Clergy and Laity Join in Celebration of Bishop’s 60th Birthday

“You are chosen and you have nothing to do with it,” was the message that Bishop Violet Fisher had for Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar as he celebrated his 60th birthday April 6.

Hundreds of clergy and laity from the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, as well as, clergy and laity from New York, where the Bishop served prior to his election to the episcopal office, gathered at St. John’s Church, Hazlet to celebrate the milestone birthday.

Prior to the celebratory worship service, the evening began with a Korean dinner and a social hour climaxed by the presentation of a birthday cake with the traditional blowing out of the candles by Bishop Devadhar.

In her sermon, Bishop Fisher said that she could understand why the 60th birthday was such an important milestone in Indian culture where for many years the average life span of the person living in India was 32 years.

In Indian culture, the 60th birthday is especially important, explain the Rev. Doug Ruffle. Conference Coordinator of Congregational Development. He said that at this life stage, someone has passed through the student and householder phases of life and will now “re-nounce all material pleasures and go off into the wilderness as a nomadic mystic.”

“While the Bishop is not going into the wilderness, he will continue his life of servant leadership on behalf of Jesus Christ,” said Mr. Ruffle.

Bishop Fisher, who was the guest preacher, reminded all that each was chosen by God.

“I want us all to understand who we are in Christ Jesus,” she said. “It is God who has chosen us. We have not chosen ourselves.”

Bishop Fisher said that election by God is the first step in the process of sanctification.

“Bishop, I just stopped by to remind you, you are the chosen one. You are the Spirit-filled Jeremiah for this season,” said Bishop Fisher. “You were chosen even before your parents knew there was a baby there. God had his hands on you, you are chosen and you have nothing to do with it.”

In Christ’s love,
Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar

A Message of Thanks from the Bishop

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I greet you all in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I am deeply, deeply touched and moved by your love at my sixtieth birthday celebration. Thanks to everyone who blessed me with a dynamic worship and Holy Communion Service, a delicious dinner and cakes and desserts of love, the celebratory book with scholarly and touching articles, words of love and prayers through phone calls, emails, cards, Facebook. Thank you for the prayers, blessings, and the gifts to the two mission causes.

God is Great! I praise and thank God for each and every one of you.

“God loves you all and so do I!”

In Christ’s love,
Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DEAR BISHOP. Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar blows out the candles on his cake presented by Nicola Mulligan at the 60th birthday celebration, April 6. The Rev. Charles Bender and several hundred others look on.

Delega...
Birthdays and Other Celebrations

Each birthday is a milestone along life’s journey. When one is young, birthdays come so slowly, and are awaited with great eagerness and impatience. As the years pass, they come more quickly, and are anticipated with less enthusiasm and increasing dread. Whatever our age or station, birthdays have a way of taking on a local color, reflecting the cultural setting from which they rise. In American culture, the first birthday or the sweet 16th are glorious celebrations with mylar balloons and crepe paper streamers: the 40th or 50th are less desirable, to be observed with false bravado or not to be celebrated at all. In Indian culture, however, recently, it is the 60th birthday that is worthy of special note. It is that age which marks the division between the foibles and follies of youth and the gravity of advancing years. The 60th year is considered the “fourth stage of man’s life” when interest and energy turns from preoccupation with the material to and integration of all of life into the spiritual. Perhaps the difference in attitude between the American and Indian observance is a significant symbolic reflection of the two cultures. So when a presiding bishop of a United Methodist Annual conference in the eastern United States, born in India and living most of his adult life in the United States, comes to that pivotal 60th birthday, it presents a teaching moment for all concerned, a cross-cultural opportunity for new insight and growth.

Such was the case on April 6, when several hundred United Methodists from across the conference and around the nation gathered at St. John’s Church in Hazlet to celebrate the birthday of Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar — not so much with balloons and crepe paper, but with a genuine outpouring of love.

Oh Yes, there was the birthday cake, the candles, the “Happy Birthday to You” song. But along with these typically American trappings, there were elements that spoke to the uniqueness of this occasion, and to the diversity of the People called United Methodist in the place called the Greater New Jersey Conference.

There was worship and music and dance in praise of God; there were words of wisdom imparted by one who had already crossed the threshold of the seventh decade; there were messages of profound affection and respect. And there was food! A sumptuous Korean feast, reminding all present that we do not live by spirit alone. Spirit and flesh — real flesh, real spirit — mingled together, at the banquet table at the beginning of the evening and at the altar at the end. A token of Incarnation.

Which brings us beyond the Bishop’s birthday to another significant day in the month of April. Ten days following the celebration in Hazlet, another observance: The Resurrection of our incarnate Lord, who knew fully the meaning of our humanity, tasted fully of its pain and sorrow; drank deeply and to the dregs of human suffering. And died.

Then Easter dawned, a tomb was opened and emptied, and Christ, the incarnate One, came forth to offer life, real life, to persons of every nation and culture, on either side of 60. Thank you, Lord.

