

## 2014 District Superintendents Appointments

Bishop John Schol announced the appointment of a new class of District Superintendents for Greater New Jersey Conference.

Rev. Emmanuel (Manny) Sardinas, Gateway North  
Rev. Regina (Gina) Hendrickson, Northern Shore  
Rev. Brian Roberts, Cape Atlantic  
Rev. Myrna Bethke, Gateway South  
Rev. Drew Dyson, Raritan Valley

Superintendents are mission strategists for the district and serve as an extension of the shepherding, care and oversight role of the bishop. District Superintendents are appointed based on their love for the local church, desire to grow vital congregations, focus on mission and spiritual maturity. In addition, the Superintendents reflect the diversity of Greater New Jersey and are committed to the goals of the strategic plan.

In announcing the new appointments, Bishop Schol said, "This is a very fruitful and experienced group of Superintendents who have been raised up by the clergy and congregations of Greater New Jersey and are called to serve for such a time as this. They will assist me in shepherding and strategically planning for making new disciples, growing vital congregations and transforming the world."

The selection process involved more than 93 clergy members who were lifted up as candidates. The Cabinet worked together to hone the list and the Bishop made the final selection and appointment.

In addition to the new Superintendents, the Bishop also announced the move of District Superintendent Reverend Jisun Kwak from Gateway North District to the Delaware Bay District to help share her experienced leadership with the southern region of the state.

The new class of District Superintendents will have large shoes to fill as



Four of the five new District Superintendents are pictured here: Brian Roberts, Regina Hendrickson, Emmanuel Sardinas, and Myrna Bethke.

Photo by Heather Fullerton.

the outgoing team served the Conference well. Reverent Paul Maliel will be retiring to Boston this summer where he and his wife Omana will enjoy time with their grandchildren. The Reverends Bob Costello, Fran Noll, Richard Nichols, and Barbara Rambach will return to the local church to continue their ministry. Each of these Superintendents has played an important role in the life of the Conference and the Bishop lifted up their contributions and their ministry.

The new appointments will take effect July 1, 2014.

### 2014 District Superintendent Appointments

#### Manny Sardinas

As Senior Pastor at the United Methodist Church in Union City, Manny has accomplished a great deal in urban ministry. He is one of the few pastors in our denomination to start a mission church in an urban community and lead

it to self sufficiency including paying all shared ministries without compromising the mission. He builds bridges with local elected leaders, has completed church building projects and engaged his congregation in transforming community ministry.

#### Gina Hendrickson

Gina Hendrickson has served as an associate pastor, a co-pastor and a senior pastor in New Gretna, Oceanville, Ocean City, Summit, and Cherry Hill. She has led a congregation in new directions, grown the congregation and led the church to greater financial health. Her work with youth includes mission trips to Russia, the Holy Land, Taize, France and the Dominican Republic. Her passion for making disciples is contagious.

#### Brian Roberts

Brian is Senior Pastor at St. Peter's United Methodist Church in Ocean City, a congregation that is growing despite

a declining population in the community. With more than 25 years of ministry, Brian has led rural, multi-cultural, and suburban congregations. He has served in leadership positions in the Conference, most recently as a part of the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee. Brian is a visionary and has a passion for Spiritual Gardening, or growing disciples of Jesus Christ in a hotbed of dynamic ministry and mission.

#### Myrna Bethke

Myrna currently serves as the Senior Pastor of the Red Bank United Methodist Church and has served in Annual Conference leadership positions including co-chairing the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. She is committed to peace and justice work. Trained as a leadership coach, she has used these skills to strengthen the congregations she serves and the leadership of other clergy. Under her leadership, congregations have grown together, increased worship attendance, and made new disciples.

#### Drew Dyson

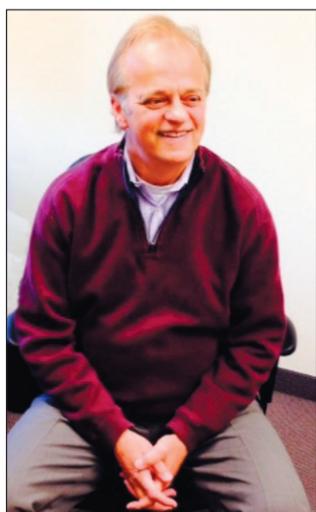
Drew has served the church as a youth director, a denominational youth



The Rev. Drew Dyson will be appointed to the Raritan Valley District.

ministry executive, a local church pastor and a seminary professor. He currently serves the Clinton United Methodist Church. He has vast experience in youth ministry and evangelism and has proven himself to be a turn-around spiritual leader in our Conference.

## Bruce Hartman Welcomed as Director of Connectional Ministries for the Greater NJ Conference



Bruce Hartman, pictured here, has been named the new Director of Connectional Ministries.

Hartman's most recent ministry has been with the conference's small church initiative called Mosaic Ministry. Using a parish model, Mosaic is striving to strengthen and revitalize three churches, Belmar UMC, Bradley Beach UMC, and Union Beach UMC, all devastated by Superstorm Sandy. Hartman provides direction and guidance that has resulted in a 50% increase in worship attendance and a mission program that will feed, clothe and provide emergency food kits to more than 6,000 people in its first year of operation.

According to The Rev. Fran Noll, District Superintendent for Northern Shore District and Hartman's supervisor with the Mosaic Ministry, Hartman leads by example. She is impressed that he is hard at work at 6am on Sunday mornings to procure the food for the breakfast program each week. "A truer example of a servant-leader cannot be found," says Noll as she reflects on his hands-on leadership style.

Continued on page 9

In an email to conference leaders on January 12, 2014, Bishop John Schol announced the appointment of Bruce Hartman to the position of Director of Connectional Ministries (DCM) for Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.

## Bishop's Convocation Draws Clergy and Their Families to Long Branch

Long Branch, NJ - After a one year hiatus, the Bishop's Convocation returned to the calendar of the Greater New Jersey Conference and there were many who were happy it did. Hun-

an opportunity for fellowship, worship, and learning. Bishop Martin McLee of the New York Annual Conference was the guest preacher who exhorted the Church to "lean in and listen" to God



Bishop John Schol was joined by clergy from around the Conference in a special service of anointing before participants left to continue their work in the mission field.

dreds of clergy, many with their spouses and a few with their children, came to Ocean Place Resort and Spa for a three day break from routine and

speaking, because "God is up to something." In his second sermon, the bishop's plea was "Don't wait until the

Continued on page 5

## A Message from the Bishop



We have important and exciting days ahead in Greater New Jersey. God has and wants to continue to do great work through us and we will meet his calling with enthusiasm and grace. In 2014, we are enacting our strategic plan which outlines a roadmap to build vital congregations using the gifts of turn-around spiritual leaders to create disciples for Christ to transform the world.

I am pleased to share with you the appointment of one of these leaders. Bruce Hartman will be the new Director of Connectional Ministries (DCM).

The Director of Connectional Ministries is "the keeper of the annual conference vision" (The Book of Discipline) and is responsible for working to maintain a healthy connection between the congregation, conference, and the worldwide denomination. The DCM oversees the program life of the conference and aligns our ministry with the mission and strategic plan - we call, equip, send and support spiritual leaders to make disciples and grow vital congregations for the transformation of the world. The DCM will help us achieve our goal of 41% vital congregations by 2018.

Bruce brings unique experiences and gifts to this position. He is a layperson from Morrow Church who completed his Master of Divinity degree from Drew Theological Seminary in 2013. Most recently, Bruce has been a leader in our new small church initiative, Mosaic Ministry. Mosaic Ministry formed a cooperative parish of three of our smaller congregations in Belmar, Union Beach and Bradley Beach. In the first six months, with the help of Bruce's ministry, Mosaic has increased worship attendance by almost 50%, started new outreach ministries that will feed and clothe 6000 people over the next year, and has led one of the congregations to become multicultural. Outside of the church, Bruce has significant and relevant professional experience. In his 30 plus year career, he has held chief financial officer and chief administrative officer positions for Yankee Candle, The May Company and Footlocker.

Possibly the most important thing about Bruce are the qualities he brings to the position. He is relational with a results orientation - an important balance in the church. He has demonstrated experience in working with people and empowering them to bear kingdom fruit. Bruce is pastoral, strategic and listens to learn. His heart is with people and the mission. When change occurs, Bruce works with people to bring them along instead of leaving them behind. He helps people think about God's strategic direction and develop a clear pathway to achieving the vision. He also learns by listening. More than all else though, he has a heart for Christ. He has committed and dedicated his life to practicing the ways of Jesus and achieving God's mission.

Bruce will help us fully engage in our strategic plan. It will not be easy. What would life and ministry be without challenges? But our challenges will sharpen our priorities and vision. Our talented, committed and passionate clergy and laity are already helping meet God's vision for us. We need to look no further than A Future with Hope Ministry or the emerging small church initiative or our raising money to stamp out malaria to see how God is doing a great witness through GNJ. As we humble ourselves, serve together and pursue the vision of growing vital congregations, we will transform the world!

