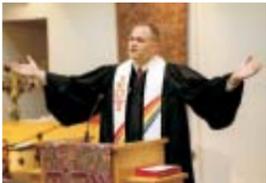


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Work of art to celebrate United Methodist Connection

by Suzy Keenan

A work of art, handcrafted in wood by Mrs. Ruth Groves, will bring to life the Annual Conference theme, "Living Connected as God's People: Celebrating the Connection." The Annual Conference will meet June 21 to 23 in Philadelphia for Holy Conferencing and worship.

Mrs. Groves is handcrafting the cross by joining figures of people that have been cut from over twenty kinds of wood, which show both our connectedness and our diversity. The finished work of art will be 4' wide by 6' high, and it will be hung over the altar at Annual Conference.

Hundreds of hours have gone into designing the figures, laying them out on a life-size pattern, selecting the wood for each figure, and then cutting each one out on a scroll saw. "When I started to create the figures, I thought we need to include everybody," said Mrs. Groves. "There is a pregnant lady, an older man with a cane, a



Ruth Groves has spent hundreds of hours in creating the connectional cross which will be a visual focus for the Annual Conference theme.

continues on page 10

Celebrating 50 years of full clergy rights for women

By Dawn Taylor-Storm*

One Sunday, as the children gathered for Sunday School, I peeked my head into the sanctuary and I saw about 10 girls "playing church." It was a sacred moment. I heard a young girl's voice over the sound system: "The

Scripture for today is. . ." She proceeded to read the Scripture for the morning. Another girl proclaimed: "Let us celebrate with our offering." None of those girls realized that their actions would have been considered radical only a short time ago. Those girls knew that the

altar was a place for them to stand and speak and lead worship.

Fifty years ago on the floor of the 1956 General Conference, a voice of wisdom and vision rang out with these words: ". . . it seems to me if we give [women] the full

rights of belonging to the conference, that we will be making it possible for many more women who have the ability and the training and all the qualifications, to respond to our need.

Therefore, I believe that we should open the way." (Lance

continues page 9

United Methodists partner in antiviolence initiative

by Suzy Keenan*

Bishop Marcus Matthews and his cabinet, along with other members of Philadelphia's faith community, met with Mayor John Street at City Hall on April 5 to discuss a faith-based partnership in support of the mayor's antiviolence initiative termed "Operation Safe Streets."

More than 100 representatives from Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, and Jewish faiths came to hear and discuss how the partnership could bring about positive and real change in Philadelphia communities that are experiencing violence.

Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson encouraged this new partnership, saying, "Law enforcement will never change the community; the faith community needs to come out to make

the change." He cited crime statistics stating that, as of April 5, there were 86 homicides in 2006 in the City of Philadelphia. Of those, 71 were African-Americans – mostly women. He added, "It's not about statistics; it's about quality of life." Commissioner Johnson encourages police officers to be role models and give back to the community. "The strongest partner we can have in this city is the faith-based community," Johnson said. He urged those around the table to work to tighten gun control legislation.

Johnson announced that six rallies would



Caption: Bishop Matthews and his cabinet stand with Mayor John Street at the "Operation Safe Streets" meeting: (left to right) Rev. James Todd, Rev. Dr. Christopher Kurien, Rev. Dr. Rodney Shearer, Bishop Marcus Matthews, Mayor John Street, Rev. Ralph Blanks, Rev. Susan May, Rev. Dr. Robert Hoffman.

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Conference Calendar

MAY 10 Facts and Feelings About Aging: Faith Needs of Older Adults

Cornwall Manor Retirement Community will be hosting the senior ministry seminar "Facts and Feelings About Aging: Faith Needs of Older Adults" on Wednesday, May 10 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The seminar will be held in Cornwall Manor's Freeman Auditorium. This session is designed for clergy, lay leaders, adult Sunday school teachers and anyone else who works with, or has an interest in, older adults. Attendees will learn about the myths and realities of aging, losses and gains associated with aging, the wisdom of aging, and the faith needs of older adults. An older adult panel will describe their experiences about how their needs changed as they aged and offer their views on what they, as older adults, see as their spiritual needs. Registration for this seminar is due by May 1. For more information, directions, or to receive a copy of the seminar brochure, please contact Kelly Saylor at 717-273-2647 or ksaylor@cornwallmanor.org. A registration fee of \$10.00 may be paid on the day of the seminar.

MAY 11-13 "Jubilee Voices: An Inward Journey, An Outward Call" Conference Columbia, SC

A conference for all United Methodist clergy Sponsored by UMC-related Columbia College Celebrating 50 years of full clergy rights for women To register & learn more:

www.colacoll.edu/jubilee
1.0 CEU; qualifies for Continuing Education funds

Affordable registration; accessible location by car & air; National church leaders, dynamic workshops, engaging speakers.

MAY 12 Innabah Golf Tournament at Spring Hollow Golf Course

Join us at Spring Hollow Golf Course for our Annual Fundraising Golf Tournament. The event will start at 1:00 PM followed by dinner and fantastic awards. To request a brochure, please contact Christy Heflin at innabahdirector@aol.com or 610-469-6111. We need golfers and hole sponsors! Hope to see you there! Sign-up soon, space is limited.

Camp Innabah, 712 Pughtown Road Spring City, PA 19475, 1-877-UMC-CAMP ext 5

MAY 12-13 Gretna Glen Camp's Spring Fun & Work Weekend - All ages

This weekend is a great opportunity for families, youth groups, individuals or small groups to work together on service projects. Friday evening will be filled with games and a movie. Saturday will bring many opportunities to serve through various clean-up, construction, landscaping, and other projects around camp. All meals are provided. Cost is by donation. Call the camp at 717-273-6525 or e-mail coordinator@gretnaglen.org for a brochure and registration form.

**MAY 13
Coventryville United Methodist
Church is holding a Chili Cook-Off
3-6 PM.** Competition is open to

anyone who would like to participate. Judging will be done by those who come to taste. Chili Entries are \$10 per entry. (Entries for a Salsa category \$5). Fun prizes and bragging rights will be awarded. "Admission Fee" of \$6 per person to taste and judge. Hot dogs and soda will also be available for purchase. For more information, or to enter, please call 610-469-9350.

MAY 13 Welcoming Training See Page 9

MAY 13 & JUNE 3 Pancakes for Peru - Mission trip fundraisers

Tabor United Methodist Church, located in Woxall, PA in the Perkiomen Valley, is sponsoring a missions trip to remote areas of Peru from July 14 to July 23, 2006. To help fund the mission, TUMC members are sponsoring 3 pancake breakfasts open to the public. The "Pancakes for Peru" breakfast dates are April 29th, May 13th, and June 3rd. Breakfast will be served from 7:00 am to 11:00 am in TUMC's Weller Hall. The cost for adults is \$5.00 and \$3.00 for 6 to 12 year olds. Children under age 5 are free. More information about the "Pancakes for Peru" events and Tabor UMC can be found at its web site, www.tabor-umc.org or by calling TUMC at 215-234-4852

MAY 20 Camp Fest at Gretna Glen

Come join us for a day of awesome camp activities. Get a taste of the many activities campers will enjoy this summer. Bring your family to explore Gretna Glen Camp. Join us for a fun concert at 10:30 a.m. with Darlene Van Dyke, contemporary Christian recording artist. There will be something for everyone! Call the camp at 717-273-6525 or e-mail coordinator@gretnaglen.org for more information.

MAY 21 Open House & Day of Prayer for Gretna Glen Camp 12:00 noon-6:00 p.m.

This will be a day to explore Gretna Glen Camp and find out more about our summer camp program. Staff and volunteers will be available to take you on a tour of the camp and answer your questions. Enjoy roasting hot dogs and marshmallows on our campfire. Join us at 5:00 p.m. for a worship and prayer gathering in the Funk Center. It will be a time to lift up in prayer the camp, staff, volunteers and campers. Call the camp at 717-273-6525 or e-mail coordinator@gretnaglen.org for more information.

**JUNE 4
Ground Breaking Ceremony at
Carson-Simpson Farm** - United Methodist Metro Ministries, Inc. is pleased to announce it will be hosting a ground-breaking ceremony for construction of its new Multi-Purpose Center. This celebration will be held on June 4, 2006 at 3:00 p.m. at Carson Simpson Farm Christian Center, 3405 Davisville Road, Hatboro, PA 19040. All are invited to attend. For additional information, please contact Jim Wilkin, Director of Camping and Nurture Ministries at 610-666-9090, ext 225 or jim.wilkin@epaumc.org.

