

## Home from Haiti, Trinity Mission Team Vows to Return

HACKETTSTOWN — It was a joyous reunion, tempered by the enormity of the destruction and the sadness of unspeakable tragedy they had left behind, when the Mission Team of Trinity United Methodist Church arrived home from Haiti to be greeted by a candlelight welcome at 3:30 a.m. January 15.

For the 15 missionaries, led by their pastor, the Rev. Frank Fowler, the homecoming was an Easter morning after a painful climb along the Via Della Rosa and their own stark vision of Calvary. For the crowd of parishioners who had kept vigil through the night, it was mingled gratitude and relief after days of fearful waiting and prayer.

The mission team had left for the impoverished island republic less than a week before, laden with 30 suitcases containing medical supplies, and some money for Haitian partners — a hospital, a clinic, an orphanage.

Their first mission partner was Grace Children's Hospital where they presented a portion of their goods as well as generous helpings of love in the form of a hug for the young patients. Then, on Tuesday January 12, on to the Orphanage outside Port au Prince where they were to stay for a time.

While half of the missionaries played with children inside the building, and the other half joined an impromptu soccer game in the courtyard of the orphanage, they felt the earth move beneath them. Before the shaking had ceased, the city and the nation were devastated, and every member of the Trinity team, though safe, had been profoundly touched.

### A Surreal Experience

For Ginny Thorp, on her first mission trip, the "earthquake was a surreal experience." "The realization of the scope of the earthquake I think first hit me," she said, "when we heard the sounds of crying and screaming coming from the town and we realized that those were *human* voices crying out. That is a haunting sound."

And the haunting sound continued.

It would be 19 hours before Dr. Fowler was able to reach the church with a borrowed satellite phone from CNN with the words, "We're OK."

"His voice was very shaky," parishioner Bill Anzel, answering phones at the church that afternoon, told the *New York Times*.

In the intervening time between the earthquake and the phone call, the Trinity mission team had experienced a veritable lifetime in hell as the capital of Port au Prince and much of the countryside took on the aspect of Apocalypse. The 7.0 earthquake that had leveled hundreds of houses including many public buildings, left the city paralyzed and brought with it the signs and soon the smell of death. Latest estimates expect the death toll to rise to as many as 200,000.

### The Agony Of Decision

Almost as excruciating as the death and destruction all around them was the decision they faced. Do they stay and help out where they can? Or do they return home? The initial intention was to stay, but soon sound judgement overruled the impulse of the heart.

"At the time of the quake we each



**WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES...** Only 24 little hours separate the events depicted in these scenes from Haiti. Above, Dan Chamberlin, a member of the Trinity (Hackettstown) mission team, comforts a child at the Grace Children's Hospital in Port au Prince. Dan was one of 15 members of the team that visited the impoverished island to bring the love of Christ in the form of medical supplies, Christian witness, and lots of TLC. Barely a day later, Dan removes the scattered possessions of team members from the guest house where they were staying, following the 7.0 earthquake that leveled much of the Haitian capital and cut a broad swath of death and destruction. Now home, the mission team vows they will return.



had a backpack of one change of clothes, no food and little water," explains Pastor Fowler. "Both of our guesthouses had been destroyed. All of the rest of our personal belongings had been destroyed. We had no tools or medicine and the only transportation, a bus that the church would need to transport it's children and orphans."

"Our host pastor recommended that we leave ASAP because we soon would become a liability not an asset. Our hearts certainly wanted to stay and help and it was very hard to leave, but our heads accepted our host pastor's recommendation and we realized that we could help more by being back home raising funds and awareness."

Added to the agony of decision was the awareness that the folks back home in Hackettstown had no way of knowing they were safe. All communications were out for a time. Finally, with the team awaiting their turn on an outgoing flight, Dr. Fowler was able to make his call home.

From there, a short flight to the Bahamas, an overnight stay, and the flight to JFK in New York, where they were met by family members in a shuttle bus to wisk them back to Hackettstown for

(Continued on page 5)

### A UMNS Report

## UMCOR Joins On-the-ground Relief for Haiti

by Linda Bloom

The United Methodist Committee on Relief and a host of other faith-based groups are on the ground in Haiti as they determine how to assist earthquake survivors.

With more than \$2 million in donations received by January 20, and receipts from January 21 services not yet counted in, UMCOR already has provided emergency grants to the Methodist Church of Haiti and GlobalMedic, a Canadian relief agency, to address immediate needs.

An assessment team led by UMCOR's Melissa Crutchfield was gathering in the Dominican Republic January 20 and preparing to enter Haiti. She is accompanied by five others with the relief agency, the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries and United Methodist Communications.

Other United Methodist-supported organizations, including Church World Service, Action By Churches Together International and Stop Hunger Now, also are responding with aid.

Paul Jeffrey, a United Methodist photojournalist and missionary on assignment with ACT, watched a Mexican rescue team free Anna Zizi from the home of the parish priest at Port-au-Prince's Roman Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption.

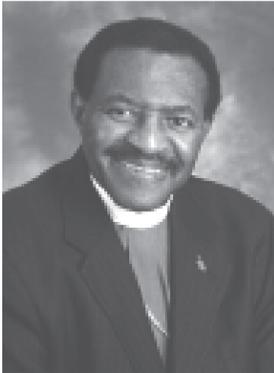
(Continued on page 5)

## A Letter To Martin:

### Battle to end racism continues

By Bishop Woodie White

**Editor's note:** Each year, Bishop Woodie White writes a "birthday letter" to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. about the progress of racial equality in the United States. Bishop White was the first chief executive of the General Commission on Religion and Race of The United Methodist Church. This year, the United States officially observed King's birthday on Jan. 18. The Relay offers our readers this letter as part of our observance of Black History Month.



Dear Martin:

What a difference a year makes! Last year, I wrote with great exuberance about the election of the first African American to the presidency of the United States. Today, I am no less excited, because it demonstrated a significant step forward in our nation's history.

However, some pundits have wrongly hailed the election as an ushering in of a "post-racial" era! Events of the past year have dispelled that premature prediction.

Martin, we have been sadly reminded of the depth of prejudice in the hearts and minds of many as the new president has taken office.

Let me quickly acknowledge that not all criticism of the President or any person of color is automatically based on race. I well remember the day I realized some people did not like me, not because I was black, but because I was I!

But we have seen the awful face of racism for so long that no matter how it camouflages itself, we know it when we see it! We have seen it these past few months, and it is no less ugly.

Yet Martin, it is the face of a passing America. However loudly the voices shout and however strong they may appear, it is a last gasp! Most Americans are prepared to live in and work for a nation absent the kind of racial division that characterized our country for so long.

At the same time, it is clear that the battle to end racial division in our nation is not yet over. We still have much work to do to replace walls of separation and prejudice with communities of love and justice.

Too many people still are racially divisive. They exploit division, foster it and profit from it, some for political gain, others for personal and financial reward — and they come in all colors!

And sadly, the seeds of racial prejudice have been planted so deeply in some that though it may seem dormant, it takes little to stir these people to act in hateful ways. So we must continue with efforts to heal our brokenness, to bring clarity to misunderstandings and to address our fears.

Good people can never remain silent in the face of evil. History has taught us too well what happens when they do.

It would be misleading on this, the anniversary of your birth, to give the impression that progress in the area of race has stalled. It has not. Every day, new doors open, old barriers fall, and hands and hearts reach across the racial divide. But it is not enough!

The reality is that walls that come down can be rebuilt. Old hatreds can be reborn. That's the problem with celebrating achievements too long and too quickly: Progress is never permanent. We need to continually nurture the good and challenge those elements committed to fostering ill will and division.

One of the most meaningful signs this year, Martin, was the nomination and confirmation of Judge Sonia Sotomayor of New York as the first Hispanic justice to the Supreme Court. The daughter of Puerto Rican parents, Judge Sotomayor has a distinguished career and will bring broad law experience to the court.

Permit me a bit of personal pride, Martin — we both graduated from high schools in the Bronx!

And I dare not forget U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder is now the first African American to hold that office. Such "firsts" are becoming so routine, Martin, that they now gain little or no public recognition!

Martin, nothing has brought me more personal joy, than the honor that came to our buddy, Joe Lowery, who continues to be an influential voice for social justice and human rights. He was chosen to give the benediction at the inauguration of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States. And it was a stirring one! Then on Aug. 12, he received the prestigious Presidential Medal of Freedom Award, the highest recognition the nation can bestow upon a civilian!

At the heart of the dream, you shared that August day back in 1963 in Washington, D.C., was a society in which people would be "judged on the content of their character and not the color of their skin."

You told us, "It was rooted in the American dream." And so it is! "One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

We shall overcome!

Woodie

(Retired Bishop Woodie White is bishop-in-residence, Candler School of Theology, Atlanta.)

