

NEW Spirit!

What's Inside

Son of EPA
elected to lead
Council of
Bishops
Page 3



UMCOR's Christ-
mas wish list.
Page 7



INDEX
CALENDAR 2
THE NATION 4
THE WORLD 5
CLASSIFIEDS 11

*“This is the work of God, that you believe in
Him whom He has sent”*

John 6:29

Believe!

Dear Family and Friends,

Barbara and I greet you this season with such grateful hearts! We thank you for your prayers, support, encouragement and friendship. You have embraced us with your warmth, love and belief in Jesus Christ.



The outpouring of love and support for our brothers and sisters in need throughout the Philadelphia Area and beyond is evidence that Christ is Alive! You have practiced your belief without hesitation and shared with those who have needed it most. For this we are thankful.

We now pray that the hope, the peace, the joy, and the love represented by the birth of the Christ child in Bethlehem will continue to fill your lives and overflow in all you say and do!

Marion Malcher

A Christmas Creed

Believe! in Jesus Christ and in the beauty of the gospel begun in Bethlehem.

Believe! in the One whose spirit glorified a little town; and whose spirit still brings music to persons all over the world, in towns both large and small.

Believe! in the One for whom the crowded inn could find no room.

Believe! in the One who the rulers of the earth ignored and the proud could never understand; whose life was among common people, whose welcome came from persons of hungry hearts.

Believe! in the one who proclaimed the love of God to be invincible.

Believe! in the one whose cradle was a mother's arms, whose modest home in Nazareth had love for its only wealth, who looked at persons and made them see what God's love saw in them, who by love brought sinners back to purity, and lifted human weakness up to meet the strength of God.

Believe! in Jesus, the Christ-child, born in Bethlehem, for you and for me.

Author Unknown



Conference Calendar

DECEMBER 10

Christmas Peace Pilgrimage— Walk the Road of Peace

Come, walk with your family and friends, and make new friends who seek a more peaceful world. More than a Walk - even if you cannot walk a portion of the pilgrimage, please consider participating in our related events. Following the singing, we will walk to the United Church of Christ at Market and Center Streets for a simple supper and to hear our guest speaker. This year our speaker is Sr. Patricia Keefe, Outreach Coordinator for the Nonviolent Peace Force, USA, who will speak on "Incarnational Peacemaking." Schedule: Participants will meet in the parking lot of 520 E. Broad Street, Bethlehem (corner of Broad and Elm) before 11 a.m. Buses will transport pilgrims to Nazareth Moravian Church on Center Square At 10:45 a.m., buses begin leaving 520 E. Broad Street (Bechtel Building); 11:00 a.m. last buses leave Bethlehem for Nazareth. For more information, call Fran Dreisbach at 610-258-7313, or the Bethlehem Council of Churches at 610-867-8671, P.O. Box 1245, Bethlehem, PA 18016 or visit their website: www.peacewalk.org.

DECEMBER 31, 2006- Deadline for local churches to obtain Child Abuse Clearance and Criminal Record Checks

JANUARY 6-8, 2006

United Methodist Youth Rally 2006
Friday - Sunday. For more information, go to: www.pen-del.org/vpm. See page 9 for more information.

JANUARY 10, 2006

Clergy Mentor Training to be offered: Tuesday, January 10 — 1 to 3 pm at Lincoln Park: Community UMC. **Who should attend?** All those in a mentoring relationship, as well as those preparing to enter into a mentoring relationship: both Mentor and Mentee. **Please Note: Clergy Mentoring is not the same as Candidacy Mentoring.** A Clergy Mentor is one who will be working with an individual who is under appointment as either a Local Pastor, Deacon in Transition or Commissioned Minister. We will be using the resource — **Clergy Mentoring: A Manual for Commissioned Ministers, Local Pastors, and Clergy Mentors.** The resource is available through Cokesbury. It is most convenient to order by going to the Cokesbury's web page using the resource item #522395. The cost of the resource is \$10. If it is more convenient, books will be available at the training. For more information, contact Pastor Tim Patterson, 570-366-0201

JANUARY 15, 2006

HUMAN RELATIONS DAY - 2006 SPECIAL OFFERING SUNDAY
Human Relations Day was created by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church in 1972 to provide ongoing resources for programs developed under the previous quadrennium's Fund for Reconciliation. In 1988, the General Conference decided that Human Relations Day be on the Sunday before the observance of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday. Lives have been turned around, communities revitalized, and the gospel

proclaimed. This has been the legacy of Human Relations Day. For stories, photos, and resources to promote Human Relations Day in your congregation, go to: <http://www.umcgiving.org>

JANUARY 17-19, 2006

Worship Conference with the Large Church Initiative, sponsored by Cokesbury's Worship Connection at First United Methodist Church in Grapevine, Texas. This worship conference is open to: clergy, musicians, band members, lay speakers, worship committees/altar guilds...**anyone** interested in planning worship! For complete details, visit your local Cokesbury Christian Bookstore, call 1-800-672-1789 or go to: <http://worshipconnection.cokesbury.com/content.aspx?dyn=433>. If you have questions please call or email us: Ellie Trimble, Events Coordinator 615-749-6193; Betsy Hall, Worship Connection Team, 615-749-6507, worshipconnection@cokesbury.com

JANUARY 30, 2006

United Theological Seminary - one-day Continuing Education Event - Monday, January 30 at Willow Valley Resort and Conference Center in Lancaster, PA, 9:30 am to 2:30 pm, sponsored by United Theological Seminary. "Teaching Christology in a Postmodern Context" by Dr. Tyron Inbody, Professor of Theology at United Seminary. • Lecture One: "Teaching Christology in a Post-Holocaust Church: Jesus and the Jews, Then and Now" • Lecture Two: "Teaching Christology in a Pluralistic World: Jesus and the World Religions" • Lecture Three: "Teaching Christology in an Electronic Culture: Jesus and the Movies" The cost (which includes lunch and .4 CEU) is \$49.00. For additional information or to register, contact Rev. Timothy Smith, 717-872-5331, pastor@fumcmillersville.com. *United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH; 937/278-5817; utscom@united.edu, www.united.edu*

JANUARY 31, 2006

Deadline for Church Statistical Report Fill out the Statistical Report online or print out the form and send it to the Conference Statistician, Dr. Theodore Newton. It must be returned by 1/31/2006. Please mail to Dr. Theodore Newton, 219 Moorestown Drive, Bath, PA 18014 or fax to (610) 837-9636. For more information, go to: <http://www.epaumc.org/BfForms.asp>

APRIL 19-22, 2006

Northeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church CONVOCA-TION ON LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRIES - FOR LAITY & CLERGY - Wednesday - Saturday, April 19-22, 2006, Pocono Manor Inn and Resort, Pocono Manor, PA. "Ministering Across Cultures": Keynote Speaker, Bishop Kwang-Young Chang of The Keumho First Methodist Church, Seoul, Korea. As a young man in his early 20's he began to serve Christ in a rural area of his native Korea. There he labored for 10 years. He has since served the First Keumho Methodist Church for 40 years. As an evangelistic speaker he has led a number of revival movements for over 38 years and has preached the gospel in over

1,700 churches. He is a pastor of enthusiasm, energy, and motivation. His inspiring power has touched thousands of Christians around the world and he continues to influence the unchurched as well. **BIBLE STUDY** led by The Reverend Moses Jarta Flomo, Irvington United Methodist Church; Irvington, New Jersey. **WORKSHOPS** - for Spiritual Growth: Prayer & Fasting, Derrick Walton; Disciple Bible Study, The Rev. Carletta Allen; Walk to Emmaus & Covenant Disciple Groups, The Rev. William Mudge; for Mission & Ministry: Domestic Violence, Sumaya Coleman; Visitation, Donna Kay Campbell; "Love on the Cross", Dave Snyder; in Korean Language: Differences Between Asian & Western Culture, Christie Hur; Cross Cultural Ministry for Korean Pastors & Church Leaders, Don Kim. Panel Discussion: Cross-Cultural Concerns & Issues. For more information contact the registrar: Barbara Anderson at 410-480-5151.

APRIL 20, 2006

BASIC SEXUAL ETHICS COURSE
9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Camp Innabah Leaders: Dr. Donna Fiedler and Dr. Gary George. To register: Email Cecile Grantham at cgrantham@verizon.net or 2285 Heather Lane Pottstown, PA 19464.