And thank you, Bishop Devadhara, for sharing your birthday with us. Many happy returns!

-- Robin E. Van Cleef
Editor

Sudarshana Devadhar, Resident Bishop
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A Message from the Bishop

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

One of the Sundays that we observe in the month of May is Heritage Sunday. According to the United Methodist Book of Discipline, “Heritage Sunday shall be observed on Aldersgate Day (May 24), or the Sunday preceeding that day. This day provides an opportu-nity for reflection on heritage, celebration of where the Church has been, how it understands it as it shapes us today, and the meaning of Christian历经程．Heritage Sunday calls the Church to remember the past by committing itself to the continuing call of God” (Book of Discipline, 2008, 6264.1).

Though we could reflect on various elements of Heritage Sunday, for the sake of space, I would like to focus on “committing itself to the continuing call of God.” One may look at this call from different angles, however, the call of God on lives is demonstrated through our Christian living as baptized Christians.

God has called individuals, in Biblical history as well as in Church and secular history, through different means and circumstances. Mother Teresa referred to it beautifully as a “call within a call.” “What she meant by this is that she was already a nun, when God challenged her to leave the comfort of the convent and go minister among the poorest of the poor, it was “a call within a call.”

While I was serving as a pastor, whenever people joined the church I used to ask them what made them want to do so. More than once people said to me, “My physician happens to be a member of this congregation and he shared with me about the church… so I am here.” In a unique way this particular physician was sharing his own story of faith. It was his calling. I am sure you may know of people who have influenced you and touched you through the demonstration of their Christian calling.

Many wonder why fewer people are being called to Christian minis-try today. Me, I hasten to say I am not just referring to ordained minis-try. I am referring to the ministry of every Christian. Many times we are reluctant to share with others our own stories of calling and how God has called us. We need to share that story with others and ourselves.

I am sure that each and every one of us has a unique story to share. Some of our calls might have come from someone’s preaching or from letters we might have received. Some have come from hymns we have sung, comments on Facebook, the witness of a teacher or coach, and the list goes on… My own call came through the witness of an evangelist from Australia as he was preaching at a spiritual convention in India regarding John 3:16 - “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

May this Heritage Sunday be a day when we take time to commit our lives to reflect, celebrate, share, and demonstrate the continuing call of God upon our lives. Christian journeys challenges us to cele-brate, pause, and reflect. May we take time to reflect on our own faith communities in the context of our village opportunities, cities, nation, and world and ask the question boldly, courageously, and prayerfully: What is God call-ing us or calling me to be and/or do today in our lives as individuals and as a faith community?

On this Heritage Sunday and the days thereafter, let us reflect on our personal past and our collective history in ways that will prepare us to live more faithfully in the present. Let us let God act upon “… the continuing call of God.” God is not finished with any of us.

“God loves you all and so do I!”

In Christ’s love,

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar

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Editor’s Note: The opinions expressed in the United Methodist Relay are those of the writers, and do not necessarily reflect those of the United Methodist Church, the Greater New Jersey Conference, or any official or organization thereof.
‘All Things New’ is 2011 Mission School Theme at 2 Locations

GNJAC — “See, I am making all things new,” that promise from Rev.-elation 21, pronounced from the heav-enly throne will undergird the GNJ Adult School of Christian Missions, jointly sponsored by the Greater New Jersey Conference and the conference’s United Methodist Women, is “the ticket to effective mission ministry for local churches across the conference,” the GCOM brochure declares. “The Coop-erative School of Christian Missions is for all. Invited are women, men, chil-dren, pastors, and friends! Make it a family retreat!”

To encourage new people to attend the School, first-time, full-time attend-ees will not pay the $40 registration fee. They will pay only the housing and food fees. That’s a $40 discount!

Those who return can expect a generous mix of worship, fellowship and learning opportunities. And there will be shopping at the Ten Thousand Villages retail store which provides vi-tal, fair income to Third World people by marketing their handicrafts. Ten Thousand Villages works with artisans who would otherwise be unemployed or underemployed.

Pre-registration for SOCM is pre-f erred although efforts will be made to accommodate walk-in students for a $50 registration fee. Meals will be available at a la carte costs but no housing will be available. Registration may be paid by check or credit card.

Petitions to General Conference Now Being Received

NASHVILLE (UMNS) — From now to Sept. 27, United Methodists can sub-mit petitions for consideration by the 2012 General Conference, United Methodist’s top legislative body.

According to church law, “Any organi-zation, any member, or lay member of The United Methodist Church may peti-tion the General Conference...”

Drew Music Institute to Explore ‘Amazing Abundance of Praise’

MADISON — In an age when “pipe organs and laptops coexist with elec-tronic bands and taize chant” in a “holy con-fusion” of sacra and profana, Drew Theological School’s Sixth Annual Mu-sic Institute is offering an “Amazing Abundance: Praying and Binging the World Around.”

