

NEW Spirit!

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LUMINA shines hope for the city of Lancaster

By Suzy Keenan

"We believe God calls us to let our light shine in the darkest places of our communities and the darkest places of people's lives, places such as poverty and despair."

Hungry children cannot learn. Ninety-seven percent of the students at Carter and MacRae Elementary School on S. Prince Street in Lancaster are eligible for the free lunch program. And many children were showing up hungry at school on Monday mornings.

That led to a new ministry called "the Power Packs Project," coordinated by LUMINA in Lancaster, a partnership of United Methodist Churches working cooperatively in the city and beyond. With a grant from the Lancaster Rotary

Club and with educational support from the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service, this project provides packs of nutritional food to supplement the weekend meals of the neediest children at the school, as well as nutrition education.

"The Power Packs Project is the newest of LUMINA's many cooperative ministries, which aim at creating just and healthy communities," said LUMINA's executive director, the Rev. Sally Wisner Ott.

LUMINA, the Latin word for light, is a ministry that began in 1993 at St. Paul's United Methodist Church with a food bank, and expanded into a food and clothing bank supported by

See LUMINA P8



A client prepares for an upcoming job interview in LUMINA's Professional Women's Clothing Bank.

Bicycles go 'round the world to change lives

By Joe DiPaolo* and
Suzy Keenan



Students in the village of Yendi wear new school uniforms and will use bikes to travel to school, sometimes as much as 15 miles from home.

Abdul Manan, age 30, had a dream of collecting bicycles to take back to his ancestral village of Yendi in Ghana, on the west coast of Africa, to enable children to attend school. Yendi lacked money to rebuild its school, which had burned down several years ago during ethnic violence. Most families lacked the resources to acquire bicycles to make the trip to the nearest functioning school, located 8 to 15 miles away, depending on the location of the children's homes or farms. Children, many of whom were shoe-less and shirt-less, had to walk bare-foot as far as 15 miles to school.

An Eastern University student from Ghana, Manan shared his dream one day with Stan Petty, a member of Wayne United Methodist Church (UMC). That led to sharing his dream during worship one Sunday morning last spring with the entire congregation of Wayne UMC.

"I felt so sad for the children," he said. "I had a dream of helping my village and I wasn't able to do that until I came to the U.S. I believe this is a divine calling for me to step up and be able to do this," said Manan, who was born to Muslim parents, but whose extended family embraces Islam, Christianity, and African faith traditions.

See BICYCLES P8

Why do we need background checks on child/youth workers?

By The Rev. Beverly Andrews*

For many of you this is a real and urgent question as you face the requirements of our Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Resolution requiring the State Police Criminal Record Check and Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance for all workers with children and youth in our churches. You know the people who work in your church and you have never had any reason to suspect anything but loving care of

the young people in their charge. Why must we put people through this expense, hassle, and feeling of suspicion when there is no need for it? As the author of the resolution, I want to respond honestly and directly to your concerns.

Most of you who are asking these questions are persons for whom experiences in your church have always been those of safety, kindness, and the loving grace of God. You may have had disagreements with

people about the details of what to do, but you have never felt physically or emotionally threatened by anyone in your church - especially not as a child. I praise God for your experiences! I, too, had a wonderfully warm and loving experience of most of the adults in my home church as I grew up. For me, church was a safe place in the tumultuous world of the late 1950's and 1960's. Unfortunately, our experiences have not been

shared by all children and youth in churches, even United Methodist Churches.

"I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live."
Deuteronomy 30: 19, RSV

For over eight years I served as a counselor at a secular center for persons dealing with a history of

See WHY P9

Conference Calendar

September 4

Methodist Russian Mission 4th Anniversary

2:00 p.m. at the Bustleton United Methodist Church, 9707 Bustleton Ave., Phila. The Methodist Russian Mission of the East District of the EPAUMC celebrates its 4th Anniversary by hosting a Concert of Sacred and Folk Music presented by the ensemble LYRA from St. Petersburg, Russia. Tickets- \$7.50 for Adults, \$2.50 for Children. Tickets may be reserved in advance by calling 215-946-0732 or purchased at the door.

September 10

Danny Oertli Concert

7:00 p.m. at Hopewell UMC in the beauty of an 1000-seat outdoor amphitheater. Danny Oertli has recorded 5 independent records. He combines soothing vocals and intelligent, searching lyrics with beautifully arranged folk-rock songs. Danny's passion is Christian teens. For more information on Danny Oertli, visit <http://www.dannyoertli.com>. Tickets \$12 in advance or \$15 at door; Children 12 and under \$5, Group Rates available. For more info or tickets: www.HopewellHappenings.org; 610-269-1545; Hopewell UMC, 852 Hopewell Road, Downingtown, PA.

September 11

Installation Service for Rev. Ralph E. Blanks, Central District Superintendent

4:00 p.m. at Arch Street UMC, Broad & Arch Streets, Philadelphia, PA; 215-568-6250. For more information contact: Dr. Mary White - 215-236-0304 or Central District Office - 215-878-4607.

September 11

Burning Bush Cafe Concert

7:00 p.m. Flicker Records Rock Band Subseven along with Chasing Victory (www.purevolume.com/subseven, www.purevolume.com/chasingvictory) will perform at the Burning Bush Cafe at Tabor UMC. Since this show is on a Sunday, this would be a great youth group event. For group discount information, please email Tabor UMC Youth Pastor, Nic Billman. Visit www.burningbushcafe.org for all of the details on this show as well as other upcoming shows or contact Youth Pastor, Nic Billman at pastornic@tabor-umc.org.

September 15-17

Worship Connection Conference for Smaller Worship Settings

The Lake Junaluska Conference & Retreat Center. For complete details click the direct link to the General information page: <http://www.worshipconnection.cokesbury.com/content.aspx?dyn=421>. If you have questions or want to register, you may call 1-800-672-1789 for Cokesbury Customer Service or visit your local Cokesbury Christian Bookstore.

September 18

Main Line Children's Festival

12 noon to 4 p.m. on the grounds of St. Luke United Methodist Church, Montgomery Avenue & Pennswood Road, Bryn Mawr, PA; 610-525-2396. Featuring nationally known Billy Jonas, Women's Sekere Ensemble, Day of

Art, Give And Take Jugglers, Elmo, food and face painting, art activities by Main Line Art Center. Sponsored by St. Luke United Methodist Church, Our Mother of Good Counce, Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, Saints Memorial Baptist Church, Lower Merion Baptist Church, Church of The Redeemer, State Senator Connie Williams, Main Line Montessori School. Proceeds Benefit Methodist Home for Children & Cookman Youth Ministries.

September 24

Installation Service for Rev. Dr. Christopher J. Kurien, Northwest District Superintendent

4:00 p.m. at Schuylkill Haven: First United Methodist Church, 420 Saylor Street, Schuylkill Haven, PA, 17972; 570-385-3941. For more information, contact Northwest District Office, 570-366-1471 or montene.wagner@epaumc.org.

September 24

Fifth Social Principles Forum - A United Methodist Witness

9:00 a.m. - Continental breakfast
9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Seminar
Those wanting to ask in-depth questions or participate in the Church and Society Work Team meeting after the seminar are welcome to stay beyond that time. Location: Kochenderfer UMC, Lebanon, PA. The Church's Role in Affecting Public Policy is the subject. Penny Staver, Executive Dir. of United Methodist Witness in Pennsylvania will be the guest speaker. For more info on the forum please contact Peggy Wood at (610) 524-5935.

September 24

How Not to be Your Child's ATM

7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. CCN Satellite Broadcast at Kedron UMC in Morton. Please take advantage of these valuable programs offered locally to you! Contact Kym O'Neill for more information: kymcells@yahoo.com. \$3 fee.

October 2

Welcome Reception for Rev. Dr. Alfred S. Maloney

3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Welcome Reception to the East District will be held at Janes Memorial UMC, 41-59 E. Haines Street, Philadelphia, PA; 215-844-9564. Call the East District for further information: 215-673-2386.

October 8

Boehm's Chapel Apple Festival

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. The Twentieth Annual Boehm's Chapel Apple Festival. Ryan Bomgardner and friends will provide entertainment for children of all ages. Music and a caricaturist will add to the festivities. Demonstrations of spinning, weaving and chair caning will be held. You can also get a look at 18th century toys. Sample freshly made apple butter, pressed apple cider, apple nuggets, apple dumplings, apple crisp with homemade ice cream, apple baked goods and "apple eggs". The Chapel will be open and tours given throughout the day. Free admission and free parking. Directions to the Chapel can be found on www.boehmschapel.org. For further information, contact Janice Kluck 717-393-7104 or execdirboehms@dejazzd.com.

October 16-18

"In Essentials, Unity" Conference

A Gathering For Eastern Pennsylvania, Sunday evening through Tuesday mid-day. .75 CEUS will be awarded to attendees. Location: Pocono Plateau Camp and Retreat Center. This conference is designed to connect people around the core convictions of our faith. Keynote Speaker: Dr. Chuck Yrigoyen "United Methodism's Doctrinal Standards: Who Cares?" Three workshops will be offered on a rotating basis so all three can be attended: Dr. Rod Shearer (Ph.D., Drew) will lead "The Old Testament Not Contrary to the New;" Dr. Yrigoyen's will be "The Groundwork of United Methodist Doctrine" and Dr. Chris Fisher (Ph.D. Edinburg) will lead our discussion on "The Faith-Science Dialogue." For more information contact: Rev. Joe DiPaolo at wayneumc.pastor@verizon.net, or John Longmire at memorialumc@cnonline.net.

