

## Delegate Elections, Guest Speakers, and Wings of the Morning Highlight Four Days of Holy Conferencing at Valley Forge

### General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegates

A significant part of Annual Conference this year, as it is every four years, was the selection of delegates, both clergy and lay, to represent the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference at the General Conference, April 14 - May 4, 2012 in Tampa, FL. After four days of voting that on the clergy side went right up to adjournment, the clergy delegates are Drew Dyson, Varlyna Wright, Jessica Campbell, Heasun Kim, and Tanya Bennett. Laity delegates are Lynn Catterson, John Bishop, Jay Brown, Mark Miller and Bethany Amey. Additional clergy and lay delegates will join those going to General Conference for the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference, July 18-20, 2012 in Charleston, WV. Clergy delegates are Sung Hoon Ahn, Christopher Heckert, John Di Giamberardino, Lysette Perez and Charles Bender and lay delegates are Samuel Sim, June McCullough, Judy Colorado, Rosa Williams and Constance Ace. Those selected as alternates for the jurisdictional conference are clergy Robert Costello, Vivian Rodeffer and Jisun Kwak and laity Cynthia Kent, Creed Pogue and Weagba Nelson. (An article on the delegation will appear in the September issue of the Relay)

### Special Offerings

Each year the conference members are given the opportunity to support initiatives through special offerings. This year \$4,359 was raised for the District Superintendents Fund; \$5,558 was raised for the Global Aids Fund; \$4,506 was raised for the Mission of Peace Fund; and \$5,094 was raised for the Central Conference Pension Initia-

tive Fund. Another special offering for the Wings of the Morning mission netted an \$86,688 with another \$108,421 being pledged by various individuals and churches bringing the combined total to \$195,109. (See the article about this offering elsewhere in the Relay)



Rev. Marion Jackson

### Special Services

Three special services celebrated different aspects of ministry. In the Tribute Service, the lives of laity, clergy spouses and clergy who had passed since last annual conference were remembered and celebrated by their friends and family. Preacher Rev. Marion Jackson (shown above) reminded leadership that their loved ones who had passed continue to surround us in a great cloud of witness. "They are here every year just as we are," said Jackson. "They come to celebrate what we have done. And they come to listen to what we have done."

During the Ministries Recognition

Service, both retiring clergy and newly commissioned clergy were celebrated. A total of 23 clergy retired this year, having served a total of 465 years. The newly commissioned clergy are: YoHan Baik, Sharon Burniston, Peter Jamieson, Sandra Jenkins, Brian Neville, Donald Stevens, Cynthia Stouffer, and Kee Young Yang.

During the Ordination Service, Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar offered advice to the 2011 Ordination Class. "My prayer for all of you is that you look for the wonder in the midst of wilderness; know that God calls you for leadership in these special times of the present age; and that God will be with you, always, to turn our ordinariness into extraordinary ministry so that the world might come to follow Jesus and together with God we can participate in the transformation of the world." There were 12 clergy who were ordained to the Order of the Elder. Those ordained were: Byungil Ahn, Barbara Frohock, Daniel Gepford, Erik Hall, Brian Joyce, Hyoik Kim, Hannah Hyokyung Lee, Erik A. Ostrow, Isabel Quezada, Geunsu James Ryoo, David B. Schumacher and David Yun. The ordination of Hugo Edison Rey, who was ordained in the Methodist Church of the Caribbean, was also recognized during the service.

### Shared Ministry Budget Approved

GNJ members approved the proposed \$12,362,418 shared ministries budget for 2012. This represents an in 2.12 percent increase over last year's approved budget, but there has been a 1.26 percent increase in income from shared ministries. This includes a 3 percent increase in health insurance and benefits, a 2.5 percent salary increase for conference staff, and a 3.54 percent increase in programs budget as requested by the Ministries Team.



Dean of the 2010-2011 cabinet Sung Hoon Ahn thanks the conference on behalf of his colleagues.

### Refinishing the Cabinet

A substantial number of changes in the Appointment Cabinet were announced by Bishop Devadhar with two superintendents retiring; Bob Smith and Renee McCleary, one returning to local church ministry; Vivian Rodeffer,

(Continued on Page 4)

## Paper Planes and the Spirit Fill the Air at Valley Forge

It started out like most other final days of Annual Conference, but about a half an hour before the scheduled lunch break, something began to happen... something unusual, something exciting...

In the last six months or so, a phenomenon has been in evidence across the country in shopping malls, public parks, train stations and elsewhere - flash mobs. These publicly unannounced, loosely organized events are serendipitous outbreaks of singing, dancing, playing, and other expressions of the human spirit. They are usually received by the general public first with surprise, then amusement, then appreciation. Most people are uplifted by such spontaneity in the midst of their daily routine.

Flash mobs have nothing on the GNJAC.

In the midst of an otherwise routine last day of conference, the Holy Spirit paid a call and brought with it a wave



Rev. Doug Miller (retired) and the Rev. Steve Quigg of Wings of the Morning.

of joy and excitement such as hasn't been seen in conference sessions in many years. It started the night before during the ordination service as many were moved by their participation in that seminal moment in the Church's life. The singing of one of the old songs of the Church, "Victory in Jesus" inspired some to think of what we as United Methodists could do to further the ministry of Christ; specifically the work of "Wings of the Morning." This ministry in the North Katanga province of Africa is a crucial transportation link to far flung villages and communities; delivering food, medical supplies, and personnel for on-the-ground ministry.

Delegates had already arrived at Valley Forge with funds that had been raised in their local churches and in a fun filled, paper airplane flying offering, presented Wings of the Morning

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## Fire at South Seaville Destroys a Building, Not the Spirit

Early on a Friday morning, the life and ministry of the South Seaville church changed dramatically as the congregation's building, standing since 1884, burned to the ground. Little survived the flames apart from a ceramic nativity set and two audio cassettes from the church's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1984. The cause of the fire is as yet unknown but it was not deemed to be of suspicious origin. "Everything burned away," said Ocean View Fire Chief Joseph Gurdgiel, "so there was

no hard evidence to say what it (the cause of the fire) was." ter the fire was our food bank because so many people depend on us." It was an emotional day as parishioners shared memories of life, ministry, and milestones associated with their church building. Some of the children of the church wrote on paper plates and hung them from the edge of the tent as decorations. One wrote, "We had fun times in the church." Another read, "God has a plan."

Other churches and some businesses in the area of South Seaville

have invited the congregation to use their facilities while plans for rebuilding get under way. In the interim, members and friends of the church have created a bit of a roadside memorial as they hang flowers on the fence that separates the site and keeps it safe. "The support has been phenomenal,"



no hard evidence to say what it (the cause of the fire) was."

By Sunday, a white tent and about 100 folding chairs were set up in front of the church's charred remains. "The church is there, under the tent," said Pastor Tom Perry. "The building is just a building." He continued, "Out of chaos and confusion, the Holy Spirit has given us an amazing amount of clarity for our mission. The first thing my congregation wanted to rebuild af-

said Perry. Donations to the church have already started coming in. Bobby Craft, 14, of Dennis Township, told Perry he was supposed to get a kayak as an eighth grade graduation present but that he wanted to give the money for the kayak to the church. Said Perry, "This is the mindset of the wonderful Christians I serve in South Seaville."

(Portions of this article are courtesy of Brian Lanieri of the Atlantic City Press.)

# EDITORIAL

## General Conference Delegation Embodies a New Spirit

During the Celebration of Ministries that occurs each year during annual conference sessions, a symbolic passing of the mantle takes place. The ritual involves a retiree who places his or her stole on the shoulders of one of those about to be ordained or commissioned. It reflects the biblical story that is found in II Kings. The story tells of the passing of Elijah's mantle to the younger prophet, Elisha, who also receives a double portion of his elder's spirit. The delegate elections of the just concluded annual conference sessions reflected a similar rite of passage.

The clergy and lay members who were elected to represent the GNJAC at the General Conference next year are a unique group. Rarely, if ever, has this annual conference sent a group that is as new to the General Church as this one is collectively. Heasun Kim, Jessica Campbell, Varlyna Wright, Tanya Linn Bennett, and Drew Dyson are the clergy that were elected. The lay members are: Jay Brown, Bethany Amey, Mark Miller, Lynn Catterson, and John Bishop. Among the laity, Ms. Amey will be attending General Conference as a delegate for the first time. Among the clergy, all are first timers. Apart from Wright, who will be serving as the superintendent of the Capital District, none of the rest of the delegation is a part of the conference program staff or appointment cabinet. This is a significant shift in the way we are normally represented to the general Church and perhaps suggests that we are witnessing the emergence of a new paradigm.

Past experience has shown that the qualities that enable a person to rise to some position of influence in the annual conference are the same qualities that get them elected to General Conference. The very fact that these are usually people who have a vested interest in maintaining the structure of which they are a part suggests that, at the very least, there would be some difficulty in visioning and supporting change within the Church that might affect them personally. That should not be read as an indictment of the integrity of those who have served in the past; nor should it be read as a question about their commitment to serving faithfully. Previous delegations have served with admirable distinction and they are due our gratitude. It is simply human nature to try to preserve that which we value and of which we are a part. We hear in every election season that we should vote for people who are from "outside the beltway" of Washington D.C. because as outsiders, their priorities will presumably be focused on serving their constituencies and not on getting re-elected.

