Director at  
[eric@justneighbors.org](mailto:eric@justneighbors.org)

Just Neighbors is a 501 (c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit.  
Donations can be deductible for federal income tax  
purposes.

## COUNCIL OF BISHOPS OFFERING THREE SCHOLARSHIPS

Application for Partial Scholarship for  
The United Methodist Ecumenical and Interreligious Training and  
The National Workshop on Christian Unity Gathering  
November 18-20, 2024

**The Church Center for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Chicago, Illinois  
Deadline for application - August 30, 2024**

*The National Workshop on Christian Unity (NWCU) has been gathering annually since 1963. Begun by leaders in the Roman Catholic Church, it is an opportunity to learn ecumenical theology, worship together and have fellowship with other Christians in the US. The United Methodist Ecumenical and Interreligious Training (UMEIT: USA) meets parallel to the NWCU in the same location, allowing for Methodists interested in ecumenism to have further training. Together the NWCU and UMEIT: USA are excellent opportunities for all those interested in ecumenism. Participation for annual conference Christian Unity leaders is strongly recommended, as the event also allows for personal interaction with the Council of Bishops' ecumenical/interreligious staff.*

**[Click here to download application for  
Ecumenical and Interreligious Training](#)**

**LOCAL INITIATIVE GRANT APPLICATION 2025  
Deadline for application - August 15, 2024**

*The Council of Bishops provides leadership for the ecumenical and interreligious ministries of The United Methodist Church. To that end they are offering 3 grants, each in the amount of \$1,000 to groups within United Methodist Annual Conferences for special projects designed to strengthen ecumenical and/or interreligious relationships. The application deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2024. Recipients will be chosen and the initial \$500 will be granted by the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2024. The projects must be completed between January and July 2025. The second \$500 will be granted once a summary report is filed. Preference will be given to groups within annual and central conferences elected to lead in Christian unity and interreligious relationships. Note: these grants are specifically for projects that are ecumenical and/or interreligious in both scope (who is included) and focus (the goal is visible unity).*

**[Click here to download application for Local Initiative Grant](#)**

**Application for Scholarship to Attend  
The Ecumenical Institute at Bossey  
Presented in 2024 (for participation in the 2025 Graduate Session)  
Deadline for application - October 1, 2024**

*The Ecumenical Institute was founded by The World Council of Churches in Switzerland in 1946 as an “ecumenical laboratory,” bringing together students of ecumenism from across the Christian community. The Council of Bishops (COB) is pleased to offer an annual scholarship to one student to participate in the “Complementary Certificate in Ecumenical Studies”(CC) through Bossey in conjunction with the University of Geneva. A total amount of \$10,000 US will be sent to Bossey on behalf of the chosen student, with the rest of the funding raised by the student themselves. Applicants for this partial scholarship must be active members of The United Methodist Church, be between the ages of 22 and 30, be preparing through an approved seminary for vocational ministry in The UMC and be accepted by Bossey into this program. The deadline to receive application to Bossey is in November 2024, so completed applications for this scholarship must be received by the Council of Bishops’ office no later than October 1, 2024. Notification will be given to the scholarship recipient no later than October 11, 2023 so the recipient can complete his or her application to Bossey in time. For more information about the CC in Ecumenical Studies, go to <https://www.oikoumene.org/what-we-do/the-ecumenical-institute-bossey>*

**[Click here to download application for The Ecumenical Institute](#)**

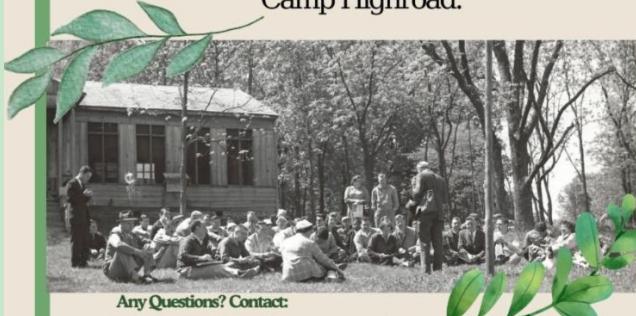


# You Are Invited

## Camp Highroad Open House 75th Jubilee Celebration

Saturday, September 7th 9 am to 4 pm

We are delighted to invite you to celebrate with us as we mark the 75th Anniversary of Camp Highroad, an outdoor ministry set apart to serve, grow and renew all who visit. Camp Highroad has been a sanctuary for 75 years, providing a haven for outdoor Christian ministry, personal growth, and memorable adventures. This momentous anniversary serves as a testament to the dedication and devotion of countless campers, staff, and supporters who have contributed to the legacy of Camp Highroad.



