Military chaplain deploys Christmas joy in Iraq

By Suzy Keenan

Major Clyde Scott conducted an unusual military operation in Iraq on December 22. Scott, a United Methodist pastor, is chaplain with the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 101st Airborne Division. This military operation brought Christmas peace, joy, and love to 160 children in a Christian school in Kirkuk, Iraq through Major Scott’s “Operation Christmas Toys.”

Scott, deployed to Iraq since September, 2005, came up the idea for “Operation Christmas Toys” after several local Iraqi clergy requested that the 1st Brigade Combat Team bring Christmas gifts to the children of two Christian Churches. Although Iraq is predominately Arab and Muslim, a diverse population of Arabs, Turkomen, and Kurdish peoples, of both Christian and Muslim faith, live in this particular area north of Baghdad. Wanting to be impartial, he decided he would deliver the gifts.

Bishop Marcus Matthews visits Africa University

By Suzy Keenan

Bishop Marcus Matthews returned on December 6 from a visit to Old Mutare, Zimbabwe on the continent of Africa. Old Mutare is home to Africa University, the United Methodist-related university that serves the continent of Africa.

Bishop Matthews, who has been instrumental in the founding and growth of Africa University, sits on the university’s Development Board. This board has a goal of seeing Africa University be self-supporting by undergirding it with an endowment. The endowment, which began at $10 million, has been built up to $40 million, but more is needed to provide for groundwork and growth.

Africa University is unique in that its students come from all over the African Continent. “It is a true blessing,” said Bishop Matthews.
FEBRUARY 7, 21
Debtors Anonymous
Meets at Thorndale UMC the first and third Tuesday at 7:30 pm. 3055 Lincoln Highway, Thorndale, PA. 610-384-2433.

FEBRUARY 9, 16, 23
AA, Alanon
Meets each Thursday at Thorndale UMC at 6:30 PM. 3055 Lincoln Highway, Thorndale, PA. 610-384-2433.

FEBRUARY 12
Allesage Renewal Ministries presents Worship Conference 2006
A fellowship, teaching, training and worship event to equip your ministry! To be held at the Allesage Renewal Center, Valley Forge, PA in Goodlettsville, TN.
Get more information and register online at:
www.epaumc.org/conference

FEBRUARY 13
S. Bell, Director of Stewardship, Center for Christian Stewardship, The United Methodist Church
Two Dates: February 17 and 24, 2006. 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM
Fees: $20 per person - Cost includes lunch.
Registration: Deadline February 10.

FEBRUARY 14
Dr. Larry Sumrall
“Lessons from the Desert: Ministering in Dry Places”
Rev. Dr. Frank Hallman, "Breaking Barriers to Intimacy with God” - Margie Burger, "Productive Retreats: How to be an Oxy
moron” - Steve Krenz, “Eyes to Hear - To be held at Simpson House, 2101 Belmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19131; 215-878-3060. Watch for additional details to follow at a later date!

FEBRUARY 20
United Methodist Day at Hershey Park - a day filled with performances of live Christian music, fun, food, and fellowship.
For more information, contact Mr. Jim Wilkin, director of camping and nurture ministries. jwilkin@epaumc.org or 1-800-828-9083, ext. 225.

FEBRUARY 25
“Growing in Faith to Serve Christ in the World”
With Rev. Dr. David Hartley, Professor of Mission Studies at Palmer Theological Seminary and Ordained Deacon in Full Connection in the Western Michigan Conference. All Deacons, Discipleship Ministers and Deacon Candidates are encouraged to attend.

FEBRUARY 25
Prayer Partners/Prayer Breakfast
Meet at Thorndale UMC the first and third Saturday at 8:30 AM. Please call Clarita Krall, director, 1-800-828-9093, ext. 247 or ecolliver@comcast.net.

FEBRUARY 27
Philadelphia Area clergy - please place these important dates with Bishop Michael E. Conn. on your calendar:

FEBRUARY 1
- Bishop’s Lenten Day Apart - SEE PAGE 3

FEBRUARY 8
- Bishop’s Liturgy Sabbath

FEBRUARY 12
- Bishop’s superintendent

FEBRUARY 15
- Bishop’s Lenten Day Apart

FEBRUARY 18
- Bishop’s Women’s Day

FEBRUARY 21
- Bishop’s Evangelism Day

FEBRUARY 22
- Bishop’s Renewal Conference

FEBRUARY 24
- Bishop’s Midwinter Retreat

FEBRUARY 27
- Bishop’s Advent Day Apart

FEBRUARY 28
- Bishop’s Lenten Day Apart

FEBRUARY 29
- Bishop’s Midwinter Retreat

MARCH 3
- Bishop’s Early Retirement

MARCH 4
- Bishop’s Women’s Day

MARCH 9
- Bishop’s Evangelism Day

MARCH 10
- Bishop’s Renewal Conference

FEBRUARY 10 - Bishop’s Lenten Day Apart
- SEE PAGE 3

FEBRUARY 17
United Methodist Marriage Encounter in YORK — “Rediscover the one you love on a Marriage Encounter Week-end! Marriage Encounter is 44 hours where married couples can get away from jobs, kids, chores and phones—and focus only on each other. If you would like greater depth, growth, and enrichment in your relationships, you’ll like the difference a marriage Encounter United Methodist Weekend can make! For registration information and prices please contact Dick & Donna Risiger 224 Main Ave., Warren, PA 16365; (814) 723-1226 or Bernel & Jola Shoff (717) 244-4581; 918 Old Commons Rd, Windsor Pa 17366 or on line at www.encounter.org

MAY 12
Innaboh Outing
Save the date!
More information will be forthcoming.

