



# GOOD NEWS



A Publication of the Valle Crucis Conference Center

December 2015

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*Deeply Rooted on  
Sacred Ground*

Good News  
4 Quarter 2015

## #BLESSED...

Those who are active on social media may see the occasional “#blessed” on someone’s status update or photo. We at the Valle Crucis Conference Center are well and truly #blessed in so many ways. We are blessed to live and work in a stunningly beautiful place. We are blessed with good business that keeps us busy, and we are blessed with the holy work of this ministry of hospitality.

2015 has been a pretty good year. Our budget is on track, and we were able to find the money to do more in maintenance and repairs than planned. We have a new food service manager. We have served new groups and introduced people from all over the world to the hospitality of Christ.

The idea of being “blessed” is sometimes problematic. It can seem like if you’re blessed, then you can’t also ask for help, or that when sometimes life doesn’t go as planned, it somehow cancels out the blessing. I don’t think that’s true. We do ask for your help. We wouldn’t be able to be God’s Hands in the World without you—as a guest here in this beautiful place, as a donor, or as a

friend. *So I invite you to be blessed by joining us in this ministry of hospitality.* Bring your group here for a retreat. Give freely of your time and talent. Please consider a generous donation, especially as we near the end of 2015.. Remember us in your long-term planning.

And be blessed as well, today, during this holiday season, and always.

Yours in Hospitality,

Margaret L. Love  
Executive Director



Inn Christmas Tree, 2015

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### THANK YOU

Valle Crucis is so very blessed to have donors like you. We appreciate every gift, large or small, and consider it imperative to be good stewards of the gifts we are given. If we inadvertently left your name out, please accept our sincere apologies!

### Memorials, September - December 2015

**Lacy McCord Hayes** by Robert C. Hayes

**Carl Cunningham** by Diana Mast White

**Beryl & Fred Scutti** by Bill & Gena Rankin

### Honoraria, September - December, 2015

**Wesley III, Kathy, and Andy Byerly** by W.G. Byerly

**Tom Eshelman** by Mary B. Haywood

**Staff of VCCC, led by Margaret Love** by John E. Cooper, Jr.

**Polly & Bob Capps** by Bill & Gena Rankin

### We would love to see your name here!

Generous donations such as yours help us continue our ministry of hospitality.

Donate securely on our web site at [www.vcconferences.org](http://www.vcconferences.org) or mail to

P.O. Box 654, Valle Crucis, NC 28691.

# 2015 Highlights

## 7 Conference-led Programs

4 Newsletters

### Replaced windows in the Mission House

Replaced kitchen floor with poured urethane

Purchased four automatic external defibrillators

### Major re-grading, graveling, and tree removal

## Restored the Labyrinth

Landscaping & gardening

Staff development & training

New food service manager & staff

Established internship program

New technology infrastructure

91 Hermitage Guests

**122 Groups Served**

8 Full-Time Staff

7 Part-Time Staff

483 Acres of Land

9,500 Budgeted Occupancy for 2015

**10,300 Projected Occupancy for 2015**



Caretaker Mont Glover in the garden ca. 1940



The Mission School helps restore the Labyrinth

[www.vcconferences.org](http://www.vcconferences.org)

# What We Want for Christmas

By The Rt. Rev. G. Porter Taylor

**What do you want for Christmas?** It's the right question if, as faithful Christians, we know what is being asked. It's not anything under the tree or that fits into a box. It's not even an experience of family or festivities. What we want is for Christ to be born in us and in this world.

All mothers know that birth is not magic. It requires preparation, intentionality and labor. In like manner, Advent is a journey away from the comfort of Nazareth into the wilderness that leads us to Bethlehem. Like Joseph and Mary, we must set out beyond the confines of our usual ways of thinking and being if the divine is to be manifest in us.

In light of all the conflict of these past few weeks (which reminds us of the conflict that was around the time of Jesus' birth--remember the Feast of the Holy Innocents is coming), I have been thinking about how we take to heart God's longing to be born in this world. How might we intentionally "Prepare the way of the Lord"?

