The monthly newsletter of the Fredericksburg United Methodist Church

Fredericksburg, Virginia

www.fumcva.org

The Open Door

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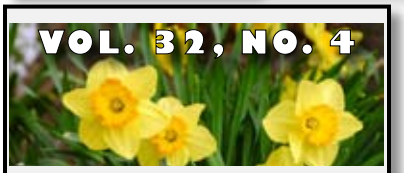

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PASTOR'S CORNER

It seems like only a few weeks ago, I was given the keys to my office and welcomed to Fredericksburg United Methodist Church in worship services. The past three years have gone quickly. There have been many changes in your lives and in mine. I am humbled to be your pastor and to offer my gifts, along with yours in service to God. At the end of June, I will be moving to a new appointment, Family Leave, in order to care for my father following his two strokes. I expect that, like every appointment, I will learn new things about myself, those I am sent to serve and the very One who sends me. Thank you for being a part of my journey. I am blessed.

Reverend Larry Davies will be appointed Senior Pastor, effective July 1. I have served with Larry on the Cabinet for five years. He is a friend and colleague. Lace-up your running shoes. Reverend Robb Almy and his family are no strangers at Fredericksburg UMC. They worship at the 9:45 service. Pastor Robb presided at the communion table, during Pastor Won's paternity leave. Their first Sunday, as your new pastors will be July 3rd.

Brenda
REV. DR. BRENDA BILER

Dear FUMC family and friends,

This month Bishop Cho and the conference cabinet announced that I have been appointed to serve Ebenezer United Methodist Church in Suffolk, Virginia. This new appointment will begin July 1st. It will be very difficult to say goodbye to you when that time comes in the summer for I and my family have received amazing loving support from you. But I know that it is my calling to go wherever I am sent to serve as a pastor. So I am also grateful for this new opportunity to serve a new congregation as a solo pastor. I would like to ask for your continuing prayers for God's guidance in this transition.

Won
REV. WON LEE

FUMC's Board of Trustees has two pianos to liquidate ...

1. Up Right, year unknown, manufactured by the Laffargue Co. of New York. Piano number 49793, one key is missing its ivory, needs tuning. "FREE to a good home."

2. Baby Grand Piano, Kimball, circa 1928 – 1929, needs tuning, $500.00 or best offer.

If you are interested, contact Kurt Nordstrom, FUMC Facilities Manager, 540-373-9021 x 115, or email him at kurtnordstrom@fumcva.org.

Connecting Through the Church

by Kitti Mann

John and I have the privilege of serving as the team leaders for the Connect Ministry in our new church organizational setup. Because of that, we have become acutely aware of ways we are seeing connections happen in our church. Just recently we saw two great examples of how people are connecting.

Last week, we were at Mary Washington Hospital to wait with Jayne Manger while Ed was having serious surgery. Jayne and Ed's "adopted son" and Chris Silkensen were present as well. As we were talking and praying, a woman approached us. She seemed nervous and worried, and, as it turned out, her husband was also in surgery. She shared her name, Barbara, and began to talk with us and express her concerns, almost begging for assurances that her husband was OK. We offered to pray with her and stood up, clasped hands, and John prayed for her and her husband. She asked about our church and, when we said FUMC, she said we all looked familiar. She said she had been to our food pantry and had eaten dinner sometimes at our second Saturday night suppers. What a wonderful sense of connection I felt. God had brought us together to pray for and give comfort and reassurance to this woman who needed the support of others.

On Sunday, March 13th, I was waiting at the Information desk in Kobler Hall to meet a family that wanted information about youth and children's activities. A fairly new attendee approached and asked about adult Sunday School classes. I showed her our church ministries booklet, and together, we discussed the classes. She picked one out, and I was able to guide her and her husband to the room where the class was being held. One of the class members was there, introduced himself, and began to tell them about the group. Afterwards, I saw them and asked about the class. They were both very impressed with the class and thought they would be going back. Another great connection made by God's grace.

Let's all look around this month and see how we can connect with someone at church. Is there someone sitting near you at church whose name you don't know? Do you see people in the hall between services that look lost or unsure where to go. Would you like to greet newcomers or be an usher or help serve at Wednesday dinner or read the scripture on Sunday mornings. Let's connect.

