
PAUMCS POST

*A Newsletter for and about the Virginia Chapter
Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries*

March 2017



Spring Retreat for Church Administrative Professionals

May 24, 2017

Mark your calendar and make plans to attend our Virginia PAUMCS Spring Event, Get Away from It All, on Wednesday, May 24, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Fredericksburg UMC in Fredericksburg, VA.

Enjoy Historic Downtown Fredericksburg

Come Tuesday after work and join your VAPAUMCS friends for an evening of dinner and exploring Historic Downtown Fredericksburg. We have reserved a block of rooms for Tuesday evening at the Courtyard Marriott. The cost per room will be \$149. Make your reservation by calling Toll-Free Reservation Center 1-888/230-1516 or 540/373-8300 and mention PAUMCS. If you need help finding a roommate email Susan Petrey at SusanPetrey@vaumc.org.

Due to a busy schedule at Fredericksburg UMC on Wednesday morning those staying at the hotel are encouraged to leave their cars at the hotel and walk the block and a half to church or use the shuttle service.

The Theme: Pastoral Transitions

Pastoral transitions can create a most difficult time for United Methodist churches. As Administrative Church Professionals we find ourselves filled with both anticipation and sorrow as established relationships are broken in preparation for new beginnings. In order for healthy transitions to take place, we all have to work together making certain that lots of details are covered. What are the many things we must do to ensure a smooth transition? Come join us for



informative conversation, great fellowship and active learning. Our speakers for the day are Larry Davis and Ted Smith.

About Our Speakers

The Rev. Larry Davies became the pastor of Fredericksburg United Methodist Church on July 1, 2016. He

served 2008-2016 as Lynchburg District Superintendent. Larry has an undergraduate degree from Virginia Tech and a master's degree from Duke Divinity School. He is the author of four books and writes "Sowing Seeds of Faith" a weekly devotion and Bible study that is published in newspapers and online. Larry is married to Mell and has two children and two grandchildren.



The Rev. Dr. Theodore "Ted" Smith received a Master of Divinity from the Candler School of Theology at Emory University in 1987. In 1996 Ted earned a Doctor of Ministry with a focus on Evangelism from Wesley Theological Seminary. In July 2011, Ted was appointed as District Superintendent for the newly formed Fredericksburg District in the Virginia Conference. Ted is married to the Rev. Teresa Signer Smith and they are the parents of one daughter, Helen.

Help with Mission Project

Following our closing at 4:30, those who are willing and able to let some of the traffic clear from I-95, are invited to stick around for our Mission Project. Help us assemble 100 health kits for Annual Conference. All materials will be purchased and on hand. Each attendee is encouraged to bring a donation of \$10, made payable to VA PAUMCS, to help pay for the materials for this project.

Who is Invited to Attend

This event is open to all church administrative staff, full-time, part-time, paid and volunteer, including, but not limited to, administrative assistants, financial secretaries, office managers and newsletter editors.

Continued on page 2

Spring Retreat (Continued from page 1)

Cost and Registration Information

Lunch is included in the registration fee of \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members. Don't miss this outstanding opportunity for learning and fellowship. A registration brochure is available [here](#) or call 804/521-1124 for more



"Feel the Spirit in the Windy City" National PAUMCS 2017

The PAUMCS National Conference will be held in Chicago, Illinois, on May 4-6, 2017.

This year's event, Feel Free in the Spirit in the Windy City, features speakers on a wide variety of topics, including the following:

Bishop Tracy Malone

Diversity in Ministry

the Rev. Young-Mee Park

Cross-Cultural Ministry and Experiences

the Rev. James Preston teaching us about

Radical Hospitality

and more

Share the National Conference registration information found at www.paumcs.org with your staff-parish committee so they can see how this continuing education opportunity will benefit your church. National PAUMCS offers scholarships to help with the registration cost. More information about scholarships is available on the PAUMCS website.

Register now and make plans to attend. A number of VA PAUMCS folks are already planning to attend. Email SusanPetrey@vaumc.org to let her know you are coming. We look forward to seeing you in Chicago!



Don't Be a Fool...Early Registration has its Rewards!

