

General Conference Sends Delegates on Rollercoaster Ride of Emotions

From April 24-May 4, 2012, thousands of people around the world watched, thanks to the online live stream, as delegates deliberated and voted on the direction of the United Methodist Church at the 2012 General Conference (GC2012) in Tampa, Florida. There are many mixed emotions coming from delegates, clergy, and laity as the legislative changes begin to be understood.

As a first-time delegate, female, young person, and clergy member, Rev. Jessica Campbell, Senior Pastor of Thiells Church in Thiells, NY, could relate to many of the hot topics broached at GC2012. Campbell compared GC2012 to an exciting rollercoaster. "It was a thrilling ride. There were low moments but they were followed quickly by high moments. The high moments left me very optimistic for the future."

General Conference was held over the course of two weeks. The first week was spent primarily in deliberations with the smaller legislative committees, which were assigned the task of weeding through the proposals for their particular area and deciding which ones they would recommend for adoption to the larger plenary during the next week. Campbell's committee was very united in their decisions but that can't be said for all of the committees, according to many reactions posted by



Bishops Grant Hagiya and Sudarshana Devadhar celebrating holy communion at the Common witness worship service, Sunday the 29th of April at the 2012 United Methodist General Conference in Tampa, Fla.

A UMNS photo by John C. Goodwin.

GC2012. One of the highs for her was "serving with five others to totally rewrite the clergy judicial complaint process. It is actually my words which will be in the Discipline, doing away with the Committee on Investigation and creating a new system."

John Bishop, lay delegate for the second time, said he could best describe GC2012 as "chaotic." John Bishop, was a member of the General Administration Legislative Committee, which had the job of discussing the

to agree on some of the other petitions.

The second week of GC2012 really made the comparison to a rollercoaster and having mixed emotions come true



Opening worship at United Methodist General Conference 2012 Bishop Larry M. Goodpaster preaches during the April 24 opening worship service of the 2012 United Methodist General Conference in Tampa, Florida.

A UMNS photo by Paul Jeffrey.

for Campbell and Caterson. Campbell said, "There were frustrating and heart-breaking moments, but there were other moments where there was a tremendous amount of solidarity among delegates." The biggest shock came to the entire delegation when the Judicial Council ruled Plan UMC, the ap-

proved church restructuring plan, to be unconstitutional late on the final day. "That undid a lot of what was done. It was very overwhelming for everyone, but I was relieved that everything that must be finished was voted on." John Bishop said this decision is what made his committee's work during the earlier sessions to be very important because many of the plans to shrink the General Agencies were what the conference fell back on when Plan UMC was ruled unconstitutional.

Caterson expressed frustration during moments but for different reasons from Campbell, "Many delegates obviously did not know the process. Process errors led to the craziness surrounding the restructuring proposals. Process errors led to the petition eliminating guaranteed appointment for clergy from being discussed in a plenary session. Central Conference delegates were voting 'no' to items simply because the materials they were given were only in English." There were also the moments that hurt oth-



Young People's Address at the 2012 United Methodist General Conference Krin Ali (left), Denver, Colo., listens while co-presenter Eva Algodon-Bohol, Cebu, Philippines, gives a part of the Young People's Address by video during an April 25 session of the 2012 United Methodist General Conference in Tampa, Fla.

A UMNS photo by Mike DuBose.

delegates on social media outlets throughout the process.

Lynn Caterson, lay delegate and elected Chair of the General Conference Committee on Reference, said she has "mixed emotions" about

three very different plans for restructuring, as well as many smaller petitions from each of the General Agencies to reduce their sizes. Ultimately, the committee couldn't agree on any of the three major plans but were able

ers. Caterson said, "The lowest of lows were the incidents where hurtful words were said by one delegate to another. And I believe it hurt our Lord as well."

John Bishop, having been to a General Conference before, said he knew what to expect of the proceedings. He

(Continued on Page 3)

Come Celebrate Conference Day of Learning

"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few." (Mt. 9:37 NRSV) I pray that we all keep each other in our prayers as the General Conference is in full session to decide how to live and be in ministry for all disciples of Jesus Christ for this generation and generations to come. We hear frequently, "We Methodists do not explain things enough." As we will be electing hundreds of workers for various committees in our Annual Conference and begin our new quadrennial ministry in a few months, we don't want to assume that all workers will know what their role is to be. We have been equipping the workers in the district by providing various workshops on the District Day of Learning once a year. I believe that we can do the same for the workers in the Annual Conference so that we may

learn how to be in "fruit-bearing" ministry as a Team. The intention of the day is to thank the "departing" members who have given so much to our ministry, consecrate the newly elected leaders, broaden our understanding of "connectional ministry," and take some tools back home. Our Lay Leader of the Annual Conference, Mrs. Rosa Williams, Ministry Team Chair, Rev. Dr. John D Giambardino, Leadership Development Team Chair, Mr. Emmanuel De La Paz will join with me to invite all current and newly elected (yet to be?) Conference-wide committee members and Conference leadership to a "Conference Day of Learning: Our Celebration of God's Call to Serve" event at Calvary Korean United Methodist Church in East Brunswick on Saturday, June 9th, 2012.

The schedule of the day:
Worship 9:00 am - 10:15 am
Panel Discussion 10:15 am - 11:15 am
Group Workshop 11:15 am - 12:30 pm
Community Lunch 12:30 pm

More detailed information will be provided through GNJ Digests. The main speakers for our worship and panel discussion will be Ms. Erin Hawkins (General Commission on Religion and Race) and Mr. Thomas Kemper (General Board of Global Ministry). Let us come, celebrate, and be equipped so that we can serve the people of God that have been entrusted with our service and leadership, more faithfully and effectively.

May God continue to bless us, our family, and our ministries. Rev. Sung H. Ahn, Director of Connectional Ministry Greater New Jersey Annual Conference.



Rev. Sung H. Ahn,
Director of Connectional Ministry
Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

A Message from the Bishop

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

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



As we gather at Valley Forge, one of the questions that our Ordinands are being asked as they seek to be ordained and admitted into full connection is, "Are you going on to perfection?" (United Methodist Book of Discipline, 2008, paragraphs 330 and 336). These two paragraphs also indicate, "The bishop as chief pastor shall engage those seeking to be admitted in serious self-searching and prayer to prepare them for their examination before the conference. At the time of the examination the bishop shall also explain to the conference the historic nature of the....questions and seek to interpret their spirit and intent." "What is Christian perfection? Loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength. This implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions are governed by pure love. - John Wesley, A Plain Account of Christian Perfection [1776]" (Taken from Susan Pellowe (ed), A Wesley Family Book of Days, Chicago, Illinois: Benard Productions, 2002, May 16).

"... actions are governed by pure love." Is it humanly possible? Is it possible to lead our lives with pure love, as ordinands and as baptized Christians? In this context, one of the follow up questions that is being asked of the ordinands is, "Are you earnestly striving after it?" (United Methodist Book of Discipline, 2008, paragraph 336). As I reflect upon it, as I look at the people who strive to demonstrate pure love, two people come to my mind. Let me hasten to mention that these two are among the many I know who have demonstrated this pure love. You may think of your own examples in this regard as well. Gandhi, who was not a Christian, incorporated the mutually redeeming ethics of the love of Jesus as he outlawed the hatred for the oppressor. Being inspired by the Gandhian movement, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. challenged his followers to oppose their oppressors without hate or violence. Both of these men strove to demonstrate pure love in their respective movements.

As we lead our Christian lives, it is sad to note that in many quarters, Christians are being divided into groups, based upon theological, cultural, sociological, and political views. Many a time the ministry and mission of the Church are being compromised because of these divisions. But as United Methodists, and most importantly as baptized Christians, we are challenged and stimulated to strive for Christian perfection.

May God grant each and every one of us the courage, wisdom, and power to strive for Christian perfection so that we may truly be the disciples of Jesus Christ filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

May this be one of our prayers in our Christian journey.

Remember, "God loves you all and so do I!"

Your brother-in-Christ,

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar

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Serving the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

Sudarshana Devadhar, Resident Bishop
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VIEWPOINT

WHOSE MISSION IS IT ANYWAY?

By Rev. Héctor A. Burgos-Núñez

This article appeared in the May edition with editorial errors. It is being rerun in its corrected form. - Ed.

Whose mission is it anyway? This is a question that I must admit I had never considered before, until recently. Since I first became active in leadership in my local congregation, I was always told that we needed as a leadership team to discern "our mission". What an exhausting process that was. Every year for hours and hours we went over different biblical passages, talked about the needs of the community, and how we could create programs and initiatives to address these needs and make a difference in people's life.

