

Connector

Connecting Local Churches to One Another, the United Methodist Church, and the World

Rising Hope Update:

Continuing Outreach in Times of Need

The Rising Hope community is grateful for your generosity. The Christmas season saw a wonderful outpouring of love to honor the Christ Child. Four hundred-fifty Angel Gifts were provided to those who might otherwise not have presents to open on Christmas morning. Over 300 families were provided Christmas Day food baskets including turkeys and chickens. Two hundred stockings provided by Franconia UMC were given out to members and constituents, including seventy-five children. The Christmas Shoppe was filled to the brim with donated gifts so that those who did not receive Angel Gifts could shop for presents for their families. A delicious Christmas Day dinner, including donated Honeybaked® hams, was served to over 60 persons who came to Rising Hope to share a day of joy.

Although, monetary donations were down during the end of the year due to economic conditions, our wonderful friends and supporters provided funds specifically for Christmas Food baskets and generously gave other gifts for our members and constituents. Rising Hope is thankful for all of the churches and individuals who made these holiday activities possible. The recipients feel

abundantly blessed by those who provide for their families what they cannot. A huge “thank you” to all of you who donate your time and your treasures so others may know the love of our Lord.

In the New Year, we would like to come to your church to speak about Rising Hope and to share how we can foster relationships that will continue the love and hope that has been so prevalent in Rising Hope's 15 years on Route One. Pastor Keary has a few dates available that he could come to speak or give a sermon, and we have other dedicated staff and volunteers who have a passion for our mission who can speak at smaller group meetings and gatherings, such as UMM, UMW, Mission/Outreach Teams, Sunday School or Sunday Mission Moment/Events. Please contact Venisa McCormick at vmccormick@risinghopeumc.org for info and dates.

In the new year, the Rising Hope ‘Milk and Honey’ Food Pantry is in need of volunteer assistance on Wednesdays and Thursdays to deliver food to the homebound and to work in the pantry distributing food to members and constituents who come in. If you are interested, please email Linda Surridge at lsurridge@risinghopeumc.org.

2012 Ministers' Convocation

“Bread for the Journey: A time for personal renewal and fellowship to regain joy and vitality in our lives and our vocation”

Jan. 17-19

Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center*

Registration, as well as more information about the keynote and other speakers can be found at www.vaumc.org (click ‘events’).

Come for great preaching, worship, workshops, fellowship, and time to relax.

** formerly known as VUMAC*

ENGAGING-EQUIPPING-EMPOWERING

Virginia Annual Conference

2nd Annual Lay Servant Academy

and

34th Edition of Lay Speaker Training

Feb. 24-26

Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center*

For more information, including on-line registration information, visit the Conference website (www.vaumc.org) or contact Rick Kottemann, Alexandria District Director of Lay Speaking Ministries at

(rpkott1@verizon.net or 703-768-2648)

** formerly known as VUMAC. Please also note that the Cokesbury bookstore at Blackstone is no longer open.*

District Lay Leader Corner:

Vocation Care Event

March 24, 2012

Good Shepherd UMC

Glen Allen, Virginia

This coming March, the Virginia Conference will be sponsoring a one-day Vocation CARE Event open to three persons from each district. Is God calling you to His service? Would you like to explore a more meaningful relationship with God? What are your gifts and how best can you put them to use?

Conference Lay Leader Shirley Cauffman explains the program as, "The Vocation CARE approach helps congregations become places where everyone - particularly young people exploring Christian vocations and the call to pastoral ministry - hear, respond to and serve God's call in their lives. As part of the program, individuals engage in a particular discipline that leads to spiritual renewal and activism in their faith communities, experience how to care for vocation in one another as a way to create a future church that is distinct from its past, and explore how to adapt the Vocation CARE approach to the particular needs of the local church ministry to form Christian disciples and emerging leaders.

The Vocation CARE approach is an adaptable process that leaders of a faith community can use to prepare young people and adult members to explore together their vocational questions, gifts and graces in service to the church and the world, and to support young members in considering God's call upon their lives. Participating in the program will assist congregations as they form relationships with young adults currently active in the church and those who aren't.