JUNE 11
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 12
Save the date!
United Methodist Day at Hershey Park - a day filled with performances of live Christian music, fun, food, and fellowship.
For more information, contact Mr. Jim Wilkin, director of camping and nurture ministries. jwilkin@epaumc.org or 1-800-828-9083, ext. 225.

JUNE 19, 21, 23-24
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, 117 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/bo879/PH-LP- main.wntr

JUNE 29
at 7:05 - United Methodist Day at the Phillies. Phillies vs. Florida Marlins
For more information, contact Mr. Jim Wilkin, director of camping and nurture ministries, jwilkin@epaumc.org or 1-800-828-9083, ext. 225.

AUGUST 11-13
The 23rd Academy for Laity
The Inn at Reading, 1040 Park Road, Wyomissing, PA
“Growing in Faith to Serve Christ—in the local church, the community, and the World.” Offering the Basic Course and Advanced Courses for Christ servant Ministers. Open to all Laity and Advanced Courses for Christ servant Ministers. Open to all Laity.

SEPTEMBER 29 – OCT. 1
United Methodist Marriage Encoun-
trer in Pittsburgh Area — “Rediscover the one you love on a Marriage En-
counter Weekend! Marriage Encoun-
ter is 44 hours where married couples can get away from jobs, kids, chores and phones—and focus only on each other. If you would like greater depth, growth, and enrichment in your relationships, you’ll like the difference a marriage Encounter United Methodist Weekend can make! For more information, please contact Dick & Donna Risiger 224 Main Ave., Warren, Pa 16365, (814) 723-1226 or Bernel & Jola Shoff (717) 244-4581; 918 Old Commons Rd, Windsor Pa 17366 or on line at www.encounter.org

JUNE 17-27, 2007
WORLD METHODIST EVANGELISM INSTITUTE 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN 2007 EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL EVANGELISM INSTITUTE
All worldwide Methodist/Wesleyan conferences and districts are invited to send lay and clergy delegates to the upcoming World Methodist 8th International Evangelism Seminar in Atlanta. Contact Dr. Winston O. Reynolds, Director World Methodist Evangelism Institute of the World Methodist Council 1700 Clifton Road, P.3, Atlanta, GA 30329. Tel. 404-727-3634, Fax. 404-727-5236, Website: www.wmeci.org
Bishop leads the search for Shalom at Mid-Winter Retreat

By The Rev. Robert R. Shank*

Over 250 clergy and their spouses were searching together for Shalom in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware this January, as part of any annual retreat in the past 6 years spent in study, prayer, and worship as they conducted their search.

The stage was set in the opening worship when Rev. Mandy Miller assured the participants there would be signs along the way to let them know they were on the right track. She quoted the lyrics of a popular U2 song: “You broke the bonds and you freed the captive / of our lectionary, so they don’t need to accept and struggle with the entire text of scripture, including those passages that are difficult or challenging.”

Dean Maxine Clarke Beach

The initial task was to define what Shalom is and what it looks like. Theocracies include peace, safety, tranquility, health, and friendship. Upon closer examination, Shalom looks a lot like The Kingdom of God.

An overriding assumption was that we struggle with justice every day. Why? Dean Beach asked, “Do really bad things happen to good people?” She then took the group to the Bible to begin searching for Shalom reporting on Walter Wink’s observations concerning the presence of violence in the Bible: There are over 6,000 passages of explicit violence in the Hebrew Bible. It was God’s own violent actions of punishment are described in 182 places when Yahweh expressly commands others to kill.

“What are we to do with these passages?” Dean Beach asked. “How can we come to terms with all this violence in our search for God’s justice and Shalom?” She even observed that anyone who combs these texts is not in our lectionary, so they are easy to avoid.

Her suggestion was to accept and struggle with the entire text of scripture, including those passages that are difficult or challenging. We seek Shalom especially in texts of great conflict and violence. The scriptures offer ways to find justice which are moral and available to all people, even to Samaritans and people who are different. As we search the scriptures we will find ways that speak and teach how God’s justice can and should be part of our own experiences.

A poignant moment occurred when Dean Beach asked, “What’s going on in our churches that people are beating each other up?” And not only in local churches either. There are clergy and parishioners getting beaten up at the Annual and Jurisdictional Conferences, too. She asked how we can create a place where we can be reconciled and experience Shalom even in our differences.

Dean Beach also introduced the African word “ubuntu,” which means “one who is open and available to others, affirming of others, and belongs to the whole of society.” The concept is we are all connected to each other. When you hurt, then I hurt. One South African lan- guage has no word for “individual.” God’s justice is intended for all people.

You do not need to have attended the Bishop’s Retreat to help in the search for Shalom. The search can include all those who desire God’s justice to be a reality in their homes, churches, communities, and the world.

The formula to search for Shalom Dean Beach offered is straightforward:

1) Remembering
2) Truth Telling
3) Repeating
4) Forgive
5) Healing

We live and work and play in a denomination called The United Method- ist Church where we desperately need Shalom. Together, may we find ways to bring Shalom to God’s people in our churches and communities and to Shalom to you, my friend.

