



February 1, 2018

Dear Virginia Conference Members:

Welcome to the 236th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference which will take place from 15-17 June 2018. We will again meet in the Hampton Convention Center. It has a peaked roof line like a sailing ship and is to the left of the round Hampton Coliseum we have used in years past.

This letter will help you with your lodging/housing for the upcoming conference. You will receive a conference packet in May that will include information on the conference including schedule, *Book of Reports*, name tag, registration card, and other useful information. If you need information on the conference including banquet meals before your packet arrives, please refer to the conference website at www.vaumc.org/AC2018

Enclosed with this letter is a list of area hotels and motels that have special rates for the conference.

All hotels/motels holding rooms for our conference will make our special rate rooms available to our conference attendees starting at **10:00am on Monday, February 12, 2018. NO RESERVATIONS WILL BE MADE AT THE CONFERENCE RATE PRIOR TO THAT TIME.**

Please follow the following steps to make your hotel reservations:

1. Make your lodging selection from the attached list and call them (not before 10:00am Feb. 12th).
2. Please have your name, number guests, special needs, dates arriving and departing ready to make your reservations.
3. Identify yourself as a member of Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church to receive the designated group rate.
4. Confirm your reservation number and their cancellation policy.

Please make your reservations as soon as possible as the hotels fill quickly. If the hotel you chose is already full, select another one from the list. We have secured enough rooms at the hotels for everyone. Please also note, that our rates and room blocks are only held until one month from the conference; any remaining rooms not already reserved are released to the general public at the regular rate.

Please note that the Convention Center has limited self-contained RV parking (no water, dumping or electricity). There are however several area campgrounds to choose from.
(<http://www.hampton.gov/parks/>)

As we approach our Conference dates, please regularly check for updates on the Virginia Advocate updates and at the Virginia Conference website: www.vaumc.org/AC2018

There are two attachments to this letter. The first being the list of hotels and motels for the special rates for the conference and the second is some information about The Great Day of Service that will take place on Saturday of Annual Conference. This information is to inform you what the Great Day of Service is and what projects you will have the chance to take part in. You will learn much more about this exciting endeavor and how to register for The Great Day of Service when you receive your conference packet in May.

On behalf of the 2018 Annual Conference Planning Committee, we welcome you.

Should you have **housing** questions, please contact me at cell number: **540-819-9386** or by e-mail at: timcraft@vaumc.org. If you have other questions, please direct those to the Virginia Conference Office.

Your servant in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tim Craft".

Reverend Tim Craft

Virginia Annual Conference
Hampton, Virginia **June 15-17, 2018**

Hampton						
Property	Address	Distance from Convention Center	Telephone for Reservations	Total Rooms for VAUMC	Room Rate plus Tax	Amenities
Candlewood Suites	401 Butler Farm Rd. Hampton, VA 23666	3 miles	757-766-8976	40	Studio \$99 Single \$119	Food Store for Purchases, Free Internet, Business services, Fitness Center, Laundry. Pet Friendly.
Country Inn & Suites	1551 Hardy Cash Dr. Hampton, VA 23666	2 miles	757-224-9994	80	\$119.00	Free Breakfast, Free Internet, Microwave, Refrigerator, Business Center, Fitness Center, Indoor Pool.
Courtyard by Marriott	1917 Coliseum Dr. Hampton, VA 23666	1/4 mile	757-838-3300	120	\$139.00	Free Internet, Business Center, Fitness Center, Outdoor Pool, Courtyard Café.
Crown Plaza Hampton Marina	700 Settlers Landing Rd. Hampton, VA 23669	3.5 miles	757-727-9700	173	\$125.00	Free Internet, Free Parking, Restaurants, Rooftop Pool, Fitness Center.
Embassy Suites	1700 Coliseum Dr. Hampton, VA 23666	Attached to Convention Center	757-827-8200	250	\$174.00	HEADQUARTERS HOTEL A stay at this hotel requires a Friday and Saturday night reservation. Free Full Cooked Breakfast, Free Manager's Reception, Free Internet Access, Business Center, Indoor Pool, Fitness Center.
Hampton Inn	3101 Coliseum Dr. Hampton, VA 23666	2 miles	757-838-1400	70	\$129.00	Free Breakfast, Free On the Go Breakfast Bags, Free Internet, Indoor pool.
Hilton Garden Inn	1999 Power Plant Pky Hampton, VA 23666	1 mile	757-310-6323	60	\$139.00	Restaurant, Free Internet, Business Center, Fitness Center, Indoor pool.