The focus will be on leadership development. The Vocation CARE approach prepares facilitators and practitioners who work with congregations, church related organizations, and the wider community. Equipped with the premise, principles, and practices of Vocation CARE, adult leaders have the skills to help call young leaders, renew the church, and change the world."

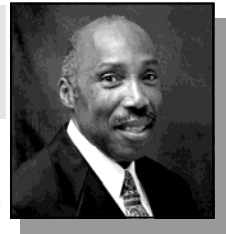
After this event, a training session will be held on each district. It is recommended that at least two of the persons who attend be between ages 21 and 40. I will be attending this event and will provide transportation. Interested persons should contact me at riverfarm@cox.net or 703-619-9663.

God calls, and we respond.

- Sue Stewart

District Lay Leader

FROM THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT



Dear Friends,

2012 is here and I look forward to very exciting things happening in this new year with our congregations looking at becoming Vital Congregations. Many of you have already set your goals to be presented to the Bishop by March 1. If you haven't, please do so as soon as possible.

As a vital congregation, you are asked to develop goals in the following five areas of congregational life:

- Disciples worship
- Disciples make new disciples
- Disciples engage in growing their faith
- Disciples engage in mission
- Disciples give to mission

Whatever you decide as your goals, working toward growth in these five areas will be a gift to the church and to the world.

Last year as we concluded our charge conferences, I heard very exciting reports about how our communities of faith approached the five fruitful practices. Each church's fruitful practice report will be posted to our District website (www.novaumc.org) soon. Once these are posted, please take some time to look at these practices and glean what you may be able to use in your local church.

God continues to bless us in many ways, and I know that God will continue to bless us in the coming year. I always find it exciting to begin a new year with great anticipation of the things God will do with me and with us as we seek to follow His divine will. May you also look forward with excitement to what God will do with you and with your congregation this new year. Remember, God is making all things new.

Yours in Christ,

Ken

JAN. CLERGY ASSOCIATION MEETING NOTICE

There is no Clergy Association meeting this month due to Bi-District Training Day. February's gathering is on the 15th at Good Shepherd UMC in Dale City. Contact Herb (alexandriapc@novaumc.org/703-820-7200) for details.

News from Camp Highroad:

Programs and Opportunities on the Rise in Middleburg

Camp Highroad (CH) is preparing for the 2012 summer camp season with the theme, "Out of this World!" Many changes have been made, and additional camp sessions added in response to the need for more opportunities for elementary-aged campers. Contact CH to make sure you get some summer camp brochures to distribute to the groups in your church. If you would like to be a part of the excitement:

- Go to www.camphighroad.org and register your child for a week of camp
- Serve as a counselor this summer and be a role model for our campers and your fellow counselors. Check out the "Employment" section of camphighroad.org
- Sponsor a child who might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience camp. Please contact our office at (540) 687-6262 if you can provide sponsorship, or if you know of a child who needs help.

CH is more than a summer camp. There are three other seasons in the year, and CH is host to the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, church retreats, volunteer teams, public, private, and homeschooled groups, and much more! CH also supports programs for special-needs children. Winter camps keep the

lodges full - even in January and February. In September 2011, CH stepped into uncharted waters by hosting **AwakeningFest**, a two-day Christian music festival that draws roughly 10,000 people (www.awakeningfest.org). The event was phenomenal: spirit-filled, fun, muddy, loud, and very exciting. They'll be back in September 2012!



Proposed ropes course at Camp Highroad.

In an effort to draw new groups to CH facilities, construction will soon begin on a new high ropes challenge course. The course will be a three-level, three-sided, fifty-foot tall, rock-climbing structure with a zip line that is twice the length of our current line. There will be three levels of aerial challenge course elements, a giant swing, and a bundle of other cool challenges with names to match! Our hope is to use this new challenge course as a tool to reach an older population of guests and to continue to offer a Christ-centered program, and a Christian

witness, to the many groups that use our site.

If you're interested in more information, please check out the CH website www.camphighroad.org, and/or join their Facebook page, or contact CH Director Rick Dawson (rick@camphighroad.org or 540-687-6262).