JUNE 17 PATRIOTIC CONCERT at Fritz Memorial United Methodist Church - 7PM

303 Packer Ave [corner of Packer Ave & Montclair], Bethlehem PA 18015 Telephone: 610 866 1515

PLENTY OF FREE PARKING

JUNE 22 The Alternative to Militarism and War presentation

The EPA chapter of Methodist Federation for Social Action is sponsoring the second ReconneXion to Justice event, The Alternative to Militarism and War: A Service of Prayer and Conversation with Celeste Zappala on Thursday June 22 from 6:15 to 7:15 pm at Arch St UMC, Broad and Arch Streets, in Philadelphia. This is during the dinner break for Annual Conference and Arch St. UMC is located a short walk from the Conference hotel. Celeste Zappala lost her son in Iraq and founded Gold Star Families Speak Out.

Hopewell UMC hosts a Christian Concert Series - three evenings of Christian music and testimony in the serenity of our 1000-seat outdoor amphitheater. The lineup for this year's Christian Concert Series is:

* **GLAD, Sat., May 13, 7:30 pm**

* **Janet Paschal, Sat., July 22, 7:30 pm**

* **River Ministries, Sat., Sept 23, 7:30 pm**

All-male quartet **GLAD** is America's pre-eminent Christian a cappella vocal group. **GLAD** performed in Hopewell's amphitheater in 2003 and returns bringing its 30 year history of recording and concert ministries. **GLAD** is noted for its trademark impeccable arrangements, layered harmonies, and vocal versatility. Their body of work is appreciated by a cappella lovers of all genres.

Although **GLAD** is now Nashville-based, the original members of **GLAD** rehearsed together for the very first time at West Chester College (now West Chester University) in 1972. The concert will feature arrangements from their newly released album, "Receive the Glory", their first a cappella album in five years. Concert tickets are available at Hopewell UMC or through our website, www.HopewellUMC.org.

Event tickets are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door. Children 12 and under are \$5. Series tickets, family packs, and group rates are also available.

JULY 16-20

SOULfeast is the conference for those who hunger for a deepening spirituality. Perfect for any one of any age,

this year we will experience four days of "Sensing the Sacred in All of Life" through workshops, worship, and Sabbath rest. **SOULfeast** provides an exciting opportunity for deeper discovery, and will be especially meaningful for those who have experienced Upper Room resources like Companions in Christ, The Walk to Emmaus, and The Academy for Spiritual Formation.

<http://www.upperroom.org/soulfeast/>

JULY 17-21 Proctor Institute

Marian Wright Edelman, Founder and President of the Children's Defense Fund hosts the Proctor Institute at Haley Farm in Tennessee. It is an excellent continuing education event for learning more about child advocacy and for motivation and inspiration. Last summer, Bill Cluely and I attended and met Dr. Otis Moss, Jr., a civil rights activist who worked with Dr. Martin Luther King; Dr. Jim Wallis, Editor of *Sojourner Magazine* and author of *God's Politic*; Marian Wright Edelman and many other advocates who are doing great things.

This year's Institute is July 17-21, 2006 at Children Defense Fund Haley Farm, Clinton, Tennessee. Leaders for the event include Dr. Otis Moss, Jr and Rev. Otis Moss, III, Dr. Fred Craddock, Dr. Joanna Addams of Morningside Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, Dr. James Forbes, Jr. of the Riverside Church in NY, Dr. William S. Epps, Abyssinian Baptist Church in NY, Dr. Robert Franklin, Presidential Distinguished Professor of Social Ethics at Candler, Howard Zinn, noted historian, intellectual and author and Marian Wright Edelman.

Workshops include:

* *Dismantling the Cradle to Prison Pipeline*

* *Alternative for Children during Summer and After School Hours*

* *Alleviating Poverty through Free Tax Clinics for Working Poor Families*

* *How to Organize Your Community and more.*

If you have Continuing Education time and money or have a real desire to make a difference you are encouraged to call Ericka Wright at 865-458-4666 or visit the Children's Defense website at

www.childrensdefense.org for registrations and details.



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Bishop Matthews participates in International Consultation in Vienna

by Suzy Keenan

Bishop Marcus Matthews traveled to Vienna March 1 to 6 to participate with sixty United Methodists from Europe and the United States in a look at the Social Principles in a changing Europe. The International Consultation, a meeting which takes place once every four years, gathered in Vienna in the Republic of Austria. The consultation was also a combined effort of the United Methodist General Boards of Church and Society, Global Ministries, and Higher Education and Ministry.

The discussion centered around where God is calling the world-wide United Methodist Church as it relates and applies the Social Principles to the church's work. The Social Principles impact the entire denomination, and discussion of the consultation revolved around what role the principles play in our mission, in our lives as disciples of Jesus Christ, and in our role of advocating for justice around the world.

Bishop Matthews was one of six bishops of The United Methodist Church, and the only North American bishop. He attended in his role as a member of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, recognizing his leadership and commitment to theological education. He participated in working group

conversations. Bishops from Europe included Bishop Rosemarie Wenner, the first woman United Methodist bishop in Europe, Bishop Patrick Streiff, Bishop Heinrich Bolleter, Bishop Oystein Olsen, and Bishop Hans Vaxby

The Rev. Neal Christie, Assistant General Secretary, Ministry of Education and Leadership Formation of the General Board of Church and Society said, "It was wonderful to be on the listening end, hearing the critical issues of church and society in Europe: the Iraqi War, alleviating global debt and poverty, economic development in central and eastern Europe. In Europe, there are major differences and divisions between countries, taking into account their differing histories and current realities. It was a unique opportunity to work together in a new way."

This quadrennium, the United Methodist Church has placed a focus on



Bishop Matthews meets the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, Dr. Heinz Fischer in the Hofburg Imperial Palace at the 5th International Consultation in Vienna (March 1-6, 2006). The Hofburg Imperial Palace in Vienna

the Social Principles, as we approach the 100th anniversary of the United Methodist Social Creed. Rev. Christie said, "In Europe, the Social Principles are taken seriously, as United Methodists are in the minority, and it is what distinguishes our church from each country's dominant church. It is a part of their identity, a part of their Christian formation, and guides their mission and advocacy."

He continued, "Here in the United States, the migrant workers issue is an important topic. But, what does that mean in

regard to the Roma (gypsies) in Bulgaria, and Iraqi refugees in Switzerland or Norway? The people are saying, 'we have done enough,' but the church is saying, 'we need to do more.'"

"We can learn from the United Methodist Church in Europe - in Wesleyan terms - about personal and social holiness and accountability," said Rev. Christie. "There is much to learn from these minority churches in Europe, where people are joining the church because of the Social Principles, and because the church there honors tradition, and reaches for racial and economic inclusivity."

For more information on the United Methodist Social Principles and Social Creed, go to: www.umc-gbcs.org.



Appointments

Bishop Marcus Matthews announces the following appointments, effective July 1, 2006:

Central District

Jose "Ricky" Ayala - From Columbia UMC (Associate) to Conshohocken UMC
Kerry W. Barth - From West Lawn (Associate) to Spring City UMC
Elaine Bortman - From Gradyville UMC to Narberth UMC and Radnor UMC

East District

Terisa Clark - On Loan to Eastern PA Conference to Washington Crossing UMC (Associate)
David Eckert - From Conshohocken UMC to First UMC of Germantown (Associate)

Northeast District

Robert Shrom - From Extension Ministry to Springtown UMC

Northwest District

Sandra Parsons - From Ackermanville UMC to Frackville UMC

Southeast District

James F. McIntire - From West Grove UMC to Prospect Park: Prospect UMC
Wendy Hudson-Jacoby - From Springfield: Covenant (Associate) to West Grove UMC

Southwest District

Greg Hill - On Loan to Eastern PA Conference from Extension Ministry Peninsula Delaware Conference to Hempfield UMC
Keith D. Price - From Limeville UMC to Bethesda UMC
George Darby - From Extension Ministry to Limeville UMC

Prayer Requests

Please keep Mr. A. Moses Rathan Kumar and his family in your prayers upon the death of his mother, Mrs. Devanasum Appdurai on April 17, 2006 in Chennai, India. Mr. Kumar is the EPA Conference's treasurer/executive director of Administrative Ministries. Condolences may be sent to Mr. Moses Kumar, 302 Truman Court, Jeffersonville, PA 19403.

