

# The Virginia Christian



Summer 2011

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A Quarterly Publication of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Virginia

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## Reflections from the Regional Minister



*Regional Minister  
Rev. G. Lee Parker*

Once upon a time there was a church that found that it was falling upon hard times. The attendance was half what of what it had been six years before, which was half of what it had been ten years before that. One day one of the lifelong church members said to another lifelong member, "Isn't our attendance down?" That same week the treasurer called the congregation's moderator

to say, "There is not enough money in the checking account to pay the electric bill, the pastor, or to send anything to DMF which we have been holding back for seven months now. Should I take the needed money out of the building fund or the memorial fund?"

This church reminds me of the story of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37:1-14. The structure is there, but the sinews, muscles, the hearts and brains are missing. It is a vision, not of life, but of death and decay. This is not what God's Kingdom looks like.

A congregation I once served had a lifelong faithful member. He had the commitment every church leader dreams of. He was in his pew at the same spot every Sunday. But a problem arose if a visitor had the misfortune of sitting in his spot. Mr. Long-time-church-member would stand beside the pew, clear his throat, shift from foot to foot, and, if

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## Calendar:

- Men's & Women's Retreat at Craig-September 9-11
- Craig Work Week-end - Oct. 7-9
- Women's Retreat at Blackstone - October 14-16
- Clergy Women's Retreat - Oct. 17-19
- Regional Board Meeting - Nov. 19 at the Summit

none of his hints worked, would tap the person on the shoulder and inform them they were in his seat. This saint of the church did not have a Kingdom vision that included others. While not everyone behaved that way, this was an indicator of attitudes and actions that were holding them back from being a vital congregation.

Cynthia Hale, pastor of Ray of Hope Christian Church, offered some thoughts about how we have let ourselves become stale. *“As Disciples of Christ, we are called to make Disciples, to reproduce ourselves, thereby reproducing Christ in the world. This is the means by which we transform our world into the Kingdom of God.*

*Through the years we have been faithful to the call, inviting, welcoming, preparing men and women, boys and girls to become a part of us and join us in the work. We were good at it. Our churches were vibrant and alive, always bustling with activity, filled with excited and committed people, worshipping and working together to the glory of our God and king.*

*But then things changed, and we no longer experience the success, the fruit of our labor that we once enjoyed. “What happened?” we ask. It’s simple: the world changed, the people around us changed, but we didn’t. We remained the same. Even though we know everything must change, we keep doing ministry the same old way, singing the same old songs, praying the same old prayers, promoting the same old programs, to the same old people.”*

If your church is happy, complacent, and comfortable, it is not likely moving. When you are following Jesus, you can’t stand still. Jesus leads his people forward toward the Kingdom on earth and the Kingdom that is to come in heaven. It takes vision to set your sights on a future ministry and mission. From where does our vision come? I believe it comes from God who created, redeems and sustains us.

We have talked a lot about congregational transformation around the region and all over the denomination. There are all kind of experts and programs that a congregation can look to for help, but ultimately they cannot inspire the vision

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Christian**

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necessary to make transformation possible. Bill Lee, in a sermon at the Piedmont District Convention, recommended a movie. It was the first time I had heard from the pulpit a recommendation to see a “Transformers” movie but he had a point. In the movie, everyday machines turn into “fantastic” robots under their own power. By contrast, the transformer toys Bill’s children played with when they were young also transformed into something different, but the children made it happen. Without hands to move and manipulate them, the toy would just sit there.

We need to be transformed by the ultimate Transformer. We need the wind of the Spirit to fill our sails and move us forward. Until people have a vision and the transforming power of God’s Spirit they will be content to be complacent and comfortable. We have to be transformed from the inside out. In Romans 12:2 Paul advises us: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

The world spins, and sometimes our lives spin out of control. Just saying “whatever God wills” is not going to get us through. It isn’t easy to change and be changed. Being transformed for ministry by God is an ongoing process.

Through being transformed we become filled with vitality, life and vision. With a Kingdom

vision, a congregation asks some important questions. What mission is God calling us to in our present context? Is our view of ministry moving us forward? Do we continually reevaluate and clarify our mission?