Planning Guide Aids Churches in Setting Vital Congregations Goals

Clergy and lay leaders of every church in the conference should have started the Vital Congregations process of setting goals for the next four years in five key areas: Worship, Disciples, Small Groups, Mission Participants and Mission Giving. A planning guide is available at www.umvitalcongregations.org. Using the guide will help each church prepare a theological foundation while planning. Each church must submit its goals by March 1, and the goals will be presented during General Conference.

Locally, there will be a training on May 12 at St. Matthew's UMC in Annandale to help churches (with worship attendance up to 150) explore ways to meet their Vital Congregation goals. More details will follow for the May 12th event, which will be conducted by Martha Stokes.

Conference to Establish Centers of Excellence

This month the Virginia Conference will introduce four Centers of Excellence. As the "All Things New" initiative continues to unfold, establishment of the Centers is the most recent step in this continuing process of aligning conference resources with the primary focus of leadership development. The goal is to design resource leadership development for clergy and laity to develop principled Christian disciples, grounded in Wesleyan tradition and theology as they answer their call to ministry in the church and world.

The Center for Clergy Excellence will be overseen by Beth Downs, director of Clergy Excellence.

The Center for Congregational Excellence will be overseen by Mark Ogren, director of Congregational Excellence.

The Center for Missional Excellence will be overseen by Glenn Rowley, director of Justice and Missional Excellence.

The Center for Lay Leadership Excellence will be overseen by Martha Stokes, director of Inclusivity and Lay Leadership Excellence.

Employment Opportunities

- P/T Director of Youth Ministries**, Church of the Good Shepherd, Vienna
- F/T Director of Children's and Youth Ministry**, Sydenstricker UMC, Springfield
- P/T Youth Ministries Director**, Christ Church Fairfax Station
- P/T Children's Ministry Director**, Arlington Forest UMC, Arlington
- 3/4 T (30 hrs) Church Treasurer**, Pender UMC, Fairfax
- P/T Youth Director**, Clarendon UMC, Arlington
- P/T Director of Music**, Cameron UMC, Alexandria
- P/T Director of Children's Ministries**, Cameron UMC, Alexandria
- F/T Director of Welcoming Ministries**, Messiah UMC, Springfield
- P/T Director of Music**, Chesterbrook UMC, McLean
- P/T Youth Ministry Coordinator**, Spirit & Life UMC, Montclair (Pr. William Co.)
- Children's Ministry Assistant**, Spirit & Life UMC, Montclair (Pr. William Co.)
- P/T Director, Christian Education**, St. John's UMC, Springfield

Contact the listing church or see employment opportunities at www.novaumc.org

Derrick Parson is New Director of Ministries with Young People for the Virginia Conference

The Rev. Derrick Parson, an elder in the Virginia Conference, is the new Director of Ministries with Young People. Derrick has been active in district and conference youth ministry, and his most recent appointment was that of pastor at Asbury Memorial UMC in Chesterfield.

Derrick's goal for ministries with young people is to develop leaders who will be productive in their churches, homes, and community-at-large as followers of Jesus.

Derrick is a veteran of the US Marine Corps and holds two Master's Degrees from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond.

January Dates to Note

(www.novaumc.org/community_events.html)