I invite you to pray for Bruce as he begins this transition and pray for all our leaders who are rising to the challenges before us.

Keep the faith,  
John Schol

## Pre-Retirement and Financial Security Seminars

**March 6, 2014 - Pre-Retirement Seminar**  
**March 7, 2014 - Financial Security Seminar**

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits has announced the dates, times and locations for the annual Pre-retirement and Financial Security Seminars.

**March 6, 2014 - Pre-Retirement Seminar** - This seminar is scheduled for **9:00am - 3:00pm** and focuses on those pastors that are planning for retirement in the next five years. This session will also feature a speaker from the Social Security Administration on Social Security and Medicare.

**March 7, 2014 - Financial Security Seminar** - Scheduled for **9:00am - 2:00pm** This seminar is designed to assist clergy who are more than five years from retirement. It focuses on financial planning for future needs.

**Both seminars will be held at the Saint Mark United Methodist Church, at 465 Paxson Avenue, Hamilton Square, NJ 08690.** Further questions may be directed to Alexa Taylor, Conference Pension Coordinator at 732-359-1038.

**ON-LINE REGISTRATION and payment by credit/debit card is available by going to [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org), click on "Online Event Registration" under "Quick Links" on home page.**

## United Methodist Clergy Grave Marker

Archives and History would like to remind everyone that United Methodist clergy grave markers are a fitting tribute to ministers who have died. The bronze marker is 5" in diameter with a circuit rider in the middle and an inscription on the parameter which reads, "United Methodist Clergy." Each marker comes with mounting hardware for either attaching to a post or directly to the headstone.

Cokesbury sells the marker at <http://www.cokesbury.com/forms/ProductDetail.aspx?pid=348116>.



John R. Schol, Resident Bishop  
The Greater New Jersey Conference ~ 1001 Wickapecko Dr., Ocean, NJ 07712-4733

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## Reports and Recommendation Rules for Annual Conference

The Annual Conference will take place from Thursday, May 29 to Saturday, May 31, 2014 at the Wildwoods Convention Center in Wildwood, New Jersey.

According to the Standing Rules of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, all **Reports and Recommendations** to be included in the Pre-Conference Workbook for 2014 must be submitted in writing to the Conference Secretary and signed by the author (Rule 3-19 a, b). Please refer to the enclosed Pre-Conference Report and Recommendation Instructions.

It is expected that all **committees, boards and agencies** will submit an Annual Report. In addition to the Annual Report some agencies will undoubtedly have Legislative Recommendations to present to the Annual Conference, including nominations to be approved by the Annual Conference session. Legislation may also be proposed to the Annual Conference by any **Clergy or Lay Member**, or by any **local church** within the Annual Conference. This would include proposals, resolutions and/or motions for 2014.

Anyone submitting a recommendation to the Annual Conference is expected to attend the Annual Conference.

The Conference Office must receive all reports and recommendations no later than **Monday, March 3, 2014** to allow time for processing and printing the Pre-Conference Journal which will be mailed to members mid-April.

Kindly send your reports and/or recommendations via email to Geri Losh, Administrative Services Manager at [glosh@gnjumc.org](mailto:glosh@gnjumc.org) following guidelines that follow.

If you have questions concerning these procedures, please contact Rev. David Wiley, Conference Secretary at (973) 464-9298 or [conferencesecretary@gnjumc.org](mailto:conferencesecretary@gnjumc.org).

### Instructions for Submitting Reports and Recommendations (Legislation) To the Greater NJ Annual Conference 2014

#### Report and Recommendation Submissions

- Reports and Recommendations** should be submitted via email to Geri Losh at [glosh@gnjumc.org](mailto:glosh@gnjumc.org). You may send the document as an attachment or place it in the body of the email itself. Please use Microsoft Word or any other software that allows files to be saved as rich-text format (RTF). DO NOT send Portable Document Format (PDF) files as they cannot be easily edited or formatted.
- The bottom of the final page of the **report or recommendation** should include the name of the submitter, the name of the person who will present the report or recommendation, date submitted, phone and a valid email address so that the submitter may be reached if necessary.

#### Recommendation Text

- The top of the first page of the recommendation should have a title and indicate whether or not the recommendation may have a financial impact on the Conference budget. Those recommendations with such implications will be given to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration for review prior to the Annual Conference (Rule 8-71).
- Formulate a recommendation using one of the prescribed styles: "WHEREAS ..." or "RESOLVED, that ..." or "BE IT RESOLVED, that ..."
- A recommendation may take the form of requesting a new program, creating a committee, commissioning a study, or adopting a position statement, etc. Do not include your argument in this section. Arguments may be included following the recommendation using the heading, "RATIONALE." **Each recommendation should include a rationale.**
- To amend the **Rules of Order** of the Greater NJ Annual Conference: Use **bolded text** for proposed additions and ~~strike through~~ for proposed deletions.

Submit Reports and Recommendations via email to Geri Losh, [glosh@gnjumc.org](mailto:glosh@gnjumc.org).

## Deadline is Monday, March 3, 2014

**THIS IS A FIRM DEADLINE - REPORTS/RESOLUTIONS RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED IN THE PRE-CONFERENCE JOURNAL, NOR WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE SECRETARY.**

### Coordinator of Youth Ministries Epworth United Methodist Church

Working as part of the Youth Ministry Team, this part-time position will plan, coordinate, and execute activities for the young people of the Epworth United Methodist Church in Palmyra.

The person must like working with children and teens, and be able to relate to today's youth culture. Success in this position requires someone who is self-motivated, able to plan and promote youth events, and actively recruit youth for involvement in the program and in the life of the church.

Please contact Pastor Charlie Soper for more information and with your interest.

Epworth UMC, 500 Morgan Ave., Palmyra NJ 08065  
856-829-1908  
[csoperjr@yahoo.com](mailto:csoperjr@yahoo.com)

## Stewardship Stories

By Rich Hendrickson  
Coordinator of Stewardship Education  
and Development, GNJAC



### The "Unemployment Rate" Impacts the Local Church

The latest numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, released in December 2013, show that the states with the highest unemployment rate are Nevada (9%), Rhode Island (9%) and Michigan (8.8%). New Jersey's unemployment rate is 7.8%. What the Bureau of Labor Statistics fails to report is an area of the country where the unemployment rate hovers closer to 80 or 90 percent. Where in the world is the unemployment that high, you might ask? Unfortunately the answer is inside most of our churches!

If the standard rule of thumb is true; that 20% of the people do 80% of the work in any given church, than we're looking at an extremely high "unemployment rate" in most of our congregations. What would it mean to the ministry you would be able to accomplish in your local setting if you were able to bring that rate down significantly? Here are some helpful hints on how to address the unemployment rate in your church:

**++Provide short-term, hands-on ministry experiences-** a one day or weekend opportunity may help those who are new to the church get involved and will be a great way to introduce the idea of community missions to the congregation. In our current culture, short-term opportunities work best also because of the time constraints most people live under.

**++Avoid generic announcements and invite people individually-** too often we stand up in church and announce that we need help with this or that and then we're surprised when no one responds. Identify those who may have gifts to bring to the particular ministry you're recruiting for. Also, look to get those involved who may be too shy or lack the self-confidence to believe they have anything to bring to the work.

**++Preach and teach the importance of service-** describe, motivate, and offer opportunities for service inside the walls of the church and beyond. Be specific in what you're asking, what's expected, and the time commitment involved. Help connect those interested with those already involved. Do everything you can to make it easy for people to say "yes."

## Two Small Congregations Join Efforts for Ministry and Outreach

During the month of December 2013, Haleyville and Mauricetown Churches joined in several community outreach projects that benefited many in their community. Just before Christmas, they served 74 families a special Christmas Dinner Package that included a Holiday Ham, 2 bags of groceries, and a pumpkin pie. Along with the groceries, wrapped gifts were given to every family for their children to have for Christmas. Also, gloves were given to all who waited in line outside of the Haleyville Church.

These two churches are rethinking how they do church and are discovering a new dimension of the Methodist

connection, by joining in community outreach projects. In the past months they have worked together and, among other things assembled and delivered fruit baskets to shut-ins and the elderly, support international missionaries, and sponsored two children in the community to attend Malaga Camp's summer program.

As Myrtie Brewster explains, "there are no strings attached to receiving this gift. Seeds of hope are being planted." "I think it is important others know that small congregations, even the smallest, can do amazing ministry, when they work together", Mrs. Brewster added.

## The Results are Coming In!

Tally Sheets from Mission Fund Campaigns from around the conference are continuing to come in. In addition to the nearly \$3 million in pledges, we are excited by the ways congregations are reporting that the Mission Fund have strengthened their ministry.

- At Middletown UMC giving units for the stewardship campaign increased by 60% over 2012 plus members committed to the 3-year Mission Fund Campaign.
- Hamilton UMC, Neptune, reports that 27 mission projects were highlighted during their Mission Fair.
- St. Mark's, Hamilton, designates their Christmas Eve offering to the Mission Fund Campaign and raises more than \$9,000.