The fact that the GNJAC has elected a delegation that is largely made up of people who are not a part of the conference structure suggests that the Church may be ready to move in a new direction. It is still too soon to tell, especially since the results of delegate elections from other Annual Conferences are as yet largely unknown. However, if a similar dynamic has been at work throughout the denomination, if the Spirit is sweeping through the Church as a whole, it could signal a sea change in the way the Church is moving into the future. Of course, just being new doesn't ensure that things will be better, but it does give us hope that in an age in which the Church is faced with a vast array of challenges, there will be people representing us who are listening for the voice of God and who are ready and willing to respond to the new direction God may be calling us to follow. Some people, especially those who live in the world of commerce, talk about thinking "outside of the box." In the case of the Church, "the box" is often the structure of the Church itself. We are sometimes slow to react and the very fact that the Church is reactive rather than proactive speaks volumes about the need for trying a new way. It is at least conceivable that a fresh perspective on what the Church can be will come into focus as delegates gather next year in Tampa. We pray that *all* those elected to represent the GNJAC at the General and Jurisdictional Conferences will bring their considerable gifts to bear on the issues facing the Church.

— GCF

### Yes, You Are Being Digested!

By now, you have probably discovered the thrice-weekly GNJ Digest, your conference's electronic newsletter full of Announcements, Events, Celebrations, National News and Conference Calendar Updates. There are also special letters from the Bishop and notifications of deaths among members of the Annual Conference.

If you are not currently on our e-mail list and would like to be, please send your request to become a part of our "digested community" to [communications@gnjumc.org](mailto:communications@gnjumc.org).

## Episcopal Address Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

This is an edited version of the Episcopal Address. The full text may be found at [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).



Bishop Sudasharna Devadhar began his seventh Episcopal address with words of thanksgiving, both personal and ecclesiastical. He expressed gratitude for the work the clergy and laity are doing throughout the annual conference as they share their God-given gifts. He also expressed gratitude for those "who I know are reading the books we suggest each year. This year's book, which I recommend you to read and study as a congregation is *Bearing Fruit*, by Lovett Weems and Mike Burton."

The bishop noted some encouraging statistics that indicate the beginnings of a renewal in the conference. He continued, "The themes of our Annual Conferences have followed the promises we make as members of the United Methodist Church. We promise to uphold the Church through our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. This year we focus on "gifts" as part of our overall theme of "Disciples Transforming the World Through our Gifts."

In the New Testament, there are several Greek words that we translate as "gifts." I want to focus on two of these Greek words: *doron* and *chárismata*. *Doron* refers to the human gifts given as in the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the infant Jesus (cf. Matthew 2:11) or in the case of the poor widow's offering (cf. Luke 21:1-3). These are the human gifts of valuables that we present to God as an offering. These gifts represent our sacrifice and our devotion to God. *Chárismata* is the term that the Apostle Paul uses to refer to the spiritual gifts given to us by God and that we in turn give in service to God's Reign. Thus, two meanings: 'Gifts' as in the presentation of a portion of our wealth and 'Gifts' as in the presentation of our giftedness as in the 'gifts of the Spirit.' Both meanings are included in the promise to faithfully participate in the ministries of the Church by our gifts.

It is important to remember that the gifts we bring to the Church represent our faith in God, our thanksgiving to God, and our devotion to God. It is a symbolic sacrifice. When we give our offerings, our tithes, we are responding to God's love for us with sacrificial giving. The very nature of 'sacrifice' signifies that the value of the gifts we bring should be part and parcel of what we have and who we are. While it may be difficult to let go of this valued property that we have worked so hard to earn, we gain abundant joy knowing that our sacrificial giving will help extend the Kingdom of God and God's love in the world. We are challenged to practice giving off the top.

Now, let us turn to the other Greek word, *Chárismata*. *Chárismata* is the Greek term that Paul uses when he speaks of Spiritual Gifts in his letter to the Romans and his first letter to the Corinthians. Each and every one of us has a gift we can bring to the table. Each of us has something we can contribute to help make our community of faith effective and fruitful in ministry. It was John Ed Mathison who wrote that "the secret of the growth of the church is the involvement of the laity in meaningful ministry."<sup>1</sup>

If we want our churches to grow, we need to explore the gifts we have in the pews. When I was a local pastor, I would ask: "What is the gift you possess?" In our Conference, we have a track record of people who have used their gifts in extraordinary ways. One of the challenges to our Conference is to draw upon the giftedness of our lay parishioners to make an impact on the needs of our communities and world. Unless we tap the gifts, we never know we have it. Thus, the key question for all of us is: What gift can I bring? Imagine the impossible. Can this be our catchword for every person? Often we only think of the gifts in an offering plate on a Sunday, yet it is much more than that.

If every pastor and lay person asked the question, "What is the gift I can bring to the table?" we would unleash a torrent of fruitfulness for our churches that would make a lasting impact on our communities. The challenge for all of us is not only to ask what gift we have to bring to the table, but also to put into action the use of these gifts. It has never been more urgent in our lifetimes for us to bring our gifts to the table. We are living in momentous times of change, which is a great challenge to our Church.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, God has placed us as His people, at such a moment like this with a mission of making "Disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

While I was in Los Angeles I saw a signboard which said, "This year thousands of men will die because of their stubbornness." Though this billboard was from the Health Department, it has a great point for the Church. May I dare to say many churches will close their doors because of their stubbornness not to see the signs around them, for not being open like John and Charles Wesley to think

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Serving the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

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## Changes at the Relay Marked by Editor's Retirement

Does anyone remember who replaced Babe Ruth? Can you recall the words of the *second* man to set foot on the moon? Are sequels ever as good as the original? These are some of the questions that come to mind as we at the Relay contemplate life without our venerable erstwhile editor, Robin VanCleaf. How do we take up the mantle of one who has worn it with such care and excellence for three decades?

VanCleaf was never considered for a staff position on the Relay until he was "discovered" by Alive Now and had a number of pieces published there in the late '70s. Then in 1979, he was invited to join the staff as an associate editor. A journalism major in college, VanCleaf says, "I always felt that the journalistic training was a good preparation for parish ministry. A lot of the same issues confront both the journalist and the pastor."

In 1982, the resignation of Editor Howard Remaly created a vacancy, and a search committee sought a replacement. Vivian Rodeffer, then a student at Princeton Theological Seminary, and possessing a strong background in graphics, was selected as the editor. After three issues, she decided to concentrate on her parish ministry and resigned. Replacing her on an interim basis was VanCleaf and David Lehmkuhl, until Bishop Dale White invited the former to assume the post of editor in chief in July 1982.

During his 29 years as editor, the paper has seen many changes. In 1987 publication of the Relay moved from Town Topics in Princeton to Webco Graphics in Lakewood, and received a new look including a bold new logo and a splash of color. Two years later full color was added to the outside and center pages.

While editor, VanCleaf, continued to serve conference churches including Cranbury and Fair Haven – until his retirement in 1993. He was asked by Bishop Neil Irons to continue as editor in his retirement.

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**Nancy VanCleaf and Bishop Devadhar share a light moment as her husband is recognized in absentia.**

"I have worked under four bishops," he said, "all of whom have been tremendously supportive, and given us the freedom and independence every paper needs."

"None of our success would have been possible without a succession of able associate editors. Most recently, these have included George Imhoff, recently retired, who holds the Relay longevity record having joined the staff in 1972, and who in addition to skillful reporting, was our advertising manager."

Also recently resigned from the staff is Dan Casselberry, whose insightful reviews and viewpoint articles were well received. We at the Relay will soldier on, but we do so knowing that we stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before.

Due to his recovery from surgery, VanCleaf wasn't able to be present at Annual Conference sessions, but his wife Nancy was there and received a plaque and words of gratitude from the bishop on behalf of the conference. Mrs. VanCleaf said, "Thank-you for accepting his resignation. We have no more deadlines!"

## Wings of the Morning

(Continued from page 1)

with more than \$80,000. What the delegates didn't know at the time was that \$80,000 wasn't even the half of it.

On Friday evening, the Rev. Doug Miller responded to the prompting of the Spirit and asked for a few moments to make a plea to the conference to collect just a bit more than the \$80,000 that had already been given for this mission. The few minutes turned into 45 minutes as, one after another, pastors and lay members lined up at the microphones to make pledges on behalf of themselves and their churches. The lunch hour came and went as the pledges kept coming. And as with flash mobs, there was first surprise, a bit of amusement, and then a growing sense of joy as the members began to recognize an in-breaking of the Spirit of God. By the time everyone had made their pledge, an additional \$108,421 had been raised. That brought the total to \$195,109!

