



CONFERENCE *CIRCUIT*

The West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church

Issue # 2 • Friday, June 14, 2019

60 Years of Celebrating Christ at the Campfire

Friday night worship honors Spring Heights Anniversary



By Shea James and Amy Mullins

Spring Heights, the Conference's camping and outdoor facility, is celebrating 60 years of faith, friendships and fun!

You are invited to join in the celebration at 7:30 p.m. today on the oval lawn in front of Wesley Chapel. Bring a lawn chair, wear your Spring Heights shirts from years past, and bring and your Spring Heights memorabilia.

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Today's Business Preview

By Mark Smith

For those attending the Annual Conference today, we begin with Holy Communion outdoors near the Meditation Chapel (located behind Wesley Chapel).

Following Holy Communion, worship will continue in the main Chapel with a time of praise and prayer.

After a business session which will include resolutions, reports, and

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More on the web!

You can read much more about the stories featured in the Conference Circuit by visiting our award-winning website, wvumc.org/news. Use your smartphone camera to scan the code at left to go directly to our news page!

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Friday Schedule

7:45am	Holy Communion with Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball (Outdoors near Meditation Chapel)
8:15am	Prayer and Praise
8:45am	Business Session
11:00am	Memorial Service James Berner, preaching
12:30pm	Lunch
2:00pm	Business Session
4:00pm	Retirement Celebration (Order of the Day)
5:15pm	Business Session
5:30pm	Dinner
7:30pm	Spring Heights 60th Anniversary Celebration (Ice cream social to follow)

60 Years of Celebrating...

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There will be family friendly worship, a singalong with the Spring Heights Alumni Band, and we will roast marshmallows over an open fire. Spring Heights 60th anniversary T-shirts will be available for sale for \$10.

Located just north of Spencer in Roane County, Spring Heights brings youth to a place of curiosity and discovery in their spiritual journeys.

Summer intern Robin Kelby said the camp is all about “the Spirit moving in young people.” Here, campers, ages 7-18, deepen their relationship with God through Bible studies and devotionals. The campsite offers outdoor activities such as swimming, horseback riding, hiking, canoeing, crafts, high ropes, and challenge courses.

Sarah Wilmoth, a 2019 summer counselor, said, “We want campers to have as much fun as you can fit into one week but also learn a lot along the way! Camp is a unique experience in today’s world because it gives youth a chance to unplug from devices and be fully present with the people around them. For some, this will be their first time away from their parents, which presents an opportunity to reach out of their comfort zones. They will learn more about themselves and more about Christ.”



Recognizing that 25 percent of West Virginia children live in poverty, Spring Heights offers flexible prices and scholarships for campers so that no one is ever turned away. This is funded through donations from generous supporters and local churches. If you are interested in supporting this ministry, please email Camp Manager Amy Mullins at amy@springheights.org or call her at 304-927-5865.

More information about Spring Heights is available at <https://www.wvumc.org/spring-heights-camp> and <http://www.springheights.org/summer-camp.html>.

Today’s Business Preview

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voting for General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates, attendees will transition into another time of worship. Jim Berner, outgoing conference treasurer, will be preaching for the Memorial Service, using the latter part of Romans 8 as his text. Berner’s service to the West Virginia Annual Conference will be celebrated.

Business continues in the afternoon, but the Conference will pause to recognize the Retirement Class of 2019.

Videos about each retiree will be posted on the Conference website, www.wvumc.org.

Today will end with a celebration of the 60 years of ministry of Spring Heights. If the weather holds, the celebration will be on the chapel lawn. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own lawn chair. An ice cream social, sponsored by the Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM), will follow.

Highlight of the business sessions will be voting for delegates to the 2020 General and Jurisdictional conferences. This year will be the first time that delegates will be chosen using electronic voting. All other matters will be voted on using traditional means.

The Conference Workbook includes brief biographies of laity interested in serving as delegates to the 2020 conferences. Nominations of additional laity can be made from the floor.

For the first time, the workbook includes information about clergy who have expressed an interest in serving as delegates. Although there are brief stories about some clergypersons in the workbook, they are not the only ones qualified to serve as delegates. All clergy members in full connection are eligible for election.

Discovery program hosts interns Max McGinnis and Caitlin Ware

By Caitlin Ware

The conference Discovery program is hosting two interns this summer — Max McGinnis, with the United Methodist Foundation of West Virginia, and Caitlin Ware, with the conference Communications Team. Both West Virginia Wesleyan College students applied to the program to learn more about the functions of the United Methodist Church and the West Virginia Conference.