The tally sheets/remittance forms ensure that your church's participation is recorded correctly - submit yours now! Just getting started? Materials available: [www.gnjumc.org/missionfund](http://www.gnjumc.org/missionfund).

A FUTURE WITH HOPE  
MISSION FUND CAMPAIGN

**The March Issue Deadline  
is February 5, 2014**



# Global Relay

Brief Reports from around the world  
via United Methodist News  
Service and Newscope

## Missionaries postpone South Sudan visit; pray for peace

ALCOA, Tenn. (UMNS) — Missionaries Fred and Libby Dearing have postponed their return to South Sudan after deciding they could do more to help their ministry partners while in the U.S. than in Africa. On Jan. 8, the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries suspended mission travel to South Sudan “for security purposes.”

## Bishop Tuell, church law expert, dies at 90

DES MOINES, Wash. (UMNS) — Retired Bishop Jack M. Tuell, a widely respected expert of United Methodist church law, died Friday, Jan. 10. He was 90. “He will be considered one of the two or three giants of our Council (of Bishops) in the latter part of the 20th century and the first part of the 21st century,” said retired Bishop William B. Oden, a longtime friend.

## Church and Society opposes new sanctions for Iran

WASHINGTON (UMNS) — The United Methodist Board of Church and Society is among more than 60 organizations that signed a letter to U.S. senators urging them not to support new sanctions that could “critically endanger” the possibility of a diplomatic resolution to the nuclear standoff with Iran.

## Commission on women offers free leadership webinars

CHICAGO (UMNS) — A series of webinars aimed at helping develop principled leaders in The United Methodist Church is being offered this year by the United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women. Among the topics are the following of Robert’s Rules of Order and submitting petitions to annual or General Conferences. The webinars start at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 4.

## Housing accommodations for General Conference

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS) — The Commission on General Conference has selected Connections Housing as the official accommodations partner for the 2016 General Conference in Portland, Ore., and the 2020 General Conference in Minneapolis. General Conference, which meets every four years, is the denomination’s top lawmaking assembly and the only body that can speak for The United Methodist Church.

## Religious hostilities reach six-year high

WASHINGTON (UMNS) — The share of countries with a high or very high level of social hostilities involving religion reached a six-year peak in 2012, according to a new study by the Pew Research Center. The sharpest increase was in the Middle East and North Africa, which still is feeling the effects of the 2010-11 political uprisings known as the Arab Spring.

## Cardinal celebrates ecumenism at United Methodist church

SUDBURY, Mass. (UMNS) — Catholic Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley preached at a special service at Sudbury United Methodist Church in honor of the 50th anniversary of Cardinal Richard Cushing’s historic visit to the same congregation to discuss the Second Vatican Council’s efforts toward Christian unity. United Methodist Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar, who leads the New England Annual (regional) Conference, also presided at the service, along with the Rev. Joel B. Guillemette, pastor of the host church.

## Top Tips from a Handbook for Mission Volunteers

By Linda Bloom\* UMNS

*“It’s God who changes us, but the mission experience creates a context through which God can work more effectively.” — Jane Ives, contributor to “A Mission Journey”*

Sharing a meal is not about food, but about culture and relationships.

That is one of the tips, both practical and theological, for volunteers who participate in mission trips from “A Mission Journey: A Handbook for Volunteers.”

On the theological side:

- Attaining an attitude of humility and mutuality allows more attention to the lives, words and actions of others.
- Expanding cultural awareness involves answering God’s call, searching our own hearts and being “known as Christians by our love.”
- Leaving ordinary lives behind as volunteers go to a new place can lead to spiritual transformation.
- Accompanying those oppressed by unjust economic, political and social systems is another way to do mission.

On the practical side:

- Taking time for meditation and reflection can smooth over culture shock and uncomfortable situations.
- Identifying justice issues can lead to deeper understanding and foster ongoing relationships.
- Participating in team activities,

worship and journaling can expand the mission experience and help prepare for the transition home.

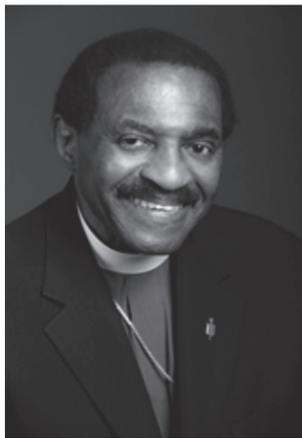
“A Mission Journey: A Handbook for Volunteers” was developed by a task force of United Methodist Volunteers in Mission and international Volunteers in Mission. Included are team activities, a “best practices list” for hosting and sending teams and an appendix of related information.

Published by the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, the book is a “vital tool” to help prepare for mission partnerships, writes Una Jones, the board’s staff executive for mission volunteers, in the foreword.

“We are in a new era of mission in which millions of people choose to engage in short-term mission and ministry outside large mission agencies, yet supported by the church,” she explains.

Print copies of A Mission Journey can be ordered through *The Upper Room Bookstore*. An e-book version is available for download through Amazon or Barnes and Noble.

\*Bloom is a United Methodist News Service multimedia reporter based in New York. Follow her at <http://twitter.com/umcscribe> or contact her at (646) 369-3759 or [newsdesk@umcom.org](mailto:newsdesk@umcom.org).



## A Letter to Martin

**Editor’s note:** Each year, retired United Methodist Bishop Woodie W. White writes a “birthday letter” to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. about the progress of racial equality in the United States. White, now bishop-in-residence at Emory University in Atlanta, was the first chief executive of the General Commission on Religion and Race.

**Bishop Woodie White**

Courtesy of Emory University

January 2014

Dear Martin:

I write this year with mixed emotions. I am mostly saddened by the number of public acts of racial bigotry in the United States and a seeming numbing of racial sensitivity and commitment to continue a journey toward equal justice for all. I have been utterly disappointed by political efforts to disenfranchise African-American voters and others by many state legislatures and the lack of outrage by the citizenry in general and the media in particular. Further, Martin, there is the emergence of what author Michelle Alexander calls *The New Jim Crow*. (I call it the last plantation in America.) Her book reveals the consequences of what she describes as “mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness.” It is a growing national shame, largely ignored!

These and other events mar our landscape of racial progress and promise. They have pushed me from my usual hope and optimism to unusual discouragement.

Then came two deaths. The first was that of Mrs. Evelyn Gibson Lowery, the wife of our dear friend, the Rev. Joseph E. Lowery. Her sudden death caught us all off guard. One moment, she was laughing and making plans to celebrate Joe’s 92nd birthday. The next saw her helpless as the result of a massive stroke from which she would not recover. Her death has left me with a heavy and broken heart.

Mrs. Lowery’s efforts and role in the movement for racial and human rights were too little known as were those of so many women who were and are a part of the struggle for justice and equality. At 88, she was still giving active leadership to SCLC/W.O.M.E.N., the organization begun when she gathered a few women at her home in 1979. It continues to empower women, mentor young girls and sponsor an annual Civil Rights Heritage Pilgrimage to 13 sites in Alabama that were important in the struggle for racial justice in America.

Martin, I have learned that no single death is experienced in isolation of others. Mrs. Lowery’s death reminded me of so many women who gave leadership to our common struggle for justice: your own Coretta and, of course, Rosa Parks, Fannie Lou Hamer, Daisy Bates and Gloria Richardson. I remember my mentors Ella Baker, Captolia Dent Newbern and Ruby Hurley. Even now, I fight tears.

Then, Martin, came the dreaded announcement of the death of Presi-

dent Nelson Mandela. While his death was not unexpected, in light of his declining health, its finality has stirred the world. Even as I write, the world seems to be mourning. People of different nations, races, ethnicities, even political ideologies mourn his passing and praise his greatness.

Some have called Mr. Mandela a civil rights leader, but such a designation is too limited to describe this elder statesman — this world leader for justice, equality, human rights and common decency. His call for peace and reconciliation after being imprisoned for 27 years by an oppressive, racist government, brought headlines around the world.

Following Mr. Mandela’s release from prison and his eventual election as president of South Africa, the world watched this man of grace and purpose embrace all people, even those responsible for his imprisonment. On the world stage, he became a symbol of diplomacy and stellar leadership.

Some tried to thrust the title of saint on him. He resisted such efforts. It said that once when he was referred to as “saint,” he responded that he was not a saint but a sinner who just keeps trying!

His call for forgiveness of one’s enemies transcended politics and spoke to our common humanity. Of course, Martin, it echoed your own message to our divided nation. Indeed, it is at the heart of Christian faith.

It is my remembering of you, Martin, and of Mrs. Lowery and Nelson Mandela that moves me from a sense of despair and discouragement. I remember three lives worthy of emulation in a common drive for justice and equality. At the core of each is an affirmation of our common humanity, of our Christian belief that we are brothers and sisters, children of a common creator.