R. Wayne Calhoun (from DHM) shared at the Piedmont District Convention the Nine Marks of a Vital, Healthy Congregation. Without some benchmarks it is difficult to know where a congregation is in its journey. I find these benchmarks to be helpful. A vital, healthy congregation:

1. Has a passionate spirituality that goes to the heart of the gospel;
2. Makes the Good News of Christ visible throughout the life of the community
3. Has a clear sense of what God is calling them to be and lives out this calling in mission;
4. Has a focus on the gifts people have and encourages the use of such gifts;
5. Has inspiring worship services;
6. Has people who genuinely like and care for one another and respect each other;
7. Has ways to resolve conflict in a positive manner;
8. Has leaders who encourage and expand the number of those in leadership; and finally
9. Has functional organizational structures that fit the needs of the church’s mission.

Are you ready to trust the ultimate Transformer? Will you pray for the dry bones to come to life?

## Around the Old Dominion

**Orange** — Macedonia Christian Church celebrated 175 years of servant-ministry on Sunday, May 22nd. It was a jubilant and joyous day in the life of the “little red-brick” church. The Rev. Lee Parker brought the anniversary message, and the theme of the day was: “We’ve Come This Far By Faith.” A special anniversary quilt was crafted to depict significant events in the church’s history and hung in the fellowship hall. An addendum covering the last 25 years of history was added to a previously prepared history pamphlet, “Milestones of History,” a copy of which was given to each participant. For more on this eventful celebration go to [www.macedoniachristianchurch-va.org](http://www.macedoniachristianchurch-va.org).



*Pastor Kathryn Hull and Lee Parker*

To view *The Virginia Christian* online, go to [www.ccinva.org](http://www.ccinva.org). The next issue of *The Virginia Christian* will be published in **November 2011**. Deadline for submissions is **October 17**. Articles submitted for the “Around the Old Dominion” section should be no more than 200 words. Articles and photos may be submitted by mail to the Regional Office or by email to: [moore.amy.g@gmail.com](mailto:moore.amy.g@gmail.com).



*Pastor Gary McCoy presents Bobby Perkins with a framed photograph of Blacksburg Christian Church signed by the entire congregation.*

**Blacksburg**— On Sunday June 12, 2011, Bobby Howard Perkins was named Elder Emeritus at Blacksburg Christian Church. Bobby grew up in the Westside Christian Church in Portsmouth, Virginia. Since becoming a member of Blacksburg CC in the early 1960s, Bobby has continually served the church in many capacities, including elder and Sunday school superintendent. Bobby also served the Regional Church for decades as the Chairman of the Credentials Committee for the Regional Assemblies, where he took meticulous notes, organized voting and non-voting delegates and hand-lettered every name tag. Regional Minister Lee Parker bestowed the Elder Emeritus honor upon Bobby on behalf of the congregation and the Region.

**Wytheville**—On June 19, 2011, members of Galilee and First Christian Churches in Wytheville hosted a potluck lunch in the fellowship hall of First Christian to honor outgoing minister Mike Hall and his wife Judy for eight years of dedicated service to the two churches.



## CHURCH EDITION

### WORKSHOP

## ***FROM VISITOR TO MEMBER***

### “E”-TOOLS TO:

- Create belonging
- Form disciples

Saturday, January 21, 2012

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Registration at 9:30 a.m.



Rev. Bill  
Lee,  
Guest  
Preacher



Rev. Bill  
McConnell,  
Keynote  
Speaker

Seventh Street Christian Church  
4101 Grove Ave.  
Richmond VA 23221

Sponsored by the Evangelism and  
New Church Ministry of the  
Christian Church (Disciples of  
Christ) in Virginia

The Evangelism and New Church Ministry invites all Virginia Disciple churches to Extreme Makeover: Church Edition II. The theme of the workshop is FROM VISITOR TO MEMBER. The workshop features guest preacher Reverend Bill Lee, Senior Minister of Loudon Avenue Christian Church in Roanoke. Former Moderator for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) he has preached for Regional Assemblies and General Assemblies.

