

The Foundation Ledger

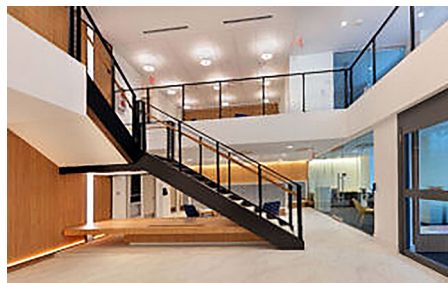
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The Road to Becoming Ordained

By the Rev. Brad Duty
Foundation Services Advisor

Over the past five weeks, I got a strong taste of the United Methodist requirements and process to become a clergy member through being commissioned as a provisional deacon on the last day of Annual Conference, held this year in Hampton, Virginia.

The touching and moving ceremony culminated in two bishops laying hands on me along with my wife and my pastor mentor. Normally, there are not two bishops, but this year Bishop Tom Berlin, the former long-time Virginia pastor at Floris UMC, who is now bishop of the Florida Annual Conference, was a guest speaker at the annual meeting, so Virginia

Conference Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson invited him to join in the commissioning and ordaining ceremonies.

As a new clergy member, I was expected to attend the Annual Conference sessions and vote, although there are some limitations on resolutions for which non-ordained clergy can vote.

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Brad Duty was ordained as a provisional deacon at this year's Annual Conference in June.

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However, on most topics this year, provisionals were expected to vote. The constitutional issue of regionalization which was passed at General Conference is not yet ready to be submitted for annual conference votes. That will most likely occur next year, but on constitutional issues, only ordained clergy and lay delegates can vote.

Prior to Annual Conference and in order to qualify to be commissioned as a provisional clergy member, I had to complete licensing school which in the Virginia Conference occurs once a year in May, an eight-day school of approximately ten-hour days. Exceptionally talented, articulate, highly knowledgeable and expert pastors and laity from around the Conference served as guest lecturers. They taught us about theology, preaching, weddings, funerals, liturgies, pastoral

responsibilities, ethics, counseling, stewardship, how to plan a service, and pastor compensation, which is very complicated, though not extravagant.

In addition, we had opportunities to prepare and lead worship, preach to peers and receive immediate feedback, and work together in small groups on a variety of tasks and challenges from the various instructors. Most of the students were seeking to become local licensed pastors. Two of us attended to meet the requirement of becoming provisional deacons. Those who were commissioned as provisional elders had all completed licensing school in previous years.

Licensing school gathers a slate of candidates, most of whom barely know each other, if at all. We went through intense training to be better able to lead people to God. Bonds formed quickly, and we were told several stories about how many years those bonds last. Every instructor or facilitator who worked with us was encouraging, enthusiastic and very committed. All of them promised to be a future resource to whom we could reach out. At the end, there was an open-book, open-note exam, but collaborating with classmates or consulting with Google, AI, ChatGPT, Alexa, Siri, etc., are not allowed.

Licensing school was excellent preparation for our future service. We shared information on where to get robes, what kind of robe, style, color, material, etc. We shared experiences about seminary, meeting boards and writing papers for the Board of Ordained Ministry. We shared preaching resources as well. When we were all elected as local licensed pastors or provisional deacons at Annual Conference, there was genuine joy and celebration.

If you are feeling a call by God and want to explore what it takes to move into ministry, reach out. Your pastor, District Committee on Ordained Ministry (DCOM) and the Conference Office of Clergy Excellence are all great resources. If God is calling, talk with God and His many messengers. This large, encouraging network of people can provide support if you accept God's call. I feel tremendously blessed that I responded to His call.

4th Annual Golf Classic



Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Brickshire Golf Club in Providence Forge, VA

Register Today for 4th Annual Golf Classic

By **Melissa Knabe**
Director of Marketing

Since inception in 2021, this annual event has grown in popularity, so if you'd like to join in the fun and play for a worthy cause, mark your calendar now and recruit your team!

We'll be playing at the championship course of **Brickshire Golf Club in Providence Forge**, just east of Richmond. All proceeds from the Golf Classic will benefit the Foundation's grant ministry.

A box lunch will be provided as well as an evening awards reception. And, new this year – we'll be offering a rain date, just in case, which will be announced closer to the tournament date.

Mulligans will be available for purchase the day of the tournament, and there will be a shotgun start at noon, followed by the awards reception.

**SAVE WITH OUR EARLY BIRD RATES
UNTIL JULY 31ST!**

Individual: \$135 (Regular rate: \$155)

Foursome/Team: \$520 (Regular rate: \$600)

SPONSORSHIPS

Hole Sponsorship without Team – \$750

Hole Sponsor with Team – \$1,100

To inquire about sponsorships or for any other questions, send us an email at foundation@vaumc.org or call the Foundation office at 804.521.1121.