Today, as I remember your birthday, Martin, I reflect on our nation as one that has made great strides to bridge its racial divide and become truly one. While we are yet flawed by those among us who hold to racial bigotry and intolerance, they no longer define us as a nation or a people! Instead, we are a people who will keep trying!

Thank you Evelyn, Mandela and Martin for reminding me.

Happy birthday, Martin.

We Shall Overcome.

Woodie W. White

## RELAY Reflections

Thoughts on the Spiritual Life  
Relayonline at [www.umrelay.org](http://www.umrelay.org)

Read, Reflect, then Write your own and e-mail your contribution or comments to [editor@umrelay.org](mailto:editor@umrelay.org).

## North Carolina Conference Shares Disaster Recovery Experience with A Future with Hope

The Greater New Jersey Conference has been working closely with its sister conference in the Tar Heel state. The North Carolina Conference's Disaster Recovery Ministries sent two representatives to share their experience with A Future with Hope (AFWH). Rev. Cliff Harvell and Tommy Gilbert offered knowledge gleaned from years of relief and recovery work during disasters like Hurricanes Irene and Floyd.

"Hurricane Floyd was North Carolina's Sandy," said Harvell, "over 55,000 homes were damaged and 35 killed in the state alone." In that grim aftermath their ministry rebuilt or repaired 216 homes and ten churches in the two-and-a-half years after Floyd in 1999, and 600 homes since Irene in 2011. Since A Future With Hope has pledged to repair or rebuild 300-500 homes in the next five years they were eager to hear how the North Carolina Conference (NCCUMC) fared.

A frank and friendly exchange of ideas in early December gained per-



Members of the North Carolina Conference Disaster Recovery Ministries Team shared their insights and experience of rebuilding after multiple major disasters with the staff of A Future with Hope during a special meeting at the GNJ Conference office.

spective for both sides; Gilbert and Harvell gave advice on what worked for

their efforts and AFWH shared the challenges faced by many Sandy sur-

vivors. Most of the affected homes in North Carolina, Gilbert explained, were damaged by river and creek flooding in the rural inland areas, whereas Sandy hit the densely populated and highly developed coast. This disproportionately affects renters, who are more vulnerable to dishonest contractors and have less control over their recovery process.

Members of A Future with Hope's case management, construction, and volunteer coordination programs asked pointed questions and received valuable feedback from NCCUMC's Disaster Relief Ministries representatives. Their insight into a more developed recovery process and outsider perspective has already helped AFWH prepare for a new year of bringing aid to the most vulnerable. By working so productively with its cross-conference counterparts, A Future with Hope has gained even more information, energy, and greater appreciation for the role of fellowship, unity and the United Methodist connection in the face of disaster.

## Bishop's Convocation

Continued from page 1

battle is over... Shout Now!"

Providing a teaching component was Dr. Jeremy Bakker an adjunct faculty member at The General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in New York City. He began with the Latin phrase: De omnibus dubitandum, which translates (generally) "doubt everything." A Pauline scholar, Dr. Bakker led the assembly on an examination of the nature of congregational vitality from the apostle's perspective. According to Dr. Bakker, "Faith, for Paul is obedience, not adherence to doctrine." Obedience to the Law is to love. He said he was going to poke the GNJAC with a stick (figuratively) when he said that we need to find an alternative way to deal with serious issues without resorting to Church trials.

Bishop John Schol shared his vision for "The Path Forward." He reflected the sociological reality that the Church exists in what is now a divergent culture and that it must adjust if it is to reach the people who are out in the

culture and apart from the Church. The bishop said that there are many who are "behind the curve" when it comes to trying new ways to reach and transform the world. Bishop Schol challenged the Church to have "grit" and for Christians to bring their passion.

A wide variety of workshops were offered that included topics such as "Communicating to Increase Participation," "Funding Ministry-Inviting God into the Mix," and "Leading with Vision: Tools Needed for Change and Resistance," to name just a few.

Rev. Dr. Gina Hendrickson, pastor of St. Andrew's, Cherry Hill and newly named District Superintendent was the preacher for the concluding time of worship. In addition to worship and



At the close of the Convocation, participants laid hands on Bishop John Schol and the District Superintendents, offering prayers as they lead GNJ in new and exciting ways.

teaching, participants had time to relax and/or engage in many activities that were available in the Long Branch

area. There was also an opportunity to visit the Highlands Host Site for A Future with Hope.

## Mosaic Ministries Sparks Growth Through Outreach



Youth in Belmar helped paint moldings to rebuild the church after Superstorm Sandy and prepare it for the launch of Mosaic Ministries.

In the summer of 2013, the Greater New Jersey Conference started a pilot ministry in the Northern Shore district by bringing together the people and resources of three churches worshipping under 30 attendees each (Belmar, Bradley Beach and Union Beach) and creating "Mosaic Ministries." Since joining together to do something different and reach out to their surrounding communities, all of which are located in areas hard-hit by Superstorm Sandy, Mosaic has thrived.

The first step was to rebuild the churches and sanctuaries which had been destroyed by Sandy. The rebuilding process was a combination of retaining traditional worship elements and modernizing for a different kind of worship experi-

ence. In addition, the Mosaic ministry staff needed to work with existing congregations to explore ways they could thrive in a new parish model with shared youthful pastoral staff and a mission-driven theology.

In the first six months of this ministry, regular attendance at the three churches has increased to 150 per week. In addition, significant mission work has been developed and is growing. The food pantry at the Belmar church, which had been closed since Superstorm Sandy, has reopened and the community is able now able to access the food pantry Mondays and Thursdays from 10am to 12 pm. Free hot lunches are served in Bradley worship includes breakfast and attendance has increased dramatically to the community and beyond.

Mosaic got out into the community, partnering with other nonprofits, local agencies, and church ministries in the area, learning more about the services each offers and how they can better support and work with one another. These meetings led to the partnership with a local elementary school, which distributed flyers in both English and Spanish that advertised the newly opened food pantry. In less than a week, the number of families served at the food pantry nearly doubled with 70% of families hearing about Mosaic through that flyer. On average about 100 servings of food per week is now provided through this ministry.

Many people who attend Mosaic Ministries live in hotels, boarding houses or are homeless. Many walk long miles in cold weather because they want to be a part of what's happening there. People share that they enjoy coming because they feel welcomed and they can spend time with friends instead of being alone in their rooms with no one to talk to. It is not only those seeking refuge who feel blessed. All of the ministries are staffed by volunteers from the local community and local businesses provide donations of food and clothing.

With so many ministries to offer the three communities of Belmar, Bradley Beach and Union Beach, including the free breakfast with worship, over 150 people are being served weekly and that is just the beginning.

Mosaic's ministries provide more than food, clothing and a warm shelter for a few hours - they offer relationships with people who truly care and want others to know the peace, grace and love of Jesus Christ.

As the Mosaic Ministry experience continues to explore new ways to "do church", they invite participation far and wide. To find out more or learn how you can be involved, please contact Lakesha Groover [lakesha.groover@gmail.com](mailto:lakesha.groover@gmail.com)



## Bishop Schol Visits the Basin Towel Crew

Bishop John Schol visited the Delran Church in the fall along with District Superintendent Varlyna Wright. Shown here, Bishop Schol chatted with the church's Basin Towel crew. The Basin Towel ministry provides non-food items to supplement Delran's local food pantry. In the photograph are: Bob Blasewitz, Pete Baker, Bishop Schol, Rev Chris Miller and Terri Pagani.

## Gateway South Church Gathers for Kwanzaa Celebration



The children of St. Johns Church in West Berlin raise their voices in song at Kwanzaa celebration.

With a church full of worshipers, community members and children, St. John's Church gathered, listened and rejoiced in a Kwanzaa celebration in West Berlin on December 28.

Rejoicing with songs and presentations, both adults and children participated in the event, which was sponsored by the Black History Scholarship Fund of St. John's, under the leadership of President Barbara Lancaster.

Many of those who participated in the West Berlin event said they came to satisfy their curiosity. "I've been hearing about Kwanzaa for years, and now I want to know what it is," said Sister Mamie Brown, Administrative Council Chairperson.

According to Sharon Allen, moderator for the evening, this weeklong observance helps to bring the community

together to pay tribute to the tradition of the first harvest. "It's designed to reinforce seven basic principles of African culture, known as Nguzo Saba in Swahili," said Allen.

Kwanzaa is celebrated from December 26 through January 1. "It's not supposed to take the place of Christmas; and we want people to know that it's part of black heritage," said Allen. "This is not a religious holiday. It's a cultural celebration."

"We gave all thanks and praise to our Lord and savior Jesus Christ for this opportunity to celebrate Kwanzaa," said Pastor Stafford J. Miller. "It was truly a way for us to continue our holiday celebrations by honoring Kwanzaa in this special multi-generational service that reflected on its cultural principles."

