

## A Call to End Violence: Act for Peace



Bishop Marcus Matthews writes letters to elected officials to advocate for safer streets in the neighborhoods of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

### A Message from Bishop Marcus Matthews

Violent crime plagues our communities - urban, suburban, and rural alike. Children going back to school are no longer assured of a safe place, as seen in the Amish school house and Virginia Tech shootings, and the recent murder in Kutztown, PA. Murder rates are the highest ever seen in Philadelphia.

Issues such as poverty, inequitable education, proliferation of handguns, drugs, and gambling all contribute to the increase in violent crime. It is time for the Body of Christ to make a transforming difference in the world!

We, United Methodists - nearly 225,000 of us in about 1,000 churches in The Philadelphia Area of The United Methodist Church - are called to be a prophetic voice for God's Kingdom. And we are called to be Christ's hands and feet that help to make God's will a reality.

I ask that each of you, pastors and laypersons alike, join me to pray, act, and advocate on behalf of the least, the last, the lost - especially for the innocent children of our neighborhoods.

#### PRAY

Please pray daily with me, now through the end of October, specifically for peace in our communities.

- Pray for our young people.
- Pray for the victims of crime and violence.
- Pray for those caught in a cycle of poverty, crime, and prison.
- Pray for our elected officials, peacekeepers, and workers in the justice system.
- Pray that God will speak to us and through us to be His witness in a hurting world.
- Put the power of prayer to work, that lasting change will transform our world. Remember when you pray: "All things are possible with God."

#### ACT

Find creative ways to be in ministry in the heart of your neighborhood that will help love your community into life!

- Identify and form a partnership with a school in your area to help children improve reading and math skills, to connect, and to mentor children into a healthy life.
- Create a safe place for peace in your community by offering activi-

*continues on page 9*

## Women who tithe

by Suzy Keenan\*

Growing up during the depression in Virginia, **Ruth Daugherty** and her five siblings watched their mother and their father, a United Brethren pastor, model tithing. "Even during the depression, my father took 10% from his pay each week and put it in a black box in my parents' dresser drawer," she said. "On Sunday, they took it out of the box and went to church to place it in the offering plate. We had one pair of shoes and one Sunday dress, and even though giving was a sacrifice, we weren't without the basics of life that we needed."

Ruth gives out of the joy of giving, "not out of obligation. It is one way that I can share what I have, to do the ministry of Jesus. My gifts are the part of my hands reaching out in ministry where I can't be, and help to do what I cannot personally do."

Tithes and offerings are not the end of her financial giving. That

*continues on page 9*



Praveena Balasundaram teaches Sunday School at Solebury UMC in New Hope, PA, where her husband is the pastor. For Praveena, giving a tithe includes not only financial giving, but also giving of time and talents.

### What's Inside

Farewell to Eleanor  
Weiser  
Page 3

Summer Camp  
Summary  
Page 6

Back to the Basics  
Page 12

Index  
Calendar .....2  
Nation .....4  
World .....5  
Classifieds .....11

## Conference Calendar

### OCTOBER 6, 2007

**Terry Teykl** will be leading a seminar on Saturday, October 6, at Washington Crossing UMC. The seminar is open to all pastors and laity in our conference. The topics include prayer, strategic prayer targets, and reaching your community through prayer. Dr. Teykl, who recently spoke to our entire annual conference during the CVI process, uses practical insights and humor to speak definitive truths regarding the power of prayer, drawing from unconventional methods and his extensive experience in the local church and as a general evangelist. The registration fee includes a book, workbook, and other relevant materials. Check out the church website for registration information.

[www.crossingumc.org](http://www.crossingumc.org)

### OCTOBER 6, 2007

**"Why men hate going to church" United Methodist Men's Breakfast** at Jarretstown United Methodist Church, 8:00am - 9:45am. With guest speaker, Marine Viet Nam veteran, church softball player, trumpet aficionado, Pastor of our booming New Hanover United Methodist Church, the Rev. Dave Lewis. The food is guaranteed to be outstanding! Jarretstown UMC, 1460 Limekiln Pike, Dresher, Pa. 19025, right off the Ft. Washington Exit of the Pa. Turnpike and Rt. 309. RSVP and direct any questions to [RossBrightwell@verizon.net](mailto:RossBrightwell@verizon.net) or 215/643-1269.

### OCTOBER 6, 2007

**22nd Annual Apple Festival at Historic Boehm's Chapel** 13 W. Boehm's Church Road, Willow Street, PA 17584. Enjoy apple dumpings, Watch Apple Butter Being Made, Live Music by Hiram Ring of Willow Street, PA. Chapel Tours, Craft Demonstrations, Vendors, Door Prizes and much more...

[www.boehmschapel.org](http://www.boehmschapel.org) or phone 717-872-4133 for additional information.

### OCTOBER 6, 2007

**Men's Event: STAND IN THE GAP 2** - Lenny Cox, Men's Promisekeeper Class Leader at Hope UM Church, Douglassville, Pa. is putting together a busload of men to go to Washington DC October 6th, 2007, for STAND IN THE GAP 2, a time for men to gather to pray for themselves, their families, and their country. Contact Lenny through the Hope Church office, 610 385 7141.

### OCTOBER 6, 2007

**"Henri Nouwen: Spiritual Mentor, Wounded Prophet"** on Saturday, October 6, 2007, 9:30AM to 3:30PM at First Presbyterian Church, 140 E. Orange St., Lancaster, PA 17602. The leader for the workshop is: **Kent Ira Groff**, founding mentor of Oasis Ministries, who is a spiritual companion, retreat leader, and writer living in Denver, Colorado. Cost is \$65-\$95 (the cost is on a sliding scale as participants are able). Contact Betsy Keller at Oasis Ministries, 717-737-8222 or email: [betsykeller@oasismin.org](mailto:betsykeller@oasismin.org)

### OCTOBER 6, 2007

**4-7 pm- Annual Roast Beef Dinner and Silent Auction** at Bethel Hill United Methodist Church. Proceeds from this event support local food missions: Manna on Main Street,

Norristown Soup Kitchen and United Methodist Neighborhood Services. "Feed the Hungry" has donated thousands of dollars to these local food missions. Bethel Hill United Methodist Church, Rt. 73 & Bethel Road, Worcester Township, PA; 215-368-7180.

### OCTOBER 7, 2007

#### World Communion Sunday

For more information go to: [www.umcgiving.org](http://www.umcgiving.org)

### OCTOBER 7, 2007

**Fuente de Amor UMC will officially launch** to the community Sunday October 7, 2007 at 6:00 PM. Special music, dance and celebrating, with a bilingual service (Spanish and English). Fuente de Amor meets at Fulton Elementary School Auditorium, Orange and Mulberry Streets in Lancaster, PA. For more information: 717-394-2311 or e-mail:

[irahetarosado@comcast.net](mailto:irahetarosado@comcast.net)

### OCTOBER 9, 2007

#### Autumn Leaves

An event for older adults, featuring programming that includes Maranatha Productions, Inc. dramatization of the story behind the hymn "Amazing Grace" and Act 1 Productions "Hymns from the Heart". Bring your friends and enjoy snacks, a hot lunch, and opportunities to play bingo, do crafts, or walk in the beauty of fall foliage in Mount Gretna. Come in groups or as individuals to fellowship and have fun. Call today and reserve your spot, (717)-273-6525, at Gretna Glen Camp and Retreat Center, 87 Old Mine Rd., Lebanon, PA.

[www.gretnaglen.org](http://www.gretnaglen.org) e-mail: [coordinator@gretnaglen.org](mailto:coordinator@gretnaglen.org)

### OCTOBER 10, 2007

**The Methodist Home for Children Annual Founder's Day Dinner** at the Merion Tribute House. The money raised help fund our important programs and services for individuals, children and families. Our supporter's ongoing commitment and dedication have helped us achieve this success and we are grateful. This year's event features "Artisan Craft" vendors who will display and sell their crafts throughout the evening. For ticket information click on the following link: [www.methodistservices.org](http://www.methodistservices.org). Choose the tab for Methodist Home for Children, then Founders Day. Any questions please feel free to contact Molly Clark Davis or Anita Howard at 215-877-1925.

### OCTOBER 13, 2007

**Making Disciples Training Series - Faith Sharing "Igniting Ministries: Becoming a Welcoming and Inviting Church."** See page 8.

### OCTOBER 14, 2004

**Festival of Hymns Choir** in concert at Lehman UM Church in Hatboro, at 4:00 p.m. This 80-voice interdenominational gospel choir will perform a variety of anthems and hymns, accompanied by organ and a seven-piece instrumental ensemble. Directed by Harrilese Durant Miles, the choir has performed at Annual Conference, recorded several CD's, and is heard on family radio stations worldwide. Refreshments. Free will offering. Lehman UMC, 300 South York Road, Hatboro, PA; 215-675-2110.

