

2022 Virginia Annual Conference

The 240th session of the Virginia Annual Conference was held live and in person June 16 – 18 at the Hampton Roads Convention Center. The theme of the conference was "United as One in Worship" based on scripture found at John 4:24: *God is spirit, and it is necessary to worship God in spirit and truth.*

There was inspired preaching and Bible study, wonderful music, fellowship, and a lot of information to absorb.

Missions – UMCOR Kits total as of Friday, June 17 were 18,560 kits valued at \$298,724. 12,611 pounds have been collected for food banks cross the conference.

Conference offering was \$122,000.

Cherryvale collected \$383 for the annual conference offering plus an additional \$237 for flood buckets. We provided 4 flood buckets and 15 hygiene kits.

The most significant happening was the approval of the **District Initiative**. Opposition was voiced by some and many questions raised but the majority spoke in favor. Restructuring offers a better use of resources and helps the church adapt to the changing environment.

After much debate, the recommendation that there be 8 districts was approved.

The new district names are:

Coastal Virginia District – Eastern Shore and Elizabeth River

Living Waters District – Farmville and James River

Mission Rivers District – Rappahannock River and York River

Mountain View District – Danville and Lynchburg

Northern Virginia District – Alexandria and Arlington

Shenandoah River District -Harrisonburg and Winchester

Three Notch'd District – Richmond and Charlottesville

Valley Ridge District – Roanoke and Staunton

The District Superintendent for our Valley Ridge District is the Rev. Doug Forester. Our new Director of Congregational Excellence is the Rev. Dale White. To stay informed of all district matters, go to www.roanokestaunton.org

The **Service of Remembrance** held Thursday night included our beloved Wade Munford. The memorial booklet which includes clergy memoirs, can be viewed on the conference website at www.vaumc.org/ac2022/. Click on Session News > AC2022 - Thursday Evening, June 16: Memorial Service.

Report of the Statistician –

11 churches have closed or voted to exit. 58 new faith communities added over the last year.

Youth – A very encouraging part of conference was the focus on our youth. The youth delegation was engaged and vocal. They showed a passion for being a part of the church and church life. A motion was made from the floor to allocate \$50,000 in the budget to youth ministries. Unfortunately, the motion was ruled out of order because requests to change the budget must be submitted prior to annual conference. And so people started making pledges. Pledges were written down and placed on a table in front of the stage. At the end of the day \$62,000 had been pledged.

Episcopal Nomination – The Rev. Tom Berlin, pastor of Floris UMC, Herndon, was endorsed by the conference for the office of bishop. Members of the delegation to the General Conference and the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference will be voting for episcopal leaders in November.

Appointments were fixed with Pastor Jonathan Greer being officially reappointed to Cherryvale for another year. Yay!

Bishop Lewis has formed a group known as Team Jeremiah to focus on the issues of LGBTQ facing the church. This team of clergy and laity has been meeting monthly since January 2022 to discuss proactive strategies and effects of a postponed General Conference. A webinar was conducted on May 31 which can be viewed on YouTube: [presentation recording and slides](#). Or search YouTube using “General Conference & Disaffiliation Informational Meeting-May 31, 2022”. The Jeremiah Team will conduct an additional Q&A zoom meeting within the next 30 days. I will share that link as soon as I have it. You can also stay informed through the conference website www.vaumc.org.

The Book of Reports, 2022-23 Appointments, session news, videos from conference, and a wealth of information is available on the conference website. Please make use of the conference and district websites to stay informed!

www.roanokestaunton.org

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