Wednesday Night Fellowship Meal

WEDNESDAY NIGHT FAMILY DINNERS

Join your friends for yummy food and a chance to meet new friends in a warm and relaxed atmosphere. The first step is to sign up each week BY MONDAY on the bulletin board outside the church work room, in the Gathering Space or by contacting Lisa Earnesty learnesty@verizon.net. Standing reservations will be accepted. If your plans change, please call the office and cancel your reservation so that we can maintain an accurate count for food shopping and preparation. When you decide that you don't want the evening to end, stay and help clean up!

Adults - $7, Children - $3 for 3-12, Under 3 is free, Families - $25 *(Tickets will be sold for take-out meals)*

April 6, 2016

Spaghetti with Meat Sauce • Meatless Sauce • Garlic Bread
Mixed Salads • Fruit • Dessert

April 13, 2016

Chicken Divan • Parsley Potatoes • Corn • Salad • Fruit • Dessert

April 20, 2016

Swedish Meatballs • Rice • Harvard Beets • Salad • Fruit • Dessert

April 27, 2016

Eye Round • Mashed Potatoes • California Vegetables • Salad
Fruit • Dessert

UPWARD BASKETBALL SEASON

by Mark Earnesty

I sit here on March 13th as I contemplate the recent Upward Basketball seasons with mixed emotions. I am excited that I can get my Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays back, but the rushing of kids throughout our church with their boundless energy, the energy that can be felt during practices and games and the devotions and lessons that the kids and spectators hear every week makes me a bit sad that it is over.

We finished our season on Monday the 7th of March with our yearly celebration where we eat pizza (and hopefully some vegetables), sit with our teams and coaches one last time, give all the kids their end of year gift, and honor our departing 6th graders. We went through 97 pizzas this year, handed out 185 of our 186 end of year gifts and celebrated 26 6th graders who aged out of Upward basketball. You can see in the pictures what Kobler Hall looked like on the 7th – it was spectacular!

These are most of the 186 kids from kindergarten through 6th grade who played basketball this past Upward season. The kindergarteners started at 8:30 AM on Saturday mornings and the last game of the day was between two 5th and 6th grade teams and ended at 3:30 PM. The games last about an hour and start with each child being introduced into the gym. They run from the entrance doors of Kobler Hall across the floor, as the crowd cheers, to the other end of the gym where their chairs are. The kids range from some who don't really like all the fanfare to others who are blowing kisses to the crowd as they enter. The first half is played and then there is a minute or so to allow the kids to get a drink before they all sit on the floor where the devotion leader talks to them. This year, the focus of the talks was on Jesus' parables. Each week, the speaker concentrated their talk on one of these parables. Some speakers gave a lesson on the parable or while

others talked about an experience in their life that related specifically to one of these stories. The speakers ranged from "seasoned" Christians to some of our very own youth who had previously aged out of the Upward program. What a wonderful opportunity to speak to the players and the crowd while giving our youth a safe place to speak about their faith.

These 186 kids also practiced in Kobler Hall once a week. Half practiced on Mondays while the other half practiced on Thursdays. Practices were also staggered in that the younger kids would start at 5:30, the middle aged kids would practice at 6:30 and the 5th and 6th graders practiced at 7:30. Coaches would spend most of the time working on basketball skills but would also spend time teaching the kids Christian virtues. The teams would spend about 3 weeks on each virtue, why it's important, and how to apply it in their lives and to basketball. Each virtue would have a Bible verse that went along with it that they were asked to learn each week. The first three they learned about were Respect, Gratitude and Trust. For example, the Bible verse that went along with respect was from I Peter 2:17. It says to show proper respect to everyone. Finally, each Upward year ends with the virtue of Love. And the Bible verse that goes along with it is John 3:16. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

It's hard to believe that the 4th year of Upward has now concluded. From the first year when we had 60 kids playing Upward, it has evolved to a group of 186 kids with many of the parents who have been here all 4 years. Some attend other churches, others don't attend any church, but during the 3 months of Upward basketball season, we share a common bond here at FUMC. I'm excited to see where God is leading this ministry in the future.

CHILDREN'S NEWS

"Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it." —Proverbs 22:6

by Shannon Bullock, shannonbullock@fumcva.org

FUMC CHILDREN'S RUNNING CLUB

Have you ever seen the excitement of Fredericksburg's annual Great Train Race? It is held on the first Sunday of May each year and usually fills our church with happy, sweaty children proudly sporting their new medal. This year we are looking at the possibility of having a group representing FUMC. We would meet on Wednesday nights before the race for a devotion and then have children and adult partners run the race course. On the Saturday before the race, we will worship together as a group and then on race day, we will proudly wear our FUMC shirts and cheer each other on. We would also like to pass out water or other items to draw attention to FUMC and our offerings for families. If you – child or adult – is interested in this idea, please call Shannon Bolick.

