

## GNJAC, Lutherans to Share Communion in Historic Service

EAST BRUNSWICK — On October 9, the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference and the New Jersey Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will celebrate a historic Full Communion Agreement, 30 years in the making.

Calvary Korean Church here will be the site of the celebration that will begin with a clergy processional at 10 a.m. and unfold with a worship service celebrating the new partnership.

Lutheran Bishop E. Roy Riley will preach and United Methodist Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar will celebrate at the Communion Table. Following a break for lunch, speakers from both denominations will share presentations and allow for a time of questions and answers.

A Festival Ecumenical Choir directed by Mark Miller will sing.

In an August 10 letter marking the anniversary of the historic agreement, Bishop Devadhar urged participation by United Methodists in the East Brunswick service.

"I request you now in Christian love to participate in the celebration of the shared Eucharist with our brothers and sisters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," the Bishop wrote.

"Celebrate this event in your churches, widely and joyfully," he added. "Encourage your laity to come as well."

The October 9 event is the latest in a series of such services occurring across the world wherever United Methodist and ELCA Christians share geographical regions. The Eucharistic celebrations began in August 2009, when the ELCA assembly voted its approval of the agreement

(958-51) as United Methodist Bishop Gregory Palmer and Lutheran Bishop Mark Hanson embraced. The action followed a similar General Conference vote a year earlier when UM delegates at the Fort Worth gathering polled 864-19.

The Lutheran-United Methodist dialogue began in 1977. By 1981, the conversations had produced a statement between the denominations affirming the validity of baptism administered in accord with Scripture, in either of the churches.

A second round of dialogues produced a common statement on the role of bishops. A third round beginning in 2001 considered the feasibility of a relationship of full communion between the two church bodies. This series of discussions has culminated in the Eucharistic Sharing

agreement that will be demonstrated in East Brunswick, October 9.

The agreement is not a merger of the denominations. Full communion means the denominations will formally honor each other's baptisms



and sacraments; their local churches may share in Holy Communion, and United Methodist and ELCA pastors may be appointed to serve in churches of either denomination.

The Calvary Korean Church, site of the Eucharistic celebration is located at 572 Ryders Lane in East Brunswick, two miles from Exit 9 of the New Jersey Turnpike.

## Acevedo and Dean to Be Leaders at Bishop's Convocation

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar is pleased to announce the 2011 Bishop's Convocation, to be held at the Double Tree Resort/Willow Valley Inn and Suites in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The dates are January 24-26. The theme for this year's gathering of clergy and spouses is "Disciples Transforming the World Through Our Gifts."

Leading the participants through the three day event will be the Rev. Jorge Acevedo, an elder in the Florida Annual Conference and lead pastor at Grace Church in Southwestern Florida. (Cape Coral, Fort Myers Shores, and North Fort Myers) This church has grown in its weekend attendance from 400 to over 2600 in the past fourteen years.

Pastor Acevedo co-authored *The Heart of Youth Ministry* with Hule

Goddard and has also written for the United Methodist Publishing House, *Circuit Rider* magazine, *Good News* magazine, and *Our Faith Today*. The Grace Church website may be viewed at [www.egracechurch.com](http://www.egracechurch.com).

Also on the agenda is the Rev. Kenda Creasy Dean, an elder in the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference and professor of youth, church, and culture at Princeton Theological Seminary. There, she works closely with the Institute for Youth Ministry. Dr. Dean is a graduate of Wesley Theological Seminary and has served as a pastor in suburban Washington DC and as the Wesley Foundation Director at the University of Maryland-College Park prior to her arrival at Princeton. Her publications include: *Oh My God: A Youth Ministry Handbook*, *Almost*



Acevedo

Dean

*Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church*, and *Youth, Religion, and Globalization*, *New Research in Practical Theology*.

Though the usual site for the convocation has been made a part of the Double Tree company, the heart of the Willow Valley Resort remains intact.

The schedule will include free time on Tuesday afternoon as well as time with our bishop and a talent show. An optional program will again be available for the clergy spouses in attendance. As always, childcare will be available during sessions, making this an opportunity to bring the entire family. Registrations will soon be available on the conference website and brochures will be coming shortly in the regular US mail. Clergy members will be given a \$150 scholarship, courtesy of the Board of Ordained Ministry and the Ministerial Education Fund, but **only for those who register prior to December 10, 2010**. The best way to get an answer to any question is to contact the Convocation Committee at [gnjacconvocation@aol.com](mailto:gnjacconvocation@aol.com).

## GNJ to Celebrate Diversity at Nov. 13 Multi-Cultural Fete

HAZLET — The Multi-Ethnic Coordinating Committee of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference is inviting everyone to the annual Multi-Cultural Celebration on Saturday, November 13, at St. John's Church, here.

Running from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., the three-hour celebration will honor the di-

verse cultural heritage of the conference in an afternoon of worship, fellowship and cultural festivity.

"A Multi-Cultural Celebration is timely and relevant, because in doing so, we are celebrating who we are as a people of God," explains Judy Colorado, Multi-Ethnic Coordinating Com-

mittee team leader. "As God's people we are diverse, and blessed with many gifts and graces. We come from many nations with deep cultural heritage. We speak many languages, and we represent diverse perspectives. However, we have one Creator, the one God whom we all serve."

"We are United Methodists with one mission, 'to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world,'" she continues. "We all belong to one Church Universal. Last year's celebration has proven that diversity is a strength, and as many as 450 people gathered during the celebration. We have witnessed the talents and gifts displayed in many forms, colors and languages."

How will this diversity be celebrated? Worship with inclusive participation is being developed with representation from different age groups and cultural ethnicities. The planning team is looking for verse readers from different languages and a sign language interpreter.

"The festivity will not be complete without native food from different continents, nations and cultures," Ms. Colorado said. "Anyone can bring a dish of any of meat or fish, vegetables, or side dishes of rice or pasta that can feed at least 50 people." Dessert and drinks will be provided.

Cultural presentations from various nations will follow. Presentations must be culturally oriented and not more than five minutes long.

For further information, readers may access the Multi-Cultural Celebration brochure from the conference web site ([gnjumc.org](http://gnjumc.org)) and send in church registrations to the conference office as identified in the brochure. To add color to the festivity, we also encourage everyone to wear their native dress or national costume, say the organizers.

"It is our goal to have inclusive participation from all local churches in the conference," Ms. Colorado concludes. "We hope and pray that our gathering together will enhance our awareness of the rich diversity we have in our conference."

### Ocean City Praise



**HANDS LIFTED TO HEAVEN, these United Methodist youth give body and voice to their faith during their 3-day feast of faith, fun and fellowship that is the Conference Youth Weekend in Ocean City. See their story on page 6.**

# A GUEST EDITORIAL

## The View from Ground Zero

September 11, 2010

By Myrna Bethke

On Saturday, September 11, my husband and I journeyed to New York City to attend the annual memorial service at Ground Zero. The weather was as gorgeous as that September Tuesday nine years ago when my youngest brother Bill died as the first plane crashed into the World Trade Towers where he worked. This year's observance of the 9/11 anniversary felt very different than in previous years. In the past this day has been set aside in somber reflection and remembering. It has also become a day dedicated to service.

This year's anniversary was surrounded by the uproar caused by an obscure pastor threatening to burn copies of the Koran on 9/11 and the proposed building of an Islamic community center two-and-a-half blocks away from Ground Zero. The actual remembrance service limited to family members was as moving as it always is. However the difference came in those who surrounded the barricades. Previously, observers have lined the barricades with respectful silence; this year as we left the family area it was full of angry protesters. I saw several anti-Islam signs, including one that proclaimed "Sharia kills women."

In the weeks leading up to 9/11 I was asked many times what I thought of the proposed community center, didn't I find it offensive and insensitive that this was so close to Ground Zero? (It didn't help that the project had been described by many as "the mosque at Ground Zero.") Truth be told, I have no problems with this proposed center being built. I welcome those who work to build bridges and foster understanding between different cultures and religions. The area where this proposed center is to be located is not sacred ground—rather the area is one of strip clubs, bars and betting joints. Such a community center would be a great improvement to the area.

The anti-Islam backlash this issue has stirred is profoundly saddening. Islam did not commit the crime and tragedy of 9/11. Nineteen men flew the planes on that day, 19 men who no more represent Islam than pastors who burn Korans represent Christianity. My sensitivities were offended by the media who kept wanting to inflame the issue, asking family members of 9/11 victims to take sides and debate one another. My sensibilities are offended by the people so convinced of the rightness of their cause they are willing to treat others with profound disrespect.

The tragedy of 9/11 hit home for me a few weeks following that day when the New Jersey State Police visited my parents. They were there to take DNA samples in hopes of someday identifying the remains of my youngest brother. I remember thinking how horrible that my parents and hundreds of others were having to do this. In June of 2002, I traveled to Afghanistan as part of an interfaith peace delegation. There we met an eight year old girl whose family had been killed in a bombing raid over their home. She was the only survivor. Amina stood in our guest house and listed all the names of those killed that day. This young girl was the only voice left for her family.