Keynote speaker Reverend Bill McConnell has served almost 20 years at Legacy Christian Church in Harrison Ohio. During his tenure the church membership has tripled to an average worship attendance of over 400. He has published four books and written numerous articles in professional journals. His book on church transformation, *Renew Your Congregation: Healing the Sick and Raising the Dead*, was published by Chalice Press in 2008. Bill has served on the National Transformation Team of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and currently serves on the Ohio Region's Transformation Team. He is currently a church consultant and a church coach. A member of the National Evangelistic Association's board of Directors, he frequently leads retreats and transformation events. Bill is an Associate with the Columbia Partnership.

To encourage attendance, special discounts on fees are offered for churches that send their pastor and a leadership team. Registration materials are available from your church or online at [www.ccinva.org](http://www.ccinva.org).

## Men's retreat concludes with moving experience of fellowship

The weekend of April 30 - May 1, men from the regions of Virginia and the Capitol Area of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) came together for a weekend of retreat and fellowship at the Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center in Front Royal, VA. We heard keynoters Bill Lee and Ron Degges and had significant discussion and fellowship times, but the most memorable part of the retreat was the closing communion service. At the conclusion of the final session, during which the men considered the question, "Where did you see God during the weekend?" we filed outside and formed a circle on the hillside behind the center, preparing ourselves for departure from the picturesque mountain setting.

Also gathered for a retreat at the 4-H center that weekend were members of Iglesia Los Hechos Mission (Church of Acts Mission) from Manassas, Virginia. The

group was relatively the same size as ours, about 80, composed of people of all ages from Mexico and other areas of Central America.

During one of our meals in the cafeteria, I struck up a conversation with their pastor, Marvin Zaldivar, who told me a little bit about himself and the church he helped start in his home basement four years ago. At breakfast on Sunday I asked him about his group's plan for the morning. I explained that we would be ending our closing worship with communion and invited them to share in the holy meal. So our brothers and sisters from Iglesia Los Hechos Mission joined our circle on the hillside.

Pastor Greg Ott and Marvin stood in the center, along with a young man who agreed to translate, if needed. The words of institution and prayers for bread and cup were said in Spanish and in English. But the participa-





tion in communion needed no translation. There on that hillside, a group of Jesus followers came together to partake in a sacrament that transcends language, culture and ethnicity. We all came forward to share communion, singing songs of praise and thanksgiving. At communion's conclusion, hugs, hugs and more hugs were shared. Conversations lingered as our time of retreat concluded. Many tears were shed as the two groups dispersed.

One man said to me that this was the first step. In light of our conversation and discussions during our fellowship time over

the weekend, I had to agree that the men recognized that the loving act of hospitality and spirituality that we had just shared was the first step of many for men of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). We must be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit and be cognizant of the compassion and love we should demonstrate as we follow in Jesus' footsteps.

Jesus was present on the hillside with us, smiling with joy. So...did I see God during the weekend? You bet I did.

—Ray Gryder,  
Director of Men's Ministries  
Christian Church in Virginia

*Save the Date!*



**A Gathering of Disciples Men**  
**July 13-15, 2012**  
**Bethany College, Bethany, WV**

Sponsored by  
the General Conference of  
Disciples Men  
and the regions of  
Capital Area, VA, WV, OH, PA &  
the Northeast.

Registration now available at:  
[www.gathering2012.org](http://www.gathering2012.org)  
For more info contact:  
Ray Gryder  
[rgryder2@aol.com](mailto:rgryder2@aol.com) 804-691-4157

## New President of Division of Overseas Ministries to speak at Women's Retreat at Blackstone

All aboard! Come set sail with the Virginia Disciple Women as we welcome the Reverend Julia Brown Karimu, new President of the Division of Overseas Ministries and Co-Executive of Global Ministries as keynote speaker at Blackstone.

President Karimu has traveled to numerous parts of the world as an executive with the Division of Overseas Ministries/Global Ministries and will help lead Disciple Women in Virginia as we set sail on an international "cruise" at the Blackstone Methodist Retreat Center October 14-16, 2011.