APRIL 30, 2006

NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES
Native American Awareness Sunday, April 30, 2006, recognizes and supports the contributions of American Indians to the church and society. The observance, approved by the 1988 General Conference, is one of six special churchwide Sunday offerings to be celebrated in each of the 35,986 United Methodist churches in the United States. The funds collected will allow The United Methodist Church to partner with existing native ministries and create programs on behalf of American Indians. Money collected also supports seminary scholarships for United Methodist Native Americans. For more information, go to: www.umcgiving.org

MAY 20-27, 2006

Alaska Explorer Cruise with Bishop & Mrs. Matthews. For more information, go to: <http://www.epaumc.org/NewsDetails.asp?pageID=994>

JUNE 11, 2006

Peace with justice Sunday Six times throughout the year, United Methodist congregations celebrate churchwide Special Sundays with offerings. Your support is critical to the survival of these important ministries and for sharing God's gifts around the world.

JUNE 19, 21-23, 2006

Annual Conference 2006
"The Executive Session for Clergy at Hempfield UMC - June 19, 2006, from 1:00-5:00 p.m.
• Annual Conference at the Wyndham Franklin Plaza, 17th and Race Streets, Philadelphia, PA. June 21 to 23, 2006 - Opening Worship will begin at 6:00 pm on June 21, and the conference will conclude with the Service of Ordination on the evening of June 23. For more information on the Wyndham, go to: <http://www.wyndham.com/hotels/PHLFP/main.wnt>

For Philadelphia Area clergy
- please place these important dates with **Bishop Marcus Matthews on your calendar:**

January 17-19, 2006

"The 2006 Bishop's Mid-Winter Retreat"
Guest Speaker: Dr. Maxine Clarke Beach, Dean of the Theological School, Drew University The Atlantic Sands Hotel, Rehoboth Beach, DE. Information on hotel and registration is available. You may direct questions to Royal Lowthert at rlowthert@comcast.net or call (302) 478-2575

February 28, 2006

"The 2006 Bishop's Lenten Day Apart"
8:30 am - 12:30 pm, Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 2313 Concord Pike, Wilmington, DE 19803; Phone: (302) 478-2575. Information on how to RSVP will be forthcoming.



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Son of EPA Conference elected to lead Council of Bishops

By Suzy Keenan

The Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church has elected Bishop Gregory V. Palmer to be its President-designate. Bishop Palmer was born and raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to The Reverend and Mrs. Herbert E. & Charlotte Sue Hewitt Palmer. His father is a retired United Methodist pastor who resides in Philadelphia, and his late mother was a teacher in the Philadelphia Public Schools.

His selection as President-designate came on Thursday, November 3, during a week-long session held at Lake Junaluska, NC. His term as President-designate begins in May, 2006. He will assume the presidency in 2008. The current President is Bishop Peter Weaver of the New England Conference. Bishop Janice Riggle Huie, of the Texas Annual Conference, will serve as President from 2006 - 2008.

Bishop Palmer described his election as "very humbling, exciting, and scary." Although as a child he never envisioned arriving at this place, he said that he looks upon his life and ministry as a calling to serve God. "My mom and dad instilled in me to listen for God's calling," he said. "They taught me that happiness and joy in life comes from living in a trusting relationship with God."

"They also taught me that to whom much is given, much is required, and so I should give back to the world, church, and community so that it

becomes more resembling of God's purposes."

A graduate of Central High School, Philadelphia, PA, Bishop Palmer grew up in parsonages and churches that his father served in Philadelphia. He particularly remembers the nurturing of his faith by childhood Sunday School teachers at Trinity UMC in West Oak Lane. He is thankful for opportunities he had to feel part of the body of Christ as a youth usher and in youth events at Emmanuel at 17th and York Streets, Union Memorial in Darby, and Haven Memorial in North Philadelphia. Having been nominated by Bishop J. Gordon Howard (EPA Bishop 1968-72) to be a part of the World Methodist Council was particularly meaningful in nurturing his gifts for service and leadership.

Bishop Palmer graduated with a B.A. from George Washington University, Washington, DC, and with his M.Div. from Duke University Divinity School, Durham, NC. In 1977 he became a Deacon (and Probationary Member) in the Eastern PA Conference, and was ordained Elder (and Full Member) in 1981 in the East OH Conference. He served six churches in Ohio in addition to serving as Youngstown District Superintendent, and was elected to the episcopacy in 2000. He is currently assigned to the Iowa Area of The United Methodist Church.

"Thank you for every door you opened for me as I grew in faith and service," is his message to the Eastern

Pennsylvania Conference. And, he asks, "Please keep me, the church, and the Council of Bishops in your prayers."

When asked about his son's election, Rev. Palmer said, "I am elated and humbled by it, and very proud of him." He added, "I just want to pray God's blessing upon him as he assumes that responsibility."

The Council of Bishops is made up of all active and retired bishops of The United Methodist Church. The Council meets twice a year. According to the Book of Discipline, "The Church expects the Council of Bishops to speak to the Church and from the Church to the world and to give leadership in the quest for Christian unity and inter-religious relationships." [427.2] The council comprises 50 active bishops in the United States; 18 bishops in Eu-



Bishop Gregory V. Palmer

rope, Asia and Africa; plus 96 retired bishops worldwide. They are the top clergy leaders in the nearly 11 million-member church.

Advent: Waiting and working for a wider vision

Where there is no vision the people perish.

Proverbs 29:18

Bishop Marcus Matthews hosted clergy of the Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences at an Advent day apart on Monday, November 28 at Aldersgate UMC in Wilmington, DE.

The Bishop's guest and featured speaker was the Rev. Dr. Laurence Hull Stookey, professor of Worship and Liturgics at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. Stookey quoted from Proverbs 29:18, reflecting that "Advent is about a number of things; but at least one of them is

vision." Mixing inspiration from the scripture, and calling upon attendees to reflect in moments of silence, Stookey asked, "What is our own vision of God's future, and what kind of vision of the NEW Creation do we transmit to United Methodists in our congregations? For if our people are to have a saving vision, surely we are those who are charged with transmitting that vision to them: a vision that is expansive, a vision that changes us, that guides us, and that motivates us to act differently in the world."

Stookey noted that fear is something that narrows our vision, and yet the Gospels are filled with the message, "Do not be afraid." He asked those present to reflect upon how they are widening the vision of the people through their preaching and teaching. The need for an envisioned destination is important to achieve God's purpose, and Stookey called upon all to seek divine counsel while working while working "for those things we already know to be in line with the ways of God."

Bishop Matthews led worship and preached on Advent being a season of preparedness. Using the hymn, "Be Thou My Vision," the Bishop re-



The Bishop's guest and featured speaker was the Rev. Dr. Laurence Hull Stookey, professor of Worship and Liturgics at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

marked that vision is the difference success and mediocrity, and to reach the places where God intends us to be. "Advent is a time to prepare, and we cannot prepare unless we have the willingness to let go of something," he said. "If we are to prepare for the advent of Christ, we need to clear the stuff and put in some hard work." He joked about receiving a marathon registration form for his birthday, and needing to let go of his excuses to not sign up and work hard to prepare to get to his goal. He urged clergy to keep being prepared, for we "don't know the time when God will come." He concluded, "In order to bring hope to a hurting world, we have to believe."



Bishop Marcus Matthews hosted clergy of the Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences at an Advent Day Apart on Monday, November 28.

Stewardship in Today's World Workshop

Presented by the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference and Eastern PA-Peninsula UM Foundation, featuring the Rev. David S. Bell, Director of Stewardship, Center for Christian Stewardship, The United Methodist Church

Two Dates Available:

Friday, March 24, 2006 - 4:30 p.m. Appetizers, 5:30 p.m. Dinner, Shady Maple, Lancaster, Full Buffet - included in fee; \$25

Sunday, March 26, 2006 - 1:30 p.m. Refreshments, 2:00 p.m. start, Tindley Temple UMC, Philadelphia, Light refreshments included; \$10

Book: Creative Giving: Understanding Planned Giving and Endowments in the Church (Included in fee)

Registration: information to follow - save the date now!

For more information, contact Ms. Stacy Martin, executive director, 1-800-828-9093, ext. 247 or stacy.martin@epaumc.org

In The Nation

Grants will provide training for crime victim chaplains

A UMNS Report
By Kathy L. Gilbert*

The Crime Victims Advocacy Council has received a grant of \$28,650 from the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries to recruit, train and supervise crime victim chaplains.