### OCTOBER 14, 2007

**4 p.m.- Charles Wesley: The Sweet Singer of Methodism** - Historic St. George's celebrates the tercentenary of one of Methodism's founders and one of the most prolific hymn writers in Christendom: S. T. Kimbrough brings his dramatic portrayal of Charles Wesley with the back story and performance of his music. A 100-voice choir from across the region will sing Wesley hymns in an interlude, and Rev. Dr. Charles Yrigoyen will be on hand for a book-signing following the event. A rare John Wesley handwritten hymnal will be on display for that day. LINK:

[www.historicstgeorges.org/fileadmin/Sweet%20Singer.pdf](http://www.historicstgeorges.org/fileadmin/Sweet%20Singer.pdf)

### OCTOBER 17, 2007

#### Cornwall Manor Founders Day Celebration.

Annual tradition honoring friends who have played an important role in Cornwall Manor's founding and history as well as those who have supported Cornwall Manor through 58 years of ministry. Guest speaker Dr. Ruth A. Daughtery, free lance educator and consultant, who serves as Secretary of the northeastern Jurisdiction, on the United Methodist Publishing Board, Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Board of Ordained Ministry; president of LUMINA board in Lancaster. For more information: Kyle Mohler, Public Relations & Development Coordinator, 717-273-2647, ext. 8237 or [kmohler@cornwallmanor.org](mailto:kmohler@cornwallmanor.org).

### OCTOBER 19-21, 2007

#### Confirmation Camp

For Junior and Senior High youth who are involved in confirmation training in their local church. Confirmands come with their church leaders and learn how to identify and use their gifts for the body of Christ. Special emphasis on missions and United Methodist connectionalism. For confirmation class to attend together with adult chaperones. Individual campers are also welcome with adult chaperones. 2008 Dates for this program are: January 11-13, February 15-17, March 7-9, April 11-13. Call the camp at 717-273-6525 or email [coordinator@gretnaglen.org](mailto:coordinator@gretnaglen.org) [www.gretnaglen.org](http://www.gretnaglen.org)

### NOVEMBER 1-4, 2007

#### Living Faith, Seeking Justice

Join other United Methodists from our area attending Living Faith, Seeking in Fort Worth, TX. We have participants from Eastern PA, Central

PA and Western PA annual conferences. Join us for 4 days of educational training, networking, fellowship and fun! Register today by calling 202.488.5600 or go to: [www.umc-gbcs.org/livingfaith](http://www.umc-gbcs.org/livingfaith). Group discounts available!

### NOVEMBER 3, 2007

**Making Disciples Training Series - Stewards of God's Gifts.** See page 8.

### NOVEMBER 9-11, 2007

#### Encounter Youth Event

See page 12 for more information.

### NOVEMBER 12-14, 2007

#### The Pennsylvania State Pastor's Conference

This year's Pennsylvania State Pastors' Conference will be held November 12-14, at The Hilton Harrisburg and Towers. The theme is "Being Christian in a Hi-Tech Culture." The cost is \$125 if your registration is postmarked by Sept. 30, 2007. The registration is \$150, if postmarked beginning October 1, 2007. You can register on line by going to [www.pachurches.org](http://www.pachurches.org). There is also a link on this site to reserve a room at the Harrisburg Hilton. If you have additional questions, please contact Rev. Dennis Keen, the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference representative to the PA Council of Church by calling (215) 355-2474 or emailing [pastordgk@aol.com](mailto:pastordgk@aol.com). See you there!

### NOVEMBER 25, 2007

**United Methodist Student Day** For more information and to order resources, go to: [www.umcgiving.org](http://www.umcgiving.org)

### NOVEMBER 26, 2007

**Bishop's Advent Day Apart** - Aldersgate UMC, Wilmington, DE. Dr. Lovett H. Weems, Jr. will be the speaker.

### DECEMBER 8, 2007

**Making Disciples Training Series - Accountable Discipleship: The power of small group ministry.** See page 8.

### JANUARY 15 - 17, 2008

**Bishop's Mid-Winter Retreat** - Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel, Ocean City, MD. Dr. Paul Nixon will be the speaker. See page 12.

### FEBRUARY 5, 2008

**Bishop's Lenten Day Apart** - Aldersgate UMC, Wilmington DE. Bishop Jeremiah J. Park will be the speaker.

### MAY 28-30, 2008

**Annual Conference 2008** will be held May 28-30, 2008. Please reserve the dates now!



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## Methodist Home for Children is the Child Welfare Agency of The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference

**WE NEED YOUR HELP**  
to make Christmas joyful for 3,000 children!

Please provide new unwrapped toys,  
books, sports items or new costume jewelry

For a complete list of needed items please call  
**Call 215-877-1926 x310 today**  
to say "**YES! WE CAN HELP!**"

Just think of the joy your gift will bring  
to a child on Christmas morning!



**Methodist Home  
for Children**

4300 Monument Road  
Philadelphia, PA 19131-1616

[www.methodistservices.org](http://www.methodistservices.org)

The official registration and financial information for Methodist Home for Children may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free (within Pennsylvania) 1-800-732-0699. Registration does not imply endorsement.

## Take part in Peace Action: End Violence Now!

This initiative is scheduled for October 5 and 6, 2007, and offers opportunities for all of our churches to participate.

- **Friday, October 5** - Community of Peace - Be a visible sign of peace by opening up and inviting your community to activities. Activities might include sports such as basketball, family night, movie night, special music, or a barbeque.

- **Saturday, October 6** - Peace Action: End Violence Now! All churches are invited to attend this event that begins at Tindley Temple United Methodist Church, 750-762 S. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA.

Tentative plans include a Peace Fair beginning at 2:00, Pray for Peace at 3:00 pm, and a march to City Hall in Philadelphia for a rally, pending permit approval. The Peace Fair will feature activities for people of all ages.

### OCTOBER 14, 2007

**Peru Relief Rally:** Raise aid for the victims of the earthquakes in Peru, at West Chester United Methodist Church, 129 South High Street, West Chester, PA 19382. *Sponsored by the Eastern PA Conference Commission on Latino Ministries and Iglesia El Buen Samaritano.* For more information please contact Rev. Evodia Villalva at (610) 692-5190 or contact her at [evodiavillalva@hotmail.com](mailto:evodiavillalva@hotmail.com).

## In Memoriam

### Rev. G. Edgar Hertzler

The Rev. G. Edgar Hertzler, who passed away Wednesday, September 12, 2007 at the age of 99. He was currently residing at the Masonic Village in Elizabethtown. He was born in Lancaster and attended Lebanon Valley College where he also served as a trustee for 24 years. He also received degrees from United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, and also from Gettysburg Seminary.

During his ministry, he served the Lebanon Circuit, the 29<sup>th</sup> Street UB Church in Harrisburg, St. Paul's UMC Elizabethtown, and Otterbein Church in Harrisburg. After the merger of the EUB and Methodist Churches, he stayed in the Central PA Conference.

He is survived by his two children, Georgia Ann Bartholomew of Mechanicsburg and Dr. Paul Hertzler of Leesburg, Florida; and two step-children, Carol Fleisher of Imperial, PA and Paul Mickey of Florida.

Condolences may be sent to Georgia Ann Bartholomew, 6017 William Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050. Memorial contributions may be sent to United Methodist Church, 750 S. 29<sup>th</sup> Street, Harrisburg, PA 17111.

### The Rev. Robert H. Wright

The Rev. Robert H. Wright, retired elder, who died early in the morning on Wednesday, September 12, 2007, at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church, VA. At the moment of his death, he was in the company of his wife, Mannie, and more than a dozen family and friends.

Rev. Wright served the following appointments beginning in 1959: Springfield: Covenant; Havertown: St. Andrews; Extension Ministry: Conference Consultant and Program Director; Extension Ministry: Supt. Lancaster District; Allentown: Asbury. He retired in 2000.

Rev. Wright is survived by his wife, Marianne, and two daughters, Elizabeth W. Jae and Marian W. Sieke.

Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Marianne L. Wright, 950 Willow Valley Lakes Drive, H#111, Willow Street, PA 17584-9663. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the Memorial Fund of First United Methodist Church, 29 East Walnut Street, Lancaster, PA 17602-4936.

### The Rev. Raymond P. Poortstra

The Rev. Raymond P. Poortstra, who died Friday, September 14, 2007 at the age of 90.

Rev. Poortstra served in Portland for seven years, Delaware Water Gap for 27 years, and was on the staff at East Stroudsburg United Methodist Church for 27 years.

Surviving are daughters, Jeanne Oravec of Clarks Summit and Kathleen Connelly and her husband, William, of Stroud Township; a son, R. Michael Poortstra and his wife, Joan, of Orange, Calif.; 12 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

Condolences may be sent to Kathleen Connelly, RR 3 Box 3165, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to East Stroudsburg Methodist Church, 83 S. Courtland St., East Stroudsburg, PA 18301.

## Welcome

We are happy to welcome Christine Eddy, the new District Resource Assistant for the Northwest District Office.

Prior to coming to the Northwest District, Christine was the Administrative Assistant at Salem United Methodist Church in Orwigsburg for three years. Previously, she worked in sales and customer service at a local hardware store, where she met Salem UMC's pastor, Rev. Tim Patterson.

Tim, during his weekly "walk about town," visits local businesses, handing out a "God loves you" card along with a piece of chocolate.

It was during one of these weekly visits that Tim and Christine talked about her applying for the assistant's position at Salem UMC.

Christine has lived in the



Christine Eddy

Orwigsburg area for the past twenty years with her husband, Gene. They have two grown daughters, Alison and Jennifer. Her "new kids" are her dog, Piper, and a cat, Raven. She and her husband attend St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church in Schuylkill Haven. In her spare time she enjoys collecting orchids, gardening, and scrapbooking.

## Farewell



Eleanor Weiser (left) trains Madeline Gonzalez-Lopez in the work of Benefits Administrator for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

Eleanor Weiser, support associate for Pensions and Health Benefits, has been part of the Conference Office staff since July, 1993. Now we bid her a fond farewell as she retires. Eleanor's last day at the office is Friday, September 28.