Are you planning to attend our Spring Event in Fredericksburg, Wednesday, May 24? If so, be sure to have your paid registration in by April Fools' Day. One \$300 scholarship, to be used toward costs associated with attending the PAUMCS National Conference in Nashville, April 12-14, 2018 will be awarded to one attendee of the VA PAUMCS Spring 2017 Event whose paid registration for this event is received by April 1.



For more information call Susan Petrey in the Richmond District Office at 800/768-6040, ext. 124 or 804/521-1124, or email

SusanPetrey@vaumc.org.

Renew Your Membership or Join Our Virginia Chapter

VA-PAUMCS Members: It's time to renew your membership for 2017. Register [online](#) or use the form in the membership brochure (see link below).

Not yet a member? Please consider joining. Note that you can save \$5 from the registration cost for our spring event if you join first. Read our [membership brochure](#).

Prayer Chain and Care Ministry

The Virginia Chapter has a PAUMCS Prayer Chain and solicits your prayers for those who submit a request. Many pray daily for the requests, send cards and notes via regular or email to those listed, or just hold the requests in their hearts.



Anyone interested in becoming part of this ministry is encouraged to email our Care Ministry coordinator, Donna Desper, at stauntondistrict@vaumc.org.

Your Care Ministry team of VA PAUMCS enjoys being in ministry with you and celebrating your special joys, giving encouragement when needed and a word of sympathy at a time of sorrow.

OnLine Certification

Unlimited space is available for the online course. Sign up today!

The PAUMCS certification course is online. Class will open April 14, and all modules must be completed by August 19. All courses are taken online, and there will be a group project available at the Annual Conference in Chicago in May 2017. You do not need to complete the group project in Chicago to become certified.

The course cost is \$300. For more information on the course and for scholarships please contact <http://www.gcfa.org/paumcs>.

Why Become Certified?

Legislation was officially adopted by the 1988 General Conference as follows: "The General Council on Finance and Administration shall have the authority and responsibility to provide guidance and consultation for continuing education of church secretaries, including establishment of training and certification programs, and to provide assistance to the Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries." (2012 Book of Discipline, ¶ 807.19) Certification recognizes your accomplishment of successfully completing professional training through an established school of business. It enhances your position as a true professional and stimulates the need for continuing education to augment your ministry in the church.

How Does the Church Benefit?

The PAUMCS Certification Course is designed to provide professional growth and development opportunities for each individual in areas of study such as Taxes and the Church, Connectional Giving, Office Finances, Ethics and Confidentiality, Conflict Resolution, and Polity of the Church. Studying such concepts encourages the participants to become better informed and more effective office administrators.



PAUMCS Certification and Advanced Certification

I wrote on the merits of becoming PAUMCS certified following my certification in 2015. It was one of the best trainings that I have ever attended. I base this on the knowledge that I brought back to the office and still refer to frequently.

PAUMCS certification provides best practices, history, finance information, personality and team-building, that enhances and energizes the profession of United Methodist Church administrative assistants, secretaries, office managers, and all who are involved in the day-to-day ministry of keeping a church running efficiently.

My class was the last to be held on site in a classroom for five days, and I, as well as many of my classmates, am grateful to have been able to take advantage of this format before certification went to the online format. Many of the concerns about replicating the personal growth and team development via a computer screen instead of in a classroom were discussed throughout our time together in Nashville. Since we are a global church, this opportunity needed to be offered to our brothers and sisters globally, and online was the only way to go.

First Online Certification Class in 2016

How did the first online certification course go? I went to the source and asked Natalie Schuette, our liaison to GCFA/PAUMCS. Here's what she shared with me:

"Last year's online certification was a great success. We had two Central Conference members from the Philippines participate in the online course, along with 49 other administrators for the United Methodist Church. We look forward to celebrating the 2016 first ever online class in Chicago. The next course will be in Summer 2017. Registration opens April 14. The cost is \$300 and GCFA offers ten scholarships to those who apply."

Kudos to PAUMCS for taking the connectivity leap to be globally inclusive *and* with a major success for the first online class! Those of you who are sitting on the fence: Hop off and join the powerful force of PAUMCS-certified staff!