While working in the Foundation office Max has found, “It’s an awesome opportunity. I am thankful to take what I am learning in school and combine it with the faith in my life to promote stewardship.”

Caitlin added, “I get to go places and meet people



I’ve never known before. I’ve seen the hard work and many dedicated people involved with planning Annual Conference and who provide our churches all year with invaluable resources. Our conference is dynamic and alive. I can’t wait to be more involved.”

Apart from their work in the conference office, Max and Caitlin are participating in the West Virginia Annual Conference 2019 at Buckhannon and Youth 2019 in Kansas City.

Discovery internships are designed by and for youth and young adults to provide an opportunity for exploring calls to ministry. Contact Shea James at sjames@wvumc.org to learn more.

Retirees honored for years of dedicated service

By Judy Pysell

“When his time of service was completed, he returned home” (Luke 1:23).

It has been said that every seven seconds a baby boomer retires: About 10,000 a day, a pace set since 2011.

A few of those baby boomer retirees are pastors and they are being recognized at the Retirement Celebration Worship Service at 4 p.m. Friday during the 2019 West Virginia Annual Conference.

Bonnie MacDonald, director of leadership formation and ministry, said of the retirees, “They have offered themselves to God for God’s use in leading others to experience the love of Christ and now they are invited to release the official business to God and to others.”



“Their growth and service as Christians will continue but their official role as pastors will end -- unless they are called into an official capacity at some point in the future to serve ‘in retirement,’” she added.

Discover area attractions during your stay in Buckhannon!

By Paula McGrew

Are you curious about places for you and your family to explore between business and worship sessions at Annual Conference?

What if your phone could serve as a kind of tour guide? Check out CLIO, a mobile app that helps you find landmarks, museums, historic and cultural sites near you (available at <http://theclio.com> or your app store). **Read more about CLIO at wvumc.org/news.**



The Pringle Tree

At Christ's Table, We All Are One

Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball opens 2019 Annual Conference with Worship and Communion



By Pam Braden

What does it mean to be invited to the table?

Love God. Love your neighbor as yourself.

At Thursday's opening worship service, Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball challenged worshipers to invoke the Great Commission.

Invite your neighbors to the table. Invite the abusers. Invite those who have wronged you. Invite the drug addicts. Invite those who you don't like. Invite the sinners.

Our daily walk with Christ enables us to invite others to the table. By learning to love those we don't like, we learn to be more like Christ.

We find Christ through the invitation to be better - to love others better - every day.

The symbolism of invitation to the table of grace at this year's Annual Conference includes not just the bread and the cup. The Bishop invites us to that same table for every session of the Annual Conference. For it is at that same table that we are given grace. It is at that same table that we return each day.

At Thursday's laity session, Conference Treasurer Jim Berner reminded attendees that the mission of The United Methodist Church is not to build buildings. The mission

of local churches is not to pay their apportionments. The mission for all is to make disciples for Jesus Christ. To do that, we must invite everyone to the table of grace.

What will we find at the table of grace? Christ's body and blood. And now, we find the business of the Annual Conference is to extend an invitation to sit at the table and embrace the mission of the church. We invite all of our brothers and sisters to be disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world.

“The table is powerful because it is a tangible call: Christ came into the world to make it whole, to reconcile it to God, to give every person hope and life. For those of us who are in the church already proclaiming the good news to the world, the table is a reminder that we are guests and not the hosts. The church and all that is good in it, belongs to God. It is also a reminder that there are still folks missing from the table and that dinner doesn't begin until everyone has come in, washed their hands, and found their plate.

— *AC2019 Worship Book*



Images from Day 1

(Clockwise from right): (1) Students from the Shenandoah Conservatory Arts Academy Choirs opened worship on Thursday; (2) The annual Ministry Fair drew hundreds of visitors to learn about ministries throughout the West Virginia Conference; The Table is central not just to our worship (3), but our business (4) at Annual Conference 2019 as we are reminded of its unifying power; (5) Conference laity gathered at the Performing Arts Center for their annual session Thursday morning; (6) Craig Hinchman, one of our music directors, plays piano during worship; and (7) Rev. Felicia Wooten Williams leads the congregation in worship.



Foundation Elects New Officers

Jeff Taylor, president of the United Methodist Foundation of West Virginia, Inc., announced that the Board of Trustees elected new officers at its May 23 meeting in Canaan Valley.