Eleanor began fourteen years ago as administrative assistant to consultants Sue Hassinger and Gil Rendle. She then worked in the Office of Resourcing with Dorothy Watson Tatem. In July, 2000, she began her remarkable and successful work with Pensions and Health Benefits.

Active in her home church, First United Methodist in Phoenixville, she looks forward to helping people through missions work, which she

does in addition to volunteering with the Southeastern Veterans Center in Spring City.

"I will treasure my association with the many pastors and lay people I have met, and the friendships I have made here," Eleanor said.

In retirement, Eleanor looks forward to spending more time with her husband and her two married daughters, and, of course, her five grandchildren, who live close-by. She will also do more reading, gardening, and walking.

Eleanor has been training Madeline Gonzalez-Lopez, formerly receptionist at the Conference Office, who is transitioning into the Benefits Administrator position.

## In The Nation

# Pittsburgh church offers dramatically different worship

by James Melchiorre\*

Jim Walker is wearing two T-shirts, two jackets and a trench coat - even as the temperature approaches 90 degrees outside of the Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community.

It's all part of the co-pastor's costume for the congregation's weekly drama, which has become a defining element of Sunday worship at the unconventional United Methodist church in Pittsburgh's eclectic South Side neighborhood.

Walker is playing himself in today's scripturally based drama, while co-pastor Jeff Eddings takes the role of a contemporary Jesus. The theme: answering the call of God to serve.

"Are you ready to follow me?" Eddings asks.

"Can we talk about the weather, the Steelers?" Walker answers. "I'm busy."



An infant is baptized during a Sunday morning worship service.

"Yes, busy. All that Internet time; you got the iPhone last week," Eddings says.

"Why don't we just take a layer or two off? I'm trying to get to the real you."

As dialogue continues, Walker gradually removes his unnecessary clothing and, finally, Eddings repeats his original question: "Are you ready?"

"I'm not ready," Walker responds, "but I'm willing."

Looking on are about 300 people sitting inside the cafeteria of a Pittsburgh building owned by Goodwill Industries and rented each Sunday for worship.

### Building bridges

While the weekly drama does not always totally replace a traditional sermon at Hot Metal Bridge, it does offer another way to present scriptural messages with a contemporary spin.

"If you're just hearing a story read, you can just zone out and stare at the walls," said Jennifer Lawrence. "But if it's unfolding in front of you, you get pulled in."

A student at the University of Pittsburgh, Lawrence herself was "pulled in" to Hot Metal Bridge when a classmate invited her to Sunday worship. Now she's a regular, arriving at 9 a.m. each week to join a team of workers who transform the cafeteria into an



Drama is an integral part of worship at Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community in Pittsburgh. The unconventional congregation is co-led by a United Methodist pastor and meets in a rented cafeteria. UMNS photos by Michael Henninger.

in-the-round worship space - moving chairs, hanging lights and setting up a sound system for whichever visiting band or soloist is providing music.

"The room starts as a cafeteria, ends as a cafeteria, and is a church in between," Lawrence says.

Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community began after Walker and Eddings, both youth ministers and longtime friends, began working with a Christian outreach program at a local tattoo shop.

Walker had shared with Eddings his "waking dream" in which both were running across the Monongahela River on a span called the Hot Metal Bridge. The bridge took its name in the heyday of steel production in Pittsburgh when molten steel was transported across it to be poured into molds.

Although Walker is a United Methodist and Eddings is Presbyterian, the two friends decided to begin a new congregation in the community of South Side and serve as co-pastors.

"We thought it was a good place to reach young adults, reach the counter-culture, reach poor people," Walker said. "We started meeting people on the street who were different from us. They had orange hair, purple hair, blue hair and we just loved them as Jesus would love them."

Attendance at Sunday worship in the cafeteria has tripled in the past two years. Eddings and Walker look out over a congregation that includes, among others, senior citizens holding their grandbabies, young adult devotees of body piercing, and families from some of Pittsburgh's wealthier suburbs. Each week, at least four or five worshippers come from the South Side's homeless community.

\*Melchiorre is a freelance producer based in New York City.

Hot Metal Bridge will be featured as part of Making Disciples training in the EPA Conference in 2008.

## The Nation in Brief

•On summer weekdays, interns from all over the United States flood Capitol Hill in Washington on their way to government buildings. Once on the Hill, many of the interns head for congressional offices. But this past summer, like many others, 14 interns departed from the group and reported to the United Methodist building just across the street from the Supreme Court. These are the Ethnic Young Adult interns, selected by the United Methodist Board of Church and Society to spend two months interning at places all over the District of Columbia. Susan Jacob, an Indian American and student at St. John's University in Queens, N.Y., appreciated the chance to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. "Jesus worked for justice, he cared for the poor, sick, hungry and dying, and it is important for the church to stand for those issues," she said. (NOTE: Susan is the daughter of The Rev. Dr. Christopher Kurien and his wife, Christy Jacob.)

•The United Methodist Church is facing the "very hard, very painful" work of cutting ministries and shifting resources while building its

denominational budget around four newly named areas of focus. After months of reviewing a proposed budget that does not keep pace with inflation, the chief executives of the denomination's program agencies pledged to preserve ministries that address those four areas - leadership development, congregational growth, global health and poverty. However, programs and ministries outside those initiatives will be reviewed for possible adjustments and cuts if the church's top legislative assembly approves the \$642 million four-year spending plan next spring, the executives said. The General Conference, which meets every four years, will gather in Fort Worth, Texas. Agency leaders reported on their budget work Sept. 7 in Nashville, Tenn., during a joint meeting of the Connectional Table and the governing board of the General Council on Finance and Administration.

•United Methodist volunteers from across the United States were welcomed, thanked and challenged to keep coming to the Gulf Coast at a Katrina Summit in New Orleans to honor the work and workers of the

past two years. More than 63,000 United Methodist volunteers from 42 states, two foreign countries and 60 annual (regional) conferences have come to the aid of the Gulf Coast since Hurricane Katrina stormed ashore on Aug. 29, 2005. The Sept. 6-7 summit was organized to thank and recruit more volunteers, find new church partnerships and encourage more donations to the Katrina Church Recovery Appeal, a special fund established by the United Methodist Council of Bishops to help rebuild churches, pay salaries and restore other ministries. Annual conferences from Alaska to Arkansas sent more than 200 representatives from volunteer mission teams to the event hosted by annual conferences in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama-West Florida.

•A newly launched online repayment system is making repaying United Methodist student loans easier and will improve efficiency in processing scholarships and loan applications. "We are moving into the 21st century," said Angella Current-Felder of the Sept. 1 online launch by the Office of Loans and Scholarships at the United Methodist Board of Higher

Education and Ministry. "This is the first step in making all of our services available online and much more convenient for those repaying loans or applying for college aid," said Current-Felder, executive director of the Office of Loans and Scholarships. Beginning in 2008, United Methodist students also can apply for scholarships and loans online. In addition, applicants will be able to go online and track the status of an application.

•Harriett Jane Olson, an executive with the United Methodist Publishing House, has been elected chief executive of the Women's Division of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries. Olson will oversee the administrative arm and policymaking body of United Methodist Women, a denominational organization of approximately 800,000 members in the United States. Its purpose is to foster spiritual growth, develop leaders and advocate for justice, and its members give more than \$20 million a year for ministries related to women, children and youth around the world. Olson succeeds Jan Love, who left at the end of 2006 to become dean of the Candler School of Theology in Atlanta.

## In The World

# Agency helps church connect digitally worldwide

By Linda Green\*

From communication centers in Africa to training programs in the Philippines, United Methodists are making strides in becoming more digitally connected around the world.

Much of that progress has occurred in the last four years, as The United Methodist Church's communications agency has focused on leading the denomination into the digital age. Members of the church's Commission on Communication, meeting Sept. 12-14, celebrated that progress and shared excitement for what the future holds.

They also reflected on a busy four-year period that included the commission's first ever meeting outside the United States — in Zimbabwe — and a stronger global emphasis by United Methodist Communications, the agency they oversee.

"God has blessed us richly with some marvelous experiences together," said Bishop Thomas Bickerton, president of the commission. "We have experienced cutting edges and crossroads in bringing vitality to the place we love, which is The United Methodist Church."

With support from annual (regional) conferences and the United Methodist



The Rev. Larry Hollon (left) and Bishop Thomas Bickerton confer.

Communications Foundation, the agency has established 15 communication centers in Africa, and it has trained and equipped people in Africa, Europe and the Philippines to tell the stories of the church in their areas. More training is planned for Europe in November.

### Helping in times of need

Commissioners affirmed United Methodist Communications' work in helping the denomination offer messages of caring and support during times of disaster, such as the 2004 tsunami in South Asia and the 2005 Hurricane Katrina on the U.S. Gulf Coast. Through the denomination's Web site at [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org), the commission enabled people to respond in many different ways.

"The church rushed into the media maelstrom and was present," said the Rev. Larry Hollon, top staff executive of United Methodist Communications. "If the church is not present in public ways in times (of disaster), our absence is noticed. Absence leaves an impression of detachment and lack of concern."

The commission also heard updates on the agency's work with organizers of the 2008 General Conference, the denomination's legislative assembly, which meets next spring in Fort Worth, Texas. United Methodist Communications staff members are using different forms of media and technology to help link the episcopal, laity and young people's addresses as well as other key presentations during the opening days of the gathering.

"It will be more than people standing at the podium and speaking," said Ginny Underwood, executive director of strategic programming at the



Olivia Schwartz holds the communion chalice for fellow commissioner Candis Shannon at the closing worship service of the United Methodist Commission on Communication meeting. UMNS photos by Ronny Perry.

agency. "Technology will enable us to make General Conference content available online so that people see and participate in the work of General Conference."