Ready to Take the Next Step

Many of us who are certified are eager to take the next step: Advanced Certification. You may have noticed that the PAUMCS website doesn't have any information regarding Advanced Certification. I asked Natalie about this, as well:

"One of my goals since becoming the GCFA/PAUMCS liaison was to revive the Advanced Certification Institute. I am grateful to report that this

has been approved and we will start promoting the course in the coming months. The Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville will host the four-day class. The curriculum will consist of new topics such as Spirituality Translated in the Workplace, Sexual Misconduct in the Church, and Self-Awareness and Interpersonal Relationships. There will also be a group research project that begins prior to your arrival in Nashville and must be completed on the last day."

Sounds like another intensive, extensive, and mind, body and spirit-stretching event! I'm hoping to attend this when it becomes available.*

Come to Our Virginia PAUMCS Spring Retreat on May 24

Most of us have encountered, and sometimes endured, the change of pastors. This is such an important event in the life of a church that my certification group chose this as our final project. Imagine the tune from *Fiddler on the Roof* - "Tradition" - sung with words about "Transition!" You've got that image, right? We had a fun time addressing a serious event. Come to our Spring Retreat where you will hear two pastors speak on the subject of pastoral transition. You're sure to glean some wisdom and wit that will benefit both you and your church during the next changeover.

I look forward to meeting you at our Spring Retreat.

In His Grace,
Beth A. Christopoulos, Administrative Assistant
PAUMCS Certified - Class of 2015
Windsor Hills UMC, Roanoke District

*Late-Breaking News

Advanced Certification Training has been postponed until Summer 2018.

Certification Available After Completing Online Course

The course includes Taxes and the Church, Office Finances, Church Polity and much more! Gain all the benefits of certification without leaving the comfort of your home/office! See page 3 or contact gcfa.org/paumcs for more information.

Why Join PAUMCS? What Difference Does It Make?

My career as a United Methodist secretary began rather tumultuously, with a funeral for our pastor's spouse. I don't think it needs to be said that I did not get much training done that day. It was no one's fault that my first day was unusual, but it added to the lost feeling I was experiencing entering my first UMC position.

A Frenzied Start

The day of the funeral was only the beginning. Over the next month, my three co-workers and I essentially ran the church while our pastor was on bereavement leave. Saying I was lost would be an understatement. Prior to my employment I had participated in worship and church activities in a very peripheral way. Now I was overseeing major church business, both day-to-day and long-term. For those first weeks the help of my coworkers was absolutely vital in the continuation of our church's functions.

The Frenzy Continues

Having a Baptist background, I was not particularly knowledgeable about Methodist ideology or practices before starting my employment at Fairview. Luckily, at that time our pastor, recently returned from bereavement leave, was very involved in staff development and encouraged me to attend the PAUMCS retreat in spring of 2015. Encouraged is maybe a euphemistic word. About six days before the spring retreat our pastor called our district office to get me on the list since the registration date had come and gone. I was thrown into the frantic situation of having less than a week to prepare for an overnight trip with people I'd never met and an organization I'd never heard of, all for a job I'd held less than four months.

Truly Experiencing PAUMCS

When I arrived at the retreat I was nervous. I was about to walk into a room with what I presumed were intimidating life-long Methodists who knew everything. But to my surprise I was welcomed with open arms by people who wanted to know me and my story, and people who were kindly willing to share their knowledge with me. Beanie Rankin led the educational sessions which focused on apportionments and record retention – topics about which I desperately needed to learn. I was so overwhelmed by the positivity, community, and varied learning sessions I experienced at

that first retreat. I returned to work that week with a renewed purpose and enhanced pride in the work I was doing for my church.

What Difference Does It Make?

It should be obvious by now that PAUMCS provided me with the foundation, education, and support that I needed to succeed in the United Methodist Church, and I have barely begun to scratch the surface of everything PAUMCS has to offer. Maybe your career began on shaky ground like mine, or maybe you had a smooth entry into United Methodist administration. Probably you were somewhere between the two extremes. I am firmly convinced that everyone can get something of worth out of PAUMCS, be it career help, continuing education, or simply a social community of like-minded professionals.

Adrian Smith
Fairview UMC, Danville

Virginia Chapter Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries

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