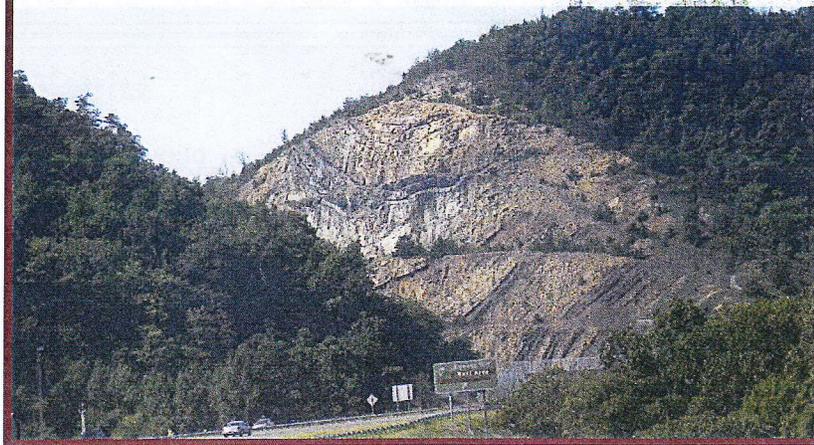
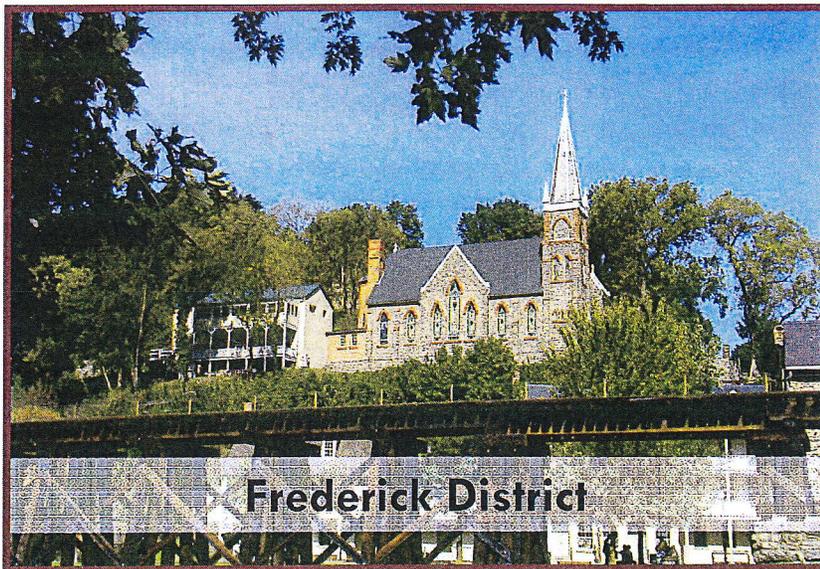


Cumberland – Hagerstown District



**Meet the
WESTERN REGION TEAM**

**Superintendents, Guides,
Support Staff and Ministries**



Frederick District

WESTERN REGION TEAM

Cumberland – Hagerstown District

Rev. Dr. Conrad O. Link became the Cumberland – Hagerstown District Superintendent on July 1, 2011. Dr. Link has been a pastor for 31 years serving his entire career in the Western Region as Pastor of a two point charge in WV, an Associate Pastor in Hagerstown, and a medium size church in Boonsboro, as well as Senior Pastor of a large church in Frederick for 18 years. He and his wife Cathy have three grown sons, one grandson and a new baby granddaughter.

Dr. Link currently serves on the BWC Cabinet, Board of Trustees, the Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and the Western Region Coordinator.

The office of District Superintendent (DS) is an extension of the Bishop's office and, as such, deals with ministry issues, such as: appointment of clergy, lay and clergy professional development, spiritual formation, supervision, coaching/counseling, local church ministry evaluation and formation and interpretation of the Book of Discipline.

The primary contact with the DS is through the pastor, chairperson of the local church pastor-parish relations committee and regional office.

Dr. Link maintains offices in both Hagerstown and Fulton but will travel throughout the region as he is needed. He can be reached by phone by calling the Western Region office 301-739-6659.



Penny R. Gaver became the Cumberland-Hagerstown District Administrator on July 1, 2013. She was born and raised on the outskirts of Funkstown, Maryland and is a graduate from Hagerstown Community College. Her previous work experience includes more than 10 years offering administrative support as a proof-reader, desktop publishing specialist, and training design coordinator.