## VITAL CONGREGATIONS

### "Time and Prayer in Lent" —

By Douglas Ruffle

Coordinator of Congregational Development, GNJAC



Paul Simon penned a song in the late 1960's that declared,

Time,

Time,

Time, see what's become of me

While I looked around for my possibilities.<sup>1</sup>

What are the possibilities of time? How can 'time' be our friend and not our foe? How can we find that place or space where time is 'just time' and not an enemy to defeat? For those of us who profess Christ, *lack of time* is often cited as the primary reason we don't read the Bible as much as we would like or we don't pray as often as we might.

Many phrases bespeak the dilemma: 'I wish I had more time;' 'Time escapes me;' 'Where did the time go?' Another songwriting poet, Jim Croce, expressed the desire of many when he wrote, "If I could put time in a bottle the first thing that I'd like to do is to save every day till eternity passes away just to spend them with you."<sup>2</sup>

Despite the myriad of supposedly 'time-saving devices' we cannot put time in a bottle. In fact, we seem to have less of it than ever before and people complain of time as if it were some bully making our lives busy, hurried, always rushing from one thing to the next.

We turn to scripture to try to find our way. Psalm 90 exhorts God to "teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart" (Psalm 90:12, NRSV). Eugene Peterson's rendition of the verse gets to the core of the matter: "Oh! Teach us to live well! Teach us to live wisely and well!" If we can somehow manage the dilemma of time, we will have gained a heart of wisdom. True wisdom, then, according to the Psalmist, comes when we learn to appreciate the passing of time.

February 17 marks the beginning of Lent when we are more accustomed to take the time to reflect on our spiritual journey. The invitation for the upcoming Lenten season is to reflect on the time we spend with God: in personal daily devotion, through community worship, through Bible Study. Will we make time for God this Lenten season?

(Footnotes)

1 Simon, Paul, "A Hazy Shade of Winter," from the Columbia Records recording, *Bookends* (Charing Cross Music—BMI), 1967, 1968.

2 Croce, Jim, "Time in a Bottle," from the ABC Records recording, *You Don't Mess Around with Jim* (Blendingwell Music, Inc—ASCAP), 1972.

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## HealthFlex Information Sessions – Feb. 8, 10, and 11, 2010

The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits is sponsoring three information sessions for the new HealthFlex insurance program that becomes effective on March 1 for all Conference Health Insurance Plan participants.

Each location will have a session for active clergy from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, and a session for retired clergy from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

HealthFlex is administered by the UM General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits in Evanston, IL and will be providing a representative at each session. The Conference BOPHB and staff in attendance will have copies of the revised Conference Health Insurance Guidelines that took effect on January 1, 2010 available as well.

Please call Barbara Gruezke, Insurance Coordinator for the GNJ Conference, with any questions regarding the new HealthFlex program. Her phone number is 1-877-677-2594, ext. 1037 or [bgruezke@gnjumc.org](mailto:bgruezke@gnjumc.org).

Host Church	Date	Address
First UMC in Glassboro	Mon., Feb. 8, 2010	56 Academy St N, Glassboro, NJ 08028
First UMC in Hightstown	Wed., Feb. 10, 2010	187 Stockton St, Hightstown, NJ 08520
UMC in Parsippany	Thurs., Feb. 11, 2010	903 S Beverwyck Rd, Parsippany, NJ 07054

## Rethink Church Offers a Lenten ‘Journey of Hope’

“Journey of Hope,” a series of Lenten sermon starters, will be available to local churches and pastors thanks to Rethink Church, the United Methodist media and messaging campaign aimed at seekers.

A Journey of Hope begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17, with an invitation to travel with Jesus to the cross. As participants encounter real life issues along the way, they will see that God’s light is sometimes even brighter in the darkness and that hope can be found even in the most unlikely places.

Social media suggestions are provided to engage each congregation prior to the message, affording opportunity for reflection afterwards. Props, especially helpful to visual learners, will add another dimension to the series. Free-downloadable UMTV video stories illustrate how United Methodists are finding and sharing hope around the world, and hope will be extended beyond the walls through experiences shared through Facebook, Twitter, blogs, short videos and personal testimonies.

“This Lenten season, take a journey to hope and share that hope with the world,” invites the Rethink Church campaign.

## Tex Sample to Lead Discipleship Workshop in Ewing April 16-17

EWING — Noted United Methodist theologian, ethicist, sociologist of religion and master storyteller Tex Sample will lead a two-day workshop on the theme “The Craft of Discipleship” at Trinity Church here, April 16-17. His presentation will address faithfulness as a range of practices and skills we learn as Christians.

“The effort here is to work against the tendency in our culture to think about faith too much as a subjective experience,” he explains. “These lectures will focus on practices, their formative role in our lives, and their importance for being the church.”

The workshop will begin with registration, Saturday, April 16 at 8:30 a.m. There will be morning, afternoon and evening lectures.

On Sunday, April 17, Dr. Sample will preach at the 10:30 a.m. worship service, and following luncheon will deliver his final lecture. Lecture and sermon themes will be announced later. Cost for the two day event will be \$30, and includes lunch on Saturday and Sunday. Paid registrants will receive a copy of Dr. Sample’s latest book, “Earthy Spirituality”.

Students at the College of New Jersey and Rider College may participate in the event free of charge.

Dr. Sample, a native of Brookhaven,

Miss., received his B.A. degree from United Methodist-related Millsaps College with a major in psychology. He received his M.Div. from the Boston University School of Theology and his Ph.D. from the Boston University Graduate School. While a graduate student, he was a Fellow in the Boston University Human Relations Center.

In 1999 he was named Distinguished Alumnus of Boston University School of Theology. He received the D.D. degree from Coe College in 2003.

An ordained elder in the United Methodist Church, he is a member of the Missouri Conference. He served as a delegate to the General Conference on four occasions and to the South Central Jurisdictional Conference five times.

Over the course of his life Dr. Sample has worked as a cab driver, a laborer, and a roust-about in the oil fields. In addition, he pastored churches for eight years and served three years as the Director of Social Relations of the Massachusetts Council of Churches. In this last capacity he was lobbyist for the Council and worked actively in the civil rights and peace movements.

At Saint Paul School of Theology he served as Acting Academic Dean during 1987-88. He is the recipient of many

## Bishop Extends Terms for DS Ahn and Rodeffer



Rodeffer

Ahn

OCEAN — In a late December letter to clergy and lay members of the conference, Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar announced the extension of the appointments of two district superintendents whose six-year term would be coming to an end in June.

“After much prayer and discernment, and following the consultation process required by The 2008 *Book of Discipline* ... I am extending the appointment as District Superintendent of the Rev. Sung Hoon Ahn and the Rev. Vivian L. Rodeffer.

Though the *Discipline* sets the term for district superintendent at six years, it provides for an extension of up to eight years at the discretion of the bishop and cabinet.

Ms. Rodeffer is superintendent of the Gateway South District; Mr. Ahn

presides over the Palisades District. Both came to their present position from distinguished service as pastors of local churches.

“For the past six years, both of them have been ministering faithfully and joyfully...,” Bishop Devadhar wrote in his letter to the conference. They “are valued members of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Cabinet. They are deeply committed to making disciples for Jesus Christ and to the strengthening of the connection in the United Methodist Church.”

The Bishop appealed to his readers to keep the “cabinet, extended cabinet, program staff, support staff, episcopal staff, and me in your prayers as we try our best to demonstrate the servant ministry of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with you.”

## Financial Seminars for Clergy Nearing Retirement

GNJAC — Two seminars for clergy, one for those five years or less from retirement, the other for those more than five years from that date, will be offered March 4 and 5 at St. Mark Church, Hamilton Square, under the auspices of the GNJ Board of Pensions and Health Benefits.

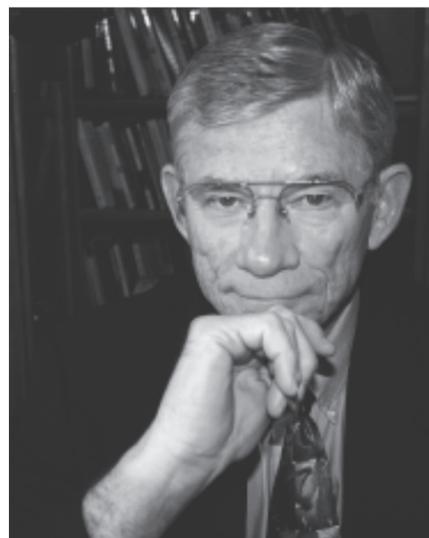
The Pre-Retirement Seminar, March 4 will focus on pastors that are planning for retirement in the next five years and will include a speaker from the Social Security Administration addressing the issues of Social Security and Medicare.

A Financial Security Seminar, March 5, at the same location, is designed to assist clergy more than five years from retirement and will focus on financial planning for future needs.

