

# THE STAUNTON DISTRICT VOICE

“Called To Love and Serve”

*The Staunton District is part of The Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church  
P. O. Box 1048, Fishersville, VA 22939; Phone: 932-1055*

**April 2002**

## Dates To Remember



April 5-7  
District Youth Retreat  
Camp Overlook

April 9 at 9:30 a.m.  
Clergy and Spouses Meeting  
Fletcher's Chapel, Callaghan

April 14 at 2:00 p.m.  
VBS Workshop  
Calvary UMC

April 20-21  
Conference Laity Spiritual Retreat - VUMAC

April 26-27  
“Awakening 2002”  
Williamsburg, VA

April 27 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.  
Reclaiming the Great Commission Event  
Fishersville UMC

April 28 at 5:00 p.m.  
Great Day of Singing  
St. Paul's UMC, Staunton

May 3 at 6:30 p.m.  
Annual District Laity Banquet  
St. Paul's UMC, Staunton

June 16-19  
Virginia Annual Conference  
Roanoke, Virginia

June 17  
Annual Conference Ministers' Spouses Luncheon  
Thrasher Memorial UMC

June 17 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.  
Annual Conference Laity Banquet  
Hotel Roanoke

June 26  
Clergy Moving Day

**Our Deepest Sympathy Is Extended To:**  
**Rev. & Mrs. David Reed and their family** on the death of Deborah's father.  
The Reeds serve Central UMC in Staunton.



### From The District Superintendent:

As much as I despise weeds in a flower or vegetable garden, I must offer admiration for a particular group of weeds for their agility. A weed, as you may already know, is an undesired plant in the midst of a bed or garden of desired plants. For example, a geranium, even with all its elegance, is still a weed if it voluntarily grows in a bed of begonias.

Around the lamppost in my front yard, I usually plant a mixture of vincas, which are very colorful and drought-resistant annuals. For each of the past three years several petunia plants have emerged from the soil in the midst of the vincas. I have dug and uprooted them to no end. But each year they return and outgrow the desired plants. I have actually begun to admire their resilience. Absolutely nothing destroys them; they resurrect each year with all their purple splendor.

Those petunias remind me of the Easter story, including the passionate love of Jesus Christ who was determined that nothing would hinder him from pursuing God's will of becoming savior of the world. Absolutely nothing stopped him. He pursued his “nevertheless promise” Garden of Gethsemane to the Cross without looking back. He was punished in every conceivable way, yet he continued on his journey to save humankind from the death of sin. His prayer from the Cross, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do,” is a great testimony of his love for sinful humanity. We are reminded of such love and sacrifice at Easter. Does it strengthen our resolve to let nothing separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus? I strongly believe that it takes the same kind of resilient love and faith to keep our personal spiritual journeys steadfast. Likewise, it will take the same kind of faithful determination that Jesus displayed to keep our churches alive and viable through mission and ministries in the name of Jesus Christ. We are an Easter people; the resurrected Spirit of Jesus Christ gives us the resilience we need to triumph over every “weedy” obstacle which confronts us. May the Spirit of Easter accompany you as you seek to bear your cross in the name of Jesus Christ.

In Christ,  
Alton M. Washington

## Link With The Laity On The Edge



When I was a child, my maternal grandmother was the “be-all, end-all” of my young life. She had a way of letting me know I was special, yet specially-made for something wonderful yet to be. She would say something like “you’re on the edge of becoming a young lady” or “you’re on the edge of being an adult.” I knew from that that she expected great things from me, the least of which was to act like the thing she knew I was becoming!

The Making Disciples event March 8-9 said much of the same. Two questions raised there stuck with me and I, in turn, would like to challenge you with the same. “What have you attempted recently that could only be done by the power of God? What is your church attempting that can only be accomplished with the power of God?” There are great needs in the community that only you may be called to do. We must not be afraid to fail, only afraid of not trying. We will accomplish as individuals or as the church only as we put forth.