VBS 2016 – EGYPT: JOSEPH'S JOURNEY FROM PRISON TO PALACE

The dates are set! VBS 2016 will happen here at FUMC from July 18 through 22. Mark your calendars now! We will travel back in time and follow the story of Joseph. Join Joseph as he swats away scorpions in a dark prison cell…stroll through the golden splendor of Pharaoh's palace…experience exotic sights and smells in an Egyptian bazaar…be carried away by music wafting through enticing desert air. AND learn how God is always with us! VBS is open for rising kindergarten through sixth graders. (Younger children may participate if a parent is on site volunteering.) The program with grade level classes will run from 9:00 – 12:00.

SOMETHING NEW!!! This year, we will have two time options for VBS!!! In addition to our regular daytime program where children meet with classes by grade level, we will have an evening program from 6:00 – 8:00. Families will rotate together as groups and can include all ages, preschool through adult. Registration forms are available and should be returned to the children's ministry office.

The planning has already started and we need you to prayerfully consider HOW you will participate this year. We cannot do this without adult volunteers and leadership. Positions needed include:

- Music Leader
- Games Leaders
- Joseph
- Guards
- Food Coordinator
- Food Shop workers
- Tribe Leaders (2 per daytime class)
- Assistant Director (to shadow this year and lead next year)
- Toy Shop
- Brickmaking Shop
- Embalmer's Workshop
- Jewelry Shop
- Linen Shop
- Hieroglyphics Shop
- Basket Weaver's Shop
- Barbershop / Salon
- Food Shop

MEET FUMC'S KIDS – Nicholas Futrell

Nicholas Futrell is an 11 year old 5th grader at Ferry Farm Elementary. He is the son of Eric and Sarah Futrell and little brother to Brenna. Nicholas and his family alternate worshipping at the 9:45 and 11:00 service. Nicholas likes the view from the sanctuary balcony. He also participates in Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and Upward Basketball. Nicholas just bridged to Boy Scouts and is part of troop 199 in Stafford. He enjoys working on merit badges, camping, community service projects, playing basketball, and riding his bike. He also plays rec league volleyball and is preparing to go to the state Destination Imagination tournament. He also enjoys showing his love for his sister by teasing her frequently. Nicholas' favorite memory from FUMC was delivering the message during the Children's Sabbath this year. His favorite books are the Lord of the RIngs series and his favorite Bible verse is Proverbs 28:1, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are bold as a lion." When Nicholas grows up he wants to be a defense industry engineer.

UMM
UNITED METHODIST MEN

UMM OFFICERS:

Larry Julihn, President • Bob LaChance, Vice President
Bob Hinkle, Treasurer • Bob Pickett, Devotional Leader

All men are invited to join the UMM on the second Saturday of each month for breakfast at 8:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We adjourn to the Chapel at 8:45 a.m. for our devotional. Come and join your brothers in Christ for food and fellowship.

Fundraiser to benefit
Fredericksburg MOPS at

Sweet Frog in Eagle Village
April 14-17

When you come in, mention that you are with Fredericksburg MOPS and a portion of the sale will go to us! MOPS provides local moms with community, guidance and support.

NOTE:
Our fundraiser is only at the Eagle Village location, NOT the Harrison Crossing location.

sweetFrog
premium frozen yogurt
EAGLE VILLAGE &
HARRISON CROSSING

Our FUMC family expresses sympathy and love to the family and friends of ...

Doug Green
on the death of his wife Susan Shaw Green

Lynda and Doug MacDonald
on the death of her mother, Nancy, on March 23

Bob and Maxine Moore and Katherine Counsell
on the death of his brother and her uncle, Richard Dicky

Roger and Mary Pasternak
on the death of his father, Walter Pasternak, on March 6

Kurt Nordstrom
on the death of his mother, Connie Nordstrom, on March 4

Marcie and Raymond Dishman
on the death of her grandmother on March 1

Becky Johnson
on the death of her brother

GetConnected! @fumc

Join us on May 29th, between the hours of 8:45 am – 12:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall for 5th Sunday Connect. This is an opportunity to meet other members of our FUMC family from all services. Coffee and light snacks will be provided.