The Foundation is governed by a Board of Trustees made up of a diverse group of laity and clergy from every district of our Annual Conference.

The Board elected D. Lyn Dotson of Morgantown to serve as chairperson, Cheryl Davis of Charleston to serve as vice chairperson, and Judy Raines of Bluefield to serve as treasurer.

In addition, the Board re-elected foundation staff members Jeff Taylor to serve as president, Kim Matthews to serve as vice president, and Susannah Carpenter to serve as assistant treasurer.

Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball continues to serve as the honorary chairperson.

Mr. Dotson is an active member of Suncrest United Methodist Church in Morgantown. A recognized leader in philanthropy, Lyn retired from the West Virginia University Foundation, where he served as senior vice president for development. He is a West Virginia Wesleyan alumnus (BA 1972) and a graduate of the West Virginia University College of Law (JD 1976). Lyn and his wife, Susan, have two adult children.

Ms. Davis attends Elizabeth Memorial United Methodist Church in Charleston, where she is active in



United Methodist Foundation of West Virginia Director Jeff Taylor (l) meets with new Board of Trustees Chair Lyn Dotson (r).

a variety of capacities. She is also active in the Midland South District and the Annual Conference. Ms. Davis is a certified lay servant. A graduate of West Virginia University (undergraduate and law degrees), her career included working in various legal and business capacities in government and the private sector prior to her recent retirement from the West Virginia Department of Transportation.

The United Methodist Foundation of West Virginia, Inc., was established in 1974. It manages over \$105 million for United Methodist causes. In 2018 the Foundation distributed over \$4.3 million for charitable purposes.

Religious life is in revival at West Virginia Wesleyan College

By Caitlin Ware

Maybe you are an alumnus of West Virginia Wesleyan College or have attended Annual Conference before, but do you know why the Annual Conference is held there? What is religious life like on campus right now?

West Virginia Wesleyan has a longstanding tradition of partnership with the Methodist Church in West Virginia. Founded by the Conference in 1890, the college has always had Methodist administrative leadership and presence on campus.

“Religious and spiritual life at Wesleyan is in the midst of receiving a fresh wind of passion and love for God,” said Lauren Weaver, United Methodist Conference liaison and spiritual life coordinator. “This is coming through the leadership, dedication, and transformation of students who are taking their faith seriously and inviting others along the journey.”

The Religious Life Council, the campus’ student and faculty assembly for connecting religious organizations across campus, is seeking to restore this outlet through community engagement, uniting with local pastors in the area, and through hosting campus events. **Read more at wvumc.org/news.**



Historic, beautiful artifacts greet Wesley Chapel visitors

Note: The Narthex of Wesley Chapel houses little-noticed religious artifacts, each with a little-known story behind it. Paula McGrew provides background and details in her article on our website: wvumc.org/news.



Thursday business session highlights

By Judi Kenaston, Conference Secretary

- Greetings from the West Virginia Council of Churches were brought by Executive Director Rev. Jeff Allen (a conference elder).
- Greetings were broadcast via video from Elle High, chair of West Virginia CONAM (Committee on Native American Ministries).
- Ken Krimmel brought ecumenical greetings from LARCUM (Lutherans, Anglicans, Roman Catholics, and United Methodists).
- West Virginia Wesleyan President Joe Thierstein brought an entertaining greeting from the college.
- Two amendments to the rules were approved. An amendment to one of the rules was proposed, but was not supported.
- Joe Kenaston moved to suspend the Rules to bring a change to the Rules. The Rules Committee supported the change to delete the requirement that resolutions be considered every day. The change was supported by the Conference.
- Conference approved a resolution on Voting Values (page 147 Conference Workbook).

We're live streaming!

...And the world is watching!

All of our business and worship sessions at Annual Conference are broadcast LIVE on our website!

Be sure to let your congregations back home know they can tune in by visiting wvumc.org/ac2019. And please remember, everything said on the conference floor is being broadcast and recorded. All sessions will be available following conference on our YouTube channel at youtube.com/user/wvumc



We welcome back Tom Bone (Southern District layity) as our official cartoonist for the Daily Circuit. See Saturday's cartoon caption to learn how you can own an original of one of Tom's drawings!

Corrections

On page 3 of our Wednesday-Thursday issue, we inadvertently misspelled the last name Rev. Mark Conner in a headline.

On page 8, the hashtag at the bottom of the page should read #WVAC2019.

We apologize for the errors.

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