Registration forms and directions may be downloaded from the GNJ website under *Finance & Admin/Pension & Retirement/Clergy Retirement Seminars*.

Saint Mark Church is located at 465 Paxson Avenue, Hamilton Square.

Further questions may be directed to Alexa Taylor, Conference Pensions Coordinator at (732) 359-1038.



Tex Sample

awards for his work in promoting justice issues.

Academically, Dr. Sample works and teaches in the areas of U.S. life-styles and culture, social theory and social change, power, social class and theological ethics. He is a specialist in the study of blue collar and poor people.

Sample has authored nine books and co-edited another. He is a member of the Society of Christian Ethics and a fellow of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

In Phoenix, Arizona, where the

Samples currently live, He is active in a number of community organization including the Asbury United Methodist Church.

Dr. Sample has conducted more than 100 studies for a variety of denominations including Disciples, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, United Methodists, and American Baptists.

Sample has also worked as a speaker and/or consultant for a wide range of business and governmental organizations from Hallmark Cards, to the Chamber of Commerce, the Job Corps, the Department of Labor, the U.S. Army, the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Federal Reserve Bank.

In 1957 Dr. Sample married Peggy Jo Sanford, a landscape artist. The Samples are parents of three children, one deceased. They have four grandchildren.

And his real name is Tex; it is not a nickname. His father named him after Texanna Gillham, an African-American woman who was born in slavery and helped raise his father near Center, Texas.

For further information and registration materials, contact Trinity United Methodist Church of Ewing, 1985 Pennington Road, Ewing, NJ, 08618. Phone (609) 883-9160.



# Global Relay

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

## Time critical for peace in Middle East, UM Bishop declares

NASHVILLE — Time may be running out to reach a peaceful settlement between Israel and Palestinians, said a United Methodist leader who was part of a delegation of Christians, Jews and Muslims visiting the Middle East. "People of faith must always look for paths that lead to peace, even when they are overgrown from disuse or blocked by security checkpoints," said Denver Area Bishop Elaine Stanovsky, a member of the delegation of 15 U.S. religious leaders in the Holy Land, Dec. 17-23. "We heard again and again that the window of hope for a peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is closing."

## Hanke named top executive of United Methodist Men

NASHVILLE — The United Methodist Church needs men, and men need a spiritual home. The challenge is bringing the two together, said Gilbert C. Hanke, new top executive for the Commission on United Methodist Men. Hanke, 59, becomes top staff executive of the agency Feb. 1. "Men are searching for something spiritual, and many are looking in the wrong places," Hanke said. "The United Methodist Church is uniquely equipped to help men because of that wonderful balance between personal and spiritual piety, as John Wesley calls it. We are always growing and understanding our relationship to Jesus Christ."

## Widows rebuilding lives at Mozambique home

MASSINGA, Mozambique — Some of the widows were run out of town as their neighbors threw stones. Others, considered too great a financial burden, were left on the side of the road to die. Still other widows were branded as "witches," and deserted by their children. These are the stories of 26 women who are rebuilding their lives, thanks to United Methodist women in Mozambique. The widows' home in Massinga has become a haven for widows abandoned by their families and threatened by neighbors as being "bad luck," or costing too much to support, says the Rev. Victoria Chifene, executive director of women's work in the Mozambique South Annual Conference.

## United Methodist initiatives boost clergy health

NASHVILLE — God had to break his heart before Bishop James Swanson started taking better care of himself. Serious soul searching and prayer have resulted in Swanson losing 30 pounds, turning him into a man who walks three times a week, eats more leafy vegetables, drinks more water and consumes three servings of dairy products a day. Swanson is one of many spiritual leaders leading healthier lives because of new United Methodist clergy health initiatives ranging from in-depth studies to a reward program for physical activity.

## Mission volunteer 'blessed to be a disciple'

SAN DIEGO — When Jesus delivered that simple talk we have come to call "the Great Commission," missionary kid Carol Conger-Cross got the message. For the past 16 years, she has trekked to Guatemala twice a year to be the hands and feet of Jesus for the Mayan people. Whether her volunteer teams are building or remodeling churches, clinics and schools or installing energy-efficient stoves, they discover serving in mission is "a powerful, often transforming experience (that) has a major impact on people's perceptions of themselves and the world."

## UMCOR assists victims of typhoon in Vietnam

NEW YORK — The United Methodist Committee on Relief is assisting victims of Typhoon Ketsana, which destroyed, damaged or flooded more than 396,000 homes in Vietnam in late September. More than 356,000 people have been evacuated from their homes. UMCOR is working with Bring Hope to Vietnam's Typhoon and Flood Victims, a program of the Vietnam Mission Initiative, to provide food, relief and material goods to 1,000 people who have lost homes, crops and sources of income. Donations to the Vietnam relief work may be made through UMCOR's international response.

## Blankets, health kits being distributed along border

NEW YORK (UMNS) — The United Methodist Committee on Relief is providing 10,000 warm winter blankets and health kits to immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexican border at six different relief points through the Methodist Border Mission Network. The network is a cooperative ministry of the denomination's U.S. annual (regional) conferences in the border area and the Methodist Church of Mexico. Donation information is available online at <http://secure.gbmg-umc.org/donations/umcor/donate.cfm?code=901670&id=3018992>.

## Carcaño keynote speaker at national immigration event

WASHINGTON — Bishop Minerva Carcaño will be among the keynote speakers at the 2010 Ecumenical Advocacy Days March 19-22. Theme of the annual event is "A Place to Call Home: Immigrants, Refugees, and Displaced Peoples." Carcaño, chair of the United Methodist Taskforce on Immigration, is the episcopal leader of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference, which includes Arizona and small portions of California and Utah. Other keynote speakers will be the Rev. Sharon Watkins, general minister and president of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and Sister Helen Prejean, Roman Catholic nun and anti-death penalty activist. For more information, visit [Ecumenical Advocacy Days](http://EcumenicalAdvocacyDays.org) on the Web.

## Climate inaction a danger, United Methodists say

NEW YORK — Someday soon, Tupou Kelemeni fears, her ancestral home could be washed away. Pacific island nations are among the countries under immediate threat from global warming and Kelemeni, a United Methodist from Hawaii and native of Tonga, is concerned about all of them. As a member of the United Methodist Women's delegation to the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, she had a chance to interview young people from the Solomon Islands and the Maldives Islands, in the Indian Ocean, about the situation. By the summit's final day on Dec. 18, it seemed unlikely that such threats would be addressed in the near future. While United Methodists traveled to Copenhagen hopeful that a new agreement could be negotiated among the representatives of nearly 200 nations, they were more focused on providing ecumenical solidarity to the poor nations most affected by climate change.

## The Bishop's Message

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



As we start our Lenten journey this month, may I place before you a quotation by Thomas Porter: "The last Supper is a meal in the midst of conflict where Jesus names the conflicts in the room, and then gives bread, the gift of forgiveness, not a stone, or retribution, or punishment. In remembering this living reality, we are called to re-member or re-frame our world and our own actions so that we do likewise" (Thomas W. Porter, *The Last Supper: Naming the Conflicts and Giving Bread and Wine, in Conflict and Communion: Reconciliation and Restorative Justice At Christ's Table*, Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 2006, p.18).

May I suggest that you reflect upon this statement as a part of your Lenten journey? Many a time in our Christian journey, whenever there is a conflict, we tend to postpone talking about it, thus causing more conflict. May we take time to approach the person or persons with whom we may have conflict and attempt to resolve that conflict by seeking genuine forgiveness and reconciliation? Also, may we seek God's power and grace to grant us the courage to name all kinds of conflict that may surround us.

Imagine if every Christian in our world did this exercise faithfully.

Imagine if in every church we did this faithfully on a regular basis.

Imagine if we took time to model the servant leadership demonstrated by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

What if we all attempted to take a basin of water and a towel and were to wash the feet of others?

What if, "Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love, show us to how to serve the neighbors we have from you..." became a prayer, A song, an action and a deed of each and every one of us? (*The United Methodist Hymnal*, Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989).

During Lent on a regular basis, may we say the prayer found in the lyrics of "For Courage to Do Justice" by Alan Paton, in our hymnal.

"O Lord,

*Open my eyes that I may see the needs of others;*

*Open my ears that I may hear their cries;*

*Open my heart so that they need not be without succor;*

*Let me not be afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the strong,*

*Nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich.*

*Show me where love and hope and faith are needed,*

*And use me to bring them to those places.*

*And so open my eyes and my ears*

*That I may this coming day be able to do some work of peace for thee, Amen."*

May we all hope and pray for a powerful and spiritually blessed Lenten journey.

In Christ's love,

*Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar*

## Former head of mission board dies at 92

NEW YORK — The Rev. Tracey K. Jones Jr., 92, former top executive of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries from 1968-1980, died Dec. 16. Jones, son of YMCA missionaries, grew up in Canton, China. He served as vice president of the National Council of Churches and led delegations of church leaders to Vietnam in 1968 and to the Middle East in 1980. He was a missionary in China and Singapore. After his retirement, he served as professor at Drew Theological Seminary and was active in Habitat for Humanity, Hospice, Resurrection House and his church in Sarasota, Fla.