- Tuesdays, 7 AM - Young Adults Women's Book Study, Uptowner Café, 1609 King St., Alexandria, VA
- Tuesdays, 12:15 PM - Noontday Prayer with Betsy Caudill (bring a bag lunch), St. James UMC, Alexandria
- Tuesdays, 7:30 PM - ESL Classes, Bruen Chapel UMC, Fairfax
- Wednesdays, 6 PM - Centering Prayer, Trinity UMC, Alexandria
- Wednesdays, 7 PM - DivorceCare, Burke UMC
- Wednesdays, 7 PM - DivorceCare for Kids, Burke UMC
- Thursdays, 7 PM - Bi-District Young Adults Bible Study, St. Matthew's UMC, Annandale
- 1st Tuesdays Bi-District Young Adults Social Hour - see page 5
- 1st Fridays, 9:30 AM - Alzheimer's Support Group, Manassas St. Thomas UMC
- 2nd Saturdays, 8:30 AM - Hiking Group, Friendship UMC
- 2nd Saturdays, 5:30 PM - Hearts Afire Contemporary Worship Experience, Church of the Good Shepherd, Vienna
- Jan. 2 - District Offices closed
- Jan. 4, 9:30 AM - Alexandria Committee on Ordained Ministry, Burke UMC
- Jan. 5, 9:30 AM - Arlington Committee on Ordained Ministry, Church of the Good Shepherd, Vienna
- Jan. 7, 9:30 AM - Bi-District Training Day, Floris UMC, Herndon
- Jan. 8, 6 PM - Bi-District Young Adults Christmas Party, St. John's UMC, Springfield (see more info on page 5)
- Jan. 10, 7 PM - Bi-District Young Adults Round Table, St. John's UMC, Springfield
- Jan. 13-14 - Bi-District Confirmation Retreat, Camp Highroad, Middleburg (see more info on page 6)
- Jan. 15 - Preference Forms, Profiles, and Statistical Table I due
- Jan. 15, 4:30 PM - Hands-On Worship, Immanuel UMC, Annandale
- Jan. 16 - District Offices closed (MLK Jr. Day)
- Jan. 17-19 - Ministers' Convocation, Blackstone Retreat and Conference Center
- Jan. 18 - Deadline for 2011 Apportionment Payments (must be postmarked to the district office or conference by this date)
- Jan. 22, 6 PM - Scream-Free Parenting Workshop, Vale UMC, Oakton
- Jan. 23, Noon - Bi-District Board of Missions, Arlington UMC
- Jan. 23, 7 PM - Alexandria District Connectional Ministries Meeting, Springfield
- Jan. 27-28 - Bi-District Bowling Lock-In, three locations (more info on page 6)
- Jan. 29, 3 PM - Bi-District Young Adults Chili/Dessert Cook-off, Mt. Olivet UMC, Arlington
- Jan. 31 - Statistical Tables II and III due

Youth Survey Results Provide a Valuable Tool for Youth Leaders and Parents

Regardless of whether or not you live in Fairfax County, the 2011 Youth Survey results are very interesting and insightful. To review them, go to this link: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey

Also, the county has put together a Prevention Toolkit, which is a collection of suggestions, tools, and resources to assist families, school and faith-based organizations, etc., and help promote the well-being of youth in our community. The toolkit URL is www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/prevention/toolkit.htm

Questions about the Fairfax County Youth Survey can be directed to Sophia Dutton, at Sophia.Dutton@fairfaxcounty.gov. If you have questions about the Prevention Toolkit, or general prevention questions, direct them to: NCSPrevention@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Mark Montgomery Accepts UCMNV Position



United College Ministries in Northern Virginia (UCMNV), our United Methodist and ecumenical campus ministry at George Mason University (Fairfax), is pleased to announce that the Rev. Mark Montgomery will be the new Minister Director effective Jan. 1, 2012. Mark, a UM elder related to the Southwest Texas Annual

Conference previously served as a campus ministry intern at McMurry University and as associate pastor at Grace UMC in Corpus Christi, Texas. Mark is a graduate of McMurry University and Duke Divinity School, and he currently chairs the Southwest Texas Young Adult Council.

Do you have students at George Mason University? Please let Mark and UCMNV know their contact information. Mark can be reached at ucmnv@aol.com.

Worship Materials Now Available for Disability Awareness Sunday

In the Virginia Conference, Disability Awareness Sunday is the first Sunday in February (**Feb. 5**) – without a special offering. The Conference Commission on Disabilities has developed worship materials and suggestions for disability awareness experiences that you can use on this Sunday, or at any other time throughout the year. The worship materials were developed based upon the Epistle reading for Epiphany 5B, which is 1 Corinthians 9:16-23. You can find the Disability Awareness Sunday packet on the Conference website (www.vaumc.org) under the “Disabilities” section.

Conference Office Seeks Two Summer Interns

The Virginia Conference Office of Congregational Excellence and the Office of Ministries with Young People are seeking two interns for summer 2012. Applicants should be interested in pursuing a career in a ministry setting, have experience and passion for the area in which they apply, and be familiar with The United Methodist Church.