October 16-18

Blessing of the Animals

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. A Rural Celebration of God's Creatures, Romansville United Methodist Church, 1859 W. Strasburg Road, Coatesville, PA (between Leids Road and Hunt Drive). All who love and appreciate animals are welcome. Bring pets and farm animals. Each animal will receive a blessing. Groups are welcome (horse clubs, dogs clubs, etc.) All animals must be on leads, leashes or otherwise restrained by owners. Bring blankets or lawn chairs. Mission Project - We are collecting clean, used blankets, flannel sheets, and towels for the Chester County SPCA. Please bring mission items with you. For more info: Call 610-486-0189 or 610-738-3228 or email romansvilleumc@juno.com or lingeorge@verizon.net.

October 22

Older Adult Ministry Conference (See p11 for details.)

October 27

Advanced Sexual Ethics Workshop

"Good Boundaries Make Good Ministry", 9:00 a.m. - 3 p.m. Presented by Bev Andrews; Location: Camp Innabah; Cost: \$25; to register: email Cecile Grantham at cgrantham@verizon.net or send money to C.Grantham, 2285 Heather Lane, Pottstown, Pa 19464. Other advanced workshops will be offered in the Spring of 2006 plus the Basic Sexual Ethics workshop. Info will be coming out later about them.

November 12

Digital Storytellers' Seminar

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Camp Hill United Methodist Church, 417 S. 22nd St., Camp Hill, PA. Phone: 717-737-5631; email: chumc@camphillumc.org. Cost: \$89 per person \$69 per person (groups of 3+). Registration forms available at www.cpcumc.org - look under Conference Events or call 800-874-8474. Registration deadline: November 1. Send registration and payment to: CPCUMC - Communications, PO Box 2053, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-2053. For more information: call Sandii Peiffer at 800-874-8474, e-mail speiffer@cpcumc.org. For more information on Digital Storytellers, visit www.midnightoilproductions.net/ds/tour/index.html.

November 14-16

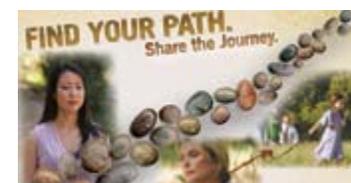
2005 State Pastors' Conference

The Pennsylvania Council of Churches is now accepting registrations for the 2005 State Pastors' Conference. Scheduled at the Radisson Penn Harris Hotel and Convention Center in Camp Hill, this year's conference will focus on the "emerging church." Visit www.pachurches.org for more details, including a registration brochure you can download, a news release that tells more about the conference, and a link to a secure site to register for the conference and pay with a MasterCard or Visa credit card. Or, call 717-545-4761.

November 28

Advent Day Apart for Clergy

8:30 a.m., Aldersgate UMC, Wilmington, DE. More information will be forthcoming.



Go to <http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?mid=9627> for details.

NEW Spirit submission requirements

Submit an article or photographs to the NEW Spirit using e-mail or U.S. Mail in only the following formats: Microsoft Word document (.doc), Rich Text format (.rtf), or Simple text file (.txt). We prefer photos sent as actual photographic prints or, electronically, as .tif or .jpg. We cannot use pictures less than 800 pixels wide. Please send logos or other graphic art in either .wmf or .eps format.

Email your items to communications@epaumc.org.



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Book Review - A Month of Sundays

By Rev. Dee Dee Azhikakath*

Tired of reading how most mainline religions are on the decline? How children brought up in the church do not attend as adults? Julie Mars, a lapsed Catholic, was the quintessential poster child for such patterns. That is, until one life-changing event ... well, changed her life and brought her back to church.

Mars, a teacher in Albuquerque, N.M., and author of the novel *The Secret Keepers*, learned of her oldest sister's diagnosis of cancer. In a decision teetering between an altruistic compassion for her sister and Mars' own selfish needs, she went to upstate New York to care for Shirley until her death. But the seven months of care added unexpected layers of intimacy and struggle. Ironically, only when Shirley's life ended did Mars begin her own quest for life through her grief and questions.

A Month of Sundays is an honest and open-hearted look into Mars' struggle with death, life and spirituality. Upon the death of her sister, Mars is overwhelmed by two desires: to see people dance and to get to church every Sunday for 31 weeks. It is through these 31 snapshots - a chapter per worship visit - Mars reveals a flashback of raw emotions and events surrounding the death of her sister, and the lessons she learns from each worship experience. Sundays grapples with the "big questions" we all have, or will at some point encounter, but may not have the courage to ask out loud.

It seems odd initially to be taken to church on a spiritual journey by someone who declares on page two that the "church is for believers, not for people like me who are so consumed with doubt." Then again, John Wesley once said, "Preach faith until you have it, and then preach it all the more." So, where else do you find faith if not a church?

Shirley, a devout Catholic, seems content with her fatal diagnosis until death grows imminently close and she becomes terrified of going to hell. On sleeping medication, she continually asks for two things: water and God. Despite Mars giving up her "life" to

care for Shirley and longing to be wanted during this time, it is God to which Shirley cries out and desires most in her last moments of life. God is the only one who could bring her peace. And this is the same peace for which Mars searches in her grief.

Off to a rocky start with her first church closed, Mars methodically attends church each week, saying that she is seeking her sister. Yet in her quest, her desires are revealed to go much deeper. After attending a Greek Orthodox Church and being challenged to introspection during the season of Lent, Mars recalls a depth of guilt she is carrying. "I don't know how or who to ask to be forgiven," she says.

For those with faith, the passage into death can be a time of comfort. Reminiscent of the words of John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." On the other hand, for those without faith like Mars, death can be downright frightening and haunted with questions, uncertainties and guilt. Luckily for Mars, "with Christ all things are possible." That includes even finding faith when there is none.

At first glance, *Sundays* appears solely about death and grief. However, as the intensity of emotions is revealed, *Sundays* is equally about living. It depicts faith as not just to prepare people for death, but to portray how to live. As Mars observes, "Dying and living. Living and dying. Learning that when you are dying, you are living, right up to the moment you are not."

Sundays reminds us of how simple life can be if we so choose. It reminds how at the most important times of our life, it is not the world that comforts us; it is God, people and our faith in both. While Mars went searching for her sister, it is grace and peace that found her.

**The Rev. Dee Dee Azhikakath is a young adult and the associate minister for St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Tucson, Ariz.*

A Month of Sundays Group Study Questions

· According to Clifford Geertz, "Religion is a system of beliefs that imbues everyday events with mystical overtones and treats this created world as if it is really real." Later on, Mars says, "there are only two reasons for religion. One: we invent religion out of fear. Two: we invent religion to express what's really, really there."

o Do you agree with either assessment?

o How would you define religion?

· Mars remembers a government pamphlet that said, "Americans ignore the past and live in and for the future, and are oblivious of the present."

o Do you agree?

o Would Mars advise Americans to live differently? If so, how?

· Mars desperately seeks some "spirit form of Shirley," and is jealous when others receive dreams from Shirley when she does not.

o Do you believe Laurie's and her fathers' dreams were a spirit form of Shirley?

o Have you experienced a spirit form of someone who has died?

· At the United Methodist Church Mars visited, they sang "I'll Fly Away" (although not actually listed in the United Methodist Hymnal). Do you agree with the imagery of your spirit flying away at death? If not, what imagery would you use to describe the passage to the afterlife?

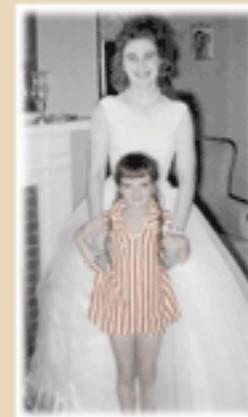
· We often describe someone who has died as someone we've "lost." Mars observes that "when you lose someone they are gone forever."

o Is using the word "lost" a good description of someone who has died?

o What other words or phrases do people use to describe the dead? Are

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

Searching for the Spirit and My Sister



JULIE MARS

they all accurate in expressing the death of a loved one?

· Since Shirley was a devout Christian, Mars felt she could get closer to her sister by attending church. Some might say it was her way of processing her grief.

o How have you mourned someone close to you?

o Did you have a project of your own?

· Leroy's dark prison was alcohol. Mars' was the pain brought on by her feeling she was unlovable and therefore unloved. What dark prison have you been trapped by, and how have you come to know the grace to set you free?

· Mars "mentally accuses a wrathful Catholic God."

o Does God have different personalities depending on denomination?

o Do we look for a God who we agree with or one that challenges us?

In Memoriam

Mrs. Eleanor M. Anderman, widow of the Rev. Carl A. Anderman Sunday, August 21, at the age of 80.

She is survived by 3 children, Rev. Timothy C. Anderman, pastor of Mont Clare UMC, Deborah J. Manuel of Mountville and Nancy A. Guenther of West Chester; as well as 5 grandchildren and 2 sisters, Katherine Shannon and Martha Wagner.

In 1947 she met and married Carl A. Anderman at Mountainhome Methodist church, his first full-time pastoral appointment. Together they served Port Carbon, Millersburg, Bristol First, Simpson Memorial in Philadelphia, Columbia - Salome, and Royersford churches until their retirement in 1987. During their retirement they resided in Mountville, PA. After Carl's death she lived at Cornwall Manor and later at Simpson Meadows in Downingtown.

Condolences may be sent to the Rev. Timothy C. Anderman, 201 Walnut St., Mont Clare, PA 19453.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorial contributions be sent to: Pocono Plateau Camp & Retreat Center; RR2, Box 2747; Cresco, PA 18326.



Healing the Wounds of Racism

2005 Schedule

All Classes are Introductory Level 1

- September 22-24 (Thursday, Friday, Saturday) Location to be announced
- October 2-4 (Sunday, Monday, Tuesday) Port-O-Call, Ocean City, NJ
- November 7-9 (Monday Tuesday, Wednesday) Kirkridge Retreat

Direct inquiries to: EPAUMC, The Office of Healing the Wounds of Racism, Attn: Hilda Campbell, Director, Human Relations and Leadership; Evangeline Johnson, Registrar; PO Box 820, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0820; 610-666-9090, ext. 215; (fax) 610-666-9093.