### Connecting schools

In an effort to foster leadership development, one of the denomination's four Areas of Focus for 2009-2012, the commission approved a partnership agreement between the agency and the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry to establish an online distance-learning infrastructure in Africa. The network will connect colleges and universities across the continent with others in Asia, Latin America and the United States.

"This partnership in online learning has the potential to make very real and concrete the wiring of the global church, a mandate United Methodist Communications has been given by General Conference," Hollon said.

Commissioners affirmed the work of the Central Conference Communications Initiative, which has provided the leadership in developing communications centers and training programs in Africa and elsewhere. In addition, a radio station has been launched in Liberia and 80 hand-cranked radios have been distributed to people who have no access to computers or live in areas with limited resources.

"Through the initiative, the church is taking its global nature seriously and doing something about it," said Andreas Elfving of Finland, chairman of the commission's central conference communication committee. "It is one of the greatest things that has happened in a long time. It has the possibility to change the church on so many levels and has the potential to change negatives into positives."

\*Green is a United Methodist News Service news writer based in Nashville, Tenn.

## The World in Brief

- As reports begin filtering in from Nicaragua and Honduras about damage from Hurricane Felix, the United Methodist Committee on Relief is preparing to respond. But donations are needed to provide relief both for victims of Felix and others needing assistance during the 2007 hurricane season, according to the Rev. Tom Hazelwood, UMCOR's domestic disaster coordinator. Felix pummeled the coastlines of northern Nicaragua and southern Honduras Sept. 4 with 160-mph winds and drenching rains. Checks for Hurricanes 2007 can be dropped in church collection plates or mailed directly to UMCOR at P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY 10087. Write "UMCOR Advance #982511, Hurricanes 2007" on the memo line of the check. Credit card donations: (800) 554-8583.

- United Methodists celebrated the commissioning of a Uganda school serving orphans and vulnerable children, and expressed hope it will serve as a prototype for schools in other East African countries. Humble

United Methodist School in Mukono was commissioned in August by Bishop Michael Watson of Macon, Ga. Part of the denomination's East Africa Annual (regional) Conference, the school was started in 2004 to serve children from war-ravaged areas and those from homes affected by HIV/AIDS.

- The United Methodist Church officially exists in Albania. Formal papers were signed Aug. 20 in the capital city of Tirana by Bishop Patrick Streiff, leader of the denomination in Central and Southern Europe. The United Methodist Church in Albania has about 150 members and friends in a nation of 3.8 million people. "We praise God that The United Methodist Church is now officially recognized in Albania," said the Rev. R. Randy Day, chief executive of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, in a statement.

- United Methodist congregations continue to spread across the vast expanses of what was once the Soviet

Union. Bishop Hans Vaxby of Moscow leads the United Methodist Church in Eurasia. Delegates from all five of the church's regional conferences in Eurasia attended the denomination's Eurasia Conference in July, which opened with an evangelism festival. The most important business item, according to Vaxby, was the development of an extensive policy on church property. Discussions continue over a revised pension plan, and whether to have one common or five separate boards of ordained ministry.

- Elvira Arellano, an illegal immigrant and member of Adalberto United Methodist Church in Chicago, was arrested in California and deported to Mexico on Aug. 19 - four days after she left the Chicago church where she had received sanctuary for a year. Arellano, 32, and her 8-year-old son, Saul, a U.S. citizen, had lived in Adalberto United Methodist Church from Aug. 15, 2006, to Aug. 16, 2007. On the one-year anniversary of her life inside the church walls, she announced plans to leave the church and

begin a nationwide campaign for immigration reform. One day later, she traveled to California and was arrested after leaving a Los Angeles Catholic church where she urged people to lobby Congress to take up immigration reform after the summer recess.

- The Hispanic caucus of The United Methodist Church will ask the denomination's top assembly to urge the U.S. Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform that emphasizes family unity, affordable education, fair treatment of laborers and a path toward citizenship. About 150 members of Methodists Associated Representing the Cause of Hispanic Americans, meeting Aug. 9-12, chided Congress for passing the 1996 Immigration Reform Act. MARCHA, one of five ethnic caucuses in The United Methodist Church, said the United States benefits from the work of immigrants but denies those same individuals such basic rights as fair wages, health benefits, social services and the opportunity to be with their families.

# CrossWalk - 2007 Summer Camp in Eastern Pennsylvania

by Jim Wilkin\*

Young people of all ages came to Carson Simpson Farm, Camp Innabah, Gretna Glen and Pocono Plateau to play, grow, make new friends, and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ. This year's theme was CrossWalk, and over 5,000 campers learned to follow God's call "to do justice and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8) The crosswalk isn't easy. Yet we can trust in God to go with us always, helping us to stand up for what is right as we reach out to serve and to care for others.

summer, our campers collected school supplies during our "Kids Give Back" weeks. The supplies went to local foster children in need. As always, no matter where the campers were from, they all enjoyed each other, learning about the Lord, and feeling safe and accepted at CSF.

## Gretna Glen

Gretna Glen enjoyed another summer of sharing the joy of knowing and following Jesus Christ! Our youth programs experienced tremendous growth! Many additional campers attended programs like Mission Possible (learning about various aspects of church missions), After Hours (featuring a rotating schedule that



At Gretna Glen



At Camp Innabah

## Carson Simpson Farm Christian Center

CrossWalk 2007 started with a surprise. The discovery of alligators kept us out of our beautiful Pennypack creek. Yet God chose to use His servants for His glory. The campers and staff learned that the journey with Christ is not always easy, but it is the life we are called to lead if we are a follower of Jesus. Over half of the campers that attended Carson Simpson Farm this summer made a first time commitment to Christ. Highlights of the summer included our first "Kids Can" Camp hosting special needs children ages 8-12. Along with other fund raising events during the

allowed for late nights ... and late mornings!), Youth Adventure (offering adventures like Whitewater Rafting) and Youth Blast (just plain old "fun!") Our children's programs were popular, as always, and the number of children attending Day Camp grew, especially in the specialty camps like Wet & Wild and Puddle Jumpers. A wonderful summer staff included many returning members and some excellent new folks, all who joined together to make our Crosswalk memorable. Having veterans helps to keep alive the traditions that our summer program has enjoyed for many years. Our new friends, coming from places like Indiana, Iowa, Burkina Fasa and even California, shared fresh ideas that



At Carson Simpson Farm

strengthened our programs! All in all, 2007 offered a great chance to focus on God's word through Micah. We all learned to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God!!

## Pocono Plateau

Summer camp at Pocono Plateau had a huge impact on the lives of campers. The summer theme, Crosswalk, was taught through Bible studies, evening chapels & campfires, and throughout the day in teachable moments. The 1,053 campers were provided with encouragement, spiritual renewal, and fun as they experience God in a personal way—sometimes encountering Jesus Christ for the very first time.

Children campers (grades 1-6) totaled 506 while youth campers (grades 7-12) totaled 547. There were the traditional camps for children and youth at the Adventure and Main Sites, as well as, the specialty camps that experienced rock-climbing, rafting, water sports, horseback riding, sports,

## Camp Innabah - If you build it, they will come!

We enjoyed sharing our faith journey with campers and staff as we experienced our Crosswalk this summer. We were excited to see over 1200 campers, an increase of 103 from last year! Praise God.

We are pleased by the growth of our Day Camp over the past several years. Day campers enjoy all the activities at Innabah, enjoying hayrides, archery, the challenge course, boating, nature activities, Bible studies, arts and crafts, and so much more.

Grandparents and Me half week events have become one of our most popular camps. Grandparents really enjoy this time with their grandchildren and take advantage of all of the amenities of camp. If you are interested in 2008, sign up early!

New camps that were added this year included Jr. High Sports, Wet-n-Wild, Real to Real, Theatre Arts Camp, and Nature Expression. Some



At Pocono Plateau

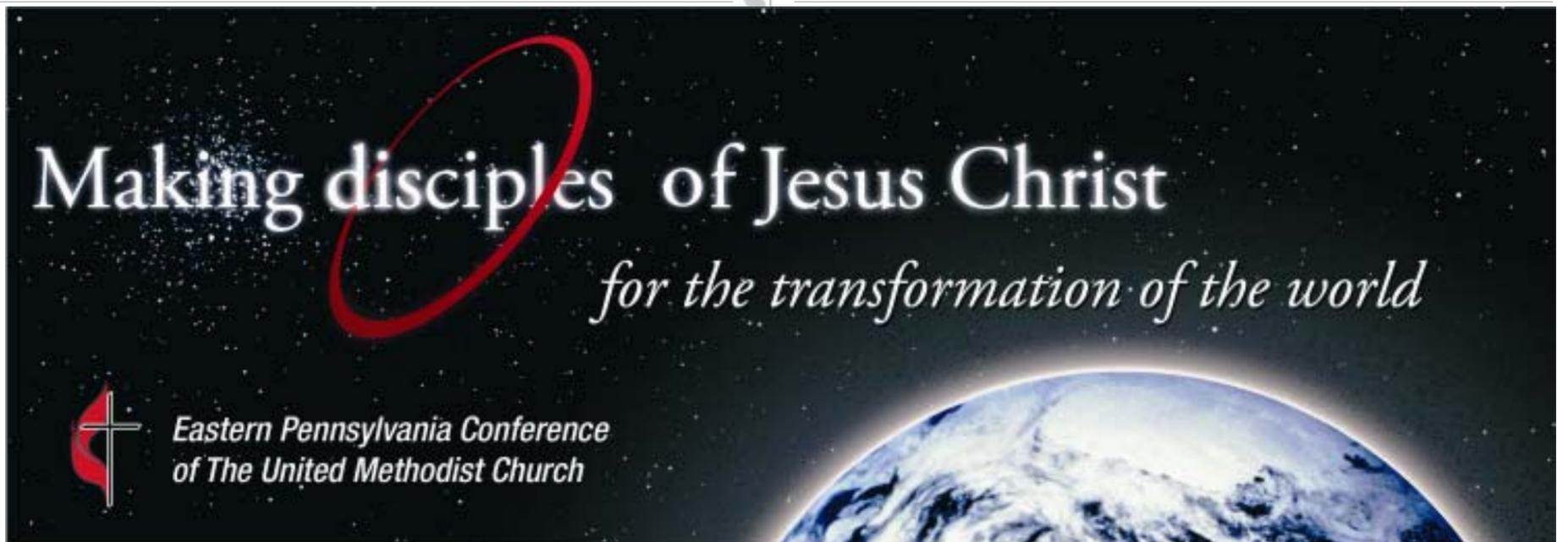
crafts, and nature studies. Our backpacking trip traveled to Yellowstone National Park.