Take a look around your community. Who are the down and out? –The forgotten? –The lonely? –The least—or misunderstood? –The fringes of society? They, dear friends are the “edges.” This is where the church is called to be. We don’t simply invite them to join us or drop off some provisions. God calls us to relationships with them just as He calls us into relationship with Him.

Do you think my response, my outlook, my lifestyle would have been the same without a hands-on, personal relationship and commitment from my grandmother? Maybe, but she wasn’t willing to take the chance with what to her she called her “precious soul.” God has many, many precious souls, ones who are weary, lost, alone, confused, angry, sad, broken, on the edge. They will only know they are precious if we are faithful, if we go, if we love, if we put ourselves on the edge. May God help us to do so.

Shalom,

Robin Powell, District Lay Leader



### Laity Opportunities

**\*Conference Laity Retreat:** April 20-21 at Blackstone. See newsletter insert.

Additional brochures are available at the District Office. This is a great opportunity to retreat together as a family.

**\*Reclaiming the Great Commission Event:** April 27 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at Fishersville UMC. Event is sponsored by the Charlottesville, Harrisonburg, Roanoke, Staunton, and Winchester Districts. Cost is \$10 to cover materials and meal. Additionally, you should read the book prior to the event. Copies can be purchased through the District Office for \$13. It is hoped that the pastor and 2 laity from each church will attend. Event is limited to 300 so register early. Deadline is April 6.

**\*District UMC Great Day of Singing:** Held Sunday, April 28, at 5:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s UMC, Staunton. We still need persons to join the massed choir. Information about

the music can be obtained from Eloise Koranicke at 943-8745. Rehearsal for the event will be Saturday, April 13, from 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at St. Paul’s UMC.

**\*District Laity Banquet:** Held on Friday, May 3, at 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul’s UMC, Staunton. The guest speaker will be Rev. Clarence Brown, District Superintendent of the Charlottesville District. Cost for the buffet will be \$12.00. Make checks payable to the Staunton District UMC. Tickets will be available at the District Office on April 1-29. Come join us for an evening of fun and fellowship.

### **Puppet Ministry**

I have a puppet ministry that is specializing in the puppets from the major VBS literatures. I will travel to any church in the Staunton District during the VBS week and perform the puppet skits that coincide with the literature that is used by the church. I will provide the puppet, the scripts, and the puppet stage. I will work with members from the area churches or I will bring other actors with me as needed for the skits. I currently have the puppets for Gospel Light and for Cokesbury but will obtain any puppet from any other literature that is being used. I am beginning to book for the summer and my contact numbers are 540-463-9403 and 540-309-7971. My puppet ministry is called "In His Grip Puppets"



Christy Gresham



### **Casa de Amistad Needs You!!!**

Casa de Amistad is Spanish for Friendship House. What started as the Hispanic outreach program at Fishersville UMC has now expanded to the District. In alignment with our vision of making everyone feel welcome at the Lord’s table we need your help in reaching out to our Hispanic brothers and sisters.

You can do this by volunteering to mentor a family providing weekly help with schoolwork. By helping the children with homework and English, we hope to speed up the families’ integration into the community. We currently have 15 Hispanic families we are working with. And what a blessing they are!

If you are interested in being a family mentor, please see Becky Lewis (943-4534). **No Spanish is needed. I repeat, No Spanish is needed!!** All you have to do is to commit to helping with schoolwork (in English) once a week. We will provide orientation and introduce you to a family.

Ministries started to support the families’ needs include:

- Library of books for all levels (beginning numbers, colors, etc., beginning readers up to teen readers) to be used by the mentors and to be left in the homes for the kids
- Spanish Sunday school class at FUMC (We now have Bibles and hymnals in Spanish)
- School supplies for school and at home
- Furniture and household goods to get families started in new homes

- Clothing as needed

If you are not interested in mentoring but are interested in helping us to further develop this outreach, we would like to hear from you too. Please contact Rev. Liz Ecklund, Rev. Jim Harris, or Becky Lewis. Dios le Bendiga (God bless you).

