



## The Oakletter, June 14, 2026

The picture above is of my friend Ann Tang. Ann is pastor of Resurrection UMC in Virginia Beach. She's a retired Army chaplain, a combat vet, and she's got an amazing call story. I'll relate just one aspect: Ann is from Hong Kong, and when her brother joined the U.S. Army, he told her that she had to join, too, so she could bless the people he fought in war. I'm spotlighting Ann because of the Annual Conference offering. Part of the offering goes to the conference's new Center for Advocacy and Belonging, and part goes to the MJ Kim Fund, which helps clergy from other countries settle as they come to serve our conference.

American churches have struggled for decades to find homegrown clergy. When I was in Japan, I met a Catholic chaplain from Los Angeles. He said he was the first priest his diocese had released to serve in the military in 20 years, and that he was released only to serve for three. Why? Because fewer and fewer Americans were entering ministry, even back in 2004.

If space permitted, I'd offer more about the challenge of finding homegrown clergy, but I want to quote Ashley Boggan, who addresses this need in *Calling on Fire: Reclaiming the Method of Methodism*. She writes: "The current state of Methodist institutions is in decline, particularly in Great Britain and the United States. The number of young clergy coming from both the British Methodist and United Methodist churches is at an all-time low, all while the average age of both denominations continues to rise."

"I have hope for our future, but the reality of that hope depends on our ability to build up the next generation of leaders."

"If we no longer are forming new leaders, or no longer calling young pastors, teaching children, or ministering to youth and young adults, it is a matter of time, and in some cases that time is already upon us, that the stream of faithful adults will come to an end."

"New leadership is essential. But with aging structures, and people, how can the church build up new generations of leaders?"

She asks some good questions, which help explain why our conference has an MJ Kim Fund.

With all of this in mind, please consider giving to the Annual Conference offering.

Thanks,  
*Ned*

### **Sunday Epistle lesson, Romans 5:1-8**

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

**Our mission statement:** Oaklette United Methodist Church, through worship, education, and outreach, seeks to make the Gospel of Jesus Christ real as we minister to all people.

**Anniversaries:** Lisa and Tommy Bailey, June 19

**Birthdays:** Arte Jones and Megan Meharg, June 14; Bobby Phillips, June 16; Bradley Wilson, June 18; Justin and Megan Silverman, June 20

**Collections at present:** \*Mission of the month [blessing box]: canned fruit [June]  
\*Annual Conference offering [see article] through June 14

### **This Week at Oaklette:**

Sunday, June 14: Sunday school and SOTM @ 9:30 a.m.; worship and children's church [**note: volunteers needed**] @ 11 a.m.

Monday, June 15: Food pantry @ 10 a.m. [L. Gallop/P. Weifert]; HRM Band @ 7 p.m.

Wednesday, June 17: choir practice @ 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, June 18: Bible study @ 10 a.m.

Sunday, June 21: Sunday school class and SOTM @ 9:30 a.m.; worship and children's church @ 11 a.m. [**note: volunteers needed**]

**Our prayer list:** Pastor Tyrone Armstrong, Donna Baker, John Basnight, Preston Basnight, Barbara Bennett, Tanya & Steve Benton, Chris Carney, Sandy Carraway, Megan Carroll, Chesapeake Fire Dept., Coastal Va District & DS Givens, Kaylee Cuccorillo, Rylee Amelia Dimitry, Bille East, Jay Eckert, ForKids, Joyce Gaston, Freekind Virginia, Kaye Herndon, Ethel Hickman, Debbie Hodges, Home School Out of Box, Earl Jenkins, Teal Jenkins, Pat Johnson, Karon Hardy, Brian Lincoln, Dave Lorence, Rose Marie Madu, Wayne Magner, Walter Nebrotskie, Pat Newbern, Dakota Rebel, Ray & Bob Rosales, Rhonda Roughton, Loretta Smith, the League of Advocates, Virginia Conference & Bishop Sue, John Tandy, Marilyn Washington, Monica Whitehurst, Phyllis Buchanan Wolfe, our Country & Military, our Pastor

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