Pocono Plateau was equally blessed with volunteers who gave of their time and energy to share their love of Christ with the campers. We could not have done it without them! Most important of all was the opportunity to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with campers. Whether they were familiar with the Plateau or new in 2007, lives were touched and changed by the power of the Holy Spirit. And let's face it, that's what summer camp is truly all about!

of the camps were so successful that parents were trying to sign their children up for next year already!

The summer was so successful because God truly blessed us with an amazing staff this year. They came willing to serve with tremendous talents and God-given gifts. We are truly thankful for another successful summer season! God has blessed the staff and guests here in many ways!

For more information, contact Jim Wilkin, director of Camping and Nurture Ministries, [jim.wilkin@epaumc.org](mailto:jim.wilkin@epaumc.org) or 610-666-9090, ext. 225.



## Making Disciples Training: Sign Up Now!

### Igniting Ministries: Becoming a Welcoming and Inviting Church

Saturday, October 13, 2007

**Location:** West Chester UMC, 129 S. High Street, West Chester, PA 19382; 610-692-5190.

**Cost:** \$10 per person, includes lunch

**Registration:** 9:30 AM to 10:00 am

**Session:** 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Training by Rev. Larry Homitsky, Director of Connectional Ministries from the Western PA Conference, and Suzy Keenan, Director of Communications the Eastern PA Conference



Rev. Larry Homitsky

### Stewardship in Today's World

Saturday, November 3, 2007

**Location:** Washington Crossing UMC, 1895 Wrightstown Road, Washington's Crossing, PA 18977

**Cost:** \$10 per person, includes materials

**Registration:** 5:30 pm to 6:00 pm

**Session:** 6:00 PM- 8:15 PM

Training by the Rev. David Bell, Director of the Center for Christian Stewardship of The United Methodist Church on developing a year-round culture of generosity. Book "Beyond Money" by Dan Dick will be available for purchase at the training for \$10.



Rev. David Bell

## Making and nurturing young adult disciples

### Gifts for First-Year College Students

Going away to college is a significant and overwhelming moment in many young people's lives, especially if leaving for college coincides with "graduating out" of their church's youth ministry. Keeping in touch with college students who were once part of your youth ministry reminds these young people that they are part of a faith community that loves and supports them. While no gift can take the place of a thoughtful letter, e-mail message, or phone call, giving these students something to help them through this challenging time in their life is a nice gesture of Christian love.

One of the biggest challenges for a young Christian living away from home for the first time is staying connected to God. *Soul Tending* (gift edition) is a companion for older youth and young adults who seek to mature in their faith and develop holy

habits for spiritual growth. The goal is that Christ will be formed in each young person as he or she intentionally seeks encounters with God. Its elegant look and feel make this edition of *Soul Tending* an excellent gift, and its compact size makes it the perfect fit for a backpack full of larger and more intimidating books.

*The Freshman Fifteen: A College Guide to Staying Healthy, Happy, and Holy* (by Julia McCarty) gives first-year students fifteen proven steps that will help them have a better, more fulfilling college experience. These steps include finding a church home, staying focused on what is truly important, taking care of your body, not doing too much, and keeping God first. Go to [www.Cokesbury.com](http://www.Cokesbury.com) to order and view the books.

Abingdon Youth is your source for youth ministry resources that unleash vital faith in your youth and help

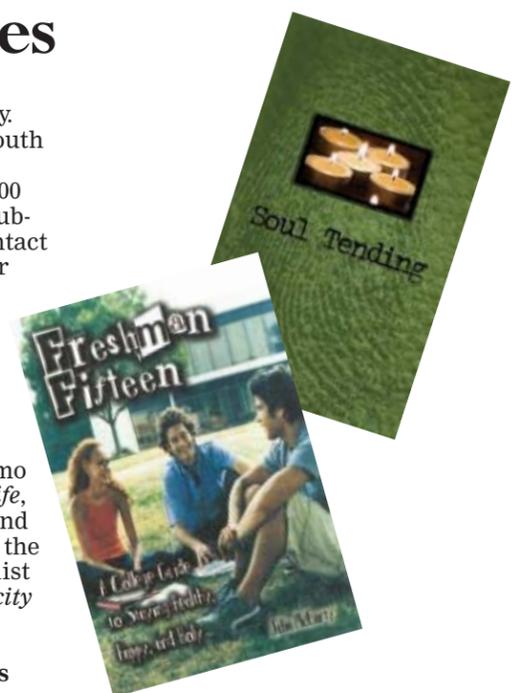
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### Promo and Sample Videos Now Available on YouTube

Visit the Abingdon Youth Promo Video playlist at YouTube at [www.YouTube.com](http://www.YouTube.com) and watch promo videos on YouTube for *Claim the Life*, the *Amazing Bible Race*, *e|Merge*, and *Veracity Video Vignettes*. Also, visit the new Abingdon Youth Sample playlist to see clips from *e|Merge* and *Veracity Video Vignettes*.

### Free Samples of New Resources Now Available

You can now download free samples of *Claim the Life*, *e|Merge*, and *Veracity Video Vignettes* at [www.Cokesbury.com](http://www.Cokesbury.com).



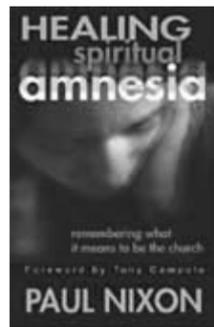
You can also watch sample videos from our DVD products at YouTube: [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

## Resources for Disciple Making Churches

*Books by Paul Nixon guest speaker at the Bishop's Mid-Winter Retreat on January 15-17, 2008*



### Healing Spiritual Amnesia Remembering What it Means to be the Church By Paul Nixon and Tony Campolo



There are no end to clichés and easy assumptions about congregational health and vitality. It's much easier to start a new church than turn around an old one; nondenominational churches are growing, while denominational churches are dying; small-membership churches are concerned only with survival; suburban churches care only about endless programming and "spiritual entertainment"; downtown churches are doomed to decay. Whatever kernel of truth such analyses might contain, they miss the actual point. Churches stagnate, decline, and die for a number of reasons, but principally because they have forgotten who they are. They have forgotten their mission to reach out to those who do not know God in Christ. They have forgotten that we worship, not to feel comfortable and safe, but to come into the presence of a God who leads us out into the world. They have forgotten the "cloud of witnesses" who have gone before us in the Christian faith, providing models for how we can proclaim the message of the gospel in ways that new generations can hear it. Paul Nixon calls this failure of memory "spiritual amnesia." Concerned with institutional survival and personal comfort, congregations have forgotten what previous generations of Christians have learned time and again: that the church's great challenge is to make the gospel available in new and compelling ways to those who need most to hear it. In a series of sweeping insights into congregational life and contemporary culture, Nixon maps a course that will help churches remember who they are and for whom they exist.

**Paperback:** 144 pages  
**Publisher:** Abingdon Press  
**Cost:** \$17 (on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com))  
Available as electronic download in Microsoft and Adobe ebook formats (\$10.00 on [www.cokesbury.com](http://www.cokesbury.com)).

### Fling Open the Doors By Paul Nixon



The temptation to focus only on their own internal problems and issues is powerful for congregations. Without realizing it, even churches that have a long tradition of outreach and social involvement become centered on issues of institutional survival and preservation. Worst of all are congregations that adopt a "fortress mentality," addressing the larger community rarely, and only in the "language of Zion" when they do. This tendency to isolation and insularity flies directly in the face of the gospel imperative to spread the good news of Jesus Christ. Christian congregations exist as God's redeeming presence in the communities in which they are located. If churches are to live as though they take that seriously, they must learn to give themselves away to the community. The focus of every ministry and program must be to reach and make disciples of the unchurched. In this book, Paul Nixon paints a picture of what community based ministry is all about. Drawing on his experiences within a congregation that has seen twenty-five years of increased worship attendance, he lays out practical steps that churches can take to plant themselves firmly within the lives of the communities they serve. He demonstrates how churches can organize their facilities to become community centers, establish multiple locations for ministry throughout the community, and empower every member to become a minister of the congregation. Written with an infectious sense of hope, this book will become a critical tool for church leaders seeking to transform their congregations into outward-looking bodies of witness.