Penny joined the Baltimore-Washington Conference in 2009 as the Office Manager / Administrative Assistant for the Western Region Office in Hagerstown and she belongs to the Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries (PAUMCS).

She is an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church, Hagerstown, where she is currently co-authoring a book entitled "Life After Suicide" discussing the 24 months following her pastor's suicide.

The District Administrator's (DA) primary function is to provide administrative support for the district and district superintendent. The DA facilitates local churches in working through the annual reports, processes and procedures of the Annual Conference and the particular needs of each district church pastor and local church leader. The DA is available for questions, advice and training. The ultimate goal of the DA is to help the local church do its ministry in a way that builds up the local church and Kingdom of God.

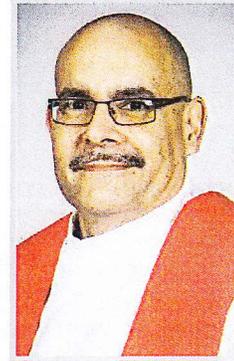
Penny has a daughter and two grandchildren; she lives with her Yorkie, Bella, west of Hagerstown. She works primarily out of the Western Region Office but travels to the Conference Mission Center in Fulton for training, staff meetings, and workshops. She can be reached by e-mail or by calling 301-739-6659.



WESTERN REGION TEAM

Frederick District

Rev. Edgardo Rivera became the Frederick District Superintendent on July 1, 2013. He was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico and was raised on the small island of Vieques. He holds a Bachelors Degree in Business Administration from the University of Puerto Rico with a major in Accounting. In 1989 he relocated with his wife to Reading Pennsylvania where he worked as an internal auditor in a financial institution for 12 years. Throughout this time he was actively involved in the local church and held various laity leadership positions.



In 1997 Rev. Rivera answered the call to ministry in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the UMC. He holds a Master of Divinity from Drew University Theological School. During his seminary studies, he served as an Associate Pastor at Emanuel-Olivet United Methodist Church in Reading, Pennsylvania and has also served a local church in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania with the Susquehanna Annual Conference until 2007.

In 2007 Rev. Rivera relocated to Maryland where he served as a Guide in the Baltimore and Washington Regions and held the position of Hispanic/Latino Ministries Coordinator for the Baltimore-Washington Conference.

Rev. Rivera is a commissioned chaplain officer in the National Guard and was initially commissioned in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard in 2003. He deployed to Iraq in 2009 as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom with the Pennsylvania 28th Combat Aviation Brigade and transferred to the Maryland Air National Guard in March 2011.

Rev. Rivera is happily married to Evelyn Rivera and is the proud parents of two sons, Eduardo and Emilio.

The primary contact with the District Superintendent (DS) is through the pastor, chairperson of the local church pastor-parish relations committee and regional office. Rev. Rivera maintains offices in both Hagerstown and Fulton but will travel throughout the region as he is needed. He can be reached by contacting Tonia Bennett at 410-309-3480.

Tonia K. Bennett became the Frederick District Administrator on July 1, 2013.

Tonia began her work with the Baltimore-Washington Conference over 16 years ago and has worked with the United Methodist Foundation, the finance department and regional staff. She was born in Washington D.C., raised in Fulton, Maryland and currently resides in Frederick Maryland. She is the mother of two sons. She enjoys traveling, spending time with her family and camping by the river.



She is a member of the Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries (PAUMCS) and completed PAUMCS certification in 2009.

The District Administrator's (DA) primary function is to provide administrative support for the district and district superintendent. The DA facilitates local churches in working through the annual reports, processes and procedures of the Annual Conference and the particular needs of each district church pastor and local church leader. The DA is available for questions, advice and training. The ultimate goal of the DA is to help the local church do its ministry in a way that builds up the local church and Kingdom of God.

Tonia maintains offices in both Hagerstown and Fulton. She can be reached by calling the Conference Mission Center at 410-309-3480.

WESTERN REGION TEAM

Regional Guide

Rev. Sarah Babylon Dorrance graduated from Wesley Theological Seminary in 2008. She comes to the ministry with business experience in international marketing.

Sarah currently serves as lead pastor at Taylorsville UMC. She believes in our Wesleyan heritage roots and has co-authored the book, "Reclaiming the Wesleyan Tradition: John Wesley's Sermons for Today."