Those two moments joined together and continue to convince me that we are all called to shape a world in which parents are no longer required to give DNA samples in hopes of identifying the remains of their children, and little girls do not have to speak for their families because they are no more. And so, bring those community centers on!

(The Rev. Myrna Bethke is pastor of the Red Bank United Methodist Church.)

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## A Message from the Bishop

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:  
Greetings in the precious name of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



People often offer recommendations for summer reading and this summer, our daughter suggested that I read *Eat, Pray, Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert (London, England: Penguin Books Ltd, 2006). Though I had mixed feelings about this book, I was intrigued by some of the one-liners and new information I read. For example, Gilbert, in talking about her faith, said, "We were Protestants, and not even devout ones, at that. We said grace only before Christmas and Thanksgiving dinner and went to church sporadically. My dad chose to stay at home on Sunday mornings, finding his devotional practice in farming. I sang in the choir because I liked singing; my pretty sister was the angel in the Christmas pageant. My mother used the church as headquarters from which to organize good works of volunteer service for the community. But even in that church, I don't remember there being a lot of talking about God" (p152).

As I reflect upon this, several thoughts cross my mind. Prominent among them are:

Do we participate in volunteer activities in the church because we enjoy doing things such as singing in the choir or do we do them out of our commitment to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? It is my opinion that when we do any ministry out of our commitment to Christ, we indeed become passionate about it and our passion may indeed become a witness for Him.

What kind of Christians would we be if we were busy doing all kinds of activities without talking a lot about God? How would our church differ from service clubs? What about our local churches? Do we talk about God our Creator, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, and the Holy Spirit our guide? Do our ministries demonstrate very clearly that we do all that we do because of our commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in our lives and in our local communities of faith?

As we plan our fall activities – as we prepare for our Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for distribution in our communities – may our ministries proclaim clearly that we do all this because we belong to a risen Savior and that our trust and hope in the Triune God is the basis for our ministry and mission.

Hispanic Heritage Month is September 15 – October 15. There are also four special days on our October calendar: World Communion Sunday, Children Sabbath, Laity Sunday, and Reformation Sunday. Each of these four Sundays has a history and a significance that need interpretation.

May we, as clergy and laity, research this special Heritage month and special Sundays so we can celebrate them with passion. Sporadic Sunday attendees like Elizabeth Gilbert cannot get excited and become part of the church that is committed to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world unless we enable them and help them to learn.

In Christ's love,

*Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar*

## THANKS FOR YOUR PATIENCE

Last month we promised an early resumption of *Relay Online*, for those who like their conference paper in the electronic format. We regret that this has not happened, but we hope that soon – perhaps by the time you receive this paper – the *Relay* will be speeding your way cybernetically. Watch for it!



Serving the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

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## Russian and American Youth Team Up for Mission

Continuing in a tradition of witness and service, leadership development and cultural exchange, fellowship and fun, a team of youth and adults – Russian and American – shared in a two week mission here last summer.

Arriving in New Jersey from Smolensk, Russia, August 11, a team of youths, accompanied by adults, were paired with their GNJ counterparts for the fortnight mission. In some ways this is a continuation of a mission that began last summer when a team of Americans traveled to Smolensk.

The youth Volunteers in Mission (VIM) team was welcomed by two host churches, Pitman and Manasquan, which opened their doors and their homes to the visitors, pairing the team into six groups – one Russian and one American – in separate homes for a week.

Along with Pitman and Manasquan, additional churches and families hosted the team for breakfast, lunch, dinner, pool parties, a “Christmas dinner,” Russian concerts, Bar-B-Q’s, a bonfire with s’mores – and much more.

The VIM missionaries learned the past and present history of the Methodist Church by visiting Old St. George’s Church and Mother Bethel AME Church in Philadelphia, and the General Board of Global Ministries in New York. The team did mission work at the Camden Neighborhood Center, made cookies for volunteer firefighters & EMT’s and helped at the Vacation Bible School program at St. Peter’s Church, Ocean City.

Julia, a high school student from Smolensk found satisfaction in working with the Neighborhood Center children.

“Working with the children really shows you it doesn’t matter where you are from,” she said. “Children just like having people who care for them.”

The team enjoyed a cultural exchange as they visited New York City, Lancaster, Pa., and the Cowtown Rodeo in Salem County. They went to see a high school and a hospital. They took in a Phillies game. They romped in the



**WITH T-SHIRTS AND SMILES, and Jeans and traditional Russian dress, the U.S.A. AND RUSSIA mingle and mesh, on this VIM mission team that toured the GNJ Conference in August. And also smiling with pride and appreciation — but minus T-shirt — is Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar. The VIM mission was part of the continuing GNJ exchange with citizens of the Russian city of Smolensk.**

surf at the Jersey shore.

Each day one of the youth would lead the team in a devotion, using Acts 2: 42-47 as the theme.

“One of the many blessings was when Anton and Julia, two Russian youth, led the team in our last devotion for this summer,” noted one of the American team members. “As it is found in Acts, ‘Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily

those who were being saved.’”

Russian student, Anton, said in this devotion that “we (Russian and US team) have been doing this each day and by us doing all that we did, others see us and start to help people. It’s like dominoes each one after another will fall and if one is missing we can jump in to fill the gap.”

On their last morning together team members ended as they had begun, with communion in a circle of love.

“After many hugs and tears our dear friends drove off but it was not ‘good bye,’ it was ‘see you later,’” noted one group member. “It was a blessed ex-

perience to be in partnership with our brothers and sisters from Russia. We pray that God will continue to strengthen our relationship with them and others around the globe.”

The GNJ Conference has had a continuing relationship with a growing United Methodist community in Smolensk for two decades as part of the United Methodist Russia Initiative.

For more information about becoming part of the Youth VIM Team to Smolensk next summer, 2011 readers may contact Julie Morris at [juliekmorris@hotmail.com](mailto:juliekmorris@hotmail.com) or Gary Albert [albertgang@comcast.net](mailto:albertgang@comcast.net).

### BRIDGETON OUTREACH TO CHILDREN



BRIDGETON – An ecumenical summer program for community children here brought United Methodists and Episcopalians together rethinking Church.

Throughout the month of July, on Wednesdays and Thursdays each week, First Church offered a program designed for the children of the community. There was Bible stories, music, games and food. Included in the program was a weekly parking lot visit by the bookmobile.

Participating in the project with the United Methodist congregation was St. Andrew Episcopal Church.

On the last day of the program, a fiesta was held that featured tasty Mexican food from a local restaurant.

### All Systems Go for GoZone

The GoZone Challenge, a friendly competition that pits team members from participating annual conferences, is underway. And GNJ, a relative newcomer to the pack, is making its presence felt. As the Relay went to press, Greater New Jersey was in 8th place among 31 competing teams.

The Challenge began Wednesday, September 20 and will continue to October 27. Team members wear pedometers to count the steps taken. The winning team earns \$500 for their confer-

ence and each qualified team player earns health miles credited to his or her personal HealthMile account.

This GoZone Challenge is a program of Healthflex, the conference healthcare program. The team that accumulates the most Healthmiles is awarded bragging rights among the Healthflex participating conferences.

The conference team’s progress will be reported during the course of the competition in the GNJ Digest.

### Gordon Turk to Perform at Whiting

Gordon Turk, critically acclaimed concert organist, will present a recital at the Whiting Church October 24. The performance will be a feature of an ongoing 25th anniversary celebration.

Dr. Turk, whose keyboard wizardry is well known along the Atlantic seaboard, is the artist presiding over the organ at the Great Auditorium in Ocean Grove. He has performed across the United States and in Europe, Russia, the Ukraine, and Japan. He is also and organist-choirmaster at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, Wayne, Pa.

A coffee/social hour will follow the 3 p.m. concert. Tickets and information are available at the church office, 732 350-6878. The church is located on Rte. 530, Lacey Road, opposite Crestwood Manor.



**Gordon Turk**



# Global Relay

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

WASHINGTON — Retired United Methodist Bishop James K. Mathews, who died Sept. 8 at the age of 97, was remembered at a memorial service scheduled at Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church, Washington, D.C. A bishop for more than half his life, he was regarded as an elder statesman of the church. In the early years of his ministry he had been a missionary to India where he met and married the daughter of renowned missionary evangelist, E. Stanley Jones. In his retirement he was frequently called upon as a trouble-shooter for taking on difficult assignments for the church.

## New York's Bishop Park supports Islamic center

NEW YORK — The United Methodist bishop for metropolitan New York has announced his support for the building of an Islamic community center and mosque near ground zero. To deny such religious freedom, Bishop Jeremiah Park said Sept. 1, "makes us less as Americans and weaker as a nation." Some opponents consider the close location to the former World Trade Center site to be insensitive to those who lost loved ones there.