Throughout the pledging frenzy, Bishop Devadhar joyfully recognized each one who was waiting for a moment at the microphone. After the break, the episcopal leader was shedding tears of joy, remarking, "I have never seen anything like that in Annual Conference sessions in my life. That was a movement of the Spirit. That is why we think outside of the box."

Miller noted, "It didn't have anything to do with me, it had to do with people identifying with making disciples and transforming the world." Steve Quigg and his wife Gail are missionaries from the GNJAC who lead the Wings of the Morning ministry. He was asked how he felt about what he'd just witnessed and replied, "I'm just blown away. We won't know until eternity what impact this may have. When we get to eternity, we'll celebrate long and hard and well what just happened."

## Episcopal Address

(Continued from page 2)

outside the box, for their inability to attack the graveyards of the present-day world such as poverty, terrorism, alcoholism, and racism and stand on them and preach and act against it. Churches may close their doors because they do not want to allow the Holy Spirit to work within them. Out of stubbornness, they may refuse to allow and encourage everyone to do their ministry by squashing their gifts.

My dear clergy and laity, God is calling you and me together, to use our God-given giftedness in our ministry and mission. What if we as faithful Christians look at our pew and pulpits and acknowledge the waste of gifts we see there because we have not claimed them and found a meaningful way to use them?

What if our Committees on Nominations and Leadership Development Committees were to do literally what the Book of Discipline says, "In conducting its work, the committee shall engage in biblical and theological reflections on the mission of the church, the primary task, and ministries of the local church. It shall provide a means of identifying the spiritual gifts and abilities of the membership" (2008 Book of Discipline, # 258). What if some of us who are professionals such as doctors, engineers, teachers, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, cooks or dry cleaners were to take time to give an hour or two of our week to teach English as a second language to our immigrants or to offer them free services or help them integrate into the community so that they too can bring and share their gifts to our larger community.

What if we allowed our church buildings to be used for ministry and missions in our communities, towns, and cities such as NA programs, After-School Programs, Homeless Shelters so that our churches could be voices for the voiceless and sanctuaries for the marginalized?

When a person comes to join a United Methodist Church, he or she promises to faithfully participate in its ministries by their gifts. There are the sacrificial gifts we bring to Church when we "give off the top" and the giftedness that our Creator has endowed each and every one of us that we need to bring to the table. Let us remember the words of C.S. Lewis, from his book, *Mere Christianity*, "The church exists for nothing else but to draw [people] into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, [it's] a waste of time. God became [human] for no other purpose."<sup>2</sup>

The vision I shared with all of you when I first came into your midst in 2004 still stands before us even now: "I envision a Church of the Pentecost in which the Holy Spirit is igniting, gifting and empowering God's children of all ages, backgrounds, colors, and personalities to glorify their Creator as passionate witnesses for Jesus Christ." Such a church does not merely serve the poor, the left out, the different, but welcomes them warmly into its heart, home and worship.

If we truly depend on the Holy Spirit to ignite, gift and empower us we need to listen carefully to the voices inside and outside the church and to respond to them as disciples of Jesus Christ committed to the transformation of the world. One such voice comes from outside the church through Susan Scott, author of *Fierce Conversations* and *Fierce Leadership*.<sup>3</sup> In its simplest form, a fierce conversation is one in which we come out from behind ourselves into the conversation and make it real... [According to Susan, Fierce Conversation accomplishes four things]

1. Interrogates reality . . .
2. Provokes learning . . .
3. Tackles our toughest challenges . . .; and
4. Enriches relationships.<sup>4</sup>

Clergy and Laity, for the Fierce Conversation to take place we need Fierce Leadership at every level.

My dear church, are we listening to Susan Scott? We cannot say we are a church with "open minds..." if we are not willing to listen to different views, perspectives and ideas. May we leave this place and go to our mission stations more and more deeply committed to make sure we are the church with the cross and flame, we *have become* truly a church of the Pentecost: igniting, gifting and empowering the children of God with fierce conversation and leadership at every level.

May we pray to God in and through the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ using the words of Walter Brueggemann:

Please join me in this prayer:

You mark us with your water,  
You scar us with your name,  
You brand us with your vision,  
And we ponder our baptism, your water,  
Your name,  
Your vision.  
While we ponder, we are otherwise branded.  
Our imagination is consumed by others brands,  
— winning with Nike,  
— pausing with Coca-Cola,  
— knowing and controlling with Microsoft.  
Re-brand us,  
Transform our minds,  
Renew our imagination.  
That we may be more fully who we are marked  
And hoped to be,  
We pray with candor and courage. Amen.  
(Baptism class/September 17, 1998)<sup>5</sup>

(Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> John Ed Mathison, *Every Member in Ministry*, (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1996,) p. vii.

<sup>2</sup> C.S. Lewis, as quoted from *Mere Christianity*, "Renovate or Die: Ten Ways to focus your church on mission," by Bob Farr with Kay Kotan (Nashville: Abingdon, 2011), p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> Susan Scott, *Fierce Conversations: Achieving Success at Work & in Life, One Conversation at a Time* (New York: Berkely Books, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Susan Scott, "Collaborative Culture," National Staff Development Council, Vol. 30, No. 3, Summer 2009 JSD, p. 53.

<sup>5</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth: Prayers of Walter Brueggemann*, edited by Edwin Searcy (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), p. 88.

**The September Issue Deadline is  
August 5, 2011**



# Global Relay

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

## Lesbian elder's penalty takes different path

KAUKAUNA, Wis. — For the first time in 20 years, a conviction for performing a same-sex union has not resulted in a United Methodist elder's defrocking or indefinite suspension. Instead, after six hours of deliberations, a jury of 13 United Methodist pastors voted 9-4 to suspend the Rev. Amy DeLong from her ministerial functions for 20 days beginning July 1. The jury which is called a trial court, also sentenced DeLong to a more detailed process for a year after her suspension to "restore the broken clergy covenant relationship." At least seven votes from the trial court of five women and eight men were required to approve a penalty.

## United Methodists help evacuate Minot

MINOT, N.D. — Teams of North Dakota United Methodists were helping evacuate residents of Minot as floodwaters threatened the city June 22. "The river is rising quite steadily, and there's going to be some definite issues with 11,000 people trying to get out at one time," said the Rev. Lee Gale, North Dakota disaster response coordinator for the United Methodist Dakotas Annual (regional) Conference.

## Religious leaders ask Obama to end Afghanistan war

WASHINGTON — Nearly 40 religious leaders — including United Methodists Jim Winkler, Board of Church and Society, and the Rev. Stephen J. Sidorak Jr., Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns — sent a letter to President Obama ahead of a June 22 televised speech in which he is expected to announce U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. "It is time to bring the U.S. war in Afghanistan to an end," the open letter said.

## Refugees on the rise, U.N. report shows

NEW YORK — A new report by the United Nations shows that 43.7 million people worldwide were displaced from their homes in 2010 because of conflict or persecution, the highest number of refugees in 15 years. In observance of World Refugee Day on June 20, the United Methodist Committee on Relief has created a series of online resources to help raise awareness about the refugee situation. For information on supporting UMCOR's refugee ministry, go to Refugee Response, UMCOR Advance #982540.

## Lewd tweets offer lessons on sexual ethics

WASHINGTON — It's a story at least as old as the Old Testament. A king spies a fetching woman from his palace roof and decides he must have her — whatever the cost. Rep. Anthony D. Weiner, D-N.Y., moved political licentiousness into the Twitter era with lewd messages and photos he sent to women he met online. An elected leader's adultery should be a matter of national concern, said the Rev. Miguel A. De La Torre, a professor of social ethics at United Methodist-related Iliff School of Theology.

## Clean water saves lives, makes disciples

MUGHOWO, Mozambique — Four communities in remote Inhambane West are praising God and The United Methodist Church for the lifesaving gift of clean, safe water. The Missouri Mozambique Initiative, a partnership between the United Methodist Missouri Annual (regional) Conference and the Mozambique Conference, has provided funds to drill 10 wells since February.

## UMCOR aids demining team in Libya

MISRATA, Libya — Navigating through a picket of NATO warships posted off the Libyan coast, an ACT Alliance demining team sailed into the besieged city of Misrata on June 13 to try to assist residents as they recover from months of war. The United Methodist Committee on Relief, which is a member of the ACT Alliance, has contributed \$50,000 to the demining effort.

## Missouri ready for Joplin volunteer teams

JOPLIN, Mo. — The United Methodist Missouri Annual (regional) Conference is ready to start receiving Volunteers in Mission teams to continue clean-up and recovery work in Joplin, much of which was devastated by a May tornado. While the City of Joplin will not be issuing building permits for 90 days, the conference reported in its latest MissionCast video, teams can help with debris removal and warehouse organization. United Methodists in Missouri are doing some volunteer work through Americorps. Call the volunteer hotline at (417) 625-3543 or register online at [www.211missouri.org](http://www.211missouri.org). To volunteer for long-term rebuilding efforts through The United Methodist Church, fill out this online form.