## Keeping the Dream Going to a New Beat

More than 260 volunteers gathered at Calvary UMC in Dumont with the God-sized goal of packaging 55,854 meals to be distributed through CUMAC, a multi-service assistance agency in Passaic County with United Methodist roots. Apparently it wasn't just the DJ's music that kept the people moving - the Holy Spirit also seemed to intercede, said Rev. Elaine Wing, pastor of Calvary UMC. "I'm not certain that Dr. King's dream included people singing and dancing as they assembled meals for the hungry, but that is what was happening at our "High 5 to End Hunger" - MLK Day of Service event," added Wing.

The event kicked off at 10 am with 52,000 meals funded and it ended five hours later exceeding the goal with an additional \$ 1,300 raised to assemble a total of 55,864 meals. There were three shifts with approximately 90 volunteers each ranging in age from 5 to 85 years of age. They came from 33 communities in Northern New Jersey. Seven churches joined hands at the assembly tables: Arcola, Hillsdale, Midvale, Leonia and Calvary UMCs, the Mormon Church in Emerson and Advent Lutheran in Wyckoff. Other volunteers came as families, couples, businesses, elected officials and police and scout troops. The team of organizers, which included Rev. Dave Wehrle, pastor of Leonia UMC, Rev. Matthew Martin of Outreach, and CUMAC Staff, said there was only one common complaint voiced by the volunteers: "we want to stay longer!"

Each shift began with a high-spirited AV orientation designed to motivate and educate the volunteers around hunger awareness. Representatives spoke of how the general public can take steps to eradicate hunger in the



(l-r) Kyle Schellberg and Justin Cornelius of Calvary Dumont add more soy nutrient to the assembly line.

Photo taken by Andrew Zimmerman

state. For example, if every New Jerseyan who has enough food gave \$ 14.85 each and volunteered 24 minutes in a food relief program annually, we could take care of the 1.25 million people in NJ who are food insecure.

"When 1 out of every 5 children in our state are without sufficient food, we know that we have to fix a broken system," said Rev. Patricia Bruger, executive director of CUMAC, which provides food to an average of 2,800 families (seniors, families, and the disabled) monthly. It also operates two mobile food kitchens in underserved areas of Paterson and it partners with 50 smaller food assistance programs in the area.

Donations for the Dumont event ranged from \$1.00 given by an elderly woman who braved the cold to walk to the church to large gifts from anonymous donors, the Advent Lutheran Church in Wyckoff, and NENJ Chapter of Thrivent Financial Lutheran.

Another sacrificial gift came from 9 yr old Madison Cook of Calvary UMC who was recently diagnosed with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis. Beginning last fall, Cook made bracelets on her Rainbow Loom which she sold, earning \$ 304 to fund 1,260 meals (each meal was 25 cents).

"High 5 to End Hunger" was one of seven meal assembly events done in conjunction with Outreach Inc. during the MLK holiday weekend. CUMAC will distribute the 95,856 meals assembled by volunteers in Dumont and in Paterson, NJ. A total of 1,400 volunteers assembled 212,346 meals in ME, VT, MA, NJ, and PA.

If your church would like information about a meal assembly event with Outreach Inc., please contact Rev. Elaine Wing at Calvary Dumont UMC or Rev. David Wehrle at Leonia UMC.



Volunteers from seven churches in Passaic County participated in the MLK Day event.

## Little Falls UMW Holds Fashion Show for CUMAC

On a Saturday afternoon in January, the United Methodist Women of Little Falls made a dream come true for the CUMAC food pantry in Paterson. They held a fashion show, using clothing from the Community Thrift Shop at the food pantry. The fashion show came about when the UMW was looking for a program for their annual Christmas Party. It was always a problem getting people to come out in very busy December. Robin Hofgesang suggested they do something fun in January, instead. Cathrine Gritman, the church's liaison to CUMAC remarked that she had an idea to do a fashion show using the thrift shop clothing. Hofgesang, who has a home economics background and experience doing fashion shows, agreed to help with the show. When Ms. Gritman spoke to Stephanie Ames, Community Engagement Coordinator of Volunteers at CUMAC, she said it was a dream of hers to do a thrift shop fashion show. Ms. Hofgesang and Ms. Gritman then asked church members to be models. Approximately 23 members of various ages and sexes agreed to be in the show. Several models went down to the thrift shop in Paterson to pick out their outfits, and Ms. Gritman and her husband Bob brought various clothing items back to



Members of the Little Falls Church pose prior to modeling clothes in a benefit fashion show for CUMAC.

church for others to choose from. As the show was being planned, CUMAC received word from Alfred Dunner that they would be donating some unsold stock from their warehouse. It was decided that the group would like to sell these brand new clothing items at the fashion show. They also had some items from the thrift shop available for

sale. Various members of the church baked desserts while others served and cleaned up. Kathy Flannagan was the narrator, and Jay Klum provided background music on the piano. All in all, it was a lovely afternoon. The organizers said the donation to CUMAC was what made all the work worthwhile. Tickets were sold at \$10, for the show

and light refreshments. All of the ticket proceeds went directly to CUMAC, a total of \$840. The proceeds from the sale of clothing and other items was \$600. A check for \$1440 was given to CUMAC to help them keep the food coming to those in need.

## Island Heights Food Pantry Serves the Hungry in Post-Sandy Period



**READY FOR ACTION.** A corps of eager and able volunteers including this quartet lend their energy and enthusiasm that along with faith and compassion power the Island Heights Food Pantry.

ISLAND HEIGHTS – Less than six months after Super Storm Sandy ravaged the Jersey shore, leaders in the Island Heights Church sought some way to minister to their community, and in April, 2013, the church started its Food Pantry Ministry serving Island Heights and Toms River.

Under the leadership of Jean and David Friedman and a corps of faithful volunteers, the food pantry opens its doors on the first and third Tuesdays of each month, currently serving, on average, approximately 40 families per month.

The Food Pantry's success is both good news and bad news: The good news is that Island Heights UMC continues its tradition of addressing the needs of its local community in redemptive ways; the bad news is that the need

for food assistance in the area is growing, underscoring the effects of the recent, and in some areas, continuing economic recession as well as the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

At Christmas this year, the Food Pantry and the church's Angel Tree program combined to provide 58 families with food and gifts for children.

"One woman broke down and wept as she told us it was the first time she'd been able to give her children gifts for Christmas in two years," said the Rev. Larry Kalajainen, Ocean Gate pastor.

The Food Pantry has links to the Food Bank of Monmouth and Ocean County and receives monthly food allocations. Donations from church members and others, both monetary and of food, also help to keep the pantry shelves stocked.

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## “The Greater Scheyichbi Conference?”

Have you ever heard of Scheyichbi? You may not have heard the word, but you know the place. It is the location of most of the Greater New Jersey Conference. Scheyichbi (shy-ICK-pee), which can be translated as “edge of the water,” is the indigenous name of New Jersey, and is the central part of Lenapehoking (leh-NAH-pay-hoe-king), which is the homeland of the indigenous people who call themselves the “Lenape” (leh-NAH-pay) and includes all of New Jersey, Southeastern New York, Southwestern Connecticut, Eastern Pennsylvania, and Northeastern Delaware.

An individual Lenape person could be identified in various ways. Semi-autonomous individual villages were often named for nearby waterways. Regional names also applied to groupings of interrelated villages. Individuals were also known by their matrilineal sub-clans. Three sub-tribes/major clans/regional dialect groups also served as additional identifiers. However, all identified themselves as the Lenape.

The name “Lenape” can be roughly translated as “original people,” “real people,” or “common people.” “Lenni-Lenape” (LEHN-nee – leh-NAH-pay) is a traditional reduplication rendering meaning “really original people” or “men of men.” The British called them the “Delaware” after the colonial name given to the major river that flowed through their homeland. Those Lenape who underwent removal away from the homeland have continued to use the name given by the colonists, while

those who remain still primarily use the indigenous term. The Lenape are regarded as an ancient nation, from which many others descended. Today, many tribes still refer to the Lenape as the “Ancient Ones” or “Grandfathers.”

While respected by their neighbors for their ability to be fierce, the ancient Lenape were a peaceful people, living in harmony with one another and with the land. They were also known as peace makers and were often called to negotiate disputes among neighboring tribes. The Moravian Missionary, John Heckewelder (1743-1823), recorded that in ancient times the Lenape were the head of a great league of ancient nations that extended from the headwaters of the Hudson River to the Potomac River. William Penn (1644-1718), the Quaker Governor of Pennsylvania, found them to be great orators and diplomats with a language of melodic beauty.

Traditionally monotheistic, the Lenape held that all land belonged to the Creator who gave them the right to use it, but never abuse it. The land was a gift to them from the Creator, to be shared with all of the other creatures. The value placed upon hospitality by the peace-loving Lenape was certainly a contributing factor to why there were fewer violent engagements with European immigrants into Scheyichbi than were in other tribal areas of first contact with colonists. Early colonial era Lenape chiefs are known to have urged peaceful coexistence between the Lenape and the immigrants. From his

deathbed Chief Ockanickon is said to have urged his successor, “Be plain and fair to all, both Indian and Christian, as I have been” (c.1682). Chief Tamanend stated in his hope for harmony “...as long as the creeks and rivers run, and while the sun, moon, and stars endure” (c.1682/3).