The 2011 institute’s abundant offer-ing, running July 28-30, will combine songs from the Global South with 19th century camp meeting songs and 20th century ecumenical music. “World music infused with this musical abundance energizes our spiritual life and quick-ens our universal pulse of the body of Christ,” explain the institute promoters, inviting all to “join us as we experience unification, liturgical variety, prayer and preaching that encourages our souls, hearts and minds to re-engage the 21st century church.”

Keynoter for the three-day event will be Michael Hawn, church music pro-moter and Parkhill School of Theology in Dallas. Co-directors of the three-day institute are Mark Miller, Director of Music and Composer-in-Residence at Drew, and the Rev. Tanya Linn Bennett, Director of the Chapel and Associate Professor of Religion. Young Adult Sessions will be led by Dr. Hawn. Themes to be explored under the general rubric “Singing a 21st Century Faith” include “The Shape of Congrega-tional Song in Our Generation” and “Global Song for Local Congregations.”

For more information and schedule of events visit: www.drew.edu/theological/continuing-education/smi

Alzheimer Researcher at Haddonfield, May 7

HADDONFIELD — Dr. Joel Ross, leading Alzheimer’s Disease researcher, will lead a discussion at Haddonfield Church on Saturday, May 7, from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m.

Called “Memory Enhancement in the 21st Century,” the discussion will an-sw er questions and provide the latest information about how Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia are being treated.

Lunch will be provided free of charge and local organizations that help families facing Alzheimer’s and dementia will be present. Reservations are required in order to provide lunch.

To reserve a seat, please email your name, address, phone number and the number of people attending to office@HaddonfieldUMC.org or call 856-873-6071.

This program is part of Haddonfield United Methodist Church’s Community Program Series which supports and educates members of the local commu-nity about topical issues that affect families.

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Churches Hunt Multi-Million Dollar Grant for Tsunami Relief

By Kathy L. Gilbert

May 5, 2011

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Drew Seminary Installs First Asian American as New Dean

MADISON (UMNS) — In a ceremony filled with spirit and symbolism, Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan was officially installed April 8 as dean of Drew’s Theological School. The Craig Chapel service followed an afternoon of events celebrating the first Asian American to lead a United Methodist seminary.

“I stand before you today keenly aware of the enormous honor and task that the communities of faith and higher education have conferred upon me,” said Dr. Kuan, who described his path from Malaysia to California to Drew as “a journey to the East.” And just as he has crossed continents to answer his calling, he said his hope for the Theological School is that it will “increasingly become more global in its orientation.”

“By expanding transnational teaching and learning relationships, I hope we can explore together what progressive Christianity and progressive religion can look like in a global context,” he said. “I am very confident that Drew Theological School’s pioneering legacy will move us in our journey of theological education.”

The service included a performance by Drew’s Korean Men’s Choir; a special hymn, “We Abide,” composed for the occasion by lyricist Laurie Zeiman and the school’s music director, Mark Miller; and the presentation of gifts from the United Methodist church and the school’s music director, Mark Miller.

Eventually Kuan sees his journey eastward coming full circle and leading him to where he grew up, though he realizes both he and the place of his birth will have changed significantly since the day of his installation.

“Likewise,” said Kuan, “Drew Theological School is hardly the same school that began 144 years ago. In our respective and interwining journeys, I hope that we’ve been changed for the better and that we’ve been changed for good.”

Dr. Kuan comes to Drew from the Pacific School of Religion (PSR) and the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) both in Berkeley, California, where he served on the faculty of both institutions.

He is an active member of The United Methodist Church (UMC), and has served on the board of directors of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry since 2004. The new dean began his career serving a church as an associate pastor from 1980 to 1983 in Malaysia. In 2002, he became an ordained elder and full member of the California- Nevada Annual Conference of the UMC. Since 2008, he has served as the vice president of the board of directors of the UMC’s General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. He holds a PhD in Old Testament from Emory University, a master of theological studies degree from Southern Methodist University and a bachelor of theology degree from Trinity Theological College in Singapore.

Newly Installed Dean Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan acknowledges the approving applause of the assembled gathering at his April 8 installation in Craig Chapel on the campus of Drew Theological School in Madison. Among those participating in the ceremony are (l. to r.) Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar, Drew Provost Pamela Gunter-Smith, and New York Bishop Jeremiah Park.

Church and Community Connect in Dynamic Discipleship in Oaklyn

The mission-oriented church rediscovers the needs of its surrounding community and world and engages in ministry to address those needs. These words from Roadmap to Renewal, GNJ’s coordinator of Congregational Development, Douglas Ruffle, caught the imagination of Emmanuel Church here this year.

Following this Roadmap the Emmanuel congregation has prayerfully committed to an intentional effort to reach out to the surrounding communities of Haddon Township and Oaklyn.

