

The Virginia Christian



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Steps Taken Toward Mission Partnership

One of the actions taken at the Regional Assembly in June was to become a Global Mission Region. The Region's Stewardship and Mission Ministry formed a Partnership Committee which, after considering various options, has chosen to partner with the churches that are a part of CEDECOL in Colombia, South America. CEDECOL (Concilio Evangelico De Colombia) is the Council of Evangelical and Protestant Churches of Colombia, a federation that represents 70% of the evangelical Christian Colombian population. Their ministries include a wide range of issues from evangelism to social justice, women and children, restoration of uprooted communities, an understanding of liberation theologies that grow out of oppressive situations, and what it means to be a disciple in dangerous life situations.

The final partnership proposal was sent to Global Ministries on October 14, and the relationship will begin in 2011, at which time the three parties—Global Ministries, CEDECOL, and our Region's Partnership Committee—will begin work on a 5-year partnership agreement which will include the theological purpose of the partnership, goals



Jennie Sue Murdock of Salem visited Colombia in 2009 as a Woman-to-Woman representative.

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Calendar:

- Children Worship & Wonder Training – Jan. 21-23, FCC Lynchburg
- Clergy Mid-Winter Sabbath at Natural Bridge – Jan. 31 - Feb. 2
- Disciple Men's Retreat – April 29-May 1, 2011
- Craig Springs 50th Anniversary Celebration – June 3-5, 2011

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*Regional Minister
Rev. G. Lee Parker*

Reflections from the Regional Minister

We lived in Montgomery, Alabama, in the mid 1980s. If one has never spent a summer in Montgomery it would be difficult to understand just how hot and humid it can be. Some say one can get accustomed to the climate there, and in some ways I did. I did a lot of bike riding, but I also drank a lot of water and Gatorade on a ten-mile ride.

One hot summer day I saw something that has stayed with me for all these years. Two motorcycle policemen were parked in a driveway in the full sun with radar guns shooting left and right to catch the speeders driving down the long, straight street. I was in an air-conditioned car and it still felt hot to me; I couldn't imagine how hot those officers were. I was at a stop sign, about to proceed through the intersection, when I noticed a small girl come down the driveway with two large glasses. I watched while the officers accepted her offering and drank deeply. After a few minutes of conversation they gave her their empty glasses and she walked back to the house. It was then I saw the mom at the front door watching over her little one as she returned to the air conditioning.

This child gave a simple gift based on a real need. Cold water, or perhaps lemonade, on a hot day to people in need was just right. It was a beautiful visual and "head/heart" memory. I still "see" her walk down the drive as a metaphor for giving according to need. To those to whom much is given there is great opportunity to give.

There is a painful reality for many in our culture now days. We don't think we are a people of plenty. We don't believe we have much to give. Our investments have lost value. Some owe more on their houses than the house is valued on the market. Jobs are lost and hard to find. We are painfully aware of this reality because we hear it over and over on the news and feel it in our personal lives. It can be depressing.

The little Montgomery girl is a good example for us. Not every gift has to "break the bank" to

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be valuable. Some gifts are valuable way beyond their dollar value. Jesus speaks of a widow who gives a gift that is small in amount but great in value. As sisters and brothers in Christ we are called upon to examine our gifts for their head/heart value. The Christmas offering is coming up and is important for the ongoing ministry of the regional church. A lot depends on your generosity and willingness to give a gift to meet a need.

Congratulations to Ray Gryder, Director for Men's Ministry for the Christian Church in Virginia, and his wife Kim on the birth of Gabriel Thomas Gryder on September 14, 2010.

Ministerial Changes

Josh Bell resigned as Minister to Youth and Minister for Outdoor Ministry in Virginia, effective October 1, 2010.

Audrey Connor, Family Life Minister for FCC Lynchburg, August 10.

Anthony Westbrook from Perseverance CC, Dundas, (last Sunday Nov. 21) to Winterville CC, NC.

John Dunston from Hillsville CC to Farmville CC, NC.

continued on next page



God so loved...

that God Gave.