Intern salary is \$250 a week (minimum of 10 weeks). For more information and an application, please contact Becky Tate. Applications must be submitted by Feb. 1 via email to Becky Tate (beckytate@vaumc.org). Becky can also be reached by phone: 804-521-1139 or 1-800-768-6040, ext. 139.

Young Adult News!

THE BI-DISTRICT YOUNG ADULTS ROUND TABLE

(**BIDYART**) will meet on Tues. Jan. 10 at St. John's UMC, Springfield. All who are interested in YA Ministry are encouraged to attend.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

... 1st Tuesday Social Hours continue! See calendar on page 4 Questions? E-mail Rachel Miller at rachel@wsunc.com.

... Thursday night 7 PM Bible study at St. Matthew's UMC (8617 Little River Turnpike, Annandale). Gather for fellowship and discussion with other young adults in Northern Virginia.

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH THE BI-DISTRICT YOUNG ADULTS!

Join us at St. John's UMC in Springfield on Jan. 8, 6 PM as we celebrate Christmas! Don that tacky Christmas sweater one more time this season, bring the worst gift you received and trade it for something that's probably just as horrendous! Bring a dessert or dish to share for our Christmas dinner. (Last names beginning with A-N: please bring your favorite holiday side dish, and last names beginning with M-Z: please bring your favorite holiday dessert.) RSVP not needed, hope to see you there! Bring a friend!

JOIN THE YA'S TO GIVE THE MONTH OF JANUARY A

SPICY AND SWEET SEND-OFF! The YA's are hosting their annual chili cook-off, with an added twist this year: a dessert competition! Start perfecting those recipes now and bring them to Mount Olivet UMC on Jan. 29, 3 PM. Contact Rachel (rachel@wsunc.com) for more details.

Applications For Virginia Voices of Youth 2012 Now Due

Applications for new and returning youth participants are due by Jan. 6. Applications are available at www.voyva.org. The tour dates are June 27- July 20, 2012. The VOY will participate in tornado and disaster recovery in the North Alabama Conference of the Southeastern Jurisdiction. All youth who have a **love of mission, music, and witness** may apply to be a part of VOY 2012. It is indeed a life-changing experience for all involved! If you have any questions, or for more information, please contact the Virginia Conference Voices of Youth Coordinator Jennifer Dixon at 757-348-7084 or email at coordinator@voyva.org

Arlington District UMW Training Day

Sat., Jan. 21, 9 AM-Noon

(*snow date Jan. 28*)

Korean UMC of Greater Washington

1219 Swinks Mill Road, McLean

For more information, contact Arlington District UMW Vice-President Marci Schiller, 703-517-1315.

THE UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH OF NORTHERN
VIRGINIA
5001 Echols Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22311
703-820-7200

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

The Connector

The monthly newsletter of the Arlington and Alexandria Districts of the United Methodist Church is mailed at no charge to clergy and key leaders within local Northern Virginia churches.

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Betsy Caudill, Program Coordinator

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Secretary

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Leon Newbanks, Business Manager

Sharon Sheldon, Program Secretary

Submit copy by the 10th of each
month to: Sharon Sheldon,
programsecretary@novaumc.org

Bi-District Youth Rally & Bowling Lock-In

Fri. Jan. 27, 10:30 PM through

Sat. Jan. 28, 7 AM



Three locations for rally/bowling:

- ... Galloway UMC, bowling at the Falls Church Bowl America
- ... Pleasant Valley UMC, bowling at the Chantilly Bowl America
- ... St. Paul's UMC, bowling at the Woodbridge Bowl America

Registration is by **group only**:

\$25 per person* by Jan. 23

\$30 per person* Jan. 24-26

\$35 per person* at the door (walk-in space is limited)

*Cost includes all bowling, plus one drink and one slice of pizza. Bring extra money for snacks, etc. See www.novaumc.org/youth.html for more information.

YOUTH CONFIRMATION RETREAT JAN. 13-14



at

Camp Highroad, Middleburg, VA

- ... Especially for small confirmation groups and their leaders
- ... \$50 per person, group registration open through Jan. 10
- ... Go to www.novaumc.org for more information, and to register on-line
- ... Questions? Contact Herb at 703-820-7200 or alexandriapc@novaumc.org

Keep up-to-date at the Bi-District Website: www.novaumc.org