We have invited Brian Koontz, our Cokesbury Representative to meet with you. If you would like to preview specific Sunday School lesson material, or other books or resources, please let us know and we will see if Brian can accommodate.

Contact John Mann (slowjet@live.com) or Kitti Mann (kittimann5@gmail.com) with questions. Hope to see you on May 29th!

United Methodist Women

Every woman of the church is invited to become a member of United Methodist Women because when women come together for missions, amazing things can happen. The theme for 2016 is "Growing in Blessedness."

PURPOSE OF UNITED METHODIST WOMEN ...

The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of Mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

UMW PROGRAMS & DATES

April 5 — **Wesleyan Circle — No Meeting**

April 7
10:00 am — **Gladys Cocke Circle,** Downstairs Fellowship Hall
Fellowship and Coffee
10:30 am — **Program**: End of Life Issues
Leader: Claire Curcio

April 14
7:30 pm — **Mary Ellen Stephenson Circle**, Parlor
Program: Women of the Bible

April 23
8:30 am-2:00 pm — **Spiritual Growth Retreat,** Kobler Hall
Theme: Created for Happiness: Understanding Your Life in God
Leader: Darlene Runaldue
* See separate article on page 2.

April 28
7:00 pm — **Mission Team Meeting**, Rm. 207

April 29-May 1 — **Conference UMW Spiritual Life Retreat,** Blackstone
*Brochures available on UMW Bulletin Board next to Parlor

Looking ahead:

May 19
7:00 pm — **WEB (Women Enriched by Books) Book Club**, Church Library
Selection: *Coffee, Tea, and Holy Water* by Amanda Hudson

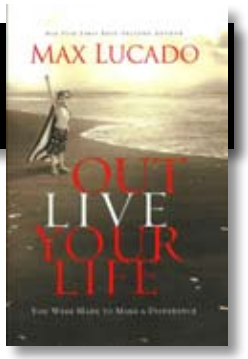
May 21
9:30 am — **District UMW Mission Fair**
Warsaw UMC (See UMW Bulletin Board for more information.)

Please call Carol Kuty at 540-898-0256 or Pat Blosser at 540-373-0593 if you have questions about our supportive community of women. ***Check out the United Methodist Women bulletin board next to the Parlor!***

UMW NOTECARDS ...

Another way for you to support missions is to purchase and use FUMC notecards. Packages of 10 notecards with envelopes, featuring a pen and ink drawing of our church by Jack Burnette, are on sale for $5.00 each. The cards are located in a basket at the Charlotte Street entrance. Place cash or a check in the envelope provided in the basket. Money from the sale of FUMC notecards is used for missions — the heart of a United Methodist Woman!

Monday Morning Bible Study



The Monday Morning Bible Study group will meet on April 4 and April 18 from 10:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. in Rm. 210. We will continue our study of *Outlive Your Life: You Were Made to Make a Difference* by Max Lucado. This study is based on the first 12 chapters of the book of Acts. On April 4 we will discuss Chapter 11, "Remember Who Holds You," and on April 18 we will discuss Chapter 12, "Blast a Few Walls." Everyone is welcome. For more information, contact Charlotte Edge at 540-371-1967 or candhedge@msn.com.

Ever think about it?

Why Are We Here?

What's the purpose of it all?

Come listen and be invigorated!

(ref: Ephesians 2: 1-10)

It's on Saturday Night, April 30th from 7-9PM at Fredericksburg United Methodist Church In Kobler Hall.

While the address is 308 Hanover St., the entrance and parking direction is on Charlotte Street across from the USPS facility.

THE SPEAKER IS DR. CLARENCE BROWN, PASTOR OF ANNANDALE UMC

COMMIT TO COMING AND BRING OTHER ADULT MEN: BRING YOUR BROTHERS, SONS (14 AND OLDER), BROTHERS-IN-LAW, FATHERS, GRANDFATHERS, FATHERS-IN-LAW, NEIGHBORS, FRIENDS FROM EVERYPLACE AND MEN FROM ALL CHURCHES ARE INVITED. WE CALL IT

† MEN'S NIGHT OUT †

AND IT'S OPEN TO MEN OF ALL BELIEFS, FAITHS AND DENOMINATIONS.

PLEASE DONATE DURING COMMUNITY GIVE ...