What a blessing it has been for me, as a United Methodist clergy, to read John Edward Nuessle's book Faithful Witnesses: United Methodist Theology of Mission (GBGM, 2008) and discern that the mission of the church is not "our mission" on behalf of God, but God's mission in the world to which we are invited to join and collaborate to make God's dreams for his creation a beautiful reality. As Nuessle's declares in his book, "We, all believers, are called to participate in the missio Dei – God's Mission in the world – as faithful witnesses to the fullness of God's grace" (Nuessle, 21).

So what is God's mission in the world? As Nuessle's express, God's mission is to spread his reconciling love, as manifested through Jesus Christ, to all of creation (John 3:16-17). This love, God's grace, which is the very nature of God, is also the nature of "God's interaction with the world, human and natural" (Nuessle, 17) is our mission – we share it and incarnate it through word and deeds. Just as we cannot "manufacture grace or manipulate its presence" we cannot manufacture a mission and identity as people of faith outside of the one that has already been given by God, through Jesus Christ.

As people of faith, we need to embrace the gift of God's grace, and join God in this mission of love by sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with all. This is not a matter of what we do, but rather of who we are called to be. Mission "is not so much what we do as who we are. We are the church of Jesus Christ that participates in what God is doing in the world (Nuessle, 24). **This is the foundation of our theology of mission: the church exists to "point the peoples of the world toward the gracious free gift of love and acceptance in Jesus Christ, and for us, as the body of Christ, to live the reality of God's loving presence in the world. Christ, who as the Word was God"** (Nuessle, 18). If we are not doing this, whether we want to consider it or not: we are not the church of Jesus Christ.

This understanding of God's work in the world is crucial if we are to be effective in the work of witnessing to people about the love of Jesus Christ, locally and around the world (Acts 1:8). Our mission work, instead of mere programs and initiative, ought to be a reflection to the world of our identity as disciples of Jesus Christ (Nuessle, 24). It should be a tangible expression of god's grace, which is always reaching out to us, bringing us closer to a full relation with our Creator (Nuessle, 26). Sharing the good news should not be limited to a passive proclamation (we are not mere messengers) – we proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ through words and deeds – we are "doers" of God's mission (Nuessle, 27).

We are at a time in the life of our beloved denomination, The United Methodist Church, where we need to, once more, hear God's call to "participate in the mission Dei through a lifelong journey as faithful witnesses to the living Lord Jesus Christ" (Nuessle, 39). Once more, we are being called by God to "live in the way of Christ" (Nuessle, 41).

As disciples of Jesus Christ, in our connectional system, we need to understand that we cannot effectively fulfill God's big dream for all creation by ourselves – we simply can't. If we are to be the church of Christ and effective participants in the mission Dei, "we must seek the natural relationships that enable us to be both visible as Christ body in the world, and to engage the world with the Gospel (Nuessle, 91). Is through this understanding of an organic-connectional organization, which is central in our Wesleyan tradition, that we, as Nuessle argues, "can literally beat the devil" at his game (Nuessle, 92). Our connectional structure is not merely a way to organize for business, but as Nuessle suggests, "it is the biblical model for the church to be organized for its task of witnessing in the entire world (Nuessle, 93).

As we seek to live in the world, as witnesses of the God of Love, Mercy and Justice, we need to claim this vision of who we are, and whose mission we are being called to join. No more should we insist in asking God to join "our mission" and fit in our models of ministry. This needs to happen at all levels in the life of the church, from General Conference and our Council of Bishops, all the way to our local congregations. It needs to infest both clergy and laity, young and old, men and women, children and our youth. We need to reclaim a vision of God's mission, join God in mission, and work hard to transform our local "Jerusalems" so that out of our local congregations and communities we can go out into the world and be in global ministries that will heal, feed, nurture, care for, and empower the people of the whole world.

Rev. Héctor A. Burgos-Núñez

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HEALING AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

By Charles Hankins

We can continue the ministry of Jesus by providing healing services within our worship services and in special locations. Healing tables at the first table of Holy Communion has been a practice of this pastor from 1980 to the present with very helpful results.

In two churches I asked the Council on Ministries for their support in offering healing to the congregations at the Holy Communion services and they backed the introduction of the first table at Communion for healing. At the introduction of the healing ministry in one church, a medical doctor who was combating prostate cancer in his own life came to the healing table. I instituted the words: "May the healing power of Christ be in your life and in the lives of those you love very dearly." The week that followed the doctor was admitted to the hospital for emergency treatment. When I visited him he asked me to place my hand on the shoulder of each person coming and ask for healing in their life. I did as he requested and continue to do so to this day.

In the next church where I instituted the healing service, I was accompanied by lay persons to introduce the healing ministry in a Baptist Church in the community and talked to other pastors about the success we were having in getting worshippers to respond.

We decided to ask the local hospital for permission to have a healing service at 3 p. m. on a weekday afternoon. There would be visitors coming to see patients and the shift-changes of employees would bring workers caring for critical care and terminally ill persons. We were thinking of a response from nurses and aides, but never thought of the cadre of persons administering tests or x-ray technicians. They need healing from the weight of concern for patients. So, the only time this healing service was held in a hospital setting, the ecumenical approach succeeded.

The purpose of this article is to introduce a specific need for healing in the lives of many people; that is "survival guilt." There are so many situations where one person is taken and another is spared. I am thinking of 9/11, natural disasters, war, disease, accidents, and many more. No one will broach the subject on their own, but a

healing table in church would offer opportunity for worshippers to put their burden in Christ's healing hands for relief.

One example was a WWII veteran who thought he lost a buddy on Iwo Jima. The combat situation was where his friend saw a saber on a dead Japanese officer and reached out to take the sword as a souvenir. The body was booby trapped. The Marine veteran thought his buddy had been mortally wounded and grieved for years that he should have prevented the Marine from trying to retrieve the sword and losing his life. More than 70 years later, he was still bothered by this incident.

When he finished telling his story, I asked him to have a member of his family seek information about the wounded Marine's history. To their surprise, the Marine had survived but was left blind.

They found that he lived in Pennsylvania and contacted him to set up a visit. All these years and healing was taking place. As they approached the area where the man lived, the Marine veteran saw a man walking along the street with a white cane; they stopped the car. He got out and went up to the blind man and called him by name and two friends were reunited.

The blind man told him that it was not his fault and that he had survived the blast thanks to Navy Corpsmen and a long period of recuperation. He said his stupidity almost cost him his life and maybe that of his friend. He took responsibility for the situation. The Marine who was carrying this burden of survival guilt was healed.

When Christians think in terms of the ability of Christ to heal wounds of such deep caring on the part of survivors of tragedies, there is tremendous need to offer healing for the unspoken heartbreaks of those who come to a healing service at the beginning of the life-giving Sacrament of Holy Communion.

I commend the healing ministry to all who read this article, and pray that many will follow the commendation of Christ to heal the sick in his Name.

(The Rev. Charles G. Hankins, is a retired elder of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, a former pastor and district superintendent.)

General Conference

(Continued from Page 1)

said one thing that is hard, especially for first-time delegates, is getting used to the process. "Once an issue begins to be discussed on the floor, it takes a long time to get through it, but you know how much work you still have to get through in the week." He explained that it's a slow process, with a lot of discussion, especially in the beginning. "You can always feel the tension going into the end of the week because of the amount of work still to be done."

One matter expressed continuously at General Conference was the need to get more young people, especially young clergy, involved in the United Methodist Church. However, many reports throughout the two weeks mentioned concern that young people were not being respected and heard in the conference proceedings. Campbell talked with many young people who had this experience, "There were times when I met with other young clergy delegates where tears were shed over the future of the church, how they had been treated during the week, and over fear that their voice might not be heard." However, she had a different experience personally, "I felt very respected, which makes me very hopeful. I feel that I was heard and was given respect

in my committee. The members of my legislative committee even encouraged the young people to speak up and listened to us."

One of the many highs of General Conference was the nightly worship services, held from 8:30-9:30pm, after long days of deliberations and voting in the plenary sessions. According to Campbell, "Worship was amazing." The worship services were led by Marcia McFee, who specializes in worship design and leadership. Caterson agreed, "The highest of highs at General Conference, were the worship experiences. [Greater New Jersey Annual Conference's] own Mark Miller played a significant role, as did several of the songs he has written."

Another highlight of General Conference for many was in the lobby areas of the convention center where groups, such as the United Methodist Women, the United Methodist Task Force on Immigration, and Imagine No Malaria, set up interactive displays to encourage delegates and visitors to support and learn more about the different issues. Campbell found this to be "a very powerful witness for what the church can be when we all come together. Seeing how passionate people are about the

Korean Pilgrims Visit United Methodist Church of Green Village



Bishop Kang; Rev. Clarissa South Holland, church pastor; Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan, Dean of Drew Theological School; Pastor Elizabeth Taylor, the Youth Pastor are among those present for the photo taken in the sanctuary of the Green Village United Methodist Church.