First step to accomplish this goal was to establish a relationship with two local public schools and their principals. In conversations with Pastor Gary Bartlett and church members, both principals expressed the need to address the plight of “stressed out” parents.

Emmanuel launched a “Parent’s Night Out” ministry, coordinated by Carol Doron. Parents in the community can drop off children at the church for fun-filled activities in a safe environment, supervised by Emmanuel’s church school staff. Parents can then go to a movie, dinner, shopping, or whatever.

Both public schools have allowed Emmanuel to advertise this ministry and other church events via flyers. Two truly wonderful blessings from this new relationship between church and community have occurred, reports Pastor Bartlett. First, after a recent food drive, Dr. Charles Warfield, of Clyde Jennings Elementary School principal contacted Pastor Bartlett and the church to find out who could use the food. Mr. Bartlett made arrangements for the groceries to go to the Oaklyn Community Food Pantry housed at the Oaklyn Baptist Church; a ministry involving several area churches including Emmanuel.

Second, Dr. Jennifer Boulden of Oaklyn School invited the pastor to join the Oaklyn Community Task Force, which consists of townships leaders committed to resolving community issues and promoting a healthy sense of community. Bartlett and Emmanuel church see these new community relationships as added ways to share Christ’s love and hope to people beyond the walls of the church building.

FOOD DRIVE: Cooperative effort by Emmanuel Church and local schools like this food drive bring “wonderful blessings” according to Pastor Gary Bartlett (r), shown here with members of a food drive team.
All Are Chosen,’ Bishop Fisher Tells Congregation at Bishop’s Birthday Fete

(Continued from Page 1) hand on you and God knew the plan that God had for you.”

The Bishop’s daughter, Dr. Trina Hemmelgarn, presented Bishop Devadhar with “In The Precious Name”, a book of celebratory writing in honor of the bishop. It is compiled of stories and tributes from family members, friends and colleagues and was edited by Mr. Ruffle and Nicola Mulligan, administrative assistant to the bishop. The book can be purchased at Amazon.com or be on sale at Annual Conference. All profits will benefit Nothing But Nets, the mission project that purchases mosquito nets in countries with high incidence of Malaria.

Tonight God’s grace came in powerful waves of love,” said Bishop Devadhar. “Each and every one of you contributed to this evening through your love and support.

The Bishop presented Bishop Fisher with a garland, which he explained was a symbol of love.

“Thank you for your support in our journey,” Bishop Devadhar said as he presented the garland. “She has been both a spiritual mother in Christ and our family pastor since 2004.”

Completing the birthday celebration were special music and liturgical dance. The Bishop also received many traditional Indian gifts on his milestone birthday including a turban, silk scarves, garlands, a fruit basket and a fountain pen. Worshipers also partook in Holy Communion with Bishop Felton May joining bishops Devadhar and Fisher in administering the sacrament.

– Jessica Stenstrom, with additional staff contributions.

LEADING IN WORSHIP in celebration of Bishop Devadhar’s 60th birthday are Bishop Violet Fisher (above), liturgical dancer Dhajia Ingram (below, left), and cellist Mira Kang (below). Also participating were Drew Dean Jeffrey Kuan, Dr. Isabel Quezada, Gage Hemmelgarn, Nicola Mulligan, Julian Wamble, soloist, Dr. Frank Fowler, Bishop Felton May, Dr. Hae Jong Kim, Douglas Ruffle, the bishop’s daughter Dr. Trina Hemmelgarn, and organist Mark Miller.

Photos by John C. Goodwin, Leo Park and Sushil Bhujbal

CELEBRANTS OF THE SACRAMENT are Bishop Fisher, center, and Bishop Felton May. Both are longtime friends of Bishop Devadhar.

GRIpped by the emotion of the evening, Bishop Devadhar (left) expresses his appreciation for the outpouring of love from the assembled throng.

The family photo (below, lower left) shows (left to right) son in law Gage Hemmelgarn, Prema Devadhar, episcopal grandchild Myla Hemmelgarn, Bishop Devadhar and his daughter, Dr. Trina Hemmelgarn.

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Less than Perfect

By Krista Hendrickson

Did you know that back in the early 1920's people actually used tapeworms as a dieting technique? Tapeworms! Real live parasites that attach to your stomach or intestines and consume all the food going into your body? No, you could lose weight. One of the more disgusting aspects of this idea was not that such a thing existed, but rather, that people actually used it.

"But wait," you say, "that was years ago, we don't do that anymore. We can't do that anymore, gross!"

Well to be blunt, I'd have to tell you that if you believe that, then denial is not just a river in Egypt! There are diets today ranging from eating nothing but cookies to pouring chemicals on your food so your brain feels full. Ask the diet pill after diet pill fills our televisions, magazines, billboards and more. Yes, although tapeworms as a form of dieting have been banned for years, they still can be purchased illegally.

