

# 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*

**August 2002**

## Dates To Remember



**August 2 at 12:00 noon**  
**VOICES of YOUTH Concert**  
**Bridgewater UMC**

**August 20 at 7:00 p.m.**  
**District Stewards Meeting**  
**Calvary UMC, Stuarts Draft**

**September 2**  
**Labor Day**  
**District and Conference Offices Closed**

**September 3**  
**Conference Offices are moving**  
**to their new location.**

**September 10 at 9:30 a.m.**  
**Ministers and Spouses Meeting**  
**Parrish Court UMC, Covington**

**September 16**  
**Charge Conferences Begin**

**October 5-6**  
**Lay Speaker Basic Course of Study**  
**Parrish Court UMC, Covington**

**November 16 1:00 – 4:30 p.m.**  
**Staunton District Conference**  
**District Laity Training**



### From The District Superintendent:

I recently read the familiar verses of Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37:1-12, 14). What a desolate scene of death and hopelessness! You perhaps have read this Scripture, but have you ever pondered the possible theological reasons as to why this scene occurred before the prophet? Why was "the whole house of Israel" in such estate? I suspect that it was not because of any great military defeat, but because they (the Israelites) had turned away from God. Their casual leaning toward secularism, the worship of other gods, their disregard for their covenant of faith, and general lack of spiritual discipline eroded their relationship with God and contributed heavily to their downfall. Life without God is death. Thus, even before their defeat by the Babylonians, the Israelites were spiritually dead.

Ezekiel clearly speaks to us today through this vision, because without intentionally practicing the spiritual disciplines of prayer, repentance, reading of Scriptures, daily meditation and listening to God, and without consistent service to God's people, our lives, our churches and our communities can become valleys of dry bones. God forbid! In the vision, God severely punishes the people of Israel for their sinfulness and hardness of heart, but God did not forsake them. In the visionary holocaust, God is present through the prophet, Ezekiel, through whom God offers a chance of reconciliation and newness of life. God asks Ezekiel if these bones can live again. Being the mortal that he is, there is some skepticism in Ezekiel's answer, but he nevertheless uses his gift of faith in God to give a positive answer of trust: "You know" (37:3). Through Ezekiel, God would breathe new life into the dead bones of Israel. As the vision continues, God gave the people a second chance for a meaningful relationship with God.

Take an introspective look at your church and community. Do you see any desolation...any dry bones...any dead parts that need new life? The God of Ezekiel's dream is still our God; a God of uncompromising hope and newness of life through Jesus Christ. God calls all of us to be faithful prophets, as was Ezekiel, through whom God can breathe new life to all of God's people. It is a great joy for me to join you in this faithful endeavor.

Peace and Grace,  
Alton M. Washington

\*Don't be afraid to go out on a limb. That's where the fruit is.



**PLEASE NOTE:** The Conference Offices are moving to their new location on **September 3<sup>rd</sup>**. Please note the following changes:

**Mailing Address:** P.O Box 1719  
Glen Allen, VA 23060

**Physical Address:** 10330 Staples Mill Road  
Glen Allen, VA 23060

**Main Phone Number:** (804) 521-1100

**800 Number:** (800) 768-6040 (This number will remain the same.)



## A Letter From Bishop Pennel:

Dear Clergy and Laity  
of the Virginia Conference,

This is a thank you letter. First, I want to thank you for the uncommon and thoughtful response to the Annual Conference offering.

As of this writing, you have given \$505,460 in contributions and pledges. This generous outpouring makes possible the building of a new church in Stavropol, Russia; the building of an elementary school in Tinga Tinga, Mozambique; and the establishment of 27 projects across the Virginia Conference for at-risk children, including the summer camp for children of incarcerated mothers. Also, I would be profoundly remiss if I did not thank you for your stewardship commitment to our connectional ministries. As of June 30, 2002, the United Methodists of Virginia have given \$11,050,775, which is a 3.5 percent increase over last year at this time.

I cannot cease giving thanks for the membership growth in the Virginia Conference. The year 2001 marked only the second time in twenty years that the conference has grown numerically. Let us not forget that joining people to Christ and His church is a primary task for those of us who claim to be followers of Jesus. The fields are still "white unto harvest." Let us be diligent in honoring and keeping our vision statement which reads, "We envision churches where all God's people are welcomed at table, nurtured and transformed to be Christ to others in the world."

The first of September we plan on moving into our new conference facility. It is located at 10330 Staples Mill Road in Richmond. We will be consecrating the new conference center on Sunday, October 20, at 4:00 p.m. All are invited to attend. We are hoping that people from around the conference will be present for this memorable and significant time of consecration. This building will provide easy access to persons from around the conference. The offices, meeting rooms and chapel will make for a more efficient and stronger ministry, both within the Virginia Conference and in the 167 countries where the United Methodist Church is at work. I want us to remember that this building is not of ultimate importance. It is what happens in and through the building that is of ultimate significance.