## NCC's 'Circle of Names' honors Dauway

NEW YORK — Lois McCullough Dauway, a retired church executive who worked for the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Women and the National Council of Churches, was among the three women honored June 14 at a "Circles of Names" gathering. An NCC project, the Circles of Names campaign creates a circle of support for women's ministries by asking a thousand people to give \$100 each in the name of a woman who helped shape their faith.

## United Methodist Men leader helps Japan

AUSTIN, Texas — Chip Sparks, president of the Austin District of United Methodist Men, served as logistic planner for U.S. military efforts to aid victims of the massive earthquake and tsunami in Japan. In that role, he helped receive, validate, schedule, track and distribute all U.S. humanitarian assistance to the citizens of Japan. "By the time that I returned home on April 28," Sparks said, "we had shipped over 250 million gallons of water and 100 tons of food, in addition to the fuel, shelters and blankets to the affected areas."

## Pastor helps Haitian children cope with grief

LES CAYES, Haiti — The Rev. Gordon Schleicher came back from Haiti with 91 pictures of grief drawn by children who witnessed death and dismemberment of family and friends during the 2010 earthquake. Schleicher, a retired United Methodist pastor and a trained grief counselor, went to the earthquake-damaged country earlier this year with a purpose. He wanted to encourage the youngest witnesses to the country's devastation to express their feelings so they could start to heal from the trauma.

## Highlights from Four Days of Holy Conferencing at Valley Forge

(Continued from page 1)

one taking on the newly created position of Director of Connectional Ministries; Sung Hoon Ahn, and one moving from the Gateway North District to the Gateway South District; Bob Costello. Joining the new dean of the cabinet Barbara Rambach will be Steven Bechtold (Skylands District) Wayne Plumstead (Palisades District) Varlyna Wright (Capital District), and Jisun Kwak (Gateway North District). Returning district superintendents are Paul Maliel (Cape Atlantic District), Richard Nichols (Delaware Bay District), Fran Noll (Northern Shore District, and Rambach (Raritan valley District).



The Claire Memorial Church Liturgical Dancers - Jersey City

## Ministry with Young People (MYP) Report Made

The GNJ MYP team is represented by two voting youth delegates aged 12 to 17; and two voting young adult delegates, aged 18 to 30, from each district, explained Albert Ramirez, Co-President of the team. He gave highlights of the ministry of the MYP team in the last year. Ramirez said that in the annual Ocean City Youth Weekend, there were 650 youth in attendance, and 12 youth came forward saying they felt called to a life of ministry. He said these youth will be invited to the camp for young people exploring their calling. Ramirez said that for the first time ever, there was a series of confirmation retreats, which 150 youth attended. The series concluded with the Bishop's confirmation celebration, which over 250 confirmands attended. Ramirez said some of the other ministries of MYP are youth lay speaking, iGod, B1 fasting events, and jurisdictional gatherings.

## Equitable Compensation Report

The GNJ Leadership approved the report presented by Rev. Jennifer Cho, chair of the Commission on Equitable Compensation. This establishes the minimum equitable compensation for full time clergy and local pastors effective Jan. 1, 2012. As a result, an elder in full provisional and associated member will receive an annual salary of \$33,902; and full-time local pastors will receive an annual salary of \$32,019. Clergy will also receive a minimum of an additional \$300 in salary for each year of service, for up to 16 years of service.

## Disability Inclusion Team Report

After a time of worship, Rev. Jackie Burgess asked the GNJ leadership to approve several resolutions. The first resolution, which was approved, creates GNJ Disabilities Awareness Sunday as a Special Sunday with an offering. The other resolutions support initiatives from the United Methodist Taskforce on Disability Ministry, which will be presented at the 2012 General Conference. The second resolution, which was approved, seeks to amend the Book of Discipline to create a Committee on Disability Awareness. The third resolution, which was approved, seeks to amend the Book of Discipline to create a Disabilities Awareness Sunday, as a seventh Special Sunday with an offering.

## Sessions Location Report

In her presentation, Rev. Reggie

Albert, chair of the Sessions Team, reported that the Valley Forge Convention Center would have slot machines and gambling tables during the 2012 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. This is something the leadership was first informed of at the 2009 Annual Conference. She said the conference's meeting space would be on the lower level, below and apart from the gambling space. She asked the conference laity and clergy to affirm the Sessions Team's decision to remain at the Valley Forge Convention Center for the remainder of the contract, which extends until the 2013 annual conference.

## Disaster Response Committee Report

Rev. Derrick Doherty, chair of the committee, said that at the last annual conference the team was formed and they got busy right away. A disaster response plan has been approved by the GNJ Conference. Three people from the GNJ Conference have also been trained to be trainers for early response teams by UMCOR. Any church that wants to start an early disaster response team can set up training by emailing [disasterresponse@gnjumc.org](mailto:disasterresponse@gnjumc.org). Any other questions or concerns can also be forwarded to this email.

## Guest Preacher

This year's guest preacher was Rev. Mike Slaughter, pastor of the Ginghamburg United Methodist Church in Ohio. He spoke to conference leadership on three different occasions. First, he emphasized the need for all leaders to begin with "self-leadership" and encouraged five disciplines to help lay and clergy remain well-balanced and healthy. He prompted those gathered to spend time on personal devotions, to spend at least a half hour learning something new each day, to invest time in the relationships that are closest to you, always continue visioning for the future and to eat healthy and exercise. He said that after we take care of ourselves, we can take care of others. "What is our business?" asked Slaughter. "Our business is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." He encouraged clergy and laity to stop meeting and start doing. He said all churches can be successful in following God's lead, whether the church was small or large, stating that he was initially appointed to a small two-room church, which has since grown into a mega church that now feeds over 1,500 families and has raised 5.1 million dollars for projects in Darfur, Sudan since 2005. "Money follows missions, it doesn't follow budgets," said Slaughter. Clergy and laity also had the option of attending a breakfast Bible Study on the gifts of God by Rev. Dr. John Holbert, who returned for his second year of providing spiritual nourishment for those who were feeding the body for the day's work.

## Mark Your Calendars for Next Year

As the 2011 GNJ Annual Conference came to a close with a service of sending forth, the dates of the 2012 GNJ Annual Conference were announced. Clergy and lay members will convene at the Valley Forge Convention Center May 31 to June 2nd next year. For additional information on other annual conference stories such as the Bishop's Episcopal Address, the District Superintendents' Report, the Lay Leader's Report and awards given at conference please see full stories in this issue of "The Relay".

## District Superintendents' Report Cites Gifted Service

Rev. Sung Hoon Ahn, Dean of the Bishop's Cabinet, began the District Superintendents' report at Annual Conference by celebrating "fruit-bearing ministries". He said more churches are extending radical hospitality and passionate and energetic worship than has been the case in the last few years.

Ahn offered some examples.

In the Capital District a community directed program for control and elimination of river blindness in the Democratic Republic of Congo was dedicated by the Princeton church. Seventy youth in grades six through twelve from Medford and Epworth, Palmyra participated in B1, the United Methodist Church sponsored annual hunger awareness event. Bishop Felton May also worked with Turning Point church and the city of Trenton.

In the Cape Atlantic District, the Freedom School at Hamilton UMC in Atlantic City continued to provide extra education for children in the city. OASIS congregation provided outreach to the community in Pleasantville and solar panels were installed at St. Paul's in Port Republic.

In the Delaware Bay District, there has been an appointment of an associate pastor to begin a new congregation as a multi-site campus of the Sharptown church. There has also been development of an Emergent Worship Service at the First church in Vineland to reach out to the young adult population.

In the Gateway North District, Urban Project, under the leadership of Bishop Felton May, has helped revitalize the ministry in the city of Newark. The laity of El Redentor Church are also working with their pastor to start an ESL class in Elizabeth Street ministry to the undocumented each Saturday morning.

In the Gateway South District, the clergy and laity of Camden Youth Ministry Initiative offered a 6 week camp program in the city last year and they will offer two six week programs this year.

In the Northern Shore District there was a new church start in Barnegat. Pastor Eric Hall organized a fun, family day for the community, which 200 adults and

300 children attended. Each child received a bag of ladybugs to release in their own gardens. "Change the world, one ladybug at a time," remarked Ahn.

In the Palisades District there are fast growing English Ministries in various Korean United Methodist Churches. First church in Ridgefield Park received 30 some new Hispanic members into the congregation. The Korean Community Church in Englewood is sponsoring a Hispanic and a Korean-Chinese congregation with the leadership of very dedicated lay leaders and Pastor Koo Yong Na.

In the Raritan Valley District, New Providence UMC is offering re-employment seminars for those who have lost their jobs due to this challenging economy.

In the Skylands District, Rockaway church undertook numerous events that made strong connections with the surrounding communities and has received tremendous responses from the people.

In addition, Ahn said more leaders are also being intentional about faith development that is geared to a younger generation. He added that there is also more risk taking service and mission as well ministry of extravagant generosity. Ahn said there are still challenges that will help us move forward. He said that churches need to be intentional about an inclusive ministry; that it is important, adding, "God pushed us to cross over boundaries and our differences to make disciples for the transformation of the world." He also encouraged leadership to remain intentional about being welcoming to youth and young adults. "How can we practice our ministry to convince the younger generation that they belong and that they are the owners of the church today?" Ahn asked.

