

Thoughts for Thanksgiving

Wings of Love

Snow geese blanket the meadow in Autumn
A visual counterpoint to the red and gold
Of leaves that drip from surrendering trees.
Having spent the season in lofty homes in branches
That reached toward heaven like hands of supplicants in prayer,
They lie scattered and dry, as fragile as memories of childhood.

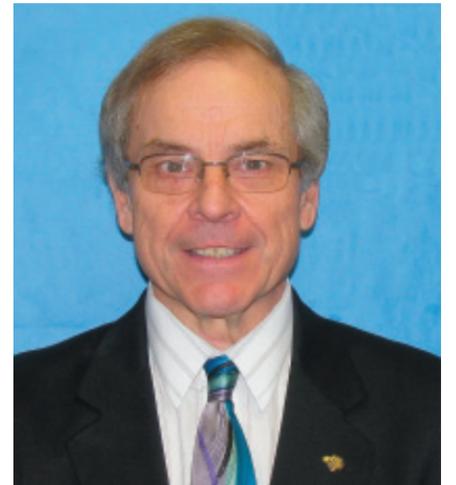
The geese, harbingers of a winter still to come,
At some unknown signal rise as one into the air.
This avian community flies, not alone, before the frost.
Not turning back, without regrets, they leave the home of summer,
Soaring toward the retreating sun, with hope for what is still to come;
A journey of feathered family and friends who stay until the journey's end.

O God, among the blessings of this world
Our temptation is to take for granted
The seasons in the sun, of never-ending days of youth
and mindless, carefree revelry.
One day we pause and find the leaves are
burnished, red and gold,
It's then we draw our arms around your gifts of love,
Those others in our lives,
And fly with thankful hearts toward life's sunset,
Upheld by wings of love.

GCF

Best wishes and prayers for a Blessed Thanksgiving from the Relay staff.

Meet the Staff- Bishop Devadhar Completes Appointments to Relay



Glenn Ferguson, newly appointed editor of the Relay.

Ocean — Following a summer of change at the Relay that saw the retirement of several key members of the staff, Bishop Devadhar has named new associate editors who assume their duties with this edition. Joining Editor Glenn Ferguson are : the Rev. Rob Tomer who will cover the Gateway South and Delaware Bay districts, the Rev. Hector Burgos who will cover the Cape Atlantic and Capital districts, and Jessica Stenstrom who will cover the Palisades and Skylands districts. Robin VanCleaf will have responsibility for the Northern Shore district while Mr. Ferguson will cover the Raritan Valley and Gateway North districts.

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Bishop's Days: Opening the Lines of Communication

by Heather Fullerton

The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference is blessed to have a bishop who truly cares about what the clergy and laity of this conference think and feel. During the months of September and October, Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar traveled to each of the nine districts for the annual "Bishop's Day." Clergy gathered each morning to worship and celebrate communion with one another before getting into the day's presentation. Every district had its own rhythm and flow for the day. Some sang hymns with a pianist; others had guitarists and a contemporary praise team. It was a great testament to the diversity of the conference.

After worship, Bishop Devadhar began the presentation on this year's theme: *The Call to Action*. At that point, either Rev. Dr. Rich Hendrickson or Rev. Dr. Doug Ruffle took over to present the key points of the day. It quickly became evident to clergy that none of the concepts being presented were really "new." They were the core values every church should strive to uphold in ministry, however, this effort takes them a step farther. The *Call to Action* chal-



Members of the clergy and laity lay hands on Bishop Devadhar in a moment of prayer.

lenges all United Methodists to take a critical and honest look inside the churches' programs to determine if they are truly being fruitful or are simply filling up the calendar. As Mr. Hendrickson summarized the book, "Bearing Fruit" by Lovett Weems and Thomas

M. Berlin, he quoted, "just because a church is busy doesn't mean a church is being fruitful."

Every morning concluded with an opportunity for pastors' questions followed by a special anointing service in which clergy had the opportunity to

anoint and pray for one another, their families, and their ministries. While singings favorite hymns, one could feel the energy and presence of God in the room. The service was a powerful testimony to the unity of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

The laity gathering was held each evening so church members could understand *The Call To Action* and what is expected of each church. It's important that clergy and laity are on the same page so that, as a unified church, United Methodists can move forward together and accomplish the mission of making disciples for Christ. Those in attendance had the opportunity to ask the bishop questions about the presentation, the denomination, the future of the conference, and about any myths or rumors that had come up over time. Many of the laity commented on how

special it is to have time with the bishop and feel like their concerns are being heard. Most left with a stronger sense of how The United Methodist Church, and particularly the GNJAC, is hoping to grow vital and vibrant churches in

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EDITORIAL

Passing the Baton of Ministry to and by Youth

Oh when the saints go marching in, when the saints go marching in. Oh Lord I want to be in that number, when the saints go marching in.

This old time hymn is often sung around All Saints Day, as we recall loved ones that have passed in the previous year, the church's forefathers and foremothers, and timeless figures like John Wesley that have helped to shape our understanding of the faith.

Hebrews 12 encourages Christians to remember the great cloud of witnesses that surrounds us. Often we translate this as a calling to celebrate the testimonies of those who have passed on. What is sometimes forgotten is that we are each called to be a witness, here and now. Hebrews 12 continues by encouraging each of us to keep our eyes upon Jesus and run the race with perseverance.

In a relay race, a baton is passed to signal that the next person should begin the race. Should it be any different in the arena of faith? As an example, are we in fact passing the baton to the young people in our midst? As a cloud of witnesses, we have a responsibility to the young people of our church. This is a responsibility not just to pass on our articles of faith and our church traditions, such as annual pot luck dinners or rummage sales that are seemingly embedded deep within our roots. We also have a responsibility to allow young people a space to explore their faith and to help them realize that their voice, their witness, matters to the church.

As a youth pastor, I realize that today's generation is not the church of the future, but is the church of now – THE CHURCH OF TODAY. I have heard it said it will only take one missing generation for the church to disappear. If we continue to discount the voices and ideas of young people, if we do not empower them to dream big and realize that God has a plan and purpose for their lives, I fear that the church will become irrelevant to the world in the future.

I would like to share an experience of a worship service that was based on the theme of All Saints Day. At the beginning of the service there was a time of sharing where people were invited to bring a candle from home that represented a loved one who had passed – a saint that they would like to honor. Afterward the congregation was invited to come forward and light tea light candles in honor of the saints of the future – the children and youth, to whom we are passing the baton.

What would happen if we actively celebrated and recognized the presence of young people in churches? What would it look like if we lit a candle in honor of the children, youth and young adults in our lives and in our churches? I think the church just might shine a little brighter.

J.S.

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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.

A Message from the Bishop



My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

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

Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori writes, "Who or what is a saint? They aren't just the great heroes of our faith. Every baptized person is a saint, each one of us called to holy living. As the hymn says, saints are just folk like you and me... Saints are folks who share the dream of God for society of shalom, a community of peace and justice. Those folk who hunger and thirst for righteousness, who seek peace, are the prophets of our age, the ones who proclaim the dream of God and work to make it reality" (Katharine Jefferts Schori, *A Wing and a Prayer: A Message of Faith and Hope*, Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, pp.140-141 2007).

As we celebrate All Saints' Day, may we take time to ponder the thoughts expressed by Bishop Schori. Many a time we often think of persons as saints: those who have done great things or made good news.

However, we often forget that God indeed calls every baptized Christian to be a saint, as he or she shares the dream of God for a society of shalom in bringing justice and peace. When we live our baptism in our communities and society through our actions and deeds, we demonstrate the sainthood in us.

May we also take time to write a thank you note to those saints who live in our communities who truly yearn and work for God's justice and peace in numerous ways:

Persons who work as volunteers in cleaning and fixing homes destroyed by natural disasters.

Persons who drive patients to hospitals who have no means of transportation.

Persons who call or email the lonely and the forgotten and provide them companionship.

Persons who teach English as a second language to immigrants in our communities.

Persons who visit the prisons and bring people there a word of hope.