So, why the rant on ridiculous diet techniques? Because we continue to be a society that tells our young women and young men that the perfect body image is the most important thing in life if you want to be accepted and happy. That message continues to have a devastating impact among our peers. So many young girls and even boys battle every day with trying to be thin, in shape; in a word, "perfect." It seems that there is a new kind of diet fad or eating disorder that comes along everyday destroying young people in their attempt to have the "perfect" body image.

But, there is an alternate message that parents and other adults need to hear and share with young people. The music artist Pink says it best, "If you ever feel like you are anything less than perfect, just remember you are perfect." We are all created in God's image and God's image is perfect in every respect. We need to find ways to tell our young people that they are perfect just the way they are. Tell them they don't have to be something other than who God created them to be. We all need to remember and really believe that God has created us and loves us just the way we are. God believes it. We need to believe it as well.

All Pilgrims traveling to Taizé this year: Mandatory Orientation meeting will be held Saturday May 14th from 10-3pm at St. John’s UMC in Hazlet.

2011 Summer Camp

The Greater NJ United Methodist Camps are hiring. We are looking for the following 2011 summer positions: Summer Counselors, Waterfront Director, Waterfront Staff/Volunteers, and Kitchen Staff. Attached are job descriptions for each of these positions plus the application for employment. These positions begin July 1, 2011. All job descriptions and Applications can be found at www.gnjumc.org

We are also looking for volunteers to serve as Chaplains, Summer Directors, and to share special activities with the campers. If you are interested in volunteering or think you have a gift that you would like to share/teach the campers please contact Rev. Erica Nunez at Emcruz@gnjumc.org

Don’t forget to register your children and youth for Summer Camp. The 2011 Summer brochure is available on the Camp website: www.gnjumc.org. Campships are available on a first come, first serve basis.

New Look for Youth Team

The Greater NJ Conference Youth and Young Adult Ministries Team has a new look. The team has changed their name to The GNJ Ministries with Youth and Young Adult Directors, and work they do in and around the GNJ. Stay tuned for our first ever... "So U think U can Pray??" competition. Youth groups/individuals will be invited to submit their Praise video to the MYP team. The selected groups/individuals will be invited to perform at OCIW 2011.

Bishop’s Confirmation Celebration May 15, 2011

Come Celebrate with hundreds of Confirmands from around the Greater NJ Annual Conference. Bishop Devadhar will share the message as we embark on this new journey in our confirmands’ lives. All 2010 and 2011 Confirmands, leaders, parents, and mentors are invited to attend. Special music, Communion and an anointing by Bishop Devadhar will just be part of the celebration of confirmation. This event is a great culmination of the Confirmation season. We hope to see you there.

Bridgewater UMC Country Club Rd. Bridgewater, NJ • 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

(Although there is no charge to attend the celebration, a headcount is necessary to ensure that we have adequate supplies and gifts for the Confirmands. Please email Emcruz@gnjumc.org with your group registration. Thank you.)
In 2042 there will be no majority culture in the United States.

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MAY 2011 UNITED METHODIST RELAY 9

NASHVILLE: Imagine No Malaria, a ministry of The United Methodist Church, proudly introduces actress Pauley Perrette to its growing community of supporters working to together to reduce deaths caused by malaria.

Perrette, 42, is well-known for playing Abby Sciuto, her character on the hit CBS TV show, NCIS. A passionate advocate for more than 36 charity causes, Perrette has generously agreed to share her talent and celebrity to help further the cause of Imagine No Malaria, while raising awareness and money to fight the disease.

"Every 45 seconds, malaria kills a child in Africa," Perrette said. "Please support Imagine No Malaria in this global battle against a terrible — but preventable disease."

NCIS Actress Joins Support of Imagine No Malaria

In the book I wrote, Roadmap to Renewal, I emphasize the importance of two key words when articulating a Mission Statement for the church. The words are "so that...". Lovett Weems and Tom Berlin agree. In their book, Bearing Fruit: Ministry with Real Results (Abingdon, 2011), they dedicate an entire chapter to the same two words: so that.

Weems and Berlin point to scripture where the two words carry weight and importance. Think of John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that (it adds) everyone who believes in him will have eternal life." Weems and Berlin call these two words "the two most powerful words for leadership." The Bible is replete with verses where these two powerful words are invoked. As I mentioned in Roadmap to Renewal, the "so that" answers the important question, "Why are we called to do this mission?" Weems and Berlin believe the two words lead the church to focus on the fruitfulness of their mission and ministry.

"So that" gives clarity as to the purpose for what we do as a church. "Having a clear so that statement helps to keep everyone focused on the end and not just the means," write Weems and Berlin. They remind us of another famous biblical passage that includes the two words: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds," includes the two words: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, " — Romans 12:2.

Your mission statement should be a reflection of what your church does. For example, Graham United Methodist Church is stepping out in faith to eradicate deaths caused by malaria. "Imagine No Malaria efforts prove contagious." — Karen Granzow learned she could help to save 100 lives by giving just $28 a month for three years and decided that she had no excuse not to do so.