The Community Foundation and over 150 local nonprofits hope to raise $1 million for charity on a single day in May. The third "Community Give" will be held from midnight to 11:59 p.m. on Tues., May 3. Our church provides volunteer and/or financial support to several of the participating nonprofits, including Micah Ministries, Rebuilding Together and School Dressing Days. If you plan to support any of these charities during The Community Give, you should go online on May 3rd to www.TheCommunityGive.org.

The Community Give
GIVE
The Community Foundation

FUMC SERVE Team

by Libby Wasem, Michelle Ewer, Dinner Coordinators

As one of the four core ministry areas of FUMC, the SERVE Team is coordinating and supporting the many outreach/mission ministries here at FUMC. This month, the team is informing all FUMC members about one of our ongoing ministries, the Community Dinner. Future articles will describe other ministries. Any members interested in participating with a ministry can contact the Church office.

FUMC Community Dinner

Matthew 25:35 "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in"

The FUMC Community dinner has been serving hot meals to those that are less fortunate for about 10 years. We serve the best tasting hot meals in the area, the second Saturday of every month to anyone and everyone who wishes to partake. Our day typically starts around 12 pm with our dedicated cook staff preparing the nearly 250 necessary meals.Then comes our set up crew around 2 pm; they make sure that the dining area is set up for our guests. Depending on the month or upcoming holiday, the dining area is typically decorated to match the holiday. A lot of the volunteers really get into this by bring in their own decorations from home or special treats, to really make this a special occasion. At 3:30 we usually start allowing guests to enter and rest their bodies and souls. I say usually, because depending on the weather, we want to ensure their comfort and safety, so we sometimes open the doors earlier. This is also the time where we can meet with the guests one on one and talk and pray with them. This can also be the only time where the guests can talk to someone who actually listens. We also provide a Bible study to share God's word and allow a time of reflection and prayer requests.

At 3:45 Pastor Brenda opens up with a prayer, thanks the guests for coming, and invites everyone to join the 5:30 service upstairs (we have had several guests accept that offer). After the opening prayer, we start to serve the salads. The salad crew is off to work getting the bowls filled for the servers to deliver to the guests.

Like a fine restaurant, we seat the guests, the drinks and meals are served to them. This seems very foreign to them, but it makes them feel (even if for only one day) very special. After the salads are served, we wait on them again to determine what they would like for dinner. When the dinner is complete, they finish off with some delicious desserts of their choice.

The Community Diner typically serves 150-200 guests every second Saturday. We also allow the guests to bring a meal home with them. We serve anywhere from 30-60 carry out meals.

We routinely have various groups assist with the community dinner, from the Girl Scouts making centerpieces, the FUMC youth making cards and decorations, Kids with Purpose making desserts, the Boy Scouts, United Methodist Women, Navy Federal Credit Union, and neighboring churches in serving. Along with the roughly 25 dedicated volunteers, we not only make this a dinner that our guests will remember, but a true ministry for the community. I have seen our guests, and received hugs from them, just wandering through town. They are always looking forward to next month's famous meatloaf and special time of fellowship. If you feel led to help out this truly fulfilling ministry, you will forever be changed and blessed knowing that you are providing for those that are less fortunate.

The grocery bill is about $450 each month. Funds are provided out of the Elnora O. Johnson Endowment, a Fund administered by the Fredericksburg United Methodist Foundation. Ms. Johnson generously bequeathed these funds to be used for local missions, including the Community Dinner.

2 Corinthians 9:12 "This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God."

HELP WANTED

GREETER/CARETAKER NEEDED ... Reports to Facilities Manager. Principal function is to provide a presence at the Charlotte Street entrance of the Fredericksburg United Methodist Church (FUMC). Also assists and/or directs guests and parishioners to meeting rooms and/or events, patrols the grounds and building to maintain a safe and secure facility for the FUMC Ministries and helps coordinate and assist if an emergency arises. Hours of duties are 7 days a week from 5:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. Two or more individuals may share this position. Send applications to Kurt Nordstrom (kurtnordstrom@fumcava.org).

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, YOUTH & HANDBELL CHOIRS NEEDED ... Fredericksburg UMC is currently seeking a part-time Director of Children, Youth and Handbell Choirs. Send your resume and letter of interest to sscooley@aol.com.

USHERS NEEDED ... The 9:45 service needs a few ushers and a couple substitutes. Please contact Catherine Cheek at chezcheek@verizon.net for the dates that are available.