As catalysts of God's shalom we are constantly challenged not to be just pew warmers, but agents of God's shalom through justice and peace ministries. During my pastoral ministry, one time I was with a group of Christians who were busy making a list of people to receive the Christmas baskets from the church. I asked about the people in our local prison. Suddenly there was silence in the room! No volunteers... Finally I volunteered to do it. Opportunities do come to us to demonstrate our sainthood through our acts of mercy, justice, and peace. The question is, do we seize that opportunity or by-pass that opportunity by providing our own reasons or excuses?

On All Saints' Day we do acknowledge, remember, and celebrate the lives of those who mean so much to us, who rest from their labors and enjoy their eternal life. It is very important for us to thank God for their witness and the inspiration and guidance they have provided to us. As we do, this may it also be a time for us to thank God for the living saints among us and for their witness. May we also call for self-examination and how we respond to the day-to-day opportunities of demonstrating our sainthood?

Wishing you and your loved ones a Happy Thanksgiving,

In Christ's love,

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar



Serving the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

Sudarshana Devadhar, Resident Bishop
The Greater New Jersey Conference ~ 1001 Wickapecko Dr., Ocean, NJ 07712-4733

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Meet the Staff

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In addition to being Editor of the UM Relay, Glenn Ferguson's primary responsibility is as pastor of the Middletown church on the Northern Shore District, where he has served since 2008. He has been a member of the Relay editorial staff for eight years, serving as an associate editor prior to assuming his present post. Mr. Ferguson is also a member of the Conference Sessions team where he co-chairs the Site Team. He has similar responsibilities as a member of the Bishop's Convocation Committee. In addition, Mr. Ferguson is a member of the faculty of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Local Pastors' Licensing School held at the UMC of the Rockaways each summer.



Robin VanCleaf - Associate Editor

In retirement, Robin VanCleaf remains a vital part of the work of the Relay, now serving in his capacity of Associate Editor for the Northern Shore District. This comes after nearly three decades as editor of the paper. During his 29 years as editor, the paper went through 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. "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."

Jessica Stenstrom

Hello everyone! My name is Jessica Stenstrom. I am originally from South Jersey, but have been transplanted to the north where I am serving as a youth pastor at Denville Community Church. With a background as a local news reporter and as a public relations coordi-

nator, I am excited to be the associate editor for the Skylands and Palisades districts. I am currently a third year student at Drew Theological Seminary and in the process toward ordained ministry. I would invite any churches on my assigned districts to contact me with news that you think is of interest to our greater community. You can reach me by calling (973) 627-1041 or by email at Jessica_Stenstrom@yahoo.com. I look forward to working with all of you!



Rev. Hector A. Burgos-Nuñez

Rev. Hector A. Burgos-Nuñez, is a lifelong Methodist. He moved from Puerto Rico to New Jersey ten years ago, and since has been actively involved in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. Mr. Burgos has a Bachelor degree in Business Administration and Marketing from the University of Puerto Rico, and last summer completed a Master of Divinity degree from The School of Theology at Drew University. A probationary elder in the conference, he has served as chairperson of the Hispanic caucus, a member of the Conference Board of Church and Society and Communications Committee. Currently, Mr. Burgos is appointed as pastor at Oasis Church in Pleasantville and Associate Pastor at First Church in Tuckerton, in charge of their Hispanic ministry House of Hope.

Rev. Rob Tomer

Rev. Rob Tomer is the pastor of Clonmell church in Gibbstown while also serving as the Coordinating Pastor for Billingsport in Paulsboro on the Gateway South District. He has served on a number of conference and district boards and committees including BOOM, Property Insurance, Trustees and Pensions. Mr. Tomer also served on the Board of Directors of ARC Gloucester for nearly twenty years – two of those as chair of the board. He remarks, "It is a privilege to serve on the Relay and developing the gift of telling the church's story in the Annual Conference."

Fall Food Collection for the Camden Neighborhood Center is in the Offing

Autumn is here! The leaves are turning, the air is crisp and it is time once again to plan for the holiday season. As you make plans for your family at home, please include your family at the Neighborhood Center!

The Center's 2011 "Praise for the Harvest" Collection provides a way for your family and your church family to reach out and help people here in the Camden Community all year long. The food collected is used for their Thanksgiving food programs and our Christmas food program. Any remaining food is used throughout the year in their Emergency Food program, which provides for a monthly box of food for their customers who find themselves temporarily without food for any reason.

They ask that you schedule a "Praise for the Harvest" Collection at your church on Sunday, November 20 and deliver all food items to the Neighborhood Center on November 21, between 9:30 and 3:30 pm.

If you are able to volunteer, they would love to have you on November 21, when they sort and organize the food items, and November 22, when they pack and store the food in the morning and then distribute it in the afternoon in the Thanksgiving Food Giveaway starting at 12 noon. Please call the office at the Center in advance (856-365-5295) to RSVP so they know how many volunteers to expect!

New this year, they are also asking for volunteers on Thanksgiving Day, when they plan to celebrate with their families and our Neighborhood Center family with a traditional community Thanksgiving meal. Since many of their homeless customers have no way to cook a holiday dinner, they will be opening their doors to them on Thanksgiving Day from 12:00 to 1:00pm. They can use people to help serve and cleanup, and invite you to share the meal with them in between! Two shifts are available, 10am-1pm and 11am-2pm.

The directors are also available to come and speak at your church program or service, or help with your collections! Since they are all new to the Center, they are very anxious to meet you all! Please don't hesitate to call with questions, or plan a trip to see them!

Emergency Food Program List:

Please pack the following non-perishable items for a family of two in a box approximately 12" x 16":

- 1 box hot or cold low-sugar cereal
- 1 can or jar low-sodium gravy
- Bagged cubed bread
- 1 box or can of sweet potatoes
- 1 package pasta
- 1 can cranberries
- 1 large can fruit
- 1 can or jar low-sodium pasta sauce
- 2 large cans tuna fish
- 1 large can or bottle fruit juice
- 1 medium bag white rice
- 1 jar peanut butter
- Beans, dry or canned
- 1 jar jelly or jam
- Coffee or tea
- Spices: sage, thyme, pepper
- Low-sodium broth
- 3 cans low-sodium vegetables
- Foil roasting pans
- Marshmallows
- Olive or canola oil

Please pack the following items separately:

Turkeys, any size; canned hams, any size; bags of potatoes; bags of yams; fresh vegetables

Year Round Programs List

Specific food and food-related items for Neighborhood Center Year-round programs:

Youth Program and Afterschool Program: These two programs need the following healthy snacks: granola bars, trail mix, low-sugar 100% juice, whole grain snacks like chips or pretzels, dried fruit or raisins, no-sugar added applesauce, salsa, reduced-fat whole grain crackers, low fat graham crackers/animal crackers, goldfish crackers, fat-free pudding, and baking supplies.

Infant and Toddler Daycare, which provides full-day service from Monday to Friday each week, always needs baby wipes, kleenex tissue, paper towels and toilet paper.

"The Neighborhood Center is a Christian social-service agency in the city of Camden that strives to serve the local community through its offering of programs for the entire family." - Taken from www.ncicamden.org.

Bishop's Days

(Continued from Page 1)

the future.

Special thanks to all of the District Superintendents, District Administrative Assistants, Conference Lay Leader Rosa Williams, and all those who took time out of their days to help host each Bishop's Day. Every host church, pastor, and staff put a great amount of effort into making the Bishop's Days a success. Special thanks to the host churches: Mt. Fern UMC/ Millbrook UMC (Skylands), Tabernacle UMC-Erma (Cape Atlantic), Bridgewater UMC (Raritan Valley), St. Lukes UMC (Northern Shore), Roselle UMC (Gateway North), Trinity UMC-Ewing (Capital), Ridgewood UMC (Palisades), First UMC Millville (Delaware Bay), and First UMC Williamstown (Gateway South).

For more information on the "Vital Congregations" movement of The United Methodist Church, visit www.umvitalcongregations.org.



Rich Hendrickson (pictured) and Doug Ruffle assisted in the bishop making presentations.



Rev. Paul Amey anoints fellow clergy at Gateway South gathering.