## Drew offers Museum of Methodism

MADISON — A treasure trove of United Methodist history can be found on the campus of Drew University. On display are one-of-a-kind artifacts like a death mask of John Wesley and the original Enoch Wood bust commissioned during Wesley's lifetime. Audio and video clips and rare documents also make up "the largest collection of Methodist history anywhere in the world." UMTV's "Museum of Methodism" is available to view at [http://www.umtv.org/archives/museum\\_of\\_methodism.htm](http://www.umtv.org/archives/museum_of_methodism.htm).

**The March Issue Deadline  
is February 5, 2010**

## Hackettstown Missioners Home

(Continued from page 1)

the candlelight welcome and re-union.

### Tragic Consequences

Less propitious was the outcome for others caught in the aftermath of the earthquake, leading to a long stateside vigil for loved ones and in many cases tragic news. The sister of Mona Augustin, wife of the pastor of First Church, Asbury Park, Sony Augustin, died when the earthquake struck and the building crumbled. Immacula was attending school in Port au Prince.

Many GNJ United Methodists of Haitian extraction, spent long hours and days of anxious waiting and prayer before hearing news of loved ones.

Three United Methodist executives of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, in Port au Prince to attend meetings with representatives of other organizations making plans to improve medical services in Haiti, had barely checked in to their rooms at the Montana Hotel before the quake struck.

Trapped in the twisted debris of the wrecked hotel, they waited until a French rescue team heard sounds of life and dug their way to them.

Only one of the three survived. The Rev. Sam Dixon, UMCOR executive officer died while his rescuers sought to extricate him from the ruins. One of his companions, the Rev. Clint Rabb, head of the United Methodist office of mission volunteers, was released from the concrete that held him prisoner, but later died in the hospital. Only the Rev. James Gulley, an UMCOR consultant, survived the ordeal.

Tributes to the fallen leaders have come in from across the church. Bishop Janice Riggle Huie of Houston, UMCOR's president said of Dixon, "He lived his life following the commandments of Jesus to feed the hungry, care for the sick, and love the least of these — all over the world." The words could apply to a host of Christian leaders and disciples who devote their time — in whole or in part — to bringing the love of Christ to the poor across the world.

Standing behind the phalanx of ministry professionals who direct the relief efforts of the church across the world is the army of volunteers who take a week or a month to serve on mission teams. Such a group is the Trinity mission team.

### An Ongoing Ministry

"This trip was a part of our ongoing Haiti mission, being the 11<sup>th</sup> team sent out from Trinity," said Dr Fowler. For him it was his 13<sup>th</sup> trip to Haiti.

"We are currently in a leadership development phase of the mission," Explained the Trinity pastor, "and so there were more adults than usual. Eight of the 15 travelers have been to Haiti before; and we 8 had been there a total of 31 times." Two of the present teams are Hackettstown high school students. Leading the team along with Pastor Fowler was Leslie Williams-Wexler and Ginny Mitchell, two other Haiti veterans.

The mission has some clearly defined goals:

- to take requested supplies to several partners in Haiti. In addition to the 30 suitcases with about \$23,000 worth of such supplies, there were money gifts that had been contributed;
- to visit mission partners in Haiti, continuing to build relationships and to learn more of their life and work;
- to fulfill the congregational mission "to share the love and Word of Jesus Christ with all";



**IN HAPPIER MOMENTS before the 7.0 earthquake devastated Haiti, January 12, Erika Pattky, one of two teenagers in the Trinity mission team, cuddles a smiling child at the Grace Children's Hospital.**

- to help travelers grow in their spiritual journey;

- to strengthen the mission of Trinity Church, as returning travelers grow in passion and commitment for the work of Christ in other places.

"Partners" in the Haiti mission include an orphanage in Bon Repos near Port au Prince in association with Dayspring Ministries in Chester; Grace Children's Hospital sponsored by International Child Care, a Michigan based organization; and St. Joseph's Home for Boys, sight of the guesthouse that becomes the teams home away from home.

Most of the goods filling those 30 bags were delivered before the earthquake, reports Trinity administrative assistant Lois Spender.

Though their journey was cut short, the Trinity team is undaunted in their commitment to their mission.

### A Continuing Witness

Ginny Thorp expressed well the mingled feelings of fulfillment beyond the frustration she and other team members had experienced.

"The main feeling in the aftermath of the earthquake was one of gratitude that we were all ok and that we were able to be there to hold and comfort the orphans as well," she said. "There would have been far less hands able to hold them if we hadn't been there."

Pastor Fowler said it another way. "After 30 years of traveling to Haiti I am well aware of the suffering of God's people there. This further devastation demands that the world offer a sustained and committed hand to the wonderful people of Haiti, that they might find a way to rebuild their homes and their lives."

But it was Suzanne Buchanan, a second-time traveler to Haiti who spoke for the group in her own very personal witness to the experience.

"We never know what special tasks God may place before us. I have known for some time that I am a voice for the people of Haiti. Now, more than ever, I must make sure that their voices are heard. I stood in a field on the day that the earth trembled, but I am safe and I am home...and now my work begins. I am one small voice but I can be heard by thousands and for that I am very thankful."

## UMCOR Joins in Haiti Relief

(Continued from page 1)

"The rescuers were crying afterwards," reported Jeffrey. It was a welcome opportunity to feel joy amid such devastation, he said.

ACT has deployed a "rapid support team" to Haiti, which will work with members with offices already in Haiti. UMCOR is a pending member of the new ACT Alliance.

Despite rescue efforts, few survivors were being pulled alive from the rubble a week after the earthquake struck.

The Reuters news organization reported that 75,000 bodies were buried in mass graves and that Haitian officials say the toll could be between 100,000 and 200,000. An organization called Partners In Health said 20,000 people are dying daily "who could be saved by surgery," according to a January 20 story in The Wall Street Journal.

### Distributing Water

UMCOR's partnership with GlobalMedic will focus on the distribution of clean drinking water, says the Rev. Tom Hazelwood, an UMCOR executive. It also will provide medical attention to earthquake survivors.

Working through local nongovernmental organizations and the United Nations network in Haiti, GlobalMedic also will distribute 110,000 sachets of PUR water purifiers, 5 million Aquatab water purification tablets and 110,000 oral rehydration sachets.

The supplies are being shipped into the Dominican Republic, and then transported by ground into Haiti, Hazelwood said.

One of the tasks for the UMCOR team in Haiti this week will be meeting with Gesner Paul, who leads the Methodist Church of Haiti, to assess how best to work with church members there.

### Organizing Volunteers

Mission volunteers from The United Methodist Church have been a strong presence in Haiti for years, so another priority is organizing for future volunteer teams. "We know the (immediate) need is for medical volunteers," Hazelwood said. "We're looking at trying to centralize the volunteer process."

Bishop Joel Martinez, interim general secretary of the Board of Global Ministries, is advising volunteer teams not to set out for Haiti immediately. "The time for volunteers will come, and their assistance will be crucial," Martinez said.

Church World Service has sent in Don Tatlock, its Latin America and Caribbean program manager, to coordinate its efforts in Haiti.

Recovery has been slow, Tatlock reported. "People are still sleeping outside in makeshift tents on street sides, parks or any open area," he said. "In some neighborhoods, you see signs written on sheets asking for water and food."

Church World Service relief kits and blankets are being distributed in Port-au-Prince, and the agency's partners in Action by Churches Together are bringing in water and sanitation equipment.

Tatlock said a European psychosocial team supported by Church World Service also was arriving in Haiti to work with disaster survivors and first responders. "The situation is so horrifying that there is concern of post-traumatic stress syndrome for members of search and rescue teams," he said in a report on the agency's Web site.

(Continued on page 8)

## Take Your Pick!



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## FOR ONE BRIEF SHINING MOMENT...



...There was Camel-Lot, at First Church, Vineland, which began the year singing, dancing and acting in a musical comedy about a used camel salesman who sold the beasts of burden at the time of Jesus' birth. The dramatic context of the story of "Camel-Lot" was actually a little girl's dream. The play invited the audience to laugh and be entertained while remembering that Christmas is about the birth of our Savior, Jesus, the Son of God. Patricia Cummines, the church's music director and her husband, Richard Cummines, produced the show with lots of support from the cast and crew, members of the children's choir and the Cathedral Choir. Pastor Jeanette Block gave the benediction, with its implied warning, "Don't let it be forgot" that "there's simply not a more congenial spot for happily-ever-aftering" than Camel-Lot.