## Millions of nets to cover Sierra Leone

SHEMINGO, Sierra Leone — Isata Sesay, who was 3 years old on Sept. 15, has suffered repeated attacks of malaria since birth. United Methodists are working to help children like Isata. The church is contributing 610,000 bed nets in November as part of a larger nationwide distribution of insecticide-treated bed nets in Sierra Leone.

## End religious bigotry, faith leaders say

WASHINGTON — A diverse group of religious leaders has called upon other U.S. spiritual leaders to join them in condemning "derision, misinformation or outright bigotry directed against any religious group in this country."

## Providing basics for Pakistan's flood survivors

DUBAIR, Pakistan — With its steep valleys and isolated villages, the northern Pakistan district of Kohistan is a tough, hardscrabble place, and already residents coping with Pakistan's recent devastating floods are worried about the coming winter, Chris Herlinger of Church World Service reports. In recent weeks, Church World Service — a partner of The United Methodist Church — has provided medical care for hundreds in several locales in Kohistan and surrounding districts through its mobile health units.

## Alert: Upper Room not involved with movie

NASHVILLE — A movie titled "I AM," which is scheduled for release this fall, currently is being promoted to churches in North America by its production company, "Upper Room Multimedia." The Upper Room, a division of the United Methodist Board of Discipleship, released a statement letting churches know that it is in no way affiliated with the California-based production company.

## UMTV: Church Embraces Haitians

ORLANDO, Fla. (UMTV) — Nearly one million Haitians are estimated to live in the United States, 200,000 in Florida alone. Yet some Sunshine State residents say they never thought much about their neighbors until images on television showed damage and human suffering caused by a 7.0 earthquake in January. Members of First United Methodist Church in Winter Park, Fla., partnered with the congregation at Berea Haitian United Methodist Church nearby. These two communities have found ways to support each other and help the people of Haiti. You can view UMTV's "Church Embraces Haitians" at <http://bit.ly/aG1Ev>. Find this and other UMTV stories on YouTube, and Tangle by typing "UMTV" in the video keyword search. You can also find the latest UMTV videos on Facebook if you become a fan of the page for The United Methodist Church.

## Diverse church lifts up New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS — For more than a century before Hurricane Katrina, First United Methodist Church and Grace United Methodist Church existed in their own worlds. Geographically they were less than a mile apart. But they were divided by race. The two churches merged after the storm, and attendance has steadily increased from about 47 to more than 200. "It has been the best thing that ever happened to us," one member said.

## 105-year-old leads hospitality ministry

ANDREWS, N.C. — Jean Christy felt she was not doing enough for her church, so she called her pastor and asked how she might volunteer. She was a mere 104 at the time. Christy suggested she might use her telephone skills to cheer up her fellow Christians, and her pastor agreed. Since March, Christy has been the "birthday ambassador" for Andrews United Methodist Church. Since March, Christy has been the "birthday ambassador" for Andrews (N.C.) United Methodist Church. She estimates she calls at least one person a week. She offers well wishes not just to regular worshippers, but also those who have not gone to church in a while. "I just call up and say, 'Your church wants you to have a very happy birthday, and Miss Christy wants you to have one also,'" she said. "And they seem really happy to hear it." Her church recently returned the favor by hosting a community birthday party with letters of congratulation from TV personality Willard Scott and others.

## Hispanic caucus focuses on youth, outreach

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Young Latino Methodists are eager to take the church's message into the world and be advocates for change, a youth leader said. Freddy Bermudez Jr., a college student and member of San Pablo United Methodist Church in Waukegan, Ill., was among the young people energized at the annual meeting of MARCHA (Methodists Associated Representing the Cause of Hispanic Americans.)

## Zoning battles endanger religious freedom

NASHVILLE — A proposal to build an Islamic center near ground zero in New York is drawing a great deal of national attention, but battles over religious zoning are being fought throughout the country. Political scientist Anthony Gill of the University of Washington says it is difficult to estimate the number of cases nationally where local communities have tried to restrict religious buildings, but he gets the sense from his research that the number is increasing. And it is no small matter. The issue of whether religious groups can build sanctuaries convenient to their members is critical to the free exercise of religion.

# Caldwell Letter, Signed by 90 Church Leaders, Alleges Racism in Attacks on Obama

A UMNS Report  
By Heather Hahn

More than 90 Christian clergy and laity have signed a letter calling for church members to speak out against racially motivated attacks against President Obama.

The Rev. Gil Caldwell, a retired United Methodist pastor residing in Asbury Park, and newly appointed pastor of Asbury Church, Atlantic City, wrote the letter after seeing criticism of Obama he felt went beyond the usual political sniping all presidents face.

A long time foot-soldier in the Civil Rights Movement, Caldwell was one of the founders of Black Methodists for Church Renewal.

Caldwell pointed to such examples as the repeated demands to see Obama's birth certificate and the continued charges that Obama is not Christian. Caldwell also pointed to a South Carolina Republican Party activist likening Michelle Obama to a gorilla.

"If, despite any differences we might have with President Barack Obama, we have not understood that the assaults upon him (and his spouse and children) have a racial component, we are deaf, dumb and blind," he wrote.

He stressed that he does not regard all criticism of the president as racist, and he also disagrees with some of Obama's policies. Racism, he said, occurs when people judge Obama by a double standard they would not use if the president were white.

Caldwell's letter, titled "**The Elephant in the Room is Race**," follows an Aug. 25 statement signed by more than 70 Christian leaders condemning misrepresentations of President Obama's Christian faith. That statement was released by the Eleison Group, a consulting firm started by Burns Strider, a former adviser to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and faith outreach director during Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign.

At Caldwell's request, the Rev. Vance Ross, an executive with the United Methodist Board of Discipleship, has circulated his letter to other Christian leaders. Most of the signers are also black United Methodists.

Ross said, as a follower of Jesus, he felt he needed to speak out regarding the criticism Obama has faced.

"We are called to love all people, and speak on their behalf when they are treated unjustly," he said. "It seems like we're moving backward, and by our silence, we indicate consent."

The Rev. Maxine Allen, another signer of the letter, agreed. Allen is the minister of ethnic ministries for the Arkansas Annual Conference and campus minister at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.



Rev. Gil Caldwell

## Would Enjoy Sharing

ASBURY PARK — The Rev. Gil Caldwell would welcome opportunities to share and discuss his Elephant article with churches of the conference.

"I believe more than ever, we as United Methodists can provide leadership in responding to the remaining vestiges of racial misunderstanding." The retired pastor and civil rights leader told the *Relay*. "My candor represents my effort to encourage others to 'dare' to talk about 'The Elephant'."

Any honoraria derived from such speaking engagements will be contributed to Asbury Church, Atlantic City, his new appointment, he said.

"Until we stop talking that we are living in a post-racial society," she said, "there will always be an elephant in the room."

United Methodists need to break their silence, Caldwell said in an interview, because the fears he sees today are not unlike some of the passions being stroked during the civil rights movement. During that period, Caldwell participated in the March on Washington in 1963 and registered black voters during Mississippi Freedom Summer in 1964.

"Martin Luther King writes of his concern for the moderates, whose fear and/or quietness caused them to be silent as the civil rights movement moved forward," he said. "I do not want historians to write of The United Methodist Church of this moment that it was silent in the face of soft as well as hard-line racism."

(Heather Hahn is a United Methodist News Service multimedia reporter.)

## Rethink Church has new Web address

NASHVILLE — Congregational resources for the Rethink Church advertising and welcoming campaign have moved to a new website address: [umcom.org/rethinkchurch](http://umcom.org/rethinkchurch). The website that previously housed congregational resources, RethinkChurch.org, will become the primary seeker site that is featured in Rethink Church advertising, beginning this fall. "Research shows that *RethinkChurch.org* resonates most strongly with the seekers we are trying to reach with our denominational advertising," said the Rev. Larry Hollon, chief executive of United Methodist Communications. "This website address reinforces the message we want non-United Methodist seekers to take away from our advertising — that we are rethinking church."

## Second pastor is crucial for new churches

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C. — The appointment of a second pastor to a new church start is a crucial point in that congregation's survival, a United Methodist Board of Discipleship executive said. The Rev. Gary A. Shockley, executive director of the agency's New Church Starts Division, Path 1, spoke to 72 newly appointed district superintendents and 10 directors of connectional ministries attending an orientation session Aug. 29 - Sept. 3. Shockley said agency staff in congregational development need to put more thought into providing guidance to bishops and their cabinets on those second appointments, too. "Keep checking on your new churches," he said. "Keep an eye on the handoff to the second leader."

## GNJ'S Franck Anguilh Brings Hope to His Native Haiti

Amidst disaster and ruin in Haiti, the church is a place of hope.