I believe that we will be conduits for grace if we will discipline ourselves to worship, to spiritual reading, to bible study, to the receiving of the sacraments, and by practicing deeds of mercy and kindness. It is our strongly held belief that disciples are made by keeping these disciplines. Though we have made great strides there is still a long road ahead in claiming persons for Christ and His church.

I want you to know that it is a notable privilege to be connected to this conference. Janene and I are most grateful to be servants of the servants of God. Thank you for allowing us to serve in your midst.

In Christ,  
Joe E. Pennel, Jr.

## District Stewards Meeting

The Staunton District Stewards meeting will be held on August 20, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. at Calvary UMC in Stuarts Draft. The following persons should be in attendance: pastors, elected local church district stewards, and local church lay leaders.

We will adopt the Staunton District budget for 2003. A proposal to hire a district program director will also be presented for funding. All members are encouraged to be present for this essential meeting.



## NBC's "Today" Show To Air UMC Commercials

NBC-TV will air a special United Methodist Church commercial twice on September 11, 2002, during the "Today" show coverage of the first anniversary of the national tragedy of September 11, 2001. The name of the spot is "Amen." "Today" features hosts Katie Couric and Matt Lauer.

The NBC "Today" show marks the beginning of the third major series of national United Methodist TV commercials. Being present in the media on 9/11 helps show that The United Methodist Church is praying for all people during this time of healing.

The "Amen" spot was especially crafted by United Methodist Communications' Igniting Ministry office as a pastoral response to the events of September 11. It aired on the CNN network for three weeks after the terrorist attacks.

In addition to the NBC-TV time purchased, additional commercials from Igniting Ministry's "Diversity," "Daughter Sleeping," "Rain" and "Love Letters" expressions will air Wednesday-Saturday, September 4-30 on 17 national cable networks and NBC broadcast. The complete list includes: ABC Family, A&E, BET, CNBC, CNN, Discovery, Fox News, Fox Sports, HGTV, History, Lifetime, MSNBC, TBS, TNT, Univision, USA and the Weather Channel.

A full schedule of the national TV spots can be viewed online: [www.ignitingministry.org](http://www.ignitingministry.org).

## Open House Month Approaches – Are You Ready?

United Methodist Open House Month is an opportunity to emulate Jesus' truly welcoming spirit, by intentionally inviting and welcoming people in your community as if each were Christ. Open House Month reinforces the promise of *open hearts, open minds and open doors* made by Igniting Ministry commercials ("spots") airing nationally in September.

Local churches are asked to make a special effort to plan special events, activities and worship services and invite newcomers to attend.

In conjunction with Open House 2002, each congregation is being asked to set aside Sunday, September 8, 2002, for "Remembering 9/11" services commemorating and remembering the tragedy. Your church could be a place



where the community can gather to remember and to pray for wisdom, comfort and healing.

Sermon outlines, worship liturgies and other resources are included in the current issue of ToolKit 1-2-3. A sampling of ideas and worship resources is located on the web: [www.ignitingministry.org](http://www.ignitingministry.org).



### Disciple Bible Study Offered

Fishersville UMC will be offering Disciples I Bible Study two different times. First is Sunday mornings beginning September 8 and the other is on Tuesday evenings beginning September 3. Cost is \$30 for books. In addition to the Disciple I there will be a Disciple III offered on Tuesday evenings beginning September 3. Cost is also \$30. For more information or to register, call Robin Powell at 942-9355.

### Link With The Laity

#### Walking

Some experiences come along once in a lifetime. The weekend of July 12 was one such occasion. My family and I traveled the state carrying Herb Mather to the five area workshops on Stewardship. I felt somewhat like public television's Bill Moyer who travels America on different adventures. It was 'interesting' a few times on the road, but all in all a great trip.



Herb shared a wealth of information which I would love to share, but space does not permit; that is except one story. As Herb told it, he was talking with another pastor about stewardship, budgets, etc. The man commented that even with a fairly large budget it was rare that they gave money to people in need. Instead, they 'walked with the people.' Seeing the quizzical look he explained. 'One day Adelle came to their food pantry. As she was filling her own bag with what she needed, the person in charge asked her some questions. Not the usual kind asked by people like us to people like her. They asked, "If you could do anything in the world and there were no restrictions of any kind what would you do? What are you good at and could teach someone else?" "Cook," said Adelle. "I love to cook." So the pantry worker told her to come back the next day with three hot meals – one each for the pastor, secretary, and custodian. She did with rave reviews. She was good!