Any Questions? Contact:  
[director@camphighroad.org](mailto:director@camphighroad.org)  
540-687-6262



**Register Here!**



[camphighroad.org/75years](http://camphighroad.org/75years)

**All Are Invited**

Friends and Supporters of  
Camp Highroad

Current and Previous Campers

Current and Former Staff

**Camp Highroad**  
**21164 Steptoe Hill Road**  
**Middleburg, VA 20117**

## REGISTER NOW FOR "GROWING YOUNG RETREAT"

Registration is now open for the "Growing Young Retreat: Six strategies to help young people discover and love your church" hosted by the Virginia Annual Conference from **October 18-19, 2024**.

Where: Roslyn Retreat Center, 8727 River Road, Richmond, VA 23229

Cost: \$75 per person (includes lodging and meals); \$50 per person if commuting

This event is open to all: Clergy, Laity, Children's Ministry Leaders, Youth Ministry Leaders,

Click on the button below to view the various Grants offered through the Virginia Annual Conference and others

**Grants**

## GRANT AND LOAN APPLICATIONS FOR SHENANDOAH RIVER DISTRICT

*Please note applications are reviewed twice yearly by the Shenandoah River Administrative Board.*

- *April (deadline to submit is April 1<sup>st</sup>)*
- *October (deadline to submit is October 1<sup>st</sup>).*

**[Click here to download instructional information](#)**

**[Click here to download a PDF of the Grant and Loan Application form](#)**

**[Click here to download a Grant and Loan Application Form in WORD format](#)**

*If you have any questions, please contact the district office.*

## NEXT STEPS IN VAUMC DISAFFILIATION RESULT IN CREATION OF BRIDGE CHURCHES

For those whose congregations have voted to disaffiliate, there are parishioners who wish to remain United Methodist. The Virginia Annual Conference and the Cabinet offer Next Steps, a website with resources to remain connected as they discern where God is calling them. At Next Steps, individuals and churches may



- **[Click here to access resources](#)** for small group gathering and other means of discipleship;
- **[Click here to learn about Bridge Churches](#)**, which offer a safe haven for persons while they discern their next faithful step;

## TEMPORARILY TRANSFER YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Click on the link below if you would like to transfer your membership to the General Roll of the United Methodist Church, held by the Virginia Annual Conference, as a temporary holding space until you connect with a new congregation:

**[Click here to Temporarily transfer your membership to the UMC Roll](#)**



## Quick Facts About Randolph Macon Academy

- Founded 1892
- Middle School (Grades 6-8) and Upper School (Grades 9-12, PG) instruction available
- Co-educational, private school with focus on university-prep curriculum and military values for leadership development
- Day and Boarding School options available
- 100% university acceptance rate, with average of \$16 million in scholarships award each graduating class, every year
- Average class size 8-15 students
- 19 Advanced Placement and 10 Dual-Enrolled Classes
- Pre-Professional Pathways set students up for success

Visit us at [www.RMA.edu](http://www.RMA.edu) for more information or contact Chaplain Monica Reynolds at [MReynolds@RMA.edu](mailto:MReynolds@RMA.edu)

### MONICA REYNOLDS

CHAPLAIN

[mreynolds@RMA.edu](mailto:mreynolds@RMA.edu) | [www.RMA.edu](http://www.RMA.edu) |  
200 Academy Drive, Front Royal, VA 22630



## KINGSWAY PRISON AND FAMILY OUTREACH

"Are you mad at me? Did you forget about me?" questioned an inmate recently. He's been in prison for a long time and his family members have either died or written him off. He is one of almost 4000 inmates that Kingsway remembers on their birthday, Valentine's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas. When his birthday came and went without a card from Kingsway, he was afraid that he had been forgotten.

A recent change by the Virginia Department of Corrections has mail from lawyers, books, pictures and religious mail going through the Centralized Mail Distribution Center as an effort to reduce illegal and dangerous things entering the prisons. Kingsway applauds this effort to increase safety for the inmates and prison staff. However, getting birthday cards into inmate hands became difficult for a while. The Centralized Mail Distribution Center would return birthday cards to Kingsway, saying that birthday cards are personal mail and needed to go directly to the prisons. The prisons would see the Kingsway name or logo on the envelope and send it back saying that it was religious mail. This was very stressful for a while, but we prayerfully and persistently kept at the problem until we found a solution. This man and other inmates are receiving their birthday cards once again.