"The people come," said Rev. Franck Aguilh. "They have hope in God. What keeps the people going is their faith."

Rev. Aguilh has made it his personal mission to help build hope in Haiti following the January 12 earthquake. Ordained an elder in full connection at the 2007 Annual Conference of the GNJ Conference, Pastor Aguilh made the decision to retire this year, to follow a new calling that God had placed upon his heart.

"There is a different call on my life that I just have to answer," he explained.

He said his congregants at First Church, Montclair, were surprised by his retirement, but that he felt God calling him to ministry in Haiti, and that it would be difficult to follow his new calling while in parish ministry.

"There was no way I could be a full-time pastor," said Mr. Aguilh, a Haitian native. "I needed to devote myself fully to Haiti. I want to make a difference in someone's life."

Since January, he has made two trips to Haiti, each for a week. By the time this is published, he will be in Haiti again, this time for a month long trip.

He said that while all the people of Haiti are important to him, he has a soft place in his heart for the children and young adults.

"They need to know that they are loved. They need to know that someone loves them," said Mr. Aguilh, who spent his first mission trip to Haiti at an orphanage.

He said young girls are having babies and they lose their hope.

"We need to do something to give them hope," he said. "We need to build a better future, a better day for them."

On his second mission to Haiti, he partnered with Annie Allen, Associate Director of Communities of Shalom, to bring leadership training to the people. Communities of Shalom is an organization that seeks to build community and unity, transforming the world one community at a time. It is based at Drew University, and Dr. Michael Christensen is the National Director.

"The basic idea is to help the people help themselves," said Mr. Aguilh.

This concept of providing resources for the people has prompted the Haitian pastor to establish Haiti Hope House, a non-profit organization that will both help educate kids and provide young adults with marketable skills. He has recently begun the required process.



**HOPE TAKES SHAPE** in the form of rebuilding an earthquake damaged house in Fedja, Haiti. Here Pastor Aguilh, on his first trip back to Haiti since the January disaster, joins Dave Knapp (right) of the Ginghamburg (Ohio) Church, in the reconstruction project.

"My own personal mission is to create an environment conducive to education to kids and to provide training to young adults," he said.

The Rev. Mr. Aguilh said he will use some of his own experience that includes an MA in business administration, as a certified project manager and as an electrical engineer to provide hands on training that is marketable to young people. He also plans to work with organizations that already exist within Haiti to accomplish this mission.

"They can use these skills to better their own future and the future of their country," said the former Montclair pastor.

From this point on Mr. Aguilh plans on alternating his time here and in Haiti,

one month at a time. He said that his wife Langirene, who is a Nurse Practitioner, will hopefully accompany him on some of his trips during her vacation time.

Each trip costs anywhere from \$1,500 to over \$2000, depending on its location and duration and Pastor Aguilh is looking for individuals and churches, who would be inspired to sponsor his trips.

"Right now I am paying out of my pockets and my pockets are not that deep," he said with a smile.

If you would like to help, you can contact the Rev. Franck Aguilh by email at [franck\\_aguilh\\_pmp@verizon.net](mailto:franck_aguilh_pmp@verizon.net).

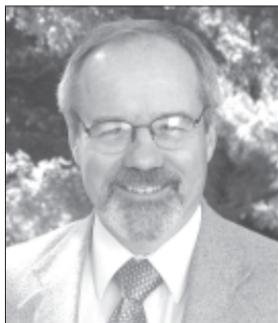
—JS

## VITAL CONGREGATIONS

### Passion, People, Principles:

By Douglas Ruffle

Coordinator of Congregational Development, GNJAC



This past summer I read a book with an intriguing title, *Strategy and the Fat Smoker: Doing what's obvious but not easy*. Written by David Meister, this book, while directed to a corporate audience, has plenty to say to those of us living in the world of the church. (see *Strategy and the Fat Smoker: Doing What's Obvious but not easy* by David Maister (Boston: The Spangler Press, 2008).

Like the fat smoker who knows he needs to quit smoking and eat better, we in the church know we need to reach out to new people. We know we need to make changes in the way we offer hospitality and do mission. We know we need to remain true to our values and principles as United Methodists, but it is not easy. It is easier to fall back on the things we have always done, even if what we have always done doesn't lead to appreciable improvement in making disciples of Jesus Christ.

For Meister, if we are to overcome the "Fat Smoker" syndrome, we need to forge an alignment in our passion, our love and understanding of people, and the principles by which we live and breathe.

For those of us in the church, passion comes from our love of God and our ardent desire to share that love with others. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" (I Corinthians 9:16 NIV).

Paul felt compelled to preach. He could not do otherwise. Does the passion we have in the church compel us to preach the gospel? Does it compel us to share the good news with others?

People also are a priority for those of us who seek to move ahead with the mission and ministry of Christ. We love people, all people. We love those who are part of our fellowship and we love the people who live in our neighborhoods and need the love of Christ that we can embody. Moreover, we understand the underlying needs that people have and we make every effort to meet those needs. We remember the commandment that Jesus gave his followers: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit — fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is my command: Love each other" (John 15:16-17 NIV).

As a church we need to be clear about our principles. In our case, we are of the people who believe in the primacy of scripture, the historic tradition of the Church, the use of our God-given faculties of reason, and the power of the Spirit to move in and among us through experience. This is our identity as people called Methodist. We remember the words of Paul, "So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation . . ." (II Corinthians 5:16-18 NIV). We would be wise to remember our Wesleyan heritage rooted in personal and social holiness.

For Meister, the key is keeping these three elements in balance. If we have a passion for sharing Christ and have a genuine love for people, but are not clear about our principles and our identity, we are rootless and can be led astray from the foundations of our faith tradition. If we have passion for sharing Christ and clarity about our principles and identity, but no true understanding of what makes people 'tick' we may indeed draw people to us—but not for long. People will see through to the fact that we really don't care about them. If we have clarity around our principles and identity and we understand people, but have no passion, we will most likely be judgmental and ultimately ineffective in reaching new people for Christ. We need to be attached to the vine that nurtures our love of God.

We need all three of the elements: passion, people and principles (identity). How are we doing?

... together we can do so much

Helen Keller

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## 'Live your faith,' Tony Cruz and Bishop tell Youth Weekenders

Youth are often told they are the church of tomorrow, but the message of the 2010 Ocean City Youth Weekend was loud and clear – "You are the church of today!"

Over 650 youth and youth leaders gathered for the weekend September 10-12 for fun and fellowship.

The featured speaker of the weekend was Tony Cruz, a national evangelist noted for his dynamic preaching and illustrated messages that bring scripture to life.

Cruz captivated the attention of youth and their leaders both Friday and Saturday night. He challenged them to "bring the cheese" and live their faith out loud. He told them to leave their excuses behind.

"God is more concerned with your availability, than your abilities," said Cruz.

Cruz also told the youth that God wasn't looking for them to *do* something, but *be* something. He asked what

ing together; Christianity isn't about standing alone. To be the NOW generation, we need to march together," challenged Cruz.

Worship was led by Lacey United Methodist Church's praise team Friday night, and Group 1 Crew performed Saturday night.

"This weekend provided something special, a place where youth could come be in fellowship with hundreds of other youth to share their own story in a faith filled place," said the Rev. Erica Munoz, coordinator of children, youth, and young adult ministries for



**FAITH AND WORKS CHALLENGE, a new opportunity for youth to become involved in community service, was offered to weekenders. Many got into the swing of things by putting together soup kits.**

the Conference. "Ocean City Youth weekend is designed to provide exactly that atmosphere. Our hope is that local churches will now go back and unpack everything that they took in this weekend."

She said that many lives were transformed during youth weekend. Over



**YOUTH EVANGELIST Tony Cruz catches the ears and the hearts of his young audience at this year's Youth Weekend in Ocean City. "Christianity isn't about standing alone," he said. "To be the NOW generation, we need to march together."**

150 youth committed their lives to Christ and 12 indicated a call to ordained ministry.

To help provide resources to the youth gathered, there were more workshops offered Saturday morning than in previous years. Workshops dealt with issues relevant to today, including one on bullying and another on using scripture as a tool when dealing with tough situations. There were also workshops on mission work, Taize, social networking, and Biblical storytelling.

The weekend also kicked off the Faith and Works Challenge, which asks each youth group in the Conference to commit to 1,000 hours of service during the 2010-11 school year. These hours can be accomplished through church, school or in the community. Youth groups who complete the challenge will receive a certificate at Youth Weekend 2011. Youth were able to complete their first hour of service by putting together soup kits Saturday afternoon.

The weekend of inspiration and fun drew to a close Sunday morning with a worship service led by the Northern Shore District Youth. During his sermon Bishop Devadhar encouraged the

youth.

"It is not about our age; it is all about embodying the word of God in our lives," said the Bishop. "It is about our Christian demeanor of humility. It is all about love, which extends beyond the cliques at our cafeteria tables. It is all about faith, which draws its strength from the divine power. It is all about integrity, demonstrating our Christian faith in our schools and society."