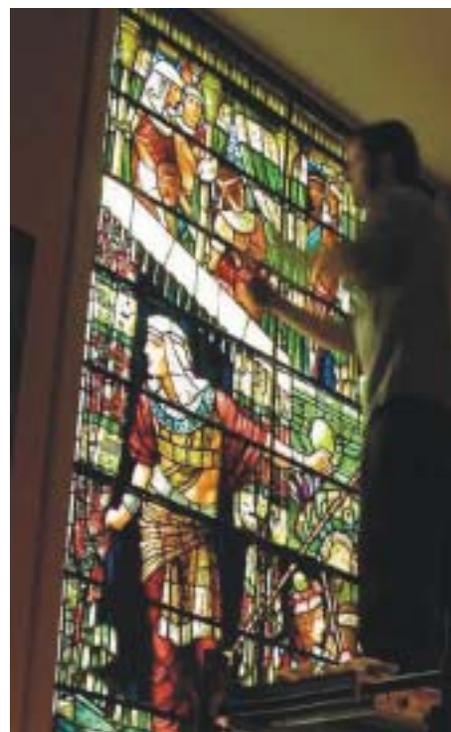


Horse Track Chaplain from PA

The Rev. Thomas Brooks, pastor of Harriman United Methodist Church in Bristol, Pa, in the East District, is the subject of a UMTV report, "Horse Track Chaplain." Brooks ministers to the workers of the Philadelphia Race-track - jockeys, stable workers, and others - who are often underpaid and far from home.

Many people believe gambling is evil and places like horse tracks should be avoided. But there is a group of chaplains who go to the track every day...to minister to the workers there." Reed Galin reports.

To see the video or to read the text, go to: http://www.umtv.org/archives/horsetrack_chaplain.htm



Stained Glass Restoration Course

Learn the art of repair and restoration with renowned stained glass artist Michael Mezalick. Ten week course to be held Wednesday evenings beginning September 14. Fee \$300 plus cost of tools. Call (215) 744-2990, ext. 250 for information.

In The Nation

Tree of Life connects mission volunteers with Native Americans

By Sandra Brands*

When Jessica Ostrawski had her first mission experience at Tree of Life Ministry on Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota, she became a convert to the outreach program.

She was one of three people from Cascade United Methodist Church in Deerwood, Minn., responding to an invitation to join a group from the larger Minnetonka (Minn.) United Methodist Church.

"Within probably two days of being there (at Rosebud), I fell in love," Ostrawski said. "I knew I wanted to make arrangements for people at Cascade to go on a Tree of Life mission trip."

She organized a mission trip with Tree of Life for 33 mission volunteers to go to Rosebud in the summer of 2004. They came from small United Methodist churches throughout Minnesota. The success of that trip led her to organize two more, for July and August this year, and again the rosters quickly filled up.

"It seems like people are even more excited about this year's trip than last year's," Ostrawski said.

Tree of Life is a ministry of the United Methodist Church's Dakotas Annual (regional) Conference to the people of four Dakota reservations. It began in 1990 on Rosebud Reservation, and it hosts Volunteer in Mission groups from across the United States. Over the years, it has grown to serve Crow Creek and Lower Brule reservations in South Dakota, and Spirit Lake Nation near Devil's Lake, N.D.

Though each ministry varies according to the community's needs, most projects involve building or repairing homes on these South and North Dakota reservations. The Crow Creek and Lower Brule Tree of Life ministry is working with homeless veterans. Plans are under way to buy a motel and convert it into housing for homeless veterans.

VIM teams arrive weekly, said the Rev. Mina Hall, who served as Tree of Life's executive director until June, when she was appointed to Flame of Faith United Methodist Church in Fargo, N.D. Teams come regularly from Pennsylvania, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Washington D.C., Georgia, Alabama, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota, Kansas and Ohio.

"These are not all United Methodist teams, though the majority are," Hall said. "Tree of Life works with all denominations, all government entities."

The ministry has coordinated activities for teams from Lutheran, Baptist, Episcopalian and nondenominational churches as well as nonprofit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity.

"That is one of the unique strengths," Hall said. "Tree of Life will go in and work where they're needed."

But Tree of Life isn't just about helping people. It's about building relationships - within the teams and with the people living on the reserva-

tions. Part of Tree of Life's mission is to promote understanding and respect between the Native Americans being served and the visiting volunteers.

"For me, the sweat lodge does it every year," Ostrawski said. "You can feel God's presence there. It's just so real and vivid. "There's a lot of etiquette involved in participating in some of these things like the sweat lodge," she said. "People are prepared by the staff at Tree of Life. One of the construction bosses who helps the teams is a Native American, and he helps prepare people."

The evening experiences are "a way to connect to the native culture with those coming in," Ostrawski said. "Unless you understand native culture, it's hard to understand why your work is so important."

For some, Ostrawski said, exposure to the poverty and rural lifestyle of reservation residents fed into their existing prejudices, but for others, it was an eye-opening experience. "They would say, 'Oh, I've treated Native Americans so poorly. I never realized what they've gone through.'

"It's very much an individual experience, an individual reaction," she said.

Shere Wright grew up on Rosebud Reservation and works with youth on the reservation. "Every day is a struggle here on the reservation," she said. "We are stuck in this place where we are so dependent. I want our people to forget about that, start looking forward and moving forward."

Wright is among those who offer volunteers a glimpse into the culture and traditions of the Lakota. Dressed in traditional tribal regalia, Wright challenges visiting mission workers by saying, "The best thing you can do for us is to remember us. Know what is going on with us. Support us when we need help."

The short-term VIM trips to Tree of Life have a twofold impact, Hall said. "You're helping people, but you're also building your own community. You are also building your own faith. When you hold devotions together, great things happen," she said.

A young man on a Tree of Life mission once told her he was losing his faith in the church. "In the process of coming out here and working with a team, he found his faith again," she said. "It was a transforming experience."

Hall described how a woman, whose home was repaired by a mission team, "looked at me and said, 'you're the lady who sends Christians to fix my home.' I work really hard to make them understand that these people (on the mission trip) take vacation time and raise money to help them."

"They are in awe that anyone would do that," she said.

The work is a step toward healing the scars of the past - mission schools, and the subjugation of an entire way of life by a dominant culture, Hall said.

"When they (Native Americans) know that people care enough and



A young jingle dancer on the Rosebud Reservation performs during a visit by Tree of Life volunteers. Exposure to the culture and traditions of the Lakota is part of Tree of Life Ministry, a program of The United Methodist Church's Dakotas Annual Conference. A UMNS photo courtesy of Jessica Ostrawski.

give to complete strangers, it speaks something to them."

For more information, go to <http://treeoflifeweekletter.org/>. Some financial support comes through The Advance for Christ and His Church, a second-mile giving program of the United Methodist Church. Details on giving to the Advance - Tree of Life is

Advance No. 123615 - are available at <http://gbgm-umc.org/advance/>.

*Brands is the editor for print and electronic publications for the Minnesota Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. Quotes from Shere Wright were contributed by Michelle Harvey Erpenbachin of the Dakotas Conference.

The Nation in Brief

• NEW LIFE

In the 1970s, Theresa Hoover United Methodist Church was on its way to permanently fading out. Then the Rev. William "Paw Paw" Robinson Jr. stepped in. "I was not convinced that the regular, traditional United Methodist membership would take off and grow fast enough to support and sustain a ministry in this building," he said. "I just saw an opportunity for this building to fill a void." He has been a key in creating a series of programs through a United Methodist ministry called Black Community Developers to serve the community of Little Rock. The programs include Paw Paw's Day Care, after-school and summer youth programs, gang intervention, a faith-based substance abuse program, housing for formerly incarcerated men, Jobs Partnership, affordable housing and a partnership with the Minority AIDS Network.

• \$1.6 MILLION BEQUETHED

A United Methodist pastor from Arkansas and his wife, both now deceased, bequeathed gifts totaling more than \$1.6 million to three church institutions. The estate of David P. and Mary Helen Conyers provided \$562,000 to United Methodist-related Hendrix College in Conway, Ark., for

scholarships. An equal amount was designated for scholarships for students attending church-related Philander Smith College in Little Rock, making it the largest contribution made by an individual to the historically black school. A third gift of \$562,000 was given to the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference for ministries with American Indians. The Rev. David Wilson, superintendent of the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference, said he was "flabbergasted and amazed" at the gift.

• HELP FOR NEEDY STUDENTS

They lined up before the doors opened at North United Methodist Church. We need glue," said Mary Bradley Weeks, the event organizer, as she helped people waiting in line. Almost four years ago, Weeks started donating school supplies to needy families, to keep a promise she made to her 2-year-old great-grandson, Adrian Mitchell. She vowed that she would teach him how to read and write before he started school. But she couldn't keep that promise. In 2002, Adrian was hit by a car and killed. Through the nonprofit Mary Bradley Weeks Education Project Inc., she gives at least a thousand students a good start for the new school year.

Around the World

Church schools confront challenges in post-war Liberia

By Dean Snyder and Jane Malone*

"Give me pen, not guns" reads a handwritten poster on the cafeteria wall of J.F. Yancy School at Camphor Mission near Buchanan.

The slogan is not hyperbole. Beginning in the early 1990s, boys as young as 12 and 13 years old were recruited or forcibly drafted into rebel armies, given guns, and deployed to fight and kill other Liberians for more than a decade.