**Paperback:** 248 pages  
**Publisher:** Abingdon Press  
**Cost:** \$16 (discounted price on [www.cokesbury.com](http://www.cokesbury.com))  
Available as electronic download in Microsoft and Adobe ebook formats (\$11.20).

## Making Disciples Series Training Schedule

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13 - Faith Sharing "Igniting Ministries: Becoming a Welcoming and Inviting Church"**  
**LOCATION:** West Chester UMC, 129 S High Street, West Chester, PA 19382  
**COST:** \$10 per person, includes lunch  
**REGISTRATION:** 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM  
**SESSION:** 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM - Training will be led by the Rev. Larry Homitsky, Director of Connectional Ministries from the Western Pennsylvania Conference, and Suzy Keenan, Director of Communications for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.  
**Registration Deadline is October 10 at 3:00 p.m.**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3 - Stewards of God's Gifts**  
**LOCATION:** Washington Crossing UMC, 1895 Wrightstown Road, Washington Crossing, PA 18977  
**COST:** \$10 per person, includes materials

**REGISTRATION:** 5:30 PM - 6:00 PM  
**SESSION:** 6:30 PM - 8:15 PM - Training will be led by the Rev. David Bell, Director for the Center for Christian Stewardship of The United Methodist Church. "Beyond Money" by Dan Dick will be available for purchase at the training for \$10. **Registration Deadline is October 31 at 3:00 p.m..**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8 - Accountable Discipleship: The Power of Small Group Ministry**  
**LOCATION:** Wescosville: Bethany UMC, 1208 Brookside Road, Allentown, PA 18106  
**COST:** \$10 per person, includes resources  
**REGISTRATION:** 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM  
**SESSION:** 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM - Training will be led by Steve Manskar, Director of Accountable Discipleship, United Methodist General Board of Discipleship. **Registration Deadline is December 5 at 3:00 p.m.**

## Making Disciples DVDs

- Transformational Spiritual Leadership Part I** with the Rev. Kelvin Sauls  
\$10 x \_\_\_ = \_\_\_
- Transformational Spiritual Leadership Part II** with the Rev. Kelvin Sauls  
\$10 x \_\_\_ = \_\_\_
- Acts 29 Prayer Encounter** with the Rev. Terry Teykl  
\$10 x \_\_\_ = \_\_\_
- Preparing Your Congregation's Ministry Action Plan** with the Rev. Kelvin Sauls  
\$10 x \_\_\_ = \_\_\_
- Living as Christian Disciples** with the Rev. Tom Albin  
\$10 x \_\_\_ = \_\_\_
- Vibrant and Transformative Worship** with Eileen Guenther and Dr. Lucy Hogan  
\$10 x \_\_\_ = \_\_\_
- Ways to Increase Your Church Attendance** with the Rev. Rene Perez and the Rev. Dr. Dorothy Watson Tatem  
\$10 x \_\_\_ = \_\_\_
- Christian Education and Spiritual Formation** with Carol Krau  
\$10 x \_\_\_ = \_\_\_

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PA 19482-0820.

## Message from Bishop Marcus Matthews

continued from page 1

ties and programs after school, in the evenings, and on weekends for children, youth, and young adults that will keep them off the streets and in a wholesome environment.

- Stay in touch with college students going off to school and young adults going off to work. Send them notes and care packages, affirm them when they return home, and help them to connect where they are to a loving church family.

### ADVOCATE

Join me in being a "Voice in the Wilderness" for the voiceless among us. It is only by changing the systems that create injustice that true healing will be made possible.

- Help members of your congregation to become knowledgeable about the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church.

- Contact your elected officials to advocate for tougher gun control, against gambling, for equitable education, for a fair minimum wage, and for fairer immigration laws.

- Join and/or become active in organizations such as A United Methodist Witness in Pennsylvania, conference Church and Society teams, Good Schools Pennsylvania, the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society, and the National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling that actively work for justice in our government and society.

### PARTICIPATE

Lastly, we ask each church to take part in Peace Action: End Violence Now!

This initiative is scheduled for October 5 and 6, 2007, and offers opportunities for all of our churches to participate.

- **Friday, October 5 - Community of Peace** - Be a visible sign of peace by opening up and inviting your community to activities. Activities might include sports such as basketball, family night, movie night, special music, or a barbeque.

- **Saturday, October 6 - Peace Action: End Violence Now!** All churches are invited to attend this event that begins at Tindley Temple United Methodist Church, 750-762 S.

Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA. Tentative plans include a Peace Fair beginning at 2:00, Pray for Peace at 3:00 pm, and a march to City Hall in Philadelphia for a rally, pending permit approval. The Peace Fair will feature activities for people of all ages.

The scheduled date for this public witness is nearly upon us. Look for more information this week.

Now is the time for all of us to pray, act, and advocate together to transform our communities into peace-filled havens of God's Kingdom.

Shalom!

*Marcus Matthews, Bishop of The Philadelphia Area of The United Methodist Church (The Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences)*

## Women who tithe

continued from page 1



Ruth Daugherty

is where her offerings to United Methodist Women come in. "The money we give helps with the needs of women, children, and youth who we can't personally reach, and are an extension of me in ministry - especially through United Methodist Women."

From her late husband, Robert Daugherty, a United Methodist pastor, Ruth learned the concept of stewardship. "Everything I have is a gift from God, and for everything I have a stewardship commitment." That includes money (she carries a cross in her change purse as a reminder), recycling, and passing on clothing and other items when they are no longer needed.

"My philosophy of life is that I need to give of my time and my talents, too," Ruth explained. "When I am asked to serve, I don't ask if I can say yes; I ask myself, 'Can I say no?'"

Ruth's giving of her time and talents began with the Otterbein Guild Girls at age ten. She served as conference president in Eastern Pennsylvania for the Women's Society of World Service in the United Brethren Church; served as national president of United Methodist Women from 1980 to 1984, and has been a delegate to Jurisdictional and General Conferences. She continues giving of herself through teaching Bible studies, singing in the choir at Grandview United Methodist Church in Lancaster, PA, teaching in regional Schools of Christian Mission, and serving as secretary for the Northeastern Jurisdiction.



Dr. Mary White

**Dr. Mary White** grew up in the Boston area in a Methodist family. While growing up, she watched her grandmother model giving and devotion to the church. Mary, who has belonged to African-American and integrated churches, witnessed a uniqueness to the African-American tradition, where giving and tithing, as well as giving of one's time, labor, and talents centered around the church community. "Our lives on Sundays were centered around the church. Through the week, families also devoted their labor and time to the church, even to taking turns cleaning the church rather than hiring a custodian," she said. "Of course, everyone in my family was expected to tithe. As children, we were expected to place a tithe of our allowance in a card or envelope. We always prepared them on Saturday night, ready for our Sunday offering. Even with as busy as I am today, I still keep that discipline."

"My father and mother taught us that God has blessed us over and over. Everything we have comes as a gift from God," Mary said. "The Bible teaches us that our tithe is a response of thankfulness and love to God for all God has blessed us with."

"They are all closely related: giving of your finances, time, talents, and gifts. I believe that it is important for us to teach our children, even as youngsters, what they can do in Sunday School and church, as well as at home - how to give and how to respond in ministry - that they can

learn helping and giving." She continued, "The success of the church depends on the understanding and full participation of all church members, from the youngest to the oldest."

In addition to tithing financially, Mary gives of her time and talents professionally as executive director of United Methodist Neighborhood Services located in North Philadelphia. This agency provides services to low income and marginalized families, particularly women, children, and youth.

Mary has belonged to United Methodist Women and its predecessor organizations since she was a youth. As an adult, her service has included being a UMW officer for Social Action, president of her district UMW, and vice-president of the Northeastern Jurisdiction core planning team for UMW. She tirelessly devotes her time as conference lay leader of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Growing up in Allahabad, north India, **Praveena Balasundaram** first learned of tithing from her grandmother, the widow of a Methodist minister, who would come to visit for two to three months each year. Praveena would watch her grandmother give money to her father, "who would faithfully bring her brand new, crisp bills from the bank," she said. "My siblings and I would crowd around her—we wanted to know what she would do with these bills. She used these bills to give her tithe and offerings. Not just a portion of her pension, but in brand new bills!"

Praveena's grandmother also encouraged her grandchildren to give. "On Sunday morning she would call us children and give us each a bill to put in the offering. I loved the feel of the crisp bills in my hand. I hate to admit it but sometimes I secretly wished I could keep the new ones for myself!"

She married a Methodist minister in Delhi, India. Together, Praveena and her husband, Sunil, tithe as a couple. "Our first giving is to God and then we prioritize the rest of our expenses." She added, "We try to teach our son and daughter to do the same. In fact, when our son was small and he would get a cash gift, we would ask him, 'What do you want to do with this?' He would wave the money around and say, 'I want to give it to

Jesus!'" Acknowledging the challenges of teaching tithing, Praveena said, "Of course, as teenagers, our children now want to "save" their money for cell phones, iPods, or books and movies!"

"My husband and I tithe on the first Sunday of the month. We have also pledged that if during the year our income drops we will not reduce our tithe for the year." Sacrificial giving is the example they lived: "When we came to the United States as students with a young family, the temptation was to hold on to the precious few dollars that we got as exchange for rupees, but when we gave our offerings to God, somehow \$10 stretched the whole week!"