Bishop Devadhar also left the youth with a challenge.

"You are not here by accident," he said. "You are here with a purpose. God is calling you by name. You know what your gifts are! Are you willing to surrender yourselves completely to Him so that you go back to your churches, schools, and communities as a new person in Christ?"

Now begins the planning for Youth Weekend 2011. If you have any ideas or would like to be on the planning team contact Rev. Erica Munoz at 732-359-1042 or by email at [Emunoz@gnjumc.org](mailto:Emunoz@gnjumc.org).

"God is good," said Munoz. "We hope every church in the GNJ will join us next year!"

— JS



would happen if the youth present at the weekend brought their faith back to their schools and brought their Bibles with them on the bus.

"When you march, it's about stand-

### Study shows young clergy increasing

WASHINGTON (UMNS) — A study released recently testifies to the ongoing need for more young adults becoming clergy in The United Methodist Church.

The denomination is moving in the right direction. Between 2009 and 2010, the number of young elders, deacons and local pastors (those under the age of 35) increased.

There are more young clergy than 10 years ago, according to the 2010 study by the Lewis Center for Church Leadership of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

However, for the first time, more than half of the active elders in the United States are now between the ages of 55 and 72. Elders who are 35 to 54 comprise only 45 percent of the nation's 17,293 elders.

Younger clergy are not necessarily better ministers than their older colleagues, but they often bring a new passion and fresh ideas to their vocation, said the Rev. Lovett H. Weems Jr., the project director of the study.

Ongoing leadership requires new generations to come in, he added.

## RELAY REVIEWS

### Book Review

by Dan Casselberry

**Church in the Inventive Age**

by Doug Pagitt

Published 2010, Spark House, Publishers, Paperback, \$14.99

Also available in Kindle Edition from Amazon.com

Books about the need for change in the church are everywhere, but not so many of them give a solid rationale for why change is necessary and how it should be approached.

Church In the Inventive Age remedies that. Pagitt carefully develops his thesis that the role of the church is to live as a participant in the culture. In the book, he describes the four "ages" the church has come through in this country: the Agrarian Age, the Industrial Age, the Information Age, and now the Inventive Age.

Pagitt maintains that change is inevitable and inescapable, and that we cannot pretend that cultural change doesn't affect the church. It does, and always has.

He further develops a value system for the inventive church, comprised of the essential values of inclusion, participation, collaboration, and beauty.

Pagitt recognizes the different internal cultures of congregations and gives helpful suggestions as to how churches can begin to understand their cultural underpinnings in ways that will facilitate their healthy transition to the Inventive Age.

Pagitt's main goal is to get churches to talk about their cultural assumptions, their past and future.

This book is well worth reading, and will be of real value to churches struggling to define and redefine themselves in a rapidly changing world. Highly recommended!



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For additional information contact  
K. Edward Jacobi, President  
at 732-747-4891 or  
[ejacobi07739@yahoo.com](mailto:ejacobi07739@yahoo.com)  
or Jay Kim at the GNJAC Office  
732-359-1032



# YOUTH WORKER TRAINING FOR 2010 - 2011

**Free Training for you - the Youth Worker!!**

This year youth worker trainings will be held around the conference in all 9 districts. It is our hope that you will be able to attend each of the three trainings at a location near you.

All trainings will be held from 7-9 p.m. at the designated church. Refreshments will be provided. Please RSVP to Ginny Kaiser at 732-359-1043 - 1 week prior to the training.

**October 21<sup>st</sup>** 7-9pm **Youth Workers- Get a Life!** - Balancing your ministry and personal life. Gateway South Chews UMC

**November 18<sup>th</sup>** 7-9pm **Recruiting Volunteers** get the right people excited about helping with young people Northern Shore West Grove UMC - Neptune

**January 20<sup>th</sup>** 7-9pm **Discipleship for Youth** how to get them involved and keep them involved Gateway North Morrow Memorial UMC

**February 24<sup>th</sup>** 7-9pm **Youth Workers- Get a Life!** - Balancing your ministry and personal life. Palisades Ridgewood UMC

**March 24<sup>th</sup>** 7-9pm **Recruiting Volunteers** - get the right people excited about helping with young people Cape Atlantic Somers Point UMC

**April 14<sup>th</sup>** 7-9 pm **Discipleship for Youth** how to get them involved and keep them involved Delaware Bay Pitman UMC

**May 19<sup>th</sup>** 7-9pm **Youth Workers- Get a Life!** - Balancing your ministry and personal life. Raritan Valley Bridgewater UMC

**June 16<sup>th</sup>** 7-9pm **Recruiting Volunteers** get the right people excited about helping with young people Capital St. Marks Hamilton Sq.



**Christian Educators Event**  
Louisville, KY  
**October 22-25, 2010**  
For more information visit [www.cefumc.org](http://www.cefumc.org)



## Safe Sanctuaries

Safe Sanctuaries Workshop led by Rev. Erica Munoz  
When: Saturday October 16, 2010  
Time: 9:00 - 12:00 pm (lunch not provided)  
RSVP to Ginny Kaiser at 732-359-1043

## YOUTH 2011

July 13-17, 2011

## You Think YOU are Ordinary...Think Again!!

The Greater NJ Conference will be arranging bus transportation to Purdue University in West Lafayette Indiana for Youth 2011. (You must register your youth group to attend the event at [www.youth2011.org](http://www.youth2011.org)....this is only for transportation) Information available at [www.faithgarden.com](http://www.faithgarden.com) and [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org) Cost is \$75 a person for Round trip transportation. Space is limited so sign up your youth group soon!!

"Come join us in the Faith Garden & may we all grow together in Christ."

**Check it out !!!**  
[HTTP://WWW.FAITHGARDEN.COM](http://www.faithgarden.com)



### The new B1 projects for 2011 have been announced just in time for the new school year!

B1 is a 24 hour fasting event that raises money to empower the poor and disempower unjust systems sustaining poverty in our world. Youth participating in B1 pledge to raise money for an Advance project from sponsors while working through a curriculum aimed to teach them about poverty and economic injustice. 100% of the funds raised go directly to the project the youth choose. Each year we feature up to six projects and missionaries to choose from. B1 is not however just about raising money! It is about connecting our lives to our brothers and sisters who are poor. We make a difference in their lives when we choose to make a difference in our lives. Check out the B1 website for more information at [www.fasttodaychangetomorrow.org](http://www.fasttodaychangetomorrow.org).

The new B1 projects along with a brief description are listed below.

**Bio-Intensive Agriculture Training Center (Kenya)** - Advance # 14217A: Money given to this project will help the center demonstrate, through practical examples, that smallholder farmers can produce more nutritious food and increase family income by efficiently utilizing small land units they own using appropriate simple organic farming methods.

**Community health and agriculture development - CHAD (Cambodia)**- Advance #14916A: This project provides training in health, microloans, and entrepreneurial organization in Cambodia.

**Jubilee Project (USA)** - Advance # 781350: Jubilee project works with the people of Tennessee, enhancing the abilities and opportunities with the tools and assets to

be economically self-sufficient **Agro-ecological farming for formerly landless families (Brazil)** - Advance # 3020559: This project transforms local food systems by creating a sustainable livelihood and protecting the environment in Brazil.

**Katherine Parker, Missionary (Cambodia)** - Advance # 15187Z: Ms. Parker works with CHAD, the community health and agriculture development program in Cambodia.

**Child Action Initiative (Democratic Republic of Congo)** - Advance # 3021036: Child Action Initiative develops wells, clinics, schools, and farms for HIV/AIDS-orphaned children and vulnerable women.

In addition to B1, The Advance is launching a new campaign this fall. 10-Fold is an educational campaign aimed to raise awareness and funds for 10 Advance projects over a 10 day period. Beginning October 10, 2010, each day will feature an Advance project on the 10-Fold website, [www.10-Fold.org](http://www.10-Fold.org), through webcasts, videos, and other multimedia experiences. Each time a participant in 10-Fold logs on and registers as an Advocate, our sponsors for that day's project will donate \$1 to the cause. We hope to generate 10,000 advocates a day for each of the 10 days for a total of 100,000 advocates and \$100,000 raised for The Advance projects. Get your local congregations involved in this effort to raise awareness and funds for The United Methodist Church's mission projects and missionaries around the world! Please join us in this educational event and learn about how the church connects in mission throughout the world.