Results from the Unstuck Church Report

By the Rev. Tommy Herndon
VP of Legacy Giving & Stewardship Development

Joe Park, the CEO of Horizons Stewardship, recently sent me the results of the Unstuck Church Report. Every quarter, the Unstuck Group compiles data on trends in churches in the United States. This quarter's report focuses on questions about staffing, structure and team. The results are both helpful and eye-opening.

1. Average church attendance increased by 17% in the last 12 months.
2. Giving is increasing faster in large churches.
3. The average church employs one full-time staff person for every 62 attendees.
4. The average church has one volunteer leader for every 19 attendees.
5. The average church invests 54% of its total budget in staff salaries and benefits.
6. The average staff turnover rate for all churches in the last year was 12%.
7. The Unstuck Group and Horizons both recommend limiting staff expenses to 50% of total income.
8. The most common staffing challenges church leaders face are financial restraints, finding qualified staff, structure and organizational challenges, staffing for growth and change, and cultural and communication issues.
9. Givers who attend worship at least once a month and who are also active in either a small group or a serving ministry give three to four times as much as someone who only attends one or two times per month.



Adrian Delgado/Unsplash

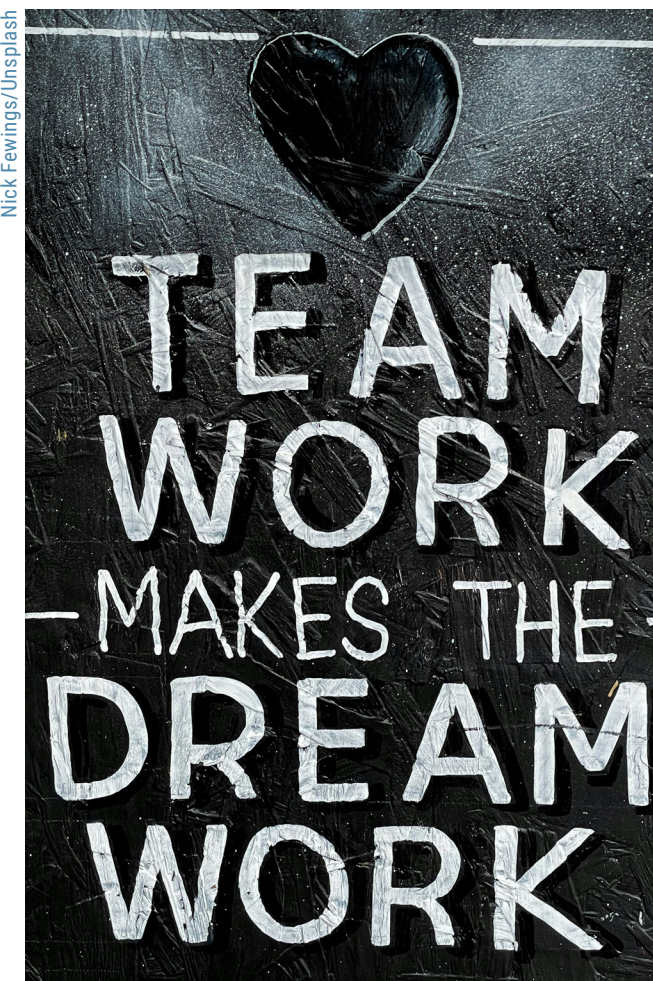
10. Larger churches are growing both giving and worship attendance in smaller venues through multi-site strategies much more successfully than smaller churches in similar situations.

11. The prevalence of Millennials, Gen X, and Boomers in staffing roles reflects generational diversity and potentially differing perspectives and approaches within the church environment.

12. A best practice is to reflect the diversity in your staffing by mirroring the demographic your church is targeting. Churches often staff in a way that mirrors what already exists versus what they are trying to attract.

13. Implementing best practices like succession, team restructuring, staff development strategies and empowering senior leadership in personal decisions is being successfully used by high-performing churches as part of a strategy to

Nick Fewings/Unsplash



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achieve their vision and goals versus cost-cutting measures to balance the budget.

14. Attendance and growth trends highlight the need for churches to adapt their staffing strategies to increase engagement in worship, spiritual development, community and serving to a clear and compelling vision.

What should leaders do next?

- Optimize staffing to achieve the vision – create staffing model focused on what is needed to bring God's vision to the life of your church.
- Enhance volunteer leadership
- Staff retention policies – focus on fostering a positive work culture, professional development opportunities and competitive compensation packages.
- Diversity – be intentional about developing and leveraging diversity in staff teams to resonate with the demographic groups prioritized in your ministry plan.
- Ask for help when you need it.

Contact Tommy via email: tommyherndon@vaumc.org

DevCo and Central UMC's Partnership Brings Dreams to Reality

By Randolph R. Shelton
VP of Lending and Capital Development

On April 15th, several DevCo representatives attended the APAH and Central United Methodist Church's celebration of the grand opening of Unity Homes at Ballston.