Have you ever wondered....

by Sue Lewandowski, Deaconess

...what is that Coat of Many Colors Group that is listed in the announcements? The First Thursday of each month this group meets to offer an open, loving, Christian setting to support families and friends of Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender (LGBT) persons.

A mother's journey to acceptance

When our son first told us about his homosexuality, I was devastated. I was a devoted Christian, and I thought that God abhorred homosexuals. Now my sweet son was taking himself out of the love of God. I didn't want to lose him, now or for eternity. Where could I turn? How I wish I had a support group like the Coat of Many Colors. This is the place where we can share our confusion, hurts, questions and insights with folks who have been there and are there now.

If this sounds helpful, contact Kitti Mann at kittimann5@gmail.com, or 540-891-1671.

Merry Makers ...

The Merry Makers April 14th trip to Port Royal has been **CANCELLED**.

Volunteer from home

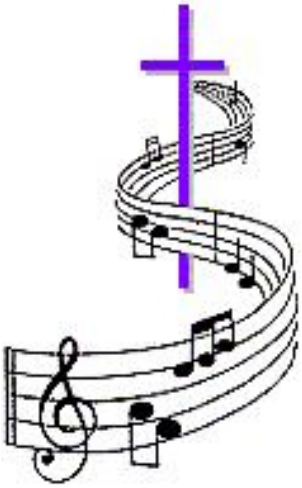
The SEEK Committee is looking for volunteers to help us verify our membership data. You can help with this from your home by making phone calls. Our goal is to gather accurate contact information for all our families. Developing an accurate database will be invaluable for the both the day-to-day operations and the future growth of FUMC. In Matthew 28:19-20: Jesus said, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." If you are interested, contact Paula Zero 540-785--2085 or Trish Vaughan at 540-656-0905.

Vacation Bible School 2016

We are excited to have Amber Dawson on board as our director for this year's VBS. We are creating our leadership team. Are you called to serve as our Design Director? Music Director and Celebration Leader? Games Leader? We will be following Joseph's story this year as we travel to Egypt for "Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace!"

VBS will take place this year from July 18 – 22! This year we will offer two different time frames. Our 9:00 – 12:00 program will offer the same format as years past. We will also offer an evening program from 6:00 – 8:00 where families will rotate together. Let Shannon Bolick know how you can help so you can get in on the fun. Registration forms are available in front of the chapel, in the gathering space, or at room #203.

IN THE CHURCH ...



Sanctuary Choir seeks new voices

Please come and join us for the joy of singing praise to the Lord. We meet every Wednesday at 7:15 p.m. in the Choir Room (113). This choir sings for all 11:00 a.m. worship services. For information, contact Bill McCoy at billmccoy@fumcva.org.

Hospital Visits

Planning a hospital stay? Are you headed to surgery? Want to have prayer and someone from the clergy staff to visit? Tell us when you are in the hospital and, if surgery is scheduled, the day, time and place where a Pastor can locate you. Our Pastors can serve you best when they know your schedule. They can meet you at the health facility prior to surgery. They can have prayer and support you and your loved ones. Hospitals no longer notify churches when members are hospitalized. If you wish to have a Pastor visit, you or a family member will need to notify the church.

AROUND THE DISTRICT & COMMUNITY ...

2016 General Conference

April 10 to be conference-wide day to pray for General Conference

The United Methodist Council of Bishops has invited each annual conference in the denomination to designate one day to hold a 24-hour prayer vigil for General Conference. Bishop Young Jin Cho has selected Sunday April 10 to be the day for the Virginia Conference prayer vigil. ***April 2 has been selected for Fredericksburg United Methodist Church.*** Rev. Dr. Ted Smith, Fredericksburg District Superintendent, Rev. Jarvis Bailey, District Program Director and Rev. Gerry Headley, District Prayer Coordinator have created a prayer schedule so that churches on the Fredericksburg District will pray for the Church, not only on April 10, but each day between March 9 and May 21, giving the General Conference full coverage plus one day for travel home from Portland, Oregon.

The General Conference is the top policy-making body of The United Methodist Church, and meets once every four years to determine the denomination's future direction, consider revisions to church law, and approve plans and budgets for church-wide programs. The 2016 meeting will take place May 10-20 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Oregon.

Nashville, Tennessee: Exploring General Conference, a free online course from United Methodist Communications, is designed to help participants learn more about the official decision-making body of The United Methodist Church and to explore many of the aspects of General Conference in anticipation of the 2016 session.