### VUMAC NEWS

"Is your church looking for a program?" Rex Wolfe, Administrator of VUMAC, is the man. Rex can tell great stories about VUMAC. He can answer questions about the center (programs, how the money is spent, etc.). He can explain levels of details (the exact way the gifts to VUMAC are used). The telephone number is (804) 292-5308; Fax number is (804) 292-1212.

Catherine Sayers,  
District Blackstone Representative



**Sexual Ethics Training:** A reminder to all clergy, diaconal ministers, and certified lay professionals who have not participated in the Sexual Ethics Seminar or been granted an exemption: register NOW for the make-up

session on Saturday, May 11, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Reveille UMC in Richmond. Registration forms were mailed to all who did not attend last fall, but you may request another form from the Office of Ministerial Services, 800-768-6040, ext. 311. All clergy, diaconal ministers, and certified lay professionals in local church and beyond the local church appointments are required to attend or receive an exemption from the Board of Ordained Ministry.

### *The United Methodist Women*

The joy of new birth has, once again, inspired the United Methodist Women as we watch the flowers in our gardens bloom and the birds begin to build their nests in preparation for the arrival of Easter and the celebration of the Resurrection of our LORD.

We celebrated 'Day Apart' at Calvary UMC on March 2<sup>nd</sup> by hearing from Susan Obaugh about her Mission trip to Russia. She told wonderful stories about her trip and shared some of her souvenirs with us. The ladies of Calvary served a delicious lunch.

The next event will be April 6th at Collierstown UMC. This is the Homie Clark Zone Prayer Breakfast. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and breakfast will be served at 9:00 a.m. The cost of this meal will be \$5.00. Our speaker will be the Rev. Lee Price. Please call your Zone leader with the number of people from your unit that will be attending.

I have the tickets for the Conference Prayer Breakfast. The cost of these tickets is \$12.00. If you plan to attend this event please either purchase your ticket at the prayer



breakfast or call me at 291-2146 to reserve your ticket because there is a limited number of tickets available.

We have 13 women from the Staunton District going to the Assembly in Philadelphia, Pa. in April.

The Augusta-Highlands Zone breakfast will be at Cherryvale UMC on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Registration will begin at 8:30 am. and the cost of this meal is \$5.00. There will be an Executive Board Meeting following this event.

Conference Events to remember are Spiritual Life Retreat at VUMAC on May 4 & 5. The School of Christian Missions will be July 26-28 for the weekend session and July 29-August 1 for the week session. Your local unit president should have the information for these events.

My hope for you is a Blessed Easter.

Serving Together,  
Doris Hedrick  
District President



### United Methodist Men's News

**Speaker's Bureau:** If your fellowship needs a speaker for one of it's meetings. A list of speakers is available. Contact any one of the District officers for information.

### Upcoming Men's Events:

**April 18** – UMMen fellowships from the City of Staunton will be holding their annual gathering, hosted this year by Central UMMen. The evening will begin with social time at 6:00 p.m., meal served at 6:30 p.m. Rev. Kenny Fields, Sr. from Bishop will be guest speaker. Rev. Fields is pastor at Alexander UMC in Bishop. Alexander UMC has served as the coordinating site for flood damage repair in the Bishop area. The people of the church have been great host for workers helping with the flood repair. Please come and welcome Rev. Fields.

**April 20** – District Board Meeting, Cherryvale UMC – All local Presidents or representatives are encouraged to attend. If your church does not have an organized UMMen fellowship, please attend. Coffee will be ready at 9:30 a.m. with the meeting getting underway at 10:00 a.m.