Since 2003, when former president Charles Taylor finally stepped aside and the United Nations deployed peacekeeper troops, Liberia's deadly 14-year civil war has largely subsided and order has been restored to much of the nation.

Yet the chaotic war took countless lives and has left the nation's buildings, roads, schools, businesses and government in disarray. Liberia has no centralized systems for providing electricity, sanitary water, safe disposal or trash collection. Unemployment is estimated at 95 percent.

In an election scheduled for Oct. 11, Liberia will select a new president, and many people hope the nation once considered the "jewel of West Africa" will be able to rebuild.

In the meantime, Liberian United Methodists are eager to get the nation's children back into the classroom.

As the 2004-05 school year drew to a close in July, Richard Clarke, director of the Department of General Education and Ministries for the denomination's Liberia Annual Conference, reported that its 120 schools are at least partially back in operation, although some are meeting in church buildings because classrooms vandalized during the war are unusable.

To recover the scope and quality of education that characterized its pre-war school programs, the conference must overcome overwhelming challenges: ruined school buildings; insufficient funds to pay teachers; untrained new teachers; shortages in basic school supplies and school furniture; and inadequate resources to cover costs for families who cannot afford the modest tuition (the equivalent of U.S.\$12 to \$67 per year, depending on the school's location).

Circumstances at J.F. Yancy School and two other United Methodist schools in the Buchanan vicinity in southeast Liberia illustrate the desperate lack of resources in the nation's United Methodist schools.

Yancy School is a boarding and day school on the grounds of Camphor Mission, a few miles outside Buchanan. Its faculty and students fled Camphor when rebels took over the campus. Since the war's end, the school has reopened and serves 184 elementary and junior high students, a fraction of its former enrollment. Only a few students live at the school; most walk to class from villages as far away as two or three miles.

Other programs at Camphor Mission that serve the school's students and families as well as the larger community include a health clinic, a

church with a congregation of 300, and a fledgling agricultural project that includes the making of soap, growing of vegetables, and the raising of pigs and chickens.

Arthur Jimmy, director of Camphor Mission, is eager to repair the mission's schools and other buildings so its educational and other programs can become fully functional again.

As Jimmy guided visitors from the United States around the grounds in July, he talked about the need for books, salaries for teachers, and repairs to the buildings.

"We have another obstacle, a big one," he added. The mission's only source of water is an untreated shallow stream.

As Jimmy led his visitors down a narrow muddy trail through the bush to the stream, he explained that the mission desperately needed a source of clean potable water for the health of the school's students, but also for the thousand nearby residents who depend on the Camphor clinic for health care and midwifery.

Without a well or reservoir, students and mission personnel must carry water from the stream 100 yards up a steep hill to the dorms and cafeteria. The stream is so shallow that a bucket can be filled only half-full at a time. Because the water is untreated, students and faculty often suffer from gastrointestinal illnesses and even cholera.

The cost of building a reservoir where water can be collected and purified - about U.S.\$60,000, Jimmy said - is almost inconceivable in an economy where families can afford only small tuition payments on their meager incomes.

Five miles away is the Brighter Future Children Rescue Center, a United Methodist school system serving more than 500 students from first through twelfth grades. Built with funding from Operation Classroom, a United Methodist-related program, the W.P.L. Brumskine High School is already overcrowded.

The campus includes a large metal frame structure that was once covered with a tent, until refugees tore it apart to make makeshift shelters. The large tent had provided space for three elementary classes. If Adams could erect a new tent on the old frame, he could move elementary classes into the tent and expand the high school classrooms. To do so would cost about \$2,000, he said. Barely able to pay teachers' salaries, he has no idea where he will be able to find the money to rebuild the tent by September.

Another school, the J.C. Early United Methodist School, is inside the city limits of Buchanan in a neighborhood called Gbejohn. The school was begun during the war for students forced to flee from Camphor Mission into the city.

Faculty and parents built a makeshift facility out of dried reeds and bamboo in this urban community. Once the mission reopened, Buchanan continued to need a school, so the makeshift school became permanent. It serves 316 elementary and junior



Students at J.C. Early United Methodist School in Buchanan, Liberia, play in a classroom being rebuilt with dirt block walls. The students are crowded into a few classrooms while their school's makeshift bamboo and reed walls, hurriedly built during the nation's civil war, are replaced with dirt block walls. Because of limited resources, construction is proceeding slowly. A UMNS photo by Dean Snyder and Jane Malone.

high students.

Recently, the school administration recognized that the bamboo buildings constructed in haste 11 years earlier would not serve the needs of a permanent school. With almost no resources, the school is being rebuilt a block at a time, with dirt blocks fashioned by the workers.

It is a slow process, said Vice Principal Abraham K. Wilmot, but with no money to buy building materials, it is the only option.

A corollary benefit of a United Methodist school continuing in this Buchanan neighborhood is the birth of a new congregation. The school buildings are used on Sunday mornings for

worship and Sunday school by Gbenjohn United Methodist Church, a congregation begun by the Rev. George Mingle eight years ago. The congregation has grown to more than 200 worshippers.

*Snyder and Malone are communicators living in the Washington D.C. area. Snyder is senior minister of Foundry United Methodist Church. Malone is an affordable-housing advocate with the Alliance for Healthy Homes.

The World in Brief

• ENGLAND

Some 400 deacons, diaconal ministers, and deaconesses from 31 countries struggled with language barriers and financial differences but still managed to find a common thread in their work of servant ministry during the 19th World Assembly of DIAKONIA World Federation July 20-27. The theme of the meeting, "Diakonia at the Margins — Challenge and Hope," spoke to challenges of the meeting itself as well as the terrorist bombings that took place in London and Egypt in July. "Diaconal ministry is about the church itself being on the margins, looking at what it might mean to be a marginalized church, instead of seeking out people to work on the margins on behalf of the church," said the Rev. Sharon Rubey, a staff executive at the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

• MOSCOW

The dedication of a United Methodist theological seminary building in Moscow has been set for Sept. 10. Originally planned for May, the dedication had been postponed last winter because of a lack of funds. But with new donations and loans, the project has progressed, according to the Rev. Sam Dixon, an executive with the United

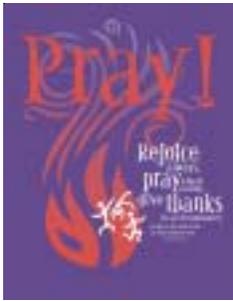
Methodist Board of Global Ministries. By the end of July, the first and second floors of the building, which includes the cafeteria, had largely been completed, he reported. Third-floor bathrooms have tile and plumbing installed and he hopes that Volunteer-in-Mission teams will be able to finish work on the living space. The Rev. Tobias Dietze, the seminary's dean and project manager, said the building already is in use. Fundraising continues for the estimated \$94,000 that is still needed for remaining construction. Donations can be made through any local United Methodist church or sent directly to Advance GCFA, P.O. Box 9068, GPO, New York, NY 10087-9068. For seminary building construction, indicate "Building, Advance 12173N." For seminary operations, indicate "Seminary Program, Advance 12174A."

• ZIMBABWE

Bishop Abel T. Muzorewa wants Christians to "climb out of their comfort zones" and bring people to Christ. His message was loud and clear on July 23, a day that brought together people from all over Africa and the world to celebrate his 60 years of ministry.

Summer Camp 2005 - Pray!

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



PRAY! was the theme for the summer camp programs this year at our four conference camps: Greta Glen, Innabah, Pocono Plateau, and Carson Simpson Farm. The summer was filled with prayers: prayers of praise and thanksgiving, prayers for safety and protection, prayers for staff, volunteers and campers, prayers for families and friends, joyful prayers and tearful prayers. More than 4,000 campers in day camps, overnight camps and trip camps learned about the Lord's Prayer and how Jesus

taught His disciples to pray. Many facets of prayer were taught to the campers. Campers learned: prayers should be filled with thanksgiving and praise, through prayer we can ask God for our needs and the needs of others, God forgives us as we forgive our friends, God wants us to be persistent and humble in our prayers, and we need to listen, because God speaks to us in prayer. Small group and large group worship throughout the week emphasized prayer.

Prayer was not the only thing that filled the summer at the four conference camps. The hot, humid 2005 camp summer days were filled with hiking, fishing, nature activities, archery, outdoor cooking, orienteering, games, challenge course, campfires, and of course swimming, boating, and water carnivals. Campers age 4 through adult enjoyed God's creation while making new friends. Memories of summer camp 2005 will be told for years to come.



“Camp is awesome!”



Camp Innabah Highlights

By Christy Heflin

God has blessed the ministries at Innabah in many ways this summer.

We have had over one thousand guests visit our camp this summer. God has touched many lives through our unique camps and dedicated leadership. Several of our events were overflowing with campers, while others had smaller more intimate groups.

During week one of camp this summer, we had for the second time a week-long event called God's Construction. Leading this spectacular event were Bonnie and Tom Cassey and several adults from First United Methodist Church, Lancaster. The purpose of this experience was not only to build a 20X20 log cabin on Sky Hill, but also experience God by performing an incredible mission project. As one of their tithe projects, First UMC gave the money for this cabin, \$15,000, to Camp Innabah from their Building Project Campaign. Their donations covered the majority of costs for this amazing log cabin structure. During the course of the week, over 30 individuals helped to complete the cabin and build bunk beds. This cabin became our 4th new log cabin at Innabah. Our goal is to build six more in the next few years. If your church is interested in raising the funds for a cabin now, approximately, \$18,000, please contact Christy Heflin at Innabah. 610-469-6111.

In addition to the excitement of our new cabin, we were able to dive into nature at Camp Innabah this summer. Did you know that more than 70% of the Earth's service is covered in water? Did you know that to stay healthy humans need about 1 liter (about 1 quart) of water a day? All of these questions as well as many others became the central focus of

Innabah's New Nature Center as campers examined the topic of water.