Bishop Ill-Nam Kang from the Chung Cheong Annual Conference of the Korean Methodist Church is leading a group of Korean Methodist pilgrims who are in the USA to trace the footsteps of Rev. Henry Appenzeller. On May 15 they stopped at the Green Village Church in the Gateway North District, where Mr. Appenzeller served as the pastor in 1884. The pioneering preacher is remembered by the church as "One of the strongest men who filled the pulpit." In 1885, he went to Korea as a Methodist missionary. Today he is remembered as the "Father of Korean Methodism." In 1902, at the age of 44, he drowned while attempting to save his Korean assistant and a girl entrusted to his care on a journey to a southern port city to translate the Bible into Korean. The Chung Cheong Annual Conference has built a museum to memorialize the mission of Mr. Appenzeller.

The Green Village church hosted a reception for the Korean Methodist pilgrims and Rev. Clarissa South Holland, the church's pastor presented Bishop Kang with a memorial plate of the church. Ms. South Holland said, "The fact that Bishop Kang, clergy and laity have travelled from Korea to the United States to follow Rev. Appenzeller's footsteps speaks volumes about their gratitude to Appenzeller for sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the people of Korea. Bishop Kang expressed his desire for our church to have an ongoing relationship with his annual conference. This is a great honor for the church."

JOIN THE YAKAMA NATIVE AMERICAN RESERVATION TRIP

June 30 to July 11, 2012

Travel with Deaconess Helen McCahill from Newark to Seattle, WA to visit Seattle, Portland, mountains, deserts, museums, July 4th parade and Pow-Wow and meet Native Americans in the Wilbur Memorial United Methodist Church, White Swan, WA. Assist in the church's summer children's program. Cost is \$350 (for food, admissions and rental car) plus round trip air fare. Deposit of \$100 reserves a space. Contact Helen McCahill at 732-988-1151 or at helenmccahill@optimum.net. New leadership is being sought to continue this ministry next year.

church is amazing." She went on to say how as the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns Committee Chair, the full-communion agreement with the Pan-Methodist churches is an exciting result of GC2012 because "it shows oneness of Christ and will open many ministry doors."

When asked what advice he would give to future delegates, John Bishop said, "Any delegate can have an influence on the legislation, particularly in the legislative committees where there are no constraints on the number of people who can speak like there is on the plenary floor. When you choose a committee, choose wisely. Choose something you're interested in." John Bishop added, "It's fun being a delegate, being there with everyone."

Social media arguably aided that sense of community. For the first time, people around the world could share their thoughts, opinions, and reactions within seconds of a decision being made. Tech-savvy delegates were able to give minute-by-minute updates, even when the live stream was closed. Some argue this wasn't necessarily a good thing as incorrect information was easily passed along in seconds. How-

ever, overall, social media added an entirely new dimension to General Conference. Hundreds of people were following and using the Twitter hashtag "gc2012" to communicate with one another. It provided a sense of participation for those who were not delegates but highly invested in the future of the United Methodist Church.

In the end, amidst the mixed emotions, there was one common question, "Where and how do we go from here?" The new president of the Council of Bishops, Bishop Rosemarie Wenner of Germany, closed the conference with these words: "The problems we are facing are complex. Our means are limited...The answer is simple: by and only through God's mercy and grace. And, therefore, at the end of all of our business, unfinished though [it may be], as we are ready to go, let us pause for a moment. Let us listen again to the words of encouragement - Christ the risen Lord says to us 'Fear not, I am with you. And, therefore, follow me. I will lead you.'"

For more information about GC2012 and the decisions made, visit gc2012.umc.org.



Global Relay

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

Church secretary training set

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS) — A special training seminar on church administration and administrative duties will be held July 15-20 at the office of the General Council on Finance and Administration. The GCFA offers this program in support of the Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries, formed 30 years ago to "provide individual growth, professional development, continuing education, spiritual enrichment and work toward the betterment of The United Methodist Church." Interested people may contact Cynthia Haralson, the GCFA staff person to PAUMCS, at (615) 369-2386 or charalson@gcfa.org.

Wanted: funds to ship sweet potatoes

BIG ISLAND, Va. (UMNS) — The Society of St. Andrew, which facilitated the "produce drop" during the recent United Methodist General Conference in Tampa, Fla., is seeking emergency donations to cover shipping for up to 150 truckloads of sweet potatoes. A North Carolina grower has offered a donation of 6.3 million pounds of good sweet potatoes that the society can ship to feeding programs across the South, as far north as New York, and as far west as Kansas.

UMCOR refugee ministry gets boost

NEW YORK (UMNS) — Church World Service is partnering with the United Methodist Committee on Relief to provide leadership for UMCOR's historic mission among refugees and immigrants. As ecumenical relations director, Jen Kilps will help get United Methodist congregations involved in resettling the displaced refugees and immigrants, as well as identify local programs for them.

Stomping out malaria

BATON ROUGE, La. (UMNS) — More than 2,000 people from eight cities hit the pavement on April 21 to raise money for mosquito nets in malaria-ravaged countries. The Louisiana Skeeter Run was sponsored by the Louisiana Annual (regional) Conference as part of The United Methodist Church's Imagine No Malaria campaign. How serious is the malaria epidemic? Every 60 seconds, someone dies from malaria.

The UMC and the rising global middle class

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS) — Throughout the world, a generation of young, educated and technically savvy leaders is rising, and they are not fond of the "old way" of doing things. These young leaders will reshape The United Methodist Church and take it in new directions, writes the Rev. Larry Hollon in his blog, "Faith, Media & Culture."

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Finding a way forward in a new global reality

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS) — "I contend that discussing the decline of the church in the United States and the growth of the church in Africa and Asia is too simplistic and reduces our options to narrow, dare I say, myopic responses," writes the Rev. Larry Hollon, general secretary of United Methodist Communications, in his latest blog. "At issue is the relevance of the gospel to changing cultures and social realities in a globally, hyper-connected world of digitally informed young persons."

Red Bank Green Ministry

The Red Bank congregation continues to work toward its goal of better stewardship of God's Creation with ongoing programs using green energy, carbon emission reduction, and education in the surrounding communities of the two river area. April 15th marked the first RB Green Fair, with exhibits of solar and other green energy alternatives, green cleaning alternatives, landscaping without pesticides, installation of a bike rack, and accompanying signs promoting the NJ state law of idling no more than 3 minutes. The church has a share in a CSA Organic Farm in Farmingdale, as well as a UMW garden plot in Fair Haven to help provide for Lunch Break's community food program. Organic Fair Trade coffee and tea for all church events is a related ministry. The youth and adults have written cards and signed letters to the

President, the Secretary of the Interior, and the West Virginia Governor to advocate for clean energy instead of Mountaintop removal, and we continue an education and advocacy program to stop hydrofracking from poisoning drinking water.

Red Bank Green Team shared its exhibits with Red Bank's Earth Day event and works with Red Bank's Environmental Commission on projects. The church provides free tree seedlings every April for congregants to plant and help restore oxygen in our atmosphere. If you are interested in learning more about our Green Faith initiatives through the Greenfaith Certification program, please contact Janie Schildge, or Pastor Myrna Bethke at Red Bank United Methodist Church, 247 Broad St. Red Bank, NJ 07701.

GC2012: 40 More Sent To Mission Service

By Elliott Wright



Jaime Vazquez is commissioned as a United Methodist missionary during an April 29 service at Palma Ceia United Methodist Church in Tampa, Fla., site of the 2012 United Methodist General Conference. Vazquez will serve with the denomination's National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries.

Tampa, Fla. (UMNS) Voices of the worldwide Methodist family came together in a Florida church on Sunday, April 29, to bless and celebrate 40 people being sent into the world as missionaries, deaconesses and home missionaries to witness to God's love, mercy and justice.

Representatives from Methodist churches in more than two dozen countries were present for the commissioning of 23 new missionaries and 17 deaconesses and home missionaries of The United Methodist Church. The missionaries were from 11 countries.

"Commissioning," according to an opening reading, "is a holy act in which the church, as sign and symbol of the Missionary God, sends forth people into the world."

The service took place at Palma Ceia United Methodist Church during the 2012 meeting of the United Methodist General Conference, the law-making body of the church, which meets every four years to conduct church business. Palma Ceia is a 66-year-old, 1,500-member church with strong mission outreach.