Please keep the Rev. Dr. Dorothy Watson Tatem and her family in your prayers upon the death of her father, Mr. Robert Daniel Watson, Sr., on Friday, April 21, 2006. Dr. Watson Tatem is the EPA Conference's director of Urban and Global Ministries. Condolences may be sent to the Rev. Dr. Dorothy Watson Tatem, 1735 N. 28th St., Philadelphia, PA 19121.

In Memoriam

Reverend William R. (Ron) Kimball, Jr., who died on December 8, 2005 in High Point, NC. Rev. Kimball served the following appointments in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference; Fairless Hills (1979) and Narberth (1985). He subsequently transferred to the Western North Carolina Conference.

A memorial service was conducted on Sunday, January 15, 2006 at Jamestown United Methodist Church in Jamestown, North Carolina. He is survived by his wife, Joan, and his children. Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Joan Kimball, 3974 Cobblestone Bend Drive, High Point, NC 27265.

Rev. Dr. Stacy D. Myers, Jr., who died early in the morning on Saturday, April 1, 2006. Dr. Myers served the following appointments beginning in 1953: Berwyn; Jenkintown; West Chester District Superintendent; Conference Evangelism; Temple; West Lawn. He retired in 1995, and then served Fleetwood: Emmanuel in retirement. Dr. Myers graduated from Dickinson College in 1951 (A.B.), Temple University in 1954 (M. Div.), Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1978 (D.D.), and Albright College in 1978 (D.D.). A memorial service was held on Wednesday, April 5 at 11:00 am at West Lawn United Methodist Church. The family received visitors

from 10:00 am to 11:00 am prior to the memorial service. An additional service was held on Thursday, April 6 at 11:00 am at Willow Street: Boehm's UM Church, 13 West Boehms Road (1 mile south of Willow Street off Rt. 272), Willow Street, PA. Interment followed this service. He is survived by his wife, Ruth; two daughters: Cheryl and Mary; and two sons: Stacy and Paul. Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Ruth Myers, 645 Willow Valley Square J110, Lancaster, PA 17602-4871. Memorial contributions may go to Albright College, 13th and Bern Streets • P.O. Box 15234 • Reading, PA 19612; Lancaster: First UMC Building Fund, 29 East Walnut Street, Lancaster, PA 17602-4936; or, West Lawn UMC Memorial Fund, 15 Woodside Ave., Reading, PA 19609-1664.

Helen B. Poortstra, wife of the Rev. Raymond P. Poortstra, retired local pastor. Mrs. Poortstra passed away on Tuesday, April 18th. Rev. Poortstra served formerly at Portland, Delaware Water Gap, and more recently as pastor of visitation at East Stroudsburg. Services were held Friday, April 21 at 11:00 a.m. at Lanterman & Allen Funeral Home, 27 Washington St., East Stroudsburg, PA 18301 (570-421-8383). Condolences may be sent to Rev. Poortstra at 66 Brown Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301.

In The Nation

Georgia couple gives up everything for hurricane relief

By Woody Woodrick*

Many residents of the Gulf Coast lost everything in Hurricane Katrina.

Dee and Jack Boreing gave up everything because of Katrina.

The Boreings are working in Mississippi as site coordinators for work teams helping in recovery efforts. They came to Pascagoula from Douglasville, Ga., where they had lived all their lives.

"We have been in the mission field for many years and knew for the past three years that we wanted to be doing something full time," said Dee Boreing. Members of New Covenant United Methodist Church in Douglasville, the Boreings have made five or six mission trips to Mexico. Family obligations put full-time work on hold, but when that situation changed, the Boreings were ready.

"Knowing their deep faith, their knowledge and organizational skills and their commitment to Christian service, when we received the urgent request from the Mississippi volunteer office for coordination assistance, it was a 'no-brainer'," said Joe Hamilton, associate director of the jurisdiction Volunteers in Mission. The staff almost simultaneously said their name and placed a call.

"With their expressed commitment to volunteer service, their reply was effectively, 'Here am I, send me.'"

Hitting the road

When the Boreings accepted the call to Mississippi; Jack said he had already said yes before even knowing where Pascagoula was, they owned an embroidery business, home and land. Dee said two weeks after agreeing to come to Pascagoula, a neighbor called and asked about purchasing their home and land, and a deal was struck without even advertising. It wasn't

easy; Dee had lived all her life in the house her grandfather had built.

A week later, Dee shared their plans to enter the mission field with a former employee and the business was sold to the employee's daughter.

"We gave away everything else," Dee said. "We paid off everything we owed, packed up and came to Mississippi."

The Boreings purchased a travel trailer and a new truck before hitting the road. The trailer sits behind First United Methodist Church and is the Boreings' home.

The couple says they do nothing without first praying for God's guidance. They also search the Bible for additional direction. At the urging of a friend, they created "Side By Side Ministries," which is based on Nehemiah 3, in which Nehemiah rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem in 52 days.

"The only way it could be done was if all the tribes worked side by side, the greatest priest and the have-nots worked side by side. That's the way we do everything, working side by side with the Lord," Jack said.

Long days

Long days and hard work are a way of life for the Boreings, who wake up early and usually don't get to bed until about 10:30 p.m. They coordinate and assign teams to work sites and then spend the day going from site to site ensuring the teams have the materials they need. They meet with homeowners seeking assistance and the needs for repairing homes. They eat most of their meals at Pascagoula First United Methodist Church with the work teams.

"It's basically a seven-day-a-week job," Jack said. "There's Scripture to cover that. If your neighbor has an ox in the ditch, you're going to stay there

until he's out. I consider this an ox in the ditch."

Little direct training exists for hurricane recovery, but Jack said he found he had many of the necessary skills for jobs such as mucking out homes and spraying for mold. He spent 33 years as a mechanic for Delta Airlines, and that included hazardous materials training. He received damage control training in the Navy, and his grandfather was a fire chief in Georgia.

"Dee and Jack bring outstanding leadership skills and a deep faith in Jesus Christ to their role as UMVIM volunteer coordinators," said Hamilton. "Their gracious gift is empathy and compassion for the survivors of disaster (and) that serves them extremely well in bringing hope to people who may well feel abandoned. They are people of their word; they do not make promises lightly, and the promises they do make are fulfilled."

"We weren't prepared for anything we've had to do, but God has provided," Dee said.

The Boreings don't get much time off. Jack laughs while saying they recently took four hours for themselves. They've taken weekends to visit children and grandchildren back in Douglasville, Ga., and the grandchildren have visited Pascagoula.

While the work is hard, Jack said the rewards make it worthwhile. "My satisfaction comes when someone comes in so stressed they are losing hope, and we're able to sit down and talk to them and they see there is hope; something will get done," he said. "Our outreach to people is to let them know God loves them and is here."

No arguing with God

When the end of August arrives, where will they go? Jack and Dee say they're not sure. They express a desire to stay in Pascagoula until the work is done but don't know when that will be. Mexico is

still a possibility. UMVIM has a two-year position open. Hamilton said people like the Boreings are vital to mission work.

"Without such volunteers, UMVIM would not exist. Each year, thousands of UMVIM volunteers, both short term and long term, are the glue that binds a community of hope together in service to Christ and his church," he said.

Wherever they go, the Boreings say it will be where God leads them.

"We never question what God wants us to do," Jack said. "I'm not about to argue with him. I've done that before, and I end up losing."

*Woodrick is editor of the *Mississippi Advocate*, the newspaper of the United Methodist Church's Mississippi Annual Conference.



After selling their home and business in Douglasville, Ga., Dee and Jack Boreing are working in Mississippi as full-time United Methodist Volunteers in Mission site coordinators for work teams helping in hurricane recovery efforts. They live in a trailer that sits behind First United Methodist Church in Pascagoula. A UMNS photo by Woody Woodrick.