Thanks to two very generous gifts, Innabah's Nature Center was up and running this summer providing campers and guests with a new way to explore camp and its surroundings. Through hands on activities such as stream studies, creek walks, water demonstrations and activities, campers learned all about God's precious gift of water. From Day Campers and Youth to Challenge Campers and Grandparents and Me, the Nature Center and water activities were



welcome additions to Innabah's summer program making it one very educational and, at times, wet camp experience.

Where at summer camp can you find the most smiles? If you talk to the lifeguards, they would tell you it is at the pool on a hot summer's day as the campers splash around. If you talk to the staff in the store, they would tell you it is when a camper receives a big scoop of their favorite ice cream. If you ask the kitchen staff, they would say it is most definitely on grilled cheese day. If you asked the maintenance crew, they would say it is when they drive hayrides full of singing campers under star filled skies. If

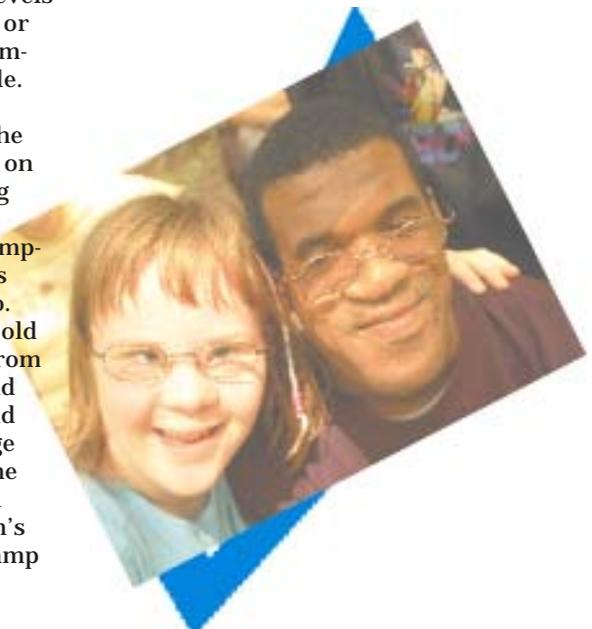
you asked the counselors, they would reply it is when campers play their favorite games or learn the value of a new friend. But if you ask some of us, we would say that the most smiles could be found on the faces of Innabah's Challenge Campers each and every day.

For the past 40 years, smiles abound as numerous campers with special needs call Innabah home for a week of camp each summer. Ranging in age from 12 to 70 and from all levels of disabilities, these one hundred or so campers have one feature in common and that is the ability to smile. Smiles can be discovered at meal times, during arts and crafts, at the pool, at a local 4th of July Parade, on rides at amusement parks, getting strikes at the bowling alley, when jumping waves at the ocean, at campfires filled with songs and S'mores and just when someone says hello. Smiles can also be found between old challenge friends and new ones, from counselor to challenge camper and among staff, campers, parents, and friends who experience a challenge week at Innabah. As they say, "The world always looks brighter from behind a smile." Thus for Innabah's challenge campers, each day of camp

brings the biggest smiles and the brightest days of them all.

When summer comes to an end, our staff often has many vivid memories of their time at camp.

Christy Heflin is the director of the Innabah Program Center. Contact information: 712 Pughtown Road, Spring City, PA 19475-3311; H:(610) 469-6111; O:(610) 469-6111; Email: CampInnabah@aol.com.



What I did at summer camp

By Campers at Innabah, Pocono Plateau, Gretna Glen, and Carson-Simpson Farm

"We learned to pray and listen for God's voice, that God is really powerful, that you can pray and praise in many different ways."



"It was a blessing to share God's love and the gift of song with the campers."



"Working with the campers and other counselors in a Christian camping environment is always a blessing. It's a time when I see people's love for God demonstrated through the way they work with each other."

"We had an awesome week. You couldn't help but feel God's presence being out in this beautiful setting."



"Working with junior high campers taught me to have patience with them, but also I was amazed to see the potential God has given each of them."



Here are Kerrin Moyer's reflections on her first summer on staff at Innabah:

"How many times in your life have you been given the chance to shoot an arrow? Or have been able to look up at a sky full of stars and one not polluted with light? Truth be told, many kids never get to experience these kinds of things. At Camp Innabah, I have noticed that even the simplest of outdoor activities seems to brighten up a child's day' whether they be in Day Camp, Archery Camp, Wilderness Encounter, or so many more. Even as a summer staff member I have experienced more than I have in a lifetime; I even went on my first real hayride.

With eight weeks of camp and a staff ready to go, what more can you ask for than a friendly smile and a helping hand? Never in my life have I seen people so willing to go the extra mile to help any person, or to accomplish some arduous task that most people would normally shun.

The campers are the light of this camp, while the staff is the backbone through servanthood. Here at Innabah, we work together to give the campers the best possible experience we can give them each day. Friendships are made here, stories are told, songs are sung, God's presence is felt, and lives are changed. At the beginning of camp weeks some kids are homesick and ready to go home. However, most of them by the end of the week want nothing more than to stay longer, just like me!"

"It was neat to learn we can pray to God any time, not just at meal time."



"Sitting on a rock surrounded by everybody watching a sunset makes you realize that there is one true artist and He is amazing!"



The camping ministry of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church is made possible when your church pays its Connectional Ministry Fund commitment.

LUMINA (cont'd pg1)

the UM churches in the city.

Now, it is an alliance of all of the churches in the Southwest District and others throughout the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference that supports twelve ministry programs for people in need. LUMINA is also a Church and Community Ministry project of the General Board of Global Ministries.

Last year, LUMINA began XOC - standing for X-Offenders Church - at Ross Street UMC. Services, held on Friday evenings, are open to everyone, but are designed for ex-offenders, their families, and friends. "It is a special sense of community, where nobody is labeled," said Ott. "It's like Alcoholics Anonymous - a place where you can belong. Many ex-offenders are not comfortable in church because the people in church are not comfortable with them. But, we're all offenders; we've all offended God in some way. In XOC, there is a sense of trust and openness, and it manifests a sense of community."

Pat Rettew and Kathy Peck are regular volunteers in the Professional Clothing Bank, which helps women and men referred by local job training and employment agencies and other

social service agencies to obtain gently-used clothing for job interviews. Rettew and Peck and other volunteers help to organize donations, display new items, and help clients coordinate outfits.

Eight women graduated in February and six in April from LUMINA's SuperCupboard, a training program in partnership with Penn State's Extension Service. Going from Pop Tarts to granola, women learn about nutrition, cooking healthy meals, and shopping on a budget. At Pearl Street UMC, Anita Rhawn demonstrates how to prepare quick, nutritious, and delicious meals. LUMINA sends the participants, both women and men, home with the same ingredients and recipe to do their "homework."

St. Paul's UMC hosts Kids' Night, a weekly Christian education program held on Monday nights, and now also hosts Beyond Kids' Night for recent graduates who are currently attending middle school. Seeing the success of St. Paul's program, Otterbein UMC launched its own Kids and Youth Night to reach out to children in their neighborhood. Volunteers, who come from many different United Methodist churches, and church members find their lives enriched by the young participants who grow up in the community of the church.

In the fall of 2002, the Lancaster

School District made uniforms mandatory in public schools, creating a financial hardship for many low-income families. Pearl Street UMC, a small-membership church became big in ministry, starting a School Uniform Clothing Bank (SUCB) with LUMINA. In 2004, nearly 2,000 children in the city schools received clothing from SUCB. "Pearl Street could have accomplished this on their own, but their ministry to low-income families was enlarged and supported by donations of funds and clothing from our partner churches and the community," said Ott.

Members of El Redentor UMC in Lancaster have a passion for supporting teens who are pregnant and teen parents. With LUMINA, they host a ministry that includes regular meetings for fellowship, encouragement, instruction in life skills, and parenting. They also offer transportation, child care, and baby necessities to new parents.

Scholarships to Gretna Glen camp, community day camp, personal care kits for kids going off to camp help children to have fun and experience hope and joy during the summer months.

In the Hope for the Holidays program, LUMINA provides names, contact information, names, ages, clothing sizes and wish lists to those who would like to sponsor a family

during the holidays.

LUMINA has one full-time and two part-time staff who work out of a one room office. Ruth Daugherty serves as president of their board of directors which consists of fifteen volunteer members. Their 2005 budget was less than \$60,000.

All of this ministry is made possible by the cooperation and partnership of United Methodist churches and by many volunteers and donors. Besides the support it receives as a Church and Community Ministry Project of the General Board of Global Ministries, LUMINA receives ongoing support from such groups as UMW's permanent trust fund and by being an Advance Special Project of the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference. "We are using a new term for our volunteers: Light Bearers," said Ott. "When you volunteer with LUMINA, you really are bearing the light of Christ. Light Bearers put hands and feet to their faith. We are all called to reach out beyond our church walls to go out and make a difference in our community."

If you would like to help LUMINA to make a difference, contact the Rev. Sally Wisner Ott, executive director, LUMINA, 133 Pearl Street, Lancaster, PA 17603; 717-394-8412; lumina@mycyberlink.net.

Bicycles (cont'd pg1)

Manan's dream inspired Wayne UMC, along with Christ UMC of Lansdale, Synagogue Mishkan Shalom, community groups like the King of Prussia Rotary and the Upper Merion Girl Scout Troop #1326, to join with a host of local residents to embrace the project.

Working with Manan to spearhead the project was David Broida, who works as Upper Merion's Parks and Recreation Director - where Manan has also worked. Stan Petty led the effort from Wayne UMC. By June, nearly 500 bicycles were collected (most were used, but a number of new ones were donated by bike shops), as well as nearly \$9,000 to cover costs of shipping, ground transportation, insurance, storage and distribution.