## Stewardship Tips

### Talk About Commitment!

By Rich Hendrickson

GNJAC Coordinator of Stewardship Education and Development

A pig and a chicken were walking by a church where a charity event was taking place. Getting caught up in the atmosphere, the pig suggested to the chicken that they make an offering. "Great idea," said the chicken. "Let's offer them ham and eggs!" "Not so fast," said the pig. "For you, that's a donation. For me it's a sacrifice!"

I think it would be fair to say that most of the offerings our churches receive during the worship service are, for some, merely a donation, and for others, a heartfelt sacrifice. For still others, it's somewhere in between.

Annual stewardship campaigns have taken on many forms and many names over the years. I've been involved in a pledge drive, an every member canvas, Loyalty Sunday, Consecration Sunday, and much too often the annual "begging" campaign.

Whatever you currently call your annual campaign I want to challenge you and encourage you to begin to think in terms of holding an annual COMMITMENT Campaign.

Dr. Wayne Barrett, Executive Director of the UM Foundation of Western Michigan and the Detroit Annual Conferences, says that "the point of any annual stewardship campaign is to encourage financial commitments." He goes on to say that "if you describe the campaign as a means to finance the budget, you will ruin it."

Herb Miller, in his Consecration Sunday Program, says that as followers of Jesus Christ our need to give in response to God's gift of Jesus Christ far outweighs the church's need to receive.

As church leaders, both clergy and laity, I would encourage you to preach, teach, and model financial commitment in your local church. I would also encourage you to create the kind of atmosphere and message in your local church where all God's people are invited to give generously to God through the church.

Please contact my office if I can be of assistance.



Bishop Devadhar

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## Delran Church Opens Doors to HS Homecoming Float-makers



**10,000 Doors —  
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Homecoming is a big deal at the high school in Delran every year. Each high school class develops a float for the homecoming parade, much as it's been done in American towns for decades. It's a very positive experience.

However, the actual process of assembling the floats in various locales around the community had frequently ended up in not so positive experiences. So when the request came from the Freshman Class to use the First United Methodist Church as the location to assemble its float, it was met with a less than enthusiastic response. The truth is, the class had been to every other organization with a large enough area and had been turned down by them all.

Delran Pastor Chris Miller took the request to George Weisgerber, Jr, the Board of Trustees president and they began to investigate.

"We had a member of our church who is on staff at the high school call us," Pastor Miller relates, "and warn us

because of past history with homecoming float preparation. We had members of the Board of Trustees who had children in high school who said we would be crazy if we did it. They reminded us that the Police in town actually step up patrols during this preparation week because of the chaos that often arises at the locations where the floats are being assembled. I even had a police officer who has been attending our church sporadically, give me his cell phone number 'just in case.'"

Mr. Weisgerber, however, performed what Pastor Miller described as "an underhanded act." "He used my words against me. Every Sunday during my benediction, I close by challenging the congregation to 'go and do something risky for God.' He said to me, 'Isn't this the kind of thing you are talking about?'" At that point it was clear that the Freshmen were coming. The trustees approved the use of the fellowship hall (SonShine Hall) for the week and a half before homecoming



**A WORK IN PROGRESS.** Eager Delran Freshmen respond to the welcome granted by the United Methodist Church as they create their Homecoming float.

and the church hosted more than 100 kids along with some parents and school staff working on what turned out to be a beautiful homecoming float.

"Our Youth Director, Phil Gorog, even came up with the idea of buying pizza for the kids one night," reported Pastor Miller, "and then a case of cookies and drinks for another night which he selflessly took out of his limited Youth Group Budget." Gorog explains the act by saying, "the parents were thrilled and somewhat flabbergasted noting the church had already done its part by making the space available". That gave Gorog the chance to say to them, "That we are grateful for what God has done for us so we are happy to do something for you."

The church's open door policy did not go unnoticed or unappreciated. Pastor Miller and the church staff received a number of letters of appreciation from students and parents.

"Please accept my heartfelt thanks for allowing the Delran Class of 2013 to use your church facilities for their homecoming float preparations," wrote one parent. "As a parent, I really appreciate what you did by giving our kids a safe place to prepare... Not only did you give them a place to use, but you fed them as well. We really appreciate your generosity."

As a result of the successful float project Mr. Gorog and the Delran Church has found a distinctly greater ability to enter into conversation with the high school population.

"We have difficulty getting into the closed circumstance that is the high school," observes the youth leader, "this was a great chance to get them to come to us."

When you open up one of those 10 Thousand doors we've been talking about, you never know what may float in or out. — JS



**FINISHED PRODUCT.** No Bible verses in view, but this completed float by Delran's freshmen may be as good a witness to the "open door, open heart" of the People of the United Methodist Church as a prominently displayed John 3:16.'

## What about Health Care Reform? Leonia Church Asks its Congressman

LEONIA — "How can we help our congregation understand Health Care Reform?" That's the question the Leonia congregation asked itself recently. A speaker? A panel discussion? A group study? The issue is very complicated and difficult to understand.

Instead of the varied options, they decided on a novel approach. They would ask members to submit questions they had about health care reform. In turn, these questions would be forwarded to their representatives in Washington, asking them for their answers.

Some questions were specific: "How much money does the taxpayer currently spend on medicine for the uninsured?" Other questions were general, such as "What are the reasons we in the United States don't have a better health care plan?"

"Imagine our delight when Congressman Steve Rothman responded with a five and a half page letter, answering each question in detail," writes Leonia's Ellie Spiegel. "It was extremely enlightening and helpful." Rothman (D) represents the Ninth Congressional District, covering the southern tier of Bergen County and including the borough of Leonia.

The letter was circulated to the congregation and is now the basis for conversations about health care Reform.

In response to the final question about our Christian responsibility for others, whether legal or illegal, Congressman Rothman answered:

"As a member of the Jewish faith, I strongly believe that ensuring access to affordable quality health care is consistent with

Judeo-Christian values... We have a moral obligation to address the issue... This moment presents an historic opportunity for America to reaffirm the greatness of our national character."

Ms. Spiegel believes that this model for church involvement in current issues is one that other churches might follow.

"We thought readers of the *Relay* would be interested in action members of the Leonia Church took regarding the issue of health care reform. Our members were confused about the various proposals. We were interested in helping people understand the various issues raised, and not in presenting one position and so we developed the strategy. We thought other congregations would be interested in this approach."

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## UMCOR Responds



**Children in Cite Soleil, Port au Prince's poorest slum area, find nourishment at a school with food provided by relief agencies like UMCOR and by Stop Hunger Now. This photo was taken last year and does not reflect current conditions.**

(UMNS photo by John Gordon)

(Continued from page 5)

### Food Aid Flown In

A planeload of 80,000 pounds of water, medicine and medical supplies organized by Stop Hunger Now is being distributed in Haiti, says the Rev. Ray Buchanan, the United Methodist pastor who is the food aid group's founder and president.

He also has talked to Mission of Hope, the partner group in Port-au-Prince that received most of those supplies, about a previous supply of pre-packaged meals. "They told us that since the earthquake, they've been feeding 50,000 a day using the meals we sent in December," Buchanan added.

Stop Hunger Now still has five containers of bottled water and three containers of more than a half-million meals ready to go to Haiti. "We're currently doing our very best trying to find military transport," he said. "We're working with the Army, Air Force and the Navy."

Meal donations have come from a variety of sources, including a January 18 packaging event in Lynchburg, Va., organized by the Rev. Larry Davies, the United Methodist district superintendent there. The effort, which resulted in 210,000 meals, "really touches the heart of what Stop Hunger Now is trying to do," Buchanan noted.

Volunteers also are needed in the United States to help assemble health kits and other relief supplies for Haiti at UMCOR's two supply depots – Sager Brown in Baldwin, La., and UMCOR West in Salt Lake City – as well as other church-owned regional warehouses.

UMCOR is encouraging church members to collect health kits for distribution in Haiti.

Gifts to support UMCOR's Haiti Relief efforts can be made to Haiti Emergency, UMCOR Advance #418325. Checks can be made to UMCOR with "Advance #418325 Haiti Emergency" in the memo line. Checks can be put in the church's offering plate or mailed to: UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY 10087. The entire amount of each gift will be used to help the people of Haiti.

\*Linda Bloom is a United Methodist News Service news writer based in New York.



**LONG AN OUTPOST of United Methodist mission, Haiti's earlier ministry is symbolized by this medical clinic in Jeremie as it appeared in this 1976 photo by John Goodwin.**

(UMNS Photo)

## UMCOR Needs Health Kits for Devastated Haiti

UMCOR's two relief supply warehouses are asking United Methodists to provide health kits that can be sent to earthquake-devastated Haiti.

"For people who are feeling powerless in being able to help those in Haiti, providing health kits is a tangible way they can make an immediate difference," said Kathy Kraiza, director of UMCOR's relief supplies. She estimates that hundreds of thousands of kits will be needed in the days and months ahead.