*The Rev. Robert R. Shank is pastor of Stroudsburg United Methodist Church in Stroudsburg, PA.

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In Memoriam

Mrs. Sylvia Franceschi

Sylvia Franceschi, wife of retired associ- ate member, the Rev. Francisco Franceschi, died Wednesday, November 23, at the age of 68.

Rev. Franceschi had served La Trinidad UMC. He retired in July of 2002.

Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Francisco Franceschi at 4605 S. W. St., Allentown PA 18103-4577.

The Rev. Henry F. Hamer, Jr.


He is survived by his wife, Marilyn; two sons, Stephen A. Herczeg, Jr. and Robert S. Herczeg, and three grandchildren.


The Rev. Stephen A. Herczeg, Jr., pastor of Salem United Methodist Church in Pottstown (part-time) and a part-time pastor on Octo- ber 31, 2005. He was 53 years old.

He is survived by his wife and their three children, Jason, Matthew, and Emily. Mrs. Sylvia Franceschi

Mrs. Joyce McCurdy


Rev. McCurdy died in 1999 while serving Trinity UMC in Lackawanna.

Condolences may be sent to the McCurdy Family, 377 Broadway, Clarks Summit, PA 18411.

The Rev. Robert (Bob) M. Neely

The Rev. Robert (Bob) M. Neely, retired elder, on Wednesday, December 28, 2005.

Rev. Neely served the following appoint- ments: former Phila.: Siloam; Phila.: St. Luke’s; White Horse; and Easton: Calvary; and East Stroudsburg. He retired in 1981.

Rev. Neely is survived by his wife, Marilyn; their three children, Jane, Paul, and Dan. Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Esther Neely at 6470 Jacksonville Rd., Bethlehem, PA 18017.

The Rev. Russell R. Hoeltzel

Retired elder, the Rev. Russell R. Hoeltzel, on Christmas, December 25, 2005, after a brief illness. He was 80 years old.

Rev. Hoeltzel was a resident at Heritage Towers in Doylestown for the past 16 years.

He was educated at the Northeast High School for Boys, University of Pennsylvania, Temple University, and Drew Theological Seminary, where he received his divinity degree with honors in 1939.

Following his ordination he went on to serve a total of 11 appointments. He also served on extension ministry as director of the Conferences Board of Pensions from 1978 to 1983, the first person to head the pension area.

Rev. Hoeltzel was predeceased by his wife, Virginia (Donnie) in 1984. He is survived by one daughter, Juan, and three sons: Kier, Leslie, and Jeffrey Condolences may be sent to Kier Hoeltzel at 6030 Forest Hills Drive, Elkton Park PA 19027.

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Bishop's Lenten Day Apart for clergy

Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences

Tuesday, February 28, 2006, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

At Allentown United Methodist Church

2135 Conrad Rd., Allentown, PA 18103

Phone: (302) 478-2575

We are excited that the presenter for the Bishop’s Lenten Day Apart will be the Rev. HiRho Park from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Rev. Park is the coordinator for the 2006 International United Methodist Clergywomen’s Consultation in August. We will have light refreshments during our fellowship time beginning at 8:30 a.m.

The preacher and communion celebrant will be Bishop Marcus Matthews.

The Rev. HiRho Park

Presentation: “Bringing the Body of Christ together”

The Rev. HiRho Park is Director of Continuing Forma- tion for Ministry for the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry Park oversees the continuing education and spiritual formation for clergy and provides support for United Methodist clergywomen, as well as racial and ethnic clergy in areas of theological development, and research. With Angela Current- Felder; Office of Loans and Scholarships, she coordinates the Women of Color Scholarship and Mentoring program. She relates to Boards of Ordained Ministry, clergywomen, racial and ethnic clergy, annual conferences, and seminars. She coordinates the Georgia Harkness Scholarship program.

RSVP: To register for this event, please call 1) your name, 2) telephone number, 3) conference, district, and local church name to Amy Botti, Bishop’s Adminis- trative Assistant by calling 1-800-628-5800. Ext. 238 are asking that everyone RSVP for this event to give us as accurate a headcount as possible.
When 1,500 clergywomen gather in Chicago for the 2006 International United Methodist Clergywomen’s Consultation next summer, they will reach forward to a new generation, even as they commemorate the historic 50th anniversary of full clergy rights for women.

The Rev. HiRho Park, coordinator of the Aug. 13-17 meeting, which is sponsored by the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry, says the gathering provides an opportunity to address barriers that prevent the full participation of women in ministry. The first full-time Methodist clergywoman was ordained in 1956.

“Gender gap between achievement of men and women persists in spite of the increasing numbers of women coming into the ministry,” says Park, director of United Methodist Commission on Women at the board.

“Clergywomen are still struggling because of lower salaries and resistance to accepting female pastors at the local church level. Many clergywomen are still in a lower to mid-level placement, often on a token level. Gender, race, education, family, mobility and politics of the church all affect clergywomen’s ministries. Clergy - male and female - in leadership positions must be advocates for women and racial-ethnic minorities. "

Park hopes the consultation will help develop strategies to strengthen and nurture the next generation of women leaders. Those strategies could include establishing a support system in each annual conference, encouraging women to explore global leadership opportunities and developing a more appropriate curricular path that encourages greater diversity. In addition, she hopes the consultation can look at why ethnic minority clergywomen are less likely to stay in local church ministry.