More than 500 persons attended, overflowing the sanctuary into a fellowship hall where a video link was set up. The Rev. Kevin M. James Sr., the church's pastor and host, said it was "wonderful to have the global church at Palma Ceia." People in 22 countries tuned in to the live stream on the Internet.

Enthusiastic welcome

Later in the evening of April 29, the newly commissioned mission personnel were enthusiastically welcomed by the General Conference at the Tampa Convention Center. Video and projected still photos underscored what Thomas Kemper, chief executive of the mission agency, termed "missionaries from everywhere to everywhere."

Bishop Hope Morgan Ward of Mississippi, vice president of the board, led the conference delegates and friends in blessing the new missionaries, deaconesses and home missionaries.

Seventeen newly commissioned global missionaries will go to places as diverse as Senegal, Costa Rica, Argentina, Russia, Northern Ireland and Tanzania. There are some 220 global missionaries serving through the denomination's Board of Global Ministries.

Deaconesses and home missionaries, who are men, serve ministries of justice in the United States. Two people were commissioned as church and community workers, missionaries in economically marginalized U.S. communities. Four are new missionaries through the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries.

Serve throughout denomination

The missionaries serve through the denomination's Board of Global Ministries; deaconesses and home missionaries have a special relationship with the church through the Women's Division of the agency.

At Palma Ceia, in a service both solemn and joyful, the new mission personnel confirmed a call to a lifetime of mission, "being led by the Spirit of God to engage in this work." They promised to pray, read the Bible, increase their skills and do their work "in sincerity and love," witnessing to the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

Bishop Bruce R. Ough of West Ohio, president of the mission agency, led the service of commissioning. At the start of the service, Thomas Kemper and Harriett Jane Olson, head of the Women's Division, read a litany that attested to the importance of missionaries and deaconesses in Scripture and the Methodist tradition.

The litany expressed trust "that these mission servants, being sent forth in the power of the Holy Spirit and the accompanying grace of God, will fulfill the sacred tasks entrusted to them."

A prayer by Home Missioner Haniel Garibay of the Virginia Annual (regional) Conference summarized many of the situations in which those commissioned will serve, including affliction by hunger, natural disaster, war, injustices, pollution, and neglect. And, those who hunger "for the spiritual food of God's Word and love."

*Wright is a longtime reporter and a former communications staff member with the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries.

**The July/August Issue
Deadline is June 12, 2012**

It's The Time Of The Season For Meeting

By Emily Snell



The North Indiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church meets in this 2007 file photo.

A UMNS photo courtesy of Indiana Area Communications.

Now that the 2012 General Conference has ended, United Methodist leaders across the nation turn to jurisdictional and annual conferences coming up this summer.

The first U.S. annual (regional) conference sessions begin May 17 in the Detroit and Eastern Pennsylvania annual conferences. The annual conference meetings wrap up in the United States with the Virginia Annual Conference session June 22-24.

The first annual conference session in the central conferences was Feb. 2-6 in Eastern Angola. Based on current data, the central conferences annual conference meetings wrap up Dec. 14-16 with the East Zimbabwe session.

The most popular dates for U.S. conference sessions are June 6-9 with 10 annual conferences meeting then. Eleven more conferences meet June 6-10, 7-9 or 7-10.

U.S. jurisdictional conferences meet in July every four years, following General Conference, the denomination's top lawmaking assembly. The main purpose of jurisdictional conferences, which involves twice as many U.S. delegates as General Conference, is to elect and assign new bishops.

Fourteen U.S. bishops and two central conferences bishops will retire this year. The North Central, South Central and Western jurisdictions each will lose a bishop's position, while the Congo Central Conference will gain a bishop.

New U.S. bishops will be elected during jurisdictional conferences July 18-21. Central Conferences are the outside-U.S. equivalent of jurisdictions, and like jurisdictions, they have multiple annual conferences. They will meet at various dates ranging from August to December 2012, and will elect or re-elect six bishops. The Central and Southern Europe central conferences will not meet until March 13, 2013, but they will not be electing a new bishop.

The following bishops are retiring this year:

North Central Jurisdiction

Linda Lee, Wisconsin Episcopal Area, Wisconsin Conference

Northeastern Jurisdiction

Ernest S. Lyght, West Virginia Episcopal Area, West Virginia Conference

Jane Allen Middleton, Harrisburg Episcopal Area, Central Pennsylvania Conference

Peter Weaver, Boston Episcopal Area, New England Conference

South Central Jurisdiction

Charles N. Crutchfield, Arkansas Episcopal Area, Arkansas Conference

William W. Hutchinson, Louisiana Episcopal Area, Louisiana Conference

Ann Brookshire Sherer-Simpson, Nebraska Episcopal Area, Nebraska Conference

D. Max Whitfield, Northwest Texas-New Mexico Episcopal Area, Northwest Texas and New Mexico Conferences

Southeastern Jurisdiction

Alfred Wesley Gwinn Jr., Raleigh Episcopal Area, North Carolina Conference

Charlene Kammerer, Richmond Episcopal Area, Virginia Conference

Timothy Whitaker, Florida Episcopal Area, Florida Conference

Will Willimon, Birmingham Episcopal Area, North Alabama Conference

Richard J. Wills Jr., Nashville Episcopal Area, Memphis and Tennessee Conferences

Western Jurisdiction

Mary Ann Swenson, Los Angeles Episcopal Area, California Pacific Conference

Central Conferences

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.

Hans Växby, Eurasia Episcopal Area
Leo Soriano, Davao Episcopal Area

After the 2008 General Conference when bishop retirement age was raised from 66 to 68, Bishops Jane Allen Middleton and William Hutchinson were given the option of maintaining their positions four more years. The two bishops will both retire this year at the ages of 71 and 70, respectively.

Bishops are permitted to serve up to three consecutive four-year terms in one episcopal area. In each jurisdiction, a committee on episcopacy — made up of one clergy and one lay delegate — reviews the bishop's work and character and proposes a new assignment. The Jurisdictional Conference then has the ability to accept or reject the assignment.

Bishops elected at the 2012 Jurisdictional Conferences will begin their new assignments Sept. 1.

*Snell is a freelance writer in Nashville, Tenn., and a former intern with United Methodist News Service.



Bishops of the United Methodist Church in Angola lay hands on a new pastor during a 2006 ordination service at the West Angola Annual Conference at the Icolo e Bengo United Methodist Church in Luanda.

A UMNS photo by Mike Dubose.

You're Invited to an Open House



Bristol Glen

200 Bristol Glen Drive, Newton
973-300-5788
June 9, July 14, August 11, and
September 8 • 11 am to 2 pm

Collingswood Manor

460 Haddon Avenue, Collingswood
856-854-4331
June 14 • 5 to 7 pm
June 15 • 10 am to 1 pm

Francis Asbury Manor

70 Stockton Avenue, Ocean Grove
732-774-1316
June 8 • 10 am to 1 pm
August 24 • 5 to 7 pm

Pitman Manor

535 North Oak Avenue, Pitman
856-589-7800
June 2, July 7, August 4, and
September 1 • 1 to 4 pm

The Shores at Wesley Manor

2201 Bay Avenue, Ocean City
609-399-8505
June 20, July 18, August 22,
and September 19 • 1 to 3 pm
June 24 • 11 am to 1 pm

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INDEPENDENT LIVING • RESIDENTIAL LIVING
ASSISTED LIVING • MEMORY SUPPORT • RESPITE • SHORT-TERM REHAB
SKILLED NURSING • HOSPICE

'Natural Church Development' Serves As Catalyst To Get Heisler Memorial Moving

Heisler Memorial Church in Heisleville, NJ refused to be a dying church. Yet, several lay leaders and the pastor could not understand why their ministry seemed to be flat and they were not growing.

"What's wrong with us?" they asked.

They were worried about declining average worship attendance but even more concerned about an overall sense of being "tired," even burned out.

"Are we just going through the motions?" They worried that their hearts were no longer in the mission and ministry of the church.

The pastor and several laity had heard of "Natural Church Development" and wondered if this tool might help. They called Dr. Douglas Ruffle, Coordinator of Congregational Development for the conference, and asked him to come out to give an overview of what Natural Church Development (NCD) was all about.

After the presentation, the church leaders decided to give NCD a try. NCD is a five step process for gauging church health, identifying strengths and weaknesses in church life and planning for a better future. There are five steps to the process: 1) Prepare—learning about NCD; 2) Diagnose—discovering the key issues that hold the church back from being as healthy as God intends it to be; 3) Plan—coming up with action steps, goals and objectives for addressing the issues; 4) Implement—the plan and making any needed adjustments along the way; and 5) Evaluate—review whether the plan was implemented and if there had been improvements in church life.

The Reverend Lou Strugala was assigned as coach to Heisleville as they began the five step process.