The Rev. Bruce Cook, director and chaplain of the Atlanta-based council, wants to use the grant to recruit 64 crime victim chaplains - one for each of the denomination's annual (regional) conferences in the United States. Cook is currently the only United Methodist-endorsed chaplain working with crime victims. Deadline for applying is Dec. 15.

"Crime victims are an underserved population in our churches," he says. "We are going into prisons and ministering to prisoners, but we don't think about ministering to the many, many thousands of victims in the community who are suffering."

Chaplains trained in ministering to victims of violent and serious crimes are needed when victims ask the "God question," Cooks says. "After a violent or serious crime, there is a real potential for them to lose their faith completely."

The 10,000 victim service providers in the United States are helping restore mind and body but are not doing anything to help restore the spirit, Cooks says. Crime victims are often sent to their pastors, who

can provide them with initial comfort and prayer but are not trained to help beyond that point, he says.

A 1982 report by the President's Task Force on Victims of Crime found that in most cases, 65 to 70 percent, the first person a crime victim calls is his or her pastor.

"Sometimes they (pastors) even say hurtful things like, 'It is God's will that your mother was murdered and tortured,'" Cook says. "That makes them angry with God. It is never God's will for someone to be murdered and tortured or anything like that."

Crime victim chaplains will be an access point for people who need help healing, he says.

The grant continues the commitment of the Board of Global Ministries to restorative justice ministries, says Elliott Wright, information officer for the agency. The board directors approved the one-time grant to



Each meeting of the Crime Victims Advocacy Council support group begins and ends with prayer. A UMNS photo by Mike DuBose



The Rev. Bruce Cook, director of the Crime Victims Advocacy Council, is seeking 64 people to be trained as crime victim chaplains. A UMNS photo by Mike DuBose

Federal, state and local funds have been identified to assist in start-up costs, Cook says. "One funding source will require that a grant of \$48,000 be written by Jan. 1, 2006, so time is of the essence."

Applications and resumes should be sent by Dec. 15 to askcvac@aol.com, mailed to CVAC, 3101 Paces Mill Rd., Atlanta, GA 30339, or called in to Cook at (770) 333-9254.

There is often no place for victims of serious and violent crimes to turn after their first contact with pastors. "Nothing in the church happens next," Cook says.

"There is no mid- to long-term care - there is not even a real good crisis care response among the churches other than just immediate responses. This is an effort to change that and bring about some spiritual care for folks who are hurting after a serious crime."

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

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

Applications and resumes for crime victim chaplains can be sent by Dec. 15 to:
askcvac@aol.com or CVAC, 3101 Paces Mill Rd. Atlanta, GA 30339
Callers can reach the Rev. Bruce Cook at (770) 333-9254

The Nation in Brief

GULF COAST

As part of UMCOR's response and in an effort to provide a central location to coordinate long term assistance, UMCOR has set up storm centers throughout the region affected by Hurricane Katrina. In Baton Rouge, Louisiana there is a main storm center that is coordinating region-wide response efforts. There are also six more localized centers, one in the heart of New Orleans operating out of First Street United Methodist Church. Each center has a director, a construction director, a case management director and administrative staff. The staff coordinates volunteer teams in their area, helps with basic construction needs, and, through case management, helps survivors form their own recovery plan and connect with other agencies who can meet additional recovery needs. Your gifts to UMCOR Advance #982523, Hurricanes 2005, help support the work of these centers.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS)

The United Methodist Church has kicked off its holiday advertising campaign with a giant billboard screen above New York City's Times Square. "The Gift," a message about

sharing one's gifts with others, is expected to reach an estimated 2 million people flowing daily through Times Square. The 30-second spots will be shown on the 30-by-40-foot screen eight times a day for a two-week period, including during the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade. In addition to advertising on one of the world's most famous outdoor video screens this holiday season, the denomination will air two television commercials on 18 cable networks Dec. 5 through Christmas Eve. The second spot, titled, "I Believe," is about how the church embraces diversity.

NEW ORLEANS (UMNS)

Two hundred and two faculty and staff members at United Methodist-related Dillard University were to receive their final paychecks Nov. 15. The reduction in the work force by the historically black college comes in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which left behind nearly \$400 million in damages on the campus when it roared across New Orleans and the Gulf Coast Aug. 29. Despite the progress being made daily on the New Orleans campus since the hurricane, Dillard University officials announced

Nov. 1 that it would make a 60 percent reduction in the number of employees on the payroll. The school will retain all 43 of its tenured faculty and 99 staff members when it begins the spring semester Jan. 9, said Maureen Larkins, director of university communications. The laid-off employees will retain their medical benefits through the end of 2005.

SAN DIEGO (UMNS)

In many local churches, mental illness remains an unknown and unaddressed social issue. The Rev. Susan Gregg-Schroeder, a United Methodist pastor, has firsthand knowledge of this problem. Diagnosed with a bipolar disorder, she is "doing very well" with medication and is coordinator of mental health ministries for the denomination's California-Pacific Annual (regional) Conference. She is featured in "Shadow Voices: Finding Hope in Mental Illness," which will begin airing Dec. 4 on ABC-TV affiliates. The one-hour documentary was produced by Mennonite Media and the Interfaith Broadcasting Commission, which includes United Methodist participation, for the National Council of Churches. The program follows 10

people who have dealt with mental illness, and it offers expert analysis from mental health specialists, counselors and religious leaders. For details, go to www.shadowvoices.com.

BIG ISLAND, Va. (UMNS)

The Society of St. Andrew's popular Advent devotions program this year is called "Sharing Christmas." The hunger relief group seeks to help individuals and congregations focus and reflect on the Christmas story, preparing their hearts through prayer and reflection. Through selected Scriptures, the devotions also challenge the reader to share in the work and mission of Christ. The reader is asked to help feed the hungry in Jesus' name through the society's national hunger-relief work. Sample kits are available online at www.endhunger.org, by sending an e-mail to church@endhunger.org, or by calling (800) 333-4597. All materials are free. Each dollar contributed to the Society of St. Andrew will provide about 100 servings of fresh food to hungry Americans.

In The World

Sharing of stories can transform the world

by Kelly C. Martini

As the United States celebrated American Education Week, November 14-18, Korean-American United Methodist Women were returning home from their own training event with a different perspective on education — one in which the educator learns as much as the student.

That wasn't the expectation when 26 Korean-American United Methodist Women members went to train others at the Asian Christian Women's Leadership Training and Dialogue, October 16-21, in Incheon, Korea. These women, along with those of established organizations from Korea and



At the closing worship of the Asian Women Leadership training participants wrote prayers for mission on paper airplanes, then flew them around the room. Participants picked up each others airplanes and promised to pray the prayers. Image by: Courtesy of Jong-Kwan Kim Source: Women's Division

Singapore, found themselves being educated by women of some of the poorest and most oppressed regions of the world.

Close to 100 women from the Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Malaysia and China attended the event that was sponsored by Ewha University's Institute for Women's Studies, the United Board of Christian Higher Education in Asia, and the United Methodist Women's Division in the United States.

Hea Sun Kim, consultant on Korean-American women for the Women's Division, was one of the event's planners. According to Ms. Kim, the trainers found that every woman had a story, and every story had a teachable moment.

For Ms. Kim, these stories may eventually move women to transform the world.

"One Laotian woman really summed it up," she said. "They're just starting a woman's group in Laos. They're poor and don't have much. They thought that they were the only ones struggling in life. But, to hear Korean American women's stories — their struggles with what it means to live as immigrants in a foreign land with a generation gap, economic gaps, the language cultural gap, discrimination — was an eye-opening experience for them."

In the eyes of the woman from Laos, the Korean-American women were Americans from the United States — a



Women from the Philippines led the morning worship at the Asian Women Leadership Training. Image courtesy of: Jong-Kwan Kim Source: Women's Division

wealthy country where "everything's fine." The women from Laos were from a war-torn country with deep-seated poverty.

The similarities in experiences across cultural, economic and demographic boundaries united them and educated them all — educators, as well as students. From these similarities, a model for how women can be in mission with each other has been created.

"The women from Laos — and all the women involved — realized that women struggle with many of the same issues about what it means to be women of the church, to struggle with poverty, to speak different languages, and to cope with the widening gap between rich and poor," Ms. Kim said.