For Praveena, the image of cream comes to mind in terms of tithing. "When we lived in India, we had milk packets delivered to our house in the morning. We would boil the milk, let it cool, and then put it in the refrigerator. The next morning when we took the pan of milk out, a thick layer of cream would have formed at the top. We would separate the cream and add it to desserts or to curries to serve special people. That's how our giving should be - offering the best to God - not the dregs."

As a member of United Methodist Women, Praveena pledges to missions also. She also gives her time and talents to God. In addition to her profession as an editor, she has been contributing articles to *Response Magazine* for six years, and she serves as an evaluator for the UMW Reading Program. She gives of her talents through writing the children's mission study on India and Pakistan, has taught the adult course at Schools of Missions in Eastern and Central Pennsylvania. At Solebury UMC in New Hope, PA, where her husband is the pastor, Praveena participates in UMW circles along with teaching Sunday school and singing in the choir.

\* *Suzy Keenan is director of communications for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church, and is a member of United Methodist Women at West Chester United Methodist Church in West Chester, PA.*

This article has been reprinted with permission from *Response Magazine*, published by the Women's Division of The United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries.

## Leadership Summit 2007 – Developing Strong Leaders

by Thomas Hall\*

For the past three summers I have religiously observed three new holy days that I've added to my calendar year: the Willow Creek Association's *Leadership Summit*. The summit gathers over 100,000 Christian leaders from around the world at over 100 sites to consider specific ways that they can grow in their God-given leadership abilities.

The mantra for the two and a half day summit centers in a high ecclesiology: the conviction that the Church is God's plan to redeem the world and that strong pastoral leadership makes strong churches.

Over the past three Augusts I've listened to John Ortberg (*If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat*), President Jimmy Carter, William Bennis, Jim Collins (*From Good to Great*), Carly Fiorina (*Tough Choices*; successfully led one of the world's largest technology companies through severe industry downturn), Michael Porter (author of 17 books; foremost authority of competitive

strategy; professor at Harvard University), Marcus Buckingham (trilogy, *First, Break All The Rules*, then, *Now Discover Your Strengths*, and finally, *Go Put Your Strengths to Use*), and Bill Hybels, to name a few.

What makes the summit so impacting for me is the cross-fertilization of ideas and inspiration that come from a variety of places. Try sitting across the table from turned-on Lutherans or Vineyards, then throw in a few Pentecostals for inspiration and spice it up with a few Episcopalians for balance, and you have lively discussions about leadership that follow the main presentations.

This year we brought about 30 folks from Crossroads because the principles of leadership are easily caught and easily appropriated. Each day during lunch we met together to compare what we learned and then later we debriefed as a group, resolving to act on at least three things that we had learned at the summit.

Here's just a thumbnail version of what one summit leader brought to the table this year . . . *You'll grow*

*most by focusing on your strengths.* According to Marcus Buckingham, *Very few people play to their strengths even 12% of the time.* So the rest of the session provided an excellent exercise not only to discover our personal strengths, but how to change the work or ministry climate so that we can begin to leverage our strengths to help the team move forward. What would happen if our church moved to a strengths-based economy? At Crossroads, we've already shifted and reallocated volunteers and staff to draw on strengths—and with amazing results!

Michael Porter raised the question, *How do you do well at doing good?* He then urged church leaders to ask strategic questions when doing mission. Porter acknowledged the altruism of churches and applauded their efforts. Yet, too often we hit the compassion button and turn the strategic button off so that the deliverables we bring may make us feel good, but in fact, do little to change the problem. At the end of the day," he challenged the leaders, "you've got to ask the

painful strategic question: "Have we really made a difference, have we done deep surgery, or have we been putting Band-Aids over wounds?" The rest of his session included powerful strategic questions (*How do we define clearly what our goals are? What set of services are we going to address?—more is not better! How do we align our congregations to become more effective? Who can we partner or network with within the larger neighbor to accomplish more effectiveness?*)

Consider attending next year's Leadership Summit (held at Church of the Savior, Wayne), August 7-9, 2008, ([www.willowcreek.com/summit](http://www.willowcreek.com/summit) for more information) and personally explore how this event could strengthen you as a leader and in turn, help you to develop a stronger church. Who knows? Maybe you too will decide to include some new holy days on your calendar during the dog days of August.

\*The Rev. Thomas Hall is pastor of Crossroads United Methodist Church.

### \*\*\*Attention\*\*\*

#### All Pastors in Cross Cultural Appointments

The Racial Ethnic Ministry Work Team is sending out a survey to you, in the hope that you will supply us with information in regard to your cross cultural appointment (CCA). Your experiences both positive and negative will be helpful in making future CCAs effective. We are also setting up workshops for pastors in and/or going to a CCA. The first one will be held on April 9, 2008. Please return your surveys by October 28, 2007. Thank you for your support.

For more information, contact the Rev. Rene Perez, [rene.perez@epaumc.org](mailto:rene.perez@epaumc.org) or 1-800-828-9093, ext. 218.

## GENERAL CONFERENCE PETITIONS

Your voice can be heard at the General Conference through petitioning! The General and Jurisdictional Conference delegation wishes to remind the Annual Conference that the deadline of October 26, 2007 for petitioning the 2008 General Conference is quickly approaching. The *Book of Discipline* provides that, "Any organization, clergy member, or lay member of The United Methodist Church may petition the General Conference ...." The procedure for doing so is found in the *Book of Discipline*, paragraphs 507.1 through 507.9. The form of petitioning described there is very important and must be followed. All petitions may have a 50-word rationale (explanation) accompanying them. Every petition is read, studied, and voted upon at the General Conference.

Petitions may be sent by email to [petitions@umpublishing.org](mailto:petitions@umpublishing.org), or by regular US mail to: Gary W. Graves, UM General Conference, P.O. Box 188, Beaver Dam, KY 42320-0187. Please note again the deadline for submitting them, October 26, 2007.

Every UM (and others interested) can access important information about the General Conference (April 23-May 2, 2008) on its website: [www.gc2008.umc.org](http://www.gc2008.umc.org), and the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference (July 14-18, 2008) on its website: [www.nejumc.org](http://www.nejumc.org).

More information on both of these important conferences will be forthcoming from the delegation in the months ahead.

## United Methodist Student Day

November 25, 2007

For more information go to: [www.umcgiving.org](http://www.umcgiving.org)

## Annual Conference DVD Order Form

### 2 Bible Studies - \$ 10.00

-with the Rev. Mary Ann Moman - Thursday and Friday, June 14-15, 2007

### 3 Sermons - \$ 10.00

-Bishop Marcus Matthews - Opening Worship - Wednesday, June 13, 2007  
-Bishop Gregory V. Palmer - Memorial Service and Service of Ordination and Commissioning - Thursday and Friday, June 14-15, 2007

### Retiree Service - \$ 10.00

Thursday, June 14, 2007

### Memorial Service - \$ 10.00

Thursday, June 14, 2007

### Service of Ordination and Commissioning - \$ 10.00

Friday, June 15, 2007

### Making Disciples Session - "Living as Christian Disciples: The Means of Grace and Ordinances of God" - \$10

- with the Rev. Tom Albin - Celebration of Ministries -

Wednesday, June 13, 2007

Plus Shipping \$4.00

Total amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: EPAUMC and mail with order form to:  
**Communications, Annual Conference Video Order**  
P.O. Box 820, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0820

## Missionary in Sierra Leone Needs Covenant Support

“Missionary” is one of the oldest and most honored offices of the Christian church, with origins in the New Testament. The letters of Paul are those of a missionary called and commissioned to Jesus Christ.

Missionaries witness and serve in dramatically different locales and cultures and engage in a range of professions and activities. They come from many places and backgrounds.

Onema L. Ombaku, a United Methodist missionary, serves as the Area Financial Executive (AFE) with the Sierra Leone Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in Freetown, Sierra Leone, West Africa. He is responsible for the receipt and disbursement of funds coming in for mission personnel and projects and sees that these funds are properly disbursed and accounted for, and submits appropriate reports to the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM).

Mr. Ombaku was born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where he

received his primary and secondary education. “I believed in God from my early years.” Ombaku shares that he was at a retreat in Lodja when he felt the strong presence of God in his life. He believes God has been preparing him to serve for many years.

He attended university in the Congo and graduation with degrees in education, political science and administration. He received his diploma in computer and accounting from Universal College in Nairobi, Kenya. His preparation to serve as AFE in Sierra Leone began when he was assigned to be the assistant to the AFE in the GBGM office in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1994. Mr. Ombaku has been in Sierra Leone since December 2006. “I know my God will help at any level of problem, situation. I keep my discipline in my life according to the word of God, to his rules, the Ten Commandments, and with the help of his Holy Spirit in all areas.”

Mr. Ombaku and his wife, Henriette, are the parents of six daughters and

three sons. The family holds membership at the Bethanie UMC in the Central Congo Area Conference.

Would your church like to support the work of a United Methodist missionary? Churches that pay their Eastern Pennsylvania Conference apportionment in full are encouraged to be in covenant with a United Methodist Missionary. To be in covenant with a missionary, a contribution of five dollars per congregation member is requested.

For the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Mission Manual, including Covenant Support application forms, please phone the EPA Conference Secretary of Global Ministries, Dick Howarth, at 610-792-4822 or email him at [rwhjwh@earthlink.net](mailto:rwhjwh@earthlink.net). Also contact Dick for a copy of the Ombaku's first missionary letter.

Recognizing that it is more cost-effective and efficient to train and support persons from the same continent to serve in mission in specialized roles, the GBGM requests Covenant



Mr. Onema Ombaku

Support for Mr. Ombaku and will be responsible for his visitation of churches in covenant with him. His Missionary Code with the board is 15166Z.