A month later, a civic organization asked to use their facility for a banquet meeting saying they were willing to pay a rental fee. The pastor said that would be fine as long as they were willing to use the church caterer. Agreed! He called Adelle to prepare meals for 45 at \$18.00 per person (with a little going to her). Today, Adelle owns her own catering business!

Did you get the message? The church gave direction, gave encouragement, and became the mentor to Adelle rather than merely a handout. The result was a changed life, a parishioner of the church, a contributor in all ways to the life of the church.

That's what we are called to do—to welcome the stranger, to make disciples, to walk with one another. What would happen if we planned our ministries, our committees, our Sunday School lessons, our board meetings around the concept of how we could 'walk' with others?

I do believe that church "got it." They had learned that all is God's, all of life's experiences and practices is stewardship and that we receive exactly whatever we put out. Think on this, share the story. As you begin to plan for 2003, challenge your church to look for ways to walk with others. There just might be an 'Adelle' both inside and outside the church just waiting for you!

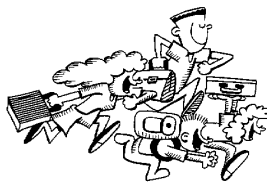
Shalom,

Robin Powell, District Lay Leader

**The Voices of Youth** will have a concert on Friday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 12:00 noon at Bridgewater UMC. This is the only concert planned for this area. The Voices of Youth 2002 Virginia Tour Concert Schedule



(Awakening the United Methodist Church to Ministry with Native American Brothers and Sisters) is as follows:  
\*Sunday, July 28, 7:30 p.m. – Trinity UMC, Danville, VA;  
\*Monday, July 29, 11:00 a.m. – Blackstone – School of Christian Mission, Blackstone, VA and at 7:30 p.m. – Ivey Memorial UMC, Colonial Heights, VA; \*Tuesday, July 30, 11:00 a.m. – United Methodist Family Services, Richmond, VA and at 7:30 p.m. – Great Bridge UMC, Chesapeake, VA; \*Wednesday, July 31, 7:30 p.m. – Fairlington UMC, Alexandria, VA; \*Thursday, August 1, 7:30 p.m. – Fairview UMC, Roanoke, VA; \*Friday, August 2, 12:00 noon – Bridgewater UMC, Bridgewater, VA and at 7:30 p.m. – Riverton UMC, Front Royal, VA; \*Saturday, August 3, 7:30 p.m. – Herndon UMC, Herndon, VA; \*Sunday, August 4, 11:00 a.m. – Calvary UMC, Arlington, VA and at 7:30 p.m. – Duncan Memorial UMC, Ashland, VA. For more information contact Gail Brill: (540) 665-5453, <[gbrill@su.edu](mailto:gbrill@su.edu)>.



**Don't forget to register for the Church Staff Retreat**, sponsored by the Board of Ordained Ministry, October 29-30, 2002, at the Holiday Inn, Koger South Conference

Center, Richmond, VA. As you make plans for a new conference year, this event needs to be on your calendar! Church staffs of any size (from two to ten or more) may register. Larry E. Matthews, founder and coordinator of Leadership in Ministry, will assist staff teams in learning about and reflecting together about family systems theory and the implications for your staff and congregation. Time for staff teams to meet together will be a significant part of the retreat. Commuters are welcome. Contact the Office of Ministerial Services (800-768-6040) for a registration brochure or email [PhyllisCrow@vaumc.org](mailto:PhyllisCrow@vaumc.org).

### United Methodist Women News

The Staunton District United Methodist Women are getting ready for a busy and exciting Fall. The next event will be the District Planning Retreat at Camp Overlook on August 9 & 10. The District Mission Team and the Presidents of the local units are invited to attend. If you are planning to attend please let me know right away. We need to let the Camp know how many people will be attending.



The Conference "Under 40 Event" will take place at VUMAC August 16-18. I hope that all of you "under 40's" have signed up. Remember that there are scholarships available if you have never attended one of these events before. Contact Susan Rigg, our district treasurer, for scholarship information.

The District Annual Meeting will be September 14th at Granbery UMC in Covington. Please put this date on your calendar as well. On October 12th there will be a Leadership Training Event for "Charter For Racial Justice Policies". There will be more information about this later.

Please remember to pray for our Missionaries and for the Ministries to women and children throughout the world.

Serving together,  
Doris Hedrick, District President



### United Methodist Men's News

Staunton District UMMen met July 20 at Ashwood UMC in Bath County. While the men attended the meeting, spouses were given a mini-tour of the surrounding

area. Catherine Sayers served as tour guide and Geraldine Cash drove the van. Thanks to both of these ladies. Following the tour everyone had lunch at the Homestead. We then enjoyed a tour of the Homestead facilities. It was a great day of fellowship and fun.