One Korean-American woman shared with the group that many times, women in the United States think of mission "as sending money" abroad to different programs and projects. This experience has changed

that. Mission is now about relationships, story-sharing, and empowering the women because of relationships.

Many women in Asia live in environments hostile to Christianity. One woman shared about the Christian and tribal persecution she experienced in her home country, her underground work, and her quest for asylum in Korea, so she could continue her ministry in safety. For others, confessing their Christian faith was an act of risking their life.

For those who were supposed to be the educators, these stories of faith moved them to a new understanding of mission — that mission is to empower women "with our listening ears, prayers, sisterhood, and support."

The Women's Division and Korean's Women's Society of Christian Service will help the Korean-Chinese women secure space for continuous women's training in their country, so they can accommodate the hundreds wanting education. For the woman endangered for confessing her faith, they will help her gain asylum and continue her ministry.

For Ms. Kim, the stories transformed both the teller and the listener.

"True sharing generates love and commitment for each other as sisters in Christ. And ultimately, one's transformation brings transformation of one's community and society. This is what we witnessed at the Asian women's gathering."

* Kelly C. Martini is executive secretary for communications for the Women's Division, United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries.

The World in Brief

PAKISTAN/KASHMIR: RELIEF CONTINUES

The rush to provide relief to earthquake-affected areas in South Asia continues. UMCOR Partners such as Church World Service, International Blue Crescent, Church's Auxiliary for Social Action, and others are working to provide relief in the form of shelter, food, and medical care. Last month's quake continues to take its toll as survivors suffer from disease and exposure to the harsh Himalayan winter. The latest reports estimate that more than 73,000 people in Pakistan and about 1,300 in India were killed in the quake. Additionally, more than a half million people remain without shelter as the bitter winter approaches. Please keep hope alive by giving generously to UMCOR Advance #232000, Pakistan/Kashmir Earthquake. You can also give by credit card online at www.methodistrelief.org.

AFRICA: FEEDING THE HUNGRY

According to the World Food Program 25,000 people die from hunger and poverty every day. Your gifts can make a difference. UMCOR's partner agencies throughout Africa are not only helping people get the food they need today, they are helping them prepare for tomorrow. Give to UMCOR Advance #101250, All Africa Famine Relief, and make a difference in someone's life.

NEW YORK (UMNS)

Two decades ago, the horrors of famine were thrust upon the world through photographs of hollow-eyed, starving children in Ethiopia. This year, the starving children can be found in Niger — and Malawi, Zimbabwe, and several other countries in southern Africa. Some 12 million people across the region are in urgent need of food aid, according to the United Nations' World Food Programme. But the Rev. Don Messer, a United Methodist theologian at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, believes the problem of hunger can be solved, despite situations like those in Niger. Ending Hunger Now: A Challenge to Persons of Faith, written and edited by Messer, along with former Senators Robert Dole, R-Kansas, and George McGovern, D-South Dakota, focuses on long-term solutions. The book was published this fall by Fortress Press.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Rains from Hurricanes Stan, Wilma as well as additional tropical storms in October triggered mudslides in Central America. Indigenous people groups were primarily affected as their homes and farms tend to be in the mountainous villages that were washed away. UMCOR is providing relief and support over the long term through local partners in Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador, and Honduras. Your gifts to UMCOR Advance #501300, Central American Emergency, give hope to those who lost so

much.

MONROVIA, Liberia (UMNS)

United Methodists throughout this West African country are expressing support for Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, who appears to have won the Nov. 8 presidential run-off election. If confirmed as winner, the United Methodist and former finance minister will be Africa's first female head of state. "She is our daughter. She grew up in this church, and we know how she was raised," said the Rev. Erlene Thompson of First United Methodist Church in Monrovia, where Johnson-Sirleaf is an active member.

MUTARE, Zimbabwe (UMNS)

Africa University celebrated the 30th anniversary of Angola's independence with a seminar Nov. 8. The event, which kicked off celebrations in Zimbabwe, featured presentations from a number of dignitaries, including Angola's ambassador to Zimbabwe, Joaquim de Lemos, as well as music and dance performances from students. The choice of Africa University as the venue for launching the celebrations reflected the school's increasing role in Angola's development. More than 70 graduates are working in all aspects of Angolan life as agriculturalists, pastors, sociologists, business professionals and others. With new partnerships involving Chevron Texaco, Agostino Neto University in Huambo and the Maria Luisa Foundation in Viana,

just outside Angola's capital city Luanda, the university will be providing additional training, research and technical support.

MUTARE, Zimbabwe (UMNS) —

Nineteen students have officially returned to classes at Africa University following weeks of uncertainty about their financial status. But that's just half of a group of 38 undergraduate students who were in danger of dropping out this semester due to financial hardship. Eleven weeks into the semester, the students, from five of the school's six academic disciplines, could not pay their fees. They'd applied for financial assistance from the university, but with the regular scholarship and financial aid funds exhausted, the school could not provide the level of help needed. Unable to register, the students remained on campus, praying for a miracle. For 19 of the 38, that miracle came in the form of grants from the university's Honorary Alumni Fund, created in 2000 to assist financially challenged students. The university invites supporters to become honorary alumni association members for \$50 annually. In the past five years, the school has raised \$49,000, which the university used to make the grants.

The Bible meets iPod

Twenty-first-century technology meets a 2,000-year-old book: the Bible meets the iPod. Zondervan, the world's largest Bible publisher, has partnered with Talking Panda, a leader in software development for the iPod, to release the TNIV Audio Bible for iPod in February 2006.

This marks the first audio Bible available in Apple retail stores. The TNIV Audio Bible for iPod will feature the complete TNIV Bible, both audio and text formats, as well as study notes from the bestselling Student Bible, a subject guide and 10 topical two-week reading plans. "To be able to carry and access the entire text of the Bible in a device that fits in the palm of your hand will be a great convenience to allow time-starved people to read or listen to the Bible whenever it suits them," said Mark Hunt, vice president and publisher of new media for Zondervan.

"This product allows users to read the text of the Bible on their iPod screen while listening to it on their earphones, which we think will be well-received by iPod enthusiasts."

The TNIV Audio Bible for iPod comes on a single DVD which allows users to easily install both audio and text files onto their iPod. Once installed, users can select a book, chapter and verse of the Bible and begin to listen and read along from that point. The iPod screen displays the text and also provides links to study notes from the Student Bible.

The Bible will be in Today's New International Version (TNIV) translation, which was launched earlier this year and designed to make Scripture easier to read and more understandable without compromising accuracy. The TNIV has been received particularly well by 18- to 34-year-olds, the same demographic as iPod users. "Research shows that the younger generation feels the Bible is relevant to their lives but they aren't engaging with it for a variety of reasons," said Hunt. "We believe this new format will make it more convenient and desirable for people to find time to either listen to or read God's Word," Hunt said.

Beginning in February 2006, the TNIV Audio Bible for iPod will be available in Apple stores, Christian and general market bookstores and other mass retail outlets across the country including Cokesbury. The suggested retail price will be \$49.99. Zondervan, a division of Harper Collins Publishers, produces Bibles, books, newmedia products, gift products from its Inspiring group and children's products from its Zonderkidz group.

Founded in 2004, Talking Panda is the leading developer of iPod software, with numerous entertaining and useful applications that expand iPod's potential beyond that of an ordinary mp3 player. All Talking Panda products are available at Apple retail stores and at <http://www.talkingpanda.com>.



TNIV Audio Bible for iPod
Complete Bible
Format: DVD-ROM

List Price: \$49.99
ISBN: 0-310-93550-4
Available: February 2006
Publisher: Zondervan

Conference to elect new lay leader

Lenora Thompson has served as conference lay leader for nearly eight years, since her election in June of 1998. During that time, she has devoted "thousands of hours of volunteer time and thousands of miles" in dedicated service to the conference. Thompson's two four-year terms of service will end in June of 2006 with the election of a new conference lay leader at Annual Conference.

Thompson defines this position as being "the voice of the laity." That involves both listening to laity from across the conference, and sharing that important input with the Bishop and other conference leadership. "I've loved every moment of it," Thompson says of her role as lay leader.



Lenora Thompson, EPA Conference Lay Leader.

Attention: Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Lay Persons

The time to prayerfully consider nominations for our new conference lay leader has arrived. The conference lay leader will be elected at the laity session on Wednesday June 21, 2006 at 2:00 pm at Arch Street UMC.