Sadly, by the mid-1700’s, the Lenape population was greatly diminished from foreign diseases, hostilities with colonists, and the rigors of forced removal. Some estimates indicate that as many as ninety percent of the population was lost. Most of the Lenape from Scheyichbi had been pushed west and north out of the area. Those that remained were living in small communal clusters, or “Indian towns,” partially assimilating to survive among the ever increasing colonists. In 1758, a government endorsed, Christian mission-based reservation was established in Burlington County, known as the “Brotherton Reservation.” While the reservation was for all the remaining Lenape in the New Jersey in perpetuity, not all who remained wished to become the “wards” of the colonial government and chose not to become permanent reservation residents. By 1801, there were only 75 or so remaining in residence on the reservation. The state government sold the land, and with the migration of the reservation residents, claimed that the story of the Lenape in New Jersey was over, which has become an often repeated error.

Of the many errors still circulated

about New Jersey’s indigenous people, the most repeated is that they all happily moved away. Not only were those who were relocated not particularly happy about it, but not all Lenape left the state. Tribal communities remained and continue today. Moreover, here are a few additional corrections about the Lenape of New Jersey: 1) They did not live in teepees as traditional homes were wigwams and longhouses; 2) They did not wear western style war bonnets and while there were other various styles of headdress, the cascading eagle feather bonnet was not traditionally one of them; 3) They did not migrate following herds of buffalo, as was common in the west though the Lenape typically had a winter and summer village and would simply move seasonally; 4) “How” is not a Lenape greeting; 5) “Squaw” is not a polite way to refer to a Lenape woman; and 6) Not all American Indians look like the 1950’s and 1960’s Hollywood stereotype, and they never did.

The indigenous people of Scheyichbi can still be found right here! They have continued their tribal culture and governance. Some may be your neighbors or co-workers... and some are reading this article as you are, and worship the Lord beside you every Sunday.

*This overview of Scheyichbi and the Lenape is the first article in a four-part series. The next installment of this series will address the Methodism’s hidden history among Greater New Jersey Native Americans.*

## Trial Set for Theologian Who Officiated at Son’s Wedding

UMNS - By Heather Hahn and Kathy Gilbert\*

A United Methodist theologian and retired elder in the New York Annual (regional) Conference will face a church trial for officiating at the same-sex wedding of his son.

The trial of the Rev. Thomas Ogletree is scheduled for March 10 at First United Methodist Church in Stamford, Conn., reports Methodists in New Directions, an unofficial New York Conference group that advocates for greater inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals in the life of the church.

Ogletree, a retired seminary dean noted for his work on Christian ethics, presided over the wedding of his son, Thomas Rimbey Ogletree, to Nicholas Haddad on Oct. 20, 2012. The service took place at the Yale Club in New York City.

Ogletree, 80, is a Yale Divinity School professor emeritus, veteran of the civil rights movement and lifelong member of the Methodist tradition. Ogletree is declining interview requests at this time.

But, in May, he told United Methodist News Service that as a professor, he rarely has been asked to perform weddings. When his son asked him to officiate, he said he felt “deeply moved.”

He said in a statement released Jan. 17 that “I could not with any integrity as a Christian refuse my son’s request to preside at his wedding.”

“It is a shame that the church is choosing to prosecute me for this act of love, which is entirely in keeping with my ordination vows to ‘seek peace, justice, and freedom for all people’ and with Methodism’s historic commitment to inclusive ministry embodied in its slogan ‘open hearts, open minds, open doors.’”

The *Book of Discipline*, the denomination’s law book, since 1972 has stated that all people are of sacred worth but “the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.”

Church law says that marriage is to be between a man and a woman and bans United Methodist clergy from performing and churches from hosting “ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions.”

If found guilty, Ogletree could face a variety of penalties. The Book of Discipline gives a trial court of 13 clergy — the church equivalent of a jury — a range of choices up to revoking Ogletree’s credentials as United Methodist clergy. However, a trial court also can opt for a lesser penalty.

Voters in the New York Conference repeatedly have approved petitions seeking to change church law on homosexuality, most recently in 2011. In 2013, the conference approved a resolution by Methodists in New Directions that commended United Methodist individuals and congregations “whose bold actions and courageous statements help to provide for the pastoral needs of same-sex couples within The United Methodist Church.”

### Complaint process

The Rev. Randall C. Paige, pastor of Christ Church in Port Jefferson Station, N.Y., was among the New York Conference clergy who filed a complaint against Ogletree after his son’s wedding announcement appeared on Oct. 21, 2012, in *The New York Times*.

Paige is the president of the Wesley Fellowship, an unofficial evangelical renewal group in the New York Conference.

“As we who brought the complaint expressed to Bishop McLee, we take no joy in bringing this complaint,” Paige said. “We do it in obedience to Christ and the laws of our Church. His honor, along with the integrity of the entire United Methodist Church is the motive driving this action.”

Ogletree and Paige met face to face in late January 2013 to try to find a just resolution to the dispute and avoid a trial. Paige asked Ogletree to promise

never to officiate at such a union again. Ogletree declined.

New York Area Bishop Martin D. McLee informed Ogletree in March that he had referred the case to a church counsel — the equivalent of a prosecutor. The church counsel then determined that there was enough evidence to proceed to trial.

The Book of Discipline says “church trials are to be regarded as an expedient of last resort.”

McLee said in a statement released late Jan. 17 that he still prays that the complainants and Ogletree can negotiate a just resolution and a trial avoided.

“During this most difficult time in the life of the church, I invite you to be in prayer for the Reverend Dr. Ogletree, the complainants and all who have a vested interest in this matter,” his statement said. “God is still God and that is where our trust and hope lies.”

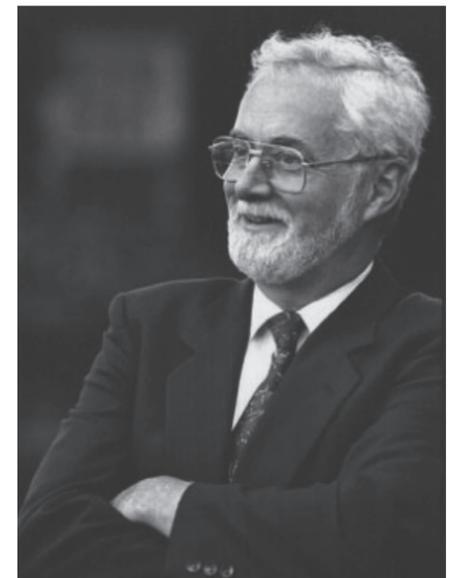
### Expectations of trial

The Rev. Thomas Lambrecht, the vice president and general manager of the unofficial United Methodist evangelical renewal group Good News, will serve as an advocate for the clergy who filed the complaint against Ogletree.

“I hope that (the trial) will accomplish the goal of holding the Rev. Ogletree accountable to the vows he made as an ordained elder in The United Methodist Church,” Lambrecht said.

He served as counsel in the church case against the Rev. Amy DeLong, who was found guilty of officiating in a same-sex union at a public church trial in June 2011. He also helped Paige file the complaint against Ogletree.

Paige added: “We filed this complaint in the spirit of Matthew 18 following Christ’s direction when a brother/sister sins. We are to go to him asking him to listen. The goal is restoration; the implicit requirement is repentance.”



The Rev. Thomas Ogletree.  
Photo by Gabriel Amadeus Cooney.

Dorothee Benz, chair of Methodists in New Directions, said a trial “is a sad, painful thing. We are waiting for the scales to fall from some eyes to see that and to embrace the path of love instead of the path of legalism.”

“On the face of it, it is very hard to avoid the conclusion that the church would rather criminalize ministry for LBGQT people than bend on one little anything.”

Ogletree told UMNS in May that as retired clergy, it won’t make much difference if he loses his credentials. Both federal law and provisions of United Methodist retirement plans prohibit depriving clergy members of the pension benefits they already have earned.

Lambrecht said that the goal of those filing the complaint is not necessarily to affect Ogletree’s financial standing.

“Our goal is to have a public declaration of accountability, and if Rev. Ogletree were to lose his credentials, it would be a very public statement that his actions were outside of the agreed-

*Continued on page 10*

## GBHEM Awards Six Ethnic In-Service Training Grants Including Gateway North District

By Nicole Burdakin

Six Ethnic In-Service Training grants – totaling \$52,500 – were awarded by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to projects that aim to recruit, train, and retain ethnic United Methodists for leadership roles in every level of the church.

“The UMC should be proud of its outreach through these grants,” said Cynthia Bond Hopson, GBHEM’s assistant general secretary for the Black College Fund and Ethnic Concerns.

“Every project we fund allows a local church or entity to reach beyond itself to serve, inspire, and make a difference. Many of this year’s projects will offer life-changing opportunities for youth, pastors, and laity,” said Hopson.

Funding for EIST grants comes from contributions to the World Communion Sunday Special Offering.

Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Inc., a university, a local church, annual conferences, and a Wesley Foundation were among the recipients of the 2013 grants.