The kits, valued at about \$12 per kit, contain everything from towels and washcloths to sterile bandages and bar soap. They will be distributed to those who have been forced to leave their homes as a result of the recent disaster.

For individuals or groups that want to contribute basic necessities, UMCOR requests that the following NEW items be placed in a sealed one-gallon plastic bag.

- 1 hand towel (15" x 25" up to 17" x 27"). No kitchen towels.
- 1 washcloth
- 1 comb (large and sturdy, not pocket-sized)
- 1 nail file or fingernail clippers (no emery boards or toenail clippers)
- 1 bath-size bar of soap (3 oz. and up)
- 1 toothbrush (single brushes only in original wrapper, no child-size brushes)
- 6 adhesive plastic strip sterile bandages
- \$1.00 to purchase toothpaste

Toothpaste is purchased in bulk to be added to health kits to ensure that the product does not expire before they are sent.

Because the emergency kits are carefully planned to make them usable in the greatest number of situations and strict rules govern product entry into international countries, UMCOR requires that the kits contain *only the requested items* – nothing more.

Each packed box cannot exceed 66 pounds.

Sager Brown Depot provides the following shipping tips for the health kits.

- Complete two packing lists – one for your records and one to be put on the shipping box.
- Paste the shipping label/packing list on the outside of each box sent. The shipping list helps the depot to quickly process kits.
- Processing and shipping costs: Please enclose an envelope containing at least \$1.00 for each kit you send. This donation enables kits to be sent without delay to Haiti.

You can send assembled relief supply kits to either relief depot – UMCOR coordinates supply shipments from both locations.

UMCOR Sager Brown Depot  
P.O. Box 850,  
131 Sager Brown Road  
Baldwin, LA 70514-0850  
For help contact, 1 (800) 814-8765

UMCOR West Office and Depot  
1479 South 700 West  
Salt Lake City, UT 84104-1605  
For help contact, 1-801-973-7250

Further instructions on assembling and shipping health kits are available at <http://new.gbmg-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies/health-kit/>.

## RELAY REVIEWS

### Roadmap to Renewal: Rediscovering the Church's Mission

by Douglas W. Ruffle  
General Board of Global Ministries, Publishers  
April, 2009 Paperback, \$9.95

In the age of TMI (too much information), the task of finding useful, credible direction for congregational development can be a daunting task. Thankfully, that task became less daunting with the publication of Doug Ruffle's latest book, *Roadmap to Renewal*.

With an economy of words, Ruffle delivers a succinct and systematic treatment of church renewal and development in a cogent, persuasive manner. I like the fact that he gets right to the point, sparing the reader from wading through page after page of theory and analysis. Instead, this book is true to its title: it is indeed a roadmap, and a good one at that.

The author knows his subject matter, and offers a helpful, hands-on approach. By design, this book is perfect for use by pastors, leadership teams, and church members in the small group study setting. Those who read it will gain a much clearer sense of where their church is, where it should be going, and the best way to get there.

The genius of this little book is that its author has captured the essence of what is essential in congregational development, and presented it in a way that will be useful for churches of all sizes. For churches who want to get "right down to business".

"Roadmap" is a great way to start.

— Daniel Casselberry

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# Thinking About Summer Camp?

Can you believe it? It is time to sign up for another great season at camp. This is an exciting time, as we see many signs and wonders around us; we are reminded of God's great gift of salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

The Greater New Jersey United Methodist Camps are places where children and families learn about God's love and what Jesus has done for everyone who believe. There are many ways you can get involved with the camps this year. For the children and teens, we have several new camp experiences: A Field Hockey training program to help beginners and experts! Girls learn advanced skills preparing them to be leaders on their teams when they return to school in the fall. We have a new sailing program for campers, ages 13 and older. This program will give campers their New Jersey boating license and training toward an ASA sailing certificate. Space is limited so sign up early!

A Wesleyan Way of Living camp provides campers with a Christian worldview, Biblical living skills, and what it means to be in ministry. The newly established Community Service Camp provides campers with opportunities to bless others by helping with projects on church properties of the greater NJ United Methodist Conference while earning community service credit. Of course, we

continue with the favorite camping programs at the Aldersgate Center and the Pinelands Center at Mt Misery, such as Mud Week, Water Week, Fishing, Music and Drama, Outpost, and other traditional camp programs. For adults and families we have reopened the family camping options for Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends at both camps, each includes a newly designed program with fun, fellowship, and worship (this will be limited to space available, so be sure to register early!). Also new for 2010, we have opened the family campgrounds at the Aldersgate Center where you may design your own unique summer vacation package.

Contact the camp office for more information: 609-893-3354. Would you like to see the camp, meet some of the staff, and ask questions before signing up for the summer? There will be an Open House at the Aldersgate Center on Sunday April 25 from 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm and at the Pinelands Center at Mt. Misery on Sunday May 2 from 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm. We can use your help to prepare the facilities for a safe and quality summer program. There will be a workday at the Aldersgate Center on Saturday, April 10 from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm and at the Pinelands Center at Mt Misery on Saturday

April 17 from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Put together a team from members of your church and family. There is something for everyone to do: rake leaves, paint, spring-cleaning, repair work, carpentry, and construction. We would love to have your help! Please R.S.V.P. if possible, as a free lunch is included. What could be better than free food, good fellowship, and working for a good cause?

Open positions for Committed Christians who would like to help lead children to Christ are available. We are looking to fill both volunteer and paid positions. Can you give us a week to help with one of the special event programs? Would you or someone you know make an excellent Christian role model for children and families? Please contact Timothy Goodwin by email (tgoodwin@gnjumc.org) if you can help or with contact information for someone you feel would be a good fit for this ministry.

We are looking forward to an awesome summer in 2010. Join with us as we celebrate open hearts, open minds, and open doors through Christian Camping with the Greater New Jersey United Methodist Camping Ministries, Inc.



## Youth Service Fund

The Youth Service Fund is a unique ministry because it is completely by, with, and for youth. Youth contribute the money, they decide what projects receive the money and the projects

supported are youth-designed, youth-led, and benefit youth. Youth Service Fund truly is youth in ministry.

Currently, only US annual conferences fund the account. Money is raised at local youth events or by church youth groups. 70% of the money raised is kept in the local community while 30% is forwarded to the national portion of the Youth Service Fund. With that 30% Young Peoples Ministries funds youth-designed & youth-led projects around the world. We recently received money for the Youth Service Fund from the Philippines and we encourage contributions from others around the world.

Grants will be awarded (through an application process) for the 2010-2011 school year for GNJ Youth Programs. Project categories are: **Faith Sharing and Outreach, Leadership Development, Scholarship, Ministry with At-Risk Youth, and Agricultural/Vocational.** More information will be shared in the next few months.



## Taize Pilgrimage 2010

Travel July 9-July 19, 2010

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For \$1,775 You Can Visit The Spiritual Retreat At Taizé, France

More information and applications are available at [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).

**Deadline is February 20, 2010**

### Souperbowl of Caring

Sunday, February 7, 2010

Want to find out how your youth group can participate this year?  
Go to [www.souperbowl.org](http://www.souperbowl.org) for more details.

### "THE HIGHTSTOWN EVENT"

Workshops provided include information about the missing generation, mission and fasting events for youth, Sunday school information and much more!

**Held at the First Presbyterian Church 320 North Main St. Hightstown, New Jersey 08520**

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 8:30 am to 12:45 pm**

Hosted by the Christian Education Associates of New Jersey  
For more information or to register go to [www.wondrouslove.org/ceworkshops](http://www.wondrouslove.org/ceworkshops)

## Curriculum Crazy February 28, 2010

Conference Media Center 3-6pm

Come to this Open House of the Conference Media Center. Giveaways, refreshments and fellowship provided. Come learn about the newest curriculum for all ages, New VBS resources and so much more. Media Resource Center Membership Discounts will be given to all who attend. For more information or to RSVP please contact Karla Donato in the Resource Center at 732-359-1020

### Youth Lay Speaking

March 13-14, 2010 at  
Pinelands Center,  
Mt. Misery NJ

### F.U.E.L

(Faith Unites Every Leader)  
Youth and youth worker training  
March 20, 2010 at  
St. John's Hazlet UMC,  
Hazlet, NJ

### 2011 Mission Of Peace to China

More information for these events can be found at [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org) and [www.faithgarden.org](http://www.faithgarden.org)

## Safe Sanctuaries

### New Background Screening System!!

To obtain a new background check for anyone working with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults go to [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org) and click the Safe Sanctuaries link. The website will give you very clear directions on how to apply for a new background check using Track-1 Technologies or to obtain an already processed check through Lexus Nexus. Please note that all Safe Sanctuaries Policy should correct their information regarding background checks. The Greater NJ Conference now uses Track-1 Technologies. Thank you.

### Upcoming Safe Sanctuaries Training

Held at the District Days of Learning - to register or for more information contact your district office!