Global Relay

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

Church attacks malaria on several fronts

BO DISTRICT, Sierra Leone (UMNS) — Nearly a year after a massive distribution of insecticide-treated bed nets, more residents in Sierra Leone report using the nets to prevent malaria. Still, as malaria patients during the summer rainy season can attest, truly defeating the disease will take more than nets. The United Methodist Church's Imagine No Malaria campaign is fighting malaria in multiple ways.

Judicial Council to meet Oct. 26-29

SAN DIEGO (UMNS) — The United Methodist Judicial Council, the denomination's equivalent of a supreme court, will consider 11 cases during its Oct. 26-29 fall meeting at the Doubletree Hotel San Diego Downtown. An oral hearing on docket item 1011-2 — regarding a decision of law by Dallas Area Bishop Earl Bledsoe related to the structure of the North Texas Annual (regional) Conference — will begin at 10 a.m. Oct. 27.

Three docket items ask the denomination's top court to review decisions of law regarding the legality of annual conference sessions of the Middle Philippines, Palawan Philippines and Cavite Philippines conferences. The Northern Illinois Annual Conference is requesting a declaratory decision "regarding a resolution that suggests a maximum penalty for any clergy member convicted of officiating at a civil union."

Group resettles 5,318 refugees

NEW YORK (UMNS) — With U.S. refugee admissions decreasing because of delays related to new security checks, Church World Service — a United Methodist partner — resettled 5,318 refugees from Oct. 1, 2010, to Sept. 30, 2011, compared to 7,055 the previous year.

"The refugees we resettled will have a chance at life. We can be proud of that," said Erol Kekic, director of the agency's Immigration and Refugee Program. But he said he regrets the potential danger to refugees whose departures for the United States have been — and are being — delayed due to the increased complication of an already complex process of interrelated interviews and screenings.

3 countries to become separate missions

NEW YORK (UMNS) — The growth and maturity of United Methodist mission work in three Southeast Asian countries — Laos, Thailand and Vietnam — has prompted directors of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries to divide them into separate missions. The denomination's work in Mongolia also was raised to formal mission status from that of an informal "mission initiative," under provisions of church rules.

Clergy, laity pledge support for same-sex unions

NEW YORK (UMNS) - A group of nearly 900 United Methodist clergy and laity in New York and Connecticut announced Oct. 17 their intention to make weddings available to gays and lesbians despite The United Methodist Church's ban on same-sex unions. Altogether, 164 clergy and 732 lay people have signed "**A Covenant of Conscience.**" The Book of Discipline, the denomination's law book, identifies the practice of homosexuality as "incompatible with Christian teaching" and prohibits United Methodist churches from hosting and clergy from officiating at "ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions."

Looking ahead to future mission trends

NEW YORK (UMNS) — As the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries continues to redefine its role as the denomination's mission leader and a 21st century missionary-sending agency, the Russia Initiative provides one possible "roadmap" to change, says Thomas Kemper, the board's top executive. The initiative's model of retaining cultural identification and fostering financial self-reliance should be studied, Kemper told directors during his report at the board's Oct. 10-12 annual meeting.

Conference must pay in sex-abuse case

WINONA, Minn. (UMNS) — The Minnesota Annual (regional) Conference must pay \$164,000 in compensatory damages to a woman who was sexually abused by a former United Methodist pastor. A Winona, Minn., jury on Oct. 6 awarded the woman more than \$1.4 million in a civil suit against the conference and Donald Dean Budd, who already had pleaded guilty to the abuse. Budd must pay \$1 million in punitive damages and \$246,000 of the \$410,000 in compensatory damages.

'40 Days of Prayer' for HIV/AIDS

WASHINGTON (UMNS) — A free, downloadable resource that offers 40 daily devotions leading up to World AIDS Day, typically Dec. 1, is available from the United Methodist Global AIDS Fund Committee and the United Methodist Board of Church and Society. "This resource is ideal for use by individuals and/or small groups in their daily prayer life as a way of lifting prayers to God about one of the worst health crises facing humanity," said the Rev. Donald Messer, chair of the AIDS Fund Committee.

ART AND SPIRITUALITY AT COLLINGSWOOD MANOR

The Collingswood Manor is starting a new program to help residents connect with God in ways Bible study alone cannot. The program will be called *Art and Spirituality: Finding the God of Creation Through Creative Activities*. The Manor needs volunteers to share their creative gifts and help residents explore creative outlets. If you might be interested in this opportunity to serve, please contact Rev. Rich Leaver, chaplain at Collingswood Manor at 856-854-4331, Ext. 305 Tuesdays through Thursdays.

Emory Professor Honored for Work with Incarcerated Women

When Elizabeth M. Bounds of Emory University's Candler School of Theology followed her call, it landed her in jail — voluntarily.

Bounds, associate professor of Christian ethics at Candler, began working with prison communities in the 1980s, and since coming to Candler, she has spent more than a decade teaching incarcerated women at Metro State Prison in Atlanta.

Along with Rev. Susan Bishop, a Candler alumna who serves as a prison chaplain, Bounds developed the Certificate for Theological Studies for inmates. Atlanta Theological Association, a consortium of four Atlanta seminaries, administers the program, which allows students to teach theology classes in the prison.

Last week Bounds received a 2011 Unitas Distinguished Alumna Award from Union Theological Seminary (UTS) for her work in restorative justice, particularly teaching incarcerated women. The award recognizes alumni who have distinguished themselves in the church, academy and society. Bounds, who joined Candler in 1997, received her M.Div. and Ph.D. degrees from UTS.

"This award is well-deserved recognition of the outstanding work Liz has done to enrich the field of social ethics and improve the lives of prisoners," says Jan Love, dean of Candler. "She is adept at guiding students as they take lessons from their classrooms and put them to work in our communities, and she has introduced many students to the idea that they can fulfill their calling in community settings."

Bounds says that students working at the prison as part of Candler's contextual education program learn lessons that will help them in other placements. "We're preparing people for the realities of institutions, which any Christian in development work will face," says Bounds. "Institutions are complicated. You learn what ministry can or can't be when you see the reality of those challenges."

By way of example, Bounds offers the story of students who were shocked when an inmate they knew was hand-



cuffed and tranquilized after misbehaving. "You can't change what the institution did in that situation," she says.

"But you have to deal with it in relation to your own sense of ministry. What does a student say to the inmate to affirm the inmate's integrity but also affirm the right of the institution to do what it does? You may think the system is unjust, but what if you can't change the system? How do you help the people within it? These are all important questions for ministry."

In addition to her prison ministry, Bounds has served as coordinator of the Initiative in Religious Practices and Practical Theology, and as both associate director and director of the Graduate Division of Religion at Emory. In addition to her role at Candler, she currently serves as a faculty member in Emory's Center for Ethics.

Bounds is the author of "Coming Together/Coming Apart: Religion, Modernity, and Community" (1997) and coeditor of "Welfare Policy: Feminist Critiques" (1999). In addition to restorative justice and the prison system, her interests include peace-building and conflict transformation, democratic practices and civil society, feminist and liberation ethics, and transformative pedagogical practices.

Fashion Show Dresses Up Multi-Cultural Celebration



Saturday, October 22, 2011 was the annual Multi Cultural Celebration coordinated by the Multi Ethnic Coordinating Team and hosted by St. John's UMC in Hazlet. The auditorium was brightly decorated with representing the countries of the world. Attendees were invited to wear their traditional cultural dress or something representative of their culture, which many did. Also in attendance to support the event were Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar, the Cabinet, Extended Cabinet, and Program Staff of the Conference.

The evening started with a "Parade of Flags" carried by people of a variety of ages and ethnicities while drummers from the African Group provided traditional music. Host, Judy Colorado, welcomed everyone in attendance and thanked all of the performing groups for volunteering their time and talents. There was a nice variety of performances including: praise dance by the African Group of Tren-

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Feeding 'Tummies and Souls' of Job Seekers

By Kathy Gilbert

October 24, 2011 - ROSWELL, Ga. (UMNS)

"I have \$800 left. No house, I'm living with a friend. I'm lost. I'm scared."

"I have been without a job for a year. I never thought it would happen to me."

"I'm technically homeless. I travel back and forth from my sister's place and my parents'."

Clay Redmon, 43; Lisa L. Lampkin, 53; and David Hampe, 25, came to Roswell United Methodist Church on a rainy Monday afternoon because they need help: They need a job.