The course is comprised of five modules, which are designed to take about 30 minutes to complete: the history of General Conference, its role and purpose; how delegates are elected to General Conference; delegates' roles and responsibilities; how petitions, general church budget and other important matters are decided through General Conference; various social issues facing The United Methodist Church and the denomination's stance on these issues; the highlights of the 2012 General Conference and what's ahead for the 2016 General Conference.

The Exploring General Conference Course is free and ongoing through June 30, 2016. For more information, or to sign up for the course, go to http://www.umcom.org/learn/exploring-general-conference.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Meals on Wheels is a service which delivers prepared meals to persons who cannot do this for themselves. The program is self-sustaining when all clients can pay. However, there are a few clients who are not able to pay at this time but who still need the service.

If you would like to help this program, you may write a check to FUMC with Meals on Wheels in the memo line and your donation will be forwarded to the appropriate person.

Technology of Tomorrow to Meet the Needs of Today

2016 Independent Living Expo

Chances are you know of someone who could benefit from Assistive Technology. Perhaps it is a family member or friend with an emotional, intellectual or physical disability. Maybe it is a relative or neighbor who would like to continue living independently at home as they age. *What is Assistive Technology?* It is any item that helps someone lead a better life. It could be as low tech as a mobility walker or as complex as a robotic exoskeleton to help paraplegics walk. There are mobile apps to help individuals with anxiety, autism, depression and PTSD. Service animals are another form of "technology."

Fredericksburg's disAbility Resource Center presents the 2016 Independent Living Expo on Saturday, May 7. The event will be from 9am to 5am at the Fredericksburg Expo Center at 2371 Carl D. Silver Parkway. Vendors will offer you an opportunity to see and touch assistive technology equipment. Service providers for in-home care will be available to speak with you about their services. State and local agencies will be on hand to help you learn about the services available to you or your loved one. A special thanks to our Silver Community Supporter – Rappahannock Goodwill Industries. Make plans to attend this first of its kind event to be held here in Fredericksburg! Free registration: www.drcexpo.eventbrite.com.

The disAbility Resource Center, a Center for Independent Living (CIL), assists people with disabilities to achieve the highest potential and benefit of independent living. Programs and services include independent living skills training, peer counseling, exercise classes and social events for people with disabilities. For more information, visit their website at www.cildrc.org or call 540-373-2559.

SCHOOL DRESSING DAYS – 2016

School Dressing Days (SDD) is an annual event sponsored by the Interfaith Community Council, of which FUMC is a member. The purpose is to help children in need be ready for the first day of school. This year, it will be held on Friday and Saturday, August 12 and 13, at the LDS church on Bragg Road. Last year, we served over 1,100 children from Kindergarten through High School and those enrolled in Head Start. Children are given new jeans, shirts, underwear and socks, backpacks, school supplies, and toiletries. Gently used outerwear (jackets, hoodies, sweatshirts) and school-appropriate shoes are offered as long as the supply lasts. The SDD committee "super shoppers" work all year to find jeans and shirts and other items at reasonable prices. Faith communities are also encouraged to collect needed supplies. The bin is ready in Mission Control and there is a list of items needed for School Dressing Days on the wall. Remember the only used items are gently used outerwear and school-appropriate shoes. – and backpacks. Like us on Facebook and receive updates to the process. Soon there will be opportunities to sign up to volunteer at the event – lots of helpers are needed to assist the families on event days. And helping at the event is an awesome experience (youth 16 and older are welcome).

Donations Needed for Girl Scout Troop 263 ...

The Juniors of Troop 263 are earning a Journey patch and the final component is a take action project. The girls have selected collecting food for the FUMC pantry. There will be a collection bin in Mission Control April 3 - 8, if anyone would like to donate non-perishable items to their project.

OUTREACH Pantry

by Ed Sielski, Outreach Coordinator

The FUMC Outreach Food Pantry is presently focusing on food products only. Our present inventory is in need of cereals, canned peas, canned fruit, canned soups, canned meat, pancake syrup and bread. Please place these items in the appropriate container in Mission Control. Since we now have an adequate supply, we do not need peanut butter, jelly, mashed potatoes and pasta. Monetary donations may also be made by writing "Food Pantry" in the memo section of your check. Contact Ed Sielski with questions. (540-786-8515)

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Please send an email to michellecooper@fumcva.org if you have an address change or if you do not wish to receive a newsletter.

The Open Door

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A STEPHEN MINISTRY Congregation