Capital - January 9; Gateway South - January 16; Delaware Bay - March 6  
Northern Shore - Feb 6; Skylands - Feb 20; Palisades - Feb 27; Raritan Valley - April 17

## Annual Audits

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## YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S PASTOR Full Time Position

We are seeking an experienced, energetic person to lead our youth ministry and Christian education program, coordinate various church outreach projects, and share in other aspects of pastoral ministry.

The ideal candidate will possess a Spirit-filled enthusiasm for working with young people and seek to celebrate and nurture their faith. Innovative ideas for this ministry's growth and development will be encouraged. Degree in a related field preferred.

We will be reviewing resumes immediately.

Please e-mail resume to [denvillecommunity.church@verizon.net](mailto:denvillecommunity.church@verizon.net) or mail to Denville Community United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 115, Denville, NJ 07834

## 2010 CALENDAR OF DISTRICT RESOURCE DAYS

The District Resource Days in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference bring some of the most prominent and inspirational thinkers and opinion-makers to where you can see them and interact with them in person. Here is the list of remarkable learning opportunities coming to the conference in 2010. Mark the Dates Now!

	RESOURCE #1	RESOURCE #2	RESOURCE #3	RESOURCE #4
<b>CAPE ATLANTIC</b>	March 22 Rev. Dr. John Holbert: <b>Preaching &amp; Bible Study</b> Clergy: 8:30am-2:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: UMC at Absecon	April 15 Rev. Kevass Harding: <b>Evangelism – Reaching the UnChurched</b> Clergy: 8:30am-2:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: Trinity UMC, Mamora	September 30 - Rev. Norma Cook Everist: <b>Church Conflict: From Contention to Collaboration</b> Clergy: 8:30am-2:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: Oasis UMC, Pleasantville	October 28 Rev. Lloyd Rediger: <b>Healthy Pastor, Healthy Congregation</b> Clergy: 8:30am-2:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: Emmaus UMC, Smithville
<b>CAPITAL</b>	February 4 Dr. Jacqui Lewis: <b>Rethink Preaching &amp; Worship</b> Clergy: 9:00am-2:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: Asbury UMC, Cinnaminson	April 16 & 17 Rev. Dr. Ken Sloane: <b>Rethink Church and Then Some</b> Fri.: 9:30am-2:00pm Sat.: 9:00am-1:00pm At: FUMC, Delran	October 13 Stephanie Moore Hand: <b>Rethink Ministry with Youth &amp; Young Adults</b> Time: TBA At: Ewing, Trinity UMC	Fall 2010 Gary Dorrien: <b>Rethink Discipleship</b> Time: TBA Place: TBA
<b>DELAWARE BAY</b>	March 25 Rev. Paul Nixon: <b>"I refuse to lead a dying church"</b> Clergy: 8:45am-3:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: Zion UMC, Franklinville	May 3 Rev. Melvin Amerson: <b>How to cultivate the culture of giving.</b> Clergy: 8:45am-3:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: Broadway UMC, Salem	October 18 Diana Butler Bass: <b>Christianity for the Rest of Us</b> Clergy: 9:30am-3:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: Haddonfield UMC	November 18 Rev. Gil Rendle: Clergy: 8:45am-3:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: TBA
<b>GATEWAY NORTH</b>	April 15 Bishop Michael Coyner: <b>Connecting Newcomers to Christ in the New Century.</b> Clergy: 8:30am-1:00pm Laity: 7:30pm-9:30pm At: Verona UMC	May 6 Kelly Sisney: <b>Humor in Ministry</b> Clergy: 8:30am-1:00pm Laity: 7:30pm-9:30pm At: Community UMC, Kenilworth	November 2 & 3 Rev. Stephanie Hixon: <b>JUSTPEACE Mediation &amp; Conflict Resolution</b> Clergy: 8:30am-1:00pm Laity: 7:30pm-9:30pm At: Vincent UMC, Nutley	November 2 & 3 Rev. Stephanie Hixon: <b>JUSTPEACE Mediation &amp; Conflict Resolution</b> Clergy: 8:30am-1:00pm Laity: 7:30pm-9:30pm At: Vincent UMC, Nutley
<b>GATEWAY SOUTH</b>	March 4 Fred Lehr: Time:TBA At:TBA	Time:TBA At:TBA	October 18 Diana Butler Bass: Clergy: 9:30am-3:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00 pm At: Haddonfield UMC	Time:TBA At:TBA
<b>NORTHERN SHORE</b>	March 11 Jason Santos: <b>"Practice, Practice, Practice." A day to be spiritually fed/Taize-based.</b> Clergy: 8:30am-2:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: Oakhurst FUMC	Oct. 2 Cheryl Hemmerle: <b>UMCOM Creative Use of Media in Worship</b> Time: 8:30am-2:00pm At: Whiting UMC	November 4 & 5 Rev. Stephanie Hixon: <b>JUSTPEACE Mediation &amp; Conflict Resolution</b> Clergy: 8:30am-3:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: TBA	November 4 & 5 Rev. Stephanie Hixon: <b>JUSTPEACE Mediation &amp; Conflict Resolution</b> Clergy & Laity: 9:00am-2:00pm At: TBA
<b>PALISADES</b>	March 18 Rev. Paul Nixon: <b>"I refuse to lead a dying church"</b> Clergy: 8:30am-3:00pm Laity: 6:30pm-9:00pm At: Midland Park UMC	May 7 Kelly Sisney: <b>Clean Christian Comedienne</b> Clergy and Laity: 6:30pm-9:30pm At: Paramus: Arcola UMC & Arcola KUMC	September 23 Rev. Mary Huyck: <b>Redeveloping the Congregation</b> Clergy: 8:30am-3:00pm Laity: 6:30am-9:00pm At: Clergy: Wayne UMC; Laity: Tenafly UMC	November 4 Dr. James Fleming: <b>Biblical Resources</b> Clergy: 8:30am-3:00pm Laity: 6:30pm-9:00pm At: Teaneck UMC
<b>RARITAN VALLEY</b>	January 9 Rev. Wayne Lavender: <b>Peacemaking Amidst Violence and Poverty</b> Time:TBA Place:TBA	March 20 Dr. James Fleming: <b>"An Archaeological Study of the Bible"</b> Time: TBA Place: TBA	September 25 Dan Smith: <b>"Renewal – Practical Steps"</b> Time: TBA Place: TBA	October 23 Kathleen Billman: <b>"Developing Multicultural Awareness – Re-learning the World"</b> Time: TBA Place: TBA
<b>SKYLANDS</b>	March 1 Rev. Rebecca Laird: <b>"Spiritual Formation"</b> Clergy: 9:00am-4:00pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: Parsippany UMC	April 8 M. Garlinda Burton: <b>"Empowering Laity"</b> Clergy: 9:00am-3:30pm Laity: 7:00-9:00pm At: Rockaway UMC	September 16 Rev. Dr. Ken Sloane: <b>"ReThink Church"</b> Clergy: 9:00am-3:30pm Laity: 7:00pm-9:00pm At: ButlerUMC	October 28 Rev. Tyrone Gordon: <b>"Church Growth"</b> Clergy: 9:00am-3:00pm Laity: 7:00-9:00pm At: Sparta UMC

## OBITUARIES

**JOHN F. GARRAHAN**, 89, retired local pastor of the Greater New Jersey Conference, died December 20, 2009, with funeral services following December 26 at the Tuckahoe United Methodist Church. A teacher by profession, he taught for over 30 years at the high school and college level, in addition to responding to the call to the pastorate, serving the Tuckahoe, Petersburg, Swainton, Port Elizabeth, Delmont, and Leesburg churches.

Mr. Garrahan is survived by his wife, Caroline, a son, two daughters, 13 grandchildren and two great-grandsons. Messages of condolence may be sent to his widow, Caroline Granahan, 1012 South Shore Road, Marmora, New Jersey 08223. Memorial donations may be to the church of your choice.

**JOAN R. HOFFMAN**, wife of retired elder the Rev. Frederick Hoffman, died Tuesday, January 12, 2010, in Keene, NH with a funeral on January 16 at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, South Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Memorial gifts may be made to the United Church of Christ in Keene, 23 Central Square, Keene, NH, 03431, or St. Paul's Methodist Church, 605 Herbert Street, Scranton, PA 18505, or the National Parkinson Foundation, Inc., Office of Development, 1501 N.W. 9th Ave./Bob Hope Rd., Miami FL 33136.

**VIRGINIA JOHNSON MERRIAM**, widow of the Rev. R. Douglas Merriam, elder of the Northern New Jersey Conference, died in Saginaw, Michigan, December 16, 2009. A Memorial Service was celebrated at the First United Methodist Church in Saginaw December 19.

Messages of condolence to the family may be sent through her youngest son, G. Douglas Merriam, 3593 E. Marcus Drive, Saginaw, MI 48603.