Rev. Robert Smith, Rev. Renée McCleary and Rev. Vivian Rodeffer, and Ahn have completed their service to the conference as District Superintendents. McCleary and Smith will retire; Rodeffer will serve as pastor of the church in Medford and Ahn will serve as the Director of Connectional Ministries. Rev. Barbara Rambach will be the new dean of the Cabinet.

## Lay Leader's Address Encourages Visionary Leaders

"As a church we must continue to grow and produce fruitfulness by training leaders, both clergy and laity," was the message that Rosa Williams, the GNJ Conference lay leader, shared at Annual Conference. "It will take all of us to get there, but we know that love and action never fails."

Williams, who has just completed her first year as Conference Lay Leader, highlighted ministries in which laity participate and during her address, encouraged laity to continue to take advantage of educational opportunities and resources. "We need to promote effective leaders," said Williams. She said that 42 people attended the first laity leader workshop, which was hosted this past March. She said additional workshops were being planned for fall and she was hopeful the workshop could be offered in Korean and Spanish. Williams said there is also a new resource booklet for lay leadership, which provides useful information about responsibilities, as well as resources you can contact for additional help.

Williams said the lay ministry program is a big asset to the conference. "We continue to train laity in large numbers in areas of mission, prayer, Bible study, Sunday school classes, and visitation for our homes for the elderly, stewardship, witness and worship." Williams said that 215 lay people became certified lay speakers this fall and 148 became basic lay speakers in the spring. She said laity also continue to be trained to fulfill the calling of a lay minister, a lay member who is able to lead the church in the absence of a clergy person.

Williams also reminded conference leadership that for the first time ever, there was a Pre-Lenten gathering for GNJ laity. Lay leadership from all over the conference gathered for inspiring worship and a message by Rev. Stephanie Hand, who was the Conference Teacher/Preacher in 2010. She said she hopes this would become an annual tradition among laity.

Williams closed by offering thanksgiving for the lay leadership of the conference. "Thank you for answering a call to serve your church; not only are you an elected leader, you are a chosen person in the ministry of Jesus Christ."

## Awards Acknowledge the Sharing of Gifts

Several awards were presented celebrating the ministry of clergy, laity and churches in the conference.

Each year three Christian Unity & Interreligious Concerns Awards are presented – one to clergy, one to a lay member and one to a church. The clergy award was presented to Rev. Beverly Jones with the Freehold Clergy Association. Jones said in a small church it is hard to accomplish much if you aren't reaching out to the community. "We work in the community and we worship together," said Jones. The laity award was presented to Chef Jerome Turner of St. Luke's Community Church, who has cooked thousands of meals for those in his community. The church award was presented to the Morristown church for their Vacation Bible School, which helps children meet other children in the community by reaching out to other churches.

The Harry Denman Evangelism Award was presented for the 26th consecutive year to youth member Weagba Nelson, Donna Kozolski, di-

rector of St. Paul's Christian School in Brick, and Rev. Ricardo Ramos. Each award recipient was asked their secret for evangelism. Nelson says he loves working with youth and never turns down an opportunity to serve his church. "I try to stay active in any way I can and spread God's word to young people." Kozolski said she has served at the school for 34 years and has done it for one reason only; "Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior." Kozolski says that each day she is able to talk to youngsters ranging from 3 to 14-years-old about Jesus. Ramos said his secret for evangelism is to give glory to God and share the love of Jesus Christ. "Many of my church members are thousands of miles away from their family members and Jesus is becoming real for each of them," he said.

The 2011 Local Church History Award was presented to the Frankfort Plains church. Finally the Harry Seese Scholarship for continuing education was presented to Rev. Dennis Blackwell.



Rosa Williams

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# Bishop Calls on Ordinands to Manifest Leadership in the Wilderness



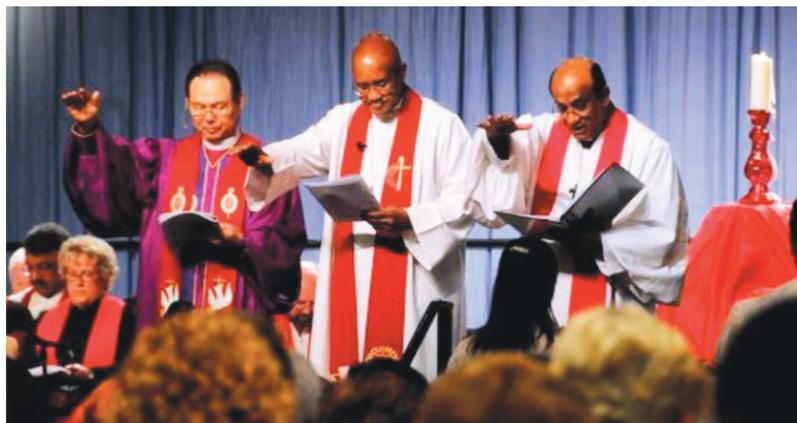
For the ordination sermon, Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar preached on Exodus 3:1-15. "There are several lessons we can underscore from this passage of scripture that have implications for ordination," said the bishop. "I want to focus with you on wilderness, leadership and God's call to ordinary people to do extraordinary things." The bishop said that throughout the Bible wilderness signifies a time of danger. He said that he believes the church of today is going through a period of wilderness; a time that is challenging because of the fast pace at which the world is changing and the financial crisis that many are facing. "We must be able to see and understand where God is in the midst of all of these changes and be able to make sense out of it," said Bishop Devadhar. "We cannot do any kind of restoration, reconnection, or revival unless and until we hear God speaking to us in our times through events and are able to connect ourselves to reality and respond to it biblically and theologically."

The bishop noted that God's call to Moses occurred while he was in the wilderness serving as shepherd of a flock of sheep owned by his father-in-law Jethro. He told the ordinands that they would be called to lead a diverse group of people. "On a given Sunday morning you will preach to congregations whose values have been shaped under different life situations, yet who need to hear from you the word of hope," said Bishop Devadhar. "Like Moses, those of us in ordained ministry, are called to lead, as a Shepherd leads sheep. God calls ordinary people to do extraordinary things." The bishop said that in moments when ordinands feel like Moses, they should consider what might have happened if Moses had told God that he didn't do sticks and stones or if Martin Luther, the Reformer of the Church, had told God he didn't do nails. The bishop closed saying, "So, my prayer for all of you is that you look for the wonder in the midst of wilderness; know that God calls you for leadership in these special times of the present age; and that God will be with you, always, to turn our ordinariness into extraordinary ministry so that the world might come to follow Jesus; and together with God we can participate in the transformation of the world."

Following the sermon, there were 12 clergy who were ordained to the Order of the Elder. Those ordained

were: Byungil Ahn, Barbara Frohock, Daniel Gepford, Erik Hall, Brian Joyce, Hyoik Kim, Hannah Hyokyung Lee, Erik A. Ostrow, Isabel Quezada, Geunsu James Ryoo, David B. Schumacher and David Yun. The ordination of Hugo Edison Rey, who was previously ordained in the Methodist Church of the Caribbean, was also recognized during the service. Visiting bishops In Hwan Kim from Korea and Felton E. May also participated in the service, as did President Iain Torrance from Princeton Theological Seminary who was present as the ecumenical representative. In the picture at the right, three bishops pronounce the blessings of God on those being ordained.

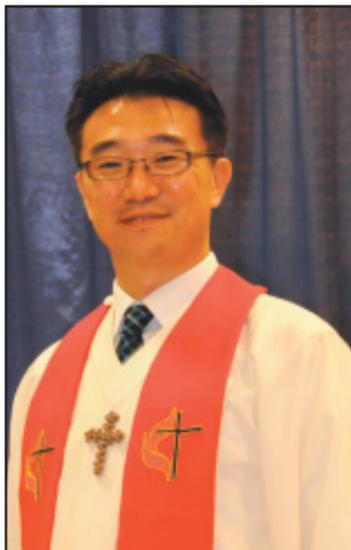
The full text of the Ordination Sermon may be found at [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).



Bishops Kim, May, and Devadhar offer episcopal blessings.