**Your Christmas Offering Supports
The Ministries of Your Regional Church**

Why is it that John 3:16 has been beloved for so long? Perhaps it's because it speaks of the awesome generosity of God. Our amazing God gave us Jesus and God continues to give... and give... and give.

- Our generous God is reaching new persons with the good news of Jesus Christ through new churches being formed and nurtured within our Region.
- God is at work through those who direct and counsel at Craig Springs camps, giving themselves to provide a quality Christian education experience for children and youth.
- God draws near through our Regional Minister Lee Parker as he walks with congregations through conflict and change toward transformation.

God so loved that God gave. Out of your love will you give? Help support the development of faith, the creation of community, and the strengthening of the congregations in Virginia by giving to the Christmas offering this year.

Most congregations will receive the Christmas Offering on December 12 and 19.

Ministerial Changes Continued

Audrey Underwood was installed as minister of West Point Christian Church on October 24. The Reverend Rick Harrison preached, the Regional Minister conducted the covenant of installation, and former pastor Bill Palmer offered the installation prayer.



Rick Harrison, Audrey Underwood and Lee Parker

- Charlie Ellis** ended his ministry at Ledbetter CC.
- Debbie Harmon** from Edinburg CC to Euclid CC, Lynchburg, October 1.
- Gordon Lee** to Interim, Poole CC, September 19.
- Deb Zuercher**, Chaplain for Centra Health, Lynchburg, September 23.
- Stephen Goss**, Director of CPE/Chaplain at Bon Secours Maryview Medical Center in Portsmouth in September.
- James Phifer** to Smyrna CC, October 16.
- Cynthia "Cyd" Cowgill** from Crestwood CC, Lexington, KY, to West Side CC, West Side, October.
- Joel M. Saucedo** to FCC Pearisburg, November 15.

Around the Old Dominion



Newport News—Hilton CC kicked off its Regional Capital Campaign with Camp Sunday on August 22.

Blacksburg—The Blacksburg CC Disciple Women’s Ministry groups hosted a program for the District II churches on Sunday, October 17th. Jennie Sue Murdock, the Virginia representative on the Woman-to-Woman trip to Venezuela and Colombia, gave an informative and interesting presentation about her trip and the group’s experiences in these two countries. Following the program, everyone enjoyed refreshments and fellowship.

Prior to the above-mentioned program, eleven members of Blacksburg CC participated in the Blacksburg CROP (Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty) Hunger Walk, raising close to \$700 for local charities and Church World Service’s global ministries.

For an online copy of *The Virginia Christian* go to www.ccinva.org.

The next issue of *The Virginia Christian* will be published in **February 2011**.

Deadline for submissions is **January 17**.

Articles submitted for publication in "Around the Old Dominion" should be no more than 300 words. Articles and photos may be submitted by mail to the Regional Office or by email to: virginiachristian@ccinva.org.



Roanoke—Mozelle Dobyns of New Covenant Christian Church was named Elder Emeritus in June. She has been a member of the church for sixty years, serving as the first woman elder and in numerous other capacities.

Honoring the Faithful



Richmond—Bon Air Christian Church recently elected their first elders emeriti. A service and reception was held honoring John Crank, Mabel Garrison, Peg Macfadden and Dot Morrison, four congregational leaders who have faithfully served as elders and supported the church through their involvement in every facet of congregational life.

Clifton Forge—First Christian Church, Clifton Forge, recently celebrated its 125th anniversary during the morning worship service and luncheon that followed. Along with Pastor Glenn Clements, special guests who participated in the service included Rev. Dr. Joe Lindsoe, Rev. Lee Parker, Rev. Ken Burger, Rev. Norman Wasson (former minister), and Rev. Dr. Richard L. Harrison, Jr. who also gave a historical presentation during the afternoon program. The anniversary cake was cut by Allen Hickman and Louise Warf. Mr. Hickman has been an active member for 78 years and Mrs. Warf for 67 years.