The Nation in Brief

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS) - U.S. membership in the United Methodist Church decreased by less than 1 percent in 2004, and worship attendance experienced a similar dip, according to a report from the denomination's finance agency. The number of United Methodist members in the United States decreased by 0.81 percent, to about 8.07 million, and worship attendance was down by 0.96 percent from 2003, according to the General Council on Finance and Administration's report, *The State of Our Connection*. Of the 63 U.S.-based annual (regional) conferences, 13 reported increases in membership, while 16 reported attendance growth. During the last 10-year period, the number of members churchwide decreased by 5.48 percent. Countering the U.S. decline, United Methodist lay membership in the central conferences - regions of the church in Africa, Asia and Europe - increased more than 68 percent from 1995 to 2004, to 1.88 million. The report is available at <http://www.gcfa.org/>

PETERSBURG, Va. (UMNS) - Like many inner-city youth where she grew up, Latoya Williams never finished high school, but the Petersburg Urban Ministries, a mission ministry of the United Methodist Church, changed that. Williams is learning cooking and restaurant management at the Peace Meal Café, part of a food-services course at the ministry. She earned her GED after enrolling in Petersburg Urban Ministries' Youth Build program, where students attend classes and work toward their high-school equivalency degrees. She is one of the first four students in the food-services course, which first received funding from the Youth Service Fund of the United Methodist Board of Discipleship. The students cook breakfast for the Youth Build students four days a week in a makeshift kitchen located in a former warehouse. "It's exciting to see them move beyond getting a GED and beginning to make plans for their lives ... and learning skills that they can carry with them and receiving

validation and hope," said Dwala Ferrell, director of Petersburg Urban Ministries.

WASHINGTON (UMNS) - Immigration rallies across the United States on April 10 signal that something hopeful and historic is brewing, said United Methodist Church leaders, after nearly 2 million marched in 140 cities for the rights of undocumented people. Hundreds of thousands gathered in the nation's capital, where United Methodist Bishop Minerva Carcaño, who leads the denomination's Phoenix Area, was one of several speakers. In New York, United Methodist Bishop Jeremiah Park led clergy and laity in a prayer vigil at historic John Street United Methodist Church in lower Manhattan before attending a rally with tens of thousands of immigrant supporters at City Hall Park. Park was one of the many speakers who took to the stage at the rally, along with New York's two U.S. senators, Hillary Rodham Clinton and Charles Schumer. Clinton is a United Methodist. {208}

Wiley College begins Alabama burned churches campaign

MARSHALL, Texas (UMNS) - The student government association at Wiley College has begun an initiative to help Birmingham-Southern College raise funds for rebuilding nine rural churches in Alabama that were burned by two Birmingham-Southern students. Both schools are United Methodist-related. According to Joseph Morale, vice president for student affairs and enrollment services at historically black Wiley College, students must be aware and responsive to the world outside of Wiley and Marshall. The college's SGA has committed to matching all funds raised by Wiley during "The Alabama Church Burning Assistance Campaign." The association has challenged the student leadership of all historically black colleges in this effort. Radio show provides scholarship support to black colleges.

In The World

Chaplain uses airwaves to get troops 'spiritually fit'

By Kathy L. Gilbert*

Army Chaplain Jay West has gone from a "mud on the boots" chaplain to the pastoral voice for service members in 56 countries.

For the past year, the United Methodist has been the broadcast chaplain for the American Forces Network in Germany. It is a role that has been a little hard for him to get used to.

"I truly love being with soldiers, and my preference would be to be out there living in the mud, in the dirt and the sand," he says. "Nevertheless, this is where God, through the Army chaplaincy, has assigned me."

Before transferring to his position in Mannheim, Germany, he served as Army chaplain for the 2nd Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, Ky. While serving at Fort Campbell, he was deployed to Iraq for more than a year.

West's combat experience, for which he was awarded a Bronze Star for valor, gives him a special connection and message for those so far from home — many for the first time. He says he knows about "the pain, anxiety, adrenaline rush, loneliness, and flood of emotions that wash over a soldier and his or her family in times of war."

"This is a military at war," he says. "My focus is on spiritual fitness and readiness. It is my job to tell soldiers that God loves them and knows what they are going through."

A broad parish

Shifting from being hands-on with 500 soldiers to sending his voice out to "faceless thousands" is stepping out on faith, he says.

"I've got a handful of soldiers now that I get to work with as a unit chaplain, but my parish stretches from Iceland to Turkey to Afghanistan to



United Methodist Army Chaplain Jay West has gone from being a "mud on the boots" chaplain to the pastoral voice for service members in 56 countries. For the past year, West has been the broadcast chaplain for the American Forces Network in Germany. A UMNS photo by Mike

Iraq, all across Germany, Europe, Italy ... to 56 countries, as we like to say in the AFN."

He uses the Apostle Paul's analogy of the planter to inspire his daily work.

"Paul says some of us are planters. One plants, one waters, one cultivates and I don't know from one day to the next — am I planting a seed? Am I carrying a watering can? Is that the day I pull out the hoe and do a little bit of weeding? I don't know. I just offer it up and say, 'OK God, you transform my words into the message that that one person needs to hear today.'"

West has two Sunday programs, "Promises" and "The Rock," and he



United Methodist Chaplain Jay West (left) prays with a troubled soldier at Fort Campbell, Ky. West is now the broadcast chaplain for American Forces Network stationed in Germany, where his message of "God loves them and knows what they are going through" reaches service members in 56 countries. A UMNS file photo by Mike DuBose.

does "Touch of Grace" daily devotions. He is also working on a series he calls "Stone Wall," which will be radio interviews with people from all ranks talking about how their faith is "getting them through."

West was in Nashville, Tenn., this spring at the Gospel Music Awards. Each chaplain coming into the job gets to shape the broadcasts, and West wants to reach the young soldier far away from home with music.

He knows if the young men and women serving today were not in military uniform, they would be sporting tattoos, body piercing and long braids.

"I want to bring them music that has an eternal value, good message, but reaches them with music they like, such as rock, hip-hop and rap."

When you offer young people music that invites them to boost the bass line in their car, you reach them, he says. "A lot of stuff the United Methodist Church does is not reaching a younger audience. Music is a great

way to engage them in their culture but not with hymns that are 200 years old.

"Our Wesleyan legacy is so rich and offers so many opportunities to speak to people where they are in today's society," he says. "We are Wesley ministers — we hold on to our heritage and don't share it enough."

A modern Wesley

West loves his United Methodist heritage. He notes that Methodism founder John Wesley rode around on horseback, pulling his Bible out of his backpack and telling people they mattered.

"My horse is a Humvee, but it is the same concept," he says. "Here was a guy (Wesley) who understood that the focus of what we are called to do is not done within the four walls of what we call the church. This was a guy who understood that ministry is done out there in the midst of a teeming, seamy, writhing humanity."

The World in Brief

US/CHINA (UMNS) - United Methodist-related Hendrix College is establishing a student exchange program with Heilongjiang University, an institution with about 23,000 undergraduate students in Harbin, China. Three representatives from Heilongjiang visited the Hendrix campus March 29 and signed the official exchange agreement, which also includes a faculty exchange program. The exchange will begin next year.

Hendrix President J. Timothy Cloyd said the relationship between the two institutions began as an effort to create friendship and understanding. "The world is smaller today, and the task of education is to build bridges between cultures," he said. The exchange will involve up to five students from each school spending a semester at the companion institution. In addition, eight students from Hendrix will take a two-week China Odyssey II tour

this summer to visit Heilongjiang and two other schools to study the culture and have dialogue with Chinese students.

NIGER (UMNS) - Children in Niger are bearing the brunt of famine. Chronic drought and locust infestations are plaguing many villages in the west African country. Through an appeal from Action by Churches Together, the international ecumenical alliance of humanitarian agencies, the United Methodist Committee on Relief is improving access to drinking water, supporting off-season gardening and livestock management, and repairing grain banks to strengthen the ability for families to have fresh water and get enough to eat. Donations for the continued support of UMCOR Advance #101250, "All Africa Drought and Famine," will help children, women and men avert the threat of famine. Checks can be placed in church offering plates

or sent to UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY 10087-9068. Credit-card donations can be made by calling (800) 554-8583.

ENGLAND (UMNS) - The Rev. Doug Smith is grateful for the time his Muslim neighbors and colleagues devoted to him when he worked as an attorney for a Texas-based oil company. Smith, who leads four Methodist churches near Bolton in northwest England, invited Moulana Faruk Ali to speak about Islam at a districtwide Methodist mission event in March. He and Ali serve as chaplains at the Bolton Royal Infirmary, where Smith says Ali has been "waging peace" by making people feel better for the past 17 years. He hopes that by inviting Ali to talk about his experience as a Muslim, people will get to know there are many sides of Islam. "We're fighting stereotypes," Smith explains. "I want to show people a more common face of Islam, different from

the one that ends up being reported on in the papers."