# Experiencing God's Presence through Song and Silence

*Sharing a desire to draw closer to God, more than 3,000 youthful seekers gathered at the retreat center in Taize, France in late July. Among them were 44 pilgrims from the Greater New Jersey Conference and Drew Theological School. Last month we offered the first part of Jeff Markay's report on that retreat experience. Here is the concluding portion of the Q & A of the retreatants from GNJAC and Drew.*

## How did you experience God's presence, guidance, and/or peace in your pilgrimage at Taize?

"I have been struggling with my path in life. God finally gave me peace and a few answers during one of the night prayer services." Becky Kralle, Chews UMC

"By learning to appreciate how universal the church is. I was moved by the integration of numerous different cultures." Shane Bogusz, Belmar UMC

"I experienced God's presence during the songs we sang." Skylar Cooper, St. Pauls UMC

"I was reminded that a pastor who is not rested and spiritually fed cannot lead their congregants to find rest and food. I need to take intentional time to experience God, and intentional time to rest." Misty Howick, Drew Theological School seminarian

"I experienced God's presence through the Brothers of Taize, and their amazing selfless lifestyles. I also learned that I can start my day over again, no matter what the situation. I can choose to move it in the direction I'd like spiritually." Nicole Krauss, Lacey UMC

"Through sharing with and the support of my peers." Amanda Rohrs, Drew Theological School seminarian

## What did you experience in the times of silence during worship or other times of silence?

"During the silence, I got to know myself more." Patricia Henriquez, Union City UMC.

"A sense of clarity." Kahson Bounds, Mt. Zion UMC

"You do not need to be alone to have silence." Richard Wright, Mt. Zion UMC

"Peace, forgiveness and love." Sean Kennedy, Bradley Beach UMC

"I experienced the movement of God during the silence. I was at one with God. Our hearts beat simultaneously." The Rev. Kim Holmes, Drew Theological School seminarian

"More often than not, I just prayed, but on 2 occasions God truly spoke to me." Nicole Krauss, Lacey UMC

"I was in silence for the last two days of the week. It was very clear to me during this period that I am able to hear the voice of God." Wayne Stackhouse, Drew Theological School seminarian

"I finally found answers to questions I've been asking myself for a long time." Becky Kralle, Chews UMC

"Peace. Reflection. I've never been able to pray so thoroughly before Taize, especially with the 10 minutes of silence at each prayer service." Shannon Dean, Kingston UMC

## What do you want to tell your home congregation about your experience of God at Taize?

"I learned that there is more than one way to serve God." Adaia Ingram, Ferry Avenue UMC

"It was so full! Full of everything good in the world." Leah Raczynski, Grace UMC



**MUSIC, expressed primarily through the Taize chants, blends with the silence and heightens the spiritual aura of Taize. Here Drew Seminarian Misty Howick sings at the morning prayer.** (Photos by Chris Heckert)

## TAIZÉ SERVICES

A mix of music and scripture, meditative chanting and silence in the Taizé manner designed to bring peace to the soul is available across the conference. Here are some of the opportunities.

- First Thursday, 7 p.m., First Church, Montclair
- Third Saturday, 5 - 6 p.m., Caldwell Church
- Every Wednesday, 6:45 p.m., Old First Church, West Long Branch
- Every Thursday at, 7:00 p.m., Tenafly Church
- Second Saturday, 7 p.m., Milford (Pa.) Church
- Second & Fourth Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., New City (N.Y.) Church
- First Saturday, 5:00 p.m., Montgomery Church

"I found a deeper relationship with God and plenty of new friends from all over the world." Becky Kralle, Chews UMC

"I never realized the importance of truly getting away and being with God. Too often we mingle God in with the hustle and bustle of the day, but He desires His own private time with you." Trinity Norwood, Ujima Village Christian Church

"There is a presence of God in silence. We can enthusiastically praise but it is in the silence that we can hear God most clearly." Wayne Stackhouse, Drew Theological School seminarian

## If you wanted to encourage another person to go to Taize in 2011, what would you say?

"Things will not be the same after you open up at Taize. Life will have new meaning." Richard Wright, Mt. Zion UMC

"The meals are simple, the night is fun, but the experience of worship and community is simply the best." John Cortese, Park UMC

"It's a good trip to go on and meet people from around the world. If you do not know Jesus, then it's a good place to start." Adaia Ingram, Ferry Avenue UMC

"In Taize, the world comes to you, and you see how everything should be. So much healing takes place." Leah Raczynski, Grace UMC

"Come to Taize for a better understanding of your faith and yourself." Jazmin Taylor, Mt. Zion UMC

"Taize is for the serious seeker. It is for those who want to be witnesses to the Kingdom of God and willing to open themselves up to new ways of praying, worshiping and experiencing the Divine." Misty Howick, Drew Theological School seminarian

"Simplicity is key, and it is enjoyable. You will have an amazing time, with amazing people. It was the best experience of my life." Rebecca Sella, Belvidere UMC

"Do it. You'll understand once you are there." Shannon Dean, Kingston UMC

Through this pilgrimage to Taize, the Greater NJ Conference has invested in the long term growth, depth and faithfulness of the youth and young adults of our churches. This ongoing pilgrimage is one of the ways that the Holy Spirit is inviting us into a new expression of reformation and renewal. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. We thank God for Bishop Devadhar and his vision of bringing youth and young adults to Taize. We thank God for the generosity, prayers and support of the congregations and families that have sent over 250 pilgrims to Taize over the last 5 years. We thank God for the witness, example and hospitality of the Brothers of Taize. We thank God for the seeds of faith that have been sown through this pilgrimage, and trust in the wisdom of the early church:

*I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6*

(The Rev. Jeff Markay is senior pastor of the United Methodist Church in Caldwell.)



**EARNEST DISCUSSION mixes with the silence and the song at Taize. Here, Bishop Devadhar shares in a discussion group during the week-long retreat.**



# Youth Assembly Mulls Issues Facing the Church

On July 19th youth and young adult members of the Greater New Jersey Conference journeyed to Berlin, Germany, for the Young People's Global Convocation. The conference was a worldwide gathering of United Methodist young people letting their voice be heard by the church at large.

At this gathering there were about 300 United Methodists from all over the world, from places such as the Philippines, Russia, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Netherlands, Mexico, and the United States, just to name a few. The people who went from the GNJAC were the Rev. Jessica Campbell, Melodie Jillson, the Rev. Juel Nelson, Weagba Nelson, Jessica Stenstrom, Sara Williamson, Bethany Amey, and Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar.

"What struck me about the Young People's Global Convocation was the face of the church; different, beautiful, dynamic, passionate, all one in the body of Christ," said Ms. Nelson.

## Voting on issues

This was the second young people's convocation where youth and young adults received a chance to vote on issues that matter to them prior to General Conference, the quadrennial law-making body of the denomination. Issues affirmed during the legislative session will be presented and voted on at the 2012 General Conference in Tampa, Fla. Some of the issues of real importance at the Convocation were: alcoholism, youth representation on committees and boards in our church, abortion, environmental issues, human sexuality, and supporting youth mission work.

"I was excited to see how passionate the youth and young adults were over issues that affect the world today," said Ms. Campbell, a voting delegate.

Each delegate had a translation pack, offering headphones and a choice of five languages, English, French, German, Russian, and Portuguese.

"It was interesting to know what it means to be 'lost in translation,'" noted one delegate. The speaker would tell a joke expecting immediate laughter, but there was an awkward pause as the translator finished, then the room burst into laughter.

## Bishop leads in worship

Bishop Devadhar led the opening



The Northeastern Jurisdiction delegation to the Young People's Global Convocation in Berlin, including the eight GNJ representatives, pose for the obligatory group picture during a free moment during the six-day assembly. Bishop Devadhar was one of the worship leaders at the event.

worship. There was liturgical dance, praise music from around the world, diverse bands and youth designed liturgy. Each day there was a different guest preacher. One morning worshiped was held in the Berlin Cathedral, a Protestant Church in the heart of Berlin.

One memorable sermon was given by a Russian youth pastor who held up pieces of a broken water glass, explaining that each one was special and unique in its own way, but did not have a purpose. They were just pieces of glass. Then holding up an unbroken glass, he declared that all of the pieces have found their purpose. Together they can do something that separately they could not do; they could hold water. We are like the pieces of glass, he concluded. We are beautiful, but when we work together we can achieve something we never imagined alone.

There was also the opportunity to go on two different excursions. Possible

excursions included dinner at the Church of the Container, a congregation started in 1996, with a church that was literally a large portable container. In 2009, the church was rebuilt larger, but still retains its container-like appearance.

Some also visited a former Jewish Concentration Camp. "It was upsetting to know that the hatred that caused the Holocaust to happen is still very much alive today and that there are still organizations of hate around the world," said Ms. Campbell. "In hearing the story it reminded us that God strongly calls us to continue proclaiming a message of love and peace, not of fear and hatred."

## A visit to the Berlin Wall

Another excursion was to the remnants of the Berlin Wall, built in 1961 to separate East Berlin from West Berlin, guarded by armed and uniformed men to keep people from fleeing East

Berlin to the west, broken down in November, 1989. The GNJ visitors heard stories of the 171 people who died trying to escape.