Newport—Gravel Hill Christian Church, established in 1835, celebrated its 175th anniversary on October 17. The celebration was led by Pastor Doyle Wyatt. Church member Michelle Harris made a historical presentation lifting up Chester Bullard as the founding pastor. Former minister Matthew Cox, Regional Minister Lee Parker, and well known radio host and inspirational speaker Donna Lou were featured speakers.



Ephesus Christian Church Has an Ark in the Yard

What started as a simple playground turned into a major undertaking last year at Ephesus Christian Church, Foneswood. Board chair Mike France suggested to members of the Young Adult Sunday school class that the church build a playground with a Noah's Ark theme. As the ideas germinated, a thirty-foot ark emerged on the church's property. Complete with two sliding boards, two swing sets, monkey bars, climbing wall, and a fireman's pole, this beautiful labor of love has been the talk of the community, not to mention a favorite playground for the children.

The Ark was dedicated at the church's July 4th cookout, and christened with 100 water balloons. The Vacation Bible School kick-off was that evening. This year's theme? Noah's Ark, of course. The curriculum was the result of a group effort, with

the church's pastor, Rev. Mark Anderson, working up the theme and writing the keynote materials, and the teachers supplementing it with age-appropriate activities. Rev. Anderson, dressed as "Noah," did the keynote each night. Add fun music, beautiful crafts, great food, and the Ark in the yard, and it was one of the most memorable Bible schools the church has seen in years.

On October 3, the church entered a float in the Montross Fall Festival Parade. The theme? Noah's Ark, of course! The project, again led by Mike France, was mounted on a flatbed, and constructed of wood, staples, nails, construction and craft materials, lots of love, and a little paint. Loaded with kids, a few adults, stuffed animals, "Noah," and newly crowned Little Miss Montross, Britteny Rose, the float won this year's "Judges' Choice Award."



District IX Celebrates Family and Missions

District IX held their Annual District meeting on Saturday, September 18. Hosted by Zion Christian Church in Beaverdam, Pastor Joan Daniels and crew fed everyone well and provided the perfect setting for the eleven churches of the District. Dr. Ken Wilbur, District Moderator, conducted the business session.

The theme for the day was "All in the Family with Global Missions." Regional Moderator David Herrick brought greetings. As the leader of the Regional Mission Trip to South Africa last February, he set the tone for the day. The group included Carolyn Palmer, Barbara and John Nelson who were partially sponsored by the District. Carolyn, Barbara and John will be available in the coming months to present their Global Mission experience with congregations. District Minister Lyle Predmore provided packets for each congregation with information on becoming a Global Ministry Congregation.



Moses Joshua, Lyle Predmore and Bill Blake with Meesha's blanket

Bill Palmer was recognized for his ten years of his ministry at West Point Christian and recent retirement. Pastors Mark Anderson at Ephesus, Michael Weeks at Slash, and Audrey Underwood at West Point were welcomed into the family.



Jon & Dawn Barnes

The theme for the day continued with a presentation, followed by questions and discussion, by Global Ministries' Mission Partners Dawn and Jon Barnes who returned from South Africa this summer.

The afternoon offering was dedicated to health expenses for Meesha Joshua, 3-year-old daughter of Rev. Moses and Jerusha Joshua of Battery Park Christian in Richmond. Meesha has been the subject of countless prayers and much concern since her very serious illness in June. Philippi Christian of Deltaville shared these concerns with Zoar Baptist and Clarksbury UM churches of Deltaville at the annual cooperative VBS. The children at VBS made a blanket for little Meesha. This blanket was presented by Jerry Dant of Philippi at the District IX Annual Assembly and entrusted to District Minister Lyle Predmore. Rev. Predmore, at the invitation of Dr. Bill Blake has since presented the blanket to the Joshua family at Battery Park which was delivered immediately to Meesha.

What I Learned in the Region

I am about to complete my term as Regional Moderator and want to reflect on some of my observations and experiences.

When I accepted the nomination to be on the Regional Board, I did so with the hope of improving the financial condition of the Region and also establishing programs to encourage persons to consider the ministry. I am happy to report that progress has been made in both goals.