"We needed the unbiased, objective voice of the coach at our meetings so we could take an honest look at ourselves," said one member.

NCD uses a survey to measure church health based on eight quality characteristics that should be present in every church: empowering leadership, gifts based ministry, passionate spirituality, effective structures, inspiring worship services, holistic small groups, need-oriented evangelism, and loving relationships. Survey results point to strengths and weaknesses with the idea that a church should leverage its strengths to address its weaknesses and thereby release the potential for "all by itself" (i.e. *natural*) growth.

In the case of Heisler Memorial, "Loving Relationships" proved to be their greatest strength. They leveraged their loving relationships to address their weakness, called a "minimum factor," which was "empowering leadership."

Coach Strugala led them through the diagnosis step of figuring out why "em-



Families gather after worship at Heisleville UMC.

powering leadership" was their minimum factor. He emphasized that they should celebrate and work on what they did well, namely, loving relationships.

"Pastor Bill Hess," said Mr. Strugala, "took an honest look at his own leadership. Though he has been a pastor for over thirty years, he worked hard to let go of control, thus empowering laity."

"Through the process," said Mr. Hess, "there was a change of spirit in the church. I felt rejuvenated in my ministry."

The transformation that can come with NCD often begins with personal transformation. Pastor Hess indicated that he himself went through personal transformation. When the pastor opened himself up for change, it empowered laity to open up and allow the spirit to work changes in the life of the church.

Not all members of the church embraced the idea of engaging in the Natural Church Development process. One long-time member raised questions about it. "I will pray for the process," he said, "because if the Holy Spirit is in it, the church will go forward positively."

The church prayed continuously as it engaged NCD. Things started to change.

"We noticed more and more children and youth coming to church and Sun-

day School." Over 120 children and youth participated in Sunday School, youth groups and worship since the beginning of this year.

More importantly, pointed out one member, "We feel like a family. We trust one another a lot more than before. We have gained a greater appreciation for our shared gifts and we

are convinced that God has a mission for us. Before we didn't know where we were going. Now we feel encouraged that God will reach our community through us."

One of the differences in the life of the church is the approach to ministry programs. "If we think we are doing something out of a sense of obligation, we don't do it. If we see it as a ministry, we do it."

The new spirit at Heisler Memorial went into action earlier this year. The town funeral director called the church. One of the twins born to a family died and the family could not afford to bury the child. Laity of the church took the initiative to do something for this family—not expecting anything in return. They raised money for a cemetery plot. The entire church surrounded the family with love and care as Mr. Hess conducted the funeral and church members hosted a reception. They continued to support the family by taking meals to them. Since this happened the family moved away, but they will always remember the love and support showered on them. Heisler Memorial knows that God is on a mission in their community and that they have a vital role to play.

Natural Church Development was the catalyst to get things moving in the right direction for Heisler Memorial Church. They know they are on the right track. They are getting healthier as a congregation and God has a plan for them. They no longer think of dying—they are too busy being engaged in God's mission.

Hear more about Heisler Memorial's story at the Natural Church Development luncheon during annual conference.

LET ME COUNT THE WAYS...

Endowment Programs Help Churches Grow:

1. Receive increased gifts to fund various ministries
2. Members begin including planned and current gifts in their stewardship response
3. Members are educated about expanded gift opportunities for mission and ministry
4. Frees up current annual budget contributions to strengthen and even expand existing programs
5. Receive major planned gifts that have previously been directed to other causes where endowments are already in place

The United Methodist Foundation preserves and grows ministries through endowments. Fifty-one GNJAC churches have invested over \$4.89 million.

Our core services of planning, consultation, education and training are provided free of charge to GNJAC churches.



For additional information contact

K. Edward Jacobi, President,

at 732-747-4891 or

ejacobi07739@yahoo.com

or Jay Kim at the

GNJAC Office 732-359-1032.

Log on to:

www.UMRelay.org for Current Relay Online,
Relay Archives & Relay Reflections.

June 10 – Walk for All Ages

NEPTUNE — United Methodist Homes 18th annual *Walk for All Ages* in Ocean Grove. Registration at Great Auditorium Pavilion, 12 noon; Walk begins 1:00 pm. Lunch, entertainment, guided tent tours, awards, and more. To pre-register and donate online, visit www.umhfoundation.org. Call 732-922-9802 x121 for additional information.

www.UMRelay.org for Current Relay Online,
Relay Archives & Relay Reflections.

Live Music to End the Sound of Growling Stomachs

Music is often noted as a universal language. To those who work in the trenches with families living at or below poverty, another language – hunger – is also universal. The sound of hunger is louder during the summer months when contributions dip due to donors being gone on vacation and when schools lunches are not provided due to summer recess. One in ten New Jerseyans are living below the poverty line and nearly a third of all children under age 18 live in households below 200% of the poverty level according to 2010 statistics from Legal Services of NJ's Poverty Research Institute.

CUMAC '80s Night 2.0 was held on Saturday, April 21, at Chatham UMC. It was the second annual "80s Night" and attendees numbering in excess of 250 people came from towns and churches as far away as the Skylands District. Putting hunger and music from the 1980s together to transform lives is the creative genius of Dave Philip, of the Wayne UMC, who developed 80s Night as a benefit for CUMAC, the largest food assistance program in Passaic County, NJ. CUMAC, the Center for United Methodist Aid to the Community, is GNJAC's largest assistance program serving Northern New Jersey.

The "Your YouChoose Band," a 20 member band of vocalists and musicians, performed 36 songs which had been paid for as one part of many fundraising options inherent to the event. Individuals made a special donation to CUMAC by preordering their favorite 1980's song. Many of the



Dave Philip, center, and fellow "Mohawks" show off their stylish hair cuts at CUMAC 80s 2.0. The "Mohawks for Hunger" element of the event raised more than \$4,000.

songs were themed such as "Black Coffee in Bed" by Squeeze which was paid for by Coffee Distributing Corporation, one of the 10 business sponsors. Six United Methodist Churches co-sponsored the event, Caldwell, Wayne, Chatham, Franklin Lakes, Butler, and Montville.

Adding to the fun and fundraising capacity of CUMAC '80s Night 2.0, were the special activities and prizes won by attendees while underscored with music. The Band played "Hungry Like a Wolf," by "Duran, Duran" while four people competed to eat the most pizza from Tree Tavern, another busi-

ness sponsor. A net profit of over \$11,000 was raised from this annual event which has a host of videos posted on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/user/MyYouChoose/featured>).

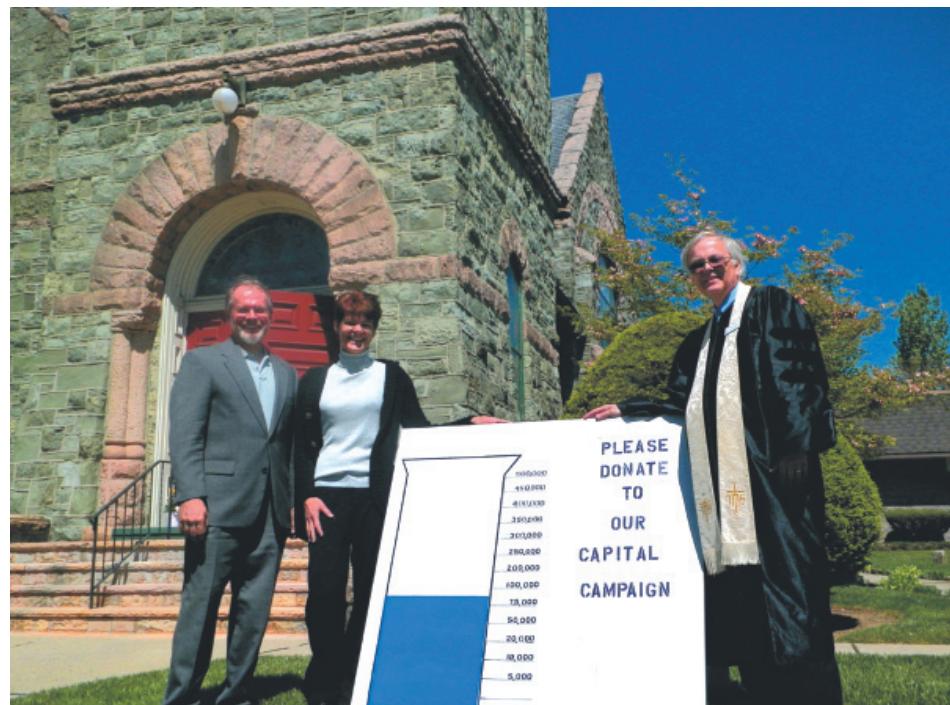
Other music related events to raise funds for CUMAC can be found across GNJAC and all are helping to quiet the sounds of hunger and transform lives of God's children. The Bergen Highlands Youth Music Theatre presented "In The Woods" at Calvary Church on Sunday, May 20th, with a love offering for CUMAC. This highly entertaining musical by Steven Sondheim was co-directed by Rev. Jennifer Lovallo and

Rich Lovallo. The Grace Church in Wyckoff presents a fall concert called "Music Feeds the Soul" where food and financial donations are collected for CUMAC.