She has a passion for reclaiming our churches for Jesus and believes that all churches have the capability, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to cast the vision and be vessels through which the transformative spirit of Christ can be at work. Sarah has lead mission trips to The Dominican Republic, Namibia and Biloxi. She is working on completion of her certification from The International Coach Federation (ICF) and has begun the D. Min program in Church Leadership at Wesley Seminary. Sarah is the proud mama of two young adult daughters who love Jesus and she plays French Horn in the Columbia Orchestra. Follow Sarah's church leadership tweets on twitter @revsarah81 .



Suggested workshops in Youth Ministry, Evangelism, Mission and Coaching include:

- **Youth Ministry** which is critical if we expect to pass along our baton of faith. In this workshop you will learn ways to empower our youth, how to accept their new ideas, and how to allow them to help cast the future vision of our churches. We have to be willing to try different models of sharing Christ and worshipping if we expect our young people to accept Jesus as their own Lord and Savior. Youth want someone to listen to them; they want someone to love them; and most of all, they want someone to believe in them. When is the last time you sat down and really listened to a young person?
- **Evangelism** is the heart of ministry, yet the "E" word seems scary. It seems we have forgotten that as Christians we are to share the Good News of Jesus, but are often afraid to do so. In this workshop you will learn how to empower your congregation to go back to the basics by teaching them that evangelism is not a bad word, but rather a lifestyle. These teachings will build up confidence so that participants can learn about relationships with Jesus . . . and with each other.
- **Mission** empowers us to build "on ramps" for newcomers and for long time members. Mission and outreach bring new life to congregations because often people want to make a difference. Today's cultural model is that people first want to belong to something . . . and then they come to know Jesus. Therefore, we need "on ramps" or non-threatening ways for people to become involved in our churches. One way is through local outreach and short term mission trips. We can train you how to lead a short term mission trip, how to formulate a team, and how to empower them to come alongside those who are in need in the world.
- **(Leadership) Coaching** is one of the skills I bring to our region. I have completed my coaching training and am able to come along side you to be a creative thinking partner, help you move through the places where you are stuck in ministry, and assist you in developing specific action plans within your ministry setting based on your expertise. All coaching is confidential and can be done on an individual bi-weekly or monthly basis depending on your circumstances.

All workshops run from 2 to 4 hours long but can be adjusted to fill the time allotted and can be tailored to meet the needs of each individual or congregation. For more information on workshops or coaching, please call the Western Region Office 301-739-6659, or e-mail her directly at: dorrancesb@aol.com .

WESTERN REGION TEAM

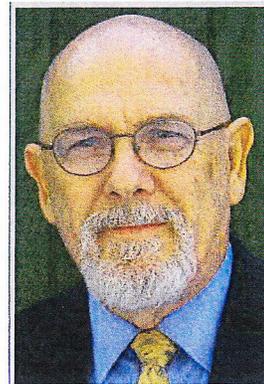
Regional Guide

Rev. Dr. G. Edward Grove has been a Western Region Guide for a number of years, primarily serving small worship churches in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia.

Ed was born in the mountains near Berkeley Springs, WV and was a member of First United Methodist Church when he received his call to ministry. He is a graduate of Shenandoah College, United Theological Seminary, Lancaster Theological Seminary, and is currently a student at the Ecumenical Institute at St. Mary's University, Baltimore, MD, pursuing a certificate in spirituality.

He has served under appointment for over fifty years in the Western Region at Inwood, John Wesley, Hagerstown (Associate), and Trinity, Martinsburg. He has served on many district and conference committees and ministerial associations throughout his pastorates. Ed has served as a member of the Board of Directors of West Virginia Council of Churches since 1995 and currently serves on its Executive Committee.

Ed has traveled extensively on mission projects working in Puerto Rico, Sonora, Mexico, the Ukraine, West Africa, and recently in Thailand. His current passion as a guide for the Western Region is in supporting pastors in small membership churches; equipping pastors and churches to excel in ministry; and resourcing small membership churches for growth, redirection, and development. Ed is the father of three adult, married daughters, and lives with his wife Marybeth, a professional audiologist, in a log cabin deep in the woods of the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia.