**May 17 & 18** – Tri-District UMMen's Spiritual Retreat. Retreat Leader will be Reverend Gary Heaton. Gary has served United Methodist Churches across the Virginia Conference and is currently the pastor of Front Royal UMC in Front Royal, Virginia. Gary has been involved with retreat ministries since his days as a camp counselor. Theme "I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY"

In Christ Service,  
Earl D. Cash  
President Staunton UMM

### **Don't starve yourself**

Whether you like it or not, read and pray daily. It is your life; there is no other way ... Do justice to your soul; give it time and means to grow. Do not starve yourself any longer.

--John Wesley

## District Youth News

**Graduating Seniors** – Micah Bowers, Holly Iberg, Neil Horn, Jerome Johnson, Star Lilley, Chris Marks and Mark Stephens. Seniors graduating, what a great time and also a time of mixed feelings. Staunton District Youth have been blessed to have young men and women like you willing to give your time and talents to further God's Kingdom in serving the district youth. Without your leadership the Staunton District Youth might still be something we just hoped and prayed for. You are responsible for the wonderful events and the growth of the district youth over the past few years. Thank you and may God bless each one of you.



**Voices of Youth** – Rebecca Rigg, Parrish Court, Covington and Erin Betlej, Calvary, Stuarts Draft have been accepted into Voices of Youth for 2002. Voices of Youth, a Virginia Conference youth mission team and choir, will travel on a mystery tour for 3 weeks in July and August. They will be providing a Vacation Bible School for a United Methodist Native American mission and learning about Native American ministries. Congratulations to our very own Staunton District Youth! You are and will be a blessing.

**Exploration 2002** – April 12-14 – Sensing God's calling? This weekend event is designed for High School/Young Adults to explore their call to full-time Christian service. Location: University of Virginia. Call 800-768-6040 Ext# 308 Youth Ministries for a registration form. Cost: \$75 per person. There may be sponsorship money available from the District for this event. Contact: Steve Joplin at 886-9367 or email: steve.joplin@hollister.com

**"Awakening 2002"** – William & Mary Hall, Williamsburg, VA, April 26-27. A two day event for all youth, adult workers, pastors and young adults featuring two contemporary Christian bands: "Solomon's Wish" and "Salvador", Comedy by "Lighthearted Improv", Keynotes by "Sam Glenn" and much more. Don't miss this AWESOME EVENT! Join thousands of youth from throughout the Virginia conference in praise, worship and fun. Need a registration form? Contact: Steve Joplin. Staunton District Youth have chartered a bus to Awakening 2002. Departing early Saturday morning and returning Saturday evening. Cost: \$13. Only 17 seats left on the Bus. First Come, First Serve! Contact: Terry Rohr at 885-6104 or email: rohrsloch@aol.com

*1 Timothy 4:12 "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example to all believers in what you teach, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity."*

Be Bold, Be Real, Be Honest!  
Steve Joplin



**The Virginia Annual Conference Laity Banquet** will be held Monday, June 17, 2002, at the Hotel Roanoke –the Ballroom, 5:00 –7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$20 per person

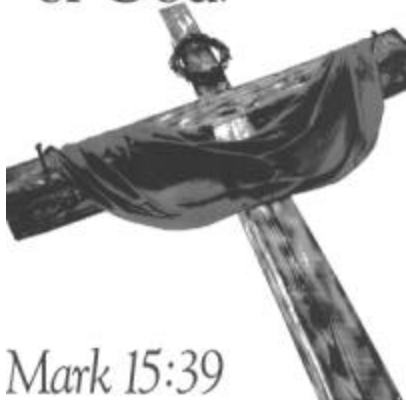
–checks payable to Virginia Annual Conference and available through Robin Powell at 942-9355. There will be no tickets available at Conference, so get the tickets early.

***The Staunton District United Methodist Church  
P. O. Box 1048  
Fishersville, VA 22939***

*Return Service Requested*

***NONPROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 178***

*"Truly this man  
was the Son  
of God!"*



*Mark 15:39*