**August 15** - UMMen Day at Camp Rainbow Connection at VUMAC. If you can help, please attend.

**September 2002** - UMMen District Fall Rally. Date and location to be announced.

**November 1 - 3** - Conference UMMen Spiritual Retreat at Blackstone.

Earl Cash, District President

### Training for an Exciting Spiritual Study Series to be Offered in Fairfax Station

If you are looking for ways to deepen the spiritual life of your congregation, I encourage you to attend the Companions in Christ leader-training event on August 24. Companions in Christ is a 28-week small-group resource from Upper Room Ministries that builds spiritual practices within congregations, helping participants open more fully to God and to one another. Since its release, more than 4,000 small groups have used this resource and leaders testify to the transformation they have observed in their participants.



Companions in Christ provides settings for learning classical spiritual practices such as scripture meditation, prayer, call, and spiritual guidance. Participants work in their Participant's Book throughout the week, reading an introductory article on the first day, then reflecting on one question each day for the next five days and recording their thoughts in their journal. On the last day of the week, the small group gathers for a two-hour meeting. The first hour is a time of sharing insights from their journal; the second hour is a time of deeper exploration of the week's theme led by the leader who relies on the content and outline in the Leader's Guide. Here is the schedule for the training: 8:30 a.m. Registration; 9:00 a.m. Introduction to and experience of Companions in Christ (28 weeks) and Companions in Christ: The Way of Forgiveness; 3:00 p.m. Learning leadership skills; 5:00 p.m. Dismissal

Jeff Henderson, Site Coordinator  
Melissa Dunlap, President, Virginia Conference Board of Discipleship  
Carole Vaughn, Virginia Conference Staff

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### Leader Training - August 24, 2002

Christ United Methodist Church,  
8285 Glen Eagles Lane, Fairfax Station, VA 22039

Registrant's Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Church Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (check one): \* HOME or \* CHURCH

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Include area code): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number from your church attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Are they registered? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Leader Orientation Registration Fees:

The registration fee includes lunch and a complementary copy of the Participant's Book, Leader's Guide, Journal, and Getting Started Guide. Additional resources can be purchased at the event at a special discount.

\_\_\_\_\_ Fee for first registrant from your congregation \$100

\_\_\_\_\_ Fee for additional registrants from your congregation \$85

Method of payment: \* Check enclosed \* MasterCard

\* Visa - Account #: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail payment and completed form to: Upper Room Ministries, P.O. Box 340012, Nashville, TN 37203-0012.

For more information visit [www.companionsinchrist.org](http://www.companionsinchrist.org) <<http://www.companionsinchrist.org>> ; Call 1-800-972-0433 or fax 615-340-7178.

Grace and peace,

Carole Vaughn, Director of Discipleship and Children's Ministries; 1-800-768-6040 or 804-359-7335; Fax: 804-359-3187; P.O. Box 11367, 4016 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23230.

**Have you ever wondered what God may be calling you to do or be?** Have you tried to discern his voice among all of the other sounds around you?



"Discover God's Call" is a ministry of the Foundation for Evangelism of the United Methodist Church. You will do a Spiritual Gifts inventory followed by a weekend retreat at VUMAC. This weekend will take place on October 18-20, 2002 and it can change your life. If you are interested in "Discovering God's Call", please call 540-291-2146 for more information.

Doris Hedrick, Vice President of Virginia Chapter of DGC

### When you ask...

Do not ask to have your life's load lightened,

But for courage to endure.

Do not ask for fulfillment in all your life,

But for patience to accept frustration.

Do not ask for perfection in all you do,

But for the wisdom not to repeat mistakes.

And finally, do not ask for more,

Before saying, "Thank you," for what you have already received.

-Brenda Short



**Correction: From James Kermit Meadows** – It looks as if I listed a wrong area code in my District Newsletter article. My correct area code is 336. My correct phone number is (336) 492-5838.

### A Prayer for Renewal

Free me this day, O Lord,  
from all fear of the future,  
from all anxiety about tomorrow,  
from all bitterness towards anyone,  
from all cowardice in face of danger,  
from all laziness in the face of work,  
from all failure before opportunity,  
from all weakness when thy power is at hand.

But fill me

with Love that knows no barrier,  
with Sympathy that reaches to all,  
with Courage that cannot be shaken,  
with Faith strong enough for the darkness,  
with Strength sufficient for my tasks,  
with Loyalty to thy Kingdom's goal,  
with Wisdom to meet life's complexities,  
with Power to lift me to thee.

Be Thou with me for another day, and use me as Thou wilt.  
For Christ's sake I pray. Amen.



-Wallace Fridy

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

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