

DISTRICT DISPATCH

A NEWSLETTER OF THE THREE NOTCH'D DISTRICT



Our Lenten Journey

by Rev. Hyo Lee, Ph.D., District Superintendent

I am writing this newsletter after just having met with a mother and a four-year-old child whose husband and father has been deported. This is the family that I asked you to pray for and financially support so that they may have some means to continue their fractured life. During our meeting with the family and Pastor Larry, I saw pictures of the smiling faces of a father and mother with their three children. Sadly, they are now separated, not knowing when they will be reunited—or if they ever will be. They also live with the looming fear that they themselves might be deported.

At the same time, more detention facilities are being built around us, and another war has started, placing many of us under immense anxiety and fear.

As I seek to cope with the anxieties and fears around us—in our communities, our country, and the world—I found what Pope Leo XIV shared to be both comforting and challenging at the same time. He said:

“Lent is a time in which the Church, guided by a sense of maternal care, invites us to place the mystery of God back at the center of our lives, in order to find renewal in our faith and keep our hearts from being consumed by the anxieties and distractions of daily life.”

<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2026/02/13/260213d.html>

Indeed, we live in a world and an age that can quickly consume us with anxiety and many distractions of daily life. Yet as followers of Christ, we know that living under constant fear and anxiety is not God’s will for us. Rather, we know and believe that we are called to live in peace and even joy as we live in this world.

The Pope invited us to practice three things.

- First, listening to the sacred Scriptures in order to ground ourselves in God.
- Second, he spoke about fasting, including abstaining from food so that we may refocus ourselves on God and God’s provision. At the same time, he invited us to fast from words that could harm others. “Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgment, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves.” I believe this practice of abstinence alone could make a positive difference for our anxious souls, as we will be filled with more of God’s presence and love.
- Third, he urged us to journey through this Lent together, especially for the sake of justice and reconciliation in love. “Let us strive to make our communities places where the cry of those who suffer finds welcome, and where listening opens paths toward liberation, making us ready and eager to contribute to building a civilization of love.”

I pray that you, your family, your church families, and your communities may know God’s peace and even joy in spite of the hostility of the world.

18 “If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you. 19 If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you, ‘Slaves are not greater than their master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also.”

(John 15:18–20, NRSVUE)

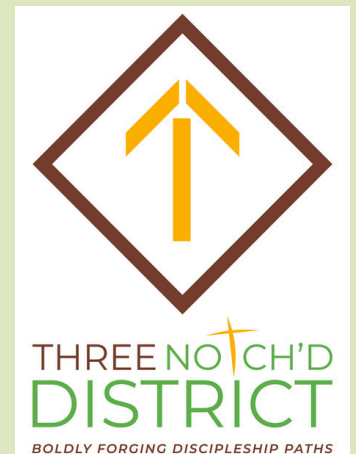
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Connecting with Lan Wilson: March 23, 24 & 26

The Rev. Lan Wilson, Conference Director of Belonging and Advocacy, wants to connect with laity and clergy in our district. We have rescheduled several opportunities for Lan to meet and get to know you and you to get to know him. These events were previously to have been held in January.

Monday, March 23

- **1:00pm, Lunch at Brazos Taco Bar**, 1133 Emmet St N, Charlottesville, with Charlottesville Cluster Leaders and interested clergy and laity
- **5:00pm, Coffee at Louisa UMC**, 100 E Main St, Louisa - all interested laity and clergy are invited to attend

Tuesday, March 24

- **11:30am, Lunch at the Pace Center**, 700 W Franklin St, Richmond, with district youth leaders and interested clergy and laity

Thursday, March 26

- **7:00pm, Coffee at Welborne UMC**, 920 Maybeury Dr, Richmond - all interested laity and clergy are invited to attend

The cost of meals is being covered by the District. **Please RSVP for one of these events using this [LINK](#)**. Questions? Contact the District Office, TNDistrict@vaumc.org, 804-521-1124.