Every second and fourth Monday, the doors at Roswell are wide open for job seekers. Dinner, understanding, encouragement and networking are all served free.

"With dinner, we think we set something in motion that says we care. There's white tablecloths. There's real silverware. And it all starts with that handshake when you first walk in the door," says Jay Litton, founder of RUMC Job Networking.

On a gloomy autumn day, more than 350 people streamed into the church for a full menu of workshops and advice. Many walked out with an armload of assistance: proper business attire,



Emeral Duncan wipes away a tear following the dinner blessing at RUMC Job Networking, Roswell (Ga.) United Methodist Church's career ministry. Duncan recently lost his job as a software programmer. A UMNS photo by Kathleen Barry.

among the unemployed to know the stress that places on a family."

The volunteers have two goals, Harper says. "We try to make people understand that number one, God will hear you and God will help you. And

Ministry doesn't need a lot of people or activities; it just needs commitment, he says.

For a long time, the ministry ran with five volunteers ministering to 60 to 80 job seekers, says Katherine Simons, program coordinator.

In 2010, the United Methodist North Georgia Annual (regional) Conference asked Roswell to hold a conference to teach other churches how to start similar ministries.

More than 200 people from 80 churches of all denominations attended the February conference. In preparation, the team put together a book, "Loving Your Neighbor," with stories from 34 volunteers who were passionate about the program.

Since then, part of the Monday

evening sessions includes a workshop led by Simons on how to start a job-networking ministry.

"I constantly remind everyone that you can have a ... complete career ministry with just a handful of volunteers," she says.

Simons says they don't count success by the number of people who find jobs but, rather, by the number of people who walk out seeing light at the end of the tunnel.

Dismal news

Job seekers come in the door beaten down by the constant bombardment of bad news.

The Department of Labor reports more than 2 million people have been jobless for at least two years, and 700,000 have been looking for work for at least three years.

The government just announced the "misery index" – the country's inflation plus unemployment rates – rose to 13 percent, a 28-year high. The jobless rate has been stuck at 9 percent for months and is forecast only to drop marginally by year-end.

News like that doesn't help morale, says Phil Clark, sitting at the table reserved for the age 21-29 group. Most of the group members are recent college graduates.

Clark thought he was going to be starting a new job and would have great news to share at the meeting, but the offer was retracted because the corporate office decided it would not be hiring any more people from the Atlanta area.

"Jesus never said life would be easy," says Trevor Nunnally, another group member.

(Continued on Page 8)



Jay Litton, founder of the RUMC Job Networking ministry at Roswell (Ga.) United Methodist Church, says ministry doesn't need a lot of people or activities, it just needs commitment.

a professional photo to post on LinkedIn or other job websites, a polished résumé and assurance that people would pray for them.

Lampkin said her main reason for coming on this day was for encouragement. "I got up today, and I just wasn't motivated to go look for a job. I'm feeling kinda like the weather."

You are not alone

Walking into a large room filled with round tables, a bustling kitchen, a buffet line, a stage and a large screen projecting instructions and directions about opportunities available for the evening can be a bit overwhelming. Volunteers are standing by, ready to offer a warm welcome.

"The new seekers walk through the door with a deer-in-the-headlights look because they walk into a room that is much larger than they thought it would be," says Bob Kashey, one of the table leaders and an inspirational speaker. "And we wind up feeding the souls and the tummies of 350 job seekers."

Encountering John Harper immediately puts the job seeker at ease. Harper has been the greeter and a volunteer with the ministry since 2001.

"I watch their faces coming down this walkway," he says. "You can tell the mood of many of them. Apprehensive. Many of them are concerned about how they're going to make payments on their house or their car. I've had enough family members to be

number two, you're not alone."

Louis Gruver, a job seeker, remembers his first night at the ministry.

"I didn't really want to do this," he said. "But I knew that I had to. And, you know, Mr. Harper was at the front door. And he shakes your hand and says, 'Welcome.'"

Redmon was one of the newcomers Oct. 10.

"I had to be very humble to come here because at one time, I had a lot of money. Now I have \$800 left," he said. "I won't feel bad to tell somebody I got this great suit from Roswell United Methodist Church. I will brag on them on Facebook tomorrow; I will tell all my friends to give 'em a try."

From a mustard seed

The well-oiled machine that today is RUMC Job Networking wasn't always so large.

Litton remembers when it was just him and another man looking for a job.

In the beginning, prayer was not a part of the program. Leaders reasoned that since the meeting was open to the community, the church didn't want to offend anyone. For a while that was OK with Litton also because he wasn't a member of the church and wasn't a professed Christian.

When he turned his life over to Christ, he realized he could turn the job-networking group into a job-networking ministry. Prayer became a key ingredient.

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Dec. 29, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
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West Hunterdon Parish Marks a Decade of Ministry



"The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God..." – Ephesians 4:11-13

These words of Christian unity from Paul had a very special meaning for the congregation gathered on a sunny September Sunday at the historic Everittstown Church in rural Hunterdon County. Those hearing them were celebrating the 10th anniversary of the West Hunterdon Parish – eight small area churches that honor their individual roots but come together as one when called to do the Lord's work. Brought together by then-Raritan Valley District Superintendent Vicki Miller Brendler, the congregations have combined their gifts and graces to support area food banks, promote health care, provide schools supplies for kids in need, assist the families of inmates at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility in Clinton, conduct joint worship services, share financial resources and so much more.

Rev. Brendler was on hand to deliver the message at the anniversary gathering, reminding all present how much can be accomplished when many hands and hearts work together in Christ. The West Hunterdon Parish includes the Bloomsbury, Everittstown, Finesville, Frenchtown, Kingwood, Pattenburg, Quakertown and West Portal churches. Pastors Christine Day, Marion Sanders, Tim Espar and Mercia Solomon took part in the service along with past parish spiritual leaders Doris Haley, Sue Moore, Adma Ross and Harry DeKolf. Former Raritan Valley District Superintendent Bob Scott also spoke. Music was provided by the combined Pattenburg-Everittstown choirs and soloist Sue Terranova.

The motto of the West Hunterdon Parish is "Rooted in the Past, Reaching for the Future" and nothing could be more appropriate for this historic yet dynamic region. Once a place of small farming communities, the area is now becoming home to young families whose members commute to the economic centers surrounding New York City and Philadelphia. The churches of the parish are prayerfully working together to meet the challenges of this rapidly changing environment.

The West Hunterdon Parish is administered by a council of appointed representatives from each of the member churches. Each church in the parish is truly first among equals. There is no dominant or "lead" church. Mutual support and accountability is always the goal.

As the anniversary observance closed with the moving hymn of dedication "Here I Am, Lord", the people of the West Hunterdon Parish looked forward to a second decade of answering the call of Christ. To God be the glory!

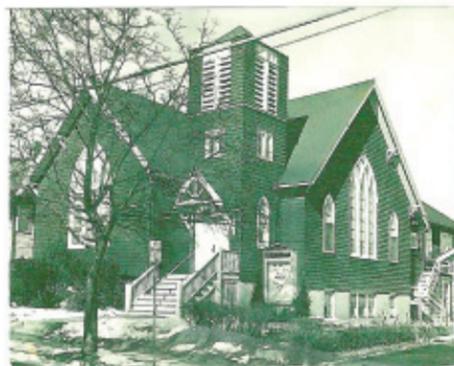
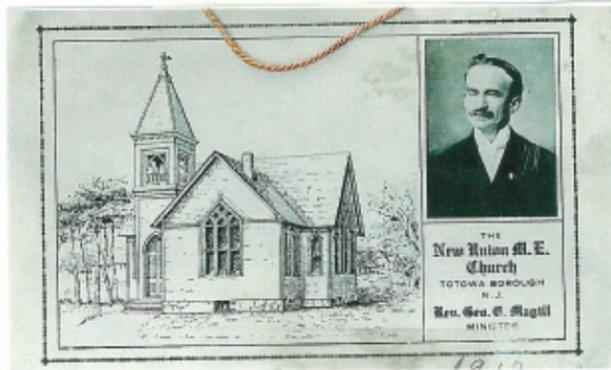
Roxbury Remembers. Roxbury Serves.