Petty organized a team of folks last May 28 to help load 400 bikes onto a container truck. Additional bikes were broken down into parts, so more could be loaded into the container. "And I took about 30 bikes to a bicycle repair program in downtown Philadelphia for children who are deprived," said Manan. "They learn bike repair, and get these lessons for free. When they graduate, they get a free bike."

The container was loaded onto a ship in New York, which left for Ghana on June 10, arriving June 30 in the Port city of Tema. Manan flew to Ghana to meet the shipment, and spent over a month there distributing the bikes to the neediest children.

"The problem goes way beyond basic transportation. I felt so sad. Why would I give a kid a bike when he doesn't even have shoes or a shirt. I would rather sell some bikes and provide children with school uniforms and shoes," explained Manan, who sold about 60 of the bikes to purchase those supplies. "The children did not

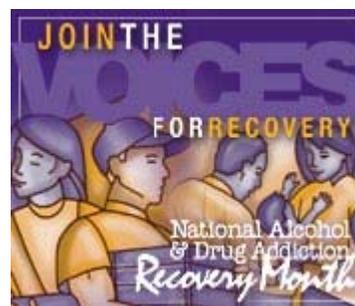
believe they could ever afford to own a bicycle in their lifetime. They were resigned that this is their life and it could not get better. Now, I can really encourage little students to become responsible. With education, they could be better informed and their life could be better."

He had quite an adventure, including chasing down folks who stole bikes (he recovered most of them), working through tangled bureaucracies, and being nearly overwhelmed with the press of children who wanted a bike so they could once again attend school. He donated five bikes to a local police station (which had no other means of transportation), which then provided him with protection and help. He also gave 5 bikes to a local Methodist church which provided invaluable assistance.

"I helped the people of Yendi to realize that they are being loved and cherished many miles away from the continent of Africa by the people of the United States, and to understand that the U.S. stands not just for war (in Iraq) but for peace." Manan also believes that part of his calling is helping people in the U.S. understand and appreciate how much they have and how important it is to share that abundance with children on the other side of the world.

Some 350 children in Ghana now have a new opportunity to learn and build a future, but Manan is not finished. He now has a dream of helping Yendi to rebuild its local school, and hopes to return there for the grand opening next summer. He plans to partner with the local Methodist Church in Yendi to insure that funds and resources are used as intended.

* The Rev. Joseph F. DiPaolo is pastor of Wayne United Methodist Church.



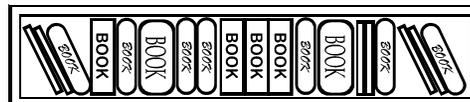
Recovery Expo 2005

September is National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month

Hosted by: United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, 181 Sharp Lane, Exton, PA 19341

"In celebration of the 16th annual National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, the Church will host Recovery Expo 2005 on Saturday, September 24, in partnership with Chester County Drug and Alcohol Services, The Coad Group, Eagleville Hospital & Rehab After Work. This Expo has been created to educate and assist those people and their families who wish to learn more about alcohol and other drug use disorders in a non-threatening atmosphere. A number of organizations and support groups will attend to assist individuals and families in their search for information and assistance. Our theme is "Learn More-Suffer Less". We believe that the more people learn about addiction and the process of Recovery - the less they and their families will have to suffer.

For additional information, please contact Wendy Beck @ (610)363-6164, email her at WBeck@Coadgroup.com or visit: <http://www.umcr.org>



Cokesbury Bookstore

150 Allendale Road,
King of Prussia, PA 19046
Phone: 610-265-3341

PARTNERS IN MINISTRY

September begins a new school year and a new church year in many respects. As you build your fall and winter calendar, consider your education and supply needs, and prepare for new seasons of worship, know that Cokesbury has a unique mission.

Though we are the retail division of the United Methodist Publishing House, our mission is less about retail sales and more about helping you in your ministry.

We can:

- ✓ Order books from other publishers including Group, Gospel Light, Augsburg, Youth Specialties, Morehouse, Jossey Bass, Zondervan, Eerdmans, CSS, and many more
- ✓ Supply paraments, banners, pew cushions, furniture such as lecterns, pews, chairs etc.
- ✓ Provide book tables for special events including guest speakers, workshops, National Bible Week, preschool book sales, teacher training for children and adults
- ✓ Recommend resources for many of your needs including books, outdoor signs, steeples, choir robes, altarware.

USE US PLEASE: We are willing to answer questions, research options and discuss with you ways in which we can be partners together in ministry.

Why (cont'd pg1)

sexual assault in their lives. Most of my clients were adults abused as children or teens. Their experiences haunt me, and are the reason that I am active in prevention efforts in our Annual Conference. Let me share with you some of their experiences of church as young people. (Please note: these are composite descriptions of real persons. No direct description of any one person is being given here.)

One woman shared that she cannot attend church any more. Every time she hears the organ play she remembers that sound from the sanctuary above her as she was abused in her Sunday School room. She wept as she asked me to help her find a safe way to be among God's people. Did I know of a church that only used a piano and had no basement?

Another person sees no reason to ever trust the church as a place of safety or even real concern. As a pre-teen she sat on her church's steps slicing her wrists because of the abuse she suffered at home. The Pastor saw her there and talked with her but he scolded her for telling "lies", and nothing ever happened to deal with or even acknowledge the abuse.

A young man came for counseling because he and his wife wanted to be parents, and he feared that he might be unable to stop himself from abusing his own child the way his father, a "pillar of the church and community" had abused him. He had become a school bully as a way of dealing with his pain and loneliness.

The truth of these experiences is just as real as the truth of those happy experiences many of us love to recall. If you have trouble believing these different realities, let me share some statistics recognized as accurate by law enforcement and academic circles, as well as those who work with survivors of abuse across this nation.

One in three girls will experience some form of sexual abuse by the time they reach 18 years of age (Russell, 1984). Note: this and the next statistic seem "old", however, the numbers have changed very little and these are still the statistics recognized today.

One in seven boys will experience some form of sexual abuse by the time they reach 18 years of age (Finkelhor, 1985). The vast majority of these victims know their abusers. (FaithTrust Institute, 1992)

The FaithTrust Institute reports that "Counseling programs in religious communities confirm that cases of child abuse among their clients conform closely to the numbers reflected in national research, including the number of cases where the victim knows the offender." (Spring, 2004 issue: *Working Together*)

Over the past 10 years an average of 70 allegations of sexual abuse of children have been made against churches per year. There has been a slight downward trend since 1997, probably due to increased policy development and implementation by denominations. (Church Ministry Resources national surveys)

From another source there is a much larger report for the more recent period:

James Cobble, Executive Director of Christian Ministry Resources, publisher of the Church Law and Tax Report, reports that "in an average year approximately 3500 churches

respond to allegations of sexual misconduct in church programs involving children and youth."

"...most American churches being hit with child sexual abuse allegations are Protestant, and most alleged abusers are not clergy or staff, but church volunteers." (Mark Clayton writing in the Christian Science Monitor: April 5, 2002 issue)

The FaithTrust Institute defines child sexual abuse as "sexual contact between a child or teenager and an adult or significantly older, more powerful person. In addition to sexual contact, abuse can include: inappropriate verbal stimulation of a child or teenager - taking or showing sexually explicit photographs of or to a child or teenager - exposing a child or teenager to pornography or adult sexual activity."

If we divide the number of persons in our sanctuaries on Sunday mornings by the numbers in these statistics, it is clear that taking these steps of providing some assurance of safety for our children and youth is not just important to those young people. This is also a way of saying to the wounded ones in our midst that we do not ever want any child to suffer; that we believe that God wants every person to be safe and cared for - and that we're willing to put our efforts and our money where our mouths are. What a wonderful gift for our own members!

"If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea." Matthew 8: 6, NRSV

MORE INFORMATION ON CHILD/YOUTH WORKER CLEARANCES

In an effort to assist congregations with their questions and concerns about how to comply with the Annual Conference Resolution about Clearances, this article contains a number of different practical ideas that we trust will be helpful.

Here are some highlights to remember about what is needed on file.

1. The two specific forms needed are the Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check and the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance. In the event that someone has not lived in Pennsylvania for at least two years (or does not currently live in PA) the requirement would be for an FBI clearance instead.

2. The Criminal Record Check can be completed, submitted, and the report returned online, at

www.psp.state.pa.us, where a credit card may be used for payment.

3. The Child Abuse Clearance requires the attachment of the Criminal Record Check results to the form. The Child Abuse Clearance forms also can be downloaded from the internet or ordered in bulk by calling 717/783-6211.

4. These forms **do not** need to be submitted annually. **Every three years** is the current standard.

5. These report forms are to be kept on file at the church.

At each Charge Conference **after December 31, 2005**, the Pastor should verify that clearances are on file for each regular worker with children and youth. No new report forms are needed.

6. A regular worker is someone who works in a repeating pattern such as monthly, weekly, or semi-annually. Anyone involved in an overnight program also needs these clearances.

7. Remember that while you are waiting for clearances to come back, or with persons under the age of 18, you may use an adaptation of the Participation Covenant Form found in the book *Safe Sanctuaries* by Joy Thornburg Melton. This book is available from Cokesbury.

What about training resources?

There is an excellent resource that was developed and produced by our own Annual Conference's Safe Sanctuaries Team. It is a video training entitled "Safe Sanctuaries: Safeguarding Students and Servants." This video could be in your church's library or Pastor's office. It was made available to all congregations at Annual Conference at Messiah College in 2002. If you cannot find your own copy, we are arranging for copies to be available in each District Office for use in local churches. This video, narrated by Bill Kennedy, a practicing attorney who is a member of Paoli UMC, gives clear rationale for our policy as well as very practical guidance in some simple methods to provide greater safety for both children and those who work with them in our church programs.