A birthday card or a holiday card seems like such a small thing to us, but to some of the men and women on the inside, it is HUGE! Just recently at a service on the inside, several inmates brought their most recent card from Kingsway so that they could match the name in the card with the volunteers taking part in the church service. Kingsway takes our mission verses very seriously: Matthew 25:35-36, 40 *For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me... The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."* Birthday cards and Holiday cards are just one small way that we can remind those living on inside that God still sees them and He cares about them!



## THE FOUNDATION

The Foundation Ledger is a quarterly newsletter produced by the Virginia United Methodist Foundation. It includes a variety of stories and up-to-date information intended for the clergy and laity of the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church. The Spring

Newsletter has just been released!

[Click here to read the Spring 2024 Quarterly Newsletter](#)



## Mark your calendar today:

October 22, 2024

Check-in at 11:00. Shotgun start at 12:00 pm.

New this year: A rain date TBA

[Click here for more information](#)

**CHECK OUT THE LATEST INFORMATION  
ON UNITED METHODIST MEN**

The Conference United Methodist Men's goal for the past two years has been to develop and publish a detailed roster of our various United Methodist Men's groups and information on their related churches for each district.



Churches, please review the links below and provide updated Points of Contact for your UMM group, as well as church and clergy information. By doing this, there will be a better way of communicating with churches and UMM groups within the Virginia Conference to get the word out on Men's Ministry. The rosters will be shared when completed.

Another link below discusses the "\$10.00 Campaign" per man at each church in the Conference. This is our only means of income to support numerous VAC organizations.

Bob Longworth...  
Vice President of Membership & Development  
757-427-6236  
[dolral@aol.com](mailto:dolral@aol.com)

[Click here to download form for Points of Contact](#)

[Click Here to download \\$10.00 Giving per Man Information](#)

[Click here to go to the Virginia Conference United Methodist Men's website](#)



[Click here to read the latest issue of "The Beacon".](#) A newsletter from the Virginia Conference of United Methodist Men.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT MISSION CHAIR

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](mailto:Joann_Ballard@gmail.com), Co-District Mission Chair at [jballard1902@gmail.com](mailto:jballard1902@gmail.com).



## DEADLINE REMINDERS TO CLERGY AND LOCAL CHURCH OFFICERS

### 2023 LOCAL CHURCH AUDITS ARE DUE IN THE DISTRICT OFFICE BY JULY 1ST

This is a reminder that **2023 Local Church Audits are due July 1, 2024 in the District Office.** Please make sure your local church treasurers and auditors are aware of this deadline.

Audits shall be entered through the Unity DataBase of the Virginia Conference. An email was sent out on February 21st to the pastors and their respective finance chairs with information on

how to complete the audit in Unity. If you need help, please contact the district office.

**RESOURCES:**

Local Church Audit Guide [\*\*CLICK HERE FOR THE GUIDE\*\*](#)

Annual Audit-Fund Balance Report worksheet (The preferred method for entering the audit is Unity.)

[\*\*CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THE AUDIT FUND BALANCE REPORT WORKSHEET\*\*](#)

**PARSONAGE REVIEW FORMS ARE DUE IN THE DISTRICT OFFICE BY JULY 1ST**

The 2016 Discipline states in Paragraph 2533.4 [page 756]:

*“The chairperson of the board of trustees or the chairperson of the parsonage committee, if one exists, the chairperson of the committee on pastor-parish relations, and the pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to ensure proper maintenance.”*

[\*\*Click here to download the Notes Information Form\*\*](#)

Please take a moment to complete this form and return it with your Parsonage review form. This is important information needed at the District Office.

[\*\*Click here to download the form for the Annual Review of the Church-Owned Parsonage\*\*](#)

Please make sure that all questions are answered and returned to the District Office.

[\*\*Click here to download the Parsonage Inventory Form\*\*](#)

This form should be completed regularly and kept in the parsonage and updated as needed. A current, updated Parsonage Inventory is essential when there is a change of parsonage families.

Remember that the walk-through of the parsonage needs to be done at a time convenient for the pastor's family. Suggestion are that it be done between now and **July 1, 2024**, in order to give sufficient time for the review form to be thoughtfully completed and discussed following the parsonage walk-through.

**PLEASE REMEMBER EVEN THOUGH YOUR PARSONAGE MIGHT BE RENTED, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO PERFORM THE WALK-THROUGH ANNUALLY AND SUBMIT YOUR COMPLETED FORM(S) TO THE DISTRICT OFFICE.**

This email was sent to clergy, SPPRC and Trustee chairpersons on March 7th.

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**If you would like to have an article included in this newsletter, please email Debbie Creech, District Administrator, at [debbiecreech@vaumc.org](mailto:debbiecreech@vaumc.org) by the 20th of each month.**

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

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