## Annual Campaigns – which ones, why and when

by Stacy J. Martin

Those two words, “Annual Campaign”, said in a church setting promote more fear and negative feelings than “Internal Revenue Service” spoken in a secular setting! Like the IRS, annual campaigns are necessary. Unlike the IRS, they can be wonderfully rewarding.

Herb Miller, author of “Consecration Sunday”, has evaluated and summarized five different campaigns. Some of you may know him or recognize his name. He has been teaching congregations how to respond to the call to be a generous giver for decades.

His article begins with the question “How can we get clergy and lay leaders to move beyond stewardship education methods controlled by (a) “the way we’ve always done it” and (b) a short list of influential layperson who block their congregation’s use of effective stewardship methods?” He answers with nine principles that churches can use to see significant

annual increases in their total offerings. I provide the ideas below; the article contains the rationale and reasons:

- Conduct an *effective* campaign *every year*
- Talk about the need of the giver to give for their spiritual benefit, not the need for the church to receive
- Instead of “what do we need to balance the budget” rather “what is God calling you to give”
- Talk about percentage giving not as a fundamentalist statement but as an appropriate faith commitment
- Complete the campaign first, then create and publish the church budget
- Talk about time and talent stewardship during a different month
- Recognize that the old “visit and ask/pledge” method is uncomfortable and has lots of baggage
- Recognize that congregations can change – thinking otherwise denies the power of the Gospel!

· Stifle the temptation to create a homemade campaign

Mr. Miller then provides his summary of five different campaigns so congregations can choose the one best suited for them. We are happy to send this six-page article to you. Please fax your request so we will have your fax number to send the article to you. Fax: 610-666-9093 Attention: Foundation Office.

Now that we know why and which one, the last suggestion I have is timing. If you want to shake things up, do your campaign in the spring. March and April are good months because folks have just reviewed their investments, prepared their tax returns and know where they stand financially. They are also in the season of celebrating God’s greatest gift to us.

For additional information about the Foundation’s investment and stewardship services or to make an



appointment for a meeting, please call the Eastern Pennsylvania-Peninsula United Methodist Foundation at 800-828-9093 x247 or email me at [stacy.martin@epaumc.org](mailto:stacy.martin@epaumc.org).

The Foundation, in a joint effort with the Making Disciples Team, is sponsoring a stewardship training event being held on Saturday, November 3 at Washington Crossing UMC. Please see page 7 for more information, or go to [www.epaumc.org](http://www.epaumc.org) to register.

## Classifieds

**P/T CHOIR DIRECTOR AND/OR PRAISE BAND LEADER** for Elverson UMC, 10-20 hrs per week. Call 610-286-9460, M-Th 9-3

**PART-TIME CHURCH SECRETARY** needed immediately, Messiah UMC, Lafayette Hill, 12 hr per week. Salary negotiable based on skills and experience. Please send resumes to: [Messiahchurch@verizon.net](mailto:Messiahchurch@verizon.net).

**FOUNDATION ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

Part-time to support the Foundation’s Executive Director in all aspects of account administration. Duties include opening accounts, reviewing account transactions, updating client information, and handling external mailings and projects and events. Correspond with clients and coordinate work with an outside custodian.

Qualifications include familiarity with the financial services field, for example trust and estate administration, along with strong computer skills. Experience preferred. Competitive salary and generous time off plan. Fax resumes to 610-666-9093 or mail to: *The Eastern Pennsylvania-Peninsula nited Methodist Foundation, P.O. Box 820, Valley Forge, PA 19482*

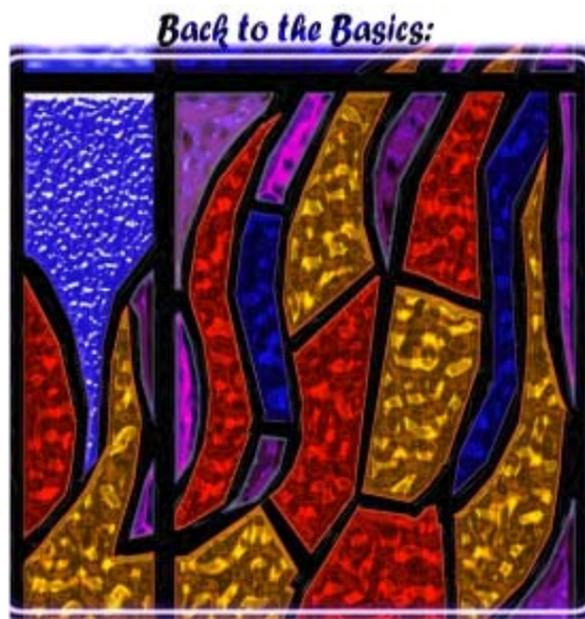
**PART-TIME MUSIC DIRECTOR WANTED FOR CAMPUS WORSHIP** Asbury Protestant Ministry at Drexel University, a ministry supported through the Eastern PA Conference, is looking to hire a very part-time music director for a new mid-week worship service on campus. Responsibilities will include: music selection; directing rehearsals with

student musicians who will make up the worship band (timing to be negotiated); and music direction during the service itself (Wednesdays, 9 pm). Experience directing a choir/worship band is preferred but not required. Comfortable working with young adults, and an informal, interactive style of worship, and experience and/or comfort with diverse musical styles preferred. Salary to be negotiated, but competitive. No more than three hours a week. Email resume and cover letter to [asbury@drexel.edu](mailto:asbury@drexel.edu). Or contact Pastor Tim Emmett-Rardin, 215-895-2522.

**KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER** Cokesbury, a Christian retailer is seeking to better serve our customers by hiring a Key Account Manager in the Philadelphia location. The incum-

bent will serve the market by developing and strengthening relationships with customers and will assist with the management of the store. Ideal candidate must have retail and leadership experience. Christian Education experience is strongly preferred. Interested persons should submit resume along with salary history to [employment@umpublishing.org](mailto:employment@umpublishing.org), or fax (615) 749-6704, or mail to: Employment Office, 201 8th Avenue South Nashville, TN. 37202.

**AUDITOR AVAILABLE** Auditor available for preparing and/or auditing the required Report of the Annual Audit. Experience in providing such in a cost effective manner. Please call George Fieo, CPA at (610) 457-1486 or e-mail to [BFGE@rcn.com](mailto:BFGE@rcn.com). References available upon request.



Vibrant, Passionate Ministry

## Back to the Basics: Vibrant, Passionate Ministry

Bishop's Mi-Winter Retreat  
January 15-17, 2008

With guest speaker, The Rev. Dr. Paul Nixon  
at the Clarion Resort Fountainebleau Hotel in Ocean City, MD

Paul Nixon is pastor of Epicenter DC, a new church being launched in the greater Washington DC area, a multi-site project focused on serving the people in emerging urban neighborhoods of high density housing along the subway lines. He is a member of the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Until 2007, he served on the extended cabinet of Alabama-West Florida Conference, overseeing congregational development. For nine years, he served on the pastoral team of the 4000 member Gulf Breeze United Methodist Church near Pensacola. Paul was founding pastor of the Community Life Center, the east campus of Gulf Breeze, overseeing it from its conception to 650 in worship attendance.

Paul consults with churches and conferences all across North America, with a special passion for coaching church planters and churches with initiatives to reach new demographic groups in their communities. He is author of three books, *Fling Open the Doors*, 2002, *Healing Spiritual Amnesia*, 2004 and *I Refuse to Lead a Dying Church*, 2007. You may purchase a copy of his latest book when you register for the retreat.

### Schedule Overview

(detailed scheduled to be provided at retreat)

#### Tuesday, January 15, 2008

Noon—2 p.m.: Registration

Bishop's Welcome/ Worship

Speaker—Dr. Paul Nixon

Dinner

#### Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Breakfast

Worship

Speaker—Dr. Paul Nixon

Free Time

Dinner

Entertainment

#### Thursday, January 17, 2008

Breakfast

Closing Worship/ Communion



Online registration: [www.epaumc.org](http://www.epaumc.org)

Deadline to register is November 30, 2007

Contact information: Amy Botti, Registrar, 1-800-828-9093, ext. 233 or email at [amy.botti@epaumc.org](mailto:amy.botti@epaumc.org)

The Face of Today's Missionary

Is it yours?

For more information, visit: [www.ummissionaries.org](http://www.ummissionaries.org)

Global Ministries  
The United Methodist Church

## Encounter 2007

One Weekend. One Passion. One Purpose.  
"LIVE IT OUT LOUD"

encounter (verb) to come upon face to face



### Friday – Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup>

A weekend of Impact and Equipping for Students in Grades 7-12

The Bands: Social Hazzard & STEREO8 in concert and worship. The Speakers: Kim Checkeye, Kris Perry, Peter Clarke & Ron Schultz. The Fun: hayrides, high & low ropes challenge course, evening campfire, games, great food, and most of all – a weekend of drawing closer to God. Don't miss out – reserve your spot today by calling or emailing Rev. Kris Perry at (570)385-3941 or [revkrisperry@yahoo.com](mailto:revkrisperry@yahoo.com). Cost is \$65, all meals/lodging are included!

\$25 Deposit due on September 20<sup>th</sup>. Balance of \$40 due on October 20<sup>th</sup>



Gretna Glen Camp & Retreat Center  
87 Old Mine Road Lebanon, PA 17042

Contact: Rev. Kris Perry at (570) 385-3941 or [revkrisperry@yahoo.com](mailto:revkrisperry@yahoo.com).