

## Compensating guest speakers or musicians on a church budget

Being a gracious host extends far beyond the doors of your home. Have you ever considered how well your church hosts the guests that you ask to help lead worship or other programs? Here are a few things to remember when you host pastors, speakers or other platform guests.

### Be clear about expectations

A lot of misunderstandings can be avoided simply by being clear upfront. When you extend an invitation to a pastor or musician, put it in writing, either via letter or an effective email. Make sure that you outline your expectations in as much detail as you can.

Your invitation should answer when, how long they are expected to speak/perform, dress requirements and equipment considerations.

Remember, the more clear you can be about your expectations, the more empowered your guests will be to make informed decisions. Once you have outlined your expectations, make every effort not to add to or change the duties you expect — especially at the last minute.

### Be creative with a tight budget

There are many ways to serve guest speakers and musicians, but if your church is small or your budget is extremely tight, you simply may not be able to financially compensate them. However, you can still show honor to your guests by thinking creatively.

Partner for platform guests: You may want to partner with one or two other churches in your community or district to host special guests. If you take this route, you will need to make sure that each participating church is clear on the details of the arrangement.

Welcome guests via Wi-Fi: Take advantage of technology. Explain your financial situation and ask potential guests if they would be willing to Skype with your congregation or livestream or video a service where they preach, speak or perform. In this way, your congregation may be able to experience the joy of having a guest without as much cost. Some sites, such as sermoncentral.com, have sermon audio or videos that can be shared with your congregation. Many churches already livestream or offer videos of sermons on their websites and would be happy to allow you to share a message with your congregation.

Read more of this article at [umcom.org](http://umcom.org).

— Tricia Brown, United Methodist Communications

## Bishop Lewis challenges conference to 2017 Bible reading

Bishop Lewis is challenging the Virginia Conference in 2017 to read the Bible in entirety with her in the coming year. Details about the challenge can be found in the January 2017 *Advocate* issue as well as on the website at <http://www.vaumc.org/pages/bishop-lewis/biblechallenge>.

## Bishop to host Convocation on Prayer

Bishop Lewis will host a Bishop's Convocation on Prayer on April 1, 2017 at Trinity United Methodist Church, 903 Forest Avenue, Henrico, VA 23229. The Rev. Juanita Rasmus, co-pastor of St. John's United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas, will be the plenary speaker for the convocation.

Workshops on a variety of topics are being offered as part of the convocation. To register or for more information go to the main webpage at [www.vaumc.org](http://www.vaumc.org), click at the top right on "conference calendar" and select the corresponding date.

## Ministers' Convocation theme announced

The Center for Clergy Excellence invites you for a time of Sabbath retreat, learning, and fellowship together as ministry leaders at Ministers' Convocation from May 8-10, 2017. Come be engaged in theological and academic conversation while experiencing rejuvenation for ministry. The theme is "Making Space for Yourself and Others" with an emphasis on hospitality as a practice and spiritual discipline. Visit <http://vaumc.org/MinistersConvocation> for more information.

## Lay Servant Academy to be held March 31- April 2, 2017

The Lay Servant Academy is about equipping laity to carry out the mission of the church of making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. All courses are open to everyone. Each course is designed to help those serving the local church to learn more about leadership, personal faith development and a deeper understanding of the UMC. Many courses offered this year will support those seeking to become Certified Lay Servants and Lay Speakers.

You may register for the Academy at <http://www.vaumc.org/LayServantTraining>. Direct registration questions to Sandy Kelley at [sandkelle@yahoo.com](mailto:sandkelle@yahoo.com) and other questions to Beth Christian at [bethchristian@vaumc.org](mailto:bethchristian@vaumc.org).

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