All nominations are to be submitted or postmarked by March 1, 2006. They are to be mailed to Carol Von Minden (Attn: Lay Leader Task Force), Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, P.O. Box 820, Valley Forge, PA 19481. Detailed information will be posted in subsequent NewSpirit editions.

To assist in this new selection process a Lay Leader Task force was formed.

The members are Royal Pinder, Central District; William (Bill) Matthews, East District; Judith (Judith) Ehninger, Northeast District; Elizabeth (Lisi) Fisher, Northwest District; George Hollich, Northwest District; Brenda Tildon, Southeast District; Ruth Daugherty, Southwest District (chair person).

You can find a full description for the position of Conference Lay Leader in the updated version of The Book of Discipline 2004 Errata via the internet on Page 355 and 362. The following is an overview of the description:

The Annual Conference Lay Leader is required to be a member of the following committees (he or she may be asked to serve on other commit-

tees):

Conference Committees

1. The Annual Conference
2. The Conference Committee on Nominations
3. The Conference Committee on Episcopacy
4. The Commission on Conference Sessions
5. The Congregational Transformation Team
6. Chairperson Board of Lay Ministry (3 Meetings per yr)
7. Lay Academy Task Forces

Jurisdictional
Board of Laity-meets once a year
National
National Association of Conference Lay Leaders

Election
In order for a person to be presented to the Annual Conference for consideration, he or she must have TEN nominations. The election process will be similar to the process for election of Laity to General Conference.

Helpful Qualifications

1. Written and verbal communication skills
2. Availability to participate on anticipated events
3. Ability and willingness to travel throughout the conference
4. Leadership skills
5. Team work

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610-265-7638 (fax)

UMCOR's Christmas wish list

Lists have become a Christmas tradition for many: children's Christmas lists, Christmas card address lists, shopping lists, a busy holiday season "to do" list, and others.

Below is a Christmas list from the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). It contains tangible ways you can show the indescribable love of God to hurting and struggling people in the world. Through your generosity, you and United Methodists everywhere can respond to Christ's command to feed the hungry, care for the sick, comfort the heartbroken, and welcome the stranger in our midst.

\$ 15.00 (UMCOR #250225)
 Supplement the diets of institutionalized children and adults in Armenia through UMCOR's Cheese distribution program.

\$ 20.00 (UMCOR #982730)
 Help ship blankets, medical supplies, hygiene articles, where they are needed most.

\$ 30.00 (UMCOR #418790)
 Serve a Haitian child a hot meal every day for a month.

\$ 40.00 (UMCOR #982345)
 Help train a health education worker to foster AIDS awareness in their community.

\$ 50.00 (UMCOR #982540)
 Help a refugee return home or find safety in a new location.



A girl in Mare Rouge. ACT is helping people in Haiti's drought-plagued northwest to survive and work for a better future. Credit: Paul Jeffrey/ACT International



This woman is carrying a bag of corn home to her family in Lisutu, Zambia, one area in southern Africa suffering from drought. Your gifts to UMCOR's Africa Famine Relief strengthen communities and reduce the risk of recurring famine. Credit: Copyright © 2002 Richard Lord / UMCOR



\$ 60.00 (UMCOR #982730)
 Build a beehive and train an African farmer in beekeeping.

\$ 70.00 (UMCOR #101250)
 Provide one month of food for a family facing famine in Africa.

\$ 80.00 (UMCOR #901670)
 Contribute to new ceilings and walls for a storm-damaged home in the US.

\$ 100.00 (One Great Hour of Sharing) Give a gift directly to UMCOR! The OGHS offering is UMCOR's backbone and allows us to keep our promise of sending 100% of designated funds to their intended project. You can give to OGHS at anytime of the year.



An ethnic Hazara girl, a refugee from Afghanistan, who lives in Quetta, Pakistan. Credit: Paul Jeffrey/ACT International

\$ 150.00 (UMCOR #982920)
 Furnish a half-kilo of miraculous moringa seeds and training to improve the diet and income of a farm family in Liberia.

\$ 200.00 (UMCOR #982450)
 Provide temporary shelter for a family displaced by a disaster such as an earthquake or flood.



When the land is vertical and the only transportation is by foot, how does the hospital in Okhaldhunga, Nepal get its supplies? The same way everything else is transported in that part of Nepal— by human porters. Credit: copyright © 2002 Richard Lord (Kathmandu, Nepal).

\$ 250.00 (UMCOR #901285)
 Offer one hour of legal work for an immigrant family caught in post-9/11 rules.

\$ 500.00 (UMCOR #602225)
 Dig a village well in Afghanistan and give 80-160 people clean drinking water.

\$ 700.00 (UMCOR #982575)
 Provide care and feeding for an explosive-sniffing dog to detect landmines in Angola.



Dogs are more effective and less time consuming than metal detectors because they only detect mines, not every piece of metal. The estimated cost for training is \$25,000 per dog. Credit: Paul Dirdak, UMCOR, Mozambique © 2001

100% of your gift goes to the program you choose. There are three ways to give:

By Offering: For local church and Annual Conference credit, make your check payable to your church and put your gift in the offering plate on Sunday. Note UMCOR # in memo line.

By Check: Make your check payable to UMCOR and mail to UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY 10087. Note UMCOR # in memo line.

By Credit Card: Call toll-free (800) 554-8583 for credit card donations over the telephone.

Visit: www.umcor.org



Bringing Christmas to those in need

From December 1 to 23, United Methodist Neighborhood Services (UMNS), located in the city of Philadelphia, will sponsor a Christmas shop for low income, inner city residents. The shop will feature toys and clothing for the holidays. Specific days are set aside for children (Dec. 10 and 17) and for senior citizens (Dec. 8 and 15) to shop for family members at very affordable prices.

New toys and clothes were donated to UMNS by members of United Methodist Churches as well as by merchants in the community. These items are then made available to area residents to share the joy of Christmas giving with their families and friends.

In addition, UMNS donated 58 lap blankets to area nursing homes for the elderly. They were packaged in Christmas bags that were donated by St. Mark's UMC of Broomall and Lehman UMC in Hatboro.

"Tis the season to give thanks and want to thank everyone for helping us at United Methodist Neighborhood Services to enhance the lives of neighbors in special need through your



Dr. Mary White stands with a table full of items donated for the Christmas Shop for low income children and seniors.

gifts," said Dr. Mary White, executive director of UMNS. "Your support helps us carry out our mission and we appreciate your partnership."

For more information contact Dr. Mary White, 215-236-0304 or mwhite9891@aol.com.

The Workshops at Annual Conference 2006

Thanks to everyone for a wonderful response to the 2005 Workshops at Annual Conference. We read your comments and plan to come back in 2006 bigger and better than ever with new topics of interest, more time, and a great workshop faculty. Stay tuned for registration information and a complete list of workshops to follow. If you have questions, please e-mail Brenda Tildon at brendatildon@aol.com



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Peace with Justice grants available from Church and Society

At the end of January 2006, the application process will begin for Peace with Justice Grants. The grants are available in two areas:

Individuals and for Programs initiated by the Church and Society Work Team (CSWT), other Eastern PA Conference agencies, District groups or local churches. In addition, programs may be initiated by a community group with a significant involvement of United Methodists of the Eastern PA Conference.

Grants for groups or congregations are primarily intended to support pilot programs or demonstration projects that can serve as models for other local churches or as seed money for projects that will be supported by other funding sources. The maximum amount to be granted is \$2,000. Grants for individuals are primarily directed to assisting work and/or study opportunities or to provide assistance with summer internships. The maximum grant for this program is \$500.

The intent of these grants is to address an issue of Social Justice, guided by both The Social Principles and The Book of Discipline. Thus grants are awarded for efforts to:

- Seek alternatives to violence and its causes,

- Support alternatives to war and militarism,
- Shape economic and social policies that promote economic justice and the self-development of peoples.
- Promote restorative justice, including abolition of the death penalty.

The funds from these grants are derived from the annual *Peace with Justice* offering taken from June to year end by churches in the Eastern PA Conference. The proceeds are evenly divided between the *Peace with Justice (PwJ)* fund administered by the General Board of Church and Society, and the Annual Conference *PwJ* fund administered by Church and Society Work Team. In accordance with The United Methodist *Book of Discipline*, "Peace with Justice witnesses to God's demand for a faithful, just, disarmed, and secure world." The Discipline further provides that the Conference *PwJ* funds be administered by the Annual Conference Board of Church and Society or equivalent structure (*paragraph 264*). The Church and Society Work Team is further guided by the United Methodist *Social Principles*.