Memorial gifts be sent to the Centenary Fund and Preacher's Aid 1001 Wickapecko Drive, Ocean, NJ 07712-4733 Attn: CFPAS.

**ALICE H. WHITE**, widow of the late Reverend Burke White, December 2, 2009. A Memorial Service was celebrated at the Caldwell United Methodist Church December 12.

Condolence messages may be sent to her step-daughter, Mary Lou Vogt, P.O. Box 4, Hurley, New York 12443. Memorial gifts may be directed to the Caldwell United Methodist Church Memorial Fund, 8 Academy Road, Caldwell, NJ 07006-5401



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*The March Issue Deadline is February 5, 2010*

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## OPPORTUNITY FILE

A roundup of coming events in the Greater New Jersey Conference and beyond. Send items of conference-wide interest to the Opportunity File at [Editor@umrelay.org](mailto:Editor@umrelay.org) or UMRelay, 1 Mayflower Ct., Whiting, NJ 08759.

### February 6 — Statistical Report Training

GNJAC — Local church training offered by CFA in use of newly designed year end reports. A must for all churches. 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Gateway North at Bloomfield; Gateway South at St. Andrew's, Cherry Hill.

### February 8, 10, 11 — Health Insurance Information Sessions

GNJAC — The new HealthFlex insurance program which becomes effective March 1 will be introduced and explained at three locations across the conference, with sessions for active clergy from 10 a.m. to noon, and retirees, 2 to 4 p.m.

Glassboro, February 8, Hightstown, February 10, Parsippany, February 11. See story.

### February 9 — African-American Heritage Center Open House

MADISON — The African-American Heritage Center on the campus of Drew University will hold an Open House in observance of Black History Month, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. FFI: Contact the AAMHC office at [aamhc@aol.com](mailto:aamhc@aol.com)

### February 23 - 25 — Children's Ministry Forum '10

RALEIGH, N.C. — "Fill My Cup, Lord" is the theme of this event sponsored by the General Board of Discipleship primarily for large congregations (over 350 in worship) but welcoming all. A life-transforming event that will send you home with new skills and fresh understandings. FFI: Visit [www.gbod.org/cm/](http://www.gbod.org/cm/) or call Erica Munoz at (732) 359-1042.

### February 28 — Curriculum Open House

OCEAN — The Conference Media Center will be the site of this 3-hour event, 3 to 6 p.m., showcasing newest curriculum resources including new VBS materials. See *edGe* page for details.

### March 4 — Pre-Retirement Seminar

HAMILTON SQUARE — The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits will host this seminar at St. Mark Church, focusing on pastors planning to retire within the next five years, 9:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. See story.

### March 5 — Financial Security Seminar

HAMILTON SQUARE — Under the auspices of the GNJ Board of Pensions and Health Benefits, this seminar at St. Mark Church aims at assisting clergy who are more than five years from retirement, but who want a bit of help in planning their financial future. 9:15 a.m. - 1 p.m. See story.

### March 6 — Christian Education Event

HIGHTSTOWN — "The Hightstown Event", an annual training opportunity for Christian educators and pastors, with a plethora of workshops and a wealth of information. See *edGe* page for details.

### April 8 - 11 — Men's Walk to Emmaus Weekend

GNJAC — Renew the spiritual fire that energizes, informs and motivates Christian leaders in this three-day experience replicating the post-resurrection walk recorded in Luke 24. This Skylands Walk to Emmaus for men is part of a world-wide movement sponsored by the Upper Room. FFI: Log on to [www.gardenstateemmaus.org](http://www.gardenstateemmaus.org)

### April 15 - 18 — Women's Walk to Emmaus Weekend

GNJAC — Renew the spiritual fire that energizes, informs and motivates Christian leaders in this three-day experience replicating the post-resurrection walk recorded in Luke 24. This Skylands Walk to Emmaus for women is part of a world-wide movement sponsored by the Upper Room; at Sacred Heart Retreat Center. FFI: Contact Judy Mazinozzi at [judym@yahoo.com](mailto:judym@yahoo.com)

### April 22 - 23 — Scouting Ministry Training

MORGANVILLE — A new program for training scouting ministry specialist will be held at Monmouth Boy Scout Council here, open to all scouting leaders in New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania. For details log on to the NSD UMM at [http://www.gbgm-umc.org/Northern\\_Shore\\_District\\_UMMen/Northern%20Shore%20Scouting.htm](http://www.gbgm-umc.org/Northern_Shore_District_UMMen/Northern%20Shore%20Scouting.htm).

### May 13 - 16 — Women's Walk to Emmaus Weekend

GNJAC — Renew the spiritual fire that energizes, informs and motivates Christian leaders in this three-day experience replicating the post-resurrection walk recorded in Luke 24. This Garden State Walk to Emmaus for Women at Keswick is part of a world-wide movement sponsored by the Upper Room. FFI: Log on to [www.gardenstateemmaus.org](http://www.gardenstateemmaus.org)

### July 9 - 19 — Taize Pilgrimage

GNJAC — Annual pilgrimage to the retreat center in France. Cost is reduced to maximize opportunity. For more information or to request an application please contact Erica Munoz at (732) 359-1042 or [Emunoz@gnjumc.org](mailto:Emunoz@gnjumc.org). Application deadline is February 20.



**CLAIMING THE BLESSING.** If a "cup of cold water" given to the little ones was enough to earn Jesus' commendation (Matthew 10:42), think of the blessings accruing to this quartet, (l to r) UMHome employees Robert Johnson, Tanya Sweet-Preston, LaRonda Dingle and volunteer Keith Anderson as they assist in loading supplies on the way to Haiti, following collections at the GNJ-related senior communities.

## UMHomes Join in Acts of Love, Hope, Charity for Haiti

COLLINGSWOOD — "I have no more tears left to cry," sighed Mimi Mertyl-Celestin, registered nurse and director of wellness at Collingswood Manor here. She and her husband, Jean, of Easthampton, both natives of Haiti, to their knowledge, have lost 35 family members.

In response to this disaster, the family courageously used both their grief and their faith as a springboard — they launched a drive for money, medical supplies, food, clothing, shoes, non-perishable food, bottled water, diapers, and other essential resources for Haitians from every possible source.

Mertyl-Celestin's father, the Rev. Marc J. Mertyl, pastor of the Church of God of Bethesda in Linden, converted the church into a hub in the supply chain. One of two Haitian churches in Linden, Bethesda reflects the strong Haitian demographics there and offers worship services in Creole.

On January 20, over 800 boxes of supplies and cases of food, water and miscellaneous items, were loaded into special air transport containers to be flown to Haiti when clearance is given. While Collingswood's drive was led by Mertyl-Celestin and their lobby turned into a receiving and loading zone, staff, residents, families and volunteers in all 10 United Methodist Homes' statewide, as well as the corporate office, wholeheartedly embraced the cause.

On January 19, after days of tirelessly collecting, they began the trip from Collingswood Manor to Linden, driving two trucks and stopping en route to make additional pick-ups.

Covenant Manor in Plainfield donated boxes of food, medical supplies, water and clothing; Francis Asbury Manor in Ocean Grove collected \$1,100 in cash; PineRidge of Montclair donated clothing. Many of the Homes' vendors gave food and water.

Bishop Taylor Manor in East Orange set up a Hope Center with coordination from the Red Cross, open to the general public and anyone wishing to confirm the safety of loved ones, posting a daily list of people presumed safe.

On February 11, Ms. Mertyl-Celestin plans to travel to Haiti to help victims of the earthquake. She'll join her sister Viola Jolicoeur, also a registered nurse. Both will give their medical expertise during the absence of Jolicoeur's husband, Ronald, a general surgeon, who heads a health clinic.

"Last year, the Homes took an important and necessary clinical precaution and stockpiled a 10 percent surplus of medical supplies in anticipation of the H1N1 outbreak," explained James C. Batten, UMH president, adding that the Homes are committing the excess for Haitians needing treatment following the earthquake.

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# *All other ground is sinking sand*

Photo from Hackettstown UMC  
Mission Team



**Rev. Clint Rabb and Rev. Sam Dixon, executives at UMCOR, were already in Haiti seeking ways to help the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. They perished in the devastation of the earthquake. They were there supported by the solid rock you created through your Shared Ministries giving. When church agencies are allowed in again, UMCOR will be there.**

**UMCOR, the United Methodist Commission On Relief, is a division of the General Board of Global Ministries and may be the best-known agency of the United Methodist Church around the world. Rated an A+ by the American Institute of Philanthropy and as four stars by Charity Navigator, when you give to UMCOR you give with the knowledge that *every penny* given to a designated Advance goes directly to those who need it most.**

**On Christ the solid rock we stand... and give**

You can continue to help the Haiti relief effort by giving to Advance #418325 or you can find other ways to help at [www.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor/](http://www.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor/)



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

