



AUMC WITNESS

Our Mission: Love God, Love Neighbor, Serve the World

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 We are a *Stephen Ministry Church*

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Radical Hospitality: Welcoming the Stranger

Blasted throughout the headlines of all our news media are stories about immigration, whether discussing the desperate migration of refugees fleeing war, famine, or their own governments, or discussing the many concerns regarding undocumented immigrants. Regardless, we constantly hear bits and pieces of information but rarely get a look at the whole story. Of course it is a big topic!

At the 2008 United Methodist General Conference, the following was offered as a preamble to the resolution on immigration: "As Christians and United Methodists we are called to love the stranger in our midst and to treat that stranger as we would our own family. We must be a church that welcomes the foreigners into our cities, our towns, our neighborhoods, our churches, our homes. We must keep ourselves open to the opportunity and blessing of entertaining angels unawares. If we are to truly live out our mandate of having open hearts, open

minds, open doors, we must work to ensure the just treatment of the foreigners living among us." This is the very definition of Radical Hospitality!

As noted in the Mission Encounter (formerly known as the School of Christian Mission) 2012 Study - Immigration in the Bible, "The Bible was written by, for, and about migrants, immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers." Had you thought about that before? The stories ranging from Abraham leaving his home, to Jesus' young life in Egypt are very similar to the stories we read about today.

Our pastors encourage us to constantly be in study of our faith and our denomination. To that end, there are two upcoming events which provide us the opportunity to learn more about the biblical aspects of immigration as well as today's issues:

On Saturday, Oct. 13, the United Methodist Women's Fall Gathering will offer a modified program of the Mission Encounter - Immigration in the Bible. Our very own Mike Hoefer, who has been an ESL teacher and helped sponsor refugees, and was a session leader at the summer Mission Encounter, will be leading the UMW program. As usual, you do not need to be a UMW member to participate in any or all parts of the event. Watch the bulletin and other church communications for more details regarding this event.

On Friday, Oct. 26, the third Immigrants Advocates Summit will be held at AUMC. This event, sponsored by immigrant advocacy organizations, will address many concerns including the identification and understanding of the many challenges facing Virginia as a result of the state's changing demographics.

As a congregation, we must continue to offer radical hospitality to all of our neighbors. Please use both of these opportunities to learn more and decide how we at AUMC can expand our vision of welcoming the stranger!

Children's Sabbath 2012 – Our Commitment

On Sunday, Oct. 14, Annandale UMC joins with thousands of other congregations across the nation in the annual National Observance of CHILDREN'S SABBATH.

While walking along a road, a sage saw a man planting a carob tree. He asked him: "How long will it take for this tree to bear fruit?" "Seventy years," replied the man. The sage then asked: "Are you so healthy a man that you expect to live that length of time and eat its fruit?" The man answered: "I found a fruitful world, because my ancestors planted it for me. Likewise I am planting for my children." -Talmud Ta'anit 23a

This Jewish story offers a bit of insight into the vision of Children's Sabbath. Every year, churches across America dedicate a Sunday in October to commit to the wellbeing of children. Not only do we celebrate the children close to our hearts and in our congregation, but those in our community and across the country.

Continued on Page 3



The Greatest Commandment

Grace and peace in the name of our Savior!

You have heard me say it before and probably will hear me say it a thousand more times: I am constantly amazed at the passing of time. Summer is over. Fall is

upon us. Annual Conference is fading in the rear view mirror.

Charge Conference is coming soon. A scant few days ago my personal odometer flipped to SIXTY! How in the world did I get to be this old???