Another part of the part of the Berlin Wall, the East Side Gallery displays approximately 106 paintings by artists for all over the world, the largest open air gallery in the world.

While each participant had a slightly different experience, the GNJ delegation gained much at the Global Convocation.

"I really appreciated was seeing how passionate our youth and young people are about faith and God's justice," said Ms. Campbell. "As a teen I could barely think outside of myself but these young men and women care deeply about events happening thousands of miles away, about environmental impacts that they may not see for decades to come, and about human rights for all people. It truly gave me hope to hear their voices."

## VIEWPOINT

### Is Jesus Really Necessary?

by Gary Kochman

Here's a quick, 1-question quiz for Relay readers. Your answers and comments are invited.

#### Is Jesus really necessary for our salvation?

- Yes: faith in Jesus Christ is the only means God has provided for reconciliation with Him.
- No: Jesus offers a way to find peace with God, but other religions do so as well.
- I'm not sure, but I think this is an important question.
- I'm not sure, but it doesn't really make much difference to me or to the church either way.
- Other (Please explain.)

If United Methodist pastors polled their congregations on this basic question today, I'm afraid many may be surprised by the divergent results. United Methodist bishops who polled their pastors may be similarly surprised.

A potent heresy has infiltrated the United Methodist Church in recent years, and has gained a widespread and debilitating (yet, by the grace of God, not universal) acceptance among clergy and laity alike. In its simplest and seemingly noblest form, it is the idea that "All religions lead to God". In its equivalent but more overt form, it is the belief that Jesus is not really necessary for salvation, but is just one path among many equally valid alternatives.

This insidious assertion is directly opposed to the teachings of Jesus (John 3:14-18 and 14:6), Peter (Acts 4:12), and Paul (1 Timothy 2:3-7), and to the doctrines of the United Methodist Church (Book of Discipline 2008, Section 103, Article IX, page 69). It diminishes Jesus' sacrificial work on the cross

(Matthew 26:39, 42) and lowers Jesus Himself to one among many rather than one above all (Philippians 2:9-11). It renders its adherents lukewarm towards Christ: He's helpful for some, but not really necessary for others. And it eviscerates the urgency – and for some even the propriety! – of our witness to others about Jesus, thereby excusing our personal and corporate failures to do so at every opportunity.

Informed by this heresy, love for our neighbors is considered best expressed in tacit respect for their beliefs, whatever they may be, and through concerns for their temporal well-being, rather than in gentle but earnest and persistent prayer and witnessing of Christ for the sake of their infinitely precious and eternal souls (Mark 8:36-38). One direct consequence, for example, has been that our public outreach campaign for the past several years has consisted largely of assuring seekers that United Methodists are an accepting people (Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors), and now invites people to "Rethink Church" however they wish, but does not even mention the name of Jesus, much less urge all with ears to hear to turn to Him!

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, let us begin again to pay more careful attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. (Hebrews 2:1-4) United Methodist bishops, in light of the confusion within the church, I beg you to re-issue a clear and united statement of faith on this point. Pastors, I implore you by the power of the Holy Spirit to remind your congregations again of the foundational truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; do not assume that all are already familiar with these truths and hold them dear. And fellow lay members, as we hear the message our pastors bring, let us awake and rise from our long and comfortable slumber, and dare again to love our neighbors enough to share with them at every opportunity what Jesus Christ has done for us, and what He alone offers them as well, remembering that we are called always to speak the truth in love.

May the Holy Spirit fill us with God's love and grace, and revive, inspire, and embolden us all.

(Gary Kochman is a member of the Middletown United Methodist Church.)

## OBITUARIES

**HARVEY MALICK**, retired local pastor of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, died September 13, 2010. Funeral services were held September 17 at Wall United Methodist Church, Spring Lake, New Jersey.

Messages of condolence may be sent to Elwood Malick, 921 Greenwood Drive, Spring Lake Heights, New Jersey 07762. Memorial donations may be sent to Wall United Methodist Church, 2414 Old Mill Road, Spring Lake, New Jersey 07752.

**SUSAN MAE McARTHUR**, at-large lay member to the GNJ Annual Conference from the Matawan Church, died August 28, 2010. A Celebration of Life Service was HELD September 1 at the Matawan Church.

A lifetime member of the Matawan Church, Mrs. McArthur was a lay speaker and held various leadership positions within the church.

She is survived by two children, a son and a daughter.

Condolences may be sent to her daughter, Lisa Riccardi and son, James McArthur, at 119 Atlantic Avenue, Matawan, NJ 07747. Memorial donations may be directed to Meridian Hospice 1340A Campus Parkway, Neptune, NJ 07753.



**INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE.** Ranging from teen years to 94, this mission team from the Red Bank Church – 35 strong – spent part of their summer vacation working with the Appalachia Service Project in Brenton, W.Va.

### Holy Land Tour

ENGLEWOOD – Galilee Church here has announced its 14th Holy Land tour to be held February 18-27, 2010 and is inviting participants. Interested parties may receive detailed information by contacting the church at 201-567-0009.

### Stewardship Stories

By **Rich Hendrickson**  
Coordinator of Stewardship Education  
and Development, GNJAC

#### Don't be shy...

Pat Springle, in her essay, *The Genesis of Generosity*, makes the observation that "a growing number of church leaders today are taking bold steps to help their people become truly generous." These leaders teach, preach, celebrate, and model the idea that giving is much more than financial stewardship and tithing. As these leaders preach, teach, and model generosity as a way of life in their ministry setting, changes are happening in the churches, agencies, and institutions to which they are connected. Churches that are becoming known for their generosity are moving away from a campaign mentality that focuses on giving primarily in response to needs like building programs or church budgets. Instead they are creating an atmosphere or culture in which stewardship is not a program they run, but rather, an honest expression of who they are as the church of Jesus Christ.

Senior Pastor Brian Tome, of Crossroads Church in Cincinnati, puts it this way: "By not talking about God's perspective on money and possessions, we condition people to become consumers instead of givers. We wanted to communicate with our parishioners that we're not here just to fund our local church ministry. We're part of a revolution God initiated to change the world."

Friends, the "revolution" begins with each and every one of us being a blessing to the people around us — and eventually, being a blessing to people around the world. Generosity is not a program! Being a blessing should be a passion that inspires everything we are, everything we say, and everything we do. Pastor Brian works with this theology, "We unapologetically present giving opportunities to our congregation. We're happy to give everybody the opportunity to have an impact on the world."



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Qualifications: B.A. from an accredited university or college.

Experience: 3-5 years of experience in fundraising analysis, materials and activities, stewardship experience preferably in a church setting. Experience with solicitation of pastors, ministers, church lay leaders and members. Membership and active participation in the life of the church both at the local church and judicatory level in a lay or clergy capacity for at least 5 years.

Job skills: Ability to identify, cultivate and solicit prospects. High quality of both written and verbal interpersonal and communication skills.

Job Knowledge: Knowledge of all fundraising vehicles and programs and fundraising software and data management systems.

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[ldidato@umh-nj.org](mailto:ldidato@umh-nj.org).

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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.

### October 7-10 — Garden State Walk to Emmaus for Men

SOUTH SEAVILLE — This three-day weekend event offers study and action tools designed to equip participants to be strong Christian leaders in church, home or workplace. FFI: Log on to [info@gardenstateemmaus.org](mailto:info@gardenstateemmaus.org)

### October 9 - UM-Lutheran Full Communion Celebration

EAST BRUNSWICK — Calvary Korean Church will be the site of this historic celebration of the Full Communion agreement between the United Methodist Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church. 10 a.m. *See story.*

### October 12 — ARMS Fall Meeting

GREEN VILLAGE — The Green Village Church will again host this first of two fall meetings of the Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses, meeting at 10 a.m. for fellowship, followed by worship, program and meeting and finishing off with lunch. Speaker is Charles Walter, of Willis of New Jersey, an insurance consulting firm, and health insurance consultant for the GNJ program, discussing how the new health care law impacts clergy and spouses.

### October 14-16 — International Conference on AIDS

DALLAS — "Lighten the Burden III," a United Methodist international conference on AIDS, will draw persons from around the world to discuss "Working towards an AIDS-free World!" Numerous workshops on AIDS-related themes. FFI: Check the GNJ Digest, or contact Linda Bales Todd, at the General Board of Church & Society, [lbales@umc-gbcs.org](mailto:lbales@umc-gbcs.org) or call 202-488-5641.

### October 14-25 — Adult Taize Pilgrimage

GNJAC — This second adult journey to the Taize retreat center in France will offer 30-somethings and older a glimpse of the spiritual nurture conference youth have been experiencing for several years.

### October 15-17 — Marriage Enrichment Weekend

HARVEY CEDARS — In this 20-hour Christian retreat, couples, in concentrated eye contact, examine their relationship. Typical reactions: "I never felt so happy...I didn't know how much my mate loved me..." as couple find their marriage and family life enriched as they experience God's love. FFI: Call Margaret or Ken Kaiser at 732 849-2375.