A night of contemporary Christian Music featuring the Gospel Project and Samhill Road will be held on Saturday, June 9th at 5PM at the United Methodist Church of the Rockaways, 1 Hoagland Avenue, Rockaway, NJ 07866. Tickets are \$10 each or two for \$15. Advanced tickets can be purchased by contacting pastorlbvumc@yahoo.com or calling 973-271-1280. All proceeds will benefit CUMAC (Center of United Methodist Aid to the Community) located in Paterson, NJ.

CUMAC's multi-service approach to helping transform lives includes programs related to tutoring and literacy, disaster relief, advocacy, and employment skills through its warehouse and thrift store operations. CUMAC works collaboratively with other UMCs, religious and non religious organizations to alleviate root causes of hunger. For more information about how you can sponsor an event to help alleviate hunger, please contact Lynne Bruger, Development Director, at CUMAC, 973 742-5518 or lbruger@cumacecho.org. Churches in the Palisades District are encouraged to participate in two service days at CUMAC on June 20 and 21. For more information on this opportunity, please call CUMAC or Rev. David Wherle at Leonia UMC or david@3umc.com.

Washington Church Restoring the Legacy



Pictured Left to Right (in attached photo): Robert May, Capital Committee Co-Chair; Heidi Noctor, Capital Committee Co-Chair; and Reverend Willian Noll, Church Pastor.

WASHINGTON, NJ – The Capital Campaign Committee, Co-Chaired by Heidi Noctor and Robert May, officially kicked off a \$500,000 fundraising campaign for the Washington Church located in Washington, New Jersey, on Sunday, April 29. The "IF WE BELIEVE... Restore The Legacy Capital Campaign" seeks to raise funds to repair and restore the Church's roof and pipe organ, provide for future stained glass window repairs, silicone the exterior of the church, and increase the Church's endowment.

The cornerstone of the church was laid on October 31, 1895 and the original congregation moved into the sanctuary in June 1896. The church building is unique in that it is constructed of green Serpentine Stone—the only church building in New Jersey known to have used such stone in its construction.

According to Ms. Noctor, "Members of the Board of Trustees, Capital Campaign Committee and church leaders have embraced the need for the campaign and have pledged nearly

\$100,000 to kick-off the fundraising drive." Ms. Noctor noted the capital campaign will run through 2015, with the goal of repairing and restoring the church's roof and completing the beautification of the church's sanctuary in time for the 120th anniversary of the church.

Mr. May who also Co-Chairs the committee, pointed out that "The roof of the church has been leaking for decades and past attempts to repair it have not resolved the problems." He noted, "Some prior repairs (like tarring the copper valleys of the church roof) have only resulted in further deterioration of the roof."

Monies raised by the "IF YOU BELIEVE... Restore The Legacy" campaign will be allocated by the church for the following purposes: major roof repairs/ restoration: \$150,000; pipe organ restoration - \$100,000; stained glass window repairs - \$10,000; silicone of the church exterior - \$10,000; beautifying the sanctuary - \$30,000; and increasing the endowment fund - \$200,000.

The Reverend William Noll, known as "Pastor Bill" to his congregation of 350 members, pointed out, "The church has an extensive mission and public outreach program and offers its facilities and support to the following groups and programs: Alcoholics Anonymous (AA); Narcotics Anonymous (NA); Transition Center for Women; Warren County Department of Human Services (Food Stamps); Interfaith Hospitality Center/ Family Promise; Community Lunch Program; Girl Scouts; Cub Scouts; CPR Training Course; Music Together; Royal Dominion Chapel of the Redeemed Christian Church of God; and the Caring Closet."

According to Mr. May, "Our church has one of the greatest outreach programs in Warren County. The "Big Green" church that some have said looks more like a "castle," has provided sanctuary...food, clothing and shelter...to hundreds of individuals."

Members of the capital campaign committee, in addition to Ms. Noctor and Mr. May (Co-Chairs), include: Carol Appleby, Carol Bloch, Candace Lewis, and Joyce Mowder.

Ms. Noctor remarked that, "Each member of the committee brings

unique talents that have allowed the group to cover a lot of ground work in a short period of time." According to Noctor, "eight weeks ago, we were still in the early stages of thinking about the capital campaign—today we have already raised nearly \$100,000 in pledges."

Mr. Noll commented that, "I am heartened by the enthusiasm with which members of the congregation have come forward to take on the challenges of a capital campaign" and added that, "I hope that citizens and business owners of the surrounding communities will also see the mission and public outreach of the Washington United Methodist Church as worthwhile and make a donation to support our fundraising efforts."

Anyone wishing to make a donation to the church's campaign can send a check to: "Washington United Methodist Church", 116 E. Washington Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882, with a notation on the check for "Capital Campaign". The Church maintains a website at: <http://washingtonumc.org> where additional information regarding the Capital Campaign can be viewed.



Summer Camps Offer Life Changing Experiences at Pinelands and Aldersgate

Ask one of our pastors or lay leaders in our churches where they first felt the hand of God in their lives and chances are they'll tell you about a camping experience. Summer Christian camp is an amazing opportunity for children, youth and young adults to meet God face-to-face. The GNJAC is blessed with two beautiful camp sites: Pinelands Center at Mt. Misery in the Pinelands of NJ and Aldersgate Center in the Skylands of Sussex County. Every summer these two camps offer weeks of swimming, hiking, kayaking, crafts, sports and more for children in grades 1-12. Led by enthusiastic and caring counselors, campers will learn about God's love through Bible Study, fun activities and the relationships they'll build with one another. Volunteer Directors and on-site Chaplains are always available to take the spiritual journey to a deeper level.

The goal of GNJAC Camping and Retreat Ministries is that every child gets an opportunity to go to camp, so funds are available for those in need and no child will be turned away. We also encourage churches to consider sponsoring a child, or making a donation to our Hulitt campership fund. If you want to register for the summer, or just want to learn more about our camping and retreat ministries please contact our main office at 609-893-3354 or visit us on the web at www.gnjumc.org/camps.

See you this summer!

STAFFING NEEDS AT THE PINELANDS CENTER FOR 2012

Please note: ALL paid and volunteer staff people MUST participate in staff training AND submit to and pass background checks. We abide by Safe Sanctuary policies. No one is exempt.

All positions listed are RESIDENTIAL (live at camp) for the entire time they are held (except weekly Chaplain – we will give the Chaplain the option of living here or commuting).

We need:



- Male and female paid counselors (18 years of age or older)
- Male and female volunteer counselors (18 years of age or older)
 - Male and female Lifeguard/Counselors (18 years of age or older. CURRENT lifeguard certification is required. Lifeguards will also be trained to act as counselors to cover for counselors on break or whenever the Program Director deems necessary.)
 - Waterfront Director (21 years or older. CURRENT lifeguard certification and supervisory experience required)
- Health Director (21 years or older. RN preferred)
- Volunteer Weekly Event Directors (21 years or older. The term "Dean" is used in other camps) for the following --

July 22-28	1-3 Grades 4-6 Grades	Craft-A-Palooza Hair, Nails, Beach, and Bible (all girl camp)
July 29-Aug 4	4-6 Grades 7-12 Grades	Sports Galore B-Ball and ALL
Aug 5-11	1-3 Grades 4-6 Grades	Camp-A-Palooza Creative Arts
Aug 12-18	4-6 Grades	Slime, Grime, and Muck (Oh YUCK!)

Please call, write, fax, or email the Program Director, Laurie Pfahler if you, and/or someone you know, are interested:



Pinelands Center At Mount Misery
Attn: Laurie Pfahler, Program Director
801 Mount Misery Road
Browns Mills NJ 08015
Tele. # (609) 893-3354; Fax # (609) 893-0472
Program email: pinelandsprogdir@yahoo.com



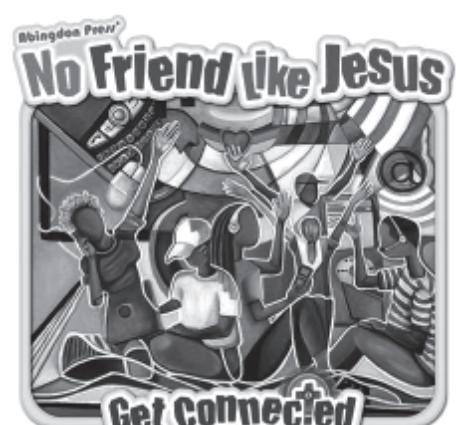
Summer 2012 Vacation Bible School



Dive in and discover God's underwater universe! Explore the depths of God's Word at VBS 2012 with Cokesbury's Operation Overboard – Dare To Go Deep With God!