TURKEY (UMNS) - For the past seven years, United Methodists have partnered with International Blue Crescent in response to earthquakes in Turkey and Iran and the tsunami in Indonesia. Now that partnership is being used in response to the earthquake that devastated parts of Pakistan and Kashmir last October. In early April, directors of the United Methodist Committee on Relief allocated \$1.5 million to the Turkish nongovernmental organization to extend its assistance to earthquake victims. UMCOR directors also approved \$5.8 million for tsunami-related projects in Sri Lanka and Indonesia and \$330,000 for further assistance to South Sudan and Darfur.

Asbury Protestant Ministry sponsors Alternative Spring Break

Instead of heading down to some pristine tropical destination or just catching up on sleep at home, 11 Drexel University students, along with four faculty and staff, spent their Spring Break in New Orleans on a work trip sponsored by Asbury Protestant Ministry, a ministry of the Wesley Foundation of Philadelphia and the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

As part of Drexel's *Alternative Spring Break* program—March 25–April 1—the 15 team members made the long drive to New Orleans, where they worked with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) to help clean out and gut homes damaged by flooding after Hurricane Katrina.

In New Orleans, more than 80 percent of the city was flooded, and throughout the Gulf Coast, it's estimated that more than 350,000 homes were destroyed and nearly 150,000 severely damaged. Overall, according to the American Red Cross, more than 850,000 housing units were damaged, destroyed or left inaccessible. Many parts of the city still have the look and feel of a ghost town.

"The reality of New Orleans is that it seems so unreal" said Drexel first-year student and Philadelphia native Jordan Arndts. "It feels impossible to ever understand the reality of it all. The experience opened my heart and my eyes so wide that a week was nowhere near enough for me."

The team had an opportunity to tour some of the more severely damaged areas of the city, including some of the wealthiest neighborhoods in New Orleans, as well as one of the poorest—the Lower Ninth Ward, located right next to one of the ruptured levees. There, work crews are just beginning to clean up. Block after block of houses completely destroyed; trees with house numbers painted on them so people can find where there house once stood; abandoned, mud-filled cars; entire neighborhoods piled high with debris, nothing but concrete foundation slabs and an occasional fence still in tact.

And there, cadaver dogs are still finding dead bodies. More than 1,600 people are confirmed dead in the wake of Katrina and Rita; nearly 2,000 remain unaccounted for.

"I suppose we knew intellectually what we were getting ourselves into but nothing could prepare us for being there," said Pastor Tim Rardin, Asbury's director and the trip leader. "It was an intense week—

"I know I sound like a broken record, but I can't thank you all enough for your help," said Hayes, who is living temporarily in Memphis, TN. "I can't imagine how I would've got this work done." One estimate suggests that volunteer crews can save homeowners a minimum of \$10,000 in gutting/clean-up work alone.

"I have always thought it would be fun to just rip a house down and take it apart," said Matt Reichl, a Drexel sophomore from Slatington, PA. "But after experiencing what I did in New Orleans, it was actually some of the hardest and most tiring work I have ever done."

Only some glassware and dishes, a few mirrors and wall hangings and several photo albums were salvageable. When the group first met Toshia, she said that she was most devastated to lose her pictures. The furniture and everything else she can eventually replace; the pictures she cannot. So she was thrilled—and understandably emotional—when team members were able to retrieve at least some of them.

It was opportunities like that to talk with Toshia and other residents throughout the week that most touched Drexel senior Valerie Moore.

"The most incredible part of the trip was being able to sit and talk with the homeowners about their experiences pre- and post-Katrina," Moore said. "All of them were open and willing to share their individual stories with us in complete candor, and each person exemplified hope and resilience."

By the end of the week Toshia's house was just a shell of its former self, nothing but a skeleton structure left to be cleaned and disinfected by another UMCOR volunteer team before rebuilding can begin. "It was satisfying to be able to make so much progress on the house, and to provide at least some sign of hope for Toshia," said Rardin. "Still, it's overwhelming when you consider that there are literally hundreds of thousands more like it."

The reality is sobering, but the overall experience was profound for team members. "It was important for the students—and all of us—to get a more personal sense of what's really happening in New Orleans, and to be able to help in some small way," said Rardin. Many students have already expressed interest in going back, and Asbury may make a return trip next year.



Through the Asbury Protestant Ministry, Drexel University students, faculty, and staff had an opportunity to put faith into action through *Alternative Spring Break* in New Orleans.

physically, emotionally and spiritually—but it was a meaningful week."

The team worked on houses in two other neighborhoods, but spent most of their time in the New Orleans East section of the city, at the home of Toshia Hayes. The home where Toshia and her older brother and sister were born and raised; and a home that, like many, had not been opened since the hurricane.

Donning Tyvek haz-mat suits, nitrile gloves, goggles and special N-95 certified masks, team members took on the arduous task of emptying and gutting the house—removing everything that had any sign of mold damage. And for a house where the water level rose nearly to the first-floor ceiling, that meant *literally* everything: furniture and appliances; household items; clothes; books; dishes; walls; ceilings and floor boards.

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UMCOR Disaster Relief Training

By Jim Wilkin*

On April 3, 2006, twenty-eight people from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference gathered at Camp Innabah for Disaster Response Basic Training provided by the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). They were reminded that we can be the body of Christ in the midst of disasters. While pictures of property damage flash on our televisions, we know that the real impact is on the lives of the people. UMCOR volunteers are continually reminded that "It's not the project, it's the people."

UMCOR responds to an event somewhere in the world every three days. While much of the work is done by volunteers, a meaningful, effective response in so many places requires great fi-

The training participants identified a number of reasons why they felt that disaster relief is such an important ministry. One participant doesn't want people to have to go through a crisis alone. Another had experienced disaster and was supported by others, so knows firsthand how important it is. Others added: "God calls us to do it," "We are a mission people," "People need hope, and Christ is the hope," "We can't change the whole world, but we can impact one person at a time," and "Scripture says we are to bear one another's burdens."

The group learned that the most important part of disaster response is to have a plan in place before the disaster occurs. Plans should be developed at the conference, district and local church level. The



Larry P. Powell, Sr., leads the disaster response training at Camp Innabah.

nancial support. UMCOR funds come from One Great Hour of Sharing and from special appeals and donations. All money received through appeals, such as for tsunami relief and Katrina relief, goes directly to the those in need; none to administration.

In addition to providing direct relief work, UMCOR sends trainers to conferences throughout the connection to help them prepare for disasters. They also maintain a site in Baldwin, LA where persons can go to receive more advanced training.

Larry P. Powell, Sr., International Catastrophic Disaster Relief Consultant for UMCOR, and Rick D. Nelson, Case Management Technical Supervisor for Katrina Aid Today, led the training at Camp Innabah to help our conference be better prepared for the possibility of a disaster. Larry is a retired fire marshal from Las Vegas, NV, who has worked extensively with UMCOR in disaster response. Rick has led the coordination of United Methodist disaster response efforts in Western Pennsylvania.

conference should plan for donations management, volunteer management, and communications. Districts should identify how to support conference efforts and help in coordination with local churches. The local church should identify its strengths and interests, facilitate training, and seek out other local churches with whom to partner.

The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference will be continuing to strengthen its disaster response skills and abilities. Anyone seeking more information or wishing to be part of the planning and preparation process should contact the Rev. Sherrin Marshall, Interim Coordinator: sherrin.marshall@epaumc.org or 1.800.828.9093 ext. 230.

* Jim Wilkin is director of *Camping and Nurture Ministries with the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church.* Contact jim.wilkin@epaumc.org.

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Boehm's Chapel Society receives unexpected \$1 million donation

by Janice Kluck

Joyce Jenkins, a woman previously unknown to the Boehm's Chapel Society, left a \$1 million bequest to the Society at her death, in September 2005. Her ashes were interred in the cemetery near Boehm's Chapel following a March 26 memorial service there.

Miss Jenkins, who succumbed to ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease), was a 9th generation descendant of Jacob Boehm, the brother of Chapel founder Martin Boehm. She was a life member of the Society who proudly displayed the plaque all life remembers receive. A quiet, frugal, modest woman who resided in Bethesda MD, Miss Jenkins left half of her estate to the Chapel Society and the other half to the Children's Inn of her long-time employer, the National Institutes of Health. The Inn shelters parents from around the nation and the world whose children are undergoing medical treatment at NIH.