Rev. Karimu will share with us the commonality that we have with women around the globe and the hopes and dreams to live in peace as we seek to faithfully witness to God's grace and love.

As the new DOM President, Karimu will be responsible for guiding the ministry's activities in such areas as program development, planning, evaluation and financial management. She also will help facilitate in connecting the ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with the global church and the world. "I want to invite Disciples to become more deeply involved in God's mission 'from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth,'" said Karimu.

Karimu, 59, earned her Master of Divinity Degree from Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis in 1986. She holds a B.S. degree

in history and political science from Jackson State Univ. in Jackson, MS.

Special invitations have also been extended to all Woman-to-Woman participants from our South East Regional Fellowship (VA, NC, SC, GA, AL, FL, KY & TN) to join us in our "ports of call" to the countries in which they journeyed, and to be our special guests at the "Captain's Ball."

For more information about the retreat, check out the website at [www.discipleswomenva.org](http://www.discipleswomenva.org) or contact Donna Webster, Director of Virginia Disciple Women, at 540-392-1312.

To register for the retreat, you may use the registration form found in this issue of the *Virginia Christian*, download it from the website or contact Sue Gordon at the Regional Office at 434-846-3400.

### A follow-up to last issue's Woman-to-Woman article:

The program began in 1989 with a trip to the Philippines. Julie Compton of FCC Hampton was the first from Virginia to go on a trip, traveling in 1992 to Puerto Rico, Jamaica and Haiti.

Keep in your prayers Rev. Joan Daniels, who is scheduled to travel with WTW to the Congo August 28 - September 11 and has been invited to preach at a Congolese church on Sunday, September 4.



# VIRGINIA DISCIPLE WOMEN'S RETREAT

Blackstone Methodist Retreat Center  
October 14-16, 2011

## Come to the Waters

**OUR KEYNOTE FOR THE WEEKEND**

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES

**FRIDAY**  
Retreat Registration 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.  
Evening Dinner  
6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.  
Opening Worship  
7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

**SUNDAY**  
Breakfast  
8:00 a.m. -8:45 a.m.  
Morning Worship  
9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.  
Lunch and Departure  
11:30 a.m.



REV. JULIA MARIE BROWN KARIMU  
NEWLY INSTALLED PRESIDENT OF  
THE DIVISION OF OVERSEAS  
MINISTRIES AND  
CO-EXECUTIVE OF  
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>FULL RETREAT</b>       | <b>\$177.00</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friday Dinner             | \$10.20         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friday Lodging            | \$48.18         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Breakfast        | \$6.95          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Lunch            | \$8.30          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Dinner           | \$10.20         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday lodging          | \$48.18         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Breakfast          | \$6.95          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Lunch              | \$8.30          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program Fee               | \$30.00         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Late Fee (After Sept. 24) | \$10.00         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retreat t-shirt           | \$10.00         |
- (Deadline to order t-shirt: September 24)
- Style: women's  men's
- Size: sm  med  lg  XL  2x  3x

**Special Captain's Ball Saturday Night!** Just like a cruise, have your picture taken with your church or with one of our special guests. Please dress as formally as you would like!

**This year we will have a retreat choir.** Practice is Friday night.

Yes, I want to participate.  
My suggested name for the choir: \_\_\_\_\_

Total remittance \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Roommate Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Double rooms may not be available because of changes at the retreat center. Please be flexible. Room requests will be prioritized in the order they are received at the Regional Office.

My special Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me directions to the retreat.

Mail form and check to CCINVA, 1290 Enterprise Drive, Lynchburg, VA 24502

## *Piedmont District Convention Report*

The 129th session of the Piedmont District Convention (PDC) of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was held July 28-31. The time was filled with workshops, plenaries, Bible lectures, and worship. Congregational Transformation was the theme. Thursday night, Elder John Moore of Chesapeake, VA, a young minister of the age of 27, reminded us that it takes both the young and the old for change. Our Bible lecture and break-out sessions were profi-

ciently facilitated by Rev. Valerie Melvin, associate regional minister of the region of North Carolina and pastor of FCC, Reidsville, North Carolina. Rev. R. Wayne Calhoun Sr. of Disciples Home Missions facilitated Friday's plenary on the process of change. On Saturday the Piedmont District Convention welcomed home Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale who led an inspiring plenary and brought it home with a powerful message on Saturday night. To wrap it up on Sunday morning Rev. Dr. Bill Lee delivered a mighty message reminding us that we need to allow the Transformer (God) to be in control.