How do we get all these forms completed? An easy possibility would be to have forms available for completion at a late Summer or Fall training session for teachers and workers. Especially if you are welcoming new workers or changing your format for Christian Education, this could be a useful time to include forms. As we move toward the Fall, most of our congregations hold some type of Rally Day or Dedication of Teachers and Workers for the new Sunday School season. Such a time is a natural for encouraging folks to complete their forms onsite during the Coffee Hour following this special service. Another idea would be to have a "Form Filling Session" before the service and collect the completed forms as a part of the dedication of workers. If you plan to do either of these, be sure to send out, at least two weeks in advance, postcards to your workers indicating the information they will need for their forms. For some people, listing all addresses since 1975 is very simple. For others in today's mobile society, it will take some time to go back through address records. If your workers prefer to complete their forms online, there could be a dedication service for workers that includes placing their clearances on the altar as an offering to God for the wellbeing of all involved in XYZ Church's educational programs.

What about other services that offer clearances that sound even more complete for a cheaper price per person? The Annual Conference has agreed to use the two forms listed at the beginning of this article: The PA State Police Criminal Record Check and the Child Abuse History Clearance. Those two forms must be completed to be in compliance. If you choose to use a service that includes more checks, that is fine. However, many of these services do not specifically include the two forms that we require.

Now that you have the clearances returned, what do you do with them? A suggested way to stay on top of these files is to set up a volunteer database. This could be as simple as an alphabetical card file of volunteers, color coded to indicate who does and does not need clearances. Each person's card would include basic in-

formation (name, address, phone, birthdate), placement within the church's programs (teacher, driver for trips, etc.), along with the date of receipt of each volunteer's clearances. At the top of each card could be a colored tab with a month and year on it, signaling when that volunteer's renewal would be due. If you use a computer data base for volunteer workers, you could use the same date information to activate an alert for renewal times. Each year you would schedule an annual review of the cards for updating information and checking on renewals. This could be tied to the work of the Lay Leadership Committee, for instance, as a way to review the "frontline workers" in the church and perhaps to send them a "thank you" for their contribution to the life of the congregation.

The Rev. Beverly T. Andrews is pastor of Bridesburg and Wissinoming United Methodist Churches and Chairperson of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference I-Care Team.

My resolution against child abuse

*By Judy Rhoads**

When Pastor David Eckert contacted me to serve with several other lay persons at Conshohocken UMC on a "Safe Sanctuaries" team, I was a little hesitant. I thought, "Oh no, another meeting to attend." After hearing about the program, I believed it would be very beneficial for our church and for me.

I have 3 grown children and 2 very young grandchildren and have always enjoyed the presence of children in my home - the place where all our kids come to meet. Loving my children as I do, it's so hard for me to imagine that harm could ever come to precious children at the hands of predators.

I felt that our church's participation in the "Safe Sanctuaries" program could help to assure a safe place for our children and youth and give peace of mind to the parents of those children. In viewing the video that we used for our training, I was surprised to hear the statistics on child abuse. This information made me all the more determined to follow through with our "Safe Sanctuaries" project.

We began with training a core group of about 5 people who would act as training facilitators. Then we offered several options for training times for all of our staff and volunteers. All people who work with children and youth in our church have now signed covenants against child abuse. We are working on obtaining background checks on all staff and volunteers, which will be kept on file in our church office. We continue to offer training sessions for new workers with children and youth.

Our church has made an effort to invite and welcome young families. I think that by providing a safe church environment where their children can come and attend Sunday school or nursery school, or participate in youth group activities, we will be able to build our church attendance and membership.

Judy Rhoads is a member of Conshohocken UMC in Conshohocken, PA.



By Stacy Martin

September 1 Market Conditions

So how is the market doing?

If your church is already a client of the Foundation, the committee members receive periodic market and performance reviews on the account. I thought I would share some recent (at least at the time of preparing this article) views on the economy and the markets with the NewSpirit readership.

The economy continues to be strong with first quarter Gross Domestic Product ("GDP") up 3.8% and second quarter up 3.4% (may be revised). GDP is the broadest measure of

economic activity, reflecting the growth rate of total economic output. You may have heard that the current economy is consumer driven, affirming that consumption is the GDP's largest component at about 66%.

Tax receipts are often a good indicator of the overall health of an economy and federal receipts grew 14% - the fastest rate in 10 years. The higher tax receipts have helped reduce the federal deficit to \$333 billion down from the record \$412 billion last year. A lower deficit means more US dollars staying in this country's economy.

Another indicator of the economy is our wallet. Gas prices are at current highs but have not yet reached the record highs in the 1970's (near \$3/gallon). Consumer incomes are also rising, generating enough cash inflow to offset the rising costs of gasoline.

The Federal Reserve raised the Fed Funds Rate to 3.5% in August. One

year earlier, the rate was 1.5%. This is the rate at which banks and institutions lend money to each other on a short-term basis, usually overnight. The Federal Reserve uses this rate to control the amount of funds available for lending, which impacts inflation and other interest rates. Increases in the rate make it more expensive to borrow money; lowering the rate makes it cheaper. Lower costs to borrow money leaves more dollars for consumers and corporations to save, investments or apply to capital expenditures. The Federal Reserve may be approaching the end of its tightening operation, therefore, short-term and intermediate-term interest rates are unlikely to move much higher.

Let's move to the stock market. For the first six months of the year, the S&P 500 figure at June 30 was negative 0.82%, that is, the stock market was down almost 1% since the beginning of the year. After the end of the second quarter 2005, some 70% of the S&P 500 companies reported second quarter profits up 11% versus

year ago levels. This corporate growth was finally reflected in the S&P 500 performance in July with the index showing growth from January through July at 2.87%. I am pleased to report that the performance of the equity funds at the Foundation is better than the S&P and their other benchmarks, for the same period.

Some churches can take stock market risk, some cannot, and for many, an equal blend of stocks and bonds is the right place to be. The Foundation works with clients to determine what the right blend of stocks and bonds is for an investment portfolio then we invest the assets, using a series of pooled funds. A pooled fund is a version of a mutual fund. It looks and feels just like a mutual fund but is only offered to clients of the Foundation - churches and agencies within the Conference. If your church has questions about the services of the Foundation, please call or email me so we can discuss the available options.

Stacy Martin is the Executive Director of Eastern Pennsylvania-Penninsula United Methodist Foundation, Tel: 800-828-9093 x247, or email: stacy.martin@epaumc.org

Marriage Enrichment Workshop



A Marriage Enrichment Workshop will be held at Bethany United Methodist Church in Allentown, PA on Sept 30 - October 1st. The program starts on Friday evening and ends Saturday

night. Marriage Enrichment is an affiliated program of The United Methodist Church, and serves to "make good marriages better." For more information, contact Charlie or Alenda Gardner at 610-395-3258, charles.e.gardner@verizon.net. Visit the Marriage Enrichment website at www.marriageenrichment.org.

Marriage Enrichment Becomes Re-Affiliated With The United Methodist Church

On March 15th, 2005, Marriage Enrichment Inc was granted affiliation with the Global Board of Discipleship for the 2005-2008 quadrennium. Dr. Carl Clarke created this Marriage Enrichment program in 1969, expressly for The United Methodist Church. In 1982, Marriage Enrichment became an independent organization, and has now become officially re-affiliated.

Marriage Enrichment is a program designed to "make good marriages better." It is conducted as a workshop in which couples actively participate. Communication skills are emphasized, along with recognizing the positive qualities that exist in each marriage. Couples leave the workshop better able to understand each other, and more aware of the love that exists between them. Most couples report feeling renewed and uplifted at the end of the program. Marriage Enrichment is conducted in a Christian atmosphere, with prayer and worship a key part of the workshop.

You can learn more about Marriage Enrichment by visiting their website at www.marriageenrichment.org or by calling 1-800-726-7424.

Relationship Checklist:

- Do you have conflicts that go unresolved?
- Do you wish your spouse would express his/her feelings more often?
- Is it difficult for you to give and/or receive positive feedback?
- Do you feel misunderstood by your spouse?
- Are there some things you can't talk about?
- Is life so busy you have trouble scheduling things together?
- Would you like to have a richer, stronger marriage?

If you or your partner can answer "yes" to any one or more of the questions above, a Marriage Enrichment Workshop can help enrich your marriage. It is for couples desiring to improve a good marriage and for couples who recognize some things aren't working.

Marriage Encounter Weekend in Royal Oak, MD

Nov 11-13, 2005

Osprey Point Inn - Royal Oak, MD - If squeezing the toothpaste from the middle has doused the romance in your marriage, a United Methodist Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend may just be the spark needed to rekindle the fire of your wedding day. Here's a 44-hour marital makeover away from job, kids, chores and phones. You will focus only on each other. If you're hankering for greater depth, growth, and enrichment in your relationship, contact Rudy and Jean Iannacone at (609) 259-2527 for details. Or visit the website at: WWW.ENCOUNTER.ORG. Royal Oak is located on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN OF THE EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE



32ND ANNUAL MEETING
Saturday, October 22, 2005
8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Location: First United Methodist Church of Phoenixville
865 South Main Street, Phoenixville, PA
(610) 933-5936

Theme:  Embracing the World Praying for Justice and Peace

Guest Speaker and Author: Jane E. Vennard

(Ms. Vennard will be available to autograph your copy of *Embracing the World* at a special book signing. Be sure to bring it with you!! See Reading Program. You may order it from the Service Center at the e-store: gbgm-umc.org/e-store/readingprogram.

Registration Fee: \$8.00 (includes boxed lunch from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.)

All Registrations Due by October 7, 2005.