What came to me are Paul's Fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. If we take seriously that Christ's birth is in us, then we must prepare to be changed into his likeness--which is the work of Advent. Our task could be to think of these attributes and intentionally cultivate one or more of them in us--especially if we begin with the ones we particularly lack. For the next two weeks, could you focus on being more patient or generous or kind? More to the point, could you look at our world and discern what is that it needs to be born anew and then pray for God to use you to increase this virtue in the world?

It does little good to rail against our leaders or wring our hands over the plight of our nation or other nations unless our discomfort leads



Using donated local cabbages, Food Service Manager James Andra prepared a massive amount of coleslaw to contribute to the Valle Crucis School Farm to Table fundraising dinner on November 7, 2015.

## Save Paper, Get Color

Switch to the electronic version of this newsletter and green up your mailbox. Over 500 people are now receiving our electronic newsletter--same content as this paper version, but in full Technicolor! You'll help us save paper, postage, and other resources. The digital version has full color photos and links to information in that issue. VCCC is committed to reducing the amount of printed material it produces.

Won't you join the paperless revolution and provide us with your name, address, and email at [info@vccconferences.org](mailto:info@vccconferences.org)? Thank you!

**If you no longer wish to be on our mailing list, or want to update your contact information, please email [info@vccconferences.org](mailto:info@vccconferences.org) with your mailing information.**

us to hope and to embracing the radical idea of the Incarnation--which is that the Word becomes flesh in us. We know what we want for Christmas--the Christ to be born anew. Let us prepare the way.

**+Porter**

*Reprinted with permission from the EDWNC Weekly Reflection*

# Bits and Pieces

## Spirit to Soul

Sitting in my chair looking  
Out the window, I see  
The Bright blue sky filled  
with white billowing clouds  
The wind is taking them swiftly  
Across the sky  
To make room for the sun.

Green rhododendron leaves are  
dancing  
To the rhythm of the wind  
Leafless trees sway, dried  
leaves scamper down the hill.  
A grazing deer lifts her head  
to smell the wind. What is near?

The earth is quiet, the only sound  
Whispering of the wind  
Ancient Scriptures tell us  
God's Spirit is like the wind  
Blowing where It will.  
Elijah listened for God in the whirlwind  
But found Him in silence,  
a still small voice.

Soul work is seeking,  
listening, waiting for  
God's Spirit, an encounter  
or Collision.  
today my Soul rejoices,  
In the blowing of the Wind  
And the stillness of this place.

Thelma Wall  
Elkin, NC

November 10, 2015  
Julian of Norwich Hermitage



Our new sign at the Apple Barn

This season of giving is very important to us. Please take a moment to consider your contribution to the Valle Crucis Conference Center. What does this special place mean to you?

Checks made out to VCCC are welcome at PO Box 654, Valle Crucis, NC 28691, or donate securely online through PayPal on our web site, [www.vcconferences.org](http://www.vcconferences.org).

Thank you for your generosity, your prayers, and your presence.



Looking toward the Conference Center over Hunt Hill



## Valle Crucis Conference Center

Post Office Box 654  
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### Good News 4 Quarter 2015

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The Valle Crucis Conference Center is a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina. Located on over 450 acres of mountain woodland and verdant farming valley, the Conference Center is truly one of the more beautiful places on Earth. With its beauty comes a sense of timeless spiritual grace that transcends denomination or faith tradition.

*The mission of the Valle Crucis Conference Center is to inspire, by loving example and service, those who break bread with us and share in the quest for spiritual renewal, Christian community, and stewardship of this sacred place.*

The Valle Crucis Conference Center is located in the historic Mission School, featuring buildings dating from the late 19th Century and early 20th Century, nearly all of which are on the National Historic Register.

The Conference Center is open year-round to accommodate groups of 5 to 150. Rates include three hearty, nutritious meals a day and arguably the best towels in Western North Carolina lodgings.

To inquire about availability of our accommodations or meeting spaces, or to learn about our Hermitage retreat cabins, visit our web site at [www.vcconferences.org](http://www.vcconferences.org) or call (828) 963-4453.