“It is a tragedy that the church is losing its rich diversity when these women choose to leave the church ministry,” Park says.

Registration brochures were mailed in November, and more clergywomen are expected at the 2006 consultation than at any of the previous seven gatherings. That is partly because of interest in the 50th anniversary of the historic vote at the 1956 General Conference in Minneapolis. In which pew full clergy women served the anniversary will be observed at a banquet during the meeting.

The Rev. Jerome King Del Pino, top executive of the Board of Higher Education and Ministry, describes the meeting as a “tremendous event” where the church is celebrating the historic 50th anniversary of women in the ordained leadership.

The Rev. HiRho Park

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When Hurricane Rita roared into East Texas and central Louisiana on the heels of Hurricane Katrina, the UM Comer Disaster Response Network is hard at work helping those who lost local homes to recover their lives and livelihoods through their 127 conferences. In the Texas Annual Conference, Rita recovery is well underway with 126 volunteer teams arriving to assist in relief and recovery between October and the end of 2005. Many more teams are scheduled in 2006. Family advocates and others are undergoing training to help people not only repair their homes, but also their lives. Your gifts to UMComer Advance #900233, Hurricanes 2005, help all that repairs for last year’s terrible storms to recover. If you would like your gift to go to a specific hurricane or region, please note that in the memo line of your check.

As I listen to the young women bishops, who are set to be ‘fully church’ when it celebrates the 98th anniversary of granting full clergy rights for women in sex apart ministry. Del Pino says. “While the 1956 General Conference addressed a vexing social, political and justice issue by its action, the greater significance was, and is, that the full inclusion of women in the ordained leadership of the church affirmed the fullness of God’s creation and God’s expectation that the church model God’s will for God’s creation on the world.”

Park agrees, saying the presence of clergywomen is the evidence of an egalitarian belief of the church. “God calls all people into ministry, especially into the ministry of reconciliation,” says Park, the first Hispanic-American woman elected to leadership of the United Methodist Church. “In The Nation in Brief

The United Methodist Church, and especially its predecessor body, the Methodist Church, will observe a doing moment in its history to “be fully church” when it celebrates the 98th anniversary of granting full clergy rights for women in sex apart ministry.”

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Stop the killing in Philippines, United Methodists say

By Larry Hollon*

MANILA, Philippines (UMNS) - A United Methodist delegation on human rights in the Philippines called upon President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to take a more aggressive role to stop the killing of clergy, church and human rights workers who work with the poor.

Noting that “extrajudicial” murders had increased in the past year in the country, Bishop John Hopkins, head of the delegation, told a Jan. 6 news conference in Manila, “The killing must stop.”

Hopkins said that the church had deeply moving first-hand testimony from more than 20 victims and surviving family members from many parts of the Philippines, who described the pain and suffering they endured through murder, target attacks by armed terrorists and church workers.

“Our people have a right to live,” he said. “This must be respected.”

The Philippine president, who is also a United Methodist, recently announced that she would seek to minister with the poor and marginalized, and distinguish their work as vital and important to the country and its people.

In hearings with victims, the delegation was told such work is often called “subversive,” and individuals engaged in human rights education are falsely accused of supporting terrorism or holding membership in political groups advocating violent resistance to the Arroyo administration.

In testimony presented to United Nations special rapporteur Philip Alston, Bellard, acting deputy chairman of the commission, said that the commission welcomed the appointment of a new ambassador to the Philippines by United States President George W. Bush.

Bellard, the highest ranking U.S. official in the embassy, emphasized that the United Nations has not yet named a new ambassador to the Philippines by United Methodist leaders in the country.

Delegation members expressed solidarity with the church in the Philippines and stated support for “courageous ministry with the poor and marginalized.”

*Hollon is chief executive of United Methodist Communications.

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**MORE NEWS FROM THE WORLD IN BRIEF**

The safety of noncombatants and to avoid indiscriminate destruction of property.

Two bishops of The United Methodist Church in the Philippines, including mission partners in other communities, to discuss progress on the investigations.

The delegation was invited to the country by United Methodist leaders in the country.

Toquero was unable to provide additional public testimony because he was placed in isolation with other victims of extrajudicial Killings.

**AFRICA UNIVERSITY PARTNERS WITH CHEVRON, ANGOLA UNIVERSITY**

United Methodist-related Africa University is joining forces with Chevron Corp. in an initiative to help with the reconstruction and development of Angola. The $1 million capacity-strengthening effort focuses on revitalizing a once-thriving agricultural zone. Huambo Province on revitalizing a once-thriving agricultural zone, Huambo Province in Angola.

The university will offer professional development training for government officials and military of labeling those who work for the poor as subversive or communist.

**INDONESIA: ONE YEAR LATER**

It’s been a year since the tsunami struck Indonesia and nations all around the Indian Ocean on December 26, 2004. UMCOR’s operations in Indonesia have accomplished much in the last 12 months. Download and share the latest UMCOR bulletin insert, New Homes, New Communities at http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor/print/bulletininserts/

tsunamimoneyearlater.cfm to learn more about how UMCOR is providing shelter, livelihoods, and hope in the wake of this disaster. As international news crews rushed to document the destruction, UMCOR and other United Methodist-related agencies distributed seeds to some 5,200 families displaced by the Sudan war and concentrated their efforts in the Blue Crescent, Church’s Auxiliary for Social Action, and military of labeling those who work for the poor as subversive or communist.

