

# The Ashland District Connection

Connecting laity and clergy to make disciples of Jesus Christ

Ashland District  
Virginia Conference

May/June 2008

on the Web at [www.ashlandvaumc.org](http://www.ashlandvaumc.org)

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## **A Word From Your District Superintendent**

As you read this article I am in Fort Worth, Texas, attending the 2008 General Conference of the United Methodist Church as an alternate delegate.

### **What Is General Conference?**

General Conference is the world-wide gathering of the United Methodist Church representing about 11.5 million church members. It is held once every four years.

### **Where and When Is General Conference?**

The 2008 General Conference is being held in Fort Worth, Texas, beginning on Wednesday, April 23, and concluding on Friday, May 2.

### **Who Attends General Conference?**

There are 1,000 delegates (half clergy, half laity) representing the 62 annual conferences in the United States and the 62 annual conferences outside the United States.

### **What Is the Purpose of General Conference?**

General Conference sets the rules of our church that are contained in our *Book of Discipline*, decides on the mission and ministry programs for the next four years which affects the apportionments for all our churches, and approves our United Methodist stands on a variety of social issues relevant to our world today.

### **What Will We Hear about General Conference?**

The news media will want to report the "HOT" topics which will be issues related to homosexuality, abortion and divestment. (Divestment will be related to our country's relationship to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.) Since our General Conference of 1,000 delegates represents 11 million Methodists from all over the world, it will be no surprise to you that we will probably have a wide variety of opinions about the best next steps for our church related to these issues. These topics are relevant because they touch real lives. They also allow us to work through our theology and ethics. However, I want to say that the most important issues for General Conference are not these "HOT" topics.

### **What Are the Most Important Issues for General Conference 2008?**

The four areas of focus are: **(1) starting and renewing churches; (2) developing new leaders; (3) addressing global poverty; and (4) addressing world health.**

Our Methodist movement began with evangelism and concern for the poor as the key ingredients to our church. These concerns are a call to return to our roots as followers of John Wesley. In addition, these four areas have the potential to put "united" back in United Methodist. Please keep the work of General Conference in your prayers that it shall serve as a bold witness for the gospel of Jesus Christ. I look forward to returning to the Ashland District to share my first hand report with you.

Grace and peace,  
**Mark**



## From Your Lay Leader

Julie and I have been in our new home in the Virginia Heritage Community a little over a month. This is our first move in 37 years. You can imagine the trips I took to Goodwill and our local landfill. Virginia Heritage Community is located in the Massaponax area off the Spotsylvania Parkway. Our new contact information is 6301 W. Dranesville Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22407, phone number 540-898-0876, and e-mail address [TubbsL@verizon.net](mailto:TubbsL@verizon.net).

During this moving experience, I was also teaming on Fredericksburg Emmaus 70 and attending General Conference and SEJ meetings in Richmond. In all this "God is Good." I have met some new sisters and brothers in Christ. Julie and I also attended the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dahlgren UMC and were blessed to be there. The sermon, fellowship, and food were excellent as was visiting our good friends John "half" Nelson and Carolyn.

I recently read a challenging article from the Methodist News Service that I would like to share with you. The Rev. Safiyah Fosua, Director of Invitational Preaching for the Board of Discipleship, referred to the story of Jesus and his disciples in Luke 5:1-11, pointing out that "the disciples could say they had been working hard all night long doing what fisherman do. However, working smart came for them when they said, 'Nevertheless Lord, we'll go and try again.'"

Fosua challenged participants to "beat the bushes and the hedges" and engage in hospitality by leaving their desert places and doing more fishing in places where people are forgotten, children have been thrown away and the "crackheads" hang out. Stop fishing over the same waters, Fosua said. "You've been fishing too shallow, re-fishing in the same water again and again. Go out there to the deep parts where no one else is going."

So let me ask, "How is your fishing these days? Might you be fishing too shallow, and in the same waters over and over?" Thoughts to ponder.



Go Fish,  
Larry Tubbs

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## Important News for UM Men

It has been 10 years since the Rev. Dr. Maxie Dunnam was at the Virginia UM Assembly Center in Blackstone. He is a world-renowned evangelist returning to address the 31st Annual Spiritual Retreat hosted by the VA Conference United Methodist Men, November 7-9. Dr. Dunnam will be giving spirit-enriched messages on the theme, "Rehearsing the Gospel."

"Ten years ago when Maxie was with us, all the sleeping rooms at VUMAC were filled to capacity, as were the many bed-and-breakfast and motel rooms in the surrounding area. I advise men to register early," said Ron Hardman, UMMen Past President. VUMAC staff reported, "registrations are already coming in."

Please urge the men of your church to participate in this year's Spiritual Retreat at VUMAC, November 7-9. Tell them to register early at this special event designed by men, for men. There has been no increase in the 2008 registration fee; prices are the same as last year.

To download a registration form go to [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org) then on the "Ministries" pull down menu click on "United Methodist Men" and then click on "2008 Spiritual Retreat Registration Form."