Local Lay Leader Gathering: March 21



Uncovering the Mysteries of the Local Lay Leader – If you serve as your church's Local Lay Leader (LLL), do you have any questions about this role or want to meet other LLL to share ideas? If so, this event is for you! You are invited to an in-person gathering of the LLLs in the Three Notch'd District on Saturday, March 21, 9:30 am - 12:00 pm, at Gum Spring UMC (191 Cross County Rd, Gum Spring, 23065). Light refreshments will be available from 9:30 am to 10:00 am and the event will begin at 10:00 am. You will hear about ways churches are partnering collaboratively; have opportunities to discuss and learn about new ideas from other lay leaders; receive information on resources to help you in your role; and have time to ask questions. To help us prepare, please click on this [LINK](#) to register for the event by Monday, March 16. Please note that if you don't register by the due date and find you can attend, please come to the event anyway. We hope to see you at the event and look forward to meeting you!

Discernment Day: March 21

The next Discernment Day will be held Saturday, March 21, 9:45am-3:00pm, at Larchmont UMC, 1101 Jamestown Crescent, Norfolk. This free event will help you to explore God's call on your life. Please use this [LINK](#) to register.



Hometown Heroes

The Madison Rose Park United Methodist Charge consists of two churches in Madison County. On February 22, they were recognized as the Madison County Organization of the Year (see picture on page one). While Rose Park UMC was damaged a few years ago after a devastating fire, the charge stayed strong and has kept up a strong presence in the community. While both churches are small in number, they work very hard to impact the community. Through groups within the charge (United Methodist Men, Rose Park UMC Women's group, Lydia Group), they consistently support Madison Emergency Services Association, fed all Madison County Public School staff the past two summers (cooks are pictured on page one), provided donations to support individuals or groups in need, collected school supplies, hosted Senior Luncheons, established a Little Pantry to feed families in need in the Wolftown-Hood community, and so much more. The efforts of both of these churches with the small congregations they have is nothing short of extraordinary. The District joins in recognizing these churches for Loving, Serving and Leading in the United Methodist way!



inspired by ancient Celtic worship

Reflect ... Refresh ... Renew

5:50 - 6:30 p.m.
Thursdays, Feb. 26, March 5, 12, 19, 26
Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church



Lenten Celtic Worship: Thursdays

Do you need a personal, prayerful respite during the hectic activities of Lent? Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church, 201 High Street, Ashland, and the Office of the Chaplain at Randolph-Macon College invite you to REFLECT, REFRESH, and RENEW in a weekly 40-minute gathering based on the ancient Celtic worship tradition of candle lighting, music, prayers, quiet reflection and space to breathe.

Clergy and laity speakers will give short reflections about God at work in their lives. Each person is given the opportunity to light candles and offer prayers. Music is provided by a variety of instruments such as piano, flute, cello and violin.

Services will be from 5:50 to 6:30 p.m. on Thursdays, March 12, 19 and 26 in the sanctuary of Duncan Memorial United Methodist UMC. All are welcome.



Concert at Fellowship Club: Mar. 10

You are invited to a live musical performance and lunch Tuesday, March 10, 11:00 am, at Reveille UMC, 4200 Cary St Rd, Richmond. Liz Nance and Russell Lawson perform a wide variety of popular music. Bonnie Scimone from Virginia Navigator will also present on their services for seniors. Lunch will follow the program (\$10 cost). Register to attend at www.reveilleumc.org/fellowship-club.

Lunchtime Organ Concert: March 10

This spring, Trinity UMC, 903 Forest Ave, Richmond, invites you to attend a series of micro-concerts. Ben Miller, Director of Music Ministries, will offer the inaugural concert featuring the music of the Wesleys. Learn more about the Wesley's musical legacy and the pipe organ while enjoying rich music in a comfortable environment! There is no cost or reservation required; all are welcome to attend on Tuesday, March 10, 12:15-12:45pm.



Lay Servant Ministry Training: May 2

The Three Notch'd District will hold a Lay Servant Ministry Training on Saturday, May 2, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm. by Zoom. The BASIC course as well as two advanced courses (Polity and Spiritual Gifts) will be offered. Each course requires two to four hours of advanced reading.

This training opportunity allows lay persons to fulfill the Book of Discipline requirements for certification as a Certified Lay Servant, work toward becoming a Certified Lay Speaker, or maintain their certification by completing a required advanced course. In addition, these courses are beneficial for any lay person who is in leadership in the local church.

Lay Servant Ministries (LSM) is one of the most significant lay leadership development programs available within the United Methodist connection. Through this equipping and empowering system, lay servants have the opportunity to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ who then go and make other disciples.