Granzow of First United Methodist Church in Los Alamos, N.M., attended an Imagine No Malaria presentation after the denomination launched the initiative last April 25 on World Malaria Day.

"Imagine No Malaria Efforts Prove Contagious" A UMNS Report By Barbara Dunlap-berg

As I mentioned in Roadmap to Renewal, the "so that" answers the important question, "Why are we called to do this mission?" Weems and Berlin believe the two words lead the church to focus on the fruitfulness of their mission and ministry.

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NBCT to Spotlight Efforts

An NBC TV special, "A Killer in the Dark," will show efforts of United Meth- odists and others to eliminate suffering from malaria. Presented by the National Council of Churches and produced by United Methodist Communications, the program will be available for local NBC affiliates scheduled to air May 1 through mid-November. Church members can contact their local stations and ask them to schedule "A Killer in the Dark."

"What really grabbed me," she said, "was the fact that The United Methodist Church is stepping out in faith to erad-icate deaths from malaria."

In 2008, the World Health Organiza-tion reports, there were 247 million cases of malaria and nearly 800,000 child deaths. In Africa, a child dies from malaria ev-ery 45 seconds; the disease accounts for 15 percent of childhood deaths.

Malaria is not contagious, but en-thusiasm for The United Methodist Church's Imagine No Malaria initiative definitely is. Just ask the Rev. Mary Kathryn Perrette, pastor of Hollywood Un-ited Methodist Church, Dunlap, Ill. She joined the fight against malaria five years ago after reading a "Spotlight article" about Nothing But Nets.

Pearce shared her newfound knowl-edge with her congregation that included many from the corporate headquarters for Caterpillar Inc. in nearby Peoria. "It's like looking at the global perspective in their day-to-day world," she said. Linking her congregation with the de-nomination, she annually sets up a ma-laria-related display featuring $1,000 of imagi-ne No Malaria. Conferences, he vowed to give $50,000 to Imagine No Malaria. Other conferences continue to support Nothing But Nets specifically. The Sierra Leone conference designated one-half of its annual conference offering for the cause.

The Imagine No Malaria goal is to raise $75 million to eliminate deaths and suffering from malaria in Africa by 2015.

"So That" Churches

By Douglas Ruffle
Coordinator of Congregational Development, GNJAC

Shore Awaits Will Graham Celebration at Ocean Grove Auditorium May 20-22

OCEAN GROVE — Will Graham, grandson of evangelistic icon Billy Gra-ham, will be at the Ocean Grove Auditorium here in a three-day Jersey Shore Celebration, May 20-22.

Graham, an evangelist in his own right, has addressed audiences around the world, will be backed up by singer-songwriter Matthew West, founder of the non-profit organization Christian groups, God Rocks, Flashlight Boys, and others.

A special Saturday morning program for children, called KidzFest, will feature the group God Rocks.

Local churches have been preparing for the Celebration for several months, working towards a successful event. The Celebration will offer something for all ages, with opportunities for group worship, individual prayer/con-sulting and conversations with Graham and other religious leaders.

Celebration organizers recently con-cluded a series of classes designed to help local Christians share their beliefs with others. Those classes were attended by more than 3,000, with par-ticipants coming not only from the lo-cation of the camp, but also from states as far away as New York and Pennsylva-nia. Additionally, an average of 945 teenagers per session have attended a three-week student version of the classes.

Admission to the event is free of charge.

The "Unemployment Rate" Impacting Your Church

The latest numbers from the Bureau of Labor Sta-tistics, released on March 22, show that the states with the highest unemployment rate are Nevada (13.6 percent), California (12.2 percent) and Florida (11.5 percent). The unemployment rate in New Jersey is 9.2 percent, with New York and Pennsylvania slightly better at 8.2 and 8.0 per-cent respectively.

What the Bureau of Labor Statistics fails to report is an area of the coun-try where the unemployment rate hovers probably around 80 or 90 percent. Where in the world the unemployment rate is above 90 percent, with no one able to find work? Unfortu-nately the answer is inside most of our churches!

If the standard rule of thumb is true: that 20 percent of the people do 80 percent of the work, and any given group at an extreme unemployment rate, one would expect a high "unemployment rate" in most of our congregations. What would it mean to the ministry you would be able to accomplish in your local setting if you were able to bring down the unemployment rate down significantly? Here are some helpful hints on how to address the unemployment rate in your church:

• Provide short-term, hands-on ministry experiences — A one-day or weekend opportunity may help those who are new to the church get involved and view the church as a great place to introduce the idea of community mis-sions to the congregation. In our current culture, short-term opportunities work best also because of the time constraints most people live under.

• Avoid generic announcements and invite people individually — Too often we stand up in church and announce a great way to introduce the idea of community mis-sions to the congregation. In our current culture, short-term opportunities work best also because of the time constraints most people live under.