For more information please contact Rev. Carolee Brubaker at cbrubaker@westchestermc.org.

Invitation for Clergy and Laity to Participate in Study of Ministry

The 2004 General Conference gave the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry the task of establishing a Commission for the Study of Ministry that will report to General Conference in 2008, and they need your help. The goal of the study commission is to provoke a conversation within the whole church about lay, licensed, and ordained ministry in order to gain clarity about the vital importance and challenges of leadership today. As part of the design to "provoke a conversation," the commission is asking laity, local pastors and ordained clergy to respond to an online survey about ministry in The United Methodist Church. The survey can be accessed through the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry website at www.gbhem.org. Please take time to respond to this survey and let your voice be heard on this vital issue.

Called to ministry as a local pastor?

The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference offers two schools for those individuals in the local pastor path to ministry, particularly those with a full time job and a family. **The Eastern PA Conference Licensing School** is an alternative to the two week course offered by the Northeast Jurisdiction at Drew University each July. It is sponsored by the Board of Ordained Ministry and directed by The Rev. Gordon Hendrickson. It targets individuals who cannot take two weeks off from their work or families to attend school. One local pastor said that she would never be serving in her local church if it weren't for this alternative school. Classes are held on Saturdays and will be rotated among four geographic areas in the conference. Individuals considering the Licensing School should be certified candidates anticipating an appointment to a local church.

For information on becoming a certified candidate, go to <http://www.gbhm-umc.org/EPCBOOM/> and click on "Candidacy Information".

Completion of the school however, does not guarantee an appointment.

Upon completing the Licensing School and receiving an appointment to a local church, the licensed local pastor must continue their education process in **The Course of Study**. The Course of Study is comprised of twenty courses, usually offered by a seminary that has been selected by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC has been selected as the location for the Northeast Jurisdiction. Wesley offers 12 of the 20 courses at the Philadelphia Area Extension School. These are designed to complement Wesley's summer courses. Gordon Hendrickson works under Dr. Ellis Larsen to direct these classes. Classes move around in the metropolitan area as determined by the location of students participating in the program. Classes have been held in Allentown, Exton/West Chester, Center City and Vineland, NJ. The extension school primarily targets the part-time local pastor who has a difficult time getting two weeks off work to attend Wesley.

For more information, contact the Rev. Gordon Hendrickson at gordonacts6@msn.com or 610-469-0429.

Youth Rally 2006 ... Young People's Ministry

The 19th Annual Event sponsored by the Peninsula - Delaware Conference of The UMC. All youth groups are invited. Friday, January 6 - Sunday, January 8, 2006. Roland Powell Convention Center, Ocean City, MD.

Hear national speakers and musicians share a power packed message with plenty of relevance, grace, and passion, bring your youth group for a time of renewal, take your youth group to the next level, attend practical seminars on youth worker training and Christian discipleship fellowship and worship with over 5000 youth and adult leaders.

Print a registration form from www.pen-del.org/ypm. Please send \$40 per person (which includes a t-shirt) if registered by October 18th, \$50 if registered by November 18th, and \$60 per person if registered by December 18th. The at the door price is \$74 per person. If you register in December and at the door, a t-shirt is NOT INCLUDED.

Hotel/lodging and meals are in addition to the registration cost... Each youth group is responsible for securing their own room reservations and meals.

The music: Chris Tomlin, www.christomlin.com, George Huff, www.wma.com/ccm, Starfield, www.starfield.com, Falling Up, www.fallingup.com, Stephen Hurd,

www.loneaokentertainment.com, Jme Medina, www.jmemedina.com, King Cys, www.kingcys.com.

The Message: Stacey Foster, www.compassion.com or www.ambassadoragency.com, Carol Kent, www.carolkent.org, Brock gill, www.brockgill.com.

Creative Artists: The Skit Guys, www.theskitguys.com and Mike Lewis, www.thejesuspainter.com.

On Saturday morning and Saturday afternoon there will be breakout sessions for middle school, high school, youth worker training and adult discipleship.

On Saturday afternoon, there will be inflatable games for all ages.

For a full color brochure and information about registration contact Penny Carney, Office of Young People's Ministry, Peninsula - Delaware Conference, 877.736.3351 or pcarney@pen-del.org

For information about the content of the event, please contact David Burke, Director of Young People's Ministry at 877.736.3351 or dburke@pen-del.org.

Go to www.pen-del.org to download registration forms, health forms and plenty of details.

All youth groups are invited. Last year several youth groups from Eastern PA as well as others from various churches and denominations attended.



New video explores "gifts of aging"

By Kathy L. Gilbert*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS) - A new video produced by the United Methodist Church's Board of Discipleship drives home the point that God's call doesn't end when a person retires and neither does the retiree's value to the church.

"God didn't call us to be Christians just until we reach a certain age," says the Rev. Hazel Bennett, chairperson of The United Methodist Committee on Older Adult Ministries and one of the voices on "New Beginnings: The Gifts of Aging."

The 20-minute video features vignettes demonstrating the active role older adults are playing in the life of the church and society. In the United States, 35 million people are over the age of 65, and that number will rise to 70 million by 2030. In The United Methodist Church, about 62 percent of the members are 50 or older, says the Rev. Richard H. Gentzler Jr., director of the United Methodist Board of Discipleship's Center on Aging and Older Adult Ministries.

"We cannot afford to allow the faith, wisdom and experience that abound in older adults to be lost or under utilized," he says. "The church has the opportunity to reframe the experience of aging and help cultivate among older adults the qualities of spiritual maturity."

"Interesting, nowhere in the Bible does

it say that Christians are to retire from discipleship,"

Gentzler says. "Rather, we are invited and encouraged to plan for new activities and pursuits that bring joy and satisfaction in later years."

The video takes a look at aging in society and offers a glimpse into the lives of older adults, such as 94-year-old Alma Sloan. In another vignette, Ray and Ruth Thompson, both in their 70s, collect day-old baked goods and distribute them to the needy in their community seven days a week. Other stories on the video show older adults tutoring children, repairing homes and learning new skills.

"New Beginnings: The Gifts of Aging" is available in DVD and VHS formats at \$15 each. It was produced by United Methodist Communications and is available for ordering at www.upperroom.org/bookstore. A leader's guide has also been developed and is available for free at www.aging-umc.org or by contacting the Center on Aging and Older Adult Ministries, P.O. Box 340003, Nashville, TN 37202-0003; phone: (877) 899-2780, Ext. 7177; fax: (615) 340-7071; or e-mail rgentzler@gbod.org.

The Committee on Older Adult Ministries also has announced that it has limited funding for grants available in older adult ministry. Grant applications must be submitted on or before Jan. 15 for 2006. The maximum amount of any single grant awarded is up to \$2,500. For additional information, contact Teri Kline at the above address and phone number or tkline@gbod.org. A downloadable application is available at www.aging-umc.org.

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



94-year-old Alma Sloan has been baking the communion bread for Creighton (Mo.) United Methodist Church since around 1976. A UMNS photo by Kathy Gilbert.

Conference takes a look at faith and aging

Seventy-four persons concerned about ministry with older adults attended the Older Adult Conference in Allentown, Pa on October 21 and 22.

Mrs. Dorothea Burnett, coordinator of Older Adult Ministry for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, gave the opening statement, and The Rev. Richard Erisman, a committee member, presented scriptural devotions. Praise Dancers from St. Matthews United Methodist Church, who range in age from 55 to 90, presented an inspiring dance.

The Rev. Dr. Rodney Shearer, District Superintendent of the Northeast District, gave the opening message on Friday evening. Dr. Shearer noted passages from the letters from Paul to Timothy that speak to ministry with older adults. He said, "Many times older adults play such significant behind-the-scenes roles in our lives. And then we become older adults!" He quoted 2 Timothy 1:5: "I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also." Dr. Shearer honored the influence of his own grandmothers in his faith development, noting that "ministry to and with older adults will influence all other ministry done in the name of Jesus Christ."

The Reverend Dr. Richard Gentzler, Jr. was the workshop leader for the conference. Dr. Gentzler is the director of the

Center on Aging and Older Adult Ministries for the General Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church. Nationally recognized as a teacher and writer, he is a leader in the field of aging and older adult ministries.