The Region's finances for 2009 were in the black for the first time in many years. Finishing in the black had more to do with lower expenses than higher revenues. During my tenure the Region lost two full-time Associate Regional Ministers. Contract personnel have been used to handle specific responsibilities that were once handled by the associates. To my knowledge, this has worked very well. Regional Minister Lee Parker and the contract staff are to be commended for the terrific job they have done with very limited resources, while the office staff continues to perform their jobs at the highest level.

The biggest drawback to this structure is the inability of staff to visit local congregations. Lee Parker has done a masterful job of organizing his time to be in as many churches as possible, but is unable to meet the demand.



*David Herrick,
Moderator of
the Christian
Church in
Virginia
2009-2010*

The Regional Capital Campaign has been ongoing for the last two years. A successful campaign is vital to continue the services and programs of the region. We had a good start, but the recession has slowed the progress of the campaign. It is time to get going again and meet our goals.

Twice as many persons leave the ministry each year as join. This a sobering statistic that is occurring in

mainline protestant churches all over the country. An effort has been made to have as many ministers as possible participate in the summer church camp program not only to serve as good role models, but to also be willing to counsel youth that show an interest in the ministry.

A continuing education program for licensed ministers has been ramped up in order to offer an alternative to seminary. This program is especially helpful to persons who are called to ministry, but cannot afford to go back to school for an extended period of time.

During my tenure I have had the opportunity to visit or hear from many churches and districts. I have found that the people in our region are very generous with their time and resources. I consider it a privilege to have been able to meet so many fine people.

But our numbers are dwindling. Average Sunday worship attendance has been declining for many

years. Churches that used to be full are only half-full now. Some churches have had to merge, while others have closed their doors.

The role of the Regional Church is more important now than ever. The Region must provide programs and leadership to help local congregations become revitalized. We, the local church, must change the way we do things, or our num-

bers will continue to shrink and more churches will have to close.

I encourage everyone not only to be supportive of the Regional Church, but also become active. Participate in the special women's and men's programs. Send your children to church camp. Participate in your District events. Attend Regional Assembly and General Assembly.

Continued from the front page

and strategies, and any financial obligations that may arise.

The Global Church Partnership is a covenantal relationship between three parties: The Virginia Region, Global Ministries, and CEDECOL. This relationship is one of reciprocity in which each partner has gifts to share and to receive as we journey together to come to realize what it means to be a part of the Body of Christ in a global sense and how we need one another to be a faithful Church today.

MMIs: A Ready Mission Resource for Congregations

Ministries and Mission Interpreters (MMI) are people who have a passion for global mission who are trained by Global Ministries and provided with the necessary tools and network to tell the story of God's mission through Global Ministries.

An MMI can be of great benefit to your congregation; they are available to speak to groups large

and small, present workshops, arrange for missionary visits, provide displays and encourage ideas for mission events.

Anne Boynton, a newly trained MMI, says, "I have been blessed with opportunities to travel abroad and to see the difference our mission partners can make in the lives of thousands of people around the world. I hope to share my passion for Global Ministries with congregations in Lynchburg and beyond. Together we can be the hands and feet of Christ. Together we can make a world of difference!"

The following people in the Virginia Region are trained Ministries and Mission Interpreters and are a ready resource for local congregations:

Jim Perry (firstxn3rd@aol.com), Kaye Edwards, David Edwards, Debbie Harmon, Lyle Predmore, Zeke Zanatos, and Anne Boynton.

For further information, check out the Global Ministries website (www.globalministries.org) or contact Jim Perry at the above e-mail address.