The completion of this innovative construction project consisted of a ground floor church (Central UMC) and affordable housing on the upper levels. The Rev. Sarah Harrison-McQueen, pastor of Central United Methodist Church, gave remarks and spoke of the challenges she faced while

leading the church through the development and construction process.

DevCo played an instrumental role in helping Pastor Sarah and her church leaders with the pre-development costs. The church was granted a loan to pay for the pre-development costs, which afforded the church leaders the opportunity to complete the site plan approval process with Arlington County. DevCo's lending representatives continue to seek ways to assist churches with bringing "dreams to reality."

If you have innovative ideas and need help with your expansion projects, do not hesitate to contact the lending team at DevCo by calling **804.521.1121** or emailing our Vice President of Lending, Randall R. Shelton, at randyshelton@vaumc.org.

We are United Methodists Helping United Methodists!



APAH



APAH

The 30th Anniversary of Mission Central

By the Rev. Tommy Herndon
VP of Legacy Giving & Stewardship Development

Thirty years ago, Mission Central was launched in the attic of McGaheysville UMC by Artie Frederick and her husband, Dave. The attic was neither heated nor airconditioned, and every piece of clothing had to be carried up and down a flight of steep stairs.

Over the years the ministry of this clothes closet expanded so much that it outgrew the space in the attic. The stairs leading to the attic were so steep that only Artie and one other woman could navigate the ascent, further limiting the ministry.

Artie came to my office one day while I was district superintendent to explain the problem. We agreed she needed another location and began to look for commercial space all over Harrisonburg but couldn't find anything affordable that met our needs, so we decided to build. A man named Bill Neff had several modular units and donated four of them to the clothes closet.

We assembled a building crew headed by the Rev. Bob Talbott, and dozens of Harrisonburg district folks worked for months. The four modular units were erected, and new flooring, ceiling and walls were added. A bathroom was installed, as well as washing machines and dryers and a play area for children. A corner in one of the modular units became the medical equipment area, and Delores Reid and crew began offering wheelchairs, hospital beds, canes, crutches, shower chairs, and all kinds of medical equipment. Both of these areas grew so fast that it wasn't long before the medical equipment ministry moved to a larger space at Mt. Tabor UMC, which gave both groups more space.



Mission Central has been helping thousands of parents with free children's and youth clothing. The ministry provides diapers and infant supplies as well as clothing for children up to 15 or 16 years old. Many churches purchase items such as new underwear, socks and pajamas. The entire Harrisonburg district has donated clothes, and Mission Central is frequently filled to overflowing. The Virginia United Methodist Foundation has often supported Mission Central through an annual grant, which covers the cost of thousands of diapers for families with young children. Over the past 30 years, thousands of children have been clothed and

cared for as a result of the ministry of Mission Central.

Artie Frederick continues to be a mainstay in ensuring Mission Central can continue to help thousands of children and their parents. McGaheysville UMC recently organized a picnic to celebrate 30 years of service to children in the Harrisonburg area. Join me in thanking Artie and Dave and all the others who have made Mission Central such a successful ministry.

If you would like to help at Mission Central or donate, please call 540-929-1688. Mission Central is located at 1704 Smithland Road in Harrisonburg.



VAUMF

Current Foundation Fund Performance

| | Since Inception | June 2024 | YTD 2024 | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|-------|---------|--------|-------|-------|---------|
| Balanced Fund | 7.19% | 1.02% | 5.87% | 14.1% | (13.0)% | 8.7% | 12.7% | 21.4% | (7.1)% |
| Balanced Plus Fund | 6.54% | 0.92% | 6.93% | 13.1% | (11.2)% | 8.9% | 9.5% | 18.8% | (4.9)% |
| Stock Fund | 10.52% | 1.10% | 9.33% | 18.6% | (12.6)% | 14.3% | 15.1% | 28.7% | (9.4)% |
| Bond Fund | 0.81% | 0.61% | (0.59)% | 5.7% | (12.5)% | (1.9)% | 5.9% | 7.9% | (0.55)% |

DevCo Certificate Rates

| Investment Certificates | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|
| Maturity Period | 6 mos. | 12 mos. | 24 mos. | 36 mos. | 48 mos. | 60 mos. |
| Rates | 3.85% | 4.35% | 4.05% | 4.00% | 4.00% | 4.00% |
| Minimum Investment | | | \$1,000 | | | |
| Interest Accrued | | | Quarterly | | | |
| Savings Certificates | | | | | | |
| Rate | | | 3.00% | | | |
| Minimum Investment | | | \$1,000 | | | |
| Interest Rate Varies | | | Daily | | | |
| Retirement Certificates | | | | | | |
| Maturity Period | | | 60 months | | | |
| Rate | | | 4.00% | | | |
| Minimum Investment | | | \$5,000 | | | |
| Interest Accrued | | | Quarterly | | | |
| NO ANNUAL FEE | | | | | | |