Programs which received grants are:

1. The Gateway North District of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference received \$7,500 to establish a Digital Ministry Leadership Development program. This program will be primarily aimed at training and equipping ethnic clergy and laity in 61 churches located in urban settings.
2. Duke University received \$10,000 for the South Sudan Theological Training Initiative. This initiative is a collaborative effort of the United Methodist faculty at Duke Divinity School and the Holston and East Africa Annual Conferences and aims to provide basic theological education for 20 United Methodist pastors of the Yei District in South Sudan.
3. Lake Park United Methodist Church, Oakland, Calif., received \$10,000 to develop Cambodian church leadership in the five Cambodian churches and fellowships in the California-Nevada Annual Conference. The goals for this grant are twofold: the training of pastoral and lay leadership and equipping pastors for ministry.

4. The Tennessee Annual Conference received \$10,000 for the SEE Tomorrow’s Leaders Today program, designed to assist in scholarships for students who are members of the Golden Triangle Fellowship at Belmont United Methodist Church and are graduating from high school. Many of these teens, who are refugees from Myanmar and Thailand, will be the first from their families to graduate from high school.

5. The Alcorn State University Wesley Foundation received \$5,000 for youth camp outreach. According to the Center for American Progress, in 2010, Mississippi had the fifth worst gun-death rate for children ages 0-18. This outreach ministry will have a positive emotional and spiritual impact on the lives of the camp participants and the ASU Campus Ministry by encouraging safety and educating on improper use of guns and the importance of human life.

6. Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Inc., (BMCR) received \$10,000 for the Harambee Youth Conference, which BMCR sponsors every other year to provide a place for young people, ages 12-18, to connect, attend workshops on discerning God’s purpose for their lives, develop leadership skills, and have a place to witness to their faith.

“I am always excited about the variety of projects we fund,” Hopson said.

EIST grant applications are open for another round of funding through June 30, 2014.

Applications are encouraged from partnerships and collaborative efforts between and with campus ministries, chaplaincies, institutions of higher education, and general agencies. Other ministry settings eligible for EIST grants are innovative, creative programming for children’s homes, retirement homes, camping and retreat centers, and hospitals.

Learn more about EIST grants at [www.gbhem.org/eist](http://www.gbhem.org/eist).

Burdakin is editorial and production assistant, Office of Interpretation, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

## UMC Market Deemed Successful in First Year

Nashville, TN – The General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA), in conjunction with Zebaplace, launched UMCmarket.org in July 2013. UMCmarket.org is an online shopping service specifically designed for members of The United Methodist Church to shop at hundreds of well-known and respected retailers and get a percentage of their total shopping purchase donated to the local church or other Church organizations of their choice.

The year developed well and finished strong for the program. Since July, 2013, 2,570 United Methodist churches have participated in the program and received donations. Between July 1 and November 30 of last year, nearly \$23,000 was donated back to local churches and other United Methodist organizations. In December alone, nearly \$26,000 was donated back as church members used the online service at year’s end.

Bobby Lee Smith, Manager of Corporate Partnership and Philanthropic Initiatives at GCFA said “We are encouraged by the results from 2013. The goal of this initiative is to provide ministry monies for churches in unconventional ways and where they might not have existed before. We are hearing

stories from church members across the connection that they are providing resources for the church in an innovative way. We look forward to this program growing. It is encouraging to see comments from users that tell us ‘This is a very good program. I use it and already [we’ve] received money back’, and to hear how just regular online shopping can make a difference to the church. We encourage everyone to search the list of stores at UMCmarket.org and see how they, too, can take advantage of receiving donations to their United Methodist organization or church.

The upcoming Valentine’s Day is an excellent time to consider shopping online for gifts and travel. By using UMCMarket.org, members of The United Methodist Church have the opportunity to select items and generate a micro-donation to the local church or United Methodist organization of their choice.”

UMCMarket.org is under constant review and revision to assure the best shopping experience and to assure that donations are credited back to churches and organizations regularly. You can follow, like, send comments and share with your family and friends at UMCmarket.org on Facebook.

## Travel with Hope with Wings of the Morning in North Katanga in The Democratic Republic of the Congo What Aviation Ministry is doing!

Since Wings of The Morning got the Grand Caravan, patients about to die are receiving hope for saving their lives in rural villages where affordable and accessible health care is now available.

From Malemba in one of the Districts in North Katanga, Mr. Kaso, a teacher, broke his leg. His relatives used sticks



Mr. Kaso, a teacher in North Katanga is carried by friends and family members and then loaded onto the plane so that he might receive treatment for his broken leg.

to protect the leg as there was a lack of appropriate health care. With growing despair, the leg was about to be amputated but through phone calls, Kaso was in contact with Wings of the Morning Ministry personnel. They talked with the pilot; he was ready and available to bring Mr. Kaso from Malemba to Lubumbashi for medical care.

With Wings of the Morning, patients who were once hopeless now have

hope. From Nyembo Umpungu, from Malemba, from Luena, the Aviation Ministry is committed to giving hope to patients who are hopeless.

Aviation Ministry facilitates affordable community healthcare services from villages to towns. Supporting Wings of the Morning is to invest and improve the quality of life to those people living in villages. They are brought into town to receive preventive measures, such as that provided to Pastor Gobaka, suffering from diabetes, who was brought to Lubumbashi for medical care.

## Bruce Hartman

Continued from page 1

Noll is also impressed that he is not only grounded in but is constantly quoting scripture. Hartman exemplified that in his first interview. When asked what he wants people to know about him, he went immediately to Colossians 3:23 and quoted, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.... This is the principle I strive to live out of, in everything that I do, no matter what position,” says Hartman.

Hartman brings with him 30 years of experience in the business world where he has served in a variety of “C” level positions for organizations including chief financial officer and chief administrative officer positions for Yankee Candle, The May Company and Footlocker. This corporate experience promises to enhance his work as DCM. He has an understanding of strategic plans and how to work with a team to implement them.

The Director of Connectional Ministries is a key leadership position in the conference and has been a vacant position since last spring when the former Director of Connectional Ministries, The Rev. Sung Ahn, was appointed to the Korean Community Church in Englewood. The Conference was in the midst of approving the strategic plan, so the position remained vacant until the plan and budget was approved. The DCM is “the keeper of the annual conference vision” (The Book of Discipline) and is responsible for working to maintain a healthy connection between the congregation, conference, and the worldwide denomination. In this position, Hartman will be one of the turn-around spiritual leaders charged with implementing the Strategic Plan and will oversee the restructuring of the connectional ministries staff to reflect the key areas of vital congregations: mission, worship, small group, making new disciples, and stewardship.

Regarding the Strategic Plan being implemented by GNJ, Hartman says, “To effectively implement the Strategic Plan, each individual should have a

piece of the plan as a set of key objectives, otherwise you end up with a plan pushed by the authors but not necessarily connected to the general group.”

Hartman is an active member of Morrow Memorial Church in Maplewood, and completed his Master of Divinity degree from Drew Theological Seminary in 2013. Hartman is deeply indebted to his pastor, The Rev. Chris Heckert, who in turn is grateful for Hartman’s ability to connect with both the youngest and the oldest in the congregation. But what Heckert really wants people to know about Hartman is that he recognizes the gifts in others, and helps them realize their full potential. “Bruce is a constant student; always learning through listening,” concludes Heckert.

Hartman was privileged to meet Christians from around the world when he traveled to Korea to visit the World Council of Churches in November, 2013. With his deep personal commitment to multicultural experiences, he took full advantage of his time in Korea and states, “I learned a lot about ‘doing worship’ in Korea.” What does that mean to him? He attended a church that has seven services each Sunday and a total of 100,000 disciples that attend these services. Yet, he felt welcomed by each and every person that he met. “The hospitality is extraordinary,” says Hartman. Can this experience be replicated in our American cultural? Hartman believes it can.

As the strategic plan for the Greater NJ Conference introduces new ideas and a desire to reverse the diminishing trends, managing change will be critical. Hartman is fond of talking about “the bright spots”, identifying and highlighting those areas where change can be measured. He believes that sharing examples of fruitfulness in the local church is one of the most important aspects in this position. He will engage in locating those ‘bright spots’ outside of the GNJ conference knowing there are beacons of vital congregations within every conference, culture, and throughout the world.

# World Renew Disaster Response Services & A Future with Hope Help An Atlantic City Resident Rebuild After Superstorm Sandy

World Renew, the disaster response organization of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, has been a major partner with A Future with Hope, especially working on homes through these last few winter months. The following article, written by Kellie Scholma of World Renew, shares about one of A Future with Hope's clients whose home World Renew worked on this winter and the blessings the volunteers came away with after meeting Keith in Atlantic City. To learn more about how to volunteer for A Future with Hope, visit [www.afuturewithhope.org](http://www.afuturewithhope.org).

"We met Keith when we started working on his home in Atlantic City, New Jersey," said Rich and Phyl Grevenstuk, volunteers for World Renew Disaster Response Services (DRS).

