

Virginia Pastor Uses His Voice and Advertising Experience to Promote the Word of God

The Rev. John Hall had a successful career in broadcasting, advertising and marketing for more than 30 years. As an on-air personality, he used his voice to promote the messages of businesses and people across Virginia. However, Hall said he felt a call to ministry throughout his life, a call he delayed until it could not be delayed anymore. “The years using my voice for the broadcasting world prepared me well to use my voice to promote and proclaim the message of Jesus Christ,” Hall explained.



Hall serves as lead pastor for Bethel United Methodist Church in Oilville, Va., a position he has held for the past 21 years. In addition to his work with Bethel, Hall is an associate member of the Virginia Annual Conference (since 2006). He has also served on the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) for three quadrenniums.

“I initially felt my call to ministry in high school. I was an average student and really didn’t apply myself. Later the call came again but I was dealing with the death of my father and grandfather within a six-month time, so I let it go again. I kept letting life and its many changes keep me from pursuing my call,” Hall said.

When he could not put off his call anymore, God’s call came to him again through a “Disciple I Bible Study.” Hall said he felt compelled to serve the local church as a pastor. Although he describes his church as small, the work that Hall takes on is quite large. With only a part-time administrative assistant, Hall handles his duties as a pastor, but also pitches in to assist with communications, Bible school and handles anything that comes up at Bethel. “I wear many hats and they change from day-to-day,” Hall said.

When not taking on the duties of his role as an associate member, Hall serves as the chairperson of the Board of Ordained Ministry within the Virginia Annual Conference. “One of the things I love about The United Methodist Church is the opportunity to serve at the district and conference levels,” shared Hall.

Hall entered the Course of Study program at Duke Divinity School. “When I first entered campus and saw the beautiful chapel, I asked God how did I get here, and in response I knew it was God’s grace and love,” Hall said “Through Course of Study, I was connected with people who felt the same call, and together we supported one another. I developed great friendships through this process.

“I committed to God and myself that I would take full advantage of the Course of Study program, and demonstrate that I could do it. I wanted to take the knowledge and let it flow through me to be a good pastor, impact people’s lives and preach the word of God,” Hall added.

A self-described cheerleader for the Course of Study program, Hall believes that it provides pastors a great opportunity to learn and grow in ministry. “Course of Study is very effective if you take advantage. It is a great option if seminary does not work for your path. You have access to great professors and interactions with your fellow students who are on the same journey.”

When asked about the challenges of the Course of Study program, Hall said that time management is always a challenge. “I had to balance my part-time professional work, part-time pastoral duties, being a husband and father along with school, but God worked it all out. In addition, there were great financial support opportunities available through the church to help me complete this journey, a huge blessing.

“Course of Study ignited something in me for academic work, which spilled into my ministry. I will always be grateful. It inspired my love for reading, writing and studying. I am now a forever student and learner,” Hall said.

If you are considering entering into the Course of Study program, visit GBHEM.org.

About GBHEM: As the leadership development agency of The United Methodist Church, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry’s mission is to build capacity for United Methodist lay and clergy leaders to discover, claim and flourish in Christ’s calling in their lives, by creating connections and providing resources to aid in recruitment, education, professional development and spiritual formation.

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