Dr. Gentzler is the author of numerous books on adult and older-adult ministry. His latest book is [The Graying of the Church: A Leader's Guide for Older Adult Ministry in The United Methodist Church](#). In addition, he has written [Designing an Older Adult Ministry](#); [Aging: God's Challenge to Church and Synagogue](#); and [Adult Ministries](#) (Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation series). He publishes the [Center Sage](#) newsletter and has recently co-produced [Rock of Ages](#), a large-print worship and songbook.

Conference workshops included [Myths and Reality of Aging](#), [Faith Issues with Aging](#) and [The Church's Role: Looking at Specific Models with Older Adults](#).

If you are interested in establishing an Older Adult Ministry in your local church, please contact Mrs. Dorothea Burnett for resources and information at 215-476-5504 or othea9@netzero.com. For information on the Center for Aging and Older Adult Ministries and grants they offer, go to: <http://www.gbod.org/coa/default.asp> or contact Dr. Gentzler at 1-877-899-2780, ext. 7173 or rgentzler@gbod.org.

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

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Resources

2005 ADVENT WREATH CANDLELIGHTING MEDITATIONS

This set of brief meditations and Scriptures may be used in lighting the candles of the Advent wreath in worship at church or home. A suggested hymn from both The United Methodist Hymnal and The Faith We Sing is provided, as an option, to conclude each meditation. Go to: http://www.gbod.org/worship/default.asp?act=reader&item_id=15104

Or contact Dean McIntyre, Director of Music Resources, The United Methodist General Board of Discipleship, PO Box 340003; Nashville TN 37203-0003; <http://www.umcworship.org>

UMCOR CALENDAR: MAKE 2006 A YEAR OF HOPE

— UMCOR's 13-month wall calendar, Harvest of Hope, highlights its work around the world. The Harvest of Hope calendar is just \$10 and includes a free CD containing a computer screensaver using the calendar's rich images and bulletin inserts to print and share with others. Order now! Limited quantities are available. Call 1-800-305-9857 or visit the GBGM E-Store at <https://gbgm-umc.org/e-store/detail.cfm?ID=1214>

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For more information, contact Dean McIntyre, Director of Music Resources, The United Methodist General Board of Discipleship, PO Box 340003; Nashville TN 37203-0003; Toll free telephone 877-899-2780, ext 7073; Email: music@gbod.org; Website: <http://www.umcworship.org>

NEW BULLETIN INSERT: SOUTH ASIA AND CENTRAL AMERICA DISASTERS

— Two terrible disasters occurred recently: mudslides in Central America buried entire villages and killed hundreds; and a powerful earthquake rocked Pakistan and neighboring countries killing tens of thousands and displacing millions.

UMCOR is responding to these events through local partners already operating in the affected areas. The new UMCOR bulletin insert, "A Message of Hope: When the Earth Shakes and the Mountains Give Way," tells just how UMCOR is providing hope in these seemingly hopeless situations. It also explains how you can be a part of this response. Please print and share this bulletin insert with others. Consider a special offering to ensure that your heart and hands can continue to work with vulnerable people in these two devastated locations. The bulletin insert is available at <http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor/print/bulletininserts/pakistan.cfm>

Scholarships and Fellowships from United Methodist Communications: Leonard M. Perryman Communications Scholarship for Ethnic Minority Students - Undergraduate study of religion

journalism/mass communications. Applications are due by March 15, 2006, for the \$2,500 scholarship for undergraduate study of religion journalism/mass communications. The scholarship assists an undergraduate United Methodist student, who intends on pursuing a career in religion journalism, in their study at an accredited U.S. college or university. The Perryman Scholarship promotes excellence by helping students continue their studies in communication, including such media as audio/visual, electronic and print journalism. United Methodist students are encouraged to apply. One scholarship will be awarded to the best overall candidate. For more information or, to receive an application packet, contact: Perryman Scholarship Committee, Communications Resourcing Team - UMCOR, P.O. Box 320, Nashville, TN 37202-0320; E-mail: scholarships@umcom.org

Judy Weidman Racial Ethnic Minority Fellowship - United Methodist Communications offers a one-year fellowship for work in religion communications to a United Methodist of racial ethnic minority origin. The recipient will be placed in an annual conference to work in a variety of media and mentored by an experienced communicator. Qualifications:

- Must be a United Methodist of racial ethnic minority heritage
- A recent college or seminary graduate with a specialization in communications
- Interested in pursuing communications within The United Methodist Church as a career. For more information, visit the web site at: <http://crt.umc.org/rem/>

Stoody-West Fellowship for Graduate study in religious journalism- Applications are due by March 15, 2006, for the \$6,000 Stoody-West Fellowships in religious journalism offered in recognition of the work and lives of Dr. Ralph Stoody and Dr. Arthur West, leaders in public relations and information services in The United Methodist Church. The grant will assist one United Methodist student in their post-graduate study at an accredited U.S. college or university who intends on pursuing a career in religious journalism. The purpose of the fellowship is to enhance the recipient's professional competence and thereby help to perpetuate the standards exemplified by Ralph Stoody and Arthur West. Religious journalism is interpreted to include news writing for secular press, church press and for church institutions. The committee will consider appropriate news and journalism forms, including electronic and broadcast media, as well as print. Application forms may be obtained by writing to: Fellowship Committee, Communications Resourcing Team - UMCOR, PO Box 320, Nashville, TN 37202-0320; 1-888-CRT-4UMC or 1-888-278-4862; email: scholarships@umcom.org For information online for any of the above, go to: www.umcom.org other scholarships, go to: www.gbhem.org or <http://www.epaumc.org/BfScholarGrants.asp>



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"Teaching Christology in a Postmodern Context"

by Dr. Tyrone Inbody, Professor of Theology at United Seminary.



Dr. Tyrone Inbody, UTS
Professor of Theology

- Lecture One: "Teaching Christology in a Post-Holocaust Church: Jesus and the Jews, Then and Now"
- Lecture Two: "Teaching Christology in a Pluralistic World: Jesus and the World Religions"
- Lecture Three: "Teaching Christology In an Electronic Culture: Jesus and the Movies"

The cost (which includes lunch and .4 CEU) is \$49.00

For additional information or to register, contact **Rev. Timothy Smith, 717-872-5331, pastor@FumcMillersville.com**

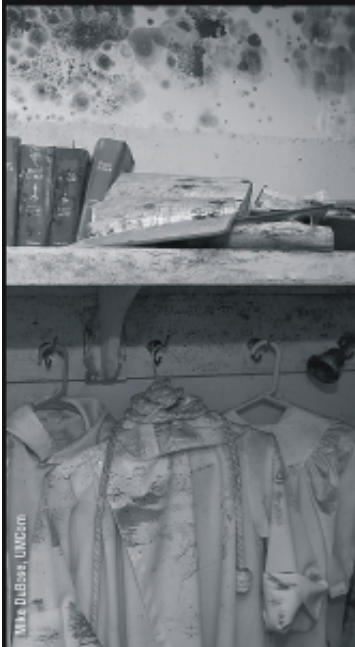
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THE KATRINA #818-001 CHURCH RECOVERY APPEAL



Katrina is not over. Please join the efforts to restore our congregations, parsonages and mission facilities.

We mourn with our brothers and sisters their great losses while we embrace this opportunity for United Methodists to show commitment to our faith and to one another. Together we can restore mission and ministry while moving into a strong future. Please open your hearts and your wallets to the **Katrina Church Recovery Appeal (#818-001)**. All money you give will help to:

- Restore hurricane-damaged United Methodist facilities.
- Pay salaries for clergy while their congregations cannot do so or until pastors can be reappointed or relocated to another church.
- Establish new congregations or consolidate existing ones in storm-ravaged areas.
- Provide worship necessities—Bibles, hymnals, robes and so forth—to churches in need.

Gifts may be sent in two ways:

- Individual contributions—Donate directly online by accessing the Web site at www.umc.org/churchrecovery
- Local church offerings—Send to conference treasurer. In the memo portion of the check, write Bishops' Appeal, #818-001.

WWW.UMC.ORG

Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church.

EPA Conference offers funding for ministry - PART 2

The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference offers funding, grants, loans, and scholarships, made possible through the conference Connectional Ministries Fund. This article is a continuation of one that appeared in the November issue of *NEWSpirit* Newspaper. Here are some of the monies available; some have application deadlines.