**Ordained  
to the  
Order  
of Elder**

(Conference Photos by John C. Goodwin)



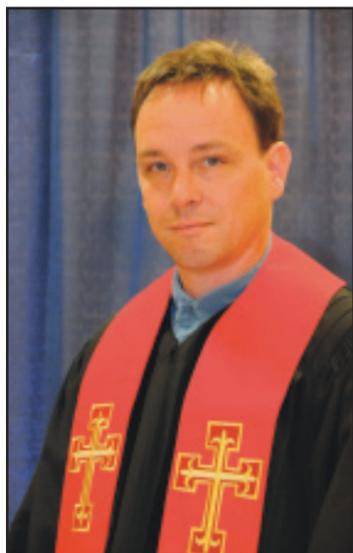
Byungil Ahn



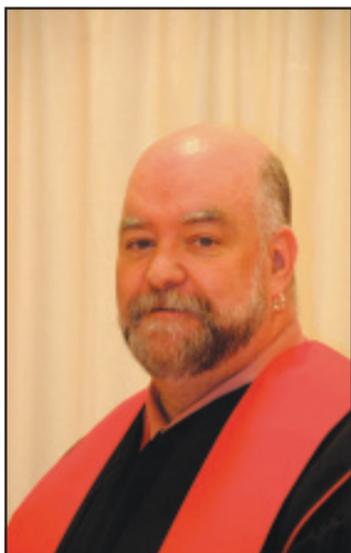
Barbara Frohock



Daniel Gepford



Erik Hall



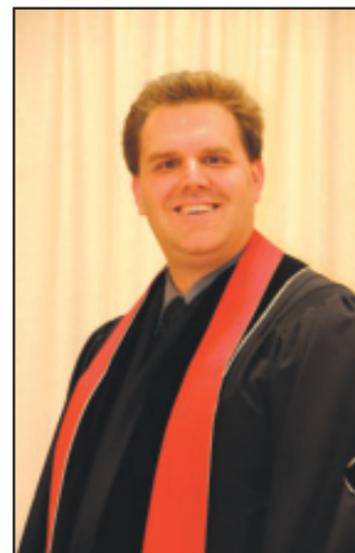
Brian Joyce



Hyoik Kim



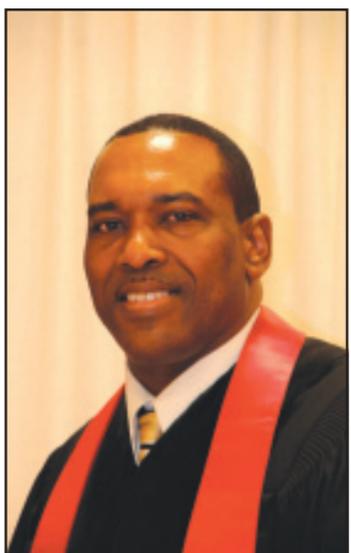
Hannah Hyokyung Lee



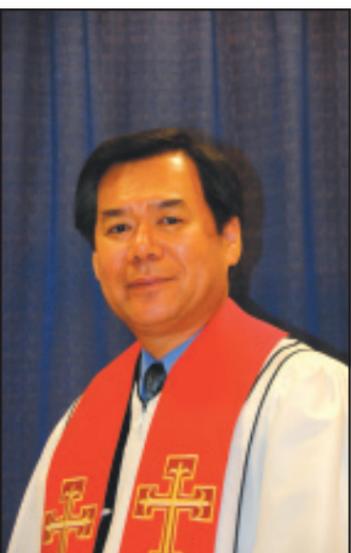
Erik A. Ostrow



Isabel Quezada



Hugo Edison Rey



Geunsu James Ryoo



David Schumacher



David Yun

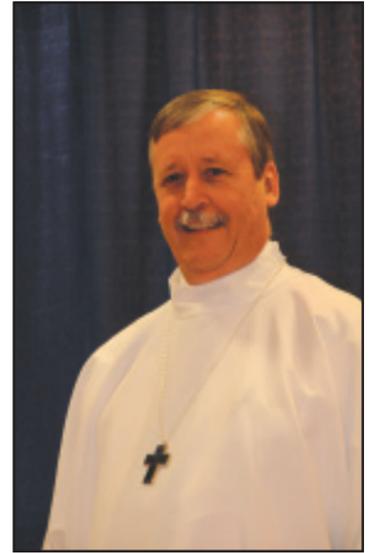
**Commissioned  
Probationary  
Elders**



Yohan Baik



Sharon Burniston



Peter Jamieson



Sandra Jenkins



Brian Neville



Donald Stevens



Cynthia Stouffer



Kee Young Yang

(Photos by John C. Goodwin)

**The 2011 Retirees**



Retiring at the 2011 session of the GNJAC were: James C. Batten, Robert L. Boettner, Linda Delsardo, David E. Dutcher, Boyd L. Fox, Louis Frick, C. Christopher Hinnen, George A. Imhoff, John V. Johnson, Calvin Woods, Deborah A. Kauffman, Christopher Seog C. Ko, Dennis G. Lippart, Norman P. Madsen, Renee McCleary, Carolyn J. Montgomery, Stephen Palmer, James Sherman, Robert Smith, Howard Sterling, Raul O. Terrero, Doris Jane Thompson, and Judith Todt. Their combined years of service totals 465. Well done, good and faithful servants!  
*(Photo by John Goodwin)*



In the closing act of worship, Bishop Devadhar prays for the General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates as remaining members of the GNAC lay their hands upon them.  
*(Photo by John Goodwin)*

**Wish List**



1. Create a community garden
2. Fund a new mission
3. Serve lunch monthly
4. Provide scholarships
5. Purchase the lot next door
6. Establish a pre-school program
7. Replace the roof
8. Renovate the parsonage
9. Purchase new equipment
10. Generate additional operating support



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# Ferrell Church Holds First Annual SpringFest

On May 14-15, the Ferrell church (Delaware Bay District) celebrated its 1<sup>st</sup> Annual SpringFest at Camp Aura. The two-day gathering gave all guests opportunities for fellowship for children, youth, and adults. Even though rain came as an unexpected guest, the group improvised and enjoyed some indoor activities such as playing board games, as well as Bible quiz games.

The church provided both lunch and dinner on Saturday. Musical entertainment was provided by the Heart Song Singers for Christ from Connecticut, and the Heavenbound Singers from southern New Jersey. The pastor, Erik A. Ostrow, also shared a message on the subject of Christian fellowship. Children's activities were led by Jessica Metcalf, a youth member of the congregation.

In addition to members and friends of the Ferrell church, members from other churches were also in attendance that day including St. John's UMC of Harrisonville and Harrisonville First Baptist Church.

A few people stayed overnight in the on-site cabins at Camp Aura. Others returned Sunday morning for a continental breakfast and morning worship, which was held in the outdoor chapel at the camp.

The church is looking forward to next year, when they host their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual SpringFest and hope to make it bigger and better in the years to come.



## New Pastoral Appointments

The following first year pastoral appointments were announced by Bishop Devadhar and the appointment cabinet during the Episcopal Evening, June 2, 2011

### CAPE ATLANTIC DISTRICT

Dennisville and South Dennis  
Hammonton: First  
Port Republic: St. Paul's  
Port Republic: St. Paul's (CP)

Peter Jamieson  
Ernest Williams  
Frank Brown  
Darryl Duerr

### CAPITAL DISTRICT

Superintendent  
Delanco: Dobbins Memorial  
Medford  
Trenton: Turning Point

Varlyna Wright  
Donald Knott  
Vivian Rodeffer  
Bishop Felton E. May

### DELAWARE BAY DISTRICT

Bridgeton: Friendship Finley  
Millville: First Assoc.  
Millville: Second  
Pitman Assoc.  
Vineland: South Vineland

James Peterson  
Melissa Doyle-Waid  
Steven Elliott  
Kee Young Yang  
Don Kim

### GATEWAY NORTH DISTRICT

Superintendent  
Bloomfield  
Irvington: Haitian  
Jersey City: Bethany-Brown  
Little Falls: UMC of Little Falls  
Livingston  
Rahway: Korean Union

Jisun Kwak  
Joel Hubbard  
Serge Brevert  
Delores Smith  
Donnie Mitchell  
Theresa Hoover  
Leo Park

### GATEWAY SOUTH DISTRICT

Superintendent  
Camden: Fairview Village  
Camden: Fairview Village (CP)  
Camden: Parkside  
Deptford: Mt. Zion Wesley  
Deptford: Almonesson  
Deptford: Almonesson (CP)  
Gloucester City: Trinity  
Gloucester City: Trinity (CP)  
Haddon Heights: First  
Magnolia  
Monroe Twp: New Brooklyn  
National Park: First  
West Berlin: St. Johns

Robert E. Costello  
Jesse Barnes  
Alice Cook  
James Keeton, Jr.  
Sandra Jenkins  
Connie Heiges  
Sam Mountain  
William Sparks  
Richard Leaver  
William Benjamin  
Cherese Evans  
Robert Ralph  
Shelley Smith  
Sandra Jenkins

### NORTHERN SHORE DISTRICT

Beach Haven: Kynett  
Beach Haven Terrace: First  
Brookville and West Creek

Diane Gilbert  
Diane Gilbert  
Elizabeth Ealie

Brookville and West Creek (CP)  
Howell: Church of the Master  
Neptune: Hamilton Memorial  
Sea Bright: First  
Sea Bright: First (CP)  
Toms River: Cedar Grove

Clark Callender  
YoHan Baik  
Shelley Potter-Abrahamsen  
Michael Turner  
Glenn Ferguson  
Eileen Murphy

### PALISADES DISTRICT

Superintendent  
Demarest: Yobel Korean  
Leonia  
Pearl River (NY)  
Suffern (NY)

Wayne Plumstead  
Daniel Chun-Hyung Yoo  
David Wehrle  
Cynthia Stouffer  
Cynthia Stouffer