Evonne Chavis, Kathy Witt and Wanda Redd



Jennie Sue Murdock



Rev. Valerie Melvin



Donna Webster



Triaillyn Copening



Ice cream social



Rev. June Hunter



Dressed for the pajama party: women from Olive Branch CC, Norge, dressed as Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and the Wicked Queen

Disciple Women's Retreat at Blackstone

The Disciple Women's Retreat was held at Blackstone Conference Center in Blackstone, Virginia, October 1-3, 2010. We experienced a wonderful weekend of uplifting keynotes from several speakers that included Rev. June Hunter, Triaillyn Copening, Joan Rainsberger, and Rev. Valerie Melvin. We were blessed to have Rev. Lee Parker join us for the weekend. We enjoyed breakout workshops on Saturday morning and afternoon, as well as times of fellowship and relaxation. Our Woman-to-Woman representative for this year, Jennie Sue Murdock, spoke to us about her journey to Colombia and Venezuela. A white elephant sale and basket raffle raised over \$300 for Woman-to-Woman. We had a great time laughing, dancing and winning prizes during a PJ party on Saturday evening. We sang and danced throughout the weekend and shared our spiritual journeys. It was a wonderful group of women from ages 20ish to 80ish. A big thank you to Wanda Redd and Evonne Chavis for their work in



Praise and worship during the retreat was led by the Women of Worship Praise Team of First Christian, Winchester, pictured above, left to right: Amy Hill, Ellie Honour, Darlene Buchanan, Jan Geiser (center front) Christina Cossaboon, Karen Schlosser and Pastor Joan Rainsberger.

helping to plan the retreat and everyone that came together to make it a spiritually fulfilling time for all who attended. Thanks to everyone who participated and helped out in any way with the retreat. Hope that you will join us next year for DW Retreat.

—Kathy Witt



Fall Retreat at Craig Springs

“Being Me! The Me God Wants Me to Be” was the theme of the Virginia Disciple Men/Women’s Spiritual Retreat at Craig Springs, September 17-19, 2010. Rev. Dan Netting, pastor of First Christian Church, Salem, Virginia, was the keynote speaker for the retreat. He led the group in considering how we can be the people God wants us to be in our everyday walk and in our churches. The weekend was a blessing for those who attended as they enjoyed the beautiful weather and the fellowship of a great group of people. Make plans to attend next year’s retreat in September.



Save the Date(s)!

**Regional Disciples Men Retreat
April 29-May 1, 2011**

Registration coming soon!

The retreat will be held at the Northern Virginia 4-H Conference Center in Front Royal, VA. The 2011 event will be a combined men’s spiritual retreat event with Disciples Men from the Capital



Area Region in preparation for the “X-treme Faith-Bold Action: A Gathering of Disciples Men” at Bethany College, WV, in July of 2012.

Brunswick Stew at The Summit

Warm sunshine, distant mountains and friendly smiles set the scene as The Summit celebrated its annual Brunswick Stew event September 23rd.



Stamey and Nancy Everheart are members of Timberlake Christian Church and residents of The Summit

For the festive occasion the parking lot was cleared and a large tent erected the day before. Morning light saw staff setting up tables and chairs, buffet lines, dessert and beverage tables. A side canopy was ready for the musician and all that remained was the setting up of the feast.

By noon the entire community was laughing, chatting and enjoying the Brunswick stew, savory vegetables, desserts and beverages. Some danced to the oldies crooned by

the day's entertainer, and many voices joined in the singing of old gospel hymns.

Residents and patients from Independent Living, Assisted Living and Health & Rehab greeted each other, with family members, future residents and staff joining in the festivities.

Some of the revelers had moved from Independent Living to Assisted Living or Health & Rehab, and were glad to share this fun time with friends.

"On a day like this, we enjoy some of the greatest benefits of community," explained Summit Director Ken Burger.

"Nearly everyone on this campus participates in some way to make this event such a popular success.

You can see and hear the joy of everyone enjoying themselves."

Next morning, the tent was removed, cars returned to the parking lot, and the normal routine resumed. Summit residents are already anticipating the next community festival.



The
SUMMIT

1400 Enterprise Drive
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www.summitlynchburg.org

The Summit is a partnership between Centra Health and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Virginia

Communication is a two-way street. Please notify the Regional Office of address changes, email changes, and ministerial changes. Also, if your church has a website, but it's not included on the congregations list on the Region's website, www.ccinva.org, please send us a link.

Craig Springs News

Get Ready for Camp!