Firsts at this convention: Sunday morning's choir made up of members of the ministers fellowship of the PDC, a concert during Friday's evening meal, luncheon for men and women, and a full agenda for the youth. Some of the highlights for the youth were lock-ins on Thursday and Friday nights, as well as flash mobbing during meal time. As a mission project, the youth and some young adults served at a local nursing home.

Representatives from the region of Virginia included Rev. Lee Parker and Donna Webster and her husband Rev. Jonathan Webster. Rev. J. O. Williams, Claretta Witherspoon, Rev. John Richardson and others from the region of North Carolina were in attendance.

—Evonne Chavis  
President, PDC

### *Ministerial Changes*

**Preston Sartelle** began his ministry to Galilee and First Christian Churches in Wytheville on June 26, 2011.

**Jack Anglin**, minister of Chalice CC, Virginia Beach starting Sept. 11, 2011.

**Ron Hennis** to pastor Old Well CC, Spencer VA, starting Sept. 1.

**Greg Ott** resigned from Trinity CC, Mechanicsville, as of August 21.

**Eldon Morgan**, Pleasant Grove CC, Martinsville, is retiring as of September 1.

**Bill Palmer** is the interim at Philippi CC, Deltaville.

**Jeffrey Schroder** is interim at Fairview CC, Hood.

**Jonathan Webster** has resigned from Snowville CC to accept a position as adjunct professor at Radford University.



Come enjoy a time of refreshment in the mountains, good fellowship with new and old friends, time for discussion, time for quiet, and time for worship.

The Christian Church in Virginia  
Men's and Women's  
Retreat at Craig Springs

September 9-11, 2011

THIS YEAR'S RETREAT THEME IS

**SUFFERING, EVIL, AND THE GOODNESS OF GOD: WHY IS THERE SUFFERING IN THE WORLD AND HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO TRUST GOD IN THE FACE OF IT?"**

*We welcome our retreat leader:  
Rev. Bill Moore, Pastor  
Bedford Christian Church*

Registration begins at 3 p.m. on Friday.  
Dinner is served at 6 p.m. The retreat ends with lunch on Sunday.

**To register, send a check and this form to Christian Church in Virginia, 1290 Enterprise Dr., Lynchburg, VA 24502.**

For planning purposes, all registrations **MUST** be received or postmarked by August 31, 2011.

(Prior to the retreat, participants will receive by email or mail a four page copy of *Where is God When Disaster Strikes?*)

**For more information, contact Sue Gordon in the Regional Office, 434-846-3400, or email ccinva\_sg@hotmail.com**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

ROOMMATE PREFERENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please register me for:	
	Full Retreat, all meals, 2 nights -\$100
	Full Retreat NO Friday Dinner -\$93
	Saturday/Sunday only, 5 meals, 1 night -\$85
	Saturday only, 3 meals, no lodging-\$54
	Total enclosed - \$

Bill Moore has been pastor of Bedford Christian Church since 2004. He also serves the Region as Director of Commissioned Ministry. He received his M.Div. from Union-PSCE in Richmond. Prior to attending seminary he was an administrator for several non-profit organizations. Bill grew up the son of American Baptist missionaries in the Congo. He and his wife Amy were missionaries in Haiti with the American Baptist Churches from 1986 to 1989. They have two teenage daughters, Rachel and Naomi.

## General Church News

### Watkins reelected as General Minister and President

On July 11, delegates to the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Nashville, TN, voted overwhelmingly to re-elect General Minister and President Sharon E. Watkins for a second six-year term.