As we engage our annualized ritual of celebrating what God has done and looking forward to our future, I once again lift the necessity of having some focus toward that future movement; our ministry areas are engaged in the process of planning for ministry; of pursuing God's will for us as it relates to the making of disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. I would remind us that we have discerned that we are a community of faith that invites, nurtures, equips and sends forth passionate disciples that love God, love neighbor and serve God's world. This is a task for everyone. We will soon be calling to ask if you will serve in some capacity. We would not be disturbed if you volunteered to serve. But there is something more I would have us ponder; have we made a disciple recently? Dave Ferguson in his book, *The Big Idea* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007) walks through a litany that many know all too well:

- 85% of people in North America call themselves "Christian;" AND
- 50% of Christian churches didn't help one person find relationship with Christ; AND
- The Barna research group, surveying 152 different measures found there was virtually no difference in the attitudes and behaviors of Christians and non Christians...

He goes further to pose this scenario: When church-going folk were asked, "What did you learn today?", the answer is usually an embarrassed silence, followed by "Ummm..." "How is it possible," Ferguson asks, "... that so many people, young and old, can respond with nothing but silence to such a simple question?"

While I am certainly not in favor of the dumbing down of the church; and while I wholeheartedly endorse and support the church's due diligence of theological and biblical reflection AND community and congregational analysis, the bottom line my friends, is always very

simple: the mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ; the church exists for others, not us.

That sense of simplicity is further illuminated by Ferguson. He shares that, "In Jesus' day, people had boiled the Bible down to 613 commandments, 613 rules. And everyone was told, 'You have to keep these 613 commandments to be okay with God.' So when the religious leader came to Jesus to ask him which of those commandments was the most important, he was really asking, 'What's the Big Idea?'" The response of Jesus to him and to us is elegant in its simplicity. Everything we plan should show evidence of the greatest of commandments: To love the Lord with all of our hearts, minds, souls and strength; and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Nothing more, nothing less, nothing else.

Yours for a Vital Witness to Christ,

Clarence



DATEBOOK

Thursday, Sept. 27, 5-7 p.m. food distribution at Immanuel campus

Fellowship Hall, 7901 Heritage Drive. Contact Betsy Clevenger, 703-425-6424, for details.

Thursday, Oct. 4, 5-7 p.m. food distribution at Immanuel campus Fellowship Hall, 7901 Heritage Drive. Contact Betsy Clevenger, 703-425-6424, for details.

Sunday, Oct. 7, 8:30 a.m. - noon ACCA food drive. Bring non-perishable food for ACCA Pantry.

Saturday, Oct. 13, 9:45 a.m. -12 noon, Wright Hall. Annandale UMC Women's Fall Gathering. Light Brunch will be served.

Friday, Oct. 26, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m., Immigrant Advocates Summit

Help reduce postage and paper costs by signing up to receive the Witness newsletter via email every two weeks instead of by U.S. mail. Please send an email to Dottie Rogerson drogerson@annandale-umc.org to request your name be added to the email distribution list. Note: AUMC does NOT share its email distribution list with outside organizations.

Continued from page 1

AUMC's commitment to "loving neighbor" contributes to accomplishing this goal. When we feed children and families at Safe Haven, make sandwiches at the Immanuel campus, collect food for ACCA's food pantry, or collect school supplies for local children, we directly impact the lives of children.

It can be easy to see children in our church and make the assumption that all children fare as well as our own. However, America's children bear the brunt of some of our nation's most pressing problems. One in six children in the United States lives in poverty. Over 16 million children live in households that cannot provide adequate food for all meals. Low-income families with children encounter great difficulty finding affordable housing. Approximately 20 percent of American children and adolescents, 11 million in all, have serious diagnosable emotional or behavioral health disorders, ranging from attention deficit disorder and depression to bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. Nearly 11 million children in the United States do not have health insurance. The Children's Sabbath is a time to reflect on these startling statistics, and to find ways to begin to address these problems.

On Oct. 14, we will look with joy and pride on the children of Annandale United Methodist Church as they sing and help lead worship. On Children's Sabbath, we will also lift the plight of children who suffer from poverty, neglect, untreated illness, and homelessness to our loving God. Our God calls us to act with justice and mercy to alleviate the conditions that prevent a child from reaching their God-given potential.