Continuing a tradition begun in 2011, residents of Roxbury Township gathered on September 17 to remember the victims of the attacks and honor the heroes of September 11 through community service.

Over 75 volunteers representing nine faith communities (including the Succasunna UMC), three Scout groups, and other community organizations, participated in the event. Volunteers assisted 15 senior homeowners in fixing up their properties by trimming bushes, painting, planting, and weeding. Cub Scout Pack 54 worked to weed and clean up near the entrance to the Roxbury Township Senior Center at Horseshoe Lake.

The effort, which lasted from 9:00am to 1:00pm, also included a food drive at PathMark in Landing and ShopRite in Succasunna. Donors gave nearly 60 boxes of food for Roxbury Township Social Services. The annual community-wide event is a partnership between the Township of Roxbury and the Roxbury Clergy Council, with support from businesses including PathMark, ShopRite, and the Home Depot.

Totowa United Methodist Church Celebrates 100th Anniversary



The Totowa United Methodist Church has been celebrating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the congregation in 1911. The pictures above show the evolution from the old school house where first meetings were held, the original church dedicated in 1912, (burned in 1967), and the current church.



Also shown from the recent meeting of the Church Conference are: (l-r) Mark Daniels, Mary Beth Daniels (assistant to the pastor), pastor Carlotta Aston, and District Superintendent Rev. Wayne Plumstead.

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ANNUAL CHURCH WORLD SERVICE CROP WALK



In October many churches around the conference participated in the annual Crop Walk in support of Church World Service. In the photograph above, members of St. Mark's, Montclair pause on the steps of the church as they prepare to step out in faith. Also pictured is part of the crowd of over 1,000 people who participated in the walk in Red Bank where more than 10 tons of food was collected and in excess of \$100,000 was raised. Among the United Methodist churches taking part were Red Bank, Middletown, Matawan, Simpson (Old Bridge), and Atlantic Highlands.



ON THE SOLID ROCK THEY STAND

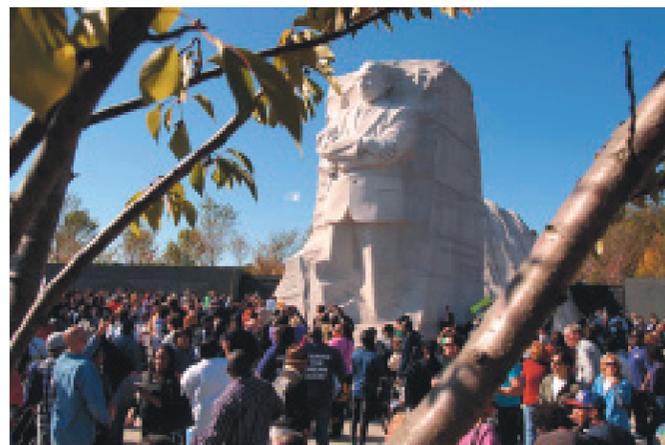


"GREAT DAY AT KINGWOOD!" That was the assessment of the Rev. Robert Olyn Bryant, former pastor of the Kingwood Church, on hand for the recent consecration of historic Pulpit Rock by Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar. Standing on the spot where Bishop Francis Asbury preached two centuries ago, are (l. to r.) Bishop Devadhar; the Rev. Caroline Smallwood, pastor of the Sergeantsville Church and former pastor of Kingwood; Mr. Bryant; and the Rev. Mercia Solomon, present pastor of Kingwood and Quakertown churches. (See advance story in September issue.)

Martin Luther King Dedication Is A Multifaith Celebration

A UMNS Report by Jeneane Jones - Oct. 18, 2011

Under crystal blue skies and the best autumn temperatures October could offer, tens of thousands gathered on the mall in Washington to witness the official — and hurricane-delayed — dedication of the memorial to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.



Small and large churches alike accepted the reality of empty pews at 11 Sunday morning, Oct. 16, as PBS news correspondent and master of ceremonies Gwen Ifill explained, "We get a pass for not being in church today."

October crowds gather around the Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial in Washington, D.C. Photo by Flickr Creative Commons/sleaf13.

Even without the requisite stained-glass windows and ushers, a reverence for the day rested on the crowd easily, as spectators found seats and settled on grass, listening to the opening chords of a Hammond organ and the music of Atlanta's Historic Ebenezer Baptist Church choir. The lines for the long-awaited celebration started forming before 6 a.m.

talking and broke into a broad smile as the images of the first family, walking slowly through the King memorial, showed on the giant TV screens.

Elders came with granddaughters. Sorors came with sisters. United Methodists mingled with Baptists. Rabbi Israel Dresner offered remarks about how proud the Jewish community was to have been part of the Civil Rights Movement with King. This was a day King's famous phrase about creating the beloved community was not only spoken from the dais; it was symbolized by the hands held in prayer.

"It's them," she said, with the trail of one tear catching the sunlight on her cheek. "This is what I have prayed for. A day I never thought would come. With God, nothing is impossible."

Remembrances of colleagues

A 70-year-old mother of four who did not want to be identified said, "I have been waiting my whole life for this moment." She talked of the grief she felt as a child, living in the same city where King was assassinated, then stopped

From the podium came remembrances of the civil rights leader including U.S. Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga., and the Rev. Joseph Lowery, a United Methodist pastor and elder statesman of the Civil Rights Movement who recently celebrated his 90th birthday.

Lowery said King's leadership gave birth to a new America. He quoted King's speech upon receiving the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize to illustrate the faith that carried him and the country through turbulent times that still face the country today.

"I accept this award today with an abiding faith in America and an audacious faith in the future of humankind," King said at the award ceremony. "I

(Continued on Page 10)



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Job Seekers

(Continued from Page 5)

Monday night blitz

The twice-monthly programs are from 5:45 to 9 p.m. Bonus workshops are from 1 to 5:30 p.m.

Crossroads Career Workshop – a nonprofit organization designed to help churches minister to people at a career crossroads – is a four-hour, fast-paced, six-step plan for finding a job.

Other early afternoon workshops range from “Boomers’ Winning Job Strategies” to “Why Should I Hire You?”

Dinner starts at 5:45, which includes an inspirational speaker and a quick Bible study. Table hosts use that time to discuss God and faith’s role in the job hunt.

On this night, Rusty Gordon is on stage with good news from Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”

Mark Reynolds, who hosts the 21-29 table, encourages the group to listen to Gordon. “Rusty has been through what we have been through.”

All the right stuff

Many of the volunteers know what it is like to be jobless or to lose a job or



Lisa L. Lampkin (left) tries on skirts in the Attire for Hire clothing closet at Roswell (Ga.) United Methodist Church with assistance from volunteer, Julie Mizer.

sions.” The goal for this year is to have 1,750 people “plugged in,” he says. There are 1,500 volunteers now.

Simons says the volunteers for the job-networking ministry are chosen

an easy thing to do.

“We offer a lot of great programs, but as soon as somebody walks in our door or makes that phone call and makes contact with one of us, they know there are people out there that love them. And that’s because there’s a God out there that loves them.”

Julie Mizer couldn’t sleep at night for worrying about the people who needed jobs and had no proper business clothes. Thus Attire for Hire, a boutique of gently used business suits, is set up in a Sunday school classroom.

“At the Attire for Hire Closet, we try to help people in their career search to wear appropriate professional attire to their job interviews,” says Mizer. “We know that sometimes people that have been out of work may not have ex-

agrees. “It takes 70 pairs of feet on the ground in order to keep this running at the level we’re at today.”

Over the last 10 years, it has grown to the point where up to 450 people have come on a Monday to Roswell, looking for help. Litton says many people in the church have volunteered in this ministry for five to 11 years.

“When you’re at the dinner tables and you’re a volunteer or you’re hosting that table of, let’s say seven or eight people, you’re now talking about Christ to seven people you’ve never met before. And I don’t know about you, but where else do you find those opportunities?” Litton asks.

DuBois says 11 years ago, he and his wife were drawn to Roswell because of the strong sense of service.