**Larry Burian**  
President, VA Conference UMMen

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## Ashland District Volunteers in Mission

Gary Gross from Tabernacle UMC is chair of the Ashland District Mission Committee. The committee has identified three opportunities for churches to schedule mission work:

- **Upper Mattaponi Indian School Restoration:** Renovating the only existing Indian school in Virginia from its present state as an office back to its original appearance. Contacts: Pat Koontz (804-798-3500) or Chief Ken Adams (804-370-5259 or [kennethfadams@yahoo.com](mailto:kennethfadams@yahoo.com).)
- **Westview on the James:** Share with a child in need, repair a roof, paint a house, feed the homeless are some of the opportunities at Westview. Contact: Blanton Youell (804-457-4210 or [wvblanton@hughes.net](mailto:wvblanton@hughes.net).)
- **FredCamp:** This is a Christian work camp for high school youth. They will spend a week working on a home for elderly or disabled citizens. Contacts: Jan Saylor (540-373-3954 or [LJSaylor@cox.net](mailto:LJSaylor@cox.net)) or Mindy Liebau (540-891-4607).

There are also two mission teams scheduled that are excellent for first time mission volunteers.

- **Mission Trip to Statesville, NC:** August 3-9 a team will be working with the Wesley Community Development Corporation to help build new homes for low income families. Cost is only \$125. Lodging is on site. Contacts: Gary Gross (540-786-8060 or [garlind68@comcast.net](mailto:garlind68@comcast.net)) or Phil Hayes (540-891-8849 or [conradp1@verizon.net](mailto:conradp1@verizon.net)).
- **Mission Trip to Goldsboro, NC:** A trip is scheduled October 5-11 to the MERCI Center helping to prepare kits for emergencies such as flood buckets. Other tasks are repairs from Hurricane Ophelia and home repair for low income families. Contacts: Kim Weakley (540-273-1032 or [weakley@msn.com](mailto:weakley@msn.com)) or Karen Peterson (804-224-1043/ [kbpetersen@verizon.net](mailto:kbpetersen@verizon.net).)

**5<sup>th</sup> Annual Granville Wade Golf Tournament reservations are due!**  
**Deadline:** Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Contact Justin Williams, 804-994-5344 or [www.bethel-methodist.org](http://www.bethel-methodist.org).

## College Scholarship Applications from the Board of Global Ministries

The *Richard S. Smith and David W. Self* scholarship application for high school seniors is due by June 1. Contact Brenda Lockhart, Grants Administrator, for a copy of the application (877-899-2780 x7184 or [www.GBOD.org/youngpeople](http://www.GBOD.org/youngpeople)).

**UM Foundation of the Virginia Conference** is offering to help your church develop endowment programs, assist individuals in planning and implementing special gifts to your church, or assist in investing funds for local churches. Call Jim Bergdoll at 800-768-6040 x120 or email [JimBergdoll@vaumc.org](mailto:JimBergdoll@vaumc.org).

## Virginia Conference School of Christian Mission Events

“Living the Sacred” will be offered on the weekend of July 25-27 or the week of July 28-31 at the Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center in Blackstone, VA. Mission studies will focus on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, “I believe in Jesus,” and “Giving Our Hearts Away: Native American Survival.” The platform speaker will be the Rev. Larry Jent. Contact your local United Methodist Women or Pat Owens at [Patowens@cox.net](mailto:Patowens@cox.net).

## Mark Your Calendars

- Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup>—Ashland District Clergy Anticipation Dinner to honor families moving from the District will be held at Wright’s Chapel in Ladysmith
- Sunday, June 8<sup>th</sup>—Annual Conference Orientation for Delegates at 3 pm at Wright’s Chapel
- June 15-18—Virginia Annual Conference in Roanoke
- July 2—Moving day for pastors

## ASHLAND DISTRICT CALENDAR FOR MAY/JUNE 2008

\*VUMAC—Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center

Date	Time	Event	Location
<b>4/23-5/2</b>		<b>General Conference</b>	<b>Fort Worth, TX</b>
5/1	7:00 p.m.	District Church Location & Building Committee	District Office
5/3	8:00 a.m.	Caring Ministry Workshop	Fredericksburg UMC
5/5	7:30 p.m.	District UMM	Wright's Chapel UMC
5/9	8:30 a.m.	5 <sup>th</sup> Annual Granville Wade Cup Golf Tournament	Manquin, VA
5/10		UM Family Fun Day @ Kings Dominion	Doswell, VA
5/13	9:30 a.m.	District Clergy Association	Wright's Chapel UMC
5/15	6:30 p.m.	District Lay Speaking Ministries	Aunt Sarah's, Carmel Church
5/16-17		Introductory Seminar in Industrial Mission	Peace UMC
5/16-18		Conference UMW Spiritual Life Retreat	VUMAC
5/22	10:00 a.m.	District Ordained Ministry Committee	District Office
5/22-30		Local Pastor's Licensing School	VUMAC
5/23	12:00 p.m.	Closing Early for Memorial Day Holiday	District Office
5/26		Closed for Memorial Day Holiday	District Office
5/30	6:00 p.m.	District Clergy Anticipation Dinner	Wright's Chapel
5/31	12:30 p.m.	District UMM Canoe & Kayak Trip	Aylett Boat Landing
6/2	7:30 p.m.	District UMM	Wright's Chapel UMC
6/4	7:00 p.m.	District Superintendency Committee	Wright's Chapel UMC
6/5	7:00 p.m.	District Church Location & Building Committee	TBD
6/7		Women's Day	Ferrum College
6/8	3:00 p.m.	Annual Conference Orientation	Wright's Chapel UMC
<b>6/15-18</b>		<b>Annual Conference</b>	<b>Roanoke, VA</b>
6/21	9:00 a.m.	District UMW Taste of Missions	Duncan Memorial UMC

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