The Annandale CROP Walk is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 13, at Lake Accotink Park. This ACCA-supported program helps raise funds for hunger, disaster and refugee relief programs of the Church World Service. A portion of the funds remain with ACCA to help local families.

Contact Camille Mittelholtz at 703-573-0074 or kmittelholtz1@cox.net.

AUMC's Prayer Shawl Ministry is gearing up for the fall with more projects. Anyone who knits or crochets (or wants to learn) is invited to join this crafty and congenial group. Meetings are every other Tuesday, at 1 p.m. in room 303. Dates coming up: Sept. 25, Oct. 9 and 23. For more information, call Rosemary Perdue 703-354-6645.

AUMC Contributes to "Stamp Out Loneliness"

Annandale United Methodist Church's Caring Ministries is collecting 2013 picture calendars, notecards, writing paper and stamps for women incarcerated in the Fluvanna Correctional Center, Virginia. To a woman in prison, a stamp can be a "lifeline" to her children, family and friends far away. The hope is the messages sent with these stamps will strengthen ties of healing and reconciliation. Bring calendars, unused cards, paper and stamps to the collection box outside of the church office.

NEWS IN BRIEF

AUMC Swaps Mini-bus for 15-passenger Van: The Trustees announce the completion of a vehicle swap, which resulted in the "trading in" of a 1999, 21-passenger Chevrolet/Goshen mini-bus for a 2008 Ford 15-passenger van. We no longer have the capacity of the larger vehicle but instead have two vehicles which can be driven by persons with a regular driver's license (instead of a Commercial Drivers License). The other church van is a 1998 Chrysler 10-passenger van, which is in the shop for air conditioner repair.

When your group needs to use a van, contact the church office with trip details: dates, destination, and driver's name. The driver must have been checked out by a member of the Van Committee and registered as a Van Driver with the church office. The driver will be expected to inspect the vehicle before departure and to return the vehicle in good condition, ready for the next trip. The driver will also be responsible for the van mileage fee, currently 55-cents per mile. This fee pays for gasoline and maintenance.

Coming Soon-New Member Class

An adult class for new AUMC members and for those considering joining AUMC will be held the first Friday of each month beginning Friday, Oct. 5, 7-9 p.m. in room 210. The class is called "Brownie Evenings with Brown" and will be taught by Rev. Dr. Clarence Brown. It is a time of exploration and discernment of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ at Annandale UMC. Topics will range from Wesleyan Theology to United Methodism 101; from Stewardship to Spiritual Gifts. Pre-registration is not necessary. For more information, call 703-256-8330. Childcare will be available for Oct. 5 but reservations are required by noon Oct. 3 to Becki Stewart - bstewart@annandale-umc.org.

Help a Family!

The congregation is invited to support Pat Shand and her family as she battles breast cancer by providing meals for the family of four. If you wish to donate a meal, please contact Hannah Knowland at hannah@gmail.com to schedule a time to provide a meal. All meals can be dropped off in TJ's office at AUMC Tuesday- Friday before 3 p.m., or at the Knowland residence after 3pm. Hannah will suggest the details further when you contact her.

Dietary Needs: Fish high in Omega 3s (salmon, tilapia), greens (salads, especially Kale), Trader Joe's Electrolyte Water, meat on the side (one family member is vegetarian).

Restrictions: No sugar, no salt as much as possible, no desserts. Please do not make meals when someone in your household has a cold or other sickness. Pat's immune system will be very low let's help protect her. As noted above, meals can be dropped off at the Knowland Residence: 3927 Arcadia Rd. Alexandria, VA 22312.