Katherine Simons, coordinator of the job-networking ministry, talks with Tyrone Griffin, who just got a job. “I used to tell people, I will land a job when you land a job. God knows when that is. You don’t know,” Griffin says.

business after 10 to 20 years of loyal employment.

Kashey has an especially compelling story to share. He started having panic attacks when he was 20 that lasted until he was 40.

“I took menial jobs at minimum wage because I had to be in a job where I could avoid people,” he says. His anxiety got to the point where he couldn’t leave his house. He finally broke down and prayed, and God “heaped an unbelievable level of passion on me.”

People share stories of devastation in their lives made different when they let God take control, Kashey says.

“The ministry is very successful. We get emails from people that have come here for eight, nine, 10 months and then get a job. And the first thing they do is ... send an email to Katherine and Jay Litton saying, ‘I just got hired and thank you so much for what you guys do.’

“I come here to feed these people, and I leave my table well fed because just the way they react to me. You can see the smiles on their face as they hit aha moments.”

Opportunities to serve

Service is a large part of the 7,000-member United Methodist church. Once a year, on Laity Sunday, the volunteers are celebrated, and everyone is asked to commit to a service opportunity.

On Oct. 9, the Rev. Mike D. Long asked people “prayerfully (to) consider where God is calling you to serve in the church, the community and in mis-

with care, taking into account their gifts and talents.

“When we talk to a volunteer ... we’re asking, ‘Would you like to volunteer with this ministry because you just have all the right stuff?’ Everything that you have ever learned in your whole life can be put to work in this one ministry.”

Some volunteers are perfect as table hosts; some are good at reviewing résumés; some are the perfect servers, Simons says. Roswell now has 360 volunteers in the job-networking ministry.

Industry advice

Not everyone who volunteers actually attends the Monday meetings. The industry guide program has 160 volunteers who are employed and willing to take a 15-minute phone call from anyone who wants to learn more about their company or job.

“It’s not that we have jobs for you directly, but we know that there’s a simple fact about getting a quality job which is it’s not gonna happen from sitting back and sending out résumés on a website and clicking links and emailing. It’s gonna happen through direct person-to-person contact,” says Michael DuBois, a director of information technology and one of the church members who volunteers as an industry guide.

“The first thing I want to do is make sure they feel comfortable because it’s hard. I mean, picking up the phone and calling a stranger, regardless if it’s in the guise of the church or not. It’s not



Chris Gilliam with Crossroads Career leads an afternoon workshop.

tremely up-to-date clothing. We try to help them put together an outfit that’ll be appropriate for whatever kind of job they’re interviewing for.”

On a typical night, 15 to 20 men and women come in looking for a particular size and asking about the right thing to wear to an interview.

“If we can,” Mizer adds, “we will dress them head to toe. For gentlemen, we’ll try to do tie, shirt, slacks. For women, we’ll try to do a suit, a dress or slacks – even handbags or shoes, if we have them.”

An event

“Every second and fourth Monday is an event,” Litton says. Simons

“What greater need is there right now than helping the unemployed?” he asks.

That works out great, Litton says. “What’s pretty cool about United Methodists is that they want to serve.”

At the end of the night, Lampkin left feeling hopeful and smiling.

“Tomorrow will be a better day.”

Gilbert is a multimedia reporter for the young adult content team at United Methodist Communications, Nashville, Tenn.

News media contact: Kathy L. Gilbert, Nashville, Tenn., (615) 742-5470 or newsdesk@umcom.org.

**The December/January Issue Deadline
is November 5, 2011**

Food and Medicine Needed After Quake



A man carries an injured girl after an earthquake in Tabanlı village near the eastern Turkish city of Van October 23, 2011.

REUTERS/Abdurrahman Antakyali/Anadolu Agency, courtesy Trust.org - AlertNet

October 24, 2011—Food and medicine are most in demand after a 7.2-magnitude earthquake shook eastern Turkey on Sunday, leaving more than a thousand injured and at least 240 dead.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is in conversation with partner International Blue Crescent (IBC) and is seeking to help meet some of these and other needs, such as blankets, plastic sheets, and hygiene kits for survivors.

“As we received news of the devastating earthquake in Turkey, the UMCOR staff went to work connecting with partners in the region,” said UMCOR head, the Rev. Cynthia Fierro Harvey. “Our prayers are with the people of Turkey at this difficult time.”

According to IBC, the area affected by the earthquake is populated principally by Kurdish communities and is among the poorest areas of Turkey.

The epicenter was in the town of Ercis, about 19 miles from the city of Van, capital of the province of the same name. News reports indicated that Ercis was hardest hit and that there are dozens of small villages in this earthquake-prone region that were devastated in the disaster.

According to those reports, at least 55 buildings in Ercis were completely flattened in the quake.

“Entire villages have [had] huge losses of human life,” as well as agriculture and livestock losses, an IBC report indicated.

Rescue efforts continued today amid the logistical challenges posed by heavily damaged roads and the expected onset of heavy rain and even snow in coming days. Sunday night, temperatures hovered around freezing. More than 200 aftershocks kept survivors huddled outdoors.

While the emergency response continues, there also will be a need for recovery and reconstruction in the devastated area, as homes, health centers, and schools have experienced severe damages. Survivors traumatized in the event will require psychosocial support.

Your support for **International Disaster Response, UMCOR Advance #982450**, is urgently needed to meet both immediate and long-term needs. Please give generously.

VITAL CONGREGATIONS

“Pietism, Nurture and Advocacy”

By Douglas Ruffle

Coordinator of Congregational Development, GNJAC



A new book on the history of our denomination points to “Pietism, Nurture and Advocacy” as organizing principles in understanding our heritage. The book, *The Methodist Experience in America: A History, Volume I*, written by Russell E. Richey, Kenneth E. Rowe, and Jean Miller Schmidt, was published by Abingdon Press in 2010. These principles can serve our churches today as they look to the future to discern action plans for mission and ministry.

Pietism refers to our heritage as an experiential religion — the people of the warmed heart. It also points to our human responsibility to live a life of obedience to

God’s Word and corporate discipline by following the rules of life that John Wesley espoused. These rules have been distilled most recently in Rueben Job’s excellent little book, *Three Simple Rules*, which emphasize 1) Do No Harm; 2) Do Good; and 3) Stay in Love with God. Pietism grounds one’s life in the Bible and personal and corporate prayer.

Nurture refers to the Methodist heritage that emphasizes spiritual growth. Each year at Annual Conference the Bishop asks candidates for ministry: “Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life? Are you earnestly striving after perfection in love? ‘Going on to perfection’ is the Wesleyan way of being intentional about one’s spiritual growth and maturity. For this reason, people called Methodists have gathered in classes — young and old — to strive after a fuller measure of holiness of heart and life. Nurture through education, mutual accountability in small groups and study help us go beyond attendance at worship to a deeper level of spiritual maturity.

Advocacy refers to the Methodist heritage of seeking social justice for all humankind. Both John Wesley and Francis Asbury were clear in their opposition to slavery. Wesley advocated for better conditions for prisoners and instilled in followers to live out a life of justice through their use of money (earn all you can, save all you can, **give** all you can). As stated in Our Social Creed: “We commit ourselves . . . to improvement of the quality of life and to the rights and dignity of all persons.”

So, as we look to the future and seek to discern what God is calling our churches to be and do in this present age, we would be wise to remember these three guiding principles that have always been part of our heritage as people called Methodists. We are at our best when the three are in balance.

The Office of Congregational Development exists to help our churches be vital, disciple-making congregations. May God bless you as you seek to find balance among the principles of Pietism, Nurture and Advocacy.

Outside the Box: The Gift that Can’t be Contained

Church-wide Sermon Series and Multimedia Bundle Focuses on Advent Season

Nashville, Tenn. — At a time of year when most people are focused on what is inside the box — whether it is gifts they are giving or getting, “*Outside the Box*,” the latest sermon series and multimedia bundle produced by United Methodist Communications, is an opportunity to explore Christmas in a new way.

The four-week sermon series is about how God used even the least likely Biblical characters like Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and the innkeeper, to do miraculous things. Designed to challenge congregations to reach out to people beyond the margins, “**Outside the Box**” encourages participants to find those who have been forgotten, ignored or turned away from life’s inns so that they may be welcomed. Weekly themes are Expectations, Acceptance, Family and Yourself.