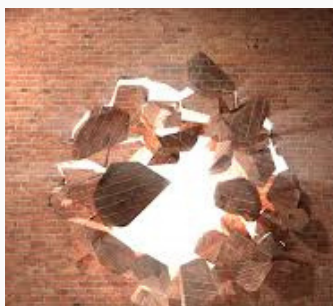
The cost to attend is \$20 per course. Payment is made online when you register. Please use this [LINK](#) to register your attendance. Registration deadline is April 27.



Gun Violence Prevention Forum: March 11

Join the conversation about the impact of gun violence in Richmond and how residents and churches can help build a safer, better community. The program will take place this Wednesday, March 11, at 6:00 pm at Reveille

UMC, 4200 Cary St Rd, Richmond. Attorney General Jay Jones will offer opening remarks. Panelists participating in the event include Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson, and leaders from RISC, Richmond Public Schools, and the City of Richmond. The panel will be moderated by WRIC-TV 8 News Anchor Eric Philips. RSVP to attend at www.reveilleumc.org/gvp-forum.



Breaking Down Walls: March 17

On Tuesday, March 17, 7:00-8:30pm, the Conference United Methodist Men and the United Women in Faith will host a Racial Justice webinar- "Breaking Down Walls: A Christian Response to the Dismantling of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion". The panelists include: Rev. James Page, Rev. Dr. Jim

Melson, Rev. Dr. Victor Gomez, and Rev. Hung Su Lim. Heather Gomez will moderate the panel discussion. Here is the Zoom webinar info: Zoom Webinar ID: 838 8143 6566, Passcode: 695853. Rev. Joseph Moseray, josephmoseray@vaumc.org, is the webinar point of contact. For more info, visit www.gcorr.org.



RICHMONDERS INVOLVED TO STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITIES

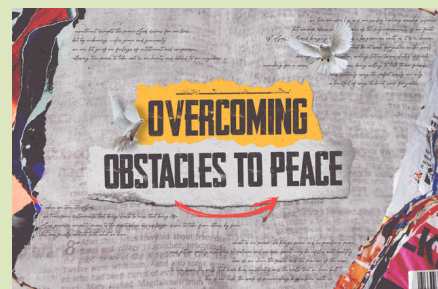
Nehemiah Rally: March 24

Join Richmond area churches and individuals in supporting Richmond City and Chesterfield and Henrico County leaders as they come together on Tuesday, March 24, 6:30-8:30pm, at St. Paul's Baptist Church, 4247 Creighton Rd, Richmond, to support the following initiatives: increasing affordable housing options, reducing gun violence, and providing mental health care.



Kits for Conference: June 6

All churches are encouraged to assemble Kits for Conference, specifically cleaning kits, hygiene kits, and menstrual hygiene kits. Instructions for kit assembly may be found at this [LINK](#). Kits will be collected only on Saturday, June 6, 9:00am-12noon, at Culpeper UMC and at Lakeside UMC (Richmond). In addition, cleaning kits will be assembled at the Culpeper location.



"OVERCOMING" SERMON SERIES: Apr. 12 Start Date

The Cabinet is encouraging churches and pastors to use a four-week sermon series to help promote understanding of justice issues from a biblical perspective. Using Scripture passages from Amos, Micah, Matthew and Ephesians, this series delves into some of the common obstacles to peacemaking - complacency, resentment, and violence - leading us to first receive Christ's peace in our own spirits and then get to the hard work of making peace in the world.

This series may begin on April 12 (the Sunday after Easter). Cluster Clergy may work together to share preaching responsibilities. Materials included in this series are children's messages, sermon notes, small group outlines, calls to worship, prayers, and graphics. Click [here](#) to access the resources.

Three Notch'd District Leadership

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Area Bishop - Rev. Sue Hauptert-Johnson
District Superintendent - Rev. Hyo J. Lee, Ph.D.
Innovation Coordinator - Rev. Jim Chandler
District Board of Church Location & Building Chair & Property Manager - Jim Mallon
District Leadership Board Chair - Don Vaught
Executive Administrator - MaryKaye Cochran
Lay Leader - Elizabeth Farrell
Associate Lay Leaders - Bert Asby, George Batten, Susan Custer, Lauren Leggett, Bob Pattison
Treasurer - Ivy Solis
Youth Coordinator (Richmond area) - Mary Elder
Youth Coordinator (Charlottesville area) - TBA
UWF Co-Presidents - Jean Swann, Sandra Thornton