Outdoor Ministries looks forward to 2011 and another summer of opportunities to provide a safe, welcoming environment and facilitate a meaningful Christian experience for all campers.

Note on the schedule below that Work Weekend is the weekend before Memorial Day. The Family Retreat has been moved from the end of summer to Memorial Day weekend.

2011 Craig Springs Schedule

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| May 20-23: | Work Weekend |
| May 27-30: | Family Retreat |
| June 3-5: | Ministry on the Mountain Craig Springs Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration |
| June 9-13: | GAP Conference |
| June 19-24: | Nature Camp |
| June 24-26 | Weekender |
| June 26-29: | <i>Piedmont District Camp & Conference (at Ferrum)</i> |
| June 26-July 1: | Pneuma |
| July 3-8: | Special Camp |
| July 9-13: | <i>General Assembly in Nashville</i> |
| July 10-15: | Chi Rho Conference |
| July 17-22: | CYF Conference |
| July 22-24: | Weekender |
| July 24-29: | AMPDD |
| July 24-29: | Outdoor Adventure |
| July 29-31 | Weekender |
| July 31-Aug 6: | Ru'ach |
| August 7-12: | New Covenant |

Descriptions of each camp and registration forms will be available in January at www.craigsprings.com

Wondering what *Pneuma* and *Ru'ach* are? The theme this year is "Got Spirit" and we've decided to name our multi-age group camping experiences appropriately. The Greek word for spirit is *Pneuma* (also means wind or breath). In Hebrew, spirit is *Ru'ach*. As in years past, two of these multi-age camps will be offered this year.

A new program we will be trying is a Weekender event. After three of this year's camps—Nature Camp, CYF Conference and AMPDD Camp—those who register for the Weekender event will

be able to remain at Craig for the weekend after those camps in order to attend the next week's camp without making the long trek home on Friday and back on Sunday. The cost will be \$50, and those staying will be supervised and fed the usual meals. We are looking for adults to be weekend coordinators who will supervise the campers who stay. This might be an ideal free weekend for a couple who'd like to spend a weekend at Craig while watching a few campers. Everyone will likely stay at Westover. The adults cannot be part of the incoming camp, but could be part of the departing camp.

We are proud to report that for the second year in a row Special Camp was in the black, as was Nature Camp for the first time in many years. We are grateful to all who contributed to these unique camping opportunities, especially to the youth who worked hard to raise funds for Nature Camp.

As for our other camps, the Ad-Fi Ministry team has advised us that our expenses are ahead of our income and it is necessary to increase camp fees again. The regular camp registration fee will increase to \$335.00. However, we are providing a \$50.00 discount if you register early (prior to May 15th); early registrants will pay only \$285.00 for the normal six-day camp (GAP fees will be \$260/\$210, and New Covenant will be \$345/\$295).

The new fee structure also includes a discount for attending multiple camps. An additional \$25.00 discount will be awarded

if you register for more than one camp. Therefore, if you attend three camps, the first will be charged at \$285, the second two will be charged at \$260—*provided you register for all three early.*

Also, we are changing the refund policy. In past years, if you could not attend a camp you had to notify the region by June 1st in order to receive a refund. This is now changed so that you have to notify the Regional office in writing or by email at least thirty (30) days prior to the particular camp in order to receive a refund.

Camp Director training will be November 20th at Fairview Christian Church in Lynchburg from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

We invite your questions, comments and concerns. You may send these to Outdoor Ministries Chair, Rev. Clay Boyd, at kilmarnock01@yahoo.com. Thank you for allowing us to serve you.

—Outdoor Ministries



Save the Date!
**MINISTRY on
 the MOUNTAIN**

June 3-5, 2011, at Craig Springs

The Christian Church in Virginia began its camping ministry at Craig Springs in 1961. In 2011 we will celebrate the past fifty years of “ministry on the mountain” with a weekend of celebration. This is a great opportunity for former campers, counselors and staff to reconnect and remember how God touched their lives in this special place.

Look for more information in the next *Virginia Christian*.