Holiday Inn Express	1813 West Mercury Blvd. Hampton, VA 23666	1 mile	757-838-8484	95	\$139.00	Free Breakfast, Free Internet, Business Center, Fitness Center, Indoor Pool, Microwave and Refrigerator.
Quality Inn	1809 W. Mercury Blvd Hampton, Va 23666	1 mile	757-838-5011	75	\$89.99	Free Breakfast, Free Internet, Exercise Room, Indoor Pool, Microwave, Pet Friendly.
Red Roof	1925 Coliseum Dr. Hampton, VA 23666	1/4 mile	757-838-1870	60	\$77.00	Free Internet, Pet Friendly.
Springhill Suites	1997 Power Plant Pky. Hampton, VA	1 mile	757-310-6333	50	\$149.00	Free Breakfast, Free Internet, Business Center, Fitness Center, Indoor Pool.
Suburban Extended Stay	1616 Hardy Cash Dr. Hampton, VA 23666	2 miles	757-951-2000	30	\$94.99	Full Kitchen, Free Internet.

Newport News						
Property	Address	Distance from Convention Center	Telephone for Reservations	Total Rooms for VAUMC	Room Rate plus Tax	Amenities
Marriott City Center	740 Town Center Dr. Newport News, VA 23606	7.7 miles	757-837-9299	25	\$139.00	Restaurant, Free Internet, Fitness Center, Paid Parking.
Comfort Inn	12330 Jefferson Ave. Newport News, VA 23602	7.8 miles	757-249-0200	40	\$109.00	Free Breakfast, Free Internet, Free Parking, Outdoor Pool.
Residence Inn Airport	531 St. Johns Rd. Newport News, VA 23602	10 miles	757-842-6214	20	\$122.00	Free Breakfast, Free Internet, Free Parking, Indoor Pool, Fitness Center.
Holiday Inn Express	943 J Clyde Morris Blvd. Newport News, VA 23601	5.9 miles	757-596-6417	35	\$119.00	Restaurant, Free Internet, Free Parking, Indoor Pool.
Holiday Inn Newport News City Center (Formerly The Omni)	980 Omni Blvd. Newport News, VA 23601	5 miles	757-223-2110	40	\$139.00	Hotel opening in Spring of 2018 after Complete Renovation , Free Internet, Free Parking, Restaurant, Indoor Pool, Fitness Center

THE GREAT DAY OF SERVICE - 2018

Led by the Holy Spirit, Bishop Sharma Lewis of the Virginia Annual Conference has asked the Virginia Annual Conference to be the Church (Body of Christ) in active and faithful service to the community of Hampton, Virginia when we gather in June 2018, for Annual Conference. She is setting aside three hours on Saturday, June 16, 2018, from 2 pm – 5 pm, and is asking all clergy and delegates to go into the community and to be active in faithful service to the community.

The Great Day of Service will be broken into three sections – (1) ministry outside of the Convention Center; (2) UMCOR Kit building in the Convention Center; and (3) presentations on Social Justice Issues at the Convention Center. Each clergy and delegate is asked to sign up for one of these three activities.

1. **Ministry Outside the Convention Center** – There will be two primary areas of work to accomplish outside of the Convention Center; Clean Up & Block Walks.

A. **Clean Up**: This area involves the physical labor of pruning, digging, and the removal of debris from historical cemeteries and children's parks. Also included is the removal of debris from several alleyways in the Hampton community, and around some of the schools and a youth community center. (In the event of bad weather – extreme heat or thunderstorms – the area schools and youth center need painting and other clean up duties inside.)

B. **Block Walks**: Working with several departments within the City of Hampton, volunteers will be handed a distribution packet provided by the city to be delivered to the residents in targeted neighborhoods within the city.

The purpose of the block walk is two-fold:

1. To make a personal contact having a face-to-face interaction with people in the neighborhood in order to offer support through a caring presence that may address needs they may have with contact information, a listening ear and if invited, to offer prayer.
2. To make a brief general assessment of the person's well-being that if needed can be reported back to the city public health contact person. (There will be a brief orientation to all volunteers by the city to assist in this assessment)

2. **UMCOR Kit building in the Convention Center** – There will be three stations set up in the Convention Center that will be used to build hygiene kits for UMCOR. Each station will hold 8-12 people per shift and all of the material will be at the station for the people to compile each kit. The kits will then be packed, taped, and put on shipping pallets and loaded onto a truck at the Convention Center. Each shift of people can take breaks after 15-30 minutes. Our goal is to build 3,000 kits.

3. **Presentations on Social Justice Issues at the Convention Center** – There will be three separate issues that will be addressed in three separate rooms of the Convention Center. Each will last for 45 minutes. After each presentation with a question and answer period to follow, there will be a break and then time to move to the next area. Each person signed up for this activity could attend all three talks.

Registration for *The Great Day of Service* will be online, and more information about that will be forthcoming. Watch the Annual Conference page on the conference website, www.vaumc.org/AC2018, the e-Advocate, and ClergyNet and LaityNet for more announcements on this awesome opportunity!