Before the vote, Watkins reflected on her six years as GMP and her plans for the next six years, pledging to hold before the church “the fundamental challenge for us as Disciples of Christ,” which she said is showing the love of God to neighbors at home and around the world, and to one another in the church.

She noted the need for the church to “engage each other openly and tenaciously” on matters often left “to polite silence or hot debate.” Specifically, she said, “We need to talk honestly about the gospel message as it relates to race and sexual orientation in our church. We’ve been at a stalemate for too long on both.”

#### *Looking for an inexpensive get-away?*

Cabins or rooms are available to rent at Craig Springs between mid-April and mid-November. Contact Camp Manager Alisha Bennett at [craigsprings@hotmail.com](mailto:craigsprings@hotmail.com) for more information.

Watkins noted progress the church has made in the last decade: 700 new and affiliating churches, and more than 500 “actively, intentionally transforming churches” new partnerships between General Ministries and regions, consolidation and streamlining of services, and a clarification of the role of the GMP.

“In a second term I would continue to convene tables of leaders to address the matters before us,” she said. “It’s the convening of tables that is the primary leadership the GMP can offer in our anti-hierarchical, radically flat Disciples way of doing things.”

— Sherri Emmons, courtesy of Disciples News Service



**The 2011 Reconciliation Offering will be received in congregations on September 25th and October 2nd.** This offering is used to fund our Church’s mission priority to become a pro-reconciling/ anti-racist church through experiential education, inclusive worship and intentional dialogue across difference. Funds from this offering provide youth and young adult camps, training programs for leadership development, and resources to promote small group study and community-building.

## Lynchburg College News

### Disciples affiliation draws student to LC

Danielle Cox's journey to Lynchburg College was a leap of faith, both literally and figuratively. A resident of Houston, Texas, and a lifelong member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Danielle always wanted to go to a DoC-related school. "From the moment I got to Lynchburg, it felt just like home," she said.

An international relations major with minors in history and public relations, Danielle said her connection with First Christian Church in Lynchburg has made a big difference in her college experience. "It's great for networking," she said. "I don't feel confined to campus."

Her volunteer work in the community includes being a Big Sister in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Virginia program. She is service chair for Sigma Sigma Sigma, which helped with a Big Brothers Big Sisters carnival and Relay for Life.

"I feel called to help others, whether it is through ordained ministry or not," she said. "Ever since I was very young I knew the importance of helping others and making the world a better place. I love making a difference in people's lives and inspiring others to do the same through my actions. No matter where I end up in life, no matter what my vocation might be, I will continue to give back to my community."

Now a senior, Danielle is president of Disciples on Campus. She is a representative to the Spiritual Resource Team, a Phillips University Legacy Foundation Scholar, and a Westover Honors Fellow.



A study abroad trip to India and a Model United Nations trip to New York City with Dr. Sabita Manian, professor of international relations, got Danielle thinking about working for a nongovernmental organization (NGO), but she also feels a calling to ministry.

She did a summer internship with the Disciples Home Missions in Nashville, Tenn., working in disaster response and coordinating volunteers to help flood victims in Nashville through direct work, worship, and meditation. She also attended this summer's General Assembly.



All of this is preparing her for possible future employment. "I would love Stephanie's job," she said of Stephanie McLemore, chaplain of Lynchburg College.

—Shannon Brennan

LC Director of Media Relations

# Fifty years of Ministry on the Mountain celebrated



About 165 people from Virginia and beyond attended events celebrating fifty years of “Ministry on the Mountain” at Craig Springs June 3-5. After dinner Friday evening, there was a short vespers service, followed by singing and s’mores under the pavilion around the fire pit. Saturday morning the group shared memories and stories, and door prizes were handed

out, such as to the camper who attended the first camp in 1961. In the afternoon, there was a hike to Boulders, golf cart tours, viewing of memorabilia, the silent auction’s last hours, and fellowship in the rocking chairs at Central. Dinner that evening was followed by a dance. Sunday morning’s worship concluded the celebration. Thanks to all who planned and attended.