Miss Jenkins began her career becoming an administrative officer of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases before her retirement. Her home, which included neither a dishwasher nor clothes dryer, was one of the more modest in a neighborhood where real estate prices are rapidly escalating. It was the subject of a bidding war between a real estate developer who wanted to

demolish it and build a high priced "McMansion" and one of Miss Jenkins' neighbors, who wanted to preserve the look and feel of the tree-lined neighborhood. The neighbor won, buying the house for \$1.157 million most of which will provide a generous endowment for the Boehm's Chapel Society.

If you are unable to visit Boehm's chapel in person, we can bring it to you! The Boehm Legacy-More Than Just a Chapel on a Hill? has recently been released. It is a 23 minute documentary about the Chapel-its history including information on the reconstruction and pictures of the Chapel before the reconstruction. Learn about Martin Boehm-his life and ministry. See programs held at the Chapel-experts from the Bicentennial Celebration in 1991 and the apple festival.

A program has been developed for churches, service and historic organizations. A representative from the Society will briefly introduce the Chapel followed by viewing of the documentary.

If you would like to have the program presented to your group, contact Janice Kluck 717-393-7104 or execdirboehms@dejassd.com

Reprint from "The Northeastern United Methodist Historical Bulletin," APRIL 2006.

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Our generous benefactors, the Methodist Hospital Foundation has awarded nearly \$900,000 in grants since 1998.

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SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN MISSION
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UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
2006 THEME: HARVESTING PEACE

WHAT: School of Mission is a unique 3-day opportunity for study, worship, fellowship, spiritual growth, and challenge to get involved in mission and social action.

WHO: School of Mission is planned for women, children (ages 6-11), youth, and men, both laity and clergy. Children & youth must be with responsible adult.

WHEN: Friday July 21 to Sunday July 23, 2006

Registration starts at 7:30 am on Friday, with the opening session beginning at 9:00 am. Closing worship is on Sunday from 2:30 to 3:00 p.m.

WHERE: The Inn at Chester Springs, on Route 100, near the intersection with Route 113. It is one mile south of the Downingtown exit of the PA Turnpike.

HOW: Everyone shares in a spiritual growth study and selects one other course, either a geographical mission study or a social issue study.

For courses and registration information please go to: <http://www.epaumc.org/NewsDetails.asp?pageID=1344>

REGISTRATION: Send by June 1 to Ruth Baker, 1045 NW End Blvd., #363, Quakertown, PA 18951.

Celebrating 50 years of full clergy rights for women

Continued from page 1

Webb, Ohio). After years of fierce struggle and second-class citizenship, on May 4, 1956 women were granted full clergy rights within the former Methodist church. And yet, in order to understand the struggle, we must go back more than fifty years. For women have been praying and preaching, marching and leading, many years before 1956. Within the Methodist tradition, women's leadership began with Susan Wesley:

"While her husband was absent in London in 1711 attending convocation, Mrs. Wesley adopted the practice of reading to her family and instructing them. One of the servants told his parents and they wished to come. These told others, and they came, till the congregation amounted to forty and increased till they were over two hundred, and the parsonage could not contain all that came."

In 1735, John Wesley appointed lay women as deaconesses, and in 1740, women assumed the role of class leader. The first woman "licensed" to preach by John Wesley was Sarah Crosby; however, in 1803 a conference vote brought the practice of licensing women to an end. The struggle continued and in 1880, Anna Howard Shaw was ordained in the New York Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church; however, when the Methodist Protestant Church merged with the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church South to become the Methodist Church, women's clergy rights were once again sacrificed. Finally, on May 4, 1956, the Methodist Church granted full clergy rights to women, with the right to a pastoral appointment. Maud K. Jensen was the first woman to receive full clergy rights and conference membership in The Methodist Church. In 1980, the North Central jurisdiction elected The Rev. Marjorie Matthews as the first woman bishop in The United Methodist Church, and in 1984 the The Rev. Leontine T.C. Kelly was elected as the first African-American Bishop.

Within our Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, there have been many bold women who have paved the way.¹ The Rev. Dr. A.J. Garner, the Rev. (now Bishop) Susan Hassinger and the Rev. Elaine Barnes were among the first

women to serve within our conference. The Rev. Lucy Pierre (Bolds) was the first African-American woman to be appointed within our conference (1975, Philadelphia: St. Thomas); The Rev. Milca Plaud (1979) and The Rev. Victoria Martinez (1980) were the first Hispanic appointments (Milca to Lancaster: El Redentor, Victoria to Southern Chester County Hispanic Ministry, now Kennett Square: Cristo Rey). Eastern Pennsylvania has also lifted up two significant female Bishops within the life of our church: Bishop Susan Hassinger elected in 1996 and Bishop Violet L. Fisher, elected in 2000 as the first African American woman from the Northeast Jurisdiction to be elected to the episcopacy.

Truly, the above list of names does not do justice to so many women who have been praying and preaching, marching and leading for the past fifty years. Some of the women are unnamed saints who stood in their churches and welcomed their new pastor with outstretched arms; others shouted for justice when no one would listen and still others continue to work and labor day after day until the vineyard is a safe and welcoming place for all women.

At this year's session of Annual Conference, we will join in celebrating the 50th year anniversary of full clergy rights for women. This celebration will lift up our sisters who have tirelessly worked to bring the beautiful diversity of God's kingdom to our churches. I pray that you will mark this celebration on your calendar and that you will come and raise your voice in song to celebrate and mark this significant occasion in the life of our church. We also encourage local congregations to mark this significant celebration. Resources for worship can be found on the General Board of Discipleship website.

... So there the girls stood, teaching and preaching, laughing and singing, "playing church." They did not see anything surprising about their actions. They knew the altar belonged to them. Truly, in those young girls, we see the fruit of our labor and the hope for our church.

**Rev. Dawn Taylor-Storm currently serves White Haven United Methodist Church and is on the planning team for the 50th anniversary celebration to take place at Annual Conference on June 22, 2006.*

Used book sale at Annual Conference

Look for the annual used book sale sponsored by Archives and History at Annual Conference.

Please bring your books to donate to Annual Conference, and your checkbook to purchase other people's donated treasures! We will have our general sales table, where hardbacks are \$1 each and paperbacks are 50 cents; also our bid table with antique and rare treasures, AND we expect some unique volumes and sets, which will be available for buyers willing to make an offer. Look for our 2006 edition of the Annals of Eastern Pennsylvania, which will be on sale for \$5. We have fascinating new articles on Philip Otterbein, Jacob Albright, and Simpson House, plus several first hand accounts of life in our Conference from the 1800s. All proceeds go toward the work of the society to preserve and disseminate our Conference's rich historical legacy. If you have questions, contact Joe DiPaolo at (610) 688-5650 or wayneumc.pastor@verizon.net.

SAYING GOODBYE, LETTING GO: Pastoral Transitions

By Bronwyn Yocum *

This spring, many pastors and congregations will say good-bye, as clergy who have received new appointments move. When the break is made well, a new pastor and congregation can develop a healthy relationship. But when the previous goodbye is not accomplished well, destructive behavior can impair the relationship between an incoming pastor and a congregation, and damage their ability to work for the glory of God.

For clergy, leave-taking can be difficult. Congregations need to remember that much of a clergyperson's life centers around the church they serve. The pastor's family has often made many of their friends from within the congregation. Children of the pastor may resent the move, and leave parents feeling guilty about uprooting their family. Beginning again in a new congregation, forging new relationships, learning a new community...these can all be intimidating to clergy who must move.

Churches, too, may struggle to let go of a pastor who is leaving. Clergy play an important role in people's lives – performing marriages, baptizing children, walking alongside those who are grieving or ill. Saying goodbye to a pastor who has played a significant role in a congregation's life can be difficult. The congregation may wrestle with anxiety about the incoming pastor, fearful of the future with unknown pastoral leadership.

Both pastors and congregations can influence the process of leave-taking.

When the departing pastor is a beloved leader, congregation members may be in denial or pain about the upcoming change, and avoid talking about the pastor's leaving. The temptation is to put off goodbyes, and then when they can no longer be denied, move as quickly as possible through them because they are painful. We don't want to dwell on those negative feelings of loss and sadness. Denial also takes shape in ignoring the upcoming change, and failing to plan to welcome the new pastor. We may think we can ignore the change and escape the pain of goodbye. But the best way to deal with the difficult emotions of loss is to recognize them and share them. Instead of avoiding painful feelings, create congregational opportunities to share feelings about the pastor's leaving, and to discuss the transition. Imagine the feelings of the congregation saying goodbye to the incoming pastor. Transitions go best when we take the time to explore our feelings, to admit the fears, and the sense of loss we may be experiencing. We discover that we are not alone in our feelings.