Camping and Nurture Ministries

• "Camperships" are provided to assist children and youth who might otherwise be unable to attend one of the four conference summer camps due to family financial hardship. Information on obtaining assistance will be included in the 2006 camping brochures and on the conference website.

• Support is provided for faith-forming and leadership development events for children, youth and young adults. The funds are raised at United Methodist sponsored outings to the Philadelphia Phillies, Philadelphia 76ers, Hershey Park, and other similar events.

For further information contact Mr. Jim Wilkin, director of Camping and Nurture Ministries, 1-800-828-9093, ext. 225; jim.wilkin@epaumc.org

Latino Plan and Ministries

• Scholarships are provided for Latino/a lay persons or pastors seeking to complete their seminary

studies or in the process of completing their undergraduate education with plans to enter into the pastoral ministry. If you believe you qualify for this grant, please call the Office of Latino Ministries to find out how to request a scholarship.

• Small grants are provided to Latino congregations for lay leadership training, and coaching for clergy or church growth. The amount of the grant depends on the viability of the project, availability of funds, and the assessment of the overall mission and vision of the church soliciting the funds.

For further information, contact the Rev. Rene Perez, director of Outreach and Church Multiplication Ministries, 1-800-828-9093, ext. 218; rene.perez@epaumc.org

Leadership

• Scholarships are offered to lay persons interested in attending Lay Speaker training through Christ Servant Ministries and the Lay Academy. Requests should be sent to Fran Sokso, 128 Lake Drive, Downingtown, PA 19335; fsokso@juno.com; 610-269-3192; or Lenora Thompson, 5734 West Oxford Street, Philadelphia, PA 19131; lenorathompson@hotmail.com; 215-878-0408.

• Funds are available to support the training of individuals in and/or creation and development of Native

American Ministries within the EPA Conference.

For further information, contact The Rev. Hilda Campbell, director of Human Relations and Leadership, 1-800-828-9093, ext. 224; hilda.campbell@epaumc.org

Scholarships

• Scholarships are offered to seminary students. Application deadlines are March 1 for fall awards and November 1 for spring awards. For applications and information, go to: <http://www.epaumc.org/BfScholarGrants.asp>

• Scholarships are offered to undergraduates. Application deadline is March 1 for fall awards. For applications and information, go to: <http://www.epaumc.org/BfScholarGrants.asp>

For more information, contact Ms. Stacy Martin, executive director of the Eastern Pennsylvania-Peninsula United Methodist Foundation, 1-800-828-9093, ext. 247; stacy.martin@epaumc.org or The Rev. Dr. Dorothy Watson Tatem, director of Urban and Global Ministries, 1-800-866-6855; dorothy.watsonatatem@epaumc.org

Urban and Global Ministries

• Grants are given to the Communities of Shalom of the

Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. These grants facilitate churches and clusters when they seek funds from organizations and agencies in the General Church and beyond.

• Scholarships enable lay and clergy persons to attend conferences that will enhance their leadership in the church, district and conference, and enrich their spiritual growth.

For further information contact The Rev. Dr. Dorothy Watson Tatem, director of Urban and Global Ministries, 1-800-866-6855; dorothy.watsonatatem@epaumc.org

Your church makes this ministry possible through its faithful commitment to the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Connectional Ministries Fund.

Classifieds

SEEKING POSITION - with the UMC as a **SECRETARY OR ASSISTANT** of no more than 20 hours a week, salary negotiable, in the area of the Lehigh Valley. Experience as a church secretary, administrative assistant of 11 years with the Episcopal Church, 15 years with the UCC church and 8 years with the United Methodist Church. Contact Susan J. Unangst at 610-767-0618. Excellent references available.

ASSOCIATE GENERAL SECRETARY position for the Northeastern Jurisdiction and the White Constituency Portfolio of The General Commission on Religion and Race - Applications must be received no later than February 15, 2006. Applications (required) should be requested from and nominations given to: Kimberly Dixon Harris, Human Resource Manager, 100 Maryland Avenue, NE, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20002-5620; (202) 547-2271; kdixon@gcorr.org

CHOIR DIRECTOR/ORGANIST - Mid-size church seeks one or two people to lead music programs. Two Sunday morning services and week. Knowledge of sacred music required. For more info see church website: www.fumcphoenixville.org. Send resume to: Bill Akin, First United Methodist Church, 865 South Main Street, Phoenixville, PA 19460.

YOUTH MINISTER (PT) - Hope United Methodist Church in Havertown is seeking a part-time Youth Minister to lead youth in grades 6-12. Minimum 20 hours per month required, as well as regular attendance at services. Looking for a caring, creative, constructive Christian. For full job description or to apply, contact Nancy Hill at (610) 446-3351, or Coisswk@aol.com.

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES (PT) - Hope United Methodist Church in Havertown is seeking a part-time Director of Children's Ministries to lead children in grades K-5. Only 2-3 hours per week to start; position has opportunity for growth. If you are Happy, Optimistic, Pleasant, Enthusiastic, Fun, Understanding, and Loving, then the HOPEFUL's of Hope UMC want you! For full job description or to apply, contact Nancy Hill at (610) 446-3351, or Coisswk@aol.com.

In the spirit of giving



By Stacy Martin*

Most of us are already aware of our call to fulfill the financial needs of our local church and to support its giving to the apportionment funds and other conference level benevolent giving. This giving is referred to as "first mile" giving.

"Second mile" giving is those gifts above and beyond what we originally planned. They include our response to 911, the Tsunami, and Katrina and Rita, as well as ongoing ministries in more than 100 countries around the world.

"Advance Specials" are ministries approved by The United Methodist Church to receive "second mile" giving funds. All Advance ministries are related to the United Methodist annual conferences and Central Conferences, partner churches outside the United States or interfaith organizations. They are screened and administered by the General Board of Global Ministries.

Important features of this giving include:

1) your gift will reach its destination, as the General Conference on Finance and Administration assures the accounting and transmission of every Advance gift

2) your gift will be used for whatever ministry you choose to support

3) 100% of your gift goes to the ministry you choose, as all Advance administrative and promotional costs are covered by other fund sources!

For information on Advance ministries, go to: <http://gbgm-umc.org/advance>, or call (212) 870-3790.

There are three ways that you can give through the Advance:

1) make your check payable to your local church and write the name of the project and the Advance code number on the check. Give this to your church Treasurer so that your local church and annual conference will get Advance credit.

2) Make your check payable to "Advance GCFA" with the name of the project and the Advance code number on the check. Send the check to: Advance GCFA, P.O. Box 9068 GPO, New York, NY 10087-9068.

3) Call (888) 252-6174 to give by credit card.

Remember: However you choose to give, 100% of your gift will go to the ministry you choose!

Giving and the IRS

On September 23, 2005 President Bush signed into law a temporary suspension of limits for certain charitable deductions. Katrina Emergency Tax Relief Act of 2005 ("KETRA") allows people to GIVE AND DEDUCT larger gifts made in the last quarter of 2005.

Charitable cash gifts (not stock) made by an individual to any public charity (two exceptions) for any charitable purpose for the last part of this year will not be subject to the 50% annual charitable deduction limitation. Further, the deduction will not

be reduced if the individual has income over \$146,000 and is subject to the 3% phase-out for itemized deductions.

The two exceptions are gifts to Section 509(a)(3) supporting organizations and contributions to a Donor Advised Fund. The rule regarding gifts to private foundations and gifts of publicly traded stock do not change and do not qualify for this expanded exception.

There has been some discussion surrounding withdrawals from an IRA to make a contribution. It should be noted that the general idea of having a 100% deduction offset the 100% taxable withdrawal has some appeal and some caveats. The appeal is that for some, their IRA is one of their largest assets. The caveats begin with the 10% penalty - it still applies if the individual is not yet 59 ½ years old. Further, if the individual's income is over \$146,000 then the phase-out of deductions does apply thereby reducing the charitable deduction. The amount of federal income tax may be small, perhaps 1% - 2%, but the possibility of federal tax exists. Additionally, state income tax may apply depending on your state's laws.

This Act applies to gifts made between August 28, 2005 and December 31, 2005. That means that you cannot write your checks on December 31 - the last day of the Act is December 30.

As always, be sure to consult your tax advisor before making any decisions, and wish him or her a very merry Christmas!

* Stacy Martin is executive director of the Eastern Pennsylvania-Peninsula United Methodist Foundation; stacy.martin@epaumc.org



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