*George Williams, center front, was the director of the first camp in 1961. Joe Lindsoe, behind him talking to Ken Burger, directed the second camp.*



*A hike to Boulders was one of the activities Saturday afternoon. Some climbed up onto the rocks, others just enjoyed the memories.*

## Craig Springs News

### WE GOT SPIRIT, YES WE DO! WE GOT SPIRIT, HOW 'BOUT YOU?!

This summer's camping season at Craig Springs has been wonderful! 352 campers and 219 Outdoor Ministry Leaders came to experience the Spirit of God at Craig Springs. The theme for this summer was "Got Spirit?" Every day we looked for the Spirit of God in the ordinary, exploring daily themes of wonder, gratitude, hospitality, generosity, worship, and love.

In addition to Bible stories that related to each day's theme, the campers were also given the opportunity to learn about different spiritual practices from Christian history to help them connect to the Divine in new ways. These included spiritual practices such as

### Youth Ministry Commission for 2011-2012

- District 1 - Naomi Moore (Vice Chair)
- District 2 - Victor Huffman
- District 3 - Sam Austin
- District 4 - Jordan Hodges
- District 5 - Sarah Jones (Chair)
- District 6 - Katie Tinsley
- District 7 - Jennifer Wright (Recording Secretary)
- District 8 - Trey Pierce
- District 9 - Anna West (Corresponding Secretary)
- District 10 - Kerby Dalton
- District 11 - Chris Prewitt
- Piedmont - Shineice Wells
- Adults - Kim Crowley, Penny Gradwell, Chris Harris, Antonio Redd

breath prayers, centering prayers, and the use of prayer beads. Each camper was also given the opportunity to walk a labyrinth.

Yes, a labyrinth! Early in the summer, volunteers from First Christian Church in Lynchburg, along with campers at Gap Conference, used rocks from the woods to build a labyrinth in the back of the ball field. This new labyrinth has impacted the lives of many campers. On Thursday night at Pneuma (June 27 - July 1), the CYF group took us on a traveling worship service. One of our stops was at the labyrinth where a CYFer shared why the labyrinth was such a special place for him.

Another first this summer: New Covenant (August 7-12) had 2 sets of triplets as campers!



All of us who had the opportunity this summer to come to God's Mountain to work, to learn, and to worship found the Spirit of God both around and in us. WE GOT SPIRIT, YES WE DO!!!

—Rev. Ann B. Pulley  
Associate Regional Minister for  
Youth & Outdoor Ministry

*Congratulations to Camp Manager  
Alisha Bennett upon her marriage to  
Andrew Beane on July 6.*

## Kid's Korner

The summer is coming to a close, and churches are finishing up their Vacation Bible Schools. We would love to hear about your week and what curriculum you used. Was it a morning or evening? Tell us your stories about your successes and your frustrations. Please share your information at [AustinRVA@cox.net](mailto:AustinRVA@cox.net). I will compose a summary and post in our next *Virginia Christian*.

Do you have a Children Worship & Wonder program? If not, or if you have some new people who need to be trained, then mark your calendars for Sept. 23-25. There will be a training at First Christian Church in Salem. Go to the DHM website to register ([www.disciple-shomemissions.org](http://www.disciple-shomemissions.org)). Register by Sept. 9th for the early bird price.

Have you ever participated in the "Light a Candle for Children" event? The Light a Candle for Children Forty-Day Prayer Vigil begins Sunday, September 11, and ends on Children's Sabbaths Weekend, October 14 to 16, 2011. The Light a Candle for Children Forty-Day Prayer Vigil is designed to help congregations focus on the needs of children and spiritually prepare for the annual observance of Children's Sabbaths. Free, downloadable materials are available on the DHM website.

The fifth Children Welcome Conference is scheduled for February 23-25, 2012 in Kansas City, MO. It is a great time to share and to learn about how we can be advocates with and for children. More details will be coming soon. Again, watch the DHM website.

Many opportunities are available for those who work with children in your congregation. If you would like to know more, or share what you are doing, please contact me, Elaine Austin, at [AustinRVA@cox.net](mailto:AustinRVA@cox.net).

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