Conduct follow-up meetings with the three bishops of The United Methodist Church in the Philippines, including mission partners in other communities, to discuss progress on the investigations.

The delegation was invited to the country by United Methodist leaders in the country.

Delegation members expressed solidarity with the church in the Philippines and stated support for “courageous ministry with the poor and marginalized.”

**FIRST AFRICAN WOMAN HEAD OF STATE**

Children learn to read in an outreach ministry of Central United Methodist Church, Daruss City, Philippines, in this 1997 photograph. A United Methodist delegation on human rights in the Philippines called upon President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to take a more aggressive role to stop the killing of clergy, church and human rights workers who work with the poor in the Philippines.

A UMNS file photo by Mike DuBose.

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Summer Camp 2006

Beyond the Border

I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

John 5:24

Carson-Simpson Farm • Gretna Glen • Innabah • Pocono Plateau

Eastern Pennsylvania Conference • The United Methodist Church
CALL US (TOLL FREE) 1-877-UMC-CAMP
VISIT US ON-LINE www.epaumc.org/camping

www.epaumc.org
Beyond the Border

Summer Camp 2006

Ages

Camp is an experience that can be enjoyed by persons of virtually any age. We offer day camp opportunities for children as young as 3 years of age. There are overnight programs designed for young children who have just completed first grade. Of course there are a great many different programs offered for children and youth of all ages through high school. And did you know that we also have a camp program designed for college students and a Spiritual Renewal Camp for adults only? How about cross generational camps? We offer Grandparents and Me, Parents and Me, Mommy and Me, as well as several family camps.

Travel Camps:

- sailing the Chesapeake – beginner, intermediate, advanced
- Legs for Liberia – hiking
- Algonquin experience – Outer Banks odyssey
- Zion and Bryce hiking
- Amish study tours
- Christian study tours
- Trailblazers
- Sports camps: adventure, off-road biking
- Children’s adventure challenge
- Youth climbing, Rock & Raft, ultimate village
- Adventure camps: rock video production
- Native American awesome art, creative expression, performing arts
- World of Wonders
- Creative & Creation caretakers
- Eco-explorers

National Parks – hiking.

Banks odyssey; Zion and Bryce biking; Algonquin experience, Outer Banks odyssey, Zion and Bryce hiking

Specialty Camps:

- praise & worship, science & nature
- World of Wonders
- Native American village
- adventure camps: rock climbing, Rock & Raft, ultimate adventure challenge, youth adventure, off-road biking, children’s pioneer, Trailblazers
- sports camps: soccer, archery, golf, fishing, horseback camp for novice or advanced, Sr. High H2O Camp
- Mission Possible: After Hours night
- Latino camp
- Challenge – Mission Possible
- After Hours night
- Spring City for pre-school through 5th grade (6th in Hatboro).
- Extended hours are available at each site.

Day Camp

Day camp programs are offered in Hatboro, Lebanon and Spring City for pre-school through 5th grade (6th in Hatboro). Extended hours are available at each site.

Family Camps:

- grandparents & me, parents & me, mommy & me, family jamborees

Scholarships available

It is the policy of the Eastern Pennsylvania-Virginia Conference that no child or youth should be denied a week of summer camp due to financial hardship. Camper families who cannot afford the full fee should first contact their local United Methodist Church about scholarship support.

Activities

Fun camp activities include arts & crafts, drama & music, swimming, Bible study, hiking, nature study, games, sports, outdoor worship, archery, boating, low ropes, high ropes, fishing, and campfires.

Contact:

1. On-line at www.epaumc.org/camping
2. By fax to the Camp Retreat Center of the event
3. By mail to the Camp Retreat Center of the event
4. Call toll free 1-877-UMC-CAMP (1-877-862-2267)

Press #2 to order a 2006 summer camp catalog
Press #3 for Carson-Simpson Farm
Press #4 for Gretta Glen
Press #5 for Innabah
Press #6 for Pocono Plateau
Press #7 for the EPA conference Camp/Retreat office

Scholarships

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Camps:

Carson Simpson Farm Christian Center: 3405 9 Old Mine Road, Hatboro, PA 19040-4295; Phone: 215-659-6283; Fax: 215-659-5129; Email: CSF@CSFCenter.org; Bay Neitz, Director
Gretta Glen Camp & Retreat Center: 87 Old Mine Road, Lebanon, PA 17042-8986; Phone: 717-273-6350; Fax: 717-273-9045; Email: camp@retreatglen.org; Paul Douglas, Director
Camp Innabah: 336 712 Pughtown Road, Spring City, PA 19475; Phone: 610-469-6111; Fax: 610-469-0330; Email: innabahdirector@aol.com; Chrissy Heffin, Director
Pocono Plateau Camp and Retreat Center: RRL Box 2747 (Pocono Plateau Road) Cresco, PA 18326; Phone: 570-676-3865; Fax: 570-676-3868; Email: camps@poconoplateau.org; Ron Schack, Director

www.epaumc.org
Living Connected as God’s people: “Celebrating the connection”
The Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference
June 21 - 23, 2006 at the Sheraton Philadelphia City Center

Opening Worship
Preaching by Bishop Marcus Matthews and music by The Africa University Choir

The world renowned Africa University Choir is an established choral ensemble for Africa University.