Mail (with check payable to EPA Conference United Methodist Women) to:

Dot Wood, 95 Second Avenue, Phoenixville, PA 19460;
phone: (610) 933-4391

Childcare available for children through 6 years of age by PRE-REGISTRATION ONLY. Parents must provide lunch and a snack.

Classifieds

Director of Lay-Led Ministries

Nominations and resumes are sought for a Director of Lay Led Ministries at East Stroudsburg United Methodist Church in East Stroudsburg, PA. Active, growing church is seeking a person to work part time (25 hrs./week) to facilitate, enable and equip church members into ministries. Work within an established equipping system helping people understand and learn of their spiritual gifts and call to service; then connecting them into ministry opportunities based on those gifts and passions. This leadership position is for the person who:

- has an understanding of local church leadership, the equipping church model, and of spiritual gifts expression in the life of the church
- desires to serve God, to strengthen the church and build God's kingdom
- is adept at multi-tasking
- is energetic, flexible, and patient
- can plan, organize, and work with others
- has good written and verbal communication skills
- is personable, with the ability to motivate people
- is proficient in MS Word, Excel, and database management

Job responsibilities include: facilitating the transition of new members to active participants in the church family, teaching new member classes, administering the church-wide Every Member in Ministry commitment program, training of leaders for all lay-led ministries, and overseeing and aiding communication of all ministries. All resumes must be received by September 16th.

Send nominations or applications to: East Stroudsburg United Methodist Church; Attention - Rev. Edward Kimes, 83 South Courtland St., East Stroudsburg, PA 18301;

or email: esumc@ptd.net (Subject: Lay Led position)

Children's Ministry Team Leader

Opening beginning on October 1 for Children's Ministry Team Leader for infants through grade 5. Should enjoy sharing the joys of Jesus while you learn from the children. Average 10 hours per week. Duties include coordinating and overseeing Children's Church for the 10:30 service, child care for special services, Vacation Bible Adventure, and other children's ministry events within the church. A criminal background check is required. If interested, please contact the office at Hope Church (610-385-7141) or contact Pastor DeWalt directly.

Director of Camping and Nurture Ministries

The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church.

The position reports directly to the Conference Executive Director of Congregational Transformation, and operates out of the Conference Office in Valley Forge. Primary responsibilities include overseeing a \$2.7 million dollar Conference-wide Christian camping and retreat program. There are additional responsibilities in the guidance and consultation of age-level ministries. A full ministry description can be obtained by calling the Conference Office at 1-800-828-9093. Minimum requirements for this position are a bachelor's degree or equivalent from a four year college or graduate school with experience and/or training in camp and retreat ministries. Equivalent experience in an administrative/managerial field for a minimum of five years will be considered. Extensive travel throughout the Conference is required. Salary will be determined based upon experience and educational background. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Anticipated start date is October 1, 2005. Inter-

ested candidates should send a letter of intent, resume, references and salary history to the Office of the Executive Director of Congregational Transformation, PO Box 820, Valley Forge, PA 19482.

THE GALA DELAWARE CONFERENCE REMEMBRANCE...

40 YEARS SATURDAY, OCT. 29, 2005

WYNDHAM HOTEL
8TH & KING STREETS
WILMINGTON, DE 19801

Honorary Chairpersons:
Bishop Marcus Matthews
Bishop Melvin G. Talbert

RECEPTION 4:00 PM
DINNER PROGRAM 7:00 PM

Keynote Speaker
Bishop Violet Fisher

EXTENDED RECEPTION 10:00 PM

**** BLACK TIE EVENT!! ****

TICKETS:
\$ 50.00 PER PERSON
TABLE OF 10: \$500.00

COMMEMORATIVE BOOKLET &
HOTEL INFORMATION
AVAILABLE

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:
Rev. Hebert Coe 610-876-8152
Ms. Betty Henderson 215-226-5268
Rev. Herbert Palmer 215-236-6223
Ms. Anne Williams 215-223-1391



Older Adult Ministry

The Older Adult Ministry will be holding a conference on the Northeast District on Friday, October 21 & Saturday, October 22, 2005 at the Days Inn Conference Center in Allentown. The conference will feature Bishop Marcus Matthews of the Eastern PA Conference and Dr. Richard Gentzler from Nashville to discuss issues affecting older adults. The Days Inn Conference Center is located at 1151 Bulldog Drive, Routes 22 & 309 in Allentown. For more information contact Dorothea Burnett at 215.476.5504 or by email: othea9@netzero.com.

The EPA Conference Older Adult Ministries is available to assist you with planning a training workshop. For more information contact Mrs. Dorothea Burnett at 215.476.5504 or by email: othea9@netzero.com.

OLDER
ADULT
MINISTRY



World Communion Sunday October 2, 2005

I press on toward the goal for... the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:14, NRSV

When you are a college junior, your

life goals begin taking form, and Ashley Tyler thinks going to law school might be one of hers.

Now, however, the business administration major is concentrating on completing her undergraduate degree at Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, where she also plays clarinet in the marching band.

Active in The United Methodist Church all of her life, Ashley is quick to express thanks for the Ethnic Minority Scholarship she received. "Getting financial help from the church makes a big difference," she said. One of six children in her family, Ashley

has shared her talents and her faith as an acolyte, choir member and Sunday school teacher in her local church; as a district youth representative; and as a Memphis Conference Council on Youth Ministries member.

In his letter to the church at Philippi, the apostle Paul wrote: "I press toward the goal for...the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus."

Those could be the words of Ashley and other men and women for whom the journey is made easier by generous United Methodists. The World Communion Sunday offering provides Ethnic Scholarships for undergraduate students like Ashley Tyler, Crusade Scholarship for international and U.S. racial- and ethnic-minority graduate students, and scholarships for racial- and ethnic-minority persons seeking second careers in church-related vocations.

Your gift makes a world of difference! For worship resources, go to: <http://www.umcgiving.org/content/sundays/communion.asp>

You're Invited

September 13-15 NEJ Clergy Women's Gathering

"Herstory-Growing Wholeness in Our Lives" at the Auburn Holiday Inn, 75 North St., Auburn, NY Cost \$275.00 plus lodging. Lodging begins at \$85.00 per night, per room (double). Many interesting and helpful workshops are planned as well as an opportunity to visit the Harriet Tubman home and the Women's Hall of Fame. For more information please contact: NCNY Conference, Central Lakes District, 144 Genesee St., Suite 404, Auburn, NY 13021 at (315) 258-0756 or email: centrallakes@verizon.net.

October 5 Nurturing the Soul of the Pastor

Wellspring of Wholeness: "Nurturing the Soul of the Pastor" will be held on alternate Wednesday mornings at Cherry Hill United Methodist Church beginning October 5th, and running through December 14th. This program provides resources for pastors in stressful situations, including: spiritual community, support for the inner and outer journey, tools to live fully into one's calling, and opportunity to deepen satisfaction in everyday life. Rev. Susan Cole, Spiritual Director, and Rev. Cynthia Hoffman, Personal and Professional Coach, will lead the program. Cost: \$300 for 6 sessions (limited scholarship help available.) For more information, contact: Susan Cole at susancole7@verizon.net or 215-242-0611 or Cynthia Hoffman at 856-857-1170.

October 21-22 "Exploring our Faith Journey"

Maria Wald Retreat Center in Reading, PA. Seeking and celebrating together! Enjoy a presentation by Kelly Martini who serves on the General Board of Global Ministries of the U.M. Church as Communications Director of the Women's Division. Arrival- Friday 4:00p.m.; Departure- Saturday 5:00p.m. Cost - Single \$70.00, Double pp. \$60.00, Triple \$55.00. Fee includes Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch. Deposit required- \$20.00 by August 15th (limited accommodations). Checks to: Elam U.M. Church, 1073 Smithbridge Road, Glen Mills, PA 19342. Attn: Randy C. Schaffer.

Alaskan Explorer Cruise with Bishop and Mrs. Matthews

Greetings from Glacier Bay

See the sights at Ketchikan!

Bishop Marcus and Barbara Matthews

Come share God's creation with us!

Find your spirit refreshed and inspired by her grandeur!

*God saw that it was good!
Genesis 1:25*

An extraordinary opportunity open to members of the Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences, their families and friends: 7-day Alaska Scenic Cruise aboard Holland America's ms Oosterdam departing Seattle, WA on May 20, 2006.

Cost per person ranges from \$1408 for an inside cabin to \$2738 for a luxury suite; plus \$220 in port taxes and \$45 in government taxes. Early registration is advised - space is limited.

For a brochure, call the EPA Conference Office at 1-800-828-9093.

18th Annual United Methodist Church Day with the



Over 1300 United Methodists enjoyed a beautiful summer evening at United Methodist Night at the Phillies on August 20. Bishop Marcus Matthews and his niece, Shara Walker, walked out to the "pitching mound" at the beginning of the game. Walker had the privilege of throwing out



Photo by Roseann Brooks

the first ball to the Phillies Phanatic in front of 43,000 Phillies fans that night. Bishop Matthews and his family and Ross Brightwell, organizer of the event, were greeted and honored in the Phillies Hall of Fame Room with a dinner.

West Chester UMC youth and senior choirs, led by Mike Muzzo, music minister, sang the national anthem to the crowd. Everyone enjoyed a humorous moment when the Phanatic grabbed the microphone in front of the choir.

During the game, Bishop Matthews toured the stadium and greeted members of the 30 congregations that participated. United Methodist Night at the Phillies is a fundraiser for conference youth programs. The Phillies will rebate \$5 for each ticket sold, thus raising \$6500 for conference youth ministry.

Be sure to look for information on the upcoming United Methodist Night at the 76'ers this year!



Photo by Heddy Bergsman © 8/20/05