Now available as a free download, the series is equipped with reflections for small groups, youth and young adult engagement tools, children’s activities and worship ideas, help for sermon planning, teacher lessons, and more. The comprehensive 70-page study is designed so that the entire church can participate — including those with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

A multimedia bundle, which includes the series, (\$25) includes five videos to make messages come to life (for worship or small groups), bulletin and worship slide graphics and outreach resources to engage the community. These items are customizable in Microsoft Word or Adobe Photoshop. There are also tips for online engagement, family-friendly worship ideas, and an Advent wreath lighting liturgy. It is available for purchase at www.umcom.org/outside.

For more information about “Outside the Box: The Gift that Can’t be Contained” and Rethink Church, call (877) 281-6535 or email Rethinkchurch@umcom.org.

United Methodist Communications 810 12th Ave. S. Nashville, TN 37203 umcom.org

Fall Food drive for CUMAC/ECHO Encouraging

Every fall churches and organizations from all over the conference converge in Paterson to provide much needed resources at CUMAC/ ECHO. (Center of United Methodist Aid to the Community/ Ecumenically Concerned Helping Others) This year was no different.

On site there were close to 200 volunteers, from twenty-two local churches throughout the day, according to Stephanie Ames, volunteer coordinator of CUMAC. She said there was also a network of over 35 churches, agencies and school groups who collected food at grocery stores across Passaic and Bergen counties.

“Over 42,000 pounds were collected!,” said Ms. Ames. “This is equal to last year, which is a relief as donations from the drive have been steadily declining for years.”

Ms. Ames said that food was shared with 24 local feeding programs. “While this is a huge boost for

Passaic County’s food-strapped pantries, CUMAC’s own share of the food went out in only 3-4 days, which indicates that all agencies will be in need of food supplies again soon.”

CUMAC always accepts donations. They have a particular need for: cereal, protein items (canned tuna, canned chicken, frozen meats, canned beans), peanut butter and jelly, and pasta and jarred sauce. In addition their regular food needs are: canned meals (chili, spaghetti, hash, stew, etc.), canned meats (tuna, chicken, Spam, etc.), canned vegetables and soups (regular and low-sodium), dry beans, rice, pasta and packaged soup, taco dinner boxes, shelf-stable, powdered, condensed and evaporated milk, baby food and formula, canned fruit (regular and low-sugar), raisins, other dried fruit, canned drinks, juice boxes, powdered drink mixes, coffee, tea, cocoa, protein supplement drinks (i.e. Ensure), snacks, crackers, cookies, cake and muffin mixes, spices (salt, pepper, garlic, etc.), and condiments (mayonnaise, mustard, ketchup, salad dressing, gravy, etc.)

For more information visit their website: <http://www.cumacecho.org/>.

Robert B. Steelman Methodist History Award

Robert Penn Warren once said, “History cannot give us a program for the future, but it can give us a fuller understanding of ourselves, and of our common humanity, so that we can better face the future.”

This is not only true of our history as a society, but also of the ministries of the Church. Each local church and ministry within the Greater New Jersey conference has a past, present and future that should be celebrated and passed on to future generations.

This is part of the reason that the GNJAC Commission on Archives and History restarted the process of celebrating the local histories of GNJ churches and ministries three years ago. Each year ministries have been invited to submit their history in whatever creative form they wish.

Archives and History has received entries that have been written, digital and in video. One request is that the history includes significant dates, any instances of well known people or events, as well as information about past and present ministers. The commission’s archivist can assist with securing information about past ministers and may be reached at waltretired@optonline.net.

This year the commission will once again present an award to a GNJ ministry who articulately and creatively expresses their own history. This year the award will be presented under the name of the Robert B. Steelman Methodist History Award, recognizing the contributions Mr. Steelman has made in the area of church history.

More information will be announced in the near future, but mark your calendar because the deadline to submit a Ministry History is April 1st. All pre-written histories must have been revised in the last five years to be eligible. Your history compilations can be submitted to Mark Shenise: GCAH, 36 Madison Avenue, PO Box 127, Madison, NJ 07940.

The Commission is also attempting to secure a list of all local church historians. Please contact Mr. Shenise at the above address with the full contact information of your church historian or email it to him at mshenise@gcah.org.

Martin Luther King Dedication

(Continued from Page 7)



People join hands during the closing benediction of the memorial dedication. Photo by Jeneane Jones.

have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits. I believe that what self-centered men have torn down, other-centered [people] can build up. This faith can give us courage to face the uncertainties of the future."

There also were recollections from those who watched King and the history he made. Dan Rather, retired CBS news anchor, said it was only in the years after the Civil Rights Movement that he learned the truth about rumors that his own CBS affiliate in Atlanta had routinely censored news stories during the Civil Rights Movement.

It was perhaps King's daughter, a preacher, who stirred the crowd in a most-familiar way. Cheers erupted several times, as Elder Bernice King's voice took on the cadence and eloquence reminiscent of her father to remind the spectators that "this celebration honoring Dr. King is not just for African Americans but for all Americans and citizens from around this world."

Bernice King reflected on Hurricane Irene, which postponed the original dedication that was to coincide with the anniversary of King's "I Have a Dream" speech. She said, "Perhaps it was divine interruption to remind us of the King who moved us beyond the dream of racial justice to the action and work of economic justice."

'We're all we have left'

The crowd listened as speeches that were part sermon and part protest urged them to press for children's rights, disrupt the cradle-to-prison pipeline that consumes young people of color, demand health care for all and reject a national mentality that allows legislative leaders to "normalize poverty." The Rev. Al Sharpton left the crowd with a challenge: "King's not coming back. We're all we have left."

President Obama's arrival on the stage captivated the crowd, transforming it into a group of political supporters with chants of "four more years." The president's speech covered the same themes that King himself spoke of some 48 years earlier — war, economic crisis and ending the racial divide.

It was not lost on Obama, or the crowd, that without King's place in history, the president's place in history would not have been secured. He told the crowd that King "stirred our conscience."

"I know we will overcome. I know this because of the man towering over us," he assured them.



Crowds cheer during a speech by President Barack Obama during the dedication on Oct. 16. Photo by Jeneane Jones.

The King Memorial, 15 years in the making and the first on the National Mall honoring a black leader, stands some 30 feet high between the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials.

The sculpture of King with his arms crossed appears to be cut out of a mountain. A line from King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech in 1964 — "Out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope" — inspired Chinese artist Lei Yixin.

Jones is director of communications and public media for the United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race.

News media contact: Maggie Hillery, Nashville, Tenn., (615) 742-5470 or newsdesk@umcom.org.

Multi-Cultural Celebration (Continued from Page 4)



ton UMC; a Scottish song and prayer by Irene Greenhalgh of Grace UMC; a praise song by a Brazilian Group; a Hindi praise song by members of Montvale UMC; a West Indian skit by members of Long Branch UMC; and a praise song by Jaime Hernandez of Christ UMC. Throughout the program,

there were also times of prayer in a variety of languages and community singing.

Following a dinner feast of a variety of foods from around the world, guests were surprised with a new program element this year: A Fashion Show! The best dressed of the evening were encouraged to "strut their stuff" for the audience while Kyu Tae Pak and Judy Colorado described their outfits. In the end, prizes were awarded for a variety of titles and a lot of laughs were had by all.

The Multi Cultural Celebration is designed to celebrate our cultural and ethnic diversity as a Conference. It is a joyous occasion to get together as individuals of a variety of heritages and backgrounds but unified as one people making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Many thanks to Judy Colorado and the members of the Multi Ethnic Coordinating Team, Rev. Lanie Price and St. John's UMC-Hazlet, and all of the people who gave their time, energy, and talents to make this great celebration a success!

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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 or UMRelay, 1 Mayflower Ct., Whiting, NJ 08759.

November 4-6 Just the Girls; Just the Guys Retreat

Come enjoy a weekend with Just the Girls or Just the Guys!! Leaders for the weekend are Celia and Ron Whitler. We will gather together and do individual sessions talking and learning about ways to love ourselves the way. Friday, 7:00pm - Sunday 2:00pm. Pinelands Center at Mt. Misery, 801 Mt. Misery Rd. Browns Mills, NJ Cost: \$ 75.00 per youth \$ 50.00 per chaperone. Food, Housing, Materials, and Gifts included. Youth must be accompanied by a chaperone from their Church.