Memorial Service and Service of Ordination
Preaching by Bishop Hope Morgan of Mississippi

Bishop Hope Morgan Ward came to the Mississippi Area in 2004 after she was the first bishop elected at the 2004 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference.

She recently led a team from Mississippi to Zimbabwe in support of Africa University.

Bible Study on Thursday and Friday mornings
with Mr. James H. Salley, Bible Study Leader

James H. Salley is the Associate Vice-Chancellor for Institutional Advance-
ment for Africa University. Jim serves as the chief advancement officer and
fund raiser for the institution, he is in charge of the University’s institutional
advancement program; and he is responsible for interpreting the programs of the University to local
churches, organizations, and agencies throughout the United Methodist connec-
tion and beyond.

Workshops at Annual Conference 2006
Leadership Resource Team

Thank you everyone who made last year’s Workshop at Annual Conference a huge success. Please your promises to be even more exciting and different. Look for your registration form in the Conference Booklet. More choices to come. If you have questions contact the Leadership Resource Team at brendahobson@epaumc.com.

1. The Methodist Connection and How You Fit—Chuck Yingyem
2. Helping Move and Shaker Move and Shake—Val Halstead
3. Deacon, Transitioning Minis try—Through Service—Richard Rolley
4. Now you are a Christ Servant: Minister What’s the Next Step—George Hilsman
5. The New Community Study—The Order of St. Luke
6. Church DNA—Part 2—Know Your Church Culture
7. Clergy and Church Board Coaching—The Office of Urban and Global Ministries and the Calling Disciple Resources Team

Sheraton Philadelphia City 17th and Race Streets Philadelphia, PA 19103
June 21–23, 2006

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Deadline

1. IF YOU HAVE A RESOLUTION TO SUBMIT, THE DEADLINE IS MARCH 17, 2006.

Resolutions are to be submitted to the Conference Secretary: The Rev. Charles E. Weigel, Jr., 551 E. Lancaster Avenue, Downingtown, PA 19335. Direct your questions to: (O) 610-209-1409, (H) 610-209-0620, email: resolutions@epaumc.com. Resolutions, in portrait format, must be sent on a disk in Microsoft Word along with a hard copy Enclosed is a sample of the format for setting up your document.

Presenters of reports are responsible for providing a scripted text or expanded outline, accompanied by the name(s) of all presenter(s), who will be at the podium, and the projected length of time the report will take. This material is to be sent to the Rev. Dr. Sherrin Marshall by May 1, 2006.

2. REGISTRATION MATERIALS FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE CLERGY, LAY AND EQUALIZING DELEGATES WILL BE MAILED BY MARCH 17, 2006.

The deadline for returning the completed registration materials is May 1, 2006. For those registering via the web site, the deadline is also May 1, 2006.

3. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RESERVE A DISPLAY AREA AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE, please contact Mrs. Evangeline Johnson at 610-666-9090, ext. 215 or 800-828-9093, email: evangeline.johnson@epaumc.org. If you supply copy-ready materials, this issue, materials must be received by the “NewSpirit” will be published. For this issue, materials must be received by April 3, 2006. This includes resolutions and also includes all materials relevant to the Annual Conference edition of “NewSpirit.”

A special Annual Conference edition of the “NewSpirit” will be published. For this issue, materials must be received by April 3, 2006. This includes resolutions and also includes all materials relevant to the Annual Conference edition of “NewSpirit.”

Any other questions about Annual Con-
ference may be directed to:

The Rev. Dr. Sherrin Marshall, Execu-
tive Director of Conference Resources/ Director of Connectional Ministries, 1-
800-828-9093 or 610-666-9090, email: sherrin.marshall@epaumc.org

Thank you for your cooperation. We believe that this information will greatly assist the work of the Annual Conference.

For a full description of these deadlines, a complete format of the resolution settings, and to print the Media Specification Submittal Form, please go to: http://www.epaumc.org/NewsDetails.asp?pageID=1216
Continued from page 1

Bishop's visit to Africa University

Matthews. “It is the only place on the continent of Africa where people from many nations study together, breaking down walls, and promoting understanding.” The bishop added. “This creates models of hope for war-torn Africa, where people get to know each other on a different level, people who will someday become the officials and leaders in the government.”

Now that Africa University is 20 years old, it now has needs in terms of infrastructure like increased electrical power and sewage systems to support new dormitories. These items are necessary to accommodate the growing student population, but do not usually receive funding support. Bishop Matthews related additional needs of the university: to provide scholarships for students at a cost of $8,000 annually for tuition, room, and board, and to build satellite schools where travel distances are prohibitive, thus taking learning to the students.

The university recently completed a school of theology and has just approved a doctorate in theology program. Two more dorms are projected for 2008, for which money has already been donated.

Bishop Matthews’ hope is that the Philadelphia Area Annual Conferences will be significant for Africa University. He will be forming a task force to present ideas to the Eastern Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania Delaware Annual Conferences, which will forward the work of Africa University and our community of making disciples of Christ.

As part of our celebration of the work of Africa University, the world-renowned Africa University Choir will perform for Opening Worship at Annual Conference. For the evening of June 21, Mr. James H. Salley, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Institutional Advancement, the Africa University Development Office, will lead the Bible Study on the mornings of June 22 and 23. Bishop Hope Morgan Ward, of the Mississippi Annual Conference, who has recently led a mission trip to Africa University, will be the preacher at both the Memorial Service and the Service of Ordination.