In this action-packed adventure, your kids will swim with humpback whales and seahorses, scuba through a vibrant coral reef, and take a personal submarine to the ocean floor, where eels and octopi play. Through interactive lessons that are easy for kids to apply to their lives today, they will "go deep" into God's Word, exploring Bible stories of people who revealed deep faith by knowing how to:

- Depend on God
- Dare to care
- Claim Jesus
- Choose to follow
- Change the world



We invite you to *Get Connected*, because there is *No Friend Like Jesus!* Through Jesus, God created a social network that connects from creation to eternity. *No Friend Like Jesus: Get Connected* is designed to move participants of all ages into a life-giving relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The Bible lessons form the foundation for a VBS experience that will open the hearts and minds of participants to see themselves as specially made by God, physically, culturally, and spiritually. The Scripture is chosen to show the different ways God has communicated in the Bible, through teaching, poetry, story, and letter, making connections with humanity from creation to eternal life. From the African talking drum to the smartphone, participants will interactively experience Christian community and be encouraged to believe and send a message that Jesus is the best friend you can ever have!

"Become friends with God, [God] is already a friend with you." (2 Corinthians 5:20b, The Message)

All Current and past VBS kits can be previewed through the GNJ Media Center for a 2 week preview time. Please contact the Media Center for more information or to preview a VBS kit today!

www.gnjumc.org/mediacenter

New Sunday School Curriculum



Grow, Proclaim, Serve! Is the new core children's Sunday school curriculum to be introduced this fall by Cokesbury. The United Methodist Publishing House says it is designed "to meet the needs of a variety of churches, particularly those who use 'Rock Solid' and 'Live B.I.G.' The curriculum will offer biblically solid, theologically sound, age-graded and age appropriate learning tools that are easy to use, fun for the children and provide lots of options." This curriculum will include multimedia tools, including video resources that will connect the children to quirky, fun characters. Music and movement videos will also be included. There will also be a teen curriculum that will have a completely different look and feel. For more information or to reserve a copy of the curriculum go to www.cokesbury.com or www.growproclaimserve.com

Ocean City Youth Weekend 2012



Mark your calendars!!

When: September 7-9, 2012

What: Ocean City Youth Weekend is a fun filled, mission driven weekend, where hundreds of United Methodist Youth gather to worship and play. Our weekend will be lead by the Mark Swayze Band, Bible Study led by Rev. Olu Brown, and comedy hour with Chris Wylde. We will participate in Mission projects, beach activities, and communion on Beach!!

Where: Ocean City, NJ

Who: 9-12th graders

Registration details will be available after June 1, 2012 at www.gnjmyp.org

Save the Date...

Summer Music Institute 2012

Two Days! - Thursday - Friday, July 26 & 27

You're Invited to....A Praise Party!

What if our invitations to worship in our local church sounded like this one, inviting everyone to a praise party? Would people come expecting to sit quietly in their pews and sing softly out of hardbound hymnals and pray with hands folded and heads bowed. Or would they come ready to shout, laugh, dance, cry — and sing with mouths wide open and voices raised in a community roused by joyful choirs and worship leaders? This year's Summer Music Institute will feature engaging and exciting techniques of song leading, liturgical design and aesthetics that renew our passion for worship. Worship that is focused on a Holy Spirit-filled, Justice-driven liturgy. Our hope is that the worship at SMI will create and model for its participants an intentionally diverse community passionately welcoming all people. **More information to follow!!!** **Mark your calendars today!**

Questions? Contact Nancy VanderVeen, Director of Theological Lifelong Learning, at nvanderveen@drew.edu, or 973-408-3084.

VITAL CONGREGATIONS

New Resources for Vitality

By Douglas Ruffle

Coordinator of Congregational Development, GNJAC



There are new, exciting resources recently published that will help your church be more vital and inviting. I lift these up for your consideration:

1. *Catch: A Churchwide Program for Invitational Evangelism*, written by Debi Nixon with Adam Hamilton. Published by Abingdon Press, this resource helps the local church to know how to attract visitors to the church, connect them to your faith community, and help them learn to know, love and serve God. The resource includes a Program Guide with DVD, small group participant book, small group DVD with Leader Guide, and an Implementation Guide. The boxed kit is available from Cokesbury for \$68.00.
2. *A Disciple's Path*, written by James A Harnish with Justin LaRosa. Published by Abingdon Press. This resource helps participants understand the discipleship pathway within the Wesleyan United Methodist tradition. It helps participants identify where they are in the pathway and what they need to do next to grow in their faith. The boxed kit is available from Cokesbury for \$39.99.
3. *Make or Break Your Church in 365 Days: A Daily Guide to Leading Effective Change*, written by Paul D. Bordon. This resource is directed particularly to those who lead congregations. It provides clear plans for the daily tasks of effectively leading a congregation. Available from Cokesbury for \$12.60.

There are many other valuable resources that can help your local church be vital, alive and growing. The three mentioned above are written by dynamic leaders of the church. Check them out at Cokesbury.com. Commit yourself to help lead your church to the next level of effectiveness.

Camp meeting cottages for sale in the oldest camp meeting in Lancaster County, Pa. Gothic Revival style cottages of the 1880's era. Prices range from \$13,000 to \$45,000. Camp open from April-November with activity in Tabernacle most weekends and 142nd camp meeting week this July 15-22. Landisville Camp Meeting.

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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.

Stewardship Stories

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



What If...?, is the title of several comic book series published by Marvel Comics. The narrative thread throughout each series explores “the road not traveled” by its various characters and the events in each of the series are considered separate from mainstream continuity in the Marvel Universe.

I thought it might be fun to consider a few “**What Ifs**” with regards to local church stewardship specifically and congregational life and health in general:

- Many people today, by their own admission, “church shop” when looking for a new congregation to call home. **What if**, rather than treating them like customers; someone who will increase the church’s bottom line, we treated everyone who came into our churches like guests ready to be welcomed with intentional hospitality?
- In many congregations the laity attend church so the pastor can minister to, and on behalf of, them. **What if** it were the pastor’s job to spiritually equip and empower the people of the church so that they can do the ministry?
- Some church folks stop showing up to the congregation they were attending because they were “not being fed.” **What if** we, as followers of Jesus Christ, were able to grow into maturity where we would become responsible for our own spiritual nourishment?
- In many congregations the finance committee exists to set and control the budget of the church. **What if**, instead, the finance committee saw it as their mission to find ways to fund and resource the ministries needed by the local church?

Most of our congregations still function under the 20/80 rule: 20% of the people do and give 80% of the time, talent, and treasure. **What if** the narrative thread throughout our churches and throughout our denomination was 100% of our folks give 100% of their time, talent, and treasure to the work of God in the world? What an exciting “road not traveled” that would be?

Credo Confirmation Retreat



Over 140 Greater NJ Conference Confirmands visited St. George's UMC in Philadelphia during the Credo Confirmation retreat.

Just Girls/Just Boys Retreat



Just girls~ just guys gather with Celia Whitler before a session during the retreat.

Just Girls/Just Boys Retreat sponsored by the Greater NJ Ministries with Young People, proved to be a weekend full of learning to love yourself the way that God loves you. Youth ages 14-16 from churches around the annual conference gathered together for a retreat about being just girls or just boys. The event was led by singer/songwriter Celia Whitler and her team. Youth focused on their own unique story as we played together, dance together, and sang together. We shared stories around the campfire, challenged one another in games and lake activities, and spent time building relationships with new and old friends. One of the most memorable moments during the retreat was a time when the girls and boys separated from one another to write an Ode to themselves as written by God. A love letter from God.

Ode to Olivia~

You have such a kind heart.
 And you are full of goodness
 When you were so far away from me, I called and
 called, waiting for you to come.
 I knew that in the end you would finally reach out to
 me.
 You are beautiful, though you don't think so, because I
 made you within my own image and you need not ask
 so many questions.
 Have faith in me for I will provide your way through
 anything, and I will not give you more than you can
 handle.
 When you believe in me you may believe in yourself
 for through me you will never fail.
 O child of mine, do not weep for you are forgiven. My
 love for you is never ending so go out and serve in my
 name and do what I have called you to do for you are
 never alone when I am here and I am the beginning
 and the end.
 Do not doubt your abilities for I, the Holy Spirit, haven
 given them to you in my own name .
 Serve me and love me while you wait my return.
 I will always have a special place for you in my
 kingdom.
 You are my daughter and I am your father.
 Come to me and I will give you your heart's desire if it
 is my will.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid.” John 14:27

An amazing weekend to remember that God created each of us in God image...and we need to embrace and love the person we are...the person God wants us to be.