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SUNDAY SERVICES
June 12-10:30am- Scott Rasmussen, President, Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association, Ocean Grove, NJ
June 19-10:30am & 7:30pm- Rev. Dr. DeForest Soaries, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, Somerset, NJ
June 26-10:30am & 7:30pm- Bishop William Williamson, Birmingham Area, Northern Alabama Conference of the UMC, Birmingham, AL
July 03-10:30am- Anne Graham Lotz, Founder, AnGel Ministries, Raleigh, NC
July 09-7:30pm- Shane Claiborne, Founding partner “The Simple Way” Philadelphia, PA
July 10-10:30am- Rev. Dan Betzer, Senior Pastor, First Assembly of God, Writer, Television & Radio Host, Fort Meyers, FL
7:30pm 57th ANNUAL CHoir FESTIVAL
Directed by Dr. Jason Tramm
July 17-10:30am & 7:30am- Haddon Robinson, past President of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and is the Harold John Ockenga Distinguished Professor of Preaching
July 24-10:30am & 7:30pm- Rev. Tony Campbell, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Eastern University, St. Davids, PA

142nd ANNUAL CAMP MEETING WEEK
Special Service- Fri. July 29- 8:00pm - Dr. David Jeremiah, Senior Pastor, Shadow Mountain Community Church, El Cajon, CA
July 31-10:30am- Rev. James MacDonald, Founding and Senior Pastor of Harvest Bible Chapel. Bible Teacher for “Walk in the Word” national radio broadcast, Chicago, IL
Aug. 07-10:30am- Rev. Dr. Zan Holmes, Pastor Emeritus of St. Luke Community UMC, Dallas, TX
Aug. 07-7:30pm- Rev. Dr. J. Ellsworth Kalas, Senior Professor of Homiletics, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY
Aug. 14-10:30am & 7:30pm- Rev. Dr. Thomas Long, Bandy Professor of Preaching, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA
Aug. 21-10:30am & 7:30pm- Rev. Dristor Begg, Senior Minister, Parkside Church, “Truth For Life” Radio Ministry
Aug. 28-10:30am- Rev. Duffy Robbins, Professor of Youth Ministry, Eastern University, St. Davids, PA
7:30pm SACRED MASTERWORK CONCERT
Sept. 04-10:30am & 7:30pm- Rev. Dr. Michael Youssef, Founding Rector at The Church of The Apostles “Leading the Way” Radio Broadcast, Atlanta, GA
Sept. 11- Commissioner R. Steven Hedgren, Territorial Leader, USA Eastern Territory, The Salvation Army

BIBLE HOUR
9:00-10:00am Monday through Saturday
Bishop Janes Tabernacle
June 20-23- Rev. Paul Moore, Founder, CitiHope International, Andes, NY
June 24-25- Pastor Rodney Finch, Senior Pastor, Calvary Chapel Cary, Apex, NC
July 27- July 2- Pastor Gayle Erwin, Founder of Servant Quarters, Cathedral City, CA
July 04-09- Rev. Rob Crucer, Senior Pastor, Zarephath Christian Church, Zarephath, NJ

July 11-16- Rev. Roger Casey, Senior Pastor, Rock Church, New York City, NY
July 18-23- Rev. John Groth, Director, Priority One Foundation, New Jersey - Delaware Conference, Newark, Delaware
July 25-30- Pastor Lloyd Pulley, Senior Pastor, Calvary Chapel, Old Bridge, NJ

142nd ANNUAL CAMP MEETING WEEK
Aug. 1-6- Rev. Paul Lawler, Senior Pastor, Christ Church, Birmingham, AL
Aug. 1-3- Evening Sessions: Revival Meeting- Pastor Tommy Miles, Macedonia Baptist Church, Neptune City, NJ
Aug. 04-10:30am Walk Thru the Bible -Old Testament-Tabernacle
Aug. 05-10:30am Walk Thru the Bible- New Testament - Tab.
Aug. 8-13- Rev. Dr. J. Ellsworth Kalas, Senior Professor of Homiletics Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY
Aug. 15-20- Rev. Dr. David Joynt, Senior Pastor, Presbyterian Church of Toms River, Toms River, NJ
Aug. 22-27- Dr. James Fleming, Director, Biblical Resource Center, LaGrange, GA
Aug. 29-Sept. 3- Rev. Cedric Miller, Founder, Living Word Christian Fellowship, Neptune, NJ

THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
August 11th & 12th- Join 100,000 leaders for this annual injection of vision, skill development and inspiration. Experience this world-class event at the OGCMA.