### October 16 — Church Development Event

MOORESTOWN — A Conference-wide event on the Principles of Church Health and Growth at the Moorestown Church will feature Dave Wetzler, publisher of Natural Church Development resources.

### October 21-24 — Garden State Walk to Emmaus for Women

SOUTH SEAVILLE — This three-day weekend event offers study and action tools designed to equip participants to be strong Christian leaders in church, home or workplace. FFI: Log on to [info@gardenstateemmaus.org](mailto:info@gardenstateemmaus.org)

### October 26 — ARMS Fall Meeting

OCEAN CITY — St. Peter's Church will again host this second of two fall meetings of the Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses, meeting at 11 a.m. for fellowship, followed by lunch, worship, program and meeting. Speaker is Margaret Winkelman of Willis of New Jersey, an insurance consulting firm, and health insurance consultant for the GNJ program, discussing how the new health care law impacts clergy and spouses.

### October 30 — Public Theology Advocacy Training

HAZLET — This day-long seminar at St. John's Church is for anyone interested in involving their church in social justice issues. 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. FFI: contact Cynthia Kent at [kent.cy@live.com](mailto:kent.cy@live.com).

### November 13 — Multi-Cultural Celebration

HAZLET — A three-hour celebration of cultural heritage reflected in the GNJ conference through worship, fellowship, food and festivity. *See story*

## FRANKFORD PLAINS TO CELEBRATE 300TH ANNIVERSARY



This simple frame meeting house, constructed in 1860, was the fourth building to house a congregation originally comprised of Lutherans, but later taken over by the Methodists in 1787. The original structure, a log cabin, gave way to a frame building in 1750. Shortly after the turn of the century, between 1802 and 1810, the third building was constructed on the same sight.

AUGUSTA — The Frankford Plains Church, in ministry in this Sussex County community for three centuries, will celebrate its 300th Anniversary October 16, with a day crammed full of activities designed to evoke the memory and rekindle the enthusiasm and commitment of members.

The Frankford Plains congregation, formed in the early years of the Eighteenth Century, antedated the Methodist movement that began with John Wesley's Aldersgate experience in 1738. Early congregants of what was to become the Frankford Plains Methodist Church are thought to have been Lutherans. The Methodists assumed control in the last quarter of the 17 hundreds, sparked by the leadership of Bishop Francis Asbury.

The anniversary celebration will begin at 1:30 p.m. with a "History Display" followed by a traditional worship service at 3:00 p.m. The day will continue with a dinner starting at 4:30 p.m.

At 6:00 p.m. guest speaker Michael Ferris, an educator, consultant, and speaker, will present "A Journey to a Potter's House" weaving lessons learned through his own brokenness to show how God, the Potter, uses pressure and pain to transform persons. Dr. Ferris lives in Connecticut with his wife and four children.

An Outside Worship Celebration with Christian music and bands will round out the day at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is invited. The church is located at 99 Plains Rd., Augusta, NJ 07822.

Information and reservations are available by calling the church at 973-702-0334.

## THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PASSAIC CELEBRATES!!

Our Austin organ, designed by Claire Coci, has been recently renovated. An event is planned to celebrate the beauty of this organ, and you are invited.

- \* DATE: **Saturday, October 16, 2010**
- \* EVENT: **Organ concert at 5:00p.m.**  
**Dinner in Fellowship Hall at 6:30p.m.**
- \* WHERE: **145 Paulison Avenue, Passaic, NJ**
- \* GUEST ORGANIST: **Mr. John J. Miller**, Director of Music Ministries at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart, will present a program of music he has selected to show off the beauty of this instrument. Mr. Miller is a frequent soloist with the New Jersey Symphony. He has been awarded the highest honor from the American Guild of Organists with the conferring of the Fellowship Certificate. His European performances have taken him to Rome, Venice, Leipzig, Prague, Salzburg and Vienna.
- \* TICKETS: \$25.00 for adults, and \$10.00 for children under 12 for both the concert and the dinner.

Please call the church office at 973-779-7521 for more information and to order tickets visit us at [www.fumcpassaic.org](http://www.fumcpassaic.org)

## The November Issue Deadline is October 5, 2010

To Music Directors... A new song about "Mary", the mother of Jesus, has been written by Marcia J. Hendron. It is appropriate for all denominations. It was first written as a song for women's ministries, but because of unusual interest was developed into a hymn. Now, it is also available to you as a fairly easy anthem, which has profound words of substance. It is the message we proclaim from the viewpoint of Jesus' mother. For additional Christmas or traditional music, call or write for a free catalogue of Marcia's Melodies, as well as a free page of music, so you can check her style.

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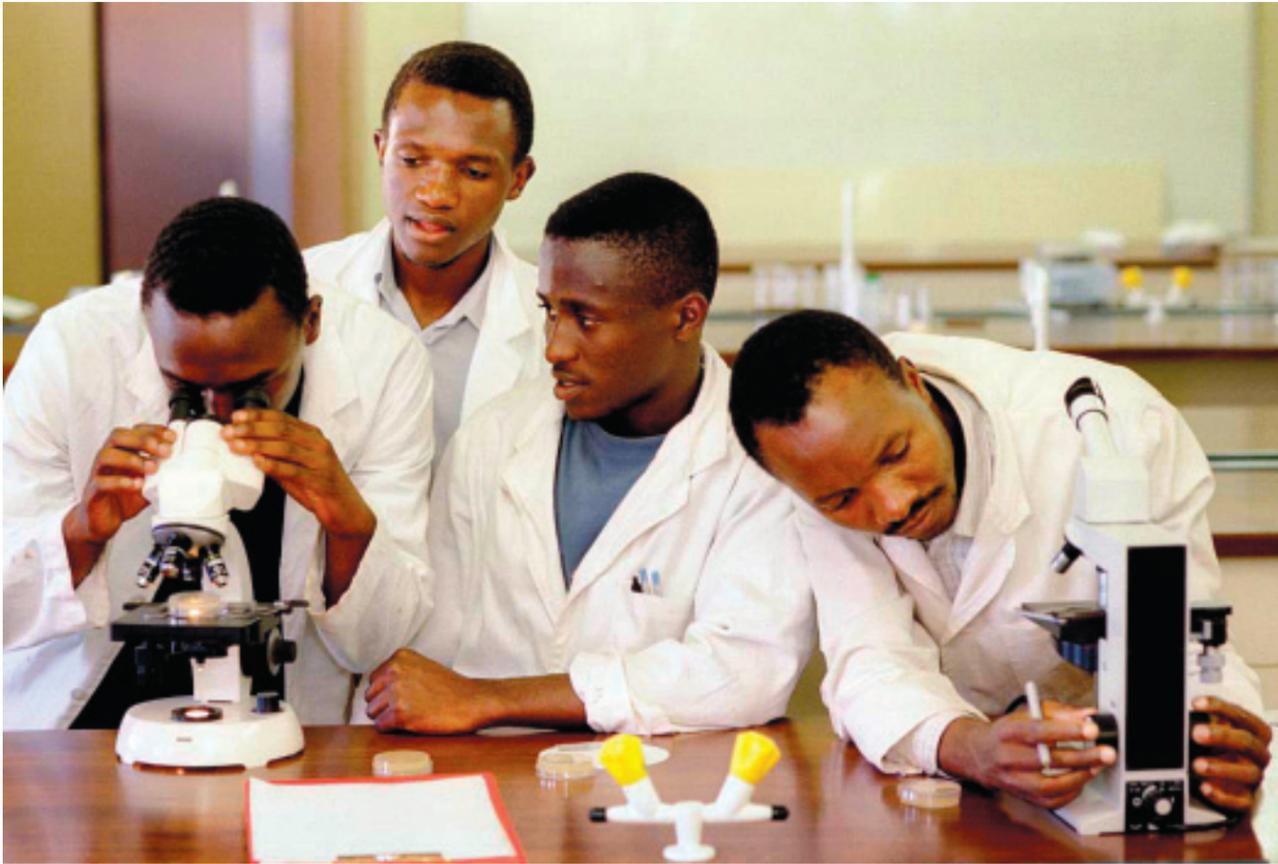
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Luke 13: 30-31

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AIDS is just one enemy, but so far it has been a fierce one. Of the estimated 34.5 million people in the world who have AIDS, 24.5 million live in sub-Saharan Africa; 2.8 million died from AIDS in 1999, 2.4 million of those were from Africa; one in five persons who die from AIDS is a child under the age of 15; 14 million children have been orphaned by this enemy, and 11 million of them are in sub-Saharan Africa.

Africa University is one of the greatest success stories in our church. It's almost 1300 students are the future leaders in Africa, but they will also be the troops who will turn the tide in the war against disease, with your help.

**Without you,  
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it just won't happen.**



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