OBITUARIES

Rev. Robert Edward Kirk, retired Elder of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, died on Friday, April 20. A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, June 23, 2012 at 11 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 48 West High Street, Somerville, New Jersey 08876-2113.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the First United Methodist Church in Somerville. Messages of condolence may be sent to Mrs. Dorothy Kirk, PO Box 914, Crossville, TN 38557-0914.

Rev. Charles (Christopher) Hinnen, retired Elder of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, died on Friday, April, 27. A Memorial Service was held on May 19 at the Tenafly United Methodist Church.

A graduate of Drew University Theological School, Chris actively served in the local church. His first appointment as a full time senior pastor was at Emmanuel UMC in Union City. In 1988, he was appointed to Kearny UMC and his final appointment was at Waldwick UMC from 1994 to 2005.

Memorial donations, in lieu of flowers, may be made to the United Methodist Global AIDS Fund, c/o Greater NJ Annual Conference, 1001 Wickapecko Drive, Ocean, NJ 07712. Please make check payable to GNJAC with "Global AIDS Fund in Memory of Chris Hinnen" in the memo line. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Reverend Hinnen's family, in care of his daughter, Melissa Hinnen, c/o The UMC of the Village, 201 West 13th Street, New York, NY 10011.

Esther Stone Wilson, widow of Rev. David A. Wilson, Jr., died on Saturday, April 28 in Atco, New Jersey. Funeral services were held at the Haddonfield UMC Chapel on May 2.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Mrs. Wilson's memory may be made to the Haddonfield United Methodist Church Building Preservation Fund, 29 Warwick Road, Haddonfield, NJ 08033. Condolences may be sent to her son, Robert S. Wilson, 211 Woodland Court, Dagsboro, DE 19939-9232.

Helen Ruth Morgan Smith, wife of the late Reverend Newell J. Smith, Associate Member of the former Northern New Jersey Annual Conference died on Wednesday, May 16 in Milford, Pennsylvania. A funeral service was held at the Frankford Plains United Methodist Church on May 19.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Wickham Methodist Church, 32 Bruce Street, Port Jervis, NY 12771. Messages of condolence may be sent to her son, David Newell Smith, 200 Leslie Dr. Unit 908, Hallendale, FL. 33009.

William A. David, retired Elder of the GNJAC, died on May 16 in Stuart, Florida. A graveside service was held on May 24 at Eglington Cemetery, Clarksboro, NJ.

David served churches in Blackwood, Carneys Point and Deepwater, Bridgeport and Centre Square, Trinity in Bridgeton, Quinton, Simpson in Long Branch, Pennsauken, Gibbsboro, Bethany in Somers Point, and Evangelical in Clarksboro. He retired in 1976.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Treasure Coast Hospice, 1201 SE Indian Street, Stuart, FL 34997. Messages of condolence may be sent to his widow, Anna Davis, 7755 SE Independence Ave., Hobe Sound, FL 33455.

Julius Logan Brasher, retired Elder of the Greater New Jersey Conference, died May 11 in Brasher Springs, Alabama. A funeral service was held on May 15 at First United Methodist Church of Gadsden, Alabama.

He served churches in the following towns in New Jersey: a Congregational Church in Chester, (the oldest Congregational Church west of the Hudson River), and United Methodist churches in Blairstown, Walnut Valley, Denville, Rutherford, Westwood and Plainfield. He was District Superintendent of the Northern District of the Northern New Jersey Annual Conference. In his pastoral work, he was beloved by his parishioners for his faithful shepherding, and widely respected for his leadership in social justice issues in the larger community. During his pastoral career, he chaired many boards and commissions of the United Methodist Annual Conference and other organizations in the region where he was pastor. He also enjoyed the opportunity to serve as a volunteer fireman. He was a thirty-second degree Mason.

Messages of condolence may be sent to his widow, Lois Watters Brasher, 5175 Gallant Road, Attalla, Alabama 35954. Memorial gifts may be sent to First United Methodist Church of Gadsden or Brasher Springs Camp Meeting, 77 Brasher Springs Road, Gallant, AL 35972.

W. Michael Campbell, AIA

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Young adults + social media = future UMC

By Kathy L. Gilbert

In the twittersphere, young adults are holy conferencing and dreaming of a better church in the aftermath of The United Methodist 2012 General Conference — all in 140 characters or less.

A tweet-up to chat about the worldwide assembly happened May 14. More than 150 people came up with more than a thousand dreams for the future of the denomination.

Two young pastors under 35 organized the social media chat. They were Rev. Becca Clark, an ordained elder in the New England Annual (regional) Conference and pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in Montpelier, Vt.; and the Rev. Jeremy Smith, an ordained elder in the Oklahoma Annual Conference and associate pastor of First United Methodist Church in Checotah, Okla.

Both Smith and Clark attended General Conference, and both had some positive and negative experiences.

Smith said DreamUMC is a grassroots effort to engage young adults and others who felt disenfranchised by the actions/inaction of the denomination's top lawmaking body April 23-May 4 in Tampa, Fla. "We heard a lot of doom and gloom at General Conference, and in the world at large, about the decline of the UMC and mainline Christianity in general, and how the church is no longer relevant to a 'new generation' of young people," Clark said. "DreamUMC proves that this is simply untrue."

Still 'pain, confusion'

Smith said he was surprised by the raw nature of the comments.

"There's still a lot of pain, confusion and dissonance even 10 days after General Conference. But there is also a lot of resilient hope that refuses to stop loving a church that in some areas seems out of touch with reality. This interplay of fidelity with accountability will be a dynamic part of young people's experience in the coming four years," he said.

Participants at the tweet-up were asked three questions:

- What did you learn/take away from GC2012?
- How has this new knowledge changed your Dream (vision or hope) for the UMC?
- What's one achievable change that would make the UMC a bit closer to the church you dream about?

A compilation of responses are posted on DreamUMC's Facebook page. The answers ranged from optimism to disappointment to love for the church.

Answers to the first question: What did you learn?

- That we aren't as divided as we think (or even previous GCs), I was amazed at how many great people there were! :)
- I learned that code words and christianese (holy conferencing, etc) mask some pretty horrifying ideas.
- I learned that even if the UMC never changes, I will be completely content spending my life fighting for it to do so.

Answers to the second question: How or have your dreams for the church changed because of GC2012?

- I dream of a church that is not a lie, truly open doors, open minds, open hearts.
- I also learned in order to move forward we have to be able to discuss w/o feeling the need to "change" the other person
- Motivated me to work harder, be involved, get off the sidelines, stand up with all of my brothers and sisters.

Answers to the third question:

What can the church do to be your "dream church?"

- Launch hundreds of progressive new churches and change UMC demographics (OK, may take more like 8 years)
- Cookies during Plenary
- GC2016 via Twitter!
- We need to sadly acknowledge our differences, part amicably.

"I was pleasantly surprised that many of the comments were not just generally passionate, but some pointedly prophetic, and many practical and doable as action moving forward (looking toward networking, deepening connections, or drafting proposals and perhaps future legislative actions)," Clark said.

Clark and Smith said they hope for more ethnic and geographic diversity in the May 28 and following tweet-ups.

"Expansion of outreach to young adults in the central conferences is a high priority, and we are committed to involving the worldwide UMC from the beginning, not just tagged onto the end," Smith said.

"Staying connected and focused keeps us practical and attentive to what can be done. I don't want to just talk about changing the church; I intend to do it!" Clark said.



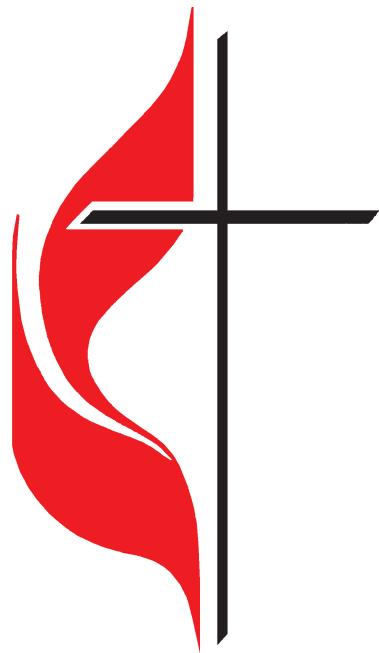
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