One way to share feelings is to plan opportunities to celebrate the accomplishments of the departing clergyperson, creating memories for the future. Make note of milestones in the pastor's tenure, and the church's growth under the pastor's leadership. Create a group to plan a goodbye process as well as a group to plan a welcome for the new pastor. Allow members a time to tell the departing pastor what their ministry

has meant, perhaps holding a goodbye luncheon after church.

Pastors also need to say goodbye effectively. When a pastor leaves a congregation, their pastoral role with that group of people ceases. They are no longer the pastor to whom people should turn for care and support. As much as it may make a pastor feel needed to have former members call for help, our system is built on the expectation that the pastor will defer to the new minister who has been appointed to that congregation. A departing pastor can help set the tone of welcome for a new pastor by making it clear that he or she will not be available to serve in the pastoral role. They can also help develop welcome plans for the new pastor, and encourage openness to change. Within the family and with close friends, the pastor can share their feelings about leaving, and their own anxieties about beginning again at the new appointment. They, too, will want to look back over their tenure and recognize the contributions they have made to the life of the congregation.

Finally, churches and pastors can use liturgy to mark this time of transition. The United Methodist Book of Worship contains services of goodbye and welcome for pastoral changes. These liturgies provide ways for the entire congregation to participate in the transition, and to offer prayers for the departing and incoming pastors. One important element of the service of farewell is the offering of forgiveness between pastor and congregation. None of us is perfect, and there will be

hurts and mistakes committed by both pastor and congregation. The offering of forgiveness allows each to move forward into God's new future without carrying the burden of unresolved guilt.

Pastors who need assistance dealing with the of transition may contact the employee assistance program that offers counseling at no charge. Should additional counseling be advisable, the Pastoral Care Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry does offer financial assistance as needed. Contact Cecile Grantham, chair of the Pastoral Care Committee at cgrantham@verizon.net. Congregations struggling with issues of letting go may want to discuss conference resources with their district superintendent.

Pastoral transitions are never easy. But we enter into this time of change with the reassurance of God's word in Isaiah 43:18-19. "Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" Remember, unless we let go of the old, we cannot receive God's new beginnings.

Look for two workshops at Annual Conference: "Pastoral Transition Workshop," Thursday and Friday, led by Rev. Jared Rardin and Rev. Dr. Sherrin Marshall; and "So you have a new pastor; Who broke the old one?" on Friday only, led by Ms. Brenda Tildon.

* The Rev. Bronwyn Yocum is pastor of First UMC of Phoenixville.

United Methodists partner in anti-violence initiative

continued from page 1

be held in six locations around the city that are considered "hot spots" of crime. He urged congregations to hold fruitful youth events, and events that encourage community building, such as marriage and reconciliation workshops. He also added that the city would be willing to help with these endeavors.

Mayor John Street expressed his appreciation for Rev. Ritter, the pastor who sent him out to organize blocks in North Philadelphia while yet a young man. There he saw people challenged by their failures and by the city's failures. "You have an obligation to serve," was the message he received while yet young.

Mayor Street outlined four components of dealing with crime and violence: 1) police, 2) city services, 3) social services, and 4) raising the level of civility in the minds of the people – to raise the level of respect they have for themselves and for their brothers and sisters.

The mayor acknowledged in some areas of the city, kids as young as 10 or 12 can get possession of a gun, people live in poverty, and they suffer with drugs, drug dealers, homicide, and suicide. He said, "Working together, we can create a certain sense of revival – spiritual revival – so

they will recognize that they are special, loved by God, and don't have to live this way."

"We seek to change the hearts and minds of people – that they can make a decision that their lives can be different," said Mayor Street. His goal is to partner and encourage faith communities to do what they do best and support them in those efforts.

The mayor suggested organizing a faith revival on the level of the Live 8 concert held last year in Philadelphia, or the Million Women March. He also said that this revival could not be government driven, but a vision from the faith community. He also suggested that every school in the city have a faith-based partner, and to create a safe place for children and youth until 9:00 every night.

Attendees agreed to continue to meet with the City of Philadelphia to help put an end to violence through a common purpose and partnership.

*Suzy Keenan is the director of Communications for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. Contact at 1.800.828.9093 ext. 227 or communications@epaumc.org

Work of art to celebrate United Methodist Connection

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person with a seeing eye dog, two people in wheelchairs – both a child and an adult. There are families and individuals: youth, children, adults.

Mrs. Groves, who has been woodworking since 1990, selected the woods for their many colors and textures. Darkest is ebony (like the black keys on a piano), which is very heavy, and which she found out, makes her sneeze. Rosewood is a rainforest product, and she was careful that it was harvested in a sound way. There are also Pennsylvania cherry and walnut, curly cherry and maple, paulnarico (bright yellow), butternut (from her family lake property in Minnesota), and pine – "because God uses even the most ordinary of us for His purposes." The red oak was recycled from somebody's hardwood floor. She also picked spalted maple, created from diseased maple that gets beautiful designs and colors from the bacteria that has gotten into it. Morado and pear wood are "a gorgeous brown color." "I am amazed that all this beauty is hiding under bark – does God have a sense of humor or what," said Mrs. Groves.

When she purchased her \$1000 scroll saw, she gave it over to the Lord. "God

owns it. I just get to use it. Everything I make with this saw is made to the glory of God. Since God owns this saw, it becomes His problem where to put it every time we move to a new parsonage!" said Mrs. Groves, who also happens to be the wife of the Rev. Lester Groves, pastor of Temple UMC near Pottstown. Rev. Groves has served ten churches in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, and they have lived in five different parsonages.

"We were delighted to find this parsonage had unused space over the garage, just waiting for someone to find a good reason to finish off the room. I have learned to trust God with these very unusual needs, like finding enough room for a woodshop in a parsonage."

Mrs. Groves combines her love of the Lord and her love of woodworking with the philosophy, "Work becomes WORSHIP when done for the Lord." Besides woodworking, she is a substitute teacher. She has been taking graduate classes, and will become certified as a teacher this May. She looks forward, after finishing four more classes, to graduate with her masters degree in special education.

Ruth Groves may be contacted by email: sawdustlady@yahoo.com.



How do your Church's investments measure up?

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800-828-9093 ext.247

stacy.martin@epaumc.org

Offering socially responsible investment solutions and stewardship education to area churches and agencies.

First Offering at Annual Conference for the Students

By Stacy J. Martin

Each year the Scholarship Team of the Annual Conference has more students who apply for financial assistance than there is money to respond to the needs. For the last four years, we have come before the Annual Conference during the time of its first offering and asked you, the delegates, to help the Team make some award to these students. Again, this year we appeal for your help. Would you give generously as you have in the last four years? The monies collected will be equally divided among the eligible students. Your contributions will help buy books, pay fees, and say to young persons that the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church encourages them as they achieve their dreams in higher education.

We are pleased to share with you that the offering received at the 2005 conference totaled **\$5,101.54!!!** This is more than two times the 2004 amount! The largest gift last year was made by Pocono Lake UMC. Not only did they demonstrate their commitment to the ministries honored at the three offerings during this Conference, but the members of Pocono Lake planned in advance and prepared one check for all three offerings! Their commitment and stewardship should be modeled by us all.

Another opportunity to provide scholarships to United Methodist students is through the annual **Student Day Offering**. There is a long history of Methodism supporting students. In 1866 a special fund was established for the educational preparation of persons for the ministry and missionary service. The 1940 General Conference established the Methodist

Student Day with a churchwide offering, which was modified by the 1968 Uniting Conference to its current form. The funds are awarded to students attending United Methodist schools.

Each Annual Conference receives a rebate of 10% of their Student Day Offering to apply to a scholarship for a local student. Connected together, United Methodists work toward transforming the lives of undergraduate and seminary students. This is a very tangible way to help students both nationally and locally through this rebate program! **What other investment can you name that pays a 10% annual return?!** This year's Student Day offering will be taken on November 26th – the Sunday of Thanksgiving and Homecoming Weekend. Please help us invest in our collective future by donating generously!

The Scholarship Team would like to thank Bishop Matthews and the delegates to this year's Annual Conference for their generous offering this year. Along with your offering on Student Day on November 26th, the students of the Conference will know that we support them as they pursue their studies.