Methodist Home for Children celebrates the gift of giving

It would not have been such a joyful holiday for the children and families served by Methodist Home for Children without the participation of many members of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. Our partners in mission helped us prepare a Thanksgiving dinner worthy of the finest homes and provided more than 3,500 gifts for distribution to every client served by Methodist Home for Children.

The Community Thanksgiving Dinner was held on Monday, November 24 in the Gym of the Main Building, which was originally the Dining Room during the days of the Orphanage. More than 340 chefs, assistants, and families feasted on roasted turkey with stuffing and gravy, candied sweet potatoes, macaroni and cheese, green beans and pies, cakes and ice cream. The children who attended from the Abington community were absolutely awestruck at the food and grace that they could have as much as they wanted to eat! The dinner was a volunteer outreach by 16 United Methodist Congregations that has recently led a mission trip to Mississippi Annual Conference, who provided the workforce for the project.

Nearly everyone who attended had a gift to give to their children. The staff at Methodist Hospital worked for weeks raising money by holding bake sales in their cafeterias as well as receiving gifts so that they could purchase toys for the children. According to James Robinson, President and CEO of Methodist Hospital: “The staff was very excited to participate in this effort and had a wonderful time shopping for the children!”

Dr. Parker elaborated further saying, “Happily, we were able to give each and every child in every single program a toy as part of the gift, and the neediest children received additional gifts. We were even able to give the mothers living at Bridge House for Women, the transitional housing program for homeless women, gifts for themselves and an opportunity to give a gift that they could then give to their children and grandchildren.

There is nothing as heartwarming as seeing the warm smiles on the faces of the last gift given at Bridge House when they found a gift that each one could give to her child especially when she thought that this would not be possible this year. We certainly felt God’s abundance this year and can not thank you enough for all that you did to make Christ-mas joyful for so many who did not think there would be much joy this year.” Methodist Home for Children thanks those that made this Chris-mas ministry possible:


Methodist Home for Children serves children, individuals, and families throughout Eastern Pennsylvania through its two agencies. Methodist Family Services of Philadelphia provides services to children in their own home, foster care, adoption, transitional housing for homeless women, and permanent housing for formerly homeless women and their children. Methodist Services for Children and Families offers daycare, after school and summer camp, a community center in Kensington and therapeutic counseling services. For more information on any of these programs please contact Theresa Haenn, Director of Development at 215-877-1925 x 109 or thaenn@methodistservices.org.
How much endowment income can we spend?

Charles Albert Tindley with concert and CD release

The life and work of Charles Albert Tindley, the great hymn writer and Philadelphia pastor who died in 1915, are being honored with a concert and CD release as part of Black History Month this year. The General Board of Global Ministries, a United Methodist mission agency, is cosponsoring a memorial concert on February 4 at Tindley Temple United Methodist Church in Philadelphia. Black Methodists for Church Renewal is the other sponsor.

The board will also celebrate the issuance of “Heaves of Heaven,” a 75-minute CD and a songbook including all of Tindley’s published hymns. Charles Albert Tindley was a clergyman of the Methodist Episcopal Church and a founding figure in American gospel music. Born in Berlin, Maryland, in 1851, he attended Wilberforce Seminary, graduated from a路段en in congregation in Philadelphia. He also wrote the words and music to dozens of gospel hymns, which have been sung in the current United Methodist Hymnal and are found in the Songs of Zion songbook.

Tindley’s work is highly relevant to the contemporary church, according to the Rev. Dr. S. T. Kimbrough, who heads both the Mission Evangelism Office and the Global Praise Program of the General Board of Global Ministri- 

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tion. “His incisive, bibilical allusions, and folk expressions are those with which African Americans may readily identify; and yet, his hymns have reached far beyond one group of people to the larger. Kimbrough said in announcing the CD, songbook, and concert.

“The Heaves of Heaven” and “We’ll Understand It Better By and By” are two of the hymns by Tindley in the United Methodist Hymnal.

Mr. Stacy J. Martin

Mission Board celebrates Tindley with concert and CD release

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Mr. Stacy J. Martin
Reflections on Christian Stewardship

By David S. Bell

What is the mission of the Center for Christian Stewardship? One of the primary functions of the Center is to foster the joy of giving in congregations and individual lives. We do this by: (1) serving the needs of local churches with exceptional stewardship resources, training, and consultation; (2) providing resources and training for annual church financial campaigns; (3) offering numerous materials and programs for ongoing stewardship education; (4) providing seminars and webinars on stewardship topics; (5) serving as a clearinghouse for best practices and innovative approaches to stewardship in a variety of contexts; and (6) serving the needs of individual church leaders through resources and training.

What is stewardship? Stewardship is the way in which we live our lives in concert with the generosity and abundance of God. It is a way of life that is centered on the conviction that everything we have is a gift from God and that our proper response is to give back a portion of our lives, talents, resources, and other gifts to God and to our neighbors as a way of expressing our gratitude and deepening our relationship with God.

What does it mean to give? Giving is an expression of our love and gratitude to God. It is a way of acknowledging the gift of our lives and the resources we have been given. Giving is a way of expressing our faith and our commitment to the church and to our community. Giving is also a way of expressing our concern for the needs of others and our desire to make a positive difference in the world.

What are common myths about giving? Some common myths about giving include the idea that giving is a burden, that it robs us of our resources, or that it is simply a way to fulfill a religious duty. These myths are not true. Giving is a joyous act, an act of love, and a way of expressing our gratitude to God. It is a way of expressing our faith and our commitment to the church and to our community.