Suggested workshops and ways Ed can help support your ministry include:

- **Develop a Catalyst Between Small Membership Churches in the Eastern Panhandle** — Ed believes that clergy of small membership churches often feel isolated, therefore his focus will be on encouraging clergy to gather together in groups that will emphasize fellowship, spiritual growth, continuing education and connection to other churches ecumenically as well as in the UM connection.
- **Encourage Pastoral Spiritual Growth** — Specifically Ed will offer prayer support and spiritual growth opportunities through times apart and retreats. He can also provide a reading list on topics including spirituality, prayer and spiritual growth for members of the clergy.
- **One-on-One Consultation** — Specifically he will provide consultation for small membership church leadership and their congregation to develop and implement strategic plans, engage in conflict intervention, and explore ways to increase their ministries.
- **Facilitate Participation in Regional and Conference Activities** — A major role for Ed will be to communicate program areas of the conference and region as well as express concerns of clergy and churches in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia back to the region and conference.

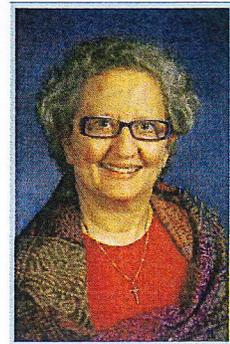
Ed is available for consultation and can be reached by calling the Western Region Office 301-739-6659 or by e-mailing him at: edhfhep@gmail.com.

WESTERN REGION TEAM

Regional Guide

Sherie L. Koob, is a Certified Lay Minister and member of Middletown UMC where her focus is on leadership development, administration, stewardship and social justice ministries. Prior to moving to Middletown, she was a leader and active member of a small congregation in Frederick County and of a large congregation in DC.

For more than 30 years she has been involved in church leadership, strategic planning, mission, and advocacy efforts, and has also served on church staff in the areas of administration and congregational care. She is passionate about speaking for those who are unable to speak for themselves, meeting the needs of the marginalized and empowering the laity to serve in areas where they are gifted.



Sherie chairs the Baltimore-Washington Conference Board of Church and Society, is a part of the West Virginia Walk to Emmaus community and the Frederick County Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Sherie and her husband, Mike, live in Knoxville, Maryland. They have three adult children and two grandsons.

Sherie's primary areas of emphasis as a Regional Guide in the Western Region will be on social justice, mercy ministries and leadership development. She is available to provide resources, training, advocacy programs and education throughout the region.

Suggested workshops in Social Justice, Mercy Ministries and District/Conference Leadership Development include:

- **Social Justice** – around *The United Methodist Social Principles*; starting a Social Justice Team; moving into advocacy; educational events around a specific issue (e.g., human trafficking, immigration, bullying, healthcare, homelessness, creation care); etc.
- **Mercy Ministries** – where to start; how to expand; joining with others to provide more services; networking; identifying resources; etc.
- **Leadership Development** – identifying spiritual gifts; building up the body to provide better service; team building; strategic planning/visioning; etc.
- **Communication:** increasing the exchange of ideas within and beyond the bounds of the Western Region by:
 - ◇ **Working with laity who feel called to be in leadership or service** beyond the local church to help identify where they can serve/work on the district, region or conference level.
 - ◇ **Connecting like minded individuals** or groups together to strengthen programs and provide support.
 - ◇ **Promoting programs and initiatives** in the Western Region to the rest of the Conference through articles in the *Connection*, the *e-Connection* and other media.

All workshops will be tailored to meet the needs of each individual congregation or cluster. For more detailed descriptions of the services Sherie can provide, please call the Western Region Office 301-739-6659 or contact her directly at: skoob.bwc@gmail.com.

WESTERN REGION TEAM

Regional Guide

Rev. Barbara Suffecool became a Western Regional Guide on July 1, 2013. She recently retired from the Washington County Public School system after serving as music teacher at various schools for more than 40 years.

Barbara currently serves as the minister of music at Hancock United Methodist Church, and has been a Deacon in Full Connection in The United Methodist Church since 1999. Her educational background includes a bachelor's from Towson University, a master's from Catholic University, a certificate in church music from Shenandoah Conservatory, and deacon formation from Wesley and Methesco seminaries.

Her ministry focuses on facilitating workshops for small to medium sized churches throughout the region for children's ministry, music, worship, and missions including Volunteer in Mission trips, as well as local work camps including Camp Hope and Camp Joy.