MINISTRY MEETINGS

Tues, Sept. 25	SPRC	7:30 p.m.	Room 302
Tues., Oct. 2	Trustees	7:30 p.m.	Room 303
	Education Committee	7:30 p.m.	Room 302

LECTIONARY TEXTS

Sept. 30, 18th Sunday after Pentecost: Esther 7:1-16, Psalm 124 (UMH 738), James 5:13-20, Mark 9:38-58

Oct. 7, 19th Sunday after Pentecost; World Communion Sunday: Job 1:1, 2:1-10; Psalm 26 or Psalm 25 (UMH 756); Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12; Mark 10:2-16

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WEEKLY VOLUNTEERS

Sunday, Sept. 30

Outreach greeters: 8:30 a.m. J.Vance/B. Brown, 9:30 a.m. A.Witkowski, 10:30 a.m. W.Ward

Greeters: Trustees

Fellowship Hour Hosts: Witness/Missions

Ushers: 8:30 a.m. J. Clarke, G. Sherfey, P. Sherfey, S. Nkesi
11 a.m. B. Gordan, C. Perdue, G. Rothman, P. Shockley

Sunday, Oct. 7

Outreach greeters: 8:30 a.m. J.Vance/B. Brown, 9:30 a.m. A.Witkowski, 10:30 a.m. W.Ward

Greeters: Alter Guild

Fellowship Hour Hosts: Bible Fellowship Classes

Ushers: 8:30 a.m. S. Fleming, R. Roberts, R. Gordon, K. Sabo
11 a.m. P. Straub, J. Thomas, R. Witkowski, P. Adams

NEXT DEADLINE

Sept. 28 is the deadline for the Oct. 9 Witness which covers Oct. 14 and 21

Homemade Kairos Cookies Needed: The Kairos Prison Ministry Team is preparing to share God's love with men at the Greensville Regional Correctional Center, in Jarratt, Va, in November. A tangible expression of our Christian love for them is cookies! The Annandale UMC Team is responsible for providing 1,200 dozen homemade cookies. The sign-up sheet, prison approved cookie recipes, and instructions are under the TV in the Atrium. If you cannot bake cookies but want to make a donation for baking supplies, make check payable to AUMC, designated for Kairos Cookies, by Sunday, Oct. 28. Other church members and team members will do the baking! Place your cookies in the AUMC kitchen freezer by Sunday, Nov. 4 and label them "Kairos Cookies". Contact Bill Iwig at 301-365-7532 if you have any questions.



Musical Notes: All youth in the 6-12 grades are invited to come and be a part of the Youth Choir here at Annandale UMC! You DO NOT have to audition and membership is open to anyone who loves to sing and worship the Lord! Rehearsals are Sundays at 4:30 p.m. The Adult Choir welcomes new members. You do not need to have experience reading music but should love to sing and be willing to learn. Rehearsals are Wednesdays, 7:15-8:45 p.m. Contact Director Pat Vaughn pvaughn@annandale-umc.org or 703-256-8330 for details.

CIRCLE NEWS

DEBORAH: Mon., Oct. 8, 7:30 p.m., AUMC Rm. 210. Prog.: Gail Pemberton will demonstrate how to make heirloom bonnets for new babies in the congregation. Hostess: Priscilla Dodge. Dev.: Carol Irons.

LYDIA: Thurs., Oct. 11, 10 a.m., AUMC Rm. 209. Prog.: Showing of "The Bethlehem Star" movie by Dan & Nancy Evans. Hostesses: Joan Power & Gloria Rothman. Dev.: Shirley Bailey.

M&M's: Sat., Oct. 20, 8 a.m., at the home of Pat Sherfey. Prog.: Brief Prayer Group meetings then work on items for the Bazaar. Hostess: Erin McKenney. Dev.: Marie Cavanagh.

MIRIAM: Thurs., Oct. 11, 9:30 a.m., AUMC Rm. 210. Prog.: Nancy Sherman- making Ribbon Angels for the Bazaar. Hostesses: Peggy Ward & Emaline Crewell. Dev.: Emaline Crewell.

PHOEBE: Tues., Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m. at Guapos (Shirlington).

As always, new members are always welcome at every Circle meeting!