The couple manages the World Renew DRS rebuilding project at the long-term reconstruction site in Ocean County, New Jersey, where flooding from Superstorm Sandy left thousands of residents with damaged homes. "It is always such a blessing to meet the people we are serving; it's a daily encouragement to us that we aren't just fixing houses — we are restoring homes."

Keith is an Atlantic City resident whose home was severely damaged by Sandy in October 2012. As the storm raged outside, Hall survived inside his home in chest-deep water. Because of a debilitating accident that left him with metal rods in his back, Keith is limited in the amount and type of work he is able to do. He is also caregiver to his

wheelchair-bound grandmother, who currently lives elsewhere.

On first entering Keith's home for the first time, the Grevenstuks found that the inside was completely gutted. There were no interior walls and a few wood planks covered the floor joists. The home's second floor was in the same type of condition. In addition, there was no electricity or heat in the home even though winter was approaching. A small, battery-operated lantern sat on a table on the second floor to provide some light.

As Grevenstuks and construction supervisors Harry and Andrea Klingenberg talked with Keith, his encouraging spirit became obvious.

"Just look what I have. I am so blessed," Keith said as he leaned against the exposed studs inside of his house. He was thankful for just the interior structure of the home and excited that the Grevenstuks, Klingenbergs,

and the other DRS volunteers were there to help him with the work he couldn't complete because of his injury.

"Living in conditions like these is hard on anybody," Grevenstuks said. "It's all you can think about, getting your home back together again. But Keith was already thinking about the future and telling us what he plans to do to help other people. He wants to plant a garden behind his house so he can grow fresh produce for his neighbors."

"As World Renew DRS volunteers we are reminded often that life is not about material possessions but about relationships. We are blessed to meet and work with people like Keith in our day-to-day living," said Grevenstuks.

World Renew DRS volunteers share often that meeting the people whose homes they work on has a deep impact on them. It's a reminder that they are not just fixing houses — they are restoring homes.



Keith, a client of A Future with Hope stands outside of his home sharing the joy the volunteers of A Future with Hope have brought him and his family.

## Wedding Trial

Continued from page 8

upon covenant of United Methodist clergy."

### Widening dispute

Ogletree's case comes at a time when the church's debate regarding human sexuality has intensified and more clergy have been willing to defy publicly church law.

He was among more than 1,000 active and retired United Methodist clergy across the United States, who in 2011, signed pledges announcing their willingness to defy the denomination's ban on officiating at same-gender unions. The New York Conference alone has 218 clergy signers, supported by 1,000 lay signers.

Bishops promised in a letter released Nov. 11, 2011, to uphold church law banning same-gender unions.

Since then, the dispute has become only more public.

Frank Schaefer in the East Pennsylvania Conference was told in December to surrender his credentials after he was found guilty in a church trial of officiating at the 2007 nuptials of his son to another man. After a 30-day suspension, Schaefer said he could not abide by the Book of Discipline "in its entirety because of its discriminatory laws." He also announced plans to appeal the ruling. The trial and its aftermath made headlines nationwide.

Retired Bishop Melvin G. Talbert officiated on Oct. 26, 2013, at the same-sex union of Joe Openshaw and Bobby Prince, members of Discovery United Methodist Church in Hoover, Ala. The Council of Bishops has called for a complaint to be filed against Talbert.

A complaint against the Rev. Stephen Heiss, a pastor in the Upper New York Annual (regional) Conference, has been referred to church counsel. Heiss has said he officiated at the same-sex ceremony of his daughter in 2002 and more such unions since New York legalized same-sex marriage in 2011. Two cases in the Pacific Northwest Conference have likewise been referred to counsel.

\*Hahn and Gilbert are multimedia reporters for United Methodist News Service



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For more information, contact tour guide, Rev. Alfred Murray at  
St. Paul UMC (609-877-7034 or [stpumc@verizon.net](mailto:stpumc@verizon.net))

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## OBITUARIES

**DIANA BATTEN**, wife of Retired Elder Rev. James C. Batten, died on November 25 in Sarasota, Florida. A memorial service was held at First United Methodist Church, Sarasota, FL on January 11.

Messages of condolence may be sent to Rev. Batten, 5770 Midnight Pass Rd., Apt 601C, Sarasota, FL 34242-3043. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be sent to the Sarasota Memorial Hospital, 1515 S. Osprey Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34239 or the Child Protection Center, 720 S. Orange Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236.

**DR. MEGAN SIMPSON**, wife of retired Greater New Jersey Conference Elder, the Rev. Dr. Robert D. Simpson, died on December 2. A memorial service will be held at the Chatham United Methodist Church on December 5.

Letters of condolence may be sent to the William A. Bradley and Son Funeral Home, 345 Main Street, Chatham NJ 07928, to be forwarded to the family.

**JOHN LEROY EWING, SR.**, retired Elder of the Greater New Jersey Conference, died on December 5 in Kissimmee, Florida. A memorial service was held in the Chapel at the Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center, Lake Junaluska, NC on December 29.

John led churches in Mt. Ephraim, Bridgeton, Elmer, Stratford, Pleasantville, Trenton, Linwood, and Collingswood. He was very proud of the six years he served as District Superintendent of the SW District of the Southern NJ Conference. In 1989 he retired from full-time ministry after 42 years of faithful service. In retirement, John served as an Associate Pastor of Indian River City United Methodist Church in Titusville, FL. John gave generously of his time in leadership positions within the church and community, serving twice as a delegate to the United Methodist General Conference and, throughout his ministry, as a leader in the work of evangelism. He provided excellent leadership to the Methodist Summer Assembly at Malaga, NJ influencing many young people to enter full-time Christian service.

Messages of condolence may be sent to his widow, Mrs. Jane Ewing, 1630 Calvin Circle, Kissimmee, FL 34746-7241. Gifts of remembrance may be made to Asbury University, 1 Macklem Drive, Wilmore, KY 40390.

**CHARLES W. CANNON**, retired Elder of the Greater New Jersey Conference, died on December 25 in Horntown, Virginia. A Homegoing Service was held on January 4 at St. John's United Methodist Church, Atlantic, Virginia 23303.

Gifts of remembrance and condolence messages may be sent to St. John's United Methodist Church, 10352 Atlantic Rd., Atlantic, Virginia 23303 in care of Ms. Lauretta Cannon.

**JOYCE PAYNE**, widow of Greater New Jersey Conference Elder, the Rev. Robert J. Payne, died in Tallahassee, Florida on January 6. A memorial service was held at Trinity United Methodist Church, Tallahassee, FL on January 17.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the music program at Trinity United Methodist Church, P. O. Box 1086, Tallahassee, FL 32302; the Robert and Joyce Payne Scholarship, Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2121 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL; or the Florida United Methodist Children's Home, 51 Children's Way, Enterprise, FL 32725.

Messages of condolence may be sent to her daughter, Mrs. Gloria Payne Colvin, 2405 Blarney Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32309.

## Immediate Opening SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

South Jersey Christian Academy, a ministry of Sicklerville United Methodist Church has an immediate opening for a School Principal. Interested candidates must be a Christian, hold a Supervisor/Principal Certificate and possess strong administrative skills. The successful candidate will maintain academic excellence and positive interactions with parents, teachers and the community at large, and work with the SJ CA's school board and the parents and students to set a vision for the continued growth and success of the school. Interested persons can send their resume to: Sicklerville United Methodist Church, 406 Church Road, Sicklerville, NJ 08081, Attn: Stacie Brookbank. Resumes may also be faxed to the church at 856-728 5440 or emailed to ([sjcaemployment@sumcnj.com](mailto:sjcaemployment@sumcnj.com)) Resumes will be accepted until February 28, 2014.

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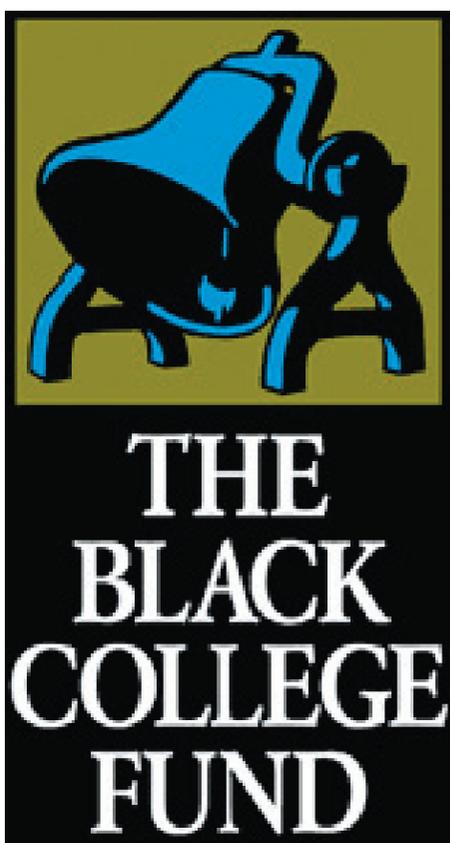


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