### RARITAN VALLEY DISTRICT

Basking Ridge: Bishop Janes  
Bethlehem Twp - North Hunterdon  
Bernardsville  
Califon  
Dunellen  
East Millstone  
Gladstone  
Port Murray: McCrae Memorial  
Metuchen: Centenary  
Milltown  
Oxford: Colonial  
South Plainfield: Wesley  
Westfield: First

Grace Pak  
Barbara Hoffman  
Myung Sun Han  
James Elliott  
Ian Lee  
Doris Haley  
Myung Sun Han  
James Elliott  
Anna Thomas  
Nehemiah Thompson  
Shirley Mitchell  
Gina Kim  
David Mertz

### SKYLANDS DISTRICT

Superintendent  
Augusta: Frankford Plains  
Augusta: Frankford Plains (CP)  
Boonton  
Boonton  
Butler  
Buttzville  
Buttzville (CP)  
Columbia: Knowlton  
Denville: Community  
Hopatcong: Westside  
Johnsonburg  
Tranquility  
Johnsonburg/Tranquility (CP)  
Morristown: Korean  
Randolph: Millbrook  
Stockholm  
Towaco: Montville

Steven G. Bechtold  
David Tillisch  
Robyne Mayer  
David Evans  
Faith Evans  
Mike McKay  
Scott Matt  
Joe McCarthy  
Jungrea Chung  
Edward H. Carl  
Jinwook Jeong  
Daniel Lincoln  
Daniel Lincoln  
Marcia Krause -Bilyk  
Sang Hoon Choi  
Jack Copas  
Ben Ellis  
Vijaya Kumar

## Conference UMVIM Haiti Mission March 12-19 2011

By Nathan Dadap

This past March, I joined a team of six people on a volunteer trip to Haiti with the GNJAC United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM). This trip was made possible through the generosity of my church, Embury: Little Silver, which paid for nearly 90% of the cost of the trip and donated additional tools. UMVIM sends teams of volunteers in relief missions throughout the world. In Haiti, volunteers either stay at the Methodist Guest House in Petionville or are sent out to an alternate site location where they camp in the area where they are working. Our team did the former, and during the week we helped with the construction of a house that when completed, will be rented out to gain revenue for the Methodist Church of Haiti. Since there is an unemployment rate of over 80% in Haiti, the church must have revenue sources other than its members.

Yes, this no doubt raises philosophical questions. To alleviate suffering in Haiti, is our time and money really best spent supporting the church? First, we must put into context what position the church occupies in Haitian society. 80% of schools are run by churches, and the Methodist Church of Haiti alone runs 100 schools. Other tangible ministries to the people include the running of a Children's Home/Orphanage (which was down the street from our worksite), as well as a senior home in Port-au-Prince. Additionally, it is interesting to note that the church in Haiti appears to be more unified than what we are accustomed to here in the U.S. In the Sunday service that we attended, there were representatives from eight other congregations, who each came equipped with a speech or musical contribution during the service. In America, our church, has to an extent, been relegated to a self-help community, a force acting only in the spiritual realm. We come to the church only when our spirit is unfulfilled; our daily lives and our spirituality have effectively become separated. These important differences in the role of the church reflect the need for a different approach to missionary service. In Haiti, supporting the church can be equated to supporting a community center in a way that encourages Haitian leadership.

With only one week in Haiti, we were forced to reconsider the objectives of our mission. As volunteers we want to work and help provide resources, but the reality is that we more importantly



UMVIM team with Haitian workers and street children.

act as ambassadors of the United Methodist Church to the people of Haiti. In this capacity, we sought to form relationships with the people around us—children living both in the Methodist Children's Home and in the tent city near the worksite, as well as with the paid Haitian laborers who had families of their own.

After a week of trying to process these experiences, I'd like to share a few lessons that I take away from the trip:

First, I want to challenge members of our conference to let yourselves be affected—by the images of destruction and despair around the world that we are exposed to every single day in the news. Through forces both in and beyond our control, human suffering will always exist. But we must never stop sharing in that suffering, and we must never avoid empathizing with the hardships of our neighbors.

Secondly, we must remember that

humanity is not a faceless group, but rather, comprised of different kinds of individuals, all special and unique in the eyes of God. In Haiti, we met children who were outgoing, and children who were shy. There were a few people in the community who were resentful of our presence and a great many others who were thankful for what we were doing.

***We rediscover the beauty in humanity only through the formation of honest and direct relationships with the people around us, this constituting the most meaningful aspect of our lives.***

Lastly, we must never lose hope that we can touch the lives of the people around us. Especially in situations where people don't have much, the offering of our support, both spiritually and with material donations, can touch people in meaningful ways that we may never realize.

I encourage anyone with interest in going on a mission to contact the conference UMVIM coordinator, Kathy Ahmad via email at [kahmad@comcast.net](mailto:kahmad@comcast.net) or cell phone at 732-865-3730. Churches can organize their own UMVIM teams to Haiti, or individuals can join one of the GNJAC UMVIM trips. Currently there are two more trips scheduled to Haiti, one for November 5 – 11, 2011 and another for March 10 – 17, 2011. I personally was blessed to have been given this opportunity for mission in Haiti by Embury UMC.

## Port Jervis Children Affirm The World is Our Parish



The Sunday School at the Drew church in Port Jervis, New York celebrated the end of the Sunday School year with a program for the congregation on June 5. It was entitled, "ALL THE WORLD".

Echoing the thoughts of John Wesley, the children spoke of the world as "our congregation" and that we are and should be in mission to everyone. Wesley and E. Stanley Jones set examples of how all the people of the world need to know the love and care that can be found in those who serve the risen Lord.

The children demonstrated how they can help children in other countries through the giving of Samaritan's Purse Christmas shoeboxes and by saving coins to purchase insecticide nets for the Nothing but Nets ministry. The children led the congregation in the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed.

One child played "My Country 'tis of Thee on his saxophone and another sang "This is My Father's World."

The congregation joined in the finale with "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" as an inflatable globe, an itty bitty baby, and the sun and moon were passed around.

## VITAL CONGREGATIONS

### “Bearing Fruit”

By Douglas Ruffle

Coordinator of Congregational Development, GNJAC



I read a book this spring that challenged my thinking about ministry in a fundamental way. While I have always championed fruitfulness in ministry, often I have quoted sayings that could be interpreted otherwise. For instance, I have quoted Mother Teresa who once said, “I do not pray for success, I ask for faithfulness.” One might interpret this as dismissing fruitfulness. However, there is a difference between the meaning of ‘success’ in our culture and what it means to be fruitful. Let me explain.

The book I read, *Bearing Fruit*, by Lovett Weems and Tom Berlin, makes a clarion call for fruitfulness in ministry. They cite recent expressions that have entered into our vocabulary that dismisses fruitfulness. I may have contributed to this problem by saying such things as “I am not called to be effective; I am called to be faithful.” As Weems and Burton say,

There is deep truth in the statement. Of course, all Christian ministries are called to faithfulness. Not all of our impact can be recorded in statistical tables, and some ministry settings will seldom reward those who seek ever-increasing numbers. The problem with the statement, however, is that it promotes the idea that pastors and lay leaders have no responsibility for fruitfulness. This comment leads us to believe that fruitful ministry is somehow not faithful, and faithful ministry is not typically fruitful [Lovett Weems and Thomas Berlin, *Bearing Fruit: Ministry with Real Results* (Abingdon Press, 2011)].

I think it is true that we need to strive for faithfulness. God will bring the fruit as a result of our faithfulness. We should expect fruitfulness from our faithfulness. We should be confident that our efforts will bear fruit for God’s Kingdom.

This coming Fall our District Resource Days will emphasize fruitfulness by reflecting on one or more of the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations outlined in Bishop Robert Schnase’s book. You recall that Schnase talks about fruitful practices of Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Intentional Faith Development, Risk-Taking Mission and Service, and Extravagant Generosity. Weems and Burton’s book takes this whole conversation of fruitfulness to a deeper level.

Bishop Devadhar recommends a book for our churches to read each year and this year (2011-2012), it is *Bearing Fruit* by Weems and Berlin. He announced his selection during his Episcopal address at Annual Conference. I am glad the Bishop has chosen this book and highly recommend it to our churches as a basis of honest discussion as we all seek to bear fruit in our mission and ministry.

## ‘Valiant Woman’



Jacqueline Haaf of Whiting United Methodist Church receives the congratulations from her pastor, the Rev. Jeff Tilden, along with the prestigious “Valiant Woman” award of Church Women United, May 6 at Tuckerton Presbyterian Church.

The Valiant Woman award is given to women of CWU in recognition of service at varied levels from local to state, regional and national. Mrs. Haaf’s award honored her service at the state level.

Active in the local congregation since moving to Whiting following the retirement of her husband, the Rev. Gene Haaf, from the New York Conference, Mrs. Haaf was recognized for her lifetime achievements in ministry and mission.

Before coming to New Jersey she was active in the New York Conference where she was president of the conference United Methodist Women, and a delegate to the 1984 General Conference.