Suggested workshops in Music, Mission, Worship and Children include:

Music

- ***O For a Few Voices to Sing!*** — You have a small church? You don't have to have 1000 tongues to sing our great Redeemer's praise! This workshop is designed to give resources to church choir directors and accompanists who are dealing with small choir issues.
- ***But How Do We Play These Things?*** — Does your church have hand bells or hand chimes and no one to play? Maybe you are exploring adding a hand bell or chime choir to your worship services. This workshop will provide help and resources to both groups, the churches which have the equipment and no one to lead and churches which are thinking of purchasing these beautiful instruments. Many people who are afraid to sing in a choir will agree to ring with a bell or chime group.
- ***Help! The Pastor Asked Me to Direct the Choir!*** — Many times the thought is, "If you can play the piano, you can direct the choir." There's more to it than that—this workshop will help the gifted keyboard volunteers who have been asked to take on the directing responsibilities, too.
- ***Guest Musician*** — If your accompanist or choir director is unavailable, Barbara might be a good alternate musician.

Missions

- ***Mission—Do It or Die*** — The church was called out of the world to fulfill the mission of Jesus the Christ. The workshop will answer important questions about mission, and why it is part of our DNA as Christian disciples.
- ***We Get It—Now What Do We Do?*** — All right—your church understands the importance and need for mission work. This workshop will help find suggestions and resources for doing the mission work your church has been called to do. We'll be exploring local missions such as Camps Hope or JOY, national missions such as VIM projects or Red Bird Mission trips, and look at international missions.

Worship

- ***All Together Now*** — All of us together are stronger than any of us separately. This workshop explores the team approach to planning worship. If you've never heard of Worship Design Planning, or you've heard of it but are not sure what to do, this information might be useful. Designed for small and medium church worship teams, planning teams, charge planning, and any one who is interested in a team approach to coordinate worship.
- ***The Main Thing*** — If you're not using a fill in the blank worship planning approach, how do you plan it? This workshop will explore planning worship around themes versus using the lectionary for planning. Pros and cons and other issues will be discussed, so the design teams can make an informed decision about planning their services.
- ***Guest Preacher*** — If your pastor is on vacation, and there are no individuals in the congregation who would like to preach, Reverend Suffecool might be able to fill the pulpit on a short-term basis.

Children

- ***It's a Different World Out There*** — Children are not "the future of the church." Children are the church NOW. But how does your church do ministry with the young disciples? How do you reach children who have heard the name of Jesus Christ only as a swear word? This workshop will explore ministries already offered, evaluate effectiveness, and look at different models of ministry with children.

All workshops are roughly 2 hours long but can be adjusted to fill the time needed and can be modified to fit the target audience. For more detailed descriptions of the services Barbara can provide, please call the Western Region Office 301-739-6659, or contact her by e-mail at: suffebar@comcast.net.

Western Region of the Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church

WESTERN REGION TEAM

Western Region Office, 12 South Walnut Street, Suite 101, Hagerstown, MD 21740
301-739-6659 • 1-866-739-6659 • Fax: 301-739-8728

Conference Mission Center, 11711 East Market Place, Fulton, MD 20759
410-309-3480 • 1-800-492-2525 • Fax: 410-290-7308

Superintendents, Guides, and Support Staff

CUMBERLAND-HAGERSTOWN DISTRICT

Rev. Dr. Conrad O. Link, Cumberland-Hagerstown District Superintendent; E-mail: clink@bwcumc.org

Ms. Penny R. Gaver, Cumberland-Hagerstown District Administrator; E-mail: pgaver@bwcumc.org

FREDERICK DISTRICT

Rev. Edgardo Rivera, Frederick District Superintendent; E-mail: erivera@bwcumc.org

Ms. Tonia K. Bennett, Frederick District Administrator; E-mail: tbennett@bwcumc.org

REGIONAL GUIDES

Rev. Sarah Dorrance — Regional Guide Ministry Focus for Youth Ministry and Evangelism;
E-mail: dorrancesb@aol.com

Rev. Dr. Ed Grove — Regional Guide Ministry Focus for Small Membership Churches;
E-mail: edhfhep@gmail.com

Ms. Sherie Koob — Regional Guide Ministry Focus for Social Justice, Mercy Ministries and District/
Conference Leadership Development; E-mail: skoob.bwc@gmail.com

Rev. Barbara Suffecool — Regional Guide Ministry Focus for Children's Ministry, Missions and Music;
E-mail: suffebar@comcast.net



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