Please contact Stacy Martin, Eastern Pennsylvania-Peninsula Delaware U.M. Foundation with any questions: 800-828-9093 x247 or email: stacy.martin@epaumc.org.

Applications, as well as lists of scholarships and awards, are available via the Eastern Pennsylvania website www.epaumc.org or by calling the Foundation office 800-828-9093 or the Office of Urban and Global Ministries office 800-866-6855.

Classifieds

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES Part-time (120 hrs/month) Seeking an energetic and dynamic youth leader to impact the lives junior and senior high youth. Responsibilities include the continued development of an established youth program, overseeing adult volunteers who assist with youth activities, working jointly with ministry team to achieve goals, and active involvement in the life of the church and the youth. If you have BA/BS in related field (or equiv exp), 3 yrs exp dealing with youth, strong communication skills, are a strong role model and understand today's youth, culture and pressures, we are interested in hearing from you. Salary commensurate with experience. Send resumes to youthcouncil@mediamethodist.org.

ORGANIST WANTED Pipe organ. First UMC Bangor. one Sunday service; accompany adult choir; pt; contact music director, Ellis Williams, day 610-588-2121, x25; evening 610-588-0260.

ALLEN ORGAN AVAILABLE Two manuals and full pedal board. Contact First UMC Bangor, 610-588-4672.

DISHES AVAILABLE Shenango China, commercial weight, white with turquoise trim, 200+ dinner plates, cups and saucers, plus 12 oval platters, relish dishes and gravy boats. Milk-glass with grape pattern - 40 platters and 37 cups. Clear glass - 178 glasses, 172 saucers with flowers. Contact First UMC Bangor, 610-588-4672.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Needed for active, 400+ member congregation. 30 hours per week. Proficient in Microsoft Word and Desktop Publishing. Salary negotiable. No benefits package. Resumes may be sent to St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, 600 Walker Road, Wayne, PA 19078 or emailed to pastor@stmatthewsvf.org

WANTED: LARGE SIZE NATIVITY SET suitable for outdoor display for Mount Hope UMC in Aston, PA. Please contact Judie Ashworth: 267-250-2374 or

jashworth@MothersWork.com

FOOD SERVICE COORDINATOR - Qualifications: Plan, Prepare, Cook and Serve Meals; Schedule, Train and Supervise Food Service Staff; Order Food and other Food Service Related Items; Accept Vendor Deliveries and Manage Proper Storage; Organize and Implement Cleaning Schedule for all Food-Service Areas; Maintain a Food Service Inventory control system; Assist with general Guest and Facility Housekeeping; Participate in weekly Staff Meetings and Devotions; Assist, as necessary, with any tasks that arise in the on-going ministry of Gretna Glen. For more information on benefits and salary, please send inquiries and resumes to: Paul Douglas, Director; Gretna Glen Camp & Retreat Center, 87 Old Mine Road, Lebanon, PA 17042; (717) 273-6525; director@gretnaglen.org; www.gretnaglen.org

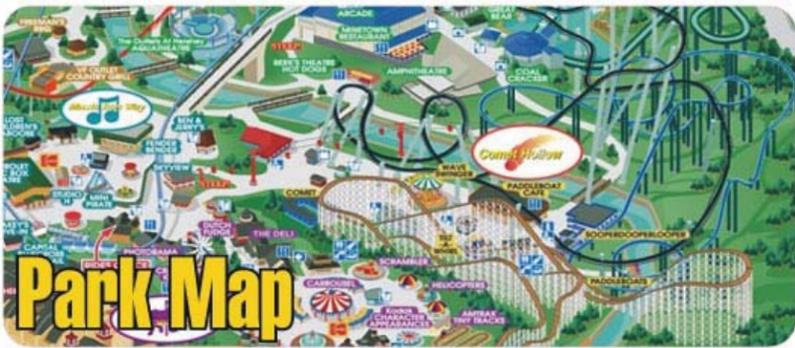
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES Hope UMC of Havertown is seeking a part-time Director of Children's Ministries to

lead children in grades K-5. Only 2-3 hour 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 a full job description or to apply, contact the church office at (610)446-3351.

YOUTH MINISTER Hope UMC 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 the church office at (610) 446-3351.

ORGANIST/PIANIST/CHOIR DIRECTOR for Bustleton United Methodist Church. Resume To: Music Search, 9707 Bustleton Ave. 19115. Phone: 215-673-1504, Fax: 215-673-3900, or e-mail: bustletonumc@worldlynx.net.

Celebrate United Methodist Day at HERSEYPARK June 17, 2006



Share a day of fun and fellowship and an evening of Christian music and entertainment as we celebrate United Methodist Day at HERSEYPARK on June 17. Bring your family, friends, youth group, Sunday School - or your whole church!

Discount tickets will soon be available.* If your purchase yours by May 1, you will receive a free T-shirt! Wear your T-shirt through the park to

show your United Methodist team spirit!

Ride the rides, including 10 world-class roller coasters, six drenching water rides, 20 kiddie rides, and many family rides.

New this year: REESE'S XTREME CUP CHALLENGE, the first interactive dark ride to pit car against car in a high-energy score-fest that is unequalled anywhere in the world. Hang onto your laser blasters!

Picnic in the picnic area just outside the park, or enjoy one the many restaurants in the park: pizza and pierogies, iced tea and ice cream, and of course, **chocolate!**

EVENING IN THE AMPHITHEATER

Christian music and entertainment in the park's amphitheater at no extra cost, 6:00 p.m. until the park closes at 10:00 p.m.

Already booked: Saline, high energy, original rock music, and Everyday Process with a no-compromise mes-

sage using hip-hop's own magnetism to spread the truth everywhere.

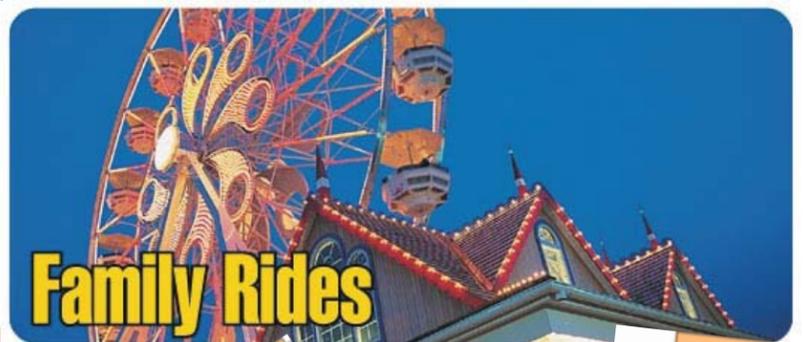
More exciting entertainers are being added to fill the evening.

More information will be mailed soon to your church.

Spread the word!

For additional information you may call Jim Wilkin, Director of Camping & Nurture Ministries, at 1-800-828-9093, ext. 225.

**A portion of each ticket sold will help to support conference ministries for youth and young adults.*



Family Rides



ATTRACTIONS

Over 60 Rides
New Reese's Xtreme Cup Challenge
10 Coasters
6 Water Rides
Many other family rides and kiddie rides

FOOD

Restaurants, Fast Food & Snacks are available throughout park.
Picnic table areas just outside park
Group picnic catering, available through Hershey Park (1-800-242-4236)
No food or beverage may be brought into the park.



EVENING ENTERTAINMENT

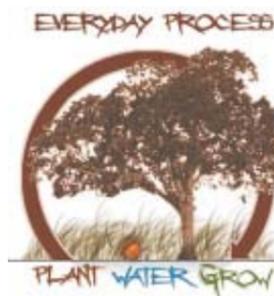
Christian music and entertainment in the park's Amphitheater from 6:p.m. until closing (10 p.m.)
Groups who will inspire and entertain include:



John Messner Matthew Kann John kramer Eugene Korn Dan Maurer

saline

Faith driven, highly-energized, infectiously original modern rock music



EVERYDAY PROCESS

A no-compromise message using hip-hop's own magnetism to spread the truth.

UNIVERSAL ROYALTY

An urban flavored blend of hip-hop, rap and rock.



ADMISSION COST

\$33 - Ages 9-54
\$25 - Ages 3-8 and 55+
Free - Age 2 and under
Free T-Shirt with every ticket ordered by May 15th!!!!

For ticket order form go to:
www.epaumc.org/NewsDetails.asp?pageID=1183