November 10- Free Webinar: Finishing the Year Financially Strong (for FINANCE LEADERS)

God's generous love sustains your church, and God provides all that is needed for God's purposes. Practical ideas for people entrusted with managing the funding. 6:30 PM CDT

November 12- Cleaning the Clutter at the Neighborhood Center

9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Join the Gateway South District and The Neighborhood Center of Camden for a day of cleaning out! There are many rooms and spaces at the Center that could be utilized in a better way, enabling the Center to provide more services to the Camden community. Can't climb stairs or carry boxes? There are other things you can do to help! Youth groups, Men's Groups, Women's Groups: this is a fantastic service project for your group to participate in!

For more information contact Sharon Vogel, Director of The Neighborhood Center, at 856-365-5295 or sharon@ncicamden.com.

November 13, 2010- Seminar: Muslims in the Kingdom of God

Presented by Gayle McCord from 9AM to 4PM at the Whitehouse United Methodist Church, 3 Old Highway, Whitehouse, New Jersey 08888. (908) 534-2064

November 14- Resource Day at First UMC, Montclair with Dr. J. Ellsworth Kalas

Clergy are expected to arrive by 8:30 a.m. for fellowship, followed by the program. Everyone is welcome to come to the evening program starting at 6:30 p.m. for fellowship, with the program starting at 7:00 p.m.

November 19-Lay Leadership Workshop for Local Lay Leaders and Lay At Large Members to the Annual Conference

Offered in English, Korean, and Spanish

10:00 am-12:30 pm (Registration and coffee from 9:30 - 10:00) St. John's United Methodist Church, 2000 Florence Avenue, Hazlet, NJ 07730.

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Holy Land Pilgrimage and Tour 2012 with Bishop:

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Depart on February 2, 2012 from Newark for just \$2,547. See gnjunc.org for further information and brochure.

OBITUARIES

R.C. Musgrove, retired local pastor, died on August 23, 2011 in Willingboro, NJ.

A funeral service was held on August 30, 2011 at the Good Shepherd United Methodist Church in Willingboro. Mr. Musgrove served as the pastor of Salem: Mt. Hope church until he retired in 2001.

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to his widow, Mrs. Evelyn Musgrove at 14 Edge Court, Willingboro, NJ 08046-2412. Memorial donations may be sent to the Good Shepherd UMC, P.O. Box 44 Willingboro, NJ 08046-0044.

Bernice H. Collins, wife of retired elder Leo B. Collins, III, died in Williamsburg, Virginia on Sunday, September 11, 2011. A Memorial Service was held on October 22 at the Hackensack United Methodist Church.

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Reverend Collins, 110 Albemarle Drive, Williamsburg, VA 23185-2319.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth...that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

— Rev. 14:13

Stewardship Stories

By Rich Hendrickson

Coordinator of Stewardship Education and Development, GNJAC



The following is adapted from a letter written by Carol Allen, Lay Member to Annual Conference from St. Andrew's UMC and used with her permission.

Ministry Shares and the Church

Our Shared Ministry Funds are one of the means by which the United Methodist Church represents Christ and our denomination throughout the world. When natural disaster strikes, the United Methodist Church is on the scene with food, clothing, temporary shelter, medical assistance and spiritual comfort. Helping during disasters, however, is not the only way the Church provides support. There are hundreds of mission projects and groups working on a daily basis to relieve suffering, improve lives, and offer Christ's love to a hurting world.

Here are some of the activities supported by our Shared Ministry Funds:

- Improve literacy by providing salaries for teachers
- Care for the orphans of AIDS, genocide, and war
- Train farmers in sustainable agriculture
- Provide essential medicine and medical supplies for clinics, hospitals, and other health programs
- Educate people in nutrition and health
- Teach rooftop gardening in urban areas
- Help dig wells for irrigation and clean drinking water
- Build churches and provide seminary education in emerging nations

This is just a small sampling of what your giving through the Shared Ministry Funds is accomplishing each and every day. Because we are a connectional church, we can make huge impact by pooling our resources and giving generously.

In order for this to work everyone needs to do their part. Please consider making an additional gift specifically to our Shared Ministry Funds.

RELAY MISSION STATEMENT

The **mission** of the **United Methodist Relay** is to provide print communication to the leadership and membership, clergy and lay, of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. It shall be a **vehicle** to tell the church's story and a **forum** for the exchange of ideas regarding Christian Faith and Practice.

In fulfillment of this mission, its **purpose** is:

- to inform the readership of events and resources at local, district conference, area and denominational levels
- to promote the mission of the annual conference, the area, and the general church
- to invite discussion of and response to important and controversial key issues facing the church
- to encourage readers to grow in their commitment to diversity and inclusiveness in church and society
- to inspire readers to grow in their faith and commitment to Christ and the Church

In pursuit of this mission and purpose, we will endeavor to be: Accurate * Informative

Interesting * Stimulating * Motivating * And sometimes, Provocative.

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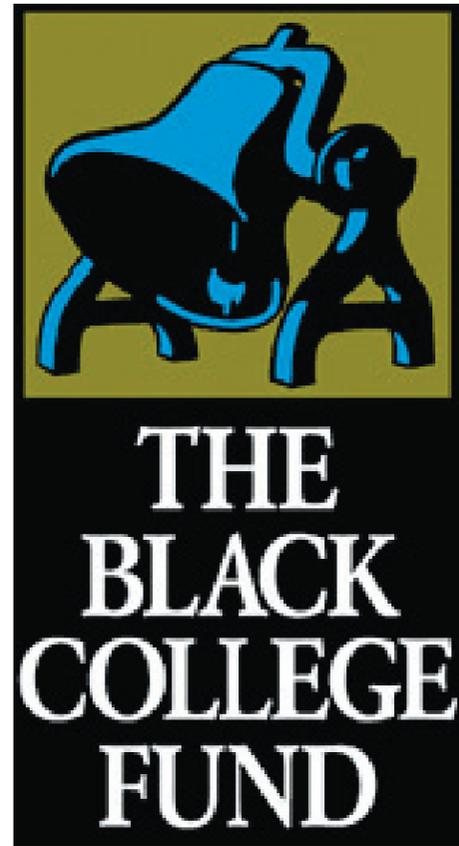
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**The December/January Issue Deadline
is November 5, 2011**

Supporting Leadership for Life

By encouraging your local church to pay 100% of its Black College Fund apportionment, you are supporting the BCF and the United Methodist-related historically Black colleges and universities. You can also make a direct donation to any of the 11 Black colleges supported by the BCF. To learn more about the fund, visit the UMC Giving site for the Black College Fund.

To order resources, call 1-888-346-3862 or visit www.umcgiving.org



- The United Methodist Church supports the largest number of Black colleges and universities of any church body in the United States.
- The 11 Black colleges are located in the Southeastern and South Central Jurisdictions.
- There are approximately 16,000 students enrolled in our schools. Ninety percent of the students qualify for financial aid. The schools keep their tuition relatively low so students with low incomes may attend. The colleges are and have always been open to all.
- One of the exceptional accomplishments regarding the administration of the Black College Fund is the small amount utilized for unrestricted and overhead expenses (less than 5 percent). The Black College Fund distributes 95 percent of the funds equally to all 11 institutions. Those with the highest enrollments receive a slightly higher amount. Five percent of the funds are awarded for special projects or activities.
- Once per quadriennium each institution receives capital funds for facility improvement or enhancement. Recently this amount has been \$250,000 per institution. Every fifth year or at the end of the quadriennium, there is also a capital residual check of approximately \$200,000.
- Each year, the goal of the Black College Fund increases by a small percentage. The church has been supporting the Black College Fund at about 83 percent. In 2006, United Methodists gave \$9,850,753 which was 87 percent of the apportionment.



Ask your Church Treasurer about your congregation's progress toward becoming a 100%, First Mile First Church.

More information, visit:
www.gnjumc.org
www.umcgiving.org