Among her accomplishments in the local church was establishment of thrift shops in Hampton Bays, N. Y. and in North Haven, Conn., where she also organized a cooperative nursery school.

In Whiting she has continued actively in mission and women’s ministry, including frequent outreach to the Neighborhood Center in Camden.

Long associated with Church Women United since presiding over the New Haven, Conn., unit many years ago, Mrs. Haaf recently completed her term as a vice-president of the New Jersey chapter.

(Photo by Gene Haaf)

## Stewardship Stories

By Rich Hendrickson

Coordinator of Stewardship Education and Development, GNJAC



### Preaching for Giving

Three boys are in the schoolyard bragging about their fathers. The first boy says, “My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, they give him \$50.” The second boy says, “That’s nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song, and they give him \$100.” The third boy says, “I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon. and it takes eight people to collect all the money!”

Most preachers I know, including myself, enjoy both the process of crafting and delivering the weekly sermon. We look forward to that moment in worship when we can interact with the congregation through the spoken word and bring to life the message that God has placed on our heart to share. Rev. Timothy Bagwell, author of, “Preaching for Giving” says that “the sermon provides an opportunity to provide pastoral, prophecy, support, confrontation, moral guidance, and love.” He goes on to say that preaching is also hard work as it is both physically and emotionally draining.

In spite of that, Timothy concludes that for most, the preaching task is still a joyful one. Except when it comes to preaching about money! Silence about money and possessions from the pulpit may make the preacher more comfortable but it certainly is not biblical. In the New Testament alone there are at least thirty-one statements, sermons, and teachings on the subject of money and possessions and thirteen out of the thirty-nine parables deal directly with the subject of money.

Sisters and brothers the evidence is clear and overwhelming. Preachers in exciting, alive churches preach joyful, challenging sermons on financial stewardship. So get busy, “scribble a few words on a piece of paper, call it a sermon,” and may it indeed take at least “eight people to collect all the money.”

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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.

### July 8-10 — School of Christian Mission

LAKEWOOD — Georgian Court University will again be the site of the first session of this year's cooperative School of Christian Mission jointly sponsored by the GNJAC and the Conference UMW. See story, pages 1 & 3.

### July 8-10 — Youth School of Christian Mission

LAKEWOOD — "Grace, Forgiveness and Reconciliation" a hands on mission project and lasting friendships, and lots of fun are among the promised good times at Georgian Court University for those who attend this year's Youth School of Christian Mission. See story, pages 1 & 3.

### July 13-17 — Youth 2111

LAFAYETTE, Ind. — Youth 2011, the four day national youth gathering for the United Methodist Church at Purdue University will bring together top United Methodist leaders, the best ecumenical speakers, bands and talent and thousands of youth from all around the nation for what is sure to be a life-changing event. For information about the event and bus transportation from the GNJ conference office, log on to [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).

### July 22-24 — School of Christian Mission.

CALDWELL — Caldwell College will be the site of the second session of this year's cooperative School of Christian Mission jointly sponsored by the GNJAC and the Conference UMW. See story, pages 1 & 3.

### July 22-August 1 — Taize Pilgrimage

GNJAC — if you are between 16 and 29 years of age you are invited to join Bishop Devadhar and chaperones on a weeklong spiritual development experience. Additional adults may request to attend as space provides opportunity. For details, see conference website, [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org) and click on Taize Pilgrimage link.

### July 28-30 — Music Institute

MADISON — Music, liturgical styles, prayer and preaching designed to encourage souls, hearts and minds will be served up at this Sixth Annual Music Institute at Drew Theological School. Themes include "Singing a 21st Century Faith," "The shape of congregational song in our generation," and "Global song for local congregations". FFI: Visit [www.drew.edu/theological/continuingeducation](http://www.drew.edu/theological/continuingeducation).

### August 15-17, 2011 Exploring a Call To Ministry

GNJAC- 12:00pm Monday – 12:00pm Wednesday  
Pinelands Center at Mt. Misery Cost: \$35

There is **no other cost** for meals or lodging associated with this retreat! Are you active in your church? Do you feel like God may be asking you to explore ministry deeper? This retreat will help youth and young adults explore what it means to be called to ministry. We will specifically explore what it means to be an Elder or Deacon in the United Methodist Church, as well as the other outlets for ministry within our denomination. This event will provide a space for young people to explore the call to ordained ministry through worship, prayer, networking and small groups.

### September 9-11 — Youth Weekend

OCEAN CITY — Hiphop artist Agape and illusionist Jared Hall will be on stage at this annual September gathering at the shore for GNJ youth. New workshops and for the first time ever, "So U think U can Praise" praise video competition. FFI: Visit the MYP website.

### September 17 — Historical Tour

PHILADELPHIA — The historical Black Connection comes alive in visits to a number of churches that contributed to the spiritual development of the City of Brotherly Love. Visits to Old St. George, Mother Bethel, Tindley Temple and others. Registration deadline, August 27.

### October 3 — India 2011 with the Bishop

GNJAC - Eleven days of discover on the Asian sub-continent where the passion of Jesus Christ is moving and stirring the people. See conference website, [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org) for details.



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Northern Shore District UMM  
Base Ball Game at the BlueClaws  
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7:05pm, \$10.00/Ticket

Fireworks follow game!  
For tickets call John Fischer III at 732-349-5384 or email him at [SingFourPartLead@aol.com](mailto:SingFourPartLead@aol.com)  
Make it a ballgame night at your church

### Northern Shore UMM BlueClaws Game on Aug 19th at 7:05pm

Join the Northern Shore District UMM at our second and last BlueClaws Game in Lakewood at the BlueClaw Stadium off New Hampshire Avenue on Friday, Aug. 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:05pm. Make it a family night complete with fireworks. Call John Fischer III at 732-349-5384 or email him at [SingFourPartLead@AOL.com](mailto:SingFourPartLead@AOL.com). Call him if your church would like a batch of tickets to sell, or for individual tickets. Cost \$10.00 a ticket. See you at the game, and have a great summer.

## OBITUARIES

**MARJORY K. MARKER**, widow of the Rev. Charles W. Marker, elder of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, died on May 5, 2011. A memorial service was held June 1, at Penney Memorial Church, Penney Farms, Florida.

Memorial donations may be made to Reform Church of America (Barbara Kapenga Ministry) and sent to the attention of Karen Bogerd, 4500 60<sup>th</sup> St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49512.

Condolences may be sent to her daughter, Margaret Shurdom, P.O. Box 433, Penney Farms, FL 32079.

**QUEEN PORTER**, lay member at-large of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, died on Thursday, June 2, 2011. She was a member of the Franklin-St. John's United Methodist Church in Newark, NJ. A funeral service was held June 8 at Franklin-St. John's Church.

Mrs. Porter is survived by her former husband, Arthur Porter and two daughters, Kimberly Fisher and Vanessa Porter-Moore, 14 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Messages of condolence may be sent to family members in care of Mrs. Porter's sister, Annie Harris, c/o Franklin-St. John's United Methodist Church, 142 Maple Ave, Newark, NJ 07112-1712.

**MARIAN G. MARSHALL**, widow of the Rev. James W. Marshall, elder of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, died on June 18, 2011. A memorial service was scheduled for July 2 at the Whiting United Methodist Church.

Mrs. Marshall, a teacher by profession, was active in ministry with her husband, with passionate concerns for missions and environmental issues.

Gifts of remembrance may be made to the Whiting United Methodist Church, or to the Whitesbog Preservation Trust, 120-34 Whitesbog Road, Browns Mills, NJ 08015. Condolences may be sent to son, James K. Marshall, 113 North Main Street, Cranbury, NJ 08512-3309.

**HORACE WILLIAM ROUSSEAU**, retired local pastor of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, died on June 17, 2011. Funeral services were held June 21 at the Tilghman Funeral Home, New Egypt.

Mr. Rousseau, a navy veteran with service in World War II, began his pastoral ministry in 1964, serving part time appointments at Smithville, Chambers Church in Hamilton Township, Windsor and Fieldsboro

He is survived by his wife, Josephine, two sons, the Rev. William C. Rousseau of Massachusetts and David B. of Tennessee; three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Messages of condolence may be sent to his wife, Josephine Rousseau, 511 Wrightstown Sykesville Road, Wrightstown, NJ 08562

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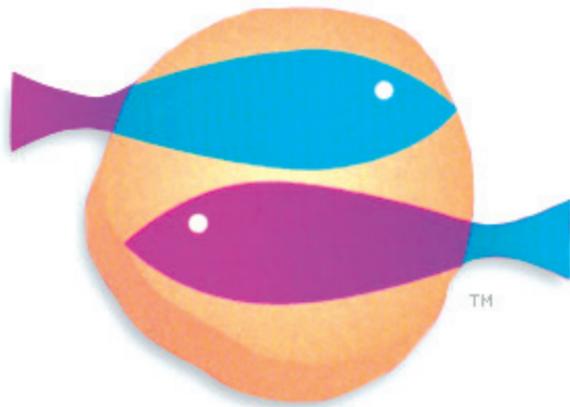
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