CONTINUING EDUCATION
Shalom Week: Theology and Practice of Shalom
The seven day intensive course, also offered for Continuing Education Credit, an introduction & certification to Shalom Training- Contact Dr. Michael Christensen at shalom@drew.edu or 973 408-3848 Cost: $200. 3 credits

Biblical Resources Seminar: “The Life of the Farmer”
Mon. Aug. 22 to Fri. Aug. 26-10:30 am -12:30pm Community Room. Led by Dr. James Fleming. Seminar fee $125. Continental Breakfast

Christian Shows in The Great Auditorium
June 18- Ocean Grove Hymn Sing-7:30pm Tabernacle
June 24- Bridgefest Concert Event- www.bridgefest.org
July 30- David Crowder Band with special guest Bob Smiley
Sept. 18- The Bishop’s Annual Songfest -4pm

BEACH FESTIVAL
June 25- Bridgefest w/ Bridge FM- www.bridgefest.org
July 30- Big Splash!

TUESDAY EVENINGS ON THE BEACH
Tuesday Evenings in July, 7-8pm: Bible Study on the South End Beach with Rev. David Cotton, Chaplain, Jersey Shore Medical Center, Neptune, NJ

FOR A COMPLETE LISTING OF ALL EVENTS CALL OGCMA At 732-775-0035
Purchase tickets online on our website: www.oceangrove.org.
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.

**May 12 - 15 — Chrysalis Weekend for Girls**

SOUTH SEASVILLE — Inspired by the Emmaus Weekend movement, this weekend retreat experience aims to inspire and support the spiritual formation of Christian young people, offering them a 3-day experience of living in community and learning Christ’s way of love and grace. For more information contact: www.GardenStateChrysalis.com

**May 14 — Taize Orientation**

HAZLET — St. John’s Church will be meeting place for all pilgrims traveling to Taizé this year. This is a mandatory orientation session. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**May 15 — Bishop’s Confirmation Celebration**

BRIDGETWATER — Come celebrate with hundreds of confirmands from the 2010-2011 classes this milestone in their spiritual journey, plus their leaders, parents, pastors and mentors. Bishop Devadhar will share the message. Special music, Holy Communion and anointing by Bishop Devadhar. 3:00 p.m. at the Bridgewater Church, on Country Club Road. No charge, but a headcount is necessary to ensure adequate supplies and gifts for the confirmands. Email Emunoz@gnjumc.org with your group/individual registration.

**May 19 - 22 — Chrysalis Weekend for Boys**

SOUTH SEASVILLE — Inspired by the Emmaus Weekend movement, this weekend retreat experience aims to inspire and support the spiritual formation of Christian young people, offering them a 3-day experience of living in community and learning Christ’s way of love and grace. For more information contact: www.GardenStateChrysalis.com

**June 1 - 4 — Annual Conference**

KING OF PRUSSIA, Pa. — “Disciples Transforming the World: Through Our Gifts” will be the theme and celebration that the 19th and 20th will gather at the Valley Forge Convention Center to transact the Lord’s business, elect delegates to General Conference and find inspiration for the year ahead.

**June 2 — ARMS Luncheon**

KING OF PRUSSIA, Pa. — The Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses will host its annual luncheon during the session of the Annual Conference. Noon at the Scanticon Hotel. Newly retired clergy and Golden Circle members (50 year members) will be recognized. Call Garey Hope for reservations at 609 291-5003.

**June 12 – Walk for All Ages**

NEPTUNE—United Methodist Homes 17th annual Walk for All Ages. Registration at Great Auditorium Pavilion 12:30 p.m., Walk begins from Ocean Parkway at 1:30 p.m. For more information visit www.umhfoundation.org or call 732-922-9800 x121.

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

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

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

LAKEWOOD — “Grace, Forgiveness and Reconciliation” a hands on mission project and lasting friendships, and lots of fun are among the promised good times at Georgian Court University for those who attend this year’s Youth School of Christian Mission. See story in the edg.e, page 7

**July 13 - 17 — Youth 2011**

LAFAYETTE, Ind. — Youth 2011 is a four day national youth gathering for the United Methodist Church at Purdue University will bring together top United Methodist Church leaders, the best ecumenical speakers, bands and talent and thousands of Christian young people, offering them a 3-day experience of living in community and learning Christ’s way of love and grace. For more information contact: www.UMRelay.org or call 732-922-9800 x121.

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

CALDWELL. — Calvary Church will be the site of this year’s annual session of this year’s cooperative School of Christian Mission jointly sponsored by the GNJAC and the Conference UMW. See story, page 3

**July 22 - August 1 — Taize Pilgrimage**

GNJAC — If you are between 16 and 26 years of age you are invited to join Bishop Devadhar and chaperones on a weeklong spiritual development experience. Additional adults may request to attend as space provides opportunity. For details, see conference website, www.gnjumc.org and click on Taize Pilgrimage link.

**September 17 — Historical Tour**

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

**October 3 — India 2011 with the Bishop**

GNJAC — Eleven days of discover on the Asian sub-continent where the passion of Jesus Christ is moving and stirring the people. See conference website, www.GardenStateChrysalis.com

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