To learn more about Christian stewardship, visit the Center for Christian Stewardship website, www.christianstewardship.org.

The Eastern Pennsylvania - Peninsula UM Foundation

FREE FOR THE TAKING

Church Racks for Folding Chairs

• One 20" x 30" x 6" wide rack - white;
  • The other one is 112" long x 21" wide;

Cigarette Receptacles

• Three 24-1/2" tall x 10" square. One also has a trash disposal square. One also has a trash disposal

Church Pulpit

• 31-1/4" wide; 40" high; 17" deep - wood.

Wooden Chair Racks

• Metal chair racks for folding chairs.

Cabinet

• 385-7141) or contact Pastor DeWalt directly, kdewalt@deja.com, for more information.

CHILDREN’S MINISTRY TEAM LEADER

Opening for Children’s Ministry Team Leader for infants through grade 3. Should enjoy sharing the joys of Jesus while you learn from the children. Average 10 hours per week. Duties include coordinating and overseeing Children’s Church for the 10:30 service, child care for special services. Vacation Bible Adventure, and other children’s ministry events within the church. A criminal background check is required. Please contact the office at Hope Church (610-385-7141) or contact Pastor DeWalt directly, kdewalt@deja.com, for more information.

Contemporary Worship LEADER

Calling United Methodist Church in Lebanon County, PA is looking for a part time, 20 hour/week Contemporary Worship Leader for our well established contemporary worship service. Responsibilities include leading the contemporary worship service, overseeing and leading a 24-person team of volunteer musicians and giving guidance to the direction of other musicians. Please contact the church office at 717-272-0418 or email Pastor Jim Hewitt at jhewitt@gbod.org.

Children’s Ministry TEAM LEADER

Provide an opportunity for people to live a lifestyle with values other than consumerism.

www.stewardship.org

To register, please go to:

http://www.davidstewardship.com/article.asp?id=1184

“This Rev. David S. Bell is director of stewardship of The Center for Christian Stewardship of The United Methodist Church”

The Rev. David S. Bell is director of stewardship of The Center for Christian Stewardship of The United Methodist Church.

For more stewardship information, contact David Bell at 610-899-2760, ext. 200, please call Thorndale UMC office, 610-385-7141, or contact Pastor DeWalt directly, kdewalt@deja.com, for more information.

The Rev. David S. Bell is director of stewardship of The Center for Christian Stewardship of The United Methodist Church.

Are there system issues within the church that may be having an impact on your church? Absolutely! I believe that talking about money and giving is a spiritual discipline, if not the greatest - taboos in the church. Many church leaders, both clergy and lay, have a fear of talking about money in the church. There are several reasons for their fear. In some cases, the church leaders or pastors have not managed their own financial resources well. In other cases, they have been embarrassed to discuss the church's financial situation. The pastors may be counseled in the pulpit and may not have developed a stewardship lifestyle of generosity. Other reasons include the lack of church leaders who have a financial literacy, the lack of any discussion between faith development and financial giving, and the minimal personal finance training that clergy or church leaders have received.

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Friday, March 24, 2006 at Shady Maple, East Earl and Sunday, March 26, 2006 at Tindley Temple, Philadelphia.

http://www.epaumc.org/BfTWorkshop.asp

What are you saying about your workshops and seminars?
"One of the most beneficial workshops I have ever attended!" "Excellent workshop – I will change my life!" "Awesome speaker – never lost my interest!" "High energy, witty, focused, prepared. Best seminar yet!!"
Scott added in his journal, “Through my interpreter I share a few words expressing that I am looking at the future leaders of Iraq. I bring greetings from children in the USA pointing out the many similarities between them and our children, who equally enjoy playing with balls, dolls, trucks, and toys in general. I explain that we give gifts as an expression of thanksgiving to God for giving us the greatest gift of all...and ask what that gift is. In each class almost immediately a child bursts out with ‘Jesus.’”

Photographs of local reporters and the Army Public Affairs Office captured the children’s joy and gratitude for the gifts, which consisted of everything from Barbie dolls to matchbox trucks and cars, soccer balls, coloring books and crayons, harmonicas, yo-yos, puzzles, paint by number art sets, and beanie babies.

Scott’s commanding officer, Col. Gray, arrived to assist in the distribution of the gifts, and the children sang “Jingle Bells” in their own language, with the American soldiers joining them in English.

Scott wrote, “I believe all of us are blessed and changed on one level or another by the experience; even those soldiers who remain outside securing the building still get to interact with the local national populace. This, I think to myself, is what Christmas is all about, and I look forward to future operations which allow us to visit and support local schools, orphanages, etc.”

Chaplain Clyde Scott is originally from Berwick, Pennsylvania, and was ordained in the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in 1986. He served at both Kemblesville and Ironville UM Churches for 4 years each, before joining the Army as a Chaplain in 1993. He has been married for 26 years, and he and his wife have three children.

As a United Methodist chaplain, Scott served 9 years in Germany, during which time he was deployed to Bosnia for 13 months; was deployed to Korea for one year; and spent 4 years in Ft. Jackson, South Carolina. He arrived in Iraq in September 2005 and will remain there until September 2006.

Photos and video of “Operation Christmas Toys” can be viewed by going to: www.epaumc.org/